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Trump Expands Immigration

Ban To Suspend Foreign Worker Visas



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FIA Commemorates 6th International Day of Yoga With A Successful Virtual Event

Yoga enthusiasts of all age groups attend 5 different sessions offered on Zoom, maxing out the capacity of the streaming platform.





(News Agencies) The Federation of Indian Associations of NY-NJ-CT (FIA-Tri-state) successfully commemorated the 6th annual International Day of Yoga on June 21, 2020. Since the inception of the International Day of Yoga, the FIA, in partnership with the Consulate General of India in New York, has celebrated the day which highlights the importance of yoga. Yoga enthusiasts of all age groups logged on to the virtual celebration on Zoom, which included five simultaneous yoga segments, taught by renowned yoga teachers. The event was very well received by The Indian diaspora, maxing out the capacity of the streaming platform.

or to unite, symbolizing the union of body and consciousness. Today it is practiced in various forms around the world and continues to grow in popularity. The International Day of Yoga has been celebrated annually on June 21, 2015, following its inception in the United Nations General Assembly in 2014. The International Day of Yoga aims to raise awareness worldwide of the many benefits of practicing yoga.

Highlighting the importance of yoga, FIA President Anil Bansal said it is the "greatest gift" from Bharat to the world. "Besides so many benefits of yoga, it improving our lung resiliency has become more pronounced during this Covid-19 pandemic," he said. Yoga is an ancient physical, mental, and spiritual practice that originated in India. The word 'yoga' derives from Sanskrit and means to join

Alok Kumar, FIA Immediate Past President and one of the organizers of the Yoga Day 2020 celebration, said the International Day of Yoga an initiative from the Government of India "has added a positive vibe" to millions across the world. He conveyed his gratitude to Consul General of India in New York, Sandeep Chakravorty, including the CGI-NY Team as well as the Yoga 2020 team, including Himanshu Bhatia, Saurin Parikh, Falguni Pandya, and Andy Bhatia, for successfully implementing all the logistics and coordination needed to make the event a grand success.

WHEN YOU'RE **BUZZED**, YOU GET IDEAS. LIKE ASKING EVERYONE INSIDE THE TACO TRUCK WHAT **DRIVING** AROUND IN A KITCHEN IS LIKE AND THEN ORDERING 22 TACOS WITH EXTRA GUACAMOLE AND ALL THE CHEESE FOR EVERY **DRUNK** PERSON IN LINE. BAD IDEA FOR YOUR WALLET, BUT NOT AS BAD AS **DRIVING** HOME BUZZED.

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In push to 'Make in India' and 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat', govt makes mandatory for sellers to mention 'country of origin' on products for GeM platform



promote 'Make in India'. "GeM has taken a significant step towards Aatmanirbhar Bharat and has made it mandatory for sellers to enter the country of origin while registering all new products on GeM," the portal's CEO Talleen Kumar told news agency PTI. Sellers, who had already uploaded their products before the introduction of this new feature on GeM, are being reminded regularly to update the country of origin, with a warning that their products will be "removed" from the platform if they fail to update the same, he said. "With this new feature, now, the country of origin as well as the local content percentage are visible in the marketplace for all items. More importantly, the Make in India filter

has now been enabled on the portal. Buyers can choose to buy only those products that meet the minimum 50 per cent local content criteria," he said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been rooting for the need to make India 'self-reliant' by investing in indigenous products and push country's 'Make in India' cause. "The state of the world today teaches us that an Atmanirbhar Bharat "Self-reliant India" is the only path. It is said in our scriptures - Eshah Panthah That is - self-sufficient India," PM Modi had said last month while announcing the Rs 20 lakh crore stimulus package amid the coronavirus crisis. "We will make the best products, will improve our

quality further, make the supply chain more modern, we can do this and we will definitely do it," the prime minister had said while emphasising on the need to push for indigenous products and local innovations. "The corona crisis has also explained to us the importance of Local manufacturing, Local market and Local supply chain. In times of crisis, this Local has fulfilled our demand, this Local has saved us. Local is not just the need, it is our responsibility also... Therefore, from today every Indian has to become vocal for their local, not only to buy local products, but also to promote them proudly," PM Modi had stated.

(News Agencies) In a bid to promote Aatmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India) and push India's 'Make in India' cause, the government's procurement portal, Government e-Marketplace (GeM), has made it mandatory for sellers to mention 'country of origin' on products they wish to sell through the platform. The Government e-Marketplace (GEM) has also enabled a provision for the indication of the percentage of local content in products with a view to

No Haj for Indian pilgrims in 2020

Saudi Arabia's ministry of Haj said a "very limited number" of pilgrims of various nationalities who already reside in the country will be able to perform the Haj since the pandemic has spread to more than 180 countries and there is no vaccination or a cure for Covid-19.



maintaining the safety of pilgrims on its land until they depart to their home countries". There had been widespread speculation that Saudi Arabia could put off this year's pilgrimage because of the Covid-19 crisis – the first time such a step would have been taken in history. The country had earlier suspended the entry of Umrah pilgrims. Saudi Arabia has registered 161,000 Covid-19 cases and 1,307 deaths. More than 105,000 people have recovered. Saudi authorities do not release data on infections among expatriates, though hundreds of Indians have been infected and 17 had died till April.

Saudi Arabia is home to nearly 3 million Indians. In New Delhi, union minority affairs minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said he had been informed of the Saudi decision by Haj minister Mohammad Saleh bin Taher Benteen. Naqvi said fees collected for applications from more than 213,000 pilgrims will be returned without cancellation deductions through direct transfer. He tweeted, "The process has been started today to immediately refund full amount of money deposited by the applicants without any deduction. The money will be refunded through online DBT mode into bank

accounts of the applicants." In 2019, Saudi crown prince Mohammed bin Salman accepted the Indian government's request to increase the country's Haj quota from 170,000 to 200,000. Of the 200,000 Indians who performed the Haj last year, 140,000 went through the state-run Haj committee. In 2018, the Indian government got permission from Saudi authorities for single woman to perform the pilgrimage without a male escort. Naqvi tweeted 3,040 Indian women had done the Haj without a male escort since then. He said this practice will continue when the pilgrimage resumes.

(News Agencies) Saudi Arabia will allow only a limited number of its citizens and foreigners already in the country to perform the Haj pilgrimage this year because of the Covid-19 pandemic and risk of infections spreading in large gatherings. In a statement issued on Monday, Saudi Arabia's ministry of Haj said a "very limited number" of pilgrims of various nationalities who already reside in the country will be able to perform the Haj since the pandemic has spread to more than 180 countries and there is no vaccination or a cure for Covid-19.

This means no foreigners will be allowed into the country for the pilgrimage. "The decision was taken to ensure Haj is performed in a safe manner from a public health perspective while observing all preventative measures and the necessary social distancing protocols to protect human beings from the risks associated with this pandemic and in accordance with the teachings of

Islam in preserving the lives of human beings," the statement said. It added that this decision "stems from the top priority [the Saudi government] accords [to]

Sonia Gandhi hits out at Modi government over border standoff with China, economic crisis, fuel hike

The Congress party says Modi's stand contradicted past remarks by defence minister Rajnath Singh, foreign minister S Jaishankar and army chief Gen MM Naravane on the Chinese intrusions.

(News Agencies) Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Tuesday said India has been hit by a terrible economic crisis, a pandemic of huge proportions and a full-blown crisis on the border with China due to the "mismanagement" and "wrong policies" of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government. "It is said 'misfortunes do not come singly'. The cumulative effect is widespread misery, fear and danger to the security and territorial integrity of the country," she said in her opening remarks at a virtual meeting of the Congress Working Committee (CWC), the party's highest decision-making body. Gandhi sharpened her attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his government on the border standoff

with China.

"True to its character, the government is in denial. The intrusion was detected and reported on May 5. Instead of a resolution, the situation deteriorated rapidly and there were violent clashes on June 15-16. Twenty Indian soldiers were martyred, 85 injured and 10 went 'missing' until they were returned," she said. "The Prime Minister was called out when he announced that 'no one had intruded into Indian territory in Ladakh'," Gandhi said in reference to Modi's remarks at an all-party meeting on June 19, that neither anyone is present in Indian territory nor any Indian post had been captured by the Chinese. The Congress party says Modi's stand

contradicted past remarks by defence minister Rajnath Singh, foreign minister S Jaishankar and army chief Gen MM Naravane on the Chinese intrusions. Former premier Manmohan Singh on Monday said a prime minister must be mindful of his words on a nation's strategic interests, insisting China should not be allowed to use Modi's words as a vindication of its position that it did not enter the Indian side of the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

Gandhi reiterated her party's support to the government in its efforts to deal with the situation. "On matters of national security and territorial integrity, the nation has always stood together and this time too, there is no second opinion.

Priyanka refuses to budge after UP govt sends notice, says 'situation in Agra worse than Delhi, Mumbai'

Gandhi took to Twitter again on Tuesday and while clarifying her previously made statement, reiterated that the district recorded 28 Covid-19 deaths within 48 hours of hospitalisation.

(News Agencies) District Magistrate of Agra, Prabhu N Singh, has served notice to Congress general secretary, eastern Uttar Pradesh, Priyanka Gandhi for allegedly citing "wrong figures" of death due to coronavirus in Agra. DM Agra has alleged that Priyanka Gandhi's tweet, stating 28 Covid-19 deaths occurred within 48 hours in Agra, was wrong and has caused confusion, triggering a wave of fear. Gandhi took to Twitter again on Tuesday and while clarifying her previously made statement, reiterated that the district recorded 28 Covid-19 deaths "within 48 hours of hospitalisation". The DM, however, has sought denial of the

wrong facts mentioned by Priyanka Gandhi within 24 hours. "The news of the "death of 28 Corona patients admitted in the last 48 hours" is untrue," District Magistrate Agra tweeted out on Monday.

Priyanka Gandhi in her tweet on Monday alleged that 28 deaths of Covid-19 patients have occurred within 48 hours of hospitalisation in Agra, Uttar Pradesh. She had targeted the Uttar Pradesh government for its 'No Test- No Corona' policy and had blamed the state government for hiding "true facts". On Monday, Agra DM, in his tweet, denied the contents which Priyanka Gandhi claimed in her tweet and described them to be untrue. On

Tuesday, Singh sent a notice to Congress national secretary.

"The tweet by congress national general secretary prima facie gives an impression that 28 deaths occurred in Agra within 48 hours. Such false tweet demoralises the Covid warriors and fighters when whole nation is fighting to stop the spread of Covid-19. Such false tweet has created a wave of fear and casts wrong impression amongst masses," stated DM Agra in his notice.

"The correct facts are that in last 109 days, there have been 1,139 Covid-19 positive cases found in Agra and 79 Covid-19 patients died in this duration. It is totally wrong to allege that



28 deaths have occurred in 48 hours in Agra," he further added. DM Singh has called upon Priyanka Gandhi to issue a denial of her statement within

24 hours so that no confusion prevails in mindset of common men and the moral of Corona fighters and warriors is not affected.

India takes another step to block China products with new rules

New sellers on the Government e-Marketplace, an Amazon-like online procurement platform, will have to register the origin of their products while those already available must meet the new requirement or risk being removed.



(News Agencies) India has amended rules for purchases by government departments, making it mandatory for suppliers to mention the country of origin in a move to push for local products and keep out Chinese manufacturers. New sellers on the Government e-Marketplace, an Amazon-like online procurement platform, will have to register the origin of their products while those already available must meet the new requirement or risk being removed, according to a government statement on Tuesday. The platform will allow buyers to filter products based on the country of origin and select those with a high percentage of local content. Buyers can choose to buy only those products that meet the minimum

50% local content criteria. The push for products made in India comes amid rising public clamor for a boycott of Chinese goods as the two nations are engaged in their deadliest border conflict in four decades. The platform, which serves India's government departments, recorded sales worth 400 billion rupees (\$5.3 billion) in the last fiscal year and has 324,000 vendors. Earlier this month, India also modified public procurement rules to give maximum preference to companies whose goods and services have 50% or more local content, with an aim to promote Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "Make in India" program in response to calls to make the country self-reliant.

Truck driver booked after bridge collapse near Indo-China border in Uttarakhand

The bridge was a vital one and was used by the Army and the ITBP used bridge to reach their posts near Chinese border

(News Agencies) A day after a Bailey bridge near the Indo-China border in Munsiyari area in Uttarakhand's Pithoragarh district collapsed when a flatbed truck with an excavator on it was trying to cross despite warnings not to do so, police on Tuesday booked the driver for negligence and damaging the bridge.

On Monday, the bridge collapsed into a rivulet when the truck tried to cross it despite several warnings. The collapse of the bridge which was also used by the Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) and army personnel to reach their posts near Chinese border has cut off a population of about 7,000 people living in villages across it. Mohammed Asif



Khan, station house officer, Munsiyari police station said, "We have booked the driver of the trailer truck identified as one

Godhan, a resident of Almora for negligent driving and causing damage to public property under relevant sections of the IPC on Tuesday." "We took the action after

receiving a complaint from assistant engineer Jaiveer Singh of the department concerned in which he accused him of crossing the bridge despite several warnings by construction workers there," said Khan. The police officer said that the accused has not been arrested yet as he is still undergoing treatment in the hospital after getting severely injured in the accident. The excavator's operator was also seriously injured. "We are also yet to record his statement. Once his condition improves, we

will do that also. As of now, a population of about 7,000 living in various villages across the bridge has been cut off due to the collapse of the lone bridge in the area connecting them to the main town

of Pithoragarh," said Khan. The police officer who had gone to visit the spot to check the repair work said, "The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) have already started the repair work on war-footing and will soon repair it in the next 5-6 days." "The crucial bridge is about 65 km short of the Indo-China border. The trailer was carrying the excavator to Lilam Valley near the border and was to be used in a road project of the BRO. At the time of the incident, construction work was going on for another bridge near the collapsed one which was not in good condition. When the trailer came there, the workers warned the driver not to cross it because the bridge was able to bear a load of only a four-wheeler at a given time. But the driver did not pay any heed and tried to cross it leading to the bridge's collapse.

China ordered attack on Indian troops in Galwan Valley: US intel assessment

According to a US intel assessment, Gen Zhao, who has overseen prior standoffs with India, saw the faceoff last week as a way to "teach India a lesson."



(News Agencies) A senior Chinese general authorised his forces to attack Indian troops in the Galwan River valley last week, resulting in a brutal skirmish that killed dozens and dramatically escalated tensions between the two Asian powerhouses, according to a U.S. intelligence assessment. Gen. Zhao Zongqi, head of the Western

Theater Command and among the few combat veterans still serving in the People's Liberation Army, approved the operation along the contested border region of northern India and southwestern China, a source familiar with the assessment says on the condition of anonymity. According to U.S. News, Zhao, who has overseen prior

standoffs with India, has previously expressed concerns that China must not appear weak to avoid exploitation by the United States and its allies, including in New Delhi, the source says, and saw the faceoff last week as a way to "teach India a lesson." The assessment contradicts China's subsequent assertions about what happened on June 15. And it indicates the deadly and contentious incident - in which at least 20 Indian and 35 Chinese troops died, and reportedly a handful on each side were captured and subsequently released - was not the result of a tense circumstance that spiralled out of control, as has happened before, but rather a purposeful decision by Beijing to send a message of strength to India. Yet that plan

appears to have backfired, as the incident sparked widespread outrage in India that continues a week later. And Beijing's attempts to make India more amenable to future negotiations, including about contested territory, instead appear to have pushed the economic giant closer to the U.S. Much is at stake, far beyond territorial control. The U.S. has pressured India for months to back away from employing Chinese tech company Huawei to help build its 5G infrastructure. In the aftermath of June 15 incident Indians were reportedly deleting Chinese social media app TikTok and destroying phones made in China. "It does the very opposite of what China wanted," the source says,

adding that "this is not a victory for China's military." It remains unclear the extent to which Chinese President Xi Jinping was involved in the decisions that led to the bloody encounter, though analysts familiar with Chinese military decision making say he would have almost certainly known about the orders. Troops had massed on both sides of the border in recent months in the northern India region of Ladakh and the southwestern Chinese region of Aksai Chin, causing global concerns of a potential escalation between the two. Private geo-intelligence firm Hawkeye 360 recently reported that satellite imagery from late May showed a buildup on the Chinese side of what appeared to be armed personnel carriers and self-propelled artillery.

India Considering Establishing 'Bilateral Bubbles' For Air Travel After US Action Against Air India

'As we contemplate further opening up in response to demands, we are looking at the prospect of establishing individual bilateral bubbles, India-US, India-France, India-Germany, India-UK,' the aviation ministry said.

(News Agencies) India is considering establishing "individual bilateral bubbles" with the US, the UK, Germany and France allowing airlines of each country in the pact to operate international passenger flights, said the Aviation Ministry on Tuesday. The ministry's statement has come after the US Department of Transportation announced on Monday that it has barred Air India from operating chartered flights between India and the United States from July 22 without its prior approval, in an apparent retaliation for the Indian government not allowing American carriers to operate between the two countries. The Aviation Ministry said, "As we contemplate further opening up in response to demands, we are looking at the prospect of establishing individual bilateral bubbles, India-US, India-France, India-Germany, India-UK. These are all destinations where demand for travel has not diminished. Final decisions pursuant to negotiations are expected to be taken soon." "We have received requests from authorities in several countries including the US, France, Germany among others requesting that their air carriers be allowed to participate in the transportation of passengers along the line being conducted by Air India under Vande Bharat Mission. These requests are being examined," it added. Scheduled international



passenger flights have been suspended in India since March 25 due to the coronavirus pandemic. Air India started international chartered flights under Vande Bharat Mission from May 6 to help people stranded amid the pandemic reach their destinations.

The US Department of Transport (DOT) said on Monday it appears that Air India may be using its passenger repatriation charters as a way of circumventing Government of India-imposed prohibition of all scheduled international services. "We are taking this action (of allowing only those Air India flights from July 22 that have DOT's approval) because Government of India has impaired the operating rights of US carriers and has engaged in discriminatory and restrictive practices with respect to US carrier services to and from India," the DOT said. The Aviation Ministry said on Tuesday that it had one round of negotiations with the representatives of the DOT and US Embassy on June 15 about letting American carriers

operate flights. "They were invited to submit precise proposals in this respect. A communication has now been received on 19

June, 2020 detailing these requests," the ministry said. Air India has been operating chartered flights on Indo-US routes since May 18 where tickets on both the legs are sold. While tickets on the India-US leg are sold through Air India's website to the public, the seats on the US-India leg have to be purchased after contacting the Indian Embassy in the US.

Patanjali Launches 'Coronil' Drug For Covid-19, Claims 100% Patients Recovered In Clinical Trial

(News Agencies) Patanjali Ayurved Limited on Tuesday launched 'Coronil and Swasari' tablets, claiming it is a cure for treating Covid-19. Patanjali claimed the Ayurvedic cure helped "100% patients recover within seven days." The company said it came up with the "research-based medicine" and conducted clinical trials in joint efforts with National Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS), Jaipur.



Patanjali has also launched a "Corona Kit" in which these drugs are available. "We are proud to announce that the first Ayurvedic, clinically controlled trial based evidence and research-based medicine has been prepared by the combined efforts of Patanjali Research Centre and NIMS," Yoga Guru Ramdev quoted as saying by news agency ANI at a press conference. Ramdev added that the research found "69% patients recovered in three days and 100% patients recovered in seven days." The efficacy of

Patanjali's medicine on Covid cure has not been corroborated by any independent medical body yet. There is currently no drug in the world which has been proven to cure or prevent COVID-19. Explaining the clinical trials conducted, Ramdev said, "We conducted two trials of these, first clinical controlled study, which took place in Delhi, Ahmedabad, among many other cities. Under this 280 patients were included and 100 per cent of those recovered. We were able to control Corona and its complications in this. After this the all-important clinical control trial was conducted." He also said that necessary approvals for conducting the trials of medicine on patients had been taken from competent authorities. "We appointed a team of scientists after COVID-19 outbreak," said Balkrishna, Ramdev's close aide and MD of Patanjali Ayurved. He said that in the next few days, data of the trial will be released as evidence to bolster claims, IANS reported.

India Downgrades Diplomatic Ties With Pak, Asks Its Embassy To Reduce Staff By 50% Within A Week

The MEA said the reasons behind the decision were alleged involvement of Pakistan High Commission officials in 'acts of espionage' and maintaining dealings with terrorist organisations.

(News Agencies) In a major downgrading of diplomatic ties, India on Tuesday asked Pakistan to reduce the staff in its high commission here by half in next seven days, and announced a reciprocal trimming of staff strength in its high commission in Islamabad.

The Ministry of External Affairs said the Charge d'Affaires of Pakistan High Commission was summoned and informed about the decision which was based on instances of involvement of Pakistani officials in "acts of espionage" and "dealings with terrorist organisations".

The activities of the two Pakistani mission officials caught red-handed and expelled on 31 May 2020 was one example in that regard, MEA said in a statement. "While their officials indulged in actions that are not in conformity with their privileged status in the commission, Pakistan has in parallel engaged in a sustained campaign to intimidate the officials of the Indian High



Commission in Islamabad from carrying on their legitimate diplomatic functions. The recent abduction at gunpoint of two Indian officials and their severe ill treatment underlines the extent to which Pakistan has gone in that direction," MEA said.

Therefore, it said, India has taken the decision to reduce the staff strength in the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi by 50 per cent. "It would reciprocally reduce its own presence in

Islamabad to the same proportion. This decision, which is to be implemented in seven days, was conveyed to the Pakistani Charge d'Affaires," it added.

In Islamabad, Pakistan Foreign Office issued a statement, which said, it "rejects and strongly condemns the baseless allegations made by the Indian Ministry of External Affairs as a pretext to seek 50 percent reduction in the staff strength" of

its high commission in New Delhi. "Pakistan completely dismisses allegations of any violation of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations by the officials of the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi and reiterates that they always function within the parameters of international law and diplomatic norms. Pakistan also rejects the insinuations of intimidation of Indian High Commission officials in Islamabad," the statement

added. The Pakistan foreign office also said that the Indian Charge d'Affaires in Islamabad was summoned to convey Pakistan's rejection and condemnation of the "baseless Indian allegations", and was also informed of Islamabad's decision to reduce the Indian High Commission's staff strength by 50 percent as a reciprocal measure. According to a mutual arrangement, the sanctioned staff strength of the Indian and Pakistani high commissions is 110 each. However, both high commissions are not operating at full strength currently. Officials said both sides will have to reduce staff strength by 40-45 people in view of India's decision. The last time India downgraded diplomatic ties by asking Pakistan to reduce the staff strength in its high commission was after the Parliament attack in December 2001. However, as relations improved by 2005, the staff strength at both missions returned to the normal level.

With Rajnath Singh In Moscow, India Pushes Russia To Speed Up Defence Contracts

Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar met with Russia Deputy Defence Minister Col General A V Fomin in Moscow to work on the modalities of speed up various defense contracts.



(News Agencies) Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his team are in Russia's capital Moscow to attend World War II Victory Day celebrations as well as speed up various defence contracts, including the S-400 missile defence system as ties with China deteriorate. After reaching Russia, Singh on Tuesday laid a wreath at the statue of Mahatma Gandhi at the Indian Embassy. He is on a three-day visit to Russia. Earlier in the day, Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar met with Russia Deputy Defence Minister Col General A V Fomin in Moscow to work on the modalities of speed up various defense contracts. "The partners agreed to strengthen multifaceted ties

between the two countries," the Indian mission stated on Tuesday. Also India and China's foreign ministers met face-to-face for the first time since the barbaric attack was carried out in Galwan valley in eastern Ladakh region across Line of Actual Control between the two countries' troops in which 20 Indian soldiers and an unknown number of Chinese troops were killed.

Both the countries have agreed to deescalate the situation along their boundary, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian said at a regular news briefing Tuesday in Beijing. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov hosted the virtual trilateral meeting with China's Wang Yi and

India's S. Jaishankar. After the meeting he said, "I don't think that India and China need any help."

On defence contracts, India and Russia have inked deals worth \$16 billion. Moscow has stated that they are committed to the timely implementation of contracts, including the supply of S-400 air defence systems and production of Kalashnikov rifles and Kamov helicopters.

Delhi is tasked with a major challenge to ramp up its medical infrastructure in the wake of the rising Covid cases, expected to cross 5.5 lakh by the end of July by one estimate, requiring close to 90,000 beds. The health bulletin on Tuesday didn't give any information on the number of beds currently available at the disposal of the authorities for treatment of coronavirus patients. The departure



Nearly 4,000 new Covid-19 cases take Delhi tally past 66,600

(News Agencies) Delhi on Tuesday recorded the highest single-day hike with nearly 4,000 fresh Covid-19 cases registered in the last 24 hours to take the coronavirus tally in the capital to 66,602, according to data released by the health department. It also reported 68 new deaths in the same period, taking the death toll to 2,301 since the outbreak of the disease. The city-state currently has 24,988 active coronavirus cases. The capital has also crossed 4 lakh tests conducted in the city to detect Covid-19 patients with tests conducted on 16,952 samples in the last 24 hours, according to the health bulletin.

from normal practice comes on a day when the Union home minister Amit Shah and Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal exchanged tweets over a new facility created for temporary use as a Covid-19 treatment centre. It all started with Kejriwal requesting Amit Shah to inspect the facility with 10,000 beds and to deploy doctors and nurses from ITBP and Army to the facility. It invited a retort from Shah, who said that the decision to operationalise the centre had been taken three days ago in a meeting attended both by Shah and Kejriwal apart from other officials while taking stock of Delhi's preparedness.

He also reminded the Delhi CM that the centre erected at Radha Swami Beas facility in south Delhi will be run by Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP). "Dear Kejriwal ji, it has already been decided in our meeting three days back and MHA has assigned work of operating 10,000 bed COVID Care Centre at Radha Swami Beas in Delhi to ITBP.

China needs to be held accountable for Covid-19's destruction



That the Chinese government has significant culpability for the global spread of Covid-19 and needs to be held accountable for its misconduct should not be a partisan issue. We already know that the Associated Press has reported the Chinese government concealed critical facts about the emergence of the virus; that local officials silenced voices of warning; and that as a result, actions of Chinese officials most likely deprived the world early on of critical information about the virus' transmissibility and lethality. Had China been forthcoming and transparent about the scope and spread of Covid-19, tens of thousands of lives could have been saved, as the US and other countries would have been able to act on information about the virus sooner and may well have taken valuable precautionary steps or implemented policies to stop Covid-19 from spreading and causing so much death. This much seems clear, though we're still trying to figure out what Chinese officials knew and when they knew it — and how much blame lies with officials in China's central government or with local and provincial authorities. The Trump administration, for its part, has internally circulated a Department of Homeland Security report alleging China intentionally hid information about Covid-19's severity. China's State Council, headed by Premier Li Keqiang, has produced its own public report rebutting claims of malfeasance and outlining what it called a "swift" response to the unfolding epidemic within its borders.

