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Kabhi kisi ko Mukammal jahan nahin milta - Nida Fazli

Noted poet and lyricist Nida Fazli, 78, passed away in Mumbai following a heart attack.

Nida Fazli was born in Delhi to a Kashmiri family and he had attended school in Gwalior. His father was also an Urdu poet. During the partition, his parents migrated to Pakistan, but Fazli decided to stay in India.

He was known among fans and singers for his elegant presentation of ghazals, dohaas and nazms.

Nida Fazli wrote the title song of TV serials like 'Sailaab', 'Neem ka Ped', 'Jaane Kya Baat Hui' and 'Jyoti'. The composition "Koi Akelaa Kahaan" is another popular composition sung by Kavita Krishnamurthy. He also worked with late ghazal singer Jagjit Singh in 1994 and together they brought out an album 'Insight', which got appreciation for its soulful poetry and music.

nidafazlijagjitsingh

He has also written famous ghazals 'kabbie kisi ko mukamil jahan na milta' (ahista ahista), 'Aa bhi jaa, aa bhi jaa' (Sur), 'Tu Is Tarah Se Meri Zindagi Mein' (Aap To Aise Na The), 'Hosh Waalon Ko Khabar Kya' (Sarfarosh).

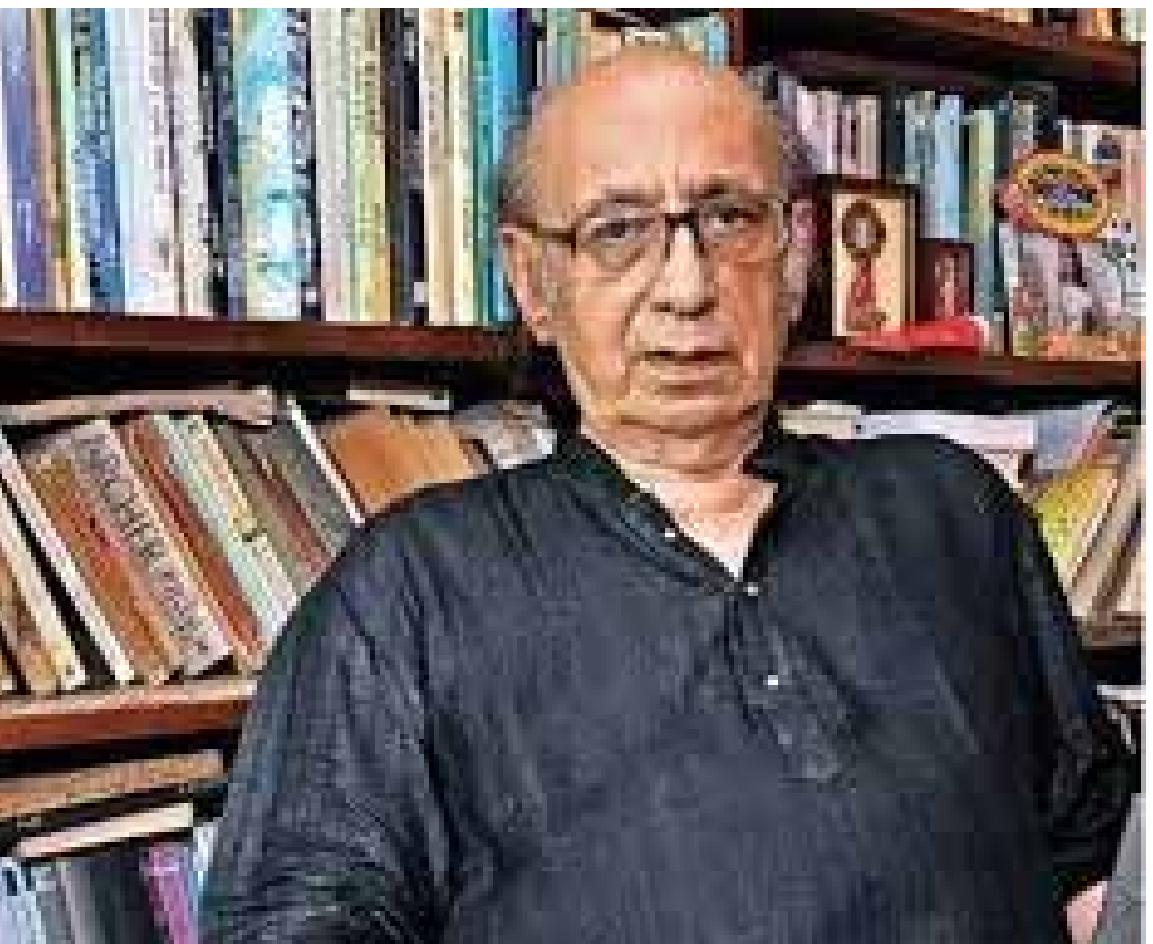
Fazli's daughter confirmed the poet's demise, a member of the organising team of upcoming Urdu festival Jashn-e-Rekhta told IANS. Fazli was a key guest at the festival.

Sanjiv Saraf, founder of Rekhta Foundation, said that Fazli's death has "left a space that can never be filled".

"Nida Fazli gave expression to the angst of the common people in simple but aesthetically powerful and nuanced language. His dohas enjoyed great popularity," Saraf said. Filmmaker John Mathew Matthan, who directed "Sarfarosh" — the movie which featured "Hosh-walon ko khabar kya" penned by Fazli, told IANS: "It's a great loss for this film industry. He was such a renowned poet. Coincidentally, today is also Jagjit Singh's birth anniversary and I have worked with both of them in my film 'Sarfarosh'." On Twitter, a string of film celebrities condoled Fazli's death and recounted some of his works. Here's what they said:

Lata Mangeshkar: Aaj mashhoor Shayar Nida Fazli sahab ka inteqal hua is baat mujhe bahut dukh hai. Allah unhe jannat ataa farmaaye ye meri dili dua.

Acclaimed director Mahesh Bhatt was shocked when we broke the news of the death of famous poet and lyricist Nida Fazli. Mahesh Bhatt, who had worked with Fazli many times in the past, fondly remembered the legendary lyricist as a



realist and one of the greatest poets of all times who was highly concerned about the general public apathy towards Urdu. Speaking exclusively to IndianExpress.com, Mahesh Bhatt said, "When you told me that he had passed away, the first thing that flashed in my mind was the extraordinary song that he had written for Pooja's (Bhatt) first film

which she had produced called Tamanna Ghar se Masjid hai Bahut Door. That was the first sound that echoed in my consciousness when I heard this tragic news."

देखा हुआ सा कुछ है तो सोचा हुआ सा कुछ
हर वक्त मेरे साथ है उलझा हुआ सा कुछ

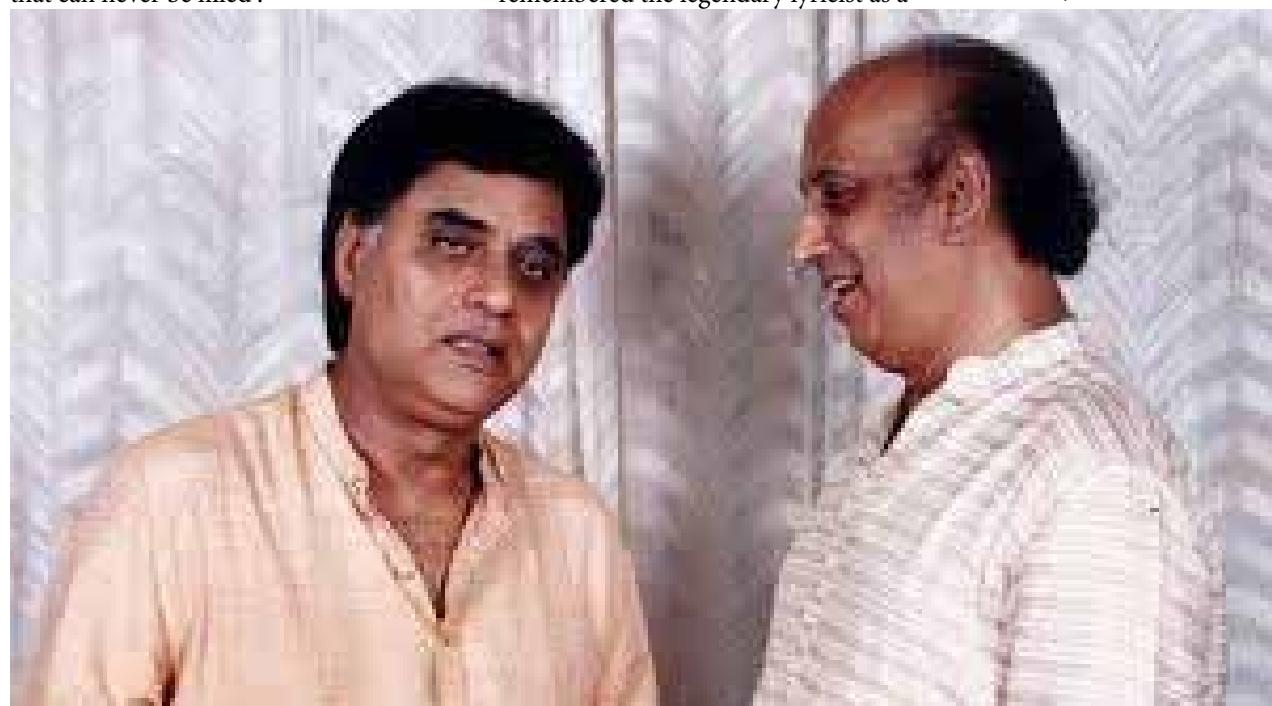
होता है यूँ भी रास्ता खुलता नहीं कहीं
जंगल-सा फैल जाता है खोया हुआ सा कुछ

साहिल की गिली रेत पर बच्चों के खेल-सा
हर लम्हा मुझ में बनता बिखरता हुआ सा कुछ

फुर्सत ने आज घर को सजाया कुछ इस तरह
हर शय से मुस्कुराता है रोता हुआ सा कुछ

धूँधली सी एक याद किसी कब्र का दिया
और मेरे आस-पास चमकता हुआ सा कुछ

Nida Fazli



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Martina Hingis, left, of Switzerland and Sania Mirza of India hold their trophy after defeating Czech Republic's Andrea Hlavackova and Lucie Hradecka in the women's doubles final at the Australian Open tennis championships in Melbourne, Australia. Photo: AP

In a perfect climax to their stupendous run, Sania Mirza and Martina Hingis were on Friday crowned the Australian Open women's doubles champions after they tamed the spirited Czech duo of Andrea Hlavackova and Lucie Hradecka in straight sets for their 36th win in a row, here.

The top seeds fought past the seventh seeds Andrea Hlavackova and Lucie Hradecka 7-6 (1) 6-3 in the women's doubles final that lasted one hour and 45 minutes.

It was their third consecutive Grand Slam title for Sania and Martina, having won the Wimbledon and US Open in the 2015 season.

In an incredible feat, Sania and Martina have now extended their unbeaten run to 36 matches, winning eight titles in a row. They won five straight titles in 2015, starting from the US Open and before the Australian Open now.

It was Sania's second title at the Australian Open, having won the mixed doubles in 2009 with Mahesh Bhupathi.

The final though was not a stroll in the park for the world number one team with the Czechs putting up a great fight in the opening set. The match was littered with breaks

with the two teams struggling to hold serve throughout.

Hlavackova was excellent from the baseline and Hradecka was terrific at the net, playing some breathtaking shots and winners.

The top seeds though had enough resources in their kitty to blunt the challenge of the Czech girls.

"I would like to thank everyone for coming out and supporting us. For me Australian Open is special, it's like home. I have special memories here. We had an incredible one year. Martina is an amazing champion and an amazing person, so it is a privilege for me to play with her," Sania said.

"We know how good you are (Czech team). We lost to you at Roland Garros. Hopefully we will have more finals to fight for," Sania said.

Martina was equally effusive in her praise for the Czechs.

"They pushed us to the limit. It was a tough tournament. We will try to defend our title next year."

In the opening set, the two pairs could manage to hold serve only twice each as it was full of breaks.

Hradecka ran frantically to her left

from the net and smashed one volley past Sania off Martina's return and then the Swiss served two consecutive double faults to hand the Czechs an early break.

The top seeds had three break chances in the next game — the fourth — on Hlavackova's serve but the Czech team saved all.

Martina earned a fourth at deuce with a volley and converted that with a forehand passing winner.

A double fault by Sania at 30-40 gave the break back to the Czech players, who were now leading 3-2.

Hradecka sent a forehand long to give the top seeds a breakpoint and netted a backhand to make it 3-3.

There was no end to breaks with Martina dropping her serve next. Hlavackova's unreachable backhand lob gave the Czechs a breakpoint and the Swiss sent a forehand wide.

Hlavackova's long forehand at 30-40 meant that Sania and Martina had a break chance but Martina's return just landed wide and it was deuce.

The top seeds though made it 4-4 with Hlavackova's consecutive forehand errors from the baseline.

Sania went down 0-40 in the next game but saved all three break chances. A forehand to net by Sania at deuce point and the top seeds were facing another break chance but managed to save that.

Another break chance and this time the Czechs converted to lead 5-4. The seventh seeds came out to serve out the set but were broken.

Martina finally held her serve in the 11th game and the top seeds led 6-5, this time not allowing the Czechs to convert break opportunities.

Eventually the Czechs too held and it boiled down to a tiebreak in which the top seeds trampled their opponents, losing just one point, to pocket the opening set.

They broke Hradecka in the very first game of the second set and never looked back after that. Though Martina was broken in the sixth game but the favourites broke back for a 5-2 lead.

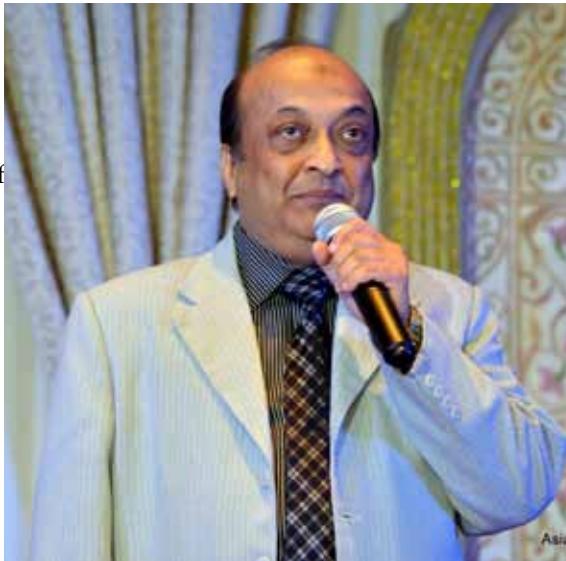
There was more drama as Martina was broken in the eighth while serving for the match and they squandered three match points in the ninth game on Hradecka's serve.

