



Rahul Gandhi defamation case: BJP hails
Surat court verdict, Congress leader to

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Afternoon

VOIC E

VIEWS & VISION OF CITY

Volume: 15, Issue: 196

SATURDAY, APRIL 22, 2023 MUMBAI

08 PAGES, ₹ 2/-

RNI No. MAHENG/2009/29332

www.afternoonvoice.com

AKSHAY TRITIYA FEWER BUSINESS FOR THE GEM AND JEWELLERY INDUSTRY



Akshay Tritiya is one of the most auspicious three-and-a-half mahurats of the Hindu almanac for performing religious rites and making gold, silver and gem purchases. Kalikanand Saraswati said "In our Hindu religion it is believed that buying gold on Akshaya Tritiya brings prosperity and good fortune. According to Hindu mythology, Goddess Lakshmi was on this day and she is the goddess of wealth and affluence".

Buying gold jewellery is seen as a way to please her and invite prosperity and her blessings. This day is considered ideal for initiating new ventures, investments, and purchases of valuable assets like gold and property. The term "Akshaya" means "never diminishing" in Sanskrit, and it is believed that performing good deeds on this day will result in everlasting prosperity and blessings.

Prasad Guruji (Hindu Priest) told Afternoon Voice, "The Akshay Tritiya falls on this Saturday and the mahurat starts at 7. 50 am on April 22, and ends at 7. 47am Sunday April 23. But the festival will be celebrated on Saturday only because it's the beginning of the Muhurat."

Pandit Vedprakash said "During this time very few weddings will be performed because planet Jupiter (Guru) is combust ('ast'). It will rise on April 29, after which there are big wedding mahurats on May 1, 2 & 10."

Ankita Jewellers said "The gold rates have gone up, today there is less business compared to last year. Gold stands at Rs 60,000 per 10 gm and rates are expected to rise further. Meanwhile, fewer weddings are scheduled this day so gold purchase is also limited."

Just like gold, silver is also considered as a lucky metal, and buying silverware like utensils, coins or other silver items is believed to bring good luck and prosperity. Many people also select to gift silver items to their loved ones on this day. Investing in real estate on Akshaya Tritiya is considered very auspicious, and many people believe that it brings long-term prosperity and wealth. This day is considered ideal for buying land, property or a house. In this modern era many consider that this day is perfect for investing in the stock market. Many people choose to invest in shares or mutual funds on Akshaya Tritiya, as it is believed that investments made on this day will yield positive returns in the long run.

Pay and get blue tick on Twitter

Editoritis



Dr. Vaidehi

Currently Twitter is one of the major and influential social networks for all age groups. Efficient use of Twitter is also one of the issues that many people care about. Having a blue tick next to your profile name was a status symbol. Blue tick indicates that a Twitter account has been verified as authentic by Twitter. The account belongs to a public figure, celebrity, brand, or organization of public interest. Earlier Accounts that meet Twitter's verification criteria are granted a blue tick badge, which appears next to the account's name and handle on their profile and in search results. The blue tick helps establish credibility and authenticity for the account, but it does not guar-

antee the quality or accuracy of its content. Whatsoever, there was always a struggle to get that blue tick.

Now this blue tick is no more a privilege or prerogative of those celebrities, even the commoners can decorate their profile with this tick and feel like a celebrity, the only thing that you should afford to do so. Twitter has launched a subscription service allowing users to buy blue-tick verification for a monthly fee of 7.99 USD. Now, it looks like the official price for the Twitter Blue Subscription in India is out and it is quite surprising as the price is claimed to be Rs. 719 per month.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 02

Pay and get blue tick on Twitter

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Verified accounts are more likely to be seen and recommended by Twitter's algorithms, which can increase the account's reach and visibility.

Verified accounts are more likely to attract followers and engagement, as users tend to trust and engage with verified accounts more than unverified ones.

On April 1st, we will begin winding down our legacy verified program and removing legacy verified check marks. To keep your blue checkmark on Twitter, individuals can sign up for Twitter Blue.

Twitter Blue is available for select iOS devices in India as of now. So, if you are an iOS user, Twitter Blue might be available for you. Here's how you can check it. Verified accounts are more likely to be seen and recommended by Twitter's algorithms, which can increase the account's reach and visibility. Verified accounts are more likely to attract followers and engagement, as users tend to trust and engage with verified accounts more than unverified ones.

