



AAP leader Saurabh Bhardwaj demands apology from Union Minister

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218 Private Schools 'Illegally' Running in Mumbai

Under the jurisdiction of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) education department 218 primary unaided private schools are running without RTE Right to Education (RTE). Some of the schools have failed to renew their recognition certificates which are authorization under the RTE Act. Most of the well-known schools around the city have made it to this list of 'illegally' run-

ning school, reports stated. This data is revealed under the RTI query made by Maharashtra Rajya Vidyarthi, Palak, Shikshak Mahasangh, a parent organisation.

Anandilal Podar High School (Santacruz), Raje Shivaji primary school (Dadar), St Michael's high school (Mahim), St Andrew's high school primary section (Bandra). St Aloysius primary school (Santacruz), The Alexandra Girls High School

(Fort), Gloria convent (Byculla), St Pius X high school (Nahur), Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan Vidyalaya (Borivli), Rustomjee Troopers (Dahisar) and VPM's Vidya Mandir primary school (Dahisar) being a few of such schools. For those unversed, according to the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, schools are required to renew their RTE approval every three years.

Such school having no Right to Education may have to pay fine of INR 10,000 per day until they fulfill the canons, as well as for operating the school without recognition is violation of rules. Every year, after receiving RTE approval, the school administration is required to submit the balance sheet to the government and parents. However, the government's inaction has provided an easy escape for many private schools.

The governor's power has become a controversial issue in Indian politics

Editoritis



Dr. Vaidehi

We all must know that the office of the governor under the constitution of independent India is overall altered from the provincial governors of the Maurya, Mughal or British empires. The Governor's role and purposes had been broadly debated by some of the think tanks of the Constituent Assembly like Dr. Ambedkar, Dr. P.S. Deshmukh, T.T. Krishnamachari, H.V. Kamath, Pt. H.N. Kunzru, Alladi Krishnaswamy Ayyar, Rohini Kumar Chaudhury, Shibban Lal Sakshena, K.M. Munshi .

Their understanding was that the proposed constitution was creating 'responsible government' in the states as much as at the centre — that is, responsible alone to the respective legislatures, that the states

were indeed sovereign within their own domain, that the discretionary power, beyond the specific situations mentioned in the constitution, does not enable a governor to override the state government.

As Dr. Ambedkar had said, "I have no doubt in my mind that discretionary power is in no sense a negation of responsible government. It is not a general clause giving the governor power to disregard the advice of his ministers in any matter in which he finds he ought to disregard." Therefore, selecting a chief minister of his choice or creating/utilising opportunities for defections to change the party in power cannot be a governor's job.

| CONTINUED ON PAGE 02

Editoritis

The governor's power has become a controversial issue in Indian politics

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The tussle between the governors and the ruling party of the state is not new to Indian politics. Remember how Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal used to stage continuous protests against then the Lieutenant Governor.

The MVA government and governor have been engaged in a series of spats over various issues. In February, the state government denied Koshiyari permission to use the state's airplane to travel to Dehradun.

While the legislature has the power to amend the rules and they followed similar process in the Lok Sabha. Maharashtra adopted the same process of electing the Speaker by voice vote.

The tussle between the governors and the ruling party of the state is not new to Indian politics. Remember how Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal used to stage continuous protests against then the Lieutenant Governor. The Governor troubled him on various issues. When Arvind kept power for the second time his challenges to deal with Lieutenant Governor minimised.

Similarly, during the last few years, the governors of Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra and, of course, West Bengal have played their roles in such a way as to make them highly debatable without essentially adding to the glory of the position and Raj Bhavan. The negative image of the state governors as "a proxy of the centre" has proved difficult to wipe out.

The MVA government and governor have been engaged in a series of spats over various issues. In February, the state government denied Koshiyari permission to use the state's airplane to travel to Dehradun. Last October, Koshiyari and the CM wrote letters to each other over the reopening of places of worship. The Governor ridiculed the CM as "secular" while Thackeray reminded him of the Constitution and the oath he had taken.

In September 2021, Governor wrote to CM following the Saki Naka rape incident, asking him to hold a two-day special session over security for women in the state. In response, Thackeray wrote back to Koshiyari, saying that since violence against women was a national issue, Koshiyari should request Prime Minister Modi and Union home minister Amit Shah to call a four-day special session of the Parliament to discuss the same. The present controversies have been around the issues of the speaker's election. On December 28, the state passed the Maharashtra Public Universities Act Amendment Bill to curtail the powers of the Governor in appointing vice chancellors of various universities.

The Governor said he had never questioned the prerogative of the House in the matter of its procedure/proceedings but he could not be pressured to give consent to a process "which prima facie appears to be unconstitutional and illegal, as enshrined in Article 208 of the Constitution". Well! The Article 208 (I) of the Indian Constitution empowers each House of Legislature of a State to make Rules for regulating

its procedures and conduct of its business. For nearly one year, the Governor has not approved the nomination of 12 members to the Legislative Council. But there are letter of exchange between the ruling party and governor. The government had planned to hold the election for the Speaker's post on December 28, through voice vote instead of the secret ballot.

The government has emphasized that the amendments are constitutional and the legislature has followed all procedures to make them. Also, the same practice is followed in the Lok Sabha and other states and that the Governor needs to act on the advice of the state cabinet. However, the Opposition had objected to it, stating that rules of the Speaker's election cannot be amended in the absence of the Speaker and called the MVA government the "most insecure government".

