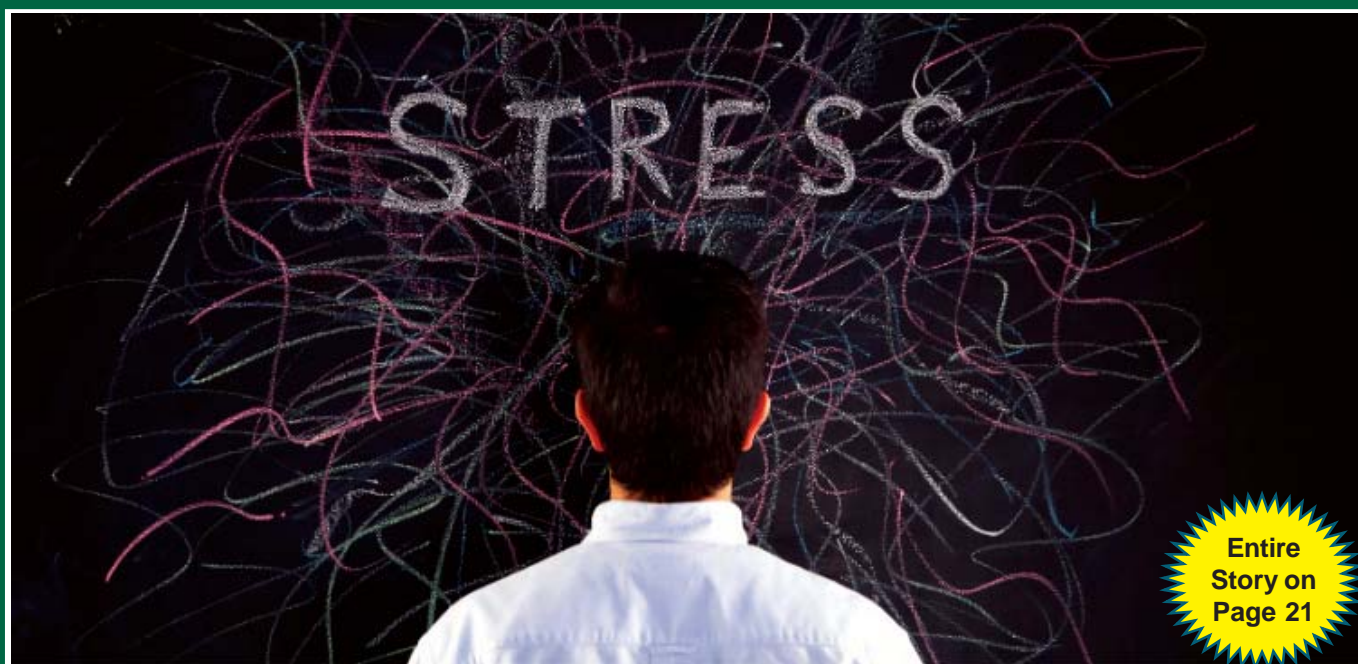


Lethal Effect Of Stress On Our Lives

New scientific studies show that stress could be the mother of all ailments



Entire Story on Page 21

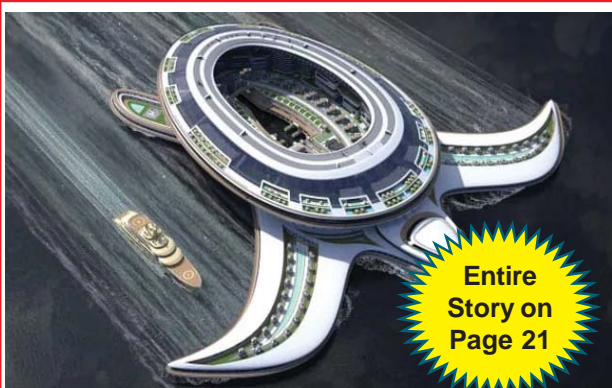
Beer Ban, Radical Sermons and More: The influence of Islam on the Qatar World Cup



Entire Story on Page 22

Water Wonder: Pangeos, the proposed floating city which could become the world's largest boat

Italian design house Lazzarini, which unveiled the concept, said Pangeos has been named after the supercontinent Pangea. At 1,800 feet long, and 2,000 feet wide, Pangeos will cost around \$8 billion to construct



Entire Story on Page 21

Subhash Kapoor, disgraced American antiques dealer sentenced to 10 years in prison



Entire Story on Page 04

Senators alarmed over potential Chinese drone spy threat

Lawmakers who were briefed on hundreds of intrusions over the White House, Capitol and Pentagon worry about possible espionage



Entire Story on Page 23

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DA Katz and NYPD take 32 Guns off the Streets at Buybacks Event



(South Asian Insider Bureau) Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz and the New York Police Department announced that 32 guns were collected today at the Church of God Christian Academy in Far Rockaway, Queens. The gun buyback events seek to curb gun violence and the destruction it causes by accepting working unloaded firearms - with no questions asked - in exchange for compensation. Today's event was co-sponsored by the NYPD, Congressman Gregory W. Meeks, Office of the State Attorney General Letitia James, City Council Majority Whip Selvena Brooks-Powers, Church of God Christian Academy, First Church of God and Food Bazaar Supermarket. District Attorney Katz said: "Gun violence will never become the norm in our communities, and we will continue to make every determined effort to rid our streets of this plague."

LONG ISLAND GUJARATI CULTURAL SOCIETY CELEBRATED SILVER JUBILEE GALA 2022



(South Asian Insider Bureau) Long Island Gujarati Cultural Society (LIGCS) . President Vijay Shah along with the entire executive committee, celebrated its Silver Jubilee Anniversary this past weekend. Emceed by Silver Jubilee Convention Coordinator and VP Programs Flora Parekh, the event was sponsored by Mayur Shah and Family. Several dignitaries, organization Presidents, guests and well-wishers graced the event including Guests of Honor Harshad (Pakaji) Patel of Gujarati Samaj and Anil Shah of VTNY, Naveen Shah (Navika Capital), Amneal Pharma Group, Mr. Dilip Chauhan (Deputy Commissioner for Trade, Investment and Innovation) and several others. Jon Kaiman (Dy. Suffolk County Executive) and Nassau County Office of Public Affairs

Citations acknowledge this major milestone success of the organization. Starting with an auspicious Diya ceremony resembling the significance of Diwali, the event had a special pious beginning by beautifully choreographed traditional Ganesh Vandana by Jhanvi Patel and Kathak Bollywood performance by Anjali Patel. "The organization is well established, represented, served and ready for another 25+ years to come" said President Vijay Shah in his inspiring message. The event was followed by a special ceremony honoring all Past Presidents Dr. Manibhai Patel, Tribhovanbhai Patel, Mafatbhai Patel and Bakulbhai Matalia followed by members who have been there since inception completing 25 years of voluntary service Mayur Shah, Bhadrash Acharya, Govind Akruwala, Amarish Kachhy and Ketan Upadhyaya.

Indian School of Business organized ISB @20 Global Event held and hosted in partnership with the Consulate General of India in New York



(South Asian Insider Bureau) The Indian School of Business (ISB) in partnership with the Consulate General of India in New York hosted the concluding Indian School of Business @20 global event on November 18, 2022. Mr. Randhir Jaiswal, Consul General of India in New York spoke about the various phases seen in the growth of the Indian education system and the strong knowledge partnerships between India and USA. Professor Madan Pillutla, Dean, ISB shared a state of the School report. Mr. Rajat Gupta, ISB's Founding Chairman spoke of the challenges faced in the initial years and the support of various governments in moulding the course of ISB's growth.

Members of the ISB Board, Mr. Girish Reddy and Mr. Purnendu Chatterjee expressed ISB's pride in its alumni and exhorted them to give back to the School in every way possible.

Established in 2001 with a vision to be a world-

class, research-driven management education institution that creates leaders, the Indian School of Business (ISB) has come a long way in its two-decade journey. Throughout its journey, ISB has won numerous recognitions, launched several successful programmes, and became an



acknowledged leader in management research in the country. Many of its 13500 plus alumni now lead global companies and manage flourishing start-ups. ISB has 1000 plus alumni presence in the US.

Celebrating this milestone, ISB through a series of global and domestic events brought together various stakeholders who have played a role in ISB's success. As India celebrates 75 years of Independence, ISB has partnered with the Consulate General of India, New York, USA to organise a celebratory event under the aegis of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.

(South Asian Insider Bureau) International megastar Akshay Kumar, known for his celebrated filmography, has now announced on social media a new tour he will headline in North America, 'The Entertainers'. The tour is set to take place in March 2023, where he will be joined by Bollywood stars Disha Patani, Mouni Roy, Nora Fatehi and Punjabi actress Sonam Bajwa. Akshay Kumar is celebrated as one of India's finest performers, with his dynamic stage presence and electrifying stunts, which makes this one of his most awaited tours. Taking to social media, he wrote "Are you up for a Giant Party? Gear up, The Entertainers are coming your way!! North America, March, 2023" The tour promises to be great fun and is the latest addition to Akshay



Kumar's list of exciting ventures including the announcement of his apparel brand Force IX and his future debut in Marathi cinema where he will be portraying the role of Chhatrapati Shivaji.

Diwali Celebrated at Ferguson Library, Stamford CT



(South Asian Insider Bureau) Ferguson Library, Stamford in coordination with The Connecticut Chapter of the Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO-CT) celebrated Diwali the Festival of Lights, on Sunday, Nov. 13th 2022. The program started with a welcome address by the Library President Ms. Alice Knapp, who thanked GOPIO for initiating this celebration and all the attendees for their show of support by their participation. Ms. Knapp also said that the library looked bright and very colorful with all the decorations and was thrilled to hear that there were more than 80 performers at this year's cultural show. This is the second year that the Library and

GOPIO-CT have organized this event. At last year's event, the Indian Consulate in New York had donated books for the "India Corner" at the library. A traditional lamp was lit by Ms. Knapp, Ms. Klompus, Mr. Prasad and other GOPIO members present. GOPIO Executive Vice-President Prasad Chintalapudi said that there is so much to learn from the Diwali festival. He said that the Devas and Asuras both gain knowledge and power but Devas use it for purpose of community growth and Asuras use it for destruction. Diwali festival is celebrated all over the world including at White House every year. This year New York Mayor Adams declared Diwali to be a school holiday in 2023.

New Rules For International Passengers Arriving In India



(South Asian Insider Bureau) New Delhi: The self-declaration forms for Covid vaccination that had to be filled in by incoming international passengers on the Air Suvidha portal, will no longer be necessary, the government has said. The decision will come into effect from midnight. A notice from the Civil Aviation ministry this evening read, "In the light of sustained declining COVID-19 trajectory and significant advances being made in COVID-19 vaccination coverage both globally as well as in India, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has issued revised 'Guidelines for International Arrivals'".

Under the revised guidelines of the health ministry, the submission of self-declaration form on the online Air Suvidha portal stand discontinued, the aviation ministry said. It, however, added a statutory warning: The rule could be reviewed if needed in view of the Covid situation.

The form on the aviation ministry's Air Suvidha portal was mandatory for incoming international passengers. In it, passengers had to declare their vaccination status, including the number of doses received and their dates. The ministry, however, said it was preferred that the passengers be fully vaccinated.

Nikki Haley hints at 2024 presidential run during Republican Jewish Coalition speech: 'I've never lost'

Haley, a former U.S. Ambassador in the Trump administration, has become an outspoken critic of Trump



more to say soon," she told the audience in Las Vegas, Nevada. Haley said if she chose to run, then she would do everything she could to win. "If my family and I decide to continue our life of service, we will put 1,000% into it and we'll finish it. For now, I'll say this. I've won a tough primaries and tough general elections. I've been the underdog every single time," she said. Haley added: "When people underestimate me, it's always fun. But I've never lost an election. And I'm not going to start now." Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, another potential presidential candidate for 2024, also spoke at the event. "Thanks to your support, the state of Florida delivered a true Republican landslide," DeSantis opened his remarks. We added four new Republican congressmen to

the U.S. House of Representatives from the state of Florida. We secured super majorities in the Florida legislature, the most Republicans we have ever had in Florida history." He added: "And because of the support of so many of you to our campaign, we delivered the greatest gubernatorial victory in the history of the state of Florida. We dominated with independent voters." The Republican hopeful also spoke to his own influence over his party, calling his victory among rural voters "gravity defying."

"We won by double digits. Miami Dade County, We won for the first time in almost 40 years. Palm Beach County. And we don't know precisely what the final number is, but We can say that we won the highest share of the Jewish

vote for any Republican candidate in Florida history," DeSantis said. Later at the event Saturday evening, Republican Jewish Coalition Executive Director Matt Brooks predicted one of the two Republicans would win the White House, over Donald Trump, in 2024.

"I don't usually make political predictions, but I want to make one tonight. And this prediction you can take to the bank. Yesterday and today you saw the next president of the United States, one of the people who spoke to us today will be in the White House in 2024," Brooks said in his closing remarks.

Trump is the only Republican candidate currently in the race as he officially announced his bid at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Palm Beach, Florida on Nov. 15, 2022.

(South Asian Insider Bureau) Ambassador in the Trump administration, has been considered a potential presidential candidate for years and became an outspoken critic of Trump after leaving his administration. "A lot of people have asked if I'm going to run for president now that the midterms are over. I'll look at it in a serious way and I'll have

World Vegan Vision Thanksgiving Dinner



(South Asian Insider Bureau) World Vegan Vision (WVV) organized Thanksgiving Dinner and Dance with over 150 people attending on Saturday Nov 19, 2022 from 6 PM to 11 PM at Antuns' By Minar. World Vegan Vision (WVV) dedicated this event to celebrate its 30th anniversary. The first Indian elected representative from the Town of North Hempstead Honorable Town Clerk Ragini Srivastava graced the occasion. World Vegan Vision is a non-

profit organization with a mission to promote veganism and healthy lifestyle. The main mission of World Vegan Vision is to increase the public awareness about the 3 main aspects of Veganism; Health, Animal Welfare, and Environmental Conservation.

The main function started at 7:20 PM with Vice President Gunjan Rastogi welcoming the audience and inviting the Treasurer Kirti Shukla for singing both American and Indian National Anthem.

Suman Munjal, President of World Vegan Vision New York Chapter, in her speech welcomed and thanked all the dignitaries, trustees, sponsors, past presidents, community leaders, executive committee members and the invited guests for coming. She stated that "World Vegan Vision has completed 30 years of its journey and we have been celebrating this milestone throughout this year. Thanks to our Founders HK Shah ji and Malti Shah ji, who have

been nurturing this organization with Tan, man and Dhan from day 1. And they have been doing it for a good cause, promoting healthy life style and compassion towards animals". She further stated that "I personally experienced enormous health benefits of becoming vegan. I controlled my diabetes and cholesterol with vegan diet. I would like to encourage everyone to join in, become vegan and experience the benefits of veganism".

Indian court sentences US antiquities smuggler to 10 years in prison



(South Asian Insider Bureau) Adisgraced American antiquities dealer accused of running a multi-million-dollar looting network via his New York gallery was this week sentenced by an Indian court to 10 years in prison for smuggling offenses. Subhash Kapoor was convicted alongside five accomplices on charges including criminal conspiracy, burglary and the illegal export of 19 artifacts worth over 940 million rupees (\$11.4 million), a police spokesperson confirmed to CNN. The verdict follows a years-long investigation into Kapoor, who stands accused of trafficking thousands of treasures plundered from temples, ruins and archaeological sites across Asia. The Indian American dealer's looting network is believed to have falsified ancient artifacts' authentication documents before selling them through his Manhattan gallery, Art of the Past. Following his arrest in Germany in 2011, Kapoor was sent to face charges in India's Tamil Nadu state, where his trial commenced last year. Although the

dealer has already spent 11 years in prison, he will not walk free following the sentencing, as he has also been indicted in the US on counts including grand

larceny, conspiracy, scheme to defraud and criminal possession of stolen property.

As part of an investigation dubbed "Operation Hidden Idol," the Manhattan District Attorney's Antiquities Trafficking Unit — a taskforce of lawyers, investigators and art experts — has seized more than 2,500 looted artifacts, worth an estimated \$143 million, that are linked to Kapoor. In addition to the 19 items he has now been convicted of smuggling, the dealer has also been accused of handling thousands of other items from countries including Nepal,

Cambodia, Pakistan and Afghanistan. In an emailed statement, a spokesperson for Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg told CNN his office was in contact with the US Department of Justice and Indian authorities about the case. "In 2020 the office filed extradition paperwork for Kapoor and we intend to prosecute him in the United States pursuant to our ongoing investigation," the spokesperson added.

Kapoor's New York-based lawyer Georges Lederman confirmed that the dealer will remain in custody in India due to the ex-

tradition request. Last year, Lederman told CNN that his client intends to contest the US charges on the grounds that "the underlying conduct he is being charged for in New York is the same for which he has already served (time for) in India." Institutions in the US and beyond have already repatriated hundreds of stolen items handled by Kapoor. Just last month, Bragg's office gave India 235 items linked to the dealer, including an elaborately carved marble archway that had wound up in the collection of the Yale University Art Gallery.

His term expiring, Garcetti pushes hard for job as Ambassador to India

(South Asian Insider Bureau) With less than a month to go before he leaves office, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti is pressing his effort to get the U.S. Senate to confirm his appointment as ambassador to India, a fraught campaign complicated by a Republican senator whose office is trying to renew doubts about whether the mayor and his staff mishandled sexual harassment allegations against a top aide. It has been more than 16 months since President Biden nominated Garcetti as the U.S. representative to the world's largest democracy. A vote on the appointment has never been scheduled, as Garcetti and his allies strain to reach the 50 votes needed for approval. L.A.'s mayor has waited far longer for confirmation — nearly 500 days — than all others whom Biden has designated to be ambassadors, according to the nonprofit Partnership for Public Service. "At some point, they need to get this resolved, because our effectiveness on the world stage is being

harmed," said Max Stier, president and CEO of the Partnership for Public Service. "It's a bad signal to India in that it diminishes the sense of recognition of their importance."



The White House has continued to express support for Garcetti, who backed the former vice president when he appeared a long shot for the 2020 Democratic presidential nomination. Garcetti and his team have focused on winning some Republican votes, after at least a few Democratic senators, including Mazie Hirono of Hawaii, indicated concerns about the harassment allegations. In an interview last week, Garcetti said his nomination has bipartisan support, though he declined to discuss the senators he has spoken to. "This India-U.S. relationship is

critical," Garcetti said as he rode in a Veterans Day parade in Pacoima. "So I'm optimistic because a lot of people said, 'Wait till after the election.' We can focus on it now and I'm optimistic we'll get it scheduled and get it done. I'm ready to serve."



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2 punjab cops, 1 man arrested by vigilance dept for accepting Rs 1 lakh bribe

Punjab Vigilance Bureau arrested two cops and one man allegedly for accepting Rs 1 Lakh as a bribe

(By Staff Reporter) Punjab complainant further informed that Vigilance Bureau (VB) on Monday the sub-inspector Bisman Singh arrested a police sub-inspector, through Surjit and ASI Resham Singh, had received Rs 11 Lakh in instalments to release his brother and the truck loaded from Srinagar. He further alleged that though the accused police sub-inspector was transferred to police lines in Jalandhar, he demanded more money through his two



Bisman Singh, who was earlier other intermediaries to help him in posted as Station House Officer this police case. After verification (SHO) at Jalandhar and Assistant of the facts in the complaint and the Sub-Inspector (ASI) Resham Singh, material evidence, a VB team including a man named Surjit Singh arrested Bisman Singh, Resham Singh and Surjit Singh for taking a bribe of Rs 1 Lakh. All the accused have been arrested on the complaint of Harjinder Kumar, a resident of Rupnagar district, who had approached the VB, alleging that his brother was arrested with his truck in a false case in which the accused showed the recovery of poppy husk in the truck, said a all the accused and further spokesperson of VB. The investigation was under progress.

BJP should make conman Suresh its national president: Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal accused conman Suresh Chandrashekhar of working on the directions of the BJP and said the saffron party should make him its national president

(By Staff Reporter) Taking a swipe at the BJP, Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief Arvind Kejriwal accused conman Suresh Chandrashekhar of working on the directions of the BJP and said the saffron party should make him its national president.

Kejriwal was speaking at the Panchayat Aajtak event in New Delhi's Connaught Place. On being asked about the explosive letters that conman Suresh Chandrashekhar sent to the Delhi Lieutenant Governor, Kejriwal said, "The BJP has been ruling the Municipal Corporation of Delhi for 15 years. It has been ruling Gujarat for 27 years. If you got to ask them what they have done all these years, the BJP will not have any answer. Hence, they have come with the love letter of conman Suresh Chandrashekhar." Claiming how Suresh is dancing to the tunes of the BJP, the Delhi Chief Minister said the BJP should make the conman their star campaigner and send him to Gujarat to

campaign for the party for the upcoming assembly elections.

"Given how Suresh is dancing to the tunes of the BJP, the BJP should make him its national president," said Kejriwal.

