

'Institution of Eminence' tag for yet-to-be-established Jio Institute draws criticism

NEW DELHI, JULY 10 /-- The HRD Ministry's selection of the yet-to-be-established Jio Institute by Reliance Foundation as one of the six 'Institutions of Eminence' drew sharp criticism from various quarters today, with many questioning the process of selection and the motive behind it.

The University Grants Commission (UGC), a panel of which carried out the selections, however, defended the move saying the institution was accorded the coveted tag under greenfield category for new or proposed institutions that are yet to come into existence. Jio Institute was trending on Twitter today with many users tagging the HRD Minister, asking him about the institute's location and credentials.

"I don't have a campus, a website or any alumni and it has left behind prominent IITs as well as private players like Ashoka University and OP Jindal Global University. It is yet to be established but was already marketed as a world class institution by the government. Can't we see the conflict of interest," JNU professor Ayesha Kidwai said.

"What is Jio Institute? I thought only I didn't know its eminence but looks like everyone knew of its existence only today," a Twitter user said.

A professor from IISc-Bangalore, which was also accorded the 'Institution of Eminence' (IoE) tag, tweeted, "How did @PrakashJavdekar evaluate this

Jio Institute to decide it was better than IIT M or IIT KGP or so many other Institutions? How can an institution that is in the process of being set up be declared Institution of Eminence? What are we giving here?" The UGC director, Jio Institute's inclusion on the grounds that it was selected under rules for greenfield institutions.

According to officials, 11 such institutions had applied for the IoE tag and Jio was selected from among them. The government granted 'Institutions of Eminence' (IoEs) status to IIT-Delhi, IIT-Bombay and the Bengaluru-based Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in the public sector, and Manipal Academy of Higher Education, BITS Pilani and Jio Institute by Re-

liance Foundation in the private sector. The move is part of a scheme of the Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry to select 20 IoEs in public and 10 private that will enjoy complete academic and administrative autonomy. However, the Empowered Expert Committee (EEC) headed by former chief election commissioner N Gopalaswami picked six institutions that, according to the panel, showed the potential to find a place among top 50 of global rankings. While the Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry will grant Rs 1,000 crore funds to the three public institutions in the next five years, the private institutes will not be eligible for government funding. (PTI)

SC begins hearing on pleas to decriminalise homosexuality

NEW DELHI, JULY 10 /-- The Supreme Court today made it clear that it would not venture into the issue of marriage relating to the LGBTQ community or interference in live-in relationships, as it commenced a crucial hearing on a clutch of pleas seeking decriminalisation of consensual gay sex. The apex court said it would only deal with the question of validity of section 377 of the Indian Penal Code which criminalises consensual sex between two adults of the same gender. A five-judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra said it will examine the correctness of its 2013 verdict that had set aside the Delhi High Court judgement decriminalising gay sex under section 377. Section 377 refers to 'unnatural carnal intercourse which is voluntarily has carnal intercourse against the order of nature with any man, woman or animal, shall be punished with imprisonment for life, or with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to 10 years, and shall also be liable to pay a fine.

"The question here is whether Section 377 of the IPC is ultra vires (beyond one's legal power) or not. Let us get out of this maze. We cannot now give an advance ruling on questions like inheritance to live-in partners or whether they can marry. Those are individual issues we cannot pre-judge now," the bench, also comprising Justices R F Nariman, A M Khanwilkar, D Y Chandrachud and Indu Malhotra, said while outlining the broad issues which would be open for arguments. The observations came when former Attorney General and senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for dancer and one of the petitioners Nartej Jaehar, said, "My life as a sexual minority has to be protected. Do not restrict this hearing to just Section 377 of the IPC. Our lives are passing by. How many of us can come on individual issues later?" Referring to the provision, the bench said two separate and distinct issues were open for argument and they were whether the sex against the order of nature, as prescribed under the law, was "retrograde" and can the