While the legislature has the power to amend the rules and they followed similar process in the Lok Sabha. Maharashtra adopted the same process of electing the Speaker by voice vote. It followed the same tradition in other states. Therefore, the decision taken by the Maharashtra legislature is not unconstitutional.

Under Article 178 of the Constitution, the Assembly chooses the Speaker, which means it is an internal procedure of the House and the Governor has nothing to do with it. Similarly, Article 208 of the Constitution also states that the House decides the internal matter of the legislature; however, it must be in conformity with the Constitution, which has been followed in this case. It again means that it is the prerogative of the state Assembly whether the election is conducted by a secret ballot system or voice vote etc. Every Legislative Assembly of a State shall, as soon as may be, choose two members of the Assembly to be respectively Speaker and Deputy Speaker thereof and, so often as the office of Speaker or Deputy Speaker becomes vacant, the Assembly shall choose another member to be Speaker or Deputy Speaker, as the case may be.

Vaidehi

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VISIONS & VISION OF CITY

Flat No. 2, J- Wing Ground floor, Sumer Nagar Building 3, S.V. Road,
Near Gandhi Motors, Borivali - West, Mumbai - 400 092.

Editor

Dr. Vaidehi

Vaidehi has received several Awards like I Congo-karmavir chakra, Bedal Powell scout and guide awards 2021- best journalist, Newspaper Association of India award- best journalist. She received lot of awards for her contribution towards journalism.

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Email- afternoonvoicedesk@gmail.com • SMS -9820199881

For any queries regarding the editorial desk, contact - 7506760610

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Voices



Letters to the Editor

Rising cases of suicides in the city is cause for concern!

Rising cases of suicides in the city is a matter of grave concern & family disputes coupled with stress as well as frustration seems to be the primary cause in most cases. Unemployment & financial problems too force sensitive people to end their lives & such shocking behavioral pattern should act as an eye opener.

Counseling is the need of the hour. Every problem has a solution if addressed at an early stage & people should share their concerns & problems with their near & dear one's regularly. One should not feel ashamed to take the help of a psychologist as sometimes one may need medication to deal with the illness!

S.N. Kabra

Regulate illicit sand mining

National Green Tribunal has to direct the state governments to take remedial action against illegal sand mining, especially in a submerged water area. Extraction of sand-mainly through an open pit -mined from beaches and inland dunes or dredged from ocean and river beds. Beach sand may contain garnet, leucoxene, sillimanite, and monazite. Sand mining presents opportunities to extract rutile, ilmenite, and zircon. Sand mining is the world's largest mining endeavor, responsible for 85 percent of all mineral extraction. The disturbance of underwater and coastal sand is due to illicit sand mining. It can also destroy fisheries,

Can alter the river bed. Globally 80% of the beaches are retreating for example in Indonesia more than 20 islands already disappeared. Due to loss of the natural sand barrier salt water seeps into soil making land unsuitable for farming.

Dredges destroy the natural habitat of countless maritime species endangering the marine food chain from plankton to whales. Coastal areas will face tourism crisis if illegal sand mining continues in the country. Sand extraction from the river banks weakens the foundation of nearby infrastructure for example in our country already bridges collapsed due to sand mining. Therefore, illicit sand mining should be regulated.

Vijaykumar H K

Looking forward towards a greener Mumbai

In recent times the residents of this city of Mumbai have been facing serious health issues on account of the deteriorating air quality in the city. People are suffering from sudden fever, headaches, sneezing, cough, shivering especially in locations like Malad West. The Cement mixing plant in the midst of a heavily populated residential area in Orlem, Malad West is adding to the health issues. In the midst of such gloomy atmosphere however, comes some heartening newsreport recently, of a reserved plot at Sangharsh Nagar, Chandivali being converted into a park. Also Gandhi Maidan at Kurla which had been encroached upon, is being spruced up. This will certainly help the residents breathe a little easier.

While we are at it, I would like to bring to the attention of the civic authorities, the request of the residents of D'monte Lane EXTENSION-Kachpada Road at Malad West, for a garden in the vicinity. There is no park in the immediate vicinity for senior citizens and children to relax. Presently, there is huge development in the area opposite Shree Vallabh Tower, could we have a plot reserved for a garden for senior citizens & children, please? The residents of Orlem are also looking forward to a Greener Mumbai!

Melville X. D'Souza

India's puppeteers struggle to survive

You must have probably familiar with puppets and if you're like most people, you must have probably seen a puppeteer in action and may have even played with a puppet yourself. Every year 21st March is celebrated as World Puppetry Day to recognize puppetry as a global art form. Puppetry is considered to be one of the oldest forms of storytelling in the country. Puppetry is a real challenge to the imagination of the individual and is one of the oldest forms of entertainment. Puppetry is a beautiful and colourful art. It is so sad to see that puppeteers are slowly fading away.

Puppetry is an animated visual art form. Kathputli that means a puppet which is made from wood. Whereas the words kath means 'wood' and putli means 'a doll or toy'. The craft of making Kathputli, was practiced by a community of performing artists. The puppeteer uses his or her skills to makes the puppet, an inanimate object, talk, sing, dance and behave the way humans do.

