

## 'The weirdest election I've ever been a part of': How the GOP almost blew the House

Abortion and primary trouble were among the factors that pushed back historical trends and Biden's approval ratings



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## The World Population Just Hit 8 Billion

United Nations model predicts a slower rate of population growth than was previously estimated



(South Asian Insider Bureau) According to the models of the United Nations (UN), the world's population will reach 8 billion today—a mere 12 years since it passed 7 billion, and less than a century after the planet supported just 2 billion people. The latest UN population update, released in July this year, also revises its long-term projection down from 11 billion people to 10.4 billion by 2100.

(Contd. on page 23)

3 dead bodies with torture marks washed ashore at a popular Mexican tourist area

US State Department had warned Americans last month not to travel to Acapulco



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## Climate Change

Himalayan Glacial Retreat, Variable Monsoon Major Threats To India, Says Report at COP-27



Entire Story on Page 21

Air India To Pay \$121.5 Million To Passengers & \$1.4 Million Fine to US in Tickets Refund Delay

Air India is among the six airlines that have agreed to cough up a total of over \$600 million as refunds, the US Department of Transportation said on Monday



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# Chief Information Officer of Publicly Traded Pharmaceutical Company Charged for Insider Trading Scheme

(South Asian Insider Bureau) Chief Information Officer of Publicly Traded Pharmaceutical Company Charged for Insider Trading Scheme An indictment was unsealed today charging a Pennsylvania man for his alleged role in an insider trading scheme involving the securities of Mylan N.V. (Mylan), a publicly traded pharmaceutical company. According to court documents, Ramkumar Rayapureddy, 54, of Upper Saint Clair, conspired with his former colleague, Dayakar Mallu, to fraudulently trade in Mylan securities

based on material nonpublic inside information Rayapureddy obtained through his position at Mylan in advance of market-moving corporate announcements for their own financial gain. At the time of the alleged scheme, Rayapureddy was Mylan's chief information officer. From 2017 through 2019, Rayapureddy allegedly tipped Mallu on multiple occasions with material nonpublic inside information about Mylan concerning, among other things, FDA drug approvals, financial earnings, and a merger with a

division of Pfizer, Inc. Mallu allegedly used the inside information to execute trades in the company's securities and in return Rayapureddy or his designee received cash payments.

Rayapureddy is charged with one count of conspiracy to commit securities fraud and three counts of securities fraud. If convicted, he faces a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison on each of the securities fraud charges and five years in prison on the conspiracy charge. A federal district court judge will determine any

sentence after considering the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors. In September 2021, Mallu pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit securities fraud and aiding in the preparation of a false tax return and is awaiting sentencing. Assistant Attorney General Kenneth A. Polite, Jr. of the Justice Department's Criminal Division and Assistant Director in Charge Steven M. D'Antuono of the FBI Washington Field Office made the announcement. The FBI is investigating the case.

## Louisiana Man Pleads Guilty to Conspiring to Compel Labor by Three Minors and to Transporting a Minor with Intent to Engage in Criminal Sexual Activity



(South Asian Insider Bureau) Darnell Fulton, 38, of Pineville, Louisiana, pleaded guilty today to conspiring to compel labor by three minors and to transporting a minor with intent to engage in criminal sexual activity.

According to the plea agreement, between June 2016 and May 2019, the defendant used violence, sexual abuse, withholding of food, degradation and intimidation to coerce multiple minors to work for his brownie baking business and provide him with the business profits. The defendant required the victims to travel to as many as 20-30 locations a day, such as plazas, car dealerships, law firms, restaurants and parking lots, in order to sell brownies. The victims worked late into the night, either selling or baking the brownies, and sold them during the day instead of going to school. In fact, the victims typically worked seven days a week with very few breaks, and had to meet a sales quota every day. The defendant regularly assaulted the victims, especially if they did not meet his sales quotas. For example, the defendant frequently required the victims to get on their hands and knees on rice and stay in a pushup or plank position for hours, and he often

whipped them with a belt if they got out of proper form. He also forced the minor victims to perform sexual acts with him and others, and transported them across state lines in order to engage in criminal sexual activity. "Human trafficking is a heinous crime that targets some of the most vulnerable people in our communities, cruelly exploiting the victims for their labor and services," said Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke for the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division. "This conviction makes clear that the Department of Justice will prosecute those who use violence, psychological abuse, and emotional manipulation to compel the labor and services of their victims. We encourage survivors of forced labor, including children, to report forced labor complaints to authorities." "This case is proof that human trafficking doesn't just happen in other countries," said U.S. Attorney Brandon B. Brown for the Western District of Louisiana. "But in fact, human trafficking can be happening right in our own neighborhoods and communities without us even realizing it.

## Owner and Employees of the Sayville Motor Lodge Indicted for Sex Trafficking and Managing a Drug Premises

### Defendants Conspired to Traffic Women, Including a Minor



(South Asian Insider Bureau) An indictment was unsealed today in federal court in Central Islip charging Narendarakuma Dadarwala, his wife Shardaben Dadarwala, their son Jigar Dadarwala, Ashokbhai Patel, and Himanshu, Inc. d/b/a Sayville Motor Lodge with sex trafficking conspiracy. The Dadarwalas, Patel, and Himanshu, Inc. are also charged with managing a drug premises, and Narendarakuma Dadarwala is charged with distribution of proceeds of prostitution and narcotics businesses. Patel was arrested yesterday in Nebraska and will be arraigned in the Eastern District of New York at a later date. The other defendants were arrested this morning and will be arraigned this afternoon before United States Magistrate Judge Lee G. Dunst. A fifth co-conspirator remains at large. Breon Peace, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, Michael J. Driscoll, Assistant Director-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York Field

Office (FBI), Rodney K. Harrison, Commissioner, Suffolk County Police Department (SCPD), and Raymond A. Tierney, Suffolk County District Attorney, announced the indictment and arrests.

"As alleged, the defendants made the Sayville Motor Lodge a money-making refuge for prostitution and narcotics trafficking, and a blight on the surrounding community," stated United States Attorney Peace. "With these arrests, we send a clear message that our Office will prosecute those who use motels or any other venue as their base of operations for trafficking human beings and drugs."

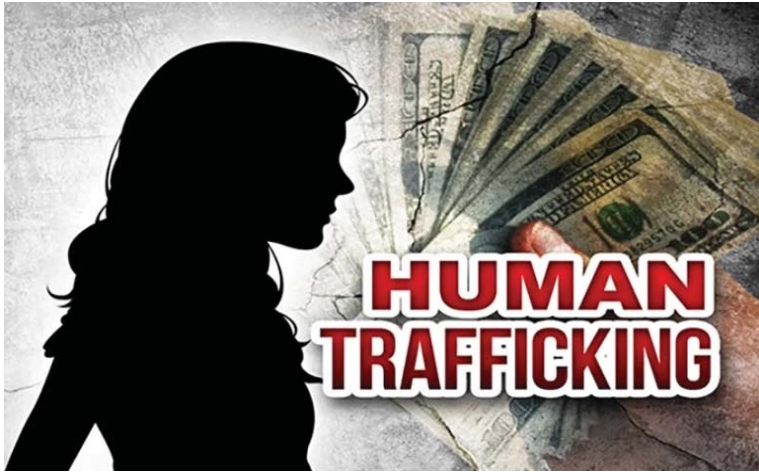
Mr. Peace also thanked the United States Marshal Service, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Office, the Nassau County District Attorney's Office, United States Customs and Border Protection, and Homeland Security Investigations for their assistance.

"We allege the owner and employees of the Sayville Motor Lodge looked the other way when pimps trafficked human beings in their hotel. More

egregiously, we allege they took money from those pimps and drug dealers, who beat and abused the women involved in front of them. Other hotel owners who operate in a similar fashion should take heed, we will hold them accountable for their actions in allowing sex trafficking to take place in their establishments. We're asking anyone who is a victim of human trafficking, or believes they know of someone who is, to call us at 1-800-CALL-FBI," stated FBI Assistant Director-in-Charge Driscoll. "From the outside, the Sayville Motor Lodge appeared to be a typical roadside motel, but in reality, there was far more than just overnight stays occurring there," stated SCPD Commissioner Harrison. "The owners and employees facilitated sex trafficking and drug sales for financial gain at the expense of women, including a minor. We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to stop those who exploit victims of human trafficking and will continue to help these victims receive the services they need to get their lives back on track."



# Guatemalan National Sentenced for Smuggling Unaccompanied Child into the United States



(South Asian Insider Bureau) A Guatemalan national was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Kenneth Marra on Nov. 3 to 36 months in prison in the Southern District of Florida for smuggling an unaccompanied 15-year-old child into the United States for financial gain. The

defendant was convicted by federal jury in July 2022. According to the evidence presented in court, Julio Ruiz Chuta, 35, was familiar with the child victim and child's family since they were from the same village in Guatemala. The defendant told the child's

parents that he could help the child obtain better educational and work opportunities in the United States versus the poor opportunities that existed in Guatemala. The parents believed that the defendant would sincerely help them since he had been to the United States before and he promised to care for their child. Consequently, the parents allowed the child to travel to the United States and permitted the defendant to act as his guardian in the United States even though they were not related. After the child passed illegally through the southern border of the United States and presented himself to authorities, he was placed in a shelter. The defendant assured appropriate authorities

that he would care for the child by enrolling the child in school and providing a place to live, and that he would not impose a debt upon the child. However, the defendant did impose a debt upon the child and his family after the child arrived in Florida. Further, the defendant charged the family interest and pressured them to pay, causing the child to work instead of attending school. The defendant also caused the family to leverage their own Guatemalan property to acquire a loan to repay the outstanding debt.

"This defendant exploited a child and the child's family after falsely telling authorities that he would provide food, shelter, and better educational opportunities, all so he could

make money off the child and his family," said Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke for the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division. "The Department of Justice remains committed to vindicating the rights of vulnerable members of our society and will continue to prosecute those who cruelly exploit their labor and services." "It is shameful that situations like this involving children continue to occur," said U.S. Attorney Juan Antonio Gonzalez for the Southern District of Florida. "The strain these types of cases put on a family is immeasurable. We will continue to go after these perpetrators with every resource available." Homeland Security Investigations and the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office investigated the case.

## Long Island Businesswoman Convicted of Obstructing the Internal Revenue Service, Filing False Tax Returns, and Structuring Cash Deposits

**Defendant Hid Cash Income to Evade Taxes, Filed False Tax Returns and Obstructed the Internal Revenue Service**

(South Asian Insider Bureau) Earlier today, a federal jury in Central Islip returned a guilty verdict on all five counts of superseding indictment charging Lorraine Pilitz, also known as "Lorraine Christie," and "Lorraine Storms" with illegally structuring financial transactions, corruptly obstructing the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and filing false tax returns. The verdict followed a two-week trial before United States District Judge Joanna Seybert. Breon Peace, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, and Thomas Fattorusso, Acting Special Agent-in-Charge, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation, New York (IRS-CI), announced the verdict.

"For years the defendant thought she could get away with hiding substantial amounts of cash and income, impeding the Internal Revenue Service, and cheating her employees, but the jury saw through the lies and has held her responsible for her actions," stated United States Attorney Peace. "Business owners who place greed above following the rule of law will face the consequences."

Mr. Peace thanked the Suffolk County Police Department's Treasury Enhanced Prosecution Program for their assistance with the case.

"Lorraine Pilitz set up a

complicated scheme to hide hundreds of thousands of dollars from the IRS by grossly underreporting her income and having an 'off-the-books' payroll. As the investigative arm of the IRS, IRS Criminal Investigation is strategically positioned to track down all those who look to steal from the U.S. Treasury and the American public to line their

own pockets," said Thomas M. Fattorusso, Special Agent in Charge of IRS-CI New York. As proven at trial, Pilitz owned and operated several automobile-related businesses on Long Island. Financial institutions are required to file a Currency Transaction Report (CTR) with the IRS for each transaction

in excess of \$10,000. Between 2011 and 2013, the defendant routinely structured cash deposits to avoid the required CTR filings – depositing cash amounts just under \$10,000. As a result of Pilitz's scheme, hundreds of thousands of dollars were concealed from the IRS. As part of the same

scheme to conceal her income, Pilitz also diverted hundreds of thousands of dollars of business checks into her and her family's personal bank accounts, maintained "off-the-books" payrolls, failed to file personal and corporate tax returns, and filed false tax returns that severely underreported her income.

## Long Island Man Pleads Guilty to \$3 Million Bank Loan Scheme

(South Asian Insider Bureau) Earlier today, in federal court in Central Islip, Gary Confredo, also known as "Gary Conte," the former operator of Goldstar Financial Management Corp. (Goldstar), a financial services business based in Commack, New York, pleaded guilty to a criminal information charging him with conspiracy to commit bank fraud in connection with a scheme to defraud Bank of America of more than \$3.2 million in loans and lines of credit that were obtained under false pretenses. The proceeding was held before United States Magistrate Judge Lee G. Dunst. When sentenced, Confredo faces up to 30 years in prison. As part of his guilty plea, Confredo agreed to forfeit approximately \$140,000 and to pay restitution in an amount to be determined by the Court at his sentencing.

Breon Peace, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, and Daniel Brubaker, Inspector-in-Charge, United States Postal Inspection Service, New York Division (USPIS), announced the guilty plea.



"As the defendant admitted, he selfishly manipulated the trust of his clients and lied to financial institutions simply to line his own pockets. He will now face consequences for his greed," stated United States Attorney Peace. "This Office stands committed to prosecuting criminals, whether they hurt someone physically or financially."

"Mr. Confredo defrauded Bank of America of millions of dollars while on supervised release from a previous conviction. With his guilty plea today, he has taken responsibility for his greed and hopefully will stop the revolving door on his life of crime. Any time the U.S. Mail is used to

commit and/or further a crime, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service will be there to see that those responsible are brought to justice" stated USPIS Inspector in Charge, Daniel Brubaker.

According to court filings and facts presented at the plea proceeding, between November 2016 and October 2019, Confredo conspired with others to submit fraudulent applications for commercial loan and lines of credit to Bank of America on behalf of Goldstar clients, who agreed to pay Confredo a portion of any loan that he secured on their behalf. To manipulate the application process, Confredo submitted altered tax returns and bank statements that falsely inflated the clients' incomes and assets and allowed them to qualify for loans and lines of credit under Bank of America's lending criteria. As a result of Confredo's scheme, Bank of America issued approximately \$3.2 million in loans and lines of credit to Goldstar's clients and sustained losses of approximately \$1 million when those loans and lines of credit were not repaid.



# Instagram Personality Known as “Jay Mazini” Pleads Guilty to Wire Fraud, Wire Fraud Conspiracy and Money Laundering

**Defendant Admits Perpetrating Fraudulent Schemes, Including Investment Scheme that Bilked Muslim-American Community Out of Over \$8 Million**



(South Asian Insider Bureau) Earlier today, Jebara Igbara, also known as “Jay Mazini,” pleaded

guilty in federal court in Brooklyn to a three count information charging him with wire fraud, wire fraud conspiracy and money laundering. As set forth in the information, up until March 2021, Igbara maintained a popular Instagram account under the name “Jay Mazini,” where he would post videos depicting, among other things, occasions during which he would hand out large amounts of cash to various individuals as gifts. In reality, Igbara was perpetrating overlapping fraud schemes, scamming investors out of at least \$8 million. Breon Peace, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, Michael J. Driscoll, Assistant Director-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York Field Office (FBI), and Thomas

Fattorusso, Special Agent-in-Charge, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation, New York (IRS-CI) announced the guilty plea. “With today’s plea, the defendant has admitted to leveraging his Instagram popularity to prey upon innocent investors and steal at least \$8 million of their hard-earned money,” stated United States Attorney Peace. “Together with our agency partners, this Office is committed to bringing scammers to justice.” “As he admitted today, Igbara deliberately operated multiple scams to cheat a multitude of investors out of their money. The FBI and our law enforcement partners are committed to stopping fraudsters

of all types and holding them accountable in the criminal justice system,” stated FBI Assistant Director-in-Charge Driscoll. “All the victims in this case were promised something that was too good to be true. Those in the Ponzi scheme were all assured a high rate of return in a short amount of time, while the victims of the Bitcoin advance fee scheme were guaranteed above current market value for their Bitcoin. This multi-million dollar case is a reminder for anyone thinking of investing: Be skeptical of any investments with larger than life promises, because if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is,” stated IRS-CI Special Agent-in-Charge Fattorusso.

## Long Island Man Sentenced to 28 Years' Imprisonment for Creating and Distributing Child Pornography



(South Asian Insider Bureau) Earlier today, at the federal courthouse in Central Islip, United States District Judge Joanna Seybert sentenced Christopher Bertsch to 28 years in prison for sexual exploitation of a child. As part of his sentence, Bertsch must register as a sex offender upon his release from prison and not have unsupervised contact with minors. Bertsch pleaded guilty to the charge in November 2020. Breon Peace, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, and Michael J. Driscoll, Assistant-Director-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York Field Office (FBI), announced the sentence.

“Today’s sentence removes a dangerous predator who not only abused minors and created videos of it but, horrifically, also operated a chat room where he

instructed adults on how to abuse minors and to create and

share images of it,” stated United States Attorney Peace. “The outstanding undercover work of the FBI made this prosecution possible. I urge parents and caregivers to encourage their children to tell a trusted adult if anyone asks them to engage in inappropriate behavior. Protecting children and holding those who harm vulnerable victims accountable for their actions are priorities of our Office.” As set forth in the government’s sentencing memorandum and other court

filings as well as on the record in court proceedings, Bertsch sexually abused an 18-month-old toddler, created child pornography with that victim and others, and generated a large collection of child pornography, including what he created and what he received from members of the chat room he operated. Bertsch’s child pornography trove included dozens of videos and hundreds of images of child pornography depicting the defendant engaged in sexual conduct with children. An analysis of his chat room activity

revealed that Bertsch sent the images of himself abusing children to others. In addition, in the chat room he operated, Bertsch instructed other adults on how to initiate and carry out sexual abuse of children, while recording it at the same time. Admission to Bertsch’s chat room required photographic proof of the applicant with a minor under their control. Bertsch shared photos of his sexual abuse of children and encouraged others to engage in such abuse and record it for his viewing.

## Former Manager of Long Island Catering Hall Sentenced to 72 Months for Forced Labor Defendant Threatened Filipino Nationals with Arrest and Deportation

(South Asian Insider Bureau) Earlier today, in federal court in Central Islip, Roberto Villanueva was sentenced by United States District Judge Joanna Seybert to 72 months in prison for his role in the forced labor conspiracy that took place at the Thatched Cottage in Centerport, New York. The defendant pleaded guilty to forced labor and forced labor conspiracy on February 5, 2020 and has been incarcerated since his arrest on December 10, 2017. Breon Peace, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York; Michael Alfonso, Acting Special Agent-in-Charge, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), New York; Jonathan

Mellone, Special Agent-in-Charge, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, New York (DOL-OIG); and Patricia A. Menges, Director, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, New York Asylum Office (USCIS), announced the sentence. “Villanueva exploited his victims’ immigration status, promising them the American dream, but instead threatening arrest or deportation if they didn’t work 16 hours a day, often unpaid, sleeping on bug infested mattresses covered in garbage bags, without heat or hot water,” stated United States Attorney Peace. “This sentence highlights our Office’s commitment to bringing abusers

to justice.” “Villanueva knowingly manipulated these workers using bait-and-switch tactics to coerce and control them, forcing them to live in squalid conditions with a constant threat of physical harm if they failed to comply with his ever-escalating demands. Today’s sentencing sends a strong message that human lives are not commodities and these workers deserved dignity and respect. HSI is committed to working together with our partners to fight human trafficking in all its forms, including labor trafficking and exploitation to prevent abuses like this,” said Acting Special Agent in-Charge Alfonso for Homeland Security Investigations in New York.





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# RSS Magazine 'Organiser' Accuses Amazon Of Funding Religious Conversions In Northeast India

RSS and Narendra Modi's BJP government have been critical of Amazon and its founder Jeff Bezos, particularly over his ownership of The Washington Post

(News Agency) The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)-linked weekly Organiser has accused the e-commerce giant Amazon of funding religious conversions in Northeast India. In its latest issue, the Organiser has accused Amazon of funding conversions to Christianity in Northeast India.

Sharing the magazine cover on Twitter, Organiser wrote, "Crackdown on foreign Christian missionaries by certain Northeast governments exposes the sinister designs, visa violations, and corporate nexus in changing the demography of the region."

Crackdown on foreign Christian missionaries by certain North East Governments exposes the sinister designs, visa violations, and corporate nexus in changing the demography of the region. The issue carries two stories addressing the issue, titled Cross Connection and Nexus of Foreign Proselytisers. The 'Cross' is a reference to the Christian Cross.

The Organiser also said Amazon could also be involved in money laundering. "E-commerce giant Amazon is financing the Christian conversion

module run by American Baptist Church (ABM). There is a possibility of a money laundering ring run by multinational companies and ABM to fund India's huge missionary conversion mission," said Organiser.

The Organiser further said the

Social Justice Forum of Arunachal Pradesh had

alleged that Amazon was "continuously

funding the All India Mission (AIM), the frontal organisation of ABM, through its foundation Amazon Smile".

"Amazon is sponsoring the conversion module of All India Mission by donating money against every purchase by an Indian," the magazine alleged, adding that AIM had openly claimed on its website that it had converted 25,000

people to Christianity in northeast India.

RSS-linked magazines have been critical of Amazon and termed it as "East India Company 2.0". RSS-linked Hindi weekly Panchjanya in October



last year had alleged that the company had paid crores of rupees in bribes for favourable government policies.

