

Editorial

Prime focus

Times are a changing as everything ought to. Stuffs that were not even dreamt about are becoming devices and gadgets for everyday use. The peace of development and inventions is increasing at a dizzying pace and in an unbelievably complex manner. Every single gene in the human body can be identified, isolated and manipulated. Electricity can be transmitted without any wires or cables. Cars that run for more than a thousand kilometers with only a gallon of fuel is no more a fantasy today. Space travel or space tourism is here. Humans with embedded microchips can now manipulate and control his environment, well almost, as of now. Research and development in every field, being aided by sophisticated computers and robots, have quickened their pace and shortened their observation periods, leading to quicker results. It would not be much off the mark to say that the world as we know today is undergoing a paradigm shift in the way we live our lives. Through these radical changes and developments, one thing has withstood the test of time, proving to be an unseen and unaccounted yet determining factor that could make or mar everything else the human mentality. The workings of the human mind emotions and feelings that cannot be quantitatively ascertained or expressed as an exactable scientific expression or equation, has remained an enigma a mystery that has not been unraveled till date. Here lies the genesis of every conflict and differences. Societies created laws and statutes based on the greater good of the citizens, and a system of checks and balances to arbitrate, enforce and amend them. It is a perfect set up on paper. Unfortunately, the better reality is so far removed from the system so envisaged. We, the ordinary citizens are arrested and harassed for raising our voice against what we feel is unjust and wrong even threatened and shot by those who purpose to serve our motherland, whatever form that might take. The powers that be proclaims to work according to the wishes of the people, while the voice is subdued with threats and intimidation, or worse still, let the voice die out and be forgotten with time. And who are we to turn to for help when the terrorists are the army and police who are drug traffickers who are extortionists who are the influential and powerful? For us mere mortals, complaints and appeals entail the inherent risk of losing limb and life. Is what we are experiencing a replica of the so called jungle law? I'd like to think that a jungle law would be a far better option each one would then have a place in the set up. But then again, we are born equal. A prime minister is as human as a sweeper or a carpenter or a scientist. Each one is doing their bit for the society. The president of India or the Chief Minister of Manipur needs a weaver to weave a piece of fabric which will be sewn into a cloth by a tailor and sold at the market form where it will be brought for his use. We need to accept and embrace one another as our equals. The powerful ones wouldn't have had a concrete mansion to hide within were it not for the masons and plumbers.

Class 11 student goes missing in Jammu, traced in HP

Jammu, Nov 3: A class 11 student was traced in Himachal Pradesh after he went missing from a school in the city, a police official said today. On October 5, a written complaint by Sandeep Kumar, a teacher of Sainik School Nagrota, was received in a police station that on October 4 roll call cadet list, Alok Sharma, had gone missing from the school premises, a police official said. As per the complaint, a case was registered and an investigation was taken-up by the police, he said. The police went to Chandigarh on the basis of an information about the usage of the Facebook account by the boy, he said. The police party, headed by Inspector Bhushan Singh Manhas, along with the staff of the

school and the local police conducted a search operation for the boy, but no progress was made, the official said. The cyber cell of Chandigarh and Jammu was also requested for their assistance, where the location of the phone used by the boy was seen in Amritsar area, he said. The police party went to Amritsar where the owner of the phone used by the boy was questioned, who disclosed his location in Amritsar, the official said. Later, it was found that the boy had managed to move towards Himachal Pradesh. The location of the missing boy was found at Dalhousie, where he was looking for a private job, he added. The police party went to Dalhousie and traced the boy. He was handed over to his parents, he said.

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National & International News

Trump Asia trip to strengthen alliances, expand new ties

PTI Washington, Nov. 3: Donald Trump's maiden Asia trip as the US President is to "strengthen longstanding" alliances and "expand new partnerships", his national security adviser has said. Mr. Trump leaves the White House on Friday on a 12-day trip during which he will visit Japan, South Korea, China, Vietnam and Philippines. This trip is not only Mr. Trump's longest foreign trip till date but also the longest Asia trip by a US president in more than a quarter century. National security adviser Lt Gen H R McMaster sees Mr. Trump's Asia sojourn as part of efforts to strengthen longstanding American alliances while expanding the new partnerships in the Indo-Pacific region. "This trip is a great opportunity to demonstrate America's and the Trump administration's commitment to the Indo-Pacific and our efforts to strengthen longstanding

