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Hinduja family members sentenced to Jail for exploiting servants



Page 13

Vol. 23

Issue 16

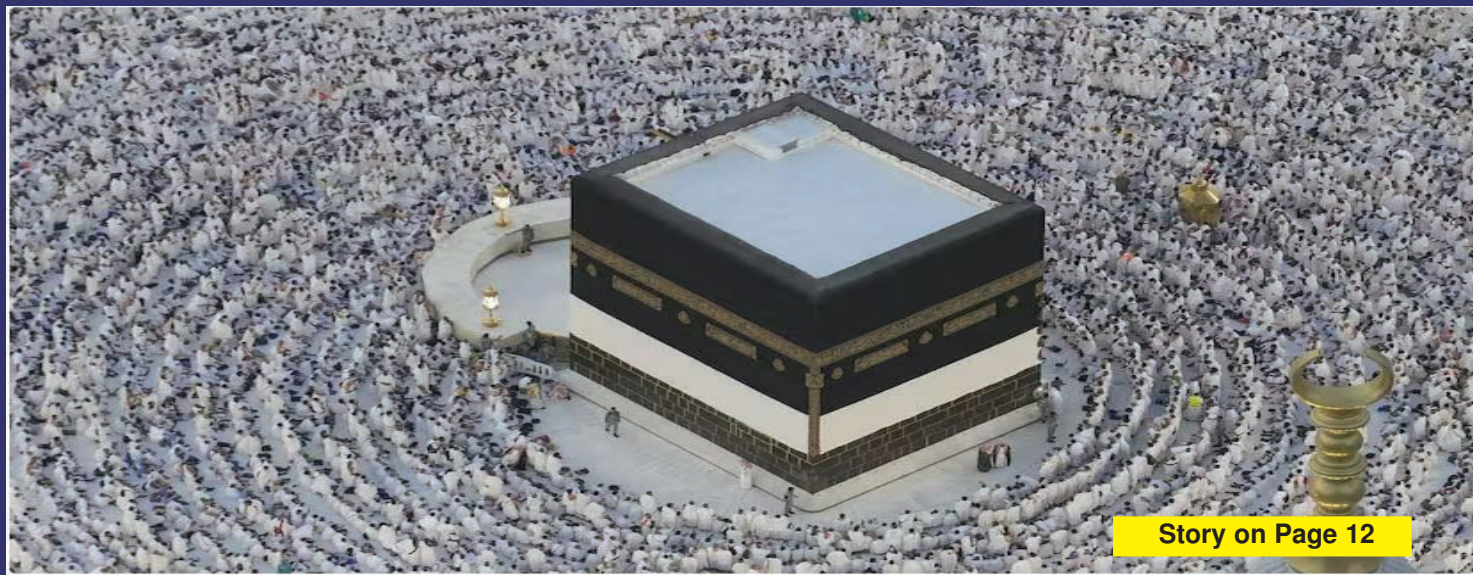
Friday 21 June to 27 June 2024

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## Over 1,000 Muslim worshippers die of heat exhaustion during Hajj pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia:

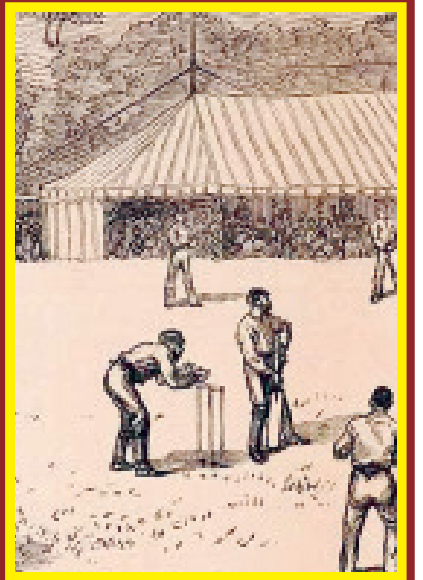
### Blistering temperatures in Mecca reached as high as 125 degrees during Islamic pilgrimage



Story on Page 12

Muslim Pilgrims Circumambulate The Kaaba, The Cubic Building At The Grand Mosque, During The Annual Hajj Pilgrimage In Mecca, Saudi Arabia. (File Photo)

## Cricket, once a thriving game in US, died at the hands of baseball



Story on Page 13

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### Fox News poll finds Biden ahead of Trump by 2 points



Story on Page 11

### Tommy Lin, defrauded banks while serving in the NYC Former Mayor Bill de Blasio administration, says FBI

Story on Page 11



Story on Page 12

### Boeing CEO grilled in Senate: 'How can you qualify for \$33 million Compensation?'



Story on Page 11

### Arvind Kejriwal to remain in jail

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## Mumbai Cricket Body Head Amol Kale Dies In USA, He Went To Watch India vs Pakistan T20 World Cup Match

(Sai Bureau)-Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) President Amol Kale has died due to a cardiac arrest in USA. He watched the India vs Pakistan match live from the Nassau County International Cricket



Stadium, New York stadium along with MCA office bearers on Sunday night. Amol Kale was known as a close aide of Maharashtra Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis. Kale was in New York along with MCA secretary Ajinkya Naik and Apex Council member Suraj Samat. The 47-year-old Kale had become the MCA president after defeating former India and Mumbai cricketer Sandip Patil in the

elections held in October 2022. During his tenure, the MCA had taken some vital decisions including the move to match the BCCI match fee for all its red-ball players for the upcoming 2024-25 season.

Kale, a prominent businessman in the state, took over as MCA president in October 2022 and was in the post for 19 months. Though he hailed from Nagpur, which is the headquarters of Vidarbha Cricket Association (VCA), Kale was settled in Mumbai for over a decade and was invested in various businesses. A BE in Electrical Engineering from Nagpur University, Kale was the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of J K Solutions Private Limited and Arpita Enterprises. Though he had not yet completed two years into his tenure as MCA president, Kale was praised by everyone for MCA's decision to grant the same amount of match fee to Mumbai cricketers that is offered by the BCCI. Under his leadership, MCA has organised many international matches at the Wankhede Stadium including the India v New Zealand Test and the 2023 World Cup matches.

## Who Was Yuvraj Goyal, The 28-Year-Old Sales Executive Murdered In Canada

A 28-year-old Indian-origin man from Punjab's Ludhiana was shot dead in Surrey, Canada on Friday. The police have taken four suspects into custody and charged them with first-degree murder on Saturday. Investigators say preliminary probe suggests that this was a case of targeted shooting but they are still working to determine the reasons behind Yuvraj Goyal's killing. All about Yuvraj Goyal: Yuvraj migrated to Canada in 2019 on a student visa and recently obtained his Canadian Permanent Resident (PR) status, marking a significant milestone in his aspirations for a better future. He was working as a sales executive. He hailed from a modest family background in Ludhiana. His father,





Rajesh Goyal, runs a firewood business, while his mother, Shakun Goyal, dedicated her time to homemaking. Prior to his relocation, Yuvraj completed his Bachelor of Commerce (Honors) from Delhi University.

Yuvraj was known to have no criminal record. The four suspects arrested for Yuvraj's murder are - 23-year-old Manvir Basram of Surrey, 20-year-old Sahib Basra of Surrey, 23-year-old Harkirat Jhutti of Surrey, and 20-year-old Keilon Francois of Ontario. In a statement, Sergeant Timothy Pierotti of Canada's Integrated Homicide Investigation Team (IHIT) said, "We're thankful for the hard work of the Surrey RCMP, Air 1, and IERT, but there is still more work to be done. IHIT investigators remain dedicated to determining why Mr Goyal was the victim of this homicide."

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# India protests Khalistani extremists holding 'citizens court' in Canada

**India objected to Khalistani extremists in Canada holding a 'citizens court' outside the Indian consulate in Vancouver. This follows a Canadian parliamentary tribute to a slain Khalistani extremist, exacerbating strained bilateral relations.**

(News Agency)- India on Thursday lodged a strong protest with Canada over Khalistani extremists holding a so-called "citizens court" and burning an effigy of Prime Minister Narendra Modi outside the Indian consulate in Vancouver, authoritative sources told news agency PTI.

Issuing a diplomatic note to the Canadian High Commission, India conveyed its serious objection to the latest actions by the Khalistani elements.

In the note, India is also learnt to have communicated to the high commission its anguish over the space being given to the Khalistani separatists in Canada by the Justin Trudeau government. India's protest came a day after the Canadian Parliament observed a "moment of silence" in the memory of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar, who was gunned down in



Surrey, British Columbia, in June last year. On June 14, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Canadian counterpart Trudeau held a brief conversation on the sidelines of the

G7 Summit in Italy's Apulia region. The interaction came against the backdrop of severe strain in India-Canada ties. The relations between the two countries

came under severe strain following Trudeau's allegations in September last year of a "potential" involvement of Indian agents in Nijjar's killing.

New Delhi rejected Trudeau's charges as "absurd".

India has been maintaining that the main issue between the two countries is that of Canada giving space to pro-Khalistan elements operating from Canadian soil with impunity. Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra last week said India's main issue with Canada continues to be the political space that Ottawa provides to anti-India elements which advocate extremism and violence.

India has repeatedly conveyed its "deep concerns" to Canada and New Delhi expects Ottawa to take strong action against those elements, he had said.

## Two Khalistanis lose fight to get off Canada's no-fly list

**An appellate court in Canada has rejected the attempt by two Khalistani extremists to get off the Canadian no-fly list. The court said there were "reasonable grounds" to suspect the two would threaten transportation security and commit an act of terror.**



A Canadian court has thrown out a bid by two Khalistani extremists to get off Canada's no-fly list because there were reasonable grounds to suspect they would commit an act of terror. The Federal Court of Appeal in its ruling this week dismissed an appeal by Bhagat Singh Brar and Parvkar Singh Dulai after they lost a constitutional challenge of their no-fly designations under Canada's Secure Air Travel Act, The Canadian Press reported.

The ruling says the act empowers the public safety minister to ban people from flying if there are "reasonable grounds to suspect they will threaten transportation security or travel by air to commit a terrorism offence." The appellate panel found that based on confidential security information, the minister "had reasonable grounds to suspect that the appellants would travel by air to commit a terrorism offence."

In 2019, Brar and Dulai went to the Federal Court of Canada to have

their names struck from the list. But Justice Simon Noel ruled against them both in 2022. The limits imposed on Dulai, he ruled, "were the result of evidence-based suspicions that he could fly abroad in order to plot a terrorist attack." "The Government of Canada must enact laws that protect national security and intelligence activities in a way that respects rights and freedoms and encourages the international community to do the same," Noel ruled. In their appeal, both Brar and Dulai argued the impairment of their rights as a result of being placed on the list was not "minimal" and therefore unjustified.

However, the appellate court ruled the legislation was justified and that confidential portions of the court process were procedurally fair. Lawyers for Brar and Dulai did not immediately respond to requests for comment on the court's ruling, said PTI. The appellate court's ruling comes amid strained ties between Canada and India over the Justin Trudeau-led government's refusal to act against Khalistani elements in the country. The Trudeau government survives on the support of Jagmeet Singh's party, the New Democratic Party. Khalistanis like Dulai are reportedly linked to Jagmeet Singh.



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## Trade war, not Russia's war, is the dollar's biggest threat

Russia's attack on Ukraine in February 2022 has unleashed forces that are affecting international relations and the global economy. But the consequences are still unclear to investors, who are focused on inflation and interest rates rather than geopolitical developments.

Yet the resolve of the West is being tested. Sweeping gains by far-right parties in the recent European Union parliamentary elections imperiled support for Ukraine. The biggest threat comes from France's National Rally party, which won the most seats in France and forced new national elections.

The presidential election in the U.S. will determine whether it will continue to support NATO and Ukraine if President Biden is reelected, or become more transactional if Donald Trump wins.

Some observers have warned that sanctions against Russia have contributed to de-dollarization. Press reports suggest a growing number of emerging market countries are aligning themselves with the so-called BRICs coalition (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) to lessen their dependence on the dollar.

Meanwhile, the G-7 has agreed to provide Ukraine with about \$50 billion in fresh aid using the profits generated by roughly \$280 billion of blocked Russian funds, most of which are frozen in Europe. For now, the threat of the dollar losing its status as the world's premier currency is exaggerated. It is also at odds with the latest findings of the Official Monetary and Financial Institutions Forum.

The results show that a net 18 percent of central banks plan to increase their allocation to the dollar over the next one to two years due to high U.S. interest rates. Central bank holdings of the Chinese renminbi are expected to stay around 3 percent for a while longer.

There are two scenarios, however, whereby the dollar really could weaken in the next year or two. One is a benign decline associated with Fed easing. The other is a dollar crisis that could lead to a loss of investor confidence.

The more likely outcome is the first scenario, considering there has not been a full-fledged dollar crisis since the mid-late 1980s.

