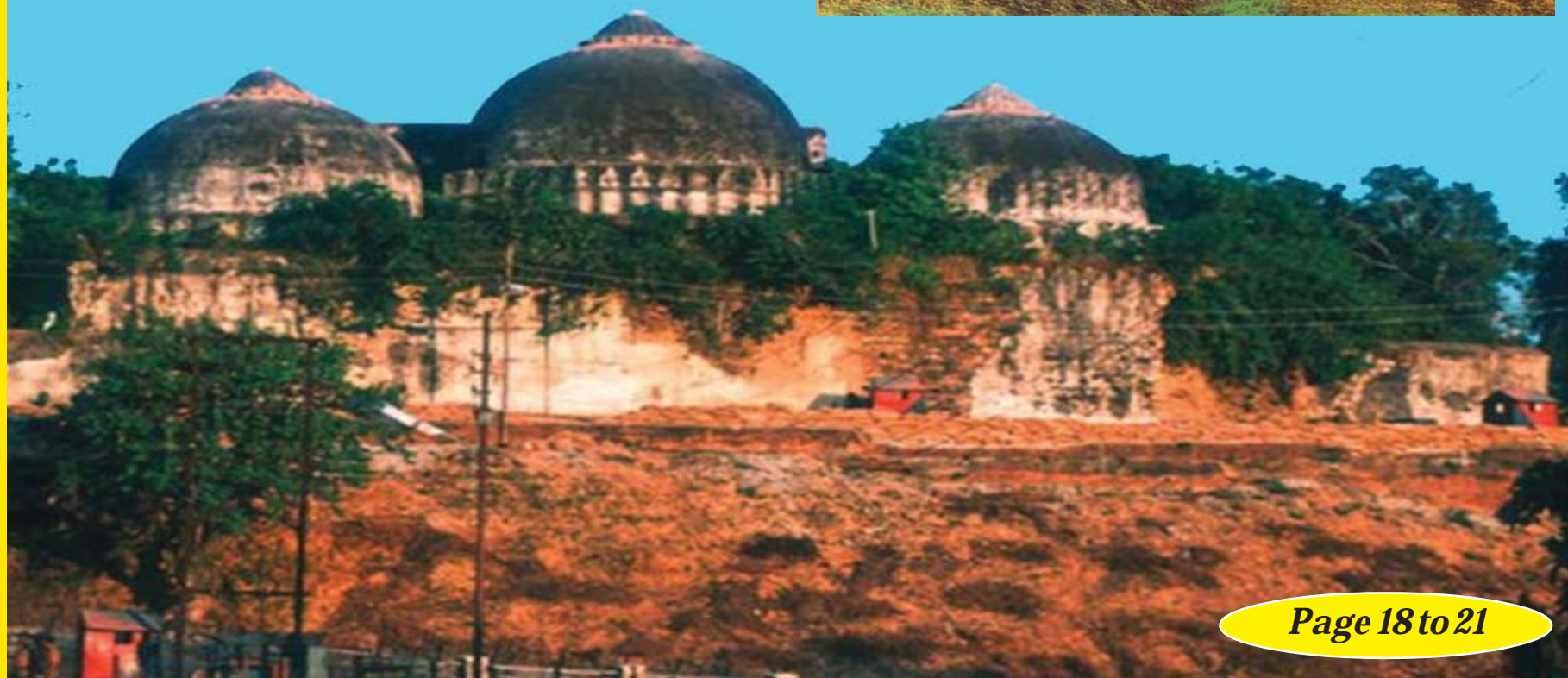




Ayodhya verdict

Ram Mandir on site, mosque off site

The judgment of the Supreme Court's five-judge Constitution bench was unanimous. The Centre has been asked to set up a trust for temple construction.



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Clavin, Declares Victory

Republican challenger Donald Clavin; currently the town's receiver of taxes, has declared victory over Democratic incumbent Laura Gillen, appearing to return the country's largest township — with a population bigger than Boston and Newark — back to GOP control

(By our staff reporter) Mineola, N.Y. — Donald Clavin declared victory over Laura Gillen in the race for Town of Hempstead supervisor Tuesday night. Gillen was seeking a second term.

As of midnight Tuesday, with roughly 1,500 votes separating the two candidates, Gillen had not yet conceded. It was unclear if she would. There remained at least a couple of thousand absentee ballots to be counted.

Clavin, who had been the receiver of taxes in the town since 2001, thanked his supporters at Mirelle's Continental & Catering in Westbury, which served as Republican headquarters.

"Ladies and gentlemen, we have made commitments, we have made promises, and we are going to deliver that to

the taxpayers by putting them first," Clavin said. "I intend to keep my promises. I intend to keep every promise I made on my campaign trail."

With 100 percent of voting precincts reporting, Nassau County District Attorney Madeline Singas secured victory over her challenger, Francis

McQuade. Singas had collected nearly 145,054 votes to McQuade's 97,122.

"This is really such a humbling experience for me," she said. "It's been my absolute honor to be your district attorney these past four years ... We run the office with one guiding principle: that we protect

the people of Nassau County. If you hurt the people of Nassau County, then we will hold you accountable." McQuade said, "I had a good time running in this race and I thank the chairman for asking me to run. I'm sorry that I was unable to deliver a victory, but I did my very best." County Legislator



Howard Kopel, a Republican from Lawrence, said, "I won a sixth term to represent the 7th Legislative District. It's great that the people of my district seem to be comfortable with my policies," he said. "A couple of things I want to work on in my next term is the county's reassessment plan and work on a solution to the Woodmere Club."

Three Port Everglades Employees and Business Owner Sentenced to Prison for Fraud Scheme

(By our staff reporter) Florida: U.S. Attorney Ariana Fajardo Orshan for the Southern District of Florida and Special Agent in Charge George L. Piro of the FBI's Miami Field Office announced that Port Everglades employees, William Woessner, 68, of Margate, Florida, David Moore, 43, of Pompano Beach, Florida, and Rajindra Lallharry, 60, of Coral Springs, Florida, and business owner Bryan Zascavage, 57, of Pompano, Florida, were sentenced to prison today for their involvement in a fraud scheme. The

defendants had each previously pled guilty to participating in a conspiracy to commit fraud concerning programs receiving federal funds.

According to the court record, including the factual statements in support of the defendants' guilty pleas, Woessner, Moore, and Lallharry were issued purchase cards or P-cards, which were to be used to buy business related goods and services for Port Everglades. Instead, they utilized the P-cards to engage in schemes to illegally

profit from the use of the cards. Zascavage operated a business, Z & Z, Inc., that provided goods and services to the Port. Woessner and Zascavage engaged in a scheme wherein Woessner would direct Zascavage to purchase certain goods. Woessner would pay for the goods using his Port Everglades P-card, but the goods were not sent to Port Everglades. Instead, Woessner utilized the goods at his plumbing company. In addition, Moore and Zascavage engaged in a scheme wherein Zascavage would receive payments for goods

ordered by Moore utilizing his Port Everglades P-card. None of the goods would be sent to the Port. Instead, Zascavage and Moore would split the illegally obtained funds. Further, John McGahee and Zascavage engaged in a scheme wherein Zascavage would receive payments for services ordered by McGahee utilizing his Port Everglades P-card. The services ordered by McGahee would not be performed by Zascavage or his company. Zascavage and McGahee would split the illegally obtained funds.

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19 alleged child sex predators arrested in Somerset County undercover sting investigation

(By our staff reporter) New Jersey: NJ Attorney General Gurbir Grewal announced the arrest of 19 child predators in Somerset County as a result of a joint sting operation. Nineteen alleged child predators, including several from Somerset and Middlesex counties and as far away as Pennsylvania and Indiana, have been arrested in "Operation Open Door," an undercover sting investigation targeting adults using social media to lure underage girls and boys for sexual activity.

Like a scene from television's "To Catch a Predator," the suspects were arrested after highly trained undercover investigators, posing as children, 12 to 14 years old, on the internet, engaged in conversations about sex and made arrangements to meet for sex. Most of the suspects were arrested when they arrived at one of two residences in the county, where they expected to find their victims home alone.

"By arresting 59 alleged child predators in just over a year through three undercover

operations across New Jersey, including Operation Open Door, we have sent a powerful message to predators that the boy or girl they target on social media may turn out to be the officer who puts them in handcuffs," Attorney General Gurbir Grewal said Thursday during a news conference at the Somerset County Prosecutor's Office.

"Through these collaborative efforts, we also are delivering a message to parents that we must all do our part to protect children by talking to them and warning them that predators use popular chat apps and gaming platforms to lure children into danger. We have no higher priority than protecting our children," he added.

The arrests were made over a six-day period from Oct. 23 to Oct. 28, said Somerset County Prosecutor Michael Robertson, adding that the arrests resulted from a "truly collaborative" effort by local, county, state and federal authorities.

"Our children and their

online safety is the utmost concern to the Somerset County Prosecutor's Office. Social media apps allow predators into our homes and as law enforcement, we must do what we can to make it a safer environment," Robertson said. "We hope that this collaborative operation will be eye-opening for parents. Although, 19 online child predators have been arrested, parents must learn the apps that their children are using and the inherent dangers within."

Grewal had a stern warning for online predators.

"If you try to target young people, we will find you and arrest you," he said, adding the suspects will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

Robertson said authorities will use "every last resource" to track down those who prey on children. Like the television program, Robertson explained, "Operation Open Door" used undercover officers, who are specially trained members of the New Jersey Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task

Force, to pose as children on social media apps. The 19 suspects initiated contact based on profiles posted by the undercover officers and once chatting began, the undercover officers clearly identified themselves as underage girls or boys

Even though they knew were talking to someone who identified themselves as 12 to 14 years old, the suspects engaged the "children" in conversations about sex and made arrangements to meet them for sex.

Robertson would not say where the residences used for the arrests were located.

One suspect traveled to one of the undercover residences from Pennsylvania. Two of the suspects lived out-of-state but were in New Jersey for work when they decided to meet a "child" for sex. Dozens of law enforcement officers from around the state, forensic examiners, and attorneys from the Somerset County Prosecutor's Office were waiting at the undercover residences waiting for the suspects to arrive, Robertson



said.

The electronic devices seized from the suspects are undergoing forensic examinations to determine if the devices contain evidence of any prior encounters with underage victims.

The arrests of Brayan Alvarado, 25 of Middlesex. Alvarado is a volunteer fireman in Franklin and driver for an electric company. Charges are second-degree luring and third-degree attempted endangering the welfare of a child.

Jihaad Brown, 23 of Franklin Park. Brown is retail salesman. Charges are

second-degree luring and third-degree attempted endangering the welfare of a child.

Michael Brown, 28 of Edison. Brown is a mail tester. Charges are second-degree luring, second-degree attempted sexual assault and third-degree attempted endangering the welfare of a child.

Julio Cubia-Aviles, 27 of West Orange. Cubia-Aviles is a carpenter. Charges are second-degree luring, second-degree attempted sexual assault and third-degree attempted endangering the welfare of a child.

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Why there cannot be any national security without individual privacy

NSO-Pegasus case: Set up an independent inquiry panel and conduct its proceedings transparently



The opening three words in the Preamble of India's Constitution start with these words, "We the People...". But given last week's revelations on the Israeli company, NSO, and its Pegasus spyware scandal in India, many citizens are today wondering whether the line in the Constitution should read as, "We the people are under watch".

Last week, WhatsApp sued the NSO Group, a surveillance firm, for allegedly hacking the messaging platform to spy on about 1,400 users. The targeted users included activists, journalists, and senior government officials, among others. WhatsApp alleged that the NSO Group exploited a vulnerability in its video-calling feature to conduct

country but also a worrying development for India's national security apparatus for three reasons.

The first is in the nature of modern communications, which are done with devices that gather incredible amounts of personal data, and have sophisticated sensors. The convenience that these devices provide to us has added tremendous value to our lives and we have invited them in to our most intimate spaces of work, family, and play. Hence, the security of a device becomes one of the fundamental bedrocks of maintaining user trust as society becomes more and more digitised. The Pegasus spyware completely erodes such comfort and has left many citizens of the country wondering about practical ways to secure their devices. They are asking whether their microphones and cameras were switched on without their knowledge. And whether their most private and

intimate moments were captured. Here the vague-but-repeated denials by the Government of India on the unauthorised use of spyware undermine these critical values. It makes the users of these devices fearful, self-censor their usage, and breeds an instinct of Luddism.

The second is by virtue of the interconnection of networks where a single compromised device can put the integrity of the entire network at risk. Hence, each contact and person not only in the contact address book of a person who has been infected with spyware, but even not present there but only met in person can be put under surveillance.

This is a plain fact as the Pegasus software, which could be remotely activated, even provides for a geofencing feature where the cellphone would automatically start a secret recording when the target is within the periphery of a specific geographical location.

This is extremely alarming given that activists, journalists and lawyers routinely correspond and have relationships and sensitive conversations with government officials.

The final reason has to do with the specific nature of the foreign vendor, the NSO Group. As per the NSO Group's website, "NSO products are used exclusively by government intelligence and law enforcement agencies to fight crime and terror." Further, it is regulated under an Israeli law that requires an export permit granted by the Israeli Defence Export Control Agency (DECA) that permits such sale only to foreign governments.

This is also confirmed by the contract between NSO and the government of Ghana that states that the DECA also oversees and approves each such agreement. The logical sequitur is that such sale of spyware is only permitted to a government agency approved by the Israeli government. Hence, if the Government of India

did not procure such spyware, then who did to spy on Indian citizens?

To date, there have been three denials, by the central government (the ministry of electronics and information technology, the ministry of home affairs, and CERT-IN, a technical body that probes cyber threats). Interestingly these are not formal press statements put out through the Press Information Bureau.

Such an approach belies appreciating the injury and threats to individuals and the country. There is an urgent need to take up this issue seriously by constituting an independent high-level inquiry with credible members and experts that can restore confidence and conduct its proceedings transparently.

We must all recognise that national security starts with securing the smartphones of every single Indian by embracing technologies such as encryption rather than deploying spyware. This is a core part of our fundamental right to privacy.

The rally puts Imran Khan's legitimacy at risk

It reminds the military that Rehman, the rally's leader, is still a force to reckon with



Mass protests designed to paralyse the seat of government and undermine the ruling prime minister are par for the course in Pakistan. Maulana Fazlur Rehman, leader of one of the country's main religious parties

party, the Pakistan Tehreek Insaaf, was otherwise flaccid opposition. Three, Rehman seems to have put paid to the Pakistani military's attempts to marginalise him politically. Almost all of these accomplishments have been at the expense of Mr Khan's legitimacy and effectiveness.

The prime minister is not in any danger of being overthrown but his survival is now almost completely dependent on the whim of the Pakistani military. Mr Khan's

country was seeking international backing on Kashmir. His announcement of a new scholarship programme at a time when Rehman was taking over the centre of Islamabad projected a sense of weakness rather than confidence.

For Pakistan as a whole, the rally only reveals the continuing problem of a polity in which the military seeks to monopolise all authority but legitimacy lies with democratic politicians. The politicians, with limited ability to

generate public goods or effect policies on behalf of their supporters, use rallies and protests to force the state structure to take cognisance of them. Rehman has reminded the military, of whom he has become increasingly critical, that he is still a force to reckon with. Mr Khan has been reminded that he can easily be rendered impotent – as he showed by using mobs to paralyse the government of his predecessor, Nawaz Sharif, for 126 days.

The truth about ISIS's threat

In the most recent Democratic debate, an animated Joe Biden exclaimed that ISIS "is going to come here" as a result of Trump's decision to abandon the Syrian Kurds and withdraw nearly all US troops from Syria.

After Trump's orders to withdraw, however, another wave of American troops entered Syria, leaving as many as 900 forces in the country. Still, the break in our alliance with the Kurds and the weakening in US counter-terror policy will undoubtedly allow gains for ISIS and other jihadi groups.

Is Biden right? Has Trump paved the way for ISIS to launch attacks on American soil? While the possibility can never be ruled out, the immediate threat ISIS poses to the US homeland is overstated. Far more concerning is the threat of homegrown terrorists, including right-wing extremists. The administration's willingness to alienate Muslims, and its failure to take the lead on sensible gun control legislation and minimize polarization only exacerbates these threats.

Given the chaos of the past several weeks, it's difficult to know precisely what the US policy is in Syria when it comes to fighting ISIS or partnering with the Kurds.

While Trump thanked the Kurds for their help when he announced the death of ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, he failed to acknowledge the crucial role they played in helping the US. Not only have the Syrian Defense Forces provided foot soldiers in the battle against ISIS, the SDF commander-in-chief told NBC News they had an informant who offered critically important intelligence about the ISIS leader's whereabouts and details on his compound, which was then passed on to the US special forces. This alliance has now been eroded, and restoring trust will not be easy.

While it's unlikely that ISIS will restore its physical territory, which was roughly the size of Britain at its peak, there remain as many as 18,000 ISIS fighters in Syria and Iraq. Killing Baghdadi will temporarily disrupt the organization, but ISIS has already morphed into an insurgency that has carried out hundreds of attacks in Iraq and Syria. Indeed since most ISIS fighters are native to Syria and Iraq, they will have a much easier time adapting to the region's shifts in power. And violence perpetrated by Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in the ongoing Syrian Civil War will likely ensure a steady flow of recruits to ISIS, which thrives on sectarian grievances. Trump may be counting on Russia, Turkey and Iran to counter ISIS but they have different agendas than the US and will not be able to achieve anywhere near the operational efficiency of strikes against the jihadis made possible by the now-sundered US-Kurdish alliance.

Europe's proximity to the region and the presence of an estimated 2,000 foreign fighters among ISIS ranks imprisoned by the Kurds means Europe is much more vulnerable to attacks, although they are more likely to be carried out by homegrown jihadis inspired and radicalized by ISIS rather than soldiers on the ground.

In the wake of the September 11 attacks, US intelligence agencies had joined forces with law enforcement to successfully counter foreign terrorist groups. But the threat has evolved, and homegrown extremists are radicalized via ISIS and jihadi propaganda online. It's stunning to consider that all the lethal terror attacks since 9/11 resulting in the deaths of US citizens at home were carried out by permanent legal residents or US citizens.

As Peter Bergen, an expert on homegrown terror makes clear, the real threat emanates from individuals or pairs who did not have formal ties to or training from terrorist groups, but were simply inspired by jihadi propaganda online.

Despite the President's divisive rhetoric and our highly polarized political climate, an effective counterterrorist strategy should include active efforts to partner with Muslim communities, implement grassroots educational initiatives and fight against the discrimination and stereotyping Muslims so often face. Trump, who appeared to reference his Muslim ban in his remarks announcing Baghdadi's death, isn't helping in this effort.

The jihadi threat -- while still dangerous -- has been overtaken by the scourge of right-wing extremist terror. The reasons behind these attacks are driven by a complex mix of access to automatic weapons, spread of hate propaganda on social media, individual pathology, political polarization, partisanship and anger and grievance, which the current administration has done too little to combat. Indeed this is by far the more enduring challenge to the Republic than the jihadist one because it cuts to the core of who we are as a people and what kind of society we wish to build. The external enemy is easier to fear, identify and combat. But the far more dangerous one is right here at home.

Former US ambassador to Mexico Wayne: Ambush murders show closer US-Mexico cooperation needed to fight crime

The horrific murders of three American women and six children in Sonora, Mexico on Monday should prompt closer and more effective United States-Mexico cooperation against the cross-border organized crime that is seriously endangering citizens of both countries. As the former U.S. ambassador to Mexico (2011 to 2015), it is clear to me that these transnational criminal groups are undermining the sovereignty of both nations daily.

The tragic killing of a family with dual U.S.-Mexican citizenship has drawn new attention to the violence in Mexico. Homicides there appear headed for a new record in 2019. Violent encounters with organized crime have generated serious public debate in Mexico about how best to stop them.

