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**JOURNALISM OF COURAGE** 

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# Post-poll violence in Bengal: CBI files seven more FIRs

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**KOLKATA, AUGUST 29

THE CENTRAL Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Sunday registered seven more FIRs in connection with post-poll violence in West Bengal. The agency has filed a total of 28 FIRs. According to sources in the CBI, the number of cases are likely to increase as the investigation progresses. On Saturday, ten FIRs were filed including murder, attempt to murder, causing grievage but etc.

On Sunday, several CBI teams visited several parts of the state as part of investigation into incidents of alleged post-poll violence. Teams visited different places in South 24 Parganas, Kolkata, Birbhum and Cooch Behar, among others. CBI officials saw and examined the houses of the complainants and interrogated them. Videos were recorded and photos were taken by the team.

A six-member team of CBI officers reached Sarisha, a village under Diamond Harbor Assembly constituency. According to sources, BJP supporter Raju Samanta was allegeldy beaten to death in the area. He was the booth president of the party and was an active member of BJP. TMC supporters were allegedly behind his murder, the sources said. Samples were collected, the team spoke to eyewitnesses of the incident. Investigating officials also visited Toofanjanj and Sonarpur.

A special team of CBI

reached Chilakhana in Toofangunj where on May 5th a TMC supporter Shahenur Rahman was killed and the BJP supporters were accused of the murder. In this case, the CBI is investigating the murder allegations against the BJP. The CBI spoke to the family of the deceased person and took all the details related to investigation of the case by the police. A team also visited several places in South 24 Parganas district. Nirmal Mondal, a BJP supporter was allegedly beaten to death in Sonarpur. Although CBI officials went to Nirmal Mondal's house but since his wife was not there they spoke to Nirmal

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

### **KEY SIGNAL IN VIDEO MESSAGE**

# India important, want to maintain ties: Taliban leadership in Qatar

Taliban deputy head in Doha mentions trade with India through Pakistan

SHUBHAJITROY

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 29

INWHAT is being seen as a s

IN WHAT is being seen as a signal to India, a member of the Taliban leadership in Qatar has said that India is "very important for this subcontinent" and that his group wants to continue Afghanistan's "cultural", "economic", "political" and "trade ties" with India "like in the past".

This overture was made by Sher Mohammad Abbas Stane-kzai, deputy head of Taliban's office in Doha, in a carefully scripted statement that he read out in Pashto in a 46-minute video message broadcast Saturday on the group's social media platforms and Afghanistan's Milli Television.

The signal is significant given that Pakistan holds the levers to the Taliban, and Islamabad and CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanekzai

Tracking actions on ground

THIS IS the Taliban's first

outreach to India since the group captured power two weeks ago. A wary Delhi will, however, wait and watch for demonstrable behaviour on the ground in Afghanistan that shows good faith by the Taliban, including its treatment of Afghans who have worked with India.



The US said it conducted an airstrike on a vehicle carrying "multiple" Islamic State "suicide bombers" heading towards the Kabul airport on Sunday. AP REPORT. PAGE 10

# To evacuate, Delhi dialled Karzai, Abdullah, Moscow

SUBRAMANIAN MUMBAI, AUGUST 29

AS INDIA made frantic efforts to evacuate diplomatic and other personnel at its Embassy, and other Indians and Afghans over a tense two days after the fall of Kabul on August 15, among those critical to the negotiations for safe passage for the Indian convoy from the Embassy to the airport — besides the Americans — were two high-profile Afghan politicians who are currently in CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

# Ceasefire is successful due to India's strength; new dynamism against enemies, says Rajnath

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**NEW DELHI, AUGUST 29

DEFENCE MINISTER Rajnath Singh on Sunday said the ceasefire with Pakistan has held because of India's "strength".

Without naming Pakistan or China, he said that India was facing its adversaries with a new dynamism.

"If a ceasefire is successful today, it is because of our strength. In 2016, cross-border strikes changed our reactionary mindset into a proactive mindset, which was further strengthened by the Balakot airstrike in 2019," Singh said at the Defence Services Staff College in Wellington.

"The belief that India would not only end terrorism on its own land but also not hesitate to conduct counter-terrorism operations on their land if needed is gradually becoming stronger," he said, and commended the armed forces for defeating the neighbour "which has been targeting our nation".



Afghanistan a 'challenge'. PTI

Singh said the neighbour that had lost to India in 1965 and 1971 cannot wage a "front war" because it does not have the capacity — and for that reason, it resorts to "proxy war, and terrorism has become an integral part of their state policy".

"Ever since our country became independent, it has been the effort of the opposing forces to create an atmosphere of instability within the country through one or the other means. If we look at the history of the last 75 years, it seems that we CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

# 50%

# DEA CXCHANGE

'We did something bigger than winning a medal, we created a legacy. Will be connected to India my whole life'

SJOERD MARIJNE
FORMER COACH, INDIAN WOMEN'S HOCKEY TEAM
PAGE 8

# In JNU course, 'jihadi violence' is only form of 'fundamentalist religious terror'

**ARANYA SHANKAR** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 29

"JIHADI TERRORISM" is the only form of "fundamentalist-religious terrorism", and Communist regimes in the erstwhile Soviet Union and China were the "predominant state-sponsors of terrorism" that influenced "radical Islamic states".

These are some of the key assertions in a new course on counter-terrorism for engineering students pursuing a dual degree programme at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU).

The optional course, titled 'Counter Terrorism, Asymmetric CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

# Haryana Dy CM: SDM who said break farmers' heads will face action

**SUKHBIR SIWACH** CHANDIGARH, AUGUST 29

A DAY after Karnal sub-divisional magistrate Ayush Sinha was caught on camera instructing police to beat farmer protesters and to not let anyone breach the security cordon without a "broken head", Haryana Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala said the government would take action against the officer.

"I am pained at yesterday's incident...that statements that do not meet the ethical standards of an IAS officer, were given by an IAS officer. Action will be initiated against him...," Chautala said at a press conference in Chandigarh on Sunday.



"From the way the statement is being made in the video, I feel that he does not fulfill the oath that an officer takes to maintain ethical standards. *Uske oopar jo karyawahi hogi woh sarkar zaroor karegi* (The government will certainly take suitable action against him)," Chautala said.

In an apparent reference to the officer's statement that "we have not slept for the entire night", Chautala said: "He (the BUSINESS AS USUAL
BY UNNY



officer) probably does not know that the farmer also can't sleep **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2** 

# 2 yrs of Assam NRC: Lakhs make it to list, but struggle for Aadhaar

**TORA AGARWALA** GUWAHATI, AUGUST 29

FOR 18 months now, Bhanu Upadhyay, a postdoctoral fellow at IIT Bombay, has been running around for an Aadhaar card. After many calls to toll-free numbers, e-mails, and visits to application centres, the Aadhaar application of the 33-year-old Nepali-origin resident of Assam is "still under process".

Upadhyay, who hails from Abhongpathar, a remote village in Golaghat district, managed to work around the need for the unique identification number. "But it's giving me sleepless nights now since I will be applying for jobs at central institutions which won't accept my application without Aadhaar," he says. Upadhyay is not alone.



About 8 lakh who gave biometrics waiting for Aadhaar. File

Around eight lakh people who provided their biometrics, and also made it to the National Register of Citizens (NRC) published on August 31, 2019, are struggling to get Aadhaar, and worry about benefits linked to it.

In all, 27 lakh people had registered their biometrics, but 19 lakh of these did not find their names in the NRC.

State government officials reckon it is a "unique problem" **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2** 

# In Kerala village, expatriates join hands for steel plant; invest Rs 1 lakh-40 lakh each

### PAGE 1 ANCHOR

**SHAJU PHILIP** THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, AUGUST 29

AFTER WORKING in Sharjah for 15 years, T C Shiju, 42, returned to his home in Thikkodi village, in Kozhikode district of Kerala, about two years ago. He was exploring investment choices, when he found a viable option in his village itself.

With an investment of just Rs 1 lakh, he became a partner in GTF Steel Pipes and Tubes LLP, a novel manufacturing venture set up by expatriates hailing



207 people invested in GTF Steel Pipes and Tubes

from Thikkodi and its surrounding villages.

Set up by the Global Thikkodiyans Forum (GTF) — a social media group of expatriates from Thikkodi floated in 2015 following a looming job crisis in the Middle East – in May 2018, the unit commenced production earlier this month.

This is the first such attempt in the state where expatriates, and returnees, of a village have come together and mobilised capital for a business enterprise of this kind.

The total investment of Rs 18 crore was raised from 207 people. Of these, 147 invested only Rs 1 lakh each. The price of a share was fixed at Rs 50,000, and an individual had to invest in at least two shares. There was a cap on the maximum investment as well – Rs 40 lakh per person.

"The major highlight of the venture is that a large section of investors are ordinary people who have some small savings, a CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

# INSIDE



WITHOUT RAM, AYODHYA IS NOT AYODHYA, SAYS PRESIDENT PAGE 3

# JD(U) turns up heat on BJP, wants NDA panel, says Nitish has 'all qualities of PM'

SANTOSH SINGH PATNA, AUGUST 29

AFTER PUTTING the BJP in a spot by seeking an inquiry in the Pegasus spyware issue and teaming up with rival RJD to demand a caste census, key all JD(U) turned up the heat on its



PM, says party resolution

May not be

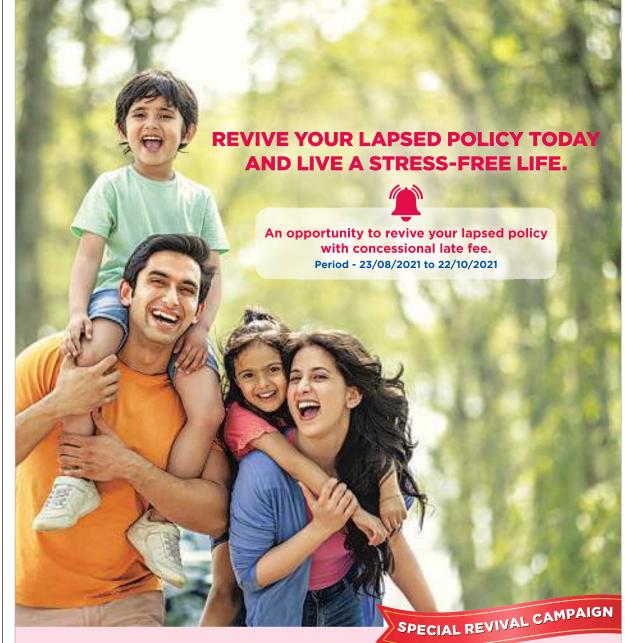
in race for

ing for an NDA coordination committee at the state and cen-

ies we differ on". The party also passed a reso-

Interparty also passed a resolution at its national council meeting that Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has "all the qualities" that a Prime Minister should have.

Speaking to reporters after the council meeting, JD(U) principal general secretary and national CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



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### VIBRANT MURAL IN KOLKATA'S NEW TOWN CAPTURES THE CITY IN ALL ITS GLORY

Led by artist Sayan Mukherjee, a group of 10 painters and illustrators have conjured up the captivating artwork in just ten days

### **TECH**



**LENOVO ASIA PACIFIC GAMING LEAD** 

Ian Tan talked about the uptake of budget gaming PCs

### **ENTERTAINMENT**



**YOU WEAR IT AS YOUR** OWN SKIN'

We take a look at how **stuff from Money Heist** were found in protests

# **EXPRESS** AUDIO

# What does the return of the Taliban mean for sports in Afghanistan?

With the Taliban returning to power after 20 years, just like everything else in Afghanistan, the future of sports in the country remains highly uncertain. In the past the Taliban has promoted men's cricket, but will it do so this time as well?

# **FROM PAGE ONE**

### Bengal

Mondal's wife and relatives at a relative's house in Jayanagar.

CBI has already arrested two people in connection with postpoll violence. Bijoy Ghosh and Ashima Ghosh were arrested from Chapra in Nadia district yesterday in connection with the murder of a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) worker, Dharma Mondol, on May 14.

On August 19, the Calcutta High Court directed the CBI to probe all the rape and murder cases that allegedly took place in West Bengal after state assembly elections. Following this, the CBI constituted special teams to probe the post-poll violence in West Bengal. For other cases, it constituted a Special Investigation Team comprising IPS officers, including the police commissioner. The court asked them to submit the report within six weeks.

Four CBI teams, comprising seven members each, have been visiting the areas in other parts of the state.

Trinamool Meanwhile. spokesperson Kunal Ghosh slammed the BJP when asked about the latest development with regard to post-poll violence

"Where is the Human Rights Commission now? They have turned into BJP's party people. Attack after attack is taking place in Tripura. What is the Human Rights Commission Team doing now? Why is not anyone visiting Agartala, Tripura now?"

In response to Ghosh statement, Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh said, "They (TMC) should first save their leaders from the hands of CBI. Tripura and Bengal cannot be compared. What they are doing in Tripura is drama."

# Kajnath Singh

have inherited the challenges," the Minister said.

But India's paradigm for national security has now changed, he said. "I am happy to say that we have made major changes to our security policies... Under a new dynamic, we have made our attitude against terrorism

Despite the challenges at India's borders, "the common man is confident that there will be no compromise on India's national security", Singh said.

"The belief gradually became stronger, that India would not only end terror on its own land, but would not hesitate to attack on their land if needed," he said.

Speaking about the nearly 16-month standoff with China in eastern Ladakh, which began in May 2020, Singh said: "In the northern sector too, last year a unilateral attempt was made to change the status quo on the border." But "here too we have gone from our old response to our adversary to a new dy-

Singh said that today, "the enemy no longer needs to enter the border", and can "also target our security apparatus from outside the border". The "alignment and realignment of global powers add to already changing security challenges".

On Afghanistan, where the Taliban are back in power after 20 years, Singh said "the changing equations" presented a "challenge". These "circumstances have forced every country to think on its strategy today", he said, adding that the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue,

# CORRECTION

# ON 27.08.21, P5

A photo caption erroneously mentioned "the 11th birth anniversary" of Mother Teresa. It should have read the 111th birth

The error is regretted. | JNU course

or Quad, "has been formed keeping these things in mind".

"Military power, trade, communication, economy, and political equations, this change can be clearly seen in all areas. In this era of globalisation, with these changes happening all over the world, no nation should be left untouched; I understand it is not possible," he said.

"Keeping our security preparedness in proportion to these changes, or should I say a step ahead of that, becomes our need, not our achievement... The change in the security paradigm over time is the reality of today.

"To deal with these challenges, continuously strengthening our preparedness, and making strong strategies is not just the need of the hour, but it is also a demand.'

### Karnal SDM

for 200 out of 365 nights... The use of such language by an IAS officer for them (farmers) is condemnable. There is an important part of their training in which they are taught the importance of integrity and balanced action. Certainly, action will be taken and an explanation will be sought for his comments."

The Samyukt Kisan Morcha has demanded the suspension of Sinha, an officer of the 2018 batch of the IAS.

In a video clip that was circulated widely on social media on Saturday, Sinha can be heard instructing a group of policemen: "Utha utha ke maarna peechhe sabko (hit them hard)... We shall not allow this cordon to be breached. We have enough force available. We haven't slept for the past two days. But you have come here after taking some sleep... Mere paas ek bhi banda nikal ke nahin aana chahiye. Agar aave toh sar phoota hua hona chahiye uska. Clear hai aanko (No one should breach the cordon and reach me. If someone does, make sure he has a broken head. Hope this is clear)."

Sinha was deployed as duty magistrate to maintain law and order near Hotel Prem Plaza in Karnal, where state BIP leaders. including Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar and state party president Om Prakash Dhankar, were meeting to discuss the party's strategy for the panchayat elections.

On Sunday, Chautala also said: "It's the job of the police to maintain law and order. Should action not be taken if someone attacks...a person who holds a constitutional post or is an elected representative?" He said that while "most of the 40 (farmer) union leaders" were from Punjab and UP, it was Haryana that was suffering as a result of the protests. "Why is Haryana being made the epicentre (of the protests) again and again? These 40 leaders should explain why they did not blockade UP and Punjab... They want to disturb the system and hurt the agrarian economy of Haryana. But we won't let them

Karnal deputy commissioner Nishant Kumar Yadav said on Sunday that while he regretted a few of the words that were used (by Sinha) in the video" and that "these should not have there", Sinha was an "upright officer"

These words came out in the heat of the moment which should not have come out," Yadav said. "His (Sinha's) intention was not wrong because that was the last naka from the venue. We had given strict directions to him that protesters should not go beyond this point at any cost. And it's natural that the directions that were given to him were supposed to be given further to the force, so that no doubt remains in the mind of

force over what is to be done."

that have mirrored the earlier tactical strategies of the Communist powers and have contin-

terrorist groups," it reads. When contacted by The Indian Express, Aswini Mohapatra, Dean of INU's School of International Studies (SIS) and concurrent faculty in the School of Engineering, said he was not involved in the design of the

Ruchir Gupta, Dean of the School of Engineering, said Arvind Kumar, Chairperson of the Centre for Canadian, US and Latin American Studies, wanted to introduce the course. "We have a joint programme with SIS, they asked us to pass this course so we passed it. I'm not an expert on international rela-

Kumar confirmed to The Indian Express that he had designed the course. Asked about the reference to only one religion in the module on "fundamentalist-religious terrorism", he said it was "because Islamic terrorism is a world-accepted thing. After the Taliban, it has

gained momentum now."

Conflicts and Strategies for Cooperation among Major Powers', was cleared during a meeting on August 17 of the uni-

versity's Academic Council. The course will be offered to students pursuing an MS with specialisation in International Relations after a BTech in Engineering – online classes for the monsoon semester start on September 20.

The Council is the university's highest decision-making body for academic programmes. Its clearance for the course will have to be endorsed by the Executive Council, which decides on management and administrative issues, as part of procedure.

One of the new course's modules,

'Fundamentalist-religious Terrorism and its Impact', states: "Fundamentalist - religious inspired terrorism has played a very critical and dominant role in the spawning of terrorist violence in the beginning of the 21st century. The perverse interpretation of the Koran has resulted in the rapid proliferation of a iihadi cultist violence that glorifies death by terror in suicidal and homicidal variants."

It states: "The exploitation of the cyberspace by the radical Islamic religious clerics has resulted in the electronic propagation of jihadi terrorism world over. Online electronic dissemination of Jihadi terrorism has resulted in the spurt of violence in non-Islamic societies that are secular and are now increasingly vulnerable to the violence that (is) on the increase.'

Another module, titled State-sponsored Terrorism: It's Influence and Impact', refers only to the Soviet Union and

ographical base and support havens for its operations. State sponsored terrorism has been largely during the ideological war between the West and the Soviet Union and China. The Soviet Union and China have been predominant state-sponsors of terrorism and they have been heavily involved in terms of their intelligence agencies training, aiding and providing logistical support to Communist ultras and terrorists," it states.

"In the post-Cold War period, the trend has been well adapted by several radical Islamic states ued to aid and arm the various

tions," Gupta said.

Kumar said that "to the best of my knowledge", he has "not come across" an instance of any other religion resorting to meth-

On the reference only to Soviet Union and China as "predominant state-sponsors of terrorism", Kumar said: "Statesponsored terrorism is very

# Taliban leadership in Qatar: India important...

Rawalpindi have always seen India's ties with Afghanistan as a negative influence. It is also the first categorical statement directed at India by a senior leader of the Taliban since they captured power in Kabul on

The Indian Express reported graph in its statement asking terrorists "operating on the territory of any other country".

Stanekzai, incidentally, was

find evidence for it and only then

similar overture to India after the Taliban's first takeover of Kabul when he was Deputy Foreign Minister of a caretaker regime. This time, his statements

cadets. In 1996, he had made a

come at a time when India has evacuated its entire Indian diplomatic contingent from the embassy in Kabul. "India is very important for this subcontinent. We want to

continue our cultural, economic and trade ties with India like in the past," he said. "We give due importance to our political, economic and

trade ties with India and we want these ties to continue. We are looking forward to working with India in this regard," he

ernment collapsed, and security personnel in Kabul's Green

Armed fighters had set up the Afghan capital. Their chain of command was not clear; apart from the Taliban, several allied groups, including Pakistan-based groups such as the Haqqani network - some of whom nurse a special animus against India – were reported to be present. Driving to the airport through these posts was fraught

India flight from Delhi was unable to land in Kabul as thousands swarmed the tarmac, India sent an IAF C17 Globemaster transport aircraft to evacuate its citizens, including those at the Embassy, through the milcontrolled by US forces.

or groups allied to them did not place hurdles in the way.

The US had been using Black Hawk military transport helicopters to evacuate their Embassy since August 12. Some European diplomatic missions too had access to military aircraft, but the Indian mission did

a senior official said.

So, even as External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar spoke to US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken, and officials of both sides were in constant touch on the logistics at the military side of the airport, New Delhi fell back on some old friends in Kabul – Karzai and Abdullah were tapped.

Afghanistan.

said. On the Taliban's plans for trade in the region, Stanekzai said: "Trade with India through Pakistan is very important for us. With India, trade through air corridors will also remain

This is again an important statement from India's point of view since Pakistan has always blocked overland transit, trade and access between India and Afghanistan.

Speaking on Afghanistan's relations with Turkmenistan, listed Stanekzai Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline project and said the Taliban would work to address the problems that are holding up the venture once a government is formed. Stanekzai also referred to

the Chabahar port developed by India while speaking about relations with Iran, and highlighted its importance for trade. Over the last two weeks

Taliban spokespersons Suhail Shaheen and Zabiullah Mujahid have also spoken about the group's views on relations with India. South Block, which is track-

ing all these statements carefully, is yet to respond to these messages. But officials have pointed out that the Taliban had cooperated for the safe passage of Indian diplomats and nationals, and Afghans, who were evacuated from

The freeze in biometrics is

linked to the fate of the NRC

which, even after two years of

publication, hangs in limbo: the

Registrar General of India has

not notified it, and the Supreme

Court, which supervised the

process from 2013, has not

heard the matter since January

6. 2020. Both the BJP govern-

ment and the state coordinator

of NRC have not accepted it ei-

ther, and are currently pushing

now," admitted an official from

the NRC office, requesting ano-

nymity. Last year, HD Sarma, the

NRC state coordinator, submit-

ted an affidavit to the Gauhati

High Court, referring to the

August 31 list as a 'supplemen-

tary' list and seeking re-verifica-

Sources in the NRC state co-

ordinator's office said the

Supreme Court SOP clearly said

Aadhaar will be given to those

who are part of the "final NRC".

"But the NRC we have now is not

final...so how can we share in-

formation on the applicant data

card? That will mean violating

the SC order," the official said.

even if it is for an Aadhaar

At the UIDAI, Regional Office,

Guwahati, officials told The

Indian Express they cannot issue

the Aadhaar numbers "till a clar-

ification is received from RGI and

the matter is communicated to

UIDAI by Home and Political

Department, Government of

tor, UIDAI, Regional Office,

Guwahati, said in an email the

NRC biometric enrolment had

been kept on hold in accordance

with the SOP guidelines. "Till a

clarification is received from RGI

and the matter is communi-

cated to the UIDAI by Home and

Political Department, Govern-

ment of Assam, the Aadhaar

number cannot be issued," he

NRC in August 2019, the offices

of the NRC State Coordinator in

Guwahati, the Home and

Political Department in Dispur,

and the UIDAI regional office in

Guwahati have been flooded

with letters from aggrieved cit-

One among them is 22-year-

old Bikash Singh, a Computer

Applications graduate from

Duliajan in Upper Assam. Unable

to apply for jobs for the lack of

an Aadhaar card, he has shot off

multiple letters to the Prime

Minister's Office, RGI, Chief

Minister's Office and the

UIDAI, Guwahati – but with-

out luck. "My brother, who is

in the first year of college, has

not been able to apply for

scholarships. It is mental tor-

ture," said Singh. Then there is

Mamtaz Begum, a housewife in

Assam's Baksa district, who has

applied for Aadhaar seven times.

Newly married Roshni Singh, a

Bihari-origin resident of Assam,

Since the publication of the

Kuldeep Pegu, Deputy Direc-

Assam.'

"Nothing is happening right

for a "corrected" NRC.

