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I might change Taimur's name: Saif Ali Khan

STORY ON page 31

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"Get Out of My Country" Indian Engineer Killed In A Hate Crime



Alok Madasani

Srinivas Kuchibhotla

Ian Grillot

(Special Report) Srinivas Kuchibhotla; 32, originally from India & working as an engineer at Garmin died at a hospital from wounds, after being shot at a bar in Olathe Kansas. The victim's friend, Alok Madasani, 32, and bar patron Ian Grillot,

24, suffered injuries. 5 Hours later police arrested Adam W. Purinton, 51, after he told a bartender at an Applebee's some 70 miles away in Clinton, Missouri, that he had been involved in a shooting. He has been charged with murder and



attempted murder . Witnesses told the media that shooter yelled "get out of my country" before he opened fire. Thousands of miles away in India, officials expressed shock at the shootings. "My heartfelt condolences to bereaved family," Swaraj, the external affairs minister, tweeted. "I have assured all help and assistance to the family." Shooting caused fears about bigotry to reverberate across the globe. (Contd on page 22)

New Trump Deportation Rules Allow Far More Expulsions



(News Agencies) Washington :President Trump has directed his administration to enforce the nation's immigration laws more aggressively, unleashing the full force of the federal government to find, arrest and deport those in the country illegally, regardless of whether they have committed serious crimes. Documents released on Tuesday by the Department of Homeland Security revealed the broad (Contd on page 23)

3 lakh Indians in U.S. at deportation risk



(Agencies) Nearly three lakh Indian-Americans are likely to be impacted by the Trump administration's sweeping plans that put the nation's 11 million (Contd on page 22)

The Jobs Americans Do

(Agencies) Forget the images of men in hard hats standing before factory gates, of men with coal-blackened faces, of men perched high above New York City on steel beams. The emerging face of the American working class is a Hispanic woman who has never set foot



on a factory floor. That's not the kind of work much of the working class does anymore. Instead of making things, they are more often paid to serve people: to care for someone else's children or someone else's

parents; to clean another family's home. The decline of the old working class has meant both an economic triumph for the nation and a personal tribulation for many of the workers. (Contd on page 21)

A nation of immigrants enters dark chapter



(News Agencies) The deportation force is here. According to new Department of Homeland Security (DHS) memos, the Trump administration plans to vastly expand the pool of undocumented immigrants in the United States who will be targeted for removal. (Contd on page 22)



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Indian-Origin Chancellor Rejects Chinese Students' Call Not To Invite Dalai Lama

(Agencies) BEIJING: A US university headed by an Indian-origin academician has rejected call by Chinese students to withdraw invitation to exiled Tibetan leader the Dalai Lama but assured them that his speech would have nothing to do with politics.

Chancellor Pradeep K Khosla of the University of California San Diego (UCSD) met with three groups of Chinese overseas students, namely the Chinese Union, Chinese Students and Scholars Association (CSSA) and the Chinese Business Society, state-run Global

Times reported today.

The university in a meeting with Chinese overseas students refused to withdraw the invitation to the Tibetan spiritual leader for a graduation speech in June but assured them that his speech would "have nothing to do with politics" the report said.

"The university said that they would not disinvite the Dalai Lama but will stop using words like 'freedom fighter' and 'spiritual head and leader of the Tibetan people' to describe him," Fan Da member of the Chinese Union told the daily. The

chancellor promised that the Dalai Lama would not include any political content in his speech and the university would soon publish a notice about the issue. "When we asked the chancellor if he knew that the university's invitation to the Dalai Lama hurt Chinese people's feelings, the chancellor said he only knew that the Dalai Lama is a 'religious activist' but had no idea about what he did," Fan said, adding that it was not clear what actions the students would take to continue their protests. The protests by Chinese students came after write ups in the state-

run Chinese media against the institution.

"By calling the Dalai Lama "the exiled spiritual head and leader of the Tibetan people" and "a man of peace," the UCSD has shown admiration for the Buddhist monk," an article in the paper had said.

The UCSD announced on February 2 that it has invited the 14th Dalai Lama to give a keynote speech at the All Campus Commencement on June 17, as well as a speech on June 16 at a public event. The university described the Dalai Lama, as "the exiled spiritual head and leader of the Tibetan people" in the announcement.

At Indian Restaurant, Diners Were Mid-Meal When Cockroaches Shut It Down

(Agencies) London: Diners at a popular Indian restaurant in the city of Leicester were forced to abandon their meals mid-way after health inspectors discovered a cockroach infestation. Sand's of Glenfield was shut down on the spot earlier this month after being tipped off by a member of the public. "A resident of the district made us aware that a pest control company had been visiting Sands. We served a hygiene emergency prohibition order on Sand's of Glenfield for a cockroach infestation, on Saturday, February 4," a spokesperson for the local Blaby District Council told 'Leicester Mercury'. "The business is now formally closed as a food business until our environmental health team are satisfied that the health risk condition no longer exists. We are working closely with representatives of the business and their pest control company to advise them about the steps they need to take in order for this to be achieved," she added. Magistrates upheld the inspectors' decision to close the restaurant at a hearing on February 8. The restaurant will have to seek the approval of health inspectors to re-open once necessary refurbishment is completed. The inspectors had found both dead and alive German cockroaches in the kitchen, including in the food store and in three freezers. Cockroach traps, put down by pest controllers, were also discovered. The German cockroach is the most common type of cockroach found around the world. A note

has been posted on the restaurant door which reads: "We are taking this opportunity to refurbish and update our equipment and taking all the necessary steps to ensure that we provide the best possible environment for our valued guests".





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Amid H-1B visa concerns, EU says open to accommodate more Indian professionals



(Agencies) The European Union said on Wednesday that it was ready to accommodate more Indian IT professionals and denounced any form of protectionism in global trade, amid anxiety in India over the Donald Trump administration's possible clampdown on H-1B visa. Pushing for deeper trade ties with India, a delegation of European Parliament's Committee on foreign affairs also expressed "regret" over failure by both sides to resume the stalled dialogue to firm the long-pending EU-India trade and an investment pact. Criticising the new US government's protectionist rhetoric which triggered fears in Europe as well, head of the delegation David McAllister said Europe was "open" for allowing more Indian professionals who are high on demand. "Europe is open for people with high demand. Indian people are highly skilled. Our IT sector would not have been successful if we did not have skilled professionals from India," he said.

Soon after taking over last month, Trump had decided to overhaul the work visa programmes like the H-1B and L1, a move that will adversely hit the lifeline of Indian tech firms and professionals in the US.

Pressing for early resumption of negotiations for the EU -India Broad-based Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA), McAllister said the delegation urged Indian leaders to resume the talks as the pact will significantly boost two-way trade.

"We deeply regret that we are not being able to move ahead. We will use the visit to call for resumption of talks for the agreement," he told reporters.

Indian-Origin NASA Scientist Detained By US Officials, Forced To Unlock Phone



(Agencies) An Indian-origin NASA scientist has said he was detained and forced to unlock his PIN-protected work phone at the US border by custom officials.

Sidd Bikkannavar, 35, said in a post

on social media that US Customs and Border Protection officers wanted his cell phone and password -- before they would let him through at Houston's George Bush Intercontinental Airport.

"On my way home to the US last

weekend, I was detained by Homeland Security and held with others who were stranded under the Muslim ban," Mr Bikkannavar wrote in a Facebook post.

"I initially refused, since it's a (NASA)-issued phone and I must protect access," he wrote.

Mr Bikkannavar, born in Pasadena, designs technology for space telescopes like the enormous James Webb telescope that's set to be launched into orbit in 2018.

"Just to be clear - I'm a US-born citizen and NASA engineer, travelling with a valid US passport. Once they took both my phone and the access PIN, they returned me to the holding area with cots and other sleeping detainees until they finished copying my data."

Mr Bikkannavar spent a few weeks away pursuing his hobby of racing solar-powered cars. As a member of a Chilean team, he visited Patagonia in early

January under the Obama administration. He returned after Mr Trump took office and issued the executive order on travel into the United States.

Nothing about Mr Bikkannavar should have caused concern for CBP - he's a natural-born US citizen, enrolled in a programme that allows individuals who've already passed background checks to quickly enter the country. In addition, he has never visited the countries on the immigration ban, and he's 10-year employee of a major US federal agency. "I don't know what to think about this. I was caught a little off guard by the whole thing," Mr Bikkannavar told the media.

Mr Bikkannavar detailed his experience on Facebook, explaining his absence to friends and coworkers. The episode, aside from the profiling it ostensibly involved, also put him in a fix with his employers, because he was required to protect access to the phone.

Code Load On Cyber Coolies

Three US H-1B laws, seeking to raise costs for firms, may hit Infosys, but make crucial points

(Agencies) The alarm bells may have started ringing a little too soon. Indian infotech firms like Infosys began losing the confidence of shareholders last month when bills proposing changes to the H-1B visa programme, which allows nearly 1.5 million skilled Indians to work in the US, were tabled in Congress. If passed, the legislations could make it harder for Indian companies to send workers here—or for US businesses to hire them. Statements by President Donald Trump that he will review 'abuses' of visa programmes made the bills appear even more ominous.

But Indian diplomats in Washington DC as well as local advocates of immigration reform say it is too early to worry. For one, there is nothing new about efforts to change the H-1B system. "Some of these bills were introduced in the previous Congress too," said an Indian embassy official. "But it is very difficult for them to get through." A total of 85,000 H-1B visas are allotted every year, but applications last year were more than thrice that number. Winners are chosen by computerised lottery. Indians get nearly 70 per cent of these on average. Many work for India-based

technology companies such as Tata Consultancy, Wipro, Infosys and Mahindra, although US multinationals including IBM, Amazon and Microsoft also apply for and get H-1B visas in large numbers.

Three Congressional bills, premised on the belief that the H-1B system is being exploited to the detriment of American workers, were tabled in January. One, introduced by Darrell Issa, a Republican from California, tries to make it more expensive for firms to hire foreign workers. It proposes to raise the minimum wage of H-1B workers to \$1,00,000 per annum from \$60,000—the floor set in 1998. But it only targets firms with over 50 employees, at least 15 per cent of whom are on H-1B.

A more comprehensive bill, tabled by Zoe Lofgren, a Democrat from California, calls for doing away with the lottery and favouring companies willing to pay the highest salaries to foreign employees. Potentially, this could make it even more expensive for firms to hire H-1B workers.

A bipartisan bill tabled by senators Chuck Grassley and Dick Durbin also proposes to scrap the lottery system. But it gives priority to foreigners educated in the US, especially those with advanced degrees. As workers more likely to get H-1B

visas under this would be the "best and brightest", it would also make it much costlier for companies.

The H-1B programme is intended to allow companies to hire highly skilled workers from abroad when they can't find such employees among Americans. These bills assume that the spirit of the law is not being met—that firms are exploiting it to hire foreign employees willing to work on low wages, denying jobs to Americans in the process.

But Ashwin Venkatraman, a petroleum engineer from India who was on H-1B until last year and has recently launched his own cloud computing start-up for the oil and gas industry, said that is not the case. "There isn't enough local talent to take up all the jobs on offer," he said. "In oil and gas (sector), there is a shortage of technical workforce. That is broadly true for all technology-oriented industries. Foreign workers are not replacing American workers, except perhaps in software services."

Some argue that the economic stimulus provided by H-1B workers helps create jobs for Americans. A report by Partnership For A New American Economy, an immigration reform thinktank, said that "workers who received H-1B visas from 2010-2013 will create more than 7,00,000 jobs for US-born workers by 2020". States such as California and Texas,



which host among the highest numbers of H-1B workers, will benefit the most.

"This H1B scheme has been crucial in making US companies competitive globally, in increasing their client base, in increasing their innovation," Navtej Sarna, Indian ambassador to the US, told CNN. "The Indian tech industry has been creating jobs here. Indian firms have invested \$2 billion in the US. They have paid \$20 billion in taxes. Nine of the top 15 companies in India are American. This is a relationship which is symbiotic." But Vikram Desai, a tech firm worker on H-1B since 2005, welcomed the proposals to 'enforce' the H-1B system. Desai said technology companies have built an entire business model based on exploiting legal loopholes—a model that not only denies jobs to deserving Americans but also abuses immigrant, and especially Indian, workers.

The H-1B system is meant to make up for shortage of skills locally rather than as a backdoor for exploiting cheap labour, Desai says. "The law says H-1B should be offered only when an American

worker is unavailable. It also says (immigrant) workers should be paid the prevailing wage. Companies should be fair and pay the wages workers deserve, irrespective of their origins. Any bill that stops this exploitation of immigrant workers and displacement of American workers is welcome." The main reason why immigrant workers, especially those from India and China, can be easily exploited is the massive backlog of applications for permanent residency from these countries, he explains. Because of country-wise quotas for 'green cards', it can take an Indian or Chinese worker decades to get this, which forces them to keep extending their H-1B status year after year. With their green card application under review, such workers "can't change jobs or even return home to attend family funerals," Desai says. "Their lack of options makes them easy targets for exploitation by companies, especially in terms of unfair wages."

China's rise could be the biggest challenge to an ideas-based global order

Speeches by three leaders at the recently concluded Raisina Dialogue stood out for their pronouncements on globalisation. The first, by India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, sounded a note of caution about the "gains of globalisation" being at risk. "Economic gains are no longer easy to come by", said PM Modi, who went on to cite the "barriers to effective multilateralism". The Prime Minister's message was direct and simple: that globalisation needs new inheritors who can help promote the projects, regimes and norms of the 20th century. This responsibility would invariably fall on the shoulders of a class of nations that we have come to know as "emerging powers".

A second perspective on globalisation at Raisina came from former Canadian PM Stephen Harper, who highlighted the role that religion plays in these turbulent times. Harper noted the role that Pope John Paul II, a Pole, played in providing "anti-communists in Poland effective leadership outside the country" in their struggle against the Soviet Union. PM Harper was hinting at

the capacity of a religious leader whose tacit support of the Western ethos ensured resistance to entrenched nation-states. In this respect, religion returned to world politics (to destroy the Soviet Empire) in the eighties, long before the rise of the Islamic State. Can tendencies driven by religious sentiment today — whether through the rise of terrorist groups like ISIS, or through the counter-movements against migration in Europe — defeat the globalisation project driven by states?

And finally, British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson offered yet another take on globalisation, in balancing his full-throated defence of Brexit with his call for greater economic cooperation with Britain. The "selective" or "a la carte" globalisation that Secretary Johnson pushed for at Raisina reflects the desire of many Western states to preserve its economic benefits while assuaging "nativist" tendencies at home. What do these three speeches at the recently concluded global conclave tell us about the world today? For one, they concede that globalisation of a certain kind has run its course.

This was a globalisation spurred by Western leadership in the 20th century, promoting ideas and institutions to salvage economies that had been devastated after two great wars. The urgency and desire to create those linkages no longer exist in the trans-Atlantic universe, so this period is witnessing selective de-globalisation.

Secondly, the leaders' speeches acknowledge that globalisation is a victim of its own success. In true Hegelian fashion, the "idea" has been destroyed by its "actualisation". Globalised economies today promote the free and rapid flow of information, bringing communities, societies and peoples together. These connected networks are by no means homogenous. They are miscellaneous groupings that often have little in common, by way of political heritage or intellectual traditions. As a result, they begin to sense their respective differences quickly and conspicuously. To be sure, the world was just as polarised or opinionated before the Information Age. But digital spaces have made distances shorter, and differences sharper.

Thirdly, their utterances indicated globalisation is in need of new torchbearers, who may not be able to project strength or underwrite stability in the same vein as the United States or Europe, but will preserve its normative roots regionally. These torchbearers will emerge from Asia, Africa and Latin America: they may not be connected by a lingua franca but their political systems will share a common commitment to free expression and trade. Their rise will be neither smooth nor inevitable. If disruptors today find the cost to destabilise the global system rather low, its custodians realise it is expensive to fix the mess they leave behind.

Prime Minister Modi astutely observed at Raisina the dust has not yet settled on what has replaced the Cold War. Russian Parliamentarian Vyacheslav Nikonov, one of the conference speakers, went one step further: "We may not be the number one military in the world," he said, "but we [Russia] are not No. 2 either". With the traditional leadership of Western powers giving way to the rise of regional powers, it is anyone's guess if they will

emerge as preservers or destroyers.

Above all, the speeches by Modi, Johnson and Harper at the Raisina Dialogue reflect their desire to couch globalisation in normative terms. The Washington Consensus was not solely about free markets, but also untrammelled expression and political dissent. The room for promoting such norms, for all the reasons mentioned above, is considerably limited today. The rise of China presents perhaps the biggest challenge to an ideas-based global order. Beijing has pursued with transactional vigour and single-minded ambition the setting up of regional financial architecture to bankroll its infrastructure projects. These initiatives place little regard for notions held sacred in the international order.

At Raisina, PM Modi highlighted the importance of these norms for the continued execution of the globalisation project. "Only by respecting the sovereignty of countries involved, can regional connectivity corridors fulfil their promise and avoid differences and discord," said the Prime Minister.

North Korea is the big problem that'll test Trump's deal-making skills

The sanctions-only approach toward North Korea spearheaded by the United States has been a conspicuous failure, encouraging the reclusive nation to rapidly advance its nuclear and missile programmes. North Korea has the dubious distinction of being the only country in the world to conduct nuclear tests in the 21st century. It has also considerably enhanced its missile capabilities, though they remain sub-regionally confined in range.

Many expect US President Donald Trump to shift course on North Korea, in keeping with what he had said during his election campaign — that he would be willing to meet with its ruler, Kim Jong-un, over a hamburger. The imperative to adopt a new tack, however, is being obscured by developments such as Pyongyang's first missile test since Trump's election triumph and the mysterious killing of Kim Jong-un's estranged half brother, Kim Jong-nam, at Kuala Lumpur airport. Kim Jong-nam, a reputed playboy with residences in Beijing and Macau, was a virtual Chinese pawn against the North Korean ruler, whose relations with Beijing are seriously strained. Kim Jong-un has refused to visit

China since assuming power in 2011, although paying obeisance in Beijing was customary for his father and grandfather, who ruled before him.

Mao Zedong famously said China and North Korea were as close as lips are to teeth. But when China last March joined hands with the US to approve the toughest new UN sanctions in two decades against North Korea, Beijing highlighted its virtually ruptured relationship with Pyongyang. Indeed, China's state media has accused Kim Jong-un of pursuing "de-Sinification" of his country and seeking improved ties with the US and Japan.

Kim Jong-un has repeatedly signalled that he wants his country to escape from the clutches of its millennial rival China. Yet, oddly, Washington has attempted to push him further into the Chinese dragnet, instead of seizing on the opportunity created by his desire to unlock frozen ties with the US. Some US scholars have even suggested a grand bargain with Beijing on North Korea. Given that Pyongyang has sought direct engagement with Washington to offset Beijing's

leverage over it, nothing is more galling to North Korea than US efforts to use China as a diplomatic instrument against it. In truth, China is already putting the squeeze on North Korea, especially since that country carried out its most powerful nuclear test last September. But China's enforcement of UN sanctions in a controlled way has failed to change Kim Jong-un's calculus, although its latest ban on coal imports will inflict more economic pain. Beijing, of course, values North Korea as a buffer state and does not want a reunified and resurgent Korea, because that will open a new threat, including bringing American troops to China's border. Make no mistake: Chinese and American interests diverge fundamentally.

Sanctions without engagement have never worked. Yet, during his entire eight-year tenure, US President Barack Obama refused to talk to North Korea unless it first pledged to denuclearise. Pyongyang's only leverage is the nuclear card, which it will not surrender without securing a comprehensive peace deal with

Washington. In the Iran case, however, Obama employed sanctions with engagement to clinch a nuclear deal.

The plain fact is that the US has no credible military option against North Korea. Any military strikes to degrade its nuclear and missile capabilities will provoke Pyongyang to unleash its artillery-barrage power against South Korea, triggering widespread destruction and a full-fledged war involving the US. The looming US deployment in South Korea of the anti-missile Terminal High Altitude Area Defence, or THAAD — which has never been battle-tested — is no real answer to North Korea's nuclearisation or to Pyongyang's artillery chokehold on Seoul.

If there is any credible US option to deal with Pyongyang, it is to give diplomacy a chance, with the goal of forging a peace treaty with North Korea to formally end the Korean War — which has officially been in a state of ceasefire since 1953. Denuclearization should be integral to the terms of such a peace treaty. But if denuclearisation is made the sole purpose of engagement with

North Korea, diplomacy will fail, as it did under George W Bush.

The Trump administration needs to recognise that the US and its allies have got nowhere by isolating North Korea, which is coping with more severe international sanctions than faced by any other US target. Trump has called North Korea "a big, big problem". But it is a problem that tests his deal-making skills. In fact, lost in the alarmism over North Korea's February 12 test of a new missile is that it occurred just after Trump called North Korea a threat.

When repeated rounds of sanctions not only fail to achieve their objectives but counterproductively trigger opposite effects, the need for a new approach becomes inescapable. Its goal should be a peace treaty to replace the Korean War armistice.

Through a carrot-and-stick approach of easing some sanctions and keeping more biting ones in place, diplomacy can, by persisting with what will be difficult and tough negotiations, clinch a deal to end one of the world's longest-lingering conflicts and eliminate weapons of mass destruction.

A foreign policy of cruel populism

Just before he was inaugurated as the U.S. President, Donald Trump laid out some principles of what appeared to be his non-interventionist foreign policy. "We will stop racing to topple foreign regimes that we know nothing about, that we shouldn't be involved with," he said in North Carolina. "Instead our focus must be on defeating terrorism and destroying ISIS, and we will." What Mr. Trump implied is that his administration would not conduct regime-change operations — such as against Iraq in 2003 during the George W. Bush administration — and certainly not indulge in nation-building outside the United States. He promised nation-building within the United States and to enhance the military "not as an act of aggression, but as an act of prevention".

The tenor of Mr. Trump's statements suggested that the United States would have a much less interventionist foreign policy. It would not be overthrowing governments or struggling to rebuild them into a liberal, market-friendly paradise. The concepts of regime change and nation-building — so fundamental to the consensus within the U.S. since the 1990s — now seem to be in retirement. Mr. Trump's main concept — America First — suggests that he would take the country into an isolationist period, with foreign adventures off the table and with the United States gradually pulling out of alliances such as NATO. The U.S. President's agenda is part of the emergence of a cruel populism that has emerged across the West, inaugurated by the Brexit vote in the United Kingdom. The heart of this cruel populism is that the people of the West have been ignored by their 'globalist' leaders, who care more for free trade deals than for the haemorrhaging of jobs in their own homelands. In this they are correct. What makes them cruel is that rather than actually get to the heart of joblessness — which is partly due to unshared productivity gains through mechanisation — they offer a harsh cultural agenda to solve an economic problem. It is hatred of Muslims and other religious, sexual and ethnic minorities that focus the attention of Mr. Trump and France's Marine Le Pen, Holland's Geert Wilders and Germany's Frauke Petry. They want to do such things as 'de-Islamise' their countries, ban minarets and secure their borders against refugees.

