



# Trump blames India, China for not doing enough on climate change



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Blaming India and other countries for justifying America's withdrawal from the landmark Paris climate change deal in 2017, Trump said he believes that "there is a change in weather, and I think it changes both ways".

\*Trump has called climate change a 'hoax'

\*Trump said he was moved by Prince Charles' "passion for future generations"

\*Trump has also accused climate scientists of having a "political agenda"

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# 10% drop in H-1B visa approvals in 2018: US authorities

(By our staff reporter)- The year 2018 registered a sharp 10% decline in the approval of H-1B visa, which is popular among highly-skilled Indian IT professionals, according to the US authorities. The US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) approved 335,000 H-1B visas, which included both new and renewable, in the fiscal year 2018. This was 10% less from 373,400 in the previous

fiscal year of 2017, according to the USCIS's annual statistical report. The approval rate of H-1B declined from 93% in 2017 to 85% in 2018. "This administration has aggressively pursued strategies to clamp down on use of the H-1B programme, and these efforts are now showing in the data," Migration Policy Institute analyst Sarah Pierce was quoted as saying by The Mercury News. For the first six

months of this fiscal year, the overall H-1B approval rate for new and continuing visas continued to plummet to 79% by the end of March, down from 85% last year, the daily reported. The H-1B visa programme is the main vehicle through which US employers can sponsor skilled foreign workers for admission. According to the latest statistical annual report, in 2018, the USCIS completed 396,300 H-1B application as

against 403,300 in 2017. In 2018, 396,300 H-1B beneficiary petitions were processed, which is 13% more over the five fiscal years and two% less from 2017, the report said. In 2018, the USCIS completed 850,000 naturalisation requests, a five year high and granted 1.1 million green cards. The H-1B visa, popular among Indian IT professionals, is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ



foreign workers in that require theoretical or speciality occupations technical expertise.

# Indian-Origin Jeweller Trapped, Gagged UK Robbers. Gets Award For Their Arrest



(By our staff reporter)- An Indian-origin jeweller who helped police arrest robbers who bound and gagged him at his jewellery store in Birmingham has been honoured with a bravery

award. Chouhan Pal was presented with the West Midlands Police Chief Constable's Good Citizen's Award last week for his handling of the attack on his Dubai Jewellers shop, during

which he was assaulted, bound with ties and had tape put over his mouth. "Despite being assaulted, you displayed courage and took the risk to set the alarm off and trap the offenders inside the building with you," Chief Constable Dave Thompson told Pal, in his 50s. "Your quick-thinking actions and bravery allowed three offenders who had committed a robbery in the jeweller's shop you own to be detained and arrested," he said. During the raid in April last year, three robbers had tricked their way into the shop using fake security

industry ID badges and claiming they needed to carry out CCTV checks. Mr Chouhan managed to hit an alarm with his shoulder, trapping the gang in the shop and setting off a smoke cloak. When they demanded the keys to the

front door, he gave them the keys to a holding area by the front door and then used the automatic release to trap them there. A passer-by heard their cries for help and let the men out, thinking there was a fire. But police arrived and

the passers-by and Mr Chouhan helped them detain the gang. All three went on to admit robbery at Birmingham Crown Court and were jailed for 14, 12 and nine-and-a-half years respectively in July last year.

## Cigarette Lighter Helps Police Identify Indian Man Murdered In France

(By our staff reporter)- French police said Monday they had identified the body of an Indian national found in a sack by the side of a road in northern France, thanks to a cigarette lighter found in the dead man's pocket. Police said the clue had proved distinctive enough to help lead to the detention in Belgium of another Indian national suspected of murder. Last October a machine operator was clearing out a pit at Bourbourg when he found a sack containing a decomposed body, without any documents or cellphone to help determine the sex, nationality or circumstances of the death. The DNA and fingerprints also failed to reveal the identity, according to a statement from investigators in Lille who led the inquiry.

But it was a cigarette lighter stamped "Kroeg Cafe" that was found in the pocket of the victim's trousers that finally led to a breakthrough, when Belgian federal police saw a picture of the evidence. Police had been searching for 42-year-old Darshan Singh, an Indian national resident in Belgium, since last June. The cafe on the lighter, though a common name in Belgium and the Netherlands meaning "the pub," was located near the victim's home in Ravels close to the Dutch border. Investigators confirmed the victim's DNA from a toothbrush. The discovery of the missing man's remains relaunched an inquiry by Belgian authorities, who in late March questioned another man of Indian nationality suspected of having killed Singh.

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# Indian Fled UK After He Raped Woman, His Earphones Led To Arrest

**The accused was found guilty of raping the woman in the back of his housemate's car in the town of Lowestoft in Suffolk, eastern England, after offering her a lift.**

(By our staff reporter)- An Indian man, who fled to India in 2017 after a sexual assault on a woman in the UK, has been sentenced to seven years imprisonment for the rape. Ajay Rana, 35, was found guilty of raping the woman in the back of his housemate's car in the town of Lowestoft in Suffolk, eastern England, after offering her a lift on December, 9, 2017. He then fled to India on December 13 claiming he was visiting his mother who was ill. He was sentenced at Ipswich Crown Court in Suffolk after being found guilty of rape following a two-week trial and was also ordered to sign the sex offenders' register indefinitely. "The police investigation commenced following a calculated and sustained attack committed on an innocent victim, who has been left traumatised by the callous actions of this offender," said Detective Chief Superintendent Eamonn Bridger, the Senior

Investigating Officer for Suffolk Police. "This was a complicated investigation that was progressed with great haste despite the challenges presented by an offender who fled the country after the attack. The investigation team worked tirelessly over many months to ensure the individual did not escape justice and I am proud of the work they produced to reach the right outcome for the victim," Eamonn Bridger said. By the time UK police identified him as a suspect in the days after the attack, having traced the vehicle he was driving during the attack, Ajay Rana had fled to India. Once he was traced to Spain, he was detained by the Spanish police in Bilbao last October on a European Arrest Warrant and was extradited to the UK in November last year after approval from the Spanish courts. During the trial, it emerged that the victim - a woman aged in her 30s - was offered a lift by Ajay Rana, saying it was cold and he

had just given a lift to two other people, and she accepted. He stopped the car further down and raped the victim in the vehicle. She then managed to get out of the car and ran away to a friend's house nearby to get help, following which the police were called.



## 7 Indian-Origin Students Win US National Spelling Bee

(By our staff reporter)- A record seven Indian-origin students and one American have won the prestigious 2019 Scripps National Spelling Bee, taking home more than \$50,000 in cash and prizes, after defeating over 550 other contestants in an unprecedented competition. It is the first time in the 94-year history of the contest that more than two co-champions have been named. Rishik Gandhasri, 13, of California; Saketh Sundar, 13, of Maryland; Shruthika Padhy, 13, of New Jersey; Sohum Sukhatankar, 13, of Texas; Abhijay Kodali, 12, of Texas; Rohan Raja, 13, of Texas; Christopher Serrao, 13, of

New Jersey and Erin Howard, 14, of Alabama were named as co-champions Each will receive the full winner's prize of \$50,000 in cash. The six boys and two girls combined to spell the final 47 words correctly over five consecutive perfect rounds in the most extraordinary ending of the competition. The competition, broadcast nationally on ESPN, took place at the Gaylord National Resort in National Harbor, Maryland. It kicked off Tuesday with its biggest field ever. The 565 contestants ranged in age from 7 to 14 and came from across the US and several other countries, including Canada, Ghana and Jamaica.



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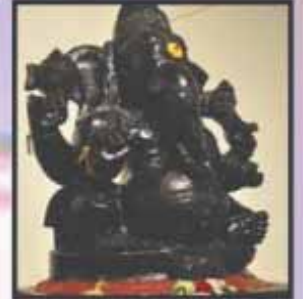
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## Border crisis puts US (and migrant families) at risk for dangerous infectious diseases

We all know about the unfolding humanitarian disaster at the border and its aftermath. Besides the general chaos, the inherent danger faced by those migrating encompasses sex trafficking, sex assaults and the disruption of lives brought by thousand-mile treks through dangerous environments. But that's not all. We are now in a world where infectious diseases, some like measles thought eradicated, have returned and are spreading globally. Understandably, we keep hearing from the government that vaccines are imperative. Whether you have been vaccinated or not, the call is now for everyone to make sure they're immune through blood tests or additional shots. That's the right response. But what the federal government hasn't told you is that during this dangerous time requiring admonitions that vaccines are imperative, there is no requirement for proof of vaccination for anyone entering this country except for those migrating legally. The team at Independent Women's Voice, of which I'm president, has discovered through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that while the government requires proof of vaccination from those seeking to migrate, there is no similar requirement for people visiting on non-immigrant visas - and that is through ports we control. With the southern border being overwhelmed with 100,000 people a month being apprehended attempting to enter illegally, there is no ability to enforce any sort of massive health check. The border patrol does its best to notice who may be showing symptoms of illness, but there's nothing to be done about those who are unaware they're ill with no obvious indications of sickness. As of May 31, we have 981 cases of measles in 26 states. For a disease we thought eradicated, we are now on track to surpass 1,000 this week, eclipsing the previous record in 1994, which reported 963 for the entire year.

Then we have infectious diseases with no vaccine or cure. Last week, Customs and Border Protection announced "U.S. Border Patrol agents assigned to the Del Rio Station apprehended a large group of 116 individuals Thursday. ... 'This large group from Africa further demonstrates the complexity and severity of the border security and humanitarian crisis at our Southwest border,' said Chief Raul Ortiz. This is the first large group apprehended in the Del Rio Sector and the first large group of people from Africa - including nationals from Angola, Cameroon and Congo - apprehended on the Southwest

border this year."Congo is experiencing the worst Ebola outbreak in recent memory, with more than 2,000 confirmed cases and over 1,300 fatalities since late August.Zika also remains an issue. In Brazil, more than 19,000 cases were reported there last year. Immigrants, legal and illegal, and visitors are coming from countries beset with measles, yellow fever, Zika, Ebola, typhoid fever, mumps, cholera, etc.USA Today reported this week, "Since the beginning of fiscal year 2019, which began Oct. 1, 2018, agents across the U.S.-Mexican border have apprehended more than 27,000 people from 37 countries other than Mexico, according to Border Patrol statistics. Del Rio Sector's apprehensions of non-Mexican migrants this year has increased by nearly 500% over the same period in fiscal year 2018."The CDC warns, "The large movement of people across the United States and Mexico border has led to an increase in health issues, particularly infectious diseases such as tuberculosis."Infectious diseases are an equal opportunity scourge. The catastrophe at the border is a humanitarian one at every level, which does not discriminate. It puts U.S. families at risk, but also in as much danger, if not even more, are the migrant families themselves caught in a vortex encouraged by cynical American politicians who believe it will pay political dividends as they attack and stop efforts of the Trump administration to address and manage the crisis.We hear arguments that attempting to control the border and stop the chaos at the border is racist or xenophobic. The opposite is true. The fact is, allowing this to continue because Democrats remain obsessed with political vengeance against the president first harms those migrating. To not secure the border and manage immigration is the abandonment of people seeking a better life in this country. Measles, tuberculosis, typhus, the mysterious polio-like virus striking children and Zika, are active in this country.Yet, if a migrant manages to escape the caravans unscathed, they travel to the interior of the country, where social services are overwhelmed as cities face the influx of tens of thousands of migrants. This collapse of assistance infrastructure forces many to sleep on the street or in tent cities where disease and infection spread.Something must be done. IWV.org has launched a petition for the White House asking the administration to redouble its efforts to secure the border using every method possible, while asking the CDC to expand the rule requiring proof of vaccination to everyone entering the country legally.

By Tammy Bruce

## Can Joe Biden actually win?

Fourteen presidential aspirants spoke at last Saturday's California Democratic Party convention, including plausible candidates such as Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., Sen. Kamala Harris, D-Calif., Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., and Sen. Cory Booker, D-N.J., as well as a bevy of inevitable also-rans. Joe Biden, who holds a commanding lead over his rivals, skipped the event entirely.The former vice president snubbed the California Dems just one week after another conspicuous absence: he failed to attend a single Memorial Day ceremony. While South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg and Sanders ran from one photo opp to another in New Hampshire and Warren saluted the Stars and Stripes in Iowa, Biden was nowhere to be found. In recent days, Biden has resurfaced at some smaller campaign stops in New Hampshire.

During one event, Biden improvised a 45-minute speech in which he reminisced about the car he drove to prom and declared homosexuality a "decision." The former vice president said "lastly" three times before managing to conclude his remarks.At another event, he mocked the Creole accent of a Caribbean electrician. While Joe was on the road, just hours after he had released his environmental plan, critics revealed that at least five sections of it had been plagiarized from groups including the Blue Green Alliance and the Carbon Capture Coalition.It might be better for Biden to remain absent and be thought a fool than to campaign and remove all doubt.So far, relative timidity hasn't impinged on his frontrunner status. According to a recent CNN/

SSRS poll, he leads the pack with 32 percent support. Sanders trails him at 18 percent, followed by Harris at 8 percent, Warren at 7 percent, and Buttigieg and Beto at 5 percent.

But Biden can't hide forever. Support for the former vice president has already fallen seven points since he announced his campaign in April. By playing it safe, Biden risks squandering his early lead before the first debate later this month.Likewise, Biden can't risk taking any risks. As the most gaffe-prone politician in the country, he has avoided major public appearances at which he might embarrass himself. Three years in relative obscurity have buoyed Biden's public approval, much as they did for Hillary Clinton after she left the State Department and before she declared her own bid for president. Now that the former vice president has re-entered politics, nostalgia will soon give way to the buffoonish reality of Joe Biden. No single column could recount the myriad stumbles of the Democratic frontrunner. He dropped out of the 1988 election after reporters caught him plagiarizing speeches, cribbing lines from former president John F. Kennedy, his brother Robert F. Kennedy, former Democratic presidential nominee Hubert Humphrey, and British Labour political Neil Kinnock. Not long after that, Biden admitted to plagiarizing a paper he wrote in law school.Two decades later, during his next bid for president, Biden described then-opponent Barack Obama as "the first sort of mainstream African American who is articulate and bright and clean and [a] nice-looking guy."

By Michael Knowles



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# The government alone can't ensure clean air

*India has been coming forward with pilot steps to tackle this problem. Sharp results will not come unless we implement specific focused projects*

India is not alone in facing the problem of air pollution. Nine out of 10 people worldwide are exposed to unsafe air. This often-invisible problem adds to the loss of lives of seven million people each year, causes conditions from asthma to dementia, and, according to the World Bank, costs the healthcare system more than US \$5 trillion every year. However, India faces perhaps the biggest and most wide-ranging risks.

From Delhi to Kanpur to Varanasi, in fact particularly in the entire Gangetic plain, our cities have often been listed by many as most polluted. People living in these cities know this more than anyone else. Air pollutants are definitely health hazards. More than anything else, people deserve a life with dignity and clean air and the government is conscious of the fact that providing such clean air has to remain national priority. But this task cannot be the government's alone. It has to be a larger collaboration

between everyone in this country. Each individual's contribution will add to overall improvement. We need to fight this together. There is no doubt that we are facing a crisis, and the government is taking it very seriously. To protect the health and wellbeing of our citizens, we launched the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) earlier this year. The NCAP targets a 20-30% reduction of PM2.5 and PM10 concentrations by 2024, compared to 2017 levels - a target set after looking at other successful programmes in cities such as Beijing and Seoul over the same time horizon.

Air pollution comes from many sources: the burning of fossil fuels for power and transport; industry, particularly chemicals and mining; agriculture, a significant source of methane; landfills; open burning of trash and agricultural waste; and dirty indoor cooking and heating. This complex picture, involving many different sectors, means

that we need a comprehensive response. The NCAP creates this response by ensuring that everybody is working together: ministries, state governments, local bodies, academia, civil society and many other partners. As our fast-growing cities are where pollution is the worst, the NCAP is also developing plans which are not general in nature but very specific to the 102 cities that have been shortlisted as major polluting cities based on the presence of the pollutants consistently for the past five years. The thrust is a city-specific, doable and impact bearing action plan.

India has been coming forward with pilot steps to tackle this problem. Sharp results will not come unless we implement specific focused projects. We have shown it in the past through diesel vehicles, the ban on pet coke, various notifications, stopping work wherever required and also reaching out to the people not just to explain the problem but



also to seek support to tackle the menace. The government has put in place an ambitious programme and states like Punjab and Haryana have taken very active steps to help farmers reduce the burning of crop stubble. All the steps are cumulatively going to help us breathe easy. LED bulbs, provision of cooking gas, leap frogging from BSIV to BSVI standards, e-mobility plan and several other steps will add to our efforts.

We are seeing efforts to prioritise and incentivise electric transport. The Uttarakhand Cabinet has approved an electric vehicle manufacturing and battery charging infrastructure promotion policy for the

state. The Telangana government is introducing electric vehicles in Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation and Telangana State Road Transport Corporation in Hyderabad. Kerala's draft electric vehicle policy aims to reduce the number of vehicles on the road by introducing modern shared transport systems, like air-conditioned e-buses and e-autorickshaws. Delhi's draft Electric Vehicle Policy 2018 has set a target of ensuring that 25% of all vehicles registered by 2023 are electric.

By taking all of these actions, we are not just clearing the air. We are moving towards meeting India's commitments under

the Paris Agreement and tackling climate change, as many air pollutants also serve as greenhouse gases or are emitted along with powerful greenhouse gases - as is the case with fossil fuel-powered vehicles. Another example is black carbon, which is produced by diesel engines, burning trash and dirty cookstoves. Reducing the emissions of black carbon and other short-lived climate pollutants globally could slow global warming by up to 0.5°C over the next few decades.

The government will continue to strengthen its activity but the need of the hour is for everyone to join this campaign. We can, and we must, do it together.