One key message from this week's tragedy: Both the U.S. and Mexico need to work together to forge an agreed strategy to eradicate these criminal groups and dismantle the networks that power these cross-border illicit enterprises. It is important to recognize that U.S. drug demand indirectly fuels much of the violence by providing billions of dollars in profits that power cartels in Mexico, including through arms smuggled from the U.S. to Mexico. In the U.S., tens of thousands die yearly from drug overdoses, with many of the illegal narcotics arriving from Mexico.

Between Mexico and the United States, it is very hard to draw a clear line between domestic and international issues on key topics like illicit drugs and cross-border crime. They are "inter-mestic," with both internal and external causes and effects simultaneously. This is why bilateral cooperation is essential to increase the chances of making progress against what is a long-standing set of challenges for both countries. President Nixon declared a "war on drugs" in 1971, and administrations in both countries have struggled ever since to make progress. Progress has been made, and lessons have been learned, but not nearly enough has been achieved. The deadly flows of fentanyl, heroin and meth continue northward across the border with deleterious effects on both sides of the border. The best way forward is through a mature, cooperative partnership between Mexico and the U.S. to weaken, disrupt and eventually destroy the supply and demand chains that power this deadly trade.

Those criminal chains provide an estimated \$19 billion to \$29 billion in U.S. profits to the drug smugglers each year, with which they buy U.S. arms, spread corruption and generate violence in Mexico, in addition to the damage they do to families and communities in the U.S. with illegal drugs.

(Contd on page 24)



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Editor in Chief & Publisher :
Sharanjit Singh Thind
Editor (Political Affairs-India) :
Aruna Singh

Chief Photographer : Vijay Shah

Special Correspondent :

Photographers: Hamad

Gagandeep Singh (INDIA)

Editorial Intern: Roubin Singh Thind

Web Coordinator : Harpreet Singh

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Phone: 917 612 3158 TelFax : 516 342 1076

editor@thesouthasianinsider.com, thesouthasianinsider@gmail.com
www.thesouthasianinsider.com

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Here's what is really causing the global economic slowdown



Ever since last year, nothing has grabbed economists' attention as much as the whipsawing evolution of the US-China trade war. Just last week, the IMF downgraded its global growth forecast for 2020, citing trade and geopolitical tensions. But economic forecasters are misunderstanding the primary cause of the current global slowdown, which means that they'll also miss what's coming next. In hindsight, it's clear that actual global industrial production growth started slowing at the end of 2017. In other words, the year-over-year pace of increase in the world's total industrial output began a sustained decline in late 2017. That's the definition of a global industrial slowdown.

Most analysts focus on the global purchasing managers' index (PMI) data for their read on global growth because it's published each month about a month and a half before the actual production data. While the global PMI generally has a positive correlation with global industrial production growth, it doesn't measure actual industrial production, as it's based on a survey of purchasing executives about conditions facing their companies. It's really a proxy for industrial production growth, which measures real output for all companies within the manufacturing, mining and utilities industries. In this case, while the global manufacturing PMI also started easing at the end of 2017, its decline didn't become evident until a few months into 2018, when

the sustained nature of the downturn became increasingly difficult to dismiss as meaningless "noise." Coincidentally, that's just about when President Trump began his trade war, slapping tariffs on washing machines and steel and aluminum imports. Because the trade war was front and center, economists thought it was to blame for the drop in PMI and global industrial growth.

Obviously, the trade war has hurt global growth. But it's important to understand that it didn't cause the global slowdown. We know this because growth in the Economic Cycle Research Institute's leading indexes of global manufacturing — designed to foretell directional changes in

both the global industrial production growth cycle and the global manufacturing PMI — started heading lower in mid-2017, well before the trade war started. So the cyclical downturn in global industrial growth was already taking shape in 2017. The trade war — starting up in 2018 — just piled onto that downturn. Most believe that economic growth just hums along until some identifiable cause makes it veer away from its "normal" course. In contrast, our research reveals an underlying economic cycle that makes economic growth swing from strength to weakness and back again. When that happens, people tend to credit or blame salient events, furnishing easily

understood narratives to explain cyclical swings caused primarily by the deep drivers of economic cycles. But, in reality, it was these underlying drivers of economic cycles — including higher interest rates and oil prices — that induced global industrial growth to start ebbing in late 2017 before there was any trade war.

The consensus view usually reflects what's already happened, meaning that it's also reliably behind the curve. The IMF's global GDP growth forecasts have always been downgraded whenever actual global GDP growth has downshifted from the previous year. The same pattern holds when growth sees a cyclical upturn. A case in point is 2016-2017, when

growth began turning up before President Trump was elected.

Such moves are commonly credited to or blamed on prominent people and events.

Make no mistake, the US-China trade war, in particular, is already having a profound impact on the world economy, spurring a long-term restructuring of supply chains, for example. But underlying cyclical forces can turn up regardless of what presidents Trump and Xi Jinping of China decide, and when.

Looking ahead, that means at some point global growth can revive even without the trade war ending. Even so, the recovery will be credited, as always, to the prominent events of the time.

China's Tibet: A story of progress

Tibet has been part of China since ancient times. It enjoys development and religious freedom

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the 60th anniversary of democratic reform in Tibet. Over the past 60 years, under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, great changes have taken place in Tibet. Politically, the backward feudal serfdom was abolished and a socialist system with people as masters and regional ethnic autonomy was established. Economically, Tibet has enjoyed double-digit growth for 26 consecutive years. Its GDP in 2018 was 147.763 billion RMB Yuan, up by 9.1% year-on-year, a growth rate

leading the country. Culturally, Tibetan language has become the first ethnic minority language in China to meet international standards. Books and cultural programmes in the Tibetan language are rich and colourful. In education, from a place with less than 2% of children school enrolment rate and 95% of youth illiteracy rate 70 years ago, it has progressed to boast a 9.55-year per capita schooling in 2018. In the religious field, it has over 1,700 religious sites and over 46,000 resident monks and nuns. Each year, millions of people come to Lhasa to worship the Buddha.

(Contd on page 23)



How to reform India's judicial system

Improve district courts, identify pending cases and encourage case and court management

The time has come," the walrus said, "to talk of many things". One of them is the necessity of reforms in India's justice delivery system. Over the years, the Law Commission of India's reports have recommended several reforms. In addition to these, there were reports by Justice GC Rankin (1925), Justice SR Das (1949), and Justice VS Malimath (2003). Civil society organisations have also released reports on the different facets of the justice delivery system. Despite the plethora of such documents, the inefficient justice delivery system has only become more inefficient.

To redress the situation, we need to have a bottom-up approach. The principal problem is with the district courts where lakhs of litigants come into contact with the justice delivery system. Unless the problems of these courts are addressed, other temporary changes and ad hoc reforms at the Supreme Court and high courts will have no bearing on the system, and the average litigant will continue to suffer "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune."

It is time to stop discussing hackneyed issues such as filling up vacancies (how many judges do we really need?), tackling the huge number of pending cases (how do you define pendency?), and establishing special courts or fast-track courts (now special fast-track courts and fast-track special courts) and get on with reforms. Lord Devlin is believed to have said: "If our business methods were as antiquated as our legal system, we would have become a bankrupt nation long

back". How true, in our context. Here are some suggestions to improve the legal system: First, improve the district courts. A high-level team must visit each district court to ascertain what is lacking in terms of infrastructure and facilities. It would surprise many to know that many court halls and rooms for the registry have not been whitewashed for several years. Broken windows, chairs, shelves and almirahs can be found across most.

Second, identify the number of pending cases and the status of each case. My experience has been that judges know the number of pending cases, but not their status. During a discussion organised by the National Judicial Academy, Bhopal, it became clear that a large number of criminal cases are

being shown as pending because of inadequate or insufficient responses from the prosecution. With some assistance, such cases can literally be disposed of in a matter of minutes.

Discussions must also be held with district court judges to appreciate the bottlenecks they encounter in their day-to-day functioning and to understand their needs with a view to ease their high-pressure assignment. Some people tend to postpone decisions, but judges cannot afford to do so and must decide several requests and cases every day.

Third, case and court management must be encouraged and embedded in the justice delivery system. (Case management is a comprehensive system of management of time

and events in a law suit as it proceeds through the justice system, from initiation to resolution).

The Singapore judiciary has successfully implemented case management, and today its achievements are recognised across the world. Our policymakers seem to have an impression that because of the sheer volume of pending cases, it is not possible to devote time to case management. But this is not true. During a lecture delivered at the Delhi Judicial Academy about 15 years ago, a federal judge from the United States who practised case management informed the judges that he started with about 3,000 cases in his jurisdiction and in three years reduced this number to about 300. Perhaps none of the judges in the district courts

(other than magistrates) have such a large number of cases on their docket. It is possible, therefore, through effective case management, to reduce the workload to manageable limits. These are some illustrative suggestions, but there is enough data and research that can be used to change the legal system. However, what is absent is a strong will to change. It is worth recalling from the preface to the Justice Malimath Committee's report: "Everything has been said already, but as no one listens, we must always begin again." (Andre Gide). A beginning can be made (again) today, and with the "nudges" suggested by several organisations in the India Justice Report, which was released on November 7 in New Delhi.

Madan Lokur is retired judge, Supreme Court of India.

Ayodhya: The SC verdict could bring an end to a long and bitter dispute

By amicably executing the SC's order, the country will only be displaying its famed tolerance.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath have done the right thing by appealing to all communities to maintain peace as the historical verdict on Ayodhya title suit draws closer. Not only has the PM asked his ministers to refrain from making any statements on the verdict, the BJP has issued a code of conduct for its office bearers. Now that the PM, often criticised for his silence when those in his party have made inflammatory statements, has made his stand clear, the Opposition would do well to follow suit and restrain the



hotheads within its ranks. It is everyone's duty, whether in power or out of it, to maintain the peace. In this context, the

manner in which Muslim clerics have asked their community to accept the verdict, whichever way it goes, is welcome. The PM's

appeal assumes all the more significance as the governments in both Uttar Pradesh as well as the Centre are led by the BJP, which has been at the forefront of the Ram temple movement. Indeed, for years now, the BJP's poll manifestos have mentioned the construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya.

The appeals for restraint have obviously been prompted, keeping in mind the violence of the early 1990s when frenzied crowds would gather at Ayodha on all landmark dates related to the issue.

(Contd on page 24)

There could be trouble ahead for Saudi Arabia's economy



The stars of the business world returned last week to Saudi Arabia's so-called Davos in the Desert, a conference formally known as the Future Investment Initiative (FII). Last year, several CEOs dropped out, afraid of associating publicly with a regime that has been accused of — and has consistently denied — being responsible for the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. And while it's true that their return this year indicates the extent of

Saudi Arabia's rapid rehabilitation, the kingdom will need more than a glitzy attendee list of business elites to mend its economic troubles.

The CEOs of BlackRock, Blackstone, SoftBank, Standard Chartered, Credit Suisse and others have all made a return this year after dropping out last year. The FII's impressive guest list is indeed a testament to the high level of interest in Saudi Arabia ever since Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman announced a

sweeping economic reform program in 2016, dubbed Vision 2030. Promising to wean the kingdom off oil, the program aimed to open the Saudi market in new ways, including plans to privatize state-owned entities and to sell up to 5% of oil company Saudi Aramco in a public offering. But the plan's progress has been uneven so far. Saudi Aramco did finally announce Sunday plans for an IPO, but it was originally slated for 2018 and had been paused or delayed multiple times. Now, Aramco is expected to list just 1% to 2% of the company on the Saudi stock exchange, as doubts linger over Mohammed bin Salman's desired valuation of \$2 trillion for the company. A smaller listing would still reap a windfall for Saudi Arabia, but far

short of the \$100 billion figure Aramco officials touted in 2016.

No matter how many times you go to Bangkok, there's always something new to see and do. Here's how to find it.

On top of all this, the International Monetary Fund last month sharply cut Saudi Arabia's 2019 growth forecast to 0.2% from 1.9%, citing a decline in the kingdom's oil GDP resulting from the OPEC+ production cuts.

Saudi Arabia has successfully pushed through some business reforms, such as loosening foreign ownership limits on its stock market and launching its inaugural tourist visa to tap into the potential of its tourism and leisure sectors. Indeed, its improvements led Saudi Arabia to climb 30 spots in

the World Bank's Doing Business Index this year.

But the kingdom has been accused of committing glaring human rights abuses, which have marred its image and heightened reputational risks for investors. These include its alleged role in Khashoggi's death, the detention and alleged torture of women's rights activists and allegations of arbitrary arrests of hundreds of businessmen and royals in a supposed anti-corruption purge. The kingdom has denied all of the allegations.

What Saudi Arabia really needs to spur its lagging economy ahead is increased inward investment. Foreign direct investment to Saudi Arabia cratered after the crown prince's so-called anti-corruption roundup in 2017,

falling to \$1.4 billion in 2017 from \$7.5 billion in 2016. Investment picked up slightly to \$3.2 billion in 2018, and Saudi Arabia has undertaken several noteworthy reforms lately, including opening up four new industries to 100% foreign investment and launching some new projects in the non-oil sector.

The kingdom's investment authority said that billions in new deals were signed at the FII, according to the Saudi Press Agency. But how many of these deals will actually come to fruition remains unclear. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development's recent World Investment Report, lower oil prices and political factors have dampened investors'

(Contd on page 24)

'To clean rivers, Indian must learn to reduce waste'

The University of Chicago's Water-to-Cloud (W2S) system provides for high-resolution spatial and temporal monitoring of rivers to gain insights that may be missed with the traditional approach.

India is one of the most vulnerable countries in terms of climate change, water, air and environmental pollution. The Tata Centre for Development (TCD) is harnessing the rigour of the University of Chicago's Economics department to address some of India's most pressing policy and development issues, combining multi-disciplinary research with strategic outreach and partnership to translate evidence into impact.

In an interview to Hindustan Times, Supratik Guha, Professor at Pritzker School of Molecular Engineering at University of Chicago, speaks to Hindustan Times on river pollution, their ongoing Water-to-Cloud (W2C) project, and what needs to be done to clean up our rivers.

KD: What is the state of the Ganga and Yamuna?

SG: Rivers are complex, dynamic systems. Hence, they need regular monitoring at various sites to get a sense of the health of the river system. The Water-to-Cloud team (W2C) has studied the

Ganga in Varanasi and Kolkata, and the Yamuna in New Delhi for the last two years. Our research findings tell us the following:

First, with over 20 drains discharging untreated wastewater in Yamuna in New Delhi and a number of barrages, including the ones at Wazirabad, ITO and Okhla, restricting water flow, pollution levels in the Yamuna are high throughout the year. The Najafgarh drain is a major contributor of untreated wastewater in New Delhi. Dissolved oxygen levels are below 5 mg/l at most times of the year, creating an unhealthy environment for fish and other species to thrive. Data from April 2019 shows a slight improvement compared to data from April 2018, possibly due to increased flow of water from the Wazirabad barrage noticed this year.

Assi nala (a river turned into a drain now) in Varanasi carries a major share of the city's wastewater from domestic and industrial sources. A pollution hotspot is observed around this area.

Due to the high flow in the Ganga, the dilution ensures that most parameters comply with Central Pollution Control Board limits for bathing water standards round the year. Rivers are self-purifying entities provided that their flow is not disturbed too much. Data shows that the Ganga in Varanasi mostly has excellent DO levels (usually above 5mg/l) despite the higher anthropogenic activities around ghats in Varanasi. This can be attributed to a better river flow in that stretch of the Ganga. This is also true for improved water quality in the monsoons over summers even though domestic or industrial pollution load may remain uniform through the year.

KD: What needs to be done to clean the rivers?

SG: Pollution levels in rivers can be lowered by reducing the amount of untreated wastewater that enters them and by ensuring a continuous flow to dilute the polluted waters. While the zero-discharge norms exist in India, empowering



regulatory bodies to implement them and penalising the violators is the need of the hour. The minimum e-flow notification for the Ganga has ensured a continuous flow in the river to dilute the polluted water, which may be a good short-term strategy, but in the long-run dilution should not be considered a solution to pollution. Hence,

restricting waste at source and moving towards a circular economy (this entails gradually decoupling economic

activity from the consumption of finite resources, and designing waste out of the system) will help clean rivers.

A systems approach needs to be adopted to intervene at each stage of the water cycle. Improving infrastructural capacity, changing people's attitudes towards a common pool resource such as water by creating awareness, understanding the real cost of pollution and its long-lasting effect will together help clean rivers.

At the foundation of all this

is making reliable data accessible to all to ensure transparency and trust. A multi-stakeholder approach is the way forward.

KD: What does the Water-to-Cloud technique do? And why is better than the earlier system?

SG: Effective river basin management and water policy formulation requires access to reliable and up-to-date data in easy-to-understand formats for timely decision-making.

(Contd on page 24)

After being trapped between rocks for over 40 hours, Chandrapur tiger dies

The tiger, apparently from Tadoba tiger reserve, had jumped into Sirna river, near Kunada village, after making a kill and got spinal injuries, according to the forest officials.



the bank of the river and got trapped in the rocks.

The forest department on Wednesday tried to rescue the animal by offering bait in a cage. The tiger tried to pull the cage but in the process injured his teeth. "We tried our best," said Nitin Kakodkar, the state wildlife warden and principal chief conservator of forest (Wildlife), Maharashtra. "Efforts to lure the tiger with bait into a cage failed till Wednesday evening. Rescue operations were called off in the evening as it got dark. Some forest personnel were deployed to keep a watch on the tiger's movements during the night. But, the wild cat was found dead this

morning," he said.

The rescue operation was conducted by a joint rescue team of the wildlife wing, forest department and few non-government organisations tried their best to rescue the two-and-a-half year old tiger, he said. S V Ramarao, the chief conservator of forests, Chandrapur circle, said a group of coal miners of Western Coalfields Ltd were the first to sight the young tiger trapped in the rocky crevice, around 35 feet below the bridge, early on Wednesday. "At that time, the tiger was able to move and swim. However, the wild cat slowed down with the passage of time and finally died,"

Ramarao said. Kakodkar pointed out that as the tiger was in water, the foresters were unable to tranquilise and capture it on Wednesday. "Standard operating procedures for rescue of predators prohibit use of tranquilisers while the animal is in water," he further said. "We fished out the carcass on Thursday and have sent it for post-mortem and further investigation is on," Kakodkar added. Sirna river flows next to the Tadoba tiger reserve, which was ranked sixth best big cat habitat in the country by the Wildlife Institute of India study released in July 2019. The reserve is said to have about 50 tigers, as per the 2018 tiger estimation released in July.

(News Agencies) A tiger, which got trapped between rocks in a river in Maharashtra's Chandrapur district on Wednesday, was found dead this morning, a forest official said. The district is known for coal mining by the Western

Coal fields. The tiger, apparently from Tadoba tiger reserve, had jumped into Sirna river, near Kunada village, after making a kill and got spinal injuries, according to the forest officials. The feline somehow managed to swim

Ram Janmbhoomi Nyas stops carving of stones at Ayodhya workshop ahead of SC verdict

Even when the RSS and its frontal organisations were banned after demolition of Babri Masjid in December 1992, chiselling of stones had continued at the workshop.



(News Agencies) The Ram Janmbhoomi Nyas has stopped carving of stones at Shri Ram Janmbhoomi Nyas Karyashaala (workshop) ahead of the Supreme Court verdict on the Ayodhya land dispute case. For the first time probably since its inception not a single artisan was present at the workshop. The Nyas is the supreme body of saints which has been spearheading the Ram Mandir movement across the country since the 1990s. Large number of devotees are in Ayodhya for the 'Chaudah (14) Koshi Parikrama', many of whom visit the workshop to see big stone slabs lying there for the proposed Ram temple. Even when the RSS and its frontal organisations were banned after demolition of Babri Masjid in December 1992, chiselling of stones had continued at the workshop. The RSS and VHP leaders, however, denied any pressure from the central leadership to stop the work.

