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IN THE NEWS TODAY

INDIA

Immigration post

The people of Andaman have welcomed the Central government's decision to declare the Veer Savarkar International Airport as an authorised immigration check post for entry into and exit from India. The decision will open up the Port Blair Airport for direct international flights and immigration facilities. Efforts are being made for extending e-visa and visa on arrival facilities for passengers.

SC raps Centre

Reprimanding the Centre and the Meghalaya government for not taking enough steps for the rescue of the 15 miners trapped in an illegal coal mine since December 13, the SC expressed dissatisfaction over the steps taken so far. A bench of Justices A K Sikri and S Abdul Nazeer asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta to inform it by Friday the steps which the government intends to take and said, "Every minute counts." P7

Avalanche death

A soldier died and another was injured when an avalanche hit an Army post along the Line of Control in J&K's Poonch on Thursday. The avalanche hit the post of Rashtriya Rifles in Sawjian sector in the morning and buried two soldiers. A rescue operation was launched immediately. While one jawan died on the spot and another was shifted to hospital.

Bulandshahr arrest

A month after Bulandshahr mob violence over alleged cow slaughter, which claimed lives of inspector Subodh Kumar Singh and a protestor, a Special Investigation Team rounded up Yogesh Raj, the number one accused and district convener of Bajrang Dal, in a late night swoop on Wednesday. Raj was arrested from Khurja locality. P9

INTERNATIONAL

Bangla MPs sworn in

Bangladesh's newly-elected Parliament members took oath on Thursday, even as the Opposition boycotted the ceremony to protest "rigged" elections. BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam said the opposition alliance will file complaints with the election tribunal. PM Sheikh Hasina has dismissed the allegations.

China creates history

China's Chang'e-4 lunar rover made history when it made the first-ever soft landing on the far side of the moon and sent back close-up images. The robotic spacecraft is carrying instruments to analyse the region's geology and will conduct biological experiments. US space agency NASA congratulated the Chinese on their success. P16

BOMBS. STABS. STREET FIGHTS. SABARIMALA STIR GETS UGLY

● Violence during hartal in Kerala ● 100 buses damaged ● 745 held ● 559 cases registered

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @TPuram

KERALA resembled a war zone on Thursday as the dawn-to-dusk hartal, called by the Sabarimala Karma Samithi protesting the entry of two young women into the Sabarimala temple in violation of customs, turned ugly. The BJP supported the hartal.

The day saw unprecedented violence marked by hurling of crude bombs, street fight between BJP and CPI(M) cadre, setting KSRTC buses on fire, and even attacks on journalists. This prompted Governor P Sathasivam to seek an urgent report from Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on the law-and-order situation in the state.

As BJP-RSS protesters went on a rampage on Thursday, the police hit back using brute force with the CPI(M) cadre, too, joining in.

Violence was reported from across the state. Bombs were hurled at Nedumangad and Thalassery while five BJP workers were stabbed at Vadanappally near Thrissur. Shops across the state were forcefully shut down, police vehicles



Police lathi-charging activists of the Sabarimala Karma Samiti and the BJP after violence broke out near the Govt Victoria College in Palakkad on Thursday | EXPRESS

Sought an urgent report from the Chief Minister on the incidents of violence and destruction of private & public property

P Sathasivam, Kerala Governor

torched, 100 KSRTC buses damaged and several party offices vandalised.

The police have arrested 745 people, 628 were taken into preventive custody and 559 cases were registered against those

indulging in violence.

With the state witnessing widespread clashes, Opposition leader Ramesh Chennithala spoke to the Governor seeking his urgent intervention to ensure law-and-order in the state.

CM Vijayan said strict action would be taken against those who indulged in violence. Instructions have been given to extract compensation from those indulging in the destruction of public property.

With streets in Palakkad, Kozhikode, Thrissur and many parts of the state capital burning, tension prevailed across the state. Though traders in Kozhikode and Thiruvananthapuram tried to open shops in the morning defying the hartal call, the protestors opposed their move by pelting stones and threatening the traders.

BJP MP V Muraliedharan met Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh seeking an NIA probe into the entry of two young women into the Sabarimala temple. He alleged that a major Maoist conspiracy was behind the development.

