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Shooter of Prada manager arrested



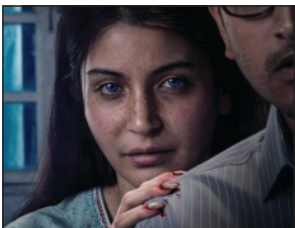
Miami Beach police have arrested and charged a second man in the killing of Kamil Patel. **Page 4**

Nirav Modi accused of \$1.8 billion fraud



Indian jeweller Nirav Modi denies allegations that he was involved in loan fraud at PNB. **Page 6**

Forthcoming Film
Pari



Actress Anushka Sharma is gearing up for the release of *Pari*, her third production venture. **Page 16**

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How Punjab National Bank fell victim to India's biggest bank fraud

By Devidutta Tripathy

MUMBAI - India's Punjab National Bank (PNB), the second-biggest state-run lender, stunned the country's financial sector when it announced last week it had discovered fraudulent transactions worth \$1.77 billion at a single branch in Mumbai.

The fraud, by far the biggest ever detected by an Indian bank, comes to light at a time when lenders - especially the state-run banks - are hobbled by \$147 billion in soured loans on their books, a problem that has choked new lending and hurt the country's economic recovery.

Despite tight fiscal conditions, the government recently extended a \$14 billion bailout to ailing state banks as part of a broader \$32 billion rescue plan. The sector also faces higher capital requirements by next year to meet new global banking rules known as Basel III. Following is an explainer on the PNB fraud and its implications for other lenders and India's banking sector:

WHAT IS THE FRAUD ALLEGATION ABOUT?

On Jan. 29, a PNB official from Mumbai filed a criminal complaint with India's federal investigative agency against three companies and four people, including billionaire jeweller Nirav Modi and Mehul Choksi, the managing director of Gitanjali Gems Ltd, saying they had defrauded the bank and caused a loss of 2.8 billion rupees (\$43.8 million).

The bank alleged two junior employees at the Mumbai branch had helped the companies and people managing them get "letters of undertaking" (LoUs) from it without having a sanctioned credit limit or maintaining funds "on margin".

The LoUs were used to obtain



Pedestrians walk past a Punjab National Bank office in Mumbai, India on February 21, 2018.

short-term credit from overseas branches of other Indian banks, PNB said.

Based on the complaint, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) registered a preliminary case against the companies and the people named on Jan. 31 and PNB said a detailed probe was underway.

On Wednesday, PNB said in a regulatory filing it had discovered fraudulent and unauthorised transactions totalling \$1.77 billion at the Mumbai branch. Investigators have said the latest disclosure was related to the earlier case filed.

HOW DID THE FRAUD COME TO LIGHT?

PNB says that on Jan. 16 the accused firms presented a set of import documents to the Mumbai branch and requested buyers' credit to pay overseas suppliers. Since they had no pre-arranged credit limit, the branch official asked the companies to put down the full amount as collateral so the bank could issue LoUs to authorise the credit.

When the firms argued that they had used such facilities in the past without keeping any money on margin, PNB scanned through records and found no trace of any transactions, according to the bank's account.

It then found that two junior employees had issued LoUs on the SWIFT interbank messaging system without entering the transactions on the bank's own system. Such transactions went on for years without detection, PNB said.

Banking sources have said in some banks the SWIFT system, which is used for international transactions, and the core banking system work independently of each other. In PNB's case, it said the outstanding LoUs were not available on its core banking system run on Infosys's Fincle software, thus the LoUs issued went undetected.

PNB has accused three companies - Solar Exports, Stellar Diamonds and Diamond R US - it said belong to Nirav Modi, a high-end jeweller who runs his

eponymous Nirav Modi stores that spread from New York to Hong Kong. Modi is worth \$1.73 billion according to Forbes rankings.

Modi's companies colluded with the bank staff, PNB said, adding that it suspected some officials at foreign branches of other Indian banks that extended credit were also involved.

It also named Gitanjali Gems, Gili India and Nakshatra - companies promoted by another jeweller, Mehul Choksi, who is Modi's uncle.

Gitanjali last week denied Choksi had any involvement with the alleged fraud, saying he would take "necessary legal steps" to get his name removed from the CBI case.

Modi has not commented on the case. His flagship Firestar Diamond has said it had no involvement.

A court on Wednesday remanded six people including a general manager at state-run Punjab National Bank (PNB) in police custody for nearly two week.

Thought of the Week: "Keep your face always toward the sunshine and shadows will fall behind you." - Walt Whitman

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ANALYSIS

Luxury property ad blitz heralds Trump son's visit to India

By Muneeza Naqvi

NEW DELHI (AP) - "Trump has arrived. Have you?" shout the barrage of glossy front-page advertisements in almost every major Indian newspaper.

The ads, which have run repeatedly in the past few days, herald the arrival not of the American president but of his eldest son, Donald Trump Jr., who is in New Delhi to sell luxury apartments and lavish attention on wealthy Indians who have already bought units in a Trump-branded development outside the Indian capital.

The newspaper ads promise that buyers who order apartments in the development by Thursday will get "a conversation and dinner" with Trump Jr. a day later.

President Trump has pledged to avoid any new foreign business deals during his term in office to avoid potential ethical conflicts. While the projects that Trump Jr. is promoting in India were inked before his father was elected, ethics experts have long seen the use of the Trump name to promote even existing business ventures as tricky territory.

The distinction between old and new projects can be hazy,

they note, and new deals can be shoehorned into old.

Several foreign deals touted over the past year by the Trump sons have "stretched the definition of what ventures were previously in the works," said Scott H. Amey, general counsel for the non-partisan Project on Government Oversight in Washington.

"The president should be putting the public's interest before his business interests. That can't happen if his son is flying around the world trying to trade on the fact that his father is sitting in the Oval Office."

This isn't the first time that President Trump's sons have raised ethical concerns as they promote their eponymous brand across the world.

Early last year Trump Jr. and his brother Eric opened a Trump-branded golf club in Dubai.

The brothers, who now lead the Trump Organization, watched as fireworks lit the sky over the Trump International Golf Club to mark the event.

On Tuesday morning, Donald Trump Jr. posed for photos in New Delhi with Indian developers building complexes in four cities. Among the business partners accompanying him was

Kalpesh Mehta who heads Tribeca, the firm described as the main Indian partner for Trump-brand real estate projects.

Mehta came to notice soon after President Trump's November election victory, when pictures of him and two other Trump Indian real estate partners with the president-elect in New York made a big splash in Indian and American media.

Later in the week, Trump Jr. is scheduled to give a speech about Indo-Pacific relations at a New Delhi business summit, sharing the stage with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Trump Jr. may be raising another set of ethics concerns by offering his thoughts on international relations, said Lawrence Noble, senior director of the non-profit Campaign Legal Center in Washington.

"The assumption is he has his father's ear," Noble said. "By talking about international relations and sharing the stage with government officials, he's acting as an informal ambassador for the U.S. at the same time he's selling properties in India. It just blurs the lines even more."

Trump Jr. is on a private visit and the State Department has



Policemen enter the premises of an under construction site of Trump Tower, a luxury apartment building, ahead of the visit of Donald Trump Jr. in Kolkata, India on February 20, 2018.

not interacted with him regarding his meetings or his speech, spokesman Heather Nauert said from Washington. "Mr. Trump's comments during the trip reflect his personal views and not necessarily those of the U.S. government."

In Gurgaon, the sprawling and ever-growing New Delhi satellite city where a new Trump Towers will eventually rise, the construction site is just mountains of dirt and unruly shrubbery, one of many residential projects yet

to be built. Buyers can hope to move into their swanky homes sometime in 2023.

Apartments in the Trump Towers complex in Gurgaon run between \$775,000 and \$1.5 million.

The Trump Organization has licensing agreements with all its Indian business partners, who build the properties and acquire the Trump name in exchange for a fee. The organization has five projects in India, making it the brand's largest market outside the United States.

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NATIONAL NEWS

Shooting suspect in South Beach murder of Prada manager arrested



Kamil Patel

MIAMI - Tyrone Jackson, the suspected triggerman in the shooting death of a Bal Harbour retail manager, was picked up by Miami Beach robbery detectives in the city of Miami this month.

Jackson, a career criminal with a limp due to a bullet wound from an AK-47, is suspected of gunning down Kamil Patel, 29, last month as he walked down a South Beach alley with his girlfriend. The couple had just left Mac's Club Deuce and were on their way to a karaoke bar.

Jackson, 32, is expected to face a charge of first-degree murder. State records show he has been arrested at least 27 times in the past two decades on charges ranging from burglary and drug possession to firing a weapon into a building.

Police and witnesses say Patel and his girlfriend Katy Park, who Patel had picked up earlier in the evening, were walking down Collins Court just south of Española Way the night of Jan. 25 when they were followed by a white Honda Accord.

A witness to the shooting told police the car pulled up in front of the couple and blocked the street when Jackson got out of the passenger side door and fired at Patel twice from about six feet away. He was struck in the shoulder and the abdomen.

Nothing was stolen and not many if any words were exchanged between the shooter and Patel. Police have never publicly explained a motive.

The Miami Beach Police Department released video of a white Honda Accord that was seen moments before a man was shot and killed on Miami Beach on January 25, 2018. The car was allegedly driven by Jeremiah Grant Dorvilus, who was found in the car police say was used during the crime, next to a Miami Metrorail station on Jan. 30. Dorvilus, 31, was arrested and charged with first-degree murder. He was denied bond.

Police say a third man in the car said that Dorvilus and Jackson picked him up in Overtown before the shooting and the trio drove to South Beach, where they

drove up Ocean Drive before heading west to the spot where Patel was killed.

Patel had moved to Miami Beach from Dallas to take a job running the Prada store at Bal Harbour Shops less than a month before he was murdered. The car allegedly used in the crime, the Honda with a temporary license plate of CCP 4319, was reported stolen the day after the shoot-

ing and its driver was reported missing by his family.

Orestes Conrado Marrero, 54, was found a few days after the shooting. Police have not said how Dorvilus wound up with Marrero's car or if they believe he has any connection to the crime.

Katy Park, Patel's girlfriend, created an intense social media campaign to help find the shooter and raise money. A GoFundMe

page in his honor has already raised more than \$26,000 and the reward for the arrest and conviction of the shooter increased to \$20,000 after donations from Prada, Mango's Cafe on South Beach and the family.

"I am alive because Kamil protected me. He didn't hesitate. His last words were 'Katy, keep walking,'" Park posted on the GoFundMe page.

Doctors charged in West Virginia and Virginia pill mill case

By John Raby

CHARLESTON (AP) - Ten doctors have been charged with overprescribing pain pills from clinics in West Virginia and Virginia, federal prosecutors announced on Tuesday. Two of those patients died.

Most of the 69-count indictment charges the owners, managers and physicians associated with Hope Clinic with conspiracy to distribute oxycodone and other controlled substances that weren't for legitimate medical purposes from 2010 to 2015.

The indictment said the defendants allegedly laundered drug proceeds by paying bonuses to physicians and employees of a patient screening firm to encourage prescribing opioids. It

said the owners knew customers were drug addicts, adding some customers were prescribed more than 2,000 prescription pills over a one-year period.

"Home-grown drug dealers hidden behind the veil of a doctor's lab coat, a medical degree and a prescription pad, are every bit as bad as the heroin dealers that flood into West Virginia," U.S. Attorney Michael Stuart said at a news conference. "We're not going to tolerate it."

One of the physicians, Sanjay Mehta, was charged with distributing a controlled substance that caused the deaths of two patients in 2013. And in a related case, another physician was charged with conspiracy to commit money laundering in a federal informa-

tion document, which signals a defendant is cooperating.

Owner Dr. James H. Blume Jr. and manager Mark T. Radcliffe face additional charges of maintaining a drug-involved premises. The indictment said they operated a cash-based clinic, refused to accept insurance, charged in-state customers at least \$275 for an initial appointment and at least \$160 for each subsequent appointment.

It said patients were not required to have a physician's referral and that the clinic hired medical professionals with no background or special training in pain management.

