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MARRIAGE EQUALITY

PARENTS OF LGBTQIA+ TO CJI FOR LEGAL STAMP OF 'RAINBOW MARRIAGES'

Over 400 parents write to Chief Justice of India D. Y. Chandrachud making the passionate plea

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

In a letter to the Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud, the parents of Indian LGBTQIA+ children appealed to consider the plea for Marriage Equality and added that "we hope to see the legal stamp on rainbow marriages of our children in our lifetime."

The letter by 'Sweekar-The Rainbow Parents' assumes significance it comes when a five-judge constitution bench headed by the CJI is hearing a batch of petitions seeking legal validation for same-sex marriage for the fourth day.

The letter stated, "We desire to see our children and

our children-in-law find legal acceptance for their relationship under the Special Marriages Act in our country. We are certain that a nation as big as ours, which respects its diversity and stands for the value of inclusion, will open its legal gates of Marriage Equality to our children too. We are growing old. Some of us will touch 80 soon. We hope that we get to see the legal stamp on the rainbow marriages of our children in our lifetime."

Sweekar-The Rainbow Parents is a support group for parents of LGBTQIA+ by parents of LGBTQIA+ to help navigate their journey towards acceptance. There are more than 400+ parents

from the length and breadth of the nation.

LGBTQIA+ denotes to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, pansexual, two-spirit, asexual, and ally.

The letter further stated, "We are appealing to you to consider the plea for Marriage Equality." "From knowing about gender and sexuality to understanding the lives of our children, to finally accepting their sexuality and their loved one we have gone through the whole gamut of emotions. We empathise with those who are opposing Marriage Equality because some of us were there too. It took us education, debate and patience with our LGBTQIA+

children to realise that their lives, feelings and desires are valid," the parents said.

"Similarly, we hope that those who oppose Marriage Equality will come around too. We have faith in the people of India, the constitution and the democracy of our nation," said the parents of Indian LGBTQIA+ children.

The letter further said that Gender and Sexuality made to election manifestos and corporate India has also begun opening up gradually to the idea of queer lives.

"Society is a changing and evolving phenomenon. Just as a rising tide lifts all boats, the judgement by the honourable Supreme Court created a ripple effect on so-

ciety and has helped move the needle from hate to tolerance to acceptance," the rainbow parents said.

"We desire to see our children and children-in-law find final legal acceptance for their relationship under the Special Marriage Act in our country. We are certain that a nation as big as ours which respects its diversity and stands for the value of inclusion, will open its legal gate of marriage equality to our children too.

It referred to the apex court judgement of 2018 by which it decriminalised consensual gay sex. The judgement ensured LGBTQIA+ people are treated with dignity and acceptance.

DILEMMA

Parliament has power; how far can courts go into it: SC

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday said Parliament undisputedly has the leg-

islative power over issues raised in pleas seeking legal sanction for same-sex marriage and pondered over the "interstices" left open for it to exercise its power and till what extent.

A five-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief

Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud was faced with several consequential legal questions, such as adoption, succession, intestacy and laws governing pension and gratuity where a once legally-acknowledged spouse is the beneficiary, if it decides to legalise same-sex marriage.

The bench observed that if same-sex marriage is allowed, then the judicial interpretation, keeping in mind the consequential aspects, will not remain confined to the Special Marriage Act, 1954 and personal laws will also come into play.

"Now, the question which we really therefore have to pose is, if this is a power which is conferred specifically on Parliament, where does the court really exercise its jurisdiction. Which are those interstices which are left open for the court to exercise its powers," the bench, also comprising Justices S K Kaul, S R Bhat, Hima Kohli

“ We are also part of ‘we the people’ and we are citizens of this country. The basic structure (of the Constitution) also belongs to us. ”

MENAKA GURUSWAMY while arguing for same-sex marriage

“ The petitioners are right in asserting that marriage itself is a bouquet of rights and though they have identified three aspects -- gratuity, provident fund and pension- actually, it does not stop at that at all. ”

It (1997 Vishaka verdict) was a classic example where the court laid down the framework pending the legislature coming up with a law in this regard. The test really is this--how far does the court go.

THE BENCH

Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud was faced with several consequential legal

TOP OF THE DAY

LOC 'RELATIVELY PEACEFUL': PAKISTAN ARMY

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Army on Tuesday said the situation at the Line of Control (LoC) has remained "relatively peaceful" after the ceasefire agreement with India was restored in 2021. In his first press conference since assuming office in December last year, Military Spokesman Major General Ahmed Sharif also talked about the latest threat of terrorism and other important issues facing the cash-strapped country. "The situation at the LoC has remained relatively peaceful after the 2003 ceasefire agreement (was restored)," he said.

ATIQ'S BROTHER-IN-LAW SUSPENDED AS GOVT DOCTOR

MEERUT: Slain gangster-politician Atiq Ahmad's brother-in-law Akhlaq Ahmad, a government doctor posted in Meerut, was suspended on Tuesday by the Health Department, a senior official said. Akhlaq Ahmad was arrested earlier this month for allegedly sheltering and providing money to the accused in the February 24 killing of Umesh Pal -- a key witness in the 2005 murder case of BSP MLA Raju Pal. Meerut Chief Medical Officer Dr Akhilesh Mohan told PTI that Akhlaq Ahmad has been suspended on the orders of the government.

BREAKING THE ICE?

Chinese defence minister to hold talks with Rajnath Singh

TDG NETWORK
BEIJING

China on Tuesday announced that its Defence Minister General Li Shangfu will visit India this week to

attend the meeting of SCO defence ministers from 27 April during which he is expected to hold talks with his Indian counterpart Rajnath Singh on ending the

OPERATION KAVERI

FIRST BATCH OF STRANDED INDIANS LEAVES SUDAN IN NAVAL SHIP

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The first batch of Indians stranded in violence-hit Sudan left the country onboard India's naval ship INS Sumedha as part of the evacuation mission 'Operation Kaveri'. External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said 278 people onboard the ship departed Port Sudan for the Saudi

HIGHER COURT

RAHUL MOVES GUJARAT HC IN DEFAMATION CASE

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday filed an application in the Gujarat High Court challenging the order

of the Surat sessions court which last week declined to stay his conviction in a criminal defamation case over his "Modi surname" remark, a lawyer said.

TILL ELECTIONS

4% Muslim quota to continue till 9 May: SC to Karnataka govt

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday said Karnataka's earlier regime granting four per cent reservation to Muslims will continue to hold the field till 9 May.

The top court will hear the batch of petitions just on the

eve of the polling on 10 May. The poll results will be declared on 13 May.

A bench of justices K.M. Joseph and B.V. Nagarathna also said the decision of scrapping of the four per cent quota for Muslims in 2B category of the 'Other Backward Castes' and granting benefits of increased quota

UNFORTUNATE

Ex-Punjab CM Parkash Singh Badal dead

TARUNI GANDHI
CHANDIGARH

Former Punjab chief minister and Shiromani Akali Dal patriarch Parkash Singh Badal, who was admitted at a private hospital in Mohali, died on Tuesday, hospital officials and party sources said. He was 95.

He breathed his last around 8 pm, hospital officials told news agency.

This was confirmed by the Personal Assistant of his son and party presi-



On common ground
Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets the leaders of various Christian organisations, at Taj Malabar Hotel, in Kochi on Tuesday

COUNTERING TERROR

SCO DEFENCE MINISTERS TO DISCUSS WAYS TO COMBAT TERRORISM

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Ways to effectively combat terrorism and matters concerning regional peace and security will figure prominently at a defence ministerial conclave of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) being hosted by India on Friday.

Chinese Defence Minister Li Shangfu, Russia's Sergei Shoigu and their counterparts from other member countries of the grouping except Pakistan's Khawaja Asif are set to attend the meeting.

On Tuesday, the defence ministry said the SCO pursues its policy based on the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations, non-interference in internal affairs and mutual understanding and respect for opinions of each of them. It said the theme of India's presidency of the grouping in 2023 is "Secure SCO".

POOR LAW AND ORDER

VIOLENT PROTESTERS TORCH POLICE STATION IN BENGAL

SUPROTIM MUKHERJEE
KOLKATA

People, agitated by the death of a teenage girl in Kaliaganj in North Dinajpur district of West Bengal, turned violent and set the local police station on fire on Tuesday. Locals have been protesting the "cover-up" by the police for the past four days and have

'SEXUAL HARASSMENT'

SC notice to Delhi government on plea of women wrestlers

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday issued notices to the Delhi government and others on a plea of seven women wrestlers alleging non-registration of an FIR on their sexual harassment allegations against BJP MP

and WFI president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh.

A bench comprising Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud and Justice P.S. Narasimha took note of the submissions of senior advocate Kapil Sibal that despite the sexual harassment allegations no FIR has been lodged.

FEDERALISM

AS STATES DEVELOP, COUNTRY WILL DEVELOP FASTER: PM MODI

TDG NETWORK
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday dedicated to the nation various developmental projects, including the Kochi Water Metro, and

SINISTER DESIGN

PRO-KHALISTANI OUTREACH BARS FOREIGN GOVTS FROM TAKING ACTION

ABHINANDAN MISHRA
NEW DELHI

A meticulously planned sustained campaign that is being funded and collaborated by pro-Khalistan groups that are based in the United Kingdom and Canada is be-

ing executed to put pressure on government heads and departments in both these countries from taking action against the Khalistani terrorists.

This has happened after it emerged that the Rishi Sunak government has decid-

ed to come down heavily on these terror groups that for years have been flourishing in the United Kingdom

Sources based in London told the Daily Guardian that in the past few months the local media and social



ON THE RADAR



GAUTAM LAHIRI

CONGRESS PROPOSES MEETING AFTER KARNATAKA POLL

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar is moving around the country to meet the opposition leaders of many states. The idea is to hold a grand meeting of likeminded opposition parties to formulate strategy for the next Lok Sabha poll. Initially Congress party wanted to hold meeting in national capital. But West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee put forward an alternative proposal to hold the meeting in Patna. Meanwhile, the Shiv Sena Uddhav faction also wants to have a meeting with opposition leaders. One Shiv Sena leader is also going to meet the West Bengal Chief Minister. Now the Congress party insists on holding the meeting just after the Karnataka poll. The Congress Party proposes that the day the Karnataka election campaign will be over, opposition parties should sit together and give a message to the electorate of Karnataka that now the opposition has got together to take on the BJP. Whether all the opposition parties will agree to this proposal is yet to be seen.

CONGRESS HIGH COMMAND GIVES GREEN SIGNAL FOR KAMAL NATH

Officially, Kamal Nath has been declared the face of the chief minister candidate for the upcoming assembly poll in Madhya Pradesh. The party has finalised the main theme of the campaign as 'mera kasurkyatha' (what was my fault?). In the last poll, Kamal Nath became the Chief Minister. After some time, Jyotiraditya Scindia left the Congress party with his follower legislator. The Congress government fell for losing its majority. Now Kamal Nath wants to create sympathy for himself by finalising the theme 'mera keykasurtha'. Meanwhile, there is no state where the Congress Party's campaign is going on any individual leader's charisma. But it looks like Congress high command has given the green signal to go ahead with Kamal Nath's plan.

GANDHIS' EFFORT TO GET BACK THEIR CONSTITUENCY

It may turn out to be a contest between present MP Smriti Irani and former MP Rahul Gandhi for the upcoming election in Amethi. The Congress Party has geared up for the election to regain the lost glory of Gandhi Bastion. At the same time, the BJP is putting all of its resources into retaining control of Amethi. Ultimately, the civic poll is almost becoming a semi-final match before the Lok Sabha poll.

BATTLE FOR KARNATAKA

BJP GOES ALL OUT ON SCRAPPING OF MUSLIM QUOTA

TDG NETWORK BAGALKOTE

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday defended the BJP government's decision in Karnataka of scrapping four percent quota for Muslims saying the party never believed in 'religion-based reservation'.

The former BJP chief also took a dig at Congress for its stand that the quota would be restored if it is voted to power in the state after the 10 May Assembly polls.

"There was a religion based reservation of four percent for Muslims. Without falling for the vote bank politics, the BJP government abolished the Muslim reservation," he said addressing a public meeting at Terdal in this district.

"We believe that religion based reservation should not happen," Shah opined.

The Minister added that after abolishing Muslim reservation, the BJP government increased the res-



Union Home Minister Amit Shah with BJP leaders Govind M Karjol, Murugesh R Nirani and other leaders during a public meeting ahead of Karnataka Assembly elections, in Theradad, Tuesday.

ervation for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Vokkaligas and Lingayats.

Referring to the Basavaraj Bommai government's decision to increase the SC reservation from 15 percent to 17 percent, Shah noted that the internal reservation of SC (Left) now stands at six percent, SC (Right)- 5.5 percent and other SCs 5.5 percent.

Responding to Congress president D K Shivakumar who has promised to restore the Muslim reser-

vation if his party comes to power, Shah sought to know whose quota the party will scrap if it manages to form the government in Karnataka.

"Whose reservation will be decreased if four percent reservation for Muslims is restored? Will it be Vokkaligas or Lingayat, Dalits, Scheduled Tribes or the Other Backward Castes?" the Minister asked.

At the fag end of its term, the BJP government decided to abolish the four per-

cent reservation for Muslims under 2-B category. The four percent was later split into two and distributed among Vokkaligas in 2-C category and Lingayats in 2-D category.

Vokkaligas and Lingayats are the two major dominant communities of Karnataka.

Shah's statement came on a day when the Supreme Court directed that the state government's decision of scrapping quota for Muslims will not be implemented till 9 May.

AWAITS SC HEARING

Govt not to implement 4% reservation for Muslims: CM Bommai

TDG NETWORK DHARWAD

Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Tuesday said the state government will not implement its decision to scrap four percent reservation for Muslims in 2B category of the 'Other Backward Castes' till the hearing in the Supreme Court is completed.

He emphasised that the reservation for 17 sub-castes of extremely backward Muslims who are placed in Category-1 and Category 2-A have not been touched. "We had decided that till the time the hearing is complete we will not take it forward. Court has not given any stay. We only have said that you (SC) hear the case; so long the case is heard, we will not implement it," Bommai told the media. He was reacting to the Supreme Court's direction to the Karnataka government



not to implement its decision of scrapping four percent reservation for Muslims till 9 May when the matter will be heard. At the fag end of its term, the BJP government decided to abolish the four percent reservation for Muslims under 2-B category. The four percent was later split into two equally and distributed among the two dominant communities of the state- Vokkaligas in 2-C category and Lingayats in 2-D

WAR OF WORDS

Priyanka slams PM for 'Dig My Grave' remark, says Karnataka polls not about Modi

TDG NETWORK KARNATAKA

Taking a strong exception to Narendra Modi's comments that the opposition party wants to "dig his grave", Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Tuesday said there won't be anyone in this country who doesn't want the Prime Minister's good health and that he has a long life.

Calling such statements "strange" and questioning as to whether it is an election issue as it is being used during the campaigning, she called on the people of the state to ensure this election is not about Modi or any other leader, irrespective of their party.

"I have seen that BJP leaders come here and speak strange things. I heard the Prime Minister was saying that opposition leaders



Priyanka Gandhi Vadra during a public meeting ahead of the Karnataka Assembly elections, in Mysore district, Tuesday.

want to dig his grave, what kind of talk is this? There won't be anyone in this country who doesn't want our Prime Minister's good health and that he has a long life," Vadra said.

Addressing a public meeting here, as part of the party's campaigning for the 10 May Assembly polls, she said, "But, I want to ask to the people- is this an election issue? They

raise strange issues, but why don't they speak about you? Why don't they speak about price rise, unemployment, talk about taking you forward?" Hitting out at the Congress members, who had purportedly raised the 'Modi teri khabar khudegi' slogan, Modi had on several occasions during his campaigning in Karnataka has asserted that people, instead, are chanting 'Modi

tera kamal khilega'. "I want to tell you that it is your duty to ensure that this election is centered around your issues. This election is not about any leader, irrespective of the party they are from. This election is about your Karnataka, it is about your pride, your daily life, which has been destroyed by their loot," Vadra said.

If people of Karnataka fail to realise that this election is about them, the future of their children, this election to save their state and culture, "you will be committing a big mistake", she said. AICC General Secretary in-charge of Karnataka Randeep Singh Surjewala, former Minister H C Mahadevappa, and MLA Yathindra Siddaramaiah among others were present.

OUST BJP TO GIVE DEMOCRACY A CHANCE TO SURVIVE: KHARGE

TDG NETWORK MANGALURU

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Tuesday said democracy has a chance to survive in the country if the "corrupt government" led by BJP at the Centre and in Karnataka is thrown out of office.

Addressing a press conference here, Kharge said Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah are silent against corruption prevailing in their governments and using the

state machinery including Enforcement Directorate and Central Bureau of Investigation against the opposition leaders. He said Modi is talkative about corruption only when an issue comes up against opposition leaders. "The Congress has always been in the forefront of development with several projects in the country. Modi questions what Congress has done in 70 years, but they seem to have forgotten the BJP's term."

Shah claims Karnataka will suffer riots if Congress wins power

TDG NETWORK BAGALKOTE

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday said if the Congress comes to power in Karnataka, dynastic politics will be at an all-time high in the state and it will be "afflicted with riots".

Addressing a public meeting at Terdal in Belagavi district, the former BJP chief also said the development of the state will be on the "re-

verse gear" if the Congress forms the government.

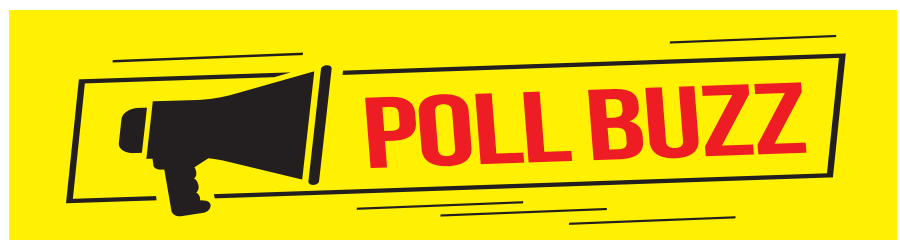
Seeking the people's mandate for "political stability" in Karnataka that would vote on 10 May, Shah said that only BJP can lead the state towards 'New Karnataka'.

"If Congress comes to power by mistake then corruption will be all time high and there will be 'appeasement'," said Shah, who is on a two-day tour of Karnataka to hold a series of public meetings.

COLOUR OF DEMOCRACY



Union Minister Smriti Irani during a Mahila Samavesh programme ahead of Karnataka Assembly elections, in Hubli-Dharwad West, Tuesday.



PM MODI TO GO VIRTUAL, MEET 50 LAKH BJP WORKERS

BENGALURU : Prime Minister Narendra Modi would hold an interactive meeting with 50 lakh BJP workers virtually in poll-bound Karnataka on 27 April. Party workers from 58,112 booths would join the meeting, Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Shobha Karandlaje told the media on Tuesday. She said the Prime Minister will join the millions of party workers to ensure that the 'double-engine' government returns to power in Karnataka. "As part of the effort, he will speak to the workers to encourage them to work for the party," the Minister added.

UNION HOME MINISTER AMIT SHAH EXCLUSIVELY SPEAKS TO ITV NETWORK IN KARNATAKA

BENGALURU : Reporter- Sir, what's your opinion on the Karnataka elections? Home Minister- I went to Mandya, Mysore and Hassan and everywhere I look, the BJP is getting a good response in Karnataka. The public is definitely with us and supporting us, and we're sure of winning elections with a full majority.

CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

HIJAB NOT A MAJOR ISSUE IN COASTAL KARNATAKA POLL CAMPAIGN

TDG NETWORK MANGALURU

The controversial issue of Muslim girls wearing 'hijab' in educational institutions, which had hit national headlines last year with a government pre-university college in Udupi banning it inside classrooms, does not appear to be a serious campaign issue for the 10 May elections



Women protest over the Karnataka hijab row. (File)

to the Karnataka Assembly. The BJP government in the state had in an order last year banned wearing of hijab inside campuses after the controversy broke out, saying 'any clothing that would disturb equality, integrity and public law and order' will not be allowed. Students were directed to wear only the uniforms

prescribed for them in schools and PU colleges.

The order was passed after several hijab-wearing girls in the state were denied entry into educational institutions wearing hijab. The move had led to widespread protests across the country. The Karnataka High Court upheld the government order after a few Muslim girl stu-

dents moved the court. The judgement was then challenged before the Supreme Court, which subsequently delivered a split verdict in October. The matter will be later heard by a larger bench.

BJP's poster boy of the hijab row, Yashpal Suvarna, is now the party's candidate for the Udupi Assembly constituency. When the row broke

out, he was vice-president of the development committee of the Udupi government PU college for women.

The incumbent MLA Raghupati Bhat, who was president of the committee, was replaced by Suvarna, a Mogavera (fishermen community) leader and firebrand activist who has a strong support base among the party cadre.

TOP OF THE DAY

DRONE SPOTTED OVER DELHI CM'S RESIDENCE

NEW DELHI : AA drone was spotted over the residence of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday, police said. Information was received at 4:46 pm that a drone has been seen over the CM's residence at the Civil Lines area, a senior police officer said. The residence area comes under the red no-fly zone or no drone zone, according to sources. Deputy Commissioner of Police (North) Sagar Singh Kalsi said a PCR vehicle deployed outside the chief minister's residence on Flagstaff Road was informed about the sighting by a staffer of the CM residence. The staffer saw the drone when was sitting in the lawns of the CM residence, he said. Following the information, police personnel, including senior officers, rushed to the spot, but no drone was visible at that time, the officer said. A written submission has been received from the CM's camp office and legal process is underway, the DCP said.

MANISH SISODIA'S WIFE ADMITTED TO HOSPITAL

NEW DELHI : Former Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia's wife who is suffering from an autoimmune disorder was admitted to a private hospital here, sources said on Tuesday. "Seema Sisodia is suffering from an autoimmune disorder, multiple sclerosis. Her condition had deteriorated and she had to be hospitalised," a source said.

DELHI CM PUSHES TECHNOLOGY, LAUNCHES 180 WEBSITES

NEW DELHI : Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday inaugurated 180 new websites of 50 departments of the Delhi government and stressed on using artificial intelligence to make services more accessible to the common people. Some of the departments whose websites were inaugurated include the transport and the public works departments. The 180 websites of 50 departments have been integrated into one portal of the Delhi government. The old websites were driven by old technology and weren't tab friendly.

FIRE IN DELHI'S SAROJINI NAGAR MARKET

NEW DELHI : A fire broke out at Sarojini Nagar market in south Delhi early on Tuesday and was doused within an hour, officials said. Fire department officials received information about the fire around 2.20 am. Five fire tenders were rushed to the spot and doused the flames in an hour-long effort. There was no casualty, officials added. "The fire erupted at around 2 am. Six to seven shops and 20 stalls were destroyed. The fire brigade reached the location by 2:30 am. "Had the fire brigade not come on time, the fire would have caused more damage.

DO-OR-DIE

BJP, AAP GEAR UP FOR DELHI'S MAYORAL POLL TO BE HELD TODAY

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Stage is set for the high-stakes Delhi mayoral election on Wednesday which will be a direct contest between incumbent Shelly Oberoi from the AAP and BJP leader Shikha Rai.

The AAP is the ruling party in the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD). The two candidates, current mayor Oberoi and BJP's Rai, had earlier filed their nominations for the Delhi mayoral poll slated to be held on 26 April, officials had said.

Oberoi was elected as the Delhi mayor on February 22. She had defeated BJP's Rekha



AAP leader Shelly Oberoi.

Gupta by a margin of 34 votes. Oberoi polled 150 votes, while Gupta received 116 of the total 266 votes polled. The voting was held at the Civic Centre — the headquarters of the MCD, where the fresh mayoral poll will be held. The post of mayor

in the national capital sees five single-year terms on a rotational basis, with the first year reserved for women, the second for the open category, the third for the reserved category and the remaining two again for the open category.



