

Bonalu celebrations at Telangana Secretariat



Hyderabad: The annual Bonalu celebrations at the Telangana Secretariat in Hyderabad on Thursday showcased vibrant traditions and cultural fervor.

Set against the magnificent backdrop

of the Secretariat building, the event drew groups of devotees dressed in traditional attire. Women were seen carrying decorated pots on their heads and dancing to rhythmic beats. The event featured stun-

ning performances, with dancers adorned in bright yellow saris and elaborate jewellery. Traditional music and colorful processions added to the grandeur. Bonalu, a festival dedicated to Goddess Mahakali,

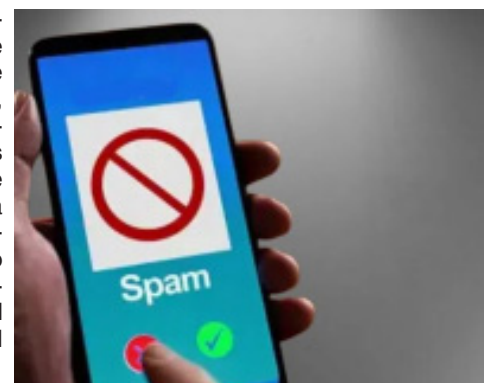
symbolizes gratitude and devotion, uniting the community in joyous celebration. The month-long festivities, involving over 3,000 temples in Hyderabad, began on July 7 and will conclude on August 4.

Centre extends spam control feedback deadline to August 5

New Delhi: To curb the spread of spam calls and unsolicited business messages, the Centre on Thursday extended the timeline for feedback submission for draft guidelines by 15 days to August 5. The Department of Consumer Affairs said that in view of requests received from various federations, associations and other stakeholders to extend the timeline for submission of comments/feedback on draft guidelines for the 'Prevention and Regulation of Unsolicited and Unwarranted Business Communication, 2024', it has decided to extend the timeline by 15 days from the last date of submission, which was July

21. The comments may now be submitted by August 5. The Department has received various suggestions which are presently under examination. As unsolicited commercial communications (UCC) or spam voice calls on mobile phones surge, the stakeholders had urged the government to ensure a level playing field in regulatory compliance requirements between telecom service providers (TSPs) and other messaging platforms providing similar communication services. The industry said it continues to assist the Department of Telecommunication (DoT), the Telecom Regulatory

Authority of India (TRAI) and the Department of Consumer Affairs in addressing the spam calls and SMS menace. The issue involves multiple stakeholders — TSPs, telemarketers, aggregators, principal entities (PEs) like banks, financial institutions and real estate agencies, according to the Cellular Operators' Association of India (COAI). The committee formed by the Department of Consumer Affairs is working to prepare draft guidelines under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, to safeguard consumers from unwarranted commercial communications.



Eye on the Middle East | Between an ICJ verdict and a Knesset resolution, the world sees two states, Israel sees one

On July 18, the Israeli Knesset (its unicameral legislature) passed a resolution rejecting potential Palestinian sovereignty and the 'two-state solution' that envisions a stable prosperous Palestinian state alongside Israel. The resolution passed with a significant majority (68 to 9) a day before the International Court of Justice delivered a landmark (non-binding) advisory opinion on July 19, that the UNGA had requested in 2023 on the Israeli occupation of Palestine. While the Court has long categorised much of Israeli action in the occupied territories as being violative of international law, the new ruling is the first direct categorisation of the illegality of Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory. On one hand, the ICJ asked states to obligatorily distinguish between Israel and the occupied territories, called on Israel to cease its illegal occupation and settlement activity, and opined that Israel owed reparations to Palestine for "the damage caused to all natural or legal persons" in occupied territories. On the other, the Knesset resolution declared that it "firmly opposes the establishment of a Palestinian state west of Jordan. The establishment of a Palestinian state in the heart of the Land of Israel will pose an existential danger to the State of Israel and its citizens, perpetuate the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and destabilise the region."

More than anything else, it is the sweeping support for the resolution that undoes any lingering perception that the talk of abandoning the two-state solution is only a political instrument of survival for PM Benjamin Netanyahu and the far-right. Support for the resolution from Benny Gantz's relatively centrist National Unity Party furthers the case in point. Finally, that opposition leaders (such as those from the Yesh Atid and Labour parties) chose to not attend the vote instead of voting against, bodes ill for the two-state conception and how much capital Israeli political parties are willing to expend on it domestically.

The past Knesset resolution was more than an immediate response to the (then) impending ICJ opinion. Numerous resolutions of the UNSC and UNGA along with other international bodies have long maintained that both Israel's occupation as well as its construction of settlements in occupied Palestine are illegal. Historically, Israel's response to such developments has been vocally critical, in rhetoric, and an aggravation of its occupation through increased settlement activity, in substance. What stands out in the Knesset resolution, however, is the explicit rejection of the two-state solution, which is in some ways unprecedented.

Historically, Israel has acquiesced to the principle, especially since the Oslo Accords (1993, 1995). In 2009, even Netanyahu had endorsed a Palestinian state (albeit with conditions deemed unacceptable by Palestinian leaders). Netanyahu stayed committed to this in principle over the next few years, despite continuing pushback from other far-right leaders who vowed to make it effectively impossible to pass any pro-two-state solution decision in the Knesset. With his own position imperilled by corruption charges



and unfavourable judicial verdicts, the fact that Netanyahu has now been strongly disclaiming the two-state solution seemed thus far to be as reflective of his dependence on far-right parties for political survival, as anything else. The Knesset's resolution is indicative of a larger, more entrenched approach to Israeli policymaking (beyond Netanyahu), historically.