In the recent past the most precious blue tick that used to give celebrity status to a profile has been removed for many celebrity accounts. Shah Rukh Khan, Amitabh Bachchan, Alia Bhatt and politicians like CM Yogi Adityanath, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi and cricketers Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma among others have lost their verified blue ticks from their Twitter accounts. Micro-blogging site Twitter removed the verified blue ticks from most of the celebrity accounts. The only individual Twitter users who have verified blue check marks are those paying for Twitter Blue, which costs USD 8/month via the web and USD 11/month through in-app payment on iOS and Android. Initially, the blue tick served as a way of protecting well-known individuals from impersonation and tackling false information.

Earlier in March, Twitter posted from their official handle, "On April 1st, we will begin winding down our legacy verified program and removing legacy verified check marks. To keep your blue checkmark on Twitter, individuals can sign up for Twitter Blue. Twitter first introduced the blue check mark system in 2009 to help users identify that celebrities, politicians, companies and brands, news organizations and other accounts "of public interest" were genuine and not impostors or parody accounts. The company didn't previously charge for verification. Musk launched Twitter Blue with the check-mark badge as one of the premium perks within two weeks of the company's takeover last year.

However, it's important to note that the blue tick badge is not a guarantee of an account's quality or content. Users



should always evaluate the information they consume on Twitter critically, regardless of whether the account is verified or not. Twitter halted its account verification programme, saying that it aims to improve the application and review process to give users that elusive blue badge. Last month, Twitter said it mistakenly approved the verification applications of a small number of inauthentic (fake) accounts.

Twitter in May launched its new verification application process, beginning with six categories, and reviewing public applications globally to help users earn the blue badge on the micro-blogging platform. Twitter previously suspended the verification way back in 2017, before launching it this year.

Vaidehi Tapan

Volume No. 15 | Issue No. 196



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Voices



Letters to the Editor

Modernise drug control department

Cops have seized millions of bottles of sedative cough syrup from pharmaceutical units across the country, which were notably sealed in long ago.

It is discovered that the syrup contains codeine, an opiate on the list of controlled substances. How this escaped the attention of regulators for so long is perplexing, given that all units using it are required to file quarterly returns of the narcotic substance used. Lax regulatory controls and gaps in the inspection of medical and drug-making firms have been identified as major causes of the sector's ills. This is a serious lapse in judgement because bogus medicines cause havoc in the lives of consumers and can even be fatal. The grip of law enforcement on this critical segment must be tightened. However, its image has been tainted by a few bad apples, with cases of death linked to contaminated medicines manufactured in India being reported on a regular basis both at home and abroad. Drug control departments must be modernised with cutting-edge technology and skilled personnel to intercept defaulters in real time. Pharma must also improve their internal quality control measures.

Immediate and firm action against the perpetrator can keep people from becoming victims of this lethal scam.

Vijaykumar H K

A milestone which we should not be proud of!

A milestone which we should not be proud of as India overtakes China to become the most populous country in the world. 142.86 crores of head count may be the official number but actually it could be more than 150 crores as many births go unreported & several others crossing borders this side unofficially. While China has been able to control its population, India has failed badly & there is no official or visible population control initiative from the govt. A large family is still considered a boon in villages & other tribal community who think that more the numbers means more hands to earn livelihood for the family. Young population criteria is humbug as the fact remains that we certainly do not have the resources to feed our teeming population which is bound to multiply like compounding terminology in mathematics. Forceful family planning measures are the need of the hour & govt needs to take stringent measures like restricting one child per couple as the situation is getting out of hand. Those willing to adopt should be granted incentives like tax concessions & grants while those having more children should be penalized as well as forced to go for sterilization.

S.N. Kabra

The festival of Eid

Eid-ul-Fitr marks the end of Ramadan. All Muslim countries celebrate Eid as a sign of unity and values. Starting the day with namaaz and a sweet dish called 'sheer khurma', men, women and children wear new clothes, while women along with their new outfits, also wear bangles and apply mehendi. The children receive blessings and gifts from elders called Eidi. Being happy and thankful to the Almighty, we should not forget the people who are not celebrating Eid such as policemen, housemaids and gate keepers who do not get leave from their employers. We should share our happiness with them too, as Eid is all about sharing happiness and joy. The purpose and philosophy behind the celebration of Eid is to commemorate the noble act of Prophet Ibrahim who is known as Abraham in Christianity.

Jubel D'Cruz

Akshaya Tritiya on 22nd April 2023



Akshaya tritaya is the first day of Krita Yuga, the first yuga of our Vedic calendar. India is a country that celebrates a host of festivals with much fervour and joy. These festivals help bind age-old traditions with our roots. One of such festivals is Akshaya Tritiya that will be observed on 14th May 2021. Also known as Akha Teej, Akshaya Tritiya is celebrated on the third lunar day of the bright fortnight. Akshaya is a term in Sanskrit that means no decay. It is believed that this day brings good fortune and luck in your life. On this day, most people start new businesses, buy land or jewellery and invest in something. It is believed to initiate new beginnings on this day in order to bring good fortune and luck. Be vigilant while buying gold on Akshaya Tritiya.