BJP leader Shikha Rai.

The city gets a new mayor after the end of a financial year. Oberoi will continue to hold charge till a new mayor is elected, official sources said on 3 April. Aam Aadmi Party's Oberoi and Aaley Mohammad Iqbal filed their

nominations earlier this month for the posts of mayor and deputy mayor for a possible second consecutive term, with the Arvind Kejriwal-led party exuding confidence that its candidates are poised for a win.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) too has entered the fray and senior party leader Rai, the councillor from the Greater Kailash-1 ward, is its candidate for the mayoral poll.

Four nominations were received by the municipal secretary's office — two each for the posts of mayor and deputy mayor. The last day for filing nominations for the mayoral poll was 18 April.

DISPLEASURE OVER LAXITY

Delays in RO plant installation create havoc among people

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday expressed displeasure over "laxity" in the work of installation of reverse-osmosis (RO) plants in water-scarce areas of the national capital and directed officials to complete it soon.

The Delhi government is installing 500 RO plants with tube wells in water-stressed areas, including

more are coming up in the Hari Nagar assembly constituency. "A total of more than 450 places in Delhi were identified for installation of RO systems, laxity is being seen in this work, on which the chief minister expressed his displeasure and gave strict instructions that this work should be done seriously and soon," the chief minister's office (CMO) said on Twitter. It said that at a review meeting, Kejriwal

DELHI'S RO PLANTATION

- Installation of plants: 500
- DJB to set up: 30
- Place where it is to be installed above: 450

unauthorised colonies. Currently, residents in such areas depend on water tankers. Under a pilot project, the Delhi Jal Board is setting up 30 RO plants of 50,000 litres per day (50 KLD) capacity. Two such plants have already been installed at Jharoda and Shakur Basti. Two

gave strict instructions to officials that no laxity and delay will be acceptable in the work of providing clean water to the people of Delhi. "Action should be taken on priority basis on the complaint of dirty water and there should be a permanent solution to that problem.

ONE MONTH'S TIME

RECOGNISE TRANSGENDER AS THIRD GENDER FOR FREE BUS TRAVEL: HC

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has granted one month's time to the city government authorities to decide a representation to legally recognise transgender community as the third gender in bus tickets issued by the DTC. In case of non-compliance, the managing director of the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) shall remain present before it on 18 August the court ordered.

The court's order came on a contempt petition filed for

"wilful non-compliance" of an October 2022 order of a division bench, which had granted four months to the authorities to take a view on the representation.

The order of the division bench had come on public interest litigation by a person belonging to the transgender community, who sought legal recognition of the community as the third gender in bus tickets and provide free travel for them in DTC buses. Women travelling in DTC buses are issued pink tickets that allow them to travel for free.

RESPONSE

WRONG TO SAY 'I AM RAISING QUESTIONS OVER PULWAMA ATTACK': SATYA PAL MALIK

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Former Jammu and Kashmir governor Satya Pal Malik has said that it was "wrong" to state that he was raising questions over the 2019 Pulwama terror attack only after demitting office.

His remark came on Monday in response to a question on Union Home Minister Amit Shah's recent statement that he was "levelling allegations after parting ways with us". "It is wrong to state that I raised this issue when I was out of power," he told reporters in Sikar in Rajasthan, adding that he had raised it on the day of the attack.

Forty Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel were killed in the terrorist attack on a convoy of security vehicles in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama in February 2019. Malik, who was then governor of Jammu and Kashmir, has recently alleged intelligence failures and that the central government denied aircraft for the



Satya Pal Malik

movement of security personnel.

Asked about the allegation that the CBI's recent summons to Malik was linked to his criticism of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his government, Shah had last week said such a charge is not true as he was called by the probe agency earlier too.

In an interview with India Today, Shah had said, "I can say with complete conviction that the BJP has done nothing that needs to be covered up. If someone is levelling allegations after parting ways with us, then

it should be evaluated accordingly by the media and people."

On Monday, Malik said Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is a "serious candidate" for the post of prime minister and that "if it is in his destiny, he will become one".

Asked about the BJP's prospects in the Lok Sabha elections next year, he said, "I wish them well, but in politics and elections, no one knows what will happen. The current situation is difficult for them, they will have to do some things."

ACCOMMODATION

JNU students began sit-in protest, demanding hostel rooms

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A group of students are on a protest at the Jawaharlal Nehru University here alleging they are yet to be assigned hostel rooms despite being in the second semester which has forced them to put up at rented accommodations.

The protesting students began a sit-in at the Dean of Students' office in the university on Monday evening. They said the demonstration would continue till their demands are met. There was no immediate response from the

JNU administration over this. The protesters also claimed that they have been locked inside the office and denied "basic necessities of accessing the toilets".

In a statement, the Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union (JNUSU) said, "Students have been sitting inside the Dean of Students' Office since Monday, demanding hostels. Despite being into the second semester, students are being forced to stay in rented rooms and pay exorbitant rents." The students also alleged that the

handover of the new hostel Barak was being delayed, adding to the woes of the students. "The construction of Barak Hostel is with the CPWD, which has given the contract to a private company. This private company has failed to pay the workers and supervisors on time, due to which work has been stopped. The handover of the hostel is being delayed indefinitely as a result," the JNUSU claimed. "The students have also demanded that all women students who are in dorms be given hostels immediately.

TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN SYSTEM

Centre plans to digitise 3,108 crore documents as part of e-Courts project

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The government plans to digitise over 3,100 crore documents as part of the phase-III of the e-Courts project which is likely to be formally launched soon, sources said on Tuesday.

On the table is also a plan to set up solar power facilities for ensuring seamless availability of information communication (ICT) infrastructure at a cost of Rs 229.50 crore. A total of 1,530 solar facilities would be installed as part of the project.

The Department of Justice in the Union Law Ministry is coordinating the implementation of phase-III of the ambitious project.

The sources said 3,108 crore documents, including legacy records and pending cases, would be digitised at a cost of Rs 2038.40 crore in phase-III.

The centrally-sponsored scheme with a timeline of

four years was announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her latest Budget speech. The financial outlay has been pegged at Rs 7,210 crore.

The phase-III of the e-Courts project envisions a judicial system that is more accessible, efficient and equitable for every individual who seeks justice, or is part of the delivery of justice, according to details available in the public domain.

It envisions an infrastructure for the judicial system that is natively digital.

Phase-III will enable any litigant or lawyer to file a case from anywhere and at any time without having to go to multiple windows in the premises of any specific court.

It also intends to create a technology-driven system in which administrative processes such as collection of different kinds of fees and applications are simplified.

SEX RATIO PARITY

ABORTION BASED ON SEX DETERMINATION BEHIND GENDER DISPARITY: DELHI HC

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Abortion based on sex-determination is a powerful method of perpetuating gender inequalities, the Delhi High Court has said, emphasising the law must have teeth to sternly deal with such situations till attitudinal changes at family level are achieved.

The restriction of access to foetal sex information is directly related to the problem of misogyny which affects women of all socioeconomic backgrounds not only in this country but globally as well, the court said. Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma made the observations while passing a slew of directions to the authorities for a strict implementation of the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act, 1994 (PCPNDT Act). The high court's order came while

refusing to quash an FIR against a doctor who was booked under several sections of the PCPNDT Act after a raid was conducted at a hospital here on information regarding illegal sex determination. It, however, set aside as bad in law the cognisance taken by the trial court in the absence of any complaint filed by appropriate authority under Section 28 of the Act. The court said the well-intended and well-implemented PCPNDT Act and Rules are means for intervention to combat gender imbalance. "The social context of the Act as well as the offence need to be remembered, and it has to be kept in mind that the gender-based violence, whether be it safety of a female child after birth or even when she is not born, is not only the concern of the State, but also of the Courts of law," it said.

RELIEF

HC GRANTS BAIL TO MAN ACCUSED OF PASSING INFORMATION TO PAKISTAN

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday granted bail to a primary school teacher who was arrested in 2015 for being part of a "network" involved in alleged anti-national activities supported by Pakistan-based intelligence operatives.

According to the prosecution, the accused was involved in the process of collection of information regarding deployment of the Indian Army and the Border Security Force in Jammu and Kashmir, and passing the same to persons

across the border, thus endangering national security. Justice Amit Sharma said the accused, who was facing trial under Official Secrets Act for serious and grave offences, satisfied the requirement of section 436A of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) for bail after undergoing half the sentence provided for the offence he is charged with. The court said although the prosecution made an assertion with regard to the likelihood of the accused affecting the security of the country and the chance of his absconding if released.

IN THE COURTS

HC REFUSES TO GRANT URGENT HEARING TO GOOGLE

NEW DELHI : The Delhi High Court on Tuesday refused to grant an urgent hearing to Google on its challenge to a single-judge bench order asking the Competition Commission of India (CCI) to consider a plea of the Alliance of Digital India Foundation (ADIF) against the tech giant's policy of allowing the use of third-party payment processors for paid app downloads and in-app purchases on a commission basis. The matter was mentioned for an urgent listing by senior advocate Sandeep Sethi, who appeared for Google before a division bench of Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma and Justice Subramonium Prasad.

HC ORDERS CHIEF SECRETARY TO FILE PERSONAL AFFIDAVIT

RAIPUR : The Chhattisgarh High Court recently directed the State Government's Chief Secretary to file a personal affidavit explaining why no steps are taken to verify physical disability certificates as per a circular issued by him in 2019. The petitioner had previously moved before the High Court in 2019, filing a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in which he emphasized the widespread misuse of 'disability certificates' issued under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016. While disposing of the case, the Court had then ordered the Chief Secretary of the State to issue appropriate directives to the relevant authorities to guarantee that no one other than a physically disabled person is allowed to profit from the Act's provisions.

SC ADJOURNED HEARING ON MUSLIM RESERVATION ISSUE

NEW DELHI : The Supreme Court on Tuesday adjourned the hearing on a petition challenging the Karnataka government's decision to scrap 4% OBC reservation for Muslims until 9 May. Meanwhile, the Karnataka government has reiterated that no admissions or postings will be made based on the government directive till 9 May. The Karnataka government had previously requested an adjournment and assured a bench of Justices KM Joseph and BV Nagarathna that no new appointments or admissions would be made based on Karnataka's ruling scrapping Muslim reservation until the next date of hearing. The state administration also informed the court last week.

RESIDENTS OF SOCIETY NEED TO PROVIDE WATER TO ANIMALS: HC

MUMBAI : In a dispute between a housing society and its members over feeding stray dogs and feeding points, the Bombay High Court has stated that it would be an obligation of the residents of the society to always make provisions for adequate water to be made available to the animals, especially considering the onset of the summer season. In its decision recently, a division bench of Justices Girish Kulkarni and R N Laddha acknowledged the petitioner's, an animal lover, assertion that she would like to supply drinking water to the dogs. "The parties must resolve the dispute amicably because drinking water should not be denied to the dogs," the court observed.

TOP OF THE DAY

10% REBATE ON
PROPERTY TAX IN
HARYANA

CHANDIGARH: Haryana Urban Local Bodies Minister Kamal Gupta said on Tuesday that people will get a 10 percent rebate on property tax payments made in ULB units until 31 July this fiscal. He directed officers to run an awareness campaign to make the public aware of this initiative so that the maximum number of people could avail themselves of the rebate. Gupta was holding a meeting with officers of Urban Local Bodies (ULB) in Sonapat, according to an official statement here. He said the state government has started several public welfare schemes to improve the standard of living of the common people, and the benefits of these schemes are being directly provided to the people.

3 COPS INJURED
IN PCR-TRACTOR
COLLISION

GURUGRAM: Three police personnel were injured after a tractor-tanker collided with a PCR van that was part of Haryana BJP president OP Dhankar's convoy near Himgiri Chowk here, police said on Tuesday. The tractor-tanker driver allegedly came on the wrong side of the road, which led to the accident, they added. After the collision, the tractor overturned, and the PCR van was badly damaged. All three police personnel were injured, the complaint added. The driver of the tractor fled after the incident, and the vehicle did not have a number plate. The tractor-tanker has been impounded, and a hunt is on to nab the driver, a police official said.

NEPALI NATIONAL
ARRESTED FOR
MURDER

SHIMLA: A Nepali national who killed his wife two months ago was arrested on Tuesday after the mutilated body of the deceased was recovered from a field, police said. The incident was reported in the Madog area of the Chopal subdivision of Shimla district. The body was recovered after the owner of an orchard here found shoes and clothes on his property and informed the police, they said, adding that the forensic team identified the deceased as 27-year-old Maya. The woman had been reported missing for two months, they said. An investigation revealed that Maya was killed by her husband, Gopal, in February.

SMUGGLER HELD WITH
1KG OF HEROIN IN
PUNJAB

HOSHIARPUR: A man was arrested with 1 kg of heroin in his possession near Mahilpur, police said on Tuesday. The man, identified as Sokha, was intercepted during a special check at Harbans Gate in Mahilpur here on Monday night, they said. Fifty injections filled with narcotics and 25 syringes were found in his possession, they said. Sokha was booked under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, the police added.

DEATH OF A DOYEN

END OF AN ERA IN INDIAN POLITICS:
BADAL'S DEMISE LEAVES A VOIDTDG NETWORK
CHANDIGARH

Five-time former Punjab chief minister and Shiromani Akali Dal patriarch Parkash Singh Badal, known for his winsome humility and strong rural roots, died on Tuesday. He was 95. "Mr. Badal passed away at around 8 p.m.," hospital director Abhijeet Singh told The hospital issued a medical bulletin shortly afterwards in which it said, "Despite appropriate medical management, S. Parkash Singh Badal succumbed to his illness. Fortis Hospital Mohali deeply condoles the death of S. Parkash Singh Badal."

During his long political career, Badal served the state as chief minister five times: 1970-71, 1977-80, 1997-2002, 2007-12, and 2012-17. At 94, Badal last year became the country's oldest candidate to fight a state election when he entered the electoral battle for the 13th time but could not save his pocket borough of Lambi in Muktsar district, only his second defeat in a political career spanning more than seven decades.



Parkash Singh Badal (8 December 1927- 25 April 2023)

Born on December 8, 1927, in Abul Khurana, near Malout, Badal graduated from

the Forman Christian College, Lahore. His political journey began in 1947, when he became the 'Sarpanch' (village head) of Badal village, then in Bathinda district. Thereafter, he became the chairman of the block samiti.

He became an MLA for

the first time in 1957, when he was elected to the Punjab Assembly from Malout constituency as a Congress member. He then moved to the Gidderbaha assembly seat from where he was elected as an MLA on a SAD ticket during the 1969 mid-term poll. Badal was re-elected in the 1972 elections, but as the SAD could not form a government, he became the leader of the opposition.

Badal was chief minister for 15 months in 1970-71 and for 32 months in 1977-1980. During the 1977 elections, he again won the Gidderbaha constituency and became the chief minister of the SAD-Janata Party government. His government passed the Punjab Women and Children Development and Welfare Corporation Bill, 1979, to ensure the development of women and children in the state. He was again elected to the state assembly in the June 1980 and

September 1985 elections from the Gidderbaha assembly constituency.

In 1986, Badal formed the Shiromani Akali Dal (Badal). Badal, after shifting to Lambi constituency, was elected legislator in 1997 and became the chief minister on February 12 of that year as the leader of the SAD-BJP government.

During this tenure, his government took the decision to provide free electricity and waive land revenue for farmers. Badal was re-elected from Lambi seat in 2002, 2007, 2012 and 2017. In 1967, he lost the Gidderbaha seat to the Congress' Harcharan Singh Brar by a margin of just 57 votes. This was his first electoral loss. The second came last year. The grand old man of Punjab politics has not been keeping well for the past few years. He was hospitalised in June of last year following complaints related to gastritis and bronchial asthma.

RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT

Jasvir under police remand, protests continue
in Morinda against sacrilege incidentTDG NETWORK
RUPNAGAR

Jasvir Singh, accused of desecrating the Guru Granth Sahib and hitting two priests at a gurdwara in Morinda, was sent to two-day police remand by district court even as markets remained shut in the town over the incident. On Tuesday, Jasvir was produced before the court of judicial magistrate (first class) in the district court complex here amid tight security arrangements. Jasvir Singh was arrested on Monday on charges of hurting religious sentiments and attempting to murder. Director General of Punjab Police Guarav Yadav in Chandigarh said police are investigating the



Stills of Jasvir under custody and Morinda protests.

matter, and if there is any conspiracy behind the unfortunate incident, it will be exposed.

On Tuesday, shops in Morinda town remained

closed, and police were deployed as a group of people continued to protest against a sacrilege incident at a gurdwara. The protests started on Monday after a man alleg-

edly hit two Sikh priests and desecrated the Guru Granth Sahib at the Gurdwara Kotwali Sahib in Morinda. Jasvir Singh was arrested by the police and charged with hurting religious sentiments and attempting murder.

Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, prominent political figures from all parties, the Akal Takht Jathedar Giani Harpreet Singh, and SGPC President Harjinder Singh Dhami all expressed their disdain of the occurrence.

The demonstration was staged at Verka Chowk in the city on Tuesday by the agitators, including "Nihangs," who demanded the culprits receive harsh punishment. In a video that surfaced on social media, the

man wearing shoes could be seen entering the sanctum sanctorum of Kotwali Sahib gurdwara after crossing the railing and then hitting two 'granthis' who were reciting from the Guru Granth Sahib and then pushing the holy book.

Jasvir Singh, who works as an electrician, was later overpowered by devotees present in the shrine and beaten up. He was then handed over to the police. On Monday, police said the accused had been booked under IPC sections 295 A (deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs) and 307 (attempt to murder).

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

14,000 MSME TO GENERATE
3.5 LAKH JOBS: HARYANA CMTDG NETWORK
GURUGRAM

Candidates who have registered with the Kaushal Rozgar Nigam Limited (HKRNL) portal will get jobs in the private sector, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar said on Tuesday.

"About 8 lakh youth in the state are registered on the HKRNL portal. The private sector can meet its manpower requirements through this portal," Khattar said. Addressing the 'Corporate Vaartha' programme, he said that the government will help set up 14,000 MSME units to generate 3.5 lakh job opportunities under the Programme to Accelerate Development for MSME Advancement (PADMA) Yojana.

HKRNL CEO Makarand Pandurang said that 373 PhD holders, 45,342 post-graduates, and 1,33,480 graduates, among others, are registered with the HKRNL. Interacting with the corporate representatives at the event, the chief minister said that a database of families has been prepared on the basis of income in Haryana through Parivar Pehchan Patra (PPP).

In this database, there are 13 lakh families whose income is less than Rs 1 lakh per year and 29 lakh families whose income is less than Rs 1.80 lakh. It is the priority of the government to provide self-employment and government and private sector employment to these families, he said. He also said that the unique programme of PPP in Haryana is being appreciated across the country, and many



CM Khattar at Corporate Vaartha programme on Tuesday.

states are also following it.

"Various states of the country have sought information about the terms and conditions of HKRNL to implement the same in their states," Chief Secretary Sanjeev Kaushal said. "HKRNL has been set up with the objective of providing contractual manpower to all government entities in Haryana in a transparent, robust, and equitable manner. The candidates hired through this Nigam also get EPF and ESI benefits, and now, going a step further, the government has taken a new initiative to provide employment opportunities in private institutions through this portal," he said.

ANTI-CORRUPTION

HARYANA ACB ON TOES,
TABS ON SENIOR OFFICIALSRAVINDER MALIK
CHANDIGARH

With around one year left in the forthcoming assembly elections in Haryana, the BJP-led government claims to take stern action against those officials involved in taking bribes during its regime so far. It is evident from the last few months that the ACB has been taking action on a large scale, and hardly a day passes when some government employee or officer is not caught taking bribes. The BJP government is leaving no stone unturned to set up its image as an anti-corruption government.

In continuation to this, it is pertinent to mention that the opposite faction accused the ruling faction of taking action against the honest officials with ill intentions. The issue of arresting a woman for allegedly taking a bribe of Rs 3 lakh for passing bills in Haryana Kaushal Vikas Mission recently on behalf of a senior IAS official led to uproar in the state. The involvement of high officials in it is echoing across the state. The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) has questioned the accused senior IAS officer, Vi-

jay Dahiya, for the case since it surfaced.

Apart from this, the bureau is also keeping an eye on other suspicious officers and employees of the department. It has now come to light that the bureau is now preparing to investigate the history of officers with a dark past. In light of the ongoing scenario, it is believed that now the bureau is engaged in brainstorming on preparing a list of such officers. In a way, the bureau has been given a free hand by the government as well. Apart from this, the issue continues to remain in the political corridors.

As per information provided by the Bureau, five HCS officers were arrested on corruption charges during the year. Also, two chief engineers, a superintending engineer and an executive engineer, a chief accounts officer and a joint director of the urban local bodies department have been arrested on charges of misappropriation of public funds. In addition, a total of 193 government servants, including 27 gazetted officers, 166 non-gazetted officers, and 27 private individuals, have been arrested during 2022.

TRIBUTE

PM Modi, host of
leaders condole demise
of Parkash Singh BadalTDG NETWORK
CHANDIGARH

Prime Minister Narendra Modi described his demise as a "personal loss" and said he was a colossal figure in Indian politics who contributed greatly to the nation. "Extremely saddened by the passing away of Shri Parkash Singh Badal Ji. He was a colossal figure in Indian politics and a remarkable statesman who contributed greatly to our nation," Modi said in a tweet. Badal worked tirelessly for the progress of Punjab and anchored the state through critical times, the prime minister said. "Parkash Singh Badal's passing away is a personal loss for me. I have interacted closely with him for many decades and learned so much from him."

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said Badal played a significant role in Punjab's politics for decades and made several noteworthy contributions towards the welfare of farmers and other weaker sections of society. "Badal Sahab was the son of soil who remained connected to his roots all his life. I fondly remember my interactions with him on several issues," he added. Punjab Governor Banwarilal Purohit, Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, and a host of other leaders condoled the demise of Shiromani Akali Dal patriarch Parkash Singh Badal on Tuesday. Expressing his condolences, the chief minister, Bhagwant Mann, said, "May the Almighty give the family strength to bear the tragic loss. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath expressed grief at the demise of Badal. In a tweet in Hindi, he expressed his condolences and said, "May God grant the departed soul a place in his supreme abode and strength to his bereaved supporters and family members to bear this immense loss." Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president J. P. Nadda said Badal was a towering political figure whose contributions to the development of Punjab are immense and will always be remembered.

KOTKAPURA POLICE FIRING

SIT files supplementary
chargesheet in courtTDG NETWORK
CHANDIGARH

A Punjab Police SIT probing the 2015 Kotkapura police firing incident in which two men were killed submitted a supplementary chargesheet in a local court in Faridkot district on Tuesday, official sources said. The 2,400-page charge sheet was filed by the Special Investigation Team, headed by Additional Director General of Police L. K. Yadav.

The SIT had filed a 7,000-page chargesheet in the matter on February 24. In the first chargesheet, the SIT had named the then Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal, then deputy CM Sukhbir Singh Badal, and ex-DGP Sumedh Saini, along with several others. Sukhbir Badal and Sumedh Saini were named as the "masterminds of conspiracy for use of illegal excessive force to hide the inaction" of the state on three sacrilege incidents in Faridkot. Badal, the then-state chief minister, was blamed for "facilitating

the execution of the conspiracy" in the 7,000-page charge sheet.

The series of incidents that threw several districts of the state into turmoil began with the theft of a 'bir' (copy) of the Guru Granth Sahib from Faridkot district in 2015. Soon after, several handwritten sacrilegious posters were found pasted on walls at places in the district, while people in Bargari village found torn pages of the holy book scattered around.

The incidents triggered vociferous protests in Faridkot. As the police mounted resistance to rein in agitations, Gurjeet Singh and Kishan Bhagwan Singh, were killed in Behbal Kalan and a few injured at Kotkapura in Faridkot in police firing. While the Yadav-led SIT is probing the Kotkapura firing case, another SIT led by Additional Director General of Police Naunihal Singh is investigating the Behbal Kalan firing incident.

