



New BJP government in Karnataka scraps 'Tipu Jayanti'

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The situation is normal in Jammu and Kashmir, says Governor Malik

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Do a deal now or lose it, Trump warns China as trade talks resume

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Shaw suspended until November 15 for doping violation

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NEARBY



Rajasthan Bills on honour killing, lynching tabled

JAIPUR The Congress government on Tuesday tabled two separate Bills against mob lynching and honour killing in the Rajasthan Assembly, while affirming that their stringent provisions would help check these incidents.

NORTH & EAST PAGE 6

Terror charges dropped, 2 seek new lease of life

NEW DELHI Mohammed Azam and Zaid Malik, who were cleared of terror charges earlier this month, reflect on what led to their arrest and what they need to do to lead a normal life.

CITY PAGE 3

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OPPORTUNITIES PAGE 15

Coffee Day's Siddhartha goes missing

A massive search is on to trace entrepreneur, who was last seen near Nethravati river in Mangaluru

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU/MANGALURU

V.G. Siddhartha, founder of the iconic Cafe Coffee Day (CCD) chain, went missing from a bridge across Nethravati river in Mangaluru on Monday evening, sending shock waves in business and political circles.

A home-grown entrepreneur who gained international fame with the success of CCD and since diversified into hospitality, logistics and investments, Mr. Siddhartha, 60, is the son-in-law of former Karnataka Chief Minister and Union Minister S.M. Krishna.

While a massive search has been launched, especially in the river, he remained untraceable till late on Tuesday. A purported letter by him surfaced, highlighting his financial troubles and blaming harassment by a senior Income Tax official for "succumbing to the situation." He particularly faulted the IT Department's move to attach the shares he held in Mindtree Ltd. and later in

Coffee Day Enterprises Ltd. towards his tax liability, creating a liquidity crunch.

As per the police complaint filed by his driver, Mr. Siddhartha had left Bengaluru informing his family that he was headed to Sakleshpur in Hassan but had instead travelled to Mangaluru. Before reaching his destination, he got off on the bridge across the Nethravati. He went walking along the bridge around 6.30 p.m., asking his driver to wait after crossing, and has been missing ever since.

The police found that his last call was around the same time to one of the senior executives in his enterprise. After Mr. Siddhartha failed to show up for an hour, the driver tried to call him. He later called the family.

The police said a sniffer dog squad pressed into service had stopped in the middle of the bridge.

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EVIDENCE LED TO ACTION ON

COFFEE DAY SHARES PAGE 16



Rescue boats searching for V.G. Siddhartha, inset, in the Nethravati in Mangaluru on Tuesday. H.S. MANJUNATH



Business as usual at cafes

STAFF REPORTER

BENGALURU

For most customers, it was just another day at The Square, Cafe Coffee Day, located in the upmarket Vittal Mallya Road, which also houses the main offices of the firm. They nursed their cappuccinos and nibbled on their snacks.

Staff members, however, took quick breaks to look at their mobile phones and monitor the news on the disappearance of CCD founder V. G. Siddhartha.

One of the waiters described Mr. Siddhartha as an extremely down to earth employer, who interacted with everybody.

While some customers – working professionals, families, and friends – remained oblivious to the news, others discussed the circumstances of how the founder went missing.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

Income Tax Department raises doubts over letter

STAFF REPORTER

BENGALURU

A letter purportedly written by V.G. Siddhartha, chairman and managing director of Cafe Coffee Day, that surfaced hours after he went missing blamed harassment from Income Tax authorities for his situation.

But the Income Tax Department is raising doubts about his signature. "The authenticity of the note is not known and the signature does not tally with Shri VGS's signature as available in his annual reports," it said.

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Fatal crash



Bolt from the blue: Eighteen people were killed when a small military plane crashed in a residential area in Pakistan's Rawalpindi on Tuesday. GETTY IMAGES (REPORT ON PAGE 14)

Triple Talaq Bill sails through Rajya Sabha

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill, 2019, better known as the Triple Talaq Bill, was passed in the Rajya Sabha on Tuesday.

