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The Other Side Of India's Reforms

A Quarter Century of Market Reform Leaves India Richer With Wider Inequality



(News Agencies) The British decision to leave the European Union is seen by many as a rejection of globalization, although the thumbs down was on free movement of labor within the bloc and not on free trade or unrestricted flow of capital within. At the same time, the world's largest democracy — India — was preparing to mark its 25th anniversary of joining the list of globalizing nations. While lifting India's GDP, globalization has increased an already wide chasm between a rich minority and poor majority.

Over the years the New Economic Policy, or NEP, introduced by the Indian government in 1991, morphed into a compendium of economic liberalization, privatization and opening up to the world. NEP has come to be viewed as combining India's entry into a globalizing world with its adoption of the neoliberal model of economic development — a brainchild of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Also known as the Washington Consensus, this model requires a government to reduce the state's role in the economy, cut state

spending and subsidies, abolish price controls, privatize public undertakings, reduce tariffs, welcome foreign direct investment, and regulate the financial sector lightly.

In India the NEP architect was Manmohan Singh, then finance minister and later prime minister, who had once served as chief trade economist at the UN Conference on Trade and Development, an associate of the IMF and the World Bank. Narendra Modi, the current prime minister, is also committed to implementing the NEP.

Pursuit of this policy resulted in

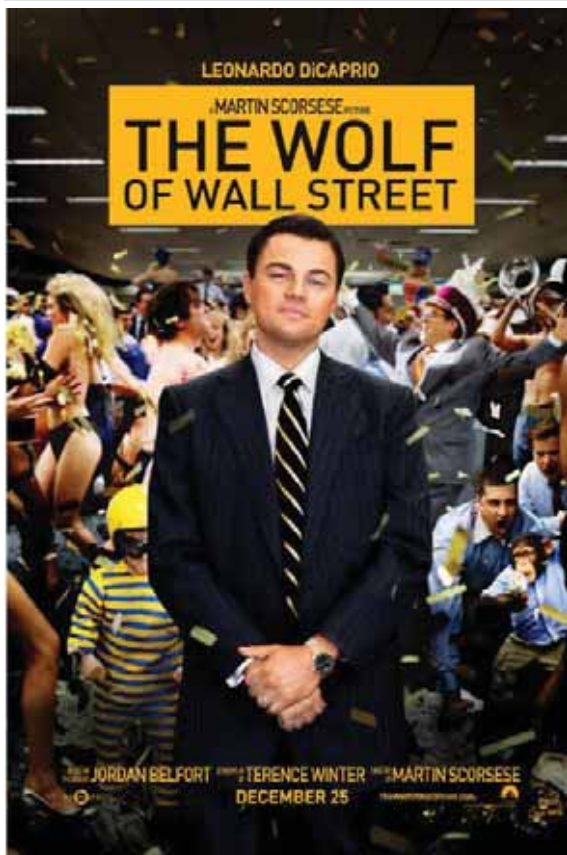
annual economic growth breaking out of the 3 to 5 percent band of the pre-1991 era. But redistribution of the extra wealth has been skewed. Those already better off have improved their living standards further whereas the large majority who lagged behind before have stagnated or grown poorer.

India's embracing of globalization came in the wake of an international crisis. Following Iraq's invasion and occupation of Kuwait in August 1990 and the subsequent loss of their petroleum exports, the price of oil rocketed and remittances (Contd on page 22)



Malaysian Sovereign Wealth Fund Corruption

US seeks to recover more than \$1 Billion



(Agencies) United States Seeks to Recover More Than \$1 Billion Obtained from Corruption Involving Malaysian Sovereign Wealth Fund

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch announced today the filing of civil forfeiture complaints seeking the forfeiture and recovery of more than \$1 billion in assets associated with an international conspiracy to launder funds misappropriated from a Malaysian sovereign wealth fund. Today's complaints represent the largest single action ever brought under the Kleptocracy Asset Recovery Initiative.



Attorney General Lynch was joined in the announcement by Assistant Attorney General Leslie R. Caldwell of the Justice

Department's Criminal Division, U.S. Attorney Eileen M. Decker of the Central District of California, FBI Deputy Director Andrew G. McCabe and Chief Richard Weber of the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI).

According to the complaints, from 2009 through 2015, more than \$3.5 billion in funds belonging to 1 Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) was allegedly misappropriated by high-level officials of 1MDB and their associates. With today's complaints, the United States seeks to recover more than \$1 billion laundered through the United States and traceable to the conspiracy. 1MDB was created by the government of Malaysia to

promote economic development in Malaysia through global partnerships and foreign direct investment, and its funds were intended to be used for improving the well-being of the Malaysian people. Instead, as detailed in the complaints, 1MDB officials and their associates allegedly misappropriated more than \$3 billion. "The Department of Justice will not allow the American financial system to be used as a conduit for corruption," said Attorney General Lynch. "With this action, we are seeking to forfeit and recover funds that were intended to grow the Malaysian economy and support the Malaysian people. Instead, they were stolen, laundered through American financial institutions and used to enrich a few officials and their associates. Corrupt officials around the world should make no mistake that we will be relentless in our efforts to deny them the proceeds of their crimes."

Former Wells Fargo Branch Manager and Two Others Charged with Laundering Proceeds of Trademark Scam



(Agencies) Charges against the former manager of a Wells Fargo Bank branch in Glendale, California, were unsealed late yesterday, alleging that he was part of a scheme to launder the proceeds of a mass mailing scam targeting holders of U.S. trademarks. Two other California men had previously been charged for perpetrating the scam and committing bank fraud in furtherance of the scam.

Assistant Attorney General Leslie R. Caldwell of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, U.S. Attorney Eileen M. Decker of the Central District of California, Inspector in Charge Robert Wemyss of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) Los Angeles Division, Inspector in Charge Maria Kelokates of the USPIS Washington Division and Acting Special Agent in Charge Aimee E. Schabillon of the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI) Los Angeles Field Office made the announcement.

Albert Yagubyan, 36, of Burbank, California; Artashes

Darbinyan, 36, of Glendale; and Orbel Hakobyan, 41, of Glendale, were charged with one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering in a second superseding indictment filed on July 14, 2016, in the Central District of California. Yagubyan was also charged with four counts of concealment money laundering, one count of false bank entries and one count of witness tampering. Hakobyan was charged with three counts

of concealment money laundering. Darbinyan was charged with four counts of mail fraud, three counts of aggravated identity theft, five counts of concealment money laundering and one count of bank fraud.

According to the second superseding indictment, Yagubyan was the manager of a Wells Fargo branch in Glendale until October 2015.

The second

Wells Fargo, then Yagubyan superseding indictment alleges that from 2013 to 2015, Yagubyan allowed Darbinyan and Hakobyan to open bogus bank accounts at the Wells Fargo branch through which proceeds of the trademark scam could be laundered in exchange for a share of the proceeds. Darbinyan and Hakobyan deposited checks from the victims of the mass mailing scam into bogus accounts at Wells Fargo, then Yagubyan

allegedly instructed Wells Fargo employees to approve withdrawals by Darbinyan and Hakobyan from those accounts, even though the two men were not the signatories on the accounts, according to the second superseding indictment. The indictment unsealed yesterday alleges that with Yagubyan's assistance, Darbinyan and Hakobyan were able to launder \$1.29 million into gold and cash through Wells Fargo.

India continues to get more H-1B visas despite fee hike: Richard Verma

(Agencies) HYDERABAD: India continues to get the "lion's share" of the H-1B visas from the US government despite the fee hike, US Ambassador to India Richard Verma said today. "India continues to receive the lion's share of H-1B and L1 and even after the fee increase, they continue to get 70 per cent of those H-1B visas," Verma said on the sidelines of 'The Future is Now: From COP21 to Reality' conference here. "We understand the concern about the fee hike. I think there is an ongoing conversation. We also know this is an important part of travel and commercial enterprise in the US. And again, there is an increase in the number of visas issued, in fact, there is a slight increase," he added. The US, under the 9/11 Health and Compensation Act, has imposed a special fee of \$4,000 on certain categories of H-1B visas and \$4,500 on L1 visas. Almost all Indian IT companies would be paying between \$8,000 and \$10,000 per H-1B visa as per the hike. According to Nasscom, this is expected to have an impact of about \$400 million annually on India's technology

sector. Earlier in his speech, Verma said the ongoing deforestation and poor land management is responsible for nearly a quarter of the world's greenhouse gas emissions as each day, greenhouse gases emitted by human activities trap the same amount of heat energy as would be released by 400,000 atomic bombs.

"Climate change is not just an environmental challenge; it is a national security issue. Changes in climate could potentially damage critical infrastructure, create shortages of food and water, and lead to mass migrations and disease outbreaks. "Receding ice sheets in the Arctic and the opening of new sea passages raise concerns about maritime security and freedom of navigation," he said. According to Verma, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 175 GW target for renewable energy deployments is among the most ambitious in the world and the US has done a great deal to support this effort. Through the US-India Partnership to Advance Clean Energy, or PACE, nearly \$2.5 billion have been mobilised for clean energy projects in India



and another \$1.4 billion in climate finance for solar projects was announced during the Prime Minister's visit to the US. "India's success is critical to global success and I firmly believe, clean energy will be one of the biggest growth opportunities in the years ahead. Between now and 2035, investment in the global energy sector is expected to reach nearly \$17 trillion. That's more than the entire GDP of China and India combined," Verma said. The US is actively supporting India's solar targets through the Government of India-led International Solar Alliance and bilateral initiatives, such as rooftop solar cooperation and solar resource mapping, he said.

Attorney General Lynch Names Rupa Bhattacharyya as Special Master of the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund



(Agencies) Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch today announced that she has chosen Rupa Bhattacharyya to head the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund (VCF) after current VCF Special Master Sheila L. Birnbaum steps down later this month. Special Master Birnbaum will continue to the full-

time practice of law at Quinn Emanuel, LLP, where she is a partner. Bhattacharyya, who currently serves as Director of the Justice Department's Constitutional and Specialized Tort Litigation Section in the Civil Division's Torts Branch, will assume her new position on July 21. "Rupa Bhattacharyya is an exceptional administrator and a devoted public servant, and I am delighted to name her as the new Special Master of the VCF," said Attorney General Lynch. "Throughout her career at the Treasury and Justice Departments, she has earned a

reputation for fairness, efficiency and integrity. I am confident that under her leadership, the VCF will continue to guarantee that those whose lives were forever changed by the events of September 11th, 2001, can receive the compensation they deserve. I thank outgoing Special Master Sheila Birnbaum for her outstanding leadership of the VCF over the last five years and I welcome Ms. Bhattacharyya to her new post."

"As a life-long New Yorker, serving as Special Master of the VCF has been perhaps the most personally rewarding work of my

career," said Special Master Birnbaum. "My goal from the beginning was to establish a program that is fair, transparent and easy to navigate and I believe we have accomplished this and more over the past five years. It has been a true privilege to work on behalf of the victims of 9/11 and their resilience is inspiring. As the VCF moves into a new chapter following the reauthorization, I know the team is well poised to continue to succeed in compensating those most impacted by the events of Sept. 11, 2001."

Birnbaum has served as VCF Special Master since May 2011,

after the fund created under the James Zadroga 9/11 Health & Compensation Act (Zadroga Act) was signed into law by President Obama on Jan. 2, 2011. The VCF was reauthorized in December 2015 and under Birnbaum's leadership has rendered award decisions on more than 10,000 claims and paid over \$1.8 billion to first responders, recovery workers and residents who suffered physical harm or were killed as a result of the terrorist-related aircraft crashes of Sept. 11, 2001, or the debris removal efforts that took place in the immediate aftermath.

25 Years sentence for Racketeering, Health Care Fraud and other crimes.

Racketeering Conviction Included Largest No-Fault Insurance Fraud Scheme Ever Charged

(Agencies) An individual named Michael Danilovich was sentenced today to 25 years in prison in connection with his conviction for 16 counts of racketeering conspiracy, securities fraud, health care fraud, mail fraud, wire fraud, and money laundering charges following a five-week jury trial.

The jury convicted **DANILOVICH** of racketeering arising out of his operation, from 2007 through 2012, of the largest single no-fault automobile insurance fraud scheme ever charged; his operation, from 2007 to 2009, of two investment fraud schemes, Lyons Ward & Associates and the Rockford Group; and his attempted operation, from 2011 to 2012, of a third investment fraud scheme, Baron & Caplan Association, including after he was arrested and released on bail in this case. **DANILOVICH** was sentenced today by United States District Judge Deborah A. Batts, who presided over the trial. U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara said: "Michael Danilovich made a career out of defrauding people. From running the largest no-fault insurance fraud scheme in the country to operating multi-million dollar investment frauds, Danilovich's deception was wide-ranging. Thanks to the outstanding work of the FBI and the NYPD, Danilovich's career of crime has been put to an end."

According to the Superseding Indictment, evidence admitted at trial, court filings, and statements made in open court: From 2007 through 2012, **DANILOVICH** was a leader of an enterprise engaged

in a pattern of racketeering that included a massive scheme to defraud automobile insurance companies under New York's no-fault insurance law, multiple securities fraud schemes, money laundering, and the operation of illegal gambling businesses.

Under New York State law, every vehicle registered in the

state is required to have no-fault automobile insurance, which enables the driver and passengers of a registered and insured vehicle to obtain benefits of up to \$50,000 per person for injuries sustained in an automobile accident, regardless of fault (the "No-Fault Law"). The No-Fault Law requires prompt



payment for medical treatment, thereby obviating the need for claimants to file personal injury lawsuits in order to be reimbursed. Under the No-Fault Law, patients can assign their right to reimbursement from an insurance company to others, including

medical clinics that provide treatment for their injuries. New York State law also requires that all medical clinics in the state be incorporated, owned, operated, and controlled by a licensed medical practitioner in order to be eligible for reimbursement under the No-Fault Law. Insurance companies will not honor claims for medical treatments from a medical clinic that is not actually owned, operated, and controlled by a licensed medical professional.

Enough Persecution. Dalits Should Stop Skinning Cows.

(Agencies) "For 20 years, I have skinned dead cows and animals. There is no glory in this work. I heave the 50 kg hide on my back. Nobody wants to even drink a glass of water from my hands. I have no regrets. If you don't want to drink the water, don't."

Vijay Deewan, 59, says he has no caste, no religion. But on much prodding he said that his mother and father were Brahmins. For the son of a Brahmin family to take up this profession in 1982, the resolve he must have had to annihilate the poison of India's caste system is something you can only imagine. It was this that made me think that amid the raging controversy over cow-vigilantism, I should introduce you to Vijay Deewan.

Brought up in Mumbai, when Vijay Deewan told his family about his decision, he did not face a lot of resistance. In his youth, he had become a follower of Gandhi, a deeply compassionate young man. He went to Gagode village, 100 kilometres from the metropolis of Mumbai, to live in the birthplace of social reformer Vinobha Bhave. Vijay Deewan has spent the rest of his life there.

Vijay Deewan says Dr BR Ambedkar declared that because of this work, untouchability was thrust upon the Dalits and that's why they should abandon it. Gandhi also believed this; so did Vinobha

Bhave. But someone had to act on it. So I did, he said. Listening to Vijay Deewan felt much better than reading a fat book on sociology. There is no dignity in working with cow hides, he said. Even if it provides an income, why should Dalits do something which doesn't have any dignity? If the upper castes want someone to remove and skin dead cows, then they should do it, he told me. Vijay Deewan says it should be acknowledged that cow hides are the natural assets of villages. Gandhi used to say that there should be a tannery next to every cowshed. Every year, 10 to 12 cows die in every village. Their skins are part of the village's economy. A raw hide sells for Rs. 700. Processing it with lime takes it to Rs. 2,000. There are 40,000 villages in Maharashtra. That's an income of around Rs. 40 crore. Shoes and several other things are made from these hides in the villages - that income should be factored in separately.

Vijay Deewan says he is not an animal lover of the activist type. He says that most Brahmins of Maharashtra are meat-eaters. So why shouldn't he chop and sell meat? And why was the cruelest punishment of the caste system heaped upon those who do it? Why was dignity stripped away from a job that serves society? People eat fish. Who gets the fish? People from the



fishermen community. But why don't upper caste families allow marriages to them? Many people support the death penalty. But you know who the executioner is. Does anyone from an upper caste become an executioner? Please find out. People from the Matang community become executioners. Those who call for the death penalty, will they marry into the Matang community?

The experiences that have motivated the strong sentiments and expressions of Vijay Deewan are precious. The question of the cow's hide is not one of religion. It's an excuse of Hindutva politics to torment Dalits. This should stop. Dalits should immediately stop skinning cows and leave it to the rest of the society. First they suffered exclusion and now they are being killed over it. This should not be tolerated in independent India.

It's That Eavesdrop Endemic

Whatsapp Says It's Snoop-Proof Now, But There's Always A Way In

(Agencies) For years, a Delhi power-broker used to call from nondescript landline numbers, changing them ever so often. Of late, he has started using WhatsApp calls for 'sensitive' conversations. He's not alone. WhatsApp has revealed that over 100 million voice calls are being made on the social network every day. That's over 1,100 calls a second! India is one of the biggest user bases of WhatsApp. And many Indian users are making the app their main engine for voice calls. One reason for this shift is that WhatsApp calls are seen to be essentially free- (though they indeed have data charges). But for a lot of people, the chief allure lies in the touted fact that WhatsApp calling is far more secure than mobile calling. In April, the app introduced end-to-end encryption for its messages and voice calls.

Consequent to this, Sudhir Yadav, a Gurgaon-based software engineer filed a PIL in the Supreme Court seeking a ban on WhatsApp on the grounds that its calls are so safe that it could be misused by 'terrorists'. Last month, a court in Brazil issued orders to block WhatsApp for 72 hours after it failed to provide the authorities access to encrypted data.

Are WhatsApp calls really impenetrable? WhatsApp believes so and says that the encryption key is held by the two persons at the two ends of the message or call and no one, not even the company, can snoop in. "The calls are end-to-end encrypted so WhatsApp

and third parties can't listen to them," a WhatsApp spokesperson told Outlook. This is precisely Yadav's concern. "Because the encryption is end to end, the government can't break it and WhatsApp cannot provide the decryption key," he says.

However, experts do not buy this argument. They believe everything on the Internet is vulnerable. "Anything that uses a phone number is vulnerable," says Kiran Jonnalagadda, founder of technology platform HasGeek. "Anyone can impersonate the phone number by getting a duplicate SIM and get access to a phone. There are also bugs in the system which security agencies use."

