Harvard faces flak over favours

New York: It's been called af-firmative action for the rich: However the second of the rich: However the second of the rich: However the second of the rich was parents are alumni, or whose parents are alumni, or whose relatives donated money. And in a complaint filed on Mon-day, a legal activist group demanded that the federal government put an end to it, arguing that fairness was even more imperative after the Supreme Court last week seeven more imperative after the Supreme Court last week se-verely limited race-conscious admissions.

missions. Three Boston-area groups requested that the education department review the practice, saying the college's ad missions policies discriminated against Black, Hispanic and Asian applicants, in favour of less qualified white candidates with alumni and donor con-

with alumni and donor connections.

"Why are we rewarding children for privileges and advantages accrued by prior generations?" saked Ivan Espinoza-Madrigal, executive director of Lawyers for Civil Rights, which is bandling the director of Lawyers for Civil Rights, which is bandling the and the size of Your bank account are not a measure of merit, and should have no bearing on the college admissions process." The complaint from liberal groups comes days after a conservative group, Students for Pair Admissions, won its Supreme Court case. And it adds to accelerating pressure on Harvardand other selective colleges to eliminate special preferences for the children of alumni and donors.

preferences for the children of alumni and donors.
The Office for Civil Rights of the Education Department, which would review the complaint, may already be gearing up to investigate. In a state-



University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. (Reuters file picture) ment after the Supreme Court decision, President Biden said he would ask the department to examine "practices like legacy admissions and other

Students walk through

the Yard at Harvard

to examine practices has began admissions and other systems that expand privilege instead of opportunity.

A spokeswoman for Harvard, Nicole Runn for Harvard, Nicole Running, Harvard, Harvard, Nicole Running, Harvard, Nic

and encourages donations, ich can be used for finan-

cial aid.

A poll released last year by the Pew Research Center found that an increasing share of the public — 75 per cent — believed that legacy preferences should not be a factor in who was admitted to college.

arguing that continuing race-based preferences was only fair in light of the fact that most of the pieces in the ad-missions puzzle "disfavour underrepresented racial mi-morities".

across the political spectrum. Representative Alexandria Coasio-Cortez, Democrat of New York, tweeted that if the Supreme Count "was serious about their ludicrous 'colour-billindiese' claims, they would have abolished legacy admissions, aka affirmative action for the privileged." On The Faulkner Facus, a Fox News programme, Senator Tim Scott, Republican for South Carolina and a presidential candidate, said, "One of the things that Harvard could do to make that even better is to eliminate any legacy programs where they have preferential treatment for legnorities". While Colorado adopted a law in 2021 banning legacy admissions in public univer-sides, legislation in Congress and several other states has gained little traction. A New York bill filed last year was opposed by the state's private school association, the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities, which includes highly selec-tive colleges such as Colum-bia, Cornell and Colgate. In Connecticut, where a law in 20

preferential treatment for leg-acy kids."
Peter Arcidiacono, a Duke Peter Arcidiacono, a Duke University economist who has analyzed Harvard data, found that a typical white legacy ap-plicant's chances of being ad-mitted increase five-fold over a typical, white non-legacy applicant.

a typicat, white hot applicant.
Even so, eliminating legacy preferences at Harvard, the study said, would not offset the loss in diversity if race-conscious admissions were also In its decision on race-con-

In its decision on race-conscious admissions, some Supreme Court justices criticised legacy admissions. Justice Nell M. Gorsuch, in an opinion concurring with the court's majority, took aim at preferences for the children of donors and alumni, awaing. "They are no help to saying: "They are no help to applicants who cannot boast of their parents' good fortune or trips to the alumni tent all their lives. While race-neutral

e most."
In her dissenting opinion, astice Sonia Sotomayor re-



FOREIGN.

The White House on Tuesday. (Reuters)

Powder found at **Biden home** is cocaine

Washington: A white powder found inside the White House late on Sunday, which led to the temporary closure of part of the presidential complex, was identified by the Washing-

ton fire department as cocaine the Washington Post reported. The Secret Service con The Secret Service con-firmed to Reuters that an "un-known item" had been found that led to part of the White House being closed, but re-ferred other questions to the fire department, which de-clined to comment. "On Sunday evening, the White House complex went into a pregationary closure

sleedwe private universi-ties, in particular, have been slow to eliminate legacies, with MIT, Johns Hopkins Uni-versity and Amherst College among a few elite schools that White House complex went into a precautionary closure as officers from the Secret Service Uniformed Division investigated an unknown item found inside a work area, "a Secret Service spokesperson said in an emailed statement. The item was discovered in the West Wing, the spokesman said. It is an area attached to versity and Amberst College among a few elite schools that do not use them.

