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**HAPPY
4TH OF
JULY**

EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt Resigns in the face of ethics issues



Pruitt is the fifth member of Mr. Trump's cabinet to resign or be fired since he took office

WASHINGTON(TIP): Scott Pruitt, the administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency who was key to implementing President Trump's conservative agenda but came under intense scrutiny for a series of questionable ethical decisions, resigned Thursday, July 5 afternoon.

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US-China Trade War Begins

Beijing vows to strike back against tariffs on US\$34 billion worth of Chinese goods

NEW YORK (TIP): The big question is now that the first shots have been fired, what goods will be affected, who will pay the price and what could happen next?

China's Ministry of Commerce, on July 5 (July 6 in China) said China will fight back against the US and report to the World Trade Organisation.

The remarks were in response to Washington's decision to impose 25 per cent duties on a similar amount of Chinese imports, which also came into effect on Friday.

US President Donald Trump had threatened to target another US\$400 billion in Chinese products with tariffs if Beijing continued to hit back.

On top of that, each country has prepared a second tariff list of goods worth about US\$16 billion. The effective dates are pending as the office

contd on Page 20



US president Donald Trump and Chinese president Xi Jinping at Mar-a-Lago. US-China relations have never been very cordial. The United States did not formally recognize the People's Republic of China until 1979, more than 30 years after its founding

Indian appointed head of top Chinese biz institute



Dr. Dipak Jain, President-Designate (European), Professor of Marketing, Global Advisor, CEIBS

BEIJING (TIP): Dr. Dipak Jain, a prominent Indian professor in the US, has been appointed as the new head of a top global business school in China, according to a media report. Jain, 61, will take over as the European president of the Shanghai-based China Europe International Business School (CEIBS), replacing Pedro Nueno who held the position for 28 years. Dr. Jain is the European President-Designate, Professor

contd on Page 20

ISIS claims suicide bomb attack on Sikhs and Hindus in Afghanistan

KABUL (TIP): ISIS has claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing in eastern Afghanistan on July 1 that killed at least 19 people, mostly Sikhs and Hindus. The bomber targeted a delegation from the minority communities as it was traveling to the governor's residence in the eastern city of Jalalabad on Sunday for a meeting with President Ashraf Ghani. Avtar Singh Khalsa, a long-time leader of the Sikh community, was among those killed. Another 20 people were wounded.

In a statement released on Monday, ISIS said it had targeted a group of "polytheists."

contd on Page 20

Overwhelmed with sorrow, relatives of the killed Sikhs and Hindus carried coffins for the last rites

Stay , Afghanistan Needs You... Page 8



Houston based entrepreneur Amit Bhandari donates \$50,000 to Ekal's Digital Literacy Program

By Manu Shah

HOUSTON (TIP): Houston based entrepreneur Amit Bhandari and his wife Arpita shaped their own American dream but along the way they also nurtured the aspirations of thousands of children, whether in the remote village of Rampura or the slums of Mumbai.

Ekal was one of the first charities the Bhandaris supported and they have consistently raised this support. They recently topped it by donating \$50,000 dollars to outfit a bus with 10 laptops for the Ekal-on-Wheels Mobile Computer Labs program.

The Ekal movement which started in 1989 to transform India, one village at a time, today, has a school in 70,000 villages offering free schooling, vocational training, digital competence and agricultural education. It has impacted 4 million children and 10 million families to date.

The Mobile Computer Labs initiative is working to enhance digital literacy and



has helped over 50,000 children become computer literate. The solar powered bus has pre-installed self-learning software developed by IIT, Mumbai and accommodates two students per computer. One dedicated trainer, assisted by the

local Ekal teacher provides two and a half hours of training in one village. The bus, which will serve the Khargone district of Madhya Pradesh near Indore, was inaugurated by Amit and Lok Sabha

contd on Page 20

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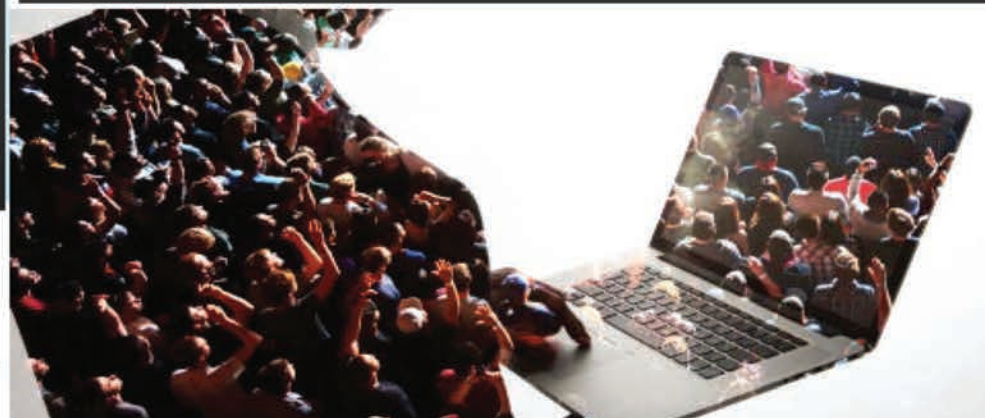
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Indian-Origin UK based Swaraj Paul to Donate Substantially to London Zoo

LONDON(TIP): Indian-origin UK based industrialist Lord Swaraj Paul has come to the rescue of London Zoo once again and will provide a substantial financial donation for the world-famous zoo's latest transformation project.

Earlier, Lord Paul had stepped in to save the London Zoo from bankruptcy back in 1993 with a 1-million-pound donation to fund a new children's zoo section in memory of his late daughter Ambika's love for the place.

He has since been a consistent supporter of the popular tourist spot in London, where later his son Angad got married to his wife Michelle in 2005.

The Zoo has long been planning to restore and enhance one of its great treasures - the landmark aviary designed by Lord Snowdon. The aviary is at risk and



Lord Swaraj Paul has come to the rescue of London Zoo, once again, with an undisclosed donation

in urgent need of attention, Mr Paul said

during his speech at an annual Paul family celebration held at the London Zoo on July 1.

The Caparo Group chief will be providing a substantial financial donation, the exact figure to be revealed at a later stage, for the zoo's latest transformation project.

ZSL's director-general, Dominic Jermy, welcomed Mr Paul's "lifetime of engagement" with the London Zoo, where Lord Paul would bring his daughter Ambika as a refuge from her cancer treatment.

Mr Paul also revealed some detail of a new American luxury Angad Arts Hotel set to open in St Louis, Missouri, later this year, which would be the world's first hotel where a room can be booked by the color of its decor to suit the mood of the clients.

Indian American Top Lawyer Appointed Acting Head of Drug Enforcement Agency

WASHINGTON(TIP): Indian American White House top lawyer, Uttam Dhillon, has been appointed as the new Acting Administrator of the crucial Drug Enforcement Agency that combats the smuggling and use of narcotics in the US.

Mr. Dhillon replaces Robert Patterson, who has retired after 30 years of service.

Mr. Dhillon, who till recently worked in the White House as deputy counsel and deputy assistant to President Donald Trump, took up the role of Acting Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) on July 3.

"With one American dying of a drug overdose every nine minutes, there can be no doubt that we are facing the deadliest drug epidemic in our history," Attorney General Jeff Sessions said announcing his appointment. The work of the Drug Enforcement Administration is critical to fighting this crisis, and President Donald Trump and he are committed to continuing to give it the strong leadership it deserves, Sessions said.

Mr. Dhillon is a dedicated public servant who has served with distinction in the White House, the Department of Justice, the Department of Homeland Security,



Mr. Dhillon replaces Robert Patterson, who has retired after 30 years of service.

Congress, and as a career federal prosecutor taking on drug traffickers at the highest levels.

Having a long career battling drug traffickers and violent crime in 2006, Mr. Dhillon was confirmed by the Senate as the first Director of the Office of Counternarcotics Enforcement at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

In that role, he served as the primary policy advisor on counternarcotics issues, focused on combating the connections between illegal drug trafficking and terrorism and developed regional counternarcotics strategies for DHS.

Prior to DHS, Mr. Dhillon served as an Associate Deputy Attorney General in the Department of Justice, where he chaired the Attorney General's Anti-Gang Coordination Committee and led efforts to formulate and implement Department of Justice policies and programs to combat violent crime and criminal gangs.

Earlier in his career, Mr. Dhillon worked as an Assistant United States Attorney in the Central District of California for six and a half years.

During that period, he was appointed to the Department of Justice's Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force and worked with federal and local law enforcement agencies to direct complex investigations of violent gangs and major narcotics trafficking organizations.

More recently, he has served as Deputy Counsel and Deputy Assistant to the President.

Mr. Dhillon received his law degree from Boalt Hall School of Law at the University of California, Berkeley, an MA from the University of California, San Diego, and a BA from California State University, Sacramento.

Indian American Seema Nanda appointed as the new CEO of Democratic National Committee



Nanda, a graduate of Boston College Law School and Brown University, succeeds the current CEO Mary Beth Cahill, who will continue to serve through the transition

WASHINGTON D.C.(TIP): Indian American Seema Nanda has been appointed as the new CEO of the Democratic National Committee. Announcing the appointment, DNC said in a press release that Nanda, who served on the transition team of DNC Chair Tom Perez, will manage the organization's day-to-day operations.

"This position is the opportunity of a lifetime, for which I am incredibly honored and humbled," Nanda said in a statement issued by the DNC. "People are hurting all across our country. And I believe that Democrats are offering the positive solutions so desperately-needed right now - solutions forged by the strength of our diversity, the rigor of our ideas, and the decency of our values. I am grateful to Chairman Perez and Mary Beth for selecting me, and I look forward to joining my new DNC colleagues in the fight for our nation's values and future."

The selection of Nanda is significant because it comes in a mid-term cycle that is seen by Democrats as a make-or-break election. Women have been playing a highly visible role in the party's efforts to snatch at least one chamber of Congress, which will enable Democrats to block parts of the agenda of President Trump.

"I'm beyond excited that Seema is bringing her talent and brilliance to the DNC," said Perez said in a statement. "I've seen firsthand Seema's exceptional ability to lead. She is a seasoned manager who has a proven track record of success and a well-documented history of fighting for our Democratic values, whether it's on immigration, civil rights or leveling the playing field for our workers."

Besides serving on the transition team, which reviewed DNC's operations after the disastrous 2016 presidential elections, Nanda also worked as Perez's chief of staff to while he was the Secretary of the US Department of Labor. At the department, she also served as Deputy Solicitor.

Perez said he was "one hundred percent certain that Seema's leadership will help the DNC capitalize on the unprecedented grassroots energy and enthusiasm surging throughout the country."

Nanda, a graduate of Boston College Law School and Brown University, succeeds the current CEO Mary Beth Cahill, who will continue to serve through the transition.

Nanda's appointment came after a five-month search.

"If there's anything I've learned during my search for a permanent CEO, there's no shortage of qualified and passionate leaders in our party. Seema undoubtedly fits the bill," said Cahill. "With Seema joining our senior leadership team, I know that the DNC will be in good hands. Working alongside Chairman Perez and the team has been an honor and a privilege. Though I'm leaving my role in the building, I'll never stop working to make sure Democrats everywhere continue to win from the school board to the Oval Office."

Indian-Origin Man Killed Brother-in-Law in UK



At the end of his prison term, Sukhwinder Singh will be deported to India.

LONDON (TIP): An Indian-origin paranoid, schizophrenic man, who was allowed into the UK following "an administrative error", has been sentenced to five years in jail for murdering his brother-in-law.

Sukhwinder Singh, 41, became delusional and stabbed his brother-in-law to death before driving the dead body to

West Bromwich police station in the West Midlands and handing himself in August 2017. The man was jailed after pleading guilty to manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility at Wolverhampton Crown Court on June 29 and is set to receive psychiatric treatment before starting his sentence.

At the end of his prison term, Sukhwinder Singh will be deported to India.

"I have to say the circumstances of this offence lead me to conclude without hesitation that you are an extremely dangerous individual," Judge Michael Challinor said at the sentencing hearing.

Sukhwinder Singh had killed his 39-year-old brother-in-law in August last year over suspicions that he was having an affair with his wife.

(Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian-Origin former Equifax software engineering manager charged for illegal trading



Mr Bonthu was an Equifax employee from September 2003 until March 2018.

NEW YORK(TIP): An Indian-origin software engineering manager has been charged by the Securities and Exchange Commission that he traded on confidential information he received while creating a website for consumers impacted by a data breach. Sudhakar Reddy Bonthu, 44, is a permanent resident of the US State of Georgia. Mr Bonthu was an Equifax employee from September 2003 until March 2018. *(Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news)*

DEADLINE TO REUNITE IMMIGRANT FAMILIES RAPIDLY APPROACHING

The children can't be in jail with their parents, more than 2,300 families caught by Border Patrol were separated. The move prompted mass outrage in the United States and internationally.

WASHINGTON (TIP): This spring, the Trump administration began a "zero tolerance" policy to criminally prosecute anyone caught crossing the border illegally. Because children can't be in jail with their parents, more than 2,300 families caught by Border Patrol were separated. The move prompted mass outrage in the United States and internationally. After first blaming the practice on the Democrats, Trump on June 20 signed an executive order that stopped the separation of families. A June 26 court order by a federal judge set a hard deadline to reunite the families, and that deadline is fast approaching.

Here's where things stand:

THE NUMBERS

It's still not clear how many children have been separated from families under the zero-tolerance policy, or how many remain separated. Trump administration officials have said 2,342 children were separated from 2,206 parents from May 5 through June 9. Trump's order stopped separations on June 20.

About 520 children were reunited with their families within days because the improper-entry prosecutions were finished before the minors were turned over to the custody of Health and Human Services, which is responsible for caring for unaccompanied children. HHS Secretary Alex Azar told a congressional committee on June 26 there were 2,047 such children in his agency's care.

On Thursday, he said there are somewhere "under 3,000" children who were believed to have been separated, but that includes kids who may have lost parents along the journey, not just parents who were detained at the border. He said none had been transferred to Immigration and Customs Enforcement custody yet.

REUNITING FAMILIES

A federal judge in San Diego who had been hearing the case of a woman separated from her child ruled on June 26 that the families must be reunited within 30 days of his order, and by July 10 if the children are younger



This spring, the Trump administration began a "zero tolerance" policy to criminally prosecute anyone caught crossing the border illegally. Because children can't be in jail with their parents, more than 2,300 families caught by Border Patrol were separated. | AP

than 5.

But it's still not clear yet how that will work. Homeland Security has set up a staging area at the Port Isabel detention center in Texas where the parents can be detained until their children arrive. But it's not clear where they will go afterward — the three operational family detention centers are near capacity.

It's also possible not all parents will be reunited with their children; HHS has a strict set of guidelines the agency must follow to determine a suitable sponsor, including a home visit and a criminal background check.

Health and Human Services deployed more than 200 workers to review the cases of separated children. Azar said parents and children are being swabbed for DNA to match paternity and checks are being done as rapidly as possible to make the court deadline. He suggested the children would be transferred to ICE custody at Port Isabel shortly before the deadline. But he signaled they'd ask a judge for more time.

Azar said about 100 of the separated children are younger than 5 and subject to the rapidly approaching July 10 deadline. Officials there say they know the locations of all the children — some were sent hundreds of miles away to shelters around the country

operated by nonprofits that care for them until a parent or other sponsor is identified.

A court hearing was scheduled Friday.

FAMILY DETENTION

It's also unclear if the families, once reunited, will be detained together or released on bond to wait out their cases. Trump administration officials have signaled they want to detain families indefinitely if they cross the border illegally, regardless of whether they are claiming asylum, in part because they say the cases move much quicker. But a court agreement on how children are treated in immigration custody generally prevents the government from holding children in immigration detention longer than 20 days.

Justice Department officials have asked that the agreement, known as the Flores agreement, be modified to allow for longer detentions. Homeland Security requested up to 12,000 more beds for a family detention center at a military base, though it asked for 2,000 to be made available quickly and the rest on an as-needed basis.

The facilities would have to comply with the standards set by the agreement that governs how children are treated in custody, which

include access to medical care, entertainment, counseling and air conditioning; though many who have been detained say the accommodations still feel like prison. Congress would have to approve funding to operate the facility.

ASYLUM

Attorney General Jeff Sessions, who oversees immigration courts, has narrowed the parameters for those seeking asylum, arguing that domestic violence or gang violence is not grounds to grant it — a blow to people arriving from Central American countries like El Salvador that have been ravaged by violent street gangs.