Thirteen people were charged overall. The charges for the various defendants carry maximum penalties ranging from 20 to 340 years upon conviction.

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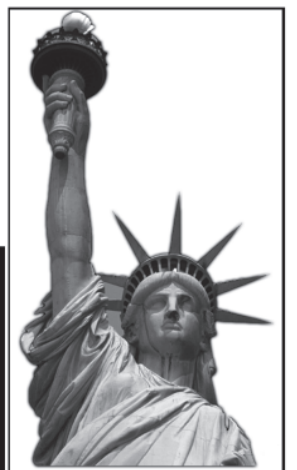
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Letters may be published or distributed in print, electronic or other forms.

Ford U.S. chief Raj Nair departs abruptly after behavior probe

By Nick Carey

DETROIT - Ford Motor Co said on Wednesday that Raj Nair, its president for North America, was leaving the company immediately after an internal investigation found his behaviour was "inconsistent with the company's code of conduct."

Ford did not give any details on what that behavior entailed. A company spokesman said the review was launched in the past few weeks after Ford received a report of inappropriate behaviour.

Nair's departure comes after

several high-profile business leaders and politicians have quit or been fired in the past year following accusations of sexual harassment, with the social media movement known as #MeToo pressing for more accountability in corporate cultures.

"We made this decision after a thorough review and careful consideration," said Ford Chief Executive Jim Hackett in a statement. "Ford is deeply committed to providing and nurturing a safe and respectful culture and we expect our leaders to fully uphold these values."

As North American chief, Nair

was responsible for operations that generate about 90 percent of Ford's global profits.

Nair apologized, without elaborating.

"I sincerely regret that there have been instances where I have not exhibited leadership behaviors consistent with the principles that the Company and I have always espoused," Nair said in Ford's statement.

The company is not investigating other executives for similar cases, a Ford spokesman said.

Nair, 53, was appointed to his current position last May when Hackett became CEO of the No. 2 U.S. automaker.

Nair previously served as Ford's chief technical officer. He joined Ford in 1987 and rose through the automaker's manufacturing and engineering ranks to become head of global product development in 2015.

Nair stands to lose about \$4.8 million worth of Ford restricted shares he was granted in May 2017 that would have vested had a remained with the company until May 2020.

In August, Ford agreed to pay up to \$10.125 million to settle an investigation into sex and race harassment at two plants in



REUTERS/Rebecca Cook

FILE PHOTO: Raj Nair, Ford executive vice-president of global product development, speaks during the North American International Auto Show in Detroit, Michigan, U.S. on January 9, 2017.

Chicago conducted by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

The EEOC said female and African-American employees had been subjected to sexual and racial harassment and found the automaker retaliated against employees who complained about the harassment or discrimination.

In an open letter after the New York Times published a widely read article on the matter, Hackett wrote "there is absolutely no room for harassment at Ford Motor Company."

"We don't want you here, and we will move you out for engaging in any behavior like this," he wrote.

Ford has been working to ef-

fect a turnaround in its operations to improve profitability as Ford's automotive profit margins have shrunk.

In emailed commentary, Michelle Krebs, executive analyst at Autotrader, the online market for cars, said this comes "at a particularly bad time for Ford."

"Investors and analysts have been unhappy with the seeming lack of a clear direction for Ford," she said. "The pressure is on Jim Hackett... to lay out a clear road ahead for Ford."

The company's margins have fallen behind rivals General Motors Co and Fiat Chrysler Automobiles NV.

Year to date, Ford shares are down 14 percent.

Sikh driver's complaint referred to state prosecutors

ROCK ISLAND, IL (AP) - Members of the Sikh community in northwest Illinois are expressing impatience with an investigation into an attack on a ride-share driver.

The Sikh Coalition, a civil rights organization, said last Friday an arrest should have been made since the Jan. 28 attack on Gunjeet Singh.

Singh is the religious leader at the Sikh Religious Society Temple in Silvis. While working as a driv-

er for Uber he was allegedly accosted by a man who put a gun to his head while saying "I hate turban people" and "I hate beards."

Rock Island County State's Attorney John McGehee said last Friday he has referred the case to the Illinois State's Attorney Appellate Prosecutor's office. McGehee cited a conflict-of-interest, which he didn't explain.

Sikh Coalition spokeswoman Amrith Kaur calls the incident a hate crime.

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Renowned diamantaire accused of massive bank fraud



REUTERS/Aman Abidi

A man talks on a phone as he walks past a Nirav Modi showroom during a raid by the Enforcement Directorate, a government agency that fights financial crime, in New Delhi, India on February 15, 2018.

By Rajendra Jadhav, Rupam Jain and Tom Lasseter

MUMBAI - Nirav Modi's name is a stamp of corporate India's growing global prestige. On Hollywood red carpets, his diamonds have sparkled on the necklines and dangled from the earlobes of actors and models like Kate Winslet, Dakota Johnson and Rosie Huntington-Whiteley.

Back in India, billboards above the traffic jams of New Delhi bear the image of Priyanka Chopra, a Bollywood star and former Miss World who is fast becoming a household name in the United States, also adorned with Modi's jewels.

But on Thursday, officials at

the nation's federal investigative agency announced it was looking for Modi as law enforcement officials fanned out to raid his jewellery stores and other businesses in Mumbai and New Delhi.

Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) officials told reporters the agency had on Feb. 4 issued a lookout circular in the country for Modi, who they say had left four weeks earlier.

Modi, who has a net worth of some \$1.8 billion according to Forbes magazine rankings, has not yet responded to the allegations and could not be reached for comment.

His flagship company, Firestar Diamond, has said it had no involvement in the case.

The setback in Modi's climb to fame and fortune was abrupt, even by the rough-and-tumble standards of one of the world's fastest growing major economies.

During an interview with Reuters in November, the famously soft-spoken Modi discussed his love for art, poetry and paintings. He also spoke of his wife and three children with whom he lives in central Mumbai.

Asked how he planned to raise funds to add new stores, he seemed unconcerned.

"All options are open," he said, sitting in his cavernous Mumbai office. "We could use internal accruals. We can take loans from banks or we could do an initial public offering."

But last month, India's second-largest state-run lender filed a criminal complaint with the CBI that accused Modi and others of defrauding the bank and causing it a loss of 2.8 billion rupees (\$43.8 million).

Then on Thursday, the same bank, Punjab National Bank, publicly alleged that Modi was involved with a much larger fraud case: \$1.77 billion from a single branch stretching back to 2011.

The news was a shock for the

circles in which Modi moved.

As recently as last month, he was at the World Economic Forum in Davos. Indian media carried a group photograph with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the foreground and Nirav Modi, who is no relation, grinning between rows of Indian business leaders behind him.

"Top industrialists invited him home to display his collections," said a Mumbai investment banker at a U.S.-based firm who has worked directly with Modi's company. "There was a personal touch in everything he sold. Nirav Modi is a brand."

A senior member at Bharat Diamond Bourse, a Mumbai-based industry body with more than 13,000 members, sketched a similar profile of Modi.

"In one of the industry meetings in 2013 he said that when people wear a Cartier ring they don't say it's a diamond ring, they say it's Cartier," said the member, who did not want to be named. "He always wanted people to say they are 'wearing Nirav Modi'."

Modi grew up in Antwerp, Belgium, in a diamond-dealing family. In 1990, at the age of 19, he moved to Mumbai, according to the November interview.

Nine years later, Modi started his own company, Firestar Diamond Ltd., selling loose stones. He employed fewer than a dozen people at the time. By last year, the number was more than 2,000.

He said he came to realise the margins were better in retail.

Firestar Group, the parent company Modi controls as a majority shareholder, saw its revenue grow over three years from 103 billion rupees (about \$1.6 billion at current rates) to some 147 billion rupees (\$2.3 billion) by the 2016-17 fiscal year, according to figures previously provided by the company.

In 2010, Modi launched an eponymous jewellery business branded NIRAV MODI, in capitals, with the tagline "Haut Diamantaire". New boutiques in Las Vegas and Hawaii have since been added to a stable that stretches from New York to London to Beijing.

But the celebrity links could be starting to break.

A spokesperson for Chopra, the film star, said in a statement: "She is currently seeking legal opinion with respect to terminating her contract with the brand in light of allegations of financial fraud against Nirav Modi."

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Hollywood actor Pierce Brosnan threatened with jail time over Indian ad



DELHI - James Bond, also known as Pierce Brosnan, has been threatened with jail time after appearing in an ad for an Indian mouth freshener which can contain an addictive type of chewing tobacco.

Last Monday, Indian law enforcement asked the Irish-born actor to explain why he made the decision to appear in an advertisement after his campaign for the pan masala product was featured on TV and in newspapers within the country.

It's illegal to advertise tobacco products in India.

Brosnan, 64, best known for portraying "007" in the James Bond films was featured in the ad for Pan Bahar about 18 months ago, and has claimed in the past that his inclusion in the advertisement was "unauthorized."

The specific Pan Bahar product that Brosnan's image was used to promote did not contain tobacco, but other goods sold by the company do, according to The Guardian.

Members of the health depart-

ment in Delhi, India, say they've reached out to Brosnan seeking an explanation. He's being given 10 days to reply.

"We have issued the notice to Pierce Brosnan through the company, and also reached out to him via social media platforms," officials told the Indian Express newspaper.

Brosnan initially addressed the ad in October 2016 by stating he'd only signed on to promote one product not the entire company and that he was told the item he was promoting did not contain tobacco or other dangerous components.

Brosnan, served as the face for the campaign, but the ad was quickly suspended after backlash emerged. According to The Guardian, Brosnan said he was "deeply shocked and saddened" that his image was used to promote a potentially dangerous product.

If Brosnan does not respond to the notice in 10 days, the actor could be fined up to 5,000 rupees roughly 78 dollars or face up to two years in jail.

The "007" actor reportedly believed that he was promoting a "breath freshener/tooth whitener [and] all-natural, containing neither tobacco, supari nor any other harmful ingredient." He said he felt "grossly manipulated" by the Pan Bahar company when it came to his involvement.

"As a man who has spent decades championing women's healthcare and environmental protection, I was distressed to learn of Pan Bahar's unauthorized and deceptive use of my image to endorse their range of pan masala products," Brosnan said statement at the time, according to People. "I would never have entered into an agreement to promote a product in India that is dangerous to one's health."

Brosnan also noted he'd lost his first wife, daughter and several friends to cancer.

Pan Bahar, meanwhile, refutes Brosnan's claims that the company deceived him. It also asserts the brand shouldn't be connected to tobacco and should instead be viewed as a mouth freshener.

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Sean Paul and Marshmello perform at music festival in Pune

Here's what rocked at the three-day-long VH1 Supersonic Fest in Pune that saw Sean Paul and Marshmello perform

PUNE - For a major chunk of the decade gone by, Mumbai folk were quick to term the emergence of Pune compelled to find its identity in the wake of commercialization an attempt to mimic the former. But throw Pune into an artistic parade, like the VH1 Supersonic, and you notice that the city has a distinctiveness that bears little resemblance to our own. Unlike the weary and disheveled office-goers turning up to attend the Sheeran and Bieber concerts in Mumbai, Pune is certain to make a sartorial statement at its festivals. Glittered faces, elaborate headgears and trails are mere accessories of a city that, as producer Viacom 18's Saugato Bhowmik says, "really knows its music. One can't say, 'I am only a rock fan'", adds Bhowmik in a bid to highlight that Indian music aficionados are comparatively more open to binging on multi-genre music than fans in several other countries. "There



Marshmello performs at the VH1 Supersonic Fest 2018 in Pune, India.

may be an affection for rock, but there will also be a liking for funk, electronic or pop. We can't stand for only one kind of music. Thus, even though we were born as an EDM festival, we included a diverse range of genres available for fans this year," he says.

The starry line-up of artistes including Major Lazer, Marshmello, Sean Paul and Incubus, among others is testimony to the inclusion of genres that have rarely defined the six-year-old gig. Each of the four arenas at the

Laxmi Lawns venue brimmed as an array of Indian and international musicians dropped their beats against a visually magnificent backdrop, only enhanced by the use of the strobe lights. Aptly situated screens ensured that fans trickling in could still set their eyes on the artistes whilst enjoying the delivery on the sound system.

