



THE

WEEKLY

RURAL



NEWSLETTER

ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER



Greetings Readers!

An overwhelming population in India continues to live in what is defined as 'non-urban' or rural. As per the 2011 Census, 833.1 million people of the total 1210.2 million population, or 69% of the populace, lived in rural areas in around 6.4 lakh villages. The rural life, while popularly portrayed as simple, slow, and serene, is much more complex, unsettling, diverse and rapidly changing. In a world dominated by the hustle and bustle of urban life, the heartbeat of rural India often goes unnoticed. Welcome to the Weekly Rural Newsletter, where we aim to bridge this gap by shedding light on the stories, struggles, and triumphs of the large majority of India's population. Presented by the diligent students of Rural Sociology, this Newsletter is a humble effort to amplify the rural voices that deserve to be heard. By closely following the national and regional media platforms students cover different states as 'state correspondents' and document the developments unfolding in the socio-economic, political and cultural spheres of the countryside. A team of two students compiles these news reports in the form of a newsletter on a weekly basis and brings the newsletter to you. We believe that having a focus on rural affairs in educational settings can have far-reaching effects in students' awareness about the challenges and opportunities in rural areas, holistic education, empathy, community engagement, and policy advocacy. We hope this exercise also creates a ripple effect among the larger audience. Stay tuned for more stories from the heartlands of our nation!

**With rustic regards,
The Rural Sociology Students' Team, 2024**

ANDHRA PRADESH

AP: Govt Begins Purification Of Village Secretariats

Under YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's administration in Andhra Pradesh, many individuals were appointed to village and ward secretariats. Still, the government failed to provide a clear job chart, leaving most staff without work. To address this, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's government plans to streamline village-level administration. Currently, over 15,000 secretariats employ more than 126,000 staff, averaging 14-15 members each. The government aims to reduce this to four staff members per secretariat and reassign the excess to other departments. As part of this initiative, 660 engineering assistants have been recruited as Assistant Engineers in the Irrigation Department, with more reassignments to follow.



Link to the article: (August 26th, 2024)

<https://www.m9.news/politics/andhra-pradesh-govt-begins-purification-of-village-secretariats/>

ARUNACHAL PRADESH

Arunachal groups protest NHPC's mega dam site survey



Link to the article: (August 31st, 2024)

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/arunachal-pradesh/arunachal-groups-protest-nhpcs-mega-dam-site-survey/article68590013.ece>

Tribal communities and local villagers from three villages in Arunachal Pradesh protested against the proposed hydropower project, along the lines of the Siang river. The protest, led by the Adivasi Welfare Society, Siang Indigenous Farmer's Forum, and the Banggo Student's Union, gathered 600 villagers from the Praong, Uggeng, and Dite Dime villages, which have been stated as the proposed sites of the project.

Following the protests, a complaint was lodged at the District Headquarters in Boleng by the Parong Village Committee, stating that the project was being "forcefully implemented", that would thereby severely impact the lives of the villagers. The Siang Deputy Commissioner refuted the order by declaring that the gathering was "anti-government and anti-development."

ASSAM

Assam to Designate Poba Reserve Forest as a Wildlife Sanctuary

The Assam government proposed to declare the Poba Reserve Forest as a wildlife sanctuary on Friday. The Poba Reserve Forest covers around 88 square kilometers in the Dhemaji area and is home to endangered hoolock gibbons. The decision to give Poba Reserve Forest sanctuary status was motivated by the need to address concerns about habitat loss and human encroachment. This status will allow for stringent conservation measures, anti-poaching laws, and habitat protection programs. The shift to sanctuary status will require extensive planning, including meetings with local communities, stakeholders, and researchers to ensure that all parties' needs and concerns are met. The effort promises to make a beneficial difference for the environment and the residents who rely on it.