The US has already spent trillions of dollars in an attempt to head off a total economic collapse, and it will take years before the final bill is totaled. If the global catastrophe of Covid-19 was abetted by intentional wrongdoing or reckless indifference on the part of the Chinese government and its senior officials, it should not be left to American corporations, business owners and taxpayers to bear the brunt of the resulting harm. China must be held

accountable. There are options that policymakers, the business community, and the American people should consider, and all reasonable measures should be on the table. China has a long history of harmful actions toward the US, and it's important to remember that China often does not act in America's best interests. For starters, cyber intrusions — including the theft of trade secrets from US corporations, in order to advantage Chinese commercial interests and benefit the Chinese military — have resulted in billions in losses. In 2017, the FBI arrested a Chinese national on suspicion of aiding the 2015 theft of personal information from millions of Americans both inside and outside of government, which were stolen in a hack of the Office of Personnel Management. In February, a US federal grand jury indicted four members of China's military with hacking the credit-rating agency Equifax and stealing the personal information of millions of private US citizens in one of the largest hacks on

record. In corporate hacks, too, American companies have been left shouldering huge losses.

Separately, illegal shipments of the synthetic opioid fentanyl from China have fueled the opioid crisis in the US and contributed to thousands of deaths in recent years, according to the Justice and State departments. So far, the US has received nothing but empty reassurance from the Chinese government about the problem; China, meanwhile, has denied it is the primary source of fentanyl in America. "President Xi said that he would stop the fentanyl to the United States — this never happened, and many Americans continue to die!" President Trump tweeted last year. The list goes on. China has used Chinese students at US universities to collect information and recruit spies, prompting the FBI to warn universities about the activity. Chinese manufacturers have long sold dangerous products in the US but have not been held accountable in US courts. All of this happened before "Covid-19" ever became part of our daily lexicon.

Several members of Congress have introduced or are working on legislation that would eliminate China's sovereign immunity — the immunity afforded to nation-states from prosecution in other countries' courts — for potential wrongdoing leading to the spread of Covid-19, and these proposals warrant serious bipartisan consideration. Congress should

consider expanding these measures to deal not only with possible Chinese abetting of the coronavirus crisis, but to hold China accountable for its state-sponsored cybercrimes as well. Members of both the Senate and House have introduced legislation to strip China and other foreign governments of immunity if they intentionally misled other countries about Covid-19. Several of these bills are modeled after the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act. We advocated for JASTA on behalf of the 9/11 community to ensure that families and victims would have full access to US courts to pursue claims against the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. JASTA has allowed the lawsuits against Saudi Arabia to proceed to discovery, and the 9/11 families, along with the American public, are now much closer to learning the facts about the Saudi government's alleged involvement in the attacks. Meanwhile, alarmist warnings that JASTA would expose the US to "reciprocal" claims abroad, which ignored JASTA's narrow framing and dishonestly analogized our legitimate activities with intentional and illegal wrongdoing, have proven totally unfounded. No such risk has materialized. The creation of a similar exception to sovereign immunity for China, based on its role in the coronavirus crisis, warrants serious and careful consideration. This should be a

bipartisan pursuit.

The Attorney General of Missouri has filed a claim against China already, and other states should consider doing the same, both to preserve available legal remedies and to ensure the issue receives the attention from legislators it deserves. Compensation for harm to US interests for any Chinese wrongdoing surrounding Covid-19 must be included in the portfolio of issues being discussed as part of diplomatic engagements between the US and China moving forward. And there's another option: The president, under the doctrine of espousal, has the authority to formally present a claim on behalf of injured US citizens to a foreign government for reparations. Throughout its history, the US used this power to secure compensation on behalf of Americans for a wide range of foreign government wrongdoing — piracy of US ships, world wars, terrorism. But unfortunately, today, foreign governments have learned that they are unlikely to be held accountable by the US. Hopefully, as we assess how to investigate what China did and didn't do as Covid-19 began to spread, and hold its government accountable for any willful decisions or gross negligence that caused harm to the rest of the world, we will keep in mind that if China took shortcuts at home, those decisions had consequences for the rest of the world.

On China, put India first

Self-interest must guide the response to China's aggression

India should react to China's act of aggression in eastern Ladakh through all means at its disposal — economic, military, and diplomatic. That is a given and there can be no argument about it. None. That said, India should also ensure that everything it does is driven by self-interest above all else, particularly in the economic domain. There is a clamour for cancelling contracts given to some Chinese companies across areas such as engineering and construction. So, how should New Delhi go about this?

It is easy to see why Chinese companies should be barred from all strategic areas — not just defence but also domains such as information technology and communications. There is a very opaque relationship between the private sector and the government in China and most Chinese private companies and entrepreneurs ensure their objectives are in sync with Beijing's larger vision. In return, the Chinese government has supported these private companies, helping them grow and

spread their network across the globe. In these areas, India's answer, when it comes



to participation by Chinese firms, should be a straightforward and unambiguous No. But the line can't be as hard when it comes to other areas. As this newspaper has reported, India depends on China for several raw materials and intermediary products (or components). Chinese companies are good at heavy engineering. India would do well to tap this expertise and continue to keep these

supply chains going in its own interest. Sure, it is always good to manufacture locally, but it won't be possible to do so overnight. Even when it does become possible, it may not make economic sense in the case of some products. Nor, for that matter, does it make sense to say no to Chinese capital, as long as investments aren't allowed in strategic areas and there continues to be a clear line between ownership (or beneficial ownership) and management. Over the past few days, some state governments have cancelled contracts issued to Chinese companies for largely non-strategic work. This is not a good idea for two reasons. One, doing so may result in protracted and expensive arbitration. Two, more important, most of these contracts were given out to the lowest bidder. Re-tendering those contracts may cause delays that India can ill-afford as it seeks to rebuild its economy. We must get back at the Chinese, but always driven by the principle of self-interest.

Covid-19 is increasing at warp speed in the US

The Covid-19 infection rate in the US is increasing at warp speed, alarming almost everyone outside the White House. About half of US states are in the midst of a substantial uptick compared to their number of reported cases just last week. Some states however have not seen any increase. For the most part, these are places like New York, New Jersey and Michigan that already went through the nightmare.

In fact, they have had a moment to enjoy relative calm and less crowded hospitals. Though never quite stated aloud, there is secret hope among us residents of the already-ransacked that perhaps the epidemic is done with us, that it has had enough.

Unfortunately, Louisiana, which had a huge outbreak in March likely related to Mardi Gras celebrations throughout the state, appears to be demonstrating that the dreaded second wave of infection -- the forceful return of virus to an already extensively affected area -- is a real thing. (There is some controversy about whether this is a true second wave or a return of an incompletely extinguished first wave, but either way, it is a mess).

And Louisiana is not alone among states with a second bump. Florida had a small rise in April, flattened its curve for a while, but has seen a disastrous rise in June. Ditto Georgia.

They opted however to tempt fate and re-open too soon, wasting the weeks of tedious quarantine. This faith-based approach resembles an athlete, after months of grueling rehab from an injury, returning too soon and ending up back at square one after re-injuring the same bone or joint.

The first time around in Louisiana was far more severe than almost anywhere, a true "sky is falling" early spring spike in cases and deaths. They responded methodically and cases plummeted, remaining relatively low for about two months.

In the last weeks though, after progressing from Phase One on May 15 to Phase Two re-opening on June 5, the area has had a surge of cases. Perhaps it was all due to a too-rapid move to Phase Two.

In addition to easing restrictions, though, Louisiana had to deal with an additional problem, a problem of growing national concern. It is surrounded by states that are in the midst of large initial outbreaks that haven't yet been well contained.

Consider Louisiana's neighborhood: to the east is Mississippi where cases have been slowly rising for months. It abuts the greater New Orleans area where the three most populous parishes all have seen a substantial jump in cases in the last two weeks according to a New York Times analysis: Orleans (15 cases a day to 26), Jefferson (33 to 60), and St Tammany (12 to 28).

Arkansas with its calamitous meatpacking

plant outbreaks is just north of Louisiana's Bossier (7.6 to 26) and Webster (5.7 to 20) Parishes. And Calcasieu Parish (8.6 cases to 26) sits across the border from Texas, which hit a new daily state record with more than 5,500 cases Wednesday. Right now Louisiana has identified clusters of cases from high school graduation parties and a bar near LSU. There will be more clusters and more spread; perhaps Louisiana will be able to contain the problem more efficiently than many other states. Or not.

But the problem will remain the same: infectious diseases are infectious. They do what they do regardless of who the governor is or when the nail salon re-opens. They move across state lines with the same ease that they go from hand to hand, something a veteran germaphobe such as the President should understand. Walls -- physical or cartographic -- can't keep the problem away.

It appears though that three northeastern states -- New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut -- are going to try the border war approach. They announced this week that they will require a 14-day quarantine for travelers from states with a 10% or greater Covid-19 diagnostic test positivity. As of Wednesday, the measure applies to eight states. Among them are Arkansas and Texas, as well as Florida, a second home for many in the tri-state area.

I personally doubt this lock 'em up approach will work without maintenance of a level of hostility and tough-guy policing that seems at odds with the moment. More importantly though it is really just an attempt to provide a practical work-around because the core problem -- the lack of federal coordination -- is not being addressed.

We currently have a situation where individual governors with different re-opening rules, different priorities and timelines, different assessments of the data, and different levels of governmental commitment are reopening willy-nilly without a consideration of the larger impact. This approach is destined to fail miserably and inevitably will corrode relationships among governors. The deliberate absence of a coordinated, cautious reopening is in many ways a larger failure of leadership than the disastrous first months of the pandemic, when the United States failed to secure adequate testing, personal protective equipment or a system to ensure ventilators were available where they were needed for its citizens. It is one thing to make a series of bad decisions in the early days of a situation no one had previously encountered. It is another and even more reprehensible problem to refuse to learn the lessons taught by the more than 120,000 people in the US who have died from the disease.

The government imposed a flawed lockdown. It has caused immense suffering

June 25 marked exactly three months since the initial 21-day lockdown that began as a response to the coronavirus pandemic. Announced at four hours' notice, without consultations with chief ministers, the lockdown was Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi's big solution to the greatest public health challenge of our times. The lockdown, however, has proven to be the biggest fiasco of our times.

Let me explain with numbers -- not opinions, but hard numbers. As the lockdown began, there were 86 new cases reported in India on March 25. By June 1, the date of Unlock 1.0, the transition to a post-lockdown phase, the number of new daily cases was 7,723.

Three weeks later (June 21), it was 15,140. And rising. Far from flattening the curve by the end of May -- or whenever this had been promised at the evasive union health ministry briefings -- the number of cases is only rising. India is now expected to reach a peak in cases towards the end of July or even August. Nobody can say anything with any certainty or credibility.

The implementation of the lockdown left a lot to be desired. The period was wasted and not used to ramp up testing and other capacities. India is now number four among all countries when it comes to the Covid-19 caseload, but, at the beginning of this week, was ranked at 139 when it came to testing per million population. Initially, the Centre did not supply an adequate number of testing kits to the states. The kits that were then sent to the states were faulty and unusable. The lockdown has come at an immense economic cost. In March -- as the coronavirus crisis began to become obvious, with the government in denial for weeks on end -- \$16 billion of foreign capital left India, an all-time high. In April, the unemployment rate rose to 23.8%,

another all-time high. In April, exports dropped by 60% as well.

About two of every five micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and self-employed businesses have started shutting down for good. As per the Clothing Manufacturers Association of India, there was an 84% dip in textile sales. Overall, the 21-day lockdown cost India an estimated Rs 35,000 crore a day. An economy is ultimately about people. Left to fend for themselves, ordinary Indians suffered immeasurably during the lockdown. As many as 92 million urban Indians and 89 million rural Indians exhausted their savings within the first 21-day lockdown. By the end of June, 139 million urban Indians are anticipated to run out of their savings. People were left desperate. The stories of migrant workers, denied even trains till May 1, and forced to buy tickets after that, is well known. But do you know the total number of non-Covid-19 deaths during the lockdown? Here's the break-up: Exhaustion: 47; starvation and financial distress: 167; absence of medical support: 63; migrant workers trying to walk home: 209; and those who died on shramik trains: 95. That adds up to 581 deaths -- deaths completely unrelated to the coronavirus and deaths directly correlated to a poorly-planned, poorly-executed lockdown. Who is responsible? An economic stimulus for business and, much more important, a relief package for the poorest and most vulnerable citizens is to be expected after a catastrophe such as Covid-19 and the lockdown. Germany has a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) 1.5 times that of India's and El Salvador a GDP that is 100th the size of India. Both these countries, and so many others, have announced generous cash transfers to those who need them.



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China has been playing Go, not chess. India needs to learn the game

As Beijing surrounds Delhi, India must expand the board, have a long-term horizon, and consolidate internally

By Raghu Raman

Chinese strategist Sun Tzu's most famous aphorism goes something like this. He said, "If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles"

Strategists learn about adversaries by observing their actions and statements, interpreting their behaviour, and studying their leaders. But the more astute understand the enemies' mindset by studying their culture.

Leaders and tactics may change, but strategies and doctrines are embedded in the culture and mindset of a nation and are, therefore, far better predictors of their actions. Both China and India have a rich culture and several texts that explain respective mindsets but an easier way to explain the difference is to study the strategy games of the two nations.



Chess originated in India. The game is played by two players on a board of 64 squares with 16 white and black pieces each. The opponents start the game with all their pieces arrayed against each other and each player moves alternatively. The pieces have powers in hierarchical order with the queen being most powerful. All pieces change their positions continuously during the game.

As those familiar with chess know, it is a game of manoeuvre that has one centre of gravity — the king; and the objective is to capture or "kill" the opponent's

king. The loss of rest of the pieces or their positions at the end of the game is immaterial. The Chinese strategy game, however, is "igo" — commonly known as "Go". It is played on a much larger board that has 19x19 sides resulting in 361 points compared to the 64 squares in Chess. In Go, the stones are positioned on the "intersections" of the squares to deny "liberty" to the opponent's stones. Go also has white and black pieces called stones, but that is where the similarity with chess ends. The objective of Go is not to capture any single

piece; instead, it is to surround a larger total area of the board with one's stones before the opponent. As the game progresses, the players position stones on the board to map out formations and potential territories. Contests between opposing formations result in the expansion, reduction, or capture and loss of stones. The winner is decided by counting each player's surrounded territory along with captured stones. China has been playing Go, not chess with India. It has been playing the game on a multi-dimensional canvas much larger

than the Indian landmass and across several spectrums, ranging from the military to the economic "intersections" blocking India's "liberty" or manoeuvrability over a long period. It has inveigled every neighbour of India by coaxing, cajoling, or enticing them into its camp. It has infiltrated into India's economic, infrastructure, health care, communication and technological value chain so inextricably that, contrary to silly calls for boycotting Chinese goods, India cannot meaningfully disengage its dependence on China. While there is no doubting the valour of our army, the cost of militarily confronting an adversary whose economy is over five times as large as ours and whose defence budget is four times ours would be horrendous in human and economic terms for decades to come. This is particularly so because China has turned India's northern and western neighbours into its surrogate pincers tying down a large part of our military assets and strategic mindshare.

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How China has overplayed its hand

By Baijayant 'Jay' Panda

Almost 2,500 years ago, Greek historian, Thucydides, wrote of the devastating Peloponnesian War, "What made war inevitable was the growth of Athenian power and the fear which this caused in Sparta." There have been other such conflicts in history between established powers and rising ones, not all of which resulted in war. The same theme is playing out today, in the tensions between the United States (US) and China, and China and India.

In his provocative 2017 book, *Destined For War: Can America & China Escape Thucydides's Trap?*, Harvard University professor Graham Allison was not optimistic. He wrote, "When one great power threatens to displace another, war is almost always the result", citing 16 such conflicts in history, of which only four navigated the transition without war.

Nevertheless, war is not inevitable. Among successful examples cited by Allison, the following two are instructive. First, when a century ago, the US overtook the United Kingdom



(UK) as the world's pre-eminent superpower. It took accommodation by the established power, the UK, as well as statesmanship and negotiating skills on both sides. A second approach involved a different strategy, where the established power, the US and the contender, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) were continually attempting to contain each other for decades, but did

not go to war. The Cold War, in that sense, was one of the great successes of the modern era in avoiding all-out war. That was a good thing, considering that nuclear weapons were part of the equation for the first time in superpower conflicts. The US approach to the rise of China had essentially been like that first approach — the UK vs the US — for decades, but has recently been decidedly shifting towards

the second strategy, that of the US vs the USSR. China's approach towards India has always been like the latter. The US accommodation of China began with the Richard Nixon administration in the early 1970s, at the height of its rivalry with the USSR, when China was an impoverished developing nation. It stemmed from self-interest, of course, not least to counter the USSR, but also to

develop a big new market for American products and a source of cheap imports. Earlier American administrations tried the same with India, but failed to crack India's Nehruvian disdain for free markets and post-colonial suspicion of the West.

There was also a belief in the West, now belied, that as China prospered, it would also become less autocratic and a more open society. While the relationship was mutually beneficial for decades, in recent years, it has soured considerably. As China became the third largest and then the second-largest economy after the US, it progressively stopped playing by the rules from which it had itself benefited, and, in fact, started flexing both economic and military muscles. Nixon himself, long after ceasing to be president, said of China, "We may have created a Frankenstein's monster."

China's approach towards India was always about containment. Right from the 1940s, as both emerged into a new, post-colonial, post-World War II era, it has viewed India as a long-term

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Defending a historically undefined border line

China's decision to erect tents at a sensitive point in Galwan on LAC was unjustified and unacceptable



By Lt Gen PJS Pannu

In my younger days, I led a couple of long-range patrols along the McMahon Line. One patrol was to go to Khang La, located on the watershed. We were late and lost a lot of daylight hours, but we pressed on to finish our task. We then strayed across the line by almost a kilometre. With no Chinese troops in sight, we divided our patrol into two teams and located Khang La only the next morning. As a young

subaltern, this was my introduction to the Line of Actual Control (LAC). I later commanded the division on LAC in Arunachal Pradesh and then 14 Corps in Ladakh a few years ago. I have flown over the Galwan Valley several times. The ridge lines on the watershed are a maze with hardly any posts close to the line or any demarcation.

The current boundary, LAC

between India and China in eastern Ladakh, is an outcome of bloody battles fought in 1962 between the two countries in this most rugged and inhospitable of terrains. These battles were fought in October-November at Daulat Begh Oldi (DBO), Galwan, and Hot Springs, areas astride Pangong Tso lake, Razangla and Demchok. Due to severely low temperatures and high casualties, these battles came to a halt and the Chinese withdrew to their bases.

Similarly, the Indian Army also moved back to nearby bases. Since then, both militaries are present there in the absence of a formal political boundary settlement. Twenty-two rounds of boundary talks have taken place between the two nations, without any worthwhile outcome. India continues to claim the entire Aksai Chin and China claims areas along a line, best described by India as the line of "Chinese perception".

The British left these boundaries un-demarcated. Its maps showed several lines, one running along the Kun-lun mountains, referred to as the Johnson-Ardagh line showing Aksai Chin as a territory within Jammu and Kashmir. Another is marked closer to the Karakoram Range described as the Macartney-MacDonald line and yet another line further west is called the Foreign Office Line. Post-Independence, these were left to the interpretation of stakeholders such as the rulers of Jammu and Kashmir, Tibet

and the Indian and Chinese governments. Haphazard historical records, differing perceptions, and the machinations of cunning political leaders, left these lines to be deciphered by experts from both sides, albeit unsuccessfully. Meanwhile, the militaries of both sides have been left to hold ground that is divided by this history.

While India published its map in 1954, with the international border (IB) showing Aksai Chin as Indian territory, the Chinese built the western highway through Aksai Chin in 1955 linking Tibet with Kashgarh and Xingjiang. With India's claims as they stand, the Chinese would have considered it prudent to secure the area west of this sensitive highway. This was to be best achieved by dominating the ridge lines that run along the Karakoram Range between the watersheds of the Chip-Chap river and Galwan river, and then,

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Don't discriminate against non-resident migrants

Create a legal regime that allows them to access safety, shelter and welfare services on equal terms as residents

By KP Krishnan

Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi recently announced that India must become Atmanirbhar (self-reliant). One aspect of this could be that India will remove barriers within its internal markets to truly become a single market. It will remove the hurdles to efficiency improvements and become more competitive. The Goods and Services Tax (GST) was a step in this direction. Recent decisions to remove hurdles in inter-state agricultural trade are also similar. For agricultural and industrial products, as well as capital, India is increasingly becoming a single market. The creation of a barrier-free domestic market is also an intent reflected in Article 301 of the Constitution.

However, there is one market where frictions are being added rather than reduced. This is the labour market. For different reasons, leaders from out-migration and in-migration states have made statements suggesting that there may be more impediments to the inter-state migration of workers. Some states have announced



preferential treatment for workers from within the state. Others have spoken of instituting an approval system before allowing their workers to move to other states, in the backdrop of how they were treated. There are compelling reasons for internal migration in India.

First, India has much higher economic differences across states than comparable countries — with the per capita income of the richest large state (Haryana) being more than six

times that of the poorest state (Bihar). The wage gap between states is as high as 100% for regular workers and 250% for casual workers. It is, therefore, no wonder that workers from the poorer states migrate to richer states for work. As of now, the best option for many poor people looking to escape poverty is to leave the states they live in, because of economic opportunities in richer states. This movement is difficult since the cost of living is also higher in

richer states. However, millions still migrate and brave squalid conditions in in-migration states because they need livelihoods. Second, some of the poorer states such as Uttar Pradesh and Bihar have younger and larger populations, with many more workers than work opportunities. While these states must develop their economies, in the short-term, migration is an essential component of development for them. Third, India's growth has been largely

services-led. For most services, the availability of physical labour is essential. For services such as cooking, driving, hairdressing and security, there is a need for workers to be physically present to provide the service.

While beneficial for migrants, migration also has negative implications. Migration can put downward pressure on wages in richer states, with the increase in the supply of workers. This creates an incentive for regional and local leaders to generate anti-migrant sentiments, and to promote policies that favour local workers. This dynamic is not very different from the one seen in international migration — after a point, a political economy develops to oppose migration. Throughout India's history, states have enacted laws and measures that are discriminatory vis-à-vis non-resident migrants. Many state laws discourage or prevent non-residents from applying for government jobs or other professions that require government licensing (auto, taxi licences),

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How Hawaii Became a Rare Covid Success Story

The islands' geography and small population helped. But so did two enterprising doctors who pushed for aggressive tracing and testing—and sometimes found themselves at odds.

In mid-February, Hawaii did not yet have any recorded cases of Covid-19, and only 15 infections had been confirmed throughout the United States. But Josh Green, the lieutenant governor and a practicing emergency room doctor, was worried. He recently had learned that a man from Japan had spent nine days in the state and then tested positive for the virus upon returning home to Nagoya. The man, apparently, was sick—and contagious—toward the end of his vacation. He and his wife, who would later test positive herself, stayed in two hotels, one on Maui and one in Waikiki. They got in rental cars, went shopping in Chinatown, ate out at more than half a dozen restaurants, and met a friend in Honolulu for coffee. How many people had the couple unwittingly infected in that time, Green wondered? "For me, it really underscored the need to get ready. Because this thing is

so contagious, it could get out of control very fast," he says. His fears weren't unfounded. With 28,000 travelers pouring into Hawaii every day during the months of January and February, 20 percent of them from Asia, the state seemed fertile ground for a major Covid-19 outbreak. That was especially true on Oahu, where at least one-third of the state's visitors cram into the hotels, stores, restaurants and beaches that line Waikiki's 2 miles. Even without tourists, Oahu, where the bulk of the state's population lives, is jam-packed—significantly more so than New Jersey, the nation's most densely populated state. But a catastrophe never came. Instead of a massive, uncontrolled outbreak, Hawaii has recorded the fewest Covid-19 cases per capita in the country. As of this writing, just one person per 100,000 has died (17 in total), and 54 per 100,000

have tested positive (762 in total). By comparison, New Hampshire and Rhode Island, two states with similar population counts, have caseloads of 406 and 1,546 per 100,000, respectively. For six weeks in April and May, new cases in Hawaii didn't top five a day. At the beaches, where mask-free residents gather largely without tourists, you can almost start to forget about a virus that has upended lives across the globe.

Few people look to the United States for coronavirus success stories, instead singling out South Korea, New Zealand, Iceland or Germany. But as America tries to navigate its way out of the first wave and considers the possibility of a second in the fall, Hawaii's experience offers hope that, with the right efforts taken at the right time, the virus is containable. It also reveals the enduring challenge of trying to shake Covid-19: Since businesses and parks reopened in late May, the state has seen a recent, noticeable spike in cases, similar to other parts of the country. In early June, Hawaii's streak of single-digit daily cases ended with three days of new infections in the teens.

Hawaii, at least, has past experience to fall back on now. In those critical early weeks, when cases were manageable, the state set into motion all the steps that experts across the globe have identified as crucial. It also benefited from being able to enforce a mandatory 14-day self-quarantine for arrivals in ways other states couldn't. But the ocean alone didn't save Hawaii. In the weeks before the arrival

quarantine went into effect in late March, many expected the virus to have spread far more widely through the population than it did.

That it didn't, and that Hawaii has continued to keep cases low, is a function not of the usual dynamics—the top-down operation helmed by a high-profile leader, as in states like New York and Michigan or countries like New Zealand and

China. Hawaii's success came at the hands of several medical doctors: Green, the outspoken lieutenant governor, along with an enterprising private physician, both of whom pushed for aggressive testing while clashing with the state's top epidemiologist, who ran a tireless contact tracing program that has managed to track all of the state's confirmed cases to date.

(Contd on page 30)



Did Vladimir Putin Support Anti-Western Terrorists as a Young KGB Officer?

Putin has sworn his time as a KGB officer in Dresden was uneventful. There's a lot of reason to doubt that claim.

When Vladimir Putin first arrived in Dresden as a mid-level KGB officer in 1985, East Germany was already living on borrowed time. On the verge of bankruptcy, the country was surviving with the help of a billion-Deutsche Mark loan from West Germany, while voices of dissent were on the rise. All around the eastern bloc, the mood of protest was increasing amid the misery and shortages of the planned economy and the brutality of state law-enforcement agencies. Most of what Putin did during the Dresden years remains shrouded in mystery, in part because the KGB was so effective at destroying and transferring documents before the collapse of East Germany. "With the Russians, we have problems," said Sven Scharl, a researcher at the Dresden archives of the Stasi, the East German secret police, which worked with the KGB on intelligence operations. "They destroyed almost everything." Only fragments

remain in the files retrieved from the Stasi of Putin's activities there. His file is thin, and well-thumbed. The only trace of any operative activity connected to Putin is a letter from him to Horst Bohm, the Dresden Stasi chief, asking for his assistance in restoring the phone connection for an informant in the German police who "supports us." The letter is short on any detail, but the fact of Putin's direct appeal to Bohm appears to indicate the prominence of his role.

