



## BREAKS DEADLOCK AFTER JUSTICE NARIMAN RETIREMENT

# Collegium recommends 8 HC judges, advocate, to SC; 3 are in line for CJI

Process sacrosanct, says CJI Ramana, anguished over 'speculation' in media on recommendations

APURVA VISHWANATH  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

THE SUPREME Court Collegium headed by Chief Justice of India N V Ramana Wednesday officially notified its recommendation of nine names for appointment as judges to the top court.

If the recommendations are accepted, three more judges could be added to the line of succession for the CJI's post – till mid-2028 – including the first woman CJI.

As The Indian Express reported Wednesday, Justice B V Nagarathna of the Karnataka High Court could become the first woman CJI. The other two



CJI Ramana -led Collegium cleared the names. Of them, (from left) Advocate Narasimha, Karnataka HC judge Nagarathana and Gujarat Chief Justice Vikram Nath could become CJI

on the list who could become CJI are Justice Vikram Nath, Gujarat High Court Chief Justice; and Senior Advocate P S Narasimha. However, all three are likely to

have relatively short tenures. Besides these three names, the Collegium has also recommended Karnataka High Court Chief Justice A S Oka, Telangana

High Court Chief Justice Hima Kohli, Sikkim High Court Chief Justice J K Maheshwari, and Justices M M Sundresh (Madras High Court), C T Ravikumar

(Kerala High Court) and Bela M Trivedi (Gujarat High Court) for appointment as judges to the apex court.

This also ends the 22-month-long deadlock days after Justice Rohinton Nariman retired.

Justice Nariman, a member of the Collegium since 2019, is said to have put his foot down that no consensus could emerge on the names unless the two most senior judges in the all-India seniority list of High Court judges, Karnataka High Court Chief Justice Oka and Tripura High Court Chief Justice Akil Kureshi, were recommended first.

All the nine names were

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## SUNANDA PUSHKAR CASE

# Court clears Tharoor in wife's death, he says long nightmare over

Charged with abetment to suicide, cruelty; defence argued cause of death not clear yet, police took 'adventurous' route

ANAND MOHAN J  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

OVER SEVEN years after his wife, Sunanda Pushkar, was found dead, a Delhi court on Wednesday discharged Congress MP Shashi Tharoor in a case of abetment to suicide and cruelty.

Special Judge Geetanjali Goel pronounced the order at a virtual hearing in which Tharoor was present. The detailed order is awaited.

Tharoor told the court that it was "seven-and-a-half years of absolute torture". He later released a statement saying that his faith in the judiciary had been "vindicated" and his "long nightmare" was over.

"I have weathered dozens of unfounded accusations and media vilification patiently, sustained by my faith in the Indian judiciary, which today stands vindicated. In our justice system, the process is all too often the punishment. Nonetheless, the fact that justice has been done, at last, will allow all of us in the



Tharoor with Pushkar. He says 'kept faith in judiciary'

family to mourn Sunanda in peace," he said.

"I would like to express my humble thanks to Judge Geetanjali Goel for her orders today, discharging me from the charges levied by the Delhi Police, which I have consistently described as preposterous. This brings a significant conclusion to the long nightmare which had enveloped me after the tragic passing of my late wife

### 7 YEARS A CASE

JAN 17, 2014: Pushkar found dead in a hotel.

JAN 1, 2015: FIR against unknown persons on charges of murder.

MAY 15, 2018: Tharoor named in chargesheet for 'abetting suicide'

AUG 31, 2019: Police ask court to try him for above, or "alternatively" frame murder charges.

APRIL 12, 2021: Court reserves order.

## SC Collegium approves Justice Kausik Chanda as permanent judge of Calcutta High Court

APURVA VISHWANATH  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

THE SUPREME Court Collegium headed by Chief Justice of India N V Ramana on Wednesday notified its decision confirming Justice Kausik Chanda, additional judge of Calcutta High Court, as permanent judge of that court.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the Collegium on August 17.

In June this year, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had told the High Court that the state government had objected to the proposal to appoint Justice Chanda as a permanent judge.

Justice Chanda was caught in the eye of a political storm in West Bengal when Banerjee sought that the case seeking re-evaluation of the Nandigram election results be reassigned from his bench, citing a "likelihood of bias".

During the hearing for refusal of the judge, Banerjee had stated that the judge could be biased as the government had opposed the proposal to appoint him as permanent judge since he was an "active member" of the BJP.

In a letter to Chief Justice (Acting) Rajesh Bindal, Banerjee's counsel Sanjay Basu had said that the Chief Minister had earlier "conveyed her objections and reservations" about Justice Chanda's confirmation as permanent judge, and so there was "reasonable apprehension... of bias". Eventually, Justice Chanda recused from hearing the case.

Justice Chanda was Additional Solicitor General of India in the High Court in 2015 before his appointment as judge. He has a tenure till 2036 as a judge of the High Court.

On Wednesday, the Collegium for appointments to High Courts, which comprises Justices U U Lalit and A M Khanwilkar apart from the CJI, also notified that it has approved proposals to appoint six

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# Plans for a ruling council as talks continue; 3 killed in first protest

REUTERS & ASSOCIATED PRESS  
KABUL, AUGUST 18

AT LEAST three people were killed in anti-Taliban protests in Jalalabad on Wednesday, witnesses said, as the militant group tried to set up a government and Western countries stepped up evacuations of diplomats and civilians.

More than a dozen people were injured after Taliban militants opened fire on protesters in the eastern city, two witnesses and a former police official told Reuters.

Witnesses said the deaths took place when local residents tried to install Afghanistan's national flag, a day before the country's Independence Day, at a square in Jalalabad, some 150 km from the capital on the main road to Pakistan.

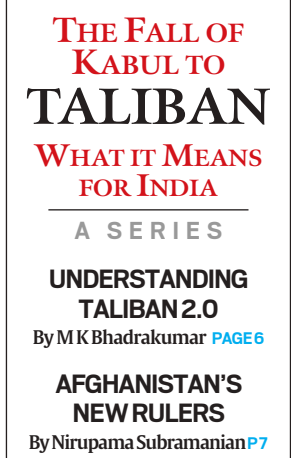
The Taliban have promised peace following their sweep into Kabul, saying they will not take revenge against old enemies and will respect the rights of women within the framework of Islamic law.

But many Afghans remain deeply skeptical, and the violent response to Wednesday's protest could only fuel their fears. Thousands are racing to the airport and borders to flee the country.

As the Taliban consolidated



Taliban released this photo Wednesday of talks with Karzai, Abdullah and Haqqani leader Anas Haqqani in Kabul. AP



power, one of their leaders and co-founders, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, returned to Afghanistan for the first time in



more than 10 years. A Taliban official said leaders would show themselves to the

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# In a thin slice of the job market, wages see a sharp jump, but Covid stress is still looming

SANDEEP SINGH & GEORGE MATHEW  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

JOB IN MANY sectors of India Inc for the quarter-ended June 2021 have seen a sharp rise in wages and salaries, suggesting a revival of sentiments and confidence in a thin slice of the labour market.

While the entire economy was hit hard by Covid-19 pandemic, April-June 2021 emerged as the first quarter in the last five that showed a large-scale revival

in wage expenses by listed companies, reflecting upward revisions and fresh hiring.

Data of 1,427 listed non-financial companies collated by RBI and presented in its 'State of the Economy' report released on Tuesday, shows that out of 16 key sectors, 11 witnessed double-digit growth in salaries and wages, and four witnessed more

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GOVT GETS TIME FOR COVID RELIEF NORMS

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INDUSTRY-WISE WAGES AND SALARIES Y-O-Y GROWTH (%)						
Quarter ended	Mar -20	Jun -20	Sep -20	Dec -20	Mar -21	Jun -21
Textiles	2.1	-29.8	-19.2	-8.8	0.1	37.7
Auto and Ancillaries	-13.2	-21.1	-7.2	4.7	6.2	25.5
Metals and Mining	-0.5	-2.3	0.9	14.6	25.3	22.6
Consumer Durables	5.6	-13.1	-9.1	-3.6	4.1	21.5
Oil and Gas	-3.9	-4.1	10.5	18.9	13.3	18.6
IT	10.5	7.3	5.5	6.8	8.6	16.4

Source: RBI

## THE WORLD



HONG KONG POLICE ARREST FOUR OVER 'TERRORISM'

400 BOOKED FOR HARASSING, ABUSING PAKISTANI YOUTUBER GIRL

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## PAGE 1 ANCHOR

KIRAN PARASHAR  
BENGALURU, AUGUST 18

AN AIR-CONDITIONING technician belonging to Udupi district in Karnataka returned home Wednesday after spending 604 days in a prison in Saudi Arabia on charges of defaming the Crown Prince and

a community on social media. Harish Begera, 34, faced life in prison or the death penalty,

before a probe by the Udupi police found that impersonators were behind the post that landed him in jail.

A resident of Bijadi village, Bangera was arrested on December 22, 2019, in the Saudi city of Dammam where he worked. This was three days after he shared a Facebook post that supported the Indian government's Citizenship (Amendment) Act and plans for a National Register of Citizens, drawing his employer's ire.

"I released a video apologise for sharing the post. I did not,



Harish Bangera with his family on his arrival at Bangalore airport Wednesday. Probe in India helped clear him. Express

however, mention that it was specifically for the post which I had made, and later deactivated my Facebook account," Bangera, who arrived in Bengaluru on Wednesday morning, told The Indian Express.

But soon, there was another Facebook account, in his name, where defamatory posts were put up against Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman and a community, leading to his arrest.

Back home in Udupi, his wife Sumana M filed a complaint with the district police, saying unknown persons had imper-

sonated Bangera on Facebook.

In October last year, local police arrested two brothers from Moodbidri town in Dakshina Kananda district, Abdul Huyez and Abdul Thuyez, after their probe found that the two had created the Facebook account in Bangera's name the same day as he deactivated his profile. According to police, they did it out of anger over Bangera sharing a post supporting the CAA and NRC.

The Udupi district police submitted a chargesheet within 10 days. SP, Udupi, N Vishnuvardhan told The Indian

discrimination", a bench of Justices S K Kaul and Hrishikesh Roy asked the government "to take a constructive view of the matter", and referred to the court's ruling, on February 17 last year, allowing permanent commission for women officers.

The court was hearing a plea filed by Advocate Kush Kalra, seeking directions to allow eligible women candidates to appear for the NDA and Naval Academy Examinations conducted by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

sion to NDA "is based on gender

## EXPLAINED Towards gender equality

AFTER its February 2020 order granting permanent commission to women Short Service Commission officers in the Army, this interim order is another step for gender equality.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

OVER A year after its landmark verdict on granting permanent commission to women officers of the Indian Army serving under Short Service Commission, the Supreme Court, in an interim order on Wednesday, allowed women candidates to sit for the National Defence Academy (NDA) entrance exam scheduled to be held on September 5.

Stating that the "policy decision" to bar women from admis-





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WEB EXCLUSIVE



**'MY HERITAGE IS MY CREATIVE FOUNDATION': BIBHU MOHAPATRA**

"Since I have moved to the west, I have built my aesthetic structure on that solid foundation of my heritage. I design for a global audience, but the influences of my Odia heritage is always present as a guiding line," the fashion designer said

TECH



**PHONE COMPANIES' 'RISK-AVERSE' PHASE**

Not ready to move beyond the foundation laid by Steve Jobs

IN PICS



**THE SHOW WILL NOT GO ON**

For Bengal's Jatra artistes, Covid takes away work, hope

EXPRESS



AUDIO

**Ground report from Kabul and making sense of the Afghan crisis so far**

In a special Indian Air Force aircraft, India evacuated a total of 130 diplomats and around 20 Indians. In this flight was also Indian Express' Associate Editor Shubhajit Roy who had been reporting from Kabul.

