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'Hang the Animal who Raped my Child'



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Ever since the tragic Nirbhaya episode hit the headlines, reportage of child rapes (and murders in many cases) have increased causing our blood to curdle. How can (ir) responsible men go around assaulting innocent infants just because they are incapable of resisting.

Close to Jaipur, one recent case hit the headlines when a six-year old child in Sikar district was gang raped and the mother could not lodge her complaint at the nearest *thana* or police station because the crime was committed in another *thana*'s jurisdiction. The law clearly states that any *thana*, even if the crime falls in another area, has to register a case and refer it to the relevant *thana* rather than denying the facility to the complainant. If it had been done, then the action to catch the perpetrator(s) could have been launched swiftly. The authorities did respond promptly, with the State Health Minister, Rajendra Rathore visiting the victim's family, and the State Human Rights Commission also intervened. Even the medical staff at a private hospital in Sikar refused to provide the medical care, in spite of a Supreme Court order of 1985, which calls upon any medical facility (public or private) to provide immediate succour to any and all victims of criminal assault or road accidents.

One hopes that the *thana* incharge who refused to entertain the complaint and the recalcitrant medicos are penalised and setting an example for others. The poor girl was brought to Jaipur in critical stage for better treatment. The two perpetrators were also hauled in, thanks to Closed-circuit Television (CCTV) footage.

Even before the ink could dry on this case, another one hit the newspapers in Sikar. A six-year old was raped and murdered by her close relative. In a recent order involving child rape, Justice P S Teji of Delhi High Court ruled: "Child sex abuse is one of the most pervasive social problems faced by our society. Its impact is profound because of the sheer frequency with which it occurs and the trauma brought to the lives of the children who have experienced this crime. Child sexual abuse is an epidemic". The case involved a sodomic rape of a nine-year old boy and the perpetrators tried to hush the case by financial lure to the victim's father. The High Court asked the trial court to provide full protection to the young victim to record his statement without any pressure from his parents.

How should the society react to such bestiality? I am reminded of a judgment by the late Guman Mal Lodha of the Rajasthan High Court, many years ago, who ruled that the son and mother-in-law of a dowry victim to be *hanged in public*. The apex court stayed the order because it did not sit well in a civilised society, but are these perpetrators civilised?

Life sentence, extending to the convict's entire life, should be the minimum punishment for child rape, with an option for death penalty. Monetary compensation should be provided for child's health, safety, educational needs and the Government should also set up rehabilitation centres for such mishaps.

Let me end with the Sikar six-year old's mother anguished cry, that the perpetrators be hanged.

Pradeep S. Mehta

Pradeep S Mehta, Secretary General

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Risk of Digital Amnesia

According to a survey, by the Internet Security Solutions provider Kaspersky, 50 percent of users treat the Internet as an extension of their



brain, while 74 percent use their smartphones to connect to the information highway. With so much information available, people tend to transfer most of the memory functions to their smartphones, raising the threat of digital amnesia.

The survey, conducted among a little over 1,000 Indian respondents between the period June 23 and July 02, 2015 explored that half of the respondents were not much interested in remembering facts. About 25 percent said that they 'strongly agreed' that they just need to remember the source of the information while 47.8 percent indicated that they 'slightly agreed' with the information.

Around 26.5 percent respondents strongly agreed that almost everything they need to recall or know is on their smartphone. *(TH, 24.08.15)*

Env. Compensation Fee

The VIPs residing in central Delhi, will have to shell out more in their monthly bills as the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) has decided to levy 'environmental compensation fee' with effect from July 01, 2015.

The move comes following the directives of the 'National Green Tribunal' whereby in May 2015 directing the Delhi Government, Delhi-Jal Board and all municipal corporations, electricity companies etc. to levy environmental compensation fee from



every household generating sewage in the national capital.

Minimum sewage charge to be collected from every household has been fixed to ₹100. If the amount of sewage charge in a billing cycle works out to be more than ₹100, the actual amount of sewage charge would be collected, stated the civic body. *(TH, 01.08.15)*

Jobless Girl Sells Diploma

After graduating from Florida State University in the US four years ago, theatre major Stephanie Ritter was not able to find a decent job in her field. Fed up of the situation, she has actually put up her Diploma for sale on eBay (American Multinational Corporation) for US\$50,000-U\$10,000 more than her student loan debt. The price also covered her college experience, in a nutshell.