Panchjanya claimed Amazon wants to establish its monopoly in the Indian market. It said, "For doing so, it has started taking initiatives for seizing the economic, political and personal freedom of the Indian citizens."

Not just the right-wing RSS and its affiliates, but the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Narendra Modi government have also been critical of Amazon, particularly over its founder Jeff Bezos's connection with The Washington Post newspaper. Bezos-owned The Post has often been critical of Modi and that was considered one of the reasons why Modi and his government snubbed Bezos when he visited India in January 2020.

NDTV at the time reported, "The perceived snub to the world's richest man with an estimated net worth of \$115 billion has been linked to articles critical of the government in the Jeff Bezos-owned Washington Post."

BJP's foreign affairs in-charge Dr Vijay Chauthaiwale tweeted a clip of Bezos and said he should tell good things about India to "employees in Washington DC". This was an apparent reference to The Post. Chauthaiwale told Reuters, "I am not opposing Amazon as a company, in fact I am a regular customer...Jeff Bezos should go home tell Washington Post what is his impression about India. The Washington Post editorial policy is highly biased and agenda driven."

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# FTX Fall Highlights Crypto Vulnerability: Here're 5 Indian Cryptocurrency Exchanges That Bit The Dust

**Here are five Indian crypto exchanges that could not survive the ups and downs in the market**

(News Agency) As many as five Indian cryptocurrency exchanges have shut down their operations amid strong headwinds, regulatory hurdles, and scams, which also consumed global heavyweights like FTX, according to a market survey.

FTX, one of the world's major global crypto exchanges, is the latest to file for bankruptcy protection in the US. Data from blockchain research and rating firm CREBACO showed that FTX had roughly \$1 billion in revenues last year.

FTX ran into serious problems after a liquidity crisis hit the business, which forced Binance to cancel its purchase deal with the exchange.

Last year, FTX had grown its customer base to 3.1 million from 246,000 in 2020. On November 11, 2022, it filed for bankruptcy protection in the US. In India, five crypto exchanges had already been shut down since the global crypto market waded into serious troubles post the pandemic. Here are a few Indian crypto exchanges that were closed.

1. Koinex

In June 2019, Mumbai-based crypto

exchange Koinex shut down its operation.

Koinex started its services on August 25, 2017, after it was founded in the same year. It had recorded \$265 million in trading volume. It added more than 40,000 new users in 24 hours at its peak in December 2018. Koinex's Twitter account, which had over 24,000 followers, has been inactive since July 2019, and its official website 'koinex.in' is no longer working.

2. BTCXIndia

Hyderabad-based BTCXIndia, a crypto platform, stopped its services in March 2018. According to Kamesh Mupparaju, the creator and CEO of the platform, BTCXIndia stopped operating due to regulatory pressure. "If there is a sudden (order) to withdraw funds, it would mean trouble for the customers," Mupparaju told CNN in 2018.

BTCXIndia's Twitter account has been inactive since 2018. Its website,

"btcxindia.com," also remains inactive. The company was launched in 2013.

3. Coinsecure

Crypto exchange Coinsecure was closed after losing over \$3.5 million

founded by Benson Samuel and Mohit Kalra in 2014, irrevocably lost investors' trust after the incident. One of the investors told Time of India in 2018, "We didn't see this coming." Its Twitter handle and website have been inactive since 2018.

4. Coindelta

Coindelta, one of the country's major crypto exchanges, was shut down in 2019. In its blog post in 2019, Coindelta said: "Much to our regret, we will no longer be able to provide exchange services for cryptocurrencies. It has been difficult for us to operate Coindelta for the last six months."

The Pune-based exchange was founded in 2017 by Rajdeep Singh, Shubham Yadav, and Manish K. Its Twitter and website have been inactive since July 2019.

5. Cryptokart

Gaurang Poddar, the founder of the Indian cryptocurrency exchange Cryptokart, announced closing the business in 2019. The company was founded in 2017 by Poddar and Mihir Modi.



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# G-20 Summit: PM Narendra Modi, Chinese President Xi Jinping Shake Hands On Sidelines

**There has been no one-on-one meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping since the Ladakh standoff began in 2020**

(News Agency) Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping shook hands on the sidelines of G-20 Summit in Bali, Indonesia.

Modi and Xi shook hands and appeared to have a conversation in a live video feed from the welcome dinner hosted by Indonesian President Joko Widodo for G20 delegates. The incident has sparked speculation over a possible thaw in icy India-China relations since 2020 when Chinese soldiers crossed the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh and occupied Indian territories at multiple places. Later in June, Chinese soldiers entered into a skirmish with Indian soldiers in Galwan of Eastern Ladakh. Twenty Indian soldiers and an unspecified number of Chinese soldiers were killed in the clashes.

There has been no one-on-one meeting between Modi and Xi since the beginning of Ladakh standoff. Despite speculation, there is no formal indication so far if any meeting between Modi and Xi is planned in Bali. India has been consistently maintaining that peace and tranquillity along the LAC are important for the overall



development of bilateral ties. Minister of External Affairs S Jaishankar has repeatedly stated that peace at the border is the basis of the broader bilateral relationship and that the broader relationship can not be separated or isolated from the situation at the border. Earlier, there had been some speculation over a possible bilateral meeting between

Modi and Xi on the margins of the Group of 20 Summit, which began Tuesday. But the agenda made known by both sides so far does not mention such a meeting. In September, Modi and Xi came face-to-face at the annual summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in Uzbek city of Samarkand for the first time since the start of the border standoff in Eastern

Ladakh. No separate meeting is believed to have taken place between them there, though it is presumed they would have exchanged pleasantries.

In Bali, the handshake took place towards the end of the dinner. The two greeted each other as Xi walked by. They shook hands and the video showed a brief relaxed conversation, before the camera moved elsewhere and the transmission ended. The dinner was held at the Garuda Wisnu Kencana cultural park in a somewhat informal setting. G-20 leaders watched dance performances as they dined. Xi had a bilateral meeting on Monday with US President Joe Biden, where the two appeared to have struck a conciliatory note, amid tensions over self-ruled Taiwan and other issues. Modi held a bilateral meeting with Biden on Tuesday. Modi is in Bali to attend the G-20 Summit at the invitation of Indonesian President Widodo. India is currently part of the G-20 Troika (current, previous, and incoming G20 Presidencies) comprising Indonesia, Italy, and India. The next G-20 Summit will be held in India.

## As More Crypto Exchanges Go Bust, Is Your Money Safe With Them In India?

**Many cryptocurrency exchanges have gone bankrupt over the past few years—a trend that continues to haunt the crypto space despite its futuristic outlook and profit-making abilities**

(By Staff Reporter) FTX, one of the world's leading cryptocurrency exchanges, has become the latest victim of the persistent volatility in the crypto market, exacerbated by scams and regulatory pressure.

The exchange ran into rough weather after Binance pulled out of a purchase deal with FTX.

FTX filed for bankruptcy protection in the US on Nov 11, faced with a severe liquidity crunch.

FTX's customer base had grown to 3.1 million in 2021 from 246,000 in the previous year. The bankruptcy filing has shocked many people in the crypto space, including its customers.

### Are Indian Crypto Exchanges Trustworthy?

Experts believe crypto exchanges that release company reports regularly and have a transparent fund-management mechanism are relatively safer for investors.

"All exchanges follow self-regulatory mechanisms and have redressal forums for customer complaints and queries. But due to lack of legal remedy or a single line of procedure, investors



may have fewer options," says Dileep Seinberg, founder & CEO of MuffinPay, a crypto neo-bank.

### Need For Strict Regulation

The industry is hopeful of a constructive debate on the issue among G20 members when they arrive in Delhi next week for talks. Its expectations stem from the fact that Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had repetitively signaled about crypto rules coming soon.

"We believe regulations are necessary as they promote financial stability,

transparency, investor protection, and a level-playing field for all market participants. The Indian government must consider regulations for the industry to protect customer funds and reduce the risk of fraud by excluding unauthorised players and tokens used for speculative purposes," says Sumit Gupta, co-founder and CEO of crypto exchange CoinDCX.

Gupta noted that as blockchain and cryptos gain popularity in India, "we need to harness this demand to shape the future of our economy."

Experts stressed that the industry bats for the right regulation, but tax policies sometimes could adversely affect the industry. Traffic and trading volumes have dwindled on Indian platforms as investors flee to foreign exchanges," says Rajagopal Menon, vice president of crypto exchange WazirX.

### Is Proof Of Reserves A Solution?

As most cryptocurrency exchanges see muted growth, Giottus, a lesser-known but considered one of the country's top 10 exchanges, said it would provide consumers with "proof of reserves".

However, others like CoinDCX said it does not employ user funds to create fractional reserves or maintain Reserve to Liability (R2L) ratio in excess of 100 per cent. "We will periodically publish R2L ratios, proof of reserves, and audit certificates going forward," said Gupta. Unocoin, another crypto exchange, said it keeps its crypto addresses confidential and does not use customer funds for internal purposes.

WazirX echoed similar views: "We maintain a safe custody approach and do not risk customer assets."



# Offices shut, hundreds of employees resigned, thousands fired: Elon Musk's Twitter is in a mess

The Twitter boss said that employees who wish to be a part of Twitter 2.0 must commit to a "hardcore" culture or leave with severance pay. Here's a quick recap of everything that happened at Twitter this week

There has been a lot of chaos at Twitter HQ lately. It all started ever since Elon Musk took over the company. A couple of few days ago, the billionaire fired as many as 50 per cent of the workforce globally, including around 90 per cent working from India. Now, some of the retained Twitter staff have resigned after Musk sent an "ultimatum" email that ordered everyone to be ready for Twitter 2.0 and be ready for a hardcore culture or leave with three months pay. In the last email that Musk sent to Twitter employees, he announced some major changes around work culture, work hours, and remote work. The Twitter boss said that employees who wish to be a part of Twitter 2.0 must commit to a "hardcore" culture or leave with severance pay. He also ordered employees to sign an online form committing to "long hours at high intensity" by clicking on the "yes" option in the mail. While some of the employees must have agreed to Musk's Twitter 2.0 rules, many didn't and left the company with three months salary. Elon Musk's Twitter 2.0

There's so much happening at Twitter

each day that one might just get confused. So, here's a quick recap of everything that happened at Twitter this week and how Musk is planning to build Twitter 2.0.

-Starting of the week, Musk fired nearly 4000 contract employees out of 5500. Just like Musk did to previously laid off employees, he didn't inform impacted employees before firing them. Impacted employees reportedly found that they are laid off only after losing access to the company's email and internal communications systems. Both US-based and global employees working in content moderation, real estate, marketing, engineering, and other departments were affected.

-It appears that Musk doesn't like suggestions/feedback from anyone. A Twitter engineer who fact checked Musk when he said Twitter is slow in "many countries" was fired publicly on the platform. Eric Frohnhofer, now the

former Twitter engineer, publically dismissed Musk's claim on Twitter's speed. The billionaire also took to Twitter to announce that he had been fired. -Now,

Musk is making multiple changes to cut costs and make Twitter a profitable company soon, which is currently not the case. One of them, Musk said, is stopping

free lunch at the company. The billionaire claimed that the "estimated cost per lunch served in the past 12 months is >\$400", which is around Rs 32,000. He, however, was corrected again by an ex-Twitter employee who used to handle the food section. Tracy Hawkins, who resigned because she didn't want to work with Musk corrected the Twitter boss and said he was "lying". "This is a lie. I ran this program up until a week ago when I resigned because I didn't want to work for @elonmusk," she said in a tweet. Musk, though, denied claims made by Hawkins. -This week, Musk fired more engineers who cribbed about the boss in

internal Slack channels. Reports suggest that nearly 20 employees lost jobs at Twitter this week for being critical of Musk's claims publicly and internally. One of the impacted Twitter engineers, Nickrw, took to the micro-blogging platform and noted, "Looks like I just got fired for shitposting too".

-Musk sent an ultimatum email to employees this week and asked them to commit to a "hardcore" culture at Twitter or resign with severance pay. He ordered employees to sign an online form committing to "long hours at high intensity" and clarified that employees who fail to sign the form will be asked to leave with three months of severance pay.

-Now, the number of employees didn't sign the form and resigned. While we do not have an exact number of people who walked out, it is believed that hundreds of Twitter employees, including many engineers, have decided not to be a part of Musk's Twitter 2.0. Following the mass resignation, Musk has shut offices and revoked badge access until November 21.



## ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਦੁਨੀਆ

Since April 2005

Editor : Sharanjit Singh Thind

PUNJABI DUNIYA

Vol. 15 Issue 27

SATURDAY, 15 OCTOBER, 2022

WWW.PUNJABIDUNIYA.COM

Published Weekly from New York

## ਐੱਸਵਾਈਐੱਲ ਵਿਵਾਦ ਦਾ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ

ਪਾਣੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਵੰਡ ਦੇ ਵਿਵਾਦ 'ਚ ਪੰਜ ਦਹਾਕਿਆਂ ਦੌਰਾਨ ਕਿਹੜੇ ਮੋੜ ਆਏ

ਥੇਓਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਦੇ ਪੋਤੇ ਨੂੰ ਨੌਕਰੀ ਮਿਲ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਜਾਂ ਮੇਰੇ ਬੱਚੇ ਨੂੰ ਨਹੀਂ। ਇਸ ਰਾਜਨੀਤੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਡੇ ਪਿਛਾਧ ਦਾ ਖੂਨ ਛੁੱਲ੍ਹਿਆ ਹੈ, ਜਾਂ 'ਵਿਦਵਾਨ' ਆਮ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਲਈ ਬਦਲ ਗਈਆਂ। ਰਾਜਕੁੰਜ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ ਕੰਡੇ ਬਲਦੇ-ਬਲਦੇ ਖੂਬ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। 23 ਜੁਲਾਈ 1990 ਨੂੰ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਪਿਤਾ ਅਵਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੇਲਜ਼ ਉਪਰ ਬੰਦੀਗਰੂ ਵਿਖੇ ਦਾਤਾਰ ਦੇ ਬਾਹਰ ਗੋਲੀਆਂ ਚਲਾਈਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ ਸਨ। ਪੰਜਾਬੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਕੇ ਜਾਣ ਸਮੇਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਮੌਤ ਹੋ ਗਈ। ਐਮਐਲਐਲ ਸ਼ੇਖਰੀ ਉਪਰ ਵੀ ਗੋਲੀਆਂ ਚਲਾਈਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਮੌਤ 'ਤੇ ਹੀ ਮੌਤ ਹੋ ਗਈ ਸੀ। ਸ਼ੇਖਰੀ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਯੂਨਾਨ ਨਿੱਕ ਨਹਿਰ ਪਾਸੇਕਟ ਦੇ ਚੰਡ ਵਿਸ਼ਨੀਅਤ ਸਨ ਅਤੇ ਐਲਫ ਸੁਪਰਡੈਂਟ ਇੰਜੀਨੀਅਰ। ਇੱਕ ਹੋਰ ਇੰਜੀਨੀਅਰ ਐਲ ਡੇ ਰੰਗਿਲ ਇਸ ਹਾਲੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਯਮਨੀ ਹੋ ਗਏ ਸਨ। 1990 ਵਿੱਚ ਹੋਈ ਇਸ ਘਟਨਾ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਯੂਨਾਨ ਨਿੱਕ ਪਾਸੇਕਟ ਦੀ ਉਸਾਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਰੋਕ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ। ਉਸਾਰੀ ਤਾਕਤ ਭਰ ਗਈ ਪਰ ਇਸ ਉਪਰ ਚਰਚਾ, ਰਾਜਨੀਤੀ, ਬੈਨਕਾ, ਵਿਵਾਦ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਸੋਲਨ ਅਤੇ ਅਦਾਲਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਖੁਦਬਾਏ ਕੱਢੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਏ।

ਅੱਜ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਮੁੱਖ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਭਗਵੰਤ ਮਾਨ ਅਤੇ ਹਰਿਆਣਾ ਦੇ ਮੁੱਖ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਮਨੋਹਰ ਲਾਲ ਖੱਟਰ ਵਿਚਕਾਰ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਯੂਨਾਨ ਨਿੱਕ ਪਾਸੇਕਟ ਨੂੰ ਨੇ ਕੇ ਇੱਕ ਬੈਨਕ ਰੱਖੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ। 6 ਸਤੰਬਰ 2022 ਨੂੰ ਸੁਪਰੀਮ ਕੋਰਟ ਨੇ ਦੱਸਾ ਸੁਣਿਆ ਨੂੰ ਇੱਕ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਬੈਨਕ ਕਰਕੇ ਕੇ

ਮਸ਼ਹੂਰ ਸੁਲਭਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਕਿਹਾ ਸੀ। ਦੋਵੇਂ ਸੁਣਿਆ ਨੂੰ 4 ਹਫ਼ਤਿਆਂ ਅੰਦਰ ਸਲ ਸਰੋਤ ਮੰਤਰਾਲ ਨਾਲ ਬੈਨਕ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਵੀ ਕਿਹਾ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ।

'ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਪਾਣੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਮੁੱਦਾ' ਉਸਾਰੀ ਅਧੀਨ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਯੂਨਾਨ ਨਿੱਕ ਨਹਿਰ ਦਾ ਵਿਵਾਦ ਕਈ ਦਹਾਕਿਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਜਾਰੀ ਹੈ।

ਇਸ ਨਹਿਰ ਦਾ ਮੌਤਕ ਥਾਵਾਂ ਡੇਮ ਦਾ ਪਾਣੀ ਹਰਿਆਣਾ ਦੀ ਯੂਨਾਨ ਨਦੀ ਤੱਕ ਪਹੁੰਚਾਉਣਾ ਸੀ।

### ਸੁਪਰੀਮ ਕੋਰਟ ਨੇ ਕੀ ਕਿਹਾ ਸੀ ?

ਸੁਪਰੀਮ ਕੋਰਟ ਨੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਅਤੇ ਹਰਿਆਣਾ ਦੇ ਮੁੱਖ ਮੰਤਰੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਲ ਸਰੋਤ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਭੁਲਾਈ ਗਈ ਮੀਟਿੰਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਕਰਨ ਅਤੇ ਮਤਕੌਦਾ ਨੂੰ ਸੁਲਭਾਉਣ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਵਿੱਚ ਇੱਕ ਪ੍ਰਕਿਰਿਆ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਕਿਹਾ ਸੀ। ਸੁਪਰੀਮ ਕੋਰਟ ਦੇ ਇਸ ਬੈਂਚ ਦੀ ਅਗਵਾਈ ਜਸਟਿਸ ਸੇਜੇ ਫਿਲਨ ਕੋਲ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਸੀ। ਜਸਟਿਸ ਕੋਲ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿੱਚ ਸੁਲਭਾਉਣ ਦੀ ਮਦਦਨਜ਼ਰ ਕੁਦਰਤੀ ਸਰੋਤ ਸਾਂਝੇ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾਣੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਮਾਲਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਗਵਾਈ ਸੁਣਵਾਈ 15 ਜਨਵਰੀ, 2023 ਨਿਰਧਾਰਤ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ। ਕੇਂਦਰ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਦੀ ਨੁਆਇਦਗੀ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਅਟਾਰਨੀ ਜਨਰਲ (ਦੋਸ਼ੀ) ਕੇ ਕੇ ਵੇਦੂਗਪਾਲ ਨੇ ਸੁਪਰੀਮ ਕੋਰਟ ਦੇ ਬੈਂਚ ਨੂੰ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਯੂਨਾਨ ਅਵ ਇੰਡੀਆ (ਯੂਐਐਐ) ਨੇ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਵੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਮੁੱਖ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਕਈ ਪੱਤਰ ਲਿਖੇ ਸਨ, ਪਰ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਜਵਾਬ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਿਆ। ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਨਵੇਂ ਮੁੱਖ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਅਹੁਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਪੱਤਰ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਅਜੇ ਤੱਕ ਕੋਈ ਜਵਾਬ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ।

ਸੁਪਰੀਮ ਕੋਰਟ ਸੁਣਿਆ ਵਿਵਾਦ ਪਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਵੰਡ ਵਿਵਾਦ, ਮੁੱਖ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਐਲਾਈਨਮੈਂਟ-ਪੰਜਾਬ, ਹਰਿਆਣਾ ਅਤੇ ਰਾਜਸਥਾਨ, ਅੰਧਰਾ, ਤੇਲੰਗਾਨਾ, ਛੱਤੀਸਗੜ੍ਹ, ਉੜੀਸਾ ਦੇ ਵਿਚਕਾਰ ਗੰਦਾਬਰੀ ਪਲਾਵਰਮ ਰੋਸ ਪ੍ਰਸਿੱਧਤਾ ਦੇ ਹੱਲਾਂ ਦੀ ਸੁਣਵਾਈ ਕਰ ਰਹੀ ਸੀ। ਸੁਪਰੀਮ ਕੋਰਟ ਨੇ ਅੱਜ ਕੇਂਦਰ ਅਤੇ ਕਈ ਸੁਣਿਆ ਨੂੰ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਦੇ ਹੱਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਸਰ ਕਰਦੇ ਲਈ ਆਪਣੇ ਹੱਥੀਂ ਲਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਸਬੰਧਤ ਸੁਣਿਆ ਨੂੰ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਆਉਣ ਅਤੇ ਮੁੱਦੇ ਨੂੰ ਸੁਲਭਾਉਣ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਕਿਹਾ।

