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DEATH SENTENCE

Bhupendra Singh -*(Contd... from Last Issue)*

The procedure had critics even before Smith's execution. "It's an experimental procedure," says Dr Jeff Keller, President of the American College of Correctional Physicians. "Many things can go wrong." Deborah Denno, a criminologist at Fordham Law School who specialises in research into death penalty methods, said the procedure "is supposed to be painless, but I have to emphasise - that's in theory."

"These masks don't usually

don't fit people," she says. "They're not airtight, air can get in." Smith could have started vomiting or survived the attempted execution with brain damage, she says. Proponents of the method reject criticism and point to examples of nitrogen hypoxia occurring in industrial accidents, with victims apparently becoming unaware of what is happening to them. One study prepared for Oklahoma lawmak-



ers considering whether to allow nitrogen gas executions cited research that concluded "without oxygen present, inhalation of

(... Contd... on Page 4)

FREEBIES..AN INSULT TO TAX PAYERS.

Sreekumar Menon -

It has become a practice to promise freebies in every election. The more doubtful the party is, the more freebies. Don't forget, the country is going through a tough time. The average debt of each state is roughly 29% of its Gross State Domestic

Product or close to Rs 5 lakh crore. In Kerala it is above 33%. Anything above 20% is considered risky/poor governance. The debt in Tamil Nadu is approximately Rs 10.7 lakh crore and if the new CM Vijay has to honour the freebies he had promised, it will take an additional rev-

enue of Rs 90 k crore annually. The grand old party in Kerala has promised free transportation for all females in their state owned KSRTC. The fact remains that KSRTC is already in heavy loss and doesn't allegedly pay salary to their employees on time.

(... Contd... on Page 3)

NMMC SEIZES 158 KG OF BANNED PLASTIC, COLLECTS ₹1.55 LAKH IN FINES

Staff Reporter - Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation (NMMC) seized 158 kg of banned plastic and collected Rs 1.55 lakh in fines from 30 commercial establishments during a special anti-plastic enforcement drive conducted across all eight ward offices on June 12. The drive, aimed at curbing the use of single-use plastic and plastic carry

bags, was carried out as part of NMMC's ongoing environmental initiatives launched following World Environment Day. Officials took action against businesses found using prohibited plastic products, resulting in the seizure of a substantial quantity of banned plastic material and recovery of penalties.

(Contd... on Page 4)

NOIDA AIRPORT TO BEGIN OPS NEXT MONTH WITH INDIGO FLIGHTS TO LUCKNOW, BENGALURU

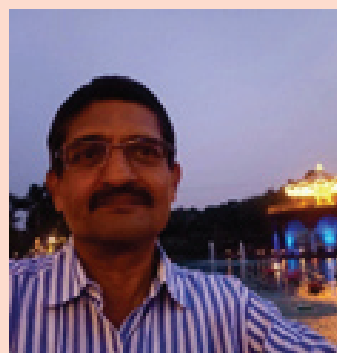


Staff Reporter - IndiGo on Thursday announced that it will start commercial flight

operations from the Noida International Airport in Jewar from June 15, becoming the launch carrier for the greenfield airport in western Uttar Pradesh. The first day flights will be to and fro Lucknow and Bengaluru, the airline said in a statement. Noida International Airport was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 28. IndiGo said it will be the first carrier to start commercial services from the airport, the

(Contd... on Page 3)

UGLIEST FACE OF REDEVELOPMENT EMERGING IN NAVI MUMBAI



Vishwarath Nair - Vashi, Navi Mumbai: Bawa Tower, Big Splash, two of Vashi's most prominent commercial landmarks, reportedly set for mega redevelopment, is in the eye of a storm, with the nearly 400 office owners and 120 shop owners on the premises in the dark, as the builder Shri Laxmichand Chheda is learnt to have negotiated a deal with Dream Developers to redevelop the property without the consent of the present stakehold-

ers who have been owning the premises for over 16 to 40 years. This is emerging as the ugliest face of redevelopment in the city as the present owners, in such large numbers, are being allegedly clandestinely conspired against. Chheda, in a recent interview to a local English daily informed that redevelopment of the complex is under active consideration and various proposals are being evaluated. This is a blatant lie as the deal with Dream Developers appears to have been inked, as the proposed developer has opened shop in the very premises and is inviting buyers to invest in the said property. Chheda further stated that redeveloping the 3 acres commercial property presents significant

