

Give priority to women, close kin of deceased donors for organ transplant: Govt to states

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Women patients should be accorded priority in organ transplant waiting lists to check gender disparity, the Union Health Ministry has advised states.

It has also suggested that weightage be given to near relatives of deceased donors awaiting organ transplant.

These suggestions are part of an advisory issued by the National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (NOTTO) under the Health Ministry to all states and Union Territories on the 15th Indian Organ Donation Day on August 2 for augmentation of organ donation and transplantation in India.

The advisory called for honouring deceased organ

donors and ensuring they receive a dignified funeral and felicitating the family members of deceased donors at public functions at state/district level on 15th August, 26 January, state foundation day etc.

"To make provision to give additional points in the allocation criteria for female patients in the waiting list for deceased donor organ transplants, so as to address gender disparity. To make provision that if a near relative of a previous deceased donor needs organ transplant, then he may be given priority," the advisory said.

It also suggested developing facilities for organ and tissue retrieval in all trauma centres and register them as

organ retrieval centre under the Transplantation of Human Organs and Tissues Act (THOTA), 1994. Similarly, states are advised to develop facilities for organ and tissue retrieval in their respective medical colleges in a phase-wise manner.

States were asked to take up training of emergency responders and ambulance staff for early identification of potential deceased donors especially among victims of road traffic accidents and stroke patients and alerting the organ donation coordinator in the hospital regarding the same.

The advisory also suggested appointment of a brand ambassador at state level to give a boost to the aware-

ness generation activities.

It also stated that directions should be issued to hospitals/centres performing organ and tissue transplantation/retrieval or tissue banking to provide data of each donor and recipient of organ or tissue for the national registry maintained by NOTTO.

In case of non-compliance, states may consider taking action as per the Transplantation of Human Organ and Tissue (THOTA) Act, 1994.

In view of the pivotal role of transplant coordinators in the Organ Donation and Transplantation Program, the NOTTO also recommended creating permanent posts for them, in hospitals performing organ transplan-

tation or organ retrieval.

Underlining the importance of organ donation, Union Health Minister J P Nadda at an event held recently said there is an alarming rise in the cases of organ failures posing a serious threat to public health and increasing strain on the healthcare system.

"Every year thousands of people wait for organ transplants. Despite the urgent need there remains a significant gap between the number of patients waiting for transplants and the number of available donors," he said.

"This gap is not due to lack of willingness but often due to lack of awareness and hesitation rooted in myths and misconceptions," he said.

Over 5 million devotees expected in Mathura for Janmashtami, security stepped up

STATE TIMES NEWS

MATHURA: The birth anniversary of Lord Krishna will be celebrated at midnight on August 16 in all major temples of Mathura, including the Shri Krishna Janmabhoomi temple, and at the Thakur Bankey Bihari temple in Vrindavan.

Nandgaon will mark the festivities on the night of August 17, officials said here on Sunday.

District Magistrate Chandraprakash Singh and Senior Superintendent of Police Shlok Kumar said that while around 4.2 million devotees visited Mathura during Janmashtami last year, the number is expected to cross five million this time.

Preparations and security arrangements are being made accordingly at all pilgrimage centres, including

Mathura, Vrindavan, Barsana, Gokul, Nandgaon, Govardhan, and Mahavan.

At the Shri Krishna Janmabhoomi temple complex alone, 150 CCTV cameras have been installed, with over 100 more positioned in the surrounding areas. For the first time, AI-enabled drone cameras will also be deployed for surveillance, the officials said. Police personnel will be stationed across the city, especially at major temples and sensitive locations.

Civic works such as cleaning, road repairs, beautification of routes, and decoration of intersections are being carried out on a war footing, the officers added.

The Uttar Pradesh Braj Teerth Vikas Parishad, which is organising the celebrations under the banner of 'Shri

Krishnotsav', has planned a three-day festival from August 15 to 17.