TRAFFIC DISRUPTION

50-yr-old bridge
collapses in
HimachalTDG NETWORK
NAHAN

According to officials, a highly loaded vehicle caused a 50-year-old steel bridge to collapse, stopping traffic in the region. Late on Monday night, the bridge collapsed. According to them, the truck's driver was hurt and is receiving medical attention at the local hospital.

The bridge, which spans the Dadahu-Renuka-Sangrah-Haripurdhara road at Danoi Khud, 6 kilometres from Dadahu village in this part of Sirmour district, was constructed in 1972 and has a per-vehicle load capacity of 10 tonnes. The locals claimed that the bridge had eroded over the previous 30 years due to the

fact that trucks frequently utilised it to transport up to 40 tonnes of limestone from the mines in Sangrah.

Sangrah Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Mukesh Dadwal said the traffic to and from Sangrah-Haripurdhara and Dadahu-Renuka has been diverted since Monday night. Commuters have been advised to commute on a local-Khud Dravil road.

Ram Bhaj, a local resident of Renuka Ji, said Sangrah is only 25 km away, but due to the current diversion through the Jarag-Khud Dravil road, commuters will now have to cover around 60 km. The affected road is especially busy during the summer as a large number of tourists visit Haripurdhara from April to June.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Parliament has power; how far can courts go into it, asks SC

and PS Narasimha, said. Observing that there is no denying that there is a link between the 1954 Act and the personal laws of various religions, the bench said, "Therefore, you cannot confine to the Special Marriage Act and it has to go beyond it."

On the fourth day of the hearing, senior advocate Saurabh Kirpal, who appeared in the court on behalf of the petitioners, vehemently pleaded for legal validation of same-sex marriage, saying seven per cent of the country's GDP will be affected if the LGBTQIA++ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, pansexual, two-spirit, asexual and ally) are denied this fundamental right.

He said gay and lesbian people are also like heterosexuals and if their marriage is not registered here, they will leave for another country for better rights, and contended that it will be a "gay brain-drain".

The bench referred to section 21A of the Special Marriage Act, which provides certain reliefs to Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs or Jains in property and other related issues if they solemnise their marriages under the law, and said it is very specific and if the court has to make some provisions of reading it, it has to be consistent with other provisions.

The bench told senior advocate Menaka Guruswamy, who represented the petitioners, that suppose the top court substitutes the terms man and woman with "spouse" or "person" in section 4 of the Act, which deals with conditions relating to solemnisation of special marriages, the question will be can it "stop at that today".

"Dr Guruswamy, the point really is that the fact that the canvas which is covered by these petitions also falls or does fall within the domain of Parliament is undisputed," the CJI said, adding, "You cannot dispute the fact that Parliament has the legislative power over the canvas which is covered by these petitions, which is Entry 5 of the concurrent list," the bench said. Guruswamy contended that the Centre cannot come to the court and argue that this a matter for Parliament as when the fundamental rights of an individual are violated, he or she has the right to approach the court.

Referring to the 1997 Vishaka verdict that laid down the guidelines to handle cases of sexual harassment at workplace, the CJI said it was a classic example where the court laid down the framework pending the legislature coming up with a law in this regard. "The test really is this--how far does the court go," the bench said.

Referring to the submissions advanced by the petitioners, it said there is no doubt that adoption, succession and intestacy are matters governed by personal laws even today. "My lords have been that north star, not just for LGBTQ rights, my lords have been the north star in many facets of fundamental rights pre the legislature walking the talk," Guruswamy said.

She said the petitioners are not asking for anything special and are only asking for a workable interpretation of the Special Marriage Act. "We are also part of 'we the people' and we are citizens of this country. The basic structure (of the Constitution) also belongs to us," Guruswamy said.

The bench said the petitioners are right in asserting that marriage itself is a bouquet of rights and though they have identified three aspects -- gratuity, provident fund and pension -- "actually, it does not stop at that at all".

Chinese defence minister to hold talks with Rajnath Singh

prolonged eastern Ladakh standoff which has severely strained bilateral ties.

Considered a close associate of Chinese President Xi Jinping, Gen. Li's India visit is regarded significant as it comes amid the vexed standoff between the armies of India and China in eastern Ladakh since May 2020.

"Upon invitation, Chinese State Councillor and Defence Minister General Li Shangfu will attend the meeting of the Council of Defense Ministers of the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in New Delhi, India, from April 27-28," China's Ministry of National Defence (MND) said in a statement.

"During the meeting, General Li will address the conference and meet with the heads of delegations from relevant countries to communicate and exchange views on the issues of the international and regional situation, as well as defence and security cooperation", the statement said.

Gen Li is widely expected to hold a bilateral meeting with Defence Minister Singh and discuss the progress of the military and diplomatic talks to resolve the festering standoff.

Ahead of Gen Li's visit, the Chinese defence ministry spoke positively about the 18th round of the China-India Corps Commander Level Meeting held at the Chushul-Moldo border meeting point on the Chinese side on 23 April. It said both sides have agreed to "speed up" the settlement of "relevant issues" related to the prolonged standoff in eastern Ladakh, besides safeguarding peace in the border areas. The two sides had a friendly and candid exchange of views on relevant issues, said the Defence Ministry's statement.

"Under the guidance of the leaders of the two countries and based on the achievements of the meeting between the two foreign ministers, both sides agreed to maintain close contact and dialogue through military and diplomatic channels, speed up the settlement of relevant issues on the western section of the China-India boundary, and continue to safeguard the peace and tranquillity in the border areas," it said.

First batch of stranded Indians leaves Sudan in naval ship

Arabian city of Jeddah. "First batch of stranded Indians leave Sudan under #OperationKaveri. INS Sumedha with 278 people onboard departs Port Sudan for Jeddah," Bagchi tweeted. India on Monday launched 'Operation Kaveri' to bring back its nationals from Sudan that has been witnessing fierce fighting following a power struggle between the regular army and a paramilitary force.

On Sunday, India said it has positioned two transport aircraft of the IAF in Jeddah and naval ship INS Sumedha



Port Sudan: Stranded Indians queue up to board INS Sumedha as they leave violence-hit Sudan for Jeddah under 'Operation Kaveri', in Port Sudan, Tuesday, April 25, 2023. PTI

at Port Sudan as part of its contingency plans to evacuate the stranded Indians. The government had on Friday said it was focusing on the safety of over 3,000 Indian citizens currently located throughout Sudan. The deadly fighting between Sudan's army and a paramilitary group for the past 12 days has reportedly left around 400 people dead.

SCO defence ministers to discuss ways to combat terrorism

The visit by Li to India would come amid the three-year border standoff in eastern Ladakh, and days after India and China held a fresh round of military talks. The SCO meeting will be chaired by Singh. "The defence ministers will discuss amongst other issues concerning regional peace and security, counter terrorism efforts within SCO and an effective multilateralism," the ministry said.

It said India attaches special importance to SCO in promoting multilateral, political, security, economic and people-to-people interactions in the region.

"The SCO pursues its policy based on the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations, non-interference in internal affairs, equality of all member states and mutual understanding and respect for opinions of each of them," it added.

The ministry said the ongoing engagement with SCO has helped India promote its relations with the countries in the region with which New Delhi shared civilisational linkages, and is considered its extended neighbourhood.

The SCO member countries are Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, India, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Apart from the member states, two observer countries -- Belarus and Iran -- will also be participating in the SCO defence ministers' meeting.

People familiar with the matter said the Pakistani defence minister may attend the meeting through video conferencing. The SCO was founded at a summit in Shanghai in 2001 by the presidents of Russia, China, the Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

Over the years, it has emerged as one of the largest trans-regional international organisations. India and Pakistan became its permanent members in 2017.

'FORCED TO RUN FROM PILLAR TO POST FOR JUSTICE'

NEW DELHI: In a petition filed by wrestlers in the Supreme Court said that they are being forced to run from pillar to post to get justice.

"The attitude of the police was shockingly rude towards the complainants and this is a grave injustice and a clear violation of their basic human rights", stated the wrestlers in the petition.

The petition further stated that the police has taken the complaints and did not even issue a formal receipt of the complaint. "As per print media, it is in circulation that the accused in fact has been given clean-chit in the matter and the committee report is lying at the Ministry of Sports and despite requests the report is not being made public", the wrestlers further stated in the petition.

The wrestlers also added that even after being sexually, emotionally, mentally, and physically exploited by the accused and his close aides on numerous occasions, the Petitioners along with other wrestlers mustered up the courage to raise their voices before the appropriate authority against such acts and sat on protest (dharna) at Jantar Mantar seeking appropriate action against the perpetrators.

Rahul moves Gujarat HC in defamation case

Congress advocate BM Mangukia confirmed Gandhi has filed an appeal in the HC here against the sessions court order. The HC is expected to soon take up Gandhi's application for hearing.

A metropolitan magistrate's court in Surat on 23 March sentenced the former Congress president to two years in jail after convicting him under Indian Penal Code sections 499 and 500 (dealing with criminal defamation) in the 2019 case filed by Gujarat BJP MLA Purnesh Modi.

The case was registered against Gandhi following the BJP MLA's complaint over his remark, "How come all thieves have Modi as the common surname?" made during an election rally at Kolar in Karnataka on 13 April 2019.

Soon after the magistrate's court verdict, the 52-year-old politician, elected to the Lok Sabha from Wayanad in Kerala in 2019, was disqualified as a Member of Parliament under provisions of the Representation of the People Act.

Later, Gandhi, a four-time MP, filed an appeal before the Surat sessions court against the magistrate's verdict, saying his conviction was "erroneous and patently perverse".

A stay on conviction by the sessions court could have paved the way for Gandhi's reinstatement as an MP.

Arguing against Gandhi's plea for a stay on conviction in the sessions court, Purnesh Modi's lawyers had said his client felt offended because the Congress leader tried to defame all people with the Modi surname through his remark.

Ex-Punjab CM Parkash Singh Badal dead

close observation in the ICU, at Fortis Hospital, Mohali. Badal was admitted to ICU on 21 April, following complaints of breathing difficulties, according to the party.

Parkash Singh Badal was an Indian politician who was

Chief Minister of Punjab state from 1970 to 1971, from 1977 to 1980, from 1997 to 2002, and from 2007 to 2017. He was also the patron of Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), a Sikh-centered regional political party. He was the president of the party from 1995 to 2008, when he was replaced by his son Sukhbir Singh Badal. As the patron of SAD he exercises a strong influence on the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee and Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee. The Government of India awarded him the second-highest civilian award, Padma Vibhushan, in 2015.

Violent protesters torch police station in Bengal



Flames billow out after a group of protesters allegedly set Kaliaganj Police Station on fire during a protest against the death of a minor girl, in North Dinajpur district, Tuesday, April 25, 2023. PTI

been incensed by a video which showed four police personnel dragging the naked body of the teenager on the road.

On Tuesday, hundreds of people, belonging to the Adivasi and Rajbongshi communities, had organised a "thana gherao" programme in protest. Protesters broke barricades and threw stones at the police station, an officer said. Later, the police personnel started a baton charge, fired rubber bullets and burst teargas shells but could not stop the mob from entering the police station and setting it on fire, he said. In the incident, one vehicle was also set ablaze.

Though the state administration sent in policemen from neighbouring police stations and deployed Rapid Action Force personnel in full riot gear, it failed to disperse the protesters.

Agitators refused to believe in the post-mortem report which said that the girl had consumed poison and died and that there were no marks of violence on the body.

Another group of protesters had demonstrated in front of the SP's office at Raiganj, the district headquarters, during the day. The protestors broke through two barricades but were stopped 200 metres from the SP's office by the third barricade and the heavy police bandobast.

The entire district has been on the boil following the death of the 17-year-old girl. While the police and the Trinamool Congress had said that the girl had consumed poison even before the post-mortem was completed, the girl's family had maintained that she was raped and murdered and had demanded a CBI probe.

The Opposition BJP, led by its State president Sukanta Majumdar, has been protesting against the crime and the "cover-up".

On Monday, the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) chairperson Priyank Kanoongo had said that the team of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), which visited the Kaliaganj area where violent protests broke out after the girl's body was found in a canal on Friday, had to face "all sorts of non-cooperation" from the State administration. He had promised to send a report to Union Home Minister Amit Shah. Earlier on Monday, the state administration suspended four ASIs who were seen dragging away the corpse.

BJP leaders slammed the Bengal Police for "insensitively dragging" the body of the young girl. "In this video, the body the West Bengal Police is insensitively dragging is that of a minor rape and murder victim from the Rajbongshi community in Uttar Dinajpur's Kaliaganj. Such haste is often seen when the purpose is to eliminate or dilute evidence and cover up the crime," BJP leader Amit Malviya had tweeted.

SC notice to Delhi government on plea of women wrestlers

"Issue notice. List it (for hearing) on Friday," the bench said and ordered redaction of names of complainant wrestlers from judicial records with a view to suppress their identities. The top wrestlers had said they have nothing to do with the WFI polls and would continue to press for a proper investigation into their allegations that Singh sexually harassed women athletes.

Several national award winning wrestlers have been protesting at Jantar Mantar demanding the government to make public the findings of the oversight panel that investigated the sexual harassment allegations against Singh.

4% Muslim quota to continue till 9 May: SC to Karnataka govt

government, said he will be filing the reply, which is prepared and is a bulky document on a batch of the pleas during the day.

"I will be filing it today but the problem is I (solicitor general) am in personal difficulty as arguing before the constitution bench hearing pleas related to same-sex marriage. Kindly put the matter for some other day", he told the bench. Senior advocate Dushyant Dave, appearing for the petitioners, opposed the request for adjournment by Mehta and said the hearing already has been deferred four times. Mehta said the interim order passed by the court is already in the petitioners' favour.

Dave requested the court to record the submission of Mehta that impugned orders, scrapping the quota for Muslims will not be implemented and the earlier notification dated March 30, 2002, granting the quota will hold the field till next date of hearing. The bench agreed with Dave and recorded the submission, while putting the matter for further hearing on 9 May. Mehta urged the bench to record in the order that the assurance was given by the state government without causing any prejudice to its contention. The bench recorded that the assurance was given by the state without causing any prejudice to

its contention.

On 18 April, the top court had deferred till April 25 hearing on a batch of pleas challenging scrapping of the four per cent Muslim quota in Karnataka after the state government sought time to file its reply. It had recorded the assurance given by the state government on April 13 that no quota benefits in admission to educational institutions and appointment in government jobs will be given to Vokkaligas and Lingayats will hold the field till the next date of hearing.

On April 13, the Karnataka government's decision to scrap four per cent Muslim quota ahead of the assembly polls came under the scanner of the Supreme Court, which questioned the government order and said prima facie it appeared to be on a "highly shaky ground" and "flawed".

Taking note of the observations, the Karnataka government had assured the top court that it will put on hold its March 24 order by which it had given quotas in admission to educational institutions and appointment in government jobs to Vokkaligas and Lingayats, till the next date of hearing. The four per cent reservation for Muslims was to be equally split between the two communities.

The top court said from the records tabled before it appears that the Karnataka government's decision is based on "absolutely fallacious assumption".

As states develop, country will develop faster: PM Modi

said as states develop, the country will develop faster.

He said the central government lays emphasis on cooperative federalism and believes that if the states develop, it will help in the development of the country. "As Kerala develops, India will develop faster," Modi said at an event held at the Central Stadium here. Earlier in the day, the PM flagged off the state's first Vande Bharat Express train from the Central Railway Station here. The service will connect the state capital with Kasaragod. Addressing a massive crowd at the stadium, Modi -- dressed in a traditional Kerala attire of 'kasavu' mundu, shawl and kurta -- said many are aware of the economic situations of the countries across the world. Despite those global headwinds, India has been globally seen as the 'Vibrant Spot of Development', Modi, who is on a two-day visit to the southern state since Monday, said. Most public transportation systems in the country, including the Kochi Water Metro, are made in India, he added. Global outreach programmes of the central government have benefited Indians living abroad.

The PM said there were several reasons behind the world's belief in India and these were a decisive government at the Centre, unparalleled investments in the infrastructure development by it, investments for reaping demographic dividend, skilling of youth and the central government's commitment for 'Ease of Living' and 'Ease of Doing Business'.

Pro-Khalistanis' outreach bar foreign governments from taking action

media is witnessing massive increase in pro-Khalistani content and a surge in disinformation warfare targeting India.

This event has coincided with the emergence of Khalistani entity Amrit Pal Singh back home.

All these contents have a common theme; of India violently suppressing individuals and groups that are demanding a separate Khalistan.

Officials have identified multiple Youtube 'journalists', Twitter users, who are associated with local organizations that are churning out content in support of Khalistani groups.

Some of these 'media' groups and 'journalists', investigation has revealed, were infact present at the Indian High Commission building in London last month when it was attacked by Khalistani groups. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) is investigating this attack.

Sources told the Daily Guardian a radical group, "Sikh Youth UK", based out of Birmingham, is at the forefront of anti-India activities in the UK. In September 2019, the founder of this group, Kaldip Singh Lehal and his sister Rajbinder Kaur were charged by the counter-terror police for money laundering worth £50,000 in the name Sikh charitable donations. Charges were also slapped on the founders for providing false or misleading information to the Charity Commission for England and Wales since it is not a registered entity.

Another entity that has been found to be an active member of this Khalistani group is Amneet Kaur Saini, who is working as a 'writer' for a Birmingham based news website that covers local news. Kaur had participated in the protest cum vandalism that was organized outside the Indian High Commission in London. The protests were organized to oppose the Punjab Police attempt to arrest the pro-Khalistani hardliner Amritpal Singh. During the protests, pro-Khalistani groups tried to vandalize the Indian flag at the Indian High Commission.

She also has been a vocal supporter of the release of Jagtar Singh Johal aka Jaggi Johal, who was arrested by Punjab Police on 4 November 2017 for murdering a former Indian army Brigadier (retd) Jagdish Gagneja. Johal was arrested on the basis of intelligence inputs that were provided by the British MI5 and MI6 to the Indian agencies. It is alleged that he is a vital member of the pro-Khalistani terror organization Khalistan Liberation Force (KLF).

Saini did not respond to this newspaper's mail seeking her version on the matter.

It has emerged that these protests saw the participation of members of various pro-Khalistani groups, such as Sikh Youth UK, Federation of Sikh Youths, and Sikh Youth Jatbandia. Similarly, overseas agencies had identified multiple YouTube entities like @SatlujTV which has now been shut down. These channels were propagating Khalistan sentiments.

Significantly, these Khalistani groups, have arranged a public letter that has been purportedly signed by members of 350 plus UK based Sikh Organizations in which they have asked Rishi Sunak 'to stop calling them as terrorists'.

However, inquiry has revealed that many of the people and organizations never signed this letter. The said letter and its content were devised by the officials of Pakistan intelligence agencies in order to tie the Khalistani cause to Sikh sentiments and stop Sunak administration from taking steps to control the Khalistani terror groups.

TOP OF THE DAY

5 HIV+VE COUPLES TIE NUPTIAL KNOT

LATUR: Five HIV-positive couples have tied the nuptial knot at a centre in Maharashtra's Latur district where they grew up after they were either abandoned or lost their parents to the infection. The couples entered wedlock on April 22 at Hasegaon village where a social worker started a centre called 'Happy Indian Village' under a project named 'Sevalay' to take care of one child infected by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), which causes AIDS. Over the years, the facility provided healthcare, education and shelter to many such children. Today, it has nearly 50 HIV-positive children, said founder Ravi Bapat. A total of 23 HIV-positive couples associated with the centre have so far married.

GIRLS OUTPERFORM BOYS IN UP BOARD EXAM

PRAYAGRAJ: Girls outperformed boys in the high school and intermediate examinations conducted by the UP Secondary Education Council this year, a senior official of the board said while announcing the results here on Tuesday. The pass percentage of girls in the high school examination was 93.34 per cent, while it was 86.64 per cent for the boys. In the intermediate examination, the pass percentage of boys was 69.34 per cent, while it was 83 per cent for girls. Priyanshi Soni of Sitapur topped the high school exam by scoring 98.33 per cent marks while Shubh Chhapra of Mahoba came first in the intermediate exam by scoring 97.80 per cent marks. Announcing the results, Mahendra Dev, the director of Secondary Education, said of the 28,63,621 candidates who appeared in the high school exam, 25,70,987 passed and the pass percentage was 89.78 per cent.

PHONE EXPLOSION CLAIMS GIRL'S LIFE

THRISSUR: An eight-year-old girl died when the mobile phone she was using allegedly exploded, police said on Tuesday. The mobile phone used by Thiruvilvamala resident, Adithyasree, allegedly exploded at around 10.30 PM on Monday, police said. Adithyasree was a third standard student of a school nearby. Police have registered a case and investigations are on.

ODISHA: MASKS MUST IN HEALTH FACILITIES

BHUBANESWAR: The Odisha government has made wearing face masks mandatory in all health facilities as the active Covid-19 caseload in the state crossed the 3,000 mark on Monday, an official said. Odisha now has 3,086 coronavirus-infected patients, and 181 more were cured of the disease in the last 24 hours, he said. In a letter to all stakeholders, including chief district medical officers, the public health directorate said, "In view of the rising of Covid-19 cases both in the country and in Odisha and as part of adopting Covid appropriate behaviour in health institutions.

GOVT'S INITIATIVE

'MEHANGAI RAHAT CAMP' POSTERS, BANNERS FESTOON PINK CITY JAIPUR

TDG NETWORK
JAIPUR

Posters and banners with the image of Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot against a pink backdrop and the launch date of the Rajasthan government's flagship 'Mehangai Rahat' initiative have come up across the State capital here.

'Mehangai Rahat Camp - 24 April Se' is printed on the posters put up on public squares, bus stops and along prominent streets and other roads near various roundabouts and buildings in the Pink City.

Gehlot on Monday



A poster of Rajasthan government's 'Mehangai Rahat Camp' with an image of Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, in Jaipur. PTI

launched the 'Mehangai Rahat' camps from Sanganer's Mahapura village in Jaipur district. These camps will be

organised across the state till June 30 so that the benefits of various welfare schemes of the state government

reach the beneficiaries.

Inflation is affecting people badly and that is why, the state government is providing relief by offering LPG cylinders at Rs 500 under the Ujjwala Yojana. People are unable to refill the cylinders due to their cost, so the Centre should come forward to provide relief, Gehlot said.

The Chief Minister also met the beneficiaries and the officers and employees present at the launch.

In Jaipur, posters with a dominant pink backdrop dot the city — from banners in station areas, on bus stops and pillars of the Jaipur Metro.

"A camp was organised in the heart of the old Walled City, near the famous Hawa Mahal," a local said.

Posters have also been put up on walls outside many public buildings such as the Sawai Man Singh Stadium, and banners mounted on many flyovers.

Some of the banners are huge and attract eyeballs in the Pink City. "The city has assumed a pink hue as these posters have a vibrant pink background. Even a lot of metro pillars bear these banners with images of the chief minister greeting people with folded hands," said Abhishek Kumar, a local.

IN RAJASTHAN

MAN FOUND HANGING NEAR MALI QUOTA PROTEST SITE, PROBE BEGINS

TDG NETWORK
JAIPUR

The body of a man belonging to the Mali community, which has been blocking the Jaipur-Agra national highway here demanding a separate 12 per cent quota, was found hanging from a tree near the protest site on Tuesday morning, police said.

Nitiraj Singh, the circle officer of Nadbai, said the body was found hanging from a tree along the highway around 150 metres from the

protest site.

The man has been identified as Mohan Singh. His body has been shifted to the mortuary of a nearby hospital, the police official said.

The community has been blocking the national highway for the fifth consecutive day on Tuesday, demanding more reservation in jobs and higher education. Despite a call by Murari Lal Saini, the convenor of Phule Aarakashan Sangarsh Samiti, the protesters have refused to vacate the protest site till an amicable solution is reached

through talks with the Rajasthan government.