Most of the puppeteers around the country and even in Gujarat are of the opinion that that the competition from cinema and TV had hit them hard. As one puppeteer from Ahmedabad Ramesh Rawal 72 Year old an Indian folk and Puppet Artist says "Television, especially, has given us a big blow". Rawal a puppet artist from Ahmedabad, Gujarat who has participated in various International Puppet festivals in Afghanistan, Tehran, Iran, Rome, Italy, Japan and in various places of India, is striving very hard to keep the culture of puppet shows active but he is helpless as he is not getting any support from concerned authorities. The Puppetry has been his family profession since many generations. Over a period of time, the colourful art started fading away and the artists like Rawal started struggling to get any work opportunities. The prospects of making good money from doing puppetry shows are quite minimal now-a-days. Modern day entertainment options like television, movies and the internet are pushing traditional puppetry towards



a slow death. In order to keep the culture and heritage of our nation alive with more charisma, we need to keep Educational Puppet shows in schools in such a way the students can easily grasp a certain topic. Puppeteers through cultural exchange can learn new techniques and apply in their performance. Schoolchildren are often attracted by puppets and interact strongly with them as they help them to overcome shyness and stage fear. Puppet shows have powerful visual impact and establish direct rapport with the audience. It can be tailored to promote civic sense, promote awareness of socio-economic problems and national issues.

The concerned officials and politicians must make puppet shows an integral part of cultural functions and festivals in villages, towns and cities. On a personal level, wealthy patrons can also arrange for puppet shows during their celebrations. Puppet shows are one of the notable marvels in the lap of the heritage of India. It is quite essential to maintain the trade of ancient artworks. . Due to the lack of patronization of government and lack of audience interest, most of the people engaged in puppetry quit from it and are involved in other lucrative source of Income but all cannot afford. Poor puppeteers like Ramesh Rawal are not able to introduce modern techniques in their performance due to Lack of sponsors. Further, many of the puppeteers of old puppet troupes are not adequately literate. Most of the traditional Puppeteers are not willing to teach puppetry to their children as they do not want to see their

children in problem, as puppetry cannot provide adequate money to live life. Schools can arrange for puppet shows on different themes from which the children can learn new things. Teenagers can easily search valuable information, which is not in their textbooks, in a novel way. Puppets provide a way of holding children's attention and in a way helps in behaviour change.

The families of puppeteers like Ramesh Rawal see a new hope to revive the lost art of puppetry to help them earn a little more than what they usually get.

Let us understand that Puppets are a different mode of communication. Besides entertainment, these dolls convey social message to everybody, irrespective of age groups. It is clear that Puppetry is one of the arts facing extinction. Government must think over for a permanent source of income to provide them livelihood on a regular basis, Let us make efforts to breathe life into it by introducing it to school students and also in financial literacy. It will be worthwhile for the government to look into the neglected art form and evolve schemes for its revival in a big way. Let us make an effort to bring back this art form viz puppeteer back in action.

Vinod Chandrashekhar Dixit

Columnist

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.)

City

Amruta Fadnavis bribe FIR: Bookie Anil Jaisinghani held from Gujarat



A bookie from Ulhasnagar, Anil Jaisinghani, has been arrested by the Mumbai crime branch from Gujarat's Godhra following a three-

day hunt. He was named as a co-accused in the case related to alleged blackmailing of Amruta Fadnavis, wife of deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis. Apart from

Anil, his daughter Aniksha was arrested last week in a case pertaining to offering Amruta Rs 1 crore bribe to get the man off the hook in a police case.

Meanwhile, the Opposition boycotted the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly alleging that the government is delaying panchnamas of farm lands affected by hailstorm and unseasonable rains. Revenue Minister Radhakrishna Vikhe-Patil said that the state government has no intention to hide any losses and it will do thorough panchnamas and ensure that relief aid is given. However, Opposition leader Ajit Pawar alleged that due to ongoing strike of government employees the panchnamas are not being conducted.

Flyer dies on flight to Mumbai from Bangkok



A passenger on board an IndiGo flight from Bangkok to Mumbai on Sunday suffered a heart attack and passed away. The flight was diverted to Myanmar due to the medical emergency. According to a flyer on board IndiGo flight 6E-57, the passenger suffered a heart attack less than an hour after the flight took off from Bang-

kok at 4pm, local time. He said that the passenger died and the flight was diverted to an airport in Myanmar. It took off from Yangon about five hours later. This is the second medical emergency diversion in the past two days. On Friday, a Ranchi-Pune flight was diverted to Nagpur after a passenger took ill. The flyer was later declared dead at a local hospital.

4 months, 50 rallies in Maharashtra, one theme: 'Love jihad', 'land jihad' and economic boycott



Starting November last year, at least 50 'Hindu Jan Aakrosh Morcha' rallies have been held across Maharashtra, in almost all of the state's 36 districts. Each of these events has followed a set pattern: a brief march through the heart of the city, amid a sea of saffron flags and caps, followed by a short rally, where speakers on a makeshift dais attack minorities, invoke "love jihad", "land jihad", "forced conversions", and call for the economic boycott of the Muslim community.

