

## After onion, milk price hike is new headache for govt

HARISH DAMODARAN  
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 15

AFTER ONION, it's milk that seems to be pinching the pockets of consumers. On Saturday, the Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), better known as Amul, and the National Dairy Development Board-owned Mother Dairy hiked the maximum retail prices (MRP) of their various pouch milk variants by Rs 2 per litre.

This marked the second such rate revision undertaken by the two dairy majors in the current year.

However, it can be seen (chart, page 2) that the milk MRP

**EXPLAINED**  
**E.**

### Signals food inflation

AS INDIA'S largest "crop" by value bought and consumed daily, milk is more representative of the return of food inflation. Unlike onion, the prices of which can be expected to fall after March, the milk supply situation may take longer to ease.

## SIX BUSES BURNT, OVER 100 INJURED

# CAB protests: Mob hits the street, police Jamia campus and students

SOURAV ROY BARMAN & SUKRITA BARUAH  
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 15

DELHI'S JAMIA Millia Islamia was at the centre of protests Sunday against the new citizenship law, as police lobbed tear-gas shells inside the campus, forced their way in, and allegedly dragged students out of the library and the mosque, and assaulted them.

The police action came after violence over the law erupted in parts of south Delhi where over an estimated 1,000 protesters clashed with police and at least six buses and over 50 vehicles were set ablaze in Mathura Road, New Friends Colony, Jamia Nagar and Sarai Julena.

This is the second flare-up in the National Capital after 27 people were detained following clashes with police during a protest against the law last Friday outside the campus, involving Jamia students and local residents.

Elsewhere in the country, protests spilled over to a third day in West Bengal where at least 15 railway stations and two local trains were vandalised, while an internet clampdown continued in Assam, where the agitation first turned violent last week.

In Delhi, the day started with students of Jamia organising a "community march" to mobilise people for a Parliament march "in the near future" and inform local residents about the new law, which grants citizenship to



Delhi Police personnel surround and beat students of Jamia Millia Islamia; (right) an injured protester being taken away, in New Delhi on Sunday. Gajendra Yadav



## PM: Who's behind fires? Can make out by looking at clothes

Says Cong, its allies fanning the flames

ABHISHEK ANGAD  
DHANBAD, DECEMBER 15

ACCUSING THE Congress and its allies of raising a storm over the new citizenship law and saying that the Opposition parties were fuelling the unrest over the issue, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said those "spreading the fire (aag lagaane wale)" could be "identified by their clothes (kapdon se hi pata chal jaata hai)".

Addressing an election rally in Dumka, Modi said: "Yeh



PM Narendra Modi with CM Raghubar Das in Dumka. PTI

Congresswale aur uske saathi... halla macha rahe hain, toofaan khara kar rahe hain. Aur unki baat

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

## Govt testing GIMs, its secure messaging app

In testing stage; for central, state staff

ANIL SASI  
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 15

THE GOVERNMENT is testing a prototype of an Indian equivalent of popular messaging platforms, such as WhatsApp and Telegram, for secure internal use. Codenamed GIMs or Government Instant Messaging System, the platform is in the pilot testing stage across some states, including Odisha — and is learnt to have been released to the Indian Navy to be tried out

on trial basis. Designed and developed by the Kerala unit of National Informatics Centre (NIC), GIMs is being packaged for employees of Central and state government departments and organisations for intra and inter organisation communications.

It is being developed as a secure Indian alternative without the security concerns attached with apps hosted abroad or those owned by foreign entities. Like WhatsApp, GIMs employs

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ASSAM TOLL UP TO FIVE AS TWO SUCCUMB TO INJURIES

PROTESTS IN BENGAL, RLY STATIONS HIT

NIA BOOKS ASSAM ACTIVIST AKHIL GOGOI

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FULL COVERAGE

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### BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY



## Payal Rohatgi detained for comments on Nehru family

HAMZA KHAN & VAIBHAV JHA  
JAIPUR, AHMEDABAD, DECEMBER 15

THE RAJASTHAN police on Sunday detained model-actor Payal Rohatgi from her residence in Ahmedabad for her objectionable comments against Motilal Nehru and Jawaharlal Nehru among others.