With U.S. inflation currently around 3 percent, the principal driver of the dollar is interest rate differentials between the U.S. and abroad. The dollar has been strong in the last year and a half mainly because the U.S. economy has outperformed its peers and interest rate differentials have favored it against the Japanese yen, the euro and the renminbi. Looking ahead, the dollar could soften if the Fed eases monetary policy. Fed officials' latest "dot plot" survey indicates they now foresee only one rate cut of 25

basis points this year, but four cuts next year if inflation moderates. This "soft landing" outcome could accompany an ongoing rally in financial markets.

The risk of a dollar crisis would increase if the trade conflict with China were to escalate. There are already some signs of increased trade frictions, as Biden recently announced higher duties on select imports from China. But a full-fledged trade war is more likely if Trump becomes president and doubles down on tariffs imposed in 2018-2019.

During the current campaign, Trump has called for raising tariffs on Chinese goods by up to 60 percent and 10 percent on all other imports. If so, this action would have a greater impact on the U.S. economy than the initial round, because it would boost tariff revenues to 17 percent of U.S. imports from 2 percent, according to Greg Ip of the Wall Street Journal.

The potential for the trade conflict to escalate is high, because China is seeking to bolster its economy by increasing exports, and it has circumvented U.S. tariffs by shifting production to Mexico and Vietnam. However, according to The Economist, Trump's former aide Peter Navarro is advising him to impose tariffs on Chinese goods produced in these countries.

Trump's trade negotiator, Robert Lighthizer, also believes the U.S. government should depreciate the dollar to improve U.S. international price competitiveness.

The closest parallel to the current situation is the mid-1980s, when the U.S. ran record trade deficits and the dollar was exceptionally strong.

The Reagan administration sought to depreciate the dollar in an orderly manner by coordinating foreign exchange market intervention and monetary policy with Japan and Germany via the Plaza Accord (1985) and Louvre Accord (1987). However, a policy dispute in the fall of 1987 led to a crisis in which the dollar plummeted while U.S. bond yields surged and the stock market crashed.

History may not repeat this time, because inflation expectations in the U.S. are lower now. Also, the magnitude of trade and current account imbalances is smaller today.

What makes the current situation more precarious, however, is the fact that China poses a threat to U.S. national security. This is the rationale the Biden administration has used to maintain and increase tariffs on China.

What does this all mean for the U.S. and global economy? Thirty-five years ago, the collapse of the Soviet bloc spurred growth in world trade as COMECON folded and Eastern European countries became integrated with Western Europe.

BY NICHOLAS SARGEN

## Putin and Kim: an alarming new pact needs close attention

The revival of ties between Russia and North Korea is prompted by events outside Asia, but the best hopes of containment may lie within the region. A shiny, sanctions-busting Russian limousine for Kim Jong-un. A fawning, rapturous reception for Vladimir Putin. These grand gestures may be welcomed by the North Korean and Russian leaders, but are intended as much for their global audience as for each other. The real prize is the strategic partnership treaty that they signed during Mr Putin's first visit to Pyongyang since 2000. The question is what it will mean in practical terms.

The relationship has been reinvigorated by events outside Asia, but hopes of containing it lie within the region. The proximate cause is evidently Russia's invasion of Ukraine: an isolated and impoverished Pyongyang is already believed to have supplied millions of artillery shells in return for cheap oil, food and other sorely needed goods. Russia might also benefit from North Korean manpower, though much more likely for labour than combat. Further back lies Donald Trump's disastrous wooing and dismissal of Mr Kim. Entirely predictably, by handing him a top-level summit without any realistic strategy to improve relations in the long term, the then president ensured Mr Kim gave up on improving relations with the US and looked elsewhere. He also prompted Mr Putin and Xi Jinping, who had kept Mr Kim at a distance, to hug him closer.

The revival of a Soviet-era pledge of mutual support against "aggression" sounds primarily symbolic given North Korea's nuclear prowess. More disturbing is Mr Putin's remark that the partnership could include "military technical cooperation". US intelligence officials have said that they believe Russia is providing nuclear submarine and ballistic missile technology,

though it is likely to extract a high price for such expertise and to have mixed feelings about North Korea's advances. At a minimum, Russia – which signed up to sanctions in the Obama years – is now obstructing diplomatic action to restrain North Korea.

The west has long feared a stronger relationship between Pyongyang, Moscow and Beijing. The launch of the Australian, UK and US (Aukus) security pact, a reaction to China's growing forcefulness in the Asia-Pacific region, has in turn raised Beijing's hackles. But China does not regard the others as peers and does not want to be seen as part of a trilateral axis with two pariah states, hence the lack of a Beijing stop on Mr Putin's Asian tour itinerary. It would also like to retain primacy in managing North Korea, and to limit its weapons development. It does not want the US to become more active in the region and is concerned that it is growing closer to Japan and South Korea, which are also increasing their defence capabilities. Mr Kim's shift from the long-held commitment to unification with the South to stressing hostility has not helped.

South Korea also said explicitly that it will consider sending arms to Ukraine in reaction to the Russian-North Korean deal, spelling out the message to Moscow. Until now, Seoul has limited direct support to non-lethal supplies, though it has signed hefty arms deals with allies of Kyiv. Russia, which has also ramped up its own arms manufacturing at speed, may in the longer term seek to rekindle relations with South Korea and Japan anyway; their large economies compare strikingly to the limited attractions of North Korea. That too offers hope that this deal could be constrained both in extent and duration. The danger is how much damage is caused in the meantime.



ISSN No. 1554 06X

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A Publication of Media Partners Capital, Inc.

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# Israel Between Hamas and Haredism

By: Priyadarshi Dutta

In the midst of Israel's 'war to end all wars' - the military campaign in Gaza to finish Hamas - a proposed legislation has the Zionist country in ferment. The matter has reached a tipping point with Pnina Tamano-Shata, a Member of the Knesset, representing the National Unity Party, a part of the ruling coalition, submitting a bill to dissolve the 25th Knesset, and have fresh elections with broad consensus by October. At the heart of the debate is a draft bill pertaining to extending military conscription to Haredim, an ultra-Orthodox Jewish community that conventionally refuses to participate in Israel's military defence.

All Israeli resident citizens, both male and female, are obliged to serve in the military for a period of 24 to 32 months. The actual service length might vary according to the recruit's age, gender or professional training in medicine/dentistry. The ultra-Orthodox Haredi Jews, in addition to Israeli Arabs, are exempted from the compulsory draft. Though there is no specific law in force to exempt Haredi Jews, they are permitted a one-year deferral at a time, if they enroll themselves in yeshiva (Jewish religious seminaries) for the study of Torah. This convention has come down since the early days of Israel (estd. 1948) as per an understanding reached between the first Prime Minister Ben Gurion and leaders of the Haredim community. A 2019 document from the US Law Library of Congress says that in consideration of the destruction of yeshiva in Europe due to the Holocaust, the goal of deferral was to prevent the closing of yeshiva in Israel due to their students being drafted into the armed forces. The situation improved within a few decades, and in 1998, a Supreme Court judgement held that religious schools were flourishing in Israel, and there was little reason to worry that the draft of yeshiva students into the armed forces would lead to the closure of those institutions. However, politics almost always triumphs over principles when it comes to Israel's coalition-based democracy. The general opinion is that Netanyahu is merely wasting time. He is trying to placate his coalition partners - the Shas Party and United Torah Judaism. These two political parties, representing the bulk of the Haredi community's vote, together contribute 18 seats in the Knesset, which is vital for the survival of Benjamin Netanyahu's government.



In May 2000, the Ehud Barak government saw two of its coalition partners viz. the secular Meretz party and ultra-Orthodox Shas party at loggerheads, over a budget cut to yeshiva. Meretz threatened to quit the coalition. Education Minister Yossi Sarid, belonging to Meretz, sobbed on camera even as mayors from around Israel requested to stay on. "What is my message to the children," said Sarid, "that there are no limits, no principles" as reported by The Economist dated May 13, 2000 (P.49). Sarid had threatened to stop the budget for yeshiva, unless they decided to carry out administrative reforms. However, yeshiva are pocket boroughs of the Shas Party, which commanded 17 seats in the Knesset as against Meretz's 10. Thus, Meretz had to quit Barak's cabinet.

However, the Shas Party also left within a month, though over a different issue. Barak survived a no-confidence motion in the Knesset by a slender margin of seven as he departed to Camp David for Mid-East Peace Talks in July 2000.

The Tal Law (2002) was an attempt to provide a statutory authorisation to the Minister of Defence to approve yeshiva students' draft deferments for a period limited to five years. However, a decade later, in February 2012, the Supreme Court struck down the Tal Law as unconstitutional. Thus, there is a legal vacuum on the subject.

The draft bill in question has divided the government as much as the country. His critics see Benjamin Netanyahu as trying to build a halfway house that would not fulfill the actual needs of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF). The

original bill was introduced by Benjamin "Benny" Gantz, the then defence minister, in the government of Naftali Bennett in August 2022. The bill was not targeted at Haredi Jews specifically, but intended to lay down a wider "Israeli Service Plan", which would oblige all sectors of Israeli society to conduct national service in some form or the other. The bill, which passed the first reading, lowered the conscription age for ultra-Orthodox to 21 years, but for a maximum of two years. According to it, a 21-year-old Haredi could join the national emergency and rescue services and receive vocational training. This measure would have also equipped the Haredi youths to integrate with the job market later. According to proposed changes in the bill, the exemption age would rise to 22 years and then to 23 a year later. On the other hand, the budget for yeshiva would be cut by 20 per cent in the beginning. This would be followed by more significant cuts, but only if the recruitment targets fall short for successive years. These targets are 15 per cent (of students from yeshiva background), 25 per cent by 2030, and 35 per cent from 2036. The proposal allows two recruitment routes for the Haredi community to join the IDF: a three-week shortened service or a three-month service, after which soldiers transfer to reserved

service.

Both Defence Minister Yoav Gallant, and Benny Gantz, the proposer of the original bill (2022) (now a minister without portfolio in Netanyahu cabinet), have expressed outrage with the current bill. They find the bill unrealistic, which fails to meet the gap between the demand and supply. The operational demands of the IDF have surged since the beginning of the campaign in Gaza last October. That the ultra-Orthodox Haredis would evade the obligation to defend the state, whose patronage they liberally enjoy, has left much of Israel fuming. While Hamas, deeply inspired by Islamic theology, is overtly committed to the destruction of Israel, it is paradoxical that ultra-Orthodox Jews shirk from their responsibility of defending the Jewish state. This might prove that while Islam is a militarised religion, Judaism is essentially a peaceful creed. "And they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore" (Isiah 2:4), says the Old Testament. This verse inspired Evgeny Vuchetich (1908-1974) to sculpt his famous bronze statue which stands on the ground outside of the United Nations Building in New York.

## The Nijjar factor

### Canada pursuing a perilous course

THE Hardeep Singh Nijjar case continues to define and undermine India-Canada relations, with the Canadian Parliament marking the first anniversary of his murder with a moment of silence in the House of Commons on Tuesday. The bilateral relationship has been in freefall ever since Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau dropped a bombshell in September last year, claiming that the alleged role of Indian government agents in the Nijjar case was being probed. The radical Sikh leader, who had been designated a terrorist by India's National Investigation Agency, was shot dead outside a gurdwara in Surrey, British Columbia, on June



18 last year. New Delhi has been pressing Ottawa to furnish concrete evidence of an 'Indian hand', even as the Canadian police have arrested four Indian nationals in connection with the killing. In a sharp response to the commemoration of Nijjar's death,



India's Consulate General in Vancouver evoked memories of the June 23, 1985, Kanishka bombing, while asserting that India stood at the forefront of countering the menace of terrorism and was working closely with all nations to tackle this global threat. The

message to Canada was crystal clear: don't give pro-Khalistan elements a platform to target India.

After his recent meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Italy, Trudeau said that there was an 'alignment' between the two nations on several 'big issues' and he saw an opportunity to engage with the new Indian government. This was seen as a significant step forward. However, the Canadian PM has taken two steps backwards by letting domestic political considerations worsen his country's relationship with an old ally. This is a perilous course being pursued by the Canadian government.

# Nalanda is a symbol of India's academic heritage and vibrant cultural exchange: PM Modi

By Jag Mohan Thaken

India, June 19: The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi inaugurated the new campus of Nalanda University at Rajgir, Bihar on Wednesday. The University is conceived as a collaboration between India and East Asia Summit (EAS) countries. Several eminent people including the Head of Missions of 17 countries attended the inauguration ceremony.

Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister expressed delight and thanked his good fortune in visiting Nalanda within 10 days of taking oath as the Prime Minister for the third term and said that it is a positive indication towards the developmental journey of India. "Nalanda is not just a name, it is an identity, a regard. Nalanda is the root; it is the mantra. Nalanda is the proclamation of the truth that knowledge cannot be destroyed even though books would burn in a fire," the Prime Minister exclaimed. He underlined that the establishment of the new Nalanda University would initiate the golden age of India.