Building walls against migrants — simple campaign fodder — will not address the economies of the West, which are fundamentally integrated with the rest of the world. The global commodity chain has enabled Western corporations to enjoy large profits as countries in the chain struggle to underbid each other on wages and regulations.

To secure and control this global commodity chain, the West has used its vast military footprint — from bases to aircraft carriers — and it has used its military and political power to pressure countries to honour intellectual property rights and to fix currencies to advantage the global elites. No wonder, then, that the eight richest persons have as much wealth as the poorest half of the world's population. This global 1%, with a majority in the West, has truly benefited from globalisation.

Isolation from this global commodity chain would seriously threaten the reproduction of wealth for this small minority. It is unlikely that the cruel populists — for all their ranting against free trade regimes — would be able to move an agenda that undermines this global footprint. Their isolationism is more rhetoric than policy. Economic sovereignty is not possible for their states, which is why they strive for cultural sovereignty. Demagoguery is the prize for this kind of populism. 'Keep out the Muslims' stands in for economic policymaking.

We have not entered into a period of isolation. Nor is the old doctrine of humanitarian intervention alive and well. It has certainly been set aside. Our new period, with the cruel populists in power, is defined by ruthless inhumane intervention. Bombs will fall, no doubt, but these will not be dropped to draw countries into the global order. Their purpose will be to encage areas seen to be lesser and inherently dangerous.

The doctrine of humanitarian intervention came into its own in the 1990s, when the United States began to justify its military operations based on the idea of 'human rights'. Wars against Iraq and Yugoslavia as well as designations of Iran, Iraq, North Korea, Libya and Syria as 'rogue states' set the terms for humanitarian or liberal interventionism. The general idea was that these states were holdouts against globalisation and that pressure against them — sanctions or armed force — was utterly justified. A notion of universal humanity guided this theory, since it was assumed that violence would tutor lesser societies into the global commodity chain. The idea of 'regime change' required the idea of 'nation-building' to complete its task. Not only would governments be overthrown, but they would be replaced by regimes that acceded to the neo-liberal policy slate and to the institutions of globalisation.

The cruel populists do not accept the theory of universal humanity. For them, the world's people are divided along the axis of culture — Christendom, on one side, against Islam, on the other. Mr. Trump has vowed to rebuild the U.S. military so that "no one will ever mess with us". What is this military to be used for? "I would bomb those s*****," Mr. Trump said of the Islamic State and its oil infrastructure. "I'd blow up every single inch," he said, so that "there would be nothing left". But the use of force does not end there. "And you know what, you'll get Exxon to come in there, and in two months — you ever see these guys? How good they are, the great oil companies. They'll rebuild it brand new." It is suggestive that Mr. Trump's Secretary of State is Rex Tillerson, who ran ExxonMobil for 10 years. Would ExxonMobil re-build the oil infrastructure for Iraq? No. "I'll take the oil," Mr. Trump said brashly and against international law.

Mr. Trump's 'Deportation Force' Prepares an Assault on American Values

The homeland security secretary, John Kelly, issued a remarkable pair of memos on Tuesday. They are the battle plan for the "deportation force" President Trump promised in the campaign.

They are remarkable for how completely they turn sensible immigration policies upside down and backward. For how they seek to make the deportation machinery more extreme and frightening (and expensive), to the detriment of deeply held American values.

A quick flashback: The Obama administration recognized that millions of unauthorized immigrants, especially those with citizen children and strong ties to their communities and this country, deserved a chance to stay and get right with the law. It tried to focus on deporting dangerous criminals, national-security threats and recent border crossers.

Mr. Kelly has swept away those notions. He makes practically every deportable person a deportation priority. He wants everybody, starting with those who have been convicted of any crime, no matter how petty or old. Proportionality, discretion, the idea that some convictions are unjust, the principles behind criminal-justice reform — these concepts do not apply.

The targets now don't even have to be criminals. They could simply have been accused of a crime (that is, still presumed "innocent") or have done something that makes an immigration agent believe that they might possibly face charges.

Mr. Kelly included a catchall provision allowing Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers or Border Patrol agents — or local police officers or sheriff's deputies — to take in anyone they think could be "a risk to public safety or national security." That is a recipe for policing abuses and racial profiling, a possibility that Mr. Kelly will vastly expand if Congress gives him the huge sums required to hire 10,000 ICE officers and 5,000 Border Patrol agents.

He wants to "surge," his verb, the hiring of immigration judges and asylum officers. He wants to add processing and detention centers, which surely has the private-prison industry salivating at the profits to come.

He wants to ramp up programs deputizing state and local law enforcement officers as immigration enforcers. He calls them "a highly successful force multiplier," which is true if you want a dragnet. It's not true if you want to fight crime effectively and keep communities safe. When every local law enforcement encounter can be a prelude to deportation, unauthorized immigrants will fear and avoid the police. And when state and local officers untrained in immigration law suddenly get to decide who stays and who goes, the risk of injustice is profound. So is the danger to due process. Current procedure allows for swiftly deporting, without a hearing, immigrants who are caught near the border and who entered very recently. But Mr. Kelly notes that the law allows him to fast-track the removal of immigrants caught anywhere in the country who cannot prove they have been here "continuously" for at least two years. He's keeping his options open about whether to short-circuit due process with a coast-to-coast show-me-your-papers policy.



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In Delhi homes, a false sense of privacy abets domestic violence



Shivani Singh

A plumber beats up his wife for 12 hours before beheading her with a saw. A gory crime of this nature is not reported every day, but it could have happened anywhere in India.

In a village, where communities are close knit, such an ordeal would require a degree of passive complicity. In a metro such as Delhi, the prolonged torture culminated into beheading because nobody bothered to intervene.

The scene of the crime, Madhu Vihar, is an informal settlement in east Delhi where houses are so tightly packed it is difficult to maintain privacy. So,

on February 10, when Subodh Kumar beat up his wife all night long, her repeated calls for help reached many.

Describing the fights as an everyday affair, a neighbour told HT that he knocked on their door and asked them to "keep it low". Kumar told him not to interfere in his "private matter". The neighbour called up his landlord and that was that.

Confident that nobody was watching, Kumar diabolically planned to cut his wife's body into pieces over the next two days. His crime came to light only when he confessed to a friend.

Not all cases of domestic

violence have a murderous end. But the perpetrators are always confident about being in total control behind the closed doors of their home. Our insular urban life, where many don't even know their neighbours, fuels that confidence.

Historically, wife beating was a private matter until different countries criminalised it. Since 1983, under section 498-A of the Indian Penal Code, domestic violence is defined as any act of cruelty by a husband, or his family, towards his wife. Ten years ago, India also brought in the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, a separate civil law to protect married women, mothers, daughters and sisters within their homes. According to the last detailed study by the government in 2005-06, 40% of married women between 15-49 years said they had faced some form of domestic violence. Though, only one in four victims ever sought help. Education or wealth did not change the help seeking behaviour. Some women turned to their families, mostly their

husbands'. Few went to police, medical personnel, or social service organisations.

An analysis of the National Crime Records by the BBC in 2014 found that from 50,703 in 2003, the number of reported cases had gone up to 118,866 in 2013 — an increase of 134% over 10 years, far outstripping the rise in population over the same period.

It is not that homes suddenly became a more violent place. With adequate laws, the reporting improved. But experts say that domestic violence is still the most under recorded crime in India. It takes remarkable courage to report abuse because the victims are often emotionally and financially dependent on their abusers.

Also, the threshold for intervention in domestic abuse is usually very high. Many do not consider it a crime. Others think it is too private a matter to interfere. Family, friends and neighbours — those closest to the victim — should be the first to pick up signs of abuse and intervene. Gender groups prescribe ringing the

doorbell, letting victims know that they can take refuge in your home and calling police if the situation is out of hand.

Detecting and reporting domestic violence, however, are not enough. Women who show the courage to walk out of an abusive relationship need support to get on with their lives. First, they need a safe, comforting place to stay.

In Delhi, there are only 13 shelters and short-stay homes for women. Most are shabby and overcrowded — used mainly by the destitute. Together, these can accommodate just 238 women, the Mint reported last November.

Once victims find a place to stay, they need help to file reports and fight cases. The law mandates the government provides such help. But Delhi has only one protection officer in each district to do this, the Mint report said. While the state must do a lot more to back the victims, it cannot, and should not, enter our homes. It is really up to each of us to step in every time a domestic quarrel leads to abuse at home and in the neighbourhood.

India-China Talks Next Week Will Be Influenced By Trump

Jyoti Malhotra

India and China will hold their first Strategic Dialogue in Beijing on Wednesday led by Foreign Secretary S Jaishankar and his counterpart Hang Yesui, but the problem with this characterization by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) is that this is not the "first" such dialogue taking place between the two Asian powers.

According to the MEA website itself, five rounds of a bilateral conversation under this exact name have taken place between 2005 - when Shyam Saran was Foreign Secretary - and 2013, when Sujatha Singh was Foreign Secretary. In the interim, three other Foreign Secretaries, namely Shiv Shankar Menon, Nirupama Rao and Ranjan Mathai, have dealt with China under this rubric itself.

Perhaps it is in the nature of the Modi government to reinvent the wheel, to breast the imaginary "me-first" tape. Foreign policy was, once upon a time, supposed to cut across party lines, no matter that each Prime Minister put his distinctive stamp on its running. But under this Prime Minister, the penchant to talk about going where no man,

or woman, has gone before has had its fair share of takers in the foreign policy establishment.

No matter. Fact is, the top diplomats from India and China will meet next week and, as the outgoing spokesperson Vikas Swarup admitted, there are some "friction points" in the Sino-Indian relationship.

The two most important relate to China's refusal to admit India into the rarefied Nuclear Suppliers Group, even though it is believed that all the other Permanent Five nations are happy to have Delhi as a member.

The second problem is China's continued obstruction of the UN committee 1267 which has been set up to proscribe the Jaish-e-Mohammed leader Masood Azhar. Beijing exercised its muscle in December to refuse to let the ban go through, although all the remaining members of the UN Committee supported India. Remember that Azhar continues to live in Pakistan under the watchful and protected eye of the Pakistani agencies. Increasingly, Rawalpindi has put pressure on the elected government in Islamabad to defer to its "iron brother," China, inviting criticism of clientelism.

Meanwhile, Global Times, which is believed to reflect the views of the Chinese establishment, has been patronizing about ISRO's record launch of 104 satellites, saying that although "Indians have reason to be proud...the space technology race is not mainly about the number of satellites at one go. It's fair to say the significance of this achievement is limited. In this regard, Indian scientists know more than the Indian public, who are encouraged by media reports."

Perhaps the most interesting aspect about this so-called "first dialogue" between India and China is that this is the first time it is taking place since Donald Trump took charge as the most disruptive President of the US the world has seen in many decades.

Certainly when Trump promised to question America's "One-China" policy and in fact promptly called Taiwanese president Tsai Ing-wen, India clapped silently in glee. In fact the recent Taiwanese parliamentary delegation is Delhi's equivalent of Trump calling Tsai. Vikas Swarup, the MEA's spokesman, insisted that there was nothing strange about



the visit and that a variety of Taiwanese, including academics, businesspeople and legislators also visited China often.

"Political meaning should not be read into the (visit)," said Swarup, but of course, that was what the Chinese did. A "Global Times" commentary said the relationship was witnessing "severe stress" in the wake of the Taiwanese delegation's visit and that such things "should be handled" better in the future.

But Trump has since gone and spoken to Chinese president Xi Jinping and reaffirmed America's "one-China" policy. Perhaps some of the euphoria in the establishment has since dimmed.

One of the issues on the Jaishankar-Hang Yesui table are the possible dates of a high-level Chinese leader to India. President Xi Jinping has visited twice, although the October visit to Goa was for the prime purpose of attending the BRICS summit, as has PM Modi - for the second time in 2016 for the G-20 meeting in Hangzhou.

The Indian side would like Chinese premier Li Keqiang to come to Delhi - if he does, he would certainly be asked questions on the "friction" points, so it is obvious that some resolution, or at least a face-saving, has to be soon hammered out on these issues.

(Contd on page 23)

In Jail Or Not, The Growing Stature Of Sasikala And Family



Seshadri Chari

Politics is as unpredictable as mountain weather. But Tamil Nadu politics takes the cake for dramatic changes. Some disgruntled restless *aatma* must be juggling the balls beneath the Chief Minister's chair in Tamil Nadu. In a touch and go floor test, AIADMK's Edappadi Palanisamy (hereinafter EPS), literally the *ek din ka raja* (king for a day), mustered the support of 122 MLAs to prove his majority while his rival O Panneerselvam (OPS) retained his trusted 11.

Though OPS put up a brave face till the morning of the floor test, it was evident that he could not match the shenanigans of the Sasikala faction which had all the power and money that was

needed for the Pyrrhic victory. EPS moved fairly very fast. Within five hours of the Governor asking him to assume office of Chief Minister, he reached Raj Bhawan to take oath of office, with time only to go to Amma's Samadhi in Marina Beach. He spent more time in the resort with the AIADMK MLAs in "detention" there, than in the Chief Minister's Office. Obviously, he knew he cannot take his eyes off even one of them. After the stinging but belated judgment forcefully indicting former Chief Minister Jayalalithaa and Sasikala for corruption and other related irregularities resulting in amassing disproportionate assets, politics was expected to take a new turn. An astute and

cunning Sasikala knew about her fate and prepared to take over the party and the government. Her action plan was to hurriedly become the CM before the Supreme Court verdict and hold on to the Chief Minister's chair as long as possible. She would have had to quit finally, but the Chief Ministerial post would have ensured certain additional facilities in jail. Had she become the Chief Minister, she would have had to quit in less than two three days, but not before ensuring her power and safety. Even without that, she managed to become party General Secretary and tighten her stranglehold on the party. Even after the Supreme Court's judgment, she held party meetings, a press conference, expelled her opponents from the party, elected her proxy for the Chief Minister's post.

Besides, she could have done much more to cover her tracks. She refused to surrender and had the police virtually under her command. Imagine, had she been the Chief Minister, how much more she could have done. She would have mocked the Supreme Court by using all available immunities and probably not gone to jail at all. Seeing through this plan, the

Governor of Tamil Nadu, C Vidyasagar Rao, delayed the swearing in and rightly so. This forced Sasikala to resort to Plan B, which, one must admit, has worked.

As per this plan, she swiftly moved her MLAs to a resort, fortified it and "elected" her proxy to be Chief Minister, exactly on the lines of what Jayalalithaa had done. OPS, who started his career as a tea stall owner, held important portfolios in Jayalalithaa's cabinet - Public Works, Revenue and Finance - and he was the first Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu from the Thevar community, one of the largest and loyal vote banks of the AIADMK. A staunch Amma loyalist, OPS became the Revenue Minister in Amma's government and held the office from 19 May, 2001 to 1 September 2001. It was during this time that Jayalalithaa was barred by the Supreme Court from holding the Chief Minister's office as she was convicted in the TANSI land scam. She chose OPS to hold the Chief Minister's Office. The tenure lasted for six months, from 21 September, 2001 to 1 March, 2002. In true filmy style, he never sat on the Chief Minister's chair, but kept

her photo on it and occupied the next chair, thus becoming the first "puppet government", remote-controlled by Jayalalithaa.

Meanwhile, for two weeks in May 2006, he was made Leader of the Opposition in the Tamil Nadu assembly and was also appointed the leader of the party's legislative group.

He again became her proxy Chief Minister on 27 September, 2014 when Jayalalithaa was convicted in the disproportionate assets case. In 2015, when she was acquitted in the Disproportionate Assets case, OPS dutifully vacated the chair for Amma. In the 2016 Assembly election, the AIADMK returned to power, albeit with a thinner margin, and Jayalalithaa became Chief Minister for a record sixth time. Her trusted loyalist OPS became her Finance Minister. When she succumbed to a major cardiac arrest in December, 2016, OPS was chosen as her successor.

It was obvious that Sasikala did not like this arrangement but was too shrewd to either say it in public or defy the party at that time. During the 2016 assembly election,

(Contd on page 23)

Trump rejects anti-Semitism? Prove it

"Anti-Semitism is horrible. And it's gonna stop and it has to stop," President Donald Trump announced Tuesday during a visit to the National Museum of African-American History and Culture. "You don't know where it's coming from but I hope they catch the people."

Many may feel relieved at this statement, which was occasioned by the latest evidence of a sharp uptick in anti-Semitism in our country. Just over the last few days, we've seen a slew of bomb threats to Jewish community centers around the country and the desecration of over 100 headstones at St. Louis' Jewish cemetery. President Trump showed some leadership with this communication, but we can ask: Why did it take him so long to decide to acknowledge reality? Just last week, he disheartened many by telling a reporter from a Jewish newspaper that merely asking about anti-Semitism was "not a fair question."

And while it's true that as of now the perpetrators of these crimes have not been found, Trump's assertion that "you don't

know where it's coming from" is disingenuous, since he has contributed to the rise of that anti-Semitism in multiple ways from the very start of his campaign for president. Trump long used powerful racist images to build his political brand and constituency during the race for the presidential nomination, setting himself up as the lone protector of white Christian America. In July 2015, his campaign released an ad that featured men dressed as Nazi SS soldiers with a message proclaiming that "We need leadership!"

Four months later, he tried to discredit his opponent Jeb Bush by retweeting a racist montage of images that included a swastika, Bush in a sombrero and a cartoon of a monkey trying to cross the border from Mexico. Such retweets from white supremacist social media accounts also brought concepts like "JewAmerica" and "white genocide" to mainstream attention.

And have we conveniently forgotten Trump's use of anti-Semitic images to try and paint

Hillary Clinton as a corrupt and untrustworthy candidate? It wasn't subtle - Clinton was depicted next to a star and against a background of \$100 bills -- but what should we have expected from its alt-right message-board source? By July 2016, having absorbed a year of such communications, his target audience knew what he stood for: the reassertion of white Christian power in America through any means necessary. For the rest of us, there were lame excuses from the Trump campaign and surrogates. "The intern did it" for the SS men; Trump's own overlooking of the presence of the swastika in the Bush-targeted retweet; the liberal media's supposed misinterpretation and paranoia in the case of the Clinton image, which featured not a Star of David but a "sheriff's badge." The truth is that racism has been a main element of continuity in Trump's political career, with anti-Semitic images used as potent currency. So no one should be surprised that the Southern Poverty Law Center, which tracks hate crimes, saw a sharp spike in hate-related

incidents (against Jews, blacks, immigrants, Muslims, and women) in the month following the election. 37% of the recorded incidents were "Trump-related," meaning they "directly referenced either President-Elect Donald Trump, his campaign slogans, or his infamous remarks about sexual assault."

All of this should make Americans very concerned about the Trump administration's statement that it is considering narrowing its investigations of terrorism to Muslim-linked acts. What is the aim of this apparent intent to ignore white racist violence, potentially paving the way for its decriminalization? We might put the question to Trump's inner circle, to men such as Stephen Bannon, whose former job as executive chairman of the alt-right Breitbart News made him the darling of white nationalists everywhere; or to Stephen Miller, who has campaigned against "Islamofascism," on the belief that the US and Western civilization are at war with Islamic jihadists. It's certainly high time to pose it to Trump's daughter Ivanka Trump and son-in-law,

Jared Kushner, both observant Jews. What they perhaps don't want to realize -- but Bannon knows all too well -- is that racism is a famously mobile form of hatred. Blacks and Jews, and Arabs and Jews, have often been collapsed together by white nationalists and their authoritarian leaders as different facets of the same "problem" to restrict or eliminate. And that once racist violence is unleashed, especially when encouraged by the state, it's difficult to contain. Optimists believe that people can change. If Trump is really serious about going against his history and combating racism in all forms, anti-Semitism included, he could start with two actions: discard the idea of exempting white terrorists from prosecution. And get rid of Stephen Bannon, Stephen Miller and all the other extremists who Trump has allowed into America's halls of power and influence, only to propagate racially-grounded fantasies of American greatness.

If history's any judge, they will lead us to ruin. We deserve far better than that.

Can uploading of obscene videos be prevented, Supreme Court asks

(Agencies) The Supreme Court on Wednesday sought to know from internet service provider Google whether it could “prevent” uploading of obscene videos such as those of sexual violence on websites. A bench of Justices M B Lokur and U U Lalit asked Google about its internal mechanism or “in-house procedure” to identify such obscene contents posted on websites and also about “how much can they do to prevent it”. “Can you not prevent it? We are simply asking you can you not prevent it,” the bench asked senior counsel Abhishek Manu Singhvi, who was representing Google India. Singhvi said the company was unconditionally willing to cooperate on these issues and they should be informed about any such material posted on websites so that they can act. He said the information about such material should come to them from the government or an adjudicating authority which could be a kind of filter. In the absence of these, a detailed in-house procedure could be adopted and they would get such contents deleted or withdrawn within 36 hours of receipt of information. However, the bench asked, “Take for instance, nobody has reported (about any such material), do you act on your own to decipher it? We are asking, is it possible for you or not?” Responding to it, Singhvi said, “No. Actually it is not possible for us...It is not something which we can discover on our own. If it is reported, we can do it. There is no legal obligation on me to discover”. Advocate Aparna Bhat, who has been assisting the court as amicus curiae, told the bench that when the matter had come to fore, there were 8-9 such obscene videos on which the CBI had conducted investigation, but now several other such materials have surfaced and the agency must be directed to look into it. To this, the bench observed, “We have not stayed any investigation. There is no stay on the investigation”.

Atmosphere of fear in universities threat to Indian democracy: Amartya Sen



Modi-led government doing enough to improve health sector in the country.

The 83-year-old economist further said that fear being faced by the minority communities in India can not be seen as cultivation of fraternity. Regretting that the pursuit of equality for the moment has increasingly taken a back seat in policy making in India, Sen said, “India does not have world-class universities... the climate of fear (in Indian universities) is detrimental to Indian democracy.” He said the government has executive power but it should not consider itself as a complete state impairing the autonomy of the universities. “The government has executive power. But it has an obligation not to see itself as whole of the state. “...For

example the money for state universities come from the states. The fact that the money on universities is spent by the government does not mean that the government will take crucial decisions in running of the universities,” Sen said. Observing that China spends 2% of its GDP on health sector, while India spends less than 1% of its GDP on health sector, Sen said, “I don’t have any hope of present government doing enough for improving health sector in India.”

