

**US backs India-Iran Chabahar port deal**



(Agencies) Washington : The Obama administration on Tuesday batted for India with regards to New Delhi's energy initiative with Iran and Afghanistan via Chabahar, amid residual suspicion and  
**(Contd on page 21)**



Story ON Page 20

**Voters just don't trust her : Emails add to Hillary Clinton's central problem**

**In Pursuit Of Malice**  
Saving reputations from free speech since 1860, defamation law gets another leg up



(Agencies) To be defamed, you need to be a "man of character". Or so the law implies. Recently, finance minister Arun Jaitley felt he had been defamed and wanted to lodge a complaint. According to senior lawyer Indira Jaising, Jaitley had to bring along two friends to vouch for his "character", as per procedure laid down in law. Last week, the Supreme Court gave a leg up to this 156-year-old law, the law of criminal defamation. Though the UK abolished criminal defamation in 2009, **(Contd on page 21)**

**Halal Guys to donate \$30,000 to LaGuardia Community College**



(Agencies) New York : The Halal Guys food cart in front of LaGuardia Community College in Queens looks pretty much like any other cart on that stretch of Thomson Avenue, and its prices are low enough not to scare away the students: \$5 for a falafel sandwich, \$7 for gyro over rice and \$5 for chicken wrapped in pita and doused in sauce. But on Thursday, the Halal Guys, whose familiar yellow carts have expanded into a global franchise, will hand over a \$30,000 donation to LaGuardia. **(Contd on page 20)**

**It'll be all action for Modi government in next 3 years**



(News Agencies) New Delhi : The Modi government is looking to utilise the next three years to consolidate its gains and has extensive plans to revamp governance and boost economic growth after having spent the initial years tackling inherited challenges of high inflation and low growth. A review of policy objectives reveals the government has fixed a target of completing rural electrification by 2018 and providing roads in 60,000 rural habitations. **(Contd on page 20)**

**IIFA is all set to celebrate the Mega India Festival in Spain**



Story ON Page 31

**Dozens of women vanish on Canada's highway of tears**

(Agencies) British Columbia — Less than a year after her 15-year-old cousin vanished, Delphine Nikal, 16, was last seen hitchhiking from this isolated northern Canadian town on a spring morning in 1990. Ramona Wilson, 16, a member of her high school baseball team, left home one

Saturday night in June 1994 to attend a dance a few towns away. She never arrived. Her remains were found 10 months later near the local airport. Tamara Chipman, 22, disappeared in 2005, leaving behind a toddler. "She's still missing," Gladys Radek, her aunt, said. "It'll be 11 years in September." **(Contd on page 26)**



# Pavithra presents Yoga of dance at Princeton University



(Press Release) Renowned Bharatanatyam dancer Pavithra Srinivasan of Chennai mesmer-

ized the audience at the Whig Hall of Princeton University during a lecture and dance presentation on the Yoga of Dance last week. Acclaimed dancer and educator Pavithra Srinivasan explored the intersections and suggested India's venerable classical dance tradition as a vehicle to connect to deeper truths and spiritual awareness. She drew on decades of rigorous dance training, deep study of sacred texts, and personal guidance from her guru--the renowned Param Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati. She enacted stories from the Pancha Tantra, Ramayana, and Bhaja Govindam, a popular 8th century devotional composition in Sanskrit attributed to Sri Adi Sankaracharya, a great seer of

Advaita philosophy of India. The program was sponsored by the Princeton University Hindu Life Program and The Yoga Council. Pavithra began by explaining Yoga and demonstrated the Surya Namaskar chanting "Om Mitraya Namaha", "Om Ravaye Namaha". She told the audience Surya Namaskar not only includes asanas and pranayama, but also includes mantra and meditation techniques, expressing gratitude to the Sun as a life and light giving source to all forms in the planet. For dancers, it is also an exercise for stretching, strengthening of muscles, massaging of joints and internal organs of the body, she said. Both yoga and the classical dances of India are a gift to the world.

Both disciplines, yoga with its admirable precision and alignment and dance with its graceful hand gestures coordinated movements and meaningful facial expressions, have been blended for centuries.

She explained to students that Vedic culture, that includes customs, food, dress, language, literature, scriptures, music, dance ... anything that gives examples of great heroes who lived a life of profound truths and courageous deeds that help the human mind and life to grow, mature and evolve. This helps in discovering the true purpose of life, to unite and to help others unite themselves with their highest nature, so all can live in a life of harmony and freedom from misery. In this

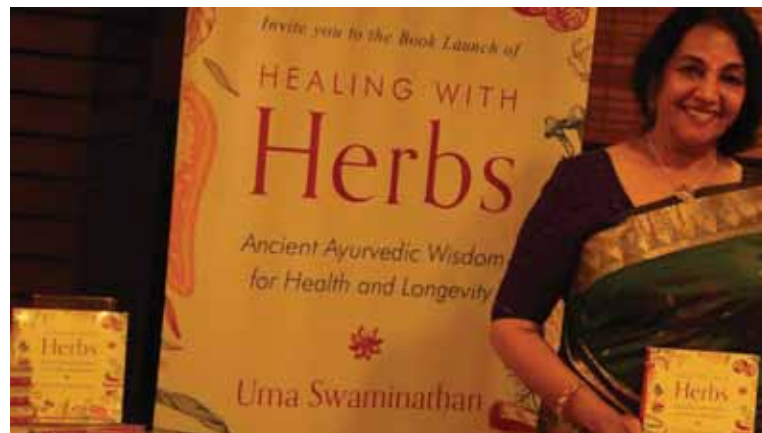
exploration, both yoga and dance point the way. Pavithra, adorned with jewels and clad in a radiant green saree, looked beautiful and her dance with excellent storytelling captivated the audience. Pavithra concluded with a scene from the immortal hymn Bhaja Govindam written by Saint Sankara in which he urges man to turn towards the Self and sing His glory instead of being distracted, deluded and destroyed by mundane matters. Yoga of dance is thus the union of the physical, psychological and spiritual plane to transcend the ordinary and to be established in one's own true nature in one's own self, which is the ultimate freedom from all unhappiness, she narrated. ?

# NJ author releases book in Chennai



(Press Release) Uma Swaminathan, a New Jersey-based community activist and a fighter of injustice in NJ school system last week released her book "Healing with Herbs- Ancient Ayurvedic Wisdom for Health and Longevity" at a gala book signing event in Odyssey Book Store in Chennai. Last year, Ms. Swaminathan authored a unique 250- page book "Herbal Transformations- Ancient wisdom revealed

for health and longevity". The American edition of this book is being marketed by Amazon.com. Jaico Publications in India has now brought out the Indian edition of the book entitled "Healing with Herbs- Ancient Ayurvedic Wisdom for Health and Longevity". The book is considered a treasure in view of the world-wide interest in its contents which include subjects like yoga, organic



food, health concerns, cultural moorings and the universal yearning for youthfulness and longevity, according to the author. It is written in a simple, personalized, chatty, and highly readable style which would appeal to all age groups, from the very young right up to the aged and it contains many lively colorful photographs taken by the author herself. It speaks of yoga practices that can increase memory

power, of tropical fruits that can even cure cancer, of increased sensitivity and intuition through proper diet and cleansing, how to lose weight and bring out one's natural aura, the sacred geometry of the traditional Kolam art and even cooking recipe. Ms. Swaminathan was referred to as Rosa Parks of Indian Community by Indian media in the US for putting a brave fight against her suspension on fabri-

cated grounds under racial bias. After three years, she was reinstated by the Courts and the Board squandered taxpayers' hard earned money to justify their illegal actions to destroy a competent school teacher because of her ethnic Indian background. Mr. T.S.Krishnamurthy, former Chief Election Commissioner of India; V. Selvaraj, former Chairman of Madras Port Trust; Prabhala Subash, a famous DJ and CEO of Masala FM radio, Mr. Chari, a retired IAS officer and others felicitated her.

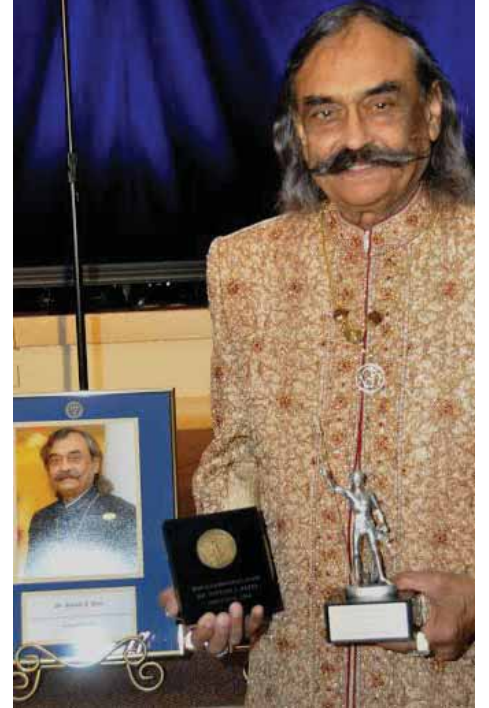
Ms. Swaminathan is a US Citizen of Indian-origin and she owns an ancestral apartment in Chennai, where she stays while in India. She has specialized in cultural anthropology while studying at the Rutgers' University in NJ. Her initial schooling was in Chennai and in Patna, Bihar. In her youth in India, she learned to fly monoplanes and got her private pilot's license. She studied classical Indian dance and is a prolific painter. She had also spent a few years in Tokyo, Japan, where she was honored by Princess Hitachi, Prime Minister, Kaifu's wife, for bridging understanding and cultural awareness between India and Japan. She was made the Chief Marshal of the International Parade in Tokyo. She has been in leadership roles in the US and is past President of the Association of Indians in America. She is also a practicing Reiki Master.

# Ninth Season of the MetLife South Asian Spelling Bee Announced

(By a staff reporter) New York- At a glittering event held in New York to mark the 9th anniversary of the South Asian Spelling Bee, Touchdown Media Inc., the leading multicultural advertising firm, today announced the launch of the ninth season of the MetLife South Asian Spelling Bee. MetLife, a leading global provider of life insurance, annuities, employee benefits and asset management, returns as the title sponsor of the contest. The event is open to children of South Asian descent up to 14 years of age. It will give South Asian children a chance to test their spelling skills in their core peer group. Interested spellers need their parent or guardian to (Contd on page 21)



# “Building India Excellence Awards, 2016” honors individuals and organizations for their outstanding contributions In USA



(By Shina George) Radius Developers presented a gala dinner called the “Building India Excellence Awards, 2016” to recognize the contributions made by South Asian individuals and organizations who have worked relentlessly in last five decades to build the name and image of India here in United States.

The event attended by over three hundred guests honored twenty two honorees in the presence of chief guest Consulate General of India in USA Riva Ganguly Das and the guest of honor Sanjay Chhabria, Managing Director, Radius on May 13, 2016 at the beautiful Royal Albert Palace. In her opening remarks Das said, “I am honored to be part of this esteemed occasion where we are recognizing people for their hard work and commitment.

I feel very proud of our South Asian community and feel happy to be a part of it. I congratulate all who have been honored and wish the very best for our fellow community members.” Spear-headed by Chhabria, Radius is a modern take on Mumbai’s real estate. Team Radius is a blend of professional flair and entrepreneurial passion. Sanjay is a renowned and respected member of Mumbai’s real estate fraternity and Radius is his independent foray into real estate. Sunil Hali, Producer of the event commented, “India is growing vertically and we need strong leaders. It is about a growing vision and I see that in Sanjay Chhabria. Radius is an amalgamation of transparency, affordability and In his welcoming remarks, Hali said, “We have

extraordinary people who have done extraordinary work and have set standards and carved a way for the next generation. It is important to recognize those individuals and organizations who have made it possible for our community to thrive here in the USA. They have worked tirelessly to have our voices heard. They have struggled to make a mark and the have suffered immensely because of financial, cultural and language barriers. We need to take time to salute them for making it easier for us, for creating an identity and putting us in the map. We are here to have recognize those voices who cared for the next generation.” The honorees at the event included:

1. Manish Patel, BAPS charities for harnessing the efforts and collective spirit of volunteers around the world.
2. Uma Mysorekara prominent member of the South Asian Community both in Queens and beyond received Building India Excellence Award, 2016 for community leadership.
3. Pam Kwatra received Building India Excellence Award, 2016 on behalf of Late Pandit Ravi Shankar, one of the world’s best and most renowned Sitar Players.
4. H.R. Shah, Chairman and CEO receiving Media Excellence Award for T.V Asia. Also received award on behalf of FIA (Federation of Indian Associations-Tri- State) as leading community organization.
5. Dr. Jayraman, Founder of Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan USA, an organization committed to promoting India culture, values and philosophy and enriching the Indian art forms, music, dance, drama, painting and films.



6. Dev Viswanath received the award on behalf of Late Dr. B. Viswanath and Satya Viswanath for first South Asian television program in the U.S. “Vision of Asia” and starting ITV Gold as pioneering media.

7. Sharanjit Thind and Jasbir (Jay) Singh received media excellence award on behalf of India Abroad, the first and the largest weekly Indian newspaper published from New York City focusing on Indian news for the Indian American, Indian diaspora and the expatriate audience.

8. Bina Murarka, Editor and Content Manager and Ramesh Murarka, President and Publisher received the award for India-West, one of the largest and most prestigious Indian weekly for the West Coast.

9. Dr. Bharat Barai received the honors for community leadership and organizer of the biggest national reception event for Prime Minister Modi.

10. Sneha and Satish Mehtani of the Mehtani Restaurant Group being honored at the Building India Excellence Awards, 2016 as pioneers in the Indian cuisine industry.

11. Kamal Arora of the Arora Hospitality Group being honored for taking Indian cuisine to unprecedented heights.

12. Dr. Hetal Gor received the Building

India Excellence Awards, 2016 on behalf of AAPI (American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin), the national organization representing medical professionals of Indian origin.

13. Mafatbhai Patel and Mahindra Patel of Patel Brothers received Building India Excellence Awards, 2016 for excellence in food industry.

14. Indian Business Association team members with Dhiren Amin, President receiving Building India Excellence Awards, 2016 for community and business organization. 15. Harshad K. Shah received Building India Excellence Awards, 2016 for his vegetarian mission to inspire people to become vegetarian and propagate the benefits of various veg. food under Vegetarian Vision.

16. Sukanya Krishnan Indian Born American News Anchor for the PIX morning news received Building India Excellence Awards, 2016 in film and television category.

17. Sridhar Chillara of TV5 and Mana TV received Building India Excellence Awards, 2016 for excellence in language media and journalism.

18. Sree Srinivasan, Chief Digital officer at the Metropolitan Museum of ART and a technology journalist

based in NYC recognized for his contribution to journalism in USA and Canada.

19. Dr. Navin Mehta received Building India Excellence Awards, 2016 for CHAALO GUJARAT for excellence in presenting culture and rich heritage of Gujarat.

20. Chandra Patel received Building India Excellence Award, 2016 on behalf of AAHOA (Asian American Hotel Owners Association), the largest Hotel Owners Association in the world.

21. Piyush Patel, received Building India Excellence Award, 2016 for philanthropy and community leadership.

22. Albert Jasani, of Royal Albert Palace receiving Building India Excellence Award, 2016 for philanthropy and community service.

Event production team included Mukesh Kashiwala, Hemant Pandya, Sharad Wala, Manisha Mehta, Shina George, Sushma Sharma and Radhika Uppal. Evening opened with a mesmerizing song by young Yash Kansara and entertainment was provided by Juhi Jagyasi, Anita Krishna, Rakesh Raj, Sarika Kansara, Sumukh Bhatia and Vicky Punjabi.



# Lawsuit Filed Seeking Transparency In US H-1B Visa Lottery

(Agencies) Washington: Two top American immigration-related advocacy groups have filed a lawsuit against the federal government seeking transparency into the lottery process of H-1B work visas, the most sought after for IT professionals, particularly those from India.

The lawsuit has been filed by American Immigration Council and American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) against Department of Homeland Security and US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) seeking information about the government's administration of the H-1B

lottery.

The two advocacy group alleged that USCIS has never been forthcoming in describing the selection process, a statement said.

"When petitions are submitted to USCIS in April, it's as if they disappear into a 'black box'," said Melissa Crow, Legal Director of the American Immigration Council.

"This suit is intended to pry open that box and let the American public and those most directly affected see how the lottery system works from start to finish, and to learn whether the system is operating fairly and all the numbers are

being used as the law provides," Crow said.

"Despite the Obama Administration's public commitment to the values of transparency and accountability, frankly, our attempts to see into this process have been resisted," said AILA executive director Benjamin Johnson. "Instead of responding to our requests for information about how the lottery is conducted, how cap-subject petitions are processed and how the numbers are estimated and tracked, USCIS has kept the process entirely opaque," he alleged. "This litigation is intended to shine a necessary light on an important



process in America's business immigration system," Johnson said. Every year, US employers seeking highly skilled foreign professionals submit petitions to USCIS on the first business days of April for the limited pool of H-1B non-immigrant visa numbers that are available for the coming fiscal year.

# Barack Obama Drop-In For Pork Soup Stuns Vietnam Street Shop Owner



(Agencies) Vietnam : Barack Obama Drop-In For Pork Soup Stuns Vietnam Street Shop Owner She has ladled out countless bowls of her pork noodle soup, but the owner of a Hanoi streetside restaurant says

she was stunned when Barack Obama strolled in, pulled up a plastic stool and slurped down Vietnam's famed "bun cha" delicacy. The US president slipped away from his hectic Vietnam visit on Monday night to

sample the dish with Anthony Bourdain, a chef and food critic who fronts a travel show about hidden culinary gems around the world. While 54-year-old restaurant owner Nguyen Thi Lien knew a foreign television

crew was on the way, she had no idea they would be bringing a very special guest. "His presence in our restaurant was a great surprise for my whole family, who could never have imagined it, even in our dreams," she told

media on Tuesday. US Secret Service and local police closed down the streets surrounding Bun Cha Huong Lien eatery on Monday evening. A large crowd gathered outside the restaurant, letting out a cheer as Obama exited. Surrounded by a coterie of bodyguards, he stopped to greet excited locals, many capturing the moment on their phones, before being whisked away in his limousine. "Obama was nice, smiling, cheerful and popular with everyone," the shop's owner told AFP, adding that she regretted not posing for a picture with the president. Bourdain posted a picture of the dinner on his Instagram feed with the caption "The President's chopstick skills are on point". It showed the two sitting on tiny plastic stools that are a common feature of Vietnamese street restaurants, Obama clasping a bottle of Hanoi Beer in his right hand. Local diners could be seen sitting at stainless steel tables behind the pair tucking in to their own steaming bowls of broth, one wearing an American-style black baseball cap.

"Total cost of bun cha dinner with the President: \$6.00. I picked up the check," Bourdain, who is renowned for his love of cheap streetside food, later tweeted.

# Did you miss this about Donald Trump's daughters?



(Agencies) The Trump family was spotted in full attendance at Tiffany Trump's graduation day and all looked happily settled. The family got together to celebrate Trump's 'mystery' (Tiffany's media tag) daughter's big day.

For those who have watched the American comedy 'What a Girl Wants', will be able to relate to what I meant by mentioning 'happily settled' family and 'mystery daughter'. The Hollywood flick is very much a

reflection of Tiffany-Donald Trump's life. Ignoring the

controversies that refuse to leave Donald Trump alone, what remains positive for him is the support he gets from his beautiful (literally) family. Irrespective of whatever the US Presidential election result would be, the Trump empire is blessed with two glamorous divas - Ivanka Trump and Tiffany Trump, who vouch for their father's passion supporting women empowerment. Previously referred to as Donald Trump's 'mystery daughter', Tiffany Trump broke her silence about her father at Trump's Republican presidential debate. The 'glamorous' Tiffany is

sweeping the Instagrammers off their feet by posting her bikini clad pictures. On the other hand, Ivanka Trump is grace, power and (American) beauty personified. EVP at the Trump organization and principal of Ivanka Trump Fine Jewelry, Ivanka introduced Donald Trump for the big presidential announcement at the Trump Tower.