The number of jewellers with licence to sell hallmarked gold ornaments across the State has increased by nearly 40% in the past three years. But, as the scheme continues to be voluntary, many jewellers are yet to be brought under the hallmark certification. In Chennai and other metros, gold sales touch a new high during this time and the gold buyers must be vigilant during the peak business time. A

particular street in Chennai is called gold street and it is worth seeing people queuing up to get their share of gold on the auspicious day. But all that glitters is not gold. The number of hallmark-licensed jewellers across Tamil Nadu had gone. As on date 10g of 24k gold (99.9%) in Mumbai is 62,200.00 Indian Rupees.

Akshaya Tritiya is believed to be one of the most important tithi of the Hindu astrology. It is said that the sun and the moon become equally bright on this auspicious day. There are many stories related to this day. One of the legends included that on this day, as per Shiva Purana, on Akshaya Tritiya, Kuber was made the lord of riches and banker of Heaven by Lord Shiva. Wake up before the cock crows and bathe yourself to perfection and enter your pooja room with reverence and pour ghee into the oil lamps and light them. Place a picture of Lakshminarashimar at the centre and draw a kolam. Place a big plantain leaf on the floor and spread rice on it and place a vessel filled with water. By making use of turmeric paste make a Ganesha and place it near the vessel and decorate it with flowers and kumkum. Wholeheartedly think of Goddess Mahalakshmi and say a slogan and offer the

preparations to the Goddess. There is a belief that doing this eradicates poverty thereby paving the way to prosperity.

Despite the surge in gold price, jewellery stores have been witnessing considerable footfalls for the past few days. With Akshaya Tritiya falling on Wednesday, jewellers say it's time to heave a sigh of relief after a prolonged lean season owing to GST rollout followed by muted market conditions, inauspicious days) combined with a couple of other factors that have impacted the jewellery sales to a substantial extent.

For the past 25 years, people have been investing in gold jewellery during Akshaya Tritiya as they believe that it brings prosperity. Gold business is expected to go briskly and we can see the jewellers getting much needed boost in sale and the people likely to get the fruits for buying gold on the auspicious day of Akshaya Tritiya. Golden days are here again.

- Jayanthi Subramaniam

Columnist

Readers are requested to mail Letters to the Editor only at

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

Political leaders meet people from corporate sector Raut on Pawar-Adani meeting



MP Sanjay Raut on Friday played down NCP chief Sharad Pawar's meeting with industrialist Gautam Adani, saying that political leaders do meet people from the corporate sector.

The Adani Group chairman met the Nationalist Congress

Party chief a day before. "Sharad Pawar or for that matter every big political leader meets people from the corporate sector," Raut said in response to a question by reporters here.

The meeting assumed some significance as earlier this month Pawar had said the Supreme

Court-appointed panel will be more useful than a Joint Parliamentary Committee for looking into US-based Hindenburg Research's allegations against the Adani group.

The NCP chief, thus, appeared to be breaking ranks with opposition leaders who have been demanding a JPC on the Adani issue. Later Pawar said he will not oppose the demand for a JPC. Raut, incidentally, also met Pawar after the latter's meeting with Adani.

"We keep meeting, and Pawar is a key leader of the Maha Vikas Aghadi (the alliance of Sena (UBT), NCP and Congress). What is surprising if we or Congress leaders meet Pawar. We had a discussion on many issues in the country and state," the Rajya Sabha MP said.

Ajit Pawar skips NCP convention in Mumbai attends events in Pune



Senior Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Ajit Pawar on Friday skipped a meeting of his party's Mumbai unit raising eyebrows in political circles as speculation about his next political move refuses to die down.

Speaking to reporters in Pune, Pawar played down the buzz saying that he was unable to attend the NCP convention as he had to remain present for some other programmes happening at

the same time.

He said nothing much should be read into this. BJP said Maha Vikas Aghadi leaders were defaming him and questioning his credibility.

The daylong meeting in Mumbai was addressed by party chief Sharad Pawar and other senior leaders like Praful Patel, Jitendra Awhad, Supriya Sule, Chhagan Bhujbal and state president Jayant Patil.

Maha govt to file curative petition in SC on Maratha quota

The Maharashtra Government will file a curative petition in the Supreme Court on the Maratha quota issue and set up a new commission to conduct a survey afresh to establish the community's backwardness, officials said on Friday.

