

## **China top court: reforms have improved court efficiency**

The efficiency of the Chinese court system has been improved by 20 percent since 2013, the Supreme People's Court (SPC) announced on Monday. The court released two white papers on judicial reform and court transparency, recording progress it had made in accountability, trial procedure and separation of powers. According to the papers, China's courts have improved their handling of human rights cases, wrongful accusations, and their dispensation of legal aid. The report on judicial reform pointed to the improvement of the national aid system through a unifying organization which gave over RMB5.42 billion in funding to over 80 000 parties since 2014 alone.

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## **Slovenia law legalizes same-sex marriage, but not adoption**

Slovenian law allowing same-sex marriage took effect Friday, and the country's first same-sex marriage will take place Saturday, according to an administrator in Maribor, the city where the wedding will take place. Ksenija Klampfer said a lesbian couple will be the first to get married under a law passed by the Slovenian government last year. The law was passed in a 51-28 vote months after a referendum to halt the legalization of same-sex marriages was voted on by the public. In allowing same-sex marriages, Slovenia joins other European Union countries including Spain, France, and Britain. While the law does allow gay and lesbian couples to marry, it does not allow them to adopt children, other than those from a spouse's previous marriage.

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## **UN rights experts urge international community to refer North Korea to ICC**

The UN Special Rapporteur for North Korean human rights, Tomas Ojea Quintana, is urging the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) and the UN member states to bring human rights violations committed by North Korea before the International Criminal Court (ICC) and address "the grave human rights situation" in the country. In a detailed report prepared with the help of legal experts Sonja Biserko of Serbia and Sara Hossain of Bangladesh, Quintana made references to North Korea's repeated nuclear and missile tests, political prison camps, abductions and lack of reliable information on the same for concerned relatives, enforced disappearances, violations of international labor standards with respect to overseas workers in the country, and a general lack of access to information as particular concerns that needed immediate attention.

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## **A Constitutional Right to Facebook and Twitter? U.S Supreme Court Weighs In**

A Supreme Court argument on Monday about whether North Carolina may bar registered sex offenders from using Facebook, Twitter and similar services turned into a discussion of how thoroughly social media have transformed American civic discourse. The justices' remarks, which indicated easy familiarity with the major social media services, suggested that they would strike down the North Carolina law under the First Amendment. Justice Elena Kagan said that President Trump, every governor and every member of Congress has a Twitter account. "So this has become a crucially important channel of political communication," she said. "And a person couldn't go onto those sites and find out what these members of our government are thinking or saying or doing."

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## **Respecting the National Song is not a fundamental duty under Article 51-A of the Constitution**

**The Apex Court** in the writ petition where it was prayed a National Policy be framed to promote and propagate the National Anthem, National Song and National Flag in spirit of the Article 51A to achieve the great golden goals, as set out in Preamble of the Constitution of India, the 3-judge bench of Dipak Misra, R.Banumathi and Mohan M. Shantanagoudar, JJ said that Article 51A of the Constitution of India does not refer to 'National Song' and only calls for respect towards the National Anthem and National Flag as a fundamental duty.

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## **Ordinary tantrums and discord or differences in domestic life does not amount to cruelty as envisaged under Section 498-A IPC**

Bombay High Court, While allowing the application for suspension of sentence of the applicant/accused under Sections 498-A and 306 read with Section 34 of the IPC, the Bench of A.M Badar, J., observed that, matrimonial cruelty is included from the definition of legal cruelty as envisaged in Section 498-A of IPC. It was further observed by the Bench that, ordinary tantrums and discord or differences in domestic life does not amount to cruelty.

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## **A judgment announced but not available on records cannot be considered a 'judgment'**

Supreme Court, Reminding the courts of their judicial duties, the bench of Dipak Misra and Amitava Roy, JJ said that a trial Judge should remember that he has immense responsibility as he has a lawful duty to record the evidence in the prescribed manner keeping in mind the command postulated in Section 309 of the CrPC and pronounce the judgment as provided under the Code. Non-availability of judgment can never be a judgment because there is no declaration by way of pronouncement in the open court that the accused has been convicted or acquitted.

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