



# INSIDER

Voice of South Asian Community Since March 2002

Published Weekly from New York

2017  
HAPPY NEW YEAR

*Wishing our  
Readers and  
Patrons Happy  
New Year 2017*

Vol. 14

Issue 19 Wednesday Dec. 28, 2016 to Jan 03, 2017

www.thesouthasian.info

## How to achieve your New Year's resolutions

*Expert says keep them realistic  
and expect small changes*

(Agencies) From losing weight to quitting smoking, each December people around the world vow to stick to their New Year's resolutions. But studies have shown that despite our best efforts, a quarter of resolutions will be abandoned by the end of the first week of the New Year. To break that pattern, one expert is urging people to set realistic resolutions this year, and to expect gradual changes rather than a major transformation. (Contd on page 21)



Cashless will be king as digitisation makes inroads

*The government no longer has to put its hands in everybody's pockets to monitor where the money goes after it leaves the mint. Digital money will give the State control over everyone's wallet, warns Harcharan Bains*



(Agencies) Prime Minister Narendra Modi is pushing an unsuspecting and a 'reluctant' India through monetary asceticism which could lead the country to becoming a 'cashless paradise' long spoken of in our spiritual and even fiscal scriptures. When the Prime Minister delivered his banking bomb last month, (Contd on page 22)

*Where Secret Arrests Were  
Standard Procedure*



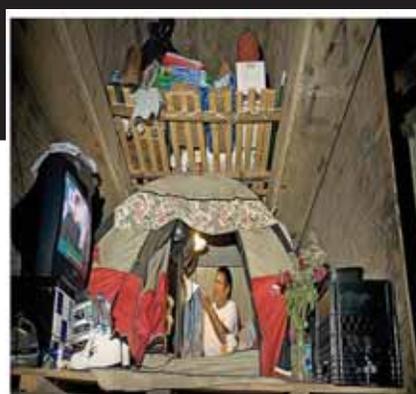
(Agencies) For a shocking glimpse of what's been happening in the name of criminal justice in America, look no further than a Justice Department report last week on police behavior in Louisiana. Officers there have routinely arrested hundreds of citizens annually without probable cause, strip-searching them and denying them contact with their family and lawyers for days — all in an unconstitutional attempt to force cooperation with detectives who finally admitted they were operating on a mere "hunch" or "feeling."

(Contd on page 23)

## The Shantytowns of America

*Inside the shacks, cars, tents and boxes  
that America's homeless call home*

(Agencies) From Florida to Louisiana, one photographer has captured these captivating images of homeless people across the United States. Mary Lou Uttermohlen's ongoing documentary project, Structure Out of Chaos, shows how the homeless have organized their lives by building shantytowns. Uttermohlen told Feature Shoot that the series began in 1993 when she moved to Miami. (Contd on page 23)



## Cabinet Clears Ordinance to Penalise Persons With Old Notes

(Agencies) Two days before the deadline for depositing old 500 and 1,000 rupee notes expires, the Cabinet today approved promulgation of an Ordinance to make possession of a large number of scrapped banknotes a penal offence that will attract monetary fine. The Specified Bank Notes Cessation of Liabilities Ordinance makes holding of old 1,000 and 500 rupee notes after March 31 beyond a threshold amount a criminal offence that will attract a monetary fine of Rs 10,000 or five times

the cash held, whichever is higher. Furnishing wrong information while depositing the old currency between January 1 and March 31 will attract a fine of Rs 5,000 or five times the amount. Official sources said the Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the Ordinance, but did not say if the penal provisions will apply to holding the junked currency after the 50-day window to deposit them at banks ends on December 30 or after March 31, (Contd on page 21)



Josh  
india tv

Ethnic Strategies

BOI  
BOX OFFICE  
INSIDER

ਪੰਜਾਬ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀਅਤ ਦਾ ਤਰਜਮਾਨ  
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਦੁਨੀਆ  
PUNJABI DUNIYA

# 3 Men Made Millions by Hacking Merger Lawyers



Tuesday.

The men were successful in hacking two firms, stealing emails of partners who work on mergers, prosecutors said. The three then bought shares of target companies, selling them after the deals were announced, prosecutors said.

Shares of targets in most such transactions tend to trade higher when a deal is announced because they are usually purchased for more than their market price.

Hackers' ability to breach the defenses of big law firms in search of confidential information about corporate clients — including tips about coming mergers and acquisitions — has long been a concern of federal authorities. Most major law firms have played down the threat posed by hackers and have been

reluctant to discuss breaches or even attempted breaches.

"This case of cyber meets securities fraud should serve as a wake-up call for law firms around the world," Preet Bharara, the United States attorney in Manhattan, said in a statement. "You are and will be targets of cyberhacking because you have information valuable to would-be criminals."

The law firms were not identified in the indictment or in a parallel civil complaint brought by the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Earlier this year, one large New York firm, Cravath, Swaine & Moore, confirmed that it had been the victim of a "limited breach" of its computer network in the summer of 2015. At the time, the law firm said it was "not aware that any of the information

that may have been accessed has been used improperly."

Cravath did not immediately respond to phone calls and emails seeking comment on Tuesday.

"Law firms have been identified as the weakest link, and it is great to see the U.S. attorney taking an interest," said Daniel Garrie, a law firm security consultant.

The three men charged with insider trading and hacking are lat Hong, Bo Zheng and Chin Hung, the United States attorney's office and the Federal Bureau of Investigation said. Mr. Hong, a resident of Macau, was arrested in Hong Kong on Christmas.

The indictment and the S.E.C. complaint detailed a number of major deals in which confidential information had been retrieved.

(Press Release) Law firms that advise on mergers once had to worry about a rogue employee trading on deal tips. Now, they have to worry about hackers doing the same.

Federal prosecutors in Manhattan have charged three Chinese citizens with making

more than \$4 million by trading on information they got by hacking into some of the top merger-advising law firms in New York. The three men targeted at least seven New York law firms to try to obtain information about deals in the works, according to an indictment unsealed on

## U.S. evicts Russians for spying, imposes sanctions after election hacks

(Agencies) President Barack Obama on Thursday ordered the expulsion of 35 Russian suspected spies and imposed sanctions on two Russian intelligence agencies over their involvement in hacking U.S. political groups in the 2016 presidential election.

The measures, taken during the last days of Obama's presidency, mark a new post-Cold War low in U.S.-Russian ties and set up a potential flashpoint between incoming President-elect Donald Trump and fellow Republicans in Congress over how to deal with

Moscow.

Obama, a Democrat, had promised consequences after U.S. intelligence officials blamed Russia for hacks intended to influence the 2016 election. Officials pointed the finger directly at Russian President Vladimir Putin for personally

directing the efforts and primarily targeting Democrats, who put pressure on Obama to respond.

"These actions follow repeated private and public warnings that we have issued to the Russian government, and are a necessary and appropriate

response to efforts to harm U.S. interests in violation of established international norms of behavior," Obama said in a statement from Hawaii, where he is on vacation.

"All Americans should be alarmed by Russia's actions," he said. It was not clear whether Trump, who has repeatedly praised Putin and nominated people seen as friendly toward Moscow to senior administration posts, would seek to roll back the measures once he takes office on Jan. 20. Trump has brushed aside allegations from the CIA and other intelligence agencies that Russia was behind the cyber attacks. He said on Thursday he would meet with intelligence officials soon. "It's time for our country to move on to bigger and better things," Trump said in a statement.

## Syria ceasefire begins, but is shaky with early clashes

(Agencies) A nationwide ceasefire in Syria, brokered by Russia and Turkey which back opposing sides in the conflict, got off to a shaky start after midnight on Friday (2200 GMT on Thursday) in the latest attempt to end nearly six years of bloodshed.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, a key ally of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, announced the ceasefire on Thursday after forging the agreement with Turkey, a longtime backer of the opposition.

Monitors and a rebel official reported clashes between insurgents and government forces along the provincial boundary between Idlib and Hama, and isolated incidents of gunfire further south less than two hours after the truce began. Warring sides appeared to have stopped firing in many other areas, however.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said the United States could join the peace process once President-elect Donald Trump takes office on Jan. 20. He also wanted

Egypt to join, together with Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iraq, Jordan and the United Nations.

A number of rebel groups have signed the agreement, Russia's Defence Ministry said. Several rebel officials acknowledged the deal, and a spokesman for the Free Syrian Army (FSA), a loose alliance of insurgent groups, said it would abide by the truce.

One FSA commander was optimistic about the truce deal, the third serious attempt this year at a nationwide ceasefire.

"This time I have confidence in its seriousness. There is new international input," Colonel Fares al-Bayoush said without elaborating.

Syria's civil war, which began when a peaceful uprising descended into

violence in 2011, has resulted in more than 300,000 deaths and displaced over 11 million people, half its pre-war population.

The ceasefire, in the waning days of President Barack Obama's administration, was the first major international diplomatic initiative in the Middle East in decades not to involve the United States.

## Christmas Party & fundraiser for Water Project in India Organized



Well known senior Democratic Party Leader Uma Sen Gupta recently organized a well-attended Christmas celebrations Party in Queens, New York. Before the party started, a documentary "Give Me Water" was shown. Documentary showed the efforts and progress of Mrs. Sen Gupta's "Give Me Water Project" to provide drinking water to poor villages in West Bengal, India. (Pictures by: CKPHOTO)

# Real Estate & Insurance

## Thinking of Buying/Selling Home?



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



**Whitestone**  
REAL ESTATE

Honesty \* Integrity \* Experience \* Knowledge

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

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

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

### Insurance Services

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

(Agencies) A woman has reportedly been beheaded by a group of armed men in Afghanistan after she entered a city without her husband.

The horrific act took place in the remote village of Latti in Sar-e-Pul province, which is under Taliban control.

Provincial Governor spokesman Zabiullah Amani told the Nation that the 30-year-old woman was targeted because she went out alone without her husband, who is in Iran.

The Middle East Press reported the woman had gone to the market to shop.

Under Taliban rule women are prohibited from leaving their homes unless accompanied by a close male relative.

They are also banned from



Samim. Although Afghan women had made hard-fought rights gains in education and work since the collapse of austere Taliban regime in 2001, there are growing fears that these could reverse with the deterioration of security and increase in violence.

Despite years of pressure by women's groups and foreign donors, Afghanistan remains one of the most difficult places to be a woman.

Restoring fundamental women's rights was one of the main objectives of the international community in Afghanistan, where the hardline Taliban Islamist banned girls from school and women from work in their rule from 1996-2001.

## *Woman, 30, is beheaded in Afghanistan for entering a city to go shopping without her husband*

working or education and are forced to wear the burqa.

The Taliban have rejected any involvement in this latest incident.

Earlier this month five female Afghan guards working in the airport in southern Kandahar

were killed by unknown gunmen as they were on their way to work, the latest in a string of attacks against women in Afghanistan. From bomb attacks to targeted or honour killings or domestic abuses, Afghan women have borne the brunt

of the 15 years of conflicts during the Taliban-led insurgency as security has deteriorated and violence has increased in most parts of the country. Samim Khpulwak, spokesman for the governor of Kandahar, said the five women

were in charge of searching female travelers at the Kandahar airport, and had been hired by a private security company. Two gunmen on motorbike followed their van and opened fire on them, killing the five and their driver this morning, said

## *'Our simple life': Meet the couple who earn \$110,000 a year and have Thirteen Kids*



(Agencies) For more than 25 years, one Maryland couple with 13 children living on a single-family income of \$110,000 has never owed a penny in debt and say they live 'pleasant' and 'simple lives'.

Despite living in the city of Bowie, one of the country's most expensive regions, Rob and Sam Fatzinger are 'thriving in all ways' of life with their large family that many would suspect could have them financially deep in debt.

But, surprisingly, it's completely the opposite for the couple and their 13 children.

Rob, 49 and Sam, 46, knew from the start of their relationship that they wanted a huge family. He explains in an opinion piece featured on Business Insider that

when he proposed to Sam he said, 'who else will give you 10 kids, a house with a white-picket fence and a dog?'

Sam replied that she didn't

want the dog, but instead make it 11 children and she would agree to marry him.

Not long after that, the couple was married in 1989 and expecting their first child a year later, a girl, who is now 24, married and finished graduate school after her 21st birthday.

The Fatzinger's next four children are in college, and two are expected to graduate this spring.

Two children are in high school, two are in middle school, two are in elementary school and two are pre-school aged.

Sam home-schools all of the children until college. But two days a week for the high school

children, the couple uses tutors to supplement what they learn at home, which costs roughly \$2,500 a year per child.

Those who have finished high school in the Fatzinger family, completed the schooling between one to two years early.

Rob and Sam shared that the first 12 of their children are natural born. They have legal custody of a two-year-old who they have had since he was a baby at 12 weeks old. They plan on adopting him in the future. The father explained that the couple has always been frugal, and have never owed a penny of debt except, for the mortgage on their home. They've never had car loans, no student

loans or credit card debt.

On top of having kids right away into their marriage, they also did not earn that much money early on in the relationship. 'We were married in 1989 and had child #1 in '90. From 1990-2000 we owned a bookstore and worked it together,' he said. 'It was our main source of income, other than side-gigs here and there. Grass cutting, odd jobs, etc... During the 90's our income topped out at \$36k per year. 'Needless to say there wasn't a lot of money put away for retirement savings.' Their bookstore closed its doors in the summer of 2000 due to people turning to the internet to purchase their reads.

## *Trump revives defense of charitable foundation amid inquiry*

(Agencies) Donald J. Trump has renewed his defense of his charitable foundation, insisting on Twitter that all of the money raised by the organization has gone to charity even as the New York attorney general continues to investigate claims to the contrary. "I gave millions of dollars to DJT Foundation, raised and received millions more, ALL of which is given to charity, and media won't report!" Mr. Trump wrote on Monday night. "100% of the money goes to

wonderful charities!" he said in another post. It was the latest flare-up concerning the Donald J. Trump Foundation, which emerged as a source of contention during the presidential race and has continued to bedevil Mr. Trump since his election. On Saturday, Mr. Trump said he would shut down the organization, a move that the New York attorney general's office said would require state approval. Last month, in its 2015 tax filing, the foundation itself indicated that it may

have violated rules meant to protect against self-dealing, such as using charity resources to benefit one of the organization's central people. The filing came after The Washington Post reported that Mr. Trump had used \$258,000 from the charity to settle legal disputes involving his businesses. There were other unusual donations from the foundation, including \$12,000 for an autographed helmet from the football player Tim Tebow and \$20,000 to an artist for painting a portrait of Mr.

Trump. It also made a \$25,000 donation to a political committee supporting Pam Bondi, the Florida attorney general, a contribution that drew scrutiny during the campaign and resulted in a penalty for running afoul of tax regulations. Eric T. Schneiderman, New York's attorney general, announced in September that his office was investigating the foundation, telling CNN at the time that he was concerned that it "may have engaged in some improprieties."

# Trump clobbers Obama for 'disdain and disrespect'



(Agencies) Donald Trump accused Barack Obama on Wednesday of throwing up 'roadblocks' and making 'inflammatory statements' on his way out of the White House, and

urged Israel to 'stay strong' in the face of 'disdain and disrespect' from the outgoing president.

Obama angered his successor by ordering his United Nations

ambassador to sit out a vote condemning Israel instead of vetoing it.

Israelis leaders say Obama himself engineered the vote as a parting shot at Prime Minister

Benjamin Netanyahu, who he has sparred with for years.

Obama's own former Middle East peace envoy, former Sen. George Mitchell, said Tuesday that the president should have either vetoed the UN resolution or delayed it so Trump could set his own

Israel policy. Obama also threw a thinly veiled hardball at Trump on Tuesday, saying at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii that 'even when hatred burns hottest, even when the tug of tribalism is at its most primal, we must resist the urge to turn inward, we must resist the urge to demonize those who are different.'

Trump jabbed back on Twitter.

'Doing my best to disregard the many inflammatory President O statements and roadblocks,' he wrote. 'Thought it was going to be a smooth transition - NOT!'

With that single tweet, the president-elect stirred up new tensions between Obama and himself, and brought back a piece of 1990s teen slang – adding 'NOT!' to the end of the sentence.

In a pair of followup tweets, Trump made it

clear that he was talking about last Friday's United Nations Security Council vote. We cannot continue to let Israel be treated with such total disdain and disrespect,' Trump wrote.

'They used to have a great friend in the U.S., but not anymore. The beginning of the end was the horrible Iran deal, and now this (U.N.)!'

'Stay strong Israel, January 20th is fast approaching!' he boomed.

Obama has also hamstrung Trump in advance of his inauguration with

environmental edicts putting millions of acres of ocean off-limits to oil drilling, and by beginning a series of 11th-hour prisoner releases from the Guantanamo Bay

military detention camp on the island of Cuba.

## New Zealand support for UN vote would be 'declaration of war'



(Agencies) Israel PM warned New Zealand support for UN vote would be 'declaration of war'

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told New Zealand's foreign minister ahead of the UN Security Council's resolution condemning Israeli settlements that support for the move was tantamount to a "declaration of war". "This is a scandalous decision. I'm asking that you not support it and not promote it," Netanyahu told New Zealand foreign minister Murray McCully, the Haaretz newspaper quoted unnamed Western diplomats as saying. "If you continue to promote this resolution, from our point of view, it will be a declaration of war. It will rupture the relations, and there will be consequences. We'll recall our ambassador to Jerusalem," he reportedly said during a personal phone call to McCully on

Friday. The Western diplomats said the conversation was "harsh and very tense" and "Netanyahu let loose with sharp threats, perhaps unprecedented in relations between Israel and another Western country". McCully, however, was not swayed by the threats, the report added. "This resolution conforms to our policy, and we will move it forward," he reportedly told Netanyahu.

New Zealand worked with Senegal, Malaysia and Venezuela to resubmit the resolution for a vote after Egypt backed down from it on Thursday. Netanyahu also criticised President Barack Obama at a weekly cabinet meeting after the US abstained from voting on the resolution on Friday. The US stand was a break from its traditional support for Israel. The Security Council resolution last week called Israeli settlements in the West Bank and east Jerusalem

a "flagrant violation of international law" and demanded "all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territory" should be immediately stopped. Netanyahu accused the US of colluding with the Palestinians and said Israel will not abide by the resolution. Following up on the resolution, secretary of state John Kerry is scheduled to deliver a farewell speech in Washington on Wednesday to outline his proposals for a peace settlement between Israel and the Palestinians. The resolution was put forward by New Zealand, Senegal, Malaysia and Venezuela. After the vote, Israel recalled its envoys to New Zealand and Senegal. It also cancelled aid to Senegal.

McCully defended New Zealand's position on the resolution and said, "We have been very open about our view that the (Security Council) should be doing more to support the Middle East peace process and the position we adopted today is totally in line with our long established policy on the Palestinian question." Read | Israel says 'reducing' ties with nations over UN vote The UN vote was also welcomed by Palestinian leaders.



THE INDIAN PANORAMA

## ASA MAI HINDU TEMPLE

presents

# BHAJAN SANDHYA

Come and celebrate the 1st day of the blissful  
**NEW YEAR 2017**

by listening to the melodious  
bhajans of the  
**Mesmerizing & Soulful**  
world renowned  
classical singer  
**Kumar Raj Gandharva**

January 1st 2017  
Sunday 1:00 pm

Sponsors  
Sunil & Deepika Modi  
Mrs. & Dr. Sunil Mehra  
Sanjiv & Dipti Chand  
Rajan & Madhu Nabe  
For Sponsor & Langer  
Please contact  
Mr. Gobind Bathija  
631-748-9333

80 E. Barclay Street, Hicksville, NY 11801 - 516.433.4388

# Why Kashmir is so angry with us

**Yashwant Sinha**

Suspicious that the Maharaja may not accede to it, Pakistan decided to launch a military attack on Jammu and Kashmir in October 1947 in order to annex the state by force. It could not use its army openly because it was still under the command of British officers. So it did so clandestinely through its so-called "non-state actors," a myth it has kept alive to this day to wage a proxy war against India. Its "tribesmen" invaded the Valley on October 22 and soon reached the town of Baramulla after sacking Muzaffarabad and Uri. Here, the raiders faced stiff resistance from the local population. Playing a leading role was a young man of 19, Maqbool Sherwani. He kept the raiders back by warning them that the Indian forces had arrived on the outskirts of the town. The information conveyed was wrong but it prevented the advance of the raiders for a few crucial days. In fact, the Indian troops had not even landed in Srinagar until then. Of course he was soon found out, captured, tortured, nailed to a wooden cross and shot repeatedly. The tale of his bravery survives to this day. That is the story of Baramulla in October 1947.

A group of concerned citizens including me visited the town of the martyr a little over 69 years later, on December 13, 2016. We went there to meet the local people and discuss the current situation with them. As we entered the town, a few words scribbled in bold letters on a wall caught our attention. "Indian dogs go back," they said. This is not an isolated example of how much things have changed in Kashmir during the last 69 years. In Anantnag, where we were having a similar interaction with civil society groups of south Kashmir, a young man told me bluntly that the Mumbai terror attack of November 2008 was the work of Indian intelligence agencies. This was in response to my statement that Pakistan was not abiding by its commitment to not allow its territory to be used for terrorism against India and continues to unleash cross-border terrorism against us. In Shopian, a youngster told us that the youth of Kashmir had no fear anymore even of death, thanks to the excesses committed by us.

The feeling of betrayal and discrimination by India runs deep in the mind of the average Kashmiri. On the issue of betrayal the narrative runs like this (I am mentioning it without in any way endorsing it): The Instrument of Accession was conditional and gave India the power only over the three subjects of foreign affairs, defence and communications. Over the years, we have gone back on this commitment and, despite the existence of Article 370 in our Constitution giving special status to the state, have tried in various ways to integrate it into India. In 1953, Pandit Nehru arrested Sheikh Abdullah, the most popular leader of Jammu and Kashmir and largely instrumental in ensuring its accession to India, on suspicion that he was hobnobbing with foreign powers to break away from India and become independent. Elections were

rigged to install puppet regimes. The complaints extend from imposing our laws on them to denying them the right of self-determination to not resolving the J&K issue for 69 years. The list goes on.

