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Why Aamir Khan is not on Forbes list of world's highest paid actors



Lumpen Supporters go on rampage leaving scores dead & cities scalded as Ram Rahim is Convicted of Rape

DEATH CULT



Security forces march past the body of a man killed during violence in Panchkula, Haryana.

STORY ON page 13-14



30 lives lost in police firing & violence during protests	350 number of people injured in clashes till last reports	1,000 people detained by police for creating unrest
7yrs minimum term rapist Ram Rahim faces in prison	2 lakh number of cult supporters who caused the riots	

Triple Talaq is void and illegal in India

Indian Supreme Court Declares Triple Talaq Unconstitutional

(News Agencies)After conflicting reports from the five-judge constitutional bench passing law on the validity of Triple Talaq, fresh reports say the apex court has declared Triple talaq unconstitutional by a 3:2 majority.

While Chief Justice J S Khehar and Justice S Abdul Nazeer were in favour of putting on hold for six months the practice of triple talaq,

asking the government to come out with a law in this regard, Justices Kurian Joseph, R F Nariman and U U Lalit held it as violative of the Constitution. Justice Kurien Joseph has said Triple Talaq is not an essential religious practice, neither a Quranic tenant so it cannot be protected under Article 25 as an exercise of practice of religion. Supporting the view, Justice Lalit and

Justice Nariman held that personal law is also law within Article 13 and can be and is subjected to fundamental rights, adding that instant Triple talaq violates Article 14 which enshrines equality.

CJI Khehar and Justice Nazeer also held it be violative but asserted that personal law is protected under Article 25 where court can't intervene. (Contd on page 23)



Nikki Haley Says Donald Trump Had To Put Pressure On India For Afghanistan Role

She said America's enemies were no longer going to know "what the timeline is".



(News Agencies) US ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley said on Tuesday the Trump administration had to put

pressure on India to step up its role in bringing about a political solution to end the prolonged war in Afghanistan.

Her comments came as Trump unveiled his new Afghan strategy retracting from his initial instinct to pull out from Afghanistan. Instead, the US president said, the American troops will "fight to win" the 16-year-long conflict. In a prime-time address, Trump called out Pakistan for providing safe havens to terrorists but also said that India was making "billions of dollars in trade with the United States, and we want them to help us more with Afghanistan..." "We've got

to put the pressure on India that they have to be part of the political solution," Haley told CNN. The Indian-origin US ambassador to the UN said that Trump was taking a regional approach to end the Afghan conflict. "This is not just about Afghanistan. This is about the region, and so that means that we've got to put the pressure on Pakistan," she said, adding that Pakistan can no longer harbour safe havens for terrorists. "We need to continue to let Iran know that all of this terrorism and their sponsorship of it is not something we're going to put up with. And we need the

international community to step up and say, look, if we're going to do this, we're doing it together. It's not the US alone," Haley said. She said America's enemies were no longer going to know "what the timeline is". "What our enemies are going to know is, we're not putting up with the terrorism anymore and we're going to do whatever it takes," she told the network. Senator Ben Cardin, a ranking member of Senate Foreign Relations Committee, supported Trump's Afghan policy. "I think the president, is calling on regional cooperation. That is the right thing. We need to have Pakistan

as a more cooperative partner in dealing with Afghanistan. India could be an important partner in dealing with this," he told on MSNBC News. "What I find difficult to follow is what he's doing on the military side. It looks like he is dealing another surge with additional troops being put into Afghanistan," he said. Cardin said the US needed a diplomatic surge. "That, to me, is going to be the key, whether he can implement a surge and have the confidence of our regional partners that we can really bring peace to Afghanistan," the Democratic Senator said.

Abusive British-Indian husbands make their wives' lives hell

Last week, as Indians were celebrating 70 years of Independence, a group of women in London held a protest demanding their own freedom. Hundreds of women find themselves abused and exploited because the husband can easily cancel his partner's visa, leaving his wife in limbo.

(News Agencies) Anjalika Sharma was the director of her own consulting company in Delhi when she gave it up to marry her husband. He was an educated IIT graduate and from a similar family so they seemed like a good fit. But just one month after they came to Great Britain to start their family he started to abuse her. At first her husband wanted to sell off her property in India to pay for his house in Britain. When she refused (it was a present from her parents) he started to threaten her. "He told me he would cancel my visa, divorce me and it would bring shame

to my family," she told me. Then the abuse got worse. She says he took videos of him raping her and threatened to post them online if she reported him. British police are now investigating. "We are Indians, we are a bit scared of breaking off our marriages you know," she told me with regret. It took her three years to leave her marriage, despite being independent-minded and financially secure.

The sad truth is that there are thousands more women like Anjalika. Indian brides who move to Britain are in a vulnerable position and can easily be

taken advantage of by abusive husbands. It is not hard for the husband to cancel his wife's visa after a dispute, leaving her stranded and without any support. Anjalika told me: "People who take their wives outside India can manipulate women, because they know they don't have anywhere else to go." Not all marriages between Indians end up in tears of course. I have plenty of friends who came to Britain and America after marriage in India and live happily. But as a growing number of Indians move abroad, this problem keeps getting worse. I spoke to another victim who is

facing similar problems. Mamta Reddy earned good money in Hyderabad as an IT consultant before she got married and moved to the UK three years ago. Immediately her husband took all her job earnings and controlled what she did. "He physically abused [me] so many times. I took that matter to his parents also, but his parents just ignored it." Because her visa depended on his name she was stuck. In July this year he persuaded her to come back to Hyderabad to "resolve" their problems. But it was just a ruse. He took her visa and left for Britain without telling her.



Then he cancelled it with the authorities, leaving her abandoned in India. She told me: "Right now I don't have single penny with me [from] what I earned [last] three years." Her husband exploited her for three years and then left her without any problems. Last week, as Indians were

celebrating 70 years of Independence, a group of women in London held a protest demanding their own freedom. Poonam Joshi, founder of Indian Ladies in the UK (ILUK), who organised the protest, was abandoned by her husband years ago.

(Contd on page 23)

Google and Walmart team up to take on Amazon in e-commerce

Walmart, the world's biggest retailer, and Google, the internet's predominant search engine, are teaming up in an attempt to challenge Amazon's growing dominance in online shopping.

(Agencies) Walmart, the world's biggest retailer, and Google, the internet's predominant search engine, are teaming up in an attempt to challenge Amazon's growing dominance in online shopping.

The deal will make the retailer's products available on Google Express, and follows Amazon's announcement that it plans to acquire supermarket

chain Whole Foods. "Starting in late September, we'll be working with Google to offer hundreds of thousands of items for voice shopping via Google Assistant -- the largest number of items currently offered by a retailer through the platform," Marc Lore, Walmart's head of e-commerce, said in a blog post late Tuesday. Walmart will integrate

Google Express, which already lets people purchase products from a large range of brands, such as Costco and the pharmacy Walgreen's, into its own platform. "If you're an existing Walmart customer, you can choose to link your Walmart account to Google and receive personalized shopping results based on your online and in-store Walmart purchases,"

Google said in a statement. Walmart's third-quarter results, released this month, once again highlighted its persistent lag behind Amazon, even if the numbers were better than expected.

Walmart US, the biggest division at Wal-Mart Stores, posted a 1.8 percent rise in comparable sales in the second quarter from the year earlier, with revenues rising 2.1



percent to \$123.4 billion, reflecting more aggressive spending. But net income fell 23.2 percent to \$2.9 billion, (Contd on page 23)

71st *I* day Celebration at Queens Borough Hall



(Agencies) On August 17, 2017 at 6:00P.M. At "Helen Marshall Cultural Center" at Queens Borough Hall. Celebration kicked-off Indian Tri Colour flag, National Anthems of India and USA. "Jana Gana, Vanda Matram, Mere Rang De Besanti, I love my India" remix by Vocalist Anuradha Khanna + Kids Nashawn Singh, Aditya Dutt and Prashasti Huliya "Ye Des Vir

Jawanoka" by Virendra Banker Patriotic song. Jam packed auditorium where the largest diversified Indian American reside in USA at Borough of Queens. Along with Borough President Melinda Katz, presance of Paramita Tripathi deputy consul Gen. of India NY, Councilman Barry S. Gordonchik, Elected Officials

Invited Guest with delegates and patriotic friends from different group. Presenting colour by NY correction Department Pledge of Allegiance and Remaks on Independence of India. Shree Shashikant Patel read message received from Chief Minister of Gujrat Shri Vijay Rupani conveying his well wishes on this celebration. Presentation of

Citation was given to Shashikant Patel, Shree Labhubhai Upadhyaya and Rita Kohli for their community cultural social services since 4 decades. Everyone spoke about unity and to strengthen both nation and community leader responsibility. Joy and Unity representing Indian Folk dance Gaba -Rass by India Home Ladies. Gopi Udeshi thanks

to borough community coordinator Mohamed Hack-BAPS Temple, Bruhud NY seniors, Jain Temple and Global Physician network and committee members and volunteers For their efforts and dedication to make this event a big success. Event ended with light dinner and lots of Homeland Memories.

Williamsburg Neighbors Furious After Garbage Truck Hits, Wrecks 12 Cars

(Agencies) NEW YORK — A garbage truck trashed one car after the other this week, leaving a mess on a Brooklyn street and some angry car owners asking if the truck driver be charged. CBS2's Marc Liverman reported had exclusive video of the damage, which affected 12 cars. Metal on metal, shattered glass, and mangled, wrecked cars were seen along Nostrand Avenue in Williamsburg, Brooklyn Monday morning. A Crown Container Company driver came down the street in a garbage truck and crashed into all the cars. The door was pulled off. The front fender was off. The tires all, you know,

blown up," he said. Luckily, no one was hurt. But Rios said he depended on that van to be able to get both him and his mother to their doctors' appointments. "They called a tow truck to take it away, because it was really demolished," Rios said. Rios said Crown Container offered him \$5,300 for the totaled car. Emanuel Acosta was still waiting to learn what he will get for his brand new Nissan Maxima. "The front bumper is screwed up, the back, everything – bad; door, everything — bad, bad, bad," he said. "It do make me mad." Acosta is a part-time Uber driver. He depends on the money from driving to survive,

and he does not know what he is going to for money until he gets his car back. Not seen in the video is what caused the truck to slam into all the cars. That is something police are working to figure out too. They have not said whether that driver was drunk or if he fell asleep. So far, there are no criminal charges, although the driver has been suspended. But Rios said that is not good enough. He wants him fired. "Take him out. Don't let him drive no more," Acosta said. "With a guy like that, hey, it could happen again." Crown Container Company issued a statement reading in part: "We are very



sorry for the damage that was done by our truck, and are thankful no one was hurt.... The driver has been suspended until the investigation is complete." That was little solace to the dozen car owners whose lives were

changed in an instant. One of the car owners said he normally washes his car around the time it was hit. Despite the costly damage, Acosta said he is thankful that he and the other car owners were not hurt.

'Pig, go back to India': Indian origin CEO abused by Donald Trump supporter in US

Ravin Gandhi posted a YouTube audio on Thursday of a woman abusing him and saying: "You're a f*** Indian pig."**

(Agencies) An Indian-origin CEO in the US was racially abused after he wrote an article saying he will not defend US President Donald Trump's economic agenda after the violence in Charlottesville where white supremacists clashed with counter-demonstrators. "I recently told the New York Times I was 'rooting' for certain aspects of Trump's economic agenda," Ravin Gandhi, CEO of GMM Nonstick Coatings, wrote for CNBC.

"After Charlottesville and its aftermath, I will not defend Trump even if the Dow hits 50,000, unemployment goes to 1 percent, and GDP grows by 7%. Some issues transcend economics, and I will not in good conscience support a president who seems to hate Americans who don't look like him," he said. What followed were a string of racist attacks on email and Twitter and Gandhi posted a voicemail on YouTube on Thursday

of a woman abusing him and saying: "You're a f***** Indian pig." Continuing with the rant, the alleged Trump supporter can be heard scornfully saying: "Get your f***** garbage and go back to India, and sell it there." The woman also called the Indian American US ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley a "Bangladesh creep" and said they will start taking down Buddhist statues. Gandhi is not a Buddhist and grew up in Illinois'

Waukegan, the Chicago Tribune reported. The audio has more than 7000 views, with a user pointing out that India wasn't a Buddhist majority country and saying: "Why are racists so ignorant?" "Even though my race is a complete non-issue in my day-to-day life, the sad reality is there's a group of racists in the USA that views me as a second-class citizen," Gandhi told the Chicago Tribune when he was asked why he posted the audio online. The US



president has been widely criticised for his failure to denounce white supremacists, neo-Nazis, and Ku Klux Klan members who took out a march to 'Unite the Right' in Charlottesville, Virginia, earlier this month. Reports say there has been a spike in racist attacks in the US after Trump assumed office.

Trump's speech signals a strategy for South Asia, not just for Afghanistan

This time, Washington should aim to change Pakistan's behaviour rather than just its public statements



It took US President Donald Trump months to finally decide on his policy for Afghanistan, America's longest war. Trump's reluctance to immediately acquiesce to his military's demands did result, though, in the most careful study of various Afghanistan options undertaken by any US administration – and one that also holds out the promise of transforming South Asia's dynamics for the better.

President Trump did well in his speech to justify continued US engagement in Afghanistan,

and key to that was the open-ended commitment of troops and the decision not to specify troop numbers. The US military and their civilian counterparts have never had the time horizon to effectively implement measures that could have strengthened the Afghan state or weakened terrorist organisations that continue to maintain region-wide support networks. Afghan security forces have fought bravely but lack adequate air power, leadership, retention rates and coalition support to stem the

tide of a resurgent Taliban, which now controls more ground than at any point since 2001. The new, open-ended commitment will also boost the morale of the Afghan security forces, who are engaged in more than two dozen battles against the Taliban across the country. Just as importantly, by approaching the Afghan strategy as a South Asian one, Washington is recognising again that this is a regional challenge. For the US to have withdrawn from Afghanistan would have prompted the collapse of the state and most likely resulted in greater factional violence. India, Pakistan, Iran and others would have been forced to increase support to their chosen sides in the conflict, exacerbating regional tensions and perhaps setting the scene for a disastrous showdown in the region. Pakistan and its 120 nuclear warheads would have become more vulnerable.

Already Iran, Russia and China have been looking to exert greater influence in Afghanistan given Washington's silence (perceived as absence) thus far.

President Trump's decision to specifically mention India in his speech reflects New Delhi's deep ties to Afghanistan. India remains Afghanistan's most important regional partner, contributing to the construction of key dams, roads, power infrastructure and even the Afghan parliament building; committing \$200mm in small development projects; and providing food aid, educational scholarships and other in-kind support. Its Afghanistan-friendly tariffs have transformed India into one of Afghanistan's primary export markets.

At the same time, his mention of Pakistan lays much of the blame on Afghanistan's eastern neighbour. The Afghans and international partners cannot prevail unless the Taliban's support networks, training camps and safe havens in Pakistan are dealt with. But Washington now needs to match its words with deeds. Through specific publicly and privately communicated conditions – and through delivering on promised consequences – Washington should this time aim to change Pakistan's behaviour rather than just its public statements. At the same time, it will have to communicate to Pakistan why, and how, playing a positive role in Afghanistan will not be a threat to Pakistan's own national interest.

Taken together, this renewed commitment to Afghanistan and increased engagement of India

and Pakistan could have the side benefit – but an enormous one – of fostering improved relations across the region. If Afghanistan can be used as a cause for all three countries to rally around, there is a real possibility that that cooperation could ease broader tensions between them and potentially result in closer ties.

There are of course other key elements to Trump's strategy. The floundering and deeply unpopular National Unity Government in Afghanistan needs to deal with corruption, broaden its base and earn its legitimacy, as ultimately it relies for its survival on the support of the Afghan people. Trump was right to demand that the Afghans need to do much of the heavy lifting and that US support will not come in the form of a blank cheque. He was also right to not insist on peace talks with the Taliban; their intransigence and continued terrorist attacks reflect their unwillingness to talk. Only a strong government in Kabul coupled with gains in the battlefield will prompt them to seriously consider a settlement. As announced on Monday, the ultimate goal of US strategy will continue to be the prevention of terrorist groups from using Afghan territory for launching or planning attacks against the US. However, as the President mentioned, this cannot happen in isolation. There are many moving parts to this reset involving the Afghan government, the US and Nato allies. Just as importantly, for the greater good of the region, Afghanistan, India and Pakistan should work together in unison for Afghanistan's future.

Triple talaq verdict: Laud SC for coming to the aid of citizens, once again

The Supreme Court observed that what is bad in religion is also bad in law, and put an end to the discriminatory practice of triple talaq

It's a Red Letter Day for Muslim women and gender justice in India. The Supreme Court of India has struck down the controversial practice of talaq-e-bidat or instant talaq, which gives men the power to end a marriage by simply uttering "talaq" to their wives three times in succession. Putting an end to the contentious custom, where Muslim women in recent times have been divorced over messages, phone calls, e-mails and letters, the court said, what is bad in religion is also bad in law and the discriminatory practice needs to end. However, a minority view of two judges, supported talaq-e-bidat on the grounds that it has been in vogue for the last 1400 years and reforms to 'personal law' in India, with reference to socially unacceptable practices should come about only by way of legislative intervention.

