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PM MODI MEETS ASIAN GAMES MEDAL WINNERS IN NEW DELHI
At a function at Major Dhyan Chand Stadium, PM Narendra Modi lauds athletes & also reiterates country's bid to host 2036 Olympics

INDIA'S HOSTING POWER ON THE RISE, SAYS PM
The PM was presented with memorabilia ranging from signed jerseys to a bow from 17-year-old archery sensation Kumkum Mohod, who won two gold medals and a silver at the recently-concluded Games. The PM said the country is not just becoming a stronger force in terms of performance but also evolving into a "credible host" for major international events

'COUNTRY'S RESOLVE WILL HOST THE 2036 OLY'
■ The PM also reiterated country's resolve to host 2036 Olympics. "We are bidding for the 2036 Olympics and it is our resolve that we will host the games," he said
■ Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya, ICC chairman Jay Shah & IOA president P T Usha were also present during the interaction

85
INDIA WON 85 MEDALS AT THE ASIAN GAMES, INCLUDING 21 GOLD

SC notice to ECI, CEC on Rahul's plea against SIR irregularities

Mulls all-women panel to probe alleged sexual violence against journalists

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY @ New Delhi

THE Supreme Court on Thursday issued notices to the Election Commission of India and Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar on a batch of pleas filed by Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi and other Opposition leaders over alleged large-scale voter deletions and irregularities in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of poll rolls. A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi also tagged the pleas with petitions already pending before the court challenging the validity of SIR. With this, all SIR-related matters will be heard together at a later date, likely on October 28.

The SC also took note of submissions that attempts were made by Rahul and others to browbeat the judiciary by undertaking a march on October 12. "Nobody can browbeat the judiciary," the CJI said, adding "We know what statements they are making outside and what they are saying in court."

The bench, while hearing another plea filed by Network of Women in Media, India over the alleged sexual violence against female journalists covering the protests, said it would consider setting up an all-women panel to look into such complaints.

"It may comprise a former woman judge, a former woman IPS officer, a former woman social worker or a social activist with a known track record," said the CJI.

The bench also agreed with senior advocate Indira Jaising's submission that there should be clear guidelines on law-enforcement authorities' interaction with journalists during protests. "We would like to lay down guidelines," the bench said while issuing notice on the plea seeking responses from the Centre and the Delhi Police.

Jaising said women reporters are particularly vulnerable to sexual abuse while covering protests when they are pushed around by male police officers.

The bench also directed that no coercive action be taken against a woman journalist against whom a case has been filed by a Delhi Police officer under the SC/ST Act alleging casteist remarks, over 10 days after her complaint accusing him of sexual harassment at a protest.

Govt clarifies on home secy's apology

On reports that Home Secretary Govind Mohan apologised to SC in a contempt case, the MHA clarified it's a usual practice. "...It is required that the party responding to the notice must begin their affidavit with an unconditional apology. Only thereafter all other facts and arguments are presented," it said

No Delhi HC bar on CJP's protest today at Connaught Place

UDAYAN KISHORE & ADITI RAY CHOWDHURY @ New Delhi

THE Delhi High Court on Thursday refused to bar a protest called by CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke on October 16 at Central Park in Connaught Place, while taking on record Delhi Police's assurance that all possible steps would be taken to regulate and control the protesters.

A bench of Acting Chief Justice Nitin Wasudeo Sambre and Justice Sanjay Sharma was hearing a plea by a Connaught Place vendor seeking a fiat to police to regulate the protest. Called "Lehra do Tiranga", the protest kicks off at 5 pm on Friday. Heavy security is likely in and around CP and Jantar Mantar ahead of the agitation. Late on Thursday, the New Delhi Municipal Council issued a notice barring general public from visiting Central Park in Connaught Place on October 16 and 17.

The petition claimed that traders and vendors would be "on the streets" if they lost another weekend to closures due to protest in central Delhi during the festive season.

"This is the Dussehra weekend. This protest has to be stopped," the petitioner's counsel submitted. The bench refused to pass a "specific" direction restraining CJP protesters as urged by the petitioner. "Don't insist. We have passed the order," the bench said.

