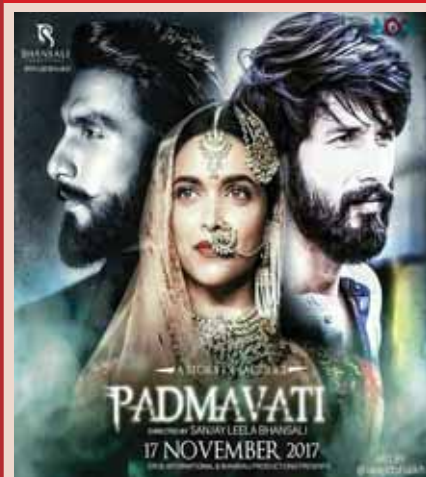


**Supreme Court Stays
'Padmaavat' Ban**



(SAI Buearu) The Supreme Court has stayed notification by Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan and Gujarat banning "Padmaavat", and has given orders to release the film in the states.

The apex court has also restrained any other state from issuing similar notifications and orders prohibiting screening of "Padmaavat".

Senior advocate Harish Salve while representing producers of Padmaavat in the Supreme Court had earlier said, "Request the Central government to pass a direction to the states for a better and an effective step and solution." Producers of the movie moved the top court on Wednesday to convince the aforementioned states to withdraw the ban on the release of the film. **(Contd on page 22)**



STORY
ON page
22

Inside Obama's Midterm Campaign Plans

In his first year back in private life, the former president has struggled with how to challenge his successor, but as the midterms approach he's preparing to take on a bigger political role.

Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu's first India visit

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, on his first visit to India, is only the second Israeli leader to visit the country after Ariel Sharon in 2003.

(SAI Buearu) Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu arrived in New Delhi on Sunday on his first visit to India to deepen defence, economic and cultural ties between the two countries that established diplomatic ties barely 25 years ago.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi broke protocol to receive Netanyahu, only the second Israeli leader to visit India after Ariel Sharon in 2003, at the Palam airport where the two leaders shared a warm embrace.

"Indian Prime Minister (Narendra) Modi is a close friend of Israel and of mine and I

appreciate the fact that he will accompany me on extensive parts of my visit," Netanyahu said before leaving for New Delhi. "We are strengthening ties between Israel and this important global power."

Modi, who made history in July when he became the first Indian PM to visit Israel, would accompany Netanyahu for most part of his tour that will also take him to Mumbai, Ahmedabad and Agra.

Netanyahu had done the same for Modi in July. "Welcome to India, my friend PM @netanyahu! Your visit to India is historic

and special. It will further cement the close friendship between our nations," Modi tweeted in English and Hebrew. Israel is to invest \$68.6 million in areas such as tourism, technology, agriculture and innovation over a period of four years, a senior Israeli official had said ahead of the visit.

From the airport, Modi and Netanyahu headed straight to the Teen Murti Chowk in central Delhi for a ceremony to rename the war memorial as Teen Murti-Haifa Chowk.

(Contd on page 23)



Ex-C.I.A. Officer Suspected of Compromising Chinese Informants Is Arrested



(SAI Buearu)

WASHINGTON — A former C.I.A. officer suspected by investigators of helping China dismantle United States spying operations and identify informants has been arrested, the Justice Department said on Tuesday. The collapse of the spy network was one of the American government's worst intelligence failures in recent years.

(Contd on page 21)

'The Post' Reminds us What Journalism Used to be and What it Should be



(SAI Buearu)

For a journalist of a certain vintage, Steven Spielberg's The Post brings back memories of how journalism used to be: journalists, with cigarettes in their mouths, banging away on their typewriters, teletype machines, dial-up telephones, hot metal typefaces etc.

(Contd on page 21)

Aziz Ansari accused of coercing woman into oral sex. Accuser shares texts, account of the night

A Brooklyn-based photographer has accused comedian and actor Aziz Ansari of sexual assault.



(News Agencies) A Brooklyn-based photographer has accused comedian and actor

Aziz Ansari of sexual assault. The woman, who goes by the name 'Grace' provided a graphic account of her experience, which began with meeting Ansari, star of Netflix's Master of None, at the 2017 Emmys and ended with her 'crying alone in an Uber'. She described the encounter, according to a report published in Uproxx, as the 'worst experience with a man I've ever had'. The first-hand account was first published on Babe.net, under the title, 'I went on a date with Aziz Ansari. It turned into the worst night of my life.' Grace says she told Aziz to 'slow down' but the actor responded, "Where do you want me to f*** you?" She also says that Aziz coerced her into having oral sex.

Grace also shared the alleged text messages that she shared with Aziz the next day, when the actor asked her how the date was for her. "Last night might've been fun for you, but it wasn't for me. You ignored clear non-verbal clues; you kept going with advances." She continued, "I want to make sure you're aware so maybe the next girl doesn't have to cry on the ride home." Ansari purportedly replied, "Clearly, I misread things in the moment and I'm truly sorry." Aziz has not responded to the allegations. He recently won a Golden Globe for his performance in Master of None, which included an episode featuring a prominent celebrity being accused of sexual harassment.

Dance USA Dance Wants to Know if You Have the Moves

5678 Media Group and ZEE TV to Kick Off Season 2 of Popular Dance Competition



(By a staff reporter) New York – 5678 Media Group and ZEE TV are asking talented dance teams to show off their moves and audition for the second season of Dance USA Dance (DUD), the latest dance competition sweeping the globe. Riding on the success of its pilot season in 2016, Dance USA Dance is taking the global platform to new heights in 2018. With 15 new tour cities, including New York, Chicago, Atlanta, Dallas, Toronto and Dubai, talented dance teams from around the world will compete for the grand prize while promoting a charitable cause.

Also, new in season 2, a partnership with Bollyshake, an internet dance community platform that brings dancers from across the globe together to share their talent and interests in various dance styles "Dance USA Dance was created to bring dance lovers from around the world to one big stage and in 2018 we're excited to kick off season 2," said Ashwanni Kumar, executive producer at Dance USA Dance. "Our vision is to tackle challenging issues by bringing people from around the world to one platform. Where there is dance, there are no differences."

For season 2, DANCE USA DANCE will enlist the help of four celebrities in the dance and entertainment space: Sarish Khan, the official host of season 2, was Miss

Pakistan USA 2015 and is known for her work as an actor, activist and attorney. Nakul Dev Mahajan, season 2 finale judge, is an American Bollywood choreographer who is best known for his Bollywood choreography on the hit show So You Think You Can Dance.

He opened the first Bollywood dance school in India and choreographed the famous Bollywood performance on the hit Netflix show, Fuller House. Lauren Gottlieb, season 2 finale judge, is an American dancer and actress from Scottsdale, Arizona. She was a contestant on the third season of So You Think You Can Dance and played the lead role in the 2013 Indian dance film ABCD: Any Body Can Dance. ? Matt Steffanina, official brand ambassador for Dance USA Dance, is a choreographer, producer and entrepreneur most known for his work with Taylor Swift, Chris Brown, Jason Derulo and Snoop Dogg.

Steffanina has also been seen on So You Think You Can Dance, hit dance movie, Step Up, The Ellen Show, The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon and much more. Auditions for season 2 are now open. For more information about Dance USA Dance and auditions, visit danceusadance.us and check us out on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. The 5678 Media Group is a full-service entertainment agency connecting brand to youth culture.

For Sale in Wantagh, Long Island



- Cape
- Eat In Kitchen: Y
- #Kit: 1
- Basement: None
- Fin: N
- 1 Family, Att
- Fireplaces: 0
- Garage: Drive: Pvt
- Bedrooms: 4
- Rms: 9
- Waterfront: N
- Taxes: \$10,170.91
- Baths Full: 2
- Half: 0
- Waterview: N
- Villages Taxes:
- Master BR 1st Floor: N
- Lot Size: 60X100
- Total Taxes: \$10,170.91
- Wood Floors:
- Sect:
- Taxes w/Basic STAR: \$8,547.00
- New Construction: N
- Adult Comm: N
- Schools: 5
- Approx Year Built: 1948
- Handicap Access:
- Levittown

Bsmt/Subfl:
1st Floor: Lr/Eik/Den/Br/Bth
2nd Floor: Br/Br/Br/Bth
3rd Floor:

Beautifully Maintained Mid Block Property. 4 Bedrooms, 2 Baths With Updated Appliances. Lots Of Natural Light, Closets, 4 Bedrooms, 2 Bath, Eat In Kitchen, Living Room And A Den To Entertain Guests And Family. This House Will Not Last !!

ML#: 2989437

Sharanjit Thind
realtorst@gmail.com



Property Professional USA LLC



Prepared by: Sharanjit Thind, Property Professional USA LLC (516) 605-2700
realtorst@gmail.com 12/15/2017 11:34 PM
Information supplied by third parties and not by Multiple Listing Service of Long Island, Inc.
Information Copyright 2017, Multiple Listing Service of Long Island, Inc.



IALI Oath Ceremony 2018

The newly elected Executive Council of India Association of Long Island held its Oath Ceremony on 9 th January 2018 at Merrick Golf Course, Merrick, Long Island.

(By Indu Gajwani) Long Rastogi and her Executive Presidents, dignitaries, elected President, followed Child Enrichment Program, Island- The program began Team by Honorable Dr. Neeta community leaders, IALI by the President's speech, which will help children with at by singing of American Jain, District Leader, District members and invited guests. where she expressed her science projects and their and Indian national anthems, 25. The ceremony was Past President, Mr. Satnam vision for IALI 2018, by homework and enhancing followed by swearing-in of the witnessed by big turnout S. Parhar gave a fabulous continuing current popular Sports Forum with indoor new President Mrs. Gunjan which included, past introduction to the newly programs and launching activities.



The Indian Jewish community has brought the two nations closer

Bombay University was the first in the world to revive the teaching of Hebrew as a second language way before Herzl even dreamt of the creation of the State of Israel

Every Jew from India has always held India in great esteem right through our more than 2,000 years of peaceful sojourn in India. Even today, every Jew from India speaks, dresses and participates actively in every cultural activity which reminds him of India: whether it is in songs, movies, dance or publication of a newsletter in Marathi. According to Sharad Pawar, the Indian-Jewish community has made Marathi an international language.

Israel has always sought friendship with India from even before the independence of both countries from the same imperial power that played the same biased game against both our people. But thanks to recent political events our two countries have come even closer. In my opinion, the bond will only grow

stronger.

The Indian Jewish community has played an important part in fostering these relations. It should be noted at the time of independence, many senior officers in the Indian Armed Forces were Jews. Many founders of medical faculties, leading doctors, senior teachers, lawyers and judges were from the Indian Jewish community. Few people know that Bombay University was the first in the world to revive the teaching of Hebrew as a second language way before Herzl even dreamt of the creation of the State of Israel.

Mahatma Gandhi was operated upon at the Sassoon Hospital in Poona and his personal physician and friend was Abraham Solomon Erulkar and some of the best schools in Ahmedabad have been

established by Jews. Even the signature tune of All India Radio was written by Walter Kaufman, a Jew. After the establishment of relations between our two countries, the first Israeli Ambassador, Ephraim Dowek, worked on establishing strong diplomatic and cultural ties between our two countries. Agricultural ties developed into the creation of miracle fruits and vegetables and the largest investor in a Kibbutz Naan-based industry is an Indian: Naandan Jain, a world leader in water sprinkler systems. Many Israeli companies have created India-based subsidiaries in the field of software development.

The young people of our countries are no less enamoured by each other. From a small trickle of sceptical youth in the early 1990s, tourism from Israel to India has grown to



several tens of thousands every year and the same is happening in the other direction. Many of them keep returning to India for a more enhanced experience of hospitality, kindness, cuisine and nature. There are more than 10,000 Indian caregivers serving in Israel. Finally, many Jews

may have left India for Israel but there is one community the Chitpavan Brahmins, known to be of Jewish descent. Their second names such as Savarkar, Mulgaonkar and Kolatkar have roots in Hebrew and 'kar' emerges from the Hebrew word for farmer.

Modi-Netanyahu Truly Made For Each Other

Benjamin Netanyahu and Narendra Modi, as in the ad for Wills cigarettes and filters, are "Made for Each Other". Born a year apart, Netanyahu in October 1949 and Modi in September 1950, they became the first persons born after the independence of their respective countries to hold the post of Prime Minister. In each other, they have found a mirror image of themselves.

Both are rigid, doctrinaire, right-wing extremists, drawing their breath from two major proponents of violence as the road to liberation and the realization of faith-based nationhood: VD Savarkar in the case of Modi, and Vladimir "Ze'ev" Jabotinsky in the case of Netanyahu.

Savarkar reserved his ire for the Buddha and Asoka, holding that their espousal of non-violence had "unmanned" the Hindu and, therefore, Hindu nationalism must be militarized. Jabotinsky called for an "iron wall of Jewish bayonets", while bluntly affirming the obvious: "Zionism is a colonizing adventure and it therefore, stands or falls by the question of armed force".

Savarkar invented the word 'Hindutva' (which he translated into English as 'Hindudom' or Hindu Raj), propagated his

version of the Two-Nation Theory holding Hindu nationhood to be incompatible with the followers of any Semitic religion, inspired the RSS and promoted the Hindu Mahasabha. Jabotinsky founded the Union of Zionist Revisionists in 1923 (about the same time as Savarkar was toying with his ideas of 'Hindutva') and pitted himself against Theodore Herzl, founder of the Jewish Agency, and Ben-Gurion, leader of the Labour Zionists and future first PM of Israel, even as Savarkar pitted himself against Gandhi and Nehru. "Jabotinsky used to say that Judea had fallen in blood and fire and in fire and blood it would rise again. His disciples fulfilled that prophecy."

Deriving from these two similar violence-ridden politico-ethical philosophies, Modi and Netanyahu have branded themselves self-consciously as proponents of a narrow, sectarian nationalism whose driving force is the demonization of "The Other" - Pakistan in the case of Modi and Palestine in Netanyahu's case. The cause to which they are devoted is a shrill, xenophobic, chauvinistic and jingoist narrative. It serves their joint cause that the Pakistanis are Muslims and so are most Palestinians. Thus, 'Hindutva' and 'Yehuditva' come

together on a common platform.

There are, of course, differences. For one, Netanyahu is highly educated, a scholar of some distinction with both a graduate degree and a post-graduate degree from one of the world's greatest educational institutions, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The same could hardly be said of Modi. For another, Modi has distanced himself from his spouse while Netanyahu has been through three marriages and entangled himself in several extra-matrimonial scandals. That need not detain us long, but it is to be noted that on August 3, 2017, the Israeli police charged Netanyahu with "crimes including fraud, breach of trust and bribes". In our country, of course, the police would not dare bring any such charge against a Head of Government. (In an earlier 1997 case, Netanyahu was let off owing to "insufficient evidence to go trial". This would sound familiar to Modi's ears as the Raghavan SIT had concluded that they could not find prosecutable evidence against him).

Where perhaps they come together is with their respective think-tanks: the Vivekananda International Foundation, established 2009 and "closely

aligned," says Wikipedia, "with the Narendra Modi government" and focused on exposing and countering "international terrorism" (first Director, Ajit Doval, now National Security Adviser). Netanyahu's is the Anti-Terrorist Institute (established 1978) and named after Netanyahu's brother, Yonatan, who was martyred while leading Operation Entebbe in 1975 to rescue the Israeli hostages who had been skyjacked to Idi Amin's Uganda.

There is rich irony in Netanyahu casting himself as "anti-terrorist" because he comes in direct line of political descent from the dreaded Irgun Zvai Leumi, the Zionist terrorist gang that "blew up CID offices, tax centres and the Immigration Building, planted bombs and led raids in which Britons and Arab civilians were killed" (Karen Armstrong, Holy War, Anchor/random, New York, p.106). From 1943 on, Irgun was led by Menachem Begin, sometimes in opposition to but often in tandem with another terrorist outfit officially called Lehi but notoriously known as the Stern Gang. Its leader was Yitzhak Shamir. After founding a political party, Likud, in 1973, Begin became PM four years later in 1977, and in 1983 he handed over the premiership to his

partner in terrorism, Yitzhak Shamir. Netanyahu is the current leader of Begin-Shamir's Likud party.

While Shamir's Lehi terrorists assassinated the British Resident Minister for the Middle East, Lord Moyne, in Cairo in 1944, Begin organized the Irgun terrorist attack in Jerusalem on July 22, 1946 that "blew up a wing of the King David Hotel, which housed the British administration, killing 91 people" (Karen Armstrong, Holy War, Anchor/random, New York, p.106). Shortly thereafter, the British discovered "a plot to extend Zionist terrorism to the United Kingdom, with Bevin (the Foreign Secretary) as one obvious target for assassination". Even after Israel was secured, such terrorist activity continued, notably the attempt in 1952 to blow up the Federal German Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, with a parcel bomb.

Between the two of them, Irgun and the Stern Gang, that is, Begin and Shamir - future Prime Ministers of Israel - got together with elements of the Jewish Agency's army, Hagannah, to launch on April 10, 1948 what has come down in history as the most notorious, vicious attack on unarmed Arab Palestinians. (Contd on page 23)

Turmoil in SC: Time to think in the spirit of utmost deference to duty

The four judges calling an unprecedented press conference after two months to hand over a copy of the letter to the media only indicates that they are still not satisfied with the working of the court under the current dispensation.



In the Mahabharata, when Draupadi was gambled away by Yudhishtira, she asked a question: "I belonged equally to all five of them, how could Yudhishtira alone lose me?" This question sprang to my mind as I watched four of the Pancha-Pandavas of the collegium stand up against the perceived dishonour of the institution. At times like this, young Abhimanyus and Parikshits of the judicial family have to wonder whether there is something at all that they can contribute to the cause of Dharma. The four judges have told the country in no uncertain terms that things are not right within the judicial fortress. From the press conference held by the judges, it appears two months ago, these very judges had written to the Chief Justice complaining about "certain judicial orders passed by this court which has adversely affected the overall functioning of the justice delivery system and the independence of the high courts besides affecting the administrative functioning of the offices of the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India".

The letter also points to an attempt on October 27, 2017, by a two-judge bench to re-look the working of the verdict in the NJAC case. This dealt with appointments to the higher judiciary. That case, however, was closed on November 8, 2017, by a three-judge bench headed by the Chief Justice. The four judges calling an unprecedented press conference after two months to hand over a copy of the letter to the media only indicates that they are still not satisfied with the working of the court under the current dispensation.

The judges have wisely refrained from setting out all the details of what they have perceived to have gone wrong in the previous months. One can now presume that the dissatisfaction persists to an extent that they feel compelled to bring out their misgivings into full public view.

Justice Chelameswar at the press conference said, "All four of us are convinced that unless this institution is preserved and it maintains its equanimity, democracy will not survive in this country, or any country." Justice Gogoi, who is expected to be the next Chief Justice of India, said that the conference was organised as "a discharge of debt to the nation".

This is a time to think institutionally and in the spirit of utmost deference to duty, that all men of law are called upon to render to the cause of administration of justice. The first call must be to ensure that the administration of justice is not perceived to be dependent upon the mere allocation of the roster of cases by the Chief Justice.

Secondly, it must be hereafter seen to that no litigant, how high so ever, can be perceived to have any role in the inner workings of the judicial process.

Thirdly, it must be ensured that the institution of the Supreme Court must not be seen as subordinate to the tastes, predilections and fashions of the Chief Justice of the day. Finally, it must be ensured that the higher judiciary is seen as an integrated family, united against any external attempt to influence it or interfere with its functioning.

As someone who has spent almost his entire working life in the Supreme Court and who is ever grateful for the recognition and honour, that working in this institution has brought me, I am loathe to say anything that will undermine the institution. It is times of crisis that determine character. The press conference should not be seen as a revolt or a challenge to authority. It must be seen as a desperate cry to set right a revered institution.

It is hoped that all the five Pandavas sit together in a spirit of re-dedication to national service. One cannot let the cause of lady justice, be subject once again, to a casual roll of the dice.

Should Trump speak to Mueller? A debate

The Washington Post reported last week that special counsel Robert Mueller has told President Donald Trump's legal team that his office will likely seek an interview with the President. Trump indicated he might be willing to be interviewed by Mueller's team, but more recently, he said, "We'll see what happens."

A high-stakes interview between Trump and the counsel appointed to investigate Russian interference in the 2016 election and the question of whether there were links to the Trump campaign would be a momentous political and legal occasion.

CNN Opinion asked James Gagliano, a retired FBI agent with two decades on the job, and Paul Callan, a former prosecutor, for their takes on whether Trump should meet with Mueller, and if so, under what circumstances. Many legal analysts, including Paul Callan, argue that no skilled attorney worth his salt would ever advise the President to agree to a sit-down interview with special counsel Robert Mueller. The most common -- and safest -- criminal defense strategy places a premium on limiting exposure for a client. A shut mouth catches no flies, as the old saying goes.

