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Aishwarya Rai, Kareena Kapoor, Aamir Khan pay last respects to Krishna Raj Kapoor.



STORY ON page 30

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Donald Trump to U.N. Refugees Should Return to Their Countries and 'Make Them Great Again'

President Donald Trump's speech to the United Nations General Assembly on Tuesday contained a message for migrants and refugees: remain in your own countries. (See full Story on p. 18)

India's new Pakyong Airport opens in incredible Himalayan surroundings

(News Agencies) Shimla : Sometimes an airport is just a strip of asphalt on a flat bit of land outside of town. Other times, as with India's new Pakyong Airport, it's a breathtaking piece of engineering on the roof of the world. Set in the Himalayan mountains at a height of over 1,400 meters (4,593 feet) (Contd on page 19)

Indian citizen pleads guilty to immigration fraud scheme using Facebook, WhatsApp



(News Agencies) NEW YORK: An Indian citizen has pleaded guilty to operating a fraud scheme by falsely representing as an employee of the US immigration service in which he used social media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp to scam people seeking to obtain American visas. Kanwar Sarabjit Singh, 51, a lawful permanent resident, used Facebook and WhatsApp to falsely represent himself as an employee of the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) who worked in the US Immigration and Naturalisation Service and who could obtain genuine US visas in exchange for a fee of US \$ 3,000 to US \$ 4,000, US Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia said in a statement. Singh pleaded guilty to wire fraud and impersonation of a federal officer and faces a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison when sentenced on December 14. As part of his scheme, Singh created a fake photo identification document pretending to be from the DHS, which he mailed to others in an effort to show that he was capable to obtain US immigration documents. (Contd on page 19)



Why The Catholic Church Is Its Own Worst Enemy in India Today

(See full Story on p. 18)

Boris Johnson, Indian-origin wife file for divorce

A former journalist, Johnson, 54, and senior lawyer Wheeler, also 54, were married for 25 years.

(News Agencies) Boris Johnson, who hit the headlines by resigning as UK foreign secretary in July over the Brexit plan of Prime Minister Theresa May, is going through a divorce after separating from his Indian-origin wife Marina Wheeler, it was announced on Friday. A former journalist, Johnson, 54, and senior lawyer Wheeler, also 54, were married for 25 years. They made the announcement in a joint statement after the tabloid press splashed stories of them living separate lives. Johnson is accused in the stories of being unfaithful, an accusation he has faced on several occasions during his



marriage to Wheeler, who is the daughter of British journalist

Charles Wheeler and Dip Singh. In the statement issued through a family friend, Johnson and Wheeler said: "Several months ago, after 25 years of marriage, we decided it was in our best interests to separate. (Contd on page 19)

The chances of a second Brexit referendum just got higher

(News Agencies) The chances of Britain holding a second referendum on Brexit just got higher. Britain's opposition Labour party voted overwhelmingly Tuesday for a policy that would put a new vote on the table if Prime Minister Theresa May failed to get an eventual Brexit deal

through the UK Parliament. And Labour's Brexit spokesman, Keir Starmer, received rapturous applause at his party's annual conference when he raised the prospect that staying in the European Union would be on the ballot paper. "Nobody is ruling out 'Remain' as an option," he said. (Contd on page 19)

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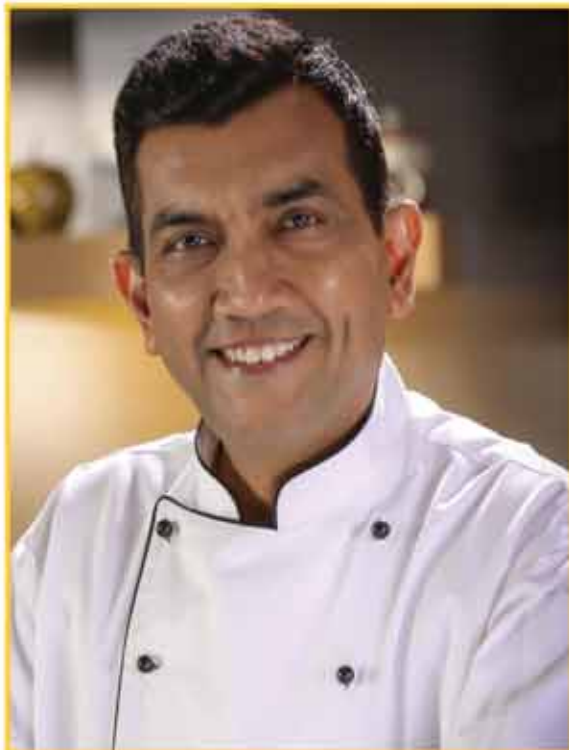
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AIA Benefit Gala



(By Our Staff Reporter) The Association of Indians in America, NY Chapter (AIA-NY) held its Benefit Gala in support for its 31st Annual Deepavali Festival at Leonard's Palazzo in Long Island on September 22, 2018. The Gala was attended by numerous respected individuals, past presidents of AIA, Community Leaders and dignitaries including members of the media and sponsors that have showcased their continued

commitment and support for the Deepavali Festival. Among the prominent people attending the Gala were Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone, Padma Shree Dr Sudhir Parekh, Mr. Chintu Patel, Co-Chairman of Amneal Pharmaceuticals and Regional Manager Air India, Mrs Vandana Sharma.

The 31st Annual Deepavali Festival will take place at the South Street Seaport on Sunday October 7th from 12 noon till 7pm,

culminating with a spectacular display of Fireworks. The event is one of the largest in the tri-state area, attracting over 70,000 to 100,000 people. Festival of Deepavali meaning 'A row of lamps' is also popularly known as Diwali, or 'Festival of Lights'. It signifies the triumph of 'Good over Evil'. The festival will be a full day celebration with numerous corporate booths, food & clothing vendors, performances and activities for the whole family

including a live grand display of fireworks. Among the individuals honored at the Gala were CEO of Sun Development and Management Corp, Mr. Bharat Patel; Cardiologist, Professor and Associate Dean at the Icahn School of Mount Sinai, Dr. Jagat Narula; President and CEO of Unique Comp Inc., Ms. Kalpana Patel and Gastroenterologists and President & CEO of Digestive Disease Care; Drs. Nilesh and Preeti Mehta. Special Recognition

Plaque for Innovation and Entrepreneurial ship was awarded to a young founder of a non-profit Venture called "Maker's Asylum"; Mr Vaibhav Chhabra. Distinguished Community Service Award was presented to Asmita Bhatia and DIVYA Shah for their exemplary service of over 25 years. The evening comprised of cocktails, light entertainment and special performances followed by sumptuous dinner.

Constellation Healthcare Technologies Inc. Bankruptcy Case

Former CEO Paul Parmar claims conspiracy, blames Chinh Chu, a former Blackstone senior executive

(By a staff reporter) New York- Paul Parmar, the embattled Ex-CEO of now bankrupt Constellation Healthcare Technologies Inc, alleges he has been the victim of a sophisticated investor takeover scheme that has roots in profiting from a "fraudulent" bankruptcy.

Parmar of Colts Neck, NJ, along with former Constellation CFO Sotirios Zaharis and Ravi Chivukula, a former executive director of the company, was charged in May this year by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission with conspiracy to commit securities fraud and securities fraud. SEC charges against Paul Parmar of Colts Neck, NJ, along with former Constellation CFO Sotirios Zaharis and Ravi Chivukula, a former executive director of the company, was charged in May this year by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission with conspiracy to commit securities fraud and securities fraud. SEC charges against Paul

& others included the scheme to falsely inflate Constellation's value to induce an investment firm to buy his company. Chinh Chu, a former Blackstone senior executive, purchased Constellation in 2017, through his investment firm CC Capital. Constellation filed for bankruptcy in March 2018, claiming that

some of the businesses it had purchased while Parmar was in charge were fictitious. Parmar alleges in court documents that Chu pushed Constellation into bankruptcy and then rigged the subsequent auction of assets to his benefit, so he could purchase Constellation after bankruptcy proceedings at a fraction of the actual value. The SEC has launched a parallel civil action into Parmar and his associates. Separately, the United States has filed a civil complaint seeking forfeiture of four properties that Parmar owns or controls, including a house in Colt's Neck, NJ and three apartments in New York City.

"There is more than what meets the eye," says Parmar's attorney Timothy Parlatore. "The direction and intent of Chinh Chu and CC Capital's various court actions raise more questions than answers." In court documents, Parlatore, says "rather than conducting a full, complete and independent investigation, the DOJ and

SEC were hoodwinked by Chu into bringing these specious claims against Mr. Parmar." Parlatore further explains the case against his client in what he believes involves a unique set of intriguing circumstances. To begin with, despite the government bringing a separate civil suit against Parmar; Parlatore says in court documents, that the DOJ is now surprisingly seeking a stay in the civil case on the theory that if the SEC were required to respond to a motion to dismiss by Parmar, their response would damage the "integrity" of the criminal prosecution.

"It is understandable that the Government is concerned that the more expansive rules of discovery that the civil rules permits would significantly decrease their chances of convicting Mr. Parmar because a full discovery process will help to establish that Mr. Chu is the true architect of the fraud, not Mr. Parmar," Parlatore submitted in his brief to the US District

Court in New Jersey. He also pointed out that it was highly implausible and strategically convenient that a highly sophisticated investor like Chinh Chu could spend \$7 million on due diligence and then make an investment decision to acquire Constellation based just on a few inaccurate statements made very early in the process by Parmar, rather than the mountains of data that were subsequently provided. What Parlatore implied was how an investor could just rely on any management reports or documents after such an extensive due diligence?

In court papers, Parmar's lawyers have also laid out what they believe is a critical omission on part of Chinh Chu. In the middle of the due diligence process, Constellation received a series of questions from a reporter at the Financial Times asking about the legitimacy of the acquisitions made earlier by Constellation. Once the Financial Times article was published, it discussed the



empty shells, concluding that "The cat's cradle of corporate entities and generalized opacity across Constellation's operations could be seen as a red flag to potential investors and financial journalists alike." While such an article would normally cause a deal like this to be derailed or delayed to perform additional due diligence, Chinh Chu incredibly had the opposite reaction, demanding to immediately close the deal. Apparently, Chinh Chu felt no fiduciary duty to either the banks or his investors to investigate and assess the allegations raised in the article, court documents say.

Interestingly, just as reported in the Financial Times article, Parlatore says in court documents, that while Chinh Chu was alleging fraud in his court

submission about Parmar's empty shell companies, he conveniently failed to mention that subsequently, Parmar bought four more companies without raising any additional funds and the combined financials of these acquisitions were far greater than the "empty shells." "Chu wants the government and the world to focus on a selective time window where his allegations might look real, but in a larger context those allegations are baseless" Parlatore replied when asked to comment about the case. Parlatore also pointed out that while Parmar was arrested on May 16, 2018, there had been no progress in the ensuing four months and that the Government had not yet obtained an indictment of Parmar. Although the time to file an indictment had been extended twice, no discussions have occurred, and the Government had made no offers to settle the case.

First Sikh turban-wearing guardsman fails drugs test



(News Agencies) A Coldstream Guardsman who was the first to wear a turban during Trooping the Colour is understood to have tested positive for cocaine. Charanpreet Singh Lall, 22, from Leicester, registered "high levels" of the Class A drug during a random test at Victoria Barracks, Windsor. He was one of three soldiers who failed the

test, The Sun reported. The Ministry of Defence (MoD) said those caught taking drugs could be discharged from the army. Brigadier Christopher Coles, head of army personnel services group, said: "I can confirm a number of soldiers from the Coldstream Guards are under investigation for alleged drugs misuse.

"Those caught taking drugs can expect to be discharged." The identities of the other guardsmen have not been revealed. The MoD told the BBC it could be a "matter of weeks" before any potential action was taken. In June Gdsm

Lall said it was an "honour" to be the first member of the Coldstream Guards to take part in Trooping the Colour parade while wearing a turban. He told how he hoped it would be looked upon as a "new change in history", adding: "I hope that more people like me, not just Sikhs but from other religions and different backgrounds, that they will be encouraged to join the Army." Gdsm Lall wore a black turban featuring the ceremonial cap star to match the bearskin hats during the ceremony to mark the Queen's official birthday. He joined the British Army in January 2016,

having moved to the UK from Punjab, India, as a baby. Between July and October last year, 220 soldiers - including army reservists - tested positive after a compulsory drug test (CDT). Drugs found in the test were cocaine, ecstasy, cannabis, ketamine, steroids, amphetamine and benzodiazepine. In January, the MoD said that it did not know how many of these 220 personnel were discharged as a result. "CDT failure may take time to investigate, therefore it has not been possible to provide data on discharge decisions," it said.

'Sunlight is best disinfectant': Supreme Court allows live streaming of cases

A three-judge bench said live streaming of court proceedings will bring accountability into the judicial system.

(News Agencies) The Supreme Court has allowed live streaming of court proceedings, starting the country's top court. In a unanimous verdict, a three-judge bench said live streaming of court proceedings will bring accountability into the judicial system.

The bench chaired by Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra hoped that the rules for live streaming would be framed soon. "Sunlight is best disinfectant," Justice DY Chandrachud, one of the three judges said in his separate but concurring judgment.

Wednesday's verdict doesn't come as a surprise. Chief Justice Dipak Misra had indicated how the judges would rule on the last hearing when he put down opposition by a civil society group, saying: "We don't perceive any difficulty in live streaming. Let us first start with it and see how it goes. We are just on a pilot project. We are not ruling out anything and will improve with time. We cannot have everything together." Senior advocate Indira Jaising had petitioned the court to start live streaming.

The government's top law officer KK Venugopal had agreed, pointing that it could help decongest courtrooms. The centre had, however, argued that live streaming should not be permitted in matrimonial matters, matters involving interests of juveniles or protection and safety of the private life of young offenders, cases involving national security and matters relating to sexual assault. Cases that could provoke sentiment and arouse passion or provoke enmity among communities should also be excluded, Attorney General KK Venugopal said.

'Impossible to live in India if Aadhaar mandatory', says sole dissenting SC judge DY Chandrachud

The Supreme Court on Wednesday declared the Centre's flagship Aadhaar scheme as constitutionally valid but struck down some of its provisions including its linking with bank accounts, mobile phones and school admissions.

(News Agencies) Calling Aadhaar as a fraud on the Constitution, Supreme Court Justice DY Chandrachud, in his dissenting judgment said the government could not have passed the Aadhaar Act as a money bill. Justice Chandrachud, the sole dissenting judge of the five-judge bench that decided the validity of Aadhaar, said the unique

identification program violates essential norms of privacy and data protection.

"Violation of fundamental rights under the Aadhaar scheme fails on the touchstone of tests of proportionality," said Chandrachud giving his reasons to differ with the majority view. Expressing his concern with safeguards provided in

the Aadhaar Act, justice Chandrachud said the act gives discretionary power to Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), the body that governs Aadhaar. "Dignity of rights and individuals can't be based on algorithm, rights of the 2 billion people cannot be tested as mere contract," said justice Chandrachud.

Aadhaar verdict: Rahul Gandhi thanks Supreme Court for 'supporting Congress vision'

In its verdict, the Supreme Court declared the Centre's flagship Aadhaar scheme as constitutionally valid, but struck down some of its provisions, including its linking with bank accounts, mobile phones and school admissions.



(News Agencies) Congress president Rahul Gandhi thanked the Supreme Court for its verdict on the Aadhaar Act on Wednesday, saying it was an instrument of empowerment for his party, but a "tool of oppression and surveillance" for the BJP.

"For Congress, Aadhaar was an instrument of empowerment. "For the BJP, Aadhaar is a tool of oppression and surveillance. "Thank you Supreme Court for supporting the Congress vision and protecting India," he said on Twitter.

In its verdict, the apex court declared the Centre's flagship Aadhaar scheme as constitutionally valid, but struck down some of its provisions, including its linking with bank accounts, mobile phones and school admissions.

A five-judge constitution bench headed by chief justice Dipak Misra held that while Aadhaar would remain mandatory for filing of IT returns and allotment of Permanent Account Number (PAN), it would not be mandatory to link Aadhaar to bank accounts and the telecom service providers cannot seek its linking for mobile connections.

It would not be mandatory for school admissions, as also for the examinations conducted by the Central Board of Secondary Examination (CBSE), National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) for medical entrance and the University Grants Commission (UGC).

We need to mainstream the climate conversation

Instead of thinking only about vehicular emission, green cars, and carbon footprint, there needs to be a conversation happening around better and equitable management of water and waste and building resilience of our cities and villages

In an interview with The Guardian recently, one of the world's most eminent climate scientists Michael Mann said: "The impacts of climate change are no longer subtle.... We literally would not have seen these extremes in the absence of climate change". While it is reassuring for climate scientists to see their predictions coming true, Mr Mann, the director of the Earth System Science Center at Pennsylvania State University added, "... as a citizen of planet Earth, it is very distressing to see that as it means we have not taken the necessary action."

The effects of this inaction are visible across the world. In India, in a span of two months, we have seen the severe impacts of extreme weather events: Higher-than-normal rains devastated southern India, and now it's northern India that is facing the same challenge. In other parts of the world, Hurricane Florence flattened the Carolinas in the US and Super Typhoon Mangkhut did the same to parts of the Philippines.

While the science of attribution – looking at how much climate change increases the odds of any one particular event

occurring – has advanced remarkably, it still takes time for scientists to determine the link between climate change and specific weather events. Yet there is ample evidence, as Mr Mann said, that shows that climate change is indeed the culprit behind such extremities. Since the world doesn't have the luxury of time to wait for scientists to establish these linkages in each and every case, it is critical that the world's -- and India's -- priority be the reduction of the risks by making smart investments to ensure communities and expensive



infrastructure are more climate-resilient. One of the fundamental components of building this much-needed resilience is to mainstream the climate conversation, which unfortunately still remains an elite topic in India (though poorer sections will be hit much harder).

So instead of only thinking about vehicular emission, green cars, and carbon footprint, there needs to be a conversation happening around better and equitable management of water and waste and building resilience of our cities and villages.