Sen further said India does not have a majority government system. “BJP only got 31% vote share in the last Lok Sabha election. Even with the allies, it got only 39% votes,” he pointed out. Sen, however, said BJP and allies have the right to govern, adding, “But the BJP-led NDA government should not be under the illusion that it is speaking on behalf of the majority of Indians.” Sen is currently Thomas W Lamont University Professor, and Professor of Economics and Philosophy, at Harvard University.

(Agencies) Nobel laureate Amartya Sen has said the atmosphere of fear in universities is detrimental to Indian democracy. “Penalties imposed on teachers for giving lectures critical of the priorities of the ruling government, and even on those who arranged the lectures

at one university or other, will have far reaching impact on value of liberty in contemporary India,” said Sen while launching his book titled ‘Social Choice and Social Welfare’ in New Delhi on Tuesday. Sen, known for his strong views, also said that he has no hope of the Narendra

South Korean professor held for flying drone over the Taj Mahal



(Agencies) A South Korean was briefly held on Wednesday morning for flying a drone in the ‘no-flying zone’ over the Taj Mahal. Chun Hong Chul, a 50-year-old professor at a South Korean university, was staying in a hotel at Agra. The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) staff traced a drone hovering over the eastern side of the Taj Mahal at around 7am. “The staff got active after spotting a drone. Locals helped trace the South Korean tourist stationed 100 away from the monument, holding the remote of the drone. He was asked to withdraw his drone and taken for interrogation,” said a senior CISF official. “The tourist expressed ignorance about the restrictions on flying drones in the vicinity of Taj Mahal and was handed over to the tourism police for further verification of his credentials,” the official added. Agra district magistrate Gaurav Dayal had on Monday issued an advisory banning flying of drones in the vicinity of Taj Mahal. Police allowed Chul to leave after questioning and a written undertaking to cooperate in the matter. “We have saved the chip recovered from the drone, which could be sent to the forensic lab in Agra, if needed. A communication has been forwarded to the South Korean Embassy in Delhi, asking them to issue advisory to tourists visiting Taj Mahal,” said Preetinder Singh, SSP (Agra).

Sikh radicals, former terrorists camping in Delhi for DSGMC polls

(Agencies) Sikh radical leaders can’t stay away from the gurdwara politics. A number of them who once actively participated in the pro-Khalistan movement have reached Delhi to support “own men” contesting the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC) polls scheduled for February 26.

Wassan Singh Zafarwal, 64, a former chief of Khalistan Commando Force, is camping in Delhi for past three days to garner support for the candidates fielded by Shiromani Akali Dal (Delhi) led by former DSGMC president Paramjit Singh Sarna. “I am meeting Sikh families in Delhi, who have a soft corner for me, to persuade them to vote for Sarna’s candidates,” said Zafarwal, who currently is associated with the United Akali Dal. “Given the present circumstances when a series of incidents of Sacrilege of Guru Granth Sahib took



place in Punjab during Shiromani Akali Dal (Badal) led government, and the party took support of Dera Sacha Sauda during the state polls on February 4, I think Sarna is a better option for us to support,” he said, adding that a number of his companions will be camping in Delhi till the polls. How his presence will change the poll results, only the time will tell, but his presence is a morale booster for Sarna who lost out to SAD (Badal) in the gurdwara polls in 2013. Mohkam Singh 57, an associate of Jarnail

Singh Bhindranwale, has also been camping in Delhi to support Sarna’s candidates. Four years ago, Mohkam Singh had supported SAD (Badal) candidates. “There is anger among the Sikhs due to sacrilege of Guru Granth Sahib. So, I decided to support Sarna this time, because there is none other than Sarna who can defeat Badals,” he said.

Paramjit Singh Sarna told HT that radical leaders’ presence will improve his poll prospects.

Sex scandal takes toll of Bihar Congress

(Insider Bureau) The alleged indulgence of a senior Congress leader, Brajesh Pandey, in a sex racket involving a former minister's daughter, has taken a toll of the Bihar Pradesh Congress Committee (BPCC) hierarchy and future plans. Besides being the convener for the campaign against demonetisation in Bihar as part of the nation-wide protest by the All India Congress Committee (AICC), Pandey was heading vital cells of the

BPCC, organisation and publicity. Pandey was also chairman of the programme implementation committee and protocol by virtue of being a vice president. "A void has been created in the BPCC after Pandey resigned as the vice president. Pandey was assigned the task of dealing with important operations of the state Congress owing to his proximity to BPCC president and education minister Ashok

Choudhary," said a senior party leader. Choudhary, who was away in Uttar Pradesh to campaign for party nominees, admitted that the Pandey episode was a major blow, but denied it would impact party functioning in the state. "Fresh arrangement will be made to offset the damage, which apparently seems to be a part of political design against him," said Choudhary, insisting on an impartial probe into the episode.

Party insiders said the AICC had rated the BPCC campaign against demonetisation the best because of Pandey's involvement. "There was huge participation in the march to the RBI and later the Jan Vedna Sammelan attended by senior AICC functionaries, including Bihar in-charge CP Joshi and Manicka Tagore. The programme is still on," they maintained. Acknowledging the dent the party suffered in Pandey's resignation,



some top leaders of the state Congress said that he (Pandey) was virtually the second man in the organisation since Choudhary took over as the president in 2013. "Pandey became the vice president and was vested with the most important responsibilities when the party underwent its first reorganisation in September 2013. He was retained as VP in the next revamp in 2014," recalled a former general secretary. Meanwhile, AICC media panellist Prem Chandra Mishra reacted strongly over Union minister Giriraj Singh's tirade against party chief Rahul Gandhi over Pandey issue and said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi should first apologise for retaining Nihal Chand as a cabinet minister despite him being chargesheeted by the police in a rape case. "The BJP has no moral right to sermonise the Congress on ethics. Pandey immediately resigned from all party posts after his name came up in an alleged sex racket. The charge is yet to be tried in a court of law. However, Nihal Chand, who is charged with rape in Rajasthan, is brazenly continuing in the ministry," said Mishra.

India's GDP projected to slow to 6.6% post-demonetisation: IMF

(Insider Bureau) India's growth is projected to slow to 6.6% in 2016-17 fiscal due to the strains that have emerged in the economy as a result of "temporary disruptions" caused by demonetisation, the IMF said on Wednesday. In its annual report, however, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said demonetisation would have only short term impact on the economy and it would bounce back to its expected growth of more than eight per cent in the next few years. The post-November 8, 2016 cash shortages and payment disruptions caused by the currency exchange initiative have undermined

consumption and business activity, posing a new challenge to sustaining the growth momentum, the IMF said in its annual country report on India. "Growth is projected to slow to 6.6 per cent in FY2016/17, then rebound to 7.2 per cent in FY2017/18, due to temporary disruptions, primarily to private consumption, caused by cash shortages," it said. India's economy grew at 7.6 per cent in 2015-16. Tailwinds from a favorable monsoon, low oil prices and continued progress in resolving supply-side bottlenecks, as well as robust consumer confidence, will support

near-term growth as cash shortages ease, the IMF said. The investment recovery is expected to remain modest and uneven across sectors, as deleveraging takes place and industrial capacity utilization picks up, the report said. In their report, the IMF Directors supported the Indian efforts to clamp down on illicit financial flows, but noted "the strains that have emerged" from the currency exchange initiative. "They called for action to quickly restore the availability of cash to avoid further payment disruptions and encouraged prudent monitoring of the potential side-effects of the initiative

on financial stability and growth," the report said. Noting India's strong economic performance of the past few years, the IMF Executive Directors commended New Delhi for its strong policy actions, including continued fiscal consolidation and an anti-inflationary monetary policy, which have underpinned macroeconomic stability. As such, the IMF recommended continued vigilance to potential domestic and external shocks and urged the

authorities to further advance economic and structural reforms to address supply bottlenecks, raise potential output, create jobs, and ensure inclusive growth. The IMF feels that on the external side, despite the reduced imbalances and strengthened reserve buffers, the impact from global financial market volatility could be disruptive, including from US monetary policy normalization or weaker-than-expected global growth.

Madhya Pradesh's Rs 500 crore hawala accused dead, says police

(Agencies) An accused wanted in the Rs 500-crore hawala scam unearthed in Katni district died at Haridwar in Uttar Pradesh, a senior police officer said on Wednesday. The police officer said Santosh Garg, who was on the run since the scam came to light, died of an illness in Haridwar. "Garg's son and police from Haridwar informed the Madhya Pradesh Police about Garg's death. His son said he died due to a liver ailment. He was undergoing treatment at a Haridwar hospital," Katni Superintendent of Police Shashikant Shukla said. Shukla said the cause of the death would be known once the post-mortem



examination report comes in. The scam had come to light after the November 8 demonetisation. The police claimed a bank account opened in the name of Garg's company was misused for transactions involving Rs 90 crore, after which the Income Tax Department issued him a

notice. He was missing and on the run since then. In January, the state Congress had produced a picture allegedly showing another scam accused, Satish Saraogi, standing with Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Minister of State Sanjay Pathak at a function.

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Telangana CM under flak for 'brazen' Tirupati offering of gold worth over Rs 5 crores

(Insider Bureau) officials said this Telangana chief minister K Chandrasekhar Rao's Rs.5.59 crore offering to Lord Venkateswara temple to fulfil his vow has come under flak from opposition parties, who termed it a "splurge of public money".

KCR, along with his family members, ministers and officials, offered ornaments worth Rs 5 crore to Tirumala temple in Andhra Pradesh to fulfil the vow he had taken during the movement for a separate Telangana state.

The chief minister also made another offering at Padmavathi temple.

KCR, his family members, ministers and officials had reached Tirupati by special aircraft on Tuesday. Temple

officials said this reminded them of the days when kings of princely states used to travel with their entourage to make the offerings.

His thanksgiving trip to the two famous temples in Tirupati and the offerings which cost a whopping Rs 5.59 crore to state exchequer, has not gone down well with the opposition parties and other critics.

Interestingly, when KCR was making the offerings in Tirupati to fulfill his vow, unemployed youth and students were out on the streets of Hyderabad demanding that he fulfill his poll promise of one lakh jobs.

The protestors clashed with police at few places in the city as police foiled the rally of the



unemployed called by Telangana Joint Action Committee (TJAC).

TJAC leader M.



Kodandaram, who fought for Telangana state with KCR but is now a major critic of TRS chief, leaders

of opposition parties and student groups were arrested. Leaders of main opposition Congress demanded that KCR stop wasting public money on his religious beliefs. Senior leader M. Sashidhar Reddy said it was not good on part of a Chief Minister to make such an offering with public money. The Bharatiya Janata Party too criticised KCR. Party spokesperson Krishna Saagar Rao said that KCR

possibly is the only CM in the entire country who spends public money so brazenly for personal reasons.

"He seems to be totally convinced that he has been elected to be the King of Telangana state and totally oblivious of the fact, that he is an elected representative in a democratic system. He is on a brazen trip of personal splurge of public money," he said.

No post-poll alliance with BSP or any party in UP says Amit Shah

(Agencies) BJP president Amit Shah on Wednesday ruled out any post-poll alliance with the BSP or any other party in the event of a hung assembly in Uttar Pradesh, confident that the party will get a "full majority". As UP gears up for the fourth phase of the seven-phase Assembly elections on Thursday, Shah, 52, also said the BJP not naming a chief ministerial candidate was part of the party's poll "strategy". "Kisi se bhi haath milane ka dur-dur tak koi sawaal nahin uthatha (there is no question by far of joining hands with any party)," he said when asked if the BJP would be willing to ally with the BSP or any other party to form a government in the politically crucial state if it fell short of a majority. The comments by Shah come against the backdrop of some poll surveys and political experts projecting a hung assembly in UP given that all the three players - the SP-Congress, BSP and BJP - have a robust set-up and a loyal social base in the state. Shah, who has campaigned extensively in UP, acknowledges the importance of the poll outcome in the state to 2019 Lok Sabha polls but at the same time he feels that the results would be even more crucial for the country's development.

Poaching menace: Shoot-at-sight orders issued at Corbett reserve

(Insider Bureau) Corbett Tiger Reserve authorities have issued shoot-at-sight orders and pressed two drones into service after movement of poachers was reported along the southern fringes of the park.

About 150 forest guards have been deployed and camera traps installed at sensitive points within the territory of the park to keep a tab on suspicious movement.

The steps follow reports of increased movement of poachers in the park's most sensitive southern border, Corbett Tiger Reserve director Parag Madhukar Dhakate said.

"150 forest officials with shoot-at-sight orders



have been deployed and a total of 388 camera traps installed in the area to conduct a five-day operation to remove any suspicious elements from Corbett," he said. The shoot-at-sight orders have been issued in keeping

with a 2003 Government Order which permits such operations to be held in order to save wildlife, he said.

"Villagers of the area have been informed of the same and advised to avoid taking animals for grazing to the core areas of the jungle," said Dhakate.

Visitors to the park will now be subjected to extensive frisking, he said. Even after a recent Uttarakhand high court order prohibiting killing of tigers, panthers or leopards on the pretext that they are man-eaters or holding them captive for reasons other than medical care, the tigers still face a grave threat to their lives because of poachers, he said.

This further contributes to the already decreasing population of tigers which has called for such stern measures, he said. Intelligence agencies had tipped off Corbett authorities recently about increased movement of a dreaded gang of poachers (Bavariya gang) along the southern fringe of the tiger reserve.

Two drones will also be pressed into service as part of the operations to keep an aerial vigil on any suspicious movement in the protected area, Dhakate said.

Corbett is one of India's oldest national park and is the place where Project Tiger was first launched in 1973.

Industrial units must have effluent treatment plants: Supreme Court

(Agencies) The Supreme Court on Wednesday passed a slew of directions to curb the release of untreated waste in water bodies and asked state pollution control boards not to allow industrial units to work if they do not have functional primary effluent treatment plants (PETPs), after giving them notice.

A bench headed by Chief Justice J S Khehar directed the state pollution control boards (PCBs) to issue common notice to all industrial units to verify whether they have set up PETPs as mandated under the legal provisions.

The bench, which also comprised Justices D Y Chandrachud and S K Kaul, said on the expiry

of a three-month notice period, state PCBs should carry out inspection of the industrial units to ascertain the status of their PETPs. If industrial units do not have functional PETPs, then they will not be allowed to function any more, the court said.

The bench directed the state PCBs to ask the concerned discoms or electricity supply boards

to disconnect the power supply to the defaulting industrial units. It said the industrial units could resume functioning only after they made their PETPs functional.

The apex court also asked the local or municipal authorities to set up Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETP) within three years after acquiring land and completing other formalities.

Sutlej-Yamuna Canal Row

Supreme Court Asks Punjab, Haryana To Maintain Order

(Agencies) The Supreme Court today made it clear that its verdict allowing construction of the Sutlej-Yamuna link (SYL) canal has to be executed and asked Haryana and Punjab to maintain law and order "at any cost" in view of a proposed protest by a political outfit tomorrow over the inter-state water row.

Indian National Lok Dal (INLD), Haryana's main opposition party, has asked its workers to gather tomorrow at Ambala and march inside Punjab to start digging the SYL canal.

"Haryana and Punjab shall maintain law and order at any cost. State of Punjab and Haryana will take action under the law...The law and order should not be violated in any manner," a bench of Justices P C Ghose and Amitava Roy said.

After taking note of submissions of senior advocate Shyam Divan, appearing for Haryana, the bench said that the decree and orders passed by the apex court, allowing the SYL canal, have to be executed and the canal has to be built.

The bench, however, referred to the submissions of senior advocate Ram Jethmalani, representing Punjab, that "good people" from both sides should sit together and find an amicable solution to the issue and said this was one of the possibilities.

It told Solicitor General Ranjit Kumar, appearing for the Centre, that the central government could act as an arbitrator if both sides are willing to settle.

However, the legal aspect is that "the highest court of the land has given its verdicts and

how can that be not implemented," the bench said.

The court said its earlier interim order of status quo will continue till further orders and fixed the case for further hearing on March 2, while again rejecting Punjab's submission that the case be listed after the poll results.

Punjab, in its affidavit, has maintained that the Punjab Termination of Water Agreement Act of 2004 was still in force and discharges it of all responsibility to provide water to other states.

It claimed that the SC verdict that the 2004 Act was unconstitutional did not render the law invalid as the apex court had only given an opinion on the Presidential reference. (More) During the hearing, Haryana's counsel Divan referred to various orders and



judgements passed by the Supreme Court from time to time and said the decisions should reach to the "logical conclusion" which is construction of the canal.

The apex court has categorically said the canal has to be constructed by a central agency and the November 10, 2016 constitution bench verdict has said that the Punjab Act, terminating the water agreement, was unconstitutional.

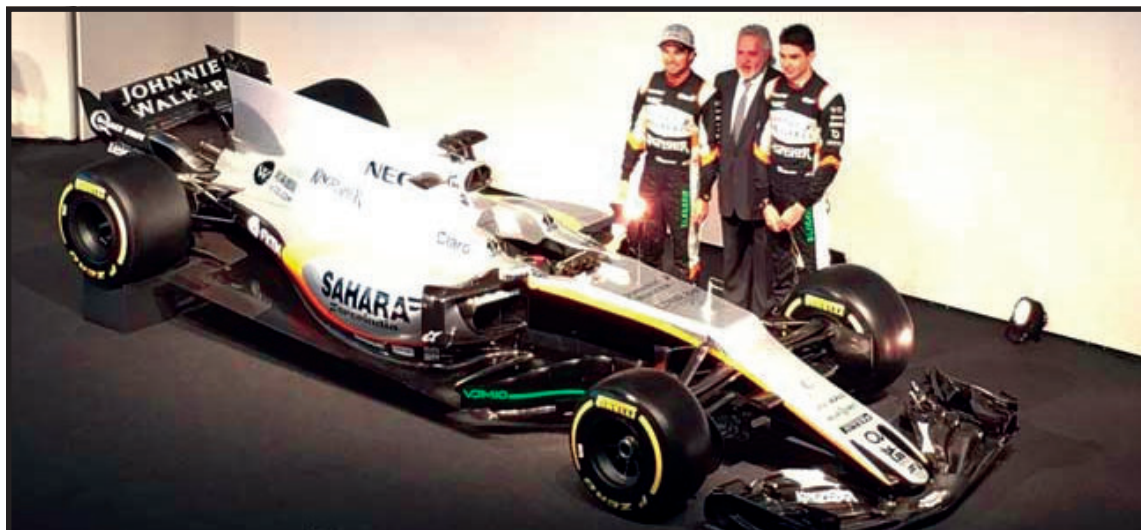
Jethmalani said the dispute at hand cannot be decided by the court as the 1981 water agreement was not enforceable as the quantity of water has

dipped and "good people from both sides should sit together and find an amicable solution".

The Centre should act as an arbitrator in the matter and help both sides in finding a solution, he said.

Rejecting the plea for adjournment of hearing after the declaration of assembly polls results, the bench said, "we want to finish it off. If we wait till the results, then you will say that let the government be formed".

Earlier too on February 15, the apex court had rejected a similar plea of Punjab saying "what is the use of courts waiting for election results."



Vijay Mallya Seen At F1 Event In UK, Slams Indian Media In Tweets

(Agencies) London : Businessman Vijay Mallya, who is wanted in India for Rs. 9,000 crore loan default, was today seen at an event in UK promoting a new Formula One car launched by his team Sahara Force India.

Mr Mallya was seen with his two drivers Sergio Perez and Esteban Ocon in a photograph uploaded by official Formula One website (www.formula1.com).

The new car of his F1 team was launched today at Silverstone.

The businessman has been on the radar of the Indian agencies for a long time now and the government has been in talks with the UK government for his extradition over charges of multi-crore loan default by a consortium of Indian banks. On Monday, the Home Ministry forwarded to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) a court-issued request to bring back embattled liquor baron from the United Kingdom to India. In a communication to the MEA, the Home Ministry has provided it details of the Mumbai special court order which approved the Enforcement Directorate's request to invoke the India-UK Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) to bring back Mr Mallya to the country.

The Mumbai special court, which is entrusted with hearing cases under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act or PMLA, had last fortnight approved the ED's request to issue an order against Mr Mallya under the India-UK treaty.

The 1992 India-UK MLAT has a clause through which the treaty can be invoked in a criminal probe seeking the "transfer of persons, including persons in custody, for the purpose of assisting in investigations or giving evidence" and it is understood that the ED considers this step a better legal tool than the regular extradition action to get a person under investigation by Indian probe agencies back to the country. The ED has been wanting Mr Mallya to join the probe in this case "in person" and had issued multiple summons to him but could not get success as Mr Mallya never deposed before it. The ED has virtually exhausted all legal options to bring Mr Mallya back to India including the issuance of NBW, based on which it had made the requests for revocation of his passport and subsequent deportation bid, apart from seeking an Interpol warrant against him which has remained unsuccessful till now.

As law colleges mushroom, concern over quality of advocates being churned out



(Agencies) New Delhi: It could be easier to get permission to start a law college in India than to get a law degree. A list of law colleges across the country prepared by the Bar Council of India shows that UP has the largest number of 350 law

colleges, and one of its little known universities, Shri Chatrapati Shahuji Maharaj University in Kanpur, has 88 colleges affiliated to it awarding law degrees. Of these 88 colleges, 44 were given permission in just two years between 2014 and 2016 to impart legal education. Another popular varsity from UP, the Chaudhary Charan Singh (CCS) University in Meerut, has no less than 101 law colleges offering LL.B courses. Even CCS University has affiliated a record 54 colleges in just four years between 2012 and 2016 to impart degree-level courses.

The mushrooming of large number of law colleges in UP — presumably due to a huge interest in the legal profession — are indicative of the popularity of the legal degrees which attract students from across the country.

This has also raised concerns in the legal and judicial fraternity about the quality of advocates such institutions are churning out in hundreds. "It's a matter of concern that some of the universities have given too many affiliations to start law colleges. We are looking into some cases in UP and Andhra Pradesh," Bar Council of India chairman Manan Kumar Mishra told TOI. However, he said the responsibility largely lies with state governments which grant no objection certificates after verifying if such colleges have adequate infrastructure and facilities to start degree-level courses.

Elite or well known universities like Allahabad University, the Banaras Hindu University, Aligarh Muslim University have just one or two colleges imparting legal education. Of the 1,500-odd law colleges in India as of May 2016, Madhya Pradesh is second with at least 143 listed law colleges, followed by Maharashtra (139), Karnataka (115) and Rajasthan (110).