Turning up on day 2, Marshmello enjoyed the undivided attention of his fans, chiefly college-going kids, as they spilled over



VH1 Supersonic Fest 2018 in Pune, India.

from the primary arena. On last Sunday, Indian record producer Zaeden delivered a beautiful set complete with rehashed versions of Havana, Shape of You and Attention, among others to a comparatively thin audience at an early 4:15 pm. Says Zaeden "I love these songs. Some people might hate them because they've heard them often. But that's me and I try to be myself when I'm on stage," he tells mid-day on the sidelines of his act. Zaeden also marked his debut live singing act

at the festival, ahead of his upcoming solo for Valentine's Day. "It's a mash-up of all my favorite [love] songs. There's Dust Till Dawn [Zayn], Perfect by Ed Sheeran and two songs by James Arthur. It will essentially feature me singing." Incubus put up a distinctive and mesmerizing act to an audience that was sure to sing along. Sean Paul didn't disappoint, instantly setting the audience grooving with his act. He belted out hits, including Give It Up To Me and Hey Sexy Lady.



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Critics of Aadhaar project say they have been harassed, under surveillance



REUTERS/Saumya Khandewal

A man goes through the process of eye scanning for the Unique Identification (UID) database system, also known as Aadhaar, at a registration centre in New Delhi, India on January 17, 2018.

By Rahul Bhatia

MUMBAI - Researchers and journalists who have identified loopholes in India's massive national identity card project have said they have been slapped with criminal cases or harassed by government agencies because of their work.

Last month, the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), the semi-government body responsible for the national identity project, called Aadhaar, or "Basis", filed a criminal case against the Tribune newspaper for publishing a story that said ac-

cess to the card's database could be bought for 500 rupees (\$7.82).

Reuters spoke to eight additional researchers, activists and journalists who have complained of being harassed after writing about Aadhaar. They said UIDAI and other government agencies were extremely sensitive to criticism of the Aadhaar programme.

Aadhaar is a biometric identification card that is becoming integral to the digitisation of India's economy, with over 1.1 billion users and the world's biggest database.

Indians have been asked to furnish their Aadhaar numbers

for a host of transactions including accessing bank accounts, paying taxes, receiving subsidies, acquiring a mobile number, settling a property deal and registering a marriage.

The Tribune said one of its reporters purchased access to a portal that could provide data linked to any Aadhaar cardholder.

The UIDAI complaint, filed with the police cyber cell in the capital, New Delhi, accused the newspaper, the reporter, and others of cheating by impersonation, forgery and unauthorised access to a computer network.

Media associations sharply criticised the action - the Editors Guild of India said UIDAI's move was "clearly meant to browbeat a journalist whose story was of great public interest. It is unfair, unjustified and a direct attack on the freedom of the press."

In response, the agency said "an impression was being created in media that UIDAI is targeting the media or whistleblowers or shooting the messenger."

"That is not at all true. It is for the act of unauthorised access, criminal proceedings have been launched," it said in a statement.

Osama Manzar, the director of the Digital Empowerment Foun-

ation, a New Delhi-based NGO, called the government's prickliness "a clear sign that rather than it wanting to learn how to make Aadhaar a tool of empowerment, it actually wants to use it as a coercive tool of disempowerment".

DATA LEAKAGE

Last May, the Centre for Internet and Society (CIS), an independent Indian advocacy group, published a report that government websites had inadvertently leaked several million identification numbers from the project.

UIDAI sent the CIS a legal notice within days, said Srinivas Kodali, one of the authors of the report.

The notice alleged that some of the data cited in the report would only be available if the site had been accessed illegally. The UIDAI wrote that the people involved had to be "brought to justice."

According to Kodali, two more notices followed, addressed to the group's directors and two researchers, containing more accusations. "They said it was a criminal conspiracy, and demanded that we send individual responses," he said.

CIS then received questions about its funding from the home

ministry section that grants NGOs permission to receive foreign funding, said a source in the group who saw the letter. CIS viewed this as a threat to its funding, the source said.

CIS declined to comment on the notices or on the questions about funding.

UIDAI did not reply to multiple e-mails seeking comment on the accusations about CIS and similar complaints by other activists and journalists, and officials could not be reached by phone. Officials at the Ministry of Information Technology that supervises UIDAI were unreachable by phone.

A cybersecurity researcher who contributed to the CIS report said scrutiny by police and government officials was a common occurrence, but harassment was stepped up after it was published.

"Sometimes people from the police station visit you. Other times from the Home Ministry. It was intimidating," the researcher said.

The person, who asked not to be named for fear of reprisal, said police officers asked questions like "How was that trip to Turkey?," to make it clear the subjects were under surveillance.

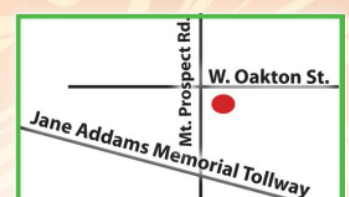
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Trump Jr. says missing out on India deals because of father's self-imposed curbs



REUTERS/Adnan Abidi

Donald Trump Jr., Basant Bansal, Chairman and Managing Director of M3M India, Pankaj Bansal, director of M3M India and Kalpesh Mehta, founder of Tribeca Developers, pose for photographers during a photo opportunity before a meeting in New Delhi, India on February 20, 2018.

By Aditi Shah

NEW DELHI - U.S. President Donald Trump's elder son described India as an important market for The Trump Organization but said the global company will lose out on new deals because of self-imposed restrictions put in place by his father since he took office.

Donald Trump Jr.'s comments, at the start of a trip to woo buyers for his luxury residential projects in several Indian cities, appeared aimed at blunting criticism that there could be possible conflict of interest in pushing the Trump brand name.

Trump Jr. said new business would take a hit in India.

"Few years ago, I said it would become our largest (market) because I really believed in the market... I think it will continue to be the same when I am able to get back in the market and focus on the business side, on new deals again in the future, once my father is out of office," Trump Jr. told television channel CNBC-TV18 late on Tuesday.

Shortly before taking office last year, Trump Sr. said he would hand off control of his business empire, which includes luxury homes and hotels across the world, to his sons Donald and Eric, and move his assets into a trust to help ensure that he would not consciously take actions as president that would benefit him personally.

Many government and private ethics watchdogs said he should have gone further, divesting himself of assets that could cause a conflict of interest. His partners in India meanwhile are playing up the Trump brand.

In the days leading up to Trump Jr.'s visit, one of its development partners in Gurgaon, near the capital of New Delhi, launched an advertising campaign on the front page of India's most widely circulated newspapers to lure buyers.

Book your Trump Towers' residence before Feb 22 and join Mr Donald Trump Jr. for a "conversation and dinner" on Feb 23, the advertisement said, luring buyers with a chance to rub shoulders with the

president's family.

The promoter advertised that among the buyers for apartments in the 47-floor tower are a famous Indian cricketer and an art maestro, neither of whom was identified.

"India, it has been an important market for us, but again there is this opportunity cost of the deals that we are not able to do that don't get discussed," Trump Jr. said, shrugging off criticism about profiteering from the president.

"We could do so many more but we are not doing those," he said, adding that even as his father put curbs in place, he got no credit for doing so.

Trump Jr. will fly to the western city of Pune on Wednesday to meet his development partner after which he will be in Mumbai on Thursday attending a champagne reception with buyers of Trump apartments built in partnership with Lodha Developers.

Trump Jr. will be speaking to Indian business leaders later this week on Indo-Pacific ties. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will also be present at the event.

Trump Jr. told CNBC-TV18 that America's economic ties with India were important.

"When you talk about this sort of natural business relationship, beyond the political relationship of the two largest democracies in the world, I think that is an important relationship to maintain especially when you look at what is going on in the world today in many of the other markets and in many of the upcoming powers," he said.

A U.S. intelligence assessment last year found Russia had meddled in the 2016 U.S. elections and that its goals eventually included aiding Trump Sr. Former White House chief strategist Steve Bannon in his new book expressed derision and astonishment over a 2016 meeting between Trump Jr., his father's top campaign officials and a Russian lawyer, terming it "treasonous".

Russia has denied meddling in the election and Trump Sr. has denied any collusion between his campaign and Moscow.

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Pakistan given 3-month reprieve over terrorist financing watchlist



A currency trader counts Pakistani Rupee notes as he prepares an exchange of U.S. dollars in Islamabad, Pakistan on December 11, 2017.

By Asif Shahzad

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan has been given a three-month reprieve by a global watchdog over a U.S.-led motion to put the South Asian country on a terrorist financing watchlist, Pakistan's Foreign Minister Khawaja Asif said late on Tuesday.

Pakistan has been scrambling in recent months to avoid being added to a list of countries

deemed non-compliant with anti-money laundering and terrorist financing regulations by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), a measure that officials fear could hurt its economy.

FATF member states have been meeting this week in Paris, where it was expected that they would decide on a U.S. motion, backed by Britain, France and Germany, to have Pakistan added to the so-called "grey list"

of countries which are not doing enough to comply with terrorist-funding regulations.

Asif, who is currently on a visit to Russia, tweeted late on Tuesday that Pakistan's "efforts have paid (off)" during a Feb. 20 meeting on the U.S.-led motion, suggesting there was "no consensus for nominating Pakistan".

He also suggested the meeting proposed a "three months pause" and asked for the Asia Pacific Group, which is part of FATF, to consider "another report in June".

In Washington, a State Department official, speaking on condition of anonymity, could not confirm that FATF deferred action for three months, pointing

out that the organization's deliberations are confidential until it makes them public.

The international community continues to have concerns about deficiencies in Pakistan's anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing system even though Islamabad has begun taking steps to address the flaws, said the State Department official without elaborating.

Pakistan earlier this year submitted a report about the progress it had made in curbing terrorist financing, but Washington submitted its motion before the Pakistan report could be discussed at the Paris hearing.

"Grateful to friends who helped," Asif added.

Two other Pakistani officials confirmed Pakistan had received a reprieve of three months.

Washington has been threatening to get tough with Islamabad over its alleged ties with Islamist militants, and last month President Donald Trump's administration suspended aid worth about \$2 billion.

Islamabad, which denies assisting militants in Afghanistan and India, has reacted angrily to U.S. threats of further punitive measures.

However, Pakistan's government is concerned the FATF decision could hurt its banking sector, causing financial pain to the economy just as a national election looms.

Police: Angry mob kills suspects in murder of girl in India

GAUHATI, India (AP) - Around 1,000 people dragged two suspects out of a police station and beat them to death in anger after the rape and killing of a 5-year-old girl in India's remote northeast, police said Tuesday.

Fifteen police officers were injured in Monday's mob attack in Tezu, a town in Arunachal

Pradesh state, said police officer Apur Bitin.

Bitin said the mob first demanded that the two accused be handed over to them. They later dragged the two out of the police jail cell and attacked them and the heavily outnumbered police.

The girl was raped and killed in the nearby village of Namgo on

Feb. 12. The region is 235 miles northeast of Itanagar, the capital of Arunachal Pradesh.

Pema Khandu, the state's top elected official, ordered a magistrate to investigate the matter.

Violent crime against women has been on the rise in India despite tough laws enacted by the government.

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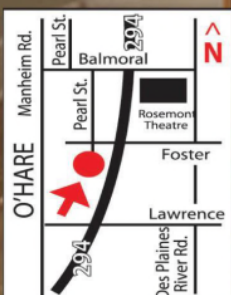
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Jaitley slams oversight lapses amid huge bank fraud probe

By Manoj Kumar and Suvashree Choudhury

NEW DELHI - India's Finance Minister decried a "lack of ethics" among sections of Indian business on Tuesday and criticised inadequate oversight by auditors and regulators, after the financial sector was rocked by a \$1.8 billion fraud at a state-run bank.

Arun Jaitley did not specifically refer to the scandal enveloping Punjab National Bank in his speech to a room full of bankers, but his repeated referral to "a stray incident" appeared clearly to be aimed at the massive alleged fraud linked to diamond billionaire Nirav Modi.