Without taking names of any party, the AAP supremo

said all the thugs and criminals of the country go to one party to save themselves and that party assures them of protection.

"Right now, Suresh

is doing nothing but batting for the party that is providing him protection," said Kejriwal.

Conman Suresh Chandrashekhar had written to Delhi's Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena that Satyender Jain, who is currently lodged in Tihar jail in a money laundering case, had asked him to pay Rs 10 crore to provide him protection inside the prison complex. The conman also alleged that the AAP has asked him to pay Rs 50 crore in lieu of a party post in southern India and arrange a team of people who would further the AAP's prospects in the south.



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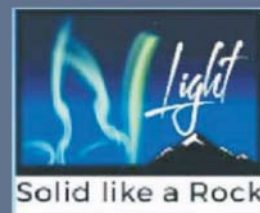
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UP man arrested for faking name, justifying Shraddha Walkar's murder

The man justified the brutal murder of Shraddha Walkar, claiming that this could have happened in anger.

(By Staff Reporter) The Uttar Pradesh Police on Friday arrested the man who, in a viral video, had justified the brutal murder of Shraddha Walkar. The man, who was calling himself Rashid Khan in the video,



enraged, he can do more than 35 pieces," he said. After the video went viral, the police launched a search operation. After his arrest on Friday, police said Vikas already had criminal cases registered against him in Bulandshahr and a record of theft and carrying illegal arms in Noida. When the police asked why he faked his name in the video, Vikas said that people actually turned out to be Vikas Kumar. The Sikandrabad police in Bulandshahr district revealed that Vikas Kumar pretended to be Rashid Khan and supported the act of Aaftab Amin Poonawala of chopping his girlfriend into 35 pieces. In the viral video, Vikas had justified the brutal murder of Shraddha, claiming that this could happen in anger. "When someone is

laughed at him as, according to them, his "face didn't match his name". He further said he regretted his actions as he was unaware of the repercussions of his deeds and feared death either here or in prison. On further investigations, the police uncovered that there were already five cases of Arms Act and theft registered against Vikas Kumar.

Bharat Jodo Yatra: Rahul, Priyanka perform Ma Narmada aarti, pray at Omkareshwar temple

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and his sister and party's general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra performed Ma Narmada aarti at Omkareshwar temple in Madhya Pradesh on Friday



(By Staff Reporter) Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, his sister and party's general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and her family members on Friday performed 'Ma Narmada' aarti at Omkareshwar in Madhya Pradesh. Gandhi's cross-country Bharat Jodo Yatra reached Khandwa district of the state during the day. The Gandhi siblings held 'diyas' (lamps) while performing aarti along with the priests at Brahmapuri ghat on the

banks of the Narmada river. Rahul Gandhi also offered a "chunari" to the river and then prayed at the famous Shiva temple, one of the 12 'jyotirlingas' in the country. Priests placed a turban on Gandhi's head and draped a 'dupatta' (stole) with 'Om' written on it on his shoulders. Police stopped the entry of devotees to Brahmapuri Ghat and also directed shops in the vicinity to down shutters as part of security arrangements.



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Bhushan Kumar files fraud complaint against imposter, calls it attempt to malign his image

Music company T-Series, in their official statement, has revealed that they have filed a complaint for impersonation and fraud against an imposter attempting to malign the image of their managing director, Bhushan Kumar



(News Agency) Music company T-series recently filed a complaint for impersonation, forgery, and fraud against an unknown accused for attempting to malign the image of the company's MD, Bhushan Kumar. The complaint states that the person impersonating the T-series head honcho has been sending 'distasteful messages' to his industry contacts. The company also issued a statement

with regard to the case and explained how it has been seeking legal help while alerting all contacts associated with Kumar. Kumar's known ones caught the bluff and told him about the same. The police is currently investigating the case.

T-SERIES ISSUES STATEMENT

Bhushan Kumar's reputation was at stake after an imposter tried to injure his image with his 'disgraceful and vindictive' behaviour. The statement said that Kumar had no role to play in these events and was the victim of the malicious intent of the accused. In case anyone is contacted by such imposters, they urged them not to engage in any conversation or transaction with them.

"T-Series has filed a complaint for impersonation, forgery, and fraud against certain unknown accused who

are attempting to malign our Managing Director, Mr. Bhushan Kumar. Through the use of foreign phone numbers, accused imposters, posing as Mr. Kumar, reached out to several persons through distasteful messages. The bluff of the accused imposters was promptly called out by persons who are personally known to Mr. Kumar. Further, the persons targeted immediately alerted Mr. Kumar of the incidents that had occurred. Upon receipt of this information, T-Series swiftly filed a complaint against the accused imposters. In light of the same, a police investigation is currently underway (sic)," the official statement read.

T-SERIES CAUTIONED PEOPLE AGAINST IMPOSTERS

Further, the company warned people against the imposter and asked them

to stay away from any kind of suspicious messages that they might think could not be from Bhushan Kumar. "The motive behind this campaign to injure Mr. Kumar's reputation is evident, and such disgraceful and vindictive behaviour will be dealt with appropriately by official authorities. Mr. Kumar has no role to play in these events and is being targeted by persons acting out of malicious intent. Should anyone be contacted by these accused imposters, we urge them to not engage in any conversation or transaction with any such imposters. The good faith and reputation that Mr. Kumar has built for himself through this organisation and his other work, remain unscathed by these weak attempts at damaging his character (sic)," the statement added.

Jet Airways Lenders Plan To Sell 11 Airplanes: Report

Six expressions of interest (Eols) to purchase these aircraft were reportedly submitted to banks in August

(News Agency) Lenders of grounded Jet Airways are growing frustrated with the holdup in implementing the resolution plan. They are reportedly considering selling 11 of the defunct airline's planes, thus forcing the airline into liquidation. As per reports, the Insolvency Resolution Plan was approved by banks in October 2020 and the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) approved the plan on June 22, 2021. The NCLT has reportedly ordered the Jalan-Kalrock consortium to get the necessary licenses and permissions to operate the airline within 90 days of the approval. Bankers claim that even one and a half years after the NCLT approved the resolution plan, the Jalan-Kalrock consortium has failed to make the required payment, which has compelled them to rethink their decision. The Economic Times reported. "Nobody thought this would take so long to execute," The Economic Times quoted a person aware of the deal. He further added, "But the fact is banks cannot transfer the company till we receive the money, and the way things are, it seems that the execution of the deal will not happen soon. Meanwhile, the 11 planes we have in our possession are also losing value. Maybe the time has come to relook at selling those." Six expressions of interest (Eols) to purchase these aircraft were reportedly submitted to banks in August. However, the procedure has been delayed by the decision of the Jet Airways monitoring committee, which is made up of banks and Jalan-Kalrock officials. Some bankers believe that since the planes have drawn some attention, banks have another opportunity to recover. "The Jalan-Kalrock consortium has filed an intervention application in the NCLT, which will come up for hearing on November 29. Banks will watch what they say to the court and act accordingly," The Economic Times quoted another person aware of the case. The report added that the consortium had blamed the banks for the delay in their submission to the court. However, bankers are reportedly formulating a plan B

to end the dispute, even if it deepened the trust deficit. Consortium (JKC) has Moreover, there's an ongoing dispute over unpaid dues employees' salaries by up to 50 per cent and put other the airline's owners. As per reports, Jalan Kalrock beginning on December 1.

Adani Group's Rs 493 Crore Open Offer For NDTV To Begin From Tuesday

Markets regulator Sebi on November 7 granted its approval to the proposed Rs 492.81 crore-open offer

(News Agency) Adani group's open offer to acquire an additional 26 per cent stake in the media firm New Delhi Television (NDTV) from the market would start from Tuesday.

The offer, for which a price band of Rs 294 per share has been fixed, will open on November 22 and closes on December 5, said a notice by JM Financial, the firm managing the offer on behalf of Adani Group firms.

Markets regulator Sebi on November 7 granted its approval to the proposed Rs 492.81 crore-open offer.

The conglomerate, run by India's richest man Gautam Adani, in August acquired a little-known company that lent over Rs 400 crore to NDTV's founders more than a decade ago in exchange for warrants that allowed the company to acquire a stake of 29.18 per cent in the newsgroup at any time. Post that, VCPL - the firm that the Adani group bought out - announced that it would launch

an open offer on October 17 to buy an additional 26 per cent stake from minority shareholders of NDTV. However, the offer was delayed since Sebi had not given its approval to the open offer.

VCPL along with AMG Media Networks and Adani Enterprises Ltd had proposed to acquire an additional 26 per cent or 1.67 crore equity shares at an offer price of Rs 294 per share.

If fully subscribed, the open offer will amount to Rs 492.81 crore at a price of Rs 294 per share.

"The decision to acquire

NDTV was arrived at in furtherance of the Adani Group's objective to set up a credible next-generation media platform with an emphasis on digital and broadcast segments, and that NDTV is a suitable broadcast and digital platform to deliver on this vision," Adani Enterprises had said in a regulatory filing in October.

On Monday, shares of NDTV closed at Rs 382.20 on BSE, down 5 per cent, touching a lower circuit.



Cannabis banking supporters scramble to reach lame-duck deal

The Senate is trying to get a package of cannabis-related legislation over the finish line in this Congress

(News Agency) Urgency is building in the Senate to get cannabis legislation passed before the year is over. The specter of a Republican-led House has lit a fire under proponents of cannabis banking legislation, according to three House and Senate staffers involved in discussions on both sides of the aisle. Senate Banking Chair Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio), Sens. Steve Daines (R-Mont.) and Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.) and other lawmakers met with Majority Leader Chuck Schumer last week to talk about the SAFE Banking Act. Lawmakers and staffers all said a concerted effort is underway to find common ground between Republicans and Democrats. "We're serious. We want to do this," Brown said. "I'm actually fairly optimistic and hopeful that we will come to an agreement." The key to passage is twofold. They must find a pairing of financial services and criminal justice reform-centered cannabis legislation that

progressive Democrats and conservative Republicans can all accept. And then they must receive signoff from the leaders of the Senate Banking Committee, House Financial Services Committee, and the four corners of party leadership in both chambers. Both efforts are already underway: Daines last week said Republicans are open to the HOPE Act — a bill introduced by Reps. Dave Joyce (R-Ohio) and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) that creates grants for state expungement programs. Joyce said research language is also on the table.

"We're open to some additions to it," Daines said. "I think the Hope Act is one, but if it gets bigger than that, I think we're gonna have a problem."

Brown, meanwhile, is working with Senate Banking ranking member Pat Toomey (R-Penn.), House Financial Services Chair Maxine Waters (D-Calif.) and House Financial Services ranking member Patrick

McHenry (R-N.C.).

"Some things will be kicked upstairs to the leaders — others will be done on our level," Brown explained.

Criminal justice reform

The SAFE Banking Act has already passed the House in some form six times. But it's been stuck in the Senate, where it either went too far for certain Republican leaders or not far enough for progressives.

The bill would not solve all banking issues faced by the cannabis industry, but it would make it easier for cannabis businesses to open bank accounts and get loans. Many industry representatives and even some advocates argue that the bill would particularly help smaller and minority-owned companies since most of the country's largest cannabis companies already having access to banking services. The bill, however, has sparked resistance from some progressive drug reform groups who argue that the



cannabis industry should not be given a leg up when there are still so many people in other states experiencing arrest and incarceration for marijuana-related crimes. Sen. Cory Booker (D-N.J.) has repeatedly said he opposes passage of a bill that helps weed businesses without communities that have been hurt by the criminalization of marijuana over the years. Schumer and Brown backed Booker's position, while

Republicans largely held firm that SAFE Banking didn't need any companion bills. But it's now the eleventh hour, and Republicans are starting to come around to the HOPE Act — a states-rights-focused expungement bill.

Joyce, a co-chair of the Congressional Cannabis Caucus, has been campaigning hard for the bill with other Republicans since it was introduced last December, and met with Schumer earlier this year to discuss common ground.

ਪੰਜਾਬ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀਅਤ ਦਾ ਤਰਜਮਾਨ

ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਦੁਨੀਆ

Since April 2005 Editor : Sharanjit Singh Thind

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ਐੱਸਵਾਈਐੱਲ ਵਿਵਾਦ ਦਾ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ

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

ਬੇਅੰਤ ਸਿੱਖ ਦੇ ਪੈਰੋ ਨੁੰਨੇਕੀ ਮਿਲ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਜਾਂ ਮੇਰੇ ਬੱਚੇ ਨੂੰ ਨਹੀਂ। ਇਸ ਰਾਜਨੀਤੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਡੇ ਪਿਛਾਧ ਦਾ ਖੂਨ ਛੁੱਟਿਆ ਹੈ, ਜਿੰਦਗੀਆਂ ਹਮੇਸ਼ਾ ਲਈ ਬਦਲ ਗਈਆਂ। ਭਾਵੇਂ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਅਰਵਿੰਦ ਕੌਰ ਬਲਦੇ-ਬਲਦੇ ਚੁੱਪ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। 23 ਜੁਲਾਈ 1990 ਨੂੰ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਪਿਤਾ ਅਵਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਐਲਪ ਉੱਪਰ ਚੰਗੀਗੜ੍ਹ ਵਿਖੇ ਦਬਰਤ ਦੇ ਬਾਹਰ ਗੱਲੀਆਂ ਚਲਾਈਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ ਸਨ। ਪੰਜਾਬੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਕੇ ਜਾਣਾ ਸਮੇਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਮੌਤ ਹੋ ਗਈ। ਐਲਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਪੁੱਤਰੀ ਗੱਲੀਆਂ ਚੱਲੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਮੌਤ 'ਤੇ ਹੀ ਮੌਤ ਹੋ ਗਈ ਸੀ। ਸਿੱਖੀ ਸਰਕੂਲਰ ਯੂਨਾ ਨਿੱਕ ਨਹਿਰ ਪ੍ਰਾਸੈਕਟ ਦੇ ਚੀਫ ਇੰਜੀਨੀਅਰ ਸਨ ਅਤੇ ਐਲਪ ਸੁਪਰਡੈਂਟ ਇੰਜੀਨੀਅਰ। ਇੱਕ ਹੋਰ ਇੰਜੀਨੀਅਰ ਐਲ ਕੇ ਗੋਵਿਲ ਇਸ ਯੂਨਿਟ ਵਿੱਚ ਜ਼ਮੀਨੀ ਹੋ ਗਏ ਸਨ। 1990 ਵਿੱਚ ਹੋਈ ਇਸ ਘਟਨਾ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਸਰਕੂਲਰ ਯੂਨਾ ਨਿੱਕ ਪ੍ਰਾਸੈਕਟ ਦੀ ਉਸਾਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਰੋਕ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ। ਉਸਾਰੀ ਤਾਵੇਂ ਭੁੱਖ ਗਈ ਪਰ ਇਸ ਉੱਪਰ ਚਰਚਾ, ਰਾਜਨੀਤੀ, ਬੈਠਕਾਂ, ਵਿਵਾਦ ਸ਼ਬਾ ਸੋਨ ਨੇ ਮੋਰਚੇ ਨਾਲ ਚੱਲ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਸੁਣਵਾਈ ਕਦੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਭੁੱਲੀ।

ਐਲ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਮੁੱਖ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਭਗਵੰਤ ਮਾਨ ਅਤੇ ਹਰਿਆਣਾ ਦੇ ਮੁੱਖ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਮਨੋਹਰ ਲਾਲ ਖੱਤਰ ਵਿਚਕਾਰ ਸਰਕੂਲਰ ਯੂਨਾ ਨਿੱਕ ਪ੍ਰਾਸੈਕਟ ਨੂੰ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਇੱਕ ਥੋੜ੍ਹਾ ਹੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ। 6 ਸਤੰਬਰ 2022 ਨੂੰ ਸੁਪਰੀਮ ਕੋਰਟ ਨੇ ਦੋਵਾਂ ਸੂਬਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਇੱਕ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਥੋੜ੍ਹਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਕੇ ਪਹਿਚਾਉਣਾ ਸੀ।

ਮਸਲਾ ਸੁਲਝਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਕਿਹਾ ਸੀ। ਦੋਵਾਂ ਸੂਬਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ 4 ਹਫ਼ਤਿਆਂ ਅੰਦਰ ਜਲ ਸੰਭਰ ਮੋਰਚੇ ਨਾਲ ਚੱਲ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਸੁਣਵਾਈ ਕਦੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਭੁੱਲੀ।

ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਪਾਣੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਮੁੱਦਾ ਉਸਾਰੀ ਅਧੀਨ ਸਰਕੂਲਰ ਯੂਨਾ ਨਿੱਕ ਨਹਿਰ ਦਾ ਵਿਵਾਦ ਕਈ ਦਹਾਕਿਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਜਾਰੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਨਹਿਰ ਦਾ ਮੋਤਾਵਾ ਭਾਖਣਾ ਡੇਮ ਦਾ ਇੱਕ ਥੋੜ੍ਹਾ ਹੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ। 6 ਸਤੰਬਰ 2022 ਨੂੰ ਸੁਪਰੀਮ ਕੋਰਟ ਨੇ ਦੋਵਾਂ ਸੂਬਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਇੱਕ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਥੋੜ੍ਹਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਕੇ ਪਹਿਚਾਉਣਾ ਸੀ।

214 ਕਿਲੋਮੀਟਰ ਲੰਬੀ ਇਸ ਨਹਿਰ ਵਿੱਚ 122 ਕਿਲੋਮੀਟਰ ਨਹਿਰ ਦੀ ਉਸਾਰੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਸੀ। ਮੈਂ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ 92 ਕਿਲੋਮੀਟਰ ਦੀ ਉਸਾਰੀ ਹਰਿਆਣਾ ਨੇ ਕਰਨੀ ਸੀ। ਭਾਵੇਂ ਦੋਵਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਇੱਕ ਥੋੜ੍ਹਾ ਟਰੀਟੀ ਸਮਝੌਤੇ ਦੇ ਤਹਿਤ ਭਾਖਣ ਨੂੰ ਸਰਕੂਲਰ, ਰਾਬੀ ਅਤੇ ਹਿਮਾਲ ਦੇ ਪਾਣੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਵੰਡ ਦੇ ਦਾ ਤੱਥ ਮਿਲ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ। ਸੀਨੀਅਰ ਪੱਤਰਕਾਰ ਜਗਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਮੁਤਾਬਕ ਭਾਖਣ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਲੋੜ ਵਿਸ਼ਵ ਬੈਂਕ ਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੀ ਗਈ। ਦੋਸ ਦੀ ਵੰਡ ਸਮੇਂ ਦਰਿਆਈ ਪਾਣੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਵੰਡ ਉੱਪਰ ਸਮਝੌਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਇਆ ਸੀ। 1955 ਵਿੱਚ ਰਾਬੀ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਆਸ ਨਦੀ ਵਿੱਚ 15.85 ਮਿਲੀਅਨ ਏਕੜ ਭੁੱਟ ਪਾਣੀ ਸੀ। ਕੋਚਰ ਨੇ ਰਾਬੀ ਦਾ 7.20 ਐਮ ਐਚ ਪਾਣੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਨੂੰ ਦਿੱਤਾ, 8 ਐਮ ਐਚ ਰਾਜਸਥਾਨ ਦੇ ਹਿੱਸੇ ਆਇਆ। 10.65 ਐਮ ਐਚ ਸੰਘ-ਕਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਿਆ। ਹਰਿਆਣਾ ਦੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਤੋਂ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋਇਆ ਵਿਵਾਦ 1966 ਵੱਚ ਹਰਿਆਣਾ ਦੇ ਬਣਨ ਤੋਂ

ਸੁਪਰੀਮ ਕੋਰਟ ਨੇ ਕੀ ਕਿਹਾ ਸੀ ?