Despite the limits, Homeland Security officials say if someone comes to a port of entry legally and claims asylum, then they won't face criminal prosecution for improper entry. They generally aren't detained while their cases are heard. Administration officials say only about 20 percent of asylum claims are granted, though people often spend years exhausting appeals before they are deported.

Some asylum seekers have been turned away at border crossings. Administration officials said it was a temporary measure only to free up space in processing centers. They say that the migrants were told to come back and that it was not an effort to push them into illegally crossing between borders, where they would be more likely to be detained and face criminal prosecution.

ZERO TOLERANCE

Meanwhile, the zero-tolerance policy is continuing for those who illegally cross the border alone: About half of the illegal crossings are single adults.

The charge of improper entry is a misdemeanor and the practice is usually for those caught to plead guilty and be sentenced to time served, or a brief jail sentence.

Right now, adults who arrive with children are no longer being referred for prosecution because there is not enough space to detain families together. It's unclear if or whether families will again face criminal prosecution should space become available. (AP)

Giant 'Trump Baby' to fly over London during US president visit

LONDON (TIP): A giant blimp depicting Donald Trump as a baby will fly over London during the US president's visit next week after mayor Sadiq Khan approved the request, protesters behind the stunt said today.

The 6-metre (19-foot) orange balloon, which shows the president wearing a nappy, will fly near parliament at a height of 30 metres between 9.30 am and 11.30 am local time.

"The mayor supports the right to peaceful protest and understands that this can take many different forms," said a spokesperson for Khan, who has had frequent Twitter spats with the US leader.

Activist Leo Murray from the group behind the protest credited a "huge groundswell of support" for Khan's decision, with more than 10,000 signing an online petition.

"We didn't get off to the best start with the mayor's office over this, who originally told us that they didn't recognise 'Trump Baby' as a

legitimate protest," he told Sky News.



"But following a huge groundswell of public support for our plan, it looks like City Hall has rediscovered its sense of humour. Trump Baby will fly!" Huge protests are expected when Trump visits Britain next week, where he will meet Prime Minister Theresa May and Queen Elizabeth II.

US newsrooms fall silent to honour five slain at Maryland paper

ANNAPOLIS (TIP): Newsrooms usually abuzz with approaching deadlines fell oddly silent as journalists nationwide paused to honour five people shot dead a week before at a Maryland newspaper.

At a temporary office of the Capital Gazette, where the massacre occurred, survivors gathered somberly at 2:33 PM yesterday. Editor Rick Hutzell rang a bell and the staff lit candles for each person who died exactly seven days earlier, The Baltimore Sun reported.

At the New York headquarters of The Associated Press, dozens paused to reflect as Manhattan streets kept humming below. At The Virginian-Pilot in Norfolk, Virginia, voices cracked as a moment of silence was accompanied by the names of the five victims being read aloud. "It was incredibly quiet," said reporter Jane Harper, 55, who once worked at the Annapolis paper. (PTI)

24 killed in fireworks explosions in Mexico, rescue workers among dead

At least 24 people were killed in a series of explosions at fireworks warehouses in the town of Tultepec in central Mexico, including rescue workers who died saving others' lives, officials said.

MEXICO (TIP) At least 24 people were killed in a series of explosions at fireworks warehouses in the town of Tultepec in central Mexico, including rescue workers who died saving others' lives, officials said.

The initial explosion occurred around 9:30 am, then spread to other warehouses just as police and firefighters began attending to the first victims. Tultepec, a town of 65,000 people just north of Mexico City, is known for its artisanal fireworks — and a history of deadly accidents.

"We deeply regret the deaths of those who were killed this morning in... Tultepec, including our firefighter and police colleagues who lost their lives saving those of many others," read a tweet from the Red Cross in the state of Mexico, where Tultepec is located.

At least 24 people were killed — including a minor — and 49 wounded, officials said. The victims included four firefighters and five police.

Hundreds of soldiers, police and firefighters deployed to the neighbourhood of Xahuento, on the outskirts of the town, cordoned off a wide



area around the smoldering workshops where the explosions occurred.

An anguished teenager was asking rescue workers for news about his father, a fireworks maker who worked in the area. "I left school to look for him as soon as we heard about the explosion. But they won't let me through and nobody is giving me any information," said Allan Osvaldo,

14.

Hours later, his father reappeared, badly shaken but safe. "I was in my workshop when I heard the explosion. I ran out and was immediately enveloped in the cloud of smoke," said the father, 43-year-old Osvaldo Urban, his voice trembling. "I'm so grateful to be OK." (AP)

UK holds emergency meeting on new nerve agent case

Home Secretary Sajid Javid will be chairing the talks in London, as counter-terrorism police lead an investigation into the incident in Amesbury, a village in southwest England.

LONDON (TIP) Britain is holding an emergency cabinet meeting on today over a couple who were left critically ill after being exposed to the same nerve agent used on a former Russian spy earlier this year.

Home Secretary Sajid Javid will be chairing the talks in London, as counter-terrorism police lead an investigation into the incident in Amesbury, a village in southwest England.

The village is close to the city of Salisbury, where former double agent Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia were found slumped on a bench on March 4 in an incident that sparked a diplomatic crisis with Russia. "The possibility that these two investigations might be linked is clearly a line of enquiry for us," said Neil Basu, head of Britain's counter-terrorism police force.

Police on Wednesday said that tests at Britain's Porton Down defence laboratory had confirmed that the substance was Novichok, which Britain says is a Soviet-made military grade nerve agent.

"The priority for the investigation team now is to establish how these two people have come into contact with this nerve agent," Basu said.

have no idea what may have contained the nerve agent at this time," he said, urging members of the public not to pick anything up if they did not know what it was. The police chief said it was the same nerve agent used against the Skripals but



"whether we can ever tell if it's the same batch will be up to scientists to determine".

Basu said there was no evidence to suggest that the man and the woman, named locally as Charlie Rowley and Dawn Sturgess, "were targeted in any way".

Basu said there was no evidence the man and the woman had "recently visited any of the sites that were decontaminated" after the poisoning of the Skripals.

"This remains a low risk to the general public," he said. "We're satisfied that if anyone was exposed to that level of nerve agent by now they would be showing symptoms." The 44-year-old woman collapsed first and an ambulance was called at around 0915 GMT, while the 45-year-old man fell ill later and an ambulance

was called at 1430 GMT to the same house in Amesbury. Police had initially assumed that the two had consumed contaminated drugs.

But samples from both patients were sent to Porton Down on Monday "due to concern over the symptoms the man and woman were displaying," Basu said.

Both are still in a critical condition and are at Salisbury District Hospital — the same facility where the Skripals were treated. Local man Sam Hobson, 29, told AFP he was a friend of the pair and said he saw the man fall ill. "He was sweating loads, dribbling, and you couldn't speak to him, he was making funny noises and he was rocking backwards and forwards," Hobson said. (PTI)

Former Navy Seal Working On Thailand Cave Rescue Effort Dies

MAE SAI, THAILAND (TIP) A former military diver has died after running out of oxygen while assisting in the rescue of 12 boys and their football coach trapped inside a cave in Thailand, an official said on July 7.

His death highlights the perils of the operation to extract the team from deep inside the waterlogged cave, raising questions about the feasibility of bringing youngsters out the same way.

"A former Seal who volunteered to help died last night about 2 AM," Chiang Rai deputy governor Passakorn Boonyaluck told reporters at the site, calling it "sad news."

The diver, identified as Saman Kunont, was coming back from a spot inside the Tham Luang cave where the group were located on Monday when his supplies ran short.

"On his way back he lost consciousness," said Thai Seal commander Apakorn Yookongkaew, adding that a friend had tried to help bring him out.

"But even though we have lost one man, we still have faith to carry out our work."

Asked how the boys could make it out safely if an experienced diver could not, Apakorn said they would take more precautions with children.

The accident marks the first major setback for the gargantuan effort, which started almost two weeks ago after the "Wild Boars" team went into the cave in northern Thailand after football practice. (NDTV)

Over 5,200 bodies retrieved in Iraq's Mosul

MOSUL (TIP) More than 5,200 bodies have been retrieved during the past months buried under debris of the devastated buildings in Iraq's Mosul city, officials said.

"The total number of bodies retrieved during the past months reached 5,228, including 2,658 civilians and 2,570 bodies for the Islamic State," Layth Zaini, from Mosul municipality, told Xinhua.

"Today (Thursday), we have retrieved six bodies for unidentified people from under debris in Shwan neighbourhood in the old city centre, which we believe that there are 500 to 700 more bodies under the debris," Zaini said.

The bodies of the Islamic State (IS) militants will be buried in a separate cemetery after being identified, according to Zaini.

Zaini blamed the lack of specific machines for digging for the slow work, as all the buildings are badly demolished and some were levelled.

For his part, Lt. Col. Rabie Ibrahim, deputy head of Mosul civil defence, told Xinhua that the number of bodies for civilians retrieved in the old city centre reached 2,654 during the past months.

The retrieved bodies were said to be for IS militants, their family members or the civilians prevented by IS militants from leaving homes during the fierce battles and heavy bombardment of the city, according to the defence police. (IANS)

Canadian PM Justin Trudeau again defends himself against groping allegation

OTTAWA (TIP) Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau again defended himself on July 5 against an allegation of sexual misconduct dating to nearly two decades ago, saying he did not act "inappropriately."

Following a meeting with Ontario's new prime minister, avowed feminist Trudeau was asked about an allegation that he groped a journalist during a music festival in the western city of Creston, British Columbia in 2000. "I do not feel that I acted inappropriately in any way, but I respect the fact that someone else might have experienced that differently," said Trudeau. The original Canadian report on the allegations said Trudeau, who was 28 at the time and not involved in politics, had apologized to the reporter in question. In that story he was also quoted as saying "I would not have been so forward" had he known she was a reporter. (AFP)

Take steps to prevent mob lynchings: Centre to states

NEW DELHI (TIP): The ministry of home affairs (MHA) on Thursday asked the states and Union Territories (UTs) to check incidents of mob lynching fuelled by rumours of child-lifting on social media.

The advisory comes after more than 20 people were lynched over the last two months on suspicion of child-lifting, the latest being the killing of five men in Maharashtra's Dhule district.

The ministry has now urged the states and UTs to "keep a watch for early detection of rumours of child-lifting and initiate effective measures to counter them".

The states and UTs have been asked to direct district administrations to identify vulnerable areas and conduct community outreach programmes for creating awareness and building confidence.

"The Centre has asked the states and UTs to take measures to prevent incidents of mob lynching fuelled by rumours of child-lifting circulating on social media," an MHA spokesperson said.

The ministry has also directed the state governments to properly investigate the complaints of child abduction or kidnapping to instil confidence among the affected people. The centre on Tuesday had directed WhatsApp, the US-based messaging platform, to take steps to prevent the spread of "irresponsible and explosive messages".

Union minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said that finding technological fixes to identify mass-circulation of messages on a particular issue, in a particular area cannot be "rocket science", and that social media cannot evade its responsibility.

UK court permits searches at Vijay Mallya's house

LONDON (TIP): A UK court has allowed searches and seizure of goods at controversial businessman Vijay Mallya's house near London, two months after Indian banks won a landmark case that is expected to enable them to enforce an Indian Debt Recovery Tribunal ruling against his assets in England and Wales.



The banks' solicitors said the June 26 order by Justice Bryan of the business and property court of England's High Court of Justice does not have the effect of triggering any enforcement.

"The order grants permission, should any action need to be taken, but it is not an instruction to act. It is too soon to speculate as to what enforcement action will be taken," said a spokesperson for TLT Solicitors, the law firm that acted on behalf of the banks.

The order said the court's enforcement officer may enter Mallya's two properties at the same address in Tewin, Hertfordshire, called 'Ladywalk' and 'Bramble Lodge' "to search for and take control of goods belonging to the First Defendant" (Mallya). It added that the enforcement officer "may use reasonable force to enter the Property if necessary, pursuant to Paragraph 12 of Schedule 12 to the Tribunal Courts and Enforcement Act 2007".

SC urges Jagannath temple to allow entry of non-Hindus

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Supreme Court on Thursday urged the Jagannath temple administration in Odisha to consider allowing non-Hindus to enter the temple, saying that Hinduism doesn't eliminate any other faith and is the eternal faith, wisdom and inspiration of centuries.

"The temple management may consider, subject to regulatory measures with regard to a dress code, giving an appropriate declaration permitting every visitor, irrespective of his faith, to offer respects and make offerings to the deity," the court said.

The observations, quoting also from the Bhagavad Gita, come days after reports said some temple servitors had misbehaved with President Ramnath Kovind and his wife during a recent visit. Non-Hindus are not allowed into the temple, which had attracted controversy over its refusal to allow entry to Indira Gandhi at the height of her powers.

Supreme Court seeks response from Sajjan Kumar in 1984 anti-Sikh riots cases

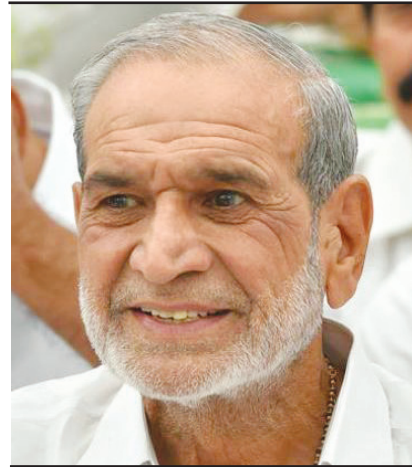
NEW DELHI (TIP): The Supreme Court on July 5 sought response from Congress leader Sajjan Kumar, accused in the 1984 anti-Sikh riots cases, on a plea filed by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) challenging the anticipatory bail granted to him by Delhi high court.

A bench of Justice AK Sikri and Ashok Bhushan said it is high time that these cases are tried at the earliest.

The bench said it was an over 30-year-old case and it took around "200 pages" for the high court to grant anticipatory bail when it could have been done in just "40-50 pages".

Additional solicitor general Maninder Singh, appearing for the SIT, said the investigation started against Kumar only in 2016 and now he has come armed with a battery of lawyers and dictates his statement to the investigating officer of the case.

The ASG said that while granting anticipatory bail to him, the high court had said that everything will be tested in trial of the case but at the end it granted him the relief saying there



The Supreme Court on Thursday sought response from Congress leader Sajjan Kumar, accused in the 1984 anti-Sikh riots cases, on a plea filed by SIT challenging the anticipatory bail granted to him by Delhi HC. The apex court said it is high time that these cases are tried at the earliest

was no evidence.

To this, the bench said whether all this was considered at the time of anticipatory bail. Singh said, "Yes. This is totally contrary to the established procedure of law."

The bench then issued notice.

The Delhi HC had on February 22 upheld a trial court order granting anticipatory bail to Kumar in two anti-Sikh riots cases of 1984, saying that according to records, he was available

throughout the investigation.

The Congress leader was granted anticipatory bail by the trial court on December 21, 2016, in two cases of killing of three Sikhs during the riots which had occurred after the assassination of then prime minister Indira Gandhi.

Kumar had submitted that his name was never taken earlier and it was a case of fresh allegations coming up after 32 years. *Source: PTI*

Sunanda case: Tharoor gets anticipatory bail

NEW DELHI (TIP): Congress leader and lawmaker Shashi Tharoor was today granted anticipatory bail by a Delhi court in a case relating to his wife Sunanda Pushkar's death almost four years ago in a luxury hotel here.

The Thiruvananthapuram MP, who has been summoned as an accused on July 7 in the case, had moved the court for anticipatory bail apprehending arrest.

Pushkar was found dead in a suite of a luxury hotel in the city on the night of January 17, 2014. The couple was staying in the hotel as Tharoor's official bungalow was being renovated then.

Observing that the prosecution's apprehensions that Tharoor may flee offshore or influence witnesses were "without any basis", Special Judge Arvind Kumar granted relief and asked him to furnish a personal bond and a surety of Rs 1 lakh each while imposing certain conditions.

In his plea for anticipatory bail, Tharoor had submitted that the chargesheet in the case was filed and the SIT had categorically stated that the probe was concluded and his custodial interrogation was not required.

The court had summoned him as an accused in the case on June 5, asking him to appear before it on July 7, observing there was sufficient ground to proceed against him.