Jaitley is the highest-ranking government official to so far weigh in on the case, in which bank employees are suspected to have steered fraudulent loans to businesses tied to Modi and his uncle Mehul Choksi.

Modi's lawyer had earlier denied the allegations against him.

Jaitley said the country needed to examine "the lack of ethics that a section of Indian business follows", and said internal and external auditors needed to examine whether they had "looked the other way or failed to detect" any

wrongdoing.

The Finance Minister also said "the supervisory agencies" needed to "introspect as what are the additional mechanisms they have to put in place to ensure that stray cases don't become a pattern again".

"It is incumbent on us as a state ... to chase these people to the last possible conclusion to make sure the country is not cheated," he said.

Asked after the address in New Delhi if he had any specific comment on PNB, Jaitley said: "I have said in the speech what I had to say."

Since PNB disclosed the fraud last week the bank, auditors and the Reserve Bank of India have been under the spotlight over how they could have failed to detect a scam in which employees are suspected to have sent fraudulent loan guarantees through the SWIFT interbank messaging platform to lenders overseas.

Soon after Jaitley's speech the RBI, the country's banking regulator, said it had alerted banks about the need to prevent any "potential malicious use of the SWIFT infrastructure" at least three times since August 2016.

Lenders had not fully imple-

mented all of the required measures, the central bank said. It did not name the banks.

The RBI added it had mandated lenders on Tuesday to implement measures to strengthen their oversight of the SWIFT platform.

Local media on Monday reported the government had written to the central bank calling on it to improve its oversight mechanism of lenders.

Federal police say Modi, a jeweller to Hollywood stars such as Kate Winslet, left India with his family in January, prior to the case being filed.

"There is nothing, there is nothing in it," his lawyer Vijay Aggarwal told Reuters on Tuesday, in response to the allegations.

A police complaint filed by the second largest state-run bank says companies linked to the jeweller and his relatives received credit worth close to \$1.8 billion between 2011 and 2017, using false guarantees supplied by two PNB officials.

Modi's uncle, Choksi, who has also left the country, has not commented on the matter. Gitanjali Gems, in a regulatory filing, denied Choksi's involvement in the alleged fraud.

The fraud case has wiped



REUTERS/Amit Dave/Files

FILE PHOTO: Indian Finance Minister Arun Jaitley addresses a delegation while speaking on the Goods and Services Tax (GST) issues during the Vibrant Gujarat investor summit in Gandhinagar on January 11, 2017.

off \$1.7 billion, or more than a quarter, of PNB's market value.

Separately, in a letter to PNB officials, Modi stated that his companies owed the bank less than 50 billion rupees (\$775.25 million), much lower than the amount alleged by the bank. He also said PNB had jeopardized its chances of recovering the sums owed by going public with its allegations.

"Your actions have destroyed my brand and the business and have now restricted your ability to recover all the dues," said Modi in the letter, accusing PNB of acting in haste and noting that his firm has always been current

on paying what it owed.

Five PNB officials have so far been arrested. The alleged fraud occurred as one PNB deputy manager, with the assistance of one or more colleagues, issued more than 100 fraudulent Letters of Undertaking - essentially guarantees sent to other banks so that they would provide loans to a customer.

After entering the transactions on the SWIFT messaging system, the official, who worked at the same branch from 2010 to 2017, did not record them on PNB's internal system, according to the bank's complaint.

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Canada's Trudeau spurs criticism, raises eyebrows on India trip



Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, his wife Sophie Gregoire Trudeau, their daughter Ella Grace and son Xavier pose with Bollywood actor Shah Rukh Khan in Mumbai, India on February 20, 2018.

which we have," said Raveesh Kumar, a spokesman for India's Ministry of External Affairs.

Atwal's invitation was withdrawn once his links to an organisation banned in India came to light. Trudeau told reporters on Thursday that a Canadian parliamentarian on the trip had taken responsibility for the mistake.

A largely unrecognized figure in India, Atwal was a trending topic on Twitter across the subcontinent on Thursday after images of him in the company of Trudeau's wife and other Canadian ministers surfaced online.

The trip, partly aimed at shoring up support for Trudeau's Liberals among the politically

important ethnic vote in key regions, has also been criticized for being light on official government business.

"I don't know if Justin Trudeau thinks that international trade missions are reality TV shows, but they are not," Conservative party leader Andrew Scheer, Trudeau's main opponent, told Reuters.

Trudeau on Tuesday cited C\$1 billion in deals between Canadian and Indian companies announced in Mumbai, and said the trip was "not just about political ties" but improving business and cultural ties.

The Atwal controversy came as the Trudeau family's ornate tra-

ditional Indian attire raised eyebrows, with the prime minister at one point donning formal wear typically worn by bridegrooms.

"FYI we Indians don't dress like this every day sir, not even in Bollywood," tweeted Indian politician Omar Abdullah.

Earlier this week, Trudeau rejected suggestions that he had been snubbed by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Modi tweeted a welcome to Trudeau late on Thursday, on the eve of a bilateral meeting between the two, six days after the Canadian leader arrived in the country, adding: "I hope PM @JustinTrudeau and his family had a very enjoyable stay so far."

OTTAWA/NEW DELHI - Canadian and Indian officials scrambled on Thursday to explain how a convicted Sikh extremist was invited to a New Delhi reception for Justin Trudeau, the latest misstep in the Canadian prime minister's bumpy eight-day trip to India.

The tour has been overshadowed by suggestions of a lukewarm reception by the government and a series of photo ops featuring the Trudeau family in coordinated Indian attire that have raised eyebrows in

both countries. The latest flashpoint, a swiftly cancelled invitation by the Canadian delegation to Jaspal Atwal -- convicted in 1986 of the attempted murder of an Indian politician visiting Canada -- came just days after Trudeau had assured his hosts he would not support anyone trying to revive a separatist movement in India.

"The fact that an invitation, which was already extended to Mr. Atwal, has been withdrawn, it basically shows (Canada) have taken into account the concerns

Landmine kills poll candidate in troubled district of Meghalaya

GUWAHATI - A landmine explosion killed four people, including an election candidate, in India's northeastern state of Meghalaya in an area where four militant groups are seeking independence, police said on Monday.

The attack happened on Sunday night in Meghalaya's East Garo Hills district, about 250 km (150 miles) from the state capital, Shillong.

The candidate for the Nationalist Congress Party from the Williamsnagar assembly constituency, Jonathone Sangma, was killed along with his driver and two police.

"The vehicle in which Sangma was travelling bore the maximum impact of the explosion. Everyone in the car died on the spot," said Ringrang Momin, a senior state police officer.

Police officials said there were

four active militant groups in the area demanding secession from India for tens of thousands of Garo tribals living in the state bordering Bangladesh.

"This is the handiwork of the militant groups... We have yet to identify the outfit involved in the landmine explosion," Momin said.

Elections for the 60-member house in Meghalaya state are scheduled for Feb. 27.

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BOLLYWOOD Insider™

Bollywood Beat

Preity Zinta files complaint against ex-boyfriend



After almost four years ago, Preity Zinta had filed a police complaint against former boyfriend and businessman Ness Wadia on the charges of molestation and verbal abuse. Now, the Marine Drive police in Mumbai finally filed a charge sheet in the case on February 20. According to the reports, Ness Wadia was present during the submission of the charge sheet in the court of the chief metropolitan magistrate. The businessman was granted bail on the personal bond of Rs 20,000.

Ness Wadia and Preity Zinta were in a relationship for over five years. The alleged harassment and verbal abuse happened during Indian Premier League match which apparently continued later as well. According to Preity Zinta's complaint, the actress has alleged that she was assaulted during a match between Kings XI Punjab and Chennai Super Kings on May 30, 2014 at the Wankhede Stadium. The complaint reveals that Preity was abused by Ness when she was seated at Garware Pavilion over ticket distribution. She, then, changed her seat to avoid Ness but he continued to abuse her in front of the other team members.

Preity Zinta further revealed in her complaint that she tried to stay away from Ness Wadia when he grabbed her hand. She has even submitted four photographs of her right arm with bruise marks.

Pari

Banner:
Clean Slate Films
KriArj Entertainment
Kyta Production

Producer:
Anushka Sharma
Karnesh Sharma
Prerna Arora
Arjun N. Kapoor

Director:
Prosit Roy

Starring:
Anushka Sharma
Parambrata Chatterjee
Rajat Kapoor
Ritabhari Chakraborty

Music By:
Anupam Roy

Release Date:
March 2, 2018

Anushka Sharma's scars double the scare. The trailer of *Pari* has been released and it shows a bruised and battered Anushka Sharma, looking at the camera



hauntingly. Her blue eyes, pale skin and scars cut a terrifying picture which looks much more genuine than the usual ghosts of Bollywood.

Sharma, who has also started shooting for Aanand L Rai's *Zero* alongside Shah Rukh Khan and Katrina Kaif, shared the teaser on Twitter, with the caption "Sweet dreams guys".

The film is directed by Prosit Roy and jointly produced by Clean Slate Films, which is owned by Sharma and KriArj Entertainment. *Pari* sees Sharma don the hat of a producer for the third time, after *NH10* and *Phillauri*; she essayed the role of a ghost in the latter, too. However, this character was a positive one, unlike her role in this upcoming film, in which she is gearing up to scare the daylight out of people.

The music of the film has been credited to National Award winning music composer Anupam Roy. Speaking about the film, he said, "I am really excited to be a part of *Pari*. I am very fond of the team and looking forward to create a melodious sound track."

In the poster of her upcoming film *Pari*, she looked positively terrifying with her pale skin, piercing blue eyes and haunted expression. In the latest one, she can be seen lying on the floor between two curtains, with her hands outstretched.

She has a lost, listless look on her face and can be seen plugged into her earphones, perhaps listening to a song on what seems



to be an iPod or MP3 player. Her legs are bruised above the ankles, which seems to indicate that her character has been tortured or tied by someone. If these two posters are anything to go by, her persona in the film will be a complete antithesis of its title.

She will collaborate with Bengali actor Parambrata Chatterjee

and debutant director Prosit Roy. "*Pari* is a great script, and I have complete faith in the vision of the director," remarked Sharma, while announcing the film. It went on floors in June 2017.

Pari was originally slated to release on February 9. However, the date has now been pushed to March 2, 2018.



After Saif's divorce with Amrita Singh, his first wife after 12 years of marriage, Saif was closely associated with Swiss model, Rosa Catalano for about three years.

UNKNOWN FACTS ABOUT BOLLYWOOD CELEBRITIES

Before becoming an actress, the dancing diva Madhuri Dixit aspired to be a microbiologist. But it was Bollywood calling for this Maharashtrian girl.



Top 3 Bollywood Films

- 1) Padmaavat** - Directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali
Starring: Deepika Padukone, Ranveer Singh and Shahid Kapoor
- 2) Pad Man** - Directed by R. Balki
Starring: Akshay Kumar, Sonam Kapoor and Radhika Apte
- 3) Tiger Zinda Hai** - Directed by Ali Abbas Zafar
Starring: Salman Khan and Katrina Kaif

Top 10 Bollywood Film Songs

- 10) "Hatt Ja Tau" - *Veerey Ki Wedding*
- 9) "Lae Doobi" - *Aiyaari*
- 8) "Kaala Doreya" - *Kaalakandi*
- 7) "Khali Bali" - *Padmavat*
- 6) "Binte Dil" - *Padmavat*
- 5) "Aaj Se Teri" - *Pad Man*
- 4) "Sehmi Hai Dhadkan" - *Daas Dev*
- 3) "Sanu Ek Pal Chain" - *Raid*
- 2) "Bas Tu Hai" - *3 Storeys*
- 1) "Ishtehaar" - *Welcome To New York*

Bollywood Trivia

Which is the first movie of Anushka Sharma?

- 1) Jab Tak Hai Jaan
- 2) PK
- 3) Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi
- 4) Phillauri

Answer: 3

Who plays 'Arunachalam Muruganatham' in movie 'Pad Man'?