ਪਹਿਲਾਂ 7.2 ਮਿਲੀਅਨ ਏਕੜ ਫੁੱਟ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਹਿੱਸੇ ਆਇਆ। ਹਰਿਆਣਾ ਬਣਨ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਇਸ ਨੇ ਵੀ 4.8 ਮਿਲੀਅਨ ਏਕੜ ਫੁੱਟ ਪਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਮੰਗ ਰੱਖੀ। ਇਸ ਪਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਪੂਰੀ ਕਰਾਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਯਕੀਨੀ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਯੂਨਾਨ ਨਿੱਕ ਨਹਿਰ ਦੇ ਨਿਰਮਾਣ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਸਤਾਵ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਗਿਆ। ਸਿਮਟੀਅਨ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਇਸਦਾ ਵਿਰੋਧ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ।

2022 ਵਿੱਚ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਸ ਪਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਵੀ ਇਸ ਵਿਵਾਦ ਦੇ ਸੁਆਹ ਵੇਲੇ ਹੋਂਦ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਹੁਣ ਆਮ ਆਦਮੀ ਪਾਣੀ ਨੂੰ ਹਰਿਆਣਾ ਦੀ ਰਾਜਨੀਤੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਹੈ।

'ਪਾਣੀਆਂ ਪਿੱਛੇ ਇਹ ਲੜਾਈ ਸਿਰਫ ਰਾਜਸਥਾਨ ਦੇ ਹਿੱਸੇ ਆਇਆ। 10.65 ਐਮ ਐਚ ਸਿੰਧੂ-ਕਸ਼ਮੀਰ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਿਆ। 1990 ਵਿੱਚ ਇਸ ਨਹਿਰ ਦੀ ਉਸਾਰੀ ਦੇ ਪਾਸੇਕਟ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਮਲ ਸੁਪਰਡੈਂਟ ਇੰਜੀਨੀਅਰ ਅਵਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਐਲਫ ਦੇ ਹਰਿਆਣਾ ਦੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਤੋਂ ਬਹੁ ਹੋਇਆ ਵਿਵਾਦ 1966 ਵਿੱਚ ਹਰਿਆਣਾ ਦੇ ਬਣਨ ਤੋਂ

ਯਾਦਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸੋਜੇ ਕੇ ਰਾਖਵ ਲਈ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ, ਜਿਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਭੈਣਾ ਬਲਵੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਗੁਰਨੇ ਅਤੇ ਬੇਟੀ ਵਿਭਿਆ ਗੁਰਨੇ ਸ਼ਾਮਿਲ ਹੈ, ਅੱਜ ਵੀ ਉਸੇ ਘਰ 'ਅਵਤਾਰਸਿੰਘ' ਵਿੱਚ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਅਵਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਐਲਫ ਨੇ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਸੀ। ਅਰਥਿਕਤਾ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਇਕਲੌਤੀ ਬੇਟੀ ਸਨ (ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਦਾ ਕਹਿਣਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਹਾਦਸੇ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਬਦਲੀ ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਜਾਂ ਨੌਕਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਗਈ।

ਜੇਕਰ ਥੇਓਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਦੇ ਪੋਤੇ ਨੂੰ ਨੌਕਰੀ ਮਿਲ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਜਾਂ ਮੇਰੇ ਬੱਚੇ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਉਂ ਵਿਵਾਦ ਦੇ ਸੁਆਹ ਵੇਲੇ ਹੋਂਦ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਹੁਣ ਆਮ ਆਦਮੀ ਪਾਣੀ ਨੂੰ ਹਰਿਆਣਾ ਦੀ ਰਾਜਨੀਤੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਹੈ।

1990 ਵਿੱਚ ਇਸ ਨਹਿਰ ਦੀ ਉਸਾਰੀ ਦੇ ਪਾਸੇਕਟ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਮਲ ਸੁਪਰਡੈਂਟ ਇੰਜੀਨੀਅਰ ਅਵਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਐਲਫ ਦੇ ਹਰਿਆਣਾ ਦੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਤੋਂ ਬਹੁ ਹੋਇਆ ਵਿਵਾਦ 1966 ਵਿੱਚ ਹਰਿਆਣਾ ਦੇ ਬਣਨ ਤੋਂ

## FBI TEN MOST WANTED FUGITIVE

## BHADRESHKUMAR CHETANBHAI PATEL

Unlawful Flight to Avoid Prosecution - First Degree Murder, Second Degree Murder, First Degree Assault, Second Degree Assault, Dangerous Weapon with Intent to Injure



Photograph taken April 2015

### DESCRIPTION

<b>Alias:</b> Bhadreshkumar C. Patel	<b>Place of Birth:</b> Kantrodi Ta Viramgam, Gujarat, India
<b>Date(s) of Birth Used:</b> May 15, 1990	<b>Eyes:</b> Brown
<b>Hair:</b> Brown	<b>Weight:</b> 165 pounds
<b>Height:</b> 5'9"	<b>Occupation:</b> Employee of donut shop
<b>Sex:</b> Male	
<b>Nationality:</b> Indian	

### REWARD

The FBI is offering a reward of up to \$100,000 for information leading to the arrest of Bhadreshkumar Chetanbhai Patel.

### REMARKS

Patel was last known to be in the Newark, New Jersey, area.

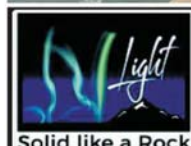
### CAUTION

Bhadreshkumar Chetanbhai Patel is wanted for allegedly killing his wife by striking her multiple times with an object while they were both working at a donut shop in Hanover, Maryland, on April 12, 2015. A local arrest warrant was issued in the District Court of Maryland for Anne Arundel County on April 13, 2015, and Patel was charged with first degree murder, second degree murder, first degree assault, second degree assault, and dangerous weapon with intent to injure. A federal arrest warrant was issued in the United States District Court, District of Maryland, Baltimore, Maryland, on April 20, 2015, after Patel was charged with unlawful flight to avoid prosecution.

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# Delhi murder: India minister denigrates women for live-in relations



channel.

Live-in relationships are still frowned upon in India, where marriage is viewed as an essential part of a woman's life. In an interview the CNN-News18 channel on Thursday, Mr Kishore said that educated women in India had strayed from their traditions and were opting to live with their partners before marriage.

"If you really fall in love with someone, get married first. What's this live-in relationship? Such methods are encouraging crimes," he said.

Speaking about the murder case, Mr Kishore added that even though Walker's parents opposed to her relationship, she chose to live with her

boyfriend. "An educated girl made this decision. They [women] think they are very frank and have the ability to take decisions about their future but it's a mistake. His comments have angered Indians and many have called him out for his "misogynistic" thinking.

"Surprised he didn't say girls are responsible for being born into this nation. Shameless, heartless and cruel, [that] blame-the-woman-for-all problems mentality continues to thrive," Priyanka Chaturvedi of the Shiv Sena party tweeted. She said Prime Minister Narendra Modi should sack Mr Kishore for speaking "such patriarchal rubbish".

ut many came to the defence of the minister and supported his statements.

"Absolutely brother if only she listened to her parents this wouldn't have happened, our parents are experienced people they can at least know whether someone is good for us or not," one user wrote.

Police claim that Walkar was strangled by her boyfriend Aftab Poonawalla, who then chopped her body into pieces and dumped them in a forest near their home in capital city Delhi. He is in police custody and has not made any public statement yet.

The case has received plenty of media attention and has been trending on social media all week, along with gory details and sensational allegations often attributed to unnamed police sources.

(By Staff Reporter) A federal minister in India has stirred a controversy after he blamed live-in relationships for a murder case that has made headlines in the country.

Shraddha Walkar was killed in May, allegedly by her live-in partner, who has been arrested and charged with murder. Minister Kaushal Kishore said that such crimes are taking place because of "mistakes" made by "educated women".

"They are the ones who get stuck in such situations," he told a TV

## Delhi murder: Police teams sent to Mumbai, Himachal; Walkar's photo with face injuries from 2 yrs ago emerges



have emerged in the investigation of the Shraddha Walkar murder case, with the latest being the victim's chats with friends and co-workers from two years indicating that she was once beaten so badly that she could not get off the bed.

Photos of Walkar from 2020 that showed clear signs of injuries also appeared on social media. Poonawala's phone will be submitted for forensic examination to determine who he communicated with after killing Walkar and to recover erased data, news agency PTI reported. So far, police have found some bones. Prima facie, they resemble human bones, sources said. Meanwhile, a Delhi court has directed the

police not to use any third-degree measures on accused Aftab Amin Poonawala and conduct his narco test within five days. The court had on Thursday granted a nod for conducting the truth serum test after police found that Poonawala was constantly changing his statements. The gruesome murder took place on May 18 as Poonawala - reportedly

inspired by the American series 'Dexter' -- allegedly chopped his partner - Shraddha Walkar - into 35 pieces and disposed them of across the city over the course of several months. Recently, the accused admitted to being high on marijuana on the day of the murder, claimed police sources, reported news agency ANI.

(By Staff Reporter) Several details have emerged in the investigation of the Shraddha Walkar murder case, with the latest being the victim's chats with friends and co-workers from two years indicating that she was once beaten so badly that she could not get off the bed.

Delhi police on Friday sent multiple teams to Mumbai, Gurgaon and Himachal Pradesh, where Aftab Amin Poonawala, the alleged killer of his live-in partner Shraddha Walkar, stayed together, to establish the sequence of events leading to her brutal murder. Several details

## US Congressman expresses solidarity with 1984 anti-Sikh riot victims

(By Staff Reporter) A US Congressman has expressed solidarity with the victims of the 1984 anti-Sikh riot victims, many of whom fled to the United States. "In memory of those Sikhs lost to this senseless violence between November 1 and 3 of 1984, and with respect to those who carry on their legacy in south Jersey today, I stand here in solidarity with my Sikh brothers and sisters," said Congressman Donald Norcross on the House floor on Wednesday.

"Madam Speaker, today, I rise in solidarity with the south Jersey Sikh community. This month marks 38 years since anti-Sikh rioters in India massacred Sikhs over three days," he said. A Democrat, Norcross represents the first Congressional District of New Jersey. "The massacre was

retaliation for the assassination of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. There were mass rapes



and lynchings. Sikhs' homes and their businesses were destroyed, senselessly slaughtered for nothing more than their beliefs and their religion," he said. "Following the slaughter, some of the Sikhs chose to flee India. Today, many of them call south Jersey home. They built lives for themselves, contributing to the education, economic, religious and cultural richness of our region," Norcross said

## Zomato co-founder Mohit Gupta resigns

**Gupta, who had joined Zomato four-and-a-half year back, was elevated to co-founder in 2020 from the position of CEO of its food delivery business**



was elevated to co-founder in 2020 from the position of CEO of its food delivery business. In a message sent to the Zomato which was shared on the BSE by the company, Gupta said he is "deciding to move on from Zomato to seek the other unknown adventures that life holds for me". Zomato said Gupta was not designated as key managerial personnel under the Companies Act, 2013 and the listing regulations, while making the voluntary disclosure of his resignation.

(By Staff Reporter) Online food delivery platform Zomato on Friday said its Co-founder Mohit Gupta has resigned from his post. Gupta, who had joined Zomato four-and-a-half year back,



# China is preparing for war, Putin digs himself ever deeper into a quagmire not saving the planet

At the G-20 meeting in Indonesia on Monday, President Joe Biden met with the leader of the Chinese Communist Party, Xi Jinping. But while Biden focused on climate change, the Chinese have been cloaking their preparations for war as a green energy push.

Rather than follow up on his mostly tough rhetoric on China over the past two years, Biden didn't press Xi on the Chinese fentanyl that killed more than 71,000 Americans in 2021. Biden also didn't mention China's responsibility for unleashing the COVID-19 epidemic. Instead, Biden used his first meeting with Xi since becoming president to tout the restart of climate talks with China.

This is exactly what China wants. Biden, who has consistently been wrong on major foreign policy matters since becoming senator from Delaware in 1973, said "I absolutely believe there's need not be a new Cold War... And I do not think there's any imminent attempt on the part of China to invade Taiwan."

Watch out. How is China deceiving America? In military operations, a deception plan works best when an opponent shows the enemy something that enemy wants to believe is true. In China's case, they know that American elites fear climate change, claiming it is an existential threat. As a result, China touts its massive effort to build wind turbines, deploy solar panels, and rapidly expand electric vehicle (EV) production, with almost half of the world's EVs operating in China.

China even impressed Biden's climate czar John Kerry, who said on Aug. 30 that China has "generally speaking, outperformed its (climate) commitments" and that America and China can help the world by "working together."

But what if China's "green" energy push has nothing to do with the environment? Rather than look at China's soothing words we should look at its deeds. What China's actions tell us is that it is pursuing a path of energy independence largely founded on their massive coal reserves.

This matters because American strategists believe that potential Chinese aggression against Taiwan, Japan, India, or other nations in the Pacific would be held in check by China's reliance on imported oil.

China imports 72 percent of its oil, of which 85 percent transits the Strait of Malacca by Singapore. The U.S. Navy could easily choke off this flow. Thus, many reasons China wouldn't risk conflict. To counter this, China has been working with Russia to increase the latter's pipeline capacity, increasing imports of both oil and natural gas from Russia. But this isn't enough. Even with about 2 million barrels coming in from Russia via pipeline, China's strategic reserves would be dry in about five months.

But China has been rapidly laying the groundwork to wean itself off imported oil and natural gas.

In 1996, China surpassed the U.S. in the use of coal to generate electricity. Since then, American coal-fired electric power has been more than cut in half while China now generates more than 5.3 times the amount of coal power as does the U.S. And China isn't stopping—it's now building or has plans to build the equivalent of the entire American coal powerplant fleet, even as we decommission our plants.

This means that all those clean green Chinese EVs are really coal-powered—thus, they don't need imported oil to power them. Now, here's where things get frightening—and bad for the planet, too. China is rapidly increasing its coal-to-liquids capacity. Turning coal into high quality fuel and lubricants isn't a new technology—the Germans used it in WW2 to make up for their lack of oil. Back then, it cost the Germans about \$20 a barrel to convert coal into gasoline while American crude went for 98 cents a barrel. But now it costs about half as much to make gasoline from coal than to refine it from oil—the main problem being that it generates about double the amount of carbon dioxide emissions as simply burning oil does—assuming China even cares about that, which it doesn't. Simply put, China's coal-to-liquids effort allows China to weather a U.S. Navy blockade of the Strait of Malacca, giving the Chinese Communist Party enormous latitude to pursue military aggression against its neighbors while keeping its economy running. You must hand it to the Chinese Communist Party—it has managed to convince American elites that it cares about the environment while it's really gearing up for war.

Each day, it would seem, Russian President Vladimir Putin has become ever more adept at creating more victims and new enemies—solidifying, even enlarging, the ranks of those arrayed against him, and strengthening the resolve of those he would seek to conquer. At home and abroad, there seems to be no limit to Putin's appetite to wreak mayhem in pursuit of an ever more elusive victory. The first missile to have landed in Poland—a NATO member—on Tuesday may well have been a Ukrainian anti-aircraft rocket intercepting an incoming Russian missile a short distance from one of Ukraine's largest cities, Lviv, as suspected by Polish and NATO leaders. (President Volodymyr Zelensky, meanwhile, has insisted the missile was not Ukrainian) But the proximate reason for this action was in fact Putin's utterly inhumane carpet bombing of Ukrainian infrastructure. This is all part of Putin's misguided, and likely futile, effort to hammer the nation into submission—a hail of rockets designed to knock out electricity, water, and other critical civilian infrastructure as winter looms.

Whatever the exact circumstances of the missile, one thing is clear. "Russia bears ultimate responsibility, as it continues its illegal war against Ukraine," said NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg Wednesday.

These attacks began at the outset of the war and have only increased in scope and virulence since Ukrainian forces last month attacked a bridge—one particularly close to Putin's heart—between mainland Russia and Crimea, which the Russians annexed in 2014.

Russian retaliation—an onslaught of missile attacks—has expanded as Ukrainian forces have continued to push back Russian units and reclaim territory seized in the early days of the war. Now Poland is facing the repercussions from these attacks—and it's not the only bordering country. Russian rockets have also knocked out power

across neighboring Moldova, which is not a NATO member, and therefore attracted considerably less attention than the Polish incident.

But beyond these most recent missile attacks lies a laundry list of horrors Putin has launched that only seems to have driven his nation further from the pack of civilized powers that he once sought so desperately to join.

His forces have planted mines in vast stretches of territory in Kherson from which they've recently withdrawn—much as the Khmer Rouge did in Cambodia stretching back to the 1970s. Indeed, Cambodian demining experts have even been called in to assist with the herculean task facing Ukraine in 2022. At the same time, Russian armies have also left behind evidence of unspeakable atrocities and torture, also reminiscent of the Khmer Rouge.

That said, a growing number of Russian soldiers have rebelled at what they have been asked to do and refused to fight. Amid plummeting morale, the UK's Defense Ministry believes Russian troops may be prepared to shoot retreating or deserting soldiers.

Indeed a hotline and Telegram channel, launched as a Ukrainian military intelligence project called "I want to live," designed to assist Russian soldiers eager to defect, has taken off, reportedly booking some 3,500 calls in its first two months of activity.

Putin has also tried, though he has been stymied at most turns, to establish black market networks abroad to source what he needs to fuel his war machine—much as Kim Jong-un has done in North Korea. The United States has already uncovered and recently sanctioned vast networks of such shadow companies and individuals centered in hubs from Taiwan to Armenia, Switzerland, Germany, Spain, France, and Luxembourg to source high-tech goods for Russia's collapsing military-industrial complex.



ISSN No. 1554 06X

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A Publication of Media Partners Capital, Inc.

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# Trump and His Disinfo Brigade Fall Flat

## The public may be increasingly immune to political disinformation

The red wave wasn't the only conspicuous no-show on Election Day.

The so-called rising tide of political disinformation — spotted by think tankers, journalists at outlets as varied as the Associated Press and the Guardian, and statesmen like Barack Obama — failed to break the shore. According to disinformation researchers speaking to the New York Times, disinfo artists, of whom there are plenty, failed to convince many that the election process is rigged and corrupt.

It wasn't from a lack of trying. As the Times notes, conservative activist Charlie Kirk called for the arrest of Phoenix election workers for broken voting machines, claiming that the outages were deliberate. Donald Trump aired similar suspicions on his Truth Social. The day before the election, Reuters reported an admission by Russian oligarch Yevgeny Prigozhin that he had interfered in American elections and intended to do so again.

What can we glean from disinformation's poor performance in 2022? Turn-out was very high, almost matching that of the last midterm election, which wouldn't be the case if large numbers of voters thought the process is such a sham that they avoided the polls. Have social media companies got-

ten better at diluting disinformation? Have voters gotten wise to disinformation? Or have we been exaggerating the effects of disinformation ever since the 2016 election? It's probably a little bit of each. In a late 2019 paper, David Karpf, a George Washington University professor of media and public affairs, cut against the grain by downplaying the effects of Russian disinformation on the 2016 election. Disinformation deserves our attention, Karpf concluded, but not our obsession, and that the 2016 Russian efforts had been something of a flop. "Generating social media interactions is easy; mobilizing activists and persuading voters is hard," he wrote.

In one entertaining passage, Karpf illustrates the absurdity of "hacking" the minds of the electorate with digital propaganda. If the psychometric targeting techniques of social media are so effective, surely those sorts of techniques would be used to successfully induce consumers to, for example, purchase gym memberships. But they aren't. So why believe that such targeting could tip federal elections — which come every two years and therefore are hard to refine — but not with gym memberships which can be constantly polished?

Continuing in his paper, Karpf points out that disinformation and propaganda

have been traditionally blunted by the fact that America has never had a well-informed public. If the public doesn't pay adequate attention to the "truth," do we need to worry that much about their exposure to disinformation?

Talking about disinformation in today's context, Karpf finds good news. "Voters, en masse, didn't buy what Charlie Kirk and company were selling. If Republicans decide that mass disinformation is an electoral disadvantage, that's a step towards the country becoming governable again," he said in an interview. "It's still a little too early to know what shared narratives will emerge from this election, particularly within the Republican Party network." Other explanations for the 2022 disinfo flop include the muzzling of serial liar Trump. Previously, he could stomp from the White House and Twitter. In this election, his message was muted by his ban from the top social media networks and by the neglect of the press, which accords to presidents, not civilians, saturation coverage of their every thought.

It could also be that the voting public, which has never been given binding evidence of a stolen election, has grown bored with conspiratorial ideas peddled by the likes of Trump and his pillow-selling supporter, as this Washington Post story suggests. People have enough

chaos in their lives with Covid, inflation, rising crime, layoffs and an impending recession, all of which can be documented, unlike the election-fraud lies. The process of social learning seems to have convinced most people to pay more attention to real dangers than imagined ones. None of this is to suggest that we're out of the disinformation woods yet. "I've long argued that the danger of mis- and disinfo isn't that it will directly change a lot of votes. It's that it will convince political elites that they can govern as though no one is watching," Karpf says. About half of 370 candidates who had espoused their notions about a "stolen" presidential election won office on Tuesday. According to a report from the liberal Center for American Progress, published before the election, misinformation can change and worsen in the postelection period, as we saw after Trump's 2020 defeat.

Trump, for one, is doing his best to make post-election disinformation worse than the pre-election variety. In a Friday Truth Social post, he urged his followers to help him stop the "very obvious CHEATING" by Democrats so that Republicans can take the Senate. Good try, Donald. But how likely is it that a public that didn't buy your 2020 election lies will embrace your 2022 lies?