Can't leave country

A Delhi court asked Shashi Tharoor to furnish a personal bond and a surety of Rs 1 lakh each while imposing certain conditions, including that he would not tamper with the evidence or leave the country without the court's prior approval. *Source: PTI*



POWER TUSSLE: SC SAYS DELHI LG DOES NOT HAVE INDEPENDENT POWERS



Lieutenant Governor Anil Bajjal with Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal.

NEW DELHI (TIP): In a landmark verdict on the power tussle between the Delhi government and the Centre, India's Supreme Court held that Lieutenant Governor Anil Bajjal does not have independent decision-making powers, and is bound to act on the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers.

The judgment pronounced in the court by Chief Justice Dipak Misra, who was heading a five judge Constitution bench, also held that the LG cannot act as an "obstructionist".

Two other judges, Justices A K Sikri and A M Khanwilkar, concurred with the verdict. It said all decisions of the Council of Ministers must be communicated to the LG but that does not mean his concurrence is required. "There is no room for absolutism and there is no room for anarchism also," the court ruled.

The decision is a major victory for Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government which has been in a constant tug of war with LG Bajjal over the power wielded by the two branches of the executive.

The Supreme Court said that except for three issues, including land and law and order, Delhi government has the power to legislate and govern on other issues.

It was ruling on a batch of appeals filed by Kejriwal's government challenging the Delhi High Court's order holding the LG as the administrative head of the national capital.

Virtually disagreeing with the High Court order, the Supreme Court said the LG should not act in a mechanical manner and stall the decisions of the Council of Ministers.

Pakistan anti-graft body to delay arrest of candidates till after polls

National Accountability Bureau has decided to show restraint in ongoing cases till the elections to dispel the impression of alleged prejudice on the part of the bureau in pending cases.

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan's anti-corruption watchdog has announced it will put any arrests of candidates in the general elections on hold till the election day on July 25, and cease ongoing anti-graft probes against all politicians.

The move by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) drew a mixed reaction, with many criticising it.

NAB also announced on Wednesday it was halting probes into cases against former foreign minister Khawaja Asif and other former provincial and state ministers from the PML-N party. All investigations, the bureau said, will resume after July 25.

The executive board of NAB decided to put these cases on hold because no breakthroughs were expected till July 25, a spokesperson said.

"NAB wants to make it clear that it has nothing to do with politics and elections. The decision to put off investigations into pending cases against politicians has been made to reflect this fact," said a statement issued after the executive board held a meeting. The NAB



spokesperson added the bureau will comply with all court orders in letter and spirit during this period after conducting due diligence. He said the executive board, NAB's highest decision-making body, had decided to show restraint in ongoing cases till the elections to dispel the impression of alleged prejudice on the part of the bureau in pending cases.

While some welcomed the decision, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf spokesman Fawad Chaudhry said it was a "clear violation" of the country's laws that don't bar any institution from arresting any individual involved in corruption "just because he or she is contesting elections". He said NAB needs to revisit its order. (HT)

25 transgenders to be among poll observers in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (TIP): A total of 75 people - 25 from the transgender community, and an equal number of disabled people and women - have been appointed as observers for Pakistan's July 25 general election a private network of organisations working to monitor the polls.

They were appointed by the Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) at a training programme organised in collaboration with the Gender Interactive Alliance (GIA) in an attempt to make the electoral process more inclusive and participatory for vulnerable sections of society.

The move is also aimed at promoting human rights and active electoral participation of vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities, transgender people and women.

As election observers, they will observe and note down any violation of rights or acts of discrimination against vulnerable sections of society at polling stations during the polls. Any direct violations will be conveyed to presiding officers, while survey forms will be filled by the observers to report instances of political and electoral violence. These forms will later be submitted to the Election Commission.

Zahid Abdullah, project manager, said FAFEN has nearly 19,000 members who will monitor the elections. "Out of these 19,000 members, we have trained around 125 persons selected from across Pakistan to monitor and enhance the capacity of citizens belonging to vulnerable groups," he said. (HT)

Pakistan inks naval shipbuilding, technology transfer deal with Turkey

ISLAMABAD (TIP) Pakistan has signed a contract for the construction of four Milgem/Ada-class corvettes with the Turkish state-controlled shipyard M/s ASFAT A.S. The deal, inked July 5, is part of Pakistan's efforts to replace aged warships featuring systems nearing the end of manufacturer support, boost its conventional deterrent vis-a-vis India, and better safeguard its maritime economy and trade links.

According to a Navy news release, the contract includes "complete transfer of technology and the transfer of intellectual proprietary rights for the design of these ships to Pakistan."

Four ships will be built - the first two in Turkey at Istanbul Naval Shipyard, and the third and fourth in Pakistan by state-owned shipyard KSEW - as part of the technology transfer package.

Indigenous construction of the second pair is intended to help Pakistan's shipbuilding industry grow and increase its contribution to the nation's economy.

Though the Ada design features considerable Turkish-developed systems and weaponry, much is still sourced from third parties including the U.S., with whom Pakistan's relations are presently firmly at their nadir.

Under the present climate, it's almost certain the U.S. won't provide clearance for the onward supply of equipment (or direct purchase via Washington); this includes the RIM-116 Rolling Airframe Missile, the Ada corvette's primary air defense system.

When asked by Defense News about this situation, the Navy did not explain how it has managed to circumvent this, whether it still hopes to acquire the system, whether the service has replaced it with an alternative (possibly Chinese such as the FL-3000N/HQ-10), or whether the service will simply recycle the Phalanx CIWS from its ex-British frigates (possibly along with Harpoon anti-ship missiles if they still have shelf life remaining) until a better solution becomes available.

Author, analyst and former Australian defense attache to Islamabad Brian Cloughley says the Pakistan Navy "will avoid all U.S. equipment, if possible, on the grounds that they can have no guarantee of supply of spares, ammunition, etc. The attitude of [U.S. President Donald] Trump and Congress is such that it would be most unwise to waste time even applying for U.S. systems.

"The Chinese route seems to be the most practicable, with indigenous systems if possible."

12 Indian Fishermen Arrested For Poaching In Sri Lankan Waters

COLOMBO/RAMESWARAM (TIP): Sri Lankan Navy on July 5 arrested twelve Indian fishermen and seized their two trawlers for allegedly poaching in the country's territorial waters.

Nearly 3,000 fishermen from Rameswaram had ventured into the sea yesterday and were fishing near Karainagar in the Lankan waters early this morning, when the Sri Lankan naval personnel arrested them, Assistant Director of Fisheries department in India, Manikandan said.

While those in other boats managed to escape, 12 fishermen were arrested and taken to Kangesanthurai port in Sri Lanka along with their boats, the official said.

The fishermen were charged with poaching fish in Sri Lanka's waters using the banned fishing net, he added.

This is the first incident of arrest after the fishing ban period ended on June 14.

The fishermen along with their trawlers were handed over to the Fisheries Inspectorate in Jaffna through the Department of Sri Lanka Coast Guard, the Sri Lankan Navy said.

The arrest was made by the Sri Lanka Navy personnel attached to the Northern Naval Command, in the seas off Delft Island.

In January, Sri Lanka increased by over 100 times the fine on foreign vessels to deter them from fishing in its waters, amid the dispute over the frequent entry of Indian fishing trawlers into the country's maritime territory.

The main aim of the move is to prevent illegal fishing activities in the Sri Lankan waters and protect the fisheries and aquatic resources of the country's coastal belt. (NDTV)

NEPAL PUSH TO TOURISM TIES

GUWAHATI (TIP): Nepal is looking for tourist exchange with Assam by offering attractive packages and direct flights between Kathmandu and Guwahati, officials said at a seminar here on July 5.

Charge d'affaires, Nepal embassy, Bharat Kumar Regmi said, "Nepal has mountains, valleys and wide variety of flora and fauna like Assam. Our geographical features are similar and the rhino is found in Nepal as well. There are around 1,500 mountain peaks in Nepal, many over 6,500 metres high. Nearly 1,000 rivers flow through the country. A large number of tourists visiting Nepal can be offered a combined package tour to visit Assam and the Northeast. Tour operators from the city can tie up with travel agents in Nepal to provide services like adventure tourism."

Regmi also said Nepal is politically stable after more than a decade. Economic growth is hovering around 7 per cent and this is the right time to invest in Nepal, he said.

The counsellor at Nepal embassy, Umakant Acharya, gave a presentation on the tourism sector, highlighting the opportunities, prospects and benefits of developing mutual packages for tourists.

He urged the business community to invest in Nepal while underlining government support and facilitation to boost business relations.

Tourism is the mainstay of Nepal's economy and provides livelihood to many of our people, Acharya said.

Assam Tourism Development Corporation managing director Kausar J. Hilaly highlighted the importance of bilateral relationship and reiterated that Nepal was transforming into a full-fledged democracy and prosperous country.

He urged the private sector to take the lead in developing tourism ties between Nepal and Assam. The seminar, Tourism in Nepal, was organised by Nepal embassy in association with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Ficci). (The Telegraph)

DOD updates congress on the war in Afghanistan SOFREP Original Content

KABUL (TIP): The war in Afghanistan is not the same as it was in 2001, nor is it the same as it was five years ago. Things are constantly evolving and changing, and with these changes U.S. authorities have laid out one primary goal: To keep Afghanistan from becoming a base of operations for terrorist activities that can strike internationally, particularly against the United States. To that end, a stable government will need to be established in order to effectively combat terrorist activities on a domestic level. Defeating the Taliban is not necessarily a part of that goal. Still, stabilization is easier said than done, if the last 17 years have been any indication. However, recent developments have shown possibilities for a reconciliation between the Taliban and the United States — a fatwa outlawing suicide bombing, and a temporary truce over the three-day holiday of Eid al-Fitr, to name the more significant ones. (Sofrep)


**GUEST
COMMENT**

PUNJAB'S WAR ON DRUGS

Giving a societal push to the Punjab Government's war on the hydra-headed drug menace, are the villagers - the common people suffering the effects of the consumption blowback. There is hardly any home in the countryside that does not have a family shattered by an addict whose only interest is how to get his next fix, even going to desperate and often deadly extremes. His treatment leaves them penniless, and the children crying and uncared for, and at times, even orphaned. Shattered by the ruin and misery unleashed by drugs over the years, some villages have taken upon themselves the task of eradicating this deadly menace through vigilantism. They are nabbing alleged drug peddlers and handing them over to the police. A political leader has also spearheaded one such campaign.

However well-meaning this practice may be, it is not without pitfalls. While being vigilant against a potential supplier of drugs, the people need to guard against going over the top. In mob fury lies the inherent danger of individuals tipping over to the side of vigilantism in the heat of the moment and taking law into their hands. The examples of recent lynchings in Maharashtra over rumors of child-lifting as well as some innocent people becoming victims of cow vigilantes are fresh. Rather than even one innocent person being victimized, law enforcement is best left to the government. After all, only the law enforcement agencies are equipped to tackle the drug mafia. Bringing the small fry in the net will not end the menace.

The Amarinder Singh government has in the past couple of days unveiled a heady mix of strategies that promise to take on the problem of intoxication. Regular dope tests for all 3.25 lakh Punjab Government employees have been made mandatory as cases of drug-tainted officers, especially in the police, are coming to the fore with shocking regularity. Death penalty has been sought for the peddlers of illicit substances as an alarming number of people are becoming addicted to drugs as well as dying from them. Treatment and rehabilitation of addicts with a renewed goal figure high on its mission. Instead of the death penalty, a strict implementation of the existing NDPS laws is sufficient to take the problem head on.

(Tribune, India)



By Saad Mohseni

"I am not certain if the community can tolerate more pain, but we don't want them to forget that they represent a legacy that stretches back a thousand years in Afghan history."

It was a black day. On July 1, a suicide bomber tore into a crowd of Hindus and Sikhs who had collected to meet President Ashraf Ghani in Jalalabad, resulting in the massacre of 19 persons; 10 were badly injured. The pain has been felt and shared by every Afghan I have come in contact with since the attack. The brutal attack claimed the lives of two of the Sikh community's favorite sons, Avtar Singh Khalsa, the only Sikh candidate running for Parliament in October; and Rawail Singh, a vibrant member of our trying-to-be-more-civil society. We all feel incredible shame that it has come to such a pass.

I vividly recall Harandar Singh and Amarjeet Singh, my Sikh classmates in primary school at the French Lycee Isteqlal in Kabul, Afghanistan, in the late 1970s. As first cousins, they were inseparable: gossiping, laughing, switching between Farsi and Punjabi without missing a beat. One was quite tall and slim, while the other was darker, shorter and slightly chubby - although I can't recall which one was which. What I do recall is that their parents, like many Sikhs in Kabul, were involved in the textile business. Anil Kumar, our lone Hindu classmate, came from a well-known family that operated one of Kabul's better-known movie theatres.

I would often walk with Harandar and Amarjeet the mile-long distance from our bus stop to school, going past the homes of the few remaining Jewish families adjacent to Flower Street. In the late 1970s, Kabul was a city that peacefully housed Indian communities. The same was true of Ghazni, Kandahar, Jalalabad and all other urban centers of Afghanistan.

I viewed these boys as lucky to evade religious studies at school, they didn't have to be subjected to the less-than-competent religious studies teacher, a character who once pulled his belt out to whip a student, only to see his pants fall to his knees. But other than their 'exotic' turbans and absence from the compulsory Islamic studies class, Harandar, Amarjeet and Anil were no different to my other friends in Kabul in those years of innocence.

The 5 lakh-strong community of Sikhs and Hindus was a robust contributor to the private sector: trade, banking, textiles, food and retail. Throughout the city, they left a distinctive mark: an enduring signifier that Afghanistan was once a true crossroads between the Middle East and South Asia. How can I ever forget the exquisite jalebis sold in the Karte Parwan district of Kabul by a Hindu merchant? Or the

AS I SEE IT

Stay, Afghanistan needs you...

Filled with remorse, an anguished Afghan hopes Sikhs, Hindus won't flee what's their home too



Brothers All: They have been hurt, but Sikhs and Hindus represent a legacy that stretches back a thousand years in Afghan history. Afghan Sikhs carry the coffin of one of the 19 victims of a suicide attack in Jalalabad on July 2, 2018, a day after the attack. Grief mixed with anger among Afghanistan's minority Sikh and Hindu community on July 2 as they prepared for funerals of loved ones, including an election candidate, killed in a suicide attack

lively Punjabi music and the bountiful spice shops that were a routine stopover for every Kabul cook. But what was special about them was their ownership of Afghanistan. They seemed to embrace the hybrid identity and took genuine pride in the link to this remote country. They belonged there.

Afghan historians believe that the first wave of 'modern' Hindus arrived during Mahmood Ghaznavi's reign over a thousand ago. Of course, it should also be noted that huge swathes of modern Afghanistan were 'Hindu' prior to the arrival of Islam in the 7th and 8th centuries, alongside Zoroastrianism, Buddhism and paganism.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the civil war that ensued brought misery to millions of Afghans - Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Jews. Many members of the community were forced to flee the country, but some of them stayed, resolutely. Those who were forced to take refuge outside of Afghanistan took pains to identify themselves as Afghans. This endeared them even more to their fellow Afghans.

The post-Soviet civil war that devastated Kabul and resulted in the lawlessness that destroyed the social, moral and economic fabric of the nation compelled more Hindus and Sikhs to flee their homes. But again, some of them stayed back. The arrival of the Taliban only brought more wretchedness. Hindus and Sikhs were initially forced to wear yellow dresses and turbans and raise a yellow flag on their rooftops. Many, feeling vulnerable, decided that it was finally time to leave. But despite this intolerant and violent environment, some of them still stayed put.

The defeat of the Taliban regime and the emergence of an independent government in Kabul, committed to the rule of law, gave hope; encouraging many Afghans to believe that this was a new beginning for the country.

In 2003, a brave Sikh gentleman stood before a Loya Jirga (grand assembly) of mostly Islamic commanders, politicians and clerics and screamed: 'It is you Muslims that have ruined my Afghanistan.' He received a standing ovation because we all knew that he was right.

The rule of law of the post Karzai era was more myth than reality. Many of their properties, namely in the Karte Parwan district of Kabul, were squatted on and confiscated by warlords or Afghans with strong connections. Given that the community had survived for a millennium through peaceful means, there was no warlord to protect them. Many of them decided to leave the country. But again, some chose to stay.