- 1) Akshay Kumar
- 2) Shah Rukh Khan
- 3) Abhishek Bachchan

Answer: 1

BOLLYWOOD Insider™

MOVIE REVIEW

Aiyaari

Banner:
Reliance Entertainment
Pen India Limited

Producer:
Shital Bhatia
Dhaval Gada
Jayantilal Gada
Karan Shah
Motion Picture Capital

Director:
Neeraj Pandey

Starring:
Sidharth Malhotra
Manoj Bajpayee
Rakul Preet Singh
Pooja Chopra
Rakul Preet Singh
Vikram Gokhale
Naseeruddin Shah
Anupam Kher

Music By:
Rochak Kohli
Ankit Tiwari

Released Date:
February 9, 2018



Director Neeraj Pandey is one of the best in the business and has a penchant for making thrillers taking a political, crime issues as its central theme. His past experiments with Akshay Kumar, *Special 26* and *Baby*, have worked both at the box office and with masses. This time around, he is back with *Aiyaari* which again has a strong plot-line and a holds out a promise of dumdaar performances by its leads Manoj Bajpayee, Sidharth Malhotra, Vikram Gokhale and Rakul Preet Singh and added appearances by director's favourites Anupam Kher and the effervescent Naseeruddin Shah. With masses still warming up to Akshay Kumar's *Pad Man*, *Aiyaari* has released at an opportune moment. Here are our thoughts about the film.

First of all, one must be wondering what *Aiyaari* actually means? So, according to the maker, the word is an embodi-

ment of all the qualities a true soldier must have. A successful soldier is the one who brings out his best in the time of adversity. So, *Aiyaari* means a combination of sharpness, wit, tact, ability to change appearances and combating techniques a soldier uses to emerge victorious. The movie revolves around Colonel Abhay Singh (Manoj Bajpayee) and Major Jai Bakshi (Sidharth Malhotra) who are both army officers. It majorly focuses on corruption within the army and the system efforts to hunt down Jai who goes rogue after finding out the ugly truth about the defence system. While it is loosely based on the Adarsh Society scam which rocked the nation in 2010, the maker does not revolve the entire movie about it. Instead, he builds on the tension using different plots which come together to make one massive issue, in this case: corruption in the Defense Ministry. The undercurrent of the film is raging generation gap between Singh and Bakshi. Friends turned foes, both lead characters focus on

keeping viewers engaged with their car and mouse chase.

While the director Pandey tried to build on the suspense, he fails to keep the viewer's attention because of its run time and clumsy writing. The movie talks about arms and ammunition scam for about one and a half hour, but ends with a focus on Aadarsh society Scam. The movie could have been salvaged by tighter editing but Praveen Kathikuloth fails to deliver on that front. *Aiyaari* suffers from a weak script but we liked a couple of dialogues which are apt to describe the Indian political circus and the subsequent corruption. For example, in one scene Manoj talks about the Kashmir issue and says the reason it's not getting solved is because lot of people have to gain from it. Kashmir is not just an issue but has become an industry. Bitter yet true. The film has all the makings of a Neeraj Pandey film. Yet, it somehow fails to have a massy connect.

DOP Sudeep Palsane has done a good job. Special mention to the make up artistes and also

costume designer Falguni Thakore for doing such amazing work with Sidharth and Manoj's different guides in the film. Action by Abbas Ali Moghul is okay but honestly, there is nothing to write home about.

Talking about the performances, Manoj Bajpayee is as usual excellent. He tries really hard to hold the film on his shoulder; after all he is one of the central characters. His seasoned act shines through. Sidharth Malhotra looks to redeem himself, after the box office debacles: *A Gentleman*, *Baar Baar Dekho* and *Ittefaq*, with this film. His romantic portions with Rakul Preet Singh fails to work and seems forced. The supporting cast of Vikram Gokhale, Kumud Mishra, Aadil Hussain, Naseeruddin Shah shine through.

On the whole, *Aiyaari* misses the mark and is a huge letdown on the account of its flawed script and the lengthy runtime. At the box office, it will be a disappointing fare.

Rating: ★★☆☆

Bollywood Beat

Salman replaces singer Arijit in *Welcome To New York*




He did it again! Salman Khan apparently got Arijit Singh's voice replaced with Rahat Fateh Ali Khan in *Sultan*. This is the second time Salman did away with Arijit's voice.

In *Tiger Zinda Hai* we had Atif Aslam crooning "Dil Diya Galan" and now there's Atif Aslam crooning "Ishtehaar" in *Welcome To New York*. Interestingly it is being whispered that Salman Khan insisted on dubbing Arijit's voice with Rahat's earlier also in *Sultan* for the song "Jag Ghoomeya". The Salman-Arijit feud goes back a long way to an awards function which Salman had hosted and where Arijit came on stage wearing informal clothes and casual chappals. The two had exchanged barbed sarcasm on stage.

This perhaps explains why Arijit was shown the backdoor in favour of Rahat. But how do we explain Rahat's presence in *Welcome To New York*?

Singer Baabul Supriyo says he is not able to comprehend the need or desire to cross the border for entertainment content at a time when war is no longer a remote concept. "If that's true, I would request the makers of the film to remove Rahat's voice and get someone else to dub it! I am also not sure why Atif Aslam got to sing 'Dil Diya Gallan' when for sure our very own Arijit could have done a much better job. The FM stations played the song galore while news channels announced the name of our soldiers martyred by PAK-sponsored terrorists."

Celebrity Birthdays

February 25th Shahid Kapoor (1981) Anuj Sawhney (1981) Urvashi Rautela (1994)	March 2nd Tiger Shroff (1990)	March 7th Anupam Kher (1955)
February 26th Veena Malik (1984)	March 3rd Shraddha Kapoor (1987)	March 8th Fardeen Khan (1974)
February 27th Prakash Jha (1952)	March 5th Nassar (1958)	
February 28th Hazel Keech (1987)	March 6th Ankit Tiwari (1986) Makrand Deshpande (1966)	

Upcoming Films

Veere Di Wedding Kareena Kapoor Khan, Sonam Kapoor, Swara Bhaskar	Race 3 Salman Khan, Bobby Deol Jacqueline Fernandez	Thugs of Hindostan Aamir Khan, Amitabh Bachchan Katrina Kaif, Fatima Sana Shaikh and Jackie Shroff
Kedarnath Sushant Singh Rajput	Manikarnika: The Queen of Jhansi Kangana Ranaut, Ankita Lokhande and Sonu Sood	Baaghi 2 Tiger Shroff, Disha Patani and Randeep Hooda
Chanda Mama Door Ke Sushant Singh Rajput, Shraddha Kapoor and Bhumi Pednekar	Pari Anushka Sharma, Parambrata Chatterjee	Raazi Alia Bhatt, Vicky Kaushal

Iran President Rouhani seeks Indian investment amid U.S. pressure



Iranian President Hassan Rouhani shakes hands with India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi (R) during a photo opportunity ahead of their meeting at Hyderabad House in New Delhi, India on February 17, 2018.

Nidhi Verma and
Sanjeev Miglani

NEW DELHI - Iranian President Hassan Rouhani will be seeking billions of dollars of Indian investment during a visit to New Delhi, diplomats said, a trip that comes amid U.S. pressure to review a 2015 international nuclear deal and re-impose sanctions on Iran.

India is trying to develop the port of Chabahar on Iran's east coast as a way to gain access the

markets of central Asia as well as Afghanistan by by-passing arch-rival Pakistan.

But progress is slow because of concern that President Donald Trump's administration may eventually scrap the Iran nuclear deal.

Soon after the sanctions were lifted, India said its firms could spend as much as \$20 billion on not just the port but also petrochemical plants, railway lines and other industries in the areas. But progress has only been made

on the port.

Iranian officials say the slow-down is largely because India has become hesitant following Trump's attempts to undermine the Iran nuclear deal and that Rouhani would be urging India to make good on its commitments.

"There are a number of projects for expansion of ties in the pipeline that not only will be in the interests of both nations but also in the interest of the region," Iran's ambassador to India, Gholamreza Ansari, said in a national day speech last week.

Rouhani, who arrives in the southern city of Hyderabad last Thursday, where he will address a Muslim congregation, will hold talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi last Saturday.

The two sides are expected to sign an agreement allowing India to run operations in the first phase of the Chabahar port project.

The port is about 72 km from the Pakistani port of Gwadar, which China is developing.

'AMERICAN INTERESTS'

The plan is for India to equip and operate two berths in the port with a capital investment of \$85.21 million on a 10-year lease.

Modi has said the government could spend up to \$500 million on the port, India's first major overseas port venture, as it tries to offer alternatives to China's One Belt One Road initiative to build trade and transport links across Asia.

But the uncertainty over U.S. policies has cast a shadow over the project, officials say.

India is struggling to get equipment such as cranes for the port because Western banks were not ready to facilitate transactions.

"They don't want to antagonise

the U.S.," said an Indian source involved in the port's development but who is not authorised to speak to the media.

"The banks' American interests are more important ... the moment you mention that THE destination is Iran they don't come forward."

Iran had hoped for swift reintegration into global trade after the easing of sanctions in 2016 but its failure to persuade Western banks to accept Iranian business has been the main roadblock to rehabilitation.

7 workers die in India while cleaning drainage pit

HYDERABAD, India (AP) Seven workers died of suffocation last Friday while cleaning an underground drainage pit at a poultry farm in southern India, police said.

Deputy Superintendent of Police Chowdesari said the deaths occurred in Morem village in Andhra Pradesh state.

After the first worker entered the drainage pit, he shouted for help because he had difficulty breathing. Chowdesari, who uses one name, said the eight

other workers entered the pit to help.

He said four died on the spot and three others succumbed later in a hospital.

A large number of villagers gathered outside the poultry farm and demanded the arrest of farm officials.

Police said they were investigating the deaths.

Such accidents are common in India, where workers clean deep drainage pits without protective gear.



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BUSINESS

BIZ BRIEFS

CBI arrests owner of pen maker Rotomac in bank

NEW DELHI - The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probing wrongdoing in the banking sector arrested the owner of pen maker Rotomac Global and his son on Thursday, a spokesman said.

CBI arrested the men, both directors of Rotomac Global Pvt Ltd, in an ongoing investigation into allegations they had cheated a consortium of banks, the spokesman of the agency said.

On Monday, the CBI registered the case against them and officials at various banks in connection with an alleged 29 billion rupees (\$450 million) loan, after a complaint from state run Bank of Baroda.

Dish says Sling TV has 2.2 mln subscribers

Dish Network Corp on Wednesday said its online streaming service Sling TV added 160,000 subscribers in the fourth quarter, disclosing numbers for the first time and providing an overall figure of 2.21 million.

Dish has been losing customers for its legacy pay-TV service for nearly a decade as people move away from satellite TV packages to online streaming services such as Netflix Inc and Amazon.com Inc's Prime Video.

The total subscribers for Sling pales in comparison with Netflix's about 118 million worldwide or Amazon Prime Video's 40 million, but they have been accumulated from scratch in just two years at a time when other cable TV providers are struggling.

Dish TV lost 121,000 subscribers in the quarter from its total 13.24 million users of both services.

Indian investigators seize Nirav Modi's Rolls-Royce, Porsche in \$1.8 billion fraud probe

By Devidutta Tripathy

MUMBAI - The Enforcement Directorate (ED) said on Thursday it has seized a Rolls-Royce Ghost, a Porsche Panamera and some half a dozen more luxury vehicles belonging to billionaire jeweller Nirav Modi and his firms, in a probe into an alleged \$1.8 billion fraud against state-run Punjab National Bank.

Modi, his companies, and other firms with links to his uncle Mehul Choksi, are at the heart of the alleged fraud that involved illegally issued letters of undertaking (LOUs) from the second-largest Indian state-run lender that were used to get loans from overseas branches of other, mostly Indian banks.

In what has been dubbed the biggest fraud in India's banking history, police have so far arrested a dozen people - six from the bank and six more from Modi

and Choksi's companies - as they continue the probe.

A lawyer for Modi has denied his client was involved in any fraud. Choksi has not commented but his firm, Gitanjali Gems, has also denied involvement in the alleged fraud.