The Prime Minister said that the revival of Nalanda near its ancient ruins will introduce India's capabilities to the world as it will tell the world that nations with strong human values are capable of creating a better world by rejuvenating history.

PM Modi stressed that Nalanda carries the heritage of the world, Asia and many countries and its revival is not restricted to revival of Indian aspects. This is evident from the presence of so many countries in today's inauguration, he added acknowledging the contribution of the friendly nations in the Nalanda project. He also praised the people of Bihar for their determination to bring back its glory which is reflected in Nalanda. Pointing out that Nalanda was once the living center of India's culture and traditions, the Prime Minister said that the meaning of Nalanda is the continuous flow of knowledge and education and this has been India's approach and thinking towards education. "Education is beyond boundaries. It inculcates values and thought while giving it shape," the Prime Minister said, highlighting that students were admitted to the ancient Nalanda



University irrespective of their identities and nationalities. He also stressed the need to strengthen the same ancient traditions in the newly inaugurated Nalanda University Campus in modern form. The Prime Minister expressed delight that students from more than 20 countries are already studying at Nalanda University and said that it is the perfect example of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'.

The Prime Minister highlighted the Indian tradition of treating education as a tool of human welfare. He mentioned the upcoming International Yoga Day and said that Yoga Day has become an international festival. He said despite developing so many strands of Yoga, no one in India expressed any monopoly over Yoga. Similarly, India shared Ayurveda with the entire world, he said. PM Modi also underlined India's devotion to sustainability and said that in India, we have carried progress and environment together. This allowed India to provide initiatives like Mission LiFE and International Solar Alliance. He said the Nalanda Campus with its pioneering Net Zero Energy, Net Zero Emission, Net Zero Water and Net Zero Waste model will carry forward the spirit of sustainability.

The Prime Minister emphasized that the development of education leads to the deepening of the roots of the economy and culture. This is borne out by the global experience and experience of the developed countries. "India that

is working on its goal of becoming a developed nation by 2047 is transforming its education system", said the Prime Minister. He further added "My mission is that India becomes the center of education and knowledge for the world. My mission is that India should again be recognized as the most prominent knowledge center of the world." Prime Minister noted initiatives like Atal Tinkering Labs catering to more than a crore children, interest in science generated by Chandrayaan and Gaganyaan, and Startup India leading to 1.30 lakh startups in India from a few hundred 10 years ago. Filing of a record number of patents and research papers and 1 lakh crore research fund. The Prime Minister highlighted the government's efforts to create the most comprehensive and complete skilling system along with the most advanced research-oriented higher education system in the world. He also mentioned improved performances by India's universities in global rankings. Throwing light on the recent achievements in the field of education and skill development in the last 10 years, the Prime Minister mentioned a rise in the number of Indian educational institutions from 9 to 46 in QS Ranking and 13 to 100 in Times Higher Education Impact Ranking. Within the last 10 years in India, the Prime Minister informed that one university has been established every week, a new

ITI has been established every day, an Atal Tinkering Lab has been opened every third day, and two new colleges have been established every day. He further added that India is home to 23 IITs today, the number of IIMs have gone up from 13 to 21 and the number of AIIMS has risen almost three times to 22. "In 10 years, the number of medical colleges has also almost doubled", he said. Touching upon the reforms in the educational sector, the Prime Minister mentioned the New Educational Policy and said that it has given a new dimension to the dreams of India's youth. PM Modi also mentioned the collaboration of Indian and foreign universities, and the opening up of new campuses of international universities like Deakin and Wollongong. "With all these efforts, Indian students are getting the best educational institutions in India for higher education. This is also saving money for our middle class", PM Modi added.

Mentioning the recent opening of global campuses of premier Indian institutions, the Prime Minister expressed the same hope for Nalanda.

The Prime Minister underlined that the world's eyes are fixed on the youth of India. "India is the country of Lord Buddha, and the world wishes to walk shoulder to shoulder with the mother of democracy", the

Prime Minister continued, "When India says 'One Earth, One Family, and One Future', the world stands with it. When India says 'One Sun, One World, One Grid', it is considered the way of the future for the world. When India says One Earth One Health, the world respects and accepts its views. "The land of Nalanda can give a new dimension to this feeling of universal brotherhood. Therefore, the responsibility of the students of Nalanda is even greater", PM Modi said.

Calling Nalanda students and scholars the future of India, the Prime Minister underlined the importance of the next 25 years of Amrit Kaal and called upon them to carry the 'Nalanda Way' and values of Nalanda with them. He asked them to Be Curious, Be Courageous and Above All, Be Kind in line with their logo and asked them to work for positive change in society.

The Prime Minister expressed the belief that Nalanda's knowledge would give direction to humanity and that the youth would lead the whole world in the coming times. "I believe Nalanda will become an important center for global cause", the Prime Minister concluded. It is pertinent to mention here that the Nalanda University Campus has two Academic Blocks with 40 Classrooms having a total seating capacity of around 1900. It has two auditoriums having a capacity of 300 seats each, a student hostel with a capacity of around 550 students and various other facilities including an International Centre, an Amphitheater that can accommodate up to 2000 individuals, a Faculty Club and a Sports Complex among others. The Campus is a 'Net Zero' Green Campus. It is Self-Sustainable with solar plant, domestic and drinking water treatment plant, water recycling plant for reusing wastewater, 100 acres of water bodies, and many other environment-friendly facilities.

The University has a deep connection with history. The original Nalanda University, established around 1600 years ago, is considered to be amongst the first residential universities in the world. The ruins of Nalanda were declared as a UN Heritage Site in 2016.

# Elon Musk is right on EVM hacking and so are those saying Indian EVMs cannot be hacked

JavedAnwer

Every six months or so, or whenever there are elections in India, EVM hacking becomes the talk of the town. This time around, just days after our General Elections have concluded, it has become the talk of not just the town but the entire world. Thanks to Elon Musk. Last week, with an eye on the upcoming US elections and probably with not a single thought related to India, Musk tweeted, "We should eliminate electronic voting machines. The risk of being hacked by humans or AI, while small, is still too high." And then he doubled down in another tweet, saying, "Anything can be hacked."

Little did Musk know that whenever, and in whichever corner of the world, someone says the words EVM and hacking, it immediately makes millions of Indians sit upright, grab their keyboards and start hammering.

And hammering Indians did, with hundreds of thousands quote tweeting Musk and smugly channeling their inner I-told-you-so persona. One among these was Rahul Gandhi, who quoted Musk and tweeted, "EVMs in India are a black box, and nobody is allowed to scrutinise them." But where there is one group, it's obvious that the other one too would swarm. Thousands of Indians also took to their keyboards and slammed Musk, telling him how wrong he was. One of these was former IT minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar who said a lot of things in response to Musk, including this bit: "I think he is factually incorrect in saying that anything can be hacked. A calculator or toaster cannot be hacked." So, who is right and who is wrong? The truth, as it often happens, lies somewhere in the middle, in that nuanced space which one cannot find in the black and white world of Twitter feuds. But before I talk of that, let me deal with calculators. Yes, calculators.

Calculators, or at least some of them, can indeed be hacked. Between 2000 and 2015, there was even a group of people who were actively hacking calculators and having fun at the expense of companies that made them. One incident made news around the world in July 2009 when a hacker named Benjamin Moody cracked the cryptographic key of Texas Instrument 83 calculator and then made it do things it wasn't supposed

to do. This led to Texas Instrument legally going after the hackers who were tinkering with its calculators. The clash made some news and offered a lot of lulz — like a hacker would say

— to a lot of geeks.

So yes, some calculators can be hacked. But EVMs?

Whether EVMs can be hacked or not, and whether Indian EVMs in particular can be hacked or not, is

a question that cannot be answered definitively. The reason for that is the "black box" part in Rahul Gandhi's tweet. He might be wrong but it is indeed true that we do not have enough information in the

public domain to ascertain whether Indian EVMs are as safe and secure as some people believe them to be. At the same time, we cannot also say that they are not safe.

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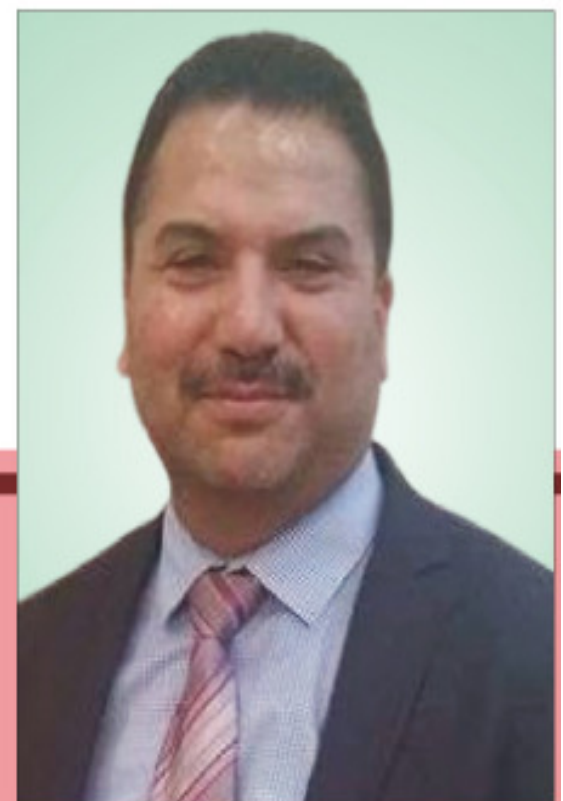
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# Yoga is the way forward, now more than ever

by Sadhguru

For centuries, in pursuit of well-being, people have looked up. This has brought a lot of hallucinations as people have imagined all kinds of things. And, it has created a continuous war between one kind of heaven and another kind. They are fighting over God or a heaven, that both of them have not seen, but are willing to fight to death.

In recent times, there has been a shift towards seeking well-being from the outside world. Thus, in the process of trying to extract the juice of life from outside, we are destroying the very source of our life – the planet itself.

Today, as societies evolve into higher levels of economic well-being, comfort, and technologies, every kind of possible convenience that could not have been imagined, are available. But well-being has still not been achieved. Mental health issues are increasing across the planet in such a way that it is no more an individual experience – it has become a societal experience. It is expected



that in the next 15 to 20 years, there may hardly be any family left without at least one person who hasn't been affected by mental health issues. We must understand that all human experience – pain or pleasure, joy or misery, agony or ecstasy – is caused from within. Once you realise this, yoga becomes very relevant because it is a technology, a tool for people to

turn inward and create their own well-being. The process of yoga is the science of inner management as you create a possibility where being blissful, joyful, peaceful is by your own nature, and not because of something that happens around you. Your life is no more in pursuit of happiness but an expression of your happiness. The message of yoga is this: "Not up, not out – in. The

only way out is in." Unfortunately, just some time ago, if you had visited an Indian village, people would not have heard of the word 'yoga', but they would have heard of Coca-Cola. The marketing of Coca-Cola has been so effective, but we have been shy to market yoga and other aspects of our culture that are valuable to us. We think that the moment we market something, it becomes

corrupt. But, how would you know there is something valuable otherwise? My way of looking at life is that if there is water in my well, and you are thirsty, it is my business to go on to my rooftop and shout that there is water here. But if you think you are very civilised, and you do not say anything, people will die of thirst. There is an inner strength in Indian culture that stems from a whole science and technology of inner well-being - right now, the entire world is crying for it. The United Nations' declaration of June 21 as the International Day of Yoga is very significant in this context, though most people may not understand it right now. They may think there is a Bubble Bath Day, Mother's Day and all kinds of days, but this is not one more thing like that. This is recognition of an ancient science, which we have used for our physiological, psychological and spiritual well-being for thousands of years. This recognition has definitely made yoga appeal to the world in a bigger way than ever before.

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# Axis of Defiance: North Korean Belligerence Gets a Putin Boost

By: Vishnu Prakash

Russian President Vladimir Putin paid a rare 'friendly state visit' to North Korea on June 19, bolstering a geopolitical realignment with significant implications. Dictatorial leaders, both the host and the guest, preside over heavily sanctioned nations that are at odds with the industrialised world. Both are nuclear powers — one de jure, possessing the largest number of warheads and the other, de facto. One of them is at war with its smaller Western neighbour, and the other has been threatening to inflict one on its southern half. The countries share a short, approximately 40-km-long land and maritime border.

