



Coal scam case: CBI conducts raids at West Bengal Law Minister's premises

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BMC-run schools

awaiting uniforms

pupils are forced to

wear old uniforms



Teacher of BMC school spoke to Afternoon voice under the condition of anonymity said "This is the same case every year. Uniforms never reach in time and most of the students get only one uniform a year. To attend school they have no other option than using old uniform or torn uniforms."

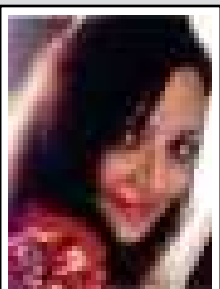
Around 3,50,000 students enrolled in the 1,216 BMC-run schools are waiting for their uniforms even three months after the start of the academic year in June. Owing to the shortcoming, they force the pupils to wear either old uniforms or attend classes in casual clothes.

This comes when the BMC is striving to upgrade its educational infra, with introducing modern labs and libraries, revamp of buildings, inclusion of ICSE, CBSE and even Cambridge curriculum. According to the civic official, who didn't wish to be named, the uniforms couldn't be supplied on time owing to the delay in floating tenders.

Godvari a house help by profession, said "forget about uniform, even the food that they serve to children is very substandard and sometimes you can find germs in it. Most children do not consume that food, they are forced to carry back home their meal in tiffin. We throw it or feed that to crows".

BJP plans for its #MissionMumbai150Plus for BMC elections

Editoritis



Dr. Vaidehi

Water has started receding from several areas of Bengaluru, but residents and IT hubs continue to worry over the weather department's warnings of more rain. Go out you will find artificial flood all across, yes there was rain and fortunately not too heavy. Does anyone care why so many potholes exist? Now if you go to any place, you can see floods and we will not talk till a few people die. All drains are full, till few people die, no one will clean the drains. Lots of constructions happened and debris waste directly goes to drains. But no one ever tried to clean the roads and clear the gutters. People throw the chocolate

wrappers through the window from the bus. They leave all clutter in gardens, throw wrappers at road sides. There is enormous use of plastic waste. If people don't stop these activities then nobody can stop the flood during monsoon.

Bengaluru is located almost equally distanced from the west and East coast. Even if cyclonic clouds tend to move towards Bengaluru from either side, mighty protectors guard them. They are western and eastern ghats.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Bangalore the silicon valley is stuck in floods

▶▶▶ PAGE 1

Political chanakya had multiple motives behind his visit and preliminarily he wants Shiv Sena to get rooted out form Maharashtra politics.

“Shiv Sena under Uddhav Thackeray’s leadership has become weak and reached its present state due to its politics of betrayal.

In a twist that few saw coming post the tumultuous political events which led to the demise of the MVA, the BJP’s central leadership gave the coveted chief minister’s post to Shinde.

Bengaluru, is on the leeward side of both these mountain ranges whereas Chennai and Mumbai are on the windward side of these ranges, so when the clouds move, they hit the mountain and shed rainfall. By the time it reaches Bengaluru, it would have exhausted 70-80% and sheds pleasant and moderate showers here.

Earthquakes happen along fault lines of a tectonic plate. When there is a slight disturbance, two tectonic plates might rub; overlap, etc to produce an earthquake. Now, Bengaluru is not along a fault line. It is at the centre of the tectonic plate. So, there is no chance of an earthquake anywhere near Bengaluru. No earthquake at least for the next 50k years (if tectonic arrangements change later)

Following two days of heavy rain that threw up scenes of flooded neighbourhoods and boats rescuing residents, water levels dropped in several areas this morning. Traffic flow has now started returning to normal after waterlogged roads led to kilometres-long congestion. However, residents are concerned over the forecasts of more rain. The weather department has predicted light to moderate rain in the city and said a down-pour is "very likely".

Karnataka Minister CN Ashwathnarayan will meet representatives of several IT companies this afternoon to discuss problems they are facing due to unprecedented rains in the city. The waterlogging led to power cuts and disrupted water supplies in several areas of the city. Borewells are being used to fill the supply gap in affected areas. In other localities, tankers deployed by the state government are at work.

A 23-year-old woman died of electrocution during the waterlogging in the city. Akhila, who worked in a school's administration department, was returning home when her scooter skidded. She tried to grab an electric pole to avoid a fall and received an electric shock. The waterlogging in the city, for the second time in a week, has put the spotlight back on unplanned urbanisation and encroachment that have choked drainage points.

The government has now swung into action. Chief Minister

Basavaraj S Bommai has said a sum of ₹ 1,500 crore has been earmarked to drain water out of the city and another ₹ 300 crore to remove encroachment. The Chief Minister has blamed the previous JDS-Congress government in the state for the situation.