ਸੁਪਰੀਮ ਕੋਰਟ ਨੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਅਤੇ ਹਰਿਆਣਾ ਦੇ ਮੁੱਖ ਮੰਤਰੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਜਲ ਸਹੀ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਭੁਲਾਈ ਗਈ ਮੀਟਿੰਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਕਰਨ ਅਤੇ ਮਤਰੇਦਾ ਨੂੰ ਸੁਲਝਾਉਣ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਵਿੱਚ ਇੱਕ ਪ੍ਰਕਿਰਿਆ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਕਿਹਾ ਸੀ। ਸੁਪਰੀਮ ਕੋਰਟ ਦੇ ਇਸ ਹੁਕਮ ਦੀ ਅਗਵਾਈ ਜਸਟਿਸ ਜੇਜੇ ਕਿਲਨ ਕੋਲ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਸੀ। ਜਸਟਿਸ ਕੋਲ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿੱਚ ਸੁਲਝਾਉਣਾ ਚਿੰਤਾਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਮੱਦੇਨਜ਼ਰ ਕੁਦਰਤੀ ਸੰਭਰ ਸਾਥੇ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾਣੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਮਾਮਲੇ ਦੀ ਅਗਲੀ ਸੁਣਵਾਈ 15 ਜਨਵਰੀ, 2023 ਨਿਰਧਾਰਤ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ। ਕੋਚਰ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਦੀ ਨੁਮਾਇੰਦਗੀ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਅਟਾਰਨੀ ਸਨਕਲ (ਦੋਸੀ) ਕੇ ਕੇ ਵੇਦੂਗੋਪਾਲ ਨੇ ਸੁਪਰੀਮ ਕੋਰਟ ਦੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਨੂੰ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਯੂਨਾਨ ਆਫ 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 ਅਪ੍ਰੈਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਇੱਕ ਪੱਤਰ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਅਜੇ ਤੱਕ ਕੋਈ ਜਵਾਬ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ।

ਸੁਪਰੀਮ ਕੋਰਟ ਸੂਬਿਆਂ ਵਿਚਾਲੇ ਪਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਵੰਡ ਵਿਵਾਦ, ਮੁੱਖ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਐਲਪਾਈਐਲ-ਪੰਜਾਬ, ਹਰਿਆਣਾ ਅਤੇ ਰਾਜਸਥਾਨ, ਆਂਧਰਾ, ਤੇਲੰਗਾਨਾ, ਛੱਤੀਸਗੜ੍ਹ, ਉਤ੍ਤਰਾਖੰਡ ਦੇ ਵਿਚਕਾਰ ਗੰਦਾਕੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ-ਰਾਜਸਥਾਨ ਬੋਰਡ ਪ੍ਰਸਿੱਧਤਾ ਦੇ ਹੱਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਸੁਣਵਾਈ ਕਰ ਰਹੀ ਸੀ। ਸੁਪਰੀਮ ਕੋਰਟ ਨੇ ਅੱਜ ਕੋਚਰ ਅਤੇ ਕਈ ਸੂਬਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਦੇ ਹੱਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਸਲ ਰਹਿਣ ਲਈ ਅਤੇ ਹੱਲੀ ਲਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਸੰਬੰਧਤ ਸੂਬਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਆਉਣ ਅਤੇ ਮੁੱਦੇ ਨੂੰ ਸੁਲਝਾਉਣ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਕਿਹਾ।

ਪਹਿਲਾਂ 7.2 ਮਿਲੀਅਨ ਏਕੜ ਭੁੱਟ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਹਿੱਸੇ ਆਇਆ। ਹਰਿਆਣਾ ਬਣਨ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਇਸ ਨੇ ਵੀ 4.8 ਮਿਲੀਅਨ ਏਕੜ ਭੁੱਟ ਪਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਮੰਗ ਰੱਖੀ। ਇਸ ਪਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਪੂਰੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਨੂੰ ਯਕੀਨੀ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਸਰਕੂਲਰ ਯੂਨਾ ਨਿੱਕ ਨਹਿਰ ਦੇ ਨਿਰਮਾਣ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਸਤਾਵ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਗਿਆ। ਸੁਪਰੀਮ ਕੋਰਟ ਨੇ ਅਗਲੀ ਦਲ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਇਸਦਾ ਵਿਰੋਧ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ। 2022 ਵਿੱਚ ਵਿਨੀ ਨੇ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਸ ਪਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਦੀ ਇਸ ਵਿਵਾਦ ਦੇ ਸ਼ੁਰੂਆਤ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਦੋਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਹੁਣ ਅਮ ਆਮ ਪਾਣੀ ਹਰਿਆਣਾ ਦੀ ਰਾਜਨੀਤੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਲਗਾਇਆ ਹੈ।

ਪਾਣੀਆਂ ਪਿੱਛੇ ਇਹ ਲੜਾਈ ਸਿਰਫ ਰਾਜਨੀਤੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ, ਸਗੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਾਸੈਕਟ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਮਲ ਸੁਪਰਡੈਂਟ ਰਾਜਨੀਤੀ ਅਵਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਐਲਪ ਦਾ ਕਰਨ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਕਈ ਪਰਿਵਾਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਭੁਗਤਿਆ ਹੈ।

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

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

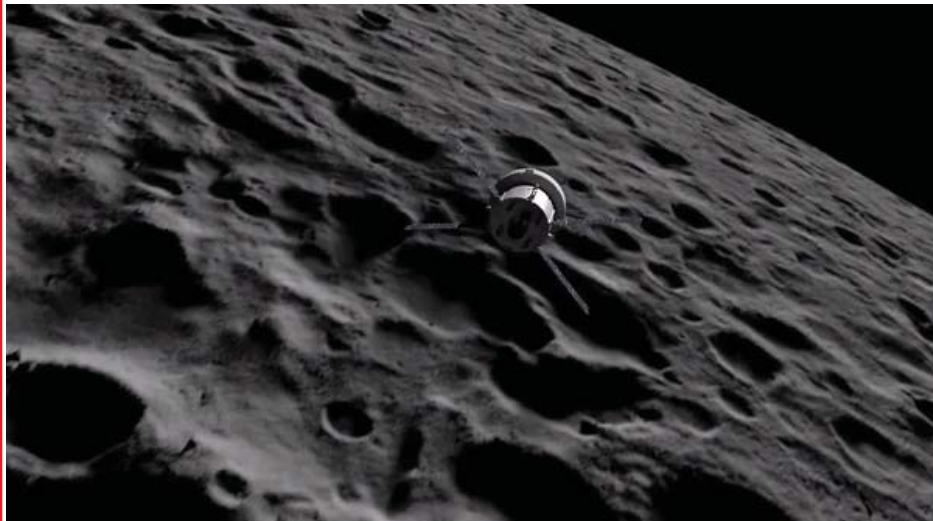
SHOULD BE CONSIDERED ARMED AND EXTREMELY DANGEROUS

If you have any information concerning this person, please contact your local FBI office or the nearest American Embassy or Consulate.

Field Office: Baltimore

Artemis-1: Orion to break this 52-year-old record set by Apollo 13 that failed to land on Moon

The Orion is currently on the ninth day of its mission and is just a day away from setting a new record



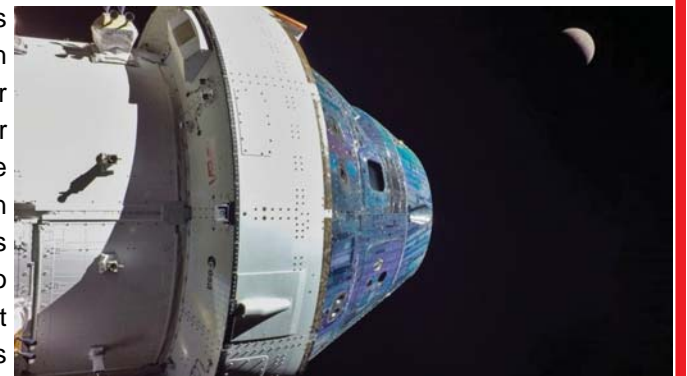
(News Agency) Ten days after it was launched from the shores of Cape Canaveral, the Orion spacecraft is set to put its name in record books. The spacecraft will pass the record set by Apollo 13 for the farthest distance traveled by a spacecraft designed for humans as it travels 4,32,192 kilometers from the planet.

The previous record is held by the Apollo 13 spacecraft, which was the seventh crewed mission in the Apollo

space program and the third aimed to land on the Moon. However, the landing was aborted after an oxygen tank in the service module failed two days into the mission. The spacecraft traveled 4,00,171 kilometers from Earth as NASA managed to safely return all three astronauts from the dying spacecraft. The Orion is currently on the ninth day of its mission and is just a day away from setting a new record. The spacecraft will enter a distant

retrograde orbit around the Moon as it continues to cruise at a speed of 4,200 kilometers per hour. The 25-day-long mission is aimed at demonstrating the feasibility of the system in sending humans back to the Moon. The new orbit is distant as it is at a high altitude approximately 80,467 kilometers from the surface of the Moon. "The orbit is so large that it will take the spacecraft six days to complete half of a revolution around the Moon before exiting the orbit for the return journey back to Earth," NASA said in a blog update. Meanwhile, flight controllers performed a third in a series of planned star tracker development flight tests relative to the Sun, with a fourth planned for tomorrow. "Star trackers are a navigation tool that measures the positions of stars to help the spacecraft determine its

orientation. In the first three flight days, engineers evaluated initial data to understand star tracker readings correlated to thruster firings," the American space agency said. Overnight, engineers will begin a 24-hour test of the reaction control system engines to evaluate engine performance for standard and non-standard thruster configurations. This test will provide data to inform procedures and ensure that the reaction control thrusters can control Orion's orientation in an alternate configuration if there is an issue with the primary configuration.



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Donald Trump Is (Still) President of White America

The culture of white supremacy has gone fully mainstream. And Trump has presided over this phenomenon as the official culture-warrior-in-chief

For the past six years, I've been grappling with the same unsettling mix of feelings: horror at Donald Trump's presidency, incredulosity at what happened at the capital, relief when the most damning evidence of Trumpian misdeeds came to light and a near-religious hope that the GOP might return to something resembling sanity. My nervous optimism persisted through the run-up to the midterms, with its loud predictions of an apocalypse, and after the election, had a brief moment of actual confidence. But this week, as I watched Trump announce his candidacy for 2024, that optimism was eclipsed by a more persistent, nagging realization: Trump was never president.

I don't mean literally. He did serve a term, though he violated so many oaths and protocols of the office — and of simple decency — that many Americans (including me) took to saying that he was not president, as a kind of protest. But I've come to believe that protest was too narrowly focused. This started to dawn on me during the Jan. 6 hearings as witness after witness described a viciously anti-democratic atmosphere in the White House that emanated from Trump but was bigger than him. They spoke about the intolerance and intransigence that had taken hold not just in the capital, but in towns and cities far beyond D.C. that were feeding the atmosphere and also feeding on it — all part of an ecosystem that was flourishing in some form all over the country.

Then it hit me: Trump was, and continues to be, the chief executive not of a nation, or of the Republican Party, or even of a cult, but of a culture — namely a culture of white supremacy.

This is actually worse than it sounds. Even very "woke" Americans tend to see white supremacy as an isolated dynamic synonymous with racism, the "bad" America. But what many people don't realize is that white supremacy is a culture that is much broader and deeper than that. It is about racialized power, an assumed authority of white people (chiefly men) to set and enforce the social and moral order as they see fit, often in the service of values that on their face sound noble, like tradition or family. In this culture, the presidency, electoral politics, the Constitution, rule of law, democratic ideals, liberalism, decency — all are incidental. They can never matter as much as white peoples' ultimate right to power.

The gravitational pull of white supremacy in America is not new. It is part of who we've always been. What is new is that in 2022, under the increasingly thin guise of conservatism — and greatly aided by the internet, social media and big media like Fox News — the culture

of white supremacy has gone fully, almost gleefully mainstream. Republican policy agendas have been replaced with relentless attacks on critical race theory and the whole notion of social justice; voter suppression is orchestrated out in the open; Jan. 6, an attempt by a largely white minority to subvert democracy, has been met with less than universal condemnation from GOP leadership.

Like a Category 5 hurricane, this culture of white supremacy has gained strength by converging with other offshoot culture wars from the last 40 years, from the anti-abortion operation to science denial to the total gun rights movement. Some of the people who are involved with these movements may not think they are serving white supremacy. But by advocating for policies that disadvantage and endanger people like me, that is precisely what they are doing. Since 2016, Trump has presided over this phenomenon as the official culture-warrior-in-chief. And he has done the job well, which is why the millions of culture warriors known as "the base" will continue to vote for him. But what is particularly worrisome is that Trump doesn't have to win elections for this culture to persist. As long as Trump remains Trump — unapologetically bigoted, xenophobic, right in all circumstances — he'll have loyal supporters in his culture war. Elections are just a technicality. This is dangerous because in 2022, this culture war is increasingly veering toward actual combat. American history has been written in violence, most often perpetrated by whites against the "Other" — Indigenous folks, Black people, immigrants of color. In today's culture war, though, Trump's opponents are all the indistinguishable Other — the 54 percent of Americans who don't support Trump or Trumpism, according to the latest polling by FiveThirtyEight, and who see democratic progress as the truer American path. The culture warriors taking up the cause are not just Proud Boys or Oathkeepers; they're average citizens in suburbs spread all over the country. In her study published a year ago in the Journal of Democracy, "The Rise of Political Violence in the United States," Rachel Kleinfeld finds that white supremacy and the propensity for political violence is coming overwhelmingly from the right. But most alarming is how truly mainstream it is. Kleinfeld notes that two surveys in the last two years found that a majority of Republicans agree with the sentiment that "the American way of life is disappearing so fast" that "they may have to use force to save it."

(Contd. on page 20)

China's Zero-Covid Reckoning

Record infections and new lockdowns lead to rising public frustration and slower economic growth.

Remember when China's handling of Covid-19 was supposed to be a global model? Western public-health sages looked fondly on Beijing's zero-Covid policy as an alternative to America's messy democratic decision to live with the virus after the disastrous initial lockdowns. Well, so much for that.

As the third anniversary of the Covid outbreak nears, China is reporting record infections. The daily highs are surpassing April's surge in Shanghai, which shut down for two months. Outbreaks are occurring across China, and cities are again imposing lockdowns. Nomura, the Japanese brokerage, estimates that more than a fifth of the country is under restricted movement.

The latest breakout was inevitable in a large continental nation given the increasing transmissibility of the virus as it mutates. China's particular problem is that its draconian zero-Covid policy has left its people less protected with either vaccine or natural immunity. For nationalist reasons, the Communist Party refused to accept Western vaccines that are more effective than China's homegrown shots. Long lockdowns mean fewer people have been exposed to the virus and developed natural immunity as they have in the rest of the world.

China's aging population is especially vulnerable, since the country lacks the hospital capacity and ICU beds to deal with widespread serious illness. By one estimate a full reopening could lead to 5.8 million intensive-care admissions in a country with fewer than four ICU beds per 100,000 people. The designs of China's rulers are opaque, but this may explain the Party's dogged insistence in sticking with zero-Covid despite the global evidence that lockdowns merely delay the spread of disease while doing great economic and social harm.

President Xi Jinping's other problem is political. An authoritarian regime can always do what it does best—surveil, coerce, lock down. But it lacks a mechanism to gain public support for the pain that could accompany the abandonment of zero-Covid. Democracies, for all their cacophony, have more flexibility to change policies and adapt when the public sees that the facts require it.

Meanwhile, signs are growing that the latest Covid breakout and lockdowns are meeting more public frustration and resistance. The protest this week at the Foxconn facility that makes Apple's iPhones in the central city of Zhengzhou is one example that has made it to the international press. There are surely many others in such a large country with no avenue to register public complaints.

The new lockdowns will slow China's economy, with growth estimates falling for the fourth quarter and the year below 3%. That's assuming Chinese officials aren't gilding the books. China's official GDP target for this year had been 5.5%.

China's Covid and economic struggles may explain in part China's recent less belligerent appearance on the global stage. But the U.S. can't assume that will continue. The larger lesson of China's Covid reckoning is that lockdowns don't work, and authoritarian regimes aren't models of public health or anything else that too many Americans imagine them to be.



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Bob Chapek's tenure marked by political missteps inside and outside of Disney

Bob Chapek was initially silent on Florida's controversial bill barring discussions of gender identity in school classrooms. Now he's saying "Goodbye, Disney (DIS)."

Chapek's rocky two-and-a-half year tenure at the head of the entertainment giant had a few wins. He navigated the Covid-19 pandemic, which shuttered theme parks around the world and halted film production, grew Disney+'s subscriber base and held his ground against an activist investor. But Disney made the surprise announcement Sunday that its revered former CEO Bob Iger is making a return as the head of the company. Chapek, who served as chairman of Disney Parks, Experiences and Products before taking over for Iger, will be stepping down immediately.

Why? Chapek's downfall arose, at least in part, out of his bungled response to Florida's controversial Parental Rights in Education bill, dubbed the "Don't Say Gay" bill by critics. His decisions had far-reaching effects on both Disney's reputation and on the company's "favored nation" status in the state.

Early this year, Disney faced mounting criticism for not taking a public stance on the bill. The law bans educators from discussions about sexual orientation and gender identity in some classrooms. Chapek ended up igniting a political firestorm — despite his initial efforts to keep the company out of

politics. (Iger had publicly condemned the bill on Twitter). Chapek addressed the issue in an email to staff but refused to issue a public statement against it in March. He defended that decision saying corporate statements "do very little to change outcomes or minds" and can undermine "more effective ways" of implementing change.

Chapek's response marked a change in tone for Disney, which had previously been led by an outspoken CEO who had famously considered running for president.

The backlash was immediate, both within the company and in the public. Disney employees began staging walkouts, saying Chapek's statements "utterly failed" to grasp the threat to LGBTQ communities.

Later that same week, Chapek apologized for his public silence on the bill. In a letter to employees, the CEO said the issue was not just about "a bill in Florida, but instead yet another challenge to basic human rights ... You needed me to be a stronger ally in the fight for equal rights and I let you down. I am sorry."

An apology too late

Chapek's attempt to keep Disney out of politics quickly backfired. While the company began bracing for further walkouts and protests from progressives, Chapek's eventual response led to a full blown battle

between two Florida giants: the Walt Disney Company and the state's Republican governor, Ron DeSantis.

DeSantis quickly ripped Disney after Chapek's public condemnation, calling the company a "woke corporation" with questionable business interests in China during a private event.

Disney is the main driver of Florida's massive tourism industry and the state's largest private employer. Before the public condemnation, Chapek told shareholders he had called DeSantis to express his "disappointment and concern."

He also announced a pause in political contributions in Florida (the company had previously donated \$50,000 to DeSantis' bid for reelection).

The feud eventually led to the Florida legislature revoking Disney's special status to operate as an independent quasi-government around its Orlando-area theme parks.

The bill states the special designation, which also gives Disney significant tax advantages, won't dissolve until June 2023. The Reedy Creek Improvement District, the entity that manages the Disney properties, argued it can't be dissolved until Florida pays off its bond debts, essentially saying the special district can continue to operate as normal.

Iger vs Chapek

The fallout over the LGBTQ legislation

created a rift between Iger and Chapek. CNBC reported that several Disney employees called Iger "to express their disappointment in Chapek."

In June, it seemed that Chapek wasn't going anywhere despite the public missteps — Disney announced a three year contract extension that would run into 2025.

"Disney was dealt a tough hand by the pandemic, yet with Bob [Chapek] at the helm, our businesses — from parks to streaming — not only weathered the storm, but emerged in a position of strength," Disney board chair Susan Arnold said in a statement, adding he was the "right leader at the right time." Despite the public controversies and feuds, Chapek was dealt a lifeline with Disney+. The service's subscriptions skyrocketed during the pandemic, and totaled more than 137 million at the time of Chapek's contract extension.

But now economic uncertainty is looming over corporate America, and Chapek recently announced a hiring freeze and job cuts to manage costs, Reuters reported.

Streaming success wasn't enough to save Chapek's tenure or his reputation, as the company lost \$1.5 billion in the fourth quarter.

Investors celebrated Iger's return as CEO, sending Disney shares up nearly 7% Monday after dropping roughly 38% this year.



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The bigger message from the Biden-Xi meeting

It took two years after Joe Biden was elected US President before the leaders of the world's two most powerful countries could finally speak in person, but when Biden and Chinese leader Xi Jinping finally met in Bali, Indonesia, on Monday on the sidelines of the G20 summit, the timing could not have been any better for the United States, for democracy and for the world.

With democracy suddenly looking like it's on firmer ground and key autocracies facing serious problems, it was an ideal moment for Biden to speak frankly to Xi about areas of disagreement between the two superpowers while trying to build safeguards to prevent the rivalry from careening into conflict as the relationship has deteriorated to its most tense state in decades.

Judging by the statements from the White House and the Chinese government, that's precisely what happened. The two sides discussed sources of disagreement, including Taiwan's autonomy, the war in Ukraine and China's human rights record. And they broached areas of potential cooperation, such as climate change, global health and economic stability.

The talks were apparently productive. The Chinese called them "thorough, frank, and constructive." Biden said, "We were very blunt with one another" but agreed to try to avoid a new Cold War. It wasn't "Kumbaya," the President said, but the two sides are perhaps less likely to start an accidental war against each other. By sheer coincidence, the encounter occurred at a pivotal moment. Biden pointed out that the results of the midterm elections "sent a very strong message around the world" that the US will remain engaged. But there was a bigger message. The most important signal to the world from the midterms is about the health of America's democracy. The US elections not only went smoothly and peacefully, but they also dealt a harsh blow to many of the most antidemocratic elements in the country.

A well-functioning democratic process in the US is likely disappointing to Xi and other autocrats hoping that deep divisions not only continue to weaken the country from within but also prove that democracy is chaotic and ineffective, inferior to their autocratic systems, as they like to claim. The midterms brought the American President to the table with a stronger hand to play.

A successful election, and a good performance by his party, gave Biden, and hence the US, a stronger presence at the table.

