



SC to hear Sharad Pawar faction's plea seeking directives for action

PG 04 >>



Afternoon VOICE

IEWS & VISION OF CITY

Volume: 16, Issue: 51

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2023 MUMBAI

08 PAGES, ₹ 2/-

RNI No. MAHENG/2009/29332

www.afternoonvoice.com



Aaditya Thackeray confident of INDIA alliance prospects.....

Page 04



Omar Abdullah on NC-Cong alliance's victory.....

Page 05



Hamas attack on Israel: Presidential candidate...

Page 06



Janhvi Kapoor spotted with rumoured boyfriend.....

Page 08

Balasaheb Thorat slams Maha Government over bad roads and potholes



The current triple engine government has made the situation of Maharashtra very miserable. All the major roads in the state are riddled with potholes, making driving and commuting life-threatening. Congress Legislature Party leader Balasaheb Thorat raised an angry question that every pothole on the road testifies to the incompetence of the Mahayuti Government.

Senior leader Balasaheb Thorat had come to Nashik on the occasion of North Maharashtra Divisional Review Meeting, on this occasion he interacted with the journalists. Thorat said, the condition of Nashik Mumbai highway is bad. A jour-

ney of two and a half hours takes four to four and a half hour. One has to wait for an hour at one place. In Bhiwandi, it has become difficult to find out which is the road and which are the potholes. Traffic congestion in Bhiwandi is becoming life threatening. No one is ready to say a word about the stones on this highway, but the toll collection is going on without a hitch. This is the situation of most of the highways in the state. Dissatisfaction is increasing in the public mind.

Thorat said, Congress raised its voice on the traffic jams and potholes on the Nashik-Mumbai highway during the ses-

session, we had also explained the seriousness of this issue to the Chief Minister, but instead of improving the traffic jam, it has increased.

Bala Saheb Thorat said "Every crisis reminds us of the incompetence of the government. Every bump the common man gets while driving through potholes on the Nashik Mumbai Road is a reminder of the incompetence of the triple engine government. A lot of tolls are levied, but there is no simple repair of the roads, the government is not ready to find a way out of the traffic jam. The question is what should Rai Thackerav

take regarding toll, but there is a huge outcry among the people and the Congress is with this outcry of the people. The position of Congress is clear in the matter of road potholes. We raised this question repeatedly in the assembly. As there is no alternative from the government, there is a lot of anger in the minds of the people due to huge tolls and huge potholes. Many people opt for trains to reach Mumbai. I request many ruling MLAs to try traveling on this road by train instead of train, so that you too will bring the pathetic condition of this road to the attention of the Chief Minister."

Achievers of the grand award event

Editoritis



Dr. Vaidehi

Same year, Sandeep Marwah, Laxmi Narayan Tripathy, Vicky Ratnani, Shri Jitendra Joshi, Ms Mrinal Kulkarni, Suresh Menon, Sangeeta Ghosh, Ruslan Mumtaz, Swami Tejomayananda of Chinmaya Mission, Shri Laxminarayan (IPS Bangalore) Shri Raghavendra Auradhkar(IPS Bangalore), Shri Ramdas Athawale, Sudarshan New Channel (Suresh Chavan K), Shri Prem Shukla then the editor of Dopahar ka Samana and now BJP leader received the award.

In 2015, Rohit Verma, Neeti Mohan singer, Neeraj Kabi actor, Sai Tamhankar, Vira Sathidar, Shruti Karlekar, Pradeep Pandey, Dayaprakash Sinha, Shailesh Gandhi, Dalip Tahil, Advocate Deepak Nikam received awards.

In 2016, Lily Patel, Adriane Anna Bredemeyer, Padmasree Kanak Rele,

Shiv Sena Leader Arvind Sawant, Journalists like Dharmendra Jore (Mid-Day), Nilesh Khare Zee Marathi, Milind Limaye of Door Darshan, actor Shishir Sharma, Sudha Chandran, Neeta Lulla, Vaibhav Tatwawadi, Smita Tambe and RJ Malishka took the award.

Padmabhushan Kanak Rele, was an Indian dancer, choreographer, and academic best known as an exponent of Mohiniyattam. She was the founder-director of the Nalanda Dance Research Centre and the founder-principal of the Nalanda Nritya Kala Mahavidyalaya in Mumbai. At the age of 80, she was most beautiful and sorted person. After this award event she became our staunch supporter. She made lot of contribution to this award journey; we miss her a lot. She will be our hearts forever.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 02

Editoritis

Achievers of the grand award event

▶▶▶ PAGE 1

2017, Kathak legend and Padma Vibhushan Pandit Birju Maharaj received the award. After receiving award, he said "perhaps this is one of the unique award events I have never witnessed so far.

In 2018 Bappi Lahiri, Kailash Kher, Marathi actor Swapnil Joshi, Rohit Roy, Rajesh Shringarpure, Bhagyashree Mote, Makrand Deshpande, Rajeev Nigam and Bharti Singh comedian received the award.

2019 Newsmakers Achievers Award was unique experience, Smt Asha Bhosle, Pandit Ajay Pohankar, Smt Moushumi Chatterjee were the awardees. There's no one as compared to Asha Bhosle on this planet.

