



**Cyclone Michaung: Five people
have been killed in separate**

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Afternoon

VOICES

NEWS & VISION OF CITY

Volume: 16, Issue

DECEMBER 05, 2023 MUMBAI

08 PAGES, ₹ 2/-

RNI No. MAHENG/2009/29332

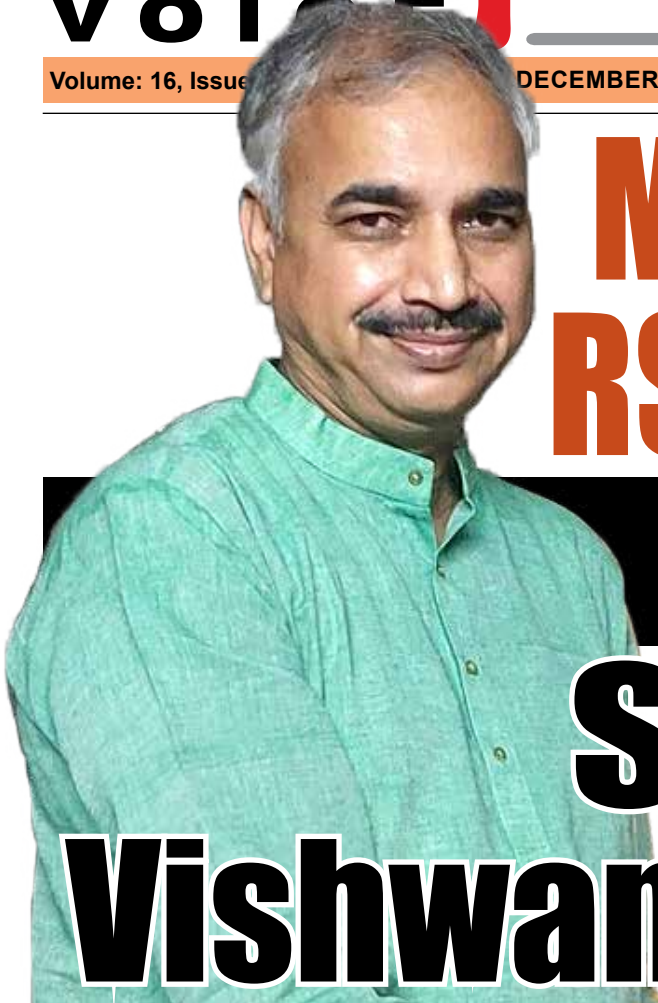
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Members of the BJP, RSS and Bajrang Dal

MANHANDLED

Social Activist

Vishwambhar Choudhari



AV Team

Social activist Vishwambhar Choudhari was invited to deliver a lecture as part of the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the Sinnar Public Library in Nashik. Speaking about the present political situation in the country, Choudhari questioned the deification of Nathuram Godse and talked about the use of DJ music during Ram Navami processions. A talk being delivered by social activist Vishwambhar Choudhari at a public library at Sinnar in Maharashtra's Nashik district was called off on Sunday after right-wing activists,

including BJP workers, heckled and manhandled him, claiming that he was criticising Hindu traditions. After Choudhari had spoken for 10 minutes, a group of people raised slogans and whisked off the mic from his hands.

Krushnaji Bhagat, chairperson of Sinnar Public Library told the media "What happened at the event was very unfortunate in the history of our town. It is just growing dictatorial tendencies in the state. It is shameful that BJP activists did not allow Choudhari to air his views. Moreover, we were surprised by the way he was manhandled and trashed by many

right-wing activists."

Jayant Awhad, a BJP functionary from Sinnar "We don't have problems if people exchange their views and speak their mind. Choudhari has continually been speaking against Hindu deities and traditions. Why should we tolerate such behaviour? I personally snatched his mic and the others present ensured that the event was called off," said. The organisers subsequently called in the police, and the event was called off.

Choudhari said he was told that the protesters were members of the BJP, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)

and Bajrang Dal. He said "We are fearless; we will remain fearless. I have spoken to Home Minister Honourable Devendraji Fadnavis on the phone and informed him about the incident,"

He further stated that "I decided to cancel the lecture because I didn't want to disturb the law and order in Sinnar. That is my duty as a responsible citizen. Otherwise, even the activists of the progressive movement would have become aggressive. Those responsible for this should note that such attacks will not intimidate us. Choudhari said.

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Sharad Pawar's power fades but Ajit Pawar emerges strongly

Editoritis



Dr. Vaidehi

Once the attitude in Maharashtra, predominantly among Marathas, was anti-BJP, evident from the huge victory margins of many candidates, including Ajit Pawar. Devendra's main target during 2014 parliament elections was Ajit Pawar's corruption. PM Modi also tagged NCP as National Corrupt Party and there were several attacks on Pawars by him. Sharad Pawar is one of the most unpredictable politicians of Maharashtra but Ajit was mindful of the way the Enforcement Directorate had sought to chase him. In his assessment, there was a need for a political answer. Ajit made several efforts to join hands with Devendra and kept him on hold for the right time.

