

The Daily Guardian

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TUESDAY | 05 SEPTEMBER 2023 | VOL. 2 ISSUE 211 | NEW DELHI | RS. 5.00

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TOP OF THE DAY

JITENDRA SINGH LAUNCHES S20 CONFERENCE IN UP

NOIDA: Minister of State (Independent Charge) of Science and Technology Jitendra Singh on Monday inaugurated the S20 Conference under the aegis of G20 at Amity University's Noida campus in Uttar Pradesh.

Addressing the jam-packed audience during the inaugural session MoS Jitendra Singh said, "Amity has created a benchmark in education across the globe. India's Presidency of G20 is a matter of immense pride for the whole country." He further said that under the visionary leadership of our Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India has attained remarkable achievements in the field of science and technology.

In 2014, the country had 350 start-ups but today we have more than 1.25 lakh start-ups and 130 Unicorns. Out of 1.25 lakh start-ups, 6,000 start-ups are in the unicorn sector itself which has transformed the landscape of innovation in the country. The Global Innovation Index has also risen from 81 to 40, which is yet another example of India's strong position in the S&T domain.

AIMIM TO HOLD TIRANGA RALLY ON SEPT 17

HYDERABAD: All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) president Asaduddin Owaisi on Monday informed that his party will conduct a Tiranga rally on September 17. Owaisi said that his party will be celebrating the merger of the erstwhile Hyderabad state into the independent and democratic India and called it 'National Integration Day'. Taking to X (former Twitter), Asaduddin Owaisi said, "We will be celebrating National Integration Day on 17th September 2023."

DISTANCING FROM ROW

I RESPECT SANATAN DHARMA: MAMATA BANERJEE ON UDHAYANIDHI STALIN REMARKS

TDG NETWORK
KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday said that people should not comment on anything that may hurt the religious sentiments of the people adding that she respects Sanatan Dharma.

West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee said, "I have a great regard for the people of Tamil Nadu. But my humble request to them, every religion has its separate sentiments. India is a secular country, it is a democratic country and at the same time, unity in diversity is our origin. So, I respect Sanatan Dharma. We go to temples, mosques, churches everywhere. We should not be involved in any matter which may hurt any section."

"Instead of saying 'condemn', my humble request to everybody is that we should not comment on anything" ■ P5



DIPLOMACY

DELHI GEARS UP FOR G20, XI JINPING TO GIVE IT A MISS

No reasons have been given for Xi skipping the summit.

T. BRAJESH
NEW DELHI

Even as the Chinese Foreign Ministry confirms that the G20 Summit in Delhi this weekend will be attended by its premier Le Qiang and not President Xi Jinping, senior officials in New Delhi have said that Xi's no show at the Summit does not reflect anything about the host nation - India. The officials here see it as a natural development, saying that the level of attendance and participation at such summits and conclaves varies from time to time due to one reason or the other.

Government sources here also played down the absence of Russian President Vladimir Putin and President of Mexico at the Summit. "In

today's world with so many demands on the leaders' time, it is not always possible for every leader to attend every summit," official sources said. Sources added that given world leaders' busy schedules "it is not always possible for every leader to attend every summit" and that many may skip summits for personal reasons. President Putin has already conveyed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi that he will not be present at the G20 Summit. He will send foreign minister Sergey Lavrov in his place.

The President of Mexico, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, hasn't attended a G20 Summit since 2018 and Saudi Arabia has failed to send a head of state on no fewer than nine instances, including sending a junior minister



Xi Jinping

(without a portfolio) for the 2017 summit in Hamburg in Germany. Mexican Economy Minister Raquel Buenrostro Sanchez will attend in their place.

Only Canada, Germany, In-

dia, Italy, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States and the European Union have always sent a head of state to a G20 summit. Meanwhile, US President Joe Biden has said he will be

disappointed if Mr Jinping does not attend but added "I am going to get to see him", although he did not specify when and where.

Ending the uncertainty, China's Foreign Ministry announced on Monday that President Xi Jinping will for the first time skip a G-20 summit, with the Chinese Premier and second-ranked leader Li Qiang instead deputed to attend the September 9-10 meet in New Delhi. No reasons have been given for Xi skipping the summit. "China looks forward to the G-20 New Delhi summit reaching a consensus on tackling challenges in the economy and development, conveying confidence to the outside world and promoting shared prosperity and growth," a spokesperson said.



