



# Donald Trump 28 Days Later

*So far, Trump has signed at least 23 executive actions, signed five bills into law, seen 12 members of his Cabinet confirmed and sent 168 (undeleted) tweets.*



STORY ON page 23

## Hammer Of Authority

*The Indian military is its own police and judge. That's the problem*

(Agencies) One way to understand our current military justice system is to read the sections in the Army Act of 1950 dealing with "offences in relation to the enemy and punishable with death" relating to warlike situations. Samples: "shamefully" abandoning a garrison or a defence position, casting away arms, cowardice, assisting the enemy, putting up the white flag of surrender, spreading rumours that may create alarm, a sentry who "sleeps upon his post or is intoxicated" in times of war. (Contd on page 22)



## Hundreds of Illegal Immigrants rounded up for Deportation in 7 states

(Agencies) Washington - The Homeland Security Department said Monday that 680 people were arrested in roundups last week targeting immigrants living illegally in the United States. The figure is far below the totals of similar raids conducted under the Obama administration.



The raids have left immigrant communities worried about stepped-up enforcement efforts and the White House taking credit for arrests. But Homeland Security described the roundups as routine. DHS Secretary John Kelly said Immigration and Customs Enforcement targeted immigrants who are a threat to public safety, including convicted criminals and gang members. He said 75 percent of those arrested were criminals, some of whom had been convicted of homicide and aggravated sexual assault.

ICE officials said 161 people from 13 countries were arrested in the Los Angeles area, all but 10 of whom were convicted criminals.

## How San Diego Built a Bridge Over the Wall



*A simple pedestrian crossing created the world's first true binational airport, and boosted the economies on both sides of the border.*

(Agencies) San Diego : Around lunchtime two days before Donald Trump's presidential inauguration, some 200 business and civic leaders from San Diego and Tijuana, Mexico, gathered in a hotel

by the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce. As the assembled professionals, decked out in business-casual attire and speaking a smattering of Spanish and English, munched on

ballroom in downtown San Diego for an event hosted by the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce. As the assembled professionals, decked out in business-casual attire and speaking a smattering of Spanish and English, munched on cold—not to say rubbery—chicken and green salad and sipped iced tea, the event's keynote speaker, a UCLA economist named Lee Ohanian, delivered a pessimistic message about the man who was on everybody's mind. Trump's plan to tax imports from Mexico would amount to "shooting [us] in the foot," (Contd on page 23)

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# Record 27 US lawmakers to visit India this month

(Agencies) Washington : Washington may be wracked by internecine political battles, but when it comes to India, love is in the air. A record number of 27 US lawmakers will visit India this month in two separate delegations, it was announced at a Congressional reception on Tuesday, reflecting one of the rare bipartisan mandates in a fractious town - support for stronger ties with New Delhi.

One delegation of 19 lawmakers will visit New Delhi and Hyderabad from February 20 to 25 to discuss US-India strategic ties under the aegis of Aspen Institute. Another CoDel (Congressional Delegation) of eight members will visit New Delhi and Bangalore from February 20 to 23. Together they will constitute the arguably the largest group of US lawmakers to visit any country at one time. There have been previous such

large visits to India, most notably in 2013 when 21 lawmakers visited for an Aspen Congressional program to examine policy challenges for US in South Asia. But the fact that this is happening at time Washington is riven with rancorous partisanship in the early weeks of the Trump administration is not lost on anyone, least of all the lawmakers themselves. At a Capitol Hill reception "to celebrate India's engagement with the 115th US Congress," Steny Hoyer, the House Democratic Whip, spoke of the bipartisan support for the India relationship and emphasized cooperation on security issues between the two countries, while Republican Congressman Dana Rohrabacher zoned in on the importance of addressing the threat arising from

extremist radical terrorism. Others, such as Texas's Pete Olsen had business opportunities (particularly energy exports from his home turf of Houston) on the mind. But the overwhelming sentiment was one of goodwill towards a fellow democracy with a large market. The Congressional sorties are also seen as an important building block leading up to a visit to US later this year by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Instead of rushing to Washington DC as leaders of many US allies and friends have done (leaders of Britain, Japan, Israel among them), New Delhi clearly prefers a slower, more deliberative process involving a wider canvas, backed by grassroots and legislative support. "The visit would let these lawmakers first hand see for themselves the political vibrancy of

India, the economic reforms that are happening, and also for them to identify potential areas of engagement," Navtej Sarna, India's new ambassador to the US who came to Washington just days before the November 8 election, told the gathering. Sarna has had a brief meeting with President Trump at a reception for foreign ambassadors, even as Indian officials have quietly begun connecting with their US counterparts as the new administration begins filling in posts vacated by previous Obama appointees. The Trump administration has appointed Brig. Robin Fontes, till recently the Defence Attache at the US embassy in New Delhi (and the first female attache at that) as the new new Senior Director for the South Asia region at the National Security Council.

## Florist Discriminated Against Gay Couple, Washington Supreme Court Rules

(Agencies) Seattle— A florist who refused to sell flowers for a same-sex wedding cannot claim religious belief as a defense under the state's anti-discrimination laws, Washington's high court said Thursday, in a case that has been watched around the nation by religious and civil rights groups.

The unanimous ruling by the nine-member state Supreme Court, which a lawyer for the florist said would be appealed to the United States Supreme Court, addressed sweeping questions about public accommodation, artistic expression and free speech.

But at its heart was a very human story about Arlene's Flowers in the small city of Richland, in southeast Washington, and what happened there in 2013 when Robert Ingersoll and Curt Freed started planning their wedding. The shop's owner, Barronelle Stutzman, knew that Mr. Ingersoll and Mr. Freed were gay and had sold them flowers for years, but then refused to provide flowers for their wedding. Her Christian faith, which defined marriage as between a man and a woman, created a line, she said, that she could not cross.

But in affirming a lower court's finding, the Supreme Court said flatly that it agreed with the couple — flowers were not really the point.

## New York Jets' Darrelle Revis faces assault and robbery charges

(Agencies) New York Jets cornerback Darrelle Revis faces five pending charges, including two counts of aggravated assault, after allegedly being involved in a fight with two men last weekend. According to a Pittsburgh police statement and a court document, the 31-year-old Revis also is facing charges of robbery, terroristic threats, conspiracy to commit aggravated assault after the incident on Sunday at 2.43am. Revis' attorney, Blaine Jones, said in a statement on Thursday that Revis was "physically assaulted while at that location by a group of at least five people." He adds that the Jets cornerback "feared for his safety" and sought medical attention. Jones told The Associated Press once a warrant is issued, he will arrange for Revis to turn himself in. "One of the other guys initiated



physical contact," Jones said. "Darrelle was walking away. He was in fear for his life and fear for his safety."

Police say the alleged fight started when a 22-year-old man from Kittanning, Pennsylvania, not identified in the statement, spotted Revis walking along East Carson Street. After Revis confirmed he was the NFL player, the man started

recording the interaction. Revis grabbed the phone and tried to delete the video. Another 21-year-old man from Ross Township tried to help the other man, but Revis tossed the phone into the road, the statement says. An argument ensued, ending with another man helping Revis, according to the police statement. Police say the 22-year-old man and the 21-year-old man claimed they were punched and knocked out. According to police, the two men regained consciousness and spoke to authorities. In his statement, Jones said that Revis, an Aliquippa native, was in the Pittsburgh area to visit family and friends last weekend. During the time of the incident, Jones said Revis "went by a location in the Southside that he is in the process of developing." That is when, according to Jones, Revis was assaulted.

## Republican Senator thinks Donald Trump will not weaken H-1B visa system

(Agencies) New York : A powerful Republican Senator has said he does not expect President Donald Trump to weaken the H-1B visa scheme, sought-after by Indian IT professionals, as the programme benefits Americans and the US economy.

Senator Orion Hatch, Senate Finance Committee Chairman, said that in his several meetings with Trump he had discussed the economic benefits of preserving and expanding H-1B visas programme, which is popular among Indian IT professionals.

Hatch told 'Morning Consult', a media technology company, that his time with Trump has convinced him that the President will take a pragmatic approach to H-1Bs. Anything that creates jobs, anything that moves this economy forward. And I think he can put political

feelings aside. And I expect him to, and I'll make sure he does," the Republican Senator from Utah said yesterday.

Hatch is expected to roll out a tech-focused "Innovation Agenda for the 115th Congress," in which he is likely to push for an increase in H-1B visa number.

H-1B visa is a non-immigrant visa that allows American firms to employ foreign workers in speciality occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise. The tech companies depend on it to hire tens of thousands of employees each year.

He had made a similar effort in 2015 when he introduced a bill to raise the annual cap of H-1B visas to between 115,000 to 195,000, based on market conditions.

"While some have expressed some reservations about the impact of high-

skilled immigration on American jobs, I believe we can and will be able to make a convincing case for reform. The data is on our side," said Hatch who met Trump some two weeks ago. He said Trump appears to recognise the importance of the high-skilled guest worker programme for overall job growth and economic productivity.

Hatch exuded confidence that he can convince the President that the data on H-1B visas shows how the programme benefits American workers and the US economy, the report said.

India is one of the top sources for international workers in the American tech industry, accounting for a major chunk of all H-1B visas. And any move by Trump, who has vowed to put an "America First" policy, will have an adverse impact in India.





Veer Entertainment of Long Island recently held their 2017 Valentine's Day Party at Antun's of Hicksville. Pinky Jaggi, a well know party and event organizer and a community member from Long Island organized the event. Organizers thanked Sharan Puri of Fern n Decor, Bhavna Sharma from Sarashiva , Tony Arora from Vaaho Studio, Kawal Sahni from Tmobile , Jyoti Bhatia Gupta and Indu Gajwani for MC & Mindy Manak.



## H1-B visa concerns hyped, IT industry should not get paranoid, says N Chandrasekaran



(Agencies) Tata Consultancy Services chief N Chandrasekaran said on Wednesday that concerns surrounding the H1-B visa are hyped and asked the US \$155-billion domestic IT industry not to get paranoid as these are exciting times with lots of opportunities.

Chandrasekaran, who is set to take over the chairmanship of Tata Sons next week, said at the annual Nasscom conference here this evening, "Every time there is a regulatory change or some kind of a perceived challenge, in our industry, everybody says 'there is a problem' ... and it is hyped up whether it is H1-B, whether it is increase in re-staffing." In fact, he said these are exciting times for the IT industry given the exponential demand for technology as every business reorients itself.

"Fundamentally, every business is going to be powered by technology. So, the opportunity and the demand that we are going to see is just exponential," he said.

"Change is something you have to live with. You cannot get overly paranoid, I don't think there is a cause for concern, I really feel the opportunity is immense," he added. Chandrasekaran, under whose leadership TCS grew to become the largest domestic IT company, said the industry will have to adapt to

changes, build capabilities, IP, form new partnerships and reskill its employees.

Building skills, hiring the right talent and re-engineering senior people is also important, he said, using a cricket analogy of waiting for the loose ball. It can be noted that there are heightened concerns, after a change in the US to adopting more protectionist policies. The proposed changes have rattled the sector and also prevented industry lobby Nasscom from disclosing its revenue guidance for the next fiscal.

Chandrasekaran also made a strong

case for not "rubbishing" the domestic services companies, which have not been able to do products like Microsoft's Windows.

He also sounded critical of those who call the work of domestic IT companies as "labour arbitrage", saying a lot of world-class skills have been used by the industry.

He hoped one day a domestic company will be able to create a widely used product like Windows or an Apple, but asked the industry to give such entrepreneurs a chance. Welcoming

proliferation of digital in the financial world with payments, he said digital needs to go deeper into other sectors like education and healthcare as well. He said various flagship government initiatives like Digital India, Skill India, Make in India have to ultimately converge in the digital sphere and asked the IT industry to make it happen. "Multiple initiatives of the government will all get connected at some stage...All these initiatives we have to bring it together. Best people to bring it together is IT professionals," he said.

## Canada Frees Kanishka Bomber Inderjit Singh Reyat

(Agencies) Ottawa: The only person convicted in the 1985 Air India-Kanishka-bombings that killed 331 people is now free, Canada's parole board said on Wednesday.

Inderjit Singh Reyat had been ordered to live at a halfway house following his release from prison one year ago, after serving two decades behind bars.

That condition has now been lifted and Reyat may return to a normal life, including "living in a private residence," parole board spokesman Patrick Storey told AFP in an email.

The Sikh immigrant from India was convicted of making bombs that were stuffed into luggage and planted on two planes leaving Vancouver, and of lying in court to cover for his co-accused.

One bomb tore apart Air India Flight 182 - Kanishka - as it neared the coast of Ireland, killing all 329 people aboard, including entire families.

The second exploded at Japan's Narita airport, killing two baggage handlers as they transferred cargo to another Air India plane.

The blasts followed a crackdown on Sikhs militants, and those behind it were allegedly seeking revenge for the Golden Temple operation.

Reyat was working as a mechanic in westernmost Canada and purchased the dynamite, batteries and detonators used to construct the bombs.

Two alleged co-conspirators were acquitted due to a lack of evidence and, according to prosecutors, because of Reyat's perjury.

Storey said Reyat's parole officer

has assessed those with whom he will live "to ensure they will not have a



negative influence on him." Conditions of his release from prison also still apply, including having no contact with the victims' families nor with extremists. Reyat must also shun all political activities and take counseling for violent tendencies, a lack of empathy and exaggerated beliefs.



# Twitter CEO says social media patterns suggest America could be on brink of its own Arab Spring-style political meltdown



(Agencies) The United States may be going through its own version of the Arab Spring, according to the head of a social media giant.

Americans have taken to Twitter to air their political grievances during President Donald Trump's first month in office similarly to how people in the Middle East did so during the Arab Spring and Iran's Green Revolution, according to Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey.

Dorsey says that the current American political discourse

online resembles 'a lot of the same patterns we've seen during the Iranian Green Revolution and the Arab Spring,' according to Fortune Magazine.

'It was stunning to see how Twitter was being used to have a conversation about the government, with the government,' Dorsey told a tech conference in San Francisco on Wednesday.

He said that Twitter has not traditionally been used as a means to further political discussion.



Things changed in 2014, when racial protests erupted in the wake of a police-involved shooting in Ferguson, Missouri.

'As a culture in the US, we've focused on things that didn't matter as much. Now, everything is brought into perspective, and Twitter is at center of the most important conversations,' he said. Despite Twitter's crucial role

as a platform for exchanging views, the company has not translated it into profit.

Last week, Twitter posted the slowest revenue growth since it went public four years ago, sending shares down more than 10 percent on fears that rivals Snapchat and Facebook were winning the war for advertising.

Revenue from advertising fell from a year ago and a 4 percent year-on-year rise in users to 319 million fell short of Wall Street forecasts as well.

The election of Trump, a prolific tweeter, as US president failed to produce a 'Trump Bump' in Twitter's results, and Twitter declined to give guidance on future revenue with Dorsey asking for patience.

The microblogging service

has struggled to find a formula that will attract a new crop of users or advertisers even as rivals have ridden a wave of rising investment in internet advertising. The lack of revenue growth has raised questions about Dorsey's leadership and whether the company would be bought by a bigger media firm.

Financial markets speculated about a sale of Twitter last year, but no concrete bids were forthcoming. Dorsey told analysts on a conference call last week that Twitter was investing in machine learning and searching for ways to engage advertisers. 'It will take time to show the results we all want to see, and we're moving forward aggressively. The whole world is watching Twitter,' he said.



## Labor nominee Puzder withdraws

The fast-food exec faced numerous scandals, including a video of his ex-wife accusing him of abuse on 'Oprah' in 1990.



(Agencies) Andrew Puzder withdrew his nomination Wednesday to be secretary of labor after Senate Republicans informed the White House that he lacked the votes to be confirmed.

GOP senators advised the White House that Puzder could not pass through the narrowly divided Senate, sources said, and shortly thereafter the White House confirmed his intention to pull out. "While I won't be serving in the administration, I fully support the president and his highly qualified team," Puzder said in a statement.

Puzder, CEO of CKE Restaurants, which owns Hardee's and Carl's Jr., becomes President Donald Trump's first Cabinet nominee to withdraw. He could lose only two GOP votes in order to be approved, and multiple

Republicans had reservations about him. Moving forward on a nomination sure to fail would have been far more damaging to Trump, Puzder and Senate Republicans than his eventual withdrawal.

White House press secretary Sean Spicer said Trump will not be issuing a statement on the withdrawal. Even though it was the GOP that turned on Puzder, he blamed Senate Democrats for obstructing the president. All of Trump's Cabinet nominees can be confirmed without Democratic votes, but Spicer dismissed the notion that Puzder withdrew under pressure from the GOP.

"There is no focus on these guys having a double standard for which they had with Obama nominees. It's just ridiculous," Spicer said. "He was not given a hearing."

But committees are run by

Republicans who control Congress. And GOP officials said there was a gradual erosion of support among Senate Republicans for Puzder. The most damaging revelation, Republicans said, was his admission that he did not pay taxes on the services of an undocumented immigrant who worked for him for years. Puzder never recovered, entering a tailspin that ended with POLITICO's publication of a video showing his ex-wife accusing Puzder of abuse. "I've expressed my concerns about a number of issues," said Susan Collins (R-Maine), one of the senators who was undecided. Though a withdrawal is a major blow to the administration, the alternative would have been worse. Taking Puzder's nomination to the Senate floor and seeing it fail would have been a major

embarrassment for Trump and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), who repeatedly backed Puzder publicly. Puzder was also a favorite of White House chief of staff Reince Priebus. Sen. Lamar Alexander of Tennessee, who runs the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee that was scheduled to take up Puzder's nomination Thursday, was among the Republicans praising Puzder even as it became clear he could not pass the Senate's muster.

"Andy Puzder has the experience and ability to make an excellent labor secretary, but I respect his decision," Alexander said. Agriculture Department hopeful Sonny Perdue has grown nervous about his own prospects in light of Puzder's troubles —

unable to get access to Priebus for reassurances that the former Georgia governor's nomination is still backed by the administration, according to a source familiar with the matter.

McConnell has focused the early part of the year on pushing through Trump's Cabinet picks. Though Senate Democrats have resisted, all of Trump's nominees have gotten through the narrowly divided chamber until now. Vincent Viola, Trump's pick for Army secretary, withdrew earlier this month after he found it too difficult to disentangle himself from his business ventures, but he bowed out before the full Senate considered his nomination.





# Melania will be moving into the White House

(Agencies) President Donald Trump defended his wife Melania at a White House press conference today and confirmed that she will indeed be moving to Washington, D.C. 'Melania goes back and forth and once Barron finishes school, it's hard to take a child out of school with a few months left, she and Barron will be moving over to the White House,' Trump told reporters.

Trump was responding to tabloid reports that suggested the first lady would stay living in New York City permanently, as she currently resides in the family's Trump Tower penthouse.

In a press conference filled with digs at reporters, Trump criticized some of the coverage of his wife as well. 'I think she's a great representative for this country,' the president said. 'And a funny thing happens because she gets so unfairly maligned, the things they say - I've known her for a long time, she was a very successful person,' he continued, speaking of the length of time he's known his third wife, who he married

in 2005.

'She was a very successful model. She did really well. She would go home at night and didn't even want to go out with people. She was a private person. She was always the highest quality that you'll ever find,' the president said.

Since inauguration day, Melania Trump has only been seen in D.C. twice. She made a brief appearance in the area last week, before hopping on Air Force One with her husband and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and his wife, for a weekend away at Mar-a-Lago, what the president calls his 'winter White House.' She also came down to Washington yesterday to meet Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his wife Sara.

Melania and Sara toured the new Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture.

The president also said Melania had dinner with him last night, along with Sen. Marco Rubio and his wife Jeanette. 'Who is, by the way, lovely,' Trump said



of Mrs. Rubio. Trump also told reporters that Melania Trump had opened the White House Visitors Office, which isn't quite right. The first lady put out a statement on Tuesday saying that Visitors Office, which handles White House tours, would open in three weeks on March 7.

Members of Congress, including some Republicans, had been grumbling about the delay, as tour requests, which their offices process, started piling up. The pause in tours, which is standard during the change of administration, but was longer than usual in this case, was likely because of the sluggish hiring of the first lady's staff.

## Trump Blames Michael Flynn's Resignation on Media, Leaks

(Agencies) Washington: US President Donald Trump on Wednesday blamed what he called the "fake media" and "illegal" leaks for the resignation of National Security Adviser Michael Flynn, who had lied to top government officials about his contacts with Russia.

At a joint press conference with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Trump said that the media had treated Flynn "very unfairly".

Trump has asked for Flynn's resignation because he had lost confidence in him after revelations the National Security Adviser had lied about his conversations with Russian officials, EFE news quoted the White House as saying.

In response to a reporter's question at the press conference, Trump called Flynn a "wonderful man", adding that he had been treated very unfairly by the media.

The President also said that the brouhaha over Flynn's resignation is an attempt to "cover up for (the) terrible loss" suffered by Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton in the November 8 election.

These were the first comments Trump had made about Flynn's resignation, which was announced on Monday and which has erupted into a big crisis for his administration.

