

SHORT STORIES

All India ophthalmological meet to be organised in city



The 69th All India Ophthalmological Conference 2011 (AIOC) will be held at the University's Convention Hall in the city from February 3 to 6. More than 13,700 doctors and ophthalmologists from across the world are expected to attend the four-day conference. The conference is conducted by All India Ophthalmological Society, a registered society, which works for the promotion of ophthalmic science and development. The conference will be inaugurated on February 3 by the chief justice of Gujarat high court SJ Mukhopadhyay.

Burglars escape with valuables in Satellite

A family who took a good night's sleep after attending the marriage function of a relative woke up to a loss of Rs3.20 lakh. The Dholakia family of Satellite had gone to sleep after attending a wedding ceremony. Soon burglars struck and escaped with cash and jewellery. Rajesh Dholakia had first mentioned in the complaint that the burglars escaped with Rs5.70 lakhs but later found some jewellery worth Rs2.50 lakh scattered in the house. Dholakia's bungalow is located near Prernatirher Derasar in Satellite.

Liftman dies under mysterious circumstances

Ranchodhbhai Bhanabhai, 75, working as a liftman at Rajlaxmi shopping centre, Gheekanta, Kalupur was found dead under mysterious circumstances in the lift-well on Tuesday. Fire brigade team recovered his body on Tuesday. The reason behind the incident is yet to be known.

Togadia condemns radio-tagging of students

VHP leader Pravin Togadia has condemned the US government's act of radio-tagging the students of 'Tri-Valley University, accusing it as an insult. He said that the electronic tags fixed on the students should be immediately removed, and they should be admitted in authorised universities in US. He said that the students had completed all legal formalities for studying in US, and it was wrong to blame them for the fraud perpetrated by the university, reiterating the demand of 'Land, Forest and Water belong to People'.

WEATHER & ALMANAC

Temperature		Wednesday, February 2, 2011	
Maximum	31.0°C	Shri Vikram Samvat 2067, Sake Era 1932, Sun	
Minimum	21.0°C	Uttrayan, Dakshin Gole, shishir Ritu, Magh Krishna	
Humidity	87%	Paksha Amavasya whole time, Nakshatra	
Sunrise	7.13 am	Uttrasadha till 12.42pm, Yoga Siddhi till 8.24pm, Karan Chatuspada till 7.13pm and after that Nag starts	
Sunset	6.32 pm	Rahu Kala : 12pm to 1.30pm	
Moonrise	6.26 am	Yam Ganda : 7.30am to 9am	
Moonset	5.07 pm	Best Period : 10.30am to 12pm, and 4.30pm to 6.30pm	
Forecast			
Weather will be mainly sunny in all districts of Gujarat state & in Diu, Daman, Dadara Nagar Haveli.			

AHMEDABAD UPPFRONT

Celebrating Ahmisa



'Festival of non-violence through arts' came to an end with Mallika Sarabhai's performance *Sva Kranti: A Revolution Within*, at Natarani on Tuesday. - Piyush Patel, DNA

Three buildings razed, many more to follow

The civic body is likely to start demolition of four to five new buildings today

DNA Correspondent

The Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation continued its demolition drive in the central zone on the fourth day after the fatal mishap at Saudagar ni Pol in Kalupur on Friday. While three sites have been demolished, AMC began pulling down three more yesterday.

floor of Jacobbai Market at Railwaypura in Kalupur. It had sealed the property on Sunday and was to begin demolition work on Monday evening itself but did not. Moreover, two more sites,

Karnavati Plaza in Railwaypura and Dilnamaz Pathan's building in Patwa Sheri, are also undergoing flattening. In all demolition work is on at six sites in the city.

Meanwhile, AMC has carried out primary inves-

tigation to determine the root cause behind the collapse in Saudagar ni Pol, but detailed investigation is yet to begin. In the primary report RP Mahida, city engineer, said that structural defects and poor quality of construction lead to the incident.

"The detailed investigation will be carried out once the four floors of the building are demolished and debris are removed," said Mahida. The detailed report will examine the role of the water wells in the foundation of the building in the catastrophe.

The civic body is also likely to start demolition at 4-5 new buildings in the central zone today.

WAR ON ENCROACHMENTS

A five-storeyed building in Kajuri ni Pol, Mandir ni Khadki at Kadiakui in Kalupur and Asfaq Vijapurwala's building in Mirghawad have already been demolished.

The civic body started demolishing the second



One of the buildings being demolished after the fatal mishap at Saudagar ni Pol in Kalupur - Pankaj Shukla, DNA

DCB has other Bata bros on their radar

DNA Correspondent

After the arrest of Mehboob Baig alias Senior and Salim Shaikh alias Bata in connection with the building collapse in Kalupur, the Detection of Crime Branch (DCB) is now focusing on the other Bata brothers named in the FIR.