"We have detained her from Ahmedabad. We are bringing her to Bundi, she should be here by Monday morning. She made a video against Motilal Nehru and Jawaharlal Nehru which had objectionable comments. A case was registered under the IT Act on October 10," said Bundi SP Mamta Gupta.

"We didn't have her address so we sent a team to Mumbai earlier. We sent multiple notices

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## BRITAIN'S GENERAL ELECTION

## Boris Johnson's big win

The Conservatives triumph. Yet Boris Johnson faces tough challenges over Brexit—and much else



Boris Johnson with partner Carrie Symonds outside Conservative Campaign Headquarters in London, on December 13. Reuters

GRIMSBY SUMMED up a fantastic night for the Conservatives and a terrible one for Labour and the Liberal Democrats. Although Great Grimsby had been a Labour seat for 74 years, supporters of all parties were conceding in the pubs by mid-afternoon that the Tories had won there. Even before hearing at 3.39 am that she had lost, Melanie Onn, the Labour incumbent, was saying she wanted a break from politics—or at least the weekend off.

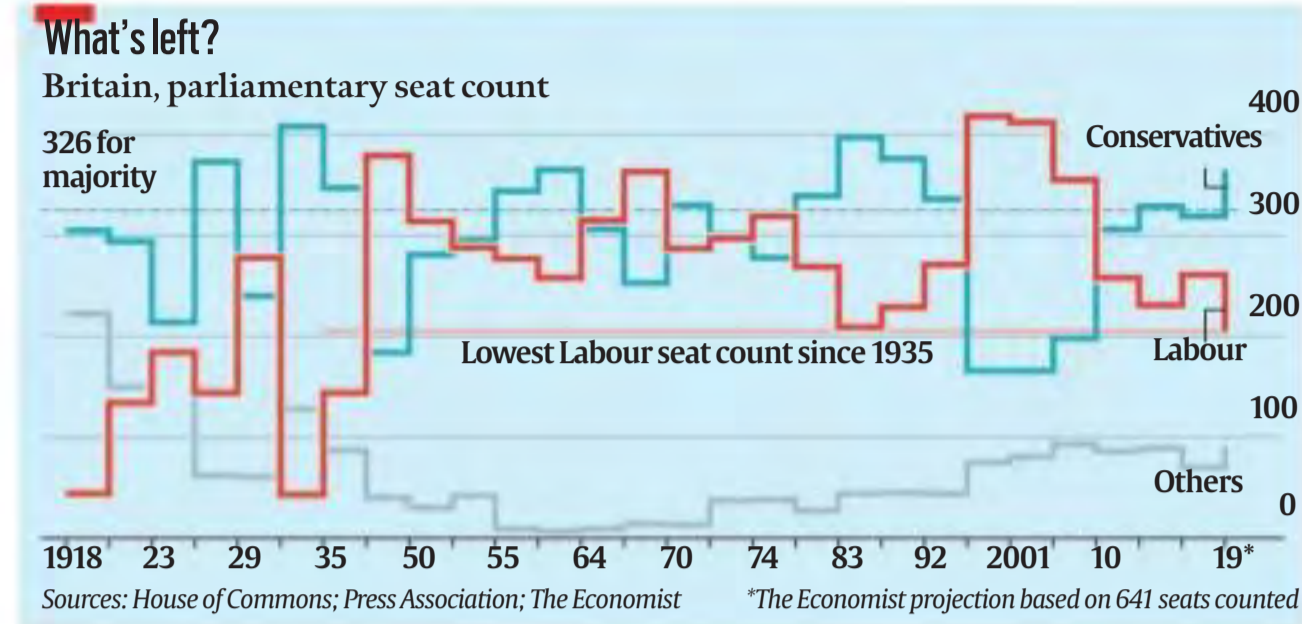
By then the story of the night was clear. Boris Johnson had pressed for an early election to end the purported deadlock in Parliament and “get Brexit done”. And voters across the country agreed with him. After three-and-a-half years of squabbling ever since their referendum vote to leave the European Union in June 2016, they chose to back Mr Johnson. By early on December 13th it looked as if his Tory majority would be around 80 seats. His strategy of relying on a simple slogan, proposing a cautious and eminently forgettable manifesto and, as far as possible, avoiding potentially awkward press or television interviews seemed entirely vindicated.