Flynn lied to Vice President Mike Pence and other top officials about his contacts with Russia's Ambassador to Washington Sergey Kislyak with whom he spoke prior to Trump's inauguration about the US sanctions on the Kremlin that former President Barack Obama imposed before he left the White House in retaliation for Moscow's interference in the US election. Trump decided to ask Flynn to resign because he had lost confidence in him after it emerged that the former army general had lied.

## These scientists think giant machines could help refreeze the Arctic

(Agencies) A team of scientists has a surprisingly simple solution to saving the Arctic: We need to make more ice. A team at Arizona State University has proposed building 10 million wind-powered pumps to draw up water and spill it out onto the surface of the ice, where it will freeze faster.

Doing so would be complicated and expensive -- it's estimated to cost a cool \$500 billion, and right now the proposal is only theoretical.

But the need to solve the problem is urgent, said professor of astrophysics Steven Desch. He and a team of scientists published a study about how to refreeze parts of the Arctic in the December 2016 issue of the "Earth's Future" journal.

The inspiration came to Desch after attending several climate change conferences in 2012.

"I came away thinking while the climate scientists had correctly identified the problems and the urgency of needing to solve them, they had no good solutions -- basically to stop CO2 emissions," Desch said.

"There will be no summer sea ice by 2030 and nothing we do on the world stage is going to

change that in time. We're not going to cut back CO2 emissions in time to prevent that outcome."The giant water pumps would sit on buoys floating in the Arctic Sea. They would take up water from beneath the ice, store it in a tank and then spray the water on top of the ice.

The top of the ice sheet is the coldest part, so getting the water on top of the ice would make it freeze faster, Desch explained.

The machines would be powered by the wind, which is plentiful in the Arctic, in a similar way to windmills you see creating power on farms. The team

estimates in the paper that 10 million devices could add a meter of sea ice onto the current level of ice over the course of a winter. That's a meter of ice on each tenth of a square kilometer. "That's a significant change," said Desch. The sea ice only grows two to three meters in thickness during the winter.

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# If you think Trump is good for India you are in for a shock

The Trump administration's noises about tightening the H1B visa programme have rattled the IT industry — both in the United States and India. Given the direction in which the administration is pushing wider immigration policy, there is every reason to expect it to press ahead on the H1B front as well. Much of the ongoing debate has been framed in terms of whether and to what extent IT firms will be hurt by the proposals that are doing in the rounds in Washington. But it is equally important to see these in the longer historical context of Indian immigration to the US.

In their recent, timely book, *The Other One Percent*, Sanjoy Chakravorty, Devesh Kapur and Nirvikar Singh offer a remarkable analysis of why Indians turned out to be the most successful immigrant group in contemporary American history. Their account is particularly valuable because they emphasise what an extraordinary departure this was

from the fate of the Indians who moved to the US in the early twentieth century — a history that still awaits its chronicler.

In the year 1900, a mere 2,031 Indians had legal permanent resident status in the US. Over the following decade, the Indian population in America rose to 4,664. This was largely the fallout of tightening immigration policies of Canada from 1908. Denied entry into Canada, many Indians turned south to the US and began working in the lumber industry of Washington state. Then they branched out to other parts of the West Coast, especially California, working predominantly in agriculture and construction.

Soon, the Indians faced the wrath of white American workers who feared the competition of Asian labourers allegedly willing to work on the cheap. In September 1907, hundreds of white workers descended on the living quarters of the "Hindus" — as all Indians were labelled —

in Bellingham and forced some 700 hundred of them to flee across the border. Later that year nearly 500 workers in Everett turfed the "Hindus" out of the city.

When an Indian attempted to buy property in Port Angeles in 1913, the real estate agents published a formal agreement not sell to "Hindoos or Negroes" as they were "generally considered as undesirable". Such incidents stemmed from a combustible cocktail of economic and racial anxieties. But they also fed on the prevalent, unsympathetic cultural images of India purveyed by seafarers, missionaries and travellers over the past century.

The xenophobic antipathy towards Indians was part of a larger nativist backlash against Asian immigrants, especially from China and Japan. Leading this campaign was the Asiatic Exclusion League of San Francisco. The league's first reports on the "Hindoo question" portrayed the Indian as dirty

and untrustworthy, insolent and lustful. In another report of 1910, the league vented its spleen: "We the people of the United States are asked to receive these members of a degraded race on terms of equality ... what would be the condition in California if this horde of fanatics should be received in our midst."

The government began to take note. In February 1914, the US Congress House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization held "Hindu Immigration Hearings". In his testimony, the commissioner general of immigration insisted the "Hindu" immigration was "a menace to the country, and particularly to California". Representative Denver Church of Fresno, California claimed, "those of us who come into contact with the Hindus, and I think it is universal, regard them as a menace."

The committee did not go with the demand for exclusion owing to the small and dropping numbers of Indian immigrants.

Church kept up his tirade, warning the House that a "large per-cent" of India's 350 million people were anxious to bring their "superstitious and backward" culture to America. Although Church's aims were not initially accomplished, the exclusion of "Hindus" was eventually achieved in the immigration law of February 1917, passed over the veto of President Woodrow Wilson.

A US Supreme Court ruling in 1923 further squeezed the Indians in America. The court ruled in *United States v Bhagat Singh Thind* that immigrants from India settled in the US were not eligible for naturalisation as US citizens. The court ruled on the grounds that an Indian could not count as a "free white person". The immigration act of 1924 banned the admission of all groups that could not legally be naturalised in the US. The door was firmly shut in the face of immigrants from India. (Contd on page 22)

## UP elections: Why a hung assembly can't be ruled out in this battleground state

India has got used to clear verdicts. Narendra Modi won an outright majority in the 2014 Lok Sabha election, the first time in 30 years that voters gave a party an unambiguous mandate to run the country.

India's biggest state, Uttar Pradesh, has picked a clear winner in the last two elections. Mayawati-led Bhaujan Samaj Party won an absolute majority in 2007. She was ousted by the Samajwadi Party in 2012 that won 225 seats in the 403-member House.

In neighbouring Bihar, the JD(U)-RJD-Congress grand alliance won a majority in 2015. The JD(U)-BJP alliance had done the same five years earlier.

Stable governments may be the new normal.

But it was not too long ago that hung assemblies were the norm, with governments failing to last the five-year term. India saw three general elections between 1996 and 1999. Uttar Pradesh, which is voting for the second phase on Wednesday, too, saw frequent changes.

It is impossible to know who got the lead in the first phase on February 8 when 73 seats went to the polls but the initial assessment is there is no clear winner. Social groups have voted differently in the region where

Jat and Muslim voters have a big presence. The contest is multipolar and a fragmentation is highly likely.

Things may change in the remaining six phases but a possibility of a hung House when results are declared on March 11 is worth looking at.

Narrative, leader, wide coalitions work

A single big poll issue, a personality-centred contest and wide caste coalitions lead to decisive outcomes.

As a sense builds up that a particular party is winning, floating voters join in because they want stability and also because of peculiar Indian voter behaviour -- the vote must go to the winner otherwise it is "wasted". In 2007, Mayawati promised an end to SP's goondaraj, or lawlessness, positioned herself as a firm leader who would enforce law of the land and came up with her version of social engineering as she reached out to upper castes.

She not only got the votes of Dalits, her support base, but also those of Brahmins and non-Yadav other backward classes.

In 2012, young Akhilesh Yadav presented himself as the new face of the SP and successfully tapped into the resentment against the alleged

corruption and indulgences of Mayawati. While Yadavs and Muslims, as expected, voted for the SP, upper castes, who were tired of Mayawati's shenanigans, chose Akhilesh as well. It was a mix of Hindutva and Vikas that saw the BJP sweep Uttar Pradesh in 2014 — winning 71 of the state's 80 Lok Sabha seats. The "Modi wave" swept away caste and identity calculations, as Jats, Yadavs, non-Yadav OBCs and Dalits voted the BJP along with upper castes, the party's traditional vote bank.

Local, narrow politics is back But, things are different this time. There is no overarching narrative or a one leader setting the poll agenda. Society is deeply fragmented and these divisions are getting reflected in electoral politics. Unlike the largely bipolar contests of the last two times, the state is seeing three-horse race, with the BJP, otherwise on the margins of the state politics, keen to repeat its Lok Sabha success.

All the three players — the SP-Congress, BSP and BJP — have a robust set-up and a loyal social base. Yes, Akhilesh has made this election about himself and is showcasing vikas (development works done by his government). And, it is true that he is well-liked.

But, every region has its own interpretation of the message.

In central UP, especially in the Yadav belt, and among Muslims, there is an overwhelming support for the young chief minister.

But this narrative has not caught up, at least not yet, across castes and geographies. The reasons could be many -- delay in ticket distribution, last-minute alliance with the Congress but the biggest of them all is the late start to the campaign as party battled a bitter power struggle.

While there is no anti-incumbency mood, many of Akhilesh's MLAs are unpopular and are likely to incur voters' wrath.

For a clear win, the SP needs an Akhilesh wave to override local arithmetic but it is not visible, especially in west Uttar Pradesh.

Mayawati has again tried to make this election about herself and law and order. The state has seen riots, communal violence and several crimes against women but the anger is not as palpable as it was in 2007.

Goondaraj, a term that has come to be associated with the SP, is not the biggest poll issue this time. In terms of social groups too, Mayawati, is the first

choice of only her core base, the Jatavs, while other groups such as Muslims or upper castes may vote for her tactically, depending on candidates. The BJP has Modi to ride on and the PM's popularity has not diminished but it neither has a popular local face nor an agenda. Its demonetisation move is not paying electoral dividends. It is no longer seen as a party of vikas as it was in 2014. It is because of these reasons that it has to rely on religious polarisation, particularly in west UP. The morale of the cadre is low and by all accounts, ticket distribution has been faulty.

The party continues to be the first choice of Brahmins and a substantial number of non-Yadav OBCs -- and these are important constituencies.

But, here, too, there are variations.

In west UP, the Jats appear to have voted against the BJP in large numbers, Thakurs have not consolidated completely and turnout may be lower among Banias.

Add it all up and what does it suggest? It suggests that politics is being driven by local considerations, the dynamic is changing in every constituency and there is no state-wide hawa, or wave.



## Sasikala's conviction shows that those who come to serve should not serve themselves



Justice shall ultimately prevail," wrote poet Subramanya Bharathi. He has been proven right today. After 21 years the country's highest court has upheld the principle that those who come to serve should serve others and not themselves.

Today's Supreme Court judgment is another wake up call to all those who aspire to a public career but instead turn it into a tool for their self-aggrandisement, amass wealth making a mockery of public service. Today's verdict is a reset button reaffirming the fundamentals of public life — that service ought to be the only motto. We ought to thank the apex court again for doing its bit to instil the fear of god or justice in our mostly selfish breed of politicians and leaders. In a trendsetting judgment in 2013 the court laid down that MP/MLAs will be disqualified immediately on conviction in a serious offence and sentenced to two or more years imprisonment. The following year, in September, J Jayalalithaa stepped down as a sessions judge sentenced her to four years in the disproportionate assets case. She returned as chief minister after a single judge of the Karnataka high court overturned the judgment in May 2015 dealing a serious blow to justice. The Supreme Court has removed that blemish today.

Regretfully, in the last decades, India's public life has been on a slippery slope. Corrupt politicians, public servants and even judicial officials have come to be accepted as a way of life. No one is anymore surprised if MLAs and MPs and elected officials are alleged of corrupt practices or of enriching themselves. In fact many of us expect them to be so. Those who are honest, modest, accessible and service-minded are an exception. Many even consider them weird. Selflessness and service mindedness are no more the jargon of public discourse or lexicon. Instead, social mobility has become the mantra and Indians remain fatalists true to their conditioning — leaving everything to karma.

As early as 2002 the Supreme Court asked that candidates among others to furnish details of their and their family's assets. Sadly, even those who have had no need for such wealth change when they reach the dizzying heights of power. The late Jayalalithaa was a classic example. She and her 'sibling in spirit' VK Sasikala behaved as the neo-East India Company, except their fief was limited to one state — Tamil Nadu. If public life had begun degenerating soon after Independence the duo's arrival accelerated the rot and Tamil Nadu was in a free fall and was in the news for all the wrong reasons. Much was expected of Jayalalithaa's pharaoh-like status, charisma, intelligence and the fact that she did not have a family of her own. She could have transformed the state easily making it the most prosperous. Instead, thanks to her and her sister in spirit, it soon ranked first in corruption.

Today the Supreme Court's decision has laid thread bare our own morals and values — Jayalalithaa was buried with all State honours. Yes. She was the chief minister when she died. We did not pause to consider that the nation's flag was on the woman whose morality and honesty was still in the balance. Partly our slow judicial system is to blame. But we should also hang our heads in shame for the words of eulogy and praise that we heaped on her — partly in the tradition that no ill should be spoken of the departed but also because our bar is so low and most of our leaders have become adept pretenders. But when the AIADMK sought that the nation's highest honour should be bestowed on their late leader — what were they thinking? What are we thinking?

## Trump's first crisis abroad He can tell Putin that Russia's expansion must stop

Perhaps inevitably, North Korea's ballistic-missile test last Sunday was characterised by many analysts as Donald Trump's first foreign-policy challenge, or at least the first not caused by his own blundering. But this is to overstate both the threat presented by Pyongyang, and the options available to the White House. There is no realistic scenario in which Kim Jong-un, North Korea's dictator, launches a war against South Korea or Japan. And so long as he doesn't cross that line, Washington has no influence over his behaviour. The only challenge Kim presents is to Trump's claim as the planet's most egotistical leader.

In reality the first foreign-policy crisis of the Trump presidency has been unfolding since the end of January, 7,000 km due West of Pyongyang. In Ukraine, Russian President Vladimir Putin and his proxy militias have resumed in earnest their programme of destabilisation and annexation. The campaign had been paused during the US presidential election, and started up again within hours of Putin's January 28 phone-call with Trump.

With his biggest American fan safely ensconced in the White House, Putin seems to have decided to return to his plans to expand Russia's territorial outlines in the west, while pushing the envelope with his foes in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Violence flared up in the Donbas region of Ukraine, where Moscow's proxies as well as regular Russian forces have been competing with the government in Kiev for control. Observers for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe reported that the number of explosions in eastern Ukraine shot up from 420 on Jan. 26 to over 10,000 on Jan. 31. Attacks on civilian infrastructure by Russian and separatist forces killed 13 Ukrainian soldiers, and left the town of Avdiivka without electricity for a week, in the middle of the winter freeze. How would the Trump administration respond? The first auguries were mixed. On Feb 2, Nikki Haley, the US ambassador to the United Nations, slammed Russia for its continued occupation of the Crimean peninsula — snatched from Ukraine in 2014. "The United States continues to condemn and call for an immediate end to the Russian occupation of Crimea," said Haley. "Crimea is a part of Ukraine. Our Crimea-related sanctions will remain in place until Russia returns control over the peninsula to Ukraine." But that same day, the U.S. Treasury Department issued a notification easing one of the sanctions the Obama administration put in place against Moscow's Federal Security Service, better known by its Russian acronym, as the FSB. CNN quoted a top State Department official as saying it was a technical fix, to avoid "unintended consequences" of US government business with Russia.



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# Dear Baby Donald: Leaks Are as American as Apple Pie

## Stop whining about the leakers, Mr. President, and get your own house in order

Will somebody please introduce Donald Trump the candidate to Donald Trump the president?

Such was his enthusiasm for unauthorized, unlawful leaks last summer that while on the hustings, he made mighty bales of hay over the hacked Democratic National Committee emails, even going so far as to urge Russia's hackers to release Hillary Clinton's "missing" emails if they had them. In the fall, he gloried in WikiLeaks' sluicing of John Podesta's emails into the public domain, using them to score political points against Clinton. The Trump camp, said Podesta, had advance knowledge of the hack. On Wednesday morning, Trump's tongue-clucking supplanted his previous cheerleading of leaks. In a pair of seminal tweets, he first bawled that "Information is being illegally given to the failing @nytimes & @washingtonpost by the intelligence community (NSA and FBI?). Just like Russia." A few hours later he reiterated that position, stating that "classified information [being] illegally given

out by 'intelligence' like candy. Very un-American!"

Un-American? Why, there is nothing more All-American than a leak! The Pentagon Papers, for example, which revealed the inner machinations of U.S. war policy and were published by the New York Times, the Washington Post and elsewhere. The Iran-Contra revelations. The diplomatic and military documents liberated by Chelsea Manning and disseminated by WikiLeaks. The Snowden cache. The Panama Papers leaks and the day-by-day leaking of classified and confidential information upon which the foundation of Page One journalism rests.

To a one, these leaks helped citizens and officeholders learn what powers were being flexed behind the scenes in their names but without their sanction. Now that he's president and not a mere campaigner, Trump has taken the convenient position that leaks are dangerous and illegal things and that secrets should be kept secret in the name of national security. But as Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan

noted long ago, excessive secrecy harms national security by blocking policymakers from the information that aids informed decision-making. For example, the U.S. Army and FBI denied President Harry Truman access to the "Venona decryptations"—the intercepts that documented Soviet espionage in the United States, because they deemed his White House too leaky!

The leaks that have just exposed the lies of former national security adviser Michael Flynn have done the nation—and Vice President Mike Pence—a great mitzvah by unmasking his subterfuges. Flynn, you'll recall, lied to Pence's face about his pre-inauguration contacts with the Russians, and Pence carried those lies onto TV, where he shared them in January. It wasn't until he read a Washington Post report about Flynn's lies that he began his inquiries and learned what other White House officials had learned a couple of weeks earlier. Thus did Pence avoid becoming his generation's Truman.



Elements of the conservative memoirs and newspaper media (Daily Beacon and Daily Caller, for example) have attempted to sketch the Flynn leaks as a counterintelligence operation by the "Deep State" and former Obama officials to undermine the Trump presidency, a theory the president himself appears to endorse in his tweets. Without a doubt, the sharp knives of the existing and exiled bureaucracy can hobble and gimp the incoming administrations they oppose. It's called obstruction, and both parties play the game, denying the Flynn leaks any status as exceptional.

Information is power, which is why bureaucracies hoard and declare it secret. Leaks, as the history books,

memoirs and newspaper archives show us, are one of the most important ways government bureaucracies inform government bureaucracies what the government bureaucracies are doing. Only somebody who lived on an island of naiveté would ever move into the White House and think the Deep State won't leak against him. Likewise, every president dispenses privileged information to the press and political allies to assist in his policymaking. Once—and if—he gets his bearings, President Trump will help himself to these behaviors. This is leaking, too, and it's All-American, too.

(Contd on page 22)

## What we're witnessing now is the beginning of the AIADMK's end

The conviction of the AIADMK general secretary VK Sasikala in the disproportionate assets case has generated a sense of respite among the people of Tamil Nadu. This, sadly, is not the end of the engulfing political crisis in the state. The selection of Edappadi K Palanisami, to replace Sasikala as a CM candidate, does not change the ground realities.

The emerging reality of politics in Tamil Nadu is grim, especially in the AIADMK. If Palanisami is able to win the floor test in the assembly, chances are that Sasikala and her extended family will control the party and government. The appointment of her nephew TTV Dinakaran as the party's general secretary points towards this.

It is almost certain that none in the Sasikala faction of the AIADMK can go back to the electorate and seek another term. Their rationale seems to be: A bird in hand is better than two in the bush.

This is also the final parting of power for O Panneerselvam and his illustrious career as a

politician with instincts for being at the right place at the right time. He seems to have overestimated the BJP's manoeuvres and its intimidating outreach through tax nets and surprise raids. However, after her conviction, the pragmatic course for Sasikala's supporters is to vote for Palanisami and secure their own term for the next four years.

This does not foreclose the possibility of further splits within the AIADMK — Panneerselvam and Jayalalithaa's niece Deepa Jayakumar joining hands to challenge Sasikala indicate this. The party already committed a big mistake by choosing Sasikala, first as the general secretary, and then as the CM.

In walking out of the fold and challenging Sasikala, Panneerselvam has not shown any courage but a sound reflection of the ground realities that indicate the mood of the people. He merely used the public emotions against Sasikala to his advantage and revealed what a fine weathercock he is with shifting loyalties from Janaki MGR to



Jayalalithaa, from Jayalalithaa to Sasikala, and now encasing the memory of Jayalalithaa.

There is virtually no difference between Sasikala and Panneerselvam in terms of their relevance, service, commitment to the AIADMK and the state — both have thrived on reflected glory and have benefitted at the cost of others. In a way, they reflect the decay and death of politics.

What we've now started witnessing in the political

dramas of factional loyalties and different camps in the AIADMK is the beginning of the party's end. The DMK and the BJP are waiting on the sidelines watching the party unravel.

Never in AIADMK's history have the people been so disillusioned with the party. In the name of statecraft, the arteries of politics have been shut down to facilitate Sasikala's "elevation" in politics. The

people also recognise and understand that Panneerselvam is no more than a false hero and the halo would vanish with the volte-face to the BJP after the vote in state legislature.

In the face of Sasikala's conviction and with the emergence of Palanisami, the ground realities and the nature of politics remain unaltered. A new mask has been introduced, but the dance and drama of Tamil Nadu politics will follow the same old script.