"I thought this piece of paper has so much worth to so many people, but for a theatre major, it could not mean less. I am doing exactly the same and probably getting paid the exact same amount as people that dropped out halfway through freshman year, except I am still US\$40,000 in debt and they are not", she stated. *(CN, 01.09.15)*

Chair at RU

Rajasthan University in an academic council meeting has decided to send its affirmation proposal regarding the direction issued by the University Grants Commission (UGC) for the establishment of a chair in the name of the Indian Hindu monk Swami Vivekananda.

UGC had proposed all the varsities across the nation for setting up of a chair to conduct research on the life, teachings and philosophy of Swami Vivekananda. On similar lines, the philosophy department will formulate a proposal, which will be sent to UGC for further scrutiny.

As per the directions of the UGC, received about two years ago, the

university will send a proposal for further approval to establish Swami Vivekanand's chair. It will help promote the life and philosophy of Swami Vivekananda, stated Chief Public Relations Officer of Rajasthan University, Bhupendra Singh Shekhawat. *(DNA, 09.08.15)*

Homeless Couple Clean Up

They might be homeless, but that is not stopping the couple of Brooklyn (one of New York City's five boroughs) from doing their bit for the city. They spend their nights at a tiny park and during the day, do a better job of cleaning it better than the local administration.

57-year old Chris and 54-year old Tammy from Pennsylvania, drifted to Brooklyn after falling on hard times. Since then, they have been living on a small traffic island in the heart of Bay Ridge, and are doing everything they can to keep their surroundings clean.

"I am homeless, my wife is homeless and what we do is we clean up the park", mentioned Chris. They survive on soup kitchen hand outs, shower at a drug rehabilitation facility. *(OC, 02.09.15)*

Navigating Virtual Worlds

Forget everything you thought you knew about computer cursors. Researchers have come up with a way to turn cursors into a tool that can navigate around 3D space. Conventional pointers that are controlled with a track pad and show up as a tiny arrow on a screen will soon be outdated, according to scientists at the University of Montreal in Canada.



The scientists have created a way to turn smartphones, tablets or anything with an interactive surface, into a translucent so-called 'controlling plane' to select and manipulate objects in a 3D world. This futuristic technology could play an integral role in how virtual reality software responds to how users move in real life. *(LSC, 27.08.15)*

More Men Taking their Lives

Contrary to the public perception, family problems drive more men to take their lives than women. Whereas the number of men taking their own lives due to family problems is 18623, the number of women in this regard is 9977 i. e. nearly twice as many men commit suicide on their account than women.

In 21 percent of such cases family problems were the major reason for suicide, according to the findings in the Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India 2014 Report of the National Crime Records Bureau.

Amit Gupta, President of the Men's Rights Organisation, National Coalition for Men said, "The laws regarding domestic violence lack the provision to safeguarding the interests of men but in contrast women get considerable legal protection".

(TH, 11.09.15)

Gods to the Rescue

The compulsory helmet rule for two-wheeler riders comes into force in the State of Tamil Nadu from July 01, 2015. The Regional Transport Office (RTO) in



Madurai city has launched an interesting campaign to enforce it. There are people out on the streets, dressed as

Ganesha and Yama, Lord of Beginnings and the God of Death, to educate people on the importance of headgear.

A board put up by the RTO in Kancheepuram has a picture of Ganesha and a slogan that reads, "You will not get a head like me, wear helmet and protect your head". A photograph of the signboard has gone viral on social media, on sites, such as Facebook and WhatsApp.

(BS, 01.07.15)

Creativity and Neuroticism

Sir Isaac Newton, influential scientist of all time formulated the laws of gravity, built telescopes and delved into mathematical theories. He was also prone to bouts of depression and once suffered a mental breakdown.

In this sense, Newton was like many other creative, driven individuals. English Naturalist and Geologist Charles Darwin,

for example, struggled with nausea and gastro-intestinal distress in response to stress leading to panic disorder.

Winston Churchill, greatest UK leader of 20th century referred to his dark moods as his 'black dog', leading to speculation that he might have had episodes of depression. Multiple studies have found a link between creativity and neuroticism – a tendency toward rumination and negative thinking.

British researchers have proposed a possible reason for the connection: Creativity and neuroticism could be two sides of the same coin.

(LSC, 01.09.15)

Road Safety Bill

The death of a management student, in a hit and run accident in east Delhi in July, 2015 has spurred the Government to fast track the Road Transport and Safety Bill and expand the cashless treatment scheme for road crash victims in the first 50 hours.