Defence

An Indian Army personnel showcases a gun to students during the Defence and Technology Expo 2023, at Nandambakkam Trade Centre in Chennai on Monday. ANI

CLEARING ROLE

COURTS CAN'T BE USED TO FACILITATE MARRIAGES IN SEXUAL OFFENCE CASES: DELHI HC

ASHISH SINHA
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday held that courts cannot serve as "marriage facilitators" in sexual offence cases, emphasising that the judicial system should not be manipulated for personal motives or to pressurise any party to act in a certain way.

A bench of Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma made these remarks while dismissing an anticipatory bail plea from an accused in a case where he allegedly raped

a woman under false pretences of marriage. The accused sought pre-arrest bail, asserting that he was willing to marry the victim, and that the woman's father, who had previously opposed the inter-caste marriage, was now ready to accept it.

The bench, however, noted that the evidence on record indicated that both the accused and the complainant had manipulated the judicial system and investigating agencies for their own benefit.

The court stressed that ■ P5

ISIS CONNECTION

NIA CONVICTS TWO IN KILLING OF RETIRED SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A Special Court of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in Lucknow has found two accused guilty of killing a retired school principal in furtherance of Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) agenda by spreading fear and terror among the people.

The NIA Special Court, Lucknow, today held the accused guilty under section 302 read with sections 34 & 120B of IPC, sections 16(1)(a) & 18 of the UA(P) Act, and sections 3, 25 & 27 of the Arms Act. The quantum of sentence against the accused, Atif Muzaffar and Md Faisal Khan, both residents of Kan-

pur Nagar, Uttar Pradesh, will be pronounced on 11th September.

The victim, Ram Babu Shukla, the Kanpur-based retired From Principal of Swami Atmaprakash Brahmchari Junior High School in Kanpur, was killed on 24th October, 2016 while he was returning home on a bicycle. He was attacked by the accused near village Pyondi in Kanpur.

The anti-terror agency had filed a chargesheet against the two accused on 12th July 2018 after elaborate investigations, which revealed that the men had been radicalised by the ISIS ideology and were out to kill people whom they believed ■ P5

RELIEF FOR PEOPLE

Assam CM discusses roadmap for complete AFSPA withdrawal with Amit Shah

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday met Union Home Minister Amit Shah here and pleaded for the complete withdrawal of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) from the state.

In the course of the meeting that lasted for 30 minutes, Chief Minister Sarma and Union Home Minister

Shah discussed threadbare the roadmap for the complete withdrawal of AFSPA from Assam, as per an Assam government release.

The Chief Minister cited the significant improvement in the law and order situation, the surrendering of scores of underground cadres of extremist outfits with huge caches of arms and ammunition following the signing of several peace accords and the drastic fall ■ P5

SANATAN DHARMA ROW

Plaint filed against Udhayanidhi Stalin in Bihar

ASHISH SINHA
NEW DELHI

A complaint has been filed against Udhayanidhi Stalin, son of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin, in Muzaffarpur of Bihar.

Advocate Sudhir Ojha, resident of Lahladpur of Sa-

dar police station, has filed a complaint regarding Udhayanidhi Stalin's statement comparing Sanatan Dharma with dengue-malaria. He has accused him of hurting the religious sentiments of Hindus.

The court has fixed the ■ P5

IN COURT

PLEA IN SC SEEKS EXCLUSION OF TRANSGENDERS IN CASTE ENUMERATION IN BIHAR

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A petition has been filed in the Supreme Court regarding caste-based counting in Bihar in which, the inclusion of transgenders in the caste calculations has been challenged. Along with this, there has been a demand to declare the survey as zero.

A petition has been filed in the top court, challenging the decision of the Bihar government to include transgenders in the list of 214 castes designated in the caste census conducted by the Bihar government.

It has been said in the petition that the transgender has been nominated not on the ■ P5

GRUESOME

TRAINEE AIR HOSTESS FOUND DEAD IN MUMBAI FLAT

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

In a gruesome incident, a 25-year-old trainee air hostess, Rupal Ogrey, was found dead at her Andheri flat in Mumbai last evening. Belonging to the state of Chhattisgarh, she had moved to the commercial capital of the country after securing a job with the Air India.

She was living with her sister and her boyfriend,

who had gone home a few days ago.

Ogrey's family reached out to her friends when she did not receive any calls on Sunday. The friends went to the apartment, found it locked from the inside, and informed the police.