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# Gen Z stopped Republicans' expected red wave-here's how GOP can win over young voters

If the GOP wants to win in 2024 it's time to stop ignoring Gen Z voters and start persuading them. Republicans must pay attention to their concerns and wake up

One week after the 2022 midterm elections, Republicans want to know: what happened? Why were expectations about the midterms so completely wrong? How could a deeply dishonest and unpopular president score one of the best midterm outcomes in recent history?

Like a great many Republicans, I am deeply disappointed, having hoped to see Americans deliver a well-deserved rebuke to a party in charge of all three branches of government – a party that set inflation soaring and sowed the seeds of recession.

There is much finger-pointing underway; many blame former President Trump for endorsing flawed candidates, prioritizing personal fealty over GOP victories. Some have dumped on Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell for failing to support Trump-endorsed candidates. There is lots of chatter on social media about the need to get out ahead of the ballot harvesting and mail-in voting which helps Democrats. All those complaints are valid, but another reason that the polling was so inaccurate and that so many critical races swung to Democrats is the growing importance of Gen Z voters, which appears to have been completely ignored by the GOP.

An estimated 27% of eligible voters aged 18-29 turned out to vote, compared to roughly 20% of young voters who typically participated in elections in the 1990s.

Not only did Gen Z show up in force, they overwhelmingly picked Democrats, by a 28-point margin. That preference was close to their vote in 2020, which went 62% Democrat and only 32% GOP.

This is important, especially because this group, which now accounts for about 10% of eligible voters, will continue to grow. In 2020, their votes totaled almost three times the number cast just four years earlier, when they reached voting age.

Pollsters discounted young voter turnout, as has been their custom, even though the Gen Z crowd also showed up in 2018 and 2020 in history-making numbers. An Insider Poll, for instance, had Dr. Mehmet Oz leading John Fetterman in Pennsylvania's critical



senate race by 3 points in late October; they had assumed only 10% of voters under 40 would participate, despite that group constituting 25% of the electorate in 2018 and 28% in 2020. In other words, two prior elections showed Gen Z is different; pollsters should have known better.

More important, it would also seem that Republican leaders ignored the youth vote, which, it turned out, was pivotal to Democrats winning key races. In Pennsylvania, for instance, Gen Z voters backed John Fetterman by a 46-point margin. Gretchen Whitmer won the race for governor of Michigan in part because Gen Z backed her by 29 points.

first, we have to understand what drives Gen Z voters. In his press conference celebrating his unexpected success in the midterms, President Biden thanked young people and said: "They voted to continue addressing the climate crisis, gun violence, their personal rights and freedoms, and the student debt relief." That is probably a fair summary.

Republicans rail about the "indoctrination" that young people are receiving from woke universities and schools, and they are right, but we will not fix left-wing academia anytime soon. GOP candidates must develop positions on gun violence and climate change that show them tackling those concerns, rather than dismissing them out of hand.

Republicans need to realize, as I recently did by talking to a young mom, that the horrific school shooting massacres at Uvalde, Parkland or Sandy Hook terrify parents. Kids are taught what to do in the event of a school lockdown; parents say they don't want their children in first-floor classrooms because they are so vulnerable. This is real; the GOP must have a plan to keep our schools safe. On climate, Republican candidates could learn a lot from Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, who has embraced a pragmatic approach to protecting his state from the ravages of warming and rising sea levels. More broadly, the GOP must develop policy solutions on climate that are thoughtful and don't clobber our economy, as Democrats' approach will do. Gradual changes in our energy mix make sense; virtue-signaling moves that drive electricity costs through the roof are not. On abortion, Republicans need to respect the will of voters. Most Americans think abortion should be legal and available, with some limits. That's where the GOP needs to be. Few people agree with extremist laws, like one passed in New York, that allow abortions in the third trimester; that's what Democrats hope to enable nationwide. But passing laws that ban abortion altogether is also extreme; even voters in blood-red Kentucky showed they do not approve of that approach. If the GOP hopes to win elec-

tions in the future, party leaders and candidates have to broaden their appeal, including reaching out to young voters via social media. They need to become TikTok savvy, and tuned into what Gen Z is talking about.

There is an opportunity here. Young voters will soon become disillusioned. They will discover that Joe Biden's blatant attempt to buy their vote through student loan handouts was a sham; he knew – everyone knew – that the president does not have the authority to spend as much as a trillion dollars without Congressional approval.

They will also soon recognize that Biden's reckless climate agenda will push their cost of living higher; they will understand the link between Democrats' wanton spending and higher interest rates, which have put home purchases out of reach for millions.

Gen Z has come of age at a peculiar time, characterized by a brilliant tech revolution and a profound labor shortage. Currently, many are being laid off at Meta, Twitter, and other tech firms. This may begin the maturing of a generation that demanded perks from desperate employers and from school administrations too cowardly to confront social media warriors.

Meanwhile, the GOP has to work on informing and persuading these voters if they want to win in 2024.



# Make in India? It Will Take More Than Subsidies

Last week, while inaugurating a new aircraft factory in western India, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi returned to a slogan he coined a few months after taking power in 2014: "Make in India." This time, however, he added: "Make for the world."

This isn't the first time Modi has gestured toward India's need to increase manufacturing exports. Still, the rhetorical emphasis is welcome, given that India's pitch to investors has typically focused on the size of its domestic market rather than on how easy it is to set up shop and export from the country.

Partly that's because it isn't yet as easy as it should be. The factory Modi was inaugurating will make Airbus SE's C-295 military transport in collaboration with the Tata Group. While India has promised to buy 40 planes, no export deals have been announced. And the government's boast that most of the supply chain for the aircraft would be located within India (underscored by Tata Sons Ltd.

Chairman Natarajan Chandrasekaran's claim that the company would "take aluminum ingots at one end of the value stream and turn it into an Airbus") reveals that Indian decision-makers still don't understand the nature of modern, decentralized supply chains.

In fact, the controversies surrounding the Tata-Airbus deal - and, in particular, its location in Modi's home state of Gujarat - are revealing of how India's latest plans to become a manufacturing superpower might struggle.

India doesn't have real industrial policy as such. What it has instead are multiple government schemes, costing about \$2 trillion, for "production-linked incentives" or PLIs. These are effectively subsidies or special treatment for large investments in particular sectors - 14 of them, at last count. Some of these targeted sectors have obvious strategic value, including semiconductors, solar modules, mobile handsets and batteries. Others have clearly been chosen because will employ lots of people - textiles, for example. And some are simply areas where India has done well in the past, such as automobile components. Given this muddled set of priorities, it isn't surprising that multiple other sectors are also lobbying for subsidies. There isn't a manufacturing investor in the world who would turn down a government subsidy. But industrial policy is supposed to be about more than that; it's meant to clarify and cement government priorities. Companies are supposed to be able to read an industrial policy and have faith that the

government's commitment to a sector is firm. The PLI programs don't quite achieve that. For example, one of the sectors targeted for incentives was specialty steel. Government assistance for lucky steel producers came with built-in production and export targets. Yet, a few months after setting the targets, the same government unexpectedly introduced an export tax on those same steel products. It's hard to sell PLIs as a sign of government commitment after mix-ups like that.

The other reason that PLIs work to an extent is that companies hope the subsidies will significantly de-risk investment in a targeted sector. It's common for foreign investors to go into business in India with a local partner; surely a government that says it will put millions into your plant is the best partner of all? Once the central government has a stake in a particular project, some of the obstacles to doing business in India - meddling bureaucrats, political whims, obstructive regulators - might be cleared away.

What we have seen, however, is that the government is not exactly a silent partner. Until recently, most observers were under the impression that the Tata/Airbus project would be located in the state of Maharashtra. News that it would go to Gujarat instead led to a political spat. One former state minister claimed

that the companies had told local officials that they had no choice in where they set up shop - the location would be up to Modi's government.

Tempers in the two states were short partly because this came very soon after Maharashtra had lost another, even bigger PLI project - an ambitious chip fabrication plant set up by Foxconn and Vedanta - to Gujarat. Here, too, the preferences of the central government - which has set aside up to \$10 billion for semiconductor subsidies - would likely have been crucial.

Modi has talked often about "cooperative competitive federalism" - the idea that India's states would freely compete for investors and raise each other's standards in doing so. When it comes to PLI choices, however, New Delhi appears to have a thumb on the scales.

A real commitment to export-led manufacturing growth would require greater trust in investors. The government should spend less on subsidies, but make sure that investors have free choice as to where and how they operate. The PLI scheme may give India one or two success stories - in mobile handsets, for example. But, unless it is accompanied by a shift in the government's mindset, it's not going to turn India into the next China.

## What PM Modi Said At Bali - Versus The Reality

Returning to India after a 30-month exile imposed by Covid, I am struck by the helpful attitude of people. I've run into multiple scenes of strangers offering support to those needing it on trains and at stations and airports, and I have personally received assistance. But there is another picture too.

"When our daughter calls from the Metro, she no longer says Khuda Hafiz at the end. We've asked her not to." So I was told by a highly-regarded Delhi professor, the father of a teen college student.

Some days later at Pune airport, I found myself standing next to an old man who, like me, was waiting for his checked bag. His beard and cap announced his Muslimness. As it had been a tiring flight for everyone, I asked him how he was doing. "Bhagwan ki kirpa hai," he replied. "I am fine." In earlier times he would probably have spoken of Khuda or Allah or Uparwala.

Some may feel triumphant as a growing number of Muslims dilute or even erase their identity or conform to Hindu usage. I cannot. To me it is a matter of shame, not pride, that many of my compatriots feel that they cannot be themselves.

Before arriving in Bali for the G20 gathering, Prime Minister Modi said that India wished to share with the world "Our mantra of One Earth, One Family, and One Future". A lovely vision, but within India, the national family is split. While many in the majority com-

munity seem pleased that Muslims are being shown their place, the latter are anxious about what's in store for them.

Not without reason. Karnataka's BJP government seems to have announced that saffron will be the colour of 8,000 new classrooms in government schools across the state. To Hindus saffron is a venerable colour, and some parents may be glad that their children will be surrounded by that dye in school. However, the project is not only unconstitutional in any plain reading; it also seems calculated to humiliate Muslims and Christians. To Hindus, saffron is a venerable colour, and some parents may be glad that their children will be surrounded by that dye in school. However, the project is not only unconstitutional in any plain reading, it also seems calculated to humiliate Muslims and Christians. Says BK Hariprasad, a senior Congress leader in Karnataka: "The government schools and colleges are run by taxpayers' money and the education minister has no business to confine it to one religion. He's trying to polarise and communalise the education in the state. That is not acceptable."

The state government's defence is that the classroom expansion scheme is called "Viveka" after Swami Vivekananda; since the Swami wore a saffron robe, it is appropriate, says the defence, to give that colour to the new spaces. The argument is unconvincing. Vivekananda's 19th-century choice for the colour of his spiritual robe cannot be allowed to become a weapon for pushing

minority children into an inferior place in 21st-century India. In fact, the spirit of Swami Vivekananda would be horrified at the bid to use him to demean a section of India's children. Let us clearly recognize what is happening around us. Supremacy, which has no place in our Constitution, is the new idol of powerful sections in today's India. Supremacy seeks to replace dignity and equality, which are norms specified in the Constitution's Preamble and spelt out in its Articles. The supremacy urge needs repeated demonstrations of the humiliation of the "inferior". Psychologically exhilarating, the supremacy drive has also seemed politically efficacious in recent times. It appears to appeal to sections of the majority community, including to some at the lower end. "Give these Hindus the chance to humiliate Muslims and Christians, and they will forget the indignities they have received from the higher castes." That's the calculation.

At the higher end, very few institutions possess a prestige greater than that of Ahmedabad's Indian Institute of Management. Earlier this month, IIM-A announced a new logo for itself. For more than 60 years, the logo had contained a replica of the Tree of Life chiselled in the 16th century in the most famous of the ten marvellous stone jalis of Ahmedabad's Sidi Saiyed Mosque. Depicting the intertwining of a tree's branches, this lattice-work window is a stunning portrait of unity in diversity. But in the India of November 2022, even a great academic

institution seemed to view such an image, and its origin, as being too controversial. It was expunged!

In one of his G20-related utterances, Mr. Modi spoke of India as "the land of the Buddha and Gandhi". It's a phrase he has used several times. Can anyone invoke Gandhi without inviting a reminder of Ishwar Allah Tere Naam? And while some may not be aware that in its complete form our national anthem, Jana Gana Mana, also speaks of Hindu, Bauddho Shikho, Jaino, Parashiko, Musholmaano, Christaani as members of India's family, it is an unalterable fact of history and literature that Tagore wrote that inclusive stanza into what was chosen as our national song. It is also an undeniable fact of history, and a widely known fact, that in Saare Jahaan Se Achchha, Allama Iqbal underlined that religion does not teach enmity. All the same, revising emblems and logos is not hard. A Cabinet or a Board can take a decision, and it's done. Getting classrooms painted in a particular colour is also a simple matter for a state government to arrange. The rest of us should take seriously what our eyes see and our ears hear. In our noble land, our children are being divided into the greater and the lesser, our people into the superior and the inferior. The urge to dominate, coerce, and humiliate is being given a fillip, and people, including young children, are being encouraged to enjoy the humiliation of others.



# Democrats Escaped a Midterm Thrashing. Here's How to Primary Biden Anyway

An aging president with poor polling presents an opportunity for 2024 challengers.

Democrats defied history and escaped a midterm beating. Yet as 2024 looms, many Democrats are still feeling anxious about their standing as they pore over the exit poll data.

Fifty-one percent of respondents said the Democratic Party is "too extreme" (1 point less than the GOP). Majorities prefer Republicans to deal with inflation, crime and immigration. And not only was President Joe Biden's job approval number a limp 44 percent, a whopping 67 percent of respondents don't want him to run again. That includes nearly half of the Democrats polled.

A chipper Biden said after the midterms that he intends to stand for reelection. Yet many Democratic lawmakers also appear to side with the skittish wing of the party's rank-and-file, according to POLITICO's Jonathan Martin, who reported that their "dread about 2024 extends from the specter of nominating an octogenarian with dismal approval ratings to the equally delicate dilemma of whether to nominate his more unpopular vice president or pass over the first Black woman in the job." With so much apprehension among Democrats, could Biden even get renominated? History suggests he can. The list of elected incumbent presidents who were either denied renomination by their party on the convention floor or chased out of running a reelection campaign after losing an early primary is incredibly short. Franklin Pierce, Harry Truman, Lyndon Johnson. That's it. (And, it's important to note, the renegade candidates who sped the retirements of Truman and



Johnson were not rewarded with the nomination for their audacity.) Amid growing Democratic nervousness about 2024 — particularly as Donald Trump appears to prepare for another White House bid — ambitious, impatient Democrats may see an opportunity to challenge a vulnerable president from their own party.

But if they want to throw Biden from the train, and not just see Vice President Kamala Harris take over as conductor, they can't copy a prior template of success. They will have to find a way to do what hasn't been done in the modern era of presidential primaries. Only Ronald Reagan in 1976 and Ted Kennedy in 1980 won any primary contests against an incumbent president, before ultimately falling short.

Here are some lessons to be learned from the past that can help shape a plausible insurgent strategy, and some Democrats who might be in a position to pull off the unprecedented.

one reason why the Reagan and Kennedy primary challenges at least racked up some delegates is they ran against incumbents who presided over inflationary economies, and they didn't let the incumbents forget it.

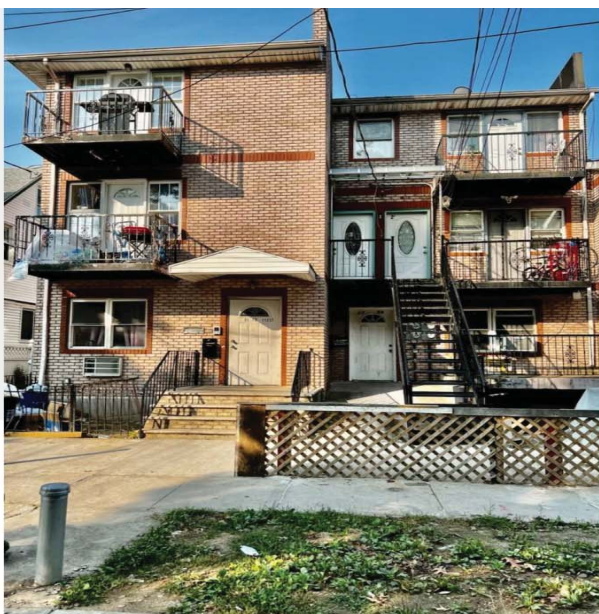
After Reagan's breakthrough victory in the late March North Carolina primary, he delivered a televised address designed to, according to his team, "redefine the contest." In the address, Reagan laid the blame squarely: "Soon after he took office, Mr. Ford promised he would end inflation. Indeed, he declared war on inflation. And, we all donned those 'WIN' buttons to 'Whip Inflation Now.' Unfortunately the war, if it ever really started, was soon over." Runaway prices provide a wide opening for a fiscally conservative message, and Reagan took advantage. "There's only one cause for inflation," he offered, "government spending more than government takes in. The cure is a balanced budget." Reagan would go

on to win 10 of the final 21 primaries and bring his fight to the convention floor.

When inflation bedeviled Jimmy Carter four years later, Ted Kennedy leaned in just as hard as Reagan, albeit from the left. "The failures are stark," Kennedy charged in his kickoff speech. "Workers are forced to take a second job to make ends meet, because wages are rising only half as fast as prices." He specifically blamed Carter for "the single most inflationary step" of lifting price controls on oil. The start of Kennedy's campaign is often maligned because of his interview on CBS that aired three days before his official Nov. 7, 1979 announcement, in which he gave a meandering response to the question, "Why do you want to be president?" But by mid-November, Kennedy was still holding a commanding poll lead over Carter of 53 to 36 percent.

After the Iranian hostage crisis, however, a horrified America rallied behind the incumbent; by the end of the month, the polls had flipped, with Carter ahead of Kennedy 48 to 40 percent. But Kennedy's campaign still saw an opening with inflation bearing down on the public.

Ahead of the primaries in New York and Connecticut, Kennedy ran a merciless ad featuring Carroll O'Connor, borrowing a touch of the Queens accent from his famous conservative TV character Archie Bunker: "Herbert Hoover hid out in the White House too ... but I'm afraid Jimmy's depression is going to be worse than Herbert's." The ad helped Kennedy get his first wins outside of his home state.



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# House Republicans say 'top priority' is to probe Biden family



(News Agency) One day after retaking a majority in the US House of Representatives, Republicans have said they will investigate the president's family as a "top priority".

The lawmakers said the inquiry would focus on overseas business dealings of the president's son, Hunter Biden. The 52-year-old is already under federal investigation, but has so far not faced any charges.

The younger Biden is not involved with the administration in any capacity.

But top Republicans insist their inquiry will determine the extent of Joe Biden's alleged involvement in his son's business dealings, including during the elder Biden's time as vice-president.

In an interim report released at

a press conference on Thursday, they argued that the president had lied to the American people about his alleged involvement in his family's business dealings.

"The president's participation in enriching his family is, in a word, abuse of the highest order," said James Comer, the incoming chairman of the House Oversight Committee.

"I want to be clear: this is an investigation of Joe Biden, and that's where our focus will be next Congress."

They accused Hunter Biden of crimes including tax evasion and wire fraud, but did not announce any immediate plans to summon him to testify.

Christopher Clark, a lawyer for Hunter Biden, told the BBC his client had no comment about the Republican announcement.

Mr Comer was joined at the press conference by congressman Jim Jordan, who is expected to become chairman of the House Judiciary Committee.

The Ohio Republican later tweeted: "The Biden Family's business deals are a national security threat." Officials with the Democratic National Committee have hit back by circulating a memo that refers to Mr Comer, a Kentucky congressman, as "a Trump apologist who has made clear that his phony investigations are political exercises designed to hurt President Biden".

The White House said the inquiries were politically motivated.

Spokesman Ian Sams said: "Instead of working with President Biden to address issues important to the American people, like lower costs, congressional Republicans' top priority is to go after President Biden with politically motivated attacks chock-full of long-debunked conspiracy theories."

A report released by Senate Republicans in September 2020 found that Hunter Biden had "cashed in" on his father's position, but the findings did

not implicate his father in wrongdoing. The newly announced investigation is one of many that House Republicans could lead. Others include the Biden administration's troop withdrawal from Afghanistan and its handling of the coronavirus pandemic.

The select committee investigating the 6 January 2021 riot by Trump supporters on Capitol Hill will be dissolved when the new Congress takes over.

Rank-and-file Republican lawmakers have nominated Kevin McCarthy, the current

minority leader, as their choice for House Speaker when a new Congress convenes in January. If elected, the California congressman would succeed long-time Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi, who announced on Thursday that she is stepping down from her leadership post.

Mr McCarthy has suggested that a Republican majority will pull back on funding for Ukraine, but he must contend with a narrow majority in the chamber.

Democrats will meanwhile retain power in the Senate, the upper chamber of Congress.



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# Elon Musk: Twitter locks staff out of offices until next week



(News Agency) Twitter has told employees that the company's office buildings will be temporarily closed, effective immediately.

In a message seen by the BBC, workers were told that the offices would reopen on Monday 21 November.

It did not give a reason for the move.

The announcement comes amid reports that large numbers of staff were quitting after new owner Elon Musk called on them to sign up for "long hours at high intensity" or leave. Twitter did not immediately respond to a request for comment from the BBC.

This week Mr Musk told Twitter staff that they had to commit to working long hours and would "need to be

extremely hardcore" or leave the company, according to reports.

