



Rapid Fire Current Affairs

Parsi Lady

An **unfinished painting by Raja Ravi Varma**, a legendary Indian artist who revolutionized **traditional Indian art** during the colonial times, will soon be made public. The painting, named '**Parsi Lady**,' is the **last piece created by Ravi Varma** before his death in 1906. The painting is unique because it provides a **glimpse into Ravi Varma's association with Dada Saheb Phalke**, who worked for him at the time. Ravi Varma gave a substantial amount to Phalke, who later became known for making Raja Harishchandra, the first full-length Indian feature film. The Kilimanoor Palace Trust owns the painting and has decided to unveil it on the occasion of **Ravi Varma's 175th birth** anniversary along with another portrait that has not yet been displayed. The Palace has restored the painting to its original form with the help of an art restorer, S. Madhan, who removed the old varnish layers and dirt that had accumulated on the painting.

Raja Ravi Varma was an Indian painter born on 29th April 1848, known for **introducing Western, classical representations of Hindu gods and goddesses**. He received training in watercolours from Ramaswamy Naidu, the royal painter, and made around 7,000 paintings during his lifetime. Varma's mastery of the lithographic press spread his work far and wide, and he was awarded the **Kaiser-i-Hind Gold Medal** by the British colonial government in 1904. In 2013, a **crater on the planet Mercury** was named in his honour.

Read more: [Raja Ravi Varma](#)

Supreme Court Orders FIRs on Hate Speech

The **Supreme Court of India** has directed **all states to Suo motu register FIRs on hate speech incidents** and initiate legal proceedings against the offenders without waiting for a complaint to be filed. The court emphasized the need to book hate speech offenders under specific penal provisions, including **Sections 153A (promoting enmity between different groups on the ground of religion), 153B (imputations, assertions prejudicial to national integration), 505 (public mischief), 295A (deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).**

The court passed a similar order in October 2022. While it was **argued that free speech should not be stifled under the guise of tackling hate speech**, the court reiterated that the Constitution envisages India as a **secular nation** where the **dignity of the individual and unity and integrity of the country must be assured**.

Read more: [Hate Speech](#)

Star Rating System for Water Fixtures

The **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** and **Mission Director of AMRUT 2.0**, announced at **Plumbex India 2023** that the Indian government is in the process of introducing a **star rating system for water fixtures to promote water efficiency**. Similar to **electrical appliances**, these water fixtures will be **given a rating of 3, 4, or 5 stars based on their efficiency, under the umbrella of Bharat Tap**.

The Indian Plumbing Association (IPA) and manufacturers have been roped in to adopt and promote these standards. The initiative has already shown that on average **over 30% of water can be saved**. The IPA has committed to saving **10,000 crore liters of water this year alone**, and urged the government to prioritize low-flow fixtures while awarding tenders in the future.

Read more: [Bharat Tap](#)

India's Core Sector Growth Slows

The output of India's [eight core sectors](#) saw a **3.6% growth** in March 2023, the **lowest in five months**, as per data from the **Ministry of Commerce and Industries**. Factors such as higher inflation, base effect, rising interest, and easing of pent-up demand, coupled with increased economic uncertainty, have hit domestic demand, resulting in a slower growth rate.

The core sector in India consists of eight industries that have a major impact on the overall economic and industrial activities. They are **coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertilizers, steel, cement and electricity**. These industries have a combined weight of **40.27%** in the [Index of Industrial Production \(IIP\)](#), which measures the **growth rate of different industry groups in the economy**. The core sector represents the capital base and infrastructure of the economy. The performance of these industries influences other sectors as well.

Read more: [Core Sectors Industries](#)

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