"The Nyas has decided to stop all work at the Karyashaala. It has decided to wait for the Supreme Court's verdict. Thereafter, it will take a decision on resuming the work," said Sharad Sharma, regional spokesperson of VHP, who operates from Karsevakpuram. At the workshop,

there are piles and piles of carved stone pillars, ceiling slabs, floor slabs and slabs for steps, all in red stone, for the proposed temple, which will not have any iron work. Many devout worshipers who visit the workshop touch the slabs in reverence. The 'Shilanyas' for the temple took place on November 10, 1989. On August 30, 1990, the workshop was set up and stone consignments started coming in. Stone carving work began in 1992 but the work slowed down since 1997 because of the pendency of the case in the high court.

Since the Yogi Adityanath government took over, work has picked up once again. "Most of the work related with carving of stones has already been completed. Only some delicate work is left which will be carried out at the temple construction site," said Sharma. The distance between the workshop and the proposed site, that is Ram Janmbhoomi, is 3 kilometre. The workshop has two giant stone cutters. There is a shed that works as the workplace for the stone-carvers. In the middle of the workshop is a wooden model of the proposed temple. And on a side, there are quarters for workshop staff and artisans.

At UK court, Nirav Modi says will kill himself if extradited to India

Nirav Modi has been behind bars at Wandsworth prison since his arrest on March 19 on an extradition warrant executed by Scotland Yard on charges brought by the Indian government.



(News Agencies) In a setback to Nirav Modi, a UK court yet again rejected a bail plea of the fugitive diamond merchant on Wednesday despite an offer of an "unprecedented bail package", which included 4-million pounds in security as well as house arrest akin to those imposed on terrorist suspects. The 48-year-old diamond merchant, who is fighting extradition to India on charges of nearly USD 2 billion Punjab National Bank (PNB) fraud and money laundering case, was produced before Chief Magistrate Emma Arbuthnot at Westminster Magistrates' Court here for his fourth attempt at bail. Dressed smartly in a white shirt and blue sweater, Modi was taken back to Wandsworth prison in south-west London and will next appear via videolink before the same court on December 4. "The past is a prediction of what might

happen in the future," said Judge Arbuthnot, as she concluded that she remains unconvinced that he would not interfere with witnesses or fail to surrender before the court for his trial in May 2020. She also noted that the confirmation that Modi is suffering from "depression" is not such that would influence her to change her previous ruling to deny bail. She, however, was extremely critical of "appalling" leaks to the Indian media last month associated with Modi's latest bail application, which referred to his mental health condition from a confidential medical report. Modi's defence team blamed the leak on the Indian investigative agencies and produced a bundle of press reports dated October 30 for the judge to accuse the Indian authorities of "bad faith and egregious behaviour".

4 of Kerala celebrity quintuplets to tie knot on same day; brother will wait

Soon after the birth of the children, the father renamed the house, "Pancha Ratnam" (five jewels). The children were stars in many ways. But it was never easy. Their father struggled to get them similar dress, bag, umbrella and the like.



When they were born on 18 November 1995, their father, a small-time trader, was excited and he gave similar names to all five: Uhtraja, Uthara, Uthama, Uthra and Uthrajan. They were born on the Uthram star in Malayalam calendar.

Soon the trader renamed their house, "Pancha Ratnam" (five jewels). The children were stars in many ways. But it was never easy. Their father struggled to get them similar dress, bag, umbrella and the like. He insisted that all their belongings should be similar, if not identical.

But when his wife had a heart problem, the family ran into financial troubles, one after the other. Nine years after the jewels were born, the father com-

mitted suicide in 2004 leaving his ailing wife and five children behind. The tragedy stunned the state. Many blamed the media for failing to see "the other side". There were enough good Samaritans around and help did pour in. The mother, who had got a pace-maker by then, also got a job in the government. Some media houses also took the lead to help them. True, the gusty mother lived for her children and gave them the best education she could. They will turn 24 this month and doing well for themselves. One daughter is fashion designer, two are anesthesia technicians and the other is an online writer. Their brother, Uthrajan, is a techie. "I was clueless after my

husband's sudden death. Then I thought I should live for my children and started fighting back. If there is a will, there is a way," she said to explain how she crossed the hurdles, one after other.

"When he was alive he was very particular that all five should get equal opportunity and treatment. We want to keep his dream alive so we decided they should get married on the same day. My son has to scale more heights so he can wait a bit," said the proud mother who works as the class four employee at the district co-operative bank branch in Thiruvananthapuram. "We will miss our brother now," said Uthara.

(News Agencies) Their birth was big news in Kerala back in 1995. They were the state's quintuplets, five children born in a single delivery. Their first day in school, first day in college and then, first vote: the media celebrated all their movements not-

withstanding their personal loss. Leaving behind bitter memories, the four women are set to start another innings in their life. They will tie knot at Sree Krishna temple in Guruvayoor on April 26 next year. And their brother is busy with arrangements.

'Respond to request or I will go': Sidhu nudges Centre on his Kartarpur visit

In his third letter to the foreign ministry to seek permission to make the trip, the Congress lawmaker said he was ready to skip the event if permission was declined.



(News Agencies) Former minister Navjot Singh Sidhu on Thursday appears headed into a confrontation with the Centre over his plan to attend the opening ceremony of the Kartarpur corridor in Pakistan. The corridor would let Indian pilgrims visit Darbar Sahib gurdwara where Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, spent his final years.

In his third letter to the foreign ministry to seek permission to make the trip, the Congress lawmaker said he was ready to skip the event if permission was declined. But if the

government didn't respond to his letter, the lawmaker said he would "proceed to Pakistan as millions of Sikh devotees go, on an eligible visa".

Sidhu said the government hadn't responded with a clear answer to his requests so far. "The delay and no response is a hindrance to my future course of action," the cricketer-turned-politician said. "I categorically state that if the government has any inhibitions and says no then, as a law abiding citizen, I will not go," he wrote.

Sidhu had been invited to the ceremony being held on the Pakistani side on instructions of Prime Minister Imran Khan, his friend from their cricketing days. It was during Sidhu's visit to attend Imran Khan's swearing-in ceremony last year that Pakistan Army chief General Qamar Bajwa had spoken of plans to build the corridor in time for celebrations to mark the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev. The corridor, first proposed by India two decades ago, links Dera Baba Nanak shrine in Punjab with Darbar Sahib gurdwara at Kartarpur, 4 km from the border in Pakistan. Media had reported on Thursday that Sidhu is unlikely to receive political clearance to participate in the inauguration of the Kartarpur Corridor. Officials and government functionaries require the foreign ministry's clearance for foreign visits in their official capacity. Foreign ministry spokesperson Raveesh Kumar did not elaborate on the specific reasons. "The inauguration of Kartarpur Corridor is a historic event. It is not important to highlight any one individual," he said. Kumar did not respond to a question on Sidhu's plans to travel on a Pakistan visa, adding that it was for Sidhu to decide what he wants to do. "Our stand that it is not right to focus on one individual," the foreign ministry said.

Don't want to talk about it' Raghuram Rajan on Bank of England job



(News Agencies) Former Reserve Bank of India Governor Raghuram Rajan declined to say if he's been asked by the U.K. about succeeding Mark Carney to head the Bank of England, and repeated his view that the job is now burdened with huge political challenges. "You're navigating in a very complicated environment with a whole lot of political forces," Rajan, who now teaches at Chicago Booth School of Business, said in a Bloomberg TV interview with Haslinda Amin on Thursday. He said in July that the issues posed by Brexit were a key reason he didn't apply for the role. Asked if anything has changed since then, and whether he's been approached about the job, Rajan declined to comment. "I don't want to talk about that, but I would say it's a very difficult job," he said. "Mark has a very difficult job, he's done it in a very admirable way and it's good that he's there." Carney, who himself denied an interest in the BOE governorship before he was appointed, has twice extended his stay and is now due to step down at the end of January, though the upcoming U.K. general election has delayed the appointment of his successor. Originally slated for the fall, it's now not expected until after the Dec. 12 vote. An interview panel has prepared a shortlist, but that could be discarded.

British gave India its first anti-pollution law in 1905

On Wednesday, the CSIR -NEERI, along with the union ministry of environment, forests and climate change, launched the digitised studies published on air pollution across the country dating as far back as 1905.



(News Agencies) Air pollution has plagued India since the 1900s. Contrary to popular belief, the first anti-pollution law was framed by the British in the then Indian capital in Bengal in 1905. The Bengal Smoke Nuisance Act --- against smoke arising from furnaces or fireplaces in towns --- was the first such law aimed at protecting the environment. Records dating back to the pre-internet times can now be found in the public domain. On Wednesday, the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) - National Environmental Engineering Research Institute

(NEERI) along with the union ministry of environment, forests and climate change, launched the digitised studies published on air pollution across the country dating as far back as 1905.

This comes at a time when the national capital is grappling with high pollution levels due to various factors including vehicular emissions, industrial fumes and crop residue burning in neighbouring Haryana and Punjab, among others.

"Air pollution as a subject was recognised way back in India in 1905, when it was called the Bengal Smoke Nuisance Act. Under

this rule, people could go to the local police and file a case against anyone who was indulging in a polluting activity, such as burning," said, Rakesh Kumar, director, NEERI, while speaking at the launch.

The law had come into existence for the abatement of nuisances, arising from the smoke of furnaces or fireplaces in the towns and suburbs of Kolkata and in Howrah and other areas of Bengal. Later, in 1912, the Bombay Smoke Nuisance Act came in and in 1963, the Gujarat Smoke Nuisance Act was enacted, he added.

"We are collecting more such records from different archives across the country. There are thousands of research studies that go unnoticed for not being published or for not getting enough attention. We are trying to bring in all such relevant data under one umbrella. This is intended to help researches and organisations such as NEERI to have specific references while

working on new studies," said Kumar.

In Delhi, the first episode of 'very dusty' weather conditions was recorded during the summer months of May and June in 1952 and 1953, which had led to an apprehension that the arid region of Rajasthan was extending towards Delhi. This was probably the first time when experiments such as cloud-seeding were first thought of, highlights one such study by SC Roy of the Meteorological Department, published in 1954.

"The study published in the Indian Journal of Meteorology and Geophysics published in January 1954 explores whether cloud seeding is a possible solution to this. The study indicates that dust incursion from desert in Rajasthan was a worry even then. Now it has intensified even more with the loss of vegetation over Aravallis in Haryana," the study stated. Consequent studies on the sub-

ject were taken up in 1969, 1970, 1973 and 1980, said NEERI scientists, who developed the web repository. The year 1981 proved to be a turning point for India, as far as tackling air pollution was concerned. For, it was in this year that the Air Prevention and Control of Pollution Act was introduced. After this, the infamous Bhopal Gas Tragedy prompted the government to enact the Environment Protection Act in 1986. Weather experts said the problem of desertification dates much beyond the 1950s. "The Indo-Gangetic Plains (IGP) mostly receives westerly winds from the deserts of Rajasthan, except during monsoon. So, as desertification increases the impact of dust on the IGP region also increases. There were plans to create a thick barrier of trees so that the dust does not travel far into this region but nothing was done," said a senior scientist from the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD).

Smog in north spikes air pollution in southern cities

Pollution spikes are common in the first half of November in northern India as farm fires peak in Punjab and Haryana during this time and the resulting smoke settles over the region.

(News Agencies) There was a spike in air pollution levels in eastern and southern India on Thursday with the Air Quality Index (AQI) in some parts of Chennai rising over 300. Officials said that this was primarily because winds were carrying pollutants from the northern plains towards the Bay of Bengal. A Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) official, who did not want to be named, said that north-westerly winds have blown the smoke created because of stubble burning in Punjab and Haryana from the northern plains because of a developing cyclonic depression over the Bay of Bengal.

Pollution spikes are common in the first half of November in northern India as farm fires peak in Punjab and Haryana during this time and the resulting smoke settles over the region. Farmers often burn stubble left behind after harvest as a quick and cheap way of clearing their fields for the next round of sowing. The air quality in Delhi was reduced to its worst level since 2016 on Sunday as the AQI sharply rose to a severe level of 494. Severe air pollution can worsen existing respiratory illnesses and



also affect even healthy people. The CPCB's real-time monitor showed the AQI crossing the 300-mark in some parts of Chennai. The air quality is considered good when the AQI is below 50 and satisfactory when it is under 100. The AQI in Andhra Pradesh's Visakhapatnam and Vijayawada rose to 274 and 204. The AQI in Kolkata was 262. The pollution levels dipped in Bangalore with the AQI being 157.

An India Meteorological Department (IMD) official said that the cyclonic storm, which is expected to make landfall on

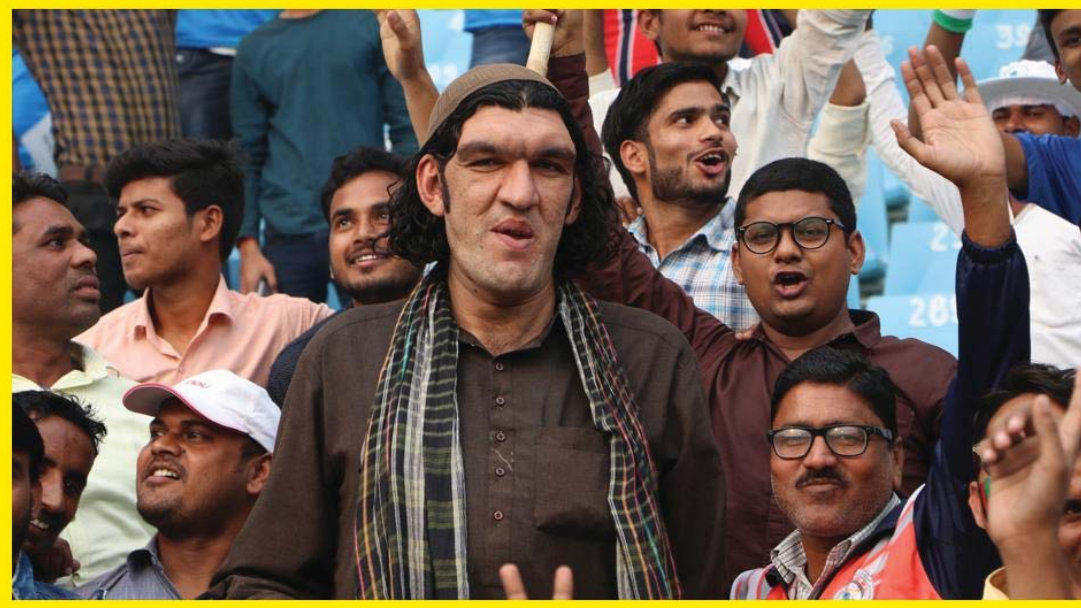
Friday, is preventing pollutants from dispersing over the Bay of Bengal as it is moving towards the eastern coast. "In fact, strong inward winds from... [the Bay of Bengal] have pushed the winds carrying the smoke towards south from eastern India..." an IMD scientist said. The CPCB scientist quoted above said that the pollution levels in southern and eastern cities have also increased because of local factors apart from the winds carrying the particulate matter. The scientist added the situation is likely to improve in a day or two as fresh winds will

bring cleaner air. The impact of the depression in the Bay of Bengal will also end with heavy rains, which is also expected to bring some respite, the scientist added. Officials said that unlike in the northern Indian plains, the air pollution monitoring in eastern and southern India, considered to be comparatively cleaner, is less common. For instance, Kolkata has only three monitoring stations, Chennai four and Visakhapatnam one. According to pollution forecast and data website airvisual.com, the north-westerly winds were moving the pollutants towards the east and then to southern India along the east coast. Experts, too, blamed the farm fires' smoke for the rise in pollution levels in eastern and southern India. "The Atmospheric Dispersion Modeling System [used to calculate concentrations of pollutants] shows that the plumes of the smoke have reached southern India," said Raj Bhagat Palanichamy, a remote sensing analyst with research organisation the World Resources Institute. The rising pollution prompted Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar on Wednesday to order the phasing out of diesel and old petrol autos.

(News Agencies) Height became a problem in finding accommodation for an Afghan man who flew down to watch one-day international cricket series between Afghanistan and West Indies here.

Sher Khan, who is 8 feet and two-inch tall, visited several hotels in search of a place to stay but no hotel allegedly agreed to rent him a room courtesy to his height.

Disappointed and alone in a new city, Khan approached police for help which took him to a Hotel Rajdhani in Naka area where he spent Tuesday



8-foot tall Afghan cricket fan struggles to find place to stay in Lucknow

Sher Khan, who is 8 feet and two-inch tall, visited several hotels in search of a place to stay but no hotel allegedly agreed to rent him a room courtesy to his height.

night. Hundreds of people gathered outside the hotel to see the tall who is a resident of Kabul. "As many as 200 people have come to see him. He is very disturbed," hotel owner Ranu told ANI on Wednesday. Due to the is being played. Ranu said the man will be staying in the city for the next four to five days.

Court grants bail to Honeypreet in Dera violence case



(News Agencies) The court of chief judicial magistrate (CJM) Rohit Watts granted regular bail on Wednesday to Honeypreet Insaan, the adopted daughter of jailed Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh. Honeypreet Insaan was the main accused in a case pertaining to violence that broke out in Haryana's Panchkula in August 2017 following Ram Rahim Singh's conviction on rape charges.

On Saturday, the court of additional district and sessions judge Sanjay Sandhir had dropped sedition charges against Honeypreet Insaan and 39 other Dera followers in the main first information report (FIR) that pertained to the arson that followed the self-styled godman's conviction. It was the sixth case in which sedition charges were dropped. The state government did not give its prosecution sanction (mandatory to add these charges) in four of these six cases. Honeypreet Insaan's counsel Dhruv Gupta said: "The bail application was moved on the ground that as the sessions court had dropped sedition charges against her, now only bailable offences were there and it is right of every accused to seek bail." Another defence counsel, Raj Singh Chauhan, said: "The bail was granted on two surety bonds of Rs 1 lakh each. The remaining five accused who are in jail will also move their bail applications in the court on Thursday."

She had been in judicial custody at the Ambala central jail since October 2017. On Wednesday evening, she left the jail in a white Toyota Fortuner. The Dera chief's conviction triggered arson and violence across Haryana that claimed 36 lives and left 250 people injured.

'Kartarpur model' may help resolve future conflicts: Manmohan Singh

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu too said a new world of peace and sustainable development could be founded if teachings of the Sikh Guru were integrated in daily lives.

(News Agencies) Former prime minister Manmohan Singh on Wednesday hoped the "Kartarpur model" might help in resolving future conflicts, as he and Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu addressed a special session of the Punjab Assembly to commemorate the 550th birth anniversary of Sikhism founder Guru Nanak Dev.

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu too said a new world of peace and sustainable development could be founded if teachings of the Sikh Guru were integrated in daily lives. "Peace and harmony is the only way forward to ensure a prosperous future. The Kartarpur model may be replicated in future too for lasting resolution of conflicts," the former PM said.

The Kartarpur corridor, scheduled to be opened on November 9, links the Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in Pakistan--the final resting place of Guru Nanak Dev--with Dera Baba Nanak in Gurdaspur of Indian Punjab.

The former PM also appealed to take forward the message of mutual love and respect propagated by the Guru to ensure an equitable society.

"Guru Nanak Dev Ji's eternal message of oneness of god, religious tolerance and peace can pave the way to end sectarian violence", Singh said, adding that it was the biggest challenge faced by the world. Punjab is Guru Nanak Devji's karmabhoomi. How will we keep Guru Nanak Devji's legacy alive if its youth is wasted with drugs, water is becoming poisonous and women are being disrespected. It is the most crucial question on his 550th



birth anniversary," Singh added. Addressing the session, the vice-president described the Sikhism founder as one of India's most democratic spiritual leaders. Naidu said his vision "had as much relevance today as it was when it was expounded five centuries ago".