The feeling of discrimination extends from ill-treating Kashmiris in the rest of India, to the PM not attending the funeral of Chief Mufti though doing so in the case of Chief Minister Jayalalithaa, to arresting the children under the infamous Public Safety Act and keeping them in regular jails with hardened criminals instead of juvenile homes, to the imposition of AFSPA in the whole state and to the presence of security forces everywhere.

The use of pellet guns is the biggest discrimination of all, according to the Kashmiris. We did not use pellet guns during the Jat agitation in Haryana, the Cauvery agitation in Karnataka,

the Patel agitation in Gujarat or any other agitation anywhere else in the country. It appears that it is specially reserved for the Kashmiris and is meant to blind their whole next generation. The use of pellet guns is the most emotive of all issues today in Kashmir.

Their present mindset prevents them from seeing things in their correct perspective. There is a readiness to believe the worst without verifying. They are blind to the excesses committed by Pakistan, including cross-border terror attacks by it.

The demands everyone articulated before us include the holding of a plebiscite as laid down in the UN resolutions, the holding of trilateral dialogue with Pakistan in order to unite the old Riyasat of J&K and finally grant them Azadi.

It must be noted with regret that the initiative this time has passed into the hands of children

of ten, 12, 14 and 16 who are sovereign unto themselves and outside the control of the established leadership. The leaders are forced to follow, they are unable to lead.

The situation from our point of view appears impossible on the face of it. Some believe that the use of force is the only way out of the present situation.

They ascribe the return to normalcy in the Valley to the use of force and the determination of the authorities not to flinch in the face of violence. This is a mistaken belief. The fragile peace is temporary and can break again at the slightest provocation. In fact, everyone in the Valley is living under the apprehension that something terrible may happen in the near future, and that this time, it will be worse than any thing that has happened in the past.

(Contd on page 23)

## Pak-Russia-China Get Closer. What That Means For India

**Jyoti Malhotra**

Just when it seemed new, possible alignments were emerging on the international stage towards the end of 2016, possibly to distract from India's renewed obsession with domestic matters such as demonetisation, US president-elect Donald Trump has spun the wheel in a different direction, calling up old enemies to possibly assist with challenging new ones.

25 years since the US actively promoted the break-up of the Soviet Union, Trump has taken a much softer line towards Russian president Vladimir Putin. The Indian foreign policy establishment is watching carefully, wondering whether this means that it will no longer need to choose between its historic strategic partner, Moscow, and its alliance of recent vintage with the Americans.

Fact is, as India spends ten times more money on buying US weapons than Russian equipment, while bilateral trade between Delhi and Washington reaches 15 times trade levels between Delhi and Moscow, the gaps in understanding between India and Russia have only grown wider.

In the last week of September, 70 Russian and 130 Pakistani troops took part in first-ever joint exercises which were inaugurated at the Pakistani special forces academy in Cherat, 34 km south-east of Peshawar, at 4,500 feet in the Khattak mountain range.

This is how "Russia Today" described the event:

"Carrying equipment weighing around 15kg, representatives from (Russia's Southern Military District's mountain infantry brigade based in Karachay-Cherkessiya demonstrated how to make a safety

mechanism using a station knot.

Their Pakistani colleagues returned the favor, showing them another safety mechanism using a special rope with three knots."

Delhi wasn't amused. Still, it isn't clear why the Indian Foreign Office wasn't able to see such a move coming. It's not as if Russia and Pakistan, Cold War rivals since the late 1980s when Pakistan did everything in its ability to help the US defeat the mighty Red army in Afghanistan, woke up one summer morning and decided they would climb the mountains at Khattak together.

The Russians have since downplayed the incident, just as the Pakistanis have played it up. In fact, Russian officials, off-the-record, even deny that Putin's special envoy on Afghanistan Zamir Kabulov told reporters at the recent "Heart of Asia" conference in Amritsar that India should not be "jealous" of the incipient Russia-Pakistani friendship in the making.

But Moscow hasn't stopped wooing Pakistan - some say, under Chinese pressure. It has offered to refurbish a 1960s vintage steel plant, as well as build a pipeline from Karachi to Lahore. A few helicopters have been offered for sale, even as unconfirmed reports suggest that the two sides have begun their first intelligence-sharing exchanges on the region.

Meanwhile, the wheel was spinning differently elsewhere. As the outgoing Obama administration targeted Putin for interfering in the US election and sought to paint him as an international monster for opposing the US intervention against Syria's Bashar-al-Assad, Russia began to scout around for friends and supporters. It found

China, ever-willing to do both business and strategy.

Interestingly, as Putin looked towards India, he found both former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh as well as Prime Minister Narendra Modi to be far more interested in engaging with the Americans. In fact, it was rumoured that Modi didn't even want to go to Moscow for his first summit meeting with Putin in late 2014 and wants to send a senior official instead. Better sense prevailed.

China's strategic embrace of Pakistan has been in the offing for several years. But it was the US which paid Pakistan \$18 billion in the 15 years since the September 11 incidents as its contribution to the war against terror - only to find Pakistan double-crossing it on a variety of fronts in Afghanistan. As China waited in the wings, Rawalpindi seemed only too happy to dump the US in favour of a closer cinch with China.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has now become the linchpin of that friendship, with Beijing's alleged promise to spend \$46 billion on the creation of new infrastructure from the Karakoram highway in Gilgit-Baltistan to the port of Gwadar in Balochistan.

Russia's interest in Pakistan is not new. Former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto almost went to Moscow in the 1990s but it seems that Indian diplomats like Ronen Senand Sati Lambah persuaded Moscow to postpone a friendship with Rawalpindi. Until June 2015, when Pakistan army chief Raheel Sharif became the first army chief in decades to visit Moscow. His spokesman, Gen. Asim Bajwa, tweeted:

(Contd on page 23)

# Rise of the right in 2016 Behind Pakistan's CPEC offer

## Europe's political landscape has changed

That Donald Trump will be the president of the United States is a thought that still boggles many. Liberals are particularly in shock; they are attempting to understand how they could misread the extent of his appeal and wonder if his election will bolster right-wing forces elsewhere in the world.

This fear is palpable in Europe where analysts warn that a significant reordering of the political landscape is underway. This is not surprising as Europe has not been at peace with itself in recent years. The 2008 financial crash severely dented its economies, sparking a debt crisis and generated high levels of unemployment. This in turn led to debates within countries about immigrants, foreigners, assimilation, national identity and so on. The surge of refugees fleeing the Syrian civil war and periodic terrorist attacks added to the fraught climate, creating the context for right-wing parties and personalities to prosper. The European Union's policies of integration have been blamed for the situation and thus anti-EU, anti-immigration and anti-Muslim platforms have gained ground.

The effects have spread far and wide. Right-wing parties – which span the ideological spectrum from conventional right of Centre formations to far-right groups, have increased support across the continent, including in France, Germany, Austria, Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Hungary and Italy. Norbert Hofer of the Freedom Party in Austria lost a rerun of the presidential election to a Greens-backed independent candidate Alexander Van der Bellen this month but secured 48.3% of the vote. The Danish People's Party came in second in the June 2015 parliamentary elections. The far-right Party for Freedom in Netherlands, whose leader Geert Wilders was recently found guilty of inciting racial discrimination, is expected to come in first or second in elections due in March. The anti-immigrant Alternative for Germany, led by Frauke Petry, secured 2 million votes in 2013 elections, it has done well in regional parliaments and is expected to win seats in parliament next year.

Far-right parties are not in a position to seize power in the continent. Political scientist Cas Mudde has claimed that “a populist radical right candidate has still not won a true electoral majority in any established democracy in the postwar era.” Whether that argument holds for the world is debatable, but it is at least true in Europe. The real concern is not that they will win but that the far-right will decisively shape political debates and forces other parties to mainstream some of its ideas. Angela Merkel of Germany has defended her policy of accepting more than 1 million refugees in 2015 but has recently called for a ban on the full veil or the niqab – a move seen as a response to from pressure from the right. Groups known as identitarians that peddle majoritarian anti-immigrant messages, which are understood as “Europe's answer to the American ‘alt-right’”, have grown in prominence. The movement has, as the Economist put it, “has a deft way of making xenophobic causes seem palatable to moderates”, its representatives are invited to speak in mainstream media and they are able to repackage ideas effectively for younger audiences.

The big testing ground for the far right's dynamism and energy is France where Marine Le Pen of the National Front is expected to make it to the second round of presidential elections due in April-May. She will be up against Francois Fillon, the centre-right candidate of the Republicans. Fillon is a social conservative and neoliberal who wants to sack half a million civil servants and reduce public spending by \$100 billion over five years. Le Pen is not expected to win. Philosopher John Gray writes, however, that “in a contest with a neoliberal at a time when austerity policies are discredited this outcome can no longer be taken for granted”. “Le Pen could edge closer to power in 2017 and make a convincing run for the presidency after that,” he argues. And then there is foreign interference. Elections in Western democracies are no longer only about what its citizens think. They also appear to be governed by what Russia's President Vladimir Putin wants. After suspicions that Moscow intervened in favour of Trump through hacking and selective leaks, Europe is anticipating Russia's intrusion into its own democratic processes. The head of Germany's domestic intelligence agency recently warned of Russia's attempts to destabilise the country through hackers and mentioned “growing evidence of attempts to influence the federal election next year”. Analysts fear that Russian hackers will tilt the election in favour Alternative for Germany. Europe is divided over sanctions against Russia following its annexation of Crimea; it is not inconceivable that Putin will back those who are in favour of rapprochement with Moscow. Incidentally both France's Fillon and as his opponent Le Pen are in favour of improved ties with Moscow. The National Front took a loan of €1 million (euros) in 2014 from a Russian bank and applied for another 27 million loan from Russia to fight elections in 2017. Russian challenges to European security continue meanwhile. Moscow seized the Crimea in 2014 and it recently deployed nuclear-armed missiles in the Baltic Sea enclave of Kaliningrad. Analysts wonder if Russia will foment the kind of unrest in Baltic states as it did in Ukraine. Trump's election has changed the security dynamic because he thinks Europe should pay more for its own security, indicating that he may not be as committed to the continent's defence as his predecessors have been.

Days after a senior Pakistani General suggested that India should shun its “enmity” with Pakistan and join the \$46 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project, the Chinese foreign ministry has called the offer a “goodwill gesture”, exhorting India to take it up. At face value, the suggestion is odd. India has no dialogue with Pakistan at present, and has opposed the project, bilaterally with China “at the highest level” as well as at the UN. Relations with China have deteriorated considerably since President Xi Jinping's visit to Pakistan to announce the project in April 2015. Initially, New Delhi sought to play down its significance, as it was made just weeks before Prime Minister Narendra Modi travelled to China, and the government would have hoped to dissuade Beijing from pushing the more objectionable projects that run through disputed territory. However, not only has the corridor taken shape rapidly, China and Pakistan have been drawn into a closer embrace, with Pakistan investing considerable resources in securing Chinese officials working on CPEC, and China redrawing its plans for the One Belt One Road to Central Asia to incorporate Pakistan's interests. China has defended Pakistan against India's efforts to pin it down with regard to support to terror groups, and to draw an obstructionist equivalence with India's Nuclear Suppliers Group membership application.

Given all this, the General's suggestion can only be understood to have been made rhetorically, especially as it was accompanied by allegations of India's “anti-Pakistan activities and subversion” in Balochistan. While there can be little expectation of any room for India in CPEC at present, there is space for India to step back and see where China and Pakistan want to go with it. The offer to India was made along with offers to other “neighbouring countries”. Already, Iran wants Gwadar to be a “sister” port to Chabahar, and Turkmenistan and other Central Asian republics have shown interest in the warm-water port that will be a nodal point for goods through Pakistan to the Chinese city of Kashgar. Further north, despite its problems on terror from Pakistan, Afghanistan is becoming a nodal point for China's connectivity projects to Iran. The meeting among Russian, Chinese and Pakistani officials on Afghanistan this week, and Russian engagement with the Taliban, indicate much more is changing in the region than just the alignment of highways and tunnels. While India has done well to shore up relations with others in the region, it cannot afford to be blindsided by their involvement with the OBOR project and Chinese plans. CPEC is no longer a project in Pakistan, but one that runs through it, a project that will link 64 countries.



ISSN No. 1554 06X

Chairman: Karam Singh Thind (Honorary)

Editor in Chief: Sharanjit Singh Thind

Editor (Political Affairs-India) : Aruna Singh

President : Bhupinder K. Thind

Special Correspondent :

Chief Photographer : Vijay Shah

Gagandeep Singh (INDIA)

Editorial Intern: Amann Thind

Web Coordinator : Jatinder Kumar

A Publication of NuWay Media Group LLC

REGD &amp; MAILING OFFICE :

P.O Box 7005 Hicksville New York 11801

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

editor@thesouthasianinsider.com, thesouthasianinsider@gmail.com

www.thesouthasianinsider.com

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

# The mother of all disruptions

Jean Drèze

Evidence is mounting of the disruptive effects of the recent move to renew currency notes, known as “demonetisation”. Disruption is actually a mild expression. What is happening is a catastrophe for large sections of the population. Farmers have dumped vegetables by the roadside for want of a remunerative price. Migrant workers have returned home after losing their jobs. Street vendors are struggling with a slump in demand. And, of course, many people have died while waiting in queues outside banks or committed suicide after unsuccessful attempts to get cash from the banks.

The disruptive effects of demonetisation also have other dimensions. The banking system, for instance, has been severely disrupted. For one thing, the constant flip-flop on rules and stringent restrictions on people's access to their own accounts have undermined the confidence of the public in the banking system. For another, it would be surprising if the considerable powers that were given to bank managers in recent weeks had not led to a spread of corruption in the banking system.

What is astonishing is how little concern this catastrophe is causing in the corridors of power. Smug reference is made from time to time to the “inconvenience” faced by the public, and people are asked to grin and bear it for the sake of the nation. Little is being done to alleviate their pains.

To understand this inertia, it helps to remember that the word “disruption” has a positive connotation in some circles, particularly that of technological innovation and especially software innovation. For instance, when Nandan Nilekani stated in an interview with Business Standard last August that “disruption is waiting to happen” in the banking system, he saw that as a very positive prospect — an opportunity for new financial technologies to step in.

One possible reason why disruption is so popular among software developers is the role of “network effects” in this field. New software typically becomes viable only if a sufficiently large number of people use it. This may require displacing the dominant product, and that, in

turn, often involves a disruption of some sort. Displacing Google, for instance, would definitely require some kind of tectonic shift in the world of search engines. Similarly, cashless payment systems like Paytm and Mobikwik work best when large numbers of people adopt these new products at the same time.

Seen in this light, there is something miraculously providential in the demonetisation move as far as the cashless payments industry and its offshoots (including online security services) are concerned. This must have been beyond the wildest dreams of the wizards of cashless payments. Just a year ago, the idea of a cashless economy sounded like utopian waffle. Today, it is the buzzword. Not only are cashless payment systems riding on the wave of demonetisation, the government is also throwing its weight behind the technology, mobilising numerous departments for this purpose and lending its advertisement powers to the industry.

The problem with the disruption lingo is that it easily becomes a licence for inflicting

hardship on ordinary people and making a virtue of it. Bank premises are overcrowded? Wonderful, that's disruption at its best. ATM queues are getting longer? Nothing like it. People are losing jobs? Well, disruption can afford some short-term collateral damage. In fact, objectively speaking, the more the disruption, the better for those who are trying to use this situation as an opportunity to promote their new products. I am not saying that they are responsible for creating the disruption, or applauding it, but it is a fact that they benefit from it. Considering the tremendous power of the software industry in India, this may help to explain why the disruptive effects of demonetisation are taken lightly.

Among the leading lights of this lobby is the Indian Software Product Industry Round Table (iSPIRT) mentored by Mr. Nilekani, an association of black-belt innovators and entrepreneurs. Take a look at their website (and also at [indiastack.org](http://indiastack.org)) if you have time — it is an eye-opening exercise. These guys (and they are mainly guys) are smart, they think big, and they have ideas. The question



remains — ideas for whom? The website makes no secret of the fact that the ultimate purpose of iSPIRT's work is to create business opportunities for the Indian software industry, not just at home but in the entire world. Under the title “Our Game Plan”, for instance, the site explains that “our ambitious goal is to create an adoption wave for software products within the Indian SMB sector”. And guess what, the way to do this is to “create a new generation of software product companies” and “disrupt global markets”, no less.

The first step, still according to the iSPIRT website, is “smart demand side evangelization” (sic). Presumably, this involves

things like selling Aadhaar to the public as a “voluntary facility”, or claiming that the purpose of Aadhaar is to improve welfare programmes. In fact, as Reetika Khera has lucidly explained in a series of articles, it is Aadhaar that has benefited from welfare programmes (by using them to push people to Aadhaar enrolment centres), not the other way round. Quite often, the impact of Aadhaar on welfare programmes has actually been disruptive, in the literal sense of the term. For instance, the recent imposition of Aadhaar-based biometric authentication on the Public Distribution System has caused havoc in several States, notably Jharkhand and Rajasthan.

## Afghanistan, India, and Trump

Given his limited choices in stabilising Afghanistan, which include supporting a national election, U.S. President-elect Donald Trump will find India to be a reliable and trusted partner in this process

On January 20, next year, Donald Trump will take over as the 45th President of the United States of America, at a time when the U.S. remains engaged in the longest war in its history — the war in Afghanistan. He will be the third President to deal with the war launched in 2001 by U.S. President George Bush and sought to be brought to a conclusion by his successor U.S. President Barack Obama.

Even though ‘Operation Enduring Freedom’ ended on December 28, 2014 implying an end to formal combat operations by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) forces, the U.S. still maintains approximately 9,800 troops as part of the international troop presence numbering over 12,000 under ‘Operation Resolute Support’. Primary responsibility for fighting the insurgency was transferred to the Afghan National Security Forces (consisting of the military and the police) two years ago but U.S. presence is essential to provide critical domain awareness, intelligence and surveillance support, air power and special forces.

For Mr. Bush, the war against al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan was an integral part of his “war on terror”, launched

on September 20, 2001. The U.S.-led effort enjoyed broad international support which continued even after Mr. Bush's ill-conceived invasion in Iraq in 2003 in search of the non-existent weapons of mass destruction. The Iraq invasion however diluted Washington's focus on the challenges it faced in Afghanistan.

In 2009, Mr. Obama drew a clear distinction between the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, describing the latter as “a war of necessity”, a “war that we (USA) have to win”. He ordered a troop surge in 2009 while simultaneously announcing the date for withdrawal of the U.S. from combat operations. This flawed decision may have been the result of domestic compulsions but it breathed fresh life into the insurgency.

### Gains and losses

Much blood and treasure has been expended in Afghanistan. The U.S. alone has spent more than \$800 billion in Afghanistan, of which \$115 billion has been spent on reconstruction; more than the inflation adjusted expenditure under the Marshall Plan for rebuilding Europe after World War II at \$105 billion! The ISAF (consisting of over 40 countries) suffered 3,500 fatal casualties during the last 15 years, with the U.S. bearing the largest loss at 2,400 lives. At the NATO summit in Warsaw earlier this year, it was agreed to maintain the current international troop presence till 2020 while providing annual

financial support of \$4.5 billion for the Afghan security forces.

It is clear that this is unlikely to bring about a material change in the situation in Afghanistan. In fact, casualties among the Afghan forces and civilians have risen rapidly in recent years. The total civilian casualties are estimated at 31,000; this year witnessed a spike. The Afghan security forces have suffered significant casualties, rising from 21,000 in 2014 to about 30,000 today.

Out of 408 districts, the government writ holds in 258 while 33 have come under the control of the insurgents, largely in the south. The remaining 116 districts are contested zones.

It is true that some progress has been registered. Life expectancy has gone up from 40 years in 2002 to 62 years today. From 9,00,000 boys in school then, the number of children in school is now more than 8 million, more than a third are girls. Literacy figures have gone up from 12 per cent to 34 per cent in 15 years. Today, with a median age of 18 years, Afghanistan has one of the youngest populations with 60 per cent of the population below 21 years of age. This progress can be sustained only if peace can be restored.

### Different political approaches

Former Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai realised early on that the key to restoring peace and stability in Afghanistan lay in Pakistan. (Contd on page 22)

# Sell the Business, Not the Presidency, Mr. Trump

In recent days, the Trump family has announced some steps that it says are intended to address the truckload of conflicts of interest that Donald Trump could bring to the White House next month, and that it is considering further measures. But so far, these steps fall well short of what Mr. Trump must do to protect his presidency from damaging accusations of corruption.

Experts believe that there is but one action that Mr. Trump can take to assure Americans that he is working to promote only their interests rather than his own fortune or his family's. That is to appoint a trustee to sell his hotels and other businesses and put the proceeds into a blind trust operated by independent managers.

By doing that, he would eliminate the many pay-for-play opportunities and other forms of corruption that could be exploited by him and by corporations and foreign governments seeking to curry favor with his administration. Such a move would also be consistent with recent practice. To avoid the barest perception of wrongdoing, presidents from both parties going back 40 years put their assets in blind trusts or in Treasury securities and mutual funds, even though federal law didn't require them to do so. Mr. Trump seems determined to flout this standard.

Instead of a detailed divestiture plan, Mr. Trump and his family have discussed several half-measures. One is to shut down the Donald J. Trump Foundation, which is already under investigation by the attorney general of New York, Eric Schneiderman, for alleged violations of state charity laws. According to the attorney general, the foundation solicited donations from people other than Mr. Trump when it was not registered to do so.

