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Inside C2

# Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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## Rishi Sunak strikes post-Brexit Northern Ireland deal with EU

LONDON, Feb 27 (Reuters) - British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak struck a new deal with the European Union on post-Brexit trade rules for Northern Ireland on Monday, saying it would pave the way for a new chapter in London's relationship with the bloc.

Standing alongside European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen at a news conference in Windsor, Sunak said the two sides had agreed to remove "any sense of a border" between Britain and its province - a situation that had angered politicians on both sides.

He immediately won plaudits from business groups who welcomed the easing of trade rules, and an EU promise that it would be willing to allow British scientists to join its vast research programme if Sunak's party accepts the deal.

The agreement marks a high-risk strategy for Sunak just four months after he took office. He is looking to secure improved relations with Brussels - and the United States - without angering the wing of his party most wedded to Brexit.

Factbox: UK says 'Stormont Brake' gives UK unequivocal veto over some EU laws  
Factbox: Britain's new Brexit trade deal - what has been agreed?  
Northern Ireland business groups welcome Brexit deal 'certainty'  
His success is likely to hinge on whether the deal convinces the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) to end its boycott of Northern Ireland's power-sharing arrangements. These were central to the 1998 peace deal known as the Good Friday Agreement which mostly ended three decades of sectarian and po-

litical violence in Northern Ireland.

"I'm pleased to report that we have now made a decisive breakthrough," Sunak said of his new "Windsor Framework". "This is the beginning of a new chapter in our relationship."

The issue of Northern Ireland has been one of the most contentious regarding Britain's 2020 departure from the European Union. A return to a hard border between the province and Ireland, an EU member, could have jeopardised the peace deal.

Unionist politicians also object to the EU and its top court retaining a role in the province over rules and regulations.

Sunak is likely to talk up the fact he has secured a so-called "Stormont brake", which he said would allow Stormont - the regional assembly - to stop any "changes to EU goods rules that would have significant and lasting effects on everyday lives". He said that would give London a veto on new rules.

Von der Leyen said she hoped the brake could be avoided if the two sides consulted each other extensively when introducing new laws and regulatory changes.

It remains to be seen whether the new terms will go far enough to end the political deadlock in Northern Ireland, where perceptions that the protocol loosened ties with the rest of Britain have angered many unionist communities.

**FUTURE REBELLION?**  
British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen hold a news



conference at Windsor Guildhall

DUP leader Jeffrey Donaldson said "significant progress" had been made but they would not be rushed into a decision. Another DUP lawmaker, Ian Paisley, told the BBC it did not go far enough, and more talks were needed.

The European Research Group, which brings together pro-Brexit Conservative lawmakers, will work with lawyers to examine the details before giving a verdict, a process that could take around a week.

David Davis, a former Brexit minister, said Sunak had pulled off a "formidable negotiating success", although there has been speculation in Westminster that Boris Johnson could oppose the deal. A source close to the former prime minister said he was studying and reflecting on the proposal.

If the deal is accepted, the new changes would be phased in over the next few years. A parliamentary vote will take place once all parties have had time to study it.

Victory would strengthen Sunak's hold over his Conservative Party

and enable him to move past the most contentious issue on his agenda as he seeks to catch up with the opposition Labour Party, now well ahead in opinion polls, before a national election expected in 2024.

Were he to fail, he would probably face a rebellion from the eurosceptic wing of his party, reviving the deep ideological divisions that have at times paralysed the government since the vote to leave the EU in 2016.

Sunak could have left the stand-off unresolved, but officials in London and Belfast say he has been motivated to act ahead of the 25-year anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement, which could entail a visit from U.S. President Joe Biden.

Biden, who often speaks with pride of his Irish roots, has expressed concern about the political stand-off. U.S. officials had previously warned that any action which endangered the peace deal could harm the prospects of a U.S.-UK trade deal.

The Biden administration was "grateful" that Britain and the EU had come to an agreement, White House national security spokes-

man John Kirby said on Monday.