That is where the similarities end. Russia is the largest country in the world, straddling two continents and covering an area of 17.1 million square kilometres, a former superpower and a permanent member of the UN Security Council. In comparison, North Korea is a tiny nation, with a landmass of merely 120,000 square kilometres. Isolated and impoverished, it would barely figure in the global consciousness were it not for its weapons of mass destruction and potential for mischief. It has been a fiefdom of three generations of the ruthless Kim clan since 1948. Historically, it has been propped up by



Moscow and Beijing, at times individually and sometimes jointly, as is the case now.

Traditionally, Moscow has held court and Pyongyang has come calling. Kim Jong Un has already visited Russia twice to ingratiate himself with Putin. The latter paid a brief visit to North Korea in July 2000, soon after taking office during the reign of Kim Jong Un's father. North Korea has always looked up to Russia (earlier the Soviet Union) for political, economic and military support. That had begun to dwindle in recent times, due to Russia's own resource constraints and the emergence of China as a major economic and military power. Nevertheless, the Kims have been steadfast in cultivating and leveraging relations with both their

giant neighbours.

The relationship has not always been smooth. A fiercely independent Pyongyang has charted its own course, at times against the wishes of Russia and China, particularly when it comes to its own security. For example, it conducted six nuclear tests, which were strongly condemned by the comity of nations. It caused embarrassment and concern in both Moscow and Beijing. Neither country is comfortable with North Korea becoming a nuclear weapon state, as it could set off a chain reaction with Seoul and Tokyo following suit. At the same time, they do not want to see the collapse of the Kim regime or its replacement by one that is pro-Western. As such,

until recently, both countries had gone along with the US-led efforts to denuclearise the Korean peninsula, even at the cost of annoying North Korea.

That cooperative approach has since been abandoned with the fraying of Moscow's and Beijing's ties with the industrialised nations. In March this year, Russia exercised its veto at the UN Security Council (UNSC) to put an end to the monitoring of sanctions on North Korea by a panel of experts appointed by the international body. It opined that the sanctions were strangling Pyongyang and that the panel of experts was playing into the West's hands by peddling biased information and focusing on "trivial matters that are not commensurate with the problems facing the peninsula". Hitherto, for fourteen years, Moscow had never objected to the panel's work. So, what changed? The straightforward answer is — Ukraine war. Moscow suddenly rediscovered the utility of its highly militarised tiny neighbour. If Western voices are to be believed, North Korea has already provided 11,000 container loads of armaments and munitions, including missiles and artillery shells, critical for the Russian offensive in Ukraine. Kim has since become an indispensable

ally of Putin, who needs to be kept in good humour. The grateful Russian Czar even gifted an Aurus Senat limousine to Kim, a car he himself uses. It mattered little that luxury cars are a proscribed item for the North under UN sanctions.

The Ukraine war could not have come at a more opportune time for Kim, who is treated as a pariah by most world leaders. He had been dealing with a failed summit with former US President Donald Trump, and neglect by current US President Joe Biden. Adding to his woes were increasingly aggressive and sophisticated joint military exercises by South Korea, the US and Japan, the reintroduction of US strategic assets (read nukes) in the Korean theatre, a stuttering economy bruised by the Covid pandemic and severe shortages of food and fuel. Bitter and frustrated, Kim Jong Un pulled out all stops in advancing his weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programme, conducting 68 missile tests, the highest ever in 2022. Speculation was rife that he would carry out the country's seventh nuclear test inter alia to validate the efficacy of its miniaturised nuclear warheads. Fortunately, that has not happened till date, though the possibility still cannot be ruled out.

## Vox Populi, Vox Dei: Democratic World's Sharp Turn to the Right

By: Sanbeer Singh Ranhotra

*Vox Populi, Vox Dei.* This Latin phrase means that the "voice of the people is the voice of God". In this day and age, however, the voice of the people is not always considered the voice of God. As long as people vote for supposed liberals, democracy wins around the world. The moment the same people turn even slightly to the Right, judgements about the health of democracy and the dangers populism poses to the world begin flowing thick and fast. Take the recently concluded European parliamentary elections as an example. It is now a fact that the "far-right" has emerged as a formidable political force across Europe.

While the centre-right European People's Party was the overall



victor in the recently held elections, the major gains made by far-right parties across the bloc is what has made news waves. In France, the National Rally of Marine Le Pen raked in nearly a

third of the total votes, shaking the ground under President Emmanuel Macron's feet, who immediately called for a snap election in an attempt to save his party's prospects. More than a

quarter of Italian voters, meanwhile, favoured Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's Brothers of Italy party, making hers among the most resounding Conservative wins in Europe.

In Germany, Chancellor Olaf Scholz' ruling coalition suffered a crushing blow, registering its worst performance in nearly a century. In Germany too, the Conservatives won resoundingly. While the centre-right Christian Democrats won over 30 per cent of the votes, the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) finished second with 16 per cent — a gain of 5 percentage points from 2019. Apart from the centre-right European People's Party's 189 legislators, the far-right has emerged as the second-biggest bloc in the European parliament. The European Conservatives and

Reformists (ECR) and the Identity and Democracy (ID) group together control 131 seats. Add to that AfD's 15 legislators from Germany, 10 representatives of Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's Fidesz party, six belonging to Poland's Confederation party, six and three from Spain's Vox party and the far-right "Party is Over" respectively, and three members of Bulgaria's pro-Kremlin Revival party.

This takes the Conservative representation in the European parliament to over 360. There is no doubt that such numbers are bound to bring about a wider right shift in EU policy. Across Europe, right-wing parties and formations have governments in Hungary, Slovakia, Italy, Sweden, Finland and the Netherlands.

# How PM Modi Made Yoga India's Source of Pride, At Home and Abroad

By: Tuhin A Sinha

Since its inception on June 21, 2015, International Yoga Day has grown in popularity and acceptance worldwide. In India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been a relentless yoga advocate, leading Yoga Day celebrations from different locations each year, and promoting its benefits at every opportunity.

Many Indians may not know why Yoga Day is celebrated on June 21. Lord Shiva, also known as Adiyogi, is considered the originator of yoga, and the summer solstice on June 21 marks its beginning. The story goes that Lord Shiva meditated blissfully for years, ignoring everyone. However, seven disciples remained patient, determined to learn from him. After 84 years, on the summer solstice, Shiva finally noticed them. On the next full moon, 28 days later, he became the Adiguru (the first guru) and taught the science of yoga to these disciples – the Saptarishis – who then spread it to the world. Thus, June 21 was naturally chosen for Yoga Day.

The idea of an International Day



of Yoga was first proposed by PM Modi during his speech at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on September 27, 2014. He said: "Yoga is an invaluable gift of India's ancient tradition. It embodies unity of mind and body; thought and action; restraint and fulfillment; harmony between man and nature; and a holistic approach to health and well-being. It is not about exercise but about discovering the sense of oneness with yourself, the world, and nature. By changing our lifestyle and creating consciousness, it can help in well-being. Let us work towards adopting an International Yoga Day."

Following this speech, the first Yoga Day was celebrated worldwide within months. Since then, the number of people practicing yoga has grown exponentially.

According to the Technical Group on Population Projections for India and States 2011-2036, there were nearly 138 million elderly persons in India in 2021, a number expected to rise by 56 million by 2031. By 2050, there will be over 319 million elderly people, three times the number identified by the 2011 Census, according to the Longitudinal

Ageing Study of India (LASI). This elderly generation, often part of nuclear and single-child families, is more vulnerable to age-related health concerns. For them, adopting yoga timely offers significant wellness benefits, and PM Modi's enthusiastic promotion has likely encouraged more elderly people to embrace yoga.

Additionally, the overwhelming increase in digital consumption from early schooling years is leading to more eye, brain, and nerve-related medical issues. Yoga offers remedies through various mudras for the eyes and face, which can help restore balance amid excessive screen time.

Notably, the Congress party has consistently avoided acknowledging Yoga Day, possibly due to their disdain for PM Modi or a disregard for India's cultural legacy. Yoga is as much a part of India's cultural identity as taekwondo is for Korea or salsa for Mexico. Any political group that undermines the country's strengths suffers from an inferiority complex and self-

deprecating attitude, overtly visible in today's Congress party. Globally, the interest in yoga is driven by two social trends: the rapidly increasing elderly population and the surge in digital consumption across all age groups, each presenting unique health challenges. The acceptance of yoga across all age groups comes at an opportune time. Reports indicate a significant demographic shift, with the elderly population increasing dramatically. Under PM Modi, yoga has become a powerful and integral component of India's soft power globally. His dedicated efforts each year have expanded yoga's outreach, allowing more people worldwide to benefit from it. Last year, PM Modi led a Yoga Day event at the UN headquarters, setting a Guinness World Record for the most nationalities — 135 — at a yoga lesson. The event featured notable figures like actor Richard Gere, singer-actor Mary Millben, New York Mayor Eric Adams, and various UN dignitaries.

## Old Song Remakes in New Films: Shortcuts to Instant Popularity

By: Biswadeep Ghosh

Many modern-day youngsters may not have seen an audio cassette, either of the pre-recorded or blank variety. In the 1980s, when audio cassettes were an inevitable presence on every music lover's shelf, India also witnessed a dramatic increase in the popularity of remakes of popular songs from old films.

The legendary composer Rahul Dev Burman's songs, in particular, were popular with those who sought to create these versions, which did not feature in films and were easily available in pirated cassettes. The recording quality was frequently substandard, and one wondered whether composers of original songs were aware of the number of remakes of their songs, which were circulated freely across the country. Copyright robbery was common, in other words, and nobody could do anything about it. Reworked versions of old songs have been common in Hindi films, too. Of course, filmmaking takes place in an organized environment. So, the new versions are created after acquiring the necessary permissions. Still, why old songs



need to be turned into remakes, even if the person who creates these new versions might incorporate a few lines from the original track, has been questioned. What leads to such criticisms is the argument that new films should have new songs. Besides, a remake, even if it incorporates a few short parts of the original song, seems to be a convenient way of capitalizing on the latter's popularity.

Crew, a recent release, has a remake of the 1993 film Khalnayak's famous song 'Choli Ke Peeche.' The original song was composed by Laxmikant-Pyarelal, while Akshay-IP is the duo behind the new version. Govinda fans

will remember 'Sona Kitna Sona Hai' from Hero No.1 (1997) composed by Anand-Milind. Crew has its remake also recreated by Akshay-IP. Moreover, the film has a remake of Ila Arun's Rajasthani folk song 'Delhi Shahar Mein Maro Ghagro Jo Ghumyo' by Bharg-Rohit titled 'Ghagra'. Although Crew is a well-liked entertainer, the extent to which the film depends on old songs is astonishing. Bollywood has produced countless remakes of films over the years. This has been criticized, and many recent Hindi remakes have flopped

because of the modern-day viewer's access to their original versions on OTT platforms. The business of film music is different. Those who create reworked versions know that the film music lover, who might have also heard the original songs, is likely to accept their modernized interpretations wholeheartedly. That happens often, too, although critics and a section of music lovers who want old songs to be left alone resent such experiments. Music composer Pritam is the common factor in 'Character Dheela Hai' from Ready (2011) and 'Character Dheela 2.0' for Shehzada (2023) recreated by Abhijit Vaghani and Pritam. Tanishk Bagchi went to the extent of recreating the classic 'Ek Chatur Naar Karke Singar' from Padosan (1961). The new version, 'Chatur Naar', was featured in Machine (2017). The Padosan song composed by RD Burman is a unique instance of spontaneity in performance. The jugalbandi of maestros Kishore Kumar and Manna Dey, with a little help from Mahmood, is unforgettable. Bagchi's version was a disaster, which was not a surprise. Machine

had another song of the same kind: 'Cheez Badi', a remake of 'Tu Cheez Badi Hoon Mast Mast' from Mohra (1994).

When an old number in a new form is used for an item number, it can magic. In Total Dhamaal (2019), Sonakshi Sinha's dance moves with 'Mungda' recreated by Gourav-Roshin became a big hit. The original song from 'Inkaar' (1977), a Rajesh Roshan composition, featured Bollywood's original dancing queen Helen, and its readymade popularity contributed to the success of the new version. 'Laila Ho Laila' from Qurbani (1980) composed by Kalyanji-Anandji in which Zeenat Aman sizzled on the screen was reborn as 'Laila Main Laila' in Raees (2019) in which Sunny Leone's dance steps fit the bill perfectly. Ram Sampath's contribution to the remake was minimal, a good thing considering the popularity of the original track.

Several Bollywood films have taken their titles from hit songs. The 2019 film Ek Ladki Ko Dekha Toh Aisa Laga's title is also a popular song of the same name from the film 1942: A Love Story (1994) composed by RD Burman.

# Forest Hills man busted by FBI for defrauding banks while serving in the de Blasio administration: Feds

A Forest Hills man was arrested by FBI agents on Thursday morning for participating in a multi-million dollar bank fraud scheme while he was a high-ranking official in the administration of former Mayor Bill de Blasio.