WhatsApp uses a person's phone number to open an account and authenticate a user. So, if the government or a security agency wants to get access to a WhatsApp call, it would be very easy. "Telecom companies cannot access these calls as they are encrypted before they reach the network. But the government can. It just has to replicate a SIM to access any number and its messages or voice calls," says Aravind R.S., a volunteer for Save the Internet campaign and founder of community chat app Belong,

There are other modes of attack as well. It is a given that Android phones, which form the majority of mobile phones used in India today, are most vulnerable to malware attacks. So, even if the app itself is secure, the device is not and if

the device is attacked, just about everything in it can be tapped into. For instance, there's the 'man in the middle' mode of attack, where a third person gets into a call and mirrors the messages to both the sides and relays the messages or calls to a different server. There is also the SS7 signalling protocol that can help hackers get into networks and calls. These attacks can make even a WhatsApp encryption vulnerable.

Security agencies and hackers routinely implant viruses into the phones of people they are monitoring. Once a phone is "infected", everything is accessible. And Android phones are extremely prone to attacks from malware. "It's not perfectly secure, especially if there is any virus in an Android phone, which is what security agencies work with. They have many more ways to get into a phone. There is no defence against that," says Aravind,

Experts believe it is possible that US intelligence agencies like the FBI and the NSA may have access to or are capable of breaking into even the WhatsApp encryption. This is proven by the recent incident where the FBI, after being refused by Apple to open up an iPhone used by a terrorist, broke into the phone by itself.

"If you are on the NSA list, there is nothing you can do to protect yourself," says Pranesh Prakash, policy director with the Centre for Internet and Society. "They will find a way to get into your



phone. In WhatsApp, many things like photographs and videos are not encrypted; these can get access to a person's account." In India, the debate on access to encrypted phones has been on since the government engaged with BlackBerry a few years ago. "There is no law governing an Over The Top (OTT) service like WhatsApp. If the government orders decryption of a call and WhatsApp cannot comply, it will become illegal," says cyber lawyer Asheeta Regidi. The government's seeming comfort level with all this legal ambiguity is yet another indicator that all is not what it seems with WhatsApp. As for callers, they would do well to speak discreetly on any network.

Ted Cruz Steals the Show

It was supposed to be Indiana Governor Mike Pence's big night—but all eyes were on the unrepentant Texas senator, instead.

(Agencies) Cleveland—Senator Ted Cruz strode out on stage at the Quicken Loans Arena on Wednesday to thunderous, extended applause. He left, smiling tightly, to equally thunderous, equally extended boos.

The applause was Cruz's reward for appearing at the Republican National Convention hosted by Donald Trump. The boos were his penalty for refusing to endorse Trump during the speech. It was the latest stunning turn at a convention that remains stubbornly fractured, despite pleas to paper over differences on three straight nights. The GOP simply isn't ready to unify.

The rapturous reception when Cruz came out was striking but not so strange. After all, even though the feud between Cruz and Trump grew increasingly bitter as the primary campaign went on, polls

showed substantial overlap between their two voter bases. But it became clear from the start of the speech that Cruz, like a trio of other famous Texans, wasn't ready to make nice.

"I want to congratulate Donald Trump on winning the nomination last night," Cruz said. It was a twice-barbed comment: Not only was it not an endorsement, the insistence that Trump had won only Tuesday, after a series of revolts by pro-Cruz delegates were put down, was a subtle jab. The rest of the speech included a series of double-edged remarks that could be taken as either support for party unity or continued disdain for Trump: "I want to see the principles our party believes prevail in November."

"What if this, right now, is our last time? ... Did we live up to our values? Did we do all we could? That's really what elections should be about.... We're

fighting, not for one particular candidate or one campaign, but because each of us wants to be able to tell our kids and grandkids... that we did our best for their future, and for our country."

"Freedom means religious freedom, whether you are Christian or Jew, Muslim or atheist."

And perhaps most cleverly: "Don't stay home in November. Stand, and speak, and vote your conscience, vote for candidates up and down the ticket who you trust to defend our freedom and to be faithful to the Constitution." Cruz can be an excellent speaker, and he was on his game Wednesday. The crowd was into it. But as the address approached its conclusion, and it became clear that there was no endorsement coming, the crowd grew increasingly agitated. Pockets of people pointed and shouted, "Endorse Trump!" And



as Cruz reached for the big finish, the boos broke out. It was stunning. Across the press box, jaded journalists' jaws hung agape.

The up-and-down pattern exemplified by Cruz's address persisted throughout the night. Early in the evening, Laura Ingraham delivered a barnburner of a speech. "We should all, even all you boys with wounded feelings and bruised egos, pledge to support Donald Trump now," she said. "This is the most important election since 1980." (Cruz apparently didn't hear her.) But a sleepy, meandering speech

by casino owner Phil Ruffin, punctuated with borderline laughable statements—"If Donald tells you something, put it in the bank. His handshake is better than any contract you will ever write"—let the air out of the room. A bit later, Pastor Darrell Scott of Cleveland Heights had the room on its feet; businessman Harold Hamm got them to sit back down again. Governor Scott Walker, whose endorsements of Trump had been tortured, offered stronger backing in his speech, which was punctuated by a refrain of "America deserves better."



How one Mann's antics Prompt Security

A video of Parliament posted on Facebook by Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) lawmaker Bhagwant Mann led to uproar in both Houses on Friday and triggered calls from the security establishment for a prompt overhaul of safety measures. Mann, a popular stand-up comedian, furnished an unconditional apology but experts say the damage has been done as the breach committed by the Punjab MP is "serious in nature" and a revamp of security is needed immediately to ensure there are no loopholes.

Officials referred to the 2001 suicide attack on Parliament that killed nine people and led to strengthening of security with better-trained personnel, sophisticated arms, new detector gadgets, sniffer dogs and armoured patrolling vehicles.

The terrorists failed to enter the main building as they could not find the way in.

"One irresponsible act by an MP has exposed the security apparatus. With fears of security being compromised the entire mechanism needs to be upgraded now," said a government official.

Sources say the under vehicle scanning system (UVSS), positioning of quick reaction teams, the system for radio frequency identification tags (RFID) that allows swift

access for cars of parliamentarians need advancement.

The UVSS delivers the full picture of a vehicle's entire length and width while the RFID identifies and tracks tags attached to objects and individuals.

The issue has given AAP's rivals ammunition to attack the party ahead of next year's Punjab polls where it has emerged as a strong contender and a threat to the ruling SAD-BJP combine.

Mann showed in the video the different tiers of checks a car with an "MP" tag passes through at various points, right up to the main entrance of the building.

While those in the security establishment grapple to make quick changes, the issue sparked angry disruptions in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha on Friday. Mann tendered an apology even as his party rallied behind him.

The AAP accused the BJP of creating hype over a "non-issue" to deflect attention from attacks on Dalits in Gujarat.

The lawmaker toned down his stand from a day earlier when he said he will repeat his filming act as it was in public interest.

"I have tendered an unconditional apology to the Speaker over the video. My intention was not to compromise the security of Parliament," he said.

"I only wanted to apprise the people of the process of selection



of questions because they, at times, ask us why their questions were not raised. I wanted to show them that the questions are selected through a lucky draw. I have made an educational video."

However, the Speaker, who saw it as grave misconduct, was not impressed by his apology as she felt it was not enough.

"Mann's action is seen as violative of two specific rules of Parliament rules — 334(A) which 'prohibits advance publicity' and 352 which says 'inter alia video/ tape recording should not be done'," Sumitra Mahajan said.

The Speaker added that she would have not hesitated in taking swift action if the matter was related to proceedings inside the House, but since it is a matter pertaining to the Parliament complex, she needed to consult political parties for appropriate steps.

The fiasco over the video is

expected to initiate action on an earlier report that found gaps in Parliament security.

Two years ago, the Speaker had set up a committee headed by former Union Home Secretary and MP from Bihar RK Singh to look into the security of the Parliament complex.

The committee had Satyapal Singh, MP from Uttar Pradesh and former Mumbai Police Commissioner, and Harish Chandra Meena, MP from Rajasthan and formerly the state's DGP, as its members.

According to the panel's report nearly 100 of the 450 CCTV cameras were not functioning, apart from other shortcomings.

The findings, submitted to Mahajan with a copy marked to the Home Ministry, had suggested enhanced security at 12 gates in the Parliament complex.



I have tendered an unconditional apology to the Speaker over the video. My intention was not to compromise the security of Parliament.

—BHAGWANT MANN, AAP MP



The comedy of errors enacted during the last couple of weeks by AAP leaders has only proved that they are not capable to hold the positions they have got.

—CAPT AMARINDER SINGH, PUNJAB CONG CHIEF



It is a problem for members representing 125 crore people and that of the nation.

—MALLIKARJUN KHARGE, CONGRESS LEADER

Can The Post Of Governor Be Redeemed?



Recently, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar called for the abolition of the post of governor. His statement came soon after the misadventures of the Union government in attempting to topple the popularly elected governments of Uttarakhand and Arunachal Pradesh. Both these attempts led to a national hue and cry, putting the BJP government in a tight spot. The Supreme Court's decision to reinstate the government of Arunachal Pradesh further lent credence to the arguments of the opposition that the governor was exceeding his constitutional brief.

Of course, this is not the first time that the role of the governor has come under the scanner. Whether it has been the Congress, the NDA or even the Janata Party-Third Front, all have misused their powers when at the Centre to topple uncomfortable or opposition state governments to further their political agendas. No wonder, Article 356 has been imposed more than 120 times in various states, at the whims and fancies of the central government. Governors have been found working at the behest of the Centre and as its agents rather than performing their obligations as constitutional watchdogs. While there have been exceptions to the rule, the post of governor usually goes to party loyalists, with little regard to merit or suitability. Now, let us come to the moot point: Has the post of governor become dispensable in the interest of federalism as enshrined in our Constitution? Should this institution be abolished?

As far as the constitutional provisions are concerned, the governor is expected to act as the link between the Centre and the state with a view to make the federation strong. The Constitution framers were wary of strong centrifugal tendencies in our diverse multi-religious socio-polity and decided to continue with this post so as to enable the Union government to have its eyes and ears in the

states and to check state governments from pursuing policies that may not be in conjugation with national priorities. The Indian polity is still susceptible to being pulled in all directions by forces inimical to national interests and integrity. Ever more strident identity politics, naxalism and challenges emanating from religious radicalization have buttressed the case for a strong central supervision for which the governor is required. The governor enjoys

wide discretionary powers under Article 163, as well as the power to reserve bills under Articles 200 & 201. In case of fractured verdict, no norms have set for governors on how to initiate government formation, and chances of them getting influenced by central diktats can't be ruled out. The governor has the right to reserve bills passed by the state legislative assembly for the consideration of the President or even refuse assent to bills that curtail the power of High Court,

interfere with the basic structure of the Constitution, affect relations with a foreign country and damage federal features. The decision of the governor is absolute and can't be revoked despite insistence from the state cabinet once the President has communicated his refusal to the Governor. The governor seeks reports from the state government on the status of bills, keeps the Centre informed of all the activities in the state, sends reports regarding law and order or breakdown of constitutional machinery and, thus, helps in maintaining effective central control over states.

Of late, the post of governor has become a matter of contention. The argument is that they are beholden to their political masters and ever-willing to meddle in state politics so as to help topple duly elected governments. Yet, governors are not the sole culprits. The conduct of the speakers has also been far from impartial and they have not conducted

themselves as per parliamentary democracy norms. The anti-defection law has been much abused. There has been an overall decline in the values of the democratic system. Doing away with the post of governor will be akin to throwing away the baby with the bathwater. The institution continues to be sacrosanct and important but the quality of the incumbents has time and again lowered the institutional prestige. The Supreme Court verdict in the SR Bommai case was historic in the sense that it curtailed the power of the Centre to dismiss state governments arbitrarily. Nonetheless, the problem persists. Certain amendments need to be made to streamline the position of governor, improve the quality of incumbents and provide dignity to this august office. Given the growth of regional parties, some of which lack a national perspective and remain embedded in parochialism and identity politics, makes the case for retaining the institution of governor all the more compelling.

Cashing in on a failed coup

Turkish President Erdogan is using the botched bid to unseat him to further his authoritarian agenda.

As if from nowhere, a section of the Turkish armed forces attempted a coup d'état on July 15. At 10 p.m., reports of gunfire near the General Staff headquarters in Ankara, Turkey's capital, began the barrage that lasted till 2.30 a.m. on July 16, when the national intelligence agency (MIT) said that the coup had been "thwarted". Chaos reigned in the intervening hours. The soldiers and their heavy armour held sections of Ankara and Istanbul, including some media stations and parts of the transportation network. Two hours into the coup, the security services had begun to tell reporters that the unrest had been inspired by the U.S.-based Islamic scholar Fethullah Gülen. Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan took to FaceTime, a videotelephony app, to ask people to go onto the streets to defeat the coup. From the mosques, imams also called for public action. By 12.35 a.m., the Special Prosecutor had already begun to frame charges against the coup leadership. It was clear that this coup — the sixth in Turkey's modern history — had failed before it could be consolidated.

Coup as opportunity Mr. Erdogan, who has long attempted to create pliable state institutions, said that the coup was a "gift from God to us because this will be a reason to cleanse our army". The government arrested more than 6,000 people from the military and other state institutions. Saying that the Gülen movement had become a "cancer virus" on society, Mr. Erdogan pledged to purge its membership from positions of authority. The ultimate arbiter of who is or is not in the Gülen movement will be left to Mr. Erdogan's own loyalists, who are likely to remove those who have long resisted the President's own bid to monopolise power. Mr. Erdogan deliberately linked the Gülen movement to the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which the Turkish army has attacked in its bases in south-eastern Turkey and in Iraq. To call both the Gülen movement and the PKK 'terrorists' is a convenient way to sweep up all Erdogan enemies into one target and use the coup — a "gift from God" — as the opportunity to go after them with vehemence.

Was the coup a plot by the followers of Mr. Gülen? So far he has denied responsibility for the

coup, saying that a military coup cannot develop democracy. Indeed his own participation is not of the essence. What will be useful is that this coup will allow Mr. Erdogan to flush out some of Mr. Gülen's followers and remove them from places of authority in the military and the judiciary.

The military's disconnect A senior military officer in Turkey told me that over the past half century the Turkish military has been increasingly isolated from society. It has built parallel institutions and believes in values — partly republican — that are at some remove from the Islamic piety and suffocation of Mr. Erdogan's Justice and Development Party (AKP). It is likely, this officer said, that some military leaders felt that their putsch might inspire others to join in against the President's centralisation of power. The amateur attempt to seize power suggests either that these soldiers had no idea what they were doing — and so had been set up — or that their officers believed that the propaganda of the deed would bring society and the rest of the military on their side. Nothing like this happened.

Smatterings of soldiers on the Fatih Sultan Mehmet and Bosphorus bridges in Istanbul do not make much of an impression on the public. This was nothing like the 1980 military coup in Turkey, nor like the covert coup of 1993 or the post-modern coup of 1997. Only Mr. Erdogan has gained from it.

When Mr. Erdogan came to power in 2002, he worried about the power of the Turkish military. It had conducted hard coups in the past, and it had perhaps assassinated a President in 1993, and removed an Islamist coalition government in 1997. The AKP came from the Islamist tradition and was vulnerable before a military that had imbibed modern Turkish secularism. To earn immunity from coups, Mr. Erdogan put his party's Islamism on mute, threw himself into providing for his Anatolian businessmen base and attempted to join the European Union as a full member — an affiliation that disallows military coups. In addition, he placed loyal Islamists into positions of authority in the military. Some of these men were also followers of Mr. Gülen. When Mr. Erdogan says that Mr. Gülen is responsible for the coup, he knows well the role the two of them played together to line the military with their kind of modern Islamist. Turkey's military had increased its authority through the war on the Kurds, which Mr. Erdogan tried to bring to an end with a peace negotiation with the PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan.

Carnage in Nice leaves the French in a state of vulnerability



After presiding over the Bastille Day parade, where the impressive military might of France was on display on the Champs Elysées, a relaxed President Hollande addressed the nation through the traditional interview. After all, France had successfully hosted the Euro Cup in spite of a series of debilitating strikes and renewed terror threats by the Islamic State. All this, in the wake of devastating floods, the worst the country had experienced in a century. The French president vowed to instil confidence in his countrymen and confirmed the lifting of the state of emergency on July 26. He ended by saying, "To be president, is to be confronted with death, tragedy and horror". The same evening his words rang true. Less than 24 hours later, a visibly moved Hollande was back on TV declaring three days of national mourning and extending the emergency.

The attack in the city of Nice, which left 84 dead and around 300 injured, 50 of them critically, took place on July 14, France's National Day, the day the republican values of liberty, equality and fraternity are celebrated. The Promenade des Anglais, a picturesque walkway and avenue along the brilliant blue Mediterranean, normally captured on camera by all visitors to this riviera city, was transformed in the space of a couple of minutes into what resembled a war zone.

Each such act of carnage — this is France's third major attack in 18 months — leaves citizens feeling more vulnerable. After the Paris attacks, the first time suicide bombers acted on French soil, it was clear that anyone and everyone was a potential target. The Nice attack, demonstrates that anyone and almost everyone could be a potential terrorist. There is no need for extensive training, guns, bombs or weapons of mass destruction. A simple vehicle suffices. Ownership is not even an issue; a 19-tonne truck can be rented with the specific purpose of mowing down happy families with children. In under two minutes, a single trucker mercilessly killed roughly as many people as three terrorists with assault rifles and endless rounds of ammunition in several hours, in the Bataclan concert hall in the November 13 attacks, after weeks or months of planning and training.

In the aftermath of each such act, there is an astonishing amount of solidarity. Nice was no exception. If anything, southern France's reputed warmth and sense of hospitality had even more people opening their doors to complete strangers. In a few hours, Nice's blood bank shut its doors to donors, so overwhelming had the response been.

Predictably too, the blame game began along with attempts to make political capital out of this human tragedy. The far-right National Front's Marine Le Pen called for the resignation of the socialist interior minister and the far-left condemned the prolongation of the emergency. The weakened president called for political cohesion and reiterated France's commitment to fighting the IS in Iraq and Syria. Struggling to cope, the government has asked "patriotic citizens to join a reserve force" to support the over-stretched and exhausted police and security forces.

The ground reality is the government and ruling class are powerless in France, as they are the world over, to prevent such attacks. The Nice attacker, a depressive, violent loner was radicalised very quickly and appears to have acted independently, though the IS has claimed the attack. The numbing possibility that this kind of attack can be carried out anywhere, any time without the intelligence agencies having a clue has left the public with a heightened sense of vulnerability. As a country in the forefront of the fight against radical Islamist groups, France is a prime target for terrorist attacks. The greatest threat is now from its home-grown crop of jihadists and would-be jihadists. The tide against terror will only begin to turn when France reaches out to her alienated, disaffected Muslim citizens, gives them the requisite space to express their identity and culture. Integration cannot take place solely at the state's behest. Given the current state of affairs in France, the identity politics, the fear mongering and the lack of political will, it is going to be a long haul.