2017, Kathak legend and Padma Vibhushan Pandit Birju Maharaj received the award. After receiving award, he said "perhaps this is one of the unique award events I have never witnessed so far. At his age he gave nice performance when audience insisted him. He sat in the program till the end, he was watching everything sitting in the audiences. Such legends are rare, and their simplicity is even rearranged of the rare.

Pradeep Welankar, is very well-known TV and Film actor and he was daily soap sensation those days. He is versatile actor and very good human. Since then, he also became our friend and guide. He and Kanak Rele ji were our favorite guests in most of our award shows

In 2018 Bappi Lahiri, Kailash Kher, Marathi actor Swapnil Joshi, Rohit Roy, Rajesh Shringarpure, Bhagyashree Mote, Makrand Deshpande, Rajeev Nigam and Bharti Singh comedian received the award.

My memories of Bappida are truly of the warmest one. What a legend and what an amazing human. I think most successful people are more grounded. Whenever I met him, he was always smiling, in a musical mind frame and melody world. Music resonated in his heart and soul. He would hum out his new tunes and discuss various songs he wanted to create and play out their variations. I enjoyed and learned more about music in every moment of our conversations. There was this particular incident which I wish to share with you all. I was touring in Russia and was visiting various tourist points of the city in a minus temperature. When we exited one of the heritage buildings, the outside temperature had dropped and it started snowing very heavily. We all had to take refuge in a bus stop till our vehicle could reach us in the snowfall. There were many other local Russian people at that bus stop and soon we all got chatting with them in some broken English plus sign language. Realizing that we were from India, some of them mentioned how much they enjoyed Indian Bollywood music, especially by Bappi Lahiri and they particularly danced to a famous song called "Jimmy Jimmy, aaja aaja". On further conversation I realized that they all truly an ardent fan of Bappida. To surprise the Russians, I asked them have you seen Bappi Da the singer of "Jimmy Jimmy, aaja aaja". They said "we just saw him on TV", I further asked them "do you want to see him live right now"? They thought I am joking, some of his die heart friends were still hoping that I am asking genuine question.

I made an attempt to call Bappi Da it was in India night 11 pm. My luck that he answered my call. I told him that I am in Russia alongside some local Russians who loved his music and songs, thus it would be great if he could say a few words to them. It was video call, the people there couldn't believe their luck and quickly huddled around the phone. Without any hesitation, Bappi da in his trademark accent and voice thanked them for their love. He gave his warm regards to everyone there and then actually sang a few lines of their favorite "Jimmy" song. The crowd was delighted beyond words and clapped joyfully. It was an unexpected gift for them and a moment of absolute happiness. A freezing cold day actually became full of warmth and joy as boundaries got dissolved by the music and human connection. That is the power of music, humility of Bappi da and his everlasting love for his fans. His amazing gesture and ability to make a difference to people at the opposite side of the globe at a moment's notice... simply amazing! For me it was a lovely moment to witness and a memory of a lifetime.

Kailash Kher is over laced with his fame and stardom and that is the reason he could never be a normal person for normal people. But still, we acknowledge his talents and versatile singing. Makrand Deshpande is very lovely human and very brilliant actor, writer, and director in Hindi, Kannada, Marathi, Telugu, Malayalam, Tamil cinema, and Indian Theatre. The best part of his nature is his human side. His stardom never over controlled his social side. He became my friend, most of our endeavors he gave his presence. Not only that but he balanced us in every act. He is God sent person for us. Whenever we need his presence, he is unconditionally there by us. He even anchored Newsmakers Achievers Award, last year and many believed that it was the best event in the history. He has that charisma.

I must mention Swapnil Joshi, he is considered to be a most sorted actor. He has huge female following, his prominence is huge in Marathi cinema. But in spite of all this you can see his unpretentious side. He has aptitude to receive people, make them feel ease. He is just like any other commoner when he is at home or around friends. Such people are very rare to find these days.

2019 Newsmakers Achievers Award was unique experience, Smt Asha Bhosle, Pandit Ajay Pohankar, Smt Moushumi Chatterjee were the awardees. There's no one as compared to Asha Bhosle on this planet. The versatility in her voice is unparalleled. This talented singer can sing a ghazal and a peppy Bollywood number with amazing levels of ease, energy, and style. She is an effortless singer. This country would always be thankful to have such legends and talents. She deserves much more in life. In her 80s she was fresh, cheerful and also humble. When she the event was like a gathering of stars on the earth. She sang beautiful songs, she allowed everyone to take a picture with her, she addressed the media and left gracefully. Her son Anand, who was coordinating with me was equally good soul. Those who know the value of achieving success always remain humble.

2021, Newsmakers Achievers Award was unique, because post pandemic when things were normalizing, we decided to resume the 1st May award event. During the covid outbreak, situation had been tough and sustaining those trying times had been very challenging for us financially too as a media house. Still, we decided to work it out and concluded our guest list. I decided to approach The Honorable Governor of Maharashtra, Shri Bhagat Singh Koshiyari to invite him as Chief Guest for the Event. I met him with our invitation and awardees list. As he went through the dignitaries on the list, he looked at me with an amused expression and jokingly asked me, "Will all these mentioned awardees actually attend the event?" I told him that they have given their consent and their presence is assured. He agreed to grace the event, but on one condition only that he will present the first few awards and then carry on. We were allowed do the event in Governor house.

Volume No. 16 | Issue No. 51



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.

