

Slapped, punched & threatened: Spate of attacks on stray dog feeders in Delhi-NCR post SC ruling

NEW DELHI: Days after the Supreme Court modified its order on the management of stray dogs, there appears to be an uptick in violence against dog feeders in Delhi-NCR. From Gurugram to Ghaziabad to Delhi's Paschim Vihar, dog feeders have been slapped, punched, thrashed with sticks and even issued death threats. Videos of them in bloodied clothes, wounds on their faces, heads and arms are doing the rounds on social media. While this is not the first time individuals have been attacked for feeding stray dogs, the latest spate of attacks has the animal welfare community fuming. Activists ThePrint spoke to say the modified Supreme Court order has been widely misinterpreted as a "ban" on feeding stray dogs, emboldening individuals to attack feeders. They argue that these assaults stem from a "misconception" about the top court ruling. On 22 August, a three-judge bench clarified that all stray dogs captured after the court's previous ruling must be sterilised, vaccinated, and dewormed, and only then, released back into the locality from where the dog catchers picked them up. However, dogs with rabies, dogs suspected to be rabid, or those showing aggressive behaviour will not be released. Additionally, the court issued specific directions with regard to the feeding of dogs. "Municipal



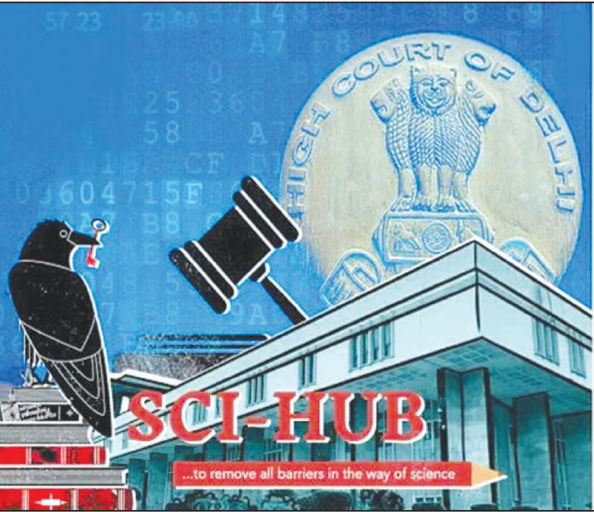
pal authorities shall forthwith commence an exercise for creating dedicated feeding spaces for the stray dogs in each municipal ward. The feeding areas shall be created/identified keeping in view the population and concentration of stray dogs in the particular municipal ward. Gantries/notice boards shall be placed near such designated feeding areas, mentioning that stray dogs shall only be fed in such areas," the order read. Adding, "Under no condition shall the feeding of stray dogs on the streets be permitted. The persons found feeding the dogs on the streets in contravention of the

above directions shall be liable to be proceeded against under the relevant legal framework." The Supreme Court order has, for the first time, brought attention to dog feeders and recognised their role as an essential part of stray dog management. Activists are trying to explain the condition on the ground, but without much luck. "Dog feeding is not banned; the court has introduced regulations," said Harjas Sethi, a Gurgaon resident and campaigner with SaveDelhiNCR. Sethi said the order "makes it the responsibility of municipal bodies like MCD in Delhi and MCG in Gurgaon to create proper feed-

ing points" but "since most municipalities have not done so yet, feeders are being targeted". **22-yr-old slapped in Ghaziabad** In Ghaziabad, a neighbour assaulted 22-year-old Yashika Shukla while she was feeding a dog in the evening of 22 August. Shukla said that her neighbour, Kamal Khanna, initially, threw a stone at the dog she was feeding, then hurled abuses at her, as well as her roommate, who was accompanying her, before he went on to kick the dog, "I feed dogs daily in the designated areas in our apartment complex. We never even go close to my neighbour's house," she told ThePrint. "When I resisted and asked him to stop (his attack on the dog), he, shockingly, started slapping me." Her roommate filmed the entire incident on her phone. Shukla alleged that bystanders did not come to her rescue but encouraged Khanna, saying: "Ekdo hamari taraf se bhi maaro (slap her on our behalf too)." The police registered an FIR against Khanna the following day under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) sections 115(2) for voluntarily causing hurt, punishable with up to one year in jail or a fine of Rs 10,000, 351(2) for criminal intimidation, carrying a maximum sentence of two years, which can extend to seven years if the threat involves grievous harm or death, and 352 for intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of peace, punishable with