That's not the only reason, however, why this was the perfect moment — from the standpoint of the United States and for democracy — for this meeting to occur: There's much more to this geopolitical moment than who controls the US House of Representatives and Senate.

After years of turmoil and anxiety, there are signs that the democratic world may just be starting to reverse the tide of autocracy, or at least its most dangerous elements. But it's too early to tell how strong the global democratic push will be. As Biden and Xi were meeting, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky made an emotional, triumphant return to the devastated, now liberated city of Kherson, the one provincial capital that Russian invaders had conquered.

In a major victory for Ukraine that Zelensky called "the beginning of the end of the war," Russian forces abandoned Kherson to avoid a battlefield rout. The Western-backed Ukrainians continue their successful push against the invasion that Russian President Vladimir Putin launched in February just days after meeting with Xi in Beijing.

Back then, on the opening day of the Winter Olympics, Putin and Xi declared the two countries had a friendship

with "no limits," with no "forbidden areas of cooperation." Twenty days later, after months of denying any intention to invade Ukraine, Russian



troops crossed Ukraine's borders in what they — and much of the world — expected would be a quick operation to conquer the fledgling democracy next door.

Putin and Xi, the world's leading autocrats, looked ascendant, unstoppable even. Meanwhile, Western democracies appeared unsettled, roiled by sometimes violent protests against Covid-19 restrictions. Putin was preparing for triumph in Ukraine. Xi was hosting the Olympics, basking in attention, and preparing to solidify his control of China.

Putin's adventure turned to disaster as the Ukrainians defended their country with unexpected tenacity and as Biden rallied allies in a muscular push to support Ukraine.

By the time Xi and Putin met again in September, China had done little to support Russia militarily, and Putin admitted that Xi had "questions and concerns"

about Ukraine. More recently, after the Russian President thinly threatened to use nuclear weapons, Xi rebuked him. The no-limits friendship of the "autocracy bros" turned a little less warm, the anti-democracy front a little less self-assured. Tellingly, Putin chose not to attend the G20 summit in Bali, avoiding confrontations with world leaders as he increasingly becomes a pariah on the global stage.

To be sure, Biden is not the only leader with a strong hand. Xi has just secured an unprecedented third term as China's leader, and he can now effectively rule for as long as he wants. He doesn't have to worry about elections, about a critical press or a vociferous opposition party. He is essentially the absolute ruler of a mighty country for many years to come.

And yet Xi faces a mountain of daunting problems. The economy has slowed down so much that China is reluctant to reveal economic data. China's Covid-19 vaccine, once a tool of global diplomacy, is a disappointment. And partly because of that, China is imposing draconian lockdowns as the rest of the world gradually returns to normalcy after the pandemic. The Biden-Xi summit came at a good time for the West and not a moment too soon. China remains a major violator of human rights, a threat to Taiwan and a key rival of the United States. But avoiding a Cold War or a direct, especially an accidental conflict, is crucial. Also crucial in the epochal competition between the two systems is showing that democracy works, defeating efforts of autocratic countries such as China and Russia to discredit it and proving that unprovoked wars of aggression, aimed at suppressing democracy and conquering territory, will not succeed.

This 'poll denier' is suspicious of Twitter's reinstatement of Trump

Donald Trump just won his first election in six years — well, sort of. On Saturday, billionaire Elon Musk announced the results of a poll posted on his recently acquired Twitter that asked users if Trump should be reinstated on the platform. Twitter's former

management had permanently suspended Trump from the platform shortly after the January 6, 2021, attack on the US Capitol, explaining in a statement at the time that it was "due to the risk of further incitement of violence" by Trump via his tweets. One day after asking Twitter users for their views, Musk revealed the news with his tweet: "The people have

spoken. Trump will be reinstated." But not before Trump had taken to his own social media platform, Truth Social, where he attached the poll and urged supporters "to vote now with positivity." After Trump's alleged victory, he pretended not to care, explaining he would be staying on Truth Social.

I say the "alleged" win by Trump given concerns raised by some about the validity of the results — such as New York University marketing professor Scott Galloway, who sarcastically tweeted while the voting was taking place: "It would be impossible for the GRU or any other bot farm to influence this poll. Impossible." (The GRU is known as the "attack dog" of Russia's intelligence services.)



Call us Twitter "poll deniers," but it's challenging to believe it was a full and fair election. I mean, how can we trust the results without in-person voting and paper ballots, as Trump has claimed are required to ensure elections are secure? But assuming he

won, Trump should savor it because it was his first victory since 2016 — and more importantly, possibly his last. Trump's only election win came in the 2016 presidential race. Granted, winning the presidency is a big deal. But since then, it's been nothing but losing for the guy who promised during the 2016 campaign that there would be

so many wins with him as President that people would "get tired of winning."

Fast-forward to Friday when Mike Pompeo — Trump's former secretary of state and a possible 2024 GOP presidential candidate — needed Trump over that very line ahead of an appearance at the Republican Jewish Coalition. "We were told we'd get tired of winning. But I'm tired of losing," Pompeo tweeted. "And so are most Republicans."

Pompeo is right. Trump has brought nothing but a dumpster full of losses to the GOP. First, the Republicans lost the House of Representatives in the 2018 midterms. Then, there was his loss in 2020 to President Joe Biden

(Contd. on page 21)

Parliament Now The Interval Between Elections And Modi's PR

Nowadays, sadly, a parliament session is the interval between elections and Modi's Public Relations exercises.

Usually, the winter session of parliament begins in the second half of November and adjourns before Christmas. This winter session, however, will begin from 7 December, just two days after voting ends in Gujarat.

This isn't the first time that parliament has been delayed on account of elections in Gujarat. The winter session of 2017 was shortened and delayed for exactly the same reason - elections in the home state of Messrs Modi and Shah. Keeping parliament running between Christmas and the New Year was the exception. Now it is quickly becoming the rule. In the last six years, the winter session has spilt over on three occasions after December 25. In contrast, in the two decades before 2014, this happened only once.

The Constitution does not provide for a fixed schedule or minimum number of sittings for parliament. The President, on the advice of the Union Government, is empowered to summon both Houses provided that the interval between two sessions does not exceed six months. Conventionally, parliament is convened

three times in a year - Budget Session (February - May), Monsoon Session (July - August) and Winter Session (November - December).

When the provision was being discussed in the Constituent assembly, suggestions were made to change the provision to ensure that parliament was convened more frequently. Members were wary of the practice prevalent before Independence when parliament only met once or twice a year, that too for the purpose of collecting and discussing revenue. In the Constituent Assembly, Professor KT Shah moved an amendment to keep the House in session throughout the year with intervals of not more than three months in between. HV Kamath was of the view that parliament must meet at least thrice a year and for long periods. It was felt that this was commensurate with the increased responsibility and membership of parliament post-Independence.

Dr BR Ambedkar did not concede to these suggestions, stating that the Constitution allowed the legislature to meet as frequently as it is needed. There was no cap on the maximum number of sittings or sessions, according to him. In fact, his fear was that "the sessions of parliament would be so frequent and so lengthy that the

members of the legislature would probably themselves get tired of the sessions."

The great Dr. Ambedkar would surely not have taken kindly to what is happening in 'New India'(!). From an average of 120 sittings annually between 1950-1970, the Lok Sabha now has just 68 sittings per year on average. The last time Rajya Sabha sat for 100 days per year was way back in 1974. In the last decade, the sittings per year for the Council of States has come down to 63 days. From 2014 it has reached disturbing levels.

Here is a nugget. The need for a fixed schedule for parliament was felt as early as 1955, when the General Purposes Committee of the Lok Sabha recommended a fixed time table for the three sessions - Budget Session (1 February to 7 May), Autumn Session (15 July to 15 September), and Winter Session (5 November or the fourth day after Diwali, whichever is later, upto 22 December). This recommendation was accepted by the then Cabinet, and yet the time-table is blatantly ignored.

While researching this piece, I came across the minutes from a meeting held in 2001. The All India Conference of Presiding Officers, Chief Ministers, Ministers of Parliamentary Affairs, Leaders and Whips of Parties was

convened in the Central Hall of Parliament. The Conference adopted a resolution urging mandatory sittings for Legislatures - 110 days for parliament and 90 and 50 days for Legislatures for big and small states, respectively. But who cares?

In 2019, I introduced a Private Member's Bill to this effect. The Bill proposes to amend the Constitution to provide a fixed calendar for the three sessions of parliament and a minimum 100 days of sittings a year for each House. This will ensure that the Union Government cannot evade the accountability of the legislature by delaying the commencement of a session. It will also allow Members of parliament to plan their parliamentary agenda around the fixed schedule to take full advantage of every mechanism of parliamentary oversight and law-making.

The healthy functioning of a representative democracy requires regular parliamentary engagement on issues of public importance. It is time the Union Government relooks at the proposal to have a fixed schedule and a mandatory minimum number of sittings for parliament.

Why would India ever want a parliament session being the interval between...

Rahul Gandhi Fumbles With Savarkar Remark But Yatra Is Needed

There is no doubt or confusion on the point. More than a hundred years ago, Savarkar did send several letters to the British asking for mercy. On this the historical record is clear and unambiguous. On the other hand, Savarkar's suffering and daring for Indian independence are also facts of history that should be recognized, including by those disagreeing with some of his core ideas.

In any case, why are we debating a hundred-year-old correspondence? What's happening before our eyes in the India of 2022 is infinitely more pertinent. Will India remain a democracy with equal rights for all, as assured by the Constitution? Or will the drive to divide India's population by religion and impose a majoritarian hierarchy succeed?

Any discussion of this live issue must take into account Savarkar's well-known and emphatic view that since Muslims and Christians subscribe to faiths originating outside India, they cannot be accepted as loyal Indians. It is this view of Savarkar that becomes a weapon in the project to humiliate India's Muslims and Christians. It also becomes a legitimate issue for debate. Also relevant to current discussions is Savarkar's insistence, first articulated in 1937 if not earlier (while the Brits were ruling an undivided India), that the country's Hindus and Muslims constitute two distinct and different nations. Influential Muslims in that undivided India expressed similar views,

and in 1940 the Muslim League, led by Jinnah, asked for the separation of Muslim-majority areas from India.

After the 1947 Partition, even as Pakistan moved in the direction of an Islamic state, the leaders and people of the India that remained rejected the two-nation theory. Under Ambedkar's leadership, a Constitution of equal rights was produced. Despite the country's overwhelming Hindu majority, it became possible for a Christian girl, or a Buddhist, Sikh, Jewish or Muslim girl, to dream of becoming India's President or Prime Minister. In practice, too, free India was led after Independence not merely by remarkable Hindu figures but also by brilliant Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis and Jews. In Pakistan too, amazing people like Abdul Ghaffar Khan kept alive the notion of equality and of partnership across religious boundaries. Although majoritarian hierarchy has staged a strong comeback in India and elsewhere, the world of 2022 is very different from the world that shaped the thinking of people like Savarkar. No one in today's UK has been heard arguing that since Rishi Sunak subscribes to a faith that originated outside the British Isles, he cannot be a loyal Brit. Sunak is no startling exception. Other Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims, and Christians from India have been elected to crucial positions in the U.S., Canada, Britain, Ireland, Portugal, Australia and elsewhere, countries far from the land where their faith originated. We can be

sure that a Savarkar growing up in today's world would reconsider his theory of loyalty.

It is noteworthy, too, that as Prime Minister Modi assumes the G-20 chairmanship, he underlines that across the world we are "One Earth, One Family, One Future." The words "One Family," are worth lingering with. Nonetheless, majoritarian hierarchy attracts passionate followers in India (and elsewhere). Since many see Savarkar as an ideological parent of any Hindu Rashtra, it should not be surprising if champions or opponents of India as a Hindu state bring up his name. It is in this context that we should place the current controversy regarding Rahul Gandhi's remark during his Bharat Jodo Yatra about Savarkar humbling himself before India's British rulers.

The remark was avoidable. Many in Maharashtra and elsewhere honour Savarkar's memory, including, crucially, Uddhav Thackeray, the Shiv Sena leader who, until the other day, was heading the Maharashtra government of which the Congress was a part.

Impolitic Rahul Gandhi's remark might have been, but perhaps it is impossible for one who says he wants to bring all Indians together on the basis of equality and mutual respect not to question the notion, associated with Savarkar, of majoritarian supremacy.

The political outcome of Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra is hard to predict. But already the Yatra seems to have

impacted the Indian mind in a significant way. Its inclusiveness (every sort of Indian seems to have joined the Yatra) offers a living and walking demonstration that all Indians, poor or rich, despised or honoured, are linked to one another and need one another. And the Yatra seems to be providing evidence that people who believe in everyone's dignity, who reject hierarchy and supremacy, who want to reach out to all their compatriots on India's good earth, will find comrades and fellow marchers.

Also underscored by the Yatra, however, is the troubling fact that physically coming together across religious divides has become rarer in our land in recent years. Covid was a new hurdle but not the only one. Even ardent champions of human rights do not mix regularly with people of another religion. One hopes that the Yatra will trigger other inclusive actions in locations across the land.

To return to Rahul Gandhi, it has to be acknowledged that until the Bharat Jodo Yatra, not many public figures were willing to mount a firm challenge to majoritarian hierarchy. Rahul Gandhi has shown his willingness to do so. He has also tested with apparent success his belief that the bulk of the Indian people want equality and mutual respect, not a high-and-low nation.

We may fault Rahul for a needless remark. But we should recognize his bold, arduous, and much-needed initiative.

Death toll in Indonesia quake rises to 162

The US Geological Survey said the magnitude 5.6 quake was centered in the Cianjur region in West Java province at a depth of 10 kilometers (6.2 miles)

The death toll from a 5.6-magnitude earthquake in Indonesia on Monday has risen to 162 with hundreds injured and over 13,000 displaced, local media Kompas.com and Detik.com reported, citing West Java governor Ridwan Kamil. The latest data from Indonesia's disaster mitigation agency had shown 62 killed in the quake.

Emergency workers were treating the injured on stretchers outside main hospitals, on terraces and in parking lots. Many included children, some of whom were given oxygen masks, IV lines and were being resuscitated.

Residents, some crying with children in their arms, fled damaged homes after the magnitude 5.6 quake shook the Cianjur region in West Java province in late afternoon, at a depth of 10 kilometers (6.2 miles). It also caused panic in the greater Jakarta area, where high-rises swayed and some were evacuated. Rescue teams and civilians in Cianjur were looking for others who may have been buried in the debris of collapsed brick houses.



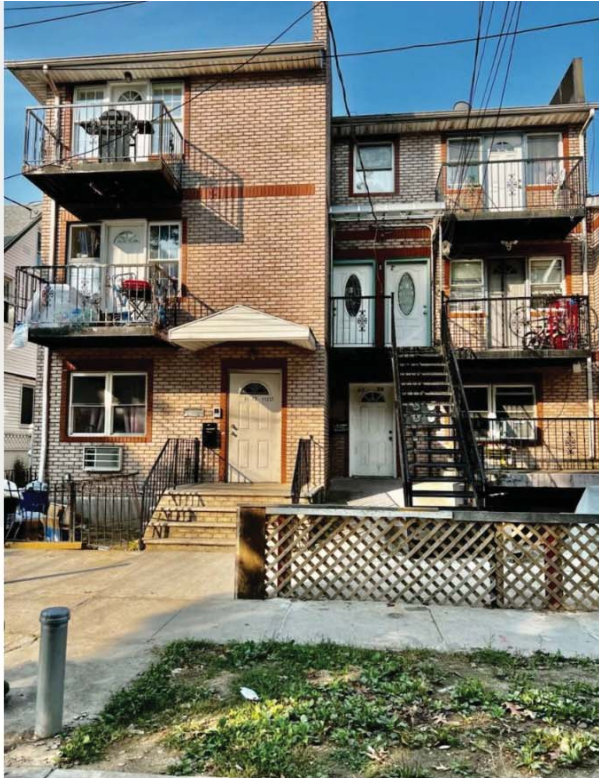
The quake was powerful enough to bring down walls, chunks of concrete and roof tiles, some of which landed inside bedrooms.

"The quake felt so strong. My colleagues and I decided to get out of our office on the ninth floor using the emergency stairs," said Vidi Primadhania, an employee in South Jakarta. Herman Suherman, the head of Cianjur regency, said the death toll

reached 56 as of Monday evening.

Around 700 were injured, said National Disaster Mitigation Agency chief Suharyanto said. Several landslides were reported around Cianjur. Among the dozens of buildings that were damaged was an Islamic boarding school, a hospital and other public facilities, the agency said. Information was still being collected about the extent of casualties and damage.

Some victims and survivors were being taken to the government hospital in Cianjur, where emergency tents were erected and workers treated the injured. Indonesia's Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysical Agency recorded at least 25 aftershocks. Earthquakes occur frequently across the sprawling archipelago nation, but it is uncommon for them to be felt in Jakarta. The country of more than 270 million people is frequently struck by earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and tsunamis because of its location on the "Ring of Fire," an arc of volcanoes and fault lines in the Pacific Basin. In February, a magnitude 6.2 earthquake killed at least 25 people and injured more than 460 in West Sumatra province. In January 2021, a magnitude 6.2 earthquake killed more than 100 people and injured nearly 6,500 in West Sulawesi province. A powerful Indian Ocean quake and tsunami in 2004 killed nearly 230,000 people in a dozen countries, most of them in Indonesia.



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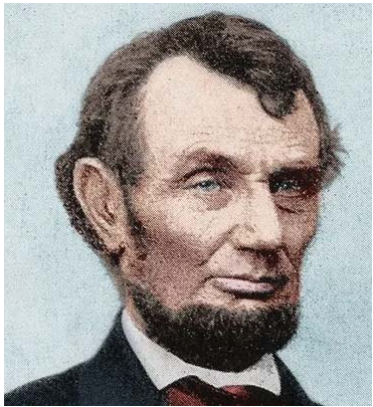


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On this day in history, Nov. 21, 1864, Abraham Lincoln 'pens' letter to Mrs. Bixby

The Bixby Letter, while controversial, is still cherished as one of the best-written letters in American history



(News Agency) President Lincoln supposedly sent his sincerest condolences to a grieving mother in the historic Bixby Letter on this day in history, Nov. 21, 1864. In the fall of 1864, Gov. John A. Andrew of Massachusetts sent a request to then-President Lincoln asking him to send his regards to Mrs. Lydia Bixby.

Bixby of Boston was believed to have lost her five sons during the Civil War, according to Abraham Lincoln Online. Lincoln accepted the request. And as the story goes, he penned a letter to the grieving mother. The letter was printed and distributed by the Boston Evening Transcript. It was soon cherished as "one of the best letters written in the history of the English language," according to a Time report. Among the praises it received: American poet and biographer Carl Sandburg called it "a piece of the American Bible" that "more darkly than the Gettysburg speech ... wove its awful implication that human freedom so often was paid for with agony." But the letter is not without

controversy. The original copy was allegedly destroyed by either the newspaper's editor or by Mrs. Bixby herself, who — as a sympathizer of the Confederacy — may have disliked Lincoln. Bixby's great-grandchildren recalled this as Bixby's political stance, according to the New England Historical Society. "I was advised by my father that my great-grandmother was an ardent southern sympathizer," Bixby's great-grandson said, according to the society. "And when she received the letter, she destroyed it in anger ... shortly after receipt without realizing its value." It was later revealed that Bixby lost not five but two of her sons,

Charles and Oliver, in battle, according to the New England Historical Society. Of the three others, the third son, Edward, reportedly deserted the Army; the fourth son, George, either deserted the Army or died as a prisoner of war; and the fifth son, Henry, was honorably discharged.

Many scholars believe that one of Lincoln's White House secretaries, John Hay, was the one who put pen to paper. The letter's popularity, however, was revived by the 1998 Steven Spielberg film "Saving Private Ryan," which the letter reportedly inspired. Actor Harve Presnell, who played Gen. Marshall in the film, recites the letter in an emotional cinematic

moment. The letter has continued to be used to honor those who have sacrificed their lives for America. A passage from the letter — "the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom" — is etched into stone at the base of the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Hawaii. On the 10th anniversary of the September 11 terrorist attacks, former President George W. Bush read the Bixby Letter during a memorial service at Ground Zero. In 2017, a team of forensic linguistics researchers used a tracing method that revealed 90% of the letter was identified as Hay's writing, according to

Outlaw billionaires to save democracy: MSNBC analyst

MSNBC's Anand Giridharadas previously referred to Twitter CEO Elon Musk as a 'sociopath'



(News Agency) MSNBC analyst Anand Giridharadas claimed that billionaires are "inconsistent" with democracy and could be outlawed while appearing on Monday's "Morning Joe."

Giridharadas discussed Twitter CEO Elon Musk's latest policy changes to the social media site, including firing several employees and allowing former President Trump's account to be reinstated. Giridharadas penned an opinion piece for the New York Times on Saturday that argued billionaires like Musk "made a strong case for abolishing themselves."