# Welcome to the Redneck Yacht Club

*Photographer documents experience inside Florida area where thousands flock each year and proudly display Confederate flags*

(Agencies) Each year thousands of people flock to the Redneck Yacht Club in Southwest Florida to enjoy days of camping, drinking and riding the mud trails in ATVs or pick up trucks.

Brooklyn-based photographer Wesley Mann documented the experience on the 880 acres of terrain in Punta

Gorda, which is also known as the Redneck Mud Park.

He explained to Feature Shoot that everyone must pay in cash before entering and that 'there are very few rules' inside.

Mann, who has taken a number of celebrities portraits in the past, said there

are certain restrictions, such as stripper poles, chainsaws, firearms and illegal drugs, that are all prohibited.

He described the scene as 'intimidating' at times, but he shared that he frequently reminded himself not to pass judgement on those who were in attendance at the mud park. The area is es-

pecially packed on patriotic summer holidays, like Memorial Day and Independence Day, with both young and older people including children. His series of photographs show attendees relaxed and enjoying the environment, as a mixture of confederate and American flags can be spotted waiving along in the wind.



Well known Indian community leader Mohinder Singh Tanjea's daughter Pavneet, recently was married as per Indian traditions. Mohinder and his wife Dimpy, left no stone un turned to make sure that the marriage remains fresh in minds of those who attended, for years to come. It was full of style and substance, modern, yet traditional. A Ring Ceremony, Ladies Sangeet, and finally the marriage function (in Sikh Gurudwara) were held over time. (Seen in picture) The newlyweds Pavneet & Sahil Mehra with parents Homa & Parvesh Mehra and Dimpy & Mohinder Taneja.



**2016 INTERNATIONAL MUSIC NIGHT SERIES**

Nassau County Executive **ED MANGANO** presents  
**International Music Nights**  
 Eisenhower Park, East Meadow • Parking Fields 6 & 6A

**INDIAN AMERICAN NIGHT**

**Sunday, June 12<sup>th</sup> • 8:00pm**  
**Health Fair Starting at 6:00pm**  
**Musical Night Under the Stars**

Dance and Vocal Performances by Local Schools and Talent / Bollywood Performances

**Sponsors**  
 VJ Technologies, South Asian Times, Arya Samaj of Long Island, TV ASIA, IVS TV, ITV, South Asian Insider, Hum Hindustani, Indian Express, Indian Panorama, Rajbhog Sweets, HAB Bank, Indus American Bank, India Association of Long Island, AAPI QLI

**Presented by Indian American Forum Inc.**  
 Chairperson Indu Jaiswal (516) 248-7241  
 Co Chairperson Gobind Munjal (646) 209-8244  
 Mohinder Singh Taneja (516) 840-7968  
 Vijay Goswamy, Anu Gulati, Jaya Bahadkar, Bina Sabapathy, Bhavani Srinivasan, Sunita Sadhnani, Roopam Maini, Shilpa Jhurani

THE NASSAU COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION & MUSEUMS IS COMMITTED TO MAKING ITS SERVICE, PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS ACCESSIBLE TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES. IF YOU NEED AN ACCOMMODATION OR ASSISTANCE DUE TO A DISABILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SERVICES, PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES AND/OR EVENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, PLEASE CONTACT MARY JANE PALMA AT 516-426-1700 (VOICE) 516-426-1770 (TDD) OR THE OFFICE FOR THE PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED AT 212-260-88 FOR PERSONS WITH HEARING LIMITATIONS AT 212-260-2106.

**FREE ADMISSION — Bring Blankets or Chairs**  
 For info call: 516 572-0200 • Day of Event Weather info: 516 572-0355

**2016 INTERNATIONAL MUSIC NIGHT SERIES**

**Grand Sponsor**  
  
**NASSAU COUNTY EXECUTIVE ED MANGANO**  
 www.nassaucountyny.gov

**NASSAU COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION AND MUSEUMS**

# To Prove Its Credibility, Congress Must Remove Rahul Gandhi

**Ashutosh**

The Congress' loss in Assam is not surprising. What is surprising is the Congress losing Kerala. And in Kerala lies the secret of the Congress's existential crisis. In Assam, the Congress has ruled for three consecutive terms, a good fifteen years. Tarun Gogoi, being the Chief Minister of a North Eastern state, was considerably ignored by national media and intellectuals. Three terms are not a mean achievement. Sheila Dikshit in Delhi was Chief Minister for three terms, allowing talk within the party of considering her a Prime Ministerial candidate if the Congress returned to power in 2014. Tarun Gogoi did not get the credit he truly deserved. In my opinion, his losing is not big news; nor is the victory of the BJP in Assam. A void was there, and the BJP filled it at the right time.

But Oommen Chandy was Chief Minister for just one term like Jayalalithaa in Tamil Nadu and Mamata Banerjee in West Bengal. They came back for another term and Chandy could not. Tamil Nadu like Kerala alternates between its two main parties, but this time it changed track because Jayalalithaa was seen as a Chief Minister who is delivering unlike DMK leader Karunanidhi whose term was fraught with non-performance, severe corruption and factional fights within his family. The question is why was a Congress government in Kerala not seen to be delivering? The Chandy government had faced serious corruption charges. He himself was named in a major scandal. Therefore, why should the people oblige a non-performing leader?

Non-performance and lack of accountability and killer instinct in the leadership are the basic reasons for the decimation of the Grand Old Party. Unfortunately, its leaders are still busy living in their self-created, illusionary ivory towers. Can anything be more pathetic than Ajay Maken, the Delhi state Congress president, crediting four municipal seats in the recent Delhi by-elections to the leadership of Congress Vice President Rahul Gandhi? If that victory can be credited to Rahul's leadership, then crushing defeats in Assam and Kerala should also be attributed to him. Can anything be more tragic than the justification offered by Mani Shankar Aiyar that Congress has performed better than BJP, nationally, in his column on this website. He of course offered

data and numbers to prove his point.

After every defeat, Congressmen as a matter of ritual raise the demand that Priyanka Gandhi should take over the party. Senior leaders whisper in journalists' ears that she has the right charisma and spontaneity to lead the Congress. Digvijaya Singh said a major surgery is required. His statement is the reflection of the realisation that something drastic needs to be done to bring back the Congress' lost glory. But statements by Maken and Aiyar don't provide any confidence that the Congress has learnt from its serial defeats. Only God can save a party who hires not only an outsider, but also a complete

political novice like Prashant Kishor, hands over the entire organisation to him with the belief that he will resurrect the party, all without realizing that he is only a communications expert and not a political strategist.

Two and a half years in politics has taught me that either one has political instincts or one does not; they can't be acquired. Neither Rahul Gandhi nor Prashant have the virtues of a leader or the mind of a strategist. It was Indira Gandhi's brilliance as a political person that in a short span of three and a half years she turned the tables on Janta Party leaders, converted the hatred against herself into sympathy and returned with a thumping majority in 1981. She

rode an elephant, reached the remotest corner of Bihar to win back Dalit votes, exploited the chinks in Janta Parivar and the fatal ambition of Charan Singh to break the Morarji Government. She knew Charan Singh was dying to be the PM; she (out) foxed him, got his government sworn in, only to finally pull the rug from under his feet in just a few weeks. She successfully proved that Janta leaders were incapable of running a government and that despite her dictatorial style, she was the better choice as Prime Minister.

Have you seen any such brilliant move by Rahul Gandhi in the last two years? Except a few statements, he is a non-performing opposition leader.

Even Anand Sharma seems to have done better in the Rajya Sabha. Not once could Rahul Gandhi put the Modi government on the mat, either in parliament nor outside. Indira Gandhi seized half chances, kept the Janta government on its toes and reestablished communication with the her lost social base. Rahul had many opportunities in the last two years: Akhlaq's murder over beef in Dadri, Rohith Vemula's suicide in Hyderabad are the prominent ones, but he failed to capitalise on them. In some cases, he didn't seize the initiative; in others, he could not carry them through to their logical conclusion.

## The Congress needs to clear the confusion over its leadership

One important difference between the BJP and the Congress is that the BJP always thinks strategically. So, there was a marked difference in the manner both parties behaved prior to assembly election results.

The Congress recognised that defeat was imminent in Assam. In private, the party's leaders predicted a majority for the BJP-led alliance, and they admitted that things had gone badly wrong in Kerala.

The Congress simply awaited the results with the air of a prisoner on death row. The BJP, on the other hand, recognised that these results presented a huge opportunity. Over the last several months, things have not gone according to plan for the Modi government. Apart from the defeats in Bihar and Delhi, there has been discontent about the failure of the economy to soar as high as Narendra Modi promised, about the failure of the government's Pakistan policy and about a rising emphasis on nationalism.

Further, despite its tiny strength in the Lok Sabha, the Congress has been an effective opposition, blocking many of the government's legislative initiatives.

The spirit of 2014, when the BJP seemed all-powerful and the Congress was on its deathbed, seemed to be fading.

The BJP realised that the Congress would lose in Assam and would be defeated in Kerala, where elections follow a pendulum pattern. It realised also, that these defeats would give it the perfect opportunity to recapture the spirit of 2014.

And so, in recent weeks, it focused on corruption scams from the UPA era, suggested that Sonia Gandhi was personally involved and implied that, because she was Italian-born, she funnelled taxpayers' money into Italy. (AgustaWestland, for instance.)

It was pretty much the same sort of attack that preceded the 2014 parliamentary election and it had the effect of putting the Congress on the defensive and neutering its parliamentary aggression. When the results were declared and showed that Congress

had, in fact, lost Assam and Kerala, it seemed like 2014 once again.

Sure enough, the media response to the defeats has followed exactly the same lines as the post parliamentary-election commentary: the Congress is dying; the Gandhis are out of touch with the grassroots; Rahul Gandhi is an incompetent leader, etc.

The effectiveness of the BJP's strategy in handling the victories and in rekindling the Spirit of 2014, tells us something about the Congress's strategic failures. Most political parties know how to manage the fallout of defeat. Some, like the BJP, know how to multiply the significance of a victory. But the Congress, alas, knows neither.

That failure to think ahead and gauge where public opinion is headed has characterised the Congress over the last four years. During UPA II, the party failed to understand how corruption scandals and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's somnambulistic performance would hurt. When the whole world was turning to social media, the Congress let the BJP dominate Twitter and Facebook. Ministers like Shashi Tharoor, who were Twitter pioneers, were publicly reprimanded. In the process the party failed to connect with a whole generation of educated Indians who now see it as lazy, corrupt and arrogant.

But the Congress' problems do not end there. It still has to establish a clear connect with its own cadres. The precedent for the relationship between the Congress president and the vice president should be the Indira-Rajiv equation from 1981-84. Then too, older Congressmen complained about the "arrogance" of Rajiv and his "computerwallas" but there was never any confusion about who was boss. Now, the equation seems more complex, not just to party workers, but also to state leaders. Nor has the party been able to find the right balance in dealing with its regional bosses. Till two years ago, critics complained that the party was ruled from Delhi and that state leaders had no room for initiative. Perhaps, as a response, the balance has swung the other way. In Assam, for instance, it was staggeringly

obvious that Tarun Gogoi wanted to drive Himanta Biswa Sarma away so that his son, Gaurav, could inherit the leadership. Gogoi's insistence that no alliances were required cost the Congress the election.

And yet, the central hierarchy did nothing, arguing that as the man on the spot, Gogoi must be allowed to take his own decisions. The case of Oommen Chandy in Kerala is less extreme — he had no personal agenda but was allowed to fight the campaign as he wished, with no input from Delhi.

So yes, it's wrong to run the state from Delhi. But it is wrong to entrust your fate entirely to the satraps. A better balance has to be found.

And finally, there's the problem of the future. In essence, this rests on a simple calculation. The BJP believes that this is a new aspirational India which likes leaders who rise from the ranks. The Congress, it says, is the party of the divine right to rule, of privilege and of dynasty.

The Congress argues that for the poor, who constitute the bulk of the electorate, it is not who you are but what you do that matters. If you can convince the people of India that you are willing and able to help them, they don't really care whether or not you speak good English or that you went to Doon School.

These are two competing visions of leadership and so far, it is hard to tell which one is valid. Yes, there is frequent criticism of the Congress's distant and privileged leadership. On the other hand, Jayalalithaa with her perfect convent school English and her regal manner, remains the queen of Tamil Nadu: nobody objects to her air of privilege and entitlement.

But if the BJP is right, then there could be more trouble ahead for the Congress. The party has an outstanding younger generation that is readying to take over. But nearly every single one of them is a creature of privilege. And the vast majority are dynasts.

It is a prospect that should worry the Congress.

# *The World Reaps What the Saudis Sow*

Saudi Arabia has frustrated American policy makers for years. Ostensibly a critical ally, sheltered from its enemies by American arms and aid, the kingdom has spent untold millions promoting Wahhabism, the radical form of Sunni Islam that inspired the 9/11 hijackers and that now inflames the Islamic State.

The latest chapter in this long, sorrowful history involves tiny Kosovo. With a population of only 1.8 million people, Kosovo has sent more of its young people per capita than any other country to fight and die in Iraq and Syria. Since 2012, some 314 Kosovars have joined the Islamic State, including two suicide bombers, 44 women and 28 children. Even Belgium, widely seen as a hotbed of extremism after the attacks on Paris and Brussels, lags behind it in the recruitment rankings.

As detailed by Carlotta Gall in a recent article in The Times, Kosovo is in this position largely because Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf states have spent years developing and funding a network of imams, mosques and secretive associations there. And while there is no evidence that any group gave money directly and explicitly to persuade Kosovars to go to Syria, senior officials in Kosovo told Ms. Gall that extremist clerics and groups have spent heavily to promote radical Islamic thinking among young and vulnerable people. "The issue is they supported thinkers who promote violence and jihad in the name of protecting Islam," Fatos Makolli, head of Kosovo's counterterrorism police, told her.

The United States and NATO invested heavily in helping Kosovo gain independence from Serbia in 2008 and establish democracy. That Saudi Arabia should be using Kosovo as a breeding ground for extremists, or allowing it to be used as a breeding ground by any Saudi entity or citizen, is a cruel reminder of the contradictory and even duplicitous behavior of America's partners in the Persian Gulf and helps to explain why its relationships with those countries have become increasingly troubled. Kosovo, rescued from Serbian oppression after months of NATO bombing in 1999, has been known as a tolerant society. For centuries, the Muslim majority has followed the liberal Hanafi version of Islam, which is accepting of others. Since the war, that tradition has been threatened by Saudi-trained imams, their costs paid by Saudi-sponsored charities, preaching the primacy of Shariah law and fostering violent jihad and takfirism, which authorizes the killing of Muslims viewed as heretics.

Most Kosovars have resisted such proselytizing, and officials in Kosovo say that support for the United States and the West remains strong. Yet experts point to a number of reasons the country has been fertile ground for recruitment to radical ideology: a large population of young people living in rural poverty with little hope of jobs; corruption and an attendant lack of faith in government; and, according to a 2015 report by the Kosovar Center for Security Studies, an education system that does not encourage critical thinking.

It remains unclear why Kosovo's government, as well as the United States and the United Nations officials who administered postwar Kosovo, did not act sooner. The Americans may have erred in assuming that Kosovo's moderate religious community would prevent extremism from flourishing.

The 9/11 attacks quickly clarified the dangers. Several Saudi organizations in Kosovo were closed, and the Saudi government, which appears to have reduced its aid to Kosovo, now insists that it has imposed strict controls on charities, mosques and clerical teachings. Even so, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates have increased funding for Islamic hard-liners in Kosovo.

The Sunni Arab states still do not seem to understand the extent to which extreme versions of Islam imperil them as well. Although the Saudi royal family relies on the Wahhabi clerics for their political legitimacy, the Islamic State accuses the monarchy of corrupting the faith to preserve its power. Since 2014, there have been 20 terrorist attacks in the kingdom, many staged by ISIS.

The Kosovo government, working with the United States, has acted to combat extremism by adopting new antiterror laws, cracking down on the money laundering that underwrites radical groups and stepping up police investigations. The flow of Kosovo's citizens heading to fight with the Islamic State apparently has fallen to zero in the last seven months, while the number of Kosovars on the battlefield is down to 140. Yet at least two radical imams continue to preach in Kosovo's capital, Pristina, and draw crowds of young men. Much work is still to be done to protect the independence and spirit of tolerance that Kosovo worked so hard to achieve.

# The return of optimism

It's time to take stock of the two years of the Narendra Modi government. But before we do so, it is important to reflect on the decade prior to 2014 when we had a prime minister who was always helpless and looked to 10 Janpath for any and every decision he had to take.

Unfortunate as it may sound, that had been the administrative practice during the two terms of the UPA regime, from 2004 to 2014. 10 Janpath was far removed from reality, detached from the needs of this country and its people. Perhaps that was the reason for widespread pessimism and cynicism about politics in the country then. However, the situation is completely different today. We have a prime minister who is strong, decisive and always available to the masses. He has a professional work style and has invigorated a new work culture in the government.

He routinely conducts review meetings with ministers, top bureaucrats, and interacts with officials across the country via video conferences. He talks to people through 'Mann Ki Baat', his monthly programme on radio. He has used these opportunities to launch massive campaigns such as the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and has been successful in evoking a sense of patriotism in the youth. Whether it is an earthquake in Nepal, or Indians stranded in Yemen, floods in Kashmir, or a fire in a Kerala temple, the Modi government has always reached out to the people with relief and rescue measures. -

The biggest achievement of this government has been to curb widespread corruption in the system. Since it took over in May 2014, the government has not faced a single corruption charge. At the same time, it has brought in one of the toughest legislation in the world to deal with the black money menace. Barring a few sporadic incidents, the borders have been peaceful. Apart from Pakistan, relations with all our neighbours have been cordial. Ties with Pakistan, too, would have been better had the civilian government in that country enjoyed full autonomy. Even so, in the last two years, there has been a slump in the incidents of cross-border terrorism. According to the latest statistics provided by the government, in the last decade, these past two years have been the most peaceful.

By touring the world, Modi has sent out the message that India cannot be ignored. Today, he has personal equations with heads of state of all major countries and has established a good rapport with all nations, big or small. He has visited countries where significant numbers of the Indian diaspora reside, and has invited them to invest in their motherland. In September 2014, when he addressed a huge crowd of Indians settled in US in New York's Madison Square Garden, at least 40 senators along with governors of four states were present in the audience.

The perception of India is completely different today — the world community has more confidence in us compared to two years ago, and there has been a 42 per cent increase in foreign direct investment. Modi has set his sights sky-high but his feet are firmly on the ground. Soon after coming to power, he announced that he was not the prime minister of India, but the "pradhan sewak".



ISSN No. 1554 06X

Chairman: Karam Singh Thind (Honorary)

Editor in Chief: Sharanjit Singh Thind

Editor (Political Affairs-India) : Aruna Singh

President : Bhupinder K. Thind

Special Correspondent :

Associate Editor: Bidisha Roy

Associate Editor (Entertainment): RajRahi

Gagandeep Singh (INDIA)

Chief Photographer : Vijay Shah

Web Coordinator : Jatinder Kumar

Editorial Intern: Amann Thind

A Publication of Media Partners Capital, Inc.

REGD &amp; MAILING OFFICE :

P.O Box 7005 Hicksville New York 11801

Tel/Fax : 516 342 1076 Cell : 917 612 3158

editor@thesouthasianinsider.com, thesouthasianinsider@gmail.com

www.thesouthasianinsider.com

**Disclaimer** The South Asian Insider is a weekly newspaper published every week by The South Asian Insider. It's available in community & religious centers, ethnic grocery stores and also available by mail, email & online to subscribers. The opinions, beliefs and viewpoints expressed by the various writers, authors and forum participants in The South Asian Insider do not necessarily reflect the opinions, beliefs and viewpoints of the Editor. All advertisers advertising in The South Asian Insider assume responsibility for accuracy of their advertisements. The South Asian Insider and/or people associated with it are not responsible for any claims made by the advertisers and don't endorse any product or services advertised in The South Asian Insider. We strongly urge consulting your lawyer before buying/contracting/hiring through the ads published in the newspaper. We are in the business of selling space and claims made by the advertisers are not authenticated or confirmed by an independent source

# I Was Threatened On Twitter With 'Rape Like Nirbhaya'

**Priyanka Chaturvedi** Anyone who is on social media would know how trolling and abuse have become a part of the discourse. The same goes for my experience online. As an active Twitter user, who happens to belong to a political party (Congress) that is different from the current powers that be, getting trolled and facing abuse is a daily menace, which due to lack of better option, I have to grin and bear.