The police broke into the apartment and found Ogrey lying in a pool of blood. She was rushed to a nearby hospital, where doctors declared her dead on arrival.

STATEMENT

UP MINISTER WASHES HANDS AT SHIVLING, OPP CALLS HIM 'ADHARMI'

TDG NETWORK
BARABANKI

Before the Sanatan Dharma controversy could subside, another row has cropped up in which Uttar Pradesh Minister Satish Sharma faced massive flak from the Opposition on Monday following a video of him washing his hands at a Shivling in Barabanki's Lodheshwar Mahadev temple surfaced online.

The video showed the Minister of State for Food and Civil Supplies washing his hands in the 'argha', or the base of the Shivling, with the help of a priest. The Congress and the Samajwadi Party have demanded the minister's resignation for "insulting Sanatan dharma". However, Satish Sharma countered the allegations saying he did nothing wrong and that if he were wrong.

VALUE OF SOLITUDE (EKANTA) IN SPIRITUAL PRACTICE



DR. MANOJ SHARMA

Solitude (*ekanta*) is a great source of joy for the spiritual aspirant. Solitude refers to the enjoyment of a simple, quiet, contemplative environment where one can just be happy with oneself. It requires not constantly engaging the mind in activity but just taking the time to smell the "roses." It is just cherishing one's own company. Solitude should not be mistaken for loneliness. Solitude is different from loneliness. Paul Tillich (1886-1965), a German-American Christian theologian, has very beautifully summarized this distinction in his quote, "Loneliness expresses the pain of being alone and solitude expresses the glory of being alone." Similarly, May Sarton (pen name of Eleanor Marie Sarton, 1912-1995), an American poet, has expressed the same sentiment by saying, "Loneliness is the poverty of self; solitude is the richness of self."

However, getting solitude is becoming difficult in modern-day life. Sometimes it is inevitable for us to find solitude because of the demands of work while at other times when we do find alone time, we cannot handle it. We try to become busy by listening to music, watching television, spending time on our smartphones, calling friends, surfing through the Internet, and doing other things that apparently keep us busy. Not knowing what to do with alone time or boredom is becoming a major stressor in present times. We have more free time than our ancestors due to the advancements in automation

and the benefits of industrialization. But we have not learned how to handle this free time which is becoming a major threat to our goal of obtaining peace and contentment.

Silence is very important in solitude. William Penn (1644-1718), the founder of the State of Pennsylvania, wrote, "True silence is the rest of the mind, and is to the spirit what sleep is to the body, nourishment and refreshment." Silence indeed offers a lot of benefits. We live in a world where silence is becoming difficult to find. We are constantly surrounded by noise. Noise pollution has become one of the sources of stress in modern-day life. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), noise pollution has a myriad of harmful health effects such as a greater risk of heart disease, insomnia and other sleep disorders, cognitive damage, especially among children, tinnitus, simple annoyance, and other stress-related health problems. Sometimes noise is inevitable, at other times we are responsible for creating noise around us. It has been shown that silence relieves stress and has been shown in some animal studies to even help in the regeneration of brain cells. Bassett and colleagues in a journal article published in 2018 in *Palliative Medicine* even talk about the role of silence as a psychotherapeutic approach. However, it is very difficult to practice silence. I am reminded of a story of four monks who were practicing silence. They remained silent for



the entire day when at the start of the evening they lit a candle. Soon the candle started flickering. The first monk said, "Oh God, the candle is out." The second monk replied, "You are not supposed to talk." The third monk retorted, "Why on earth did you two break the silence?" The fourth monk calmly said, "Great, I am the only one who is silent." The moral of the story is that each one of the monks broke their silence but for a different reason. The first one was distracted. The second one was caught judging others and was more concerned about others breaking the rules rather than focusing on himself. The third one was anger which came in the way of his goal of silence. Finally, the fourth monk was full of pride and wanted to prove that he was superior to others. So, we see that distraction, judgment, anger, and pride are all barriers to attaining solitude. We must try to get over these barriers and try to practice silent solitude every day for some time.