He further made his case on the MSNBC program by insisting that billionaires only exist in the U.S. "at our collective pleasure," suggesting it is a "policy choice" to "allow" the accumulation of such wealth.

"I think something we often forget as Americans is that billionaires exist as a class of people who have that much money at our collective pleasure, right? It is a policy choice to allow some

people to accumulate that much money, hundreds of billions of dollars, in the case of people in the United States before everybody has the chance to live with dignity, right? Other countries make that choice very differently. We have chosen historically to heavily prioritize having billionaires over having dignity for all people. And that's a choice, I would just start by saying that we could make differently in the future," Giridharadas said. He added, "And so I wrote the piece to try to remind people of that choice we have. And last week was remarkable. I mean, I've written about billionaires for years and talked about these issues on this show. But it was hard to imagine a week when there was so many spectacular reminders of the way in which this kind of billionaire classes is inconsistent with democracy as we live it."

He reiterated, "Their existence as billionaires is sort of antithetical to our flourishing as a democracy."

His New York Times piece more specifically called for policies that could tax or limit billionaires from existing in the first place. "One after another, four of our best-known billionaires laid waste to the image of benevolent saviors carefully cultivated by their class," he wrote about Musk, Trump, Jeff Bezos and Sam Bankman-Fried.

"It is a commendable sacrifice on their part, because billionaires, remember, exist at our collective pleasure. If enough of us decided to, we could enact labor, tax,

antitrust and regulatory policies to make it hard for anyone to amass that much wealth while so many beg for scraps. It is not only the vast political power of billionaires that keeps us keeping them around, it's also the popular embrace of certain myths — about the generosity, the genius, the renegade spirit, the above-it-ness of billionaires, to name a few," he wrote. Giridharadas has attacked Musk for his Twitter purchase since April. He had previously referred to Musk as a

"sociopath," claiming the CEO is "nostalgic" for apartheid South Africa and wants to limit nonwhite users. He continued on Monday to insult Musk's leadership by attacking it as a "sausage fest." "He's gutted the company. Photos of him from the company at a so-called code meeting show that there's basically like no women left working around him. It's just a big sausage fest in there working — you know, in the team that he has remaining around him," Giridharadas said.



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Meet the American who gave the nation our Thanksgiving origin story: Pilgrim Edward Winslow

Young Mayflower passenger shaped image of Pilgrims and offered only contemporary account of first Thanksgiving



(SAI Bureau) It is the first and greatest American adventure story. A small band of Christian devotees, persecuted in their homeland, sought refuge in a forbidden wilderness across the vast ocean aboard a leaky ship in the autumn of 1620. Against all odds, following near death at sea, amid privation, disease and frightening loss of life, they planted the seeds of a daring new society.

Within a few generations what's now Plymouth, Massachusetts, from a

contemporary, boots-on-the-ground, first-person source comes from one man. His name is Edward Winslow. "He's a major figure in the Pilgrim story," Tom Begley, director of collections at Plimoth Patuxet Museums (known until 2020 as Plimoth Plantation), told Fox News Digital. "He had the foresight to write down their story and share it with others." Winslow wrote a lengthy letter to a friend back in England that has gone down in history as "Mourt's Relation."

It is the only account, written as it happened, of the Pilgrims' first year in Plymouth. It is still in print, available on Amazon or at your local bookstore.

"Mourt's Relation" includes Winslow's brief, undated description of a three-day celebration in the autumn of 1621, after "our harvest being gotten in," during which the

English settlers and a much larger group of Wampanoag friends feast on fowl and deer. It is the first Thanksgiving. Winslow's account is the only version of the origin story of our national holiday written by Somebody Who Was There. Winslow made many other contributions to the Pilgrim narrative.

He signed the Mayflower Compact, the first self-governing covenant among New World settlers, as the ship floated in Cape Cod Bay on Nov. 11, 1620. He was the first Pilgrim to meet Wampanoag chief Ousamequin, better known in history as Massasoit. Winslow informed Massasoit that his people desired to have peace with him and engage in trading," James and Patricia Scott Deetz wrote in their 2000 history, "The Times of Their Lives: Life, Love and Death in Plymouth Colony."

The two men bridged a cross-cultural relationship that benefited both sides for several decades before the outbreak of King Phillip's War in 1675. Winslow also gives us our only look at the face of an actual Pilgrim. He sat for a portrait in London in 1651 after returning to England to serve its government under Protestant Parliamentarian Oliver Cromwell following the English Civil War. All other Pilgrim paintings and portraits were imagined after their time on Earth. "History records no nobler venture for faith and freedom than that of this Pilgrim band," reads the tomb on a hill overlooking Plymouth Harbor today. It's the site where the settlers buried their many dead that first winter in the New World. Winslow gave future generations our eyewitness account of that noble venture.

Historic snowstorm drops 80 inches in Buffalo area as western New York digs out

The highest total from the storm was measured in Orchard Park, New York, where 80 inches of snow piled up. The official measurement at the Buffalo Niagara International Airport was a total of 36.7 inches, which ranked as Buffalo's 5th-highest 3-day snowfall on record

(SAI Bureau) A historic lake-effect snowstorm that buried western New York, including the Buffalo metro area, finally came to an end Monday after leaving three dead and dropping up to 80 inches of snow in four days.

Bands of heavy snow off lakes Erie and Ontario produced snowfall rates between 3 and 6 inches per hour and lots of thundersnow from Thursday through Sunday, leaving most towns measuring their snow in feet rather than inches. Many vehicles attempting to drive around the region were reported to get stuck because of impassable roads.

Unofficially, 80 inches (more than 6.5 feet) of snow buried the Buffalo Southtown of Orchard Park, New York, where the Buffalo Bills were originally scheduled to host the Cleveland Browns at Highmark Stadium on Sunday, Nov. 20. However, the game was moved to Ford Field in Detroit due to "public safety concerns and out of an abundance of caution in light of the ongoing weather emergency in western New York," the Bills said.

Only 15 miles to the north of Orchard Park, the official snowfall measurement for Buffalo, taken at Buffalo Niagara

International Airport, will go into the record books as 36.7 inches.

A record daily snowfall for Nov. 19 was achieved on Saturday when 21.5 inches piled up in Buffalo, smashing the previous record for the date of 7.6 inches.

However, the Buffalo Southtowns were clobbered, with several towns picking up 50 inches or more of snow, including Eden (50 inches), Blasdell (71 inches), Hamburg (71 inches), Athol Springs (76 inches) and, of course, Orchard Park coming in on top at 80 inches.

Ahead of the historic snowstorm, New York Gov. Kathy Hochul declared a state of emergency for the Buffalo and Watertown areas because of the expected feet of snow. A state of emergency had also been declared for Erie County, New York, home to the city of Buffalo. Southern portions of the city of Buffalo were placed under a travel ban, while the remainder of the city was under a travel advisory.

On Monday, Nov. 21, President Joe Biden and FEMA approved Hochul's

request for a federal Emergency Declaration for 11 counties in western and northern New York. Hochul said the Emergency Declaration would provide immediate federal funding to the impacted counties to support ongoing response and rescue

operations. At least three deaths were attributed to the snowstorm by an Erie County official. The official said three residents passed away after suffering cardiac issues while trying to remove the snow and cautioned that the snow was heavy and could be dangerous. Medical experts say shoveling heavy snow can be detrimental to one's health. A study by the American Journal of Emergency Medicine found that more than 11,000 people seek medical attention for injuries

associated with removing snow each year. As the storm got underway Thursday evening, Nov. 17, all commercial traffic was banned along a 132-mile stretch of the New York State Thruway (Interstate 90) from Rochester, New York, to the Pennsylvania border. The Thruway was reopened to all traffic in both directions on Sunday morning, Nov. 20, but commercial speed restrictions remained in effect throughout the day. The Niagara Thruway (Interstate 190) also reopened on Sunday, Nov. 20, after being closed since the beginning of the storm, but drivers were urged to use caution when traveling. Because of the severity of the historic storm, several school districts announced they would remain closed through at least Monday, Nov. 21, while crews continued to remove snow from roads across the region. Buffalo Public Schools was closed on Nov. 21 and did not hold any remote classes. The Frontier Central School District was also closed on Nov. 21. In addition, Orchard Park Central School District and the Hamburg Central School District announced they would remain closed through Tuesday, Nov. 22.



Donald Trump Is (Still) President of White America

Many of these Republicans don't fit the typical profile of an extremist, at least not on the surface. "Those committing far-right violence — particularly planned violence rather than spontaneous hate crimes — are older and more established than the typical terrorist and violent criminal," she writes. "They often hold jobs, are married and have children. Those who attend church or belong to community groups are more likely to hold violent, conspiratorial beliefs. They are not isolated 'lone wolves,' they are part of a focused community that echoes their ideas." Kleinfeld says the violence-prone target white women (like Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer or Nancy Pelosi) as much as people of color, and the two expressions of violence seem to go hand-in-hand. Overall, she says, "the bedrock idea uniting right-wing communities who condone violence is that white Christian men in the United States are under cultural and demographic threat and require defending — and that it is the Republican Party and Donald Trump, in particular, who will safeguard their way of life." Case in point: talk about civil war rose exponentially — by nearly 3,000 percent — after the Justice Department's search of Mar-a-Lago. The "focused community" of violent white supremacists is also operating in contrast to the other focused white community that broadly believes in the opposite. This white community of non-believers poses as much of an existential threat to "their way of life" as Black people, women, LGBTQ folks, immigrants and assorted Others. In one of the most indelible moments captured on video during the Capitol riots, white rioters surrounded and screamed "fucking n-----r" at a Black cop. But the crowd called for the hanging of a white official, Vice President Mike Pence. Trump's election manifested many things, but most significant was how it suddenly laid bare internal divisions among white people. Take Wyoming Congresswoman and committee co-chair Liz Cheney. Cheney's total expulsion from the Republican fold is the clearest proof yet that it is white supremacy driving the party. Cheney had been wildly popular in her state and a near-total Trump ally. Until the insurrection. Her denouncement of that event wound up being the sole thing that mattered to her once-adoring public; the fact she still represented their very conservative views on abortion, taxes and a slew of other bread-and-butter issues didn't make a dent. Cheney's people were voting not policy but identity, something white people have done for years while progressive thinkers like Thomas Frank puzzle over what's the matter with Kansas. In Isabel Wilkerson's 2020 book *Caste*, Wilkerson describes a conversation between herself and civil rights historian Taylor Branch about the racial struggle that continues to bedevil the country, and how to resolve it. "So the real question would be," Branch says, "if you asked people to choose between democracy or whiteness, how many would choose whiteness?" Wilkerson says they both "let the question hang in the air, because neither one of us wanted to hazard a guess at that one." Nearly three years later we don't have to guess — roughly 41 percent have chosen the latter, according to FiveThirtyEight's polling of support for Trump.

Stolen jewels, several murders, and a missing diamond: What soured Saudi-Thai ties 30 years ago

while some he sold off to a gem dealer in Bangkok at a fraction of their value. However, Saudi officials have claimed that many of the recovered jewels were fake. Amidst all this, the investigations took a bloody turn with a series of murders in Thailand. Three Saudi diplomats were killed by gunmen in Bangkok in February 1990. Weeks later, a businessman close to the Saudi royal family, who had travelled to Bangkok to investigate on his own, went missing, and was presumed to have been murdered.

And then began the souring of ties as Saudi Arabia downgraded its relations with Thailand, resulting in loss of jobs for thousands of Thai migrant workers. Saudi Arabia stopped issuing work visas for Thais and discouraged its own citizens from visiting Bangkok. Diplomatic missions were downgraded to the *chargé d'affaires* level. Meanwhile, it was not just the Saudi nationals who were murdered

following the theft. Amid pressure from Saudi Arabia, investigations by the Thai authorities revealed the involvement of then police chief Chalor Kerdthes in the saga. Chalor, who was given the responsibility of retrieving the stolen loot, was found to have embezzled the confiscated jewellery, extorted the Bangkok gem dealer who brought the jewels from Kiangkrai, and killed the dealer's wife and son in 1994. Lieutenant-General Chalor was sentenced to death by the Supreme Court of Thailand, but ended up serving 20 years in prison.

Present Saudi-Thailand relations During his visit in January, Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-ocha held talks with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and also expressed "sincere regret over the tragic events in Thailand between 1989 and

1990". The high-level meeting also saw the two leaders agreeing on the appointment of ambassadors "in the near future" and to strengthen economic and trade relations.

As the two countries turned a new page in their relationship, Saudi restarted direct flights to Thailand in February. Since January, many friendly exchanges have taken place between the two countries — one being an agreement between state-owned energy firms Saudi Aramco and Thailand's PTT for cooperation in carbon capture and crude oil sourcing.

In October, Thailand hosted the controversial Saudi-backed circuit, LIV Golf Invitational. In November, Saudi Investment Minister Khalid al-Falih attended a business forum in Bangkok meeting agriculture firms.

Brussels' uphill battle to confiscate Russian assets

As for assets of Russian-owned state enterprises, the paper notes that these wouldn't be "in principle" covered by such convention, but grabbing them may raise problems linked to the confiscation of private assets, "in addition to the need to demonstrate a sufficient connection to the Russian state." The EU is also mulling an "exit tax" on the assets or proceeds from assets of sanctioned individuals that want to transfer their property out of the EU. This could run into legal problems of its own, as it would target a specific group of individuals — which runs counter to non-discrimination provisions in international law — and they in turn could invoke the human right to property as a defence. To Schill's knowledge, there is no recent and valid precedent for any of these options. "The EU and member states are trying to introduce new criminal law," he said.

— which led to the Capitol riot on January 6, 2021, and incendiary remarks by Trump using the very Twitter platform that Musk just allowed him back on. (Trump has never publicly accepted any responsibility for the attack.) Of course, there was the US Senate runoff in Georgia on January 5, 2021, where Democrats pulled a major upset by winning two races and thereby took control of the Senate for the first time since 2014. that takes us to this year's midterm debacle that saw every single election-denying candidate Trump backed for statewide office in battleground states losing. These losses weren't happenstance. Voters from Pennsylvania to Arizona sent a loud message that they rejected Trump's election-lying candidates.

The list of Team Trump losers even included Arizona gubernatorial candidate Kari Lake, known for her full embrace of the former President's election lies as well as her combative way with the media — which was noteworthy given that she had been a longtime local TV news anchor. But when on Team Trump you are required to mimic the supreme leader.

Worse for Trump is that his future is looking just as bad. His presidential announcement last week received vocal criticism

from a wide range of conservative media outlets.

But it was Trump's one-time backer Rupert Murdoch whose New York Post won the award for the most brutal/comedic trolling of Trump. First, the paper buried Trump's presidential announcement on Page 26 of the paper with headline, "Been there, Don that." Then it featured an article mocking Trump with lines such as, "With just 720 days to go before the next election, a Florida retiree made the surprise announcement that he was running for president." And it gets uglier for Trump from there. A Marist poll released Friday asked Republican and Republican-leaning independent voters who would be the best candidate to serve as the GOP presidential nominee in 2024. A paltry 35% said Trump would be that person. Add to that, 60% of Republican-leaning independent voters thought a candidate other than Trump would be a more viable option for the party in 2024. Oh, that has to hurt the thin-skinned, twice-impeached Trump.

Obviously, there's a long way to go to the first GOP presidential primaries in 2024, let alone the November 2024 election. But the way it looks, Trump should bask in the glow of winning the Twitter poll, given that it might just be his last "election" victory.

This 'poll denier' is suspicious of Twitter's reinstatement of Trump

The Debilitating and Potentially Lethal Effect of Stress On Our Lives

Stress, as a factor impacting health, has been around for long in our lexicon. But it was till recently seen only as a minor player among an array of more ominous physiological factors that caused major illnesses. That perception has changed, and quite radically, with new scientific studies showing that stress could be the mother of all ailments. It is now seen as a fundamental disorder of our mental and physical metabolism that has a debilitating and potentially lethal effect—as a causative factor for heart attacks, hypertension, cancer, brain stroke, diabetes, liver cirrhosis, obesity, osteoporosis, infertility, depression and even suicide. Indeed, the World Health Organization has responded to this by declaring stress to be the “health epidemic of the 21st century”.

In the US and other advanced nations, stress has already been recognised as a major disorder. The American Institute of Stress recently estimated that about 75-90 per cent of all doctor visits are for stress-related problems. India, too, is now falling victim to this silent killer. A December 2020 study of 10,000 Indians conducted by The Centre of Healing in Delhi found that 74 per cent Indians suffered from stress, while 88 per cent reported anxiety—a related effect with many overlaps. The data also showed that nearly 70 per cent stress therapists documented an increase in the number of patient visits; 55 per cent said there had been an increase in first-time clients after the Covid-19 pandemic. “The pandemic has increased stress and we are finding that stress has a greater impact on health than previously seen,” says Dr Ashok Seth, chairman, Fortis Escorts Heart Institute. “There is an uptick in sudden heart attacks, for example, with

stress being a significant contributing factor.” Another study of 41,600 professionals in 13 countries by Oracle and Workplace Intelligence in October 2021 found Indians to be the most stressed at the workplace—with 91 per cent of the 1,100 respondents saying they were highly stressed out by work-life situations compared to a global average of 80 per cent.

How did we go from seeing stress as an occasional outbreak of anxiety or even panic to thinking of it as a fundamental and structural factor in our lives, colouring everything, and contributing to all manner of ailments? It's quite simply the more microscopic understanding of bodily processes that modern biological sciences continue to grant to us. Senior Associate Editor Sonali Acharjee, who wrote this week's cover story, spoke to a range of researchers and therapists to understand the phenomenon to its fullest extent. It meant taking a deep dive into the science behind how our body handles stress. The normal functioning of stress is, in fact, what allows us to survive and thrive. Every perception of a threat or an impending adverse event is meant to trigger what is called a fight-or-flight syndrome. It sets off a chain of neural-hormonal reactions that gives us a bionic burst of energy, heightened pulse, sweating, and the

muscles involved in running getting into a hyperactive zone to enable us to meet the challenge. The alarm is only one end of its typical functional spectrum. Stress also allows us to respond positively to challenges by being alert, focused and thus productive—a virtuous territory known as ‘eustress’.

Some obvious stressful situations are losing a loved one, disease, natural calamities, war or any conflict that poses a consistently clear and present danger to life. However, the problem is that contemporary life has added many more triggers to the usual ones. Some may seem mundane: the everyday stress of commuting on crowded trains or navigating peak-hour jams, including the increasing noise pollution. Then there is economic stress, including job insecurity, long working hours, layoffs, and paying off financial debt. Ever so often, these triggers hunt in packs and keep individuals on edge all the time, leading to what is known as chronic stress.

Researchers worldwide, including in India, have begun to understand why chronic stress is so harmful. The endocrine system controls the physical impact of stress, particularly the hypothalamus-pituitary-adrenal axis in our body. When the brain senses a threat, it stimulates the hypothalamus to secrete hormones acting like chemical

messengers to activate the adrenal glands above our kidneys. The adrenal glands respond by releasing the stress hormone—cortisol—which then powers up our body's in-built flight-or-flight response. After the threat is over, its levels are meant to drop in the bloodstream.

In normal circumstances, this process is responsible for protecting our bodies against acute stressful situations. But under prolonged stress, the natural thermostat that turns off the secretion of cortisol malfunctions and our body remains heated up with chemicals to combat everyday stress. “When cortisol was first discovered, it was a breakthrough,” says Delhi-based neurologist Dr P.N. Renjen. “But we soon realised steroids are a double-edged sword. If you have too much of them in your body, instead of protecting you, they start to do the opposite because they become inflammatory when given in excess. Too much cortisol is now seen as a precursor to several neurological diseases, among other ailments.” Fortunately, new research is also shedding fresh light on how to manage stress. No longer are medicines and therapy the only, or the first, answer. From crystal healing to meditation, pranayama to walking, building a positive social network to journal-keeping, gardening to doing jigsaw puzzles—doctors now advise patients on various innovative ways to reduce stress and relax. All these are designed to make individuals look for solutions rather than get locked into an automated stress response when confronted with challenges. Also in our cover story are some of these tips on managing stress and leading a healthy life. Read and Relax.

(By India Today Editor-in-Chief Aroon Purie)



Water Wonder: Pangeos, the proposed floating city which could become the world's largest boat

You've heard of yachts and super-yachts, but have you heard of terayachts? That's the latest concept from Italian design house Lazzarini, which unveiled its design for Pangeos, a floating city that could become the world's largest boat. As per CNN, the proposed floating city, shaped like a tera-turtle, has been named after the supercontinent Pangea. The designers say Pangeos, which will be 1,800 feet long, and 2,000 feet wide, will cost around \$8 billion to construct. The 'floating city' will have hotels, shopping malls, parks and even ports for smaller ships and aircraft. As per Interesting Engineering.com, its en-

trance will extend into a villa and further lead to private houses, buildings, and rooftop terraces. There will even be a zone made for various flying vehicles on the upper shell of the ship. The lower area of the ship will house 30,000 cells or cluster compartments. Composed mainly of steel, it is designed to be unsinkable, as per the website. The ship's wings will be designed to collect energy from the sea's waves – letting Pangeos to cruise perpetually without emitting greenhouse gases.