Sania and Martina finally closed the championship in their favour on the fourth chance

Iftekhar Shareef Released the Trailer of Hyderabadi Landmark Film, "Dawat-e-Shaadi", in Chicago

Asian Media USA ©

Chicago IL: Iftekhar Shatreef, an eminent Businessman and Community Leader, released trailer of the upcoming Hyderabadi film, 'Dawat-e-Shaadi', in the presence of a number of eminent persons from different walks of life, on January 08, 2016 at Monty's Elegant Banquets, 703 S York Rd, Bensenville, IL Chicago. The film, which has been shot in the beautiful and aristocratic locations of Paigah Palace Begumpet, is a hilarious situation-based comedy and gripping love story in the backdrop of the traditional weddings of Hyderabad.



Iftekhar Shareef said that while "Dawat-e-Shaadi" is devoid of vulgarity, it guarantees a heavy dose of high-voltage entertainment and hard-hitting punches, which will be enjoyed by the entire family. "The non-stop laughter ride and the subtle message to the audience would result in a positive word-of-mouth publicity to the film", he added.

"It is a moment of pride that 'Dawat-e-Shaadi', is being distributed and released by Rajshree Productions under its banner in February 2016, with a big bang", said Syed Hussain, Director of the film.

"The release of our film by Rajshree Productions, which has produced a number of blockbusters in India, will take the Hyderabadi cinema up a notch like never before and catapult it into the higher echelons of film appreciation, added Hussain, with a sense of accomplishment.

"While the Hyderabadi Film Industry has been confining itself, since its inception in 2005, to making small budget films for niche market, 'Dawat-e-Shaadi' is pioneering in nature and first of its kind, considering the fact that it is a Bollywood-type big-budget film which is rich in terms of exquisite quality, pan-India appeal, breathtaking locations, and high-end technology" said Mast Ali, a. k. a. Saleem Pheku, the king of comedy, who acted in over 20 film and brought laurels to Hyderabad.

"For action and adventure, the movie lovers watch Hollywood films, for songs and dances, they prefer Bollywood films, and for pure and unadulterated comedy, they throng to the Dollywood films, that is, Hyderabadi Films", said Mast Ali. "The fans of Hyderabadi Film Industry will definitely bless 'Dawat-e-Shaadi' with resounding success, considering its high entertainment quotient", he added.

Mast Ali said that all the films of Hyderabad, without any exception, registered huge success, both at the box office and in the video market. Considering the Hyderabadi films to be a safe bet, many people came forward to invest in their production. "Dawat-e-Shaadi", with a blitzkrieg of aggressive promotion and marketing campaign, unleashed by the Rajshree Productions, is poised to break many records of success", he added.

Aziz Naser, the popular and powerful actor with over 15 films under his belt, said that "Dawat-e-Shaadi" will entertain the audiences thoroughly, irrespective of their linguistic backgrounds. "The movie lovers of the entire Indian Subcontinent, including those from Pakistan, can easily understand the "Hyderabadi Urdu, the lingua franca of the streets of Hyderabad, which is a unique mix of Urdu, Hindi, Telugu, and some Marathi", he added.



Aziz Naser said that Hyderabadi Film Industry, in future, will join hands with Bollywood stars and would churn out great movies by combining their respective success formulae.

Feroz Khan, who has essayed a negative role in "Dawat-e-Shaadi" said that Hyderabadi cinema has come to attain the status of a genre unto itself, not just considering the typical lingo of the City of Pearls, but even given the culture and traditions of the Deccan.

Dawat-e-Shaadi", which has been produced by an Australian-based duo, Samiullah Fayyaz and Syed Waseem Yaba fea-

tures three heavy weights of the Hiderabadi Film Industry--Mast Ali, Aziz Naser, Feoz Han, and above all, Adanan Sajid Khan a. k. a. Gullu Dada. Three beautiful leading ladies, Kavya, Madhavi, and Manisha too are playing interesting roles in the film.

Mast Ali, Aziz Naser, Syed Hussain, and Farhan Khan thanked Iftekhar Shareef for his help, in a variety of ways, in getting the trailer of "Dawat-e-Shaadi" in Chicago. They thanked Layeeque Ahmed and Shoukat too for their support to them.

Photographs and Press release by: Asian Media USA



Dr. Ausaf Sayeed, India's Consul General Applauded India's Economic Paradigm Shift at University of Chicago's Diplomatic Encounters Series



Asian Media USA

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Chicago IL: "The World Bank has acknowledged India as the country with the fastest economic growth, which stipulates that it would be growing at the rate of 7.8% during the current year, whereas, it is 6.7% for China, and 2.9% for world economy. This would be greatly instrumental in making India a formidable economic power to reckon with", said Dr. Ausaf Sayeed, Consul General of India in Chicago in his inaugural address in the University of Chicago's Diplomatic Encounters Series held on January 21st, 2016. The event, which was free and open to public, was attended by a large number of eminent people from different walks of life.

Continuing his address, Dr. Sayeed said that by registering spectacular growth in almost all sectors of economy, India is integrating its 5000-year old Indian civilization with high-end modernity in all spheres of life. He said that the aviation markets in India are growing at a phenomenal rate of 25%, when compared to 9% in the US and 8.4 % in China. He further stated that India has witnessed a growth of 7.6% in the passenger vehicle markets. "By selling 2.5 million cars every year, India has emerged as the fifth largest passenger vehicle market, whereas a large number of countries are facing a negative growth in this sector", he added. He said that manufacturers of high value luxury goods are targeting India in a big way considering the growth of 25% in this market on account of increasing purchasing power and brand awareness among Indians.

Dr. Sayeed referred to the urge among Indians to absorb newer technologies and to the electronic boom which is evident from the fact that 6.95 billion electronic transactions took place last year in India. "India is on the top of the world with over one billion people using mobile phones in India", he added.

Dr. Sayeed stated that, with the conceptualization and execution of such innovative flagship measures by Prime Minister Narendra Modi as Digital India, Clean India, Make in India, Sills India, and Green India, and his commitment to bring about 100 Smart Cities and to lay

down world-class infrastructure, India has emerged as one of the hottest destinations for global investors. "India has set a target of introducing 175 Giga watts of renewable energy in the coming 10 years into the energy needs of the country, including 100 Giga watts of solar energy", he added.

"While the population worldwide is aging, India is getting younger and by 2020 it would be the youngest country in the world in terms of average age of population", Dr. Sayeed said. He added that these young Indians, on account of their fresh vision and energetic enthusiasm, are making a breathtaking contribution to the development not only in India but also across the globe, and added that there are 80 Indian Companies operating in the US Midwest, which have made cumulative investments of US \$ 2.75 billion and created 13,841 jobs.

Dr. Sayeed said the Indian Consulate caters to about 500,00 Indian-Americans in the US Midwest, who are contributing magnificently in the domains of Education, Science & Technology, Trade, Fine Arts, Culture, etc. He added that about 140,000 students from Indian are pursuing higher education in the US.

Screening of "India Awakes":
The presentation by Dr. Ausaf Sayeed was followed by the screening of the 60-minute documentary, "India Awakes", produced by Atlas Network partner Free to Choose Network and narrated by Swedish historian, Johan Noerberg. The documentary focuses on bold initiatives taken by India in 1991, aimed at liberalization, privatization, and globalization, which resulted in creating fluidity between classes, triggering a boom that sent Indian incomes up at a compound rate of 7.5% annually in the last 25 years, lifting a staggering 250 million people out of poverty, and empowering India to come alive and flourish economically..

According to the documentary, this was a paradigm shift considering the fact that, for centuries, poor continued to remain poor and elite alone prospered in India. The documentary makes a reference to the expensive and cumbersome British bu-



Dr. Imaad Shaik is rising to be a lead singer in Chicago. In the above picture he is seen singing at a New Year Party in Chicago. Dr Imaad Shaik is bringing a good name for our community on the stage of Bollywood singing. (more in next issues)

reocracy which created layers of rules and regulations and hampered the poor from growing out of the shadows of poverty.

The documentary follows three individuals, Banwari Lal Sharma, Rama Bhai, and Mannem Madhusudana Rao, who belong to weaker sections of society. However, in the transformed scenario of liberalization from Government controls, they feel empowered to take charge of their own destinies, demonstrate their inherent entrepreneurial perseverance, and succeed not only in improving their lives but also in breaking down centuries-old caste system.

"India Awakes demonstrates that the more the people of India are able to build, produce, buy, sell, trade, and invest with one another—and with the rest of the world—the more each person's unique talents and skills can find their own valuable niche in meeting the needs of others, creating new wealth and opportunity at every turn", said Tom Palmer, VP, Atlas Network.

Bob Chitester, CEO and President of Free to Choose Media, told that economic freedom is really at the heart of improving lives of everybody in India. "India Awakes, therefore, reveals the enormous power of

unlocking human potential and ambition, which could establish India as a preeminent world leader", he added.

"India Awakes was one of the most inspiring stories of the prosperity that arises from economic freedom. The experiment of India is worth-emulating, on a wider scale, across the globe", said Jim Tusty Co-Director/Writer of the documentary. Daniel J. Schmidt, President and CEO, WTTW said that when governments introduce economic liberalization and people come forward to demonstrate their entrepreneurial skills, there will be beneficial outcomes for all the stakeholders.

"While India has transformed its regulatory process and liberalized its economy compared to decades past, the country is still mired in far more red tape and bureaucratic processes. Hence, there is an urgent need to further consolidate the initiatives of 1991 in order to make it more free and prosperous", opined the audience unanimously.

Denise M Jorgens, Director, International house at University of Chicago welcomed the gathering.

Photographs and Press release by: Asian Media USA

THE FASLI CALENDAR

Captain Bakhtyar S Kaoosji

One of the Mughal legacies which continued unabated in the administration of Hyderabad State of The Asaf Jahs, until 1948, was the official calendar known as the FASLI calendar. This calendar is still in use in Hyderabad and the other States of India mainly by the different Waqf Boards and partly in collecting revenues from agricultural products by Karnataka, Kerala and Tamilnadu.

HEH The Nizams Trusts also use this calendar and it is printed annually and available in select shops in Hyderabad City. This Calender displays both the Hijri and Fasli eras and highlights Eids, Religious functions, details of various Urs held in the State, Birth and Death Anniversaries, Prayer Timings, Ramzam ul Mubarak Timings for Sehri and Iftaar etc... some sections of the population call it the Jantri(Calender) ...

Fasli is derived from the word Fasl or Harvest which is the Arabic term for Division, which in India was applied to the groupings of the seasons. It is an Arabised Urdu word and the Fasli Year means a period of twelve (12 months) from July to June. The first day of the Fasli year is around the 7th or 8th.

I will elucidate the reasons why the Hijri Calender then in use, had to be modified, the people entrusted to do the job and the end result culminating in the issue of The Royal Farman by Mughal Emperor Jalaluddin Mohammed Akbar also known as Shahanshah-e-Alam or Akbar the Great.(Born. 15.10.1542 AD, Died 27.10.1606 AD and reigned from 1556-1606 AD)

Abul Fazal, renowned scholar and Minister of Akbar, explains in the "AKBAR-NAMA" that the Hijri Calender was used to collect revenue from the farmers. As per his explanation, the use of the Hijri Calender became irksome for the peasantry because there was a difference of 11/12 days between the Lunar and Solar years with 31 lunar = 30 solar years. Revenue collected was as per the Lunar year whereas the harvest was dependent on the Solar year.

Abu Al-Fath Jalaluddin Mohammed Akbar commissioned Amir Fathullah Shirazi, Asadud-Daula, a noted Persian astronomer in the Royal Court, with the task.

Changes had to be incorporated not only

in the Hijri Calender but also in the Samvat Calendar. The year of change over was incorporated to coincide with the year of Akbar's accession to the throne as Emperor of India in 963AH (1555-1556 AD or 1612 SE). Accordingly the 1 Muharram 963 AH was made the starting point of The TARIQ-e-ELAHI as it was named. Since the month of Muharram coincided with the month of Baisakh, the month of Baisakh was made the first month of the new era instead of the month of Chaitra in the Samvat Calender. The Encyclopedia Britannica's Editors write that "Akbar arbitrarily took 649 years from the Samvat year ie 1612-649=963 in order to coincide it with the year 963 AH."

The Fasli calendar came into being with a Royal Proclamation in the 29 th Regnal year of Akbar or on 10/11 March 1584 AD or 992 AH but it was dated from his accession to the throne on 5.11.1556 or 10 Rabi-ul-Awal 963 AH.

Emperor Shah Jahan the grandson of Akbar introduced the Fasli calendar in 1630 AD in the Deccan Subha which continued as the official calendar of the Asaf Jahi rulers until September 1948.

or a period of 318 years. This calendar is being used continuously from the last four and a half centuries.

As the person who developed this calender was of Persian origin and the language of the Mughal Court was also Persian the months attributed to the Fasli Calender were accordingly named with slight modification. Listed below are the names of Fasli months.

Tir, Mordad, Shehervar, Meher, Aban, Azar, Deh, Behmun, Esfand, Farvardi, Ordibesht, Khudad .

A simple way to transpose FASLI year to Gregorian year is by ADDING 591.

As an example 10 Farvardi 1346 F will work out to be 11 February 1937 AD.

Captain Bakhtyar S Kaoosji
Kuala Lumpur- Peninsular Malaysia

**Sound Engineer Shahid Lateef
with former NFL football player
Napoleon Harris**



Sound Engineer Shahid Lateef with former NFL football player Napoleon Harris at fund raiser in Chicago.

Napoleon Bill Harris is a member of the Illinois Senate representing the 15th district since 2013. Prior to his service in the Illinois Senate he was a linebacker in the National Football League for a total of seven seasons with the Oakland Raiders, the Minnesota Vikings, and Kansas City Chiefs at various times. Harris enrolled at Northwestern University, where he played college football for the Northwestern Wildcats. For one year, he was a two sport athlete playing basketball. His complete college career ranked 11th on Northwestern's all-time tackles list with 334. All-Big Ten Conference as a senior after starting all 11 games at defensive end after moving from outside linebacker and ranked fourth on team in tackles with 78

Son of Emirate's ruler was among firefighters at Dubai hotel blaze

Dubai: Son of Dubai's ruler, Sheikh Mansoor bin Mohammed al-Maktoum was among the firefighter at the scene of a huge fire at a luxury Dubai hotel.

Scrapped his New Year eve plan on Thursday night, Sheikh Mansoor dressed in firefighter gear and joined other Dubai Civil Defense officers who were working together at the Address Hotel Downtown where fire broke out.