Govt may set up new agency to probe anomalies in IT returns filed after demonetisation



(Agencies) There is a move to set up a new agency for probing anomalies in income tax returns filed by 18 lakh people after demonetisation, Union Minister Radha Mohan Singh said on Wednesday. He said post demonetisation, Rs 15 lakh crore have been deposited in banks. "As many as 18 lakh people have filed Income Tax returns showing their income as Rs 12 lakh but have deposited Rs 1.25 crore in banks ... there is a move to set up a new agency for probing it," Singh told newsmen here. The Agriculture Minister warned that all those possessing black money will be taken to task. On black money issue, he said be it Mayawati or

Congress President Sonia Gandhi's son-in-law Robert Vadra, no one will be spared if found guilty. The Income Tax department has identified 1.8 million people whose cash deposits after demonetisation do not match their taxpayer profiles and asked them to answer queries about the source of income for these cash deposits. The exercise is part of the tax department's efforts to reconcile demonetisation-related data at its disposal and look for instances of tax evasion. In the initial phase, the tax department is scrutinising cash deposits above Rs 5 lakh and suspicious deposits between Rs 3 lakh and Rs 5 lakh.

PIL to regulate internet calls on Zuckerberg-owned Facebook, WhatsApp filed in Delhi HC

(Agencies) The Delhi High Court today sought a response from the government on a plea seeking regulation of call services over the internet provided by 'Facebook' and 'WhatsApp'. A bench of Chief Justice G Rohini and Justice Sangita Dhingra Sehgal issued notice to the ministries concerned and directed them to file their affidavits within six weeks with regard to the issue raised in the petition and fixed the matter for further consideration on May 3. The



direction came on a plea by V D Moorthy, who has approached the court for regulation of Facebook and Whatsapp's Voice over

Internet Protocol (VoIP) or Internet Telephony services. His plea has urged the court to direct the authorities concerned to bring the two social media platforms and other similar applications in India under the regulatory framework just like the telecom service providers and internet service providers. The petitioner alleged that "unregulated operations of the Facebook and WhatsApp are a threat to national security and a loss to the public exchequer".

Andhra doctor rescued in Libya after 18 months

(Agencies) Hyderabad/New Delhi: A doctor from Eluru in Andhra Pradesh who had been kidnapped by Islamic State militants in Libya in 2015 has been rescued and is being brought back to India, the government said. The doctor's family in India is overjoyed at news of his rescue. The information was tweeted by External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj late on Tuesday night. "We have rescued Dr. Ramamurthy Kosanam in Libya. Dr. Kosanam has suffered a bullet injury. We are bringing him to India shortly. With this, we have rescued all the six Indians abducted there. I appreciate the good work done by our mission there." Ramamurthy was working as a physician in the Ibn-e-Sina Hospital at Sirte. On September 8, 2015, a group of IS militants entered the hospital and kidnapped Ramamurthy, engineer Samal Pravash Ranjan of Odisha and seven Filipino nurses from their residential quarters.

Former BJP MLA Vijay Jolly Booked For Rape

He has been booked for rape after a woman alleged that he drugged and assaulted her.



(Agencies) GURUGRAM -- Former Delhi BJP MLA Vijay Jolly has been booked for rape after a woman alleged that he drugged and assaulted her, police said on Wednesday. The woman, a resident of south Delhi, told police that she was drugged and sexually assaulted in Gurugram earlier in February when she visited the place with Jolly. She said she had known Jolly for some three years and that the incident happened on 10 February. Jolly, who was the Bharatiya Janata Party MLA from Saket in 2003-08, has been booked under sections 376, 328 and 506 of the Indian Penal Code, according to the FIR made available to IANS. Jolly had earlier alleged that he was being blackmailed by the woman and her husband. Police had registered a case of extortion against the couple at the Kherki Daula police station nearly 10 days back.

Serial number 00000: Fake 'Children Bank of India' notes dispensed by SBI ATM

(Agencies) A State Bank of India ATM in south Delhi's Sangam Vihar dispensed fake Rs 2,000 notes, which appeared genuine at first glance but a closer look revealed a wealth of deliberate errors that suggested the hand of a hopeless prank. A customer care executive of a call centre in Chhatrapur became the prankster's victim when he withdrew Rs 8,000 — in denominations of 2,000 — from the SBI ATM on February 6 and found to his horror that four bills were issued by the "Children Bank of India" and

"Bharatiya Manoranjan Bank". Not the Reserve Bank of India, which is the issuing authority of cash in the country. Furthermore, the notes carried obvious deviations such as "Guaranteed by the Children's Government" in place of "Guaranteed by the Central Government", "Churan lable" instead of the latent image, and a 'PK' logo took the place of the RBI seal. The mistakes appeared deliberate as the notes "promise to pay the bearer two thousand coupons" and bore "serial number 000000". The

man, identified as Rohith, called the police helpline and sub-inspector Saurabh Kumar, who arrived to help, tried to ascertain the mischief with his own debit card. He withdrew Rs 2,000 and a similar fake note came out of the machine. The ATM was temporarily sealed thereafter and a case was registered. The bank accused Mohd Isha, an employee of logistics and cash management company Brinks India Pvt Ltd, for the trouble, deputy commissioner of police Romil Baaniya said.

Microsoft Announces Skype Lite For India With Aadhar Integration

CEO Satya Nadella launched the Android app in India.

(Agencies) In a bid to make more mobile consumers use its applications, Microsoft launched the Skype Lite app today. Speaking about the app at the company's 'Future Decoded' event in Mumbai, Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella, who is currently visiting India, announced that the app will be integrated with users' Aadhar Unique Identification Numbers in India. The 'Made for India' app will enable Android phone users to make calls and exchange instant chat messages with other Skype users, free of cost. Skype Lite users will also be able to place



calls to landline or mobile phones for a charge. Additionally, the app also enables users to send and receive SMSes in areas where Internet data service for mobile phones is not available or their contact is not on Skype. Microsoft

has ensured that users can filter out spam and promotional messages from Skype chat and SMS services. Skype Lite will only be available on the Android platform for now. Nadella said that the app will have all the functionality of the full-sized Skype app, alongside specially developed features for India. The Aadhar integration can take place during the call and all the data will be wiped out once the call is over. Microsoft also said that users will have control over the data usage. Skype Lite has tools to track and manage data used on WiFi and data network.

US-born panda Bao Bao lands in China

(Agencies) BEIJING: An American-born panda started settling into her new home Thursday in southwest China where she will eventually join a breeding program.

Bao Bao was born at the National Zoo in Washington to panda parents on loan from China. Under an agreement between China and the US, such panda

cubs must be returned to China before they are 4 years old, the earliest age at which they might begin breeding.

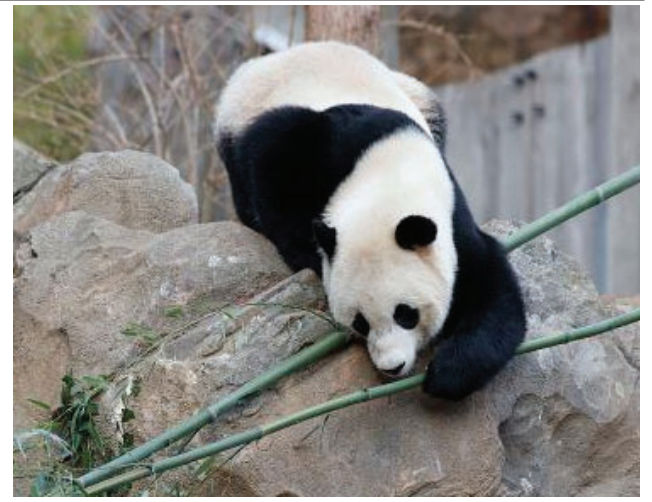
The 3-year-old landed in the city of Chengdu in Sichuan province on Wednesday after a 16-hour flight in a Boeing 777 emblazoned with a picture of a giant bamboo-eating panda. She was accompanied by a

veterinarian panda keeper Marty Dearie from the National Zoo, which had put on six days of commemorations to mark her departure.

Transported to the nearby Dujiangyan panda breeding base, Bao Bao emerged from her crate looking somewhat timid and curious, but soon settled in with a snack of

fresh bamboo, according to a news release from the China Conservation and Research Center for Giant Pandas.

Bao Bao, whose name means "precious" or "treasure," will first go through a month-long quarantine at the Dujiangyan base, the research center said. Keepers will monitor her



UK Supreme Court upholds immigration rules on spousal income

(Agencies) The UK Supreme Court upheld immigration rules Wednesday that require British citizens to have a certain level of income to bring their foreign spouses to Britain.

Since new rules were introduced in 2012, the UK partner -- a British citizen or recognized refugee -- must have a minimum annual income of at least £18,600 (around \$23,000) for their spouse to live with them, if the spouse comes from outside the European Economic Area.

Previous rules only required the couple to show that they could support themselves without the need of state help in the form of welfare payments.

Four couples challenged the

rules on the grounds that they breached their human right to a family life.

Handing down their ruling, the Supreme Court justices upheld the "Minimum Income Requirement" rules, saying they did not violate human rights legislation.

But they said the rules did not take proper account of the best interests of any children involved, or alternative sources of income, and should be amended. Advocacy groups working for migrants' rights said that although the income threshold was upheld in principle, the qualifications in the ruling had given hope to families divided by the current rules. Saira Grant, chief executive at the Joint Council for the Welfare of

Immigrants, described the judgment as a "real victory for families especially those with children." The court had backed the advocacy group's position of the past five years that the best interests of children were not being protected and that other sources of income should be considered, she said.

"This judgment confirms that the Government's position is now untenable and they must now take immediate steps to protect the welfare of children in accordance with their legal duty," she said.

According to the JCWI statement, an estimated 15,000 children, most of them British citizens, are separated from one parent as a result of the minimum income requirement.

diet, activities and health during that time, including checking her blood and feces, it said.

"Once Bao Bao the panda completes this month of quarantine, she'll go on display to the public and I welcome everyone to come see her then," research center expert Li Desheng was quoted as saying in the news release.

A 100-square meter (1,100-square foot) enclosure has been prepared for her at the base, including both indoor and outdoor play areas, equipped with rubber balls and a tires swing for entertainment and fresh bamboo and apples for eating.

Keepers will work on helping Bao Bao adapt to local

bamboo and Chinese steamed bread made from corn, soybeans, rice and eggs, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

She is the 11th panda to be born overseas and returned to China, and since she does not understand commands in Chinese, she'll be looked after for a time by an English-speaking keeper, Xinhua said.

China's unofficial national mascot, giant pandas live mainly in the mountains of Sichuan, with some also found in neighboring Gansu and Shaanxi provinces. They have long considered one of the world's most endangered animals, although last year a leading international group lowered its classification to "vulnerable."

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Anti Establishment Politicians' Like Donald Trump A Pushback Against Human Rights: Amnesty International

election campaign exemplified “the global trend of angrier and more divisive politics,” Amnesty said.

“The limits of what is acceptable have shifted. Politicians are shamelessly and actively legitimizing all sorts of hateful rhetoric and policies based on people’s identity: misogyny, racism and homophobia. The first target has been refugees and, if this continues in 2017, others will be in the crosshairs.”

The White House did not respond to a request for comment on the report.

Amnesty’s annual report, “The State of the World’s Human Rights,” documented what it called “grave violations of human rights” in 159 countries in 2016.

It said governments “turned a

blind eye to war crimes, pushed through deals that undermine the right to claim asylum, passed laws that violate free expression, incited murder of people simply because they are accused of using drugs, justified torture and mass surveillance, and extended draconian police powers.”

The report added that “the big question in 2017 will be how far the world lets atrocities go before doing something about them.”

Exceptionally, London-based Amnesty chose to launch its report in Paris.

Salil Shetty, the group’s secretary-general, said France has used emergency powers introduced in 2015 in the wake of terror attacks in an abusive and “deeply discriminatory” manner,

confining more than 600 people, mostly Muslims, under house arrest and banning more than 140 protests.

“Even states that once claimed to champion rights abroad are now too busy rolling back human rights at home to hold others to account,” Amnesty said. “The more countries backtrack on fundamental human rights commitments, the more we risk a domino effect of leaders emboldened to knock back established human rights protections.” France’s government has repeatedly defended the emergency powers as a necessary safeguard against the severe terror threat it says is facing the country, and parliament has repeatedly voted to extend those powers.

(Agencies) Amnesty International says “toxic” fear-mongering by anti-establishment politicians, among them President Donald Trump and the leaders of Turkey, Hungary and the Philippines, is contributing to a global pushback against human rights.

Releasing its 408-page annual report on rights abuses around the world today, the watchdog group described 2016 as “the year when the cynical use of ‘us vs. Them’ narratives of blame, hate and fear took on a

global prominence to a level not seen since the 1930s,” when Adolf Hitler rose to power in Germany.

Amnesty named Trump, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte among leaders it said are “wielding a toxic agenda that hounds, scapegoats and dehumanizes entire groups of people.”

“Poisonous” rhetoric employed by Trump in his

These are the new symbols of hate

(Agencies) The swastikas. The bolts. The bastardized crosses. While polite society may want to believe these well-trodden images are anachronisms, the truth is these brands of hate are surprisingly enduring. And, like any other brand, they are also subject to evolution and changing tastes.

This is how the use of hate symbols is evolving, and how people hide them in plain sight. Mark Pitcavage is a senior research fellow at the Anti-Defamation League’s Center on Extremism. He studies extreme right-wing groups and maintains the ADL’s hate symbols database. He wants you to know, right off the bat, that nothing will ever top the swastika when it comes to hate.

“The Nazis have such brand name power that they are going to be dominating white supremacist symbology for a century to come,” he says. But there is risk in this hyper-visibility. Last year, a large neo-Nazi group called the National Socialist Movement announced it would be shedding depictions of the swastika in what their leader told The New York Times was “an attempt to become more

integrated and more mainstream.”

As a replacement, the NSM chose the Othala Rune, an pre-Roman symbol co-opted by Nazi Germany. The rune, an innocent symbol outside of its appropriation by white supremacists, is related to ideas of “homeland” and “inheritance.” It is also rooted in Germanic and pagan Viking cultures, two things that white supremacists love.

“The Nazis believed that Scandinavians were pure Aryans, just like Germans were,” Pitcavage says.





While Othala runes are on their way in, other time-tested symbols are on their way out.

The iron cross used to be a widely-used hate symbol that harkened back to the Nazi era,

but lost its potency in the '90s and early 2000s when surf, skate and motorcycle companies started using similar-looking images in their branding. People who employ hate symbols typically want their ideologies known, but not so much that they’ll be criticized or shunned.



GAINING AND WANING IN POPULARITY

	OTHALA RUNE		IRON CROSS
			
<p>An ancient runic symbol appropriated by Nazis and neo-Nazis. Has experienced a resurgence since the National Socialist Movement changed their logo from a swastika to this symbol in 2016.</p>			<p>A German military medal used during WWI and WWII. It has lost potency as a hate symbol since the 1990s when it was picked up in mainstream usage by surf companies and other brands.</p>

CONTEXT IS KEY: Many hate symbols are appropriated from innocuous cultural uses, so their appearance is not always a sign of a hate group or ideology.

It presents an interesting creative challenge. Still, most people seek what Pitcavage calls a “controlled display:” A swastika on their back that’s only visible when they take off their shirt; or a tattoo on the inside of the lower lip.

But, sometimes, followers of hate groups will obscure symbols altogether, so they only make sense to people that have similar ideological literacy. “One thing I see every once in a while is a 1488 represented with a pair of dice,” Pitcavage says. One of its most ubiquitous symbols is a so-called ‘blood drop cross’: a square cross with what appears to be a drop of blood in the middle. If you take away the cross and just leave the drop, it becomes a much more subtle symbol.

“Because it is a universal Klan symbol, people would notice,” he continues. “At some point, somebody thought of the idea of caps and paraphernalia that just have a blood drop sign on them. The average person probably would not notice, but another white supremacist would.” It’s one thing to ink oneself up with symbols; it’s quite another to, as Pitcavage pointed out, use these symbols as a form of intimidation. The reactions and themes they conjure are immediate and unequivocal: The swastikas or nooses or burning crosses and white hoods, the numerology and coded languages that lend an imagined significance to bald-faced brutality.

SICK, DYING AND RAPED IN AMERICA'S NURSING HOMES

"You prepare for a phone call your mother has passed.
You don't prepare for a phone call that your mother has been **RAPED.**"

Scroll

Some of the victims can't speak. They rely on walkers and wheelchairs to leave their beds. They have been robbed of their memories. They come to nursing homes to be cared for. Instead, they are sexually assaulted. The unthinkable is happening at facilities throughout the country: Vulnerable seniors are being raped and sexually abused by the very people paid to care for them.

It's impossible to know just how many victims are out there. But through an exclusive analysis of state and federal data and interviews with experts, regulators and the families of victims, CNN has found that this little-discussed issue is more widespread than anyone would imagine.

Even more disturbing: In many cases, nursing homes and the government officials who oversee them are doing little -- or nothing -- to stop it.

Sometimes pure -- and even willful -- negligence is at work. In other instances, nursing home employees and administrators are hamstrung in their efforts to protect victims who can't remember exactly what happened to them or even identify their perpetrators.

In cases reviewed by CNN, victims and their families were failed at every stage. Nursing homes were slow to investigate and report allegations because of a reluctance to believe the accusations -- or a desire to hide them. Police viewed the claims as unlikely at the outset, dismissing potential victims because of failing memories or jumbled allegations. And because of the high bar set for substantiating abuse, state regulators failed to flag patterns of repeated allegations against a

single caregiver.

It's these systemic failures that make it especially hard for victims to get justice -- and even easier for perpetrators to get away with their crimes.

"At 83 years old, unable to speak, unable to fight back, she was even more vulnerable than she was as a little girl fleeing her homeland. In fact, she was as vulnerable as an infant when she was raped. The dignity which she always displayed during her life, which was already being assaulted so unrelentingly by Alzheimer's disease, was dealt a final devastating blow by this man. The horrific irony is not lost upon me ... that the very thing she feared most as a young girl fleeing her homeland happened to her in the final, most vulnerable days of her life." Maya Fischer made this statement in court at the 2015 sentencing of a nursing assistant convicted of raping her mother. Choking back tears, Fischer detailed her mother's story -- recounting how she had fled Indonesia as a youth with her family to escape the rape and killing of young girls by Japanese soldiers, only to fall victim decades later to a man whose job was to care for her.

A fellow caregiver saw male nursing assistant George Kpingbah in 83-year-old Sonja Fischer's room at 4:30 a.m. on December 18, 2014, at the Walker Methodist Health Center in Minneapolis. A bare leg was on each side of his hips, and her adult diaper lay open on the bed. When the witness noticed the 76-year-old aide thrusting back and forth, she said she knew a sexual assault was occurring.

Kpingbah ultimately pleaded guilty to third-degree criminal sexual conduct with a mentally

impaired or helpless victim and was sentenced to eight years in prison. In an emotional statement directed at Kpingbah during sentencing, the judge told him he had done more than ravage the lives of his victim and her family. He had betrayed the public trust granted to caregivers who have such intimate access to the sick and elderly.

"You violated (a) position of authority, a position of trust," Judge Elizabeth Cutter said at the sentencing hearing. "The ramifications of what you did are so far-reaching. ... It also affected everyone in that facility. Everyone who stays in that facility. Everyone who works at that facility. It affects everyone who has to place a loved one in a facility."

Kpingbah apologized at the hearing and said he planned to take his Bible with him to prison. His attorney asked for leniency. Kpingbah had endured his own personal struggles as a refugee, the attorney said, fleeing Liberia after many of his family members were killed. Kpingbah's one "unspeakable act," he told the judge, was completely out of character.

Yet in court documents uncovered by CNN, prosecutors revealed it wasn't the first time Kpingbah had been investigated over sexual assault allegations. Personnel records obtained by prosecutors during the investigation and reviewed by CNN show Kpingbah was suspended three times as Walker Methodist officials investigated repeated accusations of sexual abuse at the facility, including at least two where he was the main suspect.

The earliest complaint was in 2008, when police investigated

allegations he had engaged in sexual intercourse with a 65-year-old who suffered from multiple sclerosis. In another case, an 83-year-old blind and deaf woman who lived on the same wing as Fischer's mother said she was raped multiple times -- always at midnight. Police investigated her report just seven months before Fischer's mother was assaulted. While the woman could not identify her assailant, Kpingbah was suspended by the facility along with several other male staffers who were on duty during the nights of the alleged assaults. None of these allegations were found to be substantiated by the facility or the state. For years, Walker Methodist kept Kpingbah working on the overnight shift. Until that early morning in December 2014, when someone caught him in the act. In that instance, the Minnesota Department of Health found that the facility acted immediately to ensure the resident's safety and promptly removed Kpingbah. The state also noted that the facility had previously provided Kpingbah with required abuse training. As a result, the facility was not cited for any wrongdoing; only Kpingbah was held accountable for the assault.

Maya Fischer had no way of knowing about the previous allegations against Kpingbah uncovered by CNN. But she sued Kpingbah, who agreed to an unusual arrangement in which he is on the hook for a massive \$15 million judgment only if he abuses again.

Walker Methodist refused to comment on the previous allegations against Kpingbah, who worked at the facility for nearly eight years, but said in a

statement that it fully cooperated with authorities and that "the care and well-being of all of our residents and patients is our primary focus."

CNN reached out to family members of other residents who earlier reported they were sexually assaulted at Walker Methodist during the time Kpingbah worked there (though he was not deemed a suspect in every case). They said the officials there were quick to dismiss the residents' claims as hallucinations or fantasies. "Walker Methodist certainly failed to handle this appropriately with my mother and other residents, and there should be consequences," said the son of the first alleged victim after learning of Kpingbah's rape conviction from CNN.

A son of a different alleged victim, who had accused an unknown perpetrator, said he was irate he was never told that a pattern of complaints had emerged against a single caregiver. Had he known of this pattern, the son said, he would have taken his mother's report of abuse more seriously. Instead, he trusted Walker Methodist.

The Minnesota Department of Health told CNN it is barred by state law from releasing the identity of anyone investigated over an allegation that has not been substantiated, regardless of the number of allegations.

But both family members of these two alleged sexual assault victims also questioned the state health department. How effective is its oversight if it was aware of the multiple reports of abuse at Walker Methodist and still could not intervene?