Naidu, who started his address in Punjabi, said, "Guru Nanak ji belongs to the long illustrious tradition of India's visionary spiritual leaders who have illumined human existence and greatly enriched the country's cultural capital."

He said for the first Sikh Guru, differences based on caste, creed, religion and language were irrelevant.

"Our world view has been continually broadened by timeless messages of enlightened pathfinders like Guru Nanakji. We, as democratic political leaders, and even as common citizens, have so much to learn from the teachings of this great personality," Naidu said. The vice president further said, "If we can internalise and integrate these messages in our daily lives, we can certainly discover a new world of peace and sustainable development."

He said the respect for women and gender

equality was another important lesson to be learnt from the Guru.

"This spirit of equality began with Guru Nanak Dev's clear recognition that there is no distinction between a Hindu and Muslim. For him, no country was foreign and no people were alien," said Naidu.

He said it was worth noting that Guru Nanak initiated an inter-faith dialogue way back in the 16th century AD.

"The world needs such spiritual leaders, who can engage in a meaningful dialogue to exchange ideas in order to promote peace, stability and cooperation," said Naidu.

Naidu said Guru Nanak Dev insisted on earning one's livelihood by hard work.

"Work, worship and share was the motto he placed before his disciples. Earn by honest labour and share the earnings with the needy," said Naidu.

Underlining the message of Guru Nanak Dev, Punjab CM Amarinder Singh stressed the need to protect nature so that future generations do not suffer from environmental pollution. Recalling the Guru's thought "pavan guru, pani pita, mata dharat mahat" (air is the guru, water the father, and earth the mother), the chief minister said this ideology needed to be preserved in letter and spirit. He appealed to make Punjab clean and green in line with the Guru's philosophy by making the optimal use of groundwater, diversifying into less water-intensive crops and stop burning paddy straw besides checking the use of chemical fertilisers.

Kartarpur Corridor Opening: Narendra Modi thanks Imran Khan for respecting sentiments of Indians

PM Modi will also see off the first batch of pilgrims to Gurdwara Darbar Sahib through the Corridor. Giani Harpreet Singh of the Akal Takht is leading the 500-member Indian delegation that also includes former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh.



(News Agencies) Prime Minister Narendra Modi thanked Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan for respecting the sentiments of India while speaking on the occasion of the historic

opening of 4.7 km long Kartarpur corridor which will link Dera Baba Nanak Gurudwara in India's Kartarpur district to Pakistan.

Both the shrines are dedicated to the founder of Sikhism, Guru Nanak, whose 550th birth anniversary is being celebrated. "I would like to thank the Prime Minister of Pakistan,

Imran Khan Niazi for respecting the sentiments of India," said PM Modi at the Gurdaspur Gurudwara. Modi added that he was fortunate to dedicate Kartarpur corridor to the country. "Opening of Kartarpur corridor and integrated check post will bring double happiness," he said at Dera Baba Nanak. Prime Minister Narendra Modi was praised earlier by Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh and Akali Dal patriarch Parkash Singh Badal for making the opening of Kartarpur corridor possible. Badal said Narendra Modi was a "world leader" and acknowledged prime minister's role in opening of

the corridor after 72 years of efforts by the community. Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh also praised the prime minister and cautioned Pakistan against pushing a divisive agenda in Punjab and Kashmir. Capt Singh said it was a "historic day" for every Sikh who has been praying daily for 'khulle darshan didar' (unhindered access and prayers) at Kartarpur Sahib shrine. "I've been to Nankana Sahib twice but this will be my first visit to Kartarpur Sahib. I will pray for Punjab and our country," said the CM. PM Modi will also see off the first batch of pilgrims to Gurdwara Darbar Sahib through the

Corridor. Giani Harpreet Singh of the Akal Takht is leading the 500-member Indian delegation that also includes former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, Union minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal, her husband and Shiromani Akali Dal chief Sukhbir Badal and several ministers, MPs and MLAs from Punjab. The Prime Minister will declare open the Integrated Check Post at the passenger terminal building at Gurdaspur. Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan inaugurate the corridor on the end of the route in Pakistan. Several other events are being held in Kartarpur to mark Guru Nanak Dev's birth anniversary.

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पुस्तकालय के अंतर्गत आने वाले अनेक किताबों के खरीदने का प्रस्ताव किया है। इस पुस्तकालय में अनेक किताबें उपलब्ध हैं। इन किताबों में अनेक किताबें हैं जो कि अनेक विषयों पर लिखी गई हैं। इन किताबों में अनेक किताबें हैं जो कि अनेक विषयों पर लिखी गई हैं। इन किताबों में अनेक किताबें हैं जो कि अनेक विषयों पर लिखी गई हैं।

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अमेरिका ने एंट्री देने से किया इंकारा

Kartarpur corridor: India pilgrims in historic visit to Pakistan temple

A historic corridor to one of Sikhism's holiest shrines is now open, allowing Indian pilgrims rare visa-free access to the site in Pakistan.



(News Agencies) The Kartarpur corridor leads from the border straight to the Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur, 4km (2.5 miles) away. But tensions between India and Pakistan have made the shrine hard to access in recent years. However, they reached an agreement over access last month, fulfilling a long-standing wish of the Sikh community.

The corridor - which is in Punjab, a region divided during the partition of British India in 1947 - has opened just days before the 550th anniversary of the birth of Sikhism's founder, Guru Nanak, on 12 November.

There are only two major border crossings between the two countries, at Wagah between Amritsar in India and Lahore in Pakistan and further south at Munabao, where the train running between India's Jodhpur and Pakistan's Karachi stops.

What's happening?

The first Indian pilgrims to use the Kartarpur corridor included former Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh; Amarinder Singh, the chief minister of India's Punjab state; and 150 Indian parliamentarians.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Pakistani counterpart, Imran Khan, inaugurated the corridor on either side of the border on Saturday morning.

Devotees from all over the world, including the UK and Canada, are also visiting for the celebrations.

Officials say the corridor can accommodate up to 5,000 pilgrims per day, with up to 10,000 able to visit the shrine every day.

Indian visitors to the shrine will require a passport but they will be carrying travel permits instead of visas. However, they will not be allowed to leave the premises of the shrine in Pakistan or stay overnight.

What is the significance of the shrine?

The shrine was built to commemorate the site where Guru Nanak spent the last 18 years of his life. It is considered to be the second holiest site for Sikhism after Gurdwara Janam Asthan, also in Pakistan, which was built on the site where Guru Nanak was born.

The existing shrine in Kartarpur was built in 1925 after the original was destroyed by floods. It was restored by the Pakistani government in 2004.

However, the facilities have recently been upgraded to allow the complex to accommodate more pilgrims. Construction began soon after the corridor was officially announced in November last year.

Spread across 42 acres (17

hectares), the expansion includes a new courtyard, museum, library, dormitories, locker rooms, an immigration centre and an embankment to protect the shrine from floods.

The corridor also features a bridge which will allow visitors to cross over the Ravi river, which flows between the international border and the shrine.

Why is the corridor so significant?

It has been a longstanding wish of the Sikh community to open the corridor up, and it makes it much easier and cheaper to travel to the shrine from India.

Our wish to go to Kartarpur is finally being fulfilled," Amandeep Kaur, who lives in the border village of Dera Baba Nanak on the Indian

side, told BBC News Punjabi. "We will go and we shall bow our heads there. We have been separated from our Guru for a long time."

The village is just 7km from the Kartarpur gurdwara. But until now, Sikhs who wished to visit the shrine had to obtain a Pakistani visa and follow a circuitous route that often took them to Lahore city, more than 100km from Kartarpur.

Why did it take so long for India and Pakistan to strike a deal?

A historically tense relationship between India and Pakistan - who have fought three wars since 1947 - has made it difficult for a deal to be reached.

The two countries first discussed the corridor in 1998, and then again in 2004 and 2008, but these talks never led to anything concrete.

The opening of the corridor comes in the wake of soaring tensions between the nuclear-armed neighbours. In February, India launched air strikes against militants in Pakistani territory in response to a suicide attack in Indian-administered Kashmir which killed 40 Indian soldiers. The Pakistan-

based Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) group said it had carried out that attack.

In August, India stripped the part of Kashmir it administers of its partial autonomy, sparking sharp criticism from Pakistan. Since then, Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan has been lobbying for international support against the move, which he has described as "illegal".

But analysts have said while this is a significant development, it would be wrong to suggest that what lies ahead is a peace process as India and Pakistan are still at loggerheads.

Before the deal was signed, India had said it was "disappointed" with Islamabad for charging pilgrims a \$20 (£15) service fee to cross the border - but then said it would go ahead and sign the agreement.

There was also some confusion over whether Indian visitors require a passport. On 1 November, Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan said any valid ID would suffice, but news reports on Wednesday claimed that Pakistan's army spokesman said all visitors would require a passport.





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Ayodhya case: Supreme Court to pronounce verdict on November 9

(News Agencies) A Constitution Bench led by Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi will on November 9 deliver its judgment in the cross-appeals filed by the Hindu and Muslim sides challenging the three-way partition of the disputed 2.77 acres of Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid land among Ram Lalla, Nirmohi Akhara and the Sunni Waqf Board in September 2010.

The judgment comes after a marathon 40-day hearing. The five judges took less than a month to deliver the judgment. Chief Justice Gogoi is retiring on November 17.

The Bench, other than Chief Justice Gogoi, comprised Justices S.A. Bobde, D.Y. Chandrachud, Ashok Bhushan and S. Abdul Nazeer.

The hearings began on August 6 after a mediation attempt across the religious divide "to heal hearts and minds" failed to deliver. The Ayodhya is a close second to the longest heard case in the Supreme Court — the historic Kesavananda Bharati case. The testimonies in the appeals alone ran into 54 volumes consisting of 13,426 pages which have been translated into English and filed by Uttar Pradesh government. There are a total 533 exhibits translated by

various parties.

The Allahabad High Court judge, Justice S.U. Khan, one of the three judges whose opinions in the Ayodhya case are under appeal in the Supreme Court, had described the d i s p u t e d Ramjanmabhoomi-Ayodhya property as a "small piece of land where angels fear to tread". The "innumerable landmines"

involved in the case and the decades of religious tension may have played a part in the appeals having to spend eight long years in the cold storage in the apex court. Presently, the Centre, under the Ayodhya Act of 1993, is holding the acquired land, which includes the disputed land, as a non-partisan, statutory receiver.

But Chief Justice Gogoi has

been decisive and pushed the lawyers incessantly to stick to the deadline. The Bench had sat through the weekdays since August 6 to finish the hearings. The initial deadline was October 18.

The main arguments laid down by the Hindu side is that their faith and belief that Lord Ram was born exactly under what was the central dome of the Babri

Masjid, before the mosque was demolished by kar sevaks on December 6 of 1992, has been consistent across centuries.

Travelogues, writings and Skanda Purana have mentioned the Ramjanmabhoomi as a place of special religious significance to the Hindus. The Hindus have claimed that the disputed land itself is a juristic personality not

hit by the law of limitation. They have highlighted photographs from the Archaeological Survey of India excavations to prove that a large religious structure pre-existed the Babri Masjid. They said Mughal Emperor Babur demolished the temple to build the mosque.

Senior advocate Rajeev Dhavan had argued that the Muslims had exclusive title over the land and the Hindus were given only prescriptive rights to enter and pray at the Ram Chhabutra.

They sought the restoration of the property to what it was prior to December 1992. Mr. Dhavan said the idols were placed surreptitiously by the Hindus in the intervening night of December 22-23 of 1949. They said there was not one direct evidence to show that the disputed land was the birthplace of Lord Ram. They argued that the findings of the archaeological excavations does not show one structure but several constructions spread over different eras. It is not that of a single massive structure as claimed by the Hindus. "Even the Hindus were conquerors. There were thousands of conquests in history... How are they different from the conquests of Muslims?" Mr. Dhavan asked.

Ayodhya verdict : Ram Mandir on site, mosque off site

he Supreme Court on Saturday cleared the way for a temple to be built at the disputed plot of land in Ayodhya where the Babri Masjid stood before its demolition, and which Hindus consider to be the birthplace of Lord Ram. But the court also said the Sunni Waqf Board, one of the litigants in the Ayodhya title suit, should get 5 acres of land within the city for a mosque. Possession of the disputed land, measuring 2.77 acres, has been given to the Ram Lalla, another litigant. But the site will remain with a statutory receiver until the

central government sets up a board of trustees to deal with temple construction and other issues. The Supreme Court has given the government three months to establish the trust. The judgment, which was delivered by a five-judge Constitution bench, was unanimous; it caps a legal battle that has festered for decades.

It took around 30 minutes to read out the operative part of the judgment in a jam-packed Courtroom No. 1. The full text of the verdict runs to 1,045 pages.

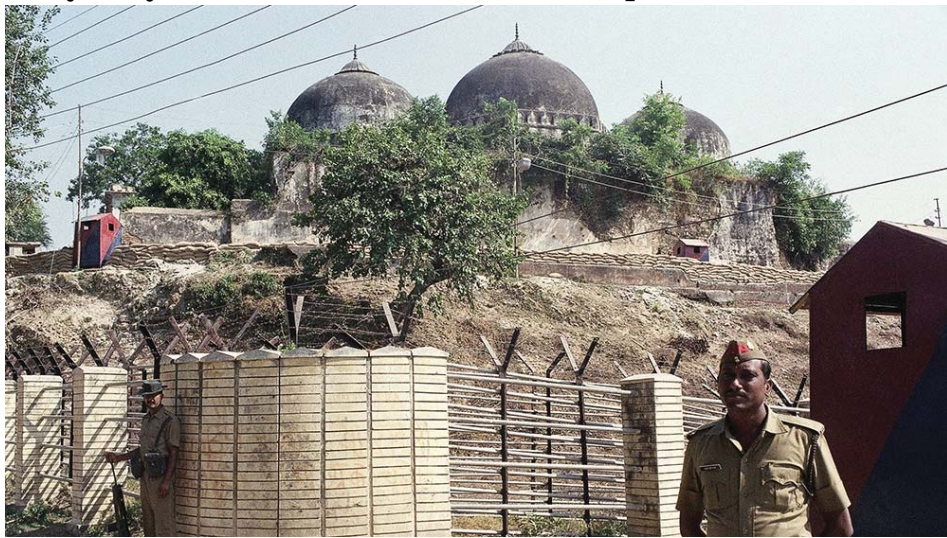
The Supreme Court

heard appeals filed against a 2010 judgment by the Allahabad High Court that divided the disputed site between the Ram Lalla, the Sunni Waqf Board and the Nirmohi Akhara. When mediation proceedings failed, the court began day-to-day proceedings on August 6. The Supreme Court dismissed the Nirmohi Akhara's suit on Friday, but asked that it be given "appropriate representation" in the trust "in such manner as the Central Government deems fit". The Nirmohi

Akhara said it had no regrets. "The court has accepted Ram Lalla's side and with this, our motive was fulfilled," Mahant Dharmdas, a member, told PTI. Sunni Waqf Board lawyer Zafaryab Jilani said the board respected the judgment but wasn't satisfied with it. "It has lot of contradictions. We will seek a review," he said. But the chairman of the UP Sunni Waqf Board, Zufar Faruqi, later issued a statement saying the board welcomed the decision, and that it would not seek a review.

Indian town anxiously awaits landmark Babri mosque-temple verdict

In Ayodhya, Hindus dream of Ram temple while Muslims call for 'practical' solution as top court set to announce verdict.



(News Agencies) Ayodhya, India - Ayodhya and its twin city, Faizabad, in the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh (UP) are in a state of heightened anxiety as they await the verdict of the country's top court in a 70-year-old legal dispute over land Muslims and Hindus both claim as theirs.

The Supreme Court, which concluded its hearings in the case last month, will decide by mid-November whether a Hindu temple should be built in place of the medieval-era Babri mosque, which was demolished by Hindu mobs in 1992.

Hindu groups claim the site was where their deity, Lord Ram, was born, while Muslims say they prayed at the mosque for generations until 1949 when an idol of Ram was surreptitiously placed inside the mosque.

Thousands of security personnel have been deployed to prevent the outbreak of violence. Hotel rooms have been booked for senior officers even as locals, apprehensive of the fallout of the verdict, have started to postpone marriages, religious functions and other celebrations.

The Ram temple movement

While Hindus in this temple town expect the top court to rule in their favour, the minority Muslim community remains hopeful that the verdict will vindicate their claims.

"This time we won't be caught by surprise like in 1992," said Naim Ashrafi, 60, looking at the Ayodhya skyline dominated by spires of temples.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) rose to political prominence

in the early 1990s on the back of the Ram temple movement that culminated in the demolition of the mosque.

Modi had promised to build the temple during the general elections campaigning earlier this year.

The court has to decide who owns the land on which the mosque stood, among other issues, which are entangled in faith and sentiment, history and myth.

The demolition of the mosque built under the rule of Mughal emperor Babur sparked India's worst Hindu-Muslim violence, which left about 2,000 people dead, mostly Muslims.

In Ayodhya, which was until then a quiet pilgrim town, at least a dozen Muslims were killed.

Ashrafi survived the 1992 violence by hiding in marigold fields while rioters went on the rampage despite the presence of security forces. Though senior BJP leaders, including former Deputy Prime Minister Lal Krishna Advani, have been charged in connection with the demolition of the mosque, the criminal trial has dragged on for years.

'Hope the judgement is balanced'

Baba Hazarilal came to Ayodhya as a young man in the 1980s and was a part of the mob that brought down the mosque.

"With BJP governments at the centre as well as in Uttar Pradesh, I am sure our dream of a Ram temple will be realised," Hazarilal, now in his 60s, says. "The court must respect Hindu sentiment and clear the way for a temple."

As the deadline draws nearer, most people, particularly the youth in Ayodhya, hope for a resolution so their town can

move on.

"I believe that local Hindus are not the problem. I have many Hindu friends, we live here comfortably, the problem is those outsiders who come here to create trouble," Sufiyana Ali, a 19-year-old aspiring photographer, told Al Jazeera.

A short distance from Ali's house, folk dance instructor Mukesh Kumar, 26, was busy rehearsing with his group that works to preserve local folk dance and music.

"I don't want to speculate on the case, these are the best legal minds, let them decide what is to be done. But it is an opportunity to bring a final closure to the dispute, so I hope that the judgement is balanced," Kumar said.

Ali and Kumar represent a new generation who were born after the mosque demolition and subsequent violence. Unburdened by Ayodhya's troubled history, they dream of better opportunities to fulfil their aspirations.

In 2010, the Allahabad High Court had ruled that the disputed area of 2.77 acres (11,210 square metres) be divided into three equal parts, with two-thirds going to the Hindu community and one-third to the Sunni Muslim Waqf Board, which represents Muslims in the court.

The judgement was challenged by all the parties in the Supreme Court.

The BJP pushed for the temple within constitutional boundaries while many right-wing Hindu organisations, some linked to the ruling party, wanted it settled out of court.

Earlier this year, the Supreme Court appointed an arbitration panel to mediate in the case but it failed to arrive at a



settlement.

Political rhetorics

Meanwhile, right-wing Hindu leaders have continued to issue rhetorical statements claiming the site as theirs.

A Hindu godman-turned politician, Ram Vilas Vedanti, recently announced that construction of the temple would start on December 6, the anniversary of the Babri mosque demolition - a day Muslims mark as "Yaum-e-Gham", or day of mourning, and right-wing Hindu groups celebrate as "Shaurya Diwas", or victory day.

Such assertions have stoked fears among the Muslim community. Many of them admit that the construction of the temple is the only "practical" solution.

"Given the politics of the country, I feel that it is better for us to accept that even if we win the case we will never be able to build a mosque there," said Salman, a 40-year-old who drives mainly Hindu pilgrims around Ayodhya in his electric vehicle.

Prime Minister Modi, in his recent weekly radio broadcast, however, seemed to call on members of civil society and religious leaders to exercise restraint.