But I would argue for a more unconventional legal approach for a wholly unconventional President for these four reasons: First, there is reason to believe that Mueller is not building a strong case against the President on the issue of collusion. The indictments filed against Paul Manafort, Trump's former campaign manager, and Rick Gates, Manafort's business associate, were related to conspiracy and money laundering that allegedly took place before their work on the campaign. Meanwhile, Michael Flynn and George Papadopoulos pleaded guilty to lying to FBI agents -- ancillary process crimes, which means that there was criminal conduct (lying) related to the investigation of a crime, but not complicity in the crime under investigation.

In other words, not one of the aforementioned Trump campaign associates have been charged in an underlying scheme related to illegal cooperation with the Kremlin to sway the election. That's critical, because it could well mean that Trump only needs to fear potential obstruction of justice charges related to his interactions with his former FBI director, James Comey, or false statement charges if he explicitly lies to investigators. For those inclined to believe the President, who has repeatedly proclaimed his innocence, the sage legal advice would be to help bring the special prosecutor's investigation to a conclusion. Interviews of targets are generally the final act in a judicial melodrama. By agreeing to meet with investigators and telling the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, Trump would help to close this chapter conclusively. And, hopefully, America would move on.



ISSN No. 1554 06X

Chairman : Karam Singh Thind

President: Bhupinder Kaur Thind

Editor in Chief & Publisher : Sharanjit Singh Thind

Editor (Political Affairs-India) : Aruna Singh

Deputy Managing Editor : Max Thind

Contributing Writers: Navjot Kaur Thind, Sonia Gaba

Chief Photographer : Vijay Shah

Special Correspondent :

Photographers: Ruth Alvarez/Hamad

Gagandeep Singh (INDIA)

Editorial Intern: Roubin Singh Thind

Web Coordinator : Jatinder Kumar

A Publication of Media Partners Capital, Inc.

REGD & MAILING OFFICE :

P.O Box 7005 Hicksville New York 11801

Phone: 917 612 3158 TelFax : 516 342 1076

editor@thesouthasianinsider.com, thesouthasianinsider@gmail.com

www.thesouthasianinsider.com

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

India and Israel are all-weather friends

Innovation is interwoven into every field of Indo-Israeli cooperation. Today, we are working together on joint projects in agriculture, water, defence, health, start-ups, space and education.

There is something intangible yet palpable which makes India-Israel relations special. Every Israeli who has visited India has felt it. Every Indian who has travelled to Israel has felt it. Every person who joins the incredible journey of India-Israel relations has felt it. Everyone who witnessed the chemistry between Prime Minister Netanyahu and Prime Minister Modi, likely to be seen again in the coming days, has felt it. It runs beneath every government to government, business to business and people to people interaction between our nations for generations.

Today, we are standing at an exciting juncture. Behind us are nearly 26 years of growing partnership between India and Israel, stemming from a deep connection between our two peoples. It is a connection which took its first steps in antiquity and has grown by leaps and bounds in recent years. Ahead of us is a future brimming with possibility and endless potential to shape a better world together.

Our joint journey is based on shared values and is fuelled by a drive for innovation. Our two peoples have transformed from

ancient civilisations to vibrant modern democracies, and we continue to evolve in order to meet the challenges of our time and the challenges of tomorrow. The key, however, is not only to adapt as reality around us changes, but to think ahead and transform the world as it is into a better one for future generations.

In their unique dynamics, India and Israel have the power to do just that. The relations between our two countries have unfolded from a focused cooperation to a diverse and resounding partnership. In word and in deed, Israel has proven to be India's all-weather friend. Today, India and Israel are working together on joint projects in agriculture, water, defence, health, start-ups, space and education. Each project is powered by innovation, India's vast experience and Israel's cutting edge technology.

The best part about these relations is that it is not all talk – our cooperation in every field has been signed and delivered. During Prime Minister Modi's historic visit to Israel in July, the three main topics on the agenda were agriculture, water and

innovation. We promised we would advance India-Israel cooperation in these fields, and we have.

Since that visit and the visit of Prime Minister Netanyahu this week, seven Centres of Excellence under the India-Israel Agricultural Project have become fully functional, bringing the total of centres today to 20 out of 35 potential centres. Simultaneously, India and Israel signed a three-year plan deepening the knowledge dispersed by each centre. Thus we are both expanding and enhancing our cooperation for the benefit of the farmer. As we expand our agricultural cooperation on the government levels, we hope to be joined by the private sectors in integrating best practices and technologies among farmers across India.

Israel's water experts, having overcome severe water shortages in revolutionary and innovative ways, are actively engaging with Indian officials. Together, they are considering the intricate water challenges India is facing and building strategies for efficient water use and reuse. The



results of our cooperation could potentially serve countries the world over.

Innovation is interwoven into every field of India-Israel cooperation, but the field of innovation itself has also advanced since July. The Technological Innovation Fund created during Prime Minister Modi's visit has been ratified by both our governments and a call for proposals has already been made. The promised India-Israel Innovation Challenge has awarded 36 Indian and Israeli startups in agriculture, water and health with tools to boost their technology. All conceived in July, delivered in January.

The great strides we have taken have been made possible by the strong connection between our peoples. MOUs signed between leaders can only

be delivered when backed with the support of the private sector and the people. India and Israel's bond, rooted in a deep friendship, brings together farmers, scientists, entrepreneurs, businesspeople, artists, academicians, and many more to join hands and shape our future.

During Prime Minister Netanyahu's visit, India and Israel will make more promises in various fields. And we make one additional promise: just as our track record shows, promises we make are promises we keep. Today, we mould the next 25 years of India-Israel relations and beyond, committed to leaving a better world behind for our children in India, Israel and children all over the world. Together, India and Israel are making a difference.

There are signs that the Indian economy is turning the corner

The first government forecast of economic growth in the current fiscal year offers a glimmer of hope that investment activity is picking up after more than six years of inertia

Amid the glum headlines about another year of slowing economic growth, there is a silver lining in the first official forecast, released last week, of national income in the fiscal year ending March 2018.

It is widely known that the Indian economy has continued to lose momentum because of the lingering impact of demonetisation as well as the messy transition to the new goods and services tax (GST). However, there are signs that the Indian economy is turning the corner — although it is far from a done deal.

Finance minister Arun Jaitley should pay attention to the silver lining as he finalises the last full budget before the next general elections. The national income estimates show that nearly a quarter of the expansion in domestic demand during fiscal year 2018 come from investment

activity. It accounted for less than a tenth of the increase in domestic demand in the previous fiscal year.

Why is this important? Any economy is powered by four engines — consumer spending, government spending, investment in new equipment and the trade balance with the rest of the world. The first three are sources of domestic demand while the fourth measures net foreign demand for Indian products.

Only two of these four engines have been firing in recent years. Indian consumers have continued to buy, aided by a rise in household debt. The government had to spend to absorb the shock to private sector demand because of demonetisation.

The other two engines of aggregate demand have only sputtered. Private sector investment has been held back because of excess capacity on the one hand as well as weak

company finances on the other. (Note: The official capital formation numbers include investment by enterprises and households.)

The quarterly capacity utilisation surveys by the Reserve Bank of India continue to show excess industrial capacity. So companies can increase production without investing in new factories. Companies have also used their free cash flow to reduce debt rather than create new production capacity.

The first government forecast of economic growth in the current fiscal year offers a glimmer of hope that investment activity is perhaps finally picking up after more than six years of inertia. A look at national savings data also shows that corporate savings have been going up as a percentage of gross domestic product, though the latest available data is only for the fiscal year ended March 2016.

It is in this context that the recent synchronised recovery in the global economy is important — led by a revival in private investment. Global trade is gaining momentum. Many Asian countries have reported robust exports growth in recent months. India has not yet been able to join the party. Expert opinion is divided on whether this is because of an overvalued exchange rate that prices Indian products out of the global market or the disruptions to domestic supply chains following the twin policy shocks over the past 15 months.

An export revival will provide the extra foreign demand that could gradually help close the excess capacity gaps in several industries, making investments in new factories more attractive.

What happened during the economic boom that ended in 2008 is instructive. Private sector investment became the dominant

driver of economic growth. Much of this investment came from registered manufacturing firms that were producing for exports. This investment surge was financed by higher domestic savings as well as a deluge of foreign capital that came in as part of the global financial bubble.

Is India due for a repeat? It is hard to say, though the World Bank said in its June update on the Indian economy that it expects private sector investment to become an important driver of economic growth in fiscal year 2019. The cold fact is that national savings and investment rates are nearly 10 percentage points down from a decade ago. A lot thus depends on an investment revival. The past 25 years tell us that the Indian economy grows rapidly only when private sector investments as well as exports are strong.



Why Pakistan could well become another Syria

Not only does this seriously challenge traditional governance and paradigms of civilian-led hierarchy, it also threatens inverting the pyramid: flipping terrorists from non-State actors to the governing class, with politics and military as its two wings

The shockingly open support by Pakistan Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa to Jamaat-ud-Dawa chief and Mumbai attack mastermind Hafiz Saeed's 'active role' to resolve the Kashmir conflict, soon after former Pakistan president and military dictator Pervez Musharraf hailing Saeed, the JuD and the LeT as 'patriotic,' marked the beginning of a new era in the way Pakistan's so-called war on terror is being perceived.

The birth of the first militant-supported political party, Milli Muslim League (MML), under Saeed at Lahore in October 2017, the confirmation by Saeed of his contesting the 2018 elections and for the first time, the Pakistan military acknowledging links with militant groups completes the new triad of transformation in Pakistan's perception of terror outfits and their roles in the war on terror.

Reactions from the US escalated from an instantly strong condemnation warning Pakistan of serious consequences failing Saeed's re-arrest, to snapping bilateral ties with Pakistan that was expected to compel action and warn Pakistan of further sanctions and strictures. The more recent and serious warnings by the US President and the

secretary of state have not just been openly defied but also contested as being unjustified.

With this Pakistan's military and the government have conceded surrender to the terror leader, de facto acknowledging the rise of its fifth estate of terror in its constitutional governance alongside the military, the government and the ISI.

While Pakistan today rises from a terror-sponsor state to a terror-driven state with a terror based-strategy with terrorists in frontline combat running their own training camps and plotting anti India strikes, the military's relevance stands depleted. Not only does this seriously challenge traditional governance and paradigms of civilian-led hierarchy, it also threatens inverting the pyramid: flipping terrorists from non-State actors to the governing class, with politics and military as its two wings.

The new and distinctly arrogant narrative in Pakistan, rejecting fears of Washington's warnings appears drawn out of a new regional China-Pakistan-Russia nexus articulated by Former DG ISI, Lieutenant General Zaheer-ul-Islam, and backed by another former ISI chief, Lieutenant General Assad Durrani's perceptions of Pakistan's strategic

relevance that has been signified by both China and Russia.

The recent surgical strikes carried out by India's special forces reflect that we are deploying a new counter-terror strategy. A comprehensive capability to make Pakistan's terror machine and supply chain dysfunctional or untenable by continuous attrition cannot be overstated. Given the operational freedom by the political leadership, the capability of our special forces to track and destroy the militant leadership, their camps and foil infiltration from Pakistan, or anywhere in the neighbouring region with the help of the Afghanistan National Army and US troops must be fundamental in the potent deterrence that India needs. A strong joint US-Indian- military strike capability backed by Israeli technology and experience, based on drones will reinforce deterrence in the entire region in the long term.

Pakistan's military is shedding its skin and revealing its integral Corps of Terror and terrorists that have always been tacitly operationalised under its wings. Notwithstanding China's continuing veto, India must press the global community to draw a larger member support base through the UN to press a resolution for

arrest or re-arrest of global terrorists.

The non-State actor in Pakistan has finally risen to frontline politics. Journalist Ahmed Rashid in his 2009 book *Descent Into Chaos* identified Pakistan to be a future crisis zone thanks to its intimate linkages with Taliban and other terror groups. In 2012, Rashid's other book, *'Pakistan On The Brink,'* chronicled the country's internal threats, divisive politics and strategies that were threatening to take Pakistan to the edge. Less than five years later, Pakistan's relationship with the Taliban, divisive politics and its strategy of exploiting terror to manage national security and internal affairs has catapulted the State into its ultimate abyss. Eventually, the people of Pakistan must be made to realise that the Pakistan military, despite having drawn the biggest billions from the US and the world in its so-called 'war on terror', apart from squeezing its own country's economy, may be heading to be another Syria or Iraq. Any new and viable deterrence for this 'war on terror' must therefore emerge from the Pakistani people. Only then can any regional or transnational effort contribute towards a comprehensive and effective counterstrategy.

Aziz Ansari Is Guilty. Of Not Being a Mind Reader.

I'm apparently the victim of sexual assault. And if you're a sexually active woman in the 21st century, chances are that you are, too.

That is what I learned from the "exposé" of Aziz Ansari published last weekend by the feminist website Babe — arguably the worst thing that has happened to the #MeToo movement since it began in October. It transforms what ought to be a movement for women's empowerment into an emblem for female helplessness.

The headline primes the reader to gird for the very worst: "I went on a date with Aziz Ansari. It turned into the worst night of my life." Like everyone else, I clicked.

The victim in this 3,000-word article is called Grace — not her real name — and her experience with Mr. Ansari began at a 2017 Emmys after-party. As recounted by the woman to the

reporter Katie Way, she approached him, and they bonded over their admiration of the same vintage camera.

The woman was at the party with someone else, but she and Mr. Ansari exchanged numbers and soon arranged a date in Manhattan.

After arriving at his TriBeCa apartment on the appointed evening — she was "excited," having carefully chosen her outfit after consulting with friends — they exchanged small talk and drank wine. "It was white," she said. "I didn't get to choose and I prefer red, but it was white wine." Yes, we are apparently meant to read the nonconsensual wine choice as foreboding.

They went out to dinner nearby and then returned to Mr. Ansari's apartment. As she tells it, Mr. Ansari was far too eager to get back to his place after he paid for dinner: "Like, he got the check and then it was bada-boom, bada-bing, we're out of there." Another

sign of his apparent boorishness.

She complimented Mr. Ansari's kitchen countertops. He then made a move, asking her to sit on top of them. They started kissing. He undressed her and then himself.

In the 30 or so minutes that followed — recounted beat by cringe-inducing beat — they hooked up. Mr. Ansari persistently tried to have penetrative sex with her, and the woman says she was deeply uncomfortable throughout. At various points, she told the reporter, she attempted to voice her hesitation, but Mr. Ansari ignored her signals.

At last, she uttered the word "no" for the first time during their encounter, to Mr. Ansari's suggestion that they have sex in front of a mirror. He responded, "How about we just chill, but this time with our clothes on?"

They dressed, sat on the couch and watched "Seinfeld." She told him, "You guys are all

the same." He called her an Uber. She cried on the way home. Fin.

If you are wondering what about this evening constituted the "worst night" of this woman's life, or why it is being framed as a #MeToo story by a feminist website, you probably feel as confused as Mr. Ansari did the next day. "It was fun meeting you last night," he texted.

"Last night might've been fun for you, but it wasn't for me," she responded. "You ignored clear nonverbal cues; you kept going with advances. You had to have noticed I was uncomfortable." He replied with an apology.

It is worth carefully studying this story. Encoded in it are new yet deeply retrograde ideas about what constitutes consent — and what constitutes sexual violence.

We are told by the reporter that the woman "says she used verbal and nonverbal cues to indicate how uncomfortable and distressed she was." She adds

that "whether Ansari didn't notice Grace's reticence or knowingly ignored it is impossible for her to say." We are told that "he wouldn't let her move away from him," in the encounter.

Yet Mr. Ansari, in a statement responding to the account, said that "by all indications" the encounter was "completely consensual."

I am a proud feminist, and this is what I thought while reading the article:

If you are hanging out naked with a man, it's safe to assume he is going to try to have sex with you.

If the failure to choose a pinot noir over a pinot grigio offends you, you can leave right then and there. If you don't like the way your date hustles through paying the check, you can say, "I've had a lovely evening and I'm going home now." If you go home with him and discover he's a terrible kisser, say, "I'm out."

(Contd on page 23)

CJI Dipak Misra needs to reply to grave charges made by SC judges

The split in the Supreme Court now is wide open, and Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra needs to respond to the grave charges that have been made by four seniormost judges.



(News Agencies) In two ways, the crisis in the Supreme Court, which erupted publicly on January 13, was long in the making. One is the fact that over the last few decades, the Chief Justice of India (CJI) more than

once relinquished office under a cloud. No enquires were held despite a public clamour. As far as this particular crisis is concerned, the judges said they had written to the CJI Dipak Mishra two months ago. But he seemingly did not address their grievances. All four are judges of impeccable character. Their disclosure marks the end of the collegium system. It is futile to say that the four judges should have gone to the President. The split in the Supreme Court now is wide open. The CJI needs to

respond to the grave charges that have been made.

First and foremost, the principle must be accepted. It was laid down by chief justice Griffiths of the Australian high court in R vs Nicholls that if any judge "...were to make a public utterance ...of such character as to be likely to impair the confidence of the public...in the impartiality of the court...if it were a fair comment would, so far from being a contempt of court, be for the public benefit".

The same holds good for judicial conduct, which raises

questions. In his classic Judges, Lord Pannick said that the criticism of the judges will not damage the rule of law.

It may, by identifying defects in the legal system, promote the cause of justice.

In this instance, the confidence in the judiciary has been impaired by the differences between the CJI and senior judges.

That the court is hopelessly divided as is evident from the strong language used by Justices Aggarwal, Arun Mishra and AM Khanwilkar in their

judgment on November 14, 2017 when they say understandably that the CJI is the "master of the roster".

This is precisely the grievance of four judges, who say that the the CJI has been behaving in the assignment of cases in an arbitrary manner. He is due to retire shortly.

The full court cannot resolve the matter, only the CJI and the senior judges can.

"Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt hath lost his savour, werewith shall it be salted?" (St Mathew 5:13)

Jallikattu death toll reaches 4 as more spectators killed in Tamil Nadu

The victims were identified as spectators who were injured after charging bulls broke into the crowd.

(News Agencies) Three people were killed during two separate Jallikattu events in Tamil Nadu on Tuesday, taking the death toll related to the controversial bull-taming sport to four.

In both the incidents, the victims were identified as spectators who were injured after charging bulls broke into the crowd.

According to police, 25-year-old Solai Pandi was killed after being attacked by a bull at a Jallikattu event held at Manaparai village near Tiruchirapalli.

Tiruchirapalli district

superintendent of police PSC Kalayan said investigation was on in the incident and action will be taken if a complaint was made. "According to my information, Sola Pandi was not a spectator, but had accompanied the bull owner from Pudukottai to the event and was attacked by the bull when he was being led away from the venue," he said.

In the second incident, spectators Ramanathan and Kasi were injured after a bull charged into the crowd during a Manju Virattu — a variant of Jallikattu— event held at a village

in Sivagangai district.

A spectator was gored to death by a bull in similar fashion at Palamedu in Madurai on Monday.

While the deaths have raised questions about the precautions taken at Jallikattu events, the organisers maintained that they had adopted all the necessary security arrangements. They said that the accidents took place because the spectators ignored the instructions that were being relayed from time to time through loudspeakers.

A senior Madurai administration official said if it



were not for the precautions taken by them, many more people would have lost their lives in the bull-taming sport. "In a sport of valour, danger is only to be expected and is not out of the place," said Jallikattu enthusiast and bull tamer Ranjit Pandian. A software engineer from Bangalore,

Pandian said just like cricket cannot be banned if a player dies on the field after being hit by a ball, similarly Jallikattu should not face any action if a bull tamer dies. "In this sport danger is ever present but it is the alertness of the player and the precautions one takes that is important, he added.

Muslims were cheated in name of Haj subsidy: AIMPLB

All India Muslim Personal Law Board general secretary Maulana Wali Rahmani said the subsidy was not given to those going on Haj but it was for Air India.



(News Agencies) The government's decision on revoking Haj subsidy has no meaning as there was no such concession and Muslims were being cheated in its name, the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) said Tuesday.

"The subsidy was not given to those going on Haj but it was for Air India that is running in losses. It was an eyewash. Muslims were cheated in the name of the subsidy," said AIMPLB general secretary Maulana Wali Rahmani.

"In normal days, tickets for

Saudi Arabia come for Rs 32,000 but during Haj, Air India used to charge Rs 65,000 to Rs 1 lakh from those going for Haj. The fare will be less without subsidy," he said.

"Haj-bound Muslims are bulk purchasers of Air India tickets and so their fare should be less. It's rule of International Air Transport Association that if anyone is going for pilgrimage, he will be given 40% discount. If the fare is not less, it should at least be the same as on normal days," he said.

All India Shia Personal Law Board Chairman Yasoob Abbas, on the other hand, said the board favoured subsidy on Haj.