A huge fire ripped through a luxury Dubai hotel engulfing dozens of storeys on December 31, where hundreds of thousands of people were gathered for celebrations.

Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum, the Vice-President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates and Emir of Dubai.

Sheikh Mansoor is also the Chairman of Dubai International Marine Sports Club. His Instagram page also shows him in military uniform, according to his Twitter page.



Republic Day Celebrations in pictures



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Andrew Seo Call upon Asian-Americans to Support His Candidacy for the Position of Commissioner of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Chicago IL: "I have an ambitious and far reaching plan of action aimed at transforming the way water is treated, managed, and delivered in Chicago and Cook County, which will be greatly instrumental not only in creating a reliable and resilient water infrastructure but also in facilitating multifaceted prosperity. I, therefore, request each and every one in Chicago and Cook County, including the Asian-Americans, to support my candidacy, in a big way, for the position of Commissioner of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago in order to translate this plan into reality", said Andrew Seo at a Press Conference, attended by a large number of representatives of Print, Electronic, and Internet Media on Tuesday, February 2nd, 2016, at 1:00 PM at Udupi Palace, 2543 W Devon Ave, Chicago, IL 60659.

Explaining his plan, in detail, Andrew Seo said that Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) of Greater Chicago shall assume control of the city of Chicago Department of Water Management, including the City's two water treatment plants, 12 pumping stations, water/server Mains and Personnel. He added that, as a part of his plan, MWRD would take over maintenance and operations of potable water to the residents/businesses in Chicago and Cook County as well as responsibility for the transport of waste water and storm water throughout the city of Chicago.

Andrew Seo claimed that his proposed plan has got a number of beneficial outcomes, which includes shifting the burden of maintaining/modernizing Chicago/Cook County's aging water and sewer infrastructure from the city of Chicago to the MWRD, generating at least USD 5 billion for the city of Chicago to re-allocate it to funding Police/Fire/Teacher pensions, as well as for other essential city services, streamlining Government and eliminate bureaucratic red tape for homeowners and businesses, and reducing water and sewer fees for the city and suburban taxpayers.

"My plan has the ability to do everything Mayor Rahm Emanuel wants and needs at this critical time in Municipal Government", said Andrew Seo. "The plan is in response to the call given by him last year to Chicagoans to come up with ideas to help make Government operate more efficiently and raise much needed revenue to successfully grapple with the problems relating to budget shortfalls, outstanding pension liabilities, and impending tax hikes", Andrew Seo added.

Andrew Seo said that Chicagoland's ability to provide clean and safe water is being challenged, as existing

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waste water and water infrastructure is aging and deteriorating. "Unless we start updating and modernizing our water and waste water systems soon it will become exponentially more challenging to retain and attract industry, business, and a skilled work force", he added.

Andrew Seo argued that investments in creating a state-of-the-art water infrastructure will be greatly instrumental in creating jobs, sustaining public health, sustaining environment, and boosting economy. "The US Department of Commerce estimates that each job created in the local water and waste water industry creates 3.5 jobs in the national economy and each dollar spent yields \$2.50 dollars in GDP", he added.

Andrew Seo, a Chicago Engineer, is a former employee of both the MWRD and the City of Chicago's Department of Water Management. He has got an impressive track record of experience in the fields of treating, managing, and delivering water. He has already pitched his plan to a number of prominent municipal and business leaders and received huge appreciation from them.

Iftehar Shareef, an eminent Indian-American, introduced Andrew Seo to the representatives of the media at the Press Conference. He said that Andrew Seo represents a rare combination of competence and commitment and added that his election as the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Water Reclama-

tion District of Greater Chicago would go a long way in solving the problems relating to the availability of clean and safe water in Chicago and Cook County. He paid rich tributes to the community service of Andrew Seo in innumerable domains.

Shareef appealed to all the Asian-Americans in general and their Indian counterparts in particular to strongly support the candidacy of Andrew Seo in the best interests of Chicago and Cook County.

The representatives of the media posed a barrage of questions about the viability and relevance of the proposed plan concerning issues relating to the availability of safe and clean water in Chicago and Cook County. Andrew Seo answered all the questions, with a professional touch.

Balvider Singh, a well-known Indian-American, expressed his support and best wishes to Andrew Seo for his stupendous success in the election.

The Press Conference concluded with delicious snacks which were relished by one and all.

Photographs and Press release by: Asian Media USA



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David Cameron backs burqa ban in schools, courts, border checkpoints

London: UK Prime Minister David Cameron has backed a ban on face-covering veils such as burqas in schools, courts and at border check points in the country but said he will not go as far as what France did to impose a blanket ban.

"When you're coming into contact with an institution, or you're in court, or if you need to be able to see someone's face at the border, then I will always back the authority and institution that have put in place proper and sensible rules," Cameron said.

It comes as the UK prepare to announce a series of measures

designed to stop British Muslims becoming radicalised and travelling to the Middle East to join terrorist groups like the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

"What does matter is if, for instance, a school has a uniform policy, sensitively put in place and all the rest of it, and people want to flout that uniform policy, often for reasons that aren't connected to religion, you should always come down on the side of the school," he was quoted as saying by the BBC Radio Four.

Cameron, 49, however, rejected the idea of a blanket ban on

burqas and other religious head-gear, along the lines of the ban imposed in France since 2010.

"Going for the more sort of French approach of banning an item of clothing, I don't think that's the way we do things in this country and I don't think that would help," he said.

Cameron's comments came on the day he unveiled plans for tougher new English language requirements to prevent segregation of members of the Muslim community.

New rules will mean that from October this year migrants

coming to the UK on a five-year spousal visa with poor or no English skills will have to take a test after two and a half years to show they are making efforts to improve their English.

France introduced a controversial ban on wearing the full face veil in public in 2010, triggering concerns from rights groups.



Dalit student suicide snowballs into a major political row

The suicide by a dalit student of Hyderabad University today snowballed into a major issue with BJP's rivals wading into it and demanding the removal of Union Ministers Smriti Irani and Bandaru Dattatreya, accusing them of being responsible for the death.

As Congress mounted the demand for the sacking of the HRD and Labour Ministers, Rahul Gandhi led the multi-party charge attacking them and the Vice Chancellor Appa Rao saying "The VC and the Union Ministers in Delhi have not acted fairly. This youngster was put in so much pain that he had no option but to kill himself."

Though he did not name Irani, who had just over the week attacked Rahul in his constituency Amethi of failing youths there, the reference was obvious to her against the backdrop of ministry's action which is blamed for the suicide by Rohith Vemula, a dalit research scholar, on Sunday night.

Protests escalated in Hyderabad and cities across the country including in Delhi, Mumbai, Pune and Chennai. Student organisations including the pro-Left AISA and AAP-backed CYSS and Congress' NSUI held protests in Jantar Mantar and

the HRD ministry in the capital demanding the sacking of the ministers and strong action against the VC.

Various political parties and leaders have blamed Labour Minister Dattatreya's letter of Aug 17 last year to Irani seeking action against the "anti national activities" of a students union and the alleged assault of an ABVP leader and a series of five communications from the HRD Ministry between Sept 3 and Nov 19 demanding follow up action for the suicide.

The HRD ministry, however, today rejected allegations that it had put any pressure on the University relating to either suspension of Rohith or keeping him out of the hostel.

The communications, it maintained, was not aimed at putting pressure but was in compliance with the standard protocol adopted in accordance with the Central Secretariat Manual of Procedure whenever a "VIP Reference" is received.



India, Israel to intensify counter terrorism coord

Jerusalem, Jan 18 (PTI) Contending that India and Israel face challenges of terrorism, the two countries today agreed to intensify coordination to deal with the menace as External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj met top Israeli leadership and discussed a wide-range of bilateral and regional issues.

Swaraj, who is on her first visit to West Asia as the External Affairs Minister, called on President Reuven Rivlin and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other top leaders.

"It was emphasised that the region around India and around Israel are both in turmoil. That there were special circumstances posed by terrorism that required coordination between the countries, especially between India and Israel," an official here said, sharing details of the meetings.

"It was agreed that the exchange of information (between the two countries) will continue in the future," he added.

Swaraj said she hopes get an assessment of the situation in the region and identify areas where the two sides can cooperate.

She said, "India attaches the highest importance to the full development of bilateral ties with Israel. Our bilateral cooperation has grown in a number of areas over the past two decades but the potential of our relations are much more."

Netanyahu, who also heads the Foreign Ministry, said that there has been a great flowering of relationship and friendship between the two countries in the recent years.

"I take special pleasure in welcoming you here and sending my regards to my good friend and colleague Prime Minister Modi. The expression of this growing relationship has been in the visit of the (Indian)



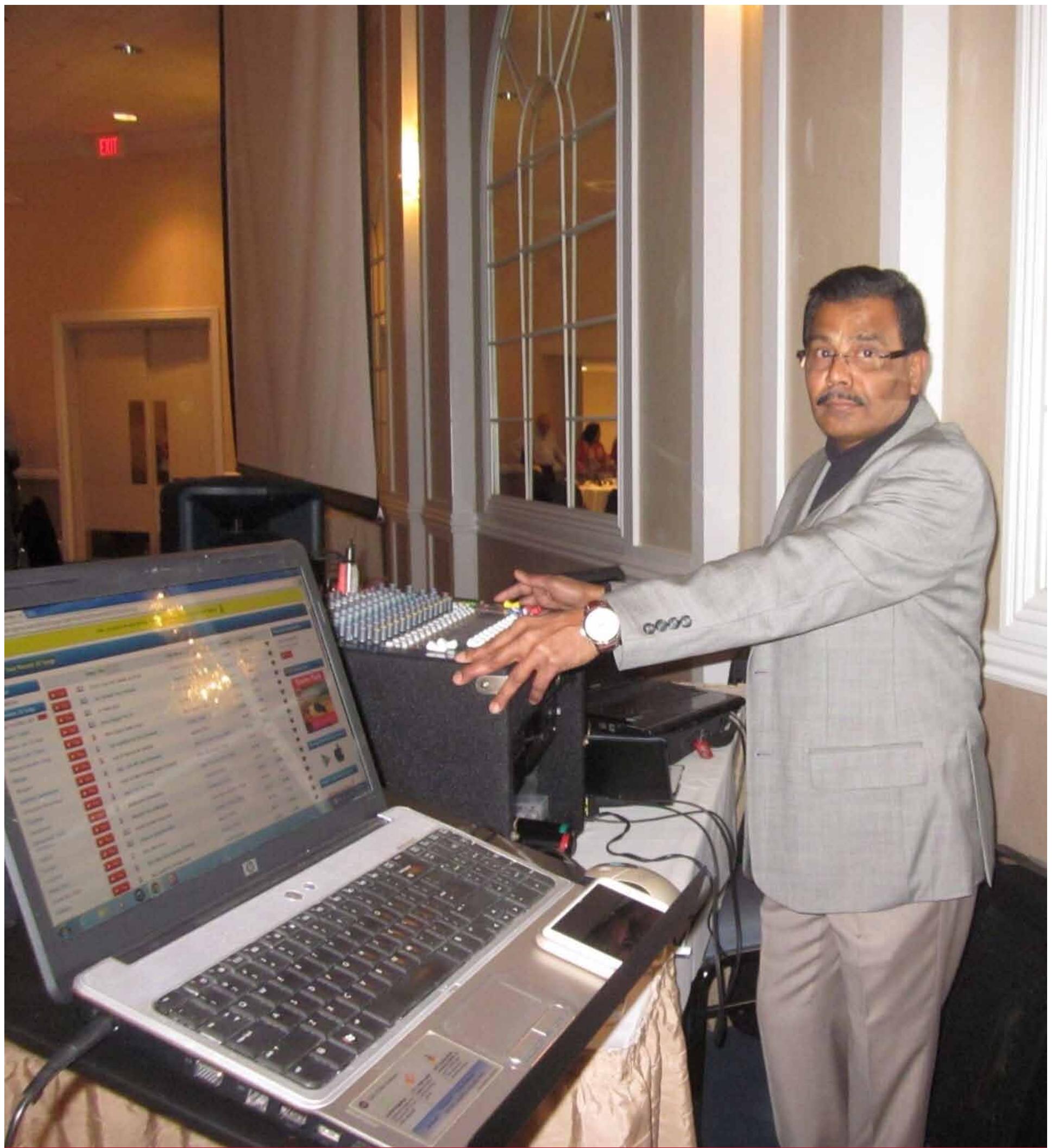
President, the first ever by an Indian Head of State," he told Swaraj.

He said the two countries are intensifying their contacts and cooperation in fields such as science and technology, cyber, defence and agriculture.

"India and Israel are at the cutting edge of so many innovations and by working together we can do a lot more for our people and the world," he said, adding that Israel admires India and view it as a great friend.

Emphasising on the importance attached to India by Israel, he said his country is putting "special effort towards building a special relationship with a special country".

President Rivlin pushed for a boost in bilateral economic ties during his meeting with Swaraj and said the two partners should quickly finalise the Free Trade Agreement (FTA).



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Shahid Lateef

China's growth hits quarter-century low, raising hopes of more stimulus

China's economy grew at its weakest pace in a quarter of a century last year, raising hopes Beijing would cushion the slowdown with more stimulus policies, which in turn prompted a rally on the country's rollercoaster share markets.

Growth for 2015 as a whole hit 6.9 percent after the fourth quarter slowed to 6.8 percent, capping a tumultuous year that witnessed a huge outflow of capital, a slide in the currency and a summer stocks crash.

Concerns about Beijing's grip on economic policy have shot to the top of global investors' risk list for 2016 after a renewed plunge in its stock markets and the yuan stoked worries that the economy may be rapidly deteriorating.

China's slowdown, along with the slump in commodity prices, prompted the International Monetary Fund to cut its global growth forecasts again on Tuesday, and it said it expected the world's second-largest economy to see growth of only 6.3 percent in 2016.

Data from China's statistics bureau showed that indus-

trial output for December missed expectations with a rise of just 5.9 percent, while electric power and steel output fell for the first time in decades last year, and coal production dropped for a second year in row, illustrating how a slowing economy and shift to consumer-led growth is hurting industry.

December retail sales growth was also weaker than expected at 11.1 percent last month, disappointing those counting on the consumer to be the new engine of growth.

"While headline growth looks fine, the breakdown of the figures points to overall weakness in the economy," said Zhou Hao, senior emerging markets economist for Asia at Commerzbank Singapore.

"All in all, we believe that China will experience a 'bumpy landing' in the coming year," he said.

There was relief in the markets, however, that growth at least matched forecasts, and a growing expectation that more monetary easing measures were imminent, possibly before Lunar New Year holidays in early February.