Modi's emphasis on peace and restraint, however, has not stopped leaders from his party and BJP's other sister Hindu organisations from making provocative statements.

UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, a Hindu monk known for his anti-Muslim rhetoric, has unabashedly called for the building of the temple despite holding a public position in an officially secular nation of 1.3 billion people.

Since his surprise elevation

as chief minister in 2017, he has changed names of cities and landmarks bearing Muslim names and promoted Hindu pilgrimage centres, including Ayodhya.

In 2018, he renamed Faizabad district to Ayodhya and announced the construction of a giant statue of Ram in town. Ayodhya was earlier part of Faizabad district.

'A sense of deja vu'

During the recent celebrations of the Hindu festival of Diwali, the BJP government pulled out all stops to fund a three-day festival that culminated in the lighting up of more than 550,000 earthen lamps.

Dozens of wall-sized TV screens mounted on trucks broadcast a popular 1980s TV show based on the epic Ramayana across Ayodhya and surrounding towns and villages.

Public announcements in the pilgrim town promised the beginning of Ram Rajya (glorified as an ideal government in Hindu folklore) and urged people to gather in large numbers in Ayodhya.

"I have been a regular visitor to Ayodhya's temples but never before I have seen a government trying so hard to revive the glory of this ancient town," said 35-year-old Gopal Das.

Far from this religious-political hustle-bustle of the main street, in a small mosque atop one of the many knolls that dot Ayodhya, 71-year-old Maulana Yasin hobbled up and seated himself on a plastic chair.

"There is a sense of deja vu. Though things are peaceful at the moment, we are ready to rush our women and children to safer places if we sense any trouble," he said. Yasin had watched his brother Ameen being killed and then set on fire in 1992.

"None of those who attacked him were locals. It is the outsiders who come here to stoke communal fires across the country for political gains."

"I have faith in the judiciary, but whatever be the verdict, it must also ensure that nobody is allowed to disturb the harmony here. I only wish to see this dispute settled so I can die in peace."



Ayodhya countdown begins: Political leaders appeal for peace, security measures stepped up

Ahead of the crucial Supreme Court verdict in the Ayodhya dispute case, political leaders cutting across party lines have appealed for maintaining harmony.

(News Agencies) Ahead of the crucial Supreme Court verdict in the Ayodhya dispute case, political leaders cutting across party lines have appealed for maintaining harmony. A verdict by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi-led bench of the Supreme Court in Ayodhya case is expected before November 17, when the CJI retires. Security measures have been stepped up in many districts including Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh.

What PM Modi said

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has asked Union ministers to be measured in their statements on matters related to Ayodhya case. He told the ministers to refrain from making unnecessary remarks on the issue and help in building an atmosphere for welcoming the Supreme Court verdict irrespective of the judgment in the contentious case.

In the latest edition of his "Mann ki Baat" radio programme on October 27, PM Modi had recalled how the government, political parties and civil society prevented attempts to create fissures when the Allahabad High Court ruling on the disputed land in Ayodhya was to be delivered in 2010. He had described it as an example of how a united voice could strengthen the country.

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

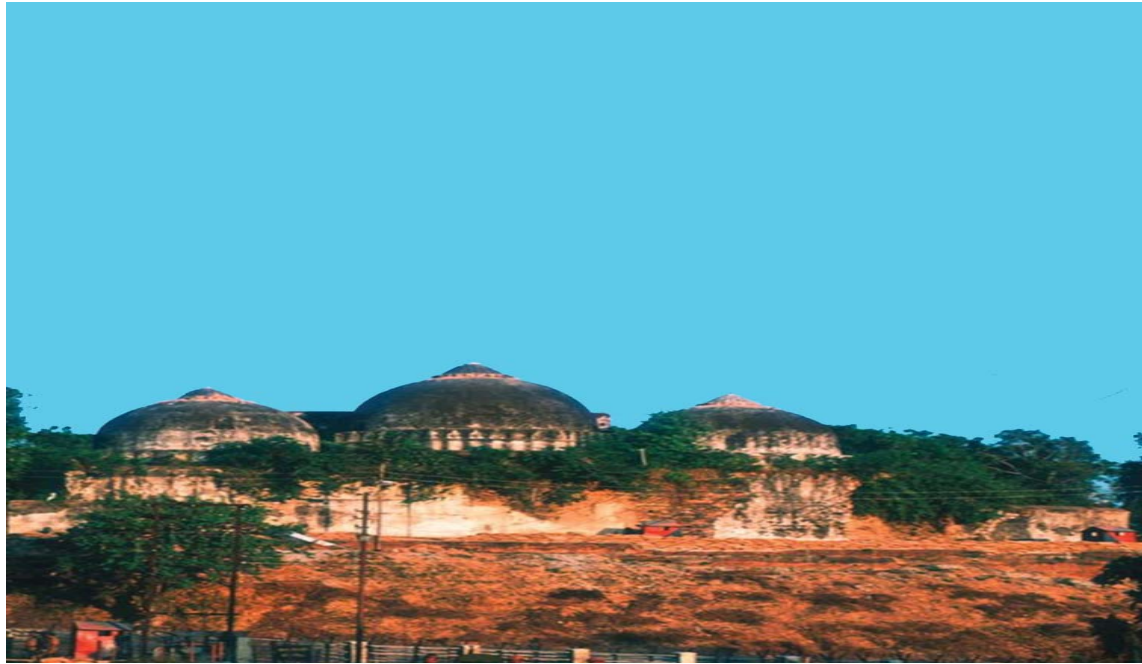
Spiritual leader Sri Sri Ravi Shankar has said the Supreme Court verdict would be welcomed by the people as they have full faith in the institution. He urged people not to fall for or ignite rumours.

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar was one of the members of the mediation panel appointed by the Supreme Court to resolve the Ayodhya title suit through intercommunity dialogue.

"People of our country have full faith in the Supreme Court and its verdict will be welcomed by everyone. I appeal to one and all to not entertain or ignite rumours. This is the time to exercise restraint and exhibit our values of brotherhood between communities," Ravi Shankar said in his message.

Mayawati

Bahujan Samaj Party chief



Mayawati said the Supreme Court verdict on Ayodhya matter must be respected at all costs.

She tweeted, "The verdict on the Ayodhya dispute can come any moment now. It is natural for people to be anxious or have expectations from the verdict. However, whatever be the decision of the Supreme Court, I appeal to everybody to respect it. Respecting the verdict is in the best interest of the country and its people." "It is also the responsibility of the Centre and all state governments to ensure the safety of the people and not let normal life be disrupted after the verdict," she wrote in another tweet.

Yogi Adityanath

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath asked his ministers to refrain from making any controversial statements ahead of the Supreme Court verdict in the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid title dispute case on November 17.

Sharad Pawar

NCP chief Sharad Pawar said "some forces" may try to take advantage of the situation and create fissure among communities.

Calling it a matter of faith, Sharad Pawar said the Supreme Court verdict in Ayodhya case should be accepted by all whatever the judgment is. Communal harmony should be maintained. There are chances that some forces might take

advantage of this, but it is important to be calm and accept things," he said.

BJP

At a meeting of the party's spokespersons, media and social media departments from across the country, the BJP's central leadership told them to avoid making unnecessary statements on the Ram temple issue, sources aware of the deliberations said.

BJP social media head Amit Malviya also briefed social media teams of the party on how to prevent controversial statements on such platforms.

RSS

In anticipation of the Supreme Court verdict in the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid title dispute case, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has cancelled all its official functions scheduled for November. The RSS has asked its workers to cancel their touring schedules as well. Sources in the RSS said that the organisation is being very cautious with regards to the Ayodhya case. They said, "After the verdict, in case something happens, then the blame should not be pinned on them.

Among the cancelled official functions is a meeting of the top brass of the RSS in Haridwar that was scheduled between October 31 and November 4.

Security beefed up

UP Police is preparing itself for the security challenge, if it comes to that stage following

the Supreme Court verdict in Ayodhya case. Police vehicles are being repaired. The armoury is being inspected to ensure that there are no last-minute glitches and even the public address system is being tested.

"It is important for us that vehicles and the public address system are in perfect order in places that are communally sensitive. This would not just help in countering rumours and also help in crowd control. Rumours and uncontrolled mobs can play havoc in a situation, where mass sentiment is involved," said a senior police officer.

Directives have been issued by the police headquarters to police chiefs in 34 communally sensitive districts including Meerut, Agra, Aligarh, Rampur, Bareilly, Ferozabad, Kanpur, Lucknow, Saharanpur, Shamli, Muzaffarnagar, Bulandshahr and Azamgarh.

Section 144 imposed in Ayodhya Section 144 has been imposed in Ayodhya till December 28. Those violating the order will be booked under section 188 of the IPC (disobedience of an order promulgated by public servant).

The Ayodhya district magistrate has issued directives prohibiting people from making defamatory remarks against any religion, community, deities, eminent personalities on social media platforms. People have also been barred from holding any event regarding the Ram

Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute.

The administration has also banned any media debates in the city and has imposed restrictions on people gathering in the region.

Restrictions in Bhopal

Tight security arrangements are being made at sensitive places in Bhopal to prevent any untoward incident in the view of Ayodhya verdict. Section 144 will remain in force for the next two months in Bhopal.

Eyes on social media

Uttar Pradesh Director General of Police OP Singh has said that the police would not hesitate to book offenders on social media platforms under the National Security Act (NSA) if they caused a law and order situation in the view the Supreme Court verdict on Ayodhya.

"We are absolutely ready. Under no circumstances, will anybody be allowed to take law in their hands. Our Intelligence machinery is geared up. If needed, the National Security Act will be imposed on elements who attempt to disrupt law and order," the DGP said.

He further said the social media platforms are being closely monitored by a team of officials and any objectionable or inflammatory post would invite action.

Faizabad police have deployed 16,000 volunteers to keep an eye against objectionable content on social media. Volunteers have been roped sensitive localities in the district to maintain calm, Senior Superintendent of Police Ashish Tiwari said.

On Saturday, District Magistrate Anuj Kumar Jha had issued orders against the use of social media to "insult" deities or to install idols and hold processions related to Ram Janmabhoomi.

Muslim parties

In the closed-door meeting convened by Navaid Hamid, president of the All India Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat, the participants resolved to maintain peace and harmony at all costs after the verdict in the Ayodhya case.

Ayodhya verdict today, nation awaits Supreme Court ruling with bated breath

The Supreme Court verdict in Ram Janmbhoomi-Babri Masjid title suit is set to be announced on Saturday.



people to respect the decision on Ayodhya.

10.20pm: Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan's has appealed to the general public to be peaceful ahead of Ayodhya verdict.

"Kerala's response was a model to the rest of the country when Babari Masjid was demolished. Everyone should be ready to accept the verdict in a peaceful manner. Every Keralite has a commitment to uphold the peace and secular values of the country. The verdict should not create any room for hate-mongering. The state police have been directed to be on high alert in the wake of the verdict," he said.

10.10pm: Delhi Police has issued a statement on the arrangement and precautionary measures to be taken ahead of Ayodhya verdict.

District DCPs and SHOs have been directed to raise police visibility and patrolling in communally sensitive areas. Necessary arrangements will be made to ensure safety and security of religious places. Field formations will remain in contact with stakeholders and conduct meetings with Aman Committees' comprising respectable from different communities.

Delhi Police will also initiate strict legal action against mischief-mongers or those found indulging in any activity which may adversely affect the peace and tranquility of the society. Social media platforms will also be monitored and Delhi Police advises that such platforms should be used with discretion, and users should restrain from spreading any unverified post.

Sufficient police forces are being mobilized, and Delhi Police will also requisition extra CAPF companies from MHA.

10.09pm: Reserve police being deployed in sensitive areas in a number of Districts of Karnataka. The education minister has declared a holiday in all schools on Saturday.

10.08pm: Tamil Nadu will be deploying close to 1 lakh police personnel all around the state for security purposes. 15,000 personnel to be deployed in Chennai. Patrol increased in all public places.

10pm: DGP IG of UP Prisons has issued a notice to all jail

officers and staff to remain alert and be in constant touch with the concerned district administration for any support/needful action required.

"Keep a vigilant eye on the reaction of the inmates and ensure that there is no communal strife/violence in Jails. Strict vigil should be maintained immediately and stern action be ensured against such elements lodged in jails who attempt to spread communal disharmony," the notice reads.

9.58pm: While giving verdict on Ayodhya, the SC will also give judgment on the claim made by the Shia Waqf board that Babri masjid was not a Sunni mosque but a Shia one.

9.55pm: VHP to address a press conference on Ram mandir judgment By SC at 2:30pm at North Avenue VHP office.

Ram Janmbhoomi-Babri Masjid title suit before the SC

The Supreme Court is set to deliver its verdict on 14 appeals filed against the 2010 Allahabad High Court judgment, delivered in four civil suits, that the 2.77-acre land in Ayodhya be partitioned equally among the three parties -- the Sunni Waqf Board, the Nirmohi Akhara and Ram Lalla.

The SC had first appointed a three-member mediation panel, comprising Justice FMI Kallifulla, spiritual guru and founder of the Art of Living Foundation Sri Sri Ravishankar and senior advocate and renowned mediator Sriram Panchu. But when the SC was told that four-month-long mediation proceedings did not result in any final settlement, it decided to take up the matter in marathon hearings.

Ayodhya on high alert

Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh has been put under a thick blanket of security. Apart from the regular security at the disputed site, the Centre has rushed in 4000 paramilitary personnel and 30 bomb squads. All dharamshalas in Ayodhya have been instructed to shut down and all non-locals have been asked to leave the city.

Ram Kot area around the disputed site has been closed off and police have blockades on the roads. After the SC circular informing about the imminent

verdict, the police also took out a flag march on the streets on Ayodhya.

District Magistrates have been instructed to make arrangements for temporary jail if necessary.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath held a high-level meeting to take stock of the situation. Section 144 has imposed in the state. UP DGP OP Singh, who met the CJI earlier in the day, has issued a letter to the public, requesting everyone to maintain law and order not to forward any insensitive messages on social media or mobile chats. He has requested people to inform the authorities about any insensitive message or suspicious activity on toll-free number 112 or via social media.

All schools and colleges have been ordered to remain shut in Uttar Pradesh between November 9 and 11. November 12 is a holiday on account of Guru Nanak Jayanti.

Locals, speaking to India Today TV, said that they expect the verdict to pass off peacefully unless outer forces try to instill any violence or clashes.

Tight security across India

In light of Ayodhya verdict, the security has been upped across the nation. All states and UTs have increased the presence of security forces on the streets. All jails have been put on high alert.

Apart from Uttar Pradesh, section 144 has also been imposed across Jammu and Kashmir and Bengaluru city in Karnataka. Schools and colleges have also been ordered to remain shut in Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Delhi, in J&K's Kathua and parts of other states.

Police bodies, across India, have announced close monitoring of social media networks for any objectionable post. Maharashtra police even arrested a 56-year-old man on Friday evening for writing an objectionable post on Supreme Court's verdict on the Ram Janmbhoomi-Babri Masjid issue. He has been booked under sections 153 (1) (B), 188 of IPC (commits any act which is prejudicial to the maintenance of harmony between different religious, racial, language or regional groups or castes or communities).

(News Agencies) The Supreme Court is set to pronounce its verdict in Ayodhya's Ram Janmbhoomi-Babri Masjid title suit on Saturday. The five-judge bench of the Supreme Court is likely to pronounce judgment at 10:30 am.

A notice regarding the pronouncement of judgment by a Constitution bench, headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi, was uploaded on the official website of the Supreme Court late Friday evening. Other members of the bench are Justices SA Bobde, DY Chandrachud, Ashok Bhushan and S Abdul Nazeer. The bench on October 16 had reserved the judgment after the marathon hearings over 40 days.

All states and Union territories across India have been put on high alert as the Centre and the state governments are reaching out to the public to maintain peace and calm if the judgment is not in their favour.

11.50 pm: In the view of the upcoming verdict in Ram Temple case, 144 has been imposed in the entire Jaipur district except for Jaipur city.

11.49 pm: Aligarh District Magistrate (DM), Chandra Bhushan Singh: All mobile internet services to remain suspended from 12 AM (08.11.2019) to 12 AM (09.11.2019) in the entire district.

11.31pm: Pralhad Joshi appeals for peace: Request every one to maintain unity, peace & harmony.

11.23pm: Punjab government has deployed additional forces in sensitive areas, including Malrekotla, Ludhiana and Jalandhar.

11.17 pm: Dry day in Bengaluru. Bengaluru police have

announced a liquor ban in the city tomorrow from 6am to midnight. Apart from regular force, 8000 additional men have been deployed across the city.

11.16pm: Gautam Gambhir appeals for peace: In view of the Ayodhya verdict tomorrow, I urge every individual to maintain peace & tranquility. We are and will remain a family of Indians.

11.03pm: Section 144 imposed in UP

11.02pm: All government schools and many private schools are closed in Delhi on Saturday. We are advising all private schools to also remain closed, says Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia.

11.01pm: CJI given Z+ security cover.

11pm: Section 144 imposed in entire J&K from midnight, indefinitely till further orders.

10.58pm: MP CM urges people to maintain peace and calm in the state.

10.57pm: High alert in Punjab and Haryana ahead of Ayodhya verdict

10.50pm: Bhopal collector declares dry day on Saturday, bans bursting firecrackers.

10.47pm: Bihar CM Nitish Kumar cancels Madhepura visit.

10.40pm: Heavy security in and around the Supreme Court.

10.35pm: "We had requested govt to make a law on construction of Ram Temple but Govt didn't do that. Now when SC is giving the order, the government can't take care," Shiv Sena in a press note ahead of Ayodhya verdict.

10.33pm: UP CM Yogi Adityanath appeals for peace. He urged people not to believe in rumours.

10.32pm: Care-taker CM of Maharashtra Devendra Fadnavis appeals for peace and asks

Narrating Snapdeal story, Indian-Americans seek removal of cap on Green Card

Work-based immigration is a great way to attract the right talent into the American economy, however this provision is currently impeded by annual Country Cap regulations in the processing of permanent residency, the FIIDS said.



(News Agencies) A top Indian diaspora think tank has urged the United States Senate to pass a pending bill that removes country cap on issuing of Green Cards or legal permanent residency, the absence of which, it said, has resulted in talent drain from the US and is negatively impacting American universities. In a policy paper submitted to US Senators, the Foundation for India and Indian Diaspora Studies (FIIDS) said the excessive delays in the

processing of permanent residency applications due to country-wise quota contributed to America's loss of revenue, market leadership and competitive edge. The case of work-visa holders from India, clearly illustrates the nature, substance and details of the impediments to legal immigration in America, it said. Work-based immigration is a great way to attract the right talent into the American economy, however this provision is currently impeded by an-

annual Country Cap regulations in the processing of permanent residency, the FIIDS said.

Current immigration laws were designed well before rapid technological changes became the hallmark of the American economy, as a result they are not designed to support recent wave of immigrations, triggered by the needs of the American industry for high levels of expertise and skills, the foundation said. The FIIDS, in its policy paper, urged the Senators to remove country cap for skilled immigrants on a work visa, treat skills-based immigration as different from family-based immigration and disallow the counting of dependents of primary visa holders in the aggregate Country Cap count. "To retain America's competitive

edge and to encourage immigration through legal means it is now time to revise outdated immigration laws to make room for the growth of new industries coming up on the American horizon," it said. Legal provisions need to accommodate a merit-based approach by encouraging skilled expert immigrants to stay in the country and contribute to its economy, it added. The delays in processing of Green Card, the FIIDS said, was causing talent drain. For example, several Indian immigrant entrepreneurs in the US have returned to India, to establish successful start-ups in their home countries, the foundation said. The most common reason for return was the restrictive US employment-based immigration policy that does not

offer permanent residency, it said. One of the many success stories of such a "reverse Brain Drain" is the case of Kunal Bahl, who has a business degree from the University of Pennsylvania and landed a job at Microsoft but was refused a work-visa.

