



BSP MLA jailed for raping minor

UP chief minister Mayawati sent one of her party MLAs to jail on Wednesday in a rape case

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Intolerance increasing in Pak

The Qu'ran repeatedly advises Muslims to suppress sentiments of revenge and anger

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Shootings trigger surge in gun sales

Sales of handguns in Arizona jumped 60% to 263 on January 10 compared with the same date a year ago

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GREENS COME ALIVE

Gujarat Kensville Challenge tees off today

64 foreign and 54 Indian golfers to fight it out in first European Challenge Tour in India

Moulin Parikh AHMEDABAD

When the Kensville Golf and Country Club was given finishing touches in 2007, no one expected it to host an international event in the near future. However, three years down the line, the stage is set, the greens are in fine shape and the club house has come alive to host the first ever European Challenge Tour event in India.

The Gujarat Kensville Challenge 2011 begins on Thursday with 118 golfers readying to tee off for the 200,000 event. This will also be the first European Tour Challenge event of the year and though the golfers are a bit rusty, they will be trying to start the season on a winning note.

Leading the field will be Italian Alessandro Tadini, the top seed for the event. With the previous season ending quite a while back, Tadini made a trip to Portugal to prepare for the India event.

"I practiced in Portugal with my coach for 10 days. This event is quite early in the season and I needed a bit of practice," he said ahead of Wednesday's Pro-Am event. Many golfers who took part in the Prom-Am event were of the opinion that the 7250-yard par-72 course is long and difficult. Jeev Milkha Singh, who has co-designed the course, also felt that the placements need to be perfect

and a lot of thinking will be required while executing shots.

Tadini said that the margin of victory will be narrow. "This course is similar to other Challenge Tours but more difficult than other ones. The uphill is slow and it will test the players. One will have to calculate the bounce. I feel it is going to be a competitive tournament," said the Italian.

Meanwhile, the Indian challenge suffered a jolt after Jeev Milkha Singh pulled out from the event on Wednesday.

However, there will be plenty to look forward to as a field of 54 Indians will also be in the fray. All eyes will now be on Gaganjeet Bhullar, the top ranked Indian of the year. Others to watch out for include No.1 in the Order of Merit, Ashok Kumar and young challenger Rashid Khan who will play his second event as a professional after bagging the silver medal at the Guangzhou Asian Games last year.

The event, which will be played for at least the next three years, sees the Challenge Tour fall in line with the European Tour, which had first staged an event in 2008 in New Delhi.

The winner here will walk away with a cheque of 32,000 while the runner-up will be richer by 22,000. Both Kensville and the Gujarat government are sponsoring the tournament.



These violinists regaled the audience at Kensville on Wednesday

THREE-TIER GOLF COURSE TO COME UP IN CITY

While many rue the overall lack of sports infrastructure in the country, Ahmedabad will soon have its fourth golfing facility. A comprehensive three-tier golfing range and academy will come up near SG Highway and will be open to the public. The pay-and-play format will mean that people of the city will be able to take up golf lessons without burning a big hole in their pockets. This will be India's only second such facility with the other being in Delhi. "The golf academy will be functional within a month. We want to nurture young talent in the state and make the game popular," said Sameer Sinha, managing director, Kensville Golf and Country Club.

CAMPILLO TRIUMPHS

Spaniard Jorge Campillo warmed up for the main event of the inaugural Gujarat Kensville Challenge in great style by leading his team to victory at the Pro-Am held at the Kensville Golf and Country Club here on Wednesday. To warm up for the main tournament, 24 professionals took part in the Pro-Am, playing as a team with three amateurs. The idea of the event is to give an opportunity to amateurs to learn the tricks of the trade from professionals whereas the pros get a feel of the course before the main course.

Bachchan: I'll take up golf after retiring!

Media persons make a beeline for Bollywood's superstar

Moulin Parikh AHMEDABAD

There was a loud buzz when the news that Amitabh Bachchan, the showman of the millennium, would be arriving at the Kensville Golf and Country Club on Wednesday to officially inaugurate the Kensville European Golf Challenge 2010.

As expected, there was a mad scramble to get close to the Bollywood superstar. Young and old alike made a dash at the first sight of Big B on the greens. A loud cheer followed when he teed off.

Later at the press conference some unusual scenes were witnessed. Press photographers, journalists and videographers jostled with each other to get as close to Bachchan for photographs and 'additional' interviews. It is unlikely that Amitabh would have seen such

scenes elsewhere.

When asked, the big man felt the game of golf needs time to master and added in a lighter note that he would take it up only after retiring from his active acting career.