I say lack of any option because under IPC sections, there is no immediate relief to anyone who faces this abuse, all sections are of bailable nature. The second challenge is of almost non-existent support structures coming from these platforms despite many tools that they say they have introduced to filter content. But trying to get accounts suspended or deactivated is near impossible.

Recently in an interview to NDTV, Shri Arun Jaitley said it was near impossible to control the trolling. While I appreciate his honesty, I disagree with him saying it isn't possible. If laws against trolling and cyber abuse were made more stringent (discarding the loopholes in Sec 66A) and if the response because less red tape and more proactive, then maybe there could be a way to address this issue. So saying it's not possible is a convenient escape route that he took.

The Women and Child Welfare Minister Maneka Gandhi who recently said trolling could be looked at as violence against women quickly beat a hasty retreat as soon as the BJP and right wing supporter base went up in arms against it. Such is their clout and such is the uncontrollable nature

of the beast that right wing has unleashed on these platforms. To now say it is near impossible to control would be running away from accountability.

Let me be very clear that I have no problem with anyone having a different point of view from mine and arguing on Twitter on issues. I follow many people from the intellectual right wing and spokesperson of parties that have a different ideology than mine. Debate is good, debate is healthy and is the essence of any strong democracy. But using abuse, threat and intimidation to try and silence a differing point of view is doing a huge disservice to the entire idea of freedom of speech enshrined in our constitution.

## Map Of Kashmir Creates New Pak-India Stress Point - But It Shouldn't

**Andrew Whitehead** Some years ago, a friend in publishing swept into the BBC's Bush House in London in a whirlwind of agitation. She caught sight of me in the lobby. "Andrew, thank God you are here. I am so worried - just how bad is it?" she asked. "It's the map! I think we've got Kashmir wrong!"

In her hand she had, hot off the press and with the launch imminent, a copy of Imran Khan's autobiography. She opened it on the page of maps in the preface and thrust it urgently into my face. "Someone says we've given Kashmir to India. Please tell me it isn't so!"

A quick glance, and I had to confirm my friend's foreboding. "It looks like this is the Indian version of how to map Kashmir", I told her. "And in a book by a prominent Pakistani public figure, that's probably not too good!"

"Oh Lord, oh Lord!" she responded, "what on earth shall we do!" And she hurried away in even more of a tizz, leaving me with that copy of the memoirs with the "rogue" map. I have it still. A collector's item perhaps. That edition of the book was recalled, I believe, and the maps amended for those copies

Observer Research Foundation, a leading think tank, had in 2015 tried to understand the political gender representation on Twitter - they sampled 23,250 tweets under political trending topics and 7.72% of tweets were by women, 46.15% by men, rest of the numbers made up by organisations or handles that haven't specified their gender (read anonymous handles). With a disparity as huge, it anyway is a mammoth task to get women to speak their mind. For them to be a relevant participant in the political discourse, we need more numbers, yet we see how through abuse, intimidation of sexist nature and bullying, the attempt continues to keep them

on the fringe.

Last evening, I was threatened with "rape and death like Nirbhaya" for just pointing out a BJP spokesperson's use of innuendo and insinuation to silence me on a TV debate. So if being a woman wasn't bad enough to be on these platforms, it is worse to be an opinionated woman from a differing ideology. However if such people and official and unofficial supporters of right wing think they can intimidate me, I am sorry, you have dialled a wrong number here. In fact I am going to talk more and more about such threats to ensure this intimidation and bullying is held accountable, even if they get away by getting bail for it and facing courts in the time to come

The Mumbai Police has

been the most helpful since last evening and have been coordinating with me to bring this man to book. However this isn't the first time that I have sought the help of cops. I had done this earlier with a handle that used to stalk my timeline, unfortunately with all the help I could get then too, the matter is still pending in courts. Mr Jaitley, what you can definitely do, considering you have a stellar record as a lawyer, is to draft an action plan for online women users facing sexual harassment and abuse that is on the lines of women facing them in real world. What Mrs Maneka Gandhi can do is ensure it's taken with the same seriousness. Stop passing the buck and show who is in charge here

destined for sale in South Asia.

From time-to-time, colleagues inside the BBC - aware of my interest in Kashmir - would phone or message saying: "Can you spare a moment to give me some advice on a Kashmir map?" That advice was simple. Don't. The perils of mapping Kashmir greatly outweigh the benefits. Somebody somewhere is likely to take exception. And if you manage to reflect the competing claims to Kashmir as well as the ground realities, you end up with a map which has such an assortment of bold lines, dotted lines and different shades that, for an international audience, it confuses rather than explains.

Al Jazeera has paid the price for mapping Kashmir. Its English network was forced to stop broadcasting in India for five days last year for showing maps which suggested that parts of Kashmir are with Pakistan and China. In the past, erring maps were over-stamped saying that the borders shown "are neither authentic nor correct". A few years back,

the Economist had to do a sticker cover-up. But the brief banning of Al Jazeera - "censorship", the network complained - shows that sensitivities to the charting of disputed territories are becoming more acute.

India is now considering legislation which would, in essence, bring the prospect of large fines for anyone publishing or broadcasting unapproved maps. Unsurprisingly, that prompted a diplomatic spat with Pakistan. But it really is an Alice in Wonderland situation. For almost half-a-century, the quiet goal of Indian diplomacy has been to turn the Line of Control which, in effect, partitions Kashmir into an international border. In common parlance, it is the line that demarcates that part of Kashmir under Pakistan's control from Indian Kashmir (yes, I know China has a stake in this too - but it's not the core issue). But if you show the line as if a boundary, then you could - if the law passes - be fined up to 100 crores.

It shouldn't be that way. Maps should be matters of reference, and just as you would never think of rerouting a river or moving a mountain

because its presence is inconvenient, there's no good reason why maps reflect political aspiration rather than reality.

India hasn't had any authority over that part of Kashmir across the line of control for almost 70 years. Pakistan neither rules Jammu or Ladakh, nor indeed has anything more than a notional claim to those areas. So why insist that maps misrepresent what's happening on the ground?

I remember on my first visit to Pakistan, calling in at a government office with a large map of the region on the wall. I was astonished. Not only Jammu and Kashmir, but Hyderabad and Junagadh as well, were shown as part of Pakistan. This really was wishful thinking; a map showing - to corrupt Jinnah's famous comment about the territory allotted to Pakistan - a "moth-eaten" India.

That trip was quite a while back, and that wall map was even then a political relic. But both India and Pakistan have turned to maps to conjure up a geopolitical landscape that simply doesn't exist, however much they might want it to.

Is that really what maps are for?



# To Recover, The Left Should Use Arvind Kejriwal's Strategy



The electoral verdict in the West Bengal state elections seems to be this: The Left is dead; long live the left. By big-L Left I refer to the official Left parties, while small-l left refers to pro-poor redistributive policies that are normally associated with left-wing ideology.

The triumphant reelection of the Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress (TMC) government represents the enduring appeal of pro-poor policies such as distributing subsidized rice to the poor, the kanyashree scheme for girls, bicycles for girl students and also improvements in rural infrastructure such as roads.

Most polls indicated the TMC was going to win, but with a reduced margin. The TMC's return with 27 more seats than it held surprised everybody. Whether one likes these results or not, full credit is due to the party and its leader for the electoral equivalent of a complete knockout of the opposition alliance (jot) between the Left and the Congress.

In the political history of Bengal, Mamata Banerjee is the only leader after Bidhan Chandra Ray, Jyoti Basu, and Buddhadev Bhattacharya who is poised to serve as the Chief Minister of Bengal for two full terms or more. Given that the party is really a one-woman show - after all, she herself said it was she who was up for election in all 294 seats - her achievement is even more noteworthy. Meanwhile the Left parties not only lost ground to the TMC, but also lost their position at the top of the pack of Opposition

parties. Barring the controversial elections of 1972, this is the first election in West Bengal since Independence in which a coalition of Left parties did not secure the first or the second place. The four main parties constituting the Left Front went down from 60 seats in 2011 to 32 seats this year. The dominant partner of the Left Front, the CPI (M), now has the third highest number of seats, thereby ceding the main opposition party status to the Congress. This is a far cry from the total tally of 227 of the major Left parties in 2006, of which the CPI (M) alone had 176. That was only two elections ago, although it feels like something that happened a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away.

The triumph of the TMC was largely at the expense of the Left since all the major Left parties lost seats, whereas other opposition parties like the Congress and the BJP each gained a small number of seats. The Congress increased its tally of seats from 42 to 44, contesting in 93 seats, and raised its share of popular votes from 9% to 12%. Its alliance (jot) with the Left clearly did not cost it in terms seats or percentage of votes. The BJP opened its electoral account in the West Bengal state assembly for the first time, by winning three seats and a 10% share of the popular vote, a sharp increase from 4% in 2011. In contrast, the Left's vote share fell from 40% to 26%!

The main question is: what drove the margin of the TMC victory? Also, why did the Left do worse than even in 2011, when it was facing the

massive anti-(34 year)-incumbency factor? On the first question, clearly there were no strong anti-incumbency currents, let alone a wave. The conventional wisdom was that the TMC would do well in the rural areas because of the pro-poor redistributive policies of the government but not in the urban areas. However, the TMC won all the seats even in Kolkata despite the fact that many of the middle class urban voters who were pro-change in 2011 had turned against the government due to concerns about law and order, unchecked hooliganism, the syndicate-Raj, and the Saradha-Narada scandals. It is true that there were some undercurrents of anti-incumbency. Eight sitting ministers lost (including the Transport Minister Madan Mitra, who contested from jail having been arrested in connection with the Saradha case), and news reports suggest that the victory margins of most successful TMC candidates in Kolkata were significantly lower than in 2011, including that of the Chief Minister.

And then there is the curious case of the NOTA (None of the Above) voters - this constituted 1.5% of all popular votes this time, higher than the vote shares of some of the smaller political parties like the CPI. So there were trickles of anti-incumbency, some of which also showed up in increases in the vote shares and seats of the Congress and the BJP. It is just that these were not strong enough to dent the pro-incumbency wave that came from rural areas due to the pro-poor schemes mentioned

earlier that have created a loyal vote bank among the rural poor.

Clearly, the jot worked out well for the Congress and not for the Left, and that partly explains the drastically lower vote share of the latter. They were after all traditional rivals until the emergence of the TMC. May be it was harder for Congress voters to forget the bitterness that accumulated from many decades of Left rule, than for Left voters, whose grievances against Congress rule is a much more distant memory. But electoral arithmetic aside, the fundamental problem is that the Left did not have any concrete set of policies to counter the TMC, other than defining itself simply as anti-TMC. Mamata Banerjee had outflanked them from the left - as far as poorer voters were concerned - through her redistributive schemes. The only hope of the Left would then be the anti-incumbency voters. However, long term economic trends to which they themselves contributed while in power had stacked the decks against them. The long-term deindustrialisation in Bengal, and the consequent flight of skilled educated labour from the state mean that the educated middle-classes are no longer pivotal voters even in urban areas.

After all, the most rapidly growing sector in the economy is not agriculture or industry but the informal sector, of which syndicates are one example. For the beneficiaries of syndicates, auto-rickshaw and taxi unions, hawkers who need protection, and recipients of club doles, Didi's strong-arm style of governance and politics of patronage and populism are attractive, even

as these alienate the educated middle-class voters who value the sanctity of institutions, individual freedoms, and a long-run growth strategy over the politics of doles. And, anyway, to these middle class voters, the 34-year record of the Left hardly inspires confidence on these issues in the first place.

The Left failed to adapt to the reality that its traditional land and trade-union centred policies for rural and urban areas respectively are largely irrelevant in present day Bengal. There is very little land left to redistribute or to mobilize the rural poor around, as they did in the 60s and the 70s. There is also not much organized industry left where trade-union mobilization will generate a huge vote bank. Yes, industrialization is needed for long-run sustainable growth and on this count, the TMC-government's record is hardly impressive as I have argued earlier. The Left belatedly learnt the virtues of growth and industrialization, but without some economic protection for the poor, industrialization cannot be thrust down their throats, as Nandigram and Singur showed.

To resurrect itself, the Left has to come up with a two-pronged strategy. It has to propose concrete welfare schemes for the rural poor that can compete with TMC's policies. Also, given that nearly one-third of the state's population lives in the urban areas and a large majority of them are employed in the informal sector, it should also learn from AAP's success in Delhi to target the concerns of this demographic, though not necessarily with the same set of policies. Otherwise, there will be nothing left of it.



(Agencies) Beijing : Having already expanded its influence in Nepal with road and rail network through Tibet, China is now looking to stretch its railway link to Bihar to improve connectivity with India and South Asia, state-run Chinese media reported today. A cross-border railroad link to the Rasuwagadhi area in Nepal has already been discussed between the two countries. China's railroad is expected to reach Nepal border by 2020, an article in the state-run Global Times said.



transport 564 km of road transport to Geelong Port in Nepal.

From there it will take another 160 km of road transport to reach Nepal's capital Kathmandu. Altogether, the combined transport takes 35 days fewer than traditional ocean transport, the report said. The combined rail and road service has been started as a follow up to Nepal Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli's visit to Beijing in March during which the two countries signed the landmark transit treaty for Nepal to access supplies from China through the arduous route of Tibet. Chinese officials said Beijing has also agreed to extend the rail link in Xigaze to Nepal border, which will enable Kathmandu to access growing rail and road infrastructure in Tibet. Nepalese officials say the new routes with China will cut down dependence on India, which till now is the sole supplier of goods. The Oli government was keen on opening up new routes with China including access to its port Guangzhou to reduce dependence on India in the aftermath of the blockade along the Indian border imposed by Madhesi in Nepal to express their resentment against the new constitution, analysts say.

## China Wants To Stretch Rail Network All The Way To Touch Bihar: Report

This rail line makes it possible to connect China to India as from Rasuwagadhi to Birgunj, which borders Bihar is only 240 km, the article said.

For Bihar, trade with China through the rail link will be easier along this route than through Kolkata, saving time, cost and distance, it said.

"The railroad connection to China not only is important for Nepal and Nepalese people's future development, but also has the capacity to build connectivity with the whole of

South Asia. The government of Nepal has the chance to make history," the article said.

It also criticised attempts to block major projects in Nepal.

"Challenge is both internal and external stakeholders' sensitivity about mega infrastructure projects. Unfortunately due to oversensitivity, some major projects were aborted before even a brick was laid. So the Nepali government must play a key role in bringing all the stakeholders into a sufficient consensus," it said. While rail and road links with

Nepal were regarded strategic for China to blunt India's influence in the country, analysts said the development of most expansive infrastructure through the rugged Himalayan mountains is viable only if they get connected to India. India, China bilateral trade currently hovers around USD 70 billion with over USD 48 billion trade deficit in favour of Beijing.

Early this month, in a strategic move to cut landlocked Nepal's dependence on India, China opened a combined road and rail service to Kathmandu

through the rugged mountain ranges in Tibet to step up transportation of supplies to the Himalayan country.

An international freight train from Lanzhou, the capital city of northwestern China's Gansu province has been operationalised.

The train will carry the cargo to Xigaze, the nearest Tibetan town close to Nepal from where the goods will be transported to the Nepal by road. The whole journey will take 10 days. It includes 2,431 kms of rail

## BJP Acts East With New Anti-Congress Bloc, Puts Himanta Biswa In Charge



(Agencies) Guwahati Hours after Sarbananda Sonowal took oath as Chief Minister of Assam at a massive victory celebration, BJP chief Amit Shah announced an alliance of non-Congress parties for the development of North Eastern states on Tuesday.

Mr Shah tweeted that the chief ministers of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Sikkim have proposed to join the North East Democratic Alliance or NEDA, the main objective of which would be "the all-round development of the North East and better co-ordination among the states and central government."

Himanta Biswa Sarma, newly sworn in as a minister in Assam, would head the alliance, Mr Shah said. Mr Sarma, who is expected to

be finance minister in the Assam government, joined the BJP last year after quitting the Congress and added substantial fire-power to the party's campaign in this year's assembly election that it has won, trouncing the Congress which ruled for the last 15 years. In his speech after Mr Sonowal's oath, Prime Minister Narendra Modi set the tone promising that the Centre would extend all assistance to Assam and other north eastern states to ensure their speedy development as part of the Act East Policy. "Assam will be the centre point to bring about effective all-round development of the entire North East and this region will emerge as a powerfully developed part of the country as a part of our Act East Policy," PM Modi said addressing a lakh-strong

crowd and asserting that the country's development could not be led only by western states. Assam is the first North Eastern state that the BJP will govern. Present at its show of strength in Guwahati yesterday, were Kalikho Pul, chief minister of Arunachal Pradesh, whose government the BJP supports, and also the chief ministers of Sikkim Pawan Chamling and Nagaland, TR Zeliang. The BJP hopes Assam will be its gateway in the North-East where the Congress still runs three governments and the Left a fourth. The region sends 25 lawmakers to Lok Sabha. The BJP has eight - it had won seven of Assam's 14 seats in 2014 and 1 in Arunachal Pradesh - and hopes to ramp up that number substantially in the next elections.

## Safe To Eat Bread, Says Food Regulator FSSAI



(Agencies) A day after a Centre for Science and Environment report said that everyday bakery items could have cancer causing substances like potassium bromate, the Food Safety Standards Association of India or FSSAI has said there is no need to panic. On its part, the food regulator has announced a ban on potassium bromate, an additive that's commonly used in bakery products, but says eating bread is still 'absolutely safe'. Speaking to NDTV, Pawan Agarwal, the CEO of the food regulatory body, said, "As an abundant precaution we have decided that potassium bromate will no longer be permitted as an additive after our panel recommended it though there is limited evidence that it causes cancer. Bread is still safe to consume. Global standards are a reference. We have to develop our own standards for Indian conditions." Even though consumers and the food safety regulator were not worried, the markets were spooked impacting the shares of companies that sell bread with some even closing in the red. Countries like the UK, Australia, Canada, China and Sri Lanka have banned the use of potassium bromate as a flour treatment agent years ago. CODEX, the international body that sets safety standards for food products also considered it unsafe in 2012.

# A holy dip and Rs 11 is all it takes to be 'certified' free of sins

(Agencies) UDAIPUR: Hindu pilgrims traditionally believe that bathing in holy waters washes away their sins, but the solace so gained is purely psychological with nothing tangible to show.

But a Shiva temple in Rajasthan is different. Here, redemption comes with a certificate that qualifies one duly purged of all sin, or 'paap-mukt'.

Welcome to Gautameshwar Mahadev Paapmochan Teertha, a Shiva temple in Pratapgarh district. This temple offers a 'paapmukti' certificate to anyone who takes a dip in its 'kund' and pays Rs 11. The temple claims to have maintained a record since Independence of all those who bathed in its Mandakini Kund and

got certified. A body of priests called Aminat Kachhari charges Re 1 for each certificate, while Rs 10 is for 'dosh-nivaran' (removal of obstacles). "People ostracised in their villages come here to take a dip and go back with 'paap-mukti' certificates," said priest Nandkishore Sharma.

The shrine which has been popular for centuries is referred to as the 'Haridwar of tribals.' "For centuries, it has been a famous pilgrimage held in great reverence, specially by the tribal community. Lakhs of devotees gather here for Gautameshwar fair held in May," said Sharma. The number of visitors has increased in recent years, but not

many seek the certificate these days. During the eight-day fair held this May, over two lakh devotees bathed in the 'kund', but only three certificates were issued.