## Reminiscent of Vajpayee-Advani Bond, Why Amit Shah May be Modi's Shadow in New Govt

*The Modi-Shah binary may limit upward mobility, but then, Atal Bihari Vajpayee and L K Advani did so from the inception of the BJP in 1980 to 2004.*

The Narendra Modi-Amit Shah binary scripted the BJP's expansionism in the first phase of the NDA. The second phase marks a shift of focus to government. Shah has been inducted as Home minister, but his importance in the Prime Minister's scheme of things goes far beyond his portfolio. The two have been joined at the hip since the election results, heralding big and bold decisions. What of the Six Sigma electoral machinery crafted by Shah? With every last one of the BJP heavyweights either in the government or hors de combat, the party has

much less heft. Can it function as efficiently in the upcoming assembly elections as it did in the past five years, without the benefit of Shah's formidable managerial skills, ruthless efficiency and commanding personality?

Even more intriguing is the question of how the post-electoral hegemonistic control over government and party exercised by the PM and Shah, will affect the RSS-BJP-NDA dynamic. In the last five years, a system of consultation and coordination between the RSS and government was instituted and functioned

quite effectively, alleviating fears that Modi would outgrow the sangh.

The RSS intervened occasionally but strongly on matters of policy, such as the short-lived Land Acquisition Ordinance. Although several RSS-mediated appointments were widely criticised, it was also seen as a leavening force.

Cabinet formation appears to have been a collective exercise, prima facie indicating that the existing system will continue. RSS number two Suresh 'Bhaiyyaji' Joshi drew up a list of names which were duly conveyed to the PM. The final shape of the

council of ministers was arrived at after discussion, with the PM naturally having the last word and Shah making the calls to the select few. This spirit of accommodation is likely to be carried over to the government.

The question is really about how much influence the RSS will choose to exercise over the selection of the BJP president and office-bearers now and in the future. The PM was the RSS choice of prime ministerial nominee in 2013 and maintains an umbilical attachment to the mother ship. You can take a pracharak out of the RSS, but you can't take the



RSS out of a pracharak. Shah, who started his political career with the ABVP (and is not a pracharak), is already being described as the PM's succession plan, should Modi choose to retire from politics at 75, six years from now. However, it may be too early to speculate on a post-Modi scenario and where Shah fits into it. At

54, he has a good 21 years to go. Already seen as the de facto number two, he is the youngest of the first-rung leaders and indeed, younger than many of the second-rung leaders. The Modi-Shah binary may limit upward mobility, but then, Atal Bihari Vajpayee and L K Advani did so from the inception of the BJP in 1980 to 2004.



# Mayawati is trying to divert attention

With Ms Mayawati announcing that the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) will contest Uttar Pradesh by-polls alone, the grand alliance against the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Uttar Pradesh seems to be all but over. In a statement released on Tuesday, Ms Mayawati has said that unlike BSP supporters, core voters of the Samajwadi Party (SP) did not vote for SP-BSP candidates in elections. While Ms Mayawati hasn't ruled out a future alliance, she has made it contingent on future struggles by SP workers against the BJP's politics.

Her statement may be uncharitable towards the SP.

Both in 2014 and 2017, when the BJP swept Uttar Pradesh, it was the SP which performed better than the BSP. It was also the SP which initiated efforts to build a coalition against the BJP, first with the Congress in 2017 and then with the BSP. While the SP's seat tally has remained the same in 2014 and 2019, the BSP has gone from zero to 10. As far as the larger question of the alliance doing badly is concerned, both the SP and the BSP would do well to pay attention to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's statement of chemistry defeating arithmetic in the 2019 elections. The biggest proof of this is that the BJP increased its 2014 vote share in Uttar Pradesh by 7

percentage points in 2019 to reach the 50% mark. This basically means that even if there had been a perfect transfer of 2014 votes between the SP and the BSP (around 42%), the alliance would still have lost on most seats.

Does the BSP not understand all this? Perhaps it does. By trying to attribute the poor performance of the grand alliance to non-transfer of core SP voters, Ms Mayawati is trying to divert attention from the behaviour of the common, non-Muslim voters in Uttar Pradesh, who vastly outnumber core supporters of any party and have voted overwhelmingly for the BJP. To be sure, this is a trend not just in



Uttar Pradesh, but most parts of north and west India.

Unless these voters desert the BJP, no arithmetic based alliance will be able to prevent the Narendra Modi juggernaut. The responsibility of failing to counter

the BJP's narrative, which has created this consolidation, lies as much with Ms Mayawati as with the other non-BJP leaders in the Hindi belt. No number of conspiracy theories can absolve the BSP chief of this failure.

## Modi won because he delivered on his promises

The 2019 elections saw a high-pitched campaign spearheaded by none other than Prime Minister Narendra Modi who made it a point to give the report card of his government in all his electoral speeches as he simultaneously outlined his vision for the future of India. The results are an indication of the success of his governance, and delivery of numerous programmes and schemes. The strong performance of the incumbent indicates that the verdict was based on development that is visible across the nation. The key takeaway from the verdict is that governance is here to stay, and identity politics is on its last legs.

A characteristic feature of governance over the last five years is the insulation of governance from political considerations which made long pending structural reforms possible. Reforms such as demonetisation have been instrumental in nudging the economy towards formalisation and it has led to a definite improvement in direct tax compliance. On indirect taxes, the government introduced the much awaited Good and Services Tax which led to an improvement in tax collection while it has simultaneously reduced the burden of multiple indirect taxes on citizens due to a

drastic reduction in the effective tax rates. Keeping with the commitment of finding long term solutions, the government enacted the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code to find a mechanism for facilitating the recovery of stressed assets.

The 2019 mandate in urban areas reflects a vote for strong macro fundamentals combined with the progressive agenda of reforms of the government. The impressive strides in upgradation and development of infrastructure, be it electricity, roads, digital, railways or other public transportation systems have grabbed the attention of the urban population which has

reposed its faith in the leadership of PM Modi.

Another key takeaway of the 2019 verdict is that there is no urban-rural divide in support of the incumbent government. This is largely because a major area of focus for the government has been on inclusive development and this development can be seen and felt by the people of India. Consider the Jan Dhan Yojana, under which India moved from a little over 50% of financial inclusion to universal financial inclusion at the household level, currently having over 35 crore account holders. Using the Jan Dhan accounts combined with the Aadhaar platform, the

government managed to systematically eliminate subsidy leakages from 440 schemes that now operate under the Direct Benefit Transfer mechanism. The government, for the first time, executed a direct income support scheme for the farmers under the PM-KISAN Yojana.

Consider the story of Chhattisgarh's Rupa Kumari, who is one of the 1.5 crore people who got a house under the PM Awas Yojana. She is naturally inclined to have voted for a government that helped her in building a lifelong asset and provided her with a roof for her family.

## Water crisis: Act now or perish

The summer of 2019 is turning out to be a searing one for most parts of India. If there is one district that is indicative of a massive crisis that could soon unfold across other parts of the country, it is Beed in Maharashtra. In 2018, the agrarian district faced a 50% rainfall deficit, leading to the drying of its two main water sources, and reduced groundwater recharge. This has led to an acute water scarcity this year, resulting in large-scale forced migration from Beed. The situation is ominous in other parts of the country as well. According to the Central Water

Commission, water storage in reservoirs in 2019 is less than the storage of last year and is also less than the average storage of the past 10 years during the corresponding period. If one reads this with the Indian Meteorological Department's second forecast that northwest and northeast India could have less-than-normal rains, and private weather forecaster Skymet's advisory that Vidarbha, Marathwada, west Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat will have "poorer than normal" rains and southern India will receive below normal rainfall, the overall water scenario looks daunting.

India, in any case, is facing the worst water crisis in its history. According to NITI Aayog's Composite Water Index, by 2020, 100 million people will be affected by a shortage of groundwater in 21 Indian cities, including Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai and Hyderabad. And about 40% of the country's population will have no access to drinking water by 2030. It's not too difficult to discern why the country is facing such an acute crisis. A report released by a team of researchers from Canada's McGill University and Utrecht University in the Netherlands blames irrigation techniques,



industrial and residential habits combined with climate change for this problem. Along with its economic and ecological dimension, the water crisis also has a huge health cost. In India, about 200,000 people die every

year due to inadequate access to safe water, according to the Composite Water Management Index report (2018). The situation is expected to worsen as demand for water increases.



## The 2019 election result is a verdict against people like me: Opinion



(Agencies)-He took a couple of days to ring but when he did, Pertie sounded concerned. "What do you make of this election result?" There was something in his voice that suggested he had already worked out the answer. Nonetheless, I still chose to reply. "What's absolutely clear is that this is a personal endorsement of Narendra Modi. The Indian people have consciously voted to give him another term as prime minister. That's a reflection of the incredible trust and faith they have in one man. The Congress may deny it, but if they do, they would be wrong."Pertie, however, didn't seem impressed. "Yes, that's obvious but what more does

this result tell us?" He seemed to be challenging my thinking. I felt like a student at school. I was being told to think more deeply. "Well," I began, "it seems that right across northern and western India and large swathes of the east, the result reflects an acceptance of the Hindutva belief that India is essentially a Hindu country and that's a distinct move away from the concept at the heart of Nehruvian secularism: that this is a land of multiple religions, castes, ethnicities, cultures and languages. However, south of the Vindhyas we seem to have a different story." This time I could tell I had engaged Pertie. He didn't disagree. Instead, he used my answer as an opening to reveal another dimension of the electoral verdict. This was clearly the reason why he had rung. "Have you considered that beyond all of this - and I don't disagree with any of it - is something much more profound and personal.

## The Modi government must restart the reforms process

(Agencies)- Prime Minister Narendra Modi's victory in the general elections is a testament to his immense popularity across the country and his supreme talent as a campaigner. His sweeping victory gives Modi a mandate to pursue a bold agenda. As an Indian American who has followed Indian politics and its economy closely from afar, here are my suggested policies and priorities for an agenda the PM should implement in his second term. First and foremost, the PM would be wise to focus on jobs, education and healthcare, as well as climate change. Progress on all these areas depends on completing the economic reforms his government started in 2014. Therefore, one of the initial things the government should do is to recommit to reforms. Early in the first term, former finance minister Arun Jaitley initiated and completed reforms in key areas, including reforming the bankruptcy code, opening coal

mining and railway sectors and allowing foreign investments in construction projects. However, after implementing the Goods and Services Tax (GST), the government's enthusiasm for reforms seems to have waned

pace of the reform by going ahead with land reform and deregulation of labour.

At the moment, unemployment is the biggest challenge the world's seventh largest economy is facing. Nearly 20 million youth are ready to enter the work force every year in India, which is a third of the population of Great Britain and Italy. To address this influx to the work force, the country needs to create nearly 55,000 jobs every day for the foreseeable future. That is a daunting, but not impossible task. To create jobs on that scale, the economy will need to grow by double digits.



China did that consistently in the 1990s and 2000s. As recently as 2007, the Chinese economy grew at 14%. A big road block to achieving double-digit growth, however, is India's poor infrastructure, which is not where it should be in spite of efforts by successive governments in the past two decades to create a world-class infrastructure.

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## Mission to recover bodies in Nanda Devi peak to take 10 days or more

**The recovery mission began early on Wednesday but was halted after encountering technical problems, officials said.**

(Agencies)- Indian authorities will likely take at least 10 days to recover the bodies of a group of climbers feared killed in an avalanche high in the Himalayas, government and police officials said on Wednesday. The eight climbers - four from Britain, two from the United States, and one each from Australia and India - were reported missing last Friday after they failed to return to their base camp near Nanda Devi, India's second highest mountain.

An Indian air force helicopter on Monday spotted five bodies partially buried in snow high on a mountain slope. The status of the other three climbers is not known, but officials have said the possibility of their survival is remote, and their bodies are likely to be near the five who had been spotted. The recovery mission began early on Wednesday but was halted after encountering technical problems, officials said. Another survey by air will be made this week



to find a way to reach the bodies or a team will be sent on foot, but they will need time to acclimatise, officials said. "It will take at least 10 days to remove the bodies," said Vijay Kumar Jogdande, the top government official in the remote mountain area. "No bodies have so far been recovered from the three initial sorties this morning," he said earlier.

The climbers were attempting to scale an unnamed, previously unclimbed 6,477 metre (21,250 feet) peak near Nanda Devi when their route was hit by a "sizeable avalanche", the company that organised the expedition, Moran

Mountain, said earlier.

Jogdande said the location of the bodies suggested that they may have changed course and taken a route they had not initially planned.

The paramilitary Indo-Tibetan

Border Police Force is leading the mission to bring the bodies to the town of Pithoragarh in Uttarakhand state. It has been one of the deadliest climbing seasons in the Himalayas for several years. More than 20 people have been killed in the mountains, including 11 on Mount Everest, the world's highest peak that has seen several fatalities in 2019 due to poor weather conditions, inexperienced climbers and overcrowding. Nanda Devi, at 7,816 metres (25,643 feet), and its sister mountain, Nanda Devi East, are among the world's most challenging peaks and only a handful of people have climbed them.

## BJP MP demands action against those who block roads while offering Namaz



(Agencies)- Bholu Singh said entire country celebrates Hindus festivals that but no one experiences inconvenience due to our festivals. Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) local MP Bholu Singh on Wednesday stoked a controversy by demanding action against those who block roads while offering Namaz. Speaking to ANI, he said: "If there is an inconvenience due to someone's festival of any religion, it should not be done. A place has been designated for expressing your devotion. Roads should not be blocked. If it happens, it is wrong. Action should be taken." "While celebrating festivals, it should be seen that it does not cause inconvenience to others. Hindus celebrate Holi, Diwali, Raksha Bandhan, and the entire country celebrate that but no one experiences inconvenience due to our festivals," he added. The statement from Singh coincides with the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr, which marks the culmination of the fasting month of Ramzan, and is being celebrated by the Muslims across the country today.

## Teen's death sparks tension in Bihar town; family says she was raped, killed

**The victim's elder sister has accused three men of raping and killing her and filed a complaint at Bhagwanpur police station against two named and one unknown person belonging to a minority community.**

(Agencies)- A 16-year-old girl's death in Bihar's Bhabua triggered tension in the town on Wednesday after her family alleged she was gang-raped and murdered by three men on Tuesday night.

The victim's elder sister has accused three men of raping and killing her and filed a complaint at Bhagwanpur police station against two named and one unknown person belonging to a minority community.

Police, however, claimed that the girl has committed suicide and that the postmortem examination of her body has not confirmed rape.

"Prima facie, it seems to be a case of suicide due to a love

affair. Police are investigating the case and trying to identify the people who have abetted the girl to end her life," superintendent of police Dilnawaz Ahmad said. The postmortem examination was conducted by a medical board at the district hospital in Bhabua and the body was sent to Varanasi for cremation under police protection on Wednesday. The elder sister also alleged that Saish Ali, the son of Munnu Ansari from the adjacent village of Awasan, was dating the girl and often met her. She claimed her sister had revealed the names of two accused before she died. The girl had no reason to commit suicide as she had gone to the bank to withdraw money, the

sister said.

The victim had gone to a bank in Bhabua on Tuesday morning. Her elder sister got a phone call in the evening from Ejaz Ansari alias Sonu, a resident of adjacent village Awasan who works as a nurse with a private hospital in Bhabua. Ansari told the sister that the girl was critical and admitted in the hospital he works for.

The elder sister rushed to the hospital but was asked to deposit Rs 4,000 towards the girl's treatment before being allowed to meet her. She called a relative and arranged for the money. They also arranged for an ambulance to take away the girl to Varanasi



but she died on the way around midnight. "The accused had raped and poisoned my sister to destroy evidence. They admitted her in a private hospital without the knowledge of police and

informed me at the eleventh hour when she was collapsing," she alleged.

Nirmal Yadav, head of the victim's village, said the girl's parents work in Gujarat and left behind their two daughters at home.



## After SP and BSP, now RLD says it will contest UP by-polls

After SP and BSP, now RLD says it will contest UP by-polls. The RLD leader said the seats his party contested in the Lok Sabha polls were all from the SP quota.



Sabha polls were all from the SP quota. Akhilesh Yadav's Samajwadi Party had contested the Lok Sabha elections in alliance with the BSP and the RLD against the BJP. Of the 80 seats in UP, BSP contested 38 seats, SP 37, and RLD 3. The BSP was the only party in the alliance which managed to improve its 2014 tally, it won 10 seats in 2019 against zero last time. The SP won five seats, the same as 2014, while RLD failed to open its account as in 2014. The by-polls were necessitated because eleven UP MLAs were elected as MPs in the Lok Sabha polls. Of the 11 MLAs, nine are from BJP, one each from SP and BSP.

(Agencies)- Samajwadi Party and Bahujan Samaj Party have announced that they will contest the by-elections in Uttar Pradesh, now the third alliance partner Rashtriya Lok Dal says it will also be in fray. "It is Mayawati ji who exited the alliance for the by-polls. We were ally of the Samajwadi Party and not of the BSP in the gathbandhan. We will definitely contest the by-polls on some seats. The party with its top leaders will decide about the number of seats it will contest and how," said the RLD state president Masood Ahmed. The RLD leader said the seats his party contested in the Lok

## Swachh Bharat toilets in this UP town sport Gandhi, Ashok Chakra tiles



(Agencies) -In a shocking incident, tiles bearing pictures of Mahatma Gandhi and the national emblem were used inside toilets built under the Swachh Bharat Mission in Bulandshahr's Ichhawari village. The matter came to light after villagers protested and leaked video footage of the toilets on various social media platforms. "These tiles were set up on the orders of the village head. When we complained against it, we were told not to interfere as it was a decision of higher authorities," a local told ANI. Soon after the incident was reported to the district administration, officials examined the case and found the tiles bearing national symbols on walls of toilets. Following the investigation, rural development officer Santosh Kumar was suspended and a notice was served to Gram Pradhan Savitri Devi. "Around 508 toilets were built under Swachh Bharat Abhiyan in this village. There were 13 toilets with symbols of Mahatma Gandhi and Ashoka Chakra. We have formed a team and inspected all the toilets. We have removed these tiles," said District Panchayati Raj Officer (DPRO) Bulandshahr Amarjeet Singh.



