

There are 10 medical colleges in Mumbai which offer the MBBS course, and have an overall intake of about 1,100 students

BRIEFLY



Foreign minister SM Krishna at the Taj in Mumbai on Friday evening —PTI

CM gets prank calls from 'Al Qaeda' member

An unidentified person called at the landline number at residence of the state chief minister Ashok Chavan and asked about his whereabouts on Saturday. The unidentified caller claimed that he was member of the terror outfit Al Qaeda and wanted to know where Chavan was. On being asked about his further details, the caller disconnected the phone. Police officials, who are now working to trace the caller, suspect that this is not an act of any person connected to any terror outfit but a prank call. Incidentally, the Nashik railway police on Sunday evening had reportedly detained a person for the case and are further questioning him to know if he was the same person who called at the CM's residence.

Oshiwara police constable commits suicide

A police constable attached with the Oshiwara police station here allegedly committed suicide at his residence in suburban Bandra, police said on Saturday. Rajendra Kamble, 47, who was staying alone at his Sant Dnyaneshwar Nagar residence, was found hanging with a nylon rope to a ceiling rod by his mother, police said adding his wife left him in 1998 and since then he was alone at home. "No suicide note was found and the reason for the suicide is not yet clear. He was irregular at work," said U Rathod, Senior Inspector at Kherwadi police station.

Shiv Sena activists organise peace march

Shiv Sena activists have organised a peace march in the city on Saturday titled 'Mazi Chalval, Me Maharashtracha' in May to unite the warring siblings, Uddhav Thackeray and Raj Thackeray. Satish Valanju, co-ordinator of the movement said, "We have organised a silent march tomorrow morning from statue of Maasaheb, (wife of Sena chief Bal Thackeray) at Shivaji Park in central Mumbai via Raj's residence to Matoshree, (Thackeray residence in suburban Bandra)."

Special task force for pharma companies

Amid rising trend of major Indian Pharmaceutical companies being taken over by MNCs, the Centre has decided to set up a task force to look into the problems of the domestic Pharma Industry, Union Health Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad said on Saturday. The ministry will look into drug price control issues and come up with long term policies for pharma companies.

BMC to use paver blocks to fix roads before Ganpati

After failing to fill up potholes on the city roads, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) said that the work would be completed manually with the help of paver blocks but only by the time Ganesh immersion starts. The BMC needs a 24 hours dry spell for the work. However, continuous rainfall is hindering the process. If the rains continue in this manner, the only option would be to fill up the potholes temporarily with the help of paver blocks.



FASHION LESSON Teachers from SM Shetty High School in Powai walk the ramp as part of the Teachers' Day celebrations at the school, on Saturday —Mukesh Trivedi DNA

ACP's son waited 3 hrs before shooting self

Shahkar Abidi

The postmortem reports of the 27-year-old Abhijeet Kurne, son of assistant commissioner of police Devendra Sawant, who shot dead his wife Ashwini on Thursday night indicates that he shot himself three hours after he shot his wife.

A police source said that the postmortem of Ashwini's body shows that she was killed at 2am on Friday, while the postmortem report of Abhijeet's body indicates that he killed himself at 5am. The post-mortem was conducted at JJ hospital. Police said that Abhijeet

shot his wife in the temple from point-blank range. The bullet exited from the other side and was stuck in the pillow. After that, although three hours later, he pointed the revolver at his head and pulled the trigger. The bullet pierced his head and hit a cupboard.



Stone hit blinds rly commuter

Dayanand Kamath

On Friday evening, a 25-year-old Thane resident lost vision in his right eye after he was hit by a stone on a Kalyan-bound local train while he was returning home from work.

Pushpendra Yashpal Kumar was standing near the door in the first-class compartment of the train when the incident took place. "I boarded the train from Dadar at 6.10pm with my office colleague. As we rode between Vikhroli and Kanjurmarg stations, a boy across the railway tracks flung a stone towards us. I realised what had happened only after my right eye began bleeding," said Kumar, who works as an assistant manager at Indian Overseas Bank, Worli. He alighted at Mulund station after the incident.

His colleague rushed him to Gokul hospital outside the Mulund (West) station. After administrating

COMMUTERS HURT IN STONE PELTING

Year	Cases Registered	Cases Solved
2010	13	Nil (Till August 31)
2009	9	02
2008	9	Nil



first aid, the doctors there advised him to visit an eye specialist since the injury was severe. Kumar went to Wavikar Eye Institute at Majiwade, Thane and an emergency operation was performed.

Dr Vaishali Wavikar, joint director of the Wavikar Eye Institute said, "The bones around Kumar's eye are fractured. We will try our best to restore his vision." Kumar was discharged from hospital on Saturday evening. Abhimanyu, Kumar's col-

league said, "We have informed the railway police about the incident. Kumar's treatment cost around Rs30,000. We plan to appoint a lawyer to get the compensation from the Central Railways."