Meanwhile, the Kerala High Court on Thursday flayed the police for allowing 'Maniti' women from Tamil Nadu to proceed from Nilakkal to Pampa in a private vehicle during the Mandalam season and orally observed that it was an imprudent action.

GRIM REVELATION

NOT A MINOR ISSUE

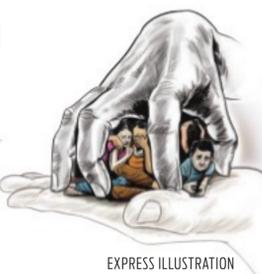
Children at shelter homes are often left unsupervised at night, subjected to corporal punishment and not provided adequate medical or legal aid

3,77,649
Total number of children at shelter homes

41,730
Total number of orphans

7,422
Number of kids in conflict with law

7,676
Number of abandoned children



EXPRESS ILLUSTRATION

9,589
Total number of shelter homes

65%

Shelter homes segregate children on the basis of age and gender

3,70,227
Number of children in need of protection and care

2,216
Children in homes who have been victims of trafficking

1,764
Children in homes who have been victims of abuse

469
Children have been victim of child marriage

HORRORS AT KIDS' SHELTERS: REPORT

SUMI SUKANYA DUTTA @New Delhi

A large number of children in shelter homes are often left unsupervised at night, subjected to corporal punishment for "discipline", given sub-standard food, not provided adequate medical or legal aid, and left to languish for years without proper education or skill development.

These are some of the findings of the first-ever nationwide mapping and review of over 9,589 child-care institutions that house nearly 3.8 lakh minors who are either in conflict with the law, orphans, victims of trafficking, or abandoned by their families.

Incidentally, the mapping of shelter homes was on when the Muzaffarpur case in Bihar — where over 20 girls were being sexually abused repeatedly over

months, and probably years — came to light.

The review was led by a four-member committee headed by Ratna Anjan Jena, statistical advisor to the Union Women and Child Development Ministry, and was submitted to the government in September, 2018.

It highlighted that more than 50 per cent of shelter homes are not producing children before the Child Welfare Committees or Juvenile Justice Boards, as mandated by the Juvenile Justice Act.

Further, just 7 per cent of these homes have ever been audited socially.

The national average of the percentage of homes that submit children's social investigation reports to the CWCs or JJBs, as required by the law, is just 31 per cent.

CONTINUED ON P7

Did Trump get Afghanistan facts wrong in Modi jibe?

RAMANANDA SENGUPTA @New Delhi

US President Donald Trump on Wednesday sneered at Prime Minister Narendra Modi for funding a library in Afghanistan, even as he sought more Indian involvement in the strife-torn country.

The Indian Prime Minister is "constantly telling me he built a library in Afghanistan... You know what that is? That's like five hours of what we spend. And we're supposed to say, 'Oh, thank you for the library.' I don't know who's using it in Afghanistan," Trump said in a press meet after his first Cabinet meeting of the year.

But sources in India expressed ignorance about any major library built by India in Afghanistan.

"Some library could have been built under some small development partnership, but it's unlikely PM (Narendra Modi) mentioned that to him," said one source.

This appeared to be corroborated by Parwiz Kawa, an Afghan poet, journalist and winner of the East West Center's "Journalist of Courage & Impact" Award.

Kawa tweeted a picture of the new Afghan parliament built with Indian help and said: "This is the 'library' that president @realDonaldTrump is talking about. He has mixed the parliament building with a library in a conversation with @narendramodi. I am not sure if the right people get into this building, but I know that this building is already in use."

The building was inaugurated by PM Narendra Modi on December 25, 2015. In his rambling interview, Trump noted that "Russia used to be the Soviet Union. Afghanistan made it Russia because they went bankrupt fighting in Afghanistan," and asked India, Russia, Pakistan and other neighbouring countries to take responsibility for Afghanistan's security.

Continued on P9



I could give you an example where I get along very well with India and PM Modi. But he is constantly telling me, he built a library in Afghanistan. Library! That's like five hours of what we spend (in Afghanistan)

Donald Trump, US President

SOCIAL EVIL

Virginity test on Pune bride raises hackles

ABHIJIT MULYE @Mumbai

A 'virginity test' conducted by members of the Kanjarbhat community in Pune has once again raised the hackles of activists after a two-minute video showing the social practice surfaced recently.