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## After Jai Shri Ram, Jai Ma Kali is now caught in Bengal's slogan war



(Agencies)- After Ram, the Hindu goddess Kali is now caught in the ongoing slogan war between the BJP and the Trinamool in Bengal. Last week, Banerjee said her party would counter BJP's Jai Shri Ram slogan with the Jai Hind and Jai Bangla slogans. Going a step further, her party leaders asked in public if BJP leaders would chant Jai Ma Kali in praise of one of Bengal's most popular deities. Their contention was that the BJP was importing north Indian culture to Bengal.

Blunting Trinamool's attack, BJP national general secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya, who is in charge of Bengal, said on Tuesday, "Why should we have any problem in chanting Ma Kali's name? We will say Jai Ma Kali, Jai Bangla, Jai Durga and also Jai Shree Ram." Seconding Vijayvargiya, Midnapore MP and BJP state unit president Dilip Ghosh said, "We will feel proud to chant Jai Hind. This is a nationalist slogan. We will also happily chant Jai

Bangla, as Bengalis in both western and eastern (Bangladesh) Bengal made it their war cry against imposition of Urdu by West Pakistan. However, will Mamata Banerjee say Jai Shree Ram?" In a caustic remark on Tuesday, TMC youth wing chief and Diamond Harbour MP Abhishek Banerjee, who is also the nephew of the chief minister, said, "They are taking the name of Ma Kali because Ram's name is not so popular anymore."

## After Eid prayers, Nitish Kumar stings Giriraj Singh for Iftar taunt



(Agencies)- Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, the primary target of Union Minister Giriraj Singh's tweet attack, has finally delivered his comeback to the central minister's taunt over iftar parties hosted by BJP allies. Speaking after offering prayers at a mosque on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr, Nitish Kumar told reporters on Thursday that some people were prone to make unnecessary comments to stay in the headlines. Then came the one-line takedown. "Such people have no religion as every religion preaches respect and love for each other," said Nitish Kumar, according to news

agency ANI. On Tuesday morning, Giriraj Singh tweeted four photos featuring Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar, LJP leader Ram Vilas Paswan and his son Chirag Paswan attending an iftar party. They were seen wearing skull caps, to which Giriraj commented: "How nice it would have been if this photo was on Phalahar or Navratri. Why do we lag behind in our faith and religion?" Giriraj Singh's comment came at a time when relations between the BJP and Nitish Kumar's party Janata Dal United are not in the pink of health.

## MS Dhoni Army insignia row What makes India's Special Forces, special



(Agencies)- The Indian Army's Special Forces unit is back in the news. And, it's not because the unit just carried out a daring, cross-border raid like it did in 2016, across the Line of Control. It's because Indian cricketer MS Dhoni, who holds an honorary post of Lieutenant Colonel in the Territorial Army, recently wore wicket-keeping gloves that sported an insignia closely resembling the one associated with the Army's Special Forces. During the June 5 World Cup game against South Africa in Southampton, UK, MS Dhoni was seen wearing green-coloured wicket-keeping gloves that had a white winged dagger insignia. This winged dagger is part of the 'Balidaan' insignia that is sported by the men of the Special Forces. The Special Forces are units that are part of the Indian Army's Parachute Regiment. They are identified by their maroon berets and are often

involved in covert military operations. Here is everything you need to know about the Indian Army's elite units.

1. The Indian Army's Parachute Regiment is headquartered in Bengaluru, Karnataka and is headed by an officer of the rank of Lieutenant General.
2. The Parachute Regiment was raised in 1952 and traces its origins to the 50th Parachute Brigade raised by the British in 1941, during the Second World War.
3. The Indian Army's Parachute Regiment has nine Parachute Special Forces units, five Parachute (airborne) Battalions and two Territorial Army battalions.
4. Soldiers of the Parachute (airborne) Regiment are primarily trained for air assault tasks which would involve their men and equipment being air-dropped on targets and also ground.
5. Para (SF) units are trained to carry out covert and overt operations. They operate behind enemy lines and carry out specialised tasks such as clandestine reconnaissance missions, intelligence gathering, laying ambushes and the destruction of vital enemy targets.
6. Each Parachute battalion comprise around 600 soldiers all of whom are trained parachutists.

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## To focus on jobs and growth, PM Modi sets up 2 new cabinet committees

**Economy has become a major cause of concern for the new government with GDP dropping to 5.8 per cent in the last quarter of the 2018-19, according to NSSO figures. Overall GDP for last financial year has been estimated at 6.8 per cent against a target of 7.2 per cent.**

(News Agencies)- Concerned about an economic slowdown and growing unemployment, the government has decided to set up two high-level committees, one to revive growth and the other to figure out ways to create jobs, under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, two government officials in the know said on condition of anonymity. The first group of Cabinet ministers, the Cabinet Committee on Investment and Growth, which will suggest policies conducive to investments and growth, will have four other members - home minister Amit Shah, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman, road transport and highways and micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) minister Nitin Gadkari, and commerce and railways minister Piyush Goyal, the officials said.

The other group, the Cabinet Committee on Employment and Skill Development will have nine members (other than the PM) with a mix of Cabinet ministers and ministers of state (independent charge). Shah, Sitharaman and Goyal are part of this committee too.

The two officials said a notification on the creation of the committees is expected soon. The government usually has a Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs to address issues related to the economy and, according to a third person familiar with the matter who spoke on condition of anonymity, it will continue to do so even as the two committees provide the requisite focus to growth and investment, and employment.

There's cause for concern on both fronts, experts said.

According to recently released official data, India's gross domestic product (GDP) fell almost a 20-quarter low at 5.8% in the last quarter of 2018-19, which brought down the full year growth estimate to 6.8%, lower than the initial estimate of 7%. The GDP that grew at 8% in the first quarter gradually dropped below 6% in the fourth quarter mainly due to slump in agricultural and industrial growth.

"The move will certainly bring focus on the two big problems that have been identified," said Dr Pronab Sen, economist and former chief statistician of India. "How effective [are the two committees], would depend on how they are able to understand the problem and take effective measures." The government is also concerned about growing unemployment as reflected in an official report that was released on Friday.

According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) report for July 2017-June 2018, the unemployment rate soared to 6.1%, which was the highest in four-and-a-half decades. While the PLFS numbers are not strictly comparable with earlier Employment Unemployment Surveys of the National Sample Survey Office, the numbers paint a grim picture on the employment front. What is particularly worrying in the PLFS numbers is the big increase in unemployment rate among educated workers.

"It [unemployment] is an extremely serious situation, according to the government's own data. It is deeply disappointing for India's youth that this is the situation even after 10 years of skill development programme," said

Santosh Mahotra, professor of economics at Jawaharlal Nehru University.

The other members in the second committee are agriculture and rural development minister Narendra Singh Tomar, human resource development minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', petroleum minister Dharmendra Pradhan, skill development and entrepreneurship minister Mahendra Nath Pandey, minister of state for labour and employment Santosh Kumar Gangwar, and minister of state for civil aviation Hardeep Singh Puri, officials said. The government is fully aware that the economy is decelerating and requires additional policy push. The committee on investment and growth will frame such policies and ensure their effective implementation, one of the two officials added.

### THE GROWTH CHALLENGE

**Moving beyond consumption-led growth**

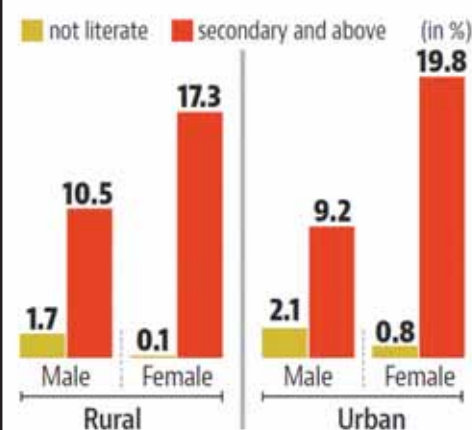


Four-fifth of the growth in India's GDP in 2018-19 came from an increase in private and government consumption. This share has been increasing for some time now. If India wants to achieve double digit growth rates, it needs to focus more on investment and exports, rather than consumption

Percentage share of private final consumption expenditure (PFCE) and government final consumption expenditure (GFCE) in GDP growth, calculated from CMIE data

### THE JOBS QUESTION

**Tackling unemployment among educated**



Unemployment rates increase with the educational qualification of workers. The Periodic Labour Force Survey shows unemployment among workers with at least secondary education has gone up drastically between 2011-12 and 2017-18. Ways need to be devised to create mass employment for educated, albeit not highly-skilled, workers

Source: NSSO

## Centre issues fresh list of top 10 terrorists active in Jammu-Kashmir

(Agencies)- With eradication of terrorism from Jammu and Kashmir being the focus of new Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the Centre has issued a list of top 10 terrorists operating in the state who need to be eliminated. The list includes wanted terrorists of Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Hizbul Mujahideen and Al Badr based on inputs shared with the Ministry by Jammu and Kashmir Police, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)

and Intelligence Bureau (IB). Six of the top 10 militants named in the the list belong to Hizbul Mujahideen, two from JeM, and one each from LeT and Al Badr terrorist organisation. LeTs commander Wasim Ahmed alias Osama, active in Jammu and Kashmir's Shopian district, and chief Hizbul Mujahideen commander Riyaz Naikoo alias Mohammed Bin Qasim are mentioned on the top of the list. Hizbul Mujahideen's Anantnag district commander Mohammad Asraf Khan, Baramulla district

commander Mehraj-ud-Din, cadre of Srinagar Dr Saifulla, Pulwama district commander Arshad-ul-Haq and Ajaj Ahmad Malik, probably appointed as Kupwara district commander, are in the list.

The list also includes Javed Matoo alias Faisal alias Shakib alias Musab, Divisional Commander of Al Badar in North Kashmir; Zaheed Sheikh alias Omar Afghani of JeM; and chief operational commander of JeM Hafiz Umar, a resident of Pakistan.



## More work, less water: India's booming 'Silicon Valley' faces dry times



(By our staff reporter) - Bangalore is paying a heavy price for its success since marketing itself as a tech hub in the late 1990s and attracting top firms, by losing its lakes and gardens to buildings. Waiting under the scorching sun for a tanker truck to deliver water to his home, Chandra Shekhar reminisced about how his southern Indian city once brimmed with pristine lakes and lush gardens. "They are all gone now. They have been consumed by buildings and more buildings," said the 59-year-old retired engineer, who has seen

the IT hub of Bangalore - often dubbed India's Silicon Valley - transform since he was a boy. "Bangalore has gone from being the city of lakes to the city of concrete. Because of this, all the water has disappeared." Years of rapid urbanisation, a swelling population and poor water management have led to drying taps, falling groundwater levels and filth-frothed lakes that can burst into flames. Bangalore is paying a heavy price for its success since marketing itself as a tech hub in the late 1990s and attracting top firms including Microsoft,

IBM, Dell and Google. While job opportunities have soared in the sprawling city, millions have no piped water and instead rely on an army of privately-run tankers that suck water from wells inside and outside the city and deliver it to homes. Other families dig unauthorised private wells in search of water for drinking, bathing, laundry and other daily needs. Even those living in long-established neighbourhoods with piped water often find water trickling, rather than gushing, from the tap. Shekhar, who paid 150,000 rupees (\$2,150) to be hooked to the city water supply in 2015, said he has to fill gaps in the supply with tanker water, which can cost up to \$50 per month. Even as the city struggles to quench its current thirst, towering residential condominiums and glass-and-steel office blocks sprout to accommodate an inflow of migrants.

## 3 Indian-Origin Executives Among Richest Self-Made Women In US: Forbes



(By our staff reporter) - Three Indian-origin women have been named by Forbes among America's 80 richest self-made women, the "ceiling crushers" and "overachievers" blazing their own trails as they create new businesses and amass fortunes. President and CEO of computer networking firm Arista Networks Jayshree Ullal, cofounder of IT consulting and outsourcing firm Syntel Neerja Sethi and CTO and co-founder of streaming data technology

company Confluent Neha Narkhede are in the Forbes list of "America's Richest Self-Made Women 2019". "Born in London and raised in India, she is now one of America's wealthiest female executives," Forbes said. Ms Sethi, ranked 23rd, co-founded Syntel with her husband Bharat Desai in 1980 in their apartment in Troy, Michigan with an initial investment of just USD 2,000. Her current net worth is one billion dollars. French IT firm Atos SE bought Syntel for USD 3.4 billion in October 2018 and Ms Sethi, 64, got an estimated USD 510 million for her stake. Ms Narkhede is ranked 60th on the list with a net worth of USD 360 million. Confluent, which is currently valued at USD 2.5 billion, counts Goldman Sachs, Netflix and Uber as customers. Neha Narkhede is ranked 60th on Forbes list of "America's Richest Self-Made Women 2019"

## UP cops stop over at house of Ponzi scheme accused's friend for lunch, suspended

(By our staff reporter) - Six Uttar Pradesh Police constables, including two women, were suspended Tuesday for stopping over at the house of a friend of the main accused in a Rs 3,700 crore online scam while escorting him from Faridabad to Lucknow, an official said. The escort team included constables Rajan Singh, Ramesh Kumar, Arun Kumar, Arun, Susheela and Preeti, he said. On the way to Lucknow, the team stopped at the house of a friend of the accused, Anubhav Mittal (29), in Noida. Later, the group also had lunch at a restaurant located in the housing complex, a Noida police spokesperson said. "Mittal was brought to Faridabad in Haryana in connection with a case. On their way back to Lucknow, he and the police personnel stopped at a flat at Cleo County Society in Sector 121 of Noida for lunch," a Noida police spokesperson said. "At the society, some locals

raised concerns over Mittal being brought there, after which the local police were alerted and the accused and the police team from Lucknow were sent back," he said. "The Gautam Buddha Nagar police has no role in the episode," he added. The Noida police submitted a report to their Lucknow counterparts about the incident and Gautam Buddha Nagar SSP Vaibhav Krishna apprised his Lucknow counterpart about it, the spokesperson said. "Six police constables, including two women, have been suspended from service in light of the episode and an inquiry has been ordered into the case," a Lucknow police official told PTI. No accused, who is being taken to a court or police station, is allowed to decide what food to have or where to have it, he said. The rules state that the accused be given treatment at par with other accused and served meals at a police station.

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# From beef to beep

### Organisers change name of festival in Kolkata after 'threats'

The daylong event is scheduled on June 23 by The Accidental Note. The organisers named it as 'Kolkata Beef Festival and now they are calling it the 'Kolkata Beep Festival'.

(By our staff reporter) - Organisers of a 'beef festival' in Kolkata have said they were forced to rename the event after they allegedly received phone calls threatening agitation at the venue if its theme was not changed. The daylong event scheduled on June 23 on the lawn of a hotel on Sudder Street

in central Kolkata was announced by The Accidental Note on social media late on May 30. The organisers named it as 'Kolkata Beef Festival and changed it to 'Kolkata Beep\* Festival' on Tuesday. The Accidental Note, an agency that has only organised some music events in the past, has not lodged any police

complaint about receiving threat calls. "However, after receiving numerous calls from people who identified themselves as members of the Bajrang Dal and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and threatened to stage agitations if only beef remained the theme of the festival, we decided to rename it," Arjun Kar, 24, one of the



organisers said. The Facebook page for the festival describes it as the "craziest meat extravaganza in town!".

## Got \$50 Million For Vacation? NASA To Open Space Station To Tourists

NASA estimated the cost of a flight would be around \$50 million per seat. In addition, NASA will charge visitors for food, storage and communication once at the station.

(By our staff reporter) - WASHINGTON/SEATTLE: NASA will allow private citizens to stay at the International Space Station (ISS) for month-long getaways at a cost of about \$35,000 per night, the U.S. space agency said on Friday. The shift reverses a long-standing prohibition against tourists and

private interests at the orbiting research lab, and reflects a broader push to expand commercial activities at the ISS and in space more generally. It paves the way for private citizens to travel to the ISS aboard rocket-and-capsule launch systems being developed by Boeing Co and Elon Musk's SpaceX. The two

companies are set to ferry astronauts to the ISS from U.S. soil for the first time in nearly a decade. NASA will allow up to two private trips to the station per year, each lasting up to 30 days, NASA said. The first mission could be as early as 2020. But the ride won't be cheap. NASA estimated the cost of a flight

would be around \$50 million per seat. In addition, NASA will charge visitors for food, storage and communication once at the station. "If you look at the pricing and you add it up, back of a napkin, it would be roughly \$35,000 a night, per astronaut," NASA's Chief Financial Officer Jeff DeWit told a news



conference in New York. "But it won't come with any Hilton or Marriott points," DeWit deadpanned. NASA's Russian counterpart Roscosmos has already allowed a number of private citizens at the station.