The protesters have formed a committee to hold talks with the government over their demands in Jaipur on Tuesday.

Members of the Mali community, which falls in the OBC category, are demanding a separate 12 per cent reservation, the formation of a separate Luv Kush Welfare Board and hostel facilities for the children of the community among others. Chief Minister Gehlot also belongs to the Mali community.

WHIFFING FREEDOM

Anand Mohan to be freed after spending 14 years in jail

TDG NETWORK
PATNA

Former Bihar MP Anand Mohan, who is serving a life sentence in the killing of IAS officer G Krishnaiah, is to be set free along with 26 others who have been lodged in different prisons of the state for more than 14 years.

A notification to the effect was issued late Monday evening, when, incidentally, Mohan, who has been on parole, was celebrating the engagement of his son Chetan Anand, who is a sitting MLA of the ruling RJD in the state.

Talking to reporters, Mohan expressed his gratitude towards Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, who along with his deputy Tejashwi Yadav, was among the attendees at the gala function organised on the outskirts of Patna.

Without mentioning BSP supreme Mayawati by name, Mohan lashed out at "those who are making an issue out of the unfortunate death of G Krishnaiah".

The Telangana-born Dalit IAS officer, who was then the district magistrate of Gopalganj, was beaten to death by a mob in 1994, while his vehicle was passing through Muzaffarpur district. Anand Mohan was present on the spot at the time of the killing, where he was part of the funeral procession of Chhotan Shukla, a dreaded gangster who was pumped with bullets in Muzaffarpur town.

The sensational killing had acquired caste overtones in an era when Bihar was stirred by the Mandal wave.

COP ASSAULT CASE

COURT RELIEF TO SHARMILA AS SHE GETS BAIL

TDG NETWORK
HYDERABAD

A local court on Tuesday granted bail to YSR Telangana Party president Y S Sharmila, a day after she was arrested by police here for allegedly assaulting police personnel following an altercation with them outside her residence in the city.

Sharmila was produced before the court after her arrest on Monday which remanded her to judicial custody till May 8 and she was lodged in a jail here.

After hearing the arguments and counter-arguments, the court on Tuesday granted her conditional bail on furnishing a bail bond of Rs 30,000 and two sureties. She was asked not to leave the place without informing the police.

CLARIFICATION

Ajit Pawar says, will stay in NCP till my last breath of life

TDG NETWORK
PUNE

Ajit Pawar on Tuesday reiterated that he would stay in the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) till his last moment amid swirling rumours over his next political move.

He was speaking at a party programme in Maharashtra's Baramati.

"Several speculations about me were circulated and rumours spread. For no reason, a ring of suspicion was created around me but without falling prey to any rumours, I am continuing with my work," he said.

"I am sure you also have several questions in your mind. You also must be thinking that if I would repeat the same thing that I had done at 8 am (in an apparent reference to his early morning oath-taking in 2019). But I have already told you that I will continue to work in NCP till my last

moment and will agree with any decision that my party takes," he said.

On 23 November, 2019, Bharatiya Janata Party leader Devendra Fadnis, and Ajit Pawar were sworn in as chief minister and deputy Chief Minister, respectively, but the government fell in a few days.

Pawar said "their" only aim is to work towards public welfare and development.

Over the past few weeks, there has been much speculation over Ajit Pawar's next political move, with a few claiming that he might join hands with the Bharatiya Janta Party. Recent Comments by NCP chief Sharad Pawar and Ajit Pawar have sparked rumours that their party is getting close to the BJP.

While Pawar has said he would not quit the NCP till his last breath, his clarification hasn't ended the speculation.

CM'S APPEAL

Gehlot urges media to uphold peace amid power tussle with Pilot

TDG NETWORK
JAIPUR

Amid a tussle over leadership with his former deputy Sachin Pilot, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has said media should not make people fight.

Interacting with reporters here on Monday, he asserted the Congress' election campaign in the state would focus on the schemes and programmes launched by his government. The veteran Congress leader also exuded confidence that his party would return to power based on the work done in the last five years.

Gehlot's comments come in the backdrop of an ongoing tussle with Pilot. The duo has been at loggerheads over the chief minister's post ever since the Congress formed the government in Rajasthan in December 2018.

Recently, Pilot opened another front against Gehlot by holding a day-long fast while alleging that the state government did not take action against the alleged corruption during the tenure of the BJP regime led by Vasundhara Raje, as promised before the 2018 assembly polls.

Gehlot, however, has not offered any direct reaction to Pilot's attack. On Monday, he said the media should not make people fight.

"The media should stick to the truth and facts... The media should not make us fight with each other. They (media persons) should fulfil their duty and it is in the public interest... The media should support the government in reiterating the truth," he said.

"I do not say 'present false figures or praise us falsely' but I would like the media to run based on truth. The media is under the pressure of the central government but they should see the interest of the public," Gehlot told reporters here.

About his government's schemes and the upcoming assembly elections, the Congress leader said the party's campaign would focus on the schemes of his dispensation.

LOK SABHA ELECTIONS

ABHISHEK LAUNCHES TMC'S MISSION 2024

TDG NETWORK
KOLKATA/COOCH BEHAR

Senior TMC leader Abhishek Banerjee on Tuesday said polls to 42 Lok Sabha seats in West Bengal will be held on the issue of development and not on the "communal" narrative propagated by the BJP.

Banerjee, who earlier in the day launched a mass outreach campaign 'Trinamool ey Nabajowar' (new wave in Trinamool) from Cooch Behar district with an eye on

the upcoming rural polls in the state, said that the TMC aims at building people's panchayat in the state.

"The next Lok Sabha elections in West Bengal will be held on the issue of development. It will not be held on the issue of communal polarisation, which the BJP wants. They have to be defeated. We will fight for rights of the people of the state," he said while addressing a rally as part of the campaign. Lok Sabha polls in the country are due in 2024.

TRAGIC INCIDENT

WOMAN DELIVERS BABY IN TOILET, THROWS INFANT OUT OF WINDOW IN KOLKATA

TDG NETWORK
KOLKATA

A woman allegedly killed her newborn minutes after giving birth inside the toilet of her house in Kasba area of Kolkata, police said.

The "killing" happened on 22 April when the woman went to the toilet, and after

giving birth, threw the baby boy out of the window upon "getting perplexed after hearing him cry", a police officer said. "The woman claimed she was not aware that she was pregnant, as her menstrual cycle was regular for the last few months. On Saturday, she gave birth to a baby boy. She claimed she

got perplexed hearing him cry and threw the baby out of the window after breaking the glass pane," he said.

Locals, after hearing the sound of the breaking window pane, rushed to the spot and found the newborn and informed Kasba Police Station.

"The woman was found

bleeding from the lower part of her body. She and her baby were taken to a nearby hospital. The baby died the next morning," he said. Initial probe revealed that the woman, who is suffering from some mental disorder, got married in November last year, the officer said.

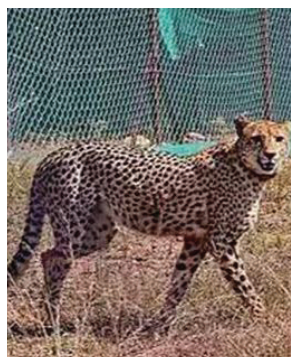
KUNO NATIONAL PARK

MP ZOO GRIEVES LOSS OF AFRICAN CHEETAH 'UDAY'

TDG NETWORK
BHOPAL

The South African cheetah 'Uday' died due to cardiopulmonary failure at Kuno National Park situated in Madhya Pradesh's Sheopur district, an official said on Tuesday.

Cheetah 'Uday' died on Sunday evening and its post mortem was conducted on Monday. Uday was among the batch of 12 cheetahs (7 males, 5 females) that were translocated from South Africa to India on February 17, 2023. "According to the preliminary report of the post mortem, Cheetah 'Uday'



had died due to cardiopulmonary failure. We have sent the sample to Veterinary University, Jabalpur to ascertain the reason behind it. It will be known only after the detailed examination of the sample," Principal

WANDERING CHEETAH 'PAVAN' FINALLY MOVED TO ENCLOSURE IN MP

BHOPAL: Cheetah Oban aka Pavan, who had strayed out of Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh multiple times and had to be rescued from far-off locations, has been shifted to an enclosure in the park, a senior Forest department official said on Tuesday.

The male cheetah had wandered outside KNP at least two times this month. In the latest incident, the feline was tranquilised on 22 April while he was about to cross over to a forest in neighbouring UP and brought back to KNP. On 7 April, Pavan was rescued from Bairad area in Shivpuri in MP after being tranquilised, officials had said.

Chief Conservator of Forest (Wildlife) J S Chouhan said.

When asked about how much time it will take for a

detailed report, he said the expert of Veterinary University Jabalpur would be able to tell about it.

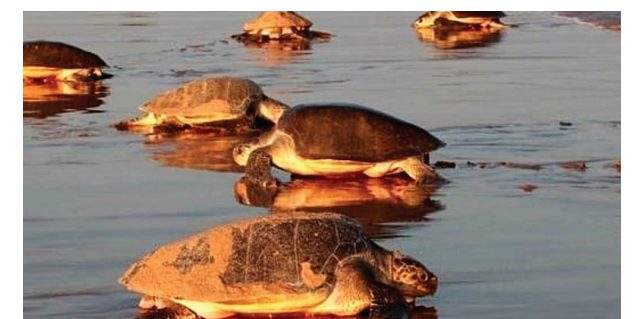
IN ODISHA

Out of eggshells, baby turtles gallop into deep sea in lakhs

TDG NETWORK
KENDRAPARA

Lakhs of baby Olive Ridley turtles broke out of their eggshells and crawled towards the Bay of Bengal without their mothers at Gahirmatha beach in Odisha's Kendrapara district. The mass hatching, which is underway over the last three days, marks the culmination of the annual sojourn of the Olive Ridley turtles.

'Arribada' or the annual journey of the Olive Ridley turtles to Gahirmatha, the



world's largest nesting site for the aquatic species, to lay eggs ended on March 9, with as many as 5.12 lakh female turtles turning up this year, officials said.

"The hatching of Olive Rid-

ley turtles lasts for seven to 10 days. The number of babies breaking out of their shells would swell considerably over the next few days," an official of the Rajnagar Mangrove (Wildlife) Division said.

FREEDOM FOR CHEETAH

Cheetah needs more space in other parks beyond Kuno

In India, the size of national parks and sanctuaries is small as compared to those in Africa. There are parks which are as big as 15,000 sq kms to 20,000 sq kms where iconic species like cheetahs, lion elephants, giraffes coexist. Not only this, many of these parks are fenced.

OPINION

DESHDEEP SAXENA



Death of another cheetah in Kuno national park seems to have opened up Pandora's Box. This is the second death of a cheetah. Interestingly, both the cats died even before they could be released in the open forest. There is another issue that has been baffling the team of the government officials and those from Cheetah Conservation fund (CCF). After the male cheetah Oban, now rechristened as Pawan, continued to move out of the 748 sq km jungles of Kuno, he was captured and put behind an enclosure. During its adventures beyond the Kuno boundaries, it was tranquilised twice before being jailed in a boma. Amidst all this, there are reports of the forest department of Madhya Pradesh writing to the Centre to look for the second home for cheetah, an issue already mentioned in the Cheetah action plan. In fact, Mukundura hills national park in Rajasthan is ready to welcome the cheetahs but the Centre is yet to take a decision in this

regard.

From the very beginning, an international community of cheetah experts and biologists has expressed apprehensions over the carrying capacity of Kuno. They have also criticised the project for its "unscientific approach". In India, the size of national parks and sanctuaries is small as compared to those in Africa. There are parks which are as big as 15,000 sq kms to 20,000 sq kms where iconic species like cheetahs, lion elephants, giraffes co-exist. Not only this, many of these parks are fenced. The issue is debated as the project cheetah proponents defended the decision to introduce the cat in the smaller parks like Kuno which, like other national parks of India, is unfenced and spread barely across 748 sq km area in Sheopur district of Madhya Pradesh adjoining Sawai Madhopur district of Rajasthan where famous Ranthambore tiger reserve is located. India plans to release 21 cats in Kuno when experts believe it cannot carry even 10. They said one cheetah needs 100 sq km area, a point vehemently contested by the project proponents in India and also those from South Africa and Namibia.

In the first lot of Cheetahs that were brought from South Africa, there were 8 cats. Four were released in

the open forest, one of them, Oban or Pawan, was brought back after it continued to move out. One female, Sasha, died on March 26. Three females are still in enclosures. After the latest cheetah casualty, there are 11 left from the lot brought from South Africa in February this year. It means there are 14 cheetahs remaining to be released in the open forest of Kuno, an issue starting at the officials of the cheetah project. After Sasha's death because of kidney failure, the South African cheetah believed to have died because of stress caused by prolonged confinement. The 12 South African cheetahs were captured 9 months ago. There was a delay in the signing of MoU, leading to continued confinement in enclosures. If Uday, the cheetah that died on April 23, was under stress, so could be the remaining 11. South African experts involved in the translocation recommend their release in the wild.

Imagine the plight of the field workers. Both Indian and those from Namibia track the cheetahs in the jungle. They chased Oban or Pawan beyond the boundaries of Kuno when the cat had reached the adjoining districts. Carrying equipment to track the animal, a team of 9 to 10 people had a tough time. If 14 more are released, it would require about 140 more people to track the animals 24x7. They should also be equipped with drones, vehicles, wireless sets among other things. Also imagine the noise created by the drones and the movement of so many people inside the jungle while tracking the animals.

The government is re-



In the first lot of Cheetahs that were brought from South Africa, there were 8 cats. Four were released in the open forest, one of them, Oban or Pawan, was brought back after it continued to move out. One female, Sasha, died on March 26.

quired to make a decision over the second home for the cheetah. Besides, about 4,000 sq kms area around Kuno bordering Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh needs to be developed as a cheetah landscape.

And for doing this, the government needs to show a political will as this would require certain restrictions for the conservation of the iconic species. The cheetah action plan also said that more cheetah populations are required to be developed. The idea was to develop 3 to 5 separate cheetah populations. As per the Cheetah Action Plan-Kuno by itself is not viable for the long-term as the site is not big enough to have viable population and for that you need at least 3 populations and then move cheetahs between them as a managed meta-population;

that is the vision of the cheetah project. Gandhisagar Wildlife Sanctuary spread over in Mandasaur in Madhya Pradesh and Chittorgarh in Rajasthan and Nauradehi in Damoh and Sagar districts of Madhya Pradesh were also selected as the second home but it would not only take time but huge sums around Rs 300 crore to Rs 400 crore to develop each of them. This would include the development of grasslands, prey base and shifting of villages.

But the best possible available and ready site for cheetahs is Mukundura. With grass lands in between, this mountainous jungle has a variety of trees and animals. In fact, cheetahs were to be brought first to Mukundura but zeroed in on Kuno.

A cheetah does not understand the administrative boundaries of a forest and

follows its instinct. For the animal, its safety and prey are paramount. Before the translocation, cheetah's movement outside the park was also expected. As the cheetah action plan also expects a high mortality rate, then why is there so much fuss over the death. It is happening because the cheetahs are dying before their release in the wild. Prolonged captivity of the animal is believed to be the reason and the progress for a second home is very slow.

Keeping all the cheetahs in Kuno will be like putting all the eggs in one basket. The government officials, who looked as stressed as cheetahs, needed to make a quick decision.

Deshdeep Saxena is a wildlife journalist, with more than three decades of experience. Besides, he is a blogger and writes for thewildlifeindia.com.

PERSPECTIVE

NOT A POLITICAL CAKEWALK

CAN NITISH UNITE THE OPPOSITION?

The Bihar Chief Minister has been very busy during the last few days, travelling to Lucknow, Delhi and Kolkata meeting various Opposition leaders. Nitish Kumar has realised that in order to give the BJP some sort of a credible fight in the 2024 elections, the Opposition needs to get its act together. However, there are cracks within. The Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrababoo Naidu has been busy trying to prop up a Non Congress-Non BJP front. In this, he is aided and abetted by Mamata Banerjee, Arvind Kejriwal and Akhilesh Yadav who see the Congress as much of a threat as the BJP at the state level. But, the canvas is larger than a string of assembly elections and regional aspirations have to be doctored for any sort of a coalition to take place at the Central level. More to the point, no Opposition alliance is possible without the Congress as it is the only pan-Indian party in the Opposition.

Hence, Nitish Kumar has taken this initiative to reach out to all the Opposition parties. It is interesting that his tour de unity began with the Congress where he met Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge. After that he called on Mamata Banerjee and Akhilesh Yadav (but not Mayawati - as one is not quite sure which boat she will finally board). At the press conference in Lucknow, the Bihar Chief Minister made it amply clear that he is not harbouring any ambitions to be the Prime Minister.

Earlier, Kharge too had stated that the Congress was not keen on portraying any PM face. Hence, the Opposition is united on strategy - that the fight against Modi would not be individual-based but would be issue-based. They have realised (wisely) that given the PM's credibility, it would be futile to wage a war against the cult of Modi. Better to take on the BJP on the government's performance - or lack of it.

Interestingly, the Opposition also seems to have zeroed in on the one issue it thinks can work - which is politics of caste. Pitching Mandal against Mandir has been done before and admittedly these are the two planks on which most elections are fought in India. Hence, Nitish has been championing the cause of the caste census and now even Rahul Gandhi and Akhilesh Yadav have picked this issue.

As a footnote, it would be important to note that Nitish Kumar is accompanied by his deputy Tejashwi Yadav during these coalition building courtesies calls. Tejashwi is Lulu Yadav's heir apparent and one who has carved a niche for himself as a caste warrior and champion of the backwards. Also, the BJP has long been harping on the differences between Tejashwi and Nitish and hinting that Nitish would soon return to the BJP fold. Well the duo putting up a united appearance will nail that rumour as well.

So, there has been a flurry of activity within the Opposition camp with Nitish Kumar taking the lead. As he himself admitted, he is no JP (the socialist leader Jayprakash Narayan who led the Opposition movement against then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in the 70s), but he is definitely offering himself as a sort of sutradhar to string the Opposition together. Not unlike the role played by Harkishen Singh Surjeet in UPA 1.

PRIYA SAHGAL

UNDERSTANDING TAX

Input tax credit: Burden of proof is a burden to prove

OPINION

AKHIL GUPTA



Ever since the debates on introduction of GST started, it has always been boasted as a tax which would eliminate the cascading effect of multileveled taxes levied by executive. The idea was to get away with 'tax on tax' through a mechanism which would allow 'seamless flow of credit across goods and services'. It, however, has not been as merrier as was portrayed.

Beginning with the written law, coupled with injudicious interpretations by law implementing authorities, road to avail 'input tax credit' (ITC) has been arduous. Law enforcing agencies have pressed upon the end consumer or beneficiary of a supply transaction to check infiltration in the supply chain, despite of him having all parameters verified in accordance with the statute. In support of their claims, agencies harp upon the provisions of law which casts the burden of proof on the recipient of supply with respect to eligibility of ITC. Resultantly, rigorous documentation synced through online portal appears to be insufficient to avail ITC, which otherwise is unified

to the business transactions of a recipient of supply.

Recently, Supreme Court while dealing with a Karnataka VAT matter¹, was faced with this legal issue as on whom the burden to prove eligibility of ITC would lie, if a purchasing dealer had tax paid invoices and acknowledgments of payments from the selling dealer. Challenging the order of the High Court, State argued before Supreme Court that the agencies cannot recover tax arrears from a seller who is not registered or has not furnished tax returns. Merely by making payments through banking modes, purchasing dealer cannot be relieved of its responsibility in law, as seller has not deposited that tax to the revenue exchequer. Supreme Court, referring to the provisions of Karnataka VAT Act regarding burden of proof for availing ITC, categorically held that mere production of invoices or payment receipts would not serve the requirements of statute listed for discharging burden of proof for

availing ITC by a purchasing dealer. The purchasing dealer, claiming ITC, must prove beyond doubt the actual transaction, which can be done by furnishing the name and address of the selling dealer, details of the vehicle which delivered goods, payment of freight charges, acknowledgment of taking delivery of goods to establish actual movement of goods, in addition to tax invoices and particulars of payment. While dealing with this issue, Supreme Court weighted the concept of burden of proof over the principle of 'lex non Cogit Ad impossibilia' i.e. law does not compel a person to do impossible.

The ruling of the Supreme Court certainly emphasises upon the need to prove the transaction by the recipient of supply, which would be squarely applicable to GST in view of the similar provisions in the statute. Investigations in GST on account of fake invoicing would certainly be fuelled backing on the ratio of Supreme Court ruling. Concomitantly, there

Recently, Supreme Court while dealing with a Karnataka VAT matter¹, was faced with this legal issue as on whom the burden to prove eligibility of ITC would lie, if a purchasing dealer had tax paid invoices and acknowledgments of payments from the selling dealer. Challenging the order of the High Court, State argued before Supreme Court that the agencies cannot recover tax arrears from a seller who is not registered or has not furnished tax returns.

is a brighter side to this. GST law is predominantly implemented through the online portal wherein there is an automated mechanism to reconcile inward purchases of a recipient with outward supplies of its supplier. Details of the parties to a transaction are readily available and verifiable. To go with this, various checks are in place to ensure deposit of tax collected by a person on its outward supplies, non-adherence to which would result in ad-

verse consequences. GST law further has unique concept of 'e-way bills' where prior to any movement of goods from a location of supplier to its recipient is captured and shared on real time basis. These parameters appear to be in sync with Supreme Court ruling. The recipient of supply of goods would be in a reasonably finer position to establish the transaction of supply and discharge its burden of proof, had these parameters are complied

with. However, the challenge would rise for the recipient of supply of services as part from tax invoice and payment details to the supplier, a recipient would not have any tangible source to establish the inward supply of services given its very intangible nature. In such a scenario, supporting documentation would be of higher importance ranging from underlying service agreement, communication trail with supplier of services along with tangible deliverables. Corroborative evidence would be the ultimate recourse in the event of default of by supplier. It would, State of Karnataka v. Ecom Gill Coffee Trading Pvt. Ltd. Civil Appeal No. 230/2023, however, still be tried against the confession statements of non-compliant supplier or an unavailable supplier.

At the same time, law enforcing agencies too must take judicious approach. The law has always worked on the principle of 'ei incumbit probatio qui dicit, non qui negat' i.e. the bur-

den of proof is on the one who declares, not on the one who denies. A recipient of supply of either goods or services or both, if had complied with given conditions of statute and has confirming documentation, as mandated by rules, must not be framed on basis of statements of a supplier or non-availability of supplier at the stage of investigation. Clarifications issued by CBIC do not call for recovery of tax dues from a person where his active role in an alleged fake invoicing transaction is not established by documentary evidence. It, would, however, be interesting to see as to how the law enforcing agencies interpret and use Supreme Court ruling in Karnataka VAT issue, especially while dealing with recipient of supply of services. On the whole, ITC avallment in GST is an uphill battle taking GST far away from being a 'good and simple tax'.

Akhil Gupta is a lawyer and tax jurist, working as a litigator on tax and corporate law matters.

IN COURT

SUPREME COURT: NOTICE ISSUED ON WOMEN WRESTLERS' PLEA ALLEGING SEXUAL HARASSMENT BY WFI PRESIDENT

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in the case observed and has issued a notice on the plea moved by top woman wrestlers of the country, wherein seeking registration of the FIR against BJP MP and Wrestling Federation of India, WFI president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh over the alleged sexual harassment.

The bench comprising of Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud was hearing the present matter.

The bench of CJI DY Chandrachud in the case observed and has pointed out that normally, a remedy of being approaching to the Police Superintendent is available under Section 156 of Code of Criminal Procedure. What being the charges?

It has been submitted by Sibal before the court that these women being the wrestlers Milord and they are sitting in the dharna. Thus, it has been complained by the 7 woman in which one being minor, wherein violating the law of the said court.