Tommy Lin, 41, was charged in a superseding indictment along with two co-defendants for defrauding financial institutions which resulted in the theft of over \$10 million while serving as the Director of Constituent Services in the Community Affairs Unit. Beginning in 2018, Lin participated in a scheme with his co-defendants Zhong Shi Gao and Fei Jiang, and others to steal millions of dollars by causing transfers of funds between accounts they controlled, then falsely and fraudulently reporting that the transfers were unauthorized, which

induced the financial institutions to credit them the amount of the transfers, according to the indictment. The scheme was responsible for over \$10 million in actual losses to nearly a dozen banks.

"Tommy Lin allegedly participated in a complex bank fraud scheme while also serving as a Director in the New York City Mayor's Office and Senior Advisor to the NYPD's Asian Advisory Council," U.S. Attorney Damian Williams said. "Leveraging his connections to law enforcement, he allegedly leaked personal identifying information to members of the scheme, ran background checks for them and even arranged for federal immigration authorities to arrest an individual in exchange for \$20,000 in cash."

Lin allegedly accepted that \$20,000 bribe

in cash in exchange for arranging for a Deportation Officer with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to arrest a disgruntled accountholder who had previously participated in the scheme, according to the indictment.

"To facilitate this conspiracy, Lin allegedly assisted members of the scheme in running background checks and accepted a significant cash bribe to arrange the arrest of a slighted account holder by immigration authorities," FBI Assistant Director-in-Charge James Smith said. "Those in municipal offices are expected to conduct themselves with rectitude and obedience to the law, not engage in the purposeful manipulation of our economic infrastructure." Lin is charged with one count of bank fraud conspiracy, which carries a maximum

sentence of 30 years in prison; one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud affecting a financial institution, which carries a maximum sentence of 30 years in prison; and one count of aggravated identity theft which carries a mandatory sentence of two years in prison to be served consecutively to any other sentence imposed.

"I thank the career prosecutors of this Office and our law enforcement partners for their persistence in investigating this fraudulent and corrupt scheme," Williams said.

Lin currently serves as the Queens Community Coordinator at the NYC Department of Environmental Protection, which will conduct an internal review. The DEP placed Lin on leave shortly after he was arrested by the FBI on Thursday.

## Fox News poll finds Biden ahead of Trump by 2 points

President Biden leads former President Trump by 2 points in a national poll of the presidential election published Wednesday by Fox News, taking a lead for the first time since last October.

A bare majority, 50 percent, of respondents said they would vote for Biden in November, while 48 percent said they would back Trump. It's a 3-point improvement for Biden over last month's Fox News poll, where Trump led by 1 point.

Wednesday's poll marks the first time Biden has cracked 50 percent support this election cycle, and the first time

he has led Trump in a Fox poll since October 2023.

When third-party candidates are included in the poll, Biden leads Trump by 1 point, 43 percent to 42 percent. Independents Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and Cornel West received 10 percent and 2 percent support, respectively, while Green candidate Jill Stein got 2 percent support. In May's poll of the field, Trump led by 3 points.

The poll could show the impact of Trump's felony conviction earlier this month, as polls across the board have since shown Biden gaining on — and

at points overtaking — the former president.

Among one of the race's most critical demographics, independent voters, Biden leads Trump by 9 points. That's an 11-point shift from May, when they favored Trump by 2 points.

"The underlying demographic tendencies that have defined the race remain in place," said Republican pollster Daron Shaw, who conducted the survey. "Biden has improved slightly with women and seniors, which keeps him afloat despite significant reductions from 2020 in support from younger voters and

African Americans."

Respondents were also more positive about the economy than in previous months. Nearly a third, 32 percent, of respondents said they have an excellent or good feeling about the economy, the highest mark of Biden's presidency.

Despite that, a 56 percent majority of respondents still had a negative outlook on the economy.

Overall, Biden has 45 percent job approval, the poll found. The Fox News poll surveyed about 1,100 registered voters nationwide, with a margin of error of about 3 percent.

## Arvind Kejriwal gets bail, Delhi court rejects ED's request

Arvind Kejriwal to remain in jail as Delhi High Court grants interim stay on trial court's bail order. The AAP national convener, who was arrested on March 21 by the Enforcement Directorate (ED), could have walked out of Tihar Jail on Friday had the high court not granted the interim relief to the central anti-money-laundering agency.

A Delhi court on Thursday granted bail to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in the money laundering case connected to the now-scrapped liquor policy. The order was passed by Rouse Avenue Court's vacation Judge Nyay Bindu after reserving it earlier today. After the order was passed, the ED requested the court to give 48 hours to it to exercise its legal remedies. However, the judge refused to stay the order. The ED has decided to challenge the bail order before the Delhi High Court. The AAP supremo can walk out

of Tihar Jail on Friday after paying a bail bond of Rs 1 lakh.

AAP workers burst firecrackers outside the Delhi Chief Minister's residence as soon as the order was pronounced. AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh said Kejriwal's release would "strengthen democracy".

"ED's statements till now were based on lies... this is a baseless fake case formed to trap Kejriwal," Sanjay Singh said. Kejriwal is the second AAP leader after Sanjay Singh to be granted bail in the case. Former Delhi minister Manish Sisodia continues to languish in Tihar Jail. Kejriwal was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on March 21 in dramatic scenes just ahead of the Lok Sabha polls. In May, he was granted interim bail by the Supreme Court in view of general elections. He surrendered on June 2.

WHAT ED, TEAM KEJRIWAL ARGUED

DURING HEARING

During the hearing, the ED claimed it had evidence of Arvind Kejriwal demanding Rs 100 crore as kickbacks in the liquor policy case. The central probe agency also alleged that kickbacks received from liquor sellers were used to fund AAP's poll campaign in Goa.

Additional Solicitor General SV Raju also said there was a direct money trail of proceeds of crime being transferred from the South Group, of which BRS leader K Kavitha was a part, to the AAP. ASG Raju also claimed that Kejriwal refused to give the password of his phone during the investigation. "Kejriwal says my phone is sacrosanct. Mai password nahi dunga. (I will not give my password). We had to resort to the phone of Vinod Chauhan (accused in the case). He is sitting quiet. An

adverse inference has to be drawn from the fact that Kejriwal has refused to give his password. This is a ground for refusing bail under ordinary bail law, forget section 45 PMLA for the time being," ASG Raju said. The ASG claimed that Vinod Chauhan was managing transfers and postings of Delhi government officials.

'ED'S CHARGES NOT BACKED BY PROOF'

Meanwhile, Kejriwal, represented by senior advocate Vikram Chaudhary, claimed that the ED's allegations were not backed by any proof and punched holes into their claims. He also argued that the AAP supremo had not been named in any chargesheet filed under PMLA. "Is ED an independent agency or playing in the hands of some political masters? The ED draws all its conclusions based on hypothesis," Chaudhary said.

# Boeing CEO grilled in Senate: 'How can you qualify for \$33 million compensation?'

Boeing CEO David Calhoun was brutally grilled on Tuesday regarding the aviation giant's safety culture and transparency during his first appearance before the US Congress since an exit door blew out of a 737 Max during an Alaska Airlines flight in January this year.

One of the tough questions that Calhoun faced was from Missouri Senator Josh Hawley, who repeatedly asked the CEO about his salary per year, which saw a 45 per cent increase from 2022, even when the aviation company had been in shambles due to a spate of incidents in his tenure. Calhoun's total compensation in 2023 rose to \$32.8 million, a 45 per cent increase from the \$22.6 million he received the previous year. Slamming the Boeing CEO, Hawley said Calhoun is only interested in "cutting corners" and squeezing every penny out of the aviation giant, without paying any heed to the transparency of the company, passengers' safety and quality checks.

"You're eliminating safety procedures, you're sticking it your employees, you're cutting back jobs, you're trying to squeeze every piece of profit you can out of this company... You're strip mining Boeing... for profit, shareholder value and you're rewarded for it. You got a huge raise, you

increase, so it's working out great for you," Hawley blasted David Calhoun.

The US Congressman stressed the multiple investigations currently underway in connection with the Boeing incidents, including whether the aviation giant completed required inspections on its 787 aircraft and if employees falsified records. Hawley said that, in contrast to the CEO, the Boeing employees are in pain and the whistleblowers are "literally fearing for their lives".

"Don't you think your priorities are misplaced here?" Hawley asked the Boeing CEO during the hearing.

David Calhoun was also asked by Hawley why he hadn't resigned yet.

"I'm sticking this through. I'm proud of having taken the job. I'm proud of our safety record. And I am very proud of our Boeing people," the CEO responded, much to Hawley's disbelief.

"I think it's a travesty that you're still in your job," Hawley said.

David Calhoun was named the CEO of Boeing in January 2020, and the company announced in March that he would step down from the role by 2024-end.

Senator Richard Blumenthal, who chairs the subcommittee, called it a "moment of reckoning" for the aviation giant and told

the hearing there was overwhelming evidence that the US Justice Department should pursue prosecution against Boeing.

Prosecutors have until July 7 to inform a federal judge in Texas of their plans. In May, the Justice Department found that Boeing had failed to "design, implement, and enforce a compliance and ethics programme" as part of complying with a deferred prosecution agreement following the fatal crashes, news agency Reuters reported. Boeing's reputation has been marred in recent years by two major 737 Max aircraft, separate but identical incidents that claimed the lives of 346 people.

In October 2018, all 189 people on a Lion Air flight died after the aircraft crashed into the Java Sea 13 minutes after takeoff from Indonesia's capital Jakarta. A few months later, in March 2019, an Ethiopian Airlines flight crashed six minutes after takeoff from the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa, killing all 157 onboard. Both the incidents were linked to faulty flight control systems.

In the latest Alaska Airlines incident, the flight carrying 174 passengers and six crew members had to make an emergency landing in the US's Portland

due to the exit door blowing off. Visuals of the plane flooded social media, showing the rear mid-cabin exit door wall missing on the plane. The door was originally meant for evacuation purposes, but was not activated on Alaska Airlines aircraft and was permanently "plugged". Later, the New York Times reported that an extensive audit conducted by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) into the Boeing 737 production revealed alarming matters, including mechanics using hotel key card to assess door seal integrity and applying dish liquid soap to a door seal "as a lubricant in the fit-up process".

## BOEING CEO APOLOGISES

David Calhoun apologised to the families of the victims of the 2018 and 2019 crashes, and also acknowledged that the Alaska Airlines incident was a result of a manufacturing defect.

"I apologise for the grief that we have caused," he said, as he was heckled by family members of victims of the crashes. Families of some of the victims have now asked federal officials to impose a \$24.8 billion fine on Boeing and swiftly move to prosecute the company on a criminal charge that was set aside three years ago, The Associated Press reported.

## 1,000 Hajj pilgrims dead amid extreme heat: What's happening in Saudi Arabia?

The annual Hajj pilgrimage, one of the world's largest religious gatherings, has been marred by tragedy as the death toll surpassed 1,000 amid blistering heat, according to news agency AFP.

This staggering loss of life further points to the growing and escalating threat climate change poses as the extreme heat has been a direct result of the phenomenon.

Amongst the fatalities, 90 were from India. The timing of the Hajj is determined by the lunar calendar, which causes the pilgrimage to move back by 10 days annually. While the Hajj is currently shifting towards the winter months, climate scientists warn that by the 2040s, it will coincide with the peak of the scorching Saudi Arabian summer.

"It is going to be very fatal," Fahad Saeed, a climate scientist at Climate Analytics based in Pakistan told Reuters. "Heat-related deaths along the Hajj are not new, and have been recorded back to the 1400s, but the situation will get much worse as the world warms."

### INCREASING HEAT STROKE RISK

Saeed and his colleague Carl-Friedrich Schleussner published a study in 2021

that found alarming projections. If global factors, including lack of acclimatisation



temperatures rise by 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, the risk of heat stroke for Hajj pilgrims will increase fivefold.

Alarming, the world is on track to reach this level of warming by the 2030s.

The vulnerability of pilgrims to heat-related illnesses is exacerbated by several

higher temperatures, intense physical exertion, exposure to the elements, and an ageing population. Last year alone, over 2,000 people suffered from heat stress, according to Saudi officials.

### INADEQUATE MEASURES

While Saudi Arabia has implemented

measures to mitigate the impact of extreme heat, such as constructing shaded areas, establishing water points, and improving healthcare capacity, these efforts have proven inadequate in the face of the escalating crisis.

"People are very religiously motivated. For some of them, it is a once-in-a-lifetime affair," Saeed said, explaining the determination of pilgrims to undertake the Hajj despite the risks. "If they get a chance, they go for it."

The staggering death toll during this year's Hajj serves as a sobering glimpse into the future challenges posed by climate change. As global temperatures continue to rise, the risk to human health and life during the Hajj and other outdoor events will become increasingly severe. Climate scientists and public health experts are urging immediate and decisive action to address the climate crisis, not only to protect the sanctity of the Hajj but also to safeguard the well-being of millions of people worldwide who are vulnerable to the impacts of extreme heat.