"The government used to give subsidy to reduce loss of Air India. If the amount is now spent on education of Muslim children, it will be good but the poor who used to go to Haj will not do so now," he said.

Samajwadi Party spokesman Rajendra Chowdhury said that Haj subsidy should not be revoked completely and facilities for those going for the annual pilgrimage should be increased.

Earlier in the day, Union minority affairs minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi announced in Delhi that there will be no subsidy for Haj from this year and said the move was part of the government's

efforts to "empower minorities" without appeasement.

A record number of 1.75 lakh Muslims will undertake the pilgrimage this year from India, he said, adding the government had spent over Rs 250 crore last year on subsidising the annual pilgrimage of Muslims to Saudi Arabia.

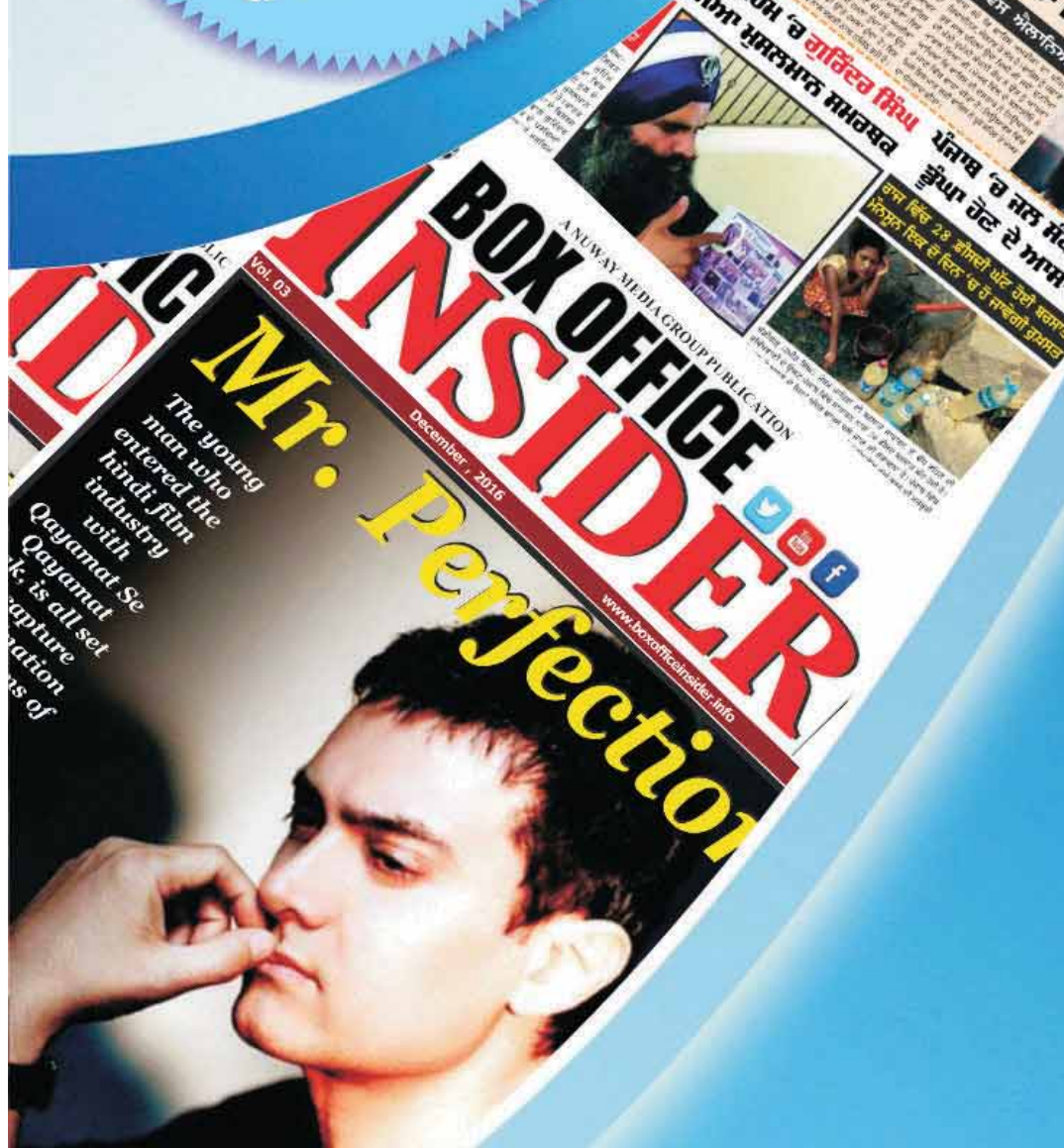
The decision is in line with a 2012 Supreme Court order, asking the government to do away with the subsidy, which had long been sought by the BJP.

The BJP had cited the subsidy as an example of "Muslim appeasement" by parties such as the Congress.



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

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



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



**Email: sst@nuwaygroup.com
www.nuwaygroup.com
Phone: 917 612 3158**



Gujarat police says VHP leader Pravin Togadia staged lost-found drama, faked illness

Police alleged that Pravin Togadia had planned everything in advance to evade arrest

(News Agencies) The Gujarat police on Tuesday dismissed Vishwa Hindu Parishad international working president Pravin Togadia's allegation that there is a threat to his life, a day after he disappeared for nearly 12 hours and was found in a private hospital later.

Togadia alleged that he fell unconscious while trying to escape a Rajasthan police team that was out to kill him in an "encounter", a term used for extra-judicial killings.

The Ahmedabad crime branch accused Togadia of staging the lost-and-found drama and faking his illness on Monday when Rajasthan police personnel came to execute a court's arrest warrant against him in a 2001 case of breaking

prohibitory orders in that state.

According to police, the 62-year-old leader was fit and admitted to a hospital by his aide.

"At 11.10am, Togadia left the VHP office in Paldi, Ahmedabad, with Dhiru Kapuriya and reached the house of Ghanshyambhai Charandas in Thaltej at 11.30am. Charandas rang up his driver, who then called an emergency ambulance service to the Kotarpur area," joint commissioner of police JK Bhatt said. Togadia was allegedly driven to Kotarpur where he shifted to the ambulance when it reached the spot. He was conscious, his were parameters normal, and was accompanied by Ghanshyambhai, the officer said.

The ambulance staff wanted to take them to the nearby civil hospital but the duo allegedly insisted on going to Chandramani private hospital, where doctors later said Togadia was in a semi-conscious state when he arrived.

Police alleged that Togadia had planned everything in advance to evade arrest as Ghanshyambhai had contacted Dr Rupkumar Agrawal of the private hospital around 6am. The hospital is located barely 8km from the VHP office.

According to officers, Togadia left his office with an aide and wasn't accompanied by his guards. The VHP leader gets Z-category security cover. Appearing in a wheelchair with a cannula for intravenous injections fixed on a hand,

Togadia told reporters on Tuesday that he left the VHP office in an auto-rickshaw and reached a friend's home after being informed that Rajasthan police had sent a team to kill him.

He then headed for the airport in another auto-rickshaw to catch a flight to Jaipur and present himself in a court, but couldn't as he fell unconscious on the way, the firebrand right-wing leader said. "I woke up at the hospital in the night." According to Gujarat police, two Rajasthan policemen accompanied by a local team visited Togadia's home in the Sola neighbourhood, but never went to VHP office in Paldi. The policemen returned when they couldn't find the VHP leader in his home.

NRI stuck at Delhi airport for 3 days after a flyer to Canada takes his passport by mistake

Satyendra Singh said he arrived in Delhi from Lucknow on Saturday and was in transit to Bahrain. His immigration had been cleared in Lucknow, so he could not go back.



(News Agencies) A Bahrain-bound NRI has been stranded at the Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport for the past three days after his handbag containing his passport was mistakenly taken away by a passenger to Canada.

Satyendra Singh said he arrived in Delhi from Lucknow on Saturday and was in transit to Bahrain.

"On Saturday afternoon, I reached Delhi and went for security check to catch the international flight. The queue was long so I put my handbag in the scanner. By the time I reached for check and crossed it, I

could not find my bag. I informed the security, who checked the CCTV footage and found that another passenger took the bag and boarded the Air Canada flight. The flight had already departed by then," said Singh, a US national, working in Bahrain. The Canada-bound passenger had reportedly taken Singh's bag leaving his own behind.

The ordeal had just started for Singh as he was left with no money or clothes. He spent the night on the floor of the terminal as he could not leave the terminal due to security reasons. His immigration had been cleared in

Lucknow, so he could not even go back.

"I informed my family and they said they will send some money so that I could buy food. But there was no way they could have contacted me. Finally, On Sunday, Air India shifted me to the lounge and I am currently here. Besides the passport, my handbag had my medicines," he added. Singh had come to India to meet his parents, who live in Lucknow. The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) said they could not do much as the security protocol does not allow a passenger to return unless he has a passport.

The airlines, however, acted promptly and the Air Canada flight, carrying Singh's bag arrived at Delhi airport on Monday evening. Air India, however, said Singh will have to pay the fare difference as hand baggage is not the responsibility of the airline. He is expected to depart by Monday night.

CBI files charge sheet against former MP minister, 94 others in Vyapam scam

Former technical education minister Laxmikant Sharma was charged with getting a person of his choice, Pankaj Trivedi, appointed as the Controller of Examinations in the Madhya Pradesh Professional Examination Board also called Vyapam.



(News Agencies) The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) charged former Madhya Pradesh technical education minister Laxmikant Sharma and his then officer-on-special-duty (OSD), OP Shukla, in one of the cases related to the Vyapam scam on Tuesday. A CBI official familiar with the development said Sharma was charged with getting a person of his choice, Pankaj Trivedi, appointed as the Controller of Examinations in the Madhya Pradesh Professional Examination Board also called Vyapam (Vyavsayic Pariksha Mandal). Through Trivedi, Sharma reportedly pushed for selection of favoured candidates in the Samvida Shala Shikshak Patrata Pariksha Varg-3 Exam, conducted by Vyapam in 2011. Besides Sharma, Shukla and Trivedi, the CBI named 92 others in the FIR.

Sharma and Shukla already spent time in prison in 2014 after the Madhya Pradesh STF, which investigated the case earlier, named them and 55 others in its charge sheet. Sharma, is also an accused in six other Vyapam cases. So far, the CBI has filed more than 110 charge sheets in connection with the Vyapam scam and named more than 1,600 people as accused in these cases. According to a CBI spokesperson, the agency took over investigations following a direction from the Supreme Court in 2015. The agency's investigation revealed that the accused and alleged middlemen collected details such as roll numbers and form numbers of favoured candidates and provided them to the then principal system analyst Nitin Mohindra in Vyapam. "Just prior to the declaration of the result, Mohindra created another database in respect of the candidates whose marks were to be increased. It was also alleged that he increased the marks as per so as to make them qualify and thereafter deleted the original results..." said a CBI spokesman.

SC's Constitution Bench to resume hearing in Aadhaar matter



Thursday will continue hearing pleas filed with regards to the Aadhaar matter. The bench, headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) Dipak Misra will begin hearing a number of petitions filed challenging the constitutional validity of the identification number. Earlier on Wednesday, senior lawyer Shyam Divan argued that the Aadhaar Card may cause the death of citizens' civil rights. Divan, who is appearing for the petitioners, told the bench that a people's constitution was being converted into a state's Constitution, adding that it was incorrect to take people's biometric data for Aadhaar Card. SC Constitution Bench Since the inception of the Aadhaar card, its validity and possible leakages of data have surfaced time and again. The apex court has also received petitions regarding the linkage of this 12-digit number with mobile phones, bank accounts and so on, the last date for which was extended to March 31 this year. SC Constitution Bench Recently, the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) decided to enable 'Face Authentication' infusion mode on registered devices by July 1, so that people facing difficulty in other existing modes of verification such as fingerprints, iris, and one-time-password (OTP) could easily authenticate.

(News Agencies) The SC Constitution bench on rights.

Patanjali's entry in the online market

(News Agencies) Patanjali's entry: Baba Ramdev, who became a businessman from Yog guru, has now entered into e-commerce with bombshell entry. He has tied up with major e-retailers Amazon and Flipkart to sell Patanjali's products online. On Tuesday, the agreement between Baba Ramdev and these companies was signed in New Delhi. Baba Ramdev opposed FDI in retail sector. He said that FDI should not come in the retail sector. Patanjali's entry Now customers of Patanjali products will get products on Amazon, Flipkart, Grofers and Big basket and other major online portals. In addition to these companies, he will also sell his products on the platform of Shoppers and Netmodes. During this, Baba Ramdev said that now Patanjali will grow towards becoming non-profit company. For this, the company will make a charity worth Rs 1 lakh crore in the coming days. He said that we will also take donations from the people. He said that the company will buy oranges from the farmers in Maharashtra and their unit has been installed. He said that within the coming two years, we are preparing a per capita capacity of one lakh crore rupees per annum. Patanjali's entry We can go ahead and win the whole world in 50 years, we are moving forward with this dream. In coming days, Patanjali will be number one in 10 to 12 countries. He also talked about how he and Balkrishna started his journey from the village. It is clear from this that after coming out in the e-commerce area after screaming in the FMCG market, the area of ?? Patanjali will increase significantly. Patanjali's e-commerce site is named after www.patanjaliayurved.net. Ramdev has always come to strengthen Swadeshi's slogan. Patanjali's entry Apart from Baba Ramdev and Balakrishna, other major e-

retailers, including Amazon, Flipkart, Grofers, joined the program in New Delhi. On this occasion Baba Ramdev said that with the establishment of an online system, the people will be able to easily access their traditional products. At the same time, Balakrishna, head of Patanjali Ayurveda said that Patanjali has the capacity to process more than one million orders every day. Patanjali's entry At present, Patanjali sells his products online from his personal portal. Apart from this, other sellers are also selling Patanjali's products online, but Patanjali is now preparing to sell its products online at large level. This means that now Patanjali sell its products on the online shopping portal itself. Patanjali's turnover in the financial year 2016-17 is more than Rs 10,500 crore. In this financial year, Patanjali's goal is to double this benefit. Under this, it is a new partnership plan.

Application filed against Salman Khan, Shilpa Shetty



(News Agencies) Application filed against Salman Khan, Shilpa Shetty. An application has been filed against Bollywood actors Salman Khan and Shilpa Shetty in Mumbai's Bhoiwada court for allegedly using casteist slur against the Scheduled Castes. They have been accused of humiliating and insulting the Scheduled Castes by using the word 'bhangi' in separate TV shows. Application filed against Salman Khan, Shilpa Shetty Presumably, Khan had used the word during the promotion of his film 'Tiger Zinda Hai', while referring to his dancing skills. Shilpa had reportedly used the word to describe how she looks at home. The application is filed under sections 156(3) of the CrPC seeking FIR under section 295 of the IPC and section 3 (1) (s) of the SC / ST act.

1984 riots: Delhi court to resume hearing against Jagdish Tytler



(News Agencies) 1984 riots: A death of three Sikhs- Badal Singh, Thakur Singh, and Gurcharan Singh – at Gurudwara Pulbangash in North Delhi on November 1, 1984, in the aftermath of the

riots that broke out after the assassination of the then prime minister Indira Gandhi. 1984 riots Earlier in October, a Delhi Court had appointed advocate BS Joon as Court Commissioner to observe the lie detector test of eye-witness Abhishek Verma in connection with the aforementioned case.

Verma had filed a writ complaint with Delhi Police, requesting them to enhance his police protection following a death threat e-mail. The email stated that Verma should drop the idea of "deshbhakti (patriotism)" and discontinue with the polygraph (lie detector) test as a witness

against Tytler, failing which he would face death. 1984 riots "This is a very serious matter and considering the gravity of the case in which I am a witness and the profile of the accused (Jagdish Tytler) and his underworld connections, it is requested that immediately an FIR be registered in this matter for further investigations and arrest of the accused Jagdish Tytler and his henchmen, who have been continuously threatening me since the day I turned a witness against Tytler," the complaint letter stated.

India to purchase anti-tank missiles from Israel through govt-to-govt deal

Spike is a battle proven missile which has much longer range and comparatively light in weight when compared to the DRDO-developed Nag.

(News Agencies) India will purchase Spike Anti-Tank Guided Missile (ATGM) from Israel through the so-called government to government (G to G) route because the military wants the proven weapon, and the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) has no objections to the deal as long as it does not involve transfer of technology (TOT). Last month after much

deliberations, the defence ministry withdraw the Request for Proposals (RFP) for 8,000 Israeli spike missiles, a deal that would have been worth \$500 million, after DRDO developed the indigenous Nag ATGM with seeker software and said it was against any TOT from Rafael Advanced Systems, the Israeli company that makes the Spike missile. While the Israelis were

upset as the withdrawal of RFP came almost on the eve of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's visit to New Delhi on January 14, South Block officials said they have no objections to the Indian Army purchasing the long range (not line of sight) ATGM from Israel through the G to G route. This decision has been discussed at the highest level, they added,

especially because Rafael Systems, Bharat Dynamics Limited and Kalyani Strategic Systems have set up a factory to manufacture the ATGM in Hyderabad under the "Make in India" route. Spike is a battle proven missile which has much longer range and comparatively light in weight when compared to Nag. The Nag missile has performed well in



trials and has range of 500 meters to four kilometers. Defence ministry officials were at pains to emphasize that India has a deep defence cooperation with Israel and has recently approved a huge order to purchase torpedoes for its new submarines from that country. India is also looking to purchase assault rifles for the Army from Israel, they added.

Israel's 'Curry queen' to visit India along with PM? Netanyahu, to gift Modi a good luck Hamsa

Reena Pushkarna, who was born to an Indian Army colonel, made Tel Aviv her home more than three decades ago. She had cooked for PM Narendra Modi for the first time more than a decade ago.

(News Agencies) An Indian woman known as the 'curry queen of Israel' will accompany Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other high-ranking officials visiting India next week.

Renowned chef and restaurateur Reena Pushkarna said in a phone interview from Tel Aviv on Tuesday that she is "very honoured and excited" to be a part of the prime ministerial delegation.

"This really means a lot to me as I wear both hats – Indian and Israeli," she said. Born to an Indian Army colonel, Pushkarna made Tel Aviv her home more than three decades ago.

Netanyahu will be the second Israeli PM to visit India after diplomatic ties were established between the two countries 25 years ago.

Pushkarna will bring a special gift for Prime Minister Narendra Modi for whom she cooked for the first time more than a decade ago. "I am carrying a small Hamsa for Modi ji to wish him good luck with all his endeavours and hope to get an opportunity

to give it to him personally," she said. Shaped like an eye in the middle of an open palm, the Hamsa is a Jewish symbol used for luck and protection.

So what are her expectations from the visit?

"Politicians do the talking...they open the doors. And people like you and I on the ground make

people-to-people things happen," she said.

When Modi visited Israel last July, Pushkarna was responsible for catering arrangements for the Indian delegation and even served up an elaborate vegetarian spread at a dinner hosted by Netanyahu and his wife Sara at Beit Rosh HaMemshala – the Israeli PM's residence.

Pushkarna and her team of seven chefs prepared three meals daily for the Indian PM, whether or not he ate at the seven-star King David hotel where world's top leaders stay while visiting the country.

That wasn't the first time Pushkarna cooked for Modi. She was responsible for catering when Modi visited Israel 11 years ago for a business event as the



chief minister of Gujarat. She is the convener of the Israel chapter of the Overseas Friends of BJP and flew to India for Modi's swearing-in ceremony in May 2014. Her restaurant in Tel Aviv, called Tandoori, was the setting for Norway-mediated talks between the Israelis and Palestinians that led to a historic peace accord in 1993. It's the same restaurant where a young Benjamin took Sara out on a date 30 years ago. Netanyahu made a mention of that dinner date during his joint press conference with Modi in July 2017.

If we are to live in a world that protects democracy, India, Israel need to form alliance to secure future: Netanyahu

(News Agencies) India and Israel are an "alliance", said Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during his inaugural address at the annual Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi on Tuesday. The two countries officially hold each other as "strategic partners," a stand reiterated in the joint statement of Netanyahu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a day before. In a speech outlining the sources of national power, Netanyahu said democratic values were the "most important" source of power. "If we are to live in a world that protects democratic norms," he said, countries such as India and Israel needed to form an "alliance to secure our future." He also underlined the challenge of

"radical Islam and its terrorist offshoots" to the "quest for modernity".

He said Modi spoke often of the need to secure democracy. "We have discussed how we can strengthen relations of our two countries in security, in civilian areas and every area," he said, before ending with the line "god bless the India-Israel alliance."

