



A thought for today

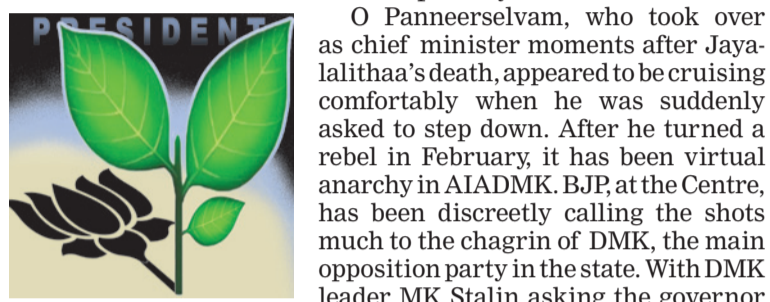
'The only chance George has of reconciliation,' argued his friend, 'is by distinguishing himself in the coming campaign'

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY, Vanity Fair

Chennai Churning

With AIADMK now split into three factions, governance has gone for a toss

Tamil Nadu politics has been in a state of flux since the death of chief minister J Jayalalithaa, who had neither put in place a second line of leadership nor groomed a successor to the AIADMK throne.



O Panneerselvam, who took over as chief minister moments after Jayalalithaa's death, appeared to be cruising comfortably when he was suddenly asked to step down.

Mumbai's Long Wait

Glacial pace of convictions in 1993 blasts case indicts India's criminal justice system

The conviction of six men last week in relation to serial bomb blasts which terrorised Mumbai in March 1993 is an important milestone in bringing perpetrators to justice.

The 1993 blasts represented a watershed moment in India's battle against crime. It marked the confluence of Mumbai's underworld gangs with cross-border terror.

Prosecution of the 1993 blasts case is yet to be completed. Not just victims but entire society is bound to be frustrated at the glacial pace of justice.

You take a selfie, I'll tweet

PM Modi and President Trump meet for the first time this month. Extracts from a conversation that will not be

Sagarika Ghose@timesgroup.com

Modi: Ah Donald, can I give you a tight hug like I gave my friend Barack? Barack and I used to hug each other. Trump: I'd love to hug you Mr Modi but I got a problem with Indians who've had visa problems in the US.

The Immigrant Swansong

New Delhi must tactfully seek to expand freedom of movement for trade and commerce

Chidanand.Rajghatta@timesgroup.com



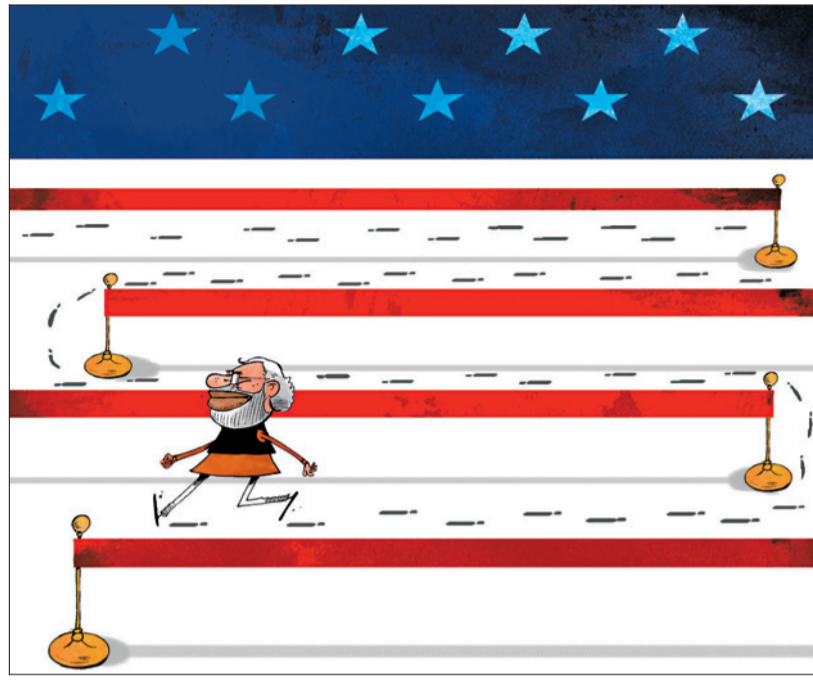
There's an old joke about the scene that greeted Neil Armstrong and co when they stepped on the moon.

Advancing the script, the first person to travel to Mars in the near future, who may well be of Indian origin, would apocryphally meet a 'sardar' managing the Martian branch of Tesla.

Ethnic stereotyping aside, the legend of the Indian diaspora is immense. There are more than 30 million people of Indian origin across the globe.

Such is the allure of its diaspora for India - in no small measure because of the nearly \$70 billion they remit annually - that New Delhi has now developed a template for community outreach.

Slogans and cries of Bharat Mata ki jai now rend the air in arenas across the globe, from New York's Madison Square Garden to Sydney's Super Dome.