Around 1.8 million people from across the world are expected to attend the pilgrimage this year.

# Why cricket, once a thriving game in US, died at the hands of baseball

"Cricket was America's first modern team sport"

For the unversed, this may sound unbelievable. The United States of America is crazy about team sports such as baseball and basketball. Cricket is considered mostly an immigrant phenomenon which is taking baby steps towards fulfilling its American Dream. Their cricket team, consisting of mainly Indian and Caribbean immigrants, is proving to be a giant killer in the ongoing T20 World Cup, having already knocked out Pakistan, which is a full-time member of the International Cricket Council (ICC). But the gentleman's game has a long history in the US. Long before baseball claimed the American sports landscape, cricket was a prominent and popular game, embraced by a diverse array of players across the young nation. George B Kirsch, a sports historian who was a Professor of History at Manhattan College, wrote in his 1984 paper 'American cricket: Players and clubs before the Civil War' that cricket may not have flourished in the US, but its early enthusiasts did contribute much to the rise of modern American team sports.

Let's trace the origins, rise, and eventual decline of cricket in the US -- its journey from a colonial pastime to a nearly forgotten sport and the attempts for its revival.

## COLONIAL BEGINNINGS OF CRICKET IN THE US

The British colonists brought cricket to North America as early as the 17th century, though the first documented version of the game is recorded in 1709 in a diary entry of William Byrd II, a prominent writer, satirist and diarist of pre-Revolutionary America.

In his diary entry dated May 6, 1709, Byrd wrote, "I rose at 6 o'clock and Colonel Ludwell, Nat Harrison, Mr Edwards and myself played at cricket, and I won a bit. Then we played at whist and I won (sic)." In 1751, the New York Gazette and the Weekly Post Boy published the earliest known report of a cricket match in North America, detailing a game between a team from London and a team from New York City. For the British colonists who settled in North America, cricket was a pastime. By the mid-1700s, cricket had spread to other territories, with matches being reported in Virginia and Pennsylvania.

After 1783, when the American Revolution ended, the interest in all things British waned in America. But cricket continued to thrive and by the mid-1800s, the sport was being played in 22 states.

Cricket was also introduced in schools and universities, with institutions like Haverford College and the University of Pennsylvania incorporating the sport into their athletic programmes.

## THE GOLDEN AGE OF CRICKET IN THE US

The 19th century marked the golden age

of cricket in the US. During this period, cricket was the dominant bat-and-ball sport, even more popular than baseball. In his paper 'American cricket: Players and clubs before the Civil War' published in the 'Journal of Sport History', George Kirsch wrote, "The sport's modern phase began with the founding of New York's St George Cricket Club in 1839, and Philadelphia's Union Club in 1843. By 1850, at least twenty organisations in more than a dozen American communities fielded elevens, enrolling perhaps five hundred active players."

In 1844, the first international cricket match was played between the US and Canada in New York, in which the former emerged victorious.

This historic cricket match is recognised as the first international sporting event in the world, predating even the first modern Olympic Games. Philadelphia, in particular, emerged as a cricketing hub. The Philadelphia Cricket Club, established in 1854, is one of the oldest cricket clubs in the United States. Matches drew large crowds, and cricket was a regular feature in newspapers and periodicals. George Kirsch explained the craze of cricket as "once bitten by the cricket bug, those addicted devoted countless hours to its pleasures and pain".

While baseball had long been a "familiar child's game in the United States", Kirsch explained that cricket, despite being a British pastime, attracted significant numbers of Americans, especially in New York and Philadelphia. And while the American baseball players were amateurs, there were a few professional cricketers in the United States who competed for both the love of the sport and for money, as per Kirsch. Despite this, cricket remained a British phenomenon, dominated by those belonging to the middle and upper class. And they made no effort to popularise the game beyond the power centres of New York and Philadelphia, especially after the end of the American Civil War in 1865.

## Four Hinduja family members sentenced to up to 4.5 years for exploiting servants

Four members of the billionaire Hinduja family have been sentenced to between four and 4.5 years in prison by a Swiss court for exploiting their household staff at their villa on Lake Geneva. However, the court has rejected the charges of human trafficking, AP reported.

Prakash Hinduja and his wife Kamal were handed 4.5 year sentences each. Their son Ajay and his wife, Namrata, were sentenced each to four years. The four accused will appeal the order before a higher court. In its order, the Swiss court said the Hinduja family members were

## HOW THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR GAVE BOOST TO BASEBALL

The American Civil War, which took place from 1861 to 1865, proved to be a death knell for cricket in the US.

Jason Kaufman and Orlando Patterson, in their paper 'Cross-national cultural diffusion: The global spread of cricket', note that "the extent to which an elite cultural practice like cricket was shared with or shielded from the general population was a direct result of the elites' own sense of their place atop the social hierarchy. Had American elite cricketers felt less anxious about their social position, for example, they might have popularised the sport along the same lines as baseball (or golf or tennis)".

Besides this, the Civil War caused widespread disruption across the US. Men who would have been playing and promoting cricket were instead enlisted in the military. Cricket clubs lost many of their members to the war, and matches were cancelled.

The Civil War also saw a cultural shift in American sports as baseball began to be seen as a more American sport compared to cricket, which had a strong British association. The post-war period was a time of growing American nationalism, and baseball fit well into this cultural shift. In their paper 'Why baseball, why cricket? Differing nationalisms, differing challenges', Boria Majumdar and Sean Brown write that "Baseball's association, with the season cycle, its trend towards extreme quantification, rural nostalgia, its ability to produce folk heroes and as 'a compensatory mechanism for the travails of industrial life', all of which are seen as something intrinsic to the American character".

But baseball didn't only have a cultural advantage. The simplicity of the game compared to cricket, requiring less equipment and fewer players, made it more accessible.

After the Civil War, it became extremely

difficult to organise cricket matches due to the unavailability of suitable grounds.

"Cricketers had more trouble than baseball players in finding and improving a good field, for cricket required a well-manicured grass surface for high-quality performance," according to George Kirsch. Cricket, however, experienced a revival from the 1870s onwards.

Players such as John Barton King, the proponent of swing bowling, emerged in Philadelphia. King's tours with the Philadelphians to England and Australia created waves, as both cricketing giants began to take notice of American cricket. Wisden Cricketers' Almanack, often referred to as the Bible of Cricket, recognised King as one of the finest bowlers of all time.

However, cricket could never again compete with baseball as either a participatory or a spectator sport in the US. By the early 20th century, cricket found its new competitors in football and basketball.

## WHY CRICKET BECAME MORE POPULAR IN INDIA THAN US

The US and India, both British colonies once, were introduced to cricket by the colonists. But while the sport gained a cult-like status in India, it died a slow death in the US.

In his paper 'The fate of cricket in the United States: Revisited', author George Kirsch wrote that cricket could not gain prominence in the US as it closely resembled a well-established rival indigenous sport -- baseball. While sports such as tennis and golf thrived since they did not have a direct rival, cricket suffered due to its similarities with baseball.

However, in India and other British colonies, cricket did not face competition from any native premodern team sport, noted Kirsch. Moreover, while American nationalism detested cricket for its colonial association, Indian nationalism saw the sport as a non-violent tool to beat the British at their own game.

guilty of exploiting the workers and providing them with meagre health benefits. The court also noted that the wages paid to the staffers were less than one-tenth the pay for such jobs in Switzerland. However, the court dismissed the trafficking charges, saying that the employees were aware of what they were getting into. The prosecution had alleged that the Hinduja family, Britain's wealthiest, also seized the passports of the workers, mostly illiterate Indians. It was also alleged that they spent more on their dog than on the salary of an employee.

Moreover, the employees were paid in rupees and not Swiss francs.

The four members also allegedly barred the workers from leaving the villa and forced them to work for long hours. In fact, on several occasions, the staffers were forced to work up to 18 hours a day with little or no vacation. The family, which has roots in India, set up residence in Switzerland in the late 1980s. The Hinduja family have businesses in sectors like information technology, media, power, real estate and healthcare. The Hinduja family's net worth is around \$20 billion, as per Forbes.

# How to roleplay like a boss if your bedroom acting sucks

**You don't have to possess acting chops like Priyanka Chopra to amp up your bedroom theatrics. Knowing just 5 things is important.**

Ever fantasised about spicing things up in the bedroom with some roleplay, but you are scared that your acting skills are more Uday Chopra than Shah Rukh Khan?

Don't worry, you're not alone.

There's expert guidance at hand to teach you how to master the art of bedroom theatrics, even if your acting makes Salman Khan's shirt-ripping scenes look subtle. You can still keep things spicy. Promise, no National Award required. Do you know why it is called roleplay and not acting? The skill of acting isn't what's important here; it's about the dynamic between the partners and the individuals involved in the experience.

Shreya Kaul, counselling psychologist, says that this is the first thing to be kept in mind and perhaps "it will give you more confidence in your intimacy".

"There's a common misunderstanding that you need



"The 'play' aspect is what's more important. It's about the moment cuts down on prep, so you can

character.

Shreya says open discussions help in this case. Discussing what you are okay with, understanding likes and dislikes, safe words, what you might enjoy, and what you may not, can be an icebreaker. You can discuss props or costumes and build up scenarios to explore together," she adds. Keep it going. The emphasis isn't entirely on the act itself, but on keeping the momentum going. How would you do that?

"You don't need to write a script with exact lines, but having a basic idea of the scene's trajectory can be really helpful. This way, there's less room for improvisation, and you won't be stuck wondering what to do next. Think of it as having a map: first, this happens, then this, and eventually we get to that point," she suggests.

Vanessa agrees, "No need to write a legit screenplay, but agreeing on a few basic cues can help with nerves and logistics."

**Defining roles**

Defining the roles and knowing the character traits is key. Is your character going to be shy, cheeky, or mischievous? Maybe you are a bit aggressive but not violent. What kind of language will

you use? Are you going to be derogatory or respectful?

Figuring this out ahead of time means you're not constantly thinking about how to act.

"Additionally, it's important to discuss what you both want to explore through the role play. Having clarity about your goals and what's attractive to you about the scenario can make a big difference. The more clarity you have before starting, the less you'll worry about how to act at the moment," says Shreya.

Don't let the boo-boos bother you "Roleplaying is about having fun in the bedroom and reconnecting with your partner. So, if somebody says something that's totally out of character, you can just giggle about it and then jump back into the scene with each other," says Vanessa.

It is not the time to act all serious and remain rigid. You should go out there, put your best creative foot forward, and see the magic happen.

Remember to be open with your partner, because let's be honest, you can't show the best of your abilities when you are awkward or low on confidence. Let your imagination and creativity lead the way, and leave the rest to the moment.



to act a certain way when roleplaying, possibly brought on by consuming pornography. In porn, people act things out with a script, but this isn't the same thing. This is about partners deciding to experience something new sexually. They involve themselves in particular setups or characters they've decided upon and elaborate on them," she says.

and the experience," she adds. Also, it is important to be honest, not just with yourself but with your partner as well to avoid building false expectations.

Dr Sanjay Kumawat, consultant psychiatrist and sexologist, Fortis Hospital Mulund, Mumbai, says, "Be forthright and honest. Avoid patterns you can't maintain."

Stick to your strengths

get right down to business," US-based sex therapist Vanessa Marin tells Cosmopolitan (May-June 2024 edition).

Don't be over-ambitious if you are just starting off and not confident about your skills, and stick to roles from real life or what seems to be easy.

If that doesn't work, act it out in advance to see if you can get into the skin (no pun intended) of your

# PM Modi, Indonesian President-elect Subianto discuss ways to boost strategic ties

*Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Indonesian President-elect Prabowo Subianto discussed ways to strengthen the comprehensive strategic partnership between both countries.*

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday received a call from Indonesian President-elect Prabowo Subianto during which the two leaders discussed ways to strengthen a comprehensive strategic partnership between India and Indonesia. "Delighted to receive a phone call from President-elect Prabowo Subianto. Wished him success for his upcoming presidency," PM Modi tweeted. "We discussed ways to strengthen comprehensive strategic partnership between India and Indonesia that are based on our civilisational ties," he said. In April, Indonesia's electoral commission formally declared Subianto president-elect.



## S Jaishankar, Sri Lankan President commission India-funded Maritime Rescue Centre



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Thursday commissioned the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre jointly with Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe.

The centre has been built with a USD 6 million (nearly Rs 50 crore, 16 lakhs) grant from India.

This includes a centre at Navy

Headquarters in Colombo, a sub-centre in Hambantota and unmanned installations at Galle, Arugambay, Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Kallarawa, Point Pedro and Mollikulam. Jaishankar, who called on President Wickremesinghe in Colombo, said that he conveyed the warm greetings of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and discussed the way forward for

the bilateral cooperation, especially in power, energy, connectivity, port infrastructure, aviation, digital, health, food security, education and tourism sectors.