Earlier in his speech, Netanyahu described India as "one of the great powers of earth". He cited military capability as the first requirement of national power, noting that in Israel's case this included considerable investment in intelligence to "compensate for our size." Military and intelligence, however, was expensive and therefore this required economic power. This in



turn required education. Israel's own defence forces, he said, were a "giant education machine." But to convert innovation into economic might needed a free market environment that allowed firms "to do business and add value to the economy." He cited the growing convergence of big data, connectivity and artificial intelligence. "Countries that seize the future are those that innovate along these lines," he said. He

spoke of "political power", "the ability to build relationships and alliances with other countries" before citing values and democracy as the fourth pillar. He said Israel's long struggle to survive had led it to understand a lesson: "The weak don't survive, the strong survive." He noted that "you make peace with the strong, you make alliances with the strong, you are able to maintain peace by being strong."

Real Estate & Insurance

Thinking of Buying/Selling Home?



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



Whitestone

REAL ESTATE

Honesty * Integrity * Experience * Knowledge

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

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

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

Insurance Services

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

(News Agencies) The BSF's director general KK Sharma said on Thursday the situation along the Line of Control and international border was "tense" but the paramilitary force was "more than prepared" to deal with it, amid increasing incidents of violation of the 2003 ceasefire agreement by Pakistan in the recent months.

"We don't initiate first fire but if provoked, we strongly retaliate. I assure you that this time also strong action is being taken. The martyrdom of head constable A Suresh won't go waste," Sharma said during a press conference.

The director general was re-



nullah (rivulet) nearby. So, possibilities of an intrusion bid in the wake of January 26 cannot be ruled out but our jawans are alert and we have also sufficient surveillance equipment in place. We will ensure that no infiltration takes place," he added.

The DG said that he has asked officers on the ground to retaliate with full force and teach Pakistan a lesson.

Pakistan's military accused Indian troops of initiating fire from across the border and targeting villages along Kashmir, killing two civilians and wounding five others in the latest "unprovoked" ceasefire violation. Pakistan's foreign ministry later said the dead were women.

Pakistan's foreign ministry on Thursday summoned an Indian diplomat and lodged a protest over the latest alleged ceasefire violation. In a statement, spokesman Mohammad Faisal said the violations have continued despite calls for restraint.

India quickly rejected the claim, saying, in fact, Pakistan initiated the fire, killing a 17-year-old girl and the soldier in Arnia. The latest ceasefire violation by Pakistan came two days after the Indian Army killed seven Pakistani soldiers in Kotli's Janglote area opposite the Mendhar sector. The dead Pakistani soldiers included a major as well. (With agency inputs.)

We're peace-loving country but reserve right to hit back: BSF

ferring to the death of the Border Security Force soldier by Pakistani fire in Jammu and Kashmir's RS Pora sector on Wednesday night.

Sharma said that India is a peace loving country and does not want to create a war-like situation.

"We are more than prepared to foil infiltration attempts and respond to ceasefire violations," he added.

The top official said the BSF inflicted heavy damages of life and property on Pakistan in its retal-

iatory fire after the latest round of skirmishes on the international border in Arnia sub-sector. He said that the force also damaged two Pakistani posts opposite Arnia, the epicentre of heavy exchange of fire.

"I can't give an exact number but if you monitor Pakistani media you will get it. It was not for the first time that Pakistan opened unprovoked fire at us. On January 3, they shot sniper round in which we lost a jawan. At that time also BSF had strongly retaliated and had inflicted heavy

damages," he said.

Pakistan Rangers have been targeting villages along the international border in Arnia and RS Pura areas of Jammu district since Wednesday night. Sharma said that the latest incident was not that of a sniper fire.

"The head constable was behind his LMG and was retaliating to Pakistani fire from a loophole of one foot by one-foot square. Enemies target that. A bullet entered from the loophole and hit him. It was very unfortunate," he said.

Sharma said that the BSF has ensured minimum exposure by making some arrangements including bulletproof jackets, helmets and some other measures.

"But still some parts of the body like lower abdomen remain vulnerable to sniping and in such war-like situation, these are occupational hazards," he said.

Sharma said that the BSF observes the movement of terrorists on the other side of the international border from time to time.

"The place where the latest skirmishes took place has a

Padmaavat release: Fringe groups threaten violent protests after SC?

(News Agencies) Right-wing Hindu fringe groups threatened on Thursday to disrupt the screening of Bollywood period drama Padmaavat after the Supreme Court lifted a ban on the controversial film.

Rajasthan and Haryana, where the BJP governments had banned the film, said though they respect the top court order they will explore the option of filing an appeal.

The film, starring Deepika Padukone, Ranveer Singh and Shahid Kapoor, is scheduled for release on January 25. It ran into controversy as Hindu groups protested against the release of the film, saying it distorts history and presents the Rajput community in a poor light.

Earlier on Thursday, the Su-

preme Court struck down the ban on Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Padmaavat and ensured its all-India release. The ban was imposed by four states — Rajasthan, Haryana, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh — despite the film being cleared by the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC).

Rajasthan home minister Gulab Chand Kataria said the state will "abide by the order".

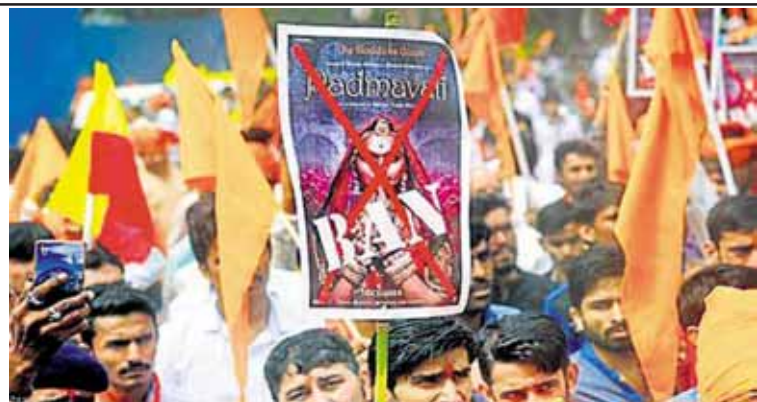
"My department and I will look for a legal provision, if one is possible, after reading Supreme Court's decision and then we will move forward," said Kataria.

Haryana health minister Anil Vij, who had earlier said he will not allow the movie to be screened, said the top court gave the decision without hearing their side. He added since "the Supreme

Court is supreme we will abide by the decision... and see if there is a scope of appealing against it". The threats, however, continued to pour in from fringe Hindu right-wing activists, ranging from jauhar (mass self-immolation by women) to burning cinema halls that screen the film. BJP's Rajput leader Suraj Pal Amu, who had offered a Rs 10-crore bounty for beheading Padukone and Bhansali, said he will protest in a peaceful manner.

"The Supreme Court order has hurt the sentiments of lakhs and crores of Hindus. My protest will continue, even if I am hanged for it," Amu said.

On November 29 last year, Amu had resigned as chief media coordinator of the BJP's state unit, days after the party served a show cause notice to him for the



Rs 10-crore bounty offer.

In Chhattisgarh, members of the Rajput community submitted a memorandum to state home minister Ramsewak Paikra, demanding a ban on the release of Padmaavat, saying cinema halls screening the film will be burnt down. A Rajput Karni Sena leader in Ujjain said his group will intensify their opposition to the film.

"We have given call for a janta curfew on January 25, where our supporters will urge the citizens not to watch the film," said Sena member Thakur Lokendra Singh Kalvi. He added the details of the agitation and further course of

action would be announced in Mumbai on Friday."

News agency ANI reported that women from the Jauhar Kshatriya Manch in Rajasthan's Chittorgarh have threatened to perform jauhar on January 24.

"We have been protesting against the release of this film ever since we came to know of it. However, the government did not pay heed to our demands and decided to favour Sanjay Leela Bhansali. Hence, we have decided that some women will perform jauhar on January 24. We are not afraid of death," the head of the committee told ANI.

Eric Trump defends president over racism: 'My father sees one color: green'



(News Agencies) Eric Trump defended his father from accusations of racism on Wednesday by saying the president "sees one color: green". In an interview on Fox & Friends, the

DNA of a man who died nearly 200 years ago recreated without his remains



(News Agencies) Recreating the DNA of a deceased person or animal was hitherto not possible without extracting a sample from the remains. But, recently, an international team of researchers led by a group with deCODE Genetics a biopharmaceutical company in Iceland recreated the DNA of a man who died in 1827 without any sample from the dead man. This is the first time the DNA of a man who died nearly 200 years ago identified as Hans Jonatan has been recreated from his living descendants rather than the physical remains of the deceased person. The man is more of an icon for the people in Iceland. He is well-known for his struggles: He freed himself from slavery and made his way to Iceland through a series of seemingly impossible events. DNA man died Researchers managed to recreate the DNA of Hans Jonatan by taking samples from 182 of his living descendants.

The team used the pieces they found to recreate a large part of Jonatan's DNA without using any of his tissue at all. It helped them trace some of Jonatan's ancestry like his mother, who was an African slave

on a plantation in St Croix, and they believe his father was a white European. DNA man died Kári Stefánsson of deCODE said: "It's all a question of the amount of data you have. In principle, it could be done anywhere with any ancestors, but what made it easy in Iceland was that there were no other Africans." According to a report by Futurism, this kind of technology could help the researchers recreate the DNA of historical figures. Agnar Helgason of deCODE stated: "Any historical figure born after 1500 who has known descendants could be reconstructed." DNA man died Though the researchers believe there are still major hurdles to overcome in this field in terms of the potential future applications, they believe it will help in repairing and filling in spaces within family trees. It could become a valuable historical tool that can give us an in-depth look at what life was like for historical figures such as Jonatan. In fact, with this process, scientists could genetically resurrect anyone and provide people with a more thorough understanding of their species.

Fox News morning show that Donald Trump frequently tweets at and about, the president's son responded to reports that his father had called several Central American and African nations "shithole countries". "My father sees one color: green," Eric Trump told the morning show hosts. "That's all he cares about." Eric Trump defends president Charged with running the family business with his older brother, Donald Jr, he insisted that the president's decades as a businessman meant he was not interested in race, the implication being he was motivated by making money. "He cares about the economy, right? He does not see race," he said. "He's the least racist person I have ever met in my entire life." Last Friday, a senator who met

with Trump to discuss immigration asserted that the president had denigrated several countries with "hate-filled, vile and racist" language. Several days of debate followed over exactly what words he used, and, more broadly, about Trump's long history of similar remarks. Eric Trump defends president On Friday the president initially ignored a reporter who asked "Are you a racist?", only to declare a few days later: "I am not a racist." His son went on to praise low unemployment rates on Trump's watch, although presidents have limited control or direct influence on the economy, save through the indirect effects of broad policies. "They won't give him any credit for that and by the way he campaigned on that," he said. "But then they'll

go out and call him racist. It's very sad." Eric Trump defends president The president's continued fixation with his businesses – including dozens of weekends spent at Trump-branded properties – has drawn criticism.

Despite assurances from members of the Trump family that they would not mix business with politics now that the family's patriarch is president, he has refused to divest from his holdings or to release his tax returns. His eldest son, charged with running the family business, has actively raised funds for Republicans allies of his father; one of his senior advisers was "counseled" after promoting Trump products; and a former ethics chief called White House practices "no way to run an ethics program".

For Sale in Wantagh, Long Island



- Cape
- 1 Family, Att
- Bedrooms: 4 Rms: 9
- Baths Full: 2 Half: 0
- Master BR 1st Floor: N
- Wood Floors:
- New Construction: N
- Approx Year Built: 1948
- Eat In Kitchen: Y #Kit: 1
- Fireplaces: 0
- Waterfront: N
- Waterview: N
- Lot Size: 60X100
- Sect:
- Adult Comm: N
- Handicap Access:
- Basement: None Fin: N
- Garage: Drive: Pvt
- Taxes: \$10,170.91
- Villages Taxes:
- Total Taxes: \$10,170.91
- Taxes w/Basic STAR: \$8,547.00
- Schools: 5 Levittown

Bsmt/Subfl:
1st Floor: Lr/Eik/Den/Br/Bth
2nd Floor: Br/Br/Br/Bth
3rd Floor:

Beautifully Maintained Mid Block Property. 4 Bedrooms, 2 Baths With Updated Appliances. Lots Of Natural Light, Closets, 4 Bedrooms, 2 Bath, Eat In Kitchen, Living Room And A Den To Entertain Guests And Family. This House Will Not Last !!

ML#: 2989437

Sharanjit Thind
realtorsst@gmail.com



Property Professional USA LLC



Prepared by: Sharanjit Thind Property Professional USA LLC (516) 605-2700
realtorsst@gmail.com 12/15/2017 11:34 PM
Information supplied by third parties and not by Multiple Listing Service of Long Island, Inc.
Information Copyright 2017, Multiple Listing Service of Long Island, Inc.



The **ONLY** temple in the world outside India
dedicated to Shri Shani Maharaj

Shri SHANI DEV Mandir, New York

Sarvamangala Shri SANEESWARA Temple, New York

Regular Poojas' and Homas' are conducted on daily basis:

Special Poojas:

- + Sri Saneeswara homam
- + Sri Saneeswara - parikara pooja
- + Sri Saneeswara harati
- + Sri Navagraha Homa
- + Poornima: vrata Pooja
- + Pradosham Pooja
- + Sri Sankatahara chaturthi Pooja
- + Sri Satyanarayana Vratha
- + Birthdays / Weddings / Upanayanam & More... ..



**1616 Hillside Avenue, Temple Suits
New Hyde Park NY 11040**
Ph: 718 740 9400 / 516 358 9400
Email: temple.navagraha@gmail.com

Temple Hours: 8.00 am to 9.00 pm

The Temple entrance is in the western side parking lot behind Hot Breads & Maharajas in New Hyde Park NY

Functions of the space:

*Temple / Community Events / Senior Social Day Care Center /
Art & Music School / Library / Spiritual Lounge / Gift Shop*

www.NavagrahaUSA.com



As we complete 15 Years

“Words cannot express the monumental journey that each and every person reading this has crossed through. The South Asian Insider has completed fifteen year journey, that has brought a wave of information and has amassed everyone together in this community. Few people can claim to have been a part of a tireless effort to soar through the top of the skies of the newspaper industries and be able to remark on it, 15 years later. We believe an order of gratitude is granted to all of you. To everyone who has stayed with The South Asian Insider through our path, thank you.

If it was not for each and every one of you today who have supported our endeavours to become a reliable source of information, we would not have been able to voice our appreciation today. We as a family will continue to move forward with every article printed, with every word typed and with every voice incorporated into the publication that has stood to uphold the value of information and knowledge. Because with each idea shared, we as a community continue to move forward. And to all, thank you for sharing this achievement with all of us here today, working towards a new tomorrow.”

**-Sharanjit Singh Thind
Editor In Chief & Publisher**

Trump blasts bipartisan immigration deal as 'horrible'

(News Agencies) President Donald Trump blasted a bipartisan immigration deal as 'horrible' on border security and 'weak' on immigration reform amid concern about a possible government shutdown that is just two days away. Trump came out swinging against a bipartisan Senate proposal to provide protections for "Dreamers" brought to the United States illegally as children – just days after a conflagration following his reported reference to immigration from 's***hole' countries blew up leadership talks. "It's the opposite of what I campaigned for," Trump said of the Senate 'Gang of Six' proposal. Democrats are demanding that a budget deal include new DACA protections, leading to concerns that there could be a shutdown if Republicans are unable to amass the votes to fund the government, even on a

temporary basis. Trump said he thinks a deal on immigration is still possible. "Time is running out," he said – while allowing that a shutdown 'could happen.' A blowup over immigration policy has prevented lawmakers from reaching a long-term deal to keep the government running. With government funding set to expire at midnight on Friday, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said Congress is 'not yet ready' to move ahead with a substantial deal, and called for passage of another short-term funding bill to kick talks to next month. 'By now it is clear that we are not yet ready to move ahead with a major agreement for long-term funding for our armed forces, nor on our immigration policy,' McConnell said on the Senate floor. 'Compromise solutions are not out of reach but for now, Congress needs to keep the government running,' the

Kentucky Republican added. 'We do support the short term [congressional resolution], however that's not our first choice,' said White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders. Members of the bipartisan 'Gang of Six' group of senators continue to look for a solution to renew DACA protections, fund border security and otherwise forge an immigration compromise, following an extraordinary blowup after President Trump reportedly blasted immigration from 's***hole countries.'

But a key Republican, Sen. John Cornyn of Texas, cast the effort as fruitless. 'The 'Gang of Six' deal to fix DACA will not get a vote in the House or the Senate because POTUS will not sign it. Let's go back to the drawing board and get this done: Border Security, end Diversity Visa Lottery, limit chain migration, and fix DACA,' he wrote. Sen. Richard Durbin of Illinois says the group wants McConnell to allow a 'test vote' on the compromise bill. The conservative House Freedom Caucus is split over whether to back the short-term bill, which also delays several healthcare related taxes. The White House dispatched chief of staff John Kelly to meet with Hispanic members of Congress on Wednesday to ease tensions over an immigration issue threatening to derail efforts on a funding bill to avert a partial government shutdown.

At the meeting, Kelly said Trump was 'uninformed' about his proposed border wall. 'We heard chief of staff Kelly say that,' Democratic Rep. Ruben Gallego of Arizona told CNN. Republicans, who have majorities in both the House of Representatives and Senate, are eyeing another short-term spending bill to keep the government open beyond Friday and also need to win support from fiscal conservatives in their own party. Democrats want the spending bill to include protections for 'Dreamers' - mostly Hispanic young adults brought to the United States illegally when they were children. Kelly was to meet with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, which opposed a bipartisan immigration deal floated last week because it would not provide a path to citizenship for parents of Dreamers.



Myanmar police kill 7 Buddhist protestors

Police in Myanmar have opened fire on Buddhists protesting a ban on a local festival, killing 7 people in troubled Rakhine State. The clash is feared to hamper projected repatriation of Muslim Rohingya refugees from neighboring Bangladesh.

Local authorities in Myanmar said Buddhist residents in Mrauk U township grew angry at a ban on a gathering celebrating an an-

cient Arakan kingdom. About 10,000 people are reported to have staged a protest march and clashed with police.

Authorities say police opened fire after the protest turned violent with some demonstrators stoning and destroying vehicles. The clash left 7 people dead and 12 others wounded.

Myanmar's leader Aung San Suu Kyi issued a statement of

apology to the victims in the clash and promised to conduct an investigation under law and take necessary measures.

Buddhists are the majority in the western state of Rakhine, which is also home to minority Rohingya Muslims. Buddhist residents are described as being antagonistic toward Rohingya Muslims, and oppose their becoming citizens of Myanmar, ar-

guing they are illegal immigrants.

The United Nations estimates that more than 650,000 Rohingya refugees have fled to Bangladesh since August of last year to avoid violence and the military crackdown in Rakhine.

The ongoing repatriation is likely to be undermined by increased instability in Rakhine as a result of the latest clash.

Apple's \$350billion windfall for the US economy

Firm will create 20,000 new jobs, build a second HQ, give all their employees a \$2,500 bonus, and pay \$38billion in US taxes on their foreign cash in the next five years

(News Agencies) Apple plans to inject more than \$350billion into the US economy over the next five years by creating 20,000 jobs, building a second headquarters, and by paying a \$38billion tax bill on their foreign assets.

The company - the nation's largest taxpayer - already employs 84,000 people in all 50 states.

Now, under Trump's tax reforms, they are set to pay off the biggest repatriation tax bill in history on their \$252 billion in overseas cash, with the money filtering back into the American economy.

They also told its employees on Wednesday that the iPhone maker is issuing a bonus of \$2,500 worth of restricted stock units following the new U.S. tax reform, according to Bloomberg.

Planned capital expenditures in the US, investments in Ameri-

can manufacturing over five years and a record tax payment upon repatriation of overseas profits will account for approximately \$75 billion of Apple's direct contribution, the firm said in a statement on Wednesday.

'Apple is a success story that could only have happened in America, and we are proud to build on our long history of support for the US economy,' said Tim Cook, Apple's CEO. He added: 'We believe deeply in the power of American ingenuity, and we are focusing our investments in areas where we can have a direct impact on job creation and job preparedness. We have a deep sense of responsibility to give back to our country and the people who help make our success possible.'

The location of Apple's new campus will be announced later this year. They say it will initially house technical support for cus-

tomers.

In their statement on Wednesday, the company announced plans to make about \$38billion in tax payments on its \$252.3 billion in overseas cash in accordance with the tax law passed late last month. That move hints that they may be planning to repatriate that money.

The announced tax payment was roughly in line with what analysts expected from the tax bill, which requires companies to pay a one-time tax on foreign-held earnings whether they intend to bring them back to the United States or not.

Apple had set aside \$36.3billion in anticipation of tax payments on its foreign cash, meaning the payment would not represent a major impact on its cash flow this quarter.

Apple also said it would boost its advanced manufacturing fund,



which it uses to provide capital and support to suppliers such as Finisar Corp and Corning Inc, from \$1 billion to \$5 billion.