There is a probability for Bengaluru to have the same situation as Chennai when a huge rainfall arises there. This is due to crowded towns in that area, there are thousands of underground cables running all around that area. There is no way to move the huge rain water to the sea or canals. Not only Bengaluru but also all the metropolitan cities are prone to flood when such a huge rainfall arises. This is due to crowds and improper arrangements of drainage.

Government should acknowledge that they have steep roads, poor traffic rules and tons of buildings blocking the water bodies. Any further construction of IT parks around ORR should be stopped. Increasing crowds is the main concern. City cannot afford to have 50 SUVs on the road at the same time, taking one person each when the road is just able to accommodate 1 and a half buses at a time. The Government should allocate more buses and direct all the companies to let their employees travel by either company bus or public transport.

Finally, merely filling a few potholes after an aggressive protest by the citizens is not a solution. The city undoubtedly has the highest number of taxpayers, yet people have no clue of exemplary service by the government. The drainage system needs to be properly addressed, sealed and they should ban all the street food shops which are situated all across the city.

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Letters to the Editor

Banning Swiggy and Zomato may cause inconvenience

This is in reference to the editorial Banning Swiggy and Zomato may cause inconvenience to working middle class. It is just an inhuman, horrifying and unfortunate decision to bring an end to such an esteemed and elite delivery concern for the middle class, who relied for their food delivery at important time when there is an emergency, shortage of manpower in home and any other domestic related issues.

Being a frequent customer, excellent feedback contributor for these delivery concern, I will miss the presence, recollect the sweet memories with the delivery persons and also a feature published in bengali daily newspaper on this delivery boy, who have supplied me my essentials in time.

Rathin Kumar Chanda

Cyrus Mistry's unfortunate deaths

Bad roads are not the only reason for the rise in accidents on highways & expressways. Some of the infrastructure is world class but the cause of accidents many a times could be vehicles that may not be serviced regularly or not roadworthy. Speeding on empty roads could be another reason as vehicles go out of control after breaching a certain speed limit on the speedometer. Cyrus Mistry's unfortunate deaths has opened an pandora's box & today every Tom, Dick & Harry have become an expert over road safety as suggestions pour in over the probable reason for the sad event.

Govt should come out with an stringent guideline that needs to be followed by all. Speeding beyond the allowed limit must be an serious offence & license of the driver needs to be confiscated so that it acts as a stringent lesson for others. Proper sign boards warning people of sharp curves & other dangers should be distinctively put up at appropriate places for drivers to follow safety norms. First aid facilities & ambulances must be made available on roads that are prone to accidents!

S.N.KABRA

Weapon of love jihad

Another incident of love-jihad has come to light in which a Muslim man named Faisal Ahmed married a Hindu female yoga teacher by posing to be a Hindu and later forced her to convert. Faisal Ahmed lured the victim girl into the trap of love by pretending to be 'Atharva'. He had physical relations with the victim and also filmed it. When the girl refused to convert, he tortured her. He also threatened to make her intimate video viral and burn her to death. Currently, a trend of deceiving Hindu girls into love-jihad by assuming fake Hindu names is going on. The lives of girls in many villages and cities have been ruined so far due to the victims of love jihad. Those who say 'love jihad does not exist' should answer this. Didn't the media, which is currently dealing with women's liberation or atrocities against women on a large scale, see this issue? The main question is, how

many more Hindu girls will be killed and action will be taken against Love Jihadis? When will Hindus in India become aware of this? Harsher measures must be undertaken so they will think twice before trapping any girl. Hindu girls need to be vigilant to prevent this !

Ketan Patil

Give justice to Bilkis Bano, please!



The federal government of Gujarat has granted remission to 11 individuals convicted of raping Bilkis Bano and murdering fourteen members of her family during the 2002 Godhra Gujarat anti-Muslim riots. What a disgrace it is not just for India but for the whole world. The discharge of those convicted is disheartening and PM Narendra Modi is answerable for this.

The crimes dedicated in the wake of the 2002 Godhra Gujarat riots have shocked not just India but the entire world. Those responsible for such heinous crimes should not have been released before time. One wonders if the meeting elections in Gujarat scheduled for the end of the year performed a component within the decision-making process.

It's been more than 20 years of injustice to Bilkis Bano and the entire Muslim community. They have faced the trauma, harassment and

despoilment of lives and properties during the 2002 Godhra riots in Gujarat. Not just Bilkis Bano, but there are thousands of Muslim women and families who are still living in camps, and thousands of those, whose stories are still unheard of and unreported.

Bilkis Bano was just 21 years old when she was brutally gang-raped in 2002 during the communal violence that followed the Godhra train-burning incident in Gujarat. She was five months pregnant at that time but in spite of this, the rapists did not spare her or her family members.