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Editorial

CONCERN REGARDING THE NEET PAPER LEAKAGE

Through the columns of your esteemed newspaper, I would like to express my deep concern regarding the recent NEET paper leakage incident. NEET is one of the most important examinations in India, and lakhs of students work tirelessly for years to secure admission to medical colleges. Such malpractices destroy the spirit of fair competition and shake the confidence of students and parents alike. The leakage of examination papers not only affects deserving candidates but also raises serious questions about the security and transparency of our examination system. Honest students suffer immense stress, disappointment, and uncertainty due to the careless actions of a few individuals driven by greed and corruption. The authorities must conduct a thorough investigation and take strict action against all those involved. Stronger security measures, better monitoring systems, and stricter punishments should be implemented to prevent such incidents in the future. The government and examination boards must ensure that merit and hard work remain the only path to success. I hope the concerned authorities will act responsibly and restore the faith of students in the education system.

3 VASHI BAR EMPLOYEES BOOKED FOR ALLEGEDLY DIVERTING AND SELLING LIQUOR WORTH ₹1.37 CR

Staff Reporter - Three employees of a Vashi bar allegedly diverted and sold liquor worth Rs 1.37 crore over nearly two years, cheating the establishment's owner and prompting the Vashi Police to register a criminal breach of trust case against them. The accused, identified as Nilesh Mahadev Patil, Vinayak Patil and Kunal Bhagat, allegedly siphoned off liquor stocks purchased in the name of Sagar Restaurant and Bar in Vashi Sector 17 between April 2024 and December 2025, causing losses of Rs 1.37 crore to the business. According to police, the fraud came to light in January 2026 when bar owner Gordon Serrao noticed that payments to several liquor distributors were pending despite regular procurement of stock. Suspecting foul play, he conducted a detailed audit of bills and inventory records, which allegedly revealed large-scale discrepancies. "Nilesh Patil was entrusted with handling liquor stock, business transactions and excise-related work for the establishment. During the inquiry, it emerged that excess liquor had been ordered

and diverted without the owner's knowledge, resulting in substantial financial losses," a police officer said. Police said Patil had been working at the bar for nearly 15 years and enjoyed the owner's complete trust. When confronted about the discrepancies, he allegedly admitted to misappropriating funds, claiming he had developed a habit of playing an online game and required money to continue participating. Police further revealed that Serrao also owns a bar in Belapur Sector 15, where Vinayak Patil worked as a bouncer and Kunal Bhagat as a manager. The duo allegedly offered Nilesh Patil lucrative commissions in exchange for supplying liquor, claiming they had a large demand for stock. Acting on the arrangement, Nilesh Patil allegedly began placing orders for liquor far in excess of the Vashi bar's requirements from April 2024 onwards. Police said the excess stock was secretly diverted to Vinayak Patil and Kunal Bhagat, who allegedly sold it elsewhere while sharing commissions with him.

HUMAN RIGHTS

FREEDOM OF RELIGION

Religious freedom—Use of loudspeakers. - No religion prescribes that prayers should be performed by disturbing the peace of others nor does it preach that they should be through voice-amplifiers or beating of drums. In a civilized society in the name of religion, activities which disturb old or infirm persons, students, or children having their sleep in the early hours or during day-time or other persons carrying on other activities cannot be permitted. It should not be forgotten that young babies in the neighbourhood are also entitled to enjoy their natural right of sleeping in a peaceful atmosphere. A student preparing for his examination is entitled to concentrate on his studies without their being any unnecessary disturbance by the neighbours. Secondly, old and infirm are entitled to enjoy reasonable quietness during their leisure hours without there being any nuisance of noise pollution. Aged, sick, people afflicted with psychic disturbances as well as children up to 6 years of age are considered to be very sensible to noise. Their rights are also required to be honoured.