## FROM PAGE ONE

### Calcutta High Court

additional judges of the Karnataka

High Court as permanent judges of that court. The six judges are Justices Sanjay Gowda, Jyoti Mulimani, Nataraj Rangaswamy, Hemant Chandangoudar, Pradeep Singh Yerur and Maheshan Nagaprasanna.

For the Telangana High Court, the Collegium recommended appointment of six district judicial officers and a member of the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal as judges. Those recommended are judges Sree Sudha, C Sumalatha, G Radha Rani, M Laxman, N Tukaramji, A Venkateshwar Reddy and ITAT member P Madhavi Devi.

### NDA exam

The bench asked the UPSC to issue a corrigendum in keeping with its interim direction and "give due publicity so that the intent of the order is translated into effect". It, however, said that admission of women candidates will be subject to the final outcome of the petition.

"Why are you continuing in this direction? Even after Justice Chandrachud's judgment expanding the horizons and extending permanent commission to women in the Army to women?... We are finding it absurd," the bench told Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, who appeared for the Ministry of Defence.

On February 17 last year, a bench of Justices D Y Chandrachud and Ajay Rastogi directed the government to ensure that women Short Service Commission officers are given permanent commission in the Army, including command postings.

"Will the Army only act when a judicial order is passed and not otherwise," Justice Kaul asked. He said his impression from the time he served in the high court was that the Army doesn't believe in doing things voluntarily, but acts only after a judgment is passed.

Justice Kaul said that even in the permanent commission matter, the Army "kept on opposing", and did not act till orders were passed. He said "the Navy and the Air Force are more forthcoming", while "the Army seems to have a bias to not implement".

Denying any bias, the ASG said there are three modes for recruitment of officers into the Army -- NDA, Officers' Training Academy (OTA) and Indian Military Academy (IMA), and women are eligible for entry through the IMA and OTA.

"Why is co-education a problem," asked Justice Kaul, adding that "the endeavour is to persuade the Army to do things itself... rather than us passing orders".

When the ASG said it was part of a "policy decision", Justice Kaul remarked that "the policy decision is based on gender discrimination".

"Even if it is a matter of policy, you are allowing women's entry through two sources. Why should you say that one more additional source of entry is closed for women? It is not just a gender principle but discriminatory otherwise too," said Justice Roy.

The ASG said the NDA involves a different kind of training, but the bench pointed out that women are now being allowed in combat roles too. Bhati said while women fighter pilots were allowed in the Air Force, only 10 branches in the Army had been opened for them.

Saying that the Navy and Air

Force seemed more liberal in the matter, the court said: "The mindset is not changing only. The Solicitor General who was appearing before the high court in the permanent commission matter could not persuade the Army. Thereafter, the Supreme Court also gave many opportunities but it did not materialise. In law also, you did not regularise them. You kept them for many years and never gave permanent commission".

The court asked the government to "begin with some tokenism" and not to compel judicial intervention all the time. Stating that the court "may not understand all intricate, technical aspects of your structure", the bench said "you are better situated to appreciate that". The recruiters "must understand" the broad principle of gender neutrality "and adapt it in the backdrop of your peculiarities," it said.

Meanwhile, sources in the Army said discussions to allow women into the NDA were on even before the Supreme Court's interim order today. A senior Army officer said the service chiefs were already scheduled to visit the NDA on August 20 "to review the training and administrative arrangements for women cadets".

The "discussion on induction of women through NDA had been ongoing and was finding support among the leadership," said the officer. "Additional infrastructure to provide for women cadets has been approved earlier and should come up in a time-bound manner," he said.

### Tharoor

lawyer, Senior Advocate Vikas Pahwa.

Pushkar was found dead in a suite of a luxury hotel in Delhi on January 17, 2014. The Delhi Police initially registered an FIR against unknown persons on charges of murder, on January 1, 2015. Tharoor was later booked under IPC Sections 498A (husband or his relative subjecting a woman to cruelty) and 306 (abetment to suicide).

On August 31, 2019, the Delhi Police asked a Delhi court to prosecute Tharoor for abetment to suicide or "alternatively" frame murder charges against him.

The prosecution, spearheaded by Additional Public Prosecutor Atul Kumar Shrivastava, had submitted that while the post-mortem examination opined that the cause of death was poisoning, there were 15 ante-mortem injuries, between 12 hours and four days old, indicating a scuffle.

Rebutting this, Pahwa had said the cause of death was yet to be established, although the police had taken an "adventurous route" in its probe.

"There are rather reports which say it was neither homicide nor suicide. A psychological autopsy was conducted. They wanted to know the mental status of the victim. But, till date, they are not clear whether she committed suicide or it was a homicide," he had said.

The prosecution had told the court that the special investigation team had to approach the FBI, and the CFSL report "was not right".

In his response, Pahwa had said the prosecution had made "an irresponsible statement by claiming that the CFSL report was not right". "None of the labs in India say that alprax was found. The FBI report stated that only traces were found because she was consuming one or two tablets... this theory is in the air. It is only a figment of imagination of the prosecutor," he had said.

The prosecution had relied on a slew of Supreme Court rulings to argue that the concept

of cruelty varies, and mental torture and abnormal behavior may also amount to cruelty.

Citing three medical reports, the prosecution had claimed that the "cause of death was... probably Alprazolam poisoning". "The medical reports have opined that the poison was administered through the oral route, however, injectable route also cannot be ruled out," Shrivastava had told the court.

The prosecution had also relied on the statement of a key witness, Narayan Singh, who was working as a domestic help with the couple at the time. According to Singh's statement, the couple had big fights in the days before her death. The prosecution had cited statements of Pushkar's friends and relatives, and her mail recovered from a hard disk, to point to her "mental status".

Countering this, Tharoor's lawyer had told the court that Pushkar's tweets "clearly indicate that the deceased was not having any 'suicidal ideations' as is sought to be alleged by the prosecution". He had urged the court to bring on record Pushkar's tweets, a plea which was rejected.

"Rather, the deceased was in a positive frame of mind and was quite optimistic about her relationship with the applicant. Despite such overwhelming material, the police has sought to conclude that the deceased allegedly committed suicide due to her differences with the applicant," Pahwa had told the court.

"There are 10 witnesses whose statements are recorded, who are close friends, relatives or domestic helps, and none of them who closely know the family say even a word against the applicant (Tharoor), to show any allegation of cruelty or harassment," he had said.

### Kabul mission

Charge d' Affaires Atul Keshap. The Cabinet Secretariat was also involved in the process.

Both sides communicated over an encrypted messaging system on a "real-time basis". In fact, Keshap was in constant touch with the US base commander in Kabul airport, so that the Indian convoy could be allowed in.

The convoy, which moved at night, reached one of the gates of the US-controlled technical section of the airport. When it reached that area, there was a huge crowd outside the airport. The Indians were told it was not the designated gate on that day to access the airport. The US side asked the Indians to go to another gate, with a simpler and better access to the airport.

The whole process was co-ordinated between Delhi, Kabul and Washington over several messages.

After a wait for a few hours, the Indian convoy was redirected to a particular gate. They were able to access the airport after Keshap got approvals from the US base commander.

This was a complicated process, because some 20 vehicles were being re-routed from one gate to another of the technical area.

Once inside, the Indian convoy was taken to a patch from where the Indian Air Force aircraft could be accessed. And there, the US side, which was already busy transporting Afghan translators, tried to ensure that the Indians were at ease.

The US government's cooperation, sources said, was key to the evacuation of the Indian diplomats and the civilians -- a testament to the close strategic partnership between the two countries.

Jaishankar, who was en route to New York, also spoke

## Collegium recommends 8 HC judges, advocate, to SC; 3 are in line for CJI

reported by The Indian Express Wednesday.

Earlier in the day, CJI Ramana expressed anguish over "speculations" in the media about the Collegium's recommendations, and said he was "extremely upset about it".

Speaking at a farewell function for Justice Navin Sinha, who demitted office Wednesday, the CJI said: "The process of appointment of judges is sacrosanct and has certain dignity attached to it. My media friends must understand and recognise the sanctity of this process. As an institution, we hold the freedom of media and the rights of individuals in high esteem. Today's reflection in some sections of the media, pending the process, even before formalising the resolution is counter-productive. There were instances of deserving career progression of bright talents getting marred because of such irresponsible reporting and speculation. This is very unfortunate and I am extremely upset about it".

The CJI placed on record the "tremendous amount of maturity and responsibility displayed by majority of the senior journalists and media houses in showing restraint and not speculating on such a serious matter". He said "such professional journalists and ethical media are the real

### THE NINE NAMES

**Justice A S Oka**  
Chief Justice, Karnataka High Court

**Justice Vikram Nath**  
Chief Justice, Gujarat High Court

**Justice J K Maheshwari**  
Chief Justice, Sikkim High Court

**Justice Hima Kohli**  
Chief Justice, Telangana High Court

**Justice B V Nagarathna**  
Judge, Karnataka High Court

**Justice CT Ravikumar**  
Judge, Kerala High Court

**Justice M M Sundresh**  
Judge, Madras High Court

**Justice Bela M Trivedi**  
Judge, Gujarat High Court

**P S Narasimha**  
Senior Advocate

strength of the Supreme Court in particular and democracy in general... Expect all the stakeholders to uphold the integrity and dignity of this institution".

While CJI Ramana is set to retire on August 26, 2022, those next in line for the top post, in order of seniority, are

Justices U U Lalit, D Y Chandrachud, Sanjeev Khanna, B R Gavai and Surya Kant.

Justice Nath, whose parent High Court is the Allahabad High Court, is likely to succeed Justice Surya Kant in 2027. He will have a tenure of just over seven months, from February 9, 2027, to September 24, 2027.

Justice Nath has been heading the Gujarat HC's intervention on the government's handling of the pandemic, raising questions on issues including lack of hospital beds and availability of essential drugs. He brought in the first-ever live telecast of a courtroom, streaming the hearings on the Covid crisis on YouTube.

After he retires, Justice Nagarathna is slated to take office as the first woman CJI. Her tenure will last just over a month, from September 25, 2027, to October 29, 2027.

The last time a CJI served such a short tenure was in May 2004, when Justice Rajendra Babu served for just 29 days.

The daughter of former CJI E S Venkataramaiah, Justice Nagarathna practised commercial law in Bengaluru before being appointed an Additional Judge of the Karnataka High Court in 2008. She is currently the second

most senior judge in the high court.

Justice Nagarathna, along with Justice Oka, presided over the Covid bench which made several interventions. Justice Nagarathna also recently headed the bench that quashed the 25% domicile reservation introduced in the National Law School of India University, Bengaluru.

Senior Advocate P S Narasimha is slated to succeed Justice Nagarathna as CJI, and remain in the post from October 30, 2027, to May 3, 2028. The only other instance of a direct appointee serving as CJI was Justice SM Sikri in 1971.

Justice Sikri, who was the first member of the Bar to be appointed a judge of the SC, headed the 13-judge bench that delivered the landmark Kesavananda Bharati ruling which established the basic structure doctrine in constitutional law.

Narasimha, originally from Andhra Pradesh, is the son of Justice P Kodanda Ramaiah, a former judge of the Telangana High Court (then High Court of Andhra Pradesh). He has appeared in several important cases, including the Ram Janmabhoomi case, and was appointed an amicus by the Supreme Court in the BCCI matter for resolving disputes related to cricket administration in India.

Karzai and Abdullah Abdullah, a senior official in the ousted government.

Mohammad Yusof Saha, a spokesman for Karzai, said preliminary meetings with Taliban officials would facilitate eventual negotiations with Mullah Baradar.