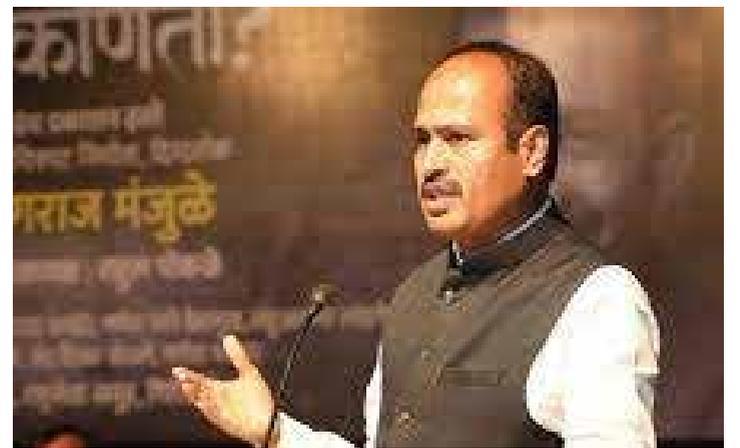
In other news, a fortnight

after Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray held a rally in Ratnagiri district's Khed, Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Sunday addressed a gathering at the same venue in a show of strength. Stressing that his party is "the real Shiv Sena", the Chief Minister took a dig at Thackeray, using terms such as "fuska baar" (a defused bomb) and "a circus" for his rally. The rallies were considered to be a major show of strength for both factions in Konkan, which is considered to be the bastion of the undivided Shiv Sena.

'Book presents authentic picture of Shivaji Maharaj's life and times': author Shrimant Kokate

Popular Marathi author and historian Shrimant Kokate, whose first book in English, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (illustrated) was launched recently, said he has made effort to present the Shivaji era correctly before the world, at a time when some authors are distorting history and trying to belittle the grand image of the Maratha king.

"Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj is known as a great king, not only in Maharashtra or India, but people across the world adore and respect him. His achievements are a great inspiration to the society, which makes it necessary to pres-



ent his journey on the basis of facts. I have made sincere efforts to bring forward the authentic

history of the great king," Kokate told The Indian Express after an event in the city on Sunday.

Maharashtra govt employees call of strike

Maharashtra government employees called off their strike after a meeting between employees' representatives and Chief Minister Eknath Shinde. The state government approved the in-principle extension of monetary benefits like the Old Pension scheme to those who are part of the new pension scheme. A total of 17 lakh government, semi-government, teaching and non-teaching staff were on strike from March 14.

HC allows SP MLA to convert plea against Maha inter-faith marriage panel into PIL

The Bombay High Court on Monday permitted Samajwadi Party MLA Rais Shaikh to convert his petition against the Maharashtra government's decision to set up an inter-faith marriage coordination committee into a public interest

litigation (PIL).

A division bench of Justices Gautam Patel and Neela Gokhale noted that the petition seemed to be in the nature of a PIL and hence the petitioner (Shaikh) could convert the same into a PIL. (PTI)

Nation

Air India urination case: Passenger moves to SC for not receiving support from SOPs



A 72-year-old woman, at the centre of headlines after a co-passenger allegedly urinated on her on board a New York-Delhi Air India flight last November, has moved the Supreme Court seeking a direction to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and airlines to frame SOPs to deal with such incidents.

The woman said she was constrained to approach the court because Air India and the DGCA failed to treat her with care and responsibility after the

incident. "In addition, the wide-ranging national press reportage full of conjecture and surmises has severely undermined the petitioner's rights as a victim under Article 21 of the Constitution, and in fairness has also affected the rights of the accused as well. Their rights to a free and fair trial have also been substantially affected due to a selective leaking of the 'AIR SEWA' complaint of the petitioner, the FIR and selective witness statements being released to the media to match specific narratives," she said in

her plea.

The petition said an absence of clear guidelines for media outlets on what requires reporting, whether they ought to make conjectures where matters are sub-judice, and the impact of media coverage based on unverified statements end up impacting the victim as well as the accused.

The petitioner further said her intentions were inspired and motivated in the interest of the general public and are a sincere attempt to set up a framework within the airline industry so that such incidents are prevented, and if they do occur, they are dealt with in a manner that does not cause additional trauma to the passengers.

She also sought a direction to the Union Civil Aviation Ministry and the DGCA to ensure that Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR) norms adhere to the highest standards laid down internationally. The woman sought directions to the DGCA and the airline companies to comply with legal requirements of the SOPs, operation manuals and reporting protocols to be followed by airline crew and staff. PTI

SC refuses to stay at Karnatak HC order to conduct board exams of class 5 and 8

The Supreme Court on Monday refused to stay a Karnataka high court order allowing the government to conduct board exams for students of Classes 5 and 8 studying the state board syllabus. A bench of Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices PS Narasimha and JB Pardiwala, however, agreed to hear on March 27 a plea filed by as-

sociations of unaided private schools against the high court order. The matter was mentioned before the bench seeking an urgent hearing.

"Let's not interfere with the high court order. The high courts know what is best in that state," the bench said and added that it does not want any uncertainty to prevail. A division bench of the high court on March 15

had stayed an order of a single bench, which had set aside circulars dated December 12 and December 13, 2022, and January 4, 2023, issued by the Commissioner of Public Instructions and the Department of State Education. The single bench had said the circulars are contrary to the intentions of the Right to Education Act under which they were issued. PTI

J&K Lt Governor Manoj Sinha says, "Will Quit if any proves fraudulent recruitment" over Aptech appointment

Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha on Sunday said the recruitment process in the Union Territory was fair and vowed to quit if anyone proved otherwise. For the first time in history, results of the Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Services examination were declared within three hours of the

last candidate's interview.