In the meantime, Sharad Pawar's differences with nephew Ajit were known to many since the emergence of Supriya Sule on the political horizon. Pawar was aware of how Ajit was trying to field persons loyal to him or fancying himself as a challenger of sorts. Instead of acting against Ajit, Pawar decided to give him a long rope. Sharad Pawar had summoned a meeting of the NCP core committee to thrash out its ties with Sena and Congress. In that gathering, Ajit, Praful Patel and others were given sufficient opportunity to speak up. But their response was muted and at the end of the meeting, Pawar was authorised to take a final call.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 02

Editoritis

Sharad Pawar's power fades but Ajit Pawar emerges strongly

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The future of Udhhav Thackeray's cabinet would depend largely on Pawar's moods. In this sense, the politics of Maharashtra has reached a pause and is likely to see a lot more action and turmoil.

Ajit Pawar, along with 41 MLAs of the total 54 in the NCP, broke away to join the coalition government in Maharashtra. One MP followed suit. Five months later, both factions of the NCP are still fighting for their rights to the party title and clock symbol.

While the NCP was always noncommittal, it had in the past described it as BJP's agenda for electoral gains.

While Pawar had emerged as a kingmaker, his nephew Ajit faces a bleak future. Even if Pawar pardons Ajit's indiscretion, the nephew's standing within the NCP is bound to be diminished. It remained to be seen how Pawar would treat the irrigation scam in the public domain. Any attempt to protect Ajit would have bad optics, while punishing him will show vendetta politics. The future of Udhhav Thackeray's cabinet would depend largely on Pawar's moods. In this sense, the politics of Maharashtra has reached a pause and is likely to see a lot more action and turmoil. Somehow Maha Vikas Aghadi came to power with all vigour and got demolished on humiliating notes. Those days Maharashtra politics rocked the world, Eknath Shinde was most searched leader on Google. Devendra Sadnavis very smartly manoeuvred his way in new equations. He pitched in all rebels and gave a steady government to the state.

In the present scenario the writing on the wall is clear. The Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) faction led by Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar seems to have decided to take on the Sharad Pawar faction head-on in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections in Maharashtra. Ajit Pawar took a hard stance against Sharad Pawar, seemingly leaving no window open for a possible reconciliation. In July 2023, Ajit Pawar, along with 41 MLAs of the total 54 in the NCP, broke away to join the coalition government in Maharashtra. One MP followed suit. Five months later, both factions of the NCP are still fighting for their rights to the party title and clock symbol. While this matter is pending before the Election Commission, the MLA disqualification case is before Maharashtra Legislative Assembly Speaker Rahul Narwekar. Amid these unresolved issues, Ajit Pawar made his intentions clear by voicing support for the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in a clear break with the past.

While the NCP was always noncommittal, it had in the past described it as BJP's agenda for electoral gains. Ajit Pawar's scathing attack against his estranged uncle was not his first. In July, soon after he had joined the BJP, Ajit Pawar had spoken in detail about how repeated discussions were held with the BJP central leadership about a possible alliance. All the talks



were with Sharad Pawar's consent, the deputy chief minister had said then. During his address at the conclave, senior working president Praful Patel spoke about how the NCP had contemplated an alliance with the BJP way back in 2004.

A meeting had taken place at his place in Delhi and Atal Bihari Vajpayee and L K Advani had given their consent for the talks, he said. However, the alliance had to be aborted as the late Pramod Mahajan leaked the news to Shiv Sena chief Bal Thackeray prematurely, he added. Mahajan was reportedly wary of an alliance as he feared Sharad Pawar would overpower him in Delhi politics. "Whether it was the 2019 BJP-NCP alliance which lasted for three days or the present, Sharad Pawar knew everything," Patel said. The objective behind Ajit Pawar and Praful Patel's attack on Sharad Pawar was to indicate he was never averse to ally with the right wing. And therefore, the Sharad Pawar-led NCP has no right to question the Ajit Pawar faction for joining the BJP-Shiv Sena coalition government. Senior Pawar is helpless and yet to come out of betrayal, ahead of elections his side of the party is shrinking and Ajit Pawar is emerging as the strongest leader. Interesting to see where the NCP as a Party going to stand.

Volume No. 16 | Issue No. 97

Afternoon VOICE
RNI No. MAHENG/2009/29332
VIEWS & VISION OF CITY

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Voices



Origins of the piggy bank



Jubel D'Cruz

Ever wondered where the word 'piggy bank' came from? Maybe you've pondered the reason as to why we started keeping money inside pigs? We delve into the history behind the popularity of the money box to discover how they came about, how they got their name and why they are traditionally shaped like pigs.