Karzai and Abdullah met Wednesday with Anas Haqqani, a senior leader in a powerful Taliban faction. The US branded the Haqqani network a terrorist group in 2012, and its involvement in a future government could trigger international sanctions.

Reuters quoted a senior Taliban official saying Afghanistan may be governed by a ruling council and that the movement's supreme leader, Haibatullah Akhundzada, would likely remain in overall charge.

Meanwhile, videos from the Panjshir Valley north of Kabul, a stronghold of the Northern Alliance militias that allied with the US against the Taliban in 2001, appear to show potential opposition figures gathering there. It's in the only province that hasn't yet fallen to the Taliban.

Those figures include members of the deposed government -- Vice President Amrullah Saleh, who asserted on Twitter that he is the country's rightful president and Defense Minister Gen. Bismillah Mohammadi -- as well as Ahmad Massoud, the son of the slain Northern Alliance leader Ahmad Shah Massoud.

Thousands of Afghans, many of whom helped US-led foreign forces over two decades, are desperate to leave the country.

About 5,000 diplomats, security staff, aid workers and Afghans have been evacuated from Kabul in the last 24 hours, a Western official told Reuters on Wednesday.

The evacuations by military flights will continue around the clock, he said, adding that clearing the chaos outside the airport was a challenge.

Hundreds were outside the airport early Wednesday. The Taliban demanded to see documents before allowing the rare passenger inside. Many of the people outside did not appear to have passports, and each time the gate opened even an inch, dozens tried to push through. The Taliban fired occasional warning shots to disperse them.

### 34-yr-old

times a day. I barely spoke to them after I was jailed." He added that he was always confident he would get justice. "But I was freed only after spending 604 days in prison." SP Vishnuvardhan said, "We are happy Harish is back home. The case against the accused is under trial in the local court."

### Delhi riots

The youth caught on video being forced to sing Jana Gana Mana as well as Vande Mataram and who later died was identified as Faizan, a resident of Karam Puri. He had died at hospital a day after his release from Jyoti Nagar Police Station, where he had been taken by police. Families of two of the other men seen in the video had told The Indian Express that the video was shot at Karam Puri, on the evening of February 24.

The Delhi Police had deposed before the Delhi High Court that CCTV cameras at Jyoti Nagar Police Station were not working between February 24 and March 4 due to technical reasons, and that there was no tampering involved.

FULL REPORTSON  
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Kolkata



# 3 WEST BENGAL

## Union minister's comment on Tagore's skin tone sparks row

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, AUGUST 18



TMC says  
Subhas  
Sarkar made  
a 'racist  
comment'

UNION MINISTER of State for Education Subhas Sarkar on Wednesday courted controversy for making a comment about Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore's complexion, drawing flak from the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC).

Sarkar, the doctor-turned-MP from Bankura, said no one in Tagore's family, including his mother, cradled him in their arms when he was a baby because he was "dark-skinned". He made the comment an interaction with the teachers of Visva-Bharati University, which was founded by the Nobel laureate. He was at the institution to attend a felicitation ceremony for becoming a Union minister.

"All were fair-skinned in Tagore's family. Even Rabindranath Tagore was fair-skinned in reality. However, there are two types of fair skin tones. Those who have a yellow tint, and those with a reddish complexion. Tagore had the second type of skin tone. His mother and others in his family refused to take him in their laps as he was

dark-skinned. But that same person became world-famous," said the minister. Vice-Chancellor Bidyut Chakraborty was by Sarkar's side when he made the remark. The minister was accompanied by local BJP leader Dhruva Saha, a move that the TMC criticised.

"Subhas Sarkar is not aware of history. By all accounts, it is well known that Rabindranath Tagore was fair-skinned. This is a racist comment [by the minister] and an insult to the icons of Bengal. Subhas Sarkar should not be allowed to enter Visva Bharati ever again," said senior TMC leader and Diamond Harbour MP Abhishek Banerjee.

The ruling party accused the BJP of trying to politicise Visva Bharati by entertaining political leaders. "As a Union Minister of State for Education, Subhas Sarkar has every right to visit Visva Bharati. But how was he allowed to bring in local BJP lead-

ers along with him? There is an unfit vice-chancellor running the university who has taken a personal interest to turn the education institution into a hub of party activities. And on the comment made by the minister on Tagore, I have nothing to say than to have sympathy for people like them. They don't know the culture of Bengal. They only believe in discrimination," said TMC's Birbhum district president Anubrata Mondal.

Asked about Sarkar's controversial comment, noted educationist and former Rabindra Bharati University Vice-Chancellor Patrita Sarkar said, "I don't know on what basis he made that comment. I don't know whether he has read Tagore's biography. Tagore was not fair-skinned but that does not mean he was dark-skinned. I don't expect such comments from a Union minister."

Sarkar added, "Tagore was not of dark complexion though people such as his elder sister had described him as Rabi, our dark-complexioned boy...The minister did not clarify [what he meant]. And will he say what he wanted to prove by referring to the complexion of Tagore? How

does it matter? Did that matter for Tagore when he got the Nobel, did it matter for Tagore when he became a world visionary, a poet-writer-painter-playwright...?"

Echoing Abhishek Banerjee, CPI(M) central committee member Sujan Chakraborty said such comments only reflect the "racist and anti-Bengali mindset of the BJP".

The BJP, however, defended the minister. "Subhas Sarkar has neither said anything against Rabindranath Tagore nor his family. He has spoken against discrimination on the basis of skin colour. His comments were not at all intended to insult anyone. The TMC should stop politicising everything," said state BJP spokesperson Shamik Bhattacharya.

Agreeing with him, senior BJP leader and former Tripura governor Tathagatha Roy said, "His [Sarkar's] comments are being blown out of proportion. If you go through matrimonial advertisements, you will find Bengali families always seek a fair-complexioned groom or bride. His comments are just a reflection of the society and against such discrimination."

— WITH PTI INPUTS

## Expect enhanced rainfall in state today: Met

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, AUGUST 18

THE METEOROLOGICAL department has forecast "enhanced rainfall activity" over the districts of Sub-Himalayan West Bengal on Thursday.

According to officials, under the influence of low pressure area over coastal Odisha and adjoining Northwest Bay of Bengal, strong southerly winds from Bay of Bengal to northeast India will continue to prevail. Rain or thundershower very likely to occur at most places over the districts of Sub-Himalayan West Bengal during the 19th. The weather department has issued an orange alert for Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar and Coochbehar districts of Sub-



Kolkata and other parts of West Bengal have witnessed heavy downpours over the past few weeks. *File*

Himalayan West Bengal. Heavy to very heavy rain (07-20cm) is very likely to occur at one or two places over these places, the department said.

Yellow alert has been issued for several other places. Heavy rain (07-11 cm) is likely to occur at one or two places over North

Dinajpur district of Sub-Himalayan West Bengal. Weather department has also alerted authorities concerned of rise in water level in rivers, water logging in low lying municipal areas, damage of kuccha road and damage of standing vegetable crop. Landslides are

likely in Darjeeling and Kalimpong districts, officials warned. Kolkata and other parts of West Bengal have witnessed heavy downpour over the past few weeks. Heavy rain lead to waterlogging at several places and disruption of rail and road transport services.

On Wednesday, the Alipore meteorological department also forecast thunderstorms and rain (West Bengal Weather. The list includes Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri in North Bengal. Two 24 Parganas districts of South Bengal, two Medinipur, Purulia, Bankura, two Bardhamans will also receive heavy thundershowers. However, heavy rains are unlikely in Kolkata. The meteorological office said thunderstorm will occur due to low pressure and seasonal axis.

### 3 YEARS AFTER FIRE

## Bagri Market reopens for business

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, AUGUST 18

Three years after a fire swept through the Bagri market on Canning Street in central Kolkata in 2018, it is back in business. The market reopened on Tuesday with 900 shops and offices.

State Transport Minister Firhad Hakim, who also heads the Board of Administrators of the Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC), inaugurated the market. State minister for fire services Sujit Bose and fellow Trinamool Congress MLA Vivek Gupta were also present at the inauguration event.

"We saw what can happen when a market is raised by encroaching on a sidewalk," Hakim said, advising shopkeepers to abide by fire-fighting rules.

Apart from the medicine shops, this market is famous for housing wholesale shops dealing in a range of products.

A massive fire ripped through the six-storey on September 16, 2018 and could only be contained after a 36-hour battle. Several shops were gutted in the fire and many who depended on the mar-



The Bagri market area in Kolkata Tuesday. *Partha Paul*

ket for their livelihoods went out of work. The market had been closed since the horrific fire incident. "You have all seen and suffered the consequences of not abiding by the fire-fighting rules. There must be enough space for fire engines to arrive at the scene of a fire and roll out," Firhad said in his address to shopkeepers and traders at the reopening event.

It was only after the installation of new infrastructure and fire safety equipment that the market was allowed to reopen. It now has an underground water reservoir with a capacity of 50,000 litres. All floors at the six-storey complex are

equipped with smoke detectors. No shop will be allowed to encroach outside space to ensure that the approach area and the passage remains clear in the event of a contingency. There is enough space now for fire engines to make a smooth entry and exit in case of any untoward incident.

According to sources, the mar-

ket association has spent nearly about 17 crores on refurbishing the six-storey complex and installing fire-safety equipment.

Kolkata Police had filed a chargesheet against two directors of the market, Radha Bagri and Varun Bagri, in the wake of the 2018 blaze. They later obtained unconditional bail.

**अखिल भारतीय आयुर्विज्ञान संस्थान (एम्स), भुवनेश्वर**  
**ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), BHUBANESWAR**  
(A Statutory Body under the aegis of Ministry of H & FW, Govt. of India)  
Bijaja, Post: Dumusuma, Bhubaneswar - 751 019

**AIIMS/BBS/Dean/DM-MCh/79/1792 Date: 18<sup>th</sup> August, 2021**

**SPOT COUNSELLING FOR ADMISSION IN DM/ Mch COURSES AT AIIMS, BHUBANESWAR**

Some vacant seats of DM/MCh. Courses at AIIMS, Bhubaneswar for the session July 2021 will be filled up from the merit list conducted by AIIMS, New Delhi for the DM/MCh. Entrance Examination (July 2021). The candidates who have qualified through entrance examination stage - I (Online / CBT) for DM /MCh. courses (July - 2021 session) held on 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2021 and stage - II held on 09<sup>th</sup> June 2021 to 11<sup>th</sup> June 2021 will be eligible to attend the Spot Counselling.

The spot counselling will be conducted at AIIMS Bhubaneswar on 30<sup>th</sup> August, 2021 at Academic Section, Administrative Building, AIIMS, Bhubaneswar from 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 Noon (Candidate reporting after 12:00 Noon will not be considered for admission). Candidates are advised to visit our institute website: [www.aiimsbhubaneswar.nic.in](http://www.aiimsbhubaneswar.nic.in) regularly for the detailed vacant seat position & latest updates.

**Sd/- REGISTRAR**  
**AIIMS, Bhubaneswar**

## 'Coordinating with MEA for safe return of 200 Bengal residents stuck in Afghanistan'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, AUGUST 18

CHIEF MINISTER Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday said her government was coordinating with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) to ensure the safe return of 200 people from West Bengal still stranded in Afghanistan.

Banerjee said most of those stuck in Afghanistan were people from Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Terai who were working there. "The chief secretary will write to the Ministry of External Affairs to bring them back. We must first look after the safety of Indians," she added.

Chief Secretary Hari Krishna Divvedi has written to district administrations, asking them to prepare a list of residents stranded in Afghanistan. A senior state administration official said, "Mainly people from the Hill areas of the state are in Afghanistan. We are already preparing a list and will send it to the MEA very soon."