This judgment is not

just a testament to the grit and determination of Shayara Bano and four other women who decided to take the issue head on and approach the Supreme Court, but also Muslim groups, especially women, who came out in protest against instant triple talaq. This is the first time in the life of the republic that Muslim women challenged an Islamic practice as violative of their fundamental right. What is also reassuring is that these women in the last two years have come out openly to talk about their anguish challenged discriminatory and obstructionist elements in Islam. Besides, efforts of the apex court too need to be lauded – as once again it has risen to the occasion and reasserted its position as protector, enforcer, and guardian of citizens' rights when governments have failed in their jobs. This case of Shayara Bano also has striking

similarities with the case of Shah Bano – at least as regards the plight of the women – decided by the Supreme Court 32 years back. While the court then also came forward to the aid of Muslim women recognising the right to alimony, the judgment was brought to naught by legislative interference.

However, this time around the judgment suits the political establishment. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been very vocal in his support for the Muslim women. On the occasion of 71st Independence Day, Mr Modi admired the courage of women who have been suffering due to triple talaq, asserted that nation is with them in their struggle. The government had gone to the extent of making a submission in the court that the government will come out with the law to regulate marriage and divorce among Muslims if the court holds triple talaq as invalid.



Undoing injustice

On instant triple talaq verdict



By declaring the discriminatory practice of instant triple talaq as unconstitutional, the Supreme Court has sent out a clear message that personal law can no longer be privileged over fundamental rights. Three of the five judges on the Constitution Bench have not accepted the argument that instant talaq, or talaq-e-biddat, is essential to Islam and, therefore, deserves constitutional protection under Article 25. The biggest virtue of the two opinions constituting the majority judgment is that they do not have to undermine any religious tenet to make their point. On the contrary, as Justice Kurian Joseph says, the forbidden nature of triple talaq can be gleaned from the Koran itself. Justice Rohinton Nariman, writing the main judgment, locates the practice in the fourth degree of obedience required by Islamic tenets, namely, makruh, or that which is reprobated as unworthy. The main ground on which the practice has been struck down is a simple formulation: that “this form of talaq is manifestly arbitrary in the sense that the marital tie can be broken capriciously and whimsically by a Muslim man without any attempt at reconciliation so as to save it.” In fact, the final summation is so simple that the court did not even have to elaborate on how triple talaq violates gender equality. On the contrary, Justice Nariman says that having held the practice to be arbitrary, there is really no need to go into the element of discrimination. The court deserves commendation for undoing the gender injustice implicit in the practice so effortlessly, within constitutional parameters as well as the Islamic canon.

The present case was initiated suo motu by the court, but opinion against triple talaq could not have gathered critical mass and the case against it significantly bolstered if it weren't for a few women standing up to the community's conservative elements and challenging it. Any other outcome would have been a great injustice to them. Even the judges in the minority have had to concede that their reasoning is based mainly on the fact that this form of talaq is a matter of personal law, and therefore entitled to constitutional protection. “It is not open to a court to accept an egalitarian approach over a practice which constitutes an integral part of religion,” writes Chief Justice J.S. Khehar in his minority opinion. Interestingly, even his view segues into a somewhat egalitarian position, restraining Muslim men from pronouncing triple talaq until Parliament enacts a law to regulate it. The All India Muslim Personal Law Board, and all those who supported its regressive opinion that even an unworthy practice should not be dislodged by judicial verdict, should now accept the verdict in the interests of a modern social order. And there is no reason to contend that their faith has been unduly secularised. For, as Justice Joseph concludes, “what is bad in theology is bad in law as well.”

And the war goes on

On Trump's South Asia policy

US President Donald Trump's decision to deepen the country's military engagement in war-torn Afghanistan signals a significant shift in the position he has held for years. Mr. Trump had campaigned to end American involvement in foreign conflicts and was particularly critical of the Afghan war, which he said was “wasting” American money. His announcement on Monday of the decision to send more troops to the country reflects a realisation that the U.S. does not have many options in dealing with its longest military conflict. This is also a grim reminder of the precarious security situation in Afghanistan. Sixteen years since George W. Bush ordered the American invasion of Afghanistan and toppled the Taliban regime, the insurgents are on the ascendent again. More than half the country's territory, mostly in rural, mountainous areas, is now controlled by the Taliban, while the Islamic State has set up base in eastern Afghanistan. In recent years, both the Taliban and the IS have carried out a number of terror attacks in the country, including at highly fortified military locations, raising questions about the very survival of the government in Kabul. This is a worry point for Mr. Trump's generals, who want to avoid the kind of vacuum left behind by the Soviet withdrawal in the late 1980s that plunged Afghanistan into a protracted civil war; the Taliban eventually took over.

But it is not going to be easy for Mr. Trump. He is the third consecutive American President to send troops to Afghanistan. Mr. Bush and Barack Obama failed to swing the situation sufficiently to ensure a long-lasting difference in Afghanistan's battleground. It is not clear if Mr. Trump can win a war they lost. His strategy can be summed up as Obama-plus — it builds on the premises of the Obama plan of additional troops and regional diplomacy. But unlike Mr. Obama, who set a timetable for the withdrawal of troops, Mr. Trump is ready for an open-ended engagement. He also said the focus of the American mission should narrow down to fighting terrorists, not rebuilding Afghanistan “in our own image”. Third, Mr. Trump minced no words while calling Pakistan a country that shelters terrorists. He also wants India to play a greater role in providing economic and developmental assistance to Afghanistan. India has welcomed Mr. Trump's strategy, as the U.S.'s objectives in building a stable Afghanistan and ending Pakistan's sponsorship of terrorism are exactly in line with India's own goals for the region. It has, however, correctly reminded Mr. Trump that it does not need his request, never mind his coarse reference to “billions of dollars” made in bilateral trade with the U.S., in order to fulfil its commitment to Afghanistan's economic development. Such open transactionalism will not serve the U.S.'s efforts in winning allies for its new Afghanistan policy, nor indeed will it further its mission in a country that is not unfairly called the “graveyard of empires”.



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The Pathetic & dangerous transformation of India to Crony Capitalism in last 70 year

By Dave Makkar

If Modi had even an iota of Nationalism/Patriotism towards India and love for the less fortunate Indians; he would have cut down the cost of governance of India. He could have announced some measures to at least re-structure the 53 Ministries to cut down their excessive numbers & massive size, Complete ban on Official Functions in 5 Star Hotels & Resorts, Abolish Pension for MP's, Ban on allocation of properties for Political Party Offices, end to VVIP & VIP culture of providing security & subsidized housing, cap on telephone bills, air travel, foreign trips, rail travel of elected & appointed officials and un-necessary appointment of officials under Ministers and various departments, commissions and committees. Can Modi explain how come a law maker is entitled to Pension and princely perks after winning one election only even if he never get elected again; where as a government servant is entitled to a pension only after 20-25 years of service. Modi could have proposed a road map to cut down the non-plan expenditure from present 74% to at least 60% in next 4 years. Modi in his political carrier as Gujarat CM has been a known destroyer of any opposition in his own party as well as leaders of other political

parties. He is also known to have least respect for democratic norms and judiciary. Since 2014 Modi is ruling India with the same undemocratic philosophy and destroying all the democratic institutions, judiciary as well as any opposition all over India to make India, "Opposition Free". Congress also tried to destroy opposition parties to make it one party rather one family rule in India and they succeeded to a certain extent only. Recently a writer Apoorvanand wrote about the reaction of Munshi Premchand that "Elimination of Opposition is a Threat to Democracy." India never had a good ruler since independence except for a very brief period Lal Bahadur Shastri and Morarji Desai. All of them including the current PM/Ruler Modi has proved to be the facilitators of crony capitalism. Modi has gone one step further by becoming the first & the last PM of India that put his hand in the mouth of poor to take out what they were eating and took away their professions and openly allowing mob lynching of people. They all have lived/living to the apprehensions of Mahatma Gandhi that he feared India will have English Rule without the Englishmen! India is in the top ten nations with the widest socio-economic gap. It is an economically, socially and politically failed state for

majority of its 1.3 billion citizens; who can not solve its socio-economic, religious and political problems including its Land dispute with Pakistan since 1948 over Kashmir. India's elite world famous Billionaires part of the 56 million filthy rich Indians are living side by side with almost a billion poor and treat them as sub humans who are burden for the country. It looks like Indian Leadership political, religious and business rather than being ashamed of this, are proud to have more than 800 million Indians living under extreme poverty & inhuman conditions. They have the insanity to say "India is shining". A former diplomat, politician, author and thinker Pavan Varma wrote in his book "Being Indian" that in the Indian elite "there is a remarkable tolerance for inequality, filth and human suffering". He adds that "concern for the deprived and the suffering is not a prominent feature of the Indian personality. The rich in India have always lived a life quite oblivious to the ocean of poverty around them". Less than 10-15 minutes from every slum in any major city of India there are very expansive heavily guarded residential areas with houses rather mini palaces costing few million dollars to \$1 Billion Mukesh Ambani's Palace. One city: two universes.

Out of the total budget, 74% is used to run the system/ government and 38% in debt servicing after adding new borrowing. In real terms the cost to run the system is 115% and 60% in debt servicing. The non-plan expenditure i.e. just to run the "System" or the government that includes Police, Military, Judiciary, Postal Services, President, Vice President, Prime Minister, 30 Governors (political appointees of the ruling party), 53 Ministries with numerous departments, 1 Department of Atomic Energy, various Commissions/ Committees to accommodate failed politicians, friends &

relatives, 543 MP's, millions of government employees as well as so called Z category security services for rulers, their families & friends practically at all levels. The new additions under Modi very soon will be Cow Ministry, Ministry to advise people what to eat, what to wear, whom they can marry & how many kids Hindu couples should produce and Ministry of Nationalism; what is national & what is anti national! If Modi had even an iota of Nationalism/Patriotism towards India and love for the less fortunate Indians; he would have cut down the cost of governance of India. He could have announced some

measures to at least re-structure the 53 Ministries to cut down their excessive numbers & massive size, Complete ban on Official Functions in 5 Star Hotels & Resorts, Abolish Pension for MP's, Ban on allocation of properties for Political Party Offices, end to VVIP & VIP culture of providing security & subsidized housing, cap on telephone bills, air travel, foreign trips, rail travel of elected & appointed officials and unnecessary appointment of officials under Ministers and various departments, commissions and committees.

(Contd on page 22)

Tiny Creatures Converting Barren into heaven...

My inquisitiveness to know more about these fantastic weaver- birds was increasing. The mushroom growth of the nests was a bewitching phenomenon for me. Perhaps it was a question mark for lethargic human beings who do not even utilize their resources and these small, colorful birds were striving to collect twigs from dawn to dusk. I was quite exuberant at the sweet chirping of these birds. It seemed as if they were busy talking and sharing their joys and sorrows. A but-natural comparison started shaking my mind that we, the human- beings.... The super creation of god.... have plethora of amenities. In spite of this, we are not contented and happy. The waves of depression and dissatisfaction are driving us into an ocean of wor-



barren into heaven. These birds were incubating new waves of optimism and contentment in me. I really want to emulate these masterminds of nature....

By Sonia Gaba

Every new dowry harassment case is an indictment of our society

Even as we hail the triple talaq verdict as progressive, there is a long way to go for gender justice to become a reality

Statistics from the capital alone reveal that there are as many as 10 dowry cases registered every single day. A worse statistic is that in spite of the number of cases registered, the number of convictions in the past four years in dowry related cases is zero. Only this week, a bright, intelligent, MBA graduate with ambitions to teach in a university killed herself in her in-laws home because she was unable to handle the harassment and constant demands for money from them. In a week where the triple talaq judgment is being hailed as a victory for gender justice,

it is sobering to acknowledge that "dowry death" is a normal way for a woman to die in this country. That dowry was outlawed in 1961 seems to have had no effect on large parts of society, in which parents of the bride are still expected to lavish "gifts" on the groom and his family. Last month, the Supreme Court ruled that a family welfare committee in every district will scrutinise dowry harassment cases before the local police can arrest the accused, because of the misuse of Section 498A of the Indian penal code, under which a man and his family, if named in a dowry

harassment case, could be immediately arrested. It is dangerous to begin with the assumption that the accuser might be misusing the law to her own advantage. While misuse is a genuine possibility, it cannot be denied that the problem is a rampant one, and one that must be addressed both from within society, and through laws. The deeply patriarchal mindset in which a woman is "given" to a man as a wife must change, because it implicitly injects a power imbalance between the husband and wife. Which, in turn, enables the belief that the



groom's family does the bride's a favour by taking her into the family. The triple talaq verdict may be a positive step in

the direction of recognising the rights of women, but the fight for gender justice and equality is far from over. It is only

when dowry and harassment stop being "yet another" stories, that real progress will be known to have happened.

PM Modi's Digital India will fail without mass IT awareness programmes

A major hurdle towards implementing the Digital India mission is the digital divide in the country. Even though mobile penetration in India is high, Internet connectivity is one of the lowest in the world.

Launched on July 1, 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Digital India (DI) initiative generated a great deal of euphoria. With emphasis on e-governance, project's objective was to create an empowered society and knowledge economy. The projected expenditure was Rs 1, 13,000 crore. Its highlights included providing high-speed Internet services to citizens, providing broadband services in all villages, implementing tele-medicine and mobile healthcare services, electronic education delivery and making governance more participative.

While the Digital India initiative is great on paper, its execution has been far behind schedule. There are many reasons for the PM's digital juggernaut rolling so slowly. The major hurdle towards implementing the DI mission is the wide digital divide that exists in the country. Even though mobile penetration in India is high, Internet connectivity is one



of the lowest in the world. Without connectivity, the effectiveness of digital services is hugely compromised. Lack of language and digital literacy in using technology to access and use information is another problem. Although inexpensive smartphones are available, most people — especially in rural and semi-rural areas — have no idea how to use them. The root cause of such barriers is our under-resourced education system and abysmally low IT awareness

among user communities. Nations around the world are recognising the transformational impact of bringing more of their population online. India needs to do this with urgency and speed. Most of India is still not connected — even if they are, the network infrastructure is so poor that speed is a major concern. Even in metros, we have to put up with abysmal speed even on 4G networks. This must change, and fast. For effective implementation of the

Digital India mission the laying of the National Optical Fibre Network has to be speeded up on a war-footing. At the moment, this is taking place at a snail's speed. The Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL) and its implementing agencies are slow in technology adaptation. They need to pull up their socks to deliver on PM Modi's vision of Digital India. Another important reason for the slow implementation of Digital India is lack of understanding of new

technologies such as cloud, mobility and IoT. Digital India content is highly vulnerable and needs to be secured against cyber attacks. But cyber security is not being given the attention it deserves. To speedily translate the prime minister's vision of Digital India into reality, we need to have a multipronged strategy and work on multidiscipline areas to bridge the digital divide that exists in India at present. The simplest way of doing this is through mass IT awareness programmes. Improving IT skills — both at user end as well as implementation end — needs to be a major priority. We also need to cut down on bureaucracy in the implementation of the National Optical Fibre Network — this is the first and most important step to connect the country on high-speed broadband. Finally, there is no option but to think of cloud-based solutions to disseminate digital services.

China's video games on Doklam show why Beijing finds it hard to exert soft power

The two recent videos — one of Indian and Chinese soldiers attacking each other with fists and rocks, and the other a bizarre one released by Xinhua — show that the problem lies with the Chinese government, and its default posture of condescension toward its neighbours

By now, you'll have seen the disturbing film clip of Indian and Chinese soldiers attacking each other with fists and rocks near Pangong Lake, in Ladakh. Such scuffles are, we're told, not unusual along the India-China border, but since civilians never get to see them, it doesn't crease our brows. My own first reaction on seeing it was relief that neither side used any of the lethal arms at its disposal, which ensured that the encounter didn't escalate from a street brawl. But on subsequent viewings, it was hard not to feel a frisson of primal fear at the sight of two nuclear-armed militaries coming to blows.

But in the hubbub created by that video, you may have missed another, in which Beijing attempted to use words where kicks and stones have failed. Last week, the Chinese official news agency Xinhua released a bizarre video in which a woman staffer, aided by a couple of colleagues, claims India has committed "seven sins" in its two-month standoff with China over Doklam. The video is unabashedly racist in its

depiction of Indians, and patronising toward Bhutanese. If the video was intended to shock and offend, all it did was mildly amuse. On social media, Indians chuckled at Xinhua's attempt to dress up a Chinese man as an "Indian" by giving him a Sikh turban and the kind of fake beard you'd use in a skit for a 5-year-old's birthday party. You have to wonder why the agency wasn't able to hire a South Asian actor (A friendly Pakistani, perhaps?) to play the part. Also unintentionally funny was the woman staffer's inexplicable use of an ersatz American accent, complete with California slang. At one point, she says: "Don't you wanna play house, bro?"

That the attempt fell flat is unsurprising: Political humour is rare in China, where laughing at the ruling elite can be injurious to a professional comedian's career, not to mention said comedian's health and freedom.