Police Inspector BA Mane of Kurla railway police station said, "We have recorded Kumar's statement and registered the case under Indian Railway Act, Section 152 (Maliciously hurting or attempting to hurt persons travelling by railway)."

Encounter in Santa Cruz

Shahkar Abidi

A close aide of gangster Ravi Pujari was killed in a police encounter at Santa Cruz on Saturday. The deceased, Rajendra Thapa, 28, was allegedly involved in recent cases of firing at builders in the western suburbs.

According to the police, the incident happened on Saturday evening near Rajesh Khanna garden at Santa Cruz. Officers said they had information that Thapa will be handing over arms to someone. Consequently, a trap was laid by the police to arrest him. When the police asked him to surrender, he fired two rounds at them. The police fired five rounds in self-defense, leading to his death.

Top docs discuss MBBS woes

No new medical college has come up in the city in last 15 years

Deepa Suryanarayan

Bringing about change in the medical system is easier said than done. However, that is precisely what a group of leading doctors in the city are aiming at achieving.

On Saturday, at a meeting arranged by the Moral Re-armament (MRA) — Initiatives of Change, a group of 20-odd intellectuals from various fields of medicine gathered to discuss an issue that affects doctors, students and ultimately, the common man: the shortage of medical professionals in the city's medical educational institutions.

In the last 15 years, the government has not come up with a single medical college — meanwhile private medical colleges have mushroomed, said the doctors, lamenting the fact that there is a severe paucity of good teachers in medical colleges.

"This is a subject that affects everyone. Without good teachers, students will suffer. And if the new batch of graduating doctors are not good, ultimately, it will be the patient, the common man, who will suffer," pointed out Dr RK Anand, renowned paediatrician, who chaired the discussion.

"It is high time the Medical Council of India redefines the definition of teacher," said Dr Sanjay Oak, dean of KEM hospital and medical director, major hospitals. "What matters is the quality of work, whether the teacher is appointed on a full time basis or contractual basis is immaterial," he continued.

Dr Oak had some radical changes to propose. "Firstly, there should be only one common entry level examination. Examinations are a huge drain financially as well as emotionally for the students," he said.

He also proposed that the first year of MBBS, but be increased to 18 months instead of 12 months, which would give students a good opportunity to get acquainted with the syllabus. "During the second year, they should focus on academics, and not attend wards/hospitals etc.," he added. New subjects such as



What they suggest

- ▶ Increase number of seats
- ▶ Government should start new medical colleges in areas of need
- ▶ Train more doctors in civic and private hospitals
- ▶ Start more diploma courses
- ▶ Initiate a system of fellowship for doctors
- ▶ Start post graduate courses in new areas such as oncology, vascular surgery

medical ethics, health economics and research should be a part of the new curriculum, he said.

Dr Oak also suggested doing away with objective/multiple choice questions as well as making rural internship compulsory for all.

"Just one year of anatomy is not adequate. Also, during internship, the students are so busy with exams," said Dr SV Nadkarni, who has written the book Management of the sick health-care system.

Another unique suggestion from Dr Jyotsna Kirtane, paediatric surgeon, Jaslok hospital, was to ask students to assess teachers every six months. "Unfortunately, unlike what was the case earlier, today, there is no 'student-bonding' with the alma mater," she rued.

"The only way to improve teaching is to get good teachers," said Dr HG Desai, reputed gastroenterologist.

Tension in Vidarbha town after murder of three priests

Jaideep Hardikar

An uneasy calm prevailed in Yavatmal's Arni town on Saturday, even as Hindu groups, led by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), clamped a bandh in the district protesting the murder of three persons on Friday, condemning the police delay in arresting the culprits.

The deceased included the chief priest of a temple. On Friday morning, the devotees found eighty year old priest of the ancient Mahadev temple, Ramoji Mirase, along with Rajesh Ingole, 28, and Motiram Shinde, 55, lying in a pool

of blood. The fourth person, Anil Umre, 35, who is said to be a member of Bajrang Dal, survived the attack but sustained serious injuries.

He was rushed to Nagpur's Orange city hospital where doctors attending on him Saturday said his condition was stable.

Ingole and Shinde were also said to be members of the VHP. The people of Arni, backed by the VHP, had decided to perform the last rites only after the culprits were arrested, sparking tension across the district and triggering all-party attempt to pacify the tempers.

City agents celebrate Aussie HC ruling

Naveeta Singh

The dismissal of Qantas airline's appeal against the payment of commission on surcharges to travel agents by the Australian high court has come as ray of hope to many Indian travel agents.