The injustice meted out to Bilkis Bano is an indelible blot, one that will make the entire nation hang its head in shame. And, as is his wont (customary behaviour), PM Narendra Modi keeps a stoic silence.

There is no safety for women in India. Many cases of rape and murder are reported every day and the

culprits are freed soon after their arrests because they are known or belong to some political party. Even the police are not trained and sensitised to handle sexual crimes in our country. In most cases, whenever the victims approach the police station for filing a complaint, they (the police) are reluctant to register an FIR.

In India, if you rape a hundred women or commit a thousand murders, you are rarely arrested and put behind bars. Women in India are treated like sex objects for men to play with. Don't they have a mother or a sister at home? What if they were to get raped? How would they feel then?

- Jubel D'Cruz

Writer

Readers are requested to mail Letters to the Editor only at

afternoonvoicedesk@gmail.com

No postal letters will be entertained
(The views expressed are authors' own.)

Cyrus Mistri's accident: "will cooperate with officials", says Car manufacturer company

Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray was denied permission to meet party MP Sanjay Raut, who is currently lodged in Arthur Road Jail in connection with the money laundering case.

Raut is a close aide of former Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray. Thackeray has sought permission from Arthur Road Jail Authority to meet Sanjay Raut in the jailer's room but the jail authority has refused.

The jail authority said Thackeray would have to take permission from the court to meet Raut and the meeting cannot take place in the jailer's room at all.

"They will have to meet in the same way as ordinary prisoners meet on that side of the lattice and for that to the permission of the court is required," the jail authority said.

The jail official said that he had not received any written application. A Shiv Sena leader close to Uddhav Thackeray had called the jail administration and said that Uddhav Thackeray has to meet Sanjay Raut



for only 15 minutes, but the jail administration refused.

After which the Jail Superintendent said, "If you want to meet, then you will have to meet like other people meet all the prisoners and for that, you have the permission of the court." Saying this the jail officer denied permission to meet Sanjay Raut.

Earlier on September 5, a Special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court extended the Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut's judicial custody by 14 days till September 19 in connection with the Patra Chawl land scam case.

Raut was arrested by the En-

forcement Directorate (ED) on August 1 in connection with alleged financial irregularities in the redevelopment of the Patra Chawl in suburban Goregaon.

After being in the ED's custody initially, the Shiv Sena leader was sent to judicial custody for 14 days on August 8.

On 22 August, a special PMLA court extended Raut's custody till September 5 which has now been further extended till September 19.

ED officials raided the Shiv Sena leader's home on July 31, and after detaining and questioning him for several hours, arrested him on August 1.

On June 28 this year, Sanjay Raut was summoned by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with the prevention of the money laundering case pertaining to the Rs 1,034 crore Patra Chawl land scam.

Back in August, the wife of Shiv Sena MP was also summoned by the agency in connection with the Patra Chawl land case.

The MP's wife Varsha Raut was summoned by the central agency after the ED officials raided the Shiv Sena leader's home and after detaining and questioning him (Sanjay Raut) for several hours, arrested him.

Meanwhile, another FIR was registered against Sanjay Raut in Mumbai for allegedly threatening Swapna Patkar, the wife of Sujit Patkar who is believed to be a close aide of the Shiv Sena MP.

The case was registered at the Vakola police station under sections 504, 506 and 509 of the Indian Penal Code. An audio clip had gone viral in which Raut was allegedly heard threatening Swapna Patkar. Notably,

Swapna Patkar is also a witness in the Patra Chawl land case in connection to which the ED detained Raut after conducting a raid at his residence.

According to sources, ED officials seized Rs 11.50 lakhs unaccounted cash from his residence during the raids. Soon after the ED officials detained him in connection with the Patra Chawl land scam case, the Shiv Sena leader said that he "won't be cowed down".

Speaking to media persons, Raut said, "False charges and documents are being framed against people. All of this is being done to weaken Shiv Sena and Maharashtra. Sanjay Raut won't be cowed down. I will not leave the party."

On June 28 this year, Sanjay Raut was summoned by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with the prevention of the money laundering case pertaining to the Rs 1,034 crore Patra Chawl land scam. Raut is being probed in connection with the re-development of Mumbai's Patra Chawl.

Actor businessman Sachin Joshi pursues discharge in money laundering case too

Pointing out that key accused, Omkar group promoters Babul Varma and Kamalkishore Gupta, have been discharged from the money laundering case in light of a recent Supreme Court ruling, another accused, actor and businessman Sachin Joshi on Tuesday urged the special PMLA court to discharge him on similar grounds. Varma and Gupta were granted relief last month after they cited a July 27 SC ruling which said that "when there is no scheduled predicate offence, the PMLA case cannot continue". The predicate offence against the accused, based on which Enforcement Directorate (ED) had registered its money laundering case, was closed.