In an email to staff, the firm's new owner said workers should agree to the pledge if they wanted to stay, the Washington Post reported.

Those who did not sign up by Thursday 17 November would be given three months' severance pay, Mr Musk said.

Earlier this month the company said that it was cutting around 50% of its workforce.

Today's announcement that Twitter had temporarily closed its offices came amid signs that large numbers of workers have now also resigned as they have not accepted Mr Musk's new terms.

Employees have been tweeting using the hashtag

#LoveWhereYouWorked and a saluting emoji to show they were leaving the firm.

One former Twitter worker who wished to remain anonymous told the BBC: "I think when the dust clears today, there's probably going to be less than 2,000 people left."

They added that everyone in their team had been terminated.

"The manager of that team, his manager was terminated. And then that manager's manager was terminated. The person above that was one of the execs terminated on the first day. So there's nobody left in that chain of command." Before Mr Musk took control of Twitter the company had around 7,500 staff. The firm was also reported to have employed thousands of contract workers, the majority of which are understood to have been laid off. Another person said they had resigned even though they had been prepared to work long hours.

"I didn't want to work for someone who threatened us over email multiple times about only 'exceptional tweeps should work here' when I was already working 60-70 hours weekly," they said.

# Reports of Chinese police stations in US worry FBI

(News Agency) The FBI is "concerned" by reports that secret "police stations" linked to China have been set up across the US.

A September report issued by the NGO Safeguard Defenders revealed the presence of these stations around the world, including in New York.

The FBI's director, Christopher Wray, told senior politicians that the agency was monitoring reports of such centres across the country. "We are aware of the existence of these stations," Mr Wray said.

"To me, it is outrageous to think that the Chinese police would attempt to set up shop, you know, in New York, let's say, without proper coordination," he added. "It violates sovereignty and circumvents standard judicial and law enforcement cooperation processes."

Asked if the stations violated US law, Mr Wray said the FBI was "looking into the legal parameters".

The senior intelligence official was speaking at a US Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee hearing, where he

was grilled by senior lawmakers. According to the Spain-based NGO Safeguard Defenders, Chinese public security bureaus established the "overseas police service stations" in several continents, including two in London and one in Glasgow. In North America, it found stations in Toronto and in New York.

The units were reportedly created to tackle transnational crime and to provide administrative services to Chinese nationals abroad, such as renewing drivers' licences abroad and other consular services.

However, Safeguard Defenders said they also serve a "more sinister goal", by contributing to "cracking down on all kinds of illegal and criminal activities involving overseas Chinese". Chia has denied running the overseas stations.

Mr Wray said the United States had opened a number of charges related to the Chinese government harassing, stalking, monitoring and blackmailing people in the US who had been critical of Chinese President Xi Jinping.

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# Why Trump's White House bid could end his career

(News Agency) As younger and more electable Republican challengers emerge, deep-pocketed donors ditch, Ivanka steps aside, Capitol sword hangs, and the Twitter-Facebook ban continues, is it the end of Donald Trump?

Trump's presidency was controversial and divisive and he was seen as a noisy and non-serious president. Former US President Donald Trump has announced that he will seek the Republican presidential nomination in 2024, aspiring to become the first person to take the White House after being rejected by voters in decades.

He has filed paperwork with the Federal Election Commission declaring his candidacy. So, is Trump a Republican candidate already? No. The paperwork only allows him to raise campaign money.

In the coming months, there will be a series of state-by-state caucuses and primary elections in which Republican voters will send delegates to the national convention to select the nominee. The same applies to the other party, the Democrats.

Caucuses and primary elections are similar to playoffs in a sports league. Several names from each party contest these polls and ultimately, a Republican and a Democrat nominee emerge who battle it out for the race to the White House. US political parties usually give incumbents a free pass to renomination for a second and the last term.

Let's quickly get a sense of what these parties stand for. Currently led by President Joe Biden, the Left-liberal Democrats have rolled out plans on climate change. They want to expand government-run healthcare programmes, protect abortion rights and tighten gun control. Some famous Democrats who have been presidents are Barack Obama, Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton and John F Kennedy.

The Republicans or Conservatives, led by Trump as President during 2017-21, went for Right-leaning judicial appointees, called climate change a hoax and tightened immigration systems for majority-Muslim and African nations. Some famous Republicans who have been presidents are George W Bush, George HW Bush and Ronald Reagan.

## PAST TENSE

Trump's presidency was controversial and divisive and he



was seen as a noisy and non-serious president who governed by tweet. Having lost in 2020, he refused to concede defeat, called the election a fraud and is facing indictment for his role in encouraging supporters to deadly rioting on the Capitol. He is the only President to be impeached twice and he remains deeply polarising.

A defeated former president running again with swords of criminal indictment hanging overhead is unprecedented in the US. Trump becomes the first former President to re-run since Theodore Roosevelt. Trump is the first since Grover Cleveland to do so after a re-election defeat.

The wealthy and flamboyant Trump was the first president in American history without prior public office or military background. But this time, the situation seems a lot different.

## CONGRESS CRISIS

And it's not only Trump's past that can mar his White House bid for 2024. The midterm elections for Congress have deepened his challenges. Newly-elected members of Congress pose for a class photo on the East Front of the Capitol in Washington, Tuesday, Nov. 15, 2022 (AP Photo/File)

The US Congress is an equivalent of India's Parliament, and its House of Representatives and Senate are like our Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, respectively. Trump is the only President to be impeached by a bipartisan vote, although Senate Republicans defeated Congressional Democrats in their effort to remove him from office.

Congressional votes are held every two years in the

middle of the President's four-year term and are called the midterms. The House of Representatives decides which laws are voted on, while the Senate can block or approve them, confirm appointments made by the President and, more rarely, probe him.

Each state has two senators with a six-year term, and representatives sit for two years and represent smaller districts. In the elections, voting was held for all House of Representatives seats and one-third of the Senate. Midterms are often seen as a verdict on how the President's performance and the party that holds the White House, the Democrats in the current case, traditionally loses seats. But this time, Democrats retained control of the Senate, while the Republicans barely managed to take power in the House of Representatives. Perhaps more importantly, in the current context, voters overwhelmingly rejected Trump's endorsed candidates, who have propagated his election fraud theory, in the midterms. Trump's decision to run again seems extraordinary but it was much-anticipated. He only confirmed the worst-kept secret while making the declaration. Trump's announcement speech was full of false and inflated claims, including about the 2020 election being rigged. He said the election architecture was like that in third-world countries. Americans feel safer using paper ballots as compared to Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) that

India and many other countries use. India also used paper ballots for decades, but the 2014 Lok Sabha elections were held entirely on EVMs. Because of the use of paper ballots, full announcements of election results in the US take several days, compared to the single-day affair enabled by EVMs.

## INDICTMENT SWORD

Trump's urgency to make the announcement seemed driven by his anxiety to get ahead of potential criminal indictment, including in a justice department investigation into the removal of classified files from the White House, and his urge to steal a march on potential rivals. However, many believe his ambitions might have motivated Democratic voters to vote with a vengeance in the midterms. The elected Republicans have blamed Trump for the lacklustre show in the midterms and rivals within the party are already trying to challenge him for the nomination, escalating efforts to move on from him.

## TRUMP RIVALS

Who could be Trump's rivals can be understood by who he is attacking the most. They are: newly elected Florida Governor Ron DeSantis and Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin. Others include former Secretary of State Michael Pompeo, Texas Senator Ted Cruz, South Carolina Senator Tim Scott and Maryland Governor Larry Hogan.

## DONORS DITCH

Some Republican mega donors and deep-pocketed conservatives, who have been close to Trump (76) for years, have distanced themselves from his

campaign, pushing for younger alternatives without taint. Ron DeSantis is only 44. Former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, once a close Trump adviser, has said to a round of ovation that the party should stop nominating divisive and unelectable people.

## IVANKA AND PENCE

His daughter, Ivanka Trump, has also said she will not be involved in the 2024 campaign. Mike Pence, who served as Vice President during Trump's presidency, has said he will not back him as "the US needs leadership to unite the country". Pence has said he was angered by Trump's tweet saying he, as Vice President, didn't have the courage to "overturn" the 2020 election certification. Pence could also be Trump's challenger, media reports have mentioned.

## MEDIA MUDDLE

Media polls have shown more Republicans identify themselves with the party over Trump than ever before, and most Americans want him to be charged for the Capitol rioting.

There have also been harsh reactions from some of Trump's former media friends. Headlines from even conservative outlets have been unfriendly. In short, he will have to do a lot of convincing. He doesn't even have the full backing of Fox News.

Trump's candidacy means Biden may run for re-election. Biden, who defeated Trump two years ago, has said he expects to run and will make an announcement next year. For now, he has made light of Trump's announcement.

## SOCIAL SHUN

Trump's list of problems is long. In an age where social media plays a crucial role in elections, he doesn't have access to Twitter and Facebook.

A desperate Trump has asked an appeals court to revive his lawsuit against Twitter Inc, challenging his permanent suspension from the platform after the Capitol rioting that had also prompted Facebook to ban him.

## END OF THE ROAD?

When a defiant Trump launched his third consecutive White House bid, fewer family members were present than at some of his past events. Ivanka and son Donald Jr did not even attend. Trump said, "America's comeback starts right now. I'm announcing my candidacy to save our country." However, the question many are asking is: Is it the end of Donald Trump?



# Climate Change : Himalayan Glacial Retreat, Variable Monsoon Major Threats To India, Says Report at COP-27

Glacial retreats not only reduce water availability in the rivers but also put hydropower projects in the Himalayan region under greater risk, says one of the authors of the report. Large hydropower projects are on India's focus to reduce dependence on fossil fuels, emissions from which are the major cause of global warming.

An ISRO study of satellite images over 15 years shows over 75% of Himalayan glaciers in retreat

The retreat of Himalayan glaciers and an erratic monsoon pattern —two of the most visible impacts of climatic changes in and around India— are going to make life more difficult in the coming days, according to a report released at the 27th United Nations Climate Change Conference or Conference of the Parties (COP-27) of the UNFCCC in Egypt on Thursday.

The report said, "Glacier retreat in the Himalayas threatens water supply, particularly under drought conditions. The Himalayas provide water for 1.3 billion people in the vicinity of 10 major river basins in Asia. Lack of water resources increases agricultural vulnerability to the changing climate, affecting the food security and health of large populations."

The report, titled 10 New Insights In Climate Science, is a work of more than two dozen scientists and researchers from around the world and has been produced by Future Earth, The Earth League, and World Climate Research Programme.

There are three major Himalayan rivers in India —the Indus in the northwest, Ganga in the north and east, and Brahmaputra in the northeast— apart from many of their tributaries. India's northern, eastern, north-eastern, and north-western states are heavily dependent on these three rivers and their tributaries. Less water flowing through these rivers can impact agriculture and fishing-dependent communities.

Speaking to Outlook over phone, Aditi Mukherji, one of the authors of the report, said that glacial retreats not only reduce water availability in the rivers but also put hydropower projects in the Himalayan region under greater risk from events of glacial lake outburst floods (GLOF).

Glacier retreat leads to the formation and development of glacial lakes. Breaches in such lakes can potentially cause devastating floods in downstream hilly regions.

Significantly, large hydropower projects are on India's focus to reduce



dependence on fossil fuels, emissions from which are the major cause of global warming. Hydroelectric projects ranging from 500 megawatts (MW) to 1,800MW of installed capacity are existing, are under construction, or are in the pipeline in the Himalayan states of Sikkim, Uttarakhand, and Himachal Pradesh, and the Union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

Speaking on the possible impact on water flow in Himalayan rivers, Mukherji said that reduction in water flow due to glacial retreats will impact the Indus region more than Ganga and Brahmaputra because the former has greater dependence on glaciers while the latter two are significantly dependent on monsoon.

"The Ladakh region is at a greater risk from implications of glacial retreat," said Mukherji, Director of Climate Change Impact Platform at the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR).

Originating in Tibet, Indus flows through Ladakh before entering Pakistan. Of its 2,880-km length, 709 km lies in India, spread over a catchment area of 3,21,248 sq km. The Indus river basin, which includes its tributaries, is spread over the Union territories of Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, and Chandigarh, and the states of Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana.

Mukherji told Outlook that farmers in Ladakh were already witnessing some impacts of glacial retreats, as water is coming down earlier than expected, at a time when the people are not prepared for farming because the land in the villages is still frozen.

She said, "The situation is such that people in Ladakh dependent on farming are considering relocation."

The Ganga flows through Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and West Bengal, but the river basin also covers the states of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Jharkhand. The Brahmaputra basin cov-

ers large parts of north-eastern India. Of them, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and West Bengal make one of the most-densely populated regions in India.

The impacts of glacial retreat may be compounded with the impacts of the changing monsoon pattern. The report said, "More variable patterns of tropical monsoon systems in South America, India and Southeast Asia...could lead to weather extremes that further expose human vulnerability in densely populated coastal areas."

The recently observed monsoon trends in India hint at sudden, heavy rain in quick bursts following prolonged dry periods.

The impacts that the report warned about can already be seen, according to Himanshu Thakkar, coordinator of South Asia Network of Dam, River and People (SANDRP), a rights and advocacy group. He thinks the government needs to stay prepared for more events of flash floods, avalanches, rock fall, and landslides in the hilly areas, and for adverse agricultural impact in the plains.

He said, "The water flows down quickly in cases of high-intensity rainfall

in a short duration, leading to less water percolation. Besides, such extreme weather events are also likely to aggravate river erosion, especially in the Brahmaputra valley."

Mukherji pointed out that in the heavily-agriculture-dependent plains, such as in West Bengal, variable monsoon has prompted some farmers to use irrigation pumps during the monsoon crop season, which they never required before. This shot up farming expenses and some farmers preferred not to sow at all.

Both Thakkar and Mukherji stressed that India needed to prioritise improving the early warning system for extreme weather events.

"India needs a basket of interventions, not isolated ones. The existing early warning system is efficient for timely evacuation in events of cyclones but we need a better warning system for agriculture that can alert farmers three to four weeks ago. We need to have a proper crop insurance system for both drought and flood. We also need to strengthen crop research to get more extreme weather-friendly varieties," said Mukherji.

The report insisted that the potential to adapt to climate change is limited, arguing that rising sea levels capable of submerging coastal communities and extreme heat intolerable to the human body are examples of 'hard' limits to human ability to adapt and pressed for greater focus in mitigation measures. The report identified the entire breadth of Asia as vulnerability hotspot areas with the highest susceptibility to being adversely affected by climate-driven hazards. It called upon policymakers to pay special attention to water resource availability, a key driver of agricultural vulnerability.





# ‘The weirdest election I’ve ever been a part of’: How the GOP almost blew the House

Seven weeks before an Election Day that many expected to be a GOP blowout, House Republicans got unsettling news: Their own internal statistical modeling was warning for the first time that they might suffer a shocking loss. The numbers fed a nagging fear that had started to creep over top party officials, according to two people who described the data: Had Republicans peaked too soon? House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy predicted in November 2021 that his party could pick up as many as 60 seats the following year. But control over the midterm started to slip away from the GOP in June when the Supreme Court revoked a 50-year constitutional right to abortion, igniting a previously disengaged Democratic base. Cash-rich Democrats began a TV ad onslaught centered on abortion rights as national generic ballots tightened. The House GOP campaign arm convened its top strategists in late summer to weigh how to react. After some debate, a fateful consensus emerged among the party's top messaging pros: They wouldn't respond at all. The group decided it was imperative Republicans stay trained on the economy and voters' cost-of-living pain. The National Republican Congressional Committee urged candidates to maintain their focus there even when under attack on abortion.

“We can't make emotional decisions,” said Mike Thom, the Republican campaign arm's political director.

It was a complicated choice — between taking punches without throwing them back or diverting focus from their top issue to engage on one that was negative for Republicans.

Both parties soon thought the Democratic surge had passed. The GOP's modeling went back to predicting a win two weeks later, suggesting the strategy had paid off. But now, a week after the election, lawmakers are back in Washington under once-unthinkable circumstances: After historical trends and polls pointed squarely toward a red wave, control of the House still hasn't been called, though Republicans are on the cusp of securing a slim majority. In hindsight, both parties were armed with data that pointed to that very outcome, but Democrats limped to November weighed down by pessimism about President Joe Biden's sagging approval ratings and skyrocketing inflation. Fueling some of that fear was a glut of GOP spending that ultimately toppled only a few endangered incumbents, including House Democratic campaign chief Sean Patrick Maloney.

The 2022 election upended conventional wisdom. People who didn't like the direction of the country or the economy did not punish Biden's party for it as harshly as expected. Suburban voters still largely backed Democrats, even without former President Donald Trump in office.

The large number of Democratic incumbents who retired complicated the

party's chances of winning some districts but only outright wrecked a few.

No one moment was the singular undoing of House Republicans' lofty hopes. But GOP leaders, in their confidence about winning the election, underestimated how much abortion and concerns over extremist candidates would galvanize the Democratic base, shrinking the battlefield. The handful of bluer-leaning seats in New York and elsewhere that Democrats did lose didn't herald a red wave, but instead became confounding outliers.

“This is the weirdest election I've ever been a part of,” said Rep. Kelly Armstrong (R-N.D.), who serves on the GOP campaign committee.

Republicans also grappled with an emboldened MAGA base, egged on by Trump, that elevated far-right — and unelectable — candidates in key battleground districts. The GOP's successes in boosting the strongest recruits yielded crucial pickups that may yet make the difference between winning and losing the chamber. But the impossible task of shaping every primary meant weak nominees cost them in several places.

This account of an election that saw historical headwinds redirected by unprecedented political developments is based on more than 60 interviews with lawmakers, candidates and strategists from both parties.

## Chaos on election night

Rep. Abigail Spanberger's (D-Va.) race was widely considered the harbinger of what was to come across the House map. The call of her win, which came after 10:30 p.m. on election night, elicited cheers and screams from staff at the DCCC's headquarters, a sleek building in D.C.'s Navy Yard neighborhood. Over at House Majority PAC, the party's flagship outside group, staffers were banging cowbells as endangered incumbents from Rep. Vicente Gonzalez (D-Texas) to Rep. Elissa Slotkin (D-Mich.) held on.

It made for an awkward split-screen as Maloney, who had returned to D.C. to be with his DCCC staff on election night, watched his own reelection chances crash amid the delight around him. In a call with staff the day after he lost, Maloney told them the cheers lifted his spirits because he knew the party was doing well even as he feared he was going to lose himself.

“Those motherfuckers wasted a lot of money on me,” Maloney told his staff in a call shortly after conceding his race the next day, according to a person listening. That jubilation was in stark contrast to the scenario many Democrats were preparing for: a Republican wave. One Democratic outside group prepared a 13-page memo almost entirely devoted to how the party should handle the fallout from huge GOP gains, according to a source familiar with the document.

Under “good scenarios,” which the group imagined as narrowly losing the House,

there were three bullet points prepared. “For most people, the turning point was Spanberger. Everyone thought she was DOA, so when she was surviving, everyone said, ‘holy shit,’” said Tim Lim, a Democratic consultant who works on races across the country. “A lot of us were ready to spin losing narratives, and I'm glad we were wrong, but we also need to figure out why we were caught so flat-footed.” At an upscale hotel ballroom across town, McCarthy's victory party never fully materialized. Gathered with his close allies, including former Speaker Newt Gingrich, McCarthy watched the results and dialed up GOP candidates every time a race was called in their favor, according to a Republican who attended the event. But he wasn't making nearly as many of those calls as the party had hoped. Senior GOP staff were growing nervous as many of the contests that would have signaled a wave turned into Republican losses, including a McCarthy favorite: former Cranston Mayor Allan Fung in Rhode Island.

In the days and weeks before Nov. 8, McCarthy had been crisscrossing the country visiting districts like Fung's — seats that backed Biden two years ago, but seemed poised to fall into GOP hands. The final results shocked nearly everyone.

There were Democrats openly questioning their party's decision to lean so heavily into abortion advertising ahead of the midterms. In the days after, some Republicans admitted it was their party which had miscalculated.

We missed that as a party. Some of the states went really extreme with their health care for women, and it hurt us,” said Sarah Chamberlain, the leader of the Republican Main Street Partnership, which identifies itself as a pragmatic GOP organization. “Kansas should have been a wakeup call. And I know we thought it had peaked, but it had not peaked, obviously.”

## Warning signs

Almost exactly one year before Election Day, Democrats' first alarm bells rang out: a Republican upset in Virginia's governor's race, a GOP rout in local races on Long Island and the defeat of New Jersey's most powerful Democratic state legislator by a local truck driver.

Hours after election night 2021, dozens of rattled House Democrats huddled in the Capitol for an intervention. Party leaders worried their message wasn't breaking through even before the results in Virginia, and had scheduled a special meeting to change course, according to multiple people familiar with the plans.

“Stop talking in Hebrew and start talking in Yiddish,” House Democratic Caucus Chair Hakeem Jeffries instructed members — a New Yorker's way of advising his colleagues to be more conversational and less poll-tested. A few minutes later, Rep. Matt Cartwright, who had just watched the GOP make local gains in Pennsylvania, offered a warning.

Cartwright said the party needed to better communicate an agenda focused on “jobs,” “tax cuts,” and “lower costs.”

If not, he said, “we'll lose our majority.” Democrats were growing nervous that their party lacked a strategy to show the public how it was combating inflation. Those fears escalated after a December meeting in the Capitol, when Democrats complained that White House officials had little more to offer on the economy than a handful of PowerPoint slides focused on supply chains and “inflationary pressure.”

Those few months with their agenda in flux, according to many Democrats, were among the lowest points in the election cycle. The party's shaken confidence helped fuel a large number of retirements from Democratic members thinking they saw a potential wave building.