His slogan also proved tactically astute, not least because it enabled him to unite Leave voters behind the Tories. The most important moment in the campaign may have been the decision by Nigel Farage, leader of the Brexit Party, not to run candidates in Tory-held seats. This signalled to hardline Brexit supporters that they could vote for the Tories instead. During the campaign the climb in the Conservatives' poll share precisely mirrored the collapse in that of the Brexit Party. The Conservatives won some Labour-held seats where the Brexit Party put up candidates. Mr Farage's party took Labour votes from people who could not bring themselves to back the Tories.

In contrast the Remain vote stayed split between Labour and the Liberal Democrats. The Lib Dems, whose leader Jo Swinson helped to bring forward an early election, had a wretched night. They may have picked up a few seats in London and the south-east but they were roundly defeated elsewhere. Many Lib Dems who were bent on stopping a Brexit-flavoured Tory victory decided to switch their votes to Labour instead. Ms Swinson lost her own Scottish seat to the Scottish National Party.

Labour's disappointment was no less crushing. By the early morning of December 13th the party was on course to win only about 200 seats, its worst result since 1935 (see chart). Once again it had been all but wiped out in Scotland. But even more humiliating was its performance across the “red wall”, a clutch of seats from north Wales to Yorkshire, most of which it had held for decades. From Wrexham in Wales through to Wolverhampton in the West Midlands and Ashfield in the East Midlands to Grimsby, the night saw red turn to blue as the Tories hoovered up seats that they could once never have dreamed of winning.

Senior Labour figures blamed Brexit, and by implication their own party's ambivalence over whether to accept it or try to reverse it.



**After his triumph Boris Johnson can be confident of forcing his renegotiated withdrawal agreement through Parliament in good time for Britain formally to leave the EU by the current deadline of January 31st. But the country will then move into a transition period during which its membership rights and obligations will, in effect, continue**

Yet although the wish to get Brexit done was undoubtedly a big reason for the Tories' success, it was not the only cause of Labour's woes. Right across their red wall, Labour candidates reported that previously loyal voters were dismayed by the leadership of Jeremy Corbyn. This was not only because Labour had put forward a far-left manifesto, which it did, but even more because traditional Labour voters felt out of sympathy with his weakness for foreign dictators, terrorists and anti-Semitism.

Yet even though the story of the night was one of Tory triumph and Labour and Lib Dem disaster, not everything went Mr Johnson's way. The surge of support for the Scottish Nationalists bodes ill for his desire to thwart any talk of another independence referendum. The early Northern Irish results also point to losses by the Tories' erstwhile allies, the Democratic Unionist Party. And against gains in the Midlands and the north of England, the Tories failed to make gains in and around London, suggesting the capital and its immediate hinterland are out of sympathy with the increasingly pro-Brexit Tories.

Indeed, the divisions in the electorate thrown up by these results may not always help the Conservatives. Their support among older voters is rock-solid. But the under-30s are almost as strongly pro-Labour. Women now vote Labour more than men do. The old splits by class and education have also shifted markedly. In the past middle-class voters and graduates tended to support the Conservatives. Now they are as likely to back Labour. And the Tories have made new in-

roads among non-graduates and working-class voters, who support the party in greater numbers than ever before.