Many years later, when Putin became president of Russia, the legendary chief of the Stasi's foreign intelligence arm Markus Wolf and Putin's former KGB colleagues took care to stress that he had been a nobody when he served in Dresden. Putin was "pretty marginal," Wolf once told a German magazine, and even "cleaning ladies" had received the Bronze Medal awarded to him. The KGB colleague Putin shared an office with on his arrival in Dresden, Vladimir Usoltsev, who

was somehow permitted to write a book on those times, took care to emphasize the mundanity of their work, while revealing zero detail about their operations. He acknowledged their role in recruiting undercover agents, but said they'd spent 70 percent of their time writing "senseless reports." Russian state television later proclaimed that Putin was never involved in anything illegal. Most of these official accounts also emphasize that Dresden itself was a provincial backwater, far from the action of East Berlin. But conversations with Stasi and KGB colleagues at the time belie the officially sanctioned claims Putin played only a marginal role. These accounts suggest that Putin's years in Dresden might have been invaluable training in his work sowing chaos in Western politics today. And one first-hand account also suggests the downplaying of Putin's activities in Dresden was also cover for another mission—one beyond the edge of the law.



This account suggests that Putin was stationed there precisely because it was a backwater, far from the spying eyes in East Berlin, where the French, the Americans and the West Germans all kept close watch. According to a former member of the Red Army Faction, the far-left terrorist group in West Germany, who claimed to have met him in Dresden, Putin had worked in support of members of the group, which sowed terror across West Germany in the seventies and eighties: "There was nothing in Dresden, nothing at all, except the radical left. Nobody was watching Dresden, not the Americans, not the West Germans. There was nothing there. Except the one thing: these meetings with those

comrades." In the battle for empire between East and West, the Soviet security services had long been deploying what they called their own "active measures" to disrupt and destabilize their opponent. Locked in the Cold War but realizing it was too far behind technologically to win any military war, ever since the sixties the Soviet Union had found its strength lay in disinformation, in planting fake rumors in the media to discredit Western leaders, in assassinating political opponents, and in supporting front organizations that would foment wars in developing countries such as the Middle East and Africa and undermine and sow discord in the West.

(Contd. on page 31)

Don't give the military total freedom

This is an abdication of political responsibility and opens the doors to future crises in conflicts

By Shyam Saran

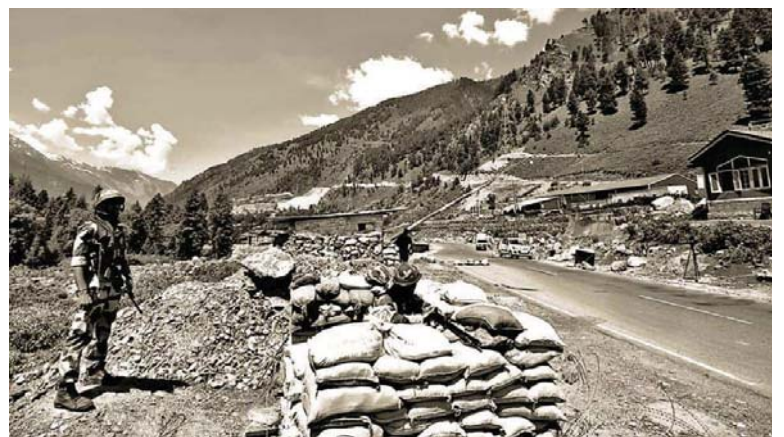
The violent skirmishes between India and China in eastern Ladakh have been disturbing. Some of the reactions from Indian leaders have also been disturbing. In a civilian democracy, where the armed forces operate under the direction of the political leadership, to announce as the prime minister and defence minister have done, that "the forces have been given complete freedom to take necessary action" is an abdication of political responsibility and opens the door to future crises in the India-China relations and in other possible conflict situations.

It is also not fair to thrust this responsibility on to the armed forces. Matters relating to war and peace are for the political leadership to decide on. Yes, once the leadership has decided that a military riposte is called for to counter a serious threat to the nation's security, the armed forces must be given discretion

in operational matters. They must act to defend our borders, but while actions at the local level and of limited scale and duration may be handled and resolved by them, any incident that goes beyond a certain threshold, with larger political and security implications, must be subject to careful assessment within the national security system and the political leadership before a military response is considered. The possibility of escalation is not just a military matter. It could have much wider ramifications, particularly if the adversary is a nuclear weapon-state just as India is. Such serious incidents cannot just be handled at the local, on-the-spot military level. The diplomatic machinery must be activated without delay and in serious instances, such as the Doklam face-off in 2017, a summit-level intervention, even, may be necessary.

We have as many as four bilateral agreements with China on maintaining peace and

tranquillity at the India-China border. These were concluded in 1993, 1996, 2005 and 2013, over a period of 20 years. These are valuable agreements with important provisions to ensure peace and tranquillity, and should not be unilaterally jettisoned or altered in an angry reaction to what happened in the Galwan Valley. They have, by and large, kept the peace at India's borders for the past several decades. That is an important achievement which should not be minimised. The use of arms by Indian forces when engaging with Chinese counterparts will inevitably lead to similar action by the latter. If we give the country's security forces the discretion to use firearms in an angry encounter, a bloodbath much worse than that which took place at Galwan could ensue. The consequences of such an incident would not just be military. It would reverberate right up the domestic political and diplomatic space. India's effort should be to ensure that



China remains committed to these important agreements and see how they can be strengthened. Even in the present case, it is not clear why the skirmishes which took place at various points were not raised to the diplomatic and higher political level. The series of incidents at multiple points and the earlier violence witnessed at the Pangong Lake area should have been a warning enough that the country was dealing with a new situation on the border. As a result of the violence in some of these encounters, we should

have been aware of heightened emotions and anger among the Indian forces as also among the Chinese. The possibility of such anger leading to more violent clashes should have been anticipated and diplomatic engagement should have been intensified. It should have been raised to the level of the national security adviser and the external affairs minister. This would have also been helpful in reading Chinese calculations. If this was done, then it has not been put out in the public domain.

(Contd on page 30)

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Wall Street Journal Editorial Board

Dems pushing strict lockdowns run most states with highest jobless rates

The Labor Department on Friday reported jobless rates in May for the 50 states, and the news is the greater than usual variation. Some state economies are recovering much faster than others, and the worst performing tend to be those that have imposed the most severe lockdowns. The national jobless rate was 13.3 percent in May, but

10 states still have unemployment rates above 15 percent. From highest down, they are: Nevada (25.3 percent), Hawaii (22.6 percent), Michigan (21.2 percent), California, Rhode Island and Massachusetts (16.3 percent), Delaware (15.8 percent), Illinois and New Jersey (15.2 percent), and Washington state (15.1 percent). The Nevada

and Hawaii economies rely heavily on tourism that has been walloped by the pandemic. But all of these 10 states have had some of the strictest lockdowns. The Michigan rate is especially striking compared to the lower rates in Wisconsin (12 percent) and Indiana (12.3 percent, down from 17.5 percent in a month). New York, the state hit hardest



by the virus, had a jobless rate of 14.5 percent in May, down somewhat from 15.3 percent a month earlier. Nine of the 10 states with the highest jobless rate are run by Democrats, who have tended to demand that the economy should stay locked

down and in some cases are still resisting opening. One exception is Colorado, where Democratic Gov. Jared Polis was one of the first to reopen. His decision is paying off as Colorado's jobless rate in May fell to 10.2 percent from 12.2 percent in April.

The real reason mobs across the country are tearing down American monuments

By Tucker Carlson

On Monday, a mob attempted to knock down a statue of Andrew Jackson. They spray-painted the base, trying to knock the statue down. In large letters, you can see it says "killer" at the bottom. Amazing. This is happening all over the country as you know and there's a reason for it. Over the weekend, most recently -- doubtless, you've heard of this -- city officials announced their plan to remove the statue of Teddy Roosevelt from outside New York's Museum of Natural History. The bronze statue has stood there in the Theodore Roosevelt Rotunda facing Central Park since before the Second World War. Soon it will be gone.

People who erected that statue 80 years ago would be confused by this, no doubt. They did not consider Teddy Roosevelt a controversial figure. In fact, Roosevelt was the most popular president in American history. He was also the most American president. No other country could have produced Teddy Roosevelt. Roosevelt's virtues mirrored the values of America. He was physically brave. He was profoundly literate, highly self-disciplined and amazingly energetic. While still a college student, Roosevelt wrote a two-volume history of the War of 1812 that is still in print today. You can buy it on Amazon. He was the youngest president in our history. He saved our economy from corporate monopolies. And by doing that, he made the American middle class possible. He created the national parks. He created the Panama Canal, the Food and Drug Administration, and then he kept going.



The list of Teddy Roosevelt's achievements fills entire shelves of biographies. Those are in addition to the more than 40 books he wrote himself on topics ranging from Oliver Cromwell to cattle ranching to social justice. Personally, Roosevelt was a famously decent man. In 1901, he invited his friend Booker T. Washington to dinner. No African-American had ever eaten in the White House. Democrats roared with rage at the idea. For the crime of having a meal with a black man, they attacked Teddy Roosevelt and his wife for the rest of their lives. But Roosevelt never bowed. He gave the finger to the mob, and he continued cheerfully on. Teddy Roosevelt was a hero to millions of Americans. He still is. That's precisely why they are tearing down his statue. They know that if they can force you to watch as they topple your heroes, they have won. There's nothing they can't do next.

They can decide how you raise your children, how you vote, what you're allowed to believe. Once they've humiliated you, they can control you and that's why across the country, mobs are tearing down America's

monuments. In the cities of Richmond and St. Paul, Minn., they've torn down statues of Christopher Columbus. They did the same thing in Boston. Boston's mayor now says it's time to remove a statue of Abraham Lincoln, the man who freed the slaves. It's racist.

In Dallas, they pulled the Texas Ranger statue out of the airport after more than 50 years. In Dearborn, Mich., they toppled the statue of the former mayor. They did the same thing in Philadelphia.

In Nashville, they pulled down a statue of a former U.S. senator. Same in Albany. In Oregon, Thomas Jefferson and George Washington were torn down. In San Francisco, the mob demolished statues of Ulysses S. Grant, Junipero Serra, and Francis Scott Key. On the pedestal of the Key monument, they spray-painted, "Kill the colonizers" and "Kill whitey," just in case you missed the point.

One thing all of these Americans, now canceled, have in common: Not one of them fought for the Confederacy. Pulling down their statues had nothing to do with the Civil War -- at least not the

first Civil War, the one that took place 150 years ago. Democrats understand that very well, and they support all of it. In every place where the mob has destroyed public monuments, Democratic leaders have backed them as they did it. But at the same time -- and you should know this -- so have many Republicans.

Last week a mob in downtown Washington, D.C. decided to tear down a statue of a man called Albert Pike. Pike was famous as a journalist and a poet and later as a prominent Freemason. For less than a year, from late November of 1861 to mid-July of 1862, Pike served in the Confederate Army. Pike was later arrested for treason against the Confederacy, and he faced execution for that. But in the end, it didn't save him from the mob. They set fire to Pike's effigy as it lay on the ground. At least one prominent conservative tweeted his approval of this. Republicans in Congress said nothing at all, and they could have. Pike's now destroyed statue is owned by the

National Park Service. It's federal property. Tearing it down was a federal crime, but no one in Washington even considered enforcing that law.

Kevin McCarthy of California, the top Republican in the House, was not in a position to say much of anything. McCarthy has endorsed the removal of statues that the left has designated as racist. Last week, as violent mobs roamed the country destroying public property, Kevin McCarthy refused to acknowledge it on his official Twitter account. On Wednesday, McCarthy did manage to send a very emphatic tweet calling for sanctions against Syria "to hold the Assad regime responsible for its atrocities." Elected Republicans, almost all of them, are in no hurry to stop the disorder. They appear to believe what we're watching is a version of the Rodney King riots from 1992. People saw an upsetting video on the internet, they're angry, and that's understandable. But they'll calm down soon, and we can get back to cutting capital gains taxes and sanctioning Bashar al-Assad. That's their view of it.

They are wrong. This is not a momentary civil disturbance. This is a serious and highly organized political movement. It is not superficial. It is deep and profound. It has vast ambitions. It is insidious; it will grow. Its goal is to end liberal democracy and challenge Western civilization itself. This is an ideological movement. The ideas that fuel it have incubated for decades on college campuses. We paid for all of it, by the way.

(Contd on page 29)

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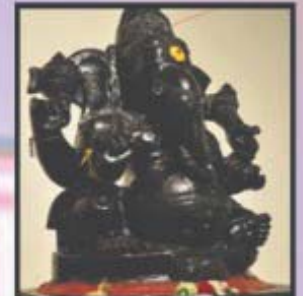
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The diplomatic dance for the horseshoe table

With multilateralism under pressure, particularly as a result of Covid-19, UNSC, too, has its challenge set. India's term on UNSC will also coincide with India hosting Brics (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and G-20 summits. India should use the opportunity to push its case on Security Council reform to open up the horseshoe table that seats the UNSC.

(News Agencies) India will serve a two-year term on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) from January 2021. This will be the nation's eighth time at UNSC. Other than the Permanent 5 (P-5), UNSC has 10 elected members, five from Asia and Africa, two each from Latin America and Western Europe & Others (WEOG) and one from East Europe.



Five of these elected members retire every year. There are five regional groups at UNSC, representing Asia, Africa, Latin America and in a hark-back to the Cold War, Eastern Europe, apart from WEOG that includes the United States (US), Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Israel. Most regional groups, other than WEOG, usually endorse their candidates ahead of the election. This time, we were the candidate for the Asian seat and obtained

182 out of 193 votes in the UN General Assembly. From WEOG, Norway and Ireland knocked out Canada for the group's two seats.

While the election is hotly contested, the election process is fascinating. The ballot is a blank sheet. You are supposed to know who is running, and write in the name of the country of your choice on the ballot. Of course, you can vote for your own country. India last served on the UNSC during 2011-12. The team was led

by ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri, now minister in the Narendra Modi government (full disclosure: He is also a cousin). I was his deputy. Then, too, we were the only candidate from Asia and obtained a record 187 votes from 192 members. We had previously been on UNSC in 1991-1992 and were seeking to return after a gap of 19 years and a bruising defeat at the hands of Japan in 1996. India's effort was to marshal the maximum number of votes.

The widely publicised story after the election was of the Pakistani ambassador, Abdullah Hussain Haroon, having shown around his ballot apparently marked in favour of India. There were others who took photos on their phones and showed them to us, signalling their support. We missed five votes. Obviously, some were political. But strange things also happen. One African country received a vote on the Asian slate. Unbelievable, but the Ambassador wrote his own

country's name on the ballot, thinking that he had signed his support for India. Then, too, Canada was bested in the WEOG by Portugal and a late-entrant Germany. A diplomat from a small country told me that while he was awaiting instruction on his two votes, he was sure one would be Germany; after all, his president rode in a Mercedes. Elected members head Security Council committees. The P-5 refer to these as "goodies". For us, obtaining

the Chair of the Counter Terrorism Committee (CTC) was important. Strangely, the British opposed this saying that we were invested in the matter. But, playing the diplomatic game in New York, Delhi and London, India prevailed. During India's chairmanship, we established the concept of "zero tolerance" for terrorism. Counter-terrorism will rightly be a focus for India during our forthcoming term on UNSC. With multilateralism under pressure, particularly as a result of Covid-19, UNSC, too, has its challenge set. India's term on UNSC will also coincide with India hosting Brics (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and G-20 summits. India should use the opportunity to push its case on Security Council reform to open up the horseshoe table that seats the UNSC.

India has closed military gap with China along border

Over the past dozen years India has not only closed the gap with China in this military theatre, it may now have a slender superiority.

(News Agencies) India has the upper hand in military deployments along its border with China, says a recent Harvard University assessment. If the Chinese attacked, co-author Frank O'Donnell of the US Naval War College told HT, "due to the larger permanent military presence of Indian forces vis-a-vis Chinese forces along the border areas, India would eventually be able to force China back across the LAC, although casualties would be extremely high on both sides." One unknown in such a conflict would be China's ability to use cyberattacks to disable Indian communications and logistics.

Over the past dozen years India has not only closed the gap with China in this military theatre, it may now have a slender superiority. Indian officials largely concur with this view though prefer to stress India does not enjoy a position of complete dominance. Chinese military assessments began recognizing this problem from the mid-2000s and this may have contributed its border belligerence.

India and China have a similar number of soldiers along the border, a little over 200,000 each, but a portion of Chinese troops are reserved for the Russian border and



handling insurgents in Tibet and Xinjiang. India holds a slight edge in fighter aircraft numbers but, more importantly, its Su-30s are superior to any Chinese fighters in the area and its base network allows it to better survive the missile exchanges that would follow. "India has more and better aircraft along the border, more experienced air crews, as well as a resilient basing position," says O'Donnell.

"China is regularly operating with a permanent Indian conventional force advantage along its border areas,"

says the report. It notes this is not "typically acknowledged" in Indian debates and optimists regarding the military balance against China were "a minority" in India. For decades, going by the People's Liberation Army's journal, *Science of Military Strategy*, India was rated only as China's number four external security concern. This has begun to change. The *China National Defence Daily* by 2013 spoke of India's "surge of forces" along the border. A 2017 *Nanfang Daily* survey of Chinese strategic thinkers said

some were worrying that "the defensive strategy of the Indian Army has shifted... toward the offensive." Two Chinese experts on territorial issues warned in 2014 that "keeping our military's advantage in the Sino-Indian border area is not only a national defense requirement, but also to prevent China from being disadvantaged in border negotiations." There is more literature in the Chinese language about India catching up in terms of military infrastructure and force deployment after the Doklam crisis, says

General G. L. Narasimhan Rao, head of the Centre for the Study of Contemporary China.

India is far from being in a position of military preponderance. Indian defence officials point to the "touch and go nature" of the mountain environment means a numerical advantage in men and aircraft can be wiped out by inclement weather. China keeps most of its military firepower along its Pacific coast and would almost certainly redeploy to go for a "round two," warns O'Donnell. M. Taylor Fravel, an MIT professor who has written on China's border policies, says that "China has just over 10 percent of its ground forces [in its western theatre], a very large part of the country, and not even all these troops are focused on India." But because China does not want to deploy a large fraction of its forces in Tibet or Xinjiang, he added, "I think this disparity in the local balance makes China especially sensitive to changes that improves India's position." Did India's steady military improvement trigger Beijing is harder to ascertain. O'Donnell thinks China's greater border aggression is a general trend evident in its behaviour with all its neighbours and not just about India.

India, Pakistan to expel embassy staff in tit-for-tat spy row



(News Agencies) NEW DELHI - India said on Tuesday it would expel half the staff in Pakistan's embassy in New Delhi over alleged spying by officials there, prompting Islamabad to say it would respond in kind. Relations between the nuclear-armed rivals are strained and tit-for-tat expulsions of diplomats, often on charges of espionage, are common. Neither country has a permanent ambassador in place and in the last month each country has accused the other of illegally detaining and torturing its diplomats. "They (Pakistan) have been engaged in acts of espionage and maintained dealings with terrorist organisations," the Indian foreign ministry said in a statement. In response, Pakistan's foreign ministry said its staff had acted lawfully, and that it would expel half of India's embassy in Islamabad "as a reciprocal measure". India earlier said it intended to voluntarily cut staff at its embassy in Islamabad by the same amount. Both countries said the affected officials had been asked to leave within a week. The latest round of hostility began when India expelled two Pakistani diplomats on May 31, after they were held for alleged spying, claims Islamabad said were "baseless". Last month Indian police released a pigeon belonging to a Pakistani fisherman after an investigation found that the bird, which had flown across the contentious border between the two countries, was not engaged in spying.

Edge of precipice?

Nepal's growing aggression towards India

(News Agencies) The relations between India and Nepal are on the edge of a precipice after the latter's Upper House passed a bill to update map that includes Indian territories.

Kathmandu's foreign policy towards New Delhi is becoming increasingly politicised as wants to junk all traditional ties and dump centuries of freindship.

The instances of Nepal's growing aggression towards India are as follows:

Nepal is redrawing its boundaries

From Uttarakhand to Bihar, Kathmandu is laying claim on Indian land and the provocation is unprecedented. Every advancement the nation makes is threat for India. Nepal is moving its troops to the border with India. It has built a helipad, is planting tents and building camps.

Nepalese forces are becoming more aggressive

They opened fire on a group of villagers along the Bihar border last week in which an Indian citizen lost his life.

Nepal's fm radio is playing anti-india songs as well as beaming propaganda in villages along the border. The Nepal parliament is passing laws indirectly aimed at Indian citizens. An Indian woman marrying a Nepali man will take seven years to become a citizen. Driving this anti-India sentiment is Nepal's Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli. He is whipping up ultra-nationalistic sentiments to survive a rebellion. However, he has been called out for his hypocrisy on territorial



nationalism.. China is encroaching into Nepal's land through an ongoing road expansion project in Tibet according to Nepal's agricultural department which conducted a survey last year. The alarming findings included the fact that China has encroached 36 hectares of land in four different districts of Nepal. Around 6 hectares of land in Nepal's Humla district, 4 hectares in Karnali district, 10 in the Sindhu-Pal-Chowk district and 9 hectares in Sankhu-Wa-Sabha. It may be sending its army to keep this land under its control. The agricultural department had warned 'there is a high possibility that over the period of time, china may develop its border observation post of armed police in those territories.' Ironically, Oli is doing nothing to stop this encroachment. China has launched massive road development projects in the Tibet autonomous region.

These projects have led to rivers changing their course. They have expanded China's boundaries into northern territories of Nepal. The

Nepalese media extensively reported on this but all its reports were either subdued or ignored. Instead, Oli is amping up differences with India over imaginary encroachments. When India constructed a road on the indian side of the border, Nepal cried foul. Their prime minister seized the opportunity to complain about territorial integrity. Integrity that goes missing when it comes to China. The fear of a rebellion appears to explains this outstanding hypocrisy. The ruling Nepal Communist party is dealing with constant infighting and is on the brink of collapse. Saving it is its guide and creditor the Chinese Communist Party. The Chinese Embassy in Kathmandu is solving internal disputes, instigating anti-India sentiments and pushing the Nepal government to pick fights. The deputy chief of Nepal communist party's foreign affairs department, Bishnu rijal called "roti-beti ka rishta" an "old rhetoric" There's a huge political divide in Nepal over the government's actions and words.

Maldives lifts all restrictions for visitors

(News Agencies) The Maldives is reopening to all visitors next month with no restrictions. A spokesperson for the tourism board has confirmed the Indian Ocean destination will welcome back tourists of all nationalities in July. While a previous draft proposal indicated travelers would need to present a medical certificate confirming proof of a negative Covid-19 test, the island nation is instead opting to allow tourists in without prior testing or a mandatory quarantine period.

There are also no new visa requirements or additional fees. At present, anyone with a super yacht or private jet can head there, but normal travelers will have to wait a few

more weeks. Last month, the Maldives, which closed its borders in March, announced a phased reopening that indicated incoming flights to its main international airport would recommence in July. "We are planning to reopen our borders for visitors in July, 2020," read an official statement issued by the Ministry of Tourism on May 30. The statement went on to stress that guests would not be charged any additional fees, referencing reports of extra tourist visa charges and landing fees. The Maldives has recorded nearly 2,000 confirmed cases and five deaths from Covid-19 so far. While the country has been shut to international tourists since recording its first cases,

around 30 resorts have stayed open, with guests choosing to self-isolate here rather than return home.

Officials previously suggested the popular honeymoon destination would reopen towards the end of the year, but this has been brought forward.

To ensure safety, the government says it is issuing a "Safe Tourism License" to accredit tourist facilities that abide by government legislation and specific safety requirements like having a certified medic on call and holding an "adequate stock" of personal protection equipment.

The original proposal suggested incoming travelers would need to have a confirmed



booking with a tourist facility with a license, but it seems this is no longer the case. In a statement issued last month, Ali Waheed, the country's minister for tourism, described the impact of the coronavirus pandemic as "more devastating than the 2004 tsunami and the 2008 global financial crisis." "For the first time in 47

years of tourism in the Maldives, we have experienced zero tourist arrival since this March," before adding, "we cannot keep our borders closed for long."

The Maldives welcomed more than 1.7 million visitors in 2019 and officials had been expecting numbers to rise to two million this year.



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Sikh abducted in Afghanistan, Afghan American community seeks India's help to free him

Appeals to India to make arrangements under the Vande Bharat Mission to provide a safe haven for more than 600 Sikhs in Afghanistan

(News Agencies) Washington DC: An Afghan Sikh was abducted from the Paktia province in eastern Afghanistan four days ago, the community living in the United States has confirmed.

The man, Nidhan Singh, hails from Tsamkani district in the Paktia province and was employed as a gursewak (helper) at the local gurdwara.

Post his abduction, the Afghan Sikh community in the United States has urged the Government of India to help in the resettlement of Sikhs living in Afghanistan.

They have appealed to India to make special arrangements under the Vande Bharat Mission to provide a safe haven for more than 600 Sikhs.

"I have spoken to Sikh member of Parliament Narinder Singh and he has confirmed that officials in the Afghan government have promised to help and find Nidhan," Paramjit Singh Bedi, the chairman of the Afghan Sikh community in New Jersey said.

"Narinder Singh has also reached out to Taliban leaders and has been assured that all efforts will be made to ensure his release," Bedi said.

Bedi and other community members will send written appeals to former diplomat and Union civil aviation minister Hardeep Singh Puri, the external affairs minister S Jaishankar and the Indian envoy to the United States, Taranjit Singh Sandhu.

HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Worried for the lives of the Sikh

minorities living in Kabul, Jalalabad and Ghazni, the Sikh community, has been constantly seeking support from India.

Encouraged by steps taken by the Indian government, leaders of the Afghan Sikh community have made several appeals to India to accommodate the Sikhs and Hindus from Afghanistan and grant them legal entry with long-term residency multiple-entry visa.

The community leaders living in the United States said it is imperative to alleviate the dire situation of religious minorities in Afghanistan who look to India as the only safe haven in the region.

FEWER THAN 100 FAMILIES LEFT

In May, expressing concern over the safety and security of



religious minorities in Afghanistan, 26 US Congressmen urged secretary of state Mike Pompeo to take steps to facilitate the "safe and expeditious relocation" of members of the Sikh and Hindu communities trapped in the war-torn country. In a letter on May 4, Congressman John Garamendi, co-chair of the Sikh Caucus, and 25 others stated that the Sikh community continues to be under

"grave" threat from Islamic State terrorist attacks directed at Sikhs. Once a thriving community of nearly 2.5 lakh people, the Sikh and Hindu communities in Afghanistan has endured years of discrimination and violence from extremists, and the community is now estimated to comprise fewer than 100 families across the country, the letter said.