Angus Nicholson, market analyst at IG in Melbourne, said in a note that further cuts in interest rates and the reserves that banks have to set aside were already looking "a foregone conclusion" before the data release, and now it was a question of timing.

RELATED COVERAGE

› China stocks climb on hopes for new economic stimulus
"That gives investors an excuse to buy stocks, after sharp falls recently," said Linus Yip, strategist at First Shanghai Securities Ltd.

Investors took their cue, pushing the benchmark Shanghai Composite Index up 3.25 percent by the close of trading, while the CSI300 index of the largest listed companies in Shanghai and Shenzhen gained 2.95 percent.

The indexes remain about 14-15 percent down so far in 2016 after a series of sell-offs in the new year.

"We see this as a technical rebound," said Yip. "It's too early to say the market has seen its bottom, as we haven't yet seen a turnaround in the economy."

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China still a good bet for investors: PWC

CURRENCY RISK

The People's Bank of China (PBOC) did its bit to calm nerves by keeping the yuan largely steady, setting the currency's daily midpoint fix at 6.5596 per dollar.

That followed news of plans requiring overseas banks to hold a certain level of yuan in reserves, a move that could raise the cost of wagering on further falls in the currency, which has lost about 5 percent since August.

Tommy Xie, economist at OCBC Bank in Singapore, said he expected more stimulus to the economy from the PBOC, but the stability of the yuan, also known as the renminbi, was critical to maintaining growth.

"This is a new risk for China. If the renminbi continues to weaken, the volatility and capital outflows get worse, then that is likely to pose a challenge to growth."

The spot yuan was at 6.5789, barely changed from Monday's close, but

offshore it weakened to 6.5935 to stand 0.2 percent adrift from the onshore rate.

Confusion over China's currency policy and its commitment to reforms has sparked mayhem in financial markets in recent weeks, as the PBOC allowed the yuan to fall sharply in early January then switched to aggressive intervention to steady it.

Likewise, concerns have mounted that the economy's troubles might be beyond Beijing's ability to fix.

Markets have long harbored doubts about the veracity of China's growth data, given their habit of closely matching official forecasts year after year despite wildly changing circumstances at home and globally.

Investors used to comfort themselves with the assumption that the authorities, while often inscrutable, were competent managers who could be trusted to ultimately guide the economy to a more consumer-driven model.

That trust has been challenged by perceived policy

missteps over the yuan and stock markets, giving weight to a volatile clique of China bears who claim high debt levels and massive overcapacity are bound to end in tears.

Even relative optimists are worried.

"A recent trip back to China suggests the economy remains in a rather bad shape. Public confidence and expectations are very low," says Wei Li, China and Asia economist at Commonwealth Bank of Australia.

"Faced with rising non-performing loans, banks are cutting credit lines despite policymakers calling for more support. New credits are mainly used to repay existing debts, rather than flowing into new investment projects."

(Reporting by Pete Sweeney, Samuel Shen and Shanghai and Beijing newsrooms; Additional reporting by Nichola Saminather; Writing by Wayne Cole and Will Waterman; Editing by Neil Fullick)

Chinese couple in court for chopping up employers

Paris: A Chinese couple, a nanny and her partner were due in court in Paris on Tuesday, accused of killing and dismembering the parents of a baby that had died in the babysitter's care.

The crime came to light in June 2012 after two joggers found a naked leg, cut off at the ankle, while running through the Vincennes forest on the edge of the French capital.

Several days later, a guide dog found a human torso in the same area, but the hunt for further remains was fruitless.

Police knew the victims were Asian and initially thought the murders could be the work of the Chinese mafia, or that of Luka Rocco Magnotta, a Canadian convicted of killing and dismembering a Chinese student, who had spent time in Paris.

But before the bodies could even be identified, a Chinese couple Hui Zhang and her boyfriend Te Lu, both

34 approached police and admitted to the crime.

Hui told police she had been babysitting a two-month-old baby that had asphyxiated in his sleep. They decided to offer the parents money to remain quiet about the death.

But when the parents arrived at the home, a furious row broke out, which ended with Hui killing them with a small axe.

Hui claims they acted in self-defence after the parents became enraged and attacked them with a butcher's knife. Her boyfriend had been seriously injured during the struggle.

Trying to cover her tracks, Hui then chopped up the two bodies in her bathroom with an electric saw, using the washing machine to cover the noise.

She then wrapped the parts in rubbish bags and scrubbed her apartment clean.

Following her directions, the police then uncovered more body parts around the forest although they did not find the baby's body, which Hui said she had thrown in rubbish bins along with some of the other remains.

The baby's grandfather claimed to investigators that the babysitter was giving the child sleeping pills, although other parents praised her service.

Police say there were no previous signs that Hui and Te, who arrived in France in 2004, were pre-disposed to this sort of grisly crime.

Hui has been described by investigators as a highly intelligent and forceful character. Witnesses say she was the dominant partner in her relationship with Te, who was a business advisor.

Is the kingdom shaking

Are the Saudis nervous?

Very. The royal family feels threats from within the country and without, as the price of oil plunges, the predominantly young population grows restless, and Saudi Arabia's bitter rival, Shiite Iran, seeks to expand its influence throughout the region. The Saudis were also deeply alarmed by the Arab Spring, which saw long-established regimes crumble; the U.S.'s nuclear deal with Iran; and the rise of ISIS. Since King Salman took the throne a year ago, Saudi authorities have intensified government repression to a severe degree. New counterterrorism legislation, enacted shortly before he took power, defines terrorism as any act with criminal intent that undermines public order, as well as any "deviant thought" that questions Wahhabism, the fundamentalist sect of Sunni Islam that dominates all aspects of Saudi life.

What is the impact of this law?

Any form of dissent is being prosecuted as a crime. Executions are at a two-decade high, with more than 150 public beheadings in 2015 and 47 in just the first week of this year — including the execution of a prominent Shiite cleric (see below), an act that led Iran to sever diplomatic ties. For urging Saudi society to be more liberal and secular, prominent blogger Raif Badawi was flogged, and his lawyer was jailed for defending him. When the lawyer's wife complained on Twitter about his arrest, she was jailed, too.

Who's pushing this crackdown?

A new group of leaders. The House of Saud has been led by elderly sons of modern Saudi Arabia's founder, Ibn Saud, for many decades. But King Salman, 80, has chosen not to name one of his younger half-brothers as his likely successor. Instead, he appointed his son Mohammed bin Salman al Saud, 30, as deputy crown prince and defense minister — and Mohammed is clearly the real power behind the throne. Unlike the older, U.S.-educated generation, Mohammed went to a Saudi university, has had little exposure to Western culture, and has "a reputation for arrogance and ruthlessness," says Bruce Riedel of the Brookings Institution.

What has Mohammed done?

The young prince plunged straight into a war in Yemen. "The previous, cautious diplomatic stance of older leaders within the royal family is being replaced by a new, impulsive policy of intervention," said a report from the German foreign intelligence service BND. Saudi Arabia is locked in a struggle with Iran for primacy in the Middle East. The rise of a Shiite government in Iraq brought that country firmly into the Iranian camp, and Lebanon was

already there. The conflict in Syria has become a proxy war between the Assad regime, backed by Iran, and militias funded by the Saudis. So when Shiite Houthi militants toppled the Yemeni government, Mohammed moved in swiftly to prevent his country from being bookended by Shiite powers. Saudi airstrikes have killed thousands of Yemeni civilians, but the prince has been undeterred.

What about domestic policy?

Mohammed says he plans sweeping, market-based economic reforms. For 80 years, the Saudi economy has been based almost entirely on oil revenue. High oil prices brought in enormous wealth, which enables the government to fund a generous welfare state without levying any income tax. Most actual work is done by foreigners — a vast army of nearly nine million immigrants from South Asia and the Middle East who serve some 18 million Saudis. Saudis are employed largely in the bloated public sector, many of them drawing fat salaries for little work. But this model is becoming unsustainable. People under 25 make up more than half the population, and there aren't enough jobs for them as they reach working age. Worse, the collapse in oil prices — from \$115 a barrel in 2014 to under \$35 now — means there isn't enough money flowing in to sustain benefits at such generous levels.

Why not?

In the past, when oil prices have fallen, the Saudis have cut production to raise them. But this time, they've kept pumping with abandon. The goal is to preserve Saudi market share by driving higher-cost oil producers — notably the U.S. fracking industry — out of business. But the sharp drop in revenue requires painful cuts to the subsidies and expense accounts that so many Saudis rely on.

How will Saudis react to those cuts?

That's one of the things worrying the royal family. The Saudi people have long had a tacit agreement with their rulers: In return for a cushy life and generous benefits, they put up with an almost total lack of political freedom or say in their own government. Many Saudis are rich enough to skip off to Bahrain or Dubai for the weekend, where they can drink alcohol and the women can shed their burqas. Most, though, are middle-class, and around one-fifth are actually poor, and if Mohammed makes good on his pledge to replace the free health care with an insurance-based system and partially privatize education,



they will suffer. "With a decline in social spending and a reduction in subsidies," says analyst Alberto Gallo, "comes the risk of rising domestic turmoil."

The oppressed Shiite minority

The Saudi regime said it executed Shiite cleric Nimr al-Nimr for terrorism, but critics said the real reason was his activism in organizing the Shiite minority and denouncing the House of Saud. Shiites make up 15 percent of the population in Saudi Arabia, and they are strongly discriminated against. They are excluded from the cushy government jobs, and Saudi television and Saudi clerics routinely spread anti-Shiite propaganda. For three years, activists in the oil-rich eastern province of al-Ahsa, abutting Shiite-majority Bahrain, have been protesting, sometimes violently. "You are now standing on top of oil fields that feed the whole world," Shiite activist Fathil Al Safwani told the BBC. "But we see nothing of it. Poverty, hunger, no honor, no political freedom, we have nothing." By executing Nimr, the House of Saud sent a clear signal that nothing will change; indeed, even complaining about anti-Shiite discrimination will get you beheaded.

India home to 2.36 lakh millionaires, fourth-largest in Asia Pacific region

New Delhi: India is home to the fourth largest population of millionaires in the Asia Pacific region, with 2.36 lakh such high net worth individuals, while Japan topped the list with 12.60 lakh people, a report says.

According to the Asia Pacific 2016 Wealth Report, by New World Wealth, India was ranked among the top five Asia Pacific countries in terms of number of High Net Worth Individuals (HNWIs).

HNWIs (millionaires) were defined as those individuals with net assets of USD 1 million or more. At the end of 2015, there were, 12,60,000 millionaires in Japan, while China ranked second with 654,000

HNWIs and Australia was at the third place had 290,000.

Others in the top 10 in terms of number of HNWIs in Asia Pacific include, Singapore at the fifth place with 224,000 millionaires, Hong Kong (6th, 215,000), South Korea (7th, 125,000), Taiwan (8th, 98,200), New Zealand (9th, 89,000) and Indonesia (10th, 48,500).

Interestingly, India is among the top five Asia Pacific countries in terms of total private wealth held, but at the bottom in terms of per capita income. India's total individual wealth stood at USD 4,365 billion, while China, which topped the list, had a total individual wealth of USD

17,254 billion.

Total individual wealth refers to the private wealth held by all the individuals in each country, including all property, cash, equities and business interests. On per capita basis, India was last among the bottom three, as the average wealth per person stood at USD 3,500, while that of Australia, which topped the ranking, stood at USD 204,400.

"As reflected, Australians are the wealthiest individuals in Asia Pacific with USD 204,000 in wealth per person, whilst people in Pakistan are the poorest with USD 1,600 per person," the report added.

It also noted that there were around 3.5 million HNWIs living in Asia Pacific, with combined wealth holdings of USD 17.7 trillion. Asia Pacific HNWI numbers have increased by 115 per cent over the past 15 years, compared to the worldwide HNWI growth rate of 82 per cent and going forward, HNWI numbers in Asia Pacific are expected to increase by 50 per cent over next 10 years, reaching around 5.2 million by 2025, it added.

Over this period (by 2025), India is expected to see a 105 per cent growth in HNWI population to 483,800 from 236,000, the report added.

As leaders chill in Davos, emerging economies going downhill fast

More than a trillion dollars of investment flows has fled emerging markets over the past 18 months but the exodus may not even be halfway done, as once-booming economies appear trapped in a slow-bleeding cycle of weak growth and investment.

While developing economies are no stranger to financial crises, with several currency and debt cataclysms infecting all emerging markets in waves over recent decades, leaders gathering for this year's World Economic Forum in Davos in the Swiss Alps are fearful that this episode is much harder to shake off.

Seeded by fears of tighter U.S. credit and a rising U.S. dollar, and coming alongside a secular slowdown of China's economy and an implosion of the related commodity 'supercycle', there's growing anxiety that there will be no sharp rebound at the end of this downturn to reward investors who braved out the worst moments.

"The global backdrop and the drivers for emerging markets are very different from 2001," David Spegel, head of emerging markets at ICBC Standard Bank said, referring to the time Asia, Russia and Brazil were recovering from the crisis waves of the late-1990s.

"Back then all the stars were aligned for globalization and emerging markets benefited the most. This time around, we just don't have those multiple catalysts."

The chief catalyst in 2001 was of course China. Its entry to the World Trade Organisation unleashed a

decade-long export and investment miracle that propelled its economy from sixth place globally, to the world's second biggest.

Its ascent hauled up much of the developing world, from Latin American exporters of soy and steel to the Asian workshops which became part of its gigantic factory supply chain. But its slowdown is whacking these countries equally hard.

Exports from emerging markets - from Korean cars to Chilean copper - are declining year-on-year at the sharpest rate since the 2008-09 crisis, according to UBS.

Global trade in fact likely grew slower than the world economy for the fourth straight year in 2015, according to the WTO, a United Nations body. That contrasts with previous decades when commerce expanded at least twice as fast as world growth.

The gloomy conclusion some are reaching is that the China effect was possibly a once-in-a-lifetime shift, whose effects are now dissipating forever.

"Rather than expecting emerging markets to mean-revert toward the golden years of 2002-2007, there is a risk that in terms of trade, what we are reverting to is the environment of 1980s," UBS strategist Manik Narain said.

FLIGHT

One feature of the "golden years" was the extraordinary amount of capital that poured into the developing world; according to the Washington

DC-based Institute of International Finance net inflows in 2001-2011 totaled nearly \$3 trillion.

Some of this is starting to reverse as last year saw the first net capital outflow since 1988, a \$540 billion loss, says the IIF which predicts more flight in 2016.

Other forecasters such as JPMorgan reckon nearly a trillion dollars have fled China alone since mid-2014; its central bank reserves alone declined more than \$500 billion last year.