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

www.afternoonvoice.com
www.beyondthenews.biz
www.mumbaimanoos.com
www.newsmakers.co.in
www.nbcaward.com
www.hackers5.com

Email- afternoonvoicedesk@gmail.com • SMS -9820199881

For any queries regarding the editorial desk, contact - 7506760610

Disclaimer : The views expressed in the edit are solely of the editor. The publication do not necessarily share the opinions expressed. Any litigation against the content or publication will be entertained under the Jurisdiction of Mumbai only.

Voices



Better Environmental Sanitation only way to curb Dengue



- Jayanthy Subramaniam

Dengue is a most dangerous disease and number of deaths are taking place in Mumbai and suburbs. There is a sense of concern, even panic, over the outbreak of Dengue in the Metro city and in several parts of the city, more so from Pune scares people throughout the year.

From all over the state, more than 10,000 cases have been detected and treated in various government and private hospitals. Considering the cases of dengue, it happens more during monsoon season but of late it continues even after the rains. This shows system failure and ring alarm bells and have not been heeded and that we are content to take symptomatic action, reactively, after the disaster has occurred. For a city like Mumbai health care is of utmost importance and the hospitals will have to gear up well in advance to control the menace of mosquitoes.

A team from the Central Government, Ministry of Health will have to visit the city and suburbs to find an amicable solution to the permanent problem facing Mumbai. It is the duty of the Ministry to assess the epidemic form of dengue spreading across the length and breadth of the state and provide assistance and the ways and means to address this health hazard in a most medical way. The health support is the need of the hour to curb the menace. Thus, everything has run according to script. But when it all subsides, we will go back to doing nothing to avert recurrence and have a lasting effect. Funds are sectioned to prevent dengue but the ultimate aim to eradicate the disease but results are not forthcoming.

Dengue fever is a disease caused by a family of viruses that are transmitted by mosquitoes. The virus is contracted from the bite of a striped mosquito that has previously bitten an infected person. The mosquito flourished during rainy seasons, breeding in water-filled flower pots, plastic bags, and containers. Poor sanitation at the household level and inadequate capacity of the public sanitation system provide ideal conditions for the vector to thrive.

The dengue-carrying mosquito breeds in stagnant clean water, it does not breed in dirty water. Urban crowding multiplies the breeding sites manifold. When population growth outstrips an already inadequate infrastructure, sanitation facilities are unable to cope with the increased population. Widespread neglect of elementary sanitation practices, by the educated and illiterate alike, contributes to open water storage, water puddling and collection of rubbish, like used tyres, old vehicles and plastics, creating a perfect environment for disease-causing mosquitoes to breed in.

The problem with dengue is both prevention and cure are fraught with difficulties. Prevention is currently limited to vector control measures, and there being no effective vaccines. These examples show that government action can be effective and give lasting protection only if its diagnostic, prevention, addressing the problems, aimed at absolute cleanliness and rising institutional efficiency. Observance of safe sanitation practices is the ultimate solution and it is the duty of responsible citizens in the interests of their own health and that of others.

Letters to the Editor

There should be age limit for people driving vehicles!

Allowing elderly senior citizens to drive vehicles can be extremely dangerous & the incident near CST station where 4 teenagers were knocked down by an 80-year-old man should act as an eye opener. It is sad that 3 teenagers were critically injured & battling for their lives in ICU. Our vital organs that assist us in hearing, eyesight lose their strength apart from erratic heartbeats that can be a hindrance while driving.

People over 75-years of age should not be allowed to drive & driving licenses should automatically expire when a person attains that age. Every life is important & safe driving should be the mantra for road safety. Elderly citizens should either use cabs or hire chauffeurs for not just their own safety but for those on roads as well!

S.N.Kabra

China's racist remarks against made in India iPhone

"India is facing misinformation and a racist campaign on China's social media due to the production of iPhones. It is being falsely claimed that India-made iPhone 15s are being rejected in China, accompanied by racial jokes. Chinese media reports suggest that the rejected iPhones are being sent to China after being rejected in Europe due to quality and sanitary standards. Until two years ago, 95% of iPhones were manufactured in China, with only 2% in India. However, this number has now reduced to 84%. Currently, around 16% of iPhone 15s are manufactured in India, and Apple plans to increase this to 25% within the next two years. The rise of India may be the reason behind the social media posts in China. Some analysts even speculate that the Chinese Spy agency MSS may be involved, aiming to show corporations that moving their manufacturing base from China would result in losing the lucrative Chinese market."

Md Mofidul Ali

Hamas attacks on Israel

Hamas's attack on Israel caused a sudden uproar in the world. All major and powerful

countries have pledged their support to Israel. While the fact is that Palestine has been oppressed by Israeli atrocities for decades. Millions of Palestinians were martyred while fighting for freedom. Many Palestinians are dying daily due to the brutality of the Israelis, but the big leaders of the world keep watching the atrocities. This is a reference to "Might is Right". More Palestinians than Israelis have died in recent attacks, but they don't care. Therefore, all organizations and countries should realistically play their pivotal role in liberating Palestine from the oppression and brutality of Israel.

Tauqueer Rahmani

India in the Holy Bible

The name "India" has been mentioned in the Old Testament in the Book of Esther of the Holy Bible (Chapter 1, verse 1). It was not given to us by the British government -- "These events happened in the days of King Xerxes, who reigned over 127 provinces stretching from India to Ethiopia...". This book was written 20,000 years before Jesus Christ was born. What has the Modi government to say about this?