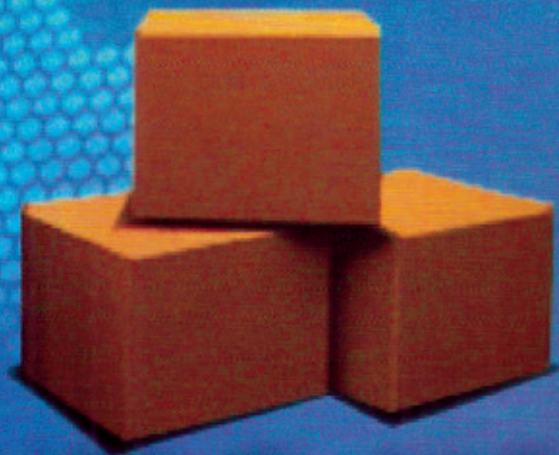
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Can you name America's longest river and its first president ?

Take the USA's immigration test to see if you could become a citizen

(Agencies) If you travel to America and love it so much you never want to leave - and want to become a citizen - then you'll need to swot up on your US history and government knowledge.

Immigrants who want to become citizens must go through a long list of requirements, including passing a ten-question civics test.

There are 100 questions on the

naturalization test, which just ten will appear. Try the sample questions below to see if you'd make the cut.

The civics test is an oral test with a United States Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS) Officer and an applicant must answer six out of 10 questions correctly to pass the civics portion of the naturalization test.

Each year USCIS

processes around six million immigration applications. In 2014, 654,949 people were naturalized and welcomed as US citizens. Applicants must be over 18 years old and a holder of a permanent resident green card. They also must have resided in the US for five or three years depending on how they obtain their status. If you'd like to try all 100 questions, visit the government website.



Stoke-on-Trent Imam 'Told Congregation to Carry Out Islamic State Attacks'

(Agencies) A Stoke-on-Trent Imam is in court accused of telling his congregation to support Islamic State and carry out acts of terrorism.

"Influential" preacher Kamran Sabir Hussain faces eight terror-related offenses in connection with his work leading a mosque on Tunstall high street in the northern town.

He is charged with two counts of addressing the mosque with the intent of "encourage support for a proscribed organisation, namely Islamic State, or to further its activities", the Stoke Sentinel reports.

The other six counts relate to "publishing a

statement", in the form of giving a sermon to a congregation, in which he "intended or was reckless as to whether members of the public would be, directly or indirectly encouraged or otherwise induced by the statement to commit, prepare or instigate acts of terrorism".

All of the charges relate to a six-week period between the 24th of June and 16th of September 2016. At a brief hearing, the 39-year-old's defense lawyer Matt Foot said Mr. Hussain would plead not guilty to the two counts of addressing a meeting at the mosque and six counts of publishing statements.

Mr. Hussain, of Knightsbridge Way, Tunstall, was remanded in custody and will appear at the Old Bailey on the 17th of March.

A by-election is currently being fought in the town, with UKIP looking to snatch the seat from Labour for the first time since the Second World War. During the campaign, it was reported that a Labour party activist claimed UKIP were "enemies of Islam", warning Muslim voters they will go to hell if they fail to vote Labour in the by-election.

Navid Hussain said that voting for any party other than Labour would result in



the electing of "an anti-Muslim and anti-Islam MP", in a text message sent to Muslims in Stoke-on-Trent Central. "Will you

be able to answer for this message, which was in the Grave and on the circulated via SMS and Final Day??? 'I helped the WhatsApp among the Enemies of Islam constituency's Muslim community because...", he wrote in the community.



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Life without social media

(Agencies) A satirical take on how much our personality, politics and relationships are being dictated by the rules of the Internet. It was on a highly political afternoon in the not-so-distant future that the social media of the world collapsed into a pile of moral dilemmas, personal problems and ideological conundrums. All of Mark Zuckerberg's servers and Sundar Pichai's men couldn't put social media together again, but they did find that the last straw that broke the camel's back was a passing "Presstitute" comment on a mainstream media news item.

Suddenly the youth of the nation could no longer depend on picture captions for political or social context. They had to take stands and decisions

unendorsed by likes and shares, and many found they lacked conviction. Without pop-culture reference and film scenes to provide context, ideas had to be communicated in full sentences, which many found boring.

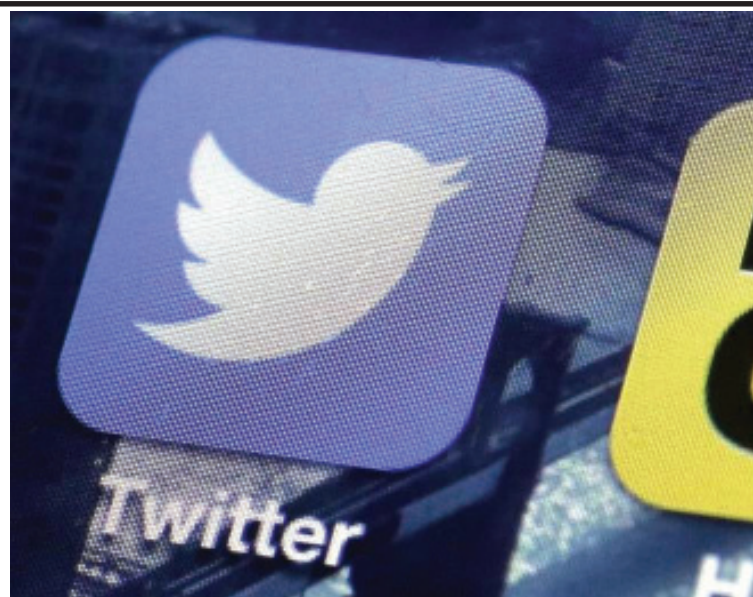
Chaos everywhere

The vast Online Defenders of National Pride regiment was disbanded, since their terrain of operation no longer existed. Liberal crusaders of various causes failed miserably when asked to go beyond change.org petitions and sharing foreign media articles. Without peer pressure, left-wing thinkers found themselves thinking right-wing thoughts and right-wing dreamers found themselves in left-wing dreams. Trolls of various hues, of course, remained trolls. Some things don't change in real life.

Certain Prime Ministers and Presidents could no longer jump the queue on facts or public opinion. They had to wait for the facts to emerge along with voters. What they had to say had to pass through filters, and some things did not go through. Without the direct feed, their supporters had to look around them to see the truth and felt profoundly moved.

What to report?

Many journalists could no longer RT without endorsement their unstated belief. Since they could no longer include in their stories the lines "Many are of the view that..." or "There was general opposition to..." , most felt jittery putting facts to paper. And without "How Twitter reacted to..." articles to file, energetic young reporters found themselves in corporation council meetings and



learning how the country is run, pictures, they realised what to their utter disbelief, looked good didn't really taste

There was a sudden

epiphany among 20-somethings that liking posts did not translate to liking those who posted, and many wrote poems about it — which they couldn't post, and felt extremely disappointed. Also now that they couldn't share

good.

Back to the real world

The big positive, however, was that relatives were easier to love and cherish now that they were no longer sharing misogynist or racist comments on family groups.

How to reason with a Trump voter

(Agencies) We are too quick to vilify those on the opposite side of the political aisle. I am firmly opposed to Donald Trump, but because of where I live, I know a lot of good and decent people who voted for him. If I feel the urge to disparage Trump supporters as a group, I have to reconcile that urge with what I know about the Trump voters with whom I work, eat and pray. There are unquestionably people who voted for Trump for ugly reasons, and those folks are probably beyond persuasion (at least by me), but I've decided I'm going to spend the next four years trying to persuade the good and decent people; to appeal to their reason and the "better angels of their nature."

Persuading them means addressing the motivations they've expressed, not the motivations we might ascribe to them based on the worst and loudest people on their side. That's what I tried to do with a piece I posted last week on Facebook, and later on my website. It ended up getting a lot of attention on the internet, and a version of it is reprinted below. Surprisingly, the most common criticism I've gotten from the piece has not been from those on the right saying I'm a "libtard snowflake," but from those on the left who think I should have said, "You voted for Trump because you're a fascist," or the like. While it's surely true of some Trump voters, it's grossly unfair as a blanket criticism of all Trump voters. Such hot language rightfully alienates decent people, and cuts off any opportunity we might have had to change their minds. Contrary to the social media headlines, we shouldn't aim to DESTROY or EVISCERATE or ANNIHILATE the other side; we must persuade them to consider a different perspective. That's not easy, but it's necessary.



That doesn't mean we should allow wrongs to go unanswered, or yield even an inch in the defense of our rights. It's incumbent on all of us to remind our fellow citizens — boldly and continuously — about the ways that this administration is violating democratic norms and American ideals. A call to treat one another with respect is emphatically not a call to "normalize" what the Trump administration and the worst of its supporters are doing. To the vast majority of American people, we can say this is evil without saying you are evil. We should, however, address their stated rationale for voting the way they did. So to those good and decent people who voted for Donald Trump, here is what I wrote on Facebook and would like to say today: You voted for Trump because Hillary Clinton was going to be in Wall Street's pocket. Trump wants to repeal Dodd-Frank and eliminate the Fiduciary Rule, letting Wall Street return to its pre-2008 ways. You voted for Trump because

you thought the Clinton Foundation was "pay for play." Trump has refused to wall off his businesses from his administration, and personally profits from payments from foreign governments. You voted for Trump because of Clinton's role in Benghazi. Trump ordered the Yemen raid without adequate intel, and tweeted about "FAKE NEWS" while Americans died as a result of his carelessness. You voted for Trump because Clinton didn't care about "the little guy." Trump's cabinet is full of billionaires, and he's taking away your health insurance so he can give them a multi-million-dollar tax break. You voted for Trump because he was going to build a wall and Mexico was going to pay for it. American consumers will pay for the wall via import tariffs. You voted for Trump because Clinton was going to get us into a war. Trump has provoked our enemies, alienated our allies and given ISIS a decade's worth of recruiting

material. You voted for Trump because Clinton didn't have the "stamina" to do the job. Trump hung up on the Australian Prime Minister during a 5 p.m. phone call because "it was at the end of a long day and he was tired and fatigue was setting in." You voted for Trump because foreign leaders wouldn't respect Clinton. Foreign leaders, both friendly and hostile, are openly mocking Trump.

You voted for Trump because Clinton lies and "he tells it like it is." Trump and his administration lie with a regularity and brazenness that can only be described as shocking.

Let's be honest about what really happened.

The reality is that you voted for Trump because you got conned. Trump is a grifter and the American people were the mark. Hey, it happens, and there's no shame in being taken in by a pro. But now that you know the score, quit insisting the conman is on your side.

Immigrants Hide, Fearing Capture on 'Any Corner'



No going to church, no going to the store. No doctor's appointments for some, no school for others. No driving, period — not when a broken taillight could deliver the driver to Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

It is happening in the Central Valley of California, where undocumented immigrants pick the fields for survival wages but are keeping their children home from school; on Staten Island, where fewer day laborers haunt street corners in search of work; in West Phoenix's Isaac School District, where 13 Latino students have dropped out in the past two weeks; and in the horse country of northern New Jersey, where one of the many undocumented grooms who muck out the stables is thinking of moving back to Honduras.

If deportation has always been a threat on paper for the 11 million people living in the country illegally, it rarely imperiled those who did not commit serious crimes. But with the Trump administration intent on curbing illegal immigration — two memos outlining the federal government's plans to accelerate deportations were released Tuesday, another step toward making good on one of President Trump's signature campaign pledges — that threat, for many people, has now begun to distort every movement.

It has driven one family from the local park where they used to play baseball in the evenings, and young men from a soccer field in Brooklyn where pickup games were once common.

It has kept Meli, 37, who

arrived in Los Angeles from El Salvador more than 12 years ago, in a state of self-imposed house arrest, refusing to drive, fearing to leave her home, wondering how she will take her younger son, who is autistic, to doctor's appointments.

"I don't want to go to the store, to church — they are looking everywhere, and they know where to find us," said Meli, who asked that her last name not be used out of fear of getting caught. "They could be waiting for us anywhere. Any corner, any block."

It has washed ever-larger tides of immigrants in Philadelphia, New York, Los Angeles and beyond to the doors of nonprofit advocacy and legal services groups, which report hearing the same questions: What should I do if I am stopped by an officer from Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE? How quickly can I apply for citizenship if I am already a legal permanent resident? How can I designate someone with legal status as my children's guardian if I am deported?

"There's a real fear that their kids will get put into the foster care system," said Mary Clark, the executive director of Esperanza Immigrant Legal Services in Philadelphia. "People are asking us because they don't know where to turn."

The new policies call for speedier deportations and the hiring of 10,000 ICE agents, and direct them to treat any offense, no matter how small, as grounds for deportation. For Mr. Trump's supporters and longtime advocates of stricter immigration enforcement, they are a welcome move toward

restoring law and order to a system that they say offered no deterrent to entering the country illegally. Undocumented immigrants, in their view, have filled jobs that belong to Americans, drained public resources and skipped the line for visas on which others waited for years.

But for the undocumented, the atmosphere in Washington is a signal to prepare for the worst.

In the parking lot of a Latino shopping strip in Austin, Tex., one couple who were walking with their two children out of a pediatrician appointment said they had picked a friend with documentation to serve as their children's guardian if they were sent back to Mexico.

"And we're getting our kids U.S. passports so they can come visit us in Mexico," said the man, a stocky restaurant worker in a gray baseball cap, who has lived in Texas for 15 years and declined to give his name.

He said he was not afraid to leave, but wanted to be prepared. "If they're going to take me," he said, "they're going to take me."

Two Roman Catholic nuns with the Sisters of Loretto, who did not want to be identified because they did not want to put the people they serve in jeopardy, said they were already seeing the undocumented people they knew change their habits out of fear.

They know a woman who has stopped going out to buy medication. They know a couple, restaurant workers, who have lived in the country for 25 years and are now taking turns going shopping. That way,

they figure, their children will still have one parent if the other is picked up. Some low-income families in New York with children who are citizens have declined to re-enroll in a program offering food assistance worth several thousand dollars, said Betsy Plum, director of special projects for the New York Immigration Coalition, an advocacy group.

"There's a real isolationist reflex that's happening now," Ms. Plum said.

On a good Sunday, the Staten Island tamale restaurant run by Cesar Rodriguez and his mother makes \$3,000. Since the start of the year, it has averaged only \$1,500, and this past Sunday only \$700.

Mr. Rodriguez, who was brought to New York when he was 13 and has temporary protection from deportation under an Obama-era program called Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, said he thought undocumented residents were saving their money in case they were detained. They may also be reluctant to leave the house for fear of immigration agents stalking outside.

"They are listening to fake news," he said. "Even if it's not true, they are afraid."

Empty chairs inside classrooms have become increasingly common in Ceres, Calif., a Central Valley city where 75 percent of students are Hispanic, according to school administrators.

The schools there are surrounded by dairies and almond orchards, which are predominantly staffed by

undocumented workers. School administrators attributed the absences to parents who were worried they could be identified through the school records of their citizen children.

In response, school officials have asked teachers to reassure students that the district does not collect data on immigration status.

In some cases, fear has lapped fact.

For Graciela Nuñez Pargas, 22, who came here when she was 7 and is protected under DACA — which covers immigrants brought to the United States by their parents as children — the prospect of taking her driver's test has become daunting. Minor driving infractions are unlikely to lead to deportation proceedings, but Ms. Nuñez, who lives in Seattle, was nonetheless anxious.

"They're expanding what it is to be criminal," she said. "Things that a normal person would do by accident could land me back home in Venezuela."

The Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, a nonprofit legal services group in Seattle, has issued thousands of business cards in recent days, advising undocumented immigrants what they should do, or not do, if a law enforcement agent knocks.

"Do not answer questions about where you were born or about your immigration status," the cards advise.

The group is also telling immigrants that if a knock does come, sliding a card under the door is acceptable.

One side of the card reads, "To whom it may concern: Before answering any questions, I want to talk to an attorney."

Nasa scientists announce the discovery of a new solar system

For centuries it has been one of the most vexing mysteries for mankind: are we, the seven billion inhabitants of this wondrous blue planet really alone, or is there life somewhere out there in the universe?

Yesterday, we came a step closer to answering that tantalising question with the landmark announcement by Nasa scientists of the discovery of a new solar system that has at least three Earth-like planets — with climates that just might support life.

The kind of planets that a certain ET might have called home.

The discovery by an international team using advanced telescopes in space and at far-flung locations around the world has caused a frenzy of excitement among astronomers who, as a breed, are not given to hyperbole. However, it is being described as the 'holy grail' for researchers.

The intriguing new planets are comparatively near neighbours, too, at just 39 light years from Earth. Granted, 39 light years (234 trillion miles) is hardly a short hop.

But that relative proximity will

enable astronomers with ultra-sophisticated telescopes and scanners to focus on the planets and confirm if there is water and the benign atmosphere needed for life to thrive.

Thomas Zurbuchen, associate administrator of Nasa's Science Mission Directorate in Washington DC, said yesterday: 'These questions about "are we alone" are being answered as we speak, in this decade and the next decades. This story gives us a hint that finding a second Earth is not just a matter of if, but when.'

Scientists have long speculated that life-supporting planets must exist somewhere in the universe, but none has ever yet been confirmed as potentially life-sustaining. Now astronomers say they have detected no less than seven Earth-sized worlds orbiting a red dwarf star — the equivalent of our sun — called TRAPPIST-1.

The seven planets are believed to be at least a billion years old and, in theory, all could have lakes and oceans. But three are too close to the star and, therefore, likely to be too hot to have water, while the

furthest planet is too cold.

It is the three planets in the middle (named TRAPPIST-1 'e', 'f' and 'g') that are generating the most interest as they lie in what is known as the habitable 'Goldilocks Zone' — neither too hot nor too cold for life to thrive.

The surface temperatures range from zero to 100c, so water won't boil off as vapour.

In addition, planet 'e' is very close in size to Earth and receives about the same level of light from its star.

Incredible facts about Earth sized planets that may harbor water. It is very small for a star — its mass is less than a tenth of our Sun's and only marginally bigger than Jupiter.

It is described as a 'quiet' star, emitting some solar flares, but not strong enough to wipe out life. It is because the star is so dim that the planets orbiting it are warmed gently, despite having orbits that are much smaller than that of Mercury, the planet closest to the Sun in our solar system.

The three most promising planets receive similar amounts of solar energy to Venus, Earth and

Mars, and Nasa's Hubble Space Telescope is already searching for atmospheres around them. Some scientists are predicting we will know within a decade if any of the planets harbour life.

And if there are life forms, they will have had much longer to evolve than we have on Earth — thanks to their relatively low temperature, dwarf stars such as TRAPPIST-1 burn through their supply of hydrogen

less rapidly than stars such as the Sun. While the Sun has an estimated lifetime of ten billion years, dwarf stars may exist for trillions.

As well as focusing on the new solar system, the international team of astronomers will go on to search 1,000 of the nearest ultra-cool dwarf stars to Earth in the hope of identifying more Earth-like planets in new solar systems.

The Jobs Americans Do

(Contd from page 1) Technological progress has made American farms and factories more productive than ever, creating great wealth and cutting the cost of food and most other products. But the work no longer requires large numbers of workers. In 1900, factories and farms employed 60 percent of the work force. By 1950, a half-century later, those two sectors employed 36 percent. In 2014, they employed less than 10 percent.

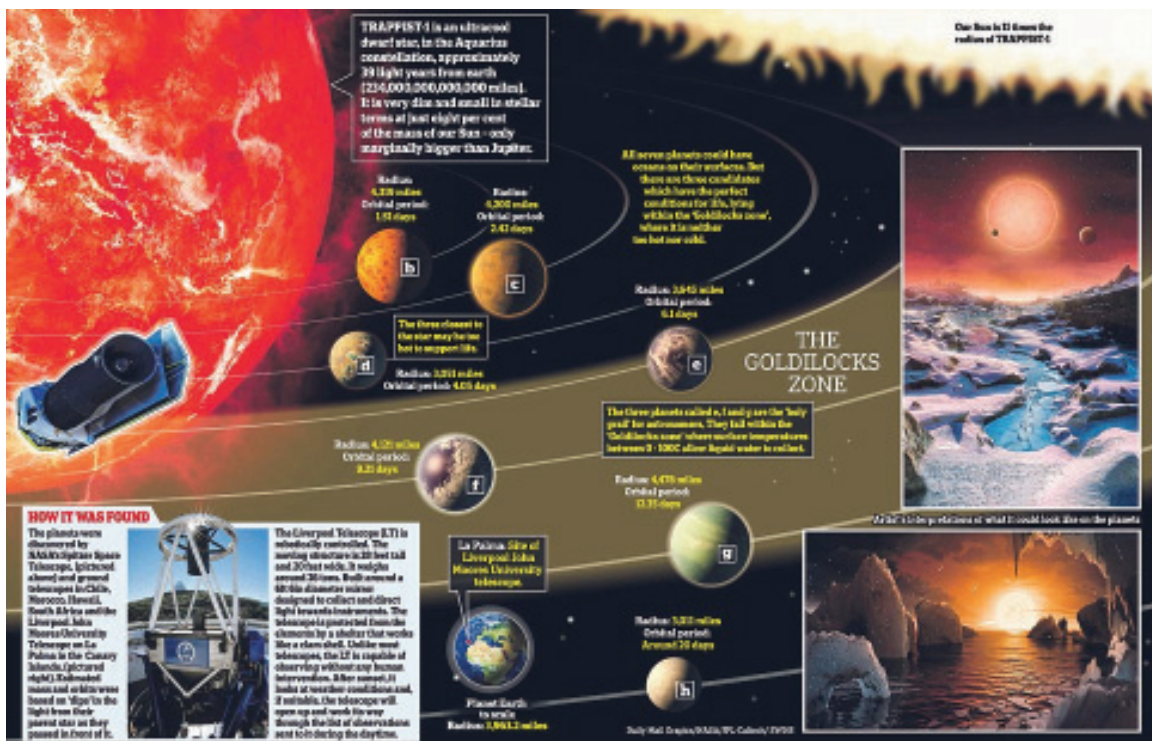
For more than a century, since the trend was first documented, people have been prophesying a dire future in which the working class would no longer work. In 1964, a group of prominent liberals wrote President Johnson to warn of a "cybernation revolution" inexorably creating "a permanent impoverished and jobless class established in the midst of potential abundance."