Devendra Fadnavis on talk of tie-up with Raj Thackeray

Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis on Tuesday denied reports that BJP was planning to enter into a pre-poll alliance with Raj Thackeray's Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) for the upcoming elections. "I also keep enjoying 'kite flying' sessions by people. People nowadays keep saying anything, interpreting it according their understanding," he said. His remarks came on a day MNS chief Raj Thackeray along with his family visited CM Shinde's official residence, Varsha, for Ganpati darshan. Shinde had earlier visited Raj Thackeray's Dar residence for darshan.



Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders to launch its third warship this year for Indian Navy on September 11

Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd (MDL), which launched two frontline warships, namely INS Udaygiri -- the second Stealth Frigate of the Nilgiri Class, and INS Surat -- the fourth Missile Destroyer of the Visakhapatnam class, in the first quarter, will be launching the third ship of Project 17A, INS Taragiri, on September 11, 2022.

This will mark yet another major milestone for MDL in the current financial year.

This ship has been built using Integrated construction methodology which involves hull blocks construction in different geographical locations and integration/erection on Slipway at MDL, said an MDL statement on Tuesday.



Photo credit: Afternoon Voice/Akash Nirmal

Shivshakti Mitra Mandal, Goregaon West

Coal scam case: CBI conducts raids at West Bengal Law Minister's premises

The Central Bureau of Investigation is conducting searches at six locations in West Bengal including the residence of state Law minister Moloy Ghatak in Asansol in connection with the alleged coal scam case.

The CBI raids are being conducted at five locations in Kolkata and one in Asansol at the residence of Trinamool Congress (TMC) leader Moloy Ghatak. The CBI had registered a case in the matter on September 20, 2012 under section - 120B r/w 420 IPC r/w 13(2) r/w 13(1)(d) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988. On completion of the investigation, a chargesheet was filed by the CBI against Grace Industries

Limited and Mukesh Gupta, director of the company in the court on October 28, 2014. The Court on August 10, 2015, took cognizance of the offences punishable under section - 120B r/w 409/420 IPC r/w 13(2) r/w 13(1)(c) and (d) of the PC Act, 1988 and substantive offences. Accordingly, summons were issued to the accused persons for their appearance before the Court.

During the course of trial, a total of 34 witnesses had been examined by the prosecution/CBI to prove its case. According to the CBI, allegations against the convicts M/s Grace Industries Ltd. and Mukesh Gupta during the period between the year 2005 to 2011 at New Delhi, Maharashtra

and other places, in furtherance of the common object of the criminal conspiracy hatched with other co-accused persons i.e. HC Gupta, KS Kropha and cheated by Ministry of Coal, Government of India by dishonestly and fraudulently inducing the Ministry of Coal to allocate "Lohara East Coal Block" situated in the state of Maharashtra in favour of M/s GIL on the basis of false information about net worth, capacity, equipment and status of procurement and installation of the plant.

CBI also stated that the said, company in its application claimed its net worth as Rs.120 Crores whereas its own networth was Rs 3.3 crores only company falsified its existing capacity as 1,20,000

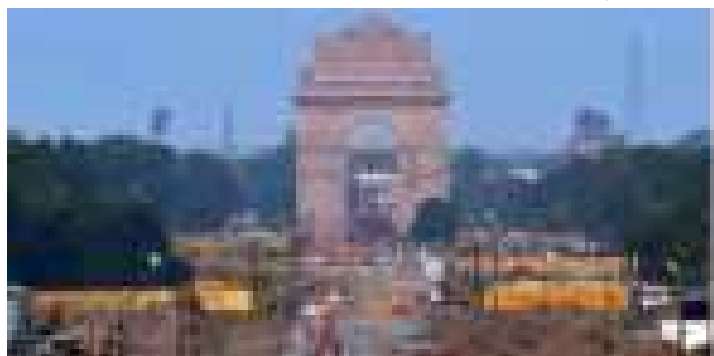


Third Party Administrator (TPA) against 30,000 TPA.

In an order dated August 25, 2014 the Supreme Court of India had cancelled the entire allocations of Coal Blocks.

Vide order dated: January 19, 2015, Special Judge of the trial court had observed that the working of the officers of the Prime Minister's office also does not appear to be above Board.

Security beefed up ahead of Central Vista inauguration



Ahead of the inauguration of the Central Vista on Thursday, Delhi Police is gearing up for the security arrangements in view of the heavy traffic and crowd at the event.

The government will be organising drone shows and cultural programmes for the public from September 9 to 11. For security purposes, drones will not be permitted near Ahead of the inauguration of the Central Vista on Thursday, Delhi Police is gearing up for the security arrangements in view of the heavy traffic and crowd at the event.