# North-Eastern paradox

*The struggle in Nagaland has to be seen in the light of the socio-cultural history of this region and steps need to be taken to include women and support modern institutions in the region.*

THE North-Eastern region has some of the most historically significant and brilliant uprisings, mobilisations, cultural expressions; accomplishments in sports as well as scholarship by women. Perhaps the most well-endowed region in the whole of India for such combined accomplishments led and strengthened by women. Decades ago, looking for illustrations of women's collective self-empowerment and action, I heard about the Nupi Lan, a crucial part of a series of organised anti-colonial struggles led by women such as the First Women War (1904), Anti-Pothang Movement and Anti-Water Tax Agitation (1910s), the Thadou- Kuki Resistance (1917), Bazar Boycott (1920). Nupi Lan had its immediate cause in the artificial famine of 1939, caused by the activities of the Mayang (Indian) traders who exported rice to colonial garrisons outside Manipur. The Nupi Lan of 1939 and the Meira Paibi movement against state terrorism since 1980, in which women have played a leading role, are crucial components of an overall anti-colonial struggle

— the coloniser being Indians! I found one more, that is the rising by women against the rampant alcoholism in Imphal. We called it "Night patrollers of Manipur", in a book called Women's Quest for Power, that was published by Vikas in 1980. Holding long poles, dandas, and lanterns, women in large numbers walked through the lanes and bylanes, waited for the men to come out of the bars and beat them mercilessly. I saw the men beg for mercy as I walked with the women. There were similar women-led struggles, collective voice in other states, Arunachal for example which were effective. Crafts to my mind is an expression of cultural creativity, using local materials. The crafts of the North-East are an extraordinary expression of skills, creativity and an artistic temperament. We also see the significant achievements of young North-Eastern women in sports of every kind whether it is football, boxing or gymnastics. In many of the states they are a predominant presence in the fields, and in the marketplace. One could argue then that

the North-East is a women-led region. However, it is also the case that custom, historical traditions are not only oppressive but continue to oppress them. A case in point is the current struggle in Nagaland by women to claim their constitutional right, of the quota in the gram panchayats. Decades ago when I visited Nagaland and wanted to see the operation of the institutions which are available for development, I was introduced to the Hohos, that is the village councils. I attended one such and found it was entirely male. When I asked, "How about women?", there was loud laughter. Most of the men made very pejorative remarks about women and said they were absolutely not allowed in any such spaces in Naga culture. There are other extremely distasteful traditions in relation to male supremacy, even in what could be slightly more "modern" states like Meghalaya. Usually, instead of dowry there is bride price. While you can celebrate the fact that there is no dowry, if you go deeper into bride price it is worse. A man has to pay the parents of the girl he wishes



to marry by giving them buffaloes (perhaps other items now). The buffaloes become in a way a payment for the purchase of the girl. This shows that dowry is not the only ugly transaction in the case of marriage. With the buffalo he more or less buys the girl. Anecdote after anecdote was narrated to me of how the girl or the woman is nothing more than slave labour in the house and the fields. She does most of the farming, fetching water, caring for the animals, firewood etc apart from the household care. She has no rights at all, while the men sit at home and drink. Liquor is a huge presence in the North-East. In this situation when we see how skilled, well-educated and liberated the women of the North-East are, when we meet them in Delhi or Bombay. We may not realise that in the hinterland of the North-East the situation is extremely harsh for women. Paradoxically, the North-East has one of the best

literacy rates among women in the whole of India. So there is a paradox here — that the North-East has the highest percentage of educated women and yet some of the worst expressions of extreme patriarchy. This is a contradiction that exists in many societies, that women are so significantly present in all the arenas such as culture, marketing even modern occupations but extremely oppressed and violated domestically. The struggle in Nagaland has to be seen in the light of the region's socio-cultural history and strong steps need to be taken to support modern institutions in that region. In the current scenario, the women's legitimate struggle for participating in the gram panchayat has to be supported. The state and the central government must bring more of these remarkable women into national institutions as well as the North-East Council and other regional institutions that have been created by the Centre.

## Reimagining nationalism

YOU are such a sensible person. You appear honest and dedicated to the nation. How can you then support these anti-national elements?" I recalled this phone call on the first anniversary of February 9. An unknown person had called me from Indore. He had watched me on television and was very upset with what he thought was my support to JNU-wallahs. I explained to him the facts of the case. But he was unmoved: "All that may be right. But tell me, how can we allow anyone to insult India like this? Doesn't your blood boil when you hear about this incident?" I could not convince him. Now that I look back, I can see why people like me failed to convince him. Millions of ordinary, newspaper reading and television watching Indians like him felt that a sacrilege took place in JNU. No matter what the facts of the case, they felt offended that "intellectuals" did not

acknowledge and respond to their hurt. The debate around a small incident in JNU may have been contrived. The dispute generated more heat than light. Yet, it forced us to confront a question we had conveniently tucked aside: how do we deal with nationalism in independent India? The first anniversary of the JNU incident is a good occasion to answer this question honestly. And the honest answer is that we did not get a good answer last year. We were caught between two false answers: energetic jingoism on the one hand, and a deracinated cosmopolitanism on the other. We must go beyond these two misguided and misleading ways of thinking about nationalism. The heart of the dispute is about our attachment to the entity called "nation". First of all, there is the question of how to define India. The jingoists prefer a cultural, historic definition of India. They want to go back to pure Bharatvarsha, unsullied by

one thousand years of Muslim and colonial history. The cosmopolitans wish to define India in modern, political and constitutional terms. For them, the political boundaries of India are an accident of history. There is no cultural essence of India. This difference spills over to the next question: what kind of loyalty should the nation command? For the jingoists, the nation deserves our primary and principal loyalty, unlimited and unquestioning. For the cosmopolitans, the nation is just one of the many entities that demand our affection. From our family to our universe, there are so many levels that we identify with. Hence one of these cannot demand absolute loyalty. The nation can only make secondary and limited claims on us. The third question, about why should we be loyal to the nation, invites even sharper differences. For the jingoist, this is no question at all. We are loyal to our nation, because we are born here. This is our



motherland. Of course, it is superior to any other country. How can we even debate this? The cosmopolitans demand good reasons for such an assertion. They insist that being born somewhere is not good enough a reason to find it good and superior. We should be doubly careful in judging our country and ourselves. And when we do so, we find that our country has been full of inequality, injustice and exploitation. How can we take pride in that? This fundamental difference results in two opposite attitudes that took the shape of two camps last year. On the one hand, we have those who take pride in whatever India stands for. This my-country-always-right attitude

brooks no questioning, either from outside or from inside. The nation-comes-first view demands complete loyalty that trumps any other smaller or larger unit. Such a belief looks for enemies within and outside. Thus we had an onslaught on "anti-national" elements within and surgical strikes on the enemy beyond our borders. This camp calls itself nationalist. It is proactive, aggressive and triumphant. Yet, it is deeply pathological: it is narrow, vacuous and divisive. In the eyes of ordinary citizens, like that caller from Indore, this jingoism appears rashtrabhakti. On the other hand, we have cosmopolitanism represented by JNU. It is passionate about lots of things, (Contd on page 22)



# Trump unleashes fury after four long weeks

**'I won,' Trump said, unloading on the media during an extraordinary news conference. 'The people get it.'**

(Agencies) After stewing in anger during four rocky weeks in the White House, President Donald Trump had his say on Thursday. He spent 80 minutes in an impromptu East Room news conference shredding his critics, relitigating the election, bragging about his crowds, crowing about his accomplishments and denying, deflecting and obfuscating a series of mushrooming bad stories that have dogged his presidency and depressed his approval ratings. It was an extraordinary scene in the White House, which Trump essentially turned into a venue for a campaign rally, trashed the country's most influential news outlets, cited approval polls and spread misinformation. It came two days before Trump hits the road for a campaign rally in Florida, where he said the crowds will be "massive." "I won," Trump said at one point, explaining to the media why they weren't important, even as he dissected their coverage and said he coveted better stories. "The people get it." He put blame at the feet of his predecessor, Barack Obama, as he lamented

that his administration doesn't get the credit it deserves. "To be honest, I inherited a mess. It's a mess. At home and abroad, a mess," he said. Trump said he was baffled by the "hatred" coming from the media, and insisted that he's being unfairly picked on — "I'm really not a bad person, by the way." It appeared to be a cathartic moment for a president who has found his early days in the White House overwhelming at times, and has found running the government harder than he expected, aides and allies say. He has grown especially frustrated with the leaks streaming from within his government, which he calls "illegal" while claiming the resulting stories are "fake news." But on Thursday, he seemed to be in his element, the TV showman jousting with reporters, dissecting individual questions, telling reporters to hush and asking for a friendly reporter in the room. "I love this. I'm having a good time doing it," the president said as he found his groove.

It was Trump's decision to hold such an extended news conference and it was made

Thursday morning, according to a White House aide briefed on the matter. After weeks of getting pounded by the media — something the president has privately and publicly fumed about — he made it clear to advisers that he wanted to speak in an unfiltered way.

Prior to taking the podium, the president consulted with a handful of key advisers — including chief of staff Reince Priebus, counselor Kellyanne Conway, spokeswoman Hope Hicks and policy adviser Stephen Miller.

Aides understood that Trump's remarks could extend well beyond an hour — which it did, as Trump kept appearing to wrap it up, only to take more questions.

One person close to Trump said he showed an "unusually long" attention span they hadn't seen often in the White House. And two sources close to the president said he was happy with his performance — and that he felt he was seizing back control of a narrative of his presidency he had lost. The reviews outside the White House were more mixed. "The guy up



there seems crazy," said one senior GOP aide. "I've thought that the whole time."

The aide acknowledged, though, that the audience wasn't necessarily Washington. "But how does this play outside the Beltway? It might play pretty well. I can't say if he killed it or if he was terrible. I just know I was watching the whole time, the whole hour and 20 minutes," the aide said.

"We were all riveted. Were you not? Have you ever seen a press conference like that from a president?"

In Trump style, the news conference was heavy on braggadocio and light on specifics. It also had a surprise element to it. The event was supposed to be about his new

labor secretary nominee, but was only about Alexander Acosta for the first few minutes. Acosta wasn't even in the room. Instead, it was about turning fire on the media and trying to regain momentum in a wounded presidency that hasn't presented a clear policy agenda moving forward.

"There has never been a president that has done so much in such a short period of time," Trump said, reading a list of his own accomplishments.

He said his administration is a "fine-tuned machine" after weeks of damaging leaks from his own aides and advisers about chaos and infighting that have slowed progress. He defended Reince Priebus, his chief of staff, who has come under fire from his own advisers.

## The boy whose awesome story reveals why Trump triumphed

*How his grandmother's love helped him escape poverty to write a remarkable book about his life - and why the American dream is now Dead for millions*

(Agencies) We are barely four weeks into the presidency of Donald Trump yet already it has led to enough dramatic incidents to last a full term.

Perhaps never in American history, and certainly not in living memory, has a new presidency opened amid such controversy, with protesting crowds on the streets of cities across the world.

Yet tempting as it is to join the chorus of execration, it is surely a much better idea to try to understand how on earth America — and by extension, the Western world — got here in the first place.

There is, after all, another America beyond the great cities of New York and Los Angeles that most liberal commentators

and foreign visitors completely miss.

This is an America where more people back Mr Trump's immigration ban than oppose it, and where car workers, shop assistants and small businessmen will go out of their way to tell you how much they approve of him.

Many of us may be appalled by the man they chose as their President. But the plain fact is that these are not bad people. Indeed, many are not so different from the millions in Britain who have deserted the mainstream political parties and voted for Brexit last June.

Why did so many Americans turn to a man with so little political experience? Why were they prepared to overlook his manifest



failings? And why, despite all the controversies, do millions of Americans still see him as the only man who will speak for them?

The answer, I think, lies not in anything Mr Trump has said or done, but in a book that does not even mention him. And it offers some intriguing clues, not just to how Mr Trump was elected, but to why his presidency is doomed to failure.

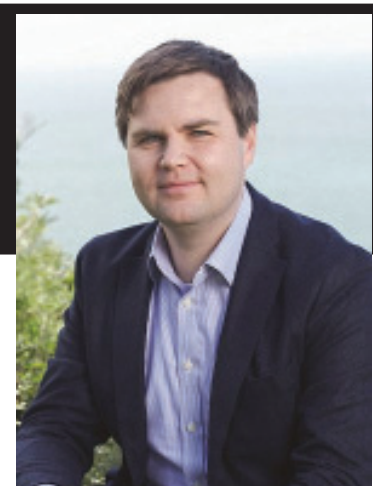
Hillbilly Elegy is the story of J. D. Vance, a former U.S. Marine who served in Iraq,

studied at Yale Law School and now works for a big Silicon Valley investment firm.

To describe him this way, however, is to miss the bigger picture.

Vance was born and raised at the very bottom of American society, in the depths of the underclass.

He grew up in the dying town of Middletown, Ohio, the Rust Belt of the American Midwest, with violent, alcoholic grandparents, a heroin addicted mother and an absent father.



His family were originally hillbillies from the poor and remote Appalachian Mountains that run from Pennsylvania to Alabama. Like most Appalachians, they came from what Americans call Scotch-Irish stock. They were warm, working people, but they were also violent, self-destructive and intensely conservative. As Vance writes of his grandmother, Mamaw, she 'came from a family that would shoot at you rather than argue with you'.





## Syrian asylum seeker is jailed for life in Sweden

(Agencies) A Swedish court on Thursday sentenced a Syrian man to life imprisonment for participation in the 2012 mass execution of seven government troops in Syria.

The Stockholm District Court ruled that 46-year-old refugee Haisam Omar Sakhanh joined the armed group Suleiman Company in early May 2012, and shot a person dead with an assault rifle.

Judge Tomas Zander said the victim, who was not identified, was shot dead along with six others 'under particularly cruel circumstances'.

The seven men who were shot were part of the Syrian regime who had been captured by the independent Islamist group, which was founded in 2011.

the Islamist armed group captured the men during an attack at the beginning of May 2012, and the seven were shot to death less than two days later, according to Stockholms Tingsrätt.

In the years since the execution, it has been impossible to identify the victims.

Sakhanh had confessed to the shooting but said he should not be prosecuted because the death sentences had been made by a legitimate court, something the Swedish court rejected.

It also rejected his defense that he had been following orders.

The group Sakanh was part of, the Suleiman Company, is a Islamic rebel group independent of Free Syrian Army that was formed in 2011 during the Syrian uprising.

The group is mainly active in the Idleb countryside's Jebel al-Zawiya region, and is led by former drug smuggler and Salafi militant Abu Suleiman al-Hamawi, according to TrackingTerrorism.org.

The court said Sakanh had been active in Italy in 2011 and 2012 where he protested against the Syrian government.

## Samsung heir arrested in corruption scandal

*The heir to the Samsung business empire has been arrested on corruption allegations.*



(Agencies) Lee Jae-yong, the de facto leader of South Korea's biggest conglomerate, has been under investigation as part of the huge political corruption scandal that has rocked the country.

Early Friday, a judge in Seoul approved a request from prosecutors for an arrest warrant for Lee, the prosecutor's office said. That means Lee will be held at the detention center where he had

been awaiting the court decision.

Prosecutors allege that the executive, who's also known as Jay Y. Lee, pledged tens of millions of dollars to win favor with President Park Geun-hye and secure government support for a controversial merger that helped tighten his grip on Samsung. They are accusing him of bribery, perjury, concealing criminal profits, embezzlement and hiding assets overseas. Samsung and Lee have denied the allegations.

"We will do our best to ensure that the truth is revealed in future court proceedings," Samsung said in a statement Friday after the judge approved the arrest warrant for Lee. The judge rejected a request for a warrant to arrest Park Sang-jin, the president of Samsung Electronics (SSNLF). Lee is a vice chairman of Samsung Electronics, the crown jewel in the family's sprawling array of businesses, which also include construction, shipbuilding and even theme parks. Samsung Electronics shares fell as much as 2% in Seoul on Friday after Lee was arrested. The prosecutors first sought to arrest Lee in January, but a judge turned down that request, citing a lack of evidence. At the time, the prosecutors vowed to "steadily" pursue their investigation of the Samsung heir. The case is part of a far-reaching scandal that has driven hundreds of thousands of South Korean protesters to the streets and prompted lawmakers to vote to impeach the president. Other top South Korean companies are also under investigation.

## Trump says he wants to deal with DACA recipients 'with heart'

(Agencies) During the marathon press conference, where he took multiple shots at members of the media and Hillary Clinton, Trump was asked about Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), Obama's executive order that protects some young illegal immigrants known as "dreamers," who were brought into the country illegally. On the campaign trail, Trump had promised to repeal what he had

called Obama's "illegal" orders on illegal immigrants, but Thursday he said "we're going to show great heart." "DACA is a very, very difficult subject for me," he told reporters in the East Room. "You have these incredible kids, in many cases not in all cases. In some of the cases they're having DACA and they're gang members and they're drug dealers too," he said. But you have some absolutely incredible kids...they were

brought here in such a way, it's a very, very tough subject." Trump said while he wants to deal with the DACA situation "with heart," there are a lot of politicians he has to convince. "The DACA situation is a very difficult thing for me as I love these kids, I love kids, I have kids and grandkids and I find it very hard doing what the law says exactly to do and, you know, the law is rough," he said. "It's rough, very very rough."

## Oroville is the best warning that infrastructure matters

(Agencies) At Oroville Dam in California this week, a major disaster was only one bout of heavy rains away. Luckily, the quick response of civil servants has averted a crisis, and with the water level at Lake Oroville dropping, authorities lifted the mandatory evacuation order and the nearly 200,000 evacuees made their way home.

Ominously, rain is now expected Thursday and over the weekend, and authorities are warning residents to be vigilant. The National Guard has 150 members in the area to provide support. It is important to understand, however, that the tenuous situation surrounding the dam and its spillways was not a danger that cropped up overnight. Instead, it has been brewing for years. And it's not an exceptional example. Of about 85,000 dams in the country, according to the National Performance of Dams database at Stanford

University, nearly 13,000 -- including Oroville -- are identified as high hazard, meaning that a failure would likely result in loss of life.

The good news is that these problems are fixable, with adequate monitoring and funding to address dam safety issues across the country, regardless of whether the dam is owned by federal, state, local or private entities. Historically, large federal investments in water infrastructure projects have been integral parts of economic policy that have helped to spur growth. The Oroville Dam, which lies north of Sacramento, for example, was completed in 1968 to much fanfare, being the country's tallest dam then and now. However, in recent decades funding for such projects and their maintenance has virtually vanished, leaving many places facing dangerous situations. The striking images of the Oroville crisis remind us that these dangers are not abstract problems. Take a

moment to consider the 2,209 people who lost their lives in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, in 1889 when the South Fork Dam failed, and imagine a similar scenario of flood-control levees or dams failing in other cities.

Dam failure can lead to cascading failures of critical infrastructure such as nuclear power stations. In terms of the potential for destruction, such scenarios would be not unlike the Fukushima disaster. Many of the large and more well-known dams in the United States -- such as the Hoover Dam in Nevada and the Addicks and Barker dams near Houston, Texas (which gained some notoriety last year during the Houston floods in spring of 2016) -- are owned and monitored by relatively well-funded federal agencies such as the Bureau of Reclamation and Army Corps of Engineers. They have measures in place to address safety issues.



# Public servants can't show gifts as income from legal sources, says SC

(Agencies) New Delhi : In its judgment deflating Sasikala's ambition to become CM of Tamil Nadu, the Supreme Court has dealt a blow to gift-loving public servants by ruling that presents could not be counted as income from lawful sources.

A bench of Justices Pinaki Chandra Ghose and Amitava Roy said: "Gifts to Jayalalithaa, a public servant in the context of Sections 161 to 165A of Indian Penal Code now integrated into the Prevention of Corruption Act, are visibly illegal and forbidden by law. The

endeavour to strike a distinction between 'legal' and 'unlawful' as sought to be made to portray gifts to constitute a lawful source of income is thus wholly misconstrued." The bench added: "With the advent of the PC Act, 1988, and consequent upon the expansion of the scope of definition of 'public servant' and the integration of Section 161 to 165A IPC in the said statute, the claim of the defence to treat the gifts offered to Jayalalithaa on her birthday as lawful income, thus cannot receive judicial imprimatur." The court was informed by

the counsel for Jayalalithaa that the income tax department did not view receipt of gifts as crime if one disclosed them and paid tax. The counsel had requested the court to take a similar view. Rejecting the contention, the SC said: "To reiterate, disclosure of such gifts in the I-T returns of Jayalalithaa and orders of the I-T authorities on the basis thereof do not validate the said receipts to elevate the same to lawful income to repel the charge under Section 13(1)(e) of the PC Act." While dealing with the nexus between Jayalalithaa as the

kingpin and associates Sasikala, V N Sudhakaran and J Elavarasi, the SC said: "The unimpeded, frequent and spontaneous inflow of funds from the accounts of Jayalalithaa to those of the other co-accused and the firms/companies involved overwhelmingly demonstrate the collective culpable involvement of the respondents in the transactions in the face of their overall orientation so as to render the same to be masked banking exchanges though involving several accounts but mostly of the same bank. No other view is possible."