In turn, officials at the Home and Political department have said they have written to the Union Home Secretary and RGI twice – in November 2020 and June 2021.

stance clear on the NRC yet... till they do not declare it as the final NRC, our hands are tied," said an official from the Home and Political department. The Indian Express reached out to the RGI, but did not receive a response.

people like Upadhyay, Begum, and Bikash Singh. Bikash Singh recently formed a WhatsApp group 'We Want Aadhaar'. There are about 35 on it everyone is facing some issue or the other...someone's PF has stopped, someone else is not able to get a ration card. I don't know how much it will help but for now, at least we can

few lakh rupees, after years of toil in the Gulf. But for an initia-

up as a small trader," he said.

iron pipes and tubes, the GTF ex-

to set up the unit, GTF Steels CEO Ishaq Koyilil, also from Thikkodi, said: "As per our analysis, the monthly demand of GI pipes and tubes in Kerala was 40,000 metric tonnes during pre-Covid. It would be down to 25,000 metric tonnes now. However, the production in Kerala is only 4,000 metric tonnes per month. Our monthly production capacity is 3,000 metric tonnes. We see a huge growth potential, as construction and infrastructure sectors are poised for major growth in Kerala." None of the partners work in the factory. The recruitment was done in a professional manner, with only qualified, trained workers being selected.

The NRC office in Guwahati

since March 2020 highlighting the "deprivations of the public". In the latest letter, H D Sarma, the NRC coordinator, said: ...around 26 lakh applicants whose biometrics were captured during claims and objections phase are not able to obtain the Aadhaar card as the enrolment numbers have been blocked by the UIDAI as per para 9 of the SOP... government may like to file an affidavit in the Supreme Court seeking relax-

"RGI has not made their

# Steel plant

tive of this type, they would not have been able to be a part of a Mohammed

and then back out after incurring huge losses. Our concern was to make such people a part of a business venture," he said. Ummer Koyilil, 60, returned

to Thikkodi village about two years ago, after working in Bahrain for 18 years. "I tried to set up a small business, but it did not materialise," he said. "I have invested only Rs 1 lakh in this venture. This has given me exposure to a business enterprise. Otherwise, I would have ended

Before deciding to set up a unit to manufacture galvanised plored other possibilities, including integrated farming and Explaining why they opted

August 15.

Sunday that the United Nations Security Council, with India as its president for the month of August, had dropped a reference to the Taliban from a para-Afghan groups to not support

at the Indian Military Academy in Dehradun in the 1980s as part of training for Afghan army difficult to define, we have to

we can include it."

spokesperson K C Tyagi said: "Just as there had been a coordination committee of the NDA during the AB Vajpayee government, we would welcome a similar committee now to discuss several issues we differ on. It would help in smooth functioning of the alliance and discourage unwarranted comments from leaders of the NDA al-

Later, speaking to The Indian Express, Tyagi said: "We have also passed a resolution at the party's national council that Nitish Kumar might not be in the PM race but has all the qualities that a PM should have".

Asked about the need for such a resolution. Tvagi said: "There have often been insinuations from some quarters (on Nitish Kumar's prime ministerial chances), and we wanted to keep the record straight".

The JD(U) leader also said the party would continue to demand a caste census. "We are waiting for a positive response from the PM," he said.

Asked about the JD(U)'s demand for a coordination committee. BIP leader and Bihar Deputy CM Tarkishore Prasad was cautious in response. "We support it because it will help us coordinate on various issues," he

On August 23, Nitish Kumar had led a 10-party delegation to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the caste census issue. Earlier, the Chief Minister had demanded a probe into allegations of surveillance of phones

using the Pegasus spyware. The BJP is wary of taking any step regarding a caste census, especially with the UP elections around the corner. Several party leaders have privately said that the party cannot afford to antagonise the OBCs, who have become a crucial support base in recent years.

On July 20, in a written reply to a question in Lok Sabha, Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai had said: "The Government of India has decided as a matter of policy not to enumerate caste-wise populations other than SCs and STs in

### Karzai, Abdullah power-sharing negotiations with the Taliban.

They were former president Hamid Karzai and former vicepresident Abdullah Abdullah, who was also the chairman of the High Council for National Reconciliation in the ousted government of Ashraf Ghani. New Delhi also reached out

to Moscow. The decision to evacuate the entire Indian Embassy including Ambassador Rudrendra Tandon, was taken after the Ghani gov-

Zone, where the diplomatic missions are located, abandoned their posts. their own checkpoints across

On August 16, after an Air

itary side of the airport that was But the challenge was to get the Indians to the airport safely — and to ensure that the Taliban

not have its own air resources. With no line of communication with the Taliban, India had to rely on third-party interlocutors to establish contact. "We reached out to all those who had any channels with the Taliban,'

India also dialled Russia for

Although Russia considers the Taliban a terrorist group, it is among three countries -Pakistan and China are the other two — that have kept their diplomatic missions open in Kabul even after the Taliban takeover. Russia has hosted Taliban delegates including Mullah Baradar in Moscow for talks, and had pushed for the Taliban to play an important role in post-US

Russia's Ambassador to Kabul Dmitry Zhirnov held talks with the Taliban on security for his country's Embassy two days after they took over, according to reports in the Russian media. Moscow's special envoy to Afghanistan Zamir Kabulov said in an interview that Russia had built contacts with the Taliban over seven years. It was these contacts that New Delhi called on Moscow to leverage on its be-

Karzai has known Mullah Baradar closely. The two men had tried to start negotiations for a political settlement back in 2010. Abdullah was in touch with the Taliban during the "intra-Afghan talks" last year after being appointed head of the High Council for National

Karzai and Abdullah have reached out to the Taliban to negotiate an inclusive government - and one or both could be part of the new dispensation in Kabul. With 150-odd evacuees

gathered at the Embassy, nego-

tiations continued through

Monday. The green light came

Reconciliation.

late in the evening — and the convoy left for the airport around 10 pm. The vehicles were allowed into the technical area of the airport around 2.30 am. Four hours

later, the C17 took off for Delhi. Efforts are now on to evacuate the 260 Indians who are still

### stranded in Kabul. Assam NRC

and attribute it to red tape and a lack of clarity on the NRC exercise itself. The state has highlighted the issue by writing to the Registrar General of India, but no action has been forthcoming so far.

At the heart of the problem

is a November 2018 Supreme Court-approved Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). Under the SOP, those left out of the draft NRC list published on July 31, 2018, had to mandatorily submit their biometrics during the hearings of 'claims' (to include themselves in the NRC) and 'objections' (to object to someone else's inclusion) process. These hearings were conducted in the run-up to the publication of the complete list on August 31, 2019.

"Once the final NRC has been  $published, such persons\,who\,are$ included in the NRC, will be given the usual Aadhaar number as applicable to legal residents in the country," Clause 9 of the SOP stated. The clause was added as a security measure to keep track of the digital entity of those who may get excluded from the list, said officials in-

volved in the drafting of the SOP The state's Home and Political Department was made the registrar of this exercise with the UIDAI providing technical support. The biometric details of 27,43,396 were collected by the UIDAI during the process.

In March 2019, Upadhyay remembers flying to Guwahati and driving to Sarupathar in Golaghat – for the hearing. While his mother had made it to the NRC, his father, his sister and he had not. "The officials told us that once the list is out, we would get our Aadhaar cards," he says. On August 31, all three made it to the NRC. "I was glad the ordeal was over," he said, but the Aadhaar ordeal had just be-

On its part, the state government has been in touch with the Centre about the issue. In response to a question in the Assembly session in July, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said the state had taken up the matter with the RGI and the Union Home Secretary.

who is based in Mumbai, said

she has not been able to open a

bank account nor get a ration

also wrote to the state's Home and Political department thrice ation of para nine of the SOP so that applicants are able to avail the benefit of Aadhar card."

Caught in the middle are

vent," he said.

professional business venture." said GTF Steels Chairman "Most of these returnees invest in trade or hotel industry,

# WESTBENGAL

# V-C of Visva Bharati in Bolpur today

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** KOLKATA, AUGUST 29

A SECTION of students and teachers of Visva-Bharati University (VBU) in Birbhum district on Sunday continued their protest against the rustication of three students at the beginning of the week. The protesters announced there would be a massive rally in Bolpur on Monday against Vice-Chancellor Bidyut Chakraborty. They said students. teachers, and the residents of Santiniketan, where the central university is located, would participate in the rally.

The ongoing sit-in against the expulsion order and the suspension of two professors began on the campus Friday night. The students have also organised another sit-in outside the residence of Bidyut Chakraborty. As a result, security personnel have been deployed outside the V-C's

Members of the Visva-Bharati University Faculty Association (VBUFA) joined the protest on Saturday, and have been demanding the revocation of the expulsion order.

"So far the university administration has not initiated any dialogue with us. However, our movement will continue till the expulsion order is not revoked," said a protesting student.

On August 23, the university rusticated three students for three years, and suspended two professors for "gross indiscipline and misconduct". The students were rusticated on the basis of an enquiry committee report. The students were accused of attempting to vitiate the "calm ambience of Visva Bharati", and "besmirch the university's administrative decisions and universal high reputation".

### 650 new Covid cases, 6 more die

Kolkata: West Bengal recorded 650 new cases of the coronavirus infection (Covid-19) in the past 24 hours, a bulletin issued by the state health department confirmed on Sunday. With this latest rise, Bengal's Covid-19 infection tally has gone up to 15.47.548 cases. The bulletin said six new deaths were recorded in the state in the same duration, taking the fatality tally to 18,423. A total 7841 persons are in home isolation, the bulletin added. ENS

# Rally against Somen Mitra's wife Sikha returns to TMC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, AUGUST 29

WEST Bengal Congress president Somen Mitra's wife Sikha Mitra returned to the ruling Trinamool Congress on Sunday, over a year after her husband's death.

Mitra claimed that though she resigned as a Trinamool Congress MLA in 2014 she never officially quit the party. "My husband was made the state Congress president [after he returned to Congress | but I had taken a break from active politics. I was touched by the warmth and simplicity of Chief



Sikha Mitra (second from right) joins the Trinamool Congress at an event in Kolkata on Sunday. Express

Minister Mamata Banerjee. She had who called me up and urged me to once again become an active TMC worker. I, therefore, decided that if I want to join active politics again then it has to be under her," she told

TMC MP Mala Roy and the party's Chowringhee MLA Nayna Bandyopadhyay welcomed Mitra and two local Congress leaders to the party at the Trinamool Bhavan on Sunday afternoon.

Mitra's move to the TMC came amid differences that emerged between her, her son Rohan, and the state Congress Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury after Somen Mitra's death in July 2020. Rohan, who resigned as the state Congress general secretary in July, continues to remain in the grand old party. Asked about her resignation

as a TMC MLA seven years ago, Mitra said there were some differences with the TMC leadership, but added that those had been resolved. "Mamata Banerjee had

cordial terms with her," she told reporters. Ahead of the state elections, the BJP had nominated Mitra as

candidate

called me up after my husband

died and I have always been on

fused to contest the polls, and claimed that the Opposition party did not take her consent before nominating her. Asked about it, Mitra said, "I have always believed that the BJP is a communal party." Reacting to Mitra's decision,

Chowringhee. However, she re-

Adhir Chowdhury, who is also the Congress leader in the Lok Sabha, said, "I don't know why Sikha Mitra left the Congress and joined the TMC. She was with the TMC earlier and had joined the Congress but now returned to the ruling party. It is her personal decision. We have always treated her with respect." — WITH PTI INPUTS

TMC, the likes of Dipendu

Biswas, Prabir Ghoshal, and sev-

eral others have been in touch

with the party leadership in the

The senior TMC leader said,

"Many leaders, who joined the

BIP, may return but they will

have to come back on our

terms. We are ready to accept

all the workers who wish to re-

The saffron party, meanwhile,

is said to be worried as thousands

of its cadre have returned to the

Trinamool, causing it to lose

ground in many districts. The

BIP fears the exit of heavy-

weights such as Dutta and

Banerjee in such a situation

hope of a comeback.

turn from the BIP."

'New plan of home minister to remit all cases through ED to harass Oppn'

**PRESSTRUSTOFINDIA** KOLKATA, AUGUST 29

TRINAMOOL CONGRESS MP Derek O'Brien on Sunday slammed the Centre for harassing the Opposition, alleging that the Union Home Minister had drawn up a plan to remit all cases through the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

He did not name Amit Shah in his comments, which came a day after the ED summoned TMC's Diamond Harbour MP and national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee and his wife for questioning in a money laundering case linked to an alleged

"A sparrow in Delhi tells me that new CBI chief may have directed a few top officials not to act too brazenly. Harassing the opposition only benefits one party. So HeMan (HM) has a new plan. He is now remitting all cases through the Extremely Dedicated (ED) director who obeys HM," the TMC MP tweeted.

Reacting to the remarks, Bengal BJP spokesperson Samik Bhattacharya said O'Brien was casting aspersions on the CBI in an unfair manner.

He also said the ED was a highly credible" independent organisation. "The TMC sees the invisible hand of the BJP in everything," Bhattacharya added.

# TMC defectors may come back before Puja: Senior leader

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** KOLKATA, AUGUST 29

HEAVYWEIGHT Trinamool Congress (TMC) leaders who defected to the BJP in the run-up to this year's Assembly elections may return to the ruling party before Durga Puja, sources have said.

After Mukul Roy, some of the names of BIP leaders Rajib Banerjee, Sonali Guha, and former footballer-turned-politician Dipendu Biswas are doing the

A senior TMC leader said earlier this week, "Initially, Abhishek Banerjee was hard on the turncoats. However, he has



Names of Rajib Banerjee (left), Sonali Guha doing the rounds

softened his stance since, and we expect many of these leaders to return before Durga Puja."

A Cabinet minister in the previous TMC government, Rajib Banerjee joined the BJP ahead of the state polls in the hope of getting more recogni-

tion in the saffron camp. However, the electoral loss from his constituency Domjur forced Banerjee into a rethink. Last week, he took to Facebook to criticise the saffron party and even skipped a key party meet-

ing chaired by state BJP chief

TMC strongman Sabyasachi Dutta who joined the BJP in 2019 in the wake of the Opposition party's massive gains in the last Lok Sabha elections was, however, seen at the party's organisational meeting last week.

Dutta said, "The Trinamool did good micro-management at the booth level, while our supporters could not reach thousands of voters at each booth. Though our manifesto was good, we could not communicate it to the locals. I feel the local language barrier posed a problem for BJP supporters, especially when it came to translating the manifesto from Hindi

A known confidante of Mamata Banerjee, Sonali Guha is a four-time MLA from Satgachhia in South 24 Parganas. She guit the TMC after being denied a ticket in the last election. However, in an open letter to Mamata Banerjee a few weeks after the poll results were declared, Guha regretted her move, writing, "The way a fish cannot stay out of water, I will not be able to live without you, Didi. I seek your forgiveness and if you don't forgive me, I won't be able to live. Please allow me to come back and spend the rest of my life in your

According to sources in the

# **POLICE COMPLAINT FILED**

# Actor gets obscene message from director's fake FB account

will further weaken it.

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** KOLKATA, AUGUST 29

AWELL-KNOWN Bengali television actor has filed a complaint with the cybercrime cell of Kolkata Police after receiving an obscene message from a fake account of a film director.

The complainant told reporters on Sunday that the day before she accepted a friend request from a Facebook profile with the name of a well-known film director. The account had several photos and work-related documents of his works. The woman said she received a message from the profile on Sunday. Initially, the Facebook user offered her a role in a movie, and then sent her the obscene mes-

Soon after the actor posted a

screenshot of the message on her Facebook profile, it was deactivated.

Soon, some of the actor's friends and fans asked her to check the director's actual profile, and discovered that the account she received the message from was fake.

"I understood soon afterwards it was not the verified account of ... sir. The fake account had many inconsistencies I realised when I checked later. But I went ahead with the complaint as I want to punish those who abuse, stalk and harass women and girls on social media. I have got all the cooperation from the police," said the

After she registered her complaint with the cybercrime cell via e-mail, the inquiry was transferred to the Barrackpore police

as she lives in an area under its jurisdiction. The police said they were working on tracing the ac-

The director who was impersonated by the accused is also likely to file a police complaint. "I was totally in the dark about such developments till now. But I would request everyone to contact me over the phone or through my office. Not sending a request to cast him/her through social media. There can be many fake social media accounts of personalities. Such things give a bad name to peo-

ple like us," he added. On July 11, another television actor had filed a complaint with the cyber cell of Kolkata Police after receiving rape threats from an anonymous user on Instagram.

Akhilesh calls on 5-time BSP

**MLA Sukhdev** 

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** 

SAMAIWADI PARTY (SP) presi-

dent Akhilesh Yadav on Sunday

visited five-time Bahujan Samaj

Party (BSP) MLA and former

Vidhan Sabha Speaker Sukhdev

Rajbhar at his residence in

who represents Azamgarh dis-

trict's Didarganj seat in the

Assembly, announced his retire-

ment from politics on July 31,

and said his son Kamlakant

(Pappu) would follow Akhilesh's

Kamlakant, who was present

In a blow to the BSP, Rajbhar,

Lucknow's Gomti Nagar area.

LUCKNOW, AUGUST 29

Rajbhar

- WITH PTI INPUTS

# Days after he told police to arrest Narayan Rane, minister gets ED notice

THE ART OF RESTING

A man takes a nap near Gandhi Statue on Mayo Road in Kolkata. Partha Paul

**VISHWAS WAGHMODE** MUMBAI. AUGUST 29

DAYS AFTER state Transport Minister Anil Parab was caught on camera directing the police to arrest Union minister Narayan Rane, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has sent him a notice asking him to appear before it on Tuesday, August 31. Parab said there was no clar-

ity as to why the ED had summoned him because the ED notice only mentions the summons to him "as part of an investigation" without mentioning a specific case.

"As expected, Anil Parab has been served a notice by the ED as soon as the Ian Ashirwad Yatra concluded. The central government has started its work. The epicentre of the earthquake was Ratnagiri (referring to Rane's arrest) and Parab is the Guardian Minister of that district. Please understand the chronology. This is a legal battle which we will fight legally," Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut tweeted.

Parab said it was unclear in which connection he had been summoned by the ED. "This evening I received the ED notice, but there is no mention of any case in it. The only thing it says is to appear before ED at 11 am on August 31. So, I can't say in which connection the notice has been served, but it says 'as



Maharashtra Transport Minister Anil

Sources in the Shiv Sena said the party would stand behind the senior party leader. The issue of the ED notice was discussed with the party leadership, they added

part of an investigation'. We had anticipated something like this. Now, we will examine it legally and respond to it," said Parab, speaking with mediapersons on unday evening.

When asked whether the Centre acted in a vindictive manner, Parab said, "I will not comment on it now. I will respond legally after studying the

To a query whether he will appear before the ED, Parab said, "I will examine it legally and then take a decision."

Parab, known to be close to Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, was caught on camera last week issuing directions to arrest Rane. The guardian minister of Ratnagiri was at a press conference on Tuesday, during which he broke off to have two phone conversations. After receiving the first call, he made another call - apparently to a police officer. Rane was arrested by police for his threatening to "slap" Thackeray

"Hello, what are you people doing? But you need to do it. Have you detained him or . What order are they asking for? The High Court and sessions court have rejected his bail (plea)... then use the police force," Parab was heard saying on the phone. The minister was audible as he was seated before open microphones.

Sources in the Shiv Sena said the party would stand behind the senior party leader. The issue of the ED notice was discussed with the party leadership, which is standing by him, and they have decided to fight it out legally, said sources.

"There is huge support and sympathy for Parab in the party and among party cadres. Because the ED notice has come days after Parab was caught on camera directing the police to arrest Rane. So, the party will stand behind Parab in this entire episode," said a senior Sena leader. Earlier, former Mumbai Police officer Sachin Waze, in a letter submitted to the NIA court, had claimed that Parab had asked him to carry out extortion to the tune of Rs 50 crore

### IN SENA, WHOEVER SPEAKS AGAINST ME IS PROMOTED: RANE

Sindhudurg: Union minister and BJP leader Narayan Rane Sunday said the Shiv Sena promotes leaders who speak against him, and claimed that his arrest was an attempt to disrupt his Jan Aashirvaad Yatra. "Some ministers who think of themselves as the President gave orders for my arrest. They were trying to stop my yatra. In Shiv Sena. whoever speaks against me is promoted," Rane said in Kankavali on the last day of his yatra.

from a private u ust. He also alleged that Parab told him to look into the inquiry against fraudulent contractors listed in the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation and asked him to collect "at least Rs 2 crore" from about 50 such contractors. Parab has denied all the allega-

Parab is the second Shiv Sena leader and third Maha Vikas Aghadi leader to have come under the scanner of the ED. Earlier, former Home Minister and NCP leader Anil Deshmukh and Sena legislator and party spokesperson Pratap Sarnaik were summoned by the ED in connection with money laundering cases.

# President visits temple site in Ayodhya, prays to Ram Lalla

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** LUCKNOW, AUGUST 29

PRESIDENT RAM Nath Kovind on Sunday offered prayers to the deity of Ram Lalla (infant Ram) in Ayodhya, visiting the site where a Ram temple is being built. Kovind said the city could not be imagined without the deity, and emphasised that Ram belongs to everyone and "is in everyone".

Kovind inaugurated the Ramayan Conclave at the Ram Katha Park, Governor Anandiben Patel and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath were among those who attended the event. In his speech at the event, the president said he hoped that following the attempts of the state and Central governments, Ayodhya would be developed as a centre of human welfare. He also hoped for the city to be an example of social harmony, and added that he wished for it to be known in the future for its "moral and spiritual culture", and as a global hub of education and research.

Earlier in the day, the president, on the fourth and final day of his Uttar Pradesh visit, arrived in Ayodhya on a special presidential train, and inaugurated the Ramayan Conclave. Kovind visited the Ram Janmabhoomi to seek the blessings of "Ram Lalla" and later in the day he offered prayers at the famous Hanumangarhi temple.



President Ram Nath Kovind offers prayers at the Ram temple in Ayodhya, Sunday. PTI

"Ayodhya is the birth land of Bhagwan Ram and his leela bhoomi. Without Ram, it is hard to even imagine Ayodhya. This connection of Avodhva and Ram has been mentioned in Sanskrit

Pratimanatakam...Without Ram, Ayodhya isn't Ayodhya. Where there is Ram, there is Ayodhya, the president said.

He added, "By organising the Ramayan Conclave, the state government has Ramayana to the people and appreciate CM Yogi Adityanath and his entire team. I have been told that the Ramayan Conclave last year was very much successful and it is a matter of great joy that the conclave is being organised in several UP districts this year. Spreading Ramayana is also important because the life values given in Ramayan are always relevant for humanity.'

at the meeting between the SP president and his father, told reporters, "My father has been suffering from post-Covid complications since he got infected last year. The visit by Akhilesh ji was not political."

leadership.

Central Warehousing Corporation
(A GOVERNMENT OF INDIA UNDERTAKING)
REGIONAL OFFICE, KOLKATA
CMC BUILDING, PHASE-I, 6TH FLOOR, NEW MARKET COMPLEX,
15N, NELLIE SENGUPTA SARANI, KOLKATA-700087

**Press Notice for Engagement of Consultant** CWC Regional Office, Kolkata invites applications from interested an eligible CWC retired employees for engagement as Consultant in Kolkata Region. For details please visit the CWC website www.cewacor.nic.in and apply online through the available link https://cwceportal.com/careers

Online application will start from 01 Sep 2021 (1000 Hrs) and will end on 21 Sep 2021 at (1700 Hrs) REGIONAL MANAGER

# Arrested for raping minor, teen gets bail after paternity test comes back negative

**SHAJU PHILIP** 

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, AUGUST 29

A TEENAGER, who was arrested last month for the rape and impregnation of a minor girl in Kerala's Malappuram district, has been released unconditionally on bail after a DNA paternity

The 18-year-old spent 35 days in judicial custody before he was released Saturday. Police had taken him into custody from his house on July 22 midnight, and he was remanded in judicial custody the next day.

test came back negative.