As global opinion (through multilateral institutions or otherwise) has historically converged against Tel Aviv on any issue, Israel has met that convergence with measures to reject such positions, at the same level. For instance, as the UN stepped up its calls for Israel to withdraw from territory it occupied since the 1967 war, Israel responded with an effective annexation of East Jerusalem through the Jerusalem Basic Law of 1980 and reaffirmed the undivided city as Israel's capital. Even as the UNSC declared the move null and void in Resolution 478 and called on states not to recognise the new capital, Israel persisted across the decades and received a further boost under the Donald Trump administration in 2017, which moved the US Embassy to Jerusalem. This attitude has held true even in its relationship with its strongest ally, the United States, for those issues where the country has maintained a critical stand. In February, March, and July this year, Israel announced a further expansion of settlements in the West Bank, even as the US criticised the move. Testimony to how this is a continuation of a long-standing approach is the fact that even when Joe Biden visited Israel as Vice President in 2010, Israel welcomed him by announcing 1,600 new settlements in East Jerusalem (occupied territory) which drew some rebuke from the then VP. Now, as global criticism escalates to generate fresh support for the two-state solution and the ICJ explicitly calls Israel's occupation illegal, Israel meets it with a rejection at the same rung – shedding its earlier approach

of accepting the solution in principle but attaching its own conditions. The two-state solution is a fact in theory and in law. Even the US, along with the UN, has historically supported the proposition (with Antony Blinken reiterating this position after the Knesset's resolution). While 145 of the UN's 193 member-states recognise Palestinian statehood, India has historically stood by the two-state solution, even as its ties with Israel have grown, and has been particularly vociferous in expressing support for Palestinian sovereignty across 2024. Such support for Palestinian statehood by states is grounded as much in geopolitical pragmatism as it is in morality and principle. Given the drift towards stability driven by economic integration that characterised the Middle East prior to October 7, the current crisis has driven home the need to capitalise on this drift by resolving the issue that is most fundamental to West Asian fault lines, before it blows up efforts at stability. The more Israel digs its heels in to counter a Palestinian state, the more it pushes Arab states into making a

choice they do not want to make — to give up on a Palestinian state or to reassess their new formal and informal ties with Israel which have already been strained by the IDF's disproportionate and indiscriminate attacks on civilians in Gaza. In turn, the longer Israel resists a Palestinian state, the greater the risk to grand connectivity projects such as the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor, which is heavily contingent on a stable Arab-Israeli relationship. If Israel's historic adherence to its older decisions vis-à-vis Palestinian sovereignty is any indication, Tel Aviv is more likely to double down on its opposition to Palestine in the short term, than to roll back the resolution. In any case, the future of Middle Eastern stability is now again linked to the more fundamental question of Palestinian statehood, than just to the question of a ceasefire in Gaza. It is this fundamentality that might force Israel to walk back on its decision in the long term, should the political and economic costs eventually become too high to bear. Thus far, these costs have been minimal in substance.

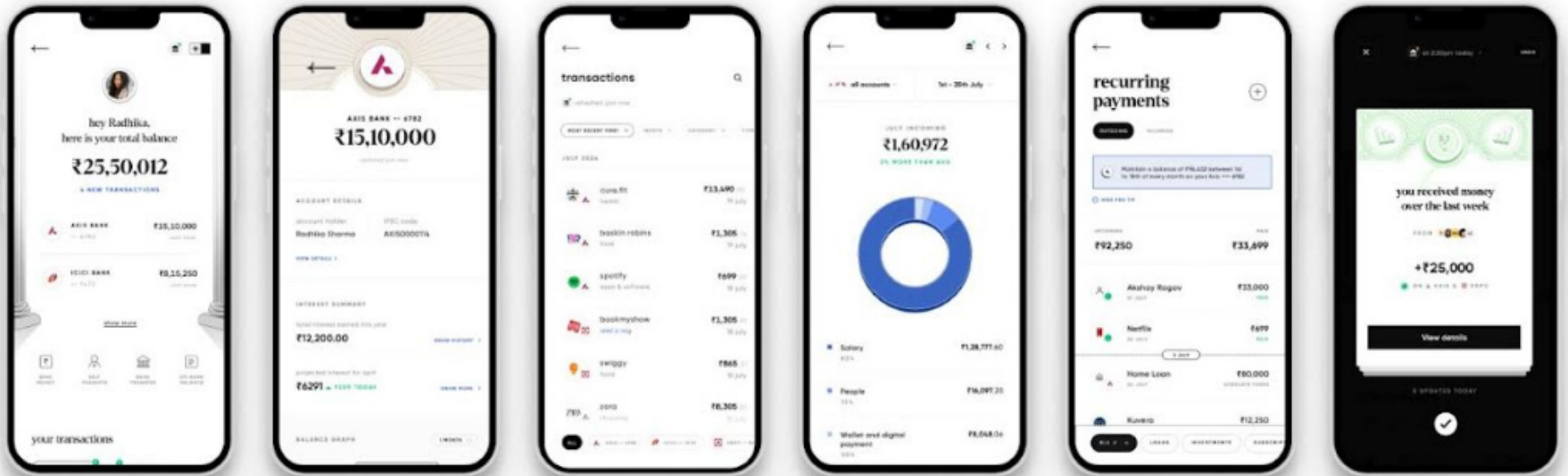
Children lodge case against Kompally municipal officials over stray dog menace

Hyderabad: The menace of stray dogs, especially in the outskirts of Hyderabad is so intense that families are adopting desperate measures to draw the attention of municipal officials to an alarming situation prevailing in their localities.

On Sunday, a group of children, hailing from various colonies under Kompally municipality, did just that by visiting Petbasheerabad police station to lodge a complaint against Kompally municipal officials for miserably failing to control the menace of stray dogs in the localities. More

than a dozen children, of course accompanied by the elderly including parents, relatives and guardians, from different colonies in Kompally municipality descended at the Petbasheerabad police station on Sunday afternoon. "The Municipal Commissioner of Kompally Municipality is not listening to our problems. Our families have made multiple representations to him highlighting the danger of the stray dogs. In the last few months, there have been several instances of dog bites our areas," a child complained.

New CRED product makes mastering money effortless CRED Money unifies fragmented transactions, enriches them with insights and reminders



CRED, the most rewarding payments platform for the affluent, is set to transform the experience of managing money. CRED Money makes personal financial management inspirational rather than intimidating, as a trusted, intelligent, and helpful guide towards financial progress. The administrative overhead of managing money increases exponentially with time and wealth. Over time, transactions get fragmented across multiple accounts: a newspaper subscription here, an SIP payment there, and the anxiety around staying on top of things multiplies. Low-confidence financial decisions - the average consumer makes ~200 of them every month - can impair compounding and distract them from their goals. Multiple accounts, one view

Nearly 7 in 10 of India's affluent live with fragmented finances across multiple bank accounts, wallets, and UPI IDs. CRED Money eliminates the friction in financial

decision-making this causes, with a unified view of balances, transactions, and patterns across bank accounts. Members benefit from advanced data science that turns each data point into actionable insights with which they can plan their lives better. On-time payments, every time

Recurring payments - SIPs, EMIs, rent, staff salaries, or insurance premiums - expand as wealth grows. Members no longer need to juggle dates, amounts or accounts in their head, since CRED Money sends reminders, updates, and offers easy ways to act on them directly with CRED UPI. With CRED Money, every payment - not just credit card bills - becomes an input towards higher financial confidence. Spend more intentionally