## Rahul, Priyanka hit out at Modi on mother Sonia's home turf

(Agencies) Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi and his sister Priyanka Gandhi-Vadra both criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's claim of being "Uttar Pradesh's adopted son", as they addressed their first rally together in their



mother Sonia Gandhi's Lok Sabha constituency on Friday.

Sharing the campaign stage with his sister — Congress party's star campaigner — Gandhi accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of making "empty" promises.

"He (Modi) makes relationships wherever he goes... He went to Varanasi and termed Ganga as his mother and said he was the son of Varanasi... In 2014 Lok Sabha polls, he promised to change Varanasi," the Congress vice-president said.

Modiji, rishtey bolney sey nahin, nibhaney sey bante hain (relationships are not developed just by talking but by nurturing)," Rahul said, as he accused Modi — who fought the 2014 general

elections from Varanasi) — of being wont of making promises without fulfilling them. "In Bihar (elections), he promised to give special package, was it given? I have a list of things that he promised for Varanasi — clean Ganga, ghats, ring road, free WiFi, Bhojपुरi Film City. Modiji, you have not fulfilled the promises you made to your mother," he said.

In a payback to the Prime Minister's remark at a recent rally that Samajwadi Party national president Akhilesh Yadav and Gandhi — who are fighting the state assembly elections together — were like "rivals that befriend each other after the interval", Congress vice-president accused Modi of pretending to be a hero while really playing the villain.

# Demonetisation 100 days

## Fake Rs 2000 notes entering India through Bangladesh



(Agencies) Fake Rs 2,000 bills are entering India through Bangladesh, three months after the newly minted banknote was introduced as an upshot of the Narendra Modi government's demonetisation drive to fight corruption, counterfeiting and terrorist funding.

But multiple confiscations of counterfeit Rs 2,000 notes over the past three weeks have undermined the shock recall of 500- and 1,000-rupee notes last November, wiping out 86% of the money in circulation in a cash-driven economy.

The demonetisation exercise has been called a watershed for a country saddled with counterfeiters pushing millions of fake notes into the Indian economy from neighbouring Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal. Terrorists and governments hostile to India use the bogus cash to weaken the economy.

The latest attempts to restart the vicious cycle after the notes ban have set off alarm bells in the security establishment. On the night of February 14, security forces foiled an attempt

to smuggle a consignment across the fence on Indo-Bangladesh border. This was the latest and biggest in a series of attempts over a short span of time.

A Border Security Force (BSF) patrol seized a bundle of 100 counterfeit notes that was thrown across the fence for "miscreants" waiting on the Indian side. The criminals escaped, leaving behind the bundle.

"Our enemies across the border will not stop bothering us. They will continue to poison our economy ... pushing fake notes is the best method to do it. It was just a matter of time that they copied the new notes," said Arun Chaudhary, former Intelligence Bureau special director and former chief of Sashastra Seema Bal that guards the Indo-Nepal border.

The Bangladesh border is a preferred route because it is porous. Of the 17 security features on the Rs 2,000 note printed by the Reserve Bank of India, 10 were found on the seized notes, according to intelligence sources.

# Over 65% Turnout in UP Phase-II Polling, Uttarakhand Records 68 %



(Agencies) An impressive turnout of over 65 per cent was recorded in 67 Assembly constituencies across 11 districts of western Uttar Pradesh, figuring in the second phase of the crucial

state polls today. Meanwhile, over 68 per cent of the electorate in Uttarakhand voted today, two per cent more than the last Assembly polls, to decide the fate of 628 candidates in 69 out of the total 70 seats. In UP, the districts where polling were held included Bijnor, Saharanpur, Moradabad, Sambhal, Rampur, Bareilly, Amroha, Pilibhit, Kheri, Shahjahanpur and Badaun.

A total of 2.28 crore voters, including over 1.04 crore women, are eligible to cast their ballots in 14,771 polling centres

and 23,693 polling stations in the second of the seven-phase polling.

"Polling was held peacefully amid tight security," UP Chief Electoral Officer T Venkatesh said. The CEO office said the average turnout was over 65 per cent in these seats. The voter turnout in the first phase was recorded at 64.2 per cent - an increase of nearly three per cent from the first phase turnout in the 2012 state Assembly polls. At Bareilly, Union Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi's 115-year-old grandfather Z H Kazmi cast his ballot assisted by his family members. At certain places, long queues were seen outside polling stations. First time voters

were seen enthusiastic, taking selfies and proudly showing off the indelible ink imprint on their fingers.

Muslim women clad in burqas were seen outside several booths, while the photograph of a newly married couple going to cast vote in Bareilly went viral on social media. Of the 67 seats at stake, the ruling Samajwadi Party had won 34 seats in the 2012 polls, followed by BSP 18, BJP 10, Congress three and others two. In the present phase, 721 candidates, including 62 women are in the fray. The maximum candidates (22) are from Barhapur (Bijnor) and a minimum of four nominees from Dhanaura (Amroha).



# No more extravagant wedding? Bill in LS seeks cap on guests



(Agencies) A Bill in the Lok Sabha seeks to put a limit on the number of guests to be invited and dishes to be served in weddings to check “show of wealth” and wants those spending above Rs 5 lakh to contribute towards marriages of poor girls.

If a family spends above Rs 5 lakh on a wedding, it has to contribute 10 per cent of the amount on marriages of girls from poor families, according to the Bill introduced by Congress MP Ranjeet Ranjan, wife of MP Pappu Yadav.

The Marriages (Compulsory Registration and Prevention of Wasteful Expenditure) Bill, 2016, may be taken up as a private member’s Bill in the upcoming Lok Sabha session. The purpose of this Bill is to prohibit extravagant and wasteful expenditure on marriages and to enforce simpler solemnisation, Ranjeet told PTI.

“Great importance should be assigned to the solemnisation of marriage between two individuals. But

unfortunately, these days a tendency of celebrating marriages with pomp and show and spending lavishly is growing in the country.

“These days, marriages are more about showing off your wealth and as a result, poor families are under tremendous social pressure to spend more. This is needed

to be checked as it is not good for society at large,” she said.

The Bill seeks that “if any family intends to spend more than Rs 5 lakh towards expenditure on marriage, such family shall declare the amount proposed to be spent in advance to the appropriate government and contribute 10 per cent of such amount in a welfare fund which shall be established by the appropriate government to assist the poor and Below Poverty Line families for the marriage

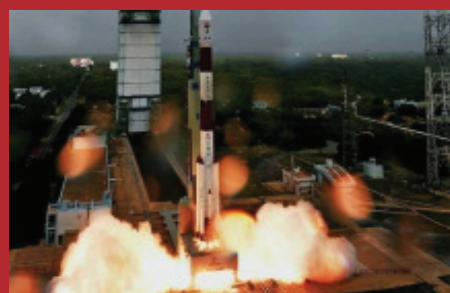
of their daughters”. It says that after this proposed legislation comes into force, all marriages shall be registered within 60 days of the solemnisation.

The government may fix the limit of guests and relatives and number of dishes to be served to the guests and relatives for solemnisation of marriage or for the reception held thereafter as it may deem necessary or expedient to prevent the wastage of food items, it adds.

## ISRO creates world record, launches 104 satellites in one go PM, President congratulate ISRO

(Agencies) Space agency ISRO on Wednesday scripted history by successfully launching 104 satellites, including India’s weather observation Cartosat-2 Series, in a single mission on board its dependable Polar rocket from here.

Bettering Russian space agency’s feat of launching 37 satellites in a single mission in 2014, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) injected the Cartosat-2 Series satellite and 103 nano-satellites into precise orbit after a textbook lift-off from this spaceport, about 100 km from Chennai. The previous highest number of satellites launched by ISRO in one mission was 20 in June 2015, the agency said. Cartosat-2 Series satellite, a remote-



sensing spacecraft with a five-year life span, would send images that would be utilised in coastal land use and regulation, road network monitoring, distribution of water, creation of land use maps among others, ISRO said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated ISRO for the successful launch, saying, “This remarkable feat by @isro is yet another proud moment for our space

scientific community and the nation. India salutes our scientists.” The complex mission has once again proved ISRO’s capabilities in undertaking commercial launches with the PSLV achieving its 38th consecutive success. President Pranab Mukherjee also congratulated ISRO for the record launch, saying the day will go down as a “landmark” in the history of India’s space programme. So far, ISRO has launched 226 satellites, including 179 belonging to foreign countries. At the end of the 23-hour countdown, the shortest so far by ISRO, the agency’s trusted workhorse Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle, on its 39th flight, blasted off from the first launch pad at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre at 9:28 a.m. and soared into clear skies.

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# BBC journalist faces action for 'faulty report' on govt's Kaziranga anti-poaching policy

(Agencies) The environment ministry has suggested "blacklisting" of a BBC producer for "grossly erroneous" reporting after its documentary projected the government's anti-poaching strategy at the Kaziranga tiger reserve as a "shoot-to-kill" policy.

An Office Memorandum (OM) issued by National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) has taken strong objection to the documentary for portraying India's wildlife conservation efforts at the reserve in "negative" light.

BBC news South Asia Bureau and the producer of the documentary— 'Killing For Conservation'— Justin Rowlatt has been issued a showcause

notice asking them as to why their permissions should not be revoked.

The documentary examines the government's anti-poaching policy and seeks to find out if the communities in the areas near the reserve have been affected.

The NTCA in its showcause has also asked the documentary to be removed from online portals with immediate effect and directed the Indian High Commission in the United Kingdom to take action.

"As per (powers) vested by section 38 O(k) of the Wildlife Protection Act 1972, this authority hereby directs the BBC News South Asia Bureau

and Justin Rowlatt to showcase as to why their permissions should not be revoked for violating clauses of the no-objection and clearances given by this authority within seven days," the OM said.

If the BBC fails to comply, its filming permission in all the tiger reserves of the country stands revoked, it said.

"Further, the said documentary uploaded on various online portals be removed with immediate effect by parties concerned. The Indian High Commission in the United Kingdom is requested to take action as appropriate in the matter," the OM said, adding it was a "breach of



trust" by the producer.

A BBC spokesperson, when contacted said the film makes clear the successes achieved by India's conservation policies in preserving the country's most iconic wildlife.

"However, the film also expressly set out to explore the challenges of India's conservation drive and during production it became clear that one of those challenges was the impact on communities living next to the park.

"Our audiences expect us to

bring them the full picture, while adhering to our editorial standards and this piece is no different," the spokesperson said in a statement.

The statement further said, "The issues raised in the film are part of an important international debate on the appropriate way to combat poaching. We did approach the relevant government authorities to make sure their position was fully reflected but they declined to take part."

# Demonetisation fades during assembly polls, parties using local issues to woo voters



(Agencies) The shadow of demonetisation on the electoral sphere appears to have faded with ground reports suggesting

that politicians from across party lines have put the issue on the back burner while seeking votes.

Parties have relied on local issues to woo voters in the run up to the ongoing assembly elections. In Uttar Pradesh, the alliance between the Samajwadi Party (SP) and the Congress along with the resurgence of Mayawati's Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) appears to have diluted the political slugfest over demonetisation.

Although the significance of the demonetisation issue as a poll plank appears to have reduced, it oddly still features in political attacks.

"The first 100 days after demonetisation are the biggest disaster in the Indian economy. Till today, we do

not know what was the real reason behind conducting this exercise," Trinamool Congress' (TMC) member of Parliament (MP) Saugata Roy said.

The course the ongoing assembly elections take could well decide the future of the political discourse on the note ban exercise.

Both the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Congress could take a call on their next course of action on the contentious issue depending on the poll result.

If BJP comes out victorious after the elections then it is likely to project the result as a direct reflection of people's support for the demonetisation policy. However, a defeat for the party would put it in a tight support as the Opposition would

project the verdict as a validation of its anti-demonetisation stand. The Opposition could also stitch a rare unity against the Narendra Modi government over demonetisation. Political observers feel that this unity has the possibility of turning into a full-fledged alliance.

"We may have differences, but we have decided to come together on this issue," Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi had said last year, indicating to Trinamool Congress (TMC) chief and West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee, who was sitting beside him. The two leaders had come on the same stage in opposition to the Modi government's November 8 announcement.

## Pubs moonlight as daytime offices

(Agencies) GURUGRAM: It's still six hours before Nowhere Terrace Pub in Sushant Lok's Cross Point Mall gets its first set of regular tippers. But there are already people seated inside -all of them working on their laptops. Strange? Well, that's because the pub turns into a shared workspace during the day.

It's not the only one. There are at least five pubs in Gurgaon, and one five-star hotel, that have started renting out space -in this case, tables -to those looking for a place to work out of. You can take it for a day or get a deal for a month. Facilities like Wi-Fi and, so metimes, snacks and coffee, are part of the package. This also helps the pubs make some money in off-peak hours when they get few customers. Sameer Dhar, the

owner of Nowhere Terrace Pub, came to the city almost two decades ago. "I started out as an entrepreneur myself 18 years ago and I understand that while starting up, every penny matters and an office is a big expenditure. Hence the idea of co-working space," he says. The pub has a dedicated area where people can work for just Rs 99 per day. The tariff includes free Wi-Fi, unlimited tea, coffee and munchies. "It helps us cover cost because we are anyway spending on the space and air-conditioning. Also, when there are people inside, customers feel more comfortable walking in for brunch," says Dhar. Cafe Di Ghent happens to be another such place.

# Palaniswami takes oath as CM, OPS says will fight for justice



(Agencies) Sasikala's nominee Edappadi Palaniswami was sworn in as the chief minister of Tamil Nadu along with his cabinet after being invited by the governor Ch Vidyasagar Rao to form government on Thursday.

Palaniswami's swearing in will be followed by a floor test in the coming days after ten days of AIADMK Palaniswami, a four-time MLA from Salem, was handpicked by Sasikala to lead the party after her conviction by

the Supreme Court in a 21-year-old corruption case. The AIADMK has been battling a power tussle after Panneerselvam revolted against Sasikala last week. Before leaving for Bengaluru to surrender on Wednesday, Sasikala re-inducted relatives Dinakaran and Venkatesh into the party, years after they were expelled by the late chief minister J Jayalalithaa. Her move was seen as a last-ditch attempt to hurt Panneerselvam, who has been expelled from the AIADMK.



# Husband beats wife to death, chops body into 2 parts in Delhi's Madhu Vihar

**The accused then beheaded her with a saw and kept the head in a bag in the bed-box. He had plans to cut the remaining body into pieces to dispose it off but he was arrested on February 15.**

(Agencies) In yet another gruesome incident in Delhi's Madhu Vihar area, a 40-year-old man purportedly beat his wife to death and then hacked her body into two parts to dispose it off so that no one could trace the plot of the murder.

The horrible murder of Manisha was perpetrated by the accused Subodh who worked as a plumber. He has been arrested by the police

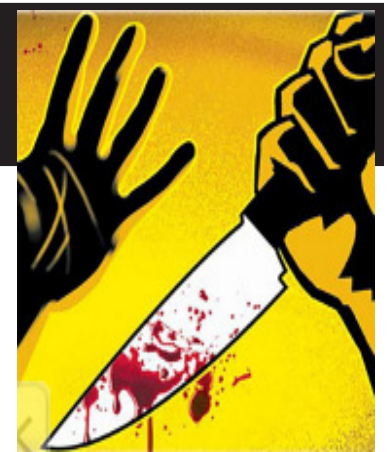
and said that he suspected his wife of infidelity; he wanted to know the truth of her illicit relationship so he lashed her on the intervening night of February 10 and 11.

First, the man beat his wife to death with lathis in front of his second wife Muniya and his three children, including Muniya's two-month-old baby. When Muniya and the children tried to intervene, he even threatened them.

The accused then beheaded her with a saw and kept the head in a bag in the bed-box. He had plans to cut the remaining body into pieces to dispose it off but he was arrested on February 15.

He had called her wife who lived with her two children in Shakurpur area to his home to sort out the issue involved. But the exasperated Subodh kept beating her despite pleas from Muniya and his children.

The police officer probing the murder said, "Even though he is claiming that he thrashed Manisha in a fit of rage, we suspect that he had planned to kill her in advance and that's why he called her to his house in Madhu Vihar". "He was wary of taking the body outside. He first beheaded her using the saw that he used for his plumbing job. He had plans to chop the remaining body in pieces," said the officer.



In spite of his awful attempt to cover up the murder, the foul smell of the dead body started emanating, locals got suspicious and informed police and Manisha's brutal murder was discovered.

# SC refuses to defer SYL case till after Punjab poll results, next hearing on Feb 22



(Agencies) The Supreme Court on Wednesday rejected Punjab government's request to adjourn the Sutlej-Yamuna Link (SYL) canal issue till after the announcement of the assembly election results on March 11.

A bench headed by justice

PC Ghose wondered what the court proceedings had to do with election results when senior advocate Ram Jethmalani made the request. Punjab has to file a response to Haryana government's accusing the former of having

violated a court order to maintain status quo on the land meant for the river water-sharing project. Punjab had denotified the identified area for returning it to farmers, a move put on hold by the SC.

Jethmalani, seeking time to file the affidavit, said that, though the document was ready, it could not be filed because the chief minister, Parkash Singh Badal, was undergoing medical treatment and thus could not vet it. But, the court asked him to complete the formality by February 20, and fixed February 22 to next hear the matter.

Meanwhile, the Centre filed a fresh affidavit before the top

court that it had taken all steps subsequent to the earlier two verdicts — delivered in 2002 and 2004. Pursuant to the two directives, the Centre said, it had nominated the central public works department (CPWD) as the central agency within a month for undertaking the canal work. A high-level empowered committee was set up within four weeks for coordinating and facilitating the early implementation of the orders. But, instead of handing over the land, Punjab passed a law in 2004 to terminate water-sharing agreements with neighbouring states. After 12 years, a Constitution Bench headed by justice AR Dave declared the law

unconstitutional on November 10. The ruling came on a Presidential Reference that was made to the top court in 2004 itself. The court had ruled that Punjab could not have taken a unilateral decision to terminate the pact with Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jammu and Kashmir, Delhi and Chandigarh on sharing of the Ravi-Beas waters. Subsequently, the top court had ordered status quo on the land acquired for the construction of canal's stretch in Punjab and appointed the Union home secretary, and Punjab's chief secretary and director general of police, as receivers to report on the ground situation.

# Want a big fat Indian wedding ?

## Bill wants to limit dishes served, guests invited

(Agencies) A bill in the Lok Sabha seeks to put a limit on the number of guests to be invited and dishes to be served in weddings to check "show of wealth" and wants those spending above Rs 5 lakh to contribute towards marriages of poor girls.

If a family spends above Rs 5 lakh on a wedding, it has to contribute 10% of the amount on marriages of girls from poor families, according to the bill introduced by MP Ranjeet Ranjan, wife of MP Pappu Yadav.

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Sabha session. The purpose of this bill is to prohibit extravagant and wasteful expenditure on marriages and to enforce simpler solemnisation, Ranjeet



told media. "Great importance should be assigned to the solemnisation of marriage between two individuals. But unfortunately, these days a tendency of celebrating marriages with pomp and show

and spending lavishly growing in the country." "These days, marriages are more about showing off your wealth and as a result, poor families are under tremendous social pressure to spend more. This is needed to be checked as it is not good for society at large," she said. The bill seeks that "if any family intends to spend more than Rs 5 lakh towards expenditure on marriage, such family shall declare the amount proposed to be spent in advance to the appropriate government and contribute 10% of such amount in a welfare fund which shall be established by the appropriate government to assist the poor and below poverty line families for the marriage of their daughters".

## Tax evasion, undisclosed income to see a decline post demonetisation

(Agencies) Demonetisation appears to have provided the impetus for the expansion of the formal economy and has laid the groundwork for a corruption-free India by giving authorities an insight into the income of taxpayers and the source of their earnings. Although normal life was disrupted in the days following government's note ban announcement, the move is expected to bring down the cases of tax evasion and non-disclosure of income in the long run. Revenue secretary Hasmukh Adhia said direct tax collection soared from 6% in 2015-2016 to 15% this year and is expected to rise further primarily due to the government's crackdown on black money. More than 2 crore zero frill savings accounts have also been opened since November 8. While presenting the budget, finance minister Arun Jaitley had said that demonetisation seeks to create a new 'normal' wherein the country's gross domestic product would be "bigger, cleaner and real".