Prime Minister Modi also stated that the footage of the crash had troubled him and so has appealed to the parents to discuss road safety at home and sensitise young boys and girls about road behaviour when they drive.

Expressing shock at the high number of fatalities, Modi said, "When we see the figures, we notice that in India, an accident takes place every minute and a road death every four minutes".

(Tol, 27.07.15)

Online Police Verification

Bengaluru, capital city of State of Karnataka has been selected by the Centre to get police verification online for passports as part of implementation of the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network system (CCTNS). Applicants could get a passport in 10 days or less, as police verification is touted as the major cause of delay in the entire process.

As opposed to the earlier process of police personnel visiting an applicant's home to verify his/her details, they can simply log into the database online and match the details.

Bengaluru Regional Passport Office (RPO) officials said that the Union Government had agreed to the RPO's proposal 'in-principle' though a formal approval is awaited. This pilot online verification process will give both the police and the RPO details of the applicants.

(TH, 27.07.15)

'PAN' for Onions

A fear over the rising price of onion and turning too costly for an average Indian household to afford has arisen due to heavy rain affecting the onion crop in Nashik city of Maharashtra – the main supply centre.

The price hike of onion is threatening to cross ₹100 a kg in Delhi, have been a cause for concern for citizens, as well as the administration.

Efforts are on to limit exports and hoarding, as well as to import onions. But some have found humour even in this conundrum. A meme doing the rounds of social networking sites has a vegetable vendor asking a customer her



PAN (Permanent Account Number) before selling her 2 kg of onions. Usually, people making transactions of ₹50,000 or more are asked to quote their PAN.

(BS, 25.08.15 & DNA 13.08.15)

Drug for Global Obesity

Scientists of the US have designed a new class of compounds that might reduce weight gain by preventing the body from absorbing fat particles. Worldwide research has shown that obesity rates have been climbing for years.

Whereas other treatments for overweight and obesity include diet and exercise, surgery and prescription medications. To help address the global obesity epidemic, scientists are developing a new class of compounds called micelle sequestrant polymers that could prevent fat particles from getting absorbed in the body and thus potentially reduce weight gain.

Targetting the body's process of absorbing fat, researchers from the University of Kansas in US designed a class of polymers that capture fat particles called micelles in the intestines, so that they are not digested.

(Tol, 31.07.15)

MoU for Health Insurance

New India Assurance Company has signed a memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Medical and Health Department of Rajasthan under *Bhamashah Swasthya Bima Yojna* that will benefit around 4.5 crore people in the State.

Chief Minister of Rajasthan, Vasundhara Raje said that after this initiative of the State Government, poor and needy people will get an opportunity of getting treatment in those private hospitals, which were out of their reach.

It will ascertain that the people of the State get benefits related to healthcare facilities, which are being provided in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu under the health insurance scheme.

(BS, 03.09.15)

New School Syllabus

Rajasthan Government has planned to introduce a new syllabus in the schools of the State from the following academic session to make the children aware about Indian culture and values, which would include stories of *mahapurush* (great leaders) among other topics.

The new syllabus, for Class I to XII, would bring major changes in books covering Indian culture, Moral Science and would include stories of *mahapurush* and the latest technologies, Rajasthan Minister of State for Education Vasudev Devanani announced on September 05, 2015 i.e. Teacher's Day.

The new curriculum will increase student's knowledge and also prepare them for global competition and present day challenges. (TH, 07.09.15)

Jaipur: Most Unsafe City

Among the leading cities in road accidents in the country, Jaipur has the highest percentage of fatalities in 2014. Both State capital and Jodhpur witnessed a rise of 6.1 percent while Kota registered increase of 8.8 percent in road accidents over the previous year.

With 3,085 cases in 2014, Jaipur leads the tally of road accidents in Rajasthan. However, deaths over

number of accidents were highest among all the major cities that had over 3,000, cases reported.



In Jaipur, 844 people died in 3,085 accidents (27 percent) and 2,801 were injured. In Jaipur, 848 accidents occurred in National Highway (NH) in which 719 people were dead while in Jodhpur and Kota the deaths on NH's were 132 and 51, respectively.

(Tol, 02.07.15)

Smart Transport System

To make Jaipur a smart city, the concerned authorities will soon implement the Intelligent Transport System (ITS). Moreover, electronic parking will also be developed at five places in the city. A senior official stated that all the crossings in the city will be brought, under the coverage

of cameras and based on the data received from them. This is how the traffic on the roads would be planned and managed.