Redemptions from emerging stock and bond funds hit a record \$60 billion last year, according to fund tracker EPFR Global.

IIF executive director Hung Tran says emerging markets' problems are not just external. They must overcome a key homegrown issue - falling productivity.

Tran estimates productivity, which provides clues on future economic growth, is growing at just 0.9 percent a year across much of the developing world, a quarter the rate seen before 2007 and not far from richer countries' 0.4 percent.

"Productivity advantage of EM countries, which is key for attracting capital flows and investment, has collapsed," Tran said. "There is a cycle of diminishing returns on investment."

SLOW-BURN CRISIS

There are some bright spots such as India and Mexico. But with China fears on the rise and Brazil and Russia

in recession for the second straight year, investment returns across the sector are unlikely to recover soon, many fear.

Emerging stock market performance has lagged developed peers for five years now, and corporate earnings have shrunk for more than four years, Morgan Stanley has calculated.

This is the longest decline in the MSCI equity index's history, MS says, noting the longest prior earnings recession in the asset class was after the 1997 crisis and lasted two years.

Richard House, head of EM debt at Standard Life Investments, notes the strengthening dollar is spooking investors in emerging currency bonds too.

"Fund performance hasn't been good across the industry...Local market funds have been an outflow asset class for a while and that experience is going to impact people's mindset going forward," House said.

The fear of large-scale outflows is clearly on policymakers' minds. To combat such an exodus, emerging economies may have to resort to radical measures such as coordinated securities market interventions, of the kind done in the West after 2008, Mexican central bank head Agustin Carstens has suggested.

Ultimately though he said that to boost long-term growth, there was only one solution - tough economic reform.

14,000 Indians overstayed in US in 2015: report

Washington: Over 14,000 of the 8.8 lakh Indians who travelled to the US on visitor or business visa in 2015 overstayed in the country, according to official figures.

The data provided by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) said that 14,348 Indians overstayed in the US in 2015.

In 2014, of the 7.6 lakhs Indians who were supposed to leave the country before the expiry of their B1-B2 visas, 11,653 of them overstayed in the US, it said.

Overstaying means a non-immigrant who was lawfully admitted to the US for an authorised period but stayed or remains in the country beyond his or her lawful admission period.

According to the "Entry/Exit Overstay Report" released by the DHS, in fiscal 2015, of the nearly 45 million non-immigrant visitor admissions through air or sea ports of entry that were expected to depart last year, 527,127 individuals overstayed their admission, for a total overstay rate of 1.17 per cent.

In other words, 98.83 per cent had left the US on time and abided by the terms of their admission, the report said.

The report does not include student on F-1 visa or those who arrived on work visas like H-1B.

In FY 2015, of the nearly 45 million non-immigrant visitor admissions through air

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The report breaks the overstays down further to provide a better picture of those overstays that remain in the US beyond their period of admission and for whom CBP has no evidence of a departure or transition to another immigration status, DHS said in a statement.

At the end of FY 2015, the overall Suspected In-Country Overstay number was

482,781 individuals, or 1.07 per cent.

Due to further continuing departures by individuals in this population, by January 4, 2016, the number of Suspected In-Country overstays for FY 2015 had dropped to 416,500, rendering the Suspected In-Country Overstay rate as 0.9 per cent, it said.

In its report, DHS said a number of countries with ties to terrorism had significant numbers of nationals still in the US accounted for by the federal government: 1,435 from Pakistan, 681 from Iraq, 564 from Iran, 440 from Syria, 219 from Yemen, 219 from Afghanistan, and 56 from Libya.

US presidency poll: Americans deserve a multi-party system!



-Dr. Abdul Ruff

Political system of any modern nation is expected to provide for multiple choices for the voters to choose from. As it is known, stronger the candidature choices, the greater the options for the people to decide their options. USA that champions only two parties - Democratic Party (DP) and Republican Party (RP) - deliberately denies that option to its citizens who are now increasingly under state surveillance and subject to state human rights violations.

Those who drafted the US Constitution seem to have opted for a two-party system in order to promote monopoly capitalism, denying equal rights to citizens.

America, known as a nation meant for "absolute" freedoms and liberty" necessary for human and societal development, has got just a limit democracy as it provides for just two political parties to contest the presidential poll. Both parties, democratic and republican, have similar ideology and agenda while in order to advance the so-called national interests, secretly coordinate their operations globally.

President Barak Obama not just continues with the terror wars in Arab world launched by his predecessor Republican Bush as part of Israeli agenda in West Asia, but even escalates the essentially anti-Islam war further. They jointly advance illegal agenda of Neocons terror nuts.

Unfortunately, Americans have no other option but to choose one of the two by watching how the primaries are enacted by the state apparatus. Had there been at least one more party people could think of reposing trust in it. The US corporate media plays havoc by playing one party (RP) against the other (DP).

Fundamentally speaking, today in the post Sept-11 hoax era, these two polities do not have serious differences in any respect. They just pretend to be rivals and fighting for power to control the world. The Sept-hoax has removed all minor differences, if at all any, between Republicans and Democrats as they speak now with one voice – the super power American military voice.

This American voice promotes capitalism and imperialism with military back up as American and global duty. This voice has no sympathy for the poor and common people. Both of them are ultra right-wing and essentially anti-people, controlled by corporate monopoly interest. It shields the corporate crimes against the common people.

Today Americans are have no faith in both the parties as they pursue terror-militarism policies that only harms life patterns of ordinary citizens, for, people have no idea as to what exactly the leaders are doing putting them at perpetual risk.

How can a country like USA with a mere two parties to represent people of a large nation like America really talk about democracy?

The millions of dead, wounded and displaced Iraqis, Afghans, Libyans and Syrians are the victims of this endless and escalating US war drive, with many millions more to follow. By taking due cue from US imperialism, Israel and India attack Muslims in the neighborhoods. The carnage will not be stopped by mere negotiations but USA and Israel are not ready even for the talks.

Spending too much on US military equipment has cost welfare schemes for the poor and less privileged ones very dearly as only the corporate lords and rich can fully enjoy

life, US policy of militarism as a key tool for invasions, has enabled the pentagon to invade or attack many Arab nations like the global fascist leader, destabilizing them and killing millions of Muslims. The resultant refugee crises have made life of people difficult in neighboring nations. In fact, entire West is in distress, except Israel, the main ally of USA in the region and a terrorist state killing the Palestinians by regular terror attacks for fictitious reasons.

Democracy is defined by the number of political parties and political freedoms the people enjoy. Multiple political parties provide a high level democracy and allow all possible many freedoms of expression to the citizens and others living in a country.

Conversely, lesser the number of political parties the weaker the democratic foundations of a given society where people suffer for want of availability of channels of expression. Under such weak democratic arrangement, people must suffer.

Constitution must provide for space for freedom of speech so that people enjoy it as their fundamental right rather than as a privilege or generosity of the state apparatus.

Communist countries do not allow any scope for more than one party and the Communist party remains the ruling party forever, until the people remove that from power and replace it by another by promulgating a multiparty system. Erstwhile Soviet Russia and China, many other communist/socialist governments did not let a second party, other than Communist party, to emerge in the country.

America and its allies in the West had called communist system as being totalitarian and authoritarian and monopoly enterprise. They boasted too much about the virtues of capitalism and imperialism as opposed to communism. Denial of certain basic rights in Soviet Union and China were used by the west as a useful tool to boost the image of western nations. However, if one looks at how far genuinely democratic the USA is, one would know Americans also do not enjoy basic political rights.

Americans are "enjoying" the 2016 US presidential election campaign now under way in the form of primaries that eventually select the final candidates for the Democratic and Republic parties. The party candidates are keen to win the party nomination of the respective party first to contest the presidency. The US electoral system is the least democratic and the most subject to manipulation of any major capitalist country purporting to be a democracy.

A country of 330 million people, and a political structure controlled by the top one-tenth of one percent, USA does not claim to be a welfare state to work for the common good for entire population.

American two-party system existing for more than 160 years, controlled by the corporatist elite, is now confronted with an unprecedented crisis of political legitimacy. Both the Democratic and Republican parties are losing their hold on a population that is deeply and profoundly alienated from the war mongering political establishment.

The official media are both oblivious to the reality of declining living standards in USA and deteriorating social

conditions or are deliberately covering it up. America is the rising stock exchange and is increasing wealth of the super-rich and a privileged upper-middle-class layer. The two party system has promoted an America as a deeply class-polarized society, with a vast and unbridgeable gulf between the wealthy and the rest of the population. It is this social reality that underlies the mounting crisis of both the Democratic and Republican parties.

US electorate feels it has been betrayed and bamboozled by the political system.

The Republican fanatic Donald Trump and the Democratic Senator Bernie Sanders have emerged somewhat popular alongside Mrs. Clinton. Contrary to all expectations, both Trump and Sanders have acquired mass support and emerged as the dominant figures in the primary process. The candidacy of Trump, the thuggish real-estate mogul and reality-television celebrity, was viewed as a entertaining sideshow that would soon lose its audience as gradually people would get fed up with religious fanaticism.

While the corporate-financial interests that control the Democratic Party still expect Clinton to win the nomination, the Sanders candidacy is seen as a harbinger of a continuing and uncontrollable left-wing political movement.

The massive economic collapse of 2008, on the very eve of the election of Barack Obama, marked a qualitative turning point in the crisis of American society. The unfolding crisis of the two-party system, like all significant political developments, has deep political and social roots. The protracted decline of US capitalism accumulating for decades has led to contradictions that are now blowing the two-party system apart. The disastrous impact of the economic crisis upon the lives of tens of millions of people is reflected in the growing rejection of two-party political system.

On the extreme right, barrage of insults against his Republican opponents and the media resonates with a section of the electorate that Moreover, Trump's candidacy is the end-product of a degraded political environment that has relentlessly promoted and legitimized the sort of reactionary backwardness that Trump skillfully exploits.

The primary factor behind the crisis of the two-party system is the growth of political activism and anti-capitalist sentiment, expressed in strikes and contract rejections by autoworkers, steelworkers and teachers, as well as in opposition to police killings and outrage over lead poisoning in Flint, Michigan, demonstrates that the ordinary people are waging an open struggle against corporate America.

Bernie Sanders, who is not a socialist but calls himself a "democratic socialist" and has placed economic inequality and Wall Street criminality at the center of his campaign, has moved into a virtual tie with Democratic frontrunner Hillary Clinton in pre-caucus polls. The next primary contest takes place on February 9 in New Hampshire. Meanwhile, a poll found that 68 percent of likely Democratic voters thought a socialist president was a good idea, a remarkable figure in a country where socialism has been subjected to endless vilification by the media and the political-corporate elites.

See if your vehicle is in re-call

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V831
 Manufacturer : Forest River, Inc.
 Make / Model Years : FOREST RIVER / 2016
 Subject : Carbon Monoxide Detector not Installed

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V832
 Manufacturer : Roush Performance Products, Inc.
 Make / Model Years : FORD / 2015
 Subject : Rear Brake Caliper Guide Pins may be Loose

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V833
 Manufacturer : General Motors LLC
 Make / Model Years : BUICK / 2016
 CHEVROLET / 2016
 GMC / 2016
 Subject : Third Row Seat Frame may be Incorrectly Welded

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V834
 Manufacturer : Highland Ridge RV
 Make / Model Years : HIGHLAND RIDGE / 2015-2016
 OPEN RANGE / 2015-2016

Subject : Sewer Gas Caution Label Omitted

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V835
 Manufacturer : Trail Boss Conversions, Inc.
 Make / Model Years : BLOOMER / 2013
 Subject : Water Heater May Scald Operator

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V836
 Manufacturer : McLaren Automotive Incorporated
 Make / Model Years : MCLAREN / 2014-2015
 Subject : Hood may Open While Driving/
 FMVSS 113

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V837
 Manufacturer : Motor Coach Industries
 Make / Model Years : MCI / 2015
 Subject : Axle Hanger Bracket may be Missing Welds

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V838
 Manufacturer : Charmac Trailers Inc.
 Make / Model Years : CHARMAC / 2015-2016
 Subject : Tire, Wheel, Hub, and Torsion Arm may Detach

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V839
 Manufacturer : Altec Industries Inc.
 Make / Model Years : MANITEX/PM / 2013-2014
 Subject : Outrigger Welds May Crack

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V840
 Manufacturer : Open Range R.V. Company
 Make / Model Years : OPEN RANGE / 2014-

2015
 Subject : Sewer Gas Caution Label Omitted

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V841
 Manufacturer : Great Dane Trailers
 Make / Model Years : GREAT DANE / 2015-2016
 Subject : Caliper Bolts may be Loose

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V842
 Manufacturer : Daimler Trucks North America LLC
 Make / Model Years : THOMAS BUILT BUSES / 2016
 Subject : Emergency Window Retention/
 FMVSS 217

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V843
 Manufacturer : Daimler Trucks North America LLC
 Make / Model Years : THOMAS BUILT BUSES / 2016-2017
 Subject : Seats may Tilt Rearward in a Crash/FMVSS 222

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V844
 Manufacturer : Suzuki Motor of America, Inc.
 Make / Model Years : SUZUKI / 2013-2015
 Subject : Obstructed Fuel Tank Breather Hose May Cause Leak

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V845
 Manufacturer : Mercedes-Benz USA, LLC.
 Make / Model Years : MERCEDES BENZ / 2015
 Subject : Loss of Electric Power Steering Assist

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V847
 Manufacturer : Vanguard National Trailer Corporation
 Make / Model Years : VANGUARD / 2015-2016
 Subject : Brake Caliper Bolts may be Loose

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V848
 Manufacturer : Jayco, Inc.
 Make / Model Years : JAYCO / 2016
 Subject : Seat Belt Anchor may Detach/
 FMVSS 210

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V849
 Manufacturer : Maserati North America, Inc.
 Make / Model Years : MASERATI / 2016
 Subject : Fuel Delivery Line Corrosion may Cause Fuel Leak

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V850
 Manufacturer : Mitsubishi Fuso Truck of America, Inc.