up to two years' imprisonment or fine. They later arrested Khanna, who claimed that Shukla hit him first, which she denies. "He even mentioned CCTV footage. But when asked to produce it, he fled," Shukla said, adding this was not the first time Khanna harassed them—the roommates—for feeding strays. **Beaten & threatened in Gurgaon** A few days later, another video surfaced in Gurgaon Sector 28, showing a man hitting a dog feeder with a stick and threatening to kill him. "Why are you here? Who sent you here, despite the SC order? Kaat ke phek dunga (I will cut you up and throw you)," the man is heard saying. The dog feeder, who was on a bike, was hit from behind and attacked a second time before a bystander intervened. Aditya Saran—a volunteer with the SaveDelhiNCR campaign who has been helping the dog feeder, a wage worker from West Bengal, said resident Prashant had hired the Bengali man before he moved to Dehradun to feed dogs in several sectors, on the promise of regularly sending him an allowance for the chore. So, the Bengali man took to caring for the dogs. "He has not fed the dogs since the attack. Now, he is scared. We had to push hard even to get an NCR [non-cognisable report] registered," Saran told ThePrint. In this case, too, the police added Section 115 and Section 351(2) of the BNS to the complaint.

Delhi HC ban on 'shadow libraries' is pushing Indian researchers up against the paywall



NEW DELHI: For a PhD scholar based in New Delhi, the high court's order to block access to 'shadow libraries' like Sci-Hub, SciNet and Library Genesis (LibGen) could not have come at a worse time. On 19 August, Justice Manmeet Pritam Singh Arora of the Delhi HC ordered the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) to instruct internet and telecom service providers to block Sci-Hub, LibGen, and other mirror domains within 72 hours. Shadow libraries are unauthorised online repositories that offer free access to copyrighted digital content, such as academic books, research papers, and software, that would normally be behind paywalls or subscription fees. They operate outside the traditional publishing system and emerged as a response to the high costs of academic material, aiming to democratise knowledge by providing free access, especially for scholars and students in developing countries. "The ban has a direct impact on the ability to carry forward research projects, conference papers, and ongoing work," a researcher from New Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University, who wished to stay anonymous, told ThePrint. He added that most journal articles necessary for research purposes are usually locked behind expensive paywalls. "For many researchers in the Global South, especially in India, paying for them is simply not possible."

The researcher is currently in the early stages of his doctoral work, which means reading widely and locating precise reference material. The research often requires specific data, quotations, or bibliographic references, and without access to these, the work comes to a standstill, the researcher explained. "There are researchers and students based abroad whose university libraries/institutions provide easy access to journals, but in India that access is very limited," he said, adding that many institutions in India do not have subscriptions, and researchers are often left without reliable alternatives. "This does create an inequality between those studying overseas, with ready access to resources, and those in India, where access is either non-existent or extremely difficult." His frustration is widely shared. In public universities across India, where budgets for libraries and journal subscriptions are limited, platforms like Sci-Hub and LibGen have long been lifelines. Their sudden disappearance threatens to derail the everyday academic work of thousands of students and researchers. The ruling came in response to a copyright infringement case filed by publishing giants Elsevier, Wiley, and the American Chemical Society. They alleged that Sci-Hub and LibGen "completely disregard copyright laws" by reproducing and distributing their works, articles, journals, and even full books, without permission.