According to a legend, Gautam Rishi, a sage, was cursed for causing the death of an animal. He punished himself, took a holy dip in the 'kund' and was freed from the curse. This started off a long tradition. "When people do farming, they inadvertently kill insects and other creatures, damage eggs of birds and reptiles. This fills them with guilt. They come here with a heavy heart, but go back relieved," said another priest Kanhaiyalal Sharma.



## Subhash Chandra Steps Down as Zee Media Chairman

(Agencies) Subhash Chandra has resigned from the post of Director and Non-Executive Chairman of Zee Media.

In a filing to the BSE, Zee Media said that its board in a meeting held today "took on record the resignation of Dr. Subhash Chandra as Director & Non-Executive Chairman of the Company with effect from May 24, 2016."

It further said that its board also approved appointment of R K Arora, CEO, as an Additional Director of the company.

"... Based on recommendations of Nomination & Remuneration Committee, approved appointment of R K Arora, CEO as an Additional Director and upon such appointment, his appointment as an Executive Director & CEO of the Company for a period of 3 years with effect from May 24, 2016," said Zee Media. Zee Media, erstwhile Zee News is one of the leading news networks of India. It has news



channels which includes Zee News, Zee Business, India 24x7, Zee Punjab Haryana Himachal, Zee Madhya Pradesh Chhattisgarh, Zee 24 Taas, 24 Ghanta, Zee Kalinga News, Zee Purvaiya and Zee Rajasthan News. Zee Media today posted a consolidated net profit of Rs 18.26 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 31, 2016 on account of reduction in operating expenditure. The company had reported a net loss of Rs 7.17 crore in the same quarter, last fiscal. Its net sales during the quarter under review were down 3.32 per cent to Rs 134.16 crore as against Rs 138.78 crore in the same quarter, a year ago, the filing said.

## BJP shows copies of PM's degrees, tells Delhi CM to apologise



(Agencies) I am presenting the PM's degrees, his BA and MA degrees. I will write a letter to reassure Kejriwal. I am ashamed to be displaying the PM's degrees, said Shah. The Bharatiya Janata Party presenting evidence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's degrees on 9 May, asked Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal to stop making allegations and apologise. "I am presenting the PM's degrees, his BA as well as MA degrees must put a full stop to the lies which are being propagated. I will write a letter to reassure Kejriwal. I am ashamed to be displaying

the PM's degrees," said Shah. Kejriwal has lowered the standards of public life, and defamed the nation, said Shah. Both the degrees (BA from Delhi University and MA from Gujarat University) are being put in public, he added. Finance minister Arun Jaitley who was also present said the discussion has "stooped so low" in the wake of baseless allegations by Kejriwal and his Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). It may be mentioned here that Kejriwal said "This is a case of unadulterated cheating. If the PM is accused of cheating under (IPC section) 420, this is a serious matter."



**WINZONE REALTY INC.**

**Baldev Singh**

**146-20 34 av. Flushing NY 11354**

**Cell: 917 224 7395**

**Email: josanaldev@yahoo.com**



**Associate Broker/Notary Public**

# India using old, new laws to criminalise free speech: Report



communities, particularly Dalits, and religious minorities" in the country.

The observations come amid rising instances of dissenting voices being dragged to court or citizens being jailed for expressing their opinion, especially on social media. The report mentioned the high-profile case of Jawaharlal Nehru Kanhaiya Kumar's arrest on sedition charges after a campus event in February where alleged anti-India slogans were shouted.

The government's action against Kumar and fellow students triggered a debate on free speech and invited criticism by the Opposition and many public intellectuals who said cases of religious and political

intolerance had gone up since the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) came to power in 2014.

The report said Indian authorities and political parties used government resources to file cases under archaic laws.

"India's abusive laws are the hallmark of a repressive society, not a vibrant democracy," said Meenakshi Ganguly, South Asia University student leader and director at Human Rights Watch. Putting critics in prison or even forcing them to defend themselves in lengthy and expensive court proceedings undermine the government's efforts to present India as a modern country in the Internet age committed to free speech and the rule of law."

The human rights organisation said its report was

based on an in-depth analysis of various provisions of the Indian Penal Code (including laws on sedition, criminal defamation, hate speech).

The report also referred to Indian laws that criminalise defamation, saying such legislation should be scrapped in keeping with the views of the United Nations Human Rights Committee. But earlier this month, the Supreme Court upheld the constitutional validity of such legal provisions, observing that they do not clash with the right to free speech. "Sedition and criminal defamation laws are routinely used to shield the powerful from criticism, and send a message that dissent carries a high price," Ganguly said.

(Agencies) Indian authorities use vaguely worded British-era as well as newer laws to criminalise free speech and stamp out dissent, the Human Rights Watch said in a report on Tuesday, calling on the government to do away with such

legislation.

The report, titled "Stifling Dissent: The Criminalization of Peaceful Expression in India", said old and new laws were being used to restrict activities by NGOs, block internet sites and target "marginalized

## At Rs 250/kg this black rice variety makes remote Assam farmers rich

(Agencies) With the Supreme Court-mandated NEET to be in place next year, experts expect a larger number of students to choose colleges in countries like Russia, China and Ukraine, where admission is easier and courses cheaper. However, statistics show students with medical degrees from these countries are finding it increasingly difficult to pass the screening test that allows them to practice in India. The number of students taking the test has doubled but the pass percentage dropped from 50.12 in 2005 to 10.7 in 2015. In this period, the pass rate fluctuated around 20 per cent, dropping to an all-time low of 4.93 per cent in June 2014, when only 293 students passed. There has been an 80 per cent drop between 2005 and 2015, in Indian

medical graduates from foreign universities passing the mandatory screening test that the National Board of Examinations holds. According to the Indian Medical Council Act, 2001, citizens with undergraduate degrees from outside India should clear the screening test conducted twice every year- June and December- before they do a one-year internship in one of the MCI recognised medical colleges. One has to score 50 per cent to clear the test. Students say the test is extremely tough. "Most questions are from postgraduate medical tests," said Raghuram Nayak, who completed his graduation in Ukraine in 2012. The students' association of foreign medical graduates say the board has made the test difficult to

discourage students from going abroad and opt to study in private colleges here that charge as much as Rs 1 crore. These students aren't even considered graduates in India unless they pass the test. Many students spend lakhs in coaching centres to clear the test," said Raghuram. Officials at NBE deny these. An expert committee which studied 11 question papers from 2013 to 2015 submitted a report to the ministry of health stating that 52.78 per cent of the questions were of "low difficulty" and 42.22 per cent questions were of "moderate difficulty". Board executive director Dr Bipin Batra said the test had no negative marking and most students find it difficult because public health priorities of other nations are different from ours. Bookmark or read stories offline

## Jaya reaches out to Stalin, douses row over seating

(Agencies) Chennai: Ushering in what could perhaps be a new political culture in Tamil Nadu, chief



minister J Jayalalitha has not only thanked DMK leader M K Stalin for attending her swearing-in ceremony but also said there was no intention to show him any disrespect. Reacting to strong criticism by DMK chief M Karunanidhi that she had insulted his son, Jayalalitha said in a statement on Tuesday, "I am happy to note that Thiru M K Stalin, MLA, attended the swearing-in ceremony of the new council of ministers. I thank him for attending the event." In a state, where AIADMK and DMK leaders barely exchange civilities, Jayalalitha's gesture in reaching out to Stalin, who was elected as the leader of opposition by his party MLAs on Tuesday, is seen as a baby step towards amicable coexistence. This is the first time in the history of the Tamil Nadu assembly that the treasury benches would be facing a nearly 100-strong opposition. I am informed that the Public Department had followed the protocol manual in allocating seats in the hall for the event," she said, adding, "If this seating plan caused him any discomfort, I would like to assure him that there was no intent to show disrespect to him or his party." She said had the officers brought to her notice that Stalin would be attending the event, she would have instructed them to provide him a seat in the first row, relaxing the norms in the protocol manual.

In a similar instance in 2002, when Jayalalitha was sworn in after being cleared by the courts in a corruption case, she had ordered an amendment of the warrant of precedence to ensure that the then leader of opposition and DMK general secretary K Anbazhagan would be seated in the front row at government functions. He had been seated in the sixth row during her swearing-ceremony that year. Bookmark or read stories offline

## AFSPA must continue in northeast, says RSS

(Agencies) NEW DELHI: RSS supports continuing the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) to flush out terrorists from J&K, Nagaland, Manipur and other disturbed areas of the northeast, indicating that the Sangh and the ruling BJP are on the same page on this issue of strategic importance. The NDA government has overlooked demands for the removal of AFSPA made by various organisations and political parties, including its own ally PDP in Jammu & Kashmir. Endorsing the government stand, RSS-aligned weekly 'Organiser' says in a recent editorial that the government should continue with AFPSA until the police are trained to contain insurgency. "The government should train and prepare



the state police... The Centre should plan for phase-wise extensive training of state police. Till then, Army may be deployed and they should remain armed with AFSPA," writes the weekly. "Terrorists in league with pseudo-human rightists try to implicate Army jawans on fake grounds, even sometimes misusing girls for

allurement. They try to drag jawans into court. The jawan is suspended and his life becomes miserable. The family suffers agony. The jawan is dragged to military court, and civil court as well, At this point, AFSPA comes to the rescue of the jawan," says the RSS mouthpiece.

# At Rs 250/kg this black rice variety makes remote Assam farmers rich



(Agencies) Rice is generally white in colour, or is it? Black is the colour for over 200 farmers in Assam's Goalpara district - and they are laughing all the way to the bank. Started by a single farmer in the district about four years ago, the cultivation of black

rice has caught the fancy of more and more farmers who are turning to it instead of the traditional white rice. Young farmer Upendra Rabha of Aamguripara village near Dudhnoi in the district started cultivating black rice in 2011 as an experiment with guidance

from the local Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK). Although the people of the area, mostly belonging to the Rabha community, did not believe in Upendra, the experiment turned out to be a grand success in the very first year. The number of cultivators now stands at over 200 as black rice fetches more returns for its nutritional value. "In 2011, a scientist of KVK, Dr. Uttam Kumar Baruah, gave me the seeds of a black rice variety called *Oryza Sativa*. I planted the sole seedling in a corner of my paddy field, which gave me 15 panicles from which I harvested 150 gram seed in 2011," Upendra, who harvested about 48 kg of paddy from the 150 gram seeds the next year, told this correspondent. "The farmers in

our area have been cultivating only traditional white rice and they have never heard about black rice. The people of the area did not believe that the black rice could change their fate. However, my efforts brought results in 2012 when I could get 48 kg of black rice. "I took my produce to agri-horticulture fairs organized by the government of Assam and other parts of the state and only then could I realize the huge demand for the black rice," said a happy Upendra. The next year he cultivated black rice in five bighas of land which resulted in nearly 1,500 kg of paddy. Black rice is known for its high nutritional value and is a source of iron, vitamin E, antioxidants, calcium, magnesium and zinc. According to experts, black rice used to be

known as forbidden rice in ancient China. Forbidden not because it looked poisonous because of its black colour, but because of its high nutritional value, which meant it could only be eaten by the emperor and other nobles. Sticky in nature, black rice is also suitable for making porridge and can also be used in preparing sweet dishes. "In 2014, 50 farmers of my village came together for community farming of black rice. We have cultivated in about 100 bighas of land and the yields were eight maunds (300 kg) of rice per bigha of land. We sold it at Rs.100 per kg till last year (for a total earning of Rs.300,000)," he said adding that last year about 100 farmers of Dudhnoi area had cultivated black rice in 500 bighas of land and got a good yield.

# Kashmiri separatists unite after 8 years to halt colony plan for Pandits



(Agencies) Kashmiri separatists have forged an issue-based unity to oppose the establishment of "exclusive colonies" for Pandits and retired military personnel in the Valley, a first since the 2008 Amarnath land agitation.

They are divided ideologically and politically but the Valley's three prominent separatist leaders - Syed Ali Geelani, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and Yasin Malik - met on Monday evening to challenge the PDP-BJP government over "plans" to rehabilitate displaced Pandits and ex-servicemen of the state in such colonies.

Hardline Hurriyat spokesperson Ayaz Akbar said the Mirwaiz and Malik went to Geelani's home at Hyderpora in Srinagar and held a closed-door meeting for about 90 minutes. "This is the first time after 2008 that all the three leaders have come together to discuss any grave issue regarding Kashmir," he said.

In 2008, the three held a series of meetings to mount a joint attack after the PDP-Congress government of the time transferred a piece of land to Shri Amarnath Shrine Board, which manages the annual Hindu

pilgrimage. The agitation and counter-agitation in Jammu shut the state for months. In a unique

show of strength, the trio has now planned a major showdown on Thursday and Friday to prevent what they claim is an attempt to change the state's demography. They called for a complete shutdown on Thursday and "peaceful protests" after Friday prayers against proposed plans for "creation of the separate clusters for the Pandits, establishing of Sainik colonies, harassment of the Jammu Muslims, BJP leader Choudhary Lal Singh's warning to the Jammu Muslims of repeating 1947 carnage and induction of

new anti-Kashmir industrial policy". A joint statement said the time has come for the people to "rise to defend their existence, individuality, their Muslim identity and the disputed status of the Kashmir and to start an effective struggle against the dangerous plans of RSS in Kashmir". Reports said at least three sites have been identified by the Jammu and Kashmir government for setting up colonies for displaced Pandits, who migrated from the Valley after militancy erupted in 1989. The government denied that the colonies will be

exclusively for Pandits. The separatists defended their opposition, saying they can't remain silent over such issues and focus only on their main demand of "freedom". They alleged that the policy makers want to settle the non-state subjects in the state on different pretexts. "Creation of Sainik colonies and separate townships for Pandits is a part of this policy. India is using the same experience in Jammu and Kashmir, which Israel had tested in Palestine and the Indian government is in close contact with the policy makers of Israel in this regard."

# Indian ISIS sympathisers could lose their passports under new crackdown on cyber jihad

(Agencies) Indians influenced by ISIS could soon lose their passports, according to an exhaustive blueprint prepared by the government to tackle the threat from the group.

The document carries several suggestions from Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The Prime Minister has taken a personal interest in devising the game-plan to keep pace with the rapidly evolving dynamics of the global jihadi group.

According to the draft of the new strategy paper on ISIS, or Islamic State, the PM wants a special team to work on the challenges of digital jihad.

Intelligence agencies have failed to curb the growing online radicalisation of young Indians, who are getting free access to the venomous ideology.

The paper says close to 200 Indians are under watch by the security agencies.

The PM has also suggested that experts be roped in to counter the menace in the virtual world. This core team could later involve counter-terror officials focusing on cyberspace.



With hundreds of individuals being monitored across the country, the government is considering the proposal to revoke passports of those marked as ISIS sympathisers.

"This will ensure they cannot travel and be part of the terror group that is looking for recruits from across the globe. We don't want Indians to become poster boys for ISIS," said an officer.

The suggestion to revoke passports is significant as it comes on the heels of a video purportedly released by ISIS featuring many Indians, who joined the group, talking

about taking revenge for the "atrocities" against Muslims in India.

"Youth between 17 and 25 years of age spend hours on the internet and this needs intervention with an effective counter-radicalisation plan," the draft paper says.

India has the world's second-largest Muslim population at nearly 170 million, but only a handful of them have joined the West Asian death cult.

Based on the PM's suggestions, the blueprint also says that many terror groups could be franchises working independently and using the name of ISIS.

# China Warns Obama After Vietnam Arms Deal



(Agencies) BEIJING: China warned President Obama on Tuesday not to spark a fire in Asia after he announced the lifting of a longstanding embargo on lethal arms sales to Vietnam. Obama unveiled the historic step on Monday during his first visit to Vietnam, insisting the move was "not based on China" while simultaneously acknowledging that both nations share a common concern about China's actions in the South China Sea. Beijing, not surprisingly, was unimpressed. It enjoys a

complex relationship with its southern neighbor: the two governments are united in their communist ideology and distaste for Western democracy, but fought a bloody border war as recently as 1979. They now fiercely contest sovereignty over many small islands in the South China Sea. The United States and Vietnam must not spark a "regional tinderbox," the Communist Party mouthpiece, China Daily, warned in an editorial Tuesday, noting concerns that Obama's move was meant to "curb the rise of China." "This, if true, bodes ill for regional peace and stability," it argued. The United States accuses China of militarizing the South China Sea by turning contested reefs and rocks into

putative military bases. Beijing says it is only asserting its "indisputable" sovereignty over the islands and blames the United States for interfering, by encouraging rival claimants to antagonize China. The nationalist Global Times tabloid called Obama's claim that the Vietnam move was not aimed at China "a very poor lie," adding it would exacerbate the "strategic antagonism between Washington and Beijing."

While not an official mouthpiece, the Global Times nevertheless often represents a strain of nationalist thinking within the party. It accused Washington of trying to knit three nets around China - in ideology, in security and in economy and trade - in an attempt to secure

its dominance of the region. While it was unlikely Vietnam, whose weapons systems are largely Russian-made, would import significant quantities of U.S. arms for the moment, the paper said, the move drew it into a "U.S.-dominated regional security system." The paper also implied there was some hypocrisy in the move to cozy up to Communist Vietnam. "When the U.S. has an urgent need to contain China in the South China Sea, the standards of its so-called human rights can be relaxed," it wrote. Experts in China said they expected that U.S. warships would sooner or later be granted access to Cam Ranh Bay, a deep water port that served as the key U.S. naval base during the Vietnam War.

## Docs with foreign degrees flunk test in India

(Agencies) With the Supreme Court-mandated NEET to be in place next year, experts expect a larger number of students to choose colleges in countries like Russia, China and Ukraine, where admission is easier and courses cheaper. However, statistics show students with medical degrees from these countries are finding it increasingly difficult to pass the screening test that allows them to practice in India. The number of students taking the test has doubled but the pass percentage dropped from 50.12 in 2005 to 10.7 in 2015. In this period, the pass rate fluctuated around 20 per cent, dropping to an all-time low of 4.93 per cent in June 2014, when only 293 students passed. There has been an 80 per cent drop between

2005 and 2015, in Indian medical graduates from foreign universities passing the mandatory screening test that the National Board of Examinations holds. According to the Indian Medical Council Act, 2001, citizens with undergraduate degrees from outside India should clear the screening test conducted twice every year- June and December- before they do a one-year internship in one of the MCI recognised medical colleges. One has to score 50 per cent to clear the test. Students say the test is extremely tough. "Most questions are from postgraduate medical tests," said Raghuram Nayak, who completed his graduation in Ukraine in 2012. The students' association of foreign medical graduates say the board

has made the test difficult to discourage students from going abroad and opt to study in private colleges here that charge as much as Rs 1 crore. These students aren't even considered graduates in India unless they pass the test. Many students spend lakhs in coaching centres to clear the test," said Raghuram. Officials at NBE deny these. An expert committee which studied 11 question papers from 2013 to 2015 submitted a report to the ministry of health stating that 52.78 per cent of the questions were of "low difficulty" and 42.22 per cent questions were of "moderate difficulty". Board executive director Dr Bipin Batra said the test had no negative marking and most students find it difficult because public health priorities of other nations are different from ours. Bookmark or read stories offline

## AFSPA must continue in northeast, says RSS

(Agencies) NEW DELHI: RSS supports continuing the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) to flush out terrorists from J&K, Nagaland, Manipur and other disturbed areas of the northeast, indicating that the Sangh and the ruling BJP are on the same page on this issue of strategic importance. The NDA government has overlooked demands for the removal of AFSPA made by various organisations and political parties, including its own ally PDP in Jammu & Kashmir. Endorsing the government stand, RSS-aligned weekly 'Organiser' says in a recent editorial that the government should continue with AFSPA until the police are trained to contain insurgency. "The government should train and prepare the state police... The Centre should plan



for phase-wise extensive training of state police. Till then, Army may be deployed and they should remain armed with AFSPA," writes the weekly. "Terrorists in league with pseudo-human rightists try to implicate Army jawans on fake grounds, even sometimes misusing girls for allurements. They try to drag jawans into court. The jawan is suspended and his life becomes miserable. The family suffers agony. The jawan is dragged to military court, and civil court as well, At

this point, AFSPA comes to the rescue of the jawan," says the RSS mouthpiece. It has also taken on JNU student activist Kanhaiya Kumar for his alleged support to left-wing extremism. "There are many Kanhaiyas who support anti-national activities in the name of free speech," says the weekly, also alleging that certain parliamentarians are on "the payroll of terrorists to raise questions in favour of anti-national elements".