There were moments of optimism. To Hamid Karzai's credit, he appointed Shamlal Bhatija Bhatia, an Afghan Hindu, as Ambassador to Canada - a first in the country's history, despite the fact that Mr Bhatia's family had resided in the city of Kandahar for over 350 years. Mr Bhatia regularly pointed out that Ahmad Shah Durrani, the Kandahari founder of modern-day Afghanistan, had based the concept of Afghanistan on inclusion.

Forty years after I last shared a class with Harandar, Amarjeet and Anil, their community has dwindled from 5 lakhs to only 1,300 - scattered across three Afghan cities. Their numbers, which coexisted with Afghans of all faiths for centuries, has now shrunk to almost nothing.

I am not certain if the community can tolerate more pain, but we don't want them to forget that they represent a legacy that stretches back a thousand years in Afghan history.

And more than ever, Afghanistan needs them to stay.

(The author is Chairman of Moby Group, the largest media company in Afghanistan)

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THE BILATERAL LIMITS OF HYPE: ON INDIA-U.S. RELATIONS



By Varghese K. George

"But India-U.S. relations will be better off without hype and grand theories, often encouraged by the government. Otherwise, every rescheduling of a meeting will be interpreted as the collapse of ties. Similarly, avoiding the hyperbole could help manage India's troubles with Pakistan and China better. The U.S. has overlapping interests with China, and India has overlapping interests with both. The trouble with big-chest, small-heart hyper-nationalism in foreign policy is that it also causes short sightedness. The audacity of hype has its limits."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and U.S. President Donald Trump have both built their politics on the promise of making their countries great again. Placing India and the U.S., respectively, as leaders on the world stage is the stated objective of their foreign policy. The project of regaining national glory is based on another assumption that they inherited a mess from their respective predecessors. Yet another shared trait is their love for spectacle over meticulous, prolonged and often frustrating pursuit of strategic goals.

Theatre as strategy

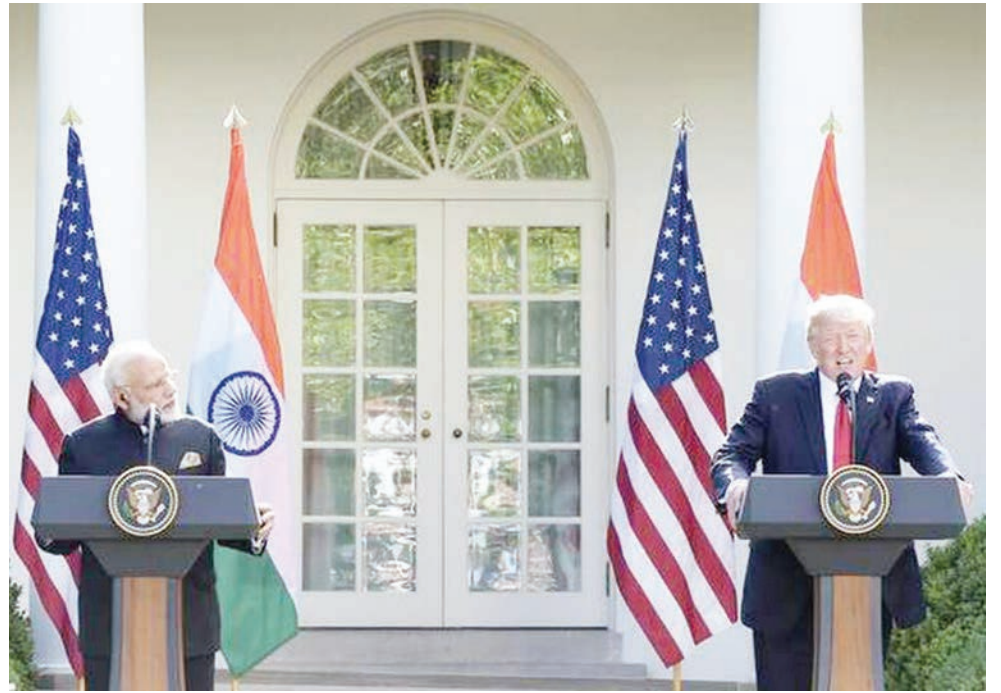
The postponement of the India-U.S. 2+2 dialogue between the Foreign and Defense Ministers of both countries, that had been scheduled for this week, has to be understood in the context of the similar personality traits of Mr. Trump and Mr. Modi. Hugging Mr. Trump may be a good spectacle for Mr. Modi, but the same may not be true for the former. Mr. Trump has set his eyes on spectacles that suit him. Mr. Trump, still basking in the denuclearization deal that he's said to have struck with North Korea's Kim Jong-un, is now looking forward to the next big event: a summit meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin. His every move on the global stage enrages his domestic political opponents and the professional strategic community alike and he is happy, as this keeps his political base constantly on the boil.

North Korea, Syria, Afghanistan, trade deficit, and all global challenges before America are the faults of his predecessors, he repeatedly tells supporters. Most recently, at the G7 summit in Canada in June, he declared: "I blame our past leaders for allowing this to happen (trade deficits) ... You can go back 50 years, frankly." Such rhetoric may sound familiar to Indians. In Mr. Trump's war on the legacy of all Presidents before him, India is on the wrong side. The remarkable growth in India-U.S. relations since the turn of the century had been nurtured by three U.S. Presidents, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama, two Democrats and one Republican who have all been the target of Mr. Trump's ire. India neither promises him the opportunity of a spectacle nor offers the grounds for destructing the legacy of a predecessor. So, he told Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to deal with North Korea and Russia, and 2+2 with India could wait. "Nobody wakes up in DC daily thinking of India," says a former U.S. ambassador to India, pointing out that 16 months into the new administration, there is no Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia in the State Department.

Impact on ties

To buttress one's own claim to be a trailblazer by denying the achievements of predecessors may be good political tactics for these leaders but trying to wish away history itself is not a sustainable strategy. Against the backdrop of a programmatic negation of history in both countries, Mr. Trump's bursts of unhinged rhetoric against China and Pakistan lend themselves to easy and convenient interpretations by supporters of improved U.S.-India ties as moments of enlightenment for the U.S., even as turning points.

But Mr. Trump cannot undo all the legacy with a magic tweet. U.S. relations with Pakistan and China took shape during the Cold War. Pakistan might be the longest ally of the U.S. after the U.K., first in the fight against communism, and then in the fight against terror that was created in the first fight.



India-U.S. relations will be better off without hype and grand theories

China used the Cold War to its own advantage in its ties with the U.S.

China today threatens the dominance of the U.S., but the America's security establishment and political elite are obsessed with Russia. India gets caught in that internal American fight too, such as in the case of an American law that now requires the President to impose sanctions on any country that has significant security relations with Russia.

Mr. Trump sees the challenges posed by China, but not in a manner helpful for India. For, India and China are in the same basket for Mr. Trump on many issues that agitate him. He has repeatedly mentioned India and China in the same breath as countries that duped his predecessors on climate and trade deals. His administration considers India and China as violators of intellectual property laws, as countries that put barriers to trade and subsidize exports and use state power to control markets. The nationalists in the Trump administration, including U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross and White House National Trade Council Director Peter Navarro are all gunning for China, and India is in the same firing line. Many Americans who think that China took the U.S. for a ride - many Democrats among them - suspect that India is trying to do the same thing.

But there are two constituencies in the U.S. that promote India against China: the Pentagon and the U.S. arms industry. This works to India's favor. While the Obama administration could not overcome State Department objections to offer India even unarmed drones, the Trump administration has done so, offering armed drones. Here, Mr. Trump is not guided by any grand theories of 'rule-based order', etc. that professional strategists talk about, but by the opportunity to sell.

Given Mr. Trump's views on trade, American companies that used to argue China's case are now guarded in their approach. Still, companies such as General Motors and Ford have come out against a trade war with China. This has implications for India too. American companies that eye the Indian market are allies in the pushback against Mr. Trump's nationalist trade policies. Mr. Modi has realized this dynamic that puts India and China in the same corner in Mr. Trump's perspective - and that significantly explains his Wuhan summit

with Chinese President Xi Jinping, the third big leader who is gaming for the glory of his country.

War against legacy

The enlightenment that Mr. Trump purportedly brought on America's Af-Pak policy also appears to have been short-lived. If one looks at the tough messages from Nikki Haley, U.S. Ambassador to the UN, in New Delhi recently on Pakistan and Iran, it is clear where the political priorities of the Trump administration lies. Here again, Mr. Trump is determined to gut his predecessor's legacy, a key component of which was rapprochement with Iran. The war in Afghanistan is the worst optics for Mr. Trump's showman politics, and his administration's approach has been to sweep it under the carpet. The Pentagon has restricted release of data on the war, but a report last month paints a picture of a deteriorating situation. The U.S.'s ability to arm-twist Pakistan has been limited anyway, and Mr. Trump's determination to turn the screws on Iran makes it tougher. National Security Adviser John Bolton, who had advocated bombing Iran, believes that a hardline policy against Pakistan is not desirable.

All told, Mr. Trump might accept Mr. Modi's invitation to be the chief guest at the 2019 Republic Day parade just ahead of the Lok Sabha campaign, triggering another round of commentary on their 'body language' and 'chemistry'. A series of significant defense purchases and agreements could be concluded in coming months. But India-U.S. relations will be better off without hype and grand theories, often encouraged by the government. Otherwise, every rescheduling of a meeting will be interpreted as the collapse of ties. Similarly, avoiding the hyperbole could help manage India's troubles with Pakistan and China better. The U.S. has overlapping interests with China, and India has overlapping interests with both. The trouble with big-chest, small-heart hyper-nationalism in foreign policy is that it also causes short sightedness. The audacity of hype has its limits.

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(Source: The Hindu)

INDEPENDENCE DAY IN THE UNITED STATES

Independence Day is annually celebrated in the US on July 4 and is often known as "the Fourth of July". It is the anniversary of the publication of the declaration of independence from Great Britain in 1776. Patriotic displays and family events are organized throughout the United States.

Independence Day is a day of family celebrations with picnics and barbecues, showing a great deal of emphasis on the American tradition of political freedom. Activities associated with the day include watermelon or hotdog eating competitions and sporting events, such as baseball games, three-legged races, swimming activities and tug-of-war games.

Many people display the American flag outside their homes or buildings. Many communities arrange fireworks that are often accompanied by patriotic music. The most impressive fireworks are shown on television. Some employees use one or more of their vacation days to create a long weekend so that they can escape the heat at their favorite beach or vacation spot.

Independence Day is a patriotic holiday for celebrating the positive aspects of the United States. Many politicians appear at public events to show their support for the history, heritage and people of their country. Above all, people in the United States express and give thanks for the freedom and liberties fought by the first generation of many of today's Americans. The Statue of Liberty is a national monument that is associated with Independence Day.

Public Life

Independence Day is a federal holiday. If July 4 is a Saturday, it is observed on Friday, July 3. If July 4 is a Sunday, it is observed on Monday, July 5. Government offices and schools are closed. Some businesses may be closed as well. In some years, many employees use a proportion of their vacation days to create a long weekend. This can cause congestion in some places, particularly towards popular holiday destinations.

There are many public events, parades, shows and fireworks displays. This may cause local disruption to traffic. Public transit systems do not usually operate on their regular timetables.



About Independence Day

In 1775, people in New England began fighting the British for their independence. On July 2, 1776, the Congress secretly voted for independence from Great Britain. Two days later, on July 4, 1776, the final wording of the Declaration of Independence was approved, and the document was published. The first public reading of the Declaration of Independence was on July 8, 1776. Delegates began to sign the Declaration of Independence on August 2, 1776. In 1870, Independence Day was made an unpaid holiday for federal employees. In 1941, it became a paid holiday for them.

The first description of how Independence Day would be celebrated was in a letter from John Adams to his wife Abigail on July 3, 1776. He described "pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations" throughout the United States.

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However, the term "Independence Day" was not used until 1791.

Interestingly, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, both signers of the Declaration of Independence and presidents of the United States, died on July 4, 1826 - exactly 50 years after the adoption of the declaration. It is also important to note that Native Americans lived in the country and each tribe had its own nation and government prior to the European settlers.

History

July 4, 1776 - The Continental Congress adopts the Declaration of Independence while meeting in Philadelphia at the Pennsylvania Statehouse (now Independence Hall). The Congress declares the American colonies free and independent states. (Note: John Hancock signs on July 4th. The rest sign on August 2, 1776.)

Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Roger Sherman, and Robert R. Livingston comprised the committee that drafted the Declaration. Jefferson, regarded as the strongest and most eloquent writer, actually wrote most of the document. The committee and Congress as a whole made a total of 86 changes to Jefferson's draft.

First two paragraphs of the Declaration of Independence:

"When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds which have connected them with another; and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any form of government becomes destructive to these ends, it



is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness."

Other Facts

- In 2012, fireworks sales by wholesalers totaled \$482.6 million and sales by retailers totaled \$368.6.
- In 2016, the United States imported \$5.4 million in American flags.
- According to the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association, the Fourth of July is the most popular day for barbecuing on a grill.
- In 2017, the National Retail Foundation estimates Americans will spend \$7.1 billion on food for cookouts and picnics to celebrate the Fourth of July.



CONSTITUTION OF AMERICA

The Constitution of the United States established America's national government and fundamental laws, and guaranteed certain basic rights for its citizens. It was signed on September 17, 1787, by delegates to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. Under America's first governing document, the Articles of Confederation, the national government was weak and states operated like independent countries. At the 1787 convention, delegates devised a plan for a stronger federal government with three branches—executive, legislative and judicial—along with a system of checks and balances to ensure no single branch would have too much power. The Bill of Rights were 10 amendments guaranteeing basic individual protections, such as freedom of speech and religion, that became part of the Constitution in 1791. To date, there are 27 constitutional amendments.

ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

America's first constitution, the Articles of Confederation, was ratified in 1781, a time when the nation was a loose confederation of states, each operating like independent countries. The national government was comprised of a single legislature, the Congress of the Confederation; there was no president or judicial branch.

The Articles of Confederation gave Congress the power to govern foreign affairs, conduct war and regulate currency; however, in reality these powers were sharply limited because Congress had no authority to enforce its requests to the states for money or troops.

Soon after America won its independence from Great Britain with its 1783 victory in the American Revolution, it became increasingly evident that the young republic needed a stronger central government in order to remain stable.

In 1786, Alexander Hamilton, a lawyer and politician from New York, called for a constitutional convention to discuss the matter. The Confederation Congress, which in February 1787 endorsed the idea, invited all 13 states to send delegates to a meeting in Philadelphia.

FORMING A MORE PERFECT UNION

On May 25, 1787, the Constitutional Convention opened in Philadelphia at the Pennsylvania State House, now known as Independence Hall, where the Declaration of Independence had been adopted 11 years earlier. There were 55 delegates in attendance, representing all 13 states except Rhode Island, which refused to send representatives because it did not want a powerful central government interfering in its economic business. George Washington, who'd become a national hero after leading the Continental Army to victory during the American Revolution, was selected as president of the convention by unanimous vote.

The delegates (who also became known as the "framers" of the Constitution) were a well-educated group that included merchants, farmers, bankers and lawyers. Many had served in the Continental Army, colonial legislatures or the Continental Congress (known as the Congress of the Confederation as of 1781). In terms of religious affiliation, most were Protestants. Eight delegates were signers of the Declaration of Independence, while six had signed the Articles of Confederation.

At age 81, Pennsylvania's Benjamin Franklin (1706-90) was the oldest delegate, while the majority of the delegates were in their 30s and 40s. Political leaders not in



attendance at the convention included Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) and John Adams (1735-1826), who were serving as U.S. ambassadors in Europe. John Jay (1745-1829), Samuel Adams (1722-1803) and John Hancock (1737-93) were also absent from the convention. Virginia's Patrick Henry (1736-99) was chosen to be a delegate but refused to attend the convention because he didn't want to give the central government more power, fearing it would endanger the rights of states and individuals.

Reporters and other visitors were barred from the convention sessions, which were held in secret to avoid outside pressures. However, Virginia's James Madison (1751-1836) kept a detailed account of what transpired behind closed doors. (In 1837, Madison's widow Dolley sold some of his papers, including his notes from the convention debates, to the federal government for \$30,000.)

DEBATING THE CONSTITUTION

The delegates had been tasked by Congress with amending the Articles of Confederation; however, they soon began deliberating proposals for an entirely new form of government. After intensive debate, which continued throughout the summer of 1787 and at times threatened to derail the proceedings, they developed a plan that established three branches of national government—executive, legislative and judicial. A system of checks and balances was put into place so that no single branch would have too much authority. The specific powers and responsibilities of each branch were also laid out.