Machines have taken the jobs of millions of Americans, and there is every indication that the trend will continue. In October, Budweiser successfully tested a self-driving truck by delivering beer more than 120 miles to a warehouse in Colorado. In December, Amazon opened a small convenience store near its Seattle headquarters that has no cashiers. Customers — for now, Amazon employees only — are billed automatically as they leave the store. In January, Bank of America opened branches in Denver and Minneapolis that are staffed by a lone employee, A.T.M.s and video terminals. And

Americans are making a growing share of purchases online: about 8.4 percent of retail sales in 2016. These changes are driven by consumer preferences, not just by corporate cost-cutting imperatives. People like shopping in bed in the middle of the night. People like that computers make fewer mistakes. And people grow accustomed to computers. A few years ago, I watched a woman walk up to a bank teller and ask where she could find an A.T.M. The teller asked if she could help. No, the woman said, she just needed to withdraw some money.

All due respect to the author, but "9 out of 12 of the fastest-growing jobs" are NOT just different ways of saying "nurse." I am an RN—and...

Clearly legal immigrants and illegal aliens are taking these jobs away from our own uneducated but unemployed citizens. In the future we... But the forecasters were wrong in the most important respect. Workers continue to find work, but now the jobs are in service. Taking care of aging baby boomers, in particular, has become by far the largest driver of job growth in the American economy. Among the occupations the Bureau of Labor Statistics expects to grow most rapidly over the next decade: physical-therapy assistants, home health aides, occupational-therapy assistants, nurse practitioners, physical therapists, occupational-therapy aides, physician assistants. ... You get the idea.



"Get Out of My Country"

Authorities in Kansas filed first-degree murder charges against a man accused of opening fire in a bar there, killing one Indian man, injuring two other people and causing fears about bigotry to reverberate across the globe.

According to witness accounts, the gunman reportedly told two of the people who were shot — both Indian men who work for Garmin, the technology firm — to "get out of my country" before opening fire and had also used racial slurs during the Wednesday evening shooting.

Multiple law enforcement agents launched an investigation into the deadly shooting inside Austin's Bar and Grill in Olathe, a city about 20 miles southwest of Kansas City. Even as authorities said they had not yet identified a motive for the attack, relatives of the Indian men said they feared the shooting was connected to a climate of fear and xenophobia in America.

The father of one of the people injured pointed to the election of

President Trump, who has routinely described a threat posed to Americans from people outside the country's borders, and pleaded with parents in India "not to send their children to the United States."

The White House responded by calling the link to Trump's rhetoric absurd, according to Reuters.

Police identified the suspected attacker in Olathe as Adam W. Purinton, 51, and said he was taken into custody in Missouri a little more than a day after the shooting.

One of the Indian men shot during the attack — Srinivas Kuchibhotla, 32 — died in the hospital later from his wounds, the Olathe police said. The other — Alok Madasani, 32, of Overland Park, Kan. — was released from the hospital Thursday.

The shooting also injured 24-year-old Ian Grillot, another patron at Austin's, who apparently tried to intervene. Witnesses told the

Kansas City Star and The Washington Post that Purinton was thought to have been kicked out of the bar Wednesday night before the shooting took place. "He seemed kind of distraught," Garret Bohnen, a regular at Austin's who was there that night, told The Post in an interview. "He started drinking pretty fast."

He reportedly came back into the bar and hurled racial slurs at the two Indian men, including comments that suggested he thought they were of Middle Eastern descent. When he started firing shots, Grillot, a regular at the bar whom Bohnen called "everyone's friend," moved to get involved.

Authorities have not released many details about the attack. They have not said the shooting was a hate crime, instead saying they are investigating to see if it was spurred by bias. During a briefing Thursday, officials cautioned that it was still early in the investigation and declined to offer a motive for the

shooting. "As far as the motivation in this case and the facts surrounding it ... what we want to do is we want to be able to be sure of our facts versus speculation," Johnson County District Attorney Stephen M. Howe said at the briefing.

On Friday afternoon, Howe noted that Kansas has no hate crime statute, saying that such charges would have to be federal: Kuchibhotla and Madasani are both Indian nationals, a spokesman for India's Ministry of External Affairs said.

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj said in tweets that she had contacted Kuchibhotla's family, in the southern city of Hyderabad, and was making arrangements to have his remains sent there.

"I have spoken to the father and Mr. K. K. Shastri brother of Srinivas Kuchibhotla in Hyderabad and conveyed my condolences to the family," she tweeted. Two diplomats from the Indian Consulate in Houston were "rushing" to Kansas to assist, Swaraj said. The U.S. Embassy in New Delhi also released a statement condemning the shooting. Chargé d'Affaires MaryKay Carlson called it "a tragic and senseless act," adding that the United States is a "nation of immigrants and welcomes people from across the world to visit, work, study, and live."

Family members of the two men said in interviews that they feared the current atmosphere in the United States. "There is a kind of hysteria spreading that is not good because so many of our beloved children live there," said Venu Madhav, a relative of Kuchibhotla. "Such hatred is not good for people."

3 lakh Indians in U.S. at deportation risk

undocumented immigrants at risk of deportation. U.S. President Donald Trump has laid the groundwork for potentially deporting millions of undocumented immigrants by issuing new guidelines.

"The Department no longer will exempt classes or categories of removable aliens from potential enforcement," the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) said in an enforcement memo. "Department personnel have full authority to arrest or apprehend an alien whom an immigration officer has probable cause to believe is in violation of the immigration laws," the memo said. The emphasis is on criminal aliens though, but opens up the door for others too. As per unofficial figures, Indian-Americans account for nearly 3,00,000 illegal aliens. According to the memo, the DHS Secretary has the authority to apply expedited removal provisions to aliens who have not been admitted or paroled into the U.S., who are inadmissible, and who have not been continuously physically present in the U.S. for the two-year period immediately prior to the determination of their inadmissibility, so that such aliens are immediately removed unless the alien is an unaccompanied minor, intends to apply for asylum or has a fear of persecution or torture in their home country, or claims to have lawful immigration status. The memorandum said when illegal aliens apprehended do not pose a risk of a subsequent illegal entry, returning them to the foreign contiguous territory from which they arrived, pending the outcome of removal proceedings, saves the government detention and adjudication resources for other priority aliens.

Madhav said that "something has changed in the United States."

Relatives of the two Indian men shot Wednesday told the Hindustan Times that they were friends who had not antagonized Purinton, and that Purinton had instead "picked an argument" with them and suggested they were illegally in the country.

"They tried to tell him that they had done their [master's degrees] in Kansas in 2006 and had been staying there with valid work permits," a relative said.

Madasani's father, Jaganmohan Reddy, told the Times he has recently begun to ask his son to return home, fearing that he might not be safe in the country's racially charged atmosphere, with ugly incidents and hate groups on the rise.

"The situation seems to be pretty bad after Trump took over as the U.S. president. I appeal to all the parents in India not to send their children to the United States in the present circumstances," Reddy said. Eric K. Jackson, the FBI special agent in charge in Kansas City, said that authorities will work to determine if the attack was "bias motivated," but said they "need to have time to thoroughly go through the investigation."

Purinton was taken into custody late Thursday in Clinton, Mo., about 80 miles away, and by Friday afternoon he had been returned to Johnson County, where he was being held in a detention center four miles from Austin's. Howe said Thursday that Purinton was charged with one count of first-degree murder and two counts of attempted first-degree murder. Purinton's bond was set at \$2 million, according to court documents.

A nation of immigrants enters dark chapter

Virtually everyone who is in the country without documentation is now eligible for deportation, and some in an expedited fashion. These memos, signed by DHS Secretary John Kelly, were rolled out on Tuesday. There are two memos at issue here; one dealing with interior immigration enforcement, and the other with border security. They provide a scary picture of what life will soon look like for the estimated 11 million undocumented men, women, and children who live among us. But President Donald Trump's deportations won't necessarily make us safer, let alone "great again." Instead they are a mixture of harsh new policies and questionable ideas from the past. The most important thing to know about Trump's deportation force is that they will be going after everyone they can.

Although the President likened the recent round of immigration raids to those carried out under Obama, these new memos specifically throw out Obama's 2014 deportation priorities, which were national security threats, dangerous criminals, and recent arrivals. Now immigration agents can go after any undocumented person convicted of a crime, charged with a crime, or who an agent believes has committed a chargeable offense. While this may sound appealing to some, it defies law enforcement logic. With agents wasting time and resources going after undocumented moms, dads, and neighbors, it becomes easier for

undocumented gang members, traffickers, and violent criminals to evade detection.

And what happens to DACA recipients -- those brought to this country illegally as children and granted temporary deportation relief since 2012 under Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals policy? Trump recently said that he wants to deal with their situation "with heart." He said that their situation is a "very difficult thing for me as I love these kids, I love these kids." Really? While the immigration enforcement memo leaves DACA in place for now, a footnote states that it will be addressed in the future. Moreover, the immigration enforcement memo notes that "The Department will no longer exempt classes or categories of removable aliens from potential enforcement." Taken together, this amounts to a chilling ambiguity for the 740,000 recipients of DACA. So despite Trump's expression of empathy, his memos say otherwise. At best, they tell these young people that immigration agents will deal with them later.

The immigration enforcement memo outlines plans to expand the use of local law enforcement partnerships in fighting illegal immigration. If you think this sounds like a good idea, think again. These partnerships, known as 287(g) programs, deputizing local police and sheriffs to serve as immigration agents can lead to racial profiling and civil rights violations. It pulls them away from

the real job of protecting their communities from crime. It directs local moneys to immigration enforcement action, which is a federal responsibility. Worse, it creates fear and mistrust of all law enforcement agencies among the immigrant community, which means that people will not come forward as witnesses to violent crime, as domestic abuse victims, or to report child abuse.

The 287(g) programs also create the potential for local jurisdictions to run amok -- the most infamous example being Arizona's Sheriff Joe Arpaio, recently defeated in a reelection bid, who was found by the Justice Department to have engaged in widespread constitutional violations. Arpaio's immigration enforcement squads were known to respond to complaints about Spanish speakers, or people with dark skin. His jails humiliated detainees, and punished them for failing to understand English. Last year, a federal court found him in contempt for refusing to stop racially profiling Latinos in his immigration sweeps.

The border security memo is equally harsh. It throws out special protections for undocumented family members of those on active duty military. It makes it harder for asylum seekers to make their case -- as if the thousands of women and children fleeing Central American countries for their lives were trying to game the US immigration system.

India-China Talks Next Week Will Be Influenced By Trump

On the NSG matter, the Chinese have explained their so-called "obstruction" by insisting that non-P5 states must have signed the Non Proliferation Treaty or NPT, which India hasn't. Clearly, it isn't willing to adjust to Delhi's de jure status on the matter. On the other hand, the big problem is that India's tough Nuclear Liability law has made it much more difficult to do business with western states like the US. Certainly, both sides would like

to play down their differences and promote their stakes in Asian stability. The Chinese are said to be looking forward too, which is why the ambassador to India, Luo Zhaohui, at a University of Bombay function in January, proposed a "Friendship and Cooperation Treaty" as well as a free trade agreement between the two sides.

Mr Luo, who was asked to cut short his tenure in Canada in October and take charge of India,

on the eve of Xi Jinping's Goa visit for the BRICS summit, described these friction points as "matters within a family." Significantly, Mr Luo pointed out that the time was ripe for the two countries to reap some "early harvest" benefits regarding the contentious boundary issue that has remained unresolved since the 1962 border war between the two countries. Although National Security Advisor Ajit Doval represents India as the PM's Special

Representative on the border talks, it is more than likely that the subject will be discussed at next week's strategic dialogue. More than anything, though, this first conversation will be an attempt to gauge each other in the wake of Trump's ascension to the throne. India's Jaishankar will want to get a sense of what and how China thinks about Mr Trump; certainly his own recent comments, saying that there was no need to "demonise but

analyse" Trump is partly aimed at the pragmatic Chinese, known to take advantage of any twist in the tale. The Foreign Secretary here is saying that India should actually take a leaf out of China's book and do the same. Certainly, if India has the benefit of Trump's support vis-à-vis China, there is no question that it will be able to gain much greater leverage, even though it is a much smaller economy than China's, and much less able to project power.

In Jail Or Not, The Growing Stature Of Sasikala And Family

Sasikala successfully planted anti-OPS news and got him out of Amma's team of negotiators for seat-sharing. In fact, three of the AIADMK's most influential leaders that time, OPS, Natham Viswanathan (Power Minister) and P Palaniappan (Minister for Higher Education) were not part of either seat-sharing talks or crucial electoral committee meetings. Thus, Sasikala ensured that these top three ministers were cut down to size, thereby clearing her path to the top post.

After Jayalalithaa's death, Sasikala took a series of steps to take total control of the party and the government. She kept all family members of Jayalalithaa out of the last rites. She was the one who decided every aspect of the funeral, last rites and the post-funeral sympathy gathering.

Sasikala's next move was to take over the party and unseat OPS. Taking over the party was child's play. OPS and the rest of the crowd played along and anointed her the party General Secretary in the fond hope that her greed would end there. It is only then that she came up with her next move, asking OPS to resign and propose her name as Chief Minister. By now, the party was in her grip and OPS had enough enemies who were waiting to dislodge him.

Here is where Sasikala miscalculated those whom she considered minions. Slighted by his colleagues and stripped of his power, OPS had nothing to lose by revolting, which he did. In a dramatic move, he sat in meditation at the samadhi of Amma and addressed the press. Rest, as they say, is history.

EPS winning the confidence vote was a foregone conclusion. Even if the DMK and Congress had voted with the breakaway MLAs supporting OPS, the numbers were against them. The only way OPS could have won was to have a secret ballot. Though there is no express

provision for a secret ballot, there is no blanket ban on it either. An impartial Speaker could have announced a secret ballot. But then a Speaker who enjoyed the hospitality and possibly other doles of Sasikala in the Golden Bay Resort did exactly what was expected of him.

More than the winning of EPS, the fallout of the proxy's victory seems to be more interesting. Ideally, Sasikala's proxy should have been on Cloud Nine after defeating "traitor" OPS. But it was the DMK that marched on to the Gandhi statue at Marina Beach and then to the Governor. The banner of revolt against Sasikala and the fight for democracy was by now firmly in the hands of MK Stalin, the DMK patriarch's blue-eyed boy.

By all means, the DMK will now become the most vocal opposition to Sasikala's proxy. They will make his life miserable, not allow the assembly to function and generally use every trick in the trade to keep EPS on tenterhooks. Meanwhile, Sasikala will move the court to get transferred to Chennai Jail which will have an AC room for her with all attendant facilities available only to the Chief Minister of the state.

With a remote firmly in her hand, her murky deals in the state may continue unabated. After completing her jail term, in full comfort, she will be still left with a year of the assembly's term. That is when she will kick the proxy out and take on the DMK.

The DMK will love this situation for it knows very well that in a straight fight between Stalin and Sasikala, the latter is a feather-weight opponent. The DMK thus will have a cake walk in the next assembly election with an added appeal from the octogenarian Karunanidhi that this is his last election to see the Dravidian sun rise again.

OPS has to rework his strategy to retain his political

relevance and ensure his future. It may be difficult, but he has a bright future if he is able to sustain his group for another four years. OPS signifies something very rare and important for politics in Tamil Nadu, which has been dominated by celluloid figures ever since the fall of Congress Chief Minister Bhaktavatsalam. The anti-Hindi agitation heralded a new dimension to politics when the DK and the DMK dominated the socio-political narrative. The DMK

New Trump Deportation Rules Allow Far More Expulsions

scope of the president's ambitions: to publicize crimes by undocumented immigrants; strip such immigrants of privacy protections; enlist local police officers as enforcers; erect new detention facilities; discourage asylum seekers; and, ultimately, speed up deportations.

The new enforcement policies put into practice language that Mr. Trump used on the campaign trail, vastly expanding the definition of "criminal aliens" and warning that such unauthorized immigrants "routinely victimize Americans," disregard the "rule of law and pose a threat" to people in communities across the United States. Despite those assertions in the new documents, research shows lower levels of crime among immigrants than among native-born Americans.

Yes, this can happen here and is--right before our eyes! The Yahoos have taken over. Let us hope and pray that the GOP has the foresight...

Barbara Moschner February 22, 2017

Just the talk of this brings fear and all the negative consequences: kids not in school, adults afraid to report criminal activity, quitting...

angel98 February 22, 2017

The president's new immigration policies are likely to be welcomed by some law

enforcement officials around the country, who have called for a tougher crackdown on unauthorized immigrants, and by some Republicans in Congress who have argued that lax enforcement encourages a never-ending flow of unauthorized immigrants. But taken together, the new policies are a rejection of the sometimes more restrained efforts by former Presidents Barack Obama and George W. Bush and their predecessors, who sought to balance protecting the nation's borders with fiscal, logistical and humanitarian limits on the exercise of laws passed by Congress.

"The faithful execution of our immigration laws is best achieved by using all these statutory authorities to the greatest extent practicable," John F. Kelly, the secretary of homeland security, wrote in one of two memorandums released on Tuesday. "Accordingly, department personnel shall make full use of these authorities."

The immediate impact of that shift is not yet fully known. Advocates for immigrants warned on Tuesday that the new border control and enforcement directives would create an atmosphere of fear that was likely to drive those in the country illegally deeper into the shadows.

Administration officials said some of the new policies — like one seeking to send unauthorized border crossers from Central America to Mexico while they await deportation hearings — could take months to put in effect and might be limited in scope.

After MGR, his wife tried to occupy the space vacated by him, but was no match for the charismatic silver screen co-star of MGR, Selvi. J. Jayalalithaa. The Karnataka-born Iyengar Brahmin lady stormed the citadel of power and became Amma to millions. She successfully shattered two myths, that in a highly Dravidianised polity, the Chief Minister's post is strictly reserved for an anti-Brahmin Dravidian male.

For now, so-called Dreamers, who were brought to the United States as young children, will not be targeted unless they commit crimes, officials said on Tuesday. Mr. Trump has not yet said where he will get the billions of dollars needed to pay for thousands of new border control agents, a network of detention facilities to detain unauthorized immigrants and a wall along the entire southern border with Mexico. But politically, Mr. Kelly's actions on Tuesday serve to reinforce the president's standing among a core constituency — those who blame unauthorized immigrants for taking jobs away from citizens, committing heinous crimes and being a financial burden on federal, state and local governments. And because of the changes, millions of immigrants in the country illegally now face a far greater likelihood of being discovered, arrested and eventually deported.



San Jose drowns

Entire San Jose neighborhoods were submerged by water on Wednesday during the worst floods for 100 years.

50,000 people were told to flee their homes after evacuation warnings were issued in the early hours of the morning. Most were issued a flood warning but for 14,000 the order was mandatory.

The flooding began when Coyote Creek, which runs through Silicon Valley from the San Francisco Bay, burst its banks on Tuesday night. It sent dirty water pouring in to the towns below it at frightening pace.

On Wednesday, residents complained that the alert had not been sent out fast enough. Some said their first warning came when they saw neighbors being rescued from their drowning homes by firefighters in dinghies.

Mayor Sam Liccardo labeled the city's response to the emergency situation a 'failure'.

'If the first time a resident is aware that they need to get out of their home is when they see a firefighter in a boat, that's a failure. We are assessing what

happened in that failure.' Residents have been warned not to go into the water which was likely contaminated by sewage.

'People should take every precaution to stay away from the water to avoid illness or injury,' Sara Cody, Santa Clara County Health Officer said.

California has been battered by winter storms for weeks after one of the wettest seasons on record. The most recent problems were brought by an 'atmospheric river' - the name given to a sudden and severe horizontal moving patch of weather.

The entire state has recorded higher than average rainfall, bringing an abrupt end to its five-year drought and sparking emergency situations all over.

In Southern California, flash flood warnings and wind advisories were issued last week as up to six inches of rain

hammered Los Angeles and surrounding areas.

Further north, the Oroville Dam threatened collapse after its reservoir rose to capacity for the



first time ever. Engineers have been battling the punishing weather to try to fix the crumbling spillways which nearly gave way to the lake for days.

San Jose's state of emergency was brought on suddenly late on Tuesday night. Water agencies have admitted they did not expect so much water to move downstream on Coyote Creek so quickly.

'The water was much higher than anybody expected. The creek spilled over the banks



50,000 people are told to leave their homes as entire neighborhoods sink under water after worst floods for 100 years

faster and higher than anybody expected,' city spokesman David Vossbrink told The Los Angeles Times.

Residents who had signed up for emergency alerts received them and warnings were issued over social media but first responders eventually resorted to going door-to-door to get people out of the danger zone.

'It was scary,' said Irma Gonzalez, 59, whose two-story apartment complex is alongside the creek. She was awakened about 2:30 a.m. by police pounding on her door.

'They were like, "You've got to hurry up and go! Move it!"'. Resident Sandy Moll said she had prepared for about a foot of water, but the flooding spilled over sandbags stacked 3 feet high and broke down her back door. Moll told The Mercury News in San Jose she was angry at the lack of warning.

'I'm seething. It's the lack of information and forewarning when they had to have known. They never even said you need to prepare for a major flood.'

Bob Benjamin, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service, said the water level in Coyote Creek reached a 100-year high during this week's storm.

The floodwaters were receding Wednesday but the mayor said it would be at least another day before residents would be allowed to return home.

Assistant City Manager Dave Sykes said officials first became aware of the rising water late Tuesday when firefighters began evacuating about 400 people from a low-lying residential area.

City officials did not believe the waters would spread to other neighborhoods and did not expand the evacuation orders.

About 300 people stayed in emergency shelters set up by the city, while many found other accommodations. Coyote Creek flooded after Anderson Dam in Santa Clara County reached capacity during heavy weekend rains.

'We've been pummeled by a number of storms since Jan. 9.

'We've been letting out as much water as we possibly could,' said Rachel Gibson, a spokeswoman for the Santa Clara Valley Water Project, which operates the dam.

Managers of the Anderson Dam were taking advantage of a break in the storms to draw down the reservoir, which is supposed to be limited to 68 percent of capacity because of earthquake concerns but is now at 100 percent, said Jim Fiedler, a chief operating officer at the Santa Clara Valley Water District.

He said it could take nine weeks to bring it down to normal levels. Inspectors in 2010 discovered the dam is vulnerable to a major quake and \$400 million is being spent to make it earthquake-proof by 2024.

Inside Uber's Aggressive, Unrestrained Workplace Culture



SAN FRANCISCO — When new employees join Uber, they are asked to subscribe to 14 core company values, including making bold bets, being “obsessed” with the customer, and “always be hustlin’.” The ride-hailing service particularly emphasizes “meritocracy,” the idea that the best and brightest will rise to the top based on their efforts, even if it means stepping on toes to get there.

Those values have helped propel Uber to one of Silicon Valley’s biggest success stories. The company is valued at close to \$70 billion by private investors and now operates in more than 70 countries. Yet the focus on pushing for the best result has also fueled what current and former Uber employees describe as a Hobbesian environment at the company, in which workers are sometimes pitted against one another and where a blind eye is turned to infractions from top performers.