sexual rights be denied to persons just because they form a minuscule minority. The nine-judge bench had held that decisional autonomy was part of the right to privacy and moreover, six out of nine judges, had ripped apart the 2013 apex court verdict decriminalising the consensual gay sex. "Justice Chandrachud's majority judgment condemning the 2013 verdict which had upheld section 377 of the IPC, is the main decision. If so, I am already home and dry," Rohatgi said. Others who have filed petitions opposing section 377 are journalist Sunil Mehra, chef Ritu Dalma, hoteliers Aman Nath, Keshav Suri and business executive Ayesha Kapur and 20 others, who are former and current students of IITs. Another senior advocate Arvind Data, representing one of the petitioners, referred to the historical background of the term 'homosexuals' and said now it has been established that this is "a normal, benign sexual variation". The proceedings remained inconclusive and would continue tomorrow. (PTI)



Moon Jae-In President of the Republic of Korea and Mrs. Kim Jung-sook being received by President Ramnath Kovind for a ceremonial reception at Rashtrapati Bhavan

Centenary celebration of Govt College of Engineering and Leather Technology



KOLKATA, JULY 9 /-- The centenary celebration of Government College of Engineering and Leather Technology was held at the Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre recently. The main highlight of the event was the Centenary Lecture where dignitaries discussed the evolution of science and technology in India in the last 100 years. Professors and principals of different colleges were present on the dais on the day. The speakers highlighted the milestones that India has touched in the field of Space Science and Satellite Technology in the recent times and also its various achievements in the field of science and technology (EOIC)

Railway Minister reviews progress of various Metro projects



KOLKATA, JULY 9: Shri Piyush Goyal, Minister for Railways, Coal, Finance and Corporate Affairs reviewed the performance of Metro Railway, Kolkata yesterday. Shri A. Vijayargiya, GM/Metro Railway apprised him of the progress made in executing various projects till date. All senior officers of Metro Railway, Kolkata were present in this review meeting. At present, Metro Railway has been maintaining a punctuality of about 99%. An action plan has been made by which all the old rakes will be replaced by the end of March, 2019 and at present emphasis will be given on preventive maintenance of the existing old rakes. He also reviewed the status of all the on-going Metro projects including East West Metro. He suggested that priority should be given to those projects where land is available with no encroachments. He also directed that Metro Railway should regularly co-ordinate with the State Government regarding issues related to land and encroachments. He suggested that emphasis should be given to enhance earnings through non-fare revenue by adopting new ideas and concept. The Minister also released a booklet in Bengali on the achievements of various railway projects in West Bengal over the last four years in presence of General Manager, Metro Railway.

BJP accuses SP of giving political patronage to mafia elements

LUCKNOW, JULY 10 /-- Hitting back at the Samajwadi Party (SP) for criticising the law-and-order situation in Uttar Pradesh under the BJP rule, the saffron party today accused it of giving political patronage to mafia elements, referring to criminal-turned-politicians Mukhtar Ansari and Atiq Ahmad.

UP BJP spokesperson Shalabh Mani Tripathi said the nexus between the SP and criminal elements became clear, when the SP and the BSP opposed the Uttar Pradesh Control of Organized Crime Act (UPCOCA) legislation during its passage. "SP's real face has been unmasked as today it is raising questions on law and

order, but it was the SP, which had given political patronage to Mukhtar Ansari and Atiq Ahmad. It was the SP which was the mainstay of the family of Rai, the SP sided with Mukhtar Ansari. Similar was the scene when MLA Prakash Pal (an MLA from Allahabad) was murdered, and SP gave patronage to Atiq Ahmad," Tripathi said in a statement issued here.

Referring to yesterday's alleged killing of gangster Munna Bajrang inside a jail in Baghat, the UP BJP spokesperson said, "Taking serious cognisance of the incident, UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath not only initiated action against the offenders responsible, but also issued instructions to be tough against the killers."

Tripathi's rebuttal came in the backdrop of former UP chief minister Akhilesh Yadav today slamming the Adityanath government for 'lack of law and order in the state. In present day Uttar Pradesh, there is no law and order, just an atmosphere of panic.