How Donald Trump's speech sets a trap for Hillary Clinton

Donald Trump said, "I accept your nomination for the presidency of the United States"... and Alice woke up to discover that her adventures in Wonderland were but a dream. Or rather not. This is real. This has happened. Donald J. Trump has been nominated by the GOP. And he probably can win in November, too. He delivered a speech unlike any I've ever seen. The cadence was uniform — a series of tweets shouted at the top of his voice as if trying to be heard over the whirring blades of his helicopter. Trump even delivers the word "peace" like it's a threat.

Critics will call it doom laden and pessimistic, lacking in humor or charm. But that is Trump's charm. He says what millions think without wasting time on folksy platitudes. He was well controlled - rather than join in with the "lock her up" chant, he urged the crowd to beat Clinton at the ballot box. And his improvised line about how nice it was to hear the GOP cheer gay rights showed a party turning a page. Love him or loathe him, Trump is winding down the religious right rhetoric in the Republican Party. But if the rest of the speech sounded furious it's because that's the way he's going to win. This was a laundry list of everything anyone has ever told me was wrong with the USA in the past decade: crime, terrorism, jobs, disrespect overseas. Trump cuts through. He gets instinctively what's grinding people's gears. And where Reagan offered the hope of personal ambition, Trump promises law and order. At this moment in time, with the American Dream so broken, "security" will do.

It was the crescendo to a day four of the Republican National Convention that had started terribly, with Ted Cruz justifying his non-endorsement to the Texas delegation live on TV. Why did he hold back the night before? To be precise, his disagreements with Trump are philosophical. But his reason for breaking the pledge of loyalty to the GOP ticket turns out to be personal. Cruz said: "I wasn't going to come like a servile puppy dog and say thank you very much for maligning my wife and father."

For this I believe Cruz deserves tremendous respect and admiration. Trump, meanwhile, is paying the price for the ugly campaign he ran in the primaries. There was no reason to imply that Cruz's wife was ugly or mad, or that Cruz's father was involved in the assassination of JFK. That said, I interviewed dozens of delegates in various delegations here — including Texas — and found that the overwhelming majority were either sanguine about the whole Cruz affair or sympathetic to Trump. Having committed themselves to the nominee, they now want to see him win. Yet again Trump is being shielded by the very establishment mentality that he once ran against.



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India Has Been Outwitted By China On This Front Too

By Yashwant Sinha

A small report appeared in a leading newspaper a few days ago under the headline "MJ Akbar Lands Sought-After Departments in Foreign Ministry". The news report then went on to describe the countries and the regions Akbar would handle. His other colleague in the same ministry, VK Singh, the report said, would continue to look after, among other things, countries in Africa and Latin America, obviously less sought after. I was not surprised at the tone and tenor of the story. If Akbar is handling countries in the European Union, barring France and Germany which will be handled directly by the External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj, and VK Singh is handling Africa and Latin America then, clearly, according to the newspaper, Akbar has the more important charge. And this is where the problem is. The news report reflects the prejudice which exists in the minds of many, especially in the media, even today, about the lesser importance of countries in Africa and Latin America than those in the other regions of the world. Together, these two continents account for 66 countries and their

importance in terms of numbers cannot be overstated. But it is not a question of numbers alone. These countries are rich in people, natural resources, trade potential and the scope for economic and technological cooperation. Yet, 70 years after our independence, they do not get the importance they deserve in our scheme of things.

Let me recall a few experiences from my past as Minister for External Affairs. The head of government of a very important country in Africa was once visiting Delhi. As per protocol, I went to meet him and have discussions with him in Rashtrapati Bhavan where he was staying. When I returned to my South Block office, I noticed a big media contingent waiting there. I felt happy at the interest our media was showing in the visit of that dignitary from Africa and started thinking about what I would tell them. But when I got down from my car and approached the media contingent, I was surprised to notice that they were not interested in talking to me. I went past them almost without being noticed. When I inquired about the reason for their being there

in such strength, I was told that they were waiting to photograph and talk to the US Assistant Secretary of State who was visiting the ministry to meet the Joint Secretary concerned. In the newspapers and TV channels, this visit received a pride of place and the more important and the more high-level visit from Africa was hardly taken notice of.

The shabby, often violent treatment meted out to African students in India is a reflection of the same deep-rooted prejudice. In my visits to various African countries, I felt delighted when I met high ranking politicians and officials who had studied in India and had fond memories of their stay here. They are precious assets for us. So are the Indian professionals who work in these countries in important positions and have made them their home.

I noticed something else also, something perhaps more disturbing. China has paid far greater attention to the countries in Africa and Latin America than India has. China's trade with these countries is often 10 to 20 times more than India's. They are also involved more in the developmental processes of



these countries than we are. We have a lot of catching up to do when compared to China.

In my travels through various Latin American countries, I noticed that they had great interest in India and were keen to forge a closer relationship. They were impressed by India's growth story and had great admiration for our democracy. Small Indian-origin communities can be found even in remote places in Latin America. They could be valuable assets for us.

We do not send our best and the brightest officers to these countries to man our embassies. They are often at a disadvantage because they do not know the local language, namely Spanish, or Portuguese as in the case of Brazil. Postings to these countries are generally regarded as off-line postings.

The India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Alliance was

formed by me in 2003. This brought together three important countries, all democracies, spread across the three continents of Asia, Africa and Latin America. The idea behind the formation of this group was to bring not only the three countries together, but also the three continents closer. My regret is that we have allowed BRICS to overtake IBSA. This has taken the shine off IBSA. Our Prime Minister has visited a few countries in Africa recently. I only hope that he will visit the continent more often and also find time to visit Latin America. I also hope that he will take Indian businessmen with him on these visits so that business-to-business contacts also develop faster and become deeper. Africa and Latin America are waiting for India. We should seize the moment. At the same time we must also change our mindset about them and their citizens.

Delhi's Monsoon Nightmare Seems To Escape Arvind Kejriwal

IP Bajpai

Each time I have returned to Delhi, the last hour before entering the city has always been one of happy expectation. It has been so since I went to boarding school (at age 7) and since then, year after year, coming home to Delhi lifted one's spirits - there always that built-in anticipation of being back in my city, with my family and my friends, and familiar surroundings.

And so it was this time, three weeks ago, when I returned from a blissful holiday. Trying, with growing impatience, to look out of the window of the plane to see my city below. The rush to get through immigration and customs and be on my way home. The high that lasts in the terminal comes to a devastatingly quick end as soon as you exit the air-conditioned space to a cacophony of horns, voices, cars and realize this is reality, this is Delhi.

As you fight your way across three lanes to your car (there is zero coordination for traffic at the new fancy airport), you are met by chaos at the police booth on the furthest lane. Cars are parked haphazardly as people struggle to get bags and themselves into their cars. Nowhere in the world is there such chaos as at Delhi Terminal 3. The Battle of Living in Delhi begins immediately upon

arrival, even for old-timers to the city.

Three weeks since then and I have on average spent over an hour a day trying desperately trying to get our house and lane monsoon-proof. This involves calling every department in the Municipal Corporation of Delhi or MCD, the local councilor, the Delhi Jal Board and making enough of a nuisance of oneself to make something happen.

Courtesy the High Court, the MCD ordered the un-cementing of the areas around trees in Delhi so that the concrete would not choke them. This was a good thing. But the area that was dug open had to be filled with mud. So, the MCD contractor came and plunked three huge mounds of mud near our house in May. And then they forgot about it. When I called the control room, they passed me onto the horticulture department. They denied all knowledge of the mounds of mud, and even the existence of trees, even though someone had come and neatly etched a number on them. (So now you can actually count the trees in your locality.) Next I tried my local MCD engineer. At first, he said he knew nothing about it, but would check. I pleaded with him that if these mounds weren't removed they would, with the monsoon rain, flow in to the

drainage system and block it forever. He said he wasn't in charge of drainage but would see what he could do.

Meanwhile, I continued a losing battle with my Municipal Councillor, and she with the Project Division, to provide (i.e. build) proper open deep storm water drains as they had already done in the rest of the colonies in our area. When I moved into this house 20 years ago, we had large, open, uncovered drains to carry the rush of monsoon rain away. That was true of most of Delhi. Then suddenly, seven years ago, the MCD arrived, laid six-inch pipes and covered the storm drains and placed small 18x18 inches perforated manhole to capture this torrent of water. Obviously there was a huge mismatch when it rained: how could 6-inch drains handle two inches of rain water? The road and sometimes the ground floor would get flooded. Did the MCD care? Not at all. Obviously, it was in someone's interest to spend (waste) all this money. The other problem is that these drains are impossible to clean without a desilting machine, which of course does not exist. So after a while, all these lovely drains are choked.

Chasing the various people who are supposed to maintain all these drains was like doing a telephone merry-go-round. From the control room, to the supervisor, to another person (not my area) to third, (I only handle large drains) and endless messages to the poor municipal councillor. Then suddenly something seemed to fall into place. The MCD finally acknowledged ownership of the piles of mud and people came to fill the area around the trees. Another junior engineer arrived with a couple of people to try and clear the storm drains. I seemed to be on a winning wicket. Not for long. The Delhi Jal Board presented me a water bill of Rs. 50,000. With arrears of Rs. 47,000. How did they manage this feat? They claimed that this was the charge from last May to this May. But I had paid every bill in between, and no other bill showed any arrears. They I figured it out: with a sleight of hand, they had moved all my payments down a couple of years and now claimed a deficit. And guess what, they gave me two weeks to pay, and when I sent someone to the department to challenge this, the person there was on leave, so nobody could explain how all the numbers had moved. Pay or we cut the line.

How Amit Shah Pandered To Sidhu - Only To Have It Backfire

Mihir Swarup Sharma

Amit Shah has had a bad week. If there's one thing that he has painstakingly built up in the years since 2014, it's his air of unflappable infallibility. Sure, there were reversals in Delhi and Bihar for the BJP - but, in both those cases, he faced very tough odds. Those bad losses didn't take anything away from his own reputation for far-seeing, quick-moving politics.

This week, however, has been different. First came Arunachal Pradesh. Now this is not a North Eastern state where you think anyone would want to expend vast amounts of political capital. But things are different for Amit Shah, the BJP - and for the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. Shah's number-one agenda is for the BJP to occupy the space that the Congress once occupied - as the natural party of government in every state in every corner of India. Every single place where there's a Congress government - even Uttarakhand, even Arunachal - has to feel under pressure. That's what "Congress-mukt Bharat" means.

Plus for the RSS - and for

Shah, as a life-long swayamsevak - there's an additional incentive. The North East has to be brought into the "mainstream" of India, as the RSS defines that mainstream. And Arunachal has been a particular focus: Nitin Sethi explained in the Business Standard how they're going about it - "the Shiva-like Rangfraa," writes Sethi, "is a creation of the RSS affiliates who have converted the animist belief system of Tangsa in to a sect of Hinduism and Rangfraa into a clone of Shiva."

For the BJP, every political act has its social agenda behind it, and that's what underlay Shah's decision to spend political capital on destabilizing the Arunachal government. But, clearly, Shah is overstretched. How could he not know that his carefully planned - and expensive - rebellion was falling apart? How could his carefully-husbanded MLAs stay at his expense in Assam, then head back to Arunachal and - the moment they were across the border - run back to the Congress? How could he arrogantly assume that the

Congress would not learn from its error of keeping on Tarun Gogoi, and not change an unpopular chief minister if it meant keeping a government?

What matters here is not that Shah got it wrong. What matters is that he committed so fully to something that he simply failed to follow through. Just like in Uttarakhand, he used government processes to political ends. Just as in Uttarakhand a BJP General Secretary flashed a victory sign while flying MLAs from Delhi to Dehradun only to discover the number of Congress defectors wasn't enough, Shah allowed overconfidence to scuttle his plan. Shah simply failed to have the right follow-through. The Congress outmaneuvered him neatly by keeping their eye on the ball.

These cricketing metaphors are intended to gently slide you into the second Shah mess-up of the week: the departure of Navjot Singh Sidhu from the BJP. Sidhu, once a moderately entertaining opening batsman and now a completely unentertaining TV personality, has been long a "face" of the BJP in



Punjab. Three times elected to parliament from Amritsar, he was unceremoniously turfed out of his seat in 2014 so that Arun Jaitley could lose it by a lakh or so votes. He is profoundly unpopular not just with the BJP's allies in Punjab, the Akalis, but even within his own state party (presumably he tries to tell jokes in meetings, people like that are always detested in their workplaces).

Even so, however, Shah invested in Sidhu. He gave him a Rajya Sabha seat just weeks ago, as a "distinguished personality" no less. Apparently this was because the Akalis flatly refused to send Sidhu to the Rajya Sabha from Punjab - not because they recognized this would further batter the state's reputation, but because Sidhu has consistently blamed his abysmal performance as an MP on lack of cooperation from the state government. (His constant

presence on the sets of awful "comedy" shows instead of in parliament or his constituency has nothing to do with his poor performance, of course.) Shah has every right to declare that Sidhu is a "distinguished personality" - Sidhu certainly has a personality, and it is certainly distinguished in the sense that it is painfully easy to distinguish his personality from absolutely everyone else's. And, after all, the Congress sent Mani Shankar Aiyar to the Rajya Sabha under a similar quota, and Aiyar is certainly similarly distinguishable.

But the question is not Shah's right to do it, but his judgment in doing so. How could he have assumed that someone as unsettled in the party as Sidhu would take a nomination to Delhi and quietly forget about ambitions in Punjab? As Navjot Sidhu's wife, Navjot Sidhu - also, confusingly, a legislator from Amritsar - points out, her husband was upset because he wants to "serve Punjab". Translation: no Delhi sinecure can replace a leading role in state politics. Could Shah not have figured this out about Sidhu in advance? Why invest so much capital - a crucial nominated seat in the House that the government doesn't control - and then fail to ensure that the recipient of your generosity is satisfied? Once again, there's a failure to follow through. Here, at least, there's something that Shah could learn from Sidhu - when he used to race down the track to hit something over mid-wicket, he never stunted on the follow-through. Is Shah overstretched? Is his ambition catching up with him? Is the BJP in too much of a hurry to ensure it's the only game in town? These are the questions we'll be asking as we head into the UP campaign, which will either cement or destroy Shah's reputation. But one thing's for certain: he's shown successive, puzzling failures of judgment. Prashant Kishor will no doubt be overjoyed at what this means for UP.

On Melania Trump's Plagiarism, A Laid-Off Journalist Watching In An L.A. Starbucks Scooped Everyone

Los Angeles : Shortly after Melania Trump finished her address Monday night to the Republican National Convention, CNN's Anderson Cooper turned to analyst David Axelrod, a former adviser to President Barack Obama, and noted a similarity between Trump's speech and the one Michelle Obama delivered to the Democratic convention in 2008 - the prime-time slot on opening night. "Just the same spot in 2008," Axelrod reiterated.

He went on to recall a few details about Obama's remarks: "She could speak about [Barack Obama] in a way and with an intimacy that no one else could, and she did it, I have to say - I'm biased in this regard - but I think that she did it very, very movingly because she did use more personal stories about him and his story. ... And, you know, Michelle Obama - she had her speech written also four, five weeks in advance, and she practiced, and she practiced, and she practiced." As well as Axelrod seemed to

remember Obama's speech, he apparently didn't notice that Trump had repeated some of her lines. In fact, the journalist widely credited as the first to document the apparent plagiarism, Jarrett Hill, wasn't at Quicken Loans Arena in Cleveland and wasn't even assigned to cover the convention at all. He was 2,000 miles away at a coffee shop in Los Angeles and tweeted: "Melania must've liked Michelle Obama's 2008 Convention speech, since she plagiarized it. #GOPConvention"

"CORRECTION: Melania stole a whole graph from Michelle's speech. #GOPConvention" The New York Times caught up with Hill, who described his discovery: Mr. Hill, a television journalist who was recently laid off, said in an interview that one of Ms. Trump's lines - the words "strength of your dreams" - caught his attention as he was watching on his computer from a Starbucks in Los Angeles, juggling Facebook chats and browsing Twitter. Mr. Hill, 31, found the clip of Mrs. Obama's speech online and

noticed that parts of the two speeches sounded the same. He then realized that a larger portion appeared to have been borrowed as he continued to examine both.

"I thought, 'That's legit plagiarism,'" said Mr. Hill, who described himself as a supporter of President Obama. "Someone took this piece and plugged in their own information." The Trump campaign has cycled through various denials and explanations for the overlap between the speeches given by Melania Trump and Michelle Obama. Perhaps the best so far came from campaign spokeswoman Katrina Pierson, speaking to the Hill: "This concept that Michelle Obama invented the English language is absurd." Got it. What's clear is that whoever wrote/copy-pasted Trump's speech figured the journalists covering the convention wouldn't notice. That turned out to be true. But the aide responsible for the speech didn't account for the out-of-work reporter in an L.A. Starbucks.

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Nitish backs centre on GST, pressure mounts on Cong



(Agencies) New Delhi : Bihar chief minister, JD(U)'s Nitish Kumar, on Tuesday came out in support of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), intensifying the pressure on his coalition partner Congress to reconsider

its opposition to the landmark reform measure or at least finesse its stand. The GST bill came up for discussion in Kumar's meeting with finance minister Arun Jaitley on Tuesday and the leaders appear to have reached common ground even as the government hopes that the legislation will be passed in the current session of Parliament. "We have always supported the GST. We supported it during the UPA and support it now. This is in the interest of the country and states. Our party fully supports

it," Kumar told the media after the meeting. The Bihar CM announced his support for GST after his meeting with Jaitley, joining the ranks of other non-NDA parties Trinamool Congress, Biju Janata Dal and Samajwadi Party which have come out in the open to support the reforms measure. During the meeting, Kumar is understood to have sought release of funds under the backward region grant and financial support for a student card the state government is planning. The CM's support for

the legislation is important for the NDA, which has launched yet another round of discussions with CMs and regional parties in a bid to ensure the bill's passage in Rajya Sabha, where it lacks majority. Most regional parties have agreed to support the bill, but a fresh outreach is underway even as the government's negotiations with Congress — the main opponent to the legislation in its current form — seem delicately poised. The government is considering options to meet the Congress' demand that a tax rate of 18 per cent be "ring-

fenced" if it cannot be made part of the constitutional amendment required for the tax reform. Opinion in Congress is still divided but the final call will be that of party vice-president Rahul Gandhi who has indicated that the rate is the real sticking point. Kumar's support will be significant as it can be expected to shore up sentiments in non-NDA, non-UPA parties like SP, BJD, Trinamool Congress and even AIADMK that continue to have some reservations on the bill.