The decision was taken at a meeting chaired by Chief Min-

ister Eknath Shinde, said a statement from his office. The meeting, also attended by deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis, was held in the backdrop of the apex court rejecting the state government's review petition.

Despite the setback, doors are not closed on Maratha reservation case, the Chief Minister's

Office said in the statement.

The process of filing a curative petition should begin immediately, and the new "comprehensive survey", to be conducted in a "scientific way", should rope in efficient, non-biased organisations which should be provided all facilities along with human resources, Shinde told the officials.

Universities told to adopt state's four-year degree plan by April 30

The state's higher education department has finally set things in motion for the implementation of the four-year undergraduate degree programme with multiple entry-exit options as recommended in the National Education Policy 2020 by issuing a government resolu-

tion (GR) late on Thursday. The four-year programme with honours or honours with research will be implemented from 2023-24 to all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes other than those regulated by the AICTE, the Bar Council of India, and the National Council for Teacher's Education.

The fourth year will be effective from 2026-27. The state has set a deadline of April 30 for all autonomous colleges and universities to set up an NEP implementation cell and adopt government regulations. Colleges are to submit an action taken report within 10 days of the deadline.

Man gets life for assaulting 80-yr-old mom, causing her death

Observing that the accused had knowledge that a single blow to his 88-year-old mother who was on oxygen support, was dangerous and in all probability would cause her death, a sessions court convicted

and sentenced a 50-year-old man to life imprisonment for hitting his ailing mother in 2016 at their Goregaon flat over a property dispute. The woman died a day later. "The intention and knowledge on the part of accused can be as-

certained from the very fact that though accused knew the fact that the deceased was 88 years old and was suffering from various diseases, he assaulted the deceased on various parts of body," Judge S N Salve said.

80-year-old from Mumbai among 3 more to die of COVID in Maharashtra

The state crossed 50 Covid-19 deaths for April on Thursday, after adding three fatalities from Mumbai, Satara and Wardha. Fresh detections in state remained over 1,100 for the second day in a row, while for Mumbai the daily tally continued to hover at more than 200 (207). The deceased from Mum woman with multiple comorbidities, including, diabetes, hypertension, chronic kidney disease, ischemic heart disease and interstitial lung dis-

ease. State authorities have confirmed 75 Covid-19 deaths since January. Of them, 73% have occurred in individuals above 60 years of age. Importantly, 71% of the deceased had comorbidities, health authorities added. recorded death of an 86-year-old man, who died of heart attack a day after being discharged from Koparde hospital where he was being treated for suspected COVID. The patient died due to cardio respiratory arrest on Thursday.

Buzz over Ajit Pawar not attending NCP meet today in Mumbai

Ajit Pawar's name is missing from the list of invitees for NCP's one-day convention in the city on Friday, triggering fresh speculation in party circles that he was being sidelined for political reasons. NCP president Sharad Pawar will address the convention on the subject of NCP's

aim "to develop Mumbai as a world-class city". State NCP president Jayant Patil will preside over the inaugural session. Besides Patil, Praful Patel, Supriya Sule, Sunil Tatkare, and former ministers Chhagan Bhujbal, Jitendra Awhad and Anil Deshmukh will interact with party workers.

Nation

Rahul Gandhi defamation case: BJP hails Surat court verdict, Congress leader to move High Court

The BJP on Thursday hailed the Surat Sessions court verdict rejecting Rahul Gandhi's plea seeking a stay on his conviction in the 2019 criminal defamation case over the 'Modi surname' remark while the Congress termed the judgement as "unsustainable and erroneous". The Congress said Surat court's order will be challenged in the High Court.

Additional sessions judge Robin P Mogera cited Gandhi's stature as an MP and former chief of the country's second-largest political party and said he should have been more careful. He cited prima facie evidence and observations of the trial court and said it transpires that Gandhi



made certain derogatory remarks against Prime Minister Narendra Modi apart from comparing the people with the same surname with thieves. The court said the surname of the complainant in the case, Bharatiya Janata Party

(BJP) lawmaker Purnesh Modi, is also Modi." the complainant is [also an] ex-minister and involved in public life and such defamatory remarks would have certainly harmed his reputation and caused him pain and agony in society".

"In this case, by uttering defamatory words viz comparing persons having [the] surname 'Modi' with thieves would definitely have caused mental agony and harm the reputation of [the] complainant, who is socially active and dealing

in public," the court said.

It said when the defamatory matter affects each and every member "of an ascertainable class or group each of them or all of them could set the law in motion." "After attributing defamatory statements against the Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the accused did not stop there and further commented 'Why do all thieves have the common surname of 'Modi'? It is submitted that the defamatory statements were made by the accused and he had the knowledge that it would harm the reputation of 'Modi' surname holders and such statements were made only with a view to earning a political gain." ANI

Godhara train burning case: SC grants bail to eight and refuses for other four convicts



The Supreme Court on Friday granted bail to eight convicts in the 2002 Godhara train coach-burning case. However the top court refused to consider bail application of other four other convicts in view of their role.