Among the more contentious issues was the question of state representation in the national legislature. Delegates from larger states wanted population to determine how many representatives a state could send to Congress, while small states called for equal representation. The issue was resolved by the Connecticut Compromise, which proposed a bicameral legislature with proportional representation of the states in the lower house (House of Representatives) and equal representation in the upper house (Senate).

Another controversial topic was slavery. Although some northern states had already started to outlaw the practice, they went along with the southern states' insistence that slavery was an issue for individual states to decide and should be kept out of the Constitution. Many northern delegates believed that without agreeing to this, the South wouldn't join the Union. For the purposes of taxation and determining how many representatives a state could send to Congress, it was decided that slaves would be counted as three-fifths of a person. Additionally, it was agreed that Congress wouldn't be allowed to prohibit the slave trade before 1808, and states were required to return fugitive slaves to their owners.

RATIFYING THE CONSTITUTION

By September 1787, the convention's five-member Committee of Style (Hamilton, Madison, William Samuel Johnson of Connecticut, Gouverneur Morris of New York, Rufus King of Massachusetts) had drafted the final text of the Constitution, which consisted of some 4,200 words. On September 17, George Washington was the first to sign the document. Of the 55 delegates, a total of 39 signed; some had already left Philadelphia, and three—George Mason (1725-92) and Edmund Randolph (1753-1813) of Virginia, and Elbridge Gerry (1744-1813) of Massachusetts—refused to approve the document. In order for the Constitution to become law, it then had to be ratified by nine of the 13 states.

James Madison and Alexander Hamilton, with assistance from John Jay, wrote a series of essays to persuade people to ratify the Constitution. The 85 essays, known collectively as "The Federalist" (or "The Federalist Papers"), detailed how the new government would work, and were published under the pseudonym Publius (Latin for "public") in newspapers across the states starting in the fall of 1787. (People who supported the Constitution became known as Federalists, while those opposed it because they thought it gave too much power to the national government were called Anti-

Federalists.)

Beginning on December 7, 1787, five states—Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Georgia and Connecticut—ratified the Constitution in quick succession. However, other states, especially Massachusetts, opposed the document, as it failed to reserve undelegated powers to the states and lacked constitutional protection of basic political rights, such as freedom of speech, religion and the press. In February 1788, a compromise was reached under which Massachusetts and other states would agree to ratify the document with the assurance that amendments would be immediately proposed. The Constitution was thus narrowly ratified in Massachusetts, followed by Maryland and South Carolina. On June 21, 1788, New Hampshire became the ninth state to ratify the document, and it was subsequently agreed that government under the U.S. Constitution would begin on March 4, 1789. George Washington was inaugurated as America's first president on April 30, 1789. In June of that same year, Virginia ratified the Constitution, and New York followed in July. On February 2, 1790, the U.S. Supreme Court held its first session, marking the date when the government was fully operative.

Rhode Island, the last holdout of the original 13 states, finally ratified the Constitution on May 29, 1790.

THE BILL OF RIGHTS

In 1789, Madison, then a member of the newly established U.S. House of Representatives, introduced 19 amendments to the Constitution. On September 25, 1789, Congress adopted 12 of the amendments and sent them to the states for ratification. Ten of these amendments, known collectively as the Bill of Rights, were ratified and became part of the Constitution on December 10, 1791. The Bill of Rights guarantees individuals certain basic protections as citizens, including freedom of speech, religion and the press; the right to bear and keep arms; the right to peaceably assemble; protection from unreasonable search and seizure; and the right to a speedy and public trial by an impartial jury. For his contributions to the drafting of the Constitution, as well as its ratification, Madison became known as "Father of the Constitution."

To date, there have been thousands of proposed amendments to the Constitution. However, only 17 amendments have been ratified in addition to the Bill of Rights because the process isn't easy—after a proposed amendment makes it through Congress, it must be ratified by three-fourths of the states. The most recent amendment to the Constitution, Article XXVII, which deals with congressional pay raises, was proposed in 1789 and ratified in 1992.

THE CONSTITUTION TODAY

In the more than 200 years since the Constitution was created, America has stretched across an entire continent and its population and economy have expanded more than the document's framers likely ever could have envisioned. Through all the changes, the Constitution has endured and adapted.

The framers knew it wasn't a perfect document. However, as Benjamin Franklin said on the closing day of the convention in 1787: "I agree to this Constitution with all its faults, if they are such, because I think a central government is necessary for us... I doubt too whether any other Convention we can obtain may be able to make a better Constitution." Today, the original Constitution is on display at the National Archives in Washington, D.C.

INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE IN AMERICAN HISTORY

American history is nothing if not filled with influential people. However, it's important to realize that the honor of having been labeled an influential person is by no means limited to military leaders or presidents. American history is also filled with visionaries and writers, activists and entrepreneurs.

Abraham Lincoln



Lincoln is profoundly famous for his legendary influence on American history. Quite notably, he ended slavery and ushered in our nation's second founding after the Civil War.

George Washington

Everyone knows Washington as the father of the country. America would quite simply not exist without him.



Jefferson was the first to tell us that "all men are created equal," an idea at the root of his profound influence on history and society.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

Roosevelt was responsible for numerous noteworthy foreign and domestic achievements that would change the face of history profoundly.



Alexander Hamilton



Hamilton's legacy as a political scientist, soldier, and banker would eventually lead to America's indisputable establishment as a major industrial force.

Benjamin Franklin

Franklin is considered the father of multiple American trades, including science, writing, invention, and many more.



John Marshall



Marshall is responsible for bringing the judicial branch into equality with the other two federal branches.

Martin Luther King

King is largely considered to be one of American history's most important fighters for racial equality.



Thomas Edison

Although his invention of the lightbulb

would have been reason enough for him to be present on this list, Edison was responsible for numerous inventions that would change history forever.



Theodore Roosevelt



Roosevelt's efforts and accomplishments would go on to set the stage for 20th century America as we knew it.

Ronald Reagan

Truman may have led us into the Cold War, but Reagan led us out of it. He is also the much loved force behind conservative realignment.



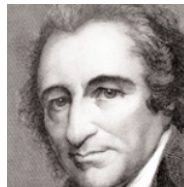
Andrew Jackson



Jackson is directly responsible for taking America from a republic to the democracy it is today.

Thomas Paine

Paine was America's first noteworthy radical, as well as the definitive voice of the American Revolution.



Bill Gates

Bill Gates is widely considered to be one of America's greatest innovators, entrepreneurs, and philanthropists.

America as a world leader

The United States is the world's most powerful country by far, with a globe-spanning network of alliances and military bases. It's practically unrecognizable from the way the country began — and, indeed, what many early Americans thought it would be.

Expansionism was always in America's DNA, as a country founded by the expulsion and slaughter of American Indians. But after America reached the Pacific coast, there was a real debate as to whether it should go further — whether the US should continue its growth as an imperial power beyond North America's shores.

This debate came to the fore after the Civil War, which removed the principal barrier to



expansion (the controversy over whether slavery would be expanded to newly acquired territories). Though the expansionists were initially stymied, they won out for a surprising reason: The Industrial Revolution.

The rapid postwar growth of the US economy required an increasingly centralized state to manage it. The more power that was concentrated in the executive branch and bureaucracy, the easier it was for the president to acquire territories abroad.

This culminated in the Spanish-American war in 1898, which ended with America acquiring a whole lot of different territories around the globe. America was officially a global power, one that intervened in a number of countries, made major diplomatic moves in East Asia, and played a critical role in ending World War I.

The next crucial step, though, came after World War II. The United States was the only country to emerge from the war in strong economic and military shape, and thus was in a unique position to shape the terms of the

peace. The result was a global financial system, called the Bretton Woods system, aimed at coordinating the global economy and preventing another Great Depression — and the United Nations, created to preserve the postwar peace.

Competition with the Soviet Union led the United States to establish its first permanent major non-wartime alliance, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). It also led the United States to grow its military and political presence around the world in an effort to contain the spread of communism, leading to interventions in places like Vietnam and Afghanistan and alliances with countries like Saudi Arabia and South Korea.

After the Soviet Union fell, the US could have chosen to withdraw from these alliances and international commitments. But it didn't, seeing them as critical institutions for preserving peace and prosperity even after the Soviet threat had receded.

So here we are: The United States is the world's most connected and pivotal power, and will remain so.



Kangana Ranaut poses in a bikini on a mag cover

Trust Kangana Ranaut to do things differently. Her most recent cover shoot for Cosmopolitan magazine looks like a continuation of her Mental Hai Kya look and feel. The actor shared a picture on her Instagram page and its vibe is fun and flirty.

Sharing the picture, the actor wrote: "#KanganaRanaut Fierce, Feminist & Brutally Honest On the cover of @cosmoindia July Issue. #cosmopolitan #Queen #cover #Diva."

While one can't speak much about the fierce bit, but 'feminist and brutally honest' it certainly is. For not only is she sporting a bikini (and looking smokin' hot), her outfit has human eyes made on them. The glitter purple print with white, black and yellow colour combination makes it stand out immediately. She has teamed it with a shimmery brown overcoat, lying lazily over her slender shoulders. The actor wears her hair short, in line with her Mental Hai Kya character. A slight hint of red adds to the overall madness.

Her film, Mental Hai Kya, unites her with her Queen co-star Rajkumar Rao. The first-look posters of the film, which were released online a while back, match the title of the film. In them, we saw the duo making faces at the camera. The film is directed by National Award-winner Prakash Kovelamudi and produced by Ekta Kapoor.

DEEPIKA REDEFINES NATURAL BEAUTY ON COVER OF CANADIAN MAGAZINE

After Padmaavat, things are rather quite on Deepika Padukone's work front even as rumour mills work overtime about her November wedding with actor Ranveer Singh. Now, the actor has featured on the cover of a Canadian magazine called SHE Canada. Try looking away as the undisputed queen of Bollywood, Deepika stares at you from the cover.

Sharing the picture, the magazine's Instagram page wrote: "Let us help you take a break from the heat wave by presenting you with our very cool toned issue 4 2018 cover featuring the beautiful @deepikapadukone!"

She is seen wearing a woollen off-shoulder top with her hair tied in what looks like a loose bun. She is holding her super slim necklace in her hand while her nude makeup accentuates her features. Her light brown lipstick adds to her overall allure. Don't miss her coffee-coloured nail polish either.

Deepika hasn't been in news much (barring her flashy Cannes appearance this summer) since the release of Padmaavat. However, news of their impending wedding with Ranveer has been afoot for a while now. The roka (pre engagement ceremony) was reportedly held long back but the wedding date was finalised only some time back.

November 10 suited the calendars of both the actors. Initially, Udaipur was thought of as a possible wedding venue but it didn't work out. Then, there was talk of a destination wedding in Italy, much like Virat Kohli and Anushka Sharma. There is even some talk of the wedding happening in Deepika's home town, Bengaluru.

Meanwhile, the Bollywood duo has amped its PDA quotient. While Ranveer has usually been on an overdrive commenting on posts by Deepika, she too has begun



commenting on his posts, making rather personal comments. On one of his photos, she had written, 'Mine'. Naturally, it went viral.

Sonali Bendre diagnosed with high grade cancer

Bollywood actor Sonali Bendre on Wednesday revealed that she has been diagnosed with cancer. The actor is currently in New York for treatment. Releasing a statement, Sonali, famous for her roles in films like Hum Saath Saath Hain, Sarfarosh, Kal Ho Na Ho, said, "Sometimes when you least expect it, life throws you a curveball. I have recently been diagnosed with high-grade cancer that has metastasized, which we frankly did not see coming. A niggling pain led to some tests, which led to this unexpected diagnosis. My family and close friends have rallied around me, providing the best support system that anyone can ask for. I am very blessed and thankful for each of them."

Adding to it, she said, "There is no better way to tackle this than to take swift and immediate action. And so, as advised by my doctors, I am currently undergoing a course of treatment in New York. We remain optimistic and I am determined to fight every step of the way. What has helped has been the immense outpouring of love and support I've received over the past few days, for which I am very



grateful. I'm taking this battle head-on, knowing I have the strength of my family and friends behind me."

As the actor shared the news on her social media handles, love and best wishes for her speedy recovery started pouring in from

friends, fans and colleagues. Manish Malhotra commented on her Instagram post and wrote, "Wishes and strength and love with you Sonali." Her Hum Saath Saath Hain co-actor Neelam Soni commented, "You are the strongest girl I know. My superwoman." Karan Johar also called the 43-year-old actor a fighter as he wrote, "Godspeed, love and strength to a true fighter and a solid soul!!!!?????"

Vivek Oberoi who co-judged India's Best Dramebaaz with Sonali took to his Twitter handle and wrote, "You are one of the strongest women I know! I admire & respect how u always stood ur ground in the face of adversity...and won! A WonderWoman who does it all-actor,author,mom,wife! An inspiration 2so many!Cancer will surely lose this fight! Our Love & Prayers are with u always!"

Sophie Chaudhary tweeted, "Sending you all the love, strength and prayers to fight this Sonali!! I know you will!! We all love you! ??? @iamsonalibendre."

Karan Johar, Arjun Kapoor, Sonam Kapoor and others send love and strength to Sonali Bendre.



Scarlett Johansson draws criticism for accepting role of transgender man

Actor Scarlett Johansson is drawing criticism for choosing to play the role of a transgender man in an upcoming film, *Rub & Tug*.

According to the Hollywood Reporter, people started criticising the star on social media. They argued that the role should have gone to an actor from the trans community.

Johansson will play the role of Jean Marie Gill, a cisgender, who was assigned female at birth, but assumed the identity of a man, Dante 'Tex' Gill who ran a massage parlour and prostitution business in Pittsburgh in 1970s and '80s.

Amid all the criticism, Johansson justified her role by pointing out that other actors who have played transgender characters in the movie have won awards for all their performances.

American actor Felicity Huffman was nominated for Oscar for playing a transgender woman in *Transamerica* (2005), while Jared Leto won the coveted award for the best supporting actor for playing the role of a transgender woman in *Dallas Buyers Club* (2013).

Source: ANI

MEGHAN MARKLE'S ROYAL WARDROBE COSTS \$1MN



Dressing royal doesn't happen on discount. That's what one can say about Meghan Markle's royal wardrobe, which is estimated to be worth \$1 million.

According to a report, since her engagement to Prince Harry last November, Markle has stepped out in approximately \$1 million worth of clothing and accessories.

Right from her wedding outfit to her custom Givenchy ceremony gown, Markle seems to put her best foot forward when it comes to being royal ready.

Markle, 36, wore her custom Givenchy ceremony gown by Clare Waight Keller clocking in at over \$440,000 and her Stella McCartney reception look worth more than \$157,000. She wore the printed Oscar de la Renta dress to Prince Harry's cousin's wedding retails for almost \$6,000. She wore a \$643 sheer-paneled Goat dress to Prince Charles' garden party.

According to a royal expert, it is Prince Charles who has been picking up the tab for her "working royal wardrobe" post-nuptials.

"Look at the publicity she has brought in run up to the wedding. I would argue that's worth every penny," the expert said. Markle may recycle some of those royal looks in the months to come, in Kate Middleton style. "When you are buying that sort of couture with those sorts of price tags it would be criminal not to re-wear them," the expert added.

Source: IANS

Important to talk to my daughters about sexual harassment I faced, says Jessica Alba

Jessica Alba spoke about the sexual harassment she faced in Hollywood and the actor says it is important to educate people, especially her daughters, about consent.

Speaking on CNN's *Talk Asia*, the 37-year-old actor said she "quickly" learnt how to handle the uncomfortable situation and things did not get worse. "A lot of different situations, I had to learn quickly how to get myself out of them, so it never got to a place, but sure, I've been in lots of different situations," she said.

"That's why it's important for me to talk to my girls about them knowing you have control over your body and over situations you want to put yourself in, and there's warning signs and there's that feeling in your stomach and you have to listen to that feeling, because usually you get that feeling before anything ever happens," she added, admitting that it would be "different" to speak to her son about this.

Alba has two daughters Honor (nine), Haven (six) and six-month-old son, Hayes, with husband Cash Warren. Hollywood is still reeling under the heated



protests and discourse about sexual misconduct, as multiple allegations of abuse and rape continue to surface against disgraced film producer Harvey Weinstein.