In an X post, Jaishankar said, "Honoured to call on Sri Lanka President Ranil Wickremesinghe. Conveyed the warm greetings of PM @narendramodi. Appreciated the progress made on various bilateral projects and initiatives." "Under President @RW\_UNP's guidance, discussed the way forward for the India-Sri Lanka cooperation, especially in power, energy, connectivity, port infrastructure, aviation, digital, health, food security, education and tourism sectors. Committed to working for the steady development of our traditionally close and friendly ties," he said. The two leaders met at the Sri Lankan President's House, the President's Media Division (PMD) said. "Joined Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe, Ministers and senior officials at the virtual commissioning of Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) and virtual handing over of 154 houses under GOI housing schemes @RW\_UNP," Jaishankar posted on X.

The External Affairs Minister is also scheduled to discuss the progress of all ongoing Indian projects in Sri Lanka, officials told news agency PTI. He is also expected to discuss preliminary arrangements for a visit by Prime Minister Modi to the island.

The minister is also likely to meet Prime Minister Dinesh Gunawardena.

## KTR alleges plot to privatise Singareni coal company, demands to stop auction

Bharatiya Rashtriya Samithi (BRS) working President KT Rama Rao (KTR) accused both the Telangana and central governments of conspiring to privatise the state-run mining company Singareni Collieries by auctioning coal blocks in Telangana. He demanded that the coal blocks near Singareni should be allocated directly to the company instead of conducting commercial auctioning.

KTR criticised the state government led by Revant Reddy for participating in mine auctions instead of demanding direct allocation. "The Central Government is auctioning more than 60 mines across the country, including Singareni, starting tomorrow. The state government's participation in the auction contradicts their previous stance of opposing the auction and seeking direct allocation from the Central Government for Singareni," KTR said.

He also reminded that Revant Reddy, when he was Congress state unit president, had written to the Central Government asking for the cancellation of the Singareni mines auction and requested direct allocation. He questioned Chief Minister Revant's current silence. KTR noted that his party and the government had stalled the auctioning of coal mines in the Singareni area for the past nine years to safeguard Singareni's future.

Meanwhile, the Telangana government urged the Centre to allocate all coal blocks located near Singareni Collieries to the state-run mining company.

# Nadella, Narayen among tech CEOs investing in cricket's American dream

Cricket may not be as popular a sport in the U.S. as elsewhere in the world, but some high-profile CEOs and investors are trying to change that.

As the Men's T20 Cricket World Cup, co-hosted by the U.S. for the first time, ramps up, investors have pumped nearly a billion dollars into their American ambition.

Microsoft

CEO Satya Nadella and Adobe CEO Shantanu Narayen are among the executives investing in the new U.S. professional league, Major League Cricket. Other cricket investors include Iconic Ventures, Madrona Venture Group and executives from Google

"What gets me excited is seeing if cricket can become a mainstream sport in the U.S.," said Soma Somasegar, venture capitalist and managing director at Madrona.

Somasegar and Nadella are among the key owners of Seattle's cricket team, named the Orcas. They're also investors in the overall league.

"Satya [Nadella] and I have been talking about bringing cricket to America for many years," Somasegar told CNBC.

Nadella is such a die-hard cricket fan that Microsoft has a cricket field at its campus in



Bellevue, Washington. "A lot of us

immigrants grew up with this sport. We'd study and watch cricket — on repeat," said Somasegar.

In total, nearly \$850 million is currently in the process of being invested in building a viable cricket league in the U.S., people familiar with the funding said. The people asked not to be named because the funding information is private.

Currently, there are six professional teams in Major League Cricket, with each team expected to spend between roughly \$75 million and \$100 million over the coming years.

That includes the cost of putting together a team, hiring the right talent and building stadiums where live cricket matches can be

played.

Adding to the fanfare is the T20 World Cup, which is being held at three locations in the U.S. and several in the West Indies throughout June.

On Thursday, in a stunning blow, the U.S. team beat Pakistan in a match held near Dallas. Fans are now counting down to the highly anticipated India vs. Pakistan match Sunday at the newly developed Nassau County stadium in New York. The last time India and Pakistan matched up, more than 300 million people in India tuned in to watch the game, according to The New York Times.

Ticket reseller StubHub said the average price of tickets for Sunday's rivalry match is \$1,300. The average price for the other 54 matches of the tournament is \$120, the company said.

Venture capitalist Anurag Jain, part owner of Major League Cricket team the San Francisco Unicorns, said the U.S. national team is primarily made up of players in the league.

"The goal is to make cricket a mainstream sport," said Satyan Gajwani, the vice chairman of Times Internet, the digital arm of the Times of India. He heads up Willow TV, which has the exclusive streaming rights for cricket in

North America, including the T20 World Cup.

Gajwani is also one of the investors in the U.S. league. He said his group is going after the incredibly loyal fans from South Asia who live in the U.S.

"You essentially have five million really hard-core fans that love cricket," Gajwani told CNBC, referring to the South Asian diaspora in the U.S.

He added that expats from the U.K. and Australia who live in the U.S. are also big consumers of cricket.

South Asians on average have the highest gross income of any ethnic group in the U.S., according to research from Indiaspora, a nonprofit community of Indian leaders around the world.

"That leaves a lot of discretionary income that is available to be spent on sports and entertainment," said M.R. Rangaswami, founder and chairman of Indiaspora.

Rangaswami, who said he will be at the match Sunday, acknowledged that the U.S. sports scene is tough to crack, with Americans consumed by basketball and football. He said a potential entry point could be through fans of baseball, which has some resemblance to cricket.

## US woman buys jewellery for Rs 6 crore in Jaipur, finds out it costs only Rs 300

A US woman was allegedly duped into buying artificial jewellery worth Rs 300 for Rs 6 crore by a jeweller father-son duo in Jaipur.

According to the police, Cherish, who is an American citizen, spent Rs 6 crore on jewellery from a shop in the city's Gopalji Ka Rasta nearly two years ago. At the time of purchase, the seller also provided a hallmark certificate to the woman, which showed the purity of the jewellery. Cherry then went back to the US and put the jewellery on display at an exhibition, where she found that it was a fake. Subsequently, she returned to Jaipur and visited the jeweller's shop, Rama



Radium, and complained about the fake jewellery to the shop owner, Gaurav Soni. She also sent the jewellery to other shops to check its purity, which also confirmed the same after tests. Following this, Cherish informed the US Embassy about the incident. On May 18, an FIR was

lodged against jeweller Rajendra Soni and his son Gaurav Soni under several sections of the Indian Penal Code.

Speaking to the media about the case, Jaipur Police's DCP Bajrang Singh Shekhawat said, "During the investigation,

the police sent the jewellery for testing. The results showed that the diamonds in it were moonstones. The tests further showed that the gold content in the jewellery, which should have been 14 carats, was also two carats. The accused jewellers also filed a complaint alleging that the woman fled with jewellery from their shop. But when we checked the CCTV footage, it turned out to be false."

"The accused jewellers are on the run, but we have arrested one Nandkishore, who issued fake hallmark certificates. A lookout notice has also been issued against the main accused, Gaurav Soni. Following the complaint by this woman from

the US, the police also received several other complaints, alleging fraud worth crores by Gaurav Soni and Rajendra Soni, which are currently under investigation," he said.

Meanwhile, speaking to India Today TV, Cherish said, "... Gaurav Soni and his father, (owner) of Rama Exports, have been systematically cheating me in jewellery. They have been shipping me nine-carat and gold plates instead of 14-carat... They have been shipping me entirely moonstone instead of natural diamond. It's not just me, it's about 10 other designers who are impacted by him and his fraud... He included fake certificates... Just nothing is real."



# Zeenat Aman Recalls Playing A Sex Worker "With A Sense Of Dignity" In Manoranjan. Priyanka Chopra Reacts

New Delhi: New day, new throwback gold from Zeenat Aman's repertoire of fond memories. On Monday, Zeenat Aman shared about one of the unconventional characters she played in Shammi Kapoor's directorial debut Manoranjan. Zeenat Aman played a sex worker in the film and she described the character with these words, "This was a character that I could have fun with: sexually liberated, financially independent, and fully capable of locking horns with, and turning down, any man." Zeenat Aman shared a picture of herself from the film. In the picture shared, she can be seen wearing a red dress. Zeenat Aman also shared a hand-painted poster of the film. Zeenat Aman shared a gray scale picture in which the film veteran and Sanjeev Kumar (who played the male lead in the film) can be seen having a fun time with director Shammi Kapoor.



Zeenat Aman began the note with a reference to "moral policing" which she said "a steady companion" throughout her career. Zeenat Aman wrote, "If I've had a steady companion through my career, it's been the moral police. And, my goodness, did they have a field day with this one! Manoranjan defied existing conventions. It was an adaptation of the fabulous 1963 American comedy 'Irma Le Douce', and it featured me in the starring role of Nisha. A sex worker with a sense of dignity, independence and humour." Talking about the shooting of the film Manoranjan, the film veteran wrote, "Filming Manoranjan was a 'haste-haste, khelte-khelte' affair. It was Shammi Kapoor's directorial debut, had RD

Burman in the role of music director, and Sanjeev Kumar as the leading man. The producer FC Mehra was a family friend. We shot the film entirely in studios in Mumbai, and it released in 1974." She added, "Nisha was no damsel in distress! Her outfits were flirtatious and sexy, but more importantly, she was unapologetic about how she earns a living. This was a character that I could have fun with: sexually liberated, financially independent, and fully capable of locking horns with, and turning down, any man."

Zeenat Aman wrote about how Shammi Kapoor "coaxed out one of her better performances with this film". She wrote, "I've always maintained that I am a 'director's actor', and I do believe Shammi ji coaxed out one of my better performances with this

film. The music and costumes were also a hoot. In 'aaya hoon main tujh ko le jaoonga' we dance upon gigantic musical instruments, 'chori chori solah singar' (sung by Asha ji) has a titillating shower sequence, and 'dulhan maike chali' is pictured entirely in a police van full of sex workers being taken to the police station and was sung by all three Mangeshkar sisters! If you're interested, you can watch these on YouTube. The 70s were a wonderful time to be alive! Despite the moral police (they're always around) the atmosphere of experimentation, freedom and fashion was unmatched!" Zeenat Aman signed off the note with these words, "I wonder if some of my older followers remember this film? I'd love to hear your memories of watching it or any discussion

it may have provoked. Enjoy your Monday and have a lovely week, everybody. The three images here include a movie still, a hand painted film poster, and another still that I have borrowed from nfa1."

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Zeenat Aman's post drew reactions from Priyanka Chopra and Archana Puran Singh. Priyanka Chopra wrote, "Moral police is still around and will continue to be around it seems! But you are beyond." Archana Puran Singh wrote a long note. It read, "Of course I remember watching this absolutely amazing film in the small town theatres of Dehradun! And big what an experience it was. Even though I was very young I was enthralled by the world that was created and my parents thought nothing of sending a young girl to watch a film on this subject (I wonder if it had an A certificate and that somehow I was still allowed! Those times were different and parents were not very well informed I guess. But I'm happy I got to watch a film that has endured in my memory till date!)." Archana added, "This is one of your films Z which has had a lasting impression on me (the other being Hare Rama Hare Krishna) and I became your hugest fan... the costumes, your styling and your entire presence was such an inspiration for me at the time and when my brother came to know that over the years you and I became friends he was like "wow, you got to make your dream of meeting your icon come true". So yes, Manoranjan and you played a big part in my own aspirations and realisation of becoming an actor myself."

## Nora Fatehi's Traditional Red And Green Ethnic Look Is Stylishly On Par With Her Power-Packed Dance Moves



Nora Fatehi cannot resist serving glamorous fashion moments. Her latest international single is a reflection of Moroccan roots with influences from Canada and India. After serving chic bohemian fashion, the actress has taken the traditional route to jazz up our Monday morning. She grooved to the beats of her new song in a bright red and green traditional Maharashtrian look. She paired an embellished red blouse with a green dhoti-style pants. With gold-toned jhumkas and stack of bangles, Nora's ethnic style was a solid ten on the style meter. She paired the look with dewy glam and nude pink lips. Nora Fatehi's bold bohemian aesthetic is meant to leave style notes. Apart from her stunning dance moves, the star's style has never failed to impress. Once again, Nora took over the fashion sphere in her best boho chic look. The actress opted for long orange satin dress that was adorned with sequins. Her braided hair and oxidised silver jewellery took the look a notch up. With bold Kohl-rimmed eyes and a matte nude base, her beauty game was on point too.