The rooftop area will also be equipped with several solar panels ca-

pable of providing additional clean energy to power the terayacht. As per Stuff.co.NZ, the city, which will have a capacity of 60,000 people, will be built after a NFT-related crowdfunding period. A virtual property as NFT with cryptocurrency is available – this will act as a deposit for a physical property if Pangeos indeed comes to fruition. Construction will take eight years and a colossal shipyard will need to be created specifically for the project. Its huge hull will be composed of nine different bows and subdivided into several blocks.

It will be powered by nine high temperature superconductor engines –

each of them fully electric motor capable of 16,800hp and powered by various onboard energy sources. “Pushed from a jet drive transmission, the tera-structure will be able to cruise at a speed of five knots. While sailing, the large wings will gain energy from the breaking of the waves and Pangeos will cruise perpetually without emissions around the planet Earth seas. Further, the rooftop area is lined with solar panels, which provide part of the necessary clean energy to power the terayacht,” the designers told the website. The Lazzarini Design Studio previously unveiled the swan-shaped megayacht and The Shape superyacht.

Beer ban, radical sermons and more: The influence of Islam on the Qatar World Cup



Islam has come into focus this year as Qatar hosts FIFA World Cup. As Qatar hosts the 2022 FIFA World Cup, the Muslim nation has come under scrutiny for its various restrictions and laws. How religion has grabbed the spotlight amid the football tournament can also be seen after reports of Zakir Naik being in the country emerged.

The controversial Islamic preacher, who is wanted in India over allegations of terror-related activities and hate speeches, is reportedly in Qatar to give sermons on Islam. Faisal Alhajri, a presenter at the Qatari state-owned sports channel Alkass, announced on Twitter on Saturday (19 November), that Naik is "present in Qatar during the World Cup and will give many religious lectures throughout the tournament."

Naik, who has been living in exile in Malaysia, is also accused of acquiring \$28 million worth of "criminal assets" to buy properties in India. His Islamic Research Foundation was banned by New Delhi for "promoting or attempting to promote feelings of enmity, hatred, or ill-will between different religious communities and groups", as per India Today. Naik's presence in Qatar may sour relations between New Delhi and Doha. Earlier, the diplomatic ties between the two nations were affected in June over now-former BJP leader Nupur Sharma's comments against the Prophet Muhammad.

Besides Naik preaching religion, in what other ways has Islam affected the FIFA World Cup in Qatar? We explain.

Beer ban

In a U-turn, Qatar banned the sale of beer at World Cup stadiums on Friday much to the discontentment of football fans.

The alcohol will be served at the FIFA Fan Festival, one of the only spots where fans can get beer outside of upscale hotel bars, reports Associated Press (AP). Meanwhile, non-alcoholic beverages like Budweiser Zero will continue to be sold at the eight stadiums and fan villages.

Notably, the host nation had earlier agreed to FIFA's requirements of selling alcohol in stadiums, according to AP.

Besides luxury hotels, alcohol will be served at the FIFA Fan Festival in Qatar. AP

Following the ban, fans have been rushing to bars and nightclubs in Doha, some rare places where alcohol is allowed. Qatar permits the sale of alcohol at hotel restaurants and bars, however, it is illegal to consume it in general public places.

BOOM notes that the country charges a 100 per cent tax on alcohol that it levies on "health-damaging" goods.

'Modest' clothing

Being a conservative country, the visiting fans have been urged to "respect the culture". But no one will be "detained or barred" from the matches over their clothes, reports AP.

In a section on cultural awareness in its guide for fans, the local organizing committee said, "People can generally wear their clothing of choice. Shoulders and knees should be covered when visiting public places like museums and other government buildings".

Rothna Begum, a senior re-

searcher at Human Rights Watch, told AP, "There isn't anyone is going to go around arresting you for this because there isn't an official dress code".

"There isn't a compulsory dress code and you can't get sanctioned for it. It's just a social restriction, a social tradition," Begum added.

Women in Qatar usually wear a headscarf (hijab) and loose cloak (abaya) in public places, while the men wear traditional long, loose white garments called thoub.

Homosexuality 'illegal'

In Qatar, homosexuality is considered 'illegal'. This has generated a lot of flak among activists as the country is hosting one of the biggest sporting events.

Although, Qatar has said "everyone is welcome" for the tournament, LGBTQ+ football fans are not so sure.

"I don't feel comfortable traveling out to Qatar and being in any way visible because if I'm visibly showing I'm an LGBT+ football fan, all I'm doing is drawing a target on the back of a local who is anything other than hostile towards me," Rob Sanderson, special projects officer of Pride in Football, told CNN.

Other restrictions

Like some other countries in the Middle East, Qatar has restrictions on the import and consumption of pork meat. Informing its citizens visiting the Muslim-majority country about the law, the UK Foreign Travel Advice government website said, "Importing drugs, alcohol, pornography, pork products and religious books and material into Qatar is illegal". Football fans have been asked to

adhere to certain norms while in Qatar. AP "Swearing and making rude gestures are considered obscene acts and offenders can be jailed and/or deported," the website adds. Unmarried couples cannot stay together in Qatar, notes the UK website. The US' Library of Congress, citing Qatari law, mentions that the country can penalise those engaging in "indecent acts and the act of sexual intercourse outside of marriage".

The punishment can include a fine or six months prison sentence for anyone found guilty of "immoral" actions or gestures in public to up to seven years imprisonment for having sex outside marriage, NPR cited the Library of Congress as saying.

Drugs are a strict no-no in Qatar. As per the UK government website, the use of, trafficking, smuggling and possession of drugs can attract heavy fines and even imprisonment.

Status of women

The World Cup in Qatar has also brought the freedom and rights of women to the fore. The country has given opportunities to women in politics, education and other fields. Last year, Qatar's emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani appointed women to two Cabinet posts, taking the cumulative tally to three female minis-

ters, which is the highest in the country's history, as per AP. Qatari women also hold other high-level positions. Sheikh Tamim had selected two women for the country's advisory Shura Council last year. However, the country often ranks at the bottom of the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report.

Rights groups have pointed out that the legal system in the country, which follows Islamic law or Shariah, "hinders women's advancement", reports AP.

Women under the age of 25 in Qatar have to secure a male guardian's permission to leave the country. Husbands and fathers can bar women from travelling. Single women who get pregnant face prosecution for indulging in sex without marriage, reports AP. Even though the law calls for the right to equal pay for Qatari women and men, it is not followed strictly. There is no law against gender discrimination in the workplace.

Women also need permission from a male guardian to work in the government and special institutions, reports AP. Women are also expected to obey their husbands and are considered legally in charge of the household. AP notes they can lose financial assistance if they defy their husbands.

(As reported by Firstpost.com)

Senators alarmed over potential Chinese drone spy threat

Hundreds of Chinese-manufactured drones have been detected in restricted airspace over Washington, D.C., in recent months, a trend that national security agencies fear could become a new means for foreign espionage.

The recreational drones made by Chinese company DJI, which are designed with "geofencing" restrictions to keep them out of sensitive locations, are being manipulated by users with simple workarounds to fly over no-go zones around the nation's capital. Federal officials and drone industry experts have delivered classified briefings to the Senate Homeland Security, Commerce and Intelligence committees on the development, three people privy to the meetings said. A spokesperson for the Intelligence Committee — which has been kept closely apprised of the counterintelligence risks — declined to comment on the briefings. The other two committees did not respond.

This story is based on interviews with seven government officials, lawmakers, congressional staffers and contractors. They were granted anonymity because they are not authorized to speak publicly about private and sometimes classified discussions involving government officials.

The officials say they do not believe the swarms are directed by the Chinese government. Yet the violations by users mark a new turn in the proliferation of relatively cheap but increasingly sophisticated drones that can be used for recreation and commerce. They also come as Congress debates extending current federal authorities and adopting new ones to track the aerial vehicles as potential security threats.

"This is part of a trend of commercial drones for potentially nefarious reasons," said Rachel Stohl, vice president of research programs at the Stimson Center think tank who closely tracks the global drone market. "We're seeing in conflict zones, in other theaters, the reliance and use of commercial drones." "These may be just innocent data collection — or really just looking around, seeing what's happening — and not in a systemized way," she added. "But the potential, of course, is that eventually they could be more dangerous."

It's unclear what, if anything, Congress is likely to do to address the threat. Several pieces

of legislation have been introduced, but most have not made it past the committee level. In addition, what limited authority exists for non-defense federal agencies to use counter-drone technology will soon expire unless lawmakers move to extend it. It's currently carried on the continuing resolution that funds the federal government expiring Dec. 16. And while officials believe Beijing is not overseeing the swarms, DJI has secured funding from investment entities owned by the Chinese government — a fact that DJI reportedly sought to conceal. And the ease with which recreational users can evade the flight restrictions means that their high-definition cameras or other sensors could also be hacked into for intelligence-gathering.

"Any technological product with origins in China or Chinese companies holds a real risk and potential of vulnerability that can be exploited both now and in a time of conflict," Sen. Marco Rubio, vice chair of the Intelligence Committee, said in an interview about the potential threats posed by foreign-made drones. "They're manufactured in China or manufactured by a Chinese company, but they'll put a sticker on it of some non-Chinese company that repackages it so you don't even know that you're buying it." "But anything that's technological has the capability of having embedded, in the software or in the actual hardware, vulnerabilities that can be exploited at any given moment," added Rubio (R-Fla.). DJI maintains that it has no control over what customers do once they purchase its products.

"Unfortunately, while DJI puts everything in place to identify and notify our customers about areas in which they can't fly, we can't control the end users' behavior," said Arianne Burrell, communications manager for DJI Technology, Inc.

"But we do everything from our end to ensure that they do follow the regulations that are set out by their localities," she added.

'Hacked or manipulated'

Chinese drone maker DJI is the world's largest manufacturer of personal and professional drones and its products account for the majority of recreational drones in the United States.

Government and outside security experts have expressed concerns about potential Chinese government ties to the drone

maker. The Pentagon banned the purchase of Chinese-made drones in 2017 and the Interior Department, which has the largest civilian drone fleet in the federal government, has banned their use except in emergencies. But thousands of federal, state and local law enforcement agencies still heavily rely on DJI drones, according to a 2020 study.

The study showed that public safety agencies in California, Texas, Illinois, Wisconsin and Florida have the greatest number of drones, the majority of which are DJI models.

All commercial drones, which use GPS for navigation, are designed so that they cannot operate within D.C.'s restricted airspace and come with instructions for users about the need to follow all such local regulations. But those restrictions can easily be bypassed.

"There's Youtube videos that could walk your grandparents through how to update the software on one of these drones to be non-detectable and to do a whole lot of other things — get rid of elevation ceilings, all kinds of stuff," said a government contractor who has helped to collect the data for federal authorities. "If you were to go buy a DJI drone at the store, it wouldn't fly over airports or specific cities because of a specific no-fly zone. So, anything that we see in DC that is a DJI-manufactured product has been hacked or manipulated to enable flight in these zones." The frequent violation of those regulations could offer an intelligence boon for malicious actors.

The contractor described the potential threat as akin to "an eight-year-old kid or an unsuspecting adult who got a DJI for Christmas and is unwittingly collecting data for somebody who could become a serious adversary." "A more sophisticated user can use a drone for industrial espionage or cyber-attacks. One could land a drone on your house and start capturing all the wireless information that's being broadcast out of your home," the contractor added. "Similarly, one could do that on a federal building, a power grid or other critical infrastructure. And the reality is, people on the tech side always said, 'look, at any point in time the Chinese can take control of a DJI that's flying in the air.'"

The U.S. government has accused DJI of having financial ties to the Chinese government and public records list Beijing-backed individuals among its investors. The Pentagon cited such links when blacklisting DJI drones. Burrell denied any financial ties to the Chinese government. "We are a private company. We don't take any money from the Chinese government," she said.

Burrell also said the company remains committed to following all U.S. laws and regulations. "DJI is active in ensuring that we should be at the forefront of regulations that are coming out about the drone industry," she said, "because we're really passionate about flight safety." The Federal Aviation Administration says more than 870,000 drones are registered in the United States — three times the number of piloted aircraft.

And it estimates that 2.3 million unmanned aerial systems — about 1.5 million recreational drones and model aircraft and 800,000 commercial drones — will be registered to fly in the United States by 2024.

Users are increasingly flying drones where they are not supposed to.

In July, Samantha Vinograd, acting assistant secretary of Homeland Security, told the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee that since 2018, the U.S. Secret Service has encountered "hundreds of drones" violating temporary flight restrictions meant to protect the president.

Vinograd also warned that commercially available drones can "be used by hostile foreign intelligence agencies or criminals to collect intelligence and enable espionage, steal sensitive technology and intellectual property, and conduct cyber-attacks against wireless devices or networks."

"The potential implications can be significant for sensitive U.S. facilities, the defense industrial base, technology firms, and others," she added.

"Most secure airspace in the world"

The appearance of so many Chinese-made drones in protected airspace over Washington presents a new challenge.

The data recently shared with Congress highlights more than 100 incursions in a recent 45-day period but the sources requested

that specific numbers, locations and frequency not be published for security reasons.

Still, that's far more than has been publicly acknowledged, such as an intrusion this summer that briefly halted flights into Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport. "There are a lot more drones flying in our airspace than you would expect," the contractor said.

But it's not simply the number of drones, which are also commonly reported in even higher numbers in metropolitan or recreational areas around the country.

"You'll see hundreds of them over that same time period but the biggest difference is obviously the national capital region is the most secure air space in the world," the contractor said. The Special Flight Rules Area around D.C. is a roughly 55-mile ring that begins at Reagan National, according to the FAA. Drone operators must obtain waivers from the FAA to fly inside the area.

The FAA maintains it is taking additional steps to detect drones and ensure they do not interfere with commercial aircraft or pose other safety hazards.

It adopted a "remote identification rule" last year that requires drones to be identifiable with a "digital license plate" that will help law enforcement agencies "find the control station when a drone appears to be flying in an unsafe manner or where it is not allowed to fly," the FAA said.

The FAA is also testing new technologies around airports to better detect drones that might pose safety risks.

The FAA, asked specifically about the rise in drone activity over sensitive federal buildings, said that while it is responsible for managing the restricted airspace over D.C., it does not have the role of defending it. It deferred those questions to the Secret Service. "Due to the need to maintain operational security, the U.S. Secret Service does not comment on the means, methods or resources used to conduct our protective operations," a Secret Service spokesperson said.

Congressional concern

The drone activity over D.C. has unnerved members of Congress with oversight of national security and aviation.

"Everybody is very concerned and trying to figure out what to do," said the contractor.

Population Gains Opportunities For Young India

The world now has more people than ever before. The population of the world crossed the mark of eight billion on 15 November 2022. The population growth is mainly due to advancements in healthcare, leading to improved lifespan, and reduction in maternal and infant mortality rates. Poverty reduction, too, has been much more than a dip. The world of eight billion is a world of infinite possibilities, states the United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency, UNFPA. Interestingly, even the number 8, when flipped on its side, becomes the symbol of infinity (?).

Adults (aged 30-64) accounted for more than half of the population growth during the journey from seven billion to eight billion, notes World Population Prospects 2022. This falls in the working age category of the population that is productive, can work and drive the engine of economic growth. Thus, the experts emphasise, it is the right time to reap the opportunity that comes with demographic dividend.

While advanced economies are past the phase of reaping demographic dividend, most of the poorest ones are yet to reach there. "However, there is a notable number of countries that are well-positioned to realise a demographic dividend today," says Michael Herrmann, Economic Adviser, UNFPA (see accompanying interview).

Andrea Wojnar, UNFPA Representative India and Country Director Bhutan, adds, "The reproductive health and rights of women and girls are key to ensuring societies thrive amid de-



mographic changes. When we are talking about population trends, we are not just talking about census data or surveys – we are talking about a woman's right to make choices about her body and her future."

She adds further, "The reproductive rights and health of women must be protected irrespective of demographic trends. Issues like climate change and access to health care disproportionately impact the most vulnerable, especially women and girls. This day should incite the global community to commit to cultivating a world in which all 8 billion of us can thrive equally."

Opportunities for young India India is one of those "well-positioned" countries that Hermann talks about. Around the same time as the world reached eight billion, India's population is estimated to have crossed 1.41 billion (1,414.8 million). Currently the second most populous country, India is projected to overtake China as the most populous one by 2023. As per

population projections by the Government of India (2020), India will add an estimated 159 million persons by 2036. Long-term projections by the United Nations indicate an addition of another 175 million persons by 2064 when the country is expected to reach the peak of its population size. India, with 177 million new births, was the largest contributor to reach the milestone of eight billion, points out World Population Prospects 2022. With a median age of 29 years, India is a young country today. The share of the working age population is expected to rise, clearly indicating the window of opportunity to boost economic development.

In 2020, India achieved replacement level of fertility (Total Fertility Rate or TFR of 2.0). A number of states and Union Territories (constituting 69.7 per cent of the country's population) are below the replacement rate. The issue of high fertility is a matter of concern in a few states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya

Pradesh, Rajasthan and Meghalaya.

Speaking on reaping the demographic dividend, social scientist and demographer Shireen Jeejeebhoy says, "States with higher fertility—mostly in the north—have already started sending workers to states in the south and the west where there is a demand for labour. This will continue, and that is the beauty of the way in which India will reap the dividend. This will ensure a greater blending of cultures, food habits and so on, but we need to initiate programmes that support migrants to assimilate in the destination environment."

Women at the heart of the discussion

Experts point out that fertility will be the most important determinant of the global population trends in the coming decades. BJP parliamentarian Rakesh Sinha has moved a private member's Bill on population regulation in Rajya Sabha to promote small families of up to two children per eligible couple. He says, "The discourse on population in India is a victim of political agenda. The demographic dividend is a misnomer. Demographers don't realize the crisis of common people. We are sitting on a volcano." He adds, "TFR measures average birth by women in her fertility age 14-49 years. This is apt for the western world. Therefore Total Marital Fertility Rate (TMFR) should be applied to children born after marriage." Talking on different approach of India towards the population increase, Jeejeebhoy adds, "In many quarters in India, the projection of India becoming the

Population Policy Reversals

➤ Singapore introduced the "Stop at two" policy in 1960, following which its TFR went down to 1.4. Faced with issues like reduced economic growth and tax base, increasingly ageing population and higher migrant presence in the workforce, the Singapore government introduced a "Have three" policy targeting young women, incentivising child birth in multiple ways. The efforts have resulted in a slight increase in TFR.

➤ Japan sought to address the concern over declining fertility rate—it had gone from high to among the lowest in the world in 50 years—by introducing policies to promote child birth through various incentives. While the country has reported an increase in TFR, the pace is slow.

➤ Greece is seeing the reduction of taxpayer every year due to its shrinking population. From 7 per cent in 1970, a whopping 36 per cent population currently is above the age of 65.

➤ France has generously incentivised the birth of a third child, including family allowances to improve purchasing power, maternity leave of 40 weeks or more for the third child, tax benefits

most populous country has raised a few alarms. Some are using this as an opportunity to call for a two-child norm policy, with penalties on those who have more. This is clearly a violation of people's reproductive rights, as India has committed itself to safeguarding people's right to bear the number of children they want."

The argument is that, eventually, bearing a child is a matter of personal choice over which governments should have little say. Referring to the unmet needs for contraception, Jeejeebhoy remarks, "Nationally, one in ten women and about one in six young women—are not practising contraception despite wanting to delay or stop pregnancy—a failure on the part of our health system to deliver contraceptive services and a violation of reproductive rights."



Population Gains Opportunities For Young India

Need for demographic resilience

The World Population Prospects 2022 suggests that countries with high fertility levels should prepare to meet the needs of growing numbers of children and young people. Dr K S James, Director, International Institute for Population Sciences remarks, "As far as the demographic situation of India is concerned, the picture is quite optimistic. The pace of growth is slower now than in the past. Demographically, we are stable. Fertility has reached replacement level." He adds, "The population in the younger age group will be declining. So the bulk of the population will be in the working age. Thus, the current fertility rate is an advantage. Women who earlier used to spend the bulk of their time in child rearing have more time for the labour market. It is important to enhance women's participation in work, and India needs to do a lot there. It (women's participation) is increasing, but it has to increase faster."

In contrast, countries with an opportunity for a demographic dividend need to invest in human capital by ensuring access to healthcare and quality education at all ages and opportunities for productive employment, while countries with ageing populations should take steps to adapt



public programmes to the growing proportion of older persons. Jaydeep Biswas, Chief Policy and Partnerships, UNFPA India, says, "As global population expansion slows and income rises, planning for the next billion will benefit from a focus on increased demographic intelligence and the factoring in of social and environmental costs of economic development."

He adds, "Experience has shown that improved health, education and gender equality re-

duce population growth. Lower fertility is strongly linked to greater empowerment and choice exercised by women." Building demographic resilience is what will ensure sustainable development. Demographic resilience stresses the importance of anticipating and planning for demographic changes and investing in education, health, gender equality and access to decent work across generations. It emphasises the need to reconsider traditional norms, espe-

cially related to the roles of women and men in families and societies, that prevent societies from turning demographic challenges into opportunities.