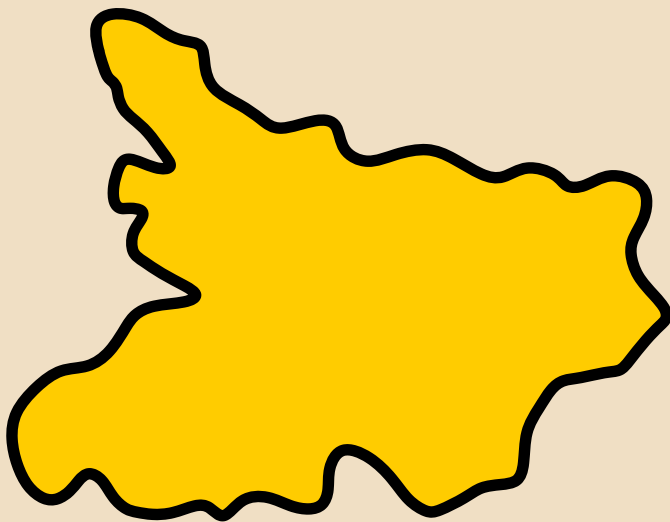


Link to the article: (August 31st, 2024)

<https://boroktimes.com/assam-to-designate-poba-reserve-forest-as-wildlife-sanctuary/>

BIHAR

Villagers to raise plight with Chief Minister



Villagers in Banjaria, Kaimur, face severe challenges due to the lack of proper roads. During the monsoon, accessing hospitals becomes nearly impossible, forcing residents to carry patients on cots. The absence of a motorable road also disrupts essential activities like weddings and education. Villagers plan to voice these concerns to the Chief Minister during his visit, seeking urgent intervention. Local leaders have assured they will push district authorities to address these pressing concerns.

(Translated from Hindi to English)

Link to the article: (August 28th, 2024)

<https://www.livehindustan.com/bihar/bhabua/story-villagers-to-share-plight-with-cm-during-kaimur-visit-hospital-access-a-challenge-in-monsoon-201724859286934.html>

CHHATTISGARH

Villagers forced to drink unclean water due to the negligence of officials in the area

Villagers in the Bharatpur development block of MCB district of Chhattisgarh are facing issues with the water supply in their village. 70 rural families have to trek to Dhondhi, which is one km away, in order to fetch drinking water. The village has three hand pumps out of which two have stopped working and one gives out red water containing high levels of iron. A water tank and solar pump were installed the previous year as part of the Jal Jeevan Mission, however there were no tap connections provided to houses. Dhondhi also does not have proper potable water, hence villagers are succumbing to water borne illnesses.

(Translated from Hindi to English)



Link to the article: (August 31st, 2024)

<https://mpcg.ndtv.in/chhattisgarh-news/officials-are-not-ready-to-listen-to-the-problems-of-bharatpur-villagers-are-forced-to-drink-dirty-rainwater-6461257>

GUJARAT

Khambhaliya had nearly 18 inch rain in 24 hours; Jamnagar over 15 inch



Heavy rains have wreaked havoc in Saurashtra's coastal districts, especially in Jamnagar, which received 15 inches of rainfall in 24 hours. Rural areas like Lalpur and Jamjodhpur are heavily impacted, with severe flooding disrupting daily life. Roads in low-lying regions are submerged, making them impassable, while the Bhimwas area faces waist-deep water, with water seeping into homes, displacing residents. The relentless downpours have left agricultural lands flooded, threatening crops and livelihoods. For the past two days, rural Jamnagar has come to a standstill, grappling with the aftermath of the torrential rains and ongoing challenges of waterlogging and inundation.

Link to the article: (August 28th, 2024)

<https://deshgujarat.com/2024/08/28/khambhaliya-had-nearly-18-inch-rain-in-24-hours-jamnagar-over-15-inch/>

GOA

7-year-old boy dies after Pitbull attack in Goa's Anjuna

Prabhas Kalngutkar succumbed to his fatal injuries after being attacked by a ferocious Pitbull in the Anjuna village of Goa, on Thursday afternoon. The incident reportedly happened around 3 p.m. at Piquen-Paddem. According to police testimonies, Prabhas was immediately shifted to intensive care but succumbed to his injuries while undergoing treatment.

In the past few years, the livestock census in Goa has reported a significant increase in the number of pet dogs. A state-wide dog-breed census is said to be released in October this year, as promised by the CM Pramod Sawant last October. In 2023, the Times of India reported Goa has a dog-bite incident every 15 minutes.



Link to the article: (August 30th, 2024)

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/goa/7-year-old-boy-dies-after-pitbull-attack-in-anjuna/articleshow/112905440.cms>

HARYANA

Jobs, sports and farming: Has BJP built 'Mhare sapnon ka Haryana'?

