

No Place For Self Expression

Moscow, Russia. Russia is once again under fire for its rigid stance against the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered) community of the country. A gay Russian protester has been detained for unfurling a rainbow flag during the Olympic torch relay as it passed through his hometown of Voronezh, 560 miles (910 kilometers) north of Sochi, where the games will begin February 7. Photos uploaded by his friends show Pavel Lebedev pulling out the flag and then being detained by security employees, who wrestle him to the snow as they wait for police to arrive. Lebedev said he was protesting the hosting of the Olympics in Russia, where a bill banning homosexual propaganda was signed into law by President Vladimir Putin in June.



A Terrible New Record

South Africa. More than 1000 rhinos were killed in South Africa for their horns. This disturbing number is a new record for poaching in the African nation, as it represents more than a 50 percent increase in poaching of rhinos from the year before. South Africa is home to the majority of the world's rhino population, so mass killings of this volume is a dire warning for conservationists. The black rhino is considered "critically endangered" by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), while the white rhino is classified as "near threatened." Rhino horns are most in demand in Asia for their alleged medicinal value. Ground up rhino horn can be sold as a cure for everything from cancer to diabetes for up to $100,000 per kg.

Power of the Masses



Istanbul, Turkey. This is good news for all the fans of the 'woman in red' who came into limelight after a Turkish police officer tear gassed her at last year's Gezi. Officer Fatih Zengin, 23, who sprayed Ceyda Sungur in the face from less than three feet (one meter) away, without warning, and continued after she had turned away to protect herself, may ultimately face time behind bars, stated Turkish media reports. The image of Sungur, known as the 'woman in red' after images of the incident went viral, being sprayed so violently has become to symbolise police violence against protesters. Prosecutors say Zengin used excessive force, and are seeking a three-jail term and his dismissal from the police.