Singing of National Anthem vis a vis Fundamental Right. - The expulsion of the three children from



Adv. Sosamma Varghese
B.A., LL.B, PG (Human Rights)

the school for the reason that because of their conscientiously held religious faith, they do not join the singing of the national anthem in the morning assembly though they do stand up respectfully when the anthem is sung, is a violation of their fundamental right "to freedom of conscience and freely to profess, practise and propagate religion". "Though, the civil Government should not interfere with religious opinions, it nevertheless may deal as it pleases with such acts as are done in pursuance of religious beliefs without infringing the principle of freedom of religion."

Secular nature of the Indian Constitution. - It has been contended with considerable force that the Constitution is not even secular. As regards the importance of the right to religion, however, it is submitted that this has no relevance to secular-

ism and the decision in Bommai's case was, to the extent, wrong. The Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan (cited from Butt, Rafique, Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973, Mansoor Book House, Lahore, 1994) proclaims Islam to be the State religion, (Article 2), and also gives rights (Articles 20, 21 and 22) comparable to the right to freedom of religion granted in India. If, a proclaimed theocratic State gives these rights their presence in the Indian Constitution cannot serve to make it secular.

Discrimination on ground of religion. - In the case of Ahmedabad St. Xavier College Society v. State of Gujarat, the Supreme Court has recognised that while secularism eliminates God from the matters of State for the purpose of ensuring that no one shall be discriminated against on the ground of religion, the Constitution at the same time expressly guarantees freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion; "the Constitution makers were conscious of the deep attachment the vast masses of our country had towards religion, the sway had on their minds and the significant role it played, in their lives."

LAUGHTER, THE BEST MEDICINE



C.K. SUBRAMANIAM-HUMOUR- MORNING WALK MUSINGS

As a regular morning walker, I feel the pulse of the people going around me as they wish me on the way. I first go through a park cum play-

ground and as I enter an adjacent park I feel the newly laid walking track suit my style of walking. I never exert too much but at the same time try to walk briskly so as to sweat it out at the end of my morning routine. This has become a way of life. But at times you get much more energy and enthusiasm to walk like a military man and it attracts others as well. On a sunny morning day as I was walking stiff with my right and left legs going in a systematic way as I passed through my friends sitting at the Centre of the Park they

did make a note of it. One of the friends noticed and started shouting left - right, left-right and I kept up the spirit and walked according to his command. But I could not continue to do so for a longer time and my friend did not stop his command. To overcome this act of military parade in a public park, I did turn and salute my friend while continuing to walk in the same style. Noticing my undue respect for him, he stopped his command of saying left-right and thereby I escaped being subjected to

(Contd... on Page 4)



*From an
Easychair*

Jubel D'Cruz

LABOUR, CHILDHOOD, AND IDENTITY: A CALL FOR JUSTICE AND DIGNITY

Every year on May 1, the world observes Labour Day—a public holiday meant to honour the contributions of workers. Yet, beyond the symbolic celebrations, it is necessary to question whether society has made meaningful progress in addressing the persistent challenges faced by the labour class. For millions of workers, particularly in developing nations like India, daily life continues to be marked by poverty, illiteracy, and a lack of access to basic necessities. A large section of labourers—especially daily-wage earners—remains outside the protection of formal labour laws, deprived of job security, healthcare, pensions, and regulated working hours. Labourers form the backbone of society. From agriculture and construction to industry and services, their tireless efforts drive economic growth and national development. Yet,

despite their indispensable role, many workers continue to face exploitation. They are often underpaid, subjected to unsafe working conditions, and denied dignity in their workplaces. This stark contrast between contribution and recognition reflects a deep imbalance that demands urgent attention. One of the most pressing concerns linked to labour exploitation is the issue of child labour. In India, child labour remains a serious and deeply rooted problem, driven largely by poverty, lack of education, and weak enforcement of laws. Children, who should be in schools shaping their futures, are instead forced into work to support their families. This not only deprives them of their fundamental right to education but also harms their physical and mental well-being. Child labour perpetuates a vicious cycle of poverty. Without education,

these children grow up with limited opportunities, often continuing in low-paying, exploitative jobs. Many are employed in hazardous environments, exposing them to injuries, health risks, and psychological trauma. Despite legal frameworks prohibiting child labour, implementation remains inconsistent, allowing the practice to persist. Strict action against those who exploit children, along with stronger rehabilitation and education systems, is essential to break this cycle. Every child deserves a safe and nurturing environment—one that is free from exploitation and filled with opportunities for growth and learning. Ensuring access to quality education, social security, and family support systems is crucial in protecting children from being pushed into labour at an early age.