In addition, The Washington Post has reported that the foundation spent money for unapproved purposes, like settling lawsuits involving Mr. Trump's businesses. It also improperly contributed to a political campaign and apparently spent money to buy baubles at charity auctions for Mr. Trump's personal use, including portraits of him and a football helmet signed by Tim

Tebow. Mr. Schneiderman's office has said that the foundation cannot be legally dissolved until its investigation is over.

The Trumps and their representatives also told The Times that they're considering hiring an outside monitor to manage the family business alongside the president-elect's two adult sons, Donald Jr. and Eric. One of the monitor's main tasks would be to block improper contacts between the business and the federal government. That's an absurd role. Mr. Trump and his political appointees would still know what he owns and would still be able to act in his family's interest even with no direct contact with the two sons. And there is no assurance that the sons could not easily overrule the monitor, who after all would be serving at the pleasure of the family.

Mr. Trump and his family say that they will not enter into new

business deals in foreign countries. They are also terminating some real estate projects that are under construction or in the planning stages in Latin America and former Soviet republics. These steps are certainly welcome. But the Trump Organization will remain entangled in many existing deals, some of which involve businesses and executives linked to foreign governments. That's a big problem, because the Constitution's Emoluments Clause prohibits American officials from receiving any gifts or income from foreign governments without permission from Congress.

Some legal experts believe that Mr. Trump will be in violation of that clause the moment he takes office because foreign diplomats and their governments have already booked rooms and hosted events at his new



Washington hotel at the Old Post Department.

Office, enriching the new president. According to a Brookings Institution paper published this month by Norman Eisen, Richard Painter and Laurence Tribe, Congress has from time to time invoked the clause in deciding whether presidents can accept gifts from foreign leaders. In one case, Congress said President Andrew Jackson couldn't keep a gold medal given to him by Simón Bolívar, the Latin American leader; the medal ended up at the State

A group of Senate Democrats led by Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts have promised legislation that would require presidents and vice presidents to divest their assets and put them in a blind trust. Republicans who control both houses of Congress have expressed no appetite for joining the cause. At the moment, only continued pressure from citizens and groups who care about ethics in government seems remotely capable of persuading Mr. Trump to agree to full divestment.

## Fix Immigration. It's What Voters Want.

Donald J. Trump smashed many orthodoxies on his way to victory, but immigration was the defining issue separating him from his primary opponents and Hillary Clinton. President-elect Trump now has a clear mandate not only to stop illegal immigration, but also to finally cut the generation-long influx of low-skilled immigrants that undermines American workers. Yet many powerful industries benefit from such immigration. They're arguing that immigration controls are creating a low-skilled labor shortage.

"We're pretty much begging for workers," Tom Nassif, the chief executive of Western Growers, a trade organization that represents farmers, said on CNN. A fast-food chain founder warned, "Our industry can't survive without Mexican workers."

These same industries contend that stricter immigration enforcement will further shrink the pool of workers and raise their wages. They argue that closing our borders to inexpensive foreign labor will force employers to add benefits and improve workplace conditions to attract and keep workers already here. I have an answer to these charges: Exactly.

Higher wages, better benefits and more security for American workers are features, not bugs, of sound immigration reform. For too long, our immigration policy has skewed toward the interests of the wealthy and powerful: Employers get cheaper labor, and professionals get cheaper personal services like housekeeping. We now need an immigration policy that focuses less on the most powerful and more on everyone else. It's been a quarter-century since Congress substantially reformed the immigration system. In that time, the population of people who are in this country illegally has nearly tripled, to more than 11

million. We've also accepted one million legal immigrants annually — and a vast majority are unskilled or low-skilled.

Some people contend that low-skilled immigration doesn't depress wages. In his final State of the Union address, President Obama argued that immigrants aren't the "principal reason wages haven't gone up; those decisions are made in the boardrooms that too often put quarterly earnings over long-term returns." Yet those decisions are possible only in the context of a labor surplus caused by low-skilled immigration. In a tight labor market, bosses cannot set low wages and still attract workers.

After all, the law of supply and demand is not magically suspended in the labor market. As immigrant labor has flooded the country, working-class wages have collapsed. Wages for Americans with only high school diplomas have declined by 2 percent since the late 1970s, and for those who didn't finish high school, they have declined by nearly 20 percent, according to Economic Policy Institute figures.

No doubt automation and globalization have also affected wages, but mass immigration accelerates these trends with surplus labor, which of course decreases wages. Little wonder, then, that these Americans voted for the candidate who promised higher wages and less immigration instead of all the candidates — Republicans and Democrats alike — who promised essentially more of the same on immigration.

America has always offered a basic deal: If you're willing to work hard and play by the rules, you can make a better life for yourself and your kids. But without good wages, this deal seems impossible, which is one reason so many Americans think their children will be worse off than they are. These

Americans see cheap immigrant labor as a way to enrich the wealthy while creating a near permanent underclass for whom the American dream is always just out of reach. Yet, as if Mr. Trump's campaign never happened, companies in labor-intensive industries want to sustain or even increase current immigration flows. It's not hard to understand why. Cheap labor helps the bottom line. It is hard to understand why so many politicians would go along. The short-term interest of businesses isn't the same as the long-term national interest.

Our country, like any country, needs borders and must decide who and how many can cross those borders. We must make this decision with the well-being of all our citizens in mind. Today, that means a large reduction in legal immigration and a reorientation toward ultra-high-skill immigrants.

This policy would resemble the immigration systems of Canada and Australia, countries with similar advanced economies. While our system gives priority to reuniting extended families and low-skilled labor, their systems prize nuclear-family reunification and attributes like language skills, education and work experience. A similar system here would allow in immigrants like doctors to work in rural areas while not pushing down working-class wages.

In some quarters, proposals like these invoke cries of "nativism" and "xenophobia." But recent immigrants are the very Americans who have to compete with new immigrants for jobs. Far from being anti-immigrant, this proposal would give recent arrivals a better shot at higher wages, stable work and assimilation.

# Delhi High Court Restrains 3 Copyright Societies From Issuing Licences



(News Agencies) New Delhi: In a blow to three copyright societies which claim to hold rights to issue licences to play music and songs of various artists in public, the Delhi High Court has restrained them from granting any such licence till April 24 next year.

Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva, in an interim order, restrained the Indian Performing Right Society (IPRS), the Phonographic Performance Ltd

(PPL) and Novex Communications Pvt Ltd from contravening section 33 of Copyright Act which mandates that only registered societies can grant licences in respect of copyrighted work.

The order assumes significance as these societies would not be able to collect revenues for live events and parties planned for the upcoming New Year celebrations at hotels, restaurants and other venues.

The court also issued notice to the Centre, the Copyright Office, the three societies and the Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India seeking their replies to the plea of Event and Entertainment Management Association (EEMA) which has sought an enquiry against PPL, IPRS and Novex for allegedly violating section 33 of the Act.

EEMA, represented by advocate Abhishek Malhotra, argued before the court that the registration of PPL and IPRS had lapsed on June 31, 2013, and has not been renewed yet, while Novex was never registered as a copyright society.

The Centre and the Copyright Office, represented by standing counsel Sanjeev Narula, submitted that they have received complaints that PPL and IPRS were violating the Act and have already initiated an enquiry.

The counsel also said a notice has been put up on the website

of the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion to inform the public that IPRS and PPL are no longer registered as copyright societies.

"Since the respondent 1 (Centre) and 2 (Copyright Office) have already initiated an inquiry and are taking action vis-a-vis the respondents 3 (PPL) and 4 (IPRS) and their stand is that neither of the three respondents, i.e 3, 4 and 5 (Novex) are registered in terms of section 33 of the Act, till the next date of hearing, respondents 3 to 5 are restrained from acting in contravention of section 33 of the Act..," the court said and listed the matter for further hearing on April 24 next year.

The court also directed the Centre and the Copyright Office "to take action in accordance with law for any breach of provisions of section 33 by the respondents 3 to 5".

EEMA has alleged in its plea that PPL, IPRS and Novex are

continuing to function in violation of the Act by handing out licences for copyrighted works, of which they do not hold the copyright.

IPRS, PPL and Novex have in the past moved courts in Delhi and other cities and obtained orders restraining hotels, restaurants, event management firms and FM radio stations from playing movie songs or music without taking licence or paying royalty.

In September this year, Novex had obtained an order from Delhi High Court restraining several hotels-cum-bar lounges from playing Bollywood songs without first getting a licence from Novex.

In the same month, Bombay High Court had on a plea by IPRS ruled that Entertainment Network India Limited (ENIL) will have to pay royalty for broadcasting songs on its FM Radio station, Radio Mirchi, in the seven metro cities where they operate.

# Modi's demonetisation move a reckless bungle: Foreign media

(News Agencies) New Delhi: Surprise and scepticism have given way to open criticism in the international media, as far as India's demonetisation experiment is concerned. On November 8, when PM Narendra Modi invalidated 86% worth of the currency in circulation, reactions varied: most foreign media outlets acknowledged the audacity of the move, while some questioned its wisdom and unintended impact. By now, most of them have declared it a reckless bungle.

Right after the decision, The Independent, Singapore, had compared Modi to the nation's founder Lee Kuan Yew for his dramatic action. China's Global Times had also called Modi's move "bold and decisive", and pointed out that much of the illegal business in the underground economy was cash-only. While giving the policy time to prove itself, it also pointed out that blocking the circulation of large currency bills was a superficial solution, and that China's own crackdown on graft had been more gradual and comprehensive.

A New York Times editorial on November 17 called the plan "poorly thought out and executed", given the pain it would inflict and its small, temporary

gains. The Guardian editorial on the same day said, "Modi has brought havoc to India", saying that "the rich will not suffer, as corruptly acquired fortunes have almost all been converted to shares, gold and real estate", but that the poor would be hit hard. The New Yorker compared this drastic move in a large, complex country to an "ocean liner turning with the radius of a Porsche".

Bloomberg travelled to the PM's constituency, Varanasi, to observe the effects on the informal economy (which contributes 46% to the GDP). It found hardship and complaint in the city, whose famous looms have fallen silent, but also detected notes of approval among the poor for Modi's decision. The financial press has been especially unsparing in recent weeks. In its December 3 issue, The Economist called it "cautionary tale of the reckless misuse of one of the most potent of policy tools: control over an economy's money". It said that demonetisation would make only limited strides in shrinking the black economy, but would affect all of India 1.3 billion citizens, the poorest most of all.

Kenneth Rogoff, economist and foremost champion of cashlessness, declared in the Financial Times that India's cash

bonfire was poorly designed, and was "too much, too soon". The Wall Street Journal criticised India's "bizarre war on cash", pointing out that in a cashless society "the state has far greater means to harm the public, both through inept policies and abuses of power". A Harvard Business

Review article called it "a case study in poor policy and even poorer execution". Analysing the weak state of digital infrastructure and the reasons for continued cash reliance, it called the demonetisation drive "a case of putting the cart before the horse". Steve Forbes,

in Forbes magazine, called the decision "breathtaking in its immorality". "What India has done is commit a massive theft of people's property without even the pretense of due process - a shocking move for a democratically elected government."

**WHITESTONE**

Cell : 917-612-3158

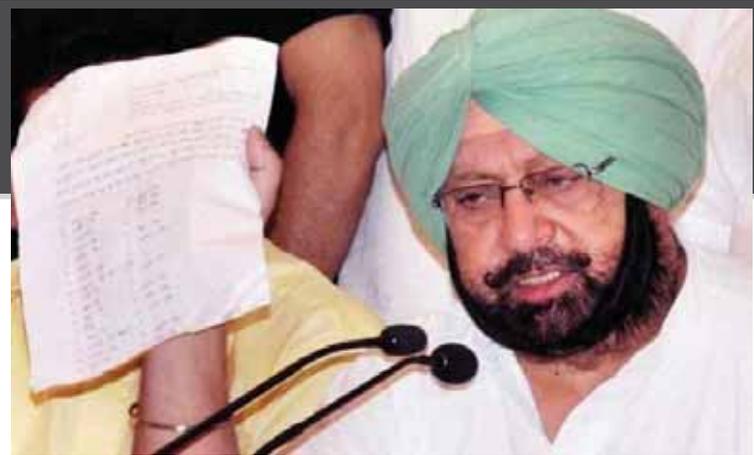
# Special Law To Crack Down On Drug Mafia If Voted To Power In Punjab: Amarinder Singh

(News Agencies) New Delhi: Vowing to eradicate the drugs menace in Punjab within four weeks of coming to power, Punjab Congress chief Amarinder Singh today promised a special law to crack down on the drug mafia and asserted that all those found guilty would be jailed and their property confiscated.

"All drugs cases would be dealt with on fast-track basis under the new law, which would

be brought immediately after (government) formation if elected to power," he said. "Nobody would be spared," Mr Singh said. In a statement issued in New Delhi, the PCC chief said the proposed legislation - part of the 9-point action plan of Congress - would provide for deterrent punishment and confiscation of property of all those found guilty of ruining the lives of Punjab's youth with drugs. Accusing the Badal

government of "allowing unchecked proliferation of drugs in the state to further their own vested interests", Mr Singh said an entire generation of youth had been destroyed because of the "patronage" accorded to the drug mafia by the present dispensation in Punjab. He made it clear that all steps would be taken, on priority basis, to tackle the drugs cases and ensure strict, deterrent punishment for drug dealers, suppliers and



distributors. He welcomed the polls. "The EC move on drugs Election Commission's decision to appoint a special team of narcotics control officers to check flow of drugs in his state during the Assembly said.

# Double Benefit From PM Modi's Crackdown On 'Nameless' Properties, Say Experts

**The practice of buying a property in the name of someone other than the buyer has been widely misused to buy real estate with undeclared income and with fake names and identities to avoid paying tax.**



(News Agencies) Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vow to take on benami, or nameless properties, can bring greater transparency to a notoriously opaque sector and help check prices if a new law is implemented properly, experts said. The practice of buying a property in the name of someone other than the buyer has been widely misused to buy real estate with undeclared income and with fake names and identities to avoid paying tax.

It is estimated benami properties worth billions of dollars are held under fictitious names across India, bypassing laws to check ownership and depriving states of valuable revenue that could be spent on development and welfare schemes. A 1988 law on such properties was amended this year to ban illegal benami transactions with stricter punishments including imprisonment and a fine of up to a fourth of the property's fair market value. These properties can also be confiscated. "We are going to take action against the properties which are

purchased in the name of others. It is the property of the country," PM Modi said in his monthly radio address on Sunday. "This law will be put to use in the coming days to fight corruption," he said.

Property as defined under the 1988 law includes not only land and homes, but also assets such as gold, stocks and bank deposits.

"If the new law is implemented properly, there will be greater transparency in the real estate sector, there will be less corruption, and we may see a correction in prices," said Vinod Sampat, a property lawyer in Mumbai.

"But these transactions are hard to track, and the government has a poor record of implementation. While the intention is good, it remains to be seen if the law can be implemented properly," he said.

A series of slum evictions in cities including Delhi has put the spotlight on an acute housing shortage in urban India.

About a third of the country's 1.25 billion population lives in

cities, with numbers rising as tens of thousands of people leave villages to seek better prospects.

A government plan to provide housing for all by 2022 is meant to create 20 million new urban housing units and 30 million rural homes. But the government has been criticised for the slow pace of implementation.

Going after benami properties can help accelerate the pace of implementing the government's plan, said Anuj Puri, chairman of real estate firm Jones Lang LaSalle India.

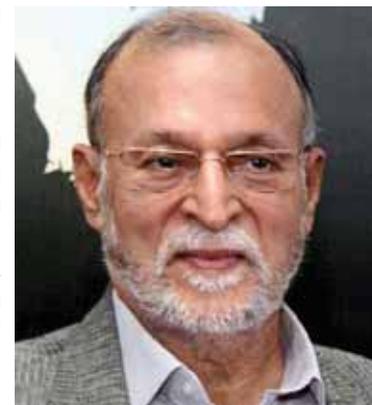
"When titles are clear and transactions transparent, the confidence of lenders increases, so we will see a pickup in lending to buyers," he said.

"This will increase the supply of residential real estate."

# Anil Baijal, Former Home Secretary, Appointed Delhi's New Lieutenant Governor

(Agencies) New Delhi : Former bureaucrat Anil Baijal has been appointed Delhi's next Lieutenant Governor, a post that fell vacant after the surprise resignation of Najeeb Jung last week. The formal appointment from President Pranab Mukherjee came

this evening after a recommendation from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Office. Mr Baijal, 70, retired in 2006 as the Secretary of the Urban Development Ministry. A Union Home Secretary, he had been shifted to the Urban Development Ministry in a reorg after the UPA government came to power in 2004. A former vice-chairman of the Delhi Development Authority, Mr Baijal was involved with the designing and roll-out of Rs. 60,000 crore Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission launched by the Manmohan Singh government. He was also on the executive council of the think-tank Vivekananda International Foundation, several of whose former members, including National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, have been appointed to senior positions by PM Modi's government.



Najeeb Jung had unexpectedly submitted his resignation on December 22, almost 18 months before his tenure was scheduled to end. His tenure had been marked with constant conflict with Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal since the Aam Aadmi Party government swept to power in Delhi in 2015. Accusing Mr Jung of being the "Centre's agent", Mr Kejriwal had alleged that the BJP-led Central government was carrying on a proxy war with the Delhi government through him.



IF YOU DON'T PICK IT UP THEY WILL.



## Enforcement Directorate raids Paras Mal Lodha's Kolkata house, tracks Delhi link

(Agencies) Kolkata: The maze around Paras Mal Lodha's Kolkata operations grew more complex with Enforcement Directorate officials tracking footprints of Rohit Tandon and Shekhar Reddy to the city. Investigators digging into the money muddle traced Tandon and Reddy's operations from Kolkata during raids on Tuesday. The officials found a foreign bank account of Lodha. They also found forex stashed. "It seems that Lodha was also operating from Kolkata although he was not residing here for long. Rarely had he

come to the city in past few years. But he might have allowed his cohorts to operate from his Kolkata office," said an ED official. A team of ED officials from Delhi were accompanied by a team from Kolkata on Tuesday afternoon when they struck Lodha's office at New Alipore. The team searched for documents linking to Lodha's financial operations. According to sources, some computer hard-disks were seized during the search along with some papers and files. An eight-member team was convinced Lodha's men might have cleaned off the entire office immediately after he was

arrested. But the teams looked for digital records left in his computers and laptops. "While Tandon was based in Delhi and Reddy in Chennai, it seems they were using the office as their base in Kolkata," said the ED official. Another team of ED official also raided Lodha's residence at Queens Park. According to sources, Lodha's wife had been coming here often, but nobody could recount when was the last time Lodha visited the house. The palatial house with Italian marble, Belgian glassware, and pompous chandelier made the investigators awestruck.



Antiques were kept all over the house. During the raids, investigators also looked for documents linking Lodha with other prominent names in the money-laundering racket. According to sources, Lodha was close to a former president of a prominent club in Kolkata. He had also convinced the club president to invest in a big budget movie of a Bengali director.

## Golden Temple visit a 'dream come true' for foreigner Sikhs



(Agencies) Amritsar: It was a dream come true for a group of 45 baptized Sikh foreign nationals who landed at Sri Guru Ramdas International Airport in Amritsar on Tuesday to pay obeisance at the revered Sikh shrine Golden Temple. The group arrived here to participate in the 350th birth anniversary celebrations of the Sikhism's 10th master, Guru Gobind Singh, at Patna. Their pilgrimage has been named Degh Tegh Fateh Yatra Sat Hanuman Singh said he came in touch with one Yogi Harbhajan Singh Khalsa, and was

so much inspired by the Sikh faith that he decided to embrace Sikhism in 1971. He was the first turbaned Sikh to have worked in USA's Transportation Security Administration. A resident of Portland city of Oregon state of US, Sat was baptized during the 1974 US visit of the then SGPC president Gurcharan Singh Tohra. He said he changed his name from James Ericsson III to Sat Hanuman after baptism. Caribbean island Pureto Rico's resident Eva Plumey, whose spiritual name

is Preet Kaur, said she was a Yoga teacher back home and was impressed with Sikh traditions and practices. In Amritsar on pilgrimage and paying obeisance at Sikh religious places, she said "this was like a dream coming true".

### After 3-month ban, Kashmir newspaper back on the stands



(Agencies) SRINAGAR: Local English daily Kashmir Reader hit the stands on Wednesday after it was banned by the Jammu and Kashmir government for nearly three months on the charges that its publication was a threat to peace in the valley. The newspaper started its publication and distribution for the first time after it was banned through an order passed by District Magistrate, Srinagar on October 2. The District Magistrate's order had alleged that the publication of Kashmir Reader posed a threat to peace in the valley which had been going through a period of turmoil since July following the killing of Hizbul Mujahideen commander Burhan Wani. The revocation of the ban on the newspaper is seen as the first success for the newly-formed Kashmir Editors' Guild, a body of all major dailies and weeklies published from the Valley.

### Union Cabinet approves ordinance to impose penalty for holding old notes

(Agencies) New Delhi : The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved promulgation of an ordinance to impose a penalty, including a jail term, for possession of



the scrapped 500 and 1,000 rupee notes+ beyond a cut-off. The Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi also approved an ordinance to amend the RBI Act to extinguish the liability of the government and the central bank on the demonetised high-denomination notes to prevent future litigations. Official sources said the ordinance has been cleared, but did not say if the penal provisions would apply for holding the junked currency after the 50-day window to deposit them in banks ends as of December 30 or after March 31, till which time deposit of old currency notes at specified branches of the Reserve Bank after submitting a declaration form is open. The ordinance on denotification of Rs 500 and Rs 1000 notes has been sent to President Pranab Mukherjee for his assent. The penalty for holding old currency in excess of 10 notes may include financial fines and a jail term of up to 4 years in certain cases.

### AAP challenges all parties but runs away from debating with us: Yogendra Yadav



(Agencies) New Delhi : Swaraj India+ leader Yogendra Yadav has again challenged AAP for a debate over alleged irregularities in party's funding details.