The actor said Hollywood is yet to see a "shift" after the #MeToo movement that served as an initiative for women from all walks of life to raise their voice against harassment, but said she has not abandoned hope. "Have I seen more women headlining movies, directing movies, writing movies, producing movies than before, and TV? I don't know if there's been that big of a shift yet, but I think people are at least trying and there's an awareness around it and how imbalanced it really is," she said.

The actor also reflected on teaching her children to be kind and to respect nature. "They have a good life. They have a really good life and I want them to be appreciative, and I also want them to be curious. I think that know-it-alls are the worst, and the second you're not learning, then what's the point?" she said.

Source: PTI

DON'T LET EGO RUIN YOUR RELATIONSHIP

You might not be aware but your ego may be getting in the way or worse, actively destroying your relationship with your loved ones. There is a thin line of difference between what is called self esteem and ego.

Ego has a negative connotation to it. It is the feeling of supreme. It is an attitude of thinking ourselves superior to others. Ego blocks the mind as it gives lot of importance to one's own self and rejecting other personalities and point of views. On the contrary self esteem has the feelings of confidence and self assurance. While in ego the associated feeling is of insecurity and fear.

Therefore it is important to not let ego get in the way and ruin our friendships, love life and family relationships. This can be done by:-

Understanding your own true self

At the bottom of letting go of or controlling your ego is being aware about your true self. Question yourself, what do you love most about yourself? What do you value most? Mind you, this would not easy and will take time, but learn to understand and know your self-worth. Identify your core values and your goals. Don't let others get in the way of that, and you'll realize that your ego need not be destructive.

Remember that you don't have to be always right

It's okay to be wrong. No one is perfect. There are always going to be situations where you make a wrong call, have a wrong attitude, or simply on the wrong side. Learn to understand these situations, and not be afraid to admit that you are wrong. It may be difficult in the beginning, but being able to admit when you're wrong gives a sense of freedom.



Overcome the need to be better than everyone else

An ego out of control leads you to think that you are better than everyone else. Just like remembering that you don't have to be right all the time, understand that you needn't be superior to everyone around you. There will always be someone better, more beautiful, smarter, faster. From infancy to adulthood, this has always been the case.

Instead of competing with others in this way, why not think of making yourself better instead? Focus on how you can improve yourself, and your relationships will fall into place.

Practice tolerance with determination

A huge ego is easily offended, which can easily lead to arguments and even a breakup. In order to let go of your ego, you have to consciously practice tolerance and make it a point to make getting offended the last thing on your mind.

This does not mean that you put aside your sense of self-worth. Instead, it is creating a mindset that people may be different from you and have different ways of expressing themselves.

Practice contentment

Lastly you should set your mind to being content with what you have. Having this mindset can help you cover all of the points above. Knowing that you have what you need, will help you be more open to what others will say and understand how they behave.



AGE DEFYING MAKEUP AND SKINCARE TIPS

While age sneaks up on you, it's best to have a few tricks up your sleeve to keep looking younger. Here are some tips that will conceal and even undo many of the signs of ageing from your face and body, so that you continue to look your youthful best.

Skip heavy foundation

A thick layer of foundation will end up into the cracks, revealing the fine lines you are trying to cover. Begin with a moisturiser followed by a primer and then a light liquid foundation or BB cream. You can also use skin plumping serum after the moisturiser for a youthful glow.

Moisturise the eyelids

While doing your moisturising regimen, include the eyelids. Dry eyelids will show fine lines and will crease your eyeshadow, making the signs of ageing more prominent. Priming your eyelids before applying eye makeup is another way to conceal signs of ageing.

Groom the brows

A good set of eyebrows can make you look young in a jiffy, so take care of them. Find the right brow shape that suits your face. If the eyebrows have become thin or grey, groom them with an eyebrow pencil.

Exfoliate and moisturise the lips

Well moisturised and soft lips not only look youthful, but also make your lipstick perform better. Ensure to exfoliate your lips every two weeks to get rid of loose skin and keep your lipstick from bleeding. Keep your lips moisturised at all times to avoid cracks showing on the lips.

Plum up those lips

Succulent, plum lips are associated with youthfulness. Before applying a lipstick, apply foundation lightly on the lips. Line and fill the lips with a lip liner. Now apply a lip-plumping lipstick or apply a layer of gloss over your regular lipstick for that plumping effect.

Work on tired eyes

Tired looking eyes instantly add years to the face. Get adequate rest and stay hydrated to keep the eyes from looking tired. Apart from that, use cucumber or raw potato slices to rejuvenate the eyes and reduce puffiness.

Diminish dark circles

Dark circles can make you look aged beyond years. Apart from getting enough sleep, use good quality under-eye cream or natural oils like sweet almond oil to dwindle those dark circles and pigmentation under the eyes.

Put volume back in the hair

You might experience hair thinning with age. Give more body to your hair by styling it to look more voluminous. Use rollers to boost the hair volume or give the hair a lift by using a large round brush.

Moisturise your hands and feet

Signs of ageing easily show on the hands and feet in the form of wrinkles. Do not forget to moisturise your hands and feet every day and avoid too much exposure to water and harsh detergents as they can dry out the skin easily.

FOOD CORNER

MUTTON KOFTA

INGREDIENTS

500 gm minced mutton, 1 teaspoon ginger powder, 2 pinches asafoetida, 6 tablespoon vegetable oil, 2 tablespoon gram flour (besan), 1 cup water, 4 clove, 1 1/2 teaspoon red chilli powder, 3 teaspoon aniseed, 3 tablespoon yoghurt (curd), 3 crushed black cardamom, 3 pinches salt, 1/2 teaspoon garam masala powder, 2 bay leaf

Method

- For preparing this yummy mutton recipe, take a large bowl and add minced mutton in it along with the spices - red chilli powder, ginger powder (1/4 teaspoon), aniseed powder (1 teaspoon), asafoetida (1 pinch), yoghurt (1 tablespoon), oil (2 tablespoons), black cardamom seeds, gram flour or besan and half of the salt. Knead well with your hand till the spices are well blended and the mixture starts to grease your hands.
- Make 15 equal portions of the mixture. On a flat greased surface, roll each portion gently into round ball. Put these aside.
- Next, put a kadhai on medium flame and heat 4 tablespoons of oil in it. On the other hand, mix red chilli powder and yoghurt together and make a paste of it.



When the oil is hot enough, add the yoghurt paste and stir briskly. When the oil separates, add the water and stir again. Add the remaining ginger powder, aniseed powder and garam masala powder, asafoetida, cloves, bay leaves, black cardamom skins and the remaining salt into the pan. Cook till the gravy comes to a boil.

Carefully slide in the koftas, one at a time and cook on high flame till the gravy starts to thicken. Lower the flame and cook, stirring gently till the oil separates. When the mutton kofta is cooked completely, serve it hot with rice or butter naan.

BEST SOURCES OF PROTEIN FOR VEGANS



While vegans eliminate meat, eggs, and all animal-based products (including milk) from their diet, it may seem that with limited options available, it would be next to impossible for them to fulfill their daily protein requirement. This essential nutrient is important for body functioning as protein deficiency can lead to serious health conditions. Below are some food types that are protein rich and 'vegan'.

Lentils

Lentils are packed with high-quantity of protein and fibre. Our body requires at least 0.8 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight daily. For example, if you are 60 kgs, your body requires 48 grams of protein

everyday, until and unless specified otherwise. One cup of lentil provides about 18 grams of dietary protein. Try to include one bowl of lentil in your daily diet to meet your protein requirement.

Beans

Be it red kidney beans or black beans, they are enriched with protein. One bowl of kidney or black beans fulfills 13-15 grams of your protein requirement and also contains heart-healthy fiber.

Veggies

Green vegetables are packed with protein. Adding spinach, beans, kale, broccoli and green peas in a vegan diet can fulfill the desired protein requirement.

Tofu

Tofu is prepared by coagulating soy milk and then pressing the resulting curd into soft white blocks. This is another best-protein source for vegans as about 100 grams of tofu provides 9 grams of protein.

Soy-milk

Soy milk is a healthy option for vegan diet. One cup of soy milk provides 8 grams of protein, 4 grams of heart-healthy fats, and phytosterols which aid good heart health.

Hemp seeds

Hemp seeds are enriched with protein and are packed with 13 grams of protein in just 3 tablespoons. You can add hemp seeds in your food to get their healthy benefits.

Eye care facts you must know

Don't take your eyes for granted. Take these easy steps to keep your peepers healthy.

Eat Well

Good eye health starts with the food on your plate. Nutrients like omega-3 fatty acids, lutein, zinc, and vitamins C and E might help ward off age-related vision problems like macular degeneration and cataracts. To get them, fill your plate with:

- Green leafy vegetables like spinach, kale, and collards
- Salmon, tuna, and other oily fish
- Eggs, nuts, beans, and other nonmeat protein sources
- Oranges and other citrus fruits or juices
- Oysters and pork

A well-balanced diet also helps you stay at a healthy weight. That lowers your odds of obesity and related diseases like type 2 diabetes, which is the leading cause of blindness in adults.

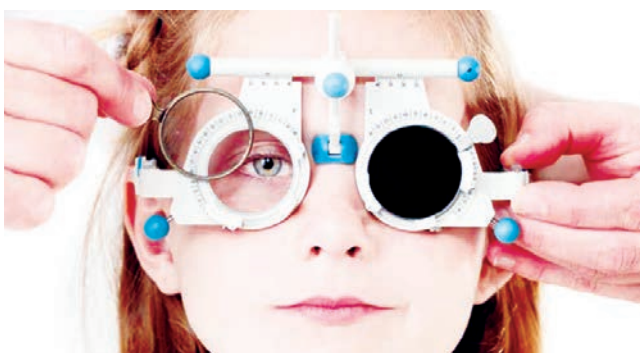
Quit Smoking

It makes you more likely to get cataracts, damage to your optic nerve, and macular degeneration, among many other medical problems. If you've tried to kick the habit before only to start again, keep at it. The more times you try to quit, the more likely you are to succeed. Ask your doctor for help.

Wear Sunglasses

The right pair of shades will help protect your eyes from the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays. Too much UV exposure boosts your chances of cataracts and macular degeneration.

Choose a pair that blocks 99% to 100% of UVA and UVB rays. Wraparound lenses help protect your eyes from the side. Polarized



lenses reduce glare while you drive.

Look Away From the Computer Screen

Staring at a computer or phone screen for too long can cause: Eyestrain, Blurry vision, Trouble focusing at a distance, Dry eyes, Headaches, Neck, back, and shoulder pain

To protect your eyes

- Make sure your glasses or contacts prescription is up to date and good for looking at a computer screen.
- If your eye strain won't go away, talk to your doctor about computer glasses.
- Move the screen so your eyes are level with the top of the monitor. That lets you look slightly down at the screen.
- Try to avoid glare from windows and lights. Use an anti-glare screen if needed. Rest your eyes every 20 minutes. Look 20 feet away for 20 seconds. Get up at least every 2 hours and take a 15-minute break.



Aspirin may reduce Alzheimer's disease: Study

According to a new research, a low-dose aspirin regimen may represent a new avenue for reducing Alzheimer's disease pathology.

A study conducted by Society for Neuroscience stated that impaired clearance of toxic amyloid beta, especially from the hippocampus, is a leading mechanism.

Activating the cellular machinery responsible for removing waste from the brain has therefore emerged as a promising strategy for slowing the disease.

Alzheimer's disease is a fatal form of dementia that affects people of age 65 or above.

Amyloid beta forms clumps called amyloid plaques, which harm connections between nerve cells and are one of the major causes of Alzheimer's disease.

However, it has been found that a link between aspirin and Alzheimer's disease decreases amyloid plaque pathology in mice by stimulating lysosomes.

Lysosomes are the component of animal cells that help clear cellular debris.

The research also established aspirin's uses for pain relief and for the treatment of cardiovascular diseases.

"The results of our study identifies a possible new role for one of the most widely used, common, over-the-counter medications in the world," said Kalipada Pahan, senior author of the study.

The findings are published in the Journal of Neuroscience.

Alzheimer's disease is an irreversible, progressive brain disorder that slowly destroys memory and thinking skills, and eventually the ability to carry out the simplest tasks. In most people with Alzheimer's, symptoms first appear in their mid-60s. Estimates vary, but experts suggest that more than 5 million Americans may have Alzheimer's.

Alzheimer's disease is currently ranked as the sixth leading cause of death in the United States, but recent estimates indicate that the disorder may rank third, just behind heart disease and cancer, as a cause of death for older people. Alzheimer's is the most common cause of dementia among older adults. Dementia is the loss of cognitive functioning—thinking, remembering, and reasoning—and behavioral abilities to such an extent that it interferes with a person's daily life and activities. Dementia ranges in severity from the mildest stage, when it is just beginning to affect a person's functioning, to the most severe stage, when the person must depend completely on others for basic activities of daily living.

Source: ANI

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AIR CONDITIONING COULD ADD TO GLOBAL WARMING WOES, WARNS STUDY

The increased use of air conditioning in buildings could add to the problems of a warming world by further degrading air quality and compounding the toll of air pollution on human health, a study warns.

Researchers from the University of Wisconsin-Madison forecast as many as a thousand additional deaths annually in the Eastern US alone due to elevated levels of air pollution driven by the increased use of fossil fuels to cool the buildings where humans live and work.

"What we found is that air pollution will get worse. There are consequences for adapting to future climate change," said David Abel, lead author of the study published in the journal PLOS Medicine.

The analysis combines projections from five different models to forecast increased summer energy use in a warmer world and how that would affect power consumption from fossil fuels, air quality and, consequently, human health just a few decades into the future.

In hot summer weather, and as heat waves are projected to increase in frequency and intensity with climate change, there is no question that air conditioning does and will save lives, said Jonathan Patz, a professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

However, he cautions that if the increased use of air conditioning due to climate change depends on power derived from fossil fuels, there will be an air quality and human health tradeoff.

The study adds to our understanding of the effects of adapting to climate change by simulating the scope of fossil fuel use to cool buildings under future climate change scenarios, said Tracey Holloway, a professor at UW-Madison.

"Air quality is a big issue for public health," she said, noting that increases in ground-level ozone and fine particulate matter in the air - byproducts of burning fossil fuels and known hazards to human health - will be one result of adding to fossil-fuel power consumption. *Source: PTI*

NASA SET TO TEST 'QUIET' SUPERSONIC FLIGHTS

NASA is set to publicly demonstrate and test a flight manoeuvre that allows jets to travel faster than sound without generating the characteristic sonic boom.

Supersonic flight over land was banned in the US because they generated characteristic loud sonic booms that could sometimes damage buildings.

Using a repurposed fighter jet F/A-18, NASA showed that a diving manoeuvre can be used to generate quiet sonic thumps over a specific area.

An initial test of the research methodology using the F/A-18 was conducted in 2011 with the help of the US military community that lives on base at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

Researchers want to take the show on the road and try the same thing over a community that is not used to sonic booms regularly sounding on any given day the way the Edwards community is.

Using the F/A-18 and its ability to aim quiet sonic thumps at a specific area, teams from Armstrong, Langley Research Center in Virginia, and Johnson Space Center in Texas plan to conduct a series of data-gathering flights over Galveston, Texas, in November this year.

The Gulf Coast city was chosen because it was next to the Gulf of Mexico, which enables the F/A-18 to keep its louder sonic booms (near the dive point) out to sea, while throwing the quieter sonic thumps (far forward of the dive point) at Galveston. At least 500 resident volunteers will be solicited to provide input to a secure web site about what they have heard, if anything, and what they felt about the sound.

CHINA'S BAIDU SET TO LAUNCH SELF-DRIVING BUSES

China's internet giant Baidu today announced that it had begun mass production of the country's first autonomous mini-bus, as the firm prepares to roll them out in tourist spots and airports.

CEO Robin Li watched the 100th vehicle roll off a production line of a factory in the southeastern city of Xiamen.

"2018 marks the first year of commercialisation for autonomous driving. From the mass production of Apolong, we can truly see that autonomous driving is making great strides -- taking the industry from zero to one," said the CEO.

The 14-seater Apolong, about one-third of the size of a normal bus, has no steering wheel, driver's seat, accelerator or brake. Co-produced by Baidu and Chinese bus manufacturer King Long, they will soon be pressed into commercial use in enclosed areas such as tourist areas and airports in several cities including Beijing, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, and the country's new megacity Xiong'an.