The perpetrators have become so confident that they have murdered someone in prison. These are the government's failures. The people of the state are very angry with the government. Such misrule and chaos have been seen, the SP president tweeted in Hindi. (PTI)

Vasundhara discusses organisational changes in Rajasthan BJP with Shah

NEW DELHI, JULY 10 /-- Rajasthan Chief Minister Vasundhara Rajee and newly appointed state BJP chief Madan Lal Saini met party president Amit Shah here today and deliberated upon like organisational changes in the poll-bound state. The meeting was held at Shah's official residence here and lasted for more than an hour. Organisation changes to strengthen the party's state unit was its main agenda, party sources said. During the meeting, the leaders also discussed the strategy for the upcoming assembly election in the state, they added. Besides Rajee and Saini, the BJP's state unit organisational secretary Chandrasekhar and its national joint general secretary (organizational) V Satish were present. This was the first meeting between Rajee and Shah after the appointment of the new state BJP chief.

Last month, the appointment of Saini to the post of state BJP president was made after several rounds of meetings between

Rajee and Shah. His appointment is being seen as a balancing act by the party leadership to avoid any political divide between two dominant castes of Jat and Rajput in the state. Earlier, BJP leader and Union minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, who represents Rajasthan's Jodhpur parliamentary constituency, was tipped to be the state president. Singh was the choice of the party's high command but there was a difference between Rajee and Shah over his selection. Rajee wanted her loyalist as the state president.

After rounds of discussions, the name of relatively low-profile Saini emerged as a consensus candidate. Saini is a former minister in the state government and former chief minister Ashok Gehlot. The ruling BJP is in direct fight with a resurgent Congress in the state, and its factional fight over tackling anti-incumbency in the state. (PTI)

Many dams in Karnataka at full level due to torrential rains

BENGALURU, JULY 10 /-- Torrential rains in many parts of Karnataka have resulted in many dams, including those across the river Cauvery, receiving copious inflows and some reaching their full level, a top official of the Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre said today. "You see the status of (dams), it can be easily said that this year the level in all of them is quite satisfactory compared to that over the last 10 years," director of Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre (KSNDMC) Dr G S Srinivasa Reddy, told PTI. Over the last fortnight, there has been heavy downpour in many parts of the state, especially in the Western Ghats, the originating point of many rivers in the state, he said.

Dr Reddy said if the flow in the Cauvery is maintained the same for the next four or five days, the Krishna Raja Sagar (KRS) dam would attain its full level by the weekend. He said the inflow into the Almati dam across the Krishna river was 32,000 cusecs. "Because Almati and Narayanapura are big dams, it will take time to get to the full level. But given the fact that there have been gains in Maharashtra, the level in these dams may reach a satisfactory level," he said.

He said here were no major rain-related disasters this year despite heavy rain fall because people were informed in advance and authorities took steps to mitigate the challenge.

20,112 missing kids reunited with families in Maha: Minister

NAGPUR, JULY 10 /-- More than 20,000 missing children were located and reunited with their families in Maharashtra under an initiative launched by the government, the Legislative Assembly was informed today. Minister of State for Home Ranjit Patil said 20,112 missing children were rescued and handed over to their families under "Operation Muskan". Speaking during discussion on a calling attention notice, he said CCTV cameras would be set up in localities reporting missing cases. Focus would on slum areas where a large number of minor girls reside, he told the Lower House. The calling attention notice was moved by Sunil Prabhu (Shiv Sena) who said incidents of children and women going missing are on the rise in Mumbai. The minister said between 2014 and 2016, 32,598 people up to the age of 60 years went missing. Of these, 25,565 were traced. Patil said in order to trace missing persons, all police stations in Mumbai have been given Standing Operation Procedure (SOP) to be followed. As per Supreme Court directives, a kidnapping offence is filed in case a child under the age of 18 goes missing. If such children are not traced within four months of filing of the case, the matter is transferred to the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit of the police, the minister said.