It's hard to make fun of other governments when you're not allowed to make jokes about your own. And it would too much to expect rapier sarcasm, or subtle ANYTHING, from so blunt an instrument of official propaganda as Xinhua.

(To show our fellow journalists — yes, Xinhua does employ some — how it's done, Hindustan Times asked comedienne Vasu Primlani to respond to the video. Rather than spoil it with a mundane description, I invite you to watch the video on our Facebook page. No fake beards were used.)

But what, apart from its clumsiness, is one to make of the Xinhua video? It suggests

Beijing wants to speak directly to Indians, over the heads of their political leaders, on the issue of Doklam. This is an interesting approach, even it was spoiled by the sheer ham-fistedness of the first effort. The second was a slight improvement. On Monday, Xinhua released another video on the topic of Doklam, this time minus the overt racism, and with a tone that, by Beijing's standards of bluster, is almost conciliatory. A male staffer (conspicuously unshorn by faux facial hair) suggests that India and China are both ancient civilizations, and "not born rivals". Curiously, he surmises that THIS is why India should immediately withdraw from all "Chinese territory". But he cannot resist the customary finger-wagging about the need for India to be "sober" and for Delhi to guard against "strategic myopia". At this rate of progress, it will be a long time, if such a time ever comes,

before Delhi need worry about the effectiveness of Beijing's propaganda directed at ordinary Indians. As any number of Sinologists have pointed out, the Chinese government struggles to exert any kind of soft power in the world, and especially in Asia. This is not because of its authoritarian nature: After all, even the Soviet Union was able to win friends, especially in the developing world, despite being a totalitarian state. Nor is it because the Delhi demonises Beijing: For one thing, the Indian government has been quite restrained, and for another, the United States was able to project soft power in India even when Indira Gandhi portrayed it as a foe. The videos show that the problem lies with the Chinese government, and its default posture of condescension toward its neighbours. Even when seeking to speak directly to Indians, Beijing succumbs to its propensity to hector and harangue — and winds up making a laughing-stock of itself with its target audience.

What India risks if it gets on board Trump's Afghanistan project

US President Donald Trump has said that he wants to further develop strategic partnership with India to achieve country's goals in Afghanistan

President Trump may have been uncomfortable with his teleprompter, but his speech will have sounded mellifluous to ears in New Delhi, mainly because he went farther than any American President in identifying Pakistan as one of the main causes of Afghanistan's problems. This open acknowledgment of reality is long overdue, and most welcome: good not only for Afghanistan, India and the US, but just possibly also for Pakistan, which has needed a bracing reality check for many years. But what is Delhi to make of Trump's invitation to play a bigger role in Afghanistan? India has many interests in that country, that

benefit them both. These have been developed painstakingly, against difficult odds, and for the most part bilaterally. One of the strengths of India's involvement in Afghanistan is that it is seen unambiguously as INDIAN involvement. Having developed these ties, India will have to decide whether it wants to be seen as part of the American project. This carries many risks, and potentially quite a few rewards. But any calculation of these has to start with an assessment of America's long-term commitment to its own project. India has to trust that Trump will do what Bush nor Obama didn't, and go the

distance, sticking to his word on Afghanistan. Let us be under no illusion that his stated goals can be achieved in a couple of years. The history of Afghanistan suggests it will more likely take decades, even with the sustained best efforts of the US and its allies. Delhi's quandary: What if Trump or his successor changes their mind and pulls out in 5/10 years? Even if the task is unfinished, it would be easy for the next occupant of the White House to dismiss the Afghanistan project as Trump's folly, and spin a withdrawal as in America's interest. Obama did that in Iraq, to his great political gain. But an American change of heart would



leave India badly exposed: unlike the US, India can't simply pull up stakes and leave Afghanistan to the Taliban, the Haqqani Network, the Islamic State, and any other wolves in the pack that Pakistan nurtures. The US may bear the

greater share of the cost of Trump's project, but the stakes are higher for India. So, much as the American President would like India along for the ride in Afghanistan, Delhi has much to ponder before climbing on board.

To put India on the top, focus on digitalisation, democracy and demography

The Development momentum initiated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is sustainable if India leverages the 3Ds – Digitalisation, Democracy, Demography, and fulfils the 'Sankalp Se Siddhi' pledge

India started its "tryst with destiny" on August 15, 1947. The 2047 centennial will be time to take stock of where we have reached. Will we be a world economic leader — not just in size, and will Indians be significantly better off?

However, to reach that "destiny" in 2047 is not easy. We must reduce poverty and inequality, ensure adequate food, and generate employment. India must compete successfully in a world transformed by technology — not just with countries but even MNCs, like Google, which alone has more than 25,000 researchers — the pick of international talent.

Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India has started generating the development momentum to fulfil our potential. It comes from executing a vision focused on enhancing productivity and employability, placing a premium on entrepreneurship, and empowering the poor with long-denied opportunities. It has broken from claustrophobic, centralised planning, which since the 1970's had throttled growth and created an ecosystem of corruption. Is this momentum sustainable? Yes it is sustainable by leveraging India's 3Ds — Digitalisation, Democracy, Demography, and fulfilling the 'Sankalp Se Siddhi' pledge as a country.

Digitalisation and technological

developments will transform our lives. At its core will be 'customisation within networks' i.e. allowing vast numbers of people to work together and cooperate, on a scale unimagined today, while maintaining individual preferences and information. Democracy remains the best political system for this new era — giving individuals a voice but also checking monopolistic behaviour. Demographics will yield dividends when we skill our youth for the new age and use these skills to create an entrepreneur driven economy.

Some of the ways in which we can put India's 3Ds to work are: National Digital Strategy — We need to create a national digital strategy detailing a proactive, future-focused approach to leveraging technology in education, employment, administrative reform, inclusion, etc. Build a 'Cooperation Economy' — Shift the focus away from individual, large-scale ventures and institutions. Instead use technology to create networks of individuals sharing information, research, common resources — effectively creating 'virtual' scale through technology.

Open 'distributed' architecture of economy — Build a seamless 'plug and play' environment that encourages innovation and entrepreneurship across sectors and even social activity. Change

knowledge acquisition and delivery in education, allow people to access others' research and share their own work easily. Encourage distributed manufacturing, thus creating multiple industrial centres spread across India rather than few unmanageable hubs. Distributed manufacturing also fits well with advances in renewable energy that are making smaller scale generation efficient. Explore substituting tightly integrated industrial processes with smaller ancillary suppliers that can cater to multiple production 'chains' — allowing more efficient capacity utilisation and potentially reducing cyclical swings.

Agriculture that's not focused on size — We continuously lament fragmented farm holdings. What we need is an agricultural revolution that uses technology to improve the returns for farmers. 'Uberisation' of capital intensive machinery, micro and precision agriculture to name some, are measures that can lead to quantum leaps in productivity and income. 'Wiki' governance and decentralised democracy — Our administrative structure needs retooling to enjoy the democracy dividend. This implies making local government institutions fiscally strong. It means real administrative power delegated down from Lutyens' Delhi and state capitals to local governments



— where decision-makers are accountable to the communities. It entails using technology, transparent and dynamic law-making and reduced 'exceptionalism' 'to evolve from a large enforcement behemoth into a self-regulation enabling regime. Technology-driven delivery of welfare initiatives — Technology, as Aadhaar has shown, will significantly reduce leakages in welfare. That is not enough. We need to use feedback from welfare schemes to dynamically determine real support needs. This means effective, not reduced, funding. The most underprivileged often need more support, and their needs must be determined on an ongoing and timely manner.

Smart citizens — Smart citizens make smart institutions. Citizens need to be educated for a technology driven world, equal access to opportunity and protection of

individual rights. Education is the most important ingredient. The UGC and relevant ministries must redesign curricula, focusing on using and harnessing technology to create solutions. This will help develop entrepreneurship. A 'pipeline' of new entrepreneurs is needed to benefit from the demographic dividend. Moral governance — We need a government that is doing what is 'right'. First we should attack the cancer of corruption afflicting our lives, and we should ensure that the "the poorest and weakest", as Mahatma Gandhi described, are included in the opportunities that India offers. These ideas should provide directional hints for action over the next three decades—till 2047. The 3 Ds are a lucky coincidence of strength that can fuel India's journey to the long-awaited tryst with destiny.

Delhi farmhouse, venue of TV soaps, ran illegal casino, 13 luxury cars seized



of the farmhouse were heavily guarded. So our men scaled the walls of the farmhouse from a forested side at around 11pm and gained access to the casino," said Biswal. Inside, many people were found gambling on four big casino tables.

police arrested the people present there. "We have seized the evidence which also includes chips worth crores. We have registered three FIRs in this connection and have invoked the Delhi Police Gambling Act and Delhi Excise Act," said Ishwar Singh, DCP (south).

Police also arrested Suresh Yadav, the alleged owner of the farmhouse. "Yadav had rented out his farmhouse to three men

to run the casino in May this year. He was present inside the casino at the time of the raid," Biswal alleged.

While the casino customers and women attendants were granted bail by a city court on Wednesday, the owner and the casino managers were sent to judicial custody, said Biswal.

In the past too, south Delhi farmhouses have been found running illegal casinos. In October 2016, casinos in Sainik Farms and Vasant Kunj were busted.

At the Vasant Kunj casino, the police found three large casino tables, stake money of Rs 43,500, seven packets of playing cards, 2,968 gambling tokens

worth crores and 85 bottles of liquor. In the past too, south Delhi farmhouses have been found running illegal casinos. In October 2016, casinos in Sainik Farms and Vasant Kunj were busted.

At the Vasant Kunj casino, the police found three large casino tables, stake money of Rs 43,500, seven packets of playing cards, 2,968 gambling tokens worth crores and 85 bottles of liquor. Businessmen, builders and share brokers were among 36 people arrested after police busted a "casino" set up for Diwali in a farmhouse in south Delhi's posh Sainik Farms, busted a week before the one in Vasant Kunj.

An illegal casino and bar were being run inside a 13-acre farmhouse in Fatehpur Beri in south Delhi. Police also seized 13 luxury cars from the site. A Delhi Police team scaled the walls of a farmhouse to raid an illegal casino and bar operating out of a sprawling 13-acre plot in Fatehpur Beri on Tuesday night. According to Chinmoy Biswal, additional DCP (south), the farmhouse located on the Dera Mandi Road has served as location for shooting films and TV soaps. "Some popular crime shows and daily soaps are shot here. The palatial structure of the farmhouse makes it a favourite destination for such shootings," said Biswal. The police arrested 30 persons from the site, including the alleged owner of the farmhouse, 14 players, 10 organisers and five female attendants. Thirteen luxury cars were also seized from the farmhouse that mostly had businessmen and property dealers from Delhi-NCR as its customers. Sources said

they had been informed about the casino few days back and they were waiting for the right opportunity to raid it when there would be ample evidence of the crime. The raid finally happened on Tuesday night after a tip-off by an informer. "The main gates

Muslim group says Supreme Court ruling on triple talaq violates Shariah



Jamiat general secretary Maulana Mehmood Madani said instant triple talaq was still valid as per the Islamic

code. The Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, one of India's largest Muslim groups, on Wednesday de-

scribed the Supreme Court decision on instant divorce as violative of the "Shariah" and a matter of "grave concern" for the Muslim community.

Jamiat general secretary Maulana Mehmood Madani said instant triple talaq was still valid as per the Islamic code notwithstanding the Supreme Court declaring it as unconstitutional and void in law.

"Even now, if a man administers instant talaq, it will come into effect as per Shariah for those who believe in it," he told reporters here. Madani

said the Jamiat has appealed to Muslims in India not to resort to divorce, especially instant divorce, "without very compelling reasons".

The apex court by a 3-2 decision struck down the centuries-old practice of instant triple talaq among Indian Muslims as unconstitutional and void in law, inviting appreciation from activists, politicians, clerics, celebrities, political outfits and NGOs, including the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) that was contending for the controversial practice.



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BLOODSPORT IN

PHOTOS: AGENCIES



By Manjeet Sehgal in Panchkula

MOBs rampaged across Haryana on Friday, leaving at least 30 people dead and more than 350 injured, while tensions flared in other parts of northern India after a court declared quasi-religious sect leader Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh guilty of raping two of his followers.

Officials said the rioting erupted in Panchkula, 250km north of Delhi, minutes after the special CBI court convicted the 50-year-old of the crimes committed in 2002. Singh, a burly, bearded man who has scripted and starred in his own films and travels in a fleet of bullet-proof cars, commands a near-devotional following — he claims in the millions — in Punjab and Haryana, where his Dera Sacha Sauda group is based.

(Above) An injured man is being lifted with help of cops during the clash on Friday; (right) a cop takes a selfie with his colleagues while paramilitary forces rush to take control of a fire that had been set by Dera followers in Panchkula.



192 cars formed the cavalcade that led to the Panchkula court before the hearing

Rampage

Supporters attacked railway stations, petrol pumps, buses and television vans as the Army was called in to restore order. Shocking photos showed bodies lying in the middle of the road, ringed by burning vehicles, as scores of security personnel marched past.

The Punjab and Haryana High Court ruled that if Singh's followers are found involved in causing loss to properties, the damages will be recovered from the Dera.

The quantum of sentence against Ram Rahim, who enjoyed 'Z' category security, will be pronounced on Monday, but experts say he faces at least seven years in prison. He was taken by a helicopter to a jail in Rohtak. Facing a barrage of attacks from the Opposition and on social media, chief minister Manohar Lal Khattar admitted that there were lapses but asserted appropriate action was being taken.

Asked how thousands of Dera followers managed to reach Panchkula

72,000 police personnel deployed across Haryana

and was his government equipped for this, the CM said, "We were prepared to deal with the situation."

The rape allegations surfaced in an anonymous letter sent to the then prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 2002. Scrutiny of the ashram grew when a journalist investigating the sect was shot dead the same year.

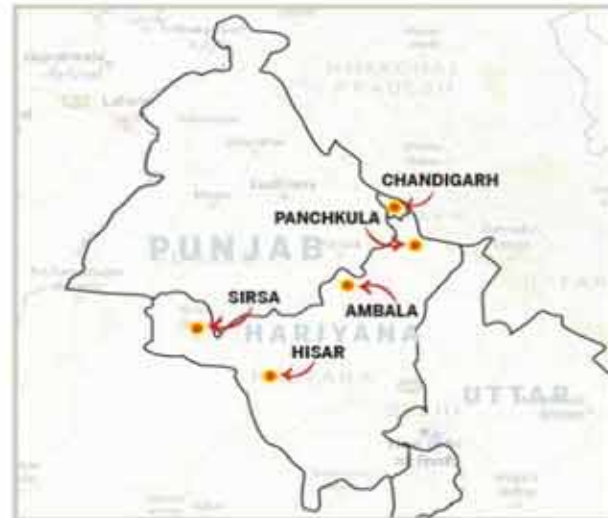
The trial in Panchkula triggered a security lockdown, with police closing schools and converting a cricket stadium into a jail in Chandigarh. Authorities in Haryana and Punjab had suspended internet services to curb social messaging in a bid to

contain anticipated unrest. In 2015, Ram Rahim was also accused of encouraging 400 followers to undergo castration at his ashram so they could get closer to God.

24 assault cases

The CBI chargesheets, main and supplementary, have mentioned names of 24 female disciples who left the Dera after being sexually abused. This reporter established contact with four victims through a former Dera aide, Gurdas Singh Toor, who spent six years with the sect and had access to the Baba's "secret place", called *goofa* (a cave), where girls were raped and tortured.

Two rape victims have revealed that he would ask his close female disciples to deploy three to four beautiful sadhvis as sentries to guard the cave through the night. The sect leader allegedly picked a new victim each day. One victim even accused Singh of raping schoolgirls. (With agency inputs)



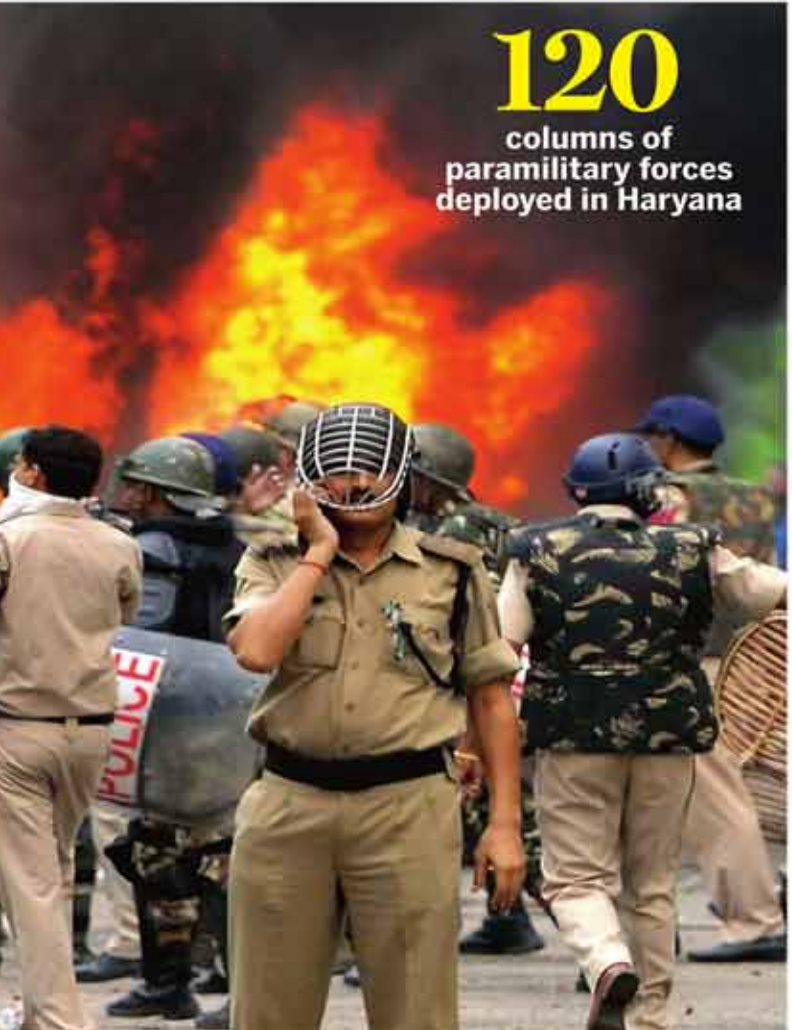
BABA AND BOLLYWOOD

EVEN as Bollywood took to social media to hail the judgement declaring Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh guilty of rape, the internet on Friday went viral with pictures of the 50-year-old self-styled godman in the company of several A-list filmstars. The godman has been known to wield substantial influence in the film community, and he reportedly loved being pictured with stars. Stars with whom Ram Rahim has been clicked at various events include Hrithik Roshan, Ranbir Kapoor, Sunny Leone, Rakhi Sawant and Tusshar Kapoor.