Apple said it plans to spend \$55 billion with U.S.-based suppliers in 2018, up from \$50 billion last year.

About a third of the new spending will be on data centers to house its iCloud, App Store

and Apple Music services, a sign of the rising importance of subscription services to a company known for its computers and gadgets. The company has data centers in seven states and also on Wednesday broke ground on an expansion of its operations in Reno, Nevada, where local officials granted it tax breaks on a downtown warehouse.



(News Agencies) GPs are carrying out up to 70 consultations a day - nearly three times the safe level, a major study has found. They are undertaking an average of 41.6 patient contacts a day - face-to-face consultations as well as those over the phone or on the internet.

However, a fifth of doctors have in excess of 50 consultations a day and some have 70 or more.

EU officials recommend that GPs should carry out no more than 25 a day. Family doctors say their workload is 'unsafe' because it is making them more prone to mistakes.

Many are deciding to quit or take early retirement, which is leaving the remaining doc-

tors with even more patients to see.

The figures come from a survey by Pulse magazine which asked 899 GPs how many patient contacts they carried out on a typical day.

A total of 21 per cent carried out 50 or more, including 4 per cent who said they did 70 or more.

Surgeries are coming under increasing pressure from the ageing population, migration and the fact that patients are being prescribed more medication - which requires follow-ups. At the same time there is a recruitment crisis, with rising numbers of doctors retiring or quitting - and not being replaced by young trainees.

The Government promised to

Safety fears over GPs forced to deal with up to 70 patients every day

Doctors warn workload is making them more prone to mistakes

recruit an extra 5,000 GPs by 2020 - including 2,000 from overseas - but experts say this is looking increasingly doubtful.

Professor Helen Stokes-Lampard, chairman of the Royal College of GPs, said: 'This survey backs up what the college has been saying for years - that

many GPs are regularly working way beyond what could be considered safe for patients, and potentially jeopardising our own wellbeing. GPs expect to be busy, and we are making more consultations than ever before, but the workload is relentless and it's taking its toll. 'It is not

necessarily the number of consultations we are making, it's the content of those consultations, and our patients are increasingly presenting with more complex, chronic conditions - many of which require much longer than the standard ten-minute consultation.'



© Shutterstock / vectorfusionart

Site doesn't even load. Just like your presidency'

Trump gets roasted online after tweeting a link to the 'winners' of his much-hyped 'Fake News Awards' on GOP's website only for it to CRASH immediately

(News Agencies) The so-called winners of President Donald Trump's 'Fake News Awards' were announced on Wednesday, with little fanfare.

The tweet linked to his list on the GOP website, which immediately crashed and led to the President being mercilessly mocked online.

Among the outlets included were The New York Times, CNN, the Washington Post and Time Magazine.

Unsurprisingly, CNN 'won' with a total of four awards. The New York Times came in second with two. ABC News, Time Magazine, the Washington Post, and Newsweek each were named once in Trump's Fake News Awards.

His list of 'award winners' was fact checked by the Washington Post, which noted that many of the items Trump called 'fake news' were tweets, that were

quickly corrected and never resulted in articles.

In a separate article, the Post called the 'awards' 'a huge flop,' saying, 'President Trump's "Fake News Awards" button did not work.'

Some of the articles mentioned were referred to rather vaguely, without much identifying detail.

In that group, Trump's list also included several stories that were later corrected.

His number one recipient was Paul Krugman, a columnist for The New York Times, who shared his opinion, which was clearly marked as such for the Times.

'We are very probably looking at a global recession, with no end in sight,' Krugman wrote, after Trump won the presidential election in 2016.

'I suppose we could get lucky somehow. But on economics, as on everything else, a terrible thing has just happened.'

Number two on the list was ABC News' Brian Ross' mistake related to saying Trump was just a candidate when he directed Michael Flynn to contact Moscow officials.

That was a 'serious error' for which Ross was suspended, after clarifying that the order came when Trump was president-elect. Third, Trump cited when CNN reported on an email alerting Trump to WikiLeaks documents, but messed up the date on which the email had sent.

Other news organizations quickly reported the CNN had made a mistake, and CNN later updated their story to reflect that the email referred to already public documents.

Coming in fourth, was a tweet by a Times reporter that said Trump had removed Martin Luther King, Jr.'s bust from the Oval Office, but was corrected an hour later, saying the reporter's view had been



blocked.

The fifth item on the list was another tweet, this time by a Washington Post reporter, that said a venue was empty, but was corrected, this time within minutes. In the sixth spot, Trump claimed CNN edited a video to make it look like Trump overfed fish in the

presence of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. A video clip showed just Trump dumping his portion of fish food into a Koi pond, and that went viral. In reality, Abe dumped his portion of fish food into the Koi Pond first and Trump followed suit, and the full article said that.

Russian couple who regularly raped their 12-year-old daughter told police: 'Better us than some maniac'



gin'. The child told investigators about the sexual abuse she suffered, it was reported. The couple then allegedly confessed to the horrific abuse they inflicted on their child. They believed 'it was better for the child to lose her virginity with her own father' than learn details of sexual life in other ways, reports added.

She was forced to sleep in the same bed as her parents where she was subjected to sexual attacks. Her mother admitted her daughter was made to take part in 'threesomes' with her parents. The girl's grandmother and great grandmother lived in the same flat but had no idea of the sexual abuse, police explained.

(News Agencies) A couple face trial in Russia after being accused of raping their own 12-year-old daughter. The child's mother told police: 'Better us than some maniac.' The married couple - both 34 - are accused of paedophilia after turning their child into a 'sex slave', law enforcement sources say. They have been remanded in custody in Volgograd (formerly Stalingrad) and, if convicted, face up to 20 years in jail. The girl was subjected to horrific and frequent sexual abuse from December 2016 to March 2017, it is alleged. The unnamed father is accused of raping the girl - often with the mother in the same bed - 'every other day' She is separately accused of sexually 'torturing'

the child with an 'artificial penis'. Ahead of the criminal trial, the parents have been stripped of their parental rights, meaning they will never raise their child. The girl has been put into care. The mother told police she was herself raped as a 13-year-old. She claimed to officers that she and her husband agreed to 'train their daughter in advance for adult life'. The girl's horrific ordeal was spotted after she went to a doctor with 'problems concerning her periods'.

The medics discovered that she was 'not a vir-



Pure Water Ice Found on Mars!

(News Agencies) When most people think of Mars, they think of a barren red desert, lifeless and without water. As it turns out, researchers studying high-resolution photos taken by the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter have found massive ice sheets. The team studied 8 locations on the Red Planet where massive landslides had recently occurred, much to their surprise, they discovered ice sheets more than 300 feet thick in some of the studied regions. Pure Water Ice Found Mars "At these locations its quite a thick ice sheet of rather clean ice. There's certainly some amount of dust and debris in it, and there can be small amounts of salts or other things as well, but what we're seeing at the scarps are predominately ice," Colin Dundas, a planetary geologist at the U.S. Geological Survey said in the recently released research paper. He believes the now exposed ice is sublimating into the Martian atmosphere, meaning it is turning from a solid directly into a gas. Pure Water Ice Found

MarsBecause it is on such steep hillsides or scarps as they are referred to, the researchers can see a cross-section of the ice, they believe the ice is surprisingly pure.

"On Mars, when you see something bright, it usually means ice," Richard Zurek, a scientist for the Mars Program Office at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory told Wired, "but the albedo readings on these exposed sections show that this is very bright stuff, and the spectrometer readings support that this is water ice and not ice-cemented soil, which would be much harder to convert into water as a resource." Pure Water Ice Found Mars One theory of where the ice sheets came from involves snow in the distant past. "Something caused it to be deposited and then deposited again," Dundas said. Researchers are keen to examine a Martian ice core, "That preserved record would be of extreme importance to go back to," G. Scott Hubbard, a scientist at Stanford University, told Science.

Ex-C.I.A. Officer Suspected of Compromising Chinese Informants Is Arrested

The arrest of the former officer, Jerry Chun Shing Lee, 53, capped an intense F.B.I. inquiry that began around 2012, two years after the C.I.A. began losing its informants in China. Investigators confronted an enduring mystery: How did the names of so many C.I.A. sources, among the agency's most dearly held secrets, end up in Chinese hands? Some intelligence officials believed that a mole inside the C.I.A. was exposing its roster of informants. Others thought that the Chinese government had hacked the C.I.A.'s covert communications used to talk to foreign sources of information. Still other former intelligence officials have also argued that the spy network might have been crippled by a combination of both, as well as sloppy tradecraft by agency officers in China. The counterintelligence investigation into how the Chinese managed to hunt down American agents was a source of friction between the C.I.A. and F.B.I.

Mr. Lee, who left the C.I.A. in 2007, has been living in Hong Kong and working for a well-known auction house. He was apprehended at Kennedy Airport in New York on Monday and charged in federal court in Northern Virginia with the unlawful retention of national

defense information.

He appeared in Brooklyn federal court on Tuesday and is being held there while awaiting transfer to Virginia. He does not have a lawyer, a Justice Department official said. The F.B.I. apparently learned that Mr. Lee was traveling to the United States and scrambled to charge him on Saturday.

Mr. Lee had previously traveled to the United States in 2012 to live with his family in Virginia. It was during that trip that F.B.I. agents searched his luggage during hotel stays in Hawaii and Virginia and found two small books with handwritten notes that contained classified information. He later made his way back to Hong Kong after being questioned by F.B.I. agents in 2013.

It is unclear why Mr. Lee decided to risk arrest by coming to the United States this month.

In the books the agents found, Mr. Lee had written down details about meetings between C.I.A. informants and undercover agents, as well as their real names and phone numbers, according to court papers. Prosecutors said that material in the books reflected the same information contained in classified cables that Mr. Lee had written while at the agency. More than a dozen C.I.A.

informants were killed or imprisoned by the Chinese government. The extent to which the informant network was unraveled, reported last year by The New York Times, was a devastating setback for the C.I.A.

Officials said the number of informants lost in China rivaled losses in the Soviet Union and Russia during the betrayals of both Aldrich Ames and Robert Hanssen, formerly of the C.I.A. and the F.B.I. They divulged intelligence operations to Moscow for years.

The C.I.A. declined to comment on Mr. Lee's arrest.

According to court documents, Mr. Lee served in the United States Army from 1982 to 1986 and joined the C.I.A. in 1994 as a case officer. Former agency officials said he also served in China during his career. Those who knew him said he left the agency disgruntled after his career plateaued.

Prosecutors said that both before and after he and his family moved back to the United States in 2012, Mr. Lee met with former C.I.A. colleagues and other government employees.

As the agency began losing assets in China, it was not clear at first that the losses were systematic, but as the disappearances mounted, the

American intelligence community eventually realized it had a major problem.

The case had frustrated counterintelligence officials in the F.B.I. and C.I.A. as they sought to determine how the Chinese had disrupted agency operations in the country.

The F.B.I. suspected an insider had revealed sensitive information to the Chinese government, a theory not initially embraced by the C.I.A. Mr. Lee eventually became a prime suspect in the hunt for a traitor.

Former intelligence officials said that the F.B.I. lured Mr. Lee back to the United States as part of a ruse and he was interviewed five times in May and June 2013. The authorities said he never disclosed the two books, described as an address book and a datebook, to investigators.

Former officials said they were surprised that Mr. Lee came back to the United States in 2012, knowing he might be under F.B.I. suspicion. Details about the F.B.I. operation to lure him back were tightly held, but former intelligence officials said he returned with the promise of a possible contract with the C.I.A. Many former agency officers leave the agency and then return on contract. At some point after

the F.B.I. interviewed him, Mr. Lee returned to Hong Kong.

Why the F.B.I. did not arrest Mr. Lee after originally finding the classified material in his notebooks remains unclear. The F.B.I. declined to comment.

Officials are concerned that Mr. Lee's case and at least one other represent a troubling pattern of Chinese intelligence targeting former agency officials, an easier task than trying to recruit current C.I.A. operatives.

In June, a former C.I.A. officer was charged with providing classified information to China and making false statements. Prosecutors said that the former officer, Kevin Patrick Mallory, 60, of Leesburg, Va., had top-secret documents and incriminating messages on a communications device he brought back from Shanghai.

In March, prosecutors announced the arrest of a longtime State Department employee, Candace Marie Claiborne, accused of lying to investigators about her contacts with Chinese officials. According to the criminal complaint against Ms. Claiborne, who pleaded not guilty, Chinese agents wired cash into her bank account and lavished her with thousands of dollars in gifts.

'The Post' Reminds us What Journalism Used to be and What it Should be

But more thrilling is the kind of journalism it reminds us of — hard-nosed investigations, hyper competitiveness, willingness to step over the lines and a conviction that journalism, and journalists, existed to hold power to account and would go to any extent to take on the establishment, even risking jail.

In the darkened auditorium, watching the intense debates around 'to publish or not to publish', in which everyone — editors, publishers, lawyers and even senior administration figures — participate, reminds us what journalism is all about.

Publish and be damned is not always an easy credo to follow, but something more fundamental — the first principles, as it were — should always be top of mind: that journalism should owe its allegiance to the nation and its people, not the government of

the day.

This may sound obvious but is not always an easy maxim to follow. In 1971, the New York Times published the Pentagon Papers — a government study which showed that successive administrations continued with the Vietnam war despite knowing it was going badly. The Washington Post wanted to follow up, but just then the Nixon administration managed to get an injunction from the courts barring the NYT from publishing any more of the 'top secret' documents.

This would have deterred anyone — as the Post's lawyers point out, publishing them would now be considered contempt of court — but the Post's editor Ben Bradlee (played by Tom Hanks) was ready to take a chance.

It was not so easy, however. Bradlee and his team were

considered reckless by the Post's lawyers and the company board, which at that very moment was about to go public on the stock exchange. Any infraction of this magnitude would discourage investors and bankers and with the threat of prison hanging over the editor and the publisher, Katharine Graham (played superbly by Meryl Streep), it could harm the company's future. The final decision lay in Graham's hands.

Graham was an accidental publisher; her father had handed over the company to his son-in-law, Katherine's husband, who later committed suicide. It becomes clear that the all-male (and all white) board does not take her seriously — they talk over her, they assume to take decisions independent of her. Graham herself is diffident, explaining that she never wanted

the job. It was a world where the ladies retire to another room to gossip while the men discuss affairs of the world.

But she had to take a decision on whether to publish the papers, and she does. As the dramatic tension rises, there are discussions on the duty of the journalist and of the newspaper to its reader. Graham is close friends with Robert McNamara, the defense secretary, who commissioned the report. Should she choose her loyalty to her friend or her commitment to her newspaper?

Things are not so easy for Bradlee either. He is reminded of the fact that he knew John F. Kennedy well — a bit too well, since he dined at the White House regularly. Did that compromise his journalistic integrity? He

denies it but has to face the bitter truth — journalists and politicians can never be friends. "We have to be a check on them," he remarks, remorseful of how he let his friendship temper his professional judgment. McNamara is friends with you because you are the publisher of the Washington Post, Bradlee tells Graham, but he is actually talking to himself.

These are the kind of ethical issues journalists have grappled with since time immemorial and are truer than ever today. We know that the Post went on to break stories about Watergate which eventually led to Nixon's resignation. In more recent times, the Post and the NYT have taken on Trump (even if their judgment during the war on Iraq was found wanting.)

Inside Obama's Midterm Campaign Plans

Since leaving office, Barack Obama has struggled with how to do what no modern president has: take on his successor.

Over the past year, he's appeared at rallies, done a robocall, made a few endorsements. His office in Washington's West End neighborhood, about a mile from the White House, has become a destination for Democrats looking to tap the former president for advice.

But with the midterms approaching, people close to him say he'll shift into higher gear: campaigning, focusing his endorsements on down-ballot candidates, and headlining fundraisers. He'll activate his 15,000-member campaign alumni association for causes and candidates he supports — including the 40 who are running for office themselves. He's already strategizing behind the scenes with Democratic National Committee chair Tom Perez and Eric Holder, who's chairing his redistricting effort.

Throughout, Obama is determined not to become the foil that he can see President Donald Trump clearly wants, and resist being the face of the Resistance for his own party.

Obama is aware of his continuing resonance among his fans — proudly pointing out to friends that his tweet of a photo greeting children alongside a Nelson Mandela quote sent after the neo-Nazi march in Charlottesville became the most liked in history. Even his relatively anodyne Martin Luther King Jr. Day tweet got more than 1 million likes.

He's also aware, in a way that he and aides think some supporters don't fully grasp, of his continuing resonance among people who hate him and would be riled up to vote against whatever he supports.

There is no model. Never before has a former president been as diametrically opposed to his successor as right now, and never before has a former president left office with his party immediately so eager to see him out on the trail.

So he's looking for ways to get involved that are rooted in what he believes only he can do.

Obama isn't expecting to make campaign appearances until the fall, people who've been working on the plans say, and when he does, he will take cues from the National Democratic Redistricting Committee in looking for endorsements and appearances that play up redistricting. He already has pending requests from the DNC, the NDRC, Organizing for Action, the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, but he hasn't yet committed to dates.

The most likely stops will be where races for governor, or perhaps Senate, overlap with competitive races for the House and state legislature. Obama won't endorse in primaries, but once he does weigh in, will be open to a range of ways to help, from rallies like the one he did for Ralph Northam in the Virginia governor's race to the robocall he recorded for Doug Jones in the Alabama Senate race.

"He's going to be out there for candidates, he'll be out there helping us in meaningful ways, not just in fundraising," Perez said. "The guy was a state senator in '04, and he was president of the United States four years later. He knows something about winning elections and building a brand."

From the morning after Trump's election, Obama has insisted that there would be a direct relation between how active he was and whether the next generation of Democrats would step up. He feels vindicated by how that played out over 2017.

"He's keenly aware that injecting himself into day-to-day politics can make it more difficult for other Democratic voices to rise to prominence," said Katie Hill, a spokeswoman for the former president. "You can expect him to continue weighing in strategically and staying above the fray while helping cultivate the next generation of Democratic leadership."

Yet his largely hands-off approach to politics since leaving office has left many Democrats apoplectic. If the fight against Trump is a battle

for democracy and everything they believe in, they argue, how can he still be sitting on the sidelines? They need all the help they can get.

That's where Paulette Aniskoff comes in. An aide from the 2008 campaign who was in the White House through both terms, she's become Obama's de facto post-presidency political director. Though an LLC incorporated as Citizen 44 — which Obama funds from his own pocket, to avoid paying her out of government money that funds former presidents' personal offices, or out of donations raised for his foundation — Aniskoff has become the point person for candidates and Obama alumni looking for how to get involved.

She's also been talking to donors who've been reaching out for a sense from him on where to write checks.

The afternoon before the Obama Foundation holiday party in December, she called in a small group of Obama's closest and biggest donors to brief them on Citizen 44. Obama's priorities are, in no particular order, the DNC, the NDRC, OFA and his foundation, she told them. People asked: But what about trying to win control of the House, or the Senate? Those will get enough attention, she told them.

"If you were engaged with the Obama campaign and the president himself, yes, you're very interested in supporting him going forward. He's being very careful not to direct, but more to use his talents where he sees an opportunity," said Jane Watson Stetson, a former DNC finance chair who was among the people who attended the meeting.

Aniskoff spent last year organizing the Obama alumni — arguably the most experienced and engaged

group of its size in politics that could be activated by one person — into 20 regional chapters. She's streamlined an active email list that highlights ways to get involved and other groups to join.

She's also created an informal advisory network of several top Obama veterans, with people like David Axelrod, Jen O'Malley Dillon, Stephanie Cutter, Mitch Stewart and Dan Pfeiffer weighing in. They've dispatched elsewhere too, with Pfeiffer, for example, advising the DNC on its communications and press operation.

Although several aides currently on his payroll, including adviser Ben Rhodes and speechwriter Cody Keenan, have become some of the highest profile and most reliable critics on Twitter, Obama sees that as happening on their own time, on personal accounts, though that often occurs during hours when they're in the office working for him, according to people familiar with his thinking.

In private, he's been keeping up with the political news himself and upset by what's coming out of the current White House, according to people who've spoken with him, but still hasn't said Trump's name in public since the inauguration. That won't change, barring a major national crisis that he'd set as his standard for going directly after Trump, aware that he can cross that barrier only once for it to have real meaning.

He will continue to thread statements as he feels necessary about Obamacare, Dreamers and a Muslim ban, but, as was the case last year, refuses to be Trump's foil, acutely aware that the president always wants to pull him in. Last week, for

example, Trump explained avoiding a trip to London expected to be defined by protests by complaining that Obama got a bad deal on the sale of the embassy — a deal that was closed under the administration of George W. Bush. Perez, who talks frequently by phone with Obama, says the former president has been chipping in with thoughts and connections for the former labor secretary, whom Obama personally recruited to run for the DNC job despite his lack of extensive political experience.