IAF planned to bomb targets in Pakistan during Kargil conflict

(Agencies) New Delhi: The Indian Air Force had drawn up extensive plans to bomb tactical as well as strategic targets deep inside Pakistan during the 1999 Kargil conflict, while the Navy had the Karachi harbour in its cross-hairs. But the orders to execute the plans never came from the then NDA government led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Instead, the cabinet committee on security on May 25 clearly instructed then IAF chief Air Chief Marshal AY Tipnis that his fighter jets must not cross the Line of Control under any circumstances, leave alone undertake deep strikes into Pakistan. Tipnis, by his own account, did ask for permission for his fighters to slightly cross the LoC for better attack options against the well-fortified positions established by the Pakistan Army regulars on the Kargil heights after intruding into Indian territory in April-May that year.



The IAF's request to cross the LoC slightly during the Kargil conflict had been categorically rejected by the then government. "The PM (Vajpayee) straightened up in his chair and said firmly, 'Please don't cross the LoC. No crossing the LoC'," recalled then IAF chief A Y Tipnis later. This restraint shown by India in not escalating the conflict into a full-blown war, in fact, put tremendous international pressure led by the US on Pakistan to finally withdraw from the Kargil heights. IAF's

own "offensive air operations" under Operation Safed Sagar, in support of the ongoing Army operations on the ground, began on May 26. But all throughout the conflict, the Indian MiG-21, MiG-27 and Mirage-2000 fighters fired rockets and missiles at the "fortified enemy positions" only from their "own side" of the LoC.

While the Kargil conflict was its peak, the Srinagar airbase was put on high alert for a pre-emptive deep strike inside Pakistan at dawn on June 13, as per an NDTV report. The MiG-21 pilots from the "Golden Arrows" squadron were all geared up, with targets being assigned, and equipped with revolvers and Pakistani currency to escape in the eventuality of being shot down over Pakistan or Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, as is customary. They had also written "letters home" if they did not return from their missions.

Gujarat Dalit unrest spreads, 2 dead

(Agencies) Rajkot/Ahmedabad : The unrest over the brutal assault on Dalits in Gujarat's Una last week, for allegedly skinning a cow, led to two deaths in Saurashtra on Tuesday. One protester was reported to have committed suicide over the episode, while a head constable was killed in clashes between a mob and police.

Six Dalit protesters survived their suicide attempts. However, AV Gakkhar, Junagadh deputy superintendent of police, told TOI that Hemant Solanki, who poisoned himself, was driven to suicide by marital problems. In Amreli, a Dalit rally turned violent when some miscreants began pelting stones at policemen who tried to stop them from ransacking shops. Head constable Pankaj Amreliya (40) was among five cops injured, and died during treatment. "We had to resort to lathicharge. Four protesters also sustained injuries," Amreli SP Jagdish Patel said. The situation was extremely volatile in most parts of Amreli, Gir-Somnath, Junagadh, Porbandar and Rajkot as protesters went on a rampage, damaging 15 state transport buses, and blocking highways.

Rahul Gandhi won't apologize for RSS remarks, will prove his point in court, says Congress

(Agencies) NEW DELHI: The Congress on Tuesday said that Rahul Gandhi will not tender an apology over his remarks against the RSS+ and will instead substantiate them with historical facts and evidence before the court to support his claim.

The Supreme Court had earlier on Tuesday asked Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi to express regret for his comments holding the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) responsible for Mahatma Gandhi's assassination or be ready to face a defamation trial.

"On a suggestion of Shri Rahul Gandhi expressing regret or apology, the question does not arise. Such a suggestion has been made in the past and not accepted by Rahul Gandhi.

"Rahul Gandhi is a mature politician with intimate knowledge of historical facts. Congress party and Mr Gandhi will defend these remarks at appropriate forum," Congress's chief spokesman

Randeep Surjewala said.

He said since the matter is pending adjudication, "we will not like to comment further on the issue".

The Congress leader said that Rahul Gandhi had challenged constitutionality of defamation proceeding besides the order of Maharashtra High Court wherein the summoning order was challenged.

He said while the bunch of petitions challenging defamation provisions have been rejected, challenge to Maharashtra High Court order is pending adjudication before Supreme Court in a special leave petition.

"The matter was listed today. Supreme Court nearly adjourned the order to July 23 without passing any order. Any remark exchanged at the bar between counsel for the parties and court cannot be commented upon as the matter is subjudice," he said.

At the AICC briefing, party spokesman Gaurav Gogoi said that

"Rahul Gandhi has said that he will not seek an apology over what he has said and will fight the case as he wants to present his facts along with historical proof and evidence to prove his point and help bring out the truth before everyone that we all know."

He added, "At this point, Congress party stands with Rahul Gandhi and we are confident that we will be able to present a strong case, present all the facts and historical evidence that we are supposed to make."

Asked about today's order of the Supreme Court, he said there is a case which is undergoing in the Supreme Court and the final judgement is yet to be heard and the case is also yet to be heard on its full merits, for which they are waiting. "Today, the Supreme Court has made some observations. We would not like to comment on the observations. Nonetheless, we are confident that when the case would be heard on its merits, we will present historical evidence and documents that support Rahul



Gandhi's claim. We respect the Supreme Court." The Supreme Court on Tuesday observed that Rahul Gandhi, who blamed RSS for the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, should not have resorted to "collective denunciation" of an organisation and will have to face trial in the defamation case against him if he does not express regret.

Rajnath counters Congress on Arunachal crisis, says 'your leaky boat was bound to sink'



(Agencies) NEW DELHI: Buoyed by the Supreme Court verdict on Arunachal Pradesh, Congress+ on Tuesday slammed the government in the Lok Sabha, accusing it of "destabilising" its governments in states, a charge rejected by home minister Rajnath Singh.

Congress members also staged a walkout even as Singh said "internal crisis" of Congress was responsible for the controversial developments in Arunachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand and

that "a boat is bound to sink if it has a hole".

The issue was raised by Leader of Congress in the House Mallikarjun Kharge who said that on the one hand, the Modi government was celebrating the 125th birthday of B R Ambedkar and on the other hand, it was "murdering" democracy by toppling popular governments.

"You have decided to execute your 'Congress-mukt' (Congress-free) slogan by any means. Wherever you get a chance, you destabilise governments and work to replace them with yours. You did so in Uttarakhand and Arunachal and tried in Manipur and Himachal Pradesh too. This is good for neither public nor Constitution," he said.

"We thank the Supreme Court for upholding the Constitution. Its order is historic and will be written in golden letters. You don't have numbers but you

want to grab power by the back door. It has become your nature. Democracy is being repressed, murdered," he said during the Zero Hour.

"The Supreme Court has slapped you and, hopefully, you will not do such things again," Kharge said referring to the recent verdict of the apex court to restore the Congress government in Arunachal Pradesh which had been dismissed by the Centre months back.

Earlier, the Supreme Court had restored the Congress government in Uttarakhand also after it was dismissed by the Centre.

Responding to the charge, the Union home minister said the Congress governments in Uttarakhand and Arunachal Pradesh fell due to the opposition by its own MLAs.

He, however, made no mention of the Supreme Court orders which had

led to the restoration of Congress dispensations, dealing a blow to the Centre.

BJP had nothing to do with what happened in the two states, Singh said, adding "if any party has this very old habit of toppling popular governments, then it is Congress".

While attacking Congress, he said its governments at the centre had toppled governments in states 105 times.

He said crisis in the two states was "unfortunate" and destabilisation of popularly-elected governments was not good for healthy democracy. "BJP had nothing to do with it. It was an outcome of your (Congress) internal crisis. Nine Congress MLAs opposed their own government on the floor of the Uttarakhand assembly. In Arunachal, over two-thirds of them defected. If your boat has a hole, then it is bound to sink if you put it in water. Why blame water for it," he said.

Cabbie held for filming woman passenger



(Agencies) New Delhi: An Ola cab driver has been arrested for filming a woman passenger while she was heading for her office in Chanakyapuri. The driver has been arrested for "an act of voyeurism and for using words and gesture to outrage the modesty of a woman", the police said. The woman who works with a private firm claimed that she had booked the cab from her house in south Delhi on July 8 to travel to Chanakyapuri. On the way, she noticed that the cab driver was holding his phone in a peculiar way. "He kept looking at me through the rear-view mirror which made me uncomfortable,"

the woman claimed. A few minutes later, she realised that the front camera of his mobile phone was switched on and it had her photograph on the screen. When she confronted him, he claimed that he was browsing through the photographs of his daughter. The woman, however, managed to snatch his phone and scan the photographs. She found a few video clips of her. She called the police and forced him to stop the vehicle near Dhaula Kuan. A police team reached the spot and took the driver in custody. According to Ola officials, the driver was terminated after they received a complaint.

Bandaru Dattatreya recalls days as onion seller



(Agencies) New Delhi: Seeking to justify the exception given to children below 14 years in cases of family enterprises in the child labour (prohibition) bill,

labour and employment minister Bandaru Dattatreya on Tuesday recalled how, as a child, he helped his mother sell onions after school hours. The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Bill was passed with voice vote and is all set to become law as its passage in Lok Sabha is just a mere formality. Dattatreya said the amendments came "because of the pressure of NGOs. I had several rounds of talks with NGOs, including Bachpan Bachao Andolan (BBA)". The bill bans employing anyone below 14 years and those in 15-18 years (adolescents) in hazardous work, except where the child helps his family.

Goodbye PoP and colours, only mud Ganeshas this year

(Agencies) Bengaluru: The Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) on Tuesday decided to ban Ganesh idols

made of plaster of Paris (PoP) and painted with chemically loaded colours. The board held a meeting with civic stakeholders and decided to strictly implement the ban on PoP Ganeshas which pose a major threat to waterbodies post festivities. Board chairman Lakshman



told media they didn't implement the ban order last year. "This time, we'll ensure the ban is total," he added. The pollution board will soon issue directions under Section 33(A) of the Water Act, 1974, banning use of idols made of PoP and colours. Other local bodies and

departments, too, will be directed to enforce the rule. Armed with the notification, civic agencies will have to act outside the state. Officials can stop or discontinue trade licences issued to persons/organizations involved in manufacture and sale of such idols, a press note said. Bengaluru police will be roped in to ensure the ban is total. It'll conduct public awareness programmes on the issue.

"I've informed the BBMP and police to work in co-ordination while granting permission/licence for such celebrations and ensure PoP and colour idols aren't installed," Lakshman said. The board has further decided to involve lake watchdog committees, RWAs and youth organizations to spread the word.

Hyd techie stabbed to death by flatmate in US



(Agencies) HYDERABAD: A 24-year-old Austin-based techie from Hyderabad was stabbed to death by his flatmate at their apartment on Monday night. The victim has been identified as Gundam Sankirth. His attacker, Kurremula Sai Sandeep Goud (27), also from Hyderabad, has been taken into custody by the Austin police. Sankirth's father, G Vijay Kumar, said the family members got the news from relatives on Tuesday morning that he was stabbed in his flat in Quarry Oaks apartment complex in North Austin. "We do not know what exactly happened. My son recently got a H1B visa. Our relatives in the US are going to hospital to find out more details," a distraught Vijay Kumar said. While the reason behind the killing is not known, Sankirth's family members and friends said Sandeep used to tease him about his frail body. No one could provide much details about Sandeep. "We know that Sandeep is from Hyderabad and just 10 days ago he joined Sankirth in the flat. We came to know that Sandeep assaulted Sankirth with a kitchen knife," Sankirth's relative Ajay told media.

Now, 59 kg of seized gold missing from IGI airport vault



that, the known pilferage since 2014 had gone up to 24kg, complaint was registered at the IGI police station on Monday," said commissioner customs Sanjay Mangal. The inspection committee carefully checked the packets on observing their weight did not tally with the records, and found yellow-coloured metal pieces inside, Mangal added.

(Agencies) NEW DELHI: All that glitters is not gold inside customs' highsecurity vault at Indira Gandhi International Airport here. A 'high-level stock-taking committee' that recently checked the sealed packets at the vault found that many of them contained spurious pieces.

In all, about 83kg gold has been replaced with lookalike metals in the past two years, but the inspection team was shocked to find that 59kg gold, worth Rs 18.3 crore at current rates, had gone missing in this July alone.

On June 21, TOI had reported the theft of about 800g gold from a sealed packet in the vault. With

A case has been registered under IPC sections 409 (criminal breach of trust by public servant, or by banker, merchant or agent) and 120B (criminal breach of trust by public servant, or by banker, merchant or agent).

The scale of pilferage has placed customs officials under suspicion as they are in charge of the vault's security. Airport security officers said no one apart from customs personnel is allowed to enter the vault area.

Police's initial investigation has also revealed that the seal of Air Customs was intact on all the packets inside which the spurious pieces were found. The

THIEVES IN THE VAULT



PAST CASES

Jun 2016 | Gold missing from customs vault. FIR lodged

Jun 2015 | FIR lodged after 11kg gold worth Rs 2.92cr goes missing from the vault

2014 | Similar complaints filed on Jan 16, 20, Apr 30 and December

SECURITY STEPPED UP

► Customs' SOP of maintaining records and internal procedures revised

► Additional CCTV cameras installed near vault and inside it

► Two sets of officers under commissioner-level officers made custodians of two vault keys



vault holds jewellery, biscuits, bars and coins of gold seized from fliers trying to smuggle these in without due declaration. Customs officials said the gold

seized from a person cannot be disposed of until their case is decided. The accused face not only a trial for smuggling but also proceedings under customs Act

1962.

"The packages are sealed by a customs officer of inspector or higher rank in the presence of independent witnesses, and a panchnama is drawn up on the spot," said a senior customs officer. The vault in-charge verifies the contents of each package before assuming responsibility for its safety. He is supervised by an Air Customs superintendent as well as deputy commissioner of customs (disposal). An officer designated as ACO (case property) gets packages issued from the vault for presenting as evidence at court hearings and they are returned after another round of verification.

In June last year, customs reported 11kg gold missing from the vault. In 2014 also, an FIR was lodged after customs discovered a series of thefts. Police say customs reported theft of gold on January 16 and 20, April 30 and December 23, in 2014.

Pakistan bars family from 'forgiving' son for Qandeel Baloch's killing

(Agencies) ISLAMABAD: Pakistani authorities have barred the family of a murdered social media celebrity from legally "forgiving" their son for strangling her, sources said, in a rare stand against the so-called practice of "honour killings".

Muhammad Waseem drugged and strangled Qandeel Baloch on Friday in a murder that has shocked Pakistan, a deeply conservative Muslim nation where the 26-year-old both

titillated and outraged with her risqué social media photos and videos.

Waseem told media he had "no regrets" about killing his sister as she violated the family's honour by her social media pictures, including "selfie" photographs with prominent Muslim cleric Abdul Qavi. In a video post with Qavi, she appears to sit on his lap. A police source said the government of Punjab, the country's largest province, has made it impossible for the family to forgive the son who murdered her - a common legal

loophole that sees many honour killings go unpunished in Pakistan. "It was done on the instructions of the government. But it happens rarely," said the Punjab police official. A senior government official in Islamabad confirmed the order came from the Punjab government. More than 500 people, almost all of them women, die in honour killings in Pakistan every year, usually at the hands of relatives acting over a perception shame has been brought on the family. It was

not immediately clear if the Punjab government's decision would lead to any meaningful reforms. An anti-honour killings bill that aims to close the family forgiveness loophole has been bogged down in parliament. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in February promised to speed up the passage of the proposed law but right groups say there has been no progress. "There is no honour in killing in the name of honour," Sharif said about Baloch's murder, according to his daughter, Maryam.



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Rattled Akalis attack Sidhu, Capt makes U-turn on welcoming him

(Agencies) Chandigarh: Day after former cricketer Navjot Singh Sidhu resigned from Rajya Sabha amid speculations that he would join Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) ahead of 2017 Punjab polls, the public spat between the him and Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) took an ugly turn after Union minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal accused him of being "ungrateful" to the BJP. Harsimrat, who is also the wife of deputy chief minister Sukhbir Badal, is the first SAD member to launch a frontal attack on Sidhu.

The animosity between Sidhu family and the Badal clan had come to fore in 2013, nearly 10 months before the Lok Sabha polls, when the television commentator launched a sit-in against

SAD while accusing them of stalling disbursement of development funds for his Amritsar constituency Kaur's fresh comments came barely minutes after Sidhu's namesake wife Navjot addressed media in Amritsar to clear the air on his joining AAP, while citing the "Badal family" as the reason for Sidhu's departure from the BJP. Harsimrat, however, remained unforgiving on the ex-cricketer. "This man used to criticise Arvind Kejriwal till a few months ago. I don't know if Kejriwal has changed or Sidhu has found that change in him. But I can say Sidhu is a ungrateful man to both Arun Jaitley and PM Narendra Modi, he cant be truthful to Punjab," said Harsimrat. The SAD had so far been

cautious to make any caustic comments on Sidhu amid no clarity over his exit from the BJP. The comments by Harsimrat diminished the chances of Sidhu's return to the SAD's ally BJP, even as Congress chief Capt Amarinder took a U-turn on his earlier comments on Sidhu, saying he is welcome into their party fold. On Monday, Amarinder, had said that Sidhu is a "deserter who should have not quit the BJP and that Congress was ready to face him". "Congress party's doors are open for everyone. We (Sidhu and me) are both from Patiala and we are both Sidhus. I have seen him playing and practicing cricket when he was young" said Amarinder in a statement. While replying to a question whether Congress



party will initiate any move to invite him to join the Congress, Amarinder said, "he is yet to resign from the BJP" AAP has already welcomed Sidhu into their party fold. He is likely to join them within 3-4 days.

Kashmiri Muslim Truckers Forced To Chant 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai' By Shiv Sena In Punjab: Report



(Agencies) On Tuesday, members from the Punjab unit of the Shiv Sena allegedly stopped trucks on their way to Jammu and Kashmir and forced the Muslim drivers to chant 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai' and 'Pakistan Murdabad', the Indian Express reported. They were also reportedly made to burn the Pakistan flag. Of the many things ultra-nationalists have been attempting to enforce in India, the raising of the 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai' slogan, or even the willingness to raise it, is probably seen by them as a definitive test of patriotism. In many instances vigilante groups have used the slogan, an ode to

'Mother India', to target and marginalise minorities. The chant, however, was not used to inspire a sense of brotherhood, quite the opposite. The Express report claimed it was to "pay back" Kashmiri Muslims for allegedly harassing Amarnath pilgrims. According to the paper, some drivers were even beaten up for refusing to chant the slogans.