Jubel D'Cruz

Hospital deaths

How are patients being treated in Maharashtra government hospitals? Deaths in government hospitals are increasing. In the month of August, 18 patients died in a single night at Kalwa Hospital in Thane district. Still, the administration did not learn any lesson from the episode. Now more than 32 patients died in Nanded government hospital in 24 hours, while 18 patients died in Sambhaji Nagar government hospitals in 24 hours. Most of the deaths are newborn babies in these two hospitals.

Patients come to the hospital to recover but die due to the negligence of the administration and the laziness of the government. The primary cause of this is a lack of doctors, nurses and crucial X-ray equipment, and medicines in government hospitals.

Jahangir Ali

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)

On their first night away from home, a look into Mumbai building fire survivors' temporary accommodation



After finishing her lunch of pulao and bananas, Kaushalya Kamble rummaged through a small bag to take out a newly bought packet of soap.

Kamble's family is one of the three families who spent Friday night at the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC)-run school in Goregaon's Unnat Nagar after a blaze engulfed their building on Friday.

Seven people, including two minors, were killed and 69 others were injured after a major fire ripped through their seven-storey Jay Bhavani residential building, a Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA) structure, in Mumbai's Goregaon West.

To wash off this marker of the tragedy, the family has bought two packets of soap and coconut oil, which they will use to scrub

off the soot.

Pointing towards her soot-covered palms and feet, Kamble said, "Since the time the fire broke out, we have not taken a bath or even cleaned ourselves properly. While this BMC school has put a roof over our heads and we are provided with food, there is no bathroom facility here. There are washbasins but there is not even a bucket which we can fill up to wash ourselves. Even now, my body is covered in soot and dirt."

On Friday, Rajesh Akre, Assistant Municipal Commissioner, had told The Indian Express the residents of the building were being rehabilitated in the municipal school for the time being. The BMC is also offering food to all survivors who are knocking on the school's door.

Responding to questions, Akre said, "Even though some may choose to not stay at the school, the facility is open to all survivors who come here".

Aaditya Thackeray confident of INDIA alliance prospects in upcoming assembly polls in 5 states



Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Aaditya Thackeray on Monday expressed confidence that the people of five states, where the assembly polls are scheduled next month, will vote for peace, prosperity and progress assured by the INDIA alliance.

The INDIA alliance is a coalition of opposition parties that seek to take on the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led National Democratic Alliance in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana and Mizoram will go to polls on different days from November 7-30 and votes will be counted for the five states on December 3, the Election Commission said on Monday, setting the stage for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

Nearly 16 crore voters would be eligible to cast their votes in these elections, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar said at a press conference in New Delhi. PTI

ECI must realise NCP founder is still around, says Raut mocking claims of Ajit Pawar, Praful Patel on party

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut on Monday said the Election Commission of India (ECI) should realise breakaway leaders Ajit Pawar and Praful Patel are claiming to represent the real Nationalist Congress Party when the party's founder Sharad Pawar is still around and had even attended a hearing at the apex poll body in connection

with the split. The Bharatiya Janata Party has started the trend of breaking political parties and families, which was dangerous for democracy, Raut, a Rajya Sabha MP, told reporters. "Even if the BJP engineers splits in parties, the ideology remains with the original party. People laugh when one says Eknath Shinde's Shiv Sena or Ajit Pawar's NCP," he asserted.

SC to hear Sharad Pawar faction's plea seeking directives for action against rebel NCP MLAs on Oct 13

The Supreme Court will hear on October 13 a plea by Jayant Patil of the Nationalist Congress Party faction headed by Sharad Pawar challenging the alleged delay by Maharashtra Assembly Speaker Rahul Narwekar in deciding petitions seeking disqualification of rival faction MLAs led by Ajit Pawar. Issuing notice on the plea, a three-judge bench presided by CJI D Y Chandrachud decided to tag it with similar pending petitions by the Shiv Sena's Uddhav Thackeray faction seeking disqualification of rebel MLAs of the Sena fac-



tion by CM Eknath Shinde.

Meanwhile, Opposition Shiv Sena (UBT) and Congress on Sunday said the Maharashtra cabinet should resign based on the "confession" by state health minister Tanaji Sawant on the responsibility regarding the death

of patients at two state-run hospitals, news agency PTI reported. The Congress also demanded a white paper on the public health system in the state to identify the cause of deaths at government hospitals in Nanded and Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar.

Banner Politics

Breakaway factions of Sena and NCP are indulging in banner politics with a new 'edge'. While CM Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena's Ramdas Kadam has displayed photographs of BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis on the banners, NCP's Ajit Pawar group replaced Sharad Pawar with his political guru Yashwantrao Chavan on their banners as Sharad Pawar had barred the Ajit Pawar faction from using his photographs. Kadam and his son have been at odds



with local Shiv Sena workers for months now and putting Fadnavis's pictures on the banners has raised eyebrows among many in Shiv Sena. The move has sparked speculations that Kadam wants to join BJP ahead of Lok Sabha elections since he wants to contest Lok Sabha polls.