Sunak is hoping that a successful outcome will improve cooperation with the EU in areas beyond Northern Ireland, including the regulation of financial services and in helping to stem an influx of migrants in small boats across the Channel.

Raoul Ruparel, a one-time special adviser on Europe to former prime minister Theresa May, said the new terms were much better than he had expected.

"It is worth saying the EU has moved massively," he said on Twitter. "Credit where it's due. They look to have listened and taken on board concerns of UK, businesses and unionists in NI."



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# WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

02/25/2023

## Back To Our Alma Mater

Last night my wife and I returned to our alma mater Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas. We were invited to sit at the Distinguished Alumni Awards Dinner next to President Dr. Jaime Taylor. These outstanding alumni are all elites in various fields. They not only love their alma mater, they also make significant contributions to society.



We left Lamar University a few decades ago. This was our first university to study for our master's degrees. It is located in East Texas and is an oil town. Most of the national oil reserves are located here.

Over the years, this university has been grinding out many local leaders and business people. At present, they have 17,000 students and more than 1,200 foreign students study here. We are so grateful for this place where we started to learn and enter into American society.

Tonight President Taylor highly praised the alumni contributions to our school as well as to the whole country. We are very proud to be part of this great institution.



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**Southern DAILY** Make Today Different

## Editor's Choice



A Muslim man prays next to tributes laid outside PalaMilone sports hall, where victims' coffins are kept in the aftermath of a deadly migrant shipwreck, in Crotona, Italy. REUTERS/Remo Casilli



A prison agent guards gang members as they are processed at their arrival after 2000 gang members were transferred to the Terrorism Confinement Center, according to El Salvador's President Nayib Bukele, in Tecoluca, El Salvador. Secretaria de Prensa de la Presidencia/via REUTERS



A part of a rocket is seen near a building damaged by a Russian military strike, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in the front line city of Bakhmut, Ukraine February 21. REUTERS/Alex Babenko



Michelle Yeoh accepts the Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Leading Role for "Everything Everywhere All at Once" during the 29th Screen Actors Guild Awards at the Fairmont Century Plaza Hotel in Los Angeles, California. REUTERS/Mario Anzuoni



Members of Palestinian security forces loyal to Hamas, take part in a graduation ceremony in Gaza City. REUTERS/Mohammed Salem



A man who served in the Ukrainian military attends a memorial service for those who have fallen during the first year of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, at St. Andrew Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral in Silver Spring, Maryland. REUTERS/Anna Rose Layden

# Who Is Elon Musk?

## Personal And Professional Highlights

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



From Wikipedia

### Early life

#### Childhood and Family

Elon Reeve Musk was born on June 28, 1971, in Pretoria, South Africa. His mother is Maye Musk (née Haldeman), a model and dietitian born in Saskatchewan, Canada, but raised in South Africa. His father is Errol Musk, a White South African electromechanical engineer, pilot, sailor, consultant, and property developer who was once a half-owner of a Zambian emerald mine near Lake Tanganyika. Musk has a younger brother, Kimbal (born 1972), and a younger sister, Tosca (born 1974). His maternal grandfather, Joshua Haldeman, was an adventurous American-born Canadian who took his family on record-breaking journeys in a single-engine Bellanca airplane to Africa and Australia; Musk has British and Pennsylvania Dutch ancestry. When Musk was a child, his adenoids were removed because doctors suspected that he was deaf, but his mother later decided that he was thinking “in another world.”



Elon (far left), Kimbal, and Tosca Musk with their mother, Maye, in Spain for Kimbal and Christiana's wedding in June 2018. (Photo:Chris & Ruth Photography)

The family was very wealthy in Elon's youth; Errol Musk once said, “We had so much money at times we couldn't even close our safe”. After his parents divorced in 1980, Musk mostly lived with his father in Pretoria and elsewhere, a choice he made two years after the divorce and subsequently regretted. Musk has become estranged from his father, whom he describes as “a terrible human being... Almost every evil thing you could possibly think of, he has done.” He has a half-sister and a half-brother on his father's side. Elon attended an Anglican Sunday school in his youth. Around age 10, Musk developed an interest in computing and video games and acquired a Commodore VIC-20. He learned computer programming using a manual and, at age 12, sold the code of a BASIC-based video game he created

called Blastar to PC and Office Technology magazine for approximately \$500. An awkward and introverted child, Musk was bullied throughout his childhood and was once hospitalized after a group of boys threw him down a flight of stairs. He attended Waterkloof House Preparatory School and Bryanston High School before graduating from Pretoria Boys High School.