"What they (Kashmiri Muslims) did to Hindu pilgrims on Amarnath Yatra has been done to them," the paper quoted Shiva Sena's Punjab chief Rajiv Tandon as saying. This news comes even as the national media reported a few days ago

how Muslims in south Kashmir defied curfew restrictions to rescue Amarnath pilgrims from a bus that collided with a vehicle on the Pahalgam-Jammu National Highway and rush them to nearby hospitals. At least 30 people have been killed in Jammu and Kashmir during protests after the killing of 22-year-old militant leader Burhan Wani. Incidentally, Tandon's unit of the Sena in Punjab last year instigated people to slap Aamir Khan and "earn" one lakh rupees because, ironically, the actor told a news organisation that he felt insecure in India due to rising intolerance. This strong-armed enforcement of the slogan as a benchmark of nationalism isn't new to India. A probe team sent by the district administration made students of a Christian school in Madhya Pradesh's Shahdol chant 'Bharat Mata ki Jai' in early July to prove that the slogan had not been banned on campus. In April, members of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) forced organisers of a seminar at the Deshbandhu College to chant 'Bharat Mata ki Jai' if they wanted the event to go on. Express said an FIR has been lodged against Tandon following the incident.

Arvind Kejriwal Taunts Modi, Says People Feel Suffocated In BJP

(Agencies) New Delhi — Taking a fresh shot at Prime Minister Narendra Modi over former cricketer-turned politician Navjot Singh Sidhu resigning from the Rajya Sabha, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday asserted that honest and good people are feeling extremely suffocated within the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) courtesy the dictatorial attitude of its top leadership. "Honest n gud people are feeling extremely suffocated within BJP due to dictatorial attitude of its top leadership," Kejriwal tweeted. Sidhu, who yesterday resigned from the Rajya Sabha, said that his nomination in the Upper House was a mere burden, adding that the purpose behind it stood defeated now. "With the closure of every window leading to Punjab, the purpose stands defeated. It is now a mere burden, I prefer not to carry it. In the war of right or wrong, you cannot afford to be neutral rather than being self-centred. Punjab's interest is paramount," he said in a statement. Signalling major developments ahead of the Punjab Assembly polls, Sidhu yesterday tendered his resignation from the Upper House.

Tendulkar Denies Business Interest In Friend's Mountain Resort Dispute

(Agencies) Cricketer-turned Rajya Sabha member Sachin Tendulkar has confirmed that he had attended a meeting in which he had sought help in sorting out problems faced by a friend of his regarding his house in Mussoorie. Responding to news reports in this regard, Tendulkar's spokesperson issued a statement in which he, however, claimed that the cricketer does not have any "economic interest" in the Landour cantonment where the property is located.

"Mr. Tendulkar attended a meeting following which a formal written representation was submitted to the Ministry of Defence on a pending dispute regarding some development undertaken in Landour by Mr. Narang. "Mr. Tendulkar

has always maintained that the prevailing laws of the land should be upheld while giving a fair opportunity to all parties concerned to present their points of view," the statement added without giving details of whom he had met in the government. The news report had said that Tendulkar tried to intervene on businessman Sanjay Narang's behalf when he met Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar to sort out a security dispute over the land with a neighbouring DRDO establishment. A spokesperson for Tendulkar said he did not have any business relationship with Narang, who owns the property-- Dahlia Bank--in Landour, which has allegedly violated construction norms. "Mr. Sachin

Tendulkar has no present business relationship with Mr. Sanjay Narang nor does he have any economic interest, whatsoever, in the Landour cantonment," he said in a statement. On his part, Narang also denied any wrongdoing and rejected reports that Tendulkar is his business partner in the property.

"Dahlia Bank belongs entirely to Mr Sanjay Narang and is his personal residence. Mr. Tendulkar is a personal friend with no existing business relationship and having no ownership of Dahlia Bank," a spokesperson for Narang said in a statement. "The construction at Dahlia Bank has been carried out in accordance with the law and with permissions granted by the Cantonment



Authorities. The construction is also beyond the prescribed distance of 50 meters from the DRDO establishment. In short there is no illegality whatsoever." Narang, in fact, accused the Cantonment authorities of harassing him.

At Stake In Kashmir

Kashmir poses not just moral but also existential questions involving statecraft.



(Special Report) Another summer, another round of violent protests in the Kashmir valley. This time the trigger has been the death of Burhan Wani, the young, social media savvy commander of the Hizbul Mujahideen. If only he had as many military kills as Facebook likes to his credit, his dream of azadi might have been possible. For now it remains a dream, despite the spontaneous and unprecedented outburst of public anger, despite the calculated statements of separatist and mainstream

Kashmiri politicians, and despite all the manipulation by the supporters and handlers of Kashmiri separatism in Pakistan's military establishment. The death of Wani has triggered a somewhat predictable response both in the Valley and elsewhere. The popular outburst of grief and rage is undoubtedly genuine. It has been encouraged by the separatist leaders on both sides of the border, but it would be a mistake to think that these violent protests are manufactured or mere posturing. In Pakistan they have led to plenty of

public displays of solidarity and official statements denouncing Indian repression. In India too a whole range of activists and media platforms have denounced both the killing of Wani and the response of the state to public protests. The positions taken by the Pakistanis and the Kashmiri separatists are hardly surprising. Neither is the popular sentiment expressed in the Valley. What is surprising and disappointing is the inability of our public intellectuals to appreciate the central place of Kashmir in the idea of India not just as a secular,

pluralistic society, but also as an economically and socially modernising democracy holding its own in an extremely hostile and dangerous neighbourhood. There is no doubt that jihadi attacks across India and by the separatists in Kashmir pose tough questions for the idea of India. But they are not merely moral questions about the legitimacy of the Indian state and its commitment to human rights and the rule of law, that are to be answered in a purely ethical framework. They are also existential questions that involve statecraft, military tactics and hard-nosed realpolitik. The Indian state is not a wide-eyed groupie at a love fest that it will give up territory to be loved and respected by its neighbours or an assortment of self-appointed nonstate arbiters of international morality. The depth of alienation in the Valley is real and enduring. It is naive to think it can be countered with economic packages and political concessions. The separatist narrative in Kashmir has a long history and for the large part it runs parallel to the two-nation theory that led to the Partition of India. The underlying impulse in both is a political and cultural identity based on religion. In the initial years, both Kashmiri separatism and the pre-1947 articulation of Pakistani ideology paid lip service to the ideals of secularism and a composite culture. Today, both have given up

the pretence and are unabashedly Islamist in their ideology. Today, Kashmir is one of the flashpoints in the global jihadi narrative like Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. And it is a narrative that has repeatedly betrayed its own syncretic history and multicultural demography with cynicism and brutality. The treatment of Kashmiri Pandits in the 1990s was an ethnic cleansing. The continued divergence of political aspirations between the Valley on one hand and Jammu and Ladakh on the other is also a case in point. Taken together they blow a big hole through the lie that the separatist claim in Kashmir is a moral imperative. Faced with an enemy that knows no norms of war or manners of peace, what does the republic do? Does it stay faithful to abstract ideals, a leap of faith unlike any in world history, or does it gather itself, ready to be wounded, ready to wound, because survival is non-negotiable in any moral framework? If we can't see a mortal threat for what it is, how do we expect to survive and thrive as a nation and civilisation. I envy the moralist and the idealist. They are guided by a glorious sense of certainty. The rest of us, the fools who actually do the killing and the dying, simply have the weight of a flawed past and our present instincts to guide us.



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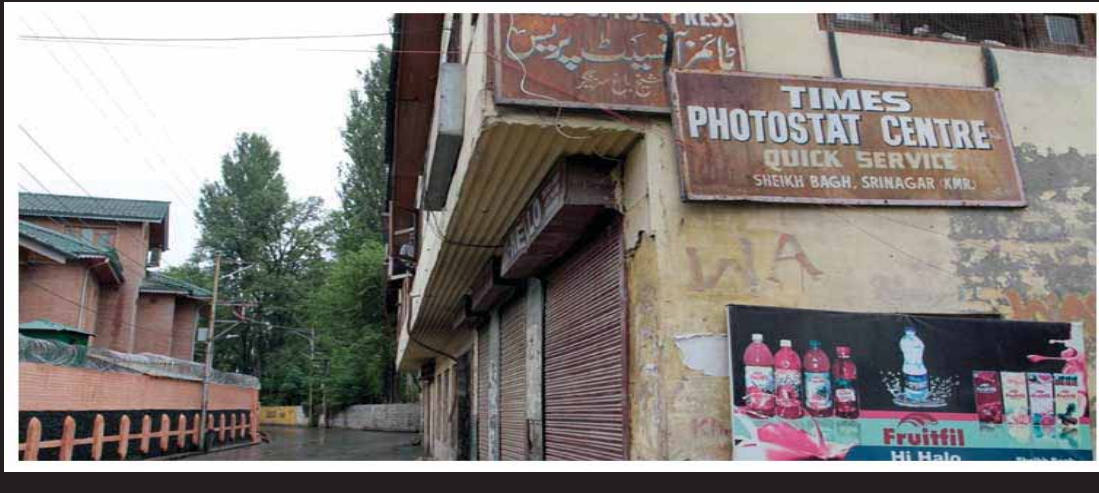
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Why Kashmiri media is muzzled

Local newspapers are often the only source of news during curfew and the record of state violence



(Agencies) Why is the clampdown on Kashmir's local media so important that it has upstaged the bigger issue at hand—an uprising that erupted against the killing of a militant commander and once again brought into focus the fraught relationship between Kashmir and New Delhi? It is a rhetorical question actually. The media gag is not a big deal. The three-day ban on the publication of newspapers pales in significance before the grotesquery of the violence perpetrated by the state during the past week. There is also nothing

novel about it this time. The Kashmiri media was silenced like it has been in the past.

At midnight on Friday, our bureau chief called and said the police have seized the copies of the newspaper and detained our staff members. I wonder why they took the trouble of sending stressed-out policemen to snatch newspaper copies. A phone call to newspapers owners would have achieved the same objective. The philosophy behind the gag was explained the next day even though the government did not own up to the raids. The government spokesman, Naeem Akhtar, said the

government apprehended trouble over the next three days, and suspending publication was considered necessary. Interestingly, while announcing this, Akhtar requested that he should not be named. This was the "how" of the media crackdown that accompanies martial law-like situation in the Valley. Before going into the "why" of the clampdown, one should ask "who" decided on the ban. One can hazard a guess that it was New Delhi's decision because Muzaffar Hussain Baig, a member of Parliament and senior PDP leader, claimed Chief Minister

Mehbooba Mufti was not even aware of the operation that killed Burhan Wani — the spark that lit the fire. Still, why is the local media muzzled whenever Kashmir is on the boil? It is not difficult to explain. Local newspapers — a record of state violence — are the only source of news in curfew-bound flashpoints where mobile phone and internet services have been snapped. Besides, the local media has the wherewithal to cover such situations extensively. The state, however, prefers a media blackout on these occasions. It would rather have the journalists do the fire-fighting or, preferably, complement its actions, than perform its job. That is why non-Kashmiri journalists, air-dropped on such occasions from New Delhi, have unhindered access to places and persons, while local reporters face various hurdles. "Special reportage" dished out from New Delhi studios — saying Pakistan was paying Kashmiri youth Rs 500 for snatching rifles from policemen — has made local reporters a target of the seething masses. The local media is the biggest check on the propagandist reportage of the majority of Indian media outlets, especially television, which can't see such eruptions except through the prism of national interest. The contrast between the reportage by local and Indian outlets is too embarrassing for the state. For example, on Sunday, a news channel ran a report about attacks

on the residences of the people suspected of informing the army on hiding places of the militants. That particular house had been attacked long before the fresh eruption in the Valley and had been covered in the local media at that time. Under the circumstances, it was a non-story. Compare this with the story of a 16-year-old boy, with congenital deformities in his limbs, being treated for a fractured leg at the Bone and Joint Hospital, only 2 km from the city centre. The boy had been thrown into a drain by the government forces on Friday while playing in a field in a south Kashmir hamlet. No news channel reported the boy's story. By and large, the local media do not balance truth with falsehood or flaunt "nuanced reportage" by equating the savagery of pellet ammunition on thousands of people with the stone-inflicted injuries of 15 troopers. Unlike Indian media channels, they question whether an Indian soldier has the right to be in Kashmir in the first place. They are more answerable to the local people than an air-dropped "war correspondent" from New Delhi who wears a cricket helmet and embeds himself with troopers in a bullet-proof vehicle, roams around in the curfewed city and acts like he is covering the war in Syria. Last time, he reported from here was during the Kargil war. powerlessness of Kashmir's pro-India politicians.

Not Milk, Cow Urine Is Apparently Selling Like Hot Cakes In India



(Agencies) Last month, in a breakthrough, researchers at Junagadh Agricultural University (JAU) in Gujarat found gold particles in the urine of some cows from the Gir region of the state. Now, a report by Bloomberg says that cow urine is selling like hot cakes in India for reasons that do not include people trying to find gold particles in it. According to the report, cow urine has become a priced possession everywhere, thanks to the Narendra Modi government and his government's programs over the past two years to protect the animal, which includes a ban on beef slaughter. "Around 30 remedies can be prepared at home with cow urine," Sunil Mansinghka, chief coordinator at Go-Vigyan Anusandhan Kendra, a cow-focused research

organization in Nagpur told Bloomberg. Many believe that cow urine can treat ailments too. K. Shankar Rao, director of the National Institute of Ayurveda, had told The Wire that many ayurvedic texts talk about treatment of ailments from eight types of urine: cow, buffalo, goat, camel, sheep, donkey, horse and human. "We prepare 20 tons of Gaunyle (made of cow urine) a day and still can't meet demand," managing director Acharya Balkrishna told Bloomberg. Dr. Virendra Kumar Jain, who owns a cow-urine therapy clinic in Indore, holds a patent on formulating a herbal medicine using cow urine. Over the past two decades, Jain's center has administered urine-derived medicines to 1.2 million patients even for treatment of cancer.

Babus To Participate On Facebook, Twitter; Centre To Amend Rule

(Agencies) Bureaucrats may soon be allowed to participate freely on social media websites like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn but criticism of government will still be a no-no. The Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) has issued draft rules which bar officers from making "criticism of government" on television, social media or any other communication application by any means including a "caricature". The proposed rules allow civil servants to accept simple and inexpensive entertainment events arranged by public bodies or institutions. However, they will have to declare before the government details of household equipments, automobiles or any other means of conveyance if their value exceed two months basic pay. These rules are part of the proposed changes in All India Service (Conduct) Rules, 1968, which are applicable to three all India services—Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS) and Indian Forest Service (IFoS). "Previous sanction of the government shall not be required when the member of the service, in the bonafide discharge of his duties or otherwise, publishes a book or article or contributes to or participates in any public media including social media websites," said the new rules. In existing rules, there is no mention of social media. The DoPT has proposed to expand the ambit of the rules that check criticism of government. The member of service shall also not criticise the government—its policy or action, capable of embarrassing the Centre's relations with state and foreign countries



governments—on television, social media or any other communication application. No member of the service shall, in any radio broadcast or communication over any public media or in any document (which may include a caricature) published anonymously, pseudonymously or in any communication to the press or in any public utterance, make any statement of fact or opinion which has the effect of an adverse criticism of any policy of the central or state governments, as per the proposed rules. The new norms allow IAS, IPS and IFoS officers to accept simple and inexpensive entertainment events arranged by public bodies or institutions. The proposed change in rules make it mandatory for the officers to submit annual returns to mandatorily include among others household equipments, automobiles or any other means of conveyance if their value exceed the concerned officer's two months basic pay.

Angry Dalits Are Dumping Cow Carcasses At Govt Offices After Flogging By Self-Styled 'Gau Rakshaks'



(Agencies) Furious at the policing by self-appointed cow protection groups, members of which beat up four men last week for ferrying carcasses, the Dalits of Saurashtra have found a unique way to raise their voice against the violence. They are dumping cow carcasses in government offices with a succinct message — ask the 'Gau Rakshak' groups to dispose of the dead animals

— a job Dalits were burdened with. Seven persons in Saurashtra also attempted suicide to protest the flogging of the men from the community by cow protectors on July 11. Videos circulating on social media showed the men cowering before the vigilante group as they were hit repeatedly with iron rods. There have been several incidents of violence against people who transport

cows across the country by vigilante groups that call themselves 'gau rakshaks' or cow protectors. In the latest incident, the four men suspected of trading in cow skin were brutally thrashed in Gujarat's Somnath district. Over Monday and Tuesday, scores of Dalits from villages brought dead cows in tractors and dumped them in government offices in Gondal and Surendranagar, the Times of India reported. Dalits will stop lifting dead animals. We told the government to ask Shiv Sainiks and the self-proclaimed cow protectors to collect and dispose of the carcass from the villages and towns," a Dalit rights activist, BK Parmar, told the paper.

Media reported that office premises were littered with dead animals and employees were seen trying to escape the stench. The situation was tense on Monday as angry protestors set fire to a State transport bus in Gondal and blocked a National

Highway. The Collector's office in Surendranagar was not spared as a group of Dalits dumped cow carcasses in the premises as part of their protest. A Congress leader is among the seven people who attempted suicide. Anil Madhad, along with six others demonstrators, consumed pesticide. The Gujarat government has ordered a CID probe and offered compensation to the victims.



I Would Not Have Been Alive To Write This : Somnath Bharti



(Agencies) AAP MLA Somnath Bharti on Tuesday wrote to the Delhi Police Commissioner claiming that the recent incident of fire in the building where he lives could be an attempt on his life by his "political opponents". The Malviya Nagar MLA urged Commissioner Alok Kumar Verma to lodge an FIR for "attempt on his life" and probe the incident that took place on Sunday, which he said was essential considering the "vicious" political environment. He said the breaking out of the fire in the first floor of the building makes him "suspicious of a conspiracy" as it apparently remains more or less unused. "Gas cylinder kept outside my residence gate was a few inches away from the flames, had the flames reached the gas cylinder, I would not have been alive to write this letter. Delhi Fire Service took almost two-and-a-half hours to extinguish the fire and even one minute of further delay by them would have left no one alive," he wrote. The former law minister expressed his disappointment over not being approached by the police over the incident "even after 36 hours" of its occurrence. "Given the vicious and the poisonous political environment of the present time, my suspicion of the conspiracy has to be probed. I have strong reason to believe that this fire could be an attempt on my life by my political opponents," he added.

India E-Commerce Sites Vow Strict Policies Amid Crackdown On Endangered Animals Trade

(Agencies) India's leading e-commerce sites are confronting an unusual problem: government claims that their consumer platforms have been used for banned trade in endangered animals. The sites have been swift to respond, taking down posts and committing to strictly monitoring illegal wildlife trade on their sites. On Monday, Union Environment Minister Anil Madhav Dave, said that instances of online smuggling of rare animals and their body parts was found on as many as 106 sites including popular ones such as Amazon, Snapdeal, OLX and eBay. "Several websites are seen advertising sale of rare animals and their parts," Dave said in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha even as he furnished a list of 106 such websites collated by the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB).