With Ajit Pawar as finance minister, squeezed budget for NCP MLAs

While many NCP MLAs who have chosen to hedge their bets with Sharad Pawar camp are being squeezed in budget allocation, one MLA who claims to be the supporter of Sharad Pawar has received highest amount of fund in last three months. With Ajit Pawar

as Finance Minister at the helm of the state's purse strings, the six MLAs from Sharad Pawar group have received absolutely no funds since the split in the party. While many NCP MLAs who have chosen to hedge their bets with Sharad Pawar camp are being squeezed in budget allocation, one MLA who

claims to be the supporter of Sharad Pawar and is being praised by his camp frequently has received highest amount of fund in last three months. It is being whispered that the said MLA has made up his mind to jump ship and will announce his move after the proposed cabinet expansion announcement.

Nation

Omar Abdullah on NC-Cong alliance's victory in LAHDC-Kargil polls



Janata Party (BJP) has won two seats. The Jammu and Kashmir administration nominates four members with voting rights to the 30-member LAHDC-Kargil.

Abdullah asserted that the poll outcome in Kargil has sent out a message against the division of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir, without consulting the people of the region. "The BJP was dealt a resounding defeat at the hands of the NC-Congress alliance in Kargil today. In celebration of our strong alliance with the Congress party, the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference is delighted to announce its victory in the LAHDC-Kargil elections," Abdullah said in a statement here.

National Conference (NC) leader Omar Abdullah on Sunday said the BJP has been dealt a resounding defeat in the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council-Kargil elections and that it should serve as a wake-up call for the

saffron party. The NC and the Congress have together won 21 seats so far. The counting of votes is still underway. Of the 26 seats for which the elections were held on October 4, the results of 25 have so far been declared. The Bharatiya

Minister Gopal Rai directs officials to take strict actions against construction firms for violating anti-dust norms

Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai on Monday directed officials to take strict action against construction agencies found violating anti-dust norms at Sarai Kale Khan here. As part of the Delhi government's anti-dust campaign, Rai inspected several construction sites in the area and found they did not have a working anti-smog gun, water sprinklers and tin sheds to prevent dust pollution. The minister directed the Delhi Pollution Control Committee to issue notice to the project proponents concerned. He said a penalty will be imposed on the violators if they fail to submit a satisfactory reply within 24 hours.

Rai Saturday launched a

month-long drive to prevent dust pollution in the capital and said strict action will be taken against anyone found violating relevant norms. The Centre's air quality panel on Friday directed authorities in the National Capital Region to enforce a ban on coal usage in hotels and restaurants, and to take punitive measures against polluting industries and thermal power plants as the air quality in Delhi plunged into the 'poor' category. This action comes as part of the central government's pollution control plan known as the 'Graded Response Action Plan' (GRAP) which is implemented in Delhi-NCR to combat air pollution during the winter season. PTI

Israel attack incident: Kerala-based women working in Israel was injured

A Kerala-based woman working as a caregiver in Israel was injured in the unprecedented multi-front attack by militant outfit Hamas on that country since Saturday. Sheeja Anand, a native of Payyavoor in Kannur district of Kerala, was injured in the missile strikes on

Ashkelon, a coastal city in the southern part of Israel on Saturday, while she was on a video call with her husband, her family said. The Indian mission reached out to her for support and has been in touch with her family in the Kannur district of Kerala. PTI

Polls, caste census likely on Congress Working Committee meeting agenda

The Congress Working Committee (CWC), the party's top decision-making body, will meet in New Delhi today as the Assembly elections in five states draw closer and the discourse around the caste census heats up.

The CWC is expected to discuss its strategy in the poll-bound states of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, and Mizoram. Unlike its primary rivals in these states, the Congress has yet to announce its candidates. In states such as Madhya Pradesh and Telangana, where it is not in power, the party has announced a slew of promises, including freebies ranging from electricity to public transport.

Caste census is also expected to be a point of discussion at the meeting. Since the women's reservation Bill was passed in Parliament in September and Bihar

released its caste survey numbers last week, the party has sharpened its demand for the inclusion of women from Other Backward Classes (OBC) in reservation for women and a nationwide exercise to count the number of castes so that social welfare policies can be designed to help those categorised as backward.

The party, especially Congress MP Rahul Gandhi, has been vocal in its pitch for "jitni aabadi, utna haq (rights proportionate to population)", with the caste census becoming an increasingly important issue ahead of the Lok Sabha elections. Gandhi said last month that the INDIA bloc would initiate a caste census if voted to power next year and demanded that the BJP government release the data of the 2011 Socioeconomic Caste Census conducted by the then United Progressive Alliance government.

Centre informs SC that the appointment of Chief Justice of Manipur will be notified soon

The Centre on Monday informed the Supreme Court that the appointment of the Chief Justice of Manipur High Court will be notified soon. Attorney General R Venkatramani, appearing for Centre, apprised the bench of justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and Sudhanshu Dhulia about the development. He submitted that the file of the appointment of Chief Justice of a High Court has been cleared, and notification will be issued shortly.

The appointment of the Chief

Justice of the High Court of Manipur, a sensitive state, was pending for a considerable time. In July, the Supreme Court collegium proposed the name of Delhi High Court judge, Justice Justice Siddharth Mridul, for appointment as Chief Justice of the Manipur High Court. The top court clarified that it should be done by the next date of hearing and listed the matter relating to judicial appointment for October 20 for further hearing.