#### Education

Aware that it would be easier to enter the United States from Canada, Musk applied for a Canadian passport through his Canadian-born mother. While awaiting the documentation, he attended the University of Pretoria for five months; this allowed him to avoid mandatory service in the South African military. Musk arrived in Canada in June 1989, and lived with a second cousin in Saskatchewan for a year, working odd jobs at a farm and lumber-mill. In 1990, he entered Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. Two years later, he transferred to the University of Pennsylvania, where he graduated in 1997 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in physics and a Bachelor of Science degree in economics.

**Musk graduated from Pretoria Boys High School in South Africa.** In 1995, he was accepted to a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) program in materials science at Stanford University in California. Musk attempted to get a job at Netscape but never received a response to his inquiries. He dropped out of Stanford after two days, deciding instead to join the Internet boom and launch an Internet startup.

#### Business Career

In 1995, Musk, his brother Kimbal, and Greg Kouri founded web software company Zip2 with funds from angel investors. They housed the venture at a small rented office in Palo Alto. The company developed and marketed an Internet city guide for the newspaper publishing industry, with maps, directions, and yellow pages. Musk says that before the company became successful, he could not afford an apartment and instead rented an office and slept on the couch and showered at the YMCA, and shared one computer with his brother. When he and Kimbal could not agree on business decisions, they settled their differences through wrestling.

#### X.com and PayPal

In 1999, Musk co-founded X.com, an online financial services and e-mail payment company. The startup was one of the first federally insured online banks, and, in its initial months of operation, over 200,000 customers joined the service. The company's investors regarded Musk as inexperienced and had him replaced with Intuit CEO Bill Harris by the end of the year. The following year, X.com merged with online bank Confinity to avoid competition. Founded by Max Levchin and Peter Thiel, Confinity had its own money-transfer service, PayPal, which was more popular than X.com's service. Within the merged compa-

ny, Musk returned as CEO. Musk's preference for Microsoft software over Linux created a rift in the company and caused Thiel to resign. Due to resulting technological issues and lack of a cohesive business model, the board ousted Musk and replaced him with Thiel in September 2000. Under Thiel, the company focused on the PayPal service and was renamed PayPal in 2001. In 2002, PayPal was acquired by eBay for \$1.5 billion in stock, of which Musk—the largest shareholder with 11.72% of shares—received \$175.8 million.

In 2017, Musk purchased the domain X.com from PayPal for an undisclosed amount, explaining it has sentimental value.

#### SpaceX

In 2001, Musk became involved with the nonprofit Mars Society. He was inspired by plans to place a growth-chamber for plants on Mars and discussed funding the project himself. In October 2001, Musk traveled to Moscow with Jim Cantrell and Mike Griffin to buy refurbished Intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) that could send the greenhouse payloads into space. He met with companies NPO Lavochkin and Kosmotras; however, Musk was seen as a novice and was even spat on by one of the Russian chief designers.

**Musk explains the planned capabilities of SpaceX Starship to NORAD and Air Force Space Command in 2019**

The group returned to the United States empty-handed. In February 2002, the group returned to Russia to look for three ICBMs. They had another meeting with Kosmotras and were offered one rocket for \$8 million, which Musk rejected. Musk instead decided to start a company that could build affordable rockets. With \$100 million of his early fortune, Musk founded Space Exploration Technologies Corp., traded as SpaceX, in May 2002.[73] As of 2021, he remains the company's CEO and also holds the title of Chief Engineer.