Our political class must pay more attention to gender equality

The SC judgment on Sabarimala will open the doors for other Hindu places of worship to do away with their exclusionary practices whether it be restrictions on women or certain castes. It would be good for Hinduism, for social cohesion, for our economy and for the physical and mental well-being of women.

The Sabarimala judgment will create deep divisions among Kerala's Hindus for some time. I say this with some certainty after listening to my mother's views, which echo the conservatism that still runs through this highly literate society. Malayalis of all religions are happy to wear their faith on their sleeve even as many profess to be card holding members of the Communist Party. My mother feels that it is not worth annoying the powerful deity just to prove a feminist point. Though why the right to equality should be dubbed feminist is beyond me.

On another scale, you may recall that the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams, the governing body of the iconic temple made a bold decision to employ women as barbers to carry out the famed head shaving that is part of the temple's rituals. But there was much opposition on the grounds that menstruating women should not enter the premises of Lord Venkateshwara's abode or, indeed, come into contact

with the devotees. This raised a problem: how can anyone tell when a woman is menstruating? So the solution was to restrict women from this job altogether. However, the temple does not restrict the entry of women for worship.

In almost all religions, the restrictions that come with faith seem reserved for women. Women cannot be priests in the Catholic faith and the clergy is almost exclusively the preserve of men. When two brave women qualified as qazis in UP, there was an uproar from the male clergy that this was unIslamic. It is not, but the qazis faced a great deal of social opprobrium. But let us stick to Hinduism for now. Sabarimala is just a reflection of the traditionally inferior role that a woman played in Hinduism. Of course, the courts have been exemplary in coming up with judgment after judgment in favour of women; our laws are all based on gender equality; and Indian women themselves have fought and got their rights on so many

issues. But it would be good if prominent voices were to question some of the practices and beliefs which hold Hinduism back with relation to women's rights. It was deeply disappointing that just before what was a seminal shift in thinking on the part of the RSS chief, Mohan Bhagwat, he made a remark that a woman had a contractual duty to look after her husband and the home in return for which the man would protect her. I wish he had talked about some of the more pernicious aspects of Hinduism, which can do with some rethinking, given how far women have come today. For example, child marriages which are still conducted despite laws banning them were for the express purpose of passing on the responsibility for the girl to another family. The girl is often considered a social and economic burden on the parents. Sex determination tests and sex selective abortions are again practised much more among Hindus than other faiths since the son is the inheritor



of the family name and business with some exceptions.

Widows in Hindu society are considered unlucky, the women often thought to be morally complicit in the death of their husbands. Many of them are abandoned or have to live constrained lives, as penance for the alleged ill luck they have bought the family. I could go on. But this is not to paint a picture of doom and gloom. The judiciary is doing its bit. Now our politicians and custodians of cultural organisations like the RSS must put their minds to making Hinduism a truly modern and inclusive religion. To come back to Sabarimala, there is nothing in the scriptures which decrees that the celibate

deity will take umbrage at women in their fertile years entering the temple. This was probably formulated by a cabal of priests.

The judgment will open the doors for other Hindu places of worship to do away with their exclusionary practices, be it restrictions on women or certain castes. If they do not seriously look into this, the courts, over time, will force them to change. It is pity that a political class which keeps referring to women as goddesses and superior beings cannot pay more attention to gender equality. It would be good for Hinduism, for social cohesion, for our economy and for the physical and mental well-being of women. Who can object to that without sounding regressive?

Donald Trump's worldview was laid bare at the UN and it should worry anyone who understands history

US President Donald Trump came late to the podium at the United Nations General Assembly on Tuesday morning. And within moments, he had the gathered world leaders laughing. By the time he finished, it was a far more somber mood in the hallowed chamber, in which Trump himself said "so much history has transpired."

But on this day, he was making a history of his own. The levity he sparked so soon into his address came, perhaps, because he was doing exactly what his audience had come to expect -- plenty of ego; little humility: "I stand before the United Nations General Assembly to share the extraordinary progress we've made. In less than two years, my administration has accomplished more than almost any administration in the history of our country." He boasted that America is stronger and more powerful than ever before: "Our military will soon be more powerful than it has ever been before. In other words, the United States is stronger, safer and a richer country than it was when I assumed office ... We are standing up for America and for the American people." He stated, clearly, his administration's view of the world: "America will always choose independence and cooperation over global governance, control and domination." The longer he spoke, the more portentous it became: "We will never surrender America's sovereignty to an unelected, unaccountable global bureaucracy. America is governed by Americans. We reject the ideology of globalism. And we embrace the doctrine of patriotism." And Trump made it clear he is happy to divide the world into nations he sees as his friends and those he sees as undeserving enemies: "We are taking a hard look at US foreign assistance ... whether the countries who receive our dollars and protection also have our interests at heart. Moving forward, we are only going to give foreign aid to those who respect us and, frankly, are our friends." And when he gave a shout out to some of those friends, he gave yet more insight into the sort of nations he considers allies. Many former friends were missing -- indeed, erstwhile ally Germany even came in for criticism. Somewhere near the top of the friends list this year -- an astonishing turnaround from being the leader Trump criticized so readily from this very platform last year -- was North Korea.

"I traveled to Singapore to meet face-to-face with North Korea's leader, Kim Jong Un. Since that meeting, we have already seen a number of encouraging measures that few could have imagined." South Korea and Japan both got a shout out, too. He singled out Saudi Arabia as a key ally, specifically piling praise on its autocratic rulers, King Salman and his son Mohammed Bin Salman. Other autocratic Gulf states got praise, too: "The UAE, Saudi Arabia and Qatar have pledged billions of dollars to aid the people of Syria and Yemen."

He praised Poland, whose right-wing President Andrzej Duda met with Trump a few days ago, offering to help build a new US military base that he would call "Fort Trump." The Polish leader, who faces possible sanctions from EU leaders for firing judges as part of sweeping political meddling in the country's judiciary, got a double helping of praise. Trump explained that Poland found favor with him for the way in which it is standing up to Russia: "We congratulate the European states such as Poland for leading the construction of a Baltic pipeline so that nations are not dependent on Russia ... Germany will become totally dependent on Russian energy if it does not immediately change course."

There was a ringing endorsement of India's tough leader, Narendra Modi. Trump highlighted Modi's efforts on poverty, rather than his record of failing to curb sectarianism in India. He also praised Israel: "There is Israel, proudly celebrating its 70th anniversary as a democracy in the Holy Land." This, of course, was Trump talking up his reasons for announcing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel last year, while making no mention of his cuts to UN budgets supporting Palestinians. The obvious implication: If the Palestinians are losing funding, they are not friends who respect the US. As his speech drew to its close, Trump drew his thoughts together. Just in case we missed it, he made clear once more his belief that though we might all share this planet, we live on it separately: "The whole world is richer, humanity is better, because of this beautiful constellation of nations, each very special, each very unique. And each shining brightly in its part of the world." An hour or so before, the same audience listened to another world view from the UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres. He seemed to foreshadow Trump's darker leaning with a lesson from history: "Today, with shifts in the balance of power, the risk of confrontation may increase... In assessing the Peloponnesian War in ancient Greece, Thucydides said, and I quote, 'It was the rise of Athens and the fear that this instilled in Sparta that made war inevitable.'" Trump offers a different worldview, one that keeps nations apart. In his words, "We must defend the foundations that make it all possible. Sovereign and independent nations are the only vehicle where freedom has ever survived." There will be some who listened to Trump today and heard echoes of the 1930s. Ironic, as the UN came into existence to overcome the global horrors from that dark moment in history.

The ball is back in Parliament's court on cleaning up politics

The Supreme Court has stuck to the letter of the law in putting the onus on Parliament to frame a law to prevent people with criminal charges against them from contesting elections and entering the house, even as it has made it clear that political parties need to do a lot more to clean up politics.

It has issued five broad guidelines related to better labelling and disclosure of such charges. These are to make sure that a candidate for political office declares his or her criminal antecedents, that these be put on the party website, that Parliament take measures to keep tainted individuals out, that Election Commission forms record criminal records of candidates in bold letters, and that political parties publicise as widely as possible the criminal history of their candidates.

Making these details public will work in two ways. One, of course, is to ensure that people aren't voting for someone without knowing the facts. The other is deterrence -- because these charges will now be well-known, perhaps politicians will be more careful.

Skeptics say politicians will not get together and pass a law against their own. They also say winnability will triumph over a clean record. But with the disclosure that the SC has asked for, it will become that much more difficult for political parties to disregard the criminal antecedents of those they chose to stand for elections.

The apex court has been consistently pushing the political class to clean up its act. On its recommendation, 12 special courts have been set up in 11 states to fast track criminal cases against politicians within a prescribed time frame of one year. This is a little optimistic given that at last count there were 2,466 cases pending. But it is a positive start. While political parties may quail at strong measures against candidates, in the long run a clean record could be a vote catcher for them. And winnability is a factor that depends largely on how much weight the party throws behind a candidate.

With the SC order, political parties will now find it difficult to make excuses for choosing tainted candidates. To be sure, law enforcement and legal systems will have to become more effective and efficient to ensure that they weed out politically-motivated charges from actual criminal ones. The move will not clean up politics overnight, but it does add ammunition to the battle for probity in political office.



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To mount an effective challenge to the BJP, the Opposition could use a bit of stardust

Coming to India the leadership attributes Rawnsley suggests are the attributes which enabled Narendra Modi to create the new BJP. A comparison with the Advani-Vajpayee BJP demonstrates that it is new. I would argue that to mount an effective challenge to the BJP the opposition needs to find a leader with Rawnsley's attributes including star dust. History has shown that Indians vote for leaders rather than parties

Witnessing in London the political chaos created by implementing Brexit, Britain's departure from the European Union, has led me to think of India's politics. There is a civil war raging in the Labour party between the supports of the radical leader Jeremy Corbyn and his centrist opponents. Europe has caused further divisions in that party. There is a civil war in the Prime Minister Theresa May's Conservative party between those who want a negotiated break with Europe and the farright element who are prepared to see Britain crash out of Europe without an agreement. That's a prospect which the head of the Tata owned British car-manufacturer Jaguar Land Rover, Ralf Speth, has said would mean the loss of 10,000 jobs and would wipe out the company's profits. There is a great deal of speculation talk about the possibility of the two main parties splitting when Theresa May presents her plan for a negotiated Brexit to Parliament. As the two main parties are being pulled apart by their extreme wings there should be an opportunity for the small Liberal party who are committed to Europe to occupy the centre ground but their leader Sir Vince Cable has called for a new centrist movement to be formed. Although that does not seem to be going anywhere, the political columnist for the pro-European Sunday Observer, Andrew Rawnsley, does believe that the present chaotic situation in British politics, with the possibility of a radically left or radically right government coming to power, could lead to a new centrist formation emerging. In a centre page

article he said, "it is perfectly possible to inspire passion and mobilise enthusiastic support from a broadly centrist position." He quoted as examples of politicians who had done that, Tony Blair, Emmanuel Macron of France, Justin Trudeau of Canada, and Barack Obama of America. But to win by standing on the centre ground requires, according to Rawnsley, leaders who have "sufficient experience to be taken seriously, enough freshness to be exciting, and a body of smart ideas that are both galvanising and credible" Rawnsley added, "a bit of charisma and a sprinkling of star dust would be a great help in animating support." Coming to India the leadership attributes Rawnsley suggests are the attributes which enabled Narendra Modi to create the new BJP. A comparison with the Advani-Vajpayee BJP demonstrates that it is new. I would argue that to mount an effective challenge to the BJP the opposition needs to find a leader with Rawnsley's attributes including star dust. History has shown that Indians vote for leaders rather than parties. This brings me to Rahul Gandhi. The queues outside Delhi's Indira Gandhi Museum indicate that some of her star dust might still be sprinkled on Rahul. He may not be a star yet, but he attracts attention wherever he goes and whatever he does. He has had been in politics for some time now which counts as experience, although his experience would be more saleable if he had joined Manmohan Singh's government. He hasn't so far produced any attention-grabbing

new policies. He is not highly rated by political pundits. Nevertheless he is the only national centrist politician on the scene who could lead a new formation to oppose the BJP. But he can't do that at present.

Rahul is now planning to set sail in a leaky ship, a hotchpotch coalition which hasn't even come together yet. He knows it will sink before it sets sail if he demands to be captain, so he is not doing so. Congress optimists believe that if



the ship survives the formation, New electoral voyage ahead of Congress, just as Tony Blair occupied the central ground by building New Labour, his day could still come. There is not much prospect of any other politician emerging as foundation of a new India's Tony Blair.

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The ball is back in Parliament's court on cleaning up politics

With the SC order, political parties will now find it difficult to make excuses for choosing tainted candidates especially if they have to publicly admit their culpability. The move will not clean up politics overnight, but it does add ammunition to the battle for probity in political office.

The Supreme Court has stuck to the letter of the law in putting the onus on Parliament to frame a law to prevent people with criminal charges against them from contesting elections and entering the house, even as it has made it clear that political parties need to do a lot more to clean up politics. It has issued five broad guidelines related to better labelling and disclosure of such charges. These are to make sure that a candidate for political office declares his or her criminal antecedents, that these be put on the party website, that Parliament take measures to keep tainted individuals out, that Election Commission forms record criminal records of candidates in bold letters, and that political parties publicise as widely as possible the criminal history of their candidates. Making these details public will work in two ways. One, of course, is to ensure that people aren't voting for someone without knowing the facts. The other is deterrence -- because these charges will now be well-known, perhaps politicians will be more careful. Skeptics say politicians will not get together and pass a law against their own. They also

say winnability will triumph over a clean record. But with the disclosure that the SC has asked for, it will become that much more difficult for political parties to disregard the criminal antecedents of those they chose to stand for elections. The apex court has been consistently pushing the political class to clean up its act. On its recommendation, 12 special courts have been set up in 11 states to fast track criminal cases against politicians within a prescribed time frame of one year. This is a little optimistic given that at last count there were



2,466 cases pending. But it is a positive start. While political parties may quail at strong measures against candidates, in the long run a clean record could be a vote catcher for them. And winnability is a factor that depends largely on how much weight the party throws behind a candidate. With the SC order, political parties will now find it difficult to make excuses for choosing tainted candidates. To be sure, law enforcement and legal systems will have to become more effective and efficient to ensure that they weed out politically-motivated charges from actual criminal ones. The move will not clean up politics overnight, but it does add ammunition to the battle for probity in political office.

How clean energy can be India's saviour

India should cut red tape, offer subsidies, and do whatever it takes to transform the majority of its energy generation to solar and wind by 2025 or sooner

As evidenced by the fall of the rupee and the widening account deficit, India's dependence on oil has left it bruised by global forces. In previous oil crises, India had no choice but to tighten budgets. But things are different now; advancing technologies offer a permanent solution to this and another dire problem: pollution. The country needs to take an aggressive approach to replacing fossil fuels with energy from the sun and wind.

What blocked humanity's ability to tap the sun until recently was the cost of capturing its energy and converting it into electricity. Now, a few things have changed. We have become much better at making semiconductors for computers; and those same silicon technologies are what convert solar energy into electricity. We have developed ways to make solar panels from thinner slivers of silicon. We have gotten much better also at figuring out how to squeeze more out of the solar energy we capture. And, most importantly, economies of

scale are beginning to affect the price. For these reasons, solar-energy capture is advancing on an exponential curve. With that advance, we are heading into an era of practically unlimited, clean, almost free energy—and this could be India's saviour. The first solar photovoltaic panel built by Bell Labs in 1954 cost US \$1,000 per watt of power it produced. In 2008, modules used in solar arrays cost \$3.49 per watt; by 2018, the price per watt had fallen to less than 40 cents. The amount of solar-generated power has been doubling every two years or less for the past 40 years — as costs have been falling. At this rate, solar power is only five doublings, or less than 12 years, away from being able to meet 100% of today's energy needs.

It isn't just solar production that is advancing at a rapid rate, and this will not be our only source of clean energy; there are also technologies with which to harness wind, biomass, thermal, tidal, and waste-breakdown energy, and research projects all over the world are working on improving their efficiency and

effectiveness. Wind power's price became competitive with the cost of energy from new coal-burning power plants in 2016, and prices have continued to fall since. Wind-power contracts were recently signed at 2 cents/kWh in Mexico and Brazil and Rs 2.43 in Gujarat. According to Bloomberg's New Energy Outlook 2018, India's levelled cost of electricity, which takes into account the net present value of the unit-cost of electricity over the lifetime of a generating asset, for onshore wind is now 3.9 cents per kWh, down by 46% from its price of a year ago, and the cost of solar is 4.1 cents, down by 45%. By comparison, coal costs 6.8 cents per kWh, and combined-cycle gas, 9.3 cents.

To be completely free from fossil fuels and a dependence on the grid, energy storage is needed. The cost of this too is plummeting. In 2008, the cost of industrial batteries was \$1000 per kWh of energy stored; by 2015, it had fallen to \$268/kWh. In 2016, Tesla said that the cost of battery production at its Gigafactory was less than \$190 kWh. This



June, Elon Musk said this could fall to \$100/kWh by year's end. Even if this benchmark takes a year or two longer, what is clear is that there are revolutions in the making — revolutions that India can lead.

Prime Minister Modi laid out ambitious plans to build 175 GW of renewable power generation by 2022, with the addition of 100 GW of solar, 60 GW of wind, 10 GW of biomass, and 5 GW of small hydro. But, with the tariffs that have been imposed on solar cells, GST, and a lack of incentives, this goal is not likely to be achieved.

India should instead be cutting all red tape and taxes, offering subsidies, and doing whatever else it takes to transform the majority of its energy generation to solar and wind — by 2025 or sooner. Unlike fossil fuel subsidies, which only burn money, these investments will provide huge pay-offs in the short term.

Next, India should be first country in the world to rid its roads of fossil-fuel-consuming vehicles; this too is possible. The same batteries that store energy for the grid also power electric vehicles. With their falling costs, electric cars will soon be available at prices a fraction of their climate destroying predecessors'. The government should mandate that, by 2023, the sale of all fossil vehicles be banned and that by 2027, they will not be allowed on the roads.