Challenges and opportunities:

Virtually all advanced economies have already left the phase of the demographic transition, where they could have reaped a demographic dividend, and many of the poorest economies have not yet entered this stage. However, there is a notable number of countries that are well-positioned to realise a demographic dividend today. Doing so is not an automatic process. It is essential that countries invest in human capital

throughout the life course—including health and education—and create equal opportunities for the people to engage in the economy and society at large. Success in realising the first demographic dividend is ultimately also the best way to prepare for the next phases of the demographic transition and the ageing of the population.

Human resources:

Some countries only averted population decline because of relatively high migration to these countries. However, to make the most of migration, it is important that countries have clear and transparent policies on immigration, and it is also advisable that they do more to tap potential that lies in emigration. Rather than viewing emigration as inherently bad, it should be understood as an increasingly normal aspect of life.

Gender dividend:

Greater gender equality is essential not only for achieving desired fertility rates, but also for creating more inclusive societies that are resilient to demographic change. For example, as long as house work and care work for children and parents is largely borne by women, it will be very difficult for women to combine their reproductive and professional aspirations. Furthermore, gender equality is essential to promote a greater engagement of women in the economy and in society at large.

Total Fertility Rate in Indian States

High fertility rate above replacement level

3.0

Bihar

2.7

Uttar Pradesh

2.6

Madhya Pradesh

2.4

Jharkhand

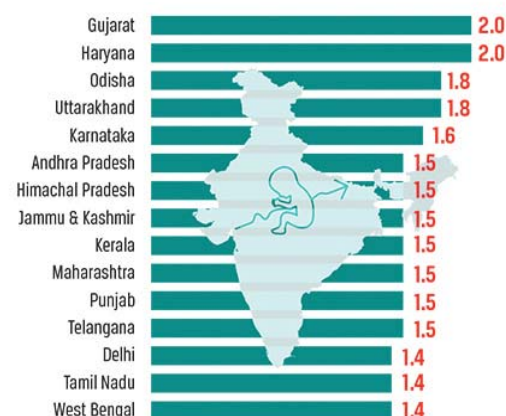
2.4

Rajasthan

2.2

Chhattisgarh

Low fertility rate below replacement level



Assam has achieved population replacement level of 2.1

GRAPHIC BY PARVEEN KUMAR .G

Source: Statistical Registration System (SRS), 2020

Sam Bankman-Fried tries to broker FTX bailout from his home in the Bahamas, despite being booted from the crypto company

➤ Sam Bankman-Fried is hunkered down in an upscale neighborhood of Nassau, still scrambling to raise billions to plug a hole in now-bankrupt FTX.
➤ He stepped down as CEO of the company and a long-shot deal would be viewed in the same way as any other third-party offer, legal experts say.
➤ It comes as Bahamas and Delaware courts fight for power in FTX's dueling bankruptcy filings.



NASSAU, Bahamas — Despite being pushed out of the cryptocurrency giant he founded, Sam Bankman-Fried told CNBC he is trying to lock down a multibillion-dollar deal to bail out FTX, which filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection earlier this month.

In a brief interview with CNBC late Friday, the FTX founder declined to give details about the downfall of his crypto conglomerate, or what he knew beyond liabilities being “billions of dollars larger than I thought.” Bankman-Fried declined an on-camera interview or broader discussion on the record. He said he was focused on retrieving customer funds and is still on a quest to secure a deal. “I think we should be trying to get as much value to users as possible. I hate what happened and deeply wish that I had been more careful,” Bankman-Fried told CNBC.

Bankman-Fried also maintained that there are “billions” of dollars in customer assets in jurisdictions “where there were segregated balances,” including in the U.S., and said “there are billions of dollars of potential funding opportunities out there” to make customers whole.

What was once a \$32 billion global empire has imploded in recent weeks. Rival Binance had signed a letter of intent to buy FTX's international business as it faced a liquidity crunch. But its team decided the exchange was beyond saving, with one Binance executive describing the balance sheet as if “a bomb went off.” FTX filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection on Nov. 11 and appointed John Ray III as the new CEO, whose corporate experience includes restructuring

Enron in the wake of its historic collapse. Despite losing access to his corporate email and all company systems, Bankman-Fried maintains that he can play a role in the next steps. Venture capital investors have told CNBC the 30-year-old had been calling to try and secure funding in recent weeks. Still, investors said they couldn't imagine any firm with a large enough balance sheet or risk appetite to bail out the beleaguered FTX.

A long-shot, Bankman-Fried-brokered deal would be viewed in the same way as any competitive bailout offer, according to legal experts.

“He's no different than any third-party suitor at this point, other than the fact that he's a majority FTX shareholder,” said Adam Levitin, a Georgetown University law professor and principal at Gordian Crypto Advisors. “He could come into Delaware with an unsolicited offer, and say I want to buy out all the creditors for a price. But that would have to be approved by the bankruptcy court — he can't force a deal.”

FTX's new CEO has also said he's open to a bailout. On Saturday, Ray said the crypto company is looking to sell or restructure its global empire.

“Based on our review over the past week, we are pleased to learn that many regulated or licensed subsidiaries of FTX, within and outside of the United States, have solvent balance sheets, responsible management and valuable franchises,” FTX chief Ray, said in a statement, adding it is “a priority” in the coming weeks to “explore sales, recapitalizations or other strategic transactions.”

After reviewing the state of FTX's

finances last week, Ray said he's never seen “such a complete failure of corporate controls and such a complete absence of trustworthy financial information” in his 40-year career. He added that Bankman-Fried and the top executives were “a very small group of inexperienced, unsophisticated and potentially compromised individuals,” calling the situation “unprecedented.”

Battle in the Bahamas

Part of Bankman-Fried's ability to sign a deal may come down to which jurisdiction has more say in the bankruptcy process.

In a recent filing, Ray cited a conversation with a Vox reporter last week in which Bankman-Fried suggested that customers would be in a better position if “we” can “win a jurisdictional battle versus Delaware.” He also told Vox he “regrets” filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, which took any FTX restructuring out of his control, adding “f— regulators.” Billions in FTX customer assets are now caught in limbo between a bankruptcy court in Delaware, and liquidation in the Bahamas. Ray put FTX and more than 100 subsidiaries under Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in Delaware — but that didn't include FTX Digital Markets, which is based in the Bahamas. The Nassau-based leg of FTX doesn't own or control any other entities, according to the organizational chart filed by Ray.

The Securities Commission of the Bahamas has hired its own liquidators to oversee the recovery of assets and is backing a Chapter 15 process in New York, which gives foreign representatives recognition in U.S. proceedings. As part of that process, Bahamas regulators said they transferred customers' cryptocurrency to another account to “protect” creditors and clients. It also said the U.S. Chapter 11 bankruptcy process doesn't apply to them.

The Bahamas move flies in the face of what's happening in Delaware.

The FTX estate said that those withdrawals were “unauthorized” and accused the Bahamas government of working with

Bankman-Fried on that transfer. FTX's new leadership team has challenged Bahamian liquidators, and asked the U.S. court to intervene while enforcing an automatic stay — a standard feature of Chapter 11 proceedings. Typically, bankruptcy is meant to fence off assets to make sure they can't be touched without court approval.

FTX's team said the Bahamian group had no right to move money and called the Bahamas withdrawals “unauthorized.” Data firm Elliptic estimated the value of the transfer, which was initially thought to be a hack, to be around \$477 million.

“There are some issues that require either coordination or fighting to figure out — there's going to be some jockeying when it comes to assets in the Bahamas vs. the U.S.,” said Daniel Besikof, partner at Loeb & Loeb. “The Bahamas folks are taking a broader read of their mandate and the U.S. is taking a more technical read.”

The bankruptcy mayhem is partly a result of messy accounting on the part of FTX. Under Bankman-Fried's leadership, Ray said the company “did not maintain centralized control of its cash” — “there was no accurate list of bank accounts and signatories” — and “an insufficient attention to the creditworthiness of banking partners.”

Part of the Bahamas' motivation for control may come down to economic interests. FTX hosted a high-profile finance conference with SALT in Nassau and planned to invest \$60 million in a new headquarters that one top executive likened to Google's or Apple's campus in Silicon Valley. “Some of it is about protecting domestic creditors — this is a Bahamas company. There's also a lot of money to be made for local Bahamian law firms, you have the whole trickle down effect,” said Georgetown's Levitin. “There's going to be some level of a staring contest between the Delaware bankruptcy court and the Bahamas regulator.”

Bankman-Fried's future

Some experts say Bankman-Fried may be gunning for a bailout

to reduce his own criminal liability and possible jail time. Bankman-Fried did not respond to a request for comment on potential charges. Justin Danilewitz, a partner at Saul Ewing who focuses on white-collar crime, said while the odds of anyone flocking to make FTX whole are “highly unlikely given the staggering losses,” mitigating client losses can be a tactic to look better in the eyes of the court. Some have likened that outcome to what happened at MF Global, formerly run by ex New Jersey Gov. Jon Corzine. The company was accused of using customer money to pay bills for the firm. But Corzine settled with the CFTC for \$5 million, without admitting or denying misconduct.

The approach could backfire, Danilewitz said. That move could “reflect a degree of culpability or be viewed as an admission, and someone taking responsibility for what happened.”

Even if Bankman-Fried manages to play a role in recovering funds through a bailout, or somehow gains more control through a Bahamas liquidation process, he may face years of legal fights from possible wire fraud to civil litigation. Wire fraud requires proof that a defendant engaged in a scheme to defraud, and used interstate wires to achieve that. The statutory maximum term is a 20-year sentence, in addition to fines. Danilewitz called it a “federal prosecutor's favorite tool in the toolbox.” The key question, he said, will have to do with the defendant's intent. “Was this all a big mishap, or was there intentional misconduct that could give rise to federal criminal liability?” Others have likened Bankman-Fried's legal situation to Bernie Madoff and Elizabeth Holmes, the latter of whom on Friday was sentenced to 11 years in prison for fraud after deceiving investors about the purported efficacy of her company's blood-testing technology. “The Theranos verdict should not have left him feeling good,” said Georgetown's Levitin. “He has a real risk here. There's the possibility of criminal liability, and civil liability.”

'I Caught Lightning in a Bottle. I Will Be One of the Last People to Leave Twitter.'

From news media to message-testing to adversary-monitoring, the platform has changed Washington. It won't be easy to go back



In case you haven't heard, people are this close to leaving Twitter. In the weeks since Elon Musk took over the platform, his erratic leadership and bewildering choices have alienated many of Twitter's power users, a core crop of whom are part of the American political establishment. Musk has upended the service's handling of verification, opening the door to fraud. And he's fired many of the people, analysts argue, who kept spam, bots and hate speech from running rampant on the site. And so, some of Twitter's best-known are promising to leave for the greener pastures of Mastodon, Instagram and TikTok.

But leaving a communications channel that's become central to how Washington works won't be easy. In much of the world, Twitter seems a bit silly. Even inside the metaphorical Beltway, people will admit to it being an ego-boosting dopamine-dispensing machine if not an insular, often-toxic time suck. The truth, though, is that Washington takes Twitter very seriously. Twitter is a place where all the worlds that make up Washington — the politicians, the policy experts, the press, academics, activists, and others — gather. And in an increasingly remote age, Twitter does much of the work that physical meeting spaces once did in Washington. For a city that never stops feasting on work, Twitter "is a bottomless bowl of soup," says Margaret O'Mara, chair of American history at the University of Washington, where she studies the overlap of politics and tech. She was also a staffer in the Clinton White House in the 1990s.

And using Twitter well is a bit of a superpower, one that the

American political class is loath to give up without a fight. Sure, folks in Washington might well give up on Twitter. But for now, it's still the place for reporter-messaging, idea-debating, networking, rumor-mill-monitoring and career-building. Any replacement will struggle to replicate all the ways it has transformed the city. I spoke with more than 15 insiders from all walks of Washington who spoke about how Twitter's become baked in to their lives. They talked about how Twitter has become essential to how they do their jobs, and why the end of the social network would trigger upheaval in the capital. Talk to just about anyone in politics, and they make plain that one of Twitter's key uses is simply getting themselves, their boss, their issue in front of a powerful audience: the press. If you're trying to reach Americans, says one Senate Democratic staffer, "one way is to spend a million dollars on TV ads." Another way, says the aide, is to "talk to the people who talk to people" — that is, reporters. "Twitter is good for that." That Twitter is soaked through with journalists isn't accidental. Twitter, in its struggle to grow its user base after it launched in 2006, actively cultivated reporters and other media figures and encouraged them to tweet, incentivizing them (at least in the pre-Musk days) in part through the sort of bulk-verification it otherwise gives to sports teams and talent agencies. It worked: Today, some 70 percent of journalists say Twitter is the social platform they use first- or second-most in their jobs. That's helped usher in a new era in news media and a new

era of Washington.

As a result, says Nu Wexler, a former Senate staffer who from 2013 through 2017 was a policy communications official in Twitter's D.C. office, "it's a very easy way to get the attention of much larger megaphones." Since the number of reporters on Twitter ballooned, that dynamic has become integrated into the way Capitol Hill, for its part, operates; the good press secretary knows how to stuff a catchy quote into a tweet, pre-packaged to induce pick-up by political reporters. It's a skill that can rescue from the wilderness the hundreds of rank-and-file members of Congress who might struggle to fill a press conference.

On Twitter, every representative and senator is one click away from just about every reporter in the country, which can make them a force to be reckoned with — including those who are, on paper, several rungs above them in the congressional hierarchy. New York second-term Democratic congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has 13.5 million followers; Speaker Nancy Pelosi has 8 million. Controversial Georgia Republican Marjorie Taylor Greene has, after several scandals, no committee assignments. She does have, however, at 1.3 million, nearly the same number of followers as House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy.

"It's one of the best tools for political legitimacy," says Zach Graumann, who as campaign manager for New York City businessman-turned-non-profit-leader Andrew Yang during the 2020 presidential election used Twitter to mobilize an online "Yang Gang" that helped catch the attention of the political press. Of course, that doesn't make you president. "What got you here won't always get you there," says Graumann. But the attention paid to Yang did help propel him to the national debate stage, which for the one-time test prep company CEO would likely otherwise have been an impossibly long shot.

On the flip side, though, Twitter

has also found enormous purchase as a political listening tool. "With all due respect to reporters," says another Senate Democratic aide (like the first, unwilling to go on record to talk inside-baseball more frankly), "reporters are not Americans." That is, the aide argues, journalists' thinking on many issues isn't reflective of the rest of the American population's, meaning it takes special effort to know how they'll react to national events.

Understanding their world view, says the aide, is made hugely easier through Twitter, saying that they parse how reporters are tweeting about issues from abortion to Russia to inflation — more valuable than what gets printed in their publications because it's before their editors have gotten their hands on it. That, says the aide, can help press staffers decide to which journalists to direct "care and feeding" to get them to see issues their way before they go to print.

"Have you ever read *The Boys on the Bus?*," says the aide, as in the Timothy Crouse book about covering the 1972 presidential campaign. "Fifty years ago, you had to be a white man on the bus to see that taking place," referring to how reporters talk amongst themselves about how news narratives will be shaped. "Now, with Twitter, you can see that happening in real time."

"I'm on Twitter because you're on Twitter," says Niki Christoff. An aide to John McCain during his 2008 presidential bid, Christoff, after serving in top policy-communications roles at Uber, Google, and elsewhere, now runs Christoff & Co., a boutique D.C.-based strategic consulting firm. "My job is to get their message into the press bloodstream," Christoff says of her clients. Christoff points to using Twitter to monitor how, last week, the story of the collapse of the cryptocurrency exchange FTX broke through into public consciousness.

Christoff said she watched it migrate on Twitter from reporters at niche crypto

publications like CoinDesk to Washington Post tech reporters to superstar financial journalist Andrew Ross Sorkin, using that insight to understand the exact right time to strike in getting one of her crypto clients national attention. "It's a window of opportunity for you to elevate what you've been saying to the trade press for a long time to a bigger audience," says Christoff. And Twitter can be an in-your-pocket generator of the sort of up-to-the-minute insights that arguably power Washington and inarguably power cable TV careers.

Kurt Bardella is a former Republican Hill staffer turned Democratic consultant and newsletter publisher (his "Morning Hangover" is a daily country music tipsheet) who regularly appears as a political commentator on MSNBC's "Morning Joe" and other cable news shows. "It has become the tool I use to prepare to go on TV," Bardella says of Twitter.

"As I'm sitting there getting ready to go on, I'm scrolling through looking at, what's the latest? What did the Gen Z vote look like in Michigan? What's the narrative right now about the Latino vote?" Bardella's hardly unique in this. "A lot of talent," he points out, "has an iPad right there on set." And it's also been key to helping those same reporters build careers and — a phrase that everyone in Washington pretends to hate, even while doing it — build brands. And when those brands become big enough, they can become actual independent businesses. Take Vox co-founder Matt Yglesias, who leveraged his 535,000 Twitter followers and ceaseless tweeting — this past election day, for example, Yglesias tweeted more than 80 times — in building "Slow Boring," an über-successful wonky Substack newsletter widely read in progressive circles. Judd Legum was a Clinton campaign veteran who in 2018 left the left-leaning Center for American Progress to start a reported politics newsletter called "Popular Information," about half of whose now 200,000 readers, says Legum, found out about it through Twitter. Without Twitter, neither writer would likely have had the kinds of followings that make for successful independent media operations.

The Pundits Blew the Midterms. Who's Surprised?

The over-reliance on predictive journalism does a disservice to everybody

The jury has returned a true verdict: The press and the pundits, which forecast a gaudy red wave, got it horribly, terribly, magnificently wrong. The Washington Post's Dana Milbank and Vanity Fair's Charlotte Klein, among others, presented the receipts after the election to scold the reporters and columnists who had so confidently crystal-balled a sweeping Republican triumph. The beatings passed out to the press and commentariat have been well deserved. If you pick a pony and he loses, you should pay some sort of price. But at this late date in our political progress, why should anybody place much faith in election prognostications? Surely readers and viewers must have remembered the 2016 election, where the Saturday before Election Day, the Princeton Election Consortium expressed the press/pundit consensus by pegging Hillary Clinton's chance of winning at 99 percent before she dramatically lost three days later.

Apparently not. As the political press reported out the 2022 campaign like 2016 never happened, making their many wrong-headed prophecies about the red wave, readers, who should have known better, lapped up their prophecies until they had to barf them out the next day. The beatings passed out to the press and commentariat have been well deserved. If you pick a pony and he loses, you should pay some sort of price. But at this late date in our political progress, why should

anybody place much faith in election prognostications? Surely readers and viewers must have remembered the 2016 election, where the Saturday before Election Day, the Princeton Election Consortium expressed the press/pundit consensus by pegging Hillary Clinton's chance of winning at 99 percent before she dramatically lost three days later.

Apparently not. As the political press reported out the 2022 campaign like 2016 never happened, making their many wrong-headed prophecies about the red wave, readers, who should have known better, lapped up their prophecies until they had to barf them out the next day. The press can't blame faulty polls for their blown prediction this time, as they did in 2016. As Grid's science reporter Dan Vergano and others have recently reported, independent pollsters presented fairly accurate portraits of voter sentiment this time around. Viewed in hindsight, it's almost as if the press seers deliberately ignored the polls to make their inaccurate predictions. Various writers have correctly blamed the press for embracing a seemingly solid "narrative" — the president's party traditionally takes a drubbing in the midterms, plus inflation, plus crime, plus President Joe Biden's relatively low approval rating — to project a Republican victory. But that narrative melted all the way to the ground on Election Day, sullying the prognosticators.

We could consume additional oxygen by hunting down specific writers and outlets to apportion individual blame for the flawed 2022 coverage. But shaming people and institutions for past predictions rarely makes prognosticators more cautious about predicting again. In that way, they're a lot like serial killers who keep killing until somebody disarms them. Instead of establishing a Bureau of Shame, a wiser use of our time would be to convince editors that the election-prediction industrial complex's skills at predicting the future are somewhere between null and slight, and that they should confiscate the predictors' keyboards if they insist on calling the future before it arrives. This is not an original idea. Academics have previously made a laughingstock of the press for its predictions as have journalists like Sharon Begley and historians like Rick Perlstein. If the press and pundits were certifiably good at foretelling the future, wouldn't they have already taken those skills to Wall Street, where having special knowledge about what is going to happen can make you a fortune? The fact that they predict elections instead of picking stocks proves that they're as accurate as entrails-readers at seeing around corners. In addition to not being an original idea, the notion that prediction coverage is about as scientific as a horoscope column is a view shared by many political editors and producers. Then why do they

continue to green-light stories about incoming "red waves" and that certain Hillary Clinton victory? Not to deflect blame from the press, but readers seem to crave such reports and commentary, much in the way football fans — even if they don't gamble — look forward to reading the point spread on Sunday's games. It makes for entertaining copy and provides watercooler or Twitter chatter. It also flatters journalists, who often mistake the demand for predictions as proof of their omniscience.