Interviews with more than 30 current and former Uber employees, as well as reviews of internal emails, chat logs and tape-recorded meetings, paint a picture of an often unrestrained workplace culture. Among the most egregious accusations from employees, who either witnessed or were subject to incidents and who asked to

confidentiality agreements and fear of retaliation: One Uber manager groped female co-workers’ breasts at a company retreat in Las Vegas. A director shouted a homophobic slur at a subordinate during a heated confrontation in a meeting. Another manager threatened to beat an underperforming employee’s head in with a baseball bat. Until this week, this culture was only whispered about in Silicon Valley. Then on Sunday, Susan Fowler, an engineer who left Uber in December, published a blog post about her time at the company. She detailed a history of discrimination and sexual harassment by her managers, which she said was shrugged off by Uber’s human resources department. Ms. Fowler said the culture was stoked — and even fostered — by those at the top of the company. “It seemed like every manager was fighting their peers and attempting to undermine their direct supervisor so that they could have their direct supervisor’s job,” Ms. Fowler wrote. “No attempts were made by these managers to hide what they were doing: They boasted about it in meetings, told their direct reports about it, and the like.” Her revelations have spurred hand-wringing over how unfriendly Silicon Valley

and provoked an internal crisis at Uber. The company’s chief executive, Travis Kalanick, has opened an internal investigation into the accusations and has brought in the board member Arianna Huffington and the former attorney general Eric H. Holder Jr. to look into harassment issues and the human resources department.

To contain the fallout, Mr. Kalanick also began more disclosure. On Monday, he said that 15.1 percent of Uber’s engineering, product management and scientist roles were filled by women, and that those numbers had not changed substantively over the past year.

Mr. Kalanick also held a 90-minute all-hands meeting on Tuesday, during which he and other executives were besieged with dozens of questions and pleas from employees who were aghast at — or strongly identified with — Ms. Fowler’s story and demanded change.

In what was described by five attendees as an emotional moment, and according to a video of the meeting reviewed by The New York Times, Mr. Kalanick apologized to employees for leading the company and the culture to this point. “What I can promise you is that I will get better every day,” he said. “I can tell you that I am authentically and fully dedicated to getting to the bottom of this.”

Some Uber employees said Mr. Kalanick’s speedy efforts

were positive. “I am pleased with how quickly Travis has responded to this,” Aimee Lucido, an Uber software engineer, wrote in a blog post. “We are better situated to handle this sort of problem than we have ever been in the past.”

As chief executive, Mr. Kalanick has long set the tone for Uber. Under him, Uber has taken a pugnacious approach to business, flouting local laws and criticizing competitors in a race to expand as quickly as possible. Mr. Kalanick, 40, has made pointed displays of ego: In a GQ article in 2014, he referred to Uber as “Boob-er” because of how the company helped him attract women. That tone has been echoed in Uber’s workplace. At least two former Uber workers said they had notified Thuan Pham, the company’s chief technical officer, of workplace harassment at the hands of managers and colleagues in 2016. One also emailed Mr. Kalanick.

Uber also faces at least three lawsuits in at least two countries from former employees alleging sexual harassment or verbal abuse at the hands of managers, according to legal documents reviewed by The Times. Other current and former employees said they were considering legal action against the company.


Liane Hornsey, Uber’s chief human resources officer, said in a statement, “We are totally committed to healing wounds of


the past and building a better workplace culture for everyone.” Uber’s aggressive culture began with its 2009 founding, when Mr. Kalanick and another founder, Garrett Camp, created a start-up that would let customers hail a cab with little more than a few taps of their smartphone — bypassing many of the headaches people had with the taxi industry. Mr. Kalanick also started putting into place what eventually became Uber’s 14 core values, inspired by the leadership principles at one of the biggest public tech companies, Amazon.


To grow quickly, Uber kept its structure decentralized, emphasizing autonomy among regional offices. General managers are encouraged to “be themselves,” another of Uber’s core values, and are empowered to make decisions without intense supervision from the company’s San Francisco headquarters. The top priority: Achieve growth and revenue targets.

While Uber is now the dominant ride-hailing company in the United States, and is rapidly growing in South America, India and other countries, its explosive growth has come at a cost internally. As Uber hired more employees, its internal politics became more convoluted. Getting ahead, employees said, often involved undermining departmental leaders or colleagues.










ਪੰਜਾਬ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀਅਤ ਦਾ ਤਰਜਮਾਨ



PUNJABI DUNIYA

Wells Fargo fires 4 senior employees for ties to fake account scandal



(Agencies) Wells Fargo has fired four senior employees amid an ongoing probe into the bank's illegal sales practices. The company announced Tuesday that it fired four employees who either work or used to work in that community banking division that's at the center of last year's scandal. Wells Fargo (CBEAX) admitted last fall that it created as many as 2 million fake accounts between 2011 and 2015. In the following months, stories emerged depicting a toxic sales culture and employee mistreatment. Some former employees told CNNMoney they were subject to retaliation after they tried to stop the sales tactics. Since the scandal came to light, Wells Fargo has been under investigation by the Department of Justice, Congressional

committees, state attorneys general and prosecutors offices. Customers, employees and shareholders have also launched class-action lawsuits against Wells Fargo. The company's board of directors also opened an independent investigation into the practices. In a news release Tuesday, Wells Fargo said that investigation is expected to finish before the bank's annual shareholder meeting in April. The executives won't receive a 2016 bonus, and the company says they will forfeit all of their unvested equity awards as well as any vested outstanding options. Wells Fargo fired 5,300 workers for creating millions of fake accounts. In October, embattled company CEO John Stumpf retired suddenly, and forfeited \$41 million in stock awards.

India Urgently Needs A 'Bad Bank,' Says Chief Economic Adviser Arvind Subramanian

(Agencies) India's finance ministry on Wednesday backed a call by the Reserve Bank of India to set up an institution similar to a "bad bank," saying urgency was needed to address troubled loans weighing on the banking sector that were hobbling investment and growth.

Arvind Subramanian, the finance ministry's chief economic adviser, said that delaying a cleanup would further reduce private-sector investment and make the problem worse for Asia's third-largest economy.

His comments backed forthright views expressed in a speech on Tuesday by

Viral Acharya, the new deputy governor of the RBI, who said India's failure to tackle bad loans was the result of a piecemeal approach that had given "all discretion" to lenders.

"There is very much urgency," Subramanian told a news briefing in New Delhi, adding that the government was in touch with the RBI on the matter.

"The government is looking at it very closely. I think the more you delay the problem more private

investment will remain weak. That is, I think, the big cost we face now, and of course, losses of the government keep mounting." Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government, which is approaching three

years in power, has taken little action to strengthen stricken public sector banks that account for around 70 percent of lending in India.

The renewed sense of urgency comes as economic growth slows due to weak credit and investment, as well as the lingering impact of Modi's abolition of 86 percent of the currency in circulation in November in a crackdown on tax evasion and the black economy.

Subramanian has proposed setting up a so-called Public Asset Rehabilitation Agency (PARA) that would handle the biggest, toughest problem loans and take politically difficult decisions to reduce debt. Banks in India had record stressed loans of \$133 billion, or 12.34 percent of their total loans, as of last September.



Amid layoffs, Snapdeal founders admit to wrong decisions

(Agencies) BENGALURU/GURGAON: As online marketplace Snapdeal started laying off employees on Wednesday, the company's co-founders Kunal Bahl and Rohit Bansal sent out an email to anxious staff, admitting they took several wrong decisions over the past two-three years amid a funding frenzy and that it was time to course-correct. The communication from the founders follows a cost-cutting drive by Snapdeal to conserve cash. The co-founders will take a 100% salary cut, Bahl said in the email, which was reviewed by TOI.

The co-founders had written another email around 10 days ago, as reported by TOI in its February 13 edition, preparing employees for the impending "tough decision".

Employees said the troubled e-tailer, which is backed by SoftBank of Japan and Foxconn of Taiwan, has laid off 250-300 people across the country in the first phase, a bulk of them at its headquarters in Gurgaon. The final number of layoffs could run up to 1,000 or more, said people close to the development.

A Snapdeal spokesperson claimed the retrenchment number would be much lower - around 600, over the next few months.

TOI had reported on February 17 that the online retailer was looking to merge some of its major categories. The company's salaries and bonuses in 2015-16 amounted to Rs 673 crore, an increase of two-and-a-half times over the previous year's Rs 217 crore.

"We started growing the business before the right economic model and market fit was figured out," Bahl and Bansal wrote in their email. "A large amount of capital with ambition can be a potent mix that drives a company to defocus from its core. We feel that happened to us. We started doing too many things, and all of us starting with myself and Rohit, are to blame for it," they said. They said from here on, Snapdeal would focus only on its core strengths and shut all non-core businesses in a bid to drastically cut cost. Snapdeal shut its consumer-to-consumer marketplace Shopo recently and disbanded SD Instant, its express delivery service. Categories like beauty and FMCG have been discontinued too.

A \$3.7 billion hedge fund interviewed dozens of job candidates, and what it discovered was damning

(Agencies) A \$3.7 billion hedge fund firm has some insight on how to hire top talent - look for malleable people.

In an investor letter dated this month, Tourbillon Capital Partners' Jason Karp wrote that his firm had looked at



dozens of experienced candidates in recent months. The exercise was not particularly fruitful, however.

"There are a lot of bad values and habits out there that have been learned from this last regime," Karp wrote in the letter, a copy which was reviewed by Business Insider.

Instead, the New York firm is looking to hire more "malleable" recruits. Two MBA interns from the summer of 2016 are joining full time

this summer, and the firm has just hired two more interns for the summer of 2017, according to the letter.

Hedge funds have long raced to find top talent. Legendary investor Steve Cohen said last year that he had trouble finding solid recruits. The billionaire's family office, Point72 Asset Management, has been running a training program for recent college grads.

Here's the full excerpt from the Tourbillon letter:

"Fortunately, we have found that some of this hedge fund tumult has created a ripe environment for talent. As such, we have interviewed and met with several dozen candidates in all areas of our investment team. We have

found, however, that there are a lot of bad values and habits out there that have been learned from this last regime and consequently, we are focusing much more time on identifying malleable individuals.

The Tourbillon Global Master Fund returned -9.2% last year after posting a -1.8% drop for the fourth quarter of 2016, according to the letter.

"This was the worst year in my 18-year career," Karp wrote, adding that most of the underperformance was attributable to the first quarter.

Karp also wrote that the firm's flagship fund posted a 8.1% return with a 13.5% net market exposure from the second quarter through the end of the year - making the period "one of our better three quarter alpha periods since inception."

The firm manages about \$3.7 billion, according to a person familiar with the matter who declined to be named because the information is private.

Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos is endorsing online schools, but student scores may indicate a big problem

(Agencies) It was the best of times and the worst of times for virtual schools, which allow students to go to school without ever stepping into a school building. Online schools received yet another hearty endorsement last Friday from the new Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos, who doubled down on her opinion that these schools should expand – without any hint that she recognizes there are serious quality-control issues.

Meanwhile, an important study published last week in Education Researcher added to the growing pile of research that reveals that online-only schools tend to attract and harm the most

vulnerable students. The study from RAND Corporation and New York University found that Ohio students with low test scores who enroll in online-only schools tend to fall even further behind. High-performing students fare better, but they still do worse than they would have done if they had not enrolled in a virtual school, according to the study. The findings for the lowest achieving students are particularly troubling considering the high stakes for children who are already on the edge of failure. And, as it turns out, low-performing students tend to be drawn to cyber charter schools, the study found. "If that's a population they want to serve, then they

need to design a system that is better for [those] students," said Andrew McEachin, of RAND Corporation, an author of the new report.

Another idea: Traditional schools could look at this as an opportunity to create a more effective model for at-risk students. Educators could find out why students are lured to attend cyber schools, and then incorporate some of what students want into those programs at in-person schools. "If they want more flexibility or more autonomy, then maybe there's a way to tinker with their own systems to make these students feel more welcome," McEachin said. The study's findings are

not unexpected. A high-profile study in 2015 from Stanford University's CREDO (Center for Research on Education Outcomes) and the Center on Reinventing Public Education was also bad news for the online-school sector. Some critics, however, disliked the study's methodology. And virtual school supporters say these schools serve students who – for whatever reason – are not finding what they need in traditional schools. Advocates maintain that their success is best measured by measuring the outcome only of students who don't drop out or leave to pursue other types of schooling.

Sears can't afford to keep Ivanka Trump's brand

(Agencies) An increasing number of retailers have announced their intention to drop Ivanka Trump's merchandise line. From Nordstrom and Belk to Neiman-Marcus and Burlington, there's a growing movement for retailers to distance themselves from the Trump brand.

The coincidence of the announcements may seem to suggest that there's a political motive behind them, especially as the #GrabYourWallet movement, which advocates boycotting

Ivanka's products, has gained momentum following Donald Trump's election last November. However, retailers maintain this is simply a business decision, and they're no longer offering the merchandise because it isn't selling.

If that's the case, then it's reasonable that Sears Holdings would also join the conga line of companies dumping Trump wares, because despite the bit of life that was recently breathed into its stock when chairman and CEO Eddie Lampert revealed his reorganization plan for the retailer, Sears can't afford to anger any of its remaining customers.

According to The Wall Street Journal, sales of Ivanka Trump's fashion line at Nordstrom fell 32% last year, picking up steam as the election year advanced, with footwear and apparel plunging more than 70% in the last three weeks of October. However, brand representatives have countered that overall sales actually rose 21% year over year.



Nordstrom issued a statement saying it makes "buying decisions based on performance," and the Trump line wasn't up to snuff. Soon after, the other retailers also rushed out similarly worded statements, with Neiman-Marcus saying its decisions are "based on productivity," Belk saying it reviews the "assortment and the performance" of its brands, and Burlington saying it makes "buying decisions based on performance."

Those statements were similar to the

one eventually offered by Sears, which said the reason it eliminated 31 Trump Home items from its online website was "part of the company's initiative to optimize its online product assortment, we constantly refine that assortment to focus on our most profitable items." Nordstrom might be able to get away with dropping Trump's merchandise because its customers tend to be wealthier, its stores are located in more urban areas, and they are in states with a presumably more liberal political bent.

The retailer notes it derives a significant portion of its revenues from stores on both coasts of the country, but particularly from the blue state of California, where it had 78 Nordstrom and Nordstrom Rack stores located at the start of 2016, or 24% of its locations. That's more than triple the number it has in the red state of Texas, where there were 24 stores, or purple Florida, where it had 23.

Nissan's CEO Carlos Ghosn just stepped down



(Agencies) Nissan Motors has a new CEO. On February 22, the Japanese automaker announced that Hiroto Saikawa will become its new CEO on April 1, 2017.

Saikawa, who currently serves as the company's co-CEO, will take over for Nissan's long-time chairman and CEO Carlos Ghosn.

"I am confident that the management team I have developed at Nissan over the past 18 years has the talent and experience to meet the company's operational and strategic goals," Ghosn said in a statement.

"Having recently taken on new responsibilities at Mitsubishi Motors, and taking into consideration the upcoming Nissan general shareholders meeting, I have decided that the time is right for Hiroto Saikawa to succeed me as Nissan's CEO."

Even though Ghosn will relinquish his spot as the CEO, he will retain his position as the company's chairman. In addition, Ghosn will remain the CEO of Renault Group, chairman of Mitsubishi Motors, as well as chairman and CEO of the Nissan-Renault-Mitsubishi Alliance.

Springfield woman puts new 'spin' on nutrition and lifestyle

(Agencies) SPRINGFIELD >> Christine Wyatt was happily working as a K-2 reading specialist in Pine Hill, N.J., when her daughter Lily, then a 3-year-old who had been recently diagnosed with autism, became severely ill from food allergies. In desperation, Wyatt resigned from her full-time teaching job to turn her full attention to Lily's condition and investigate ways to help her.

Not long after, Wyatt gave birth to her youngest daughter Bryn. The young mother said she felt tired, stressed and ready to shed her extra post-pregnancy weight. In her search for better nutrition, Wyatt and her husband Eric discovered Isagenix products and began adding the dense



nutrition-laden products into their diet. Feeling their "almost-immediate profound effect," the couple began to incorporate Isagenix into their children's diets as well. Not only did Lily's health dramatically improve, Wyatt claimed, but she no longer had a speech delay. In fact, today, almost four years later, Lily is not allergic to anything except peanuts and tree nuts. Wyatt also claims that, when tested, Lily is no longer diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

"I'm not a doctor so I can't rightly say that Isagenix products 'cured' Lily's autism, but I can state that the super foods found in Isagenix products are good for everyone and very definitely promote better brain health, more energy and an overall healthier body. We can say

that we witnessed major positive changes in Lily," Wyatt stated.

Isagenix products range from skin care and supplements to protein shakes and snack bars, soups, crackers and other food items. The products, which do not contain GMOs, have both protein and vegan-based lines. According to Wyatt, the meal replacements help users reach a healthy weight and maintain it, as well as build muscle and strength. "As soon as I started using Isagenix," Wyatt said, "I felt my whole body light up in a week. I had so much energy!"

She believed in the products to such a high degree, that she began marketing them to family, neighbors and friends.

"I was so impressed with this hidden secret," Christine shared recently, "How could I not share these incredible products with my mom, sisters and Facebook friends?"

Testosterone therapy's benefits and risks

(Agencies) Testosterone therapy, when used by men over age 65 who have low testosterone levels, offers some health benefits but also poses potential risks, suggests a roundup of five new studies in the Journal of American Medicine and JAMA Internal Medicine.

Testosterone treatment improves bone density and anemia in those men, the results indicated. But on the downside, it increases the amount of plaque buildup in coronary arteries while doing nothing to improve cognitive function, the researchers found.

A separate study separate study, published in JAMA Internal Medicine, also showed that testosterone therapy is associated with a lower risk of cardiovascular events in men 40 or older over a period of about three years.

Testosterone therapy is recommended for men whose blood levels of this masculine hormone fall below the normal range. Symptoms of

low blood levels include low sex drive, fatigue, body and facial hair loss, and decreased muscle mass. Supplemental testosterone is usually taken as a gel, by injection or via a skin or mouth patch.

Researchers at the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania designed and coordinated the Testosterone Trials, a series of studies at 12 academic medical centers across the United States. The studies were a response to the Institute of Medicine's call in 2003 for more rigorous study of the positive and negative health effects of testosterone replacement therapy in older men.

The studies received support from the National Institutes of Health and from AbbVie (formerly Solvay and Abbott Laboratories), which makes a testosterone product.

The Testosterone Trials included 788 men who were 65 years or older and had

low blood levels of testosterone. The researchers randomly assigned half the participants to use a daily testosterone gel and the other half a placebo gel for one year. Then, the researchers measured specific health outcomes in each participant at three months, six months, nine months and one year, with an additional year of followup in some of the studies.

According to Susan S. Ellenberg, lead biostatistician on the study and a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, the Testosterone Trials are really a "single trial" and "a single randomization."

"People could be in only one trial, or they could be in multiple trials, but it was all sub-studies under one big umbrella trial," she explained. She added that all of the sub-studies did not include the total 788 participants.

The Cognition Trial, which looked at memory and general cognitive

function, did include all participants. The results showed no improvements in memory or any other measure of cognitive function for the men using the testosterone gel.

The Bone Trial found that testosterone treatment improved bone density and bone strength in the men. However, the Cardiovascular Trial showed more plaque buildup in the coronary arteries of men treated with testosterone. Yet the number of cardiovascular events, such as heart attacks, was similar for the men treated with testosterone and those using placebo. The Bone and Cardiovascular Trials, made use of high-tech CT scan measurements and compared both groups.

Finally, in the Anemia Trial, testosterone treatment helped correct anemia with no identifiable cause and helped correct anemia caused by iron deficiencies.

Do YOU know who your rivals in the office are?

Experts find most of us fail to spot our competitors



(Agencies) Research has shown that we can gauge who likes us in the workplace, but a new study has revealed that we fall short when it comes to identifying our rivals.

Experts have discovered that employees tend to be unaware of those who are competing with them and trying to edge them out on the job.

This was a result of people masking outward feelings of competitiveness towards others in order to come across as pilot.

he study was conducted by Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, which discovered that most people are blind to their co-workers competitiveness.

'We looked at whether people understood what other people in the workplace thought of them,' said Hillary Anger Elfenbein, professor of organizational behavior.

'You tend to know who likes you. But, for negative feelings, including competitiveness, people had no clue.'

Elfenbein and her co-authors, Noah Eisenkraft from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Shirli Kopelman from the University of

Michigan, ran two different studies during the course of their research.

In the first study, the team asked 14 car salesman to complete a short questionnaire that asks about their feelings towards co-workers and vice versa..

The survey listed questions about feelings of liking such as 'how much do you like each of your colleagues?'

And other questions focused on competition like 'how much do you see each of your colleagues as a rival?'

Each of the salesman's names were listed near each questions with a 9-point scale. Participants were asked to rate them accordingly and answer questions about how they thought each other their colleagues felt about them.

As the team predicted, people were significantly more accurate at knowing who liked them than who was competing against them.

Forget five a day, you should eat 10 portions of fruit and veg to cut your risk of early death, researchers find

(Agencies) While five portions of fruit and veg a day is good for you, eating 10 is dramatically better, researchers have found.

They say a fruit and vegetable intake above five-a-day shows major benefit in reducing the chance of heart attack, stroke, cancer and early death, and could prevent up to 7.8 million premature deaths worldwide every year. The new research, led by scientists from Imperial College London, analysed 95 studies on fruit and vegetable intake. The team found that although even the recommended five portions of fruit and vegetables a day reduced disease risk, the greatest benefit came from eating 800g a

day, which is roughly equivalent to ten portions. 'Our results suggest that although five portions of fruit and vegetables is good, ten a day is even better', said Dr Dagfinn Aune, lead author of the research from the School of Public Health at Imperial. The study, which was a meta-analysis of all available research in populations worldwide, included up to 2 million people, and assessed up to 43,000 cases of heart disease, 47,000 cases of stroke, 81,000 cases of cardiovascular disease, 112,000 cancer cases and 94,000 deaths.



Back pain ups risk of early death by 13%

Suffering from lower back pain? Be careful, back pain — approximately affecting 700 million people worldwide — is the leading cause of disability globally and may increase your risk of dying early by 13 per cent, researchers warn. The findings showed that compared to those without spinal pain (back and neck), a person with spinal pain has a 13 per cent higher chance of dying early.