Members can analyse spending patterns across bank accounts and search by merchant or category, enabling them to understand their own financial behaviour

and take steps towards improving it. Too much ordering in, or not enough investments? Money lets members take a clear-eyed look at their spends, enabling them to redirect their money to what they'd truly value. A filter for amounts helps identify big spends for introspection on patterns around them, and to be more mindful of the little ones that add up to a lot. On the flip side, consumers often miss moments of delight - dividends on forgotten investments, payment reversals, or tax refunds - which they can now easily track and trace. Key updates curate the most important transactions and prevent notification fatigue. Personal finance management that's actually personal

CRED Money is built on the account aggregator (AA) framework, which enables consumers to permit secure and encrypted sharing of their bank account information

between authorised organisations. The AA framework is part of India's digital public infrastructure, aimed at putting citizens in control of their own data. With CRED Money, members can understand their financial patterns without sharing their bank account login credentials or statements. CRED - as a licensed and trusted financial information user - presents these in a rich, digestible, and actionable format with no manual intervention and automatic categorization. Kunal Shah, founder, CRED, said, "More money, more problems. For the affluent, managing finances often means more complexities leading to anxiety. We have built a product that improves every affluent person's relationship with money and makes them less anxious about it through a trusted, insightful experience. CRED Money is for those who wish to have greater control over money without the pain of doing it."

Rachakonda Police Commissioner Sudhir Babu visited Medipalli Police Station

Rachakonda Police Commissioner Sudhir Babu visited Medipalli Police Station on Thursday to review the performance of officers and staff in various police stations and services provided to common people as part of maintaining law and order in Rachakonda Commissionerate. On this occasion, the surroundings of the station were inspected. Besides examining the records in the station, they reviewed the performance of various departments like reception, patrolling staff and maintenance of CCTVs. The officials have been directed to keep the staff of the problem areas always alert. He inquired about the measures being taken to maintain peace and security within the police station.



Daimler India Commercial Vehicles announces the appointment of its Head of Bus Business

Daimler India Commercial Vehicles (DICV), a wholly owned subsidiary of Daimler Truck AG ("Daimler Truck"), announced the appointment of Mr. Andamuthu Ponnusamy as Head of Bus Business, effective July 1, 2024. Mr. Andamuthu P began his journey with DICV in 2011 and brings over 35 years of experience in the automotive (passenger and commercial vehicle) industry, specializing in operations management. Mr. Satyakam Arya, Managing Director & CEO of Daimler India Commercial Vehicles, stated, "The bus industry in India is witnessing healthy growth and is poised to become a vital part of the growing CV industry volume in the medium term. Bus is an important part of our business and Mr. Andamuthu is the most able person in our organization to take our bus business to the next level. I am confident that he will drive the development and execution of strategic initiatives, focusing on product innovation and operational excellence in our bus business."

He was instrumental in setting up DICV's truck assembly operations right from the start given his expertise in leading diversified manufacturing teams and his solid comprehension of operational excellence and cost management pivotal to the company's growth over the last decade. In 2016, he became Head of Cab Production and Truck Operating Systems, where he significantly improved operational excellence in DICV truck operations. Notably, he spearheaded the end-to-end operational planning and execution of the BharatBenz BS6 truck range at the time of the implementation of the regulation in India. In 2021, Mr. Andamuthu P was appointed as Head of Bus Production, a role in addition to his role as Head of Truck Cab Production, when he successfully integrated the bus business with truck operations and spearheaded a capacity ramp-up for fully built buses, leading to a significant increase in cumulative production. His continuous efforts towards cost savings in bus production, through strategic initiatives and fostering collaboration with procurement, manufacturing and engineering teams, have been substantial. Commenting on his appointment, Mr. Andamuthu Ponnusamy, Head of Bus Business, Daimler India Commercial Vehicles, said, "I am honored to be chosen to head the bus business at DICV. With our global DNA and the strong foundation that we have built here at DICV over the past decade, I am confident that we will achieve significant growth and set new industry benchmarks in the bus industry. As we navigate this exciting growth period, my priority will be to sharpen our competitive edge, contribute to the sustainable development of BharatBenz buses, and deliver value to our customers and stakeholders."

Over the last decade, DICV has set high standards for safety and efficiency in the commercial vehicle industry. Recognized for industry-leading total cost of ownership, BharatBenz buses have become synonymous with reliability, comfort, and safety. In 2023, the company rolled out over 1,000 fully-built buses in a single year,



showing our commitment to excellence and the ability to meet the growing demands of the market. The BharatBenz brand focus remains on delivering top-quality products that ensure a superior travel experience, while contributing to the sustainable development of the transportation sector. Daimler Truck Holding AG ("Daimler Truck") is one of the world's largest commercial vehicle manufacturers, with over 40 main locations and more than 100,000 employees around the globe. The founders of Daimler Truck have invented the modern transportation industry with their trucks and buses a good 125 years ago. Unchanged to this day, the company's aspirations are dedicated to one purpose: Daimler Truck works for all who keep the world moving. Its customers enable people to be mobile and get goods to their destinations reliably, on time, and safely. Daimler Truck provides the technologies, products, and services for them to do so. This also applies to the transformation to CO2-neutral driving. The company is striving to make sustainable transport a success, with profound technological knowledge and a clear view of its customers' needs. Daimler Truck's business activities are structured in five reporting segments: Trucks North America (TN) with the truck brands Freightliner and Western Star and the school bus brand Thomas Built Buses. Trucks Asia (TA) with the FUSO and BharatBenz commercial vehicle brands. Mercedes-Benz (MB) with the truck brand of the same name. Daimler Buses (DB) with the Mercedes-Benz and Setra bus brands. Daimler Truck's new Financial Services business (DTFS) constitutes the fifth segment, the product range in the truck segments includes light, medium and heavy

trucks for long-distance, distribution and construction traffic and special-purpose vehicles used mainly in the municipal and vocational sector. The product range of the bus segment includes city buses, school buses and intercity buses, coaches and bus chassis. In addition to the sale of new and used commercial vehicles, the company also offers aftersales services and connectivity solutions. Daimler Truck Asia (DTA), under Daimler Truck AG, is an organizational unit that jointly operates Mitsubishi Fuso Truck and Bus Corporation (MFTBC) – an icon in the Japanese

commercial vehicle industry with 90 years of history with its FUSO brand – and Daimler India Commercial Vehicles (DICV), an up and rising challenger in the Indian market. DTA adopts a strategic business model that allows its group entities to collaborate on product development, production, exports, sourcing and research activity to provide innovative, cutting-edge and best value products to customers. DTA's vision is "to develop mobility solutions to embrace a better life for people and the planet," and is aligned with Daimler Truck's purpose, "For all who keep the world moving."