A bench headed by Chief Justice of DY Chandrachud granted bail to the eight convicts. These eight people were those who were convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment and their

sentences were upheld by the trial court order. The top court has earlier denied the bail application of those accused persons whose death sentence awarded by the trial Court was commuted to life imprisonment by the Gujarat High Court. The top court noted that the sentence of death which was awarded by the trial Court has been commuted to life imprisonment by the High Court and the State Government has

preferred appeals against the order of the High Court. 11 accused were sentenced death penalty by the trial court. Later Gujarat HC commuted the death sentence to life imprisonment.

Gujarat Government on Monday reiterated that the convicts of the 2002 Godhara train coach-burning case were involved in serious offences as they pelted stones and bolted the door of the train and opposed their bail plea. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta submitted before the top court that it is just not a case of stone pelting but the accused had bolted the door of the train from outside and then pelted stones. However, the convicts' lawyers submitted that they have served 17 years in prison. ANI

Poonch terror attack: Army personnel pay tribute to 5 fallen braves



Army personnel on Friday laid floral tributes on the 5 bravehearts who lost their lives in a terror attack in the Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday.

"To pay homage to the supreme sacrifice of the five Bravehearts of the Indian Army who laid down their lives in the line of duty in Poonch District on April 20 2023, a wreath-laying ceremony was organised at Rajouri with full Military traditions," the Army said in a statement.

Senior army officers and officials from the civil administration attended the sombre wreath-laying ceremony of the fallen

bravehearts. Five jawans were killed and another was seriously injured on Thursday after their vehicle caught fire following an amush attack by suspected Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorists in the Poonch district.

The army said the terrorists, taking advantage of heavy rains and low visibility in the area, fired upon the vehicle and likely used grenades, which caused the vehicle to go up in flames.

The fallen bravehearts were identified as Hav Mandeep Singh, L/NK Kulwant Singh, Sep Harkrishan Singh and Sep Sewak Singh, all natives of Punjab and L/NK Debashish Biswal, a native of Odisha.

J&K Ex-Governor Satyapal Malik summoned by CBI

The CBI has asked former Jammu and Kashmir governor Satya Pal Malik to answer certain queries in connection with an alleged insurance scam in the Union Territory, officials said on Friday.

This is the second time in seven months that Malik, who completed his terms as the governor of various states, will be questioned by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).



He was questioned in October last year after he concluded his gubernatorial responsibilities in Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Goa and finally, Meghalaya.

The CBI move comes barely a week after Malik's interview to "The Wire", in which he made critical remarks about the BJP-led Centre, especially regarding its handling of Jammu and Kashmir where he served as the last governor before the erstwhile state was bifurcated into Union territories.

World

US discovers six Chinese 'police stations'



US discovered six Chinese spy bases after the FBI busted Chinese 'police station' in New York City, reported New York Post (NYP).

The FBI helped shut down a clandestine Chinese "police station" in Manhattan after the arrest of two alleged operatives earlier this week.

Lu Jianwang, 61, and Chen Jinping, 59, both New York residents, are facing charges of conspiracy to act as China's agents and obstruction of justice.

Meanwhile, NYP informed that there are several more of these illegal organizations scattered across the US. "We found at least four listed in the US by PRC (People's Republic of China) public security authorities, plus flagged an additional four overseas Chinese service centers in the US set up by the UFWD networks responsible for manning the stations," a spokeswoman for Safeguard Defenders told NYP.

In addition to the Chinese police station above a noodle

restaurant in Manhattan's Chinatown, there is another station at an undisclosed address in New York City, as well as an outpost in Los Angeles, according to a new report by Safeguard Defenders.

In addition to Los Angeles and New York, the nonprofit has found so-called "overseas service stations" in San Francisco and Houston as well as in cities in Nebraska and Minnesota.

The Madrid-based human rights group initially published a report last year detailing 100 clandestine Chinese police stations around the world. These law enforcement organizations, operated by the Chinese Communist Party, are tasked with spying on Chinese nationals around the world, reported NYP.

However, Beijing denied running these stations, characterizing them as "service centers" for overseas Chinese nationals.

Sudan: Amid ongoing fight, paramilitary group RSF announces 72-hour ceasefire

As violence in Sudan enters day seven, the country's paramilitary force Rapid Support Forces (RSF) has announced a 72-hour ceasefire starting from Friday, Al Jazeera reported.