It has also been alleged by the petitioner in the plea that there has been inordinate delay in registering FIR, especially when POCSO charges



are pressed against the wrestling body's president. Thus, the allegations made reportedly date back to 2012. The petitioners in the case have been protesting against such inaction at the Delhi's Jantar Mantar.

The court in its order stated that there being a serious allegation at the behest of

professional wrestlers concerning sexual harassment. The court issued the notice which is returnable on Friday. Further, the bench of CJI directed that the complaints which were being given in sealed cover shall again be resealed and to be placed under the plea filed.

It has also been claimed by Sibal in the case that there being a committee report which has not been made public. Thus, even the police persons can be prosecuted for not registering of an offence of the said nature. Now there being only an amendment to Section 166A of Code of Criminal Procedure, wherein it

allows the police to also be prosecuted if the case is not registered.

Meanwhile, in the case, the Sports Ministry seeks a response from WFI in terms of the National Sports Development Code, 2011

Accordingly, the court listed the matter to be next heard on May 28, 2023.

IN COURT

Chief Justice Of India, Dr Justice DY Chandrachud Inaugurated The New Judges Library In The Additional Building Complex Of The Supreme Court Formally Functional

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Chief Justice of India, Dr Justice DY Chandrachud inaugurated the Supreme Court Judges' library in the Additional Building Complex of the Supreme Court formally functional on April 25, 2023.

The New Judges Library In The Additional Building Complex Of The Supreme Court is spread

over the four floors which include circulation section, the reference section, information management section, legal research and legislation section and acquisition section.

However, the total collection of the books and reference material in the Judges library is 3,77,000 out of which 2,40,000 are being placed in the New library.

Therefore, the new library houses legal com-

mentaries, law reports, biographies and general books along with Judges Lounge and Judges Conference Room.

The Chief Justice Of India, Dr Justice DY Chandrachud also inaugurated Soli Sorabjee's Bibliotheca by unveiling his portrait in the library.

The occasion was graced up by the Judges of the Supreme Court along with the senior officials of the Registry.



IN COURT

Uttarakhand High Court: Offences Affecting 'Secular Fabric' Of Country Cannot Be Compounded | Sec. 295A IPC

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Uttarakhand High Court in the case Brajesh v. State of Uttarakhand observed and has held that the offences which outrage the religious sentiments of communities and have the tendency to affect 'secular fabric' of the country, the same cannot be compounded.

The Single judge bench headed by Justice Sharad Kumar Sharma in the case observed and has rejected to compound an offence as it is stated under Section 295A of the Indian Penal Code, 1860.

In the present case, the complaint was being registered against the petitioner, wherein he claims to be the Deputy District Secretary of Rashtriya Hindu Vahini, Udham Singh Nagar and he being the accused of using derogatory words for another religion and he has also posted the same on his WhatsApp

status. Thus, the petitioner in the case approach the High Court in order to quash the case which is pending on the ground of amicable settlement.

It has also been observed by the court that before using of the inherent power as stated under Section 482 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, the same must be conscious as to whether the said offence has the wide social impact. The court in the case also noted that the offences punishable as stated under Section 295A of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 and has the tendency to affect the 'secular fabric' of the country and therefore, the same cannot be compounded as stated under section 320 of Code of Criminal Procedure.

The court opined while stressing on the words deliberate and malicious as stated under section 295A of Indian Penal Code, 1860.

The court stated that Deliberate means,

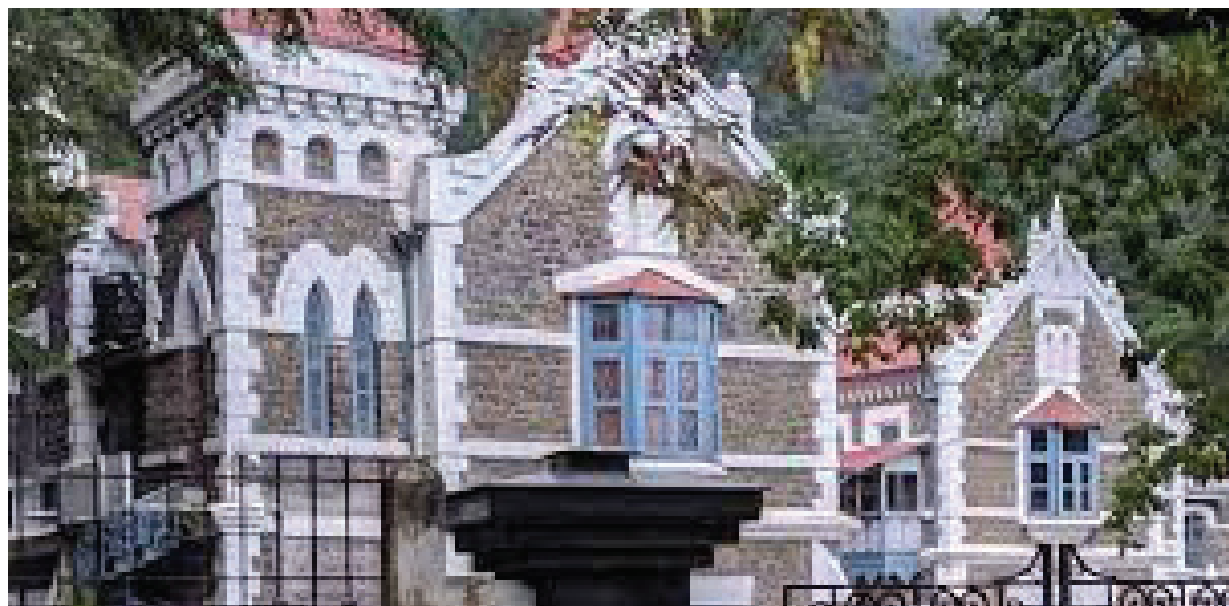
it being the conscious act, being made by the person which belongs to a particular community to outrage the respect, which is enjoyed by other religion in this country.

Further, the court observed that if it being a citizen under Article 5 of the Constitution of India and if the person does not carry respect for other religion, the same may lead to a certain catastrophic situation which at time becomes uncontrollable by the administration and are particularly being so called constructed religious groups of the said country.

Accordingly, the court rejected for quashing the pending complaint by compounding the case.

The counsel, Advocate Mr. Harshpal Sekhon appeared for the petitioner.

The counsel, Advocates Mr. Amit Bhatt, Dy. Advocate General for the State; Mr. Jasmeet Sahota represented the Respondent.



IN COURT

CHHATTISGARH HIGH COURT: DIRECTED CHIEF SECRETARY FOR FILING OF PERSONAL AFFIDAVIT TO EXPLAIN THE INACTION; IDENTIFYING FAKE DISABILITY CERTIFICATES

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Chhattisgarh High Court in the case Chhattisgarh Divyang Seva Sangh v. State of Chhattisgarh And Ors observed and has ordered the Chief Secretary of the State Government for filing the personal affidavit wherein it is showed as to why no steps are to be taken in order to verify the physical disability certificates as per the circular issued in the year 2019 by him.

In the present case, the petitioner had earlier filed a Public Interest Litigation, PIL and has approached the High Court in the year 2018 wherein the petitioner highlighted the frequent misuse of the 'disability certificates and the rights which is being issued under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.

The court in the case observed and has directed the Chief Secretary of the State to issue appropriate directions to the concerned authorities for ensuring that no person other than a physically disabled person who is being allowed to avail the benefits as it is being provided under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016. Thus, the court disposed of the plea filed in the case.

It has also been noted by the court that the directions



which are being passed because one too many allegations to the misuse of disability certificates and also the easy access thereto even by non-genuine persons for obtaining the employments and the benefits are emerging.

Therefore, the Chief Secretary issued a circular dated May, 2019, wherein directing all the concerned authorities in order to verify the certificates issued under the Act before extending benefits of different government schemes and jobs. Further, the court also required them

to ensure that only genuine persons are being extended to such benefits.

The court observed that the petitioner in the case took shelter of the High Court yet again wherein it is alleged that despite the issuance of the circular, thus, no steps have to be taken by the concerned authorities in order to verify the genuineness of such certificates.

The Division bench headed by Chief Justice Ramesh Sinha and Justice Sanjay K. Agrawal in its order stated that the Chief Secretary, Government of Chhattis-

garh is directed for filing his personal affidavit as to why no positive steps are being taken in order to verify the physical disability certificates as per circular issued by him in the month of May, 2019.

Accordingly, the court listed the matter to be next heard after two weeks.

The counsel, Advocate Mr. Sangharsh Pandey appeared for the petitioner.

The counsel, Advocate, Mr. Raghendra Pradhan, Additional Advocate General; Mr. Anand Mohan Tiwari represented the respondent.

IN COURT

DELHI HIGH COURT: GOOGLE MOVED CHALLENGING THE ORDER OF SINGLE JUDGE DIRECTING CCI TO CONSIDER APPLICATION OF START-UPS AGAINST NEW PAYMENT POLICY

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court in the case observed, wherein the Google moved while challenging an order of the single judge directing the Competition Commission of India in order to take up the applications moved by an alliance of start-ups against tech giant's new in-app user choice billing policy and the same needs to be considered on or before April 26, 2023.

The division bench comprising of Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma and Justice Subramonium Prasad was hearing the present matter.

The counsel, Senior Advocate Sandeep Sethi seek for urgent listing of the matter and has appraised the court that the CCI is to hear the matter at 2:30 PM. On the other hand, it has



been submitted by the counsel appearing for the Alliance of Digital India Foundation stated that the LPA has not been served

upon them yet. In the present case, the appeal has been moved against the order of Justice Tushar Rao Gedela,

wherein he disposed of the plea moved by Alliance of Digital India Foundation, against Google's new policy. Thus, the petitioner in the plea also seek direction on the tech giant in order to keep the same in abeyance till the issue is being adjudicated by Competition Commission of India.

The bench of Justice Tushar Rao Gedela stated that there being no impediment, legal or otherwise, in directing the CCI in order to take up the application as stated under section 42 of Competition Act as filed by the petitioner for hearing and in order to consider the same in accordance with law on or before 26.04.2023, thus, it has also been made clear by Justice Gedela that the observations made herein are only for the purpose of deciding the present list made before the said court and shall not tantamount

to any expression which being on the merits of the case and the same is therefore, which being without prejudice to the rights and contentions of all parties to be taken at the appropriate proceeding.

It has also been observed by the single judge that the proceedings which are being initiated before the Competition Commission of India would not be vitiated due to vacancy or due to any defect in its constitution. Adding to it, the court stated that merely because of the defect or due to any vacancy in the constitution of the CCI, the CCI cannot be considered as a statutory authority for not having jurisdiction to adjudicate the complaints or the other proceedings which are pending before the court.

Senior Advocate Sandeep Sethi filed the present plea.

IN COURT

Pulled Up Civic Body Chairman For Issuing Demolition Notice To Sessions Judge: Calcutta High Court

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Calcutta High Court in the case observed and has pulled up the Chairman of English Bazar Municipality for issuing the notice of the District and Sessions Judge, Malda for the demolition of a building which is being constructed within the premises of the court.

The division bench comprising of Acting Chief Justice ACJ T. S. Sivagnam and Justice Hiranmay Bhattacharyya in the case observed and has informed the Advocate General S. N. Mookherjee that it would pass of the appropriate orders if in the case, the said notice is not being withdrawn off.

It has also been asked by the ACJ to AG that something unusual and surprising has been happened. The same being unheard of. How can the demolition notice be issued by civic body to a sessions judge.

Further, the ACJ stated that the most unfortunate part being that the chairperson



is an advocate, who used to practice in that court. Thus, even the family members of him use to practise there and being a lawyer is not that he is aware that under the Government Buildings Act, these municipal laws would not apply. Yet, the lawyer has audacity to issue notice.

The court in the case observed and has also noted that it can embarrass the said municipality by asking the report of the illegal constructions which being within the municipality.

It has also been remarked by the ACJ that I am being told that there being encroachments around the building and this man wants to reward them by constructing of the multi-storey building which will house the shopping complex too. Thus, how can the same be allowed under law?

The court in the case also asked the AG to ensure that the notice is withdrawn. Accordingly, the court listed the matter to be next heard on April 26, 2023.

ANALYSIS

HOW TO CHECK STORM OF RUMOURS?

Serious questions have resurfaced after a fake video of Aaradhya went viral on social media!



DR VIJAY DARDA

*Jhooth ka khaufnaak manzar,
Afsaabo ka ye samandar,
Kiski baaton par aitbaar
karoon,
Yaban toh bar or bai,
Hawaon mein udta kbanjar
wanjar!*

When I sat down to write my column this week, these few lines sprang into my head and began making noise. I began to ponder what type of nasty mentality the individual must have had who posted the fake news on social media about Abhishek and Aishwarya Rai Bachchan's daughter Aaradhya's illness and even death. The wicked mind posted the video and people unknowingly spread it? We are a culture that gives and receives blessings; how can we ever contemplate death for someone? Unfortunately, the presence of such warped minds on social media is on the rise.

This is not the first incident involving the Bachchan family. They approached court, but there are several similar stories. Such crimes continue to be committed against those who participate in social activities. What exactly is movie gossip? The same thing happens with the politicians. It's entertaining to target and embarrass others. It's a kind of disease.



The perpetrators don't think about its impact on others, or how it impacts their family?

In the case of Aaradhya, the Delhi High Court has ordered delisting and deactivation of all such videos from Google and YouTube, and prohibited the uploading of any video that violates Aaradhya's privacy. The court has also sought specific information about those who posted fake footage about Aaradhya. It is as simple as clicking a button to collect this information for Google and YouTube. Let us hope this

information will reach the court and the perpetrators would be punished. The court has also observed that it is the responsibility of Google and YouTube not to allow such videos to be uploaded! The question that arises here is what kind of attitude these platforms are displaying. The Indian courts warned not once but several times, and the government also tried to rein them in but these social media platforms have been continuously trying to find an escape route. I don't understand why? Do they exert so much influence that

they can do whatever they want and the law should not take its course against them?

Keep in mind that all these platforms began as means of interaction but were cleverly renamed social media. Do they have anything which can be termed media? The term "media" refers to a forum for analysing news and issues. There is a provision in the newspapers, TV stations and even websites to investigate the news and ensure its authenticity. The journalists working on these platforms ensure that nothing inap-

propriate is published, but there is no such safeguard on social media! You can publish or upload anything on Google, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram or Facebook. It makes no difference to them what you upload. You're browsing Facebook and suddenly a video that will put you to shame will appear. Let alone abusive posts, even sex-related material begins to appear. After all, there must be some checks and balances somewhere. Actually, people create hullabaloo when the government considers action. However, they do not

use their own judgement. After all, the government is yours, and in a democracy, you are also the government! Who will deal with such things then?

I have served on the Parliamentary Committee on Information Technology. I am well aware of and comprehended everything. I believe that the Internet is a rich source of knowledge that has altered our perception of the world, but we must also pay attention to what is presented in front of the people and what they are watching. Everything has a positive and negative

side. We must strike a balance. The decent people on the social platform are also bearing the brunt of other people's faults.

Recently, videos showing migrant workers from Bihar being beaten up and chased away in Tamil Nadu, suddenly started appearing on social media. People in Bihar were outraged, and the administration in Tamil Nadu was perplexed as to why the government machinery had not received information about such an incident. After a quick investigation, it was discovered that this

fake video was created by Manish Kashyap, a You-Tuber from Bihar. In Tamil Nadu, no such incident had occurred. Many of the videos were from outside of Tamil Nadu and rather old. Manish showed a video of labourers returning home on Holi as an escape. People naturally trusted him at first. This reminds me of a 'sher' of Wasim Barelvi:

*Woh jhooth bol raha tha
bade salike se,
Main aitbaar na karta to
aur kya karta?*

Manish is presently in judicial custody, but the question is the same again: Why did YouTube allow such videos to be uploaded without verification? In fact, there is no provision for any such control. You may be startled to learn that Twitter has dissolved its own Trust and Safety Council. There is no available information about what arrangements were made after that. The UN spokesperson Stéphane Dujarric has even stated that an environment that spread hatred is fostered by social media sites. At least in India, we are witnessing this and dealing with the consequences. It is impacting our social fabric. Shariq Kaifi has rightly penned these lines:

*Jhooth par uske bharosa kar
kya,
Dhoop itni thi ki saayaa kar
kya!*

So it's time to be cautious. It's natural to get confused when so many things are served to you so quickly. Apply your mind... or else this storm of rumours will hurt you too!

The author is the chairman, Editorial Board of Lokmat Media and former member of Rajya Sabha.

TOP OF THE DAY

FLYDUBAI AIRCRAFT LANDS SAFELY IN DUBAI AIRPORT

KATHMANDU: A FlyDubai aircraft, which took off from Kathmandu airport on Monday with more than 160 people on board, has landed safely in Dubai on Tuesday morning, state-run Nepal Television reported. The aircraft reported a problem in one of its engines soon after take-off at 9.20 am on Monday from the Tribhuvan International Airport, according to airport sources. The pilots later told the control tower they will continue with the flight after finding out that all indicators were normal. "The FlyDubai aircraft has landed safely in Dubai," state-run Nepal Television reported on Tuesday. There are more than 160 people on board including 50 Nepali passengers.

OHIO PLANE CATCHES FIRE AFTER BIRD STRIKE

NEW YORK: Shortly after an ordinary takeoff from an Ohio airport on Sunday, passengers aboard an American Airlines plane became alarmed when they heard loud noises and saw flames shooting out of an engine. Moments later, when they learned a bird strike had caused an issue, many feared the worst. The fire was detected a short time later and the Boeing 737 returned to the airport, where firefighters quickly doused the flames. According to the Federal Aviation Administration, 15,556 strikes were reported in 2021, an increase of 33% from the 11,666 strikes reported in 2020.

BAN KI-MOON URGES ARMY TO END MYANMAR VIOLENCE

BANGKOK: Former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Tuesday urged Myanmar's ruling military to take the initiative in finding a way out of the country's violent political crisis, including releasing political detainees, after a surprise meeting with the army leader who seized power two years ago. Ban met Monday in the Myanmar capital Naypyitaw with the leader of the military government, Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, and other top officials.

19 KENYAN STUDENTS ARRIVE FROM SUDAN

NAIROBI: The first group of Kenyan evacuees from Sudan landed in the country's main airport on Monday. Thirty-nine students — 19 Kenyans along with 19 Somalis and one Saudi Arabian national — alighted from a Kenya Airforce aircraft that landed on Monday night. The students travelled by road to South Sudan where they boarded the military aircraft. The group was received by Defense Minister Aden Duale who said they were all students at an international university in Sudan and that more Kenyans were scheduled to be airlifted home. More evacuations are underway, with the foreign ministry stating three evacuation programs were active.

TRACING DANGER

CHINA FLEXES MUSCLES AS TAIWAN IDENTIFIES 13 ENEMY WARPLANES

TDG NETWORK
TAIPEI

Taiwan tracked 13 Chinese military aircraft and three naval vessels around the country between 6 am on Sunday and 6 am on Monday, reported Taiwan News.

Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense (MND) said that 13 People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) military aircraft and three People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) vessels had been tracked around Taiwan. One of the detected aircraft entered the southeast section of Taiwan's air defence identification zone (ADIZ), reported Taiwan News.



Harbin Z-9 anti-submarine warfare helicopter was tracked in the southeast sector of ADIZ. The MND said it monitored the situation and responded by scrambling combat patrol aircraft, dispatching naval vessels, and deploying land-based air defence missile systems.

reported Taiwan News. According to the Center for Strategic and International Studies, grey zone tactics are "an effort or series of efforts beyond steady-state deterrence and assurance that attempts to achieve one's security objectives without resort to direct and sizable use of force." Since September 2020, China has increased its use of grey zone tactics by routinely sending aircraft into Taiwan's ADIZ.

It is worth mentioning Taiwan split with China in 1949 after a civil war. The ruling Communist Party says the island is obliged to rejoin the mainland, by force if necessary. Beijing says con-

tact with foreign officials encourages Taiwanese who want formal independence, a step the ruling party says would lead to war. Tensions between China and Taiwan escalated after the US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi travelled to the breakaway country in August last year. China raised objections to Pelosi's visit to Taiwan, which China claims as part of its territory.

So far in March, Beijing has sent 325 military aircraft and 101 naval vessels around Taiwan. Since September 2020, China has increased its use of grey zone tactics by routinely sending aircraft into Taiwan's ADIZ, reported Taiwan News.

GRIPPING TERROR

Sudanese fear resumption of war post evacuation of foreign envoys

TDG NETWORK
KHARTOUM

As foreign governments airlifted hundreds of their diplomats and other citizens to safety, Sudanese on Monday desperately sought ways to escape the chaos, fearing that the country's two rival generals will escalate their all-out battle for power once evacuations are completed.

In dramatic evacuation operations, convoys of foreign diplomats, civilian teachers, students, workers and families from dozens of countries wound past combatants at tense front lines in the capital of Khartoum to reach extraction points. Others drove hundreds of miles to the country's east coast.

A stream of European, Mideast, African and Asian military aircraft flew in all day Sunday and Monday to ferry them out. But for many Sudanese, the airlift was a terrifying sign that international powers, after failing repeatedly to broker cease-fires, only expect a worsening of the fighting that has already pushed the population into disaster.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said he had helped broker a 72-hour cease-fire to begin late Monday. It would extend a nominal truce coinciding with a Muslim holiday that brought almost no reduction in fighting but helped to facilitate the evacuations.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned of a "catastrophic conflagration" that could engulf the whole region. He urged the 15 members of the Security Council to "exert maximum leverage" on both sides in order to "pull Sudan back from the edge of the abyss."

Sudanese face a harrowing search for safety in the constantly shifting battle of explosions, gunfire and armed fighters looting shops and homes. Many have been huddling in their homes for nine days. Food and fuel are leaping in price and harder to find, electricity and internet are cut off in much of the country, and hospitals are near collapse.

Those who can afford it were making the 15-hour long drive to the Egyptian border or to Port Sudan on the Red Sea coast. Those without means to get abroad

streamed out to relatively calmer provinces along the Nile north and south of Khartoum.

Many more were trapped, with cash in short supply and transport costs spiralling.

"Travelling out of Khartoum has become a luxury," said Shahin al-Sherif, a high school teacher. The 27-year-old al-Sherif was frantically trying to arrange transport out of Khartoum for himself, his younger sister, mother, aunt and grandmother.

They had been trapped for days in their home in Khartoum's Amarat neighbourhood while fighting raged outside. Finally, they moved to a safer district farther out. But al-Sherif expects things to get worse and worries his sister, aunt and grandmother, all diabetic, won't be able to get the supplies they need. Bus ticket prices have more than quadrupled so that renting a bus for 50 people to get to the Egyptian border costs around \$14,000, he said. Heavy gunfire and thundering explosions rocked the city in continued fighting between the military and a rival paramilitary group called the Rapid Support

Forces.

Over 420 people, including at least 273 civilians, have been killed and over 3,700 wounded since the fighting began April 15. The military has appeared to have the upper hand in fighting in Khartoum but the RSF still controls many districts in the capital and the neighbouring city of Omdurman, and has several large strongholds around the country.

For foreign nationals, the need to abandon Khartoum had become overwhelming by the seventh day of the conflict. Khartoum's wealthy neighbourhoods, where most foreigners live, saw some of the heaviest shelling and drone strikes, and several fell under RSF control.

The United States said Monday that it has begun facilitating the departure of private U.S. citizens after swooping in to extract diplomats on Sunday. White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan said the U.S. has placed intelligence and reconnaissance assets over the evacuation route from Khartoum to Port Sudan but does not have any U.S. troops on the ground.

FURTHER SOUTH

A POWERFUL SOLAR STORM PRODUCES STUNNING AURORAS

TDG NETWORK
CAPE CANAVERA



An intense solar storm has the northern lights gracing the skies farther south than usual. A blast of superhot material from the sun late last week hurled scorching gases known as plasma toward Earth at nearly 2 million mph (3 million kph), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said Monday.

