



Current Affairs of the Day

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- Girls face more pressure during a pandemic: study

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- U.K. nod for extradition of Nirav Modi in PNB case
- Cash, other freebies worth ₹1,000 crores seized by EC in ongoing Assembly polls



U.K. nod for extradition of Nirav Modi in PNB case

The U.K.'s Home Department has approved the extradition of diamond merchant Nirav Modi to India in connection with the ₹13,758 crores Punjab National Bank (PNB) fraud, about two months after the Westminster Magistrates' Court in London ruled that a prima facie case was made out against him.

Highlights:

1. The accused now has the legal recourse of approaching the U.K. High Court within 14 days to seek permission for moving an appeal against the Secretary of State's decision.
2. Unless there is an appeal, a requested person must be extradited within 28 days of the Secretary of State's decision to order extradition (subject to any appeal) according to the U.K. government's website.
3. The CBI had registered the first case against the diamond merchant and others in 2018, alleging that they cheated the PNB of about ₹6,498 crores by getting Letters of Undertaking (LoUs) issued fraudulently to overseas banks for securing buyer's credit in favour of his three firms.

Cash, other freebies worth ₹1,000 crores seized by EC in ongoing Assembly polls

The Election Commission of India on Friday said it had seized cash, liquor, drugs, precious metals and other freebies worth ₹1,001.43 crores meant for distribution to voters in the ongoing Assembly elections. "Seizures crossed ₹1,000 crores for the first time in any Assembly electoral process," the ECI said in a statement.

Highlights:

1. In 2016 for the five Assembly elections, the total seizures were only ₹225.77 crores. When asked about FIRs filed against those involved and the details of political parties and individuals involved, the EC spokesperson did not respond.
2. Association for Democratic Reforms said the ECI may not necessarily know which parties are responsible. When the ECI comes across cash, drugs or other freebies, they seize the items. They should confiscate the vehicles and file FIRs.



Girls face more pressure during a pandemic: study

Twenty-five girls from seven cities set out to interview their peers to record the impact of COVID-19 on their lives and found that adolescent girls were grappling with an increased pressure to get married, spent long hours on household chores, lacked tools to continue school education online, and reported an increase in gender-based violence.

Highlights:

1. The study titled 'COVID In Her Voice: A Girl-led and Centred Participatory Research Study' was released on April 13. It was conducted by girls aged 13-24 from Ahmedabad, Alwar, Bareilly, Delhi, Lucknow, Mumbai and Pune within their communities.
2. The study was supported by the U.K. government and conducted by EMpower, global philanthropy focused on at-risk youth in emerging markets.
3. Among the biggest challenges girls faced was the inability to attend online school. This was a result of nearly 80% of respondents reporting an increase in household chores, which meant that 64% of girls and young women felt they did not have space or get the time to study online.
4. Lack of access to resources and technology was also a challenge — nearly 28% of those surveyed didn't have the tools such as mobile phones or Internet access to learn online.
5. With households from marginalised communities facing financial stress due to the economic impact of COVID-19, girls believed that the pressure to get married had increased, with nearly 42% reporting this.
6. Up to 26% of respondents believe there was an increase in gender-based violence and felt that fears and threats of violence intensified restrictions on their freedom.
7. Almost 90% of girls reported experiencing mental distress and despair without any access to information about coping mechanisms. Their mental distress was exacerbated because of barriers in communicating with friends and teachers.

On concluding the field research, seven girl leaders finalised a list of priority recommendations which include establishing girl-friendly spaces within the community such as skills training centres and violence-free spaces.