The Class XII student alleged physical and mental torture at the hands of the police, and his lawyer said that they will file a damage suit.

"I vehemently objected to the allegation that I had raped the minor and impregnated her. Before the next day's break, I was taken to the house of the girl, handcuffed. The girl told the police that I had abused her and was responsible for the pregnancy," the teenager

denied there was any relationship between them. "When the police forced me to confess to the charges of rape and impregnating the girl, I pleaded ignorance. They tortured me mentally as well as physically to take the responsibility for the pregnancy," he said.

The teenager's lawyer said the police moved against te teen solely based on the girl's statement. "It was the prosecution's decision to go for a paternity test without any delay. We are planning to file a damage suit against the police," the lawyer said.

The 18-vear-old's father said the paternity test has brought relief for the entire family. "The girl also hails from our locality, but even after the DNA test result, they haven't tendered an apology for humiliating my son," the father said.

Meanwhile, police sources said although the paternity test came out negative, the teenager will still have to face the sexual abuse charges against him. "We have also started probing to identify the person who has impregnated the girl," an officer said.

# Actor held for possessing drugs to be probed for 'financing illicit trafficking'

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** MUMBAI, AUGUST 29

ACTOR ARMAAN Kohli, who was arrested by Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) on Sunday for possessing cocaine, has also been booked for "financing illicit traffic and harbouring offenders". The actor faces a minimum of 10 years and a maximum of 20 years in prison if convicted.

The NCB had searched Kohli's residence Saturday based on information that he was possessing drugs. Officials recovered cocaine from a table in his bedroom.

After his arrest. Kohli was produced before a magistrate court and was remanded to NCB custody for a day. His name



of cocaine cropped up when the NCB officials were questioning Ajay Raju Singh, a major drug peddler arrested on Saturday, who said he

Kohli was

possession

has also bought drugs from another accused, who is on the run. "So far, the investigation has revealed that the case has international linkages as the cocaine seized is of South American origin. NCB Mumbai is probing the route and linkages used to bring

the seized cocaine to Mumbai...'

sold drugs to Kohli multiple

times in the past and that Kohli

# Tripura BJP MLAs meet to identify 'party mistakes'

**DEBRAJ DEB** 

A GROUP of BJP MLAs led by former health minister Sudip Rov Barman Sunday held a public meeting in Agartala to "identify mistakes" by the Tripura government and state party unit, saying these would be brought up before the central leadership.

Roy Barman told reporters that his party and the state government have little interest in listening to the voice of the grassroots workers.

He said: "We have given them scope to speak and lighten their minds. Some of them might have said some untoward things. They are saying these out of pain and anguish. We have all the old BJP karyakartas here. The party and government aren't listening to their voices. We shall bring these to the attention of Delhi, the party and the state

Asked if he is in touch with the Trinamool Congress, Roy Barman said: "I haven't contacted them, I am confident none of those with us have communicated with TMC. I am not sure if anyone else has done it. I am comfortable where I am."

The former minister said there is scope for improving law and order in the state. He also said he raised multiple issues before central leaders who offered several solutions — which weren't implemented.

Roy Barman, who moved from Trinamool Congress to BJP in 2017, was Health Minister in the Biplab Deb cabinet. He was dropped later, ostensibly owing to differences with the

# **Farmer injured in Karnal** lathicharge has died of heart attack: Chaduni

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** CHANDIGARH, AUGUST 29

SENIOR BKU leader Gurnam Singh Chaduni said Sunday that a farmer who had been injured in the police lathicharge in Karnal the previous day, has died of a heart attack. Haryana Police however, denied any farmer's death due to the lathicharge

The BKU leader tweeted: "Sushil Kajal, who owned one and a half acres of land, had been participating in the farmers' agitation for the past nine months. He had suffered serious injuries in the police lathicharge at Karnal toll plaza yesterday and at night he succumbed to a heart attack..."

Police had lathicharged a group of farmers disrupting traffic on a national highway while heading towards Karnal to protest a BJP meeting, chaired by Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, on the upcoming panchayat polls, Saturday. BKU claimed 50 farmers were injured, of which 10 had sustained serious wounds.

Farmer groups will be meeting in Karnal Monday to decide the next course of action.

Farmers who attended Sushil's cremation Sunday also alleged that he had received injuries in the police lathicharge. However, Karnal SP Ganga Ram Punia said: "It's factually incorrect that he died because of the injuries received during use of force by police. Had it happened, the family members would have certainly got his postmortem done. We came to know about his death only when his cremation was taking place...'



Farmers block a highway in Patiala on Sunday. Express

# Punjab farmers block state, national highways to protest Karnal lathicharge

**RAAKHI JAGGA** LUDHIANA, AUGUST 29

Thousands of farmers in Punjab hit the streets on Sunday, blocking traffic on all important states and national highways for two hours to protest against the lathicharge on fellow agitators in Karnal a day earlier.

The chakka jam continued from noon till 2pm in various Punjab villages, during which farmers burnt effigies of the Harvana government.

Manjeet Singh Dhane, vice president of BKU-Dakaunda, said, "The Haryana government ordered action against us which led to several farmers sustaining iniuries during a lahicharge. The orders of the SDM Karnal has

been backed by the politicians. Hence, we need to stay united in our fight for our farmer brothers... We need to get ourselves heard and also want to give a loud and clear message to the administration that we farmers are united."

Sukhdev Singh Kokri Kalan, general secretary, BKU Ugrahan said, "Effigies were burnt in 705 villages of Punjab and at 39 pakka dharna sites by our union."

Jhanda Singh Jethuke, another protester, said, "We will intensify our struggle in the coming days. On September 7, we will support a dharna staged by government employees for various demands. On September 13, we will gherao Moti Mahal, the personal residence of Puniab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh in Patiala.

### **MANN KI BAAT**

# 'Sabka Prayas' can take India to new heights in sports, says PM

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 29

URGING PEOPLE to transform his mantra of 'Sabka Prayas' (collective endeavour) into reality, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Sunday said India can attain the heights in sports it deserves through everyone's contri-

The Prime Minister had first used the slogan 'Sabka Prayas' during his Independence Day

During the 80th edition of his monthly 'Mann Ki Baat' radio programme on Sunday, the Prime Minister said, "This is the period of 75 years of Independence. This year, we have to make a new resolve, think new every day, and increase our zest to do something new. When India will complete the centenary of Independence, then these resolutions will reflect in the foundation of its successes. So, we cannot let this opportunity go. We have to contribute our max-

imum efforts to this." Remembering hockey legend Major Dhyanchand on his birth anniversary, which is celebrated as National Sports Day, the PM said, "I was thinking, wherever his soul may be, he must be extremely pleased.



Because Dhyanchand ji conquered the world of hockey for India... India's sons and daugh-

ters have once again instilled new life into Indian hockey. "No matter how many edals we win until we win a medal in hockey, Indians cannot fully enjoy the victory. And this time, we did win an

Olympic medal in hockey, after

a gap of four decades," he said. The Prime Minister urged people to also pick up other sports. "Be it at home or outside, in villages or in towns, our sports grounds must be full. Sab khelen, sab khilen [Everyone should play, everyone should blossom]," he said. "Through 'Sabka Prayas' [everyone's contribution], India can attain the height in sports which it deserves... All of us should strive to further this momentum... Let us transform the mantra of

'Sabka Pravas' into reality." Wishing people on the eve of Janmashtami, the Prime Minister urged people to under-

stand the science behind festivals. "Friends, when people across the world think so highly of Indian spirituality and philosophy, then it is our responsibility to carry forward our glorious traditions... Let us celebrate our festivals by understanding the science behind them and understanding their meaning," he said. The Prime Minister also

spoke at length about Lord Krishna and discussed the artworks of Jadurani Dasi, an American devotee and ISKCON follower. He said. "We are aware of all the forms of the lord, from the naughty Kanhaiya to the Krishna who assumes the Virat Swarup. From the master of scriptures to the master of weapons, be it art, beauty or sweetness, Shri Krishna is everywhere."

The Prime Minister also extolled the virtues of Sanskrit, saying the language helps strengthen cultural ties between nations. He appreciated the contributions of Rutger Kortenhorst, a Sanskrit scholar and teacher in Ireland; Dr Chirapat Prapandavidya and Dr Kusuma Rakshamani in Thailand: and Boris Zakharin. who teaches Sanskrit at Moscow State University in Russia in promoting the language in their countries.

**ACTIVE CASES: 3,76,599** VACCINATIONS: 62,98,30,818 TOTAL DEATHS 4,38,214 WEEKLY CFR 1.35% TESTS TODAY: 17,17,985 | TOTAL TESTS: 52,03,60,914

TRACKING THE SECOND SURGE

**NEW CASES: 42,513** 

WEEKLY POSITIVITY: 2.25% | OVERALL POSITIVITY: 6.29%

### STATES REPORTING MOST CASES

STATE	NEW Cases	ACTIVE CASES	WEEKLY POSITIVITY	TOTAL VACCINATIO
Kerala	29.836	2.13.034	18.53%	2.79.50.60
■ Maharashtra	4.666	52.844	2.36%	5,70,39,02
■ Andhra Pradesh	1,557	15,179	2.20%	2,87,49,80
■ Tamil Nadu	1,538	17,322	0.99%	3,12,50,47
■ Karnataka	1,262	18,784	0.70%	4,07,28,91

### STATES REPORTING MOST DEATHS

STATE	TODAY'S	TOTAL	WEEKLY	OVERALL
	DEATHS	DEATHS	CFR	CFR
■ Maharashtra	133	1,40,679	3.07%	2.20%
■ Kerala	75	20,620	0.76%	0.56%
Odisha	69	7,887	5.46%	0.79%
■ Tamil Nadu	22	34,878	1.25%	1.35%
■ Andhra Pradesh	18	13,825	0.90%	0.69%
Note: Data as on Aug 29; vac	cination number	s as of Aug 28. Death	s include those fror	n previous days.

# 18 children test Covid positive in Mumbai children's home

**SANJANA BHALERAO** MUMBAI. AUGUST 29

EIGHTEEN CHILDREN from a children's home in Mumbai tested positive for Covid-19, All the infected children have been shifted to a Covid care centre at Vashi in Navi Mumbai. Officials the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) said all of them are stable.

Harish Nouni, medical officer of the M East ward said, "On August 25, one child from the home tested positive at the Chembur Shatabdi hospital and two more tested positive on August 26. Later, all the remaining inmates were tested and 15 more tested positive. We are keeping a watch on all of them."

Civic officials said that another screening will be held after five days at the facility.

"Regular health check-ups of children are done. The guidelines of the government are strictly enforced," said an official from the home. As per protocol, the home has been sealed and sanitised and all other residents quarantined.

# IE Thinc session today on livelihood opportunities for migrant workers

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**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 29

HUNDREDS OF millions of migrant workers were the worst affected by the repeated Covid-induced economic disruptions as their livelihood opportunities disappeared overnight. As the Covid vaccination rate increases, there is hope that the economy will grow and create more jobs. But will that happen

in a manner that creates job opportunities for migrant workers, who are driven out of homes by acute economic distress? The country is al-

ready witnessing a "K-shaped" recovery

where bigger firms have bounced back while millions of small and marginal firms continue to languish. Under the circumstances, there is a high chance that migrants may continue to struggle. Moreover, the evidence of

the past two decades shows that the Indian economy has gone



tion in total employment. Persistently high unemployment rates have become the new normal Scan to register Again, with meagre levels of skills, mi-

grant workers often find they can only participate in a limited number of activities. Under the circumstances,

what can governments do to create more livelihood opportunities for migrant workers? What are the policy changes required to address the grievances of unemployment among migrant workers? What is the role that big private sector firms can play in the process? How can the private sector join hands with civil society organisations and the governments to improve the fortunes of migrant workers?

The fifth edition of the eightpart webinar series Thinc Migration by The Indian Express, which will go live Monday, will address these questions. Presented by Omidyar Network India, the panel discussion among the leaders from academia, private sector and civil society will examine the extent of damage to the employment of migrant workers and suggest what needs to be done to create new jobs.

The panel for this edition includes keynote speaker Meher Pudumjee (Chairperson of Thermax Limited); Rajiv Khandelwal (Founder, Aajeevika Bureau), Manish Sabharwal TeamLease), (Chairman, Radhicka Kapoor (Fellow at ICRIER), and Deepak Mishra (Professor, JNU). The session will be moderated by Udit Misra, Deputy Associate Editor, The

# Who chose Amarinder as leader for 2022 polls, Cong leader asks Rawat

**ANJU AGNIHOTRI CHABA** JALANDHAR AUGUST 29

PUNJAB CONGRESS general secretary Pargat Singh Sunday questioned state political affairs in-charge Harish Rawat about the decision to hand the leadership of the 2022 Assembly election campaign to Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh.

Talking to reporters during a social gathering, Pargat Singh, the Jalandhar Cantonment MLA, asked Rawat to explain when the decision was taken, as a committee formed two months ago under Mallikarjun Kharge had decided that the elections would be held under the leadership of Sonia and Rahul Gandhi. Rawat had on August 25 said

that the 2022 Punjab elections will be fought under Amarinder Singh after meeting four state ministers who were said to be seeking the CM's ouster. Pargat said that Amrinder

Singh was an undisputed leader. "But the 2017 election promises made by him were not fulfilled. There is no question of groupism in here, but I feel sad that such a strong leader like Captain Amarinder Singh has not been able to fulfill poll promises for the past four-and-a-half-years,' he said. He said that in 2017. Captain Amarinder Singh was the face of the Congress in the state. But questions had now started arising with regard to the fulfillment of promises made by him after four-and-half-years of Congress' rule. The CM, he said, has not lived up top the expecta-

tions of the people. About the Cabinet decision for cancellation of Power Purchase agreements (PPAs) with private players, Pargat Singh said that the government had done the right thing.

# **SALUTE THE SOLDIER**



RAJENDRA

**MARTYRDOM ON 30 AUG 2016** 

On 30 Aug 2016, Lance Naik Rajendra Singh made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty and attained martyrdom while serving at Line of Control in Akhnoor Sector (J&K) in 'Operation Rakshak'. We bow our heads in reverence of the martyred soldier. He, in the true traditions of the 2nd Battalion the Rajputana Rifles, made the

supreme sacrifice for the motherland. It is

because of soldiers like him, that today every member of the 2nd Battalion the Rajputana Rifles holds his head high. 'MAY THE ALMIGHTY CONFER EVERLASTING PEACE TO YOUR NOBLE SOUL

REMEMBERED AND REVERED BY COMMANDING OFFICER AND ALL RANKS 2nd BATTALION THE RAJPUTANA RIFLES (EVER **VICTORIOUS)** 



KUMAR YADAV, (POSTHUMOUS)

This historic day fills our hearts with pride and sorrow alike when in the highest traditions of the Indian Army, you laid down your life in the line of duty. World is a lesser place without you but we know that you are with the gods above and even heavens have improved by your gracious

14 Oct 1976 - 30 Aug 1999

Fondly remembered by CO AND ALL RANKS OF 3 RAJPUT

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CORRIGENDUM his is in reference to previous Notice dt: 7th August 2021 for awarding dealership for the sale o

Inis is in reference to previous Notice at: /tin August 2021 for awarding dealership for the sale of KHADI PRAKRITIK PAINT made from cow dung, on District basis as per Term and Conditions of Application Document. Interested firms/enterprises may apply with details such as Name of the Firm/ Enterprises, Name of the proprietor/partner, Address, GST Number, Contact Number, email address, specifying the District for which Dealership is required along with the fee of Rs. 50,000/- in the form of DD payable at Jaipur in favor of Kumarrapa National Handmade Paper Institute or through NEFT/RTGS to Account No. 30523012747 (State Bank of India, Branch Sanganer, Jaipur IFSC SBIN0007095). The last date of submission of application is now further extended to 03.09.2021.



Office of The Additional Chief Engineer, PHED, Region- Kota

Notice Inviting Bid No. 47/2021-22

Bids for "Work of reorganisation of Bada Nayagaon piped water supply scheme in District. Bundi under JJM" are invited from interested bidders upto 19.09.2021, 18.00 Hours. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the http://www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in, and http://rajwater.gov.in department websi UBN No. PHE2122WSOB06419

DIPR/C/8510/2021 Date of NIT: 27.08.2021

### **GOVERNMENT OF RAJASTHAN** "IMPORTANT"

**DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND GEOLOGY** Email: biddingcell@rajasthan.gov.in

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT)** 

In exercise of the powers conferred by Section 10B of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, its subsequent amendments and in accordance with the Mineral (Auction) Rules, 2015 as amended from time to time notified thereunder, the Government of Rajasthan has notified the following mineral block for the purpose of grant of Mining Lease for mineral limestone and hereby invites bids in digital format only from eligible bidders through electronic auction. The details of mineral block and last date of submission of bid is as summarized below: Block Lease

27.08.2021 13.09.2021 upto 2400 Hrs (IST) 01.10.2021 upto 1300 Hrs The block is being put up for first attempt of auction. The interested and eligible bidders, upon registration of MSTC website 

<a href="http://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/mlcl/index.jsp">http://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/mlcl/index.jsp</a> will obtain login ID and Password. After successful registration, the eligible bidder can purchase the Tender Document online on payment of the tender fee of Rs. 2,00,000/- + GST and can participate in the eligible bidders.

The GST at the rate of 18% is applicable on the purchase of tender document. The GST applicable is to be submitted by the prospective bic der itself and the copy of receipt is to be attached with the technical bid. The prospective bidder shall be solely responsible for remitting th GST as per applicable law and statutory liability in this regard will be responsibility of prospective bidder and no liability whatsoever shall be borne by the DMGR/MSTC.

Detailed terms and conditions, deadlines etc. for participation in the electronic auction are provided in the Tender Document. The Model Tender Document and the Mineral Block Summary is available free of cost in electronic form and can be downloaded from the website of STC Ltd, <a href="https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/mlcl/index.jsp">https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/mlcl/index.jsp</a>; and Department of Mines & Geology <a href="https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/mlcl/index.jsp">www.mines.rajasthan.gov.in> for the purpose of information only. Timelines, notifications, updates and other details for the e-auction process are available on the website of <a href="https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/mlcl/index.jsp">https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/mlcl/index.jsp</a>. Any revision, clarifications, addendum, corrigendum, time extensions, etc to the above tender documents will be hosted on websites 

<a href="https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/mlcl/index.jsp">https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/mlcl/index.jsp</a>; and <a href="https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/mlcl/index.jsp">www.mines.rajasthan.gov.in</a> only and no separate notifications.

# PHED, Region, Kota

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Additional Chief Engine

(Maesh Jangir

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### Government of Raiasthan **Directorate Medical Education** ChikitsaShikshaBhawan, Govind Marg, Jaipur Email ID: r.mes@rajastha.gov.in No. F7(100)/Rajmes/Acad./PMC/2020/4/2285 Dated 19-08-202

E-Tenders are invited for "Project Management and Supervision Consultan for Construction Supervision of Medical Colleges in Rajasthan" from eligible bidders. The details of E-Tender can be seen on the website: www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in & www.dipro

BID Invitation Notice No. 07/2021-22

THE SCHEDULE IS AS FOLLOWS: Schedule Date

0	recn	nicai biu o	peniii	ig Date			13-1	J9-202 I	03.00 PW
DETAI	LS C	F TENDE	R:-						
NIB N	lo.	Nar	ne of	the work		Tota Esto Cost Lace	d. (In		Processing fee in RS.
07/202		Supervision Construct	on ion olleg	nagement Consultant Supervisior es in Rajasi Iders	for n of		.00	11800/-	1180/-

The Tender/Bid shall only be submitted through online tendering system o www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in. The interested bidders shall have to be enrolled/registered with portal of www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in for participat ng in the bidding process

UBN NO:- MES2125LOB00017

DIPR/C/8434/2021

Commissione

(Shivangi Swarnkar)

#ExpressExplained

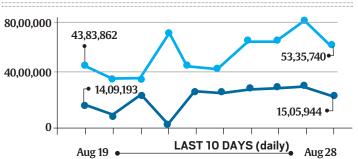
If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to explained@indianexpress.com

# CORONAVIRUS DASHBOARD

TOTAL VACCINATED IN INDIA (at least one dose)

48,62,12,439

■ First dose ■ Second dose



**COVISHIELD** 

**TOTAL DOSES** 62,98,30,818

(Sputnik V's 7,35,154 doses not represented in pie) DOSES ON AUG 29 68,41,684

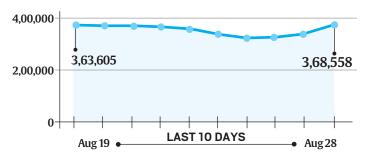
**AUG 29: 1,07,80,592** (1ST DOSE: 80,37,926; 2ND: 27,42,666

### **INDIA ACTIVE CASES**

3,68,558

**COVAXIN** 

12.2%



Note: The August 28 figures in these graphs are based on the government updates on August 29

**INDIA TOTAL CASES 3,26,95,030** Source: Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, updated at 11 pm on August 29

# Children gained more weight than normal in pandemic

YOUNG CHILDREN, especially those tronic health records of 1,91,509 membelonging to the age group 5-11 years, gained excess weight during the pandemic, according to a study published in the Journal of the

Medical American

Association. "When we compared the weight gain among children from 2019 to 2020, we found that there was more weight gained during the pan-

demic for youths of all ages," Corinna Koebnick. the senior author of this study, of the Kaiser

Department of Research & Evaluation, was quoted as saying in the press release issued by Kaiser Permanente.

Kaiser Permanente is a healthcare consortium based in Portland, California.

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The researchers analysed the elec-

bers of Kaiser Permanente, belonging to the age group 5-17 years, from March 1, 2019, to January 31, 2021.

■ Those age 5-11 years gained 5.07 pounds more during Covid-19 than during the same time period before Covid-19, while those aged 12-15 and 16-17 gained an excess of 5.1 pounds and 2.26 pounds over the

prior year, respectively.

Among 5-to-11-NEW RESEARCH year-olds, this weight gain

resulted in almost 9% Permanente Southern California's more children becoming overweight or obese compared to 5% in those aged 12-15 years and 3% in those aged 16-17. Most of the increase among those 5-11 and 12-15 years old was due to an increase in obesity.

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Source: Kaiser Permanente

# SIMPLY PUT

# Hurriyat at a crossroads

The Hurriyat Conference, the political platform of separatists in Kashmir, is getting increasingly marginalised, with the Centre cracking down on its leaders and considering a ban on both factions.

### **BASHAARAT MASOOD**

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 29

AFTER BANNING the Jamat-e-Islami and the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), there have been reports that the Centre is considering a ban on both factions of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference. What does the Hurriyat Conference stand for, and what is its relevance?

### The beginnings

In the winter of 1992, when militancy was at its peak in Kashmir, the separatists felt the need for a political platform that would complement the militant movement and seek a resolution of the Kashmir issue. This led to the formation of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC), an amalgam of separatist political outfits.

On July 31, 1993, several separatist political, social and religious parties - with disparate ideologies but united by a common view that Kashmir is under "illegal occupation" - stitched together the alliance after seven months of deliberation.

The idea was first discussed on December 27, 1992 at a meeting called by Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, then 19, who had taken over as Kashmir's head priest (Mirwaiz) and the chairman of Awami Action Committee after the assassination of his father Mirwaiz Mohammad Faroog on May 21, 1990. When the alliance took shape, Mirwaiz was its first chairman.

The Hurriyat's constitution describes it as a union of political, social and religious parties of J&K, to wage a "peaceful struggle" for resolution of the Kashmir dispute, according to UN resolutions or through tripartite talks - among India, Pakistan and the people of Kashmir.

The Hurriyat essentially was an extension of a poll alliance formed six years earlier. In the 1987 Assembly elections, several social, religious and political parties had joined hands under the banner of Muslim United Front (MUF) to oppose the National Conference-Congress combine. The elections, widely seen as rigged, sowed the seeds of a civilian and militant movement against what was perceived as New Delhi's rule in Kashmir.

# The structure

The Hurriyat had a two-tier structure: an executive council of seven members, and a general council of close to two dozen members. The Hurrivat constitution didn't allow



moderate faction head Mirwaiz Umar Farooq (right), and Yasin Malik (left) after a meeting in Srinagar in 2016. Express Archive

any change in the executive council but permitted increasing or decreasing the numbers in the general council.