Arabia - temporary home to an estimated three million Indian workers - the Indian prime minister recently reached out to the country's toiling expats.

Nowhere has the Indian diaspora grown and thrived as much as in America, home to nearly four million People of Indian Origin and Non-Resident Indians.

With a median family household income of over \$1,00,000 and 70% of its adult population holding at least a master's degree (both way above the US average).

Next week, when Prime Minister Modi arrives in the US capital, he will meet the Indian community at a modest ballroom which is a far cry from Madison Square Garden in 2014 or SAP Center in 2015

its citizens as the United States. There is a growing sense - and a few small indicators - that the historical mandate for openness and acceptance in what is fundamentally an immigrant society is being altered, if not subverted.

'Pakistan is supporting IS-Khorasan in Afghanistan ... it is simply another tool in Pakistan's spoiler toolkit'

It has been a bloody Ramadan in Afghanistan, starting with a Taliban car bombing in eastern Afghanistan, the massive suicide bomb attack near the Indian embassy in Kabul's diplomatic area that killed over 90 people and last week's insider shooting of US military personnel by a renegade Afghan soldier in northern Afghanistan.



How badly has the political and security situation in Afghanistan deteriorated?

Afghanistan is in turmoil. Tension between the camps of Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai and CEO Abdullah Abdullah is palpable.

Most of Kunduz province is now controlled by Taliban. Similarly, Taliban have made advances in Tirin Kot, capital of Urugzan province, and have taken

agencies with ethnic allies. Abdullah has done the same.

The perception of discrimination among Afghanistan's minority communities - Hazaras and Uzbeks - has contributed to a widening ethnic and regional divide.

Observers point out that Islamic State Khorasan (IS-K) is becoming a stronger force in the region. Your take?

Their activities are certainly gaining more exposure. The most interesting corollary of their rise has been a view in Russian, Chinese and even Iranian quarters that the international community can and should negotiate with Taliban - the chief enemy is IS-K and Taliban can assist in this fight against the enemy.

First, the shift in Chinese, Russian views of Taliban may help the peace process progress but this legitimises Taliban and has certainly played into Pakistan's pro-negotiation rhetoric.

There is evidence that ISI is supporting IS-K. It is simply another tool in Pakistan's spoiler toolkit.

people who stamped into New York City's Madison Square Garden in 2014 and Silicon Valley's SAP Center in 2015, two events that set the tempo and provided the template for similar prime ministerial outreach across the world.

Mind you, the capital area's Indian-origin population is large enough to have merited the Walter E Washington Convention Center (which offers the city's largest ballroom at 52,000 square feet), or at least the Washington Marriott Wardman Park or Omni Shoreham, venues where Modi's predecessors Manmohan Singh and AB Vajpayee respectively addressed the community.

But this is not the time, nor the dispensation, with which you share or showcase the strength of the diaspora. In as much as previous administration officials and US lawmakers were awed by the Madison Square Garden spectacle (and said so publicly), and saw it as a celebration of the country's diversity, this regime is more likely to see it as a threat.

Already, the signs are not propitious - not just in the US but in many immigrant destinations abroad, including UK and Australia. From proposing ideological tests for potential immigrants to shutting down guest worker visas (which have led to US citizenship for many Indians) on the pretext of misuse, nativist boffins have begun to curtail immigration, initiating steps that have also put a hex on Indian students who venture abroad to study, on tourists, and indeed on businesses.

Of course, no country can afford to have open borders and every country needs to regulate inflow of immigrants; New Delhi shouldn't mind that. But what India should aim for is to secure and expand the facility of its people to freely travel for education and entertainment, trade and commerce - India's great strengths - while hoping both for its and America's sake that the nativist mood against globalisation is a temporary aberration.

dilbert



Yoga Sadhana And Progress Of Civilisation

Nivedita Joshi

Yoga has been defined as 'Chitta vritti nirodha', that is, 'stops all internal and external forms of thinking which may sprout with or without volition' - stilling the mind.

It is the subtle body or the physiological sheath. Senses of perception and organs of action are vehicles of gross body, dependent on mind, without which the outer body cannot function.

Gross and subtle bodies are inter-dependent. We use our senses to fulfill and enjoy the mind's demands and so get caught in the web of worldly desire. Like the spokes of a wheel, these enjoyments revolve between pleasure and pain.

and static shuddha swaroopa.

Yoga gives us ways to develop harmony and balance and achieve holistic health. Patanjali says that it is possible to achieve these either by practice and dispassion or by total surrender to the Supreme.

one in all, the true nature of oneself. The practitioner of yoga, the yoga sadhaka, thus bridges the gap between body, mind and Self and becomes master of these three.



Sacredspace

My Priority

My priority is cricket. Everything that I get apart from it is a result of the effort on the field. Everything else follows. I am pretty aware of my priorities, and I don't really focus on things that are not as important to me as cricket.

Virat Kohli



the speaking tree