He returned to India, partnered with his friend Rohit Bansal and launched SnapDeal, an online retailer, the FIIDS said. Urging Senators, especially Senator Durbin, to support the Fairness for High-Skilled Immigrants Act of 2019 in the US Senate as the first resounding step towards a resolution, the FIIDS said, delay in processing of Green Cards was negatively impacting American Universities. The FIIDS found that Indian students in the United States, are the second largest

group of foreign students but their numbers have slowed to 5.4 per cent growth in 2017-18, a five-year low. Commonly cited reasons are work-visa restrictions and permanent residency issues, it said. "The solutions we suggest, are bound to immediately infuse a much-needed enthusiasm among skilled immigrants waiting in the United States and aspirants across the globe, who continue to look to America as the preferred destination to realise their potential and their dreams," the FIIDS said. Indian entrepreneurs helped start companies like Sandisk, Jupiter Networks and Bose Corporation, generating about 1.5 million jobs, the foundation said. Indian Americans are CEOs of top firms like Microsoft, Google, MasterCard and Pepsi, it said.

Donald Trump ordered to pay \$2 million for misusing namesake charity to help his 2016 campaign

A spokesman for the Trump Foundation said it was pleased the court rejected James' request for punitive damages.

(News Agencies) A New York state judge on Thursday ordered U.S. President Donald Trump to pay \$2 million for misusing his namesake charitable foundation, resulting in funds being used to advance his 2016 presidential campaign.

Justice Saliann Scarpulla, of the state Supreme Court in Manhattan, directed the payment to eight non-profits, in connection with a lawsuit by the state's attorney general against the president and three of his adult children over the now-dissolved Donald J. Trump Foundation.

The White House had no immediate comment. A spokesman for the Trump Foundation said it was pleased the court rejected James' request for punitive damages.

The attorney general, Letitia James, said her office has also reached agreements with the foundation and its directors to end the June 2018 lawsuit, which was filed by her predecessor, Barbara Underwood. James said Trump admitted to "personally misusing funds at the Trump Foundation," which agreed last December to dissolve, and accepted limits on



his activities if he created a new charity. James also said Trump's children - Donald Jr., Eric and Ivanka - agreed to "mandatory training" on the duties of charity officials.

"The court's decision, together with the settlements we negotiated, are a major victory in our efforts to protect charitable assets and hold accountable those who would abuse charities for personal gain," James said in a statement. Underwood had filed suit after a 21-month probe that she said uncovered "extensive unlawful political coordination" between the Trump Foundation and Trump's campaign. The lawsuit sought to recoup \$2.82 million donated to the foundation in a 2016 Iowa fundraiser for military veterans, but

which Underwood said Trump allowed his campaign to control.

Scarpulla agreed with the attorney general's office that Trump had breached his fiduciary duty to the foundation. "Mr. Trump's fiduciary duty breaches included allowing his campaign to orchestrate the fundraiser, allowing his campaign, instead of the Foundation, to direct distribution of the funds, and using the fundraiser and distribution of the funds to further Mr. Trump's political campaign," she wrote. The judge said that because the money ultimately went to support veterans, Trump should pay just \$2 million, without interest, rather than the entire \$2.82 million. In refusing to award punitive damages, Scarpulla cited Trump's agreement to take steps to avoid a recurrence. The \$2 million is expected to go to Army Emergency Relief, the Children's Aid Society, City Meals-on-Wheels, Give an Hour, Martha's Table, the United Negro College Fund, the United Way of the National Capital Area and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Indian Americans win polls, make history

Two other Indian Americans Dimple Ajmera and Mano Raju were elected to local bodies in North Carolina and California respectively.

(News Agencies) Indian American Ghazala Hashmi made history Wednesday when she became the first Muslim woman elected to the senate of Virginia state helping, in the process, Democrats take control of the chamber from Republicans.

Suhas Subramanyam, another Indian American, was elected to Virginia state's lower chamber, the House of Delegates, which Democrats also wrested from Republicans. Two other Indian Americans Dimple Ajmera and Mano Raju were elected to local bodies in North Carolina and California respectively.

More Indian Americans are running for public office increasingly, and winning. There are four of them in the US House of Representatives and one in the US Senate, forming what they jokingly call as the "Samosa Caucus". One of them, Senator Kamala Harris is running for president. They are all Democrats, as are Hashmi and Subramanyam.

"This victory, is not mine alone. It belongs to all of you who believed that we needed to make progressive change here in Virginia, for all of you who felt that you haven't had a voice and believed in me to be yours in the General Assembly," Hashmi, a former college professor, wrote on Twitter after her landmark victory. This was her first run. Hillary Clinton, the former Democratic presidential nominee, sent her a "shoutout" as well, as the first Muslim woman elected to the state senate. Subramanyam, a former member of President Barack Obama's technology team, also won on his first crack at public life. He ran from a district with a large presence of Indian Americans. In fact, among those he defeated was another Indian American, Akshay Bhamidipati.

5 of 2019's biggest box office busts

1) "Terminator: Dark Fate"

Despite being a part of a franchise that has brought in \$3 billion (according to Box Office Mojo), the latest installment of the franchise had a "dark fate" of its own at the box office, bringing in an anemic \$29 million in its opening weekend.

To understand just how anemic, consider the film's \$185 million budget. Indeed, it's very possible that the studio will lose money on the project. It might be time to say, "Hasta la vista, baby" to those killer cyborgs from the future. "Terminator: Dark Fate" focused on Arnold Schwarzenegger's Terminator character, alias "Carl," reuniting

with Linda Hamilton's Sarah Connor to protect a new, young face from a morphing cyborg and certain doom.

2) "UglyDolls"

Not even an all-star cast could save this animated musical. The film earned only \$32 million worldwide, which didn't satisfy, considering the budget for the film was an estimated \$45 million, according to IMDb. Not even sales of the soundtrack, featuring Kelly Clarkson's hit "Broken & Beautiful," made up for the total tank at the box office.

"UglyDolls" was based on the plush toylines of the same name, and starred Clarkson as Moxy, an ugly doll that finds a

community of perfectly groomed dolls, and discovers what that it's what's on the inside that counts.

3) "The Goldfinch"

Not only was this film a financial disappointment, it was also panned by critics despite expectations that it'd be a heavy hitter come awards season. The film earned \$9 million, costing production studios Amazon and Warner Brothers an estimated \$35.4 million. Among the complaints from moviegoers was the long runtime and the clunky writing, which may have contributed to its failure. Ansel Elgort stars as the survivor of a bombing that's taken in by a wealthy New York family but

struggles with the loss of his mother.

4) "Dark Phoenix"

Superhero movies (almost) always do well at the box office. This year alone, Marvel's "Avengers" franchise picked up over \$5 billion and "Joker" is well on its way to joining the Billion Dollar Club. Unfortunately, "Dark Phoenix," part of a long-running X-Men franchise, earned only \$50 million over the film's budget. Superheroine Jean Grey (Sophie Turner of "Game of Thrones") is corrupted into villainhood in this flick, and her fellow X-Men mutants must save humanity from her

destructive powers.

5) "The Kitchen"

An Oscar nominee, an Emmy winner and a comedy star walk onto a movie set ... and the movie tanks. "The Kitchen" made less than half of its estimated \$38 million budget back despite acclaimed performances from the film's stars — which was about the only thing critics liked about the female-led mob movie. Melissa McCarthy, Elisabeth Moss and Tiffany Haddish star as the wives of Hell's Kitchen gangsters who take over the business when their husbands are sent to jail.

Bolivia mayor dragged through streets, has hair cut by protesters as election violence swells

The deadly incident on Wednesday happened in the city of Cochabamba, where 20-year-old student Limbert Guzman was killed in a spate of clashes. Morales, who expressed his condolences on Twitter, said Guzman had been a victim of violence promoted by political groups that encourage racial hate. Meanwhile, in the town of Vinto, located about 210 miles from Cochabamba, the mayor of the governing

Mas party was attacked by protesters after rumors that two members of the opposition had been killed by supporters of Morales, according to the BBC.

into Mayor Patricia Arce Guzman was confronted at the town hall by protesters, who then dragged her out barefoot through the streets of the town as windows at the city building were broken and her office was set on fire.

Guzman was then forced to kneel down

as demonstrators cut her hair, doused her in red paint, and forced her to sign a resignation letter all while yelling "murderess, murderess," according to the BBC. Police eventually rescued the mayor and carried her away; she was pictured covered in red paint and dirt. The clashes in Bolivia have continued to escalate this week, with police firing tear gas to push back stone-throwing demonstrators during clashes late

Tuesday and early Wednesday as they attempted to march on the presidential palace. Opposition leader Luis Fernando Camacho has been leading protests in Santa Cruz, the country's most populous city, demanding Morales step aside following the Oct. 20 election. Opponents challenge an official count that showed Morales winning by a margin big enough to avoid the need for a runoff against a united opposition.

Walgreens' drone delivery 'fully operational' in Virginia skies: How it works

Walgreens' pilot drone delivery program has launched into skies over Christiansburg, Virginia, as the pharmacy partnered with Alphabet subsidiary Wing. Walgreens customers can order over 100 different products using the Wing mobile app, FOX Business reported. Walgreens Chief Innovation Officer Vish Sankaran told FOX Business its drone delivery partnership signals a "new era" for customer convenience. Once the order is placed, workers at the Wing facility

package the orders in shipping containers. These containers house the various items customers can choose from. Once selected, the packaged order is then walked to the pickup zone. The drones are able to carry payloads equal to their own weight. As the drone hovers overhead, it lowers a hook that a Wing worker can attach the order to. The drone raises the package to a secure position on its underbelly and speeds away to complete the delivery. It arrives at the

customer's doorstep in minutes.

Wing has also partnered with FedEx to use drones to complete the last mile of the shipping giant's deliveries.

FedEx's Senior Vice President of Global Planning Joseph Stephens said the drones provide unique opportunities for the transportation industry.

"There is a reliability aspect of this," Stephens said. "The drone flies as the crow flies, so there is an optimization and an efficiency aspect of it."

Stephens told FOX Business that drone delivery can be more reliable and more cost-effective in rural communities.

Sankaran told FOX Business getting approval for prescription drug delivery is what's next for the drone delivery process. Walgreens is in early talks with U.S. regulators to take the next step. He called that step "still in process."

Walgreens is wrapping up its third week of the drone delivery program partnership, as it started on Oct. 19.

One of FBI's Most Wanted fugitives offers surrender

They allege his bogus deals left buyers empty-handed but responsible for payments, and the owners of consignment vehicles without their cars or their money. A grand jury indicted Khan in 2015 for allegedly swindling \$1.7 million from one bank through nearly two dozen loans, but investigators later identified at least 75 more victims. When Khan disappeared and abandoned his company, Emporio Motor Group, the FBI placed a \$20,000 reward for information leading to his arrest. His next television appearance would be a Most Wanted feature on CNBC's "American Greed." Now Khan is claiming, in an

exclusive interview with Fox News, he has been trying to negotiate his surrender for years. "What more do I have to do? I'm basically practically begging you," Khan said. "I'm a fugitive from justice saying 'arrest me'." Khan claims prior to his indictment, he fled the country with his family after receiving death threats because of his business deals. He says since he was charged, he's been reaching out to the U.S. Attorney's office from his protected hideout in a country with no extradition treaty to the United States. Local newspaper reports from 2016 indicate he did send an open letter to prosecutors, proclaiming his

innocence and agreeing to return if similar charges against his younger brother were dropped. Khan admitted his business was struggling, but blamed it on a brain tumor, which he never mentioned to Fox News. "I'm not pleading guilt, I'm not pleading innocence," Khan said by phone from an undisclosed location. "The point is I need to get my wife and kids home so I can stand trial." Khan is asking that prosecutors allow his family to return to the United States with him upon his surrender, skirting a \$60,000 fine for overstaying their visas they would otherwise incur if they flew commercially. "[The prosecutor] is gonna spend

\$20,000 to get information about me and then who knows how much money he's had to spend trying to chase me around the world. Let me walk into an embassy. You've got a military jet going home, throw me in with my wife and kids," Khan said. Khan says his bargaining chip is other than this offer, authorities have no way of reaching him in a non-extradition country. The New Jersey U.S. Attorney's Office would not comment on the case, nor would the FBI, but former New Jersey Assistant U.S. Attorney Joseph Mack says Khan's request is a tall order from a man on the run.

Former US ambassador to Mexico Wayne: Ambush murders show closer US-Mexico cooperation needed to fight crime

Since 2008, the U.S. and Mexico have deepened cooperation under the "Merida Initiative," which has provided for a combination of technical assistance and training, additional equipment, and closer law enforcement and justice cooperation. Merida cooperation has evolved over the years, building unprecedented cooperation between the law enforcement and justice agencies of the two countries. It has also received criticism for the tactics used to go after drug groups, such as focusing too much on

decapitating leadership of drug groups, while not dismantling mid and lower level criminal structures and overall for not making enough progress in bringing criminals to justice. The Merida program has, however, created the infrastructure and environment for the enhanced bilateral cooperation needed if these transnational criminal groups are to be weakened. It provides the opportunity now for additional adaptations to make better progress in going after the bad guys.

In early 2019, following the inauguration of President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (AMLO) as Mexico's new president, I joined a group of Mexican and American thinkers who recommended steps to improve U.S.-Mexico public security cooperation. Those recommendations took into account that AMLO came to office promising a new approach to public security, but recognized the vital need for better day-to-day law enforcement cooperation as reflected by record number of violent homicides in Mexico during 2018 and the

continued pace of cross-border trafficking. The two governments recently agreed to bolster cooperation against cross-border arms smuggling, called "Operation Frozen." They have also set up half a dozen working groups to begin defining a new cooperative plan, that collaborative work has not yet born results.

Even before this week's killings, U.S. officials were concerned given the continued drug flows, cartel activity in Mexico, and the slow progress in

agreeing to a re-energized U.S.-Mexico cooperation. The U.S. and Mexico must intensify efforts to forge an agreed strategy and action plan to move against the violent cross-border criminal organizations. They should seize the momentum of the tragic events in Sonora to double down on achieving a

well-developed and effectively implemented joint strategy that respects and reinforces the sovereignty and security of both countries. The time and hard work will be needed to achieve such more effective U.S.-Mexico security cooperation, but the progress will highly benefit the citizens of both countries.

Ayodhya: The SC verdict could bring an end to a long and bitter dispute

These included the laying of the foundation for the temple in 1989 and the demolition of the Babri Masjid in December 1992. This time around, the BJP-VHP-RSS combine has not issued any call to its workers to reach the temple city. Hindu religious leaders have also stayed away from making any statements and have, instead, sent out letters telling the faithful to avoid any form of celebration should the verdict go their way. The history of the disputed site has seen deep divisions between Hindus and Muslims. The first suit in the case was filed on January 19, 1885. Since then, until a possible resolution of the dispute this month, the legal case over the ownership of the disputed site has seen many twists and turns, few peaceful.

In September 2010, when the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad high court delivered a split verdict in the Ayodhya title suit, the losing party had the option of moving the higher courts. The apex court's judgment is considered final though the losing party can still go on appeal.

By amicably executing the Supreme Court's order, the country will only be displaying its famed tolerance. Governments, political parties and the people must respect the apex court verdict on an issue that they themselves could not resolve all these years.

There could be trouble ahead for Saudi Arabia's economy

enthusiasm for Saudi Arabia, and the crown prince has certainly done his country no favors on the political front. Another major misstep by Mohammed bin Salman, and investors could once more flee. Davos in the Desert certainly dazzles. But the kingdom doesn't need all that glitz and glamour. What

it should focus on is maintaining steady progress on strengthening its business climate by continuing to improve the ease of doing business, encouraging increased foreign involvement by loosening onerous ownership restrictions, and — most importantly — curbing reputational and political risks by ending the

flagrant abuse of human rights. Riyadh can hold numerous investment summits, but without progress on making it easier to do business there and ending human rights abuses, the kingdom will be hard-pressed to gain the kind of large-scale, long-term investment that it needs.

'To clean rivers, Indian must learn to reduce waste'

Traditional water quality monitoring approach involves grab sampling, followed by transportation of samples to a laboratory where they are analysed using scientific instruments and the results are produced in a couple of weeks. Traditional laboratory-based testing is tedious, slow, expensive and prone to

inaccuracies due to mishandling. We at the University of Chicago envisioned the Water-to-Cloud system for such high-resolution spatial and temporal monitoring to gain insights that may be missed with the traditional approach. Geo-tagged, time-stamped mobile cyber physical sensing systems are used

to collect such data over a given area at high spatial resolutions. These can identify pollution hotspots as well as provide data on violators and efficacy of government sanitation interventions. W2C gathers insights from such data and attempts to create machine learning-based models for water quality predictions.

China's Tibet: A story of progress

Tibet is a homeland shared by Tibetan and other ethnic groups of China. In the 7th century, the then Tibetan ruler Songtsan Gambo married Princess Wencheng of the Tang dynasty of China, and Buddhism was introduced into Tibet from the Tang Empire. In the 13th century, the Yuan dynasty brought Tibet under its direct administration. The following Ming dynasty continued to strengthen the administration of Tibet. During the Qing dynasty, the reincarnation system for living Buddhas was established in Tibet. Historical records prove that Tibet has been part of China since ancient times. In today's world, it is universally recognised that Tibet is an integral part of China, and no country has ever recognised "Tibetan

independence". And there is no such thing as the so-called "political status" of Tibet.

In recent years, journalists from countries including India have visited Tibet. They have witnessed the economic and social achievements, religious freedom, and the happy life enjoyed by the Tibetan people. More and more people have begun to view the current situation in Tibet in a rational and objective light, and rethink the false accusations made by the Western media. The Chinese government protects citizens' religious freedom according to its constitution and laws. Those who claim "the Chinese government violates religious freedom of the Tibetan people" either have never been to Tibet or harbour ulterior motives.

The reincarnation of the living Buddha is the unique inheritance system of Tibetan Buddhism. In 1653 and 1713, the Qing emperors granted honorific titles to the 5th Dalai Lama and the 5th Panchen Lama, officially establishing the titles of the Dalai Lama and Panchen Erdeni and their political and religious status in Tibet.

In 1793, the Qing government promulgated the ordinance by the Imperial House Concerning Better Governance in Tibet (29 Articles), stipulating that the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama and other living Buddhas shall follow the procedure of "draw of lots from the golden urn", and that the selected candidate is subject to approval by the central authorities of China. The current 14th Dalai Lama was approved by the then

national government of China and was enthroned through the "Sitting-in-Bed" ceremony in 1940. The 11th Panchen Lama was selected by a draw of lots from the golden urn, approved by the central government of the PRC and then enthroned through the "Sitting-in-Bed" ceremony in 1995. In 2007, the Chinese government promulgated the management measures for the reincarnation of living Buddhas in Tibetan Buddhism, putting the reincarnation of living Buddhas under the rule of law. At present, there are 1,331 living Buddhas in China, among which 356 are in Tibet. Their reincarnation must all comply with national laws and regulations, religious rituals and traditional customs. On June 23, 2003, China

and India signed the Declaration on Principles for Relations and Comprehensive Cooperation Between the PRC and the Republic of India, in which India recognises that Tibet Autonomous Region is part of the territory of the PRC and India does not allow Tibetans to engage in political activities against China in India. This commitment was reaffirmed in subsequent bilateral documents between the two countries. China appreciates India's position. It hopes and believes that India, as a responsible major country, will stick to its position, honour its commitments, resist interference on Tibet-related issues and promote the healthy and stable development of China-India relations.

Chinese drug dealers convicted after first China, US joint probe

President Donald Trump has in the past blamed the Chinese for thousands of fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the US.