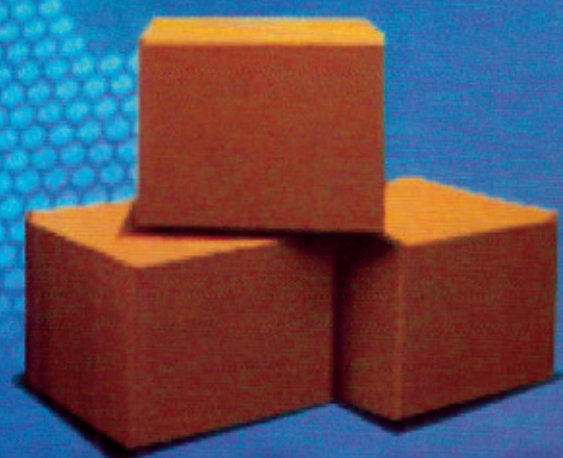
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# Congress becomes another wheel of Samajwadi Party in UP

*Walking away with the party's election symbol helps Akhilesh in carving a unique niche in state politics to be envied by many veterans.*

Emergence of Akhilesh Yadav as victorious in the internal feud in the Samajwadi Party and walking away with party's election symbol award under his belt and his strategy in having clinched an alliance deal with Congress Party, has seemingly helped him in carving a unique niche in state politics to be envied by many veterans. This alliance can help Akhilesh Yadav and Congress Vice-President Rahul Gandhi to mobilise youth vote in the state. Both entail enough potential to emerge youth icons and a pointer towards this has already been reported by Akhilesh when he spoke about one of his visits to a primary school in Rae Bareilly, the parliamentary constituency of Congress president Sonia Gandhi and said that children took him for Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi.

**SP-Congress alliance**  
Electoral alliance between SP and Congress has set alarming bells ringing in political camps of BJP and BSP. Both parties have agreed on seat sharing where SP would fight on 298 seats and the Congress on 105. This all but clears any chances of a grand

alliance in the state as well. Akhilesh's victory in SP's internal feud has seemingly helped him emerge as the leader of consensus within the party and whatever little resentment people had with the government was pushed into the background. Politics of alliances may be a reality in UP now, but winning elections has always been as huge a challenge as also running the government. And who else would know it better than the two parties — Congress and SP — who both have bitter-sweet experiences of alliance partners.

Prior to its alliance with Congress, the SP was apprehensive that they would lose Muslim voters had they joined hands with the Ajit Singh-led RLD. However, after SP's tie-up with the Congress, Akhilesh has become the most prominent face of the secular coalition. The solidarity between the Jats and the Muslims has diminished to a huge extent after the Muzaffarnagar riots. As far as the Congress is concerned, even in a state of disarray, it commands around 10% of votes. The coming together of the SP

and the Congress will help unify the traditional voter as well as consolidate Muslim votes on its own. The coalition also hopes to attract women voters and neutral voters from the upper castes. Rahul Gandhi and Akhilesh Yadav are young leaders and they could be bolstered by the presence of Dimple Yadav and Priyanka Gandhi.

One expert has opined: "The alliance has brought the two parties back in the race; they have won the battle of perception. But its success would depend on coordination at the ground level. Their cadres are used to opposing each other and suddenly they will be expected to cooperate." Another expert opines that SP and Congress, which had together polled about 40% votes during the 2012 assembly polls, presently are in a win-win situation in numerical terms; nevertheless, at ground level, it will be advantage Congress and the SP may not gain much.

Some political observers caution against too much reading into this political marriage between SP and Congress, because, as they argue, the inherent contradictions of the SP-

Congress alliance are bound to strain any tie-up at every stage of the polls. The SP's massive surge began after it started eating into the Congress' minority support base, especially in the post-Babri mosque demolition phase, when Muslims deserted the Congress lock stock and barrel and joined the SP in 1993. The SP's alliance with Kanshi Ram's BSP proved a formidable social combination of OBC-Dalit and Muslims that literally overwhelmed the Hindutva wave in 1993.

The SP continued to successfully confine the Congress to the margins till 2004 and the 2004-2009 period saw a bonhomie between the SP and the Congress. The SP even bailed out the Manmohan Singh government against the CPM's attempt to pull the rug out from under the UPA government's feet. This afforded Congress an opportunity to expand its base by eroding the SP's core base of minority and a section of OBCs. Alarmed by this development, SP's subsequent moves were not to let the Congress emerge from the fringe role it has been playing all along. It is in this



backdrop that some experts caution against seeing through the prism of an agglomeration of arithmetic because politics is more chemistry than a sheer game of numbers. The Congress, which had been relegated to the fourth position in the state and its influence being restricted to pocket boroughs like Amethi, Rae Bareilly and Sultanpur, has in the past few months, seems to have gained some ground through its various missions like the "Kisan Yatra" undertaken by Rahul Gandhi and its recent alliance with SP may help to regain some lost ground.

**BSP's Prospects**  
The BSP led by Mayawati, one of the major contenders for power, has been the first to come out with its list and it did not hesitate from giving 97 tickets to Muslim candidates. Evidently, it is eyeing the Muslim vote bank of the SP. Some experts say BSP supremo Mayawati has fielded Muslim candidates only in those constituencies that have close to 100,000 minority voters. None of these constituencies has less than 30,000 Dalit voters. The BSP believes Dalits and Muslims do not just vote for a common candidate, more than 90% of them make sure they come out and vote. If between 180,000 and 200,000 votes are polled in these constituencies, and the Muslims and Dalits are united in their thinking then the BSP will be a winner. These are the parameters Mayawati has kept in mind while giving tickets to the forwards, backwards and the Dalits. On the other hand, Mayawati is better placed than any other political formation to gain from the RSS leader Vaidya's recent controversial statement on reservations. Soon after statement, Mayawati launched a full-blooded attack on the RSS-BJP combine and questioned their commitment to the Constitution and Dalit welfare.



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# Meghalaya governor's hall of sleaze and shame

*adly, such lecherous act is not confined to one party or office or constitutional authority. The high and mighty often feel a sense of entitlement, a licence to take advantage of their position and exploit vulnerability of women.*

In the cacophony of noises created by the election in five states which is being termed as midterm test for Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the sordid tale of Meghalaya Governor V Shanmuganathan has not met with condemnation that it deserved. The governor was forced to quit after about 98 members of his staff wrote to President Pranab Mukherjee, Modi and Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh alleging that the governor had turned the 'Raj Bhawan' into a 'young ladies club'. The letter made 11 allegations against him. One is that he appointed three young women who were allowed free lodging in the Raj Bhawan.

The letter mentioned that one of the women was appointed as personal assistant to the governor, then elevated as the public relations officer and she accompanied V. Shanmuganathan whenever,

he was on tour outside Meghalaya. The letter alleged that the governor had "compromised the dignity" of the Governor's House, turned it into a club where "young ladies come and go at will" and had hired only women on his staff. The petition alleged that the Governor House had "become a place where young ladies used to come and go at will on direct orders of the Governor... Many of them had direct access to his bedroom."

Trouble for the governor began when a woman job aspirant accused the Governor of making advances when she appeared for a 'personal interview' at the Raj Bhawan for the post of PRO on January 24. The woman alleged that the governor offered her a "part time or full time job". She went on to allege that the governor hugged and kissed her describing it as a "dirty hug". Women activists held protests



in Shillong after the letter listing various acts lecherous acts and omissions by His Excellency reached PMO.

Sadly, such lecherous act is not confined to one party or office or constitutional authority. The high and mighty often feel a sense of entitlement, a licence to take advantage of their position and exploit vulnerability of women.

Instances of voyeuristic indiscretion by men in high offices cut across party lines and people's reactions vary from expressions of outrage to amusement while some show least concern dismissing these as a private matter.

The system has to ensure that criminal behaviour, should not be allowed go unpunished. We at Tehelka

condemn such behaviour by anyone including those in power and at helm of affairs. The governor, who is a bachelor has denied the allegations and said that the candidates were like his daughters and granddaughters, but the whole sordid episode needs thorough probe and strongest condemnation.

Hussein Ahmed and Mohamed Hossain moved as quickly as they could through the waist-deep snow. They were fleeing the United States for Canada, terrified but determined to get to safety.

"Sometimes we were crawling," Ahmed, 34, says. "It was terrible. ... I thought I would never survive such a field of ice."

The two men were part of a group of five Somalis who crossed illegally through Mexico into the United States, begging for asylum there. Now they find themselves crossing a border to beg for asylum all over again.

The men began having sleepless nights because of US President Donald Trump's campaign rhetoric. Then he signed an executive order temporarily barring refugees, and all travelers from Somalia. That was the final sign. They hatched a plan to

# Fleeing America

*Why refugees are risking life and limb to escape to Canada*



leave. They each paid a man \$300 to take them toward Grand Forks, North Dakota. He drove them to as close as possible to the border about 8 p.m. on Friday

might, the men say. They were to steer clear of the bright lights of the US North Dakota border in the distance, where customs agents might turn them back or send them to jail. He told

them where to walk, across the land where they meet Manitoba. But what was meant to be a 30-minute journey stretched into

hours. "We traveled the whole day and ... actually we lost the direction," Hossain, 28, says.

At one point, the men thought they might die trying to save themselves.

Many had never seen snow in their home country, let alone walked miles in it.

"Almost I became swallowed in the ice," Ahmed says.

And then the Canadian border lights were behind them. They called 911, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers came, and the men requested asylum.

The long journey, the steep price, and the fear had been worth it, the men say. They had been through so much before they reached America. Ahmed says he fled death threats from Al-Shabaab. Hossain says he fled discrimination as an ethnic minority in his country, after seeing his family members threatened or killed. Ahmed left behind young children when he fled; Hossain's mother is still in Somalia, and tried to dissuade him from making the dangerous border crossing.



# Clean Ganga

## Funds flow generously for project, but river far from clean

After facing the National Green Tribunal's wrath earlier this month for failing to clean the Ganga, minister for water resources Uma Bharti announced that a committee of secretaries would be set up to expedite the process.

MC Mehta, a Delhi-based lawyer, was not impressed. The long-winded saga of Ganga's clean-up has had as many turns as the river itself, with Mehta witnessing them all. He had filed a public interest litigation (PIL) with the Supreme Court in 1985 for cleaning the river. A few months later, then prime minister Rajiv Gandhi launched the first Ganga Action Plan.

Two action plans have been completed and hundreds of crores of rupees spent since then, but the river still remains heavily polluted. "Not a single drop of the Ganga has been cleaned so far," the green tribunal noted at a hearing in January.

Mehta says the only things that changed under the Narendra Modi government are ministries, names and budgets. Cleaning the Ganga was one of the cornerstones of Modi's campaign in the 2014 elections, when he fought and won from Varanasi – one of the holiest sites located on the banks of the Ganga. The call to revive a river that is sacred to the Hindus, and a lifeline for almost 40% of the country's population, helped propel him to power.

His administration made a promising start. In his first year, Modi launched the Namami

Gange programme with a whopping budget of 20,000 crore for a five-year period ending 2020.

This was at least 20 times more than what had been spent on Ganga rejuvenation projects since 1985.

However, as his government nears the three-year mark, it is becoming increasingly clear that lack of funds was never the problem. An RTI reply from the PMO last year revealed that about 20% of the Rs 3,700-crore funds allocated in the first two years of the programme was not utilised.

The committee formed by Bharti is part of the latest in a series of steps taken at the central level to reinvigorate the programme.

Under the banner of the Namami Gange programme, the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA) – tasked with the overall planning, implementation and monitoring of the project – was transferred from the ministry of environment and forests to the ministry of water resources (renamed as the ministry of water resources, river development and Ganga rejuvenation). Then the NGRBA itself was replaced by the National Council for River Ganga (Rejuvenation, Protection and Management) or the NCRG.

An empowered task force was set up in 2016. The newest committee has been formed under the aegis of this task force. For a mechanism as elaborate as this, the government seems woefully unprepared to



even diagnose the problem – leave alone implement solutions. "The people implementing the project know nothing. They don't know how many polluting industries are there, what is the length of the polluted stretches, or the number of villages dependent on the river," said Mehta. According to documents submitted to the court by the Centre, the number of grossly polluting industries (GPIs) affecting the Ganga was 764 in 1985. In 2017, government officials were still listing the number of GPIs as 764.

There is lack of clarity on the number of major drains that discharge pollutants into the Ganga and its main tributaries. While the CPCB pegs the number at 30, the Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board claims that at least 150 directly join the Ganga and its tributaries.

"Government data is often ill-founded, and it hardly reflects ground realities," a green tribunal panel observed when an expert group presented its findings in December 2016. The group, comprising IIT professors, cited multiplicity of authorities as a major stumbling block for the programme. RM Bhardwaj, a senior scientist at the Central

## SORRY STATE

Govt is yet to utilise 20% of the ₹3,700-cr funds allotted in the first two years of the launch of clean Ganga mission

### MONEY FLOW

₹939 crore (till March 31, 2013)  
Total expenditure under the Ganga Action Plan Phase I & II

₹20,000 cr

Funds allocated for the Namami Gange Programme (2014-2020)

### POCKET PINCH

Allocated Spending Unspent



### Sewage problem

Discharge of untreated sewage is one of the major causes of pollution in the Ganga.

The government is executing 42 sewage infrastructure projects to tackle the problem

### Falling short

Achieved Planned

Treatment capacity: 253.50 mld (Million litres daily) vs 327.93 mld

Sewer network: 1,060.96km vs 3,896.55km

### Keeping watch

- 572 out of 760 Online Effluent Monitoring System (EMS) installed at grossly polluting industries (GPIs)
- 266 out of 572 Online data being captured
- 36 Units with a March 31 deadline for installing EMS
- 135 Closed for non-compliance
- 17 Exempted (zero liquid discharge achieved)

Pollution Control Board (CPCB), blamed lack of coherent information about the river's condition on the ministry's over-reliance on state governments for data. "Now, these things are emerging only during the judicial process," he said.

CPCB is the agency charged with monitoring water quality.

The Ganga basin, the largest river basin in the country, serves Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi, and parts of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal.

Lack of coordination between the Centre and state governments have also been blamed for poor implementation of Modi's pet project. "Our regulatory system is not strong," said Bharadwaj. "The industry is not honest, and there is no

culture of owning up to one's mistakes. If we are able to take care of the major industries, it will be a big achievement." Earlier this year, the Supreme Court had entrusted the green tribunal with hearing the petition for cleaning the Ganga. The apex court directed the tribunal to submit progress reports on the case every six months.

The tribunal held a hearing this week. The National Green Tribunal ordered a CBI inquiry into the setting up of sewage treatment plants and network in the Garhmukteshwar area in Uttar Pradesh as part of the clean Ganga programme. "People like you sit on your chairs and waste public money, Ganga is what it is because of people like you," Justice Swatanter Kumar, who heads the bench, lashed out at the officials."





# Media As A State Annexe

The US media, torn between dispassion and compliance, faces Trump's withering fire



For better part of the last century, and almost from the 1920s onwards, when modern journalism turned more professional and into a respectable vocation, the American media and its continental cousins have enjoyed tremendous clout, prestige and influence in countries across the globe.

Their pithy writing, 'unbiased' reportage and analytical skills of complex issues, both at home and in faraway conflict and disaster zones, turned them into models and exemplars for journalists and media organisations across the world. But though the western media enjoys a reputation of being liberal, it rarely disclosed the fact that they were also part of the establishment and often worked in its interest.

"The major media, The New York Times and so on, tends to be what is called liberal. Of course, liberal here implies highly supportive of state power, state violence and state crimes," American thinker Noam Chomsky told Outlook in a 2010 interview.

Others outside the US—particularly in countries that were victims of America's armed intervention or machinations for regime change—would agree with Chomsky. They often argued that beneath that exalted veneer the western media and their hyped journalists were just glorified pamphleteers of their respective governments.

This view surfaced prominently during the Cold War, when the US-led West was engaged in an ideological battle with the erstwhile Soviet Union. The CIA and the MI5 left no stone unturned—they had jointly sponsored films, including George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and 1984, and deliberately changed the ending, ignoring the author's instructions, to sharpen the anti-Soviet criticism. Then, they funded journals and magazines like *Encounter*, drawing celebrated names (without their knowledge) like poet Stephen Spender,

philosopher Isaiah Berlin and journalist Irwing Kristol. The CIA even orchestrated the publication of Boris Pasternak's *Dr Zhivago* in the West in 1957 after it was suppressed in the USSR. It is with stinging irony that Orwell had once said, "Journalism is printing something that others do not want to be printed; everything else is public relations."

After 2003, mainstream American media's allegiance to the state became explicit, as it was roundly accused of helping the US government in 'manufacturing' consent against Saddam Hussein's non-existent 'WMD programme'—thus justifying the invasion of Iraq. Some, like NYT foreign correspondent Daniel Simpson, protested and resigned, accusing the newspaper of having become a "propaganda megaphone". His lone voice went unheeded; journalists from most major US media bodies scrambled to enlist as 'embedded' journalists and travelled with the invading Americans in Iraq, casting doubts about their credibility.

In the past, another war, Vietnam, yielded such classics of conflict reportage as Michael Herr's *Dispatches*, with American media coverage deemed by media commentators as having reached one of its high points. Yet, the more critical coverage of the government's effort came, as highlighted by Neil Sheehan in his book *A Bright Shining Lie*, only after the 1968 Tet Offensive, with the realisation that the US was not in a position to win in Nam.

More recently, when whistleblower Edward Snowden sought a pardon from the Obama administration, the mainstream media was split. The NYT was for a pardon, but The Washington Post opined that Snowden should be tried for leaking government secrets that jeopardised the US's position and hampered its intelligence operations.

Throughout all this, the venerated position of the

American media remained unaffected. That is, until recently.

Now, a war has been declared on them by US President Donald Trump. This tirade not only threatens to destroy their credibility, but is also aimed at tarnishing the sacrosanct image the media has nurtured for years.

Trump's deep-seated anger against the media though, is not propelled by any ethical or moral compulsion. It stems from a realisation that they are close to the Washington elite in general and the Democrats in particular, and it is this nexus that he needs to break to make them fall in line.

If Trump was vicious in his attack of the mainstream American media (and they of him) during his campaign, he has remained relentless in the severity of his criticism after assuming office. They peddle "fake news" and "only spread lies" has been Trump's standard charge, as he goes about cautioning the American public about major newspapers like The Washington Post and The New York Times and TV networks such as CNN.

Trump, a rank outsider who managed to win the Republican party nomination and the presidential election against media-favourite Hillary Clinton, has promised to break the Washington establishment and give power back to the American people.

As American academic and social critic Camille Paglia had predicted before the election, "If Trump wins, it will be an amazing moment of change, because it would destroy the power structure of the Republican Party, the power structure of the Democratic Party and destroy the power of the media. It would be an incredible release of energy...at a moment of international tension and crisis."

Trump has created a crisis not only within the US but deepened a sense of gloom beyond America's shores, particularly across the Atlantic,

where in the wake of last year's Brexit, the very foundation of the European Union has been put to test. Trump's victory has increased the possibility that similar right wing and nationalist forces now have a better chance of seizing power in several European countries due for elections this year.

The nervousness among the European liberals, especially its media, has culminated in a counter-offensive against the American president and the threat he poses to hard-won western liberal values. This campaign was encapsulated on the cover of German magazine *Der Spiegel* that showed Trump holding the severed head of Lady Liberty in one hand and a knife with blood dripping from it on the other.

Other magazines have also voiced their anguish—an *Economist* cover showed Trump lobbying a Molotov cocktail into the White House, to show how worried they were about the his potential to damage the establishment. But it was the *Spiegel* cover that sparked off a major controversy, leading many liberals also to question whether comparing an elected US President with IS jihadists was an appropriate thing to do.

Back in the US, the media seems to be facing one of their worst crises. Since Trump's victory—which most of the mainstream media had failed to predict—their stocks had been falling steadily. The latest Gallup survey shows the media's credibility—usually consistently over 50 per cent—have now fallen to a lowly 32 per cent.

It is not only Trump supporters who are questioning the credibility of the media, criticism against them is also coming from the left and liberal sections. "What we know as the media never imagined a Trump victory," says Stanford University historian Victor Davis Hanson. "It has become unhinged at the reality of a Trump presidency."

Similar views are also expressed by WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, who charges the US media with "ethical corruption", while Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Glenn Greenwald has described the attempt by The Washington Post to carry unverified reports about Russia's involvement in the hacking of the email system of the Democratic Party's headquarters "as an incredibly irresponsible and dangerous form of behaviour that media outlets, led by The Washington Post, are engaging in".

But the US media and its symbiotic ties with the state is also something that its old colonial masters, the British, had instituted and used effectively to safeguard the empire's interest. The case of Hans Raj Vohra, is a point in example. The young revolutionary-turned-approver's statement in the Lahore Conspiracy case in 1929 was instrumental in sending Bhagat Singh, Raj Guru and Sukhdev to the gallows. The Viceroy rewarded him by arranging his education at the London University and later accommodated him as a journalist at the *Civil and Military Gazette*.

How will the intractable standoff between Trump and the mainstream media play out? The recent stay order of the judiciary on the US President's ban on immigration from seven predominantly Muslim nations is seen as the first major setback for him and, therefore, a victory for the media that had been extremely critical about it.

"The media has now become the opposition party, not the Democratic Party," Trump's chief strategist Stephen Bannon complained in exasperation.

Are the claws in this fight going to get sharper, drawing more blood in the coming days? Or will the US media fall in line and accept the new order that Trump is attempting to set up? The American media won't give up without a protracted bareknuckle fight.



# Dear Baby Donald: Leaks Are as American as Apple Pie

The motives behind the Flynn leaks deserve our scrutiny. Did the intelligence officials who collected Flynn's conversations with the Russian ambassador and then, as has been hypothesized, leak them do so to undermine the president and boost their own stock? Possibly, and worthy of a Page One story. Did FBI investigators tell the press about Flynn's lies for similar self-aggrandizing reasons? Again, I'd

both assign and read that story. But I'm less shocked about bureaucracies leaking truthful and civically valuable information about a powerful and dangerous liar in government than I am in learning they aren't robots who are slaves to a key that Baby Donald sticks into their back and winds them up with. Long ago, media scholar Stephen Hess built out a taxonomy of leaks that should guide our thinking in reading the news.