(Contd.. on next issue)

(Jubel D'Cruz is a freelance writer and the author of several books for children. He also writes letters to the editor for newspapers and magazines all across India on various social, national and environmental issues. He lives in Dombivili, Mumbai)

NOIDA AIRPORT TO BEGIN OPS ...

third in the National Capital Region (NCR). According to the airline, inaugural flights on June 15 will operate on the Lucknow-Noida-Bengaluru-Noida-Lucknow sector. As per the announced schedule, flight 6E 2278 will depart from Lucknow at 7.05 am and arrive in Noida at 8.05 am before departing for Bengaluru at 8.35 am and

landing there at 11.05 am. The return flight, 6E 2279, will leave Bengaluru at 3.45 pm and reach Noida at 6.20 pm before departing for Lucknow at 6.55 pm and arriving there at 8 pm. IndiGo said it will gradually introduce direct flights connecting Noida International Airport to more than 16 destinations across the country, including metro

cities such as Bengaluru and Hyderabad, besides tier-2 and tier-3 cities like Amritsar, Chandigarh, Dharamsala, Jaipur, Lucknow, Navi Mumbai, Pantnagar and Srinagar. The airline said bookings for the flights are being opened in phases through its website, mobile application and authorised travel partners. Aloke Singh, ●

FREEBIES..AN INSULT TO TAX PAYERS.

Also, the free transportation would have a great impact on the private bus industry in that state since 51% of travelers are females. Free transportation for differently abled persons or pension for senior citizens are understandable/worth considering. But, not free transport for all females. Kerala with a mere 3.6 crore population

is in debt to the tune of Rs 5.45 lakh crore, much above the average debt of other states. This freebie will kill the economy of a state if the promise made is without proper mobilization of funds, which they don't have. I am totally confused as to why the Supreme Court is silent on this subject. Its time the court inter-

venes with aggression and stops political parties from such promises that doesn't give justice mathematically. Unless democracy is made accountable, the country will face severe financial drought in the long run. This is gross insult to the tax payers. They pay taxes for the development of state and not giving bribe to voters. ●

UGLIEST FACE OF REDEVELOPMENT

..... *Contd. from Page 1*
challenges, particularly in terms of project economics and coordination among stakeholders. This too is another baffling lie as the present owners were not at all informed about their property being put up for sale and the deal proposals. Chheda, the Chairman and Managing Director of Rajkamal Group, one of the stakeholders in the project, further lied that 'all the members are supporting us'. The brazen backstabbing of the present owners has caught them unawares and they all are apparently scrambling to seek justice from the political bosses, judiciary, CIDCO and NMMC authorities and the media. They allegedly fear that the proposed developer has struck a deal of several crores and could spend some more to get the building declared dilapidated and forcibly evict the current owners, even as they gratify the political heavyweights, officials and media. Shri Vishal Choithramani, founder and chairman of Dream Developers (co-founders - Shri Vicky Artwani and Shri Sushil Mulchandani, key management - Preesha Choithramani and Varun Artwani) claims that the 45 storied twin premium commercial towers will give a new identity to the District Business Centre of the city with world-class infrastructure and facilities, setting international luxury commercial benchmarks and enhancing the commercial landscape of the city. The ground floor of the two massive malls will house all the existing shops in the project and the upper storeys of the Mall will house the offices, which the current stakeholders will find very high value enhancing, informed an official in the proposed developers' office. Interestingly,