The court also said that processes in view of judgments deal-

ing with the mode of appointment and time period should be followed by the government and such things should not require any monitoring by this court. The court also noted that positive development in the large no of recommendations from high courts is pending with the ministry, which has been forwarded to the SC collegium. Collegium requires consultee judges' opinions to be taken and processing to be done, which is underway and will be done at the earliest, the court said. ANI

Metro's Purple line complete, ops on 2 sections between Krishnarajapura to Baiyappanahalli to begin on Monday

Passenger services will begin on the two sections between Krishnarajapura to Baiyappanahalli, a distance of 2.10 km with one station in between at Benniganahalli, and the other beyond Kengeri to Challaaghatta a distance of 2.05 km with effect from Monday, the BMRCL has said. With the opening of these two vital sections, the complete East West corridor, the Purple Line from Whitefield (Kadugodi) to Challaaghatta will be complete with a total length of



43.49 km and 37 metro stations, according to the statement.

Meanwhile, a massive fire-cracker mishap at Balaji Crackers shop charred 14 workers to death while three sustained burn

injuries on Saturday. Following this fire mishap on the outskirts of Bengaluru near the Karnataka-Tamil Nadu border Saturday, several shops in both the southern states along the Bengaluru-Chennai National Highway near the intra-state border remained closed Sunday. Reacting to the tragedy, Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar said the government will form a new policy and guidelines to prevent such cracker mishaps.

World

Hamas attack on Israel: Presidential candidate Nikki Haley slams Secretary of State Antony Blinken, calls it "irresponsible"

Republican presidential candidate Nikki Haley has slammed Secretary of State Antony Blinken, labeling his comments as "irresponsible." This follows Blinken's statement asserting there was no connection between the recent Hamas terrorist attack on Israel and the release of USD 6 billion in frozen funds to Iran as part of a prisoner swap deal, Fox News reported. Haley, the former governor of South Carolina and former US ambassador to the United Nations shared her views during an appearance on NBC's "Meet the Press." She responded to Blinken's earlier remarks, where he suggested that the USD 6 billion could not have contributed to terrorism and mentioned that the US had not seen evidence of



Iran's support for the attack.

Haley criticised Blinken's statement, saying, "I actually think it was irresponsible for Secretary Blinken to say that the USD 6 billion doesn't weigh in here. I mean, let's be honest with the American people and understand that Hamas knows and Iran knows they're moving



money around as we speak because they know USD 6 billion is going to be released. That's the reality," according to Fox News, an American multinational news and political website.

Blinken had previously responded to Republican criticisms of the deal made by Joe Biden's administration with Iran, which

involved unfreezing USD 6 billion in funds in exchange for five US prisoners held in Iran. Blinken emphasised that the funds from that account could only be used for specific purposes like medical supplies, food, and medicine. "It's very unfortunate that some are playing politics at a time when so many lives have been lost and Israel remains under attack," Blinken said. Haley argued that it was naive to assume the funds couldn't be repurposed for other uses. She said, "To think that they're not moving money around is irresponsible. They hate Israel. They hate America. They are going to continue to use this. It was wrong to release the USD 6 billion." The recent Hamas attacks have resulted in the deaths of at least 600 Israelis

and the injury of over 2,000 others, as Israel and Hamas fighters continue to engage in conflict, as reported by Fox News.

Haley also criticised the Biden administration's foreign policy in the Middle East, particularly citing the withdrawal from Afghanistan and the waiver of sanctions on Iran, which provided Iran with additional funds. She asserted that when Iran receives money, they utilise it for hostile purposes. "It was wrong to go and have that debacle in Afghanistan," she continued. "It was wrong to waive sanctions on Iran that gave them even more money. Money has been flowing to Iran, and that is the problem because when Iran gets money, they use it for hate," Haley said, Fox News reported. ANI

Myanmar: Southern area faces heavy flooding affects more than 10,000 people



Flooding triggered by heavy monsoon rains in Myanmar's southern areas has displaced more than 10,000 people and disrupted traffic on the rail lines that connect the country's biggest cities, officials and state-run media said Monday. A senior official at the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Lay Shwe Zin Oo, said constant rainfall in the Bago region that began last week caused flooding in the low-lying areas of its capital, Bago township. She said there were no casualties reported so far, but that more than 10,000 people had to abandon their homes.

Bago township recorded 7.87 inches (200 millimeters) of rainfall, its highest level in 59 years, Myanmar's Meteorological Department said Sunday. Rain or thundershowers was forecast for

across the country until Monday evening. One of the leaders of an emergency rescue team in Bago told The Associated Press that the flooding was at least 7-8 feet (2.44 meters) deep in low-lying areas and 3-4 feet downtown. Almost the whole area of the town was flooded, That Zin Maung, chairman of the Mizzima Thukha Charity Foundation said by phone on Monday. It is the third flood in the town this year and the worst in many years. All the monasteries in the town have opened relief camps.

Charity organizations are evacuating people from low-lying areas as much as they can. A 55-year-old resident of Bago's Pan Hlaing ward interviewed by phone said the flood waters were about 5-6 feet deep in her neighborhood, and her family members were living on the second and third floors of their house.

The woman, who spoke on condition of anonymity because Myanmar's military government prefers to tightly control the release of information, said the water was still rising steadily in her neighborhood, which had never flooded badly before. Social Welfare Ministry official Lay Shwe Zin Oo said people were sheltering in 32 relief camps, schools and Buddhist monasteries in Bago, while the authorities were providing food, drinking water and other essential assistance.