Transco and Genco CMD Ronald Rose makes surprise visit to SPDCL stores in Sangareddy

Sangareddy: Transco and Genco CMD Ronald Rose made a surprise visit to the TGSPDCL's district stores here on Thursday and directed the superintending engineer and other staff to maintain sufficient material stocks in the store. Rose was accompanied by TGSPDCL CMD Musharraf Faruqi.

Reviewing the stock position of major materials, the Secretary directed the officials to maintain sufficient rolling stock of equipment such as distribution transformers, energy meters, poles, conductors and others.

He specifically directed SE operations (Sangareddy) to appoint feeder-wise nodal officers to closely monitor the power supply position on each 11-KV feeder to take up rectification action immediately when-



ever a problem arises, duly fixing the responsibility for any negligence or lapses.

Keeping in view of the ongoing Vanakalam season and to provide quality and reliable supply to the farming community, Rose instructed to replace the failed distribution transformers within 24 hours in the urban areas and within 48 hours in rural areas.

How Kamala Harris positions herself on immigration, abortion, economy will impact her traction among Indian Americans

Karthick Ramakrishnan, founder and executive director of AAPI Data, an organisation that studies the political attitudes of Asian American communities in the U.S., spoke to The Hindu on Kamala Harris's run for the White House. In this conversation, he discusses Ms. Harris's prospects including with Indian Americans. He also discusses the impact of another Indian American – Usha Vance, wife of Republican vice-presidential candidate J.D. Vance – on the peripheries of the race... What we saw was a drop in support for Joe Biden among Asian Americans - that's the eight percentage point drop. Among Indian Americans, it's almost a 20% drop. So it's even more dramatic among Indian Americans. What is important to note, though, is that Donald Trump doesn't gain much from that decline. How is that possible? Well, you have a big increase in the proportion saying 'I'm going to vote for some other candidate' or 'I don't know', or 'I won't answer that question'.

The way I interpret it, as a political scientist, is [these are] people who are very dissatisfied with their choice between Biden and Trump. So will we expect Harris to perform the same? I think she'll perform better. I think a fair number those who are saying I'm going to vote for some of other candidate, she can probably win some of those votes, and the high proportion that say don't know or refuse to answer, she'll probably grab most of those votes, as well.

There are examples we can look at from 2019 and 2020 that give us some clues as to how Kamala Harris will perform. She did not perform as well when she was running for president, because she was not well known outside of California. And so even though there was a fair amount of curiosity - and even pride - among Indian Americans, the people who were dominating the news headlines in 2019 were people like Bernie Sanders, people like Elizabeth Warren, and people like Pete Buttigieg and then Joe Biden. So, it was really difficult for Harris to break through. One of the reasons why she dropped out in 2019 was that Bernie Sanders was doing better in California than she was. And she's a senator from California. So that was a big part of that calculation. But once she got chosen for the vice presidential nomination, you saw this big spike in interest among Asian Americans, but particularly Indian Americans. In terms of what you saw on social media, what you saw on commentary, and at least impressionistically what we gathered from campaign finance data.

The impact of the Kamala Harris candidacy on Indian Americans who have moved towards Trump. I think it's important to note that Ms. Harris's entering into the fray introduces a new dynamic that will create its own set of disruptions in terms of the vote choice and political allegiances of Indian Americans. What we saw in October 2023 (AAPI Data -AP- NORC Survey) was that Harris's favourability was on par with Biden's. It makes sense; she is seen as part of the Biden-Harris administration. And so she did not perform that much better among Indian Americans or among Asian Americans more generally than Biden did. That said, she performed a lot better than

Donald Trump and a lot better than Nikki Haley and Vivek Ramaswamy. People were saying how much ethnic pride may influence where Indian Americans go this year. When it comes to people who identify as Democrat or Republican, it's really hard to vote across party lines, even when it's your compatriot running on the other side. And so that's what that evidence shows: even if there might have been some curiosity, Haley did well among Indian Republicans, she did not do well among Indian Independents, or among Indian Democrats. And the same was true for Ramaswamy. He did even worse among Indian Americans in general, and certainly among Indian American Democrats and Independents. So, without all of that in play, it'll be interesting to watch how much Harris will try to project a new direction, and how much he will run on the record of the Biden-Harris administration. It's actually something that vice presidents, if they run for the presidency, have to navigate. She can pick and choose the progressive side for those audiences that care about that. But she can pick the more centrist sides from her time as Attorney General [of California] from her time as a district attorney [of San Francisco]. One issue that will roar to the front now is abortion and reproductive rights. And on that issue, Indian Americans and Asian Americans are among the strongest supporters of abortion rights. She brings credibility to that issue and prominence to that issue in ways that Joe Biden could never have brought to the table. The economy is the major reason why they [Indian Americans] soured on Biden, Harris inherits a good amount of that. But I think she has the chance to say I would do things differently. But she also has the ability to raise the visibility of issues like abortion, like climate change, and gun control. These are all issues in which Indian Americans are much closer to her than they are to Trump and [his running mate J D] Vance.

Immigration is another potential reset opportunity. Everyone is going to try to portray her role in terms of the border issue and, you know, trying to address the root causes of migration from Central America. I think she has the ability to recast the issue as one that also involves family visas, long visa wait times, and the Republican Party's plans, especially if you look at Project 2025 to dramatically scale back migration. So these are all issues that I think that that she could bring to the table that scrambled the calculations of the Trump campaign and of Indian American voters as well. How are Republicans going to compete for Indian American and Asian American votes given their hardline positions on immigration?

This is a big challenge of the Republican Party has faced over the last two decades, and it's gotten worse under Trump. So even if Indian Americans might give the Republican Party credit on issues like the economy and maybe even on some foreign policy issues, [there are] two major issues that prevent them from going over to the Republican side. One is the rise of Christian conservatism and, now, Christian nationalism. Indian Americans are majority Hindu, and very religiously di-



In this conversation Karthick Ramakrishnan, founder and executive director of AAPI Data, discusses Kamala Harris prospects including with Indian Americans.

verse, even looking beyond Hindus. So that prevents a lot of Indian Americans from feeling welcome, or at home, within the party. The other major issue is immigration. Indian Americans are the largest group of Asian undocumented or illegal immigrants in the country. To the extent that the community is more and more aware of the complicated nature of immigration, they might have less hard and fast attitudes...