The government will be organising drone shows and cultural programmes for the public from September 9 to 11. For security purposes, drones will not be permitted near Central Vista on the day Prime Minister Narendra Modi visits. But, it will be allowed for the rest of the days Central Vista on the day Prime Minister Narendra Modi visits. But, it will be allowed

for the rest of the days.

Alap Patel, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Traffic while talking to ANI requested the public to avoid using private vehicles and plan their travels well in advance. "The inauguration of Central Vista has been anticipated for long and hence a huge crowd is expected to garner at the spot, post-inauguration.

So we have started making the arrangements accordingly. People will be able to roam easily around the Rajpath area.

They will also be able to purchase food items from the official vendors. We have also made arrangements for washrooms".

"Two areas have been allocated for parking spaces having the capacity of around 500 and 300 cars respectively. But, as huge crowds are expected to turn at the event, we would suggest people to not bring their private vehicles and use DMRC buses and other public transport," the DCP said.

Bharat Jodo Yatra: Rahul Gandhi to sleep in container for next 150 days

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi who embarks on 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' from Tamil Nadu's Kanyakumari today, will be staying in a container for the next 150 days.

In what is being seen as a Congress' "masterstroke" to take on the Narendra Modi government in the upcoming 2024 elections, Congress is launching the 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' on Wednesday in which

Rahul Gandhi will start the 3,570 km journey lasting about 150 days from Kanyakumari to Kashmir.

As the party begins the nationwide yatra, some pertinent questions arise about the lodging and flooding of Rahul Gandhi. However, the party has made it clear that he will not stay in any hotel but rather will complete the entire journey in a simple manner.

Rahul Gandhi is going to stay

in the container for the next 150 days. Sleeping beds, toilets and air-conditioners are also installed in some of the containers.

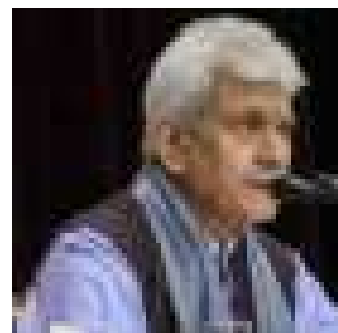
During the journey, the temperature and environment will differ in many areas. The arrangements have been made keeping in view the intense heat and humidity with the change of places. "About 60 such containers have been prepared and sent to Kanyakumari

Jammu, Srinagar turn Smart under 'Naya J&K'

Over 276 projects have been approved by the Centre in the last three years under the "Smart City Mission" in Jammu and Srinagar to transform these cities into vibrant centres having all the facilities, said the officials on Wednesday.

These projects are aimed at strengthening urban infrastructure, improving city services, public aesthetics, ease of living and providing a clean and sustainable environment to the citizens in "Naya Jammu and Kashmir."

The transformation of Jammu and Srinagar cities from highly congested and underdeveloped urban areas to 'Smart Cities' is yet another achievement of Prime



Minister Narendra Modi-led dispensation which "bit the bullet" on August 5, 2019 and ended the 70-year-long so-called special status of Jammu and Kashmir. The "Smart City" projects focus on improved urban governance.

Effective steps are being taken to ensure that these projects

are completed within the stipulated deadlines. "Mission Smart Cities" was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on June 25, 2015, for the development of 100 Smart Cities across the country.

The idea was envisaged with an aim to drive economic growth and improve the quality of life of people across the country. Jammu and Srinagar cities were selected by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs in the third round of competition held in June 2017. Till August 5, 2019--when the Centre announced its decision to abrogate Article 370 and bifurcated it into two Union Territories--no major steps were taken to turn Jammu and Srinagar into Smart Cities.

World

Xi-Putin to meet in Uzbekistan next week



Chinese leader Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin will meet on the sidelines of a summit in Uzbekistan next week, CNN reported citing Russian media.

The expected meeting at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit would be the first face-to-face between the two leaders.

Notably, it would also be the first overseas trip for Xi since the

outbreak of the COVID19 pandemic.

On Wednesday, a top Chinese leader Li Zhanshu became the highest ranking official to leave China when he arrived in Vladivostok to attend the Eastern Economic Forum.

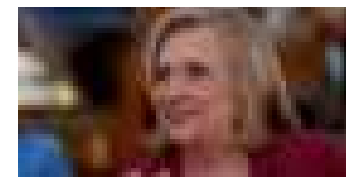
On Wednesday, a top Chinese leader Li Zhanshu became the highest ranking official to leave China when he arrived in Vladivostok to attend the Eastern Eco-

conomic Forum. Russia and China have emerged as closer partners in recent years as both face tensions with the West.