A clear momentum shift built over the summer. Biden's approval ticked up. Democrats were gaining in national generic ballot polls. And voter registration in numerous states shifted younger and more female.

Voters in Kansas overwhelmingly rejected an August referendum that would have opened the door to revoking access to abortion in the red state. Then New York Democrat Pat Ryan won a special election for a closely divided Hudson Valley district while campaigning heavily on abortion rights.

Meanwhile, Democratic candidates and outside groups began a TV ad campaign that would carry through the fall. Since July, Democrats have spent some \$120 million on abortion-focused advertising, according to data from AdImpact, a media tracking firm.

Republicans' internal surveys conducted before Dobbs showed a massive win in November brewing. One example: Slotkin was trailing by a high-single-digit margin in her opponent's private polling in June. But by mid-September, Republican Tom Barrett was down in his polls, and Slotkin beat him by 5 points on Election Day.

“I don't think that was all Dobbs, because he had a lot of negative spending going on at the same time,” said Jason Cabel Roe, Barrett's consultant. “But I don't think you can ignore the role Dobbs played in it.”

Overturning Roe motivated huge segments of the Democratic Party, especially younger voters — and especially in Michigan, where abortion was literally on the ballot in the form of a constitutional amendment to guarantee the right to the procedure.

Democrats still had to grapple with inflation and a looming recession, and their candidates aired numerous ads assuring voters they felt their pain. The DCCC's strategy was for candidates to fight Republicans “to a draw” on the economy and then talk about abortion rights, extremism or guns to pull ahead. One of the closest midterms in history, instead of the usual party-in-power wipeout, was vindication.



# The World Population Just Hit 8 Billion and Here's How It Will Continue to Grow

Demographers will never be sure if 15 November really was the Day of Eight Billion, as the UN has named it, but they do agree on one thing. Although the human population has grown rapidly, that growth is slowing—and, within a few decades, Earth's population will begin to shrink.

"It is a crude approximation that is more of a symbolic finding," says Patrick Gerland, who leads demographic work at the UN Population Division in New York City. "We may have passed it, or it may be a little later, but it's around this time that humanity is reaching 8 billion." Although approximate, this could be the most reliable estimate that the UN has produced so far. The organization recently changed how it analyses data, switching from five-yearly to annual intervals. And there has been a steady improvement in recent decades in the ability and capacity of many countries to collect statistics.

Significant blind spots remain, however, particularly for countries that are experiencing humanitarian crises and conflicts, such as Somalia, Yemen and Syria. "The accuracy of the underlying, empirical information varies tremendously around the world," Gerland says.

## DIFFERING ESTIMATES

The rapid rise in population throughout the twentieth century (see 'People of the world') was driven by advances in public health and medicine, which allowed more children to survive to adulthood. At the same time, fertility rates (defined as the number of children per woman) stayed high in lower-income countries.

Demographers take a particular interest in fertility rates and how they are expected to change, because these factors help to drive what will happen to the global population in the future. Differences in assumed fertility rates have been an important reason behind a notable diversion in what various models

had previously forecast for the world's population in 2100, for example. Those results suggested a spread ranging from 8.8 billion to nearly 11 billion by the end of the century.

"If you make even relatively small adjustments in these fertility-rate trajectories it accumulates, and suddenly a big country can have 100 million people more 80 years from now," says Tomáš Sobotka, a population researcher at the Vienna Institute of Demography.

In 2018, the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) in Vienna forecast that global population would be about 9.5 billion in 2100. The institute is now preparing an update, which will raise that estimate to between 10 billion and 10.1 billion. The change is due to higher observed and expected survival rates among children in lower-income countries, Sobotka says. Another factor is higher estimates of fertility rates in some large countries, including Pakistan.

## MORE RELIABLE DATA

The most significant factor behind the UN's updated forecast is that data from China has been more reliable since the end of the country's one-child policy in 2015. "There was always a mismatch in the different sources of data coming from China during that policy," Gerland says. Some parents, particularly if they had a girl, would not register an initial birth, he says. For that reason, many children did not appear in official statistics until they started to attend school. "We basically had to rely on education statistics for more accurate information," he says. The UN predictions suggest that China's population has already peaked and will now shrink year-on-year until at least the end of the century. "The Chinese statistics are suggesting there are already more deaths than births in China, and in that situation the population will start to decline," Gerland says.

(By David Adam, *Nature* magazine)

# 3 dead bodies with torture marks washed ashore at a popular Mexican tourist area

(South Asian Insider Bureau) Beachgoers at a popular Mexican resort town were subjected to a stark reminder of Mexican cartel violence when dead bodies of tortured individuals washed up on the beach over the weekend. Visitors to Acapulco's famed Playa Condesa made the discovery on Saturday afternoon when two bodies were found showing clear indications that they had been tortured, *The Sun* reported. One of the bodies was tied to a cement anchor on one hand and one foot while another body was lying face up in

the sand. A third body was found with gunshot wounds to the back of his neck the next morning at nearby Icacos Beach. Tourists enjoy the beach near one of three bodies that washed ashore at Icacos Beach in Acapulco, Mexico, Nov. 12, 2022.

The third body was reportedly found close to a military base. The Mexican military was called to the scene, and soldiers could be seen standing around in some photos, but the beach ultimately remained open, and the bodies were removed. Fo-

rensic technicians work around one of three bodies that washed ashore at Icacos Beach in Acapulco, Mexico, Nov. 12, 2022. Acapulco is located in the Mexican state of Guerrero, one of several regions the U.S. State Department warned in October that Americans should not travel due to crime concerns. "Crime and violence are widespread," the State Department warned. "Armed groups operate independently of the government in many areas of Guerrero. Members of these groups frequently maintain road-

blocks and may use violence towards travelers. U.S. citizens and LPRs have been victims of kidnapping in previous years." Forensic technicians and security forces move one of three bodies that washed ashore at Icacos Beach in Acapulco, Mexico, Nov. 12, 2022. (REUTERS/Raul Sendic) Acapulco was listed as the 7th deadliest city in the world in 2019, largely a result of cartel violence, after being one of the most popular travel destinations for Hollywood A-listers for decades beginning in the 1940s.

# Air India To Pay \$121.5 Mn To Passengers & \$1.4 Mn Fine to US in Tickets Refund Delay

(South Asian Insider Bureau) The US has ordered Tata-group owned Air India to pay refunds worth USD 121.5 million and imposed a fine of USD 1.4 million for extreme delays in providing refunds to passengers due to the cancellation or change in flights, mostly during the pandemic, officials said.

Air India is among the six airlines that have agreed to cough up a total of over USD 600 million as refunds, the US Department of Transportation said on Monday.

Air India's policy of "refund on request" is contrary to the Department of Transportation policy, which mandates air carriers to legally refund tickets in the case of cancellation or change in flight, the officials said.

The cases in which Air India was asked to pay the refund and agreed to pay the penalty were before the national carrier was acquired by the Tatas.

The Department of Transportation said Air India was ordered to pay USD 121.5 million in refunds to its passengers and pay USD 1.4 million as fine.

According to an official investigation,

Air India took more than 100 days to process more than half of the 1,900 refund complaints filed with the Department of Transportation for flights that the carrier cancelled or significantly changed.

Air India could not provide the agency with information regarding the time it took to process refunds to passengers who filed complaints and requested refunds directly with the carrier.

"Irrespective of Air India's stated refund policy, in practice Air India did not provide timely refunds. As a result, consumers experienced significant harm from the extreme delay in receiving their refunds," the Department of Transportation said.

Air India said it has received a fine pertaining to delayed refunds, which mostly relate to the pandemic period during which Air India was a publicly-owned entity.

Since Air India airline was privatised in January 2022, every effort has been made to clear all backlogged refunds, with more than 25,000 cases totalling USD 18.30 million successfully pro-

cessed, the airline said in a statement.

"New systems have also been implemented to expedite the processing of new refunds which are now turned around, on average, within one week," it added.

Apart from Air India, the US Department of Transportation has imposed fines on Frontier, TAP Portugal, Aero Mexico, EI Al, and Avianca.

Frontier was ordered to pay USD 222 million in refunds and USD 2.2 million in penalty. TAP Portugal will pay USD 126.5 million as refund and USD 1.1 million in penalty; Avianca (USD 76.8 million in refund and USD 750,000 in penalty), EI Al (USD 61.9 million in refund and USD 900,000 as penalty) and Aero Mexico (USD 13.6 million in refund and USD 900,00 as penalty).

In addition to the more than USD 600 million as refunds that airlines have paid, the Department of Transportation announced that it is assessing more than USD 7.25 million in civil penalties against these six airlines for extreme delays in providing refunds.

With Monday's fines, the Department's Office of Aviation Consumer Protection has assessed USD 8.1 million in civil penalties in 2022, the largest amount ever issued in a single year by that office, a media release said.

Under the US law, airlines and ticket agents have a legal obligation to refund consumers if the airline cancels or significantly changes a flight to, from and within the US, and the passenger does not wish to accept the alternative offered. It is unlawful for an airline to refuse refunds and instead provide vouchers to such consumers, the Department of Transportation said. "When a flight gets cancelled, passengers seeking refunds should be paid back promptly. Whenever that doesn't happen, we will act to hold airlines accountable on behalf of American travellers and get passengers their money back," US Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg said. "A flight cancellation is frustrating enough, and you shouldn't also have to haggle or wait months to get your refund," he added.



# The Untold Story Behind Emax

## The Cryptocurrency Kim Kardashian Got Busted For Hyping

**(By John HyattForbes Staff) An exclusive Forbes investigation unmask the pair of slick promoters who appear to have made millions pumping and dumping EthereumMax and other now virtually worthless crypto tokens.**

In June 2021, at the height of the cryptocurrency craze, Kim Kardashian posted an Instagram story promoting Ethereum Max, a brand-new token. The reality TV star wasn't giving "financial advice," but she was eager to share with her 225 million followers "what [her] friends just told her about the Ethereum Max token" — namely that they were reducing supply to give "back to the entire E-Max community."

Turns out some of those "friends" had paid the professional celebrity \$250,000 to promote Ethereum Max, and even though Kardashian had labeled her Instagram post as an "ad" it wasn't enough to satisfy regulators. Last month the Feds fined her \$1.3 million for hyping the cryptocurrency. SEC Chair Gary Gensler described the charges as "a reminder to celebrities" that they must disclose such payments. Kardashian declined to comment.

Kardashian was not the only famous personality to endorse the obscure token, which sported a market cap of nearly \$250 million in May 2021 but is currently virtually worthless. Other paid Emax boosters included boxing legend Floyd Mayweather, NBA Hall of Famer Paul Pierce, and NFL wide receiver Antonio Brown.

But the token's famous promoters were merely the outward manifestation of more widespread disease. An exclusive Forbes investigation has uncovered that behind Emax's rapid rise—and even faster fall—are two guys from the small coastal city of Milford, Connecticut: Russ Davis, a crypto promoter and marketer, and Justin Maher, one of Emax's cofounders and Davis' brother-in-law. Over the last 18 months, Davis and Maher have shilled dozens of dubious tokens.

Many of those tokens are so small and obscure that there is little available data, but Forbes was able to find historical prices for 18 of the cryptocurrencies endorsed by Davis and Maher. On average, each token is down more than 90% from its all-time high. That compares to the broader cryptocurrency market which is down 70% since peaking last November, according to CoinMarketCap. At least eight coins promoted by Davis and Maher (with names like Rocket Bunny and Boom Baby) have plunged over 99% from their peaks. Davis and Maher's role behind Emax has not previously been reported. In an apparent web3 twist on the classic "pump n dump," Davis and Maher pitched Emax as a long-term investment to Davis' thousands of Twitter, Instagram and



Facebook followers during the token's launch last May, while simultaneously cashing out their own holdings through secret wallets. According to allegations in a class action lawsuit and individuals who spoke with Forbes, the duo pocketed millions of dollars in profits.

Davis, 41, runs InRussWeTrust, a paid newsletter and private Facebook group of 24,000 crypto enthusiasts. Maher, 37, is a crypto promoter and was a financial advisor at NorthwesternNWE +0.9% Mutual from 2013 until October 2021 when he resigned "while under internal review for allegations that [he] was involved in a cryptocurrency shilling scam," according to an SEC disclosure. A spokesperson for Northwestern Mutual confirmed that Maher no longer works there "due to not following firm policies and procedures." Maher has not been charged with a crime.

For his part, Davis denies the lawsuit's allegations and said he's never participated in any pump and dump schemes. Davis alleges that Giovanni Perone, one of Emax's cofounders and a defendant in the class action lawsuit, was the one doing the pumping and dumping: "Gio was the kingpin of the whole Emax scandal, 100%."

In a series of text messages with Forbes Maher also blamed "Perone and his crew." Maher insists that most of the lawsuit's claims are "based on hearsay or conjecture, or just straight up conspiracy theories."

Perone, 38, was an executive at private equity shop Cerberus Capital Management before cofounding Emax. Perone, like Davis and Maher, offloaded Emax tokens "onto unsuspecting investors" for "substantial profits" during the token's first six weeks, according to allegations in the lawsuit. Perone and his lawyers did not respond to repeated requests for comment.

Not everyone is mad at Davis and Maher.

Some Emax investors sold early and scored profits. Others made peace with their losses, chalking it up to the realities of the crypto market where fortunes can vanish as quickly as they're made.

To the less forgiving though, InRussWeTrust sabotaged its own followers.

"A lot of people followed Russ," says Tony Russo, 34, a Florida-based crypto investor and former InRussWeTrust member. "He gained trust and then started screwing his own people over." Before becoming a crypto millionaire, Russ Davis hit the jackpot the old-fashioned way: By winning the lottery. In November 2016, Davis won the Connecticut state lottery's \$1 million Diamond prize; he took home \$720,000 after-tax.

By the start of 2021, Davis was dabbling in crypto. That February, he began investing in Shiba Inu, the dog-meme token that Elon Musk would help hype to the moon, and helped a bunch of friends do the same. After Shiba Inu skyrocketed in the spring, Davis was crowned a "crypto consultant" by CNN and won thousands of loyal fans. He parlayed his burgeoning reputation into InRussWeTrust.

Davis' followers first heard about Emax on May 14, 2021, two days after the cryptocurrency was created. Maher advised the Facebook group to not "sleep on" the new token and posted screenshots that showed Emax's astonishing 24-hour gains of 466,590%. "Emax is crushing records," Davis wrote the next day.

To generate these eye-popping "returns," Emax's creators, which included Maher, had underfunded Emax's liquidity pool "to the point where small buys would cause large spikes to the price," according to the class-action lawsuit, which was filed in January in the Central District of California U.S. District Court on behalf of

around 100 plaintiffs who lost more than \$5 million investing in Emax.

Emax's creators had essentially created a penny stock bucket shop—of the sort made famous by the movie Boiler Room—for the crypto age, only one where the economics were far better. No need to open physical offices or hire an army of crooked salesmen to work the phones. Social media influencers and celebrities can amplify products faster. Lawyers, SEC filings and even the need for real businesses to back sketchy stocks, are rendered completely unnecessary. And best of all, few guardrails and scant enforcement.

The lawsuit names five "executive defendants," all like Maher cofounders of Emax. They have filed an attempt to get the case dismissed. There are also five "promoter defendants": Kim Kardashian, Paul Pierce, Antonio Brown, Floyd Mayweather, Jr., and Russ Davis. The point of the scheme, the complaint alleges, was to use, "the artificially inflated prices" to burnish Emax's credentials to investors while the defendants cashed out.

Investors new to crypto could use the 18-step instructional video on how to buy Emax created by Michael Speer, whose wife owns a home in Milford, and is one of the executive defendants in the lawsuit. Speer, a one-time mayoral candidate in East Haven, Connecticut who now lives in Texas, misrepresented himself to the public as a neutral third-party when he was actually a cofounder of Emax, the lawsuit alleges. Speer denies playing any role in Emax's founding, calls the lawsuit's allegations against him "bogus" and says he's never met Davis or Maher.

Josh Olin, 35, was one of those new investors. A former video game developer who worked on the Call of Duty franchise, Olin started investing in crypto early last year and found his way to InRussWeTrust. He initially splashed a few thousand dollars on Emax and is not a party to the class action lawsuit.

As Emax's price alternately soared and plunged during its chaotic first weeks, Olin doubled down on his bet: "I just kept buying in and buying dips like they tell everybody." Ultimately, Olin says he spent about \$100,000 buying Emax tokens. "It was a lot, a lot, a lot of money."

More experienced investors might have noticed some big red flags. For instance, Emax didn't publish a white paper—a technical overview of the token and its goals—before listing, as is customary for new cryptocurrencies.



# The Untold Story Behind Emax

Even weirder, Emax completed a “hard fork”—a technical term for migrating to a new blockchain and issuing new tokens to holders—less than two weeks after launching. Why would a brand-new cryptocurrency need—or want—such a fundamental overhaul so quickly?

But some investors found it easy to overlook technical matters when the token was endorsed by a raft of celebrities in its first few weeks. In addition to Kardashian and those named in the lawsuit, Emax was promoted by model and influencer Amber Rose, rapper French Montana, nightclub owner David Grutman, celebrity jeweler Eric Da Jeweler, and NFL wide receiver Juju Smith-Schuster. Even Tom Brady joined the action, commenting, “I’m in on that!!” on an Instagram post by Grutman announcing that two of his Miami nightclubs would start accepting Emax as a form of payment.

None were more influential, or better paid, than Floyd “Money” Mayweather Jr. who earned \$2.5 million for pumping the coin, according to the lawsuit. The boxer, who had been fined \$615,000 in 2018 for promoting a different cryptocurrency scheme (he did not admit or deny the findings), wore an Emax shirt to the Bitcoin Conference in Miami on June 4, 2021, where he was interviewed on Fox News and declared during a panel, “I

believe there’s gonna be another cryptocurrency just as large as Bitcoin someday.” Emax also became the exclusive crypto payment option for Mayweather’s pay-per-view fight against YouTube star Logan Paul on June 6, 2021, a fact that Emax advertised on a billboard in Times Square.

Davis posted photos in his Facebook group of himself and Mayweather in Las Vegas on the day of the big fight, announcing a “long term deal” between Emax, Mayweather and InRussWeTrust. But Mayweather does not appear to have promoted Emax again after the fight. Mayweather could not be reached for comment.

Like any digital asset, Emax transactions are recorded on a public ledger, where anyone can track coin movements between digital wallets. To reassure the market that they weren’t dumping tokens, Davis and Maher had publicized the wallet addresses that they said held their Emax. Although the data seemed to corroborate what they were saying, Olin was suspicious. Trolling through the blockchain he soon discovered other wallets with large Emax holdings that were indeed cashing out.

“The further I investigated, the more inconsistent things would get,” Olin says. “I had a bunch of wallets that I knew were colluding. I had a bunch of accounts that

I knew were all related to one another.” By Olin’s estimation, dozens of wallets connected to Davis’ public wallet had sold “tens of millions of dollars” of Emax between May 2021 and August 2021. The Emax lawsuit tells a similar story, alleging Davis started cashing out his “massive” Emax holdings shortly after his promotional activities began. The complaint lists 46 wallet addresses that are “believed to be owned/controlled by Davis” and “used to conceal his transactions.”

Davis denies cashing out Emax holdings through secret wallets, and he disclaims ownership of all the wallets identified in the lawsuit. “The accusations of the pump and dump stuff are so humorous, it’s almost offensive,” he says.

Maher, meanwhile, as a cofounder of Emax received 5.9% of all tokens, according to the lawsuit. Maher departed the Emax founding team about two weeks after the project’s launch, his stake worth \$4.1 million at the time, and then quickly sold off 98% his holdings, the lawsuit alleges. Maher says he “never received a penny as cofounder” and insists he didn’t sell anything until after the Mayweather fight.

Jay Falcone, a resident of Seymour, Connecticut, which is just 11 miles down the road from Milford, who is familiar with Emax’s origins and is a friend of Giovanni Perone, says that Davis bought his Emax stake “very, very early—like on day one—and for very little cost, and rather than coming on to the project to help, instead sold off the entire way.” Falcone, who is not a party to the lawsuit but lost “40 to 50 grand” on Emax, blames Davis for the token’s trajectory.

It wasn’t just Falcone: Emax got around Milford. The new “internet coin” was the subject of a 98-comment discussion thread in a popular local Facebook group. Michael Bulkley, a pastor at Milford’s Kingdom Life Christian Church, told Forbes he lost \$4,500 investing in Emax after a parishioner told him about it. “Human nature and greed got the best of me,” Bulkley says.

When, in July 2021, Olin confronted Davis and began sharing his suspicions with the InRussWeTrust community, Davis kicked him out of the Facebook group. Today, Emax trades at a 99.5% discount from its short-lived heights last May.

Stephanie Roberts, a 38-year-old independent marketing consultant, first started investing in crypto in 2017. She joined InRussWeTrust shortly after its launch and was among Emax’s first investors, but unlike Olin, she sold her coins early, netting thousands of dollars in profit. But not even Roberts stood a chance on the Matrix Samurai token, a scheme promoted by Davis last June, during the peak of the Emax craze.

Davis alerted his followers to Matrix Samurai in a Facebook post on June 2, 2021, identifying himself as a “founding Samurai.” Three days later, he touted Matrix Samurai again, posting its since-deleted white paper. Then, on June 12,

the burglary went down.

“I was in Houston. The coin launched on a Saturday at like 10am, and by 10:15am all the money was gone,” recalls Roberts. “I had like \$20,000 in this coin—everything was gone.”