The invention of the piggy bank originates to over 600 years ago in the 15th century when people would use pots to store whatever money they had. In that time, metal was an expensive commodity and not frequently used for household equipment. Household items such as plates and pots were made from an affordable clay called 'pygg'. Therefore, whenever people had a few extra coins, they would simply drop it into their clay jars which they referred to as a 'pygg' bank or pot. During the time of the Saxons, vowels had different sounds to them, therefore 'pygg' would be pronounced as 'pug.' However, soon after the pronunciation of 'y' changed from a 'u' to an 'i', making clay 'pygg' and the animal 'pig' sound the same. An interesting fact in the old English language, coincidentally pigs would roll around in 'pygg' mud and dirt, which could have contributed to the association of the words.

As both words sounded the same, English potters would shape 'pygg' pots into the shape of pigs to humour the words. As this became a trend, people would request for the 'pygg' pots to be shaped like pigs. Over the next few hundred years, people slowly forgot that 'pygg' referred to the clay. This became the norm in the 19th century and English potters would create pots shaped like pigs for people to use as a

bank, humouring the origins of the word. This may have been accidental but has been used ever since and this is why we still use piggy banks to save money today.

In some European countries, such as Germany and the Netherlands, the pig represents good fortune, so it's customary to gift people with a piggy bank as a symbol of prosperity. During the New Year, it is also a tradition to exchange 'Lucky Pigs' made of marzipan, chocolate, wood or porcelain.

Piggy banks are also an important part of Chinese culture. In the Chinese zodiac, the pig is a symbol of wealth and prosperity, and giving a piggy bank as a gift is believed to bring good luck and fortune to the recipient. The piggy bank is also seen as a practical gift, as it encourages saving and financial responsibility, which are important values in Chinese culture.

Looking beyond its fascinating origins and its cultural significance, the practical purpose of the piggy bank has stood the test of time – that is, encouraging people to save money. With the rise of digital banking and cashless transactions, the act of physically putting money into a piggy bank may seem a little outdated. However, the fundamental principle of saving remains as important as ever.

So, let's not forget the humble piggy bank and let us continue to celebrate it as an inspiration and as a reminder of the importance of healthy savings habits. A piggy bank is the best way to store and save money. It makes a person realise that money is collected just like drops are collected to make a river. We can make enough amount of money by saving every bit.

Letters to the Editor

Social welfare; requirement of time!

The level of politics in the state has receded since last one decade. Instead of substantial issues, mere verbal issues, which are trivial are put forth. It is understandable that opposition party leaders verbally criticize the rulers. It is the duty of opposition leaders to keep the rulers in check. The sheer aim behind this is to protect the interests of the people and the society. But, the fact that some prominent ministers in power continue to criticize the leaders of the opposition insinuates that these ministers have no other business to do. It is unbecoming of a high position ruling leaders to nag opposition leaders now and then. Such misbehavior of the rulers affects the social mind unknowingly. So, in my opinion, it is better that the rulers should pay more and more attention to social causes instead of fruit-

less politics. Moreover, to say, instead of internal fighting, fight for the elevation of society is a requirement of time. Herein is wellbeing of society and nation.

Sudhir Kangutkar

Take strict action

A 15-year-old girl was allegedly raped by her neighbour after holding her hostage in his house in Pataudi area with the help of his mother on November 29 but came to light on Friday when the victim's mother lodged a complaint at women police station, Manesar. According to the complaint filed by the mother, her 15-year-old married daughter is living with her.

On November 29, the girl was passing through the house of the accused when he called her inside his house, the mother said. "After this, the accused's mother locked the main gate and he raped my daughter at night. Meanwhile, I kept searching for her the whole night. My daughter managed to escape from captivity on November 30 morning, when the accused was sleeping.

She reached home and told me about her ordeal. Then I approached the police with her. This sort of accident occurs from time to time somewhere. Therefore, the police must strictly look into this kind of accident and punish such exemplary punishment so other people can get lesson.

Jahangir Shaikh

Protection of Privacy

Law agencies seize digital devices like laptops, mobiles, pen drives from the houses of the accused and even journalists in the name of investigation. These agencies even snatch away their financial, personal and professional privacy. The Supreme Court told the government that the nine-member constitution bench of this court has considered the right to privacy as a part of Article 21 (life and personal liberty) under the fundamental rights in the year 2017.

The Supreme Court has asked the government to make guidelines regarding confiscation of personal digital devices and has also stressed that the

professional interests of journalists should be kept in mind. On the other hand, due to the use of AI, our privacy is being destroyed within minutes and crime is also being encouraged. Recently, a picture of an actress created with deepfake went viral.

AI is going to make a big contribution in public welfare, especially in education, health, agriculture and other production efforts, but ways will have to be found to avoid the destructive effects of its misuse. Anyway, every new technology is a double-edged sword. A conscious society avoids its ill effects and accepts it. The government will also have to keep privacy in mind while confiscating such devices.