Vice-Chairman of the Mathura-Vrindavan Development Authority and ex-officio CEO of the Parishad, Shyam Bahadur Singh, said the festivities will begin on the morning of August 15 with a grand procession from the main gate of Shri Krishna Janmasthan to Potra Kund, Govind Nagar, and Deeg Gate, before returning to the starting point.

The procession will combine devotional and patriotic themes, featuring about 250 folk artists from Braj, Bundelkhand, Rajasthan, and Haryana, performing traditional dances such as Bundelkhand's Rai, Rajasthan's Kachhi Ghodi, and Haryana's Gujri.

CBSE to set up its own community radio station

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) will soon come up with a community radio station exclusively for its students, teachers and other stakeholders, according to officials.

The proposal was approved in the recent Governing Body meeting of the board, where it was decided that the application for procuring a license be moved.

"The proposal to set up a community radio station was approved by the board's Governing Body. It was decided that consultative meetings will be held in next six months with stakeholders and experts for preparing and processing application for community radio license detailed," a senior CBSE official said.

The board has also decided that financial implications be worked out, the official added.

The CBSE already runs a podcast called Shiksha Vani which disseminates timely audio content for various subjects of grades 9-12 in a lucid and seamless manner.

CBSE-Shiksha Vani is available on Play Store for Android phone users. Shiksha Vani has, so far, uploaded approximately 400 pieces of content in accordance with NCERT curriculum.

"The modalities of the content which will be broadcast on the community radio station will be worked out once the license is procured," the official added.

Community Radio is an important third tier in radio broadcasting, distinct from public service radio broadcasting and commercial radio. Community radio stations are low-power radio stations, which are meant to be set up and operated by local communities. It provides a platform to air voices among the local community, especially marginalised sections of society, on issues concerning health, nutrition, education, agriculture etc. Moreover, since the broadcast is in local languages and dialects, there is a possibility of more connect among people. According to official statistics, there are 540 commissioned community radio stations in India. These stations are operated by non-profit organisations like educational institutions, NGOs and societies.

Legal education system grappling to meet demands of 21st century: ex-CJI Chandrachud

STATE TIMES NEWS

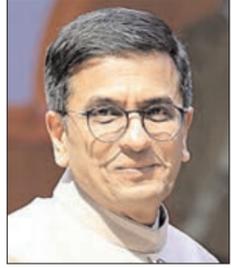
CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR: Former Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud has said that despite producing some of the finest legal minds, our legal education system continues to grapple with fundamental gaps that hinder its ability to meet the demands of the 21st century.

Addressing law students here on Saturday, Chandrachud also said lawyering is a stressful profession and the mental health concerns of lawyers should be addressed systematically.

He was speaking at the Vishnupant Advant lecture series on the topic 'The Present and Future of Legal Profession: Opportunities, Challenges and Drawbacks.'

"Despite producing some of the finest legal minds, our legal education system continues to grapple with fundamental gaps that hinder its ability to meet the demands of the 21st century," he said.

"We are witnessing today a digital explosion, data protection disputes, climate change litigation, online dispute resolution and digital



first regulatory frameworks are becoming the new norms," he said.

"Pragmatically, this means reforming legal education and continuing professional development programmes to foster cross-sectoral expertise. By cross-sectoral expertise, I mean digital law, data privacy, environmental law, cultivating critical reasoning and social empathy, and encouraging collaboration with other professions such as technology experts and social scientists.

"To achieve this vision, law schools and continuing education programmes must anticipate the evolving landscape of legal careers and actively prepare both students and current profes-

sions to succeed within it," he said.

Chandrachud said the curriculum must expand beyond traditional doctrines and procedures to include foundational training in data science, tools and experience designed for technologies and principles of algorithmic accountability.

"Students need to develop skills to assess AI model outputs, detect biases in training data and work collaboratively with software engineers to define tools that uphold constitutional values and human rights standards.

"Moot court exercises could incorporate artificial intelligence adversaries that challenge students to predict algorithmic decisions and formulate compelling arguments to hold automated systems accountable," he said.

"During my tenure as Chief Justice, I had the great opportunity of unveiling several technological reforms. Reforms that I am happy to report have remedied to a great extent the issues that plague our judiciary. We introduced e-filing of cases available across nearly all

states," he said.