American alliances and expand new partnerships," McMaster told reporters at a White House news conference on the eve of Trump's departure to the region. McMaster said in the last 10 months, Mr. Trump has actively engaged leaders in the Indo-Pacific to address a range of strategic issues, prominently the North Korean nuclear threat. "Since taking office, Mr. Trump has placed 43 calls to Indo-Pacific leaders and conducted bilateral meetings with Japan, South Korea, China, India, Australia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Singapore and Thailand," he said. In line with his presidential diplomacy, Mr. Trump's trip will focus on three goals: strengthening international resolve to denuclearise North Korea; promote a free and open Indo-Pacific region; and advance American prosperity through fair and reciprocal trade and economic practices, McMaster said. The United States remains

committed to the complete, verifiable and permanent denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula, he said. The top presidential adviser asserted that Trump will reiterate the fact that North Korea threatens not just its allies, but also the entire world. "That is happening. But the president recognises that we're running out of time and will ask all nations to do more," McMaster said. During his meetings with world leaders, Mr. Trump will remind friends and foe alike that the US stands ready to defend itself and its allies using the full range of its capabilities, he said. "In particular, he will continue to call on all responsible nations, especially those with the most influence over North Korea, to isolate its regime economically and politically; to convince its leaders that the pursuit of nuclear weapons is a dead end and that it is past time

to denuclearise," he added. McMaster said Mr. Trump will also use the trip to promote his vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific region. "He will make the case that respect for freedom of navigation and overflight, the rule of law, sovereignty, freedom from coercion, and private enterprise and open markets is the best model to increase prosperity throughout the region, and to secure the freedom and independence of all nations," he said, adding the president will focus on his commitment to free, fair and reciprocal trade during his trip. "He looks forward to working with partners across the Indo-Pacific region to ensure that governments do not unfairly subsidise their industries, discriminate against foreign business or restrict foreign investment. This will help increase trade, reduce unsustainable deficits, and promote prosperity for the American people and the people of the Indo-Pacific region," McMaster said.

Aadhaar Number-SIM/Mobile Number Linking: From December 1, You Can Do Linking Via OTP

NDTV New Delhi, Nov. 3: From December 1, 2017, Aadhaar card holders can link their UID or Unique Identity Number with mobile number or SIM from the comfort of their home. This was said by the UIDAI (Unique Identification Authority of India) on microblogging site Twitter. "No need to give finger prints to local SIM card retailer for your mobile phone verification... From December 1, 2017, you can do it from comfort of your home through OTP received on mobile number registered with Aadhaar," said the UIDAI, the issuer of the

12-digit personal identification number or Aadhaar number. OTP or One-Time Pin is a mode of authentication offered by the UIDAI. Under one-time PIN-based authentication, an OTP with a limited period validity is sent to the mobile number and/ or e-mail address of the Aadhaar number holder registered with Aadhaar. "The Aadhaar number holder shall provide this OTP along with his Aadhaar number during authentication and the same shall be matched with the OTP generated by the Authority," according to the UIDAI website - uidai.gov.in.

Besides OTP, the UIDAI also offers biometric-based authentication. In its bid to simplify the process to link Aadhaar with mobile SIM, the Department of Telecom (DoT) recently introduced three options to link UID with mobile connection: an app-based method, an OTP-based method and an IVRS facility. The telecom operators have welcomed the latest clarifications by the DoT on Aadhaar card linking. Telecom users will soon get more options to complete the process of linking their Aadhaar card with the mobile connection. "These new

methods will help subscribers to get their mobile number linked to Aadhaar without visiting the stores of the telcos (telecom companies)," the Department of Telecom (DoT) said in a press release dated October 25. Is it safe to link your Aadhaar with SIM? The UIDAI recently clarified on this in a separate post on Twitter. Verifying mobile number with Aadhaar adds extra layer of security to your SIM as nobody else can use your identity to get connection in your name, the UIDAI noted.