(Left) Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh with Anil Kapoor and John Abraham and (above) with Shilpa Shetty.

BABA'S NAME



120 columns of paramilitary forces deployed in Haryana

Real truth behind the Dera growth

1 Dera Sacha Sauda (place of real truth) was founded by Shah Mastana Balochistani in 1948. Mastana was succeeded by Shah Satnam in 1960.

2 Satnam conferred the post of the Dera chief on Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh in 1990 when he was only 23. Under Ram Rahim, DSS followers grew in volume from 10 lakh to over five crore in 27 years.

3 Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh was born in August 15, 1967 into a Jat Sikh family, at Sri Gurusar Modia village in Ganganagar, Rajasthan.

4 Ram Rahim appointed his son Jasmeet as his successor after the CBI filed chargesheet against him in rape and murder cases in 2007. Jasmeet is a businessman and married to Congress leader Harminder Singh Jassi's daughter.

5 DSS has ashrams in Haryana, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Punjab, Himachal, MP, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Delhi and Chandigarh and its HQ in Sirsa.

6 DSS claims that Ram Rahim's music albums and films are the main sources of earning.

7 In 2002, anonymous addressed a letter to then PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee accused Ram Rahim of raping sadhvis living in his ashram at Sirsa. The letter was also sent to the Punjab and Haryana HC's chief justice who turned it into a criminal petition.

8 After the HC ordered a CBI probe, it was followed by an eight-year trial. Finally, Ram Rahim was convicted of rape Friday.

9 He calls himself a messenger of God.

10 His followers claim that he holds the record for performing maximum number of roles (43) in *MSG 2*. In 2016, Ram Rahim got Dadasaheb Phalke film foundation Award for most popular actor, director and writer.



Outdoor broadcast vans of several TV channels were attacked by the supporters outside the court complex adjoining Chandigarh. Some OB vans were set on fire in Panchkula.

Media vans & journo's also bear the brunt

ENRAGED followers of Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh Friday attacked media vehicles and journalists after a CBI special court here held the self-styled godman guilty in a rape case.

An INDIA TODAY TV crew was attacked in Sirsa. The TV team's cameraman Pradeep Gupta was seriously injured in the attack. Stones were pelted at the INDIA TODAY TV vehicle as they tried to get out of the court complex.

The cameraman had to be immediately rushed to a local hospital. He received serious injuries on his face. The vehicle was trying to reach the main gate of Sirsa which was only at a distance of two km. The followers were reportedly carrying sharp weapons with which they attacked the INDIA TODAY TV crew. The OB vans of several television news channels were attacked by the supporters outside the court complex, adjoining Chandigarh. Some OB vans were set on fire in Panchkula.

"We were about to move our OB van when the Dera goons who were sitting on both sides of the road started pelting stones on us. I saw a mob of nearly 100 men armed with wooden sticks and stones first attacking the OB van of

NDTV. They also seriously attacked OB engineer of this van with sticks. Later they also targeted our OB van besides others. We had a narrow escape as they wanted to attack us also," Arvind Prajapati, OB Van engineer of Aaj Tak told who had a narrow escape told this correspondent.

A telephone exchange was also torched by Dera protesters in Chananwal in Punjab's Barnala.

Police and paramilitary forces have been deployed in great numbers. Ten trucks of army entered CBI courts complex and took charge of securing the courts complex after the judg-

Media targeted for 'negative coverage'

ment. The police and paramilitary forces could not react adequately as the mobs indulged in violence. But tear gas was fired at one place, leading to stone throwing by Ram Rahim Singh's supporters.

A total of 15 incidents of violence were reported within 45 minutes in Punjab and Haryana after the court verdict became known. Most attacks took place in Sectors 3, 4 and 5, which are all close to the court complex.

India Today

"I appeal to everyone, particularly his supporters, to maintain peace. Any harm to life and property due to this unrest cannot be compensated by any amount of money."

— RAJNATH SINGH, UNION HOME MINISTER



"Chilli bombs? Pepper grenades? Pellet guns? Do the forces keep those only for protesting Kashmiris?"

— OMAR ABDULLAH, J&K EX-CM



"I appeal to people of Haryana, especially Dera 'premis' (followers) to maintain peace and brotherhood."

— ML KHATTAR, HARYANA CM



"I appeal to all to maintain peace & have directed Commissioner of Police to take effective measures to ensure protection of life & property"

— ANIL BAIJAL, DELHI L-G

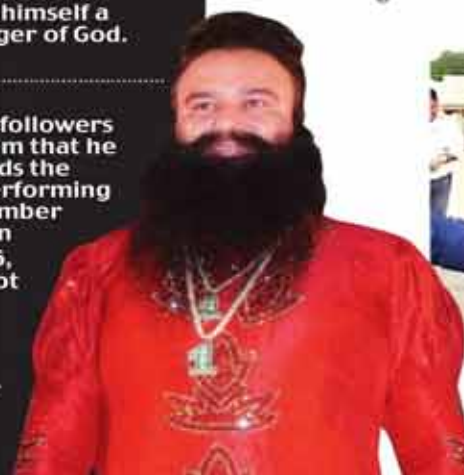
"It's my request to Punjab to maintain peace. Punjab Police, CRPF and the Army are doing their work too. Violence is not what we want."

— RAJNATH SINGH, UNION HOME MINISTER



"I urge everyone to stay calm and maintain peace."

— ARVIND KEJRIWAL, DELHI CM



INDIA TODAY TV cameraman Pradeep Gupta was seriously injured after the OB van they were travelling in was pelted with stones.



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IAS, IPS allocation policy rejigged for 'national integration of bureaucracy'

According to the new policy, the existing 26 cadres will be divided into five zones instead of states.

The government has finalised a new policy for allocation of cadre to officers of three all India services – Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS) and Indian Forest Service (IFS). Under the new policy, the Centre has decided to divide all 26 existing cadres into five zones and candidates will have to mention their preferred choices in descending order when appearing for the civil services examination. While choosing their preference, candidates will have to indicate states from each zone. However, candidates will

be allotted home states on the basis of merit, preference and vacancy.

The new policy will seek to ensure that officers from Bihar, for instance, will get to work in southern and north-eastern states, which may not be their preferred cadres, a personnel ministry official said. "This policy will ensure national integration of the bureaucracy as officers will get a chance to work in a state which is not their place of domicile," the official said. He said the new policy would help in upholding the rationale behind the all-India services.

"All-India service officers are supposed to have varied experiences which can be earned when they work in a different state, which is new to them. The officers may not be able to experiment new things if they work in their own domicile state," the official said.

The new zones are:

Zone-I – AGMUT (also known as Arunachal Pradesh-Goa-Mizoram and Union Territories), Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Rajasthan and Haryana.

Zone-II – Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and Odisha



Zone-III – Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh

Zone-IV – West Bengal, Sikkim, Assam-Meghalaya, Manipur, Tripura and Nagaland

Zone-V – Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

The policy is likely to be implemented from this year.

The officers of the services are currently allocated a cadre state or a set of states to work in.

They may be posted on central deputation during the course of their service after fulfilling certain eligibility conditions.

Narendra Modi meets Nepal Prime Minister in Delhi



Earlier, external affairs minister Sushma Swaraj received Deuba on his arrival - in another significant gesture of friendship. Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday paid a surprise call on visiting Nepalese Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, signifying the importance India attaches to ties with its close neighbour amid China's active wooing of Kathmandu. "Happy to welcome Rt Hon Sher Bahadur Deubaji, PM of close and friendly neighbour Nepal. Look forward to more extensive talks tomorrow," Modi tweeted on Wednesday. The unexpected meeting between the two Prime Ministers came a day ahead of formal talks between the two sides. Deuba, on a five-day state visit, will be given a ceremonial welcome at Rashtrapati Bhavan on Thursday.

Earlier, external affairs minister Sushma Swaraj received Deuba on his arrival - in another significant gesture of friendship. Deuba chose India for his first overseas visit after becoming Prime Minister in June. Nepal's ambassador to India Deep Kumar Upadhyay termed Modi's call a "warm-up" ahead

of the official talks on Thursday. Deuba's state visit comes days after Chinese vice-premier

Wang Yang was in Nepal during which the two sides signed several major agreements to boost energy and economic ties. The Deuba visit also comes amid a dragging standoff between Indian and Chinese troops on the Doklam plateau that has escalated tensions between New Delhi and Beijing.

Deuba and Sushma Swaraj met in Kathmandu earlier this month when the two sides are known to have discussed the Doklam issue. On Thursday, the two sides will hold delegation-level

talks following which Modi and Deuba will remote launch from Hyderabad House the Katiya-Kushaha and Raxaul-Parwanipur cross-border transmission line for supply of 50 MW each. Some agreements are expected to be signed following the talks. Deuba is leading a 48-member delegation including Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister Krishna Bahadur Mahara, other ministers, MPs, Secretaries and other high ranking officials to India. Deuba also interacted with the Nepali diaspora

at the Nepal Embassy and lauded their contribution towards nation building. He promised to provide a mechanised channel to transfer money to Nepal, the Himalayan Times reported. Deuba is expected to raise the issue of inundation in the Terai region and other issues during his talks with Modi. Modi will also host a banquet in honour of Deuba and his delegation in the evening. Deuba, also President of the Nepali Congress, will also visit Hyderabad, Tirupati and Bodh Gaya.

Is privacy a fundamental right Supreme Court to decide today

Privacy is central to the legal challenges facing Aadhaar, the 12-digit biometric unique identity number, which has raised data breach and privacy concerns.

A nine-judge bench led by Chief Justice of India JS Khehar will decide on Thursday if privacy is a fundamental right, a judgment that will have a bearing on civil rights as well as Aadhaar.

The privacy verdict comes two days after the court in a landmark judgment struck down the Islamic divorce practice of instant triple talaq as unconstitutional.

The other members of the bench, which will assemble at 10.30am, are justice J Chelameswar, justice RK Agarwal, justice SA Bobde, justice AM Sare, justice RF Nariman, justice DY Chandrachud, justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul and justice S Abdul Nazeer. The CJI, who retires on August 27, and justice Nazeer, both of whom dissented, and justice Nariman were among the five judges who also heard petitions against triple talaq.

Privacy is central to the legal challenges facing Aadhaar, the 12-digit biometric unique identity number, which has raised data breach and privacy concerns. Critics also say it helps the government spy on

Petitioners have argued Aadhaar violates privacy because it requires finger printing and iris scans. Before taking up Aadhaar petitions, the court said, it first needed to decide if privacy was a fundamental right.

The government says citizens have a right to privacy but it is not an absolute right. The Constitution framers included all rights but consciously kept out the right to privacy. Judges have differed with the government, saying, "Textually it is correct today that there is no right to privacy in the constitution. But even freedom of press is not expressly stated. This court has interpreted it."

The Centre has urged the court to restrain itself from making any declaration because privacy has different aspects and couldn't be seen in isolation, saying it was a "conglomerate of rights".



people.

The government is pushing for Aadhaar to plug leaks in various welfare schemes. Aadhaar is mandatory for availing welfare benefits, filing income-tax returns, and opening bank accounts.

Trump defends Charlottesville response, warns of govt shutdown for Mexico wall

US president Trump, stung by days of criticism that he sowed racial division in the country after the Charlottesville violence, told supporters in Phoenix that he strongly condemned "neo-Nazis, white supremacists and the KKK".

US President Donald Trump revved up supporters on Tuesday with a defense of his response to a white supremacist-organised rally in Virginia and a promise to shut down the US government if necessary to build a wall along the border with Mexico.

Under fire for saying "both sides" were to blame for the violence between white supremacists and left-wing counter protesters in Virginia on August 12, Trump accused television networks of ignoring his calls for unity in the aftermath.

"I didn't say I love you because you're black, or I love you because you're white," Trump said. "I love all the people of our country."

Police used pepper spray to

disperse crowds after protesters threw rocks and bottles outside the convention center where Trump spoke, police said.

Trump, who often uses news organizations as a foil, repeatedly singled out the media for criticism of how it covered the violence in the Virginia college town of Charlottesville and the resulting political fallout.

"These are truly dishonest people. They're bad people. I really think they don't like our country," Trump said. "The only people giving a platform to these hate groups is the media."

Adopting a glib tone, Trump said many reporters ignored his condemnation of white supremacists, including the Ku Klux Klan.

"I hit 'em with neo-Nazi, I hit 'em with everything ... KKK? We

have KKK. I got 'em all," he said.

James Clapper, a former director of U.S. national intelligence, expressed concern at Trump's performance, calling it "downright scary and disturbing."

"I question his fitness to be in office," Clapper told CNN. Funding for the border wall has flagged in the US Congress as many lawmakers question whether Trump's main promise during the 2016 presidential election campaign is really necessary.

But with a budget battle looming, Trump said he would be willing to risk a politically damaging government shutdown in order to secure funding for the wall.

He visited the border region in Yuma, Arizona, earlier on Tuesday.



"If we have to close down our government, we're building that wall," Trump said. "We're going to have our wall. The American people voted for immigration control. We're going to get that wall."

With thousands of supporters cheering him on, Trump also weighed in on another racially

charged issue, hinting he would pardon former Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio.

Arpaio, 85, who battled illegal immigration in the Phoenix area, was found guilty last month of criminal contempt for violating the terms of a 2011 court order in a racial profiling case.

Supreme Court dismisses review plea of jailed AIADMK leader Sasikala

A trial court in Bengaluru had convicted AIADMK's Sasikala, along with late Tamil Nadu chief minister Jayalalithaa, for amassing assets disproportionate to their known sources of income.



The Supreme Court has dismissed a plea of jailed AIADMK leader VK Sasikala seeking review of its verdict convicting and sentencing her to a four-year jail term in a disproportionate assets case. The apex court also rejected her plea for an open court hearing of the review petitions. "We do not find any error in the common judgment impugned, much less an apparent error on the face of the record, so as to call for its review. The review petitions are, accordingly, dismissed," a bench of Justices S A Bobde and Amitava Roy.

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, representing Sasikala and other convicts, gave written submissions and propositions which were taken on record by

the top court. The apex court perused the review petitions and dismissed the pleas filed by Sasikala and other convicts in the case. Besides Sasikala and two others -- V N Sudhakaran, former Tamil Nadu chief minister Jayalalithaa's foster son, and Elavarasi, widow of Sasikala's elder brother-- had challenged the setting aside of a Karnataka high court verdict acquitting her and restoring the trial court verdict in totality.

Late Tamil Nadu chief minister J Jayalalithaa was also an accused in the case. The trial court in Bengaluru had convicted Sasikala along with Jayalalithaa, Sudhakaran and Elavarasi in the case for amassing assets disproportionate to their known sources of income.

On February 14, the AIADMK leader Sasikala was convicted in the case by the apex court, dashing her ambition to become the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister. The top court verdict held her guilty of entering into a conspiracy with late AIADMK supremo Jayalalithaa. Consequently, she was not able to enter into electoral politics for a period of six years after serving the four year jail term. Sasikala, the close aide and shadow of Jayalalithaa for almost three decades, was locked in a power struggle for the top post with then acting Chief Minister O Panneerselvam.

The apex court had set aside the Karnataka high court order acquitting all the four accused and "restored in toto" the trial court's decision in the 19-year-old disproportionate assets case. The special trial court had found disproportionate assets worth Rs 53.60 crore, which Jayalalithaa and the three others could not account for. The CBI had alleged that the unaccounted wealth was to the tune of Rs 66.65 crore. Sasikala had been in prison in 1996 when the case was registered. In 2014, after the special trial court convicted and awarded her a four-year sentence with a fine of Rs 10 crore. Jayalalithaa was then awarded four-year jail term, besides a fine of Rs 100 crore. The apex court, which abated the

proceedings against Jayalalithaa conspiracy was hatched at her after she died on December 5 Poes Garden residence in last year, held that the criminal Chennai.