Reports in the state-run Myanmar Alinn newspaper on Monday said trains that departed from Mandalay, the country's second-largest city in central Myanmar, and from southern Mawlamyine township were halted en route. Scheduled departures from Yangon, the biggest city in the country, were canceled after rail lines were flooded by the rapid flow of water from mountain torrents and the spillage from dams in the Bago region. Myanmar Alinn also said some neighbourhoods in Kyaikto township in southern Mon state were flooded by water from mountain torrents, and 555 people there were taking shelters in three relief camps on Sunday. PTI

US: Largest hindu temple inaugurated in New Jersey



BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham, the largest Hindu temple in the United States spread over 185 acres, has been inaugurated here, with devotees underscoring the temple's message of unity, peace and harmony for people living across America and the world. The grand dedication ceremony of Akshardham in Robbinsville, New Jersey was conducted on Sunday in the presence of Mahant Swami Maharaj following a nine-day celebration that commenced on September 30.

Swami Maharaj performed the 'Pran Prathista' ceremony at the temple amid rituals and traditional ceremonies. The construction of

the temple, dedicated to Bhagwan Swaminarayan, started in 2011 and concluded this year. It was created by 12,500 volunteers from around the world. Among the several key unique features of the temple is the largest elliptical dome ever constructed from stone. Volunteer Lenin Joshi noted that Swaminarayan Akshardham presents India's heritage and culture to modern America.

Created by volunteers around the world, this masterpiece stands as an enduring symbol of love while preserving traditions and spreading messages of peace, hope, and harmony across generations, he said. PTI

Expression

Why do we need tests and grades?



Vijay Garg

Retired Principal Educational
Columnist Malout Punjab

Marks and rankings are the currency of education and advancement. But they are flawed and unfair assessments. Off the Mark: How Grades, Ratings, and Rankings Undermine Learning (but Don't Have To) by Jack Schneider and Ethan L Hutt, is set in the US, but analyses this global dilemma.

Why do we need tests and grades? To motivate learners, to succinctly record their abilities, communicate these to other institutions, and signal to employers. But they don't work that way: grades goad students, but not their learning. Students don't waste time on anything that won't be tested. Grading skews incentives, as students cheat or game the system. Marks also sharpen inequalities.

The strongest predictor of marks is a student's family and neighbourhood; affluent parents exert more pressure and provide more support.

Then comes the standardised test, first devised in 19th century America for a uniform diagnosis of varied student populations. Unfortunately, they have been used as snapshots of ability that become lasting portraits of inequality. The test-takers did not ask whether the content of the test measured biological intelligence or social opportunities. The standardised test became educational destiny.

But what blanket critiques of standardised tests miss is that they are not all the same. 'Norm-reference' tests, meant to place a student in a particular distribution, can identify those who are very advanced and those who need special assistance. Meanwhile, 'criterion-reference' tests are used to check if a student has reached a particular standard.

This targeted assistance for

identified weaknesses can make all the difference to students and can be a tool of educational equity. If someone is near sighted, then they are not told they have a permanent deficiency, they are prescribed glasses. It's when a result is treated as the end of the story, rather than the impetus for intervention, that there's a problem.

School is supposed to be the great equaliser of social opportunity, but it doesn't work that way. Standardised tests do take away the high-stakes pressure of school grades, but both are correlated with socioeconomic status. But then again, so are student essays, for which they often rely on their net-works. Recommendation letters can be hard to parse, a mess of adjectives and writing styles. There is no easy fix for fairness, the only way is to use nuanced judgments, knowing that these useful tools can also be weapons. The predicament of marking and testing is a wicked problem, the whole world struggles with similar frustrations. Countries experiment

with different elements and weights.

Zambia assesses students with 75% on national exams and 25% on school grades. New Zealand measures progress in secondary school through a pass-fail system, not grades, reducing both competition and gaming. At higher levels, it adds distinctions for merit and excellence, to let students compete. Singapore has recently flattened its ranking systems, after deciding it was unhealthy. Another way is to peg tests to practice: for instance, instead of multiple-choice questions for history, it makes sense to do what historians do, piece fragments from the archive to offer an interpretation of the past.

The book shows that we need to go beyond the usual either/or framing about marks and exams. We need to look at the specific uses of each tool, and within the context of broader goals. We need to recalibrate rather than reinvent

Rs 3 Lakh crore recovered from defaulters through IBC- 2019



Er. Rajesh Pathak

Columnist

Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India reports that the total cases of bankrupted and insolvent properties to have been settled through IBC code is soon to touch the figure of 300 this year. The lenders have so far recovered about 3 lakh crores; whereas, last year the amount was 51000 crores. Now the total figure of resolution of such cases has gone up by more than 80%.

Notably, the provisions of amended IBC- 2019[Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code] being made more transparent, strict and one of favourable to the creditors led the

recovery hurdle free and one yielding the result. According to the World Bank report, earlier before IBC first passed in 2016, the average time period of debt resolution in India was 4.3 years. In order to bring down the time period the branches of NCLT [National Company Law Tribunal] was increased to 15 from 10; and in them 26 more members have been inducted. National Law Colleges were approached to facilitate the training for advocates and members of the tribunals. Under the new law the cases of bankrupted companies are to be resolved within 330 days of once once writ filed.