Today, the Supreme Court judges operate virtually in a paperless manner and they are provided with scanned, bookmarked and digitally signed case records which they access, read, annotate and preserve for their reference, Chandrachud said.

He advised aspiring lawyers to ignore insults from opponents as it will not help them win a case, and said he has been following this principle after retirement also.

He also said lawyers should reorientate their identity as "facilitators of justice before everything", and stressed that ethics should be prioritised.

There is no shortcut for success, and the students of law should be lifelong learners and independent thinkers, he said.

Citing legal luminary Fali Nariman's advice for lawyers, the former CJI said they should always be honest and responsible with their opinions and avoid sporting the "champ" syndrome. Law is not a game, he added.

"Know your law and facts

deeply. Be careful not to get lost in trying to fit your case into old judgments and don't suffer from "case law diarrhoea," Chandrachud said.

"If your opponent throws insults, ignore them. Responding won't win you the case. I have carried Fali Nariman's principle that if your opponent throws insults, ignore them. I am carrying that in my retirement as well. To people who throw insults at me, I have only one answer, if that makes you happy, so be it," Justice Chandrachud said.

"Read, observe and learn how to argue and how not to argue," he said. "When you have multiple arguments, lead with your weakest but make it your strongest effort. Save the best argument for last," he said.

Chandrachud said the hardest working judges do the most amount of work. Stay busy, sharp and avoid complacency, he said, adding that "integrity is everything."

"Understate your case rather than overstating," the ex-CJI said. Leave anger outside the court. Even in heated arguments, calmness

wins more than passion, he added.

The former CJI also said lawyers should not be quarrelsome, pointing out that "your colleagues shape your reputation".

"Courtesy matters more than you think, he said, adding that lawyers should never indulge in personal attack on judges or opponents.

"Focus on skills and substance over showmanship," he said.

Lawyering is a stressful profession and several studies have pointed out that lawyers' jobs can be often very stressful and making them more prone to addiction and struggling with mental health issues, such as depression, at higher rates than the general population, he said.

"Talk to each other and understand those who are in distress, why they are in distress," he said.

The former CJI asked students to keep upgrading themselves. He also underlined the need of more women to join the field of law.

Drone rumours trigger panic, night patrols across villages in western UP

STATE TIMES NEWS

LUCKNOW: In Purnapur, a rural tehsil in Pilibhit district, 45-year-old Bhurey Singh now stands on nightly vigil with a flashlight strapped to his bicycle and a thick wooden stick in hand. Hired two weeks ago by local residents, he serves as the village's "sky sentry".

"They say thieves are using drones to plan robberies," Bhurey told PTI. "Whether it's true or not, we can't take any chances."

His nightly patrol reflects a wave of fear spreading across more than 300 villages in at least a dozen districts of western Uttar Pradesh - from the forest edges of Pilibhit to the urban sprawl of Ghaziabad.

Since mid-July, cries of "Drone chor!" have echoed through village lanes at night, replacing the usual silence of the countryside. Shadows dart across rooftops, wooden lathis are clutched tightly, and families stay awake long past midnight in fear of unseen threats from above.

Villagers speak in hushed tones of mysterious drones flying after dark - allegedly scouting rooftops and identifying weak entry points. In many communities, drones have become ghosts in the sky. Sometimes real. Often imagined. Always feared.

As the panic grew, so did state attention. Last week, the matter was reviewed in a high-level law and order meeting chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. He issued a stern warning against those spreading rumours or flying drones without authorisation.

"Those creating fear using drones - or spreading misinformation - will be charged under the Gangster Act," the chief minister directed. Provisions under the NSA may also be invoked if necessary, he said.

To regulate drone usage, police have been instructed to maintain a dedicated drone register.

DIG Kalamidhi Naithani of Meerut Range directed all police stations in his jurisdiction to list drone owners and

take immediate action against individuals operating drones after dark. He cautioned citizens against using drones "just for fun", warning of strict legal consequences for violations.