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in 2019 manifesto made a promise to Haryana to build 1000 sport nurseries and gym and stadium in every village if the party is voted in power again. The manifesto was supposed to establish a Ministry of Youth development and self employment in Haryana. However, in 2023-24, Haryana unemployment rate was three times more than India's overall employment rate. Haryana is known for its remarkable performance in sports, however, the funds for sports infrastructure is not up to mark. The Khelo India initiative was only able to release 67 crores to Haryana even though the state ranked in top 3 in the National Games. The manifesto also guaranteed welfare of farmers with risk-free farming. Yet, the state has seen an increase in farmers' protest and a significant shrinkage in farmers and decline in the proportion of sown areas.



Link to the article: (August 28th, 2024)

<https://www.indiatoday.in/diu/story/haryana-election-bjp-poll-promise-jobs-sports-and-farming-2589579-2024-08-28>

HIMACHAL PRADESH

Villagers opened front against liquor shop in Bilaspur's Kaler village



Link to the article: (August 28th, 2024)

<https://zeenews.india.com/hindi/zeephh/himachal-pradesh/villagers-submitted-a-memorandum-to-deputy-commissioner-bilaspur-demanding-removal-of-contract/2404257>

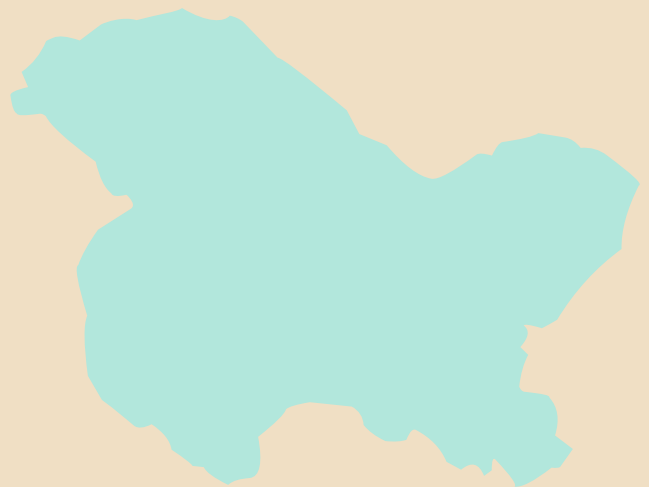
The villagers of Kaler village of Bilaspur district in Himachal Pradesh, many villagers filed a memorandum with the commissioner of Bilaspur against a liquor shop in Kaler village. The Himachal - Punjab border, certain shops have availability of cheap liquor which results in gathering of drunk individuals making it difficult for women and children to move through that patch. Before this memorandum, local women did file a report on the same while no strict action was taken. Due to this availability of cheap liquor, two people have even died due to intoxication. The villagers are extremely uncomfortable with this situation and will not tolerate this further. Furthermore, there is also a speculation that alcohol sale is being done illegally hence strict action needs to be taken otherwise the villagers will begin to protest on the streets.

(Translated from Hindi to English)

JAMMU & KASHMIR

Nationwide Unified Lending Platform in due course: RBI. Here is what it could mean for J&K farmers and MSMEs

The introduction of the Unified Lending Interface (ULI) by the RBI is set to transform credit access for rural communities in Jammu & Kashmir, particularly farmers and MSMEs. ULI's seamless access to digital land records will allow quicker and more efficient loan approvals, reducing the cumbersome documentation process that rural borrowers face. This streamlined approach will enhance credit availability, helping those in rural areas who often struggle with traditional lending barriers. By simplifying access to finance, ULI will empower rural borrowers, supporting agricultural productivity and small businesses, and ultimately boosting the region's economic resilience.



Link to the article: (August 26th, 2024)

<https://ziraattimes.com/2024/08/nationwide-unified-lending-platform-in-due-course-rbi-here-is-what-it-could-mean-for-jk-farmers-and-msmes/>

JHARKHAND

Wild elephants cause havoc to life and property



In Semartoli in Kamdara, Gumla district elephants have caused significant destruction in villages, damaging homes and crops. The conflict between humans and elephants is a major issue in the region, as villagers live in constant fear of these attacks. Despite repeated incidents, the response from authorities, such as providing effective deterrents, has been inadequate. The affected communities are demanding immediate action to prevent further loss of life and property.