This realignment was crucial to Mr Johnson's big win. Yet it is a fragile one based largely on Brexit and a visceral dislike of Mr Corbyn. Suppose that Brexit is done and Labour replaces its leaders, after losing four elections in a row. Voters from the Midlands and north who have backed Mr Johnson or the Brexit Party this time round might by the next election be suffering from the Brexit fallout. If so, they could easily return to Labour. And that risk may constrain his freedom of action in office, especially in relation to how he deals with the next round of Brexit negotiations.

After his triumph Mr Johnson can be confident of forcing his renegotiated withdrawal agreement through Parliament in good time for Britain formally to leave the EU by the current deadline of January 31st. But the country will then move into a transition period during which its membership rights and obligations will, in effect, continue. And though some are suggesting that a big majority will enable Mr Johnson to soften his terms for a future trade deal with the EU, and to embrace a new liberalised and free-trade agenda, others are pointing out that that the need to retain his new Brexit-backing voters will inevitably steer him in a direction that is more protectionist and less keen on immigration.

It will also become harder for Mr Johnson to break his manifesto promise not to extend the December 2020 deadline for ending the transition period. Yet all trade experts say that a comprehensive deal with the EU of the sort that he advocates cannot conceivably be negotiated and ratified in such a short time. Trade deals typically take several years, not several months. So unless Mr Johnson is ready to ask for an extension, the risk of Britain leaving the EU with no trade deal in place at the end of next year will be significant. The result would be high barriers to exports and severe disruption to trade.

Both business and the financial markets have welcomed the majority that Mr Johnson has won this week, not least because it has killed off the spectre of a Corbyn-led, far-left government. But they may find that a year with a rampant Mr Johnson in charge of negotiations with the EU is not all that comfortable either.

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ON OCTOBER 2nd 2018 Jamal Khashoggi, a Saudi journalist and critic of the kingdom's government, visited its consulate in Istanbul in order to secure documents needed for his upcoming marriage. He did not come out alive. After initially denying responsibility, the Saudi government admitted that Mr Khashoggi was killed in a “rogue operation”.

Two months later Omar Abdulaziz, another Saudi dissident, filed a lawsuit in Israel against NSO Group, an Israeli software company. Mr Abdulaziz alleges that the NSO Group had licensed Pegasus, a piece of spyware that snoops on smartphones, to the Saudi government, which used it to spy on him—and, through him, Khashoggi. NSO Group denies that its software was used against Khashoggi. In October WhatsApp, an encrypted-messaging firm owned by Facebook, also sued the firm, saying its software had been used to hack roughly 1,400 of its users. WhatsApp says it has urged America's Department of Justice to open an investigation. NSO Group disputes WhatsApp's allegations “in the strongest possible terms”. On November 26th a number of NSO Group's workers filed a lawsuit against Facebook, claiming that the social-media giant has unfairly blocked their private accounts.

The flurry of lawsuits has drawn attention to a little-known corner of the cyber-security industry. Most cyber-security firms focus on defending clients from hackers and malware. But some, including NSO Group, as well as Gamma Group (an Anglo-German firm) and Hacking Team (an Italian one which in April merged with another company to create Memento Labs), sell software to help governments access online data on persons of interest. Business appears to be brisk.

The opaque nature of the market for “intrusion software” means the job of trying to compile figures falls mostly to academics and NGOs. NSO Group, which is unusually candid, says its revenue in 2018 was \$250m. In February Novalpina Capital, a British private-equity firm, bought a majority stake in the firm. The valuation implied by the transaction reportedly placed the firm in the “unicorn” club of startups worth over \$1bn. Most of NSO Group's competitors are much smaller, says John Scott-Railton, a re-

COMPUTER SECURITY  
Offering software for snooping to governments is a booming business

A flurry of lawsuits has drawn attention to a growing part of the cyber-security industry

searcher at the University of Toronto's Munk School of Government. Danna Ingleton of Amnesty International, a human-rights group, reckons that the market is worth at least several billion dollars.