Despite these measures, fear persists on the ground.

According to police, the roots of this hysteria lie in Amroha, where bizarre rumours began circulating in early June about an under-wear-clad, oil-smeared gang of thieves using drones to survey homes before burglaries. Though the story appeared implausible, it spread rapidly.

Soon, villages in neighbouring districts such as Moradabad, Rampur, Sambhal, Meerut, and Bijon began reporting similar drone sightings. Many videos - some doctored or outdated - went viral on social media.

Every flickering light or low-flying object sparked panic. On WhatsApp, paranoia quickly outpaced fact.

Officials attribute the growing alarm to low digital literacy, widespread misin-

formation, and deep-seated anxieties around unfamiliar technologies.

What began as whispers has now escalated into violence.

In Modinagar, Ghaziabad, a man visiting his partner from Hapur was mistaken for a drone operator and beaten by a mob earlier this month. He had no drone - only the misfortune of being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

In Bareilly, a toy drone found on the roof of a government school caused alarm. Four brothers returning from Delhi were intercepted and assaulted by locals who assumed they were part of a drone theft gang. Police later confirmed the drone was a broken plastic toy incapable of flight.

In Aurangabad, Bulandshahr, a blinking light in the sky triggered chaos. A man walking nearby - allegedly drunk and unaware - was caught, stripped, and beaten. He had no connection to any drone activity. Police helplines in several

districts have received hundreds of drone-related complaints in recent weeks. However, senior officers maintain that no thefts have been conclusively linked to drone surveillance.

"Drone sightings have been reported for over a month now," DIG Naithani told PTI.

"But not a single theft case has been proven to involve drones. This hysteria is driven entirely by rumours and fear."

Over 40 people have been arrested in districts such as Meerut, Amroha, and Sambhal for inciting panic or spreading false information. Police in several areas have launched awareness drives, directing drone owners to register their devices or face fines. WhatsApp helplines have been issued to counter hoaxes.

In Amroha, three YouTubers filming drone footage were detained for flying without police permission. They were released after verification, but the incident added to local suspi-

cion.

In Meerut, two content creators were held for allegedly spreading fake drone-related videos.

Police in the affected districts have appealed to residents to approach authorities if they spot a drone, instead of spreading rumours on social media.

Superintendent of Police (Rampur) Vidya Sagar Mishra told PTI, "We have held meetings with influential community members at the village level and sought their support to counter the rumours."

The officer said drone sightings were largely hearsay and had no proven links to any organised gang.

Still, in many homes, fear continues to shape daily life. "One or two people in every household now stay awake through the night, looking at the sky," said Ramapati Verma of Fatehganj in Bareilly.

"We can't let our guard down. What if the thieves come? What if they hurt someone?" she asked.

Chacha Chaudhary on mission to clean Ganga

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: India's beloved comic hero Chacha Chaudhary, whose brain works "faster than a computer," is back but this time diving into the waters of the Ganga with his giant sidekick Sabu to battle villains threatening the river's health.

A latest set of stories, released as part of a collaboration between the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) and Diamond Books publication, blends humour, action and environmental awareness in a way only Chacha Chaudhary can.

The newly published comics take the familiar duo into four fresh adventures, each highlighting a unique aspect of the Ganga ecosystem.

In an anti-poaching story, Chacha Chaudhary joins hands with friendly dolphins that also showcases the river's biodiversity.

In "Aviral" (ever-flowing) and "Nirmal" (clean), Chacha Chaudhary and Sabu ensure that polluters and illegal dumpers face justice.

A third adventure brings in a wise old tortoise, representing resilience and the age-old connection between river and life.

As always, Sabu's sheer physical might crushes the henchmen, while Chacha Chaudhary's razor-sharp mind unravels the masterminds' plots.

The mix of fast-paced action and moral clarity has long been a hallmark of cartoonist Pran's creation, but here, the stakes are ecological survival, not just small-town peace.

Chacha Chaudhary was declared the mascot of the Namami Gange Programme by the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) in October 2021 to engage children and promote behavioural change towards river cleanliness through comics and animations.