## For cow slaughter, give Rs 9,000 to gaushala: HC

(Agencies) Chandigarh: In March 2015, the Haryana assembly unanimously passed one of the most stringent Acts against cow slaughter - the Haryana Gauvansh Sanrakshan and Gausamvardhan Act - which included rigorous imprisonment up to 10 years and a fine of up to Rs 1 lakh.



The Punjab and Haryana high court however has created a different sort of precedent where men accused of cow slaughter can become eligible for premature release from jail by donating money to a gaushala. The court has ordered premature release of six people who were convicted for cow slaughter in Yamunanagar with the condition that they donate Rs 9,000 each to a specific gaushala in Panipat. A single bench headed by Justice Hari Pal Verma passed these orders on May 14 while hearing a revision petition filed by Mohammed Aslam, Mohammed Akhlak, Gulzar, Mohammed Arshad, Mohammed Gulfan and Mohammed Istakar. The accused were booked on April 21, 2008, under the Punjab Prohibition of Cow Slaughter Act, 1955, after they were held with 20 oxen which were being taken from Haryana to Uttar Pradesh for slaughtering. On February 4, 2013, a local court sentenced them to simple imprisonment of six months and a fine of Rs 1,000 each. An appeal against the order was dismissed by the court of additional sessions judge of Yamunanagar on February 18 this year. The accused were in jail for about three months when they appealed in the high court. They restricted their plea to the quantum of the jail term. They demanded that the sentence be reduced to the period already undergone. It was also submitted that there was no other case against them. The government counsel was against any leniency, stating that the men had committed a serious crime and hurt the religious sentiments of people at large. The court held, "In these circumstances, it is directed that the sentence awarded to the petitioners shall be reduced to the period already undergone by them subject to their payment of cost of Rs 9,000 each being deposited at Govind Gaushala GT Road, Panipat. The petitioners be released forthwith, if not required in any other case after payment of cost as well as the fine, if not paid so far".

# Can you spot a terrorist just by looking at their face?

New software can tell if you are anything from a paedophile to an ace poker player by analysing your features



reflected in our face. It's a kind of signal.' The firm, which was founded in Tel Aviv in 2014, has developed a database of 15 classifiers which Gilboa says are used to determine personality traits with 80 per cent accuracy. Faception showed off the technology at an amateur poker tournament where it predicted which four competitors would be the best by comparing their pictures with a database of professional players. At the end, two of those four ended up among the event's three finalists, it was reported by The Washington Post. The Faception website says: 'Utilising advanced machine-learning techniques, we developed and continue to evolve an array of classifiers. 'These classifiers represent a certain persona, with a unique personality type, a collection



(Agencies) A company claims it can identify terrorists, paedophiles and ace poker players simply by looking at their face. Faception, an Israeli start-up, says its technology can spot character traits that are undetectable to the naked eye. The company claims its software classified nine of the 11 Paris massacre jihadists as terrorists from their facial features without

inputting any prior knowledge of their involvement. It appears to have been so successful, the firm says it is now working with a homeland security agency to help identify criminals. Shai Gilboa, Faception chief executive, said: 'We understand the human much better than other humans understand each other. 'Our personality is determined by our DNA and

of personality traits or behaviours. 'Our algorithms can score an individual according to their fit to these classifiers.' However, experts questioned whether the technology could lead to a Minority Report-style system of justice where people are placed under suspicion before they have even committed an offence. They also warn that such software is often only as accurate as the

information that is programmed in in the first place. Pedro Domingos, a professor of computer science at the University of Washington, said: 'Can I predict that you're an axe murderer by looking at your face and therefore should I arrest you? 'You can see how this would be controversial.' Gilboa says the company will never make his classifiers that predict negative traits available to the public.

## Sri Lanka floods

Death toll rises to 101 as waters recede



(Agencies) Colombo: Floods subsided across Sri Lanka Tuesday revealing the full extent of damage from last week's deluge that also triggered landslides, officials said, as the death toll crossed 100. The Disaster Management Centre (DMC) said 101 people were known to have died last week while another 100 people were still listed as missing in the worst hit central district of Kegalle.

Military officials in the district, 100 kilometres (60 miles) north-east of the capital, said a search was still under way for the missing people although there was little hope of finding anyone alive under the tonnes of mud. "The flood waters have receded across the country," DMC spokesman Pradeep Kodippili told AFP. "Over 530 houses have been completely destroyed and another 4,000 partly damaged." He said most of the capital's flood-affected population had returned to their homes since Monday when the water levels started going down. At the height of the floods, a third of Colombo's 650,000 residents were driven out of their homes, according to official figures. The Finance Ministry has estimated the damage to small businesses and industries at about \$2 billion. The government has promised compensation to victims, but details are yet to be announced.

Sri Lanka's parliament has been recalled to meet Wednesday, a week ahead of schedule, to discuss reconstruction and rehabilitation following the worst flooding in the capital in nearly a quarter of a century.

## EU referendum: Donald Trump and Boris Johnson kiss in British mural

(Agencies) London: A giant mural showing Donald Trump passionately kissing Boris Johnson has appeared on the side of a building in Britain, one month before its referendum on EU membership. The mural shows the likely US Republican presidential nominee and the former mayor of London — both populists intent on shaking up their countries' political establishments — locking lips. Trump is cradling Johnson's shock of blond hair in his hand. The mural in Bristol, southwest England, was commissioned by We Are Europe, a campaign group which wants Britain to remain in the European Union at the 23 June vote. Johnson is a leading figure in the "Leave" campaign who has been tipped as a possible future prime minister if Prime Minister David Cameron, who wants to remain in the EU, loses the vote. Meanwhile, Trump has said Britain would be better off outside the EU. "People need to look at this image and



think: 'Is this the future I want?'" said Harriet Kingaby, one of the founders of We Are Europe. The 4.5 metre high artwork has echoes of a mural of Soviet and East German leaders Leonid Brezhnev and Erich Honecker known as The Kiss which was painted on to the Berlin Wall in 1990. Bristol is known as the spiritual home of graffiti artist Banksy, although the Trump and Johnson mural was created by artists Felix Braun and Jack Dones.

## Married father-of-two, 36, pleads guilty to stealing nude photos and videos

(Agencies) A Pennsylvania man pleaded guilty Tuesday to hacking into the email and online accounts of several female celebrities and stealing private information, including nude photos and videos. Ryan Collins, 36, was accused of gaining access to more than 100 Google and Apple accounts from November 2012 to September 2014. Many of those accounts belonged to famous women, including Jennifer Lawrence and Kate Upton. The father-of-two pleaded guilty in federal court to one count of gaining unauthorized access to a protected



computer to obtain information. Federal prosecutors said Collins used a scheme called phishing in which he was able to get victims to provide information about their accounts in response to emails that appeared to come directly from Apple and Google. In the scheme, he asked account-holders to provide their log-in data, the Los Angeles Times reported. In some instances, authorities said, he was able to obtain all the files his victims had stored online, including nude photos and videos. No celebrities were identified in a plea agreement filed in March.



**India Association Of Long Island**  
*Cordially Invites You & Your Family*  
on  
**Saturday, June 18th, 2016**

To our 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Fund Raiser

&  
**GALA DINNER 2016**

Meet IALI 2016  
Distinguished  
Honorees !



A fun-filled  
evening with  
food, entertainment  
and fun

**THE HUNTINGTON HILTON**

598 Broad Hollow Road, Melville, NY 11747

Time 6:00 PM To 11:00 PM

Music, Dance, Entertainment, Exotic Dinner Cuisine and Much More.

Ticket :-  
**\$100/person**

For Sponsorships, Vendors & Tickets Visit Us Online @ [www.ialinewyork.org](http://www.ialinewyork.org)

**President, Beena Kothari (631) 988-1280**  
[presidentiali.1978@gmail.com](mailto:presidentiali.1978@gmail.com)

**Gunjan Rastogi (718) 490-0736**  
Vice President

**Lalit Aery (917) 750-2473**  
Secretary

**Vimal Goyal (516) 978-7125**  
Treasurer

Gala Chairman: Dr. Jagdish K. Gupta, MD - Past President 917-941-2886

Saroj Aery  
917 750 5764

Anu Jain  
516 728 4186

Veena Lamba  
516 395 1468

**Ved Behl (Finance)**  
631 368 3571

Hargovind Gupta  
516 669 4220

Amita Karwal  
516 303 6803

Mohinder Singh Miglani  
516 690 1257

**Neelam Modi (Cultural)**  
516 987 0053

Kiran Gupta  
631 384 4049

Sushil Khanna  
516 439 0278

**Prafulba Vaghela (Membership)**  
516 708 3928



# Delivering News, uncompromised & Unbiased for the last 13 Years

Some call us a Media House, Others call us an Institution to learn from



**\*Print**

**\*Online**

**\* TV**



**Media Partners USA LLC**

**Tel: Editorial 917 612 3158 Ad Sales 516 474 7573**

**www.thesouthasianinsider.com www.joshindiatv.com www.punjabiduniya.com**

**Reg.d & Mailing Office: P.O. Box 7005, Hicksville New York 11801**

**Corporate Office: 626 RexCorp Plaza, 6th Floor, Uniondale, NY 11556**



# Machine Bias

*There's software used across the United States to predict future criminals. And it's biased against blacks.*

On a spring afternoon in 2014, Brisha Borden was running late to pick up her god-sister from school when she spotted an unlocked kid's blue Huffy bicycle and a silver Razor scooter. Borden and a friend grabbed the bike and scooter and tried to ride them down the street in the Fort Lauderdale suburb of Coral Springs.

Just as the 18-year-old girls were realizing they were too big for the tiny conveyances — which belonged to a 6-year-old boy — a woman came running after them saying, "That's my kid's stuff." Borden and her friend immediately dropped the bike and scooter and walked away.

But it was too late — a neighbor who witnessed the heist had already called the police. Borden and her friend were arrested and charged with burglary and petty theft for the items, which were valued at a total of \$80.

Compare their crime with a similar one: The previous summer, 41-year-old Vernon Prater was picked up for shoplifting \$86.35 worth of tools from a nearby Home Depot store.

Prater was the more seasoned criminal. He had already been convicted of armed robbery and attempted armed robbery, for which he served five years in prison, in addition to another armed robbery charge. Borden had a record, too, but it was for misdemeanors committed when she was a juvenile.

Yet something odd happened when Borden and Prater were booked into jail: A computer program spat out a score predicting the likelihood of each committing a future crime. Borden — who is black — was rated a high risk. Prater — who is white — was rated a low risk.

Two years later, we know the computer algorithm got it exactly backward. Borden has not been charged with any new crimes.

Prater is serving an eight-year prison term for subsequently breaking into a warehouse and stealing thousands of dollars' worth of electronics.

Scores like this — known as risk assessments — are increasingly common in courtrooms across the nation. They are used to inform decisions about who can be set free at every stage of the criminal justice system, from assigning bond amounts — as is the case in Fort Lauderdale — to even more fundamental decisions about defendants' freedom. In Arizona, Colorado, Delaware, Kentucky, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin, the results of such assessments are given to judges during criminal sentencing.

Rating a defendant's risk of future crime is often done in conjunction with an evaluation of a defendant's rehabilitation needs. The Justice Department's National Institute of Corrections now encourages the use of such combined assessments at every stage of the criminal justice process. And a landmark sentencing reform bill currently pending in Congress would mandate the use of such assessments in federal prisons.

In 2014, then U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder warned that the risk scores might be injecting bias into the courts. He called for the U.S. Sentencing Commission to study their use. "Although these measures were crafted with the best of intentions, I am concerned that they inadvertently undermine our efforts to ensure individualized and equal justice," he said, adding, "they may exacerbate unwarranted and unjust disparities that are already far too common in our criminal justice system and in our society."

The sentencing commission did not, however, launch a study of risk scores. So ProPublica did, as part of a larger examination of the powerful, largely hidden effect of algorithms in American life.

We obtained the risk scores assigned to more than 7,000 people arrested in Broward County, Florida, in 2013 and 2014 and checked to see how many were charged with new crimes over the next two years, the same benchmark used by the creators of the algorithm.

The score proved remarkably unreliable in forecasting violent crime: Only 20 percent of the people predicted to commit violent crimes actually went on to do so.

When a full range of crimes were taken into account — including misdemeanors such as driving with an expired license — the algorithm was somewhat more accurate than a coin flip. Of those deemed likely to re-offend, 61 percent were arrested for any subsequent crimes within two years.

We also turned up significant racial disparities, just as Holder feared. In forecasting who would re-offend, the algorithm made mistakes with black and white defendants at roughly the same rate but in very different ways. Could this disparity be explained by defendants' prior crimes or the type of crimes they were arrested for? No. We ran a statistical test that isolated the effect of race from criminal history and recidivism, as well as from defendants' age and gender. Black defendants were still 77 percent more likely to be pegged as at higher risk of committing a future violent crime and 45 percent more likely to be predicted to commit a future crime of any kind. The algorithm used to create the Florida risk scores is a product of a for-profit company, Northpointe. The company disputes our analysis.

In a letter, it criticized ProPublica's methodology and defended the accuracy of its test: "Northpointe does not agree that the results of your analysis, or the claims being made based upon that analysis, are correct or that they accurately reflect the outcomes from the application of the model."

Northpointe's software is among

the most widely used assessment tools in the country. The company does not publicly disclose the calculations used to arrive at defendants' risk scores, so it is not possible for either defendants or the public to see what might be driving the disparity. (On Sunday, Northpointe gave ProPublica the basics of its future-crime formula — which includes factors such as education levels, and whether a defendant has a job. It did not share the specific calculations, which it said are proprietary.)

Northpointe's core product is a set of scores derived from 137 questions that are either answered by defendants or pulled from criminal records. Race is not one of the questions. The survey asks defendants such things as: "Was one of your parents ever sent to jail or prison?" "How many of your friends/acquaintances are taking drugs illegally?" and "How often did you get in fights while at school?" The questionnaire also asks people to agree or disagree with statements such as "A hungry person has a right to steal" and "If people make me angry or lose my temper, I can be dangerous."

The appeal of risk scores is obvious: The United States locks up far more people than any other country, a disproportionate number of them black. For more than two centuries, the key decisions in the legal process, from pretrial release to sentencing to parole, have been in the hands of human beings guided by their instincts and personal biases.

If computers could accurately predict which defendants were likely to commit new crimes, the criminal justice system could be fairer and more selective about who is incarcerated and for how long. The trick, of course, is to make sure the computer gets it right. If it's wrong in one direction, a dangerous criminal could go free. If it's wrong in another direction, it could result in someone unfairly receiving a harsher sentence or waiting longer for parole than is appropriate. The first time Paul Zilly heard of his score — and realized how much was riding on

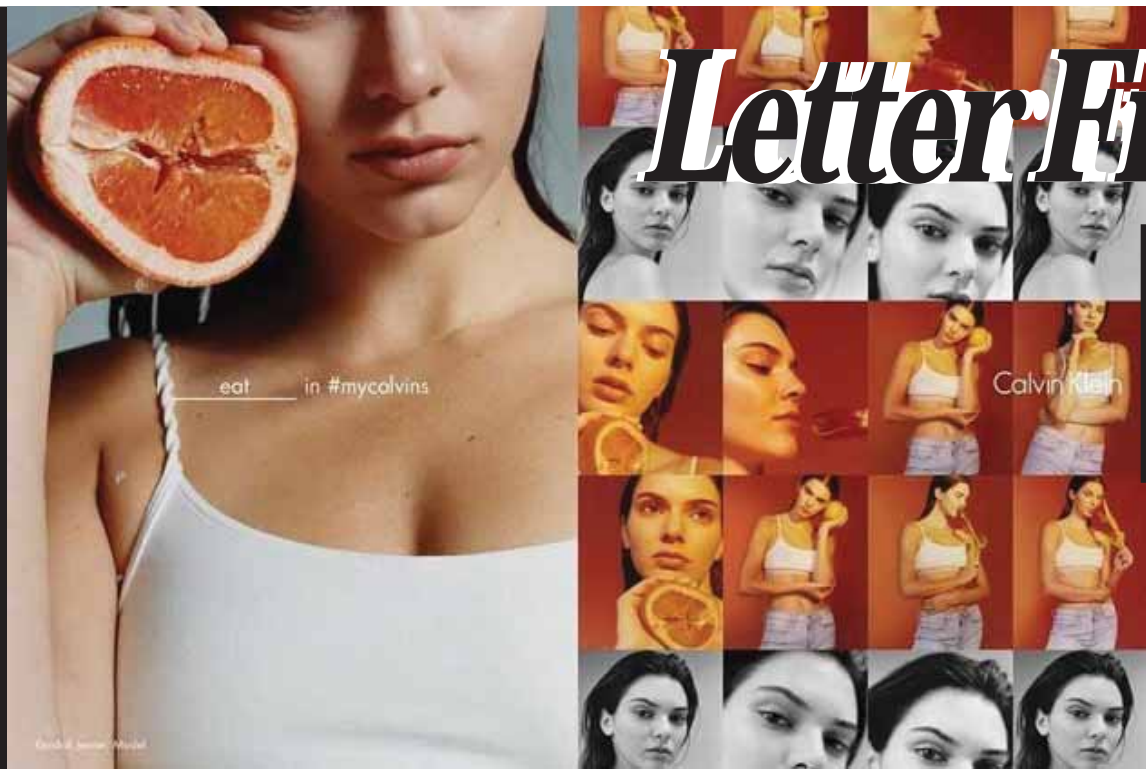
it — was during his sentencing hearing on Feb. 15, 2013, in court in Barron County, Wisconsin. Zilly had been convicted of stealing a push lawnmower and some tools. The prosecutor recommended a year in county jail and follow-up supervision that could help Zilly with "staying on the right path." His lawyer agreed to a plea deal.

But Judge James Babler had seen Zilly's scores. Northpointe's software had rated Zilly as a high risk for future violent crime and a medium risk for general recidivism. "When I look at the risk assessment," Babler said in court, "it is about as bad as it could be." Then Babler overturned the plea deal that had been agreed on by the prosecution and defense and imposed two years in state prison and three years of supervision.

Criminologists have long tried to predict which criminals are more dangerous before deciding whether they should be released. Race, nationality and skin color were often used in making such predictions until about the 1970s, when it became politically unacceptable, according to a survey of risk assessment tools by Columbia University law professor Bernard Harcourt. In the 1980s, as a crime wave engulfed the nation, lawmakers made it much harder for judges and parole boards to exercise discretion in making such decisions. States and the federal government began instituting mandatory sentences and, in some cases, abolished parole, making it less important to evaluate individual offenders.

But as states struggle to pay for swelling prison and jail populations, forecasting criminal risk has made a comeback.

Dozens of risk assessments are being used across the nation — some created by for-profit companies such as Northpointe and others by nonprofit organizations. (One tool being used in states including Kentucky and Arizona, called the Public Safety Assessment, was developed by the Laura and John Arnold Foundation, which also is a funder of ProPublica.)



# Letter From London

**"Nothing comes between me and my Calvin's...." was the tag line that had made Calvin Klein a global brand but its provocative adverts may have gone too far NABANITA SIRCAR**

London is one city where the weird and wonderful keep happening side by side. Last weekend, Flip Out, the city's largest trampoline park, opened in Wandsworth. With more than 120 trampolines over 45,000 square feet, the park has features like the snazzy parkour area, so you can try free-running without being terrified that you'll smack your head on the pavement, basketball hoops so you can practice those dunks, a special stunt area and a massive pit filled with 38,000 foam blocks you can dive into. There is a Pinball area where you can endlessly bounce between two trampoline walls, along with Flip Fit cardio sessions and Flip Yoga.