The executive council was represented by Jamat-e-Islami, a socio-religious outfit that supported Kashmir's integration with Pakistan; Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, a pro-Independence militant outfit that declared a unilateral ceasefire in 1994 to work for peaceful solution; People's Conference, a political party founded by Abdul Gani Lone who was assassinated by militants in 2002; Mirwaiz Umar Farooq's Awami Action Committee; Ittehadul Muslimeen of Shia cleric Abbas Ansari; People's League led by Sheikh Abdul Aziz who was killed when police fired on protestors marching towards Muzaffarabad in 2008: and Muslim Conference of Prof Abdul Gani Bhat, a professor who was terminated from service by the J&K government for "constituting a threat to the security of the state".

The general council included trade bodies, students' associations, and social and religious groups. Its numbers kept changing.

### The split

From 1993 until 1996, the Hurriyat was the dominant political force in Kashmir with mainstream political leaders having withdrawn. While the National Conference returned to the political scene during the 1996 Assembly elections, the Hurriyat stayed afloat with backing from Pakistan.

After over a decade, the alliance started crumbling within, struggling to keep its flock together with its disparate ideologies, from moderates like Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and Abdul Gani Lone to hardliners like Syed Ali Geelani and Masarat Alam, Their differences over future strategy, role of militancy, and dialogue with New Delhi, were out in the open.

The 2002 Assembly elections led to a split. The hardline group led by Syed Ali Shah Geelani accused Sajad Lone, representing People's Conference after his father's assassination, of fielding proxy candidates in the elections. The Geelani group demanded Lone's expulsion, but then Hurriyat chairman Abbas Ansari refused. In a meeting at Geelani's home on September 7, 2003, the hardliners removed Ansari as Hurriyat chief and announced Masarat Alam as interim chairman. The Hurriyat split into Mirwaiz and Geelani camps.

The J&K Liberation Front led by Yasin Malik parted ways with both factions.

### **Moderates-Centre talks**

The Mirwaiz camp was in favour of dialogue with New Delhi while the Geelani group set a precondition that New Delhi first accept Kashmir as a disputed territory.

Immediately after the split, the Mirwaiz group opened the channels of dialogue with the Centre. On January 22, 2004, then Deputy PM LK Advani hosted a Hurriyat delegation – Abbas Ansari, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, Abdul Gani Bhat, Bilal Lone and Fazal Haq Qureshi – at his office in North Block. Both sides decided to meet again. The second round was held in New Delhi on March 27 that year.

Talks continued with the subsequent government. On September 6, 2005, then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh met with Hurriyat moderates led by Mirwaiz. The next round was on May 4, 2006, and the two sides agreed to evolve a mechanism to continue dialogue for resolution of the Kashmir issue.

With the Centre's backing, the Mirwaiz faction and Mohd Yasin Malik also travelled to Pakistan on the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus to meet the leadership in Pakistan.

### The rise of Geelani The moderates' perceived closeness to

from the dialogue bolstered the Geelani-led hardliners. On April 12, 2016, six leaders including Shabir Ahmad Shah, Nayeem Ahmad Khan and Aga Hassan Budgami parted ways with Mirwaiz and joined Geelani.

New Delhi and the absence of any outcome

### The current disarray

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) raids on Hurriyat leaders in 2018 put both factions on the backfoot.

On June 30 last year, Geelani sprang a surprise when he dissociated himself from his faction of the Hurriyat, leaving the reins to his deputy Mohammad Ashraf Sehrai who died in custody in Jammu jail earlier

The NIA raids, the ban of Jamat-e-Islami, and the arrest of most of the top and second-rung leadership of both factions, before the abrogation of J&K's special status on August 5, 2019, have left the Hurrivat in

# What's new in renovated Jallianwala Bagh

DIVYAA

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 29

ON SATURDAY evening, Prime Minister Narendra Modi – also the chairperson of the Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Trust — inaugurated the renovated Jallianwala Bagh complex, which had been shut since February 2019 for an extensive makeover by the Ministry of Culture. The monument had looked nondescript on the 1-km stretch of Heritage Street in Amritsar, which draws an average 10,000 visitors a day, most of them to pay obeisance at the Golden Temple.

A look at what has changed in the makeover, and what has been added:

# What's changed

Approximately Rs 20 crore was earmarked for restoration and conservation, implemented by the government-owned NBCC Ltd. Facilities such as toilets, ticketing counters and drinking water have been added. The



Visitors at Jallianwala Bagh on Sunday, after the reopening. Rana Simranjit Singh

entry and exit points have been repositioned, and a lotus pond has been built around the main memorial. The 'Shahidi Khu' or Martyrs Well, into which hundreds of people jumped to escape bullets, is now enclosed in a glass shield — a decision criticised by some since it is perceived as restricting the view.

# What's been added

A 28-minute sound-and-light show that re-enacts the events of April 13, 1919, is being shown free every evening. A Salvation Ground has been built for visitors to sit in silence to honour the victims of the massacre. Several new sculptures of victims have come up on the high walls of the narrow lane through which visitors enter.

Four new galleries have been created through adaptive reuse of underutilised buildings to showcase the historical significance of events in Punjab, including the freedom movement and the Gadar movement. It also has a sculpture of Guru Nanak Dev. Sikh warrior Banda Singh Bahadur, and a statue of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

# Politics of nationalism

Last week, Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh had inaugurated the Jallianwala Bagh Centenary Memorial Park, a second memorial as "a tribute to the unknown martyrs" of the massacre, saying the

member the martyrs who were identified. The second memorial has been built over 1.5 acres, almost 3 km from the site. The CM, a trustee of Jallianwala Bagh, also attended the Centre's event, where he urged the PM to bring back the personal effects of Shaheed Udham Singh from the UK.

With families of the massacre victims present, the PM spoke about how, to mark 75 years of Independence, 'Azaadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' was being celebrated, with freedom fighters being honoured in every village and places associated with the freedom struggle seeing a revamp. Modi listed steps taken by the Centre to take the legacy of the Gurus to the youth — turning Sultanpur Lodhi into a heritage town, the Kartarpur corridor, air connectivity between Punjab and some countries, interconnectivity of places relating to the Sikh Gurus, and development of the Anandpur Sahib, Fatehgarh Sahib, Chamkaur Sahib, Ferozepur, Amritsar, Khatkar Kalan, Kalanour and Patiala heritage circuit.

# Militancy in Assam's Dima Hasao: in the 1990s, 2000s, and now

**TORA AGARWALA** GUWAHATI, AUGUST 29

ON THURSDAY, a suspected militant attack left five truckers dead in Assam's Dima Hasao hill district. As per reports, a convoy of about seven trucks - carrying clinker and coal from a factory — were fired upon, and then set ablaze. According to police, intelligence inputs suggest that an outfit called the Dimasa National Liberation Army (DNLA) was behind the attack.

### What is the DNLA?

It is a new insurgent group, formed in 2019. It has not claimed responsibility for the attack. When it was formed, it had said in a release that it was "committed to revamp the national struggle and fight for the liberation of a sovereign, independent Dimasa Nation".

Special DGP(Law & Order) G P Singh said the group was "another one in a series of militant organisations in North Cachar Hills (Dima Hasao) district claiming to represent interest of Dimasa people".

The group runs on extortion and taxation.

"It draws its support and sustenance from the NSCN(IM)[of Nagaland]," said Singh. The trucks attacked on Thursday were travelling from a cement factory, owned by a subsidiary of the Dalmia Group. According to Singh, the attack was aimed at "sending a message" to the Dalmia Group in particular, and other industries, to extort money.

# Who are the Dimasas?

The Dimasa-Kacharis (or Dimasas) now live in Dima Hasao, Karbi Anglong, Cachar, Hojai and Nagaon districts of central and southern Assam, as well as parts of Nagaland. Edward Gait, in his book A History of

"aborigines" or the "earliest known inhabitants of the Brahmaputra Valley". Prior to Ahom rule, the Dimasa kings ruled large parts of Assam along the south

bank of the Brahmaputra between the 13th

Assam, describes the Dimasa-Kacharis as

and 16th centuries. "It was a powerful kingdom and had almost all of the southern belt of Brahmaputra under its control in the 16th century," said Uttam Bathari, Associate Professor of History at Gauhati University.



One of the trucks attacked by the new militant group on Thursday. Express

# What is the history of militancy here?

The hill districts of Assam — Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao (earlier North Cachar Hills) - have had a long history of insurgency that peaked in the mid-1990s, and was rooted in a core demand of statehood.

Both districts are now protected under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, that allows for greater political autonomy and decentralised governance in certain tribal areas of the Northeast. They are run by the North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council and Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council respectively.

In Dima Hasao, the demand for statehood began in the 1960s, along with other tribal sections of undivided Assam. While new states such as Meghalaya were carved out, Karbi Anglong and North Cachar remained with Assam on a promise of more power by the then Congress government, including implementation of Article 244(A), which allows for an 'autonomous state' within Assam in sone tribal areas. This was never implemented.

A demand for a separate state, 'Dimaraji', gathered steam, and led to the formation of the militant Dimasa National Security Force in 1991. It surrendered in 1995, but its commander-in-chief, Iewel Gorlosa, broke away and formed the Dima Halam Daogah. After this group began talks with the government in 2003, Gorlosa broke away again and formed the Dima Halam Daogah (Jewel), with an armed wing called Black Widow. Bathari said these groups were "quite strong" in the 1990s-2000s and had "a popular support base". "There was a lot of violence, killing, and extortion," he said.

Gorlosa was arrested in 2009, signed a ceasefire agreement in 2012, and joined mainstream politics. In 2017, an NIA court convicted him and 14 others for diverting government funds to insurgent groups for terror activities between 2006 and 2009.

A senior journalist from Dima Hasao, who wished to remain anonymous, said the area was a hotbed of insurgency in 1994-95 and again in 2003-2009, but has been largely peaceful in the last decade.

# What about the DNLA?

The journalist said the group was "not a big organisation". "However, they have tried to be active in the last year or so," he said. There have been extortion attempts, and firing incidents - but none as big as what happened on Thursday.'

Special DGP Singh said the group, when formed, had a strength of about 20-25. In May, a police operation led to the death of six of its top cadres. "Current strength is about 12-15," said Singh.

In Bathari's assessment, the group's main demand is the formation of the pre-colonial Dimasa state so that they can be brought under one political unit. "If you see the couple of videos the group has put on social media. it is clear that they are playing on the sentiment of the pre-colonial Dimasa state," said Bathari. Added to it is a feeling of neglect. "If you travel to interior areas, it is evident that they live in poor conditions – bad roads, no connectivity, and few schools," said Bathari.

### What is the significance of the attack? It comes at a time when the government

has been making efforts to bring militant groups to the mainstream. As per government data, 3,439 militants have surrendered since 2016, when the BJP first came to power. Also, when the Bodo Peace Accord was signed in January 2020, all factions of the militant group NDFB gave up arms.

"This [the attack] comes at a time when tourism and development was gaining momentum in Dima Hasao," said the journalist. Special DGP Singh said: "Now we have to

neutralise them [DNLA] on an urgent basis." BJP spokesperson Pijush Hazarika said

the government would take "all steps at the strictest level to bring them to book".

### WORDLY WISE

FEAR OF CORRUPTING THE MIND OF THE YOUNGER GENERATION IS THE LOFTIEST FORM OF COWARDICE.

— HOLBROOK JACKSON

# **The Indian EXPRESS**

Ramnath Goenka

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

Today, the gates of the Supreme Court mark the geography of desperation, its destination

A cry at Gate D

# OPTIMISM & CAUTION

Fifty per cent Indians getting at least one shot of Covid vaccine is a significant milestone. There is still need to unlock carefully

ASTWEEK AS the country crossed 60-crore cumulative vaccinations, it reached a significant milestone in its Covid inoculation drive. More than 50 per cent adult Indians have received at least one shot of the vaccine. Official data show that 99 per cent healthcare workers have received the first jab and 83 per cent are fully vaccinated. Nearly 80 per cent frontline workers have received both the shots. In conjunction with the serosurvey results that indicated two-thirds of people in the country have antibodies against the coronavirus, the vaccination data is cause for optimism at a time when medical experts are warning of a possible third wave. These developments are likely to give a fillip to the post-second wave opening-up underway in several parts of the country and inform plans of state governments to resume physical classes in educational institutions. There can be scarcely any doubt on the need for people to emerge from the pandemic-imposed shells. At the same time, however, there is also abundant reason to suggest that necessary caveats be built into the un-lockdown measures. The temptation to assume pre-Covid normalcy should be stoutly resisted.

The government has asked states to speed up the administration of the second shots — a salient advisory given the well-established fact that two shots provide the maximum protection against the virus. The first shot prepares the immune system to build antibodies. But these antibodies are known to wane after a few months. After the second jab, the body produces a stronger immune response because it now has substantial T cells that identify the pathogen. However, there is much that is unknown about the virus's behaviour and the recent spurt in breakthrough infections in different parts of the world suggests that even two doses of the current crop of vaccines may not provide the protection they were earlier believed to offer. The ICMR has, in fact, been alive to this exigency. It has repeatedly underlined that the vaccines are "disease modifying" - they reduce the severity of Covid – but not always "disease preventing". The premier medical research agency's counsel — and that of other experts — on observing Covid-appropriate behaviour is even more prescient at a time when masks are making a comeback in the public health discourse of countries that dispensed with this anti-Covid measure earlier this year. The US Centers for Disease Control, for instance, has reversed its earlier advisory and asked people to wear masks in public indoor spaces in areas where the virus is surging.

Several countries are now planning to administer booster shots to people in 2022 to enhance their immunity against the virus. Policymakers in India are not impervious to this discourse. In keeping the virus at bay, the priority should be to nudge people to remain vigilant — not waver from Covid-appropriate behaviour — as well as complete this year's vaccination targets.

# No single story

DU decision to strike off works by Bama, Sukirtharani and Mahasweta Devi smacks of censorship in the name of culture

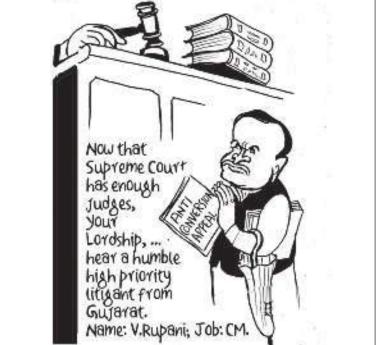
ITERATURE, BY INSTINCT and in practice, is against the oppression of the single story. It is interested, not in dogma, but in textures and voices, chronicles and records that confound easy truths. By pushing us into zones of discomfort and disquiet, it allows us a clearer view of human life. In doing so, it also offers a powerful way to speak back to power. It's an understanding that appears to have escaped Delhi University authorities, who have struck off the works of Tamil writers Bama and Sukirtharani, as well as the short story 'Draupadi' by Mahasweta Devi, from a paper of the undergraduate English literature syllabus. No reasoned argument has been offered by the DU's Oversight Committee for the decisions that several members of the university's academic council have described, in a note of dissent, as "vandalism". The Delhi University registrar defended the changes by stating a preference for "literary content ... that does not hurt the sentiments of any individual". He also objected to the language of Mahasweta Devi's 'Draupadi' — the story of Dopdi Mejhen, a Santhal woman gang-raped in police custody — as going against "culture and ethics", and the fear that it would make "students hate the military."

It appears that behind such decisions is the idea of the classroom as a sanitised encounter — to be measured by the deference of students to all kinds of authority, especially the state. The summary dismissal, too, of the works of Bama and Sukirtharani, who powerfully represent the experience of living in an oppressive caste society, confirms this narrow vision and its anxieties. In the name of "culture" and "ethics", it undoes decades of scholarship and debate that have pushed literature departments to a more expansive understanding of literary experience and merit — as gendered, as influenced by caste, and race and empire. Anything but the single wholesome story. That such a decision has been taken by a committee which does not include members from the English Literature department, among other disciplines, also leads to worrying questions of the way syllabi are being vetted. According to the DU registrar, however, "I can read English, you can read English. If something offensive is written somewhere, we don't need a PhD in literature to understand that."

Scholars and students of literature must not be distracted from their work – the critical study of all texts, whether nationalistic or not — by such censorious instincts. Nor should the classroom be held hostage to the "sentiments" of those who take offence at any challenge to the "consensus". Delhi University must rethink its decision to shrink the syllabus.

# Freeze Frame

**EPUnny** 



# Pratiksha Baxi

IN THE 1980S, women's groups protested at the gates of the Supreme Court against the acquittal of policemen who raped a tribal girl, after four law professors wrote an open letter critiquing the judgment. On December 20, 1979, the then Chief Justice of India, Y V Chandrachud, wrote a letter to the Gujarat women's groups led by Jyoti Sangh assuring them that he fully shared their view "that life and justice must be made safe and acceptable to unprotected women". Without romanticising the past, it would be fair to note that such courtesy to women's groups has not been emulated within the judiciary since.

Protests by women against sexual impunity in law and society at the gates of the apex court have continued. For the gates of the Supreme Court have occupied a symbolic significance in the geography of lived constitutionalism through different kinds of people's movements. Today, the gates of the Supreme Court mark the contemporary geography of desperation, its destination.

On August 16, 2021, the 24-year-old rape survivor who had accused Bahujan Samaj Party MP in 2019 of rape, set herself ablaze along with her friend, a 27-year-old man, in front of the Supreme Court of India. Both are now dead. The victims thought of the Facebook live as a "dying declaration" or the final complaint against the legal system and the culture of state impunity, as they called out the names of those officers who they held accountable. After this public roll call of impunity and a powerful appeal to the public to record their testimony, the two friends set themselves ablaze. The victim indicted the police and the judiciary for stripping her of dignity.

We are left numb with grief as we consume their words, their cries and images of their burning bodies at Gate D. The singed hands of the security guards of an empty apex court, without the usual bustle of lawyers and litigants, bear witness in flesh to the crisis in the legal system today.

For, as per some media reports, the victim had filed a petition in the Supreme Court pleading for a transfer of the rape case from Allahabad to Delhi in March. The brother of issued by a Varanasi court in August 2021. And the Delhi police allegedly now suspect that they killed themselves after being framed in a fraud case. An enquiry has been announced, and an officer sent to judicial custody, as we despondently wait for more information on this tragic case.

It is devastating that we have a dark legal history that mutely records that rape survivors are routinely killed or kill themselves

the accused MP filed a case of forgery against

her, in which a non-bailable warrant had been

history that mutely records that rape survivors are routinely killed or kill themselves in protest in front of police stations, courts and government buildings. Outrage, if any, is pushed towards the convenient demand for death penalty, deflecting public attention from a serious review of state impunity.

While the media discourse on rape is mostly spectacularised and sensationalised, state response also pathologises or criminalises anti-rape protest that challenges state impunity. The dominant response to demand death penalty does not challenge cultures of state impunity. For it is not sensational enough to demand accountability and strict action against those who bring false charges against vulnerable victims and complainants. There is no sober and serious reflection on how to abolish those practices of policing that target and victimise unprotected people based on their identity or status as the first step towards addressing the social problem of violence.

Transfers and suspensions are the first response of governance to impunity. Practices of policing within a security state framework also do not actually challenge sexual impunity. The increased use of the National Security Act in rape cases indicates a breakdown in routine policing, rather than assure us of gender sensitive policing. More and more rape survivors, especially from marginalised communities, have been re-victimised. The imprisonment of victims of violence is on the increase in lockdown prisons. There is no judicial enquiry on why victims of violence are imprisoned on false counter cases. There was no change in judicial policy declaring that no rape victim would be arrested and imprisoned despite the outrage that followed the imprisonment of a rape survivor on a contempt charge at the height of the pandemic.

It is a social fact that the criminal legal system often merely re-arranges a system of illegalities. For example, rape survivors are routinely pressurised to "compromise" illegally and turn hostile in trials, failing which they may be threatened or even killed. Noting this, the Supreme Court in Ramesh v. State of Haryana, has noted that this technique of terror under the guise of compromise is part of our socio-legal culture. The apex court here gives voice to the desperation when victims and witnesses are at the mercy of police. In the lockdown, this terror was amplified as trials got postponed. During the lockdown, victims could not escape intimidation, and transfer petitions were not always heard during this time. No moratorium was declared against arbitrary arrests of women and victims of violence, despite repeated petitions and advisories. Guidelines on how to treat rape survivors during the lockdown were not announced to ensure their safety, as trials could not be held.

Their abject story is aligned to another unspoken history of our courts. While this history is unfortunately not of interest to students of law, there are many cases of suicides from court buildings by accused persons or litigants. It is not the tradition of courts to mourn the death of litigants or victims, who kill themselves from court buildings or immolate themselves in front of a court. For judicial "reference" is only passed to mourn the passing of judicial lives — not when victims and litigants give up on life because of law's violence.

Victims and litigants are usually added to the design and procedure of courts, while judicial doctrine is built on their stories of social suffering. We often forget that there is no constitutional glory without a brief. Will the judiciary mourn these deaths? Or will the victims whose hope is broken by the promise of justice be blamed rather than be honoured for reminding law and society of the forgotten quest for humanity?

Baxi is the author of Public Secrets of Law: Rape Trials in India

# FINDING HER PEOPLE

How Gail Omvedt found acceptance in the Dalit-Bahujan community

Somnath Waghmare

ALMOST ALL SOCIAL movements in India, whether left or right, feminist or Adivasi, are led by people from historically dominant castes. The only exception is India's Dalit-Ambedkarite movement, which has never accepted our oppressors as our leaders or heroes. And yet, our movement wholeheartedly embraced Gail Omvedt, a white American woman who came to India in the 1970s for her PhD. In the last few days, since Omvedt passed away, all the messages that I have seen on Bahujan social media and WhatsApp statuses have been in tribute to her. We are all grieving. I feel as if my mother has died.

I began to shoot a documentary film on her and her husband Bharat Patankar in 2017, just after my first film on Bhima Koregaon (*The Battle of Bhima Koregaon: An Unending Journey*) had released. My family's village is 15 km from theirs and I have known them and their daughter Prachi for almost a decade. After three years of closely following them for the film, it hurt to shoot Omvedt's last rites on Thursday.

I had the privilege to meet her in my first year of BA, when I attended a cadre camp organised by Patankar. It was the first time I had seen a white woman, that too speaking fluent Marathi. A friend told me that she was Patankar's wife and a professor and activist who worked for our cause. I was curious about why I had never heard of her before.

INDIAN EXPRESS

As much as she spoke and wrote for Dalit-Bahujans, she also treated them equally, not as if she was doing them a favour. When farmers and labourers, both men and women, met her at rallies or protests, she spoke with them kindly and patiently. She listened to them and she was accessible. It was this, along with her academic stridency, that led to her complete acceptance by Dalit-Bahujan communities.

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The next day, I went to my college library and asked for books she had written. The librarian gave me her book on Babasaheb Ambedkar. That book, *Ambedkar: Towards an Enlightened India*, transformed my life. I knew then that I would always work for social justice.

From then on, I saw her regularly at protests, rallies and meetings for the rights of Dalit-Bahujans. I went to Pune for a Master of Arts in Communication Studies and began to work with the camera. I wanted to make films on our issues and document our Bahujan people. I saw that the so-called mainstream media and cinema purposely ignored Dalit-Bahujan icons and we did not have any documentation of our leaders, writers and activists. My first idea was to make a biopic on Omvedt and her work, but I felt it was not yet the time, so I made the Bhima Koregaon film instead.

Soon after, I asked the couple for permission to make this film. From then until the pandemic lockdown began in March 2020, I would periodically follow both of them in their social work, shooting their interactions, meetings and speeches. This was when I saw the side of her that went beyond the scholar and activist. Though she was always the centre of attention at meetings and rallies, she never cordoned herself away from people. As much as she spoke and wrote for Dalit-Bahujans, she also treated them equally, not

as if she was doing them a favour. When farmers and labourers, both men and women, met her at rallies or protests, she spoke with them kindly and patiently. She listened to them and was accessible.