If sources are to be believed the brothers will soon be nabbed. DCB sources also said that Salim was working for Senior. The police have also identified owner of the land as Mohammad Patangiya and he too may be arrested soon. Sources in DCB said that the investigating agency is tracing the whereabouts of Munaf and Hanif Bata. The Bata brothers had been absconding since the collapse of the building on January 28, which left five dead and 16 injured. Joint commissioner of police, DCB, Mohan Jha said that several other people may also be arrested. "We have

been handed over the investigations, and we will try to put an end to the land mafias in the Walled City area," he said, adding that the DCB will also work with the AMC in this connection. He said the agency will also quiz structural engineers and other builders connected to the collapsed building. Sources close to the development told DNA that Salim had gone to Maharashtra and was hid-



Salim Bata in DCB custody

AMC officials also under DCB's scanner

Sources in DCB said that the police will also look at officials who turned a blind eye to the illegal buildings. They will also try to find out why the illegal construction was not stopped despite several complaints regarding the same.

ing there for the last few days.

However, he then tried to move to Bharuch and was nabbed from there.

Sources close to the builders in the Walled City claimed that Munaf was hiding in Ajmer. Salim, has been named in the police complaint that was filed following the building collapse. He was the main builder behind the structure.



ANALYSIS

Manjula Pradeep

Dalit oppression result of myriad yrs of caste system

Violence against Dalits is the outcome of thousands of years of subjugation due to the existence of the caste system. But the situation of Dalit women becomes more vulnerable due to the intersectionality of caste with gender. The oppression against Dalit women becomes multiple and is manifested through extreme forms of atrocities committed against them by non-Dalits and violence by the Dalits.

After the framing of the Indian constitution, very few laws have been enacted to protect the rights of Dalits. One of the laws whereby some relief is given to the rights of the Dalit women is sec 3 (1) (X1) and 3 (1) (X11) under prevention of atrocities against SC and ST Act, 1989. There are certain sections under Indian Penal Code (IPC) for the protection of women in general, where Dalit women are also covered.

Some of the important sections relating to gender violence under the IPC are sec. 304B (dowry death), sec. 306 (abetment to suicide) sec. 354 (assault or use of criminal force on a woman with intent to outrage

Through the legal aid programme, we provide legal aid, moral and social support to the survivors and victims of caste and gender based violence in Gujarat. Navsarjan has dealt with and is working on several cases of extreme forms of violence against Dalits and Dalit women. One of these cases was the multiple rape of a female Dalit student in the Patan PTC College. Although the six accused were sentenced to life imprisonment, in the judgment, the court removed the sections under the Atrocity Act, its stand being that the rape survivor was raped by a non-Dalit and Dalit accused so it won't fit in as an atrocity case.

There are several cases of rape of Dalit girls and women being handled by Navsarjan in the past few years and are being highlighted in the media, but in how many cases is the criminal justice system ensuring that the accused are punished under the law?

A case of sexual trafficking of a Dalit girl who was kidnapped from the primary school in Bavla and sold off at many places is going on in the Ahmed-



For representation only

her modesty), sec. 376 (rape), sec. 498 A (punishment for subjecting a married woman to cruelty). Apart from the IPC sections there are no stringent laws for the protection of the rights of women. A law to protect women against domestic violence has been enacted in 2005, but it does not impose any punishment to the accused.

Gujarat as an independent state is celebrating 50 years of its existence and the prevention of atrocities Act enacted on January 30, 1990, has completed 20 years. The population of Dalits in Gujarat as per the National Census of 2001 is 7.01 % of the total population. While boasting about its development and progressiveness, the government of Gujarat also needs to be questioned on the grounds of implementation of laws and sections for the protection of Dalits and Dalit women's rights. As per the fifth report of the National Commission on SC and ST of 1998-1999, Gujarat stands second i.e. 62 cases per one lakh population, in terms of volume of crime against Scheduled Castes, just after Rajasthan.

Navsarjan, an organisation dedicated to the upliftment of Dalits, has been addressing the issues of social justice and rights of Dalits and Dalit women in particular for more than 20 years in Gujarat.

abad Sessions court for more than one year, but due to weak criminal justice system, the survivor is still awaiting justice. Another case of gang rape of a Dalit girl who was studying in the 12th grade in a high school in Limbdi town is pending in the Limbdi Sessions court. The rape survivor has sent an application to the state legal department for appointment of Nainaben Bhatt as special public prosecutor, but the state is denying appointing her without giving any valid reasons.