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## मोदी का एलान-ए-जंग

### बूंद-बूंद को तरसेगा पाक

नई दिल्ली ■ हम हिंदुस्तानी

पुलवामा आतंकी हमले के बाद मोदी सरकार ने अजब कदम उठाते हुए पाकिस्तान को अपने अपने हिस्से के पानी को वापस लेने का फैसला किया है। इसके साथ ही इस पानी को जम्मू और कश्मीर जैसे पठार को वापस लेने का फैसला भी किया सरकार ने हिमाचल प्रदेश में हिंदू-मुसलमानों के बीच तनाव को दूर करने के लिए। मोदी सरकार ने अजब कदम उठाते हुए पाकिस्तान को अपने अपने हिस्से के पानी को वापस लेने का फैसला किया है। इसके साथ ही इस पानी को जम्मू और कश्मीर जैसे पठार को वापस लेने का फैसला भी किया सरकार ने हिमाचल प्रदेश में हिंदू-मुसलमानों के बीच तनाव को दूर करने के लिए।

पाकिस्तान के अजब कदम उठाते अपने हिस्से के पानी को वापस लेने का फैसला किया है। इसके साथ ही इस पानी को जम्मू और कश्मीर जैसे पठार को वापस लेने का फैसला भी किया सरकार ने हिमाचल प्रदेश में हिंदू-मुसलमानों के बीच तनाव को दूर करने के लिए।

के बाद भारत और पाकिस्तान को तीन-तीन नदियों के पानी को इस्तेमाल की अनुमति मिलेगी। इस समझौते के अनुसार भारत के अजब कदम उठाते अपने हिस्से के पानी को वापस लेने का फैसला किया है। इसके साथ ही इस पानी को जम्मू और कश्मीर जैसे पठार को वापस लेने का फैसला भी किया सरकार ने हिमाचल प्रदेश में हिंदू-मुसलमानों के बीच तनाव को दूर करने के लिए।

## भारतीय-अमेरिकन कम्युनिटी द्वारा घोर निंदा

वॉशिंगटन ■ हम हिंदुस्तानी

अमेरिका में भारतीय-अमेरिकन कम्युनिटी ने अमेरिकन सरकार को अजब कदम उठाते अपने हिस्से के पानी को वापस लेने का फैसला किया है। इसके साथ ही इस पानी को जम्मू और कश्मीर जैसे पठार को वापस लेने का फैसला भी किया सरकार ने हिमाचल प्रदेश में हिंदू-मुसलमानों के बीच तनाव को दूर करने के लिए।

## आईएस में शामिल हुई महिला को अमेरिका ने एंटी देने से किया इंकार

वॉशिंगटन ■ हम हिंदुस्तानी

अमेरिका ने अजब कदम उठाते अपने हिस्से के पानी को वापस लेने का फैसला किया है। इसके साथ ही इस पानी को जम्मू और कश्मीर जैसे पठार को वापस लेने का फैसला भी किया सरकार ने हिमाचल प्रदेश में हिंदू-मुसलमानों के बीच तनाव को दूर करने के लिए।



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# NDA govt eyes Rs 17,500-cr navy chopper deal with

**India is buying 24 Lockheed Martin-Sikorsky MH-60R helicopters to strengthen the navy's anti-submarine/anti-surface warfare and surveillance capabilities.**

(News Agencies)- In what is likely to be the new government's first big defence contract, India may hammer out a ~17,500-crore deal with the United States for naval helicopters before the year end, two senior officials familiar with the navy's modernisation said on the condition of anonymity.

India is buying 24 Lockheed Martin-Sikorsky MH-60R helicopters to strengthen the navy's anti-submarine/anti-surface warfare and surveillance capabilities.

The multi-role helicopter (MRH) purchase is being made under the US government's foreign military sales (FMS) programme, which involves a direct government-to-government sale. A critical operational necessity for the navy, the MRHs are being bought as a replacement for the Sea King 42/42A fleet, which went out of service nearly two decades ago.

"We hope to conclude the contract with the US by October-November. The deliveries are expected to begin 18 months after the contract is signed and all the MH-60Rs should be in by 2022. The helicopters will plug a key capability gap," said one of the officials cited above.

Armed with AGM-114 Hellfire missiles, MK 54 torpedoes and advanced precision kill weapons system rockets, the twin-engine helicopters can operate from frigates, destroyers and aircraft carriers. The US Defense Security Cooperation Agency notified the Congress of the possible MH-60R sale to India in April.

"The 24 MRHs have been overdue for years and their induction would hugely benefit the navy. The choppers will be a concern for our adversaries. Perhaps we are going to need more and one hopes that we will look for pan Indian armed forces



platform commonality in light and heavier helicopters," said military affairs expert, Rear Admiral (ret) Sudarshan Shrikhande.

The navy is also pursuing a plan to build 111 naval utility helicopters (NUH) in India under the strategic partnership (SP) model to replace its outdated fleet of French-designed Chetak choppers. The technical bids of the foreign firms competing for the project were opened on Monday.

US firm Lockheed Martin, European Airbus Helicopters and Russian Helicopters are eyeing the ~21,738-crore project that involves manufacturing the choppers locally in partnership with Indian firms.

The opening of the bids will be followed by technical evaluation, field trials, staff evaluation and technical oversight before commercial negotiations begin. The SP model lays down the template for cooperation between

Indian and foreign firms to build high-tech weapons in the country through transfer of niche technologies. Next-generation submarines, fighter planes and armoured vehicles are covered under the SP model.

The navy uses NUH for search and rescue, medical evacuation, communication duties, anti-piracy and anti-terrorism operations, humanitarian assistance, surveillance and targeting.

## 'Don't challenge us': Mamata Banerjee's message on Eid

**Trinamool Congress and BJP have also indulged in bitter attacks and accused each other of unleashing terror and violence during elections and tampering with EVMs.**

(News Agencies)- A six-minute speech by West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee at a huge gathering on Eid took a sharp political turn on Wednesday as she warned the Bharatiya Janata Party that it will have to soon pay for "tampering EVMs." Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress and the BJP are engaged in an intense political battle in West Bengal. The BJP made unprecedented gains in the recently-concluded Lok Sabha elections in West Bengal winning 18 seats, after winning two in the last general polls in 2014. The Trinamool won 22 of the 42 seats in the eastern state this year. The Trinamool Congress chief's comments also come amid an ongoing war of words between the BJP and Trinamool over 'Jai Shri Ram' slogans. Mamata Banerjee has said she has no problem with the slogan of 'Jai Sri Ram'

if used in religious connotations but has accused the BJP of mixing religion and



politics. "When the sun comes up, it is initially very hot. But it cools down fast. The manner in which they tampered EVMs, it is certain that they will also go down very soon," Banerjee said without naming the BJP during the prayers. Mamata addressed the gathering after the prayers. Banerjee had her head covered while addressing a few thousand Muslims at Red Road in the Maidan area where a mass namaz is organised during Eid every year. "Jo humse takrayega, choor choor ho jayega," said Banerjee,

implying that those challenging the TMC will be demolished. The TMC and BJP have also indulged in bitter attacks during elections and the ruling party has accused the BJP of tampering with electronic voting machines.

Claiming that unity is the essence of Bengali culture and tradition, she said if people are united they can fight any battle. "In future, we will fight all battles together. Remember, you are dead if you are scared. But those who fight together ultimately succeed," she said.

Banerjee also advised the gathering to ignore certain words that are uttered these days. "Some people will always say a few things. Let them say it. It is their right. But remember, you can be successful if you speak from your heart," she said. The BJP's Bengal unit general secretary Sayantan Basu dismissed Banerjee's allegation on EVM tampering.

## Ilhan Omar violated campaign finance rules

(Contd from page 32) Finance and Public Disclosure Board said the first-term congresswoman also must pay the state a \$500 civil penalty for using campaign money to travel to Florida, where she accepted an honorarium. "Rep. Omar must personally reimburse the Omar committee \$3,469.23," the report concludes.

"This reimbursement payment is the total amount of campaign funds that were used for purposes not permitted by statute in 2016 and 2017. Rep. Omar must provide documentation within 30 days from the date of this order showing the deposit of the reimbursement into the Omar committee's account." Additionally, conservative commentators pointed out that the Board's report revealed Omar and her current husband, Ahmed Hirsi, filed joint tax returns in 2014 and 2015, when Omar was reportedly married to another man. Omar engaged in a civil marriage with Ahmed Nur Said Elmi in 2009,

and the couple separated in 2011 without formally petitioning for divorce until 2017. Prior to her marriage with Elmi, Omar had reportedly wed Hirsi in the Muslim "faith tradition," but the couple separated shortly afterwards. Omar did not officially marry Hirsi until 2018, after reconciling with him and splitting with Elmi. Tax experts say the IRS only permits joint filings if a couple is in a state that legally recognizes the couple as married. "Time to get federal IRS officials involved?" asked conservative blogger Michelle Malkin. "What say you all?" "A sitting congresswoman may have filed EIGHT YEARS of fraudulent, felonious, tax returns," added writer David Steinberg, who authored a Twitter thread flagging the issue. The crisis committee had Frederick & Rosen prepare releases for Rep. Omar and Mr. Hirsi to sign in order for Frederick & Rosen to obtain Rep. Omar's and Mr. Hirsi's filed joint tax returns for 2014 and 2015," the report notes.



# No Meeting Between PM Narendra Modi And Imran Khan Planned On SCO Sidelines: MEA

**Prime Minister Narendra Modi would be attending the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit in Kyrgyzstan's capital Bishkek on June 13-14.**

(SAI Bureau) NEW DELHI: No meeting is scheduled between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Pakistan's Imran Khan on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation or SCO summit in Kyrgyzstan's capital Bishkek, the Foreign Ministry clarified today. PM Modi will attend the SCO summit on June 13-14.

"To the best of my knowledge, no meeting is being arranged between Prime Minister Modi and Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on the sidelines of the SCO meet," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said today.

Last month, sources said no decision had been taken on a meeting between the two leaders in Bishkek. If the two prime

ministers do meet, however, India will convey the same red lines of terror to Pakistan, sources had said, adding India's red lines on talks and terror have not changed.

Over the last few years, India has refused any initiative for talks, contending that cross-border terror has to stop before talks can begin.

However, talks about a possible meeting between the two prime ministers started gaining momentum after Imran Khan called PM Modi to congratulate him for his landslide victory in the general elections. The foreign ministry said PM Modi had thanked Imran Khan for his phone call and greetings.

Relations with Pakistan - wobbling since the terror strike

at Uri in 2016 - took a nosedive after a Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist killed 40 CRPF soldiers in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama on February 14. Days later, India conducted air-strikes on a Jaish camp in Pakistan's Balakot on February 26. The Pakistan Air Force struck back, targeting civilian and military installations in India and captured Indian Air Force pilot Abhinandan Varthaman. In April, Imran Khan was quoted as saying that he saw a better chance of peace talks with India if PM Modi's BJP won the elections. The cricketer-turned-politician had said if the next government in India were led by the Congress party, it might be "too scared" to seek a settlement with Pakistan over Kashmir, fearing a backlash.



The BJP swept the crucial national elections and decimated the Congress by winning 303 seats alone, surpassing its massive 282 seat win of 2014. The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation was founded at a summit in Shanghai in 2001 by the presidents of Russia, China, Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. India was granted the membership of the SCO along with Pakistan in 2017.

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# Trump blames India, China for not doing enough on climate change

(SAI Bureau) London: US President Donald Trump has blamed countries like India and China for not doing enough on climate change, labeling them as regions with air that is impossible to breathe while claiming that the US has some of the "cleanest air". In one of his final interviews before leaving for Ireland at the end of his UK state visit on Wednesday, Trump, who has blamed India and other countries

for justifying America's withdrawal from the landmark Paris climate change deal in 2017, said he believes that "there is a change in weather, and I think it changes both ways". Trump claimed that while the US had "some of the cleanest air", it was other countries that were not doing enough to tackle pollution. "China, India, Russia, many other nations, they have not very good air, not very good water in the sense of pollution and

cleanliness. They don't do the responsibility," he told Britain's ITV channel. He was replaying his conversation with Prince Charles, an ardent campaigner on climate change issues, and admitted that the Royal did most of the talking during their 90-minute discussion. Asked if he himself believed in climate change, the US President said he believes it goes "both ways". "He [Charles] did most of the

talking, and he was really into climate change and I think that's great. I believe that there's a change in weather and I think it changes both ways," he said. Trump said he was moved by Prince Charles' "passion for future generations" but stopped short of changing any of his views on climate science. "Don't forget, it used to be called global warming, that wasn't working, then it was called climate change, now it's actually called

extreme weather because with extreme weather you can't miss," he said. Trump has accused climate scientists of having a "political agenda" and called climate change a "hoax", though he later retracted that statement. In 2017, he pulled the US out of the landmark 2015 Paris climate agreement, saying the international deal to keep global temperatures rises below 2 degree Celsius was disadvantageous to US workers.

## Congress Law Of Inertia

colleagues in the Congress Working Committee (CWC), the party's top decision-maker, his wish to step down as party president. A suitable replacement must be found, preferably within a month. Efforts by Congress leaders, including mother Sonia Gandhi and sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra to persuade Rahul to withdraw his resignation have, so far, drawn a blank. For the Congress, the deepening crisis is familiar

territory, but no one's willing to learn. Before 2014, when Sonia Gandhi took over as Congress president in 1998 after the brutal exit of Sitaram Kesri, she had spoken about dwindling numbers of her party in Parliament, the "serious erosion" of its support base among the electorate and the "danger of losing our central place in the polity of our country". She talked about the "urgent need" to revive the Congress in states where the party had ceded

ground. Sonia failed to revive the Congress as its president in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Odisha and West Bengal, but she adroitly steered the party back to power for a decade starting 2004. But then, the steady gains her party made started drifting away soon after 2012 when she began abdicating responsibilities in the electoral arena to make way for her son. In 2014, when under Rahul's stewardship of the Lok

Sabha campaign the Congress touched its electoral nadir, the mother-son duo was back to addressing party colleagues on issues Sonia had spoken of in 1998. Both offered to quit-Sonia as president and Rahul as vice president-but the resignations were rejected. Then on, Rahul led the Congress from one disaster to another, but his formidable surname ensured that in December 2017, when he agreed to officially take over as Congress

president, there was no one to challenge his ascension. Now, while the Congress's tally has gone up to 52 seats, its vote share has remained the same pitiable 19.5 per cent. The BJP, for its part, won 303 seats-up from the 282 it won in 2014-and, in a majority of the states where it had a bipolar contest against the Congress, its vote share crossed the 50-per-cent-mark, a remarkable feat in India's first-past-the-post electoral system.

## Mumbai BJP Youth Wing Chief Declared Wilful Defaulter By Bank Of Baroda

As a guarantor, Kamboj said, he had paid Rs 76 crore as his part of the liability over the last two years. The matter reached the court in 2014 and the verdict went in the borrower's favour, he said. However, he paid up so as to ensure that there were no dues against him, the letter said.

Kamboj has been serving as president of the Mumbai unit of the BJP's youth wing since November 2016. PTI Mumbai BJP Youth Wing Chief Declared Wilful Defaulter By Bank Of Baroda BJP leader

Mohit Kamboj has been declared a "wilful defaulter" by the state-run Bank of Baroda. Kamboj, chief of Mumbai unit of Bhartiya Janata Yuva Morcha who was in news earlier this year when he replaced his last name with 'Bhartiya', disputed the bank's action, saying he had paid his dues as a personal guarantor for a loan. In an advertisement Wednesday, the bank published Kamboj's photograph, using his new name, Mohit Bhartiya, and said it has declared him a wilful defaulter with regard to borrowings by a firm called

Avyan Ornaments. It had initiated proceedings to declare Kamboj and one Jitendra Kapoor as wilful defaulters as per the RBI's norms, the bank said. As per the RBI's instructions, it was now informing the wider public about Kamboj and Kapoor being wilful defaulters, it added. The account in question is managed by the bank's zonal stressed-assets recovery branch in South Mumbai. In a letter circulating widely, the 35-year-old Kamboj

claimed he was not a promoter or director of the company, but a personal guarantor. As a guarantor, Kamboj said, he had paid Rs 76 crore as his part of the liability over the last two years. The matter reached the court in 2014 and the verdict went in the borrower's favour, he said.

However, he paid up so as to ensure that there were no dues against him, the letter said.

Kamboj has been serving as president of the Mumbai unit of the BJP's youth wing since November 2016.

## Himalayan High Jinx *White House pledges to barrel ahead with Mexico tariffs*

the world's highest mountains. This year alone, Nepal has issued nearly 381 permits to climbers, excluding sherpas and guides. This number does not include the rough estimate of 140 permits granted by China to climbers ascending from the Tibetan side.

In April 2015, when a series of earthquakes shook the landlocked South Asian country, it seemed as though the danger of potential avalanches and the threat of facing the uncontrollable would place an unfortunate stop-gap on what can arguably be considered as Nepal's most lucrative stream of income. The 7.8 magnitude earthquake had claimed 9,000 lives and destroyed nearly 8,00,000 households; in effect, crippling the country's

tourism industry when its famed heritage temples and mountainous trails were reduced to a rubble. The seismic aftershocks which continued for days triggered a wave of horrific landslides, levelling pockets of the main cities in the Kathmandu valley, roadways and infrastructure, and many smaller villages along the countryside. At the time, recovery and rehabilitation had seemed like an uphill climb for the small nation which is nestled within the Himalayan belt and the Indo-Gangetic plain and is home to a population of 2.93 crore people. Yet, the tourism industry remained cautiously optimistic and resilient, appealing to the international community of visitors, climbers, and tourists.

and Mexico held more talks Thursday evening at the State Department. Pence told reporters during a stop in Pennsylvania to promote the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement that U.S. officials "made it very clear that Mexico has to step up. They have to do more and they have to do more quickly." One U.S. official said more meetings are planned this evening at State Department. The State Department didn't respond to multiple requests for information about Pompeo's whereabouts or who participated in Thursday's talks with the Mexican delegation.