Asked if the BJP-led Central government should revisit the immigration policy in light of the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, Banerjee said, "It is a sensitive issue and a major policy decision."

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**IMPORTANT DATES:**  
Last Date for Online Registration Application Form: 21.08.2021  
Date of Online Entrance Examination : 27.08.2021

**Sd/- REGISTRAR, SMU**

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Admission will be made only on the basis of merit position as determined by candidate's score in BITSAT 2021.

The last date to complete the application process along with the prescribed fee of ₹1000 is **21<sup>st</sup> August 2021**. Further details and application procedure are available at the website: [www.bitsadmission.com](http://www.bitsadmission.com)

**Dean, Academic Undergraduate Studies BITS Pilani**

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**— The Indian EXPRESS —**

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Africa Education, RTI

**CONCLUDING REMARKS**

**MODERATOR**

**Uma Vishnu**  
Senior Editor  
The Indian Express

**Bikkrama Daulet Singh**  
Co-Managing Director  
Central Square Foundation

A year ago, the National Education Policy laid out a roadmap for overhauling Indian education, promising vital shifts in the learning process. However, that conversation got hijacked by the global pandemic as school-going children found themselves out of classrooms. Now as schools prepare to reopen, what can administrations and educationists do to address the learning loss and help children catch up? What are the tools we have as we attempt such a catch-up?

This edition of IE Thinc attempts to unpack some of these issues.

**The Indian EXPRESS**  
— JOURNALISM OF COURAGE —

Kolkata





Uttam Kumar Sarkar

## Uttam Kumar Sarkar named new director of IIM-Calcutta

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
KOLKATA, AUGUST 18

UTTAM KUMAR Sarkar was on Wednesday named the new director of IIM-Calcutta. The appointment will take immediate effect, the Indian Institute of Management-Calcutta said in a statement.

Sarkar was selected from a large number of highly accomplished and qualified aspirants from India and abroad, through a very rigorous search process that lasted several months, it said.

“Professor Sarkar knows IIM-Calcutta intimately; its history, culture and the aspirations of its large body of faculty, students, alumni, staff, board and all stakeholders,” Shrikrishna Kulkarni, the chairperson of the Board of Governors of IIM-Calcutta, said.

## IIT-KHARAGPUR FOUNDATION DAY

## NEP will turn India into global knowledge hub, says Pradhan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
KOLKATA, AUGUST 18

THE NEW Education Policy (NEP) 2020 will turn India into a global knowledge hub where the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) will play a crucial role, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said on Wednesday.

The IITs would not just be “centres of learning” but “centres of nation-building”, he said in his virtual address at the 71st foundation day programme of IIT-Kharagpur.

“NEP 2020, which has completed one year, is aimed at realising the vision of accessibility and equality in education...As more youths aspire to pursue technical education, we ensure none is deprived due to lack of proficiency in English,” Pradhan said.

The minister claimed NEP 2020 would break barriers and revolutionise the way technical education is imparted to deserving candidates.



Visitors at the Victoria Memorial in Kolkata on Wednesday after it reopened with Covid-19 protocols in place. PTI

# Local trains to roll again after 50% rural public gets jab: CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, AUGUST 18

CHIEF MINISTER Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday said local trains would be allowed to operate once half of the rural population is vaccinated against Covid-19. She said the government was deferring the restart of the trains because it was being cautious about a possible third wave of the pandemic.

“People in the villages are very much aware [of the situation]. We are emphasising increasing the vaccination rate in urban as well as rural areas. Gradually, we will allow local trains to run as soon as fifty per cent of people in villages get the antidote. Because there is a fear that children will be affected in the third wave. We are holding off on the launch of local trains in the interest of children. Because, when the parents return home in a crowded train, the children may also be affected by them,” Banerjee told reporters at the state secretariat after chairing an administrative meeting. Though the local trains are not running, many people are currently travelling in staff special trains.

Meanwhile, Banerjee said her government would rename Mother Dairy, a milk and dairy

products company run by the West Bengal Cooperative Milk Producers’ Federation, “Bengal Dairy”. Another Mother Dairy firm is operated by the National Dairy Development Board, which is controlled by the Centre.

“We sell our milk produce under the Mother Dairy brand. The name will now be changed to Bangla Dairy; the chief secretary has been asked to take necessary steps in the matter. Bangla Dairy is related to Bengal. Under the humanitarian project, the state government will insist on increasing the production of eggs, fish and meat. The number of poultry in the state will also be increased,” Banerjee said.

Talking about the meeting, the chief minister said matters related to losses incurred because of the recent floods were discussed. She informed that a team of state ministers would visit Delhi to meet the Union Minister of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, and the members of the Niti Aayog.

“We will place four demands before them — Ghatat master plan, master plans for the Sundarbans and Digha, places that suffer extensive suffering damage owing to cyclone, and improvement of various dams and reservoirs of the DVC

[Damodar Valley Corporation], including Tenughat and Panchet,” she said. Following the floods, Banerjee had blamed “unplanned” release of water from DVC dams for the “man-made floods”. Pointing out that the state government had taken up the Lower Damodar Basin project, worth Rs 3,000 crore, for water supply management, the chief minister said the ministerial team would also put forth its request for dredging the Ganga near Farakka Barrage in Murshidabad district.

Banerjee reiterated that the Centre had not given her administration any funds in the aftermath of cyclones Amphan, Fani, Yaas, and Bulbul. Contending that her government would not put up with any form of corruption, the Trinamool Congress chairperson said, “Anyone found involved in sand, coal or cattle smuggling will not be spared. The police have been asked to take strict action against those involved, whether it be an official or a political leader from outside. In Haldia, I know that BJP raises a lot of money.”

She maintained that the government would conduct an audit of “benami” accounts in co-operative banks. “The state government can hold audits and money found in any ‘benami’ accounts will be transferred to the

## STATE RECORDS 646 NEW COVID CASES, 7 DEATHS

Kolkata: The state saw a spike in Covid-19 infections and fatalities, with 646 new cases and 7 deaths reported in the last 24 hours. Five districts recorded one death each, while the North 24 Parganas logged two in the last 24 hours, taking the overall toll to 18,325. Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Bankura, Paschim Medinipur and Hooghly were the districts to have recorded one death each. Till date, the state has recorded 15,40,258 cases of which 15,12,218 have successfully recovered from the infection. Over the last 24 hours, 660 patients were discharged

PTI

government exchequer. Why will one particular person get to enjoy such money? It is the common people who should benefit from it,” Banerjee added. (WITH PTI INPUTS)

## ‘DUARE SARKAR’ CAMPS

# ‘Lakshmir Bhandar’ draws most enrolments in Phase 2

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, AUGUST 18

THE FIRST two days of the second phase of the state’s ‘Duare Sarkar’ project camp, which kicked off on Monday, saw people in their thousands making a beeline to sign up for government benefits and schemes. About 18,500 camps put together across the state in the second phase drew 29,02,049 people over the first two days.

According to government sources, ‘Lakshmir Bhandar’ has been the most sought-after scheme in this phase of the ‘Duare Sarkar’ initiative, with 60 percent of the people, who visited these camps, enrolling for it. Under this income support scheme of the government, homemakers belonging to general castes are to receive a monthly dole of Rs 500, while those belonging to the SC/ST communities would draw Rs 1,000 each per month. The yearly dole for general caste women works out to Rs 6,000 each.

Dedicated counters have been set up for the ‘Lakshmir Bhandar’ scheme at each camp under the ‘Duare Sarkar’ initiative.

The ‘Swasthya Sathi’ scheme drew the next most enrolments in this phase of the ‘Duare Sarkar’ camps, while the one for caste certificates drew the third-most interest. Apart from these, the re-



At a ‘Duare Sarkar’ camp in Kolkata on Monday. Partha Paul

maintaining 40% of enrolments were for Student Credit Card, Krishak Bandhu (New), ‘Bina Mulley Samajik Suraksha’ (social security free of cost), correction of minor errors in land records, opening of new bank accounts, Kanyashree, Rupashree, Khadya Sathi, Shikhashree, Tapasili Bandhu, Manabik, Jai Johar and mutations of Agricultural land.

The state launched the ‘Duare Sarkar’ initiative last January with an aim to take government services to the doorsteps of citizens. In the last phase of the initiative, people largely enrolled for the ‘Swasthya Sathi’ cards, or health cards.

South 24 Parganas was ahead of the rest of the state in terms of

‘Duare Sarkar’ applications on the first day of the ongoing phase. For all projects, 4,71,887 applications were received in this district in the first two days.

Despite all preparations, including applications with unique identification numbers, heavy rush of applicants enrolling for the ‘Lakshmir Bhandar’ scheme was noticed at many camps.

The camps would be in place till September 15. Some logistical issues cropped up on the first day, as there were reports of poor internet service at certain places and a snag was reported in the devices needed for enrolment in Swasthya Sathi scheme at some camps. However, necessary measures were taken to resolve these issues.

# Over 46 lakh applications received at ‘Duare Sarkar’ camps: Mamata

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
KOLKATA, AUGUST 18

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday said at least 46 lakh people had submitted applications to access the benefits of various welfare schemes during the second edition of the government’s ‘Duare Sarkar’ [Government at the doorstep] and “Paray Samadhan [Solution at neighbourhoods]” initiatives that commenced on Monday.

As part of the “Duare Sarkar” initiative, launched by the government last December, camps were set up across the state to empanel names of people for government schemes. The pro-



CM Mamata Banerjee at Nabanna Wednesday. CMO

gramme drew a huge response everywhere in the state, and is touted to have played a major

role in ensuring the Trinamool Congress (TMC) victory in the Assembly polls a few months ago. Of the 46 lakh applications submitted, 30 lakh were for accessing benefits of the “Lakshmir Bhandar” scheme under which women will receive financial assistance, said the chief minister.

Amid reports that people were pouring in at the “Duare Sarkar” camps, Banerjee asked everyone to follow the Covid-19 protocol. “The camps, numbering thousands, will run for a month. We will extend the period, if necessary,” she added.

The chief minister warned people against “unscrupulous elements” taking money from people to get their names enrolled for the schemes.

# CM says ex-Tripura Speaker wrote to her wishing to join TMC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, AUGUST 18

CHIEF MINISTER Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday said former Speaker of the Tripura Assembly, Jiten Sarkar, has written to her expressing his desire of joining the Trinamool Congress.

Sharing news of Sarkar’s letter with media persons on Wednesday, the CM claimed that her party will win the next Assembly election in Tripura and all the welfare projects that had been initiated in West Bengal will be replicated in the neighbouring state.

“Former Tripura Speaker Jiten Sarkar has sent me a letter saying he, along with others, wants to join the Trinamool Congress,” Banerjee told reporters.

The Trinamool supremo, who is keen to expand her party’s footprint to northeast states after coming to power for the third time on a back of a resounding mandate earlier this year, expressed confidence in Trinamool’s ability to wrest power from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Tripura.

“We will win Tripura next,” she said during the press conference at the state secretariat,

Nabanna.

The Trinamool received a major boost with regard to its Tripura goals after former Congress leader from the neighbouring state, Subal Bhowmik, joined the party last month.

In a further shot in the arm for the party, Congress leader Sushmita Dev joined the Trinamool in the presence of senior leaders Abhishek Banerjee and Derek O’Brien in Kolkata on August 16.

A former MP and chief of the All-India Mahila Congress, Dev sent her resignation letter to Congress chief Sonia Gandhi but offered no reason for it. “I have a long relationship with the Congress and I have written everything about that in my resignation letter,” she told reporters in Kolkata.

Hitting out at the BJP government in Tripura, the CM claimed on Wednesday, “There is no law and order in Tripura. The administration is out of order.”