China could set up border outposts in encroached territories: Nepal govt document

China's road building projects have altered the course of rivers, leading to loss of Nepalese territories



(News Agencies) Massive road development projects in the Tibet Autonomous Region have led to rivers changing their course and expanding China's boundary into northern territories of Nepal, a document by Nepal's agriculture department has warned.

The document, accessed indian media said patches of Nepalese territory in several districts had already been encroached by China and cautioned that Beijing could take over more territory in the north if the rivers continue to change course. The loss of Nepalese territory due to the rivers changing course could run into "hundreds of hectare land", it said. "There is a high possibility that over the period of time, China may develop its Border Observation Post of Armed Police in those territories," the document by the agriculture ministry's survey department said.

Nepal, which shares a boundary with China in the north, has 43 hills and mountains from the east to west, that act as the natural boundary between the two countries. The two countries have

six check posts, essentially for trade. The survey department has assessed that the changing course of 11 rivers had already

cost Nepal 36 hectare, or 0.36 sq km, across four of its districts; Humla, Rasuwa, Sindhupalchowk and Sankhuwasabha.

The encroachment of 36 hectare land by China had been first reported to the KP Sharma Oli-led government last year. There were some street protests after the loss of Nepalese territory to China emerged in the local media. But the Oli government, who is accused by his detractors of attempting to cosy up to China's communist party, played down the encroachment by the Chinese and channeled the public outrage against India over

the new maps issued by New Delhi in November last after the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir was split into two union territories.

Instead, PM Oli went on to amp up the differences with India over Kalapani, Limpiyadhura and Lipulekh spread across 330 sq km in May this year after Chinese intervention helped him survive a rebellion within the party in April. That intervention, however, meant that he had to scrap two ordinances promulgated just five days earlier. PM Oli had seized the opportunity after defence minister

Rajnath Singh opened an 80-km road that ends at Lipulekh Pass on the border with China.

Analysts in New Delhi and Kathmandu believe that PM Oli's hard push to Nepal's new political map was an effort to whip up ultra-nationalistic sentiments targetted at India to consolidate his position in the government and the party. This is why he did, a diplomat in New Delhi said, PM Oli did not inform Parliament before it voted on the map earlier this month that he had ignored an offer of dialogue between the foreign secretaries of the two countries.

Taliban killed 291 Afghan security personnel in past week: Gov't

(News Agencies) The Taliban has killed at least 291 Afghan security personnel over the past week, a top government official said, accusing the armed group of unleashing a wave of violence ahead of potential peace talks. The previous week was the "deadliest" in the country's 19 years of conflict, Javid Faisal, spokesman for the National Security Council, said on Monday. The Taliban group carried out 422 attacks in 32 provinces during the past week, killing 291 security personnel and wounding 550 others, Faisal said on Twitter. "Taliban's commitment to reduce violence is meaningless, and their actions inconsistent with their rhetoric on peace," he said.

The Taliban rejected the latest government figures. "The enemy aims to hurt the peace process and intra-Afghan talks by releasing such false reports," Zabihullah Mujahid, the Taliban's spokesman in Afghanistan, told the AFP news agency.

"We did have some attacks last week, but they were mostly in defence." In



a cabinet meeting on Monday, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani condemned the violence, which he blamed on the Taliban. The government sees the violence "as running against the spirit of commitment for peace", Ghani said. In an attack on Monday, gunmen shot dead two prosecutors and three other employees

of the attorney general's office. The attack happened on the outskirts of capital Kabul, when gunmen opened fire on the car the attorney general and his team were in, the attorney general's office and the interior ministry said. It was unclear who the attackers were, and the Taliban denied involvement. The incident drew condemnation from US special envoy Zalmay Khalilzad, who led negotiations with the Taliban ahead of a deal signed in February between the US and the Taliban. The deal set out a US withdrawal from Afghanistan in

return for security assurances from the Taliban and outlined steps to be taken by the Afghan government before intra-Afghan talks. Khalilzad said the legal team had been working on a prisoner exchange that is a requirement before the Kabul government and the Taliban can start peace talks.

Concerns grow over 'lapses' in Sri Lanka's Easter attack probe



(News Agencies) Lawyers and activists have flagged apparent lack of adherence to due process by police during investigation into the 2019 bombings. As investigators in Sri Lanka move into the "final stages" of the probe into the April 2019 Easter terror bombings, concerns over apparent lack of adherence to due process have risen from several quarters.

Sri Lanka police recently said they are about to conclude investigations of the deadly serial bombings that claimed 279 lives last year; having arrested over 200 suspects in connection with the case. However, as more arrests make headlines, lawyers, civil society activists and rights groups flag apparent lapses in adherence to the law. In particular, the April 14 arrest of attorney at

law Hejaaz Hizbullah has drawn much attention. The lawyer has been in detention for two months after he was arrested under Sri Lanka's draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) that civil liberties activists have long wanted repealed. The former Maithripala Sirisena-Ranil Wickremesinghe government, having promised to repeal the Act, didn't.

Neither was a reason given at the time of his arrest — police later told media that it was in connection with Easter bombings — nor has he been produced before a magistrate since his arrest nine weeks ago. The Colombo Fort magistrate recently instructed the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) to produce him on June 24. After multiple requests, Mr. Hizbullah

was granted access to his lawyers for a few brief meetings, that too in the presence of CID officials, in whose custody he has been. According to police sources, the lawyer's detention order was signed by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa. "Investigators will not detain someone without reason or evidence. There has been no violation of due process in this probe," police spokesman Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Jaliya Senarathne told The Hindu.

Meanwhile, his family has filed a fundamental rights petition at the Supreme Court, challenging his detention. Further, the arrest of the lawyer — an establishment critic, who rose to prominence after the 2018 constitutional case

challenging then President Sirisena's abrupt dissolution of the Parliament — sparked concern among local and international actors.

"Most alarmingly, Mr. Hizbullah has been denied access to his family and even lawyers except for a brief 15 minutes with an Attorney-at-Law under the scrutiny of an eavesdropping CID officer. This does not constitute due access to one's lawyer," a statement signed by 158 lawyers said. Civil society representatives issued a statement saying, "the most troubling aspect" of the arrest was CID officers having allegedly accessed two case files of Mr. Hizbullah, which amounted to a "severe impingement of attorney-client

privilege". In a tweet on May 26, the Delegation of the European Union to Sri Lanka said it had written to Sri Lankan authorities expressing "deep concerns" over Mr. Hizbullah's arrest, while renewing calls to review Sri Lanka's 40-year-old counterterrorism legislation.

Citing his arrest, among other incidents, in its recent report on 'eliminating religious intolerance', Human Rights watchdog Amnesty International said: "With the new government still in its first year, the frequent incidents of demonisation, vilification and scapegoating of Sri Lanka's Muslim population are a cause for great concern," referring to different instances of discrimination and violence targeting Sri Lanka's Muslims in the last few years.

PIA plane crash in Karachi was due to human error, report says

(News Agencies) Dubai: Human error caused the tragic crash of a Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) passenger plane in Karachi last month, says the provisional investigation report.

The report says that the crash was due to the negligence of both the cockpit crew as well as the Air Traffic Control (ATC). There was apparently no technical fault in the aircraft, said the preliminary investigation report that was submitted to the Aviation Division in a high-level meeting

on Monday. PIA Flight PK8303, carrying 99 people, including eight crew members, crashed in a densely-populated residential area near Karachi's Jinnah International Airport on May 22, while it was making its second attempt to land. Two people survived the crash, while 97 were killed. Meanwhile, in a policy statement made at the National Assembly of Pakistan on Monday, Minister for



Aviation, Ghulam Sarwar Khan, said the interim report has been compiled, in keeping with the deadline, within a period of one month after the tragedy took place on May 22.

"The report is absolutely ready ... We have received it and also discussed it with Prime Minister Imran Khan," he said. He added that he would present the report before the National Assembly session on Wednesday. A day after the incident, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) had constituted an investigation team headed by its Aircraft

Accident and Investigation Board (AAIB) president, Air Commodore Usman Ghani, reported the Express Tribune. On Monday, Ghani made a detailed briefing to Aviation Division officials. According to the report, the cockpit crew and the ATC repeatedly made mistakes. Sources privy to the inquiry report said that the aircraft's black box has so far not indicated any technical fault in the aircraft.

As virus cases soar, Pakistan says it must keep economy open

(News Agencies) ISLAMABAD (AP) — The coronavirus is spreading in Pakistan at one of the fastest rates in the world, and its overwhelmed hospitals are turning away patients. But the government is pushing ahead with opening up the country, trying to salvage a near-collapsed economy where millions have already slid into poverty from pandemic restrictions.

Further complicating the dilemma, many people are ignoring government calls to wear masks or obey social distancing rules. Millions crowd markets and mosques. Hard-line clerics tell followers to trust that faith will protect them. Many call the virus a hoax. Even some government

officials dismiss warnings, saying traffic accidents kill more people. "I am nervous when I go out because I see our people are still not taking it seriously," said Diya Rahman, a broadcaster at Radio Pakistan in the capital, Islamabad. Two of her colleagues have died of the virus and more than 20 others have tested positive.

She fears that "until they see their families are dying they won't understand that we can save ourselves if we adhere to the guidelines, to wear masks." Pakistan is a prime example of fragile developing countries that say they'll just have to live with rising infections and deaths because their economies cannot withstand an open-ended strict lockdown.

New U.S. COVID-19 Cases Surge 25%

Arizona, Florida and Texas saw record highs in new infections of the coronavirus last week as states continued to loosen lockdown restrictions.



(News Agencies) The United States saw a 25% increase in new cases of COVID-19 in the week ended June 21 compared to the previous seven days, with Arizona, Florida and Texas experiencing record surges in new infections, a Reuters analysis found. Twenty-five U.S. states reported more new cases last week than the previous week, including 10 states that saw weekly new infections rise more than 50%, and 12 states that posted new records, according to the analysis of data from The COVID Tracking Project, a

of all three states have attributed the increases in new cases to more testing, and to younger residents not following social distancing guidelines. Some health experts have criticized these states for reopening too quickly without adequate

restrictions, for instance not making it mandatory to wear masks in public. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recommended states wait for new COVID-19 cases to fall for 14 days before easing social distancing

and the District of Columbia are in D.C. Nationally, the number of new COVID-19 cases had been falling on a weekly basis through May. Last week's 25% jump came after a 1% rise in the second week of June and straight weeks of declines, followed by a 3% increase in the first week of June.

Thirteen states Rhode Island, Illinois and

Powerful Earthquake Shakes Southern, Central Mexico

(News Agencies) MEXICO CITY — A powerful earthquake centered near the southern Mexico resort of Huatulco killed at least two people, swayed buildings in Mexico City and sent thousands fleeing into the streets. Mexico President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said one person was killed and another injured in a building collapse in Huatulco, Oaxaca. Otherwise he said reports were of minor damage such as broken windows and collapsed walls. Oaxaca Gov. Alejandro Murat later said a second person was killed in an apparent house collapse in the tiny mountain village of San Juan Ozolotepec. The

state-run oil company known as Pemex said the quake caused a fire at its refinery in the Pacific coast city of Salina Cruz, relatively near the epicenter. It said one worker was injured and the flames were quickly extinguished. López Obrador said there had been more than 140 aftershocks, most of them small. Seismic alarms sounded midmorning with enough warning for residents to exit buildings. Power was knocked out to some areas. Helicopters flew over downtown Mexico City and police patrols sounded their sirens. Groups of people still

milled around in close proximity on streets and sidewalks in some neighborhoods of the capital about an hour after the quake. Many were not wearing masks despite past appeals from municipal officials for them to do so as a way to curb the spread of the new coronavirus. The U.S. Geologic Survey said the magnitude 7.4 quake hit at 10:29 a.m. (11:29 a.m. Eastern) along Mexico's southern Pacific coast at a depth of 16 miles (26 km). The epicenter was 7 miles (12 km) south-southwest of Santa Maria Zapotitlan in Oaxaca state. It was felt in Guatemala and throughout south and central Mexico.

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Saudi leadership pressures former intelligence official's family, seeks access to documents



(News Agencies) LONDON - As Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman moved to tighten his grip on power over the past few years, detaining senior royals and opponents, one person has eluded him: a former top-ranking intelligence official who was close to a key rival to the throne. In recent months, the crown prince — known by the initials MbS — has increased pressure on relatives of Saad al-Jabri, including detaining his adult children, to try to force his return to the kingdom from exile in Canada, the former

intelligence official's family say. In the crown prince's sights are documents Jabri has access to that contain sensitive information, according to four people with knowledge of the situation. Jabri was a long-time aide to Prince Mohammed bin Nayef, who the crown prince ousted as heir to the throne in a 2017 palace coup that left MbS the de facto ruler of Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil exporter and a key U.S. ally. Saudi authorities detained bin Nayef and two other senior royals on March 6, the latest in a series of extraordinary measures seen aimed at consolidating MbS's strength within the ruling Al Saud family and removing perceived threats to his power ahead of an eventual succession upon the king's death or abdication. Multiple top Interior Ministry officials were also arrested in March, said Al Saud family and two of the people with knowledge of the situation - both well-connected Saudis. Days after bin

Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro ordered to wear mask in public

(News Agencies) A judge in Brazil has ordered President Jair Bolsonaro to wear a protective mask when he is in public spaces in the capital, Brasilia, and the surrounding federal district. The far-right president has been criticised for belittling the risk posed by coronavirus. He dismissed it as "a little cold" at the start of the pandemic. Brazil has the second-highest number of coronavirus cases and Covid-related fatalities in the world after the US. There are more than 1.1m confirmed cases of coronavirus in Brazil and more than 51,000 coronavirus-related deaths have been recorded, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University. Despite these high figures, President Bolsonaro has repeatedly appeared in public

without a mask while greeting his supporters. At one rally, he was filmed coughing without covering his mouth and on another occasion he was seen sneezing into his hand and shaking the hand of an elderly woman immediately afterwards. The requirement to wear masks in the federal district came into force on 30 April. The rule was brought in by the governor of the federal district, Ibaneis Rocha, and requires people to cover their nose and mouth in all public spaces, including public transport, shops and commercial and industrial premises. On 11 May, the rule was further tightened with those flaunting it facing fines of 2,000 reais (\$387; £310) per day. Federal Judge Renato Borelli's ruling means Mr Bolsonaro is not exempt

and that the president and any other public officials who do not comply with the requirement will also incur the 2,000-reais fine. President Bolsonaro has argued from the start of the pandemic that measures taken to curb the spread of the virus could be more damaging than the pandemic itself. On Monday, he renewed his call for the easing of lockdown measures and the reopening of shops and businesses. He said that the way the pandemic had been handled had "maybe been a bit over the top". The president's insistence that the economy should be prioritised has been deeply divisive and he has clashed with state governors who have introduced restrictions of movement and requirements to wear masks in public.

Steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick

FOLLOW THE STEPS BELOW: If you are sick with COVID-19 or think you might have it, follow the steps below to help protect other people in your home and community.

Stay home except to get medical care

- **Stay home:** People who are mildly ill with COVID-19 are able to recover at home. Do not leave, except to get medical care. Do not visit public areas.
- **Stay in touch with your doctor.** Call before you get medical care. Be sure to get care if you feel worse or you think it is an emergency.
- **Avoid public transportation:** Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.



Wear a facemask if you are sick

- **If you are sick:** You should wear a facemask when you are around other people and before you enter a healthcare provider's office.
- **If you are caring for others:** If the person who is sick is not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then people who live in the home should stay in a different room. When caregivers enter the room of the sick person, they should wear a facemask. Visitors, other than caregivers, are not recommended.



Separate yourself from other people in your home, this is known as home isolation

- **Stay away from others:** As much as possible, you should stay in a specific "sick room" and away from other people in your home. Use a separate bathroom, if available.
- **Limit contact with pets & animals:** You should restrict contact with pets and other animals, just like you would around other people.
 - Although there have not been reports of pets or other animals becoming sick with COVID-19, it is still recommended that people with the virus limit contact with animals until more information is known.
 - When possible, have another member of your household care for your animals while you are sick with COVID-19. If you must care for your pet or be around animals while you are sick, wash your hands before and after you interact with them. See COVID-19 and Animals for more information.



Cover your coughs and sneezes

- **Cover:** Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- **Dispose:** Throw used tissues in a lined trash can.
- **Wash hands:** Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



Clean your hands often

- **Wash hands:** Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This is especially important after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- **Hand sanitizer:** If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.
- **Soap and water:** Soap and water are the best option, especially if hands are visibly dirty.
- **Avoid touching:** Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.



Avoid sharing personal household items

- **Do not share:** Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people in your home.



[cdc.gov/COVID19](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19)

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The real reason mobs across the country are tearing down American monuments

The rest of us were so thrilled that our kids got into Duke that we decided to ignore what Duke was actually teaching them and are continuing to send big checks. That was a mistake. It was one of the greatest mistakes we've ever made. We didn't appreciate the stakes involved at the time and as a result of that, we became easy marks for their lies. Even now, so many of us continue to pretend that this is about police brutalities, about the death of a man called George Floyd in Minneapolis.

We still imagine we can fix it by regulating chokeholds or spending more on de-escalation training. We are too literal. We're too good-hearted to understand what's really happening. Our decency is the mob's main weapon against us. We have no idea who we're up against.

For most people, the primary joy in life is the act of creation, making something good and useful, whether it's dinner for your family or a deck off the back of your house or a solid day at work. The most profound act of creation, of course, is having children -- new life itself.

Healthy societies celebrate all of this. They understand that the impulse to create is how civilizations are built. But they also recognize that there are forces arrayed against creation and they vigilantly defend themselves against those.

In every society, there are those who seek to destroy. They destroy for the same reason that troubled boys torture dogs or shoot house cats. Inflicting pain makes them feel powerful.

We used to call people like that anti-social forces. They still exist. We just pretend they don't. Or worse, we excuse their behavior. We coddle them. We fund them. Wall Street sends them money in the hope that they will be destroyed last. The rest of us just look on confused. We don't really know what's happening, but the destroyers know. They know exactly what's going on.

ever in American history have they been more emboldened than they are now. Just this Monday afternoon, around lunchtime, an activist called Shaun King issued the following demand on Twitter: "All murals and stained glass windows of white Jesus and his European mother and their white friends should also come down. They are a gross form of white supremacy created as tools of oppression, racist propaganda. They should all come down."

Before you dismiss that idea as absurd, the rantings of some crank on social media, keep in mind that Shaun King is the most famous Black Lives Matter leader in this country. Black Lives Matter is now more popular than either major political party. So, don't be surprised when they come for your church. Why wouldn't they? No one is stopping them.

The forces of destruction have grand ambitions. It's not just about the Teddy Roosevelt statue. They plan to rule this country. What will happen if they do?

Well, you may imagine that self-defense is bulwark against chaos. In this country,

you assume you can always defend yourself and your family. That's a pillar of our civilization, of all Western civilizations. One woman assumed that, too. On Wednesday, she was driving through Louisville, Ky. According to local police, the woman found herself surrounded by protesters who were blocking the road. They stood in front of her car with a megaphone. She argued with them to let her pass. One of them produced a gun. The woman tried to flee.

When the woman stopped at a red light a block later, another protester pointed a gun at her. Again, she hit the gas and made it home alive.

On Sunday, National Public Radio published an article about the incident. The headline of that piece: "Vehicle attacks rise as extremists target protesters." In other words, for trying to escape from being murdered, NPR called this woman an extremist who was "targeting protesters."

Think about that and you'll begin to understand why so few citizens have tried to stop the mobs as they pillage our country. Antifa doesn't own the statues in your city's parks; it doesn't own your city. You do. You help pay for it. But what would happen if you tried to defend public property or even if you tried to defend your own property?

You know the answer. You'd be swarmed by federal agents, you'd be Roger Stoned with the help and complicity of CNN and NPR and so many others. You'd be the criminal. There's no question. You've seen this happen before.

To a remarkable degree, federal law enforcement is now driven by political imperatives. Certain kinds of so-called hate crimes top the list of priorities. They'll draw the FBI faster than you could summon the local police to your house during a home invasion, even when, as is so often the case, they turn out to be hoaxes.

Meanwhile, actual hate crimes -- brutal crimes in which Americans are gravely injured -- are ignored completely. They take place on our streets with shocking regularity. The media don't cover them. They often go unpunished entirely.

That's not speculation. There's quite a bit of video of it online, some of it very recent. We're not going to show you the clips. If you're interested, go to the Twitter feed for the Matt Walsh blog before Twitter pulls it down. You'll get the point.

But you already know. Laws are not applied equally in America. Some victims are considered more deserving than others, despite the fact we're all citizens. Justice is not blind. Never in our lives has this been more true than it is right now, and is very likely to get worse. That's the aim of this movement, of these riots -- to overthrow the value, the principle of equality under the law.

After November, that trend could accelerate dramatically. And by the way, we should stop pretending that this is an election between Donald Trump and Joe

Biden. There is no Joe Biden. The Joe Biden you remember no longer exists.

The babbling husk you see may have the same name and similar features, but behind the mask, there is nothing but a jumbled collection of talking points from the early 70s. "Turn on your record players." "No malarkey."

The candidate has no independent thoughts of his own. He has no core beliefs. He is empty. He's a perfect Trojan horse. For the people who've taken over the Democratic Party, he is perfect.

heir plan is to ride him to power. Once there, someone tough and calculating and purposefully -- Kamala Harris, probably -- will change the country. How? Well, they've shown us how.

For three years, they told us that secret Russian agents had taken over the U.S. government. There was never a single piece of evidence to show that that was true in any way. It was a hoax. And yet it worked. They dominated the country with that lie, and that was their dry run.

Can we convince millions of people to believe something that's completely absurd? Yes, we can. That's what they learned. That's the lesson. They'll do it again. This time the Russians will be Confederate sympathizers or Nazis or white supremacists or whatever other name they choose to give to their political opponents. It almost doesn't matter. But once they pick one, they will gin up mass hysteria because that's what they're good at. The media will collaborate fully because that's their job. And we'll have another

witch hunt, once again with the full support of federal law enforcement and intelligence agencies. And who knows, maybe the military too, because the threat is just that profound.

A few foolish souls will attempt to point out the obvious, what's true. Of course, there are racists here, as there are everywhere. But overall, this is the least racist country in the history of the world. Millions of Africans want to move here. Many already have. Our last president was black. What are you talking about?

Those people will be silenced. Anyone who defies the narrative will be silenced. By that point, the category of hate speech will have expanded to include anything they don't want to hear and will be criminalized, a federal offense. You watch. If they can tear down a Lincoln statue because it's racist, they can ban the First Amendment. You don't want to live in a place like that.

Who can save us from that? Well, as of right now, only Republicans can save us from that. Not because they are inherently virtuous, not because they want to -- they don't -- but because they're the opposition party to the extent they still have opposition to anything. We have no choice but to ask for their help. The Republican Party is the only power center-left in this country available to people who dissent.

It doesn't matter who you voted for last time. This is not an endorsement of anyone's policies. It's an acknowledgment of who holds power and who doesn't. And the Republican Party's the only power center available.

STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

Avoid close contact with people who are sick.



Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.



Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.



[cdc.gov/COVID19](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19)

Fireworks complaints surge in US cities



(News Agencies) Massachusetts bans all consumer fireworks outright, according to the US Consumer Product Safety Commission. In New York State, ground-based or hand-held "sparkling devices" are allowed, while aerial fireworks and firecrackers are prohibited. In New York City, the rules are even more limited: all types of fireworks, including sparklers, are banned. By law, US consumers are not allowed to purchase professional grade fireworks.

Earlier this month, Boston Mayor Marty Walsh held a press conference on the boom in fireworks use, where he noted a 2,300% increase in complaints about fireworks to the city's police. In nearby Braintree, police posted a video of fireworks being set off by a local resident, and called the recent outbreak "a public safety issue." In New York City, where residents have been line and 911 emergency coming from the grappling with recovery line. It marks an increase in Brooklyn borough alone, from that same period in 2019. The "dramatic increase" has been concentrated in June, level, "local resident Kate city's 311 informational with 4,559 calls to 311 Kroeger told the BBC.

(News Agencies) German authorities in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia have reimposed lockdown restrictions in two districts after a spike in cases, with more than half a million people affected. One area is home to a meatpacking plant where more than 1,500 workers have tested positive.

State premier Armin Laschet said the "preventative measures" in Gütersloh district would last until 30 June. Neighbouring Warendorf district has also seen restrictions return.

The state's health minister, Karl-Josef Laumann, announced the second lockdown just hours after the first, saying further measures were needed "in order to protect the population". It is the first time lockdowns have been reintroduced in Germany since the country began lifting nationwide restrictions in May.

Germany has been praised for its overall response to the pandemic, but there are fears infections are rising again. Authorities in North Rhine-Westphalia had been among those strongly pushing Chancellor Angela Merkel to ease national restrictions in recent months.

fireworks to the city's police. In nearby Braintree, police posted a video of fireworks being set off by a local resident, and called the recent outbreak "a public safety issue." In New York City, where residents have been line and 911 emergency coming from the grappling with recovery line. It marks an increase in Brooklyn borough alone, from that same period in 2019. The "dramatic increase" has been concentrated in June, level, "local resident Kate city's 311 informational with 4,559 calls to 311 Kroeger told the BBC.

Coronavirus: German outbreak sparks fresh local lockdowns

(News Agencies) German authorities in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia have reimposed lockdown restrictions in two districts after a spike in cases, with more than half a million people affected. One area is home to a meatpacking plant where more than 1,500 workers have tested positive.

State premier Armin Laschet said the "preventative measures" in Gütersloh district would last until 30 June. Neighbouring Warendorf district has also seen restrictions return.

The state's health minister, Karl-Josef Laumann, announced the second lockdown just hours after the first, saying further measures were needed "in order to protect the population". It is the first time lockdowns have been reintroduced in Germany since the country began lifting nationwide restrictions in May.

Germany has been praised for its overall response to the pandemic, but there are fears infections are rising again. Authorities in North Rhine-Westphalia had been among those strongly pushing Chancellor Angela Merkel to ease national restrictions in recent months.

What's happening in North Rhine-Westphalia? On Tuesday morning, Mr Laschet described the outbreak linked to the Tönnies meatpacking plant, southwest of the city of Gütersloh, as the "biggest infection incident" in the country. Just hours later, health minister Laumann announced that Warendorf would also reimpose restrictions. In the two districts, bars, museums, cinemas and gyms must all close, and restaurants can only serve meals to take away. Stricter social distancing measures are also back in force, meaning people can only meet one person from outside their own household and it has to be in public. Schools and nurseries have already been closed in Gütersloh, and those in Warendorf will shut their doors on Thursday. There is also a mandatory quarantine in place for all employees of the affected Tönnies plant. Three police units have been deployed to enforce the measures, accompanied by aid workers. Authorities have put up metal fencing around residential buildings where plant staff live and are distributing food to more than 7,000 employees, many of whom are migrants. Translators are on hand to explain the situation.