A spokesperson for the Mexican Foreign Ministry said Thursday afternoon that the two sides were still talking. "We continue to explore options to address the growing number of undocumented migrants that pass through Mexico," Roberto

Velasco Álvarez wrote on Twitter. "The US position is focused on immigration control measures, ours on development. We have not yet reached an agreement but we continue negotiating." Another source familiar with the talks told POLITICO that any deal likely "involves more on enforcement and regional coordination on asylum." U.S. officials wouldn't comment about the specifics of the proposals. "It's very premature of staff to comment on ongoing negotiations for fear of jeopardizing them," one White House official said. Sen. John Thune (R-S.D.) said it was possible that a 5 percent tariff increase scheduled for Monday could be put off while the negotiations continue. "We're hopeful that the discussions that are

happening right now with the Mexican officials will reach a conclusion and it's a good one," Thune said. But both Pence and White House spokesperson Sarah Huckabee Sanders stressed late on Thursday that the administration was pressing ahead with its plan to impose duties next week. "At this point the tariffs are going to be imposed on Monday," Pence said in Pennsylvania. "I'm encouraged they came today with more but it will be a matter for the president to consider."

Rep. Henry Cuellar (D-Texas) said he has been in frequent contact with officials at the White House and with the Mexican government and indicated that Mexico has shown a new willingness to address U.S. immigration demands.



# Anti-Trump press fails to gin up 'nasty' Markle

(News Agencies)- While the liberal media back home worked overtime to pull President Trump into a "nasty" war of words with the royals over Meghan Markle, the British press has given the U.S. commander-in-chief surprising rave reviews during his historic trip across the pond. It all started last week when Trump was informed of past comments made by the

"Suits" actress-turned-princess during an interview with The Sun. Before Markle traded Hollywood for royalty, she supported Hillary Clinton in 2016 and called Trump "misogynistic" and "divisive," even threatening to move to Canada if he got elected. Trump told The Sun he was "shocked" by Duchess Meghan's past remarks. "I didn't know that. What can I say? I didn't

know that she was nasty," Trump said upon hearing Markle's past comments. When confronted with the fact that Duchess Meghan - who is on maternity leave -- wouldn't be seeing the president during his state visit, he replied, "I didn't know that. I hope she is OK."

Trump, who is typically quick to slam his critics, even predicted that Markle would make a "very good" princess. When actress Bette Midler recently angered the president by sharing a fake quote attributed to him, Trump responded by calling her a "washed up psycho," "sick scammer" and said she looked "really bad." By comparison, Trump's comment about Markle

was friendly but the interview resulted in non-stop news coverage by the mainstream media, painting Trump as a bully who called the American-born duchess "nasty" as he was set to arrive in the U.K. A CNN chyron simply stated, "Trump calls Meghan Markle 'nasty' ahead of UK trip," while CNN's website published an article headlined, "Trump shatters diplomatic etiquette on eve of UK visit." MSNBC's headline stated, "Ahead of state visit, Trump calls Markle 'nasty.'" Several other American news organizations followed suit, and Trump critics took to twitter to put an emphasis on the "nasty" comment. When you look at the entire



conversation, it is clear he was referring to her previously nasty comments about the president, not the Duchess personally," Accuracy in Media national editor Carrie Sheffield told Fox News. "Context matters and it is shameful for outlets to take the President's remarks out of context to generate clicks." Trump defended himself on Twitter, blaming "fake news media" for

taking his comment out of context and doubled down during an interview with Piers Morgan for ITV's "Good Morning Britain," saying he wasn't calling Markle nasty, but rather was just surprised to hear her comments about him. "I wasn't referring to 'she's nasty.' I said she was nasty about me. And essentially I didn't know she was nasty about me," Trump told Morgan.



# 'I hope you come to this country again soon'

(News Agencies)- Donald Trump has left Britain at the end of his whirlwind three-day state visit after the Queen told him: 'I hope you come to this country again soon'.

Mr Trump and his wife Melania, who moved on to Ireland this afternoon before going to France tomorrow, joined the monarch and Prince Charles to speak to some of the 300 Second World War veterans who fought on the Normandy beaches 75 years ago.

As they posed for the final photograph at the D-Day 75

commemoration event in Portsmouth, the President told the Queen: 'It was a great honour to be with you' and Her Majesty replied: 'I hope you come to this country again soon'.

Mr Trump was heard saying: 'Great woman. Great, great woman' as he and Melania went to board his Marine One helicopter. They flew to Southampton Airport before being taken to Shannon in Ireland by Air Force Two.

The Queen, Mr Trump and Prince Charles had just met with six veterans who fought on D-Day following

the grand commemoration ceremony in Portsmouth today, including one 93-year-old who flirted with First Lady Melania.

At a small lunch reception also attended by world leaders including Theresa May and Emmanuel Macron, the President told the veterans it was his honour to meet them and he had been moved by their stories.

Hours earlier the Queen paid tribute to 'my generation' after another British veteran received an ovation from the monarch

and Mr Trump as he described his 'mates who didn't come back' from France.

On their arrival in Ireland Mr and Mrs Trump were greeted at Shannon Airport by Irish Taoiseach Leo Varadkar. As the two men posed for photos Mr Trump was heard discussing Brexit with the Irish PM and even mistakenly referred to a 'wall' when mentioning the Irish border. His pledge to 'build a wall' on the US/Mexico border was one of the key slogans of his 2016 election



campaign. At a pool spray before their meeting, President Trump said to PM Leo Varadkar, 'Probably you'll ask me about Brexit because I just left some very good

people who are very involved with Brexit, as you know. 'And I think it will all work out very well, and also for you with your wall, your border.

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## Drivers' fury as Sadiq Khan plans to introduce 20mph limit to 'red routes' in central London

(News Agencies)- Londoners face 20mph speed limits on main roads in the city centre and £100 fines if they break the rules, under new plans unveiled today. Transport for London wants to roll out lower speed limits on the majority of roads inside the capital's congestion zone. This would mean 5.5 miles of London's streets would carry a £100 fine for drivers caught speeding. The plans for red routes were revealed today with a second phase proposed to reduce all speed limits in suburban London by 10mph by 2024. But the AA pointed out that the average speed reached by drivers in central London is only 7.4mph, according to Transport for London's



own figures. Critics also pointed out that a Department for Transport study found there has been no significant reduction in accidents in areas around the country where there was a 20mph limit. London drivers are likely to be furious about the new charges, which come on top of £12.50 toxic air fees introduced earlier this year. London Mayor Sadiq Khan is putting the proposals out for consultation today in a bid to get them put into place by May 2020. The main roads affected in central London include the Albert and Victoria Embankments, Millbank and Borough High Street.

## Another TINY anti-Trump protest!

(News Agencies)- A tiny gathering of protesters made their way to Portsmouth to demonstrate against Donald Trump, after hundreds of thousands of people failed to turn out in London. A small crowd holding banners and placards were in the city where the US President, First Lady Melania, the Queen and around 300 veterans gathered to mark D-Day. Amongst the protesters, many people seemed to be going about their daily business, and bunches of placards were seen left on the street unused. It comes hours after the President today dismissed protests in London against his three-day state visit to Britain as 'organised flops'. Updated estimates suggest only around

10,000 marched from Trafalgar Square to Parliament Square yesterday, just 4 per cent of the figure organisers had hoped for. Taking to Twitter at 7am this morning, Mr Trump said: 'I kept hearing that there would be 'massive' rallies against me in the UK, but it was quite the opposite.' The big crowds, which the Corrupt Media hates to show, were those that gathered in support of the USA and me. They were big and enthusiastic as opposed to the organised flops!' His comments come after Jeremy Corbyn launched a scathing attack on Mr Trump as he addressed an anti-Trump rally on the second day of the visit. The Labour leader spoke to crowds from a stage in Whitehall as thousands of protesters took to London's



streets yesterday. Mr Trump said he refused a request for a meeting with the Labour leader and dismissed reports of demonstrations as 'fake news'. Yesterday, a Trump fan was surrounded in London by an angry group of protesters shouting 'Nazi' before a milkshake was thrown at him and a scuffle broke out. The semi-retired grandfather, who refused to be identified, told

MailOnline he was at the protest at Parliament Square campaigning to protect democracy. He said he was peacefully debating with 'moderate lefties' and 'having a laugh with the majority of them' before the demonstration turned violent. A woman who was screaming 'Nazi scum' at him was later identified as NHS worker Siobhan Prigent, who took to Twitter to say she was 'very sorry' for her behaviour.

## Boris Johnson's fightback against '£350m-a-week' trial is delayed

(News Agencies)- Boris Johnson's fightback against a Remainer court case over the referendum campaign was briefly delayed after Ed Miliband's judge wife was chosen to preside over a hearing. The former foreign secretary lodged a request for a judicial review last week after he was ordered to appear in court over his claim Britain sends EU £350m every week. But the High Court judge on duty was Mrs Justice Thornton, 48, the wife of the former Labour leader, according to the Sun. She immediately 'recused' herself from the hearing because of her political connection to the Labour Party. It means another judge had to handle it. The 48-year-old barrister was made a judge in February this year. Lawyers representing entrepreneur and anti-Brexit campaigner Marcus Ball, 29, have brought three charges of misconduct in a public office against Mr Johnson alleging he made statements to the public he 'knew to be false'. Two relate to when he served as both an MP and Mayor of London before the 2016 referendum and the other

in his role as MP in the run-up to the 2017 General Election. The front runner to replace Theresa May as Tory leader could become the first serving Prime Minister in the modern era to appear in the dock if his attempt to have the case thrown out fails. Mr Johnson's representatives have called the case a 'stunt' brought forward for 'political purposes' while former Tory cabinet minister David Mellor called District Judge Margot Coleman's ruling 'nutty' and Jacob-Rees Mogg, who is supporting Mr Johnson's leadership campaign, added it was 'an attack on free speech'. Michael Gove was among the colleagues who came to Mr Johnson's defence last week, saying the move was an attempt to 'criminalise free speech'. And a source close to Mr Johnson said the prosecution was 'nothing less than a politically motivated attempt to reverse Brexit and crush the will of the people'. Mr Johnson made the comments in the run-up to the 2016 EU referendum and before the 2017 General Election, claiming the UK should give the cash to the NHS instead.

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## Experts warn bizarre viral Vacuum Challenge that sees people sealing their children in bin bags could cause DEATH by strangulation

(Agencies)- Experts have warned against trying a new online challenge dubbed 'The Vacuum Challenge' as it could potentially lead to strangulation.

The challenge has been sweeping the internet, as social media users - from the UK and around the world - share videos as they seal themselves in bin

bags, by sucking out the air with a vacuum cleaner. However, experts are concerned that many of the videos posted online feature adults 'vacuum sealing' their children, sitting in bin bags with their heads poking out.

Despite the hilarious videos online, Yahoo News reports it could be a lead to cerebral hypoxia caused

by strangulation as the bag tightens around the neck. The challenge is believed to have been inspired by vacuum beds, which are popular in the BDSM community. A vacuum bed is a frame containing a latex suit, which covers the entire head and body, which participants climb into.

Air is then removed using

a suction pump or vacuum, while the person inside breathes through a tube running into the mouth.

The challenge, which has been tried by social media users from across the globe, sees participants sitting or lying on the floor inside a bin bag, which often reaches up to the neck. The nose of a vacuum is then inserted



## Bangkok red light district is set to be remodelled

(Agencies)- The Bangkok red light district is set to be remodelled - in the style of the Cotswolds.

Rattanakosin Island in the centre of the Thai capital, has been a prostitutes' haunt for decades. Street girls cater to local men there, leaving tourist hot-spots to flashy gogo dancers seeking wealthy foreigners.

But Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-Cha has declared its days are numbered after being inspired by Bourton-on-the-Water, near Cheltenham.

The military leaders 'dream' is to see the 1700s area, with canals passing through it, transformed into an 'important tourist attraction reminiscent of England's Cotswolds', reports the Bangkok Post. Yellow star flowers are to be planted along the canals while old buildings will be painted a soft shade of yellow. Defence Ministry permanent secretary Gen Nat Intarachareon added they are now planning to re-create the area in the 'image of the Cotswolds'. Starting in February, canals have been dredged and

floating water cleaners installed. Bangkok Metropolitan Administration worker Phaitoon Khamparat said the second part of the plan is to 're-adjust this area and landscape so it is not suitable for prostitution'.

By making the area clean with more electric lights, we can add CCTV to monitor the offenders.

'Thirdly, new public activities should be introduced to the area to encourage tourism.'

It is unclear whether prostitutes, street food

sellers and scrap metal workers, which have lived there for years, will be allowed to remain in the area in the future.

When Khlong Lat Phrao canal, in the north of Bangkok, was redeveloped houses built into it on stilts were demolished.

There are an estimated 1,682 canals in the city, that have earned it the name 'Venice of the East'.

into the neck of the bag, sucking out all of the air inside. The lack of air within the bag means people are unable to move, and often fall to the ground, losing control of their limbs. Social media users from around the world have tested out the challenge and shared videos of their

hilarious reactions online. Some social media users expressed their shock at the challenge, suggesting they understood where it originated from and were confused as to how it had caught on. 'All these people exploring the latex vacuum bed kink without even knowing it,' one social media user tweeted.

## Russia 'successfully tests' hypersonic interceptor missile that can shoot down Western weapons and travels 2½ miles in one second

(Agencies)- Russia has conducted a 'successful' military test of its state-of-the-art new interceptor missile intended to neutralise incoming Western attacks.

The Kremlin declined to name the rocket system shown on video blasting off from Sary-Shagan, an anti-ballistic training range in Kazakhstan.

But it is believed to be the deadly PRS-1M hypersonic interceptor missile, crucial to protecting Moscow and other strategic sites in the region from potential incoming NATO or other enemy missiles.

Footage tweeted by the Russian defence ministry shows the unfolding and preparation of the weapon's vehicle and the moment of

launch from six different angles.

The missile is shown shooting upwards from the ground leaving a trail of smoke and dust behind it. 'Another test-launch of a new Russian interceptor missile was successfully conducted,' said the ministry.

'After a series of trials, the new interceptor missile confirmed its characteristics and successfully completed the task by striking an assigned target with precision.'

Russian state news agency TASS indicated that the tests were linked to earlier trials at Sary Shagan last year.

These involved the upgraded PRS-1M

interceptor missile which is described as 'much faster and deadlier than its predecessor'.

This new missile is a development of the older 53T6 which 'previously flew several times faster than a bullet and accelerated within seconds to 3 km per second, making it the world's fastest missile', said gazeta.ru

'The modernised version's speed has already approached 4km per second.'

This is 1.86 miles per second and 2.48 miles per second respectively.

'The new product's kill zone is practically one and a half times greater in terms of altitude and range,' reported gazeta.ru in analysing the PRS-1M.

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## World Bank keeps growth forecast for India at 7.5%, warns against 'skirmishes'

**In its Global Economic Prospects report, the World Bank also said growth rate is expected to remain the same for the next two fiscals.**

(Agencies)- The World Bank has retained its forecast for growth in India at 7.5% in the 2019-20 fiscal and the succeeding years, but warned that re-escalation of India-Pakistan tensions arising from "military skirmishes" such as the one in February could increase uncertainty and impact investments in the region. Continued GDP projection of 7.5% should be reason for some relief and celebration coming as it does amid ongoing efforts to fix the way India measures growth, which has come under intense scrutiny, and some

distrust, after a government agency discovered serious gaps in a key government database.

In its "Global Economic Prospects: Heightened Tensions, Subdued Investment" released Tuesday, the World Bank downgraded global growth prospects by 0.3% to 2.6% for the 2019-20 fiscal "reflecting weaker-than-expected international trade and investment at the start of the year". This will begin improving here after and growth might touch 2.8% in 2021.

India, on the other hand, will not only grow by 7.5%, but as the largest economy

in South Asia, help the region post a "solid" growth. Pakistan, on the other hand, will continue the downslide and decelerate to 3.4% from 5.8% in the previous fiscal. Its economic woes have forced it to seek yet another bailout package from the International Monetary Fund, and consultations are underway on terms and conditions. Military tensions broke out between the two South Asian neighbors in February after a terrorist attack in Pulwama by the Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad. India struck the outfit's

training facilities in Balakot in Pakistan. And Pakistan retaliated with an air raid that led to the downing of an Indian air force fighter jet. The World Bank noted that the "military skirmishes between major South Asian countries in mid-February remained contained, and economic repercussions were minor". But, it warned that, "a re-escalation of tensions between the two countries could increase uncertainty, depress confidence, and weigh on investment in the region". The Bank also cited the February "skirmishes between India and Pakistan" as a



"reminder that latent geopolitical tensions can flare up at any time", in reference to risks to regional and global economies.

"Uncertainty" about Brexit, Britain leaving the European Union, was cited among other key challenges and risks confronting India and other South Asian countries. "Uncertainty about the Brexit process poses a risk to some South Asian economies which have preferential trade agreements or generalized system of preferences with the European Union and significant exports to United Kingdom (Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka)," the Bank said. "A no-deal Brexit could have a significant impact on exports of those countries to the UK in the absence of new trade agreements," it added.

## Trump hints at 'big' trade offer if Britain breaks free from EU

(Agencies)- Donald Trump waded into the UK's fraught politics on the first day of a state visit, urging his hosts to proceed with Brexit and dangling the promise of a U.S. trade deal he said would swiftly follow.

With the country preparing for the appointment of a new prime minister, Trump called on the British to throw off the "shackles" of European Union membership in a tweet before a banquet hosted by Queen Elizabeth II.

The White House issued a statement saying that the president supports a Brexit "being accomplished in a way that will not affect global economic and financial stability while also

securing independence to the United Kingdom."

Trump will meet Tuesday with Premier Theresa May, likely for the last time. May, who became the Conservative government's leader in the wake of the 2016 Brexit referendum, is resigning after failing to persuade Parliament to approve the divorce deal she negotiated with the EU, leaving the issue in the hands of her successor.

The American president has suggested that person should be Boris Johnson, the former foreign secretary who quit May's cabinet in protest over her Brexit proposal.

In the lead-up to his trip to London, Trump said the U.K. should walk away

from tortured talks with the EU if Brussels refuses to negotiate better terms, and said Nigel Farage - who's campaigning for a no-deal Brexit - should be put in charge of the process.