The Enforcement Directorate, an agency focused on foreign exchange and money laundering offences, has been conducting separate searches at homes and offices of Modi. As of last Saturday, it had seized jewellery, gold, diamonds, precious metals and stones that it said were worth 56.74 billion rupees (\$872.5 million).

In a Twitter post on Thursday, the ED detailed the seizures of the cars from Modi and his companies. It also said it had frozen shares and mutual funds worth 78 million rupees held by Modi and 867.2 million rupees by Choksi.

WhatsApp to launch money transfer service in India

MUMBAI - WhatsApp will launch a "full feature" inter-bank money transfer service in India, its biggest market, after a test involving a million users, National Payments Corp of India said.

Last Friday's statement marks the de facto official launch of WhatsApp's new service as NPCI is the body set up by the central bank and lenders to oversee payment services.

WhatsApp launched a limited service in India, where it has more than 200 million users, last week. This uses customers' phone numbers linked to bank accounts to facilitate payments and marks the first global foray into money transfers by the Facebook-owned firm.

Four banks will join United

Payments Interface (UPI) - which powers the payments service - for WhatsApp, NPCI said. At present, India's third-biggest lender ICICI Bank processes the fund transfers on WhatsApp, the application shows.

WhatsApp's popularity in India is likely to pose a threat to established players, but it is entering a competitive market after Alphabet Inc's Google launched a payments app last year to compete with local players.

The country's cashless economy got a boost after Prime Minister Narendra Modi banned old high-value currency notes in late 2016, leading to a surge in online payment providers such as home-grown player Paytm, the biggest in India.



FILE PHOTO: Indian jeweller Nirav Modi poses during the launch of his store in Mumbai, India on March 14, 2015.

Modi, who police say left India with his family in January, before the bank filed a police complaint triggering an inquiry, has not publicly commented on the case yet.

However, in a letter to PNB, a copy of which was seen by Reuters, Modi had said that his companies owed the bank less than 50 billion rupees, well below the amount alleged by the bank. He also said PNB had jeopardized its prospects of recovering the sums owed by going public with its allegations.

SHARES FALL FURTHER

PNB responded to Modi's letter on Thursday.

In its letter of reply, seen by Reuters, the bank said the LoUs in question were illegally obtained by Modi's firms and it was compelled by law to report it to law enforcement agencies, as they were potential violations of money laundering laws and the Foreign Exchange Management Act.

It urged Modi to respond with a "concrete and implementable" repayment plan on outstanding dues.

Earlier on Thursday, Reuters reported that PNB had stepped

up its controls on the use of global interbank payments network SWIFT in the aftermath of the fraud.

Separately, on Thursday, responding to clarifications sought by the stock exchange, PNB in a regulatory filing said it had followed all "lawful avenues available" to recover its dues.

The bank reiterated that it had enough assets and capital to meet any liabilities from the fraud.

In a note issued late on Wednesday, Goldman Sachs trimmed its earnings estimates for the top three Indian state-run banks, including PNB, saying recent capital injections announced by the government would dilute earnings.

It cut PNB's earnings estimate by nearly 30 percent for the current fiscal year ending March 31, saying it expected a larger earnings slide in PNB's case due to the fraud-related liability.

PNB shares fell 2.3 percent on Thursday. The stock has lost more than a quarter of its market value since disclosing the \$1.8 billion fraud on Feb. 14.

Gitanjali Gems fell almost 5 percent, its maximum daily limit, to all-time lows.

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Indian banks may take more than \$3 bln hit from PNB fraud

By Sanjeev Miglani

NEW DELHI - Indian banks could take a hit of more than \$3 billion from loans and corporate guarantees provided to diamond companies at the centre of a massive alleged fraud at the state-run Punjab National Bank, the tax department has estimated.

As of March 2017, banks had extended loans and guarantees worth 176.32 billion rupees (\$2.74 billion) to companies tied to billionaire jeweller Nirav Modi and his uncle Mehul Choksi, the tax department said in a note seen by Reuters.

Since then, the loans and guarantees would have increased over the past year and the total "hit" to Indian banks "may well exceed" \$3 billion, according to an internal note prepared by the tax authority on its preliminary investigation into India's biggest

bank fraud case.

According to a complaint by PNB, the biggest fraud in Indian banking history involved two junior officials at a Mumbai bank branch issuing "letters of undertaking" to firms linked to Modi and Choksi for them to obtain credit from overseas branches of other Indian lenders.

The bank said these fraudulent transactions had taken place over a number of years and amounted to \$1.77 billion.

None of these letters of undertaking - essentially credit guarantees - were recorded on the bank's internal software system and instead were transmitted through the SWIFT interbank messaging system, "thus avoiding early detection of fraudulent activity", the tax note said.

It said that Choksi's Geetanjali Gems and its subsidiaries led by Choksi dealt with 32 banks.

Among those that offered credit to Choksi and Modi, famous for his chain of stores stretching from New York to Beijing, were the Union Bank of India, Allahabad Bank and Axis Bank, the tax note said.

Union Bank of India, another state-run lender, said last Friday it has an exposure of \$300 million as a counter-party lender. Axis Bank, a private sector lender, has said it has sold all its exposure related to the fraud.

Among the findings of the tax department was that several firms in which Modi and his uncle were involved had people of limited means listed as majority partners. Those people were not identified in the tax department note.

The total loans in the three firms of Modi, Stellar Diamond, Solar Exports and Diamonds R Us was 39.929 billion rupees,



Diamond jeweller Nirav Modi at an event.

while total capital of the partners was 4 billion rupees, it said.

It said the three firms' "trade receivables", or the amount being billed to customers, were "much higher than total turnover of the three companies involved in the fraud, which shows that

goods are being sold for related party and are either over-invoiced or not coming at all".

Modi and Choksi have not made any comment so far. Federal police say they both left India in early January and there whereabouts are unknown.

Uber will aggressively invest in Southeast Asia, won't let SoftBank rule it: CEO



Dara Khosrowshahi, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Uber Technologies, speaks with the media in New Delhi, India on February 22, 2018.

NEW DELHI - Uber Technologies Inc's chief executive pledged to continue investing aggressively in Southeast Asia even though the U.S. ride hailing firm expects to lose money in the fast growing market due to costly battles with rivals such as Grab.

SoftBank's 15 percent stake purchase in Uber last month has opened up the possibility of combining Uber with other ride-hailing assets the Japanese group owns across Asia. SoftBank has stakes in Singapore-based Grab and India's Ola.

At the time of the investment, SoftBank said it wants Uber to focus on growing in the United States, Europe, Latin America and Australia - not Asia, which has been among the most costly and competitive regions for the ride-services firm, a source had told Reuters.

Uber is preparing to sell its Southeast Asia ride-hailing business to Grab in return for a substantial stake in the company, CNBC reported earlier this month, citing sources familiar with the matter.

But Dara Khosrowshahi seemed to dismiss that strategy on Thursday in his first official visit to Asia since he became Uber CEO last year.

"We expect to lose money in Southeast Asia and expect to invest aggressively in terms of marketing, subsidies etc," Khosrowshahi told reporters in New Delhi, adding there is huge potential in the region thanks to a big population and fast internet user growth.

"From a competitive standpoint we think we can improve," he said.

Khosrowshahi said that a decade from now he expects 80 percent of growth at Uber to be organic and some through acquisitions.

"We will look at anything But right now the plan for Southeast Asia is to go forward, lean forward and to invest."

INDIA PUSH

Khosrowshahi said SoftBank is an investor but Uber, which has a valuation of around \$68 billion, will take any final decisions along with the board on mergers and

partnerships. He said he does not expect any change in Uber's India operations following the deal with SoftBank.

India is one of Uber's fastest-growing international markets and accounts for more than 10 percent of Uber's trips globally, but it's not making money yet, Khosrowshahi said.

Uber and India's market leader Ola have been locked in a fierce battle, pumping in millions of dollars of investors' money for a bigger piece of the country's \$12 billion taxi market.

"The greatest value that we can create here is to continue to invest and grow our business here, not just for India but the role it is going to play in shaping our product for the rest of the world," he said.

Khosrowshahi declined to comment on specific investments for India but said "it is a lot" and will continue to increase.

"We as a company need to have a balanced profile in terms of growth and investment. There are developed markets that we are going to continue to invest in that are going to be more profitable ... and we should actively be investing in markets like India and Latin America that have huge growth ahead of us."

Khosrowshahi, who took the helm in August after former CEO Travis Kalanick was asked to step down amid a litany of regulatory problems, driver and consumer scandals and court cases, has pledged to make a clean break with past practices that have led to accusations of a toxic work culture.

India bank hack 'similar' to \$81 mln Bangladesh central bank heist

By Sudarshan Varadhan

NEW DELHI - Hackers who tried to steal nearly \$2 million from India's City Union Bank this month used tactics similar to those employed in the unsolved cyber heist of \$81 million from Bangladesh's central bank in 2016, City's CEO said on Monday.

The unknown hackers disabled the City printer connected to global payments platform SWIFT on Feb. 6, preventing the bank from receiving acknowledgement messages for three fraudulent payment instruction sent that evening until the next morning.

"Nobody suspected that it was an attack and thought it was a systemic network failure," N. Kamakodi told Reuters by phone. "The system department people, everybody assembled, analyzed the problem, rebooted, they closed shop only around 10-10.30 in the night."

The next morning, bank officials managed to reconcile the previous day's transactions and found out "three transactions which were not originated from our bank".

The bank had been able block only one of the transfers worth \$500,000, while attempts were under way to retrieve the rest, he said. It first disclosed the heist on Saturday.

In the case of Bangladesh Bank, hackers infected the system with malware that disabled the SWIFT printer. Bank officials in Dhaka initially assumed

there was simply a printer problem.

The hackers stole the money from Bangladesh Bank's account at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York using fraudulent orders on SWIFT. The money was sent to accounts at Manila-based Rizal Commercial Banking Corp and then disappeared into the casino industry in the Philippines.

Nearly two years later, there is no word on who was responsible and Bangladesh Bank has been able to retrieve only about \$15 million, mostly from a Manila junket operator.

"We definitely see similarities between the Bangladesh case, and the similarities are being factored into the investigation," Kamakodi said.

City Union, a small private lender based in south India, said the three money transfer instructions were sent via correspondent banks to accounts in Dubai, Turkey and China.

He said SWIFT was helping it investigate the matter, and that the hack happened despite the bank adding new security measures days before.

"It's a cat and mouse game," he said.

SWIFT said it did not comment on individual customers or entities.

Russia's central bank said last week that unknown hackers stole 339.5 million rubles (\$6 million) in an attack via the SWIFT international payments messaging system in Russia last year.

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South Africa level T20 cricket series vs India

CENTURION - Heinrich Klaasen turned it on for South Africa here at the SuperSport Park on Wednesday night, even as everyone thought Manish Pandey and MS Dhoni, in particular, will walk away with the honours as well as the T20 series for India.

Thanks to his exploits and a cool-headed JP Duminy, South Africa won by six wickets to level the series 1-1 and keep it alive. The last match of the series and the tour will be played in Cape Town on February 24.

The South Africa wicketkeeper-batsman, promoted to bat at No. 4 in the hope of accelerating the run rate did his job with aplomb, hammering 69 off 30 balls to bring Proteas within striking distance. When he had

walked in, the hosts were 38/2 in five overs, still needing runs at over 10 an over. By the time he was dismissed as the third Proteas batsman to fall, South Africa needed 58 runs off 41 balls at just over eight. Importantly, he had wiped off a significant number of runs as the Indian bowlers cowered under pressure. Skipper JP Duminy, who held one end up, kept rotating the strike and giving it back to the big-hitter. Duminy ended unbeaten on 64 (40 balls, 3x6, 4x4).

Klaasen hit seven sixes, clobbering five of them against ODI series hero leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal, who was taken for 64 runs off his four overs. There were only four dot balls in his spell. Klaasen's ability to im-

provise came to the fore even as he didn't bother about the feet movement getting the big hits from the crease.

Earlier, riding on a late 98-run fifth-wicket partnership between Manish Pandey (79 off 48 balls) and former skipper MS Dhoni (52 off 28 balls), India reached 188/4. The total, it seemed at halfway, had put them in the driver's seat and firm favourites to seal the match and series.