'Pride of Karnataka' no longer? Why Booker Prize winner Banu Mushtaq is in the eye of a storm

BENGALURU: When Banu Mushtaq won the 2025 Booker Prize, there was a barrage of congratulatory messages from all sections of Kannadigas. She was referred to as the 'Pride of Karnataka', with no mention of her being Muslim. But this was short-lived. Soon after Karnataka chief minister Siddaramaiah announced her to be the chief guest at this year's Dasara event, her identity as a Muslim became the focal point of every reference made about the 77-year-old writer. Among those who wished her when she won the Booker, but have since changed their position, is former BJP MP Prathap Simha. "Make Banu Mushtaq, who has received the Booker Prize, the

president of the All India Kannada literature conference, but is it appropriate to invite her for the inauguration of Dasara, which is a symbol of (Hindu) religious belief and practice?" Simha said in a post. This triggered a debate around Dasara, the alleged Hinduisation of Kannada, Muslim appeasement and various other issues that stirred the communal cauldron. Having been a target of 'maulvis' her entire life over her writings which called for more freedom for Muslim women, Mushtaq is once again facing scrutiny. This time the criticism is coming from the political class, especially the BJP's ecosystem. Ironically, these are often



the same leaders who have previously presented her as a progressive voice, aligning with the BJP's narrative of empowering Muslim women, including their stance on banning Triple Talaaq. Her achievement as the first-ever author writing in Kannada to win the prestigious award now seems to matter little. After the first flurry of award ceremonies, felicitations by various

groups, she has now retracted into a shell. "It is only (a) short term break so that the communal agenda should not get an opportunity to rake up the issue once again," she told ThePrint. Mushtaq grew up as the darling daughter to a doting father. She recalls in multiple interviews how her father encouraged her to study. A health inspector in the government, her father had to move around quite a bit, but her education was undisturbed at an Urdu school in Arsikere in Hassan district. But when her father was transferred, she moved to a Christian-run Kannada school in Shivamogga. The sole condition was that she learn the Kannada alphabet within six months. The

skepticism of the school was based on the belief that Muslims were reluctant to study Kannada as the latter was projected as a "Hindu language", she recalls. This statement has reappeared with Simha and several others reposting a 2023 video clip of hers at a literary event. In the event, she laments how Kannada was likened to Tayi (Goddess) Bhuvaneshwari and even the state flag was vermilion and turmeric, believed to exclude people from other communities. "This ploy to exclude me (largely referring to minorities) started a long time ago," she said while addressing the gathering at the Jana Sahithya Sammelana in 2023. Muslims in Karnataka

speak Kannada, but are more inclined to speaking Urdu or the Dakkhini version of the language. However, Karnataka also has a rich culture of Muslims who have contributed immensely to Kannada literature. This includes Sara Abubakar, Nissar Ahmed, Bolwar Mahamad Kunhi and Mushtaq herself among several others. Many of them used Kannada to articulate the intricacies, challenges and problems of the Muslim community. Mushtaq was also part of a group called the 'Bandaya Sahitya Sanghatana' that loosely translates to 'organisation of rebel litterateurs' such as Baraguru Ramchandrappa, Ramzan Darga, and Kalegowda Nagawara among others.

Chicago firm's thorium nuclear fuel leap & export nod could 'give new life to US-India 123 Agreement'

NEW DELHI: Chicago-based firm Clean Core Thorium Energy (CCTE), which was granted an export licence by the US government last week to commercialise the thorium-based nuclear fuel that it has developed, is now looking for regulatory approvals in India for sharing the nuclear technology for deployment in Indian reactors, ThePrint has learnt. The development is significant as it can provide India an alternate nuclear fuel in thorium—of which it has vast reserves—as an alternative to uranium. India currently imports uranium to meet its nuclear energy requirements, and has very limited commercially viable uranium sources. As and when the approvals in India come through, they will