"AAP challenges all parties but runs away from debating with us! Is this Hypocrisy or its lack of democratic spirit," Yogendra Yadav, a former AAP member, tweeted on Wednesday.

The income tax department has issued a notice to Aam Aadmi Party, citing discrepancies in the donors' list submitted to tax officials and what had been put up on the party website.

Termining the notice as "malicious", AAP said that the BJP-led NDA government is harassing the party and targeting its donors.

However, Devinder Sehrawat, "rebel" AAP MLA from Bijaswan, has alleged that party received Rs 70 crore from a bogus company in an Axis Bank account. Swaraj India has also sought to corner AAP on the issue of "discrepancies" in the donors' list submitted by the party to tax officials and what had been put up on its website. AAP has described the error as "inadvertent". "This again is incredulous. How come the party made these errors for two consecutive years? Why were these not corrected even after first notice from IT authorities?" Swaraj India asked.

AAP national treasurer Raghav Chadha had explained that "initially, there was an inadvertent error in the list submitted to the income tax department, which has been rectified in the revised ITR after receiving the notice." "To revise an IT return is the legitimate right of a party. Not even single donation is concealed by Aam Aadmi Party," he said.

Swaraj India's challenge for a debate followed anti-corruption crusader Anna Hazare's latest letter+ to Delhi chief minister Kejriwal in which he questioned the AAP's deviation from its stated principles of "financial probity and transparency"

# Nitish Kumar 2016: Prohibition and support for demonetisation fuel his national ambitions



**The biggest issue he espoused in order to expand his constituency to the national level, was to pass a prohibition law in April this year – it was one of his main poll campaign promises in an effort to woo women voters.**

(Agencies) When Nitish Kumar retained his Bihar crown in November 2015 in bitterly contested assembly election, he had two things in mind: to retain his development image despite being in the company of his arch rival for two decades, Lalu Prasad Yadav, and to look for a national plank on the basis of his "good governance". He had gone into the 2015 assembly campaign with a new coinage: 'seven resolutions' or 'saat nischay', which was a smart repackaging of his development programme, giving the energy sector top billing. He had also included students' credit cards and clean water supply as part of the package that had to be delivered to people in a time-bound manner.

The idea was to clearly demarcate his development agenda from his NDA days

his agenda on road, health and education going as usual. And even though he looked like a supporter of the status quo, Nitish Kumar wanted to shake things up with the Public Grievances Redressal Act to make the system more responsible, responsive and less bureaucratic in providing 49 government services. The biggest problem, however, remained that the government did not do much about complaints of rampant corruption in land mutation clearances. The biggest issue he espoused in order to expand his constituency to the national level, was to pass a prohibition law in April this year – it was one of his main poll campaign promises in an effort to woo women voters. He first considered only a partial prohibition by banning country liquor; however, the overwhelming response of women and self-help groups combined

with feedback from over-enthusiastic supporters emboldened the CM to declare total prohibition from April 5. The media supported the move until he added some stringent – draconian to some – provisions in August. He was then criticised for incorporating provisions such as making all adults responsible in cases of liquor consumption, the seizure of any family member for the same offense and the confiscation of property of an offender.

Nitish Kumar responded to these attacks with his monkish indifference at the Rajgir convention of his party where he said that when a great task is undertaken, one is first ridiculed, then challenged and finally supported by his critics. The Gopalganj hooch tragedy, in which 16 people died, seriously undermined the prohibition policy. Though over 10,000 cases had been lodged under the liquor law and over 13,000 people have been arrested, liquor continues to find its way to Bihar via UP, Jharkhand and West Bengal. Implementation of liquor law will continue to challenge the state police.

Bihar's CM did succeed in making liquor a national issue and he keeps up the pressure on the Centre to impose it at the national level. In the state, the RJD was not in favour of the liquor ban initially as it would hurt the interest of several Yadav liquor traders. But the RJD chief had to buckle under pressure because Nitish enjoyed a sure shot advantage over Lalu despite being a junior alliance partner. Some RJD leaders openly protested against the stringent provisions of the liquor law, but Nitish did not soften his stance. Lalu, who is known for his political sagacity beyond his image of a casual politician, sorted out the matter even though there was pressure on him to assert the RJD's position as senior alliance partner with 81 MLAs as against JD (U)'s 71. Deputy CM Tejashwi Prasad Yadav tried some political posturing by putting only his photograph in some of advertisements of his department, but Nitish Kumar continued to hold sway. The third alliance partner, Congress, always looked to favour Nitish at the expense of Lalu.

## CBI summons TMC MPs in chit fund scam

(Agencies) Hours after Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee demanded PM Narendra Modi's resignation over the demonetisation drive, the CBI issued summons to her party MPs Sudip Bandopadhyay and Tapas Paul in connection with its probe into the chit fund scam. CBI sources said they want to question Bandopadhyay in connection with the Rose Valley chit fund scam. The agency has charged several TMC members in its probes against chit fund companies including Saradha.

Banerjee had earlier accused the Centre of using CBI for its "vendetta politics", while claiming that such tactics would not make her deviate from her campaign against demonetisation. The CBI had asked Bandopadhyay to appear before it earlier but he sought a later date for the questioning. This time, the agency has asked him to appear at its Kolkata office on December 30.

## Post-Demonetisation, equation among national & regional parties changing



(Agencies) KOLKATA: While Congress has so far failed to bring together a united opposition of national and regional parties, its list of friends seems to be getting updated constantly.

While Mamata Banerjee's TMC warmed up to Sonia Gandhi's call for an united Opposition, Congress alliance partners in assembly polls in Bihar and West Bengal, Nitish Kumar's JDU and CPM, categorically refused to be present at the Opposition meet in the Capital. Other larger regional parties and former UPA allies like NCP, SP, BSP and smaller ones like AAP, too, decided to stay away from the meeting, despite their opposition to the demonetisation drive.

While BJP appears to be happy at the prospect of a not-so-united opposition, the big question now is over the fate of coalition politics that controlled the country since the 1990s. A senior TMC leader

blamed internal glitches for the disunity. "We are seeing internal issues that are preventing the parties to come under one umbrella." If this condition prevails, then it will be difficult to go for the coalition politics

in the country." Most of the 16 large opposition parties, including BJD, stayed away from the meeting called by Congress. Even among those who attended, no senior leader barring

Congress and TMC were seen at the meeting.

When the meeting to set a common minimum programme was on, CPM's Sitaram Yechury was visiting Dhulagarh in Bengal that witnessed communal tension few days back.

## Note ban destroyed terror funding, drug mafia, human trafficking: PM Modi

(Agencies) DEHRADUN: PM Narendra Modi on Tuesday stoutly defended the move of demonetisation+ claiming that the decision has destroyed "in one stroke the worlds of terrorism, drug mafia, human trafficking and underworld." This, he said, happened when "on November 8, fake notes became zero." "Have you made me the PM simply for cutting ribbons and lighting lamps? I have been given the work of a chowkidar..now when I am doing chowkidari, a few people are disturbed. They are facing problems...wondering what kind of a chowkidar is this who is attacking the leader of the thieves. The country has not only been disrupted by black money (kala dhan) but also by kala man (evil mindset). Both of them have to go," he told the crowd of an estimated 70,000 people who had assembled at the Parade Ground to hear him.

Illeging that demonetisation "shook the corrupt", Modi termed the move as a safai abhiyan (clean-up exercise). "People were sleeping on top of piles of notes. When I announced demonetisation, they were shaken up. But still they tried hard to avert it -- there is corruption in the blood of some people, so they started exchanging notes from the back door.

They thought Modi will not see. But we had all the information. The people of the country have helped me. That's why I am fighting. Even now, they can attack me if they get the chance. But they don't know that I am wearing the protective armour of over 125 crore Indians," the PM claimed. He added that 18,000 villages were "still living in the 18th century without electricity" when he took over. "We set a target of these villages being electrified in 1000 days. Till now, 12000 villages have been electrified of which many are in Uttarakhand too," he told the audience saying that this was done for the benefit of the poor, not the rich in an apparent allusion to Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi's recent allegations that he was taking away money from the poor and giving to "only 50 rich families." Acknowledging the inconveniences faced by the common man post demonetisation, Modi said, "The common man of the country prefers honesty and is ready to suffer hardships for it. Only a handful of people are corrupting the country. I am fighting to strengthen the honest. India which was once called 'sone ki chiriya' (golden bird) has been looted. We have to rectify this. If the country is to move ahead, corruption has to end."

# Cutting across party lines, rebels strike it big in Punjab



(Agencies) Chandigarh: This is the season of turncoats in Punjab politics and they seem to be striking the best deals. The ruling Shiromani Akali Dal and the Congress reel under a string of resignations after the parties refused tickets to many sitting legislatures for

the upcoming assembly election. While SAD, in power for 10 years, is trying to combat antiincumbency by bringing in new faces, Congress' decisions are mainly based on internal surveys, which party sources said it conducted to evaluate winnability of candidates.

The AAP has also dug its heels deep in, and is trying to entice Dalits and NRIs. Punjab has the highest concentration of Dalits at 34% of the population. But it is also witnessing the exit of the party's old warhorses who played important roles during the 2014 parliamentary elections. The AAP had won four of the 13 parliamentary seats from Punjab in 2014. On Sunday, a former senior leader of the AAP, Yamini

Gomar, joined the Congress. Gomar, who is a Dalit and was the AAP candidate in the 2014, called her former party "dictatorial" and "corrupt".

Some Panthic leaders of the Shiromani Gurdwara Panthic Committee seem to be leaving the SAD. The committee that manages Sikh religious shrines is largely controlled by the SAD.

SGPC executive committee member from Barnala, Tek Singh Dhanola, joined SAD(L) led by TN Governor Surjit Singh Barnala's wife Surjit Kaur Barnala. Till recently, Tek Singh was a close confidant of SAD(B) secretary-general Sukhdev Dhindsa, but was feeling disgruntled after a break up with Dhindsa family.

## Najeeb Jung's resignation

*BJP blames Arvind Kejriwal government, Congress says 'exit unceremonious'*



(Agencies) New Delhi : The resignation of Najeeb Jung as lieutenant governor on Thursday caught Delhi's political circle by surprise with the Congress terming the exit "unceremonious" and the BJP claiming he was "upset" with the AAP government. Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal said the resignation came as a surprise to him. Kejriwal wished Najeeb Jung best for his future endeavours. Leader of opposition in the Delhi assembly Vijender Gupta said a BJP delegation had met the lieutenant governor on Wednesday over delimitation of municipal wards when Jung had "expressed" his displeasure with the Kejriwal government. "Even then (yesterday) he was upset with the AAP government stalling work. But we did not foresee this. He told us that he was going a week-long leave. Delhi needed him," Gupta said. Union home secretary Rajiv Mehrishi said Jung has a meeting scheduled with him on Friday. "The LG met me day before yesterday but he did not give any indication of submitting his resignation. Another meeting of mine with the LG is scheduled for Friday (tomorrow)... I have come to know about his resignation only through media," Mehrishi said.

# Beijing's 'technical hold' on Jaish-e-Mohammed chief Masood Azhar expires on December 31



(Agencies) New Delhi : India is hoping for more clarity on its bid for a United Nations ban against Jaish-e-Mohammed chief Masood Azhar when China's "technical hold" blocking the move at the UN Security Council expires on

National Investigation Agency's (NIA's) recent findings indicting Azhar in the Pathankot air force base attack on January 2. India has yet again nudged China to stop shielding Azhar from United Nations' sanctions, people in the know said.

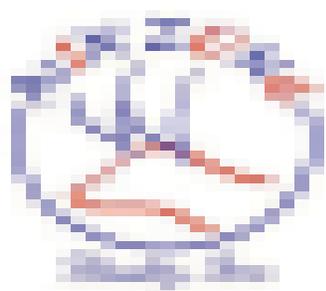
December 31.

Even as China hinted earlier this month that there is no change in its position on Islamist hardliner, India's case has been bolstered with the

NIA's chargesheet against Azhar came just 12 days before the expiry of the "technical hold", which China imposed on India's bid to bring him under UN sanctions.

China's inflexibility will cast a shadow on Sino-India ties which this year witnessed hiccups not only over Azhar but also over India's NSG bid, China-Pakistan-Economic-Corridor and visas to Uyghur leaders.

The evidences collected by the NIA to indict Masood Azhar will be shared with China, persons familiar with the development said. India has yet again urged China not to extend the "technical hold" further and instead help advance the process at the United Nations to impose international sanctions on the terror mastermind based in Pakistan, officials said.



# WIN ZONE

## REALTY INC.

# Baldev Singh

146-20 34 ave. Flushing NY 11354

Call: 917 24 1885

Email: [baldevsingh@yahoo.com](mailto:baldevsingh@yahoo.com)



Associate Broker, Real Estate

**nuway group**

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

**Josh India TV**

**BOI** BOX OFFICE INSIDER

**ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਦੁਨੀਆ**

**Ethnic Strategies**

**Most Trusted  
News Media Company  
Serving South Asian Americans**

*The Only South Asian American Media Group that Gives you Maximum Cost Effective Reach*

**Box Office INSIDER**

**Mr. Perfection**

ANUWAY MEDIA GROUP PUBLICATION

December - 2016

www.boxofficeinsider.info

**INSIDER** Voice of South Asian Community

**Americans scam and defrauded**

**Terrorist funds flow from Pakistan to fuel Kashmir**

**Warrant issued against Vijay Malya**

**Garbage Hill Fire Marks New Delhi's Pollution Drive**

**ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਦੁਨੀਆ**

**ਪੰਜਾਬ 'ਚ ਜਲ ਸੰਕਟ ਹੋਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਪੈਸਾ ਦੇਣਾ ਪਵੇਗਾ'**

**ਪੰਜਾਬ 'ਚ ਜਲ ਸੰਕਟ ਹੋਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਪੈਸਾ ਦੇਣਾ ਪਵੇਗਾ'**

*3 Million + Views on YouTube & Half Million fan like on Facebook*

**Email: [sst@nuwaygroup.com](mailto:sst@nuwaygroup.com)**  
**www.nuwaygroup.com**  
**Phone: 917 612 3158**

नववर्ष की शुभकामनाएँ  
माता की चौकी  
7 जनवरी 2017



# माता की चौकी वैष्णो सेवा समिति द्वारा



माँ भगवती की चौकी पर आप  
सभी परिवार इष्ट मित्रों सहित  
सादर आमंत्रित है

शनिवार 7 जनवरी 2017 शाम 6:00 से 9:00 बजे तक  
पश्चात् लंगर और प्रसाद

**स्थान:- आसामाई हिन्दू मंदिर**

(VENUE : ASA MAI TEMPLE)

80 E Barclay St, Hicksville, NY 11801

अधिक जानकारी के लिये संपर्क करें रोशन लाल जी 516-433-4388

# Madhu Valli wins Miss India USA

*Sarita Pattnaik is Mrs. India USA, Rhea Manjrekar is Miss Teen India USA*



The chairman and founder, Dharmatma Saran with the three winners



Best Talent of Miss India USA, Pushkara Chaganti from Washington State



The Top Five of Miss India USA



Best Talent of Miss Teen India USA, Rhea Manjrekar of New York.



Miss Bollywood Diva, Fatima Armaghan from Massachusetts

(Press Release) Madhu, 19, is from Virginia is a budding hip hop artist. She is studying music and communication at George Mason University. She aspires to make it big in music and has 14 different singles to her credit. Mrs. India USA, Sarita Pattnaik from Georgia is an interior designer by profession and mother of two kids. She wants to be a social activist and become a voice for women's empowerment. Rhea Manjrekar from New York was crowned Miss Teen India USA. Rhea loves to work for homeless children and has raised over USD 50,000 in last two years for the cause. Madhu and Sarita will represent USA in the Miss & Mrs. India Worldwide 2017. The three won the crowns out of 52 finalists from all over USA. The annual pageant which also celebrated thirty fifth anniversary of Miss India USA was held in Fords, New Jersey.

In Miss section Sania Laraib from North Carolina and Riya Kaur from New York were declared First and Second Runner Up respectively. In Mrs. section Nishtha Chadda from New York and Shamita Behl from Massachusetts were declared First and second runner up respectively. In the Teen section Crystal favorite from Georgia and Esha Kode from New Jersey were declared first and second runner up respectively.

The pageant started with a stunning performance by all the contestants led by the outgoing queens Karina Kohli, Neha Multani Verma & Aanchal Shah choreographed by Shilpa Jhurani. All contestants presented their best in the Indian and the

Evening Gown segment after which the top ten were selected. The top ten contestants from Miss section then amazed the audience with their talent which included

Bollywood dances, Indian classical dances, singing and karate. In the Miss section Pushkara Chaganti from Washington State and in Teen section Rhea Manjrekar from New York were awarded Miss Talented. Dharmatma Saran, Chairman & Founder, presented an appreciation plaque to Mr. H. R. Shah, Mr. Albert Jasani, Mr. Sunil Easo,

Ms Nishi Bahl and Shilpa Jhurani for their support in organizing this year pageant. "I am very thankful to the Indian community for its support through the years," said Dharmatma Saran, "and especially thankful to H.R. Shah and Albert Jasani for supporting the pageant." Sonny Molu, state director of Georgia Area won State Director of The Year award and was also presented a plaque. Aryan Vaid - Bollywood and TV actor, Namita Dodwadkar - Mrs. India Worldwide 2016 and Anuradha Maharaj - former

Miss India Trinidad were emcees for the function and Nishi Bahl was the choreographer assisted by Shilpa Jhurani. The panel of judges included Ms. Vandana Sharma - General manager Americas of Air India, Lalit K. Jha - Bureau Chief of PTI USA, Deepak Chopra - Creative Director from Mumbai, Ruchi Prasad an IT professional and Alesha Mills a stylist. The crowning was followed by a lavish dinner and dance. Tabulation was done by Niles Choksi CPA assisted by Nandish Desai. Photo courtesy of Suresh Jilla

A NUWAY MEDIA GROUP PUBLICATION

**BOX OFFICE INSIDER**

Global Brand Ambassador

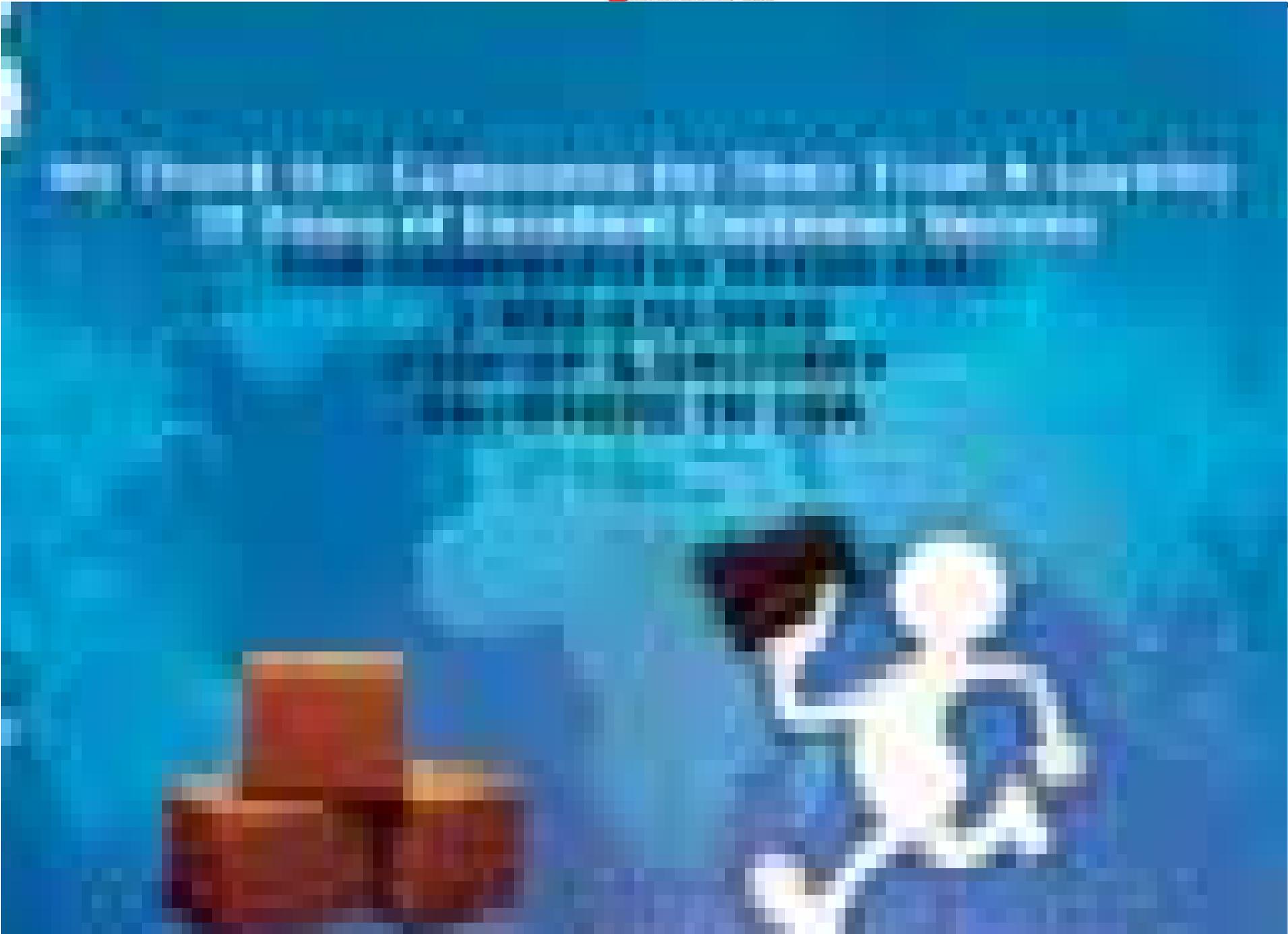
BO BOX OFFICE INSIDER 2016

Vol. 03 December, 2016 www.boxofficeinsider.info Published Monthly

**Mr. Perfectionist**

The young man who entered the hindi film industry with *Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak*, is all set to capture the imagination of millions of his fans worldwide with his new offering "Dangal". Aamir Khan is a... ae... ever get to skin... characte... plays.