She alleged that her party workers who went to Agartala were beaten up and threatened in a hotel. The electricity connection to the hotel was snapped, she alleged, adding that the BJP will not be able to hold the Trinamool back through such ploys.

## TMC replaces many civic body heads

Kolkata: In line with the party’s ‘one-person-one-post’ policy, the Trinamool Congress government in West Bengal on Tuesday initiated changes in about 100 municipalities and brought in new faces replacing old leaders who have been holding several other posts, a

senior minister said. Ministers Arup Roy, Rathin Ghosh, Sujit Basu and others were removed from the posts of administrators of various municipalities, Urban Development and Municipal Affairs Minister Chandrima Bhattacharya said.

PTI

**TAMIL NADU GENERATION AND DISTRIBUTION CORPORATION LTD**  
**Notice Inviting Tenders (E-Tendering Process)**

Sl.No	Tender Inviting Authority	Specification No	Total
1	SE/CIVIL/PCC	09, 10, 11	3

For details of works/Procurement/Due date of submission/opening, viewing and downloading of e-tenders, please visit website: [www.tangedco.gov.in](http://www.tangedco.gov.in), [www.tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app](http://www.tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app), [www.tenders.tn.gov.in](http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in)

DIPR/2452/TENDER/2021

**CHANDIGARH HOUSING BOARD**  
8, Jan Marg, Sector 9-D, Chandigarh, Ph.: 0172-4601809

**Notice for inviting e-tenders for allotment of Built-up Units in U.T. Chandigarh**

It is hereby notified for the information of general public that e-tenders are invited for the sale of Built-up Units. All the Commercial Units are being sold on Lease-Hold Basis. However, specific Residential Units are being sold on Lease Hold while other specific units are being sold on Free-Hold basis. E-tenders are invited individually for each of Built-up Unit.

- The E-Tender process is open for all the citizens of India as well as NRIs / PIOs above 18 years of age. The persons already having any property (Residential or Commercial) can also participate in the e-Tender.
- The Built-up Units shall be allotted to the highest eligible bidder, quoting above the reserve price of the Unit. The GST will not be applicable on the consideration / premium of the unit. However, in case of allotment on Lease-Hold basis, GST will be applicable on Lease Money / Ground Rent payable annually.
- All willing participants may visit the official website of the Chandigarh Housing Board [www.chbonline.in](http://www.chbonline.in) to understand the detailed procedure for submission of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) and e-bids. The Terms & Conditions and the detailed List mentioning localities / sectors of the Built-up Units and reserve price can be downloaded from the official website of the Chandigarh Housing Board.
- In order to submit e-bids, every prospective bidder is required to get himself / herself registered at <https://etenders.chd.nic.in>
- Stickers have been pasted at each of the Built-up Unit for better identification and Site Offices have been provided at different Sectors/Locations to facilitate inspection by the prospective bidders. The location of each of the unit on google map, address of the Site Offices and contact details of the officials are available on the official website [www.chbonline.in](http://www.chbonline.in). The days specified for the inspections of the units are as under:-

Sr. No.	Built-Up Units	No. of Units	Days for Inspections (10:00 AM to 5:00 PM)
1	Residential Units on Free-Hold Basis	34	Every Saturday
2	Residential Units on Lease-Hold Basis	33	Every Wednesday
3	Commercial Units on Lease-Hold Basis	149	Every Friday

**6. Schedule of dates for e-Tender of the Units :-**

Sr. No.	Event	Date & Time
1	Starting date & time for bid Submission	From 20 <sup>th</sup> August 2021 (10:00 AM)
2	Closing date & time for bid Submission	Till 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2021 (Upto 10:30 AM)
3	Opening of e-bids	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2021 (from 10:15 AM onwards)

**Chief Accounts Officer,**  
**Chandigarh Housing Board, Chandigarh**

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**CORRIGENDUM No. 01**

Date: 18-08-2021

20th August 2021 being the holiday on account of 'Muharram', the last date of submission of bids for e-Tender No. CIPET/HAL/ E-ten-01/Construction/2021-22 dated 29-07-2021 has been extended upto 31-08-2021, at 13.00 hrs. & opening of Technical bid on 31-08-2021 at 14.30 hrs. Sd/- DIRECTOR & HEAD

**Government of Odisha**  
E-mail ID- [sectorb\\_2006@yahoo.co.in](mailto:sectorb_2006@yahoo.co.in)  
Tel/Fax- 0671-2301751/2302751

**1st Corrigendum to Bid Identification No. CCE.Ctc.(R&B) 13/2021-22**

Tender Reference - CCE.Ctc.(R&B) 13/2021-22

The Bid availability period and Date of opening of the tenders have been modified as follows:-

Sl. No.	Bid Identification No.	Bid Availability period as per Tender Notice	Revised Bid Availability period	Bid opening Date as per Tender Notice	Revised opening Date
1	CCE.Ctc.(R&B) 13/2021-22	18.08.2021 to 16.00 Hours of 02.09.2021	26.08.2021 to 16.00 Hours of 09.09.2021	03.09.2021 at 11.00 Hours	13.09.2021 at 11.00 Hours

Further details can be seen from the website <http://tendersorissa.gov.in>.

Sd/- P.K. Pradhan  
Chief Construction Engineer  
Cuttack (R&B) Circle  
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Applications in prescribed format along with details of qualification, experience and contribution to profession/ research are invited from Indian Nationals for the recruitment to the posts of regular faculty positions (Professor & Associate Professor) in the various departments of the Institute. The details of the number of posts including required qualifications, eligibility criteria, scale of pay, Application Form and other general information are available at the Institute website [www.gcekr.ac.in](http://www.gcekr.ac.in). The last date for the receipt of applications at GCE, Keonjhar is **28.09.2021** during office hours by Speed Post/Registered Post only. A copy of the complete application form along with all Annexures is also to be sent to the mail id [recruitment@gcekr.ac.in](mailto:recruitment@gcekr.ac.in). The Institute will not be responsible for any postal delay. The qualifications, eligibility criteria, experience and publications etc. as on the last date of submission of Application only will be considered. Incomplete application or applications received after the last date will not be considered. The Institute reserves the right to fill-up or not to fill-up the post advertised or alter the number of posts advertised or even to cancel the entire selection process without assigning any reason thereof.

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Tender No.: EL-TRO-HWH-21-22-1, dated 17.08.2021. Sr. DEE/OP/Howrah invites open e-Tender against Tender No. EL-TRO-HWH-21-22-1 for the following works. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids upto closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Name of Work: Comprehensive Cleaning & Washing of Electric Running Room /BWN, office of the Sr. CC/BWN, CREW Lobby/ BWN & Locker Room For 2 Years, Bidding System: Single packet system, Advertised Value: Rs. 48,14,642.20. Earnest Money/Bid Security: Rs. 0.00. Obtain Bid Security Declaration in lieu of Bid Security: Yes, Date and Time of uploading Tender: 17.08.2021 at 12:54 hrs., Validity of Offer: 45 Days, Bidding Start Date: 30.08.2021, Tender Closing Date & Time: 13.09.2021 at 15.00 hrs. The details are available at website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

HWH-84/2021-22

Tender Notice is also available at websites : [www.ee.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.ee.indianrailways.gov.in) / [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

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Man’s death death inside jail: family seeks CBI probe

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

THE DELHI High Court Wednesday issued notice to the Centre, Delhi Police and Tihar Jail authorities in a peti-

tion seeking transfer of probe into the death of 29-year-old gangster Ankit Gujar, who was allegedly murdered inside the jail earlier this month, to the CBI.  
While seeking a status report from authorities, the

court also ordered preservation of CCTV footage of the incident and listed the case for hearing on September 2. The petition filed by his mother, brother and sister through advocates Mehmood Pracha and Shariq Nisar alleges that the

authorities are trying to “manipulate the investigation” to save and shield the culprits. The conduct of authorities “unabashedly” has been in favour of offenders and against the victims, it contends. The plea also seeks security of the family members.

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**HIGHLIGHTS**

- 1. 87<sup>th</sup> Position in NIRF India 2020 Rankings
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- 3. Credited good research output of Publications
- 4. Best Faculty to Project Ratio with good Research Funding
- 5. Meritorious Faculty with international experience
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**IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

Last Date of Online Registration and Submission of Application Form	1 September, 2021	Duration of Examination 120 Minutes (2 Hours)
Last Date of Successful Fee Transaction	2 September, 2021	Mode of Examination LAN Based CBT (Computer Based Test)
Date of Examination	15, 16, 23 and 24 September, 2021	Pattern of Examination Objective comprising Multiple Choice Questions

**GENERAL INFORMATION –**

- Detailed information about CU-CET 2021 is available on CUCET website (<https://cucet.nta.nic.in>)
- Candidates are required to apply online through CU-CET 2021 website.
- Candidates appearing in the first examination of the qualifying degree are also eligible to apply.
- Admission to all Programmes shall be based on the Entrance Test CU-CET 2021
- Details of Programme of Study, Eligibility Criteria, Programme Structure, Faculty Profile etc. are available on [www.cup.edu.in](http://www.cup.edu.in)

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**For Admissions Query Email: [admissions@cup.edu.in](mailto:admissions@cup.edu.in), Phone: 09464269330**

I Aleya Begum W/O Abdul Gafur of Kismat Hasdaha pt III, PO: Kismat Hasdaha, P.S.: Dhubri, Dist: Dhubri (Assam), declare that after marriage my name changed to Aleya Bibi. Both the name Aleya Begum and Aleya Bibi is the same identical person.

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**Tender Notice**

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Last Date for Submission of Application: 09.09.2021 up to 3.00 PM  
Corrigendum, if any, shall be published on Bank's web site only. All bidders are requested to visit Bank's web site regularly in their own interest till last day of submission.  
Date: 19.08.2021 General Manager Kolkata Zone  
Place: Kolkata

**Bank of Baroda**

**Notice to Customers and Locker Holders of Bank of Baroda Jadavpur (e-Vijaya) Branch, Kolkata in connection with shifting of Branch premises to an alternate Premises**

All the customers & Locker holders of Bank of Baroda, Jadavpur (e-Vijaya) Branch, Kolkata situated at Raga Regency, 62E/47A Raja S C Mullick Road, Jadavpur, Kolkata - 700092 are hereby intimated that the Branch is being shifted to an alternate premises situated at 23 Raja S C Mullick Road, Jadavpur, Kolkata – 700032 on/after 19-09-2021.

All the locker holders at the Branch are intimated that all security related precautions will be undertaken while shifting the locker cabinets to avoid any damage to the contents. However, all our locker holders of our Jadavpur (e-Vijaya) Branch are requested to take notice of this and arrange removal of breakable items / articles from their lockers on any working day prior to the shifting of the locker cabinets /Branch. Bank shall not be liable for any unavoidable / unforeseen loss /damage caused to the articles/items kept inside the locker cabinets owing to shifting of lockers to the new premises.

The Branch will function from the new premises from/after 19-09-2021. We sincerely regret for the inconvenience caused to you in this regard and assure you of our best services at all times.

Date: 19.08.2021  
Place: Kolkata

**Dy General Manager**  
Kolkata Metro Region

**Bank of Baroda**

**Sukhi Branch**  
Vill & PO- Sukhi, PS- Nabagram Dist. Murshidabad, Pin- 742226

**[Rule -8(1)] POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property)**

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorized officer of the "Bank of Baroda", under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (2) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 10.05.2021 calling upon to the borrower-Mrs. Sania Hardware (Proprietor Abul Bakibul Haenat) and Guarantor Mrs. Hazera Bibi to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.22,31,138/- (in words Rupees Twenty Two Lakhs Thirty One Thousand One Hundred Thirty Eight) within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him / her under Section 13(4) of the said Act, read with Rule 8 of the said Rules on this 17th day of August of the year 2021.