Yes, there are very few electric vehicles on the market today; they are still costly; and the charging infrastructure isn't there. But there is nothing to stop India's entrepreneurs from fixing all of these problems, given the motive and support. The economic boom that would result, and the innovations India would create, could benefit the world.

Yamuna crosses danger mark in Delhi, water enters five Haryana villages

People residing in the district have evacuated their houses as the Karnal district administration has sounded alert following sudden rise in the water flow of Yamuna due to widespread rainfall in the hills and northern parts of Haryana.

(News Agencies) The water of overflowing Yamuna river entered several villages at Indri block of Karnal district of Haryana on Tuesday while thousands of acres of standing crop also submerged in water, adding to the woes of the farmers who were already reeling under the untimely rainfall for the past three days.

People residing in the district have evacuated their houses as the district administration has sounded alert following sudden rise in the water flow of Yamuna due to widespread rainfall in the hills and northern parts of the state. According to information, the water entered the Sayad Chappra,



Nabiabad, Dabkoli Khurd, Kalsora and Halwana villages located in low lying areas. "This water after heavy rainfall of three days has totally damaged our crops and vegetables. There is not even fodder for the cattle," said a farmer, Lakshman Singh, of Kalsora village. Another farmer Ram Chand of Nabiabad village alleged

that the government did not take required steps to control floods from Yamuna as they have faced the flood second time in the past two months. Talking to Hindustan Times, Karnal deputy commissioner Aditya Dahiya confirmed, "The water has entered four to five village of the district and we have our disaster management

teams on alert and the administration is ready to carry the evacuation operations if required." "The water is likely to recede by Wednesday morning and as of now, there are no reports of any threat to life of people in these villages," he added. Commenting on the crop damage, he said that the state government has already ordered a special 'girdawari' in the state and instructions have been issued to revenue officials to assess the crop loss as per the government norms. As per information, the level of water flow in Yamuna increased to 2.16 lakh cusecs on Monday night following heavy rain in the hills but it receded to 60,000 cusecs by 4pm on Tuesday.

The first temple for Mahatma Gandhi where devotees gather everyday

Hundreds of people will gather at a temple built in Mahatma Gandhi's memory at Pedakaparthi in Telangana's Nalgonda district on the occasion of his 149th birth anniversary on Tuesday.

On average, 100 devotees visit the temple, the first one dedicated to Gandhi in the country (the second is to open in Vijawada, in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh on Tuesday) everyday.

"On Gandhi Jayanti (Tuesday) there will be visitors in big numbers from nearby villages and also from far-off places... There will be day-long bhajans; competitions for school students in elocution and essay writing on the life of Gandhi and his preaching," said J Naresh, a temple administrator.

Gandhi Gudi (temple) was built in 2014 on a four-and-a-half acre plot of land about 75 km from Hyderabad. A six-member trust manages the temple with donations from worshippers. The donations are just enough to maintain the shrine, pay the salary of a priest and conduct daily rituals.

"We somehow felt the present-day youth do not have much knowledge about Mahatma Gandhi and his philosophy. At the same time, though, they have not forgotten our culture of going to temples regularly. So, we thought of attracting them towards Gandhism by constructing a temple for the Mahatma," the trust's chairman, M Sreepal Reddy, said.

Gangs involved in flesh trade in Haryana fixing clients in fake rape cases

In what the police describe as "honeytraps or extortion rackets", the number of rape related complaints that at the initial stage of investigation are turning out to be a "trap to target the customer" are on the rise.



(News Agencies) Gangs dabbling in flesh trade and fixing their clients in fake rape cases to extort money are on the prowl in the state, according to the police. In what the police describe as "honeytraps or extortion rackets", the number of rape related complaints that at the initial stage of investigation are turning out to be a "trap to target the customer" are on the rise. At least one fake rape case a week has been reported this year so far. "This year alone the police have detected 37 honeytrap cases, which will fall flat. About 20% of the rape cases every year are being cancelled as they are found false during investigation," said BS Sandhu, director general of police (DGP).

The police say that such fake rape complaints pose another challenge to the already grappling investigators as far as cases of crime against women

are concerned, especially with the alarming rise in rapes and gangrapes. Worse still, every new rape complaint — whether genuine or fake — turns out to be worse than the previous one in terms of brutality and audacity of the crime.

Truth or lie?

Last week, a woman of Rewari walked into a police station in Jind alleging that she was 'gangraped'. The case turned out to be the latest instance of fixing the prey in fake rape FIR. The woman, police say, was demanding Rs 2 lakh from a 58-year-old farmer, to withdraw the complaint. "We arrested her red-handed along with another woman and a man while she was receiving Rs 2 lakh from her client," a Jind police official said. The officer added, "However, in the beginning, it appeared to be a genuine rape case. The FIR was registered against two people. Suspicion arose as the woman

refused to undergo medical examination and also refused to record her statement before the magistrate." The rape accused farmer, police said, furnished a call record to prove it was the woman who was frequently calling him. "Finally, we trapped the woman and her accomplices," a police investigator said. In another case close on the heels of the Jind case, on September 22, police arrested three people, including a woman, while extorting Rs 5 lakh from a man in Kaithal by threatening to implicate him in a fake rape case.

"The police nabbed all the accused red-handed while accepting Rs 10 lakh to withdraw the case. The court sent all the accused to jail," Sandeep Kumar, inspector, who investigated the case, said, pointing out that the accused doctor had recorded the conversation in which the woman was demanding money to withdraw the rape case. In the first week of January, police had busted at least five honeytrap gangs operating in Bhiwani, Rohtak, Sirsa and Jhajjar. Their modus operandi was to lodge false rape cases against men and extort money. In Rohtak district, the police had arrested a brother-sister duo who were demanding Rs 95 lakh from a city-based contractor to withdraw a false rape case, while in Bhiwani, police arrested a

woman and a man for demanding Rs 6.5 lakh from Tosham youth to withdraw the rape complaint, which was false, against him.

How fake victims get caught

The cops involved in investigation of these cases said the common modus operandi of these 'fake rape victims' is that they delay recording their statement before the magistrate under Section 164 of the CrPC to hammer out a deal with the 'accused'.

"Police have to record the statement of the rape victim as fast as possible, but we cannot force the complainant," said a senior police officer. Haryana Human Rights Commission chairman justice SK Mittal (retired) said, "We are ready to provide assistance if the victim writes to us about any false case. We take action if we get a complaint from anybody."

Recent fake rape cases

September 22: Three people, including a woman, arrested for extorting Rs 5 lakh from a man in Kaithal by threatening to file a false rape case against him.

September 17: Hailing from Rewari, a woman alleged that she was gangraped in Jind where she had gone to purchase medicines. Case turned out to be false.

September 11: A maid of a Hisar-based doctor, her minor daughter, son and a middleman arrested for taking Rs 10 lakh to withdraw a 'fake' rape complaint against the

doctor.

July 31: Yamunanagar police arrested a woman for alleged extortion and blackmailing a youth, who had already paid her Rs 4 lakh

May 9: A woman and two men arrested for extorting Rs 5 lakh from a 65-year-old man in a honeytrap case.

April 28: Panipat police arrested three women and a man who were blackmailing a man and threatening to file a false rape case against him lest he paid Rs 10 lakh.

February 20: Kurukshetra police arrested a gang of four, including two women as they tried to extort Rs 2 lakh from a liquor contractor

January: Jhajjar police nabbed 3 women for making obscene video of youth and demanding Rs 1.5 lakh.

January: In Rohtak, brother-sister duo held for demanding Rs 95 lakh from contractor to withdraw false rape case.

January: In Bhiwani, a woman was among 2 arrested for demanding Rs 6.5 lakh and 150 sq yard plot to withdraw false rape case January: In Sirsa, 2 women among 5 arrested for making obscene video of man, demanding Rs 10 lakh. January: In Jind, Punjab couple arrested for demanding Rs 25 lakh from youth to withdraw false rape case against him.



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Haryana cabinet okays monthly pension to acid attack victims

An official spokesperson said that the financial assistance will be given on the basis of the percentage of disability.

(News Agencies) Women victims of acid attack will be given a monthly pension by the Haryana government. The Cabinet on Tuesday approved a scheme to facilitate the women victims a continuous source of income throughout their life.

However, an official spokesperson said that the financial assistance will be given on the basis of the percentage of disability.

A victim with 40-50% disability will get financial aid at the rate of 2.5 times of the handicapped (Divyang) pension. For those with 51 to 60% disability, the assistance will be 3.5 times of the handicapped pension and for more than 61% disability, the assistance will be 4.5 times of the handicapped pension. At present, the state government provides Rs 1,800 per month as disability pension which will be increased to Rs 2,000 per month from November.

Any woman or girl who suffered an acid attack on or after May 2, 2011 will be eligible for the scheme. The scheme, the spokesperson said, seeks to restore, to an extent, the right to live with dignity for a woman or girl acid attack victim.

The spokesperson said in certain cases, the acid attack victims lost their ability to hear and developed other complications. Many deaths have also been reported after acid attacks. The subsequent treatment requires huge amount of money and it is not possible for every victim to afford such costly treatment. Hence, financial assistance due to disability arising on account of acid attack will be granted. The financial assistance will be admissible for women in case of disfigurement of any part of the body.

The victim herself, parents or her legal guardians may apply to the district social welfare officer for relief. In case of a minor victim, the application may be made on her behalf by a parent or guardian. In case of victim being married, the application can be made on her behalf by husband or parent or guardian. The application will be supported by documents that will include medical certificate issued by the medical board at district level, copy of the FIR or complaint.

Govt job to martyr's daughter

The Cabinet also decided to provide Group-C government job to Sujita Kumari, daughter of martyr Satya Narayan, who was killed in Operation Meghdut on



November 9, 1988. He was a resident of Mamaria Ahir village of Rewari district. Kumari was 10-month-old when her father died in action. The spokesperson said she has done MA and B.Ed and that as per her qualification, she is eligible for Group-C post.

Board to run Bhimeshwari temple of Beri

The Haryana Cabinet approved Haryana Mata Bhimeshwari Devi Mandir (Ashram) Beri Shrine Act, 2018 that aims at better management, administration and governance of the shrine. After the Act comes into force, the ownership of the shrine fund and its administration will vest with the Board. While the CM will be the Board's chairman, Jhajjar deputy commissioner ex-officio member secretary and Beri sub-divisional magistrate will be the chief executive officer.

Further, all employees of the temple will be considered Board employees. The spokesperson said salary of the employees will not be less than what they are drawing at present. The shopkeepers and lease holders who are tenants of this worship place will be considered as the tenants of the board.

Other decisions

The Cabinet also decided to provide Group-D government job to Jaivir Singh, brother of martyr Satbir Singh, on compassionate grounds, by giving relaxation in the policy. Satbir Singh of Dhani Harsukh village of Bhiwani district had died in Operation Rakshak in Jammu and Kashmir on November 23, 2002.

The Cabinet accorded approval to the Panchgram Development Bill, 2018 for developing five new cities over an area of 50,000

hectares on each side of the Kundli-Manesar-Palwal (KMP) expressway.

The Panchgram Development Authority will be constituted as the apex body for policy making, development and regulation for the development of panchgram region, the spokesperson said.

Under this project, five cities along the expressway on 50,000 hectares on each side, would cover eight districts — Sonapat, Rohtak, Jhajjar, Gurugram, Rewari, Mewat, Faridabad and Palwal.

Haryana State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (HSIIDC) will hire a consultancy firm through global tender for undertaking the master plan. The CM will be the chairperson of the authority.

The Cabinet gave nod to provide

financial assistance of ₹93 crore in the shape of loan and subsidy to the three private sugarmills of the state for making cane arrears payment of the sugarmill farmers for the sugarcane crushing season 2017-18.

Toll rates for Kundli

Manesar section approved

The Cabinet approved the toll on the inordinately delayed Kundli-Manesar section of Kundli-Manesar-Palwal expressway project being executed by the HSIIDC. An official spokesperson said the toll on the Kundli Manesar section will be levied by the HSIIDC itself or through an agency. The toll points on which the toll fee will be levied initially included toll plaza at Abbaspur village and Pipli village in Sonapat district, Mandhoti village and Badli village in Jhajjar and at Sultanpur, Patli-Hazipur and Mokalwas/Fazliwas villages in district Gurugram.

The toll fee for the financial year 2018-19 will be charges at the rate of Rs 1.35 per kilometre for cars, jeeps and passenger vans. It will be Rs 2.18 per kilometre for light commercial vehicles, Rs 4.57 per kilometre for trucks and buses and Rs 4.98 per kilometre for multi-axle vehicles. This toll fee will remain in effect till March 31, 2019 and would be linked with price index and will be changed with effect from April 1, 2019 every year on the basis of National Highways Fee (Determination of Rates and Collection) Rules, 2008.

Was not in power when Rafale deal was finalised, says French president Macron

On Rafale deal, French president Macron said, "I will be very clear. It was a government-to-government discussion."

(News Agencies) French President Emmanuel Macron has said that the Rafale deal was a "government-to-government" discussion and he was not in power when the multi-billion dollar agreement for 36 fighter jets was signed between India and France. Addressing a press conference on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session, Macron was asked if the Indian government had at any point told France or Dassault - the French aerospace major - that they had to accept Reliance as the Indian partner for the Rafale deal.

India had inked an inter-governmental agreement with France in September last year for procurement of 36 Rafale fighter jets at a cost of around Rs 58,000 crore, nearly one- and-half years after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the proposal during a visit to Paris. The delivery of the jets is scheduled to begin from September, 2019.

"I will be very clear. It was a government-to-

government discussion and I just want to refer to what Prime Minister (Narendra) Modi



very clearly said a few days ago," Macron told reporters here Tuesday without elaborating.

"I don't have any other comment. I was not in charge at that time and I know that we have very clear rules," he said in his first comment on the issue.

Macron, who assumed the presidency in May last year, emphasised that this is a

government-to-government discussion and "this contract is part of a broader framework which is military and defence" coalition between India and France.

"This one is very important to me because this is a strategic" coalition and not just an industrial relation. "That is my point. I just want to refer to what PM Modi said on this situation," he said.

A huge controversy over the Rafale deal has erupted in India after a report in the French media quoted former president Francois Hollande as saying that the selection of the Indian company in the Rafale deal was done at the behest of New Delhi.

Hollande said that the Indian government proposed Reliance Defence as the partner for the French aerospace giant in the Rs 58,000 crore Rafale deal and France did not have a choice.



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Braving the storm, Kashmiri Pandits file nominations for J&K civic polls



The young Pandit is part of a small group of 15 people who filed nominations for 21 wards of Kulgam and Devsar in the district in the first phase of urban local body polls which are scheduled to begin from October 8 to 16.

cratic Party and National Conference.

South Kashmir has emerged as hotbed of militancy in the state with majority of local recruits from the region. Hizbul Mujhideen commander Riyaz Naikoo has threatened candidates who intend to fight elections to get shrouds for themselves besides asking local policemen to resign from their jobs. Three policemen were killed after they were abducted from their homes in Kulgam's neighbouring district of Shopian last Friday.

"It was my own decision. I want to work for development of the people. I know about the threats but why would anybody harm me when I have done no wrong. Besides whatever will be in my destiny I am going to get that," said the young Pandit candidate, an MBA, who left the Valley when he was four.

The young Pandit said he received tremendous respect from the locals everytime he visits

Kashmir.

"People have been inviting me to their homes. Nobody has ever bothered me here," he said requesting anonymity but insisting to mention the name of his little known Manav-Adhikar National Party.

Overall the atmosphere in south Kashmir has been subdued if not antagonistic against the upcoming exercise.

Police maintain strict vigilance "We have ensured all the facilities are intact and the security is up to the mark," said Kulgam deputy commissioner Shamim Ahmad Wani, the election officer for the district, adding, "When PDP and NC are not fighting, the response will be obviously affected."

The officials have been very evasive about the number and details of the candidates filing nominations. Most of the candidates who have filed nominations are expected to be associated with Congress and BJP who have announced to fight the

elections.

Locals fear bloodshed

Many of the locals don't want to be associated with the entire exercise. "The situation is very bad. People are dying here and you are talking about polls," said a shopkeeper in Kulgam town. A student of Anantnag town said that there will be too much bloodshed if polls went ahead. "There is too much tension. Bohut Khoun Kharaba hoga. There have been boycott calls, police killings and militant threats. People are not in the mood," he said. In Bijbehara town, a trader said that the political process has shrunk to a point where the people don't want to be associated with anything related to state. "Earlier the political process used to go alongside the militancy. There would be room for each other. But the muscular policy of BJP government has lost Kashmir for India. The BJP is winning in rest of the country at the cost of Kashmir," he said.

(By Our Staff Reporter) When a 28-year-old Kashmiri migrant Pandit filed his nomination papers for municipal elections in south Kashmir's Kulgam on Tuesday, he was wary of the camera held by the officials, as a necessary protocol.

The young Pandit wanted to do it in absolute secrecy. He later agreed after being assured that the video or the pictures, necessary for the official records, would not be shared publicly. Immediately after filing the nomination papers, he flew back to Jammu where he has been living since early nineties, after migrating from Kulgam due to eruption of militancy in the valley.

The young Pandit is part of a small group of 15 people who

filed nominations for 21 wards of Kulgam and Devsar in the district in the first phase of urban local body polls which are scheduled to begin from October 8 to 16. It was learnt that at least 2 candidates in this small group are migrant Pandits. These nominations mean that one-third of wards will remain empty in Kulgam. Official sources said that seven wards in the district have drawn a blank while in rest of the 15 wards majority of the candidates will become councillors untested.

Threat of militancy, boycott calls The elections are happening amid threats from militants, boycott calls from separatists and abstention from two main mainstream parties Peoples' Demo-

Things to know about Aadhaar, India's billion-strong biometric database

The Supreme Court said Aadhaar would be mandatory for accessing government services, but also ruled that private corporations could not force customers to hand over their ID cards.