Muslim group says Supreme Court ruling on triple talaq violates Shariah



Jamiat general secretary Maulana Mehmood Madani said instant triple talaq was still valid as per the Islamic code. The Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, one of India's largest Muslim groups, on Wednesday described the Supreme Court decision on instant divorce as violative of the "Shariah" and a matter of "grave concern" for the Muslim community. Jamiat general secretary Maulana Mehmood Madani said instant triple talaq was still valid as per the Islamic code notwithstanding the Supreme Court declaring it as unconstitutional and void in law. "Even now, if a man administers instant talaq, it

will come into effect as per Shariah for those who believe in it," he told reporters here. Madani said the Jamiat has appealed to Muslims in India not to resort to divorce, especially instant divorce, "without very compelling reasons". The apex court by a 3-2 decision struck down the centuries-old practice of instant triple talaq among Indian Muslims as unconstitutional and void in law, inviting appreciation from activists, politicians, clerics, celebrities, political outfits and NGOs, including the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) that was contending for the controversial practice.

BTech and bust: Why Indians rush to be engineers when there are no jobs

Engineering students are seeing the degree as a path towards a government job as they regard it better in terms of security, starting pay and perks.

Six lakh information technology professionals are expected to lose their jobs over the next two three years, according to a forecast by a leading head hunter. Studies suggest that almost half of those who graduate from the prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) take their skills to work in financial markets and consulting.

The answer, experts say, depends on what the 1.5 million engineers graduating every year dream of.

Conversations with students, faculty members and higher education experts suggest students don't always sign up for engineering courses just to become engineers and to start designing new engines for cars, extending the lifetime of a battery, building the next big software giant or taking part in the "Digital India" programme. Most of them simply want a job — any job, and given a choice, a job with the government.

When the news of IT sector layoffs reached Rohtak, Dharampal Dahiya, 19, didn't care. He has finished his second year in civil engineering and has been preparing for competitive examinations to get a government job. That is all he wants. And so do most of his classmates.

Dahiya travels 30 km everyday from his village Sisana in Sonapat to Matu Ram Institute of Engineering and Management, a private college in Rohtak. His father, a farmer, didn't want him to follow in his footsteps, for agriculture is no longer a profitable occupation. His parents enrolled him in an engineering college, as friends and relatives suggested a BTech will ensure a "stable career".

Sandeep Malik's story is not very different. The 26-year-old from Rohtak finished his BTech in 2013 and became the first engineer in his family. "I couldn't clear the National Defence Academy exam after Class 12. With my BTech background, I can possibly get a technical entry in the defence sector." Like Dahiya, Malik took up engineering primarily to get a government job. Their aspirations mirror that of India's youth at large: the latest CSDS-KAS Youth Study, released in April 2017, found that 65% of Indian youth would prefer a government job; just 7% wished for a job in the

private sector. The lure of a government job is obvious: job security, allowances and better pay at the entry level. In retrospect, Malik says "not much", as he explains the economics: "Engineering education costs around Rs 60,000 per year; a BA costs Rs 4,000-10,000. So you are spending four years, and around Rs 2.4 lakhs to get a BTech degree. BA is significantly cheaper and saves you a whole year, meaning additional time for preparation."

Dahiya and Malik went to one of the thousands of private colleges that have sprung up in the country to fulfil the demand of engineering education. 3,288 engineering colleges exist under the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), more than double from the 1,511 colleges ten years ago.

On the other extreme, lie the IITs, the best that the country has to offer. But apart from the coveted civil services examinations, government jobs hardly figure on the list an IIT undergraduate. Using 2013 placement statistics of IIT-Bombay, Milind Sohoni, a computer science professor at the institute, found that 45% of the BTech students took up jobs



in finance and consulting, 24% in IT and 8% in FMCG and non-IT. Just 22% took up jobs in engineering and technology, which Sohoni argues is the most relevant sector to IIT-Bombay's mandate and training.

This tells us that neither is working in technology companies a priority for students nor does an engineering degree guarantee a job.

"Given the returns to and the costs of investing in education, individuals make rational investment choices with respect to education," Michael Spence said in his 2001 Nobel Prize lecture. "Employers have beliefs about the relation between the signal and the individual's underlying productivity," he went on to say. What this means is that

employers use an engineering degree as a "signal" that the graduate is more talented and capable compared to those who don't possess one, regardless of whether college education has any direct relevance or implication for the job being offered.

Economists like Spence say that "signalling" depends on both the institution one went to and the degree they possess.

In the Indian labour market, a professional degree like engineering, which is more focused on empirical ability than arts and humanities, has higher "perceived" economic returns.

But if everyone becomes an engineer, then the signalling function of the Btech degree falls, and employers have no way of

distinguishing technically proficient professionals from those who are engineers simply in name.

Colwin Fernandes, chief technology officer of Opcto Technologies, says this has already begun. "Engineering graduates are completely lost. The whole idea is that people seem to be that they think they are entitled to a job. If you are unemployable, you are not competing in the IT job market," he said. Fernandes warns that the labour market is changing rapidly due to advances in automation technology. New jobs will come up, he said, but Indian engineers may not be able to take them up. "Layoffs will happen. Graduates need to make themselves layoff-proof."

Narendra Modi, the feminist? For that the PM must help women on 5 issues

No one should appropriate from Muslim women the credit for the triple talaq verdict. The NDA government can, among others, bring in a women's reservation bill and criminalise marital rape

Millions of Muslim women were freed from the shackles of an obsolete custom on Tuesday as the Supreme Court abolished instant talaq — the culmination of a long and uphill battle by victims of the practice that stretched on for more than half a century.

But on social media and television, the watershed moment soon gave way to political wrangling as Right-wing commentators and BJP leaders sought to credit Prime Minister Narendra Modi. From information and technology minister Ravi Shankar Prasad to BJP IT cell chief Amit Malviya, saffron party members extolled the government's stand against triple talaq in the Supreme Court.

This invited push back from others on social media, who pointed out the fight by Muslim women — the first petitioner Shayara Bano faced attacks from clerics, community elders and Muslim leaders — and argued it was unfair to take credit away from them. The government's unequivocal stand against the practice, under which hundreds of women have been abandoned over text messages, WhatsApp, Speed Post or Skype, was an extraordinary shift from previous administrations that shied away from taking a stand,

possibly keeping in mind an imagined monolithic Muslim vote-bank.

1. Women's reservation bill: A move to guarantee a third of seats in Lok Sabha and state assemblies to women has been languishing in political oblivion for two decades now. The Congress has always indicated it backs the legislation. The BJP put the issue in its Lok Sabha manifesto but has done little since. Women form just 11% of the lower house and in many state assemblies, the situation is dire still. If the BJP is serious about its women's rights agenda, it should use its brute majority in the Lok Sabha to push through a bill that will likely make more women-friendly legislation a reality.

2. Scrap anti-Romeo squads: The groups of policemen in plainclothes wrecked havoc across Uttar Pradesh within weeks of the BJP sweeping to power, picking up unsuspecting couples, thrashing young lovers and setting out guidelines for public conduct. A commitment to women's rights is intimately linked to a respect for their freedom and choice to love — and so any moral policing is incompatible with the BJP's claimed pro-women stand.

3. Crack down on trolls: It is not unusual on

social media for people to extol women's rights and issue rape threats to women in the span of an hour. But the rub is in the fact that many of these accounts are followed by BJP office bearers, and even senior leaders. To abuse women for airing their views and threaten them with violence rape is antithetical to feminism.

4. Criminalise marital rape: In a free country with a constitutional democracy, marriages cannot be a licence for non-consensual sex. The sacrament of marriage and protecting the institution of matrimony — two reasons the government has cited over the past year to defend the marital rape exception in India law — cannot be arguments to force women into abusive marriages

5. Act against errant leaders and vigilantes: If the son of a prominent leader is involved in stalking of a woman, the party cannot be seen protecting him. If a group founded by a sitting chief minister barges into the house of a young inter-faith couple and threatens to thrash them for transgressing community boundaries, the police have to act against them. If a BJP leader is caught on camera threatening a woman officer, he cannot go scot free.

Here's What Russia's Propaganda Network Wants You to Read

How a new system for tracking Kremlin influence operations reveals what Moscow is thinking.

Over the past year, Americans have been hearing a lot about Russian attempts to sway public opinion in the United States using manipulative tactics on social media. But in the abstract, it can be hard to understand exactly what that means.

To help illuminate the issue, the Alliance for Securing Democracy recently unveiled Hamilton 68, an interactive dashboard displaying the near-real-time output of Russian Influence Operations on Twitter—or RIOT, if you're a fan of on-the-nose acronyms. The dashboard is the product of a research collaboration that includes me, Clint Watts, Aaron Weisburd, Jonathon Morgan and the German Marshall Fund.

The network promotes a selective worldview of Western societies in decline, suffused with crime, chaos and conspiracy, and a Russia (and a Russian president) filled with strength and integrity. It produces some original content and amplifies content produced by other people, scouring the internet for messages that tear down confidence in democracies, while absolving Russia and its allies from any hint of wrongdoing.

That said, RIOT is a complex affair. Influence operations are subtle by design, and those behind them don't usually reveal themselves. The dashboard shows a mix of Twitter account types, including openly Russian-backed media such as Russia Today (RT) and Sputnik, as well as 600 Twitter accounts linked to a less obvious influence network, which exists to amplify opinions and information that favor the Kremlin's preferred narratives.

The output of this network is not comprehensive by any means, but it is representative of the content shared by thousands more social media accounts on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and virtually every other major social media platform. A detailed description of how this network was identified can be found here.

The network monitored by the dashboard amplifies three types of content: Content openly created by Russia; content of unclear origin, which the Russians may or may not have had a hand in creating or shaping, directly or indirectly by driving traffic to certain themes; and content that was created by

third parties not formally connected to Russia, but which reflects the messaging priorities of the influence network.

While there has been much speculation about the role of Russia in creating "fake news," it is safest to assume that the majority of content promoted by the network falls into the first or third category, until proven otherwise. If that assumption is correct, then the majority of the content amplified by the network is produced by third parties. The users in the dashboard were chosen because they reliably amplify the themes of the broad network linked to Russian influence campaigns. Some are almost certainly in the employ of the Kremlin, but others may be more loosely connected. What we can say with certainty is that the accounts we monitor were selected because they act in a synchronized manner to promote messages we could connect back to overt Russian media and themes. We excluded one subnetwork of accounts that synchronized with this network's activity, because technical clues suggested it may have a different origin, and we want to research the subnetwork further.

So what are the major themes and stories promoted by RIOT?

Russia produces an extraordinary amount of directly attributable media, such as RT, Sputnik and affiliated entities. This material is heavily promoted by the network, but it represents only a portion of the total content.

The official outlets promote Russia in general, as one might expect, with recent headlines like "Futuristic Russian bridge recognized as international masterpiece" and "Putin's Fishing Trip: How Russian Leader Chased Giant Pike." They also seek to promote Russian foreign policy interests in fairly obvious ways, with stories like "New 'Planned' Anti-Russia Sanctions Aimed to Make US Global Energy Monopolist," "VP Pence's Balkan remarks show Washington sliding into 'primitive Cold War clichés'" and "Moscow Considers EU Commissioner Attack on Russian Law on NGOs Unfounded."

Below the surface of this output, the RIOT network selects stories to promote and amplify. Often these stories come from the attributed outlets—from Aug. 1 to Aug. 9, the RIOT accounts

linked to RT.com more than 1,300 times and sent nearly the exact same number of links to SputnikNews.com. The actual number is almost certainly larger; we couldn't efficiently parse the large number of link shorteners (such as bit.ly and trib.al) used by the network.

The most-shared RT story over that nine-day period was a summary of a Facebook post by filmmaker Oliver Stone, condemning U.S. sanctions against Russia and claiming that U.S. intelligence agencies are engaged in a "false flag" war against Russia. False flags and conspiracy theories abound throughout the content of the network.

The top Sputnik story shared by the RIOT network was one of six stories attacking the Hamilton 68 dashboard itself. This particular story quoted pro-Russia Twitter users who took a dim view of the effort. Another Sputnik story quoted the infamous former Russian ambassador to the U.S., Sergey Kislyak. Other stories prominently featured in the network focused on Russian military cooperation with Iran and China.

While the Oliver Stone story was the second-most shared individual story, the majority of content in this category was amplified content created by third parties not necessarily linked to Russia, but whose content could be deployed to emphasize pro-Russian themes.

These included links from both the political right and the left, as well as more traditional news outlets. A recent story from Consortiumnews decried anti-Russia hysteria and promoted a documentary "debunking" Sergei Magnitsky, whose story has recently risen to prominence thanks to Donald Trump Jr.'s Trump Tower meeting with Russians during the 2016 campaign.

Not all of the stories linked by the network were recent. One prominently linked story was a 2016 Daily Mail article claiming the FBI tried to frame Julian Assange. Another was a 2015 article on the left-leaning Truthout accusing the U.S. of sparking the Syrian civil war, citing WikiLeaks as its source.

It is important to note here again that we are not asserting Russia is responsible for creating or shaping this content, except



possibly by sending clicks to the sites in question. The Russian influence network amplifies content found online that suits its narratives, for obvious reasons. Amplifying content created by third parties is a powerful tool because it distances Russia from the content and conveys a breadth of support for the themes. It's also just plain easier to jump on someone else's content or trend than to create your own out of thin air.

One of the most prevalent themes pushed by RIOT is the promotion of conspiracy theories that muddy the waters regarding any wrongdoing by Russia or its allies, particularly the Syrian regime. This material is significantly promoted over social media, with occasional help from the attributed outlets. Examples over the past year include conspiracy theories seeking to discredit Bana al-Abed, a young girl in Syria who tweeted about the civil war with assistance from her mother, and reports of chemical attacks by the Syria regime, as well as the Seth Rich conspiracy theory, which conveniently exonerates Russian hackers from being the source of the WikiLeaks dump of Democratic National Committee emails during the 2016 election.

While there are examples of RIOT promoting voices from the far left, as noted above, this activity appears to be dwarfed by the scale at which it promotes the far right, both in the United States (which is the main focus for content documented in the dashboard) and in Europe. For three consecutive days in August, the most retweeted Russia Today stories recorded by the dashboard involved scaremongering videos appearing to show refugees swarming into Spain, as well as a story alleging that the German government is suppressing news of refugee crimes.

Such click-baiting content is only the tip of the iceberg of the RIOT network's support for far-right movements around the globe, and within the United States. On their own sites and social media accounts, RT and Sputnik tread relatively carefully in their flirtation with the far right, and they devote a significant amount of space to the far left as

well. But support for the far right is a much bigger component of the influence network, and it is much closer to the surface. It is important to emphasize that our analysis of these networks was not based on the political views of its participants. When we analyzed activity related to Russian influence, we found a large number of very active accounts that present themselves as part of the "alt-right" but which are closely linked to the RIOT network.

Some of these accounts are likely controlled by someone in Russia, but some users eagerly participate for their own reasons. The accounts monitored in the dashboard are there because they reliably amplify content related to Russia and its messaging themes. As noted above, we believe we have identified other influence operations promoting the "alt-right" on social media that likely have a different point of origin, but the subnetwork identified here is aligned with the RIOT network. We are continuing to research this issue in an effort to better quantify and further contextualize how these right-wing and pro-Russia networks intersect and overlap.

In the United States, this overlap is primarily focused on the "alt-right," the vaguely defined anti-immigrant, white supremacist movement whose center of gravity is firmly anchored on social media and the Web. While the "alt-right" has a very real base of support in the United States, it also enjoys deep and undisputed ties to Russia, many of which can be found offline in the real world. So it should not be surprising that Russian influence networks are part of the "alt-right" mix online.

In Germany, RIOT amplifies false reports about crime by refugees, through a variety of outlets, including anonymous Twitter accounts. In the U.S., the network amplifies many of the topics discussed by the "alt-right," but with a special focus on issues that are incidentally useful to Russian interests, such as the aforementioned Seth Rich conspiracy theories, which seek to divert blame away from Russia for the hack of the DNC's emails.