Replying to another calling attention notice that highlighted the problems faced by senior citizens, Social Justice Minister Rajkumar Badole said the age at which a person is classified as a senior citizen has been lowered to 60 from 65 earlier. The government has launched several schemes for the welfare of senior citizens, he said. Opposition members were not satisfied with the reply and demanded that the notice be withdrawn, a request accepted by Speaker Haribhau Bagde. (PTI)

Raja Sabha, Rwanda Senate sign MoU to promote inter-parliamentary dialogue

NEW DELHI, JULY 10 /-- For the first time, the Raja Sabha signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with its counterpart in a foreign country, Rwanda, for promoting inter-parliamentary dialogue. Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu became the first Raja Sabha chairman to sign such an agreement when he inked the MoU with the visiting President of the Senate of the Republic of Rwanda, Bernard

Makuza. The MoU, with six articles of cooperation, seeks to promote inter-parliamentary dialogue, capacity building of the parliamentary staff, organisation of conferences, forums, seminars, staff-attachment programmes, workshops and exchanges. The two sides also agreed to collaborate in regional and international multilateral parliamentary bodies in furtherance of the relations between the two countries.

ER honours staff for alertness on safety



Shri Harindra Rao, General Manager, Eastern Railway with ER employee after honouring him with Safety Award for his diligent work in maintaining safety in train operations, at ER headquarters today. Shri Rahul Gautam, Chief Safety Officer, Eastern Railway was also present.

KOLKATA, JULY 10: Shri Harindra Rao, General Manager, Eastern Railway honoured an employee with Safety Award for his diligent work towards ensuring safety in train operations, in a high level meeting on Safety & Punctuality held at ER HQ today. Shri Barister Ram, Sr. Technician, while

examining coach of 25657 up at Sealdah maintenance pit on 21.5.2018, detected a crack of the spring of a coach. The broken spring was promptly replaced by a new one and the coach was made fit to run. His sincerity and alertness helped in avoiding untoward incident.

LG or CM? Who is responsible for clearing mountains of garbage in Delhi: SC

NEW DELHI, JULY 10 /-- The Supreme Court today asked the Centre and the Delhi government to clarify by tomorrow who could be held responsible for clearing the "mountain loads of garbage" in the national capital -- those reporting to LG Anil Baijal or to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. The top court's direction comes days after its verdict on the power tussle between the Lieutenant Governor and the Aam Aadmi Party government in which it held that the LG has no independent power to take decisions and is bound by the elected government's aid and advice. "Now, we have the advantage of the verdict. There is mountain load of garbage in Delhi, particularly in Bhalasa, Okhla and Ghazipur. We would like to know who is responsible for clearing the garbage those answerable to the LG Govern-

ment or those answerable to the Chief Minister," a bench of Justices M B Lokur and Deepak Gupta said.

At the outset, the bench asked Additional Solicitor General Pinky Anand, appearing for the Centre, and the counsel for Delhi government, under whose jurisdiction fell waste management. "Under whose jurisdiction does waste management falls. Where is an affidavit on waste management policy? Who is responsible for clearing mountains and mountains of garbage in Delhi?" Tell us by tomorrow," the bench said. Anand said she will file an affidavit by tomorrow on the issue. "The affidavit in this regard should be filed by the concerned officer of both the functionaries by tomorrow. For this purpose, list the matter on July 12," the bench said. During the hearing, the court observed that Delhi is

getting buried under mounds of garbage and Mumbai is sinking under water, but the government is doing nothing. It also slapped fines on 10 states and union territories for not filing their affidavits on their policies for solid waste management strategy. "You see, Delhi is getting buried under mountain loads of garbage and Mumbai is sinking. But yet, the government does not do anything. When the courts intervene, we are attacked for judicial activism. We are given lectures on separation of powers and encroachment of jurisdiction," it said. In March 27, the top court had said that days are not far when garbage mounds at the Ghazipur landfill site in Delhi will match the height of iconic 73-metre high Qutub Minar and red beacon lights will have to be used to warn off aircraft flying over it. (PTI)

team exclusively from the Upper House of any country to visit India. The other two senators in the delegation are Gertrude Kazawa, Deputy Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Political Affairs and Good Governance, and Theresa Kagoyire Visigara, Member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Security. The delegation is on a three-day visit to In-dia that concludes tomorrow. (PTI)