"He has studied ex-presidents, and he wanted to accord respect [to Trump like the] respect that George W. Bush accorded him, and respect that other ex-presidents accorded," Perez said. "But that doesn't mean you don't do things behind the scenes to be helpful — and he's been exceedingly helpful on a number of levels."

Holder said he spoke in the past few weeks with the former president about his group's plans for the year ahead.

"Just as he did in 2017, I fully expect President Obama will continue to help us fundraise, engage grass-roots activists through NDRC's partnership with Organizing for Action, and shine a spotlight on redistricting in key state races this year," Holder said.

As Obama's aides love to note, Obama's popularity is at 63 percent, up from 59 percent at the end of his presidency, according to a Gallup poll out in December.

"His help is needed at the state and local level. He's popular," said former interim DNC chair Donna Brazile. "His message of hope and change continues to resonate with an electorate that has grown more restless than ever."

Supreme Court Stays 'Padmaavat' Ban

In their plea, the producers questioned the right of these four state governments to ban the film when the apex court has already clarified that the film's screening can only be suspended in a particular area if there is a law and order situation developing.

The release of Bhansali's magnum opus was banned in the said four states to wing a potential law and order problem. The flick has run into

trouble time and again, as members of several Rajput factions have accused Bhansali of distorting history. Starring Deepika Padukone, Ranveer Singh and Shahid Kapoor in lead roles, the film is based on the 16th century Sufi poet Mohammad Jayasi's poem Padmavat. The film is all set for a worldwide January 25 release in Hindi, Telugu, and Tamil, and will be the first Indian film to get a global IMAX 3D release

Aziz Ansari Is Guilty. Of Not Being a Mind Reader.

If you start to hook up and don't like the way he smells or the way he talks (or doesn't talk), end it. If he pressures you to do something you don't want to do, use a four-letter word, stand up on your two legs and walk out his door. Aziz Ansari sounds as if he were aggressive and selfish and obnoxious that night. Isn't it heartbreaking and depressing that men — especially ones who present themselves publicly as feminists — so often act this way in private? Shouldn't we try to change our broken sexual culture? And isn't it enraging that women are socialized to be docile and accommodating and to put men's desires before their own? Yes. Yes. Yes.

But the solution to these problems does not begin with women torching men for failing to understand their "nonverbal cues." It is for women to be more

verbal. It's to say, "This is what turns me on." It's to say, "I don't want to do that." And, yes, sometimes it means saying goodbye.

The single most distressing thing to me about this story is that the only person with any agency in the story seems to be Aziz Ansari. The woman is merely acted upon.

All of this put me in mind of another article published this weekend, this one by the novelist and feminist icon Margaret Atwood. "My fundamental position is that women are human beings," she writes. "Nor do I believe that women are children, incapable of agency or of making moral decisions. If they were, we're back to the 19th century, and women should not own property, have credit cards, have access to higher education, control their own reproduction or

vote. There are powerful groups in North America pushing this agenda, but they are not usually considered feminists."

Except, increasingly, they are. The article in Babe was met with digital hosannas by young feminists who insisted that consent is consent only if it is affirmative, active, continuous and — and this is the word most used — enthusiastic. Consent isn't the only thing they are radically redefining. A recent survey by The Economist/YouGov found that approximately 25 percent of millennial-age American men think asking someone for a drink is harassment. More than a third of millennial men and women say that if a man compliments a woman's looks it is harassment. To judge from social media reaction, they also see a flagrant abuse of power in this sexual

encounter. Yes, Mr. Ansari is a wealthy celebrity with a Netflix show. But he had no actual power over the woman — professionally or otherwise. And lumping him in with the same movement that brought down men who ran movie studios and forced themselves on actresses, or the factory-floor supervisors who demanded sex from female workers, trivializes what #MeToo first stood for.

I'm sorry this woman had this experience. I too have had lousy romantic encounters, as has every adult woman I know. I have regretted these encounters, and not said anything at all. I have regretted them and said so, as she did. And I know I am lucky that these unpleasant moments were far from being anything approaching assault or rape, or even the worst night of my life.

But the response to her story

makes me think that many of my fellow feminists might insist that my experience was just that, and for me to define it otherwise is nothing more than my internalized misogyny.

There is a useful term for what this woman experienced on her night with Mr. Ansari. It's called "bad sex." It sucks.

The feminist answer is to push for a culture in which boys and young men are taught that sex does not have to be pursued as if they're in a pornographic film, and one in which girls and young women are empowered to be bolder, braver and louder about what they want. The insidious attempt by some women to criminalize awkward, gross and entitled sex takes women back to the days of smelling salts and fainting couches. That's somewhere I, for one, don't want to go.

Modi-Netanyahu Truly Made For Each Other

"Two hundred and fifty men, women, children and old men were massacred" (Armstrong, p.107) and then "their bodies were mutilated". Begin sent his congratulations to his fellow-terrorists saying, "As at Deir Yassin, so everywhere, we will attack and smite the enemy. God, God, thou hast chosen us for conquest". His final unambiguous sentence was, "that the story of Deir Yassin did a great service to the Jewish state: it got rid of the Arabs".

A fortnight later, on April 25, 1948, Arab Jaffa (liberated from Turkish rule by Indian troops during WWI and commemorated by the Teen Murti monument in New Delhi) was attacked by the two terrorist outfits and such was the dread they inspired that almost "70,000 inhabitants abandoned their city and fled. There followed scenes of looting, pillaging and destruction" (Armstrong, p.107) by the Jewish forces.

On becoming Prime Minister, Begin consolidated his reputation for wanton murder by egging on the 1982 massacre of hundreds of hapless Palestinian refugees in the Lebanese camps of Sabra and Shatila which brought down so much opprobrium on Begin that he was forced to resign the following year, only to make way for his fellow erstwhile terrorist from the Stern Gang, Yitzhak Shamir.

These are the distinguished Likud predecessors of Benjamin Netanyahu. No wonder he has been ruthless, inhuman and callous in showering missiles and bombs on Palestinian protesters in the Gaza strip, roundly condemned in the Goldstone Report of 2009 and the Falk Report of 2017, followed by a series of UN resolutions. It is all, however, water off his duck's back because he remains completely unmoved at the plight of the Palestinians.

In the same month as he inflicted these atrocities, Netanyahu spoke at Bar-Ilan University on June 14, 2009 laying down his conditions for a two-state solution: Palestine to be demilitarized forever with "no army, rockets, missiles or control of its airspace"; Jerusalem to be "undivided Jewish territory"; no right of return for the Palestinians

driven out of Israel or the Occupied Territories as this would "undermine Israel's continued existence as the State of the Jewish People" (what I call 'Yehuditva'); and Palestinian acceptance of not only the State of Israel (that the Palestinians have acquiesced in since Arafat became the undisputed Palestinian leader in 1967) but, more specifically, acceptance of Israel as a "Jewish state" (thus forfeiting the right of displaced Palestinians to ever return even to a united State of Israel-Palestine). More recently, in 2015, to the outrage of millions of Jews within and outside Israel, Netanyahu "claimed to speak for all Jews world-wide" - rather like Modi's outrageous and oft-repeated claim to speak on behalf of "125 crore Indians" when not even a third of the Indian electorate voted him to office in

2014.

In the current West Asian turmoil, dangerously aggravated by the Trump-Netanyahu axis, there is little scope for the Modi government to play the role of "honest broker", as is being suggested by Modi's decision to make a stand-alone visit to Palestine next month in the immediate wake of this Netanyahu visit in order to allegedly maintain the "balance" in our relations with Israel and Palestine. We have lost the moral compass set by Mahatma Gandhi when he famously proclaimed, "Palestine belongs to the Arabs as France to the French and England to the English", and the practical course set by Nehru when India stood against the partitioning of Palestine and sought instead a united state with autonomously governed provinces for the Arabs

and the Jews within a democratic, secular, constitutional framework for the two communities to live together fraternally. Modi's alternative realpolitik is stymied by Israel's visceral hatred of the same Iran that we are assiduously cultivating. And given our seven million strong diaspora in the Gulf region, it is in our obvious vital national interest to not be party to the stoking of intra-Arab rivalry or Israel's confrontation with Iran.

That is why, for all the hype being generated by the Modi cohort over the Netanyahu visit, our most knowledgeable expert on West Asia, Ambassador Talmiz Ahmed, says, India-Israel relations "will remain transactional in character and never attain the level of a strategic partnership".

Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu's first India visit aims to deepen trade ties

The three bronze statues at Teen Murti represent the Hyderabad, Jodhpur and Mysore Lancers who were part of the 15 Imperial Service Cavalry Brigade that liberated the Israeli city of Haifa on September 23, 1918 during World War 1.

The renaming underscored the special link and the common history between Israel and India, Netanyahu said after the event, according to Israeli officials.

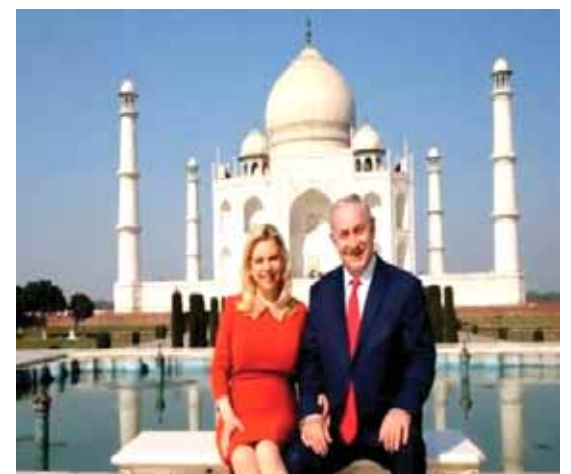
Israel is one of India's biggest weapons suppliers, exporting an average of \$1 billion of military equipment each year.

But days before Netanyahu's arrival, India called off a deal to buy 8,000 anti-

tank guided missiles from Israel's state-owned defence contractor Rafael.

In December, New Delhi had voted in favour of a UN resolution denouncing US recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

"The relationship is an all-weather relationship... so strong and so important to both countries that our feeling is that nothing can reverse it," Israeli ambassador to India Daniel Carmon had said on Friday on being asked about the vote. External affairs minister Sushma Swaraj called on Netanyahu in the evening while Modi hosted him for a private dinner.



**We Thank Our Customers for Their Trust & Loyalty
22 Years of Excellent Customer Service**

FOR COMPETITIVE RATES CALL

1-800-870-5845

**PICK-UP & DELIVERY
ANYWHERE IN USA**



INDO US EXPRESS, INC.

World wide Couriers*Freight Forwards

Domestic & Local Delivery

43-50, 11th St., Suite No, 109, LIC, New York, N.Y. 11101

Tel: 212-447-5720. Fax: 5169323750

www.indousexpress.com

Email : gsingh9070@aol.com (or) indousexpress@gmail.com

7Days A Week

**CALL ABOUT OUR SPECIAL RATES TO
INDIA**

There Is No Rampaging MeToo Mob

The cultural reaction to the Aziz Ansari allegations show the movement is more measured than its critics claim.



In an article for New York magazine that went viral on Friday, Andrew Sullivan joined a chorus of voices urging women to prevent the #MeToo movement from spinning out of control. It is at least the second pre-emptive war he's attempted to enlist his readers in, and it promises to be as futile as the last. Still, his timing was prescient. "A month or so ago, a friend and I mulled over when exactly the backlash to the then-peaking #MeToo moral panic would set in," he wrote. "Mid-January, we guessed, and sure enough here we are."

He was referring mostly to a controversial upcoming Harper's article about allegations of misconduct in media, but one might as well fold in the backlash that has greeted the article about Aziz Ansari that recently ran in the online publication Babe. The piece, which features an account of a date with Ansari from a young woman pseudonymously called "Grace," is long and graphic in its description of behavior that—while absent the workplace power dynamics that have characterized stories about the serial predations of Harvey Weinstein or Matt Lauer—was still, according to Grace, unsettling and even assaultive. (In a response, Ansari stated that the sexual encounter "by all indications was completely consensual.") Almost immediately after its publication, a flurry of critics furiously insisted not only that Grace's story should never have been told, but that Grace's telling of it was morally monstrous, perhaps more so even than Ansari's behavior.

On Monday, Ashleigh Banfield, an anchor for Headline

News, a network defined by prosecutorial hysteria, accused Grace of recklessly destroying Ansari's career and "chisel[ing] away" at the #MeToo movement's gains for women in the workplace. "What exactly is your beef?" she asked. "That you had a bad date with Aziz Ansari? Is that what victimized you to the point of seeking a public conviction? And a career-ending sentence against him? Is that truly what you thought he deserved for your night out?" In closing, Banfield intoned severely that what Ansari deserved was not a "Hollywood blackball" but rather "a bad case of blue balls."

This followed a piece in the Atlantic on Sunday titled "The Humiliation of Aziz Ansari" by Caitlin Flanagan. In it, she laments how "weak" and diffident young women have become in the face of male aggression since around the time of the "Falklands War." "Apparently there is a whole country full of young women who don't know how to call a cab, and who have spent a lot of time picking out pretty outfits for dates they hoped would be nights to remember," she huffs at the end. This sentiment is joined to the rather astonishing suggestion that criticism of Ansari might be racially motivated, a contract kill by a "hit squad of privileged young white women." "Twenty-four hours ago—this is the speed at which we are now operating—Aziz Ansari was a man whom many people admired and whose work, although very well paid, also performed a social good," she wrote. "He was the first exposure many young Americans had to a Muslim man who was aspirational, funny, immersed in the same culture that they are. Now he has been—in a professional sense—assassinated, on the basis of one woman's anonymous account."

It would indeed be tragic if Grace had—in a professional sense—fatally shot without reason the only good young Muslim man in America as he was riding through town in an open convertible, but that isn't precisely what has happened here. As of about noon Tuesday, Ansari has yet to face any professional consequences whatsoever for Grace's disclosure. That could well change, and if it does, we can surely expect more caterwauling from similarly minded critics. They would do well to read another piece in the Atlantic titled "To Hell With the Witch Hunt Debate," a refreshing rebuttal to warnings that #MeToo could bring about a sex panic that would subsume good men for breathing in the general direction of malevolent and vindictive women, of which there are apparently many. "In the America of earlier generations," the author noted, "one thing that silenced women who wanted to report unwanted sexual acts was how important it was not to damage a man's career, his reputation, his family." A shrewd observation made, the byline says, by one "Caitlin Flanagan."

Flanagan's about-face about Grace, like other emerging critiques of the story, elides many of the details of her account to paint a picture of a not-quite-abnormal awkward, fumbling evening. This happens most egregiously and predictably in a Monday op-ed in the New York Times by Bari Weiss, which will, for many thousands of people, be the authoritative rendering of what happened:

The following hews closer to what was actually reported: Grace tells the reporter that, after initially engaging Ansari in oral sex, she squirmed and pushed him away—even getting up and moving elsewhere in the apartment at multiple points—as Ansari continued to follow her, grope her, and move her hand toward his penis. At one point she collected herself in the restroom and returned to tell Ansari that she didn't want to "feel forced." Ansari didn't relent for long, and she performed oral sex on him again before he "rammed his penis against her ass" in front of a mirror and asked her how she wanted to be penetrated. At this point, Grace says she "said no, I don't think I'm ready to do this."

As Weiss relates, Ansari then asks Grace if she'd like to relax, clothed, on the couch and they do. But in a section of the text completely omitted from Weiss' retelling, Ansari then tries to kiss her, undo her pants, and stick his fingers down her throat—all after she's said no to him firmly and clearly. She curses men, and Ansari, we're told, tries to force kisses on her again after she's turned away.

The title of Weiss' piece is "Aziz Ansari is Guilty. Of Not Being a Mind Reader." Deducing that a visibly uncomfortable woman who's rebuffed sex physically and verbally might not, in fact, want your fist in their mouth is evidently an act of clairvoyance. This is the rhetoric of female inscrutability. On the one hand, Ansari might have thought, Grace seemed distraught and rejected his advances. On the other, she hadn't Maced him or run away screaming. This is a "mixed signal."

The main concern of Weiss and the others is that we've crossed a new threshold, where men who engage in minor sexual misbehavior, however uncomfortable they may be, are publicly scorned and ostracized just like the obviously worse men who have been in the headlines since the fall. Lumping Ansari in "with the same movement that brought down men who ran movie studios and forced themselves on actresses, or the factory floor supervisors who demanded sex from women workers," Weiss admonishes, "trivializes what #MeToo first stood for." But Grace did nothing of the sort. While the piece makes clear that she considered Ansari assaultive, it says that Grace "compares Ansari's sexual mannerisms to those of a horny, rough, entitled 18-year-old"—a disappointment, given Ansari's public persona as a sensitive, empathetic voice on dating and gender relations. At no point does she suggest he's a Weinstein—her behavior during the encounter can be read, really, as her trying desperately not to think the worst of him—and you'll be hard-pressed to find anyone, since the piece's publication, who seriously has. A Vox article on Grace's encounter argues it's worthy of discussion precisely because it was "ordinary." A piece at Bustle says that Ansari, like

the titular character of the viral short story "Cat Person," was not "a bad man," but rather blind to or unwilling to acknowledge, in his eagerness, signs of discomfort.

Those pieces have come in the wake of what Weiss calls "digital hosannas by young feminists, who insisted that consent is only consent if it is affirmative, active, continuous and [...] enthusiastic." As she suggests, these standards would implicate perhaps most men in misconduct that until recently would simply have been characterized as "bad sex." But that's precisely the point. A sexual culture in which it is deemed all right for women not to be affirmative and enthusiastic partners in sex is a culture that enables sexual coercion. I'd argue that these young feminists don't want to "criminalize" all dubiously consensual encounters, as Weiss alleges, but rather subject them to criticism. In the cases of public figures like Ansari, that criticism will inevitably be public; it seems hard to remember now, but the standard for reporting bad or unflattering behavior by celebrities has not typically been a dozen or so alleged cases of assault.

A detailed exposé about uncomfortable sex with a prominent comedian would've been published by gossip mags 10, 20, or 30 years ago, albeit in a different cultural milieu and without speculation from people like Weiss about the "torching" of a reputation for all time. Grace's critics don't bother offering explanations as to why they're so certain Ansari is finished, which is emblematic of the reactionary impulse. According to this line of thinking, any significant change—against racism or sexism, in the interest of this or that previously unrecognized and disadvantaged minority—may bring about some grand and catastrophic upheaval. The responses to wrongs we see and understand now must be tempered to prevent a bloodbath against the innocent that is perpetually on the cusp of arriving.

Stormy's Story

Did Donald Trump pay a porn star to keep quiet about an affair?

Not long after the 2016 Republican National Convention, I got a tip from a friend of mine. An old acquaintance of his in California was close to a woman in the adult-film industry who claimed to have had an affair with Donald Trump. I reached my friend's friend, who put me in touch with the actress, who is known as Stormy Daniels.

Daniels, whose given name is Stephanie Clifford, did indeed have a story about Trump, which she related to me in a series of phone conversations and text exchanges that took place between August and October of 2016.

Daniels told me she'd gone to Trump's hotel room after meeting him at a celebrity golf tournament in Nevada in 2006. There they'd begun a sexual relationship, which continued for nearly a year. They'd met in New York and more than once in Los Angeles. In early 2007, Trump had invited her to a party to promote Trump Vodka, where she was photographed. He'd also invited her to his Miss USA pageant that year.

In our conversations, Daniels said she was holding back on the juiciest details, such as her ability to describe things about Trump that only someone who had seen him naked would know. She intimated that her view of his sexual skill was at odds with the remark attributed to Marla Maples.

She didn't allege any kind of abuse, insisting she was not a victim. The worst Trump had done, she said, was break promises she'd never believed he would fulfill. She claimed he'd offered to buy her a condo in Tampa, Florida, and that he'd said he wanted to feature her as a contestant

in an upcoming season of *Celebrity Apprentice*. Daniels, who is far from naïve, says she did not take him seriously, but Trump had insisted his NBC contract let him do whatever he wanted on the show. Eventually, she said, he'd told her the network wouldn't allow her on the air because of the objections of an executive's wife.

Daniels said she had some corroborating evidence, including the phone numbers of Trump's longtime personal assistant Rhona Graff and his bodyguard Keith Schiller, with whom she said she would arrange rendezvous. While she did not share those numbers with me, I did speak to three of Daniels' friends, all of whom said they knew about the affair at the time, and all of whom confirmed the outlines of her story.

Given what was going on in the final weeks of the campaign, during which Trump was facing a torrent of accusations of sexual abuse, I didn't think an extramarital affair would be a highly significant story. What interested me more was Daniels' allegation that Trump had negotiated to buy her silence.

Daniels said that, through intermediaries, she and Trump

had worked out an agreement for the presidential candidate to pay her a six-figure sum to keep quiet. More specifically, she said her lawyer Keith Davidson, a Beverly Hills-based attorney who specializes in claims against celebrities, had worked out the terms with Trump's lawyer Michael Cohen.