The borrower / Guarantors / Mortgagees in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of the "Bank of Baroda" Sukhi Branch for an amount of Rs.22,31,138/- and Interest thereon at the contractual rate plus Costs, Charges and expenses till date of payment.

The Borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

**Description of the Immovable Property:**

All that part and parcel of the property situated at (Village Nimgram PO Nimgram Beluri, PS Nabagram, Dist Murshidabad, Plot No L.R. 1003, J.L-014, Mouza-Nimgram, KH No L.R. 1232, L.R. 217, Plot No. LR 1003, Land area 24 Decimal in the name of Hazera Bibi vide sale deed no. I-6150 dated 16.09.1986 and area 18 decimal and deed no. I-7722 dated 03.12.1986 land area 6 decimal). The land is butted and bounded by:- On the North by: Dulal SK & Others, On the South by: Rejalul SK & others, On the East by: Mahiuddin Rabi, On the West by: Dulal SK & Others

Date :17.08.2021  
Place: Behrampore

**Authorised Officer**  
Bank of Baroda

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5. Certificate in "Footwear Design & Production" (Part time Course for working personnel)	1 Year	4
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A different Stalin

The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister has commendably managed the COVID 19 crisis and not let it cloud his vision for social justice and economic empowerment

THEY SAY innovation cannot be possible without encouragement. Or young Selvan SS Madhav from Thiruvavur would not have become the young scientist that he is today. With his school closed during the Covid-19 lockdown, the talented Madhav maximized his online lessons, studying software programmes like Java, Python, C, C++ and Kotlin. He developed a palm-sized computer processing tool that drew the attention of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin. Known for his commitment to developing a tech-enabled and inclusive governance model, the latter pledged financial assistance for Selvan's higher studies and research. Today, the young man has got work orders from outside the State and has a neat little business of his own.

The State Government has been an equal enabler for the dispossessed, unfortunate and devastated. In its first budget, it has reduced the price of petrol by Rs 3 per litre with a smart plan to make up for the resultant deficit. Take the case of the Accident Insurance Scheme, as part of which Stalin himself moved funds from the Chief Minister's Public Relief Fund to help the family of three women who died when the ambulance they were travelling in keeled over. Or the way he encouraged Samartians like Ilaiyaranai and gave Rs 25 lakh cash relief to families of doctors who died on the frontline of the ceaseless battle against COVID-19. True to his promise to stand by the common man, he has ensured scooters for the physically challenged in far-flung corners of the State and sustainable housing options for the homeless.

In fact, the Chief Minister has been working over time to deliver on all the people-friendly promises he made before the elections. Soon after assuming power, he swiftly moved to make five big changes to ameliorate the lot of the pandemic-hit --- A Rs 2.07 crore Corona relief package to rice scheme card-holders, reduction of milk price by Rs 3 per litre, free bus travel for women, a direct interface for last mile connectivity through the "Chief Minister in your constituency" department and the Chief Insurance Scheme in private hospitals for treatment of COVID-19.

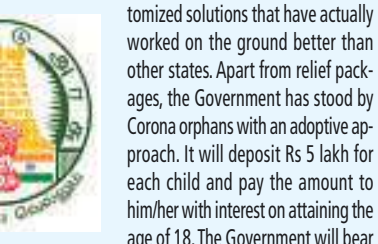
But the granular micro-detailing and welfarist outlook haven't made him lose sight of the macro picture or a future-ready vision. For the first time in India, he set up an international panel of experts to advise him on economic development and co-creating a sustainable future. He has prioritized mega infrastructure projects, oiled the economy by accelerating and incentivizing MSMEs and developed solutions-based approaches in water management, rural housing and power supplies. The State Government is confident of a liveable index



M K Stalin, Chief Minister, Tamil Nadu

that guarantees that the State will be entirely slum-free in 10 years. In fact, Stalin has established a responsive matrix and aligned the Government's development policies with it, a bottom-up, participatory approach rather than a top-down imposition of power. And as the son of DMK patriarch M Karunanidhi, he doesn't let the weight of his political legacy heave on his model of governance.

**CORONA WARRIOR** : Tamil Nadu has been among the worst-affected States, battling spiralling COVID-19 cases in waves. This has compelled the State Government to make difficult choices and devise customized solutions that have actually worked on the ground better than other states. Apart from relief packages, the Government has stood by Corona orphans with an adoptive approach. It will deposit Rs 5 lakh for each child and pay the amount to him/her with interest on attaining the age of 18. The Government will bear



all the expenses of these children, including education fees and accommodation, up to their graduation. This is not a one-off scheme but will be monitored by district level committees.

The Chief Minister has ramped up Corona care facilities at most Government hospitals, adding 80,000 beds with oxygen facilities and power units for uninterrupted services, rolling out oxygen plants besides prioritizing a nutrition programme for the recovered.

**ECONOMY BOOSTERS**: Stalin has factored in the deeply divisive inequities in the economy in the post-

TECH-AIDED GOVERNANCE

- Ungal Thokuthiyil Muthalamaichar**: All the 4,57,645 petitions received under the programme have been acted upon and 2,29,216 grievances redressed.
- Union-State ties**: A first of its kind advisory council to develop a Federal Fiscal Model with renowned experts on legislation involving revenue and taxation (including GST).
- Fortifying Legislature**: Archives and records will be digitised.
- Land administration**: The Government will undertake a modern survey of the entire State utilizing Differential and Global Positioning System (DGPS).
- Environment & Climate Change**: Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV), artificial intelligence, GIS and MIS based management systems will be used for forest management and conservation. India's first Integrated Environment Monitoring Studio is coming up for forecasting air quality on real-time basis.
- Edutech drive**: High-tech laboratories will be set up in 1,784 Government Middle Schools and smart class rooms will be established in 865 Government High and Higher Secondary Schools.

pandemic age and believes that Tamil Nadu should attain a stable growth. Development, he insists, should extend to people of all groups. While bringing down the State's debt burden, the State Government has opted for data-based decision-making to increase performance efficiency and transparency. The industrial policy diversifies the infrastructure base of Tamil Nadu, both geographically



Chepauk-Triplicane MLA Udhayanidhi Stalin hands over public donations to CM MK Stalin

and sectorally. It has envisaged industrial corridors, smart cities, highway networks, the 'Singara Chennai 2.0' programme with world class urban infrastructure as its pivot, mass rapid transit systems for Madurai, Tiruchirappalli, Salem and Tirunelveli districts and job-creating projects at growth clusters.

It's further mining prospects for new sunrise sectors

like tourism, a master plan for which is being drawn up for the first time. Harvesting the engineering talent of the youth, the Chief Minister is bent on creating an enabling ecosystem by focussing on high technology projects such as aerospace, robotics and precision manufacturing. As the Chief Minister said, "The ambition of our government is to elevate Tamil Nadu as an ease of business-friendly state in South Asia and create a \$20 trillion economy of by 2030." The single window website has been upgraded to cover 24 sectors. An industrial eco-system fund of Rs 500 crore is expected to fuel emerging sectors such as electric vehicle manufacturing, solar cell and wind turbine manufacturing, information technology and electronic hardware manufacturing. Stalin wishes to seize the opportunities presented by the Fourth Industrial Revolution and is revving up MSMEs so that they can add value to global supply chains. The MoU with General Electric to set up a Center of Excellence will develop technology to manufacture advanced equipment for aircraft engines.

**FARMERS' WELFARE**: The Tamil Nadu Government has indicated its commitment to uplift the lot of farmers by allocating a separate budget for agriculture and changing the nomenclature of the Department of Agriculture into Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare. The idea is to push agritech-enabled practices like soil testing and crop zoning to increase the area under cultivation and achieve a high productivity of foodgrains. And demonstrating the right spirit of cooperative federalism, the Stalin Government has implemented the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), which provides hand-holding support to farmers during

eventualities. Incentives have come in the form of paddy depots, dry fields, raw materials and machinery. Buffering these measures are irrigation projects, extension and reconstruction of river connection projects and a constant crusade to leverage dam heights in neighbouring States to maximise the benefits of shared water resources. Not to mention free power for farmers to pump water into their lands. The goal: 125 lakh metric tonnes of foodgrain production by 2021-22. Farmers will be empowered to drive the Rural Transformation project.

**CM AT THE DOORSTEP**: The "Chief Minister in your constituency" is already a big hit with a record number of redressal of petitions by all stakeholders. While the Lokayukta is being revitalised and empowered, online open access from anywhere will be enabled to ensure that "any time, any place services" are made available. The e-consumer service center called "Minnakam" has notched up an enviable record of addressing grievances.

**DIVERSITY CHAMPION**: Inclusivity is just not a talking point but a reality in Tamil Nadu. The Government has in a first for India, given women equality in rights to family property. It is also working on their financial inclusion, activating self-help groups and overall health and well-being. It has recognised transgender people and is providing them job-oriented skill training besides welfare measures.

And in a major reform in temple management, it has established the Ministry for the Hindu Religion, which is freeing encroached shrine land and ensuring transparency in management. The DMK Government is taking steps for all castes and women to become priests. And following the path of social justice, the Chief Minister has issued orders increasing the reservation of most backward classes, denotified communities, Muslims, Arunthathiyars and Vanniyars.

He has retained the portfolio of the Welfare of the Differently Abled himself, so that it has greater field presence and efficacy.

**TALENT POOL CREATOR**: Besides announcing Rs 5 lakh grants for Olympians, the Stalin Government is already working on providing a grooming-worthy ecosystem for sports persons. In a big push to the creative economy, Stalin has for the first time valued artists and intellectuals, protecting them from motivated litigation, opening libraries and providing grants and houses for award-winning writers.

Stalin has clearly left the personality cult behind in politics and is focussing on a systemic overhaul that not only cuts across party lines but will reset known templates. COVID may have posed a challenge but he has managed to work on other critical sectors as well. Determined to be a worthy leader who has been forgiven by critics.







THE IDEAS PAGE

Understanding Taliban 2.0

The upheaval in Kabul needs to be seen in the context of radical realignments in the region and the transformations within the Taliban



M K BHADRAKUMAR

REGIME CHANGES ARE capricious events, since there are many variables in play. It explains their mystique. The latest one in Afghanistan, third in the past two decades, is no exception. The Mujahideen takeover in 1992 was a preordained event choreographed by the United Nations, which slipped out of its hands. The 1996 Taliban takeover was like a slow-motion talkie with Ahmad Shah Massoud simply disappearing from Kabul without a fight. Last Sunday's dramatic developments lead to a sense of deja vu.

However, there are major differences, too — three, in particular. Unlike previous occasions, the Afghan state structures are largely intact, which was highlighted by the Taliban's dramatic press conference in a grand setting, with chandeliers hanging from the ceiling, within 48 hours of their march into Kabul.

Second, the regime change is still playing out sedately and it may take days or even weeks before its final contours emerge in the form of a transitional government. There are signs that the victor is amenable to persuasion to accept a consensual outcome.

Third, and most important, unlike the previous two occasions, the international community, especially regional states, is midwifing the transition. Again, the victor is willing to take help from the world community to assist in a sweeping national reconciliation that accommodates the widest possible swathe of opinion in that hopelessly fragmented country. Setting aside great-game impulses in new Cold War conditions, big powers are constructively engaging the Taliban.

Truly, it is incomprehensible why India shut its embassy in Kabul. A great opportunity was at hand to plough a new Afghan policy independent of American tutelage. The only plausible explanation for such unseemly hurry to retrench could be that the government takes a zero-sum view that if Pakistan has a sense of triumphalism, then India must be the "loser". But we were never really such one-dimensional people previously. We had a profound understanding of the Afghan nation's ethos, traditions and culture and their enduring affection toward India.