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मोदी का एलान-ए-जंग

बूंद-बूंद को तरसेगा पाक

बड़ी बूंद आ रही पाकिस्तान, तीरते दिन नौ की गोलीबारी, भारत ने दिया कटाई जवाब

नई दिल्ली: हम हिंदुस्तानी... मोदी का एलान-ए-जंग... बूंद-बूंद को तरसेगा पाक...

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ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਨੌਜਵਾਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ ਉਡਾਰੀ ਮਾਰਨ ਲਈ ਖਰਚੇ 27000 ਕਰੋੜ

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ਮਾਰੀ-ਅਮਰਿਕਨ ਕਮਿਊਨਿਟੀ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਖੋਰ ਨਿੱਠ

ਮਾਰੀ-ਅਮਰਿਕਨ ਕਮਿਊਨਿਟੀ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਖੋਰ ਨਿੱਠ... ਮਾਰੀ-ਅਮਰਿਕਨ ਕਮਿਊਨਿਟੀ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਖੋਰ ਨਿੱਠ...

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83 killed after being hit by lightning in Bihar, PM Modi tweets on the disaster

I express my condolences to the families of those who have lost their lives in this disaster," the prime minister tweeted on Thursday. "13 people died in Gopalganj, eight each lost their lives in Madhubani and Nawada, six each in Siwan and Bhagalpur, 5 each in East Champaran, Darbhanga and Banka, three each in Khagaria and Aurangabad, two each in West Champaran, Kishanganj, Jehanabad, Jamui, Purnia, Supaul, Buxar and Kaimur and one each in Samastipur, Sheohar, Saran, Sitamarhi and Madhepura," Disaster Management Principal Secretary, Pratyaya Amrit said. Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar has expressed grief at the loss of lives and has announced a compensation of

Rs four lakh each for the kin of the deceased and proper treatment for the injured. He asked people to adhere to safety norms during bad weather conditions and follow the guidelines issued from time to time by the disaster management department. The secretariat said monetary help to those who had lost animals and cattle will also be extended. Reports from Gopalganj said all the victims were farmers and residents of Barauli, Manjha, Vijaipur, Uchkagaon and Kateya localities. The lightning struck when they were working in their fields. There was chaos at the Gopalganj Sadar Hospital, where the victims were brought for treatment. The entire emergency ward was itself

flooded. Attendants of the injured patients created a ruckus, but the situation was brought under control after intervention of senior medical officials. District magistrate Arshad Aziz said seven injured people were admitted in Sadar Hospital for treatment. He said compensation would be given to the families of the deceased as per the rules. In Khagaria, a woman died and five minors were injured in Choutham locality. More than 15 cattle also died after being hit by lightning. The accident occurred while all of them were working in a paddy field. Five people were killed by lightning strikes in Darbhanga.

Officer in-charge of the district disaster management department, Pushpesh Kumar said that in Uchhati village under Biraul block a woman died on the spot due to lightning while she was planting paddy in the field. Two women were injured in the incident. The injured women were sent to the Primary Health Center for treatment. Reports from Madhubani said that eight people including four of a family, besides a farmer and two others were killed in the Phulparas and Benipatti police station areas. Officials in East Champaran said, while a 49-year-old man died and three others were injured at Belwatiya village under

Sagauli police station of East Champaran, a 14-year-old girl, a resident of Surendra village under Raxaul police station, was killed in the lightning strikes. "All the three people who sustained injuries are undergoing treatment at a local hospital in Sagauli and the body of the deceased has been sent to Motihari Sadar Hospital for autopsy," said Mithilesh Kumar, station house officer, Sagauli police station. In neighbouring West Champaran district, two villagers were killed in Narkatiaganj subdivision of the district. Last year too, lightning had killed 39 people in Bihar during the monsoon season.

Hopeful India

India hopeful professionals will continue to be welcomed in US: MEA



including the issuance of fresh H-1B visas and L-1 visas (for inter-company transfers), till December 31. This was done because of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.. Indians are the main beneficiaries of the much sought-after H-1B visa programme to gain entry to the US as skilled immigrants. The temporary suspension of entry of certain categories of non-immigrant visa-holders and their family members is "likely to affect movement of Indian skilled professionals who avail of these programmes to work lawfully in the US," Srivastava said. "We are assessing the impact of the order on Indian nationals and industry in consultation with

stakeholders. People-to-people linkages and trade and economic cooperation, especially in technology and innovation sectors, are an important dimension of the US-India partnership," he added. Srivastava pointed out high-skilled Indian professionals "bring important skill sets, bridge technological gaps and impart a competitive edge to the US economy". He added, "They have also been a critical component of the workforce that is at the forefront of providing Covid-19-related assistance in key sectors, including health, information technology and financial services." Indians currently account for more than 70% of the 85,000 H-1B visas given out every year.



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The US sees a record number of new coronavirus cases in a single day

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis also indicated that his state would not be moving to relax present restrictions. California Gov. Gavin Newsom declared a budget emergency to free up \$16 billion to fight the pandemic, according to a release from his office. The state could pause further reopening of its economy -- and even "toggle back" -- if health officials continue to see increases in infections and hospitalizations, Newsom suggested at a press conference Thursday.

And the head of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said the US has only counted about 10% of coronavirus infections. That might mean as many as 20 million Americans have been infected. Officially, coronavirus has killed at least 122,481 people and infected more than 2.4 million nationwide, according to Johns Hopkins University. Florida and Texas announced Wednesday that they had recorded more than 5,000 new Covid-19 cases the prior day, a new daily record. California reported more than 7,000 cases, obliterating a record hit a day earlier.

Hospitals in California have seen a 32% increase in patients with the coronavirus over the last 14-day period, reaching an all-time high since the pandemic began, Newsom said. The number of patients in intensive care units has reached

a record high after increasing 19% over the last two weeks. Florida passed 5,000 again on Thursday, according to new state data. Florida, Texas and California account for 27.4% of the 328 million people living in the US, according to the latest US Census Bureau estimates.

'A temporary pause,'

Texas governor says

Abbott previously had said he wanted to move to the next phase and be fully opened by July 4. "The last thing we want to do as a state is go backwards and close down businesses. This temporary pause will help our state corral the spread until we can safely enter the next phase of opening our state for business," Abbott said in a release. Earlier this month, he announced the state was moving into its Phase III, meaning most business could operate at up to 50% capacity. He suspended all elective surgeries in hospitals in four counties that are home to the cities of San Antonio, Dallas, Houston and Austin. The counties have had "significant increases" in Covid-19 hospitalizations, Abbott said. Any procedure not immediately necessary to correct a serious medical condition or preserve a life will be postponed. "As we work to contain this virus, I urge all Texans to do their part to help contain the spread by washing their hands regularly, wearing a mask, and practicing social

distancing," Abbott said in a statement. In California, the budget has gone from a \$21 billion surplus to a \$54.3 billion deficit in a matter of months, decimated by the economic demands of the pandemic. Newsom's proclamation clears the way for the legislature to use \$16 billion rainy fund to respond to the pandemic. Expenditures include personal protective equipment, medical equipment, and services to protect vulnerable populations.

20 million might have been infected

The CDC has been looking at antibody tests done across the country to see how many people had past infections that were not diagnosed at the time, said director Dr. Robert Redfield. It is seeing many more cases than have been reported officially.

"A good rough estimate now is 10 to 1," Redfield told a media briefing.

This is partly because testing had been limited to people who were seriously ill and showing up in hospitals or nursing homes. But now, as more people are being tested, it is becoming clear that a large percentage of people did not have any symptoms, or mild symptoms, Redfield said.

Some states are extending restrictions

Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey said at a press conference he wouldn't talk much about "gating criteria" for lessening restrictions, saying

"Arizona is on pause."

Arizona is seeing the highest number of new cases per capita of any state in the country. It's had more new cases per capita than any state has had besides New York or New Jersey, according to a CNN analysis of data from Johns Hopkins University.

"It's growing, and it's growing fast across all age groups and demographics," Ducey said.

The state has added about 2,700 new cases per day over the seven days that ended Tuesday. Adjusted for population, that's about 38 new cases per 100,000 people per day. In Louisiana, Gov. John Bel Edwards issued a new proclamation extending the Phase 2 restrictions for another 28 days. "Some in Louisiana may be done with Covid, but I promise you that Covid is not yet done with Louisiana," Edwards said. "I especially want to call on the young people of our state, those ages 18 to 29, to take this illness seriously."

DeSantis in Florida indicated that the state won't be changing restrictions anytime soon "We are where we are," the governor said at a press conference. "I didn't say we're going to go on to the next phase." He added later: "We never anticipated necessarily doing anything different, in terms of the next phase at this point."

More cases attributed to multiple factors

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo

reported the lowest number of hospitalizations, with 996 across the state, "the lowest number since we started." Cuomo criticized others who "played politics," opened their economies too early, and "now are causing this nation great havoc." Several factors contribute to the rise in cases. In California, the virus is spreading at private gatherings in homes, more young people are testing positive, and cases among the incarcerated are alarming.

Officials in various states are encouraging social distancing, wearing masks, and washing hands. "Going out in public without a mask is like driving drunk," said Dr. Jonathan Reiner, a cardiologist and professor of medicine at George Washington University. "If you don't get hurt. You might kill somebody else." Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis has attributed the rise to more testing but others say community transmission is playing a key role as the state reopens. And it's not accurate to simply say that the increased infections is due to increased testing, said Michael Osterholm, director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research & Policy at the University of Minnesota. No clear connection to recent protests has been established, experts say. Concern about cases in the younger population and those without symptoms

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- Monitor your health more closely than usual for cold or flu symptoms.



STAY HOME IF SICK

- Stay home and call your doctor if you have symptoms like coughing, shortness of breath, fever, sore throat.
- If you do not feel better in 24-48 hours, seek care from your doctor.
- If you need help getting medical care, call 311.
- NYC will provide care regardless of immigration status or ability to pay.



PROTECT THE MOST VULNERABLE

- If you have chronic conditions like lung disease, heart disease, diabetes, cancer or a weakened immune system, avoid unnecessary gatherings and events.
- If you have family or friends who have one of these conditions, do not visit them if you feel sick.



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How Hawaii Became a Rare Covid Success Story

In the background was a low-key governor who listened to the voices around him and made quick decisions when he needed to.

With arguments still flaring up across the country about the most effective way to manage the coronavirus response—often divided between those who want a heavy government hand and those who don't—Hawaii's experience shows that sometimes what works best is a multipronged, even redundant approach. "We didn't really have a fully proactive or decisive plan at the outset," says Mark Mugiishi, CEO of HMSA, the state's largest health insurer. "But with the Pacific Ocean guarding our borders and an early lockdown, we built the plane while flying it and got extraordinary results." "Old hat" is how Sarah Park, Hawaii's top epidemiologist, describes contact tracing. Basic, low-tech, gumshoe work. "We've been doing it forever, any time there's a disease outbreak. It's interesting to me that everyone wants to talk about it now," she said recently from her 4th-floor office at the state department of health in Honolulu. As a medical doctor and former disease detective with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's elite Epidemic Intelligence Service, Park hunted down West Nile infections in the United States in 2002 and SARS cases in Taiwan in 2003. Like many states, Hawaii's department of health had on hand a skeletal staff of investigators to respond to any outbreaks of infectious diseases. In early February, well before the state had a confirmed case, Park's team of six began their detective work, just as they had for the emergence of hepatitis A and rat lungworm a few years earlier. Using flight information given to them by the CDC, they contacted anyone arriving in Hawaii who had recently spent time in China and informed them that, for the next 14 days, they couldn't leave their houses or wherever they were staying. Then, every day, Park's team called to see if the travelers were complying, and whether they were feeling sick. A few were, but not enough to warrant testing, which in February could be done only at the CDC's lab in Atlanta with a week's

turnaround time. Park's team also dialed around to all the people the infected Japanese man had interacted with while on Maui and Oahu. The investigators ultimately determined that, with the exception of the coffee date in Honolulu, all of his encounters were too brief to have transmitted the virus. The friend isolated himself for two weeks and never developed symptoms.

"We realized that, unlike residents, travelers stick mostly to themselves," Park says. "They're not going to our potlucks or our beach barbecues or hanging out in someone's garage, where they're in close contact with other people for a sustained period of time."

As if to prove the point, on March 6, Hawaii got its first case—a resident returning to Honolulu on the Grand Princess cruise ship. Park's team scrambled to figure out who in the state the individual had spent more than 10 minutes in close contact with. Most of his family members were told to isolate. Park's team did the same with the other cases that rolled in over the next few days—an elderly man returning from Washington state with symptoms, a couple from Indiana who had become sick while vacationing on Kauai, a skier back from the slopes of Colorado, an Air Canada flight attendant staying on Maui. In the beginning, people weren't really eager to talk to us," recalls Lauren Usagawa, one of the department's original investigators. "They didn't know who we were, and some thought it was a scam or that they were being pranked." But for Usagawa, who had previously worked on sexually transmitted diseases, Covid-19 interviews were relatively easy: "People are a lot more honest when you're asking them who they had dinner with than who they're sleeping around with." In fact, many people, she says, were appreciative that someone was checking in on them and that officials were trying to stem the disease. Those patients or contacts who didn't have family or friends to bring them food and other essentials for the two weeks got daily deliveries, paid for by the department of health and distributed by a network of volunteers. Nonetheless, the

infections mounted, and Park frantically began to recruit staff from around the department. She brought in investigators from the immunization and foodborne illness sections, and public health nurses from anywhere she could find them. By early April, the expanded team of 35 was still struggling to stay on top of the several hundred people who had tested positive in recent weeks and their more than 1,000 close contacts. Everyone was working nights and weekends. "I had times when partners, as well as my own staff, asked me, 'At what point do we stop?' Because every day it's getting bigger and bigger, and they're hearing from and seeing colleagues in other states stop and move on," Park recalls. Usagawa's first day off in four months didn't come until the end of May. ("It felt weird," she mused. "Like I should be doing something.") She decided to spend the day cleaning and tackling an enormous pile of laundry.)

Plenty of other states had similar government tracking programs. The difference is that Hawaii was able to keep

its going as the virus spread, thanks to some combination of stamina at the department of health and the fact that the state's high-water mark for daily cases never went above 34, on April 3. "States were doing intensive case investigation and contact tracing in the beginning. But then the wave of infections came from Europe in early March, and all hell broke loose," says Jeff Engel, a Covid-19 senior adviser at the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists. "States weren't able to keep up." Park's team, which eventually grew to nearly 100 people, including volunteers, has hunted down contacts for all of the state's 762 confirmed cases to date, largely cutting off the virus as it sought new hosts. While Engel hasn't done a comprehensive survey of state epidemiologists, he says he is not aware of another state that managed this. Contact tracing is most productive when cases are either stable or trending downward and represent a small percent of the population, but many states are only now hiring and training armies of investigators to ramp up their contact tracing efforts.

Don't give the military total freedom

The agreements arrived at in 1996 and 2005 committed the two sides to engage in a clarification of the Line of Actual Control (LAC). We know where LAC lies and India's activities are confined to the area within LAC. China contests this alignment at some locations but we do not know how China perceives LAC in its entire length. Both sides have agreed that clarifying LAC is essential to assuring peace and tranquillity at the border, pending the settlement of the border question. The Galwan incident offers an opportunity for us to engage China on this agreed exercise and implement it expeditiously. China's reaction will also demonstrate whether it is really interested in maintaining peace on the border or whether it prefers to keep it ambiguous so that it can unilaterally advance its territorial claims at points and time of its choosing. This will enable us to draw the necessary conclusions and respond accordingly. There is no doubt that India's relations with China have become more adversarial. The string of incidents at the border is a symptom of that, as is the mounting evidence of Chinese activism in India's subcontinental neighbourhood. The Indian government's response has to be a careful mix of political, diplomatic, economic and military measures. Engagement with China must continue but its terms must reflect the changed context. Now, more than ever, we need to step back and reconsider our national strategy in all its dimensions. India has left that on the shelf for far too long.

Don't discriminate against non-resident migrants

or deny them the benefits of educational reservations. Other laws, prevalent in some states of the Northeast, regulate the entry of non-residents within the state. Yet another category of laws prevents non-residents from owning property (such as in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and others). The Union government has recently announced "One Nation One Ration Card" because non-resident migrants are currently ineligible for many state welfare schemes. Even though Article 19(1)(d) of the Constitution guarantees free movement and residence, states have enacted "reasonable restrictions" to disfavour non-resident

migrants. Article 16 outlaws discrimination in employment on the grounds of residence, but the criteria for determining reservations is usually linked to local demographic characteristics. The courts have also largely upheld positive discrimination in employment and education that nonetheless discriminates against non-residents. They have upheld not just residency as a ground for eligibility for jobs and educational seats, but also the charging of differential capitation fees based on residency. In doing so, courts have generally privileged the equality interests in the Constitution at the cost of free movement and residence. While

such measures ostensibly serve to protect local constituents, they inhibit migration and thus the law of comparative advantage from operating to the benefit of in-migration states. Bengaluru could not have become a hub for information technology if it had imposed restrictions on the movement of skilled professional migrants who eventually settled in the city. Contrary to nativist sentiments, Karnataka's population has been a net beneficiary of this in-migration because of the increased contribution of Bengaluru to Karnataka's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) besides the value of diversity. This benefit is not

limited to skilled or high-end services. To the extent that Bengaluru's economy powers Karnataka's growth, a migrant hairdresser working in Bangalore is also important for the state's economy. This was evident recently when the Karnataka government wanted to prevent migrants from leaving for their home states because of their importance to the construction industry. It is, therefore, time to seriously re-examine the legal framework that inhibits the movement of migrants across the country, and prevents them from accessing safety, shelter and welfare services on equal terms as residents.

Defending a historically undefined border line

moving further south-east along the ridge lines west of the Chang Chenmo Range. The Chinese concept of defending these areas

is to keep the Indian forces at a stand-off distance from this highway. With the increasing ranges of artillery and surveillance resources, China seems desperate to push its claim lines further to the west. The Indian Army has a clear mandate to prevent any encroachment and alteration of LAC by the People's Liberation Army (PLA), not allowing the Chinese to unilaterally change the status of the boundary. The expression LAC was first used

by Chinese Prime Minister Chou en-Lai himself in a letter to Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in 1959.

Today, the boundary in eastern Ladakh is over 800km with LAC being approximately 550km. Chinese patrols ensure they keep the passes off the watershed under domination so as not to allow the Indian troops to occupy the ground beyond. They continue to build tracks that generally emanate from the western highway and progressively move westward towards LAC to dominate the passes or crossing points. Hot Springs and Galwan are areas

where both sides have been making roads and tracks. The Chinese have an advantage of terrain which is more open, plain and served by the western highway. Chinese patrols are fresh when they reach points of patrolling, often using centrally-heated vehicles.

LAC has neither been surveyed nor marked on the ground. It is a line drawn with a thick pen on the map. This could translate into anything like 100 metres on the ground. A tent pitched a few metres this way or that way along this line can create trouble. However, the tents that the PLA erected

along LAC was from where it can see straight into the Galwan Nala, leading to the sensitive Indian Darbuk-Shyok-DBO road and, therefore, unacceptable to India, just as the PLA is sensitive to Indian domination of the western highway. Since 1993, many agreements have been signed between the two countries to resolve such matters peacefully and according to laid-out protocols. The agreement of 1996 mentions that military means shall not be used while dealing with such border situations.

In the absence of any boundary

settlement, both sides have come face-to-face several times resulting in clashes, with recent ones being in 2013 at Depsang, Demckok and Chumar in eastern Ladakh. The incident at Galwan is a flashpoint of the worst kind in recent times. It can have serious ramifications when both nations have large conventional forces backed by nuclear weapons. Can the two countries afford to go to war that too when the world is reeling from the coronavirus pandemic? Why China would choose to display such belligerence at this time is open to a larger debate.

Defending a historically undefined border line

Among these measures was support for terrorist organizations. Across the Middle East, the KGB had forged ties with numerous Marxist-leaning terror groups, most notably with the PFLP, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a splinter group of the Palestine Liberation Organization that carried out a string of plane hijackings and bomb attacks in the late sixties and seventies. Top-secret documents retrieved by a researcher in the early 1990s from the archives of the Soviet Politburo illustrate the depth of some of these connections. They show the then-KGB chief Yuri Andropov signing off three requests for Soviet weapons from PFLP leader Wadi Haddad, and describing him as a "trusted agent" of the KGB.

In East Germany, or the German Democratic Republic (GDR), the KGB actively encouraged the Stasi to assist in its "political activities" in developing countries. In fact, support for international terrorism became one of the most important services the Stasi rendered to the KGB, according to a paper written by Dr. Marian K. Leighton, a former Soviet analyst at the Central Intelligence Agency. The East German security services had always been subservient to the KGB and closely followed orders handed down by their Soviet masters. By 1969 the Stasi had opened a clandestine training camp outside East Berlin for members of Yassar Arafat's PLO. Markus Wolf's Stasi foreign-intelligence unit became deeply involved in working with terrorist groups across the Arab world, including with the PFLP's notorious Carlos Ramirez Sanchez, otherwise known as Carlos the Jackal. Stasi military instructors set up a network of terrorist training camps across the Middle East.

One former KGB general who defected to the United States, Oleg Kalugin, later called these activities "the heart and soul of Soviet intelligence." The former head of Romania's foreign-intelligence service, Ion Mihai Pacepa, who became the highest-ranking eastern-bloc intelligence officer to defect to the United States, had

been the first to speak openly about the KGB's operations with terrorist groups. Pacepa wrote of how the former head of the KGB's foreign intelligence, General Alexander Sakharovsky, had frequently told him: "In today's world, when nuclear arms have made military force obsolete, terrorism should become our main weapon." Pacepa also stated that KGB chief Andropov had launched an operation to stoke anti-Israeli and anti-U.S. sentiment in the Arab world. At the same time, he said, the KGB unleashed domestic terrorism in the West.

West Germany had been on edge ever since the far-left militant Red Army Faction—also known as the Baader-Meinhof Group after its early leaders Andreas Baader and Ulrike Meinhof—launched a string of bombings, assassinations, kidnappings and bank robberies in the late 1960s. In the name of toppling the country's "imperialism and monopoly capitalism," they'd killed prominent West German industrialists and bankers, including the head of Dresdner Bank in 1977, and had bombed U.S. military bases, killing and injuring dozens of servicemen.

By the end of the seventies, when the West German police stepped up a campaign of arrests, the Stasi began providing safe haven in the East to members of the group. "They harbored not just one but 10 of them. They lived in cookie-cutter buildings around Dresden, Leipzig and East Berlin," said Franz Sedelmayer, a German security consultant who later worked with Putin in St. Petersburg. The Stasi had provided them with false identities, and also ran training camps.

Initially, after the fall of the Wall, the West German authorities believed the Stasi had provided only refuge and false identities to the Red Army Faction members. But as prosecutors continued to investigate the Stasi's role, they found evidence of a much deeper collaboration. Their investigation led to the arrest and indictment of five former Stasi counter-terrorism officers for conspiring with the group to bomb a major U.S. army base

in Ramstein in southwest Germany in 1981 and attempting to kill a U.S. general. Stasi chief Erich Mielke was indicted on the same charges.

But amid the tumult of German reunification, there was no political will to root out the evils of GDR's past and bring the Stasi men to trial. The five-year statute of limitations on those charged with collaboration with the Red Army Faction was deemed to have passed, and the charges dropped away. The memory of their crimes faded, while the KGB's involvement with the Red Army Faction was never investigated at all.

But all the while, the Soviets had overseen the operations of the Stasi, with liaison officers at every command level. At the highest level, KGB control was so tight that, according to one former Red Army Faction member, "Mielke wouldn't even fart without asking permission in Moscow first." "The GDR could do nothing without coordination with the Soviets," said a defector from the senior ranks of the Stasi.

This was the environment Putin was working in—and the story that the former Red Army Faction member had to tell about Dresden fitted closely with that.

According to him, in the years that Putin served in East Germany, Dresden became a meeting place for the Red Army Faction. Dresden was chosen as a meeting place precisely because "there was no one else there," this former Red Army Faction member said. "In Berlin, there were the Americans, the French and the British, everyone. For what we needed to do we needed the provinces, not the capital." Another reason the meetings were held there was because Markus Wolf and Erich Mielke wanted to distance themselves from such activities: "Wolf was very careful not to be involved. The very last thing a guy like Wolf or Mielke wanted was to be caught red-handed supporting a terrorist organisation ... We met there [in Dresden] about half a dozen times."

This former Red Army Faction member and his colleagues would travel into East

Germany by train and would be met by Stasi agents waiting in a large Soviet-made Zil car, then driven to Dresden, where they were joined in a safe house by Putin and another of his KGB colleagues. "They would never give us instructions directly. They would just say, 'We heard you were planning this, how do you want to do it?' and make suggestions. They would suggest other targets and ask us what we needed. We always needed weapons and cash."

It was difficult for the Red Army Faction to purchase weapons in Western Germany, so they would hand Putin and his colleagues a list. Somehow, this list would later end up with an agent in the West, and the requested weapons would be dropped in a secret location for the Red Army Faction members to pick up. Far from taking the backseat role often ascribed to him during his Dresden years, Putin would be among the leaders in these meetings, the former Red Army member claimed, with one of the Stasi generals taking orders from him. As the Red Army Faction sowed chaos across West Germany in a series of vicious bomb attacks, their activities became a key part of KGB attempts to disrupt and destabilize the West, the former member of the terror group claimed. And, as the end loomed for Soviet power and the GDR, it's possible that they became a weapon to protect the interests of the KGB. For instance, the terrorist group orchestrated the killings of the chairman of Deutsche Bank in 1989 and the chief of the Siemens technology company in 1986, both of whom supported political positions or were engaged in activities that posed challenges to the Soviet regime.

For the former Red Army Faction member those days now seem long ago and far away. But he can't help but remember with regret that he was no more than a puppet in Soviet influence games. "We were no more than useful idiots for the Soviet Union," he said with a wry grin. "This is where it all began. They were using us to disrupt, destabilize and sow chaos in the West."

Trump Expands Immigration Ban To Suspend Foreign Worker Visas

WASHINGTON - U.S. President Donald Trump will suspend the entry of certain foreign workers, a senior administration official said on Monday, a move the official said would help the economy, but which business groups strongly oppose. Trump will block the entry of foreign workers on H-1B visas for skilled workers and L-1 visas for workers being transferred within a company through the end of the year, the official said. Trump will also block seasonal workers on H-2B visas, with an exception for workers in the food service industry. Businesses including major tech companies and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce have said the visa suspension would stifle the economic recovery after the damage done by the novel coronavirus pandemic.