His remarks come amid criticism of the government's decision to appoint Aptech, a previously blacklisted agency, to conduct the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board recruitment examination. "Questions have been raised on selections. For the first time after Independence

when the last candidate was interviewed in the Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Services examination, the results were announced within three hours of that. "If anyone alleges that one fraudulent recruitment has been made, I will leave Jammu and Kashmir the next minute," Sinha said here. PTI

Rahul Gandhi announces "unemployment allowance for the youth" to fight against BJP in upcoming Karnataka polls



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday called on party leaders in the state to fight the BJP with unity, as he exuded confidence of "sweeping" the forthcoming Karnataka Assembly polls with absolute majority.

He also announced unemployment allowance for the youth, as the party's fourth poll guarantee, on coming to power. The Congress has already announced three poll guarantees' 200 units of free power to all households (Gruha Jyoti), Rs 2,000 monthly assistance to the woman head of every family (Gruha Lakshmi), and 10 kg of rice free to every member of a BPL household (Anna Bhagya).

Addressing a public rally at Belagavi in northern Karnataka, Gandhi hit out at the BJP-

led Central government, saying "this country belongs to everyone, does not belong to two to three selected, it is not Adani's". "Select people, who are BJP's friends, are getting all the benefits. It is leading to corruption," the Wayanad MP alleged.

Gandhi and AICC President M Mallikarjun Kharge, who hails from the state, said an unemployment allowance of Rs 3,000 per month would be given for graduates and Rs 1,500 for diploma holders for two years in the event of the party gaining power in the State, where Assembly elections are due by May. Gandhi attacked the Basavaraj Bommai government in Karnataka, dubbing it as the "most corrupt government". "It is a 40 per cent commission government," he claimed. PTI

India records 918 new Covid-19 cases, 4 deaths

India saw a single-day rise of 918 fresh coronavirus cases, while the active cases rose to 6,350, according to the Union health ministry data updated on Monday. The country's COVID-19 death toll has increased to 5,30,806, with four latest fatalities -- two reported by Rajasthan, one by Karnataka and one death reconciled by Kerala. According to the data updated at 8 am, the daily positivity was recorded at 2.08 per cent while the weekly positivity was pegged at 0.86 per cent.

The infection tally stands at 4.46 crore (4,46,96,338). The active cases now comprise 0.01

per cent of the total cases, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate has been recorded at 98.8 per cent, according to the health ministry website. A total of 92.03 crore tests for detection of Covid have been conducted so far with 44,225 tests conducted in the last 24 hours. The total number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 4,41,59,182, while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.19 per cent. According to the ministry, 220.65 crore doses of Covid vaccine have been administered in the country so far under the nationwide vaccination drive. PTI

World

Japanese PM Fumio Kishida held talks with PM Modi

PM Fumio Kishida, who arrived in New Delhi early this morning for a two-day visit, held a meeting with PM Modi at the Hyderabad House. Kishida invited PM Modi for the G7 leaders meeting scheduled to be held in Hiroshima in May this year.

After the meeting, PM Modi in a joint statement said, "Today Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida invited me to the G7 Leaders' Summit which will be held in Hiroshima in May. I thank him for this."

"I welcome Japanese PM Fumio Kishida to India. In the last one year, PM Fumio Kishida and I have met several times and



every time I've felt his positivity and commitment to the India-Japan bilateral relationship. His today's visit will be beneficial to maintain this momentum," he added.

PM Modi called today's meeting a "great opportunity" to work together keeping the goals of both nations in mind. PM

Modi said he is happy to be able to welcome his Japanese counterpart again in September this year for the G20 Summit.

PM Modi said that he spoke to Kishida regarding India's G20 goals and priorities. In his statement after the talks, PM Modi said this meeting aims to give a voice to the global South and

strengthen the India-Japan relationship.

He said, "I have spoken to him regarding India's G20 priorities in detail. Our main priority is to give voice to the needs of the global south."

He said that the culture that believes in "Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam" believes in taking everyone along. In a joint statement after meeting PM Modi, Kishida called India an "indispensable partner" of Japan.

He said, "It gives me great pleasure to be able to unveil my new vision on the soil of India which is our indispensable partner in realising a free and open Indo-Pacific."

In the joint press statement, the Japanese PM said, "I formally invited PM Modi to G7 Hiroshima Summit and on the spot, my invitation was immediately accepted."

Speaking about the economic cooperation between Japan and India, Kishida said, "Our economic cooperation with India which continues to grow rapidly will not only support the further development of India but also create significant economic opportunities for Japan. In this regard, we welcome that steady progress is being made towards realising 5 trillion yen of public & private investment in financing from Japan to India in 5 years."

Over 70 countries, including EU express concerns over Afghan women's rights, education

As the Taliban continues to suppress women and restrict their fundamental rights in the country, the European Union (EU) along with more than 70 countries in a joint newsletter on Sunday expressed concern over the situation and said that these restrictions undermine economic and social stability and development in Afghanistan, Khaama Press reported.

The letter further stated that one of every three aid workers in the country is a woman, and as a result, they are no longer allowed to assist women and other people in need.

According to the statement, restrictions on Afghan women

working for domestic and international non-governmental groups would prevent millions of Afghans from receiving humanitarian aid, Khaama Press reported.

Ban on education and other fundamental rights of women is undermining inclusive governance and the recognition of human rights, the statement read further.

The de facto authorities have restricted women's and girls' freedom of movement since August 15, 2021, preventing girls from attending secondary education, excluding them from the majority of the workforce, and forbidding them from utilising public parks, gyms, and bathrooms.

In a recent move, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is all set to send a team of scholars to the country to discuss women's right to education and work with the regime, TOLONews reported as female education continues to suffer majorly in Afghanistan.