Dave said the WCCB has hired cyber crime specialists to check for any online advertisements of rare animals. A Snapdeal spokesperson said in a statement, "We work closely with WCCB which has provided an updated list of banned products in June 2016 to facilitate detection of any attempts by sellers to list such products on online marketplaces." The spokesperson added Snapdeal is "fully committed to support the Environment Ministry in this endeavour." An Amazon India spokesperson told Economic Times such products were no longer available on its India portal, Amazon.in. "In May this year, Amazon India took down 296 items in the 'animal specimen' category and 104 items under the 'snares or



traps' category that were listed by third-party sellers, after Wildlife SOS drew our attention to them," the spokesperson said. "We have since engaged with the government and provided our utmost support to help monitor the situation. We have also provided information as and when required by various government bodies and will continue to do so."

Meanwhile, eBay has said it has zero tolerance for wrongdoing and has strict policies to stop sale of products from endangered animals on its website. Quikr has maintained if they come across fraudulent listing, they delete it and also block the user. Atul Tewari, COO of Quikr in his response

said that the company uses a combination of human effort, technology and phone verification to moderate our listings and has a team of over 100 people who work round the clock to manually review them. A meeting of representatives from online trade portals was convened in May this year to discuss issues pertaining to online wildlife trade, sensitise them about it and discuss modalities to assist WCCB in case of such detections. Dave said during training and sensitisation programmes conducted by WCCB, the issue of illegal online wildlife trade is being highlighted so that officials involved in the enforcement are abreast of such trends.

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The Other Side of India's Reforms

(Contd from page 1) of the reduced Indian workforce in the Gulf fell. By the spring of 1991, Delhi's foreign exchange reserves fell to \$1.21 billion, just enough to cover about two weeks of imports. The government faced the unpalatable prospect of defaulting on sovereign loans and approached the IMF for assistance which came with strings attached.

The financial crisis gave a fillip to free marketeers who urged Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao to undertake far-reaching transformation of the economy. The government abolished import quotas, slashed tariffs from over 100 percent to a range of 25 to 36 percent, and ended industrial licensing except for defense and national strategy enterprises. Public-sector monopolies were limited to security, national strategy, nuclear power and railways. Private investment was allowed in banking, insurance, telecommunications and air travel. Foreign companies were permitted equity up to 51 percent in 34 industries.

The result was noticeable. From 1991 to 1996, average annual GDP expansion was 6.7 percent. India's foreign exchange reserves rose to \$22.74 billion.

However the expansion rate really picked up after 2000. Besides economic liberalization, other extraneous factors came into play, independent of domestic policies. One was the arrival of mobile phones and the internet, and the other was the high-tech revolution in information technology.

Growth in mobile phone usage has been phenomenal, zooming from less

than 37 million subscriptions in 2001 to more than 846 million in 2011 to crossing the 1 billion mark last year. Mobile-phone density impacts economic expansion. A study by the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations showed that the states with 10 percent higher mobile phone penetration produced 1.2 percent higher economic growth than those with lower telephone density.

IT along with its allied business process outsourcing sector has benefited India, helping to boost its foreign earnings. Whereas panic about the Y2K bug crashing computers at the turn of the new millennium proved mostly unfounded, it helped create a niche for India's techies. Western companies found that rates charged by Indian IT firms to immunize computer systems against the millennium bug were a fraction of rates charged by Western competitors. Overwhelmed by orders, Indian companies worked round the clock to finish the job. India's exports of IT services doubled in two years from \$2.6 billion in 1998-1999. Since then exports have accounted for three-quarters of the industry's turnover. The industry's contribution to India's exports soared from 4 percent in 1998-1999 to about 25 percent in 2012-2013.

But the 12.5 million employed directly and indirectly by the IT sector amount to a mere 2.5 percent of the national labor force of 496 million in a country with 1.25 billion people. The bottom line is that India is an agrarian society. Seven out of 10 Indians live in villages. A little over half of the nation's workforce is engaged in

agriculture and allied activities.

As part of the IMF loan, India was required to reduce its fiscal deficit of 8.2 percent of GDP. The Rao government drastically cut its investment in irrigation, water management, flood control and scientific research, power generation and related rural needs. Later, pressured by the World Trade Organization and the IMF, India started withdrawing market controls and curtailing subsidies for such agricultural inputs as chemical fertilizers and diesel.

The emphasis of the WTO and the IMF on export-led growth encouraged cultivators to switch from food crops to fertilizer-intensive cash crops like cotton, coffee, sugarcane, groundnuts, pepper and vanilla. As a consequence, the daily per capita availability of food grains declined from 510 grams in 1991 to 422 grams in 2005. The general lack of rural development and neglect of poverty alleviation has meant continuing malnutrition. A 2009 study by the official National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau showed 35 percent of Indians suffering from chronic hunger as measured by body mass index. During the first post-NEP decade indebted farm households nearly doubled, from 26 percent to 48.6 percent. The ratio of debt to assets rose from 1.6 to 2.4, an increase of 50 percent. The trend has continued, with an increasing number of indebted farmers committing suicide.

At the other end of the economic spectrum, the number of dollar billionaires in India has jumped. Between 2004 and

2015, their number rocketed from 13 to 111, the third largest after the United States and China, according to an annual list published by the Chinese magazine Hurun. A year earlier the number of dollar millionaires crossed the 250,000 mark.

To defuse rising social tensions caused by obscene inequality, a democratically elected government periodically intervenes to redistribute wealth equitably by passing laws to benefit the large indigent majority. For instance, in 2006, pressured by 59 Communist MPs, the minority government of Manmohan Singh passed the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, guaranteeing households 100 days of work to build or repair village infrastructure. In 2013 the Singh government, yielding to pressure by leftists, trade unionists and NGO activists, passed the National Food Security Act to provide subsidized food grains to about two thirds of India's population. The program's continuation under the Modi government, albeit in reduced form, has averted large-scale hunger in India's villages during lean seasons. A panoramic view of the past quarter century indicates that advance of NEP has not been smooth.

Increased GDP growth has come at the cost of ever-widening inequality. Grassroots resistance to NEP in India's democratic environment has made its progress intermittent. This pattern is set to continue irrespective of which of the two major parties — the Congress or the Bharatiya Janata Party — is in power.

Trump and the Dark Art of Bad Publicity

(Contd from page 32) is at the heart of one of the most remarkable mechanisms of Trump's rise—the conviction that mistakes, flagrant provocations and the attendant bad publicity genuinely don't matter, so long as they serve the goal of owning the spotlight. On the short list of Trump's most guiding, abiding beliefs, this is one that ranks near the top: that bad publicity doesn't have to be avoided, and doesn't have to be endured—that it should be embraced, and even stoked.

It's possible to see Trump's whole campaign as a structure built on colossal missteps, statements that would have torpedoed all other candidacies but have buoyed Trump's simply by keeping his name in the news. Trump launched his presidential candidacy last summer by descending the escalator at the tower that bears his name and uttering his infamous words about how Mexico is sending to America its criminals and rapists. Those remarks alienated an ally, trashed a major portion of an ethnic group Republicans had vowed to court and set the tenor for a bid that has willfully, almost gleefully defied every poll-tested tenet of modern politics.

Calling Senator John McCain "not a war hero" last July was another early signal that he would go out of his way to make trouble, and benefit from it: The disrespectful comment earned Trump

widespread condemnation—and a surge in polls. Since then, from his mocking of a disabled reporter to his declaration that he could shoot somebody on Fifth Avenue and "wouldn't lose voters" to his grinning, thumbs-up Cinco de Mayo social media taco bowl blast—"I love Hispanics!"—to his suggestion that the judge in a Trump University class-action lawsuit couldn't be impartial due to his Mexican ancestry to his pigheadedness in the Star of David controversy, bad publicity hasn't torn him down. It consistently has kept him in the public eye, and kept his opponents scrambling for attention.

If that belief has seen its most high-stakes demonstration over the past 13 months, it has for Trump a much deeper, more personal history. And if it's possible to identify the moment when the tactic was first on full display, it was February of 1990—a month in which Trump's scandalous affair with the buxom actress Marla Maples destroyed his marriage with the former Ivana Trump, the mother of his first three children. In the mind of nearly every business and public relations expert in America, such an event was a damaging crisis to be buried posthaste; the frenzied coverage of his congenital intemperance and incorrigible megalomania, they thought, obviously would tarnish Trump's brand. In the mind of Trump, on the other hand—as he watched his name and photograph jump

from the New York tabloids to the national news, day after day, week after week—the nonstop exposure was a tool to enhance his celebrity on a vast new scale. Trump was right. The experts were wrong. And the approach that came into focus more than a quarter-century ago hasn't changed.

"He is of the mindset that the more his name is dropped, the more a kind of hypnosis, for lack of a better word, there is to the American public," Jim Dowd, the CEO of Dowd Ink, who did public relations for Trump from 2004 to 2010, told me in a recent interview. "He thinks even a negative piece is a positive for him."

More than any Oval Office aspirant ever, Trump the candidate hasn't managed bad publicity so much as he has turned it into a weapon. But this philosophy, and his skill deploying it, now faces its stiffest test. What really knocked the plagiarism episode from the headlines this week was an even bigger piece of bad PR—the spectacle of a stalwart of his own party, Ted Cruz, standing in front of the Republican crowd, refusing to endorse Trump, pointedly and in prime time. In background chats with GOP operatives and delegates around Cleveland, the refrain was consistent: The Trump campaign must be operating under the theory that the most important thing is sheer publicity, good or bad.

"I can't explain it any other way," said

an aide to a Republican member of Congress who has hesitantly backed Trump. "They don't care that this thing is a mess, as long as people are paying attention to it."

Trump leaves the convention, though, as the official nominee of a party that still hasn't united behind him, many of its members seeing as disqualifying his suspect conservatism, his ceaseless missteps and his overall disposition. In the months to come, too, he will be raked by an ongoing onslaught of Democratic attack ads, the fodder for which is the mass of material that generated the bad publicity he has turned into fuel—the bad publicity he has used to get to the brink of residence in the White House. But his unfavorable ratings are historically high. He sits at zero-percent support among black voters in swing states Ohio and Pennsylvania. He has well-documented meager support from Hispanics and from women. If bad publicity is partly what helped him run through the primaries, it is also, analysts contend, what finally will stop him over the next three-plus months heading into the general election.

"My expectation is that the data will continue to show that this isn't going to work for him in the general, and his response to that is going to be to act out more," Tim Miller, the former Jeb Bush communications director and Republican strategist, told me Thursday afternoon.

Vijay Mallya saga: Banks are the hunted; the baron has already won this battle

and they have had access to thousands of documents," said Mallya.

"If the missing link is only to interview me, come to London and interview me, get on the radio conference and interview me, send me an email with questions and I will reply. I have nothing to hide." He continues, "it seems a bit contradictory and disconcerting, that just because I'm not physically present in India, that they should issue an arrest warrant and cancel my passport. What confidence does that give me about their real intentions?" Here, Mallya is smartly playing the psychological game to sway the public opinion in his favour, a game to show how he is being unfairly treated in the entire Kingfisher loan default episode.

But, is it really the case? Take a closer look at the Kingfisher case. The Airlines stopped flying in October, 2012. The loans to 17 banks (about Rs 7,000 crore then) became Non-performing Assets (NPAs) on the books of banks in the same year.

There were no serious efforts to repay the money (at least if one goes by the banks involved in the lending process) till late last year when the banks were pulled by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to dig out the dirt from under their carpets. Let's be clear on one point. Till the time public pressure mounted on the case, neither the banks nor Mallya seemed to have any major problems. Everyone was in the bar and all were drinking with much bonhomie. So, neither Mallya nor the lenders can claim the highest standards of honesty or responsibility in this case. Banks were not even willing to approach the investigators till recently against Mallya. And finally, when all hell broke loose with the RBI opening the Pandora's box, banks rushed to courts to seek detention of Mallya and cried foul in public. Just a week before banks could move the Supreme Court seeking Mallya's detention, the liquor king boarded a flight to UK. If no one had tipped off Mallya

about what was in store for him in the approaching days, he would still be here in the country. Possibly, all those stories of a 'sixth sense' and 'guardian angels' are indeed true and some power beyond the human senses worked in the favour of the beleaguered entrepreneur.

But, plain logic would also say that the possibility of some mortals tipping off Mallya cannot be ruled out. As Mallya's lawyers have highlighted in the past, he isn't the one who owes the maximum dues to Indian banks. There are cases of bigger NPAs. But, Mallya's case assumed significance since many other defaulters would well have been studying this case closely to decide their next course of action. That the Mallya case has the potential of sending a wrong signal to the defaulter brethren is something Firstpost had pointed out long back. There were several mistakes banks and investigators committed in

the Mallya case. First and foremost, they acted very late in this case. Banks should have recognised the problem early and alerted investigators of Mallya's wrongdoings (as evident from a few banks' tagging Mallya as a wilful defaulter), which they failed to do at the right time. As for investigators, they failed to foresee the chance of Mallya leaving their jurisdiction (or simply ignored the warning signals?). The third mistake was cancelling Mallya's passport prematurely. This happened when cases were going on in various courts against Mallya and courts have been issuing summons to him. By cancelling Mallya's passport too early, the government gave him a good reason not to come back and face trial. The decision to request Mallya's deportation from the UK was a wrong step since there were no strong case against him in the homeland to warrant such an action, so is the request to the Interpol for a red corner notice

and seeking extradition. It was an all-noise and no-proof case. In short, this is a classic case of both investigators and lenders acting late and bungling the case. Banks also rejected Mallya's offers to partly pay the loan or go for a one-time settlement (OTS) for the right reasons. Mallya's offer that sleuths can come and question him in UK is akin to mocking the system since courts have been issuing non-bailable warrants against Mallya or asking him to appear in person (read here and here). Mallya is personally responsible for the Kingfisher loan default (over Rs 9,000 crore to date adding the accrued interest amount) since he has given a personal guarantee to the loan. But, as it appears today, the Kingfisher-Vijay Mallya case has set a bad, dangerous precedent in the Indian banking sector. It puts at risk the very validity of a personal guarantee issue by promoters to banks against large corporate loans that are ultimately public money.

Why Russia is Rejoicing over Trump

For Putin, Trump is the gift that keeps on giving. Shunned and sanctioned by Western leaders for Russia's aggression in Ukraine, Putin now sees a future ally riding into view. The Kremlin and its right-wing supporters also enthusiastically applaud the isolationist they see in Trump, who has suggested he might curtail U.S. involvement in NATO and European affairs, and who derides the same political "mainstream" that has deemed Putin a pariah. If he wins in November, would Trump allow Russia's sphere of influence to grow in Eastern Europe? These are the questions that are rife in Russian official circles. Here in Moscow, I often hear Trump being compared to Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the extremist nationalist politician

whom people call Zhirik and who is known as the "palace jester" of Russian politics because of his calls to execute dissenting ministers, lawmakers and generals by shooting them in Red Square, or to reduce the birth rate in Russian Muslim republics by imposing a financial penalty for the birth of a third child. "I admire Trump, he is like our Zhirik, they both say what they think," Aleksandr, a Nizhny Novgorod student and supporter of the Rodina party—originally a coalition of 30 nationalist and far-right groups—told me. "See, the success of palace jesters like our Zhirinovskiy or the American Trump is easy to explain: They are not afraid of saying what other king's courtiers are afraid of saying." Or as another Trump

fan named Sergei Markov said: "It is as clear as God's day, Trump is anti-American establishment and people supporting him are also against the American establishment and therefore, they are pro-Putin, as our Putin is also against the U.S. decision-makers but he is with American people." Putin has several times declared that there was no true democracy in the United States. When CNN's Fareed Zakaria recently interviewed the Russian president, asking him about Trump, Putin stressed his view that there were no democratic elections in the U.S., "where prosecuting attorneys are shooining international observers from polling stations."

Earlier this month, Russian Trump fans—including Putinologists, mild and far-right nationalists, anti-globalists and Donbas separatists—gathered in annexed Crimea to discuss post-November U.S.-Russia relations during a 9-day long Kremlin-financed forum. Even the militia leaders of self-proclaimed Donetsk and Luhansk republics showed up. Sitting in the presidium at a table covered in red cloth, Sergei Markov, the orga-

nizer of the annual forum since 1999, explained to the auditorium full of political scientists and graduate students, that once America elects "the palace jester" Trump as its president, the Kremlin's life will be easier everywhere—in Syria, in Ukraine, in Europe and at home.

While only 10 percent of Russians support Hillary Clinton's candidacy, the Trump camp is growing day by day. A member of parliament from Putin's ruling United Russia party, Robert Schlegel, told me he liked Trump's personality and political views. "We understand that Clinton's focuses her campaign on escalating the Cold War fight with Russia, so we have great expectations for Trump, who says he would end the Washington's cycle of hostility against Moscow," Schlegel told me in a recent interview.

That extends to NATO. A few weeks ago NATO held its biggest exercise since the end of Cold War, with 31,000 troops from 24

countries participating in military drills. The news about NATO's decision to deploy 4,000 soldiers to Poland and Baltic countries has also concerned many officials in Moscow. Thus the most passionate dreamers here imagine an almighty Trump ordering an American exit from NATO, just as the United Kingdom voted to exit the EU. And they are hanging on the U.S. election news: Every time Trump calls Hillary Clinton a "liar" or "crooked," it makes headlines on Russian TV. "We hope Trump would consider pulling the U.S. out of NATO or at least put an end to the alliance's aggressive expansion," says Markov, expressing the hopes of most pro-Kremlin hawks. "We also hope he would make the current Ukrainian leadership leave and let east and west of Ukraine elect new [Kremlin-friendly] government."

Donald Trump, the newly anointed Republican nominee, is inspiring a new generation of optimism in Russia.



The new language of rage

New Delhi's reverie is rudely interrupted by Kashmir reality again. It must now confront a youth despair different from the old, own its share of responsibility for it



Tens of thousands of people, some newspaper accounts say, marched to the Eidgah in Srinagar on a grey spring morning in 1990, defying a curfew, to bury Ashfaq Majeed Wani, icon of the Kashmir insurgency. His claims to sainthood were dubious, at best: He'd kidnapped a civilian, now-Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti's sister Rubaiya Sayeed, menaced the Pandit minority, before ending his career by accidentally blowing himself up with a grenade in a botched ambush near Srinagar's Firdaus Cinema, the only actual military operation he is documented to have participated in. In 1990, even a second-rate martyr sufficed. "Mothers would put mehendi on their sons going to Pakistan", recorded the scholar Navnita Behera. "Children carried placards saying 'Indian dogs go home' or 'Mujahideen qaum zindabad'".

The startled surprise with which many in India have responded this week, to the violence unleashed by the killing of Burhan Wani is testimony to the amnesia and denial which surrounds national conversations on Kashmir. Having imagined that politics in Kashmir was engaged in a process of reconciliation with the ethnic-religious nationalism that long drove jihad, New Delhi's reverie has been rudely interrupted by reality. Burhan Wani was, as his critics

contend, a terrorist, not a feckless innocent. To end the conversation there, though, is to also miss the point. Like Ashfaq Wani, more than a quarter century ago, he was significant as an aesthetic, not an individual. The question New Delhi should ask is why unarmed young men are hurling themselves in the direction of bullets to defend that aesthetic.