Log onto [www.boxofficeinsider.info](http://www.boxofficeinsider.info) for the best in Bollywood and Hollywood Insider news



# INDO US EXPRESSING

Expressing the Indo-US relationship through the lens of the Indian diaspora, this special issue explores the complex and multifaceted nature of the relationship. It examines the role of the Indian diaspora in shaping the relationship, the challenges they face, and the opportunities they present. The issue also explores the impact of the relationship on the Indian diaspora and the broader Indian community in the United States.

Edited by [Name], this special issue is a must-read for anyone interested in the Indo-US relationship. It provides a comprehensive overview of the relationship and offers valuable insights into the role of the Indian diaspora. The issue is available for purchase at [Link].

# Hillary Clinton, a mail-order bride and the inventor of the internet

*Plane passengers reveal the most interesting people they've sat next to*



(Agencies) It's always a lottery when it comes to who you end up sitting next to on a plane. But these passengers, who have revealed the most fascinating flight neighbours they've ever had, scored the winning ticket. From Hillary Clinton, who allegedly slept all the way

in the history of computing.' Similarly, another user described the day he shared a flight with Glenn Edens, who designed the first laptop computer in 1979.

Eliot Hodges wrote: 'Although he was busy editing a presentation on his laptop, I introduced myself to him soon

star in American sitcom Silver Spoons, and went on to appear in long-running crime drama series NYPD Blue.

Another mentioned being seated next to actor Robert Duvall - from The Godfather and Apocalypse Now - who was 'emphatically not chatty'.

One particularly salient encounter was with a Nazi concentration camp survivor named Greta, described by Todd Frary.

'I've rarely met someone who was so alive and vibrant, she practically shimmered with vitality and delight,' he wrote.

'We struck up a conversation and fearlessly answered any questions I had about what it was like, how she survived, and her life after the war.

'What stunned me the most was how she harbored no bitterness, hatred or anger for what had happened to her. She was quick to add, "People today would do well to follow that advice" and indeed I do.'

Another touching account came from a man called Joel



Oleson, who found himself next to a mail-order bride on her way home to Ukraine for the first time since her marriage five years ago.

'She was flying alone with a heavy heart,' he wrote, adding that her husband had turned out to be a 'shy and introverted computer nerd'.

Mr Oleson concluded: 'She planned to catch up with her family and decide what to do next. She feels bad for him, but doesn't also feel much of a bright future.'

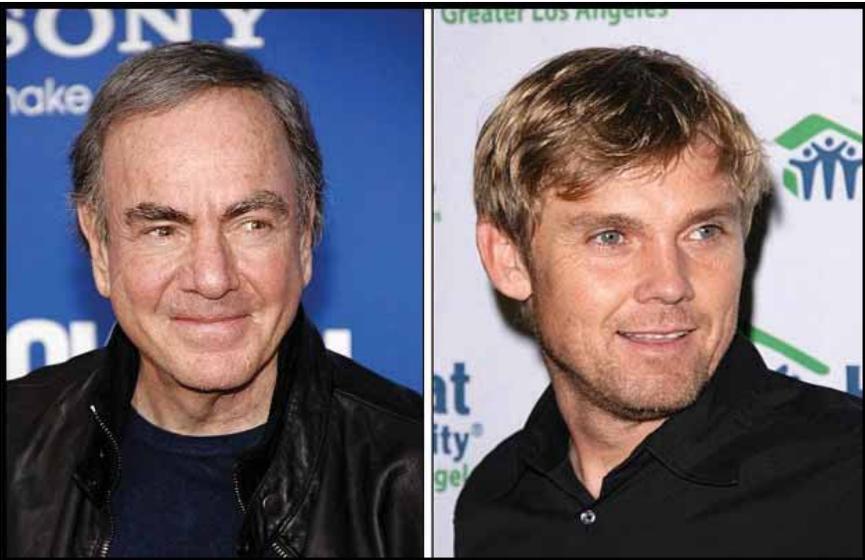
One submitter, Dick Karp, was surprised by the friendliness of his seat neighbour - the famously fiery Ingrid Newkirk, founder of animal rights organisation Peta.

'I doubt that we would ever meet other than by coincidence since I certainly don't share her views,' he wrote, adding,

'We had a fun discussion about animals.' Finally, plane passenger Garret Meikle realised when he ended up

on the same flight as his favourite Canadian hockey team, the Toronto Maple Leafs. 'I changed from a 30-year-old banker to a young child all excited about my good fortune,' he wrote.

While Mr Meikle didn't get to meet them, he did get a napkin with all their autographs on it - thanks to a special request via the flight attendant.



through a lightning storm during a flight to Pittsburgh in 1992, to a crestfallen mail-order bride and a Nazi concentration camp survivor, some of these encounters were eye-opening to say the least. Writing of her encounter on Quora, a woman called Jennifer Miller relayed: 'In April 1992, I sat across the aisle from Hillary Clinton on a tiny charter plane, flying from Pittsburgh to a campaign event in Erie, PA.'

'What I remember most about the trip was that we flew through a lightning storm and Mrs Clinton managed to sleep through it.'

Another submitter, Dave Baggett, wrote that he was stunned to discover the friendly gentlemen sitting next to him and chatting about the internet was actually one of the men who invented it.

Mr Baggett wrote of Vint Cerf - hailed as one of the 'fathers of the internet': 'I talked with him the whole flight [...] He never let on, in the slightest way, that he was one of the most important figures

after take-off. He was very friendly and proved to be deeply knowledgeable about Silicon Valley and technology.

'I soon learned that I was sitting next to Glenn Edens.'

Several celebrities cropped up on the discussion forum, including Leonard Nimoy, the actor who played Spock in the legendary Star Trek franchise.

Passenger Shulamit Widawsky, who was flying from Los Angeles to Washington DC in the 1980s, wrote: 'We chatted and I said, "I've watched Star Trek since it began. I feel like I've grown up with you."

'To which he responded, "Just call me Dad!"'

Others include two encounters from a man by the name of Jason Kay, who said: 'Neil Diamond politely asked me to switch seats with his fiancée'.

He also revealed: 'I had a great conversation with Rick Schroder on how he was one of the few child celebrities who had avoided the pitfalls of fame.'

Mr Schroder was a child



# 9 Famous Financial Scams in India

**Financial Scams have not been uncommon in India. A scam is a means of getting money by deception or in an illicit way with a fake identity or documents, India, has now and then seen many scams in the financial world which has shaken Dalal Street. The Securities Exchange Board of India has been re-viving rules and regulation in a aim to plug the loop holes in the securities market. Here are few famous scams from the long list of scams in India till date.**



**Harshad Mehta Case**

Talking of scams, how can we forget Harshad Mehta. He was known to have fooled many investors by taking advantage of loop holes in the system.

Harshad and his associates initiated a securities scam by diverting funds of about Rs 5,000 crore from the banks to stockbrokers between April 1991 to May 1992.

After the scam was exposed, the stock markets crashed and Mehta was arrested and banned from trading in the stock markets.

**Ketan Parekh**

Following the footsteps of Mehta, Ketan Parekh had bigger plans. He conned banks and exchanges like the Allahabad

Stock Exchange and the Calcutta Stock Exchange, and bought shares in fictitious names to manipulate the share prices in companies.

Ketan was a chartered accountant who used to run a family business, named NH Securities.



**Satyam Scam**

Ramalingam Raju along with 2 other cooked up accounts to show increased sales, profits and margins from 2003 to 2008.

On April 9, 2015, B. Ramalinga Raju, along with 9 others were pronounced guilty in the Satyam Scam.

**Roop Bhansali scam**

CRB was once a top-notch investment banking firm, started by C R Bhansali. Roop Bhansali, through mutual funds, fixed deposits and debentures collected money from investors.

With the help of non-existent companies he is raised money and transferred to his other shell companies or others who invested with him.

**Subrata Roy**

Subrata Roy in the name

protection measures mentioned therein. The case is still on and one has to wait for the outcome.

**Saradha Scam**

Chit-fund company Saradha Group's Chairman Sudipta Sen ran various investment schemes and collected money from many investors in West Bengal and Odisha.

**NSEL Scam**

Money from investors were siphoned off as the most of the



underlying commodities did not exist and the buying and the selling of commodities was being only conducted only on paper.

Investors were attracted by offering fixed returns on paired contracts in commodities. And it was lately, found out the stocks were missing.

The NSEL is a company promoted by Financial Technologies India Ltd and the NAFE. Jignesh Shah along with Shreekant Javalgekar were accused of the scam.

**Coal Scam**

Coal allocation scam also know as Coalgate scam is a political scandal concerning the

Indian government's allocation of the nation's coal deposits to public sector entities (PSEs) and private companies.

There was wrongful allocation of coal deposits among government employees without competitive bidding.

**2G Spectrum Scam**

It was a telecommunications scam and political scandal in which politicians and government officials under undercharged mobile telephone companies for frequency allocation licenses.

According to CAG, former Telecom minister A Raja has evaded norms and carried out the dubious 2G license awards in 2008.



# How to achieve your New Year's resolutions

(Agencies) Professor Peter Herman, a psychology lecturer at the University of Toronto says that the reason resolutions fail is because they are too ambitious. He told MailOnline: 'They are unrealistic in some or all of the following respects: people think that they can change more quickly than is the case, they think that they can change more than is the case, or they think they can change more easily than is the case.'

Professor Herman suggests that the issue may be a cycle of failure, interpretation, and renewed effort, which he calls 'the false-hope syndrome.'

The cycle begins with people undertaking a difficult self-change task, such as overeating, gambling or smoking – common, yet rarely successful changes.

While people may achieve some initial progress in the task, ultimately they fail to achieve their goal.

Having failed, they interpret

## Cabinet Clears Ordinance to Penalise Persons With Old Notes

till which time deposit of old currency notes at specified branches of the Reserve Bank after submitting a declaration form is open.

The Ordinance also provides for amending the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Act to provide legislative support for extinguishing the demonetised banknotes that are not returned. While the high-denomination currency ceased to be a legal tender from midnight of November 8, 2016, a mere notification was thought to be not enough to end the central bank's liability and avoiding future litigations.

Currency notes carry RBI's promise to pay the bearer the amount of the value of the note, a pledge that can be nullified only by legislation after giving due opportunity to everyone to return old notes.

Sources said the proposal put to the Cabinet was for a four-year jail term for anyone possessing a number of demonetised currency after March 31, 2017, but it was not immediately clear if it was approved.

The Ordinance will have to sent to the President and after his assent will come into force.

their failure to convince themselves that with a few adjustments they will succeed.

Finally, they embark on another attempt, and the cycle repeats.

In his paper on the topic, published in American Psychologist, Professor Herman and his co-author, Janet Polivy, wrtke: 'People tend to make the same resolutions year after year, vowing on average 10 times to eradicate a particular vice.'

Obviously, every renewed vow represents a prior failure; otherwise, there would be no need for yet another attempt.

'Equally obviously, unsuccessful attempts do not diminish the likelihood of making

future plans for self-change.'

Even those people who are ultimately successful at sticking to their resolutions make the attempt five or six times on average before succeeding.

Professor Herman says that the best way to stick to your resolution is to make it more realistic.

He told MailOnline: 'Often this means scaling back your resolution to something that is actually manageable.'

'Unfortunately, modest resolutions do not often correspond to the amount/speed/ease of change that people want for themselves.'

'They want a full transformation, quickly and easily, which is unrealistic and

therefore counterproductive.'

One of the most common New Year's resolutions made is to lose weight.

But when people set out to lose weight, they often set unrealistic goals, such as a pound (0.45kg) a week.

Professor Herman said: 'People must content themselves with more modest goals.'

'One pound a month would bring a weight loss of 12 pounds (5.4kg) in a year, which is much more realistic. 'People should understand that a more modest goal has the benefit of actually being achievable.' Another problem with New Year's resolutions is the overestimation of how much of a difference accomplishing a goal will make.

Professor Herman said: 'Losing a lot of weight (and keeping it off, if you can) will not necessarily magically transform your life.'

'People believe that losing weight will make them much more attractive and successful in endeavors well beyond their weight (e.g., career success).'

Instead, Professor Herman says that people should recognise that modest weight loss will be useful, but not necessarily life-changing.

He added: 'If people acknowledge that modest weight loss will be useful but not transformative, they will have a better chance of achieving change (and not being disappointed in the result).'

## Do you always fall for the wrong guy?

(Agencies) Does your relationship record throw up nothing but a string of dismal liaisons with men you were never compatible with in the first place? Do you feel that you have an uncanny knack of attracting Mr Wrong? Look within. Here are some reasons why Mr Right might be eluding you:

**A lack of clarity about relationship goals**  
Do you remember that oft-quoted egg dialogue in Julia Roberts-starrer 'Runaway Bride'? Asked if she knows how she wants her eggs in the morning, Maggie (the character Julia plays in the film) says 'Benedict'. So, the moral of the story is you should have a clear idea about what exactly you are looking for in a relationship. What are the qualities you are looking for in a partner? More importantly, what kind of relationship are you looking for - long term relationships, flings or no-strings-attached affairs? Get some clarity first.

### Know thyself

This can be an extension of the previous point. It's fine if you wish for an open

relationship, but can you handle the complications that come with it? Or you have a commitment phobia, yet invariably you fall for guys who want long term relationships. So a little bit of self-assessment before getting involved with someone can help.

### All too familiar

If you are continuously finding guys who are similar to each other, then you'd be repeating your relationship mistakes again and again. You can take a relationship counsellor's help to analyse why you keep getting involved with the same kind of men. Break the pattern and embrace change. Good luck!

### Are you suffering from low self esteem?

Do you always find yourself in a relationship where your boyfriend disrespects you? Experts say that if you always allow yourself to be disrespected in a relationship, then you might be suffering from a sense of low self-worth. Stop thinking that you don't deserve better.



### Peer pressure and fear of loneliness

Let's face it, 'single' is still a scary word for some. Thanks to peer/social pressure, one can be railroaded into relationships just for the sake of getting paired up. If you give in to this pressure, chances are you could end up selecting random guys, who may or may not be compatible. Also, if you are too scared of loneliness, you can take rash decisions and allow a wrong set of people to enter your life. Try enjoying your own company sometimes, it's not that bad!

## 5 sex habits every woman should follow

(Agencies) Sex can be a very confusing affair, especially in the initial days. Cultivate these habits right from the start for a happy and healthy sex life. Don't fake it: We know exactly how easy it is to just let out a couple of loud moans to let him know that you've had an orgasm when he's been going at it for ages with no end in sight, but resist the temptation. Not only will you lead him to believe he knows what he's doing, you'll also be resigning yourself to bad sex for as long as you are with him. Instead, stop him, and show him how to get you off.

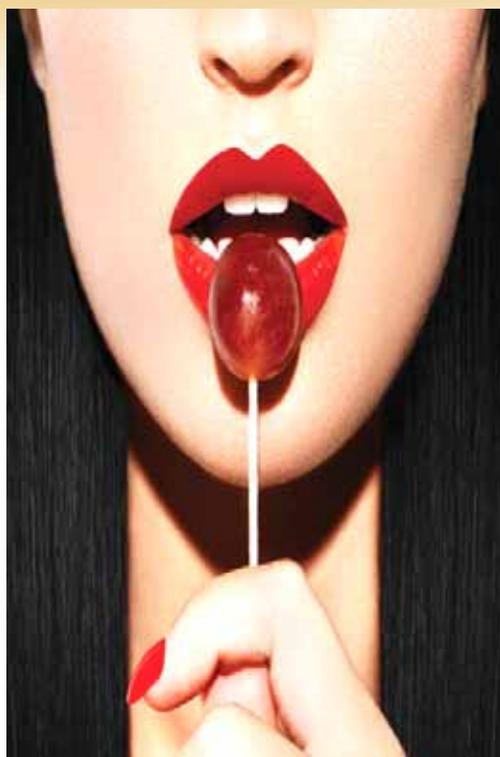
**No glove, no love:** No man is going to be good enough for you to spend two weeks worrying about whether he's gotten you pregnant, or given you an STD. Wear a condom, every time.

**Communicate:** Sure, it's awkward to stop a makeout session in its tracks to

ask your partner if he's been treated recently, but you know what's more awkward? Having a conversation with your next partner about how you caught an STD because of the communication gap you had with your ex.

**Don't worry about how you look down there:** The state of your private parts is never of concern to your partner. Of course this doesn't mean that you should grow an unruly bush out there (grooming is important for hygiene), but there's no need to get worried over a little stubble.

**Say no when you want to say no:** You are under no contractual obligation to go through with sex if you agreed to it but changed your mind mid way. If you don't feel like it, stop it and say no. If he cribs or gets mad, be glad you stopped it. A man who respects you will never behave like that.



# Afghanistan, India, and Trump

He described the Taliban as “Pashtun brothers” and tried to improve relations with Pakistan. In many of his speeches, Mr. Karzai referred to India “as an old friend” and Pakistan as “a brother and conjoined twin”. The metaphor may not be apt — because half the conjoined twins are stillborn and an additional one-third die within 24 hours — but it does capture Pakistan’s critical role. Eventually, he became exasperated with Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf’s rebuffs and tried, unsuccessfully, to open up his own channels for dialogue with the Quetta Shura, first with Mullah Obaidullah and then with Mullah Baradar, only to have them successively neutralised by the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

Mr. Ghani went a step further. Having witnessed Mr. Karzai’s doomed efforts and conscious of the political fragility of his National Unity Government, he swallowed his pride and even called on the Pakistani Army chief, Gen. Raheel Sharif, at the GHQ, in Rawalpindi in 2014, a departure from protocol that raised many eyebrows. He tacitly accepted Pakistan’s demand that Afghanistan diminish the salience of its relationship with India, in the expectation that

Pakistan would play a positive role to ensure political reconciliation. A new track was opened with the Quadrilateral Coordination Group consisting of Afghanistan, Pakistan, China and the U.S. However, Mr. Ghani too felt betrayed when he learnt that the myth of Mullah Omar had been sustained for at least two years and despite his pleading, the ISI went ahead with the anointment of Mullah Mansour as the new Taliban leader. As insurgency grew, he publicly blamed Pakistan of sending “a message of war” when he had held out a hand of peace.

In their own fashion, both Mr. Bush and Mr. Obama saw the Pakistan problem but were content to manage the situation rather than push for a solution. Mr. Bush ensured the first round of peaceful elections in Afghanistan by laying down clear redlines for Gen. Musharraf but during his second term, he was preoccupied with Iraq. Mr. Obama tried diplomacy by appointing the high profile U.S. Ambassador Richard Holbrooke as Special Representative for AfPak but eventually decided that the best way for the U.S. to address the issue was to reduce its role and presence in Afghanistan. The Kerry-Lugar

assistance package for Pakistan turned out to be more carrot than stick.

## Pakistan’s overreach

Given a porous border with Afghanistan with tribal linkages cutting across the Durand Line, Pakistan’s legitimate interests can be understood as also the fact that it is critical to any political reconciliation in Afghanistan. However, what Pakistan has been seeking is to exercise a veto over Kabul’s relations with Delhi which the Afghans are unwilling to concede.

Pakistan’s policies towards both India and Afghanistan are determined primarily by the Army which sees India as an existential threat. Looking at its relations with Afghanistan through the India prism makes it inevitable that Pakistan can only have a relationship with Afghanistan that is mired in mistrust, suspicion and hostility. Since relations with India are unlikely to normalise in the foreseeable future, the only way out for Pakistan to play a constructive role in Afghanistan is to accept the idea of Afghan sovereignty and autonomy and refrain from making it a zone of India-Pakistan rivalry.

Unless Pakistan changes its

attitude, political reconciliation in Afghanistan will remain unlikely. The Taliban today is a fractured lot, neither a Vietcong nor even a Hezbollah. Its fragmentation does not affect its ability to launch terrorist attacks in Afghanistan but certainly makes it more difficult to get it to the negotiating table.

Meanwhile, the National Unity Government in Kabul is not a strong and united entity thereby reducing its negotiating space. All this diminishes Pakistan’s ability to deliver the Taliban too; it can ensure presence for a one-off meeting but lacks the political capital needed to underwrite the reconciliation process.

The challenge for Kabul is that it has to engage in multiple reconciliation processes — with the Taliban and with the Pakistani army. The hardline Taliban represented by the Haqqani network is determined to continue the fight militarily. However, even the more moderate who are willing to talk demand the exit of all foreign forces from Afghanistan. Not only could this bring about a collapse of the fragile coalition in Kabul but it would also reduce the international financial support which is critical to keep the

government machinery working. Power sharing can be worked out, as demonstrated recently in the accord with Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, but no government in Kabul can accept this Taliban redline.

## The India factor

India has had the most effective economic cooperation programme, having spent more than \$2 billion and committed another billion dollars earlier this year. Indians have also lost lives in deliberate attacks linked to the Haqqani group and the Lashkar-e-Taiba but this has not diminished the Indian role. It has only cemented Afghan-Indian relations which are now developing a military dimension. Never again will India be forced to close down its embassy in Kabul as it happened during the Taliban regime.

When President-elect Donald Trump takes charge, he will find that he has little choice in the matter. A complete withdrawal is out of question. His challenge will be to change the calculus of the Pakistani establishment, increase capabilities of the Afghan security forces to inflict attrition on the insurgents, and, in 2019, support an election in Afghanistan that brings about a more cohesive government. In all this, he will find the Narendra Modi government to be a reliable and trusted partner.