this 12000 sq. mts. plot was allotted at a very concessional rate to Mitha Estates Pvt. Ltd. to develop an iconic recreation centre in the prime location of the city. Hundreds of citizens were sold gold and silver club membership. All these members were ultimately cheated and the property was allowed 'Change of Use' and converted into a commercial property in connivance with vested interests in CIDCO Ltd. and a builder. This property then changed hands and presently there are several illegal shops in the various entrances to the property, obviously in connivance with NMMC officials. These people may have no locus standi to claim rights in the said property and obviously the developer will stand to gain. Several storeys above the 3rd floor in Bawa Tower too are illegal as the said floors have not been granted Occupancy Certificate and the owners may find themselves unable to claim their title to the said premises. Overall, the proposed developer will find it a worthy proposal to deny genuine owners their due on grounds of illegality of ownership. Meanwhile, the rightful owners are gearing up for a long-drawn battle to assert their rights in the face of possible threats of demolition and eviction on grounds of structural instability of the building, unless the proposed developer lures them with an offer that they just cannot refuse. With rampant ongoing and proposed redevelopment projects all over the city, Navi Mumbai is all poised to witness a spate of big promises, bulldozing, lying and betrayal in the redevelopment projects in the city, though some of the reputed builders are all set to handover redeveloped projects in Navi Mumbai. ●

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HEALTH

NO HEADACHE MEANS NO BP?

Staff Reporter - "No headache means no BP?" Doctors bust common myths around high blood pressure. Dr Bipeen chandra Shamro, Cardiac surgeon in Mumbai, says: High blood pressure tends to develop silently without any symptoms. Hence, ignoring medicines, excess salt intake, and stress can take a toll on the heart. It is time to bust myths linked to high blood pressure and protect the heart. Currently, high blood pressure, also known as hypertension, is commonly seen in a large number of people. Still, many people end up believing myths and fail to address hypertension on time.

The delay in hypertension management can lead to a heart attack, stroke, and kidney disease. Understanding the facts can help people protect their heart health in time. **Myth 1: No headache means BP is normal** Fact: Many people believe that blood pressure tends to increase only when they experience headaches, dizziness, or even discomfort. But hypertension is labelled as a "silent killer" because it may not show symptoms for years. Even if a person feels healthy, high blood pressure can damage blood vessels and heart. Hence, it is imperative for everyone to regularly monitor their

BP levels after 30. Even those who are obese, have diabetes, or a family history of hypertension need to be careful, manage their BP, and take care of their heart. So, even if there is no headache but your BP is high, then take medication if advised by the doctor. **Myth 2: If the BP becomes normal, it's OKAY to stop medicines** Fact: Blood pressure comes within the normal range because the medicines recommended by the doctor are effective. Stopping medicines without consulting a doctor can cause BP to rise again and increase the risk of a heart attack. Don't abruptly stop medication

just because you are bored or feel better. The doctor will monitor the BP and adjust the dosage accordingly. **Myth 3: "Tension Se Nahi, Namak Se Badhta Hai BP"** Fact: Stress can also temporarily increase blood pressure. Though excess salt intake is one of the biggest reasons that can lead to uncontrolled hypertension. Packaged foods, chips, pickles, instant noodles, sauces, bakery products, and processed snacks are jam-packed with sodium and should be avoided by everyone to prevent hypertension. **Myth 4: Only elderly people get detected with high blood pressure** Fact: Currently,

even youngsters are getting detected with hypertension due to poor sleep, unhealthy eating habits, lack of exercise, smoking, obesity, and stress. Unfortunately, there is a surge in hypertension cases among people in their 20s and 30s too, which is a matter of concern. Hence, a nutritious diet, regular exercise, proper sleep, stress management, reducing salt intake, and timely medicines can be advised to everyone. Make sure to check the BP from time to time and also go for regular cardiac screening to prevent any heart-related problems. •