Then Prime Minister Narasimha Rao didn't have an iota of doubt that India shouldn't lose time to launch a conversation with the Mujahideen groups ("Peshawar Seven") notwithstanding their close association with Pakistan. Suffice to say, the Indian narrative is deeply flawed. We are riveted on archaic notions of "strategic depth" and regard the Taliban as a plaything of the Pakistani establishment. Our perspective on the Taliban movement remains unchanged from the brief period it held power in Kabul. And, alas, our erroneous assumptions leave no scope to accommodate the compelling ground reality that Taliban today is largely an indigenous movement with roots running extensively in Afghan society. Indeed, through the past two decades in political wilderness, Taliban has transformed into an incredibly diverse movement that made inroads into all communities and ethnic groups.

Equally, the Indian establishment refuses to acknowledge what even the Western world, leave alone regional states, accepts: Pakistan's political economy is undergoing a profound



C R Sasikumar

transfiguration and it increasingly regards geo-economics as the leitmotif of its regional strategy. Why and how this is happening makes an epoch-making story of change. But the Indian elite doggedly refuses to take note of it lest they would need to respond to it as a responsible neighbour. Political exigencies apparently demand that it is advantageous to be stuck in the old gyre and keep turning and turning.

Compared to the 1990s, the Taliban today is unrecognisable. The vacation of their Kabul embassies by Saudi Arabia and the UAE bears eloquent testimony to it. The Sheikh's held the Taliban in a pernicious grip in the 1990s, but the latter holds Saudis and Emiratis at arm's length now. None other than Mullah Khairullah Khairkhwa, a close associate of Mullah Omar and one of the original Taliban members who launched the movement in 1994 (interior minister, governor of Herat, etc. during their regime), stated in front of TV cameras a fortnight ago that Wahhabism is a deviant belief and "there has never been such a belief" among Afghans and "we (Taliban) do not have the same connection (with Saudi Arabia) as before". There have been no Taliban visits to Saudi Arabia for years now. The Taliban is asserting its traditional Islam and Shariah.

The Saudi and Emirati intelligence funded the Taliban and manipulated it to settle scores with Iran in the 1990s. Remember the disappearance of 11 Iranian diplomats from the consulate in Mazar-i-Sharif in 1998 in an intelligence operation for which the Taliban was blamed? Talibs are wiser now about the ways of the world, exposed to the metropolis and have diversified external relations in the West and East alike, and are hankering for legitimacy. This is in sync with Pakistan's priorities

Suffice to say, the Indian narrative is deeply flawed. We are riveted on archaic notions of 'strategic depth' and regard the Taliban as a plaything of the Pakistani establishment. Our perspective on the Taliban movement remains unchanged from the brief period it held power in Kabul. And, alas, our erroneous assumptions leave no scope to accommodate the compelling ground reality that Taliban today is largely an indigenous movement with roots running extensively in Afghan society.

too and is of momentous significance as a pointer toward what to expect in Afghanistan. This needs explaining.

All evidence shows Pakistan is persuading the erstwhile Northern Alliance to join a broad-based, inclusive transitional set-up with the Taliban as the immediate priority. The signals look good. Meanwhile, the coordinating group comprising Hamid Karzai, Abdullah Abdullah and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar is en route to Doha, acting as a bridge for the non-Taliban political forces (not only from the Northern Alliance) who were marginalised by Ashraf Ghani and his corrupt clique. The statements from Moscow and Washington suggest that this process will gain traction.

To be sure, our diplomats will be eager to return to Kabul, reopen the embassy and launch a conversation with the new ruling elites and contribute to regional efforts to stabilise Afghanistan in the long-term interests of regional security and stability. There is an imperative need to stop viewing Afghanistan as a sub-plot of India's Pakistan policies.

The paranoia in certain circles in India about the "spillover" from Afghanistan is unwarranted. The Taliban has an exclusively Afghan-centric agenda. They are old-fashioned "nationalists". It is simply inconceivable that once ensconced in power, Taliban will play a subaltern role to any regional state. On the contrary, Taliban's "Afghan-ness" will inevitably surge as a robust sense of independence and "strategic autonomy" in statecraft. They will be interested in friendly relations with India.

The writer, a former diplomat, headed the Iran-Pakistan-Afghanistan division in the MEA

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"Those American officials from successive administrations who contributed to this two-decade-long folly have a lot to answer for. The United States of America, for once, should hold itself to account." —DAWN

Opposition needs to look within

It is not government, but Congress-orchestrated disruption of Parliament that disrespects mandate, undermines democratic values



PRALHAD JOSHI

THE OPPOSITION needs to introspect and play a constructive role in Parliament. The recently concluded monsoon session was the capture of democracy by a few Opposition members. Parliament is meant for debates and discussions, with decisions based on majority. The government has a comfortable majority in both the Houses, yet all parliamentary work, except on selected subjects, was stalled, putting at risk the well-established parliamentary ethos and etiquette.

Throughout the session, the government approached the Opposition through the business advisory committees (BACs) of both Houses, the Chairperson of the Rajya Sabha, Speaker of the Lok Sabha and different ministers, including the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs. The government agreed to discuss all the issues suggested by the leaders of various political parties, including the state of the economy, rising prices of essential goods, farmers' issues, Covid-19 and vaccination management, etc. But the Opposition did not allow discussion on any issue, except Covid-19 and vaccination.

The BACs of both Houses allocated time to discuss and pass more than 25 Bills. However, due to the irreconcilable attitude of the Opposition parties, 22 Bills were passed by both Houses without the expected and desired debate, except the 105th Constitution Amendment Bill. The leader who orchestrated all this is blaming the Prime Minister for not building consensus and for denying the Opposition the opportunity to raise issues of national importance.

Complaining about the use of military-grade software to hack into devices while not allowing the Minister of Information and Technology to make a statement on the subject on the floor of the Rajya Sabha on July 22 is equally unfortunate. The situation was further aggravated when a copy of the statement was snatched from the minister and was torn and thrown at the chair. On August 4, due to the deplorable conduct of some Opposition members, the Rajya Sabha chairman was left with no option but to direct six MPs to withdraw from the services of the House for the rest of the day. On that very day, one Opposition MP broke the glass of the Rajya Sabha chamber's locked door, thereby injuring a security officer. On August 10, the Opposition created complete chaos in the Rajya Sabha. Some members jumped on a table and shouted slogans, disregarding parliamentary norms.

The unelected working president of a national party, who has ignored repeated internal demands for the election of a full-time president, is talking about the promotion of democratic values. The public can tell who makes issues out of non-issues and turns Parliament into a museum by not allowing fruitful debate. Let the working president of the Indian National Congress herself intro-

spect and decide who is undermining democratic values.

There have been instances in the past when Bills were passed with little debate or no debate during the UPA government, but at least the Opposition members never danced on tables and snatched papers from ministers. There were protests in Parliament regarding corruption allegations but they never went to the extent of the manhandling of security personnel.

A party which claimed to follow the ideals of B R Ambedkar never gave him his due. This party ensured his defeat in the first Lok Sabha elections in 1952 and was not able to get him elected as one of the 296 initial members of the Constituent Assembly. Everyone knows how much importance Subhas Chandra Bose and Sardar Patel were given by INC and its governments.

A party which has used religion and caste for political benefit is talking about inclusive growth and equity-based justice, when, for the sake of votes, they nullified a progressive equity-based judgement in the Shah Bano case, which gave the right to alimony to Muslim women.

The country has not forgotten how INC and its leaders even put the judiciary in jeopardy by ensuring the supersession of three justices of the Supreme Court — J M Shelat, A N Grover and K S Hegde. A N Ray was made CJI on April 25, 1973, a day after the Supreme Court judgement in the Kesavananda Bharati case outlining the basic structure doctrine of the Constitution. All three judges who were superseded were part of the majority judgement.

India has administered more than 55 crore vaccine doses to its citizens so far — the highest in the world — despite misinformation about the vaccine and its efficacy being spread by the principal opposition party. The party contributed to the creation of vaccine hesitancy among the people.

In 2014, when NDA took over from UPA, the Indian economy was ranked 10th in the world and now it is the sixth-largest economy in the world. But, according to the INC working president, the Indian economy is not expanding and developing.

The government of the day has so far transferred more than Rs 1.50 lakh crore, as part of the Kisan Samman Nidhi initiative, directly to the bank accounts of small farmers and is still being called "anti-annadata" by the INC. They allege that the farm laws are draconian, but without pointing out a single flaw in them.

Highways are being constructed in India at the rate of 37 km per day now as against 9 km per day during the UPA tenure, but the government is still being criticised for having hollow slogans instead of tangible achievements. It is clear who believes in hollow slogans and who delivers tangible results.

Autocratic people themselves are disrespecting the majority view in Parliament and not allowing the government to discharge its functions as per the mandate bestowed on it by the people. Is it not autocratic to bring the majority opinion to a standstill?

The writer is Union Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Coal and Mines, Government of India



M S SAHOO

THE INSOLVENCY and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 (IBC) is a noble law because it relieves stress, be it of a company, a limited liability partnership, a proprietorship or partnership firm or an individual. However, the discussion here is limited to companies as provisions of the IBC relating to individuals, except in relation to personal guarantors to corporate debtors, are yet to come into force. It is based on generalisations though there are notable exceptions.

For reasons sometimes under the control of a company and at times beyond its control, it may experience stress, that is, is unable to repay the debt in time — implying that it has assets less than claims against it. Elementary economics tells us that when a company has inadequate assets, the claim of an individual creditor may be consistent with its assets while claims of all creditors put together may not. In such a situation, creditors may rush to recover their claims before others do, triggering a run on the company's assets. They recover on a first-come first-served basis till the assets of the company are exhausted, bleeding it to death. This is a negative-sum game.

The IBC provides for reorganisation that prevents a value-reducing run on the company. It aims to rescue the company if its business is viable or close it if its business is unviable, through a market process. In case of a rescue, the company is reorganised as a going concern. The claims of creditors are restruc-

A shorter haircut

Timely use of IBC can help minimise and even avoid losses for creditors

tured, which may be paid to them immediately or over time. In case of closure, the assets of the company are sold, and proceeds are distributed to creditors immediately as per the priority rule. The IBC entrusts the responsibility of reorganisation to financial creditors as they have the capability and the willingness to restructure their claims. They are likely to rescue a company having a going concern surplus which aligns the interests of the company and of financial creditors, making it a positive-sum game.

Where the company does not have adequate assets, realisation for financial creditors, through a rescue, may fall short of their claims. Such shortage, in common parlance, is known as haircut. About a year ago, Ghotaringa Minerals Limited, and Orchid Healthcare Private Limited caught media attention. They together owed Rs 8,163 crore to creditors, while they had absolutely no assets when they entered the IBC process. There was no hair to be cut. In comparison, there are cases (Binani Cements) which have yielded a zero haircut, in addition to rescuing the company.

Perhaps the relevant question is: Why does the IBC process yield a zero haircut in one case and 100 per cent in another? It depends on several factors, including the nature of business, business cycles, market sentiments, and marketing effort. It, however, critically depends on at what stage of stress, the company enters the

IBC process. If the company has been sick for years, and its assets have depleted significantly, the IBC process may yield a huge haircut or even liquidation. The companies, which have been rescued through IBC till March 2021, had assets valued at, on average, 22 per cent of the amount due to creditors when they entered the IBC process. This means that the creditors were staring at a haircut of 78 per cent to begin with. One third of these were not even going concerns. The IBC process not only rescued these companies, but also reduced the haircut to 61 per cent for financial creditors.