It was this, along with her academic stridency, that led to her complete acceptance by the Dalit-Bahujan communities. In 2018, the Delhi-based Dalit rights NGO had organised a conference called Dalit Women Speak Out at the Savitribai Phule Pune University. The group invited Dalit women from across the country to speak. Omvedt was the only non-Dalit woman to be invited as a special guest.

In the last few years, as her health declined, I saw Patankar patiently care for her like a child. They were devoted to each other. I recorded five interviews with her, as well as many more with Patankar about their life and work. I knew, as I shot footage for almost three years, travelling with her and sitting by her side, recording the two of them singing progressive songs together and trying to capture every movement, that her time was running out. My film is in post-production and will be released in six months. It is painful to know that she will never see this visual tribute to her incredible work for India's Dalit-Bahujans.

Waghmare is a documentary filmmaker and a PhD scholar at TISS, Mumbai

# AUGUST 30, 1981, FORTY YEARS AGO

# Uncertainty On DA

THE GOVERNMENT WANTS half the additional dearness allowance for its employees impounded for a period of one year. This is believed to have been spelt out by the government at a meeting of the representatives of the national council of the joint consultative committee held on August 29. Cabinet Secretary, Krishnaswamy Rao Saheb, who presided, is believed to have said that the impounding should apply to the two instalments of DA already due -April and June. The reasons assigned were runaway inflation and the need to check money circulation and the difficult ways and means position of the government. It is believed that employees are ready for a portion of the additional DA to be impounded if they are adequately compensated in house rent allowance and city compensation allowance.

# Cong (I) Rout

THE ROUT OF the Congress (I) in the crucial elections to the Visakhapatnam and Vijayawada municipal corporations in Andhra Pradesh has shocked the party high command. The Chief Minister T Anjiah is expected in Delhi on August 30 when he will explain the reasons for the party's bad showing to the high command. It is likely that the high command will depute one of the general secretaries to Andhra Pradesh for on-the-spot assessment of the party's image in the light of the poll results.

# MIZORAM PACT

THE CENTRE HAS decided to conclude most of the demands made by the Mizo National Front (MNF) leader Laldenga. The underground MNF and the Centre had reached a pact about two years ago under which the MNF had given an undertaking to stop all hostile activities to pave the way for negotiations for solving the Mizo problem. Despite this, the MNF continued to participate in illegitimate activities.

# M O Mathai Dead

M O MATHAI, special assistant to first PM Jawaharlal Nehru, whose books on the Nehru Gandhi family set off a public debate has died. He was 72 and a bachelor.



THE INDIAN EXPRESS, MONDAY, AUGUST 30, 2021

# THE IDEAS PAGE

# to those who worked for them, including the refugees who must now be found homes and jobs, but to Afghan society as a whole." —THE GUARDIAN

"Western countries, including the UK, must honour their obligations, not only

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

# Meeting the poshan challenge

Fortification of rice supplied under government schemes is a welcome decision. This should be accompanied by policies to improve women's education and well-being



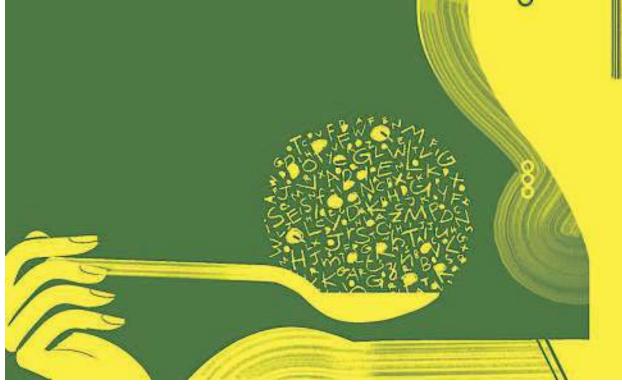
By Ashok Gulati and Ritika Juneja

ON AUGUST 15, Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the nation from the ramparts of the Red Fort to mark India's 75th Independence Day. Besides other big announcements, he emphasised the need to ensure "poshan" (nutrition) to the country's women and children. PM Modi announced that, by 2024, rice provided to the poor under any government scheme – PDS, midday-meal, anganwadi — will be fortified. It is a bold decision. Leveraging science to attack the complex challenge of malnutrition, particularly for low-income and vulnerable sections of the society, who cannot afford balanced diversified diets, can be a good intervention. We presume that the nutrition experts of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) have been consulted in arriving at the decision.

Scientists at the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) have been developing biofortified crops in India with a view to eradicating malnutrition amongst the poor sections of the society. As per the ICAR website, they had developed 21 varieties of biofortified staples including wheat, rice, maize, millets, mustard, groundnut by 2019-20. These biofortified crops have 1.5 to 3 times higher levels of protein, vitamins, minerals and amino acids compared to the traditional varieties. It is worth noting that these varieties are not genetically modified they have been developed through conventional crop breeding techniques by our own scientists. A research team led by Monika Garg at the National Agri-Food Biotechnology Institute in Mohali has also developed biofortified coloured wheat (black, blue, purple) that is rich in zinc and anthocyanins. Farmers from Punjab and Haryana have been roped in to multiply the production of this wheat variety. This points towards the beginning of a new journey, from food security to nutritional security.

The HarvestPlus programme of the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) also deserves special mention here as they have been working closely with ICAR, state agricultural universities (SAUs), the international centres of CGIAR, seed companies and farmer organisations to accelerate production and improve the access of the poor in India to iron-rich pearl millet and zinc-rich wheat. Globally, more than 40 countries have released biofortified crops, benefitting over 48 million people.

The PM's strong commitment towards a malnutrition-free India — Kuposhan Mukt Bharat – is crucial as 15.3 per cent of the country's population is undernourished, and India has the highest proportion of "stunted" (30 per cent) and "wasted" children (17.3 per cent) below five years of age, as per the FAO's recent publication, 'The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World, 2021'. These figures indicate that India is at a critical juncture with respect to



CR Sasikumar

nutritional security and will not be able to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) of eliminating all forms of malnutrition by 2030 in the business-as-usual scenario.

However, access to nutritious food is only one of the determinants of nutrition. Other factors like poor access to safe drinking water and sanitation (especially toilets), low levels of immunisation and education, especially of women, contribute equally to this dismal situation. In a country where about 50 per cent of the rural population does not have safe and adequate drinking water within premises, where about 15 per cent of schools still lack access to basic infrastructure (electricity, drinking water and sanitation) and where the average annual school dropout rate at the secondary level (Class 9-10) is still 18 percent (as per the Niti Aayog's SDG Index for the year 2020), one cannot tackle the multi-dimensional problem of malnutrition just by biofortification. It must be recognised that in the long run, India needs a multi-pronged approach to eliminate the root cause of this complex problem. That approach should include the following initiatives.

First, there is a direct correlation beveen mothers' education and the wellbeing of children. Children with mothers who have no education have the least diversified diets and suffer from stunting and wasting and are anaemic. Notwithstanding considerable efforts by the government to improve female literacy, only 12.5 per cent women (in age group 15-49 years) were found to have completed school education (Class 12) in 2018 according to the Sample Registration System Survey. Hence, targeted programmes for improving the educational status of girls and reducing the school dropout rates, particularly at the secondary and higher educational levels, need to be promoted. Also, childcare knowledge and information on holistic nourishment should be compulsorily included in the school curriculum. This will improve mothers' knowledge regarding colostrum, continued Innovations in biofortified food can alleviate malnutrition only when they are scaled up with supporting policies. This would require increasing expenditure on agri-R&D and incentivising farmers by linking their produce to lucrative markets through

expenditure on agri-R&D and incentivising farmers by linking their produce to lucrative markets through sustainable value chains and distribution channels. This will generate remunerative income for farmers and fuel the scaling-up of the unfolding technology. The government can also rope in the private sector to create a market segment for premium-quality biofortified

breastfeeding, diarrhoea prevention and treatment using oral rehydration solution, child immunisation, and family planning. Innovative strategies that integrate education and nutrition programmes hold great importance in combating the malnutrition problem. The Global Nutrition Report (2014) estimates that every dollar invested in a proven nutrition programme offers benefits worth 16 dollars.

 $Second, innovations \, in \, biofortified \, food \,$ can alleviate malnutrition only when they are scaled up with supporting policies. This would require increasing expenditure on agri-R&D and incentivising farmers by linking their produce to lucrative markets through sustainable value chains and distribution channels. This will generate remunerative income for farmers and fuel the scaling-up of the unfolding technology. The government can also rope in the private sector to create a market segment for premium-quality biofortified foods to cater to high-end consumers. For instance, trusts run by the TATA group are supporting different states to initiate fortification of milk with Vitamin A and D. Other private dairies should also be encouraged to scale up milk fortification across the country.

Third, a national awareness drive on the lines of the "Salt Iodisation Programme" launched by the government in 1962 to replace ordinary salt with iodised salt, can play an important role at the individual and community levels to achieve the desired goals of poshan for all. Branding, awareness campaigns, social and behavioural change initiatives, such as community-level counselling, dialogue, media engagement and advocacy, especially amongst marginalised communities, can promote consumption of locally-available, nutrient-dense affordable foods among the poor and children. But equally important is grandma's recipe of diversified diets — we should always keep that in mind.

Gulati is Infosys Chair professor and Juneja is Consultant at ICRIER

# Opening up open-source

Constraints in public procurement processes are holding back the technology from realising its potential. Its uptake must be incentivised



ABHISHEK SINGH AND VARAD PANDE

THE JOURNEY OF Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) in India has been long and vibrant. What began with a few Linux user groups in the 1980s has grown into a movement through collaboration among a diverse community of innovators. FOSS today presents an alternative model to build digital technologies for population scale. Unlike proprietary software, everyone has the freedom to edit, modify and reuse open-source code. This results in many benefits - reduced costs, no vendor lock-in, the ability to customise for local context, and greater innovation through wider collaboration. We have seen some great examples of public services being delivered through systems that use FOSS building blocks, including Aadhaar, GSTN, and the DigiLocker. While the trend is promising, much more can be done.

Recognising its potential, in 2015, the Indian government announced a policy to encourage open source instead of proprietary technology for government applications. However, the true potential of this policy is yet to be realised, largely due to constraints in public procurement processes.

Several misconceptions remain in the understanding of FOSS, especially for GovTech, and it is important to clarify these points to help increase the adoption of FOSS.

"Free" in FOSS is perceived to be "free of cost" and hence many think that the solutions based on FOSS are not good enough. For example, FOSS is often mistaken to be less trustworthy and more vulnerable, whereas FOSS can actually create more trust between the government and citizens. FOSS communities can examine the open-source code for adherence to data privacy principles, help find bugs, and ensure transparency and accountability. Many solutions launched by the government including Digilocker, Diksha, Aarogya Setu, the Covid-19 vaccination platform CoWIN — built on top of open-source digital platforms - have benefited from valuable inputs provided by volunteer opensource developers. Such inputs have immensely helped in improving solutions and making them more robust.

Another important issue is that it can feel easier to deal with a proprietary software vendor who builds a bespoke software and can be held accountable for any failures. In the case of FOSS, there appears to be an absence of one clear "owner", which makes it harder to identify who is responsible. While this concern is legitimate, there are ways to mitigate it, for example, by having the government's inhouse technical staff understand available documentation and getting key personnel to join relevant developer communities. This has been tried out in several projects successfully but needs to be strengthened further.

India is at an inflection point in its journey towards greater adoption of FOSS in GovTech — it has already demonstrated the potential of FOSS deployment through its use in critical, population-scale projects. With an IT workforce of more than four million employees and a software industry that is the envy of the world, we already have the required talent. What we need is a concerted push to harness the biggest promise that FOSS holds — the possibility of collaborative technological innovation.

Here is a four-step path to make this vision a reality

The first step is to incentivise the uptake of FOSS in government. The government's policy on the adoption of open-source software requires all tech suppliers to submit bids with open source options. Suppliers also need to justify in case they do not offer an opensource option, and sourcing departments are asked to weigh the lifetime costs and benefits of both alternatives before making a decision. While this serves as a good nudge, policy can perhaps go a step further by formally giving greater weightage to FOSS-specific metrics in the evaluation criteria in RFPs, and offering recognition to departments that deploy FOSS initiatives, such as, a special category under the Digital India Awards.

The second step could be to curate a repository of "GovTechready" building blocks that are certified for use in government and audited for security compliances. Off-the-shelf FOSS software is often not ready for direct deployment by government. Creating a repository of ready-to-use "GovTech-ised" building blocks, can help departments quickly identify and deploy FOSS solutions in their applications.

Third, FOSS innovations can be encouraged through "GovTech hackathons and challenges", bringing together the open-source community to design solutions for specific problem statements identified by government departments. The best innovations emerging from these challenges can get a leg up by listing them on government procurement platforms such as GeM. One such challenge — a #FOSS4Gov Innovation Challenge — was recently launched to accelerate the adoption of Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) in government by harnessing innovation from the FOSS ecosystem.

Finally, a credible institutional anchor is needed to be a home for FOSS led innovation in India. Such an institution can bring together FOSS champions and communities that are scattered across India around a shared agenda for collective impact. Kerala's International Centre for Free & Open Source Software (ICFOSS) is a great example of such an institution that led to Kerala being a pioneering state in the adoption of FOSS. A national "FOSS Centre of Excellence" can convene capital, resources and capacity-building support, creating the much-needed momentum to build world-class "made in India" FOSS products.

Singh is CEO MyGov and National eGovernance Division, Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY) and Pande is at Omidyar Network India. Views are personal

# Let's say never again

Lesson from Partition is not how horrific it was, but how not to recreate its madness

foods to cater to high-end

consumers.

SHAH ALAM KHAN

ON THE EVE of Pakistan's Independence Day on August 14, Sayema, a famous radio jockey with a private radio station, tweeted Independence Day wishes to friends across the border. For the next few hours, her timeline was inundated with abuse, hate and bigotry of the most repulsive nature. Unfortunately, most of those abusing her were not trolls or from the IT cells of political parties. They were common people like you and me. Sayema's message of friendship was interpreted as hate against India and most labelled her an anti-national -the commonest hole to fit a peg of any shape. Sayema is a peg with the oddest shape in this new India – she's a Muslim.

The Prime Minister of the world's largest democracy has asked us to commemorate August 14 as a "Partition Horrors Remembrance Day". The horrors of Partition are undoubtedly among the most painful memories of any society. The blood lines which were drawn over the land mass of the subcontinent in 1947 still continue to bleed for many from that generation. August 14 is the Independence Day of Pakistan, the byproduct of that very

Partition. No wonder it now becomes an anti-national act to wish Independence Day greetings to a neighbouring country.

greetings to a neighbouring country.

As identity begins to take over nations and national identity becomes a tool for manipulating the masses, we need to have a clear understanding of the ideological debate on nationalism, patriotism and national identity. In the 75th year of its Independence, India is at the threshold of a Partition of a different kind. The binary which has come to rule us is ugly in its ideological posturing. The identity politics which drives the PM into announcing a Partition Horrors Remembrance Day is dangerous and illogical.

The horrors of Partition are not for remembrance. They are for deriving lessons. They shouldn't haunt us but rather help us in coming out of the trauma of communalism and bigotry, which had besieged the subcontinent at that time. To remember them as a means of horror is to pollute the memory pool of coming generations. To remember them as lessons would be the best way to provide them with a handbook on "how not to communally divide a country."

History, memory and cultural identity are the most sinister tools of manipulating masses. Nothing is more productive politically than a cohort manipulated with hate. The Prime Minister could have been more careful and correct in the choice of his words. Frantz Fanon, the West Indian philosopher and writer, believed that cultural identity is a socially generated neurosis. He used it in the context of colonial cultural influences but it could be equally correct for religious influences as was seen at the time of Partition. One of the greatest writer-philosophers, Albert Camus, believed that history is not just a possible site of violence, but history coincides with violence. He debunked the theory of "history as necessity." Camus's questioning of the dialectical idea of history is so relevant in this new India, where the highest executive of the democracy requests its citizenry to remember the trauma of Partition.

The hopeless sadness which such memories can generate in the people of that era can have a disastrous outcome not only on them but on their heirs too. In countries with existing wounds like those of the Partition,

identity and culture has to be reimagined in a secular, rational perspective, away from political benefits and free from ideological bonhomie. In the words of the American philosopher, Martha Nussbaum, "as we tell stories about the lives of others, we learn how to imagine what another creature might feel in response to various events. At the same time, we identify with the other creature and learn something about ourselves." Nussbaum's words mark the epitome of what should be remembered about the Partition. We should remember that our horrors are also someone else's stories.

We need healers, not the hurt, to reduce the pain of Partition. The patriotism we embrace shouldn't be at the expense of hatred of the other. The PM has a penchant for catchy phrases and words. But playing with collective memories is tricky. Collective memories are the most precious treasure of any civilisation. They should be handled with care because if they break, they can release demons of all kinds.

The writer is Professor of Orthopaedics, AIIMS, New Delhi

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

# ENGAGE KABUL

THIS REFERS TO the article 'Importance of Engagement' (IE 28 Aug). India needs to accept the fact that the Taliban is in power in Afghanistan now, and the only way forward would be to engage with them, lest it be misconstrued that we are not interested in the future of that country.

Hemant Contractor, Pune

# AFGHAN QUESTION

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Connect with Kabul' (IE, August 27). With an attack at Kabul airport killing a dozen US troops and injuring many others, the "wait and watch" may not be a felicitous approach. Creating a thoughtfully put out plan for balancing out the relationship with the Taliban and preventing them from bolstering a breeding ground for terrorism seems to be the only way out. Delhi is walking on a tightrope where both action and inaction seem equally dicey.

**Melvin Thomas,** Bhopal

# FARM REFORMS

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'The land question, and answers' (IE, Aug 28). The experiment of the collectivisation of farms was tried in the erstwhile USSR with disastrous consequences. The human cost of this ideology driven step has been chronicled most poignantly in Sholokov's immortal novel, *And Quiet Flows the Don.* In our country adequate measures exist to protect farmers. What is missing is their honest implementa-



●THE WAY TO FUTURE MOBILITY:
AKHILESH MANGAL

 INCLUSIVE NATIONALISM: CHAITANYA PANDEY & SANDEEP PANDEY

www.indianexpress.com

tion. Agriculture needs to be depoliticised and the ongoing farmers agitation must be wound up immediately. Involvement of market forces will bring real benefits.

**H N Bhagwat,** Chiplun

# STRATEGIC HELP

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'A helping hand to Kabul' (IE, Aug 28). It is time we become pragmatic about how we develop our foreign relations. Being sentimental or blindly following a path just because we are used to it may land us up in the same situation that found us in the unipolar world after the demise of the erstwhile communist USSR. Strategic appreciations should be based only on hard facts however uncomfortable they may be.

**Shubhada H,** via email

# IDEA EXCHANGE NEWSMAKERS IN THE NEWSROOM

# SJOERD MARIJNE, FORMER COACH, INDIAN WOMEN'S HOCKEY TEAM

# We did something bigger than winning a medal, we created a legacy. Will be connected to India my whole life

Marijne talks about being shuffled between teams, earning the girls' trust and teaching them to "dream big", describes the semi-final loss and telling them why "in a few days, they would see it differently", and shares his plans about a book, and maybe Chak De India 2. The session was moderated by Assistant Editor Mihir Vasavda

MIHIR VASAVDA: You returned home and started coaching a club soon after the Olympics. Do you miss being in India with the team while the celebrations are going on, or have you settled into your new life?

It's strange. I chose to be with my family because I hadn't seen them for three-and-a-half months. That was the main reason for coming back. The competition in The Netherlands starts around September 11 or 12, and I'm coaching a club team so I also had to be there. But it's a bit like living in two worlds. One world is India, where the team members are heroes of the country. The girls have done so well, and there are a lot of ceremonies... What happens is you keep staying in that feeling, and then of course, vou are reminded of the Olympics. And while I'm now in The Netherlands, it feels different because life goes on. It's normal. My country is different with these things, it's not like India, there are not a lot of ceremonies.

It's sometimes tough to adjust to such a situation because you don't want to lose the feeling that you had at the Olympics. The two days that I was in Delhi (after returning from Tokyo) were amazing. Afterward maybe - and I spoke to my wife about this—it was better to stay a little bit longer in India. But at that moment you only want one thing and that's just going back to the family. It feels a bit like a two-way feeling.

### MIHIR VASAVDA: How tough is it to move on, to return to the daily life after all the emotional highs you experienced in Tokyo?

I will say now that, after four-and-ahalf years, I'm used to good weather. On Tuesday, I was coaching my new team in the rain. It is cold, the summer is not really good here. Then you are really thinking like okay, my life's not going to be like this now. You are not going to be wearing shorts now, but a longer training kit. That's something different. I am someone who can adapt very fast.

The other thing was that for four-anda-half years, I didn't understand what the girls were saying to each other, and also the boys. I don't speak and know all the Hindi words. And now I understand everything. So that's also different and a nice change.

### MIHIR VASAVDA: You took over the team from the one we saw in Tokyo?

I didn't know what to expect at the Olympics because we didn't play matches against other good countries for five months. We played in January and February against Argentina and Germany. But it was almost two years since we played matches under pressure, and that was the (Olympics) qualifiers. That's why it was really difficult.

I get a lot of compliments but you must not forget what the support staff did. I wasn't by myself. Janneke (Schopman, analytical coach) and Wayne (Lombard, strength and conditioning coach) did so much amazing work. There were girls who didn't believe they could achieve something. They came to the camps, they did their job — they have a job for a lifetime at the Railways or wherever else — and that's fine. But they weren't ambitious. I told them that they immediately need to be ambitious and need to set goals. And that's what we did. Making the position of the women better was the dream goal and I think we achieved that goal.

**DWIVEDI: You** have made things easier for the next coach. After all this, how tough was it to walk away? Are there

any regrets? I don't have any second thoughts about coming back to India. You must

not forget that what happened at the Olympics was the outcome of four-anda-half years of hard work. Frustrations, emotions, positivity... all different things. Now everything looks like it went easy and smoothly, but that wasn't

I had moments when I really missed my family and I didn't know whether I could still do the job in India. Ending things like this is perfect, but I didn't forget those moments. That is important. And for the next coach, I think it will be more difficult because the expectations are rising.

**SANDEEP DWIVEDI: You finished** fourth at the Olympics. Is there a memory that you will carry with you from this assignment with the



Te took over the women's

SJOERD MARIJNE

hockey team in 2017, ▲after they finished 12th out of 12 teams at Rio Olympics. In four-and-a-half years, he turned around the team's fortunes and brought them closer than ever to an Olympic medal. In Tokyo, India stunned former champions Australia in what was one of the biggest upsets of all-time; gave eventual silver medalists Argentina a scare before narrowly missing the bronze medal, and lost to Britain in play-off match to finish fourth. He has since moved on, becoming coach of Dutch club HC Tilburg

I was with the women for nine months so it felt like being back home. They had made good progress with Wayne Lombard and their fitness had really improved. I could continue with the plans I had for the women's team and I felt good about coming home. SRIRAM VEERA: What did you make

of reports about Vandana Indians are everywhere... Katariya's house being attacked and and hockey's popularity has how did it affect risen with this. We need not the team? worry about our Olympic

The most important thing is that we weren't using social status now... if you want a media. I didn't talk to her about it then because I didn't know if she had seen it. They were hardly using

their phones because there was a strict rule at the Olympics. After the last match, I spoke to her and she said she knew (about it), but blocked it out and continued. That's the way these girls have been trained. It's like soldiers who are trained to go into the battlefield. The things that happen back home, you have to close

awards and about money. I only dreamed about one thing. And that is doing something that nobody has done before and creating a legacy that you will always be remembered for. That's why I will always, for my whole life, be connected with India. **SANDEEP** 

dreamed about what people say, about

DWIVEDI: I'm sure you have been asked several times about Chak De India, the Hindi film. You also had a social media conversation with Shah Rukh Khan. Do you expect a sequel to the film on your journey?

million people watching... Have you been approached by people? As long as I don't have to play myself,

I will be fine. I am writing a book. The last chapter is almost finished. I can't wait for it to be published and everybody can read all the things that really happened to me for the last four-and-a-half years as coach. Also, I want to share valuable lessons for personal life, private life and also for corporate life. Maybe one thing leads to another. If the book leads to a movie, I would be honoured. It would be nice to have a Chak de India 2, yes. It won't surprise me if people come for that. But I'm not focusing on that at the moment. First let the book get published, and then let's see. I just hope people like it... What I saw when I arrived in India, how did I do the whole thing from 2017 to the Olympics... It's an exciting story and I am happy to share it.