Make / Model Years : MITSUBISHI FUSO / 2012-2015
 Subject : Fuel Return Hose may Deteriorate and cause Leak

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V851
 Manufacturer : Suzuki Motor of America, Inc.
 Make / Model Years : SUZUKI / 2014-2016
 Subject : Wiring Harness may Rub and Short

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V852
 Manufacturer : Suzuki Motor of America, Inc.
 Make / Model Years : SUZUKI / 2012-2014
 Subject : Engine Stall due to Tappet and Camshaft Wear

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V853
 Manufacturer : Suzuki Motor of America, Inc.
 Make / Model Years : SUZUKI / 2014-2015
 Subject : Poor Battery Ground Conductivity

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V854
 Manufacturer : Suzuki Motor of America, Inc.
 Make / Model Years : SUZUKI / 2014-2015
 Subject : Ignition Switch Terminals may Corrode

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V856
 Manufacturer : Starcraft RV
 Make / Model Years : STARCRAFT / 2015-2016
 Subject : Sewer Gas Caution Label Omitted

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V865
 Manufacturer : Ford Motor Company
 Make / Model Years : FORD / 2015
 Subject : Left or Right Rear Axle Shafts may Fracture

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V869
 Manufacturer : Mazda North American Operations
 Make / Model Years : MAZDA / 2003-2008
 Subject : Passenger Air Bag Inflator May Rupture

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V871
 Manufacturer : Hyundai Motor America
 Make / Model Years : HYUNDAI / 2011-2012
 Subject : ESC Malfunction may cause Loss of Control

NHTSA Campaign ID Number : 15V878
 Manufacturer : Chrysler (FCA US LLC)
 Make / Model Years : JEEP / 2015
 Subject : Power Steering Hose Clamp Incorrectly Positioned

Refugee crisis prompts EU to restart accession talks with Turkey

-Dr. Abdul Ruff

After a long break, now Turkey and the EU have opened another avenue of negotiations regarding Turkey's accession into the bloc. Turkey's long-stalled EU ambitions have been boosted by Europe's desperation on issues like refugees. For the 1st time, Turkey became the largest refugee-hosting country w/ 1.6 million and EU displays sympathy towards Turkey in solving the deadly humanitarian crisis.

The European Union (EU) revived Turkey's membership bid and launched accession talks with Serbia on 14 December, in a sign that the migration crisis due to terror wars in Middle East has prompted the bloc to seek closer relations with its neighbours despite a pause on accepting new members.

Two weeks after Turkey and the EU signed a deal on working together to stem the flow of migrants and refugees pouring into Europe and to revive membership talks, the bloc opened chapter 17 of the EU acquis on European rules of finance, banking and investment.

Recently the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) called on Turkey to return to a peace process amid the escalation of fighting between security forces and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in urban areas across the country's southeast.

Turkey first sought EU membership in 1987 but its bid has made poor progress, with issues such as fundamental freedoms and the future of Cyprus proving to be major obstacles. Turkey's EU membership talks started in 2005. Since then, the process has all but stopped; only one of 35 chapters (Science & Research) has been successfully closed - eight are frozen indefinitely.

Since 2005 the EU has opened 15 chapters out of a total of 35 required to join, with only one being provisionally closed in a decade. Crisis in Kurdish towns in southeastern region of Turkey as well as human rights violations by Turkish government is an issue EU talks with Turkey as a part accession process.

Disagreements over Turkey's rights' record, its democratic credentials, and especially its troubled ties with EU-member Cyprus are among the major impediments to EU accession. Ankara has not opened its ports and airports to Cyprus, which is divided between Turkish and Greek Cypriots.

Only Ankara recognizes Turkish northern Cyprus internationally.

Owing to Cyprus, the EU decided in 2006 to suspend negotiations with Ankara on eight of the 35 chapters, including key themes like the free movement of goods, freedom to provide services, customs and external relations.

All the time, EU was critical of Turkish atrocities in Kurdistan region but now it seems to have changed its position now by criticizing for the first time the "terrorists" as well in Turkey, thereby strengthening Turkey's bid EU membership. –

Although the military atrocities and human rights violations in Arab nations by European and US militaries have never been remain deadly concern, EU talks about human rights and press freedom



issues in Turkey, bringing the accession process to a near-complete halt.

Turkey will not become an EU member any time soon, and its full membership still faces resistance from France, Germany, and, especially, divided Cyprus, where Turkey controls the north.

In fact, Europe's need for help slowing down the wave of people seeking refuge in the EU revived the appetite for accession talks with Muslim-majority Turkey. The EU promised €3 billion for the more than 2 million refugees living in Turkey and to end the visa requirement for Turkish visitors to the passport-free Schengen zone. During a debate in the European Parliament on the situation in the southeastern region of Turkey -- where state authorities have imposed round-the-clock curfews in many Kurdish towns several times -- the Socialists & Democrats in the European Parliament (S&D) group and other officials have urged Turkish authorities to restart the stalled peace process.

While the MEPs stressed that Turkey has a right to defend itself against "terrorist" attacks, they argued that curfews serve as a form of collective punishment. "Turkey's right to fight against terrorism is not questioned," Kati Piri, S&D MEP and the parliament's rapporteur on Turkey, said, and the so-called 'retaliation actions' from the PKK last week -- killing police officers and their family members -- can in no way be justified.

The general feeling, however, is that the curfew and operations by Turkish forces are about collective punishment rather than being aimed at restoring public order." Kati Piri also said she is concerned about the prosecution of more than 1,000 academics who signed a petition calling for peace last week. "How can reasonable people calling for the violence to stop be labeled traitors and promoters of terrorism?" she asked. "In all our interactions with Turkey, we continue to urge all parties to guarantee the rule of law in the country and to call for an immediate cease-fire and an urgent return of the Kurdish peace process," Johannes Hahn, member of the European Commission in charge of European Neighborhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, said in an address to

members of the parliament.

The high level political dialogue between Turkish and EU officials on Jan. 25 will be another opportunity to raise these issues. "The peace force remains the best opportunity in a generation to solve a conflict that has claimed far too many lives," he said, after stressing that the progress made in the past two years should not be thrown away.

In echoing Piri's remarks, S&D vice president for foreign affairs, neighborhood policy and enlargement Knut Fleckenstein also called for a return to the peace process. "We strongly urge the government to return to the path of dialogue and not to sacrifice the country's long-term stability. Equally, we call on Kurdish political and community leaders to act with restraint and responsibility," he said. "And finally, we urge the European Commission to state clearly that we disagree with the Turkish authorities' current policy in the Southeast of the country and that there needs to be a change," he added.

A group of MEPs from S&D will travel to southeastern Turkey in February to observe the situation there.

Turkey has agreed in principle to an EU refugee action plan, which is expected to be finalized. In return for its help, Turkey has demanded the EU provide three billion Euros (\$3.3 billion) a year in funding and visa-free travel for Turkish nationals as well as a resumption of negotiations on its long-stalled application to join the bloc.

Turkey, however, resents EU's constant interference in Turkey's internal affairs in order to block its entry into EU.

EU leaders are facing the biggest refugee crisis since World War II and are urgently seeking to secure the help of Ankara in curbing the flow of migrants into the European Union from Turkey -- which is giving sanctuary to 2.2 million Syrian refugees. "The refugee crisis and terrorism shows us that we are on the same continent, we are facing the same challenges and the more we develop common policies, the better off we will be," EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini told press.

The EU's 28 leaders hosted Turkey for an extraordinary summit to improve ties and help tackle the unrelenting migrant crisis.

In November 2015 EU and Turkish officials have met in Brussels for a summit aimed to tackle record influx of migrants into Europe. Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu and EU representatives signed a special agreement at a summit to discuss the refugees fleeing for Europe. The EU bloc is offering Ankara an aid package and closer ties in return for help in curbing the flow of new arrivals. European countries pledged to provide Ankara with three billion Euros (\$3.2 billion), reduced visa restrictions for Turkish visitors to the EU, and other benefits - in exchange for help coping with nearly two million Syrian refugees on its soil. EU has also pledged to renew talks on Turkey's EU membership.

In return, Turkey said it would crack down on human smugglers and prevent economic migrants from crossing over into Europe. The talks focus on the role of oil exports in financing the self-styled "Islamic State" (ISIS), after Russia accused Ankara of enabling the ISIS to smuggle oil.

Turkish foreign minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said opening the first new section for two years is "quite symbolic." "We hope other chapters will be opened soon and the negotiation process returns to its natural course. We shouldn't wait another two years to open another chapter," Cavusoglu told press. Cavusoglu said Turkey was making progress on its end of the deal to make it easier for refugees to settle in Turkey. "We are preparing a draft law to issue working permits for Syrians living in Turkey," he said, adding that they are building new school classrooms and easing access to healthcare.

On November 26, 2015 Turkey's minister of European Union affairs said that Brussels had agreed to open a new chapter in stalled membership talks with Turkey by mid-December, following an EU-Turkey summit. Out of 35 "policy chapters" which all EU candidate countries must successfully negotiate prior to membership only 13 have been opened and only one has been successfully closed so far.

The opening of Chapter 17 is part of the re-energizing of Turkey's accession process as agreed at the EU-Turkey summit in November. Luxembourg currently holds the EU's rotating presidency. Chapter 17 focuses on economic and monetary policy, with bolstering the independence of Turkey's central bank a pre-condition to the move. The EU and Turkey would start working together to open five to six more chapters in 2016.

Although the process of resumption of accession talks between EU and Turkey is certainly a positive move, whether or not it is a mere tactical move by EU to solve the European refugee crisis alone by using Turkey or indeed it is a genuinely accession move as well, remains to be seen. However, RU has to be sincere and honest partner in peace processes, both Turkey's domestic and European.

HINDI MOVIE RELEASE DATES

Opening	Name	Genre	Director	Cast
8 January	<i>Chauranga</i>	Drama	Bikas Mishra	Soham Maitra, Ena Saha, Riddhi Sen, Sanjay Suri, Tannishtha Chatterjee
8 January	<i>Wazir</i>	Thriller	Bejoy Nambiar	Amitabh Bachchan, Farhan Akhtar, Aditi Rao Hydari, John Abraham, Neil Nitin Mukesh
15 January	<i>Chalk n Duster</i>	Drama	Jayant Gilatar	Shabana Azmi, Juhi Chawla, Divya Dutta, Zarina Wahab, Arya Babbar, Richa Chaddha
15 January	<i>Rebellious Flower</i>	Biopic	Krishan Hooda	Prince Shah, Shashank Singh, Mantra Mugdha, Kirti Adarkar, Bachchan Pachera
22 January	<i>Airlift</i>	Action	Raja Krishna Menon	Akshay Kumar, Nimrat Kaur, Purab Kohli, Ferena Wazeir
22 January	<i>Jugni</i>	Musical Drama	Shefali Bhushan	Sugandha Garg, Siddhant Behl, Sadhana Singh, Anuritta K Jha, Samir Sharma
22 January	<i>Kyaa Kool Hain Hum 3</i>	Adult Comedy	Umesh Ghadge	Tushar Kapoor, Aftab Shivdasani, Mandana Karimi, Krishna Abhishek, Claudia Ciesla, Gizele Thakral, Gauhar Khan(Special appearance), Andy ^[disambiguation needed] , Meghna Naidu
29 January	<i>Mastizaade</i>	Adult Comedy	Milap Zaveri	Sunny Leone, Tusshar Kapoor, Vir Das, Shaad Randhawa, Gizele Thakral, Riteish Deshmukh
29 January	<i>Saala Khadoos</i>	Sports	Sudha Kongara	R Madhavan, Ritika Singh
5 February	<i>BHK Bhallaa@Halla.Kom</i>	Comedy	Rakesh Chaturvedi 'Om'	Ujjwal Rana, Inshika Bedi, Manoj Pahwa, Seema Pahwa, Yashpal Sharma, Brijendra Kala, Benjamin Gilani
5 February	<i>Ghayal Once Again</i>	Action	Sunny Deol	Sunny Deol, Soha Ali Khan, Tisca Chopra, Shivam Patil, Aanchal Munjal, Daina Khan, Rishab Arora, Neha Khan
5 February	<i>LoveShhuda</i>	Romance	Vaibhav Mishra	Girish Kumar, Navneet Kaur Dhillon
5 February	<i>Sanam Teri Kasam</i>	Romance	Radhika Rao, Vinay Sapru	Mawra Hocane, Harshvardhan Rane
12 February	<i>Fitoor</i>	Romance/Drama	Abhishek Kapoor	Aditya Roy Kapoor, Katrina Kaif, Tabu, Ajay Devgn, Aditi Rao Hydari, Akshay Oberoi, Lara Dutta, Rahul Bhatt
12 February	<i>Lucknowi Ishq</i>	Romance/Drama	Aanand Raut	Adhyayan Suman, Karishma Kotak
12 February	<i>Sanam Re</i>	Romance	Divya Khosla Kumar	Pulkit Samrat, Yami Gautam, Urvashi Rautela, Rishi Kapoor
19 February	<i>Direct Ishq</i>	Drama	Rajiv S. Ruia	Rajniesh Duggall, Nidhi Subbaiah, Arjun Bijlani
19 February	<i>Ishq Forever</i>	Drama	Sameer Sippy	Krishna Chaturvedi, Ruhi Singh, Javed Jaffrey, Lisa Ray
19 February	<i>Neerja</i>	Biopic/Drama	Ram Madhvani	Sonam Kapoor, Shabana Azmi, Shekhar Ravjiani
19 February	<i>Tere Bin Laden dead or alive</i>	Comedy	Abhishek Sharma	Manish Paul, Sikander Kher, Pradhuman Singh, Ali Zafar, Sugandha Ram
19 February	<i>Dhara 302</i>	Action Drama	Jitender Singh Narukal	Rufy Khan, Dipti Dhotre, Gulshan Pandey
26 February	<i>Bollywood Diaries</i>	Drama	K.D. Satyam	Raima Sen, Ashish Vidyarthi, Salim Diwan, Karuna Pandey, Vineet Kumar Singh
26 February	<i>Aligarh</i>	Biopic/Drama	Hansal Mehta	Manoj Bajpai, Rajkummar Rao
26 February	<i>Love Shagun</i>	Romance/Comedy	Sandesh Nayak	Anuj Sachdeva, Nidhi Subbaiah
4 March	<i>Zubaan</i>	Drama	Mozez Singh	Vicky Kaushal, Sarah Jane Dias, Raghav Chanana
4 March	<i>Jai Gangaajal</i>	Action/Drama	Prakash Jha	Priyanka Chopra, Anuj Aggarwal, Prakash Jha, Rahul Bhatt
4 March	<i>Do Lafzon Ki Kahani</i>	Romantic	Deepak Tiwari	Randeep Hooda, Kajal Aggarwal

Abhi Na Jao.....