"Back pain should be recognised as an important co-morbidity that is likely to impact people's longevity and quality of life," said lead author Matthew Fernandez from the University of Sydney in Australia. This is a significant finding as many people think that back pain is not life-threatening," added Paulo Ferreira, Associate Professor at the University of Sydney. An individual's lifetime prevalence of back pain is nearly 84 per cent and more in older populations. "With a rapidly growing ageing population, spinal health is critical in maintaining older age independence, highlighting the importance of spinal pain in primary health care as a presenting symptom," Fernandez explained.

Home At Last

Leaving the baggage of his past behind, Sanjay Dutt makes his final comeback



(Agencies) There is an unusual buzz in the bustling Tajganj area of Agra, not far from the Taj-Mahal, on Wednesday where a big crowd is waiting patiently for a glimpse of Sanjay Dutt, who is about to resume his career with a shoot for Bhoomi, his much-awaited re-launch vehicle in Bollywood.

As a bearded Dutt enters the location in his trademark gait, there is a hint of nervousness on his face—a long-awaited comeback can remind one of a debut. A loud cheer from the crowd dispels the tension, brings

a faint smile on his face. The veteran looks a bit reassured now as he waves to the crowds before facing the camera for the ambitious project being helmed by director Omung Kumar of the Mary Kom and Sarabjit fame.

It must have been déjà vu for the 57-year-old actor, as he has been through similar situations more than once in the past. As a matter of fact, Dutt may well have forgotten how many times he has staged such a comeback and made his mark in the tinsel town marquee before the recurring quirk of fate, a protracted legal

battle, interrupted his rides to fame. But now, he is a free bird, with the baggage of the tumultuous past way behind him, ready to pick up the threads of his career from where he left off four years ago.

And yet, it has taken almost a year for him, since he left Pune's Yerawada jail, to choose his first film. "I had been looking for scripts that went beyond my screen persona," he says. "I wanted to do something vulnerable yet powerful. Bhoomi is an emotional and sensitive drama that explores the relationship between a father and a daughter."

Choosing the right subject was, of course, not easy for him. Since he made his debut in Rocky (1981), he has had a chequered career marked by upheavals caused by personal problems ranging from drug addiction to prison terms. Arrested for the first time on the charge of possessing illegal weapons in the wake of the 1993 Mumbai bomb blasts, Dutt had been in and out of prison; his last sojourn behind the bars being an almost three-year-long stay in

Pune's Yerawada jail after the Supreme Court held him guilty under the arms act in 2013. The term ended in February last year.

This time, Bollywood's best-known 'comeback man' returns in a mature avatar in front of the camera, with a clean slate, to play a father to Aditi Rao Hydari in a pivotal role in a revenge drama that he thinks will give him an immense scope to showcase his histrionics.

Bollywood could not probably have waited for long for his final comeback to see if his prolonged incarceration has blunted his talent, his star appeal or the pull at the box office. Of course, there has been no dearth of film makers who are vying with each other to put their money on Dutt and want him back on screen at the earliest. "Bhoomi is extra special to me primarily because it is Dutt's comeback film," says Omung "It is great to have him back where he belongs—in front of the camera. Bhoomi is an emotional revenge drama that centres around the relationship between a father and his daughter."

Dutt was last seen on the

screen in the Aamir Khan-blockbuster, PK (2013)—which was released after he was imprisoned. Vidhu Vinod Chopra's Marco Bhau was initially supposed to be Dutt's first film after his return. Chopra's next on his popular Munnabhai series, which saw Dutt essaying his career's best roles, was also in the pipeline and so was the next project of director Siddharth Anand (of the Bang Bang, 2014, fame). And then, there were also talks about a sequel to Mahesh Bhatt's 1991-hit, Sadak. But at the end, it is Bhoomi that got Dutt's nod as being the first film in his new innings. Bhushan Kumar of T-Series, who is producing the film along with Omung and Sandeep Singh of Legend Studios, says everybody is looking forward to the film, and there is much enthusiasm 'over the comeback of Baba (Dutt's nickname) on screen'. "There is also the exciting father-daughter jodi played by Dutt and Aditi in the film," he says. "His versatility will be on display. We are all geared up for the making of the film in Agra, where the unit will camp for about 50 days."

Rajput bodies in game of one-upmanship over stalling of Bhansali's film Padmavati



(Agencies) Rajput organisations in the country are trying to outdo each other in their attempt to stall the release of Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Padmavati after the Jaipur-based Shri Rajput Karni Sena disrupted shooting of the epic drama.

In January, the Karni Sena made headlines after it attacked the crew of the Padmavati, including Bhansali, at the film's set in Rajasthan. The group was demanding that Bhansali scrap any reference to a romantic alliance between Rani Padmavati, whose existence has been disputed by several historians, and 14th-century Muslim ruler Alauddin Khilji.

The Karni Sena claimed that Padmini was a proud queen who

took her own life rather than submitting to Khilji, who attacked the Chittorgarh Fort. Last week, the Akhil Bhartiya Kshatriya Mahasabha (ABKM) passed a resolution against the movie at its national convention held at Kurukshetra in Haryana and dubbed Karni Sena a "fringe" group that has "compromised" the community's stand on the upcoming film.

AKBM, which claims to be the oldest and biggest organisation of Rajputs with many erstwhile royals as its state presidents, plans to launch nationwide protests in the third week of March from Rewa in Madhya Pradesh, followed by Patna on April 2.

In a letter to Union information and broadcasting ministry, the

mahasabha has warned that it will stall the screening of the movie if there is any "distortion of historical facts".

Its leaders, cutting across party lines such as Gulchain Singh Charak of the Congress, also met Chandigarh administrator and Punjab governor VP Badnore, who belongs to the Rajput community, last week. The office of the governor said Badnore met mahasabha leaders but gave no assurance on the movie.

The organisation claimed it had earlier held protests against Jodha-Akbar, a television series based on Mughal history, and forced its producers, Balaji Productions, to delete "objectionable" scenes.

"We are a 120-year-old organisation. We have Maharaja Raghubir Singh Sarohi and Maharaja Digvijay Sinh from Gujarat as members. Most movies show Rajputs as villains. But this one is an insult to our national heroes," mahasabha's national working president Mahendra Singh Tanwar said. "There are two Karni Senas and they are quarrelling among themselves. We are not with them," he added.

Phillauri: Want to talk to Anushka Sharma?

(Agencies) Increasingly, film-makers are pushing the envelope not just with content but also by adopting innovative ways to promote their films. One such strategy has been devised by the makers of Phillauri, in which actor Anushka Sharma will interact with fans on a video call but remain invisible. Produced by Fox Star Studios and Clean Slate Films and



directed by Anshai Lal, Phillauri releases on March 24. Anushka will be calling fans every week to talk to them about Phillauri as Shashi, the friendly spirit, through a dedicated WhatsApp number (9867473178). A source explains, "Anushka is playing the role of a friendly spirit in the movie. To take this thought forward, she has got a personal phone number registered in the name of Shashi—the character from the film that she is playing. She will interact with fans through WhatsApp's video calling feature. All they have to do is add the number on WhatsApp. The number will be constantly used by her throughout the campaign of Phillauri to engage with her fans, who will get exclusive access to the film's promotional content too." Talking about the innovation, Shikha Kapur, chief marketing officer, Fox Star Studios, says, "The unique storyline of Phillauri, where the lead-actor plays a friendly spirit who cannot be seen by people, gives us the opportunity to create a campaign that is imaginative. For Phillauri, we have created ideas that are experiential in nature and invoke participation."

Irada movie review

Arshad Warsi, Naseeruddin Shah's eco-thriller raises pertinent questions

Irada

Cast: Arshad Warsi, Naseeruddin Shah, Divya Dutta, Sharad Kelkar, Sagarika Ghatge
Director: Aparnaa Singh
Rating: 3/5

There are some inconvenient truths that we avoid looking when development is involved. And then comes a film which grabs us by the neck and forces us to take notice of a world different from ours. Director Aparnaa Singh's *Irada* brings us face to face with harsh realities in Punjab.

Hundreds of new cases of cancer are being reported every year in the state that is known as the rice bowl of India and most of them belong to a particular geographical area. *Irada* suggests the reason behind it could be reverse-boring, a technical term for dumping chemical residuals into the earth. *Irada* doesn't intend to be a documentary and thus it narrates the story via Parabeet Walia (Naseeruddin Shah), a master planner whose daughter is in cancer's death grip. The



political hierarchy, spearheaded by razor-tongued chief minister Ramandeep Braitch (Divya Dutta), behaves like the proverbial ostrich in the sand and is only concerned about the donations it gets from the pharmaceutical mafia.

This nexus becomes all the more evident when National Investigation Agency (NIA) officer Arjun Mishra (Arshad Warsi) comes to Punjab to investigate

a murder case that's getting complicated every minute.

Disguised as a Good Samaritan's fight for justice, *Irada* talks about systematic corruption or rather the lack of willpower to curb it. Divya Dutta's terrifyingly authoritative CM is more than just grey. She hurls abuses and symbolises political parasites, who want to retain power by hook or crook. She is aptly supported by Sharad

Kelkar's ironically named character Paddy Sharma, a privileged pharmaceutical executive. It's people like Paddy Sharma who are contaminating the local water. He dares the CM to take action against him and shows how democratically elected leaders are captive to donors with deep pockets.

Constructed on the lines of *A Wednesday*, *Irada* tries to look like a thriller but fails to sustain

the initial momentum as many sub-stories cross paths. The film struggles to give every story a fair chance to unfold but loses the grip on the central theme in the process.

It comes down to the actors to stop it from crumbling. Here, Singh enjoys assistance from stellar performers like Shah, Warsi, Kelkar and Dutta.

Warsi reminds us of his 2005 *Sehar*. He doesn't go overboard and underplays a sharp cop, a rarity in Hindi films. Shah displays a wide range which he has perfected over the years, and Dutta looks ruthless and ambitious as the corrupt CM. In between, Kelkar also throws in some punches. But this is not what *Irada* will be known for. Its head-on take on the overuse of natural resources should be considered an alarm bell. The epidemic can spread to other places even before we realise and if it is in our hands to restrict the menace, we should better act. Also, it's the age of theme-driven films and *Irada* has a strong one.

I might change Taimur's name: Saif Ali Khan



(Agencies) Bollywood actor Saif Ali Khan has said he might change his newborn son Taimur's name once he is a year old, despite wife Kareena's opposition to the idea. Soon after Saif announced Taimur's birth, a raging debate broke out on Twitter over the name given to him by his parents. Many believed Saif shouldn't have named his son after Timur, the Turkish ruler who invaded India. Asked if he has now come to terms with the controversy surrounding his son's name, Saif told *The Times of India*: "I haven't told anyone about this — I thought for a second about changing his name. For a couple of weeks. And Kareena was a little against it, and she said, 'People respect you for your opinion and you can't'... So I said, yeah, but it's not

about people. I don't want him to get unpopular." And I still might, maybe when he's one or two, I might change his name in a while, it's still sinking in, what to do. Someone in my PR agreed with me, and we drafted a small letter. And when I read it, it was so pathetic, that I cancelled the idea. Because it was really like, uhh, 'I'm sorry', and 'I didn't want to offend' and 'I'm an idiot' (laughs), and you know, I've given in to pressure. It just sounded awful. However you write it, it just wasn't sounding right. It was like I didn't realise where I live or what I'm doing. So I did think about it. I thought about it, but it was for the wrong reason. If I feel that he's going to get in trouble in school, I might still change it. It's a bit late now, though. Or not. I don't know," Saif added.

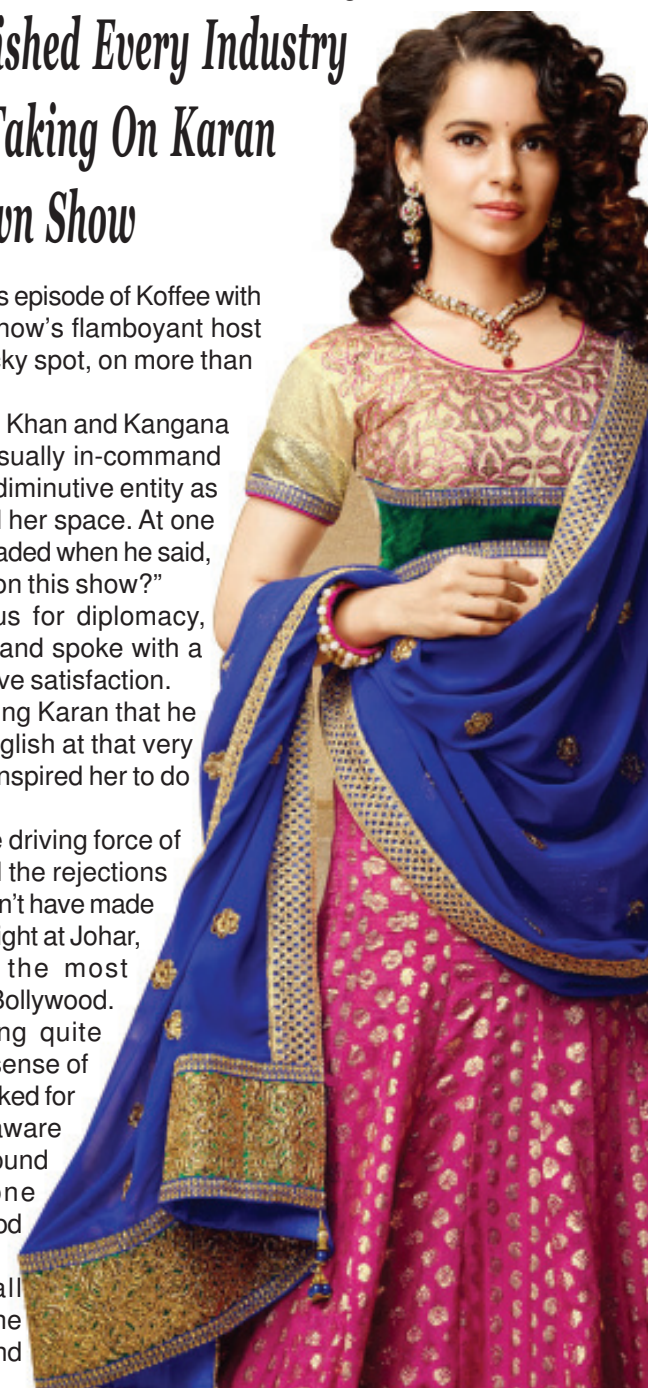
Kangana Demolished Every Industry Convention By Taking On Karan Johar On His Own Show

(Agencies) On last night's episode of *Koffee with Karan*, one found the show's flamboyant host in an uncomfortably sticky spot, on more than one occasion.

The guests were Saif Ali Khan and Kangana Ranaut, but even the usually in-command 'Nawab' seemed like a diminutive entity as Ranaut fiercely claimed her space. At one point, Khan even self-shaded when he said, "What am I even doing on this show?" In an industry notorious for diplomacy, Ranaut was confident, and spoke with a certain sense of vindictive satisfaction. She didn't mind reminding Karan that he had made fun of her English at that very show and that episode inspired her to do better.

"Karan, you've been the driving force of my life. If it wasn't for all the rejections and the mocking, I wouldn't have made it," she said, looking straight at Johar, undoubtedly one of the most powerful filmmakers in Bollywood. This reflects something quite terrific about Ranaut's sense of self. When she was mocked for her accent, she was aware that the accent didn't sound as polished as one expected from a Bollywood star.

Instead of getting all wound up, she took the criticism on her chin and worked on improving it.



It's not easy to say no to work: Dia Mirza

(Agencies) New Delhi: It's been six years since her last big screen outing "Love Breakups Zindagi", but Dia Mirza doesn't mind being away from the arclights in pursuit of "quality cinema". The actress-producer says it is difficult to say 'no' to work, but she is happy as long as she is part of "credible work" like a role in the Sanjay Dutt biopic.

Dia will play the role of Sanjay's wife Manyata Dutt in the biopic, which will be about the ups and downs that the actor has witnessed over the years personally and professionally.

"What has kept me away is the desire to be part of quality cinema that I feel warrants my full attention and love. I have invested 15 years of my life into a film career... Seven of which I have invested to being a film producer," Dia told IANS here.

The 35-year-old actress, who was here to unveil New Elite Inverter SKY series for the electronic brand Panasonic, says producing films helps one to start understanding the nuances of filmmaking and become

passionate about the craft.

"Then you want that craft to reflect in the performances and the choices you make as a performer."

"I am really happy that I am doing the Sanjay Dutt biopic and that's what I was really aiming to be a part of — just credible work. And I hope that these choices — as scary as they can be because it's not easy to say 'no' to work — will translate into all that I believe I offer, and do as an artiste," she added.

Asked how she is prepping for her role, Dia said: "I'm shooting

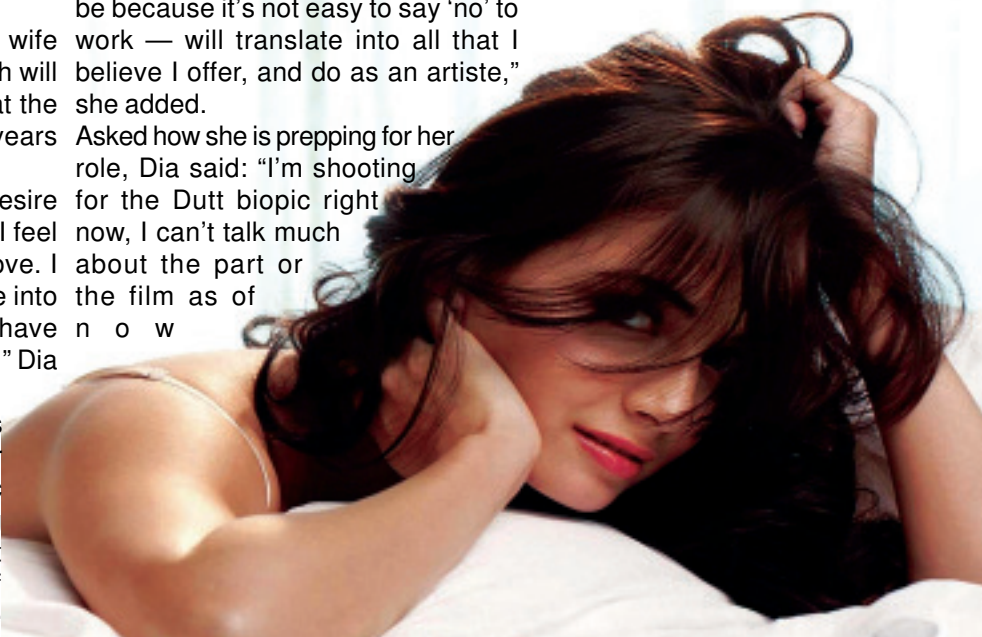
for the Dutt biopic right now, I can't talk much

about the part or the film as of

n o w

because we are under production."

A former beauty queen who won the Miss Asia Pacific 2000 title, Dia made her debut in cinema in 2001 with the film "Rehnaa Hai Terre Dil Mein". She was later seen in films like "Deewaanapan", "Tumko Na Bhool Paayenge", "Dum", "Parineeta" and "Kurbaan".



Bhansali truly makes an artiste out of me: Priyanka Chopra

(Agencies) Actress Priyanka Chopra is all praises for Sanjay Leela Bhansali, who turned 54 on Friday, and says the filmmaker makes an artiste out of her every time she collaborates with him. The actress has worked with the filmmaker in



"Bajirao Mastani" and "Goliyon Ki Raasleela — Ram Leela". "Happy birthday Sanjay Leela Bhansali... You truly make an artiste out of me every time we work together. Here's to many more years of your magic," Priyanka tweeted on Friday. Currently, Bhansali is busy filming for his upcoming project "Padmavati", which was in the line of fire last month. The film stars Ranveer Singh, Deepika Padukone and Shahid Kapoor. Activists of the Karni Sena damaged some cameras and other equipment on the "Padmavati" set in January in Jaipur as they opposed what they called was distortion of historical facts in the film, which is about Alauddin Khilji, the medieval-era Delhi ruler, who fell in love with Rajput queen Padmavati.

Have made my space without backing, support, says Aditi Rao Hydari

(Agencies) She's clearly on a career high this year with roles in "Aur Devdas", "Padmavati", Mani Ratnam's film "Kaatru Veliyidai" and in Sanjay Dutt's comeback film "Bhoomi". Actress Aditi Rao Hydari says she finds it gratifying to play such myriad roles as she has done it "step by step on my own".

"I feel very lucky to be part of all these projects... More so, because I have done it step by step on my own without any backing or support in the film industry," Aditi said in a question by IANS during a Facebook live chat.

"It's been tough but I have also been very blessed. When you're working with people like this, you can never have complains. I never have complaints, I always look at the positive side. And I know I have such a strong belief in my work and dreams, that things just happen... I want to do better work, without support and backing," she added.

The ambassador of beauty and skincare brand Avon, Aditi was launching the Avon True range digitally via the chat. She was answering queries ranging from her beauty regime to her work and

social media involvement.

The actress, who has featured in Bollywood films like "Yeh Saali Zindagi", "Khoobsurat" and "Fitoor", also says she is willing to go to any extent to look her character when a film requires.

"I think that as an actor, you have to become the character. And whatever the character demands, you must do. When you wear a particular kind of make-up — whether it's prosthetics or little

changes in make-up — maybe on your, in the way you do your eyebrows, or line your eyes... It makes a huge difference and makes you look like a different person," she said.

"You're used to a certain kind of look which is routine. But the moment you change that, you feel different. I think it's really important to put that extra effort to create a new look for a character. It also stays with

people. As an avid movie watcher, I know what a difference it can make, and I can go to any extent to do that," she added.

Aditi is known for the glow on her face and the radiance she exudes. Is that a result of dedicated workout sessions or she believes in natural ways?

"I am not very good with regimes usually, but I am intuitive with them. I listen to my skin, I listen to my body... This sounds very hocus-pocus, but it's true and it works. I keep a balanced diet, and believe that good health starts from inside."

"My day starts with apple cider vinegar and warm water. I try my best not to miss my workouts,

which, I am sorry to admit, I do very often. But I do lot of yoga, helps you to stay calm, peaceful and hopefully beautiful even under trying circumstances. It takes a lot for me to get angry, and I think all these things help me maintain that," Aditi said.

Is being a private person a bane or a boon when you are a public figure?

"It's important for me to speak my mind but to do so responsibly... Social media rules our lives and that can be hard as well as really thrilling... And as far as my personal life is concerned, the answer is in the question itself, it is personal and only for me to know. Doesn't that makes sense?" she said.



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