More and more people might know friends of friends who have overstayed their visas. In some of those [cases] illegal immigrants might not just be border crossers, they may be visa overseers, including elders who are taking care of their grandchildren, for example... [Donald Trump] has to manage a lot of mixed opinion and a lot of strong anti-immigrant opinion within the party. And it becomes more challenging for him to do something independently that could increase legal immigration. There's a lot of opposition even to legal immigration, by the likes of [former White House Senior Advisor] Stephen Miller and [Breitbart founder and former Chief White House strategist] Steven Bannon, and many other conservatives in the Republican Party.

How loyal are U.S. voters to political parties?

The important thing to note in the Indian American context is that you have an existing base of voters who have voted for two or three elections or even more. And what political science research says is that if you voted for someone from the same party, for two or three elections, it is very unlikely that you're going to change your mind. Even if you don't call yourself a member of that party, you have those habits ingrained in you and your attitudes tend to align with that party.

Now, there are people who have been independent throughout and those people are more persuadable. But the big missing piece of this is the number of new voters coming in and those who are newly naturalised as well as people who are born in this country who have become voting

age since 2020. That's where you're going to more likely see persuasion making a difference. On the impact that Usha Vance, the Indian-origin spouse of Republican Vice Presidential candidate, will have on Indian American votes.

It's remarkable that Indian Americans who are among the various large immigrant groups most recently arrived in the United States, are doing as well as they are politically. The Japanese American population, the Chinese American population, and even the Latino population, which has been here for centuries, if not decades, do not have representation on the two major party tickets the way Indian Americans do. And so why is that? Immigrants who come from robust democracies are more likely to be engaged in politics than immigrants who come from Communist countries or other repressive regimes. High English proficiency, is a factor too. So, while it might be surprising for a lot of people, it is not unusual to see Indian Americans getting into leadership positions as quickly as they do. Now Usha's story is a different story. That's another part of the Indian American story - people doing very well, when it comes to elite education in the United States, and also in terms of elite professionals in the United States.

Now, she [Usha Vance] has largely not been political herself. And so that, I think, will be a big question in terms of how much will she actually convert Indian Americans over to the Republican side. She was a registered Democrat until less than a decade ago. I think what she did, and will continue to do, is to humanize and soften the image of J.D. Vance and maybe try to soften the policies of the Republican Party when it comes to issues like immigration [and] abortion. But there's not much that the spouses of vice-presidential candidates do. It's a big question of how much vice presidential candidates themselves do; usually, the focus is on the top of the ticket. When you get to talking about the spouse of a vice presidential candidate, the effects are marginal at best.

Between Distance and Voyage, musician Dhruv Ghanekar is at home with the world

Once celebrated for its novelty, somewhere down the line, “fusion” became a dirty word. Over the decades, it had found its utterances in jazz, which witnessed the emergence of jazz fusion, a sub-genre in the late 1960s that incorporated instruments and arrangements from rock and funk; and cuisine, where in the 1980s, in Florida, USA, a group of classically trained chefs used the term when they began creating dishes that combined Asian or Caribbean ingredients in typically European offerings; and it spread like a rash in the British-Asian and Indian music scene in the early 1980s and all through the 1990s, before remix culture took over in the early 2000s. “There was a period of time during which ‘fusion’ was a very misused word, not unlike ‘world music.’ The Grammys recently changed the name of that category to global music — which sort of summarises what I’ve been trying to do with the last two albums,” said Dhruv Ghanekar, a few days after the release of his latest album, *Voyage 2* — which could also be described as fusion music. “I’m ambivalent about that term because I’m not a purist,” he added.

Now that’s one word one would never associate Ghanekar with. The 50-year composer, songwriter, and entrepreneur from Mumbai has always found ways to merge his innate talent with his growing interests. Trained in Hindustani classical music in his formative years, during which time he also found himself facing the camera, in a handful of films and shows directed by the family friend and noted filmmaker Shyam Benegal, including *Katha Sagar* (1986), *Susman* (1987) and *Bharat Ek Khoj* (1988). In his teens, Ghanekar began training as a guitar player, which led to the formation of his first rock band, *Chakravyuh*, in college in 1993. Three years later, the band would break up and Ghanekar would join forces with Ashutosh Pathak to form *Smoke Music*, a one-stop joint that produced over 3,000 commercials, scored music for six films, composed music for nearly every television network, music for indie artists. In 2007, they set up *Blue Frog*, a premier live music venue in Lower Parel, Mumbai, that gradually spread to three cities — Delhi, Bangalore, Pune — before shutting shop in 2016. Ghanekar founded *Wah Wah Records* in 2012 and has released *Voyage* and *Voyage 2* under his own label. His first solo album was *Distance* in 2009; *Voyage* followed in 2015, and nine years later, *Voyage 2* — it’s safe to say there’s a theme here. “These albums, especially *Voyage* and *2*, are a culmination of so many influences. I’m as interested in Brazilian choro music as I am in ghazals from the north or *Natya Sangeet* from Maharashtra; my curiosity is leading the way for me,” he said. *Voyage* was a deft exercise in sonic mapmaking and collaboration — Ghanekar invited singer-guitarist Raul Midon, French-Cameroonian bassist/vocalist Etienne Mbatia, percussionist Trilok Gurtu and drummer Ranjit Barot, along with vocalists Ila Arun and Kalpana Patowary, to explore a variety of sounds from North and West Africa, merged with Rajasthani and Assamese folk. In *Voyage 2*, Ghanekar continues his cartographic journey with Arun and Patowary, who are

now joined by Nandini Srikar, Asha Sapera, Vaishali Samant, bassists Mohini Dey and Tim Lefebvre, drummer? Gino Banks, percussionist? Taufiq Qureshi, trumpet player Sam Dechenne, and rapper Ila Straight.