Critics of the measure say Trump is using the pandemic to enact his longstanding goal to limit immigration into the United States. Trump-owned or Trump-branded businesses have used the H-2B program to hire seasonal guest workers. The

immediate effects of the proclamation will likely be limited, as U.S. consulates around the world remain closed for most routine visa processing. A senior Department of Homeland Security official said the proclamation will not affect valid visa holders already in the United States.

Republican Trump is running for re-election on Nov. 3 and has made his tough immigration stance a central pitch to voters, although the coronavirus, faltering economy and nationwide protests over police brutality have overshadowed that issue. The visa suspension announced on Monday will open up 525,000 jobs for U.S. workers, the senior official said on a call with reporters, saying it was geared at "getting Americans back to work as quickly as possible." The official did not explain how the administration arrived at that figure. The temporary visa suspension will include work-authorized J visas, which are available for cultural exchange opportunities in the United

States, and visas for the spouses of H-1B workers. BSA, The Software Alliance, whose members include Microsoft and Slack, strongly urged the administration to "refrain from restricting employment of highly-skilled foreign professionals", adding that "these restrictions will negatively impact the US economy" and decrease job opportunities for Americans. Doug Rand, co-founder of Boundless, a pro-migrant group that helps families navigate the U.S. immigration system, said the fact that H2-A visas used to bring in foreign farmworkers were exempt signals that "big agriculture interests are the only stakeholder with any sway over immigration policy in this administration." Many other business groups were lobbying against a temporary visa ban before it was announced. The immigration restrictionists would like us all to believe that every single company bringing over foreign-born workers is nefarious and just wants to bring in people who are underpaid," said

Rand. "That is a false premise." Trump also will renew an April proclamation that temporarily blocks some foreigners from permanent residence in the United States, the senior administration official said on Monday. The official said that proclamation freed up roughly 50,000 jobs for Americans, but did not provide details. An exemption for medical workers in Trump's April ban on permanent residence will be narrowed to people working on coronavirus research and care, the official said. In addition to the new visa suspension, the Trump administration will take several other moves to tighten rules around temporary work visas. The administration plans to rework the H-1B visa program so that the 85,000 visas available in the program each year go to the highest-paid applicants, instead of the current lottery system. In addition, the administration plans to issue rules that make it harder for companies to use the H-1B visa program to train foreign workers to perform the same job in another country, the official said. Both moves

would likely require regulatory changes. Labor Secretary Eugene Scalia will use the department's statutory authority to investigate abuse of the H-1B visa program, the senior official said. The Trump administration also finalized a regulation on Monday that will lift a requirement to process work permits for asylum seekers within 30 days, a move that will likely result in longer waits for work authorization. Trump rolled out new health-focused rules in March that allow for the rapid deportation of immigrants caught at the border and virtually cut off access to the U.S. asylum system. At the same time, he announced the land borders with Canada and Mexico would be closed to non-essential crossings, a measure that has been extended several times. (Reporting by Ted Hesson and Steve Holland in Washington; Additional reporting by Raphael Satter in Washington and Mica Rosenberg in New York. Editing by Sandra Maler and Grant McCool)

Millions of Americans can't afford water as bills rise 80% in a decade

Millions of Americans can't afford water as bills rise 80% in a decade, changing demographics and the climate emergency fuel exponential price hikes in almost every corner of the US. America's growing water affordability crisis comes as the Covid-19 pandemic underlines the importance of access to clean water. The research shows that rising bills are not just hurting the poorest but also, increasingly, working Americans. "More people are in trouble, and the poorest of the poor are in big trouble," said Roger Colton, a leading utilities analyst, who was commissioned by the Guardian to analyse water poverty. "The data shows that we've got an affordability problem in an overwhelming number of cities nationwide that didn't exist a decade ago, or even two or three years ago in some cities." Water bills exceeding 4% of household income are considered unaffordable. Colton's 88-page report is published today at the launch of a major project on America's water emergency by the Guardian, Consumer Reports

and other partners.

Our research found that between 2010 and 2018 water bills rose by at least 27%, while the highest increase was a staggering 154% in Austin, Texas, where the average annual bill rose from \$566 in 2010 to \$1,435 in 2018 – despite drought mitigation efforts leading to reduced water usage. Meanwhile, federal aid to public water utilities, which serve around 87% of people, has plummeted while maintenance, environmental and health threats, climate shocks and other expenditures have skyrocketed. "A water emergency threatens every corner of our country. The scale of this crisis demands nothing short of a fundamental transformation of our water systems. Water should never be treated as commodity or a luxury for the benefit of the wealthy," said water justice advocate Mary Grant from Food and Water Watch, reacting to the Guardian's research.

In Washington, 90 lawmakers from across the country – all Democrats – are

pushing for comprehensive funding reforms to guarantee access to clean, affordable running water for every American. The Guardian's investigation shows that the water poverty crisis is likely to get much worse, with bills in many cities becoming unaffordable for the majority of America's poor over the next decade.

In Austin, Texas, if prices in the city continue to go up at the current rate, more than four-fifths of low income residents – defined as people living under 200% of the federal poverty line (FPL) – could face unaffordable bills by 2030.

In Tucson, Arizona, another drought affected city, the number of low income residents facing unaffordable bills doubled to 46% between 2010 and 2018 – as the average bill increased by 119% to \$869. Rising costs are disproportionately impacting poor Americans. In New Orleans, Santa Fe and Cleveland, about three-quarters of low income residents live in neighbourhoods where average water and sewage bills are unaffordable. Amid rising costs

and diminishing federal dollars, the use of punitive measures – shutoffs and liens (a legal claim on the house linked to a debt which can lead to foreclosure) – is widespread. Just like mortgage foreclosures, water shutoffs and liens can force affected households to abandon their homes.

Jarome Montgomery, 48, a truck driver from Warrensville Heights in Cleveland, has borrowed from his partner, mother, grandmother and sisters to repay more than \$30,000 to the water department since 2013, and avoid his home being auctioned off at a tax sale. Despite this, he still owes more than \$5,000 in water and sewer charges including penalties and interest.

"I've done two payment plans, but I'm still in foreclosure, it's like they're trying to make me homeless," said Montgomery. "There is no way I'm using the amount of water they're charging me for but I'm in a no-win situation, I don't want to lose my home so I have to keep finding the money." In San Diego, the average bill was \$1,416 in 2018: 62% of low

income people live in neighbourhoods where the average bill was unaffordable, representing almost one in five of the city's total population. Among the poor, one in seven faced average water bills upward of 12% of the total household income in 2018. Currently, tech hub Seattle has the lowest poverty rate of the cities analysed, and only 13% of Seattleites struggle to afford water – even though bills rose to \$1,254 in 2018 in order to help fund earthquake and climate change resilience improvements. Nevertheless, by 2030, three-quarters of low income residents could be living in neighbourhoods with unaffordable bills. Nationwide, water bills were almost universally unaffordable for the poorest poor in 2018. In 11 of the 12 cities, 100% of the population with incomes below 50% of the federal poverty level lived in neighbourhoods with unaffordable water bills, with the 12th city, Fresno, reaching 99.9%. Millions of Americans can't afford water as bills rise 80% in a decade

As India and China clash, it is time to heed Chanakya

India has officially fought four wars since Independence. In all these, there are many unanswered questions which successive generations have been exercised about. Across the world, narratives about wars are scripted to suit political interests. But the people have a right to know what were the circumstances in which Pakistan and China dared to take India on and what has been done to minimise this possibility in the future.

To understand this, let us take a walk down history. Till today, it is not clear whether China actually attacked India in 1962 or, as some claim, Jawaharlal Nehru ordered this offensive, completely overlooking ground realities. Whatever the truth, the official stand is that China stabbed us in the back even as Nehru sought friendship with it and that our brave soldiers were defeated despite putting up a valiant fight. But

it was more than just a defeat; China occupied a few thousand square kilometres of Indian territory at that time. Our Parliament has always sworn that we will not rest until we get all of it back. I wonder if today's generation knows that this land is still with China.

Five years after that war, there were bloody clashes in 1967 and again in 1975. These were not wars but underlined the threat posed by China.

When the late Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Atal Bihari Vajpayee was foreign minister, during the Janata Party government, he visited Beijing. But by then, there was a perception that ties with China should be normalised even with issue remaining on the back-burner. This is why Indira Gandhi stepped up efforts to cement ties with Beijing in 1981. Her son and successor Rajiv Gandhi took this forward, and

his historic 1988 visit laid the framework for India-China ties, which has persisted till data. Subsequent prime ministers, PV Narasimha Rao, Vajpayee, Manmohan Singh and, now, Narendra Modi have all held out the hand of friendship to China, seen as a great Asian power and counterpart to India. Over time, the resolve of Parliament and the pain of defeat faded away. But this cannot be the basis for diplomacy. Chanakya, India's great ancient philosopher, said that your immediate neighbour is your natural enemy as he covets your territory and resources and is positioned to take them if he is more powerful than you. The only exception to this trend towards considering China as a potential friend was the late George Fernandes, defence minister in the Vajpayee government. He was emphatic that China is our enemy number one. He was

roundly attacked for this. Though he was under pressure, he kept discussing this informally with military officers. As defence minister, Mulayam Singh Yadav, too, saw China as a clear threat and raised some serious questions about the Tibet policy.

After the Galwan Valley clashes, I thought of George Fernandes. Why did we choose to ignore the issues he raised? Why did India's establishment continue to focus on a much weaker country such as Pakistan and view it as our main enemy? We merely managed the border with China; New Delhi did not put in place concrete infrastructure until recently. China, on the other hand, prepared ceaselessly. It built roads close to the Line of Actual Control, laid railway tracks and put together all the necessary infrastructure its army would need for an

eventual confrontation. Today, we are paying the price.

It is this same lackadaisical attitude to defending India's borders that allowed Pakistani soldiers to enter Kargil in 1999. Even that conflict did not teach the government the right lessons. Those in charge feel that the answer is to blame everything on Nehru and the Congress. But that is not good enough. When PM Modi was holding his conversation with Opposition leaders, I was busy in an online conversation with General VP Malik, Indian Army chief during the Kargil war. Let me quote him. "National security is the biggest issue. It is a matter of great sadness that our political parties are publicly raising their fingers on the issue of national security. Of course raising questions is your right, but instead of doing it publicly, discuss it in the meeting, it would do more good."

China has been playing Go, not chess. India needs to learn the game

If India does consider the military option, it will have to factor in China's overwhelming superiority in the Ladakh region specifically, and in electronic warfare, cyberwar, drones, missiles and the nuclear arsenal of the People's Liberation Army generally. The word "igo" in Mandarin literally means to encircle, and that is China's strategy with a combination of the "String of Pearls" (which refers to the sea line communications from China to the Horn of Africa through strategic choke points and maritime centres in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Somalia) along India's coastline and the Belt and Road initiative in the North. Nepal, Bhutan and now Ladakh are additional "stones" being placed to constrict India's manoeuvrability from every direction. Instead of treating these episodes as singular events, India must join the dots to appreciate the

Chinese game plan and design a counter-strategy along three thrust lines. First, an encirclement cannot be broken only from inside. Instead, India must expand the "board" by cooperating with countries such as Japan, Australia, Taiwan, Malaysia, South Korea, Singapore and Vietnam which are increasingly threatened by China's hegemonistic moves. Simultaneously, it must build pressure from within the encirclement by rapprochement with immediate neighbours such as Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka. This requires us to think like a Go player and appreciate that unlike chess, the stones in Go don't have relative power. India has far greater historical synergies with every one of our neighbours including Pakistan, than China does. Each stone, or in this case, country, is important, regardless of its physical or economic size. We need to value them as equal partners in the struggle against

Chinese hegemony. Second, India must recast its national security strategy horizons to decades instead of election cycles. If a government's image is interlocked with tactical timelines, then, by definition, strategy will

How China has overplayed its hand

competitor that must be checked. Thus, its relentless focus on keeping India under pressure, and slowing down its resurgence, from every possible angle, using every possible tool at hand. China's India-containment strategy was clear since its early patronage of Pakistan from the 1950s. It has continued to exploit that benighted nation as a client-state, primarily to act as a brake on India. Then, while establishing a detente on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with India for nearly half-a-century, China began leveraging its fast-growing economy to implement the "string of pearls" strategy to encircle India from south-east Asia to Africa. This has recently seen sharp acceleration, with the Belt and Road Initiative projects such as Hambantota and Gwadar ports

suffer because tactical and strategic goals are usually at cross purposes. Divorcing national security from politics will enable long-term indigenous capacity-building and strengthening external alliances. Last, and most important, India

in Sri Lanka and Pakistan, and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor running right through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Most significantly, China has feverishly stepped up its attempts to cultivate Pakistan-like client states among India's immediate neighbours, as recent developments in Nepal have shown. Furthermore, as covered in the previous edition of this column, in recent years China has also begun asserting itself globally, raising the hackles of nations near and far. India has also been changing. It had earlier wasted decades of LAC detente (when "no bullet was fired in anger, no life was lost") by being laggardly about fortifying its border defences, unlike the Chinese. That has changed dramatically since 2014, with huge increases in infrastructure expenditure in border

needs to consolidate its internal critical mass. The country is facing multiple challenges on several fronts, most seriously the economy. Political power, as Mao said, may grow from a barrel of a gun, but national power emanates from a strong and vibrant

economy, which, in turn, requires internal peace, cooperation, and harmony to inspire customer and investor confidence. Unless those conditions are achieved, no country can aspire to be a regional power or thwart attacks on its sovereignty.

states, both civilian and defence. As many commentators have noted, the recent rapid scaling up of infrastructure on India's side of the LAC was one of the key triggers for the current clash, with China wanting to intimidate India from trying to achieve parity. The Modi government has also taken similar steps abroad, for instance, by finally commissioning Chabahar port in Iran after decades of delay. This time, China has badly overplayed its hand, and been shocked by India's determined resistance. The Modi doctrine is clearly rooted in Kautilyan principles. Unlike his predecessors, he will not be complacent with defences because of opponents' words of peace. He will seek peace like them, but maintain it from a patient, gradually-built position of strength.

Trump Suspends Visas Allowing Hundreds of Thousands of Foreigners to Work in the U.S.

The move is fiercely opposed by business leaders, who say it will block their ability to recruit critically needed workers from countries overseas.



WASHINGTON — President Trump on Monday temporarily suspended new work visas and barred hundreds of thousands of foreigners from seeking employment in the United States, part of a broad effort to limit the entry of immigrants into the country. In a sweeping order, which will be in place at least until the end of the year, Mr. Trump blocked visas for a wide variety of jobs, including those for computer programmers and other skilled workers who enter the country under the H-1B visa, as well as those for seasonal workers in the hospitality industry, students on work-study summer programs and au pairs who arrive under other auspices.

The order also restricts the ability of American companies with global operations and international companies with U.S. branches to transfer foreign executives and other employees to the United States for months or yearslong stints. And it blocks the spouses of foreigners who are employed at companies in the United States.

Officials said the ban on worker visas, combined with extending restrictions on the issuance of new green cards, would keep as many as 525,000 foreign workers out of the country for the rest of the year. Stephen Miller, the White House aide and the architect of Mr. Trump's immigration policy, has pushed for years to limit or eliminate the worker visas, arguing that they harm employment prospects for Americans. And in recent months, Mr. Miller has argued that the economic distress caused by the virus has made it even more important to turn off the spigot. But the directive, which has been expected for several weeks, is fiercely opposed by business leaders, who say it will

block their ability to recruit critically needed workers from countries overseas for jobs that Americans are not willing to do or are not capable of performing. "This is a full-frontal attack on American innovation and our nation's ability to benefit from attracting talent from around the world," said Todd Schulte, the president of FWD.us, a pro-immigration group supported by technology companies.

"Putting up a 'not welcome' sign for engineers, executives, IT experts, doctors, nurses and other workers won't help our country, it will hold us back," said Thomas J. Donohue, the chief executive of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. "Restrictive changes to our nation's immigration system will push investment and economic activity abroad, slow growth and reduce job creation." Administration officials said the president's order would not affect people outside the United States who already have valid visas or seasonal farm workers, whose annual numbers have ranged from a low of about 50,000 to a high of about 250,000 in the past 15 years. There will also be a narrow exception for certain medical workers dealing specifically with coronavirus research, officials said.

The order will ban au pairs who come to the United States to care for children, though officials initially told reporters they would be exempt. Later, two senior administration officials said parents could seek waivers to the ban on a case-by-case basis, with no assurance that they would be approved.

In the order, Mr. Trump described suspension of the visas as a way to ensure that Americans are first in line for scarce jobs — an assertion that immigration

advocates say does not reflect the reality of a dynamic and changing work force. "Under the extraordinary circumstances of the economic contraction resulting from the Covid-19 outbreak, certain nonimmigrant visa programs authorizing such employment pose an unusual threat to the employment of American workers," Mr. Trump wrote in the order. The effort to restrict entry from foreigners into the United States was at the heart of one of the president's key promises during the 2016 campaign and is certain to play a central role as Mr. Trump seeks to energize his core supporters during his re-election campaign this year. While the president's pledge to build a "big, beautiful wall" to prevent illegal border crossings has attracted more attention, his efforts to slow down the flow of legal immigration have been even more effective and potentially long-lasting.

In April, the president signed an executive order that suspended for 60 days the issuance of green cards to most foreigners looking to live in the United States. But at the time, Mr. Miller and the president bowed to pressure from the business community to avoid imposing limits on the worker visas.

Monday's order extends the green-card prohibition in addition to suspending the issuance of many of the worker visas. Immigration restrictionists who have had the ear of the Trump administration applauded the announcement. Combined with recent measures, "the work visa suspensions will put the thumb on the labor market scale in favor of U.S. workers," said Jessica Vaughan, the policy director at the Center for Immigration Studies, which advocates curbing immigration.

"It's really heartening to see the president stand up to the special interests that pull out the stops to lobby for these visa programs," said Ms. Vaughan, who said she had been regularly consulted by White House aides on the issue.

In addition to the temporary suspensions, administration officials said Mr. Trump was directing the government to make permanent changes to a broad array of immigration regulations in order to discourage what they said was unfair competition for American jobs from foreigners looking to come to the United States.

Among those changes will be new methods of ensuring that high-skill visas in the future are awarded to the highest-paid workers and of preventing companies from contracting large numbers of midlevel foreign workers to perform accounting, programming and other technology-assisted jobs that Americans might be able to do.

Other changes would be aimed at discouraging immigrants from applying for asylum as a way of obtaining a work permit in the United States. It was unclear when those regulatory changes would go into effect. The administration could try to issue emergency rules to expedite such changes rather than go through the normal process, which can take months or even years because the public must be allowed to comment before a final rule is enacted.

But fast-tracking the rule-making process on foreign workers could invite legal challenges from opponents who say the administration did not follow the rules. Last week, the Supreme Court ruled that Mr. Trump violated the Administrative Procedure Act when he tried to terminate an Obama-era program aimed at protecting young immigrants from deportation.

"The government could try and fast-track that process by not allowing the public to weigh in on the changes before they go into effect, but it is difficult to see that process surviving court review," said Lynden Melmed, an immigration lawyer and the former chief counsel of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Amid the pandemic, the Trump administration has seized on the threat to public health as

a pretext to issue a series of policy changes affecting almost every aspect of the immigration system, including asylum and green cards. While many changes have been announced as temporary, they could remain in place indefinitely. But critics say the administration has used the health crisis and the economic meltdown it has caused as pretext to put in place restrictions that further its immigration agenda. While Mr. Trump and his aides said the suspension of visas was in response to the pandemic, the administration has been pursuing the same broad reductions to legal immigration policies for years, including during times when unemployment was at its lowest in decades. In 2017, the president endorsed the RAISE Act, a Republican Senate bill that would have cut legal immigration, including business visas, by about 50 percent. In the weeks leading up to the announcement on Monday, a diverse coalition of businesses and research universities had lobbied fiercely, flooding the White House with letters and phone calls, in an attempt to limit the scope of the executive order. "It's the largest crackdown on work visas that I have seen in my 35 years of practice," said Steve Yale-Loehr, a Cornell law professor. "Thousands of businesses and universities will be hurt by these restrictions. Similarly, individuals will be stuck overseas unable to help the U.S. economy recover."

But the opponents failed to block the measures, which they had argued were counterproductive to economic recovery. "The Trump administration has argued that it wants to create a merit-based immigration system that prioritizes educated immigrants with skills," said Alex Nowrasteh, the director of immigration studies at the libertarian Cato Institute. "With this suspension of the H-1B visa program, they have shown, once again, that they really mean they want fewer immigrants." "These immigration bans are more red meat and not jobs for the base," said Rebecca Shi from the American Business Immigration Coalition in Chicago. "They don't even serve Trump's own business interests." Mr. Trump has used H-2B visas to hire seasonal staff for his resorts to work as cooks and waiters.

How Trump's misguided H-1B visa ban will devastate our economy

This week, the Trump administration issued a new executive order suspending employment-based visas used by more than half-a-million foreign workers each year, including the H-1B skilled-worker program relied upon by our nation's tech industry. This policy won't simply make life harder for immigrants—it will have devastating consequences for the economy, robbing U.S. businesses of skilled, tech-savvy workers, hampering economic growth, and stifling job creation as we push through the coronavirus downturn.

As an immigrant and the cofounder of a startup that has raised \$70 million to help new Americans participate fully in our economy, I'm dismayed by the President's shortsightedness. The business and technology communities have spoken out clearly, time and again, about the need for a smarter approach to immigration. My company, Nova Credit, recently drafted an open letter signed by more than 230 business leaders, including top current and former executives at JPMorgan Chase, Lending Club, PayPal, and Verizon, asking Congress to ensure immigrants are treated fairly in COVID-19 response and recovery efforts.

We did so because we know that immigration isn't a zero-sum game.

Foreign workers don't take jobs from Americans, but rather give businesses like ours the talent and skilled labor we need to keep growing and create jobs and prosperity for everyone.

The Trump administration claims its policies are meant to protect U.S. workers, but the true impact will be a catastrophic loss of jobs and innovation. Our workforce is aging, so we need immigrants to keep our economy firing—especially in the skilled positions that fuel growth and create jobs for American workers. According to New American Economy, every H-1B visa that's issued generates 1.83 new jobs over the following seven years. With 85,000 H-1B visas currently issued per year, that means even just a one-year freeze would cost the U.S. a total of 155,550 jobs.

The new executive order also halts the issuance of L visas, which let businesses move workers from one branch to another and are vital to the running of multinational companies. It bars many workers from entering on H-2B visas, which are widely used by the hospitality sector and other seasonal businesses wrestling with chronic labor shortages. And it bars the entry of skilled workers' spouses under H-4 visas—a pointlessly cruel move that will separate loved ones and have an outsize toll on immigrant women.

The J visa program, used by students and professionals, is also on the chopping block, and the administration is likely to follow up by targeting the Optional Professional Training program that allows students to work temporarily for U.S. companies after graduation. Both the J and OPT programs are major drivers of innovation that create jobs for everyone. Reducing OPT numbers by just 60%—a far more restrained approach than the administration favors—would reduce GDP by a quarter-percent by 2028, and wipe out 443,000 jobs, including 255,000 now held by American-born workers.

The long-term toll would be even worse, because the foreign students and skilled workers of today are the startup founders and CEOs of tomorrow. SpaceX founder Elon Musk and Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella once used H-1B visas to live and work in the U.S. In total, the U.S. has 3.1 million immigrant entrepreneurs, according to New American Economy, and immigrant-run businesses employ 8 million people. Without immigrant founders, the Fortune 500 would be only the Fortune 277, because almost 45% of our country's biggest companies were founded by new Americans and their children.

My own story speaks to the contributions made by immigrants. I was

born in the U.K. to Greek parents, educated in a French school, and worked in East Africa before coming to the U.S. for an MBA at Stanford. Because I was able to use the OPT program and other employment-based visas to stay in the U.S. after graduating, I went on to cofound Nova Credit, which now employs 55 people and helps thousands of immigrants a year to access financial services like loans and credit cards.

We'll need exactly that kind of imagination, energy, and optimism as we work to revitalize our economy—and that means we can't afford to sideline or scare off our immigrant workers. The pandemic doesn't care about paperwork or politics: It's affecting us all. But nobody benefits if we force hardworking immigrants to abandon their dreams and return to their home countries—or to more welcoming countries such as Canada—and rob ourselves of their talent, their innovation, and their entrepreneurialism.

Americans should reject the administration's misguided effort to exclude skilled immigrants. It's time for all Americans—and especially our leaders in D.C.—to put politics aside, do what's right for the U.S. economy, and work to ensure that bright, ambitious immigrants know they'll always be welcome in the home of the free.

How US pause on H1-B work visas will hit Indian companies

The US has blocked H1-B and certain other non-immigrant worker visas until the end of the year. A look at who uses these visas, and how the move will impact Indian firms who send workers to the US

The US administration on Tuesday said it was extending the 60-day ban on immigration and non-immigrant worker visas till the end of 2020. Popular work visas including the much-coveted H-1B and H-2B, and certain categories of H-4, J, and L visas shall also remain suspended until December 31, the White House said in a press note.

The move, US President Donald Trump said, was to protect domestic workers who had been impacted due to a contraction in the economy in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. In order to fill a vacuum of highly-skilled low-cost employees in IT and other related domains, the US administration issues a certain number of visas each year which allows companies from outside the US to send employees to work on client sites.

Of these work visas, the H-1B remains the most popular among Indian IT companies. The US government has a cap of 85,000 total H-1B visas for each year. Of this, 65,000 H-1B visas are issued to highly skilled foreign workers, while the rest 20,000 can be additionally allotted to highly skilled foreign workers who have a higher education or masters degree from an American university. Apart from the H-1B visas, the US government also issues L1 visas which allows

companies to transfer highly skilled workers to US for a period of up to seven years. H-2B visas allow food and agricultural workers to seek employment in the US.

Why did the US suspend non-immigrant worker visas?

Since it was started in 1952, the H-1 visa scheme has undergone many changes and revisions to allow or disallow certain categories of skilled workers in the US, depending on the economic situation of the country. The technology boom coupled with the arrival of the internet and low-cost computers in developing nations such as India and China saw a large number of graduates willing to work at relatively low costs in the US, a win-win situation for both the employer and the employee. However, it has since often been criticised for sending low cost workers to the US at the expense of domestic workers.

In January 2017, after taking over as the president of the US, Trump had hinted that the low-cost workers were hampering the economy and undercutting jobs of citizens. The US had then hinted at reforming the "broken" H-1B visa system. Trump seized the opportunity provided by the economic contraction due to Covid-19 by first banning the entry of non-immigrant workers till June 23, and then

extending it till December 31.

