

Two-year-old Indian boy dies after four days down well

● The case of Fatehveer Singh captured national attention after he fell into the 33-metre (110 feet) deep well in the Punjab

● Authorities had dug a hole parallel to the well to reach the trapped toddler

New Delhi, India

A two-year-old Indian boy stuck in a narrow well for more than four days was pulled out dead yesterday, triggering protests over delays in reaching the toddler.

The case of Fatehveer Singh captured national attention after he fell into the 33-metre (110 feet) deep well in the Punjab state district of Sangrur while playing on Thursday.

The disused well was just 23 centimetres (nine inches) wide, complicating desperate efforts by dozens of rescue workers and volunteers as locals and television cameras looked on.

"The child is not alive anymore. He was pulled out at 5 in the morning by the NDRF (National Disaster Response Force) personnel," Vijay Inder Singla, a state lawmaker, said.

The toddler, who had oxygen supplies but no food or water, was flown in an air ambulance to a hospital in the capital Chandigarh where he was declared dead.

Authorities had dug a hole



An Indian rescue team dug a hole parallel to the well and inserted a 36-inch wide pipe into it, in an attempt to reach the trapped toddler



Rohi Singh (L), the grandfather of two-year-old boy Fatehveer Singh, mourns next to the body of his grandchild, who was stuck in a narrow well for more than four days, as they take the body back to their village in Punjab state district of Sangrur in an ambulance, in Chandigarh

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Have sought reports from all DCs (deputy commissioners) regarding any open bore well so that such terrible accidents can be prevented in the future

PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER AMARINDER SINGH

parallel to the well and inserted a 36-inch wide pipe into it, in an attempt to reach the trapped toddler.

Villagers angry about the failed rescue mission gathered at the site Tuesday and shouted slogans against the state government.

Protesters also blocked a main road briefly before police were deployed to prevent further trouble.

The rescue operation was "delayed due to lack of required technical assistance," resident Kultar Singh was quoted as saying by local media.

The borewell was dug by the child's family in 1984. They used to draw water from it to irrigate the fields but stopped using it after 1991.

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh has ordered a crackdown on open wells across the state.

"Very sad to hear about the tragic death of young Fatehveer," he tweeted Tuesday.

Canada bans capture and breeding of dolphins, whales



Representative picture

Montreal

Canada's parliament on Monday approved a bill banning the capture and breeding of cetaceans such as whales and dolphins in a move hailed by animal rights activists.

The bill, first proposed in 2015 and now awaiting symbolic royal approval, will not apply retroactively, meaning captive marine mammals can stay confined.

And it will contain exceptions for marine mammals who require rehabilitation

following an injury, or in other cases authorized by authorities.

"This is such an important law because it bans breeding, making sure the whales and dolphins currently kept in tiny tanks in Canada are the last generation to suffer," Melissa Matlow, campaign director for World Animal Protection Canada, said in a statement.

"We hope other countries will now follow Canada's lead and that travel companies will also realize the declining acceptance for these types of attractions."

US man to face death penalty trial in Vietnam

Hanoi

A Vietnamese-American man charged with "attempting to overthrow the state" will go on trial in Ho Chi Minh City on June 24, his family said, and could face the death penalty if found guilty.

Michael Nguyen has been held for nearly a year in the one-party communist state, which has tightened its grip on power since a new administration came to office in 2016 and took a harder line on dissent of

any kind. Nearly 130 prisoners of conscience are currently behind bars in the country, where independent media is banned and protests are illegal.

Nguyen was detained in July last year while travelling with two activists on a visit to Vietnam.

The father of four young daughters could face the death sentence if convicted.

His family said he has been denied access to lawyers during his detention and insisted he is innocent.

New York Times to cease political cartoons

New York

The New York Times has announced it will no longer include daily political cartoons in its international edition, weeks after apologising for publishing a caricature of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu deemed anti-Semitic.

The cartoon, published in April, depicted Netanyahu as a guide dog wearing a Star of David collar and leading a blind Donald Trump -- who was wearing a kippah, or a Jewish skullcap.

It prompted an uproar within the Jewish community, with Israel's ambassador to the UN likening the drawing to the content of Nazi propaganda tabloid Der Sturmer.

Editor James Bennet said the paper had planned for a year to cease running political cartoons in the international print version of the Times, in line with the US edition.

The decision will come into effect on July 1, Bennet said in a Monday statement.

Patrick Chappatte, one of the paper's leading cartoonists, said the decision was directly related to the Netanyahu cartoon.

He condemned the publi-



cation of the caricature at the center of the controversy but said he was concerned that media outlets were increasingly buckling under political pressure and criticism from "moralistic mobs" on social media.

"Over the last years, some of the very best cartoonists... lost their positions because their publishers found their work too critical of Trump. Maybe we should start worrying," Chappatte wrote on his personal website.

Bennet said the newspaper hoped to keep working with Chappatte and fellow contributor Heng Kim Song on other projects.

New York Times publisher A.G. Sulzberger announced in May that the editor who published the cartoon would be disciplined.

Light exposure during sleep linked to weight gain in women, says study

● The research, which was published in the Journal of American Medical Association (JAMA) Internal Medicine

Washington

Women who sleep with the television or a light on in the bedroom may be more likely to gain weight, according to a new study published Monday.

The research, which was published in the Journal of American Medical Association (JAMA) Internal Medicine, relied on a survey of almost 44,000 US women, with a follow-up five years later.

The women were classified according to their level of exposure to artificial light at night (ALAN) which came from a variety of sources, from small night-lights or clock radios to light shining in from the street to televisions or room lights.

One of the key findings was that women who slept with a television or a light on in the room were 17 percent more likely to have gained five kilograms



Representative picture

(11 pounds) or more during the study period.

The correlation remained strong even after controlling for factors like sleep duration, diet, and physical activity.

Although the authors cautioned they could not definitely draw a causal link, they said their findings added to a growing body of evidence that supports sleeping in a dark room.

"Public health strategies to decrease obesity might consider interventions aimed at reducing

ALAN while sleeping," wrote Dale Sandler and Yong-Moon Mark Park of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences in North Carolina and coauthors.

They suggested that the light may be suppressing production of melatonin, thereby disrupting circadian rhythm and eating patterns.

Other possibilities were that light acts as a "chronic stressor" disrupting the release of stress hormones such as glucocorti-



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oids that play a part in regulating food intake, or that there may be another mechanism at work that affects metabolism directly.

The authors acknowledged several limitations including that the data was self-reported and they did not know how intense various light sources were.

High light exposure may also "reflect a constellation of measures of socioeconomic disadvantage and unhealthy lifestyle behaviors, all of which could contribute to weight gain and obesity."