Imagine a sarai, a resting place where travellers gather and mingle, sharing conversation and cultures — this album sounds familiar and foreign in equal measure, and with a sound so robust that every song lends itself to a terrific live performance. “*Voyage* was a slightly more introspective and brooding album. We toured with it at a number of jazz festivals, which are now really genre-agnostic, and people want to be moved, they want to dance. *Voyage 2* was designed in response to that: I wanted it to be fun, a joyous celebration. It will translate brilliantly on stage,” said Ghanekar. The opening track, *Suprabhatam* sets the tone without hesitation: Sanskrit shlokas meet drum and bass with a jangly sitar and Dey’s bass keeping time in the background. “What is interesting for me as a composer is to bring in something new to known forms, otherwise it’s just a remix. Indian regional folk is so vast and so deep, I will need several lifetimes to explore it fully. But I still want to expand my own vocabulary and conduct a deeper exploration of Indian folk melodies as seen through my unique global lens,” said Ghanekar, who returns to explore Rajasthani and Assamese folk with Arun and Patowary; this time, he’s introducing rhythms from funk, reggae, dub, electronica and rap in tracks like *Bego*, *O Sorothia*, and *Jadu*, respectively. *Voyage 2* is also a tip of the hat to Arun (who happens to be his mother-in-law as well) — across four songs, one simply marvels at her incred-



ible range and ability to evoke different moods and take the listener on multiple sonic journeys. “She’s a one or two-take artist. She’ll give you long stretches of the song at one go, and you keep recording. Later on, I take the best parts and stitch them together, which is unlike how most recordings go these days. All the singers on the album are women, and they are so unique and in complete command of their craft and genres. Every voice on *Voyage 2* is an authority on the culture she represents. So, I’m not thinking of correcting them, I can solely focus on how we can take these sounds to the next level,” said Ghanekar. Now what should anyone who finishes listening to *Voyage 2* move on to next? “Oh, I know! When I was recording my first album, *Distance*, I was working with someone who introduced me to an Alge-

rian drummer named Karim Ziad. He has an incredible album, *Ifrikyia* (2001), which combines the music of the Berber people with jazz — it blew me away! It changed the way I thought about how I could present Indian music to the world. And then, Ziad came and played on *Voyage!* After a few promotional shows in September in Mumbai and some other cities, Ghanekar will go on tour with the album at the end of the year. But he’s wasting no time to get started on his next project. What’s it gonna be? “Pop! It’s going to be a radical departure from *Voyage 2*, and I need to return to my singer-songwriter avatar. It’ll be sort of introspective, I’m not trying to be young. There’s a fair amount of material that I can draw from,” he said, adding, “I spent too long waiting between solo projects, and I don’t want to make that mistake again.”

How a software glitch disrupted global businesses

In the early hours (IST) of July 19, reports emerged that Microsoft’s Azure cloud service was facing an outage, affecting users in the Central U.S. area. Within the next few hours, the service outage spread like wildfire to several other countries, including India, disrupting flight operations and air traffic, forcing airports to shift to manual operations. Brokerages and stock exchanges were also hit, throwing the digital lives of many out of gear. The Indian Computer Emergency Response Team, CERT-In, has issued a severity rating of “Critical” for the incident.

Microsoft, while acknowledging the outage in a blog post noted that “Virtual Machines running Windows Client and Windows Server, running the CrowdStrike Falcon agent, may encounter a bug check”. The tech giant estimated the approximate time of impact to be as early as 4.09 a.m. UTC (9.39 a.m. IST) on July 19, when this update started rolling out. While Microsoft has not fully revealed what caused the outage on its cloud service, one incident seems to have triggered this cyber event — a glitch in the software update of CrowdStrike’s end point protection programme, Falcon Sensor. CrowdStrike is a cybersecurity firm that deploys unified security programme to stop breaches in

real time. The Falcon Sensor platform runs with high privileges and is built to protect endpoints (basically, any devices connected to a computer network). A mishap in this security platform can cause the operating system to crash, like what several users faced globally on July 19 with the Blue Screen of Death (BSOD). Once BSOD flashes on a user’s screen, they will be caught in a boot loop cycle, which simply means that they won’t be able to access their devices linked to CrowdStrike’s Falcon platform. This is because the security solution is deployed at the BIOS level.

What does BSOD mean?

BSOD is a warning that users see on their computer when the system interrupts operations and displays it on a blue screen. This is what many users saw today when they tried to access their affected devices during the outage. Officially referred to as the “Stop Error”, the warning is issued when a critical problem forces Windows to reboot. Before rebooting the system, the Windows operating system saves a file on the computer, carrying some data about the error. This file is called a ‘minidump’ and is crucial in determining the cause of the error. BSOD warnings have many causes and include problems caused by

hardware drivers, incompatible software like apps, or programs which may cause conflicts that result in BSOD. Additionally, faults in the hardware systems like RAM, hard disk drive (HDD), Solid-State Drive (SSD), motherboard, or other physical components in a system can also lead to a BSOD screen. A malware injected by threat actors could also corrupt system files in a computer, causing it to show the Blue Screen of Death. In order to fix the error screen, it is essential to find out the cause and troubleshoot the issue, based on the alphanumeric code shown in the message.

What could have caused this malfunction?

According to CyberArk’s CIO, Omer Grossman, there are range of possibilities, starting from “human error - for instance, a developer who downloaded an update without sufficient quality control - to the complex and intriguing scenario of a deep cyberattack, prepared ahead of time and involving an attacker activating a “doomsday command” or “kill switch”.

And it is anyone’s guess until CrowdStrike’s own analysis and updates are out in the coming days. Most cybersecurity experts will be keen on understanding what could have gone wrong here.

J.D. Vance: Trump's heir apparent

Millions have lived the life of precarity that J.D. Vance was born into in 1984 but rarely has the story of hillbillies — a pejorative reference to unsophisticated rural white population — been told like he did in his memoir published when he was all of 31, in 2016. Mr. Vance, now the Republican candidate for U.S. Vice President, “grew up poor, in the ‘Rust Belt’, in an Ohio steel town that has been hemorrhaging jobs and hope,” he recounts in *Hillbilly Elegy*, a book that Barack Obama would recommend to understand the social upheaval in the U.S. by 2016, which was partly the result of his own ascent to the highest office in the country. Hillbillies were earlier labourers, sharecroppers, coalminers, and factory workers in later decades. “Americans call them hillbillies, rednecks, or white trash. I call them neighbors, friends, and family,” Mr. Vance writes.

They were once the backbone of U.S. manufacturing and largely supported the Democratic Party. As finance and technology sectors in New York and California, respectively, became the two poles of the U.S. strategy and economy, the factories in the Midwest, comprising States such as Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, shuttered and rusted; and the people there fell into despair and addiction. Their link to the national life of America was increasingly limited to enlisting as soldiers for global wars that they grew to detest. In the run-up to the 2016 presidential election, their plight found a voice in national politics as Donald J. Trump and Bernie Sanders questioned the shared orthodoxy in the Republican and Democratic parties, respectively, on trade and war. Mr. Trump could turn the white working class grievance into anger and win the Presidency, but he barely knew the life of the dispossessed Americans that he was claiming to represent.