# Cashless will be king as digitisation makes inroads

few would have thought that this was actually a harkback to India’s ancient spiritual and economic traditions in which money is referred to as maya and its character is described as extremely fickle and treacherous.

Under the new dispensation, even Dharamraj will have to learn computers to digitise our hell-worthiness. Our religions always complained that the nature of maya is fickle. The Modi masterstroke has tried to make it less fickle, more reliable and verifiable. Cyber will replace the spiritual — and both are equally intangible if not unreal.

However, Modi was inspired more perhaps by hardcore fiscal ground realities than by the philosophical unrealities of religion. Cashless society is seemingly a modern and Western fetish. Terms such as “plastic money” — or, at a more advanced stage — “digital money” are just sophisticated covers to hide another driving force which is central to the cashless fetish: centralised control through the use of invisible technologies. So technology, which was supposed to democratise power through universalisation of information will actually create new dictators sitting on top of all information even on our private lives.

It is true of course that under practically every political system, governments have their hands thrust firmly into the citizen’s pockets. But up to now, governments had just so many hands. Pockets always and easily outnumbered government hands, no matter how many. Paper currency is a symbol of governmental control not only over the citizen’s money but even on his spending and “other” habits.

But to exercise this control, the government needs an elaborate system of fiscal monitoring, and this is not an easy task. Once ‘paper cash’ leaves the government mint, it develops a mind of its own and chooses its destinations and picks its own routes to reach those destinations. Governments practically lose control over something to which they gave birth — cash currency. Maintaining the character profile of every note that leaves the mint becomes an impossible task.

It is because of this “free will” of every currency note to chart its own course that governments need an elaborate taxation regime and massive armies of governmental officials at various levels to put this regime in place and keep it functional. As cash currency leaves the mint or even a banking hub, it

declares its independence of the system. Cash currency hates any interference in its sovereignty. Every paper note wants to live its life on its own terms. The last place a coin or a note wishes to lodge itself in is a government treasury, and worse, a banking strong room. It is the nature of currency to remain ‘current’ — constantly renewing its contract with life. Ideally, this should mean that cash currency is happier in capitalistic economies as it is in these economies that “spending” is preferred to “saving”. But this is not true. The fact is that capitalistic economies do not allow their currency the kind of freedom which communist, socialist or controlled economies provide it. This is because, theoretically at least, socialistic economies keep every ‘penny’ of their currency on the move in the interest of social welfare while capitalist economies have invented an artificial dungeon for their “legal tender” — the illegal basements of money hoarders. These basements are darker, more sinister and utterly stifling for currency because once a coin falls in these dungeons, there is very little chance of its coming out of it to breathe in fresh air of actual market economy.

Don’t forget the new czars of

communist economies whose individual worth far outweighs cash in the pockets of the entire proletariat. These czars also love dark basements for their harems of curvy currency! The tinpot “proletariat dictatorships” are known to possess and hide even darker and deeper cells in which they keep their unaccounted beauties.

In democracies like India, one would presume that there would be no such thing as ‘economics of fiscal dictatorship’, as most policies and every penny on which governments put their signatures have to be approved by the people through their elected representatives. This is the theory. The ground reality is somewhat different. Parliamentary sessions are not and should not be economic seminars in which experts discuss not only the details of the policies under which governments propose to collect and spend money that comes to it in the form of taxes — people’s money. The fact is that in most democratic countries, Parliaments are just “mute and non-responsive” mirror images of the people, more like location pictures frozen for five years, stirred only occasionally to create the illusion of life and activity.

The fact also is that members

of parliaments (in any democratic country) are seldom elected on the basis of a detailed economic agenda, and therefore they know very little of what the people who have elected them truly expect of them on economic policies. As for people, they know even less — and couldn’t care less. By and large, what goes for “economic policy” is nothing more than a set of slogans invented generally by people who have earned their places more because of their distaste for economics than their understanding of it. The more someone understands economics, the less qualified he becomes to be a popular leader. At best, he can be a mere face or voice of a political party whose members understand what would confuse their electorate the best, and get elected on the basis of this confusion.

In this scenario, to expect our political leaders to place economics above politics is, to say the least, utterly fantastic. Our leaders are an entertaining lot: the more they understand money, the less they understand economics. This is an entertaining luxury allowed only to people in democracies. What we have is a secret, unwritten but clearly understood deal between the people and the politicians: neither would make economics a precondition for the fulfillment of their greed for money.

# The shantytowns of America



At the time the city was being sued for arresting homeless people prior to public events.

'During the federal court case a judge ruled that "safe zones" must be established where people could eat, sleep and bath in public without fear of arrest until services could be offered to them,' she said.

Uttermohlen said that as a result of the ruling 'shantytowns sprung up all over Miami and across the country'.

There are an estimated 1,200 people living in shantytowns in Miami.

She said that in order to take the

portraits she had to 'build relationships and abide by the requests of the community', because a lot of people didn't want to be photographed.

Uttermohlen told the website that there were some shantytowns that she completely avoided because they were too dangerous.

In Miami, laws were passed making it impossible for paroled sex offenders to move home with their families, Uttermohlen wrote.

She said they were required to wear leg monitors and sleep

under a bridge each night or they would violate their parole.

The project has been waves of watching people organize until a task force comes along to sweep them away, according to Uttermohlen.

Shelter and services might be offered during a sweep, but the residents usually don't want to lose their freedom. The cycle of building villages and having them swept away repeats over and over again. Homeless people get disempowered and disorganized every time

the get disbanded.

And the lives of homeless families is a paradox as they need to ask for help but also feel vulnerable of losing custody of their children to social services.

In the past, homeless people built shanties with wood, and electricity was acquired by rewiring streetlights, Uttermohlen wrote.

She said, today's shantytowns people are living in tents because it's cheap and easy to move quickly.

Many homeless people work full time jobs, have bank accounts and keep up their personal hygiene.

## Why Kashmir is so angry with us

Sections of the Indian media, specially some TV channels, are hated in the Valley with a passion which is unbelievable. They have contributed in no small measure in creating the kind of misunderstanding which exists in the minds of the people there.

But all is not lost in the Valley yet. There is still some light at the end of the

tunnel. People still refer to Vajpayee with a great deal of respect and there is appreciation for the approach he had adopted. The present delicate calm is the best opportunity to reach out to the people in J&K in the spirit of Vajpayee and engage them in a dialogue. After all, the Agenda of Alliance between the BJP and the PDP, which is the basis on which the present

government has been formed, clearly states, after talking approvingly of the dialogue process started during the Vajpayee rule, that the new government would also similarly begin a dialogue process with all stakeholders in the state. All stakeholders will include not only the people living in the various parts and regions of the state, but also the

Pandits who still live in the Valley, or have migrated, and the Sikhs who stay there braving all odds as well as other minority groups. My appeal to those in authority is to ensure that the present window of opportunity is not lost. The issue of Jammu and Kashmir is a political issue and has to be resolved politically and not by force.

### Pak-Russia-China Get Closer. What That Means For India

"Wreath laying at tomb of unknown soldier. Heart-warming to see Russian band play Pakistan anthem perfectly."

Meanwhile, Zamir Kabulov, who had recently completed a posting in Kabul as Russia's ambassador - where he saw the enormous power that Pakistan's intelligence agency and army wielded in Afghanistan - was beginning to exercise power in the Russian establishment.

"Kabulov believed that while Pakistan was part of the problem in the ongoing conflict that prevented the stabilization of Afghanistan, it was also part of the solution because of its over-sized influence in that country," said Nandan Unnikrishnan, Senior Fellow at the Observer Research Foundation.

As the Central Asia states which about Afghanistan began to weaken as a result of their ageing but increasingly dictatorial leaderships, Kabulov was able to sell the line that Afghan militancy and drugs could become a big threat not only to Central Asia but to Russia's own soft underbelly.

An Indian official who has been closely associated with Afghanistan policy over several decades, said on the condition of anonymity, "Soon after the September 11 incidents and the expulsion of the Taliban from Afghanistan, the Western world believed that Pakistan had the key to the region. So much so

that the US forbade India from entering into any security-related partnerships with Afghanistan, as it believed that was the prerogative of Pakistan. Today, 15 years later, many things have changed. India is in a much stronger place in Afghanistan. The US is now the disillusioned party and hopes India will lift its game to help out in that country. And Pakistan has replaced the US, its key mentor and funder, with China as its main strategic partner in the region. The chips are falling in entirely unforeseen ways. Russia, China and Pakistan could be coming together in a loose association of sorts, while India and the US hang together on the other side. Except, with Donald Trump as the new US president, things could change again. Reading the tea-leaves in these interesting times, as the Chinese would say, is fraught with risk. Nevertheless, if Trump reaches out to Putin as he has promised to do - and as his presumptive Secretary of State Rex Tillerson is expected to do, with his own decades of experience of drilling for oil in Russia, he could succeed in extracting him from Xi Jinping's jaws. For India, that would be the best news - Modi riding off into the sunset with Trump and Putin together - even if it is still in the realm of fiction. The way 2016 has turned out, however, nothing is implausible. Perhaps real life will have a shot at imitating fiction next year.

### Where Secret Arrests Were Standard Procedure

This wholesale violation of the Constitution's protection against unlawful search and seizure by the police in Evangeline Parish, including in its largest city, Ville Platte, was standard procedure for putting pressure on citizens who the police thought might have information about crimes, according to the findings of a 20-month federal investigation. The report described as "staggering" the number of people who were "commonly detained for 72 hours or more" with no opportunity to contest their arrest, in what the police euphemistically termed "investigative holds."

The sheriff's office in Evangeline, with a population of 33,578, initiated over 200 such arrest-and-grilling sessions between 2012 and 2014. In Ville Platte, which has 7,303 residents, the local police department used the practice more than 700 times during the same years. The residents faced demands for information, the report said, "under threat of continued wrongful incarceration," resulting in what may have been false confessions and improper convictions. "Literally anyone in Evangeline Parish or Ville Platte could be arrested and placed 'on hold' at any time," the report found, noting the large African-American populations in Ville

Platte (64 percent) and Evangeline (29 percent over all). The police ordered one woman to bring her young children with her to headquarters. They questioned her 5-year-old about the mother before releasing the children. The mother slept on the floor of a holding cell for three days before charges, later dropped, were even brought. While the nation has been exposed in recent years to police abuses involving the fatal shooting of citizens, particularly black Americans, the new report presents something no less insidious: dragnet interrogations routinely conducted below the radar as a supposed tool of criminal justice. The practice, which finally prompted local complaints to the federal government, was found to be habitual in the parish for as long as anyone could remember. Reforms have since begun, a tribute to the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division's Special Litigation Section, which carried out the investigation and demanded wholesale changes. This bureau has done notable work during the Obama administration, investigating 25 law enforcement agencies and requiring and overseeing major reforms. To fully secure national justice, its work must continue.

# Escort To Libido Land

A young girl from Varanasi goes to Mumbai to look for a job and ends up as a high-profile escort. Carefully hiding her secret, she pulls out her family from a state of financial distress. This is the story of a 2007 Hindi film, *Laaga Chunari Mein Daag*, with Rani Mukerji in the lead role. This is also the story of the changing face of prostitution in India, no more confined to the seedy bylanes and dingy cubbyholes of Shivdaspur in Varanasi, Sonagachi in Kolkata, Kamathipura in Mumbai, GB Road in Delhi and many other traditional "red-light areas".

With changing lifestyles and the advent of technology, the sites, sights and sounds related to commercial sex work have undergone several radical transformations down the centuries. From the sophisticated nagar-vadhu to tawaif, to nautch-girl, to underage sex slaves in city brothels, to the world-travelling escort, the woman who extends sexual pleasure in return for money and material comforts now has many avatars. The most defining feature of this new-age prostitution, however, appears to be an insistence on choice. Many educated young women, and men, are in this profession, purely out of choice.

Is Prostitution a Matter of Choice?

Ruchira Gupta, founder of anti-trafficking organisation Apne Aap, has a contrary opinion on the matter of choice. "A woman sells her body only when other vistas of earning livelihood are not open to her," she says. How, then, does one place girls like Dina (name changed on request), a post-graduate student in New Delhi who admits to being in the profession just for the fun and money? When Dina came to the city for higher studies, she began to explore its vibrant clubbing scene, only to soon realise that her pocket money was insufficient to pay for her exorbitant wine-dine bills and concert tickets. She tried landing herself some small-time modelling assignments with lesser-known agencies, but her income clearly wasn't enough for the aspirational lifestyle she sought. "It was purely a matter of funding my lifestyle," she recalls. "I am a music junkie and like to unwind at classy places. But I can't afford many of those. So I find somebody who can. I am not in a committed

relationship. I see myself more as a serial dater. These days, people are hooking up with each other like never before. There are so many dating apps as well that make no-strings relationships casual and easily accessible. People end up having sex on their first date itself. When I am out with a man, I see the evening as a date and try to make the most out of it. Some guys are good, some are obnoxious. But that's a risk I take." Natasha (name changed on request), a Russian escort, accompanying a Delhi businessman to a reputed five-star hotel, shares that she came to India to be able to ensure a comfortable life for her daughter. When asked how she brings herself to like Indian men, she answers stoically, "It is work." She is particularly happy with this client at hand as he appears to be a clean man with good personal hygiene. He also asks her politely to take a shower.

Modus Operandi

Natasha meets at least four clients every day and makes Rs 6,000 per hour from each of them. Half of that amount goes to the pimp who lists himself as a travel agent. On a typical call, she is dropped off by a driver at the hotel where the client has already pre-booked a room. She and the driver do not know each other. The client pays her the full amount in advance. She calls up the agent to confirm the receipt of payment. For the next one hour, she is with the client. If he wants to extend her stay, he has to pay another Rs 6,000 in advance for the next hour. Natasha is not allowed to share her phone number with the client. She's also not supposed to ask him for his personal contact details. The phone she carries with her belongs to the agency and is used rotationally. If the client wants to meet her again, he needs to tell the agent about the same. Most escort 'companies' work in a professional manner and sometimes also carry out billed transactions, should the clients need them for reimbursement. There are options of using serviced apartments instead of hotels, should the client insist on an added layer of privacy. In this industry, like in pornography, women are paid more than men. Not sure if it gives the wage gap crusaders a reason to rejoice. Predictably, foreigner escorts bill higher than Indian ones.

Business Aids

Some nightclubs and pubs in Delhi-NCR have also established their reputation as haunts where "hot girls" are seen aplenty. One restaurant owner confides that he has a bunch of smartly turned out girls who are paid to "hang out" at his property to lure party hoppers. The girls may or may not be involved in actual sex work, but they do play an important role in getting him daily business. In return, the girls get to party at swanky places and network with big names. Ashwin Mushran, Mumbai-based actor who occasionally doubles up as DJ, however seems surprised at such a trend. "Is it a cultural thing?" he wonders. "In Mumbai, I've not yet come across this. The places I go to as a DJ or simply to grab a beer with friends get business because of the ambience and experience they offer. I'd be very surprised if owners used women as bait." In Delhi, the city of movers and -shakers, wheelers and dealers, escorts are routinely used as ice-breakers, honey traps, currency as well as celebratory champagne. This October, a New York-based lawyer C. Edmonds Allen grabbed eyeballs by alleging that a BJP MP was honey trapped using a European escort. Allen wrote a letter to PM Narendra Modi stating that arms dealer Abhishek Verma, his erstwhile client, blackmailed the MP with visual proofs of him with foreign escorts. The politician, then a member of the -parliamentary committee on defence, allegedly shared classified information with arms manufacturers.

Preferring to remain anonymous, a senior manager at an iconic five-star hotel in the national capital shares that during winters there is a sharp rise in the number of escorts present on his property. "Delhi winters attract a lot of travellers from abroad," he says. "People travel for business, conferences and -leisure. There are deals to be closed, negotiations to be opened and generous spattering of festivity in the air. People in general want to have a good time. Escorts, too, thrive during this time of the year. They get a lot of work done smoothly."

Do big hotels thus get a bad name for having escorts around? "Yes, hotels get branded as such. We are trained over the years to spot and restrict escorts," he says, proudly

claiming, "Most of us hoteliers can even intuit about an escort on our premises, but we deny access only when we are very sure as the stakes are really high." He recalls how he had to profusely apologise to a leading actress who was occupying a premium suite in his hotel with her family when she was mistaken for a hooker by a -security guard.

Confirming gender bias in the trade, the manager admits they are not trained to spot male escorts. "Very rarely do we come across women checking into hotels and bringing gigolos along." When asked about the "bartender pick-ups", he recalls, "As a young trainee, I was approached by a couple. The husband admitted to being impotent and wanted me to have sex with the wife, while he watched. It seemed so bizarre. They were almost sure I would fall for

the idea." The male desire is seen as a surplus and commercial sex work is pegged firmly on this idea.

What does buying sex do to men? And what about women's fantasies of freedom? Nishtha Gautam traces the contours of 'prostitution by choice'



# PM Narendra Modi's Mastery Of The Message To Be Tested As India Enters 2017: Foreign Media

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will go into 2017 watchful but unbowed.

In what will be a busy year of state elections, economists are slashing India's growth forecasts because Prime Minister Narendra Modi's unprecedented cash clampdown is denting demand. The experiment has missed its first marker of success and the almost-daily regulatory flip flops are enraging citizens.

Yet, analysts point to the fact that India hasn't seen bloody riots of the kind witnessed in Venezuela, which followed PM Modi in banning higher-value banknotes before it reversed the move. Perhaps most importantly, a fractured opposition hasn't been able to capitalize on the social pain triggered by the world's most sweeping currency policy change in decades.

"So far there has been no successful mobilization of public opinion against demonetization," said Sanjaya Baru, New Delhi-based director at the International Institute of Strategic Studies and media adviser to Narendra Modi's predecessor, who's written books analyzing former administrations. "Though we can't say what's going to happen in the future, at least so far it would seem like Modi is on top."

The move tests PM Modi's reputation as the master of the message. He has touted the cash ban as India's strongest step against tax evasion and graft in a nation where rising economic inequality helped him sweep to power with the biggest electoral mandate in 30 years.

PM Narendra Modi on Nov. 8 banned 500 and 1,000 rupee notes, removing 86 percent of currency in circulation. With TVs beaming pictures of serpentine queues spilling out of banks and newspapers carrying stories of rural distress, he pleaded with Indians to give him until Dec. 30 to ease the strife.

Here's the impact: India's

economy is projected to grow 6.5 percent October-December instead of the 7.8 percent economists had predicted earlier. Moody's Investors Service says asset quality at Indian banks — reeling under a pile of bad loans — will weaken. Small businesses, the biggest creators of jobs, are estimated to forfeit transactions worth \$9 billion.

International observers



such as former U.S. Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers and former World Bank Chief Economist Kaushik Basu have criticized Modi's move.

"Even if consumption revives quickly on the back of remonetization, investment could remain muted for longer," said Pranjul Bhandari, Mumbai-based economist at HSBC Holdings Plc. "The output gap, that is the slack in the economy, will likely remain negative for two quarters longer than we had initially estimated, making it unattractive for investors."

Medium as Message

And while the potential impact on state polls due in 2017 is not yet clear, the subdued outlook hasn't dented the performance of Narendra Modi's party in municipal elections over the past month.

One reason could be his ability to channel his message

via social media, as President-elect Donald Trump does, allowing Narendra Modi to speak directly to the public without any media filter. "This shows the importance people attach to good governance," PM Modi tweeted on Dec. 20 of the election results.

He, however, hasn't held a single national press conference since taking office and interviews are vetted. Instead, Narendra Modi relies on public speeches and has

used the medium more than 10 times since Nov. 8 to defend demonetization.

Incorruptible

Narendra Modi's speeches brim with rhetorical flourish and his bold cash clampdown became important part of his narrative as he approached the half way mark in his term early November.

"Modi presented himself as someone with fire in the belly, willing to change things in the country," said Ullekh NP, author of *War Room: The People, Tactics and Technology Behind Narendra Modi's 2014 Win*. "People at least for now believe his message; that he's incorruptible, that he has no family, that he's focused on the nation. But unlike an election campaign, where promises suffice, here there's prolonged hardship for people."

Support for Narendra Modi will waver if opposition parties form alliances in Uttar Pradesh, Ullekh said by phone from the key electoral state.

Shifting Goalposts

Narendra Modi's skill in rebranding has allowed him to recast his message even as massive deposits of old notes being turned in at banks robbed him of his main reason for the demonetization.

Indians have deposited 13 trillion rupees of the 15.4

target black money. Leaders from the main opposition Indian National Congress party said they'll have to hold smaller rallies in Uttar Pradesh due to the cash clampdown. The state's Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav, from the Samajwadi Party, said he's sure to win because the lines of harassed citizens queuing up at cash machines will now shift to vote for him at polling booths.

Faith and Fear

Uttar Pradesh is due to vote by mid-May. It is India's most populous state and the biggest contributor to farm output. Elections will be held before that in four other states, including Punjab, called the 'bread basket of India.'

"Farmers are hurting," said Ajay Vir Jakhar, chairman of lobby group Farmers' Forum and grandson, son, and brother of Congress politicians. "Demonetization will have limited impact politically because opposition isn't able to take advantage of the pain."