SpaceX attempted its first launch of the Falcon 1 rocket in 2006, and although the rocket failed to reach Earth orbit, it was awarded a Commercial Orbital Transportation Services program contract from NASA later that year.[76] After two more failed attempts, which reportedly caused Musk so much stress that he was “waking from nightmares, screaming and in physical pain,” SpaceX succeeded in launching the Falcon 1 into orbit in 2008, making it the first private liquid-fuel rocket to do so.



Later that year, SpaceX received a \$1.6 billion Commercial Resupply Services program contract from NASA for 12 flights of its Falcon 9 rocket and Dragon spacecraft to the International Space Station, replacing the Space Shuttle after its 2011 retirement. In 2012, the Dragon vehicle berthed with the ISS, a first for a private enterprise. (For additional reference, go to: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elon\\_Musk](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elon_Musk))

#### Tesla

Tesla, Inc.—originally Tesla Motors—was incorporated in July 2003 by Martin Eberhard and Marc Tarpenning, who financed the company until the Series A round of funding. Both men played active roles in the company's

early development prior to Musk's involvement. Musk led the Series A round of investment in February 2004; he invested \$6.5 million, became the majority shareholder, and joined Tesla's board of directors as chairman. Musk took an active role within the company and oversaw Roadster product design but was not deeply involved in day-to-day business operations. Following a series of escalating conflicts in 2007 and the 2008 financial crisis, Eberhard was ousted from the firm. Musk assumed leadership of the company as CEO and product architect in 2008. A 2009 lawsuit settlement with Eberhard designated Musk as a Tesla co-founder, along with Tarpenning and two others. As of 2019, Elon Musk was the longest tenured CEO of any automotive manufacturer globally. In 2021, Musk nominally changed his title to Technoking while retaining his position as CEO.

**Musk next to a Tesla Model S at the Tesla Fremont Factory in 2011.**

Tesla first built an electric sports car, the Roadster, in 2008. With sales of about 2,500 vehicles, it was the

first serial production all-electric car to use lithium-ion battery cells. Tesla began delivery of its four-door Model S sedan in 2012; a cross-over, the Model X was launched in 2015. A mass market sedan, the Model 3, was released in 2017. As of March 2020, it is the world's best-selling electric car, with more than 500,000 units delivered.[113] A fifth vehicle, the Model Y crossover, was launched in 2020. The Cybertruck, an all-electric pickup truck, was unveiled in 2019. Under Musk, Tesla has also constructed multiple lithium-ion battery and electric vehicle subassembly factories, such as Gigafactory 1 in Nevada and Gigafactory 3 in China.

Since its initial public offering in 2010, Tesla stock has risen significantly; it became the most valuable carmaker in summer 2020, and it entered the S&P 500 later that year. In October 2021 it reached a market capitalization of \$1 trillion, the sixth company to do so in U.S. history. On November 6, 2021, Musk proposed on Twitter selling 10% of his Tesla stock, since “much is made lately of unrealized gains being a means of tax avoidance”.



**Tesla's sprawling factory and headquarters in Austin, Texas.** After more than 3.5 million Twitter accounts supported the sale, Musk sold \$6.9 billion of Tesla stock in the week ending November 12, and a total of \$16.4 billion by year end, reaching the 10% target. In February 2022, The Wall Street Journal reported that both Elon and Kimbal Musk were under investigation by the SEC for possible insider trading related to the sale.

#### Neuralink

In 2016, Musk co-founded Neuralink, a neurotechnology startup company to integrate the human brain with artificial intelligence (AI) by creating devices that are embedded in the human brain to facilitate its merging with machines. The devices will also reconcile with the latest improvements in artificial intelligence to stay updated. Such improvements could enhance memory or allow the devices to communicate with software more effectively.



**Musk discussing a Neuralink device during a live demonstration in 2020** At a live demonstration in August 2020, Musk described one of their early devices as “a Fitbit in your skull” that could soon cure paralysis, deafness, blindness, and other disabilities. (For additional reference, go to: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elon\\_Musk](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elon_Musk))

#### The Boring Company

In 2016, Musk founded The Boring Company to construct tunnels. In early 2017, the company began discussions with regulatory bodies and initiated construction of a 30-foot (9.1 m) wide, 50-foot (15 m) long, and 15-foot (4.6 m) deep “test trench” on the premises of SpaceX's offices as it required no permits. A tunnel beneath the Las Vegas Convention Center was completed in early 2021. Local officials have approved further expansions of the tunnel system.