In the video, a *jaat panchayat*, or group of elders, are seen asking a recently married boy if he could confirm that the girl he had married was indeed a virgin.

In conformity with the social practice, the groom is heard saying "samadhan hai" (yes satisfied) thrice after which the girl and boy's relatives are seen offering money to the community.

Confirming the incident, Sunil Malke, a former Congress corporator and business-

man in Pune, said the video was from his son's marriage last week. The girl also belongs to a well-off family.

"He (my son) was asked whether he was satisfied with the marriage and he admitted that. I don't think there is anything wrong in it," Malke said.

He said the ritual could not be called a virginity test. "It has nothing to do with virginity tests. We are a respectable family and I'm opposed to such things," Malke said, adding that certain people jealous of his stature were trying to tarnish his and his community's image.

Brides being subjected to a virginity test are not new among the Kanjarbhat community of Maharashtra.

Earlier, a groom had to produce blood-stained bed sheets before the *jaat panchayat* to prove that the girl he had married was a virgin.

But after a sustained campaign by social activists against the practice, the virginity test has been modified. Now the

groom, after the first night with the bride, only has to testify to her virginity by saying "samadhan hai" thrice.

"This is a 450-year-old ritual in our community. A girl who doesn't bleed on her wedding night can be subjected to beating, humiliation or even divorce and her family can be made to pay a hefty fine," said Vivek Tamaichkar of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences who has been working against the ritual.

A girl is told about the family tradition and her consent is sought. It (the test) is done before members of the family and not the whole community. Certain people are trying to tarnish the image of our community. This is being done by certain publicity seekers

Vishnu Bhat, Kanjarbhat community leader

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When Isaac Newton was a young boy, his mother tried to pressurise him to become a farmer. However, he was so bad at farming that she reluctantly sent him to college to study.

AUTO/TREND

TAKING CHARGE

These India-bound electric vehicles are the ones to look out for, as we move towards cleaner and greener mobility

OUR nation is set on becoming an all-electric country by 2030 and car manufacturers are already working towards introducing pure electric drive vehicles in the market as early as 2020. We take a look at some exciting new electric vehicles (EVs) expected to launch in India in the near future.
—Vikram Gour

JAGUAR I-PACE

The Jaguar I-Pace boasts fine craftsmanship and a beautifully sculpted interior which makes it a product that has that authentic Jaguar DNA. Add to that, the I-Pace has been designed on a new architecture that utilises the best technology available in order to deliver an EV that's not just practical but a capable performer as well. The electric motors have been designed in-house by Jaguar Land Rover and offer a combined power output of 400 PS and 700 Nm of torque. The I-Pace has a tested range of 500 kms per charge. *Expected price ₹65-70 lakh.



MOTORSCRIBES

(A pitstop for modern-day car and bike enthusiasts, this column features the latest machines, reviews, roadtrips and more. By a team of automotive insiders who call themselves MotorScribes)



NISSAN LEAF

This is an EV that possesses sharp lines, LED projector headlights, floating roof design and comes with the signature Nissan grille. It gets all the bells and whistles which include a large touchscreen infotainment system, digital driver display, climate control air-conditioning and a very premium fit. The Leaf is a large car that offers ample room for five adults and comes with an enhanced battery pack that allows for 250 km of range on a single charge. It is expected to be introduced as an import initially. The price will be in the ₹20 lakh range.

MINI ELECTRIC CONCEPT

A production version of the MINI Electric Concept is expected to be unveiled in 2019. Looking at the future of urban electric mobility, this automobile will focus on delivering the same driving excitement that customers have come to love about the brand. The electric motor on board will offer a quick response and the precision-tuned suspension will ensure that 'go-kart' feel. The range of the MINI Electric Concept has also been maximised. *Expected price ₹40 lakh.



AUDI E-TRON

The Audi e-tron is a full-size SUV that carries a sharp futuristic look and has an amazing on-road presence. It comes fitted with two powerful electric motors and a new generation quattro drive system, which can go from 0-100 kmph in 5.7

seconds and has a range of over 400 kilometres. The two electric motors churn out 300 kW of power. Adding to its practicality, during 90 per cent of all decelerations the e-tron recovers energy using electric motors. In fact, Audi uses an integrated electrohydraulic brake system in order to maximise energy recuperation. *Expected price ₹75 lakh.