N Ashraf

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)

UBT Sena leader Sanjay Raut says, "EVM mandate, but it does not reflect people support" over BJP victory



The victory of BJP in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Rajasthan doesn't reflect people's support but it is an "EVM mandate", Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut said on Monday. The BJP swept Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh on Sunday whereas Congress won BRS-dominated Telangana.

"The poll results are unexpected and surprising but we respect the democratic process. When the mandate goes against your party, one has to accept it. However, the results of Madhya Pradesh are not only surprising but also shocking for us. The poll results in three of four states should be considered as the EVM mandate and it has to

be accepted in that way only," Raut said. I dare them (BJP) to hold elections using ballot papers and we will see the outcome, he added.

The Rajya Sabha member demanded the Election Commission of India take cognizance of the people "who have doubts about the authenticity of EVMs (Electronic Voting Machines) and the way they function". Raut referred to purported remarks on EVMs made by Congress leader Digvijaya Singh at a meeting held in Mumbai in the past. "He (Singh) had also expressed his fear that EVMs can be tampered, suggesting that the results cannot be trustworthy," Raut added. Interestingly, Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister and NCP leader Ajit Pawar on Sunday said he won't be surprised if some people cry foul and blame EVMs for the assembly polls outcome. ANI

Mumbai Police's crime branch held 22-year-old man in kidnapping case



Mumbai Police's crime branch has nabbed a 22-year-old man from Madhya Pradesh in connection with the kidnapping of a Mumbai-based builder by a gang for a Rs 10 crore ransom last month, taking the number of persons arrested so far to six, an official said on Monday. The accused, Mazhar Shakir alias Shanu Shah, was picked up from Dhar by officials of the Anti-Extortion Cell on Saturday, he said.

The builder was kidnapped from Mazgaon area of Mumbai on November 23 by a gang who bundled him up in a car and fled, the official said, adding that the

kidnappers demanded Rs 10 crore for his safe release.

The victim was assaulted and kept confined in suburban Govandi from where he was rescued on November 25 by the police. A case was registered at Byculla police station and an investigation was launched, leading to the arrest of five persons, including gangster Iliyas Bachkana. The interrogation revealed that Shanu Shah had played an active role in the crime and a search was launched to trace him, the official said. Shah's location was traced to Dhar and he was taken into custody by a team of Mumbai Police. Further investigation is underway. PTI

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Members of the BJP, RSS and Bajrang Dal

We also spoke to some BJP leaders and social activist about this issue over which they expressed their views. BJP leader **Keshav Upadhyay** told Afternoon Voice, "If there is any complaint filed then police would definitely take action against it".

"I condemn this act" said, Social Activist **Medha Patkar**, this act is against freedom of expression and details which he talked about was only referring to the history but these people don't want to listen to the truth and this why they have turned violent. Political leader in power are trying to cut the voice of agitators which is against freedom of expression".

When asked about people not able to raise their and stopped so will this campaigning stop here?



over which, Advocate **Asim Sarode** said, "People are not willing to understand that this event of 'Nirbhay Bano' is only to create awareness amongst people and he was only about democracy and constitutional policies but political leaders of the right wing group felt we are talking against PM Modi and Amit Shah but they should understand it is not about particular person it is only about tendencies".



Former Guardian Minister from Congress **Mohammed Arif Naseem Khan** said, "This is completely fascism as it dominated by some people in the name of Hindu as some social activist are not able to voice their opinion and government should take strict action against those people involved in this act".

BMC invites bids for Desalination Plant with a capacity of 200 MLD in western suburbs

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) on Monday invited bids to set up a desalination plant with a capacity of 200 MLD per day in the western suburbs. The civic body has called for bids for the construction of the desalination plant in the Manori area, and the operation and maintenance for 20 years, an official said. Though

the bids have been invited for setting a 200 MLD capacity plant, it should be "expandable to 400 MLD", he said, adding that the intended parties have been given one month to submit their bids. "The project has already received the approval of the Maharashtra Coastal Zone Management Authority (MCZMA) and all other sanctions are also in place," the

official told PTI. The project will be set up on 12 hectares of government land under the control of the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation at Manori, he said. The civic body had earlier said that the desalination plant would require a capital investment of Rs 1,600 crore and Rs 1,920 crore in operational costs for 20 years. PTI

PM Modi unveiled the statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj at Rajkot Fort at Sindhudurg

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday unveiled the statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj at Rajkot Fort in Maharashtra's Sindhudurg district. Modi paid homage to the rich maritime heritage of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj who constructed several coastal and sea forts, including the Sindhudurg



Fort. The Maratha empire founder's seal inspired the new naval ensign that was adopted last year when PM Modi commissioned the first indigenous aircraft carrier, INS Vikrant. Later on Monday, PM Modi is scheduled to witness the operational demonstration by Indian Navy on the occasion of Navy Day. PTI

Nation

Cyclone Michaung: Five people have been killed in separate incidents in Tamil Nadu

As many as five people have been killed in separate incidents in Tamil Nadu's Chennai amid heavy rain due to cyclone Michaung, according to an official statement by the Chennai police. One person has been injured due to the falling of a tree, according to the police.