(By Our Staff Reporter) More than a billion Indians have uploaded their biometric details to a national database in exchange for a unique 12-digit ID that authorities say will transform how citizens interact with government and propel the world's second-most populous country into the digital age.



holds the personal details of an Indian citizen, including their biometric data from photos, fingerprints and iris scans.

Citizens use the ID for everything from filing tax returns, to accessing pensions or welfare as the government seeks to put more of its services on an online platform. An Aadhaar number is also recognised as valid proof of identity and residence. Each ID is issued by the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI). The details are stored in a single centralised server centre. The first Aadhaar cards were distributed in September 2010 and a mammoth information campaign then prompted vast numbers of Indians to enrol at thousands of registration centres. More than 1.2 billion Indians, some 90 percent of the population, now hold an Aadhaar number. More than 21 billion banking and other digital transactions now take place annually under the scheme.

But the scheme has faced vocal opposition, with critics claiming the software guarding citizens' personal information is shoddy and vulnerable to cyber attacks, while others fear the scheme risks turning India into a surveillance state.

On Wednesday the Supreme Court said the ID would be mandatory for accessing government services, but also ruled that private corporations could not force customers to hand over their cards.

Here is the lowdown on "Aadhaar", the world's largest biometric database.

Aadhaar, ("foundation" in Hindi), is a 12-digit unique identification number that

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300 people stranded in Lahaul and Spiti rescued, most roads reopened in Himachal

Twenty-seven stranded people, including nine foreigners, were airlifted to safer places by the Indian Air Force, while the Border Roads Organisation rescued many people, officials said.

(By Our Staff Reporter) Around 300 people stranded in various parts of Himachal Pradesh's Lahaul and Spiti district have been rescued and most of the 600 roads of the state reopened after being blocked following recent snowfall, officials said on Wednesday. Twenty-seven stranded people, including nine foreigners, were airlifted to safer places by the Indian Air Force, while the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) rescued many people, the officials said. An official of the Himachal Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority said most of the 600 roads, including the Chandigarh-Manali road, of the state have been reopened. He also said about 300 people stranded at various places of Lahaul and Spiti district have been rescued. Around 200 people are still stranded there, the



official added. Keylong sub-divisional magistrate Amar Negi said eight persons, hailing from West Bengal, were airlifted to safer places in Stingri in Lahaul district and Bhuntar in Kullu district on Wednesday by 11 am, while five were airlifted to Stingri on Tuesday evening. Five of total 27 people airlifted have been taken to Bhuntar in adjoining Kullu district in IAF helicopters directly, he added. Negi told PTI that two IAF helicopters are continuously airlifting people stranded in various areas including Koksar and Baralacha. The weather conditions are favourable now and BRO personnel are on their job to clear the roads of debris, he said hoping that most of the roads would be opened by Thursday morning, the SDM said.

11-month-old baby dies on board Qatar Airways plane after breathing problem

A Hyderabad airport official said Arnav Varma and his parents arrived from Doha on flight no QR-500 and were immediately taken to Apollo Medical Centre, Hyderabad, due to breathing problem of the infant.



(By Our Staff Reporter) An 11 month-old baby died on-board Qatar Airways' Doha-Hyderabad flight on Wednesday after developing breathing problem, airport sources said. The Hyderabad airport official said Arnav Varma and his parents arrived from Doha on flight no QR-500 and were immediately taken to Apollo Medical Centre, Hyderabad due to breath-

ing problem of the infant. After examination the doctors declared him dead on arrival. The baby was a US passport holder while his parent held Indian passports. "We are aware of the very sad news that a young child passed away at Hyderabad International Airport this morning. Our heartfelt sympathy and thoughts are with the affected family," Qatar Airways statement said.

Citing India's verdict on gay sex, UN rights chief urges countries to amend laws

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet said there is a need to see more countries taking steps to bring their laws and practices in line with the fundamental equality of all their people.



(By Our Staff Reporter) The UN's top human rights official cited the "landmark" decision by India's Supreme Court decriminalising consensual gay sex and urged more countries to bring their laws and practices in line with the fundamental equality of all their people.

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet, during the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/ Transsexual and Intersex (LGBTI) Core Group event -- 'Violence against LGBTI Individuals: Extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions' -- on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly here on Tuesday, said that change is happening around the world.

On September 6, a five-judge Constitution bench of the Supreme Court of India unanimously decriminalised

part of the 158-year-old colonial law under Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code which criminalises consensual unnatural sex, delivering a ground-breaking victory for gay rights in India. Bachelet said: "More than 70 countries criminalise consensual same sex relationships, and also criminalise transgender people based on their appearance. These laws subject LGBT people to long prison sentences, and in some cases physical punishment. They also implicitly encourage prejudice, hatred and violence. But laws can change".

"In India, we have just seen a landmark decision by the Supreme Court, decriminalising same-sex relationships. This important discussion is taking place all over the world. Not only in Europe and North

America – it is moving forward in Africa, in Asia, in the Americas, in the Caribbean and in the Pacific," she said.

Welcoming these "vital changes", Bachelet said there is a need to see more countries taking steps to bring their laws and practices in line with the fundamental equality of all their people.

She, however, stressed that there is also a need to "change minds" as at the core of killings and violence against the LGBTI community is prejudice and hate.

"We will only prevent these crimes if we are brave enough to address these factors, across society," she said. Earlier this month, the Supreme Court had unanimously struck down one of the world's oldest bans on consensual gay sex, delivering a ground-breaking victory for gay rights in India. The Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra had unanimously held that the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) community possess the same Constitutional rights as other citizens of the country. PTI YAS CPS



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Why The Catholic Church Is Its Own Worst Enemy in India Today

The Catholic Church traces its origins to that day, approximately 2,000 years ago, when Jesus appointed a leader among his Apostles with these words cited in the Bible, "Simon, you are Peter (meaning, rock), and upon this rock I shall build my Church."

You would expect a two-millennia-old organisation to have its act together in the area of legal procedures and communication. Yet, since news broke in end-June of a nun's rape allegation against the (now arrested) Bishop of Jalandhar, Franco Mulakkal, the Catholic Church in India has appeared to be a floundering, leaderless mess, falling short of basic humanity in its response to a woman's grave grievance. From conversations I have had with dozens of Catholics across India throughout September, it is clear that a sizeable number are furious at the Church's conduct in this imbroglio. Even some higher-ups are disillusioned with the top leadership's inertia.

Missionaries of Jesus or Mouthpieces of a Bishop?

The complainant in this case, let us call her Sister X, belongs to the Missionaries of Jesus, a fledgling congregation of Catholic nuns headquartered in Jalandhar. Sister X and her supporters say her appeals to Church authorities went unheeded, compelling her to approach the police in Kerala where the alleged rapes occurred.

Considering his position of power, Mulakkal should have graciously stepped down to facilitate the police probe. Instead, he stayed on for two-and-a-half months, before temporarily handing over administrative responsibilities in Jalandhar to a junior on 13 September. Church sources call this a "pre-emptive move" by him because action from the Vatican at long last seemed inevitable since Cardinal Oswald Gracias of Mumbai – who is on the Pope's Council of nine cardinals advising him on Church reform – was in the Vatican at the time and had publicly stated he

would try to alert Pope Francis to the issue.

On 20 September, the Vatican temporarily replaced Mulakkal with another Bishop in Jalandhar, purportedly at his own request.

This decision, however, came after Missionaries of Jesus was widely condemned for maligning Sister X in statements and circulating her photograph to the media, ignoring the law against disclosing a sexual abuse victim's identity.

Catholic Reformists vs Church Patriarchy

The lasting image from this episode may forever remain the unprecedented sight of five nuns – Sister X's allies within Missionaries of Jesus – sitting on dharna in Kochi from September 8-21 demanding justice for her.

Church authorities may yet have ignored them, if they had not been joined by ordinary Catholics and priests, some of whom believe the Church tried to cover up the case while others were outraged by its silence when the congregation defamed Sister X.

For years, India's Catholic liberals have vented their disgruntlement – in private, at conferences within the community and occasionally in public – regarding misogyny in the Church, the position taken on homosexuality and abortion by bumbling Church spokespersons on TV, financial corruption and more. What the nuns on dharna have, in a sense, done is rip the doors off those conference rooms and jolt a patriarchal, bureaucracy-ridden Church, thus becoming a rallying point for Catholic reformists.

"The Church in India Has Failed Its People"

The nuns are backed by the Save Our Sisters campaign comprising Catholic laity and priests across denominations. The open support from these priests has been crucial, since it has marginally influenced even Catholic conservatives, as I have gathered from off-the-record conversations.

When murmurs of doubt emanate from conformists and when rebels emerge within the power structure, religious organisations tend to take note. On September 11, a representative of Delhi's Catholic Church told NDTV that Mulakkal should resign while the police investigation is on. The die was cast with Cardinal Gracias' statement cited earlier in this column. "The Church in India has failed its people in this episode," a senior priest told me on condition of anonymity while explaining how the ancient monolith works.

A Wake-Up Call for Catholic Authorities Worldwide

If Sister X has felt traumatised by the nearly three months it took to arrest Mulakkal, she is likely to have been exhausted by the lumbering leviathan that is the Catholic Church if she had kept her case within the organisation.

The senior priest elaborated on Sister X's options in the Church mechanism. For a complaint about the Jalandhar Bishop, the first stop is the Archbishop of Delhi who has authority over a region that includes the Jalandhar diocese.

The CCBI can hold an inquiry and forward its findings to the Vatican where the Church's global head office is situated. The Vatican alone may remove a Bishop.

Like Indian courts, the Church is notoriously tardy. What Sister X faced though is not slowness but inaction. Her family has told the media she had approached Delhi's Archbishop Anil Couto with her problem to no avail. Couto has not denied this.

Besides, Father Stanley Kozhichira, spokesperson of the Delhi Church, told me that on a trip to Kerala this May (that's before the police complaint was filed), Couto met Sister X. She is unlikely to have kept her troubles from him anyway since he would be personally acquainted with her, having been Jalandhar's Bishop before Mulakkal.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI) is an assembly of bishops across all rites groups. CBCI is not authorised to take up a complaint against a Bishop. Asked why it did not at least act as a pressure group to force Mulakkal to resign, the senior priest pointed to inter-rites rivalry in India which is so extreme that such a united move is wishful thinking.

The churn among India's Catholics over Mulakkal's case is yet another wake-up call for a Church already grappling with complaints of paedophilia against priests in multiple countries. The good news is that last week Pope Francis – widely considered a liberal – called a February 2019 meeting of representatives of Catholic bishops worldwide to discuss the abuse of minors and adults.

Being a Minority Under Majoritarian Rule

Religious leaders everywhere tend to expect sheep-like acquiescence from their flock. This expectation in the Catholic Church is at odds though with its reputed commitment to the education of the masses including its own people (the reason why the number of Catholic-run schools and colleges in India

is "second only to government-run institutions" as journalist Farah Baria noted in 2015 in Mumbai Mirror).

While a trickle of Catholics outside Kerala too have spoken up when approached by news media, many more might have joined in but for the worry that the community's protests could be appropriated by the ruling right-wing BJP, just as Muslim women's battle against instant triple talaq has been used by BJP to promulgate an Ordinance that activists say is designed to victimise Muslim men.

Wounds are yet to heal from the murder of Australian Christian missionary Graham Staines and his little sons, pan-India attacks on Christians during Atal Bihari Vajpayee's PM-ship and in Karnataka under BJP rule, the 2008 Kandhamal riots and the targeting of Christians after BJP formed the Central government in 2014. Besides, anti-Muslim violence since 2014 has got all minorities on edge.

It is remarkable that none of these issues deterred Sister X's supporters.

Catholic liberals must now raise the decibels over other issues too, taking a cue from Sister Anupama – one of the nuns on dharna – when she told Asianet's Jimmy James, "We're not staging this protest to shame the Church or for any reason other than to ensure that no nun, no woman for that matter, ever finds herself in this position in future."

Diplomacy is not a mark of affection in such situations, and the Church would be wise to realise that its strongest critics may well be its greatest well-wishers.

Donald Trump to U.N. Refugees Should Return to Their Countries and 'Make Them Great Again'

"Ultimately, the only long-term solution to the migration crisis is to help people build more hopeful futures in their home countries," he said. "Make their countries great again." Trump commended Jordan for keeping Syrian refugees close to their country's borders so they could return to their homeland when the conflict is resolved. "The most compassionate policy is to place refugees as close to their homes as possible, to ease their eventual return to the heart of the rebuilding process," he said. The president said the United States would not participate in the United Nations Global Compact for Migration, citing the need to protect

American sovereignty. "Migration should not be governed by an international body, unaccountable to our own citizens," he stated. In July, more than 190 countries joined the Global Compact drafted by the United Nations. Trump first withdrew from the compact in December 2017, highlighting their differences in immigration policies. The president said the United States would continue monitoring the civil war in Syria and vowed to respond if Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad used chemical weapons. "Rest assured, the United States will respond if chemical weapons are deployed by the Assad regime," he said.

The chances of a second Brexit referendum just got higher

His comments were significant because Labour has been as divided over the issue as May's Conservative Party. Some Labour MPs represent districts in Britain that voted decisively to leave the EU in the 2016 referendum, and fear losing their seats if there is a

general election. The Labour leader, Jeremy Corbyn, is known to be a lifelong Euroskeptic.

But the party membership, which propelled Corbyn into power, strongly supports staying in the EU and has forced the leadership's position

to evolve. Delegates at the party conference in Liverpool, northwest England, voted overwhelmingly for a motion that calls for a second referendum in the event that Parliament fails to approve an eventual deal.

Starmer told delegates at the party conference in Liverpool that Labour would vote down any deal struck by May.

"If the Prime Minister returns with a deal that does not meet our tests, and that looks increasingly likely, we will vote against her deal," Starmer told the rapturous crowd. "A vague or blind Brexit is a leap to nowhere, and we will have no part in it."

Starmer said Labour preferred the uncertainty to be settled in a general election "but if that's not possible, we must have other options ... that

must include campaigning for a public vote."

"Nobody is ruling out remain as an option," he added, in remarks that were not included in the text of his speech released by the Labour Party.

Last March, Labour outlined six tests upon which it planned to assess any final Brexit deal, including the provision of a "strong and collaborative" future relationship with the EU, the delivery of the "exact same benefits" provided by the UK's current membership of the single market and customs union, and the "fair management of migration" in the interests of the British economy.

On Sunday, in an article for the Britain's Sunday Express newspaper, May reiterated her opposition to a new Brexit referendum. "Some are now

openly advocating a second referendum and extending Article 50 to delay Brexit, sending us right back to square one," she wrote.

Calls for a second referendum have increased since May returned from an informal EU summit in Salzburg, Austria last week and admitted discussions were "at an impasse." May struck a defiant tone during a Downing Street statement in which she called for the EU to "respect" the British position and the result of the June 2016 referendum. She called on the EU to spell out its objections to her plan or come up with an alternative. "Throughout this process, I have treated the EU with nothing but respect. The UK expects the same. A good relationship at the end of this process depends on it," May said.

India's new Pakyong Airport opens in incredible Himalayan surroundings

the facility serving a remote area of Sikkim state offers one of the most dramatic airport approaches on the planet.

Its inauguration on Monday also marked a milestone for aviation and travel in India.

"After the opening of the airport there are now 100 operational airports in India," said Narendra Modi, India's prime minister, during a speech at Pakyong's opening ceremony on Monday.

"This airport was built at a cost of \$68.7 million and showcases our engineers, workers and their potential -- how the mountains were cleared, the

ditch was filled, the heavy rains they dealt with. This is truly an amazing feat of engineering."

As part of that work, an 80.38 meter embankment was built to make space for the 1.7-kilometer-long and 30-meter-wide runway, which is enclosed by deep valleys.

The airport's 2,380-square-meter terminal can accommodate up to 100 passengers. But its real asset is the incredible Himalayan scenery -- a widescreen landscape captured in a series of stunning images by Indian photographer Rajiv Srivastava, who runs the website Imazin India.

Indian citizen pleads guilty to immigration fraud scheme using Facebook, WhatsApp

Singh instructed individuals seeking immigration documents to e-mail him passport photographs, copies of their passports and other personally identifying information and to send him money through overnight delivery service or by wire transfer. After receiving these documents and the requested fee up front, Singh created and mailed fake letters purporting to be from the US Embassy in New Delhi which falsely represented that there was an appointment to pick up the requested visa documents. Many of Singh's victims resided overseas and were impoverished. In addition to this visa fraud scheme, Singh also admitted to engaging in an investment fraud scheme in Tennessee in 2012 in which he defrauded approximately 22 investors of approximately US \$ 340,000. Singh gained the trust of a local pastor and his church, including elderly members, and falsely represented to them that he owned a small company in India that provided labour for services, including data entry, to two large, international companies and that for a small, up-front investment, they would see a large return on their money. Federal authorities said those defrauded by Singh should contact the FBI's Washington Field Office

Boris Johnson, Indian-origin wife file for divorce

"We have subsequently agreed to divorce and that process is under way. As friends we will continue to support our four children in the years ahead. We will not be commenting further."

Johnson and Wheeler attended the 70th anniversary event of the Indian Journalists Association on August 15, 2017, when he characteristically mixed humour with self-deprecation, but asked journalists to "speak truth to power".

Johnson's daughter, Lara, 25, was quoted by the tabloids as telling her friends: "Mum is finished with him. She will never take him back now." Johnson and Wheeler were reported to be living apart, not socialising as a couple for some time.

Pakistan supports violence, says Congress, then takes a swipe at the RSS

The Congress equated the BJP with the Britishers, alleging both of them followed the 'divide and rule policy'.

The Congress on Monday alleged that the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Pakistan are on the "same page in propagating hatred, violence and division among people".

The opposition party also equated the BJP with the Britishers, alleging both of them followed the 'divide and rule policy' and supported loot of India's resources to be moved abroad.

Congress's stinging attack follow repeated jibes from the ruling party that the opposition party and Pakistan both wanted to oust Prime Minister Narendra Modi from power.

Amid repeated attacks from Congress on the issue of Rafale deal, BJP president Amit Shah recently asked whether the opposition party was forming an "international mahagathabandhan" (grand alliance) against Modi.