It was also indicated that the intelligent transport system is the application of computer and communication technologies in dealing with transport problems.

The ITS enables providing timely feedback to the traffic managers and road users after collection of data. The system aims at enhancing safety of drivers, ensure better traffic efficiency and reduce congestion. (Tol, 26.08.15)

Bone Marrow Transplants

The Sawai Man Singh (SMS) hospital of Jaipur is set to become a centre for bone marrow transplantation with the second successful transplant performed in June. The first transplant was done in September 2009. But due to shortage of staff and other facilities, the transplants could not be continued.

Doctors of SMS claimed that the hospital currently acquires all necessary equipment and manpower

ULBs for Civic Engagement

An Advocacy meeting was organised by CUTS CART on August 27, 2015 in Jaipur, Rajasthan, realising the fact that rapid urbanisation is essential and this could be attained by strengthening Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).



Purushotam Biyani, Director cum Joint Secretary, Directorate of Local Bodies, and Government of Rajasthan said that the department is endeavouring to strengthen the ULBs and to improve the municipal services by provision financial assistance.

All mayors should be called by the Department of Local Bodies (DLBs) regularly to discuss their issues and grievances to ensure development work. There should also be better coordination between the DLBs and Municipal Corporations delivering the services efficiently. This was the outcome of the Mayor's conference organised in Kota, Rajasthan on September 23, 2015 by CUTS CART. Kota Mayor Mahesh Vijay Bhartiya stated that better coordination between Municipal Corporations and DLBs is the need of hour.



Presently, SMS is the only government-run hospital in the State, which is offering bone marrow transplantation".
(RP, 02.07.15)

for bone marrow transplant. Hemant Malhotra and Sandeep Jasuja of medical Oncology division of Department of Medicine teamed up to resume bone marrow transplants.

SMS hospital Superintendent Virendra Singh said, "There are hardly 10-12 hospitals in India, which conduct bone marrow transplants.

Jaipur Crowned as Creative City

The Pink City is likely to be bestowed upon the title of 'Creative City' under UNESCO Network of 'Creative Cities'. If this happens, it will be a hat-trick of recognitions for the city as it has already got this year, the titles of World Craft Council's 'World Craft City' and UNESCO's 'World Heritage City', making it the only city in India to grab three big titles in a single year.



The Network of Creative Cities has 69 members so far from 32 countries and covers seven creative areas – craft and folk art, design, film, gastronomy, literature, music and media arts. Varanasi had applied for title 'City of Music' while Jaipur had submitted the entry as 'City of Crafts and Folk Art'.
(CT, 30.09.15)



Metro Updates

Online Complaint Forums

The Jaipur Metro Rail Corporation (JMRC) has developed an online mechanism to receive complaints and suggestions online and act accordingly. On its official web site www.jaipurmetrorail.in, the Corporation has created a link on which any passenger can give opinions on 23 services directly linked with the riders.

The Metro body has uploaded information on the number of seats reserved for senior citizens and disabled and a query has also been made regarding the number and quality of seats.

Besides, the passengers were also asked to give remarks like satisfactory; needs improvement; good; and very good online on the same link, so that the Metro body could take action accordingly. In the past two months, the JMRC has received hundreds of opinions and has acted on many of them.
(DNA, 11.08.15)

Failing to Woo Investors

It seems Rajasthan Government's attempt to attract private investment in the public-private partnership (PPP) mode for the Jaipur Metro Phase II Project is unlikely to fructify soon, notwithstanding the fact that the companies of at least five countries have so far shown interest in the Project.

The companies that have reportedly shown interest in the Project included Singapore's public transport giant SMRT Corporation, the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) of Malaysia, Maglev Technology, USA; China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC) and Korea Rail Network Authority (KRNA).

The Phase-II Project scheduled to complete in 2021 will be 23 km-long comprising 20 stations connecting Sitapura Industrial Area in the south to Ambabari in the north via Ajmeri Gate and Mirza Ismail Road.
(MOI, 13.08.15)

Rescheduled Timings

Accepting passengers' suggestion, the JMRC has announced to reschedule train timings with effect from September 05, 2015.

The first train on September 05, 2015 would start from Mansarovar at 6.25 am instead of 6.45 am, and the last train from Chandpole will leave at 9:20 pm instead of 9 pm, an official spokesperson stated.

The new timings would help the students to travel to school on time and would also be beneficial for businessmen who can avail the Metro services after closing their shops during night, the spokesperson indicated quoting a JMRC order.
(NDTV, 03.09.15)



More Metro Trains

To cater to the needs of students, passengers of Sindhi Camp bus stand and railway station, the JMRC has decided to run three additional trains between Mansarovar and Chandpole corridor.