By weaving environmental themes into an iconic Indian comic format, the initiative aims to make children and young readers not only fans of Chacha Chaudhary, but also spread awareness on Ganga conservation.

Navy ships 'Udaygiri', 'Himgiri' to be simultaneously commissioned on Aug 26

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Indian naval ships 'Udaygiri' and 'Himgiri', part of Project 17A stealth frigates, are slated to be simultaneously commissioned on August 26 at Visakhapatnam, officials said on Sunday.

The first ship of the P17A (Nilgiri Class) stealth frigates 'Nilgiri' was commissioned at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in January.

The second warship, Udaygiri, built at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), was delivered to the Navy on July 1.

The Indian Navy is preparing for the simultaneous commissioning of two advanced front-

line frigates -- 'Udaygiri' (F35) and 'Himgiri' (F34) -- on August 26, a Navy spokesperson said.

This will be the "first time that two major surface combatants from two prestigious Indian shipyards are being commissioned at the same time at Visakhapatnam," he said.

These multi-mission frigates are capable of operating in a "Blue Water" environment dealing with both conventional and non-conventional threats" in the area of India's maritime interests, the defence ministry has said.

Project 17A is a follow-on to the Shivalik class (Project 17) frigates active in service.

Among the seven frigates, four will be delivered by MDL,

Mumbai and the remaining by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata.

'Himgiri' is the first of P17A ships being constructed by GRSE, Kolkata. This event underscores India's accelerating naval modernisation and its ability to deliver sophisticated warships from multiple shipyards, officials said.

This milestone showcases the success of the 'Make in India' and 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' initiatives in the defence sector.

In another major milestone for the Indian Navy, 'Udaygiri' is the 100th ship designed by the Navy's Warship Design Bureau.

'Udaygiri' and 'Himgiri' represent a "generational leap" over earlier designs. Displacing about 6,700 tonnes, the P17A frigates are roughly 5 per cent larger than their predecessor Shivalik-class frigates band yet incorporate a sleeker form, with a reduced radar cross section, the officials said.

These are powered by combined diesel or gas (CODOG) propulsion plants using diesel engines and gas turbines that drive controllable-pitch propellers and are managed through an Integrated Platform Management System (IPMS).

The weapon suite includes supersonic surface-to-surface missiles, medium range sur-

face-to-air missiles, 76 mm MR gun and a combination of 30 mm and 12.7 mm close-in weapon systems and the anti-submarine or underwater weapon systems," the Navy spokesperson said.

Both ships are the result of an industrial ecosystem spanning over 200 MSMEs, supporting approximately 4,000 direct jobs and more than 10,000 indirect jobs, he said.

The commissioning of 'Udaygiri' and 'Himgiri' underscores the Navy's commitment to self-reliance in ship design and construction and follows the commissioning of other indigenous platforms, including destroyer INS Surat, frigate INS Nilgiri, submarine INS Vaghsheer, ASW Shallow

Water Craft INS Arnala, and Diving Support Vessel INS Nistar, all in 2025 alone.

Rigorous sea trials have validated the frigates' hull, machinery, firefighting, damage control, navigation and communication systems, ensuring they are ready for operational deployment, the spokesperson said.

The forthcoming ceremony at Visakhapatnam will thus be more than a naval ritual; it will be a celebration of India's journey towards a robust and self-sufficient maritime defence ecosystem, the Navy said.

As the nation watches the two grey hulls take their place in the fleet, the message will be clear -- India's oceans are

guarded by ships built in India, designed by Indians and staffed by Indians, a true embodiment of the 'Make in India' initiative and a beacon of the country's rising maritime power, it said.

Also, INS Tamal, the Navy's newest stealth frigate, has completed a port call at Casablanca, Morocco, from August 6-9 during her return voyage to India, the officials said.

Commissioned in Russia on July 1, INS Tamal is transiting back to her home base via multiple European and Asian ports, advancing India's maritime diplomacy and reinforcing bilateral ties.

INS Tamal is the third Indian naval ship in the last two years to visit Casablanca, they said.