Earth felt the brunt of the storm Sunday, according to NOAA, with forecasters warning operators of power plants and spacecraft of the potential for disruption. Auroras were reported across parts of Europe and Asia. In the U.S., skygazers took in the sights from Wisconsin, Washington state, Colorado, California, New Mexico and even Arizona — mostly a reddish glow instead of the typical green shimmer.

"I don't want any expectations of these green curtains moving back and forth" so far south, said Bill Murtagh, program coordinator at the NOAA Space Weather Prediction Center in Boulder, Colorado.

Although conditions have eased, auroras might still be visible as far south as South Dakota and Iowa late Monday and early Tuesday if skies are dark. The farther north, the better the show as the energized particles interact with the atmosphere closer to Earth, according to Murtagh.

RISING RISK

China faces social instability as unemployment rises sharply

TDG NETWORK
BEIJING

China is heading towards social instability as unemployment rises to a historical level, reported Geo-politik.

The youth unemployment rate is approaching historical highs, coupled with various challenges such as debt risks and slowing global growth, indicating that China's economic outlook is still uncertain after the devastating effects of the zero-Covid policy. Apart from an uneven recovery, persistent youth unemployment is a concern, especially as a record 11.58 million students have graduated from universities and colleges this year, reported Geo-politik.

Unemployment among Chinese urban residents aged 16 to 24 rose sharply to 19.6 per cent in March from 18.1 per cent in February, close to the record high set last July when it reached 19.9 per cent, according to the Bureau of Statistics. Slower manufacturing and a weak IT sector may be two forces behind persistent youth unemployment, reported Geo-politik. However, concerns about social mobility are now driving some Chinese youth to push back

HEADING	HEADING	HEADING	HEADING
2023	March	19.60%	
	February	18.10%	
	January	17.30%	
2022	December	16.70%	
	November	17.10%	
	October	17.90%	
	September	17.90%	
	August	18.70%	
	July	19.90%	
	June	19.30%	
	May	18.40%	
	April	18.20%	
	March	16%	
	February	15.30%	
	January	15.30%	

against societal expectations about careers and family.

A case in point is "lying flat" movement that advocates doing the bare minimum to get by rather than working hard for a long-term reward that is not guaranteed.

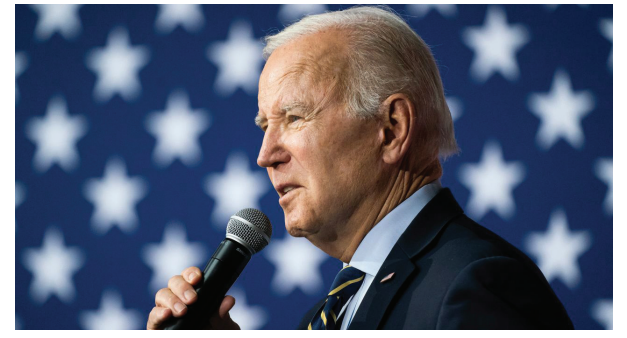
Some young Chinese are purposefully living paycheck-to-paycheck, calling themselves the "moonlight clan" - participants now buy luxuries like an overseas trip to

compensate for longer-term disappointment. Analysts believe that unsustainable youth unemployment could become a threat to social stability, reported Geo-politik.

Moreover, domestic sales are slowing, and rising tensions between the US and China are prompting international electronics brands such as Apple to reduce "Made in China" and move production outside China.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

US VICE PRESIDENT BIDEN DECLARES HIS INTENTION TO SEEK RE-ELECTION



US president Joe Biden

TDG NETWORK
WASHINGTON

US President Joe Biden will be running for re-election as the President of the United States. Biden on Tuesday formally announced that he seeks a second term as the US President. This sets up the possibility of a rematch with Donald Trump, The New York Times reported.

"Every generation has a moment where they have had to stand up for democracy. To stand up for their fundamental freedom. I believe this is ours," Biden tweeted on Tuesday. "That's why I'm running for re-election as President of the United States. Join us. Let's finish the job," the president further tweeted.

The US President on Tuesday launched his campaign for President: Let's Finish the Job. Biden is the oldest US president in history. Meanwhile, as the 2024 US presidential elections are inching closer, Conservative talk radio host Larry Elder has declared his candidature for the Republican presidential ticket, The Washington Post reported.

"America is in decline, but this decline is not inevitable," Larry Elder tweeted on Thursday. "We can enter a new American Golden Age, but we must choose a leader who can bring us there. That's why I'm running for President," the tweet read further, as Elder announced his candidacy.

Elder joins a burgeoning Republican field headed by former president Donald Trump, which also includes software entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy, former Arkansas governor Asa Hutchinson, and former UN ambassador Nikki Haley, reported The Washington Post.

Last week, Senator Tim Scott (R-S.C.) announced the formation of an exploratory committee; other potential candidates include Governor Ron DeSantis (R) of Florida and ex-Vice President Mike Pence.

AFTERSHOCKS

Quake razes hospital, sends Indonesians racing to highland



The magnitude 7.1 earthquake was centered 170 kilometers (105 miles) southeast of Teluk Dalam, a coastal town in the South Nias.

TDG NETWORK
JAKARTA

A strong undersea earthquake early Tuesday sent streams of people fleeing to higher ground in eastern Indonesia before the tsunami danger passed.

Footage released by the National Disaster Mitigation Agency showed streams of people in a village on Mentawai Island fled to the highlands by foot and motorcycles under the rain in darkness, while some patients at the village's hospital were evacuated to its yard as cracks showed in the facility's floor.

The shocks were felt in districts and cities of West Sumatra and North Sumatra provinces, and some places ordered evacuations to higher ground. Residents in parts of West Sumatra province, including the provincial capital of Padang, felt the earthquake strongly for about 30 seconds, agency spokesperson Abdul Muhandi said.

"Many residents in several villages on Mentawai island chose to stay displaced in higher ground although the tsunami alert was ended due to fears of aftershocks," he said, adding that authorities

were still collecting information about the damage.

The magnitude 7.1 earthquake was centered 170 kilometers (105 miles) southeast of Teluk Dalam, a coastal town in the South Nias regency of North Sumatra, at a depth of 15 kilometers (9 miles), the U.S. Geological Survey said. Aftershocks measured as strong as 5.8. After an initial tsunami alert, Indonesia's Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysical Agency lifted it just before dawn, about two hours after the quake. The agency initially put a preliminary magnitude at 7.3, but later revised it to 6.9. Variations in early measurements are common.

The agency's head of the Earthquake and Tsunami Center, Daryono, who goes by a single name, said that based on sea-level observations, minor tsunamis of 11 centimeters (4.3 inches) were detected in Tanah Bala coastal area of South Nias regency.

Indonesia, a vast archipelago of 270 million people, is frequently struck by earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and tsunamis. In November, a magnitude 5.6 killed at least 340 people and damaged more than 62,600 homes in part of West Java.

ROTTEN TO CORE

PAKISTANIS STARE AT GLOOMY FUTURE AMID ABJECT POVERTY, BURGEONING INFLATION

TDG NETWORK
ISLAMABAD

Poverty in Pakistan and inflation in these months have made life extremely difficult for poor people, Pak vernacular media reported.

The majority of Pakistanis are living below the poverty line and 80 per cent of unskilled labourers are not getting a salary of (PKR) 25,000 minimum announced ten months ago, reported Ex-

press Daily. Director of the Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research (PILER), Ummat Ali, told Express Daily that inflation in these months has made life challenging for people who are poor.

He said that considering the inflation rate and increasing prices, the government should make minimum wages of (PKR) 50,000 per month. With reference to the World Bank's Report, Ummat Ali added

that more than 83 per cent of households are earning less than USD 2, but the government did not take any action on the World Bank report, according to Express Daily.

On the other hand, trade unions also failed to grab any benefits as most of the labourers were unregistered. Whoever raises a voice against the management is expelled as most of them do not have any proper appointment documents and they cannot be given any

legal help.

As per different reports, more than 5 million have gone jobless in the past few months and the situation is worse in rural areas where women also work in fields all day but are not able to earn more than USD 2. The level of inflation in Pakistan in March was 35.4 per cent, which had a major impact on purchasing power.

While the Punjab government recently announced an increase in the minimum

wage to (PKR) 32,000 a month, Ali said there is no mechanism to ensure the implementation of the government order or to check which industrial and commercial houses are paying their employees what.

Ali continued by saying that the ongoing economic crisis has caused a rise in unemployment in Pakistan, with estimates putting the number of jobless at five million. In Pakistan, the rising rate of unemployment and

denial of basic rights is now causing people to become violent, and there is also a surge in the rise of street crime and theft.

Moreover, the lack of minimum wages in Pakistan has led to poor living conditions for the majority of workers. Amid escalating economic hardships, people are literally at pains to bear the brunt of frequent hikes in petrol and power tariffs and inflation on the whole, Pakistan vernacular media reported.

TDG EXPLAINER

The Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict

■ What is the historical background of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict?

The Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict is rooted in a dispute over sovereignty in Nagorno-Karabakh, a mountainous area of some 4,400 square kilometres. In 1987 Nagorno-Karabakh's Armenian population began a campaign to separate from Azerbaijan and unify with Armenia. The dispute was still unresolved by the time of the Soviet Union's collapse in 1991, and a two-year war in the early 1990s ended in a decisive Armenian military victory.

By the time of the ceasefire in May 1994, more than 25,000 people had lost their lives, and more than a million were forcibly displaced from their homes. Almost all of the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh had broken away from Azerbaijani control. A new entity was established, the de facto Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, which has not been officially recognised by any state, including Armenia, to this day.

■ What are the main issues at stake in the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict?

Azerbaijan planning a long-term presence in Armenia. The recent large-scale cross-border attacks inside Armenia by Azerbaijan, with reports estimating at least 286 people killed from both sides and hundreds more wounded, highlights the wider picture of a collapsing Russian-led security order in Eurasia.

Coming on 12 September, the attacks coincided with Ukraine's successful counter-offensive in Kharkiv and fresh fighting between Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. Several key actors in Eurasia now see Azerbaijan as a critical - or at least important - partner in solving new problems flowing from the war in Ukraine. For the Kremlin, Azerbaijan is a pivotal link for a more isolated Russia seeking new routes to Iran and Asia.

■ What are the key events or incidents that have occurred during the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict?

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is an ethnic and territorial conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh, inhabited mostly by ethnic Armenians, and seven surrounding districts, inhabited mostly by Azerbaijanis until their expulsion during the 1990s during a period of Armenian occupation. The Nagorno-Karabakh region is entirely claimed by and partially de facto controlled by the breakaway Republic of Artsakh.

BY BHARTI NAIDU

UN WARNING

Sudan to see further displacement of people despite partial ceasefire: UN

TDG NETWORK
GENEVA

The UN refugee agency warned Tuesday of "further displacement" of people from Sudan after thousands streamed into neighbouring Chad and South Sudan despite a tenuous cease-fire between the two warring Sudanese generals battling for control of the country. The fighting has plunged Sudan into chaos, pushing the already heavily aid-dependent African nation to the brink of collapse.

The figures could rise, she cautioned. Sarrado did not have figures for the five other countries neighbour-

“ Since the clashes erupted on April 15, at least 20,000 Sudanese have fled into Chad and some 4,000 South Sudanese refugees — who had been living in Sudan — have returned to their home country. “The fighting looks set to trigger further displacement both within and outside the country



Olga Sarrado, UNHCR spokeswoman

ing Sudan, but UNHCR has cited unspecified numbers of those fleeing Sudan arriving in Egypt.

“The UNHCR was scaling up its operations”, she said, even as foreign governments have raced to evacu-

ate their embassy staff and citizens from Sudan. Many Sudanese have desperately sought ways to escape the chaos, fearing late their all-out battle for power once evacuations are completed.

Several previous cease-fires have failed, although intermittent lulls during the weekend's major Muslim holiday allowed for dramatic evacuations of hundreds of diplomats, aid workers and other foreigners by air and land. More than 800,000 South Sudanese refugees live in Sudan, a quarter of them in the capital of Khartoum, where they are directly affected by the fighting.

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5 CURRENCIES WITH HIGHEST VALUE IN THE WORLD

Are you wondering which currency is the highest in the world? When you think of the highest currencies in the world, you would think of the US Dollar or British Pound or Euro. But you must be surprised to know that the most expensive currencies are none of the mentioned ones and they even don't belong to the wealthiest nations of the world. The 'Highest Currency' is based on the high value of them when exchanged with INR.

1 KUWAITI DINAR (KWD)
The highest currency in the world is none other than Kuwaiti Dinar or KWD. Initially, one Kuwaiti dinar worth one pound sterling when the Kuwaiti dinar was introduced in 1960. The currency code for Dinars is KWD. The most popular Kuwait Dinar exchange rate is the INR to KWD rate. Indian expat community is very strong in Kuwait, hence the reason for being a popular currency pair.

2 BAHRAINI DINAR (BHD)
The Bahraini Dinar or BHD is the currency of Bahrain. Located in the Arabian Gulf, Bahrain is also heavily reliant on oil exports. The most popular Bahrain Dinar exchange rate is the INR to BHD rate. The currency code for Dinars is BHD, and the currency symbol is BD. Bahraini dinars are pegged to the US dollar and are used only in Bahrain. Indians are the largest expat group in Bahrain and that explains the reason for INR to BHD popularity.

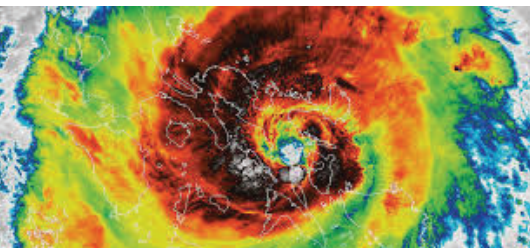
3 OMANI RIAL (OMR)
The Omani Rial or OMR is the currency of Oman. Before 1940, Oman used INR as its official currency and this is why the most popular Rial exchange rate is INR to OMR Rate. Situated on the south eastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula, Oman's economy mostly relies on the oil reserves that they have.

4 JORDANIAN DINAR (JOD)
The Jordanian dinar or JOD is the currency of Jordan. In 1950, the currency replaced the Palestinian pound as Jordan's official currency. West Bank used Jordanian Dinar and the Israeli shekel as well. The government of Jordan keeps fixed exchange rates which is a major reason behind that the currency's value is so high.

5 BRITISH POUND (GBP)
The pound sterling (£) or GBP is the currency of Great Britain and is the 5th strongest currency in the world. It is also the official currency of Jersey, Guernsey, the Isle of Man, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, the British Antarctic Territory, and Tristan da Cunha. The most popular United Kingdom Pound exchange rate is the EUR to GBP rate.

— Bharti Naidu

QUIZOHOLIC



1. The National Weather Service calculates the heat index by using air temperature and what other data?

- Time of day
- Relative humidity
- Barometric pressure
- Wind speed

2. What colour is the best option to wear in order to stay cool on a hot sunny day?

- Black
- Blue
- Green
- White

3. The three major cities (with population greater than 100,000) that get the most snowfall on earth are all in what country?

- Japan
- Canada
- Russia
- United States

4. In 1913 the world record air temperature of 134 °F was recorded in what country?

- Côte d'Ivoire
- Ecuador
- Saudi Arabia
- United States

5. Which of these are not like the others?

- Typhoon
- Tsunami
- Hurricane
- Cyclone

Answers: (1) Relative humidity (2) White (3) Japan (4) United States (5) Tsunami

PICTURE PERFECT

Devotees arrive to offer prayers at the Kedarnath Temple after its doors opened marking the Char Dham Yatra, in Kedarnath. PTI



DO YOU HAVE AN OPEN MIND?

RANDOMLY SPEAKING

MANJULA POOJA SHROFF



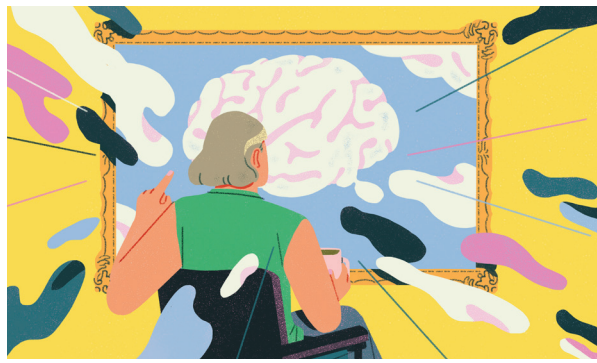
Rather than making a subjective opinion on the matter of being Open or Closed minded, why not look at a variety of ways to identify these patterns? While there are many factors at play, one key element is the mindset difference between these two groups of people. There is a striking difference between a person with an open-mind and a person with a closed mind.

Have you ever wondered why some people seem to make constant progress in their professional and personal lives, while others appear to be doomed to repeat the same mistakes over and over again?

Let's look at a few mindset patterns for clarity and better understanding:

Are you amongst those who is more interested in listening than in speaking? Or do you try to block others from speaking?

Do you feel compelled to



see things through others' eyes? Or do you focus much more on being understood rather than understanding others?

Are you, midst those who are willing to consider new ideas or are you dismissive and resistant to new information?

Are you willing to challenge your own beliefs or do you cling on to your belief even in the face of contradictory evidence?

Do you know when to make statements and when to ask questions or are you more likely to make state-

ments rather than ask questions.

Can you genuinely believe that you could be wrong; believe that everyone makes mistakes or would you rather say "I could be wrong ...

Open-mind, they are more curious, show a keenness to learn from others, can concede when they're wrong and consider ideas and opinions that are new or different from their own.

The second group is closed-minded - they are stubborn, believe they know everything, their ideas are the greatest and can't even consider the likelihood that they've gotten something wrong.

Its important to first identify if you have a Closed mind and to what extent? If you recognize closed-minded behavior patterns in yourself, you're not alone. We're all somewhere on the continuum between open and closed-minded by default.

When you find yourself exhibiting these behaviors in the moment, acknowledge what's happening and correct it. As soon as you can, find a quiet place and reflect on what's going on at a deeper level. Any change in mindset takes practice, you must remain active in the process of open-mindedness: It won't happen by accident.

Dr. Manjula Pooja Shroff is the MD, CEO of Kalorex Group

SOCIAL MEDIA

'Khel Khatam, paisa hajam?' Amitabh Bachchan calls out Twitter 'Mausi'

TDG NETWORK MUMBAI

Bachchan is worried about the money that he paid to Twitter to get the blue tick back!

On Sunday late at night, the Shahenshah of Bollywood took to Twitter to express his concern in his inimitable hindi words! Amitabh's post read, "Are mare gaye gulfam, biraj mein mare gaye gulfam...ae! Twitter mausi, chachi, bahni, tai, bua...! Jhoaa bhar ke naam hain tumhare! Paise bhar-



va liyo hamar, neel kamal khatir...aab kehete ho jinkar 1 million follower unkar neel kamal free me? humar toh, 48.4 million hain, ab?? Khel Khatam, paisa hajam?"

Earlier Amitabh thanked Elon by saying "Tu cheez badi hai musk musk" interchanging the lyrics of the song "Tu Cheez Badi Hai Mast Mast" from the 1994

film "Mohra" after the blue tick got restored to his account.

The Musk-owned social media platform had removed blue ticks from legacy accounts, which had not purchased its paid Blue service. Several celebrities including Bachchan, Sachin Tendulkar, Virat Kohli and others had lost their blue ticks on April 21, later Musk announced that he will pay for the blue ticks of some celebs which include Amitabh Bachchan as well.

ASTERIOD

ASTERIOD THE SIZE OF THREE FOOTBALL PITCHES TO SCRAPE PAST EARTH TOMORROW

TDG NETWORK WASHINGTON

Asteroid 2006 HV5, which has been classified as Potentially Hazardous Asteroid By NASA, is due to pass worryingly close to the Earth tomorrow.

The space rock, which is estimated to be around 1,000 feet in diameter, will pass by the Earth at a distance of 1.5 million miles, or 6.3 times the distance from the Earth to the Moon, travelling at some 38,000mph. NASA issues chilling asteroid warning that makes this end of world three times



more likely She added that 2006 HV5 is listed as having a rarity of '2' in NASA's Centre for Near Earth Object Studies' database.

That means that, on average, an asteroid of this size or larger will only come this close to Earth once year.

ENVIRONMENT

This is what a hill made of 650,000 cigarette butts looks like

TDG NETWORK LISBON

Cigarette filters, commonly referred to as "cigarette butts," are harmful plastic waste. Every year, trillions of cigarette butts are dumped into the environment, where they dissolve and release toxic metals and nicotine before becoming microplastic pollution. Recently, a group of environmental activists made an effort to do something novel to draw attention to the serious issue of this specific pollution.

Climate activists gathered 650,000 cigarette butts and



piled them up in the heart of Portugal's capital, Lisbon, on Sunday to raise awareness about the often-overlooked form of pollution. They collected enough stubs to fill 40 plastic buckets, then heaped them into a mound for the German climate campaigner behind the stunt to climb on.

Andreas Noe wore a breathing apparatus to protect him from the toxins in the non-biodegradable butts.

BRAIN-PICKING



Water is an important resource. In places where there is scarcity of water, there should be maximum use of technology so that exploitation of water can be minimum.

— DROUPADI MURMU
President of India



ESCAPE

DRUG TRAFFICKER BUYS METH FROM COPS, ESCAPES ARREST PLOT

TDG NETWORK LOS ANGELES

Undercover sheriffs deputies in Riverside County near Los Angeles said they agreed to supply 27 kilograms (nearly 60 pounds) of the illegal stimulant, in what they hoped would give them the proof they needed to get their man.

But after handing over the cash and collecting his haul, the suspect apparently was not interested in hanging around to get arrested.

"After the transaction, the suspect drove away and deputies from the Gang Task Force attempted a vehicle stop. "The suspect failed to yield, and a pursuit was initiated. Due to the high speeds and suspect's disregard for public safety, deputies lost sight of the vehicle." Defeated sheriff candidate Michael Lujan, a former captain in the department, said he had heard the drugs were worth around \$35,000. "Why would you let someone get in their vehicle, I don't know," he said. "It is pretty embarrassing. It's unfortunate because now we have additional narcotics out on the street."



WHAT'S TRENDING



#UPBOARDEXAMRESULTS UP BOARD EXAM RESULTS ARE OUT, NETIZENS STARTED A MEME WAR

Uttar Pradesh Secondary Education Council (UPMSP) released the result of high school and intermediate examination on 25 April 2023 at 1.30 pm, after which social media was flooded with memes. Yes, users are posting funny memes here, seeing which you will definitely laugh. Some of which are mentioned below.



Once a thirsty crow was flying hither and thither in search of water. It was the month of June. The sun was very hot. It had not rained for some days. So, all the tanks and ponds had dried up. After a long labor, he saw a pitcher.

He flew to the pitcher. He found that water was just at the bottom of the pitcher. He tried his level best to sip the water with his beak but could not succeed.

He saw some pebbles lying nearby. He carried the pebbles with his beak and dropped them into the pitcher one by one. The level of the water started rising. As it came up to the mouth of the pitcher, the crow was able to quench his thirst. So, he drank water and flew away saying akin.

- By Bharani Sundaram

"Where there is a will there is a way"

ANGELA MERKEL

LAST BUT NOT LEAST

Things to avoid while outings with children



SMRITI AGARWAL

In my childhood, my parents were very particular about my brother and me conducting ourselves as per the place we were in; for example, if we were in a restaurant, there would be rules such as elbows to be off the table, cutlery should not make a sound against the dishes, voice to be soft, no getting up from our chair without a valid reason, etc. Then, if we were travelling in an aeroplane or train, there was another set of rules, the same for cinema halls, other people's houses, etc.

We knew, and it had become a part of our inner selves, that the playground and our home were the two places where we could play, run, shout, and do all sorts of antics.