In a statement, the paramilitary forces announced that the ceasefire would come into effect at 6 am (04:00 GMT) on Friday, which marks the beginning of the Muslim holiday of Eid ul-Fitr, amid heavy fighting with the army in the country's capital of Khartoum.

"The armistice coincides with the blessed Eid al-Fitr, and open humanitarian corridors to evacuate citizens and give them the opportunity to greet their families," Al Jazeera reported, citing the statement.

The conflict between Su-

dan's military leader and his deputy on the ruling council erupted six days ago, derailing a plan for a transition to a civilian democracy that had received international support, four years after the overthrow of the previous government by widespread protests and two years after a military coup.

There have been violent clashes in Sudan for nearly six days between the country's army and a paramilitary group over a proposed timeline for handing over power to a civilian government.

Nearly 300 people have been killed in the past five days, according to the UN health agency. Thousands of people have fled Khartoum for safety, reported Al Jazeera.

UK Dy PM Dominic Raab resigns over bullying allegations

UK Deputy Prime Minister Dominic Raab on Friday resigned in the wake of bullying allegations.

"I am writing to resign from your government, following receipt of the report arising from the inquiry conducted by Adam Tolley KC. I called for the inquiry and undertook to resign if it made any finding of bullying

whatsoever. I believe it is important to keep my word," read Raab's statement.

Allegations surfaced about Raab in November, with former staff claiming he created a "culture of fear" in their departments.

He denied the allegations and requested an investigation into himself after two formal complaints were made.

India, Armenia, Iran holds first trilateral political consultations in Yerevan

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of India, Armenia and Iran held the first trilateral political consultations on Thursday in Yerevan. The three countries had a wide range of discussions, particularly on economic issues and regional communication.

Trilateral cooperation in various fields was also discussed during the meeting. Informing of the consultations, the official Twitter account of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia wrote, "First trilateral political consul-

tations btw MFAs of #Armenia, #Iran & #India were held in Yerevan. Sides discussed, particularly economic issues & regional communications outlined prospects of deepening cultural & people to people contacts & trilateral coop in various fields."

Armenia and India celebrated 30 years of bilateral diplomatic relations in 2022.

Armenia and India maintain active political ties. Effective cooperation exists between the two nations within international bodies.

Chinese company announces to cut production over non-payment of dues by Pakistan

The relationship between "all-weather" ally Pakistan and China is deteriorating over the non-payment of dues by Islamabad, reported The Nation. Delayed payments have been a recurring problem and have impacted the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) significantly.

Chinese mine operating company recently announced that it will be forced to cut production by half due to the non-payment of dues by the federal government, Pakistan owes USD 60 million to the corporation that provides coal to most of the coal-based power plants in the country, reported The Nation. The China Machinery Engineering Corporation (CMEC) feeds coal to power plants that generate an average of 1360 megawatts of electricity.

After Pakistan's failure to pay the dues, the extraction and provision of coal to these power plants had to be cut down. What could be avenues to become a more efficient, cost-effective and productive economy are quickly turning into missed opportunities



and incurring more liabilities for Pakistan, reported The Nation.

CMEC is warning the country of a complete halt within the next month should this matter remain unresolved.

According to details released by the corporation, payments have not been made since May of last year. Furthermore, slow operations could threaten Phase III of the project, resulting in Pakistan being forced to import coal rather than using local reserves, reported The Nation.

Pakistan barely have enough reserves remaining to cover basic

imports for the next four months and if it adds more coal to the mix, the country will be incurring an exorbitant cost. Matters like these have been recurrent in Pakistan; in the last few months, Chinese authorities had voiced their concerns about overdue payments worth USD 1.5 billion to Independent Power Plants (IPPs), reported The Nation.

Pakistan's poor economic condition has led to a severe dollar shortage, which is why it is likely that it may not be able to make these payments in the near future as well.

Importance of Basic(Primary) Education



Vijay Garg

Retired Principal Educational
Columnist Malout Punjab

Basic education is defined as primary plus secondary level education. It is an evolving program of instruction that is intended to provide students with the opportunity to become responsible and respectful global citizens, to contribute to their economic well-being and that of their families and communities, to explore and understand different perspectives, and to enjoy productive and satisfying lives. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, which was approved by the Indian Parliament on 4th August 2009, explains the modalities of the provision of free and obligatory education for children between the ages of 6 to 14 years in India under Article 21A of the Indian Constitution. India became one of the hundred and thirty-five countries to make education a fundamental right of every child when the act came into implementation on 1st of April 2010. Basic education is the basic and foremost right of every child. The availability and provision of general education to the child is not only the responsibility of government but also of parents and households. Basic education brings awareness among the masses, opens avenues for opportunities as well as self-advancement and improvement and reduces chronic and inter-generational poverty. As a first step in the creation of welfare and just society, universal basic education is an absolute pre-requisite for sustainable development. In order to compete with the surrounding world, children are prepared from very early childhood. The first six years of a child's life are globally acknowledged as being the most critical years for lifelong development since the pace of development during these years is extremely rapid. This is why basic education is very necessary for all to go ahead in life and get success. It develops confidence and helps to build the personality of a person.