HYUNDAI KONA

Hyundai India has announced that their first EV for India will, in fact, be the Kona — which is set to arrive by 2020. It is a seemingly robust SUV with a fluidic design theme and will come fitted with a state-of-the-art, in-car connectivity system. Powering it will be an electric motor and an efficient battery pack which will give 400 km per charge. *Expected price around ₹20 lakh.



TATA TIGOR EV

Tata Motors showcased their electric ambitions at this year's Auto Expo held in New Delhi in February 2018 with a range of their existing cars albeit with an electric drivetrain. Following up on that, the Indian conglomerate has done a soft launch of the Tigor EV which is currently on offer only to the EESL (Energy Efficiency Services Limited) of the Central Government, however, the plan is to introduce it for sales to the public by 2019. It is currently powered by a 30 kW electric motor and a 216 Ah battery pack that gives it a range of 130 km. It is capable of touching a top speed of 100 kmph and is currently offered in the XM trim which gets dual front airbags, air-conditioning and power windows as standard features. *Expected price ₹8 lakh.

Spot your sweet spa for a perfect rejuvenation

EXPRESS FEATURES

SPAS worldwide have been known as places of healing and rejuvenation for thousands of years now. The modern world boasts of many options — some budget, some luxurious and some heritage. It very important not only for the client to understand what he/she wants from the experience but also for the spa to understand what it is that the client is looking for.

Vibha Khanna Rastogi of Sawadhee Traditional Thai Spa tells us what to look out for while choosing a spa. "Sanitation is a key aspect of the spa experience and factors like hygiene and cleanliness, which are often taken for granted by local spas are important."

Luxury spas make sure that the towels, bathroom and bed sheets all are spic and span. They thrive on attention to detail.

Check if your spa is using organic and chemical free products that do not cause any harm to the environment. "They use their own blend of custom made oils in different fragrances for a variety of massages. The body scrubs are made from pure ingredients like chocolate, honey, olive oil, yogurts, essential oils, oats, coffee, almond paste, rice powder etc. These have a number of natural properties that benefit the skin."

Customisation is another feature that luxury spas offer. "They have all kinds of massages and therapies from across the world that help the client rejuvenate. The therapists are trained to deliver each massage differently depending upon the needs and wants of the clients. They are also highly experienced and know how to tackle the correct



Choose from a great variety of treatments

Hot stone massage, potli massage, sports massage, Thai traditional massage, deep tissue massage, body scrubs, facials, traditional Javanese lulur are some examples of the kind of varied services that spas provide.

pressure points in different situations, making the client feel more at ease," she says.

The therapists should also have knowledge about the kind of massages that the spa has to offer, and can recommend which massage will suit them the most depending upon their needs and problems.

"A total package of all things desirable and relaxing is what a good luxury spa is. Spas today are constantly evolving just as their consumer is evolving and working towards providing the best quality spa services at the most affordable prices for the client," she concludes.

Weaving traditional art on a global canvas

ANGELA PALJOR

SHE seamlessly blends Indian research and craftsmanship with modern-day western silhouettes. Designer Payal Jain is known for being synonymous with eternal style. "I believe my designs have a western body and an Indian soul," says Jain, whose philosophy is evident in her work which has matured with time.

"The timeless and simple designs tread through decades and remain evergreen and always amongst our favourite possessions. When it comes to design, I tend to follow an understated and minimalistic approach. Fashion for me has always been about my love for textile," says Jain.

Jain grew up in a family that shared the love for art, and by the age of eight, she had already attended a few hundred painting and sculpture exhibitions and had heard all the legendary Indian musicians perform live. She learned classical Hindustani music, Odissi dance, tabla, drawing and painting during her childhood, and spent a lot of time absorbing various art forms, all of which have strongly influenced her design sensibility.

"I took figure drawing and still life classes at Triveni Kala Sangam when I was ten. My sense of proportion, aesthetics and design all evolved from that point onwards. But fashion was suggested as a career option by a close friend and once I discovered my love for textiles and crafts, there was no looking back. Most of my collections over the years speak of art forms, artists, music and architecture as inspirations. They continue to inspire my designs, and my design ethos is based on art and design in totality," says

Jain who is now focusing on her Pret label, most of which she exports to the US and other countries.