pave the way for the thorium-based ANEEL (Advanced Nuclear Energy for Enriched Life) fuel to power its fleet of Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs), and help India leapfrog to its target of generating 100 GigaWatt nuclear energy capacity by 2047. India currently produces 8.18 GW of nuclear power capaci-

ty—just 1.6 percent of the total energy mix. The licence to CCTE comes at a time when India has begun work to amend provisions of the Atomic Energy Act, 1962 and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, 2010 to allow private investment in the nuclear sector and address liability issues. The nuclear li-

ability law had proved to be a major stumbling block for private players to enter India's civilian nuclear energy sector. CCTE CEO Mehul Shah told ThePrint, "This landmark Part 810 authorisation has potential to breathe new life into the US-India 123 Agreement, and deepen strategic nuclear ties. ANEEL fuel deployment in India's PHWRs strengthens long-term energy security, while reducing reliance on imported uranium and lowering strategic vulnerability." The licence came just a fortnight after the company announced a major breakthrough with ANEEL fuel achieving more than 45 GW-days per Metric Ton (GWd/MTU) burn-up level in the Advanced Test Reactor at the

US Department of Energy's Idaho National Laboratory. A high burn-up level signifies maximum energy at every cycle of irradiation in a nuclear reactor. ANEEL fuel combines thorium with High-Assay Low-Enriched Uranium (HALEU) to offer a safer, more efficient and proliferation-resistant alternative for existing and future PHWRs fleet worldwide. CCTE had said in a statement following the breakthrough. Natural uranium contains 0.7 percent of fissile Uranium-235, and three to five percent of low-enriched uranium used in more common PHWRs. But HALEU enriches the uranium fissile content up to 20 percent. For civilian use, the upper limit of enrichment is 20 percent.

Declare Marathwada's Marathas as Kunbis, give quota: Jarange to delegation under retired HC judge

MUMBAI: Activist Manoj Jarange on Saturday told a delegation led by retired High Court judge Sandeep Shinde that the government must declare all Marathas of Marathwada as Kunbis and be given reservation. The delegation met Jarange at Azad Maidan in south Mumbai this afternoon. He has been on an indefinite hunger strike since Friday seeking quota in government jobs and education for the Maratha community. Jarange said the committee under retired judge Shinde had studied gazettes related to the issue for the past 13 months and now it was time for the panel to submit its report to pave the way for Marathas to get Kunbi status. Jarange has been seek-

ing a 10 per cent quota for Marathas under the Other Backward Class (OBC) category. He has demanded that Marathas be recognised as Kunbis — an agrarian caste included in the OBC category — which will make them eligible for reservation in government jobs and education. "Marathas in Marathwada must be declared as Kunbis and given reservation. The Hyderabad and Satara gazettes must be made into law for this," Jarange said. In response, retired judge Shinde said he wasn't authorized to give such a report. It was the job of the backward class commission, Shinde said. "Caste certificate is given to

individuals and not the entire community," he added. The entire conservation between Shinde and Jarange was beamed live on Marathi news channels. Justice (ret'd) Sandeep Shinde heads the committee formed in September 2023 by the then Eknath Shinde government to decide the methodology for issuing 'Kunbi' caste certificates to members of the Maratha community. The committee was asked to study the records of the former Hyderabad and Bombay states where Marathas are sometimes mentioned as Kunbis. Initially appointed for the region of Marathwada, its scope was later extended to cover the entire state.