(Warning, I'm cribbing myself here.) Leakers leak for a reason, and not always to preserve the Constitution. Deep Throat—aka Mark Felt—leaked because he thought he was unjustly being passed over for the directorship of the FBI and wanted to injure President Richard Nixon, an "Animus Leak" in the Hess parlance. Leakers leak to boost their own egos; they leak as goodwill deposits with a reporter, hoping they can make a

withdrawal later. They leak to advance their policy initiative to destroy a rival's policy initiative or to gauge public reaction to an idea or to blow the whistle on wrongdoing.

If Trump hopes to tame the leak monster—something no other leak-hating president has ever done—he might want to stop lying first so as not to antagonize the leakers. But you know how likely that is.

## Hammer Of Authority

Independent India has got no soldier execu-ted; that does not mean we have not had cowardice or desertion in times of war, or sentries who fell asleep. All it does is to tell us how antiquated the law is. The colonial ring of its language, and some provisions, date many of its provisions to the 1911 Indian Army Act. There is something inherently authoritarian about the military justice system because the military is a kind of dictatorship functioning within a democracy. Given the requirements of military discipline and the preservation of good order, the system has felt a need to create

an authoritarian regime where authority flows from the top to the bottom. Also, questioning an order, or not following the draconian rules, can lead to punishment that would be considered severe by the regular laws of the country.

Good order and discipline are not just about war time, but relate to the daily life of an army man required to keep the military's fighting edge keen at all times. For this, there are summary procedures for commanding officers of units to punish jawans up to the rank of a hawaldar. Death sentence may not visit you if you desert, mutiny, steal,

strike or threaten superiors in peace time, but you can still get 14 years RI and be cashiered, which means no retirement benefits.

There are other problematic provisions, such as "unbecoming" or "disgraceful conduct" of officers and junior commissioned officers, not too clearly defined, but venture into areas that go against the moral ethos of the armed forces and their sense of honour. Actually, unlike the police or other state instruments, army personnel can be punished for cruelty to civilians, defiling religious places and even infidelity. The aim of the system is

to provide a quick, but fair procedure. Safeguards are built in, but the very nature of the system raises questions. The military courts, or the courts martial, comprise benches of five or three officers with no legal training—even the prosecutor and defence councils are line officers. General courts martial usually have a judge advocate who is supposed to advise the court on the finer points of the law. In essence, the military is its own police, forensic department, judge and jury, and this is the biggest weakness of the system. While the summary court-martial is a useful means of maintaining good order, when it comes to more serious crimes, collecting evidence, its presentation and consideration by a non-specialist group can be problematic. The idea that peers are the best judges goes back to the European notion of a jury trial. In India, the system was abolished after a jury acquitted a naval commander of a 1959 murder of a businessman. The Bombay High Court overturned the verdict and tried and convicted him through a bench.

Over time, the infirmities of the system have been apparent, especially since it has no built-in right to appeal and, given its

draconian nature, bears instances of its misuse. To deal with this, the government established the Armed Forces Tribunals (AFTs) in 2007. The members here are mixed—senior retired judges and senior retired military officers.

The big problem, however, is that the AFTs come under the ministry of defence, instead of the law ministry. So the appeals system is run by the very outfit against whom the appeals are usually entered. The key powers to have their judgements and orders implemented have been withheld from the Tribunals, and their rulings are simply ignored, if found inconvenient. Separating the military from society has often been seen as a means of enhancing the military effectiveness of the forces. The Army Act was a manifestation of this. But times have changed, and so have the very nature of warfare and the context of the old rules. Getting soldiers to follow orders must be accompanied by a culture where not only illegal orders are challenged, but instead draconian discipline to get them to follow orders, the officers depend on their self-esteem as professionals and their sense of being part of a team.

## Reimagining nationalism

but when it comes to the nation, it is detached and indifferent, if not awkward. Their view of the nation is liberal, substantive and inclusive. In the debate last year, they were defensive, if not defeated. To ordinary people like my interlocutor, they come across as deracinated intellectuals, as modern, westernised, English-speaking class that does not understand the ethos of this country, let alone take pride in it. It becomes easy to dub this class rashtradrohi.

The tragedy of the debate on nationalism was not just that narrow and aggressive posturing won the first round. The tragedy was not just that more inclusive and tolerant visions were pushed out. The real tragedy was that India was debating its nationalism in entirely borrowed terms. Both these pathologies—jingoism and cosmopolitanism—are European in origin. Proponents of Hindutva nationalism are as European in their mindset as the deracinated westernised intellectuals. The real tragedy of the debate last year was that it was entirely imported, that the mainstream of Indian freedom struggle was absent from this debate.

It is easy to see how the cosmopolitan response is

European in its sensibility. In Europe today, "nationalism" is a bad word. It connotes chauvinism, intolerance to migrants and outsiders and aggressive policy vis-à-vis one's neighbours. Suspicious of this narrow creed, liberal, cosmopolitan intellectuals tend to be uneasy with nationalism. Indian cosmopolitanism tends to borrow this attitude from its European counterpart. Unfamiliar with Indian traditions of universalism, they equate universalism with the West.

But we often miss out on how the narrow, aggressive, Hindutva version of nationalism is equally a European import. The idea of "one nation, one culture, one race, one language, one religion" is not an Indian idea. This is rooted in the European inability to deal with diversity and their pathological quest for uniformity. This quest, expressed in Bismark's Germany or Mazzini's Italy, is very much the ideal for proponents of Hindutva nationalism. The name of the country is changed, but the model of what nationalism means is very European. This European pathology is at the roots of the jingoism that dominates India today.

What, then, is the way out?

The ideal of nationalism that was evolved during Indian freedom struggle offers us a way out. Tagore's reflections on India's unity, Gandhi's defence of nationalism and Bhagat Singh's vision of a future India provide us with a richer understanding of nationalism. This nationalism invites us to think of India as a civilisational and cultural entity whose unity does not lie in European-style uniformity. It does not see India's diversity as a national weakness, rather it celebrates the unity in this diversity. This nationalism is not divisive but unifying. Its principal focus is on bringing together Indians of different caste, community, region and religion. While opposing British rule, this nationalism was not anti-white. It did not lead to hatred for outsiders. Instead it opened India to solidarity with the world outside, with other oppressed people in colonies outside India. Unlike European nationalism, Indian nationalism encouraged debates on what it meant to be a nation.

The real tragedy of today's India is that there is no political force that can defend this mainstream of Indian nationalism. The first anniversary of the JNU debate reminds us of this tragedy.

## If you think Trump is good for India you are in for a shock

(Contd from page 6)

Faced with implacable racism and diminishing opportunities, many Indians chose to return home. The plight of the Indian in the US was dramatised in 1929, when Rabindranath Tagore abruptly pulled out of a lecture tour in America owing to discourteous treatment by immigration officials—behaviour that he felt reflected the anti-Indian bias of the act of 1924. By 1940, there were only over 2,000 Indians immigrant left.

The striking success of Indians who immigrated in recent decades is also testimony

to the extraordinary changes in America since the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Without the delegitimation of the older, brisk racism and overt xenophobia Indians could not have scaled such heights in the US. As much as the technicalities of the immigration regime, we should worry about the subtle re-emergence of such attitudes in the policy discourse of the Trump administration. When a white supremacist like Steven Bannon publicly grumbles about South Asians heading Silicon Valley corporations, the echoes of Church are unmistakable.



# Donald Trump 28 Days Later

Donald Trump will hit the four-week-mark Friday on a presidency that has begun like no other — full of big promises, constant controversy, the ever-present encroaching of major scandal, and zero regard for the previous norms of American politics.

Beneath the noise, however, there has been a march, however halting and disorganized, toward Trump's promised radical remaking of American policy, foreign and domestic. The border wall his critics said he'd never build has been ordered, his promised rollback of regulations is in full swing, his Supreme Court pick that will likely sit on the bench for decades, and even the "Muslim ban" he promised during the Republican primary was put in place, however briefly, in altered form. The dual track is familiar to those who watched his campaign, during which a series of controversies and scandals garnered mass attention while few foresaw Trump's success in building a winning coalition. But a presidency is a longer race than even the campaign, and it remains to be seen whether Trump can outrun his missteps the way he did last fall.

So far, Trump has signed at least 23 executive actions, signed five bills into law, seen 12 members of his Cabinet confirmed, nominated one justice to the Supreme Court, sent 168 (undeleted) tweets, fired one acting attorney general and demanded one resignation: that of his own national security adviser.

It has been 28 days. Here they are.

## **Inauguration Day: Jan. 20**

Where things went according to plan:

The speech: In a short address, Trump stuck to the themes that won him the election, painting a scene of current "American carnage" — claims of economic decay and rising crime that are contradicted by a considerable volume of statistical evidence — as well as his own promise to usher in a new American glory.

First executive actions: Trump signed an executive order that allowed for the delay or waiver of certain Affordable Care Act provisions, and another that froze pending regulations until they won approval from the White House or a newly appointed agency head — early moves toward core promises of his campaign.

Cabinet confirmations kick off: Two of Trump's best-received

Cabinet picks, retired Marine Gens. James Mattis for Defense Secretary and John Kelly for Homeland Security, both won easy confirmation in the Senate. Vice President Mike Pence swore them in that evening.

Where things went off the rails:

The crowd size: The crowds for the inauguration and ensuing parade were bested by the audience that attended former President Barack Obama's first inauguration, a disparity unveiled both by Metro rail ridership numbers and, more immediately, by aerial photographs.

## **Day 2: Jan. 21**

### **According to plan:**

First foreign leader visit is announced: Press secretary Sean Spicer announced the first visit from a foreign leader, with the Prime Minister Theresa May of the United Kingdom scheduled to visit Trump at the White House during his first week in office.

### **Off the rails:**

The Women's March: Hundreds of thousands of protesters descended on Washington and cities around the nation (as well as internationally) in massive numbers to demonstrate against the new president, opening questions about whether his election would galvanize progressives into a more politically effective resistance.

The CIA speech: Trump visited the CIA headquarters to show his support for their work, but while standing before the Agency's wall honoring the 117 CIA officers who died in service, he delivered a campaign-style address that stepped on his message.

Sean Spicer: The new press secretary called a news conference, but instead of taking questions, he offered a searing critique of the news media's accuracy while delivering no fewer than five demonstrably (at times even obviously) false statements in five minutes. The appearance won Spicer widespread mockery as his inaccuracy became the subject of a short-lived but widely shared meme.

## **Day 3: Jan. 22**

### **According to plan:**

Conversation with Netanyahu: Trump spoke by phone with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, extending the invitation for him to visit the United States in February and taking an early step toward a promise of warmer U.S.-Israeli relations.

Trump's second response to

the Women's March: After initially complaining about the protests (see below), Trump took a more measured tone in a follow-up tweet: "Peaceful protests are a hallmark of our democracy. Even if I don't always agree, I recognize the rights of people to express their views."

### **Off the Rails:**

"Alternative facts": White House counselor Kellyanne Conway defended Spicer's Saturday night falsehoods by telling NBC's Chuck Todd that Spicer was simply presenting "alternative facts." The phrase was widely mocked and cast further doubt on White House credibility just days into the administration.

The beginning of the end of Flynn: Sunday night, The Wall Street Journal published an article with an eyebrow-raising lede: "U.S. counterintelligence agents have investigated communications that President Donald Trump's national security adviser had with Russian officials, according to people familiar with the matter." The problem would not go away quietly.

## **Day 4: Jan. 23**

### **According to plan:**

More executive actions: Trump signed three more executive actions aimed at fulfilling campaign promises on what the White House billed as the first work day of the administration. The orders officially withdrew the U.S. from negotiations over the Trans-Pacific Partnership, froze federal hiring (except for the military and in certain security situations) and barred federal funds from going to international groups that provide abortions. The move on trade was the final nail in the coffin for U.S. participation in TPP, which had been slowly careening toward doom during the presidential campaign in which Trump and Clinton both voiced opposition to it. The hiring and abortion orders represented two more boxes checked on the conservative wish list.

Spicer, take 2: Spicer's much-anticipated Monday briefing was mostly drama-free, and the press secretary pledged the administration's "intention is never to lie to you."

Tillerson on the move: Rex Tillerson won a party line vote in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to advance his nomination for secretary of state. His prospects were uncertain after a rocky confirmation hearing and doubts voiced by Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.), who ended up

supporting the former ExxonMobil CEO nonetheless.

### **Off the Rails:**

Trump's meeting with lawmakers: In a meeting with bipartisan congressional leadership at the White House, Trump repeated his false claim that widespread voter fraud cost him the popular vote in the general election.

Conway on tax returns: Conway walked back a claim she made Sunday — in which she seemed to indicate Trump never had any intention of releasing his tax returns — and returned to the line repeated throughout the campaign, that his returns would be released after the completion of an audit.

## **Day 5: Jan. 24**

### **According to plan:**

More executive orders: Trump signed five more executive actions: Two encouraged the construction of pipelines, one sought to expedite the approval of infrastructure projects, one called for material used to build pipelines to be made in America "to the maximum extent possible," and another called for swifter permitting for domestic manufacturers.

Nikki Haley: Trump's pick for ambassador to the United Nations, former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, was confirmed by the Senate 96-4.

### **Off the Rails:**

Spicer on voter fraud: Spicer defended Trump's voter fraud claims by incorrectly citing a widely debunked study. He did not say whether he agreed with Trump's claim, though he claimed that Trump had based his belief on "studies and evidence."

## **Day 6: Jan. 25**

### **According to plan:**

Immigration orders, Part 1: Trump signed two orders on immigration. One included a call for the beginning of planning and construction of the border wall and the hiring of 5,000 more border patrol agents, another pushed for the hiring of 10,000 additional Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers and aimed to cut off federal funding to "sanctuary cities."

Paul Ryan's Philly speech: In a speech at congressional Republicans' retreat in Philadelphia, House Speaker Paul Ryan said the Republican-led Congress would replace Obamacare, cut taxes and fund Trump's border wall by August. It's usually the White House making grand predictions and Congress coming in with the cold water, but

Ryan's statements represented a show of unity.

### **Off the Rails:**

Voter fraud tweet: While his administration worked to steer the conversation toward Trump's policy, the president himself — possibly still upset over focus on his loss in the popular vote — couldn't resist relitigating the election. "I will be asking for a major investigation into VOTER FRAUD, including those registered to vote in two states, those who are illegal and.... even, those registered to vote who are dead (and many for a long time). Depending on results, we will strengthen up voting procedures!"

## **Day 7: Jan. 26**

### **According to plan:**

Bannon bashes the press: From the campaign trail into the White House, Trump and his team have grown fond of attacking the news media — a move that seems always to rile up their base. Trump's chief strategist Steve Bannon added his voice to the chorus, telling The New York Times that the media is "the opposition party" and that the press should "keep its mouth shut and just listen for awhile." Trump would later repeat the "opposition party" phrase to describe the press.

### **Off the Rails:**

Spicer, again: On a flight back from Philadelphia, where Trump addressed the Republican congressional retreat, Spicer suggested a 20 percent tax on imports from countries "like Mexico" could be used to pay for the border wall. But Spicer quickly walked back the proposal, saying it was not a policy proposal but rather "one idea" for how the wall could be paid for. The idea was out there long enough to get panned by some Republicans, including Sens. Ben Sasse and Lindsey Graham.

Mexico responds: Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto canceled a planned visit to the U.S. in response to Trump's Jan. 25 executive actions.

## **Day 8: Jan. 27**

### **According to plan:**

March for Life: The March for Life came to Washington with anti-abortion activists feeling a sense of renewed vigor now that Trump has been elected. Pence, in particular, won plaudits by being the first sitting vice president to address the annual event — a hometown crowd for him if there ever was one.

First presidential presser: Donald Trump welcomed British Prime Minister Theresa May, an event that went smoothly and showcased a tight partnership between the two nations. Trump answered his first questions from reporters as president.



# Through the Looking Glass



## *How can we recognize our friends in the mixed-up world of Donald Trump?*

(Agencies) You know you're living in a looking-glass world when former Vice President Dick Cheney speaks out against one of Donald Trump's executive orders. He's a good example of how past adversaries of movements for peace and justice are lining up against our current adversary, the new president. The United States, Cheney told radio host Hugh Hewitt, should not exclude people from our territory on the basis of religion. That was just a few days after Trump had signed an executive order entitled "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States." Such a move, said Cheney, "goes against everything we stand for and believe in." In the same interview, Cheney revealed the origins of his personal affinity for Muslim refugees. His own ancestors, he said, arrived on this continent to escape religious persecution. "They were

Puritans," he explained, adding, "There wasn't anybody here then when they came." No one? It was a sparkling display of precisely the European-American solipsism that so deeply marked the Cheney years in power.

Refugees, he acknowledged, do represent "a serious problem." To begin to solve it, however, "You gotta go back and look at why they're here. They're here because of what's happening in the Middle East."

The refugees Cheney refers to aren't "here," of course, or what would be the point of Trump's entrance ban? Otherwise, I'd have to agree with the former vice president: you do need to look at "what's happening" but also -- something he didn't mention -- what happened in the Middle East to explain their need for refuge. Refugees from Iraq and Syria (among other places) have indeed lost their homes and

homelands by the millions, in significant part because of the very invasions and occupations that Cheney and his president, George W. Bush, launched in the Greater Middle East, radically destabilizing that part of the world. The Enemy of My Enemy? What should it mean for those of us hoping to resist the grim presidency of Donald Trump to find Dick Cheney, even momentarily and on a single issue, on our side? One thing it certainly can't mean is that Cheney stands for the same "everything" that moved thousands of people to rush to U.S. airports, demanding the release of visitors, immigrants, and green card holders detained under Trump's new order. Although in the Muslim refugees of today he may indeed recognize a reflection of his Puritan ancestors, Cheney's disagreement with Donald Trump does not, in fact, make him a

friend of the cause of compassion, justice, or the rule of law. Few of us who spent eight years opposing Bush and Cheney or who remember their record of invasions, occupations, torture, black sites, and so much more are likely to imagine that his opposition to the ban on refugees makes him our friend. But that doesn't mean that we can't take some satisfaction from where he's landed on this issue. It's been harder, however, for many of us to find clarity when it comes to certain of the other war hawks who, for their own reasons, don't trust Trump. It's a trap most of us avoided last summer when 50 members of the national security establishment, including former National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice and one of

George W. Bush's CIA directors, Michael Hayden, wrote an open letter warning the world that Trump lacked "the character, values, and experience to be president." We recognized that the letter signers themselves lacked the "character, values, and experience" to comment. After all, in the Middle East and elsewhere, this bunch had helped to pave the way for Trump's rise. In recent months, as the Russian hacking scandal hit and Trump's feud with the CIA gained ever more media attention, that Agency has proven another matter. Here is a real danger to avoid: in our efforts to delegitimize Donald Trump, it's important not to inadvertently legitimize an outfit that most of us have long opposed for its vicious campaigns around the world.

# How San Diego Built a Bridge Over the Wall

## Front Feature

Ohanian declared, "with many, many unintended consequences." Given the aging of the baby boomers and declining U.S. birth rates, Trump's possible plan to reduce immigration levels would make it "extremely difficult" to achieve increased productivity or GDP growth, he warned. But Ohanian wound up his speech on a positive note: Trump seems like a "person who tends to change his mind," he said. The crowd laughed nervously.

For the people who do business in Tijuana and San Diego talk, of barriers—whether it's tariffs or even "big beautiful walls"—is anathema. They know that the health of their "mega region," as San Diego's Republican mayor Kevin Faulconer calls it, depends on enhancing the economic integration of the two cities that collectively boast a population of 5 million. (Roughly half live on each side.) One of the most dramatic examples of their commitment to that entwined economy is a bridge that literally crosses above the border fence. In late 2015, a terminal connecting San Diego to the Tijuana airport opened. Funded privately by American and Mexican investors, the Cross Border Xpress has created the world's first truly binational airport. Each day, thousands of passengers from San Diego now walk easily across the border

directly into the Tijuana airport. Conversely, people landing in Tijuana now walk into San Diego after their flights. The project is a striking physical manifestation of the increasing interconnectedness of the two cities.

It wasn't always this way; in fact, as recently as 20 years ago, San Diego, a southern California city long dominated by a major presence of the U.S. Navy, felt more of a gravitational pull from the north than the south. "San Diego was [still] deciding what it wanted to be. We looked north and decided that we did not want to be Los Angeles, or worse a pretty suburb of Los Angeles," recalls James Clark, the executive director of the Smart Border Coalition, a civic group that advocates for improved border crossings. San Diego looked south and discovered its sister city, Tijuana, had become a manufacturing powerhouse. "Tijuanese were spending money in our stores, restaurants, museums, and theaters. We had families that lived on both sides of the border, went to school on both sides of the border, attended church on both sides and were truly bi-cultural, bilingual, and binational."