Meanwhile, the Chennai airfield is to remain closed until 9 a.m. tomorrow. "Airfield closed for arrival and departure operations till 0900 hrs IST tomorrow due to adverse weather conditions", said the Chennai airport



authority in a post on 'X'. Subways have been closed due to the severe waterlogging in Chennai. Also, traffic has been closed from Manjambakkam to Vadaperumbakkam Road due to the release of water from Puzhal Lake, said the police. "DDRT Teams are available in all vulnerable areas and they are working in coordi-

nation with the GCC and Highways Department," it added.

Cyclonic storm 'Michaung' intensified to a severe cyclonic storm at 8:30 a.m. today, about 90 km east-northeast of Chennai. The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) has warned of heavy to very heavy rainfall on December 4 and 5 in north-

coastal Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. Light to moderate rainfall at most places and heavy to very heavy rainfall at a few places, with extremely heavy falls at isolated places over coastal Andhra Pradesh and Yanam, is expected on December 4 and 5.

Public life is severely affected in Chennai due to heavy rains lash-

ing several parts of the city. Several areas, including Wallajah Road, Mount Road, Anna Salai, Chepauk, outside Omandurar government multispecialty hospital and other low-lying areas, were left inundated due to the persistent heavy rainfall. Chennai's popular Marina Beach was flooded due to heavy downpours, and the roads from Mount Road to Marina Beach were blocked due to severe waterlogging. The Tamil Nadu government has declared a public holiday in Chennai, Chengalpattu, Kancheepuram and Tiruvallur districts on Tuesday, given the cyclone. ANI

Ethanol production capacity in India is 1,364 crore litres is sufficient, Centre informed Rajya Sabha

The current ethanol production capacity in India is 1,364 crore litres and is sufficient to meet the fuel blending targets, the Centre informed Rajya Sabha on Monday. In a written reply in the Rajya Sabha, Rameswar Teli, minister of state in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, apprised that Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Karnataka are ethanol surplus states.

The National Policy of Biofuels-2018, notified in June, 2018,

provided indicative targets of 20 percent ethanol blending in petrol and 5 percent biodiesel blending in diesel by 2030. "Encouraged by the past 7 years' performance under the Ethanol Blending Programme, the government decided to advance the targets of 20 percent ethanol blending in petrol from 2030 to Ethanol Supply Year (ESY) 2025-26," the minister informed the Rajya Sabha.

The Roadmap for Ethanol Blending in India 2020-25, prepared by an inter-ministerial com-

mittee, estimated an ethanol requirement of 1,016 crore litres to achieve 20 per cent blending targets in ESY 2025-26, the minister mentioned. "The current ethanol production capacity of 1364 crore litre is spread across most of the states of the country including the ethanol surplus states of Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Karnataka. This capacity is sufficient to produce the ethanol required to meet the blending targets," Rameswar Teli informed. ANI

TMC MP Mahua Moitra says, "I will speak when they table it..." over Ethics Committee report



Amid the ongoing controversy on the alleged "cash-for-query" case, TMC MP Mahua Moitra on Monday denied commenting on the Ethics Committee report saying "she'll only speak when they table the report before the Parliament." The TMC MP said, "What can I say when it was not even tabled (before the Parliament)? Had they tabled it, I would have said something. I will speak when they table it..."

According to several media reports, the committee in its report has recommended the expulsion of Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra in a "cash-for-query" case. Meanwhile, BJP MP Nishikant Dubey on Monday alleged that the Congress MP and leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, leaked the Ethics Committee report on Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra before it was tabled in the House.

Speaking to ANI, the BJP MP also said that he is not aware of what is mentioned in the report. "...Let the report be tabled. I don't know what is mentioned in the report...What I had to say, I said before the Ethics Committee...I will be able to make a comment only after the report is tabled. The report will be tabled after 12 pm...I don't know how was the report leaked, I think Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury leaked it..." Dubey said. The Ethics Committee, which probed the 'cash-for-query' allegations against Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra, was reportedly scheduled to lay its report in Lok Sabha on the first day of the Winter Session of Parliament on December 4.

Lok Sabha Ethics Committee had last month submitted its draft report connection with the 'cash-for-query' case to Speaker Om Birla. Sources said the committee had recommended the expulsion of Moitra. ANI

Punjab: Police arrested two people for slogans "Boycott Air India"

The Punjab Police in Monday arrested two operatives from the "Sikh For Justice" (SFJ) group for writing "Boycott Air India" slogans in public places. "Punjab Police have arrested two operatives of Sikhs for Justice (SFJ) for writing anti-national slogans at public places in Punjab and adjoining states," said Director General of Police (DGP) Punjab Gaurav Yadav here on Monday.