(Translated from Hindi to English)

Link to the article: (August 31st, 2024)

<https://www.livehindustan.com/jharkhand/ghumla/story-wild-elephants-cause-havoc-in-villages-destroy-houses-and-crops-201725126652208.html>

KARNATAKA

Gangavathi Tehsildar Withdraws Order To Remove Lampposts With Hindu Symbols On Way To Anjanadri Hills After Backlash

The Koppal district administration in Karnataka has rescinded the order for the removal of lamp posts. These electric poles were installed near Anjanadri hills on the roads of Gangavathi taluka, also known to be the birthplace of Lord Hanuman. The lamp poles represented 'Gada' (mallet) and 'Dhanush' (bow). The Social Democratic Party of India expressed their concerns that these lamp posts show resemblance to the ones in Tirupati and Ayodhya, claiming to symbolize a singular religion. They further pointed out how the communal harmony could be disrupted and petitioned to have the poles removed. Furthermore, Gangavathi Tehsildar also suggested lodging a case against the engineers of KRIDL (Karnataka Rural Infrastructure Development Limited). However, after a discussion in the general meeting of the Municipal Council. The earlier order has been revoked and no case will be registered against KRIDL. The officials claim that the lamp posts are only to guide and inspire devotion among the religious visitors to Anjanadri Mountains.



Link to the article: (August 29th, 2024)

<https://swarajyamag.com/news-brief/karnataka-gangavathi-tehsildar-withdraws-order-to-remove-lampposts-with-hindu-symbols-on-way-to-anjanadri-hills-after-backlash>

KERALA

Kerala finance minister calls for more support for startups in rural areas



Link to the article: (August 30th, 2024)

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/amp/story/cities/thiruvananthapuram/2024/Aug/30/kerala-finance-minister-calls-for-more-support-for-startups-in-rural-areas>

Finance Minister K N Balagopal has called for more support and assistance for startups in rural areas after inaugurating the StartUp conclave organised by the Kerala Financial Corporation (KFC). The urban-rural divide is narrow in Kerala in terms of facilities, the minister said. A large number of youngsters are interested in starting ventures in their native place. He urged financial institutions like the KFC to lay more focus on promoting ventures in rural areas. The Zoho Corporation's rural office model in Kottarakkara is a testimony to the potential of the state's rural areas to host large businesses, he said.

MAHARASHTRA

No Alcohol, No Tobacco, & No Phones During Study Hours, This Village In Maharashtra Leads A Rural Revolution

In the heart of Maharashtra's Osmanabad district lies a village that stands as a beacon of transformation, unity, and discipline—Jakekurwadi. This small yet remarkable village of around 1,594 residents, nestled in the Umarga tehsil, is a testament to the power of community-driven change. The village has implemented a strict ban on both the consumption and sale of alcohol and tobacco products. According to Dainik Bhaskar reports, the penalties for violating these rules are steep, with fines of ₹5,000 for selling gutka and ₹500 for consuming it. However, the village's commitment to well-being doesn't stop there. Recognising the pervasive impact of technology on daily life, especially on the younger generation, Jakekurwadi has instituted a "no mobile, no TV" policy from 6 pm to 8 pm every day.



Link to the article: (August 29th, 2024)

<https://curlytales.com/no-alcohol-no-tobacco-no-phones-during-study-hours-this-village-in-maharashtra-leads-a-rural-revolution/>

MADHYA PRADESH

Government schools in Bhopal are increasing efforts to provide quality education to all children



The Central Government is supporting the development and implementation of 416 PM Shri Schools in the state of Madhya Pradesh, providing good education to children and improving their facilities through various schemes. According to the report, more than 2 lakh children are currently receiving education in these schools and funding of up to Rs 220 crore has been approved as well. Health checkups are being provided for students, with one lakh having done them so far. All high schools and higher secondary schools have been provided with facilities of digital libraries, ICT labs and smart classes. Girls are being offered self-defense training as well.

(Translated from Hindi to English)

Link to the article: (August 29th, 2024)

<https://theruralpress.in/2024/08/29/quality-education-is-being-provided-to-students-through-416-pm-shri-schools-in-the-state/>

MANIPUR

Release village volunteers immediately!

Awang Potsangbam Chaokhat Khongthang Apunba Meira Nupi Lup condemned the authorities for arresting six village volunteers in Manipur, alleging it triggered renewed Kuki militant attacks in peripheral villages. Speaking at the Manipur Press Club, the group's president, Soubam Madhabi, expressed concern over the increased fear and panic among villagers following the arrests. She criticized the government's actions, stating that the volunteers were protecting the area without concern for their future, and demanded their release within four days. She also urged women in the valley to join in the demand to safeguard the volunteers' lives.