Solitude can be used to do meditation. Introspective meditations (*manan dhyana*) or using thoughts to analyze one's own thoughts are an excellent start to enjoying one's solitude. However, true meditation is beyond the realm of thoughts and feelings. A simple technique

to perform meditation is by watching one's breathing and just merging in that awareness. Another method for meditation can be by chanting a mantra, slowly making it an inner chant, and then merging it with that mantra. An easy mantra to recite is the sound of "Aum." Another procedure for meditation is to focus on the five elements of earth, water, air, fire, and sky and focus on inner balance both outside and inside. Another process for meditation is to meditate on the senses of touch, taste, smell, hearing, sight, and kinesthetic sense without engaging in them. Another system of meditation is Kundalini yoga in which awareness is focused on different *chakras* that correspond to various endocrine glands.

Another way of utilizing solitude is by engaging in creative activities. There are lots of ways of expressing one's creativity. Some people like to draw, others like to sketch, some people like to engage in coloring or writing and the list goes on. When nature creates something, it always has newness in it. The leaves on a tree may look similar but when we closely examine them, they are all different in their finer attributes. Likewise, all human beings look similar but no two human beings are the

same. So, when one creates something, one should try to create it in its unique way, and in such a creation, one often finds one close to the creation. If one is cooking a dish one should try to do it with newness every time the same ingredients are mixed. Mechanization and reproduction in an industrialized world are robbing us of our creativity and thus links with creation. One should find some creative activity that is not done for monetary benefit but solely for the purpose of deriving peace and contentment.

Solitude also entails not being perturbed by the absence of social interaction or company. One should not detest company but must be content both in the absence or the presence of people around oneself. It requires a balance between being an introvert and an extrovert. One should be happy just with oneself. Sometimes people are bothered by getting old because it provides more solitude and reduces interaction with others. Old age should be treated as bliss. Here are some ways you can increase the bliss of solitude in your life by introspective meditation (*manan dhyana*) or reflection on the following five points:

In the past 24 hours, did I have any time for solitude?

What did I do in this alone time?

In the past 24 hours, did I crave company or interaction?

Can I devote more time regularly in solitude?

What can I do to practice silence, meditation, or creative activity in the future?

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THE WISE OWL

OUR LIFESPAN CAN BE SUMMED UP IN ONE BREATH...

What is the description of our lifespan?? According to Gurbani, it can be summed up in one breath. The breath we take, if it remains inside and does not come out, that's it. Everything is over...or to put it simply, the heartbeat if it doesn't beat, the whole body stops, no matter how healthy other organs are. We have no idea of how much time we have, our duration etc, when we are supposed to exit from this life, in short, our life is so uncertain and yet we take things for granted daily.

Our happiness is postponed for some other day when we will be successful, our peace of mind is probably only for our old age, when we have nothing to do. Nothing is promised to us, with death being the only certainty. It doesn't mean we have to leave everything to start looking for our end or live life as if there is a sword hanging over our heads. Instead, learn to enjoy and live every moment as there is no tomorrow promised to us and we have to make the best of each day.

With every breath, make each moment count, after all, in the end we are merely beings of a single breath. We are beings of one mere breath who have to idea about the time and extent of our lives on this earth.

RELAX... HERE AND NOW



MYSTIC MUSING

RAJESH M. IYER

Alexander was exasperated and regretted his decision to meet the recluse sage Diogenes. He, along with his soldiers, had been roaming the island for hours. Yet there was no sign of Diogenes. 'I shouldn't have come to meet him,' Alexander said as he sat down on the beach. 'Little wonder people call him insane.'

That's when one of the soldiers spotted Diogenes coming out of the jungle, along with his dog. Unmindful of the visitors, the sage sat down on the beach. Both he and his dog viewed the new arrivals with amusement, as the usual fanfare associated with an emperor's visit was out of place on that pristine island.

'Master, I've come for your blessings as I'm setting out on my biggest expedition,' Alexander spoke. 'And what would that be?' Diogenes asked. 'Conquer the entire world,' Alexander replied with pride. 'And after the world is conquered?' Diogenes was curious to find out. Though a simple question, it surprised Alexander. Frankly, he had never thought about it. 'I'll be content...' was all Alexander could mutter. 'And what after that?' Diogenes asked. 'I'll relax,' Alexander replied.

'Why undergo such pains?' Diogenes laughed. He told his dog, 'Teach him how we relax without

conquering anything.' Addressing Alexander, he added, 'There's enough space here. I even have my barrel if you need shade. Forget everything and relax.' 'It's too late now,' Alexander replied. 'Relaxation isn't possible until I've achieved what I've set out for.'