The latest telephonic exchange between the Chinese President and the Russian President on June 15 highlights the growing ties between the two countries in the wake up of the Ukraine conflict.

By calling up Putin and assuring him of further development of economic, military, and defense ties between the two countries at a time when the Russian presence in Ukraine is not showing any sign of ending, Xi has not only totally ignored the Western warnings but he has also put to rest speculations that the image of China moving too close to Russia has been causing concern in Beijing.

Hillary Clinton says she will not run for President in 2024



Former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on Tuesday (local time) said that she will not be running for President again following her two failed bids in 2008 and 2016. Clinton was speaking at a news channel where she was asked by the anchor if the leader would ever run for president again.

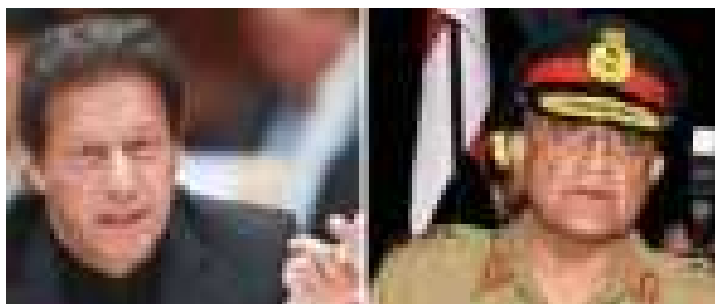
"No, no," Clinton said as quoted by The Hill. "But I'm going to do everything I can to make sure that we have a president who respects our democracy and the rule of law and upholds our institutions," she added. The anchor further asked Hillary Clinton "What if Donald Trump runs again?" The former US Secretary of State responded that Trump would not fit into that category and that "he should be soundly defeated" if he runs again.

Clinton was defeated by Trump

in the 2016 presidential election. During the 2016 election cycle, Clinton was plagued in scandal following the revelation that she had a private email server while serving as secretary of state during the Barack Obama administration, prompting a lengthy FBI probe, a leading US daily reported.

Donald Trump has been teasing another run for president in 2024, and according to The Hill, polls show that he has a good shot of clinching the Republican nomination. Clinton has said that she would endorse President Biden if he runs for reelection the same year.

Pakistan facing 'tough times' over sexual misconduct by top diplomat in Spain



Pakistan is facing a tough time dealing with the case of sexual harassment of local female staff by a senior Pakistani diplomat and Consul General of Pakistan in Spain as internal enquiry may lead to further revelations.

Earlier this month, a local consulate staffer lodged a complaint against Mirza Salman Baig over the sexual harassment at the workplace for more than three months in response to which the Spanish department has sought a response from the mission as it cannot dodge the responsibility for providing a safe work environment for the worker.

The victim filed a criminal case in a local court as Baig used to harass her by sending lewd messages through social media. Moreover, she was also subjected to a sexual assault attempt by Baig in a hotel in Barcelona, Al Arabiya reported citing the complaint by the victim.

Following the incident, the victim lodged the complaint with Pakistan Ambassador Shujat Rathore in Madrid, who later referred the matter to the Foreign Office in Islamabad for further investigation. The Foreign Ministry later sent a two-member team to Barcelona and Madrid to probe the case.

They completed the investigation, on the basis of which the Foreign Office removed the officer from his position and recalled him to the headquarters in Islamabad. Earlier, Pakistan's official for Protection against Harassment in May 2022 dismissed the former head of mission of the Pakistan embassy in Italy after allegations of harassment were proved against him.

Nadeem Riaz, former ambassador in Italy, was accused by Saira Imdad Ali, an officer of the Ministry of Commerce, of harassment at the workplace. Ali was stationed at the Pakistani mission in Italy headed by Riaz in 2018.

China earthquake: Death toll rises to 74

The death toll in the earthquake that hit the Sichuan province in China on Monday has reached 74 so far, local media reported on Wednesday.

The rescue headquarters of the Ganzi said 40 were killed, 14 were missing and 170 were injured in Ganzi as of 9 pm (local time) on Tuesday, as per Xinhua News Agency

Expressway tollbooths opened up over 700 special channels for earthquake relief. All service areas along the Chengdu-Luding Expressway have been fully stocked with epidemic prevention supplies, oil products, food materials and other emergency supplies. More than 1,900



officers, armed police and soldiers of the People's Liberation Army PLA Western Theater Command rushed to the earthquake-hit area and arrived at the epicentre area at 8 am on Tuesday, engaging in the transport of the injured, road dredging, victim search and other rescue work, Global Times reported. As a result of the earth-

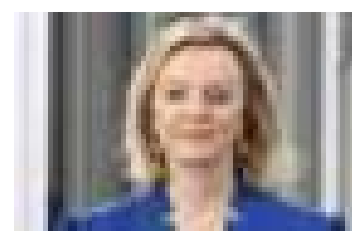
quake, the power supply in the province was cut off, Expressway tollbooths opened up over 700 special channels for earthquake relief. All service areas along the Chengdu-Luding Expressway have been fully stocked with epidemic prevention supplies, oil products, food materials and other emergency supplies.