A hard split with the EU would give maximum scope for a new trade accord with the US. If the UK remained bound to the bloc's regulations, it would narrow the options for a future agreement.

It's a sensitive issue in the UK. Rivals jockeying to replace May are putting forward their own Brexit plans, with the favorite, Johnson, pledging to take Britain out of the EU - with no deal, if necessary - at the end of October.

'Powerful Deal'

Trump criticized May's compromise agreement with the EU last November, saying Britain "may not be able to trade with us" as a result. His comments dashed hopes stoked by his comments made before an earlier meeting with May, when he said "a very big deal, a very powerful deal" would be completed between the two countries "very very quickly."

Opponents of Brexit say a trade deal with the US risks imperiling the National Health Service, by increasing the involvement of private US companies in the public sector. May's office was forced to reiterate Monday that the state-funded health-care system would not be up for



discussion in trade talks. The statement potentially put her government at odds with Trump after his ambassador in London, Woody Johnson, told the BBC that the "entire" UK economy would be on the table. Trump and May will meet American and British business leaders on Tuesday at the start of the second day of his visit, which could throw up more controversy than Monday's schedule of royal visits and pageantry. 'Greater Still' May, who will co-host the talks at St. James's Palace, will call for governments on both sides of the Atlantic to embrace the opportunity of Brexit to seal a bilateral free-trade deal, and work together to keep global markets "free, fair and open."

## With US tariffs looming, many in Mexico back president's approach

(Agencies)- Facing possible crippling tariffs US President Donald Trump is threatening to impose on the United States' biggest trading partner, Mexican president Andrés Manuel López Obrador has responded with calm and calls for continued friendship, and avoided strong language that could cause the dispute to deteriorate. He wants dialogue, not a Twitter spat,

and much less a trade war with the country that buys 80 percent of Mexican exports. Mexicans have seen enough Trump tweets not to think the sky is falling even at this latest threat, and while some might wish their president would take a couple of swings at a figurative Trump pinata, most seemed to think López Obrador was taking the right approach in trying to

head off the tariffs. "We do not want conflict, a war. Let us avoid that," said Gilberto Lozoya, a 26-year-old in the northern city of Nuevo Laredo, across the border from Laredo, Texas, who works for a factory that exports boilers for US brands like Whirlpool. The business stands to take a hit if the tariffs, starting at 5% and rising as high as 25%, take effect on a Monday deadline Trump

has given Mexico for slowing irregular migration through its territory. And while Lozoya feels his country could probably do more on that issue, he believes things are in good hands with López Obrador. "The way the president has responded is very good," Lozoya said. "He is a very sensible person." The Mexican government, which has struggled to cope with large numbers of mostly

Central American migrants, has not publicly proposed any new policies, instead seeming to opt for a strategy of convincing Washington that it is already doing its part on migration. Under López Obrador, who took office Dec. 1, Mexico has increased deportations and highway checkpoints in the south while raiding migrants traveling in a large caravan and atop freight trains. It has also insisted that human rights are at the core of its policy, and said it won't criminalize migration. Where previous President Enrique Peña Nieto was roundly criticized for not taking a more forceful line in responding to then-candidate and later President Trump, López Obrador does not seem to have suffered significant backlash over his handling of the latest tiff between the North American neighbors.



# The war of 1857 was much more than just a sepoy mutiny or a peasant revolt

**It was an assertion of the sociocultural identity of Bharatiya society which was under attack by the British**

The first war of independence, often termed as a mutiny by the Marxist and the British historians, had started on May 10, 1857. 162 years on, it is important to revisit what happened during those days as Bharat continues to bear the consequences of fault lines created by the British government in the post-1857 era. The origin of these fault lines lie in the fact that a concerted attempt was made to curb the cultural nationalism, which formed the core of the first war of independence.

The colonial school of historians deliberately undermined the significance of this uprising as a national event. It ignore the real factors which led to this nationwide uprising.

The historians from the colonial school that largely comprised British historians termed this event as mutiny of Bharatiya troops in British army while those following the Marxist school of history have termed it as an outcome of the distress among the peasants. However, if we look at the facts, it emerges that it was a national uprising and the

prime factor that led to this war was the way the East India Company and the British officials were attacking the cultural ethos of this nation and especially the Hindus.

None other than the prominent conservative leader, Benjamin Disraeli, who later became the Prime Minister of Britain (February 27, 1868-December 2, 1868 and February 20, 1874 - April 22, 1880) accepted in House of Commons on July 27, 1857, "The revolt was more than a mutiny of Indian troops." (Mutiny at the Margins: New Perspectives on the Indian Uprising edited by Crispin Bates). "Disraeli blamed EIC's (East India Company's) administration policies, the imposition of the settlement of the property and aggressive Christian missionaries for disrupting Indian society and thereby creating an environment conducive to revolt or resistance." (Parliamentary Debates, 3rd series, Vol. 147, July 27, 1857, PP 440-472, (ed) Ainslee Embree). Earlier speaking in the House of Commons on July 16, 1857, he

said, "The Chancellor of the Exchequer has informed us that India at the present moment is suffering only from a momentary and unexpected impulse arising from superstitious causes. This insurrection, which extends from the Punjab to Calcutta, is, according to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the creation of a sudden impulse. Sir, I have heard, but I can hardly believe that such grave consequences have arisen from so accidental a cause. I can hardly believe that that class, of all others, in our Indian empire which, by its education and interests, and by every motive which can influence the loyalty of men, ought to be most devoted to our Government, should be suddenly found in a state of open insurrection, from the cause alleged by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I must be permitted to say that I believe the cause of the present state of India to be much graver and deeper than appears to be conceived by Her Majesty's Ministers. I believe the present state of India has been occasioned by long years of misgovernment..." Noted historian RC Majumdar in his monumental



work, 'The Sepoy Mutiny and the Revolt of 1857', that was prepared to mark the 100th anniversary of this event in 1957, wrote, "There were some special reasons for bitterness in the relation between the two communities. Englishmen in general regarded the Indians as barbarians, and the Christian Missionaries held in open contempt the idolatrous practices of the Hindus." Warren Hastings wrote in 1784 that "a few years ago most of the Englishmen regarded the Indians almost as barbarians, and though the feeling has decreased it has not entirely disappeared". The truth of this is proved by a book written in 1792 by Charles Grant, an officer of the East India Company, in which he remarks that Bengal hardly possesses

any honest and conscientious men such as are to be found even in the most backward countries of Europe. He then proceeds to give a long list of the defects of Indian character. Even so late as 1855, a most slanderous libel on Bengali character, in the most objectionable language, was published in the Calcutta Review. Majumdar also highlights the role played by Christian Missionaries as they went all out for conversions in a planned manner that resulted in a strong reaction from the society at that time. In light of these facts, it is clear that the first war of independence was much more than a sepoy mutiny or a peasant revolt, it was an assertion of the sociocultural identity which Bharatiya society had preserved for more than 5000 years and which was under attack from the British.

## Car ownership must become a relic of the past

**Millennials are making wiser choices for society's benefit. It is high time Indian cities join the likes of London, Singapore and New York to further discourage private car ownership**

I grew up in Mumbai, travelling in jam-packed suburban trains. I put up with the daily commute because that helped me get to my college classes on time. But I did, at times, feel tempted to travel in the comfort of an air-conditioned car.

In the last few years, car travel in most metros has become a nightmare. Moving around by road in Bengaluru, for example, is nearly impossible with the average speed going down from 30 kmph in 2005 to less than 10 kmph in 2018. The city loses an estimated Rs 38,000 crore annually as a social cost of traffic congestion.

A recent report by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) says that Indian cities are 149% more congested than their Asian counterparts. The biggest reason

for the rising congestion in major metros and cities is a mismatch between the development of public transport infrastructure and a rising number of private vehicles.

More Indians are buying personal vehicles because they consider it as a sign of success. From 1951 to 2000, the country added seven million cars, and in the following decade, another 8.5 million.

Asset utilisation of private vehicles is very low. They carry 1.15 passengers and their idle time is typically 96%. A study by the Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi, found that 14% of the available space in India's capital is taken up by parking. The space could otherwise be used for bike lanes, affordable housing or greener and

oxygen providing parks.

According to a 2019 Health Effects Institute report, air pollution kills more than one million Indians every year, and seven out of the world's ten most polluted cities are in India. And nearly 83% of all carbon monoxide emissions can be traced to vehicles, making them a major source of bad urban air. In this scenario, what's the alternative transport solution that can reduce congestion, air pollution, our carbon dependency, and help build smarter, more sustainable cities?

In the short-term, ride-sharing - with improved safety standard and shortened waiting time - is a convenient and affordable way to reduce traffic congestion. Mandating private vehicles to pool passengers can immediately



improve asset utilisation and reduce congestion by 17%-31%, shows a study by BCG. In the medium-term, as electric vehicles become cheaper and the charging infrastructure improves, we can deploy two/three/four wheeled electric vehicles on a larger scale as our preferred ride-sharing choice. In the long-term, we need to build a more robust public transport system based on the public-private partnership (PPP) model. One PPP solution is designing a multimodal system

that combines shared and electric first/last mile commute with metro/bus system for the longer leg.

A study published by the United States National Academy of Sciences found that 43% of shared-mobility users reported an increase in their use of public transport, while only 28% of individuals reported reduced use. The study suggests that ride-sharing, when integrated with public transport network, can support a sustainable "car light" lifestyle.



# Modi 2.0 Signals Clipping Of Wings For Doval

It may seem unnecessary, or even irrelevant, to discuss Narendra Modi's choice of ministers for his second term as Prime Minister. After all, one of the most obvious aspects of his leadership style is the centralisation of power - early on in his first term, he made it clear to the seniormost bureaucrat in each ministry that they were now empowered to speak directly to the Prime Minister's Office, and undercut their minister if necessary. After five years in South Block, the Prime Minister now likely has solid control over which civil servant goes where - and thus the bureaucracy now reports to him, and not to their ministers.

And yet, the Prime Minister's choices are worth examining - if for no other reason than Amit Shah and he reportedly spent a great deal of time on it. Shah himself got the Home Ministry. This, at the union level, is not quite as powerful as it is in a state government - Shah was Chief Minister Modi's Home Minister for some years - since there is no police force, with the notable

exception of those in territories such as Delhi, that he will directly control. But there is the intelligence services, and counter-terror operations, as well as, no doubt, action against the "infiltrators" and "termites" that Shah has so controversially targeted. Before the portfolios were announced, Delhi was rife with rumours that Shah wished to become Finance Minister. Frankly, that might have been an actually useful location for his famed attention to detail - outgoing finance minister Arun Jaitley is many things, but unlike P Chidambaram, is not a details man. Perhaps those rumours were unfounded but what is clear now is Shah is not Finance Minister - the one position that, because of its ability to control funds, has an impact on every other ministry.

That position instead went to Nirmala Sitharaman. This is in many ways a puzzling choice. Sitharaman has not been a standout in the Defence Ministry, except for her strong defence of the Rafale deal - surely not a qualification for the job of Finance

Minister. But it is in the Commerce Ministry, where she was for some years during Modi's first term, that we should turn for clues to how she will manage as Finance Minister. And here the record is not encouraging. Sitharaman's Commerce Ministry was inward-looking and presided over a turn away from trade agreements. During her tenure - and over Modi's first term generally - Indian exports performed very poorly, barely increasing in real terms and doing markedly worse than those of comparable economies such as Bangladesh and Vietnam. If nothing else, the choice of Sitharaman signals Modi's renewed commitment to statism and to Hindutva socialism. A more encouraging



choice, if as surprising, is that of S Jaishankar as Foreign Minister. Jaishankar distinguished himself as Foreign Secretary, where he managed both the personal and the substantive aspects of the Modi government's diplomacy with consummate skill. Modi has an unfortunate tendency to rely excessively on bureaucratic advice and action. But

Jaishankar is not an ordinary bureaucrat, he has an unusual breadth of vision and a clear-eyed view of India's capabilities and requirements. Indian foreign policy faces multiple challenges: from managing its position as Trump upends the global economic order to dealing with Chinese attempts to influence India's immediate neighbourhood.

## The Answer to Why India Are Playing First World Cup Match So Late Does Not Make Any Sense

The Cricket World Cup is in full swing, but the Indian team is watching the action from the periphery, preparing over the last week as if for some other event while other sides battle for supremacy at the points table. The question on the minds of most Indian cricket fans, then, is natural: why has their team not played a single match yet?

Six days since the start of the tournament, Virat Kohli and Co. are still waiting for their turn to take the field, and are using the time to acclimatize themselves to the conditions, as well as recuperate after the grueling Indian Premier League.

That India's match has been delayed beyond what can be considered reasonable can be judged from this: India's opponent in the opening match, South Africa, would be playing its third match in the tournament after having already played England on May 30 and Bangladesh on June 2.

Apart from the Proteas, hosts England, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan would all have got

two games out of the way by the time India plays its first match on Wednesday, June 5.

The Indian team will be the only one to get so much time, 13 days to be exact since their arrival in England on May 22, to settle down and get used to the English conditions - a luxury not afforded to other sub-continent teams. This clearly showed in the dismal performances by Pakistan and Sri Lanka in their opening fixtures. But the answer for the delay apparently has got nothing to do with acclimatizing.

According to reports, India were supposed to play their first match on June 2 against Bangladesh but the International Cricket Council (ICC) changed the schedule at the request of the all-powerful Board for Control of Cricket in India (BCCI).

The BCCI "source" cited in the reports said the board cited the guidelines of the Lodha Committee, formed by the Supreme Court to clean up cricket administration in India, to get the ICC to push back the date of the first match.

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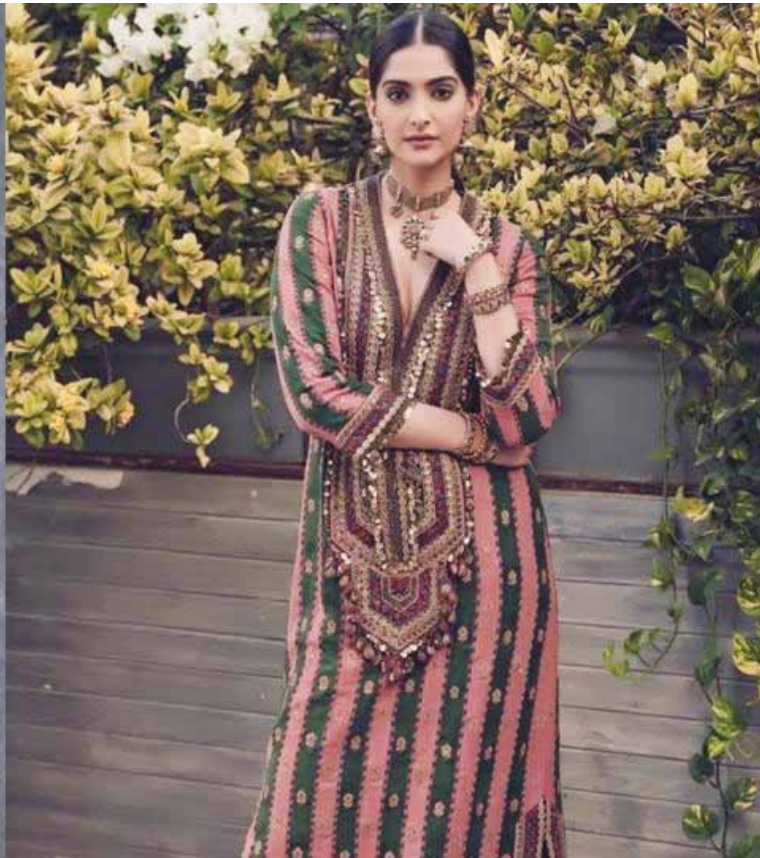
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# Festive Fashion 2019

*This Eid, give a spin to your traditional outfits*

*Ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr, we give you a lowdown on what's haute this festive season.*



after bottom wear this festive season. The gharara worn by actor Bhumi Pednekar has been stitched in chanderi fabric with a golden print and has got embroidery and mirror work. "Since it's a traditional gharara in a much more comfortable fit in terms of ghera (circumference), it is extremely versatile. From an Eid lunch to an evening party, it can be worn anywhere, which is why it's ideal for Eid," says designer, Tamanna Punjabi Kapoor.

**Black Magic**

A simple silhouette complemented with some prints can never go wrong. Keeping it simple here, is actor Vidya Balan in Vaisavi Shah's design. The black salwar suit teamed with a printed dupatta makes for fine festive wear.

**For the festivities**

Fashion designer Tamanna Punjabi Kapoor lists a few ideas you could try out for an Eid party: -High-raised salwar sets with pastel embroidery and light mirror work would be perfect for an Iftar party at a friend's home. Even a long simple kurta with a heavier dupatta could do wonders.

-For a bigger event, a heavy gharara with a beautifully draped dupatta and some regal Nizam jewellery would really bring out the whole Eid vibe. Modern silhouettes can be saved for resorts whereas festivals deserve an old world charm.

The festival of Eid is all about vibrancy and ethnic fashion. From shimmery dupattas to salwar suits embroidered with zari, the ensemble choices by Muslim women have always been extravagant.

According to fashion designer, Pearl Uppal Kachru of Talking Threads, the designs, layers and styles of clothes should allow women to express their individualities yet remain true to the values that define them. Keeping that in mind, to help you pick your perfect outfit for Eid,

we chose a melange of ensembles to make your festive celebrations a stylish one.

**Indo Chic**

It's bohemian and traditional, just like the two colours running parallel to each other on this ensemble. Actor Sonam K Ahuja in designer Sabyasachi's outfit, is ideal for any outdoor Eid celebration. We love how she has complemented the outfit with some traditional Indian jewellery.

**Haute Pink**

No festival is complete without a sari. Actor Shilpa Shetty Kundra

rocks this fuschia pink ruffled sari with a belt designed by Vvani. The vibrant colour adds exuberance to the festivities and the stylish silhouette will make for a chic evening wear.