Signs of integration abound. You can hear it in the impeccable Mexican Spanish pronunciation that even many Anglo San Diegans possess; the city to

their south is named "Tee-hwana," not "Tee-a-wanna," they remind visitors. You can see it in many of the city's neighborhoods, where Spanish signage is everywhere. And most of all, you can see it at the border crossing in the southern San Diego neighborhood of San Ysidro, the world's busiest land border. It's a sprawling, hectic scene, as thousands line up on foot and in cars to make what for many is a daily crossing from Mexico to the United States and vice versa.

Recently the mayor of San Diego says, the relationship between Tijuana and his city is "incredibly strong." The numbers tell the story. According to a 2014 study from the University of California, San Diego's Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, the region has a gross annual product of more than \$220 billion. Some 70,000 commercial and vehicular northbound crossings are made each day. (Tens of thousands of those are commuters—some of them American citizens—who live in Tijuana and work in San Diego.) The area has become "the largest region for medical device manufacturing" in the world, says Faulconer, who explains that because of increasingly complex binational supply chains, "sometimes [one product] will cross the border two to three times."

UCLA's Ohanian pegs the figure far higher: In some cases, he suggests, a good can cross the U.S.-Mexico border an astonishing 14 times before it goes to market. One study suggests that the average good exported from Mexico to the U.S. contains 40-percent American-made components. In the San Diego-Tijuana region, Solar Turbines, Kyocera International and Taylor Guitars are just a few of the companies that have facilities on both sides of the border.

To help bolster this burgeoning cross-border relationship, the region has undertaken some unusual binational infrastructure initiatives in recent years—and not just at the Tijuana airport. Most importantly, construction is now underway on a new land border crossing to the east of the extant traffic-clogged gateways; one designed and partially funded with local money from San Diego County's regional governments, and which will be paid off through tolls. The new border crossing should be open before the decade is out, and—backers say—the benefits to the regional economy will total in the billions. Regardless of who is sitting in the Oval Office, San Diego and Tijuana are betting that "big league" binational infrastructure investments will pay off.



# Mental tricks that'll really make you nod off, why popping pills won't help and how you can stop snoring keeping you awake

(Agencies) Good sleep is like a gift from the Gods. Sleep well and you'll be healthier and better able to fight infection, combat stress and control your blood pressure.

You'll be better at learning and remembering new things; you'll be more creative and better able to concentrate, as well as evaluate, and respond to, risk. You'll have more energy, stamina and sex drive. And you'll be happier all round.

A racing mind is often the cause of insomnia. Thoughts rush to the fore and jolt you out of sleepiness just as you're dropping off. They jostle for attention when you wake up in the night or early morning, making it impossible to get back to sleep.

If you've been diligent about

the worry-control exercises I outlined in yesterday's paper, you should be learning to rein in your anxiety, but if you find yourself in bed awake, and your mind is empty and clear, there's an incredibly strong compulsion to fill it with something negative.

It'll come as no surprise to insomniacs to hear that what generally fills that space is a spiralling worry about sleeplessness itself — a loop that merely feeds itself the more you struggle to nod off.

The key, counter-intuitively, is to distract your busy brain from this worry about lack of sleep, while at the same time keeping your stress levels low.

How do we do that? By filling the mind with something all-consuming but which triggers no emotion whatsoever.



These strategies should help. Try them all and pick the one you like best.

People respond differently to each — it's a personal choice — but pick one with the least possible overlap with your everyday life so that you minimise the potential for triggering associated worry (accountants, for instance,



might want to avoid the numerical strategy, in case it causes stress about work).

Studies show the old trick of counting sheep has only limited success in the real world because it's just too simple.

It's all too easy to visualise fluffy sheep leaping over hedges and stiles while simultaneously wondering about next month's mortgage repayment, your child's falling marks at school, or your imminent hip operation.

Instead, try counting backwards from one thousand in sevens (1,000, 993, 986, 979 . . .). Sounds tough,

right? That's because it's meant to be. Actually, it doesn't matter if you get the numbers wrong or lose your place, you just have to be mentally consumed by the task. If you get in a muddle, simply start again.

You'll know very quickly whether this is going to work or not. If it doesn't, and you get to the point that you know sleep will not come, give up and get out of the bed. In my experience, however, this rarely happens. Most of the time, your brain will reach either a point of overload or an extreme level of boredom, and choose sleep as the desired alternative.

## New York Fashion Week

### *Empowering women in troubled times, the Victoria Beckham way*

(Agencies) Victoria Beckham on Sunday unveiled a beautifully tailored collection of clothes designed to empower women in troubled times, joined by husband David, who is reeling from an email scandal, and their children.

David, the British cultural icon and football legend, sat front row with Brooklyn,

Romeo, Cruz and Harper, in a blaze of flashing cameras after sending his wife a bouquet and card to wish her luck.

The leak of a series of expletive-laden emails in which he apparently raged about not receiving a knighthood have battered his squeaky-clean image at home and had threatened to overshadow his wife's fashion show.

But fashion editors, buyers and fans braved heavy rain and a freezing New York morning for one thing only: a fall/winter 2017 collection of classic, wearable clothes made for the global woman.

As Beckham — one half of likely Britain's most famous power couple — knows better than anyone, it was about keeping her customer happy rather than creating the most innovative fashion on the block.

There was a British feel with heritage fabrics and a colour palette inspired by a gentleman's club — oxblood, navy and black — mixed with more feminine rose-beige, powder blue and lipstick red.

It was a look steeped in menswear — sharply tailored and oversized outerwear — given a sexy, feminine edge with chiffon and georgette frilled skirts, leather gloves worn to the elbow, and wedge and heeled boots.

There were also flat, masculine black shoes with a



pointy toe and double buckle. The bag of the season was a sleek vanity-box.

"Never has there been a time where it is more important to empower women," Beckham told reporters.

"It's about making her feel strong and powerful," she said, delighted to chat about the clothes, saying only about her family that she loved having them in New York.

The show was not a radical departure: as Beckham said herself, there was a familiarity to the collection, which showcased the craftsmanship of beautifully made clothes to offer a working wardrobe for the woman who can afford it.

Without explicitly referencing Donald Trump's rocky first weeks as president and Brexit back home, she evoked the uncertain political times.

"There is so much going on at the moment in the world and I think that we have to be optimistic. We have to be positive," she said.

"So what can I do to make my customer feel that? And like I said it's just about really beautiful clothes and luxury and strength."

"It's always about empowering women," she added. "I'm always influenced by menswear and how can I evolve that each season."





# Heavy snowfall linked to heart attack ?

## Shovelling seen as the main reason

(Agencies) People living in regions that see heavy snowfall, like India's Himalayan region, better be careful as you are at an increased risk of a heart attack after a heavy snowstorm, a new study suggests.

The risk was found to be particularly higher for men and researchers believe that shovelling is the main mechanism linking snowfall with heart attack, or myocardial infarction (MI).



*Playboy will feature nudes after all, magazine disrobes after covering up in 2016*



(Agencies) Playboy magazine is returning to its roots, bringing nudes back just a year after abandoning full frontal shots of women saying they had become outdated.

Under the headline "Naked is Normal," the magazine will bring nude pictorials back in its March/April edition, the company said on Monday.

"I'll be the first to admit that the way in which the magazine portrayed nudity was dated, but nudity was never the problem because nudity isn't a problem," Playboy's chief creative officer Cooper Hefner said in a statement on the magazine's website. "Today we're taking our identity back and reclaiming who we are," added Hefner, the son of Playboy founder Hugh Hefner.

Former Baywatch star Pamela Anderson was the last person to bare it all for the magazine in its January/February 2016 edition.

Founded in 1953, Playboy had decided to stop publishing nude photos of women, saying they had become outmoded due to the plethora of free pornography on the internet. Playboy's circulation has dropped from about 5.6 million in 1975 to around 800,000 in recent years, and the magazine had also come under pressure from women to end a practice many found offensive and degrading.

It launched a revamped version in March 2016 in which it replaced full frontal nudity with flirty, more natural shots of women in scanty attire.

Cooper Hefner said on Monday that the magazine was also bringing back some of its other features, including "Party Jokes" and "The Playboy Philosophy" column that last appeared in the 1960s.

particularly after heavy snowfalls. Snow shovelling is a demanding cardiovascular exercise requiring more than 75 per cent of the maximum heart rate, particularly with heavy loads," said study co-author Nathalie Auger from University of Montreal Hospital Research Centre in Quebec, Canada.

The team of researchers looked at data from two separate administrative databases on 128,073 individual hospital admissions and 68,155 deaths from heart attack (MI) in the province of Quebec between 1981 and 2014.

They restricted analysis to months in which snow falls,



November to April, and obtained detailed weather information from Environment Canada for each health region included in the study.

About 60 per cent of hospital admissions and deaths due to heart attack were in men, showed the study published in the

Canadian Medical Association Journal.

The day after a snowfall had the strongest association.

"Quantity of snowfall was associated with an increased likelihood of hospital admission or death due to MI the following day among men," the study said.

## 5 ways to get rid of a puffy face

### Here is everything you need to know

(Agencies) The worst thing you can ever wake up to in the morning is a puffy, swollen face. From stress, water retention to allergies, there are various reasons, which can cause one's face to be puffed up. And when one's face is swollen, they usually end up in a situation where they avoid looking at themselves in the mirror. This aggravates the stress. However, the good news is that puffy face is not permanent, unless it's a medical condition. So, here is your guide on how to get rid of a swollen face, the natural way.

The notion that drinking lots of water can lead to a bloated face is a myth. In fact, it's the other way around, dehydration and lack of adequate water intake can cause your face to be bloated. Dehydration can cause blood vessels to enlarge that can lead to water retention, especially in the face causing it to be puffy. One of the main reasons for your face to swell up is the high content of salt in the body. Salt tends to retain water in the body that causes puffiness.

Avoid carbonated drinks and



always look for the level of sodium content in packaged products. 2300 mg or less is enough sodium for the day, for 50 years old and below and 1500 mg for people above 50 years old.

Increase fiber in your diet if you want to prevent your face from getting bloated. Have papaya as it helps to keep your stomach and intestines healthy, which in turn keeps your face lean. Also have fruits containing Vitamin C, beta-

carotene and antioxidants, that prevent water retention in the skin. These also help to renew the skin and give it a bright glow.

Work out to lose the puffiness. Cardio and weight training will help you improve blood circulation and open up the pores. Combine this with a balanced diet and you can shed weight off your face too. You can also do exercises that target your double chin and jawline.



# Mukesh Ambani: Entrepreneurship is about finding problems to solve

*A vital lesson in entrepreneurship, was given to him by a professor at the University. He had told Ambani, that a leader never asks for the problems that need to be solved. Rather, he finds his own problems and figures out their solutions himself.*

(Agencies) On his return from the Stanford Business School in 1981, Reliance Industries chairman Mukesh Ambani recalls asking his father about what his (Mukesh's) responsibilities in the company would be. His father had replied that he was not going to assign him any duties in the business. Rather, he told Mukesh to figure things out himself and left it to him to decide how he wanted to begin work at Reliance Industries. "That was the most valuable lesson in entrepreneurship of my life,"

said Ambani, at the NASSCOM India Leadership Forum. "My father said if you want to become an entrepreneur you will have to figure things out on your own. Only managers are told what is to be done, not entrepreneurs," Ambani continues. Another vital lesson in entrepreneurship, was given to him by a professor at the University. He had told Ambani, that a leader never asks for the problems that need to be solved. Rather, he finds his own problems and figures out their solutions himself. Ambani said it

is very important that you be passionate about the problems you find and solve. He has also learned over the span of his experience as an entrepreneur, that every objective of the company, should be linked to societal values. Along with solving problems of the company, it should also deal with problems that are faced by the people around a company, he said. "Financial returns are a by-product of this. If you focus only on returns, chances are you would not be able to ever meet



your passion," he adds. Despite running a multi-billion dollar company, Ambani said he has faced many failures in his life. He said, "Failures are normal, people have not seen how many times I have failed." He said it is best to learn from them than to give up. Although failures are something he can live with, he

cannot accept disappointing investors. "It is important to treat investor money more carefully than your own money," he says. Another true quality of an entrepreneur, he says, is positivity. A born entrepreneur does not pay heed to what the cynics say, and rises to the top, said Ambani.

## SBI, five associate banks to be merged to create global sized bank



(Agencies) Seeking to create a global sized bank, the government on Wednesday gave its go-ahead to the merger plan of the State Bank of India (SBI)

and its five associate banks but did not take a decision with regard to the Bharatiya Mahila Bank.

"The cabinet had earlier in-principle cleared the (merger)

proposal. It had gone to the boards of various banks which have granted the approvals. The recommendations of the boards were considered today (February 15) and the cabinet cleared the proposal," finance minister Arun Jaitley said. The associate banks which will be merged with SBI are: State Bank of Bikaner & Jaipur (SBBJ), State Bank of Mysore (SBM), State Bank of Travancore (SBT), State Bank of Patiala (SBP) and State Bank of Hyderabad (SBH).

"With this merger, the SBI, with all these five

subsidiaries merging in it, will also become a very large bank, not merely from a domestic point of view but actually a global player in its very size," the minister said after the Union cabinet meeting. It will, he added, "certainly lead to far greater efficiency. It will lead to synergy of operations within these banks... it will cut down the cost of operations. The cost of funds itself will come down".

With the merger of all the five associates, SBI is expected to become a global-sized bank with an asset base of Rs 37 trillion (Rs 37 lakh crore) or over \$555 billion, 22,500 branches and 58,000 ATMs. It will have over 50 crore customers. State Bank of India has about 16,500 branches, including 191 foreign offices spread across 36 countries. SBI first merged State Bank of Saurashtra with itself in 2008. Two years later, State Bank

of Indore was merged with it.

On the proposal to merge the Bharatiya Mahila Bank with the SBI, Jaitley said, "It is under consideration as of now. We have not taken any decision related with that today." About the specific date on which the merger of five associate banks with the SBI would become effective, he said, "We will inform you about the specified date when the merger will come to the effect." Jaitley also said that merger will not be detrimental to the services of any employee, "It will be a smooth arrangement." The board of SBI earlier approved the merge plan under which SBBJ shareholders will get 28 shares of SBI (Rs 1 each) for every 10 shares (Rs 10 each) held. Similarly, SBM and SBT shareholders will get 22 shares of SBI for every 10 shares.

## Tata Motors Q3 profit plunges 96% on losses in India ops, lower JLR profit

(Agencies) New Delhi: Tata Motors Ltd's fiscal third-quarter profit plummeted 96% as lower sales at its British luxury car unit Jaguar Land Rover Automotive Plc. (JLR) and a wider loss in its domestic business took its toll on India's largest automaker by revenue. Net profit fell to Rs111.57 crore in the three months ended 31 December from Rs2,952.67 crore in the year-ago period, the Mumbai-based company said on Tuesday. A Bloomberg poll of 20 analysts had estimated a profit of Rs2,264.5 crore.

Consolidated sales fell 2.2% to Rs67,864.95 crore from Rs69,398.07 crore in the year-ago period. Tata Motors said the invalidation of high-value banknotes by Prime Minister

Narendra Modi on 8 November hurt its domestic commercial vehicles business, a cash cow, with sales of trucks and buses declining 9%. Sales of light commercial vehicles were flat. The biggest hit came from JLR, where net profit declined to £167 million (\$208 million) from £440 million a year ago on a 13.1% increase in revenue to £6.5 billion. "These are terrible numbers," said Mahantesh Sabarad, head (retail research), SBI Cap Securities Ltd. "That is because the JLR margin seem to be settling in to the single-digit space unlike (in) the past where a 14% was a given. More so, the JLR product mix has altered

quite substantially" and variable marketing spending has been on the rise, Sabarad said.

## Amazon Takes on Microsoft Skype With Video Conferencing App 'Chime'



(Agencies) Amazon has come up with its own video conferencing app – Chime for online meetings. The app comes as a competition to Microsoft's Skype and Cisco's WebEx.

As per a report, Amazon

Chime offers a free service for a video call and a chat room with 2 users at the max.

A monthly fee, starting from \$2.50 per user, will be needed for any additional services. Features like Active Directory integration, video meetings of up to 100 people, custom URLs, attending the meetings from a regular phone line can be availed with an increased monthly fee of \$15 per user.

Amazon Chime is a free to download app for iOS, Android, Windows and MacOS users.

With the prices falling in a higher bracket, Amazon Chime might find it hard to compete with Microsoft Skype and Cisco WebEx, both being established players in the Video-calling segment. To start with, Amazon offers a free 30-day trial period to businesses to try the full Pro-service.



# Over 70 killed in suicide blast triggered by IS at Pakistan Sufi shrine



important days for local Sufis.

A statement from the Sindh police spokesman said the bomber entered the shrine as crowds massed on Thursday. Many wounded were ferried in private cars to hospitals.

"The incident took place outside the mazar (shrine) where Golden Gate is located," Hyderabad commissioner Kazi Shahid Parvez told the media. An emergency has been declared in hospitals across Dadu, Sehwan and Hyderabad.

Eyewitnesses described gory scenes in the shrine's compound where human body parts were seen scattered. Some bodies were also seen lying on the floor.

Several injured are stated to be in a critical condition, state-run Radio Pakistan reported.

Television footage showed army and paramilitary medical teams reaching the site and injured people being taken to nearby hospitals in ambulances and a military helicopter.

Following the attack, chaos overtook the area as rescue teams were unavailable to cope with the flood of victims. Scores of people died in the courtyard of the shrine for want of medical attention.

Sehwan does not have a proper hospital and the nearest medical facility is in Hyderabad where ambulances finally took the victims.

Protests erupted at the bomb site as relatives of those killed voiced their anger over the absence of any medical assistance.

Mairaj Ahmed, in-charge of Edhi Foundation, said,

"Ambulances from Hyderabad and Jamshoro have been sent to Sehwan. The town has a taluka hospital but it is not equipped with a trauma centre to deal with emergency cases."

According to the media, there were unconfirmed reports about a female suicide bomber involved in the brutal incident.

In the latest wave of terror gripping the country, more than 100 people have lost their lives in the eighth such violent attack in the past five days. Pakistan Armed Forces spokesperson Maj Gen Asif Ghafoor tweeted that army and Rangers have been deployed to the site for medical support. "Each drop of the nation's blood shall be revenged, and revenged immediately. No more restraint for anyone," army chief Qamar Bajwa said in a statement.

(Agencies) At least 72 people were killed and more than 150 others injured when a suspected suicide attacker blew himself up at a Sufi shrine in Pakistan's southern Sindh province on Thursday, the latest in a string of terror attacks in the country this week.

The Islamic State claimed responsibility for the attack at the shrine of Lal Shahbaz Qalander situated in Sehwan, 132 km from Jamshoro and around 140 km from Hyderabad.

"At least 72 are dead and over 150 have been injured," senior police officer Shabbir Sethar told Reuters, adding that the death toll was likely to rise. The IS claimed responsibility for the bombing, the terror group's news agency Amaq reported.

The suicide bomber attacked at the time of 'Dhamaal', when devotees remember the saint through music and dancing. Some Muslims sects consider dhamaal to be an anti-Islamic practice.

A spokesman for medical charity Edhi said the attacker appeared to have targeted the women's wing of the shrine, and around 30 children accompanying their mothers were dead.

"We were there for the love of

our saint, for the worship of Allah," a wailing woman told Dawn News television channel outside the shrine, her headscarf streaked in blood. "Who would hurt us when we were there for devotion?"

Large crowds frequent the famed shrine, which has the mausoleum of Sufi saint Lal Shahbaz Qalandar, on Thursdays. Thursdays are

## India's IT industry Agrees It Faces Twin Challenges: Trump And...

(Agencies) MUMBAI: Automation and the new U.S. administration were the big unknowns at the tech sector's annual shindig this week, with machines threatening to take away thousands of jobs and concerns over possible visa rule changes in the key American market.

But senior executives from the \$150 billion industry, which rose to prominence at the turn of the century by helping Western firms solve the "Y2K" bug, said companies with skilled English-speaking staff and low costs could not be written off yet.

The sector, led by Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys Ltd and Wipro Ltd, is lobbying hard as the new U.S. administration under President Donald Trump considers putting in place visa restrictions.

The administration may also raise salaries paid to H1-B visa holders, a move

that could significantly increase costs for IT companies that are already facing pressure on margins.

The longer-term challenge and opportunity for the sector was automation, executives said, as global corporations from plane-makers to consumer firms bet on the use of machines to further cut costs and boost efficiency.

That threatens lower-end software services and outsourcing jobs in a sector which employs more than 3.5 million people.

Summing up the mood at the three-day NASSCOM leadership event in Mumbai ending on Friday, Malcolm Frank, Chief Strategy Officer at Cognizant which has most of its operations in India, spoke of "fear and optimism."

Even top IT executives were "fearing the machines", he said.

Some top executives, including Infosys'

Chief Operating Officer Pravin Rao, said that greater automation was expected to help engineers and developers shed repetitive jobs for more creative roles.

"Some part of the work we'll be automating 100 percent, you don't require people to do that kind of work," Mr Rao told Reuters. "But there are always newer things, where we will be able to re-purpose employees who are released from those areas." With rapidly changing technology, Indian IT firms are emphasising the need for retraining their workforce, in many cases setting up experience centres and learning zones on their sprawling campuses.