Addressing a press meet on the eve of Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting at Sewagram in Wardha district near Nagpur, AICC chief spokesman Randeep Singh Surjewala said the RSS vision is contrary to the Gandhian ideology. "When Gandhiji and the

Congress were fighting the British, the RSS kept quiet. The RSS doesn't represent any section of the society. It believes in violence and it's base is polarisation, hatred and discrimination," he said.

On reported remarks by Pakistan against the RSS at the United Nations, Surjewala said, "Pakistan, like the RSS, supports violence and it practices hatred and divisiveness. It (the RSS) also supports violence. The Congress and people of India don't support this."

Surjewala said the CWC meeting at Sewagram, which was Gandhiji's "karmbhoomi" (the land where one works), will be historic. It will take place at Mahadev Bhavan, just 300 metres from the Gandhi Ashram.

"This is a battle between the ideologies of Gandhi and Godse. You can't imbibe Gandhi's idealism by speaking good about him or taking pictures like him. For those in power, Gandhi's thought is just a lip service. Those in power murder Gandhi's thought. They swear by Gandhi only for optics and photo-ops," Surjewala said in a veiled attack on Modi.

He said the BJP's base was

"untruth, fear and arrogance" and the party has to "cleanse its soul to understand Gandhi". He said the CWC meeting in 1942 was held here to give the call of Quit India and the party will now pledge to launch a campaign to free the country from "loot-jhoot-bhay-batware (lies, fear, divisiveness)".

"An anti-people and arrogant BJP has replaced Britishers after 71 years," he said, alleging the Britishers looted India's natural resources and took them abroad and the BJP government has also given a free hand to "bank looters" to rob the country's resources.

Under British rule, India's plurality was attacked with policy of 'divide and rule', he said, as he accused the BJP of indulging in communal, caste and regional polarisation and playing a political game of chess like Shakuni (a wily character in Mahabharata).

"Like the British, the BJP wants to curtail democratic principles and centralise power in Modi. Like the British, BJP's DNA is anti-farmer and it is against the oppressed, Dalits, tribals, backward communities, minorities and women," he said.



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14 years and two trials later, Bill Cosby is led away in handcuffs

Minutes before a handcuffed Bill Cosby walked out of the courtroom as an 81-year-old convicted sex offender, he removed his dark pinstripe blazer and purple tie, and rolled up the sleeves on his crisp white shirt.

(By Our Staff Reporter) Judge Steven O'Neill had just sentenced Cosby to three to 10 years in a state prison for drugging and sexually assaulting Andrea Constand 14 years ago. It took more than a decade, two trials and dozens of accusers to seal his fate.

After the sentencing, the judge took a break to consider the de-

fense attorney's request to free Cosby on bail during the appeal. As people waited for the judge's bail decision in the hallway, where court officials had ushered them, the man once known as "America's favorite father figure" sat with his attorneys and took off some of his clothes. About 20 minutes later, the judge returned and said bail was not appropri-

ate. Sheriff's deputies escorted Cosby out of the courtroom as he clutched a wooden cane with both hands.

Looking straight ahead, Cosby walked down a hallway and disappeared behind doors -- the final stages of a monthslong journey to state prison.

"Mr Cosby, any comments sir?" a reporter asked.

He did not say a word. During the sentencing, Cosby sat motionless in a courtroom packed with about 200 people.

A man who once rubbed elbows with some of Hollywood's biggest names only had attorneys and publicists with him in the courtroom. His wife, Camille, who'd stood by him throughout both trials, was nowhere to be seen. Nei-

ther were his children. Cosby declined to address the courtroom during the sentencing hearing, and sat rigidly as O'Neill explained why state prison is mandated. "This was a serious crime," said O'Neill, a judge in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. "Mr. Cosby, this has all circled back to you. The day has come, the time has come."



Pakistan is simply not able to deal with India

The only way for productive bilateral dialogue, though, involves putting any perceived disputes in the freezer and pushing for bilateral trade and development, and increased people to people contacts



(By Our Staff Reporter) When Narendra Modi took over as India's Prime Minister in 2014, he had a vision of removing all formality and doing away with stiff diplomatic protocol while dealing with neighbours, including Pakistan. His idea was an extension of his successful campaign element "chai pe charcha" where the PM could take an impromptu flight to Dhaka, Kathmandu, Colombo or Islamabad and drop in to have a cuppa with his counterparts and sort out any irritants -- without diplomatic baggage. While he has been largely successful in pulling down diplomatic walls and promote bilateral ties with Thimpu, Dhaka, Kabul, Kathmandu and Colombo, Islamabad simply snubbed PM Modi's December 2015 outreach with a terror attack on Pathankot air base. The piece of paper found in the vehicle carting the Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorists to Pathankot base clearly showed the attack was planned on December 25, 2016--the day PM Modi bravely dropped in at Lahore while en-route to Delhi from Kabul. The fact is that, as

much as PM Modi and his predecessors have tried to normalise ties with Islamabad, Pakistan remains stuck with its fantastic Kashmir obsession and has yet to come to terms with the 1947 partition. All efforts to normalize relations with it in the past have been shot down by either a brainwashed jihadist or by the K

word. Despite having no locus standi in Kashmir, Pakistan covets the Muslim majority valley and believes that it can overthrow legitimate Indian rule through violent means. Pakistan's administrators have repeatedly used the dialogue with India to gain domestic brownie points, showing off their extraordinary affection for Kashmiri people and their so-called struggle. Islamabad earlier had the support of the US and other western countries in its Kashmir venture, but it is now evident to even its die-hard supporters that Pakistan is using jihadists to further its political aims in both Kashmir and Kabul. Hence, for the first time the US State

Department's "Country Reports on Terrorism 2017" mentions Jammu and Kashmir as a state of India. The report, released Tuesday, states that Islamabad failed to significantly limit Lashkar-e-Tayyebba (LeT) and JeM from openly raising money, recruiting and training in Pakistan. Both jihadist groups are in competition to target India so as to secure donations, with Jaish attacking Pathankot base and Lashkar targeting the Uri base two years ago. Now that the Modi government has reconsidered its positive response to Pakistan's request for a meeting of the two foreign ministers on the sidelines of

the UNGA next week, this writer can state the obvious: nothing would have come of the meeting anyway. Islamabad would not have given up its Kashmir obsession. PM Imran Khan would have used the meeting to gain international legitimacy and project himself as a reasonable leader who wants normal ties with India. This would have bought him space -- at least till the next terror attack comes in Jammu and Kashmir or the Indian hinterland. Egged on by South Block mandarins, Indian leaders have tried time and again to make a distinction between the political objectives of a civilian government in Islamabad and

Rawalpindi GHQ, the fact is, no such separation exists with the latter holding absolute veto power on any decisions of the former. The role of the Pakistani Army in the present regime is overwhelming; Imran Khan owes his political lifeline to Army Chief General Qamar Bajwa and Rawalpindi sponsored Islamists. While nothing fundamentally has changed in Pakistan in the context of Army's dominance in Islamabad and its stance on the Kashmir issue since the 1990s, India since then has moved into different orbit in terms of its economy and global clout.

*The Maldives poll results are an opportunity for India to gain lost ground
China is likely to mount a major effort to protect its strategic investments and ongoing projects in Maldives*



(By Our Staff Reporter) Voters in Maldives have decisively ensured that their country remains firmly within the comity of democratic nations, by voting out incumbent and controversial President Abdulla Yameen. The combined opposition candidate Ibrahim Mohammad

via the ballot box. Solih's victory again underscores the power of the Maldivian people and their determined opposition to an autocrat who has indulged in corrupt practices, muzzling of the media and systematic suppression and jailing of judges and opposition leaders,

Solih has been declared winner by an impressive margin of votes. The massive voter turnout, above 90%, presaged the probability of change

including former President Mohamed Nasheed who was overthrown in a murky putsch and imprisoned by Yameen. Doubts about the election result have dissipated with Yameen conceding defeat. But until the president-elect takes over in November, there is no 100% guarantee that Yameen may hand over power smoothly.

The result also validates India's strategic patience to await the election result, without being stampeded into any intervention in the domestic affairs of a friendly neighbour. The election result will reopen avenues for mending fences and bringing India-Maldives ties to an even keel. The root cause of the mistrust between India and the Maldives has been the growing Chinese footprint on the ar-

chipelago. Both India and the United States have swiftly welcomed the election result. China's reaction came later, calling for continuity and stability. While congratulating Solih and reiterating respect for the electoral verdict, China's Foreign Office stated that it would build on the friendship with Maldives and encourage Chinese companies to invest and continue to work there under market conditions. Pakistan's Foreign Office has welcomed the results thrown up by the democratic process. The geostrategic significance of the Maldives lies in its proximity to the Sea Lines of Communication in the Indian Ocean. More than 60% of trades and energy supplies traverse via this.

India must focus on neighbourhood first

India is already among the front ranking countries of the world, writes Shyam Saran

(News Agencies) By the metrics of power, whether economic or military, India is already among the front ranking countries of the world. It is likely to emerge as the third largest economic power by mid-century, behind China and the US, and will have matching military capabilities. Its scientific and technological capabilities are also impressive and growing, whether in space sciences or in the digital realm.

The instruments of power are at hand but their use remains sub-optimal because of structural issues. There is an under-investment of both human and material resources in India's diplomatic machinery. You cannot run an expansive foreign policy of an emerging great power with less than a thousand diplomats and a budget that treats the ministry of external affairs as a sideshow. There is also the issue of quality that can only be improved through better recruitment and capacity building. We need to put in place an effective, efficient and autonomous development agency that can overcome the

persistent shortcomings in delivery of projects in developing countries, undermining our international credibility.

With rising power should come greater self-confidence. This is particularly important at a phase in history when an established and familiar geopolitical landscape begins to deconstruct and a new world order must take its place. India's interests will not be served if it has to acquiesce in an order in the making of which it had little role to play. It must determine what place it wants to occupy in the new world order and align its foreign policy to that objective. In my view, it is a multipolar world order that will give India relatively greater room for manoeuvre.

Others may advocate an approach in which alignments should trend towards alliances against the prospect of a new hegemon seeking monopoly of power and influence. India can play the role of an architect of the new world order only if it is not constantly preoccupied, as it is today, by tensions, even crises, in its immediate subcontinental neighbourhood.

Furthermore, a multipolar world order will only be possible if there is a multipolar Asia, since the centre of gravity of global power has now moved to the trans-Pacific from the trans-Atlantic. What happens in our part of the world will determine the shape of the new order.

For the foreseeable future, India's foreign policy will need to remain anchored in this region, even while expanding engagement with other parts of the world.

I would like to see much greater investment in three key policies declared by this and previous governments: Neighbourhood First, Act East and Indian Ocean. This is intimately related to meeting the China challenge and in ensuring that Chinese hegemony does not become an inevitability. The only credible countervailing power to China in Asia is India and it also has the advantage of being a civilisational entity like China.

India sees its own emergence as an opportunity to revive its cultural affinities with its extended neighbourhood east and west. China sees, instead, an



opportunity to reassert a regional dominance which it believes is bequeath upon it by history. This gives India a significant perceptual advantage. The subcontinental neighbourhood is India's greatest strength and its greatest vulnerability. This is a region where its power is overwhelming even when it is being contested by an expansive Chinese power. A China card in the hands of some of our neighbours is potent because we allow it to influence our neighbourhood policy, making it defensive.

It is often the case, particularly in the case of Pakistan, that we allow domestic politics to distort neighbourhood policy. Neighbourhood First must be reflected in India

emerging as the engine of growth for the subcontinent, as the most efficient and cost-effective transit and transport corridor for our partners, underpinned by modern infrastructure and with borders which serve as connectors rather than as walls behind which we cower in fear and suspicion. India has the greatest stake in South Asia integration. Our foreign policy must truly reflect this.

Indian foreign policy has leveraged its appeal as a successful plural democracy managing immense diversity. It is a constant refutation of the argument that rapid economic development requires political authoritarianism. Our domestic political rhetoric and actions must be careful not to undermine this hard-won reputation.

Pakistan's home-grown terror is its biggest enemy

It is a widely held belief among many Indian analysts and policy-makers that the Pakistan army will lose its very raison d'être if it stopped considering India the greatest threat.

(News Agencies) A new report published by a US-based think tank that cited Pakistan army officers as perceiving home-grown terrorists as a greater threat than India was received with considerable interest.

However, similar views expressed by far more authoritative figures in the Pakistani military establishment and included in an official publication that provides insights into operational doctrines have not led to any change in the Pakistan army's India-centric approach.

The report "The Quetta Experience", published by the Wilson Centre, and written by a retired US army colonel, focuses on the views of Pakistani officers attending the Command and Staff College in Quetta, a prestigious

institution that provides a yearlong course for hundreds of officers with about a decade of service.

The report is based largely on accounts given by US military officers attending the Quetta college of their interactions with their Pakistani counterparts — in other words, second hand information.

Through interviews with US officials who attended the college during 1977-2014, the report states that Pakistani officers have gone from describing India as the "number one threat" in the 1980s to calling for better relations with India. We never get a sense of what percentage of the Pakistani officers in an annual batch — the Quetta college states on its website that each course includes 365 Pakistani

and about 40 foreign officers — hold these changing views on India.

But long before the publication of this report, former Pakistan army chief, Gen Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, had several times spoken publicly about the country's "internal threat" assuming a greater dimension than the external threat (read India). This was mostly at the time when Kayani's troops were engaged in a bloody campaign to drive out Pakistani Taliban fighters who had set up a parallel administration in the Swat Valley of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province.

Addressing the passing out parade at the Pakistan Military Academy in Kakul on October 25, 2008, Kayani talked about combating home-grown



terrorism, which he described as an "internal threat that warrants immediate action".

On July 3, 2009, while addressing a commissioning parade at the naval academy in Karachi, Kayani fine-tuned his force's approach further by saying that while the "external threat to Pakistan continues to exist, it is the internal threat that merits the immediate attention" of the country. However, during a

formal interaction with Pakistani journalists in February 2010, Kayani famously asserted that the Pakistan army will remain an "India-centric" force as long as the Kashmir issue and differences on the sharing of river waters with India were not resolved. He also said the Pakistan army's "frame of reference" for addressing issues related to Afghanistan included India-specific concerns.

Can Clean India campaign pave way for reversing Ganga pollution curve?

Under Swachh Bharat Mission, 4,471 villages have been declared open defecation-free along the Ganga basin with almost complete coverage in Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh. Only 694 villages came under the ODF category in 2015-16.

(News Agencies) Domestic sewage from towns and villages along the Ganga is the main source of pollution (over 70%) in the river, a Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) assessment has found. Industrial effluents contribute to the rest of the pollution.

Officials see an opportunity in bending the river water pollution curve by cutting the main pollutant under the Centre's Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) for universal sanitation coverage.

They say this can be done if the technology being used to make villages and towns open defecation-free (ODF) is carefully monitored to ensure no faecal sludge contamination.

Under the SBM, 4,471 villages have been declared ODF along the Ganga basin with almost complete coverage in Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh. Only 694 villages came under the ODF category in 2015-16.

"There are 132 gram panchayats in the state along the Ganga. No sludge, grey or black, is discharging into... the Ganga," said Namami Gange (Uttarakhand) CEO Raghav Langar.

Considering the domestic sewage load in the river is so high, officials are banking on SBM to bring down this load in the coming years even as there has been little improvement in the Ganga waters quality.

"We have not seen any perceptible difference in

the faecal coliform (bacteria) levels in the Ganga stretches flowing through Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand in the past four years," said A Sudhakar of the CPCB's water quality division. "There is a marginal decrease in biochemical oxygen demand (the amount of dissolved oxygen needed to break down organic waste in water) levels," he added.

Sudhakar said they have data of the last four years showing these trends. "But it has not been compiled yet and hence cannot be shared." The SBM guidelines say if there is no sewerage facility, an on-site treatment system like twin pits, septic tanks, bio-digesters, or bio-tanks should be constructed for the collection, treatment

and disposal of sewage. Experts say building toilets is a part of the solution. "We have to understand that the excreta are going into a box, a pit or a tank. Along the Ganga, the water table is quite high and if these tanks are not desludged properly, then the wastewater can leach into the groundwater," said Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) programme director Bitush Luthra, who is tracking SBM implementation in urban areas. "Often in many towns, there is no control over the design of these tanks or on how they will be emptied."

He said they recommend very careful monitoring of septic tanks or pit designs, reuse of sludge for compost and a decentralised approach in



treating the sludge. Tata director Yugal Joshi said Institute of Social Sciences assistant professor Pratibha Ganesan's study also found that septic tanks being used in many urban areas under SBM cause "second-generation problems either due to faulty construction or careless treatment of faecal sludge". The study was carried out across eight states to explore the implementation of septic tanks in villages.

It found tanks with no soak pits and non-cemented bottoms have both environmental and health impacts. SBM have been made ODF.

twin-pit toilets being built under the mission are also treatment plants and do not require any faecal sludge treatment. "The excreta turn into nutrient-rich compost after a year. It is safe to be used on farms. We are creating mass awareness on this through a multimedia campaign and interpersonal communication in villages and soon these issues will be resolved." He insisted that there is a natural improvement in the Ganga waters quality as all villages on the river banks have been made ODF.

Dafydd Jones' vintage photos of British elites gone wild

(News Agencies) in the early 1980s, at secretive night-time events around Oxford University and in grand country homes in Kent, Surrey and Buckinghamshire, carefully selected guests would descend in gowns and tuxedos to drink, eat, flirt, dance, kiss, date, fight, show-off, gossip and then drink some more. Before the age of Instagram, they were there to behave badly.

David Cameron, the former UK prime minister, was a frequent attendee of such hunt balls, debutante dances and society weddings. So was the actor Hugh Grant, on the cusp of movie stardom. Nigella Lawson, in between waiting tables in a restaurant near Oxford University, would also turn up. There they would rub shoulders with a litany of future politicians, business leaders, aristocrats, academics and other doyens of the ruling classes.