Daniels told me that agreement involved a complicated arrangement to shield the real names of the parties. She texted me an unsigned two-page document spelling out this arrangement, the title of which was "Exhibit 'A' to the Confidential Settlement Agreement and Release: Assignment of Copyright and Non-Disparagement Agreement."*

The document she texted me indicated that in the main agreement—a document I never saw—"Stephanie Gregory Clifford aka Stormy Daniels is referred to by the pseudonym 'Peggy Peterson,' and _____ is referred to by the pseudonym 'David Dennison.'" The document Daniels sent me included two additional pseudonyms, "David Delucia" and "RCI," but did not indicate which person and/or entity those pseudonyms referred to. Another provision in the document I saw stated that only Daniels' lawyer Keith Davidson and a lawyer for the other party would be allowed to retain copies of the side-letter agreement identifying the parties by their actual names.

Daniels said she was

talking to me and sharing these details because Trump was stalling on finalizing the confidentiality agreement and paying her. Given her experience with Trump, she suspected he would stall her until after the election, and then refuse to sign or pay up.

As an alternative to being paid for her silence, Daniels wanted to be paid for her story. She thought it might come out anyway, as one version did on the website the Smoking Gun in October 2016. (The site reported the allegation that Trump and Daniels had an affair, not that they had negotiated a settlement.) Daniels said she wanted, in her words, something to show for her experience. Another motivation to go public, she said, was her anger about Trump's newfound opposition to abortion and gay marriage.

I told Daniels that Slate did not pay sources but encouraged her to come forward without compensation. I proposed interviewing her on *Trumpcast* and writing her story. She never said yes and never said no. Late in the discussion,

I asked a Slate colleague to help me verify her account.

We both spoke to Daniels and to Gina Rodriguez, a former porn actress turned agent, who Daniels was using to negotiate with media organizations. I gathered that Daniels was also discussing going public on *Good Morning America*.



Why Is It So Hard for Americans to Get a Decent Raise?

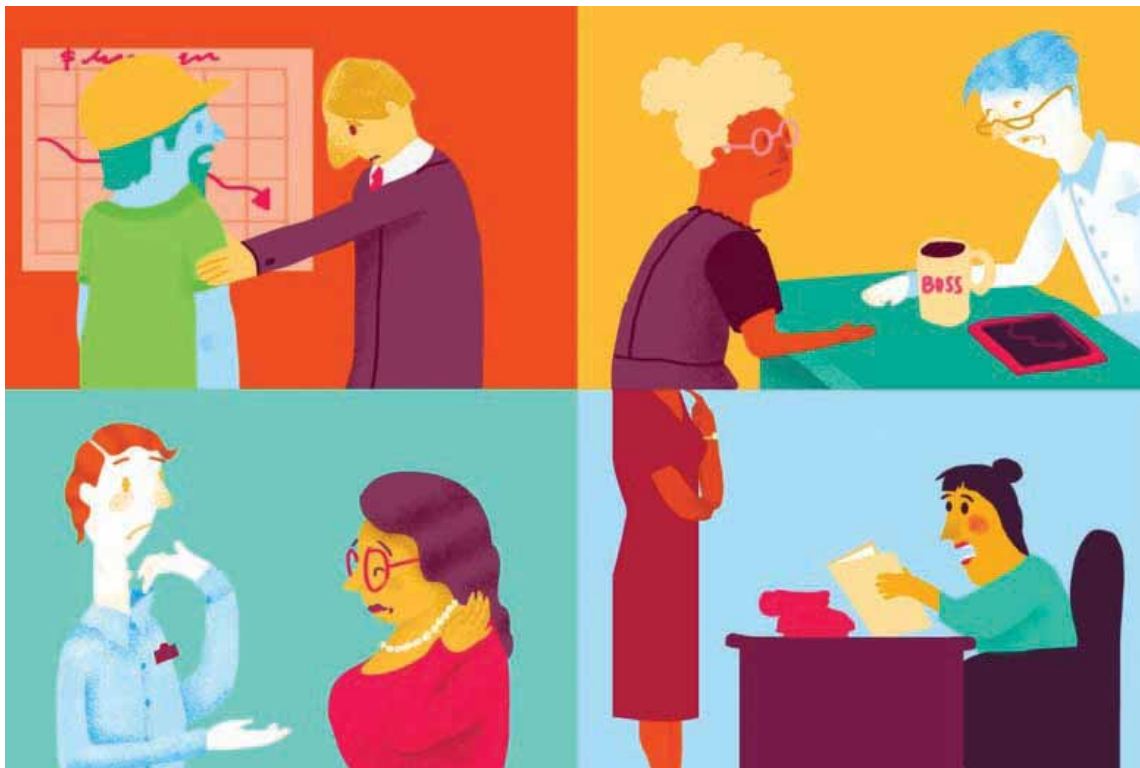
A new answer could change how we think about unions, monopolies, and the minimum wage.

If you were a delivery van driver searching for a new job any time between the years of 2010 and 2013, chances are, you wouldn't have found many businesses competing for your services. In Selma, Alabama, there was, on average, just one company posting help wanted ads for those drivers on the nation's biggest job board. In all of Orlando, Florida, there were about nine. Nationwide the average was about two.

The situation for telemarketers wasn't great either. In any given city or town, approximately three companies were trying to hire for their services. Accountants only had it a little better: Roughly four businesses were posting jobs for them.

Those numbers are based on the findings of a new research paper that may help unlock the mystery of why Americans can't seem to get a decent raise. Economists have struggled over that question for years now, as wage growth has stagnated and more of the nation's income has shifted from the pockets of workers into the bank accounts of business owners. Since 1979, inflation-adjusted hourly pay is up just 3.41 percent for the middle 20 percent of Americans while labor's overall share of national income has declined sharply since the early 2000s. There are lots of possible explanations for why this is, from long-term factors like the rise of automation and decline of organized labor, to short-term ones, such as the lingering weakness in the job market left over from the great recession. But a recent study by a group of labor economists introduces an interesting theory into the mix: Workers' pay may be lagging because the U.S. is suffering from a shortage of employers.

The paper—written by José Azar of IESE Business School at the University of Navarra, Ioana Marinescu of the University of Pennsylvania, and Marshall Steinbaum of the Roosevelt Institute—argues that, across different cities and different fields, hiring is concentrated among a relatively small number of businesses, which may have given managers the ability to keep



wages lower than if there were more companies vying for talent. This is not the same as saying there are simply too many job hunters chasing too few openings—the paper, which is still in an early draft form, is designed to rule out that possibility. Instead, its authors argue that the labor market may be plagued by what economists call a monopsony problem, where a lack of competition among employers gives businesses outside power over workers, including the ability to tamp down on pay. If the researchers are right, it could have important implications for how we think about antitrust, unions, and the minimum wage.

Monopsony is essentially monopoly's quieter, less appreciated twin sibling. A monopolist can fix prices because it's the only seller in the market. The one hospital in a sprawling rural county can charge insurers whatever it likes for emergency room services, for instance, because patients can't go elsewhere. A monopsonist, on the other hand, can pay whatever it likes for labor or supplies, because it's the only company buying or hiring. That remote hospital I just mentioned? It can probably get away with lowballing its nurses on salary, because nobody is out there trying to poach them.

You don't have to look hard to tell that we live in a world where many employers have extraordinary leverage over their workers—just read about the

grueling, erratic, computer-generated schedules low-wage workers are forced to navigate, or the widespread proliferation of noncompete agreements. And it's clear that American industry has consolidated enormously over the decades. Years of mergers and the rise of exceedingly profitable superstars like Google and Facebook have concentrated economic power in fewer corporate boardrooms, and research suggests that America's transformation into a life-size Monopoly board may be cutting into labor's share of the economy.

But studying monopsony has traditionally been tricky for economists, because they lacked good data that would let them analyze broad trends specifically in labor market concentration. The new paper hops over that hurdle by using a trove of data from CareerBuilder.com, which publishes about one-third of all online job ads in the country. (Even for economists who are paid to worry about it, industry consolidation sometimes has its upsides.) The team looked at the number of companies advertising jobs in more than two dozen different occupations, from nurses to accountants to telemarketers, in each of the country's different metro and nonmetro areas between 2010 and 2013. They then calculated local labor market concentration using the awkwardly named Herfindahl-Hirschman Index, or HHI, which antitrust regulators use to analyze the effects of mergers on competition.

What they found was a bit startling. The Department of Justice and Federal Trade Commission consider a market with an HHI score of 2,500 or more to be highly concentrated—if a merger between two wireless companies left that little competition for cell services, for instance, there's a good chance the government's lawyers would challenge it. In their paper, the authors find that America's local labor markets had a whopping average HHI score of 3,157. Employers also tended to advertise lower pay in cities and towns where fewer businesses were posting jobs—suggesting that the lack of competition among companies was letting them suppress pay. According to one of their calculations, moving from the 25th percentile of labor market concentration to the 75th percentile would lower pay in a metro area by 17 percent.

The degree of concentration, and the effect on wages, tended to be worse in smaller towns than major cities. Places like Alpena, Michigan, and Butte, Montana, had the least competition among employers, while New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia had the most. It also varied by occupation. Equipment mechanics, legal secretaries, telemarketers, and those delivery drivers faced some of the most highly concentrated job markets; registered nurses, corporate salesmen, and customer service representatives had some of the least. But overall, the problem looks pervasive. If the U.S. really does have the sort of

widespread monopsony problem this paper documents, it would be one more important point on the constellation of reasons workers have fallen so far behind this century. It would also change the way we need to think about certain public policy issues. Take the minimum wage. The classic argument against increasing the pay floor is that it will kill jobs by making hiring more costly than it's worth. But in a monopsony-afflicted world where companies can artificially depress wages, a higher minimum shouldn't hurt employment, because it will just force employers to pay workers more in line with the value they produce. The same goes for collective bargaining. In the perfectly competitive labor markets of economics textbooks, labor unions are basically dead weight that make companies less efficient. In a world where a small clutch of businesses do most of the hiring, unions may actually fix a broken market by giving workers more sway.

Then there's antitrust. Today, when regulators are evaluating a large merger, they tend to think about how it will affect the prices consumers pay. If two health insurers merge, will Americans end up paying higher premiums? If a wireless company eats its rival, will our cellphone bills shoot up? In principle, the government's lawyers can also consider what corporate consolidation will do to workers, but that tends to be a backburner issue. This paper's findings suggest that Washington needs to think more carefully about how mergers can impact the job market, not just on the national level, but in specific cities and towns, where the marriage of two, smaller companies could have a big local impact. Of course, this is just one, early study, and like most economics research, there are questions to raise about its technique. It's possible, for instance, that nurses or accountants are offered lower pay in cities where few companies are hiring because the economy isn't very good there.

Want to lose weight?

You could try this one doctor-approved thing every morning

If weight loss is one of your goals in 2018 and you are planning on introducing apple cider vinegar to your diet, we spoke with a dietician and a doctor to explain whether drinking the rumoured weight-loss aide and general health booster every morning actually works.



(News Agencies) First things first: Whether you do or don't want to lose weight is totally personal; if you want to, great, but if you don't, that is perfectly fine as well.

If weight loss is one of your goals in 2018 and you don't know where to start, you're not alone. Ask around and you will find so many hoping to shed some pounds this year — and preying on these doe-eyed resolvers will be all manner of 'fast weight loss solutions.' They'll guarantee instantaneous results or promise to make the pounds melt off without you having to change a thing. The reality is, losing weight in a safe, healthy, and effective way is a lot more complicated than that.

"Weight loss requires lifestyle

changes, no matter how much we might wish for quick answers. It requires work, adaptability, and a whole lot of patience. There's so much that goes into it," Dr Sanjay Aggarwal, a general physician at Holistic Healthcare Centre in Delhi, said.

But, according to Dr Aggarwal, if there's one weight-loss elixir that is already in your kitchen pantry (and if it's not there already, it deserves to be) is apple cider vinegar. If the vitamins and minerals alone are not enough reason to have you hooked — It's rich in vitamins E, A, and P and magnesium, iron, calcium, the list goes on and on — studies have shown that it might help keep you from feeling hungry by slowing stomach emptying.

If you're looking to shed a few pounds,

Dr Aggarwal said it's time to start using apple cider vinegar, as it can support weight loss, and also improve digestion and constipation. All you have to do is drink it every morning on an empty stomach. "Most weight loss fads are not healthy, but few that suggest drinking apple cider vinegar and honey, which contains some natural sugars and nutrients, in a glass of water, can help. The acetic acid in vinegar slows the rate at which your body digests starch and helps regulate sugar spike caused by eating them," Aggarwal said.

The honey-apple cider-water combination is not new, and it's not a health miracle either, if that's all you are taking in. But in can help you shed weight, if combined with a balanced diet,

Dr Anupam Dey, a Kolkata-based dietician said.

"If your stomach is empty and you're introducing an acid, it's going to cause irritation, which can make you feel full and not want to eat. Apple cider vinegar lowers the glycemic index of high-carb foods like pasta, meaning it can help you feel fuller longer by slowing the release of glucose into your bloodstream," he said. Moreover, the pectin in apple cider vinegar has been known to move things along when bellies get backed up, according to Dr Dey. In conclusion, he said, "Adding honey and vinegar to an already healthy diet does have weight loss benefits, improves your digestion and it will do no harm, as long as you watch your total calorie count."



Psychedelic drugs may treat depression without dulling emotions

While antidepressants drugs can help to combat the symptoms of depression for patients, they can dampen how the brain processes strong emotions.

(News Agencies) Psychedelic drugs like magic mushrooms can help relieve the symptoms of depression, without the 'dulling' of emotions linked with antidepressants, a study has found.

Working out if someone is happy, angry or afraid, from the look on their face, is a skill we may take for granted.

For some people, however, such as those with chronic depression, this innate ability to pick up on and respond to emotional prompts like a facial expression can be disrupted, with the brain becoming oversensitive to negative stimuli.

While antidepressants drugs can help to combat the symptoms of depression for patients, they can dampen how the brain processes strong emotions - effectively turning down the dial on the hypersensitivity to negative emotions but also 'blunting' intense positive mood.

Researchers at the Imperial College London in the UK suggest that psychedelics, like magic mushrooms, may hold the key to

sidestepping some of these effects in treating depression, by reviving the brain's activity and effectively reconnecting patients with their emotions.

Previous research has shown that psilocybin - the active compound in magic mushrooms - may help to alleviate symptoms in patients with persistent depression by 'resetting' brain activity. In the study published in the journal *Neuropharmacology*, researchers focused on the potential of the drug to change brain activity in key areas involved in emotional processing. They found that after treatment with psilocybin, patients with depression who did not respond to conventional treatments, reported improvements in their mood and symptoms. However, the researchers also observed a stronger response to emotional faces with increased brain activity in an area called the amygdala - the almond-shaped region of the brain involved in processing emotions and which is known to play a role in depression.

Women, beware. Early periods and menopause linked to heart disease

The UK study showed that women who began menstruating before the age of 12 faced a 10% greater risk of cardiovascular disease, and for those who went through menopause before the age of 47, the risk by 33%.



(News Agencies) Women who start menstruating at the age of 11 or younger, or enter menopause before 47, face a higher risk of heart disease and stroke, according to a UK study. Miscarriage, stillbirth, undergoing a hysterectomy, and bearing children at a young age were also associated with elevated odds of cardiovascular problems later in life, researchers found. The additional risk varied from only a few percentage points to more than 40%, they reported in the journal *Heart*. The findings are not the first to uncover a link between reproductive factors and cardiovascular diseases, and the data do not show a causal relationship, the authors cautioned.

But their findings do strengthen the association, and suggest that women with

premature reproductive cycles or a history of adverse events should be frequently screened for heart trouble and conditions leading to blood clots. The scientists drew data from a long-term health survey in Britain that monitored and tested more than a quarter of a million women from 2006 to 2016. The women's average age was 56 when monitoring began.

More than four-fifths had been pregnant, and nearly half had two children. On average, they started having their periods at 13, and had their first child at 26. In 2016, two-thirds of the women had gone through menopause, at an average age of 50.

The study showed that women who began menstruating before the age of 12 faced a 10% greater risk of cardiovascular disease compared to those who were 13 or older. For those who went through menopause before the age of 47, the risk for cardiovascular disease rose by 33%, and for stroke alone by 42%. Miscarriages were likewise linked with a greater danger of heart disease, with each stillbirth increasing the risk by six percent. A hysterectomy was associated with a 20% higher chance of developing heart disease, the team found.

‘Coolest monkey in the jungle’: Racist ad lands clothing giant H&M in trouble

NBA superstar LeBron James took to Instagram to express his anger against the ad, which featured a black boy sporting a hoodie with the words “Coolest monkey in the jungle” written on it, and Canadian R&B singer The Weeknd severed his contract with the company.



(News Agencies) A racism scandal at H&M is the latest indication of management problems at the Swedish clothing giant, once the darling of shoppers but now struggling to make the switch to e-commerce, analysts say.

H&M is one of the most well-known brands in the world, with global brand consultancy Interbrand ranking it the 23rd best known company worldwide

in 2017 – ahead of Ikea and fashion luxury goods manufacturer Hermes.

But lately, H&M has struggled to lure shoppers into its 4,553 stores around the world, and has been slow to develop its online offering. “It’s (been) one of the toughest years for H&M,” Joakim Bornold, an economist at the investment bank Nordnet told AFP, noting that the company’s stock price has fallen by 35% since January 2017.

Racism scandal

As if the company’s earnings weren’t problematic enough, H&M last week found itself in the middle of a social media storm, accused of racism. Its online catalogue featured an advertisement of a black boy sporting a hoodie with the

words “Coolest monkey in the jungle” written on it.

According to Gothenburg University marketing professor Eva Ossiansson, the gaffe is a sign that H&M has lost its Midas touch. “It signals that the company has problems to cope with, both in terms of how their business should develop with regard to e-commerce and the digitalisation in our society, as well as in their communication,” she said.

The company tried to quash the criticism by apologising and withdrawing the ad and the item from sale. But the damage was done.

NBA superstar LeBron James expressed his anger on Instagram on January 9, hours after the garment

was removed from sale. Lisa Magnusson, editorialist at Swedish paper of reference Dagens Nyheter, meanwhile played down the scandal, saying people should be more upset about the working conditions of the labourers in Asia who make H&M clothes for pennies. She noted that if every garment were sold for just three kronor more (0.3 euros, \$0.37), those workers’ salaries could be doubled.

H&M, which also owns the brands COS, Monki, Weekday, Cheap Monday, Arket and H&M Home, said in December it would be closing stores, but didn’t specify how many or where. The company will publish its full-year earnings report on January 31.



Milan Fashion Week 2018 *Designers feature urban street wear for millennials*

Day 2 of Milan Fashion Week opened with youthful designers focused on urban street wear that tries to capture the zeitgeist of Millennial consumers.

(News Agencies) With social and political crises unsettling the globe, Milan Fashion Week was all about slogans this season. “Time For Change” has been a particularly dominant catchphrase, one the fashion world can expect to see branded across sweatshirts, waistbands and accessories next fall and winter. The ubiquity of the expression does not necessarily denote consensus around the message it’s designed to convey. For some, it means back to roots. Others intend it as a call for respect. But the overall implication seems to be a rejection of the status quo, which really isn’t surprising in fashion.

Naturally, Miuccia Prada is the outlier. Prada eschewed words because they have become empty. Where they appeared on prints in her new looks, words were meaningless. The second day of Milan Fashion Week of mostly menswear previews for

Fall-Winter 2018-19 opened with youthful designers focused on urban street wear that tries to capture the zeitgeist of Millennial consumers. Here are some highlights from Sunday’s shows, including Prada, Dirk Bikkembergs, MSGM and DSquared2:

Prada’s strange packages

In challenging times, it is not unusual to seek the familiar. For Miuccia Prada, there is comfort in black nylon. The designer generously employs her favoured material in her pieces for the next cold weather season, padding them and applying them in protective layers.

The boxy shapes for men and women appear to conceal the wearer in a unisex vein, but it is all for naught: Identity badges suggested a form of surveillance in the runway scenario. That sense of excessive control transforms into a political statement once the garments are

on the rack and available to consumers. “I think we are in a moment when these aspects of control are very relevant,” the designer said after the show.

Despite the collection’s utilitarian nature creating a sort of uniform of anoraks, jackets, caps, straight trousers and skirts, Prada said she also wanted to convey elegance. Beyond the dystopian looks, she included tourist-grade short-sleeved knits, or wild print short-shirt combos for men, and slit-skirt suits in bright tones paired with open-toe heels and long leather gloves for women.