In his executive order extending the ban, Trump said that while under normal circumstances, "properly administered temporary worker programs can provide benefits to the economy," the extraordinary economic contraction created due to Covid-19 posed a threat to the US workers.

Who all does it impact?

Since the ban is effective immediately, the processing of all new H-1B, H-2B, J, and L visa categories stand suspended. This means those who do not have a valid non-immigrant visa as of June 23, and are outside of the US, will not be allowed to enter the country until December 31. Workers in essential services in the food sector have been given some reprieve, and their entry shall be decided by the consular officer of immigration services. H-1B, H-2B, J and L visa holders, and their spouse or children already present in the US shall not be impacted by the new worker visa ban.

How does it impact Indian IT companies? Indian IT companies are amongst the biggest beneficiaries of the US H-1B visa regime, and have since 1990s cornered a lion's share of the total number of visas issued each year.

As of April 1, 2020, the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) had

received about 2.5 lakh H-1B work visa applications, according to official data. Indians had applied for as many as 1.84 lakh or 67 per cent of the total H-1B work visas for the current financial year ending March 2021.

Apart from the suspension of these work visas, the executive order signed by Trump has also made sweeping changes to the H-1B work visa norms, which will no longer be decided by the currently prevalent lottery system. The new norms will now favour highly-skilled workers who are paid the highest wages by their respective companies.

This could result in a significant impact on margins and worker wages of Indian IT companies which send thousands of low-cost employees to work on client sites in the US. Though the large Indian IT companies have cut down their dependency on H-1B and other worker visas by hiring as much as 50 per cent of staff locally, they still rely on these visas to keep costs in check.

Indian IT companies also offer subcontracts to Indian nationals already present in the US with valid H-1B visas. Bangalore-based Wipro spends as much as 20 per cent of its revenue to subcontract Indian workers with valid H-1B visas.

Spouses on H4 visas stuck in India following Trump's ban



Trump's visa restriction has left the fate of spouses of H1B visa holders hanging in the balance.

communicate with visa applicants) and just needed the stamp," she said. Radhika's biggest concern is the toll the situation is taking on her child, who is missing his father and will have to skip school as well this year. Several immigration lawyers have called out the Trump administration for his decision to include dependants of H-1B and L-1 visa holders, who are on H-4 and L-2 visas. "It is incomprehensible how keeping a spouse outside the United States protects US jobs... In that case, you could have suspended their work authorisation. That smacks of political ransom rather than policy," said Rajiv S Khanna, managing attorney at

immigration law firm, Immigration.com. Dependents on H-4 and L-2 visas are legally not allowed to work and restricting their entry would not impact unemployment levels, he added. Spouses on an H-4 visa can apply for an Employment Authorisation Document (H-4EAD), but this has been left untouched by the current proclamation. Some US-based lawyers have started compiling lists of people affected by the order and will challenge it legally. New Delhi's Aparna* is among those who are relying on these likely lawsuits to help with the situation. "I spent 18 days with my husband after we got married, but because I was still serving

my notice period, I stayed on in India and didn't go back with him," she said. Similarly, Disha*, who is stranded in Hyderabad, recently received a notice to submit her passport to get the H4 visa stamped but could not do so because embassies were shut. Her husband, who works with Microsoft, is currently in the US. Even after the consulates open and I get my stamp, I will still not be able to travel till the end of the year. There are several of us in this situation who are suffering from being separated from our families," she said. All the affected ones said they were hoping that the US administration would alter this proclamation and allow them to return home soon.

Shivani* -- who has been living in suburban Connecticut (US) for the last seven years with her software engineer husband and a pet -- recently got an extension for her H-4 dependent visa, which needs to be stamped by the local US consulate when she travels outside the US, before being allowed back. "This time, when I came to India, I had an appointment, but then all this happened," she said.

Shivani was referring to the closure of the US embassy and consulates across India due to the coronavirus outbreak, which meant she could not get her passport stamped.

US President Donald Trump's decision on Monday to suspend certain non-immigrant visa issuances till December 31 has further added to Shivani's misery. As per the US president's proclamation, H-4 visa holders who do not have a valid visa stamped on their passports as of June 24 are not allowed to enter the country till year end. The move has resulted in hundreds of families facing the prospect of being separated for a further six months.

Shivani is not the only one facing this dilemma. Radhika* and her four-year-old child, who came to

Kolkata to meet family earlier this year, have been similarly stranded. "I've been in the US since 2010, first on an L2 and now H4. I have an approved I-797 (a form used by the US immigration agency to

After US suspends H-1B visa, Indian engineers look at Canada

Trump's decision to curb H1B and other visas is likely to see more Indians moving to Canada.

PUNE: US President Donald Trump's decision to suspend H-1B and other non-immigrant work permits till December 31 is likely to see more Indians moving to Canada, which has a more open policy on immigration. Canadian staffing firms have reported a sharp increase in enquiries over the last few weeks as murmurs around the proposed suspension grew louder. The increase in the number of hits to our website and emails we get has been huge, especially over the last two days," said Irfhan Rawji, Chief Executive Officer, MobSquad which contracts its employees to larger tech firms, provided the job can be done from Canada. The company is also fielding queries from American companies which want to hold on to certain key employees whose status in the United States might have been in jeopardy because of their visa conditions. Shortly after the visa suspension was announced, Canada's immigration minister Marco Mendicino said, "We believe that immigration will spring our recovery out

of this pandemic. We have a plan in place that looks to leverage the best and the



brightest from around the world. We've got pathways like the Express Entry program, and the Global Talent Stream, which will help to bring entrepreneurs, engineers, and innovators." Before the coronavirus induced lockdown, Canada had said it would like to attract 1 million permanent residents between 2020 and 2022. Out of the 74,000 new permanent residents added in the first few months of this year, 24% were Indians.

In 2019, 85,585 Indians opted for

permanent residency in Canada, up from 39,705 in 2016, as per data from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Canada. It is unclear how many of these people were living in the United States before moving to Canada, as the data is provided only by nationality. StackRaft, which helps companies find remote engineering talent, said there had been an increase in people reaching out to them in the last few weeks. "A lot of H-1B holders have also been reaching out because of layoffs; 70% of our engineers on H-1B are either moving back to their home countries or

to Canada," Vartika Manasvi, co-founder of StackRaft, said. H-1B visa holders risk being deported if they are unemployed for more than 60 days. Even though people currently in the US are not impacted by the presidential proclamation, it has led to a lot of uncertainty over whether they will be in the line of fire in future. Increasingly, US employers are also encouraging employees working remotely from Canada, whether to hold on to key talent or to fill roles that they cannot locally.

Apple, Google, Twitter React to Trump H-1B Visa Ban

In his new executive order, President Trump temporarily froze new work visas, including the H-1B, through at least the rest of 2021. That creates some issues for tech companies that rely on the visa—with the CEOs of some large firms speaking out against the suspension.

Apple CEO Tim Cook took to Twitter to express his displeasure over the move. "Like Apple, this nation of immigrants has always found strength in our diversity, and hope in the enduring promise of the American Dream," he wrote in part. "There is no new prosperity without both." Google (and Alphabet) CEO Sundar Pichai chimed in with a

similar message. "Disappointed by today's proclamation—we'll continue to stand with immigrants and work to expand opportunity for all," he wrote, adding: All of these companies, of course, rely heavily on the H-1B visa for specialized talent. Not only do they source these employees directly; many also rely on consulting and "business services" firms to subcontract H-1B workers. For example, according to a dataset from the U.S. Department of Labor, Google hired 7,604 H-1B candidates directly in 2019—and outsourced an additional 889. Here's a breakdown of how some other prominent firms hired and subcontracted H-1B

workers last year: However, the median H-1B salary at consulting and subcontracting firms such as Capgemini, Tata, Accenture and IBM is generally much lower, suggesting that subcontracted H-1B workers could end up being paid a lot less than those sourced directly by the big tech companies.

Trump's order won't affect those H-1B workers already in the U.S. The impact on tech companies, however, will hinge on whether the suspension extends beyond this year. In theory, a longer ban will drive these firms to hire more workers already in the country, as opposed to sourcing talent from overseas. And that's

exactly the White House's intention.

"In the administration of our Nation's immigration system, we must remain mindful of the impact of foreign workers on the United States labor market, particularly in the current extraordinary environment of high domestic unemployment and depressed demand for labor," the order states. "Historically, when recovering from economic shocks that cause significant contractions in productivity, recoveries in employment lag behind improvements in economic activity." Any visa suspension, in other words, could readjust demand for labor in favor of domestic workers.

Assessing impact of US decision on blocking H1B visas: MEA



dimension of ties between the two countries.

India on Thursday said it was assessing the impact of the Trump administration's decision to block H1B visas on Indian nationals and industry but indicated its dismay over it saying people-to-people linkages and economic cooperation are an important dimension of ties between the two countries. In a huge blow to Indian IT professionals eyeing the US job market, the Trump administration suspended the most sought-after H-1B visas along with other types of foreign work visas until the end of 2020 to to protect American workers

in a crucial election year. "This is likely to affect movement of Indian skilled professionals who avail of these non-immigrant visa programmes to work lawfully in the US. We are assessing the impact of the order on Indian nationals and industry in consultation with stakeholders," Spokesperson in the Ministry of External Affairs Anurag Srivastava said. He was replying to a question on the issue at an online media briefing.

"People-to-people linkages and trade & economic cooperation, especially in technology and innovation sectors, are an important dimension of the US-India partnership," he said. The

decision by the Trump administration is going to impact a large number of Indian IT professionals and several American and Indian companies who were issued H-1B visas by the US government for the fiscal year 2021 beginning October 1. Srivastava said high-skilled Indian professionals bring important skill sets, bridge technological gaps and impart a competitive edge to the US economy. "They have also been a critical component of the workforce that is at the forefront of providing COVID-19 related assistance in key sectors, including health, information technology and financial services," he said.

India said it was assessing the impact of the Trump administration's decision to block H1B visas on Indian nationals and industry but indicated its dismay over it saying people-to-people linkages and economic cooperation are an important

H-1B: Minimal effects expected from Trump's visa suspensions, green card freeze

Canada reaches out to tout its welcoming immigration policies

While the administration of President Donald Trump has said his order suspending many work visas and extending a green card freeze will save the jobs of more than a half-million Americans, immigration experts Tuesday pointed out that the coronavirus pandemic has already choked off the flow of foreign nationals to the U.S. That's in part because the outbreak has closed overseas consular services for foreign citizens wishing to come to the U.S. as immigrants or workers, said Daniel Costa, director of immigration law and policy research at the Economic Policy Institute, a left-leaning think tank.

"The immigration system is basically already shut down. And we haven't seen any signs of when regular visa processing will open up again abroad. To me, that makes it seem like this is mostly symbolic, and suggests strongly that it's a political tactic to blame immigrants for an economy that's shedding millions of jobs because of the pandemic," said Costa, who in May published research that found the H-1B visa, intended for jobs requiring specialized skills, was being used by employers, including major U.S. technology firms, to obtain cheaper foreign labor. After Trump on Monday issued the order suspending entry of foreign nationals under the H-1B and other visas until the end



of the year, Ken Cuccinelli, acting deputy of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, tweeted that the move would "preserve about 525,000 jobs for Americans during the remainder of 2020." The order does not apply to foreign citizens holding visas valid on a date before Wednesday, when the order goes into effect, or to people already in the U.S. However, the non-partisan Migration Policy Institute estimates that if the pandemic hadn't already ended movement of foreign citizens into the U.S., the suspensions would block fewer than 400,000 foreign citizens: 158,000 wishing to immigrate permanently via green cards, plus 167,000 who would enter with work visas, including 29,000 would-be H-1B workers and 19,000 spouses

and children on H-4 visas accompanying them. Institute analyst Julia Gelatt said it was unclear how Cuccinelli arrived at the number he cited. But she said blocking foreign nationals from obtaining jobs doesn't mean all those jobs are saved for Americans. Some jobs Americans would not take, and for others, there are no available and qualified American workers, Gelatt said. Immigrants often create jobs by spending money and starting businesses, Gelatt added. Trump, in his order, said that "American workers compete against foreign nationals for jobs in every sector of our economy," and that amid the economic troubles created by the pandemic, work visas including the H-1B "pose an unusual threat to the employment of American

workers."

The order drew fire from groups representing Silicon Valley tech firms, and from several companies. "Immigrants have not only fueled technological breakthroughs and created new businesses and jobs but have also enriched American life," Google spokesman Jose Castaneda said via email Tuesday. "Particularly now, we need that talent to help contribute to America's economic recovery." But UC Davis professor Norm Matloff, a frequent critic of the H-1B program, called the visa suspensions a "big win" for Big Tech because they would block only foreign workers outside the U.S. so firms would still be able to hire from a large pool of foreign students already here.

"Trump has consistently stated since back in 2015 that he considers the H-1Bs recruited from U.S. university campuses to be the 'good' H-1Bs," Matloff said in a blog post Tuesday. Staffing firms bringing foreign workers into the U.S. would be hit hardest by the suspensions, Matloff said. "This frees a large number of visas for the tech firms," he said. Suspending H-1B visas threatens next wave of innovation

This is who's blocked from coming to the US under Trump's latest visa ban

H-1B: Trump administration extends visa ban to non-immigrants

H-1B: Silicon Valley blasts Trump's Monday order suspending visas

Report: Trump administration expected to suspend H-1B visas for the rest of the year
Meanwhile, Canada's Consul General in San Francisco reached out to this news organization the day after Trump's order was issued to discuss "what Canada can offer."

Consul General Rana Sarkar in an interview Tuesday said the Canadian government's welcoming immigration policies have drawn more than 40,000 foreign tech workers to the country in the past five years. "Without wanting to comment on U.S. immigration policy and visa restrictions, I will say that the contrast to what others are doing puts Canada in a very strong place," Sarkar said.

India's Pakistan dilemma

Both talking and not talking haven't helped. But maintain minimum engagement

(News Agencies) India has downgraded its diplomatic relationship with Pakistan. It has told the Pakistani high commission in Delhi to reduce its strength by half, on the grounds that officials were supporting "cross-border violence and terrorism". Given the reciprocity that governs diplomatic ties, India will do the same in Pakistan. This comes soon after India expelled two Pakistani high commission officials for spying, and Pakistani agencies detained and harassed two members of the Indian diplomatic mission in Islamabad. Since August, when India decided to change

the constitutional status of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), the two countries have also not had high commissioners in each other's country. New Delhi's recent decision is the first time after the 2001 Parliament attack that it has downgraded ties to this level.

But the tit-for-tat diplomatic battle hides beneath it a real dilemma in India's Pakistan policy. On one hand it is a clear, well-recognised, fact. Pakistan is a State that sponsors terrorism and engages in asymmetric warfare against India. It has, directly through its military-intelligence nexus, given patronage to terror groups that

have conducted attacks, leading to huge loss of Indian lives. Pakistan continues to cause violence and instability in J&K — an integral part of India. It engages in mass disinformation campaigns against India internationally. And it is an "all-weather friend" of China, which has stepped up its offensive against India — perhaps even in close consultation with Islamabad. In this backdrop, even continuing with diplomatic niceties and talking to Pakistan appears futile. At the same time, Pakistan is a neighbour. Its alliance with China poses a threat, for it can lead to an adversarial "two-front" situation —



which Indian policymakers have factored in, but must be avoided for the costs involved. Countering Pakistan's disinformation campaigns is also a distraction from India's core diplomatic goals. And not talking at all — and downgrading diplomatic ties — will not make the situation better. This then is the dilemma. The United Progressive Alliance government talked, hoping it would embolden constituencies of peace and lead to a

breakthrough. It did not work. For the most part, the Narendra Modi government has not talked. It hasn't worked either. There are no easy solutions. But at the minimum, diplomatic channels of some sort must remain intact to handle unforeseen situations, as well as the other elements of the relationship, including people-to-people ties. India must think more creatively about its legitimate Pakistan dilemma.



The Moscow reset

Russia remains a valuable partner, but don't expect more than neutrality

This should not come as a surprise. Russia is not the Soviet Union. Its economy is half the size of India and its enormous economic relationship with China is essential to its prosperity. The two have a crude geopolitical convergence in their common antagonism towards the United States. Moscow supplies arms and hydrocarbons to both India and China. Russia is powerful enough to maintain relationships

with both, but not strong enough to choose between them. And Russia sees its interests in maintaining this position. Among other things it is profitable: China was its first customer for the S-400. New Delhi has already begun seeking to reset its relationship, especially as the defence element is starting to fade. Energy and strategic minerals are now rising in importance between the two

countries and this is evident in the bilateral investment figures. Moscow still wields a veto in the United Nations and will remain a diplomatic partner in many areas. More differences will crop up, as is evident already over Afghanistan, as the knob on bilateral ties is turned down from special to normal. All this flows naturally from a changing global order and New Delhi should adjust its policies without sentiment.

(News Agencies) India invests in its relationship with Russia, but increasingly in return for neutrality rather than support. Defence minister Rajnath Singh visited Moscow to help mark World War II Victory Day just after external affairs minister S Jaishankar attended a virtual

Russia-India-China summit hosted by Moscow. The defence minister asked Russia to speed up its delivery of the first battery of the S-400 air defence system. He did not ask Moscow to reconsider its steadfast neutrality during the altercation along the Sino-Indian border.

Assess China's actions, not words

Its military build-up will have to be countered

(News Agencies) The news on the India-China front remains grim. Officials familiar with ground developments and satellite imagery have indicated that China has engaged in a rapid, and rather drastic, build-up of troops and material at various points across the Line of Actual Control. In the Galwan Valley, where brave Indian soldiers destroyed a tent built by the People's Liberation Army on June 15, the Chinese appear to have re-erected the structure. In Pangong-Tso, the Chinese presence between Finger 4 and Finger 8 is now well-established. While India has matched it up

with its own troop deployment, the military moves from China signal escalation. The paradox is that this is happening despite military-level talks where both sides have agreed to disengage; it is also happening at a time when in diplomatic talks, while maintaining their respective positions, the two sides have indicated progress. India must carefully note this dual signalling from China — where it is involved in talks and makes commitments to step back, but continues to remain aggressive on the ground. India must continue to respond not by believing words, but assessing

actions. China has had a long history in deception. In the 1950s, when India raised the issue of Chinese official maps indicating parts of Indian territory under its own sovereign jurisdiction, Chinese leaders reassured Delhi that this was a legacy of the past and did not reflect current positions. But soon after, in 1962, it engaged in an offensive operation and expanded its claims, exacerbated no doubt by India's weak strategy. A more recent example is the Chinese mismatch between its commitment at military talks on June 6 to disengage and its



actions on June 15 where, in what appears to be a "pre-mediated" act, it attacked and killed 20 personnel of the Indian Army. The lesson is simple — wait for action on the ground before giving an inch in any diplomatic talks. In this case, the Chinese military aggression is complicated by its historically

untenable and false claim over the Galwan Valley. India had no choice but to continue to build its military posture on the ground, and prepare for all scenarios, even as diplomacy is given a chance to pressure China into translating its words into action on disengagement and limiting its claims.

China's Art of War in Sri Lanka

China's amplified efforts to bolster relations with Sri Lanka have shifted the global order and left the United States grasping for straws to maintain its global prestige and relationship with the island nation.

(News Agencies) Sri Lanka received another round of Chinese-made face masks and medical equipment to combat the coronavirus in mid-June, which is further evidence that Sri Lanka is a major target of Beijing's foreign policy and "donation diplomacy." China's continued Indo-Pacific expansion and Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) promotion, culminating in the launching the "Health Silk Road," have caused a swell in U.S.-China tensions. Sri Lanka, referred to as an important piece of "real estate" by U.S. Ambassador Alice Wells for its strategic location in the Indian Ocean along major maritime shipping routes, has been a flashpoint for these New Cold War-causing tensions over recent months. China's amplified efforts to bolster relations with Sri Lanka have shifted the global order and left the United States grasping for straws to maintain

its global prestige and relationship with the island nation.

Prior to 2019, Sri Lanka's administration was pro-Washington and favored striking political deals with the United States. For example, in 2017 the pro-American Sirisena-Wickremesinghe administration happily renewed its Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) with the United States for another ten years. The ACSA allowed the transfer and exchange of logistics supplies, support, and refueling services which benefited U.S. military operations in the Indo-Pacific region.

A mere two years later, however, the pro-Beijing Gotabaya Rajapaksa administration has refused to cooperate with U.S. initiatives, exemplifying that Sri Lanka is now actively choosing a partnership with China instead of the United States. Recently,

the United States failed to renew its Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) with Sri Lanka, even after pledging \$480 million in development aid via the Millennium Challenge Compact (MCC). The United States and Sri Lanka spent months debating the MCC compact which promised infrastructure development projects, much like China's BRI projects within Sri Lanka's borders; however, the Colombo administration ultimately declined to sign the strings-attached MCC offer and refused to renew the SOFA.

The SOFA negotiations instigated some political tension and debate amongst Sri Lanka's political class who called the SOFA a "very serious infringement on the country's sovereignty." In the wake of these June 2019 tensions, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo canceled a trip to Sri Lanka during his tour of the Indo-Pacific region.



Though the US claimed the cancellation came due to "scheduling conflicts," many Sri Lankans speculated that it had more to do with rising local anti-American sentiments as the US attempted to establish a new military base in Sri Lanka as part of its, now failed, SOFA agreements. In retrospect, it seems that this trip cancellation and rising local sentiments against American influence in Sri Lanka foreshadowed the decline in U.S.-Sri Lankan partnership in favor of China.

It is no wonder that Sri Lanka has shifted its alliance, as the coronavirus proved that China has the undeniable power of the purse.

After the outbreak of the coronavirus in Sri Lanka, the Colombo administration sent an urgent request to the Chinese government for foreign aid to manage its current financial debts and combat the virus. Just days later, the Chinese government responded by extending a ten-year \$500 million concessionary loan to Sri Lanka, stating that the two countries have enjoyed a "long history of friendship" and that the Chinese government is committed to "continuously providing necessary assistance to the Sri Lankan government and people within our capacities for the country's economic and social development."

Pakistan Covid-19 doctors witness black market deals in blood plasma

(News Agencies) As coronavirus chaos has enveloped Pakistan, with hospitals overflowing, doctors dying and infections escalating at an unmanageable rate, a dangerous black market in blood plasma has emerged.

The blood plasma of recovered coronavirus patients is now being sold for upwards of £3,000 to those who are desperately looking for a cure, at a time when doctors say Pakistan's healthcare system is on the brink of collapse.

Convalescent plasma is being trialled around the world as a possible treatment for the disease. It contains antibodies generated by the immune systems of people who have fought off the virus. Doctors in government hospitals in Islamabad said they had witnessed transactions between patients and intermediaries. The Guardian has also seen multiple text messages between people across Pakistan who are buying and selling the plasma of recovered patients.

"The hospitals are not involved but I have seen deals happen in front of me," said a doctor at a government hospital in Islamabad, who asked not to be named. "Usually a patient's attendants or family will

approach someone who has recovered, asking them to donate blood. When a certain amount is agreed as payment, usually between 200,000 and 800,000 rupees (£950-£3,800), they go to a private lab and extract the plasma, which is then 'donated' to the patients." He added: "I know a family of five who became Covid-19 positive and spent 3.5m rupees on blood plasma on the black market. They believe it's a miracle cure."

Sources at the federal investigation agency confirmed they were aware of the unregulated black market sales of blood plasma but that it was up to the police to investigate individual cases.

Doctors said that hospitals in Islamabad had also run out of vital drugs, such as dexamethasone which was recently proven to help in Covid-19 recovery, as well oxygen cylinders, because they had been stolen and were now being sold for 25 times the market price on the black market.

Pakistan now has one of the fastest infection rates in the world, with 185,000 confirmed cases and upwards of 5,000 new infections a day. The planning minister, Asad Umar, has said cases could multiply eightfold by the end of July and hit 1.2 million.

'My life became a disaster movie' the Bangladesh garment factory on the brink

One factory owner tells how coronavirus cancellations by UK brands have seen him struggle to pay wages

(News Agencies) As high streets across England opened this week and hundreds of people jostled through the doors of clothing shops, thousands of miles away in Chittagong, Bangladesh, Mostafiz Uddin is worrying about how to pay his workers' wages. At Denim Expert Ltd, the sustainable clothing company he founded in 2009 as a sustainable apparels clothing company, hundreds

of boxes of jeans are crammed against walls and packed to the ceiling. These boxes contain 38,000 pairs of Burton jeans, worth more than £200,000 that were ready for shipment in early March. But as the UK went into lockdown that month, an email pinged into his inbox that tore his

life apart. Arcadia, the company run by billionaire Sir Philip Green, which owns the Burton brand alongside others including Dorothy Perkins and Topshop, told Uddin it was cancelling all its orders and would not accept any shipments from his factory. "After I read that email, my whole body was shaking, I just couldn't believe what was happening," he says. On top of the jeans packed and ready to ship, Uddin claims he had spent \$340,000 (£275,000) on material to make another 60,300 pairs of jeans for Burton and Dorothy Perkins worth \$425,000. He alleges another £1m had gone on material purchases based on projections of Arcadia orders he was told were

coming down the line. "In total the Arcadia orders that had been placed at my factory were worth over \$2.44m. All gone, in one day." In a statement, Arcadia disputed Uddin's claims, saying it only considered the £200,000 of finished jeans as a cancelled order and that it would now be paying for all the orders in production at Denim Expert. A spokesperson also said that Arcadia was not

legally responsible for material purchased by Denim Expert Ltd for future orders.

"It is completely inaccurate for Mr Uddin to claim that Arcadia has cancelled orders totalling \$2m. The total value of orders we were forced to cancel as a result of the pandemic was closer to £200k for stock which was to be delivered between June and November," said a spokesperson. Arcadia wasn't the only brand that cancelled orders at Uddin's factory as retail outlets closed across the UK. Peacocks, owned by Edinburgh Woollen Mill, refused to accept shipment of 15,100 pairs of jeans or pay for another 30,000 items of clothing that were already in production. The unprecedented cancellations from brands that Uddin had worked with for decades shattered his life's work in a matter of weeks. Overall, 80% of his orders were gone with no compensation.



Trump the underdog-Can campaign climb out of the hole he's dug?