"Golf requires lot of patience and needs to be played in a peaceful atmosphere. I will take it up after retiring," he joked. The brand ambassador of Gujarat state tourism had words of praise for the young entrepreneurs of the state and owners of Kensville.

"Gujarat has always been known for its entrepreneurs and the good thing is that these youngsters have not forgotten their culture. They have made the state proud even outside India." He expressed interest in purchasing a plot at the course here, like Sachin Tendulkar and Jeev Milkha Singh.

Emotional homecoming of a different kind for Jeev

Moulin Parikh AHMEDABAD

Need to give my body a rest, star golfer blogs after pulling out of tournament. It was going to be an emotional homecoming of sorts for Jeev Milkha Singh, playing at his signature golf course at the Kensville Golf and Country Club.

The country's leading golfer was thrilled to take part in the first ever European Challenge tour in the country that will commence at the picturesque course here tomorrow.

On Tuesday evening he was accorded a traditional Indian welcome and the game's followers were eagerly waiting to see him in action. So close is his association with Kensville that his entire family had come for the event.

Milkha Singh, one of India's greatest athletes ever and Jeev's father, even played together in the pro-am event on Wednesday.

However, the news of his pullout late in the evening disappointed myri-

ad of his fans.

His run of trouble began when he injured his shoulder playing in Dubai early last year. After a two-month break he returned to the course but the rotator cuff pain in his left shoulder never went.

Jeev continued playing with it and he was further bogged down by back problems. He pulled out of the Casio Open event held in November in Japan due to a lower hip injury. After not hitting a ball for over a month, he returned to action in the Royal Trophy, Thailand after confirming his participation just a day before the event began.

The injury-plagued season still has not ended for the star player, who has decided to cut down on his playing this year. "I have realized it the hard way that I am no longer young, and I am definitely not Superman. I need to give my body a good rest" — that's how he expressed his sentiments in his blog.



Jeev Milkha Singh



Union telecom minister Kapil Sibal may face privilege motion for lowering the credibility of a constitutional body

Sibal in dock for CAG flak

Anil Anand NEW DELHI

Union telecom minister Kapil Sibal could be in for trouble for slamming the findings of the comptroller and auditor general (CAG) on the allotment of 2G spectrum. A week after he termed the CAG's loss figure of Rs1.76 lakh crore as "erroneous and sensational", Sibal is likely to face action for "lowering the credibility" of a constitutional body.

The public accounts committee (PAC), headed by senior BJP leader MM Joshi, has decided to take "appropriate" steps to ensure that such an act was not repeated in future. The CAG has officially stated that the minister's move amounted to contempt of the house. The issue figured during the PAC's meeting here on Wednesday. Taking a serious note of the telecom minister's statement, Joshi said, "The sense of the committee members was that whatever Sibal said was

DEFENCE CHIEFS FACE PAC

For the first time in the parliamentary history of India, the chiefs of the three armed forces appeared before the public accounts committee (PAC) on Wednesday. The committee had called them in connection with alleged irregularities in the canteen stores supplies. PAC chairman MM Joshi has not ruled out the possibility of another meeting.

improper and against propriety. They have authorised me to take appropriate steps to prevent such a development in future."

He said Sibal should have read the report carefully. "The CAG has never said that it is (Rs1.76 lakh crore) the exact amount," Joshi added.

The panel has not ruled out the possibility of moving a privilege motion. "It is not to censure anyone. But I will decide the appropriate steps at an appropriate time," Joshi said.

Cong, NCP avert flare-up over Rahul remark

Praful Patel downplays earlier shrill reaction of party leaders after 'coalition compulsions' comment

Anil Sharma & Shubhangi Khapre NEW DELHI, MUMBAI

A day after Congress general secretary Rahul Gandhi held coalition compulsions as responsible for the galloping inflation, the NCP, the apparent target of the statement, responded in different voices. A potential flare-up, however, seems to have been averted.

A section of the NCP had interpreted Rahul's statement as an attack on party chief and agriculture minister Sharad Pawar and issued scathing statements. Firing the first salvo, party general secretary DP Tripathi sought to remind the young Congress leader that "humility and not arrogance" should be the hallmark of the principal coalition partner.

He went a step further to remind Rahul's "Italy-born" mother Sonia Gandhi that



more than 60 democracies in the world, including Italy, have coalition governments. "The era of coalition governments is here to stay," said Tripathi. Senior NCP leader Tariq Anwar also joined the chorus scaling up the attack against the Congress.

In an effort to douse the fire, Congress spokesperson Abhishek Manu Singhvi deflected the entire blame on the media.

"This story originated from Lucknow where the Congress general secretary had an interaction with college students. During the course of his discussion, he did not refer to the NCP or Pawar or blame any party for the rising prices," he said. He maintained that the entire controversy had emerged without any basis.