# India vs Pakistan brings the biggest cricket party to the US



India and Pakistan cricket fans gathered in New York in their thousands for the ICC T20 World Cup clash between the two nations, bringing a flavour of the subcontinent to unfamiliar terrain for the sport.

The 34,000-seat temporary Nassau County International Cricket Stadium built in Eisenhower Park, in East Meadow on Long Island, was a sellout with fans travelling from far and wide for the game on Sunday.

The USA is co-hosting the T20 World Cup with the West Indies with Lauderhill in South Florida and Dallas, also hosting games.

This fixture is the marquee game of the group stage of the competition bringing the two rivals face to face in a game which resonates well beyond cricket.

Political tensions and security concerns mean that the two rarely meet outside of

major competitions but there was no hint of such issues among the fans, who were in a festive mood despite the rain which caused a delay to the start.

For members of the Indian community in the United States, the tournament offers a rare chance to watch their heroes in the flesh rather than on internet streams. "It's in our backyard, so there is nothing like it, this is the first time we have had the chance to experience cricket. We are lucky to have this amazing ground built just for this event," said Kumar Mathuria from New York.

"There are lots of cricket fans in this area but I have also met people who have flown in from India and other places overseas for this game. It's unbelievable," he added.

On the crowded streets around the venue, traders sold jerseys of both teams, while Pakistan fans waved their national flag out of the tops of SUVs.

Pakistan supporter Eswar Malik had flown from Saint Louis for the game and said the rivalry was one that Americans now understood. "It's an old rivalry – its like the Yankees-Red Sox or Saint Louis and Chicago – an old rivalry that goes on and on," he said. This is the fifth game to be held at the venue but by far the highest profile and likely to be the only one which will sell out the stadium.

That was evident in the long lines for security and the confusion around the parking areas.

Secondary market tickets were still available on various apps but any last minute purchasers would have to be ready to spend over \$1,500 for a general admission ticket.

Inside the stadium, the 'New York' signage was the only reminder of where the game was being played with the

music and pre-game build-up clearly designed for the fans of the two countries. There was a huge roar when former Indian great Sachin Tendulkar was introduced to the crowd as part of the pre-game interviews. Siddarth Kadavarthi had driven 10 hours from North Carolina to attend the game and said the chance to see Indian greats Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, in what may be their last tournament, was something he couldn't miss.

"They are absolute legends of Indian cricket, of the game itself and we might never get to see them in a game like this again, so although it was a 20-hour round-trip drive, I wasn't going to miss it," he said.

A beaming Muthuria had less specific motivation for his presence.

"This is simply one of the biggest events in sports"



# Pakistan thought it was playing USA, turned out to be Team India H-1B

THIS WASN'T Pakistan losing to India B, it was Pakistan losing to India H1-B. That was the popular take on Friday at Dallas where USA shocked one-time world champions Pakistan in a nail-biting Super Over finish in a group game of the World T20. With as many as six cricketers of Indian descent, most of them on temporary H1-B visas that allow companies to hire overseas employees, featuring in the historic win, the joke would be a hit in the immigrant community. Almost everyone had a role in scripting a historic day for American cricket. The ripples of joy spilled as far as Delhi and Mumbai, Anand in Gujarat and Chikkamagaluru in Karnataka. Their stories are diverse.

The Super Over hero, Saurabh Netravalkar, had packed his bags from Mumbai to San



Francisco for higher studies. Player of the Match and batting hero Monank Patel (50 off 38 balls) had left Anand in 2016 for New Jersey to start a restaurant after he realised his cricket career was going nowhere. Three-wicket hero Nosthush Kenjige, born in Alabama but raised in Nilgiris and Bengaluru, returned to the US to work as a biological technician. Milind Kumar, who took a blinding catch in the Super Over, had represented a clutch of domestic sides before quitting his job in ONGC and flying to Houston, where he had been playing league cricket. Nitish Kumar, whose last-ball four tied the game, was born in Ontario, Canada, but shifted to the US during a torrid phase during the pandemic. Left-arm spinner Harmmeet Singh, whose action was likened to Bishan Singh Bedi, left India as a shattered man after setbacks and rejection, including an alleged match-fixing scandal although the board eventually cleared him. Jasdeep

Singh spent most of his life shuttling between New Jersey and Chandigarh, before settling down in the US. Their sweat and dreams were rewarded on a sparkling afternoon in Dallas, and past midnight in India. But the Netravalkar household in Malad was wide awake. Saurabh's father Naresh was all nervous before and during the game. More so, as his wife had flown to the US. "I was in full tension, it was the day when he was about to become hero or zero. I was confident but Pakistan is a good side," he told The Indian Express. The left-arm seamer, though, seized the moment, producing a magnificent Super Over with the ease of coding a difficult programme in his Oracle office. Earlier, he had bowled magnificently, conceding 18 runs and nabbing two wickets. Saurabh had almost quit cricket, but as he wrote on Facebook once: "Even if you leave cricket, it has found a way back into your life." When he left home, his father said, he had

not even carried his bowling spikes. "He saw a few people playing cricket where he used to stay, which was near his university. He began to play cricket as a timepass. Look at his destiny — USA because they are the host nation, and Saurabh got a chance to represent them," he said. Every weekday, Saurabh is at the office from 9 am to 9 pm. "His office has all the facilities, so he uses his gym there. He does his nets and every weekend he travels around for different tournaments," said his father. He credits his son's clear plans for his success. "He told me papa, if I don't get enough chances, I will move to the US to do my masters."

So he did, but another was waiting for him. A cricketing dream he had buried. His team mate Monank though never forsook the game, because his dying mother's last wish was to see him as a cricketer. Sensing that cricket would take him nowhere after representing Gujarat in age-group cricket, he flew to New Jersey to start life afresh in 2014. Two years later, he opened a Chinese restaurant but it did not gather adequate business, debts mounted and he sold it.

Another shock came in the form of his mother's cancer, and she would soon die. But Monank persisted with cricket, for his mother wished so. As luck would have it,

the then USA coach J Arunkumar recognised his talents and polished the sparks of a talent into his country's batting pillar. "It's a big day for Team USA and for the USA cricket community, too. Of course, beating Pakistan in the World Cup is going to open many doors for us," he said after the game.

Guiding them all is Milind, a veteran of 46 first-class games, someone who has played in the IPL. He was a substitute but left his imprint on the game with an acrobatic catch, lunging forward to consume Iftikhar Ahmed in the Super Over.

His father Suman, a retired banker who lives in Delhi's Karol Bagh, narrated the reason Milind left his country: "He was getting the opportunity to play, the exposure was good, Major League Cricket was also in the pipeline. It was hard for me to say goodbye to him but it was his sheer passion for the game that drove him away from the country of his birth."

Different from all was Nosthush's journey. He was born in Alabama, where his father Pradeep, a coffee planter, writer and one of the directors on the Coffee Day board, was completing Master's in agriculture. When he was just a two-month-old, the family returned to a quaint coffee-town in Karnataka. He developed interest in the game and played league cricket in Bengaluru. Later he left cricket behind to begin his life anew in Virginia. But Nosthush understood that he couldn't stub out the habit of playing cricket. So he began playing in local leagues, attended a trial and made good use of the claim to be an American citizen. He then did community service for 800 hours in a year to become eligible to represent the US. Now he is living the dream he never thought he would. And their dream owed to that prominent display on their visa sticker: H1-B.

# Axis of Defiance: North Korean Belligerence Gets a Putin Boost

By: Vishnu Prakash

Russian President Vladimir Putin paid a rare 'friendly state visit' to North Korea on June 19, bolstering a geopolitical realignment with significant implications. Dictatorial leaders, both the host and the guest, preside over heavily sanctioned nations that are at odds with the industrialised world. Both are nuclear powers — one de jure, possessing the largest number of warheads and the other, de facto. One of them is at war with its smaller Western neighbour, and the other has been threatening to inflict one on its southern half. The countries share a short, approximately 40-km-long land and maritime border.

That is where the similarities end. Russia is the largest country in the world, straddling two continents and covering an area of 17.1 million square kilometres, a former superpower and a permanent member of the UN Security Council. In comparison, North Korea is a tiny nation, with a landmass of merely 120,000 square kilometres. Isolated and impoverished, it would barely figure in the global consciousness were it not for its weapons of mass destruction and potential for mischief. It has been a fiefdom of three generations of the ruthless Kim clan since 1948. Historically, it has been propped up by Moscow and Beijing, at times individually and sometimes jointly, as is the case now.

Traditionally, Moscow has held court and Pyongyang has come calling. Kim Jong Un has already visited Russia twice to ingratiate himself with Putin. The latter paid a brief visit to North Korea in July 2000, soon after taking office during the reign of Kim Jong Un's father. North Korea has always looked up to Russia (earlier the Soviet Union) for political, economic and military support. That had begun to dwindle in recent times, due to Russia's own resource constraints and the emergence of China as a major economic and military power. Nevertheless, the Kims have been steadfast in cultivating and leveraging relations with both their giant neighbours.

The relationship has not always been smooth. A fiercely independent Pyongyang has charted its own course, at times against the wishes of Russia and China, particularly when it comes to its own security. For example, it conducted six nuclear tests, which were strongly condemned by the comity of nations. It caused embarrassment and concern in both Moscow and Beijing. Neither country is comfortable with North Korea becoming a nuclear weapon state, as it could set off a chain reaction with Seoul and Tokyo following suit. At the same time, they do not want to see the collapse of the Kim



regime or its replacement by one that is pro-Western. As such, until recently, both countries had gone along with the US-led efforts to denuclearise the Korean peninsula, even at the cost of annoying North Korea.

That cooperative approach has since been abandoned with the fraying of Moscow's and Beijing's ties with the industrialised nations. In March this year, Russia exercised its veto at the UN Security Council (UNSC) to put an end to the monitoring of sanctions on North Korea by a panel of experts appointed by the international body. It opined that the sanctions were strangling Pyongyang and that the panel of experts was playing into the West's hands by peddling biased information and focusing on "trivial matters that are not commensurate with the problems facing the peninsula". Hitherto, for fourteen years, Moscow had never objected to the panel's work. So, what changed? The straightforward answer is — Ukraine war. Moscow suddenly rediscovered the utility of its highly militarised tiny neighbour. If Western voices are to be believed, North Korea has already provided 11,000 container loads of armaments and munitions, including missiles and artillery shells, critical for the Russian offensive in Ukraine. Kim has since become an indispensable ally of Putin, who needs to be kept in good humour. The grateful Russian Czar even gifted an Aurus Senat limousine to Kim, a car he himself uses. It mattered little that luxury cars are a proscribed item for

the North under UN sanctions.

The Ukraine war could not have come at a more opportune time for Kim, who is treated as a pariah by most world leaders. He had been dealing with a failed summit with former US President Donald Trump, and neglect by current US President Joe Biden. Adding to his woes were increasingly aggressive and sophisticated joint military exercises by South Korea, the US and Japan, the reintroduction of US strategic assets (read nukes) in the Korean theatre, a stuttering economy bruised by the Covid pandemic and severe shortages of food and fuel. Bitter and frustrated, Kim Jong Un pulled out all stops in advancing his weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programme, conducting 68 missile tests, the highest ever in 2022. Speculation was rife that he would carry out the country's seventh nuclear test inter alia to validate the efficacy of its miniaturised nuclear warheads. Fortunately, that has not happened till date, though the possibility still cannot be ruled out.

Some Western analysts believe that a dramatic provocation could be staged by Pyongyang, possibly in October just before the US presidential elections on November 5. It is difficult to anticipate the shape or form it may take. The North can be ingeniously innovative. In recent weeks, for example, they despatched hundreds of giant balloons floating into South Korean airspace filled with filth and garbage, which mercifully did not contain any hazardous substances, but caused

enough anxiety among the citizens.

Earlier in January, Kim denounced South Korea as the 'primary enemy', abandoned the goal of reunification, cut off inter-Korean communication channels, shuttered all three agencies responsible for overseeing relations with the South and ordered the dismantling of the monument of reunification in Pyongyang. He also scrapped the Comprehensive Military Agreement (CMA) signed in November 2018, in which both Koreas had agreed on several confidence-building measures in the security domain. In November 2023, President Yoon Suk Yeol of South Korea had partially suspended CMA in response to the launch of its first spy satellite by Pyongyang (also in November).

This is the background in which the visit took place. President Putin was accompanied by his Deputy PM Denis Mantrurov, Defence Minister Andrei Belousov and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, among other senior officials. He was greeted in person by Kim Jong Un at the tarmac on arrival. A rapturous welcome followed in the city. Pyongyang was dolled up in honour of the visiting dignitary.

As widely anticipated, the sides concluded a comprehensive strategic partnership agreement which includes a mutual defence pact, significantly committing them to extend "mutual assistance in the event of aggression against one of the parties". Both countries have described the agreement as "a truly breakthrough document".