Some companies are partnering with universities to design and fund education programmes, while staff members spoke of employers laying on training and webinars to help develop skills in automation and cloud computing.

# Veteran US reporter Dan Rather raises Watergate spectre

(Agencies) Former CBS news anchor Dan Rather has compared the controversy over links between members of President Donald Trump's team and Russia to the Watergate scandal.

Rather, who was for decades one of the best known and most trusted figures in US journalism, said in a Facebook post: "Watergate is the biggest political scandal of my lifetime, until maybe now."

He said Watergate, which brought down the presidency of Richard Nixon in 1974, had been a nine-out-of-10 on a scale of crisis for the US government, while "this Russia scandal is currently somewhere around a five or six".

He continued: "But it is cascading in intensity seemingly by the hour. And we

may look back and see, in the end, that it is at least as big as Watergate. It may become the measure by which all future scandals are judged.

"It has all the necessary ingredients, and that is chilling."

The post has been shared more than 88,000 times and has generated nearly 200,000 reactions.

Later in the post, Rather, who is often viewed as taking a liberal perspective, strongly criticised the White House, accusing it of a "spigot of lies" and saying it had "no credibility on this issue".

"I would also extend that to the Republican Congress, who has excused away the Trump Administration's assertions for far too long," he said.

Rather also promoted his post on Twitter, generating more than 13,000

retweets and 22,000 likes.

President Trump's latest response over the Russia controversy was retweeted more than 14,000 times and liked by nearly 60,000 accounts.

Both posts have also generated many critical comments. A number of comments by Rather's Facebook followers, several of which had likes in the tens of thousands, suggested that the way Republican politicians scrutinised President Nixon was the benchmark that should be applied now.

Since his post was published, leading Republicans such as Devin Nunes, John Cornyn and John McCain have urged further investigation.

Some commenters on social media aimed particular criticism at Jason Chaffetz, the Republican chair of the

House Oversight Committee, who has said his panel will not look into Gen Flynn's stepping down as Mr Trump's national security adviser. Likening US political scandals and embarrassments to Watergate may have lost some of its force over the years, becoming almost a cliché. Mr Trump has himself used the comparison, at an election rally last year, saying the row over Hillary Clinton's emails was a scandal "bigger than Watergate".

Some social media users have suggested an alternative analogy for the present situation, saying a better comparison may be to the Iran-Contra affair, in which journalists exposed the illegal funding of anti-Sandinista forces in Central America in the 1980s.



# Pakistan kills over 100 militants in crackdown after Sufi shrine blast by IS



(Agencies) More than 100 militants were killed in a sweeping crackdown launched by Pakistani security forces a day after a suicide attack claimed by the Islamic State left 81 dead at a crowded Sufi shrine.

Thursday's attack at the Lal Shahbaz Qalandar shrine in Sindh province was preceded by suicide attacks in Lahore and the northwest. The surge of violence that has claimed more than 100 lives in a week has shaken the confidence of Pakistanis after a recent improvement in the security situation.

The attacks also came at a time when Pakistan's civil and military leadership had been congratulating itself for defeating terrorism across the country. Army chief Gen Qamar Bajwa pledged to avenge the deaths and said there would be "no more restraint for anyone".

The army and paramilitary forces launched operations in Karachi and other parts of Sindh, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces and the tribal areas. "Over 100 terrorists have been killed since last night and sizeable apprehensions also made," said a statement from the military's media arm.

Eighteen militants were killed in different parts of Karachi alone since Thursday night and scores were arrested in different cities. Afghan embassy officials were called to the army

headquarters in Rawalpindi and asked to hand over 76 terrorists "hiding in Afghanistan", military spokesman Maj Gen Asif Ghafoor tweeted. The border with Afghanistan was also closed for security reasons, he added.

The death toll in the suicide bombing at the Sufi shrine at Sehwan in Sindh province rose to 81 on Friday and more than

250 people were admitted to different hospitals, state-run Radio Pakistan reported.

Amaq news agency, which is affiliated to the IS, claimed the attack. The shrine attracts large crowds on Thursdays and the suicide bomber struck when thousands had gathered for 'dhamaal', a Sufi ritual of singing and dancing.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said he would do everything in his power to protect the country but people questioned how terrorism had raised its head again after claims that the military operation in the tribal areas had wiped out most militant groups.

The military began its operations in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and in Karachi in 2014 and 2016 respectively. Former army chief,

Gen Raheel Sharif, had declared two years of success and said Pakistan was safer as a result of the campaign. Violence-related fatalities dropped from 7,611 in 2014 to 4,653 in 2015 to about 2,560 in 2016, and observers agreed the overall security situation had improved significantly.

But this week, all claims of success were turned on their head. Though the Pakistan Army has asked Afghanistan to hand over terrorists hiding in its territory, analysts believe this isn't the solution.

"We cannot keep on insisting the problem is elsewhere. It is here. It is in our midst," said security analyst Hasan Askari Rizvi. Others such as analyst Ayesha Siddiqi pointed to the proliferation of militant groups in southern Punjab and upper

Sindh. Hundreds of madrassas have been established by militant groups, which use them to recruit and train young men and collect funds.

Despite repeated promises, the federal government has not allowed any operation in upper Sindh or southern Punjab because many of the militant groups are patronised by elements in the ruling PML-N party. "A number of sectarian and extremist organisations are political allies of the PML-N," Rizvi said. The military is ready to start a sweep and even announced its intention to do so after the suicide attack in the heart of Lahore on Monday. But the military also patronises other militant groups which are used to launch attacks into India and to aid in security operations in Balochistan.

## How And Why Sasikala Was Able To Defeat Panneerselvam

Act I in the riveting drama to succeed J Jayalalithaa as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu may have just drawn to a close after almost a month, but the battle to inherit her legacy is certain to go on for quite some time. Most regional parties don't face an acute succession problem as the supreme leader's son or daughter is projected as the heir apparent well in time and groomed to don the mantle. Thus the AIADMK's rival, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam or DMK won't face a similar problem as its ailing nonagenarian chief, Kalaingar M Karunanidhi, has anointed his younger son MK Stalin as his successor. Arguably, however, even in family-run political outfits, such succession is not always smooth. Azhagiri, Karunanidhi's elder son, has never accepted his father's choice and may openly revolt when the supreme leader is not on the scene. Similarly, the Samajwadi Party's "pari-war" was played out in full public view in recent months. But at least the filial wars

take place after the succession drama is played out. In the AIADMK's case, it was raging even before the charismatic Amma was on her death bed and broke out virulently within days of her demise.



The power struggle between Jayalalithaa's companion Sasikala and O Panneerselvam (stand-in Chief Minister whenever Amma was unable to function as executive head of Government) has been both bitter and inconclusive as of now.

Undaunted by her conviction in a Disproportionate Assets case by the Supreme Court, Sasikala has succeeded in foisting her nominee, E Palanisamy, as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, with the support of a majority of AIADMK MLAs. Acting Chief Minister OPS's hope that once Sasikala was convicted, the bulk of MLAs lodged in a resort in Mahabalipuram would flock to him has been belied. It is indeed intriguing that the MLAs have not switched camps despite the fact that Sasikala will stay in jail for the next three years and cannot become an MLA for 10 years. It would seem that AIADMK MLAs, "orphaned" by the death of Amma want to cling on to a Mother figure - a role they believe only Chinnamma can fulfill. Since the late 1960s, Tamil Nadu's

politics and, to some extent, that of neighbouring Andhra Pradesh, have revolved around iconic personalities, not necessarily political leaders. Dravidian politics in Tamil Nadu got firmly rooted when DMK founder CN Annadurai ousted Congress stalwart K Kamaraj Nadar in the 1967 general election.

## Immigrant haven of Miami-Dade votes Against sanctuary status - as protesters scream: 'shame on you'

County commissioners in immigrant-rich Miami-Dade voted Friday to uphold their Cuban-born mayor's order to cooperate with federal immigration officials, drawing shouts of 'shame on you' from those hoping to make their community a sanctuary city.

Though it's the only U.S. county where more than half the population is foreign-born, Florida's Miami-Dade has bucked a trend among some cities that have sought to defy federal immigration crackdowns out of sympathy with their large migrant populations.

The commissioners, voting 9-3, backed the order of Mayor Carlos Gimenez that was delivered after the administration of President Donald Trump threatened to withhold federal funding from the so-called sanctuary cities.

'This is a country that opened arms to everyone, allowed opportunities to everyone. But this is also a country of law,' county commissioner Rebeca Sosa, also of Cuban descent, said before the vote taken in a special public session.

'I am so sad to see that people are afraid of something that has

nothing to do with immigration. This was just a financial decision.'

In emotional public testimony, dozens spoke against the order, including school-age children of deportees, young people brought to the U.S. without legal permission as children, construction workers, lawyers and rights activists. At one point, four school-age girls and a boy stepped up to the podium holding hands with Nora Sandigo, who has a foundation that helps and houses children whose parents have been deported.





# Mac Duggal Wows at New York Fashion Week

**(By Renee Mehrra) New York** There were plenty of crowns and sashes in the standing room only crowd Saturday, February 11, at New York Fashion Week and there was plenty of glamour as well sitting in the seats along the runway. Such a reception was not new to designer Mac Duggal as he runs the most sought after pageant and prom dress lines in the U.S. Surprisingly, this unprecedented turnout was Mac Duggal's first showing at New York Fashion Week. The spotlight for the evening was shining on Mac Duggal, who is the go-to designer for all fans looking for glamorous, gorgeous gowns with bling and an eye popping wow factor.

In addition to the expected gowns with lots of shimmer and bejeweled adornments, there was the unexpected. This collection from Mac Duggal featured floor-length capes, unconventional slacks, shorts and even body suits. The collection unveiled in New York City for fall-winter is sure to keep Mac Duggal standing as the go-to designer for glamour.

Born in India, designer Mac Duggal's enthusiasm for women's couture fashion began with the merging of the colorfully vibrant

designs of his homelands royal history and opulent traditions with a sophisticated and contemporary design aesthetic. Having a long and rich history with his homeland Mac is never too far from the very culture that has inspired his life's work. Practicing a religion called Sikhism, ties to his cultural background are strong and run deep. Sikhism believes in one higher power and one higher consciousness, and that everyone is equal. This is essentially the same as American values. In an interesting twist of fate - it is these same values that have allowed Mac to not only weather the difficulties of moving to America, but have also allowed him to do it successfully while holding close to his heart his homeland

Arriving in the United States in 1983 at the age of 23, Mac began his road to success with his first collection, Creative Creations, a line of dazzling gowns blending Indian beauty and elegance with Western styling. Proud of his heritage, Mac Duggal has always designed using glorious fabrics and colors that are hot and spicy like the fashion and cuisine of his



homeland.

The Mac Duggal brand further elevated itself with the introduction of designer couture gowns and pageant wear. It was Mac Duggal's high fashion prom dresses that made him at the forefront, and part of the foundation, of the emerging designer prom dress market. It is the success of these first collections that won Mac Duggal the 1998 Diva Fashion Award for Designer of the Year in the Prom / Pageant category. Mac Duggal is the sponsor of dozens of national and international pageant titleholders including Miss USA, Miss America, Miss

World, Miss Earth and Miss Universe. The one-of-a-kind styling of these designer dresses are what launched the brand into the realms of evening wear for social and special occasions.

Today the Mac Duggal Design House continues to showcase seasonal collections known for their entrance making drama, feminine detail and modern sensibility. This understanding of the modern woman has made Mac Duggal a staple in Prom, Pageant and Evening wear spanning the globe in over 5 continents and 32 countries. Mac continued his success by expanding his collection to 12 distinct social occasion lines. This success is highlighted by the many awards throughout his celebrated career. With a history of innovation and success, the Mac Duggal brand has transformed into a highly sought after label courted by A list celebrities including Shakira, Carrie Underwood, Gwyneth Paltrow, Khloe Kardashian, Eva Longoria, Paris Hilton and many more TV personalities, athletes, pageant titleholders and influencers globally.

In summer, 2017 the exhibit Many voices, one Nation will open

at the Smithsonian national museum of American History in Washington, DC. This permanent 20 year exhibiting will explore the complex history of American migration and assimilation and will do what the museum strives to do everyday generate curiosity, challenge accepted notions and bring people together through a new understanding of each other.

Because Mac's leadership and worldwide generosity has influenced the global outlook of American companies and has been an inspiration to new generations of immigrants who continue to remake America. the Smithsonian has selected Mac Duggal as one of the handful of individuals to share their personal stories of challenge, risk and entrepreneurial success in this permanent exhibit in Washington, DC.

Mac currently resides in the Chicagoland area and is happily married to his wife Bubbly of 30 years. They have two children Daughter Ieena who has her own designer label- (IEENA for Mac Duggal) and son Yuvraj who is studying entrepreneurship at the college level.

## Indian designer gears up to shine at New York Fashion Week

**(By Daisy Walia) New York** : Indiaspopup.com, a premier online destination for luxury designer wear showcased Prema Badiani's "Root Cause" collection at the Indian Consulate in New York City.

Based out of New York, Indiaspopup.com, promotes talented Indian designers by showcasing their work on an international level and Badiani's collection was the first in a series of such events.

"We are very proud of the craftsmanship and creativity of our Indian Designers and hope to make a major dent in the global fashion market," said Dr. Shweta Reddy, Founder of Indiaspopup.com.

The event was held at the consulate as part of the New York Fashion week and helped open an avenue for an entire community of Indian Textile makers.

Her label "Premal Badiani "

has become synonymous with sophisticated drama, feminine motifs, unabashed grandeur and contemporary structure. Her enthusiasm for fashion resonates in her designs, resplendent with signature layering, dazzling embellishments, intricate draping and exquisite attention to detail.

Driven by artistic, modern and luxurious design and style, couture-like quality and a high level of customer service, her label holds an impeccable customer appeal.

"Mine is a lifestyle brand, born out of passion for creation and design, inspired by the rich heritage of India. It's an exclusive blend of luxury, opulence, intricate craftsmanship, exquisite embroideries with fresh cuts and the finest quality of fabrics and global designs that define modern Indian couture", said

Badiani.

Badiani has also joined hands with NGO Hearts@Work foundation led by the successful entrepreneur Viral S. Desai who has been persistently making tremendous efforts with his various initiatives in the field of environmental awareness to bring in the 360-degree sustainability in the society. The brand is honored to announce an association with the 'Clean India, Green India' initiative.

On their platform, Indiaspopup features several super talented designers including Falguni & Shane Peacock, Rohit Gandhi, Rahul khanna, Varun Bahl, Anupama Dayal , Gaurav Gupta and of course Premul Badiani. Designs which are carefully chosen are put together on a single platform to make shopping a great experience for all. The event also featured Mirza Ghalib wines from Sufi Wine Group

(Touchdown Media)





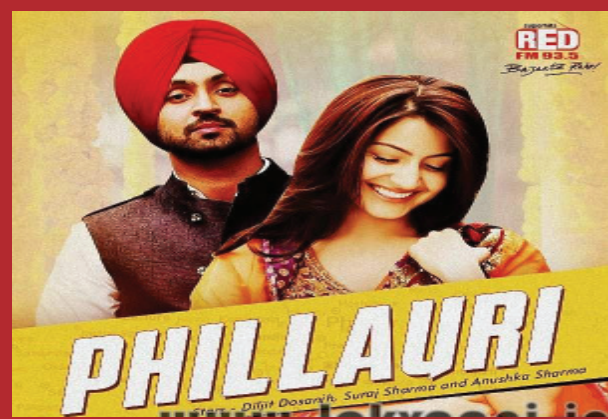
# Diljit Dosanjh-Anushka Sharma's on-screen romance comes alive in 'Dum Dum'

After the trailer of 'Phillauri' released to applause from viewers, the film's makers are optimistic about its first song, 'Dum Dum', evoking a similar response. A romantic Sufi number, it releases today.

The track, penned by Anvita Dutt, marks the debut of composer Shashwat Sachdev and singer Romi. The film's director, Anshai Lal, says that it took two months to

Phillaur (a town in Punjab's Jalandhar district) in Dangarh, near Barnala. We also opted for live recording to lend an organic feel."

About the album of 'Phillauri', Anshai says, "Dum Dum' sets the template for the other songs in the film. While a couple of them have soulful music, there are also some fun numbers that will be released later."



## The Ghazi Attack movie review

Nothing shrill about Rana Daggubati's patriotism



**The Ghazi Attack**  
Direction: Sankalp Reddy  
Cast: Rana Daggubati, Kay Kay Menon, Om Puri, Nasser, Atul Kulkarni, Taapsee Pannu  
Rating: 4/5

A war film is not exactly common in Indian cinema, and one that focusses completely on a chapter from a conflict without digressing into romance, dreams and dances needs to be lauded, and Sankalp Reddy's Telugu work, The Ghazi Attack has the ability to engross. What is more, Reddy has managed to get a really impressive star cast of Om Puri, Nasser (though in minuscule role), Rana Daggubati, Kay Kay Menon and others.

It was after a very long time that I saw Menon as Navy Captain Ranvijay Singh exhibit his sheer brilliance which I saw in Anurag Kashyap's first movie, Black Friday, where the actor played the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Rakesh Maria, investigating the 1993 Bombay blasts. As Ranvijay Singh, he is the haughty but highly intelligent captain in charge of an Indian submarine, S 21. The Eastern Naval Command at Visakhapatnam sends Lieutenant-Commander Arjun Varma (Daggubati) along with Singh in order to keep him in check as the ship sails on a secret mission just before the 1971 India-Pakistan war

breaks out. Quite interestingly, Daggubati too is wonderfully restrained – a complete changeover from the kind of parts he has been playing so far. In addition, we also have an excellent performance from Atul Kulkarni, who as the executive officer, Devraj, on board the submarine has the trying task of keeping peace between a brash and ready-to-torpedo the Pakistani submarine (Ghazi) Singh and, Varma, the man told by his bosses to ensure that the Indian captain does not provoke a war. Shot splendidly inside what looks like a real submarine, Ghazi has been mounted with a fair degree of authenticity and scripted quite impressively. Admittedly, the film may not be comparable to some of Hollywood's unforgettable war classics, like Von Ryan's Express and Battle of the Bulge – just to name two. But given the kind of handicaps Indian cinema faces in terms of budget and special effects, Ghazi is remarkable in the way it presents some of the most tense moments when the Indian submarine hits a landmine planted by the Pakistani vessel. Severely handicapped by loss of lives and injuries to the men aboard, S 21 finds itself in a desperate corner – when it can only move up or down and not forward or backward.

## Post pregnancy weight loss

Tips from Kareena Kapoor and her dietician Rujuta Diwekar

Kareena Kapoor Khan is already looking a few kilos lighter and slimmer and she's glowing all the more just two months after the birth of her son Taimur Ali Khan.

"The idea is to have faith. And to do it all in a continuous, sustainable way," the new mommy said in a Facebook Live chat on Tuesday.

The video has already clocked over 8.7 lakh views, with thousands of people, especially women, commenting on it with their own diet queries. Kapoor Khan put on 18kg during her pregnancy, courtesy all the ghee and parathas she ate. "And I flaunted it, double chin and all, until the day I walked into the



hospital. People said I could eat grilled fish or meat to avoid putting on weight. But I wanted to do it the conventional way, the right way. So I ate it all, but in the right quantities," she said.

According to her dietician Rujuta Diwekar, the target for

Kapoor Khan has always been to take it a step at a time and not rush the process. "Because we don't want to go one step forward and two steps back, which is what happens when you do a crash or extreme diet," Diwekar, who was also at the chat, said.

## Amitabh Bachchan teams up with Ranbir Kapoor and Alia Bhatt for Dragon?

Director Ayan Mukerji is back with Ranbir Kapoor after four years (after Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani) for his ambitious project Dragon. If reports are to be believed then Mukerji has also signed Amitabh Bachchan for a pivotal role in the film. Dragon, that will show Ranbir as a man with special powers, also stars Alia Bhatt. Times Now quoted a source as saying, "He (Amitabh) has given his nod for the film. It's a full fledged role and not a guest appearance. It's an important role. He will begin shoot this year itself."

While Ranbir has made a cameo appearance in Amitabh's Bhoothnath Returns (2014), this will be the first time the two will be seen together in full-fledged roles in a film.

Hindustan Times could not independently verify the report. Dragon is the third



collaboration between Ayan and Ranbir after the duo worked together in Wake Up Sid and Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani. He recently revealed that Ranbir's character has "mystical powers" in the film. "I have not locked the title yet. Dragon is just the tentative title. It was called Dragon because in the film, the boy has connection with fire. It is his power. The guy has a mystical connection with fire. So, I called it Dragon.

There's something I like about the word," Ayan said. The shoot for Dragon is likely to begin in August. Amitabh Bachchan, is currently working on Ram Gopal Varma's Sarkar 3. He will also be seen in Thugs of Hindostan with Aamir Khan. Ranbir Kapoor will soon be seen in Jagga Jassos opposite Katrina Kaif and he is currently preparing for Rajkumar Hirani's Sanjay Dutt biopic.





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