Link to the article: (August 28th, 2024)

<https://www.ifp.co.in/manipur/release-village-volunteers-immediately>

ODISHA

9-Year-Old Found Dead, Local Boy Detained Current Affairs



A 9-year-old girl, was found dead in a forest in Angul district, Odisha, prompting police to detain a 12-year-old local boy for questioning. The 9-year-old had gone missing after leaving her home to play on August 26. Her body was discovered the next day, the boy allegedly killed her by pelting her with stones. A post-mortem is being conducted to look for signs of sexual assault. The local community is in shock, and police are investigating the circumstances surrounding her death, emphasizing the urgent need for child protection measures in the area.

Link to the article: (August 30th, 2024)

<https://www.deccanchronicle.com/nation/current-affairs/odisha-9-year-old-found-dead-local-boy-detained-1820250>

PUNJAB

SC to hear Punjab's plea for release of rural development funds on Sept 2

The Supreme Court has scheduled the Punjab Government's petition for hearing on September 2, 2024 whereby the state is seeking Rs; 1,000 crore plus from the Centre. This plea is as part of an already existing legal battle wherein AAP led Punjab government has accused the Centre of holding back resources such as the Rural Development Fund (RDF) and a proportion of the market fee. The Punjab government argues that these funds of more than Rs 4,200 crore are necessary for efficient functioning of the state's procurement of food grains. The state's plea indicate that it has the constitutional right to set rates for the market fee as well as RDF. Punjab's lawyer Shadan Farasat said the case did not appear on the Supreme Court website even as the government claimed that the case is scheduled to be taken up today September 2. Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justice J B Pardiwala and Justice Manoj Misra said that the matter shall be taken up on the mentioned date.

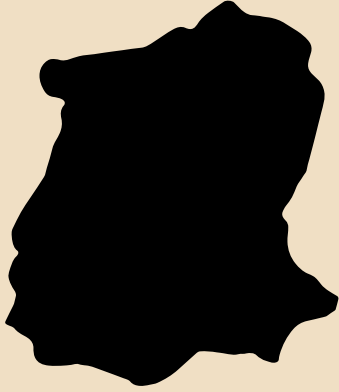


Link to the article: (August 30th, 2024)

https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/sc-to-hear-punjab-s-plea-for-release-of-rural-development-funds-on-sept-2-124083000404_1.html

SIKKIM

Indian Army diffuses bomb at Teesta riverbank



(Image taken from the Hindustan Times)

Link to the article: (August 29th, 2024)

<https://www.indiatodayne.in/sikkim/video/sikkim-indian-army-defuses-bomb-on-teesta-riverbank-1081772-2024-08-29>

This week, the Indian Army's Bomb Disposal Team successfully defused a bomb which was discovered on the Teesta riverbank in Lower Bardang in East Sikkim. The device was discovered during routine inspections and carefully disarmed by the specialised unit to ensure the safety of the surrounding environment. This incident was an outcome of last year's Glacial Lake flood in North Sikkim when a significant amount of military equipment was swept by the flood. The occurrence closely follows a similar discovery made in South Sikkim where another bomb was found and neutralised.

TAMIL NADU

Panels to be set up to pick model solar villages in Tamil Nadu

The Tamil Nadu Green Energy Corporation (TNGEC) will set up district-level committees to identify villages eligible under the PM-Surya Ghar Scheme. This scheme will help introduce solar-powered infrastructure, from solar-based home lighting systems to solar pumps for agriculture and solar street lights covering village roads. Revenue villages with a population of over 5,000 will be considered, villages with a greater potential to adapt to solar energy will be identified. The selected villages will be given a grant of Rs. 1 crore. The goal of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) is to develop one Model Solar Village per district.



Link to the article: (August 29th, 2024)

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2024/Aug/29/panels-to-be-set-up-to-pick-model-solar-villages-in-tamil-nadu>

TRIPURA

Over 17,500 people leave relief camps as flood situation improves



86% of the most affected people by the floods in Tripura have returned to their homes over one week. The unprecedented flooding and landslides caused by heavy rain claimed 32 lives and affected over 17 lakh people in all 8 districts of the state. The Tripura Disaster Management Authority (TDMA) has declared the entire state as a "Natural Calamity Affected Area." Chief Minister Manik Saha said in an all-party meeting that the damage to properties, crops and infrastructure amounted to around Rs 15,000 crore according to a preliminary assessment. A six-member interministerial Central Team (IMCT) visited Tripura to discuss damage to properties and crops. On Friday, there were 17,940 people housed in 329 relief camps.