The slogans were written in Punjab, Himachal, and Rajasthan. The masterminds behind the slogans were Gurpatwant Pannu and Jagjeet Singh of SFJ in New York. A New York-based SFJ--backed by mastermind Gurpat-

want Singh Pannu and Jagjeet Singh-- is designated as an unlawful association by the Indian Government. Recently, slogans including Boycott Air India, Khalistan Zindabad and SFJ Zindabad were seen at various places in district Bathinda during Independence Day, Dharmshala in Himachal Pradesh during Cricket World Cup match, Hanumangarh Railway Station in Rajasthan and Gurupurab in District Amritsar, the Information and Public Relations Department of Punjab stated. Those arrested have been identified as Harmanpreet Singh of village Naseebpura in Talwandi Sabo, Bathinda and Lovepreet Singh of Kotshamir in Bathinda.

The police have also recovered three cans of black spray, one flag of Khalistan and one motorcycle from their possession, it added.

DGP Gaurav Yadav said that during questioning, the arrested persons confessed that they were working for the SFJ organisation and were in touch with an associate of SFJ Jagjit Singh, who used to send money to SFJ activists in India on behalf of Gurpatwant Pannu. "Preliminary investigations have also revealed that both the arrested persons had received Rs 1,25,000 in various instalments through Western Union from the SFJ organisation to carry out these tasks," he said. ANI

World

Amid ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas, Palestinian student shot in Burlington, paralysed



Hisham Awartani, a Palestinian student shot in Burlington, Vermont, is now paralysed, said his mother, Elizabeth Price, in an interview with CNN. Awartani, one of three Palestinian students who were shot, may face a life without mobility after a bullet lodged in his spine.

Elizabeth Price shared with CNN that they initiated a GoFundMe campaign to aid her son financially "as he prepares to move into this next phase of his life--recovery." "It's been a gut wrenching and difficult six days, but it's also been a remarkable and awe-inspiring time--first to

watch Hisham and his two childhood friends meet this experience with resilience, strength and even deep concern for others (for each other, for their parents many miles away and for thousands of their people suffering under a brutal military bombardment) and, second, to see and feel the incredible support from all over the world, including messages of love and support from many of you," Price said.

Hisham Awartani, a 20-year-old junior at Brown University, is grappling with the reality of a "very long road" to recovery, as stated by Price. Awartani and his friends, Kinnan Abdalhamid and Tahseen Ali Ahmad, were shot during a walk in Burlington over the Thanksgiving holiday. ANI

Indonesia: Mount Marapi erupted leaves 11 killed, 12 missing



Eleven climbers were killed and more than 12 are reported missing after Indonesia's Mount Marapi erupted, local officials have said, Al Jazeera reported on Monday. When the volcano in West Sumatra erupted on Sunday, as many as 75 people were in the area, as per the authorities.

Head of the Padang Search and Rescue Agency, Abdul Malik said: "There are 26 people who have not been evacuated, we have found 14 of them, three were

found alive and 11 were found dead." Video footage of Sunday's eruption showed a huge cloud of volcanic ash spread across the sky and cars and roads covered with debris. A minor eruption on Monday forced rescue workers to suspend their operations, according to Al Jazeera. Indonesia sits on the Pacific's so-called "Ring of Fire" and has 127 active volcanoes, according to the country's volcanology agency, including the 2,891-metre (about 9,500 ft) Mount Marapi. ANI

US Navy ship shot several drones heading in its direction from areas of Yemen

A US Navy ship shot down several drones heading in its direction from areas of Yemen controlled by the Houthi militants on Sunday, ABC News reported quoting a US official. "The USS Carney has been involved in multiple engagements in the Red Sea involving Houthi attacks on commercial vessels today. In at least two circumstances, the Carney successfully shot down [unmanned aerial vehicles] headed in its direction," the official said.

ABC News reported that one ballistic missile fired from Houthis in Yemen landed in the

vicinity of a merchant vessel in the Red Sea and the USS Carney, which was nearby, responded to the ship's distress call. The official said, adding that there were no injuries. While heading to assist, the Carney shot down a Houthi drone, the official said, adding that the vessel had earlier shot down another drone. The Pentagon, in a statement to ABC News, said more information will be provided as it becomes available. "We're aware of reports regarding attacks on the USS Carney and commercial vessels in the Red Sea," the Pentagon stated. ANI

Afghanistan: Education minister Habibullah Agha criticized poor quality of education in schools

Afghanistan's Taliban-appointed Acting Minister of Education Habibullah Agha has criticized the poor quality of education in the country's religious schools, TOLO News reported. TOLO News is an Afghan news channel broadcasting from Kabul.

Habibullah Agha asked the Taliban and religious scholars to pay serious attention to raising the quality of education. The Taliban-appointed minister, while speaking at the graduation ceremony of about 120 students from Darul-Ulom Imam Abu Hanifa's 12th and 14th grades, said that the number of religious schools in Afghanistan has increased in comparison to the past and that students are given good facilities in this area. Agha noted: "In my point of view, the quality of education is becoming weaker day by day, although seeking education has become easier. There was a time when students could not find a book."