The Pathetic & dangerous transformation of India to Crony Capitalism in last 70 year

Can Modi explain how come a law maker is entitled to Pension and princely perks after winning one election only even if he never get elected again; where as a government servant is entitled to a pension only after 20-25 years of service. Modi could have proposed a road map to cut down the non-plan expenditure from present 74% to at least 60% in next 4 years. Modi in his political carrier as Gujarat CM has been a known destroyer of any opposition in his own party as well as leaders of other political parties. He is also known to have least respect for democratic norms and judiciary. Since 2014 Modi is ruling India with the same undemocratic philosophy and destroying all the democratic institutions, judiciary as well as any opposition all over India to make India, "Opposition Free". Congress also tried to destroy opposition parties to make it one

party rather one family rule in India and they succeeded to a certain extent only. Recently a writer Apoorvanand wrote about the reaction of Munshi Premchand that "Elimination of Opposition is a Threat to Democracy." Premchand recorded this apprehension in a brief commentary titled 'Germany Ka Bhavishya' (The Future of Germany) right after the victory of the Nazi Party in Germany in 1933. "After the landslide victory of the Nazi Party in Germany, the question that arises is will Germany really turn into a fascist regime and will the Nazis be able to hold and consolidate power for at least five years? If it happens and the Nazis get an opportunity to establish themselves, they will suck the democratic life and vision out of Germany through its political and military strength in such a way that not a single opponent of the Nazi Party would

be left in Germany for 25 years." It is not necessary to view Premchand's observation in the context of the present times but the focus of his comment is the forced elimination of opposition before the victory of the Nazi Party. He does not censure the German opposition parties for their inability to protect themselves. He clearly states that the crime was Hitler's who was phasing out the opposition through undemocratic means. The Nazis had a private army which none of the other political parties in Germany possessed. Premchand unequivocally states that the elimination of opposition should be a cause for worry and one who carries it out must be held responsible for it and must be questioned.

The process of selling India to Corporate houses started by Congress has been expedited under Modi aka BJP. Modi regime is ignoring the extreme

poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and inequality due to the fact that 56 families own 75% of India! Modi was created and installed in a Rs 32,000 crore marketing scam by these very corrupt business houses of India and marketed by Washington based APCO that is PR company of practically all the dictators around the world including all the Muslim Dictators of Middle East. Modi is catering to the elite, establishment & his handlers only with no emotions and responsibility towards the general public especially the farmers and extreme poor of India. Modi is presiding over the half burnt Funeral Pyre of Indian Democracy started by Congress. BJP's Modi is making sure that it is fully burnt and ashes are immersed in Holy Ganga by sacrificing the left over Democratic norms in this ongoing burning Funeral Pyre of Indian Democracy. Even being

3rd gen RSS/Jansangh/BJP supporter and victim of Indra's emergency I can not support the present leaders like Modi, Jaitley, Shah, Samriti, Uma, Adityanath working as facilitators for the New East India Company owned by Adani, Ambani, Tata, Jindal, Ruia's etc. All these corporations unlike East India Company do not have their private army but soon will be making all kinds of war heads, missiles, helicopters, air planes, ammunition and other sophisticated military gadgets because Jaitley has increased the FDI limit to 49% from 26% for this Industry. Just few days before the 2015 budget Middleman/Lobbyist has been legalized in India for deals with the government including defense deals. Now there won't be any shortage of Radia's openly operating in the corridors of power to influence law makers for favors for their corporate clients

Sex, scandals and spirituality *China is waging a water war on India*

She should have called the culprits brothers and begged them to stop... This could have saved her dignity and life. Can you clap with one hand?" Asaram Bapu reportedly said.

Chandraswami: The controversial 'godman' who died in May this year was considered an influential power broker when P V Narasimha Rao was the prime minister. It is said that Chandraswami gave 'spiritual advice' to actor Elizabeth Taylor, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and even underworld don Dawood Ibrahim. His fall-from-grace moment came when his name cropped up in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case. In 1996, he was arrested on charges of duping a London-based businessman.

Swami Nithyanand: The self-styled godman found himself in the eye of a storm after a news channel showed a video footage of Swami Nithyanand in an alleged sexual act with an actress. One of his followers accused Nithyanand of repeatedly raping her and threatening her with dire consequences if she approached anyone for help. On searching his ashram in Bengaluru, police found condoms and ganja from the compound. It was also alleged that some of his followers were forced into signing non-disclosure agreements to experiment with 'tantric sex'.

Sant Rampal: This self-styled

godman had a rags to riches story, who worked as a junior engineer in the Haryana irrigation department before becoming Sant Rampal. The controversial godman was arrested by police in November 2014 following a 30-hour standoff wherein Rampal's militia allegedly tried to stop paramilitary forces from entering the Satlok ashram. Subsequently, sedition charge was slapped on him and some of his followers.

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi: His association with Beatles is well-known and so is his subsequent fallout with English rock band. It was alleged that Maharishi made sexual advances towards Mia Farrow, which eventually led to the Beatles' disillusionment with him. However, the other side of the story is that Maharishi found out the Beatles were allegedly doing drugs and therefore severed ties with the group.

The Beatles' Sexy Sadie song, written by John Lennon, is believed to be an attack on Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. The 'spiritual guru' died in 2008. And then, there were some like Sarathi Baba and Nirmal Baba who were arrested on charges of fraud and cheating. While probing charges against Sarathi Baba in Bhubaneswar, the police also found evidence against him for blackmailing young women with their nude photos, which were taken by hidden cameras in bathrooms of his ashram.

Data on upstream river flows is essential for flood forecasting and warning in order to save lives and reduce material losses. China's data denial crimps flash flood modelling in India.

By embarking on a dangerous game of water poker, Beijing has demonstrated how the denial of hydrological data in the critically important monsoon season amounts to the use of water as a political tool against a downstream country. Indeed, even while supplying data in past years, China's lack of transparency raised questions. After all, like rice traded on the world market, hydrological data comes in different grades and qualities — from good, reliable data to inferior data and broken data. China's latest action actually violates two bilateral MOUs of 2013 and a 2014 accord, which obligate it to transfer hydrological data to India from three upstream monitoring stations in Tibet every year from May 15 to October 15. No data has been transferred thus far this year, although India, in keeping with the MOUs, paid for the data in advance. While China sells hydrological data to downriver countries, India provides such data free to both its

downstream neighbours — Pakistan and Bangladesh.

China has long displayed contempt for international law. No bilateral accord seems to have binding force for it once its immediate purpose has passed, as Beijing recently highlighted by trashing the 1984 Sino-British treaty that paved the way for Hong Kong's handover in 1997. China said that pact had lost "practical meaning" because 20 years had passed since Hong Kong's return. Yet it selectively invokes a 19th-century, colonial-era accord to justify its Doklam intrusion, while ignoring its own violations — cited by Bhutan and India — of more recent bilateral agreements not to disturb the territorial status quo.

India should not be downplaying China's breach of commitment to supply hydrological data from May 15. Yet, for two months, the ministry of external affairs hid China's contravention, which began much before the Doklam standoff. When the ministry of external affairs (MEA) finally admitted China's breach of obligation, it simultaneously sought to shield Beijing by saying there could be a "technical reason" for non-transfer of data (just as MEA sought to obscure China's

August 15 twin raids in the Pangong Lake area by gratuitously telling the Financial Times that "no commonly delineated boundary" exists there). How can a technical hitch explain data withholding from three separate stations for over two months? Had China been in India's place, it would have promptly raised a hue and cry about the commitment violation and linked it to the downstream floods and deaths.

More fundamentally, the Doklam standoff, the Chinese hydro-engineering projects to re-engineer cross-border river flows, the denial of hydrological data, and China's claims to vast tracts of Indian land are all a reminder that Tibet is at the heart of the India-China divide. The 1951 fall of Tibet represented the most far-reaching geopolitical development in modern India's history, with the impact exacerbated by subsequent Indian blunders. India must subtly reopen Tibet as an outstanding issue, including by using historically more accurate expressions like "Indo-Tibetan border" (not "India-China border") and emphasising that its previously stated positions were linked to Tibet securing real autonomy.

Supreme Court Declares Triple Talaq Unconstitutional By 3:2 Majority

After reading separate judgements, the 5-judge bench of Supreme Court rules in 3:2 majority triple talaq is void and illegal.

They thus, had stayed a matter that comes plausibility of this the divorce practice for 6 months till the Parliament passes law to ban it.

The Centre, earlier on May 11, told the apex court that it opposes the triple talaq practice and wants to fight for women equality and gender justice.

However, All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) counsel

Kapil Sibal told the apex court that Triple Talaq is

under the Muslim board and therefore, in his opinion, the top court should not interfere in it.

While hearing several pleas filed by Muslim women challenging the practice of triple talaq, the apex court observed that it would examine whether the issue is fundamental to religion or not.

Relentless debates on the validity and

practice were instigated soon after one petitioner, Shayara Banu,

challenged the Muslim Personal Law over instantaneous application of triple talaq (talaq-e-bidat), polygamy and nikah-halala. Supporting the stance of ending the practice of triple talaq, the Allahabad High Court

had earlier asserted that the rights of any person, including Muslim women,



cannot be violated in the Allahabad High Court woman by uttering the name of 'personal law'. In December last year, the practice of divorcing a "unconstitutional."

Abusive British-Indian husbands make their wives' lives hell

She doesn't want find themselves abused anyone else to go through and exploited due the fear and insecurity because the husband can she suffered. "The very easily cancel his partner's egregious manner in visa, leaving his wife in which some men behave limbo.

towards their wives is soul destroying," she told me.

Indian Ladies in the UK Indian women are being campaigns on behalf of abandoned by British-victims of domestic abuse born Indian husbands not and spousal just in the UK, but in India abandonment. They say too.

that hundreds of women Amanjot Kaur

Ramoowalia, who runs the charity Helping Hapless in Chandigarh, says there are around 15,000 women just in Punjab who have been left abandoned by their husbands from Europe, America or Canada. "He [the groom] comes here and he asks for a massive dowry. They marry. He takes the money and enjoys the honeymoon. Then he

never comes back," she says.



never comes back," she says.

The plight of these women should shame us. I feel disgusted that British-Indian men are exploiting women for their money; I feel angry that UK law makes it easy for abusive men to put women's lives in jeopardy

and Indian law makes it very difficult for women to divorce these fraudsters. But most of all I'm ashamed that Indian men are able to use Indian traditions of izzat and shame to silence women and abuse them without repercussions.

Anjalika Sharma told

me she was so ashamed of what was happening to her, she did not want to raise the issue. But her mind has changed. "Now I am determined to get him arrested. This is the right decision, to put him in jail." I hope she and many more women like her get the justice they deserve.

Why Chandigarh, India's best planned city, went under after three hours of rain

Mohali and Panchkula, the satellite towns built on the same grid as Chandigarh as showpiece counter-magnets by two states respectively.

The Monsoon mess glaringly laid bare the shortcomings in futuristic planning and upgrade of the tricity's drainage system that was put in place for a much-smaller population base years ago. Chandigarh's natural storm water channel, the Northern Choe, for instance, hasn't been cleaned up for last two decades.

In Mohali, on a lower gradient than Chandigarh, a project to replace the inadequate storm water pipes with ones with more carrying capacity has been a hanging fire for five years. A pre-monsoon audit, extensively reported by Hindustan Times in June, had revealed major gaps and missed deadlines even in such basic annual preparedness as cleaning up of the road gullies. In Mohali, more than half of the gullies were left clogged, officials admit now. The harried residents whose homes were deluged out of the blue are now suing the municipal corporation for compensation.

Not that their civic bodies face scarcity of funds. Rather they are flush with money as evident from crores of rupees of unspent budget of the Chandigarh municipal year after year,

thanks, largely to bureaucratic sloth. In fact, the failure to utilise the funds for capital creation led to a slash of Rs 170 crore in its current plan.

The unprecedented water-logging shines light, decidedly poor, on the governance deficit in Chandigarh and Mohali, both billed as the smart cities in the making.

Paradoxically, these planned, and pampered, urban centres with a better infrastructure than other cities in the region, synonymous with squalor, are under a growing population pressure due to their high livability index. Chandigarh, originally built for half a million, is now teeming with 1.5 million. This has spurred rapid-fire urbanisation in its periphery, much of it haphazard, blocking the natural drainage and thus making the city and suburbs prone to water-logging of a rising scale.

Faced with a swell of public outcry, civic officials' first reaction to the monsoon mayhem was to water it down by blaming it all on the weather gods for pouring too much rain in too short a time span. But, it's a wake-up call they can ill-afford to ignore. Even the best planned city needs to smarten up its governance and put its act together to justify the tag of 'Smart City'.

Google and Walmart team up to take on Amazon in e-commerce

on e-commerce and a willingness to compete by lower prices, as well as costs of \$788 million connected to a debt payment. Walmart holds the biggest share of the US grocery market of any retailer, with a network of nearly 4,700 stores that the company says are located within 10 miles of about 90 percent of the US population. But it has faced increasingly stiff competition from Amazon, which is set to ramp up to a new level with the tech giant's impending purchase of Whole Foods

Market. According to Internet Retailer, citing figures from the Department of Commerce, Amazon accounted for 38 percent of all online sales in the second quarter and contributed to half of all growth in US internet commerce over the period. But it remains behind Walmart when it comes to US distribution as a whole, with the two companies accounting for 2.8 percent and 6.3 percent of the market respectively last year. Walmart has made several acquisitions in

recent years to try to catch up, including the purchase of Jet.com last year for about \$3 billion. It has also started to deliver groceries in some cities via partnerships with Uber and Lyft. Google is also looking to expand its activities in online shopping, grouped together under its Google Home brand. Under the new partnership, shoppers can make purchases via voice-enabled Google Home devices, as Amazon does with its Alexa-enabled Echo devices.

Does your teenager love fast food? Study says brain wiring may be to blame

A new study reveals that adolescents, who are at an increased risk of obesity, have progressively less neural activity in circuits of the brain that support self-regulation and attention.

(News Agencies) Don't blame your adolescent kid for eating high-calorie food. A new study says teenagers hooked to high-calorie food may be unable to control the urge for burgers, pizzas and french fries due to an impairment in the brain region linked to self-regulation.

The findings have revealed that adolescents, who are at an increased risk of obesity, have progressively less neural activity in circuits of the brain that support self-regulation and attention.

"The study establishes that risk for obesity isn't driven exclusively by the

absence or presence of urges to eat high-calorie foods, but also, and perhaps most importantly, by the ability to control those urges," said Bradley Peterson, professor at the University of Southern California. For the study, reported in the journal *NeuroImage*, the team used fMRI to observe relationship between neurological activity and risk for obesity in overweight teens compared with lean adolescents.

In adolescents who were obese or who were lean but at high familial risk for obesity, they observed less activation



in attention and self-regulation circuits. Brain circuits that support attention and self-regulation showed the greatest activation in lean/low-risk adolescents, less activity in lean/high-risk participants and least activation in the overweight/obese group.

53 % Indians lack discipline to stay fit despite abundance of gyms

In a pan-India study conducted by Gympik, India's largest fitness discovery platform, 53 % of the respondents said that they lack the discipline to stay fit.



(News Agencies) Despite the mushrooming of gyms and fitness centres as well as the growing popularity of fitness apps and virtual gyms, most Indians do not find time to exercise. In a pan-India study conducted by Gympik, India's largest fitness discovery platform, 53 % of the respondents said that they lack the discipline to stay fit. Gympik conducted the market research - Weighing up fitness-in Delhi, Bengaluru, Mumbai and Hyderabad to find out the current fitness trends and habits amongst Indians. Based on the responses of 1.06 million people, mainly in the age group of 20-35 years, Gympik study found that 52 %

do not find time to exercise, while 36 % lack the motivation to join a fitness centre. In fact, 14 % claim to be absolutely clueless about where to begin their fitness journey from. "In India, the top fitness players barely constitute 15 % of the market share as compared to that of Japan and Singapore where 40 % market share is covered by the top five players. There's massive scope for consolidation in the organised fitness sector in India," said Amaresh Ojha, Founder and

CEO, Gympik. "Currently, the retail market for fitness in India is valued at Rs.4,579 crore (USD 0.76 billion). It is expected to cross the Rs.7,000 crore mark by the end of 2017. Besides exploring the current fitness trends across age groups and occupations in different Indian cities, we were also looking to investigate if there was any significant correlation between stress levels, age, consciousness levels, and regularity of physical exercise," he added.

Coffee lovers, take note: Caffeine can help you sleep, stop post-op pain

For patients who suffer from sleep deprivation before surgery, caffeine before the operation could be an alternative way to reduce post-operative pain associated with a lack of sleep.

Research has shown that a lack of sleep (both pre- and post-op) can worsen pain after surgery. This new study from the Department of Anesthesiology at Michigan Medicine set out to see if there were any

interventions that could minimise the effect of sleep loss and reduce the severity of pain experienced after surgery. The team focused on caffeine as a potential treatment, which may seem surprising given that caffeine is a stimulant to increase alertness. Earlier studies indicated that drinking coffee may lead to a longer life and lower risk of death from heart disease and cancer.

"Most people would be confused by the idea of using caffeine while we insist on the

dangers of not getting enough sleep," noted study author Giancarlo Vanini, M.D. However, as caffeine blocks the actions of the sleep-inducing neurotransmitter adenosine, causing us to feel more awake, the team proposed that caffeine might counteract the negative impact of sleep deprivation on surgical pain. "Insufficient sleep enhances pain perception, so we reasoned that caffeine might also be useful for reversing the increase in pain caused by sleep loss," Vanini said.

Yoga fans, take note Science now confirms its mind-body health benefits

While many have benefited from practising yoga, researchers are now unravelling the science behind it.



From increased strength to flexibility to heart health, the benefits of yoga and meditation are countless. However, we still have much to learn about how exactly these practices affect mind-body health. A new research investigates the effects of yoga and meditation on brain derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), the activity on the hypothalamic pituitary adrenal (HPA) effects and inflammatory markers.