Addressing a press conference on Thursday along with All India Students' Association (AISA) leader Neha Bora, Students' Federation of India (SFI) leader Aishe Ghosh and actor Prakash Raj, Dipke criticised the police action against demonstrators and alleged that the government was using state machinery to shield Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar.

Convert can't get quota based on prior caste: SC

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY @ New Delhi

IN a significant order, the Supreme Court on Thursday held that a person who converts to Islam cannot automatically claim reservation under a notified Muslim Backward Class (BC) category based on their pre-conversion caste status as a Hindu.

Upholding a Madras High Court verdict, the judgment from the two-judge bench of justices Prashant Kumar Mishra and Shree Chandrashekar said, "Such a conversion severs the legal foundation of an entitlement which is specifically conditioned upon membership of that Hindu social order."

The bench said a person who converts from the Hindu social order to a non-Hindu social order cannot claim affirmative action under Article 16(4) of the Constitution merely on the basis of social backwardness associated with their pre-conversion status. It said the former caste or community status as a Hindu cannot automatically be transposed into a Muslim BC cate-

gory and a private religious body cannot conclusively determine statutory entitlement.

Therefore, the SC held that a person who converted to Islam, Christianity or any other non-Hindu social order cannot claim, merely on basis of their pre-conversion status, any statutory benefit, protection, quota or entitlement under Article 16(4), which is dependent on them belonging to a particular social order.

The SC ruling came on a Tamil Nadu government appeal against a HC verdict quashing the state's order that allowed converts to Islam from Backward Class, Most Backward Class, Denotified Community and Scheduled Caste backgrounds to get cer-

tificates as belonging to one of seven notified BC Muslim classifications.

The HC declared the GO unconstitutional while deciding a writ petition of Sameer Ahmed (earlier Paramasivam), who converted to Islam in 2015 and sought a certificate as Muslim Lebbai, one of seven Muslim communities recognised as BC Muslims in TN.



Former caste or community patterns can't automatically be transposed into Muslim BC category
Supreme Court

PAKISTAN SCHOOL ROOF COLLAPSE RESULTS IN 35 DEATHS

At least 34 children and a teacher were killed when the roof of a private school collapsed on Thursday in Peshawar, capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province | P13

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EXPRESS READ

Had warned Stalin of defeat plot: Thiruma

Chennai: Speaking at a INDIA bloc protest held against CEC Gyanesh Kumar on Thursday, VCK chief Thol Thirumavalavan alleged that SIR contributed to Stalin's defeat in Kolathur. "I had warned the DMK chief about a possible conspiracy to defeat him," he added | P4

Fine rice to be sold at ₹30/kg in TN co-ops

Chennai: To control retail prices of fine rice varieties currently being sold between ₹75 and ₹90 per kg, TN has decided to sell a fine rice variety at ₹30 per kg in 250 co-operative stores. Around one lakh tonnes of the rice variety will be made available shortly, says food minister | P4

WITH THIS ISSUE
CHENNAI'S BEST WEEKEND GUIDE
INDULGEE
40 PAGES, INCLUDING 24 OF INDULGEE (TABLOID)



CM Vijay launches TN Semiconductor Ecosystem Scheme in Chennai | EXPRESS

State launches semiconductor scheme, will top central aid

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Chennai

CHIEF MINISTER C Joseph Vijay on Thursday launched the Tamil Nadu Semiconductor Ecosystem Scheme, aimed at attracting investments in chip manufacturing and positioning Tamil Nadu as one of India's leading hubs for advanced electronics manufacturing.

The scheme launched at the secretariat seeks to strengthen the state's semiconductor ecosystem by offering additional financial incentives over and above the assistance offered by the centre and is tailored to support companies investing in the sector.

The scheme is designed to promote investments across semiconductor manufacturing value chain, including wafer fabrication, raw materials, assembly, testing, packaging and supply.

The scheme will be implemented under two categories. Under the first category, TN will provide additional incentives to projects approved under the centre's Semicon India Programme 2.0 and the India Semiconductor Mission. P7

CM OPENS DATA CENTRE: P2

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