The Secretary General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, Hissein Brahim Taha announced the scholars' team on the first day of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's meeting in Mauritania.

Almost 40 countries sent representatives to the 49th OCI meeting, which took place in Mauritania on March 16 and 17, TOLONews reported.

Afghan families call on Taliban to reopen schools for girls above grade 6



Families in Afghanistan called on the Taliban yet again to open schools for girls in grades 7 to 12 as they are worried about the future of their daughters in the country under the regime of the organisation, TOLONews reported.

This comes as Afghanistan enters a new education year, however, the female students in the country are still denied their basic right to attain education.

Since the Taliban took control of Afghanistan, schooling above grade six has been closed, which, later in December last year, barred girls and women from going to universities and working with NGOs.

In a statement given to TOLONews, the families lamented over the ongoing situation in the country and said that the cruel de-

cision of the de facto authorities has put the future of their daughters at stake.

"I have four grandchildren who did not attend school and are now staying with me. They should decide whether or not to attend school," Kabul resident Abdul Jalil said.

In a separate statement, another resident, Raziq said, "I have two daughters. One of them is in grade 8 and another one is in grade 10. We are calling on the Islamic Emirate to allow them to go to their schools."

This comes as female pupils have also expressed sadness over their schools closing. Zainab, a student, stated, "We urge the Islamic Emirate to reopen the schools for us so that we can finish our education," according to TOLONews.

Putin tells Xi they will discuss China's Ukraine peace plan

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday told Chinese President Xi Jinping that he had looked at China's proposals for a resolution of the Ukraine conflict and that he viewed them with respect, reported Reuters.

Putin tells Xi Jinping, who is in Moscow for a three-day state visit to Russia, that they will discuss China's Ukraine peace plan.

Xi arrived in Moscow to meet with President Putin, a state visit that will highlight their nations'



close ties amid the war in Ukraine and will be closely watched by Kyiv and its Western allies.

Xi Jinping told President Putin that he was convinced that Putin enjoyed the Russian people's support ahead of a presidential election scheduled for next year, it reported.

Speaking at informal talks at

the start of Xi's state visit to Moscow, Putin also said that Russia was "slightly envious" of China's rapid development in recent decades.

Meanwhile, Ukraine and the United Kingdom have called on the Chinese leader to use his influence and press Moscow to end the war.

Column

Efforts to Control Gun Culture in America



Lalit Gang

Writer, Journalist, Columnist

America, which speaks the language of violence, which supports violence, which brings a storm of weapons in the world, when it itself started becoming a victim of violence, then its time of self-realization. The biggest difficulty of the modern civilization of America has been that violence has become so comfortable here that everything has been answered only in the language of violence. The environment of violence there has become so strong that the people there have become very insecure in their own homes due to the gun-culture there. After taking the brunt of the easy availability of guns for a long time, the people there have started opening a front against it at their level and President Joe Biden has been forced to sign an executive order related to curbing the misuse of weapons.

In June last year, a large number of people took to the streets demanding a change in the law related to the purchase and sale of guns. What is needed is that along with giving relief to the victims of this problem, strict laws should be brought on the buyers of guns as well as its manufacturers and sellers. Like in America, gun-culture flourishing in Punjab also needs to be controlled.

In America, such news kept coming every day that some madman started firing indiscriminately with his gun somewhere in the school or sometimes in the market and people were unnecessarily killed in it. One of the major reasons behind this is the easy availability of all kinds of guns to the common people there and the use of these guns for indiscriminate firing on trivial matters and hysterics, which continues to be a cause of deep concern. There is always a fear of some major untoward happening due to the whims of a crazy person in the life of the common people, their beliefs and loyalties have been so wounded that there is no protective shield like trust between man and man.

It is difficult to say who hides such an ugly and insane mind within the



clean faces. America's arms race and technological race is pushing the entire human race into a corner from which it has become difficult to return. Now, along with the world, America itself is a victim of these weapons and violent mentality.

The entire humanity is moaning and suffering because of the bad culture that America has spread in the world to establish supremacy over the world and to flourish its arms business. America has talked about the New World Order, it has talked about openness, it seems that the "world man" is suffocating and wants to come out of the suffocation. See the irony that America is the most powerful and secure country in the world but its citizens are the most insecure and feared citizens. There are more prisoners in the jails there than in any other country in the world. There have been many such incidents that suddenly some madman started firing at a restaurant, hotel or gathering and a large number of people were killed. In 2014, guns were used in 68 percent of the total 14,000 murder cases registered in the US. A study commissioned by the government itself revealed the fact that about 1300 children under the age of 17 are injured by guns in America every year. The US administration will have to curb not only the 'gun culture' but also the weapon culture, now it will have to change its mindset to make the world

livable.

The United States has seen at close quarters the consequences of petty quarrels or unnecessary paranoia after carrying a deadly weapon, where it kills hundreds of people every year. Any sensitive society should see and understand this situation as a serious problem. It is not without reason that in America, where most families have had different types of guns; voices have started rising against this weapon culture. It was very important to raise this voice, according to the saying that sooner or later, America's eyes are open, and then a message of peace and non-violence will go to the world with America. Certainly, it was absolutely necessary to control this culture of violence in America.