Time changed, and with that, civic literacy changed. In today's times, parents have no time or inclination to set rules and boundaries, as they feel that it is binding for children. The common feeling today is that children need to be themselves and be free

wherever they are. But is that the right way to raise a responsible individual?

When we are not guiding the children in their formative years to consider the space and privacy of others, how do we expect them to grow up to be empathetic and responsible citizens?

Today, we see children shouting, making noise, running around, and misbehaving wherever they are, and parents ignore

them. They are running in the aisles of cinema halls, all over restaurants, aeroplanes, hotel corridors when they are on holiday, malls, metro rails, etc. Others who get disturbed are also unable to say anything because the moment anyone raises an objection, they are told, "Arey! What is your problem? They are only kids, after all." The millennials need to be guided and trained on this aspect of parenting, where they raise their children to be aware of social conduct and the culture of different ambiances. The only strategy they have is to hand a gadget to the child, who is quiet

and engrossed in it.

The strategies for parents to teach their children to have an appropriate demeanour and conduct are:

■ **BE A ROLE MODEL:** Children observe the way a parent behaves in a space and then embody the same in their own behaviour.

■ **GAME TO SET RULES:** Make a game of having agreements with the children on different sets of rules for different places.

■ **NO GADGETS ON DINING TABLES:** Whether in the house or outside, gadgets should not be allowed for adults or children. Engage your children with conversations about food, talk to them about the place they are in, etc.

■ **INVOLVE THE CHILDREN:** Inform your children about where you are taking

them and what their expectations are of the place.

■ **DO NOT TAKE THE CHILDREN TO PLACES NOT MEANT FOR THEM:** If you will not be able to engage your children purposefully in a place, party, or dinner, do not take them on such outings with you.

■ **MOVIE HALLS AND THEATRES ARE NOT FOR CHILDREN:** Unless it is a children's movie or play, avoid taking children to a movie or play. The dark, enclosed space with loud noises is not compatible with children's sensitive senses, and neither can they sit patiently for such a long time for something that does not interest them. Please understand that they have a limited attention span until the age of 10.

Let us, as adults, be clear that it is not the children's fault. The onus lies on us to decide how and where we take them and how we have groomed them for the outings. My suggestion is to always plan to take your children to places of their interest and spend quality time with them instead of fitting them into your plans. Happy parenting!

Smriti Agrawal is an award winning author, specialized in early childhood parenting



Being Non-Judgemental How Difficult is it?



THE LIFE LAB
INDU BHARGAVA

Judging people around us on their looks, status, community, gender, ethnicity, or race comes naturally to most human beings. Being non-judgmental is the biggest challenge in life. During childhood, we revere some people, we fear some people, and we trust some explicitly. Whatever these figures tell us or feed us with information, we believe it. This is

how we grow up with deep-rooted biases in the form of complexes, fears, values, and sometimes ethics. Even after growing up to be adults, despite realising that most of our complexes, fears, inhibitions, and sometimes beliefs were baseless, we still go on reacting or responding to them as we have been training our minds to do ever since we were kids.

As individuals, we are so distracted by the external factors of a person that we lose focus on their internal characteristics or traits. There are circumstances and evidence that point towards a person's bad behaviour or action, but does it make the other person worthy of our condemnation or insult? But being non-judgmental is really difficult.

Why is it important to be non-judgmental? Do we also get affected by our biases and beliefs? In my opinion and experience, when we

judge others, we are limiting ourselves too. If we are trying to set benchmarks or standards for others, those would be applicable to us too. Then how do we deal with this situation? We might argue or give logic that life has not been fair to me in certain terms, and so could be the case with the person we are judging on some basis. Acknowledging, accepting, and appreciating others helps us grow as people. We can draw inspiration in this manner, whereas judgement can re-

sult in criticism or denunciation and will only invoke negative feelings in us.

To be able to see the good in others and be able to adapt it for our own growth is an exemplary trait in good human beings who can be great leaders one day. But dear readers, this is your life and your choices; who am I to judge?

Indu Bhargava has almost 23 years of professional experience in the field of training, counseling, education, journalism, and corporate communications.

How to tick with time blocking: Decoding if it's your perfect productivity hack!



HOW TO...
ADITI N.C.

As our lives get busier and our to-do lists seem to never end, finding effective ways to manage our time and increase productivity has become more important than ever. One popular technique that has gained traction in recent years is time blocking. But is it the right productivity hack for you? Let's find out...

WHAT IS TIME BLOCKING?

Time blocking is a time management technique that involves scheduling specific blocks of time for different tasks or activities throughout your day. Instead of relying on a to-do list, you allocate dedicated time slots for specific tasks, appointments, or projects on your calendar. During these time blocks, you focus solely on the task at hand, avoiding distractions and interruptions.

IS TIME BLOCKING MEANT FOR YOU?

Here are some factors to consider when determining whether time blocking is right for you:

1 Your work style: If you prefer a more flexible and spontaneous approach to work, time blocking may feel too restrictive and rigid. On the

other hand, if you thrive on structure and routine, time blocking can provide the framework you need to stay focused and organised.

2 Your type of work: Time blocking can work well for tasks that require deep focus and concentration, such as writing, designing, or coding. It allows you to set aside dedicated blocks of uninterrupted time to work on these tasks, which can result in increased productivity and better-quality output. However, for tasks that are more collaborative or require frequent interruptions, such as meetings or brainstorming sessions, time blocking may not be as effective.

3 Your schedule: If you have a highly variable or unpredictable schedule, time blocking may not be practical. For example, if you have a job that involves frequent travel or irregular work hours, it may be challenging to stick to a strict time-blocking routine. In such cases, you may need to adapt the technique to fit your schedule or explore other time management methods that are more flexible.

4 Your personal preferences: Everyone has different preferences when it comes to managing their time. Some people enjoy the process of scheduling and planning their day in advance, while others find it tedious and overwhelming. If you are someone who enjoys structure and organisation, time blocking may be a good fit for you. However, if you prefer a more intuitive or spontaneous approach to work, you may find other techniques, such as a to-do list or a task-based approach, more suitable.

ences when it comes to managing their time. Some people enjoy the process of scheduling and planning their day in advance, while others find it tedious and overwhelming. If you are someone who enjoys structure and organisation, time blocking may be a good fit for you. However, if you prefer a more intuitive or spontaneous approach to work, you may find other techniques, such as a to-do list or a task-based approach, more suitable.

5 Your ability to stick to a plan: Time blocking requires discipline and consistency. If you struggle with following a strict schedule or find it challenging to stay focused for extended periods of time, time blocking may not be the best fit for you. It's important to be honest with yourself about your ability to stick to a plan and determine whether time blocking aligns with your strengths and weaknesses.

The key to effective time management is finding a method that works well with your individual needs and helps you achieve your goals efficiently. Experiment with different techniques, and ultimately, choose the one that aligns with your unique work style and helps you boost your productivity.

Aditi NC is the founder and CEO of The Social Unicorns.

Safe Playschool in an Unsafe World



PATRICIA DSOUZA

Parents who buy clothes for their kids' wardrobes can be quite picky. They might be far less picky when looking for something like daycare, preschool, or playschool that may unknowingly endanger a child's life.

A recent incident should be a cautionary lesson for all parents of young children. On March 27th, 2023, a parent raised a complaint with the management of a playschool located at Swami Vivekanand Road in Kandivali West, Mumbai. The parent noticed severe behavioural changes, including sudden aggression, in their 2-year-old boy who attended the playschool, which had 25 children. Two teachers were booked for allegedly mistreating, hitting, and slapping toddlers in the classroom. The CCTV camera recorded the entire incident, which went viral on social media, showing the teacher mercilessly throwing the kids at the preschool.

The Kandivali police in Mumbai charged the two teachers under Section 23 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.

In July 2018, a two-year-old girl was assaulted at a playschool in Kolkata's Diamond Harbour area. The parents of Baby Tanu (name changed), who was one of the 20 children at the playschool, requested that the authorities show them the CCTV footage. However, they were informed that the CCTV cameras were not functional. An FIR was

registered against the playschool under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO) Act 2012.

Not only are the parents shattered, but they also blame themselves. Although they understand that the only person to blame is the perpetrator, they still wonder how they could have let

deaths are rare, many other forms of maltreatment exist. During these years, children are most vulnerable to manipulation, abuse, and exploitation. Therefore, it is crucial to provide a safe and secure environment for them, especially at the preschool level.

These days, we continue to hear news about heinous crimes against children, striking a familiar note.

Although the names of the victims change, the issue doesn't!

The bottom line is that parents need to adopt an invest-



The bottom line is that parents need to adopt an investigative mindset. They need to constantly keep their eyes open and communicate with other parents at the same school.

igative mindset. They need to constantly keep their eyes open and communicate with other parents at the same school. They must inquire with their children daily about their experiences. If their children are too young to be interrogated, then they must unexpectedly go to the premises and verify. Above all, even if your child tells you something that seems impossible, "believe them" and "win their trust by talking to them".

If parents have hesitations about the playschool, they should find another place, even if it seems impolite or uncomfortable. The stakes are higher when a child goes through a disastrous phase. *Dr. Patricia Dsouza Lobo is the author of 'When Roses are Crushed'. She is Executive Director of Kripa Foundation.*

Simple ideas to make luxury accessible in residential interiors



RAHUL MISTR

The myth that luxury interiors come with a heavy price tag is common. However, with proper planning and strategizing, it is possible to create luxury interiors without breaking the bank. In addition, with some simple details, spaces can be designed to feel more luxurious on a limited budget.

ADDING TEXTURAL QUALITY

One way to add depth and richness to a space is by layering materials. Combining different materials and textures, such as velvet, leather, and natural fibres, can ensure textural quality. For example, a simple cushion can be transformed into a luxurious one by adding metallic embroidery, tassels, or a silk or velvet trim.

INTEGRATING SMART SOLUTIONS

Choosing the right appliances and smart systems can also add to the sleekness of interiors. While efficiency is often associated with expensive devices, smart systems can save energy and time in the long run while still giving the space a high-end feel. For example, smart lighting systems that can be controlled with a mobile device or a voice assistant are becoming more accessible and affordable. Likewise, smart lighting and air conditioning systems also offer cost savings in the long run.

PAYING ATTENTION TO DETAILS

Paying attention to small details such as sockets, handles, and switches can also significantly impact the look and feel of a space. By



choosing high-quality and well-designed options, the space's overall aesthetic can be elevated. For example, a simple light switch can be replaced with a sleek touchpad, or door handles can be upgraded to more elegant designs.

Sticking to a theme and design style can also make a space feel more luxurious.

INCORPORATING DESIGN THEMES

By using a consistent colour palette and material selection, a cohesive look can be

achieved. An open design theme can create the illusion of a bigger space, allowing for more natural light and enhancing the luxurious feel. Attention to detail is essential, as some may look lavish but can be challenging to maintain. For example, marble may look beautiful but can be prone to staining and damage if not sealed properly.

CREATIVE SOLUTIONS TO MUNDANE PROBLEMS

For example, in-built furni-

ture and wardrobes can be an economical way to design a home while keeping clutter at bay. Concealed storage units within walls and beds can also be a great way to maximise space and create a more streamlined look. For example, a built-in headboard with hidden storage compartments can offer a place to store books or other items while adding a luxurious touch to the bedroom.

Proper planning and strategizing can transform any room into a luxurious oasis. Luxury is a subjective concept that revolves around comfort, visuals, and financial aspects. Furthermore, luxury is breaking away from trends to build a space that holds meaning, sentimental value, and layers of sensibilities and is personalised to the homeowner. With ever-growing smart technology, detailed market research, and an inclusive approach, one can achieve affordable luxury.

Rahul Mistri, Founder and Principal Designer at Open Atelier Mumbai

STORYTELLER

AASHISHA
CHAKRABORTYConfessions
of a Salesgirl

They set her next to a carton of soft drinks and a table. A table smack in the middle of a road. A road in the middle of nowhere. The salesgirl wiped a bead of sweat from her brow. What on earth was she supposed to do? Stop whizzing cars and ask them if they want a cool drink. "Umm... do you get many customers here?" The lone girl reached out to two other hawkers—one of cigarettes, paan, and the like and a fruit seller. The paan seller looked at her funny at first, then, after a few interminable seconds of close scrutiny, he finally deigned to open his mouth. "Are you married?" What what? Like, seriously, what? Her frown was a mix of consternation, disbelief, and disgust. It probably didn't warrant an answer. But almost as if it were a habit with her... As if she couldn't not answer a question asked of her, she replied before she could stop herself, "No." But she managed to give him a dirty look in the process.

"Hmmm... how did you come here?" He continued, chewing his betel leaf, his teeth reddening like her face.

I appeared out of nowhere in the back of beyond, she wanted to say. Instead, she turned her face to the phone, wondering if this is what she was supposed to do for the rest of her day/days/month/months...

Disappointment, rage, and regret made her coil into herself. Why had she joined this place at all? Who had chosen such a god-forsaken location to set up a cold drink stall? How did they imagine something would sell here?

"Hellooo!" came the fake fun voice at the other end. That was supposed to be her team leader, Mister Fun, who was absolutely no fun.

"Hi." She cut straight to the chase. "I want a change of location."

"What, my dear?" And why?"

"There is no one here for miles! How do you expect anything to sell?"

"That is what you are there for, Missus." "Remember how you mentioned in your interview about going any number of miles to get a sale?"

She fumed as if a lion was breathing within her. "I still want a location change." "It's not possible today. I have no one available for that area. We can try tomorrow." So, she was stuck that day with the red-lipped betel leaf seller and the aged fruit seller, who seemed like he had taken a vow of silence since the time Dhritrashtra went blind. That day, the salesgirl noted in her diary:

Choose the right location. Avoid creepy people. The salesgirl reached the clock tower early the next morning. She was a newbie, but not ignorant. She did not want to be thrown into the hinterland again. "Happy with the new location now?" Mister Fun grinned his hypocritical plastic smile at her. "Yes, thanks," she said with a small smile. "I expect you to make at least 10 litres worth of sales today," Mister Fun continued his eerie grin and left. As the sun assumed its kingly throne, the salesgirl realised what she had done. There were people there—loads and loads of people, yes. But so were the sellers. The number of sellers was as numerous and unending as the number of people; the salesgirl was overshadowed by the sheer variety of soft drinks—some of more elite brands, some of cheaper and more affordable names, and others who had coupons up their sleeve. Dear Lord of Sales, what had she done?

The life of a salesperson is tough, but the life of a salesgirl can be tougher. Amidst crushing competition and the fight to prove oneself to the last, the salesgirl also has to deal with creepy, intimidating customers and has to be able to figure out the distinction between those with genuine interest and time-wasters. As one of the few women who take up this challenging role, she also has to battle inane questions that have nothing to do with her profession but everything to do with her gender. Sometimes she feels objectified, sometimes negated, and at other times demoralised.

The sun settles for the night and smiles down at the weary and the brave. 'You will all see better days,' it hums, 'just wait, keep trying.' The salesgirl sleeps soundly.

Aashisha Chakraborty, bestselling author of *Mis(s)adventures of a Salesgirl*.

THE FESTIVE BONANZA
OF LITERARY FESTIVALS

NITISH RAJ

Literature has always been considered a serious affair of intellectuals. Those intellectuals who prefer to lock themselves up in a personal space and give serious thoughts to either existing malfeasance of the mortal world or venturing into a dystopian era questing to find an ideal world of harmony and affection. Such trait always gives an impression to the authors that they love solitude and loneliness which may be partly true but at the end of the day, authors are also human beings. Even though they consider human beings as mere mortals but how can they keep themselves aloof from the festivity of life to which they are entitled as human beings and especially the one that helps them keep themselves sane? They would also love to have the fun and frolic of a festival and what could be a better opportunity than participating in a literary festival?

A literary festival is not just a conglomeration of like-minded authors but also authors who perhaps think on a completely different tangent and challenge our thought process. A literary festival not only comprises of authors but also readers and those prospective writers who

dream of finding their names on the cover of a book. Even though the literary festivals are primarily aimed at promoting the authors' work and fostering a love for literature and writing through various literary activities like Book Launches, Book Signings, Book Reading, Panel Discussions, and various other activities, it pinches very hard that the history of literary festivals is completely new. The timeline of the earliest literature dates back hundreds of years even before the birth of Christ, whereas, the first literary festival was organized by George Wilkinson and John Moore in 1949 by the name of 'The Sunday Times Cheltenham Literature Festival'.

And in a country like India where festivals are a part and parcel of our life and whose literary heritage has been a source of pride for us, has embraced the culture of literary festivals wholeheartedly. The biggest example of this celebration of literature is the Jaipur Literature Festival which started in 2006 with just 30 writers and 100 readers in attendance and has emerged as the biggest literary festival in the world. India, being a country of multiple languages, has the privilege of lit-



erary festivals centered around various languages. And the beauty of this festive bonanza is that even though they aim to promote their native language they do not just restrict it to their native language, and they invite authors from various languages and locations. One of the best examples of such a diverse love towards literature is Jashn-E-Rekhta which is the world's largest Urdu language literary festival and has had eminent speakers like Dr. Kumar Vishwas who is undoubtedly the most popular Hindi poet of our country, and Prem Chopra; a notable actor of Hindi and Punjabi films along with Nandita Das; an actress and Director who has acted in films of ten different languages.

Even though we as Indians are always in the habit of comparing the quality of literature from the West; India is one of those countries where literature is not just concentrated on the active authors but also we have always respected our deceased authors whose literary contributions have shaped us as an individual. Perhaps we would be one of those few countries that have started literary festivals in tribute to our past authors and one such literary festival is the Kerala Literature Festival in tribute to D.C. Kizhakemuri; a writer and publisher who is considered the doyen of the Indian Publishing Industry. We as Indians have been blessed to have literary festivals not just organized under the pa-

tronage of the government but also by a variety of corporates, bookstores, and other literary enthusiasts who have been active pioneers.

Whether it be the Tata Literature Live which is organized under the patronage of Tata Group or the Apeejay Kolkata Literature Festival organized by the Oxford Bookstores or Times Lit Fest organized by the Times of India; these literary festivals have been enthusiastic in promoting the Indian literature in particular and Indian literature in totality. And this proves true the saying that 'literature teaches us the real meaning of humanity', and the literary festivals in India are promoting humanity and harmony in a true sense. It comes as a pleas-

ant experience to find various personalities from different backgrounds of society coming together to promote the single cause of the enrichment of literature. These literary festivals are not just a medium to promote the writings of various writers but also a different form of art which have the same motto as literature.

Even though a few literary festivals like Guntur International Poetry Festival just allow poetry and the Bookaroo Festival of Children's Literature is mainly concentrated on children's literature; the literary festivals in India mainly focus on multiple forms of art and culture. They not only give us a sneak peek into the current vividness of our rich literature but also give us an immersive experience of the unforgettable journey and works of various eminent authors of whom we have either forgotten or are simply unaware.

The revolution of the literary festival is indeed a major positive hullabaloo in the Indian literary fraternity that has certainly helped us find our immense love for literature. They help us realize our creative paradigm and also serve as a center point where we can meet the creator of our beloved books in person and get mesmerized by their immense imagination power.

Author is the Editor-in-Chief of *The Literary Mirror* and Co-Founder of *Literia Insight*.

RUSKIN BOND SHARES SECRETS TO ENJOYING
ADVANCING YEARS IN HIS NEW BOOK

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Long past the age when people are termed 'senior citizens', bestselling author Ruskin Bond will share in his next book how the years past 60 can be "the best years of your life".

The children's author will come

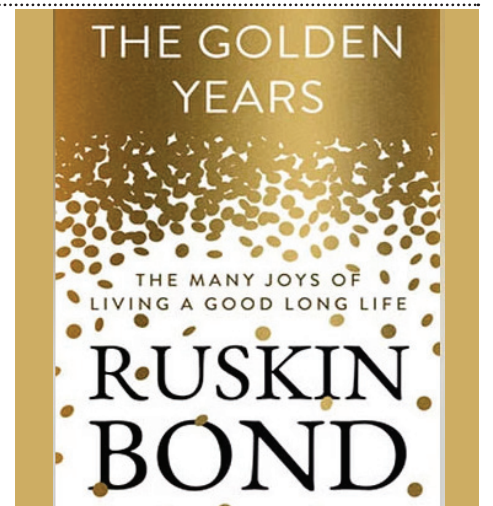
out with "The Golden Years" on the occasion of his 89th birthday on May 19, publisher HarperCollins India has announced. "... A book that I have written for those, like me, who can no longer climb trees, swing from the flying trapeze, or go sky-diving. There are, however, a great many other things we can do, and this book

describes and enumerates some of them," the writer of "The Enchanted Cottage" said in a statement. Bond added that with a little care, dedication, and love, these years are often the best years of life.

"Life may not be a bed of roses—roses have thorns, after all but if you can make your bed with care

and dedication and a little love, you may find that it's a good bed and a good life often the best years of your life!" he said.

Written in Bond's inimitable style, involving stories, anecdotes, observations, and witticism, the book is a collection of a "goofy old man's reflections on a life well-lived".



BOOKS TO LOOK OUT FOR THIS WEEK

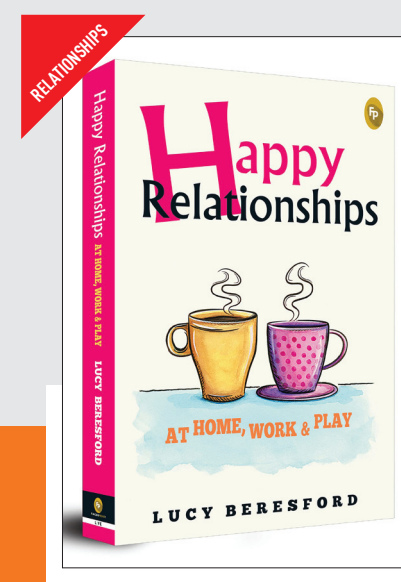
Happy Relationships at Home, Work & Play

Price: Rs 199.00

Author: Lucy Beresford

Publisher: Fingerprint! Publishing

Why do some relationships give us great joy and others become toxic? What role do we play in our relationships? Are our relationship skills weakening in the age of social media? From the moment we are born we rely on others for our survival. But as we get older, we can sometimes find relationships upsetting and frustrating. In this insightful, warmly written book, psychotherapist Lucy Beresford cuts to the chase of how to have harmonious, fulfilling relationships. Whether it's with our partner, our kids, our boss, or our mother-in-law, or perhaps most importantly ourselves, all our relationships require at some stage in our lives a little bit of tender loving care.



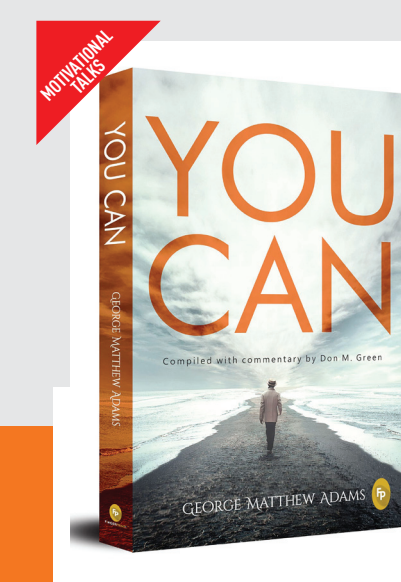
You Can

Price: Rs 99.00

Author: Jordan B. Peterson

Publisher: Fingerprint! Publishing

Do you often wonder whether you really have it in you to accomplish your goals, to win over obstacles, and to succeed in life? Through the empowering self-help manual you can, penned to promote personal growth and well-being for anyone who reads it, George Matthew Adams talks about things to be done to pave your way to a fulfilling, successful life—such as sitting for an hour in silence to shape your creative vision, going the extra mile in serving others, letting your character rule your work, studying your mistakes, learning to use time, and many more. Inculcate these habits, and your life will change.