### SHIVANI NAIK: How do you train an Indian woman player to be ambitious and to not be content?

The thing is, as a player, you only have 10-12 years at the highest level and I always asked them, what do you want to be remembered as? Do you want to be remembered as being 10 years in camps and not winning anything? Or do you want to be remembered in another way? Because after this, you are going to work or have children or anything else. So why don't you dream big? And that is something that I have taught the girls, to dream big. What is your dream goal that will inspire other women. And how can we make that happen? Like winning a medal. It's not about winning a medal but the medal helps to achieve that dream goal. It's constantly taking them out of their comfort zone.

### NITIN SHARMA: How did you handle the team post the narrow loss in the semi-finals when they were on the field crying?

Initially, I said, 'There are no words that will help take away how you feel. I have no words for that. You have to feel it. That's sport.' But I also told them that in a few days you will think differently about this. You will be proud of what you have achieved. I told them you don't know this because you are away from social media but the whole country loves you. Right now, you will not feel like that... In sport, you give everything you have got. That is the golden rule. In the end, you see what the score is... If you gave everything and you don't have any energy anymore, you can be happy with yourself.

### MIHIR VASAVDA: You have dealt with Hockey India and the SAI. Are they doing things right or do they need to focus more on certain issues?

It's a big challenge from here. It's not easy. There is no club competition. That's what helps The Netherlands very much. It helped Belgium women and men, Germany... So that is something that's a challenge for the federation and SAI. Another thing is of course organising tournaments and Pro League with India and that needs to happen. A lot of girls will play hockey now. They saw how women were stars from the Olympics. How can you identify talent? That will be something else. Like David John, the previous High Performance Director... He was the one who identified talent. One trip, I came back and he says I'm going to have someone for your team. I was always open to that but I said 'I don't know.' He said, 'Trust me, I will add someone to your team and you will be happy.' It was Salima Tete. So she was scouted pretty well. This will be a challenge.

### SHIVANI NAIK: What would your advice be to school coaches of girls' teams?

Don't focus only on exercises of ball and stick. Train the whole motor skills. Teach them to catch balls, roll balls. throw balls and movements. Make that better, then maybe someone will become a complete player.

Indian team, something that makes you feel that the trip was worth it?

That moment would be winning against Australia. There were 24 seconds to go and Neha had the ball with Navneet and the others. They knew that we are going to win... It's about that moment... You see the four-and-a-half years flash before your eyes. All things that had happened, the losses, the frustrations... We had so much disappointment with the World Cup (in 2018), the qualifier. The girls were devastated and I used those experiences and told them, 'Listen, do you want to go through those moments again? Do you want to feel it again because you know how painful it is.' At the (Australia match) it finally went in our favour; that was the moment. We were

The Olympics was outcome

of 4.5 years of hard work...

The end was perfect, but I

didn't forget that. For the

next coach, it will be harder

as expectations are rising

the ones who won and I didn't have to tell the girls things like, 'We were really close' or 'You really did well'. But no, we were the ones who went into the semifinals, we were the ones who won the match. That moment of joy, I will never forget.

**DEVENDRA PANDEY: Was it tough to** get players to open up, especially girls who came from remote parts of

It was very difficult. I am the coach and in India, there is a lot of distance between a coach and the players. The distance is lesser in The Netherlands. It is easier for a coach. The whole respect thing in India is also very good but it didn't work for us. They were afraid to talk to me because they thought I would drop them if they talk about their issues. They felt I would think they are not good enough.

It was a slow process of building their confidence and getting them to understand that if you come to me with guestions or feel you are not doing something right, I am there to help you instead of judging you. The moment they realised that, they started coming to me and opened up gradually with all kinds of things, their issues. I am not a patient guy but in the end, they opened up.

### NITIN SHARMA: When you joined the women's team, what were your first impressions of the team, tactically

We had our match against Belarus (in March 2017) and the first thing I noticed was that we were not fit. And if fitness is not good, it is not possible to play good hockey, so that is where it started. The other thing that I saw was a lot of technical errors. Decisions made on the pitch... I would think. 'Why are you doing this? I don't really see the reason why you are doing this.' From there on I started making a plan on how I wanted to see the team in the Olympics. And we worked from that plan backward.

### TUSHAR BHADURI: How did you deal with administrative issues linked to the federation, SAI (Sports Authority of India), Sports Ministry?

I am only concerned about the things I can control. There is a lot administration-wise that I can't control. (Former India coach) Roelant Oltmans told me the moment I arrived, 'Listen Sjoerd, these things can happen and you just have to let it go. You can worry about it but it will create a lot of frustration, and that's what you have to avoid.' I am not saying it was always easy but that is what I always kept at the back of my mind. I also knew that I wanted to do better and that it was not always working. Let's say I had some challenging moments...

### TUSHAR BHADURI: Was the manner in which you were shuffled between the men's and women's teams difficult to deal with?

I said this to the girls as well. I have to be able to look in the mirror and say, 'I did everything I could. I put all my energy and time in it.' In this situation, I was very surprised, because if you see those nine months, we didn't do well at the Commonwealth Games, but the rest of the time we did really well. As I said, the Asia Cup was the last tournament the men won. For me, I felt like I couldn't take it (the decision to be shifted) seriously. If this is happening, it can't be

### TUSHAR BHADURI: Do you feel you should have been consulted before being shunted around?

I think you should always speak with the coach. I was on holiday when I received a phone call saying that I wasn't the coach for the men's team anymore. I was then asked whether I wanted to continue with the women's team. When I look back now, it sounds funny.

MIHIR VASAVDA: You have seen Indian hockey from both sides. the men's as well as the women's teams. In terms of the support that they get, is there a difference between the teams?

vided the tools we wanted. So that was not an issue. It's more about participating in the Pro League, organising tournaments in your own country... The men are ranked higher because tournaments are organised for them every time. For instance, the women didn't qualify for the World League in New Zealand and the men didn't either. I just hope Hockey

# you tell us about that exchange?

It was a good moment because it made me feel like they wanted me back.

your ears to it. You have to block it and that's the way it is. After the battle, you see the emotions coming. But the problem was solved. They solved it really well and really fast. The police and Rani (Rampal, captain) did really well in the

situation, as it is about leadership.

Illustration: Suvajit Dey

### SANDEEP DWIVEDI: What does India doing well at the Olympics mean for international hockey? How does the world see Indian hockey post-**Olympics?**

The good thing about India is that Indians are everywhere in the world. I receive messages from all over the world. I think that is also a good thing because the popularity of hockey has increased with this. I think that the FIH (International

Hockey Federation) is really happy about The men are ranked higher what happened, because I don't think as they have tournaments we have to worry every time... I just hope about our Olympic status for the follow-Hockey India and Odisha ing years... if you want a million peocan organise more ple watching these tournaments for women matches... I am curious about the number of spectators

> watching these matches. I think they (the  $FI\bar{H})$  are really happy. And it's also good for women's hockey, that like other countries we also feel, 'Whoa! we can do this'.

### **SANDEEP DWIVEDI: Do you at times** just think about what you have done for the game in India and what it means? Has it sunk in yet?

Yes, because I don't want to forget this. For me, they are the most beautiful moments. And the reason is that we created a legacy. We did something bigger than winning a medal. The longer we are away from the tournament, the longer it's behind us, the more we realise what we have changed. And that is something huge. I'm proud to be part of that because that's what I always dreamed of. I never dreamed about winning medals. I never

and technically?

There is a big difference, but SAI pro-India and Odisha can organise more tournaments for women. Maybe the Pro League because that's what the girls

### SRIRAM VEERA: When you rejoined the women's team, Savita Punia said that they liked having you back. Can

# ECONOMY

### Market Watch

# M-CAP OF 8 MOST VALUED COS JUMPS

New Delhi: Eight of the top-10 most valued companies together added Rs 1,90,032.06 crore in market valuation last week, with Tata Consultancy Services and RIL being the prominent gainers. Last week, the Sensex gained 795.40 points or 1.43 per cent. PTI

# **SECTOR WATCH ADDITIVE MANUFACTURING**

# 3D manufacturing of electronic gear may get its own PLI-like scheme

WHAT IS 3D PRINTING

manufacturing uses

computer-aided

prototypes or

designing to make

working models of

objects by laying

down successive

layers of materials

manufacturing uses com-

puter-aided designing to make

prototypes or working models

of objects by laying down suc-

cessive layers of materials such

as plastic, resin, thermoplastic,

metal, fiber or ceramic. With

the help of software, the model

to be printed is first developed

by the computer, which then

gives instructions to the 3D

printer. Like the other PLI

schemes, the incentives for

companies in the 3D or addi-

tive manufacturing space

would be on achievement of a

minimum threshold of cumu-

lative incremental investment

and incremental sales of man-

ufactured goods net of taxes.

There could, however, be some

relaxation for companies in

this space as it is a relatively

facturing sector, which is a high

volume production area, the

demand and proliferation right

now is very low. We plan to en-

courage companies applica-

tion areas are smart glass,

power electronics, sensors and

non-electronic components in

electronics such as mobile ac-

cessories and give them some

incentives beyond PLI as well,"

the official said. Asia leads the

world in 3D printing and about

50 per cent of its market is cor-

nered by China. But, globally,

the US leads with over 35 per

"For the electronics manu-

new sector, an official said.

■3D printing

or additive

**AASHISHARYAN** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 29

THE MINISTRY of Electronics and Information Technology may soon come out with a production-linked incentive (PLI) kind of scheme for additive

manufacturing of electronic

components, sources said.

In meetings held over the last month, the IT Ministry had reached out to electronics component makers to understand their requirement so that a suitable policy could be designed accordingly, one of the sources said.

"Specific lightweight products which are used in critical electronic equipment and are very expensive to replace are among the priority items. We are looking at other areas beyond electronic manufacturing for the second phase," a ministry official said.

The Indian Express had in December 2020 reported that the IT Ministry was likely to come out with a policy on additive manufacturing soon. The new policy was aimed at promoting 3D printing on an industrial scale and helping domestic companies "overcome technical and economic barriers" so that they could build supportive and ancillary facilities for world leaders in the technology, such as the US and China

As per a draft of the policy, the Ministry values additive manufacturing or 3D printing industry at \$35.6 billion by 2023, up from a less than \$7 billion in 2017. For the electronic manufacturing component space, the Ministry sees potential for 3D components in wearable devices, soft robots, structural monitoring and building elements and radio frequency identification devices.

3D printing or additive

FSDC meeting

okays fundraise

New Delhi: Bharti Airtel's

board on Sunday approved

raising up to Rs 21,000 crore

by way of rights issue, at a

price of Rs 535 per share, ac-

cording to a regulatory filing.

Merchant bankers

New Delhi: The government has shortlisted 10 merchant

bankers, including Goldman

Sachs Group Inc., J P Morgan

Chase & Co, and ICICI Securities, to manage the

mega initial public offering

(IPO) of the country's largest

life insurer LIC. "Goldman

Sachs Group Inc, JPMorgan

Chase & Co, ICICI Securities

Ltd, Kotak Mahindra Capital

Co, JM Financial Ltd,

Citigroup Inc and Nomura

Holdings Inc are among the

10 BRLMs that have been

shortlisted," an official said.

'Carlyle offer for

New Delhi: Private equity gi-

ant Baring Asia, which owns

the software firm Hexaware

Technologies, is set to pick the

\$3 billion offer from the

Carlyle Group for the com-

pany, as per a source. PTI

Hexaware'

for LIC IPO

# SOPs for IT rules: Social media cos may meet Ministry again

INTERMEDIARY GUIDELINES AND DIGITAL MEDIA ETHICS CODE

**AASHISHARYAN** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 29

SOCIAL MEDIA companies across the board are likely to approach the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) once again to expedite the process of putting in place a standard operating procedure (SOP) for the Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code, sources in know of the development told The Indian Express The need for an SOP for the in-

termediary guidelines was felt once again, following the recent controversy over Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's post across social media platforms, wherein he had posted a photo of the parents of a nine-year-old Dalit girl who was allegedly raped. The photo stoked controversy and was subsequently taken down by Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, Simultaneously, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) sent legal notices to the platforms as well as Gandhi.

removed Gandhi's tweet and post, they claimed that it was done based on their internal guidelines on posting and not on the notices sent by the NCPCR.

 $Though \, all \, the \, three \, platforms$ 

"Right now, the NCPCR has no jurisdiction to send us a legal no-

EXPLAINE

# **Need for standard** operating procedures

THE NEED for an SOP for the intermediary guidelines was felt once again, following the recent controversy over Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's post across social media platforms, wherein he had posted a photo of the parents of a nine-yearold Dalit girl who was allegedly raped. The photo stoked controversy and was subsequently taken down by Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Simultaneously, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights sent legal notices to the platforms and Gandhi.

tice. They should have either approached us through the grievance officer or got a court order asking us to take down the post. We took down the posts as it violated our policies. There is, however, no SOP and we do not know which agency can send us a takedown notice and which cannot," a senior executive at a social media firm said.

An executive at another social

media firm said that as per the

Supreme Court's judgment in the Shreya Singhal case, where Section 66A of the IT Act had been struck down, the direction to remove any content from social media can only be if there is a court order, or if a competent authority of the Central

government issues such order un-

der Section 69A of the IT Act.

"Neither Section 69A nor the blocking rules under IT Act authorise NCPCR to direct intermediaries to remove content. We will challenge its (NCPCR's) jurisdiction in this issue." the executive said.

Twitter was the first to lock Gandhi out of his account, allowing him access only to delete the tweet. Though Gandhi had later submitted a consent letter of the parents of the nine-year-old Dalit girl Twitter, Twitter had still not allowed general public access to the tweet and said that it would remain hidden as it is against rules under the Protection of Children

from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. "As part of the appeal process,

RECOVERY IN CORPORATE PERFORMANCE, WITH TOP- AND

**BOTTOM-LINE GROWTH EXPECTATIONS TO BE BETTER THAN** 

PRE-COVID: CHANDRAJIT BANERJEE, DIRECTOR GENERAL, CII

copy of the formal consent/authorisation letter to use the referenced image via our India Grievance Channel. The tweet is now withheld in India and the account access has been restored," a spokesperson for the platform had said. Twitter had, subsequently, also blocked access to the Congress party's official Twitter account and several other accounts belonging to its leaders. The platform had then said it had taken "proactive action" on several other tweets, which had posted the same image.

"We have taken proactive action on several hundred Tweets that posted an image that violated our rules, and may continue to do so in line with our range of enforcement options. Certain types of private information carry higher risks than others, and our aim is always to protect individuals' privacy and safety," a spokesperson for the platform had said.

Later, Gandhi's post was removed from Instagram as well as Facebook. In its official response, Facebook had said it had "taken action to remove the content as it was in violation of our policies".

The platform had also said in the case of the nine-year-old girl, her family had pleaded for their safety in court, and, therefore to ensure their safety and dignity, the content had been taken down.

Amid 'difficulties' in filing, some tax compliance deadlines extended

**ENSECONOMIC BUREAU** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 29

CITING DIFFICULTIES reported by taxpayers and other stakeholders in electronic filing of certain forms, the income-tax department on Sunday extended the deadline for various compliances, including filing of statement for equalisation levy and remittances. The extension of compliance deadlines comes as the new income tax portal, www.incometax.gov.in, launched on June 7, has been facing glitches since its rollout.

The Finance Ministry had last week "summoned" Infosvs CEO & MD Salil Parekh to explain the issues resulting in the disruption of the portal developed by the software major. In the meeting with Parekh on August 23. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had expressed "deep disappointment" over persisting glitches for more than two months after the launch and gave a deadline of September 15 to Infosys to resolve the issues.

The tax department has extended the deadline for filing the equalisation levy statement in Form-1 for the Financial Year 2020-21 till December 31, against the original due date of June 30. The quarterly statement in Form 15CC to be furnished by authorised dealers in respect of remittances made for June and September quarter, can now be filed by November 30 and December 31, respectively. The original due date for filing this statement was July 15 and October 15 respectively.

In a statement, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said on consideration of difficulties reported by the taxpayers and other The CBDT in a separate statement also announced extending the deadline for making payments under the direct tax dispute resolution scheme Vivad Se Vishwas till September 30

stakeholders in electronic filing of certain forms it has been decided to further extend the due dates for e-filing of these forms.

The CBDT in a separate statement also announced extending the deadline for making payments under the direct tax dispute resolution scheme Vivad Se Vishwas (VsV) by a month till September 30. However, taxpayers have the option to make payments till October 31, with an additional amount of interest.

Also, the due dates for electronic filing of forms related to intimation by pension funds and sovereign wealth funds, too, have been extended. Intimation to be made by Pension Fund and sovereign wealth fund in respect of investment made in India for the June and September quarter, which is required to be furnished by July 31 and October 31, would now have to be furnished by November 30 and December 31, respectively.

The CBDT also extended the due date for uploading of declarations received in Form 15G/15H for the June and September guarter till November 30 and December 31, respectively. The original due dates were July 15 and October 15, respectively.

Suspension of foreign

passenger flights

# Most CEOs expect growth to be over 8%, says CII poll

A significant economic recovery is on the cards in 2021-22, according to a poll, conducted among 117 senior CEOs at the recent meeting of the Confederation of Indian Industry National Council. About 79% of them expected GDP growth to be over 8%

**HURDLES:** 



46% of the CEOs expected more than 10 per cent growth in the first half of the current fiscal when compared to the first half of pre-pandemic year 2019-20

33% said their firm's revenue growth will be up to 10 per cent during first half of current fiscal when compared to the first half of pre-pandemic year 2019-20

32% hoped their companies to register up to 10 per cent growth in net profits for the first half of current fiscal

**49%** of the senior industry leaders

per cent net profit growth

polled indicated more than 10

during first half of current fiscal

when compared to first half of

pre-pandemic year 2019-20

About one third of the CEOs indicated that current capacity Source: is still in excess of demand

kets have been relatively stable

due to steady purchases by DIIs

and domestic retail investors as the

accommodative policy stance of

the RBI has ensured ample liquid-

extended till Sept 30

THE SUSPENSION of scheduled international passenger flights due to the coronavirus outbreak been extended till September 30, aviation regula-

**ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU** NEW DELHI AUGUST 29

tor DGCA said on Sunday. "However, international scheduled flights may be allowed on selected routes by the competent authority on a case-

to-case basis," it added. Scheduled international passenger services have been suspended in India since March 23, 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic. But special international flights have been operating under the Vande Bharat Mission since May 2020 and under bilateral "air bubble" arrangements with selected

countries since July 2020. India has formed air-bubble pacts with around 28 countries. including the US, the UK, the UAE, Kenya, Bhutan and France. Under an air-bubble pact between two countries, special international flights can be oper**SPECIAL FLIGHTS** 



Delhi airport. File

■Special international flights have been operating under the Vande Bharat Mission since May 2020 and under bilateral "air bubble" arrangements with selected countries since July 2020.

ated by their airlines between

Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) also said the suspension does not affect the operations of international allcargo services and flights specif-

The circular issued by the

ically approved by it.

# 'AI asks US court to dismiss

New Delhi: Air India has asked a New York court to dismiss a petition filed by Britain's Cairn Energy for seizure of its assets to enforce \$1.2 billion arbitral awards against the Indian government, saying the litigation was premature as an appeal against the arbitration award was still pending.

The petition by the airline, which is separate to the government's plea in a Washington court seeking dismissal of Cairn's lawsuit to seek confirmation of the arbitral award, said the New York district court lacks jurisdiction to adjudicate a "mere hypothetical question" or one that depends upon contingent future events that may or may not occur. Cairn's petition to confirm the Award is pending in the District Court for the District of Columbia," Air India said in the August 23 petition, PTI

# BRIEFLY — Market rallies despite FPIs exit: Retail investors step up

made net equity purchases of

Rs 32,155 crore, as against net sales

of Rs 11,140 crore in the same pe-

riod of last year, reflecting the in-

creased inflows in the funds and

heightened interest of retail in-

vestors in the equity markets.

51% indicated that Ease of Doing Business was still cumbersome

at the grass roots followed by Cost of Doing Business (other than Capital cost) being high, as indicated by 32 per cent of the CEOs

# **GEORGE MATHEW**

cent share.

on Sept 3 MUMBAI. AUGUST 29 New Delhi: Finance Minister

Nirmala Sitharaman has WHILE THE Sensex closed at an called a meeting of the all-time high of 56.124.72 on Financial Stability and Friday with retail investors going Development Council (FSDC) into an overdrive, foreign portfoon September 3 to discuss lio investors (FPIs) sold stocks the state of the financial secworth Rs 779 crore during the day, taking the total outflows (excludtor and a strategy to support the nascent recovery of the ing IPOs) to over Rs 48,000 crore pandemic-hit economy. since April this year, as worries over a taper tantrum in the US increased and valuations of domes-Airtel board tic stocks shot up.

> Even as retail investors tightened their grip over the stock markets, data from the exchanges show FPIs have taken out Rs 7,652 crore in August so far, Rs 23,193 crore in July, Rs 25 crore in June, Rs 6,015 crore in May and Rs 12,039 crore in April. When compared to this, FPIs had invested Rs 42,044 crore in February this year, Rs 48.223 crore in December 2020



The BSE in Mumbai. File

and Rs 65,317 crore in November. Stocks offloaded by FPIs have been acquired by retail investors and institutions with alacrity.

Despite the FPI pullout, the Sensex has gained over 6.600 points, or 13.36 per cent, from 49,509 since April 1 this year, aided by sustained flow of funds from retail investors and institutions. In the April-July period, mutual funds

Domestic institutional institutions have invested Rs 46,940 since April this year. Investments by retail investors through SIP(systematic investment plan) are averaging around Rs 8,000 crore every month. On the other hand, active investor demat accounts rose by 27 lakh in a year to 2.221 crore as of July 2021. The market rally is now being

led by domestic retail investors amply supported by domestic institutions and mutual funds amid hopes that the Covid-hit economy will rebound in the coming quarters as vaccination has picked up and the number of infections has fallen from May highs.

"Even though FPIs represent

'smart money' they are no longer market movers in India. At least for now, retail investors have emerged as market movers and DIIs also are playing a supportive role. We don't know how long this retail exuberance will last. Present valuations do not offer any margin of safety," said VKVijayakumar, chief investment strategist, Geojit Financial Services. Perhaps this is the reason why FPIs have been consistent sellers in the cash market for many days now. At the same time, they don't want to lose momentum in the market since India is, by far, the outperformer in emerging markets.

Suman Chowdhury, chief analytical officer, Acuite Ratings & Research, said FPI sales can be attributed largely to increased concerns on the taper down of bond purchases by the US Fed which are expected to commence by the end of the calendar year and normalise the excess liquidity in the global asset markets. However, the mar-

US Fed chair Jerome Powell made clear some important points that gave investors the comfort they craved at the virtual Jackson Hole event. He indicated that tapering and interest rates are not linked, which is very important if the Fed wants to avoid a mini taper tantrum when they do pull the trigger in the coming months. The

ity in the system.

plan is still to taper this year. "The result season is over with better-than-expected delivery and vaccination drive going on in full swing. However, the sharp outperformance in the past 18 months led to concerns on valuations," said Siddhartha Khemka, head-retail research, Motilal Oswal Financial

message from Powell was that the

# **Subscribers joining NPS** after 65 can take up to 50% equity exposure

**ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 29

MAKING THE National Pension System (NPS) more attractive for subscribers joining it after 65 years of age, the PFRDA has permitted them to allocate up to 50 per cent of the funds in equity, besides easing the exit norms.

Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) has revised the guidelines on entry and exit following an increase in the maximum age for joining the NPS from 65 year to 70 years of age. The entry age for NPS has been revised to 18-70 years from

Any Indian citizen and

# Call for tax exemption on pension

New Delhi: Pensioners' body Bharatiya Pensioners Manch has urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to exempt pension from income tax to provide relief to the senior citizens in the country. PTI

Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) in the age group of 65-70 years can also join NPS and continue up to the age of 75 years, according to a PFRDA circular on the revised guidelines.

