

NEW LAWS ON JULY 1 | Criminal code to include two significant features: Zero FIR and e-FIR

# Focus on victim-centric reforms

**Megha Kuchik**  
MUMBAI

Parliament has enacted three laws, the 'Codes', which will come into effect from July 1. The Indian Penal Code (IPC) is being replaced with the Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita 2023, the Indian Code of Criminal Procedure with the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita 2023, and the Indian Evidence Act with the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam 2023.

The laws include two significant features: Zero FIR and e-FIR. Previously, the complainant had to visit a specific station. Now, citizens can

file complaints at any station, and the case will be transferred to the relevant station. This eliminates jurisdictional barriers for the complainant. E-FIR allows complainants to file complaints from anywhere via mobile phones. However, the complainant should visit the relevant station within three days to sign the complaint paper.

The police and judicial systems will also have to follow a timeline. The police must complete the investigation within 90 days and file the charge sheet. Judges will have to deliver verdict within 45 days after a specific hearing period.

According to the new law, the police can hold the accused in custody for up to 60 days, whereas it was previously 15 days.

Section 124A on sedition has been cancelled and replaced with a section to be used against those who act against the country with weapons, act against the country's economy, or act against the country's integrity. A section for mob lynching has been added.

Digitisation of the legal system is a feature of these laws. E-FIRs ensure that FIRs cannot be erased, and the issue of missing FIRs will not arise. As per the new law, forensic in-

There seems to be a lack of accountability and insufficient training for police personnel

**Advocate Yuvraj Narwankar**

vestigation is mandatory in cases where the punishment exceeds seven years. When the police raid any place or seize property, video recording is compulsory. Virtual hearings

are also allowed.

According to the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam 2023, electronic evidence will be considered prima facie evidence, and even messages from social media will be considered as evidence.

Advocate of the Supreme Court and Bombay High Court, Yuvraj Narwankar, stated, "I welcome the new laws. However, the implementation of the new laws requires infrastructure, which is currently lacking. There is no cloud storage, and data security is crucial, especially in sensitive cases like rape. There seems to be a lack of account-

ability and insufficient training for police personnel. The new laws do not include the 'right to be forgotten', which is important."

Praveen Dixit, former director general of police of Maharashtra, views the new laws positively. He stated, "It is an historic event that these archaic British period laws are being replaced. The suggested timeline to complete the process is significant. The introduction of electronic evidence would make a significant difference in ensuring the conviction of criminals. The punishment of community service is a welcome concept."



Lokhandwala Jogger's Park

## BMC razes structures at Jogger's Park

Residents to move application in HC seeking urgent hearing on Mon

**Shefali Parab-Pandit**  
MUMBAI

Following the directives of the Bombay High Court (HC), the BMC recently demolished illegal constructions at Jogger's Park at Lokhandwala, Andheri (East).

However, residents have expressed displeasure and alleged that the action is just an "eye wash", and an "unauthorised gurdwara" is still encroaching on the park. The residents will move an application in the HC seeking an urgent hearing on Monday.

The park was built in 2003 by MHADA and was initially maintained by Millennium Foundation. In January 2013, it was handed over to Celebration Sports Club for maintenance and upkeep.

However, after receiving complaints from residents, the BMC issued notices on January 23 and March 4 this year to the club and Sanjha Chula Guru ka Langar Trust on allegation of encroachment.

Meanwhile, members of the Lokhandwala Jogger's Park Association filed a plea seeking demolition of the gurdwara, citing inaction by the BMC.

At a hearing last month, the HC directed the civic body to ensure that no further construction comes up and to take the notice to its logical end.

Accordingly, officials demolished sheds, toilets and other constructions on June 24.

Anuj Mittal, a petitioner and secretary of the association, said, "The action was just an eyewash; the machinery was brought on site at 8am, but action started only at around 5pm. No action has been taken on the gurdwara. Only the compound wall, toilets and sheds were demolished. The next hearing will be in September, so on Monday we will move an application for an urgent hearing."