Mr. Vance lived all parts of that life, and managed to climb the pinnacle of elite education in the U.S., graduating from the Yale Law School in 2013. From 2003 to 2007, he served in the U.S. Marines, of which six months were in Iraq, in a war which he considers needless. Earlier in his life, Mr. Vance barely managed to avoid the fall into the abyss of addiction that surrounded him. Even today, on and off, he gets a call announcing the death due to overdosing of someone he knew. Mr. Vance credits his survival to his tough grandmother — ‘mamaw’ as he called her — and his growth to a strong Christian inspiration. He could not “squander God-given talent,” and hence “had to work hard”. “I had to take care of my family because Christian duty demanded it. I needed to forgive, not just for my mother’s sake but for my own. I should never despair, for God had a plan,” he writes. His life is about what he escaped, as much as what he made of it — a remarkable one that fits into the stereotype of American Dream. He is white America’s answer to Barack Obama. He resented Mr. Obama and was inspired by him. He “gave me hope that a boy who grew up like me could still achieve the most important of my dreams,” Mr. Vance wrote in 2016. Mr. Vance’s portrayal of his life as member of the rural hill people and the working class has been questioned by various scholars and from different perspectives — which in progressive lexicon could be termed gaslighting. His book sold three million

copies and was turned into a film. In the book and interviews, Mr. Vance comes across as a deeply reflective person, who honestly confronts the decadence, anger, frustration, and alienation, in his community and even himself, without judgement or bitterness. He notes the violent masculinity, and the fear of people unlike them that influence hillbilly life. Grandmother’s influence

Mr. Vance’s single mother had many love interests, and her addiction led him going into the care of his grandmother — a tough woman who read her Bible and feared her God, generally despised the church, liberally used the F word, and loved her guns. The grandmother was born in Jackson, Kentucky, and the family moved to Ohio for work. Young Vance would accompany mamaw during her visits to Kentucky. He still owns a cemetery plot in Kentucky where five generations of his ancestors were laid to rest, and that hillside is what Mr. Vance calls home. “I and Usha (his wife who is of Indian-origin) will be laid to rest by our children in that same place,” he said, accepting the Republican nomination. “America is not merely an idea, though it is founded on strong ideas. It is home for us. Nobody fights for an abstract idea. But everyone fights for their home,” Mr. Vance, now a strong champion of American nationalism, told the Republican convention in Milwaukee in Wisconsin. Wisconsin, Ohio, Detroit and Pennsylvania, where Mr. Trump was nearly killed by an assassin on July 13, are key swing States that determined the outcomes of the 2016 and 2020 presidential contests by narrow margins. With Mr. Vance on his side, Mr. Trump hopes to turn it all his side this time around. “You are going to enjoy this ride,” Mr. Trump addressed Mr. Vance in his closing speech at the Convention. Mr. Vance’s current political positions might be rooted in the life that he remembers. His grandmother had 19 loaded guns in her home when she died in 2005, one within reach wherever she stood. “That’s the American spirit,” Mr. Vance said in his acceptance speech. In her youth, the grandmother shot and nearly killed a thief who tried to steal a cow — a prized possession of the family. “There is nothing lower than the poor stealing from the poor,” she would tell Mr. Vance later. Against illegal immigration Mr. Vance argues that illegal immigrants are threatening the lives and livelihoods of the poorest Americans. He argues that new entrants into the community should be admitted on the terms of the current members — like the parents of Usha who immigrated from India. Mr. Vance is an opponent of abortion, and he will be questioned on this issue by the Democrats who hope to make it a key campaign issue. The VP candidate is a critic of U.S. aid to Ukraine, and aid in general though he strongly supports aid to Israel. He thinks the U.S. strategy should focus on Asia and China, and bother less about Europe and Russia. The white world of Vance was very distant from the world of ‘white privilege’ that is often skewered in diversity discourses. Mr. Vance’s initiation into high society routed through Yale and was aided by Usha. As the story goes, elite law firms would test the social skills of candidates before making an offer, often at a dinner setting. Mr. Vance, for the first time in life, had to make choices about wines, and fig-



ure out what to do with multiple spoons, knives and forks on the table. In panic, he ran to the restroom and called Usha — his “spirit guide.” Mr. Vance landed the job, and now, he connects the world of wealth and privilege with that of the countryside. He counts Peter Thiel and Eric Schmidt among

this backers. Mr. Vance believes communities cannot be rejuvenated by financial support alone, but they need leadership and organisation. Regardless of the election outcome, J.D. Vance is set to be a central figure in U.S. politics in the coming decade.

Apple iPhone 16 shipments may not be increased as previously claimed

Despite rumours around Apple’s plans to increase shipments of its soon-to-be-released iPhone 16, a report has stated that this may not be the case. Analyst Ming Chi Kuo has revealed that during the recent earnings calls with key suppliers, TSMC and Largan, both shared that there was no increase in orders from the hardware giant.

Even as Apple and its suppliers are preparing for the iPhone 16’s fall debut, an earlier report had shared that Apple was planning to ship a massive 90 million or more iPhone 16 models just in 2024. It was believed that Apple Intelligence was the reason for the huge boost in orders. “My understanding is that some suppliers have seen an increase in iPhone 16 orders for 2H24, but from the EMS/assembly per-



spective, the iPhone 16 orders for 2H24 have not seen much change (about 87 million units), still slightly lower than the 2H23 iPhone 15 orders (about 91 million units),” Kuo noted. It must be noted that Largan is focused solely on the high-end Pro models. The iPhone 16 range is expected to be powered by the new A18 chip with focus on new Apple Intelligence AI features.

Has Bangladesh students' protest been hijacked? Will embers keep smouldering?

As violence spread in Bangladesh, some alleged that the students' protest had been hijacked by Jamaat-e-Islami and other radical Islamic groups. Is that a fact or a bid by the Sheikh Hasina government to whitewash its crackdown? Experts also explain why this protest is unique in its composition and scale. As a peaceful anti-quota protest turned violent in Bangladesh and spread across the entire country, it is being said that the agitation has been hijacked by sinister elements. Experts say the movement is unique because of the diverse participation and in being leaderless. They, however, express concern that though the Sheikh Hasina government might be able to douse the fire with a heavy hand, embers will continue to smoulder, risking eruption at any time. Reports say 133 people have been killed, while Bangladesh watchers say the toll could be much higher. What exactly is going on in Bangladesh is shrouded in mystery as information isn't coming out because of the internet shutdown for the last 72 hours.