Prada enlisted architects to design new accessories, including a padded front pack that could stand in as a form of body amour, and a utility tool apron. Artists came up with the prints, including burning bananas and meaningless strings of words. “Now they no longer represent concepts, but they are pure decoration,” she said.

Supermodel Kendall Jenner opens up about her ‘debilitating’ battle with anxiety

The Keeping Up With the Kardashians star said in a magazine interview that she has often experienced panic attacks and episodes of sleep paralysis.



Supermodel Kendall Jenner has revealed that she struggles with anxiety and that it keeps her up at night.

In an interview with Harper’s Bazaar magazine, Jenner told model and actor Cara Delevingne, that she has often experienced panic attacks and episodes of sleep paralysis.

“I have such debilitating anxiety because of everything going on that I literally wake up in the middle of the night with full-on panic attacks. Where do I even start? Everything is so horrible, it’s hard to name one thing,” Jenner said.

“I just think that the world needs so much love. I wish I had the power to send Cupid around the planet, as cheesy as that sounds.

You go online and you see everyone saying the worst things to each other, and it’s hard to stay positive. It’s hard not to get eaten alive by all the negativity,” she added.

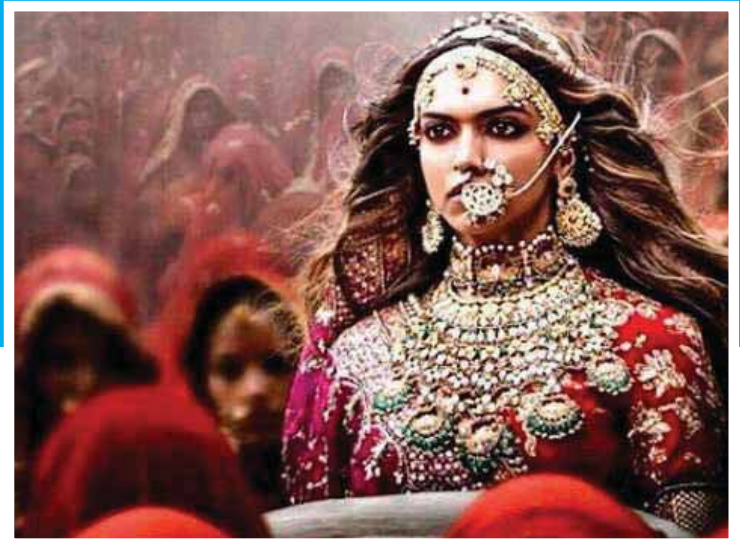
Jenner, who has over 86 million followers on Instagram, admitted that she is trying to find a happy balance between her personal and public life. “Lately I’ve just tried to stay off it, and I definitely don’t look at comments. I think Instagram is still a fun place for the most part. I like going on and seeing what people are up to, but I mostly follow stupid accounts with pictures of puppies and little baby animals and people saving animals. Forget about Twitter, which is so not fun these days. It just makes me sad,” she added.

Though Jenner has a fashion line with her younger sister Kylie Jenner, she says she would like to do something more “serious” on her own.

“Kylie and I have our little brand that we do together, and actually have a fun time doing it, but I would love to branch off and do something a little more serious and really sit down and test my brain and play with it a little bit,” Kendall told Cara Delevingne.

Haryana becomes fourth state to ban Padmaavat after CBFC clearance

After Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat, Haryana is the fourth state to ban Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Padmaavat on Tuesday.



After Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat, Haryana became the fourth Indian state to ban Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Padmaavat on Tuesday citing "law and order situation in the state". Before the Assembly polls in Gujarat in November last year, the state government had banned the film, which was earlier titled as Padmavati.

Based on 16th century Sufi poet Malik Muhammad Jayasi's epic poem Padmavat, the movie stars Deepika Padukone in the titular role while Ranveer Singh plays invader Alauddin Khilji. Shahid

Kapoor essays the role of Maharawal Ratan Singh in the film.

News agency ANI quoted Haryana minister Anil Vij as saying, "The CM earlier said we will take a decision after censor board passes it. In this meeting, I said it should be banned in Haryana keeping in view the law and order situation. Cabinet supported this and we decided it will be banned in Haryana." Last week, Gujarat chief minister Vijay Rupani banned the film in the state and said, "The Gujarat government's earlier order banning screening of the

film stays. There is no scope to release in the state unless any changes in the earlier order are made."

The movie has been facing violent protests by the fringe group, Shri Rajput Karni Sena who blame the director and lead actors of insulting Rajputs and the community's honour. The protesters have issued death threats against Bhansali and Deepika over allegations that the queen romances Muslim emperor Alauddin Khilji in the movie – a charge the filmmakers have denied. Historians are divided on whether the queen existed.

Originally titled Padmavati, the film's name was changed to Padmaavat as suggested by the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC). The CBFC recently cleared the film for release with U/A certificate and a set of five modifications.

On Monday, the makers of Padmaavat released a new poster with no faces, mentioning the changes in bold and reassuring everyone

that the film "upholds the honour of the Rajput community." Padmavati, scheduled for a December 1 release, was postponed due to protests in several states for alleged misrepresentation of history and maligning the image of Queen Padmavati. Slated to hit theatres on January 25, Padmaavat is set for a box office clash with Akshay Kumar's PadMan.

Kim Kardashian, Kanye West announces birth of 3rd child, this one by surrogate

Kim Kardashian and husband Kanye West announced their third child on Tuesday, a girl born to a surrogate

Kim Kardashian and her rapper husband Kanye West announced their third child on Tuesday, a girl born to a surrogate. "Kanye and I are happy to announce the arrival of our healthy, beautiful baby girl," Kardashian said in a message on her app. The couple thanked the unidentified surrogate "who made our dreams come true with the greatest gift one could give." They said the baby was born on Monday but they did not announce a name.

Kardashian, 37, and West are already parents to North, 4, and Saint, 2. The "Keeping Up with the Kardashians" reality and social media star has said she decided to use a surrogate after doctors warned of serious health risks if she became pregnant again. Kardashian has given detailed accounts on her blog about the difficulties she experienced during her two labors. Two of Kardashian's sisters are also expecting babies.

Khloe Kardashian, 33, announced in December that she is six months pregnant with her basketball player boyfriend Tristan Thomas, while their half-sister Kylie Jenner, 20, is reported to be expecting her first child soon. The arrival of Kardashian and West's third child swiftly became one of the top five trending topics on Twitter.



Sanitary pads should be free : Akshay Kumar



Sanitary pads should be free : Akshay Kumar. Akshay Kumar, who is all set to come up with his next film 'Padman' in the Republic day weekend, feels that sanitary pads should not be tax free, rather free for women. While promoting the movie in Pune, the 50-year-old actor said, "Women are going for tax free sanitary, but I say it should be completely free. Cut the five percent money from defence, make one bomb less and give it to women to get the sanitary napkin." 'Padman' is a biopic based on the life of Arunachalam Muruganantham, who makes cheap and affordable sanitary pads for the women of his village and fights for menstrual hygiene. Quirky posters, interesting trailer and some soulful songs have already made fans really curious.

Helmed by R. Balki, 'PadMan' also stars Sonam Kapoor and Radhika Apte. The flick is all set to release on January 25 and will clash with Sanjay Leela Bhansali's magnum opus 'Padmaavat', which stars Deepika Padukone, Ranveer Singh and Shahid Kapoor in the pivotal roles.

Mukkabaaz movie review

Anurag Kashyap's angry film spares no one; Vineet Singh is our own Rocky

Anurag Kashyap's terrific form continues as he spares no one. From reverse casteism to the messed up political scenario, he trains his gun to many evils. Here's the movie review.



Mukkabaaz

Cast: Vineet Singh, Jimmy Shergill, Zoya Hussain

Director: Anurag Kashyap

Rating: 4.5/5

Tum AC ghar me rehti ho, main ped ke neeche leta hoon Tum nayi Maruti lagti ho, main scooter Lambretta hoon. (You live in an air-conditioned house, I live beneath a tree. You look like a new car, I am an old scooter.) Slow motion fist fight never looked more intriguing. A passionate but mostly untrained boxer is brawling with some ruffians on a congested street, and a mute girl is looking at him from a rooftop. There is pain, there is lust and there is a challenge. Can the boxer rise up, accept the invitation and fall in love with the girl who is so near yet so distant?

A gritty young man Shyvan Singh (Vineet Singh) wants to be known as a 'boxer'. It's not just a game for him. It's his ticket to a better life, one that offers respect. He keeps Rocky's posters and calls himself Uttar Pradesh's Mike Tyson. Boxing is the only thing he is good at, but he is way past the age he should have 'made it'. Like most of

the sports federations in India, the UP federation is also cracking under political pressure. Bareilly politician and mobster Bhagwan Das Mishra (Jimmy Shergill) is the kingpin who makes or breaks careers. Unfortunately, the girl is his niece and that might kill Shyvan's only reason to breathe, boxing.

It's a set-up we have accepted as part of our lives. Itna toh chalta hai — As if struggle is the one thing aspiring sports persons should accept as part of their career graph. The officials are neck-deep in corruption. Everybody wants to be in the good books of political heavyweights. A malfunctioning system is internalized, accepted. Shyvan with his idealism is a misfit. He is angry, mostly aimless and certainly not the one to bow down. Even hundreds of punches can't bend his spine.

Director Anurag Kashyap takes us inside the modest Singh household where they don't understand everyday English; in fact they are irritated by it. They probably consider English as one of the reasons for their misery. The son talks about 'passion' and the

electrician father hears 'fashion' and keeps lecturing him. It's weirdly funny and a tight slap on the face of the education system and a society which equates knowing English with being educated.

Mukkabaaz keeps getting darker. In one of the scenes, Bhagwan Das asks a waiter to bring another jug for a harassed, helpless coach Sanjay Kumar (Ravi Kishan in a very unlike Ravi Kishan role), who belongs to a backward caste. Bhagwan Das, who is blind in one eye, immediately notices that the waiter's right eye is of stone. For a second, it appears like the nature's way of teaching him humility. But he isn't the one to leave his caste pride.

Men like him are the reason boxing tournaments take place in open and the place allotted for it becomes somebody's private property. Players don't understand the difference between medicines and prohibited drugs. For them, winning the state or national level championship is about getting a government job. They never aspire to win medals. Kashyap brings all

these facets out in the open and then makes strong comments.

From calling out 'gau rakshaks' to calling the championship sponsor Bedaag (spotless), he teases us with in-your-face humour. You don't know whether to nod in acceptance or just look away when a boxing official tells Shyvan, "Nobody wants to know what's happening in your life."

Kashyap's terrific form continues as he spares no one. From reverse casteism to the messed-up political scenario, he trains his gun on many evils. Mincing words was never his style, but this is bolder and very effective.

Interestingly, Shyvan's love story with Sunaina (an enigmatic Zoya Hussain) never takes a backseat. It remains the prime emotion. The more ruthless the masters become, the more rebellious the oppressed get.

Jimmy Shergill might look overdramatic to some, but he has tried his best to justify his persona, but such characters are not rare. Political aspirations collaborated with a strong sense of entitlement can lead to fatal actions.

Zoya Hussain is at the lack of words, but her eyes are not. She is aptly supported by the background music which needs a whole new article. It's wonderful and non-mainstream but the songs dare you to overlook lyrics.

And then there is Vineet Singh. This is the performance we all will cherish for years. It's legendary and who knows it might become his performance of a lifetime. You will root for him, you'll duck the punches with him and then you'll go down with him, but you'll never leave him. He won't let you. Our very own Rocky is born.

The 156-minute Mukkabaaz is the best film in last one year or so, and this year couldn't start on a better note. Let's cherish Vineet Singh and his thickheaded brawler with open heart.

Hum pehla dhakka nahi mare, hum pehla mukka nahi jade

Hum pehli gaali diye naa...

Unko kyun laga, bin baat ka tha Humra jhagda jazbaat ka tha.

(I didn't push him first, I didn't hit him first. I didn't abuse him either.. Why did he feel bad? My fight was all about feelings.)

Bigg Boss 11: These six contestants were not invited to the finale

The show started with 19 contestants on October 1 and continued for 105 days. During this period, we saw contestants fighting a fierce battle among themselves.

Bigg Boss 11 ended with a mega episode on Sunday. Shilpa Shinde defeated her closest rival Hina Khan in a tense finale. Vikas Gupta was declared the second runner-up. Puneesh Sharma was the only commoner to enter the top four this season.

The show started with 19 contestants on October 1 and continued for 105 days. During this period, we saw contestants fighting a fierce battle among them. Thirteen out of the initial 19 participants reunited for the grand finale. Some of them even performed at the big stage hosted by Salman Khan and Akshay Kumar.



But what surprised everyone is the absence of six contestants. These contestants were not called for the finale.

Zubair Khan: Salman

Khan wasn't happy with the way Zubair reacted after his eviction from the show. He accused Salman of threatening him and said he has even approached the

police to complain against the Bollywood actor.

Sshivani Durga: The so-called spiritual leader was also kept out of the finale. She didn't have anything

against the show, but she was friends with Zubair.

Mehjabi Siddiqui: She was cordial with everyone and thus it was surprising to not see her during the finale.

Sabyasachi Satpathy: His absence puzzled everyone as he was friends with Vikas Gupta and others. His stay inside the house was also non-controversial.

Jyoti Kumari: The Bihar student was one of the firsts to leave the house. She is out of the public glare since then.

Lucinda Nicholas: Like Jyoti, she also vanished without a trace. It's not clear whether the organisers tried to contact them before finale or not.

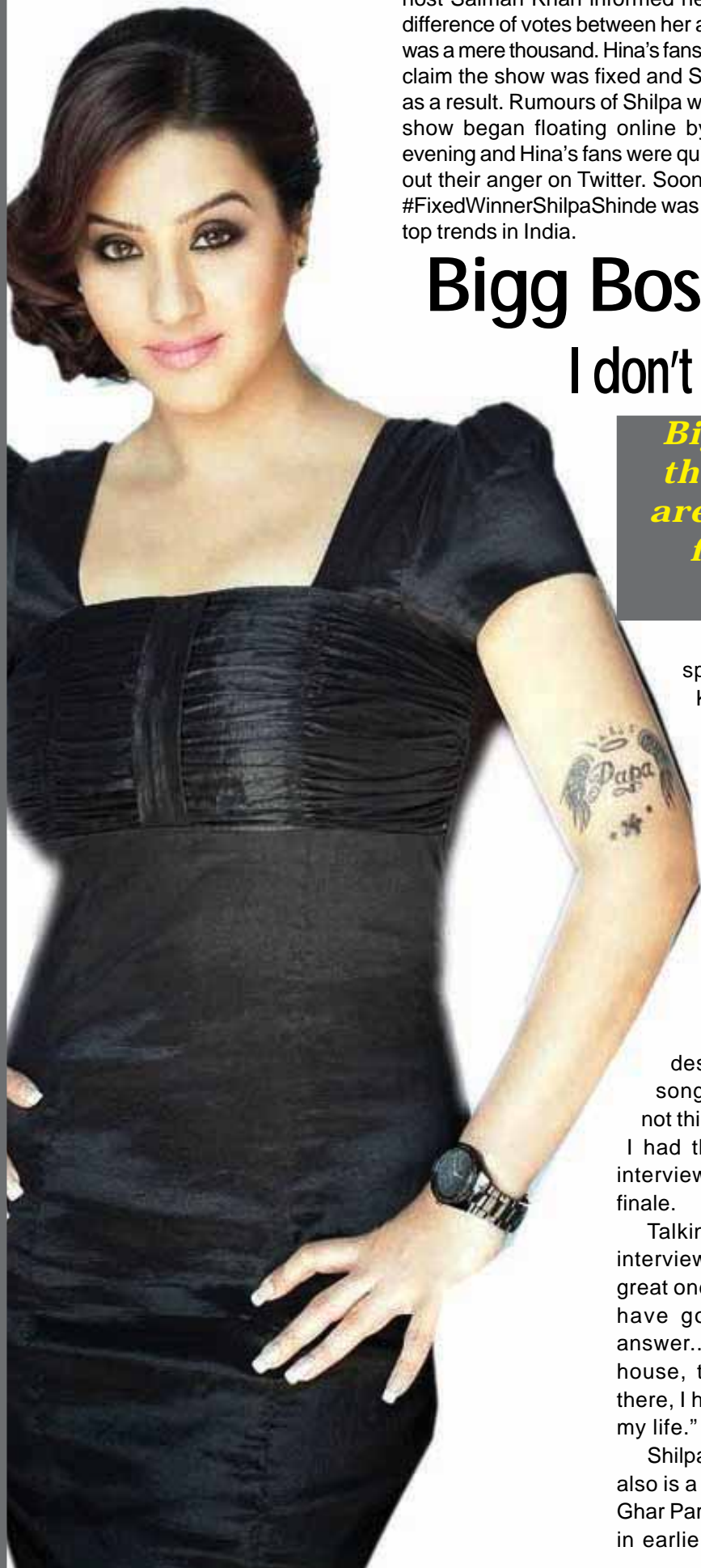
Bigg Boss 11 fixed, claim Hina Khan's fans as Shilpa Shinde emerges winner

Hina Khan says Salman Khan informed her that there was difference of a mere thousand votes between her and Shilpa Shinde. Hina's fans, however, refuse to see reason. Defeat is hard to accept, especially if you are obsessed fans who are highly invested in the win of your favourite star. If the platform that we are talking about is Bigg Boss, the claims and counter-claims are so much more shriller. As Bhabhiji Ghar

Par Hain fame actor Shilpa Shinde won the reality show Bigg Boss 11 Sunday night and TV star Hina Khan ended up as the first runner-up for the season, Twitter was a war zone. While Shilpa's fans were jubilant, Hina's fans were already looking for conspiracy theories.

While Hina has been generous in her post-finale interviews, her fans refuse to see reason. Hina even said that the show's host Salman Khan informed her that the difference of votes between her and Shilpa was a mere thousand. Hina's fans, however, claim the show was fixed and Shilpa won as a result. Rumours of Shilpa winning the show began floating online by Sunday evening and Hina's fans were quick to pour out their anger on Twitter. Soon enough, #FixedWinnerShilpaShinde was one of the top trends in India.

While some claimed Shilpa's vote share was fixed beforehand, others believed Shilpa entered the show with a pre-signed contract that she would be declared as the winner eventually! However, apart from the angry rants, there is no other proof that hints towards the winner of Bigg Boss 11 being fixed, as is being alleged. Hina has gracefully accepted Shilpa's victory and said every contestant is a winner as they struggled inside the house for survival.



Bigg Boss 11 winner Shilpa Shinde I don't want to meet Hina Khan again in my life

Bigg Boss 11 winner Shilpa Shinde proves that the friends and enemies made inside the house are for keeps. Here is what she has to say about first runner-up Hina Khan and contestants Akash Dadlani and Arshi Khan.

Fans and TV audience may have spent the last few minutes as Salman Khan prepared to announce Bigg Boss 11 winner on Sunday night biting their nails, but not Shilpa Shinde. With actor Hina Khan standing besides her, she was sure that she will emerge the winner. She said in an interview that she had faith in her fans and did not doubt that Salman would soon say: Bigg Boss 11 winner Shilpa Shinde! Well, that is exactly what happened.

"The audience who voted for me despite me singing such a tone-deaf song, I had complete faith in them. I did not think about defeat for a single moment. I had the confidence," Shilpa said in an interview to India Forums after Bigg Boss finale.

Talking to Media, Shilpa said in a video interview, "It has been a big journey and a great one. It is still unbelievable. After what I have gone through, this is the perfect answer... I think the way I lived inside that house, the way relationships were made there, I had never imagined such changes in my life."

Shilpa also believes that audience support also is a clean chit of sorts, given the Bhabhiji Ghar Par Hain controversy she was embroiled in earlier. "This is not a filmy line but truth

always wins. I have never hurt anyone and that pays back. I have always wanted good for everyone. No artist from my industry has ever supported me but all technicians have been on my side," she said.

She further told the English daily that when it came to announcing the name of the winner, host Salman Khan teased everyone and took his time announcing it. So when he finally announced Shilpa as the winner, it took a minute for it to register. "I had earlier thought maybe I will cry and spoil my makeup when I become the winner but at that moment I didn't know what to do." Going over the three months she spent inside the house, she said the most bitter moments were due to Arshi Khan and Akash Dadlani.

Talking about the moment she was announced the winner, Shilpa told India Forums in her interview, "My major breakdown happened because of Akash Dadlani and Arshi Khan." Arshi and Akash were initially close to Shilpa and even called her mom for a few weeks inside the house. However, the trio later fell apart and Shilpa was left alone to fend for herself. And what does she have to say about Bigg Boss 11 first runner-up Hina Khan? Shilpa said she would not want to meet Hina ever again in her life. "While Hina Khan knew everything in the kitchen, I had no clue. However, I did all the work but she never bothered. I had never cooked for 18-19 people earlier."