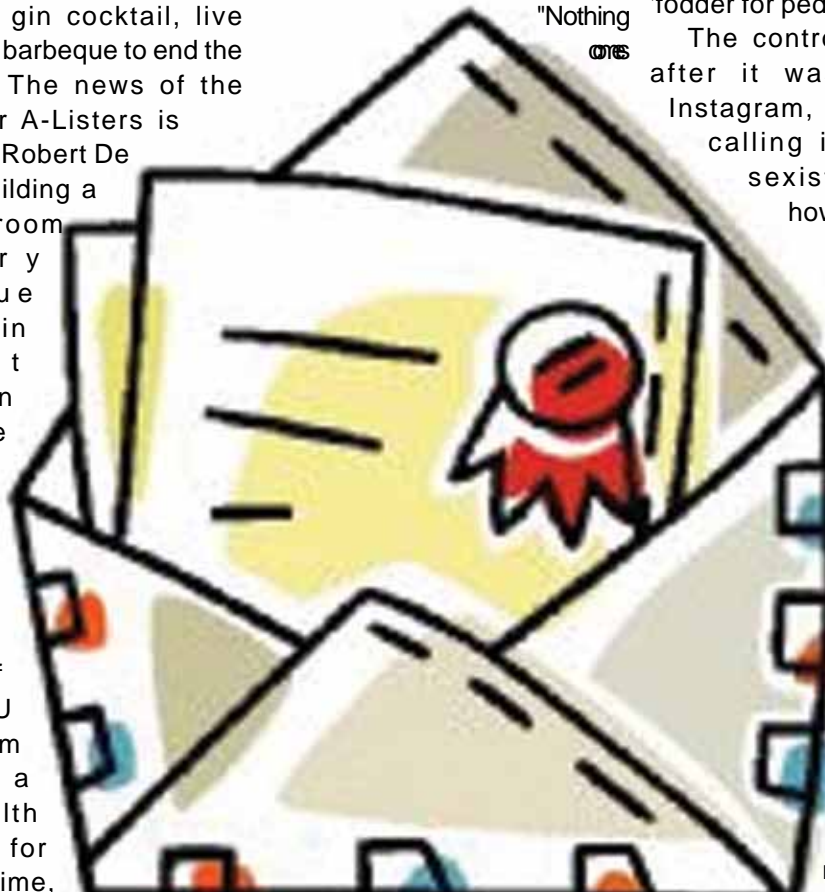
In another part of the city, Aperol's rooftop bar at the Bird Of Smithfield had a weekend inspired by the Terrazza Aperol in Milan. The hang-out featured a GIF photobooth, where guests could strike a pose but the main attraction was the Aperol Spritz Socials, a series of inspiring talks with London's hottest influencers. The most bizarre but delightful event featured the eccentric Tweed Run in its eighth outing. Hundreds of cyclists gathered in flat caps, trilbies and berets for a 12-mile ride while about 1000 people dressed in Harris Tweed jackets began their ride from Clerkenwell in what is described as a "bicycle ride with a bit of style". Enthusiasts had travelled from Ukraine, Netherlands and various other countries and

streets were lined with people eagerly taking pictures of the well-dressed riders, some on vintage bikes, including penny-farthings. The cyclists stopped for tea in Tavistock Square and lunch in Kensington Gardens. The event finished back at Clerkenwell for a bit of a 'jolly knees-up' at a garden party with free gin cocktail, live music and barbeque to end the evening. The news of the month for A-Listers is that actor Robert De Niro is building a new 83-room luxury boutique hotel in Covent Garden called The Wellington Hotel.

**Beaches in Danger**  
In the midst of the EU Referendum debate, a EU health rule will, for the first time, see 10 beaches in England and 17 in Scotland getting warning signs because of 'poor' water quality measured over a period of four years. Signs advising people not to swim are being put up in beaches including parts of Clacton, Margate, East Looe, Ilfracombe and Burnham along with Cleveleys, north of Blackpool, Allonby and Silloth in Cumbria, and Spittal, Northumberland. Some of these are the most popular

beaches in the UK. The signs are advisory and do not amount to a ban. Some of these famous tourist spots during summer will inevitably put some visitors off, which will be a blow to the local economy. So check EU warnings before you plan your holiday.

**Upskirting Scandal**  
"Nothing comes between me and my Calvin's...."



between me and my Calvin's...." Was the tag line that had made Calvin Klein a global brand but its provocative adverts may have gone too far—or too high. The company's new ad campaign has been severely criticized for a total lack of social responsibility. The row is mainly over the "upskirt" shot of model Klara Kristin flashing her knickers which has become the focus of social

media criticism. The campaign ad's removal and an also includes another shot of an anonymous model with her hands inside her knickers, one of reality star Kendall Jenner posing with a grapefruit that looks like a woman's genitals and another of a model in her Calvin's taking a selfie (selfie of her bottom). They images are akin to soft porn and critics have slammed the fashion house for ignoring the kind of influence it can have on teenagers. The Karla shot has been called 'disgusting' with some going so far as to say the young-looking model's hyper-sexualised image is 'fodder for pedophiles.'

The controversy started after it was posted on Instagram, with followers calling it creepy and sexist. Klara has, however, remained defiant and written on Instagram: 'I LOVE this photo... All this was comparable to discussion 'satanism'. The craze has about it makes me think about how alienated and scared some people are to the female human body.' She has got some support but for most people it's not the underwear nor its sexually explicit nature but the angle of the image. Upskirting is seen as exploitive and classified as sexual harassment by the National Centre on Sexual Exploitation (NCOSE). In the photograph Klara does look much younger than her 22 years. This is not the first time Calvin Klein has been slammed for its daring adverts. NCOSE has now started a petition for the

ad's removal and an apology from the American fashion brand.

**Gluten Tag**  
In most supermarkets, the 'free from' section of food products is increasing, claiming to be free from lactose or dairy. The latest addition is gluten. Gluten-free cakes, bread, pesto and various sauces or even gluten-free Easter eggs are easily available. Even products that do not have gluten now go with the specification 'gluten-free'. The hype has been going crazy. You can find gluten-free ready meals in the "healthier choices" chill cabinet. It wasn't too long ago that gluten-free food was only available on prescription. That was before Gwyneth Paltrow got onto the gluten-free bandwagon and Americans began to follow blindly in her footsteps. One US TV show host even joked that gluten t h i s was comparable to 'satanism'. The craze has now crossed the Atlantic, which was inevitable, given the global fads for diets.

What they forget to put on those "gluten-free" products is the fact that gluten-free can be high in fat and calories and cause nutritional deficiencies and obscure an actual diagnosis of coeliac disease. Also experts haven't quite figured out why healthy people adopt the diet except that most say 'no reason'. It has also been found that there is no scientific evidence that a gluten-free diet is beneficial for children without a verified diagnosis of coeliac disease or wheat allergy. Here's food for thought—fads, by their very definition, never last that long anyway!

# Emails Add to Hillary Clinton's Central Problem: Voters Just Don't Trust Her

For more than a year, Hillary Clinton has traveled the country talking to voters about her policy plans. She vowed to improve infrastructure in her first 100 days in office, promised to increase funding for Alzheimer's research and proposed a \$10 billion plan to combat drug and alcohol addiction. But as the Democratic primary contest comes to a close, any hopes Mrs. Clinton had of running a high-minded, policy-focused campaign have collided with a more visceral problem. Voters just don't trust her. The Clinton campaign had hoped to use the coming weeks to do everything they could to shed that image and convince voters that Mrs. Clinton can be trusted. Instead, they must contend with a damaging new report by the State Department's inspector general that Mrs. Clinton had not sought or received approval to use a private email server while she was secretary of state. It is not just that the inspector general found fault with her email practices. The report speaks directly to a wounding perception that Mrs. Clinton is not forthright or transparent. After months of Mrs. Clinton's saying she used a private email for convenience, and that she was willing to cooperate fully with investigations into her handling of official business at the State Department, the report, delivered to Congress on Wednesday, undermined both claims. Mrs. Clinton, through her lawyers, declined to be interviewed by the inspector general as part of the review. And when staff members raised concerns about the wisdom of her using a nongovernment email address, they were hushed by State Department officials, who instructed them "never to speak of the secretary's personal email system again." In November 2010, when a State Department aide requested she release her personal email address or start using an official address, Mrs. Clinton said she was open to using a second device or email address but added, "I don't want any risk of the personal being accessible." Mrs. Clinton's allies on Wednesday jumped on the fact that the report also revealed that Colin Powell, the secretary of state under President George

W. Bush, and other State Department officials had also exclusively used personal email accounts. "The inspector general documents just how consistent her email practices were with those of other secretaries and senior officials at the State Department," said Brian Fallon, a Clinton spokesman.

But Mr. Powell is not running for president against a likely opponent, Donald J. Trump, who has now adopted the drumbeat of "Crooked Hillary."

"Crooked Hillary, crooked Hillary, she's as crooked as they come," Mr. Trump said at a rally in Anaheim, Calif.

His attacks came as Mrs. Clinton tried to break through with her own criticism that Mr. Trump had profited from the 2008 housing crisis.

But the Clinton campaign's new effort to define Mr. Trump as a con man who rips off the little guy for his own gain will be met with the trickle of new developments related to Mrs. Clinton's private email. The F.B.I. is separately investigating whether Mrs. Clinton and her aides exposed sensitive national security information in their email correspondence. She has already turned over 55,000 pages of emails to the State Department. And Mrs. Clinton's campaign has struggled to put the issue behind her. Mrs. Clinton spent much of last summer insisting she did not need to apologize for keeping a private server in her home in Chappaqua, N.Y. because the practice was "allowed." Then,

in September, she offered a tortured apology, acknowledging in an interview with ABC News that using a private email server had been a "mistake." She added, "I'm sorry about that." Mrs. Clinton has long contended that voters care more about issues — like equal pay for women, widely available child care, and making college more affordable — than how she handled her emails as secretary of state. Even her Democratic primary opponent, Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, tried to squelch the storm over the private server during the first Democratic debate last fall. But something has seeped into the electorate. A presidential

campaign always contends with incoming fire, but it is also designed to serve as an infomercial to present a candidate's best attributes. Instead, Mrs. Clinton has gone from having a 69 percent approval rating and being one of the most popular public figures in the country when she left the State Department in 2013 to having one of the highest disapproval ratings of any likely presidential nominee of a major party. Roughly 53 percent of voters said they had an unfavorable opinion of Mrs. Clinton in a new ABC-News Washington Post poll. Some 60 percent of voters said they had an unfavorable opinion of Mr. Trump.

## Halal Guys to donate \$30,000 to LaGuardia Community College

"But I love this place," he said of the Halal Guys cart. "The food is really good." That's 6,000 sandwiches, in check form. "It must be good if there's a line this long!" said Kyle McCloud, a man from Jacksonville, Fla., who was about to sample his first chicken platter. The original Halal Guys are three immigrants from Egypt — Mohamed Abouelenein, Ahmed Elsaka and Abdelbaset Elsayed — who started out with a hot dog cart in Midtown Manhattan. They switched to Halal food in the early 1990s after noticing demand among taxi drivers.

"If you want to know what's good and what's bad in any town, you ask a cabdriver," said Hesham Hegazy, the director for business and brand development at Halal Guys. "It took no time for the word to get out and the line to start building." The Halal

Guys first donated to LaGuardia, which is in the Long Island City neighborhood, in 2013, when their entire operation was a couple of food trucks, some piles of meat and pita bread serving the lunch crowd. Today, they have signed about 335 franchise agreements, Mr. Hegazy said, with locations in the Philippines, California and Texas. This gift, like the two previous ones, will go to the Halal Guys scholarship fund, which is somewhat less famous than their gyros or the white sauce on them.

The gift is being funded by Dan Rowe, the chief executive of Fransmart, the restaurant franchise consulting firm that works with the Halal Guys. He had promised Mr. Hegazy that if the company signed a deal in South Korea, he would give part of his commission to LaGuardia, which serves

50,000 students a year, most of them poor and many of them immigrants. Mr. Abouelenein, one of the founders, sent three of his children there, one of whom now runs the company.

At lunchtime on Thomson Avenue on Wednesday, two or three food carts dotted each block on the busy thoroughfare. There was a Korean Grill and a coffee cart ("If you're not shaking, you need another cup," a sign near the bagels read). There was a waffles-and-crepes truck, and a cart offering cheeseburgers and lamb gyros. There was a lonely-looking woman selling fruit. But only the Halal Guys seemed to have an employee whose entire job was to manage the line. Mr. Hegazy said they also employ a bouncer on weekend nights to control the crowd at one of their Midtown spots.

## Stage set, it'll be all action for Modi government in next 3 years

The first two years are being seen as a period of consolidation and fixing of priorities while the stress will now be on programme implementation.

Sources familiar with decision-making said the government faced multiple challenges that hurt economic growth and led to "policy paralysis" because of high inflation, low growth, an external crisis due to currency depreciation, shortage of coal affecting power generation, stalled projects and a demoralized civil service.

The government has taken a series of measures to restore confidence and boost growth through fast-track decision making, a crackdown on corruption and black money, concerted efforts to tame inflation and shoring up strategic ties. This period saw the launch of mega programmes to improve sanitation, attract investment with Make in India, labour reforms, improvements in ease of doing business, Skill India drive, approving a new bankruptcy law and a

massive financial inclusion programme, the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana. This is a massive social security scheme covering 10 crore people.

The time in office so far has been used to clean up the mines and minerals segment through a transparent process for auctioning of mineral resources, spectrum, FM radio and resolving issues linked to stalled projects. So far, the government has claimed, there have been no complaints of corruption. The government's fight against black money has made progress even though it is a long haul. The new law against foreign black money resulted in disclosure of Rs 4,100 crore. The 32-year-old tax treaty with Mauritius was amended and a new compliance window was allowed from June 1 for domestic black money.

The introduction of direct benefit transfer and Aadhaar resulted in huge savings for the government and helped plug loopholes in the subsidy regime. An estimated Rs 25,000 crore has been

saved using these tools. The government feels it is well-poised with growth estimated to be around 7.6 per cent in the current fiscal against the backdrop of a slowing economy and inflation tamed at around 5 per cent level — well within the RBI's comfort zone. The government has stuck to fiscal consolidation, which has provided enough room to the RBI to cut interest rates. The robust growth has been acknowledged across the globe with the IMF terming India as a bright spot amid a slowing global economy. Relations with Pakistan have been challenging but the government, while determined to engage, will not lose sight of core concerns over terrorism. With China, India has been forceful in raising the boundary dispute. While there is debate over the government's reforms record, political opposition in Parliament has blocked some key measures like the Constitution amendment bill to implement the GST.

# *Ninth Season of the MetLife South Asian Spelling Bee Announced Accra, Ghana added as International center*

register them online at [www.southasianspellingbee.com](http://www.southasianspellingbee.com). Organized by Touchdown Media Inc., the 2016 MetLife South Asian Spelling Bee will be conducted in 12 locations across the United States starting on June 11. Regional level events will be held in Los Angeles, the Bay Area, Dallas, Houston, Chicago, Seattle, Atlanta, Charlotte, Washington, D.C. Metro, New Jersey, New York and Boston. All events will be free to attend and open to the public. Accra, Ghana was announced as the 13th center from where spellers of South Asian descent will qualify for the finals. "For the past eight years, the Bee has consistently provided a firm platform for the community to come together and hone their craft. It's become a family activity that contributes towards the

overall development of the child. We are proud to enter our eighth consecutive year and look forward to engaging some of these wonderful spellers," said Rahul Walia, founder of the South Asian Spelling Bee and CEO of Touchdown Media Inc. Each competition will begin with a written test of 25 words. The participants must spell 15 or more words correctly to advance to the afternoon oral round, which will be conducted by experienced pronouncers and judges. The top three in the oral round will receive prize money. The top two spellers of each regional competition will advance to the finals to be held in New Jersey in August. Similar to previous years MetLife has once again funded the \$10,000 champion's grand prize that will be awarded to the winner at the finals. This

year, the Bee is proudly presented by Britannia - Britannia Industries Limited is India's leading food company and marketer of cookies, dairy products and bread, while Kawan- the world's most popular Roti paratha brand returns as the powered by sponsor and as always, SONY Entertainment Television Asia is the exclusive broadcast partner for the MetLife South Asian Spelling Bee and will be airing the series across 120 countries. Britannia is extremely happy and excited to continue its association with this platform as a presenting sponsor. With its 120+ years of golden heritage of making healthy, fresh & delicious food, Britannia is a household name among South Asian consumers. This unique platform will help Britannia to reach out to Gen Z & showcase some of its popular

brands like "Milk Bikis" and the new introduction, "Milk Bikis Creams" which are perfectly suited for the budding spellers. "Kawan is proud to return as a sponsor and we have tremendous faith in contributing towards crucial family time for the community. We look forward to getting to know the spellers and their families through this wonderful journey," said Tim Tan, Managing Director Kawan Food.

"Year over year, the MetLife South Asian Spelling Bee has made for great programing that gels with our ethos of compete family entertainment. We are all about family values and encourage platforms such as these that highlight the talent of our community," said Jaideep Janakiram, Head of North America, Sony Entertainment Television-Asia.

## *US backs India-Iran Chabahar port deal*

misgivings among some lawmakers whether there could be a strategic and military dimension to the tripartite agreement.

US senators closely examined assistant secretary of state for South Asia Nisha Desai Biswal on the Chabahar deal during a hearing, but the official said

Washington recognized that from New Delhi's perspective that Iran represents a gateway into Afghanistan and Central Asia. She had not seen any sign of Indian engagement with Tehran in areas such as military cooperation, which might be of concern to the United States, she added.

"For India to be able to contribute to the economic development of Afghanistan, it needs access that it does not readily have across its land boundary. And India is seeking to deepen its energy relationship with the Central Asian countries and looking for routes that would facilitate that," Desai-Biswal told

the Senate foreign relations committee, assuring members that the Obama administration has been "very clear with the Indians what our security concerns have been and we would continue to engage them on those issues."

"They (Indians) have been very responsive and receptive to our briefings, to what we believe the lines are. And we have to examine the details of the Chabahar announcement to see where it falls in that place," she added.

Given President Barack Obama's own outreach towards Iran and US difficulty in maintaining a toe-hold in landlocked Afghanistan because of its problems with Pakistan, Washington is broadly supportive of the Chabahar deal, particularly since it outflanks the China-Pakistan axis in neighboring Gwadar. But such is the reflexive suspicion in US over Iran, often stimulated by the so-called Israeli lobby, that many lawmakers still have reservations about any deal with Tehran.

While some senators wanted to know if the deal to develop the Chabahar port violated any sanctions against Iran, others wanted to know if India was ready to sign a formal security cooperation agreement with the US during Prime Minister Modi's visit to Washington next month. India and the United States have already strengthened their security cooperation in several areas and "We're looking at what additional areas we can engage in to deepen that cooperation," Biswal replied cautiously.

The pow-wow over India-Iran relations came amid a precipitous slide in US-Pakistan

ties over the drone strike that killed Taliban leader Mulla Mansour, purportedly while he was returning from Iran under the impression that Pakistan had bought an insurance for him against drone strikes because he was a key figure in talks.

But US officials said he was taken out because he was an obstacle to peace. "Mansour represented an effort to rekindle the war, rekindle the conflict, restoke the violence in Afghanistan, and was not interested in pursuing peace. We believe that an Afghan-led, Afghan-owned peace process is the way ultimately to resolve the conflict in Afghanistan," state department spokesman Mark Toner said.

Pakistan's de facto military ruler Raheel Sharif also jumped into the fray on Tuesday, summoning US ambassador to Islamabad David Hale to the GHQ and warning that Pakistan-US ties would be affected, even as the Pakistani media has been kvetching about why Mansour was killed only after entering Pakistan and now while he was more accessible while traveling freely in the Gulf.

TV anchors have been working up a lather wondering if Iran sold him down the drain, even as some Pakistani commentators have been marveling at India's ability to strike a balance between Iran and Saudi Arabia, something Pakistan has been unable to do.