The ruling BJP comfortably managed the number in favour of the legislation, which criminalises instant divorce by Muslim men.

In the 240-member House, 99 members voted in favour of the Bill, 84 opposed it while 57 members stayed away – by either walking out, abstaining or

being absent. Minutes after the vote, Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted that by abolishing triple talaq, "Parliament corrects a historical wrong done to Muslim women."

As many as eight Congress MPs were absent during the vote, including Sanjay Singh, who resigned just hours before. Janata Dal (United) and AIADMK members walked out. While BSP MPs opposed the Bill during the debate, they were absent during the voting.

30 MPS ABSENT PAGE 12

Government did not try out GST system before rollout: CAG

'Lack of preparation led to lower returns'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), in its first ever audit of the Goods and Services Tax, has said the government had failed to try out the system before its rollout, leading to inadequate compliance mechanisms, and lower tax revenues. The report was tabled in Parliament on Tuesday.



The invoice matching system has not been put in place. GETTY IMAGES/STOCKPHOTO

the rollout. It added that compliance in terms of the number of returns filed had been falling month after month, and that the government had not been following the rules set for the transfer of revenue to the States.

"Even after two years of rollout, system validated Input Tax Credit through 'invoice matching' is not in place and non-intrusive e-tax system still remains elusive," the report said.

RULES FLOUTED IN TRANSFER OF

GST FUNDS TO STATES PAGE 13

Assam's golden tea sells for ₹50,000 per kg

RAHUL KARMAKAR

GUWAHATI

Rajan Lohia produces about 25 lakh kilograms of tea annually from his three estates in eastern Assam's Dibrugarh and Sivasagar districts. Of this, only 2 kg has struck gold.

On Tuesday, his Manohari Gold tea fetched ₹50,000 a kg at the Guwahati Tea Auction Centre (GTAC). This was the highest price commanded by any tea sold in any auction centre in India.

"We made 5 kg of this handmade tea but only 2 kg got sold at the auction. We will have to wait for favourable conditions around this time next year for producing the next lot," Mr. Lohia told *The Hindu*.

Earlier record

In July last year, the same tea from the same plantation – the 1,000-acre Manohari Tea Estate – had created a record; a kilogram sold for ₹39,001 to become the most expensive tea sold at any auction in India.

But less than a month later, Golden Needles tea from the Donyi Polo Tea Estate in Arunachal Pradesh fetched ₹40,000 for a kg and sold 1.1 kg at that price. It was a comeback for Golden Needles that had fetched ₹18,801 a kg at the GTAC on November 10, 2018.

"Ours is a specialty golden orthodox tea made from the buds of P-126, the



Around 6 kg of tea buds went into producing 1 kg of this record-breaking tea.

finest tea clone grown under the perfect climatic conditions during the second flush. Unlike the traditional Assam teas processed by machines, this is done manually with the utmost care," Mr. Lohia, 56, said.

A little less than 6 kg of tea buds went into producing a kilogram of the record-breaking tea that yields a golden hue when brewed. A kilogram of mass-market tea consumes an average of 4.5 kg of tea leaves. "Each kilo took a week from plucking and sorting of leaves to finishing," Mr. Lohia said.

Mangilal Maheshwari of Sourabh Tea Traders, who bought 2 kg of Manohari Gold tea in 2018, picked up the lot again this time for the record price. "People who bought the tea last time wanted it again," he said.

Mr. Maheshwari had retailed the tea last year at ₹8,000 per 100 gm.

Truecaller bug sparks fears of hacking

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

Several Android phone users, who have installed the Truecaller app, were in for a shock on Tuesday when they received text messages saying their registration for

the Unified Payment Interface (UPI) app has started, and their bank account was linked to ICICI Bank's portal for UPI transactions.

Truecaller, a user-generated content app that stores registration details of tele-

phone numbers in its database, has a feature named Truecaller Pay, which offers UPI-based transactions like any other payment application. The incident occurred when the app was updated.

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