The basic spirit behind these approaches is actually to save company from being insolvent; and concerning banks from NPA. As well as the interests of investors,

suppliers, employees and all those dependent on the company could be secured. Besides, all the care has predominantly been taken of bringing about first of all some settlement between lenders and debtors. Only in case of failure that the process of insolvency is made mandatory to be initiated. And after this if successful bidder refuses to clear the debt and other liabilities ample provisions are made to initiate criminal prosecution against him.

In 2008 America has undergone an economic recession. In his celebrated book, 'The Ascent of Money' the author, Nial Fergusson, threw the light with precision on the cause of recession. According to him it was not due to some fault that the Americans did in the process of manufacturing

of the products. Nor it was due to sudden downfall in the pace of bringing about what is called technological innovations corresponding to the need of the time. On the contrary its nearest cause was that the financial control had gone out of the hands. Actually due to increasing default in the kind of loan which is, in the words of author, beautifully called sub-prime housing loan that the credit-system fast shrunk. And out of its shock how the bank like that of Lehman Brothers' collapsed that we all know well. What achieved through IBC- 2019 is, therefore, required to be seen against the bank drop of above historic event.

Entertainment



The 'Game of Thrones' star, Sophie Turner posted a selfie of herself wearing a bracelet with the title of Taylor Swift's second studio album, 'Fearless' written on it, reported People.

The Instagram Story marks her first social media post since she and her estranged husband Joe Jonas announced their split in a joint statement on September 6. The "Fearless" friendship bracelet could be a nod to Jonas, 34, because numerous tracks on the Grammy-winning record are said to be about the artist after his brief affair with Swift, 33. According to People, in fact, Turner seemingly addressed that a vault track off Swift's first album rerecording Fearless (Taylor's Version) could be about Jonas. She shared the song "Mr. Perfectly Fine" on her Instagram Story at the time of the album's 2021 release and wrote that "it's not NOT a bop."

Swift reposted the Instagram Story on her own account and wrote in response, "Forever bending the knee to the of the north." In the midst of Turner's divorce from Jonas, the X-Men star was seen out in New York City with the pop superstar twice in one week at the end of September.

Turner was then seen dining with Swift, Blake Lively and Brittany Mahomes the night before they all attended the Kansas City Chiefs' game against the New Jets last Sunday. Around that time, a source close to the actress confirmed to People that Turner is staying in Swift's N.Y.C residence amid her ongoing custody battle with Jonas, with whom she shares daughters Willa, 3, and Delphine, 14 months. "Taylor has opened her home to Sophie," the insider shared. "Sophie is welcome there any time. Taylor continues to be a great friend." **ANI**

Star Sophie Turner posts a picture on social media with a new 'bracelet'



Janhvi Kapoor spotted with rumoured boyfriend Shikhar Pahariya at airport

Actor Janhvi Kapoor on Monday morning was snapped at the Mumbai airport along with her rumoured boyfriend Shikhar Pahariya. The duo did not pose together in front of the paps.

Janhvi was snapped in a casual outfit and opted for a no-makeup look. She was seen greeting the paps and flaunting her cute smile. Shikhar, on the other hand, donned a sky-blue shirt paired with blue jeans. He completed his look with black shades. Several pictures and videos of the rumoured couple have surfaced on social media.

Neither Janhvi nor Shikhar have confirmed or denied their relationship, however, the two have been spotted together several times. Shikhar is the grandson of former Maharashtra chief minister Sushil Kumar Shinde. He is an entrepreneur, polo player, and philanthropist. **ANI**

Greta Gerwig reveals that "She was hiding at the back" while screenings of 'Barbie' movie



American actor and writer Greta Gerwig is revealing an unexpected detail about her critically acclaimed film, 'Barbie', reported People. The 40-year-old filmmaker explained that she made the decision to do her own clandestine fieldwork during the movie's opening weekend in July by hiding in the theatre's back during showings to observe the audience's response first-hand.

"I went around to different theatres and sort of stood in the back, and would then also turn up the volume if I felt it wasn't playing at the perfect level," she recounted during a screen talk on Sunday at the BFI London Film Festival, according to The Hollywood Reporter. She said at one of those sneaky screenings, she heard a woman cracking up over a particularly zingy one-liner about the Proust Barbie. "And I was like, 'That joke was for you!'" Gerwig told the festival audience. **ANI**

Actor Shah Rukh Khan's security has been increased by govt to the Y+ category

The Maharashtra government has increased the security of Shah Rukh Khan to the Y+ category after he allegedly received death threats. According to Maharashtra police, he had given a written complaint to the state government that he had been receiving death threat calls after the films 'Pathaan' and 'Jawan'.

Earlier, SRK was provided security by two police constables, apart from this he was accompanied by his own personal security guard. Now his security has been raised to a Y+ category on the recommendations of the High Power Committee. Shah Rukh Khan will now be accompanied by a team of 6 trained commandos of the state's VIP security unit at all times. The police said that apart from the security of Shah Rukh his house will be guarded by 4 Mumbai Police personnel with weapons around the clock. Talking about the success of his films, 'Jawan' has redefined box office success, captivating audiences with its gripping storyline and stellar performances, and rewriting record books along the way. With his previous release 'Pathaan' and now 'Jawan', SRK has become the first actor to have two films grossing Rs 1000cr each in a single year. **ANI**