**Musk during the 2018 inauguration of the Boring Test Tunnel in Hawthorne, California.**

#### Personal Life

##### Born

Elon Reeve Musk

June 28, 1971 (age 50)

Pretoria, Transvaal, South Africa

##### Citizenship

United States[1]

##### Education

University of Pennsylvania (BS; BA)

##### Titles

Founder, CEO and Chief Engineer of SpaceX  
CEO and product architect of Tesla, Inc.

Founder of The Boring Company and X.com (now part of PayPal)

Co-founder of Neuralink, OpenAI, and Zip2

President of Musk Foundation

##### Spouse(s)

Justine Wilson

(m. 2000; div. 2008)

Talulah Riley

(m. 2010; div. 2012)

(m. 2013; div. 2016)

##### Partner(s)

Grimes (2018–2022)[2]

##### Children

8

Parent(s)

Maye Musk (mother)

##### Relatives

Tosca Musk (sister)

Kimbal Musk (brother)

Lyndon Rive (cousin)

##### Companies

Zip2, X.com, PayPal, SpaceX, Tesla, Inc., SolarCity, Tesla Energy, Hyperloop, OpenAI, Neuralink, The Boring Company, Twitter

For additional reference, go to: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elon\\_Musk](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elon_Musk) (Courtesy [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elon\\_Musk](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elon_Musk))

# COMMUNITY

## The Free Press Is In Decline, Even In Strongest Democracies



Illustration/Axios

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

The corruption indictments issued for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu last week include charges that he sought to manipulate the media to secure more favorable coverage.

**Why it matters:** Such interventions have become more prevalent around the world, including in democracies. As we've seen in places like Russia and Turkey, one of the surest signs democracy is being eroded is a crackdown on independent media.

**Driving the news:** Netanyahu was indicted for an arrangement he allegedly brokered with a telecom magnate, in which the prime minister offered favorable business regulations in return for positive coverage of him and his wife Sara.

•The deal was with Shaul Elovitz, who was formerly the majority shareholder of telecom group Bezeq. Bezeq owns a popular Israeli news website called Walla.

•Netanyahu was also indicted on charges that he struck another deal with a Tel-Aviv-based daily newspaper called Yedioth Ahronoth to limit the circulation of its competitor in exchange for less critical coverage.

**Be smart:** Israel still has a vibrant media ecosystem, but such attempts to delegitimize negative coverage and control the press are not limited to Israel. They can

range from subtle to brutal.

•**In Hungary,** Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and his allies have “systematically taken control of roughly 90% of the country's media outlets,” per NPR, consolidating dozens of print, radio and TV outlets into one giant conglomerate that Orbán has exempted from Hungarian media or competition rules. There have also been reports that Orbán has “systematically starved” independent outlets of state advertising money if they do not provide favorable coverage of his administration.

•**In Turkey,** President Erdogan's allies in the business community have bought up a handful of mainstream-media outlets that have subsequently adopted a pro-government stance. According to The Atlantic, the government has in many cases enabled those sales. That consolidation has occurred in conjunction with an increase in free press penalties, including fines and jail time, that have grown more severe as Erdogan's reign has become more autocratic.

•**In the Philippines,** President Rodrigo Duterte's government has used an aggressive “cyber libel” law to lodge several cases against independent media site Rappler and its CEO Maria Ressa, per Poynter. Earlier this year, the government revoked Rappler's news registration in a move that press freedom groups

called politically-motivated.

•**In Venezuela,** U.S. journalists were arrested and detained by the country's military counter-intelligence agency earlier this year at the command of President Nicolás Maduro. Maduro's crackdown on journalists comes after years of autocratic actions that have eroded the country's democracy.