The directorate general of civil aviation (DGCA) had in 2004 introduced fuel surcharges on basic fares. Agents allege that most airlines either don't refund this surcharge or don't give the agents a commission on it. The Australian HC on Sep-

tember 3 asked Qantas to pay commission to agents on the fuel surcharges it had introduced since May 2004. "This decision proves how airlines the world over have been fleecing passengers and travel agents," says Rajesh Rateria, chairman, travel agents association of India (TAAI).

"The DGCA had issued a directive to airlines last month, asking them not to show surcharges as taxes. Many airlines have been fleecing passengers by not refunding the surcharge amount during cancellations. And as

Agents allege that most airlines don't refund, or pay commission on the surcharge amount

the surcharge is shown as tax, they also do not pay us a commission on it," he says.

The DGCA had set an August 12 deadline to implement the May 2008 air transport circular. Under the circular, in case

of ticket cancellation by the passenger, airlines have to refund the basic fare including surcharges except if the surcharges are a part of the basic fare. The regulator also asked the airlines not to count surcharges as taxes and mislead the passengers. In case of cancellations, the airline can only deduct the taxes which are paid to the government and not the surcharges, which they usually pocket. If the directive is implemented, airlines will have to refund both the basic fare and the fuel and insurance surcharges.

Q&A



Grace Pinto is not only an educationist, but also the managing director of Ryan International Group of Institutions located in 15 states across India. Recently nominated as chairman's circle member for a unique educational initiative by the US India Business Council, she also represents various educational committees of the government and IIT Delhi. Yogita Rao spoke to her about what's ailing the education system in India today and asked what could be done to improve the scenario. Excerpts:

What is lacking in the Indian education system today?
One of the drawbacks of Indian

'Teaching is not a job, but a calling'

education system is that it does not give due importance to vocational education. As a result there is a mismatch between skilled manpower required and skilled manpower available. Every year, we churn out millions of graduates who do not have the specific skill sets required by the market. If this trend continues, it would hurt our economic growth in the long run. This requires a well-knitted infrastructure for vocational education in India, which should be nourished from the secondary school level.

School teachers are highly demotivated in the present scenario. What can be done to motivate them?

Teachers should understand that teaching is not a job, but a calling. In today's times, we have many individuals wanting to be teachers, but they still lack passion and commitment as compared to earlier times. To motivate them, it

Grace Pinto
Educationist

In today's times, we have many individuals wanting to be teachers, but they still lack passion and commitment as compared to earlier times

is important that they are strengthened to be passionate towards teaching. The society has an important role to play in this. It is very important for every teacher to understand that professional self-development in teaching skills is highly important. A lot of in-service and professional development (PD) programmes should be introduced to sharpen their teaching skills in line with the current environment. What the teacher gains from such PD

programmes should be applied in their classrooms for better student learning outcomes. Feedback is a vital part of teacher motivation. Everyone wants acknowledgement that they are doing a good job, and suggestions on how they can do even better.

The B Ed and M Ed programmes lack the kind of training for teachers that is needed in today's scenario. Please comment.
I strongly believe that the



curriculum, which develops teachers for the community, needs to be evolved as per the needs of the students, their environment and the community at large. We strongly propose that teachers should be regularly evaluated and encouraged for continuous professional development.

What are the steps you have taken at Ryan schools to ensure that best education is imparted to students?

Students in our schools embark on 'International Student research projects' as a part of its curriculum delivery.

What do you think about the reforms taking place at centre and the state level today?

The Right to Education Act is in line with the vision to educate every uneducated child of the country. We need to formulate and adopt an educational system that will suit each and every student.

Assault claim heats up Lilavati dispute

The legal battle over the control of the Rs700 crore Lilavati Hospital has become murkier, with a second FIR being lodged against trustee Chetan Mehta for allegedly assaulting his aunt Charu and her family members, when they went to attend the board of trustees meeting last month.

In a statement on Saturday, Chetan denied assault allegations levelled by Charu's husband Kishore, and sons Rajiv and Prashant, at a press conference on Friday.

Kishore claimed that he and his family were stopped by security guards from attending the board of trustees meeting on August 19, and were allegedly assaulted at the insistence of his nephew, Chetan. He said Charu had lodged

an FIR with Gamdevi police. Earlier, managing trustee Niket Mehta had filed an FIR, alleging that he was assaulted by some persons at the Chetan's insistence. The latter, however, denied the allegations.

In a statement on Saturday, Chetan denied the allegations and said Kishore and his sons were not trustees of the Lilavati Kirtilal Mehta medical trust. "Their intention is to unlawfully take over the management of the Trust and sell the Hospital for personal gains," he alleged.

He added that Kishore's family had gate-crashed the trustee meeting, and the security and police had tried to restrain them. The allegations of intimidation and assault are false, he said. —Agencies



Sunday, September 05, 2010

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