Civic chief Bhushan Gagrani said, "We require an order or clarification with regard to the status of the gurdwara. As far as the remaining illegal construction is concerned, it has been demolished."

The honorary secretary of the club, Hemant Nair, confirmed that the BMC demolished the sheds and other structures that were objected to, and even the club has removed some of these as per notice.

Activist and film producer Ashok Pandit, however, asked, "Why is the BMC expecting citizens to move the court repeatedly? Citizens are trying to protect public land from encroachments and yet the civic body wants them to approach the court repeatedly. All the illegal structures in the park must go."

## Hit by vehicle, teenager falls off flyover

**Megha Kuchik**  
MUMBAI

A young man was killed after he was knocked down by a speeding vehicle near Gundavali metro station on Saturday.

Vivek Yadav and his friend Aman Yadav, both 19, were out for a run when the vehicle rammed into them.

Vivek fell from the Andheri flyover due to the impact of the accident and died. Aman survived but suffered multiple fractures and head injuries. He is currently receiving treatment at Seven Hills Hospital and is set to undergo surgery. The incident was discovered when a group of cyclists noticed Aman lying on the bridge around 6.12am. Vivek was found lying under the bridge some time later.

Aman was conscious but could not recall what had happened. His left lower leg was swollen, indicating multiple fractures. It is believed that Vivek lay unattended for at least 15 to 20 minutes before being found.

The police have registered a case under the IPC sections 279 (Rash driving), 304 (A) (causing death due to negligence), and 338 (grievous hurt caused by a rash or negligent act endangering human life) against an unknown person.

## NEET centre shuts overnight, leaving 52 staff in the lurch

Owner arrested in Sakinaka; local police say he has no connection with the NEET paper leak matter

**Megha Kuchik**  
MUMBAI

More than 50 employees of a NEET counselling centre in Sakinaka filed a police complaint on Friday after finding it shuttered.

The centre, Advaya Vidya Praveesh Margdarshank Private Limited, is located at 1 Aerocity Corporate Park.

Mangesh Shinde, Deputy Commissioner, Zone-10, said Organda Arvind Kumar, aka 'Aaditya Deshmukh', the centre's owner, was recently arrested by Karnataka police from Sakinaka in an old case, and has no connection with the NEET paper leak matter.

According to sources, Kumar, a resident of Belgaum, was arrested in Sakinaka on Thursday for defrauding individuals of up to Rs1 crore after promising them MBBS admissions. Kumar, a notorious criminal with 15 cases in Hyderabad and one in Bangalore, was preparing to execute a significant scam in Mumbai, the sources claimed.

He established the Sakinaka

centre a month ago, operating from two offices. On Thursday, Kumar told his employees that the premises would be renovated. The next day, the employees found the centre closed and approached the police.

"I visited the centre upon learning the situation. Approximately 52 employees worked there," Shiv Sena (Shinde) MLA Dilip Lande said.

"I discovered the accused's real name is Arvind Kumar, living under the alias Aaditya Deshmukh. He issued bogus recruitment letters to employees, and their salaries are a major concern. I have assured the employees that I will raise this matter. I have written to Chief Minister Eknath Shinde regarding their salaries and requested the police to investigate any possible NEET paper leak angle," he said.

The manager of the centre, Beena Paul, confirmed that 52 employees were yet to receive their salaries.

Meanwhile, the police have yet to register an FIR.

## MSRTC drugging & robbery: Rights panel upbraids officials

Commission says it is the duty of driver and conductor of bus to care for the safety and security of passengers

**Pranali Lotlikar**  
MUMBAI

The State Human Rights Commission has taken suo motu cognisance of a recent case of drugging and looting in a Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation bus.

Shailendra Sathe, 57, was travelling from Pune to Mumbai when he was drugged and robbed of money and valuables worth Rs3.7 lakh. MSRTC staff who helped the ad agency owner alight at Dadar assumed he was drunk and left him on the footpath, where he lay for more than 16 hours before his family located him and admitted him to a hospital.