Similarly, last train from Chandpole will depart at 9.20 pm. As per the revised timetable, Metro will take 132 trips per day as against 129 trips. There will be a gap of 20 minutes between the first and second train from Mansarovar end. Similarly, there will be 20 minutes difference between the second last train and the last train.

The JMRC Director (Operations and System) C S Jingar said, "After the timings are revised, the Metro passengers can board at least seven trains from Jaipur railway station and 20 buses from Sindhi Camp bus stand".
(Tol, 04.09.15)

Is Water under Pressure in Rajasthan?

Water is the most crucial means for maintaining an environment and ecosystem conducive to sustaining all forms of life. Rajasthan is the State known for acute water scarcity and this problem was recognised even during the pre-independence and the old tradition of water conservation and harvesting is reflected in numerous old structures like *Tankas*, *Khadins*, *Johads*, *Bawaries* etc. After independence special impetus was given to development of various water resources.

Water Crisis in Rajasthan

Vasundhara Raje, Chief Minister of Rajasthan mentioned that at present, there was acute shortage of water in Rajasthan and over two-third of the State had been declared as 'dark zone'. Water in most of the dams had been reserved for drinking purposes. She indicated that the river-basin work initiated by the State Government needed dedicated efforts by all the stakeholders. In addition, she also warned that water conservation efforts were urgently required and the State Government is taking forward Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Project of river-linking, which is expected to solve Rajasthan's drinking water and irrigation problems. Raje also indicated that river-basin work initiated by the State Government required dedicated efforts by all the stakeholders.



Water is life's matter and matrix, mother and medium. There is no life, without water. – Albert Szent-Gyorgyi

Adopting 'State Water Policy' and Maharashtra Model

In addition, the Government of Rajasthan has recently adopted the State Water Policy, keeping in view the provisions included in the 'National Water Policy' and the specific conditions and problems of the State. The policy addresses all the issues for maximum development and optimum utilisation of scarce water resources in the desert State. The plan is based on some assumptions/projections regarding the development of water resources and the utilisation efficiencies. Additional Chief Secretary of State (Infrastructure) C S Rajan stated that all issues relating to water have been outlined and the State has perhaps the best water policy *vis-a-vis* other states. The implementation of the Policy has however been slow and a small part of the scheme has become functional and for effective execution of the Policy it was of utmost importance to get to know the first hand problems at the field-level.

To get rid of the extreme situation of water scarcity, Rajasthan is likely to adopt Maharashtra's *Jalyukta Shivar Abhiyaan*, which is the flagship programme launched by Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis. Under this programme, micro-irrigation systems would be encouraged for proficient use of water, hence increasing the irrigated area. After the successful implementation of the programme, a delegation from Rajasthan was sent to study and to get through the details of the scheme.

Water Resource Vision 2045

The problems being faced by the State at present and the future scenario with a long-term vision up to 2045 emphasises the need of time-bound action plan for successful implementation of the 'State Water Policy and Plan'. Water Resource Vision 2045 by water resource department has been prepared to highlight the short-term (up to 2015) and long-term (up to 2045) thrust areas and action plan, which are pre-requisites for successful implementation of the 'State Water Policy and Plan' and achieving the objective of optimum use of every drop of scarce and precious utilisable water resource.

Rajan also recommended rationalisation of water tariffs, use of PPP mode, review of water laws, water audits and said that water management should increasingly shift from engineering-based to local community-based. Furthermore, it is also envisaged that periodical review and evaluation of 'Water Policy' would help timely refinement/modification of the same, identifying thrust areas and action plan to achieve the objectives of the 'State Water Policy'. Moreover, effective implementation of the water conservation projects would surely bring a change in Rajasthan.

(This feature has been abridged from an article by Vivek Bhavsar, Special Correspondent of The Asian Age and Water Resource Vision of GoR. These were published in The Asian Age on 04.07.15 and waterresources.rajasthan.gov.in/24.07.15)

Sources: BS: Business Standard; CN: Category News; CD: Changing Tomorrow; DNA: Daily News Analysis; ET: Economic Times; LSC: Live Science Contributor; MOI: Mail Online India; NDTV: New Delhi Television; OC: Oddity Central; RP: Rajasthan Patrika; TMRG: TUMENMEZHRAYGAZ; TH: The Hindu; Tol: Times of India