Link to the article: (August 30th 2024)

<https://www.daijiworld.com/news/newsDisplay?newsID=1221997>

TELANGANA

CM Revanth Reddy's Pharma Village plans face stiff opposition in his own constituency

Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's plan to scrap the Pharma City project and establish 'pharma villages' instead faces fierce opposition from farmers in his constituency of Kodangal. A woman farmer threatened to take her life if her land was acquired for the project. Farmers from Lekacherla, Pulicherla and Polepally villages are protesting against the government's move, stating that fertile agricultural lands should not be given to pharma companies as it will affect their livelihoods and cause environmental pollution. Despite farmers' strong objections, the state government plans to acquire over 1,200 acres of land from three villages for the proposed pharma village.



Link to the article: (August 28th, 2024)

<https://telanganatoday.com/cm-revanth-reddys-pharma-village-plans-face-stiff-opposition-in-his-own-constituency>

UTTAR PRADESH

Rural Stadium to be Built in Anogi Village



Link to the article: (September 1st, 2024)

<https://www.amarujala.com/uttar-pradesh/sitapur/rural-stadium-will-be-built-in-anogi-village-sitapur-news-c-102-1-slko1052-118239-2024-09-01>

The spectacular extension of the new rural stadium will be at Anogi village, Gondalamau block, Sitapur district, and rice. This project has been proposed by District Magistrate Abhishek Anand and the above project has been cleared by the government. Local administration will give a five-acre plot for the construction of the stadium. Construction work for these buildings have been assigned to the Uttar Pradesh Housing and Development Board. It is proposed to be an indoor and outdoor sport complex that would cost approximately 5 crore wherein the youth of the locality will be able to practice and polish their talent in athletic, kabaddi, volleyball, badminton and many more. Besides, preliminary plans have been prepared for the construction of another rural stadium in Akbarpur block with an expectation that the idea would be passed shortly. The actual site for the above project has already been sourced.

(Translated from Hindi to English)

UTTRAKHAND

Rain wreaks havoc in Pagano village... Four houses and two cowsheds razed to the ground, villagers ran away to save their lives late at night,

Due to massive rains in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district, the Pagano village was filled with debris damaging houses and cowsheds resulting in villagers running out of their houses to save their lives in the middle of the night. The villagers also complained that everytime it rains the debris enters the village filling the barns, fields, roads and accumulation outside the doors of houses. The incident that happened on Thursday night has created immense panic among the residents making it difficult for them to sleep at night if it rains. This has been ongoing for 3 years endangering about 53 families of the village.



Link to the article: (August 30th, 2024)

<https://www.amarujala.com/photo-gallery/dehradun/uttarakhand-weather-disaster-in-chamoli-pagano-village-houses-collapse-people-panic-2024-08-30>

(Translated from Hindi to English)

WEST BENGAL

Mob vandalises house of Panchayat committee member in Bengal for molesting 10-year-old girl



In West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district, a mob vandalized the house of a panchayat member accused of molesting a 10-year-old girl. The incident occurred in the Rajbari area of Rohanda panchayat. The accused was arrested on Sunday morning, following the girl's report of the assault to her family, who then confronted him with other villagers. Enraged by his response, the mob also damaged a shop owned by his brother. Police used tear gas to disperse the crowd. The girl's father demanded stricter measures for women's safety, emphasizing the need for harsh punishment for the accused.

Link to the article: (September 1st, 2024)

<https://www.telegraphindia.com/west-bengal/mob-vandalises-house-of-panchayat-committee-member-in-west-bengal-for-molesting-10-year-old-girl/cid/2045049>

CONTRIBUTORS

Ace Patil
Ananya Mahadevan
Deshna Kamdar
Kanoopreiya Vatsa
Kimberly Roy
Mishita Thapar

Nritu Luthra
Noor Das
Presth Bhardwaj
Ritika Verma
Rujula Talloo
Snehal Khurana

Editor of the Week: Ace Patil
Newsletter Design: Mishita Thapar, Ananya Mahadevan