The firms are understandably coy about revealing their clients' identities. But in 2015 a widely reported data breach appeared to reveal a list of Hacking Team's clients. The list included a Saudi spy agency and the Sudanese government of Omar al-Bashir, as well as the FBI, Malaysia's Anti-Corruption Commission and the state government of Bayelsa, a province of Nigeria. Memento Labs did not respond to requests for comment.

The industry has been around for a while, but Mr Scott-Railton says that documents leaked in 2013 by Edward Snowden, an American spy—which lifted the lid on America's electronic-surveillance capabilities—gave it a big boost. “Other states said ‘how do we get hold of something like that?’” The leaks also pushed Western technology firms to encrypt more web traffic and instant messages, making existing forms of eavesdropping harder. Some private firms now offer governments that do not have the expertise to breach such defences themselves the tools to do so. Many are staffed by former Western spooks. According to a leaked personnel roster obtained by the *New York Times*, DarkMatter, based in the United Arab Emirates, has hired several people who used to work for the National Security Agency, America's main signals-intelligence organisation. DarkMatter did not reply to requests for comment.



In October WhatsApp sued the NSO Group, saying its software had been used to hack roughly 1,400 of its users. Reuters

## Trench coats and grey hats

Most of the companies say they assist law enforcement in fighting terrorism, drug smuggling or other misdeeds. At a conference in November Shiri Dolev, NSO Group's president, complained about the coverage

of her firm. She argued that services such as WhatsApp are used by some “as a vehicle for terrorism and crime”, and that software such as Pegasus is vital. The firm insists its products are “not a tool to be weaponised against human-rights activists or dissi-

dents”. In September it announced a new human-rights policy, based on UN guidelines; it reckons it is the first firm in the industry to do so. Even before that, says a spokeswoman, the firm had turned down around \$100m of business on ethical

grounds in the past three years.

In theory the export of hacking software is controlled by the same laws that regulate the sale of weapons. In practice most observers think such restrictions have little bite. David Kaye, the UN's special rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression, has described the market for spyware as “out of control” and “unaccountable”. State use of the industry's products to target political opponents, journalists and others seems common, says Ms Ingleton.

Previous lawsuits have foundered, she adds, in part owing to their high-tech, international nature. Courts first need to be convinced that plaintiffs have suffered an injury, that the injury could be traced back to the defendant, and that the court can redress it. Even if this “standing” can be established, it is hard to procure evidence. “And even then it can be hard for some judges to understand what is being presented,” she says. In a recent case in America “Mr Kidane”, a pseudonymous American with links to Ethiopia, alleged that the Ethiopian government had been spying on him and his family using FinSpy, one of the Gamma Group's products. A judge threw out the case on the grounds that the alleged spying did not occur entirely within America's borders. The Gamma Group did not respond to requests for comment.

All the recent publicity has nonetheless increased pressure on the companies. In November Ron Wyden, an American senator, called for an investigation into whether NSO Group's products had been used against American citizens. Mr Kaye wants a moratorium on exports until stricter laws can be drawn up. And the WhatsApp lawsuits marks an escalation by the big technology companies, which want to safeguard their users' data.

A serious crackdown remains unlikely, thinks Edin Omanovic at Privacy International, another NGO, owing partly to the official background of many employees at such firms. “Enforcement has always been a problem within the arms industry,” he says. Until that changes, purveyors of snooping software can expect to thrive.

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## In B'desh, Sen claims fifth title of the season

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
DHAKA, DECEMBER 15

FAST-RISING Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen notched up his fifth title of the season, claiming the men's singles crown at the Bangladesh International Challenger with a straight game win over Malaysia's Leong Jun Hao in the final here on Sunday. The 18-year-old Indian has capped a superb year with a 22-20 21-18 win over Hao in the summit clash to clinch his fifth title in last seven tournaments.