Fiction on Kashmir, by sheer repetition on prime-time television, has acquired the magical quality of reality. Facts matter, though, and this one more than others: There is no escalation of terrorist violence in Kashmir. Bar a small uptick in 2012, violence in Kashmir has been declining since 2002. The number of active terrorists, too, has fallen steadily. Last year, there were 148 who carried out 143 attacks — less than one per terrorist per year, the laziest insurgency in the annals of warfare.

There is no upsurge of Kashmiris joining jihadist groups, either. Last year, 66 youngsters were reported to have joined jihadist groups, from 16 in 2014 — a figure newspapers read as a sharp escalation. In context, though, 2010-2013 were years of exceptionally low recruitment; the numbers are now closer to their general level this past decade.

Moreover, the large-scale killings of civilians in the communally-charged protests of 2008 and 2010 did not drive young Kashmiris into the ranks of terrorist groups: Recruitment actually fell. Large groups of

people, mainly youth, have been gathering at the funerals of slain jihadists — in October 2015, more than 30,000 marched to bury the Lashkar-e-Taiba's southern division commander, Abu Qasim — but few joined their ranks.

"The language of war is killing", the philosopher Carl von Clausewitz taught. This youth cohort, though, is choosing not to speak that particular language. The violence that followed Burhan Wani's killing, much as in 2010, involved storming police posts. These were the acts of the suicide bomber, perhaps — but without the bomb. Kashmir's historically-unprecedented youth male cohort has found a new vocabulary, in neo-fundamentalist Islam drawn off the internet. Islamist currents have long existed in Kashmir. The Jama'at Ahl-e-Hadis, established in Kashmir in 1925, and the Jama'at-e-Islami, wielded great influence over the jihadist movement. The new youth cohort, though, has borrowed the

aesthetics of neo-fundamentalism without the rigors of membership of these parties. Internet Islamism appears to offer a kind of moral liberation, free from the taint of compromise, the stuff of real-world politics.

Ever since 2006, thus, young people have found agency around aesthetic questions: Faith, religious identity, issues of honour, particularly the protection of women's chastity. This is the classic material of ethnic-religious nationalist movements, Islamic, Hindu or otherwise. Young people attacking the police find a sense of agency, even heroism, in giving their blood to guard Kashmir's cultural and religious identity against what they imagine to be predatory Hinduism. Politicians in Kashmir have no reason to challenge this grim nihilism. Ever since democratic politics resumed in 1995, it has had a minimal presence in Kashmir's old cities, heartlands of the jihad. This suits the political leadership, as low-turnout elections here make re-election by party faithful predictable. To the south, in Jammu, the Islamist rise in Kashmir serves a similar purpose, sharpening boundaries between Hindus and Muslims.

Like elsewhere in India, youth despair in Kashmir has flourished in a landscape characterised by high levels of youth unemployment and lack of economic opportunity. In Kashmir, there is an added twist: The absence of the promise of change. "Give me five years of peace", CM Mehbooba Mufti said at a rally in Udampur in April, "and I will give you development". Her predecessor, Omar Abdullah, often said much the same thing. "People have to decide how long they will wait for peace and prosperity", he proclaimed in

Sopore in 2013, at a rally in the Islamist heartland. This extraordinary consensus suggests people are responsible for solving the crisis imposed by violence — not elected leaders.

In 2006, an expert task force appointed by then PM Manmohan Singh made several recommendations to address the firmament on which Kashmir's youth crisis rests, proposing radical initiatives to develop linkages between agriculture and industry, train young people for opportunities in the services sector, offer land to business, and build a new satellite city for Srinagar. Barely a single recommendation has been implemented. As politicians see it, there isn't a payoff for this kind of change. Disenfranchised youth aren't likely to vote for existing party networks, so it makes more sense to funnel funds towards the well-oiled patronage networks that link contractors to the political elite. Let alone development, politicians — in New Delhi and Srinagar — haven't sought to equip their police forces to deal with crowds. PM Singh, after the carnage in 2010, promised a task force would be established to "devise non-lethal ways to manage protests". He didn't. Today, the J&K Police improvises, using shotguns firing pellets. The weapons are less likely to kill, but near-impossible to aim, causing injuries to eyes. The force has no training centre for modern riot-control tactics. Kashmir's New Islamist rise is resistible, if confronted by genuine political activism — but neither the will nor intention to do so is evident.



The Atrocious Charge Of Cow Slaughter For Akhlaq's Family

Brinda Karat

It is not even a year since the brutal murder and public lynching of Mohammad Akhlaq on the night of September 28, 2015. There are no timelines for sorrow and grief. Time does not heal, it may help to hone personal survival strategies for those who have to overcome the overwhelming loss of a beloved. But Mohammad Akhlaq's family is being denied even that chance. They are shattered with the news that they are now to be investigated on the charge of slaughtering a calf.

UP has a stringent law against cow slaughter. Under Section 3 of the Uttar Pradesh Prevention of Cow Slaughter Act, 1955, the slaughter of a cow, bull, bullock or its progeny is completely banned and penalty for violation, including an attempt to slaughter, is seven years of imprisonment. It is therefore a very serious matter with grave implications, given the political situation when under the present central regime, those who believe cow slaughter is justification for the death penalty adorn ministerial positions. Akhlaq's family have expressed their willingness for a full investigation and in fact have demanded that it be completed speedily so that the truth can once again be reiterated.

Those who accuse them are the murderers of Akhlaq.

17 of them, including sons of BJP leaders are in jail. The murder case is coming up for hearing on July 26 where charges are expected to be framed by a court. Everything is being done by the accused and their supporters to weaken the case and get the charges changed. Family members of Akhlaq who are witnesses in the case are being threatened to withdraw.

In a diabolical move prior to this crucial court hearing, a petition was filed in the local court demanding that an FIR be registered against Akhlaq's family members on grounds of violating the cow slaughter laws in Uttar Pradesh. The actual petitioner himself confesses that he is not an eyewitness; clearly he is the proxy for those in jail; yet the petition was accepted.

In a total travesty of justice, a local court in Sujapur ordered an investigation under Section 156 (3) of the CrPc on the basis of that petition. Among those to be investigated is the slain man's daughter, a young woman named Shaista. At the terrible time of her father's murder, we saw her, grief-stricken and asking the world, "And when they find that the meat was that of a goat, will it bring my father back?" Today, she is accused along with her elderly mother, of holding the calf down while Akhlaq's brother, who lives far from the village in town, is accused of actually wielding the knife and cutting the throat of the calf. Other members of the family including a daughter-in-law, also

living away in town, are all named as accomplices. The narration of events in the petition are so obviously fake and motivated. Astonishingly it is claimed that the "calf, adored by the whole village" and "fed milk and bread by the dotting villagers" was killed in broad daylight by Akhlaq's family and at different stages, this was witnessed by three villagers, who have been named. This is supposed to have occurred on September 25, three days before Akhlaq was killed. Astonishingly, at the time of this supposed slaughter of their beloved calf, the eye witnesses remained silent - leave alone reporting it to the police, they kept it a closely-guarded secret even from the other villagers. Why, one would ask? According to the petition, they were scared. Of whom? No answers.

But there is more of such drivel. The remains of the animal, according to the petition, were disposed of only three days later. The villagers, according to the petition, now busy looking for their revered missing calf, suddenly find Akhlaq trying to dispose of a black plastic bag. No prizes for guessing that it contains the remains of none other than the missing calf. Having been caught red-handed, not only does he confess, but he actually invites the villagers to his home to check the contents of the fridge which he says contains the rest of the meat. The angered villagers then beat him up.

For communally-driven

criminals capable of lynching, murdering a helpless, unarmed senior citizen, unable to defend himself, the manufacture of bizarre defence stories are to be expected. But should courts so easily permit what is clearly the blatant misuse of Section 156(3)? This clause is meant to protect citizens' right to justice when the police refuse to act or investigate a complaint. Under this clause, the magistrate is the deciding authority and does not require to hear anyone other than the complainant. But if the complaint itself is prima facie without any basis, why should it be entertained? Here the petition itself is so full of contradictions, so clearly motivated to serve the purpose of intimidation of witnesses in an on-going murder case as also to influence the main case in which charges are to be framed, that it surely should have been dismissed. Instead the police are ordered to investigate. But the police role too is highly questionable. Instead of bringing on record the details of the investigation into the murder case which necessarily included investigation of the alleged motive, including cow slaughter, the police made no efforts whatsoever to convince the court that a fresh investigation was not required. It just produced a one-line written statement that no investigation had been conducted on cow slaughter. This provided the ground for the order. There is another side pointed out by the bright young lawyer representing the family, Yunus Saifi, who feels the petition may turn out to be a self-goal. He says that the petition actually admits to the killing of Akhlaq and names specific people at the scene who should

now be included as accused in the main case of murder. He and some members of the family are now targets of the merchants of hate who populate the Sangh Parivaar organisations in the area.

At the time of Akhlaq's death, RSS and BJP leaders had justified the killing quoting the so-called Vedic injunctions that the punishment for cow slaughter was death. Now they want the judiciary to work on this understanding. The statements by BJP leaders welcoming the court order make it clear that they are fully with the murderers. In fact, it was Sanjeev Balyan, a minister in the Modi Government who said, "Akhlaq couldn't have eaten the full cow all alone. The meat would have gone to 20 families there. It's time to track them down and ensure justice is done to the other side", the other side meaning those in jail.

With the UP elections as the immediate agenda, the Sangh Parivaar is back to doing what it knows best, the creation of communal polarization through spreading lies and hatred. This is a bigger battle against these forces which has to be fought and won, but in the meanwhile, the immediate concern is for the security and welfare of Akhlaq's family. The country owes them. Stand with them, stand by them, let them know they are not alone. This will also force the UP Government and administration to take the necessary urgent legal and administrative measure to ensure that justice is done and that they are protected from this vicious and inhuman onslaught.

By Kiran Bedi

I have to write this because this matter goes to the heart of the problem in governance of India today: Why are our public services so poor in delivery of service? Why is the public suffering even when where there is reasonable infrastructure? Why is the public suffering even when there are policies, rules and even resources in place?

Why is the public suffering from deficient services when we have men and women selected (who scored the highest marks) through one of the toughest public service examinations? And why is the public suffering when this class of people are the best served - they are the most secure in their jobs and highly privileged. Let me share with you what has triggered this thought. It's my visit to the Puducherry railway station with

India vs Its Arm-Chair Bureaucrats: Enough Is Enough

team members of related services. This was my 13th, 6 am weekend field check of ground realities concerning issues of public services. I was warmly received by the officers on duty at that time. Since it was an announced visit, the premises were found clean. I saw a tourist booth located in the corner so that a traveler would not see it. There was no one manning it at that time - perhaps because it was a Sunday. It did not matter that the service was for visitors and that the travellers know no holiday. There was no Railway Police, called GRP, visible. After that, everyone concerned thought the check was over: a small railway station found clean, hence everybody was probably under the impression that the purpose of the visit was achieved,

till we... moved over to meet the three-wheeler scooter drivers waiting with their vehicles at a small distance. I asked them how much did they charge? Any fixed rates? And how were the needs of passengers met? One of them started to converse in Hindi. He then called his leader. The leader came and shared the known rates and started to lament how difficult it was for them (drivers) to make a living, in a way laying the grounds for fleecing and over-charging, which was the recurring complaint coming to us from all directions. Then we saw a bus stand being used by the parking contractor who too was underpaying the railway authorities for the contract. He was even using the bus stand as his outlet to run his own service as no other bus would stop there

due to the fear of being attacked by so-called vested interests.

People or passengers who were frequent travellers would get off the train and just walk past these three-wheelers. New ones would either accept the over-charging or be left stranded. We saw first-hand how our station was not a welcoming doorway but a place of harassment. With no one taking action, the station was left to its monopoly management. (Sic) We looked for the railway station boss who had been invited to come for the morning inspection. On checking, we were informed that he was not present (probably anticipating what would get exposed). We tried calling him, he refused to take the call. We observed as a train arrived and departed. We saw (perhaps first-

timers) passengers coming to the three-wheelers who demanded travel fare three times over, while others were walking down to a bus stop four kilometres away. There was no pre-paid service to check this. Over-charging and fleecing was a habit. I also wondered why could a regular bus not be here at the railway station? Enquiries revealed that private operators shooed them away, and never allowed passengers to board them. No one complained and life went on. We also saw passengers, senior in age, hauling their carry bags over the staircase as there were no elevators. None were found complaining. They were happy perhaps that they had a railway station. I saw all this from inside my car, parked strategically, so that my presence does not cause any distraction to incoming passengers.

(Special Report) New Delhi: Carrying a large aluminum bowl, Susheela Kumari bustles around behind two dozen cows in a shelter in northern India, ready to collect a valuable product: urine. Distilled urine from female cattle currently fetches at least as much as milk in India, but getting it isn't easy work. Kumari and two other attendants who work around the clock in a cow shed in Bulandshahar, 50 miles (80 kilometers) east of New Delhi, collect barely half the 15 to 20 liters of fluid the animals pass



monetize less savory bovine byproducts. The state of Rajasthan has gone further, creating a ministry of cow affairs to advocate for an animal, which some critics say, has more rights than the country's 2 million homeless citizens. It's also possible that the liquid harbors potentially dangerous pathogens.

India-trained veterinarian Navneet Dhand, who is an associate professor in veterinary biostatistics and epidemiology at the University of Sydney, points to three diseases prevalent in India that could potentially be transmitted to people in the raw urine of infected cows: leptospirosis, which can cause meningitis and liver failure; arthritis-causing brucellosis; and Q-fever, which can cause pneumonia and chronic inflammation of the heart. That's not dissuading Jain's Cow Urine Therapy Health Clinic, which buys 25,000 liters (6,600 gallons) of cow urine a month from a dozen gaushalas. Virender Kumar Jain, who founded the 15-doctor practice in the central Indian city of Indore, said his center has administered urine-derived medicines to 1.2 million patients over the past two decades for ailments from cancer to endocrine disorders, such as diabetes. His staff field inquiries from 4,000 online patients daily, Jain said. Consumers can also buy the products via e-commerce websites, such as Amazon. He estimates cow attendants can make 1,200 rupees a month from the sale of a cow's liquid waste, which can easily pay for the beast's upkeep. Urine distillate sells for \$1.20 to \$1.50 (80 to 100 rupees) a liter, says Balkrishna of Patanjali. Still, the value of cow urine is not a great incentive for keeping unproductive cows until their dying day, said Pankaj Navani, a former engineer whose 300-cow Binsar Farms produces 2,200 liters of milk a day. The lifespan of a cow is about 15 years, though most stop producing milk years earlier. Navani's herd, established in 2012, is still relatively young and he's yet to face the challenge of what to do with his former milkers, he said. "A more logical policy approach is required to deal with the issue in general," Navani said.

With Modi Government, Cow Urine Turns Into Liquid Gold: Foreign Media

daily. Urine from India's indigenous *Bos indicus* cows, which are considered sacred by Hindus, is a hot commodity. That's thanks in large part to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who's introduced programs over the past two years to protect the milk-producing animals and support industries derived from their waste. His government has spent 5.8 billion rupees (\$87 million) on cow shelters, intensified enforcement of beef-eating bans and tightened measures to stop the illicit sale of cattle to neighboring Bangladesh. "Around 30 remedies can be prepared at home with cow urine," said Sunil Mansinghka, chief coordinator at Go-Vigyan Anusandhan Kendra, a cow-focused research organization in Nagpur that's supported by two Hindu groups. "It's our foremost ambition to reach the elixir to countrymen." In the cow shelter in Bulandshahar, in Uttar Pradesh state, attendant Kumari is careful not to spill any of the golden liquid she collects in her bowl. "The most difficult task is to collect

cow urine because how do you know when an animal will actually do it?" said Vikash Chandra Gupta, who partnered with the cow shelter in Bulandshahar last year for starting his cow-urine business. "The attendants take clues from the animals' movements and try to identify patterns in urination." The pungent-smelling booty is poured into a crude distiller to remove impurities. The distillate can be reduced further to a powder form or sold as a liquid concentrate to various makers of traditional medicines and herbal remedies.

Subramanian Swamy, a member of Modi's Hindu-dominant Bharatiya Janata Party and who serves in India's Upper House, isn't satisfied with existing cow-protection efforts. The Harvard-educated Hindu economist is calling for the removal of more than a dozen export subsidies on buffalo meat, of which India is the world's largest exporter. A loophole in the policy encourages cows to be slaughtered and their meat passed off as buffalo, he says. One enthusiastic cow-urine buyer is yoga guru Baba



Ramdev, whose budding consumer goods empire is challenging local units of Colgate-Palmolive Co., Unilever and Nestle SA. The saffron-robe clad yoga teacher and anti-corruption campaigner pays 150,000 rupees a day for a steady stream of the raw material that his company Patanjali Ayurveda Ltd. uses to make into soaps, disinfectants to elixirs. Patanjali's bestseller is urine-based floor-cleaner Gaunyle, according to managing director Acharya Balkrishna. "We prepare 20 tons of Gaunyle a day and still can't meet demand," he said in a phone interview. Proponents of ayurveda, a holistic healing system developed thousands of years ago in India, say the urine, or "gomutra," of an Indian cow contains special therapeutic properties and health benefits. Traces of gold are found in the urine of cows from the local Gir breed, scientists at Junagadh Agricultural University, in Modi's home state of Gujarat, concluded in June after analyzing 400 specimens.

In cow-worshipping India, the increased protection and reverence given to the hump-backed, droopy-eared creatures have become a source of inter-faith conflict, given its conservative Hindu agenda. Two Muslim men were forced to eat dung by a cow protection group as punishment for allegedly transporting beef in the northern state of Haryana in June -- one of the latest cases of beef vigilantism that turned deadly on at least three occasions last year. To prevent unproductive cows being sent to the abattoir, the government started the so-called Rashtriya Gokul Mission in mid-2014, a national program that entails, among other things, constructing havens for retired, ailing and barren bovines. Proceeds from the animals' bodily waste are intended to pay for their board and keep. Modi's government in May held an inaugural national conference on cow shelters, or "gaushalas" in Hindi, where two members of his cabinet encouraged thousands of attendees to



Why India's 'Biggest Tax Reform' GST Is Still Stuck

(Special Report) It's slated to be India's 'biggest tax reform' that will simplify the web of taxes across India. Even as the main opposition party Congress has approved a five-hour debate on the Goods and Services Tax (GST) bill, there are several thorny issues and caveats that the BJP and opposition parties are expected to iron out before the bill, which is pending in the Rajya Sabha, is approved. Here are the main roadblocks:

1. Plain politics: There appears to be a deep divide between the Congress party members on whether to support the bill, and plenty of grandstanding. A government source told Business Standard that Congress members in the Rajya Sabha were split between those who were pro-bill and those indifferent to its passage. Other parties have also expressed they might oppose the bill include CPIM, according to media reports. However,



Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that with the exception of the Congress, the government largely has everyone on board, and continues to have discussions with them individually. 2. Conditions and caveats: Congress has asked for three main conditions and tweaks to the bill in its present form.