It had again been a story of inconsistent and poor bowling from South Africa as they allowed India to get to their eventual total even after finding the formula of restricting them.

When Suresh Raina was dismissed, India were 90 for four in the 11th over. It looked like



India's MS Dhoni plays with the ball after running out South Africa's Dane Paterson.

the Proteas would finally restrict the Indians to a modest total. But what followed was a mess for them as poor field placements, some lucky as well as brilliant shots got India to their eventual score.

Dhoni scored a half-century at a strike rate of over 185, proving once again that he still has in him to get boundaries towards the end. Manish Pandey had kept the scoreboard ticking while Dhoni was finding feet. Pandey hammered South Africa's most successful bowler from the last match, Tabraiz Shamsi whereas

Dhoni took 17 runs off Dane Paterson's last over. Paterson is known to be the death-overs specialist but he had no clue of how to contain the unorthodox Dhoni.

India had begun on wrong footing, losing Rohit Sharma early, but South Africa's problems of bowling short and in the slot to the top order batsmen returned to haunt them as Chris Morris, after bowling a brilliant maiden with the new ball, allowed Dhawan to take 20 runs. It was just the third over of the match and got India off to a flying start once again.

Virat Kohli achieves rare feat in ICC rankings, Jasprit Bumrah joint-top in ODIs



India's Virat Kohli plays a shot.

MUMBAI - Virat Kohli on Tuesday became the second batsman ever after South Africa's AB de Villiers to have earned more than 900 rating points in ICC Rankings, in Test and ODI cricket concurrently.

Kohli also became the first Indian batsmen ever to have breached the 900-point mark in ODIs, extending his lead over de Villiers. Kohli now has 909 points, well ahead of de Villiers who has 844.

Virat Kohli's 909 rating points are also the highest in the last 27 years since Australia's Dean Jones in 1991, who back then had earned 918 points.

Before Kohli's feat, de Villiers has been the only batsman to have carried more than 900 rating points in both Test and ODI cricket. It was in 2015 that de Villiers had 902 points in ODIs, while in Tests, he had 935.

Kohli's gain comes after he created the world record of scoring most runs in a bilateral ODI series during the recent six-

match India versus South Africa affair.

Averaging a mind-boggling 186, the Indian cricket team captain hammered a record 558 runs with three centuries and one half-century, and was dismissed only thrice as India won 5-1. It also marked the first instance of a batsman scoring more than 500 runs in a bilateral series.

"Kohli has thus moved ahead of Brian Lara in the all-timers' list, having also overtaken him in the all-timers' Test list last month. Kohli is now seventh in the ODI list of all-time rankings that is led by Vivian Richards with 935 points and the India captain is now a good 22 points clear of Sachin Tendulkar, whose ODI career high of 887 points came against Zimbabwe in January 1998. Kohli's aggregate is the best since Brian Lara reached 911 points in March 1993," the ICC said in its release.

Among the bowlers, India's Jasprit Bumrah and Afghanistan sensation Rashid Khan earned

joint 787 rating points and occupy the first two spots respectively.

South Africa captain Faf du Plessis, who played only in the first ODI against India and scored a fine century, moved up one position to reach the eighth spot.

With 323 runs in the ODI series, Shikhar Dhawan moved up as many as four positions to reach the 10th spot in the ICC Rankings. Leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal, who claimed 16 wickets in six matches, moved up eight positions to the 21st whereas Chinaman bowler Kuldeep Yadav rose 15 positions to get to the 47th spot.

"Pace bowler Jasprit Bumrah's eight wickets have lifted him two places to take the joint-first position," the ICC release added.

The Afghanistan spinner played a key role in his team's ODI series win against Zimbabwe, and thus gained from his splendid performance which saw him grabbing 16 wickets in five matches.

"Rashid has joined Bumrah at the top with 16 wickets in the series against Zimbabwe which Afghanistan won 4-1 to become the youngest to attain top ranking. His 51 runs in two innings in the series, including a brisk 43 in the final match in Sharjah on Monday, has also helped him break into the top-five in the list of all-rounders while he has also moved up 11 slots to take 114th place among batsmen," the release informed.

Afghanistan also moved up one position up in ICC Rankings for Teams, going past Zimbabwe to become the 10th-ranked team.

Kuldeep Yadav flummoxed by wrong-un on social media



India's Kuldeep Yadav, MS Dhoni and Ajinkya Rahane celebrate the wicket of South Africa's JP Duminy.

MUMBAI - Indian cricketer Kuldeep Yadav has had to apologise to his fans on social media platform Instagram, after an 'unsolicited post' surfaced on his page on Wednesday.

Kuldeep has claimed that his Instagram account was hacked and he was not responsible for it, adding his apologies in his message.

"I would like to apologise for the unsolicited post that was posted by my Instagram account in the past few mins .my Instagram account was hacked by someone, I'll take steps to improve my password protection. Thanks for understanding," (sic) Kuldeep took to Twitter.

The Chinaman bowler topped the charts for most wickets during India's crushing 5-1 series win against South Africa, claiming 17 wickets. His partnership with leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal has given India an X-factor in their bowling and has played a big role in the team's recent wins in limited-overs cricket.

A few days ago, Abhinav Bindra, the winner of the shooting gold medal in Beijing Olympics, had his Twitter account hacked by the Turkish Cyber Army.

The group has reportedly hacked the accounts of Bollywood actors Abhishek Bachchan, Anupam Kher, politician Ram Madhav and a few others.

— Health  Bulletin —

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Kids with food allergies often put at risk by their parents



Parents of kids with food allergies often engage in behaviors that could trigger an allergic reaction in their child, a survey found.

By Shereen Lehman

Parents of kids with food allergies often engage in behaviors that could trigger an allergic reaction in their child, a survey found.

Almost half of parents of kids with food allergies reported at least one risky behavior, such as not carrying epinephrine autoinjectors or not reading food labels.

These behaviors are likely due to knowledge gaps and misconceptions, as well as possible

financial barriers, according to Dr. Julie Wang of the Jaffe Food Allergy Institute of Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City and her colleagues.

Wang's team conducted the survey to better understand food allergy management behaviors and attitudes in their patients' households.

"During our patient visits, we routinely counsel families about food allergy management to reduce the risk of allergic reactions. However, we noted that in some cases, our patients

experienced allergic reactions that were associated with risk-taking behavior," Wang told Reuters Health in an email.

"It is important to understand the barriers patients and their families face in managing their food allergies," she said.

As reported in The Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology, Wang and her colleagues surveyed 100 English-speaking parents of children ages 6 months to 18 years who had previously been diagnosed with food allergies and who came for follow-up visits at an urban allergy clinic.

Parents were asked about potentially risky food allergy management behaviors. For example, Wang said, "Risky behaviors include parents giving their child the allergic food to see if the child is still allergic and not always being prepared with emergency medication, epinephrine autoinjectors, in case allergic reactions occur."

Over 70 percent of the kids had experienced food allergy reactions in the previous year, with almost 40 percent reporting at least three reactions.



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Migraine tied to higher risk of cardiovascular diseases



People with a history of migraines may be more likely to develop cardiovascular problems like heart attacks, stroke, and an irregular heart beat than individuals who don't experience these headaches, a Danish study suggests.

By Lisa Rapaport

People with a history of migraines may be more likely to develop cardiovascular problems like heart attacks, stroke, and an irregular heart beat than individuals who don't experience these headaches, a Danish study suggests.

While migraines have long been linked to an increased risk of heart attacks and stroke, the current study offers fresh evidence that these headaches may also be tied to other types of cardiovascular problems, said lead author Dr. Kasper Adelborg of Aarhus University Hospital in Denmark.

"Now accumulating evidence supports that migraine should be considered as a risk factor for most cardiovascular diseases in both men and women," Adelborg said by email.

"Although the absolute risks of

cardiovascular diseases were low at the individual level, it translates into a substantial increase in risk at the population level, because migraine is a very common disease," Adelborg added.

Up to one in five people get migraines, a chronic, often debilitating disorder characterized by severe headaches as well as symptoms like nausea and intense sensitivity to sight or sound, researchers note in *The BMJ*.

For the study, researchers examined data on 51,000 patients who had been diagnosed with migraines and a control group of more than 510,000 similar people who did not have migraines.

In the migraine group, most of the patients were women and were typically diagnosed for the first time when they were around 35 years old.

At the start of the study, none of the participants had suffered

a heart attack, stroke, peripheral artery disease, heart rhythm disorders, clots in the deep veins of their legs, or heart failure.

After 19 years of follow-up, 2,451 people with migraines had at least one of these cardiovascular problems, and 575 people had more than one.

Compared with the control group of people who didn't get migraines, those who did were roughly twice as likely to have a stroke, 49 percent more apt to have a heart attack, 59 percent more likely to have clots in the veins in their legs, and 25 percent more likely to experience an irregular heartbeat.

A migraine history didn't appear to influence the risk of heart failure or peripheral artery disease, however.

The absolute risk of these heart problems was low. Over the study period, 25 in every 1,000 people with migraines had a heart attack, compared with 17 out of every 1,000 individuals without a history of these headaches.

Similarly, 45 in 1,000 people with migraines experienced the most common type of stroke, compared with 25 out of every 1,000 people without a migraine history.

Clots in the legs developed in 27 of every 1,000 people with migraines and 18 in 1,000 people without these headaches. And, with migraines, 47 in 1,000 people developed an irregular heartbeat, compared with 34 in 1,000

other individuals.

In general, the risk of cardiovascular problems associated with migraines was higher for people who had a history of migraines with aura (visual symptoms such as flashing or shimmering lights, zigzagging lines or stars).

One limitation of the study is that some people with migraines might not have been properly diagnosed, the authors note. Another drawback is that researchers lacked data on other factors like exercise habits that can independently influence the risk of developing cardiovascular disease.

Still, the findings add to a growing body of evidence that even young, healthy people may develop cardiovascular disease if they experience

migraines, said Tobias Kurth, author of an accompanying editorial and director of the Institute of Public Health at the Charite - Universitätsmedizin in Berlin.

"Migraine, specifically migraine with aura, has previously been associated with an increased risk of stroke and there was increasing evidence that migraine is also related to other non-stroke cardiovascular diseases, such as myocardial infarction and death from cardiovascular causes," Kurth said by email.

"These findings matter for patients because having migraine puts them at an added risk for cardiovascular disease above and beyond the risk from other known factors such as hypertension, smoking, obesity, etc.," Kurth added.

Preemies and underweight babies more likely to have low IQs

Babies who are born much too soon or who arrive weighing too little may not score as high on intelligence tests during childhood as full-term infants, a research review suggests.

Researchers examined data from 71 previously published studies that included a total of 5,155 full-term babies and 7,752 of the most vulnerable preemies: those born at less than 32 weeks gestation or weighing less than 1,500 grams (3.3 pounds).

Overall, intelligence quotient (IQ) tests typically completed sometime from age 5 to age 20 showed that preemies typically lagged behind their full-term counterparts. On average, preterm youth underperformed on the IQ tests by the equivalent of about 13 points.

"The progress in neonatal health care that has been made since the 1990s considerably increased the survival of preterm infants," said lead study author Sabrina Twilhaar of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Academic Medical Center.

"However, this improvement in survival was not accompanied by improvement of cognitive outcomes," Twilhaar said by email.

Pregnancy normally lasts about 40 weeks, and babies born after 37 weeks are considered full term. Half of the preemies in the study were born before 28.5 weeks gestation and half of them arrived weighing less than about 1,000 grams (2.2 pounds).

In the weeks immediately after birth, preemies often have difficulty breathing and digesting food. They can also encounter longer-term challenges such as

impaired vision, hearing and cognitive skills, as well as social and behavioral problems.

Each additional week of pregnancy that babies missed with preterm deliveries was associated with a 1.26-point reduction in IQ scores, researchers report in *JAMA Pediatrics*.

Based on the lower scores for preemies in the study, researchers estimated that about 16 percent of the earliest arrivals would have a serious intellectual disability, compared with about 2.5 percent in the total population.