By

M.A. Waheed

That lyrical musical song from "Hum Dono" portrayed by Sadhana and Devanand haunted us then, haunts us now and will haunt us for rest of our lives..... Sadhana's expressions and emotions leave you in an enchanted trance, catapulting mind, body and soul into a world of peace and tranquility. On Christmas Day in 2015 the heart-throb of now-not-so-young but romantics of yesteryears bid farewell to a fashion icon and talented actress of Bollywood. In the period known as the Golden Era of Bollywood films, she exuded a rare exuberance with a slick combination of grace and grit. Sadhana perhaps lived the perfect synopsis of a manual that preached to "say without saying". In romance it is believed by some majnus that the unsaid

is more impactful than the said. I am reminded of a shair.....
 Hum ko yeh arzoo woh chehre se uthaye niqaab khud hi
 Unko yeh intezar ke takhaza kare koyi.....
 Sadhana attracted, wooed, seduced, evoked, emoted without transgressing the boundaries of dignity and conventional codes. Her grooming and hair-style..... the Sadhana-cut caused a revolution on college campuses. Even though she authored and edited modern trends in a then conservative India, she preserved the image of a desirable bahu and the beloved of an upwardly mobile young man. Sexy in a saree, adorable with a bindi, Sadhana blended and meshed with ease and

devotion either for a temple darshan or whispers on the lawns of a park back-to-back. She became the darling of the Muslim community with her excellent performance in "Mere Mehboob". Hijaab and Adaab came so effortlessly to Sadhana. Her jhumka gira re song and dance from Mera Saaya created a buzz in the 60's. The life Sadhana breathed in Lata's rendering of the song, O Sajana with loose hair dancing with air waves are a poet's dream. Even though she never won the Filmfare award, she was in league with the best of the best of her times with box-office success. Her name signifies a means to achievement..... and she lived upto her name by living in people's heart.

Movies of Sadhana.....

Asli Naqli
 Love in Simla,
 Ek Musafir Ek Hasina
 Arzoo
 Raaj Kumar
 Hum Dono
 Anita
 Ishq Par Zor Nahin
 Aap Aye Bahaar Ayee
 Parakh
 Mera Saaya
 Dil Daulat Duniya
 Budtameez
 Sachai



Amaanat
 Ek Phool Do Mali.....

Sadhanas has acted with most of the famous heroes of her time. She gave Silver Jubilee hits with Joy Mukherjee, Shammi Kapoor, Devanand, Rajendra Kumar..... Just go to youtube and watch her songs. You will be mesmerized by the histrionics of this yesteryear actress. In the B&W medium the nostalgia will enrapt your attention and take you down memory lanes and bylanes of warmth, love and unfathomable passion. Born in Karachi, Pakistan in 1941 her end came on December 25, 2015 in Mumbai, India. M.A. Waheed is a freelance journalist based in Upstate NY.



Sunny & I never interfere in each other's work: **Bobby**

Mumbai, Jan 19 (PTI) Actor Bobby Deol says he and his actor-brother Sunny do not interfere in each other's work.

The 48-year-old actor said he did not give any suggestions to Sunny, who is ready with his upcoming action-drama "Ghayal: Once Again".

"I didn't contribute anything to the film. We don't like to interfere in each other's work. I wouldn't want him to get bogged down by what someone else is saying. It's his vision and creative side," Bobby told PTI.

"I did 'Dillagi' with him which was one of my best performances. I have a lot of faith in him and I have a feeling that it's going to be a great film which people are going to enjoy," he said.

"Ghayal Once Again" has been directed, written and produced by Sunny. It is the sequel to the 1990 super-hit action drama "Ghayal" and will mark the come back of the 58-year-old actor, who starred in the iconic role of amateur boxer Ajay Mehra. Bobby says it is difficult to don the hat of a director, producer and actor in one film, but his brother has pulled it off with ease.



"I am really excited for the film. He has really worked hard. He has directed the film and has put all his effort into it. It's been tough producing, directing and acting in a film, but my brother is as tough in real life as he is on screen," he said.

Bobby was last seen in the 2013 comedy "Yamla Pagla

Deewana 2", which also starred Sunny and his father veteran actor Dharmendra.

The actor says he is currently looking for scripts and has no plans of following into the footsteps of his brother and turning a director.

"I am looking for good scripts, working on things, so let's see. But I can't write, and directing is a big job. It's something which people have a knack for," he said.

"There are good writers who can't be good directors, and there were lots of actors who tried directing but they couldn't. So it's something which people have in them. You can't figure out how it happens," he said.

Bobby will be seen in the upcoming season six of Celebrity Cricket League playing for actor Sohail Khan's team Mumbai Heroes.

Hrithik's next an action-adventure film



Mumbai, Jan 19 (PTI) Actor Hrithik Roshan will be seen in an action adventure film to be directed by Vijay Krishna Acharya under the Yash Raj banner.

"We are making a film with Hrithik in the lead. The film has all elements like drama, action, humour, romance, song.

It's an action adventure film. It's not the film in 'Dhoom' series," sources said.

The "Dhoom 3" director is yet to finalise the leading lady of the film.

"The film will go on floors mid this year. The announcement will be made soon regarding all the details of the

project," sources said.

Hrithik will be seen next in Ashutosh Gowariker's "Mohenjodaro", a period drama. He also has a film with filmmaker Sanjay Gupta which will be produced by Rakesh Roshan.

Kabir Bedi slams daughter Pooja

Bollywood Actor Kabir Bedi has lashed out at daughter Pooja Bedi for calling his newly married wife "wicked and evil", saying he is "deeply disappointed" with the comments.

Bedi, who tied the knot for the fourth time with Parveen Dusanj on his 70th birthday, took to Twitter to share his displeasure over the unwelcoming remarks made by Pooja.

"DEEPLY DISAPPOINTED by venomous comments by my daughter Pooja against @parveendusanj just after we married. NO excuse for bad behaviour (sic)," he wrote.

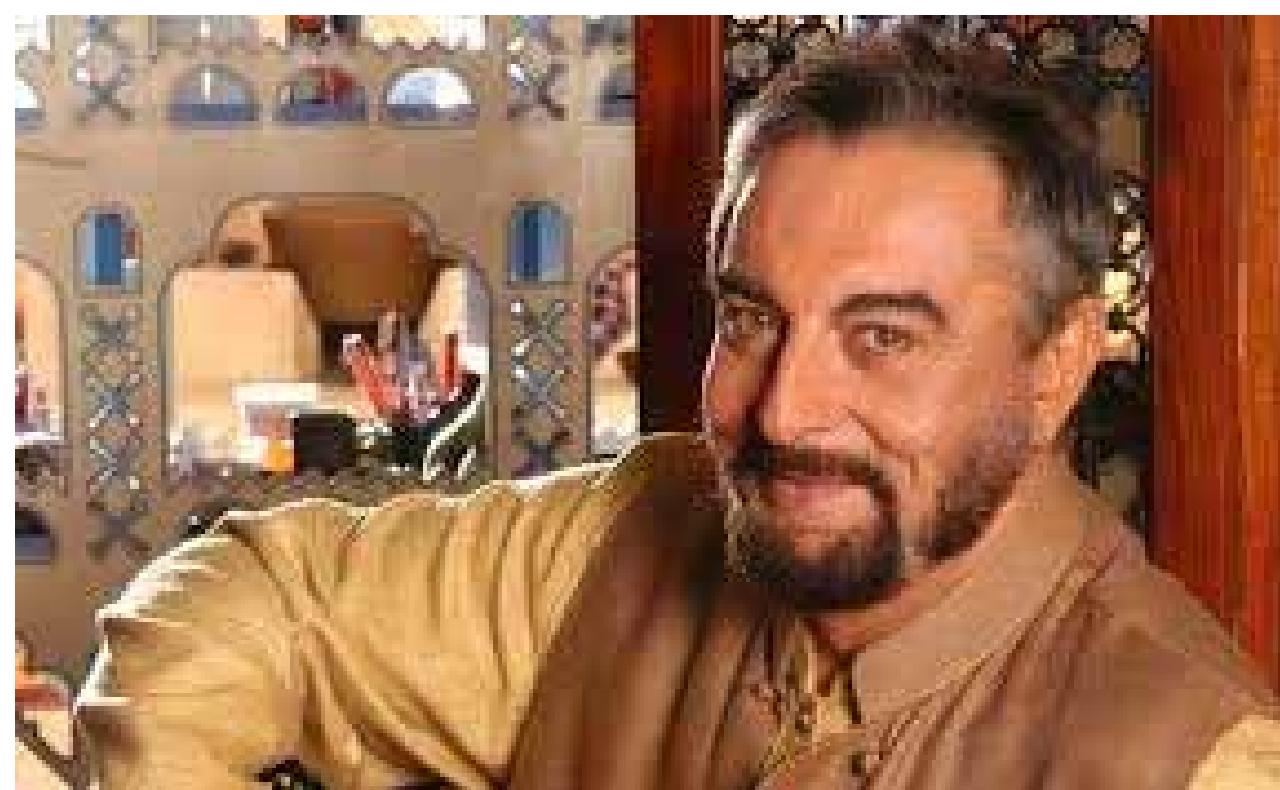
Pooja, who is the daughter of Bedi and his first wife Protima, was not happy with the marriage.

"Every fairy tale has a wicked witch or an evil step~mother! Mine just arrived! @iKabirBedi just married @parveendusanj," she had tweeted on January 17 immediately after the wedding.

She later deleted the tweet and wished her father the best for his fourth marriage.

"Deleted the last tweet on my dad @iKabirBedi 4th marriage. Lets keep things positive. I Wish him the best!" she posted recently but Bedi is in no mood to let bygones be bygones.

Bedi's first marriage was to model-turned-Odissi dancer Protima, with whom he had two children Pooja and Sid-



dharth.

He later married British-born fashion designer Susan Humphreys and the couple had son Adam. Bedi divorced Humphreys and tied the knot with TV and radio presenter Nikki Bedi. They had no children and divorced in 2005.

Bedi and daughter Pooja have been estranged for over a year. Pooja had apparently asked father Kabir and his partner Parveen to move out of the house that she said belonged to her mother, Protima.

Kader Khan: Looking at Padma awardees, it's good I didn't get it:

Considering the Bollywood celebrities who have made it to the Padma awardees' list this year, "it's good that I did not get one", says veteran actor-writer Kader Khan.

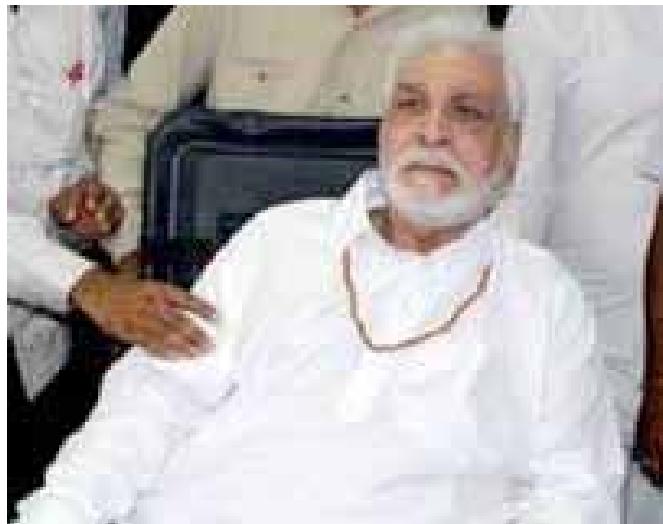
This year, names like Rajinikanth, Anupam Kher, Priyanka Chopra, Madhur Bhandarkar, S.S. Rajamouli, Udit Narayan and Malini Awasthi, among others, are in Padma awardees' list.

The ever-versatile actor also hinted that "flattering" around the movers and shakers in Lutyens' Delhi could be one of the reasons behind his colleagues getting the honour.

On being told the names of the industry colleagues who were earlier this week named for the Padma awards, the 79-year-old actor told IANS in an exclusive interview: "... it's good that they did not give me a Padma Shri. I have neither flattered anyone in my life, nor will I ever. I don't want these awards if they have been given to people (in the industry) who got it this time."

He believes "an award is a no big thing, but its importance lies in the people it has been conferred upon".

"Earlier, there was a certain honesty in



these awards but it's not the same case now. People have now forgotten to respect others and have become way too selfish.

"I would think that I was not as capable as those who were chosen for the Padma awards this year. I, however, thank all those who proposed my name for it," Khan added.

Khan, who has regaled the audience with his comic side in films like "Himmatwala", "Aankhen" and "Coolie No.1" among several other entertainers, also urged actors to refrain from indulging in politics.

"I would like to urge all the actors to

return from the politics. 'Laut aao, politics tumhari manzil nahi hai' (Come back, politics is not your destination). It is only breaking you."

Khan, who it seemed was finding it difficult to speak due to his old age-related illness, sounded especially upset with actor Anupam Kher, who has been named for a Padma Bhushan.

"What has he done except singing praises for (Prime Minister) Narendra Modi," he asked.

"I am not contesting the government's decision of conferring him with the award but the only thing I want to know is the credentials that I lacked for it (the award)," Khan, who termed audiences' love for him the biggest honour, said.

The central government on January 25 announced the list of Padma awardees, and it led to an outcry on the social media over Kher's inclusion in it.

In a tweet that he posted in 2010, he had

questioned the authenticity of the Padma awards.

Kher, whose wife Kirron Kher is a Bharatiya Janata Party MP from Chandigarh, is of late seen posturing with the Narendra Modi government.

He also led a 'Tolerance March' criticising artistes across the spectrum who indulged in 'Award Wapsi' as a mark of protest against growing intolerance in the country. In fact, Malini Awasthi and Madhur Bhandarkar were also on the forefront of the march with Kher.

Just last year, various actors and directors in B-Town had proposed Khan's name for a Padma Shri award. And back then, he had acknowledged the efforts by his colleagues of "demanding" the honour for him.

"If the government feels that I have done good work, it will honour me. It's people's love that they are demanding it for me," Khan had told IANS in an interview in September 2015.

On the big screen, the veteran actor was last seen in Fauzia Arshi-directed "Hogaya Dimaagh Ka Dahi".

Maharashtra Govt Gave Hema Malini Plot Worth Crores For Rs 70,000, Reveals RTI Activist

A month after the BJP-led government in Maharashtra announced allotment of a prime piece of land to actress and MP Hema Malini for a dance academy, an RTI activist has claimed the plot valued in crores is being given to her for a mere Rs 70,000.

This is the second instance when the BJP MP from Mathura has been allotted a plot in the financial capital and she remains in possession of the earlier one, activist Anil Galgali claimed.

Phone calls made to the actress-politician went unanswered.

Galgali claimed that according to the documents obtained by him, the actress has been allotted the land, measuring 2,000 sq mt and located in suburban Oshiwara, at rate of Rs 35 per square metre (total Rs 70,000) by the Mumbai Suburban District Collectorate.

"I have written a letter to Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and pointed out how his government was being so kind to give a plot at a throw-away price which is against the policy of his own government," Galgali said.

The plot was originally reserved for a garden, but "conveniently it was handed over to a BJP MP for her dance academy", he alleged.

"File notings received under the RTI also show this is the second time she has been allotted a prime plot in Mumbai," Galgali alleged.