NTPC power plant blast: Death toll rises to 32, initial probe shows safety norms violated

New Delhi, Nov. 3: The death toll in the blast at NTPC's Unchahar plant in Uttar Pradesh's Raebareilly has risen to 32, ANI reported on Friday, even as initial reports from the accident site indicated that safety norms were violated. The reports point to a practice that is regularly resorted to across coal-fired plants in the country. The practice involves de-choking the bottom hopper — the funnel-shaped bottom end of the boiler — by using rods to push out ash clinkers while the boiler is in operation, in violation of safety norms. This very exercise seems to have gone horribly wrong at Unchahar. After *The Indian Express* had sent a detailed email to NTPC on the initial reports with specific questions, an NTPC spokesperson responded saying: "...we feel it is too premature for us to conclude the exact causes, for which a committee has been constituted. We request you to bear with us and not go by hearsay and unauthenticated information being circulated around." Also Read: Early probe shows safety norms violated, boiler ops went wrong. While the NTPC's official probe report is still underway, officials in the know told *The Indian Express* that workers at the Unchahar plant had opened a manhole at 10 metres height, and were in the process of inserting poking rods to clear out the bottom of the hopper. "Workers go below the hopper, sometimes hoisted on scaffolding, to poke with rods from the bottom. The clinker conveyor is switched off. The process is called double poking, wherein the threat of big lumps falling on the heads of workers is a clear and present danger. The danger in doing it when the boiler is operational is that tonnes of clinkers or solid ash may fall down suddenly," said a source. Soon after the incident, Union Power Minister R K Singh on Thursday said

next of kin of those killed will get a compensation of Rs 20 lakh. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had on Wednesday announced Rs 2 lakh compensation for the families of those killed and Rs 50,000 for the seriously injured in one of the country's worst industrial accidents in years. Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi, who was on a three-day Navsarjan Yatra in poll-bound Gujarat, took a break to visit Rae Bareilly to meet the families of victims of the explosion. Raebareilly is the parliamentary constituency of Congress President Sonia Gandhi, who has expressed shock at the "terrible tragedy". At the spot, he was heard asking officers about the incident. Rahul was accompanied by senior party leaders Ghulam Nabi Azad and Congress state president Raj Babbar. Rahul was heard asking officers: "How many workers were working there?" "People are saying that it (the plant unit) was run early (before schedule). It should not have been run that way. We will demand a probe," the Congress vice president told PTI. Azad demanded a high-level probe by an outside agency to bring out the facts. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he was "deeply pained" by the accident, even as he approved an ex-gratia payment of Rs 2 lakh each for the families of those killed in the blast. On Twitter, PMO said: "Prime Minister @narendramodi has approved an ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh each for the next of kin of those who have lost their lives due to the accident at the NTPC plant in Raebareilly, Uttar Pradesh. PM has approved Rs. 50,000 each for those injured due to the accident." The National Human Rights Commission had issued a notice to the Uttar Pradesh government on Thursday over the

incident that took several lives and injured over 100 people. The Commission said in a statement that a "high-level probe into the matter is immediately required to ascertain the negligence and errors, if any, behind the incident, which involves the

right to life". It said there was need to ensure that such tragedies do not recur. The notice has been sent to the chief secretary of the state. A detailed report is expected from the government within six weeks, the rights panel said.

Notorious criminal arrested by police after encounter

PTI Badaun (UP), Nov 3: A notorious criminal, carrying a cash reward of 20,000 on his head, was arrested following an encounter in Wazirganj area in which two policemen were also injured, a senior police official said today. Acting on a tip off, Chandravir, a wanted criminal, was on his way to the district, a police team started checking vehicles on the Jhanwar road when they saw him coming on a motorcycle, Senior Superintendent of police Chandra

Prakash said. When the police asked him to stop, he opened fire in which Special Operations Group incharge Ram Gopal Sharma and constable Manish were injured, the SSP said, adding in the return fire, the criminal also suffered injuries in the leg. All the injured, including Chandravir, have been admitted to the district hospital, he said. Chandravir had been absconding in a murder case since 2010 and is also accused of killing his father-in-law, the SSP said.

'No technical education via correspondence courses,' rules Supreme Court

TOI New Delhi, Nov. 3: The Supreme Court (SC) on Friday ruled that technical education cannot be provided via correspondence courses. The apex court restrained educational institutions from providing courses in subjects like engineering, in the distance education mode. In ruling against distance education in these courses, the top court

affirmed the findings of the Punjab and Haryana high court on the issue. And in doing that, the SC set aside a verdict by the Odisha high court, which allowed technical education by correspondence. Two years ago, the Punjab and Haryana high court ruled that a degree in 'computer science' obtained through distance mode could not be considered on par with one attained by attending regular classes.