In crypto, Matrix Samurai is what’s known as a “hard rug pull,” in which a token’s developer inserts a backdoor in a token’s code that enables them to drain investors’ money. It’s difficult to measure how much exactly investors lost from Matrix Samurai. But DexTools, a tracker of decentralized tokens, recorded buying volumes of \$55 million on June 12. In a Facebook group of ex-Davis believers (“InRussWeDONTTrust”), one person said they lost \$30,000; another, \$15,000. Today, 8,130 wallets hold worthless Matrix Samurai tokens, according to Etherscan.

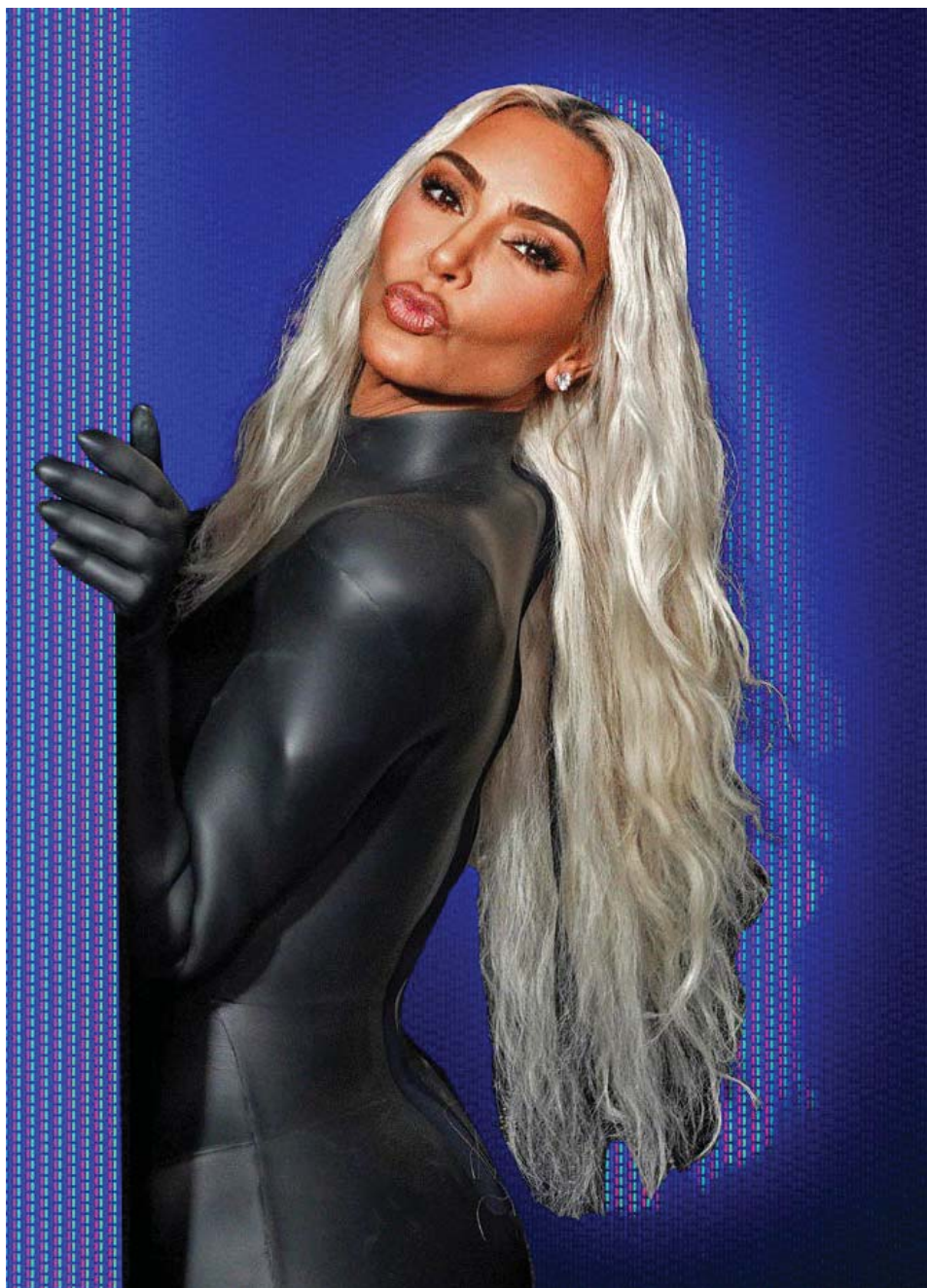
Davis denies any wrongdoing regarding Matrix Samurai. Immediately after the rug pull, he shared his public wallet on Facebook, which appears to show he lost several hundred thousand dollars on the token. “If I’m a pump and dumper, I’m the worst one in the world because all I’m doing is losing money,” Davis told Forbes. Maher also posted in the Facebook group to deny any wrongdoing and explain that he had slept through the launch while vacationing in Hawaii, and as a result, had not invested—or lost—any money.

Two days later, Maher pinned the blame on a rogue developer, but Roberts didn’t buy it. Like Olin she had begun tracking Emax’s blockchain, using the wallet tracking app Zerion. “I literally spent months tracking all these wallets,” she says. “Going from wallet to wallet, wallet to wallet. It was like a whole maze.”

When Roberts started raising her suspicions with InRussWeTrust’s members, Davis gave her the boot, too. “He blocked me out of the group and then he sent me a message,” she says. “But when I went to go read it, he had deleted it.”

Since Matrix Samurai’s collapse, Davis and Maher have kept busy cycling through new cryptocurrencies. For a while it was The People’s Coin, which Davis touted on Fox Business Network as “an honest coin [to] help out charities with cryptocurrency.” These days it’s Challenge Coin, a cryptocurrency that says it donates 4% of all transactions to nonprofits helping U.S. veterans. In June, Fox Business Network invited Davis back on to hype Challenge Coin alongside Rob O’Neill, the U.S. Navy Seal famous for his participation in the raid of Osama Bin Laden’s Pakistan compound (and now a Challenge Coin promoter).

“A cryptocurrency is just like any store of value,” explained Davis, when the Fox host, Maria Bartiromo, asked him where Challenge Coin derives its value from. “What’s a baseball card worth to you? If it’s valuable to you and people want to pay for it, then that’s what the value is.”





# The Looming \$62 Billion Crypto Contagion

(By Nina Bambyшева, Javier Paz, Michael del Castillo and Steven Ehrlich) Like stock certificates sprinkled with pixie dust, inflated exchange tokens were at the core of FTX's spectacular collapse. They are still in widespread use at major cryptocurrency exchanges around the world. Will they be crypto's undoing?

In 2017, cryptocurrency exchange Binance created the first of a new kind of blockchain-minted digital asset: BNB coin, designed to reward customer behavior such as trading or referring friends to its own platform. "A model for building a scalable, and impactful cryptocurrency business," heralded CoinDesk editor Pete Rizzo in 2019, after Binance moved the coin to its own proprietary blockchain. "Unbelievable brilliance."

Today, the only unbelievable thing about the whole cloth of crypto inventions known as exchange tokens, like BNB, is that they have inflated to tens of billions of dollars in value and in large part have become the foundation upon which the fast-growing digital-assets markets rest.

The weakest link in former billionaire Sam Bankman-Fried's crypto empire was FTX's own exchange token, which traded under the symbol FTT. According to Reuters, Bankman-Fried had lent his trading company, Alameda, billions of dollars in FTX customer funds, collateralized by these FTT tokens, which were essentially invented as a way to offer trading discounts and other perks.

"The way that FTT works," said Bankman-Fried in an August 2022 interview with Forbes, "It is not that you get free FTT for doing things. The way to think about it is that you get free shit for having FTT. So, there's a bunch of doo-hickeys."

At the peak in 2021 FTT had a market value of \$9.6 billion, but unlike a common stock, which represents legal ownership in the assets of a corporation, FTT does not represent any equity ownership in the FTX company. If FTT had any intrinsic value, it was in the form of discounts that FTX customers using these tokens could get trading on the exchange—as much as 60% for active traders. You can think of these exchange tokens as being akin to loyalty or reward points you might get as a frequent customer of Starbucks or the UnitedMiles by flying on that airline. They have value, but it's unlikely that a bank would allow you to use them as collateral if you wanted to purchase a home.

However, in the highly speculative and often bizarre world of digital assets, these loyalty tokens trade on numerous crypto exchanges just as stocks do on the New York Stock Exchange, and FTX



founder Sam Bankman-Fried reportedly used them as collateral for the loans his company made. Up until a week ago FTT traded at \$26 and had a market capitalization of \$3.5 billion. But after Bankman-Fried's rival Changpeng Zhao, Binance's billionaire founder, went on Twitter to say he was planning to sell over \$500 million of FTT, it sparked the crypto equivalent of a bank run. Today FTT sells for \$2.70, and given FTX's recent bankruptcy filing, it is likely headed to zero.

But the story of exchange tokens in cryptoland is far from over. Forbes counts more than 16 global crypto and DeFi (decentralized finance) exchanges currently using these tokens for a combined market value of no less than \$62 billion. [SEE TABLE BELOW]

In fact, so-called exchange tokens are an important underpinning to the crypto exchange ecosystem because they are effective in creating customer loyalty—especially when token prices are rising. Virtually all such tokens offer holders exchange-specific perks such as trading fee discounts, preferential margin loan terms, enhanced rewards for staking (lending) and exchange-branded cashback Visa cards. Exchange tokens are also awarded to customers that refer new traders to a platform, in a system similar to multi-level marketing organizations like Amway. Exchange tokens function as the fuel for crypto's self-fulfilling bubbles.

Binance—the largest crypto exchange in the world—has its own token, BNB, which by itself has a market capitalization of \$45.9 billion, though it does not represent any equity in Changpeng Zhao's company nor has it been registered as a security with the U.S.

SEC.

Anyone who opens an account on Binance and starts trading can buy or earn these BNB tokens, which offer 25% discounts on spot and margin transaction fees and 10% on futures. If you refer friends, you can get up to 40% commission every time they make a trade on Binance. Also, because Binance has created its own blockchain that mints BNB coins, you can use BNB to pay for goods and services, book airfare and hotels on sites like Travala for instance, participate in exclusive token sales and even earn free tokens by completing surveys and tasks. You can also put BNB to use by staking, earn a flexible percentage yield by depositing it on BNB Chain-based projects and apply for crypto loans. Notably, these digital assets are also essential for anyone who want to use Binance's decentralized exchange (DEX), which theoretically can't be shut down by U.S. regulators.

Unlike bitcoin, which is mined every ten minutes, all of the 350 million FTT tokens that would ever exist were created in what is known as a pre-mine. "There will never be any more minted," said Bankman-Fried recently. In fact, over a period of about three months starting around June of 2019 almost all of FTT's premined tokens were sold prior to getting listed on crypto exchanges. "Effectively, all of the FTT tokens were owned by a collection of people and entities," said Bankman-Fried.

In order to create scarcity and essentially bolster the value of its exchange tokens, FTX and Binance conduct what are known as token burns. Periodically both exchanges

send tokens to irretrievable addresses reducing the float, similarly to a share buyback, and thus increasing the value of the exchange tokens outstanding. Since 2019 FTX has burned 21 million FTT tokens. In total, Binance has burned more than 42 million BNB, which would be worth \$11.6 billion at today's prices. CZ has said Binance doesn't borrow money and has never used BNB as collateral on loans. He recently began advocating that exchanges undergo a "proof" of funds.

In terms of governance, exchange tokens, like loyalty reward programs, are completely under the control of the entity that issues or redeems them, even if they profess to stick to pre-arranged schedules for issuance or burning. DeFi tokens, by contrast, claim to offer holders the ability to propose and vote on platform changes. But in reality, many large DeFi platforms concentrate governance in the hands of big investors and founding teams. Additionally, just as FTT did not give holders stakes in FTX, purchasing a DeFi token does not necessarily convey ownership rights into the underlying platform.

The table below offers details on some 16 different cryptocurrency and DeFi-platform exchange tokens representing more than \$60 billion in market value. Conspicuously absent are Coinbase and Kraken, which are U.S.-based and have avoided issuing exchange tokens, presumably because they would likely be deemed securities by the SEC. All of the tokens listed trade on exchanges daily like stocks—most of them have plummeted in value in the last year—but not a single one offers any ownership in the companies that they are affiliated with. Buyer beware.



# Can India Keep Its Net-zero Emissions Pledge?

**A brutal heatwave that has exacerbated India's power crisis is threatening to short-circuit New Delhi's COP26 commitments**

At the mega environmental summit—the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference, commonly referred to as COP26—hosted by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson in Scotland last November, Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid out an ambitious roadmap of India's climate action plan. Watched by the world's who-is-who, Modi announced five significant decisions. India would take its non-fossil energy capacity to 500 GW by 2030. It would meet 50 per cent of its energy requirements from renewable energy by that date. India would reduce the total projected carbon emissions by one billion tonnes by 2030. India would also reduce the carbon intensity of its economy by more than 45 per cent by the same year. Finally, he set 2070 as the timeline to achieve net-zero emission. “These panchamrits will be an unprecedented contribution of India to climate action,” Modi said. The US and most of Europe have pledged to achieve net-zero emission by 2050, while China has extended the deadline to 2060. Modi's announcement was India's first major commitment to the idea of net-zero emission. Earlier, at the G-7 climate and environment ministers' meet in June 2021, New Delhi had resisted the net-zero emission target, saying it was not part of the broader policy commitments. But by COP 26, there was a dramatic turnaround in New Delhi's stand. Perhaps, India realised the importance of being on the right side of the global debate for a country with big power ambitions. There was tremendous pressure from leading Western powers for India to be onboard the emission targets. John Kerry, US President Joe Biden's special envoy for climate, made at least two trips to New Delhi for consultations. As a country with over one billion people, what India does affects the world's fight against climate change. But barely five months later, India's commitments already appear to be under severe stress. With the country battered by a searing heatwave, which has in turn boosted demand for power, the Centre has decided to reopen



more than 100 coal mines previously considered financially unsustainable, to fuel the country's power plants. According to the government, the country expects to increase coal output by up to 100 million tonnes in the next three years by reopening the closed mines. With pressing domestic compulsions, critics wonder if India will be in a position to deliver what it has promised by 2030. Switching to renewables is not easy, especially in a developing nation like India where there are competing claims on scarce resources. How difficult will it be for New Delhi to deliver on the ground, considering the new green technology is expensive and the money promised by the rich, industrialised nations has merely

trickled in? None of them has so far stuck to the promise of providing the one billion dollars annually to poorer countries pledged in the Paris Climate meet in 2015. Lifting India's teeming millions out of the vicious circle of poverty and giving citizens a decent life is the priority of every government. Development in the traditional sense means need for more energy. For countries like India and China—two of the world's biggest greenhouse gas emitters—fossil fuel provides an easy answer. India and China are the world's top oil importers. Asked how realistic it is to expect cutting renewables by half by 2030, former foreign secretary Shyam Saran, who was involved in the early negotiations on climate action and was

Manmohan Singh's special envoy on climate change, says. “As I am not in the government, I do not know the inside details. We need green technology and an energy mix, hydel power is a good and clean source, so are nuclear and renewables like solar and wind. But green technology is expensive, so much will depend on how quickly new technology can be obtained at a reasonable rate.” One of the selling points for the civil nuclear deal with the US was clean energy from nuclear power stations. However, the world is now gradually turning away from nuclear energy. Especially after the Fukushima radiation leaks in Japan in 2011 led to a backlash over nuclear power. Even countries like France, that gets over 70 per cent

of its electricity from nuclear energy, are now committed to stop new nuclear plants. In India too, despite the promise of clean energy, there has been little progress. The French nuclear plant in Jaitapur in coastal Maharashtra is now more or less abandoned, thanks to public protests. The Fukushima disaster had also led to massive protests against the Russian-built Kudankulam nuclear power station in Tamil Nadu. The government, however, rode through the protests and the plant continues to supply electricity to Tamil Nadu since 2016. The Prime Minister's International Solar Alliance is a good initiative, but the technology has to be further streamlined as there are problems—sometimes with the panels, as well as days, especially during the monsoons, when the sky is overcast. Wind power has the same problems. The unreliability of both solar and wind as compared to fossil fuels is a major issue, as storage becomes a serious setback. Large battery packs are also very expensive. “To meet 50 per cent of its power requirements by 2030 from renewable energy, India will need to increase installed capacity of renewables to 700 GW. If India considers hydroelectricity as part of renewables, then it will need to increase new renewable capacity to 630 GW.

## The climate debate

Developing nations consider the rich, industrialised countries responsible for global warming and say they bear special responsibility for cleaning up the globe. Earlier, nations like India and China would argue that they are not responsible for the present situation. But the blame game is getting the world nowhere towards finding an urgent solution. The need now is for the rich countries to extend financial help to developing nations. India believes that transfer of climate funds and low-cost technology are essential to power the transition to green energy. Modi raised this issue in Glasgow when he said, “India expects developed countries to provide climate finance of US\$1 trillion at the earliest. Today, it is necessary that as we track the progress made in climate mitigation, we should also track climate

finance. The proper justice would be that the countries which do not live up to their promises made on climate finance, pressure should be put on them.” As always, the poor have to bear the brunt of a warming planet. Whether it is flash floods, heatwave or bitter cold, those who live in shanties are hit the hardest. Climate change-related displacements affect mainly the poor and the urban underclass. As India tries to gradually switch from coal to renewables, coal mining will come to a halt. The poor will be the hardest hit. Not just those working in the mines, but the ancillary industries and makeshift markets that grow around mining townships. “The energy transition will change the nature of employment and economic security in the country,” says Aditya Valiathan Pillai of the Centre for Policy Research (CPR), who

tracks climate change.

“But it is not a simple, linear story. There are at least three angles to this. First, those employed in the fossil fuel industry, particularly in India's coal-rich states, will have to look elsewhere for their livelihoods if India decides to take net-zero seriously in the coming decades. Governments will have to offer them safety nets, skills retraining and investments for a soft landing.” But there is also a positive side, she says. “The transition could well lead to a new generation of renewables manufacturing jobs. And third, an element frequently left out, is that an aggressive transition by India and other large emitters could reduce the frequency and magnitude of climate impacts, thus preventing people from entering the poverty spirals that come with them,” adds Pillai.



# How Himachal Is Paying The Price For Ignoring Climate Change Warnings

**Overexploitation and tourism, among other factors, have begun to take a toll on the hill states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, as a full-blown climate crisis stares in the face of their residents**

The years of dire warnings about an impending climate crisis are past. The unabated heatwave leaving the hills singed, along with 2,760 cases of forest fires – said to be the highest ever in Himachal Pradesh, an unprecedented dry spell and 92.4 per cent rain deficiency are not just indicators. Climate change is happening, that too at a scary rate and scale. The severity of the shift in weather in the mountainous regions of Himachal is highlighted by the 21 days of a severe heatwave in the state this year, a record in recent history. The state stood at number three after Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh in the number of heatwave days in March-April 2022. Total heatwave days in both Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh were 25. In comparison, Punjab had just seven severe heatwave days while Uttarakhand had three, Bihar two and Odisha only one. Thousands of tourists driving up to Shimla and hill destinations to escape the heat of the North Indian plains encountered warm weather with the water crisis, while long traffic jams and high vehicular emissions they caused only compounded the woes for locals. Conditions were no different for those rushing to Nainital, Rishikesh and Mussoorie in the neighbouring hill state of Uttarakhand, whose vulnerability to climate-induced disasters, like the Kedarnath tragedy in 2013 and the Chamoli disaster in 2021, is already widely known.

The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) defines a heatwave as an unusually high temperature or hot weather. For the hills, temperature exceeding 30°C and for the plains, a recording crossing 40°C is described as a heatwave. Environmental scientist Chander Bhushan, CEO, iForest, admits that there has been an increase in the global average temperature. Changes of 1-2°C in average temperature can cause potentially dangerous shifts in climate. This year, coupled with the severity, the timing of the heat wave – it happened in the early months of summer between March and April – is being considered more worrying for the mountain states. He says, "We have entered a new age of hot extremes that will get worse with increasing global warming. We need a heat code and an action plan." On Himachal, he feels one of the long-term impacts of the heatwaves will be a steady jump in the state's energy bill due to rising dependency on air conditioners and fans. Besides, agriculture and



horticulture are already showing effects of this change in terms of productivity. In the British-era hill station of Shimla, the use of electric fans and ACs was unheard of till some years back. The demand has grown by 70-80 per cent this summer.

Most aged residents of Shimla recall that till the 1980s, a recording of 24°C would make a big headline in newspapers. But gradually the town started getting warmer. Snowfall pattern has changed over the years. The state capital's forest cover got replaced by a concrete jungle, even in the banned areas. "After 2000, Shimla has become a hothouse, with temperature extremes of 32°C, water shortage and vehicular pollution, even as greenery disappeared to make spaces for buildings and roads," says Dr Ramesh Chauhan, vice-chancellor at APG Shimla University.

Says Kunal Satyarathi, joint secretary at National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), "This is the first time when the hill state recorded so many heatwave days, that too in March-April. The impact of heat, the dry spells and global warming is already visible in the form of forest fires, water crisis and drying-up of the rivers in Himachal Pradesh."

Apart from Shimla – where low water supply during summers has become regular, rural populations in several districts are also facing water scarcity due to drought conditions. More than 1,150 water supply schemes in the state have become defunct due to the drying-up of rivulets and streams, their perennial sources.

The impact of the heat wave is conspicuously high in the state's fruit belt. A third of the apple crop – mostly older varieties like Red Royal and Delicious – are severely impacted. The flowering in the orchards started much

before usual. This left apple producers in utter panic, who resorted to measures like sprays to protect the plants against diseases, premature bud break, etc. State capital Shimla – which had witnessed the worst ever water crisis in its post-Independence history in 2018, was revisited by an acute water shortage. Due to the dry spell, most natural sources upstream in rural settings hit their lowest bottoms, having no water to be lifted for supply in the town.