DEATH SENTENCE

..... *Contd. from Page 1*
only 1-2 breaths of pure nitrogen will cause a sudden loss of consciousness". Alabama State Attorney General Steve Marshall has called nitrogen gas "perhaps the most humane method of execution ever devised". Some witnesses to Smith's execution, though, said he did not lose consciousness within seconds and that he inhaled the gas for many minutes, thrashing all the while, before finally succumbing. The flurry of attention over Smith's execution comes as enthusiasm for the death penalty has ebbed across much of the US. The number of executions is down substantially from a peak of 98 in 1999, according to the DPIC. Not only are fewer death sentences being carried out, in fewer states - just 10 have executed a prisoner in the last decade - but fewer death penalties are being handed out by courts. Gallup, which has been tracking public attitudes towards the death penalty for nearly a century, says that 53% of Americans favour the death penalty for convicted murders. That figure is down from a high of 80% which the survey registered 30 years ago. Ms Maher says a variety of factors resulted in the death penalty becoming less common - not only botched executions, but nearly 200 exonerations of death row inmates, legal changes which prohibit mentally impaired people and juveniles from being put to death, and the increasing reluctance of juries to hand down death sentences. This trend is likely to continue. The case raises numerous questions: What is nitrogen hypoxia? What is required to administer it? Why is a new form of execution necessary? Nitrogen hypoxia is a method of suffocating a person by forcing them to breathe pure nitrogen, starving them of oxygen until they die. Despite its scientific - sounding name, "nitrogen hypoxia" is not a real medical term, says Joel Zivot, an associate professor of anesthesiology at Emory University, who co-authored the human rights complaint.

Nitrogen is an inert gas that makes up 78 percent of the air we breathe, passing in and out of the body harmlessly with every breath. A person can breathe pure nitrogen and not immediately realize there is a problem, but their cells and organs are slowly being deprived of the oxygen needed to function and will rapidly start to break down. Someone deprived of oxygen will pass out in minutes and die soon after when the heart stops beating, according to Zivot. Strangely the state is not required to demonstrate that a method of execution is not "cruel and unusual punishment, the burden is on the condemned inmate to show that it is torturous rather than the burden being on the state to show that it's not. So the state can make up anything it wants. When asked what the most humane way to execute someone would be, Corinna Barrett Lain, a law professor at the University of Richmond, who's writing a book on lethal injection her answer — the firing squad. "Death by firing squad is nearly instantaneous. That's certainly better than being electrocuted for five or six minutes or being gassed to death for six to 10 minutes or being slowly suffocated under a veneer of peacefulness for 10 to 20 minutes." As Prout's founder Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar says: "If a life for a life is considered an unsailable principle of justice, then there is nothing more to say. But remember that born criminals commit their crimes due to their physical or psychic abnormalities; are not the so-called civilized people who make no effort to cure such born criminals, guilty of the same crime? Does not capital punishment amount to cutting off the head to get rid of a headache? In my opinion to take the life of a born criminal of this type is as much a crime as it would be to pass a death sentence on a patient just because we could not cure the person's illness. It is the duty of a civilized society to arrange for born criminals to be cured of their ailments. Killing them to lighten the burden caused by their lives is certainly not indicative of a developed civilization." •

NMMC SEIZES 158 KG OF BANNED PLASTIC...

..... *Contd. from Page 1*
According to civic officials, Turbhe recorded the highest seizure, with 100 kg of banned plastic confiscated and Rs 45,000 collected in fines from eight establishments. Belapur reported Rs 30,000 in penalties and seizure of 10 kg of plastic, while Nerul saw Rs 10,000 in fines and 5 kg of plastic confiscated. In Vashi, authorities collected Rs 5,000 in penalties and seized 5 kg of plastic. Further action in

Koparkhairane resulted in Rs 20,000 in fines and seizure of 2 kg of plastic, while Ghansoli recorded Rs 30,000 in penalties and 28 kg of confiscated plastic. In Airoli, officials recovered Rs 15,000 in fines and seized 8 kg of banned plastic. The enforcement campaign was conducted under the guidance of NMMC Commissioner Dr Kailas Shinde and the supervision of Additional Commissioner Sunil Pawar. •

LAUGHTER, THE BEST MEDICINE ...

..... *Contd. from Page 2*
more upright steps till the end of the walking track. My other friends fell into

laughter and appreciated my spontaneous way of making my presence felt without hurting them in any way. •

Quotable Quotes

When someone
tells you that you can't,
don't believe it.
It's a reflection of
their limitations,
not yours.