Meanwhile, the officials of Darul-Ulom Imam Abu Hanifa stressed about improving the quality of education in religious schools, saying that not only religious sciences are taught in this Darul-Ulom, but also contemporary sciences. "In our Darul-Ulom, not only religious sciences but also contemporary sciences are taught, so these graduates, in addition to religious sciences,

also include students from contemporary sciences, and today about 120 people graduated from this Darul-Ulom," said Abdulhai, head of the Imam Abu Hanifa Darul-Ulom, as per TOLO News. A number of Imam Abu Hanifa Darul-Ulom graduates from the 12th and 14th grades asked the Taliban to provide them with employment opportunities in the country. ANI

Philippines records an earthquake of magnitude 6.8

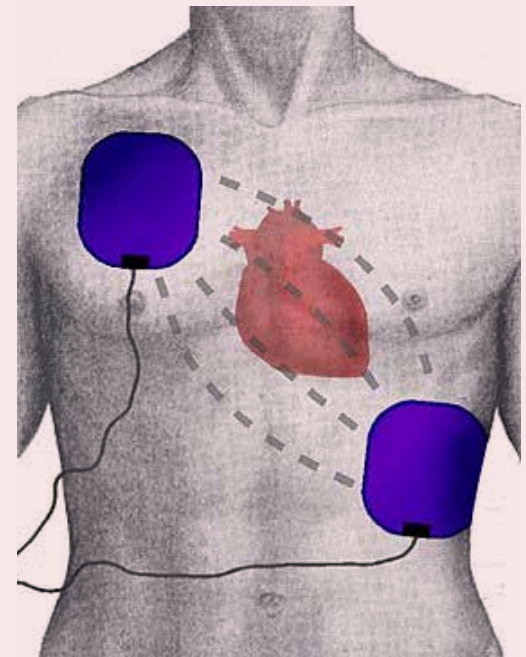
An earthquake of magnitude 6.8 on the Richter Scale struck the Philippines on Monday, the National Centre for Seismology (NCS) reported. The quake occurred on Sunday night at 01:19:42 IST at a depth of 82 km in Mindanao.

The NCS posted from its official handle on X, "Earthquake of Magnitude:6.8, Occurred on 04-12-2023, 01:19:42 IST, Lat:

9.03 & Long: 126.70, Depth: 82 Km, Location: Mindanao, Philippines." No casualties were reported in the incident till the filing of this report and more details are awaited. Earlier, on Saturday, a strong earthquake in the southern Philippines claimed at least one life as thousands were ordered to evacuate, including in Japan, after tsunami warnings that were later lifted, Al Jazeera reported. ANI

Expression

DEFIBRILLATOR - What is the need for AEDs in public spaces?



C.K. Subramaniam

Columnist

Emergency services in India unfortunately are known to take way more time than they should and therefore, first-aid tools have a crucial role to play for saving lives. With a large population size and densely crowded public spaces, there are strong indicators for the growing incidence of sudden cardiac events in the country.

This makes installation of AEDs in public places important and they should be placed alongside fire-extinguishers or at similar locations. In large buildings, possibly every floor can have an AED, in markets, malls, and public places, they could be placed centrally and at entry and exits. The device may be installed at security guards rooms and surveillance centres as well.

What is the issue?

In recent times the incidence of deaths due to sudden cardiac arrests outside home is increasing. Various Indian cities need to install Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) in public spaces to address this issue. Automated External Defibrillators or AEDs are portable electronic medical devices to detect life-threatening cardiac activity such as irregular heartbeats and pulse less ness. It can revive the heart by defibrillation or application of electricity to restore effective cardiac rhythm.



Cardiac arrest is taking place in a Gym or while he is playing squash in a health club. The doctors feel that a chance to survive happens if only there had been a defibrillator in the gym. It's a small portable device that saves lives.

Timely aid could save many lives and the objective of installing the AED was to empower a common man to do his bit to save a life. An Automated External Defibrillator (AED) costing Rs. 1.5 lakh to save the lives of those who suffer from Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) was installed at the Airports as part of the project to save a life. The machine was installed at the security check area on the departure. One in 2000 Indians per year dies due to SCA. Timely aid could save many lives and the

objective of installing the AED was to empower a common man to do his bit to save a life. Everyone was aware of Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), which is an aid given physically while Ventricular Fibrillation is done using a device. The device would generate an electric shock to the heart muscle to reverse the effects of ventricular fibrillation.

In the absence of a trained medical professional, AED can be used by an ordinary educated person, as it is equipped with simple audio and visual commands. During a cardiac arrest, the heart stops functioning due to problems in the electrical system of the heart, disrupting the pumping action.

As a result the blood flow to the brain and other parts of the body

stops, within seconds, a person drops down unconscious and has no pulse, and within minutes, a person suffers death. It is estimated that the failure to administer life-saving defibrillation within 4 to 6 minutes of suffering cardiac arrest is a major factor for 95 percent of sudden cardiac deaths. A person suffering from cardiac arrest except for timely administering of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and AEDs, there remains no other way to save the life. It can revive the heart by defibrillation or application of electricity to restore effective cardiac rhythm.