In a news release last month describing its autumn class, the first since the college eliminated legacy preferences, Amberst amounteed that the number of first-generation students in the school's fall class would be higher than ever — 19 per cent — while the number of students who were legacies had declined to 6 per cent. Previously, legacies had made up 11 per cent of the class.

the West Wing, the spokesman said. It is an area attached to the executive mansion where the President lives and includes the Oval Office, cabinet room and press area, along with offices and workspace for the President's advisers.

President Joe Biden was part in the White House at the

not in the White House at the time.

'Clean zone' around President enforced

Putin to boost coup defences

New York: President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia Vladimir V. Putin of Russia is said to work out of identi-cally constructed offices at multiple residences so that photographs don't reveal his location

His assistants undergo

cess that a former bodyguard once called them "a caste of chosen people".

And more than three years after the pandemic's beginning, the Kwenlin has conting, the Kwenlin has conting, the Kwenlin has conting the great of the president, requiring many who come near him to quarantine for days.

For decades, people who know him say, Putin has been remarkably focused on his personal security and on preventing rivals from using the powers of government against him. Now, in the aftermath of last month's short-lived rebellion led by Yevgeny V. Prigozhin, leader of the Wagner private mercenary group

system once more.

He is rewarding loyalty among the ruling elite and

snowering his most impor-tant constituency — the men with guns — with cash. And, so far, he has avoided the sort of large-scale purge that other authoritarian leaders have carried out in response to coup attempts or rebellions, per-haps to avoid destabilising his

haps to avoid destabilising his system further:

"The President is acting very rationally," said Ekaterpo-litical scientist. "He is focused on his personal and political survival, and he's ready for anything to accomplish that."

anything to accomplish that." She noted that, for the She noted that, for the moment, despite Putin's reputation for ruthlessness, his response to the falled rebellion appears to be all carror rather than stick—as evidenced last week by a lavish Kremlin ceremony honoruring security forces, and by an official government decree granting a 16.5 per cent raise to soldiers, police officers and other security agency employees. Schulmann nosited that

rity agency employees.
Schulmann posited that
"the system is too emaciated
and fragile to indulge in any
large-scale repressions" in response to the rebellion.

Some argue that, so far, Putin's handling of the muti-ny has left him in a strength-

ened position. He has removed Prigozhin as a destablishing factor in Russia's invasion force in Ukraine and he has forced the millitary, the security forces and members of the ruling elite to declare their loyalty to him anew. But analysists say they believe that Putin will face new threats, especially as he continues to empower a patchwork security apparatus composed of different interests and power centres. "Short and power centres." Short

one erm, this is a destanding situation."
Over his 23 years in power, Putin has handed control of some of the state's most important assets to longtime friends and has placed former bodyguards and other loyal-ists in key government positions. The agency whose main mission is to protect him and other top officials, the Federal Protective Service, is a force numbering in the tensof thousands that has also taken on a growing role in monitories. a growing role in monitoring other security agencies.

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Five killed shooting

New York: The police found a fifth victim in a southwest Philadelphia shooting, hours after a heavily armed guman wearing a bulletproof vest opened fire on Monday evening, the police said.

The fifth victim was found in a house near the shootings: there were casings that

in a house near the shoot-ings, there were casings that matched the other shootings, according to a police spokes-person. The dead were all men between the ages of 20 and 59, the police said. Two children, aged 2 and 13, were also hospitalised and were stable, they

said.

A male suspect was taken into custody by the police just before 8:40pm (local time), the authorities said, adding that authorities said, adding that they had recovered a semi-au-tomatic rifle, a handgun and another gun in the alleyway behind South Frazier Street. A second person who the police believed had "picked up the gun and returned fire" was also in services.

Scribe beaten up in Chechnya

VICTORIA KIM

In Connecticut, where lawmakers held a hearing on the issue last year, Yale was among the private schools that came out in opposition. In

written testimony, Jeremiah Quinian, Yale's dean of under-graduate admissions, called the proposed ban a govern-ment intrusion into university

affairs.
Selective private universi-

New York: A Russian in New York: A Russian inves-tigative journalist known for her work on human rights was severely beaten and badly in-jured, along with a lawyer, on Tuesday morning in an attack in Chechnya, according to a statement from her newspa-

Elena Milashina, a journal-Elena Milashina, ajournajist with Noraya Gazeta who uncovered the torture and killings of gay men in Chechnya, was in Grozny to cover the trial of Zarema Musayeva, the mother of exiled opposition activists, according to the newspaper. Milashina and the attorney, Alexander Nemoy, who is representing Musaveattorney, Alexander Nemov, who is representing Musayeva, were accosted by masked men who beat them with clubs, took their phones and demanded that they unlock the phones, according to Novaya Gazeta.