Jain believes that her fashion label is an extension of her personality, as is the case for any artist and their expression through every creative medium. "I work with Indian textiles and crafts and have always been passionate about creating fabrics from scratch. My deepest joy lies in being able to see what I have envisioned, come alive on a weaver's loom or embroiderers' adda. It takes a lot of time, patience, love and passion to wait and watch each collection slowly take shape. The process can take anywhere from one month to 24

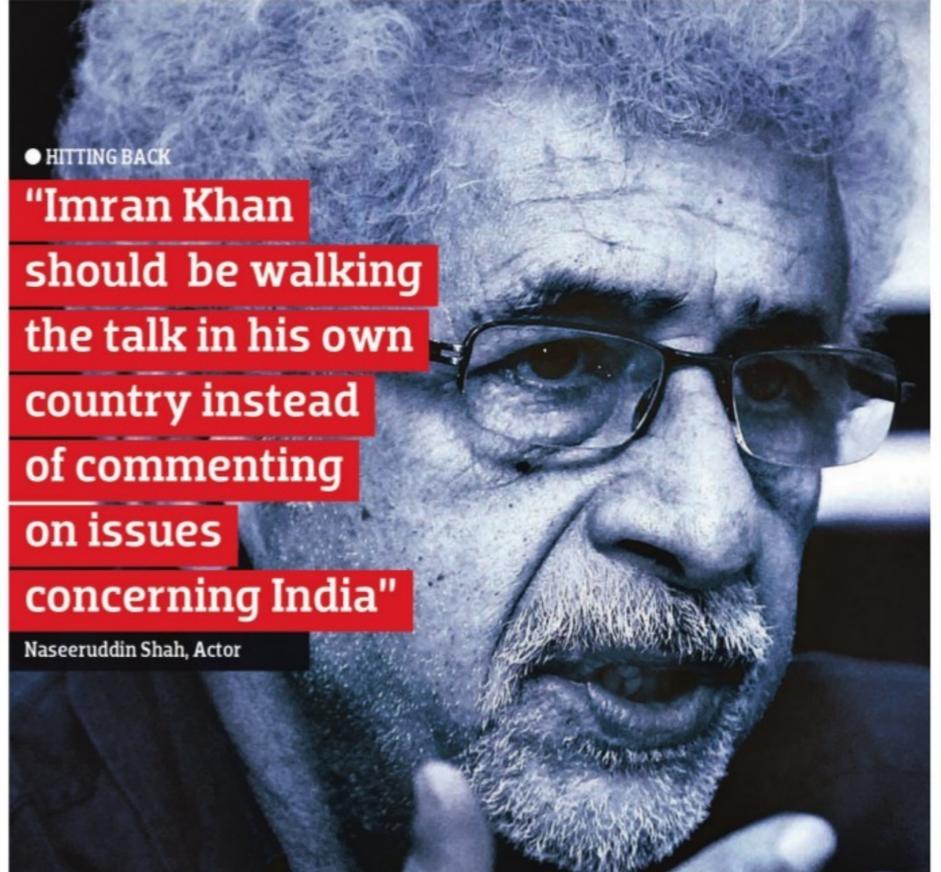


Designer Payal Jain

months. The final result, however, may never be visible to an onlooker but the pleasure of creating it from a simple thought is absolutely unparalleled," she says.

A self-proclaimed workaholic, Jain loves and breathes her work. Her day begins early around six with yoga, pranayama and meditation. After a light breakfast, she is all set to work. "I am at my office by 9.30 and before I know, it's evening and time to head back home," shares Jain who is proud of her Indian roots and rich textile heritage. It is a constant endeavour to work with Indian textiles and crafts, many of which are on the verge of extinction. "All my collections are a vast canvas of organic, natural and handloom textiles with much experimentation in traditional embroidery techniques, interpreted in a modern and contemporary context for the global woman of today. I feel blessed to have been born as an Indian and have the opportunity to be able to work with this endless treasured heritage. My entire team works with experts and clusters across the country to drive this tradition forward," she says.

After a day's work, evenings are for family and close friends. She travels extensively, but there's always a book or two tucked inside her luggage. "I like to reinvent myself constantly. I am looking forward to a bright, beautiful and inspiring year ahead," she concludes.



HITTING BACK

"Imran Khan should be walking the talk in his own country instead of commenting on issues concerning India"

Naseeruddin Shah, Actor

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