Babies in the analysis were born between 1990 and 2008, and the results didn't appear to differ based on year of birth.

Preemies who had what's known as bronchopulmonary dysplasia, a chronic lung disease associated with the long-term use of oxygen and mechanical ventilation to help them breathe, did appear to fare worse on IQ tests than preterm infants who didn't receive these interventions.

This suggests that interventions to lower the risk of this lung disease could help improve cognitive outcomes for preemies, said Robert Joseph, a researcher at Boston University School of Medicine who wasn't involved in the study.

"The factors that contribute to the development of these illnesses are not completely understood, but probably include infections, oxidative stress, nutritional deficiencies arising from preterm birth, and therapies that are needed to assure the survival after very preterm birth, such as mechanical ventilation," Robert said by email.

Family history increases breast cancer risk even for older women

Women are more likely to develop breast cancer when a mother or sister had this disease, and the risk associated with family history doesn't appear to diminish with age, a U.S. study suggests.

Family history has long been linked to a higher risk of breast cancer in younger women, who are generally advised to start getting screening mammograms when they're ten years younger than the age their relative was at diagnosis.

But family history has been thought to be less of a factor for the elderly, and women often stop routine screenings by their 70s.

"Older women with family history have an approximately two-fold higher risk of breast cancer compared to women with no family history," said lead study author Dejana Braithwaite of the Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center at Georgetown University Medical Center in

Washington, D.C.

"As we go from age-based to risk-based screening recommendations, our findings show that older women with family history may benefit from continued mammography screening, even after age 74," Braithwaite said by email.

While current U.S. guidelines advise women to get a screening mammogram every other year from age 50 to 74, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force hasn't found sufficient evidence yet to weigh in on whether women should continue screening after that.

The goal of mammograms is to detect tumors before they can be felt in a physical breast exam, catching cancer sooner when it's easier to treat. Ideally, this should mean fewer women are diagnosed when tumors are bigger, rapidly growing, and harder to attack.

But widespread screening can

also catch small, slow-growing tumors that are unlikely to be fatal. Particularly when women are older or have a limited life expectancy, detection of these less dangerous tumors might result in needless tests and treatment.

But for older women with a family history of breast cancer, the benefits of screening may still outweigh the risks.

Researchers examined data on 403,268 women age 65 or older, including 10,929 who developed breast cancer during an average follow-up period of 6.3 years.

When women ages 65 to 74 had a family history, they were 48 percent more likely to develop breast cancer, the study found. For women 75 or older with a family history, the increased risk was 44 percent.

Overall, the elevated risk associated with family history didn't appear to vary based on the relative's age when diagnosed with breast cancer.

New acne diagnoses linked to increased depression risk

By Shereen Lehman

In the first year after being told by a doctor that they have acne, patients' risk for a diagnosis of major depressive disorder spikes by more than 60 percent compared to the general population, a new study shows.

Dermatologists and other doctors treating acne should keep an eye on patients' mood symptoms as well, and start treatment or make a psychological referral if depression is present, the authors write in British Journal of Dermatology.

"The idea for the current study came from another recently published study we did looking at the mental health effects of the acne drug isotretinoin (Accutane). Over the past few years, there have been numerous reports that isotretinoin (Accutane) has been linked to psychiatric disorders," lead author Isabelle Vallerand told Reuters Health by email.

"Our recently published systematic review did not find an increased risk of psychiatric disorders among people treated with isotretinoin, but we wondered if acne itself may be contributing to mental illness," said Vallerand, a researcher with

the Community Health Sciences department of the Cumming School of Medicine at University of Calgary in Canada.

Acne, the most common skin condition in the U.S., includes whiteheads, blackheads, pimples, cysts and nodules that affect the face, shoulders, back, chest and upper arms. Past research has found that roughly two-thirds of acne patients are adults, not teenagers, and that depression is common, with about 10 percent of female acne patients also experiencing depression symptoms.

While it is intuitive that acne can have negative effects on mood, Vallerand said, the study team wanted to assess whether there was an increased risk of "true clinical depression."

Using a large UK database of medical records, they analyzed information on patients ages 7 to 50 years, focusing on 134,437 people with a new acne diagnosis and 1,731,608 similar patients without acne.

After following both groups for up to 15 years, researchers found that among acne patients, the probability of developing major depressive disorder was 18.5 percent, while in the

general population it was 12 percent. The risk was highest in the first year after a new acne diagnosis and then tapered off, the authors note.

"We found that acne increased the risk of developing clinical depression by 63 percent in the first year following an acne diagnosis and that this risk remained elevated for five years after the initial acne diagnosis," Vallerand said.

Overall, acne patients had 46 percent higher risk for major depression than the comparison group. Women outnumbered men among the acne patients, and women were also more likely to develop depression.

The authors did not have information about the severity of patients' acne, but they speculate that more severe cases might lead to greater depression risk. Nor did they know what acne medications the patients were using, other than those on isotretinoin.

"While it has been known for many years that people with acne might have a lower mood resulting from their skin, this is the first study to show conclusively that acne can be more than just a skin blemish, and can have



In the first year after being told by a doctor that they have acne, patients' risk for a diagnosis of major depressive disorder spikes by more than 60 percent compared to the general population, a new study shows.

a substantial impact on mental health in the form of clinical depression," Vallerand said.

"We believe that healthcare providers treating patients with acne should firstly be aware that acne is a risk factor for developing major depressive disorder and that they should encourage any of their patients with acne

to feel comfortable raising any mental health concerns to their attention, as these should be taken seriously."

Physicians treating patients with acne should also help to coordinate mental health interventions for their patients who develop depression, when needed, she added.

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WEEKLY HOROSCOPE

(March 4 - 10, 2018)

Aries (March 21 to April 20)

You might start the week on a slightly distressed note. There may be concerns about financial matters and the health of a loved one. Things are better mid-week as you decide to take control of the situation.

Taurus (April 21 to May 21)

You may have quite a few social occasions during this week. You let your hair down. Your friends are a great source of happiness. There could be a long-distance travel and sundry expenses.

Gemini (May 22 to June 21)

There's work and more work. You may be short on time and may need to interact with several people for completing important tasks. There may be surprise work offers or business proposals coming from unexpected quarters.

Cancer (June 22 to July 22)

There is emphasis on activities of a more religious or charitable nature. Work picks up pace midweek and you can expect more number of hours to be spent on handling a new project. The week ends on a good note and you spend memorable time with good friends.

Leo (July 23 to August 22)

You deal with quite a few matters that bring out a lot of fear and resistance from you. The good part is that there is travel in the near future and this keeps you excited and looking forward. This could be a work-related travel.

Virgo (August 23 to September 23)

Keep a firm control on your train of thoughts as there could be over-analysis of complicated relationships, and this creates tension. If you are able to distinguish between situations: those that you have control over and those where you cannot guide or direct outcomes, you will be peaceful.

Libra (September 24 to October 23)

You are in a contemplative mode. There may be certain difficult emotions and relationships that keep you wound up. It is better to get professional help if situations become mentally too bothersome.

Scorpio (October 24 to November 22)

Financial concerns dominate the week. There could be heavy expenditures incurred on the medical treatment of a loved one or for funding a new venture. You may be worried about how you will pay off the loan, but you step up nonetheless.

Sagittarius (November 23 to December 21)

You may face issues related to home, repairs, maintenance and sale or purchase of a property now. Some may be blessed with a child or may bring home a pet. You may need to be alert at work though, as rivals may try to harm your interests or malign you.

Capricorn (December 22 to January 20)

You are likely to travel for work. There may be talks in progress for initiating a new project. It will be helpful to keep a balanced head on your shoulders and not get swayed easily. Health is a concern.

Aquarius (January 21 to February 19)

It's a good week for you. Some of you may be busy preparing to join a new place of work. It will be better to move slowly, spending more time observing and learning in a new environment. There could be increased travel.

Pisces (February 20 to March 20)

The week puts focus on your health and physical errands. You may get quite conscious and take on a healthier lifestyle as well as adopt a makeover of sorts. There is some great news mid-week as some receive a surprise promotion or a monetary reward.

Move over Steve Harvey, there's a new family game show in town

Family quiz show to premiere on Zee TV this month

On Saturday, February 24, media and entertainment mega-giant ZEE Entertainment will debut "America's Smartest Family" - a brand new television game show where 16 families will compete for a \$10,000 cash prize. Airing exclusively on ZEE TV, the highly-anticipated series is the first-ever English-language quiz show of its kind, placing some of the globe's brightest South Asian families on stage for a chance at the title of "America's Smartest Family."

Hosted by 23-year-old YouTube sensation Zaid Ali, "America's Smartest Family" is a unique mashup of the American household favorites "Family Feud" and "Jeopardy," but with that special ZEE TV twist that celebrates its South Asian heritage. Complete with a diverse set of categories and a buzzer, each episode will feature five challenging in-studio question rounds, testing pre-screened contestants on their ability to answer quickly and more importantly - their ability to work as a team. Only the fastest, most well-rounded family will get to take home the crown.

Round one consists of four questions, with a toss deciding which family goes first. Participants can choose from one of five topics - including science, math, arts, history and



geography. Once a category is chosen, it may not be selected for the remainder of the round. During the first round, 100 points will be awarded for every correct answer. There are no deductions for wrong answers until round three and four, when a mistake can cost a team 100 points for every incorrect answer.

As the game progresses, questions become increasingly difficult. By rounds three and four - each correct answer is worth 200 points. During the fifth and final round, the game takes a turn and host Zaid Ali spices things up by offering clues. If the team answers correctly without a clue, a maximum of 1,000 points is awarded. If the family chooses to get clues, each clue costs them 200 points. At the end of five rounds, scores may vary from -2,400 to 5,500. In the event of a tie, an extra tie-breaker round will identify the winner.

In the first four episodes of the season, four families will compete

against one another, accumulating points for every correct answer. The eight winning teams from those early contents will move onto the semi-finals until just two families remain. The winners of the semi-finals will make it to finals, for the ultimate face-off, where one family will be named "America's Smartest Family."

"In its 20th year of network broadcast in North America, its time to produce relevant content for the audience which is locally sourced and features the local community. This is yet another commitment from Zee which prides itself as being the innovative leader for the market," said Sameer Targe, Head of Americas for Asia TV.

Tune in and watch the world premiere of "America's Smartest Family" on ZEE TV at 9:00 p.m. EST.

To learn more about "America's Smartest Family," visit zeeoriginals.com/americas-smartest-family/

22 room motel to sell to the highest bidder

STARBUCK, MN - Henslin Auctions, Inc. will sell to the highest bidder by absolute (no minimums / no reserve) live auction a 22 room motel in Starbuck, Minnesota on Monday, April 16th, 2018. The Cedar Inn is currently in operation and is located next to Casey's Gas Station/Convenience Store and the busy intersection of Hwy 28 and 29. Starbuck, MN is located in Central/West Central Minnesota and has a population of approx 1,300.

"Here is an excellent opportunity to purchase a turn-key busy in central Minnesota," stated real estate auctioneer and broker, Allen Henslin. "The Cedar Inn Motel is located in the heart of Starbuck, close to a very busy intersection and next to Lake Minnewaska. This real estate will sell no matter what the highest bid will be. Take advantage of this opportunity!"

The town is located on the west side of Lake Minnewaska which is a popular Minnesota lake. Cedar Inn Motel is open year round with a bait shop and also 2,300



sq. ft. living quarters. 12 rooms have 2 double beds with refrigerator, microwave, TV, electric heat and AC unit. There are 9 suites with double beds, hide-a-bed or futon, desk and office chair and all other amenities. Bait shop is 20' x 24' and is located street side in a separate building. New buyer will provide auction company with certified funds of \$10,000 as earnest money immediately following the auction and at the signing of the purchase

agreement. There will be a 10% buyer's premium that will apply to the final bid price to equal full contract price. Real estate will sell as-is where is to the highest bidder. Real estate closing will be 30-45 days following the auction. Real estate taxes will be pro-rated between buyer and seller.

Any questions or information regarding this auction, please contact Laura Posl 320-262-4893 or visit www.henslinauctions.com.



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