India saw 4.8 lakh road accidents in 2023, Tamil Nadu accounted for 14%, highest fatalities in UP

NEW DELHI: India recorded over 4.8 lakh road accidents in 2023, marking the third straight year of increase. National Highways, though making up just 2.1 percent of the country's total road length, accounted for 31.2 percent of these accidents. According to the "Road Accidents in India 2023" report released by the Road Transport Ministry Thursday, Tamil Nadu recorded 67,213 road accidents (13.9 percent of all such cases nationwide), marking its sixth straight year at the top of the list. It was followed by Madhya Pradesh (11.5 percent), Kerala (10 percent) and Uttar Pradesh (9.3 percent). However, in terms of fatalities, Uttar Pradesh leads with 23,652 deaths (or 13.7

percent). It was followed by Tamil Nadu (10.6 percent), Maharashtra (8.9 percent), and Madhya Pradesh (8 percent). Accordingly, Uttar Pradesh recorded a high accident severity—which measures persons killed per 100 accidents—of 53.1, while Tamil Nadu was at 27.3. The all India average is 36. The top five states in terms of accident severity are Mizoram (90.6), Bihar (80.6), Jharkhand (78.5), Punjab (77) and Meghalaya (75.3). The report also provides details for road accidents in 50 cities with a population of 1 million and above. National capital Delhi tops the charts in terms of accidents and fatalities at 5,834 and 1,457 respectively. It is followed

by Bengaluru with 4,974 accidents and 915 fatalities. As per the report released Thursday, overall road accidents went up for the third consecutive year in 2023 to reach 4,80,583 (4.2 percent rise from 2022). The number of fatalities increased by 2.6 percent from 2022 to stand at 1,72,890. As per the report, 70,593 or 40.8 percent of total fatalities occurred due to negligence of passengers or drivers for not wearing helmets and seat belts. For the fourth consecutive year in 2023, the victims of fatal road accidents largely constitute young people in the productive age groups. "Young adults in the age group of 18-45 years accounted for 66.4% of victims during 2023. People in the

working age group of 18–60 years share 83.4% of total road accident fatalities," according to the report. Among road categories, National Highways (NH) which constitute only 2.1 percent of total road length saw 1,50,177 (31.2 percent of total) accidents and 63,112 (36.5 percent of total) fatalities. While state highways, which are 2.8 percent of total road length, accounted for 22 percent of total accidents and 22.8 percent of total fatalities. The 'other' category (95.1 percent of total road length) comprising district roads, rural roads, urban roads and project roads registered 46.8 percent of total accidents and 40.7 percent of total fatalities.

'Will not interfere or give instructions': Karnataka home minister on SIT in Dharmasthala case

BENGALURU: Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara on Saturday said that the government will not interfere with the Special Investigation Team's (SIT) investigation in the Dharmasthala case. Speaking to reporters, Parameshwara said that no information can be disclosed until the SIT completes the investigation. G Parameshwara said, "If the investigation into the Dharmasthala case has to be completed quickly, that is the SIT's own decision. The SIT is already conducting the investigation, and until it is completed, they will not disclose any information. We will not interfere or give them any instructions." He added that the government cannot fix a time frame for the investigation in such



cases. "We don't know where this case will lead. If it is completed soon, the report will be submitted soon. They will investigate until the case reaches a logical end. This is not the kind of matter where you can say, 'finish it in a week and give the report'. We cannot fix a time frame," he said. From the Dharmadhikari of Dharmasthala to everyone else, all have welcomed the

SIT probe," the Home Minister added. The investigation in the case is underway, and last week, the Belthangady Court sent the complainant in the Dharmasthala case to 10 days of SIT custody. The issue has sparked a political row in the state with the BJP announcing a Dharmasthala Chalo rally. Earlier, Karnataka Leader of

Opposition (LoP) R Ashoka said that it was Chief Minister Siddaramaiah that have politicised the Dharmasthala issue and not his party. He insisted that the issue was being politicised by the Congress and said that they would visit Dharmasthala to extend their support as Hindus. "It is not the BJP. It is the Congress which is politicising Dharmasthala; Siddaramaiah politicised it. When the complaint was received, the procedure states that the background should be checked to investigate the matter. But they did not follow it. Dharmasthala belongs to all Hindus in India and around the world. On September 1, we will be going to Dharmasthala as Hindus, not as BJP," Ashoka told reporters.