Early next year, they are set to enter Japan's self-driving market as shuttle buses at nuclear power stations or in Tokyo to ferry around elderly people in local communities. The vehicles have the "fourth level" of automation as defined by the Society of Automotive



Engineers, meaning they can operate within an enclosed location without human intervention.

This is one short of the highest level, where vehicles can operate anywhere on the road. "I took a self-driving car to come to the developer conference last year, and ended up getting a ticket at (Beijing's) fifth ring road," Li quipped.

Baidu, often referred to as China's Google, operates the country's leading search engine and also invests heavily in services ranging from online payments

to connected devices and artificial intelligence.

"In the past, China exported cheap commodities to the world. In the future, China will export AI technology to the world," Li said at the firm's annual AI developer conference. He also announced a new AI chip called Kunlun at the conference, which can support a wide range of AI applications including voice recognition, natural language processing and autonomous driving.

Source: PTI

Facebook shuts down Moves, Hello and tbh applications

Facebook has announced it is shutting down its fitness app "Moves", Android app "Hello" and anonymous social media app "tbh". Facebook is deprecating these apps due to low usage, the company wrote in a blog post late on Monday.

Launched in 2014, the fitness app "Moves" was curated to record the daily physical activities of users, including walking, cycling and running. The app would be put to halt on July 31.

The social-networking giant launched "Hello" in 2015 for Android users in Brazil, the US and Nigeria, enabling them to combine information from Facebook with contact information on their phone. "Hello" would shut down in "in a few weeks."

Facebook's product manager Nikita Bier co-founded "tbh", an abbreviated millennial slang expanding into "to be honest" as an anonymous social media app for high school students in the US.

The app was later acquired by Facebook in 2017 and is expected to be put to rest in the coming weeks.

"We know some people are still using these apps and will be disappointed - and we'd like to take this opportunity to thank them for their support," the post added.

Facebook claimed that the user data from all the three apps would be deleted within 90 days. *Source: IANS*



Light is developing a smartphone with five to nine cameras



US-based digital photography company and camera-maker Light is prototyping a smartphone with five to nine cameras that could be capable of capturing a 64-megapixel image, the media reported.

"A camera-maker called Light showed concept and working prototype phones with between five and nine lenses -- yes, nine -- on the back. It says its phone design is capable of capturing 64MP shots, better low-light performance and sophisticated depth effects," The Washington Post reported.

The device is not much thicker than an iPhone X and uses internal processing to stick the photo together.

The company has commissioned Foxconn as an investor and said it would launch the smartphone featuring multiple lenses later this year.

"All those lenses and the processor power required to stitch together all those individual shots don't come cheap. A stand-alone camera from Light with 16 lenses costs \$1,950," the report added.

The company had unveiled the L16 camera -- which uses 16 lenses to capture 52-megapixel images -- back in 2015 and starting shipping it last year.

"The results are impressive, especially when the size of the camera is considered. It's truly pocketable. Yet in the end, consumers want the convenience of a phone with the power of a dedicated camera," TechCrunch reported. *Source: IANS*

Qatar fund buys Sahara-owned Plaza Hotel for USD 600 mn

NEW YORK (TIP): The Plaza Hotel, one of New York's most iconic buildings in which Subrata Roy-led Sahara India group has majority stakes, has been fully acquired by a Qatar government-owned fund for about USD 600 million, according to a media report on Wednesday.

Qatar's state-owned Katara Holding has acquired full ownership of the hotel, including a 75 per cent stake from Subrata Roy-led Sahara India Pariwar for about USD 600 million, according to the Wall Street Journal.

The "surprise buyer" is a hospitality fund that buys and manages hotels around the world for the Qatar government.

Katara bought the 75 per cent stake held by the Sahara Group and the 25 per cent stake from New York real-estate investor Ashkenazy Acquisition Corp. and its partner Saudi Prince al-Waleed bin Talal, it said.

There was no immediate comment available from the Sahara Group.

The deal, which closed on Monday, includes 282 guest rooms and the property's retail space, people familiar with the transaction were quoted as saying in the report.

Qatar, a tiny Gulf nation, is the world's largest exporter of liquefied natural gas. It already owns landmark hotels such as The Savoy and The Connaught in London.

US President Donald Trump, who once compared it to the Mona Lisa, and hotelier Conrad Hilton were previous owners of one of the most iconic landmarks in New York City.



Trump lost the hotel in a bankruptcy. The Plaza Hotel, opened in 1907, is the only hotel listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The report said Katara's purchase marks the latest twist in a long-running global saga surrounding the Plaza Hotel's ownership. In April, a group of investors led by founder of Dubai-based White City Ventures Shahal Khan and Kamran Hakim of the Hakim Organisation, a large private New York landlord, had reached a deal to buy the property.

But about a week later, Ashkenazy and Prince al-Waleed exercised a right as minority owners to match any agreement

to purchase Sahara's majority stake, the WSJ report said.

Sahara acquired its controlling stake in 2012 in a deal that valued the property at about USD 575 million.

The Indian company has been trying to sell the Plaza for years but was never able to complete a deal.

Last year, it hired brokerage firm Jones Lang LaSalle to carry out an auction of the property.

About 50 private-equity firms, foreign governments and other investors had expressed interest in the Plaza Hotel last year, people familiar with the matter say.

Source: PTI

SERVICES SECTOR POSTS ROBUST GROWTH IN JUNE

NEW DELHI (TIP): Following a marginal contraction in May, the services sector returned to growth during June and registered the fastest rate of expansion in a year, supported by robust increase in new business orders, said a monthly survey.

The seasonally adjusted Nikkei India Services Business Activity Index rose from 49.6 in May to 52.6, registering the fastest growth since June 2017.

In PMI parlance, a print above 50 means expansion, while a score below that denotes contraction.

"The service economy returned to expansion territory in June. Encouragingly, the latest performance was the strongest seen in a year, against a backdrop of improving demand conditions," said Aashna Dodhia, Economist at IHS Markit, and author of the report.

Reflecting improved demand conditions, jobs growth picked up from May's five-month low.

"In response to an improvement in demand conditions, service providers raised their staffing levels at a faster pace than in the previous survey period," Dodhia said.

Source: PTI

FRESH BID FOR FORTIS



NEW DELHI (TIP): Malaysia's IHH Healthcare Berhad on Tuesday said it has made a fresh binding offer to the Board of Fortis Healthcare.

The binding offer is valid till July 16, 2018, IHH Healthcare Berhad said in a regulatory filing.

IHH on Tuesday issued a letter to the Board of Fortis "setting out a binding offer, which supersedes and replaces the enhanced revised proposal," it added. The company, however, did not provide any details about the size of the bid.

Source: PTI

Higher oil prices risk to India's growth: Moody's

NEW DELHI (TIP): Higher crude price is a key risk to India's growth, but subsidy reform in petrol and diesel has diminished the risk to sovereign credit profile, Moody's Investors Service said on Wednesday.

As per market polls of 175 investors conducted by Moody's and its affiliate ICRA on 175 last month in Singapore and Mumbai, investors identified higher oil prices as a key risk to growth and said that there are risks to achieving 3.3 per cent fiscal deficit.

The investors also said that the government's PSB recapitalisation package is not sufficient, given the banks have not been able to raise capital as planned.

In its report Moody's said: "Similarly to the views of the poll respondents, we also consider higher oil prices to be a risk to growth, but risks to sovereign credit dynamics from oil has diminished in recent years following subsidy reforms to petroleum and diesel fuel; only liquefied petroleum gas and kerosene oil remain subsidised".

The rating agency said it does not expect oil prices to remain elevated for an extended period, but this possibility



"remains a downside risk".

The price of Indian basket of crude surged from USD 66 a barrel in April to around USD 75 a barrel at present.

With regard to recapitalisation plan for public sector banks, Moody's said although we expect the recapitalisation package to be sufficient to meet the minimum regulatory capital needs, it will be insufficient to support credit growth.

"Banks have not been able to raise new capital from the equity markets as planned under the government's recapitalisation measures," it added.

Poll participants favoured consolidating to five-to-10 public sector

banks from 27 currently, in line with more recent government announcements.

In October last year, the government unveiled a Rs 2.11 lakh crore PSU Bank recapitalisation plan. Of this, Rs 1.35 lakh crore is to come from the sale of recapitalisation bonds. The remaining Rs 76,000 crore will be through budgetary allocation and raising of funds by banks from the markets.

However, contrary to investors' view that achieving fiscal deficit target would be a concern, Moody's said it expects the government to meet its target for the current fiscal, which will end in March 2019.

Source: PTI

VOLKSWAGEN TO INVEST RS 7,900 CRORE IN INDIA

NEW DELHI (TIP): German auto major Volkswagen Group on Monday announced investment of 1 billion euro (around Rs 7,900 crore) between 2019 and 2021 as part of its latest strategy to enhance presence in India which will be led by group firm Skoda Auto.

As part of 'India 2.0' project, Skoda Auto is setting up an engineering design and development centre at Pune besides enhancing capacities at the group's two plants at Aurangabad and Pune. The group will launch a new SUV based on VW's flexible MQB platform by the second half of 2020.

The group has set a target of capturing 5% of the Indian passenger vehicles market by 2025. "We are now investing up to 1 billion euro by 2020-21. This is the biggest investment which we have done in one single market. This is the first and most decisive step," Skoda Auto CEO Bernhard Maier said.

On the R&D centre, he said: "It will be ready by the end of the year...we plan to hire 200-250 engineers to develop cars in India." The group is looking to create up to 5,000 direct and indirect jobs through setting up of the engineering centre and creation of additional capacities in the two plants. "We want to exploit the maximum of our current capacities in Pune and Aurangabad," he said.

Source: PTI



contd from page 1

US-China Trade War Begins

of the US trade representative is in the midst of a public comment period on its list.

The trade war became official after Trump repeatedly said he wanted to reverse the United States' massive trade deficit with China, which rose to about US\$375 billion last year. That number is US\$100 billion higher than China's own calculation.

In an updated list published on June 15, Washington dropped many China-made consumer goods, such as TVs and flat panel screens, and added more intermediary products like semiconductors and plastics, after opposition during a public hearing in May.

The second tariff list, which is still under review, focuses particularly on "Made in China 2025", a Chinese industrial policy aimed at getting ahead in hi-tech industries. It includes electronic integrated circuits and the machines that produce them.

Washington has dropped many China-made consumer goods, such as TVs and flat panel screens, and added more intermediary products like semiconductors and plastics to its tariff list. Photo: Reuters

China struck back in April with a list of US\$50 billion worth of US imports, many of which were agricultural products. Beijing later removed US\$16.3 billion worth of US aircraft from the list and added more food such as fish and nuts.

The primary US goods affected are soybeans and vehicles, while it is mostly Chinese industrial goods hit by US tariffs.

Who bears the brunt of these rounds of tariffs? Eventually consumers.

Analysts said imposing tariffs on Chinese goods such as semiconductors would eventually increase prices for American consumers because they were key components of electronic products. And it's not an easy business decision for US manufacturers to shift sourcing after tariffs are in place.

"Alternative sources do exist for most of the Chinese products on the targeted list, but less expensive products purchased by less affluent consumers are likely to see larger price hikes as manufacturers substitute more expensive parts for Chinese inputs facing tariffs," Mary Lovely, a senior fellow at the Washington-based Peterson Institute for International Economics, wrote.

"These consumers may not see much difference in performance due to one higher-quality part, but they are likely to see a difference at the cash register."

Chinese consumers, on the other hand, could pay higher prices for imported seafood and fruit.

It is just the beginning. What happens in the longer run will impact economic policies of many countries across the world.

EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt Resigns in the face of ethics issues

Pruitt's deputy at the EPA, Andrew Wheeler, will serve as the agency's acting administrator starting Monday, President Trump said in a tweet.

"I have no doubt that Andy will continue on with our great and lasting EPA agenda," Mr. Trump tweeted. "We have made tremendous progress and the future of the EPA is very bright!"

Donald J. Trump

?

@realDonaldTrump

I have accepted the resignation of Scott Pruitt as the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. Within the Agency Scott has done an outstanding job, and I will always be thankful to him for this. The Senate confirmed Deputy at EPA, Andrew Wheeler, will...

3:37 PM - Jul 5, 2018

Pruitt had been the subject of a seemingly endless deluge of stories about his behavior and spending practices. It began

earlier this year when it was revealed that Pruitt had rented a room at a favorable rate from a well-connected energy lobbyist. Pruitt's lavish spending on his own security then came under scrutiny, as did his decision to install a \$43,000 private phone booth in his office. There were also allegations that Pruitt had created a toxic professional atmosphere at the EPA that penalized his critics.

Pruitt said his decision to leave the EPA was a hard one in his resignation letter to Mr. Trump.

"It is extremely difficult for me to cease serving you in this role first because I count it a blessing to be serving you in any capacity, but also, because of the transformative work that is occurring," Pruitt wrote. "However, the unrelenting attacks on me personally, my family, are unprecedented and have taken a sizable toll on all of us."

Mr. Trump defended Pruitt Thursday evening while speaking to reporters on Air Force One. He said there was "no final straw" and that he had not requested Pruitt's resignation.

"Scott Pruitt did an outstanding job inside of the EPA," the president said. "We've gotten rid of record breaking regulations and it's been really. You know, obviously, the controversies with Scott -- but within the agency we were extremely happy. His deputy has been with me actually a long time. He was very much an early Trump supporter. He was with us on the campaign. He is a very environmental person. He's a big believer, and he's going to do a fantastic job."

The government had launched numerous investigations and probes into Pruitt's behavior, although he continued to insist that he had done nothing wrong. At the time of Pruitt's resignation, the EPA inspector general was looking into his protective service detail, his traveling at taxpayer expense, and the allegedly excessive raises he gave to some members of his staff. Swamped by requests and stretched thin by the sheer number of audits into Pruitt, the EPA inspector general had also agreed to look into his housing arrangements and allegations that he had staff members perform his personal errands, among other issues.

Pruitt is the fifth member of Mr. Trump's cabinet to resign or be fired since he took office. The others were former Acting Attorney General Sally Yates, former Health and Human Services secretary Tom Price, former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, and former Veterans Affairs secretary David Shulkin.

(Source: CBS News)

Indian appointed head of top Chinese biz institute

of Marketing and Global advisor at CEIBS. He is a globally recognized marketing and innovation expert whose insights have inspired a generation of business leaders to pursue success with significance. Dr. Jain's influential career spans nearly four decades as an educator, a senior business school administrator, and a consultant to corporations and governments. Throughout his career, he had furthered a pedagogical model that combines academic excellence and business relevance to produce high-impact results with social significance.

Prior to being named Sasin's Director in 2014, he served from 2011 to 2013 as Dean of INSEAD, an international business school with campuses in France, Singapore and Abu Dhabi. Before joining INSEAD, Dr. Jain was Dean of Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management from 2001 to 2009. In recognition of his many scholarly achievements and outstanding teaching, he also was named the Sandy and Morton Goldman Professor of Entrepreneurial Studies and Professor of Marketing at Kellogg, whose Marketing Department he joined as a faculty member in 1986.

Dr. Jain's academic career began as a student in Tezpur, Assam India. He earned his bachelor's degree in statistics (1976) with Honors from Gauhati University, where he taught for four years before enrolling in the University of Texas (Dallas), where he completed his Ph. D in Marketing in 1986.

An award-winning scholar in his own right, Dr. Jain's areas of research expertise include the marketing of high-tech products; market segmentation and competitive market structure analysis; cross-cultural issues in global product diffusion; new product innovation; and forecasting models. He has published more than 60 articles in leading academic journals and has earned the prestigious John D.C. Little Best Paper Award. Among the many distinctions for his teaching and service, Dr. Jain received the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman from the Prime Minister of India, an award that recognizes exceptional leadership contributions of overseas Indians.

Jain, a former dean of two of the world's leading business schools, the Kellogg School of Management and INSEAD, will work alongside his Chinese counterpart Li Mingjun. Brought up in Assam, Jain, who lives in Chicago and works in Shanghai for 10 to 15 days each month, has been teaching

marketing at CEIBS since September last year when he took on the president-designate role.

(With inputs from CEIBS)

ISIS claims suicide bomb attack on Sikhs and Hindus in Afghanistan

Sikhs and Hindus face discrimination in the conservative Muslim country and have been targeted by Islamic extremists in the past, leading many to emigrate. The community numbered more than 80,000 in the 1970s, but today only about 1,000 remain.