# Regulation of coal supply to plants to free up 1.77 lakh tonnes: **Power Ministry**

**ENSECONOMIC BUREAU** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 29

REGULATION OF coal supply to power plants that have more than 15 days of fuel stock will free up around 1.77 lakh tonnes of coal from 26 stations, said the Power Ministry. Power Secretary Alok Kumar on Sunday reviewed the report of the core management team to ensure daily close monitoring of coal stock position at thermal power plants, the power ministry said in a statement.

During the meeting, some facts emerged which will ease out the coal stock position at TPPs and will ensure uninterrupted supply.

# OPEC+ could reconsider output increase, says Kuwait Kuwait City. Economies of East

**REUTERS** KUWAIT, AUGUST 29

THE INCREASE in oil output agreed last month by OPEC+ nations could be reconsidered at its next meeting on Sept. 1, Kuwait's oil minister said on Sunday.The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and allies including Russia, collectively known as OPEC+, will meet on Wednesday to discuss the previously agreed increase of 400,000 barrels per day (bpd) for the next several months.

"The markets are slowing. Since COVID-19 has begun its fourth wave in some areas, we must be careful and reconsider this increase. There may be a halt to the 400,000 (bpd) increase,"



**OPEC+** last year implemented a record output cut of 10 million bpd, equating to about 10 per cent of world demand. Reuters file

Mohammad Abdulatif al-Fares told Reuters on the sildelines of a government-sponsored event in Asian countries and China remain affected by COVID-19 and caution must be exercised, Fares added.US President Joe Biden's administration has urged OPEC and its allies to boost oil output to tackle rising gasoline prices that it views as a threat to the global economic re-Asked about the US call, Fares

said OPEC+ members had different views on the matter."There are meetings with OPEC countries, especially the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, and so far there are different views on how to handle this issue," Fares said. OPEC+ last year implemented a record output cut of 10 million bpd, equating to about 10 per cent of world demand, when energy demand plunged.

# Cairn petition'

# 10 THE WORLD



"I have three alternatives for my future: being arrested, killed or victory (in the presidential election)"

- JAIR BOLSONARO, the Brazilian President, said in remarks to a meeting of evangelical leaders ahead of the 2022 election.



A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket launched from **Kennedy Space Center** on Friday. AF

### **USA**

### SpaceX takes ants, avocados to space station

A SPACEX shipment of ants, avocados and a humansized robotic arm rocketed toward the International Space Station on Sunday. The delivery—due to arrive Monday—is the company's 23rd for NASA in just under a decade. A recycled Falcon rocket blasted into the predawn sky from NASA's Kennedy Space Center. The Dragon is carrying more than 2,170 kg of supplies and experiments, and fresh food including avocados, lemons and even ice cream for the space station's seven astronauts. The Girl Scouts are sending up ants, brine shrimp and plants as test subjects, while University of Wisconsin-Madison is flying up seeds from a small flowering weed.

# **IRAO**

### Macron visits **Iragicity** destroyed by war

FRENCH PRESIDENT **Emmanuel Macron on** Sunday visited Iraq's northern city of Mosul, which suffered widespread destruction during the war to defeat the Islamic State group in 2017. Macron began his visit to Mosul by touring the Our Lady of the Hour Church, a Catholic church that was badly damaged during the rule of IS that lasted from 2014 until the extremists' defeat three years later. Iraqi children dressed in white and waving Iragi and French sang upon Macron's arrival.

# **CONGO**

### Suspected militants kill 19 in eastern village

SUSPECTED ISLAMIST militants killed at least 19 people in a raid on a village in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, local authorities said. The attackers looted houses and started fires in Kasanzi-Kithovo near Virunga National Park in North Kivu province overnight between Friday and Saturday, they said. "I don't know where to go with my two children," villager Kahindo Lembula, who lost four of her relatives in the attack, told Reuters by phone. "Only God will REUTERS

# AMERICAN MILITARY WINDS DOWN EVACUATION FROM AFGHAN CAPITAL

# **US says drone kills IS suicide bombers** before they could attack Kabul airport

Rocket strike near airport kills child

**AP&REUTERS** KABUL, AUGUST 29

A US drone strike Sunday struck a vehicle carrying "multiple suicide bombers" from Afghanistan's Islamic State affiliate before they could target the ongoing military evacuation at Kabul's international

airport, American officials said. There were few initial details about the incident, as well as a rocket that struck a neighbourhood just northwest of the airport, killing a child. The Taliban initially described the two strikes as separate incidents. though information on both remained scarce and witnesses heard only one large blast Sunday in the Afghan capital.

The airstrike came as the US winds down a historic airlift that saw tens of thousands evacuated from Kabul's international airport, the scene of much of the chaos that engulfed the Afghan capital since the Taliban took over two weeks ago. After an Islamic State affiliate's suicide attack that killed over 180 people, the Taliban increased its security around the airfield as Britain ended its evacuation flights Saturday

US military cargo planes continued their runs into the airport Sunday, ahead of a Tuesday deadline earlier set by President Joe Biden to withdraw all troops

from America's longest war. Two American military officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss military operations, called the airstrike successful and said the vehicle carried multiple bombers.

# Countries say will accept Afghans after August 31

THEUS and 97 other countries said they would continue to take in people fleeing Afghanistan after the American military departs on Aug 31 and had secured an agreement with the Taliban to allow safe passage for those who are leaving. The Taliban's chief negotiator, Sher Mohammed Abas Stanekzai, had announced on Friday that the group would not stop people from departing, no matter their nationality or whether they had worked for the US during the 20-year war. The joint statement was released on Sunday on behalf of more than half of the world's governments and NATO. NYT

Capt Bill Urban, a spokesman for the US military's Central Command, called the drone strike an action taken in "self-defence." He said authorities continued "assessing the possibilities of civilian casualties, though we have no indications at this time.'

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid earlier said in a message to journalists that the US strike targeted a suicide bomber as he drove a vehicle loaded with explosives.

Biden headed on Sunday to Dover Air Force Base to honour members of the US military killed in Thursday's attack as their remains were returned to the US.



US President Joe Biden, First Lady Jill Biden and Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin during the transfer of remains at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware on Sunday for the 13 members of the US military who were killed in a bombing last week in Afghanistan. NYT

# Taliban kill Afghan folk singer in restive province, says family

KATHY GANNON, TAMEEM AKHGAR & JON GAMBRELL KABUL. AUGUST 29

A TALIBAN fighter shot dead an Afghan folk singer in a restive mountain province under unclear circumstances, his family said Sunday. The killing reignited concerns among activists that the insurgents would return to their oppressive rule in the country after their military blitz toppled the government.

The slaying of Fawad Andarabi comes as the United States winds down a historic air-

lift that saw tens of thousands evacuated from Kabul's international airport, the scene of much of the chaos that engulfed the Afghan capital since the Taliban took over two weeks ago.

The shooting Friday of the folk singer came in the Andarabi Valley for which he was named, an area of Baghlan province some 100 km north of Kabul. The valley had seen upheaval since the Taliban takeover, with some districts in the area coming under the control of militia fighters opposed to the Taliban rule.

The Taliban say they have since retaken those areas, though neighbouring Panjshir in the

Hindu Kush mountains remains the only one of Afghanistan's 34 provinces not under its control.

The Taliban previously came out to Andarabi's home and searched it, even drinking tea with the musician, his son Jawad Andarabi said. But something changed Friday.

"He was innocent, a singer who only was entertaining people." his son said. "They shot him in the head on the farm." His son said he wanted justice and that a local Taliban council promised to punish his father's killer.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said they would investigate the incident.

# With wind speeds topping 230 kph, Hurricane Ida makes landfall in Louisiana

**KEVIN MCGILL & JAY REEVES** 

NEW ORLEANS, AUGUST 29

HURRICANE IDA blasted ashore along the Louisiana coast on Sunday, with the eye of one of the most powerful storms ever to hit the US arriving near the barrier island of Grand Isle.

The powerful Category 4 storm made landfall on the same date Hurricane Katrina ravaged Louisiana and Mississippi 16 years earlier, about 64 kilometres west of where Category 3 Katrina first struck land.

Arriving with a barometric pressure of 930 millibars, Ida oes down as tied for the fifth strongest hurricane to make landfall in the United States based on wind speed.

Ida rapidly intensified overnight as it moved through some of the warmest ocean water in the world in the northern Gulf of Mexico, its top winds grew by 72 kph to 230 kph in five hours.

Hurricane force winds started to strike Grand Isle on Sunday morning. Before power was lost on the Louisiana barrier island, a beachfront web camera showed the ocean steadily rising as growing waves churned and palm trees whipped. More than 100,000 customers had lost power in Louisiana by noon and were without electricity, according to PowerOutage.US, which tracks outages nationwide.

Wind tore at awnings and water began spilling out of Lake Ponchartrain in New Orleans. Officials there said Ida's swift

storm than Katrina

HURRICANE IDA has made landfall in Louisiana on the same date on which Hurricane Katrina did so 16 years ago. A Category 4 storm, Ida is much more powerful than the Category 3 Katrina, which had wreaked havoc in the state leading to as many as 1.833 deaths. However, the massive toll taken by Katrina was seen as the result of an inadequate levee system, which experts now are hoping is much better equipped to handle a hurricane. But the intensity, size and direction of Hurricane Ida could result in it becoming a massive nat-

intensification from a few thunderstorms to massive hurricane over three days left no time to organize a mandatory evacuation of its 390,000 resi-

Mayor LaToya Cantrell

urged residents to leave volun-

ural disaster, experts say.

tarily. Those who stayed were warned to prepare for long power outages amid sweltering Nick Mosca was walking his

dog, like most of those who were out Sunday morning. "I'd like to be better pre-

pared. There's a few things I'm thinking we could have done. But this storm came pretty quick, so you only have the time you have," Mosca said.

# Veteran Afghan strongmen to form new front for holding negotiations with Taliban

Afghans say Taliban's enemies starting to disappear

**DEVJYOT GHOSHAL** AUGUST 29

A BAND of veteran Afghan leaders, including two regional strongmen, are angling for talks with the Taliban and plan to meet within weeks to form a new front for holding negotiations on the country's next government, a member of a group said.

Khalid Noor, son of Atta Mohammad Noor, the oncepowerful governor of northern Afghanistan's Balkh province, said the group comprised of veteran ethnic Uzbek leader Abdul

AS AMERICAN troops rush to

complete their withdrawal by US

President Joe Biden's Tuesday

deadline, many Afghans are

afraid that reprisals from the

country's new rulers will soon

control of Kabul two weeks ago,

the invading units made a bee-

line for two critical targets: the

headquarters of the National

Security Directorate and the

Ministry of Communications.

When Taliban fighters seized

**CARLOTTA GALL** 

AUGUST 29

follow.



Rashid Dostum and others op-

Veteran ethnic Uzbek leader **Abdul Rashid Dostum** 

posed to the Taliban's takeover. "We prefer to negotiate col-

lectively, because it is not that the problem of Afghanistan will be solved just by one of us," Noor,

Taliban fighters in Kabul. NYT

Their aim – recounted by two

Afghan officials who had been

briefed separately on the raid -

was to secure the files of intelli-

gence officers and their informers.

and to obtain the means of track-

ing the telephone numbers of

27, told Reuters in an interview from an undisclosed location.

"So, it is important for the entire political community of the country to be involved, especially the traditional leaders, those with power, with public support," Noor said.

Atta Noor and Dostum, veterns of four decades of conflict in Afghanistan, both fled the country when the northern city of Mazari Shariffell to the Taliban, the hardline Islamist group, without a fight.

The US-backed government and military folded elsewhere as the Taliban swept into Kabul on

Afghan citizens. That could be dis-

astrous for hundreds of thousands

of people who had been working

leadership has presented a mod-

erate face, promising amnesty to

government security forces who

lay down their arms. They have

even written letters of guarantee

that they will not be pursued, al-

though reserving the right to pros-

A Taliban spokesman, Suhail

Shaheen, said in a Twitter post in

English that there was no settling

of scores. Nor, he said, was there a

hit list with which the Taliban

ecute serious crimes.

So far, the Taliban's political

to counter the Taliban threat.

However, the backroom discussions are a sign of the country's traditional strongmen coming back to life after the Taliban's stunning military campaign.

It will be a challenge for any entity to rule Afghanistan for long without consensus between the country's patchwork of ethnicities, most analysts say. "The Taliban at this point are

very, very arrogant, because they just won militarily. But what we assume(is)that they know the risk of ruling the way they did before," Noor said, referring to the previous Taliban regime's exclusion of minority ethnic groups. REUTERS

were conducting door-to-door

searches, as has been rumored.

of detentions, disappearances

and even executions at the

hands of the Taliban, in what

some current and former gov-

ernment officials describe as a

covert pursuit of the militants'

enemies. The scale of the cam-

paign is uncertain because it is

ground," said one former leg-

islator, who was in hiding else-

where when the Taliban

visited his home in the middle

Israel strikes Hamas targets in

of the night.

Gaza after border protests

"It's very much under-

being conducted covertly.

Yet there are growing reports

# **Ex-UK Marine** leaves Kabul with dogs, cats but no local staff

**JILL LAWLESS** LONDON, AUGUST 29

A FORMER UK Royal Marine who waged a high-profile campaign to leave Afghanistan with almost 200 rescued dogs and cats has flown to safety — with the animals, but without his charity's Afghan staff, who were left behind in Kabul.

A privately funded chartered plane carrying Paul "Pen" Farthing and his animals took off from Kabul late Saturday after a saga that gripped and divided Britain, raising difficult questions about the relative value placed on human and animal lives.

Animal welfare campaigner Dominic Dyer, who has acted as a UK-based spokesman for Farthing, said the plane was due to land at London's Heathrow Airport on Sunday.

Farthing, who started the Nowzad charity after serving with British forces in Afghanistan 15 years ago, was eligible for evacuation in Britain's military airlift along with Afghan members of his staff and their dependents. But he refused to leave without the animals.

Dyer said Taliban guards would not let the Afghan staff enter the airport, even though they had the required papers. AP

from obtaining nuclear weapons.

On Saturday, hundreds of



In New Orleans ahead of the approaching Hurricane Ida on Sunday. AP

# UK public moves on from virus curbs even as cases rise

MARK LANDLER& **STEPHEN CASTLE** LONDON, AUGUST 29

NEARLY 60,000 football fans packed London's Emirates Stadium last Sunday to watch Chelsea outplay Arsenal. Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical, Cinderella, made its glittering debut in the West End after several Covid-related delays. On the subway, where masks are still mandatory, half the riders go barefaced.

All this at a time when Britain is reporting more than 30,000 new coronavirus cases a day, hospitals are coming under renewed strain, and preliminary data shows that the protection provided by vaccines ebbs several months after the second dose.

Such is the strange new phase of Britain's pandemic: The public has moved on, even if the virus has not. Given that Britain has been at the vanguard of so many coronavirus developments from incubating variants to rolling out vaccines — experts say this could be a glimpse into the future for other countries.

"We don't seem to care that we have these really high infection rates," said Tim Spector, a professor of genetic epidemiology at King's College London, who has been leading a major study on Covid-19 symptoms. "It looks like we're just accepting it now — that this is the price of freedom.'

Some of that equanimity may stem from the fact that Britain's case rate, while high,



Britain is now reporting more than 30,000 new coronavirus cases a day. Reuters

### has not vet risen anywhere near the level that government officials predicted when they lifted virtually all Covid restrictions last month. Some may be because of the weaker link between cases and severe illness. And some of it may simply reflect fatigue, after 17 months of baleful headlines and stifling lockdowns.

"There's a feeling that finally we can breathe; we can start trying to get back what we've lost," said Devi Sridhar, the head of the global public health program at the University of Edinburgh. "It's really difficult to ask people not to mix for a prolonged period, especially if nere is no solution."

With nearly 80 per cent of the adult population fully vaccinated and the virus still circulating widely, Professor Sridhar said, Britain may be a model for other European countries and the United States of "whether you can manage Covid in a sustainable way". The evidence, she added, was inconclusive because Britain still faces critical challenges, like the reopening of schools on Wednesday.

# At least 30 killed in Houthi strikes on Yemen military base

**REUTERS** ADEN, AUGUST 29

AT LEAST 30 soldiers were killed and 60 wounded on Sunday in Houthi strikes on a military base belonging to forces of the Saudiled coalition in southwest Yemen, a spokesman for the southern forces and medical sources said.

The Houthis have carried out several attacks using armed drones and ballistic missiles on the al-Anad military base, Yemeni southern forces spokesman Mohamed al-Nageeb said.

Naqeeb said that between 30 to 40 soldiers were killed and at least 60 wounded, adding the death toll may still rise as rescuers were still clearing the scene. The southern forces are part of the Saudi-led coalition.

Two medical sources said several bodies had arrived at Lahj province's main hospital along with another 16 wounded people. It was unclear if civilians were among the casualties.

Residents said that several loud blasts were heard in the al-Anad area, which is located at some 70 km north of the southern port city of Aden, Several other residents from the disputed central city of Taiz said they heard ballistic missiles fired from launchers positioned in the Houthi-held eastern suburbs of the city.

The war started in 2014 when the Houthis invaded Sanaa and

ousted the government of Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi. A coalition led by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates intervened in March 2015 to restore Hadi to power but the ensuing conflict. now stalemated, has killed tens of

worst humanitarian crisis. The attacks came at a time when peace talks between the Saudi-led coalition and the Houthis, and backed by the United Nations and the United States, have stalled after both sides failed to reach a compromise deal.

thousands and caused the world's

The talks are focused on steps to lift a blockade on Houthi-held ports and Sanaa airport in return for a promise from the Iranaligned group for truce talks.

**ASSOCIATED PRESS** JERUSALEM, AUGUST 29

ISRAELI PLANES struck Hamas militant targets in the Gaza Strip Sunday, hours after violent clashes between Palestinian protesters and troops along the border.

The Israeli military said that planes bombed a Hamas militant facility in the Gaza Strip in response to the launching of incendiary balloons into southern Israel and violent protests staged for a second consecutive week. Israeli Prime Minister Naftali

Bennett spoke to reporters in

Washington before he boarded

a flight to Israel, wrapping up a

state visit that culminated with a

Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett face-to-face meeting with

President Joe Biden. It was the

first since Bennett took office in

June. "We will operate in Gaza

according to our interests," he

said in Hebrew on the tarmac. Bennett said he "achieved all the objectives for the trip" to Washington, including strategic cooperation in preventing Iran

Hamas-backed activists staged a nighttime protest along the Israeli border, throwing explosives toward Israeli forces who responded with live fire. Gaza health officials said three people were injured by Israeli fire. Additional protests were planned through the week.

> Organisers said the protests are meant to increase pressure on Israel to lift its blockade of the Palestinian territory. Israel and Egypt have maintained the blockade since Hamas, a group sworn to Israel's destruction, seized control of Gaza in a 2007 coup after winning Palestinian elections. Israel and Hamas have fought four wars since, the most recent in May.

# US Open: Djokovic, Osaka in the spotlight

**ASSOCIATED PRESS** NEW YORK, AUGUST 29

NOVAK DJOKOVIC is well aware that his twotrack pursuit of men's tennis history at the U.S. Open — the first calendar-year Grand Slam in more than a half-century and a record 21st major title — means all eyes will be on him when he is on the court.

"I'm hugely inspired and motivated by that, no doubt. But at the same time, I know how to balance things out mentally, with lots of expectations, obviously, around, My participation here - without Rafa (Nadal) and Roger (Federer) participating," Djokovic said Friday, mentioning the two sidelined rivals with whom he shares the current men's standard of 20 majors

"Ifeel it," he continued. "I know there's a lot of people who are going to be watching my matches and expecting me to do well and fight

Naomi Osaka knows, too, that her return to Grand Slam action for the first time since pulling out of the French Open for a mental health break means she will be the center of attention when she has a racket in her hand as the defending women's champion at Flushing Meadows, and when she has microphones in front of her.

"I mean, it will definitely feel a bit different, Idon't really know how to describe it, but I kind of had to get over the feeling of people's gazes feeling a bit different to me. At the same time, I started to tell myself that it is what it is. Like, I did what I did, so I can't really change people's perception on me." Osaka said. "It might make me feel a little bit nervous. But first rounds alwavs make me feel a little nervous. Maybe I can just attribute it to that. I guess I'll find out when I'm in that situation."

The year's last Grand Slam tournament begins Monday\_with full crowds a year after all fans were banned because of the coronavirus outbreak, and about half of players vaccinated\_and, even if this weren't the first one

since 1997 that'll be missing Federer, Nadal and both Williams sisters, there is little doubt where the focus would be.

From other players. From the media. From

Djokovic, a 34-year-old from Serbia who is seeded No. 1, and Osaka, a 23-year-old from Iapan who is seeded No. 3.

"I really wish for me to maybe, one day, be at that level of consistency and be able to dominate Grand Slams at such a level," said No. 3 seed Stefanos Tsitsipas, who blew a two-set lead against Djokovic in the French Open final. "It is something that comes with time. I think he has learned throughout the years how to preserve his best strengths and kind of expose them at the right moment, at the right time."

Djokovic began his accumulation of major trophies on the hard courts of the Australian Open in 2008; his title there this February was his ninth. He added his second trophy on the red clay of Roland Garros in June, followed by his sixth on the grass of Wimbledon in July. A fourth on the hard courts of the U.S. Open in the Sept. 12 final would not only let him break a tie for career Slams with Federer and Nadal but also go 4-for-4 this year, something only two other men have managed to do.

Don Budge was the first in 1938, and Rod Laver followed by putting together true Grand Slams in 1962 and 1969. Here's what an achievement that is: In the 52 years since, no man even had won the first three major titles in a single season until Djokovic now.

"He's just amazing," said No. 2 seed Daniil Medvedev, who lost to Djokovic in the final at Melbourne Park. "I have no other Last year's trip to New York did not end

happily for Djokovic, of course. He was disqualified from his fourth-round match after inadvertently hitting a line judge with a ball that Djokovic hit after dropping a game in the open-

The only Grand Slam match he has lost since that day was in the final against Nadal at last year's pandemic-delayed French Open in



Serbia's Novak Djokovic is seven match wins away from winning all four majors in the same calendar year.

# **New equation: Ashwin-Shardul** could be greater than Ishant-Jadeja

**SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY** 

AUGUST 29

VIRAT KOHLI dismissed the idea of playing an extra batsman. "I don't believe in that balance. I have never believed in that balance."

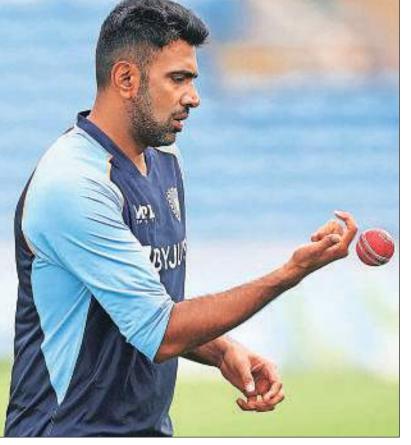
A combination of six specialist batsmen, a bowling all-rounder and four bowlers has been India's recipe for success over the past couple of seasons. The India captain saw no reason to change it even after an innings defeat at Headingley. The template for the first three Tests in the ongoing series had been four fast bowlers and Ravindra Jadeja as a spin-allrounder. Given the skipper's reluctance to change it, maybe a change of personnel would be beneficial. On the face of it, Ravichandran Ashwin and Shardul Thakur for Jadeja and Ishant Sharma could make the team betterbalanced without rejigging the template.

In fact, there's a paradox. Although Jadeja was the specialist all-rounder in the XI, India effectively played the first three Tests with seven specialist batsmen. Conditions restricted the left-arm spinner's bowling minutes at Trent Bridge and Lord's. And despite him sending down 32 overs and taking two wickets at Headingley, Jadeja hardly made much impact in a game even though he was expected to be a lot more effective. On the other hand, the left-hander is the fourthhighest scorer (133 runs) in the team at the moment ahead of Kohli, Ajinkya Rahane and Rishabh Pant.

