



1993

Sri Lankan politician Lalith Athulathmudali is assassinated while addressing a gathering, approximately four weeks ahead of the Provincial Council elections for the Western Province.

2005

The first ever YouTube video, titled "Me at the zoo", was published by user "jawed".

2013

At least 28 people are killed and more than 70 are injured as violence breaks out in Hawija, Iraq.

2018

A vehicle-ramming attack kills 10 people and injures 16 in Toronto. A 25-year-old suspect, Alek Minassia

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gripes. "What he heard was complaints about immigrants, Europe, the rich," Emanuele Fiano, a centre-left parliamentarian, told me. "He's run with that and is now borderline dangerous."

The danger is not exit from the European Union — the government has come to its senses over that — or some Fascist reincarnation. It's what Fabrizio Barca, a former minister for territorial cohesion, called the "Orbanization of the country;" in a reference to Viktor Orban, the right-wing Hungarian leader. In other words, insidious domination through the evisceration of independent checks and balances, leading Salvini to the kind of stranglehold on power enjoyed by Orban (with a pat on the back from Trump) or by Vladimir Putin. "The European Union has been ineffective against Orban," Barca noted. Worse, it has been feckless.

Another threat, as in Trump's United States, is of moral collapse. "I am not a Fascist but. ..." is a phrase increasingly heard in Italy, with some positive judgment on Mussolini to round off the sentence. Salvini, in the judgment of Claudio Gatti, whose book "The Demons of Salvini" was just published in Italian, is "post-Fascist" — he refines many of its methods for a 21st-century audience.

Barca told me the abandonment of rural areas — the closing of small hospitals, marginal train lines, high schools — lay behind Salvini's rise. Almost 65 percent of Italian land and perhaps 25 percent of its population have been affected by these cuts. "Rural areas and the peripheries, the places where people feel like nobody, are home to the League and Five Star," he said. To the people there, Salvini declares: I will defend you. He does not offer a dream. He offers protection — mainly against the concocted threat of migrants, whose numbers were in fact plummeting before he took office because of an agreement reached with Libya.

The great task before the parties of the centre-left and centre-right that will most likely be battered in this election is to reconnect. They must restore a sense of recognition to the forgotten of globalization. Pedro Sánchez, the socialist Spanish prime minister, just won an important electoral victory after pushing through a 22 percent rise in the minimum wage, the largest in Spain in 40 years. There's a lesson there. The nationalist backlash is powerful, but pro-European liberal sentiment is still stronger. If European elections feel more important, it's also because European identity is growing.

As for the curiously prescient Italian political laboratory, Bannon is investing in it. He's established an "Academy for the Judeo-Christian West" in a 13th-century monastery outside Rome. Its courses, he told me, will include "history, aesthetics and just plain instruction in how to get stuff done, including facing up to pressure, mock TV interviews with someone from CNN or The Guardian ripping your face off."

Bannon described himself as an admirer of George Soros — "his methods, not his ideology" — and the way Soros had built up "cadres" throughout Europe. The monastery is the nationalist response to Soros's liberalism. There's a war of ideas going on in Italy and the United States. To shun the fight is to lose it. I am firmly in the liberal camp, but to win it helps to know and strive to understand one's adversary.

(Roger Cohen is a journalist, author and a columnist for The Times)



TOP
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TWEETS

01



Everything the Democrats are asking me for is based on an illegally started investigation that failed for them, especially when the Mueller Report came back with a NO COLLUSION finding. Now they say Impeach President Trump, even though he did nothing wrong, while they "fish!"

@realDonaldTrump

02



Every creature has a function, none is superfluous. The whole universe speaks the language of God's love, of His boundless affection for us: soil, water, mountains, everything is God's caress. #Biodiversity #LaudatoSi'

@Pontifex

03



As a member of the opposition, I feel that we lack clarity on what we are fighting against. If we are alleging EVM fraud, then all of us should boycott elections till EVMs are abolished. If we're agitated about movement of EVMs near strongrooms, then we should demand repoll.

@Shehla_Rashid

04



Five more years of Narendra Modi will bring India back into the light of its great dharmic heritage and ability to guide the world to a higher consciousness. Those who oppose Modi usually have little respect for India's culture or history before Nehru.

@davidfrawleyved

Disclaimer: (Views expressed by columnists are personal and need not necessarily reflect our editorial stances)

Ramadan, a month of patience



Indonesian Muslims pray on the eve of the holy month of Ramadan at the Baiturrahman Mosque in Banda Aceh, in Aceh province

T.P.ABDURAHMAN (PAYYOLI)

The days of fasting in Ramadan are moving with a great pace; drew near to the last ten.

At this time, it would be better for the believers to know how to derive all the merits out of fasting. The most important merits of fasting are to achieve piety or self-restraint and patience by means of self-controlling or by willpower.

It is needless to point out that Muslims, during this month, should devote their time in reading and grasping the meaning of the Quran. Once they dip into the contents of the Quran, they can understand that it teaches patience, tolerance, purity, sanctity and piety and desert all that damages the souls of men; a true characteristic of right and wrong

ance or patience is what a believer rehearses during the month of fasting. Here it is worthwhile to mention the words of the Prophet (S) about Ramadan Fasting: "Ramadan is the month of Patience or Sabr".

There are many verses in the Quran mentioning about the reward promised to those believers who endure with patience towards the cause of their Lord of the Worlds, Allah.

Some of those verses are shown here:

"Those who patiently persevere will truly receive a reward without measure!" (39:10) "Peace unto you for that ye preserved in patience! Now how excellent is the final Home! (13:24) O ye who believe! Persevere in patience and constancy; vie in such perseverance; strengthen each other; and fear God; that ye may prosper". (3:199)

But the worth of patience should be applied at the beginning of disaster and not at the end. This is what we can understand from the words of the Prophet of Allah (S): He said: "Verily the patience is at the first stroke of a calamity". (Bukhari and Muslim).

Lack of patience is the root cause of all problems of human being. But fasting person with true faith cannot, but endure with patience at all times especially when he comes across hateful and provoking situations. If his reactions in such a hateful situation are fit for tat towards the infuriating or aggravating person, his fasting would be invalidated.

He should control his tongue and other organs not to fly out of his control. If he fails to control his sense of organs, his fasting will fetch no reward from Allah. It is opportune to mention the words of the Prophet (S): "If any one does not abandon falsehood in words and deeds, Allah has no need for his abandoning his food and drink." (Bukhari)

A believer, who is fully aware of all invalidating factors of fasting, cannot, but apply the principle of "toleration" for the sake of Allah's reward in the Hereafter. He would say "I am fasting" His Lord, Allah knows that his endurance with patience in such a circumstance is a great thing and for which Allah offered him Paradise. Allah says: And will reward them for what they patiently endured (with) a garden (in Paradise) silk (garments)." 76:12).

In a nutshell, it is needless to point out that Muslims, during this month, should devote their time in reading and grasping the meaning of the Quran. Once they dip into the contents of the Quran, they can understand that it teaches patience, tolerance, purity, sanctity and piety and desert all that damages the souls of men; a true characteristic of right and wrong. But one cannot possess these qualities without proper divine training. This training is what a believer gets during the month of Ramadan fasting. Whoever is victorious from this training could be seen with a life of reversal after Ramadan which would blossom in the Paradise.