Because America is today the biggest hub of crime in the world and today it is a victim of the culture of violence it spread in the world. It is obvious that the incidents of firing there have been taking the lives of hundreds of people, which were not incidents of Islamic terrorism, and then what was it? It is a question that exposes American civilization. Is this a product of America's materialistic and violent culture? Realizing the mental trauma and other difficulties of the victims, US President Joe Biden on Tuesday took a meaningful initiative towards curbing gun abuse. Under this, the 'background check' done during the sale of guns will

be improved. Through this, Biden has directed the cabinet to create a better government system to support communities struggling with gun violence. It is not hidden that the kind of mental trauma and other difficulties that those who lose a loved one in unprovoked firing have to deal with.

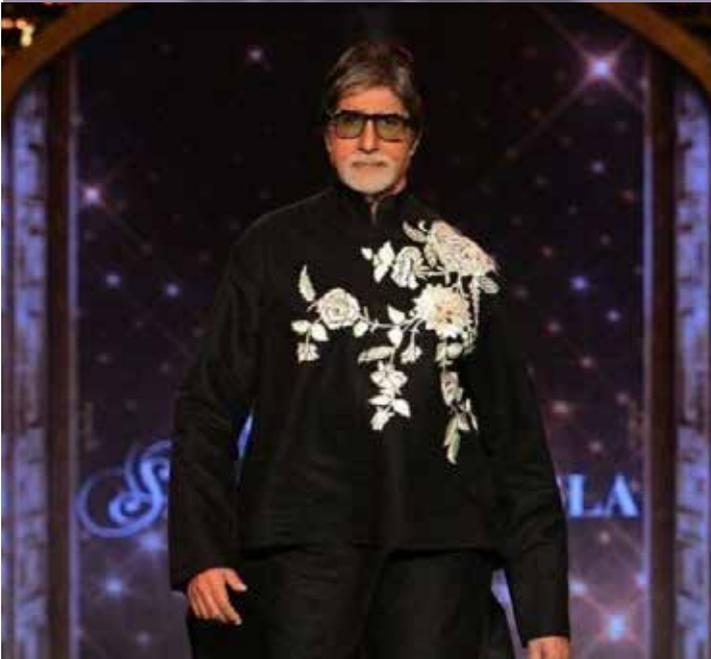
The mentality of 'do what you want' thrives where the values of human relationships have ended, where children grow up independent in an individualistic system. In the situation of 'not in a good mood', an event is just an event, it neither gives happiness nor sorrow. In such a situation man dwarfs his infinite powers. This is a stereotypical way of expressing inner turmoil. Such people do not have a decent and non-violent way of living right. There is no recognition of time. In such people, there is no special concern for dignity, etiquette, intimacy of relations, peaceful co-existence etc. Material comforts become the ultimate goal of life. Such isolation among American citizens is fueling deep frustration, intense resentment, and venomous vindictiveness. They become mentally ill and commit murder using dangerous and deadly guns available with them. Actually, the psychology associated with having a weapon in hand works behind firing a gun in a fit of rage on trivial matters.

Even so, much of the distortion and brutality in the nature of violence depends on the availability of weapons. Such incidents of murder usually happen because a man in a frenzy who could not control his anger or frustrations had a gun available when he was angry. Such cases are common, in which even after reaching the peak of anger and excitement in a mutual debate, two people or parties are reconciled, because they did not have weapons at the time of the dispute.

America is becoming a cultureless country – this nation is riding on physical development and weapon culture. The citizens there can keep as many arms as they want. In some places even a license for arms is not required. There are very few homes in America that do not have a gun or pistol. This weapon culture of America is connected with its birth. It has become prosperous on this weapon culture and has ruled the world. Today the same violent weapon culture is taking a heavy toll on its own.

Entertainment

Actor Amitabh Bachchan writes "I repair, hope to be back on the ramp soon" on social media



Amitabh Bachchan misses the fun and frolic on the ramp. Are you wondering what makes us think so? Check his latest Instagram post. Taking to Instagram in the wee hours of Monday, the senior Bachchan posted a throwback picture of himself from the ramp. In that frame, Amitabh was dressed in a black kurta-pyjama with white embroidery embossed on the kurta. The superstar completed the look with white shoes and a black shade.

"thank you for all the prayers and wishes for my recovery .I repair. hope to be back on the ramp soon." Amitabh wrote in the caption and shared a folded hands emoji and a rose with it.

Fans lapped up the post with encouraging comments. One wrote, "Love you, Amitabh Bachchan, sir nice!" "Black looks great on you. hope to see u dazzling," wrote another one.

For the unversed, Amitabh broke his rib cartilage and suffered a muscle tear to his right rib cage during the shooting of an action sequence of the film 'Project K' in Hyderabad. The actor was flown to Mumbai after the initial treatment. Amitabh wrote in his blog, "In Hyderabad at shoot for Project K, during an action shot, got injured, rib cartilage popped broke and muscle tear to the right rib cage.

Cancelled shoot, did doctor consult & scan by CT at AIG Hospital in Hyderabad and flown back home." The actor continued, "Strapping has been done and rest been advocated .yes painful . on movement and breathing . will take some weeks they say before some normalisation will occur .some medication is on also for pain .. So all work that was to be done has been suspended and cancelled dropped postponed for the moment until healing occurs .I rest at Jalsa and am mobile a bit for all the essential activities . but yes in rest and generally lying around ."