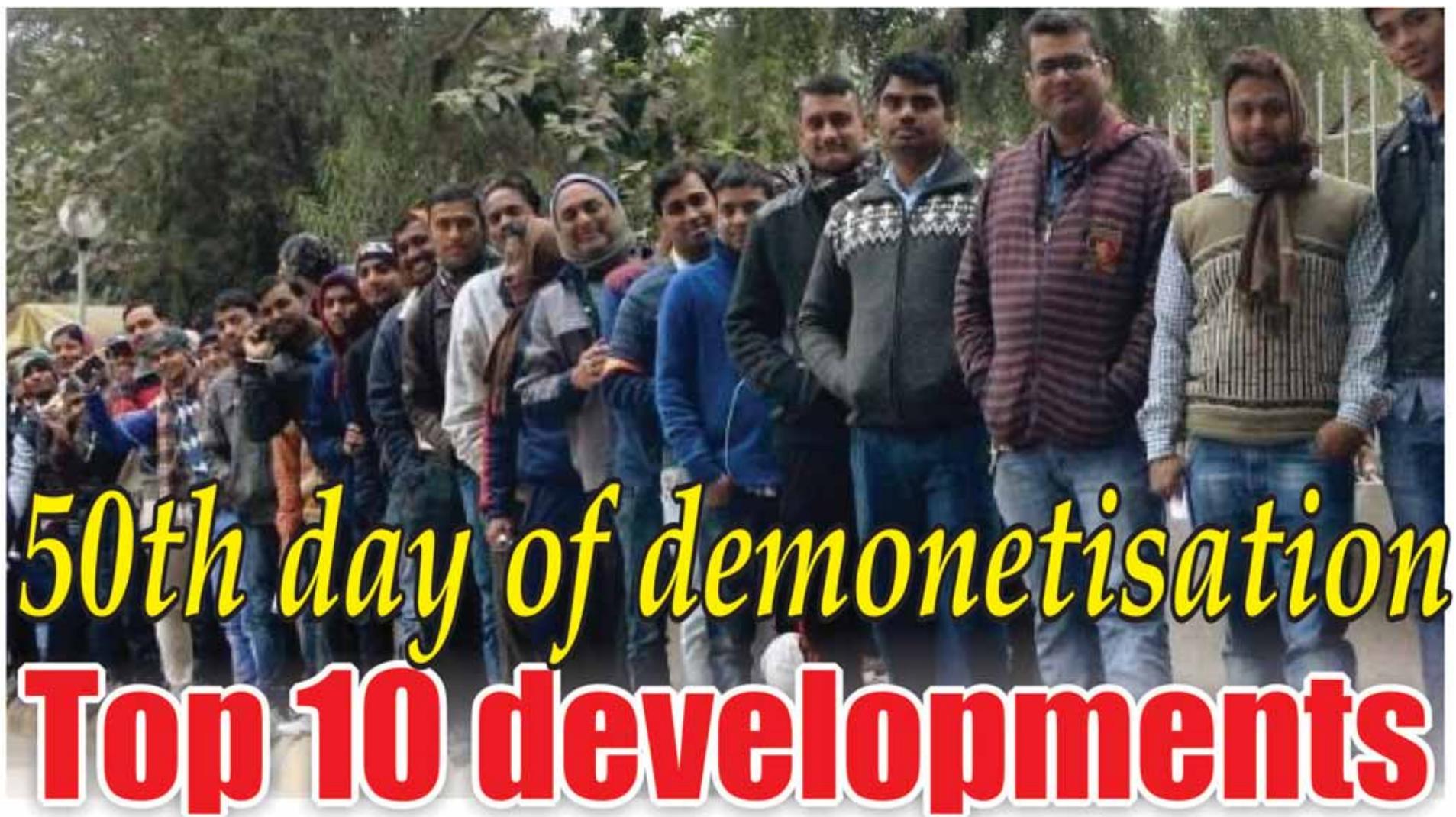
Investors will focus on the government's first growth forecast for the year through March — due Jan. 7 — to assess the economic impact. Meanwhile, tax officials are raiding homes and offices across the country in a China-style crackdown on corruption, seizing bundles of currency notes and stashes of gold and jewelry.

Narendra Modi should follow his cash ban by lowering corporate and income tax rates in the budget — likely Feb. 1 — to encourage compliance, said analysts at Kotak Institutional Equities Ltd., adding that critics of his Nov. 8 decision are underestimating the "psychological" impact of the step. The move "will reinforce the faith of the general population in the government's efforts to clean up the system and instill fear in a section of the society, which hitherto has had little regard for the laws of the land," they wrote in a Dec. 19 report. "Faith and fear."

trillion rupees invalidated by Narendra Modi's move, undermining the government's estimate that about 5 trillion rupees of this was unaccounted money and wouldn't reach banks.

"It seems very likely that the original aim of the demonetization drive — forcing illicit wealth holders to come to light — has already very nearly failed," said Vaninder Singh, an analyst at NatWest Markets, adding that this has pushed the government to change its commentary to fostering a cashless economy. "At what level of economic pain will we see an inflection in Modi's ratings? The answer depends upon how 'patriotic sacrifice' interacts with economic pain."

Political rivals allege that the shifting goalposts indicate Narendra Modi's Nov. 8 decision was never intended to



# 50th day of demonetisation

## Top 10 developments

### 1. New notes

After Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced demonetisation, the Reserve Bank began to release new Rs 2,000 and Rs 500 notes to banks for distribution to the public. Citizens were told they had till December 30 to deposit their defunct bills in banks, or exchange them for new notes. However, it was later announced that there wouldn't be any over-the-counter exchange of demonetised notes after midnight of November 24, but that deposits could still be made. An RBI circular released on December 19 (which was later withdrawn for KYC-compliant citizens) said that deposits of old notes worth more than Rs 5,000 could be made just once till December 30, if the depositor could satisfactorily explain them. Old notes could still be used for some purposes, such as buying LPG cylinders and railway tickets, till December 15. Currently, the daily withdrawal limit at ATMs is Rs 2,500 and the weekly withdrawal limit is Rs 24,000.

### 2. Political parties: Many, but not all, oppose ban

While the government has strongly defended its decision, several Opposition parties - including the Aam Aadmi Party and the Trinamool Congress - have opposed the note ban. Former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh intervened in the Rajya Sabha, describing the government's move as "monumental mismanagement."

*It's been an eventful fifty days since Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced on November 8 that the old Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 notes would no longer be legal tender. Here's a round-up of the major developments that have occurred till date, in 10 points.*

The Parliament's Winter Session was marked by repeated adjournments, and the logjam in the legislature prompted President Pranab Mukherjee to remark at an event: "For God's sake, do your job (in a remark directed at MPs)."

However, some political parties, such as Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's Janta Dal (United) have supported the move.

### 3. Encouraging cashless transactions

Since demonetisation, the government has stressed on the importance of moving towards a cashless economy. For example, on November 22, the RBI doubled the balance limit of semi-closed Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPIs) to Rs 20,000. On December 8, the Finance Ministry announced eleven measures to promote cashless transactions, including a 0.75 per cent discount on purchases of petrol and diesel (at Central Government Petroleum PSUs) using credit or debit cards, e-wallets and mobile wallets.

### 4. Lucky draws to encourage digital payments

Earlier this week, the government also launched two lucky draws - Digi Dhan Yojana (for businessmen) and Lucky

Grahak Yojana (for consumers) - to incentivise cashless transactions. Winners will be selected on a daily and weekly basis under the Lucky Grahak Yojana and weekly basis under the Digi-Dhan Vyapar Yojana respectively, leading up to a mega draw of Rs 1 crore on April 14, 2017, after which the scheme will be reviewed for further implementation.

### 5. I-T raids

The Income Tax department has conducted several raids across the country after demonetisation, the most high-profile of which was perhaps the one conducted at the premises of former Tamil Nadu Chief Secretary P Rama Mohana Rao and his relatives. Rs 23 lakh in new currency and Rs 6 lakh in demonetised notes were seized from the premises of some of Rao's relatives and associates, officials said. However, they didn't find any unaccounted money at the former chief secretary's office or house.

### 6. More than 3,500 I-T notices sent

Since November 8, the I-T department issued 3,589 notices to various entities for alleged tax evasion and hawala dealings, a report said on December 25. The department is set to initiate

action against an additional 67.54 lakh non-filers who carried out high-value transactions in the 2014-15 financial year, but didn't file tax returns for 2015-16, the report added.

### 7. Citizens turn watchdogs

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said during his last Mann Ki Baat address of the year that the government was using information provided by citizens to crack down on those who have unaccounted wealth. In fact, the government asked citizens to write to [blackmoneyinfo@incometax.gov.in](mailto:blackmoneyinfo@incometax.gov.in) with details about black money hoarders, and received as many as 4,000 messages as of December 20.

### 8. Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana

A new tax disclosure scheme, the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, opened on December 17, and will close on March 31 next year. The scheme provides for 50 per cent tax and surcharge on declarations of unaccounted cash deposited in banks. Declarants also have to park a quarter of the total sum in a non-interest bearing deposit for four years. Information disclosed under the scheme won't be used for prosecution, Revenue Secretary Hasmukh Adhia

said.

### 9. Now, action against benami property holders

Prime Minister Modi said during his Mann Ki Baat address that his government would make a "dormant," decades-old law against benami property "operational" in the days to come. "Whatever is required to strengthen the institutions to make the benami law more effective, we will do that," a top finance ministry official said.

### 10. Penalty for possession of demonetised notes

The government will soon issue an ordinance imposing a penalty on possession of defunct notes after December 30. Possession of demonetised notes will only be permitted for the purpose of research and numismatics. However, the ordinance - which the Cabinet is expected to clear in a day or two - will have a clause allowing people to deposit defunct notes at RBI branches (as promised by the government) after giving reasons for doing so. The ordinance is necessary to complete the legal process of demonetisation as banks will stop accepting deposits of old currency after Friday.

# Fidelity Isn't Boring Any Longer

*Modern couples are more aware of the impermanence of marriage in India's transitioning culture. Yet, monogamy is not out of style, writes Smita Deshmukh*



'Chastity is the most unnatural of all sexual perversions'. It's a line made famous by Aldous Huxley, and couldn't hold more truth in India today—more than half a century after the death of the English writer-philosopher. There seems to be an explosion of adultery in this ancient land. A flurry of no-strings-attached, casual sex-oriented, convenient dating apps, Tinder and Grinder, to cite two examples, encourage (like its peers) a popular trend of open relationships, where both partners explore other people, sexually as well as physically, with the tacit consent of their partners. More and more people seem to be venturing outside the stringent and sacred lakshmanrekha of their sacred marriages—an institution increasingly being viewed as an outdated, safe and boring business arrangement, predominantly based on procreation and patriarchy.

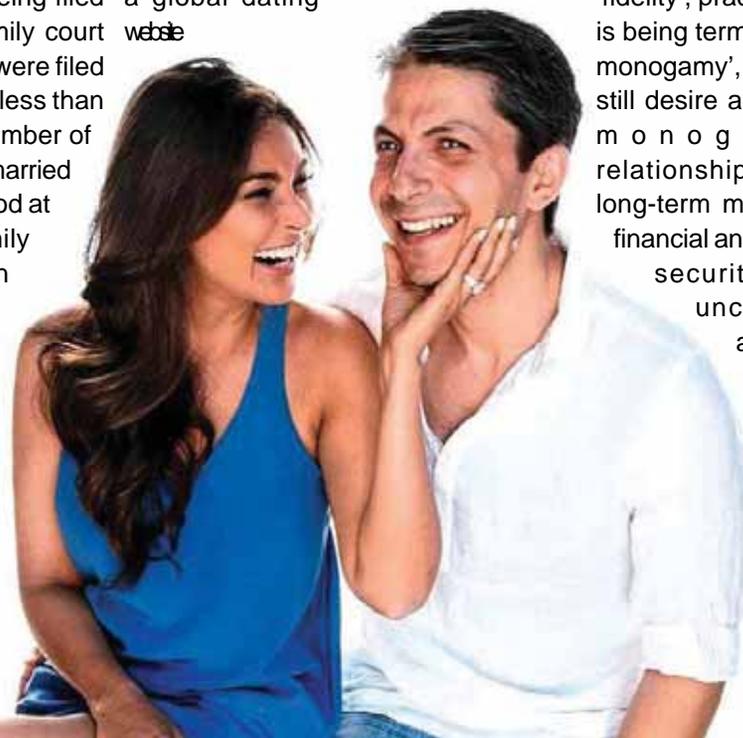
So, whether we like it or not, in morally high-handed and chaste India, which still places a huge premium on a woman's virginity and the birth of a male heir, many couples are increasingly far less burdened with the legal, moral and social criticisms and expectations around marriage that existed, for instance, in our parents' generation. No wonder then that divorce rates are staggeringly high now. Where the divorce rate was just 1 in 1,000 ten years ago, and is still a relatively low 13 per 1,000—as compared to the US

average of 500 per 1,000, a Hindustan Times report of January 2015 claims 11,667 cases of divorce were filed in Mumbai in 2104, up from 5,245 cases in 2010. In 2014, while Kolkata registered 8,347 cases of divorce, witnessing a 35% increase from the 2,388 divorce cases in 2003. Lucknow saw 2,000 divorce cases being filed in the UP capital's family court in 2014. Of these, 900 were filed by couples married for less than a year. In 2009, the number of cases filed by couples married for less than a year stood at 300. Three more family courts were opened in Bangalore to cater to a growing demand, taking the number of such legal platforms to six.

Relationship counsellors and divorce lawyers attribute a number of reasons for recent collapse of conventional relationships—a declining influence of the erstwhile Bharatiya parivar and the dissolution of the joint-family structure that upheld traditional social values; increasing psychological and financial independence of women; late marriages resulting in a stubborn reluctance to compromise or change fixed ways and lifestyles. Earlier, couples would go to fix their fractured marriages; today young couples actively seek counseling more to convince their family or partner that a divorce is the right decision.

In a consumerist world of instant gratification and social-media dominance, especially for the YOLO ('you live only once') generation where relationships are virtual and voyeuristic, fidelity—the word, much like the concept—is largely outdated. At least, in urban India. A survey conducted by Ashley Madison, a global dating

website



for those who are married or already in a relationships that launched in January 2014 in India, revealed that 76% of Indian women and 61% of men did not even think that infidelity to be a sin or immoral. Responses (from ten cities) were collected for this survey from 75,321 respondents; 80% were married. What's more, 81% of men and 68% women claimed their affairs have had a positive effect on their marriage.

Modern couples are more acutely aware of the gnawing impermanence of marriage in our transitioning culture, seemingly

poised to witness a burgeoning sexual revolution. Yet in this cynical world, not all seem to be jaded emotionally or are seeking greener pastures. Instead, they are apparently expressing a keener interest in seeking to protect their romantic relationship. How? By renegotiating what they mean by

'fidelity', practising what is being termed as 'new monogamy', where they still desire a committed relationship, with the long-term mutual trust, financial and emotional security and unconditional attachment

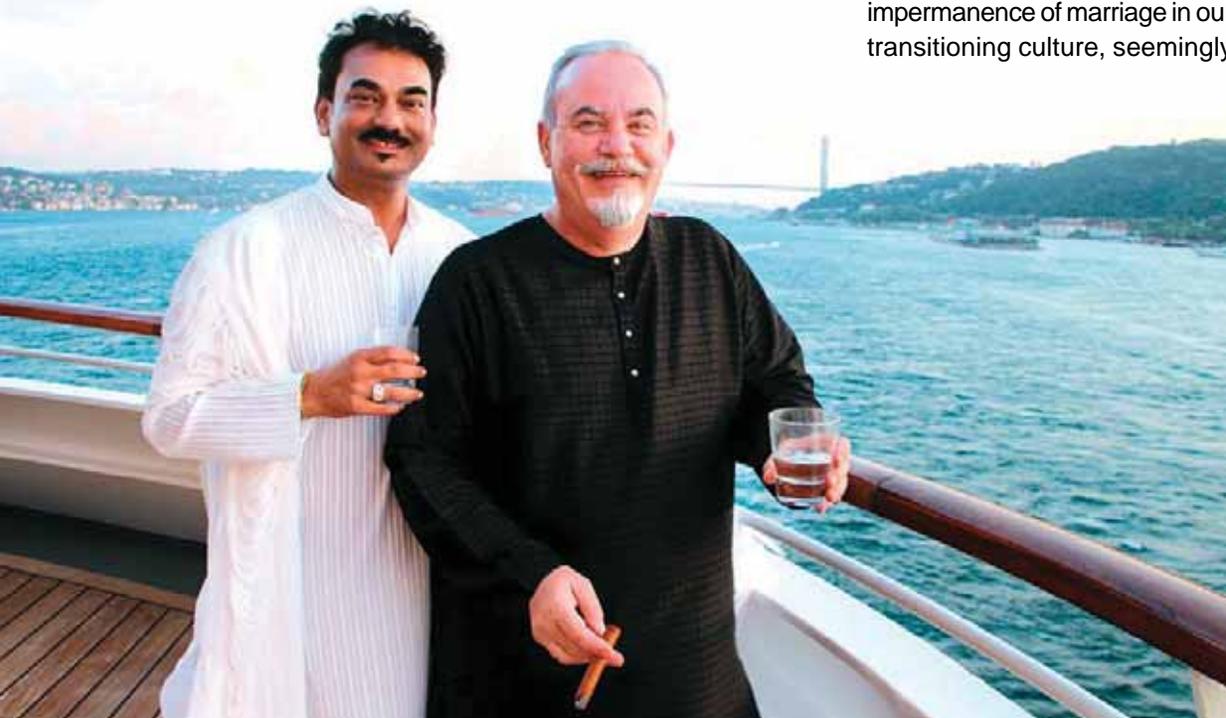
that traditional monogamy promised, even if it didn't always deliver, by modifying what their

conditional perceptions of emotional and sexual 'commitment', 'fidelity' and 'monogamy' were, in the first place. Today's marital attachments thus involve a more fluid concept of connection with each partner assuming that the other is, and will continue as the main attachment, and that outside attachments of one kind or another are allowed, as long as they don't threaten the primary connection.

Take the case of Sunayna and Nitish Desai, a much-married, progressive, liberal couple based in Mumbai. The 32-year-old wife

calls herself a workaholic corporate lawyer, while Nitish, a year older, is into the garment business. A decade-long marriage later, the couple confesses to being on what they term as a self-imposed 'break'—staying apart for four months to discover how they actually felt about each other. It's—as they note—a healthy practice that commenced five years ago when Sunayna travelled to Germany for nine months, a trip she claims 'helped' her marriage. "Love is a very complex word, which I don't quite understand. We've had our ups and downs and moving out for few months was my idea," she admits, sans any lingering guilt or remorse. Adds Nitish: "We knew that in this period, we'd meet other people. We were open about it and it did happen. But eventually, we knew we were coming back to each other. The experience has taught us so much."

To Nitish, marriages move from high level of physical intimacy to friendship and companionship. "Mutual respect is key. In traditional marriages, one partner is the leader and the other the provider. But we are both equal: Sunayna has a great career and she loves her work. When personal growth happens, marriages will also grow," he explains when asked what keeps the duo committed despite the experimental time out.



# For Russians, Bleak Realities at Home

MOSCOW — Russian hackers have been making front pages recently in the United States and Europe, but few people in Russia seem to care or even notice. The Russia of international media and the Russia that we, Russians, know from the inside could not be further apart.

Abroad, President Vladimir V. Putin is seen to be upsetting the post-Cold War balance of power in Europe, pushing the United States out of the Middle East and instigating a nationalist-demagogic resurgence across the Western world. Having just helped install an American president of his choosing, he has even more king-making opportunities awaiting him in 2017, in elections set for the Netherlands, France and Germany.

This, at least, is what one gleans about Mr. Putin's abilities from the Western press. But little about these feats, whether they are exaggerated or not, resounds domestically. When reported in Russia, they come across as part of the general white noise that Moscow's state-run media create every day. Most news on Russia's heavily controlled television, the media of choice for most Russians, is international, not domestic. But when the Vladimir Putin of the reports from Aleppo or Tokyo is offered to the audience, Russians see him as some distant international entity whose actions have little to do with anything happening in their own lives.

Back here, it is outright scary. The latest horror is a mass poisoning in the Siberian city Irkutsk. This month 71 people were reported dead after drinking hawthorn berry tincture made with alcohol. The liquid, sold as scented bath soap, was marked "not for ingestion," but people bought it for that purpose because it was cheap — 70

rubles (\$1) a bottle. One shipment proved deadly because the alcohol in it was methanol, not the customary ethanol. Similar liquids are sold and commonly used as booze by destitute alcoholics throughout recession-ridden Russia, where even people with average incomes hoard cash and switch to cheaper goods during hard times. The cheapest legitimate vodka commands the controlled price of 190 rubles, or \$3, in grocery stores; the alcoholics at the bottom of the income chain cannot afford even counterfeit vodka, which sells at about 100 rubles (\$1.60) a bottle. The Russian Research Center of

Federal and Regional Markets for Alcohol estimates that about 10 to 12 million people fit that description. News of this sort could take up much more television time, and spark more public conversation, if it were not already being spent on the war in Syria, the refugee crisis in Europe or primaries in France. Those events are what feature prominently in the media diet fed to every Russian. If the domestic agenda really were the center of public attention, people would have to face the reality not just of pauper drunkards, but also of children dying in a foster home because of a lack of funding. In that newsworthy event last

August, also from Irkutsk, a state-run foster home had too little money to provide adequate treatment for its young charges, three of whom died during a dysentery epidemic.

Incomes are declining, and poverty is on the rise. The economic slump that started in 2014 hit those least protected. Since 2013, the number of people living below the official poverty line has grown from 15.5 million to 21.4 million this year — 14.6 percent of the population. The official threshold of poverty currently stands at 9,889 rubles a month (\$160). If a European formula for poverty measurement (60 percent of median income) were used, the figure would be much higher.

This is the unseemly flip side of the agile and unpredictable power that the world sees on television screens. It would be tempting to think that Russia's newly assertive and costly foreign policy was a direct reason for the failing economy and deteriorating quality of life. In fact, the cause-and-effect sequence may be the other way around. The annexation of Crimea and Moscow's later aggressive moves were not just responses to one particular event, a Western-instigated revolution in Ukraine. They were natural consequences of the Kremlin's decision to put Russia on the kind of path it is on now.