"Happy to end the year on a winning note with my 5th international title here in Bangladesh!! Hope to continue my good form in the next year 2020. Like to thank all my sponsors @OGQ\_India @HerbalifeIndia @YonexInd @Sports\_PDCSE @ppba @bai\_media," Lakshya tweeted.

Among other Indians, Maneesha K and Rutapama Panda went down 20-22 19-21 to top seeded Malaysians Tan Pearly Koong Le and Thinaah Muralitharan in the final. Men's doubles pair of MR Arjun and Dhruv Kapila also failed to outwit fourth seeded Malaysian pair of Yee Jun Chang and Kai Wun Tee, going down 19-21 16-21 in the summit clash.

Lakshya started his campaign with a 21-5 21-10 win over compatriot Rajesh Verma in the opening round. He then beat three Malaysians on way to the final. The Uttarakhand shuttler thrashed MD Tah M Ziyad 21-13 21-6, before claiming 21-17 21-9 and 21-9 21-11 wins over Aisil Soleh Ali Sadiqin and Ng Tze Yong respectively. The top seeded Indian then saw off third seed Ikhsan Leonardo Imanuel Rumbay of Indonesia 21-18 21-16 in the semifinals. The young Indian shuttler won his first title of the year at the Belgian International in September and followed it up with wins at Dutch Open Super 100 and SarriLorLux Super 100 in October before claiming the Scottish Open crown in November.

## Momota wins Tour Finals

AFP: World number one Kento Momota fought back from a game down to win his 11th badminton title of the year Sunday with victory at the BWF World Tour Finals. The Japanese had lifted 10 titles in a remarkable 2019 while opponent Anthony Sinisuka Ginting had won none prior to their final in the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou.

# China sees red after Ozil speaks for Uighurs



Ethnic Uighur boys hold placards with the images of Arsenal midfielder Mesut Ozil during a protest against China in Istanbul on Saturday. The placard reads: "Thank you, Mesut Ozil, on behalf of 35 million oppressed." Reuters

## REUTERS

SHANGHAI, DECEMBER 14

ARSENAL TRIED on Saturday to distance itself from the comments of its star midfielder Mesut Ozil after he posted messages on Twitter and Instagram critical of China's policies toward its Muslim Uighur minority. "The content he expressed is entirely Ozil's personal opinion," the official account of Arsenal Football Club said in a post on China's Twitter-like Weibo platform. "As a football club, Arsenal always adheres to the principle of not being involved in politics."

Ozil's posts called Uighurs "warriors who resist persecution" and criticised both China's crackdown and the silence of Muslims in response. "(In China) Qurans are burned, mosques were closed down, Islamic theological schools, madrasas were banned, religious scholars were killed one by one. Despite all this, Muslims stay quiet," Ozil, who is a Muslim, said in his posts.

Replies to Arsenal's Weibo post were angry, with one showing a shredded Ozil soccer jersey next to a pair of scissors and others demanding he be expelled from the club. A search on Weibo for the hashtag translatable as "Ozil issues inappropriate statement", which had been one of the top trending topics on the platform, returned no results on

## Spurs win, Man United held

London: Tottenham Hotspur winger Lucas Moura's brilliant solo strike and defender Jan Vertonghen's late header sealed a 2-1 victory over Wolves in an entertaining Premier League game at Molineux Stadium on Sunday. In another game, Mason Greenwood came off the bench to rescue Manchester United as the teenage striker's late equaliser secured a 1-1 draw against Everton at home. **REUTERS**

Saturday afternoon. Weibo frequently censors discussion of sensitive topics, particularly amid a push by Beijing to clean up its internet. The Chinese Football Association told government-backed news outlet, The Paper, on Saturday it was "outraged and disappointed" by Ozil's remarks, describing them as "inappropriate". "Ozil's comments are undoubtedly hurtful to the Chinese fans who closely follow him, and also hurt the feelings of Chinese people. This is something we cannot accept," the news outlet quoted an unnamed official from the association as saying.