By overvaluing predictive journalism, voters and the press end up undervaluing the more difficult to assemble coverage of candidates' positions and their strengths. This is not to say that reporters or pundits should ignore polls or that horse-race coverage should be abandoned. When conducted with rigor — and when presented with provisos that detail their shortcomings — polls can give voters and candidates useful sketches of what voters are thinking. Polls and horserace coverage also help candidates decide where to campaign hardest. But poor punditry can also have consequences in the real world, where predictions of a landslide for one party might depress turnout from the other.

Until the press can prove they've gained super-skills at predicting the future, news outlets should feel free to accept their own limitations and retire from this sordid and misleading racket.

Stolen jewels, several murders, and a missing diamond: What soured Saudi-Thai ties 30 years ago

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman met Thailand's prime minister last week in Bangkok and signed agreements to expand diplomatic relations between the two countries

The relations were restored only earlier this year, three decades after a high-profile jewellery theft, also known as the Blue Diamond Affair, snapped ties between the two nations. In January this year, Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-ocha's landmark visit to Saudi Arabia marked the highest level of contact between the two countries after the \$20-million heist controversy, resuming full diplomatic ties.

Now, Salman's visit to Thailand came on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit. The crown prince said restoration of ties has benefits for both countries, as the two leaders inked agreements pledging to increase trade and investment.

So, what is the Blue Diamond Affair? It all started with the theft of jewelry and other valuable gems from the palace of Prince Faisal bin Fahd, the



eldest son of King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, in 1989.

Kriangkrai Techamong, a Thai worker employed as a servant at the palace, stole precious gems worth \$20 million from Prince Faisal's home, which also included a rare 50-carat blue diamond,

which is still missing.

The ensuing diplomatic repercussion was thus named after the gem. According to reports, Kriangkrai, who had access to the royal bedroom, one evening sneaked into Prince Faisal's chamber after he learned of safes that

were kept unlocked. He stole valuables worth about \$20 million, hiding some in vacuum cleaner bags while some jewels were stuck to his own body using duct tape, a BBC report said.

He hid the loot in a large cargo delivery he was sending home to Thailand, and left the country by the time the theft was discovered. After evading arrest for some time, Kriangkrai was finally caught at his home in Thailand's northern Lampang province in January 1990 by the Thai police, who were alerted by their Saudi counterparts. Kriangkrai was sentenced to seven years in prison, but was released after three years as he cooperated with the police and had confessed.

Soon after, much of the loot was retrieved — some Kriangkrai had kept with himself,

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Is Congress Emerging As A Credible Alternative To BJP?

The Congress needs to build a narrative to counter the BJP's communal and divisive agenda and get its act together to win back popular support in the Hindi hinterland

The Hindi heartland is the politically most significant region of the country encompassing nine states with 225 or over 40 per cent of the total Lok Sabha seats. The road to Delhi, they say, leads from Lucknow. One of the main reasons behind the Congress's decline nationally is its continuous dismal performance in politically the most significant region. The Congress electoral tally has been continuously taking a hit in the region and the party hardly looks prepared to take up the challenge. The party managed to win 79 out of the 225 seats in 2009, which took a huge dip in 2014 as the party ended up with just eight seats. If this was bad, the worst was yet to come. The tally reduced further from eight seats to just six in 2019 with the likes of Rahul Gandhi losing his traditional bastion of Amethi. Speaking to Outlook on the party's position in these states, Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge observes, "We are well aware that we have lost some ground over the years in states like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. And we tried to win back the confidence of the people; for example, we won 21 Lok Sabha seats in 2009 in UP. At the same time, we won Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh in 2017 after 15 years. Another fact is that the BJP destabilised our government in Madhya Pradesh using money and state agencies like the ED and IT. We intend to rebuild our party in both these states with new vigour." The party faces several challenges in the region. First is the dominance of regional parties like the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) in Bihar, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in Delhi and the Samajwadi Party (SP) in Uttar Pradesh, which eats into the vote share of the Congress. The regional parties have, in fact, emerged as an alternative to the Congress, taking away its position as the main challenger to the BJP in many states. The party's job needs to be

redefined not only to challenge the BJP but also to establish itself as the principal opposition. "This region gets affected most by the national narrative. Leaders from non-Hindi states are still able to invoke regional sentiments to push back against the BJP, be it Mamata Banerjee, M.K. Stalin or KCR. But there is no leader who can do that as effectively in the Hindi heartland," says political analyst Aditya Menon.

Second, the Congress's inability to stem the infighting in many state units has become a constant feature and cause of embarrassment for the grand old party on several occasions. From the Gehlot-Pilot fighting in Rajasthan to a series of resignations in Uttar Pradesh, the party looks clueless on how to control its leaders. Not so long ago, the party lost its government and Madhya Pradesh to the BJP due to this factor alone. The absence of a credible leadership in the states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi and Jharkhand has only led to diminishing public trust in these states. The states where the Congress has local leadership, the party is doing well, at least in assembly elections, for instance, in Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan or Madhya Pradesh. The top leaders of the party seem to have lost that connection in the Hindi heartland. Rahul Gandhi shifting to Wayanad and losing from Amethi was a sign of this decline. Another factor that has damaged the party's prospects in the region is its failure to effectively counter

the BJP's communal narrative. The party often finds itself on the horns of a dilemma, for staying quiet would create distrust among the minority community and lose whatever support it is getting in



terms of votes and opposing it would result in displeasing the majority voters the party is hoping to win back.

The Congress does no longer have any particular caste or group as its vote bank identifying themselves with the party. If the SP has Muslims and Yadavs, the Bahujan Samaj Party has Dalits and the BJP has upper caste and non-Yadav OBCs as their vote bank, which provide them an edge over the Congress, the party has to satisfy itself with residual votes, if any, from all these sections. The macro approach is another hindrance in its path to revival. What the Congress needs at the moment is to focus on micro issues that directly affect the day-to-day life of the locals as relying purely on national issues has not helped the party. It needs an approach like that of the AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal in Delhi—free electricity, healthcare and education, among others. People in Delhi rejected the AAP in both 2014 and 2019 parliamentary elections, but the same people voted for the party in assembly elections because of these schemes that directly benefited them.

The biggest embarrassment to the party in recent times has come from leaders like Captain (retd.) Amarinder Singh, Jyotiraditya Scindia, Ghulam Nabi Azad, Jitin Prasada and Major (retd.) Vijay Singh Mankotia, among others, who have switched their allegiance. In fact, there is a long list of such leaders who served at the highest level of the party but have deserted it to join the BJP or other outfit. Some even formed their own party. The inability of the Congress high command to rein in and convince its own leaders has not gone down well with the people. Centralisation of power in the Congress has often resulted in delayed decisions, with the party mostly showing to be reactive rather than proactive. Things that were supposed to be decided immediately could not be decided without the consent from the top, leading to missing on several opportunities. The 'Bharat Jodo Yatra'—an exercise aimed at reclaiming the lost ground—has thus far received a good response from the people. But the real test of the yatra will be when it enters the Hindi belt. Whatever has worked for the party in the rest of the country does not seem to resonate with the people of this region. "Sometimes, even the right political decisions by the party have not paid dividends. And that is part and parcel of politics. But we are going to work on it. A feedback mechanism is being put in place. UP has a new PCC president and for the first time we have appointed a region-wise president also in the state. Different states will have different strategies. We will take appropriate decisions as per the local sentiments and the will of the people," says Kharge. However, it will need more than that. What the party requires is a completely different narrative that can strike a chord with the people of the Hindi belt to help it regain the lost ground.

Brussels' uphill battle to confiscate Russian assets

European Commission is mulling options to seize assets of Russian state and oligarchs — but it's an untested legal path

The European Commission is exploring legal options to confiscate Russian state and private assets as a way to pay for Ukraine's reconstruction, according to a document seen by POLITICO.

The goal would be "identifying ways to strengthen the tracing, identification, freezing and management of assets as preliminary steps for potential confiscation," according to the document.

The potential bounty would consist of nearly \$300 billion frozen Russian central bank assets, as well as assets and revenues of individuals and entities on the EU's sanctions list. The idea was floated already in May, and is supported by Kyiv, as well as Poland,

the Baltics and Slovakia. EU leaders in October tasked the Commission to look into legal options to seize Russian assets currently frozen under sanctions. But the conundrum is that there's currently no legal mechanism to confiscate Russian assets — as pointed out by U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen back in May. It would need to be created. "There may be a path for the EU to validly confiscate frozen assets under international law, but it is likely a narrow, a long and an untested path," said Jan Dunin-Wasowicz, a lawyer at Hughes Hubbard & Reed. That isn't deterring the Commission from looking into it.

With regards to private assets belonging to sanctioned people or

entities, Brussels is readying proposals to make sanctions evasion an EU crime, a step which would facilitate their confiscation — but only in case of a criminal conviction. Even then, the EU would need to argue each case in court, likely having to litigate for years.

That's because a lot of these assets would be considered foreign investments, which enjoy protection against expropriation without compensation and a right to fair and equitable treatment under international treaties that Russia has with a lot of EU countries.

The confiscating authority would also need to draw a clear link between the property owner and the conflict in Ukraine. "To ensure proportionality, you

would need to look at who are the owners, what did they do, et cetera," said Stephan Schill, professor of international and economic law and governance at the University of Amsterdam. With regards to frozen foreign reserves of the central bank, the largest money pot, the EU executive writes in the document that "these are generally considered to be covered by immunity," with a footnote pointing to a U.N. convention on jurisdictional immunities of foreign states and their property, which is however not yet in force. "From an international law perspective, it's pretty clear that without Russia's consent you can't use Russian central bank assets," said Schill.

(Contd. on page 22)



'A Crazy Old Man Fighting With Himself'

Can Trump Do to DeSantis What He Did to Bush?

He toppled one Florida governor to a win in 2016. He'll likely need to do it again to win in 2024

To become president, Donald Trump had to vanquish a Florida governor. To become president again, he might have to do it once more.

The most important story in politics in the coming weeks and months is the potential resorting of the Republican Party in the aftermath of a midterms in which the GOP was widely expected to win big and ended up winning hardly at all. Within this most important story, though, is a most captivating likely mano-a-mano matchup. Trump is going to have to try to do to current Florida governor Ron DeSantis in 2022, '23 and into '24 what he did to former Florida governor Jeb Bush in 2015 and '16. Here, though, in the first few days of his third real run for the White House, the trouble for Donald Trump is that the Trump of today is not the Trump of 7½ years back, and neither is Ron DeSantis now the same as Jeb Bush was then. In the estimation of aides and advisers to all three men and dozens of insiders, analysts and operatives from Florida to Washington and beyond, DeSantis is arguably stronger than he's ever been, while Trump is arguably weaker than he's ever been. So much, in other words, is so different. Like Bush, yes, DeSantis packs imposing fundraising might, plus the apparent (and increasing) favor of elite consultants, media and money men of the right. But whereas Bush was a colossus in

Tallahassee in his prime — "King Jeb," some called him — he was 62 by the time he started running for president and had been out of office for the political eternity of more than eight years. He was, of course, also the son of a president and the brother of another — his family name less a helpful legacy than an anvil he dragged around in a cycle defined by an angry, anti-establishment bent.

DeSantis, on the other hand, is 44. He went to Yale and then Harvard Law, but he grew up middle-class in the Tampa Bay area suburb of Dunedin. His father installed equipment for Nielsen. His mother was a nurse. And in this year's elections in which no small number of Republicans were surprising losers, DeSantis was by far the biggest winner, cresting to a second term by an eye-popping 19 percentage points. People who didn't vote for DeSantis in 2018 clearly voted for him in 2022. If Bush in 2015 was seen as the past, DeSantis now, in the cheeky new nomenclature of Rupert Murdoch's New York Post, is viewed as "DeFuture." In his victory speech in Tampa, in which he declared that he and his campaign team had "re-written the political map," DeSantis stood in front of not the Florida flag but a giant American flag.

It's tempting, then, to see Trump, not DeSantis, this time around as more of the Jeb Bush — a has-been who's done

but doesn't know it or doesn't want to admit it. "He's dead man walking," longtime Florida-based, mostly Democratic megadonor John Morgan told me. "He's lost three elections in a row," Sam Nunberg, one of Trump's earliest political advisers before and during his 2016 campaign, told me. "The majority of the country despises Trump," Nunberg noted, "and the majority of the Republican Party is moving on." It's far from only Murdoch's Post and Fox News and the Wall Street Journal that are blaming Trump for the spate of GOP losses and blaring a shift in preference. Previously supportive elected officials from the Senate to the House and down to the states have begun to edge away as well. Perhaps equally importantly, right-of-center talkers, bloggers and influencers like Mike Cernovich and Candace Owens have openly criticized a man they once lionized. Some of the most up-to-date polling is showing more Republican voters want DeSantis more than Trump. Anybody else would acknowledge this bald reality and fade away or at least take a break. But Trump is Trump. And for all the ways he so consistently stokes chaos, Trump, 76, is nothing if not predictable. He won't let it go because he never has. He won't admit defeat because he never has. He won't willingly, much less graciously, cede the spotlight ...

because he never has — especially not to a seemingly able and ascendant heir. "He can't accept that anybody else can do what he perceives he can do," Alan Marcus, a former Trump publicist and consultant, told me. "And he also can't accept walking away because that would indicate he's a loser." And so he's going to attack DeSantis. He already is. Whether it works — whether he can do to DeSantis what he did to Bush — is very much to be determined. But what is almost certainly to come really is no mystery at all.

"Trump will just fling himself at DeSantis, saying whatever, whenever," said Mac Stipanovich, the Tallahassee fixture of a Republican operative who now is a registered independent on account of his distaste for Trump. "Anyone who would discount Trump at this point hasn't been paying attention," said Alex Conant, a GOP consultant who was a key aide to Marco Rubio during the 2016 presidential campaign. "I would never discount his ability," Conant said of Trump, "to trample the competition and win the primary." "DeSantis' team is full of smart people," anti-Trump Republican strategist and Lincoln Project co-founder Reed Galen told me, "but they've never faced a face-eating dragon before." "Folks forget," a close Trump adviser told me, "what DJT can do to somebody."

Saif Ali Khan dubs Vikram Vedha's box office performance 'disappointing': 'We pay people astronomically and...'

Saif Ali Khan said while Vikram Vedha has underperformed, south films have done enormous numbers, showcasing what a confident cinema rooted in culture can do

Saif Ali Khan minces no words. The actor, who was last seen on the big screen in Vikram Vedha co-starring Hrithik Roshan, says the action thriller was a disappointment at the box office despite being mounted well with an able star cast.

Hindi remake of the 2017 Tamil hit of the same name, Vikram Vedha was directed by filmmaker-duo Pushkar-Gayatri, who also helmed the original. The film opened to rave reviews but had a lackluster run at the box office. In an interview with CNBC-TV18, when asked why Hindi films are not clicking with the audience, Saif said he, just like everybody else, is clueless. In an interview with CNBC-TV18, when asked why Hindi films are not clicking with the audience, Saif said he, just like everybody else, is clueless. The original film starred R Madhavan and Vijay Sethupathi. The Hindi remake had Saif reprising Madhavan's role, while Hrithik stepped into Vijay's

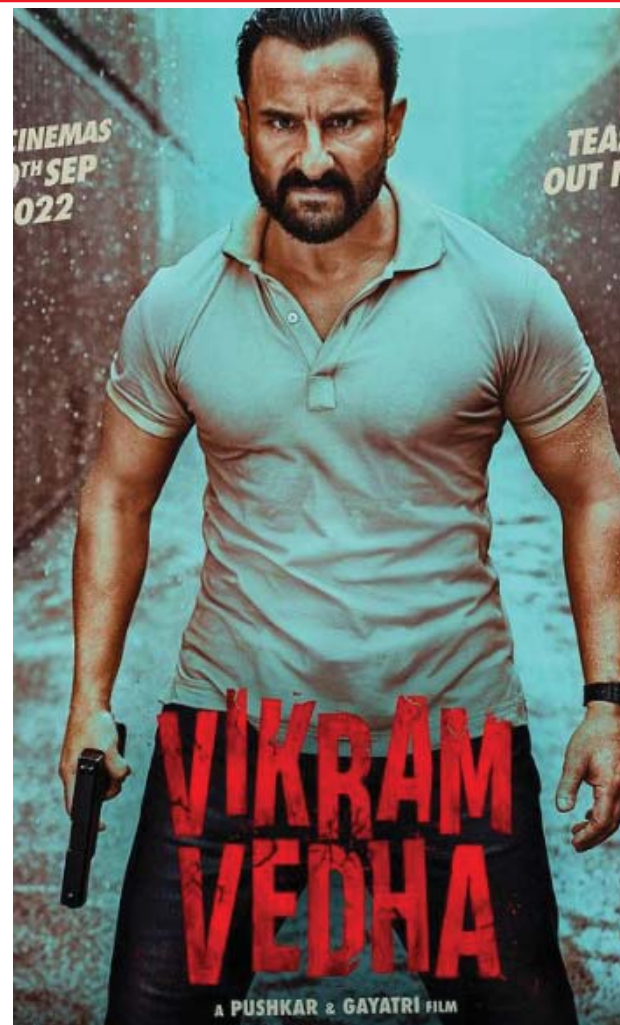
shoes. When the film released in September, after a dull marketing campaign and riding on the heavy shoulders of Hrithik's first screen outing since his 2019 blockbuster War, Vikram Vedha struggled to cross Rs 80 crore in India.

Saif said it was expected that the film will do well, but that didn't happen. The trend of films not working, the actor said, has already led to introspection.

"It was certain that this film, with these two guys in it, is going to open big and since it's so well made, it's going to run. But it was disappointing. I have no idea what's happening. People will continue to make movies, we will continue to try, prices will keep fluctuating, because our pricing is insane—we pay people astronomically and the returns have been not good," he added. Vikram Vedha's failure at the box office has come in a year where few Hindi films have truly

performed, while South films like RRR, KGF 2 and Kantara have broken box office records. Acknowledging the current trend, Saif said the Hindi film industry may have gone away from the roots of Indian cinema, which RRR and KGF are firmly rooted in.

"South films are doing enormous numbers, there are classes going on about what's happening. Maybe sometimes in Bombay we have a tendency to wander off the path towards European cinema or lose touch with... I remember a lot of the films I had done a few years ago, people had stopped wanting to shoot songs. There are a lot of directors still who are uncomfortable about that. "It is part of our culture. Films like RRR, KGF 1 nailed it, I love those movies. I loved KGF 1 particularly, it had that universal thing to it. There are certain movies that have those things and it doesn't matter if it is garish, loud and crazy. It is very confident cinema," he signed off.



Bholaa first look: Ajay Devgn smears 'bhasm' on his forehead, questions 'Kaun hai woh?.'



Bholaa marks Ajay's fourth project as a director. The film also stars Tabu in a pivotal role.

?? Aag Laga Degi Movie." Yet another person wrote, "Seriously, ??? Remake of the masterpiece kaithi ???" Even as one user asked, "Why

on earth is this being released in 3D...its just a remake of kaithi." One ardent Ajay Devgn fan dropped a comment which read, "Ajay sir PLZZ realease it fast." Bholaa is a Hindi remake of the critically acclaimed Tamil hit Kaithi, which starred Karthi in the lead, and was helmed by Vikram director

Lokesh Kanagaraj. The 2019 fourth project as a director. He featured him and Amitabh action-thriller was about an inmate who helps the cops

when they are attacked by a gang of smugglers. The cops then help him reunite with his daughter. Bholaa marks Ajay's



The first look of Ajay Devgn film #Bholaaln3D." The actor also shared that the first teaser of the film will release on Tuesday, while the movie itself will be available in a 3D format. Fans had mixed reactions to the announcement. While some were excited about the teaser, some could not be bothered. One user wrote, "Super excited #Bholaa Kaun hai woh?" Another mentioned in a comment, "Har Har Mahadev

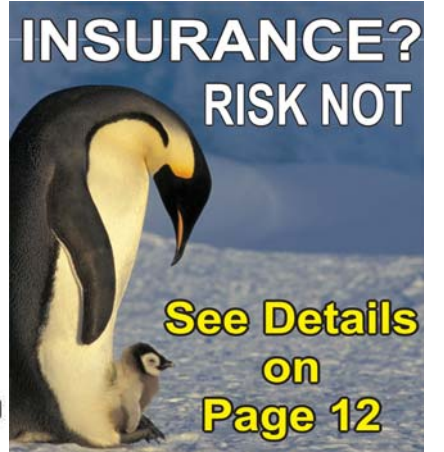
has previously helmed U Me Bachchan in a pivotal role, called Runway 34.



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POPULATION GAINS Opportunities For Young India

India is a fertility rate conundrum. Its six states have high figures, which mirror many developing countries and throw opportunities and challenges simultaneously. The rest of the country, however, runs parallel to developed nations with challenging demographic conditions



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