Apart from a few initiatives, India is largely unaware of the need for installing AEDs at strategic locations in public places. The health scenario is causing a rethink and up gradation of such standards worldwide, and India needs to learn from the US, the need to make this device readily available. Keeping the trends of public health in mind, the union and state governments need to lay guidelines for installation of AEDs.

Government should make installing AEDs mandatory in railway stations, airports, metro stations, and bus terminals. Security staff and emergency service personnel should be trained to administer first-aid services, including CPR and AEDs. AEDs should be installed in traffic police vehicles and patrolling cars, and such officials should be trained to operate AEDs. Stitch in time saves nine is true and AEDs serve the purpose of application of electricity to restore effective cardiac rhythm and save life with timely intervention.

Entertainment

Marvel Studios chief Kevin Feige says, "Robert Downey Jr won't return as superhero Iron Man"



Robert Downey Jr has completed his run in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) and will not be returning as superhero Iron Man, says Marvel Studios chief Kevin Feige. Downey Jr last played the role in 2019's *The Avengers: Endgame* when the superhero died.

Since then, there have been fan speculation about Tony Stark aka Iron Man's return to the MCU. "We are going to keep that moment and not touch that moment again. We all worked very hard for many years to get to that, and we would never want to magically undo it in any way," Feige told *Vanity Fair* in the Downey Jr. profile. Director Joe Russo, who directed *The Avengers: Infinity War* and *The Avengers: Endgame* along with brother Anthony Russo, said the team has also moved on emotionally from Downey Jr's departure from the franchise. We'd already said tearful goodbyes on the last day of shooting. Everybody had moved on emotionally. We promised him it would be the last time we made him do it-ever," Joe said.

Anthony recalled that it was a difficult thing for the Hollywood star to say his last line as the superhero. When he did come back, we were shooting on a stage directly opposite where he auditioned for Tony Stark. So his last line as Tony Stark was shot literally a couple hundred feet from his original audition that got him the role, Anthony said. Downey Jr essayed the role of Tony Stark aka Iron Man across 10 films of the MCU. **PTI**



Janhvi Kapoor was spotted offering prayers at Mahakaleshwar Temple with rumoured boyfriend

Actor Janhvi Kapoor offered prayers at Mahakaleshwar Temple in Ujjain on Monday. She participated in 'Bhasma Aarti' in the temple and offered special pooja rituals. Her rumoured boyfriend Shikhar Pahariya accompanied her for the prayers.

Raghav Sharma, a temple priest, blessed her by giving a photograph of Baba Mahakal. Notably, neither Janhvi nor Shikhar has 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**

Actor Kate Winslet talks about experiences while working with co-star Leonardo DiCaprio, says "Clicked immediately"



Actor Kate Winslet says she and her "Titanic" co-star Leonardo DiCaprio "clicked immediately" when they met on the set of the blockbuster movie. The Oscar-winning actors played doomed lovers Jack and Rose in James Cameron's romance drama that went on to become one of the most successful movies in 1997. In a behind-the-scenes featurette from the film's upcoming 4K Ultra HD DVD release, Winslet, 48, also reflected on her bond with DiCaprio. "Once I started working with Leo, we were able to kind of find our own rhythm," she said in a clip shared by *Entertainment Tonight*.

"And it's amazing to kind of look back and think about it all over again, she said adding that they "clicked immediately, right away." "He was this kind of mess of long, skinny, uncoordinated limbs, and he was just very free with himself, and he had this effervescent energy that was really magnetic. And I remember thinking, Oh, this is gonna be fun. We're definitely gonna get along.' And we just really did. We just really did. Calling DiCaprio, 49, as a "ferociously intelligent man", Winslet said he was fascinated with the period. The actor, who like DiCaprio has gone on to establish a successful Hollywood career, said they still take out time to speak to each other. "You know, if you think about it, in the world that we live in now to have friendships that bind you, and that shared history, it's really something, she said. **PTI**



Parineeti Chopra reveals of putting on weight for her upcoming project

Actor Parineeti Chopra says she put on 15 kgs for her role in filmmaker Imtiaz Ali's upcoming movie "Chamkila" and is now trying to get back to "looking like myself". "Chamkila" is based on the life of iconic music star of Punjab from the 1980s, Amar Singh Chamkila. Punjabi actor-singer Diljit Dosanjh has essayed the titular role, while Parineeti portrayed his wife and singing partner Amarjot. "I spent 6 months this year singing in Rahman sir's studio, and going back home to eat as much junk as I possibly could to put on 15 KILOS for Chamkila! (Coming soon on Netflix) Music and Food. That was my routine," the Bollywood actor wrote on Instagram alongside a video of her from the gym. **PTI**