Mil Milashina suffered brain injuries, her fingers were bro-



Eelena Milashina

ken and she repeatedly lost

ken and she repeatedly lost consciousness, the statement said. Nemov was stabbed, according to the newspaper. Equipment and documents were also destroyed.

A photo posted by the mewspaper showed the journalist sitting on a hospital gurney with her hands bandaged up to her wrists and most of her hair shaved off. Noyava Gazeta said it was publishing the photo with her permission. Reporters Without Borders, which tracks violence against journalists, said it was horrified by the savage attack" on Milashina.

New Veta Times New Service

India, Pak trade terror blows

OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi: Member countries

New Delhi: Member countries of Shanghal Cooperation Organisation on Thesday signed up to cooperate in countering radicalisation even as India and Pakistan shadow-boxed with each other over terrorism and minorities.

In his inaugural address at the virtual meeting, Prime Minister Narendra Modi brought up terrorism and said: 'Dealing with this challenge requires decisive action. Regardless of its form or manifestation, we must unite in our fight against terrorism. Some countries use cross-border terrorism as an instru-Some countries use cross-border terrorism as an instru-ment of their policies, provide shelter to terrorists. SCO should not hesitate to criticise such nations. There should be no place for double standards on such serious matters. We need to enhance mutual coop-

on sucn serious matters. We need to enhance mutual cooperation in dealing with terror financing as well...."
He did not name Pakistan but his reference to cross-border terrorism was clearly directed at Islamabad and the mention of double standards was a swipe at China which has blocked sanctions against some Pakistani terror promose nas blocked sanctions against some Pakistani terror groups in the UN Security Council. When his turn to address

the virtual gathering came, Pakistan's Prime Minister

Shahbaz Sharif responded in like fashion, saying: "Any temptation to use it (terrorism) as a cudgel for diplomatic point-scoring must be avoid-ed under all circumstances." On the issue of minorities, he said they should never be demonised in the pursuit of domestic political agendas and spoke against violent ultra-nationalism and xenophobic ideologies, especially Islamophobia.

phobia.
Without mentioning Kash-mir, he brought it up by undermir, he brought't up by under-scoring the need to guarantee fundamental rights to all "in-cluding those under occupa-tion" and ensure the right to self-determination. Unlike the SCO foreign

ministers conference in May in Goa where a spat between the foreign ministers of India and Pakistan overshadowed and Pakistan overshadowed everything else, the virtual format ensured that the focus remained on the agenda and both countries signed up on the joint statement on "countering radicalisation leading to terrorism, separatism and extremism".

extremism." While condemning terror-ism in all its forms and mani-festations, the SCO countries asserted in the joint statement that it should not be associated with any religion, civilisation, nationality or ethnic group irrespective of who commits it and with whatever agenda.

Along with a New Delhi Declaration, the SCO member countries also came out with a joint statement to cooperate on digital transformation; ac-knowledging it as a "driver of global, inclusive and sustaina-ble growth".

The consensus on radia

global, inclusive and sustaina-ble growth".

The consensus on radi-calisation and digital trans-formation apart, there was a concerted push to gradually increase the use of national currencies in mutual settle-ments.

ments.
This was particularly
pushed by Iran and Russia.
In his speech, Russian
President Vladimir Putin said:
"We are making wider use of
national currencies for mutunational currencies for mutu-al settlements. In particular, over 80 per cent of commercial transactions between Russia and the People's Republic of China are made in rubles and yuan. The share of the Rus-sian national currency in ex-port transactions with all the

port transactions with all the SCO countries exceeded 40 per cent in 2022.
"Russia has been very active in implementing the SCO roadmap for the transition to rectional currencies in mutual roadmap for the transition to national currencies in mutual trade, endorsed at the previ-ous summit in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. It is important to continue this work, to take co-ordinated measures to remove regulatory barriers, to estab-lish the necessary payment infrastructure and to create an independent financial sys-tem."

tem."
Likkewise, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi also spoke out against the hegemony of the dollar in what was his maiden speech at SCO after Iran was given full member-

Iran was given to ship.

"Relying on the experience of the past decades, it is now quite evident that, along with militarism, what forms the basis of the western domination system has been the dominance of the dollar and therefore any attempt to shape a fair international system requires the removal of this instrument of dominance in intra-regional relations."

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