By Arnon Mishkin

With every new public poll showing likely Democratic nominee Joe Biden with a clear lead over President Trump, with yet another former insider spewing negative tales of White House dysfunction, and with Trump's rally attendance suggesting that his base

enthusiasm may be waning – one can feel the conventional wisdom coagulating around a consensus of an almost certain Democratic victory, and even a blue wave that would lead to the party controlling the Senate as well. Indeed, it sometimes seems that the only people who don't think Biden will

win are Democrats who were so shocked by 2016 that they refuse to believe anything other than 'lightning will strike again.' But how certain is it? And is there anything that the president and his team can do to prove the pundits wrong again, just as they did in 2016? A look at the national and state polls shows why most believe the president is the current underdog in the race. According to the Real Clear Politics national average, Biden is currently ahead by eight points, 50 to 42. Of even greater concern for Republicans: there hasn't been a single poll that has Trump above 43 since the middle of May. The most recent Fox News poll put Trump at 38 percent, with Biden at 50 percent. Moreover, there is evidence in the poll that Trump's vaunted base may not be

as powerful as it appeared in 2016. Trump wins the support of 66 percent of white evangelicals, as opposed to the 80 percent he got in 2016, according to multiple 2016 election day studies. Similarly, among whites without a college degree (the so-called "white working class"), Trump is getting 52 percent, as opposed to the 66 percent support he garnered in 2016. A state-by-state analysis is even more alarming for the Republicans.

In the core battleground states, Biden is up by about four points in Arizona, over five points in Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, and up by almost nine points in Michigan. Now, there is some evidence that the polls could be underestimating support for the

president. Indeed, my colleague Daron Shaw – the Republican half of the bipartisan team that conducts the Fox News Poll – has written a paper that shows that Republicans on average do about two points better once the votes are counted than pre-election public polling estimates. In other words, if the election were held tomorrow, then – maybe – Trump might do about two points better than the polls suggest. In other words, he'd be somewhere between 40 and 44 percent – with Biden at 48 percent. That's unlikely to be close enough in the popular vote to win an electoral majority in the swing states – even if the campaign's Get-Out-The-Vote effort is as powerful as the Darth Vader's "Death Star" in "Star Wars," as they claim.

A moral agenda for a troubled America

(News Agencies) In public demonstrations that have spread around the world, a multicolored coalition for racial justice has taken to the streets since the killing of George Floyd by a police officer in Minneapolis on Memorial Day. Their slogan, "Black Lives Matter," is reverberating across America, and politicians have scrambled to draft legislation to satisfy their demands.

But the present uprising for racial justice is about much more than ending chokeholds and police misconduct. As the nation prepares to mark its 244th birthday, millions are marching to confront the basic contradiction between the equal justice America promises and the inequality our government has consistently delivered to so many. In this historic moment, we the people are demanding a government that serves all of our needs.

Long before the Covid-19 pandemic killed nearly 120,000 of our neighbors and Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin pressed his weight on George Floyd's neck, decades of growing inequality had left millions of Americans feeling like they could not breathe.

In 2018 we re-launched the Poor People's Campaign that Martin Luther King Jr. and a broad coalition of labor activists, welfare rights advocates, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans and Native Americans started in 1967 to demand that the federal government address poverty. When we conducted a national audit to assess what had changed in half a century, we learned that in 2016 there was not a county in the US where someone working full time at minimum wage could afford to rent a two-bedroom apartment. Forty years after we abandoned the War on Poverty, 140 million Americans were poor or low-income, according to our 2018 audit. Racial disparity has always been at the heart of American inequality. The same plantation capitalism that stole land from Indigenous people and labor from Black bodies also built the wealth of the New York Stock Exchange. "Slavery never ended. It evolved," as our friend Bryan Stevenson, founder of the Equal Justice Initiative, often says.

Trump's Tulsa rally was a flop



(News Agencies) President Donald Trump couldn't wait. His presidency is nosediving, with bad news erupting all around him. His answer was Tulsa, a campaign rally in blood-red Oklahoma, the state he won by a crushing 36 points in 2016. But Tulsa did not deliver. The event that was supposed to trumpet his return to greatness -- and the country's return to normalcy -- instead brought embarrassing scenes of empty bleachers, a dismantled stage and a familiar speech unsuccessfully trying to reignite public fears.

After raising expectations with claims that a million people had requested tickets for his first campaign rally in more than three months, the vacant seats were the biggest story of the night. It was a bad omen for November, and Trump undoubtedly saw it with his own eyes as he scanned a sea of blue seats devoid of supporters on the top level of the arena that he and his campaign had said would be bursting beyond capacity; so full, they expected, that the campaign planned for a second outdoor speech to bring an additional 40,000 people unable to find a seat indoors.

Instead, the outdoor speech was cancelled, the stage dismantled. The campaign absurdly tried to explain by claiming that protesters blocked the entrances. But every reporter there confirmed that was not true.

Maybe Tulsans weren't dying to see Trump during a pandemic, although many thousands did come, possibly risking their lives to follow a president who showed he doesn't value the health of his supporters enough to follow the advice of health experts. They had urged him to postpone the rally. Oklahoma has seen rising numbers of coronavirus diagnoses in the runup to the meeting, and an indoor gathering of thousands -- most of them without face masks -- may be the best possible way to spread the contagion. The speech covered mostly familiar terrain, old promises, boring attacks and outrageous statements. The theatrical incitement and divisiveness genuinely energized the crowds when Trump first took to the hustings four years ago. Now it's mostly more of the same. We're used to him now. We've heard it all before. Still, as with so much that is happening in the world today, we have to remind

ourselves how abnormal it all is, to hear a president of the United States threaten violence against Americans and traffic in prejudice.

Speaking of recent anti-racism protests, he warned, "our people are not nearly as violent. But if they ever were, it would be a terrible, terrible day for the other side." It's unclear who exactly "the other side" is. The speech was filled with the usual racist innuendo. He called Covid-19 the racist term "Kung-flu," dog whistled, "they want to demolish our heritage," and spoke of the brutality of gangs, claiming that if Vice President Joe Biden and the Democrats are elected, "our country will be destroyed."

The crowds cheered when Trump attacked CNN or China, but it appeared to me that his effort to make them hate Biden didn't elicit quite so much excitement.

The speech was typically self-centered, with a bizarre more than ten-minute long riff on his ultra-slow descent from the West Point ramp, and absolutely no words of compassion for the nearly 120,000 people in this country who have died during the pandemic.

Instead, Trump repeated the lie that coronavirus numbers are climbing because there's more testing, shockingly revealing that, "I said to my people, slow the testing down, please." Experts say testing saves lives. Slowing the testing leads to more deaths. The White House predictably claimed he was joking.

If this was the great comeback, the relaunch of Trump's campaign for re-election, it was a flop, and Trump most likely knows it. Don't be surprised if heads roll in the campaign.

Is Suicide A Cry For Attention And A Sign Of Alienation?

Perhaps it tells us about the inescapable forces that lurk within us ready to enter our personal space and break the innermost boundary that protects our self.



(News Agencies) A dozen people have called me since the death of Sushant Singh Rajput. They were feeling disturbed. Most were young and they wondered why Sushant

killed himself even when he was a successful actor? Their worry seemed palpable. Each of them, it seemed, was asking if it was alright to be successful; and if one

does not become successful, how does one stop from feeling vulnerable to inner demons? Perhaps that is what suicide does to us. It tells us about the inescapable forces that lurk within us ready to enter our personal space and break the innermost boundary that protects our self. Today, the most prominent view of suicide in psychoanalysis is that it is a kind of displacement, that the desire to kill or destroy the self comes from feeling thwarted in real life which the individual turns it upon himself. According to this view, all emotions that culminate in a person resulting in suicide can be explained in terms of life history of the individual.

Suicidal behaviour

according to Durkheim is behaviour which has not been redirected to the source who is the cause of it. The resurgence of old psychic wounds and trauma more than offsets what life has to offer at present or in future. Perhaps that is what makes the narrative of suicide both poignant and unique. It is a life story of an individual that resurfaces again to haunt the family and in case of the celebrity, the wider world. The attempt, the surprise and then the utter bewilderment that everyone gets engulfed in, leaves an indelible mark on those left behind for life who have to ask themselves why they didn't see it coming. In each case, there are some who have to deal with a kernel of

emotions that will never leave them for as long as they live. It remains an existential dilemma embedded within, a struggle between hope and despair and existential dread and nihilism on the other. If Sushant Singh had everything, would he have killed himself? His messages and tweets do not reflect a man who could have been weak of will. Neither do they show a psychotic frame of mind. There is a cry for attention of an intellectual caught up within the vortex of survival in a heartless industry. There is a preoccupation about issues of life and death that shows a man both reflective and in existential angst. He was desperate to make it big in an industry known for its nepotism.

Unique urine 'fingerprint' reveals quality of your diet, whether it's the best fit for your body

Scientists have completed large-scale tests on a new type of five-minute urine test that measures the health of a person's diet, and produces an individual's unique urine 'fingerprint'.

(News Agencies) In a recent study, scientists have completed large-scale tests on a new type of five-minute urine test that measures the health of a person's diet, and produces an individual's unique urine 'fingerprint'.

Scientists at Imperial College London in collaboration with colleagues at Northwestern University, University of Illinois, and Murdoch University, analysed levels of 46 different so-called metabolites in the urine of 1,848 people in the U.S. Metabolites are considered to be an objective indicator of diet quality - and are produced as different foods are digested by the body, say the research team, who

published their findings in the journal Nature Food.

The work was funded by the U.S. National Institutes of Health and Health Data Research UK. Dr Joram Posma, author of the research from Imperial's Department of Metabolism, Digestion and Reproduction said: "Diet is a key contributor to human health and disease, though it is notoriously difficult to measure accurately because it relies on an individual's ability to recall what and how much they ate. For instance, asking people to track their diets through apps or diaries can often lead to inaccurate reports about what they really eat. This

research reveals this technology can help provide in-depth information on the quality of a person's diet, and whether it is the right type of diet for their individual biological make-up." The findings revealed an association between 46 metabolites in urine, and types of foods or nutrients in the diet. For instance, certain metabolites correlated with alcohol intake, while others were linked to intake of citrus fruit, fructose (fruit sugar), glucose and vitamin C. The team also found metabolites in urine associated with dietary intake of red meats, other meats such as chicken, and nutrients such as calcium. Certain metabolites were also linked with health

conditions - for instance compounds found in urine such as formate and sodium (an indicator of salt intake) are linked with obesity and high blood pressure. Professor Paul Elliott, study co-author and Chair in Epidemiology and Public Health Medicine at Imperial said: "Through careful measurement of people's diets and collection of their urine excreted over two 24-hour periods we were able to establish links between dietary inputs and urinary output of metabolites that may help improve understanding of how our diets affect health. Healthful diets have a different pattern of metabolites in the urine than those associated with worse health outcomes."

Calculated risk? Smokers good at math are more likely to want to quit

Researchers found that smokers who scored higher on a test of math ability were more likely than others to say they intended to quit smoking.

(News Agencies) For smokers who are better at maths, the decision to quit just adds up, suggests a new study. Researchers found that smokers who scored higher on a test of math ability were more likely than others to say they intended to quit smoking. The study was published online recently in the journal Health Psychology.

The reason: They had a better memory for numbers related to smoking risk, which led to perceiving a greater risk from smoking and then a greater intention to quit. "People who had better math skills remembered more of the scary numbers about smoking risks that we gave them, and that made a difference," said Brittany Shoots-Reinhard, lead author of the study and research assistant professor in psychology at The Ohio State University. This study is one of the few to link the ability to work with math - called numeracy - with smoking, Shoots-Reinhard said.

"These results may help explain why many studies find that smokers who are more educated are more likely to successfully quit," she said. The research involved 696 adult smokers in the United States who participated online. At the beginning of the session, participants were given a short, standardized test measuring numeracy.

Each label also included a congressionally mandated text warning (such as "Smoking can kill you") paired with risk probability information for smokers and non-smokers. For example, "75.4 percent of smokers will die before the age of 85, compared to 53.7 percent of non-smokers." At various points, participants were asked to rate their emotional reactions to each label, the credibility of each label and the personal relevance of each label.

Either immediately after the

experiment or six weeks later, the participants answered a variety of questions designed to see how much they remembered of the risk information



they were given. They were also asked questions gauging their perception of how high their risk was related to smoking and to rate how likely they thought they were to quit smoking in the next 30 days or the next year.

Although it wasn't the focus of this study, the findings confirmed earlier research suggesting that memory for

high-emotion warning labels (those that had graphic images like a diseased lung) was lower immediately after the experiment than memory for the low-emotion warning labels (those with graphics like the cartoon gravestone).

However, memory for the graphic labels declined less for those tested six weeks later than for those shown the less graphic images.

But over and above the effects of the images, participants who scored higher in numeracy tended to have better memory for the risks involved in smoking, including the statistics. And this was linked to higher risk perceptions and intentions to quit.

The results suggest that health officials and policymakers should evaluate how they present risk information to smokers, Shoots-Reinhard said. "Smokers who are less numerate tend to have a very superficial knowledge about the health risks of their habit," she said.

CBI files new case against Videocon's Venugopal Dhoot and unknown bank officials

Venugopal Dhoot and unknown officials of a consortium of banks that includes the State Bank of India, ICICI Bank and IDBI Bank have been booked for alleged irregularities in loans provided to a group company for its oil and gas assets in Mozambique, Indonesia and Brazil.

(News Agencies) The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Tuesday filed a new case against Videocon group chairman and managing director Venugopal Dhoot and unknown officials of a consortium of banks that includes the State Bank of India, ICICI Bank and IDBI Bank for alleged irregularities in loans provided to a group company for its oil and gas assets in Mozambique, Indonesia and Brazil, officials said.

The CBI is already investigating Dhoot along with former CEO and MD of ICICI Bank – Chanda Kochhar for the

past two years for an alleged loan fraud of Rs 1,875 crore. Kochhar hasn't been named in the fresh case but "unknown" officials of three consortium banks are under the scanner.

The agency's FIR on Tuesday named Venugopal Dhoot, unknown officials of consortium banks led by SBI and other unknown persons under prevention of corruption Act, cheating and criminal conspiracy.

The agency had conducted a preliminary enquiry (PE) in the matter first against unknown officials of ministry of petroleum and natural gas, ONGC Videsh, Oil

India Limited, Bharat Petro Resources Ltd (a subsidiary of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd) and consortium of banks including SBI, IDBI and ICICI Bank, led by SBI Cap, on suspicion that they colluded with directors of Videocon Mozambique Rovuma 1 Ltd (VMRL), a subsidiary of Videocon Hydrocarbons Holding Ltd (VHHL), a company registered in Cayman Islands, with an intent to cause undue pecuniary gain to Videocon Industries Ltd (VIL). Venugopal Dhoot told HT, "I don't know about the case. I will check and come back to you." SBI and ICICI didn't

respond till filing of the report.

The VHHL had acquired 10% participating interest in oil and gas block in Rovuma Area 1 Block Mozambique from a US based petroleum company Anadarko in 2008 and it had oil and gas assets in Indonesia and Brazil.

In April 2012, the consortium of banks led by State Bank of India sanctioned Standby Letter of Credit (SBLC) facility of \$2773.60 million to Videocon Hydrocarbons Holding Ltd (VHHL) for appraisal and development of overseas oil and gas asset in Mozambique, Brazil and Indonesia and other

funding requirement in relation to the said oil and gas asset and for refinancing the existing facilities, according to CBI FIR.

The SBLC facility of \$1103 million was refinanced which includes an outstanding amount of \$400 million of Standard Chartered Bank (SCB), London. The first charge on VIL's oil and gas asset was part of SCB's security. The VIL in February 2013 informed the consortium of banks that loan of SCB had increased from \$400 million to \$530 million asking the banks to pay off the loan and take over the charge of oil and gas assets after paying the same.

Wirecard ex-boss Braun arrested as creditors hunt lost billions

(News Agencies) MUNICH/FRANKFURT (Reuters) - Wirecard's (WDIG.DE) former boss has been arrested on suspicion of falsifying its accounts, after the German payments firm disclosed a \$2.1 billion financial hole and questioned whether trustees had actually held money on its behalf. Markus Braun turned himself in on Monday night after Munich prosecutors issued a warrant for his arrest. A judge ruled on Tuesday that the 50-year-old Austrian could be released as soon as he posts 5 million euros (\$5.7 million) in bail.

Germany's financial regulator also filed a fresh complaint against Wirecard with the prosecutor, saying the company's belated admission that billions were missing showed it had mis-stated its financial position between 2016 and 2018.

"This also strengthens the suspicion that the information contained in its financial reports sent false signals for Wirecard's share price and in so doing violated a ban on market manipulation," regulator Bafin said in a statement.

In his 18 years in charge, Braun transformed an offshoot of the dot.com boom, known for handling payments for online gambling and adult entertainment sites, into a \$20 billion-plus 'fintech' that won a place in Germany's blue-chip DAX index. The former consultant traded in a suit for a black roll-neck and portrayed himself as a tech visionary, telling New York investors last autumn that Wirecard would increase revenues by six times by 2025 as digital payments boom.

Wirecard's meteoric rise was, however, accompanied by repeated allegations from whistleblowers, journalists and speculators that its revenue and profits had been pumped up through fake transactions with obscure partners. Braun, who will have to report to police once a week, said last week in a video statement that Wirecard may have been the victim of fraud, without giving details.

Coronavirus doing almost double the debt damage as financial crash: Moody's

(News Agencies) The coronavirus will push debt levels in the world's richest nations up by almost 20 percentage points on average this year, credit rating agency Moody's said on Monday, almost double the damage seen during the financial crash.

A new report by Moody's looked at 14 countries from the United States and Japan to Italy and Britain and assessed how coronavirus-induced economic slowdowns would scar their finances.

"We estimate that on average in this group, government debt/GDP ratios will rise by around 19

percentage points, nearly twice as much as in 2009 during the Great Financial Crisis". "Compared with the GFC, the rise in debt burdens will be more immediate and pervasive, reflecting the acuteness and breadth of the shock posed by the coronavirus". Italy, Japan and Britain are expected to suffer the biggest debt increases at around 25 percentage points of their respective GDPs, while the United States, France, Spain, Canada and New Zealand will all see theirs jump roughly 20 ppts.

Data from the UK last week showed public borrowing hitting a

record high in May and a measure of public sector debt passing 100% of economic output. A failure to bring debt levels back down would leave countries with weaker credit profiles more vulnerable to future economic or financial shocks, and sovereign credit rating downgrades, Moody's added. "Rating implications will depend on governments' ability to reverse debt trajectories ahead of potential future shocks," the report said. "Italy and Japan will be particularly dependent on growth trends since scope to narrow and sustain materially stronger financial balances than before the shock is limited".

Adani Power approves delisting of equity shares at Rs 33.82

It informed exchanges that the delisting proposal of May 29 was approved in the board of directors meeting.

(News Agencies) Adani Power Ltd on Monday gave the final nod to its voluntarily delisting of equity shares at Rs 33.82 which is 10 per cent less than its previous closing of Rs 38 on Friday.

It informed exchanges that the delisting proposal of May 29 was approved in the board of directors meeting.

"Adani Properties Pvt Ltd (APPL) proposes to either by itself or together with other members of the promoter group as the case

may voluntarily delist the equity shareholders' approval for delisting proposal by way of a special resolution through postal ballot and e-voting. In this regard, the draft of the postal ballot notice and the explanatory statement were also approved. The company was also authorised to issue and dispatch the postal ballot notice and the explanatory statement to the shareholders of the company. Practicing



shares of the company," it said.

It further said that based on the information available with the company and the report, it granted approval to the company to seek

Company Secretary Chirag Shah was appointed as the scrutiniser to conduct the process of the postal ballot in a fair and transparent manner.

Kangana Ranaut recalls not being able to afford clothes for award functions, because 'I wasn't a star kid'

Kangana Ranaut has said that when she started out in the film industry, she couldn't afford clothes to wear at awards shows.

(News Agencies) Actor Kangana Ranaut has said that after one of her exes accused her of being a 'gold digger', she decided to prove everyone wrong by becoming one of the richest persons in the country by age 50. In an interview to Pinkvilla, Kangana said that she didn't know how to deny her ex's comments. She said, "I didn't know how to prove that it wasn't it. In a relationship, how does one who doesn't have such possessions, comes from a small town with a humble background, have no chance of love, dignity! That person suddenly doesn't have a say in this world of nepotistic materialistic people. Then, I thought I'm going to have the best house anyone will have, best office and by the age of 50, I also will be one of the richest people in India. That's what I've just decided." She said that when she started out in the industry, she wasn't paid, because she isn't a 'star kid', who are given stylists. She continued, "I remember after Gangster, I was going for these award functions where I was

getting an award. I didn't have clothes to wear. I didn't even have any money to buy those clothes. So there was this designer friend of mine Rick Roy who used to sponsor my clothes. He was struggling himself but his parents were supporting him." She said that it was because of Rick that she was even able to attend some of those awards shows. She added, "He would make these gowns for me and I'd wonder where he's getting the money from. But it was wonderful that somebody came to my help. Otherwise, how would I even go to these functions? I wouldn't have made it to those award nights. I didn't have clothes. Otherwise, I used to wear a few Mango tops and for me, those were the luxury brands. That was the best I could afford at that point. I didn't have access to anything. From there, I came here so it's amazing." In the wake of actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death, Kangana has once again spoken against the Bollywood elite, accusing them of ostracising outsiders.



Second film on Sushant Singh Rajput announced, to be titled Sushant

(News Agencies) Another film has been announced on Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput who died on June 14. Filmmaker Sanoj Mishra has announced his film and titled it Sushant. Sanoj, however, clarified during the launch that it is not a biopic and is the story of strugglers who reach Mumbai in the hope of fulfilling their dreams. Sanoj has earlier made films like Gandhigiri, Ram's birthplace, Lafange Nawab and Srinagar. "This film will be the story of all those who are forced to take harsh steps in Bollywood due to harassment. This film will be produced under the banner of Road Production and Sanoj Mishra Films and will be shot in Mumbai and Bihar," he said in a statement.

Sanoj also said that people from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar have returned from Mumbai during the lockdown amid the corona pandemic, adding that it is a golden opportunity to develop the cinema industry in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Meanwhile, producer Sandip Singh -- a close friend of Sushant -- shared the poster for his directorial debut Vande Bharatam, which had Sushant in the lead. In an Instagram post, Sandip wrote, "You made me a promise. We,

the Bihari brothers, will one day rule this industry and be the inspiration/support system for all young dreamers like you and me bhai. You promised me that my directorial debut will be with you. Raaj Shaandilyaa wrote this and we were to produce this together.

I need your belief, that faith you showed, that was my strength. Now, with you gone...I'm lost...but I promise you this my brother. Now tell me how do I fulfil this dream? Who will hold my hand like you did? Who will give me the power of SSR, my brother?

Charlize Theron Reveals True Nature Of Sean Penn Relationship

(News Agencies) Charlize Theron pulled the veil off her reported engagement to Sean Penn, saying she "was never going to marry him." Theron, an Oscar winner who stars in Netflix's "The Old Guard," spilled the tea about her relationship with Penn, which reportedly ended in 2015, on Howard Stern's radio show Monday. The shock jock asked her about media reports that she and Penn, a two-time Academy Award winner, were once engaged. "What? That's not true. no. I did not 'almost get married to Sean', that's such bullshit," Theron said, per People. "No, we dated, that was literally all we did, we dated." She added: "It was a relationship, for sure. We were definitely exclusive, but it was for barely a year. We never moved in. I was never going to

marry him. It was nothing like that." Theron gave a similar explanation to WSJ Magazine in 2016. "We were in a relationship and then it didn't work anymore,"



she said then. "And we both decided to separate. That's it." Asked by Stern if marriage is a possibility in her life, the "Atomic Blonde" star replied: "I never wanted to get married. That's never been something that's important to me."



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83 killed after being hit by lightning in Bihar, PM Modi tweets on the disaster

(News Agencies) In Bihar, at least 83 people lost their lives while 30 others were injured in thunderstorms and lightning that struck several parts of the state on Thursday. The lightning also killed more than 15 cattle in Khagaria district. Large scale damage to property has also been reported from various districts. After media reports of 83 people being killed in a single day due to lightning in Bihar emerged, Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed his condolences on Twitter. "In some districts of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, heavy rains and lightning caused the death of many people. The state governments are engaged in relief work with promptness.

(Contd. on page 28)

As India and China clash, it is time to heed Chanakya



(News Agencies) In conversation with leaders of the Opposition recently, Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi clarified that no one had entered Indian territory or captured any border post with reference the deadly border clashes with China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) in Ladakh's Galwan Valley. The Opposition

asked him several questions on the border stand-off at the virtual meeting. It is not clear whether they were satisfied with the answers they got. But one thing is clear. There is little at the moment to reassure people on the nature of the conflict with a resurgent and belligerent China.

(Contd on page 33)

Hopeful India

India hopeful professionals will continue to be welcomed in US: MEA

(News Agencies) India on Thursday said the US administration's decision to temporarily suspend entry of some categories of non-immigrant visa-holders till December is expected to affect the movement of skilled Indian professionals. However, India remains hopeful that its professionals "will continue to be welcomed in the US in future" as that country has always welcomed talent, external affairs ministry spokesperson Anurag Srivastava told a weekly media briefing. US President Donald Trump signed an executive order on June 22 temporarily suspending various categories of visas for immigrants,

(Contd on page 28)

The US sees a record number of new coronavirus cases in a single day



(News Agencies) The United States saw a record number of new coronavirus cases in a single day with 37,077 reported Thursday, according to Johns Hopkins University. Coronavirus has infected more than 2.4 million people and killed over 124,000 in the United States. Thursday's total eclipses the previous high on April 24, when 36,291 new coronavirus cases were reported across the country. Meanwhile, as coronavirus numbers skyrocket, some states are holding back on easing restrictions. Texas Gov. Greg Abbott paused any further phases to reopen the state on Thursday and issued an order to ensure hospital beds be available for Covid-19 patients. Abbott's moves came as his state, California and Florida -- the three-most populous -- set records for new coronavirus cases daily amid fears of "apocalyptic" surges in major Texas cities if the trend continues.

Millions of Americans can't afford water as bills rise 80% in a decade

Covid has claimed about 12,000 lives in India, with cases and fatalities rising in recent weeks. HT EXPLORES HOW THE PANDEMIC has shaped national issues since march 2, seen as the beginning of the infection's first wave in India, and changed personal lives and habits. The outbreak pushed to the fore the urgency of health care, plight of migrant workers, and economic hardships. It also put to test federalism and made political parties innovate.



(News Agencies) Millions of ordinary Americans are facing rising and unaffordable bills for running water, and risk being disconnected or losing their homes if they cannot pay, a landmark Guardian investigation has found. Exclusive analysis of 12 US cities shows the combined price of water and sewage increased by an average of 80% between 2010 and 2018, with more than two-fifths of residents in some cities living in neighbourhoods with unaffordable bills. In the first nationwide research of its kind, our findings reveal the painful impact of America's expanding water poverty crisis as aging infrastructure, environmental clean-ups,

(Contd on page 32)

ਪੰਜਾਬ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀਅਤ ਦਾ ਤਰਜਮਾਨ

PUNJABI DUNIYA