**Pretty Pastels**

Handcrafted with meticulous details like sequins, block printing and dori embroidery, this ethnic flowy green anarkali designed by Devnaagri, when paired with Kota tissue dupatta is a perfect pick for Eid. The ensemble worn by actor Alia Bhatt truly celebrates the

essence of the festival in style.

This burgundy farshi palazzo suit by Talking Threads features rose gold zardozi, gota patti and crystal hand embroidery. The kurta and farshi (wide-legged palazzo pants) are crafted in chanderi with its dupatta crafted in pure silk. The lightweight handwoven chanderi gives a regal touch to the outfit, making it ideal for an Eid party. Also, the intricate hand embroidery adds to the simple silhouette. Suit Up

This ivory ensemble features a gharara, one of the most sought

## *Who needs Tinder? Tracey Cox reveals the VERY unexpected places to find your next steamy encounter - from the local church to an Uber Pool*

Online dating and hook-up apps might be convenient but they're also demoralising, exhausting and only expose you to a certain type of person.

Remember what people used to do before Tinder came along?

They'd meet in real life!

Look up, not down, and you might just find there's loads of attractive people standing right beside you. Even better, meeting someone in real life avoids that awful moment when you meet someone you sparked nicely with on screen...to find it's a fizzle

chemistry-wise for one or both of you in the flesh.

Many people are so used to dating online, they've forgotten how to do it the old-fashioned way. Or never learned. A lot of millennials struggle with in person communication and lack body language skills because they have no experience.

I met my husband at a pub in Richmond. He was standing drinking a pint, I was sitting with a girlfriend at a table near him. Between us, handily, was a box of matches that came from Stringfellow's, a strip club in London.

I picked them up and called him over. 'Are these yours?' I said, narrowing my eyes like I was about to tell him off. He looked at them, squinted, and then said, 'God no! No, they're not mine!'

'Only kidding,' I said. 'I just wanted to talk to you'.

He laughed, I laughed. And then we got married (well, a few years later)

It's actually easy to meet people. You just have to get yourself out of the mindset that says you'll only meet them when you're looking - like on an app or at a club.

Then you have to be brave enough



to make an approach. Believe it or not, that part's easy, once you know how and have done it a few times.

Here's some unexpected hunting

grounds you may not have thought of - and what to do when you're there and see someone who takes your fancy.



## To have, or not to have, coconut oil...

When an epidemiologist at the Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health called coconut oil one of the worst things anyone can eat, it was only the latest in a long flip-flop. So should we eat coconut oil or not? The answer, as in most things, might be in moderation



than 15 to 20 per cent of total calorie intake, and saturated fats no more than 7 per cent," he says. In moderation, coconut oil helps. It's a quick energy source and can boost fat burning. Use unrefined coconut oil for... Weight loss: Coconut oil

In August 2018, Karin Michels, an epidemiologist at the Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health, called coconut oil "one of the worst things you can eat". Indians were understandably outraged. But Michels' views were just the latest in a long flip-flop over coconut oil. About five years ago, the West was hailing it as a 'new superfood'. Actors Emma Stone and Gwyneth Paltrow gushed over its health and

beauty benefits. Folks began downing spoonfuls, hoping for healthy hearts, luminous skin. So is it good or bad? It's both, depending on how and how much you use. Cardiologist Dr Nikesh Jain says the oil can raise both HDL (or good) and LDL (or bad) cholesterol. The trick to using it right is moderation. He recommends consuming no more than 2 tbsp (20 gm) a day, either raw or in cooking - and no other oil. "Fats shouldn't be more

has about 90 per cent fat, but its medium-chain saturated triglycerides (MCTs) have been shown to go to the liver, where they are rapidly metabolised and less likely to be stored as fat. Diet: If you're ingesting coconut oil raw, make sure it's unrefined and no more than 2 tbsp a day. Skin and hair: Lauric acid and monolaurin, a chemical made from lauric acid, are formed after metabolism of coconut oil, and aid skin, hair and overall health.

## Raiding the refrigerator

Craving a between-meals snack? Here's what you should keep in your fridge at all hours



How many times have you woken up in the middle of the night by a certain emptiness in the stomach that refuses to let you snuggle back in bed till you have had a bite? Or been unable to concentrate on work, mid-morning because you are anxiously waiting for the lunch hour? Or wished for a snack before dinner? And what has your refrigerator offered you in such emergencies - chocolate? Ice cream? Cold cuts? All heavy on calories or probably high on preservatives. Healthy food need not be boring, or require complicated preparation. Here's what nutritionists advise you to stock up on.

# Energy drinks may harm your heart: Study

**Researchers also found a statistically significant increase in systolic and diastolic blood pressure in participants who consumed the energy drinks.**

Consuming too many energy drinks in a short timespan may increase blood pressure and disrupt heart rhythm, a study has found.

For the study, published in the Journal of the American Heart Association, enrolled 34 healthy volunteers between the ages of 18 and 40 years. Participants were randomly assigned to drink 32 ounces of one of two commercially available caffeinated energy drinks or a placebo drink on three separate days.

The drinks were consumed within a 60-minute period but no faster than one 16-ounce bottle in 30 minutes.

Researchers at the University of the Pacific in the US measured the electrical activity of the volunteers' hearts by electrocardiogram, which records the way a heart is beating. They

also recorded participant's blood pressure.

All measurements were taken at the study's start and every 30 minutes for four hours after drink consumption.

Both energy beverages tested contained 304 to 320 milligrams of caffeine per 32 fluid ounces. Caffeine at doses under 400 milligrams is not expected to induce any electrocardiographic changes. Other common ingredients in the energy drinks in the study included taurine (an amino acid), glucuronolactone (found in plants and connective tissues) and B-vitamins. The placebo drink contained carbonated water, lime juice and cherry flavouring. In participants who consumed either type of energy drink, researchers found that the QT interval was six milliseconds or 7.7 milliseconds higher at four hours compared to

placebo drinkers. The QT interval is a measurement of the time it takes ventricles in the heart (the lower chambers) to prepare to generate a beat again. If this time interval is either too short or too long, it can cause the heart to beat abnormally. The resulting arrhythmia can be life-threatening.

The results of the study confirm previous findings and suggest that the QT interval changes are generally sustained over the four-hour monitoring period rather than being a short-lasting effect after consuming 32-ounces of an energy drink. Researchers also found a statistically significant increase in systolic and diastolic blood pressure in participants who consumed the energy drinks. "We found an association between consuming energy drinks and changes in QT intervals and blood pressure that



cannot be attributed to caffeine," said Sachin A Shah, a professor at University of the Pacific.

"We urgently need to investigate the particular ingredient or combination of ingredients in different types of energy drinks that might explain the findings seen in our clinical trial," said Shah. The study is the largest controlled study of the effects of energy drinks on the heart and blood pressure in young healthy volunteers. "Energy drinks are readily accessible and commonly consumed by a large number of teens and young adults, including college

students. Understanding how these drinks affect the heart is extremely important," said Kate O'Dell, a professor at the University of the Pacific.

"The public should be aware of the impact of energy drinks on their body especially if they have other underlying health conditions," Shah said.

"Healthcare professionals should advise certain patient populations, for example, people with underlying congenital or acquired long QT syndrome or high blood pressure, to limit or monitor their consumption," he said.



## No country meeting global goals for gender equality

*In 2015, all United Nations member states adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to achieve by 2030 in areas such as education, climate, and gender equality.*



No country is on track to achieve the gender equality called for in the United Nations's development blueprint, a report released on Tuesday said. In 2015, all United Nations member states adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to achieve by 2030 in areas such as education, climate, and gender equality.

But the new report says countries aren't on the right track to meet the gender equality benchmark, which requires eliminating discrimination and violence against women and ending harmful practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation. "We're literally failing to deliver on the gender equality promises made in the (SDGs) for billions

of girls and women," said Alison Holder, director of Equal Measures 2030, which put together the SDG Gender Index report. "Even more worrying for me is 1.4 billion girls and women live in countries that got a 'very poor' failing score on the index," she said, speaking on the sidelines of the Women Deliver gender equality conference in Vancouver.

Using data from 129 countries, the survey shows that wealthy nations like Finland, Sweden, Norway and the Netherlands were making the most progress while poor or unstable countries such as Chad, DR Congo, Congo-Brazzaville, Yemen and Niger were falling behind. There were also "pockets of good news even in struggling countries," said Holder.

For example, Senegal is closer to achieving gender parity in its parliament than Denmark, even though Senegal's GDP is 56 times lower. However, no country has fully achieved gender equality, the report said. The findings of the index indicate a lack of political will to invest in advancing gender equality, according to Anne-Birgitte Albrechtsen, chief executive officer of Plan International, a child rights charity that contributed to the report. She hopes to see advocacy groups and activists take up the data from the gender index and use it to mount "clever political campaigns to generate actions." The survey isn't the first to show the tough road ahead for the SDGs. A report released last month said that despite 150 million people gaining access to electricity every year, the SDG of assuring affordable and clean energy was not on track to be reached.

## Here's a list of advantages that extroverts enjoy at workplace

*It is in four categories that extroverts enjoy a distinct advantage; motivational, emotional, interpersonal and performance-related.*

Researchers have zeroed down four key advantages that extroverts enjoy in the workplace. There's been much debate in popular culture recently about the advantages and disadvantages extroverts have in the workplace, but it often overlooks the scientific literature, a recent study pointed out. A prototypical extrovert can be defined as talkative, outgoing, prefers taking charge, expresses positive emotion and enjoys seeking out new experiences, explains Wilmot. By comparison, a prototypical introvert is quiet, emotionally reserved, less energetic and harder to get to know. The study, published in the Journal of Applied Psychology,

offered a comprehensive review of existing research (91 meta-analyses in total) relating to extroversion and work-related variables. These variables (165 in total) include things like motivation, work-life balance, emotional well-being and performance. Supporting data was taken from studies across multiple countries, from different occupations and across different career moments including education, job application, and on the job evaluations. The team of researchers found that higher extroversion was desirable for 90 per cent of variables, which suggests a small, persistent advantage in



the workplace. It was in four categories that extroverts enjoy a distinct advantage; motivational, emotional, interpersonal and performance-related. "These four appear to really capture the strongest positive effects of extroversion at work," said Wilmot, whose research looks at how organizations use personality measures to solve workplace challenges. According to the researchers, published in the Journal of Applied Psychology, extroversion is linked with a greater motivation to achieve positive goals - in this case as a desired reward through work. It's

also closely associated with experiencing positive emotions more regularly. A happy employee is not only more satisfied with life, but they also tend to work harder and are perceived as a better leader as a result, study suggests. Positive emotions also act as a buffer against stress or adverse experiences at work. Since extroverts like to be around other people, the third advantage has to do with socializing. By virtue of stronger communication skills, extroverts tend to adapt better to different social situations and are adept at persuasion, which is also a strong leadership skill.

The fourth advantage is in job performance. Wilmot pointed to past research that has found out of the big five personality traits, only conscientiousness and emotional stability generally predicted performance across different occupations. This is a combination of the three previous advantages. "If you're motivated to achieve a goal at work, if you're feeling positive and you're good at dealing with people, you're probably going to perform better on the job. These advantages appear to have a cumulative effect over the span of one's career,"





**Bharat movie review:****Salman Khan, Katrina Kaif deliver an emotional Eid entertainer**

**Bharat movie review: This Salman Khan, Katrina Kaif Eid release is epic in its scale - starting from Partition, touching on Pandit Nehru's era, it fast forwards us to 2010 with Amitabh Bachchan, Shah Rukh Khan and Manmohan Singh as reference points. Rating: 3/5.**

**Bharat**  
 Director - Ali Abbas Zafar  
 Cast - Salman Khan, Katrina Kaif, Jackie Shroff, Disha Patani, Sunil Grover  
 Rating - 3/5  
 Salman Khan has often explained the rejection of his earlier Eid release, Tubelight, as thus -- the film came out on a festival and people expected to be entertained; instead they left the theatre crying, and the film flopped. As much as a Salman Khan film can flop. That is why Bharat -- despite finding its origins in the heart-wrenching Partition of India, and being linked to it till its climax -- is primarily an entertainer. Some jokes land lightly and dance around you; others hit you in the small of your back with all the subtlety of an express train -- but they are aplenty. Bharat -- Salman and director Ali Abbas Zafar tell you from the

very first scene -- will make you cry. But it will also give you action, romance, drama and definitely, comedy. Ergo, an Eid blockbuster - ask Salman's fans. Bharat seems to be designed for them. In case you were expecting Salman and Ali to give you a reprisal of that brutally honest scene from Sultan in which the actor - shown overweight and past his prime - faced his reality and teared up, Bharat is not that film. Instead, as a bearded sexagenarian here, he beats up a group of much younger men without breaking a sweat. Bhai:1 - brutal honesty:0. Bharat begins with a train full of corpses entering a sleepy station somewhere in Pakistan. Caught in the middle of post-Partition riots, Salman's character - Bharat - gets separated from his father (Jackie Shroff) and sister. He spends the rest of the film, spread across 60 years, honouring his

promise to his father - to keep their family together. Earnest and sure-footed, these are some of the best scenes of the film, and you can't help but tear up. As Bharat's story runs parallel to that of independent India's, momentous events in history get referenced -- Nehru's death, Amitabh Bachchan's rise, India winning its first cricket World Cup, Sachin Tendulkar and Shah Rukh Khan emerging as superstars the nation looked up to. Even India's liberalisation and former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh get a postscript. To take care of his mother (Sonali Kulkarni) and two siblings, Bharat becomes a circus artiste, ably supported by his childhood friend Vilayati (Sunil Grover). Bharat's first girlfriend, Radha (Disha Patani), is there perhaps only for the Slow Motion song. Once she matches



steps with a de-aged Salman, her track is unceremoniously discarded. This is perhaps Bharat's single biggest failing. Other than Salman, Katrina and perhaps Sunil, everyone gets half-baked roles and are expected to sleep-walk through the film. Actors as talented as Tabu, Sonali and Kumud Mishra are on the periphery with nothing much to do. The film is at its most agile when its two leads are together. Salman as a coy Bharat and

Katrina Kaif as the plain spoken Kumud -- she of the foxy curls and Parveen Babi swag. The actor is feisty and charming and Salman is also at his best when he's with her -- whether as a young couple flirting on oil fields somewhere in the Middle East, or as an elderly couple looking back on a life well lived. In a refreshing moment, she even tells Bharat, "Tum thode self-obsessed nahi ho?" Another zinger from her is "You are a human being, don't try to play God." It is hard not to cheer for Kumud.

**X-Men Dark Phoenix movie review****The worst film in the X-Men saga, sloppy seconds to Avengers Endgame**

**X-Men Dark Phoenix movie review: A lousy conclusion that spits on the memory of the path-breaking franchise; dispassionately performed, ineptly scripted and gratingly scored. Rating: 1.5/5.**

**X-Men: Dark Phoenix**  
 Director - Simon Kinberg  
 Cast - Sophie Turner, James McAvoy, Michael Fassbender, Jennifer Lawrence, Nicholas Hoult, Jessica Chastain  
 Rating - 1.5/5  
 X-Men: Dark Phoenix is so inconsiderate of cinematic laws that under different circumstances, it could have passed off as a maverick work. Sadly, as it stands, it is a uniquely bizarre experience; dispassionately performed, ineptly scripted and an absolute disgrace to the legacy of the once formidable X-Men film franchise. For it to arrive during Pride Month is especially disappointing. Regardless of your feelings about Bryan Singer - a reprehensible man by most accounts - at least he used his

X-Men movies as a vessel to unpack his anxieties about sexuality, about alienation; and as an excuse to revisit his fascination with World War 2. But Dark Phoenix has little substance to it. Directed by long-time X-Men writer and in-house talent for 20th Century Fox, Simon Kinberg, it is the purported final film in the franchise, with the intention being to integrate these characters - played by different actors - into the Marvel Cinematic Universe next. As far as send-offs go, Dark Phoenix is particularly anaemic; not a patch on the recent Avengers: Endgame, or even Logan. Unlike its predecessors - the fabulous X-Men: First Class and X-Men: Days of Future Past, and even the forgettable X-Men: Apocalypse - Dark Phoenix has no sense of time or place, despite

being set in the '90s. It's set in a world that finally seems to have accepted mutants; and after decades of fighting for his kind, Professor Charles Xavier (James McAvoy) seems to be content. His school for Gifted Youngsters is packed, the American president has him on speed-dial, and after an early rescue mission set in space, his X-Men are given a heroes' welcome. Just a couple months ago they were declared persona non grata! But there are fractures emerging among the group. Mystique (Jennifer Lawrence) and Hank McCoy (Nicholas Hoult) - the only remaining members of the First Class - are looking to move on. The new recruits - Cyclops, Storm, Nightcrawler - are struggling to fit into the pre-established dynamic. Ironically



for a series of films that was once applauded for treating every character with respect, and for emphasizing their individuality, the X-Men franchise has sort of settled into a mould. In that early rescue mission, none of the young X-Men seem to have any agency; they take orders from Mystique instead. Jean Grey, for no apparent reason other than to kick-start the plot, decides to go rogue after taking a solar blast to the face. She no longer wishes to be a 'scared little girl answering to a

man in a chair' but, as she is told by a bafflingly wasted Jessica Chastain, 'the most powerful creature on the planet'. Sensing her uncontrollable power, Charles attempts to restrain her, which leads us to the scene that the trailer - in a blatant act of self-sabotage - spoiled so stupendously. For the sake of those of you who've made the wise decision to avoid that trailer, I won't spoil it here. But suffice to say that it is the single greatest example of the sort of train-wreck this movie is.