By studying the participants of an intensive three-month yoga and meditation retreat, the researchers found that the practices positively impacted BDNF signaling, the cortisol awakening response (CAR) and immunological markers, and in addition improved subjective well-being.

In this study, the retreat participants were assessed before and after participating in a 3-month yoga and meditation retreat that involved daily meditation and Isha yoga, accompanied by a vegetarian diet. The yogic practices consisted of physical postures, controlled breathing

practices, and seated meditations during which the participants focused on mantra repetition, breath, emptying the mind and bodily sensation. The researchers measured psychometric measures, brain derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), circadian salivary cortisol levels, as well as pro- and anti-inflammatory cytokines. They also collected data on psychometric variables including mindfulness, absorption, depression and anxiety, and investigated the relationship between psychological improvements and biological changes.

The data showed that participation in the retreat was associated with decreases in both self-reported anxiety and depression as well as increases in mindfulness. The research team observed increases in the plasma levels of BDNF, a neuromodulator that plays an important role in learning, memory and the regulation of complex processes such as inflammation, immunity, mood regulation, stress response and metabolism.

Men want cuddles, women prefer sex



London: Contrary to general perception, a new study has found that men need to cuddle to be happy in a long-term relationship while women prefer to have sex.

Researchers at Indiana University have found that acts of affection like hugs and kisses are more important to men than women. And for women, sex tends to get better over time — after a couple has been together about 15 years.

Lead author Julia Heiman said that the first 15 years of a relationship may be emotionally draining for women while they are raising children. As they get older, they have fewer pressures.

She said: "It's possible that

women became more sexually satisfied over time because their expectations change or life changes when their children grow up. The period of less satisfaction seems to overlap with the period of raising children, during which other things really take a focus." The study is based on a survey of over 1,000 couples from five different countries who had been in relationships for between one and 51 years. Men who reported frequent kissing and cuddling were three times as happy, on average, as those who had less snuggling with their partners. Women said that such shows of affection had very little impact on their happiness.

The Vanity Trap

Low self-worth
We're living in a culture that's making

LET'S admit it. Most of us fancy ourselves much more than we'd like to admit. But when that admiration turns into narcissism or self-obsession, there's a problem at hand.

Clinical psychiatrist Seema Hingorrany believes that the act of constantly being preoccupied with thoughts of yourself and feeling the world should revolve around you is unhealthy. "A selfobsessed individual is

someone who just can't help thinking and talking about themselves. These people believe that they are superior and have little regard for other people. But behind this mask of ultraconfidence lies a fragile self-esteem, vulnerable to the slightest criticism. It is also called Narcissistic Personality Disorder, when the symptoms are chronic," says Hingorrany.

people increasingly self-obsessed. A little obsession is natural and good, however, it becomes a problem when this starts interfering with one's daily life. Consultant psychiatrist Dr Dipti S Shah believes when there's social and occupational impairment due to self-obsession, it's

time to seek help. "The most common reason for self-obsession is insecurity. Physical appearances are critical to selfworth," says Dr Shah.

Sadly, self-obsessed individuals' lives revolve around themselves. "This leads them to act in a self-centred manner. In relationships, such individuals are highly demanding and usually think about themselves. Such people are most likely have little or no concern for their partner. To be in a relationship where only one partner's needs are met can be stressful. Unfortunately, a high percentage of self-obsessive

traits are seen in teenagers. It's family and friends who seem to suffer. Parents find it tough to deal with this behaviour," says counselling psychologist Devaunshi Sampat-Mehta.

Enjoy, but know your limits

There is a fine line between enjoying your drink and becoming dependent on your daily fix

Shiv Thakur (name changed) often meets his friends for a drink at a pub, simply because he has nothing to do. "A drink keeps us busy," he says. From enjoying a drink after work to graduating to a regular nightcap when home alone doesn't take long. However, the real problem is binge drinking. While a glass of wine with dinner may be good for health, overdoing the drinks may hurt your overall health. Says Johnson J Edayaranmula, executive director, Indian Alcohol Policy Alliance, an NGO, "Binge drinking is now common. Alcohol intake is increasing, leading to public health problems. Social drinking has increased, particularly among the urban and suburban population." He reveals that spirits make up for 88% of what Indians regularly drink, while beer boasts a 10% share. "The share of wine is only 2% of what Indians consume. Among young professionals, whiskey is the favourite. Beer is also very common." You must know when to stop, but how much is too much? Says psychiatrist Vivek Benegal, "The typical Indian indulges in binge drinking, having more than five drinks at one go. The recommended level is not more than 21 standard drinks a week, 14 for women, of 30 ml each. A Patiala peg of 90 ml is as good as three drinks." Studies conducted by the Alcohol & Drug Information Centre (ADIC) India show that drinking usually starts in social circles for pleasure and companionship, progressing to isolated and regular drinking. It says, "In the majority of poor communities, alcohol is consumed to overcome fatigue, stress, etc." India has nearly 62 million alcohol users, 17% of whom are alcohol dependents. Adds Benegal, "Alcoholism is a disease of the brain."

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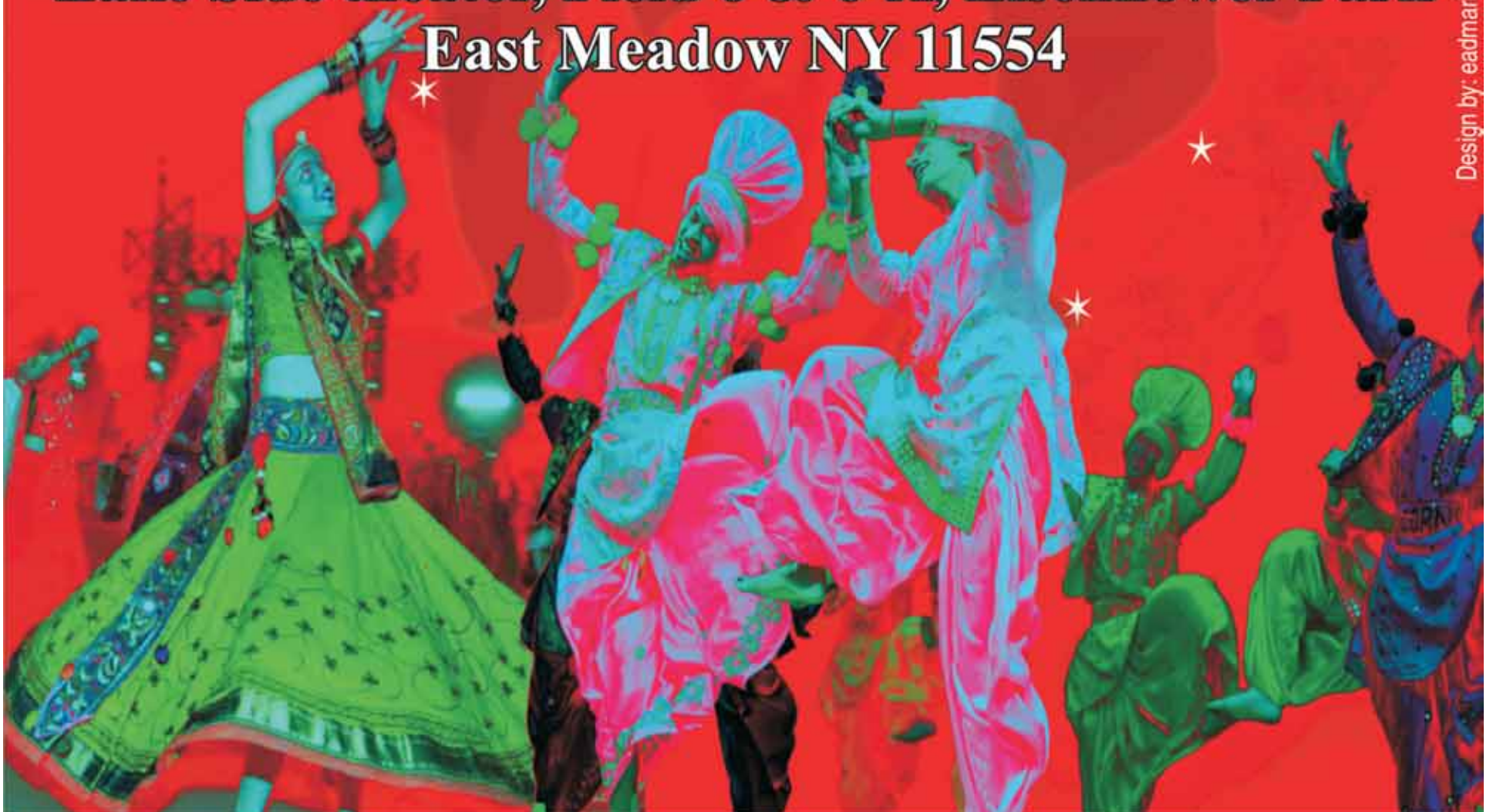
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Mingsha Shan or the sand dunes (left) along the city are one of the major tourist attractions in Dunhuang, China; the town is also well-known for the Buddhist Mogao Caves (above).



At the crossroads of two primeval routes, Dunhuang marked a key point in the journey of ancient travellers.

NAVIGATING SAND DUNES

along

By **Auto Bild team** in Dunhuang

SET out on the GLAdventour, we're driving down from Stuttgart to Pune in an Indian-registered Mercedes-Benz GLA 200 CDI and support car Mercedes-Benz GL 350 CDI. Currently, we're on the southern branch of the Silk Route, which started even before we entered China.

It took us three days to cross the first state in China but now we are in the second state, Gansu, and are headed to the third, Qinghai. Our first task, however, is to explore Dunhuang, a very popular tourist centre because of the Buddhist Mogao Caves near it.

Since we cannot take our cars anywhere close to the caves, we



As the team climbs onto the Tibetan Plateau, the landscape changes and temperature falls.

head for the next biggest attraction of the city, the Mingsha Shan or the sand dunes. They are majestic, appearing out of nowhere and towering over the city. We decide to take a detour to get close to the sand dunes.

Dunhuang marked a very important point in the journey of ancient travellers because it

was here that they had to make an important decision: whether to continue East towards the centre of China on this branch of the Silk Route or turn South towards India.

It's not a choice for us, so we turn South towards Golmud, which lies south of the Gobi Desert, and is touted as



the Salt Lake City of China.

On our way out, we stop by at a replica of the ancient city of Dunhuang, which has also been used in many Chinese movies and long-running TV serials to portray an old Chinese town. It is complete with shops, residences, a city hall, a Buddhist temple, a horse riding school and even an execution square.

Soon the road starts to climb onto the Tibetan Plateau and the temperature drops to well below zero degrees Celsius. The roads get icy and the landscape varies between stark brown and white even as a herd of Bactrian camels grazes on the sparse brown grass.

As we cross one high-altitude pass after another, we can't help but marvel at how well

the Chinese have made their roads. There are switchbacks and loops, but it has been made in a very motorable manner unlike the roads in our part of the mountains that are very difficult to negotiate.

We pass by a replica of the Pangong Tso, one of many salt lakes in this region, which is in the shape of a crescent. Crystal clear waters reflect the landscape around and the setting sun casts a magical light over the endless vistas of brown and white.

The city itself does not seem special but is the first one that has a Sheraton and a Hilton, thanks to the large mining operations in the region.

Our schedule for the next day includes a serious drive, passing altitudes of over 5,000 metres and pit stops at smaller towns (which may not have Internet connectivity) on the way to Lhasa.

To see more log on to intoday.in/gladventure

World's 20 richest models (And they are worth a staggering ₹4,500 cr)

INSTEAD of fruitlessly endeavouring to jack up the economy, perhaps finance ministers should turn their attention to the world of modelling. The sums earned by supermodels now rival business turnovers. The money's in endorsements. Kate Moss has been the face of Agent Provocateur and Burberry, and designed her own lines for Topshop. Tyra Banks' millions reflect her role as executive producer of America's Next Top Model, a worldwide TV franchise. So why is Leonardo DiCaprio's ex-girlfriend Gisele Bündchen at the top of the list? Flip-flops — her Ipanema line has been growing, with over 250 million pairs sold in 2010. She also has a skincare line, Sejaa, and owns a hotel in Brazil. There is one (former) model whose £ 743 million fortune dwarfs those of all the others put together.



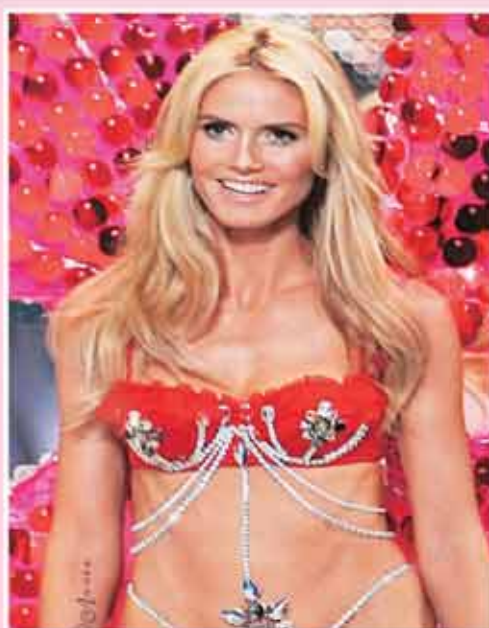
1 GISELE BÜNDCHEN
Brazilian, ₹750 crore



2 TYRA BANKS
American, ₹442 crore



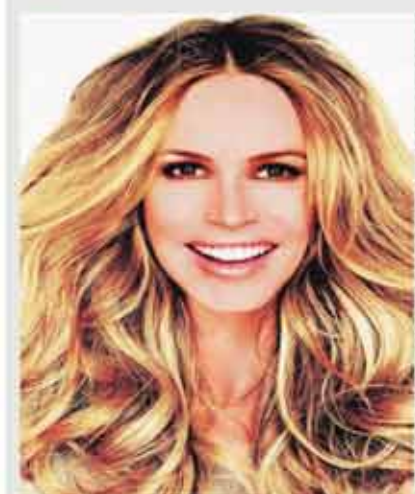
3 CHRISTIE BRINKLEY
American, ₹396 crore



5 HEIDI KLUM
German, ₹349 crore



4 KATE MOSS
British, ₹388 crore



6 ELLE MACPHERSON
Australian, ₹295 cr



7 CLAUDIA SCHIFFER
German, ₹271 crore



8 NAOMI CAMPBELL
British, ₹240 crore



9 MILLA JOVOVICH
Ukrainian, ₹178 crore



10 ADRIANA LIMA
Brazilian, ₹170 crore



11 DARIA WERBOWY
Ukrainian, ₹147 crore



12 HELENA CHRISTENSEN
Danish, ₹139 crore



13 NATALIA VODIANOVA
Russian, ₹116 crore



14 DOUTZEN KROES
Dutch, ₹101 crore



15 EVA HERZIGOVA
Czech, ₹101 crore



16 CHRISTY TURLINGTON
American, ₹85 crore



17 LINDA EVANGELISTA
Canadian, ₹85 crore



18 CINDY CRAWFORD
American, ₹85 crore



19 CAROLYN MURPHY
American, ₹77 crore



20 STEPHANIE SEYMOUR
American, ₹77 crore

Move over, green tea: Rajasthan to produce a unique tea made from olive leaves



(News Agencies) Get ready to sip on a new kind of tea. The desert state of Rajasthan will soon give the country an alternative to green tea - brewed from olive leaves. Agriculture Minister Prabhu Lal Saini said the brand - named Olitia, The Olive Tea - will be launched soon by Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje. "It will be the first time in the country and the world that a green tea alternative will be produced out of olive leaves," he told PTI on the sidelines of an event in the city. He added, "I am a PhD in Agriculture myself, and I knew olive leaves have several health benefits. So I decided to get some study and

The olive tea contains zero caffeine, builds immunity and fights fatigue. It can also help those who suffer from mental stress and cardiac diseases.

lab testing done about it." He showed several papers with findings of the lab studies. A lab test, conducted in July, confirmed the presence of several anti-oxidants, anti-inflammatory and other substances in the olive leaves. One of the substances found was Luteolin. "Experiments with Luteolin show that it suppresses bacteria-induced inflammation. Luteolin is an oxygen scavenger," reads the report. He said the lab tests confirmed the presence of "such strong anti-oxidants" in olive leaves that they can help prevent several types of cancer - blood cancer, prostate cancer and ovaries cancer. After the studies and lab tests confirmed these properties of the olive leaves, the decision to process them was taken, he said. "It will medically benefit those who suffer from mental stress, cardiac disease. It has anti-inflammatory properties as well," he said. The Olitia, The Olive Tea, packet also claims it has zero caffeine, builds immunity, fight fatigue and has anti-ageing properties. Saini said the olive green tea will come in multiple flavours which are in vogue these days like lemon and mint. "We are trying to diversify and produces other flavours like ginger, tulsi etc," he said.

Here's everything you need to know about the new relationship term- Emotional Divorce

After gaslighting, ghosting and benching, emotional divorce is the new addition to the relationship dictionary. With the help of experts, we explain what emotional divorce is and how you can survive it.