Under Taliban rule in the late 1990s, they were told to identify themselves by wearing yellow armbands, but the dictate was not wholly enforced. In recent years, large numbers of Sikhs and Hindus have sought asylum in India, which has a Hindu majority and a large Sikh population.

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani arrived in Jalalabad earlier on Sunday to open a hospital, part of a two-day visit to the province bordering Pakistan.

Mr Ghani's spokesman said the president was still in Nangarhar but was "away from danger".

The attack came a day after Mr Ghani ordered Afghan security forces to resume offensive operations against the Taliban following the expiry of the government's 18-day ceasefire.

The government's unilateral truce overlapped with the Taliban's three-day ceasefire for Eid, but the militants refused to prolong it.

The unprecedented ceasefire over the holiday capping Ramadan triggered spontaneous street celebrations involving Taliban fighters, security forces, and war-weary civilians.

ISIS, which has an affiliate in the province, was not part of the ceasefire. The group fights both government forces and the Taliban, which has shown no sign of letting up its campaign of violence.

Houston based entrepreneur Amit Bhandari donates \$50,000 to Ekal's Digital Literacy Program

Speaker Sumitra Mahajan. Amitwasimpressed by how "coachable and open to learning the children were."

However, this isn't the first time the Bhandaris have opened their checkbook. They support the Jain Society of Houston, donated six acres of land for the Gujarati Samaj center in Houston, wrote a quarter million dollar check to Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner's Fund for Hurricane Harvey relief work, paid off the loans of a temple in Phoenix and raised \$3 million for Magic Bus, an NGO that is deeply personal to them and aims to bring children out of poverty through a unique sports based curriculum.

Amit attributes this empathy to his modest upbringing. He is a native of Indore, Madhya Pradesh. His parents were professors but the family was always stretched financially. Despite this, his parents supported a handicapped school and were always ready to provide a helping hand.

Amit's entrepreneurial leanings kicked in as early as middle school when he and a friend made paper bags and sold them to local vendors. At 17, he was accepted in the Rotary Student Exchange Program and attended High School in Hicksville, Ohio. America turned out to be "a tremendous experience" so much so that he got his aunt to sponsor his green card. He headed to Drexel University in Philadelphia for Chemical engineering and footed his tuition by waiting on tables. The job was a formative lesson in "time management, juggling priorities and dealing with people."

The engineering degree landed him a job at ExxonMobil but Amit's afterhours were spent scouting for a good business idea. He plunked his savings into a daycare, rental properties and a convenience store and in 2006, started his own company BioUrja (Urja in Hindi means energy.) The company trades in ethanol, petroleum products, crude oil, grains, metal tubing for the oil production sector and now renewable energy. It is ranked as one of the most successful companies in Texas.

There's parental pride in his voice when he talks of his daughter and son who spent weeks as Magic Bus Youth Leaders in slums and villages engaging with the children. The experience moved Aanya, 16, to present a paper at the United Nations outlining ways of providing nutritious food and educating farmers on employing better agricultural methods. Ansh, 14, on his part, is looking forward to spending more of his summers supporting Magic Bus programs worldwide.





Shree Ganeshaya Namah

Bejan Daruwalla is world's most famous astrologer today. He appears regularly on world wide TV shows. Bejan who has been a professor in English, has authored a number of books on astrology. India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi , on March 29, 2012, lunched one of Bejan's books, '2012- End of the World? Bejan contributes to a number of journals and newspapers in many parts of the world which include Berkley Communications (London) Times of India (Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai) and The Indian Panorama (New York and Texas). Bejan's predictions have mostly been correct and people the world over rely on his predictions.



Bejan Daruwalla is available for astrological consultations. He can be reached at info@bejandaruwalla.com and on phone **011-91-8141234275 www.bejandaruwalla.com**

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE JULY 9 TO 15, 2018

Aries:

Ganesha says from the first period of concentrating on money and acquisitions, you turn your attention to family and intimate bonding. You are also deeply attached to your family, and your parents and siblings mean the world to you. You know that the family can be well looked after if you earn well and so - family and finance - go hand in hand. You make extra efforts to secure the financial aspects for your extended family and look for new avenues of investment and expansion. You will tap the markets and indulge in speculation with some success, too. (I must add here that a lot depends on the individual horoscopes and these are mere generalizations; and also remind you of the fact that the stars impel and don't compel.

Taurus:

Your life acquires a new intensity and tempo. You are on the fast track to success and even the fastest escalator is too slow. There may be a few delays and impediments, but you manage to get over all that with some breathtaking risk-taking ability. This is a period of unmitigated passion with your loved one. You find joy in intimacy and you move from physical pleasure to super consciousness and that, I must add, is quite a remarkable journey.

Gemini:

After all the initial expansion and money making, you enter a world of new ideas and inspirations. You also entertain and have fun at social gatherings. It is not that you are not working, but meetings also help you network and make the right connections. You are less driven now and enjoy lighter moments with friends and family. You have to guard against depression, though, as there will minor irritants and they will plunge you into deep thinking mode.

Cancer:

This is a period of consolidation. You will be making contacts with all sorts of people, you will be in a frenzy of communication, reaching out to everyone. You make valuable contacts and your business/work grows. You make money, with the right decisions at the right time and are prudent enough to invest the extra in gilt edged securities and also in purchases that make good money sense. There is travel, an upswing in your prestige.

Leo:

You get encouraged by the good times and pitch in for more expansion. You think big and take risks like a gambler at Las Vegas. You are also in the throes of a new relationship and it is going well. Remember that there is the force of gravity and the higher you go, the harder you can fall. So, it's good to spread out and be on a high but don't over-extend yourself either physically and financially. If fortunes change (and you never know what happens when) you will fall flat on your face. You also get a tad arrogant and feel that you are the beginning and end of all life forms.

Virgo:

You are moving in many directions and the force is with you. You are doing too much too soon. You are also travelling and meeting people. Sometimes, you get too frank, blunt and outspoken and this will not help your cause one bit. You will also spend recklessly and indulge in all forms of speculation and gambling. There is new romance, attachments, love affairs and you revel in it. If in love, you could take it to the next level. All in all, an expansive period in which many things happen to you.

Libra:

You slow down a bit and think issues over. You have to deal with mounting expenses and are mired in your own doings of the last period. You look for more meaning in whatever you do and take recourse in spiritual books perhaps, even gods and godmen. But there is more than intellectual movement; you move physically too, on business and for pleasure. You look at inner growth and greater knowledge which you realize will help you achieve.

Scorpio:

You are communicating frenetically this period. Local and domestic affairs will occupy your attention and set off a great deal of action, though it may not always be to your liking or inclination. There will be intrusions from others which you should guard against. You have been moving fast and in different directions. Prioritize your life and don't scatter your energies like you have been doing for some time now. The home environment needs attention.

Sagittarius:

You streamline all your activities. You look to others for help in this and it is a welcome move as the world wants to help someone who is keen on doing so. No one likes losers, and you like to be a winner in the game of life and not a whiner. You have many accomplices now who will also, later, want a share in the pie. You are never winners. You make changes in the basics and let go of old dependency needs or crutches which may have helped you stay afloat in the past. You have a lot of self-belief now and your relationships are revitalized. There are promises of long-term stability.

Capricorn:

Once again, you seek out avenues for more money as it means recognition, power and security in your lexicon. I do not say that it is not true, but an overemphasis on money may well be your undoing in the long run. You work hard and are motivated to move heaven and earth to achieve your goals. There will be a lot of stress and you need to take care. Family, loved ones, children, parents, in-laws and all the others in your extended family demand your time and you will be walking the tightrope. A tense period.

Aquarius:

There is outstanding success in store for you. You are determined and all fired up and move in the right direction with panache. You weed out all that you don't need which includes friends who don't mean well and other pretenders. Your attitude is right and you have an infectious optimism which will ensure that you get your point across without ruffling feathers. Family bonding will also be pleasing, fulfilling and there are promises of success and joy in all areas of your life. You make steady progress and squash all rivalry before it turns ugly and disastrous.

Pisces:

While the work areas is moving along smoothly, you also make some personal conquests. You are more creative and attract many like-minded people who will collaborate with you both at work and at play. You pave the path to success with concrete results. Your work skills are sharpened, and your personal equation enhanced. You have laid the foundation and it is time to work on them and reap the dividends. With the right attitude and the hard work that you put in, there is no room for failure.

WORLD CUP 2018: THE ELITE 8



KYLIAN MBAPPE

SAINT PETERSBURG (TIP): Just 8 teams remain from the 32 who started the World Cup in Russia.

Look how each side are placed ahead of the quarterfinals on Friday and Saturday.

Uruguay

One of only two teams to win all 4 games so far, Uruguay boasts one of the meanest defenses in Russia marshalled by talismanic captain Diego Godin, and a lethal strikeforce in Edinson Cavani and Luis Suarez.

Cavani's fitness is the big concern ahead of Friday's meeting. The Paris Saint-Germain striker limped off with a calf injury after scoring twice to end Cristiano Ronaldo and Portugal's World Cup dreams in the last 16.

France

After cruising through the group stage in underwhelming fashion, France kicked through the gears thanks to Kylian Mbappe's blistering pace to blow Argentina away in a 4-3 World Cup classic in the last 16.

A very different task awaits in breaking through Uruguay's brick wall of a defense that will not allow Mbappe the same space to exploit. But as legs start to tire in the latter stages, France's strength in depth could start to make the difference.

Brazil

Along with Uruguay, Brazil shares the best defensive record, having conceded just once in 4 games so far and are slowly starting to hit their stride at the other end of the field too as Neymar struck his second goal of the tournament in the last 16.

After a disappointing 1-1 draw against Switzerland, 2-0 wins over Costa Rica, Serbia and Mexico have taken Brazil into a 7th straight quarterfinal and they remain the favorites to erase the scars of a humiliating 7-1 semifinal thrashing at the hands of Germany 4 years ago.

Belgium

Belgium will be the true test of how good the Brazilian back line is in Kazan on Friday, but coach Roberto Martinez has some big decisions to make after a stunning comeback from 2-0 down in the final 21 minutes avoided a shock exit to Japan in the last 16.

Japan picked the holes in Martinez's attack-minded 3-4-2-1 system and the Red Devils had to rely on their superior physical power in the latter stages with Jan Vertonghen and

Marouane Fellaini heading home before Nacer Chadli completing the comeback at the end of a stunning counter-attack.

Martinez must now find the right balance to harness the best from Kevin De Bruyne, Eden Hazard and Romelu Lukaku without leaving Belgium exposed.

Sweden

They are not the prettiest side, but Sweden is extremely effective and happy to play the role of underdog, having seen off the Netherlands and Italy in qualifying and Germany in the group stages.

Their run to the last 8 for the first time since 1994 has been built on 3 clean sheets in 4 games, but while hard to break down, they lack a potent force up front.

England

Freed from the curse of the penalty shootout after they beat Colombia from the spot, England will be favorites to reach a first World Cup semifinal since 1990.

For 92 minutes in Moscow, the Three Lions kept their cool as Colombia lost theirs and played with a patience in possession rarely seen by England sides in recent years.

Yerry Mina's stoppage-time header threatened to change all that, but a first World Cup win on penalties in 4 attempts gives Gareth Southgate's men reason to believe this time really will be different.

Russia

The hosts have delighted their public by surpassing all expectations to make it to the last 8 thanks to a stunning penalty shootout elimination of 2010 winners Spain.

Russian players were on their knees in exhaustion after defending for 120 minutes in Moscow with just 26 percent possession and they must now summon another huge physical effort, with Croatia expected to dominate the ball once more.

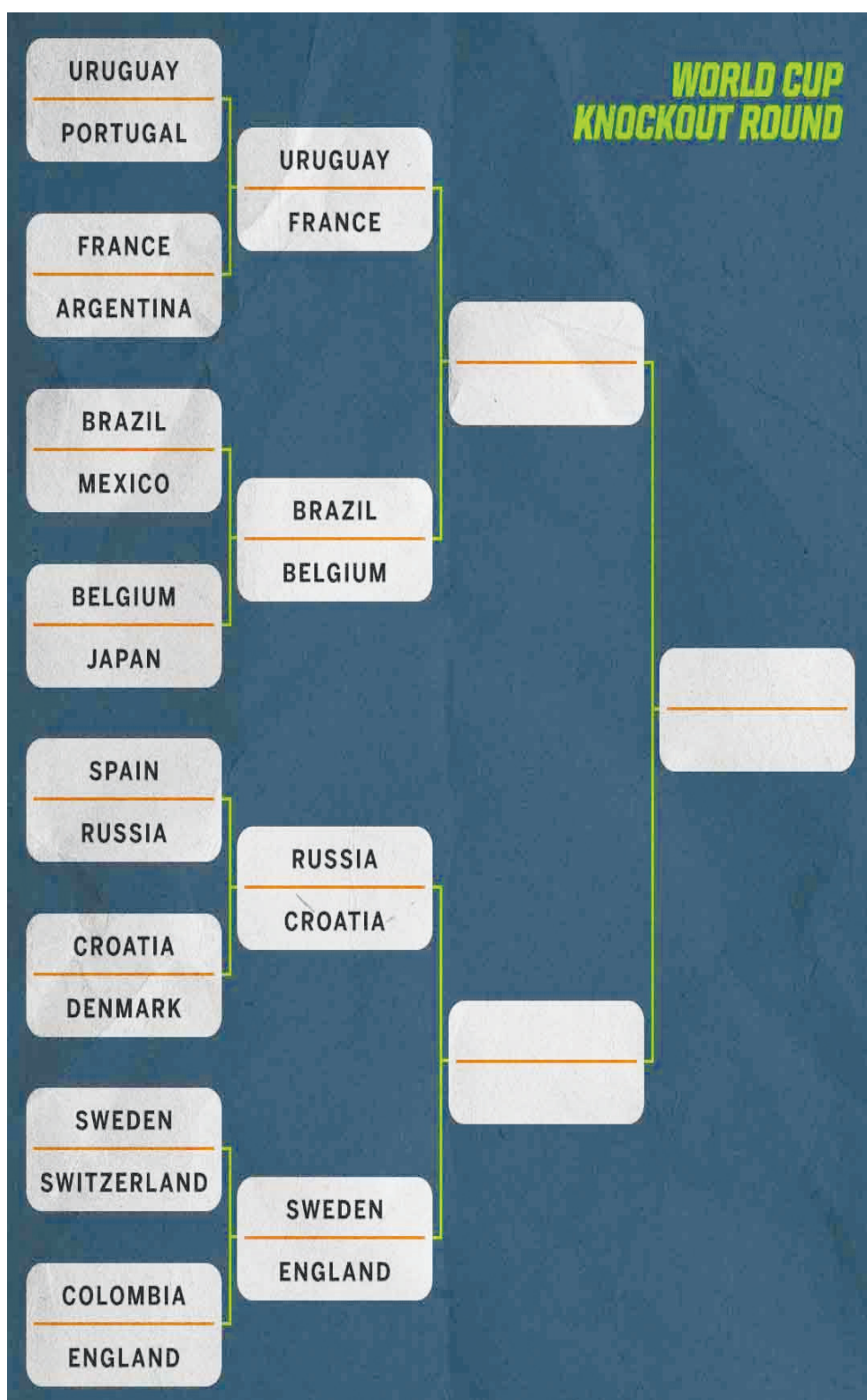
Croatia

Arguably the outstanding performers of the group stage, Croatia was made to suffer to make it past Denmark on penalties.

Luck often has not accompanied Croatia in the knockout stages after bright tournament starts, but having bounced back from the blow of Luka Modric's missed penalty 4 minutes before the end of extra time in the last 16, the time for a highly talented generation may have come.



LUIS SUAREZ



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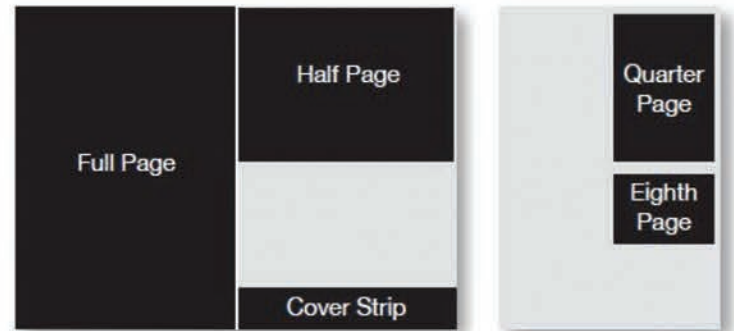


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