Jadeja's contributions, however, have been restricted to important cameos and a couple of crucial partnerships. Over the last two years, his batting improvement has been immense but at No. 7, he is no Ravi Shastri and maybe only marginally better than Ashwin. And as Kohli said at the post-match press conference on Saturday, sometimes you need to look beyond the numbers.

Only a few days ago, Ashwin tweeted a picture of him batting left-handed at the nets with a caption: "The desire to ignite something different every day never burns out." It's a matter of interpretation whether a sly dig was aimed at anyone, but someone with close to 2,700 Test runs and five centuries is no mug with the bat. In his last 10 Test innings, Ashwin has scored a hundred under pressure plus a match-saving 39 not out against Australia in Sydney last winter. His sound footwork holds him in good stead.

As an off-spinner, he is arguably the world's best. "They have to pick Ashwin. It's very hard for me to digest that the (team's) best spinner was out of the playing eleven in the first three Tests. Who you will drop? It's



Apart from his spin expertise, Ashwin offers a lot with his batting as well. Reuters

up to the Indian think-tank. The best spinner should be playing," former India captain and ex-selection committee chairman Dilip Vengsarkar told The Indian Express.

The Southampton Test in 2018 was one of the lows in Ashwin's career. On a turning pitch, England's Moeen Ali outperformed him with a nine-wicket match haul compared to the Indian offie's three. But over the subsequent three years, Ashwin' bowling has become even more well-rounded, with added variety. The pink-ball Test in Adelaide in December last year was a case in point, where in seamer-friendly conditions, he spun a web around Steve Smith and company, eventually retuning with four wickets in the first innings. In the World Test Championship (WTC) final also, he partially opened the game for India on the final day, just that he didn't have enough runs to bowl with in the fourth innings.

The fourth Test will be played at The Oval

from September 2. It's a venue that traditionally has the flattest pitches in England. It briefly became Ashwin's home ground after the WTC final, when he joined Surrey for a short County stint ahead of the Test series. He ran through Somerset's batting with 6/27 in 15 overs, dismantling them for 69 in their second innings. As the Adelaide Test last year and the WTC final two months ago showed, Ashwin of the 2021 vintage can rise above the pitch factor, for he has become more skilful in the air, through his flight, loop and dip.

### Shardul for Ishant?

India started the series with Shardul as their fourth seamer and he would have retained his place but for a hamstring injury. Ishant played at Lord's and gave an impact performance in both innings. After a marauding win in the second Test, the team at Headingley sort of picked itself. But as it turned out, two consecutive Tests at 33 years

of age were a little too strenuous for the Delhi fast bowler. He was completely bereft of rhythm. Collectively, the tourists didn't bowl well at Leeds. "Basically, they (England) bowled a lot better than us in this game,

A fit-again Shardul should automatically return to the XI at The Oval. In the first Test, his two wickets in an over in the first innings included loe Root. In the second innings also.

important than personal milestones. From that perspective, an Ashwin-Shardul lowerorder partnership inspires more confidence than the Jadeja-Ishant combine. This also allows the team management to retain a 4-1

### The Pant puzzle

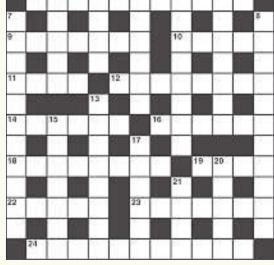
Inconsistency has been Pant's biggest

The England bowlers aren't giving Pant any hitting space. He is trying to counter that by dancing down the track to pacers, who are much taller than him. Bounce and away movement have made him a sitting duck.

der needs the cushion of an extra batsman. "India will have to play with six (specialist) batsmen and the sixth should be Suryakumar Yadav. He is at the peak of his career and can match anybody in this team as far as batting is concerned.'

Kohli sees an extra batsman as a defen-

# **CROSSWORD 4521**



- Pain (6,5) 9 In a scramble can go to this
- 10 Home for a rabbit is pointless for a donkey (5)
- 11 Impose duty (4) 12 They may put up their houses for sale
- 14 Acookmayuseatinone
- 16 Let out the smallest amount, sav(6)
- 18 He sends abroad for money
- 19 Emperor in knight's armour
- 22 Play some instruments
- 23 Where you may buy duty-free wine on display (7)
- 24 Fill a position as a successful astronaut? (2,4,5)

- 2 Tries new form of worship
- 3 Night without end almost 4 Get off or put on the line
- 5 Pretty girl in red and rose
- 6 Still out of tune? (7) 7 Consort very disturbed by
- argument (11) 8 Like one who cares for others -
- or is a decent sort 13 The offer of money may make
- him cross (8) 15 Grass around the seaport
- 17 Gale blows itself out to a
- smooth finish (6) 20 Passionless disciple
- 21 The expedition set off

Solutions Crossword 4520: Across: 1 Adrift, 4 Africans, 9 Orator, 10 Preserve, 12 Echo, 13 Madam, 14 Anna, 17 Legal charges, 20 Burning fever, 23 Ache, 24 Abbot, 25 Talc, 28 Cash sale, 29 At will, 30 Sentinel, 31 Cygnet. Down: 1 Above all, 2 Road hogs, 3 From, 5 Fire at random, 6 Inst, 7 Arrant, 8 Seesaw, 11 Bathing belle, 15 Flour, 16 Reefs, 18 Aviation, 19 Bracelet, 21 Caucus, 22 Chosen, 26 Asti, 27 Stay.

# **OVER THE HEDGE** by Michael Fry & T Lewis







# **CALVIN & HOBBES** by Bill Watterson









# MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



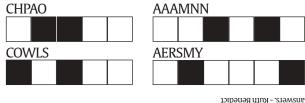




# JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to  $\,$ the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get The trouble with life isn't that there is answer, it's that there are answers. - Ruth

Benedict (2,,,2,4) **AAAMNN** 



SOLUTION: POACH, SCOWL, MANANA, SMEARY
SOLUTION: POACH, SCOWL, MANANA, SMEARY
PASSWET: The trouble will life isn't that there is **no** answer, it's that there are **so many** 

# Difficulty Level 4s Instructions

SUDOKU

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Difficulty Level 1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s =

	-8		1	3	2		9	
		2	9		7	8		
8		6				2		7
			4		3			
2		1				9		4
	П	4	6		8	7		
	1		2	5	9		4	

SOLUTION SUDOKU 4578 1 3 7 8 6 9 4 2 5 4 5 7 3 1 8 9 6 2 5 4 6 8 2 4 6 8 5 3 1 9 3 1 9 2 6 1 9 3 4 7 2 5 8 8 9 1 5 2 3 6 4 7 3 5 2 4 7 6 9 8 1 4 7 6 9 1 8 5 3 2

# **DAY TODAY**

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20) the month for getting down to

money is concerned. This is no time for frivolous attitudes and must have their odds carefully calculated. A personal commitment might also come with a price tag, as it happens.

will only make matters worse if you play the innocent. You know far more than you pretend! Give other people the benefit of the doubt, just for a change.

# This is not an

in family discussions mainly because, although you have your normal excellent grasp of the facts, these may be completely irrelevant. The best path might be to follow a gut instinct, just as long as you can restrain your impatience.

# CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

between two splendid groups of planets. I can quite understand if your only options seem to be a choice between the devil and the deep blue sea, but it's not really that bad. You just have to master the

# LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

the past.

Spare some time to pursue important professional goals, and if you're not currently at work, make a community ambition your

main priority. It doesn't matter what it is, just as long as the end result is an increase in your prestige, status and self-worth.

doubt concerned to know when

Kohli said at the presser on Saturday.

his two wickets neutered England's middleorder charge. Shardul is a swing bowler, a valuable commodity in English conditions. As a lower-order batsman, he is a serious upgrade on Ishant. On many an occasion in domestic cricket, Shardul has bailed out Mumbai with his batting. His 67, and a 123run partnership with Washington Sundar in Brisbane earlier this year, turned the game on its head. Kohli spoke about partnership batting, how stands of 50-60 runs are more

problem. On his day, he is a match-winner and his Brisbane heroics confirm that. But away from home, such impact knocks are few and far between. India's middle order and lower-middle order have been suffering from Pant's current travails. Kohli refused to read too much into his 17-plus average after the first three Tests, protecting the young 'keeper-batsman and speaking about assessing his performance only after the series. At the same time, the skipper's antidote to tackle England's bowling was "concentration and precise decision-making"

Vengsarkar opined that an iffy middle or-

sive option and one loss will not shatter his belief. This, though, puts greater pressure on Pant. The youngster will be given a long rope, but the team template reduces his margin

> prosperous, but for some strange reason they are likely to

pick up the crumbs from somebody else's abundant

good fortune.

rather than you. Perhaps you'll

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 22)

it may occur to you that rather

something very useful for you

to learn. Listen well and you'll

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23 - Dec 22)

of the time.

Whatever is

displease someone but, rather

tack and mix with people who

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

overall tension and uncertainty

considerably less than it was

one or two years ago, but you

still need regular sign-posts if

you're to find your way along

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

good luck for granted. That

you'll then stop noticing your

would be a shame, for

advantages and could

opportunity slip through

even let a valuable

Sensational

planetary aspects

thick and fast that you might soon come to take

are now coming so

in your life should be

life's little voyages.

You must continue

at every available

opportunity. The

to take your bearings

proposed now is bound to

than wasting your time on such ungrateful types, why

don't you just change

value vour truly

wonderful gifts?

You can't keep

everybody happy all

eventually turn the tables

on them.

than resisting a partner's

criticism, there may be

Life goes on in spite

of someone else's

mildly obstructive

behaviour. Actually,

# BY PETER VIDAL

LIBRA (Sept 24 - Oct 23) It's your period of The most important planetary relationships of the

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21) You may expect an emotional start to the day, and if

someone should happen to fly off the handle you

### GEMINI (May 22 - June 21) especially favourable

time for expressing feelings or engaging

# You are sandwiched

incredible feat of going all out for the future while hanging on to everything that's best from

### VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sept 23) You are still in a

quandary over one particular personal matter. You are no

the air will clear, but it could be a few months yet, so you may as well stop worrying. The question you should ask is what you can do to help yourself now, circumstances to change

### your fingers. PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar

In spite of your

reputation, you are often very good at explaining yourself. In fact, you may be one of the only people for miles around who is capable of comprehending the true significance of today's emotional events. Your wisdom may be much in demand.

# Nishad leaps to the podium

High jumper, who lost his hand in fodder-cutting machine, wins silver medal at Tokyo Paralympics

**NITIN SHARMA** 

CHANDIGARH, AUGUST 29

AS 23-YEAR-OLD Nishad Kumar posed alongside Americans Roderick Townsend and Dallas Wise after winning the silver medal in men's T-47 high jump event at the Tokyo Paralympics, his parents were somehow holding back tears in village Badaun in Himachal Pradesh's Una district.

Rashpal Singh and Pushpa Kumari remembered how, 14 years ago, Nishad lost his right hand in a fodder-cutting machine. With Rashpal working as a mason, it has been a long journey to the podium. "As parents, whenever we remember the day when Nishad's hand got into the fodder-cutting machine at our home, we cry. Today's medal is the reward for his hard work. To see him hold the Indian flag and the silver medal at the Tokyo Paralympics has made us forget all the hardships," an emotional Rashpal told The Indian Express from Una.

At Tokyo, Nishad jumped 2.02m in his first attempt in the medal round before reaching 2.06m in his third attempt. It was only bettered by Townsend with a jump of 2.15m with Wise tied with Nishad on 2.06m.

With his father owning less than an acre of farmland in their village, Nishad grew up seeing his father doing masonry work to support the family. Nishad was six when his right hand went into the fodder-cutting machine while helping his mother at home. He was taken to a hospital in nearby Hoshiarpur in Punjab, but the hand had to be amputated.

Two years later, Nishad would opt for athletics under coach Ramesh at the Saraswati Vidya Mandir, Katohar Khurd, and would initially compete in 200m and 400m apart from high jump. "When Nishad recovered, he was disappointed for some time but watching sports events on television aroused interest in sports and he asked coach Ramesh at his school about starting athletics. He never saw him lesser than anybody and would often tell his mother that he will do better than normal athletes. He competed in normal categories early in his career," remembers Rashpal.

### Rapid rise

While a young Nishad would win a high jump silver medal in the sub-junior category at the 2013 National School Games in Patiala, it was not untill 2017 that he started competing in the para category. The athlete came to Panchkula to train under Naseem Ahmad, coach of Olympic javelin throw champion Neeraj Chopra, and Vikram Chaudhary. He would win the silver medal in high jump with an effort of 1.83m at the National Para Athletics Championship at Panchkula the same year. In 2019, Nishad would emerge as the champion at the World Para Grand Prix Championship in Dubai with a jump of 1.92m before getting a bronze medal at the World Para Championships at Dubai the same year with a jump of 2.00m.

"When he came to train, we were impressed by his height and the way he took advantage of it. He had learnt the basics of the Fosbury Flop technique on TV but we had to work a lot in improving him. He had made jumps of 1.40-1.55m in the general category and we made him spend time on vertical jumps on a board apart from standing jumps near the pit box and the high jump area. It helped him master the Fosbury Flop technique and the medal in the Para Nationals in 2017 gave him the belief that he can do more. Once his body balance and technique was finetuned, we would make him jump 50-60 jumps



Nishad Kumar in action at the Tokyo Paralympics on Sunday. (Below) With his coach Naseem Ahmad Reuters/Express

shouted at the Tokyo Metropolitan

Gymnasium – the venue for the table tennis

'Cho-lay,' has its roots in China - a country

that has dominated the sport to such an extent

that foreign players (even Indians) have started

using it. Essentially, cho-lay means 'good, one

more.' But Patel's own war-cry, her unique

identity, found a permanent place in the sport's

the medal ceremony for the Class 4 (wheel-

chair) women's singles event, there was an

Indian flag too. The silver was Patel's – a testi-

mony to her unexpected, but not undeserved,

achievement. It made her the first ever Indian

(able-bodied or impaired) paddler to have

medalled at the Olympics or Paralympics, also

The World No 12 was never expected to get

this far in her first-ever appearance at the

Games, not even get out of the group stage her

rankings considered. But she beat World No 9

Megan Shackleton of Great Britain in the round

robin. Then World No 8 Joyce De Oliveira of

Brazil in the Round of 16, Serbian World No 2

Rankovic in the quarterfinal, and finally 2016

Rio silver medallist and World No 3 Zhang

Miao in the semi-final. In the summit clash she

fell to World No 1 Ying Zhou – a legend in her

own right who won her sixth Paralympic gold

India's first at this edition.

As three Chinese flags were raised during

event at the Tokyo Paralympics.

### The 41-year-old BSF man, whose Army man father was injured during the 1971 Indo-Pakistan war, produced a best throw of 19.91m to finish third behind

Piotr Kosewicz (20.02m) of Poland and Velimir Sandor (19.98m) of Croatia. However, the result has been challenged by some other competitors, who have objected to his classification in the F52 category. The grounds of the protest are not clear as the process was

tale of resilience by clinching a bronze

medal in the men's F52 event but a

protest has put his celebrations on hold.

Vinod's bronze on

hold after protest

Tokyo: Left bed-

ridden for close to

10 years after

falling off a cliff,

Indian discus

thrower Vinod

Kumar scripted

an astonishing

completed on August 22.

# Silver pocketed, music and merriment begin for table tennis star Bhavina

four days a week and he showed improvement with medals at World Grand Prix and World

Championships," remembers Ahmad.

### Support system

Nishad's growing prowess and ambition meant his family had to find money to fund his training. "When Nishad told me that he had to train at Panchkula. I told him not to worry about expenses. Sometimes, I would travel to nearby villages or to Punjab for work. Sometimes, I would get daily work at Rs 350-400 for 10-15 days per month and sometimes for 20-25 days per month. Whatever we could save, we saved for his training expenses and would also ask relatives for help apart from taking loan from the village cooperative society," says Rashpal.

The last one year has seen Nishad training in Bengaluru under Satyanarayan, coach of Rio Paralympics gold medallist Mariyyapan, and Ahmad believes Nishad will only improve further. "His biggest strength has been the ability to do what he visualises in training as well as in competitions. His speed before the jump was excellent and he did not look under pressure. To win a medal with a new Asian record jump speaks of his confidence. He is young and I am sure he can achieve more in the coming years," shares Ahmad.

At the village, Pushpa and Nishad's sister Rama Kumari are waiting for his return. "Bahut hi sherdil bachha hai. Jab se wo acci-(He is a lion-hearted kid. Since the accident, he always gave us support). He loves eating his favourite makki ki roti and saag. When he returns, we will welcome him with his favourite food," said Pushpa.



Bhavina Patel after her final on Sunday.

medal in the final.

"With this run she's probably going to go up to the number six or seven spot," says Pramod Gangrade, general secretary of the Para Table Tennis Promotion Association (PTTPA). "The big goal now will be to keep at that spot and go higher. For that she has to continue going for tournaments regularly."

# Different demeanour on court

But that's something Gangrade, a former para table tennis player himself (he was stricken with polio and has a disabled left leg) is confident Patel will anyway be targeting. He's known the 34-year-old since 2010, and he's seen how her demeanour changes when she enters a tournament

"She's been a very jovial, fun-loving friendly person, but when a tournament starts, she goes into a shell," he explains.

"She will go to the stadium, play her match, head back to her room and rest. She'll come out to have her food, and head back to the room. She'll speak little to nothing to people, and she's not really interested in roaming around and sight-seeing. She's there to play. She wants nothing to distract her. The same thing happened in Tokyo.

Now that the medal has been secured though, Gangrade is reminded of what happened the last time he had seen her win a title at the nationals in March.

"She was all quiet when the tournament was on. After she won the final and the prize distribution was over, she came to me and said to play some music on the loudspeakers so that the players could dance," he says. "It was quite an endearing sight - these players in their wheelchairs dancing to Daler Mehndi and Mika Singh songs."

There will be celebrations no doubt when she comes back to India as well. But there is a hope that government officials et al who will hold felicitation programs will be considerate.

Diagnosed with poliomyelitis when she was a year old, Patel has been playing the sport for half her life. It's a much-needed release and method of exercise for her, but it does take its toll. "These players suffer from stiff back issues

very quickly. If they sit for more than two 2 hours in the wheelchair at a stretch it becomes very stiff and painful. The only way to counter it is to lie down for a while at intervals," Gangrade says.

"No matter how much fitness work you do, this problem persists. But I'm sure she'll smile through everything and sit through all the functions even if it goes on for eight hours. These players aren't starved for facilities, they long for recognition."

The celebration will only last for a monthand-a-half though, as her husband Nikul exis still more to be achieved. The World Championships are coming up, then we'll have the Commonwealth Games and Asian Games. We will not stop here," says the former u19

# **BRIEFLY** —

# Four gold medals for India at Asian junior boxing championship

New Delhi: It was gold rush for India at the Asian Junior Boxing Championships in Dubai with four pugilists from the country finishing on top in the finals held on Sunday. Rohit Chamoli (48kg), Bharat Joon (+81kg), Vishu Rathee (girls 48kg), and Tanu (girls 52kg) notched up contrasting victories in their summit clashes to bag the top prize. While Chamoli defeated Mongolia's Otgonbayar Tuvshinzaya in an intense final, Joon got the better of Kazakhstan's Yerdos Sharipbek 5-0 to finish on top. In another final, Gaurav Saini (70kg) signed off with a silver medal after losing 0-5 Boltaev Shavkatjon of Uzbekistan. In the girls' competition, Rathee picked up the gold medal defeating Uzbekistan's Bakhtiyorova Robiyakhon

# Nagal pulls out of Davis Cup tie

New Delhi: Indian tennis player Sumit Nagal has withdrawn from the country's upcoming away Davis Cup tie against Finland citing a hip injury and has been replaced by Saketh Myneni in the five-man squad for the indoor contest on September 18-19. Nagal, who had lost in the first round of the US Open Qualifiers, communicated to the national tennis federation AITA on Saturday that doctors have advised him not to play on the hard courts. Non-playing captain Rohit Rajpal and chairman of the selection committee, Nandan Bal then discussed the replacement and agreed upon the name of Myneni, who last played for India in 2018 in the World Group Play-off tie against Serbia.

# Mumbai defeat Oman by 4 wickets

Muscat: Young opener Yashasvi Jaiswal's stroke-filled 82 and a disciplined show by the bowlers formed the cornerstone of Mumbai's comfortable four-wicket win over hosts Oman in the first one-day here on Sunday. After losing the T20 series 1-2, Mumbai have started the one-day series on a high. Mumbai first bundled out the hosts for 196 and then cantered to the target in 43.4 overs, with Jaiswal being the star performer. The second one-day will be played on Tuesday.

# Former IOC prez Rogge no more

Jacques Rogge, the Olympic sailor and  $or tho pedic \, surgeon \, from \, Belgium \, who$ led the International Olympic Committee as president for 12 years, has died. He was 79. The IOC announced his death on Sunday without giving details. Rogge's health had visibly declined when he attended Olympic events since his presidency ended in 2013, after being appointed IOC's eighth president in 2001. Rogge represented Belgium in rugby and was a world champion in sailing

-JOURNALISM OF COURAGE

PTI & AP

# **Juventus start life without** Ronaldo with a shock loss

TURIN, AUGUST 29

LACKLUSTRE JUVENTUS began life without Cristiano Ronaldo by suffering a suprising 1-0 defeat at home to promoted Empoli in Serie A on Saturday. Juve, who this week agreed a deal with Manchester United to sell

Ronaldo to the Premier League club, looked shorn of ideas up front in the Portuguese forward's absence. Other than some fierce Federico Chiesa strikes from range, the hosts did not threaten to score in the first half as Empoli edged into a surprise lead when captain Leonardo Mancuso swept the ball home at the far post in the 21st minute. After the break, Juventus coach Massimiliano Allegri introduced Alvaro Morata, Dejan Kulusevski and new signing Manuel Locatelli from the bench but, even with all that firepower on the pitch, they created few openings of note. Empoli saw out their first win back in the Italian top flight in relative

comfort, leaving Juve on one point from their opening two matches of the season. "It's a difficult moment," Allegri told DAZN. "We need to grow, we have to face our problems together. There have been too many players who have done things poorly who don't usually drop to that standard." Having started the season with a 2-2 draw at Udinese, Juve, even without Ronaldo, were widely expected to have too much for their newlypromoted opponents. Chiesa, who came in for Ronaldo, almost broke the deadlock early on from distance, but his arrowing effort was brilliantly saved by Empoli goalkeeper Guglielmo Vicario.

That was as good as it got in the first half for Juve, with the visitors breaking well and creating the opening for Mancuso, who reacted quickest to the loose ball in the area to fire home.

Juve supporters let their feelings be known as attack after attack broke down, with Paulo Dybala especially guilty of some wayward passing. The home side threw everything at their opponents late on but apart from Locatelli's dragged effort wide, an equaliser never looked likely, with that Ronaldo-shaped hole a tough one to fill. Juve failed to win their first two league matches at the start of a season for just the third time in their last 52 top-flight campaigns.

# Barcelona, Real Madrid eke out narrow wins

Barcelona's Memphis Depay scored for the second game in a row to give his side a 2-1 win at home to Getafe in LaLiga on Sunday in another unconvincing overall performance from the Catalans. And in Madrid, amid reports that Kylian Mbappe could soon be on his way, Real Madrid won 1-0 at Real Betis in the Spanish league on Saturday. Right back Dani Carvajal volleyed in a pass from Karim Benzema in the 61st minute.



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Keynote speaker & panelist Meher Pudumjee Chairperson, Thermax Limited

Fifth Edition

# **Creating livelihoods: What can policy do?**

Millions of migrant workers were the worst affected by the Covid-induced economic disruptions as their livelihood opportunities disappeared overnight. As the Covid caseload declines and the vaccination rate increases, there is hope that the economy will grow and create more jobs.

But will the benefits of economic growth be limited to the formal sector workers? What can be done to create more livelihood opportunities for migrants workers? What are the policy changes required to address the grievances of unemployment among migrant workers?

Join us as we delve into these questions and more.



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