The recent cases of gang rape and trafficking of young Dalit girls and women set off alarm bells to the vulnerable position of Dalit women in the state. Ultimately the question to the state is, "Is there an effective criminal justice system in place to ensure safety and dignity of the Dalit community and Dalit women especially?" The time has come when Dalit women should be recognised as a distinct social group rather than classifying them under the general women or Dalit category. Accordingly the state should evolve and implement a specific focus and programmes on Dalit women's rights within the broader framework of the Dalit and women's empowerment agenda.

The writer is a commentator on Dalit issues

Letters to the editor

A good decision

It is pleasantly surprising to learn that you have done away with the edit page. As rightly observed by you, it's more punditry than expert comment. Also, some newspapers may have taken pride in dishing out erudite editorials, but more often than not, these have been a reflection of which political party a newspaper is inclined to favour. Now that you have decided to restrict penning an editorial only when a news event warrants a stand by your paper, it is bound to mould public opinion and even influence decision making on the part of the government. The editorial page no longer attracts the reader and many skip reading it. Your approach of giving

comments spread across various pages will make your newspaper reader-friendly. Lastly, what is heartening is that Letters to the Editor column has not only survived, but has been accorded more space.

Sandeep Kumar
Ahmedabad

PM should act

The world watches with bated breath the revolution in Egypt and Tunisia as hundreds of thousands of people revolt against dictatorships and corruption. The message one gets after watching these events unfold is that you cannot take people for granted for long. Hats off to the people who have the courage to effect

change. We in India are also facing a similar quandary over what needs to be done to stir our present government from their deep slumber. When Manmohan Singh took over as Prime Minister we as Indians looked up to him as one of the cleanest of our politicians -- and a reformist who could take India forward. But what we got after trusting in his leadership are scams, corruption and nepotism. Though he still remains as an individual with a clean image, his party and allies have taken the country for a ride. Singh has remained a mute spectator to the misdoings of his ministers. Even after the Supreme Court ruling he has maintained silence on the whereabouts of black money.



One gets a feeling that many of the heavyweights in his party and allies are involved and hence he is silent on the issue. The PM promised action on the CWG scam and today all the accused are out on bail and the main culprit is still to be arrested. Action in the 2G scam was delayed and

it required a court intervention to wake the govt up. Yet the ruling party men are shamelessly talking to the same party for seat sharing arrangements. The apparent lack of work ethics in your senior minister, who is very close to the sugar and onion lobby, very clearly shows his involvement in such crises and yet he assumes an important position in your government. Whenever such issues are brought up by the media your party spokesperson and ministers try to divert the attention to other topics and make it a political issue. If a million people march to bring about a revolution in Egypt, we Indians are capable of a billion people march! Please do not force us to take to the

streets. We have almost lost all the confidence in the way the country is being ruled. If people's anger pours into the streets then it can cause chaos and will result in loss of property and lives. Hence we humbly request you to please take concrete action against people irrespective of their political affiliations and bring about a change before it is too late.

Krishna Kumar
Ahmedabad

Haj subsidy

On January 28 the Supreme Court finally upheld state funding of Haj subsidy. According to Islamic scholars Haj pilgrimage should not be made by taking a loan and it

must be exclusively funded out of one's income or savings whereas in govt, expenditure on Kumbha Melas etc is not restricted to Hindus only since foreigners, non Hindus, Nagababas etc participate in them. More importantly, the Haj subsidy is paid by the govt to airlines as transportation charges only for Muslims. One feels that taxes paid by Hindus are diverted by the govt to Muslims as Haj subsidy, without any correlation of taxes paid by that community. It's advisable to have the January ruling reviewed by a full bench of the Supreme Court headed by the C.J., as per Article 137 of the Constitution. Over to J Bandukhwala!

MS Rajagopalan
Ahmedabad

EVENTS

- Lunch**
Indian fusion lunch at Haute Peppers, Bodakdev. From 12 noon to 3 pm. Till Feb 15.
- Exhibition**
'Trails of Holi', an exhibition at L & P Hutheesing Visual Art Center, Navrangpura. From 4 pm to 8 pm. Between Feb 3 and 6.
- Film screening**
Screening of short films at Natarani, Usmanpura. From 8.30 pm onwards. On Feb 10.
- Strawberry fest**
Strawberry menu with desserts and beverages at the Grand Bhagwati. From 11.30 am to 10.30 pm. Between Feb 1 and Feb 15.
- Performance**
'Lamps on Lilypads', a contemporary intercultural performance at Natarani. Till February 3.
- Food fest**
Punjabi dhaba festival at Royal Orchid Central, Paldi. From 7 pm to 11 pm. Between Feb 4 and Feb 13.
- Photography**
'Undhu Chattu'- Photographs by pinhole cameras will be exhibited at Rajwada, Vejalpur. From 11 am onwards. Till Feb 3.