Two drug dealers were given suspended death sentences and several others were jailed for smuggling the opioid Fentanyl to the US, a set of convictions that followed the first joint probe by Chinese and American law enforcement agencies. The flow of fentanyl, a prescription opioid considered several notches stronger than heroin, from China to the US has been a point of

discord between Beijing and Washington.

President Donald Trump has in the past blamed the Chinese for thousands of fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the US.

On Thursday, a court in the city of Xingtai in northern Hebei province announced the verdict, adding that it was the first time that China and the US had worked jointly on such a case.

The highly publicised sentencing of the suspects on Thursday was followed by a joint press conference by

Chinese and US officials in Xingtai.

"Two principal criminals, Liu Yong and Jiang Juhua, were sentenced to death with a two-year reprieve and life imprisonment, respectively, for the crime of selling and producing drugs, according to the Intermediate People's Court of Xingtai," the official news agency, Xinhua said in a report on Thursday.

"Chinese and US law enforcement agencies exchanged information frequently, and China successfully traced down the

group thanks to the US tip-offs. After three months' hard work and tens of thousands miles of travel, China finally arrested more than 20 suspects and confiscated 11.9 kilograms of fentanyl, 19.1 kilograms of alprazolam and other drugs," the tabloid Global Times said in its report Thursday.

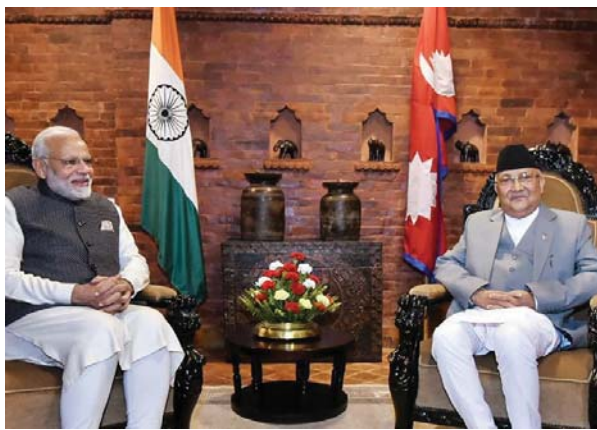
"The US notified China when they got the information, which propelled China to take swift action, and China also provided information of suspicious parcels to

the US so they checked those parcels at the customs," the GT report added.

According to the US's Centres for Disease Control, fentanyl overdose had killed more than 28000 people in the US. In December 2018, Beijing said it would reclassify fentanyl as a "controlled substance" following a meeting between Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Nepal cries foul over new India map

On the map, India's border cuts into Kalapani -- long a source of contention between the two countries, particularly because Indian troops have been deployed in the area for more than 50 years.



Nepal on Wednesday objected to a new map released by India that places the disputed area of Kalapani within Delhi's borders, saying it was "clear" the territory belonged to Kathmandu. On Saturday, India released the new map following its decision to split the state of Jammu and Kashmir into two administrative territories. On the map, India's border cuts into Kalapani -- long a source of contention between the two countries, particularly because Indian troops have been deployed in the area for more than 50 years. Nepal "is committed to protecting its international border," the foreign ministry said in a statement.

"Any border-related issue relating to the two friendly countries needs to be resolved through diplomatic channels on the basis of historical documents and evidence." "The Nepal government will not accept any unilateral decision," it added. An 1816 treaty established Nepal's western boundary with India along the Kali River, but border disputes have arisen over a discrepancy between the two sides over where the source of the river is located. Rajan Bhattarai, the foreign relations advisor to Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli, said a solution would be sought through talks. "We have to verify the authenticity of the map and examine the borderline from our concerned authorities and experts. Then we will start talks using our diplomatic channels," Bhattarai told Media.

Documents reveal how Facebook harnessed users' info, kept it from rivals: Report

Facebook has been adamant that "documents Six4Three gathered for this baseless case are only part of the story and are presented in a way that is very misleading without additional context."



Leaked documents from a civil suit against Facebook show how the social network aimed to employ user data as a tool for bargaining and to manipulate competitors, NBC News reported on Wednesday. Some 7,000 pages of documents reveal how Facebook chief Mark

Zuckerberg and his team harnessed users' personal information to reward part-

ners by giving them preferential data, while depriving rivals of the same sort of information, it reported. NBC said the emails, notes and other documents dated as far back as 2011 and were supposed to be kept out of the public eye pending the civil case in California.

They show, for example, how Amazon received special data access after purchasing advertising

on Facebook, while an app called MessageMe was denied data after growing so large it became a competitor, NBC reported. While acting out of self-motivation, Facebook planned to portray the moves as protective of user privacy, the documents showed. The lawsuit was filed by a now defunct startup called

Six4Three, which created a failed app called Pikinis. Through the app users could find Facebook pictures of people in bathing suits, but in order to work, the app's software had to be able to access the data of Facebook users and their friends. The suit accuses Facebook of abusing its power over user data, although most of the

documents filed in the case have been sealed by a judge at Facebook's request. Facebook has been adamant that "documents Six4Three gathered for this baseless case are only part of the story and are presented in a way that is very misleading without additional context." The social network contends that the suit by Six4Three is aimed at compelling it to provide the kind of data access that was taken advantage of in the Cambridge Analytica privacy scandal. Up to 87 million users potentially had their data hijacked by political consulting group Cambridge Analytica, which was working for Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign.

Pak's security establishment fearful of India's strategic encirclement: US Congressional report

For decades, Pakistan has played an active but negative role in Afghanistan, a Congressional report has said, asserting that Islamabad wants a weak government in Kabul. In its latest report on Afghanistan, the independent and bipartisan Congressional Research Service (CRS) identified Pakistan as the most important neighbour of Afghanistan. Pakistan, it said, has played an active, and by many accounts, a negative role in Afghan affairs for decades. "Pakistan's security services maintain ties to Afghan insurgent groups, most notably the Haqqani Network,

a US-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) that has become an official, semiautonomous component of the Taliban," CRS, which periodically prepares reports on issues of importance for Congressmen for them to make informed decisions, said. Afghan leaders, along with US military commanders, attribute much of the insurgency's power and longevity either directly or indirectly to Pakistani support, the report said, adding that President Donald Trump has accused Pakistan of "housing the very terrorists that we are fighting". US officials

have long identified militant safe havens in Pakistan as a threat to Afghanistan's security, though some Pakistani officials dispute the charge, it said "Pakistan may view a weak and destabilised Afghanistan as preferable to a strong, unified Afghan state (particularly one led by an ethnic Pashtun-dominated government in Kabul; Pakistan has a large and restive Pashtun minority)," the CRS said. However, instability in Afghanistan could rebound to Pakistan's detriment; Pakistan has struggled with indigenous Islamist militants of its own, the report added.

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Pak Hindu student raped before being murdered: Autopsy

The final-year student of Bibi Asifa Dental College in Sindh province was found dead on a cot by her friends on September 16 with a rope tied to her neck.

(News Agencies) A Pakistani Hindu dental college student, who was found dead in her hostel room in Sindh province, was raped before being murdered, the final postmortem report has found.

The final-year student of Bibi Asifa Dental College in Sindh province was found dead on a cot by her friends on September 16 with a rope tied to her neck.

The final postmortem report, which was issued by Chandka Medical College Hospital Woman Medico-Legal Officer Amrita on Wednesday, revealed that the girl was sexually abused before being murdered, the News International reported on Thursday. Her death was caused by suffocation. Asphyxial signs caused by a



ligature on the neck were seen. "Such signs are produced either in strangulation or hanging and are to be ascertained through circumstantial evidence as corroborative at the crime scene by state investigation authorities," the officer said. A DNA test confirmed the presence of male DNA profile indicated from semen residue on her clothes, and a vaginal swab tested positive for a forced sexual act, the report said.

ਪੰਜਾਬ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀਅਤ ਦਾ ਤਰਜਮਾਨ

ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਦੁਨੀਆ

Since April 2005 Editor: Shanjit Singh Thind PUNJABI DUNIYA Weekly

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ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਨੌਜਵਾਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ ਉਡਾਰੀ ਮਾਰਨ ਲਈ ਖਰਚੇ 27000 ਕਰੋੜ

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ਸੱਜਣ ਕੁਮਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਧਾਂ ਕੋਲੋਂ ਬਚਾ-ਬਚਾ ਕੇ ਰੱਖੇਗਾ ਜੇਲ੍ਹ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਾਸਨ

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Unattractive women and people who have a satisfying sex life are more likely to cheat, says study

A person's own attractiveness was negatively associated with infidelity among women but not men - meaning less attractive women were more likely to have an affair. A partner's attractiveness was negatively associated with infidelity among men but not women - meaning men were more likely to be unfaithful when their partners were less attractive.

(News Agencies) Women who are perceived as unattractive are more likely to cheat on their partners, while the opposite is true for men, according to a study that identifies predictors for whether your Valentine will be faithful in a long-term relationship.

The study by researchers from Florida State University in the US identified some of the strongest predictors of infidelity, including age, marital satisfaction, sexual satisfaction, attractiveness and history of short-term relationships.

Researchers found younger people and those less satisfied with their relationships were more likely to be unfaithful. People satisfied with sex in their relationship were more likely to engage in infidelity, perhaps suggesting they felt more positive about sex in general and would seek it out regardless of how they felt about their main relationship. Another predictor of infidelity was attractiveness. A person's own attractiveness was negatively associated with infidelity among women but not men - meaning less attractive women were more likely to have

an affair. A partner's attractiveness was negatively associated with infidelity among men but not women - meaning men were more likely to be unfaithful when their partners were less attractive.

A person's history of sex was a predictor of infidelity, too. Men who reported having more short-term sexual partners prior to marriage were more likely to have an affair, while the opposite was true for women. The research, published in the journal *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, is the first to find evidence of psychological responses that help a person avoid infidelity and stay in a long-term relationship. The team followed 233 newly married couples for up to three and half years and documented intimate details about their relationships, including marital satisfaction, long-term commitment, and whether they had engaged in infidelity and if they were still together.

Researchers tested two psychological processes that everyone shares in varying degrees: Attentional



Disengagement and Evaluative Devaluation of potential romantic partners. Disengagement from possible partners is the ability to direct attention away from an attractive person who could be considered a romantic option.

Devaluation of possible partners is a tendency to mentally downgrade the attractiveness of another person, even if he or she is especially good looking. The team tested newlyweds on those

processes by showing them photographs of highly attractive men and women, as well as average-looking men and women.

Researchers discovered that participants who quickly disengaged their attention from an attractive person were less likely to engage in infidelity. Individuals who looked away in as little as a few hundred milliseconds faster than average were nearly 50% less likely to have sex outside

marriage. Conversely, partners who took significantly longer to look away from romantic alternatives had a higher risk of infidelity, and their marriages were more likely to fail. The tendency to devalue, or downgrade, the attractiveness of potential romantic partners also lowered the risk of infidelity and raised the likelihood of maintaining the relationship. Faithful people evaluated romantic alternatives much more negatively.

Don't want to diet? **You can still lose weight by following this simple trick**

New research has found an easy way to bring down your Body Mass Index (BMI). Here's what it is.

(News Agencies) People who wolf down their food could lose weight simply by chewing longer and pausing between bites, study results suggested Tuesday. Research involving nearly 60,000 Japanese people showed a link between eating slower or faster, and losing or gaining weight. "Changes in eating speed can affect changes in obesity, BMI and waist circumference," a research duo from Japan's Kyushu University wrote in the journal *BMJ Open*. "Interventions aimed at reducing eating speed may be effective in preventing obesity and lowering the associated health risks."

BMI stands for Body Mass Index, a ratio of weight-to-height used to determine whether a person falls within a healthy range. The WHO considers someone with a BMI of 25 overweight, and 30 or higher obese. In line with recommendations by the Japanese Society for the Study of Obesity, however, a BMI of 25 was taken as obese for Japanese populations for the purposes of the study. The researchers analysed health insurance data from 59,717 individuals diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes — a form of the disease that generally hits in adulthood as a result of being overweight.

The participants had regular

check-ups from 2008 to 2013. Data captured included their age and gender, BMI, waist circumference, blood pressure, eating habits, alcohol consumption, and tobacco use. From the outset, the slow-eating group of 4,192 had a smaller average waist circumference, a mean BMI of 22.3, and fewer obese individuals — 21.5 percent of the total. By comparison, more than 44 percent of the fast-eating group of 22,070 people, was obese, with a mean BMI of 25.

The team also noted changes in eating speed over the six years, with more than half the trial group reporting an adjustment in one direction or the other. "The main results indicated



that decreases in eating speeds can lead to reductions in obesity and BMI," they found. Other factors that could help people lose weight, according to the data, included to stop snacking after dinner, and not to eat within two hours of going to bed. Skipping breakfast did not seem to have any effect.

Limitations of the study included that eating speed and other behaviours were self-reported. There was also no data on how much participants ate, or whether they exercised or not. Commenting on the research, Simon Cork of

Imperial College London said it "confirms what we already believe, that eating slowly is associated with less weight gain than eating quickly." This may be due to the fact that the satiety signal takes some time to travel from the stomach to the brain, and may arrive only after the fast eater has already consumed more than enough.

But he said that relying on the participants themselves to score whether they eat slowly, or fast, was "considerably subjective" and may skew the data.

Spend too much time on social media?

It can cause tension in your real life relationships

A survey showed teenagers from low-income families reported more physical fights, face-to-face arguments and trouble at school that spilled over from social media.

Even as effects of social media use on mental well-being is hotly debated, a new study says that spending too much time online can create problems in real life relationships of teenagers and vice versa. Results of a survey conducted by Professor Candice Odgers of University of California, Irvine and her colleagues showed teenagers from low-income families reported more physical fights, face-to-face arguments and trouble at school that spilled over from social media.

On the other hand, the

researchers found that adolescents from economically disadvantaged households are also more likely to be bullied and victimised in cyberspace. "The majority of young people appear to be doing well in the digital age, and many are thriving with the new opportunities that electronic media provides. But those who are already struggling offline need our help online too," Odgers said. In a commentary published in the journal *Nature*, Odgers argued that while smartphones should not be seen as universally bad, vulnerable teenagers experience greater negative

effects of life online. "What we're seeing now may be the emergence of a new kind of digital divide, in which differences in online experiences are amplifying risks among already vulnerable adolescents," said Odgers, who is also a fellow in Canadian Institute for Advanced Research's Child & Brain Development programme. For the last 10 years, Odgers has been tracking adolescents' mental health and their use of smartphones. In her survey of North Carolina schoolchildren, 48% of 11-year-olds said they owned a mobile phone as did eighty-five per cent



of 14-year-olds. The study showed that teenagers from families with a household income of less than \$35,000 per year spent three more hours a day on screen media watching TV and online videos than teenagers in families with an annual income of more than \$100,000. The increased screen time could also convert to more problems offline,

the findings showed. "The evidence so far suggests that smartphones may serve as mirrors reflecting problems teens already have. Those from low-income families said that social media experiences more frequently spilled over into real life, causing more offline fights and problems at school," Odgers said.

Think vaping is safe?

E-cigarette vapours are loaded with toxic metals and can cause cancer

A new study found significant amounts of toxic metals, including lead, leak from some e-cigarette heating coils and present in the aerosols inhaled by users. It can cause cancer and damage your brain.

It has come to light that e-cigarette vapours contain a significant amount of toxic metals, which can be dangerous. According to a study conducted by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, significant amounts of toxic metals, including lead, leak from some e-cigarette heating coils and are present in the aerosols inhaled by users. Previous studies found that users of e-cigarettes may be at higher risk of lung infection.

In the study, scientists examined e-cigarette devices owned by a sample of 56 users. They found that significant numbers of devices generated aerosols with potentially unsafe levels of lead, chromium, manganese and/or nickel. Chronic inhalation of these metals has been linked to lung, liver, immune, cardiovascular/brain damage, and even cancer.

"It's important for the FDA, e-cigarette companies, and

vapers to know that these heating coils, as currently made, seem to be leaking toxic metals — which then get into the aerosols that vapers inhale," said senior author, Ana María Rule. Vaping, the practice of inhaling this aerosol as if it were cigarette smoke, is now popular especially among teens, young adults and former smokers.

Vaping is popular in part because it provides the nicotine "hit" and the look and feel of tobacco-smoking but without smoking's extreme health risks. Evidence that vaping isn't entirely safe continues to accumulate, however. For the new study, Rule and her colleagues, including lead author Pablo Olmedo, recruited 56 daily e-cigarette users from vaping conventions and e-cigarette shops around Baltimore during the fall of 2015.

Working with participants' devices, which they brought to the researchers' lab at the Bloomberg School, the scientists tested for the

presence of 15 metals in the e-liquids in the vapers' refilling dispensers, the e-liquids in their coil-containing e-cigarette tanks and in the generated aerosols. Consistent with prior studies, they found minimal amounts of metals in the e-liquids within refilling dispensers, but much larger amounts of some metals in the e-liquids that had been exposed to the heating coils within e-cigarette tanks.

The difference indicated that the metals almost certainly had come from the coils. Most importantly, the scientists showed that the metal contamination carried over to the aerosols produced by heating the e-liquids. Of the metals significantly present in the aerosols, lead, chromium, nickel and manganese were the ones of most concern, as all are toxic when inhaled.

Almost 50% of aerosol samples had lead concentrations higher than health-based limits defined by the Environmental Protection



Agency. Similarly, median aerosol concentrations of nickel, chromium and manganese approached or exceeded safe limits. "These were median levels only," Rule said. "The actual levels of these metals varied greatly from sample to sample, and often were much higher than safe limits."

E-cigarette heating coils typically are made of nickel, chromium and a few other elements, making them the most obvious sources of metal contamination, although the source of the lead remains a mystery. Precisely how metals get from the coil into the surrounding e-liquid is another mystery. "We don't know yet whether metals are chemically leaching from the coil or

vaporising when it's heated," Rule said. The researchers did observe, however, that aerosol metal concentrations tended to be higher for e-cigarettes with more frequently changed coils — suggesting that fresher coils give off metals more readily.

The researchers also detected significant levels of arsenic, a metal-like element that can be highly toxic, in refill e-liquid and in the corresponding tank e-liquid and aerosol samples from 10 of the 56 vapers. How the arsenic got into these e-liquids is yet another mystery — and another potential focus for regulators. The findings from the study are published online in *Environmental Health Perspectives*.

Scientists REVERSE Alzheimer's in middle-aged mice and claim the drug could be used like a daily vitamin to prevent the disease

(News Agencies) Scientists have successfully reversed Alzheimer's in a middle-aged lab mouse - using the same method as a major clinical trial in humans which was called off yesterday.

The team at Cleveland Clinic admitted they were 'shocked' when their attempts to reduce amyloid plaque in mice completely eradicated the dangerous build-ups that slowly cripple the brain.

They claim their tests on a 20-month-old mouse - equivalent to a 50-year-old human - show it could be possible to halt the disease if it is caught decades earlier than usual.

Lead author Riqiang Yan envisions a future when these enzymes, known as BACE1 inhibitors, could be available as a vitamin that all humans take preventatively to stave off neurodegenerative disease.

However, just hours before Yan's paper was published today, Merck announced it had pulled the plug on its phase 3 clinical trial in early- and mid-stage Alzheimer's patients using

this same inhibitor after an interim review found more risks than benefits.

Already aware of the Merck failure, Yan told Daily Mail Online last night that he still believes BACE1 is the answer to preventing and treating Alzheimer's.

'We were surprised it worked so well, we saw complete reversal,' Yan, who will start as chair of the department of neuroscience at the University of Connecticut this spring, said.

'To our knowledge, this is the first observation of such a dramatic reversal of amyloid deposition in any study of Alzheimer's disease mouse models.'

BACE1 helps produce beta-amyloid peptide by cleaving amyloid precursor protein.

Drugs that inhibit BACE1 are therefore being developed as potential Alzheimer's disease treatments.