Behind Russia's recession, which is slowly morphing into stagnation, are the weakened

price of oil in recent years and some longer-term factors, like the state's growing role in economic matters and an unwelcoming business climate. The decline started long before Moscow went into Ukraine or Syria. The systemic nature of the current crisis is underscored by the fact that even with the oil price hovering at \$50 a barrel, the Russian Finance Ministry does not project the country's economy growing faster than 1.5 percent annually, all the way to 2030.

This is a man-made situation, not destiny. Central control of what Mr. Putin calls strategic economic assets and a heavily controlled social order have been his priorities since he took power in 2000. He dismantled the fledgling competitive political scene Russia had in the late 1980s and the 1990s, got rid of most independent institutions and renationalized the economy. The share of state-owned and state-controlled companies contributing to gross national product increased from 35 percent in the early 2000s to 70 percent now. The number of state and municipal unitary enterprises tripled just from 2013 to 2015. "Russia now has the kind of state monopoly capitalism that troubled Vladimir Lenin so much more than a century ago," Boris Grozovsky, a prominent writer about the Russian economy, concluded recently in an article for The Russia File.

## Agonism: The Pain Principle

***Kinky sex isn't new in the land of Kama Sutra. Typically, BDSM challenges gender stereotypes. Here, consent is given proactively. Its power lies in our ability to withdraw it, says Jaya Sharma***

Before I joined the BDSM community at the age of 46, I never thought of myself as 'kinky'. Today, six years down the line, I wonder whether I was kinky even before I discovered this erotic practice of 'bondage domination sado masochism'. For instance, I've always loved that difficult-to-describe thing that the lal mirch kaa achar does to my mouth. And my love for the almost too-embarrassing-to-mention, Hai re hai, neend nahin aaye and lk meethi si chubhan variety of old Hindi songs and the mercifully more sophisticated, Mai Ree, Main kase kahun. What are these if not emotional masochism at play? Not to forget words like vyakul, tadapna, bekarar that I adore. And lest I be accused of being a Hindustani chauvinist, quick WhatsApp messages to friends reveal that there are phrases like vingal in Malayalam, byakul (almost cheating here) in Bengali, jor in

Marwari, and hook or tees in Punjabi. I'm not sure about English though, as it doesn't seem to lend itself to the 'mixedupness' of the pain-pleasure, of emotions.

In the ragas I sing as a student of Hindustani music, I've always known that discipline can enable tremendous creativity. Any raga permits only particular notes; sometimes only in a particular order. It is precisely this discipline that allows for a magical spontaneity and crazy creativity. An almost trance-like feeling overtakes me when I sing—as a medium, all I can do is to interfere thus, as little as possible with the flow of notes. These experiences are evidence perhaps that I was always kinky and that perhaps everyone is. And this makes perfect sense because life is like that—it doesn't follow straight lines, and what is kink if not a twist in the line?

Moving from the seemingly non-erotic to the sexual—it was also the love bites, my eyes being closed, hands held in a strong grip above me, that whisper in my ear demanding that I say thank you every time I reached an orgasm. Kinky, no? And these were 'pre-BDSM days'.

The point I'm making here is critical. We should not think of 'kinky', as something out there, at a safe distance away from us, something that only a certain section of 'perverted' people do using handcuffs and whips. I want to make this distinction between kinky, which I feel we all are at some level, and that which is practised by those in the BDSM community. The difference being that in BDSM we allow ourselves to be led into greater intensity by surrendering more to pleasure-in-pain, freedom-in-discipline kind of erotic energy.





(Agencies) The Prime Minister's demonetisation drive has not only hit the opposition parties but also the star-studded party circuit in the Capital, with many hotels forced to cancel their New Year Eve events as celebrities jet abroad for more money. The hotels that have not cancelled their events will only feature in-house DJs instead of the usual entourage of Bollywood



For example if a band which usually charges 3.5 lakh per gig gets a 2.5 lakh gig right now, I'd tell them to take it,' he said.

A host of shows scheduled for New Year have also been cancelled at the eleventh hour after organisers failed to arrange the cash needed to pay vendors.

'It is recession for party venues as they don't have money to pay to their vendors and to artists,' said Yogesh Dixit of YS Events.

Sources said that nearly 80-90 per cent of the bookings were done in cash.

'Table booking at nightclubs used to cost over a lakh for New Year parties, but they are down this year as most bookings were done by industrialists and builders in cash. Now they are avoiding such bookings,' said a manager of a popular night club.

Even the restaurants and bars at popular party places like Connaught place and Hauz Khass are feeling the heat of demonetisation.

'Restaurants are trying to keep the package easy on the pocket this year,' said hospitality sector veteran Umang Tewari.

Some industry experts claim

# No money, no DANCING!

*Cash ban triggers dance drought at NYE live shows in Delhi as hotels and bars cancel acts as celebs head abroad*



celebrities, leading dance troops and stand-up comedians, as most of the business is strictly cash-driven.

According to sources, no actor or international artist has

been booked to perform in Delhi and NCR so far.

The only big names confirmed so far is Punjabi singer and actor Diljit Dosanjh, who was recently seen in Uda Punjab. He will

## DISMAL PARTY SCENE THIS YEAR

- No Bollywood celebrity or international DJ is performing in Delhi
- Not only are clubs cost cutting in getting artists but DJs are being offered half of what they used to charge earlier
- Many parties which were held at banquets and farmhouses were canceled this year due to a severe cash crunch
- Belly dancers, sufi singers and international dance troops not booked for popular party joints
- Decline in print and radio advertisements as organisers opt for online promotion
- Rates of couple and stag packages down by 20%

perform at a five star hotel in Gurugram.

Artists and event organisers said that all the leading stars are either performing abroad or they have chosen not to attend any party as most venues do not have the money to pay their rates.

A source told Mail Today that an international rapper who will perform at a nightclub here had to cut his fee from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 6 lakh.

Subir Malik, pianist with the band Parikrama, said,

'Demonetisation has hit a lot of industries across the country, and business for musicians is down. It's impossible to make a new debit or credit card for everyone in such a short time.' Malik said that 95% gigs have gone to DJs, not bands, because it's more expensive to hire a band.

He said that bands are also reducing their fee this year. 'I'm telling everyone that they should go for whatever they get.

that demonetisation had very little impact on corporate and young tech savvy crowd.

'Delhi is a different market as compared to Bangalore, which is mostly cash driven.

This will set the right tone for the future forcing both organizers and party goers use digital money and bring more transparency,' said leading hospitality consultant Pravesh Pandey.

Many events have been cancelled this year, leaving city DJs with no job. Year-end is the time one makes good money but this New Year is not going to be easy for artists.

— DJ Mudit Gulati

Party joints are not quite hopeful of making good money this New Year, which is why they are cutting short on their budget – including those on artist and celebrity.

— Umang Tewari, Hospitality sector veteran

As compared to Bangalore, Delhi is a different market, which is mostly cash-driven...forcing both organisers & party goers use digital money.

— Pravesh Pandey, Hospitality consultant

### STARS OF MIDNIGHT

Diljit Dosanjh is expected to perform at a hotel in Gurugram.

The city will also see Punjabi singer Juggy D's performance.



# Reeling Under The Spell Of Star Love

*Bollywood affairs have always caught the public's imagination. Now, they have also become a marketable commodity, says Sathya Saran*

Love is no longer important as the film was whispered sweet nothings. It is a package that comes with proclamations on social media, brand endorsements, and image building. Is the Age of Innocence lost forever?

I was a kid when I first watched Madhumati. The magic of the movie stayed with me for a long time. Its songs and the misty locales the story was set in carried a strange power. The love story itself, transcending births, imprinted itself on my mind. It was my first brush with romantic love, which though second hand, made me believe that all love was for keeps, and true lovers would be born again and again to reunite through centuries. Almost as

the impact of the actors in it. Still hazy about the fact that they were images being projected on a screen, I believed them to be real, present in some inexplicable way in person, in that dark hall where I had watched the forest officer and the village girl live through the tale that was spun out.

Talking about it in school, I heard from a senior that Dilip Kumar and Vyj-a-y-a-n-thimala were indeed in love in real life too. She imparted the information with the air of one who knows much more than others, and when asked how she knew of the goings-on in far away Bombay, living as we did in

Guwahati, said she had read it in a film magazine. Her mother subscribed to one; it was printed in Bombay. So there!

I turned the information around in my mind. I remember feeling happy. It had to be so. It was as if Cinderella had found her Prince Charming. Dilip and Vyjaya-n-t-h-i-m-ala were so perfectly suited, and the story I had seen on screen could not be false!

As I grew older and wiser, I realised that film magazines often sent balloons into the sky. Some were filled with the hot air of conjecture. Others based on a stray remark, or hearsay. And though some of them could indeed be based on truth, there was no way of

knowing for sure! Rumours continued to be traded among us, through the school going years. Films had a magnetic pull, and the heroines, beautiful and distant, living through emotions that filled our senses; the heroes, debonair and dashing; peopled the canvas of our imagination as nothing else could do. So we learnt that affairs were part of the world of films.

Of course they were! Working together especially in scenic locations like Kashmir and Shimla, far away from the humdrum city; speaking romantic lines, singing songs that swore of never dying love...the setting was perfect. The spark would sometimes combust, at other times smolder quietly. Whatever the case, the smoke would find its way to the fans, eager to know anything about their screen idols. Distance made it all seem perfectly acceptable. The stars themselves, even for fans living in the same city, were people who shone bright on the screen, but twinkled only momentarily in real life. Fans could catch

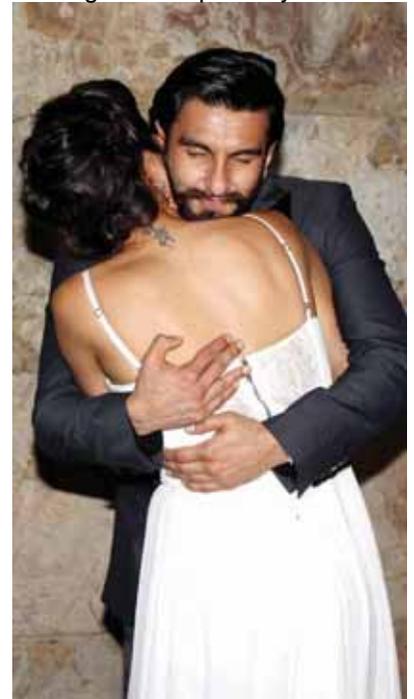
but glimpses of their idols at public events, and charity shows, or the occasional scene shot on a street, before they withdrew into the mists they had drawn around their lives.

Oh, affairs did happen. Though from a generation that frowned on film stars and thought them immoral. Shobhana Samrath defied tradition further, by moving out of her married home with her daughters, to live with actor Motilal. The liaisons were inevitable, and numerous. Ashok Kumar and Nalini Jaywant, Dev Anand and Suraiya, Guru Dutt and Waheeda Rehman, Dilip and Madhubala, Raj Kapoor and Nargis, but only those permitted into the stars' inner circle could separate the grains of truth about the stories that linked them together from the chaff of conjecture. Sometimes, the fans almost willed the star teams to pair up in real life, creating perfect but imaginary liaisons; at other times the real life chemistry sizzling on screen gave the secret away. It kept the public's interest in the stars alive, added a dimension to the films they starred in, created a talking point. Beyond that, well, there was the business of daily life.

In fact, the older school of stars put such emphasis on privacy, that Dilip Kumar, in his recent autobiography, dismissed his rather publicly known involvement with Madhubala as merely professional admiration. Gentlemen after all, did not kiss and tell. Even affairs as star crossed as the one between Zeenat Aman and an already married Sanjay Khan, which had the film media go ballistic over the very public slap delivered to Zeenat by Sanjay, costing her an eye, created only very contained ripples. And I personally remember one long awkward session at the Femina Miss India where at

a preliminary contest Akshay Kumar sat tongue tied, saying little, and the other three judges were as uncomfortable. Not being an avid reader of gossip magazines I had placed Akshay and his lady loves, past and present, Shilpa Shetty, Pooja Batra and Twinkle, in the same panel! Later, the fact that none of the panelists articulated the discomfort, even privately, made me admire their sangfroid. And as the recently released book on Rekha mentions, while the actress did nothing to hide her feelings for the object of her adoration; he, on his part maintained a stiff upper-lipped silence. And the media as well as the fans are still guessing if it was to B or not to B!

Whether the affair did indeed happen, causing Krishna Kapoor to move out of her home into a hotel along with her children, as Rishi avows, or not, the fact remains that it did not make national headlines. The 'publicity stunt'; if it was only that, must have got notice only from the gossip columnists. And Raj Kapoor, uncanny showman that he was, might indeed have welded fact and fiction to push his film up by a notch by leaking information of an affair, knowing then, as we do now, that there is nothing like bad publicity.



(Agencies) Watched Aamir Khan's "best film ever" yet? Think every reviewer worth his salt in this part of the world got so swayed by Dangal that they glossed over the film's weaknesses? The jury is still out there on this, but some foreign reviewers haven't been as kind to the film, a few even slamming it for being formulaic and crowd-pleasing. Based on the life of former wrestler Mahavir Singh Phogat, Dangal is the story of a father who fights against the society and its norms to raise his daughters as tough, medal-winning wrestlers. While Aamir Khan plays Mahavir in the film directed by Nitesh Tiwari, Fatima Sana Shaikh and Sanya Malhotra play his two elder daughters Geeta and Babita Phogat.

Let us take a look at what the critics have to say: Slamming it for being too formulaic, New York Times' Ben Kenigberg writes that wherever Dangal goes, "it goes there in the maximalist Bollywood style, with emotions set to full blast and its heart firmly on its sleeve."

Calling Dangal "a one-trick domestic sports drama that drags on for two hours and 40 minutes", Owen Gleiberman of Variety invokes other Aamir Khan films (Lagaan and PK) to highlight the length of the film, but adds that Dangal does not quite justify it. "If the movie has a theme, it's that Mahavir is a patriarchal thinker forced, by circumstance, to move into the 21st century. He's a lot like India itself," Owen writes, adding, "That means, among other things, that he's going to treat

**The copy of Dangal leaked on Facebook was clearly a camera print recorded live inside a theatre.**



## Dangal: This is what international media is saying about the Aamir Khan film

his daughters with no mercy. When they're teenagers, he subjects them to a grueling training regimen (worst restriction: no spicy food), and the defining moment comes when he cuts off their hair. It's a lot like a Marine cut; as the two see it, they've been shorn (tearfully) of their identities, which their father will now rebuild from the ground up. There is — or could have been — a resonance to all of this. But Nitesh Tiwari, the director of "Dangal," works strictly on the surface." Labelling Dangal as

"crowd-pleasing" film, Mike McCahill writes for The Guardian, "As with most of this Khan's crowdpleasers, it's acutely attuned to wider

realities: beyond the mat, the Singhs encounter superstition, child brides and institutional slackness, each sidebar reflecting a social

struggle." "Very solid, very sound entertainment, with thumpingly good Pritam songs that make Eye of the Tiger seem like pipsqueakery," Mike adds.

## Jyoti And Kiran Matheroo, Toronto Sisters, Arrested In Nigeria Over Sex Extortion Scandal: Report

(Agencies) Two Toronto sisters reportedly embroiled in an international sex scandal have been taken into Nigerian prison custody over cyberbullying and extortion charges. Jyoti and Kiran Matharoo are facing allegations they're high-society prostitutes accused of running of a website aimed to extort money from Nigeria's wealthiest people, according to Nigerian news site Politics Nigeria. The Matharoo sisters were caught with laptops and iPads containing videos of themselves having sex with men, according to CityNews Toronto. The two allegedly recorded conversations and sexual trysts with their high-profile clients. It's claimed they used a third party to blackmail targets to pay thousands of dollars for their privacy, or face release of the material on the sisters' website.



**xXx will release in India before anywhere else. Deepika reveals date**



(Agencies) Deepika Padukone tweeted on Wednesday that her upcoming Hollywood debut, xXx: The Return of Xander Cage will release in India on January 14 - a full week before anywhere else in the world. The film was

initially scheduled for a January 20 release, but with the added interest of having an Indian face in among the international cast, the release date has been switched.

xXx has been steadily building steam for the past few months, and by intelligently targeting the Indian audiences, first with images from the sets, and then with special Deepika-centric trailers, they've established a solid awareness for the film. Releasing films in India earlier than anywhere else isn't a new concept. Inferno was released in India before the US, thanks to Irrfan being a part of it. Even The Jungle Book was given an early release. Directed by DJ Caruso, the movie also stars Vin Diesel in the title role, and an international cast which includes Donnie Yen, Nina Dobrev, Ruby Rose and Samuel L Jackson.

## Zeenat Aman reveals what she feels about Sunny Leone's version of Laila O Laila

(Agencies) Veteran actor Zeenat Aman, who had grooved to Laila O Laila song from Qurbani, is happy that this song is recreated by Sunny Leone for the movie Raees.

The makers of Shah Rukh Khan starrer Raees have recreated the iconic song with Sunny Leone and SRK.

Dancing on the tunes of the new version of Laila Main Laila Sunny has added her own style to the song. The 65-year-old actor has been out of the country but is delighted as she feels the makers of Raees have done a wonderful job with the



song, a media released said. have been remixed. A whole new generation gets the chance to hear it," Aman said.



# Here are Bollywood's eight highest grossing films of 2016



Most of the big Bollywood releases of the year are weighed in terms of their net box office collection, both by the audience and the trade pundits.

A film's initial box office run determines the length of its life in the multiplexes rather than the novelty of the subject or the innovative approach of the director.

Established superstars keep churning out similar films every year and refrain from experimenting with their characters. This year, Bollywood was no different. But while some films made money, some of those that

about Salman Khan's charisma at the box office and he just keeps upping his game with every film. It's debatable whether the content of his films have become better, but his numbers are always staggering. In a year when no other Hindi film garnered even Rs 200 crore, Sultan earned more than Rs 300 crore.

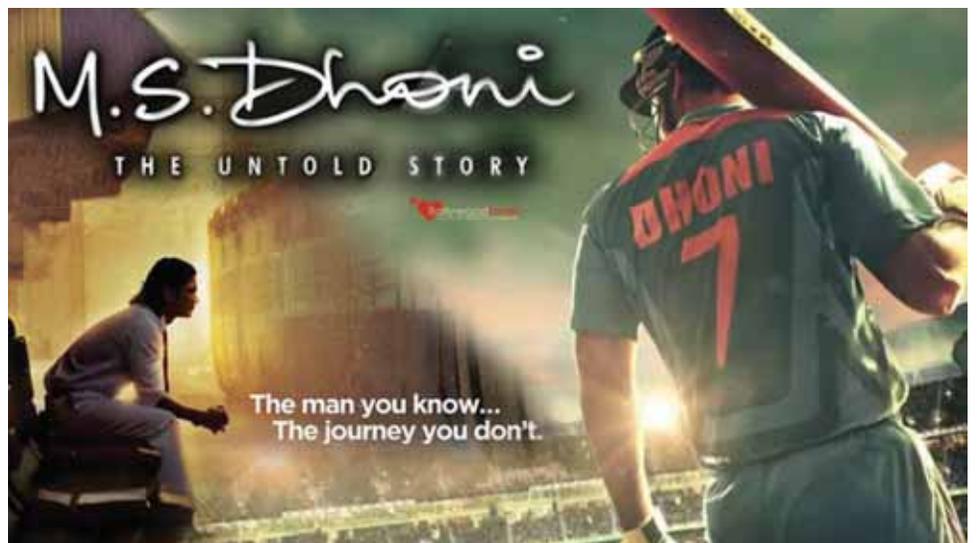
MS Dhoni – The Untold Story: Sushant Singh Rajput delivered the performance of a lifetime in this biopic on India cricket captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni. The film received mixed reviews

f l o p p e d include many w h i c h released after t h e government demonetised Rs 500 and Rs 1000 bank notes in November, triggering a cash crunch. Still 8 films crossed the Rs 100-crore mark in 2016. Sultan: A lot has been said and written about Salman Khan's charisma at the box office and he just keeps upping his game with every film. It's debatable whether the content of his films have become better, but his numbers are always staggering. In a year when no other Hindi film garnered even Rs 200 crore, Sultan earned more than Rs 300 crore.

but scored well at the box office. At Rs 132.85 cr, MS Dhoni is the second highest grosser of 2016. Airlift, Rustom and Housefull 3: If there is one actor who can stand up to the mighty Khans of Bollywood, it's Akshay Kumar. Three of his films did phenomenal business this year. Airlift (Rs 129 cr), Rustom (127.42 cr) and Housefull 3 (Rs 107.70 cr) are at number 3, 4 and 6 in this list of moolah raking films.

Ae Dil Hai Mushkil: Apart from Anurag Kashyap's Uda Punjab, Karan Johar's Ae Dil Hai Mushkil turned out to be the most controversial film of

the year. First it was Aishwarya Rai's sensuous the films scenes with Ranbir Kapoor released on the same day, and then Raj Thackeray's October 27. Devgn proved objection to Pakistani actor trade pundits wrong by Fawad Khan's presence in making a strong impact at



it, Ae Dil Hai Mushkil saw the box office. Shivaay is its ups and down. But at number 7 with Rs 100.25 eventually this all paid in cr in its kitty. the producer's favour when Dangal has just started it ended up making Rs its journey and it has 112.39 cr. ADHM is number 5 in the list. cr in its first three days and

Shivaay: Ajay Devgn's Shivaay gave ADHM a good there is a chance that it may turn out to be the most commercially run for its money as both successful film ever.





The South Asian **INSIDER** The South Asian **INSIDER** The South Asian **INSIDER**

January						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

February						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

March						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

April						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

May						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

June						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

July						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

August						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

September						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

October						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

November						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

December						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

The South Asian **INSIDER**

**BOI**  
BOX OFFICE  
INSIDER

ਪੰਜਾਬ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀਅਤ ਦਾ ਤਰਜਮਾਨ  
**ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਦੁਨੀਆ**  
PUNJABI DUNIYA

**Ethnic Strategies**

**Josh**  
india tv