Lurking in the background, camera in

hand, was photographer Dafydd Jones. A selection of Jones images of the time has been released as "The Last Hurrah," a photobook by British publisher Stanley/Barker.

"At that time, the English upper class was top dog," Jones said in a phone interview. "They had the confidence to have these big, easy, relaxed parties that would quite often get quite wild. They were very carefree."

Jones grew up in suburban Oxford. ("I was a 'townie'" he said.) Throughout his youth, he recalls the city's students "walking round looking like tramps." Then, in a trend that coincided with the election of Margaret Thatcher in 1979, Jones noticed Oxford's students "abruptly try and differentiate themselves from the rest of the city."

Across the UK, the rich and powerful were resurgent. "Thatcher gained power and promptly cut taxes," Jones said. "Suddenly, the well-off had more money to spend, and

they spent it on parties."

He would see students walking the streets in black-tie and flowing gowns. "They weren't trying to hide their wealth," he says. "The rich were celebrating." Although he wasn't a student at Oxford, Jones found ways to blend in among the colleges' grand halls. He would find out when and where these secret parties were happening, and blag his way in, his camera safely hidden in his satchel.

One series of images, taken in the autumn of 1980 at a meeting of the Bloody Assizes Dining Society, an exclusive all-male drinking club, were submitted to a Sunday Times photography competition. Although he didn't win, he came to the attention of Tina Brown, the future Vanity Fair editor, who was then at the helm of society magazine Tatler.

Brown called Jones, congratulated him on his shots of the Oxford student scene and offered him a job as Tatler's official party

photographer. He would start immediately, on the proviso he moved to London straight away.

At first, Jones didn't take her seriously. "The shots I submitted (to The Times) were fairly obvious send-ups of the kind of shots Tatler would routinely publish," he said.

But Brown loved them. Jones was sent to every high-end party Tatler could get access to, and Brown would routinely use the images he returned with to animate Tatler's pages.

In 1983, during a stint as a columnist for the Daily Mail, Brown used Jones work, including an image of a woman in a flowing gown dancing on a grand dining table, for a piece titled "Snob Wars."

"There's a civil war going in Britain... except it isn't very civil," Brown wrote. "Everywhere I look, social groups are lining up and shaking their fists at each other. We have kissed off the guilt of the 'caring, sharing' seventies and got dressed to kill for the Up Yours Eighties."



"Tina would talk about this new generation of what she called 'sod you' Tories," Jones said. He remembers a grand ball in Kent. Six hundred guests were invited. On arrival, they were greeted by boy scouts holding burning torches, lining each side of the long driveway to the stately home. "The ball took place on the same night as the Brixton riots," Jones said. "Everywhere I look, social groups are lining up and shaking their fists at each other. We have kissed off the guilt of the 'caring, sharing' seventies and got dressed to kill for the Up Yours Eighties."

taken some heat for a perceived lack of critical distance from his subjects. But, as he points out, the upper classes of Britain are not now the same. "They've been replaced by wealth from around the world," he said. "The landed gentry isn't as significant anymore. The Chelsea set have been squeezed out of Chelsea. They're more self-conscious. They've lost that sense of carefree confidence." He points to the title he chose for his series of the former powerful at play: "I called it 'The Last Hurrah,'" he said. "It felt appropriate."

A deep dive into India's job market

The State of Working India 2018 highlights important aspects of India's labour market.

(News Agencies) High income inequality driven by a driven by a growing divergence between growth in productivity and wages is the biggest challenge, even as quality of work and social inequalities based on caste and gender have been coming down gradually in the Indian economy.

A monthly income of Rs 50000 or more puts a person in the top 1%

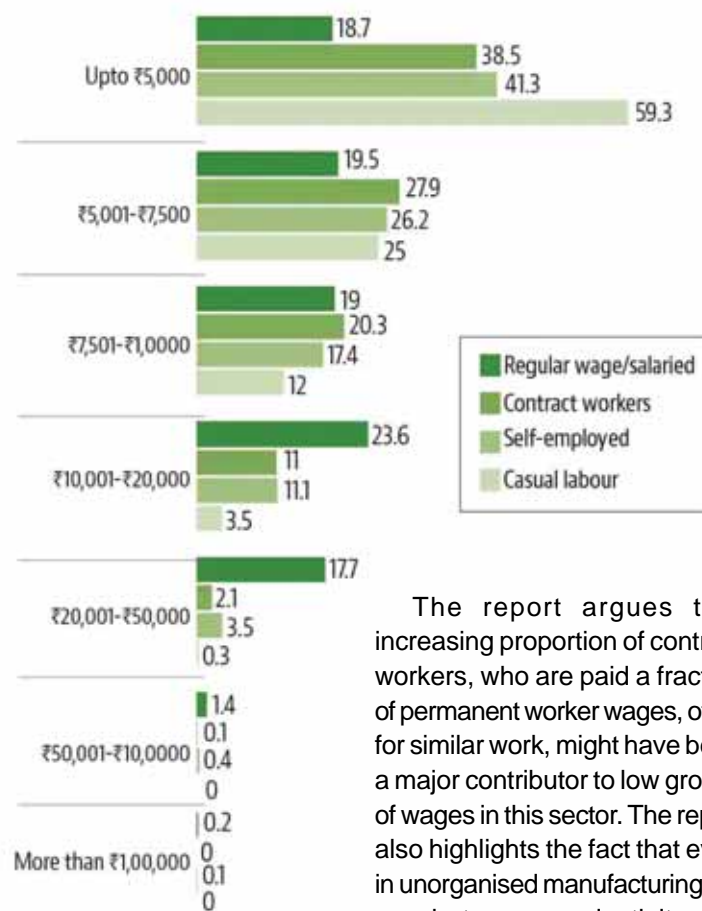
82 % of male and 92% of female workers in India earned less than Rs 10,000 a month in 2015, according to statistics given in the Labour Bureau Employment Unemployment Survey (LB-EUS) of 2015. The seventh central pay commission had stipulated a minimum wage of Rs 18,000 per month. "This suggests that a large majority of Indians are not being paid what may be termed a living wage, and it explains the intense hunger for government jobs", the report says share of women workers in the lowest income bracket is 1.7 times that of male workers. A monthly income of just Rs 50,000 or more puts an Indian worker in the top 1% bracket. Being a regular/salaried worker significantly reduces the probability of being in the lower income bracket compared to self-employment or contract and casual work. These trends persist despite the fact that real wages grew across sectors between 2010 and 2015.

Class divide has increased, but social inequality is going down

A big reason for income inequality during this period is the growing mismatch between productivity and wage growth, especially that of workers, in the

Self-employed workers have lower incomes

Income distribution (in %) by type of work



Indian economy. The report uses data from Annual Survey of Industry (ASI) statistics (organised manufacturing) to show that while wages for production workers have been almost stagnant, managers' compensation started rising at a faster rate since 2000 onwards. Growth in labour productivity, which was always higher, experienced an even greater increase during this period. The inequality between managers' and workers wages could be an underestimate because the data does not include non-wage income from stock options etc. for the former.

The report argues that increasing proportion of contract workers, who are paid a fraction of permanent worker wages, often for similar work, might have been a major contributor to low growth of wages in this sector. The report also highlights the fact that even in unorganised manufacturing the gap between productivity and wages has started rising since the middle of last decade.

While overall wage-productivity gap has increased, there is good news on the gender inequality front. The aggregate gender wage gap has decreased both in rural and urban areas for both casual and rural workers, the report shows. ASI data shows that ratio of weighted female to male wages in organised manufacturing consistently increased from around 0.35 in the beginning of last decade to more than 0.45 in 2013. This however saw a decline in 2014. According to data from the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) survey women in urban regular wage market earned 80% of what men earned. This value was around 60% in urban casual wage markets and both regular and casual wage markets in rural areas.

Gender inequality in earnings manifests itself differently across employment and educational categories. It is the highest in employer and own account worker categories and the lowest among regular workers and casual agricultural workers. In terms of educational categories, gender inequality follows a U-shaped pattern, with inequality



being the highest for intermediate levels of education.

One of the biggest proofs of caste-based discrimination in India's labour market is the disproportional representation of various caste groups across low and high income professions in India. While Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) groups have over-represented in low-income groups, the reverse holds for upper caste groups.

Controlling for gap in education leads to a significant narrowing down of caste-based inequality in earnings. Here also, the trend follows a U-shaped pattern with the gap being the highest at the level of intermediate education. While a certificate/diploma holder SC worker earns 69% of what an upper caste worker gets, the figure is 77% and 74% for graduate and post-graduate workers. This, the report argues, underlines the importance of reservations and other affirmative action policies in reducing caste inequality in the Indian labour market. Both in case of women and deprived castes, own account/self employment leads to a bigger inequality than regular wage employment. This suggests that both social backwardness and patriarchy also create disadvantages outside labour markets.

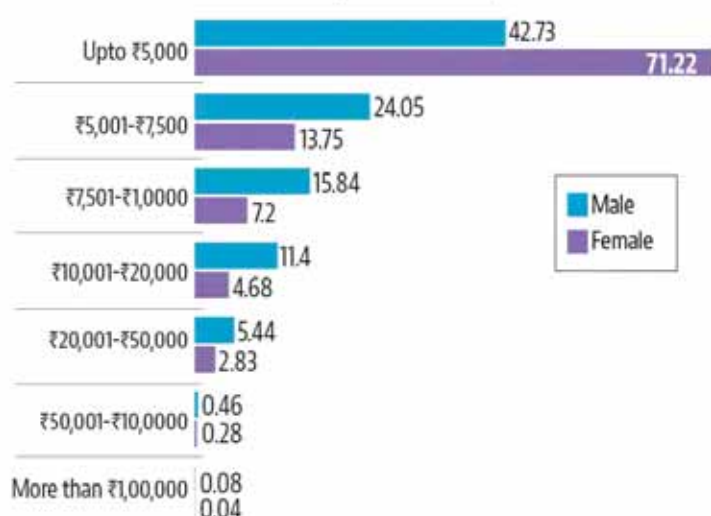
Regular employment has increased, but by how much depends on definition

Many commentators have argued that statistics such as an

increasing number of subscribers in provident fund and other social security schemes denotes an increase in the share of regular employment in the Indian economy. While the report agrees with the broad trend, it also underlines the importance of defining what a regular job means. It estimates the share of regular employment in manufacturing, construction and services on the basis of three definitions: formal 1 (simple regular work), formal 2 (regular work with provident fund or pension, gratuity, healthcare/ maternity benefits, or paid leave) and formal 3 (formal 2 with a written contract). In 2015, the share of formal 1 category jobs in non-agricultural employment was 60%. However, these numbers fall to 30% and 17% for formal 2 and formal 3 categories. This statistic also finds a reflection in the relatively high share of unemployment among the young and educated workers. The report uses 2015 LB-EUS data to show that unemployment among graduate and post-graduate workers was more than seven times what it was among illiterate or barely literate workers.

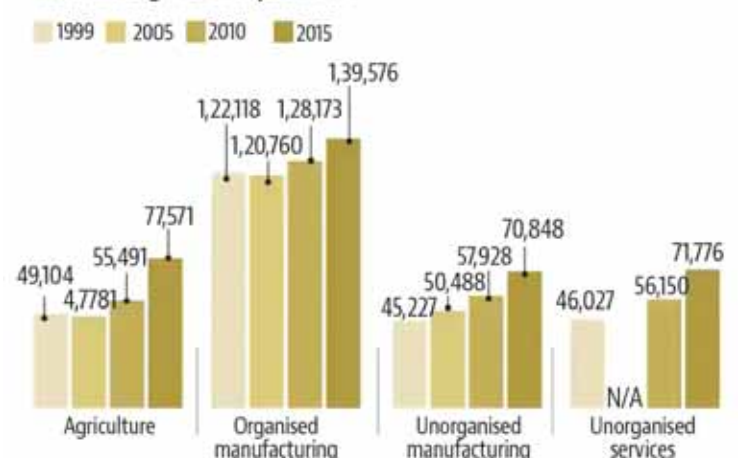
Similarly, unemployment was the highest among 15-25 year olds in the country. The number of people with at least a graduate degree who are looking for a job is roughly equal to the entire population of the city of Bengaluru, the report says. The inability to find a job which matched their skills is the biggest reason for high unemployment among the educated workers.

% Share of workers by monthly income



Wages have grown across all sectors

Annual wage at 2015 prices in ₹



Carbs are not the enemy: This study says high carb diet may lead to weight loss

The study's results support previous research finding that a plant-based, high-carbohydrate diet can help with weight regulation and body composition and reduce the risk for type 2 diabetes.

(News Agencies) A diet rich in healthy carbohydrates -- found in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains -- can reduce body weight and improve insulin function in overweight individuals, a study claims. In the 16-week clinical trial, researchers with the US-based non profit Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine placed participants in either a plant-based, high-carbohydrate, low-fat diet group or asked them to maintain their current diet.

"Fad diets often lead people to fear carbohydrates. But the research continues to show that healthy carbohydrates -- from fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains -- are the healthiest fuel for our bodies," said Hana Kahleova, lead author of the study published in the journal *Nutrients*. The plant-based diet group avoided all animal products and added oils and limited fat intake to 20-30 grammes per day. There were no limits on calories or carbohydrate intake. The control

group maintained their current diets, which included meat and dairy products. Neither group altered their exercise routines. Total carbohydrate intake did not change in the control group, but increased significantly in the plant-based diet group, both as absolute intake and as a percentage of total calories. Participants focused on whole, complex carbohydrates from fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and legumes. At the end of the trial, body



mass index, body weight, fat mass, visceral fat volume, and insulin resistance decreased significantly in the plant-based diet group. There were no significant changes in the control group. The study's results support previous research finding that a plant-based, high-carbohydrate diet can help with weight regulation and body composition

and reduce the risk for type 2 diabetes. Complex carbohydrates are naturally rich in fibre -- a nutrient found in plant foods that adds bulk to the diet without adding extra calories. Previous studies have shown that high-fibre diets are effective for weight loss and can help reduce the risk for type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and certain types of cancer.

World Contraception Day Tracking apps can help you have safe sex

(News Agencies) It is 2018 and technology is finally acknowledging female reproductive health as an important area to invest in. There are many apps and wearables that are introducing newer features to help women understand their bodies better. But a lot of work is yet to be done; for instance, many of these apps lack a pregnancy tracker - the need for which was highlighted in a popular Twitter thread recently. US-based Swapna Krishna, a technology writer spoke about how health tracking apps for women are not inclusive as many don't account of pregnancy as a feature. During pregnancy, women are bound to put on weight, stop menstruating and even go through various hormonal changes. But these aspects of reproductive health have been completely ignored by technology, with the exception of Nokia's health tracking app.

Dot: This app helps you plan or prevent your pregnancy based on your menstrual cycle. The app uses a method called Dynamic Optimal Timing (DOT) and tells you if you are in risk for conception rating it low, medium or high. It has a pretty accurate period tracker, keeps a record of symptoms and moods during your cycle and also lets you share this information with your doctor. Though the app is free, some paid additional features allow you to share information with your partner.

Clue: This period-tracking app is the most gender-neutral application out there, so no flowers, no pink butterflies. It gives you information on your ovulation days; apart from this it also helps you with health logs, frequency of exercise, moods, menstrual flow and cervical fluid. Another great feature is its ability to predict your next three cycles accurately, along with the symptoms. This way you can always be prepared.

World Contraception Day: Common types of birth control, apart from condoms

World Contraception Day: We list some of the most common birth control methods available in India, and let doctors explain just how effective they really are.

Despite the fact that 47.8% of women in India use some form of birth control, there is still quite a bit that the average woman doesn't know about her birth control.

To make matters worse, with all of the conjecture that gets thrown around about it, finding the right type of birth control can be a tricky process and a bit confusing. Thus explaining why, more than half of India's population in its reproductive age (15-49 years) doesn't use a modern method of contraception to prevent unwanted pregnancies or spaced births.

However, first of all, it's important to understand what exactly birth control means.

"It's a method of contraceptive that prevents a woman from getting pregnant, but how each method works, as well as the side effects, pros, and cons for each differ," Dr Namita Gupta, gynaecologist, Pearl Healthcare, Mumbai says.

The misinformation floating around about birth control is staggering. Part of that can be blamed on a lack of readily available information. So, on World Contraception Day (September 26), we went to the experts to clear up the confusion. Read on to learn the different options available to you, the pros and cons of each and the truth about some of the common misconceptions surrounding birth control.

"Finding the right birth control is such an individual experience, it comes down to trial and error. What one woman responds to well may not be the right fit



for another," Kolkata-based gynaecologist Dr Ratnabali Ghosh says. Ahead, a look at different types of birth controls and how they work:

The pill

One of the most common methods of birth control, this is a hormonal approach that uses estrogen and progestin (female sex hormones) to arrest ovulation.

"It prevents the body from ovulating by creating an environment that is similar to pregnancy. When a woman is pregnant, she doesn't ovulate, so mimicking that environment means that women on the pill cannot get pregnant," Dr Ghosh says.

Unfortunately, that means a lot of the side effects women on the pill experience are similar to pregnancy side effects: Water retention, breast tenderness, headaches, bloating, nausea, and breakthrough bleeding.

"The severity of these effects depends

on the dosage, the way the hormones are administered, and a woman's individual response to hormones. Pros of the pill include reliable cycle control and the fact that it's a proven method that's been tried and tested. But, since the pill needs to be taken daily, even missing a single day can mean you're at risk for pregnancy," Dr Ghosh says.

Vaginal ring

This involves inserting a hormone-filled ring into the vagina, where the hormones are absorbed directly into the bloodstream.

"When you take a pill, it has to be absorbed by your intestinal tract, through the liver and into the body. This can cause fluctuations in hormones, which can be uncomfortable for some women and can be responsible for those aforementioned side effects. The ring functions more locally, so you have a lesser chance of suffering from these side effects," Dr Ghosh says.

Only Shilpa Shetty could pull off red pants in such a polished, refined way. Get her look

Shilpa Shetty Kundra is here to show you how fabulously versatile red trousers can be, and get you inspired to rock your own pair.