"In 1997, Shiv Gana-BJP government had given Hema Malini a plot of land, but she could not develop it due to CRZ (Coastal Regulation Zone) issues but did not bother to return the land to the government," he claimed.

The Government should charge her the rate (for the current land) as per the ready reckoner and ask her to return the earlier plot, he said.

The ready reckoner rate is an annual statement of property rates based on which the government collects stamp duty from buyers. It is the basis for calculation of market value of flats for stamp duty and registration charges.



A woman and a baby were in the doctor's examining room, waiting for the doctor to come in for the baby's first exam.

The doctor arrived, and examined the baby, checked his weight, and being a little concerned, asked if the baby was breastfed or bottle-fed.

"Breastfed", she replied.

"Well, strip down to your waist." The doctor ordered.

She did. He pinched her nipples, pressed, kneaded, and rubbed both breasts for a while in a very professional and detailed examination.

Motioning to her to get dressed, the doctor said, "No wonder this baby is underweight. You don't have any milk."

"I know", she said, "I am his Grandma."

After having failed his exam in Logistics and Organization, a student goes and confronts his lecturer about it.

Student, "Sir, do you really understand anything about the subject?"

Professor, "Surely I must. Otherwise I would not be a professor!"

Student, "Great, well then I would like to ask you a question. If you can give me the correct answer, I will accept my mark as is and go. If you however do not know the answer, I want you give me an 'A' for the exam."

Professor, "Okay, it's a deal. So what is the question?"

Student: "What is legal, but not logical, logical, but not legal, and neither logical, nor legal?"

Even after some long and hard consideration, the professor cannot give the student an answer, and therefore changes his exam mark into an 'A', as agreed.

Afterwards, the professor calls on his best student and asks him the same question.

He immediately answers, "Sir, you are 63 years old and married to a 35 year old woman, which is legal, but not logical. Your wife has a 25 year old lover, which is logical, but not legal. The fact that you have given your wife's lover an 'A', although he really should have failed, is neither legal, nor logical."

One night, Tim was walking home when, all of a sud-



den, a thief jumped on him.

Tim and the thief got tangle up and began to wrestle. They rolled about on the ground and Tim put up a tremendous fight. However, the thief managed to get the better of him and pinned him to the ground.

The thief then went through Tim's pockets and searched him. All the thief could find on Tim was 25 cents.

The thief was so surprised at this that he asked Tim why he had bothered to fight so hard for 25 cents.

"Was that all you wanted?" Tim replied, "I thought you were after the five hundred dollars I've got in my shoe!"

This poor man is facing surgery on both his feet because of severe wounds. The doctor has warned him that he cannot tell how bad the damage is until he gets him in the operating room and he has prepared the man for the worst.

After surgery, the man is slowly waking up and he sees the surgeon approaching his bed. The doc looks at him and says, "I have good news news and I have bad news - which would you like first?"

The man nervously responds, "Give me the bad news first." The doc says, "I had to take both your feet"

"Oh my, what could possibly be the good news?" says the man.

"The guy in the bed next to you wants to buy your slippers!"

A good looking girl waved at me today...

But there was no way I was swimming out that far to save her.

A person went to an interview of a healthcare organization. After the first question he was disqualified.

Interview Board: Why do people have different kind of

blood groups?

Applicant: Because mosquitoes love to enjoy different kind of flavors.

A husband and wife had a fight.

Wife called her mom: He fought with me again, I am coming to stay with you.

Mom: No dear, he must pay for his mistake. I am coming to stay with you!

A man has a curse, he is only able to say a single word every year. But if he doesn't say a word that year he can say two the next year, then three, and so on.

One day he meets a beautiful woman and wants to ask her to marry him, but he has no words saved up so he must wait four years.

So he waits four years and he is finally able to ask her the question. He looks her in the eyes and says "Will you marry me?"

She looks back at him with a smile and twinkle in her eye and replies "Come again?"

After a talking sheepdog gets all the sheep in the pen, he reports back to the farmer: "All 40 accounted for."

"But I only have 36 sheep," says the farmer.

"I know," says the sheepdog. "But I rounded them up."

This past Sunday Mary Ellen and Elisabeth went to the 10:30 AM service and the new pastor was long winded and his sermon was quite long.

After the service was finally over, Mary Ellen said to Elisabeth, "The sermon was beautiful don't you think?"

Elisabeth replied "Oh yes it was, but a bit too long. Next week I'm bringing my cushion to sit on, these benches are too hard."

She continued to say, "You know Mary Ellen at one point during the sermon I thought my butt went to sleep."

Mary Ellen said, "I know, I heard it snore three times."

I woke up suddenly terrified, I'm late for work!

I opened my eyes and chilled... I'm at work.

Patna court closes case against Lalu, others

Patna, Jan 19 (PTI) A district court here today accepted Bihar government's plea to withdraw a case against RJD chief Lalu Prasad, his two minister-sons and others for vandalism and stopping government officials from discharging their duties during an RJD-sponsored bandh last year and discharged all the accused.

Chief Judicial Magistrate Om Prakash accepted the plea of government lawyer for withdrawal of the case against 262 RJD leaders including Lalu Prasad, his sons Tejaswi Yadav and Tej Pratap Yadav, besides state party chief Ramchandra Purve.

Tejaswi Yadav and Tej Pratap Yadav are Deputy Chief Minister and Health Minister respectively.

The government lawyer made a plea by moving an application for withdrawal of case under CRPC 321, which

was accepted by the court. The court discharged all the accused and closed the case.

A case was registered against them with Kotwali police station in Patna on July 27, 2015, under various sections of IPC which related to vandalism and preventing government officials from discharging their duties.

The charge sheet was filed in the case on October 13 last year.

RJD, which was not a part of the state government at that time but was supporting Nitish Kumar ministry from outside, had enforced a Bihar bandh on July 27, 2015 demanding the release of caste census report by the union government.





Hyderabad: Information technology minister K.T. Rama Rao on Sunday said the Telangana state government would seek funds from the Union government to implement a project to make the city's roads signal-free for smooth flow of traffic. He said the government would construct multi-level flyovers



at 54 junctions in Hyderabad in order to prevent traffic jams under the Strategic Roads Development Project, which would be implemented at an estimated cost of Rs 20,000 crore.

The minister along with Union minister Bandaru Dattatreya, Deputy Chief Minister Mahmood Ali, and other state ministers laid the foundation stones for different facets of the project at KBR Park, Banjara Hills Road No. 2, Kukatpally and other places. Mr Rama Rao said that the government would develop the city as an ideal capital. "In order to

build Hyderabad as a global city, we have started the first phase of the SRDP. Apart from construction of multi-level flyovers under the project, the government will also construct skyways on the outskirts of the city." Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao has already planned to construct two more reservoirs in the city at an estimated cost of Rs 7,500 crore with financial support from the ILFS, he said.

The minister said the government had already distributed over 42 lakh dust bins and 2,000 auto-trolleys for waste management in the city. "We have been constructing night shelters for beggars, double bed-room flats for poor people and community function halls in colonies," he said. Mr Dattatreya said that he would try to bring more funds from the Central to develop the city. "We will establish craft

and vocational training centres for women under Central schemes in the Khairatabad Assembly segment," he said.

State ministers Nayini Narsimha Reddy, Talasani Srinivas Yadav, T. Padma Rao, MPs K. Kesava Rao, K. Visweswara Reddy, MLCs Bhupal Reddy, Bhanu Prasada Rao, MLA Chintala Ramachandra Reddy, GHMC commissioner Dr B. Janardan Reddy and others took part in the programmes. Mr Dattatreya along with Mr Mahmood Ali and Mr Rama Rao would lay the foundation stone for the construction of double bedroom flats at Indiranagar under Khairatabad Assembly segment on Monday. They will inaugurate work on the multi-purpose sports complex at Sanatnagar that is being built at an estimated cost of Rs 5 crore.

Nitin Gadkari announces Rs 41,000-cr road projects for Telangana

Hyderabad: Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Monday announced road projects worth Rs 41,000 crore for Telangana, including two Express Highways from the state capital Hyderabad to Bengaluru in Karnataka and Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh.

"The total package for Telangana is Rs 41,000 crore. This is not the final figure. It is still open for discussion. And if any new National Highway is recommended from the leaders of Telangana or from the state government or from our (BJP) leaders, we will think positively and we will support Telangana as a new state," Gadkari told reporters here.

The Union Road Transport and Highways Minister today laid the foundation stone of 4-lane of Yadgir and Warangal section of NH-202 (new NH-163) of length 99 km costing Rs 1,424 crore.

He said the government will soon prepare the Detailed Project Reports (DPR) for two Express Highways connecting Hyderabad with Bengaluru and Vijayawada.

"The Telangana portion of cost of construction for the two Express Highways would be Rs 16,000 crore covering 190 km for Vijayawada and 210 km for Bengaluru Express Highways," the minister said.

According to him, making of inland waterways would be the NDA government's top priority.

He also assured that his ministry would take up works of making waterways in Telangana, once the related proposals are cleared by Parliament.

According to him, as many as 111 waterways projects are pending for clearance in the Rajya Sabha.



As Telangana is a land-locked state, the Centre has taken a decision to construct a dry port on Godavari river.

"We have taken a decision to make dry port on Godavari where it will act as a multi-modal hub. There will be a National Highway, waterways and at the same time aviation connection will also be there," Gadkari said.

GHMC elections: TRS makes clean sweep, TDP, BJP, Cong wiped out

IN WHAT is being termed a "historic win" for Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS), the K Chandrasekhara Rao-led party made a clean sweep in the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) poll results declared on Friday.

The party, which is in power at the state level, won in all the five zones and made inroads into the old city areas as well by winning a total of 99 seats out of 150. The elections were held on February 2 with a voting turnout of 44 per cent.



The TDP-BJP combine were left with an embarrassing 4 seats, while the Congress bagged only 2 seats. It is a major setback for the TDP and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu. The Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (MIM) has won 44 seats.

In another boost to the TRS, people from the Andhra region have voted overwhelmingly in favour of the TRS. Crucial wards in the IT corridor like Madhapur, Gachibowli, Miyapur, which is dominated by people from the Andhra region, have been won by the TRS. Even Kukatpally, which is considered an exclusive Andhra enclave, voted for the TRS. The TDP had won the Kukatpally Housing Board ward the last time.

During the election campaign, CM Chandrasekhara Rao and his son K T Rama Rao, the IT Minister, had said the TRS did not differentiate between people of various regions and states living in the city. The party had also promised to build low-cost 2 BHK houses for socially and economically backward people.

Speaking after the results in the evening, Rao said, "This is a historic victory as no party has ever won over 55 seats in GHMC elections. Among the promises we made, the most important is giving 2 BHK houses to eligible beneficiaries."

Iran's Khamenei welcomes sanctions lift, warns of U.S. 'deceit'

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Tuesday welcomed the lifting of international sanctions against Iran, but warned that Tehran should remain wary of its old enemy the United States.

State television reported that Khamenei wrote to President Hassan Rouhani to congratulate him on implementing the nuclear deal, which resulted in U.S., European Union and United Nations sanctions being lifted over the weekend.

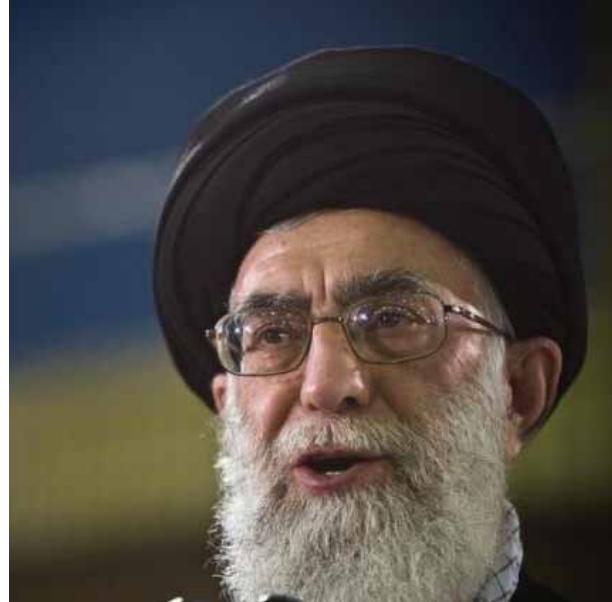
In his first comments since the deal took effect, Iran's highest authority made clear that Washington should still be treated with suspicion. He made no mention of a surprise prisoner exchange that also took place this weekend.

"I reiterate the need to be vigilant about the deceit and treachery of arrogant countries, especially the United States, in this

(nuclear) issue and other issues," Khamenei said.

"Be careful that the other side fully meets its com-

Washington could walk away from the deal when President Barack Obama leaves office in early 2017.



mitments. The comments made by some American politicians in last two, three days are suspicious," he added.

Republican candidates for the U.S. presidency have criticized the deal, and some Iranian officials fear

Hopes for a broader rapprochement between the two countries were dashed on Sunday when Washington slapped new sanctions on companies accused of supporting Iran's ballistic missile program, drawing an angry response from Iranian officials.

Germany sees Iran as key to stabilizing Middle East

Germany wants to work with Iran to help calm regional conflicts now that the Islamic Republic is emerging from international isolation and also prevent tension escalating with regional rival Saudi Arabia, Germany's foreign minister said on Tuesday.

Iran emerged from years of being considered a pariah state at the weekend after the United States, European Union and United Nations lifted sanctions linked to its nuclear program under an international deal which involved Germany.

Iran was the key to stabilizing the Middle East, referring to conflicts in Syria and Yemen, the minister, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, said.

"We need Iran to calm the conflicts and re-establish stability in this crisis-hit region. And I hope Iran is ready for this," Steinmeier told foreign journalists.



Steinmeier said calming the war in Syria was central to solving Europe's refugee crisis, which has prompted deep divisions within the EU on how to share the burden of accommodating the influx.

Gulf Arab neighbors, including Saudi Arabia, accuse Iran of backing rebels in Yemen and pro-government militias in Syria. A mostly Arab coalition led by Saudi Arabia launched a military offensive against Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen in March.

Tensions rose further this month when Saudi Arabia executed a prominent Shi'ite Muslim cleric, prompting an angry reaction from Shi'ite Iran.

Steinmeier said these tensions would not disappear soon but it was possible to build trust between the two regional rivals.

"Neighborly tensions, like those between Saudi Arabia and Iran, will not turn into friendship overnight," he said.

"In a first step, a lot would be achieved if both sides brought the current situation under control, not let it escalate, and talked to each other," he said.

"I am very confident that this new beginning of German-Iranian relations will be filled with substance," Steinmeier told foreign journalists in Berlin.



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