On its part, the Obama administration has pretty much said it will continue to attack terrorist targets in Pakistan if they don't sue for peace and Islamabad and Rawalpindi can stuff it if does not like it.

## *In Pursuit Of Malice*

India's Supreme Court extensively quoted British jurists to up-hold a law that was four centuries old in its country of origin. It was introduced here by the colonial government in the Indian Penal Code in 1860. In upholding sections 499 and 500 of the IPC, the two-judge bench shocked much of the legal fraternity who called the verdict "regressive".

BJP MP Subramanian Swamy had challenged the law and the court clubbed it with similar petitions filed by Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal and Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi that called out the outdated law's chilling effect on freedom of speech. A private complaint could lead to arrests and detention of unreasonable and disproportionate nature, the petitioners claimed. While Swamy and Rahul wanted the apex court to do away with the law, the BJP-led government has backed its constitutional validity through the attorney-general.

Politicians of all major parties have been hauled up several times for criminal defamation. Last year, Jaitley was summoned to answer sedition charges for a comment on the top judiciary. That case, though,

was soon dropped and the judge suspended. Kejriwal joined the 'defamation' club after Jaitley and Nitin Gadkari filed separate complaints against him. Similarly, an RSS worker complained against Rahul and J. Jayalalitha against Swamy.

In a recent case in Kerala, the principal and 11 students of a polytechnic and later nine students of Sree Krishna College, Guruvayoor, were arrested and charged under criminal defamation for publishing material that the BJP thought defamed PM Nar-endra Modi in their respective campus magazines. In a Times of India op-ed piece, Amulya Gopalakrishnan pointed out how Jaw-aharlal Nehru has been slandered on the internet. Imagine if these trolls had to be charged with defamation! The Supreme Court had earlier held that "actual malice" has to be established even for civil prosecution, and to have knowingly spoken falsely or with reckless disregard for the truth would amount to defamation and call for civil remedies. But the two-judge bench of Justice Dipak Misra and Justice P.C. Pant has now justified criminalising defamation by arguing that

citizens have a fundamental right to reputation and that the "reputation of one cannot be allowed to be sacrificed at the altar of others' right of free speech". Defamation harmed the reputation of a person, they ruled, saying the right to life with dignity under Article 21 of the Constitution also protected a person's reputation, who can file a civil suit and, simultaneously, a criminal complaint.

The judgement, say critics, neither exp-lains how defamation can be deemed to be a public wrong and why criminalisation is a reasonable and proportionate response, nor why the law's chilling effect on free speech is not a valid concern. Calling this a "constitutional issue", critics have argued that the matter needs to be decided by a larger constitutional bench of at least five judges. "How is it that Kejriwal, Subramanian Swamy and Rahul Gandhi were on the same page, but the Supreme Court wasn't?" asks Paranjy Guha Thakurta, editor of Economic and Political Weekly. "There are criminal elements in the press, but this is a bigger issue. Defamation should be a civil offence and a judge can pass directions and make defaulters pay.

Delivering News, uncompromised & Unbiased for the last 13 Years

The South Asian  
**INSIDER**  
Voice of South Asian Community

Top: **INSIDER** The South Asian Voice of South Asian Community

Headlines: **How Google Counting the 2016 Election**, **How ISIL Out-Terrorized Bin Laden**, **Scammed Nation** (69 scams that have rocked India since 1947), **Colour Therapy**, **Father Christmas files for bankruptcy**

Bottom: **State Senator Anthony Avella Backs Satnam Singh Parhar For City Council**



Top: **INSIDER** The South Asian Voice of South Asian Community

Headlines: **ARE THE POLLS SKEWED?**, **Overwhelming Support for Anthony Santino**, **The horror of 'canned lions'**

Headlines: **Why American Workers Without Much Education Are Being Hammered?**, **Polio's First Case**, **India's First Smart Aqueduct**



Headlines: **President Obama recalls Iraq to end Iraq**, **Slugh is queen**, **ma Cowboy**

**MPU** MEDIA PARTNERS USA LLC

**We Thank Our Customers for Their Trust & Loyalty  
22 Years of Excellent Customer Service**

**FOR COMPETITIVE RATES CALL**

**1-800-870-5845**

**PICK-UP & DELIVERY**

**ANYWHERE IN USA**



**INDO US EXPRESS, INC.**

**World wide Couriers\*Freight Forwards**

**Domestic & Local Delivery**

*43-50, 11th St., Suite No, 109, LIC, New York, N.Y. 11101*

*Tel: 212-447-5720. Fax: 516 932 3750*

*www.indousexpress.com*

*Email : gsingh9070@aol.com (or) indousexpress@gmail.com*

**7Days A Week**

**CALL ABOUT OUR SPECIAL RATES TO  
INDIA**



# Pause In March Of Arab Spring

*Authoritarian regimes are striking back, enhancing power in West Asia?*

The revolutionary wave of mass protests known as the Arab Spring is currently paused. While most of the West remains focused upon conflicts that have exploded in its undertow, including civil wars in Libya and Syria, we should not lose sight of another development in the Middle East – that of retrenched authoritarianism.

The autocratic regimes that escaped the Arab Spring have not lain idle while revolutions upended Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Yemen. Rather, the survivors have recalibrated their ruling strategies. The result is retrenched authoritarianism, defined as not simply a return to the pre-Arab Spring status quo, but rather the creation of more intransigent and potent means of controlling society on part of incumbent regimes.

Critically, this revitalized desire for authoritarian control is symbiotic with social mobilization: the more a regime perceives society as willing to rebel, the more tenaciously it fights to preserve power. Arab leaders know that the underlying social and economic dynamics of popular uprising still exist. Retrenched authoritarianism thus reflects the desire of regimes to defeat societal forces of opposition once and for all.

The core strategy behind retrenched authoritarianism is crafting alliances with those sectors of Arab societies that grew fatigued from the social mobilization and political crises of the Arab Spring. These include the secular middle classes that see Islamist movements like the Muslim Brotherhood as a threat to their

secular identities and personal freedoms; workers who see social unrest as detrimental to the economic normalcy needed in tourism, retail and construction; and business elites and crony capitalists who wish to restore some degree of legal order, so that they can continue monopolizing key sectors and profit.

In sum, the interests of three sectors of society, hailing from different class structures, have temporarily converged. The fatigue of these social forces constitutes the terrain upon which retrenched authoritarian regimes thrive. However, retrenched authoritarianism also rests upon the passivity of the revolutionary generation, whose demobilization has opened space for regimes to restore their political supremacy.

Beyond this strategy of building new social alliances, four operational tactics of retrenched authoritarianism can be witnessed in republics or monarchies. The first is greater repression, taking varied forms, but with a common purpose – to neutralize any autonomous organization, monitor public spaces and reduce the potential for future insurrections.

In Egypt, for instance, the violent suppression of all opposition including not only the Muslim Brotherhood but independent civil society movements and student groups has reached levels not seen since the Nasserist era. The disappearances and deaths of those in detention have reached in the hundreds. In many countries as well, the judiciaries have tightened anti-terror laws, criminalizing many forms of online speech.

On the other side of the spectrum, more banal forms of coercion can be found in Morocco where after the February 20 protest movement security forces punished many protesters with dubious charges. It restricted the activities of many civil society organizations, such as the Moroccan Association for Human Rights (Association marocaine des droits humains) and the Freedom Now NGO, and likewise restricted the Islamist movement 'Adl wal-Ihsan. Finally, it also imposed pressure on individuals and groups with sustained smear campaigns.

Such strategies of control have always existed within the Moroccan state's repertoire of soft authoritarianism, but from the 1990s until the Arab Spring the state preferred to utilize carrots rather than sticks. Today, while the region is intently focused upon the threat of terrorism and ISIS, the state is dismantling what it sees as the infrastructure of social resistance – a strategy of divide-and-conquer. With the threat of repression lurking in the background, the state has sought to buy social peace by negotiating benefits for distinctive social movements. For instance, it delivered progressive laws for feminists, parliamentary visibility for Islamists and wage increases for workers.

The second tactic is the exploitation of fear. The only alternative to autocratic political order, these regimes have argued, is absolute chaos, as embodied by collapsing or failing states like Yemen, Syria and Libya. The choice given to citizens is austere: acceptance of stability

enforced by repression or a

plunge into darkness as embodied by ISIS and chaos.

The third tactic is the careful redeployment of Islam along puritanical principles, partly to reassure the pious and traditionalists that rulers have their interests in mind, and partly to sideline Islamists.

In Egypt, for instance, citizens who publicly ate and drank during Ramadan were arrested last June for not showing respect for the holy month and Islam. Egyptian women protesters are also taken into custody and subjected to virginity tests. Security forces justify this humiliating practice on grounds of ensuring the moral probity of both the women and the state.

In Jordan, one of the largest new economic development projects in Amman, the Boulevard Arjaan, is one that pointedly does not sell alcohol. The government has also strongly supported the spread of Islamic banking within the larger finance sector and implemented Islamic financial principles within state institutions such as the Postal Savings Fund.

In Morocco, last year the state preemptively banned the controversial film *Much Loved*, which explored the problem of prostitution from the perspective of four women. Such censorship was justified on grounds of upholding moral order though such an action circumvented the legal standards of newly drafted regulations, which explicitly lay out guidelines for the rating and prohibition of media content. These expressions of religious identity are selective, so as to not disaffect the secular middle classes, and do not intend to empower Islamists and other religious groups. Because this religious impetus manifests through the discretionary power of the state, it is neither predictable nor consistent. For this reason, it is not available for Islamists to coopt. They are excluded from this puritanical

trend.

A fourth tactic of retrenched authoritarianism is increased

foreign interventions, justified in the name of fighting against radicalism and containing regional threats, such as Iran. More than ever, Arab regimes frame Iran and its clients, namely Hezbollah and the Assad regime in Syria, as existential threats. Inversely, Iran is spreading the same sectarian discourse by framing most Arab regimes as a grave danger to Shi'a Islam.

While initially motivated by a geopolitical logic, over time foreign interventions have allowed the Arab autocracies to support one another while drawing attention away from domestic problems. In Yemen, many Arab countries are immersed in an ongoing intervention that has resulted in numerous civilian casualties with only limited military success. Libya and to a greater degree Syria have also experienced this new wave of interventionism, with both conflicts escalated by the financial and military contributions of other Arab states.

Across the Arab world, autocratic regimes have engaged in these four tactics of retrenched authoritarianism in hopes of foreclosing future revolution. In the short run, these techniques of governance have indeed strengthened state control.

However, at the heart of retrenched authoritarianism rests a long-term gamble: all else being equal, youth activists that comprise the vanguard of opposition movements can be permanently deactivated. This is an untenable premise because the fundamental drive for the Arab Spring protest movements still exists today – the desire for human dignity, expressed through demands for freedom and voice. The Arab autocracies cannot put the revolutionary genie back into the bottle.



# Modi begins Iran trip with gurdwara visit

PHOTOS: PTI

**Will meet Prez Rouhani and religious leader Khomeini today**

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Sunday arrived in Iran on a two-day visit, which will see India and the Persian Gulf nation working on enhancing economic partnership that includes a possible deal on developing the strategic Chabahar port.

"Reached Iran, a land with whom India shares civilisational ties. Hope to enhance economic partnership between our nations. I also hope my Iran visit further cements cultural and people-to-people ties between India and Iran," Modi tweeted.

The first Indian Prime Minister to visit the Islamic nation in the last 15 years, Modi was received at the Mehrabad International Airport by Iran's Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Ali Tayyebnia, after which he left for a local Gurdwara to meet people of Indian origin.

Formal talks with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani are scheduled for tomorrow morning after a ceremonial welcome for the Prime Minister. Rouhani will also host a lunch for him. Modi will also call on Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khomeini as well before his return. Ahead of his arrival, Modi in a series of tweets said, Enhancing connectivity, trade, investments, energy partnership, culture and people to people contacts would be our priority.

"My meetings with President Rouhani and Hon'ble Supreme Leader of Iran will provide an opportunity to advance our strategic partnership, the Prime Minister added. Besides signing a deal on development of Phase-1 of the Chabahar port, India is looking at doubling oil imports from the Persian Gulf nation, which a few years back was its second-biggest oil supplier, as well as making progress on getting rights to develop a giant gas field in the energy-rich country. India's Road Transport, Highways and Shipping Minister Nitin Gadkari will also be present there for the signing of the agreement on Chabahar port. Post-sanctions Iran has seen a

**Reached Iran, a land with whom India shares civilisational ties. I also hope my Iran visit further cements cultural and people-to-people ties between India & Iran.**

**— NARENDRA MODI  
PRIME MINISTER**

flurry of diplomatic and business activities with leaders from China to Korea courting Tehran. In the run-up to Modi's visit, Transport Minister Gadkari, Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj had visited Tehran.

Stating that he looked forward to the conclusion of the Chabahar agreement during his visit, the

prime minister said India and Iran enjoy civilisational ties and have shared interest in the peace, security, stability and prosperity of the region.

"I am looking forward to my visit to Iran today & tomorrow, at the invitation of President Rouhani," he added.

In an interview to Iran's IRNA news agency before of his arrival, Modi said the two

countries have always focused to add strength to our relations, even during the difficult times. In the current context, both countries can look to expand our cooperation in the fields of trade, technology, investment and infrastructure and energy security.

Stating that India's public and private sector firms were keen on investing in Iran, he said the signing of agreement on development of Chabahar port will provide wider connectivity.

Chabahar is a port in South-

East Iran that will enable India to bypass Pakistan and open up a route to land-locked Afghanistan with which New Delhi has close security ties and economic interests.

The energy sector, he said, was one of the most important dimensions of bilateral economic ties and with investment in development of Farzad-B gas field, the relationship would go beyond the buyer-seller dealings to being genuine partners.



(Top) Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari at a gurdwara in Iran. Modi being welcomed by Iran Finance Minister Ali Tayyebnia.

**PM becomes the first Indian leader in 15 years to visit the Persian Gulf nation**

## Dozens of women vanish on Canada's highway of tears

Dozens of Canadian women and girls, most of them indigenous, have disappeared or been murdered near Highway 16, a remote ribbon of asphalt that bisects British Columbia and snakes past thick forests, logging towns and impoverished Indian reserves on its way to the Pacific Ocean. So many women and girls have vanished or turned up dead along one stretch of the road that residents call it the Highway of Tears. A special unit formed by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police officially linked 18 such cases from 1969 to 2006 to this part of the highway and two connecting arteries. More women have vanished since then, and community activists and relatives of the missing say they believe the total is closer to 50. Almost all the cases remain unsolved.

The Highway of Tears and the disappearances of the indigenous women have become a political scandal in British Columbia. But those cases are just a small fraction of the number who have been murdered or disappeared nationwide. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police have officially counted about 1,200 cases over the past three decades, but research by the Native Women's Association of Canada suggests the total number could be as high as 4,000.

In December, after years of refusal by his conservative predecessor, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced a long-awaited national inquiry into the disappearances and murders of indigenous women.

The inquiry, set to cost 40 million Canadian dollars (\$31 million), is part of Mr. Trudeau's promise of a "total renewal" of Canada's relationship with its indigenous citizens, and it comes at a critical time.

Aboriginal women and girls make up about 4 percent of the total female population of Canada but 16 percent of all female homicides, according to government statistics. Carolyn Bennett, the minister of indigenous and northern affairs, has spent months traveling across the country to consult with indigenous communities. During her meetings, families and survivors have complained of racism and sexism by the police, who she said treated the deaths of indigenous women "as inevitable, as if their lives mattered less."

"What's clear is the uneven application of justice," Ms. Bennett said.

One reason to doubt the estimate by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, she said, is that the police often immediately deemed the women's deaths to be suicides, drug overdoses or accidents, over the protests of relatives who suspected foul play. "There was no investigation," she said, citing one recent case. "The file folder's empty."

A United Nations report last year described measures by the previous government to protect aboriginal women from harm as "inadequate" and said that the lack of an inquiry into the murders and disappearances constituted "grave violations" of the women's human rights. Failures by law enforcement, it added, had "resulted in impunity."

Ms. Radek, a co-founder of Tears4Justice, an advocacy organization, said, "When it comes to the missing, racism runs deep."

The federal government has allocated 8.4 billion Canadian dollars (\$6.4 billion) over five years to aid indigenous communities, which have disproportionately high levels of poverty, incarceration, alcoholism and substance abuse, and often lack basic necessities like safe drinking water.

**Bollywood Star Djs**  
*Best Sound Better Entertainment  
 Simply the Best Disk Jockey.  
 Star of every Event.  
 Professional Sound,  
 Reliable and Name  
 Branded Gear*

**Unbeatable Price**

[www.Bstardjs.com](http://www.Bstardjs.com), [bstardjs@gmail.com](mailto:bstardjs@gmail.com)  
**516-605-4467** **411 South Broadway, Hicksville, NY 11801**

# REAL ESTATE \* INSURANCE \* COMMERCIAL LOANS

## Real Estate Services Offered :

Brokerage, Investment Advisory, Asset Management

**We specialize in Investment & Income producing properties.**

## Insurance Services Offered :

Business, Liability, Disability, Workers Comp, E&O, Auto, Home, Personal & Commercial



**Sharnjit Singh Thind**  
 Licensed Real Estate/  
 Insurance Broker NYS  
 Notary Public

**WHITESTONE**

Real Estate & Asset Management Corp.

**HONESTY \* INTEGRITY \* EXPERIENCE \* KNOWLEDGE**

345 Third Ave., 6th Floor, New York, NY 10022 Tel : 646.875.8495/ cell : 917.612.3158

Email : [ssat@WhitestonecorpUSA.com](mailto:ssat@WhitestonecorpUSA.com) [WWW.WhitestonecorpUSA.com](http://WWW.WhitestonecorpUSA.com)

Whitestone Real Estate & Asset Mangment Corp is a Licensed New York State Real Estate Broker

All Commercial Loans are arranged through excellent third Party Lenders

# Weight Loss Goals: Ditch diet and simply pop these 'gas-filled balloons'



(Agencies) If you have tried every trick in town to knock off those extra kilos and haven't succeeded so far, don't lose hope. A new treatment where you swallow gas-filled balloons could be the way out. The treatment enables people to eat less and, thereby, deal with obesity. Lead researcher Shelby Sullivan, MD and director of bariatric endoscopy at Washington University's School of Medicine in St. Louis, MO

(Missouri), said new balloon system could help patients lose almost twice as much weight compared with lifestyle changes alone, adding this is very important because weight loss is very difficult and a significant number of people are not successful in achieving their weight loss goals with diet changes and exercise. According to public health experts, more than 640 million people globally have obesity (defined as a BMI of more than 30), and there are more people considered overweight than normal or underweight in the world. Researchers found that within the Obalon balloon treatment group, the average loss of total body weight was 6.81 percent, while the control group's average weight loss was 3.59 percent. Dr. Sullivan and her team also found that 64.3 percent of individuals who received the Obalon balloon achieved at least a five percent total body weight



loss, compared to only 32 percent of the control group. Individuals in the Obalon balloon treatment group experienced improvements in their systolic blood pressure, fasting glucose, LDL cholesterol and triglycerides. The study is presented in the meeting of Digestive Disease Week.

## Ladies, now fight ageing while partying with girlfriends

(Agencies) This one is sure to give a lot of girls tears of joy. A new "anti-ageing" cocktail, that claims to do both, fight wrinkles and give ladies a good time, is soon to launch in the market. Developed by a biotechnologist, Anti Everything is described as a guilt-free beauty elixir infused with anti-aging and feel-good ingredients, in cocktail form. "Countless nights out with my girlfriends went hand in hand with feeling guilty about overindulging. I wanted to be freed of that feeling and set out to create a drink that combines science with lifestyle for a non-guilty pleasure," said creator Anja Skodda in a statement. If the concept sounds fishy, that's because it is. Literally. Its main anti-aging ingredient is caviar collagen, said to help restore skin's firmness and elasticity and reduce the look of fine lines. Fish collagen is purported to be a more effective anti-aging agent than porcine or bovine collagen. The drink is also infused with sea buckthorn, which contains high amounts of vitamin E, lutein and fatty acids. The berry contains 15 times more vitamin C than oranges. Vitamin C is a powerful anti-oxidant and plays a key role in collagen synthesis. The beauty ingredients are topped off by vodka. Anti Everything is the latest drinkable beauty product to hit the market. There's the brand Beauty & Go, which features four beverages for different skin needs: skin revival, detox, vitality and radiance. Ingredients include collagen, hyaluronic acid, resveratrol, selenium and vitamins A, C and E. Skinade is also packed with collagen peptides and claims to show a significant improvement in the appearance of lines and skin hydration. And Gold Collagen is a beauty supplement that contains a blend of hydrolysed collagen, vitamins and minerals, which are likewise supposed to reduce the appearance of wrinkles and firm up the skin.