(News Agencies) We all know and love Shilpa Shetty Kundra's edgy sense of style. But even more than that we love that the actor slash reality TV judge slash author just stepped out in a pair of rich red pants and showed off a refreshing, ladylike way to rock them. Shilpa stepped out for a shoot to promote her new dating reality show, Hear Me, Love Me, at Mehboob Studios in Mumbai on Monday wearing a vibrant pair of Zara pants (Rs 2,790) so

expertly accessorised that she actually managed to look incredibly put together. Shilpa's red hot look spoke volumes and said she felt confident and fashion forward. We admire Shilpa's ability to take what tends to be an automatic sartorial no-no and turn it into a fashion statement that we're definitely thinking about emulating. Only Shilpa Shetty could pull off crimson pants in such a polished, refined way. The combination of her bright pants

and the contrasting, more dressy top revealing Shilpa's killer abs, gave the look a beautifully feminine twist. We also like the belted waist on the pants — not only does it look super cute, but the high-waisted style is on trend. While her embellished Christian Louboutin heels elongate her legs, the gold hoop earrings from Misho Designs served as subtle accessories and added a touch of luxe. Red pants, like Shilpa's, can make a statement in casual



settings, and help convey an equally bold message at a fancier place. Like work or a luncheon. Topped with a neutral blazer, Shilpa's chic ensemble can easily work at the office. Then after

office, you could show off the ladylike blouse underneath for a sassier feel. In fact, you can pull off statement-hued bottoms at just about any other occasion, including running errands.

Malaika Arora's bizarre dress will leave you with so many questions



(News Agencies) Malaika Arora was spotted wearing an unforgettable little black dress in a new photo shoot. With a whimsical black and silver star-motif sequined bodice and a daring asymmetrical hem with sheer ruffles, Malaika's dress is basically the dictionary definition of the term "extra." The dress from Russian label, Kalmanovich, had more ornate details than we could even count and was a touch eccentric.

You thought the craziness ended with the quirky, bold print? Wrong. Malaika's long-sleeved ensemble also featured one giant star-shaped cut-out on the left side, to reveal her toned midriff. Malaika's dress also came with a dangerously high slit on one side that looked like it went all the way up past her stomach.

Malaika's bold party-ready look came complete with a glossy nude lip and sparkly smoky eyes. Her pin-straight long hair was perfectly accented by her Swarovski earrings and killer black heels. Malaika was really feeling the look and wrote "SUNDAZEEEEE" along with a photo she posted to Instagram on Sunday. If you're looking to one-up all your girlfriends on your next night out with a truly eccentric and unforgettable dress, one like Malaika's glamorous/luxe/fierce dress is an option.

Sonam Kapoor flaunts her svelte figure in classic white dress with sexy neckline

Sonam Kapoor Ahuja is giving us so many style goals in this curve-hugging sheer dress. Statement sleeves and a plunging neckline are the perfect details to make a white dress stand out.

(News Agencies) Sonam Kapoor Ahuja is never afraid to push it when it comes to her style — and we love her for that. Remember these designer dresses Sonam wore at Cannes Film Festival? What about her edgy, sporty looks from husband Anand Ahuja's label Bhane? Well, Sonam went for it again, this time proving that an LWD (little white dress) can go a long way.

Sonam reinvented the LWD with a see-through dress by Emilia Wickstead, while out in Delhi on Sunday. While a monochromatic dress is mostly ladylike, Sonam's translucent look revealed a more risqué side, despite its demure silhouette. While Sonam's striped organza dress with black piping plays with transparency, a nipped waist that billows out and blousy sleeves gathered for puffy effects add touches of volume and texture to her look. A

plunging off-the-shoulder neckline keeps things racy. Just a little, though. We love the way Sonam's eye make-up compliments the colour of her dress, and how there's just a dash of blush, then some subtle pink colour in her lips. Also, notice how Sonam isn't wearing a lot of jewellery — just the earrings? We think her gold hoops from Jet Gems are the perfect choice for a dress as wow-worthy as this one. Sonam added a little more edge to the crisp white look with a pair of black Manolo Blahnik heels. With Sonam's curly hair in that high ponytail, she's just a vision. It's hard not to be obsessed with the way all the elements of Sonam's look completely go together in perfect harmony. We can already envision wearing a similar dress with strappy heels for a date and flats for a weekend outing.



Paris Fashion Week: Karan Johar slays in Gucci outfits in Paris

Ace director Karan Johar was in Paris for the Gucci show at the Paris Fashion Week.

(News Agencies) Ace filmmaker Karan Johar, who recently turned cover boy for the latest edition of a luxury lifestyle magazine, is now in Paris flaunting his Gucci outfits. The 'Ae Dil Hai Mushkil' director shared various snaps from the Gucci show at the Paris Fashion Week (PFW) on his Instagram and you can't afford to miss these ensembles.

In one of the pictures, Karan looked suave in a black outfit, coupled with a grey checked designer coat and big black frames. He also shared a snap

with South Korean singer Kai, captioned "With K-pop star at the @gucci show! @weareone.exo #kimjongin #kai"

On the work front, KJo recently announced his next directorial titled 'Takht', two years after Ranbir Kapoor-Anushka Sharma-Aishwarya Rai Bachchan-starrer 'Ae Dil Hai Mushkil' garnered immense appreciation. The flick, starring Ranveer Singh, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Alia Bhatt, Janhvi Kapoor, Anil Kapoor, Vicky Kaushal, and Bhumi Pednekar, will hit the theatres in 2020.



How to care for your nails, 6 simple tips you need to follow for long and beautiful nails

Check out the things you need to stop doing to your nails now and the nail care tips you should follow to keep them in tip-top shape. They're actually simple, so listen up.

(News Agencies) It's important to make sure your nails are thoroughly dirt-free. Long nails are beautiful, but regular trims are as important to your nails as they are to your hair. If your nails are brittle and break easily, it's time to try some daily tips.

Ragini Mehra, founder at Beauty Source and Sapna Bedi-Khaitan, owner of Reign Studio, list down some ways to take care of nails.

Practice good nail hygiene: Without proper care, the nails become brittle and thin and so, it is essential to have a regular maintenance routine. Manicure and pedicure help in keeping healthy and shiny looking nails. Ensure that you stick to salons

that have technicians who have undergone proper training. Wear gloves for better nail care when working with your hands, such as when you are gardening or housecleaning, to protect the polish and keep dirt out of your nails.

Choose correct nail lacquer and nail care collection: Wearing nail polish does not harm your healthy nails, but many of your favourite nail polishes and acrylics, are full of harsh chemicals that cause nail brittleness, dryness, and thinning. Ensure that you use products that are paraben-free, sulfate-free, formaldehyde-free, toxin-free, gluten-free, cruelty-free and vegan. Pick a nail colour

remover that treats conditions that adversely affect nails and cuticles, preferable something that has the unique goodness of Vitamins A, C, and E.

Hydrate your hands: It is advised to wash the hands with lukewarm water to help keep the hands and nails soft and smooth. Also, apply a hand cream frequently which is enriched with fruit extracts. It will help in restoring and make the hands look hydrated and moisturised.

Coat it up: Bottom and top coat may seem unimportant, but they help to keep our nails from chipping, splitting, cracking and strengthen and protect the nail from being stained. The coats also do an awesome job smoothing



imperfections. Try and pick up a top coat which has an external barrier harder than traditional top coats, so it's more durable against wear and damage. Also look for UV protection in the formula to combat environmental damage to include fading and yellowing.

Nail extension: The nails are one of the parts of the body that can say more of a person. In fact, many people look at the hands because they say a lot about each other's personality, the way of life. Presentable nails are equally important and if the nails do not grow and are short, it's beneficial to get nail extension

done. Take care of your nail extensions. Make sure that you fix the damaged nails as soon as possible and keep an eye out for dryness, redness and peeling of skin or cuticles. Moisturise cuticles: Taking care of the cuticles is a critical part for a healthy growing nail. Dry, cracking cuticles not only make nails look messy, they can also cause hangnails and just plain hurt. Cuticles are part of your skin and serve the important purpose of acting as your nail's protective barrier. Moisturise and massage with oils which have healing properties such as Argan Oil to restore moisture and repair damages.

London Fashion Week 2018: All eyes on Victoria Beckham, Burberry

Victoria Beckham's show, scheduled for Sunday, is expected to attract a host of VIPs, starting with the Beckham tribe - her husband David and their four children.

(News Agencies) London Fashion Week opens Friday with all eyes on Victoria Beckham, who debuts at the event on the 10th anniversary of her label's launch, and on Burberry's new star designer Riccardo Tisci.

The ex-Spice Girl, celebrating a decade since her brand's 2008 unveiling in New York, has since defied the naysayers and won the respect of her peers.

The Briton now heads a fashion empire valued at £100 million (\$131 million) by the industry press, but will be presenting at the country's premiere fashion gathering for the first time.

"Ten years ago, when Victoria Beckham started, many saw her as just another example of a celebrity wanting to have a fashion range with no formal fashion training," University of Westminster Professor Andrew Groves told AFP.

"Through hard work and determination she has proved those early critics wrong."

'VB' on Piccadilly

Ahead of her homecoming of sorts the 44-year-old mother-of-four recently featured on London's legendary Piccadilly Circus advertising screens, fulfilling a childhood dream.

"When I was a kid my parents would always drive us up to London and show



us around Big Ben and Buckingham Palace, and... Piccadilly Circus," Beckham told The Daily Telegraph newspaper this week.

"I remember looking up, thinking 'wow, how cool would that be, to literally see your name in lights.'

The designer's show, scheduled for Sunday, is expected to attract a host of VIPs, starting with the Beckham tribe - her husband David and their four children. British Vogue magazine, which features them on its October cover, is hoping some former bandmates may also attend.

"Fingers crossed for some Spice Girls on the front row," it wrote.

The other big highlight of London's week, dedicated to the spring-summer 2019 collections and which ends on Tuesday, will see Tisci present his much anticipated first collection for Burberry. The Italian designer, formerly of Givenchy, replaced Christopher Bailey

as chief creative officer of the luxury British fashion house in March and will showcase on Monday.

He was credited with reviving Givenchy during his 12-year tenure there by cultivating links with celebrities. His arrival at Burberry is intended to reinvigorate the brand following disappointing profits in recent years.

Burberry is relying on Tisci, praised for his ability to blend streetwear with high fashion, to re-energise its high-end presence.

"Riccardo's creative vision will reinforce the ambitions we have for Burberry and position the brand firmly in luxury," chief executive Marco Gobetti said in a statement.

No fur

Naomi Braithwaite, senior lecturer in fashion marketing and branding, Nottingham Trent University, told AFP that Tisci "seems a perfect choice for Burberry."

"His tendency to not be afraid to take creative risks and innovate (are) characteristics that have underpinned Burberry's philosophy in the last few years," she said.

Originally from Taranto, a port city in southern Italy, Tisci trained at Central Saint Martins, a top arts and design college in London. He has already started to make his own mark on the venerable British brand since arriving, recently unveiling on Instagram a new company monogram.

A white "B" is interwoven with red ribbons to form the initials of Thomas Burberry, who founded the fashion house in 1856. London Fashion Week will also offer up its usual legion of young talent, starting with Jonathan Anderson on Saturday.

The artistic director of luxury leather goods firm Loewe, considered one of the biggest talents of his generation, will showcase the latest offering from his own J.W. Anderson brand.

Fashionistas are also expected to be out in force Saturday for the debut collection of British It-Girl Alexa Chung, a Swiss Army knife of talents - from modelling to TV presenting to designing.

With no animal furs on display during the five days of parades, animal rights activists are not expected to repeat past protests, highlighting the evolution of the industry away from the use of fur.

Unsold vehicles pile up at dealers as fuel, loan costs keep buyers away

The unsold stock is likely to rise more this month, considered inauspicious for big-ticket purchases



vehicles.

A survey of 11 dealers of the country's five largest passenger vehicle makers showed average inventory at dealers of Maruti Suzuki India Ltd and Mahindra and Mahindra Ltd (M&M) of about 45 days, much higher than normal levels of 25-30 days. For Tata Motors Ltd and Hyundai Motor India Ltd, dealers have inventories of around 35-40 days. The executives spoke to Mint on condition of anonymity.

The situation has been exacerbated by rising dispatches from Maruti Suzuki, as the country's largest carmaker added a new assembly line of 250,000 vehicles at its Gujarat factory. Maruti's move prompted others, especially Tata Motors, M&M and Hyundai Motor India

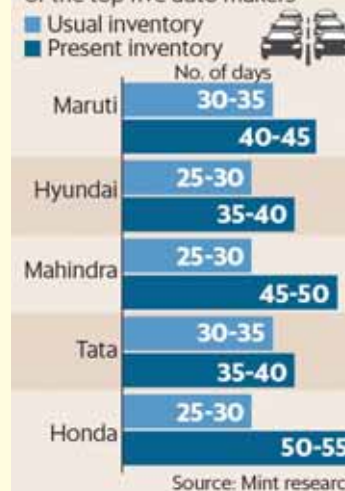
Ltd, to follow suit in the last two months, despite subdued retail demand, the dealers said.

Two dealers of M&M in Haryana and Rajasthan said the inventory build-up to this year's festival season began about four months before, against the industry norm of two months.

"Unfortunately, in India, vehicle sales are known only by wholesale numbers and dealers have little say over the number of vehicles they will have to take every month," said the Haryana dealer. "Most of the manufacturers are fixated on market share, since it has an impact on their market cap. Hence, we have now inventory of almost 45 days and it will worsen in September." The Rajasthan dealer expects retail sales to

Inventory check

Level of inventories with dealers of the top five auto makers



(News Agencies) New Delhi/ Mumbai: Automobile dealerships in India are saddled with large unsold stocks as sharply higher fuel prices, erratic rainfall and rising borrowing costs have crimped demand in the past two months. The increase in inventory is also caused by additional capacities

and resultant higher factory dispatches by auto makers in their battle for market share. The scenario will likely deteriorate this month when retail sales are expected to fall substantially, especially in north India, due to the Shraadh period, considered inauspicious for big-ticket purchases such as property or

increase 10-12% this year during the festive season, lower than M&M's expectation of a 15-20% growth.

PNB to seek Rs.5,431 crore capital infusion from govt

PNB board meeting to take place Thursday for considering infusion of Rs. 5,431 crore by the government by way of preferential issue of equity share and fixing date of EGM for obtaining shareholders' approval in this regard

(News Agencies) New Delhi: Punjab National Bank (PNB) Wednesday said it plans to seek Rs.5,431 crore capital support from the government a day after finance minister Arun Jaitley assured state-owned banks of all support from the government.

The meeting of the bank's board will take place Thursday for considering infusion of Rs.5,431 crore by the government by way of preferential issue of equity share and fixing date of extraordinary general meeting (EGM) for obtaining shareholders' approval in this regard, PNB said in a filing to stock exchanges. The finance minister Tuesday committed capital support to banks after meeting heads of public sector lenders.

"Some of them did mention that the PCA (prompt corrective action)

guidelines should be revisited because that is indirectly impacting their lending ability and that government should be more upfront in the capital requirement of some of these banks. "I have assured them that we will immediately look at this subject because we are as keen as them, as every Indian is, that this opportunity is not missed because we want the cycle of high consumption, high growth, NPA recoveries, credit offtake really to be utilised to the fullest in order to help economy," he had said.

The government infused Rs.2,816 crore as capital infusion via preferential allotment of equity shares this month to meet regulatory ratios. The government in July decided to infuse Rs.11,336 crore in five state-owned lenders including PNB, Corporation Bank and Andhra Bank to help them meet regulatory

capital requirement.

The infusion was part of remaining Rs.65,000 crore out of Rs.2.11 trillion capital infusion over two financial years.

The government announced Rs.2.11 trillion capital infusion programme October last year. As per the plan, the public sector banks (PSBs) were to get Rs.1.35 trillion through re-capitalisation bonds, and the balance Rs.58,000 crore through raising of capital from the market. Out of the Rs.1.35 trillion, the government has already infused about Rs.71,000 crore through recap bonds in the banks and balance would be done during this fiscal.

Besides, PSBs are also planning to tap the markets to raise more than Rs.50,000 crore this fiscal to shore up their capital base for business growth and meeting regulatory global risk norms.

OYO's Global Expansion Risks

Sacrificing a Vital Focus

Franchising is tough. This Indian hotel startup can't just copy Uber and Airbnb.

(News Agencies) Cobble together a disparate collection of independently owned budget hotels. Implement quality standards in exchange for the right to carry a big-brand logo. Then offer them access to your booking platform for a cut of revenue. That sounds like a \$5 billion business, and it's what OYO Hotels has become. A \$1 billion round from the likes of SoftBank Group Corp.'s Vision Fund, Sequoia Capital and Lightspeed Venture Partners puts OYO on the growing list of Indian unicorns. Founder Ritesh Agarwal has big plans for the startup, which already has 10,000 hotels in 160 Indian cities, as he told Saritha Rai of Bloomberg News. By 2023, we will be the world's largest hotel chain. We want to convert broken, unbranded assets around the globe into better-quality living spaces. I'm concerned that Agarwal's focus on expansion could put the whole venture at risk. Around 60 percent of the new money will go into China, where OYO began operations last year, and it's already added Nepal, Malaysia and the U.K. "We plan to rapidly scale our business in these countries, while continuing to invest further in technology and talent," the firm said in a recent statement. VCs love numbers — 230 cities and more than 8,500 hotels in India, 171 cities and 87,000 rooms in China, a 25 percent cut of every booking — and it appears Agarwal is giving them just that. With more than 150,000 heads resting on its pillows per night, according to Agarwal, and rooms running between \$25 and \$85, OYO could be bringing in as much as \$1 million a day in revenue.

Facebook is responsible for Instagram now. It better not mess it up

Instagram founders Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger are out. Now the question is what happens to the business they started, and what that will mean for its owner, Facebook.