Diogenes laughed (a few chroniclers say that even the dog chuckled) and remarked, 'It's never late; know this. In fact, it's now or never.'

Alexander had no idea what the wise man meant. He went on a conquering spree. However, his mission was far from accomplished when he died in Babylon. Among his dying wishes was one where he wanted his hands to hang out of his coffin so people would realize that he left the world empty-handed.

While desires are important, a thin line separates them from the mad craving that tags along. It's something to be careful about. Little do we realize that we invariably end up stepping on to the other side. Keep in mind that we came into the world empty-handed and will eventually leave it the same way.

Rajesh M. Iyer is a storyteller who explores human relationships through meaningful anecdotes, parables, and stories; he shares his work on www.rajeshmeyer.com.



While desires are important, a thin line separates them from the mad craving. Remember you came into the world empty-handed and will leave it the same way.

SO, WHAT DO WE DO WITH AI

Let's accept the fact - AI is already operating in so many areas of our life. Right... All things SMART is run on AI.

There is a bright side and dark side to computers, Cell Phone and AI as well.

By choosing our responses to make life easier and not slaves we can make it brighter. Then the question remains about the misuse of ChatGPT for drafting etc.

Well misuse has remained for centuries. Was misuse of resources not prevalent say a hundred years back. It speaks of that person's integrity and both karmic laws and laws of the land would take care.

Focus on investing in yourself to make you stronger with Divine connection that nothing outside disturbs you. You are aware of the massive intelligence that you are connected to. The easiest way to connect to this person intelligence is through maha mantra. Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Hare Hare.

The author is a Trustee and leads the "Transcend" project, the world's largest Audio and e-Book app initiative.

SPIRITUALITY IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

A revolutionary insight for the common man



ANANDA TIRTHA DASA

WHO CAME FIRST?

The first question when it comes to the title is one of who came first the chicken or the egg. In the 1970s a reporter claimed that the body is just a bag of chemicals. ISKCON's founder Srila Prabhupada told him will he be able to create life if he is given the bag of chemicals.

So, AI could not come by chance. It's a product of a living being.

LET'S LEAVE THIS DISCUSSION.

The ancient Vedic Text have taught us the principal of Yukata vairagya i.e., using everything in the service of the Lord. This it says is real renunciation and detachment.

This will save our time from unnecessary debate of who came in first. Let's learn to accept the change in our lives. How did we learn to accept the change when computers came in. There was so much hue and cry about losing jobs etc. What happened. We all know.

Then the cell phone revolution swept us. Today we

cannot live without it for a moment.

SO, WHAT'S THE LESSON.

We are not the controllers. We have no control over what happens to us, but we have a control over how we can respond to what happens to us. Splitting the word RESPONSIBILITY gives you RESPONSE + ABILITY. The ability to respond.

On one had technology has made our lives easier but on the other hand has made it busier.

But again, we are to be blamed. We choose to respond that way. We should not allow us to become slaves of technology but use it to ease our lives so that we have time for enquiry into higher aspects of life. The choice should be yours's and not your addictive mind's choice.

What has tech done to our personal lives. Has it made us deeper, loving, dependent on God, peaceful, healthier, happier? Has it given us more free time? Really? Are we using that free time in deepening our relationship



with God.

WHY DO I NEED TO CONNECT TO THE REAL INTELLIGENCE, THE UNIVERSAL INTELLIGENCE.

The heart pumps in 2000 gallons of blood daily, the body has innate intelligence to heal itself, there is a complex machinery of millions of tissues, cells that function to digest our food etc. and perform so many functions. All this happens with Lord seated in the heart as Paramatma being a witness it. His intelligence permeates all the universe.

If we recognize this intelligence and what our connection with this intelligence is we can navigate our life peacefully knowing our Source, our identity as to who we are i.e., part and parcel of this Divine Intelligence,

who is conscious, aware and responds.

If this intelligence is all knowing, responsive, loving, caring then why would you fear. You would have a vast resource of loving help and guidance that would make you thrive not survive. Lord Krishna in the B Gita's concluding verses says, "If you become conscious of Me, you will pass over all the obstacles of conditional life by My grace"

So, imagine the excitement to interact and take guidance from this intelligence. Surrendering to it. This Real Intelligence is a person and knows past present and future. We are limited with limited intelligence. But if we recognize and connect this larger intelligence you are now connected to a super house. When Lord is your partner make your plans big.