Rationing was frequent as the total availability of water with the supply agency – Shimla Jal Prabandhan Nigam – came down to 33-35 MLD against the requirement of 42 MLD.

Shimla has begun water rationing to meet the drinking water demand. Hoteliers hired water tenders to meet high water demand because of the heavy influx of tourists.

Environmentalist Sunita Narain shared her concern about Shimla's worst water crisis in 2018 when she drew a parallel with Cape Town in South Africa. Her fears are coming true within three years of 2018, when Shimla's water crisis made headlines in the Washington Post and New York Times, when not a drop of water was available for eight consecutive days, exacerbated by the non-availability of water at the source of Shimla's supply – perennial rivers and streams that had dried up.

Last week, massive protests over water shortage began afresh at Theog, after dozens of villagers blocked the Shimla-Rampur National Highway. The police registered an FIR against the state's lone CPI(M) MLA Rakesh Singha and nine others.

"The villagers were not receiving water for five-six days. The source had dried up and whatever water was available was being supplied to Shimla town. The women, who had to walk 6-7 km to fetch

water on foot, threatened to block the supply of water to Shimla if their demand for regular supply was not met. There is a serious conflict brewing," warns Kuldeep Tanwar, a Himachal Kisan Sabha leader and retired Indian Forest Services officer (IFS).

Climate change has not only created a serious shortage in drinking water but has also left the state's hydro-power sector reeling. There is a substantial fall in the water inflow of the Satluj – a glacier- and snow-fed river. This is a clear sign of the adverse impact of receding glaciers and the decline in snowfall in high-altitude mountains.

"Results of our study this year, on changes in snowfall, are shocking. There is a 19-27 per cent reduction in the snowfall in the catchment areas of the three perennial rivers viz Ravi, Beas and Satluj. The highest variation among these rivers in terms of loss of snow is 27 per cent in Ravi, followed by Beas is 26 per cent," informs SS Randhawa, a senior scientist who was part of the study jointly done by the state council of Science Technology and Environment; and Indian Space Applications Centre, ISRO, Ahmedabad. The data available with Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam (SJVN) Ltd – the country's highest profit-making power PSU – shows a massive shortfall in power generation this year. This is mainly due to low discharge in the Satluj river, which is feeding several mega hydel projects including the 1,500 MW Nathpa Jhakri Hydel project and 412 MW Rampur project. The total power generated in June 2022 was 884.28 MW, against 1,033.384 MW in June 2021 at the Nathpa Jhakri project. A similar disappointing trend is seen at Rampur hydel project further downstream. There was a clear shortfall of 39.10 MW in June 2022 as the project generated only 246 MW against 285 MW in June 2021. There is also data available showing reduced water discharge in the river in the summers due to less snow cover and no rain in the high mountains. Nand Lal Sharma, chairman and MD at SJNL Ltd, says, "The shortfall in energy generation is quite unusual during the peak summers. Melting of the snow in the high mountains has always been sustaining the water discharge at the projects. The unfavourable climatic conditions, receding of glaciers and lack of snowfall are glaring factors impacting the run of the river projects in Himalayan basins in Himachal and Uttarakhand."



# From Surinder Koli to Aaftab Ameen: Inside the minds of butchers among us

Reality is often more horrific than what most OTT writers can imagine. Here is why it's crucial to explore what may be going on in the darkest corners of the perpetrators' minds when they do the unimaginable.

Aaftab Ameen Poonawala strangled his live-in partner Shraddha Walker, cut her into 35 pieces, bought a fridge to store the body parts and later scattered them across a South Delhi forest over 16 nights, the police said in charges that have stunned the country.

Aaftab also googled and used chemicals to clean the blood, stayed active on the victim's social media and lit agarbattis to kill the stench in the room where he lived with a new girlfriend and roamed freely in the national capital months after the murder, as per investigators.

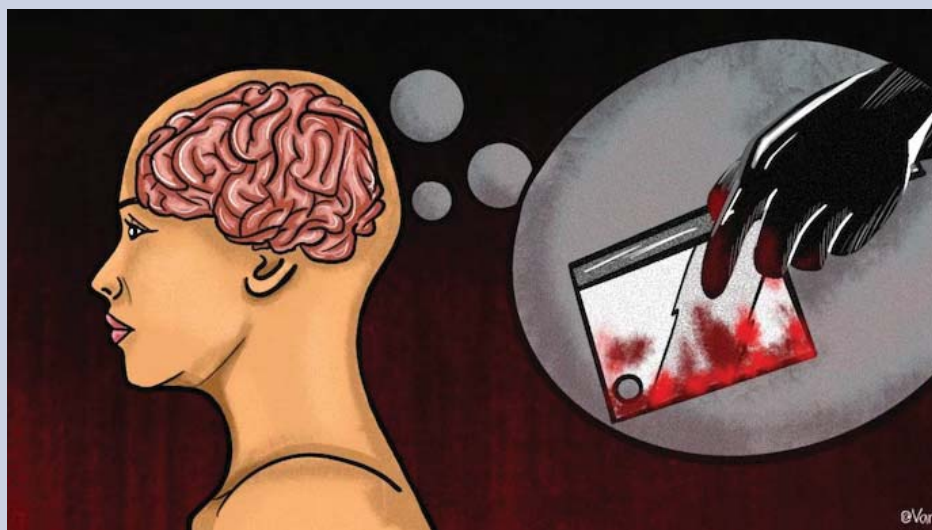
The chorus for the strictest punishment for Aaftab has been getting louder, while the media has described the crime with expressions such as blood-curdling, bone-chilling and stomach-churning.

This case has reminded us of the horrendous crimes committed by the likes of Surinder Koli, Raja Kolander and Chandrakant Jha. Koli, Kolander and Jha had many victims and chopped their bodies [and much more; we will return to it], an act Aaftab has also confessed to, according to the police. In such cases, labels such as serial killer, predator and psychopath fly thick and fast but they alone do little for us to understand why those, who we call butchers, do what they do, and what goes on in the darkest corners of their minds when they do the unimaginable. Attempts to explore these questions are in no way a justification but they provide explanations that can help prevent such shockers in the future.

One can present well-argued explanations only when psychological layers are peeled back to examine circumstances behind crimes and gather insights into methods. Because, without context, most of it is mere sensation and shock. Let's start with Aaftab. First, who exactly is a psychopath? Typical psychopathic traits include impulsiveness, manipulative behaviour and grandiosity. But the most striking attribute is a lack of remorse and empathy, something that characterises what has happened now.

This lack of remorse and empathy was also evident in one of the convicts in the 2012 Nirbhaya gang-rape and murder case when a foreign journalist controversially interviewed him from Delhi's Tihar prison complex. In the coming days, investigators will unpick Aaftab's state of mind, but he has been shown to be remorseless.

Be that as it may, the crimes he has been accused of fall into three categories of subconscious cruelty, as per criminal



**Experts say in psychotic murders, perpetrators hear voices or suffer from bizarre delusions. Kolander maintained a diary, a kill-list of the names of his victims, which he often visited for a high.**

psychologists. In the first case, perpetrators are familiar with dismemberment methods from their life experiences as medical practitioners, butchers or chefs. The police have said Aaftab, inspired by American crime show *Dexter*, was adept at using a meat knife as he was a trained chef. Experts say some people, over time, might get desensitised to the act of dismemberment even if the corpse is that of a human.

The case also seems to feature the defensive mutilation method that addresses the difficulty of lugging out, hiding or disposing of a full corpse. Small body parts, thrown at different places, make the victim's identification difficult and there's little evidence of the crime till the perpetrator is arrested and made to piece everything together. This is what the police are trying to do at this moment.

Another form of subconscious cruelty is found among people who have suffered trauma and they used the freeze response and suppressed anger as a coping mechanism. Like all emotions, anger is also an energy in motion. When suppressed, it stays locked up inside, restless for a release. Then even a disproportionately small trigger may make people overwhelmed and explode at some stage. While it will take time to know whether such aspects preceded the case, psychiatrists say former victims of violence might commit violent crimes to release suppressed feelings.

The police have said Aaftab committed the murder after another major fight over Shraddha's insistence on marriage, little knowing her organically valid assertion would lead to her murder and the chopping of her body.

The third type of subconscious cruelty, as per experts, is seen among people who suffer acute psychotic episodes associated with rage. Though introverted, they may appear by and large normal in ordinary circumstances. This may also be relevant in the current case.

On the other hand, aggressive mutilation is driven by the same aggressive emotional motivation that kills. Sometimes dismemberment, as means of torture, is the cause of death, as seen in beheading cases by terror groups like ISIS. There's another kind of mutilation called offensive mutilation. This is often driven by lust and necro-sadistic traits. The perpetrators often cut off the genital organs or breasts of victims, something Mohammed Shafi or Rasheed, the Kerala human sacrifice case accused, has been charged with. Some perpetrators, having lost touch with perceptive reality, pull out abdominal organs through genital tracts, a media mention made in the Delhi gang-rape and murder case.

Some serial killers develop deviant sexual fantasies much before the actual commission of crimes, motivated by anticipated emotional rewards, experts say. They practise their fantasies on objects and animals as a coping

mechanism to temporarily escape from emotional pain arising from past traumatic experiences. Slowly the questions of morality, humanity and consequences vanish.

Scientists say once a fantasy has been enacted, it becomes an autobiographical memory. It needs activation, usually through exposure that causes arousal and high levels of aggression.

This might have been at play in Noida's Nithari during 2005-06 when Surinder Koli, caretaker at businessman Moninder Singh Pandher's house, showed overpowering compulsion to rape and kill several young girls and boys. He chopped their bodies into pieces and disposed of them in a drain.

Aspects of cannibalism and necrophilia were also thrown in the case, though never fully substantiated. However, a documentary later showed Koli's confession to a magistrate, in which he admitted to having cooked a piece of flesh from a victim and eating that.

Deviant fantasies also have the motivation of empowerment to counter the long-felt powerlessness and sexual inadequacy. Post-mortem sex allows some perpetrators to feel powerful and potent, something they don't feel when with alive human beings. Koli has been sentenced in some of the cases, while Pandher was released on bail.

ttar Pradesh's Raja Kolander aka Ram Niranjana was another such predator who allegedly killed about 15 people over the years. There were also allegations, again unsubstantiated, that he stewed the brains of their victims in a boiling pot and drank the soup.

Kolander was arrested in 2000, and this year, Netflix released a documentary on him. He was envious of his people's intellect and social stature. Killing them and chopping their bodies into pieces was his way of acquiring those traits.

Though Kolander denied the allegations, he talked about the oppression against the Kol community he belongs to. Those who studied his case have said that in killing people, he had assumed the role of the criminal justice system in his head. And that's why he had started using the word Raja with his name. He had also renamed his wife as Phoolan Devi, and children as Andolan, Jamanat and Adalat. And now on to our final case study. Bihar's Chandrakant Jha was convicted in 2013 of three of the many murders he was accused of in Delhi during 2003-2007. Netflix released a documentary on him as well early this year.



## Eating together as a family can improve your teen's diet, even if you all don't get along

Teenagers and young adults who eat meals with family are healthier. Family meals really do improve teenagers' diets and put them on a path to healthy eating in later life, says new study. The researchers found that when families sit down together, adolescents and young adults eat more fruits and veggies and consume fewer fast-food.

"Our research found that family dinners are a great way to improve the dietary intake of the whole family, regardless of how well the family functions together," said lead researcher Kathryn Walton, post-doctoral researcher at Sick Kids Hospital in Toronto,

Canada. "It's a time when families can slow down time that parents can spend time together and from their busy days to talk, model healthful eating



behaviours," Walton added. Canada.

The study, published in the journal JAMA Network Open, found that preparing and enjoying a meal together can also help families bond and the meal does not have to be a big drawn-out affair.

"Even if it's something you pull out of the freezer, add a bagged salad on the side and you'll have a decent nutritional meal," said Jess Haines, Professor from the University of Guelph in

Canada. Walton said many teenaged and young adults living at home are busy with evening extracurricular activities or part-time jobs, making it hard to find time for dinner with family members. But finding that time once a day -- even if it's breakfast together -- can be just as effective, the researcher said. For the study, the team looked at more than 2,700 participants, 14 to 24 years of age.

## Pregnant? Here's another reason why you must eat healthy to stay fit

While it is known that inadequate nutrition during foetal development can cause diabetes and heart disease, a new study warns that it could also lead to early menopause at age younger than 45. Prenatal malnutrition was also associated with a higher risk of premature ovarian failure.

Natural menopause is a milestone of ovarian aging that results in the end of a woman's reproductive years. Conversely, an early menopause is associated with increased risk of heart disease, osteoporosis, depression, and memory changes and changes in vaginal and sexual health, according to researchers.

"The findings showed that food deprivation during early foetal life affects how long the future ovaries function," said Joann Pinkerton, executive director from the North American Menopause Society (NAMS). Although several studies have investigated the association between malnutrition exposure in early life and risk of various metabolic diseases in adulthood, the association with reproductive ageing was not evaluated.

This new study, published in the journal Menopause, involved nearly 2,900 Chinese women and specifically sought to address the effect of early life exposure to malnutrition on age at menopause. It has already been documented that the development of the hypothalamic-pituitary-gonadal axis during the foetal stage plays a critical role in adulthood reproductive health, the researchers said.

## Just 1 hour on treadmill can boost metabolism for 2 days: Study

A single workout session consisting of three 20-minute treadmill runs could activate neurons that are important regulators of blood glucose levels and energy balance as well as influence metabolism for up to two days, says a study over mice.

The findings showed that a single bout of exercise for mice could boost the activity of energy-burning neurons and inhibit the counterpart one for up to two days and those changes can last longer with more training.

"It doesn't take much exercise to alter the activity of these neurons," said Kevin Williams, a neuroscientist at University of Texas Southwestern.

"The study predicts that getting out and exercising even once in a semi-intense manner can reap benefits

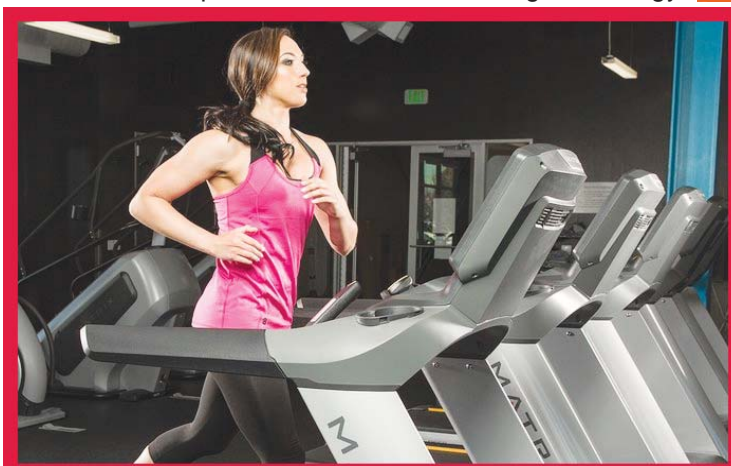
that can last for days, in particular with respect to glucose metabolism," he added.

Further, a single workout consisting of three 20-minute treadmill runs caused a decrease in appetite that lasted up to six hours.

"This result may explain at the neural circuit level why many people don't feel hungry immediately after exercise," Williams said.

For the study, published in the journal Molecular Metabolism, the team measured the effects of short- and long-term exercise on two types of neurons that comprise the melanocortin brain circuit. Both humans and mice have this circuit.

One of the neuron types is associated with reduced appetite, lower blood glucose levels, and higher energy



burning when activated while the other type increases appetite and diminishes metabolism when activated.

The study also provides avenue to research potential treatments to improve glucose metabolism in patients with conditions such as diabetes.

"It is possible that activating melanocortin neurons may hold

therapeutic benefits for patients one day, especially for diabetics who need improved blood-glucose regulation," Williams said.

"This research is not just for improving fitness. A better understanding of neural links to exercise can potentially help a number of conditions affected by glucose regulation," he noted.



# Manav Vij Claims 'Laal Singh Chaddha' Suffered Due To 'People's Stupidity': Send Rs 500 To Aamir Khan

'Laal Singh Chaddha' tanked at the box office but witnessed a new lease of life after it released on OTT

'Laal Singh Chaddha', which starred Aamir Khan, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Mona Singh and Naga Chaitanya, failed to perform at the box office when it was released in August this year.

The film, which was a remake of 1994 Tom Hanks' starrer 'Forrest Gump', managed to earn only Rs 58.73 crore. It happened so because many people boycotted it on social media and trended an old interview of Aamir, in which the actor had talked about the "growing intolerance" in the country. However, when the film was released on Netflix, it found a new lease of life. It got appreciated by a certain section of the audience.

In fact, Manav Vij, who essayed the role of a Pakistani soldier, found people apologising to him



Singh Chaddha in theatres following the boycott trend. But they loved it when they watched it on Netflix." He even suggested that these people "should have transferred Rs 500 to Aamir Khan Productions' account. The producers are at a loss because of your (people's) stupidity." The story of 'Laal Singh Chaddha' revolves around Aamir's character Laal, who is depicted to be a man with a low IQ. He serves in the Indian army during the 1999 India-Pakistan war and ends up saving the life of Mohammed, played by Manav, unaware that he is a Pakistani soldier. The two become friends later. The film was helmed by Advait Chandan.

on Twitter for not watching 'Laal Singh Chaddha' in the cinema money to Aamir Khan's Mid-Day while promoting his latest web show 'Tanaav', Manav Singh Chaddha' in the cinema production house because of the said, "Many people also loss that it incurred due to the no-show in the theatres by the apologised to me on Twitter, saying they didn't watch Laal apologies, people should send same set of people. Speaking to



## Hrithik Roshan begins shooting for 'Fighter'

**Touted as India's first aerial action magnum opus, the film is directed by Siddharth Anand of 'War' fame**

Bollywood star Hrithik Roshan has commenced filming for his next movie 'Fighter'. Touted as India's first aerial action magnum opus, the film is directed by Siddharth Anand of 'War' fame. Hrithik shared the news of kickstarting the first shoot schedule of 'Fighter' on his Instagram Stories on Monday evening. "Right! Let's go....@marflix\_pictures #Fighter," the actor captioned a picture of him with the director. Also featuring Deepika Padukone and Anil Kapoor, 'Fighter' is homage to the valour, sacrifice and patriotism of the Indian armed forces. The film, backed by Viacom18 Studios and Marflix Pictures, will arrive in theatres on January 25, 2024. Hrithik was last seen in the action crime thriller 'Vikram Vedha', the Hindi adaptation of the 2017 Tamil film of the same name.

## Singer Beyonce leads Grammy 2023 nominations with nine nods

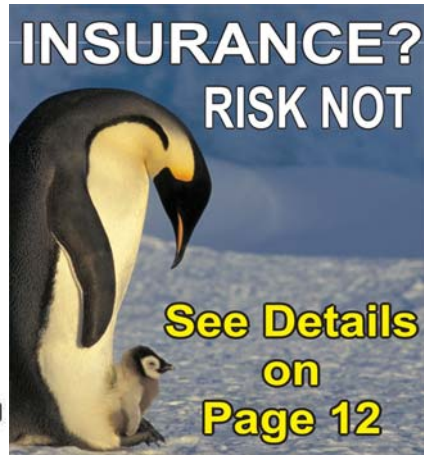
The needle is set over the ridges of vinyl records as the nomination for the 65th annual Grammy Awards have been announced, with Beyonce leading the field with nine nods, Kendrick Lamar close behind with eight, and Adele and Brandi Carlile tied with seven. Four contenders enter the race with six nominations apiece: Future, Harry Styles, Mary J. Blige, DJ Khaled and Randy Merrill. The nominations were largely as predicted, with Beyonce, Adele, Styles, Lamar and Lizzo being the five contenders, who were each nominated in the top three all-genre categories: record, album and song of the year. Among the artistes who did better than predicted in those top categories are Mary J. Blige and ABBA, who were nominated for record of the year and album of the year, but not song. For Blige, it has been 16 years since she last landed nods for record and album. The currently very hot Steve Lacy also landed in two of those three categories, being put into contention for both record and song for the recently chart-topping Bad Habit. Latin music did not have the breakthrough pres-

ence in the general categories that some expected. Bad Bunny was nominated for what many consider the top prize, album of the year, for his blockbuster Un Verano Sin Ti. It was not a landmark year for country music in the nominations. Not a single country artiste made it into the top four general categories. The controversial Morgan Wallen was shut out, despite being one of the two commercially biggest artistes during the nominating period, along with Bad Bunny. Zach Bryan, one of the great breakouts of 2022, was limited to one nomination, and it was not best new artiste, something for which he was almost universally predicted. Other artistes to contend in the top three categories will be Taylor Swift (whose All Too Well (10-Minute Version) is nominated for song of the year), Doja Cat (up for the single Woman after her smash album was in the mix last year), Coldplay, DJ Khaled, Gayle and, making a surprise return, '90s Grammy queen, Bonnie Raitt. Meanwhile, BTS has received a historical three nominations in a single year. One of their Korean songs is up for a Grammy for the first time.





# INSIDER



Vol. 21 Issue 39 Friday November 18 to November 24, 2022 \$1 [www.thesouthasianinsider.com](http://www.thesouthasianinsider.com)

## The Looming \$62 Billion Crypto Contagion

The 16 crypto and DeFi exchanges created exchange tokens to attract and retain customers. Though they trade like stocks and have a value of over \$60 billion, none represent ownership in their affiliated platforms



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