Goals of Basic Education

There are basically four main goals of basic education of a child which are listed below.

Read with comprehension, write effectively, and communicate successfully in a variety of ways and settings and with a variety of audiences.

Know and apply the core concepts

and principles of mathematics; social, physical, and life sciences; civics and history, including different cultures and participation in representative government; geography; arts; and health and fitness.

Think analytically, logically, and creatively and to integrate technology literacy and fluency as well as different experiences and knowledge to form reasoned judgments and solve problems.

Understand the importance of work and finance and how performance, effort, and decisions directly affect future career and educational opportunities.

Importance of Basic Education

Primary education is one of the basic needs of human. The difference that basic education can make to human life is easy to see. There are many important features of getting the basic education in childhood as discussed below.

Deprivation: The most basic issue relates to the elementary fact that illiteracy and innumeracy are forms of insecurity in themselves. Not to be able to read or write or count or communicate is a tremendous deprivation. The extreme case of insecurity is the certainty of deprivation and the absence of any chance of avoiding that fate. The first and most immediate contribution of successful basic education is a direct reduction of this basic deprivation.

Ideal Society: Education provides a platform for a decent livelihood. One can take up a job in industry or another professional service if he is educated. An educated society can help everyone to grow and develop as individuals in their respective fields. Basic education helps you become a useful member of society. Many people of lower income groups have a good lifestyle through basic education. If we want to see the world as a fair place where everyone is given equal opportunities, basic education is what we require. Education is a must if we want to do away with the existing differences between different social classes and genders. It opens a whole world of opportunities for the poor so that they may have an equal shot at well-paying jobs. Education also plays a major role in women empowerment.

Employment: The means of economy and money making have changed with basic education. It is the primary cause of rising in employment opportunities all over the world. Without education, a person can only perform lay jobs or labour jobs using his hands and legs, but with basic education, he can work using his brain. The advent of the

internet, software and other technology could perform well due to education. This makes us generate colossal income and employment opportunities. Maybe if people are not educated, these technologies would be of no use to anyone. So such vast income generation is possible due to educated humans.

Ability to Read and Write: Basic education gives the ability to a person to read and write. As most of the information is delivered in writing. This is because it is important in daily life. An individual with these abilities is an educated person. He/she able to read literature, newspapers, magazines and signboards. He/she is able to get the other people's views and experiences which result in enhancing the individual's knowledge. A person with basic knowledge of education can understand the signboards applied on roads, shopping malls, bus stands, railways stations and airports. Moreover, an individual with the basic education can do his/her daily chores like activities related to banks, shopping and money transactions by his/her own, otherwise, a person with no basic knowledge will be dependant on others just to do his daily chores.

Communication Etiquette: With basic education, a person can communicate in a sensible way. Basic education teaches communication etiquettes like the sense of speech, use of proper gestures and good body language. A person having least required education has a good way to speak and also own other communication etiquettes. The body language of that person reflects confidence due to education. It will be difficult for the person to compose an email, write a letter or even understand the features of a smartphone without basic education. Also, if an individual goes abroad, he can easily survive thereby learning the local language. He will learn the local language easily from the books available in markets for learning that language. With this, you are able to communicate in a proper language with the correct usage of grammar, prepositions, pronunciation, etc.

Express Views and Opinions: Basic education gives the ability to a person to express his own opinions in a well-mannered way. He is able to communicate with the mass audience by writing his views in newspaper articles, writing letters and by making videotapes. Most of the famous poets, authors are not so much educated but they got fame due to their ability to influence

people. Though it is true that this ability influencing people is by birth but basic education nourishes their skill. One can even communicate professional and personal issues in written form. They can do by email, letters, books, etc. Many people write novels, poems, stories due to their education.

Better Social Harmony: The basic education is a way by which people of different cultures, religions; sects come together during schooling, college, etc. Thus it helps them understand each other better and stay in mutual harmony. Therefore education can improve social harmony. Education can guarantee a better lifestyle.

Difference Between Educated and Uneducated Person

There is a huge difference between the educated and uneducated person. Following are some of the aspects in which both are different from each other.