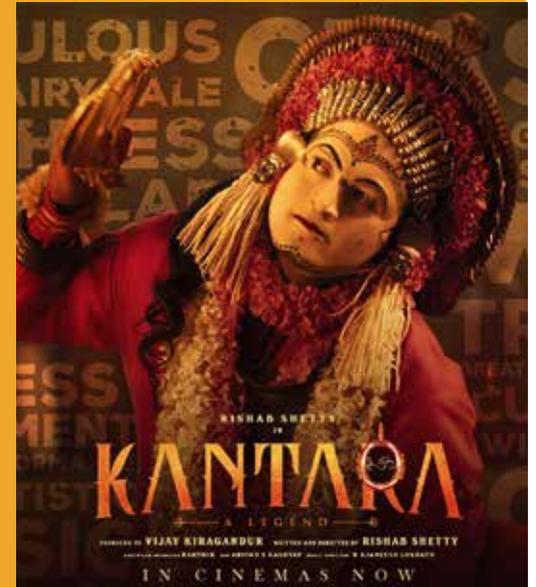
Since then, Amitabh has been keeping his fans updated about his health progress through his blogs and tweets. The news of his recovery will surely bring broad smiles to the face of his fans. ANI

Film 'Kantara' was screened at Pathe Balexert theatre Geneva

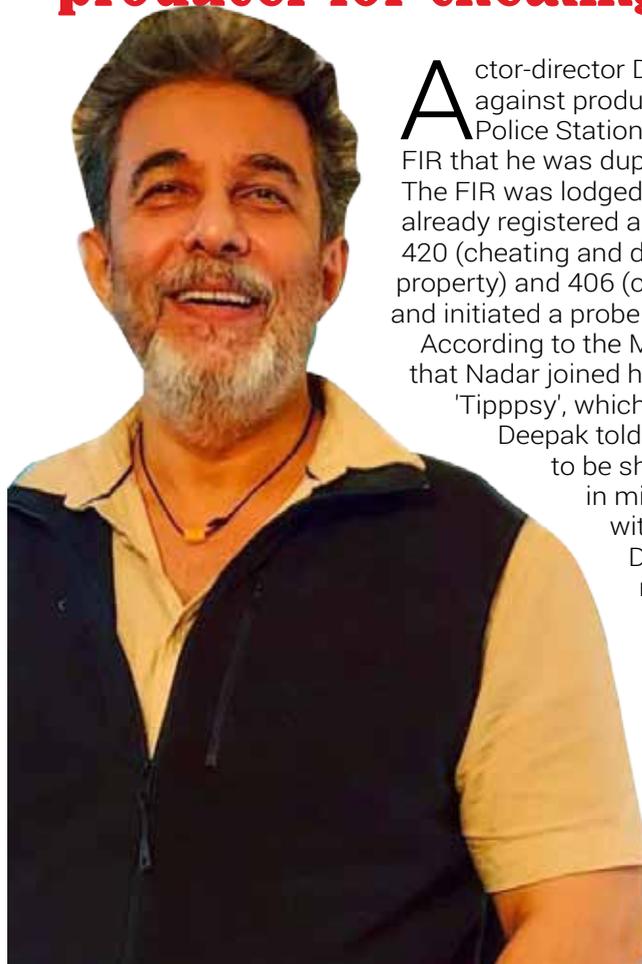
Kannada blockbuster film 'Kantara' was screened at the Pathe Balexert theatre Geneva on March 17. An audience of about 220 people including the UN representatives, Heads of International Organisations from Germany, Brazil, UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development), ITU (International Telecommunication Union) WHO (World Health Organisation), Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Indian diaspora attended the screening.

The audience gave a rapturous response to the film. Set in the fictional village of Dakshina Kannada, 'Kantara' followed the character of Rishab Shetty (who is also the director of the movie), playing the role of a Kambala champion, who had a faceoff with an upright Forest Range officer. The movie amalgamates myth, fiction, folklore and the local culture of Karnataka. The film shows the eternal tussle between man and forest. The film inspired people to be aware of environmental challenges.

The Indian PR spoke about the production of multi-lingual films in India at the UN and also emphasized the fact that Kannada films are contributing 10 per cent to it. Helmed by Kannad star Rishab, 'Kantara' not only garnered critics' praises but also minted a whopping amount of money at the box office. The film completed its glorious run of 100 days in the theatres in February. On that occasion, Rishab announced the film's prequel. ANI



Actor Deepak Tijori lodges FIR against producer for cheating Rs 2.6 crores



Actor-director Deepak Tijori filed a case of cheating against producer Mohan Gopal Nadar at Amboli Police Station in Mumbai. The actor claimed in his FIR that he was duped of Rs 2.6 crores by the accused. The FIR was lodged on March 15. Mumbai Police have already registered a case against Nadar under sections 420 (cheating and dishonesty inducing delivery of property) and 406 (criminal breach of trust) of the IPC and initiated a probe into the matter.

According to the Mumbai Police, the actor said that Nadar joined him to co-produce a thriller titled 'Tipppsy', which Deepak was supposedly to direct. Deepak told Police, that the film was scheduled to be shot in London in 2019. Keeping that in mind, Deepak has entrusted Nadar with Rs 2 crores and 60 lakhs. But Deepak claimed that the film was not completed in time. After asking for the repayment of the money repeatedly, Nadar dodged him by giving various excuses.

Moreover, Deepak claimed in his FIR that the cheques provided by Nadar kept bouncing. Then Deepak decided to lodge a complaint against him. The Officer-in-charge at Amboli that they have started the investigation. No arrest has so far. ANI