Newly elected UK Prez Liz Truss appoints most diverse Cabinet

Prime Minister Liz Truss has unveiled one of the UK's most diverse Cabinets, with key frontline posts going to ethnic minority members of Parliament, including Indian-origin Suella Braverman as the Home Secretary.

The process of appointing the Cabinet will continue into Wednesday, when Truss addresses her first Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs) in the House of Commons.

By her side on the frontbenches will be Braverman, 42, whose Tamil mother had her family roots



in Mauritius and Goan-origin father migrated to the UK from Kenya.

Also, by her side will be Ghanaian-origin Kwasi Kwarteng, 47, as the UK's first black Chancellor and mixed Sierra Leone and white heritage James Cleverly as the For-

eign Secretary, Truss' own former portfolio.

The senior Conservative MPs who had come out in support of former chancellor Rishi Sunak in the Tory leadership election are conspicuous by their absence in Truss's top team, which she has packed with close allies, such as Therese Coffey as Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and Wendy Morton as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury and the first Tory female Chief Whip in charge of party discipline.

FOCUS ON THE EDUCATORS

Vijay Garg Retired Principal Educational Columnist Malout Punjab

Investing in education is critical to reach the world's agenda for sustainable development, as well as to recover from the COVID-19 crisis and foster citizens who can tackle future global challenges. It is time we put teachers at the center of education investments.

Around the world, education systems are facing massive challenges when it comes to teachers. In many low and lower-middle income countries there are not enough teachers, and large numbers of them have not received sufficient training and support. The Global Partnership for Education estimates that it costs, on average, US \$371 dollars to train a teacher in its partner countries. Its ambition is to train 3.5 million teachers, who could reach 140 million students.

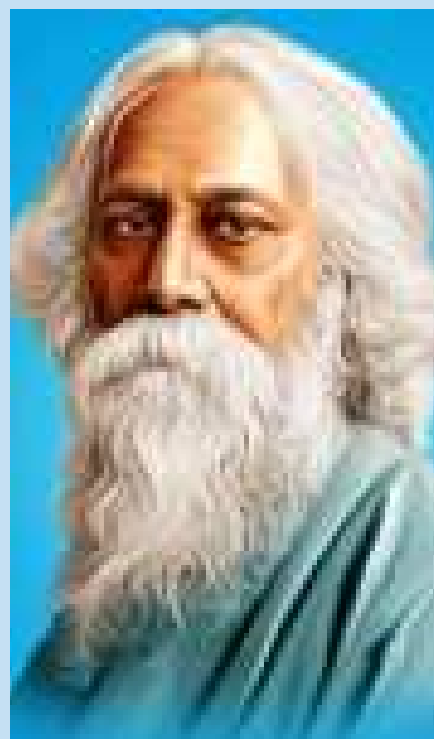
This will represent about 1 in every 6 dollars – about 16% - of the budget the partnership hopes to spend over the next five years. This will make an incredibly important contribution to meeting the trained teacher gap, which is one of the cornerstones of reaching the other education goals and the SDGs.

Teachers in India have built a powerful legacy of learning through the nation's crest and troughs— from Aryabhata and Savitri Bai Phule to Rabindranath Tagore and S. Radhakrishnan. Today, India is home to approximately 9.7 million teachers across 1.5 million schools. They continue to be a major marker of socio-economic development and are a critical piece in our quest to be a global powerhouse of learning. The pandemic offered a true reflection

of this, as teachers around the country adapted to virtual mediums to ensure that learning did not stop. They emerged as critical catalysts of change by converting their homes into online classrooms, going beyond the call of duty to arrest learning loss, and focusing their energies on helping students navigate the new normal and become self-learners.

For India, however, the challenges of education go much deeper. Limitations such as lack of accessibility, poor quality of learning material, demographic differences and shortage of teachers in schools demand more profound interventions and critical action plans. A recent UNESCO report states that India has nearly 120,000 schools with just one teacher each and that 89% of these

single-teacher schools are in rural areas. The report also estimates that India needs nearly 1.2 million additional teachers to meet the current shortfall. This calls for urgent measures and increased investment in the teaching community to bring more qualified and empowered educators into the Indian workforce. Accelerated government efforts such as the National Education Policy 2020 have been at the forefront of this need, having enshrined crucial tenets of ownership and autonomy to teachers, while also recognizing, documenting and sharing innovative pedagogies devised by them. With the policy outlining the need to build vibrant teacher communities for better networking, India is taking large strides in the education space.