Condemning the incident, a division bench of Justice KK Tated and Sanjay Kumar said it is the duty of the driver and the conductor to care for the safety of passengers. The panel has issued summons to the managing director of MSRTC and deputy commissioner of police, Zone-4, calling on them to hold a fact-finding inquiry into the case.

"When passengers purchase a ticket to travel from one destination to another, it is the utmost duty of the driver



### List of questions

- Whether an inquiry into this incident has been conducted by authority concerned and action taken against the responsible person.
- Whether any system of paying compensation to the victim in such cases is in existence at MSRTC.
- Whether any offence has been registered by staff of the bus at the police station.
- What are the precautions taken by MSRTC to counter this sort of incidents?

and the conductor of the bus to care for the safety and security of the passengers during his journey," the commission said.

"This is not the first incident on Mumbai-Pune Express Highway. Incidents of drugging and looting is a frequent affair on this route in public transport system. To stop this kind of incident, efforts like in-

stalling CCTV cameras in the bus and sensitising the driver and the conductor should have been made by the authority. The conduct of the staff of the bus at Dadar Shivneri bus stand is highly deplorable and against the ethics and conduct of government servants. It is a violation of human right of life and dignity of individual," it said.



## NGO adds a dash of colour to walls of BMC school

iVolunteer aims to create a rich environment for children and decrease dropout rate at schools

**Dhairya Gajara**  
MUMBAI

An NGO that brings together volunteers and organisations to share time, skills and passion to promote social development has started an initiative to paint the walls of government schools.

iVolunteer kicked off the initiative from the BMC school at Worli Naka on Saturday.

Participants painted the walls of the school with images of animated characters, objects and quotes representing science, history and digital technology.

"The primary aim of this initiative was to upgrade the classroom walls as these government schools are not able to spend enough on beautification and refurbishment," Nameeta Sadhani, relationship manager, iVolunteer, said. "At the same time it creates an enriching environment for the children and decreases the dropout rate at schools."

The initiative also saw participation from students and teachers, who expressed their imaginations on the walls of their own schools. The initiative also gave a platform to volunteers who wanted to interact with students and understand their struggles and ambitions.

iVolunteer carries out this initiative at different schools once a quarter. Previously, they have transformed the compound walls of Prabhadevi municipal school and aim to refurbish every school in the city.

"The volunteers participating in this initiative are usually very dedicated and enthusiastic with an aim to give something to the underprivileged children. They give their best by using different painting methods, which seems like they are appearing for an elementary drawing exam. We wish to carry this initiative ahead to every school we come across," Sadhani said.

## Shree Dhootapapeshwar: More than 150 years of Ayurvedic excellence

**FPJ News Service**  
MUMBAI

Shree Dhootapapeshwar Ltd will celebrate 152 years of service to humanity through Ayurveda on June 30.

"Service of Ayurveda is service to mankind" has always been the company's driving principle since its foundation at Panvel in 1872 by the late Krushnashastry Puranik. In its 152 years, the company has been delivering Ayurvedic excellence by manufacturing safe, authentic, standardised and efficacious healthcare formulations, batch after batch.

The company's medicines are manufactured at its GMP- and ISO-certified manufacturing units located at Panvel and Bengaluru. In-house quality compendium 'Shree Dhootapapeshwar Standards' (SDS) serves as a warranty for patients and a guaranty for physicians. An enviable record of safe, authentic, standardised and efficacious medicinal range of over 400 classics marks the SDL footprint today. Monographs of each product are readily available for refer-

ence on the company's website and underscore the transparency the company upholds.

Shree Dhootapapeshwar carries out research in the form of pre-clinical and clinical trials based on globally recognised guidelines. It has been published in various scientific journals thus revalidating the ancient Ayurveda principles in

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**Bank of Baroda** Zonal Stressed Asset Recovery Branch : Meher Chamber, Ground floor, Dr. Sundaral Behl Marg, Ballard Estate, Mumbai-400001. Phone: 022-43683807. Email: armbom@bankofbaroda.co.in

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