NCP leader Praful Patel and other Congress leaders moved into damage control soon. In a hurriedly convened meeting in Mumbai, Patel said, "The party distances itself from Tripathi's statement made in Delhi. There is no reason for anybody to get upset. Rahul Gandhi has not mentioned Sharad Pawar or the NCP. Neither has he held the party or leader responsible for price rise." Patel said Rahul had responded to a question raised by a student on coalition compulsions.

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"It's different here; you can see it, feel it. The drive to Mahatma Mandir itself was different," said Mahindra in his address. "Your (Gujarat's) leadership is legendary. It has not only made a mark in this state but also in India. Gujarat is the leading state of the country, breaking new ground; new leadership in the country. Gujarat will soon give leadership to not only the country but beyond," Tata said.

CEO and managing director of ICI-ICI Bank, Chanda Kochhar congratulated the state on organising the most successful business summit the country has ever seen. Both the Ambani brothers intriguingly compared Modi to their own father Dhirubhai. Anil said Modi can realise his (Anil's) father Dhirubhai and Mahatma Gandhi's dreams of India.

At the end of four-hour-long consecutive speeches, when Modi finally took the podium for his speech, it surprisingly lacked his usual spark as he read out a prepared speech. Pulling a quote out of Barack Obama, Modi pronounced "Gujarat can, and Gujarat will".

Steve Jobs, Murdoch to unveil iPad paper

The publication, which will be called *The Daily*, is expected to launch on January 19

Washington: Steve Jobs and Rupert Murdoch, the two media moguls will appear together at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, according to a

source familiar with preparations for the launch of *The Daily*, Murdoch's iPad publication. The launch date is expected to be January 19, but that may change.

The Daily has been the talk of the media world over the past couple months, and the News Corp chief has even dubbed it his "No. 1 most exciting project." The hush-hush project has been taking shape at the company's Manhattan headquarters, but it will also have staffers in Los Angeles.

Jesse Angelo left Murdoch's *New York Post*, where he was second in command, to run *The Daily*, and former Viacom digital distribution boss Greg Clayman came aboard to run the business side. Murdoch is reportedly willing to sink \$30 million into the project.

The cash infusion has spurred *The Daily* into a high-profile hiring spree over the past couple of months. So far, Angelo and his team have brought in a number of top-notch journalists from media outlets such as the *New Yorker*, *The Daily Beast*, *Forbes*, *AOL* and *Politico*. — Agencies



BACKPAGE READ

Soon, SC norms to restrain Dirty Harrys

Govt may be asked to not reward policemen



Rakesh Bhatnagar NEW DELHI

Concerned at the high number of fake encounter killings which claim many innocent lives across the country, the Supreme Court is set to issue detailed guidelines to restrain law enforcement agencies from becoming a law unto themselves.

The apex court is likely to direct the government not to reward and decorate cops for staging 'encounters' and branding them as 'in response to the firing' by the citizens, who were otherwise unarmed.

A bench of justices Dalveer Bhandari and Deepak Verma has accepted the proposed guidelines framed by the People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUC) along with the suggestions made by the Bombay high court and the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC).

According to the NHRC, 2,956 cases have been registered in connection with police encounters in different parts of the country since the body was formed in 1993. Of these, 1,366 complaints alleged fake encounters. PUC lawyer Prashant Bhushan said a dedicated investigative team, preferably from a separate cadre of the police, should be attached to the NHRC/SHRC to investigate all encounter deaths. Also, an FIR must be registered in all such cases.

The question of granting compensation to the dependents of the deceased should depend upon the facts of each case and it shall be determined by NHRC.

HOW THEY ARE REWARDED

The Mumbai police commissioner has the power to give a maximum reward of Rs30,000 to the team which has successfully completed an encounter. On an average, each member of the team gets around Rs2,000. Earlier, till 1993, a Gallantry award used to be given to the policemen for an encounter, but this was stopped.

ENCOUNTER SPECIALISTS IN TROUBLE

Pradeep Sharma, police inspector: Has eliminated 112 gangsters. Was dismissed from service and is presently lodged in jail for his alleged involvement in the Lakhna Bhैया encounter case

Sachin Vaze, assistant police inspector: Part of 30 encounters. Was arrested in the Khwaja Yunus custodial death case in February 2003. Has resigned from the police force

Daya Nayak, assistant police inspector: Involved in close to 80 encounters. Was arrested by the anti-corruption bureau in February 2006 in a disproportionate assets case and is suspended from service

Ravindra Angre, assistant police inspector: Has eliminated more than 55 gangsters. Was arrested in June this year for allegedly threatening and extorting money from a builder in Thane and is currently suspended from service