Entertainment



Saiyami Kher, Gulshan Devaiah to headline Anurag Kashyap's next

Bollywood actors Saiyami Kher and Gulshan Devaiah are all set to collaborate for Anurag Kashyap's next untitled project. The upcoming drama film is produced by Anurag Kashyap and the star cast of the film is currently shooting for the project in Hyderabad.

Talking about the film Saiyami said, "It is an interesting project and something that will stay with people for a long. Gulshan is an amazing actor, extremely creative, and extremely versatile. We worked together for 'Unpaused Season 1' and there is a comfort level working with him. Unfortunately, I can't reveal much about it but I can promise you that the wait will be worth it."

The film marks Saiyami and Gulshan's second on-screen collaboration after their anthology series 'Unpaused Season 1'.

Meanwhile, Anurag's recently released film 'Dobaaraa' which starred Taapsee Pannu in the lead role failed to impress the audience at the box office. Saiyami, meanwhile, will also be seen in Excel Entertainment's next 'Agni' opposite actor Pratik Gandhi.

The film is based on firefighters. While not much of the details of the project are known, the shooting has already started this month and most of it will be happening in Mumbai and Delhi. Apart from that, she will also be seen in 'Breathe: Into the Shadow Season 3' and 'Ghoomer', both opposite Abhishek Bachchan.

Helmed by R Balki, 'Ghoomer' is a story of a coach and his prodigy.



Katrina Kaif reveals Vicky Kaushal was never on her 'radar'

Actor Katrina Kaif will be seen marking her presence with her 'Phone Bhoot' co-stars Ishaan Khatter and Siddhant Chaturvedi in an upcoming episode of 'Koffee with Karan 7'. The actor spilled beans about her relationship with Vicky Kaushal in the show. Marking the season's first trio, the three turn up the heat as they discuss bromance, love interests, and the concept of suhaag raat. Chronicling fun with a side serving of charisma, the trio captures hearts and laughter with panache.

Sharing the details of her relationship with Vicky, the 'Jab Tak Hai Jaan' actor shared how the beloved star was never on her 'radar'. She said, "I did not even know much about him. He was just a name I had heard of but had never associated with. But then, when I met him, I was won over!" Katrina also revealed that the first person she confessed to being smitten by Vicky Kaushal was none other than director Zoya Akhtar, at whose party cupid struck the two lovers.

Calling her relationship 'unexpected and out of the blue', the 'Ek Tha Tiger' actor added, "It was my destiny and it was really meant to be. There were so many coincidences that at one point all of it just felt so unreal." On Monday, host Karan Johar took to social media and unveiled the episode's promo which has left the internet in splits, courtesy of Katrina's witty humour.



Bieber suspends 'Justice world tour' due to health issues

Canadian singer Justin Bieber, on Wednesday, announced that he has suspended his ongoing 'Justice' world tour to focus on his health. Taking to Instagram, Justin shared a long post which reads, "Earlier this year, I went public about my battle with Ramsay Hunt syndrome, where my face was partly paralyzed. As a result of this illness, I was not able to complete the North America leg of the Justice Tour."

"After resting and consulting with my doctors, family and my team, I went to Europe in an effort to continue with the tour. I performed six live shows, but it took a real toll on me. This past weekend I performed at Rock in Rio and I gave everything I have to the people in Brazil," he added.

Talking about his health issues post-concert, the 'Baby' actor wrote, "After getting off stage, the exhaustion overtook me and I realized that I needed to make my health a priority right now. So I'm going to take a break from touring for the time being. I'm going to be OK, but I need time to rest and get better. I've been so proud to bring this show and our message of justice to the world. Thank you for your prayers and support throughout all of this exclamation point I love you all passionately."



Chris Pine's representative denies Harry Styles spitting rumours

Hollywood actor Chris Pine's representative has now dismissed all the claims, stating that actor Harry Styles spat on Pine during the world premiere of 'Don't Worry Darling'. "This is a ridiculous story – a complete fabrication and the result of an odd online illusion that is clearly deceiving and allows for foolish speculation. Just to be clear, Harry Styles did not spit on Chris Pine. There is nothing but respect between these two men and any suggestion otherwise is a blatant attempt to create drama that simply does not exist," Pine's representative told an entertainment website.

A video of actor Chris Pine went viral from the world premiere of Olivia Wilde's film 'Don't Worry Darling' in which Styles apparently could be seen spitting on Pine although the act could not be 100% confirmed by the recordings. Soon after the video was shared on social media, Styles faced a lot of backlash from the netizens.