There is a nationwide curfew and police were given shoot-at-sight orders on Sunday. The Supreme Court delivered its verdict on the 56% quota system, including the 30% quota for descendants of freedom fighters of the 1971 Liberation War in civil service. The Supreme Court reduced the overall quota but didn't scrap it altogether. Such is the extent of violence that bodies have been hung from trees, IndiaToday. In has learnt. How did a students' protest that began at Dhaka University take such a disastrous turn?

"The agitation is called quota agitation. If you see the facts, the government has already scrapped the quota in 2018. The recent agitation started after the High Court reinstated the quota. If both the government and students want the quota removed, then it's not clear what it is that the students are protesting against," said Riva Ganguly Das, former High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh. There is perhaps more to this than what meets the eye. The protests at this stage aren't just about quotas," Das told IndiaToday. In India hasn't commented on the situation in Bangladesh, calling it the country's "internal matter". It has worked to get Indian students back from the country. "It is shocking how the protest started by students has exploded and led to over a hundred deaths. Unemployment, corruption seem to have got added, but even then the sheer numbers of protesters on the streets has surprised many," said Das. It was also a reference to the Razakars, collaborators with Pakistan in the 1971 war, by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina while talking about the protests that added fuel to the fire. Being called a Razakar is the worst slur in Bangladesh. Shafquat Rabbee, a Bangladeshi-American political analyst and faculty member at University of Dallas, sees a broader historical context to the recent students' agitation and believes the issue of quotas was just the trigger. He tells IndiaToday. In that the protest is distinct from previous ones due to several factors that are also behind the "sheer number, depth, and breadth". Some in Bangladesh believe that it's no more a students' protest and has



been hijacked by Jamaat-e-Islami and other radical Islamist groups. This has been outrightly rejected by experts who say that videos and bodies in morgues reveal that students are the protesters. Jamaat-e-Islami and other Islamic fundamentalists are known to survive on such oxygen. On a call on a patchy telecom connection, Dhaka-based senior journalist Swadesh Roy described to IndiaToday. In how protesters vandalised houses and set fire to whatever they could lay their hands on. "It has now become an agitation of Jamaat and other Islamist fundamentalist groups. In a crowd of about 1,000, only three-four students are present," said Roy. "Most students have realised that and withdrawn from the agitation," he added. Describing the brutality, the Bangladeshi journalist said that protesters killed the personal secretary of former Mayor of Gazipur, Jehangir, and hung his body from a tree.

The incident in Dhaka's Badda area is said to have taken place when Jehangir, who is infamous for his high-handedness, confronted the protesters with his men. "The former Mayor has also sustained severe injuries and the attackers are known Jamaat faces," said Roy. There was fear that the protests could take a turn for the worst. On an internet-based call moments before the shutdown on Thursday, a prominent Bangladeshi legal activist feared that the protest had already been hijacked. "What started as a demand by students, which seems to be in consonance with the government's position in the Supreme Court, seems to have been hijacked by sinister forces given the statements issued by ministers and Awami League officials," the activist, who knows the ruling party's mechanics, said. "This protest has been hijacked just like the Shahbag movement had been hijacked." The legal activist also pointed out how it was intriguing that Sheikh Hasina's ministers and Awami League leaders, including the party's Gen-

eral Secretary Obaidul Quader, have been issuing pro-quota statements. That, the activist said, was in contradiction to the government's anti-quota stance in the Supreme Court. "People are baffled and are questioning if these remarks are by design. Are they being made deliberately to confuse people and for conflagration," the activist said. Bangladesh has been at the crossroads of vested interests. "There could be other invisible hands. There are examples of how organic protests in Bangladesh have been hijacked by people with vested interests in the past," the activist said. **WHY IT'S A UNIQUE LEADERLESS AGITATION IN BANGLADESH** Bangladeshi-American political analyst Shafquat Rabbee says one has to understand this protest on a broader context of the situation in Bangladesh over the last decade and half. "The students protesting originally were in the 15-25 age group who have seen no other political systems but one-party rule by Sheikh Hasina all their lives," said Rabbee. He says then there's a high unemployment rate and rampant corruption. Private sector jobs growth is abysmal, and these young people are seeing cronies capture all the government jobs, positions and power. "This prepared a fertile ground for a large-scale protest and this is what we are seeing now. This is a spontaneous protest," he said. According to Dhaka-based journalist Swadesh Roy, violence had spread to 46 of Bangladesh's 64 districts. By Friday, he said, violence continued in six of those districts. The large-scale protests have also seen the deployment of the army, paramilitary forces and armoured vehicles. Security forces have used live bullets to tackle protesters. One of the Bangladesh watchers told IndiaToday. In that a doctor at Dhaka Medical College told him that she saw 400 people dead or critically injured. Rabbee explains what has contributed to the size, depth and expanse of this

agitation. "What is remarkable this time is that the students who were killed by government forces are not just the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Jamaat activists or madrasa students like in earlier stages of Hasina's rule," said Rabbee. "Apart from those students, among the dead now are children of senior government officials, urban kids who appeared on podcasts and created high-quality content for social media," he added. The American-Bangladeshi analyst says only public universities used to be the hotbed of political violence in the past. "This time around, you have an equal amount of protests and violence taking place inside private universities, where richer kids study, and the casualty count in those private universities is also almost equal to the public ones," he said. "Therefore, both the sheer number, depth, and breadth of participation in the protest, and the corresponding casualty count are unprecedented. The impact will also be proportionate," the American-Bangladeshi analyst tells IndiaToday. **WHO IS LEADING BANGLADESH PROTEST, HOW WILL IT END?** Journalist Swadesh Roy said there were casualties on both sides and the brutality is reminiscent of Afghanistan in the days of the war. "For the Jamaat and the other fundamentalists, it is a life-and-death situation. They know they won't be able to regroup if they lose," said Roy. University of Dallas faculty member Rabbee said the agitation not only changed from quota to one of popular anger, it also saw political parties and other groups join in. "It will be foolish to assume political forces are not part of this protest. People of all political persuasions are in it given the broad-based nature of the grievances, both political and economic, felt by the younger generation under Hasina's autocratic rule," he said. Hasina's critics, however, see the mention of Jamaat as an attempt by the government to whitewash its excessive use of force against the protesters.