However, because BACE1 controls many important processes by cleaving proteins other than APP, these drugs

could have serious side effects. In many trials, mice completely lacking BACE1 suffer severe neurodevelopmental defects.

To investigate whether inhibiting BACE1 in adults might be less harmful, Yan and colleagues generated mice that gradually lose this enzyme as they grow older. To their surprise, the mice developed normally and appeared to remain perfectly healthy over time.

'If we can show the compound is safe, it would be available for preventative measures.'

'BACE inhibitors can function like a vitamin, you could give it out to people early on and people could take it comfortably for years.'

'Our tests on a 20-month-old mouse found no side effects, now we have to look at a much older mouse to see if this can work in later stages of disease.'

The findings could be a game changer for the pharmaceutical industry, which has had a rough ride with BACE1 inhibitors - although some analysts claim Merck's failure suggests we are



barking up the wrong tree.

On Tuesday, Merck announced in a statement that it has pulled the plug on a trial with patients given either a placebo, or 12mg or 40mg of verubecestat, once a day.

Roche did away with BACE1 inhibitors in 2013.

Eli Lilly also dropped the method in 2013, but a year later joined forces with AstraZeneca to try another version in early-stage patients, a similar age to the mice tested in Yan's new study. That is now in phase 3 clinical trials. Biogen and Eisai are also in advanced clinical trials testing

a similar but subtly different BACE inhibitor - E2609 - in early-stage patients.

Meanwhile, Amgen and Novartis are testing a BACE inhibitor known as CNP520, which they are testing on people at-risk of Alzheimer's, to see if it could work preventatively.

The race has been high-powered and fast-paced for years, but with so many trials in late stages - and Merck's most promising trial now out of the question - there is palpable excitement at who will be the next front-runner to score the jackpot and make a fortune.

Have you ever wondered why we blink?

Blinking is an omnipresent involuntary process that maintains stable and healthy vision



(News Agencies) Humans unconsciously trade off the loss of information during a blink with the physiological urge to blink, a study suggests. Blinking is an omnipresent involuntary process that maintains stable and healthy vision. With 15

blinks per minute on average, it is one of the most frequent human actions, researchers from Technische Universitat Darmstadt in Germany said.

However, during a single blink, our visual perception is interrupted for about a third of a second, they said. Although

our conscious perception suggests a continuous and stable world, about 10% of the time we are missing potentially important visual information from our surroundings.

For this reason it is advantageous, whether for our

ancestors roaming the savanna or the modern human crossing a busy road, to coordinate our blinking intelligently. Previous studies have revealed an intriguing multitude of additional factors influencing human blink rates. Blinking is closely intertwined with cognitive functions connected to dopamine, a neuromodulator involved in reward related behaviour and learning. In particular, blink rates are elevated when we are tired and are related to our activities, as they go up when we are talking and go down when we are reading.

While blinking is clearly related to these cognitive processes, so far it has been unknown, how blinking relates quantitatively to properties of our environment. Researchers led by professor Constantin Rothkopf from Technische Universitat Darmstadt, showed for the first time quantitatively, how blinking is related to environmental task

events. Participants in an experiment were instructed to detect short events presented on a computer monitor. The probability of an event occurring was systematically modified by the researchers to reveal participants' blinking strategies. Participants learned the hidden regularities of the visual events and progressively improved their performance of detecting the events. The analysis of the blinking behaviour showed that participants unconsciously blinked less and less the more probable they believed an event was about to occur. "The computational model we have developed is able to reproduce this behaviour," said PhD student David Hoppe, first author of the study.

"As the model also contains physiological parameters, which differ between individual participants, it is possible to predict the likelihood of times between two successive blinks," Hoppe said.

Ujda Chaman movie review

Sunny Singh's film is painfully long, fritters away its advantages

Sunny Singh's film can be lauded for picking a real subject, but the film fritters away its advantages and gives us a half-baked product.



Ujda Chaman
Director - Abhishek Pathak
Cast - Sunny Singh, Maanvi Gaagroo, Aishwarya Sakhuja, Atul Kumar, Grusha Kapoor

Ujda Chaman hardly had any buzz till around when its first poster released and the quirky theme registered. However, now that the film is out in theatres, it is clear it has bitten off more than it can chew. The film about receding hairline is bald in both its treatment and script, pun firmly intended. An official remake of 2017 Kannada film Ondu Motteya Kathe, Ujda Chaman starring Sunny Singh is to be lauded for picking a real subject, but the film fritters away its

advantages and gives us a half-baked product.

With premature balding as its subject, Ujda Chaman has its heart in the right place but never delves deep, happy to stay on the surface and revel in clichés. We blame the weak script. Here's taking a stab at the story: 30-year-old Chaman Kohli (Sunny Singh) is a Hindi professor over weekdays and a prospective groom looking for suitable match over the weekends. He has not much luck doing either, with his semi-bald pate being responsible for the state of his affairs. To top it all, an astrologer predicts that if Chaman doesn't get married within a year, a

lifetime of celibacy awaits him. His parents do everything possible to get him married, but most of the matrimonial meetings end up as ridicule fests.

Chaman tries the non-arranged marriage routes too – from dating apps to flirting with female professors but all in vain. Finally, when he finds a girl, Apsara (Maanvi Gaagroo) who loves him, he is not sure of her because of her weight issues. Whether Chaman will be able to rise above judging someone by their looks -- something he himself has dealt with most of his life — forms the premise of the film.

One of the major problems with Ujda Chaman is that it's not outright funny, failing to do justice to the genre it's trying hard to sell -- comedy. There are some scenes and lines in the first half that will make you laugh especially the true-blue Punjabi flavour and accent from Rajouri Garden, a West Delhi locality where most affluent Punjabis reside. However, Ujda

Chaman falls short of being a laugh riot as the jokes are uneven and spread thin.

The film makes you uncomfortable when it deals with body-shaming and makes it sound trivial. Just like the posters of the film normalized calling a man 'takla', Maanvi's Gaagroo's character is time and again addressed disparagingly as 'bhains', 'moti' etc.

The film ultimately force-feeds you the concept of inner beauty with a boring monologue in the climax after spending its entire length showing us romance of a balding man and an overweight woman. Why is the match ideal? They are both lacking in some way, according to the society's unrealistic standards of physical beauty.

Performances are decent but easily forgettable. Their impact lasts only till the climax. Sunny Singh of Sonu Ke Titu Ki Sweeti fame delivers a sincere performance, but is let down by his wooden and poker-faced expressions. This is

the first film where Sunny doesn't play the hero's friend but a solo lead that is practically there in every frame and his character definitely needed more weight.

Maanvi Gaagroo, on the other hand, shines as an overweight girl who is confident in her skin and gives two hoots about what the world thinks or says about her looks. She brings freshness to the screen and you wish the makers gave her a little more screen time. You only wish that her love story with Chaman, which was rushed up in the film, was handled with more grace. Considering her character is strong-headed in her approach, it's tough to believe how easily she falls for a guy and agrees to marry him without really knowing him well.

Atul Kumar and Grusha Kapoor as Chaman's parents deliver some of the winning and hilarious moments. It won't be an exaggeration to say that they are given the best lines to say on screen. For

instance when a potential mom-in-law asks Chaman, 'Beta aap kya karte hain', his mom jumps in and says, 'Yeh WhatsApp karta hai'. Or when during a conversation, Grusha says, 'Main apne bête ke liye aisi bahu laungi ki Rajouri Garden ki rooh kaamp jaye' to which Atul replies, 'soch le, sochne par GST nahi lagta', trigger soft humour. There are a plenty of mispronounced words — hair transplant as 'hair plant' or risky as 'riksy' and the struggle to utter tougher words like 'testosterone and metabolism' correctly in one go — intended to create funny moments and they succeed to some extent. Karishma Sharma and Aishwarya Sakhuja in extended cameos play their parts well despite characters not being properly fleshed out characters. Shukla is a wasted cameo to say the least. Chaman's onscreen brother, Gagan Arora flaunts the West Delhi swag with much ease and has a charming screen presence.

Drive movie review

Sushant Singh Rajput's Fast & Furious clone is one of Netflix's worst mistakes ever

Sushant Singh Rajput and Jacqueline Fernandez star in a cheap imitation of Fast & Furious, which has to be one of Netflix India's worst mistakes ever.



Drive
Cast: Sushant Singh Rajput, Jacqueline Fernandez, Boman Irani, Pankaj Tripathi
Director: Tarun Mansukhani

The only reason Drive exists is because someone watched all the Fast & Furious films, ended the binge with Ocean's Eleven and Italian Job and thought 'If they could do it, so can I'. How the idea was bought by a studio as market-savvy as Dharma is something we

will never know. However, they cut their losses in time and wriggled out of a theatrical release, handing it off to Netflix instead.

The Sushant Singh Rajput and Jacqueline Fernandez movie now joins the ranks of Chopsticks and Brij Mohan Amar Rahe – films that leave you wondering if the execs of streaming giant were having an off day or if the problem lies deeper. Things are so dire that you know from the first shot that

this is one drive you should have avoided. It begins in the worst way possible – with an in-your-face product placement and a cut-price Fast & Furious feel to it. Blondes dancing in hot pants and shirtless men showing off their six-packs as cars vroom around them – you get the picture.

Jacqueline Fernandez rules over this hub when she is not plotting heists. The 'kachra' in her engine is a man called King who is out-heisting her, and if good caper films are anything to by – without much finesse. Her latest plan involves a robbery in Rashtrapati Bhawan where an unscrupulous Director of Monetary Restrictions (Vibha Chibber) – now that sounds like a post-demonetisation designation, but I digress – and her deputy Hamid (Pankaj Tripathi) have

hidden their ill-gotten gains. However, PMO is onto King and has put their best man on the job, Irfan (Boman Irani).

All good caper films are a combination of plot finesse and suavity. Heist films, as a genre, come with their implausibilities – you admire the good ones for them, the terrible ones grate. In all the double-crossing and triple-crossing, Drive drops quite a few beats. While there are some moments of thrill where you are truly invested in the film, they are so rare that you marvel when they come.

However, it is in the suavity department that Drive is truly lacking. Sushant – who has some truly good performances to his name – has a smug, pouty expression

stuck on his face throughout Drive. Try as he might, he just cannot wipe that off and start acting. Jacqueline simply doesn't have the acting chops to carry off the Mata Hari role makers have dreamt up for her. Pankaj and Boman try but realize somewhere in the middle that the effort is just not worth it.

But then, why should they put in all the work when everyone is having a ball. The lyrics and dialogues appear to have been written in English and when they couldn't find anyone who can speak passable Hindi, they dialed for Google Translate. There is a song called 'Karma Badi Kameeni Hai' whose literal English translation 'Karma is a B**ch' may actually ring a bell. Then Sushant mouths this

stilted 'Mujhpar kissi ka adhikaar nahi hai'; why not make him say 'Nobody owns me' and be done with it?

The film's CGI is real deal-breaker. The moment Drive steps on the gas and chases kick in, the film starts looking like a bad video game. The only response to the god-awful visual effects could be helpless laughter. The stakes are so low that Drive never recovers – especially as they come at what are supposed to be the most thrilling moments in the film. The fact that there are scenes 'inspired' by Fast & Furious does not help. While I cannot give you more without ruining the moments, you will know when you see them and then rue the discount version.

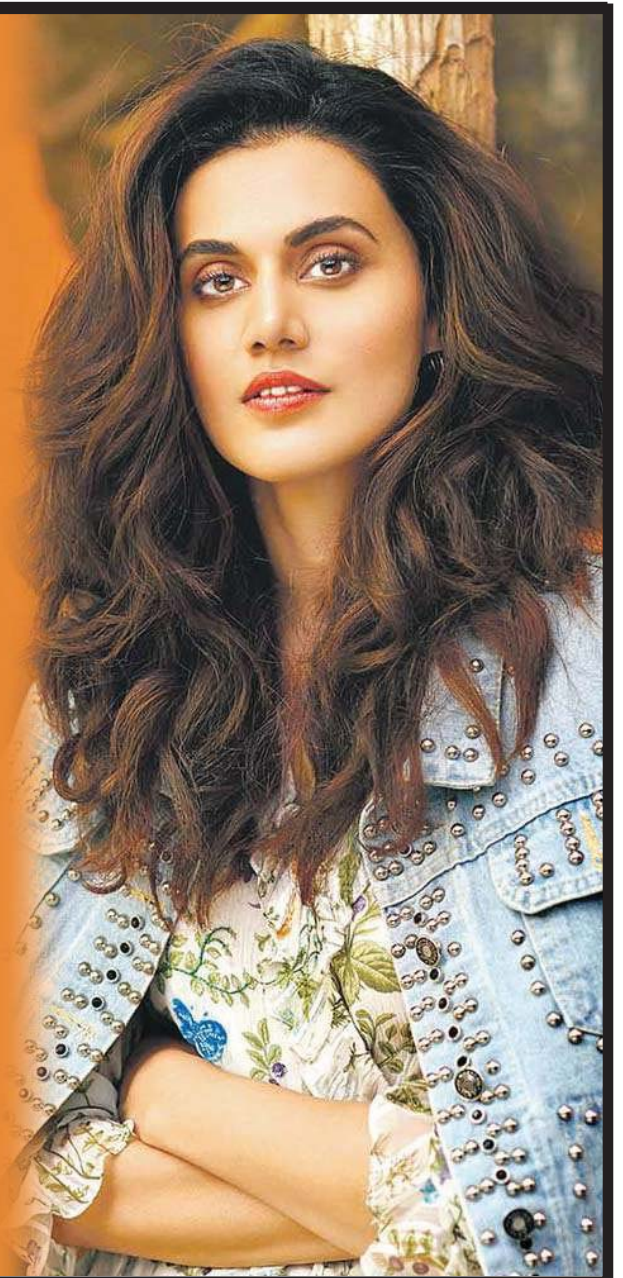
I managed to reduce weight because I was outside Delhi: Taapsee Pannu

Delhi gives you an edge and a unique style over others in Bollywood, believes actor Taapsee Pannu who was born and brought up in the Capital. "Delhi has a very particular character I feel and Delhiites have certain characteristics. We have spunk and style that is different from other cities. When I engage with people from other states, they recognise that I am a Delhiite," says Pannu. Being a Delhi-based girl, she feels she has a better command over language, specially Hindi. "Delhi girls are very street smart. We know it might be a borderline rude at times, but we also know how to keep things away. Thanks to this city. And the fact that I speak Hindi much better than others, my pronunciation, baat

karne ka tarika, sentence form karne ka tarika, shabad use karne ka tarika is on point. Not every actor is well equipped with the language."

Known for her films such as Pink (2016), Mission?Mangal (2019), Naam Shabana (2017) and many more, Pannu was an engineering student and started modelling in her college days. She used to be a big time foodie but after moving to Mumbai, she stopped having junk food. She says, "Mein weight reduce kar payi kyunki mein Delhi se bahar nikal gai thi. Mein Dilli mein rehti to nahi kar pati. I literally stopped eating a lot of unhealthy food because I am out of Delhi. It doesn't taste the same and wasn't worth so much calories, that's the smile logic. I don't eat chole bhature outside Delhi. I don't like

it. I haven't gol-gappe outside, its not worth it,"Pannu had no plans to be an actor and she had no interest in movies. It's during her college days, she started going to theatres with her friends to watch movies. "My parents don't really watch films. We were never taken out for a movie outing. I could really count on my finger tips the movies I have watched before college and that too I watched when sitting for lunch and dinner at home and whatever comes at TV, we watch. It changed in college because my friends want to go out and watch a movie. That's when films came into my life, honestly. That's when I started going to theatres. I am probably the least informed in terms of cinema, as compared to my co-stars," says the actor.



Fatima Sana Shaikh is set to entertain her fans with her quirky comedy, Bhoot Police

After winning hearts with her diligence and versatility, Fatima Sana Shaikh has proved with her craftsmanship that she is here to stay. The actress whose every performance is a testimony of her sheer on-screen talent is all set to explore her comical side in her next project.

Slipping into characters that were mentally as well as physically exhausting, Fatima has made a huge impact as Geeta Phogat in the critically acclaimed drama, Dangal, where she portrayed the role of an Indian wrestler fulfilling her father's dream of winning gold. She was then seen in a challenging role as an archer fighter and warrior princess in the action thriller, Thugs of Hindostan. She will be seen next on the big screen in Bhoot Police opposite Saif Ali Khan where she is all set to unleash her humorous side. To get into the soul and heart of the character, Fatima has already started preparations for it. Sharing on the same, Fatima shared, "I've been involved in multiple reading sessions with our director Pavan Kirpalani and the writer Pooja. Bhoot Police as a horror-comedy genre is exciting to explore because the process is slightly different from my past preps (for drama and action)."

Debuting as a child artist in Chachi 420 - the ultimate laughter riot with the legend Kamal Hasan, Fatima draws inspirations from eminent actors from comic spheres. "I enjoy watching Akshay Kumar, Kamal Hassan, Johnny Lever, Paresh Rawal and Om Puri for their comic timing. Its a treat to watch them; they are that amazing! The role has come to me at the right time. I want to explore different characters and genres now," she further adds. Apart from horror-comedy Bhoot Police starring Saif Ali Khan and Ali Fazal, the actress will also be seen Anurag Basu's next and she is exhilarated for her first-ever collaboration with Anurag Basu and Rajkumar Rao.

Harbhajan Singh, Irfan Pathan to make Tamil movie debuts



Cricketers Harbhajan Singh and Irfan Pathan will soon make their Kollywood debuts. According to media reports, Harbhajan Singh, who already has a Tamil Nadu connection because of his stint with the Chennai Super Kings (CSK), will make his Kollywood debut with the movie Dikkiloona. The film, starring Santhanam, is directed by Karthik Yogi.

Dikkiloona is rumoured to be a science fiction movie. The film will see Santhanam donning a triple role as the hero, villain and comedian. The director has refused to divulge further details about Harbhajan Singh's role in the film saying it will be one of the many surprises that he has in store for Tamil movie goers. Harbhajan Singh has already made his mark in movies as he was part Bollywood film Mujhse Shaadi Karogi and Punjabi films Second Hand Husband and Bhaji in Problem.






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5 of 2019's biggest box office busts



(News Agencies) The year 2019 has been a big one for film. With six flicks having earned over a billion dollars at the box office and "Avengers: Endgame" earning more than any other movie in history, you'd think there would be a little love to go around for other movies — especially franchise tentpoles — but that is not guaranteed. Here are five of 2019's most notable box office bombs:
(Contd on page 23)



Walgreens' drone delivery 'fully operational' in Virginia skies: How it works

(Contd on page 23)

Bolivia mayor dragged through streets, has hair cut by protesters as election violence swells

Sister Lucy Kalappura, who took part in a protest by nuns belonging to Missionaries of Jesus Congregation, seeking the arrest of Bishop Franco Mulakkal, accused of raping a nun, was expelled by the Franciscan Clarist Congregation in August this year.



(News Agencies) The mayor of a small town in Bolivia has become the latest victim of violence in the country that has seen violent street clashes intensifying over the country's disputed election nearly three weeks ago. Officials said Wednesday that a third person was killed in street clashes between supporters and foes of President Evo Morales, Bolivia's first indigenous president, who has accused the opposition of trying to stage a coup.
(Contd on page 23)

One of FBI's Most Wanted fugitives offers surrender



(News Agencies) One of the FBI's Most Wanted fugitives says he wants to surrender, but claims his offers are being ignored by the United States government. Afzal 'Bobby' Khan has been on the run since 2014, accused of running a sham luxury car dealership in Ramsey, New Jersey, where he ripped off super-rich clientele and banks. Investigators say Khan, who once appeared on the "Real Housewives of New Jersey" TV show, would get customers to sign off on auto loans priced higher than some houses -- but for some of the sales he didn't have the car title, and for others he never delivered the car.
(Contd on page 23)