**Zoom out:** In fully autocratic countries, the simple act of reporting can be dangerous. Just this past week:

•**In Egypt,** security forces raided the offices of the last major independent media company and temporarily detained three of its top editors, per the New York Times.



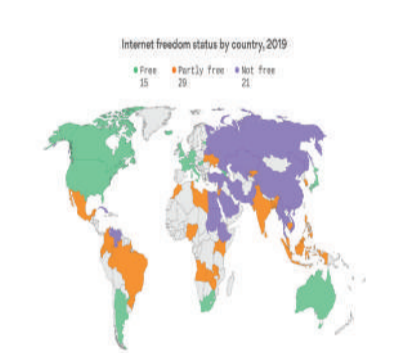
**Murdered Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi**

•**In Saudi Arabia,** the government detained “at least eight people, mostly intellectuals and writers ... amid a two-year crackdown on free expression in the kingdom,” per Reuters. The move follows the one-year anniversary of the murder of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi, which U.S. intelligence officials say was ordered by the Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman himself.

**The big picture:** Internet freedom is in decline around the world, with governments using social media to monitor their citizens and spread disinformation at home and overseas, according to an annual Freedom House report. Even in the U.S., President Trump has been accused of attempting to punish outlets whose coverage he objects to.

•In April, The Justice Department filed a motion asking a district court to dismiss the lawsuit.

**Related**  
**Internet freedom declines in U.S. and around the world**



Reproduced from a Freedom House map; Note: Score based on obstacles to access, limits on content and violation of user rights; Map: Axios Visuals  
Rising levels of political disinformation and government surveillance are making the internet less free in the U.S., according to a new report by Freedom House, a democracy and human rights research group.

**The big picture:** Internet freedom is in decline around the world, according to the report, as governments increasingly use social media to monitor their citizens and spread disinformation at home and overseas.

•The U.S. has long been a bastion of internet freedom and still ranks sixth out of 65 countries assessed, but its status has fallen each of the past three years.

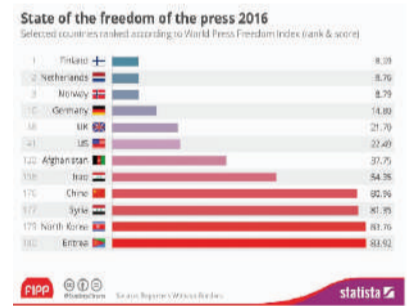
**Details:** The authors cite monitoring of social media platforms by immigration and law enforcement agencies as a particular concern in the U.S., along with political disinformation that has been “at times exacerbated by top government officials and political leaders.”

•**Most free:** Iceland, Estonia, Canada, Germany, Australia.

•**Least free:** China is “the world's worst abuser of internet freedom,” followed by Iran, Syria, Cuba and Vietnam.

•**Of China,** the authors write: “Censorship and surveillance were pushed to unprecedented extremes as the govern-

ment enhanced its information controls, including in the lead-up to the 30th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre and in response to persistent antigovernment protests in Hong Kong.”



Countries in decline:

•Sudan saw social media blocked during mass protests against now-former President Omar al-Bashir, and harsh repression during a lengthy state of emergency.

•Kazakhstan's government “temporarily disrupted internet connectivity, blocked ... news websites, and restricted access to social media platforms” during its stage-managed presidential transition.

•Brazil saw a rise of cyberattacks and “social media manipulation,” mostly from supporters of President Jair Bolsonaro — who then hired consultants accused of “spearheading the sophisticated disinformation campaign.”

•Bangladesh's government, in response to protests over road safety and electoral irregularities, “resorted to blocking independent news websites, restricting mobile networks, and arresting journalists and ordinary users alike.”

•Zimbabwe became a more difficult place to access the internet, both because of economic chaos and crackdowns from the government.

**The other side:** Ethiopia was one of the few countries in which internet restrictions were loosened this year, under reform-minded Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. Improvements were also seen in Malaysia and Armenia.

**The bottom line:** “What was once a liberating technology has become a conduit for surveillance and electoral manipulation,” the authors write about social media. (Courtesy axios.com)