Confidence: An uneducated person has low confidence in social affairs because of lack of proper education. This disability will keep one low in confidence in public affairs whereas the educated person has a high level of self-confidence just because of basic education.

Respect: Usually, an uneducated is less respected by society. We generally notice this thing that people without basic education are less respected than those with proper education.

Ease of Life: An illiterate person depends on the others to read a signboard or write a bank pay slips etc. on the other hand the literate person does not depend on anyone and will be self-reliant on most of the issues.

Learning: An Uneducated person can gain knowledge of things happening around only by hearing from the others on the flip side the educated person gains knowledge of happenings by even reading books, magazines etc.

Growth in Life: For an uneducated human it is very difficult to occupy higher positions in society whereas there are many chances for the person with a basic education can occupy the higher position in society proper if proper effort is taken.

Hence, these are some of the important aspects of basic education which makes it essential in modern life. If a person does not have a basic education, he will face different sort of problems in his entire lifespan. Basic education is not just an arrangement for training to develop skills; it is also recognition of the nature of the world, with its diversity and richness, and an appreciation of the importance of freedom and reasoning.

Entertainment

Richard Madden on liking complex characters: It is what I live for and love



Hollywood star Richard Madden says there is a "thing going on" with him when it comes to choosing emotionally complex characters and while it may turn out to be mentally taxing, it's the challenge he lives for as an actor. The Scottish star, who attained global fame with his role of Robb Stark in blockbuster series 'Game of Thrones', has explored themes like Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and anxiety through his roles in 'Bodyguard' and movie 'Ibiza', respectively. In his upcoming series 'Citadel' and 'Killer Heat', the actor deals with the concept of duality. Does he have an inclination towards such characters? "This is true I suppose," Madden said.

"In 'Citadel', it is the first time that I'm playing two characters within the same piece. Two human beings in one body, essentially. And that's what really drew me to this whole concept. The idea of what character traits exist in you because of genetics or because of how you're born, and what are learned based on your life experiences or childhood trauma that make you be the man you are today and inform your decisions," the actor told PTI in an interview here.

"Finding those nuances, similarities and those parallels... As an actor, I got the opportunity to play opposite versions of the same person... It is taxing, but it's what I live for and I love it. With these characters, I suppose the extremes balance each other out, so I get to play both versions. PTI



Priyanka Chopra and Nick Jonas exude major couple goals on social media

Global icon Priyanka Chopra and American singer Nick Jonas are one of the most loved celebrity couples. The duo never fails to shower love on each other on social media and their recent post is a perfect example of that.

In the early hours of Friday, Nick took to his Instagram account and dropped an adorable video from their recent vacation which he captioned, "Rome."

In the video, the couple could be seen walking and kissing on the streets of Rome, Italy and having ice-cream together. Nick donned a pink shirt while the 'Don' actor wore a black jacket over a green dress.

Soon after he dropped the video, fans flooded the comment section with red heart and fire emoticons. "ideal relationship, very sweet," a fan wrote. Another fan commented, "my favorite couple in the world." "OMG Coupleee goalsss," a fan wrote. "You guys are adorable," a fan commented. Priyanka and Nick Jonas got married in a Christian and a Hindu ceremony in Jodhpur's Umaid Bhawan Palace on December 1 and 2 in 2018. Later, the couple also hosted two receptions in Delhi and Mumbai.

In January 2022, the two announced that they welcomed daughter Malti Marie via surrogacy. ANI

Cannes Film Festival has finally released the names of the Jury members and president for the short film section. The festival has picked top filmmakers-directors in order to judge the world-class short films and pick the best for the Short Film Palme d'Or and the 3 La Cinef prizes for student films in the Official Selection. According to Deadline, a US-based media house, Hungarian director and screenwriter Ildiko Enyedi has been selected as president of the Cannes Film Festival jury. She is known for movies like 'The Story of my wife' and 'Magic Hunter'.

The jury consists of Iranian-American screenwriter and director Ana Lily Amirpour, Canadian actress and director Charlotte Le Bon, French actress Karidja Toure and Israeli filmmaker Shlomi Elkabetz. The jury has some of the finest names from the industry which ensure unbiased and deserving wins for the movies.

Enyedi debuted in Cannes in 1989 when her first film My 20th Century was selected for Un Certain Regard and won the Camera d'Or. President felt happy as well as nostalgic for her achievement as she said, "Being chosen meant to be understood, to be seen for real, as if this huge, colourful and flamboyant community of brilliant artists and film professionals opened their arms to me, the total beginner, inviting me among them, extending trust where there was just a promise. Till this day I remember every moment of the time spent in Cannes." ANI

Cannes Film Festival releases names of Jury members for short film category