# Super 30

**Trailer of the Hrithik Roshan film gets a super response, garners over 20 million views in a day**



Ever since it was announced that Hrithik Roshan would be playing the role of a teacher - mathematician Anand Kumar onscreen, it created a lot of buzz and his fans have been waiting in earnest for the film. And on Tuesday, the trailer of the film, which will see Hrithik come back to the big screen after a gap of two years, has received resounding thumbs up from everyone including critics and his fans. The 2 minutes 37 seconds trailer has already amassed over 20 million views on YouTube and it promises that the film looks high on drama and heavy dialogues. Hrithik's industry

colleagues including filmmaker Karan Johar, actor Taapsee Pannu, and trade pundits have praised the trailer, calling the actor "outstanding". Talking about what made the trailer receive such overwhelming response, trade analyst Taran Adarsh says, "Hrithik is such a good looking guy and has a physique to die for. And for the film he has undergone a total transformation and has a non-glam look in order to fit the part. He has gone the extra mile to play the character and it looks like he has gone into the skin of the character."

Another aspect why the trailer

how the trailer connected with the audiences so effortlessly is because of the dialogues. "Definitely the trailer leaves you asking for more and you want to know what it going to happen in the film. The curiosity has piqued. The dialogues are so good especially Aaj Raja ka beta raja nahi banega, Raja vahi banega jo haqdaar hoga. I think it has an immediate connect," shares trade expert Atul Mohan. Critics aside, the youngsters in the country, too, have found the trailer to be relevant and meaningful, something that can bring about a change.

## Saif Ali Khan, Tabu's Jawaani Jaaneman to release on November 29



Here is some good news for all the movie buffs out there! Saif Ali Khan and Tabu starrer Jawaani Jaaneman has finally got a release date. The film will hit the screens on November 29 this year. Helmed by Nitin Kakkar, its shooting schedule will commence this month in London. Trade Analyst and film critic Taran Adarsh announced the news on his Twitter handle and wrote, "Release date finalized... Jawaani Jaaneman to release on 29 Nov 2019... Stars Saif Ali Khan, Tabu and Alaiya F [Pooja Bedi's daughter]... Directed by Nitin Kakkar... Produced by Black Knight Films, Northern Lights Films and Pooja

Entertainment... Starts June 2019 in #London. The film will mark the Bollywood debut of Pooja Bedi's daughter Alaiya F. 2019 is turning out to be a busy year for Saif. Apart from this film, the 48-year-old is currently busy preparing for his role as a 'naga sadhu' for his upcoming film Laal Kaptaan. He will also be seen essaying the character of cop Sartaj Singh in the second season of the much-awaited crime thriller web series Sacred Games 2. His character in the series is on a mission to uncover a terror attack in Mumbai in 25 days. Tabu was last seen in the rom-com De De Pyar De where she shared screen space with Ajay Devgn and Rakul Preet Singh.

## Priyanka Chopra gives bold twist to the saree on magazine cover

**Priyanka Chopra is the latest star to feature on the cover of InStyle magazine. Check out her pictures from the shoot.**

Actor Priyanka Chopra has featured on a magazine cover again after a long break. She is the face of US magazine InStyle's July issue and is seen in a sultry new look on the cover. The cover features Priyanka as she shows off her bare back in a sequined saree by designer Tarun Tahiliani. She posted a long caption, talking about her inspiration for the look. "Fashion is such an important part of global culture, often arising from centuries of tradition, and doesn't go out of style when the seasons change. The 'Saree' is one of the most iconic and recognized silhouettes from India. To me, its beauty lies in its versatility, not just in drape and fabric. It embodies elegance, femininity, and power, and I love how I feel when I'm wearing one. I'm so proud to be wearing a @Taruntahiliani saree on

@instylemagazine's July cover! Thank you @laurabrown99 for being such an amazing creative partner, and for sharing some of India's incredible fashion with the world. #IndianSummer #ProudDesi," she wrote with her post. Her husband Nick Jonas shared several heart-eyes and fire emojis in the comments and her co-star in an upcoming film, actor Mindy Kaling wrote, "Okay gorgeous". More pictures from the shoot show her in another saree, this one by designer Sabyasachi Mukherji. She thanked him for flying the saree to her for the shoot. Her Krish co-star, actor Hrithik Roshan called her 'beautiful' in the comments. A final picture shows her dressed in a white and red lehenga by Anita Dongre. Priyanka shared more behind-the-scenes clips

from the shoot on her Instagram stories. One showed the magazine's editor, Laura Brown, hiding underneath her lehenga and another set of videos showed Priyanka helping Laura wear a saree with just 'three safety pins'. Another video showed Priyanka dancing in her saree, showing her back to the camera. "Rock the saree," she wrote with the video. The magazine's Instagram page shared a video of an interview with Priyanka. She talked about venturing into Hollywood with roles that were 'ethnically ambiguous', how her fashion has evolved over the years, her fans in India and the US and more. She even talked about cultural differences that Nick and she had to deal with after their marriage.





## Bikini-clad star helps Liverpool ace beau Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain celebrate Champions League victory

Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain is riding high on Liverpool's victory over Spurs 2-0 on Saturday night.

And Little Mix's Perrie Edwards was clearly ensuring her beau was celebrating in style as they were seen living it up on a yacht just days later - during which the superstar couple were getting up close and personal.

The 25-year-old songstress was looking incredible in a sexy yellow bikini as she frolicked with the sportsman hot on the heels of his team Liverpool's victory against Tottenham Hotspur in the Champions League Final. While Alex was sadly benched for the entire game, he still seemed in celebration mode for his team.

Perrie slipped into a sexy yellow two-piece for the outing which not only displayed her taut stomach but also her perky assets and svelte hips. Her blonde locks billowed in the wind while she shielded her face. She was not afraid to display her frame as she frolicked on the yacht in the tiny two-piece - in which Alex was sure to assist in applying her sunscreen with very cheeky detail.

Alex was not to be outshone as he opted for a funky two-piece with a garish pattern while he was also showcasing his edgy style with his frosted hairdo and stylish Nineties sunglasses.

On Saturday, Perrie couldn't contain her excitement as she rushed onto the



pitch at the Wanda Metropolitano in Madrid to celebrate. The Black Magic songstress celebrated with the Liverpool midfielder - despite being benched for the game - by giving him a massive hug and posing with the trophy.

Prior to her departure, the singer spoke to Boogie and Arlene on Forth

1 radio and said: 'I'm going to be out in Madrid so if they win it's going to be party central and I am ready to party.'

'I just want Alex to be a part of it, that's all I care about.'

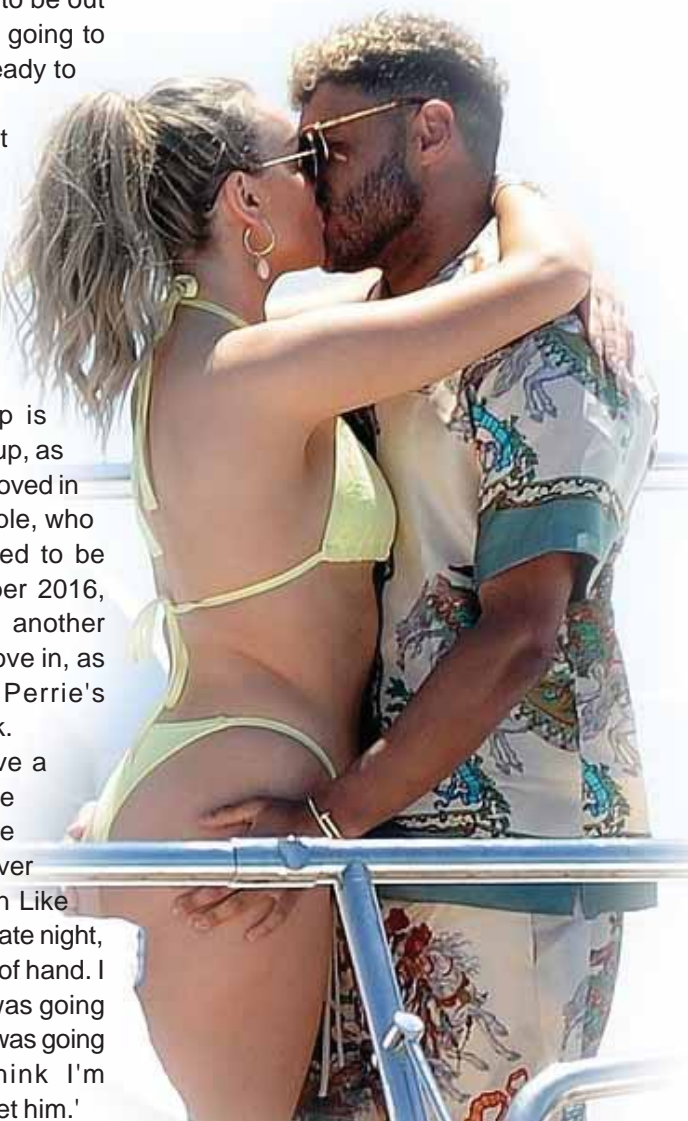
'I can't even tell you how nervous I am and I don't even

know if he is going to play or not but my anxiety is through the roof.'

Their relationship is definitely heating up, as the pair recently moved in together. The couple, who were first rumoured to be dating in November 2016, also recently had another family member move in, as they welcomed Perrie's childhood cat Jack.

And they also have a fiery competitive

streak, as Perrie joked she and Alex once almost split over a board game. The Woman Like Me singer shared: 'We had date night, it was competitive, it got out of hand. I swear to God I thought he was going to dump me - and I thought I was going to dump him. If you think I'm competitive, you should meet him.'



## Avengers Endgame vs Avatar

**Barring miracle, Marvel film will not beat James Cameron's epic as number one film of all time**



Despite a 'ridiculous' worldwide total of \$2.713 billion, Marvel's Avengers: Endgame will not dethrone James Cameron's Avatar as the highest grossing film of all time. Endgame has, however, eclipsed Avatar's US gross already, but trails in international markets.

The combined competition from Pokemon: Detective Pikachu, Aladdin, John Wick: Chapter 3 and Godzilla: King of the Monsters was too much for Endgame to handle, Forbes says. The report says that barring a re-release or miracle, Endgame will not top Avatar's \$2.78 billion total. Endgame is just \$75 million shy of Avatar's

as it's going to be.

Endgame's staggering performance has pushed the Marvel Cinematic Universe's combined total to \$21 billion worldwide, further increasing its gap as the biggest film franchise of all time.

Forbes says that it bodes well for Disney to be able to boast that it owns the biggest film of all time (Avatar is now a Disney property), the biggest import in China, and the biggest film in the US. It also helps Avatar 2's cause if it can be marketed as the sequel to the biggest film of all time.

total, after more than a month of release.

It has already emerged as the top foreign grosser in China and India, and is the number two grosser in the US, after Star Wars: The Force Awakens. All said and done, Forbes predicts Endgame will conclude its run with \$2.66 billion, around \$20 million less than Avatar. But considering the Oscars push Disney is already setting into motion, it won't be surprising if the studio stages a re-release, especially if the gap is as narrow

### Ad Astra trailer:

**Brad Pitt goes interstellar in Christopher Nolan-esque thriller**

20th Century Fox has revealed the first trailer for Ad Astra, director James Gray's deep-space adventure film starring Brad Pitt as an astronaut who goes in search of his long lost father, played by Tommy Lee Jones. The two-and-a-half minute trailer opens with Pitt's character, Roy McBride, saying that he owes everything to his dad, who went missing during a mission 16 years ago. The elder McBride was researching an 'a highly classified material that



threaten the existence of the solar system'. When signs of an impending apocalypse are seen, Roy is assigned to go up into space to investigate what his father was up to. Gray has compared Ad Astra to Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness, and has said that it will feature 'the most realistic depiction of space travel that's been put in a movie'.

The second half of the trailer shows large scale action and interstellar travel, as Roy ventures further into the outer reaches of our galaxy.



# Congress Law Of Inertia

*A Gandhi never quits? But Rahul Gandhi as party president has not proved to be the galvaniser that Sonia was*

(SAI Bureau) December, 1985. The Congress, a brute majority in the Lok Sabha on Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's watch, was celebrating its centenary year at a plenary in Bombay-yes, that was before the city changed its name. And in a speech shocked party stalwarts at



electorate and the "danger of losing our central place in the polity of our country". She talked about the "urgent need" to revive the Congress in states where the party had ceded ground. Sonia failed to revive the Congress as its president in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Odisha and West Bengal, but she

at the session, Rajiv declared that Congress workers were "handicapped, for on their backs ride the brokers of power and influence, who dispense patronage to convert a mass movement into a feudal oligarchy". For such "brokers of power", Rajiv added, "the masses do not count" since "their thinking, or lack of it, their self-aggrandisement...their linkages with the vested interests in society... are wholly incompatible with work among the people". Nearly 35 years since those prophetic words, the Congress lies in tatters. The BJP's Narendra Modi spared the "grand old party" 44 seats in 2014 and 52 in 2019. Yet, the Congress remains the "feudal oligarchy" that Rajiv had cautioned against. The abject failure at the hustings has been autopsied threadbare. Rahul

Gandhi, the commander who led his men into the ambush, told his colleagues in the Congress Working Committee (CWC), the party's top decision-maker, his wish to step down as party president. A suitable replacement must be found, preferably within a month. Efforts by Congress leaders, including mother Sonia Gandhi and sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra to persuade Rahul to withdraw his resignation have, so far, drawn a blank. For the Congress, the deepening crisis is familiar territory, but no one's willing to learn. Before 2014, when Sonia Gandhi took over as Congress president in 1998 after the brutal exit of Sitaram Kesri, she had spoken about dwindling numbers of her party in Parliament, the "serious erosion" of its support base among the

adroitly steered the party back to power for a decade starting 2004. But then, the steady gains her party made started drifting away soon after 2012 when she began abdicating responsibilities in the electoral arena to make way for her son. In 2014, when under Rahul's stewardship of the Lok Sabha campaign the Congress touched its electoral nadir, the mother-son duo was back to addressing party colleagues on issues Sonia had spoken of in 1998. Both offered to quit-Sonia as president and Rahul as vice president-but the resignations were rejected. Then on, Rahul led the Congress from one disaster to another, but his formidable surname ensured that in December 2017, when he agreed to officially take over as Congress president, there was no one to challenge his ascension.

# Himalayan High Jinx

*A rush to scale Mt Everest has led to chaos on top of the world and left several mountaineers dead*



(SAI Bureau) The mountains seduce. They thrill. They also kill. But for mountaineers, nothing beats the fatal attraction of the tallest of them all-Mount Everest. The crown of the Himalayas is the ultimate prize for climbers, the Holy Grail of mountaineering. Since Hillary and Tenzing Norgay's historic ascent to the summit in 1953, thousands of mountaineers have trekked through the snow-bound, icy heights in search of glory. Scores of climbers have also been killed. But the avalanche of mountaineers in Nepal and the Himalayas has raised a big question: how much can Mt Everest take? Last week, as hundreds of mountaineers set out for the summit to take advantage of a small, five-day window of clear weather, it led to an unprecedented "traffic jam" on the steep, treacherous incline at 26,000 feet. The consequences were tragic; at least 11 climbers-including three from India-have been killed in the chaotic race to the top this season. The number of deaths so far this year is nearly twice the number of mortalities in 2018. Over the years, Nepal has built a formidable reputation as a haven for mountaineers and mountaineering enthusiasts, with thousands of climbers visiting the country each year to brave the climb up

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## Mumbai BJP Youth Wing Chief Declared Wilful Defaulter By Bank Of Baroda



(SAI Bureau) BJP leader Mohit Kamboj has been declared a "wilful defaulter" by the state-run Bank of Baroda.

Kamboj, chief of Mumbai unit of Bhartiya Janata Yuva Morcha

who was in news earlier this year when he replaced his last name with 'Bhartiya', disputed the bank's action, saying he had paid his dues as a personal guarantor for a loan. In an advertisement Wednesday, the bank published Kamboj's photograph, using his new name, Mohit Bhartiya, and said it has declared him a wilful defaulter with regard to borrowings by a firm called Avyan Ornaments. It had initiated proceedings to declare Kamboj and one Jitendra Kapoor as wilful defaulters as per the RBI's norms, the bank said. As per the RBI's instructions, it was now informing the wider public about Kamboj and Kapoor being wilful defaulters, it added. The account in question is managed by the bank's zonal stressed-assets recovery branch in South Mumbai. In a letter circulating widely, the 35-year-old Kamboj claimed he was not a promoter or director of the company, but a personal guarantor.

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## White House pledges to barrel ahead with Mexico tariffs



(SAI Bureau) The White House pledged on Thursday to charge ahead on tariffs on Mexico, saying the U.S. position "has not changed" after officials met for a second day to address the steady flow of Central American migrants trying to enter the United States.

Talks between Mexican and U.S. officials at the White House wrapped up without resolution. Several key officials in the administration were unavailable for negotiations.

President Donald Trump was in France for the 75th anniversary of the D-Day invasion, and both Vice President Mike Pence and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo were on the road.

In an interview with Fox News in France taped shortly before the D-Day ceremony, Trump defended his strategy of using tariffs to get countries to the negotiating table. He also

slammed House Speaker Nancy Pelosi for her criticism of him in recent days.

"I actually don't think she's a talented person," Trump said. "I've tried to be nice to her because I would have liked to have gotten some deals done. She's incapable of doing deals. She's a nasty, vindictive, horrible person."

In Washington, the United States

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## Ilhan Omar violated campaign finance rules, investigation finds, as more questions about tax filings arise



(SAI Bureau) - Rep. Ilhan Omar, D-Minn., repeatedly violated state rules when she used campaign funds to pay for personal out-of-state travel as well as help on her tax returns and must reimburse her former campaign committee nearly \$3,500, Minnesota campaign finance officials ruled Thursday. The Minnesota Campaign

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