### Subscribe to



### Complimentary Subscription Offer for 4 Issues

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address (Home/Business) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Profession \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Subscription Term ( ) 1 Year 100\$ ( ) 3 Years 275\$ ( ) 5 Years 450\$

**The South Asian Insider**

PO Box 7005 Hicksville New York 11801

Cell: 917 612 3158

Email: [thesouthasianinsider@gmail.com](mailto:thesouthasianinsider@gmail.com) [www.thesouthasianinsider.com](http://www.thesouthasianinsider.com)

\*Please check payable to The South Asian Insider

\*Your personal details are safe with us. We don't sell your Personal info to third parties for any purpose.

\*The South Asian Insider is a Weekly & published for a total of 52 Issues in a calendar year.

\*Your Subscription includes free access to Our Web Edition, Old Issues and our Weekly Newsletter.

**Reasonable Rates**

**Creative Arts**

## Web Design.

**Graphic, Magazines,  
Newspaper Designing**

**Max 516 474 7573**

**+91-9592398822**

**onpunjab@gmail.com**

**Harshad Kumar**  
*Specializing in mens haircut  
color & other services*

Haircut - Facial,  
Highlights, - Gotee  
Skin Fades

**Neelu's Khubsoorat** This is  
409 South Broadway our only  
Hicksville, NY 11801 location

516-681-2166  
718-708-9600

**We work for you, not for an Insurance Company**

**Navjot Kaur**  
Lic. Insurance Broker  
(Life, Accident & Health)

---

**WHITESTONE**  
Real Estate & Asset Management Corp.

P.O. Box 7005, Hicksville NY 11801  
Cell: 516 280 0576 TelFax : 516 934 0962  
Email: [ennjay@whitestonecorpusa.com](mailto:ennjay@whitestonecorpusa.com)

# AN EYEFUL OF ANNE

PHOTOS: AGENCIES



Soundtrack artist Pink performs at the premiere of *Alice Through the Looking Glass* at El Capitan theatre in Hollywood.



Anne Hathaway proudly showed off her enviable post-pregnancy figure in a corset number. (Right) Mia Wasikowska in a floor-length black gown.

ANNE Hathaway welcomed her newborn son Jonathan just two months ago.

So the 33-year-old star proudly showed off her enviable post-pregnancy figure at the premiere of her film *Alice Through the Looking Glass* on Monday.

The new mom looked stunning as she hit the red carpet in a form-fitting corset style dress at the star-studded Los Angeles event.

The Oscar-winning actress — who plays the White Queen in the film — made sure to turn heads in the floral frock. Her low-cut number revealed much of her ample bosom as she nearly spilled out of the skintight garb. Hathaway's black and white pin stripe dress was adorned with oversize colourful flowers throughout.

She went with a dramatic smokey eye, deep rose gloss with matching manicure, and several diamond cocktail rings and earrings for added sparkle.

### Hathaway plays the White Queen in the film

The new mom posed with Mia Wasikowska, 26, who stars as Alice in the sequel to Tim Burton's 2010 film *Alice In Wonderland*.

Wasikowska dazzled in a floor-length black gown with gold embellishments and sheer cut-outs.

The Australian beauty's toned torso was revealed beneath the see-through fabric which included delicate patterns in the shapes of butterflies and moonbeams.

Her silky blonde bob was tucked behind one ear to highlight her exquisite facial features and she added a bold red lip for a pop of colour.

Hollywood hunk Johnny Depp, 52 — who plays the Hatter — donned a midnight blue three piece suit.

Although his stunning wife, actress Amber Heard, 30, was not alongside the Oscar-nominated actor, he was spotted getting cosy with co-star Sacha Baron

## MAD AS A HATTER

JOHNNY Depp was still embodying the Mad Hatter on Monday night, as he accompanied funnyman Sacha Baron Cohen on the red carpet.

Put together, the acting duo were boisterous in front of the cameras at the *Alice Through the Looking Glass* premiere.

*Edwards Scissorhands* star Johnny stars alongside the *Borat* actor, 44, for the first time in the sequel as Sacha joins the all-star cast.

And Johnny couldn't have looked more delighted to share a joke with his giddy co-star on the red carpet, spending time playfully poking at the actor's paunch and pecs in front of the cameras.



Carmen Electra

Cohen, 44. Cohen plays Time — half clock, half man — in the quirky film and coordinated ensembles with Depp in a navy blue suit with brown necktie and dress shoes.

Singer Pink, 36 put on an epic performance as she rocked out on stage in a layered ruffled dress at the star-studded premiere.

The *Just Like Fire* hit-maker changed wardrobes and took to the red carpet with her husband, motorcycle racer Carey Hart, 40, and their daughter Willow Sage Hart, aged four. *Alice Through the Looking Glass* was made after the original raked in \$1 billion at the box office despite lukewarm reviews.

# Who's the sexiest of them all?

Ciara hosted the Billboard Music Awards in a silver chainmail dress. She completed the look with a pair of silver strappy shoes.



Kate Beckinsale went braless in a white plunging gown designed by Belgrade-based label Hamel

IT'S ONE of the hottest music events of the year.

So the stars pulled out all the stops to bring some seriously sexy glamour to the 2016 Billboard Music Awards at the T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas on Sunday night.

Leading the way was Ciara, Britney Spears, Mila Kunis and Kate Beckinsale who made sure to stand out on the red carpet in revealing and slinky ensembles. While the ceremony made room for some of the biggest names in entertainment including Madonna and Rihanna, Ciara certainly stole the spotlight as soon as she arrived at the Las Vegas venue.

Showing off oodles of flesh in a silver gown which left little to the imagination, the statuesque beauty knew exactly how to cause a stir. The 30-year-old star looked incredible in the slinky metallic number by Philipp Plein.

She showed off a hint of tantalising side-boob and wore her brunette locks in a chic up'do with blunt fringe. A sexy thigh-high slit showed off her long legs and she added the finishing touch with some silver ankle-strap stilettos. The beauty, who is engaged to NFL star Russell Wilson, was joined by her beau on the pink hued carpet.

Britney Spears, who's performing a medley of her hits at the event, made sure all eyes were on her as she arrived in a black lace bodysuit and mesh thigh-high boots. The 34-year-old star looked absolutely amazing as she showed off her toned and tan legs. Her long blonde locks fell in thick

tousled waves and she sported smokey eyes and nude lip. Mila, 32, showed off her legs in a beaded Zuhair Murad dress which she teamed with metallic heels.

Daily Mail



Rihanna looked stunning in a green sheer zebra patterned maxi dress while accepting the Billboard Chart Achievement Award.



Priyanka Chopra in a long blue satin dress; (left) Jessica Alba in a see-through lace mini-dress and racy thigh high boots.

Britney Spears put up a pole dance show and rode a mechanical guitar in a tiny costume at the do.



Madonna paid homage to Prince by wearing his signature colour.

# Five Indian movies to show kids this summer

**T**HE summer holidays are on, and the sweltering heat is forcing kids to stay indoors, much against their wishes. All of us know how difficult it is to keep kids entertained and creatively engaged, which is why I thought of coming up with this list of five Indian children's films that I have seen in the past few years, and that I think are worth showing to your kids. Usually, I find most Hindi films inappropriate for children, and tend to take them only for animated English films such as *Zootopia*, *The Jungle Book*, and so on, which is why it is such a refreshing change to find well made Indian films for children.



Poster of the film 'Bumm Bumm Bole'; (below-inset) Partho Gupte in 'Hawaa Hawaa'

In no particular order:

**1 BUMM BUMM BOLE:**

Directed by Priyadarshan, it is an authorised adaptation of the 1997 Iranian, Academy Award-nominated film, *Children of Heaven*. The story revolves around an impoverished family in a village that cannot even afford school uniform or shoes. The father (Atul Kulkarni), mother (Rituparna Sengupta), son (Darsheel Safary), and daughter (Ziyah Vastani) make do with what they get and that's not a lot. When the little girl's only pair of shoes gets misplaced, the siblings decide to share the pair. Soon, a marathon is announced in the village, and Darsheel decides he will compete so he can win the third prize — a pair of spanking new sports shoes. I won't tell you how it ends, but needless to say, the script, the brilliant acting and the heart-warming story, will touch you.

**Takeaway:** It's a great way to teach kids to value their things and to be grateful, without sounding preachy.

**2 STANLEY KA DABBA:**

Written, directed and produced by Amole Gupte, the film stars Divya Dutta and Partho Gupte (Amole's son) in pivotal roles. Before *The Lunchbox* came around, this film did a brilliant job of appropriating food into film and weaving a beautiful story around the humble *dabba*. It's about Stanley, a popular Class 4 student at an English-medium school in Mumbai, who never carries his tiffin on some pretext or the other. He comes into contact with the Hindi teacher (played brilliantly by Amole Gupte himself) who forces other teachers and students, to share their food with him. One day, he corners Stanley about why the boy doesn't get his own food and threatens him with dire consequences.

**Takeaway:** A tear-jerker, this one will teach your children sensitivity without you having to say a word.

**3 CHILLAR PARTY:**

A personal favourite, this is one movie you can see over and over again. Directed by Nitesh Tiwari and Vikas Bahl, who went on to direct the award-winning *Queen*, *Chillar Party* is about a group of urban kids who live in the same apartment complex. The insightful film gives us a peek into the dynamics of urban living. The children come into contact with an urchin who steps in to clean cars when his uncle takes a holiday. Fatka, as he is called, has a dog, Bhidu, and the movie gains momentum when the children are exposed to



the world of politics thanks to an incident involving the dog. *Chillar Party* won the 2011 National Film Award for Best Children's Film, and for good reason.

**Takeaway:** It gives city kids a chance to introspect, since many of them tend to be pampered and perhaps even selfish. It also shows children the power and importance of standing up for what they believe is right.

**4 HAWAA HAWAAI:**

Again an Amole Gupte film, it features an older Partho Gupte, and Saqib Saleem. It centres around a boy, Arjun, who moves to Mumbai with his mother after his father (a farmer) commits suicide. Arjun serves tea at a local stall and dreams to skate. As Saleem (a skating coach) notices his talent, Arjun must now get himself a pair of skates. With no money, he and his friends scour the local garbage stops and champion a pair of skates out of scrap, which they

name 'Hawaa Hawaa'.

**Takeaway:** Resilience and hard work, this film has all the values you'd want in your child.

**5 DELHI SAFARI:**

The only animated film in the list, directed by Nikhil Advani, features the voices of Akshaye Khanna, Govinda and others. The film brings the environment hazards we're all witnessing, to the fore. The only difference is: it's from the point of view of animals. The film is about five animals and birds who decide to undertake a journey from Mumbai to Delhi to protest the taking away of their jungle, their home. The film won the National Film Award for Best Animated Film.

**Takeaway:** While schools are doing a good job of teaching children about global warming, most of the talk is from the point of helping us. Hardly anyone is talking about what it's doing to our animals. This film does just that.

## Juveniles to be tried as adults

SOME three years after the Nirbhaya case shook the country and the world, the Juvenile Justice Act, which allows children aged 16 to 18 years to be tried as adults in cases of heinous offences, finally comes into force today.

The Ministry of Woman and Child Development has passed orders to the effect that the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015 will be enforceable from January 15, 2016.

The Act replaces the JJ Act of 2000 that looked at reformation as a key goal when it came to crimes involving juveniles, despite the severity of the crime. Under the new act, juveniles between 16 and 18 years, who are found guilty of



committing heinous offences — through a preliminary inquiry by the Juvenile Justice Board — will be sent to a children's court that can pronounce them guilty.

They can then be kept in a safe place until they turn 21. If

they are still not found to have been reformed, they can be sent to regular jails that house adults. However, most states do not have such places of safety, and implementation will definitely be the more difficult step in this hurdle.



## THE PET PEEVES OF PARENTS

A RECENT report in *Psychologytoday.com* talks about something that may bind all parents of the universe together: their pet peeves. The report quotes a survey undertaken by Rebecca Eanes, creator of *Positive-Parents.org* and the author of a brand new book, *Positive Parenting: An Essential Guide*, who asked

9,000 parents what behaviours in their children upset them. The top upsetting challenges almost all parents face at some point: aggression, tantrum throwing, whining and not listening. Instead of resorting to the age-old threats, Eanes presents new ways of disciplining that would make parenting a positive experience.

PICTURE FOR REPRESENTATION

# The 17th Edition of IIFA is all set to celebrate the Mega India Festival in Madrid Spain



(Press Release) The Videocon d2h IIFA Weekend 2016 festivities will witness a host of events- IIFA Rocks, FICCI - IIFA Global Business Forum, IIFA Stomp in collaboration with MULAFEST Urban Trends Festival, along with the anticipated mega awards night, NEXA IIFA Awards 2016

IIFA Rocks 2016 musical performances line-up includes hit-maker Pritam, Meet Brothers, Benny Dayal, Kanika Kapoor, Monali Thakur, Neeti Mohan and Papon among others!

The star-studded Nexa IIFA Awards 2016 to feature performances by Bollywood superstars Salman Khan, Hrithik Roshan, Priyanka Chopra, Deepika Padukone, Sonakshi Sinha and Tiger Shroff; to be hosted by charismatic Bollywood Actors Farhan Akhtar & Shahid Kapoor.

(By a staff reporter) Mumbai- The International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) has announced the 17th Edition of the most spectacular celebration of Indian Cinema worldwide that will occur in the capital city of Madrid, Spain from 23rd – 26th June this year!

IIFA Rocks has always been a star-studded affair with a mix of fashion, music and dance. It is a celebrated global event that has been growing each year. To reveal some of the exciting details about the upcoming Videocon d2h IIFA Weekend,

Bollywood's superstar Salman Khan was joined by versatile actor Anil Kapoor who together shared their excitement about the IIFA celebrations being held in Spain end-June. The two friends were joined by leading lady Shilpa Shetty, young icons Tiger Shroff,

as a once-in-a-lifetime on-stage production. Performances include the hit songs of the Meet Brothers featuring Kanika Kapoor with Benny Dayal and Neeti Mohan among others. National-award winner Monali Thakur and Papon will be serenading the

to a global platform. We are glad that alongside film, we can also feature fashion, music, culture and business through the Videocon d2h IIFA Weekend. As this year marks the 60th anniversary of India & Spain diplomatic relations, IIFA Madrid 2016 is going to be a star-studded extravaganza and the excitement and anticipation has been growing among the industry and fans alike. It will be a magical and memorable time for locals and visitors to witness the stunning acts live on stage at the spectacular IFEMA - Feria de Madrid. The IIFAs in Madrid are going to be a special mélange of dance, music, fashion and business!"

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Raj Nayak, CEO- COLORS, commented saying "We are doubly excited about IIFA this year because it's happening in one of the most exotic destination in the world. Along with Wizcraft we have managed to put together a stellar line up of performers comprising of Salman Khan, Priyanka Chopra, Deepika Padukone, Hrithik Roshan, Sonakshi Sinha amongst many others; along with friends of IIFA like, Anil Kapoor, Shilpa Shetty, Parineeti Chopra, Tiger Shroff and a whole galaxy of stars who will grace this gala occasion. The night will be hosted by the multifaceted Farhan Akhtar and the very gifted, Shahid Kapoor. I'm glad to announce that the entire Indian Film Fraternity is blocking their dates and gearing up to attend the IIFA Weekend in Madrid. Fans from all over the world have been queuing up to attend this spectacle, which will soon be telecast on Colors TV in the month of July."

Recreating the magic of Indian cinema, the 17th edition of the IIFA Celebrations will play host to some of the most celebrated stars of the Indian film industry, notable guests, and dignitaries from India and the region, world



Abhay Deol and Sooraj Pancholi. Music sensations Meet Brothers, Kanika Kapoor, Monali Thakur, and Benny Dayal too joined the media event to share their joy about performing at the IIFA ROCKS in Madrid. Among the star-studded line-up are also dance sensations Elli Avram and Daisy Shah (the leading lady of Salman Khan's *Jai Ho*).

This year, the IIFA Rocks stage will include noted music director-composer-singer Pritam who is performing with Spanish artistes

audience. To add to the star-studded affair, Bollywood's leading lady Parineeti Chopra and actor Sooraj Pancholi are set to perform at IIFA Rocks; Elli Avram and Daisy Shah will perform the hit songs of the year. Alongside the gamut of musical acts and dance performances, the distinguished Indian fashion designer Vikram Phadnis will showcase a breathtaking fashion show marking his 25 years in the fashion industry. The IIFA revelries are well underway, as IIFA this year, will also showcase a special teaser screening of the Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra film - *Mirziya*. IIFA Stomp, which is already bringing famous musical acts with its collaboration with Mulafest will be highlighting another key aspect of Indian culture with a special yoga Master class with Shilpa Shetty in Madrid Spain.

Speaking on the occasion, Wiz Andre Timmins, Director – Wizcraft International Entertainment Pvt. Ltd, said, "IIFA from the beginning has promoted Indian cinema across the world



media and Indian cinema fans from across the globe.

With the City of Madrid playing host to the IIFA Weekend and Awards 2016, The Title Sponsor for the Videocon d2h IIFA Weekend are Videocon D2h, Title Sponsors for the Awards are Maruti Suzuki and Hero Cycles are the Cause Partners. IIFA Awards celebrations will air exclusively on broadcast partners, Colors TV and Mahou will be the co-sponsor of IIFA Celebrations. El Corte Ingles are the 'Official Retail Partners' and Qatar Airways is the "Official Airline" for the IIFA celebrations, Clear Channel is "OOH Media Partner" for IIFA. IIFA this year is supported by the remarkable IFEMA - Feria de Madrid as the location for IIFA Rocks, Nexa IIFA Awards and IIFA Stomp as well! Mr. Saurabh Dhoot, Executive Chairman - Videocon d2h says, "IIFA Awards over the years have grown tremendously in terms of scale and extravaganza. This year's Videocon d2h IIFA Weekend promises to be yet another milestone with lots of entertainment, glamour & innovation. Videocon d2h is today the first Indian media company to be listed on Nasdaq, USA. IIFA and Videocon d2h are perfect examples of Indian brands making a huge mark globally." Speaking of the association, Mr. R. S Kalsi, Executive director, Marketing & Sales, Maruti Suzuki said "We are delighted to associate with NEXA IIFA Awards 2016 for the second year, last year we showcased our Premium crossover S-Cross at IIFA. This year we will showcase how NEXA is at the forefront of bringing innovation & delivering outstanding experiences.

# Real Estate & Insurance

## Thinking of Buying/Selling Home?



**We Specialize in  
Income Producing  
& Investment  
Properties**



**Whitestone**

REAL ESTATE

Honesty \*Integrity \*Experience \*Knowledge

**Phone : 516 280 0576, 917 612 3158**  
**Email : sst@whitestonecorpUSA.com**  
**www.whitestonecorpUSA.com**

Sharnjit Singh Thind, Licensed Insurance Broker (Property & Casualty)  
Navjot Kaur Licensed Insurance Broker (Life, Accident & Health)

Whitestone Real Estate & Asset Management Corp is a Licensed New York State Real Estate Broker  
All Commercial Loan are arranged through excellent third Party Lenders

### Insurance Services

**Business,  
Liability,  
Disability,  
Workers Comp,  
E & O, Auto,  
Home,  
Personal &  
Commercial  
Accident, Life,  
Health, Visitor  
& Travel**