(News Agencies) Instagram has become an immensely popular platform for young people. It's also been a bright spot for Facebook amid a tumultuous time for that platform, which is grappling with fake news, foreign election meddling and privacy issues. It's unclear what Instagram's future will look like without the original duo at the helm. While it's not uncommon for founders to leave after their company is acquired, it's notable

that Systrom and Krieger stayed on for six years after Facebook purchased their platform for \$1 billion. Both founders were still deeply involved with Instagram: Systrom was CEO and Krieger served as chief technology officer. Instagram largely operated as a standalone company within Facebook, and now some of that autonomy could disappear. "One of the key hallmarks of Instagram has been its independence and

uniqueness from Facebook. The founders closely guarded that," said Debra Aho Williamson, principal analyst at eMarketer. Bloomberg reported that Systrom and Krieger are departing because of tensions with CEO Mark Zuckerberg over the direction of Instagram. According to Bloomberg's sources, Instagram could become more integrated with Facebook now that the co-founders are leaving.

Troll says Abhishek Bachchan should open vadapav stall after Manmarziyaan, actor's response is dignity itself

A Twitter user blamed Abhishek Bachchan for Manmarziyaan's box office run, here's the actor's response.



(News Agencies) Abhishek Bachchan believes in going out and setting the record straight. The actor, who often replies to people on Twitter, including trolls, took on a man this time who blamed him for the performance

of Anurag Kashyap's Manmarziyaan at the box office. Abhishek's first film after a 2-year sabbatical, also starring Vicky Kaushal and Taapsee Pannu, earned over Rs 24 crore after two weeks of release. Holding Abhishek responsible for the film's box office performance, a Twitter user wrote, "#Manmarziyaan tanked at box-office, once again proving @juniorbachchan to be legend with amazing ability to make good film a flop! Kudos to his abilities, not many have it! It time to end #nepotism and for #StarKids to start #Vadapav stall..lol! #Stree proves #TalentCounts!!" He also added, "It time to end #nepotism and for #StarKids to start #Vadapav

stall..lol! #Stree proves #TalentCounts!!" Replying to the tweet, Abhishek wrote, "With all due respect kind sir, I would expect an esteemed doctor such as yourself to study all the facts and figures before proclaiming anything. I certainly hope you do so with your patients. Learn the economics of the film before you tweet something that will embarrass you." Not to back down, the man replied, "Ha ha! You wish Mr. Bachchan Jr! But I don't see any reason to be embarrassed! In fact actors who give consecutive 16 (+1 now) flops in a row should be! I noted my observations vigorously as "nepotism rocks" in your industry. You may be a good human being, but a terrible actor!"

Another Twitter user jumped into the conversation, pointing out the Manmarziyaan was made at a small budget and has already posted a profit, "Manmarziyaan is a small budget film, and they have already make profit in it so it should not be called flopped. The overall purpose of any business is profit and it is," his comment said. Abhishek replied to this comment, "Absolutely! But how do we explain this to him!" Earlier, Abhishek had taken on a troll who had asked how Abhishek could afford his lifestyle despite not doing a film in two years. "Not worked for last 3 years but has money for vacation ! How ?" was the comment. Abhishek had then replied, "Because, sir, I have several other

businesses that I run apart from acting and producing movies. Sports being just one of them." Abhishek is the owner of Pro Kabaddi League team Jaipur Pink Panthers and a co-owner of Indian Super League football team Chennaiyin FC. On another occasion, Abhishek responded to a person who asked how Anurag cast him in Manmarziyaan after working with the likes of Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Vicky Kaushal and Manoj Bajpayee. "Yay, he called me a film star!!!" Abhishek replied. When the person said what he had 'meant' to say was that Abhishek was the 'son of a movie star,' Abhishek replied, "Oh... You 'meant'... Chalo, I'll consider it a Freudian slip."

Nana Patekar sends legal notice to Tanushree Dutta, demands apology

Nana Patekar's lawyer has said that the actor has sent a legal notice to actor Tanushree Dutta for accusing him of sexual harassment.



(News Agencies) Actor Nana Patekar's lawyer Rajendra Shirodhkar said on Monday that a legal notice has been sent to Tanushree Dutta, claiming that she has levelled false accusations of sexual harassment against the veteran actor. Tanushree has said in recent interviews that Patekar had harassed her during the shooting of their 2008 film, Horn OK Please and also demanded to do an intimate dance step with her.

"A legal notice has already been sent to her and she will receive it today. The notice that I have sent is a standard one — denying allegations and asking for an apology," said Shirodhkar, according to a Firstpost report. When the lawyer was informed that journalist Janice Sequeira,

assistant director Shyni Shetty, and actor Daisy Shah had corroborated Tanushree's account, he said Nana will soon hold a press conference.

"I can't say much now. I have absolutely no idea why she (Tanushree) is talking about it now but she may have some reasons to do it. Nana will come to town (Mumbai) today or tomorrow and address a press conference. Let him come back and talk, that is the best way to know. Tomorrow he should be definitely here," added Shirodhkar.

Earlier, speaking to the media, Tanushree had said that she is putting together a "team of lawyers and advocates" to defend herself. She had said on Saturday, "Contrary to

Video of Tanushree Dutta's car being attacked in 2008 goes viral

Tanushree Dutta has accused actor Nana Patekar of alleged sexual harassment on the sets of their 2008 film, Horn OK Pleassss.

A 2008 video of actor Tanushree Dutta's car being attacked while she was seated inside has emerged online; the video is said to be of the same incident that the actor spoke about recently. Sometime last week, Tanushree accused actor Nana Patekar of alleged sexual harassment on the sets of their 2008 film, Horn OK Pleassss. She had alleged that choreographer Ganesh Acharya, the director and the producer of the said film were also complicit in the harassment. She was asked to do a lewd dance steps with Nana, which she eventually objected to. She had further said how, after she walked off and shut herself in her van, alleged workers of a political party landed up on the film's sets and started banging on her van. Later, when her parents arrived to take her home, they attacked her car, damaging it, while she was inside. he said video claims to shows the actual footage. In it, we can see the car surrounded by a violent crowd — some banging on the window of the car, one person trying to deflate one of her car's tyres and yet another

climbing on top of the car and jumping on it. A tense Tanushree is seated inside; despite the harrowing scenes on all sides, she looks remarkably calm. The actor's rep told Hindustan Times that it was indeed the video of the 2008 incident. It may be recalled that the actor has been on a war path, speaking to media about her ordeal. Incidentally, this is not the first time she spoke about it. When the incident happened, she had spoken but to no avail. At a recent media interview, when asked about the possibility of #MeToo movement in India, she had remarked that such a movement could never happen in India without any debate about what happened to her in 2008. Tanushree got a shot in the arm after journalist Janice Sequeira tweeted her eyewitness account of the incident in detail, corroborating Tanushree's claim. Not just her, another woman named Shyni Shetty, an AD on the set of the said film, came out with her version of the said incident, which matched as well.

claims made by Nana's lawyer I have not received any legal notice. So bluffmaster gogo needs to step up his game a bit here. Instead of making empty threats to intimidate me into silence, send me a legal notice and then you will see

what I will do with it!!." Keeping her fight alive against the veteran actor, Tanushree said "bankrupt and corrupt lawyers and advocates" were defending "serial harassers and offenders" in order to attain few seconds of fame. "Despite witnesses coming

forward and all evidence in my support, I'm being subjected to criminal intimidation and harassment by Nana's helper. I'm sure this guy has many skeletons in his closet too as birds of a feather always flock together," said Dutta.

Aishwarya Rai, Kareena Kapoor, Aamir Khan pay last respects to Krishna Raj Kapoor.

Bollywood stars including Amitabh Bachchan, Kajol, Anil Kapoor and members of the Kapoor family paid their final respects to the late Krishna Raj Kapoor who died on Monday.



(News Agencies) Late Bollywood icon Raj Kapoor's wife, and the grandmother of Kareena Kapoor, Karisma Kapoor and Ranbir Kapoor, Krishna Raj Kapoor died on Monday after a cardiac arrest. She was 87. The beloved 'Krishna Aunty' of the Bollywood circuit received a heavy-hearted goodbye from her large family and other film celebrities arriving at the Kapoor residence in Mumbai to pay their final respects. Photographers spotted Kareena

Kapoor Khan with her husband Saif Ali Khan, Karisma Kapoor, Randhir Kapoor, Kajol, Sanjay Kapoor with his wife Maheep Kapoor and Anil Kapoor with his wife Sunita Kapoor and Rani Mukerji at the residence. Actors Aamir Khan, Aishwarya Rai, Abhishek Bachchan, Varun Dhawan, Sonam Kapoor, Alia Bhatt, Sanjay Dutt, Tabu and more also paid their respects to Krishna Raj. Salman Khan, Sanjay Dutt and Aamir Khan also tweeted to express grief on

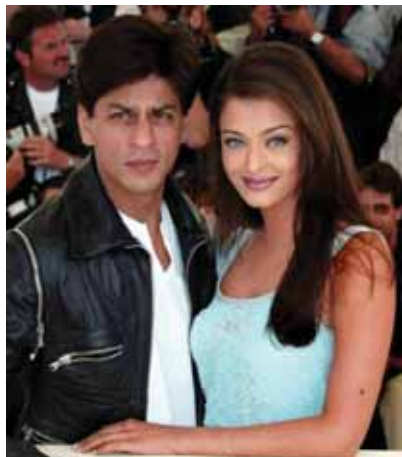
her death. "If Raj Kapoor was an institution in film making, Krishnaji was an institution in living life. A very sad loss to all of us. My love and warmth to Randhirji, Rishiji, Chimpuji, Reema, Rituji and everyone in the family. We love you Krishnaji," Aamir wrote in a tweet. Salman tweeted: "Krishna aunty .. my mother and me will miss u always.. #KrishnaRajKapoor" Randhir Kapoor confirmed the news of his mother's death on

Monday to PTI, "My mother expressed grief over her death on social media. Her today due to cardiac arrest...old age was another factor. We are deeply saddened by her demise." Krishna is survived by her five children, sons Randhir, Rishi and Rajeev and daughters Ritu and Riima and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. The last rites will be performed at Chembur crematorium. Several Bollywood stars

condolences. Riddhima Kapoor Sahni took to Instagram to pay tributes to her grandmother. "I love you - I will always love you - RIP dadi," Sahni captioned two photographs. Soha Ali Khan, Raveena Tandon and Anupam Kher, among others took to social media to offer condolences.

Aishwarya Rai, Shah Rukh Khan make it to new 100 outstanding Asians list

Aishwarya Rai Bachchan and Shah Rukh Khan are the only Bollywood actors to make it to the list, which also includes Indian cricketer Sachin Tendulkar.



(News Agencies) On Wednesday, Asian Geographic magazine released a list of outstanding people, titled 'Astonishing Asians', containing the names of 100 men and women whom the magazine deems the most

influential in Asia. There is a great Indian presence this year, including celebrities, activists, writers, cricketers and businessmen. Aishwarya Rai Bachchan and Shah Rukh Khan are the only Bollywood actors to be featured in the coveted 100 Outstanding People list for 2017. Weeks after being honoured with the inaugural Meryl Streep Award for Excellence, at the first Women in Film and Television (WIFT) India Award, Aishwarya once again proved she's made her own mark in the global entertainment industry. She, along with Shah Rukh featured on the cover of Asian Geographic magazine. Apart

from Aishwarya and Shah Rukh, the line-up includes Indian cricketer Sachin Tendulkar. Some of the other big names from India include businessman and India's richest man, Mukesh Ambani, economist Amartya Sen, author-activist Arundhati Roy and billionaire entrepreneur, Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw. Asian Geographic magazine in their latest issue - Astonishing Asians - compiled a list of 100 influential Asians. This issue draws inspiration from influential leadership icons, philanthropic champions, business magnates, science icons, sports and cultural figures who have influenced and inspired people globally.

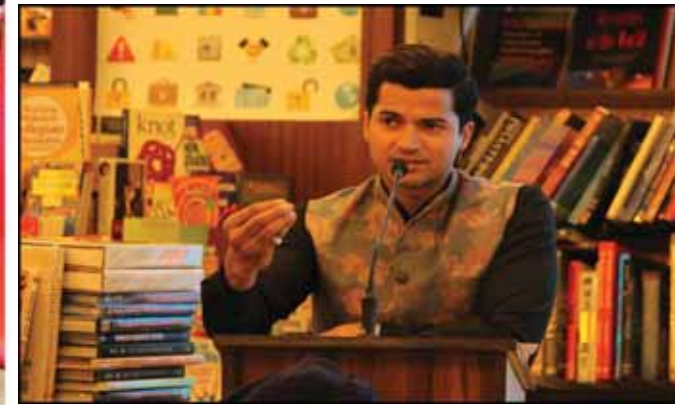
Anupam Kher tries to create a positive vibe around Sonali Bendre in New York



(News Agencies) As actor Sonali Bendre Behl is undergoing cancer treatment in New York, where Anupam Kher is shooting for his new show New Amsterdam, the veteran actor says he often tries to talk to her, meet her and create a positive vibe around her. The two actors have featured in movies like Keemat and Hamara Dil Aapke Paas Hai. "I spoke to Sonali two days ago and she is getting her treatment done. As she knows that I am also in New York for four-five months, we both talk about who will be able to return back home first. I always tell her, 'I don't know about me, but I really want you to go back home'," Anupam told IANS over phone from New York. He is stumped by how brave the "Sarfaroosh" actress is. "Sonali is a courageous and brave person. By brave, I do not mean strong in terms of physical strength. How you deal with life in difficult situation determines your true strength and the way Sonali is fighting is highly applaudable.

"Actor Prashantt Guptha Helps Launch A Book On Bollywood Legends"

(News Agencies) The world of Bollywood has captured hearts across the world. Many hope to make it big in the industry, however, only a few are able to achieve long-lasting success and receive the respect of their peers. Luckily, former New Yorker and now Bollywood actor Prashantt Guptha, has only seen his star continue to rise in Bollywood. For example, this past week, Guptha welcomed a league of legends from the film fraternity at a prominent book store in Mumbai's posh filmy locality, Bandra. There, Guptha had the honor of hosting the book launch of Raaj Grover's **THE LEGENDS OF BOLLYWOOD**. The evening was presented by one of India's leading publishing houses, Jaico Publishing, and witnessed Prashantt as the Master of Ceremony. In his deep



voice and eloquent Hindi, Guptha greeted Hindi film legends Dharmendra, Tabassum, Prem Chopra, Ranjeet, Mahesh Bhatt and Zarina Wahab. Raaj Grover, now a resident of New Jersey, was once a publicist, producer and

associate director in the 1950's, and worked under Sunil Dutt's Ajanta Arts. This book is Grover's tribute to the era gone by and a walk down memory lane with his 'star buddies.' Considering how important a book this was to Grover,

it was a huge honor for Prashantt to be given such a significant role at this event. Moreover, Guptha has been affiliated with Grover from his years in New York, which added to the magic of the event. Speaking with regards to the

event, Guptha shared, "Whilst on stage, a few things kept playing on my mind. The warmth with which they [the legends] greeted each other melted my nervousness away, and the experience of having Dharmendra ji look me in the

eyes with affection the whole time I spoke, felt like a divine energy passing through me. What history! Anyone would be in awe!" Guptha, who is best known for his role in Neeraja, has several projects coming up this year! We will be sure to bring you all the latest on his projects!

Aamir Khan, Amitabh Bachchan applaud Mumbai Police's Thugs campaign.



Yash Raj Films' presentation, Thugs of Hindostan, may present Aamir Khan, Amitabh Bachchan, Fatima Sana Shaikh and Katrina Kaif as thugs (con men) cast in the mould of anti heroes, but Mumbai Police knows better. It wants to let all the 'thugs' out there know that the safety of the Maximum City is safe in the hands of the city's police force.

Bollywood, its celebs are treated like dustbin, says Saif Ali Khan at Baazaar trailer launch

Bazaar stars Saif Ali Khan, Radhika Apte, Chitrangada Singh and newcomer Rohan Mehra in prominent roles.

After a series of duds (Rangoon, Chef, Kaalakaandi), Saif Ali Khan is finally on an upward swing in his career. After the success of Sacred Games, comes his next film Baazaar. The trailer of the film was launched on Tuesday and it looks promising. Saif plays an ambitious, and unscrupulous, Mumbai stock trader who worships money. The film also stars Radhika Apte in a glamorous role, Chitrangada Singh as Saif's wife and newcomer Rohan Mehra, son of late Vinod Mehra. If Saif's character Shakun Kothari is a stock market veteran, giving him

challenge is Rohan's Rizwan Ahmed. Small wonder, at the trailer launch at Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), all the principle players sounded rather upbeat. Speaking at the launch, Saif said that he was thankful to Nikkhil Advani for offering him a role like this one. "Shakun Kothari is very successful and ruthless, which was fun to play," he said. He added, "I recall speaking to Nikhil and saying that they are many films on the stock market which I don't understand. Some



of the numbers and figures are too much for me. He told me that it's not about numbers. It doesn't matter if you understand stock market or not. It's about good and bad, it's about crossing lines--it could have been about cricket or anything. It is a metaphoric reference. It was tough job to have a Gujarati accent, to ensure it didn't become a caricature, to make it real, to make it cool... I had a really good time doing it."



Ayushmann Khurrana on wife Tahira's cancer diagnosis: Decided to take it positively, watched Manmarziyaan on the same day

Ayushmann Khurrana has finally spoken about how his family dealt with wife Tahira Kashyap's cancer detection and following surgery. Tahira was diagnosed with Stage 0 cancer and underwent a partial preventive mastectomy, just two weeks ago. Speaking to Mid Day, a calm and composed Ayushmann mentioned that

after they found that they had been diagnosed with it, they decided to deal with it in a positive way. He further revealed that Tahira was diagnosed on his birthday. "She was diagnosed on my birthday [September 14]," he said. They were faced with two options - if they should mourn about the crisis or look at it with positivity. "We

had to maintain a happy life state to deal with it. In fact, after we got to know about her condition, we went to see Manmarziyaan that evening. We told ourselves, 'Okay, we've been diagnosed. We can't go home and cry about it. It's better to go for a film.' So, we watched the film, came back and got the date for her operation."

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