Perfect Parenting: How to Raise Happy and Successful Children

Price: Rs 189.00

Author: Sushant Kalra

Publisher: Rupa Publications India

Unlearning is the first step of learning some people say parenting comes naturally to you once you become a parent. But does it? Some people think that there is only one perfect approach to parenting. But can one approach apply equally to individuals who think, feel and respond differently? Some people believe that parenting is simply about applying the lessons we learnt from our parents' experience of raising us. But can we ignore the fact that times have changed and our children's lives have been further complicated by pace, competitiveness and social media? Perfect parenting breaks the myth that parenting is not something to be learnt.



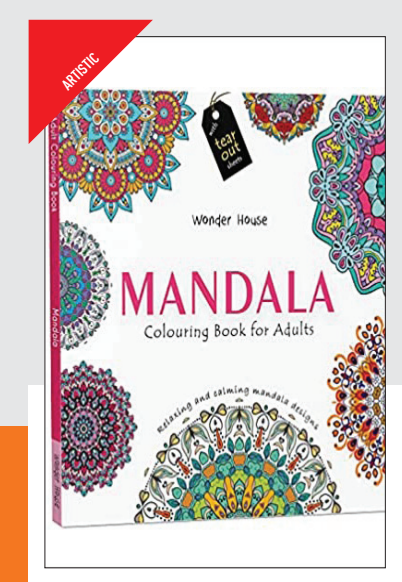
Mandala Art: Colouring books for Adults with tear out sheets

Price: Rs 149.00

Author: Wonder House Books

Publisher: Wonder House Books; First edition

Mandalas are spiritual and ritual diagrams representing the various interpretations of our universe. These powerful diagrams can help you embark on a spiritual journey of self-discovery by allowing you to take a break from a hectic life style. Relax and get rid of your anxieties by adding myriad colours to these extraordinary designs.



TOP OF THE DAY

FOUR COUNTRIES IN RUNNING FOR 2027 WOMEN'S WORLD CUP, FIFA CONFIRMS

Four contenders are competing to host the 2027 Women's World Cup, FIFA confirmed, days after the joint United States-Mexico bid entered the race. Brazil, South Africa and the European project teaming Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands were previously announced as intended candidates trying to win a vote scheduled for May next year. All four projects come from countries "with a strong football tradition," FIFA secretary general Fatma Samoura said in a statement.

AZ DOMINATES WITH 5-0 VICTORY OVER HAJDUK TO WIN UEFA YOUTH LEAGUE

Unheralded Dutch club AZ Alkmaar is a European champion for the first time after outclassing Hajduk Split 5-0 in the UEFA Youth League final. AZ earned Europe's premier youth title with another dominating win in the knockout rounds: Real Madrid was previously beaten 4-0, Barcelona by 3-0 and Eintracht Frankfurt 5-0. A penalty converted in the 45th minute by 17-year-old Ghanaian winger Jayden Addai rewarded AZ for being the most ambitious team in the first half.

LOWER-RANKED EUROPEAN SOCCER CLUBS UNITE IN NEW LOBBY GROUP

European clubs feeling left out of soccer's politics and marginalized by wealthy Champions League teams launched a new lobby group. The Union of European Clubs met in Brussels with about 40 clubs - including six from Spain, five from England and four from Germany and claiming to complement and not be a rival to the established European Club Association. The ECA has a strong influence with UEFA, including in decisions on how the Champions League is run and distributes money. "We do feel we aren't represented anywhere in European football," Crystal Palace co-owner Steve Parish said.

MAN UNITED MANAGER TEN HAG PREPARES FOR CRUCIAL CLASH AGAINST CITY

Year-end exams don't come much tougher than the one facing Erik ten Hag and Manchester United. The Dutch manager was hired to return the storied club to its former glories after a decade of decline. Against Manchester City in the FA Cup final he will get the chance to show how far United has come in his first season in charge. While a one-off match cannot judge an entire campaign, the contrast in emotions for United's fans will be stark depending on the outcome. A win on June 3 would not only secure a second trophy for Ten Hag beside the League Cup - but also serve as a statement of intent that he is building a team ready to go head-to-head with City, perhaps as soon as next season.

I-LEAGUE 2023

FC BENGALURU UNITED SECURES PLACE IN 2ND ROUND OF I-LEAGUE

TDG NETWORK
CHHATTISGARH

FC Bengaluru United ended their group stage campaign of the 2nd Division I-League Qualifiers on a high note, following yet another victory against RKM FC, 1-0 at the Ramakrishna Mission Sports Complex in Chhattisgarh on Monday.

Nikhil Mali's (12') early strike was the sole goal of the match. Fans turned up in large numbers to cheer for the home team but will take solace in the fact that they were treated to an afternoon of high-octane football. With 17 points in 8 games, the victory seals FC Bengaluru United as the leader of the Group C table and they move on to compete in the next round of 2nd Division I-League Qualifiers with four other teams in a home and away format. The top two teams will then secure a place in the 2023-24 I-



FC Bengaluru United and RKM players in action.

League season. As early as the 12th minute, FC Bengaluru United showed their appetite for goals. After swiftly regaining possession in a threatening area, a shrewd Shajan Franklin, played in Nikhil Mali who found the back of the net, to score his

second goal of the season and give FCBU the crucial early lead, 1-0. He nearly doubled his tally soon after but was unavailable to complete his brace. While the two-time Karnataka Super Division imprinted themselves on the game, tempers

began to flare and the RKM FC skipper Suresh Kumar Dhruw was given a yellow card for his conduct against FCBU striker Irfan Yadwad. At half time, FCBU led 1-0, despite their dominance, the game was very much within the reach of RKM FC.

The second half resumed with RKM FC continuing their aggressive brand of football. A physical contest ensued between the two sides, with midfielder Abhijit Pramanik picking up a yellow for his blatant foul, soon after this Sayif Mullick of RKM FC was sent off with a red card for his infractions. A 10-man RKM FC struggled to secure an equaliser but did manage to deny FC Bengaluru United another goal. Following a brief hiatus, FCBU will be back in action on May 6th, where they will take on the winners from Group A (yet to be determined) in a home fixture. The previous round augurs well for the team, they have proven to be lethal in front of goal and rock solid on a defensive front. Striker Irfan Yadwad is the league's highest scorer with 11 goals and will be keen to continue his purple patch for the remainder of the season.

IN PREPARATION

Badminton Association of India gears up for Asian Games

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Badminton Association of India (BAI) has decided to conduct a selection trial from May 4 to 7 to pick the team for the upcoming Asian Games.

The Asian Games, which was originally scheduled for September last year, will be held in Hangzhou, China from September 23 to October 8 this year.

According to the circular issued to all the affiliated state associations, the trials will be conducted at Jwala Gutta Academy of Excellence in Telangana.

Double Olympic medalist PV Sindhu (World No. 11), HS Prannoy (world no. 9), men's pairing of Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy (World No. 6)



Representative image of Badminton Association of India.

and women's combination of Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand (world no. 19) have been selected directly for the Asian Games "based on their placing in the BWF Top 20 ranking list as on April 18." World champi-

onships silver and bronze medallists Kidambi Srikanth (World No. 23) and Commonwealth Games champion Lakshya Sen (World No. 24), Orleans Masters Super 300 winner Priyanshu Rajawat, national champion

Mithun Manjunath and Tokyo Olympian B Sai Praneeeth are among the nine men's singles players, who will have to fight it out in the trials.

In women's singles, London Games bronze medalist Saina Nehwal, Aakarshi Kashyap, Malvika Bansod, Ashmita Chaliha, Unnati Hooda will be among the women's singles shuttlers, who will have to grind it out in the three-day trials.

"The deadline to send confirmation of participation in the final Selection Trials to BAI is 5pm, Friday, 28th April 2023," BAI said in the letter.

"Format of the trials will be set after confirmation deadline." List of Players for Asian Games 2023 selection trials: Men's Singles: Lakshya Sen, Kidambi Srikanth,

Priyanshu Rajawat, Mithun Manjunath, Sai Praneeeth, Mainsam Meiraba, Bharat Raghav, Ansal Yadav, Sidhant Gupta Women's Singles: Saina Nehwal, Aakarshi Kashyap, Malvika Bansod, Ashmita Chaliha, Aditi Bhat, Unnati Hooda, Alisha Naik, Shriyanshi Valishetty, Anupama Upadhyay Men's Doubles: MR Arjun/Dhruv Kapila, Krishna Prasad/Vishuvardhan, Suraj Goala/Pruthvi Roy, Nithin HV/Sai Pratheek, Kushal Raj/Prakash Raj Women's Doubles: Ashwini Bhat/Shikha Gautham, Tanisha Crasto/Ashwini Ponnappa, Radhika Sharma/Tanvi Sharma Mixed Doubles: Rohan Kapoor/Sikki Reddy, Sai Pratheek/Tanisha Crasto, Hariharan/Varshini, Hemagendra Babu/Kanika Kanwal.

PROTEST-POLITICS SOLIDARITY

Wrestlers' protest gets political backing

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI



Indian wrestlers Sakshi Malik (L) and Bajrang Punia during sit-in protest.

Several politicians, including former Haryana Chief Minister Bhopinder Singh Hooda, and 'khap' leaders on Tuesday met with the protesting wrestlers and extended their support to them.

Hooda, Udit Raj, another Congress leader, CPI leader Brinda Karat, who was stopped from joining the stir by the wrestlers in January, were welcomed by the wrestlers, a day after they had sought support from all quarters.

Hooda spent about 35 minutes with the wrestlers at the Jantar Mantar, where the grapplers had started their protest in January, demanding the removal of Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) President Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, who was accused of sexual harassment and intimidation by them.

While Hooda did not speak, Raj asked the protesting wrestlers to stick to their cause, like the farmers did against the farm laws and said, "You will emerge victorious".

The Bharat Kisan Union (BKU) representative also joined the wrestlers' stir.

MISFORTUNATE PLAYER

INJURY SIDELINES ONS JABEUR AT MADRID OPEN

TDG NETWORK
SPAIN

Defending champion Ons Jabeur is unable to defend her Madrid Open title this year as she has withdrawn from WTA 1000 event due to injury. The World No.4 from Tunisia withdrew from the tournament on Monday because of a left calf injury.

Jabeur reached the last four of last week's Stuttgart Open, but she retired from her semifinal match against World No.1 Iga Swiatek with a sprained left calf while trailing 3-0. Two-time Grand Slam finalist Jabeur said on social media that medical exams showed, "A small tear in my calf and I will need more time to recover. I am sad to announce that I won't be able to compete and defend my title this year [at Madrid]."

Jabeur was seeded fourth in the Madrid main draw before withdrawing. Shelby Rogers of the United States, previously the highest-ranked unseeded player, will replace Jabeur as the



Tunisia's Ons Jabeur in action.

No.33 seed in the draw. A qualifier or fortunate loser will fill Rogers' previous slot in the draw.

This is Jabeur's second injury of the season. Jabeur had minor knee surgery after the Australian Open this year, which kept her out of the entire Middle East swing in February.

Jabeur came back for the Sunshine Double and then appeared to be back to her

best on clay. She won her fourth career WTA singles victory on dirt in Charleston in early April, then beat Jelena Ostapenko and Beatriz Haddad Maia in Stuttgart before retiring in the semifinals. She entered the French Open last year as one of the championship favourites after success on red clay, including a title in Madrid, but she was knocked out in the first round.

POST GAME EFFECT

Spur sacks interim coach Stellini after loss to Newcastle

TDG NETWORK
UNITED KINGDOM

Tottenham Hotspur parted ways with Cristian Stellini on Tuesday after suffering a humiliating 6-1 defeat against Newcastle United.

Tottenham released an official statement to announce the Italian's departure. "Sunday's performance against Newcastle was wholly unacceptable. It was devastating to see. We can look at many reasons why it happened and whilst myself, the Board, the coaches and the players must all take collective responsibility, ultimately the responsibility is mine.

Cristian will leave his current role along with his coaching staff. Cristian stepped in at a difficult point in our season and I want to thank him for the professional manner in which he and his coaching staff have conducted themselves during such a challenging time. We wish him and his staff well. Ryan Mason will take over Head Coach duties with immediate effect. Ryan knows the Club and the players well. We shall update further on his coaching staff in due course.



Tottenham ex-coach Cristian Stellini.

I met with the Player Committee today - the squad is determined to pull together to ensure the strongest possible finish to the season. We are all clear we need to deliver performances which earn your amazing support," as quoted by Tottenham FC.

With a span of two months, Tottenham has undergone two managerial changes. Earlier Antonio Conte and Tottenham mutually decided to part ways on March 27th.

Tottenham made an announcement to thank Conte for his contribution during a tenure which lasted for 16 months.

READINESS

INDIAN SHUTTLERS GEAR UP FOR ASIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

TDG NETWORK
DUBAI



India's badminton star PV Sindhu.

Top Indian shuttlers, including double Olympic medalist PV Sindhu, will hope to find their rhythm as they begin their campaign in the main draw of the Asia Badminton Championships, here on Wednesday.

The 40th edition of the prestigious continental competition started here on Tuesday with the qualifying rounds, while the main draw comprising all the top players will happen only from Wednesday.

It will be a tough task for India to return with a medal, considering most of the top players have been struggling with rhythm and form this season.

India have so far won 17 medals at ABC with Dinesh Khanna claiming the lone gold in 1965 and the likes of Sindhu, Prannoy and Lakshya will have to really play out of their skins to break the title drought.

On a comeback trial after a long injury lay-off, Sindhu has shown some spark when she reached the finals of the Madrid Spain Masters and the 8th seeded Indian will hope to find her 'A' game when she begins her campaign against Taiwanese Wen Chi-hsu.

In men's singles, world number 9 HS Prannoy has been consistent and he will look to gear up for the bigger battles with a good show in the opening round against Phone Pyae Naing of Myanmar, while 2021 world championships silver medalist Kidambi Srikanth will take on Bahrain's Adnan Ebrahim.

Former world number 6 Lakshya Sen has endured a difficult phase in 2023 as his ranking plummeted after a series of early exits, forcing the Indian to take a break.

The Commonwealth Games champion has a tough road ahead with former world champion Loh Kean Yew of Singapore standing on the way in the opening round.

In women's singles, Malvika Bansod will face top seed and last year's finalist Akane Yamaguchi of Japan, while Aakarshi Kashyap meets Indonesian Komang Ayu Cahya Dewi.

In men's doubles, sixth seeded pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, who won the Swiss Open super 300 title early this year, will open against Malaysian combination of Tan Kian Meng and Tan Wee Kiong.

MR Arjun and Dhruv Kapila, and Krishna Prasad Garaga and Vishnuvardhan Goud Panjala are also in fray.

Women's doubles pair of Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand, the Commonwealth Games bronze medallists, will face Indonesia's Lanny Tria Mayasari and Ribka Sugianto.

IPL 2023

GUJARAT DOMINATES MUMBAI IN HIGH SCORING ENCOUNTER

TDG NETWORK
AHMEDABAD

Gujarat Titans produced a clinical performance to outclass Mumbai Indians by 55 runs in a completely one-sided IPL match here on Tuesday. Set a stiff target of 208, MI were stopped at 152 for nine. MI didn't get the kind of start they would have liked and were struggling at 29 for the loss of captain Rohit Sharma's wicket in six overs, the team failing miserably to utilise the powerplay. While trying to work the ball on the outside, Rohit got a leading edge and ended up giving a return catch to his opposite number, Hardik Pandya, in the second over.

After the seamers had done their job, star leg-spinner Rashid Khan came on and bowled a very economical first over.

MI managed to score 13 runs in the seventh over, before Rashid ended Ishan Kishan's painstaking stay in the middle. Ishan consumed as many as 21 balls for his 13 runs.

Three balls later, Rashid had Tilak Varma trapped in front of the wicket to leave MI reeling at 45 for three in the eighth over.

From there, five-time winners MI could not do enough to challenge the defending champions.

After a forgettable outing with the ball where he was smashed around for 39 runs in two overs, Cameron Green chipped in with 33 off 26 balls, while Suryakumar Yadav contributed 23 in 12 balls. Nehal Wadhwa smashed his way to 40 in just 21 deliveries, but their efforts only delayed the inevitable.

Besides Rashid's 2/27 in four overs, Noor Ahmad, the other spinner from Afghanistan, finished with impressive figures of 3/37 in his full quota of overs.



GT players celebrate after MI's fall of wicket.

Earlier, GT's lower middle-order used the long handle to good effect and powered their team to a formidable 207 for six. David Miller blazed away to a 22-ball 46, Rahul Tewatia smashed an unbeaten

20 in just five balls, while Abhinav Manohar needed only 21 deliveries to make 42 during a vital partnership of 71 runs for the fifth wicket with the South African. This was after Shubman Gill made a

neat 34-ball 56.

Arjun Tendulkar began on a promising note and conceded four runs in the opening over after his skipper Rohit opted to bowl first on winning the toss.

Gill got the first boundary of the match as the opener played one behind square off a Jason Behrendorff delivery that was slightly short.

MI didn't have to wait long for their first breakthrough as Wriddhiman Saha missed an attempted pull shot to edge one to the keeper off Tendulkar in the first ball of the third over.

Having taken his partner Gill's advice, Saha reviewed, but the on-field umpire's decision was retained by UltraEdge.

It was a nice comeback by Tendulkar junior, four days after being smacked for 48 runs in three overs by Punjab Kings. Growing in confidence, the 23-year-old left-arm seamer gave away just five runs.

With the help of few fours and a six, Gill gave the GT innings the momentum it needed after a quiet first five overs.

SHUBMAN GILL

HEADTURNER

Crushed a scorching 56-run innings, including 7 boundaries and 1 maximum, to assist Titans in setting a mammoth target of 207 runs.

56
RUNS
34
BALLS



DAVID MILLER

TURNING POINT

When his team was in dire need of runs, he unleashed his power-hitting prowess and clobbered a blistering 46 runs off a mere 22 deliveries.

David Miller



MATCH PREVIEW

KKR'S FATE HANGS IN BALANCE AGAINST RED-HOT RCB

TDG NETWORK
BENGALURU

Kolkata Knight Riders will be desperate to bring their flagging campaign back on track, while Royal Challengers Bangalore will look to shrug off their overdependence on their top three batters when the two teams clash in the IPL here on Wednesday.

The two-time champions have looked clueless in their last four outings, losing at home while also on the road. The Nitish Rana-led side is currently at seventh spot with just two wins from seven games.

The losses can largely be pegged down to the shoddy performance by KKR batters. They are missing their regular skipper, Shreyas Iyer, and star all-rounder Shakib-Al-Hasan.

In the 49-run loss against Chennai Super Kings on Sunday, KKR batters were expected to rise to the occasion, chasing a 230 plus score, but instead the top-order, comprising the likes of Venkatesh Iyer, Rana, and N Jagadeesan, crumbled under pressure.

CAPTAIN SAYS

Warner applauds bowlers after win against SRH

TDG NETWORK
HYDERABAD

Delhi Capitals (DC) skipper David Warner heaped praise on his bowlers after the team successfully managed to defend their total of 144/9 in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2023 against Sunrisers Hyderabad at Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium on Monday.

Ishant Sharma, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, and Mukesh Kumar bowled economical spells on a consistent basis to make SRH struggle for boundaries. The pressure got to the SRH batters as they started losing wickets in quick succession

while searching for boundaries. "The game throws us challenges, for us, it's great to get two points. Mukesh under pressure was amazing. Well done to him and the two spinners, they've been our rock. These two are experienced bowlers, and they are never going to let you down. From day one, he (Ishant) kept on telling me that was he ready. Unfortunately, he was sick few games before but credit to him. He's worked very hard to get back into the IPL. To get an opportunity and to bowl upfront like he has, that's exceptional. We spoke about it at the end of O (wins) out of 5 (games), that teams have won before from



DC skipper David Warner (R), Mukesh Kumar and Axar Patel.

PITCH REPORT

It will be the second-last game of the season at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium. The pitch will likely provide a lot of support to the batters in this game. The average first innings score in the last T20 games at this venue has been 194 runs.

a concern. He hasn't bowled his quota of four overs even once this season as he often gets injured while bowling.

But KKR will walk into the game with a slight psychological edge, having defeated RCB by 81 runs earlier this season.

Meanwhile, RCB will be high on confidence after eking out a seven-run win over the then table toppers Rajasthan Royals and would be eager to extend their winning streak.

Faf du Plessis and his troops have won four of their seven games, including the last two, and find themselves just outside of the top four in the fifth spot.

RCB's wins have come on the back of sensational performers by a few players.

Du Plessis has been in sublime form and has raised several century-stands with Virat Kohli and Glenn Maxwell, who are also in good nick.

Such is the dependence on the three that only they are doing the bulk of the scoring while the other batters have failed to fire.

More is expected from the middle-order comprising Dinesh Karthik, Mahipal Lomlor, Shahbaz Ahmed and Suyash Prabhudessai.

Among bowlers, Mohammed Siraj has been in sensational form. The Purple Cap holder has conceded at 7.17 runs per over and has bowled the most dot balls -- 89 this season.

Siraj is being ably supported by Wayne Parnell and Harshal Patel. The addition of Sri Lankan spinner Wanindu Hasaranga has also done wonders for the previously struggling RCB bowling unit.

RCB were undone by KKR spinners earlier this season and they will have to be a bit cautious while playing the likes of Varun Chakravathy, Suyash Sharma and Narine

POS	TEAM	P	W	L	D	PTS.	NRR
1	Chennai Super Kings	7	5	2	0	10	+0.662
2	Gujarat Titans	7	5	2	0	10	+0.580
3	Rajasthan Royals	7	4	3	0	8	+0.844
4	Lucknow Super Giants	7	4	3	0	8	+0.547
5	Royal Challengers Bangalore	7	4	3	0	8	-0.008
6	Punjab Kings	7	4	3	0	8	-0.162
7	Mumbai Indians	7	3	4	0	6	-0.620
8	Kolkata Knight Riders	7	2	5	0	4	-0.186
9	Sunrisers Hyderabad	7	2	5	0	4	-0.725
10	Delhi Capitals	7	2	5	0	4	-0.961

Points table is updated till match no. 35 GT vs MI

ORANGE CAP HOLDER



FAF DU PLESSIS
RCB

07
INNS
405
RUNS



DEVON CONWAY
CSK

07
INNS
314
RUNS



DAVID WARNER
DC

07
INNS
306
RUNS



VIRAT KOHLI
RCB

07
INNS
279
RUNS



RUTURAJ GAIKWAD
CSK

07
INNS
270
RUNS

PURPLE CAP HOLDER



MOHAMMED SIRAJ
RCB

07
INNS
13
WKT



ARSHDEEP SINGH
PBKS

07
INNS
13
WKT



YUZVENDRA CHahal
RR

07
INNS
12
WKT



RASHID KHAN
GT

06
INNS
12
WKT



TUSHAR DESHPANDE
CSK

07
INNS
12
WKT

QUOTE OF THE DAY



“His (Mark Chapman) match-winning knock in the fifth and deciding match was particularly special and we're happy to have someone in such strong form added to our ODI squad.”

- GARY STEAD (NZ COACH)

there. Hopefully, we can make it three in a row. We've got back-to-back games against Sunrisers, so we have to start again," David Warner said after the match.

The Australian batter came back to his former home after a long period of time. He marked his comeback in a dramatic fashion and after the game, he thanked everyone in the stadium for their support.

"Love it here, it's an amazing crowd, they always come here and support. Thanks for all the support," Warner added.

Delhi won the toss and decided to bat first. Even though Delhi struggled throughout the first

innings they still managed to put up a score of 144/9. SRH started the chase on a strong note, however after Mayank Aggarwal's knock of 49(39) came to an end, SRH's batting lineup started to fall apart. Washington Sundar and Heinrich Klaasen tried to change the course of the game in the final overs of the game, but they fell short at the end of the day. SRH ended their innings with a score of 137/6 and fell short by 7 runs.

Delhi Capitals will be back in action to face Sunrisers Hyderabad once again but this time the venue will be different. DC will face SRH at the Arun Jaitley Stadium on Saturday.