(News Agencies) By definition, emotionally divorced, is the 'left-divorce is 'the legal dissolution of a marriage by a court or other competent body'. It involves tedious paperwork, separation of finances and assets. However, divorce is just a formality as it's preceded by an emotional divorce, which does the actual damage. According to the internet, emotional divorce can be defined as a psychological defence mechanism employed by the partner, who feels that their existing marriage is a threat to their well being. The subjected partner tends to withdraw his/her emotions from the marriage to protect oneself. According to experts, Shivani Misri Sadhoo, psychologist and marriage counselor and Anika Parashar, therapeutic counselor- who also have Facebook support group for divorced women, the partner that initiates the emotional divorce, is the 'walk- away' spouse and the partner that gets

marriage.
-Their aim is to accelerate the divorce process. They have no idea that there are irreconcilable differences in the marriage and that the marriage is heading for a breakdown.
-Clingy attitude towards their partner, always looking for one more chance to save their marriage.
-They feel nervous, anxious and worry about the future and being single again.
-In extreme cases, they have a tendency to stalk or harass their partner.
-Their aim is to delay the divorce process.
During an emotional divorce, the left- behind partner tries to control the relationship. They failed to see the warning signs and when they get emotionally divorced, they don't know how to respond. As a result, they act in a manner that usually ends up pushing their partner further away. The left- behind partner needs to avoid causing unnecessary conflict and understand that the relationship is over and need to let go. It's also important for them to understand that the partner walking away is not a bad person. In fact that person is just as emotionally damaged as they are and they are looking to protect themselves from further pain.

Breast ain't best for Millennial men, Pornhub study says

online searches sag



(News Agencies) It seems a paradigm shift is underway as far male pornographic habits are concerned. The affinity of millennial males towards breasts is less compared to previous generations, if a recent online study is to be believed. According to a study done by Pornhub on what people's porn habits and preferences online are, there has been a 20 % fall in people searching for breasts. While millions are still searching for breasts and b**bs, they comprise only 1.5 % of total searches. What is interesting, however, is the ways in which they search for breasts online. The two most used search terms are 'big t*ts' and 'big b**bs.' Quite basic and self explanatory, as you can see. Then there are the following- 'huge t*ts,' 'big natural t*ts,' and just 'b**bs.' Post that, specifics come into play as the key words are 'Asian' and 'lesbian.' Another one is 'breastfeeding'. What one can deduce from this study is that people are more or less looking for large breasts. Also, natural is preferred over silicon. One thing's for sure, after 100 years when Pornhub does this analysis again, we won't be surprised if breasts figure prominently on the list - they just might rise to the challenge!

Why Aamir Khan is not on Forbes list of world's highest paid actors

Bollywood superstars Shah Rukh Khan, Salman Khan and Akshay Kumar are in the top 10 of the Forbes list of highest-paid actors in the world but Aamir Khan didn't make it.

(News Agencies) Bollywood superstars Shah Rukh Khan, Salman Khan and Akshay Kumar are in the top 10 of the Forbes list of highest-paid actors in the world, which was revealed late Tuesday. But Aamir Khan didn't make it, despite his last release, Dangal, managing to break the Rs 2,000-crore barrier at the box office. A Forbes report says Aamir earned Rs 175 crore from Dangal alone, arguably the highest fee for any actor in the world. But still he missed the coveted list. "Mr Khan doesn't ever get featured in the Forbes list as he doesn't share, not even (his) rough earnings (sic)," his team said on being contacted. The Dangal star did make it to the Forbes' Top 100 Celebrities' list in 2013 when Rajkumar Hirani's 3 Idiots made Rs 200 crore, a first at the domestic box office. He has not featured on the list of world's highest paid actors ever.

Aamir is picky about the movies and brand endorsements he does, but industry insiders believe that has nothing to do with his absence from the Forbes list. Ad guru Prahlad Kakkar believes that Forbes had

messed up.

"He has always had this policy of few endorsements. He has always said 'I will do just four endorsements and charge X amount of money, take it or leave it'. He must have ignored when they (Forbes) approached him and they are being vindictive," he said. "The Empire strikes back," he added jokingly. A major share of earnings for our celebs comes from brand endorsements. Being choosy, Aamir mostly works with one brand at a time, according to Forbes. Besides, his overseas earnings are truncated too. Dangal was a super-hit in China, but the government there gives only 25 per cent of the box-office revenue to foreign studios. Most countries give a share of 40 to 50 per cent to studios. Unlike Shah Rukh and Salman who churn out more than one film a year and Akshay who releases at least three or four movies annually, Aamir often takes more than a year on a single movie. After Dangal in December 2016, Aamir will be seen in a cameo role in Secret Superstar. He is currently working

for a movie titled Thugs of Hindostan with Amitabh Bachchan and Fatima Sana Shaikh. The film is set to be released towards 2018-end. Also, ventures other than film production bring additional moolah to the top celluloid stars. Trade expert Akshaye Rathi said: "SRK, Salman and Akshay have diversified into business ventures and we do not see Aamir doing any such thing. Even if Shah Rukh isn't doing any film, his VFX lab earns enough for him. Salman has parallel earnings from clothing, jewellery and other ventures."

Katrina Kaif wants to star in Game of Thrones

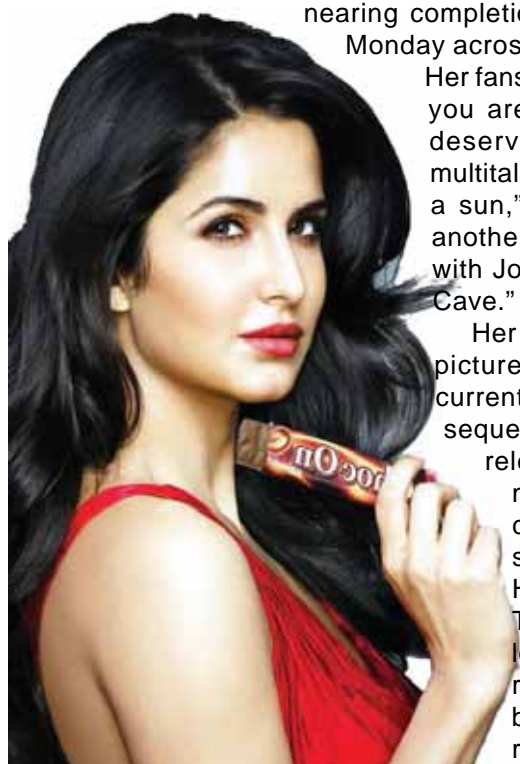
Katrina Kaif has posted a new picture and asked to be a part of HBO's Game of Thrones. Dressed as a Dothraki, Katrina sure has her eyes set on Jon Snow.

(News Agencies) Katrina Kaif has professed her love for Jon Snow and said she wants to be a part of the hit television show Game of Thrones. The actor posted a picture, dressed somewhat in Dothraki fashion, perhaps to build her case.

In the picture, she shows off her toned legs and poses in front a beach shack. She is seen wearing a black cut-out dress over a bikini with her hair swept back. "Can I be in #gameofthrones pleeeeeeassee... #ilovejonsnow #pleasetakemeintheshow #moodyandbroodingismything," she captioned the photo. The season 7 of the show is nearing completion with the final episode set to be telecast this Monday across the globe.

Her fans are all in for the idea. "Omg my angel. @katrinakaif you are looking so sizzling my diva yes of course you deserve to come in this show mam because you are multitalented person keep smiling ever keep shining ever like a sun," one said. "I want to see you in the series," said another. One has already started imagining her in the cave with Jon Snow: "Waiting for your scene wid Jon snow in the Cave."

Her look has been styled by Anaita Shroff Adajania and the picture is for an upcoming issue of Vogue India. Katrina is currently working on Tiger Zinda Hai with Salman Khan. It is the sequel to 2012's hit film, Ek Tha Tiger. The film is scheduled to release this December. Katrina may be a late entrant to social media but she has her A game on. From her photos with her co-stars to her fitness videos to her quirky captions, Katrina sure understands how to get her fans interested. Meanwhile, HBO has revealed the title of the final episode of Game of Thrones Season 7, 'The Dragon and the Wolf'. Likely to be the longest ever episode in the show's history, it is expected to set records. The present season of Game of Thrones has been beset by hacks and leaks but has nonetheless set up new viewership records.





Forbes' highest paid actors

Shah Rukh Khan, Salman Khan, Akshay Kumar among world's top 10

While Shah Rukh Khan, Salman Khan and Akshay Kumar are on Forbes highest paid actors list, Aamir Khan's absence despite Dangal's success is surprising.

(News Agencies)The much awaited Forbes' list of highest paid actors in the world is out now, and it's a good news for Bollywood fans. While Mark Wahlberg has topped the list this year, three Indian actors find place in the top 10. While Shah Rukh Khan is at number 8, Salman Khan and Akshay Kumar follow at number 9 and 10 respectively. According to Forbes, while SRK earned \$38 million (Rs 243.50 cr), Salman made \$37 million (Rs 237 cr) and Akshay took home \$35.5 million (Rs 227.5 cr).

These three actors were expected to be in the list as they are the highest earners in the world's biggest film industry in terms of numbers of films produced every year. However, Aamir Khan's absence from the list is surprising whose Dangal has broken the worldwide collection records for any Indian film. It collected over Rs 2000 cr (\$312 million) in China alone. The magazine says it has collected the data over a period of 12 months starting from June 1, 2016. Dangal released on December 23, 2016 and most of its earning came within the specified period.

Mark Wahlberg is surprisingly the highest earning actor in the world with \$68 million kitty. That's almost 79% more income than Shah Rukh Khan. Wahlberg, 46, made to the top thanks to his pay days for movies Daddy's Home 2 and Transformers: The Last Knight,

according to the Forbes ranking released on Tuesday.

The rapper-turned-actor knocked 2016 leader Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson into second place, with estimated 2017 earnings of \$65 million. Forbes estimates earnings, before taxes and management fees, from movies, TV and commercial endorsements.

The Forbes list again highlighted Hollywood's gender pay gap. Last week, the magazine named La La Land Oscar winner Emma Stone as the world's highest paid actress with an estimated 2017 take of \$26 million. Forbes said the 10 highest-paid leading men earned a combined \$488.5 million before tax in its June 2016-June 2017 scoring period, nearly three times more than the \$172.5 million earned by the top 10 scoring women. Forbes attributed the disparity to the prevalence of superhero and action blockbusters that earn big at the box office for Hollywood studios but tend to have fewer leading roles for women. Pirates of the Caribbean star Johnny Depp, who for years has been among the top five paid actors, did not make the top 20 this year, Forbes said. Depp is currently embroiled in a bitter lawsuit with his former business managers who have detailed what they describe as his lavish spending habits. Vin Diesel (\$54.5 million), Adam Sandler (\$50.5 million) and Jackie Chan (\$49 million) were

The top 10 paid actors this past year, according to Forbes magazine:

1. Mark Wahlberg, \$68 million
2. Dwayne Johnson, \$65 million
3. Vin Diesel, \$54.5 million
4. Adam Sandler, \$50.5 million
5. Jackie Chan, \$49 million
6. Robert Downey Jr., \$48 million
7. Tom Cruise, \$43 million
8. Shah Rukh Khan, \$38 million
9. Salman Khan, \$37 million
10. Akshay Kumar, \$35.5 million

adjudged 3rd, 4th and 5th on this list. Iron Man star Robert Downey Jr and Tom Cruise came 6th and 7th before Indian actors took over the list. Actors like Chris Hemsworth, Samuel Jackson and Tom Hanks failed to surpass the Bollywood superpowers in this list that has a busy actor like Mark Ruffalo at number 20. La La Land star Emma Stone leads the race of the highest paid actresses in the world, but her earning of \$26 million is nowhere close to the highest paid actors. She is closely followed by Jennifer Aniston with \$25.5 million and Jennifer Lawrence with \$24 million. This shows how big the gender pay gap is in Hollywood. Deepika Padukone - who was 10th highest paid actress in 2016 - failed to make the cut this year.

Is A Gentleman ready for a bloodbath at box office? Directors Raj and DK answer

A Gentleman, starring Sidharth Malhotra and Jacqueline Fernandez, is releasing alongside 6 other major films. Its directors Raj and DK weigh their chances at the box office.

(News Agencies)They started as US-returned software engineers Raj Nidimoru and Krishna DK who were passionate about filmmaking and wanted to make one of their own in Bollywood. Almost a decade later, they go by a much crisper Raj and DK, and have a rather interesting filmography to boast of. However, meet them for the first time and it is hard to make out who is who. A quick Google search can help there but what we are more interested in is understanding who does what in the film, especially now that their next film A Gentleman starring Sidharth Malhotra and Jacqueline Fernandez is all set to

hit the screens this Friday. Raj says, "We write together once we are excited about the idea. We discuss a concept for almost a year before actually going on the floor." DK gently interrupts that shows how comfortable they are in taking forward each other's ideas. He says, "We write to direct which means we get ready for the final stage through writing. Even on A Gentlemen which is shot in Miami. That was expensive so we worked in double shifts and with two parallel units."

Their last film Happy Ending starring Saif Ali Khan failed and that probably inspired them to come up with a better

plan. DK says, "We were dealing with logistics and were working on another film which got delayed. Interestingly we were working all this while." A

Gentleman will be battling it out with at least six other major releases this week, but Raj seems confident. He says, "We



didn't want to make a film beyond the budget. In this case, Rs 40 crore. They spent Rs 10 crore on advertising.

Sex, scandals and spirituality

How self-styled godmen like Gurmeet Ram Rahim have courted controversies

It is not just Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim, many 'godmen' in India have been mired in controversies and scandals.

(News Agencies) Controversy can perhaps be the middle name of Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim, who is awaiting the court's verdict in a 16-year-old case of alleged sexual exploitation of two sadhvis, or women followers. In 2002, a sadhvi had written an anonymous letter to then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, accusing the Dera chief of sexual abuse. Fifty year-old Gurmeet Ram Rahim also faces murder charges—he is accused of

murdering Sirsa-based journalist Ram Chander Chhatrapati for his writings against Dera Sacha Sauda. In December 2014, the Punjab and Haryana High Court ordered a CBI probe into allegations of forced castration of 400 dera followers inside an ashram. A former Dera follower Hans Raj Chauhan in his petition said that the followers were told that those who would get castrated would be able to meet God through the Dera chief, Gurmeet Ram Rahim.

Asaram Bapu: Known as Bapuji among his followers, Asaram Bapu is accused of allegedly raping a minor girl in 2013. The girl alleged that Asaram had asked her to perform oral sex on him, an act she declined. Following the brutal Delhi gang-rape on December 16, 2012, the self-styled godman had sparked a controversy with his comments, blaming the victim for the ordeal. "Only five-six people are not culprits. The girl is as guilty as her rapists..."

(Contd on page 22)



China is waging a water war on India

Beijing is fashioning water into a political weapon by denying India flood-related hydrological data since May, even as major flooding has hit the region from Assam to Uttar Pradesh. Data on upstream river flows is essential for flood forecasting and warning in order to save lives and reduce material losses. China's data denial crimps flash flood modelling in India.



(News Agencies) Tibet, a treasure-trove of natural resources, including water and precious metals, is a great strategic asset for China in its pursuit of an often improvident style of economic growth. The sprawling Tibetan plateau also arms Beijing with water leverage over downstream countries because it is the starting point for most of Asia's great rivers, many of which are being heavily dammed just before they cross into neighbouring nations.

China is sharpening its leverage with co-riparian India. Water indeed has emerged as a new divide in Sino-Indian relations, as Beijing quietly and opaquely builds dams, barrages and other structures on rivers flowing to India. It spurned then Prime

Minister Manmohan Singh's 2013 proposal that the two countries enter into a water treaty or establish an intergovernmental institution to define mutual rights and responsibilities on shared rivers. The flash floods that ravaged Himachal Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh between 2000 and 2005 were linked to the unannounced releases from rain-swollen Chinese dams and barrages.

At a time when the Doklam face-off has entered its third month and the risk of a Chinese military attack on India is growing, there is more troubling news: Beijing is fashioning water into a political weapon by denying India flood-related hydrological data since May, even as major flooding has hit the region from Assam to Uttar Pradesh. (Contd on page 22)

Why Chandigarh, India's best planned city, went under after three hours of rain

The unprecedented water-logging shines light, decidedly poor, on the governance deficit in Chandigarh and Mohali, both billed as the smart cities in the making



(News Agencies) Natural mishaps have an uncanny way to expose all that is wrong with India's urban planning and infrastructure. Monday's unusually heavy rains, heaviest in 16 years, starkly did that reality check at an unlikely of places: Chandigarh, the country's first and, arguably the most, well-planned city since Independence. A 115-mm downpour in just three hours morphed the much-acclaimed 'City Beautiful' into an ugly chaos that its denizens had scarcely ever imagined. In no time, the swirling, muddy waters

turned wide, leafy avenues into pools, choked main arteries and well-manicured roundabouts and swamped the upscale sectors. The peak-hour Monsoon misery wreaked the worst traffic gridlocks that Le Corbusier's designer city had not seen in its living memory. If alive today, the French genius would have been aghast to see the flood-like emergency in his famed masterpiece and co-capital of Punjab and Haryana. The rain-induced mess in the Union Territory was no less worse in its immediate neighbours

(Contd on page 22)



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