These include: capping the tax rate at 18 per cent; removal of a one per cent additional tax; and setting up of a council to settle disputes. According to media reports, both BJP and Congress may compromise on the cap requirement but need to come up with alternative ways to legally "ring-fence" the cap. BJP has

maintained that a hard cap would prove a difficult exercise requiring a constitutional amendment for any future revisions. The government has also agreed to drop the one per cent levy, but is facing a demand from Congress to submit its revised proposals in writing, the Hindu reported.

3. The lost revenue argument: The Communist Party of India (Marxist), CPM, has raised concerns the reform will hamper state government's ability to raise funds as GST is expected to shift away a portion of the tax collection to the federal system. This could impede states' abilities to raise immediate resources in disaster-scenarios as they would become over-reliant on the Centre, CPM has said. The GST was approved in the Lok Sabha last year. GST is an indirect blanket tax that will subsume several indirect state and federal taxes such as central excise duty, value added tax, service tax, among others.

When Clues Nearly Led The FBI To America's Favorite Saudi



(Special Report) For anyone who remembers Washington in the 1980s and 1990s, the Saudi ambassador at the time was something of a legend. Prince Bandar bin Sultan seemed to know everybody. He was close friends with both Bush presidents and enjoyed warm ties with President Bill Clinton. He often dressed in traditional Saudi garb, but he loved America. He even had his private aircraft painted in the colors of his favorite football team, the Dallas Cowboys.

He was also someone the FBI believed for a time had employed people connected to al-Qaida. This is an important detail in the new chapter of a long-forgotten 2003

congressional report captured in 2002, contained an unlisted number for the company that managed Bandar's estate in Aspen, Colorado. The CIA later found that there were no "direct links" between other numbers found in Zubaida's phone book and the U.S. numbers. Another number in Abu Zubaida's phone book belonged to a bodyguard employed by the Saudi embassy.

The "28 pages," as this section of the 9/11 report has come to be known, provide no evidence that the Saudi government or Saudi senior officials had planned, financed or even knew ahead of time about 9/11. That remains the conclusion of the 9/11 commission, which examined the leads contained in the 28 pages.

But the declassified chapter does show some connections between Bandar and al-Qaida. To start, it says that the personal phone book of Abu Zubaida, a senior al-Qaida planner who was

captured in 2002, contained an unlisted number for the company that managed Bandar's estate in Aspen, Colorado. The CIA later found that there were no "direct links" between other numbers found in Zubaida's phone book and the U.S. numbers. Another number in Abu Zubaida's phone book belonged to a bodyguard employed by the Saudi embassy.

The report also said that another Saudi's phone number was found in an Osama bin Laden safe house in 2002. This person had provided services to a couple who worked as personal assistants to Bandar.

The final tidbit in the declassified chapter involves

Bandar's wife, Princess Haifa bint Faisal. She had made regular payments to the wife of Osama Basnam, who the FBI said may have helped two of the 9/11 hijackers when they first came to San Diego in 2000. Bandar himself also wrote a check for Basnam, but this was in 1998 before the hijackers had arrived in America.

It turns out that these leads didn't add up. In a statement released Friday, the two co-chairs of the 9/11 commission, Tom Kean and Lee Hamilton, said, "Although the Commission expressed concerns about multiple individuals, only one employee of the Saudi government was implicated in the Commission's plot investigation."

That person was Fahad al-Thumairy, who was employed by the Saudi Ministry of Islamic Affairs. The FBI and the commission ended up interviewing him in Saudi Arabia. In the end though, the commission said the FBI found no evidence al-Thumairy provided assistance to the two hijackers.

While the 28 pages do not implicate the Saudi government in the 9/11 plot, they do show how the kingdom played a dangerous game in the 1990s when al-Qaida was just getting started. Back then, the small

CIA unit that tracked the group observed that the Saudis had stopped cooperating with the agency's monitoring of the group's founder, Osama bin Laden, in 1996 — in part because he knew too much about the kingdom's involvement with Islamic radicals.

To illustrate Saudi Arabia's non-cooperation, the report says the CIA and FBI for years pressed Riyadh for access to Madani al-Tayyib, who managed bin Laden's finances when he was based in Sudan. But they were persistently rebuffed. As one FBI agent told the Senate investigators, the Saudis would say al-Tayyib was "just a poor man who lost his leg, he doesn't know anything."

Before 9/11, it would have been difficult to see that much was wrong in the U.S.-Saudi relationship. What you saw were Prince Bandar's lavish parties in Washington. What you did not see were the frustrations of the CIA and the FBI, shrouded in the official secrecy of the national security state. You also did not see the few individuals in Bandar's orbit who would come under suspicion after al-Qaida took down the World Trade Center.

Myth Busted: Home-cooked baby food not always better than market options



(Agencies) Countering the popular belief that meals cooked at home are healthier for kids, a new study claims that it is not always better than commercially available baby foods.

Often perceived as the best option, home-cooked meals are cheaper but they usually exceed energy density and dietary fat recommendations, researchers said.

It is recommended that the introduction of solid foods, known as weaning, begins when a child is six months old. It should include a variety of foods to provide a balanced diet rich in a broad range of nutrients. The researchers from University of Aberdeen and University of Warwick in the UK wanted to assess how well homemade and commercially available readymade meals designed for infants and young children met age specific dietary recommendations.

They compared the nutrient content, price and food group variety of 278 readymade savoury meals, 174 of which were organic, and 408 home cooked

meals, made using recipes from 55 bestselling cookbooks designed for the diets of infants and young children.

In terms of the food group content, 16% of the home cooked meals were poultry based compared with 27% of the readymade meals; around one in five (19%) were seafood based vs 7% of the readymade meals; a similar proportion (21%) were meat based compared with 35% of the commercial products; and almost half (44%) were vegetable based compared with around a third (31%) of the readymade meals. Home cooked meals included a greater variety of vegetables than readymade meals, but commercial products contained a greater vegetable variety per meal, averaging three compared with two for home cooked recipes.

Home cooked meals also provided 26% more energy and 44% more protein and total fat, including saturated fat, than commercial products.

While almost two thirds (65%) of commercial products met dietary recommendations on energy density, only

just over a third of home cooked meals did so, and over half (52%) exceeded the maximum range. "Dietary fats contribute essential fatty acids and fat soluble vitamins together with energy and sensory qualities, thus are vital for the growing child, however excessive intakes may impact on childhood obesity and health," researchers said. They highlight that the lower protein content of the readymade meals might be due to the

higher proportion of early stage meals on the market while predominantly vegetable based meals are recommended for first tastes. Parents may choose to vary the content of recipes, and there are likely to be natural variations in the nutritional content of raw ingredients, thus making direct comparisons harder to make, researchers said.

The research was published in the Archives of Disease in Childhood.



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Mina Hasan Eid Lawn Collection 2016



(Press Release) Mina Hasan, undoubtedly is one of my favorite designer's across border. Primarily, because of young, state of art designing and with her tremendous input to make all her collections exclusive and stylish.

Her, EID Lawn 2016 collection, is among our hit list. Perfect blend of modern femininity and elegance, it is bound to be your favorite summer, formal wear. She, manages to catch your attention with all the rich peppy, vibrant tones. Array of colors, used vary from pastel pink's, peaches, sea green to crimson red, festive magenta, and pops of vibrant deep blue and yellow. Color combinations used are eccentric with a visual balance of harmony.

Summers and floral prints are inseparable. Prints are in bright and playful hues against neutral bases. In addition of vibrant prints she has added embroidered floral motifs on organza patches to keep up with the festive mood of Eid. Each design speaks a story of its own, with beautiful backdrops of vintage cars, canoe, locomotive carriages. Credits for this amazing photo shoot goes to Nadir Firoz Khan. Personally loved the photo shoot.

Wide variety of fabrics have been used from lawn, jacquard, pure silk/chiffon/net dupattas with printed bottoms, making it perfect for sultry summers. With these fine high quality fabrics used, you need not to compromise on your summer style quotient. Design 4A, is off white jacquard dress, we could not keep our eyes off. Detailed with lovely embroidered roses in red and orange keeps the flow. Heavy



The Lawn Muse
by Komal Bindra



embroidered daman enhanced with cut-work makes it more dainty. Sharp digitally printed lowers with embroidered net dupatta makes this an exquisite ensemble. Stitching styles recommended strongly would be.....Go "Boho" with cut out sleeves, flared sleeves, high-low hemlines with sleek pants, straight pajami's and boot cut trousers. Pair them with sharp pair of nude heels or the much in 'Khussa's', berry lips, hair either pulled back or for more catchy look go for the lived in curls like Victoria Secret's angles. Mina Hasan's collection in all is classy, snazzy, chic and dot on trend. We love it.



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Youngsters don't consider sex as taboo topic: Ranveer Singh

(Agencies) Actor Ranveer Singh, who has earlier endorsed a condom brand, says sex as a topic is not considered taboo by the youth any more even though it is considered "dirty" and "a stigma" by the larger population in the country. "Sex in our country is a subject of stigma. For the longest time, sex in India has always been spoken and thought of as a dirty thing, a sleazy subject and always kept in the closet," Ranveer said at a screening of Sex Chat with Pappu And Papa, an online series based on sex education. Ranveer had made news when he endorsed a condom brand a few years ago and had also featured in some steamy ads. "It was my own small way of shedding light on the changing perception about sex. Youngsters don't look upon it as a taboo subject anymore, they don't think about it as a dirty thing. I wanted to try and bring sex out of the closet and make people understand that it is a beautiful thing... An expression of love. What's most important is for the Indian youth to understand as much as they can about safe sex and sex education. There are still so many institutions that don't have it mandatory, which I think should be made mandatory," the Bajirao Mastani actor added. About his expectations from Sex Chat with Pappu And Papa, he said: "I hope it sends out a strong message to parents and to youngsters, adolescents and to anybody who watches to change their perspective on this subject of sex. "Of course, we have our culture and we live in a society which is traditionally very conservative, but times are changing. With the advent of the internet, things have opened up.

Kabali: Two-minute scene from the film leaked

(Agencies) The two-minute introduction scene of Rajinikanth's Kabali, which is slated for a worldwide release on Friday, has leaked online. According to a source, the leak might have happened from the Gulf. "The leaked clip features Arabic subtitles too. Hence, it must have originated from the Gulf. The team is trying to find the source of the leak," said a source. The two-minute scene features Rajinikanth exiting from a prison. Meanwhile, superstar Rajinikanth along with his daughter Aishwarya watched the special screening of the film in Virginia (US) on Wednesday. Directed by Pa Ranjith, the film features Rajinikanth as a don fighting for Tamils in Malaysia.



Randeep Hooda wants to sell a 15-day old calf, are you interested?

(Agencies) In a social media post that is rare coming from a celebrity, Bollywood actor Randeep Hooda shared pictures of himself with a 15-day-old calf and a few cows, announcing that they are up for sale. Randeep shared the pictures on his Facebook account and wrote, "15day old vava at my friend #JayantMulay's farm called #Ashwavan. He has beautiful #Sahiwal cows, best milk money can buy." Now that's a touch of reality that is hard to find in people living in the limelight. Cute move, Randeep! Now, the closest move we have ever seen any Bollywood make is that time when Nawazuddin Siddiqui shared pictures of himself farming in Budhna (Uttar Pradesh) - his home village. He even promoted Budhna's new irrigation systems while on holiday there in October 2015. Talking to Hindustan Times, Nawaz said, "I have done farming for 20 years of my life. Whenever I get time, I take it up. It's our ancestral occupation. It gives me a lot of pleasure."



The Mumbai airport was buzzing with Bollywood celebrities are several of them were seen making their way in and out of the city. While Shraddha Kapoor returned from an ad shoot in Bali, Sanjay Dutt landed back from Colombo. Also, Katrina Kaif and Gauhar Khan were snapped at the international terminal.

KAREENA shows off her baby bump

Kareena Kapoor Khan's pregnancy news has been the talk of the town ever since the couple confirmed the news. On Sunday evening, the actress was seen stepping out of a salon. Dressed in a simple tee and a pair of jeans, her baby bump was visible. The mommy-to-be looked quite thrilled as she flashed smiles at the shutterbugs while making way towards her car. DP



B-town Buzz

Going all out for Dishoom

Actors John Abraham, Varun Dhawan, and Jacqueline Fernandez have been extensively promoting their upcoming film Dishoom, which is hitting theatres on July 29. Recently, the trio was snapped at a promotional event in Mumbai. Varun went a step ahead and promoted the film while taking a ride in an auto rickshaw in the city. DP





CLASH FRIDAYS

With no Bollywood biggie after *Sultan* scheduled for a solo release this year, the season of clashes lies ahead.

(release dates subject to change)



aug 12



MOHENJO DARO VS RUSTOM

The Independence Day holiday weekend notwithstanding, both biggies will eat into each other's collections. *Mohenjo Daro* is Ashutosh Gowariker's dream project starring Hrithik

Roshan, reportedly riding a ₹100-crore budget. *Rustom* stars Akshay Kumar and is based on the case of Naval Commander KM Nanavati, allegedly tried for killing his wife's lover.



sep 16



PINK VS RAAZ REBOOT

A multiplex tussle seems to be lined up here. Although the films are of varied genres, *Raaz Reboot* seems to have an edge because it belongs to a popular

franchise. The film stars Emraan Hashmi and promises great music. *Pink* is about women's power and stars Amitabh Bachchan and Taapsee Pannu.



oct 28



AE DIL HAI MUSHKIL VS SHIVAAY

Fireworks in store on Diwali. Karan Johar's new romance *Ae Dil Hai Mushkil*, starring Ranbir Kapoor and Aishwarya Rai-Bachchan, confronts Ajay Devgn's self-directed action

adventure, *Shivaay*. *Ae dil...*, also starring Anushka Sharma, accounts the love story of a man and an older woman. *Shivaay* highlights the human elements about Lord Shiv.



nov 18



FORCE 2 VS TUM BIN 2

Bollywood has never seen a clash of sequels, so when two films of diverse genres open on the same date, it will be interesting. *Force 2* brings

back John Abraham in his action hero avatar as an angry cop while *Tum Bin 2* tells a new unusual love story with a new cast.

— Vinayak Chakravorty

Why Russia Is Rejoicing Over Trump

Dropping threatening language from the GOP platform is just the sort of bonus Moscow expects from its man Donald.



Dropping threatening language from the GOP platform is just the sort of bonus Moscow expects from its man Donald.

(Agencies) Moscow— Excited by Donald Trump’s pledge to promote “easing of tensions and improved relations with Russia,” the Kremlin establishment earlier this month invited Trump adviser Carter Page to speak before graduating students of the New Economic School. Page did not disappoint. In his remarks, Page condemned current American policy for its “often-hypocritical focus on democratization, inequality, corruption and regime change.”

When a Russian student asked Page whether he really believed that American society was liberal and democratic, Trump’s adviser grinned and delivered a line that might have come from Vladimir Putin himself. “I surround the word ‘liberal’ with quotes,” he said. “I tend to agree with you that it’s not always as liberal as it may seem,” he said. “I’m with you.”

It was thus perfectly in keeping with Trump campaign’s entente with the Kremlin that last week Trump aides reportedly watered

down the new Republican platform on Russia, removing language that called for giving weapons to Ukraine to fight Russian and rebel forces. Page, an energy expert, has close ties to Russian business and relationships with executives at Gazprom, the giant state-run gas company. Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort has worked as a lobbyist for former Ukraine’s former Russia-aligned

(Contd on page 23)

Just Happening

News flash

An 18-year-old German-Iranian man opened fire in a crowded Munich shopping mall and a nearby McDonald’s on Friday night, killing nine people and wounding 16 others before killing himself, the chief of police in the Bavarian capital said.

Clinton picks Kaine as her running mate. The presumptive Democratic nominee will officially debut the Virginia senator as her vice presidential pick on Saturday.

Trump Wins GOP Presidential Nomination

Donald Trump officially became the Republican Party’s presidential nominee on Tuesday after a roll call vote overshadowed by dissent and apathy atypical of what is traditionally a celebration of the party’s White House candidate.

Vijay Mallya saga: Banks are the hunted; the baron has already won this battle

(Agencies) The Kingfisher-Vijay Mallya case is slowly proving to be a dangerous trendsetter for Indian banks and investigative agencies, not just because of the inability of the banks to recover the Rs 9,000-crore loan from Mallya, but also because of the message it sends to other bank loan defaulters and habitual law-breakers.

The message is that if you are a very rich person with sufficient hold in power centres, you can cock-a-snook at the system after defaulting a few thousands

of crores to a host of banks. Worse, you can mock them from a safe distance with counter-arguments about why you are not paying your dues in full and also why you are not facing the law of the land.

In this process, the banks become the bakras (or sacrificial lambs) and investigators turn out to be mere onlookers. That is precisely what billionaire Vijay Mallya is doing now.

In an interview given to Autosport on Wednesday, Mallya spoke about a witch-hunt being waged against him in India. “So

sadly in India, these investigative agencies are political tools that do not hesitate to go on a wild-goose chase, and in the process it is nothing but persecution. There is no other way I can describe what is happening other than a witch hunt. I just have to ride out the storm,” said Mallya to the motor racing magazine. The liquor-baron still offers complete willingness to fully co-operate with any investigation. “They [the Indian authorities] have had access to many executives of Kingfisher Airlines, (Contd on page 23)



Trump and the Dark Art of Bad Publicity

In one lurid, scandalous month in 1990 he learned a lesson that helped forge his whole candidacy.

(Agencies) In the epic spectrum of bad publicity that has defined Donald Trump’s volatile, attention-snatching campaign, Melania Trump’s plagiarism of parts of a Michelle Obama speech on the first night of this week’s Republican National Convention was relatively tame. The advice from seasoned professionals was pretty simple: Find someone to fire, let the scandal die down, move on. Instead, clumsy and contradictory excuses from staffers and surrogates helped keep the story alive all day Tuesday. By Wednesday morning, with the gaffe still dominating the news cycles, the boss had had enough—enough apologizing,

enough flailing attempts at standard crisis management.

It was time for Trump to declare victory. He took to Twitter.

“Good news is Melania’s speech got more publicity than any in the history of politics,” he said, “especially if you believe that all press is good press!”

This seemed like a preposterous claim—that borrowing lines was basically a good thing if it got enough attention, that all the fumbles that kept the topic in the news were just part of a story of success. But the idea, unprecedented at this level of politics,

(Contd on page 22)