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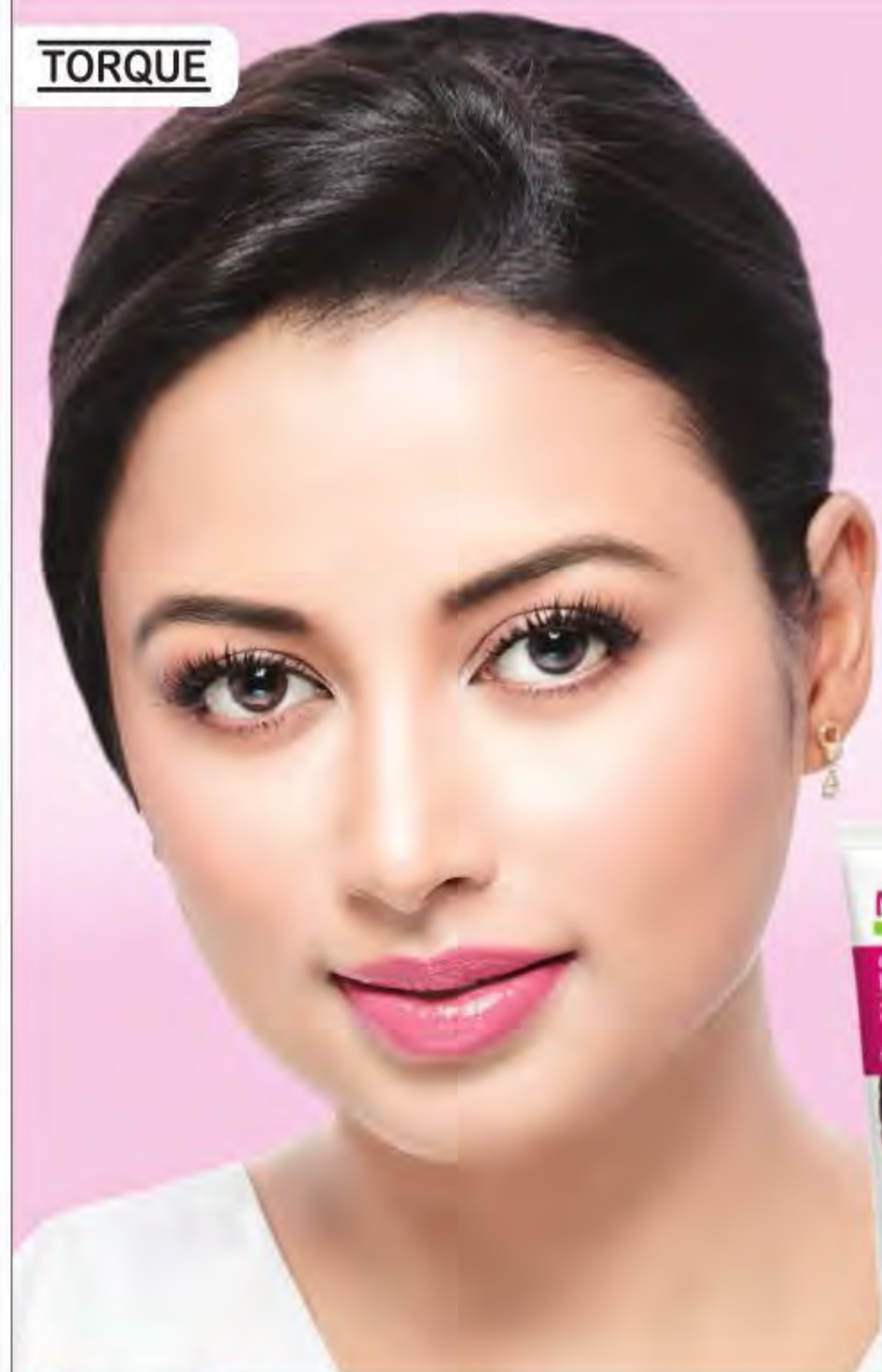
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