A haircut is typically the total claims minus the amount of realisation/amount of the claims. But this formulation may not tell the complete story. The realisation often does not include the amount that would be realised from equity holding post-resolution, and through the reversal of avoidance transactions and the insolvency resolution of guarantors — personal and corporate. It also does not include realisations made in other accounts (recovery of about Rs 8,000 crore incidental to resolution of Essar). The amount of claim often includes NPA, which may be completely written off, and the interest on such NPA. It may include loans as well as the guarantee against such loans. These understate the numerator and overstate the denominator, projecting a higher haircut.

Should a haircut be seen in relation to claims of creditors or the assets available? The

former may not be realistic as the claims are often inflated. The latter may make better sense because the market offers a value in relation to what a company brings on the table, not what it owes to creditors. The IBC maximises the value of existing assets, not of assets which probably existed earlier.

The IBC enables and facilitates market forces to resolve stress as a going concern where resolution applicants, who have many options for investment, including in stressed companies, compete to offer the best value and such value matches the expectation of financial creditors, who have many options for recovery as well as resolution. If the best value offered by the market is not acceptable to creditors, the company is liquidated.

In addition to rescuing the company, the IBC realises, of the available options for creditors, the highest in percentage terms. It is a tool in the hands of stakeholders to be used at the right time, in the right case, in the right manner. They should use it in early days of stress, when value of the company is almost intact, and close the process quickly before value recedes further to minimise or even avoid haircuts. Post disposal of the pre-IBC legacy matters, as "recent" stress cases are dealt with, the haircuts would perhaps be pleasing to the eye.

The writer is Chairperson, Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

RIGHT MOTIVES

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Reason to remember' (IE, August 18). The author has rightly pointed out both the sides of celebrating Partition Horrors Remembrance Day. The timing of its announcement, after more than seven decades of India's independence and in the context of the upcoming UP assembly elections, shows its real intent. Perhaps the time has come to change the election system in India from First Past the Post to Proportional Representation, to put an end to this divide-and-rule political culture. The irony is that this change can only be made by the people elected through the current system which makes the perpetrators of this political culture the representatives of the people.

H Upadhyay, via email

GROUND REALITIES

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Ungraceful retreat' (IE, August 18). It is heart-wrenching to see the miserable situation and the grim condition of the citizens of Afghanistan. While sympathising with Afghan civilians, I agree with the US President Joe Biden's decision of troops withdrawal. Nation-building was never the motive. If someone needs to be blamed for the crisis, it should be the Government of Afghanistan. The US provided logistics, armoury, artillery and air support to the Afghan defence forces. But these resources were mishandled and a huge amount of capital went into the

pockets of the Afghan leaders. Tushar Anand, Patna

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Ungraceful retreat' (IE, August 18). While there can be no two opinions about the ugly US role in Afghanistan, the world must not lose sight of the significant US contribution in the war against terrorism. It might have gone into Afghanistan like a blinded bull because of the 9/11 tragedy, but its intervention in 2001 definitely put terrorism back by at least a couple of decades. The US exit may be ungraceful but it serves their national interests. India needs to be clear-eyed in her response. H N Bhagwat, Chiplun







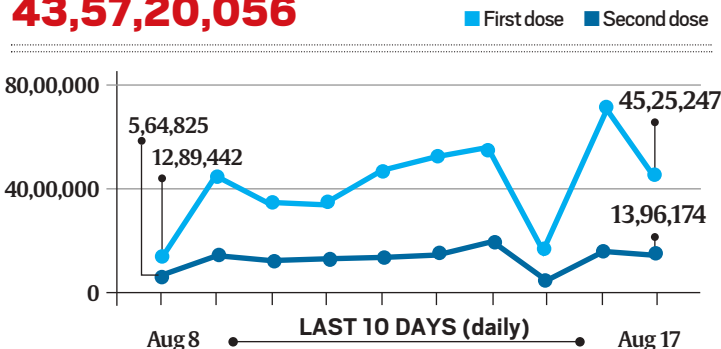
@ieExplained

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If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to [explained@indianexpress.com](mailto:explained@indianexpress.com)

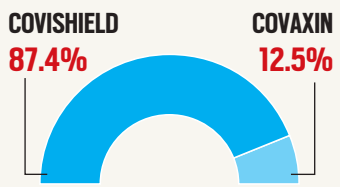
## CORONAVIRUS DASHBOARD

**TOTAL VACCINATED IN INDIA** (at least one dose)  
**43,57,20,056**



**TOTAL DOSES**  
**55,47,30,609**

(Sputnik V's 6,64,698 doses not represented in pie)

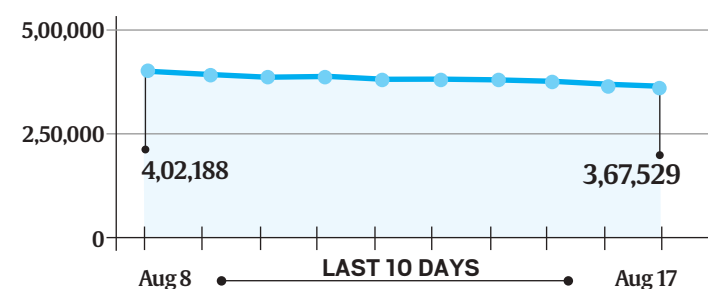


**DOSES ON AUG 17** **59,21,421**

**AUG 16: 88,73,501** (1ST DOSE: 71,22,059; 2ND: 17,51,442)

## INDIA ACTIVE CASES

**3,67,529**



Note: The August 17 figures in these graphs are based on the government updates on August 18

**INDIA TOTAL CASES** **3,22,85,857**

Source: Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, updated at 11 pm on August 18

## Vaccine protection waning, suggest three CDC studies

THE US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released three studies on Wednesday that federal officials said provided evidence that booster shots of the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna coronavirus vaccines would be needed by all Americans in the coming months.

But some experts said the new research did not support the decision to recommend booster shots for all Americans.

Taken together, the studies show that although the vaccines remain highly effective against hospitalizations, the bulkwork they provide against infection with the virus has weakened in the past few months.

It's unclear whether the decline in protection against infection is the result of waning immunity, a drop in precautions like wearing masks, or the rise of the highly contagious Delta variant — or a combination of all three.

"We are concerned that this pattern of decline we are seeing will continue in the months ahead, which could lead to reduced protection against severe disease, hospitalization and death," Dr Vivek Murthy, the surgeon general, said at a White House

news briefing on Wednesday.

Citing the data, federal health officials outlined a plan for Americans who received the two vaccines to get booster shots eight months after receiving their second doses, starting September 20.

But some scientists were deeply sceptical of the new plan.

"These data support giving additional doses of vaccine to highly immunocompromised persons and nursing home residents, not to the general public," said Dr Celine Gounder, an infectious disease specialist at Bellevue Hospital Center and a former adviser on the pandemic to the

ministration.

Boosters would only be warranted if the vaccines were failing to prevent people from ending up hospitalized with Covid-19, she said.

"Feeling sick like a dog and laid up in bed, but not in the hospital with severe Covid, is not a good enough reason," Dr Gounder said.

"We'll be better protected by vaccinating the unvaccinated here and around the world."

THE NEW YORK TIMES



**PAPER CLIP**

NEW RESEARCH

# Afghanistan's new rulers

Military victory is theirs, the Taliban will now seek to build a government — and here, negotiations and accommodation may have a bigger role to play. Who are the men to watch out for in the coming weeks?

**NIRUPAMA SUBRAMANIAN**  
MUMBAI, AUGUST 18

AFTER ROLLING effortlessly to power, the Taliban face the hardscrabble of give-and-take politics, and appear to be in negotiations to accommodate several interests within the factions and tribes, and in the ecosystem that helped and supported them — Pakistan's security establishment is a main part of this — and even their "enemies".

## Baradar, likely new head

Going by the signals emerging from the huddles in Kabul and Doha, where high-ranking Taliban leaders camped for nearly a decade for the talks with the US, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, the number two in the organisation and in-charge of its political wing, is likely to head the new government.

He arrived from Doha in Kandahar, and participated in the first press conference of the new regime earlier this week.

The supreme leader, or Amirul Momineen, Maulvi Haibatullah Akhundzada, may not take part in government directly. There was talk during the Doha discussions about an Iranian-style Supreme Leader, and if that post is created in the new Afghan set up, Akhundzada could be the likely choice for it.

Mullah Baradar belongs to the Popalzai Pashtun tribe, and is known as a co-founder of the Taliban along with Mullah Muhammad Omar, the first Amir. Omar, of the Hotak tribe, is said to have been extremely close to Baradar, which means brother, a nickname that the Amir gave him. Baradar was designated under UNSC 1272 in 2001 and remains on the list.

In 2010, Baradar was detained by the ISI as he had begun to respond to overtures for peace talks from then President Hamid Karzai, a fellow Popalzai. Karzai was anything but Pakistan's man, and through his years in office and until months ago, was vocal about the role of the Pakistan military in the conflict.

Baradar spent eight years in incarceration, and was released only when the Trump Administration launched talks with the Taliban in 2018. He headed the nine-member Taliban team that negotiated with US Special Representative Zalmay Khalilzad — they were the two signatories to the Doha Agreement last year, by which the US agreed to withdraw its troops on condition that the Taliban would not shelter al-Qaeda or ISIS, and would hold negotiations with other Afghans to arrive at a political settlement to end the war.

It is unclear if Baradar has now made his peace with Pakistan, which hand-held the Taliban through the talks. But if he becomes the head of the new government, he is likely to be more independent minded than the Pakistani security establishment — the Army and ISI — would like.

## Ascion and two veterans

Mullah Muhammad Yaqoob, the 31-year-old son of Mullah Omar and operational head of the military wing of the Taliban, would likely be an important figure in the new dispensation. He did not pitch himself hard when the leader of the Taliban was being chosen in 2016; he may now claim a place in the new set-up.

Yaqoob was not in the Taliban delegation for talks with the US, or for the intra-Afghan talks. But he was part of the Rehbari shura, the Taliban's leadership council that is also known as the Quetta shura because some of its members were based in that city in Pakistan after the previous Taliban regime was ousted in 2001.

Two other names that have cropped up in recent weeks — including in reports, flatly denied by the Indian government, that claimed a meeting with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar — are Mullah Khairullah Khairkhwa and Mullah Mohammad Fazl.

Both men are 54, and were among the five

## THE TALIBAN, THEN AND NOW

Who's who in the Pakistan-sponsored fundamentalist movement that is now in power in Kabul

### THE NEW RULERS

#### HAIBATULLAH AKHUNDZADA | ~60

SUPREME LEADER

More cleric than fighter; seen as a consensus-builder among the Taliban. Was named leader in May 2016 after the movement confirmed the death of Mullah Akhtar Muhammad Mansour, the successor to founder leader Mullah Muhammad Omar. Haibatullah Akhundzada is from Kandahar.

#### ABDUL GHANI BARADAR | ~53

POLITICAL LEADER

One of the founder leaders of the movement; powerful, longtime lieutenant to Mullah Omar; commands a sizeable following among the rank and file; was chief negotiator for the Taliban at the Doha talks and signed the agreement with the US Special Representative.

Illustrations: Suvajit Dey



**ZABIULLAH MUJAHID,**  
AGE NOT KNOWN

■ Chief spokesperson; mysterious voice of the Taliban for at least a decade before he revealed himself before cameras at a news conference in Kabul on Tuesday.



**SHER MOHAMMAD**  
**ABBAS STANIKZAI, 60**

■ Chief negotiator at Doha; led day-to-day talks with the Americans before Mullah Baradar appeared on the scene after some progress had been made.



**ABDUL SALAM HANAFI,**  
AGE NOT KNOWN

■ Negotiator and member of the Taliban office in Doha; sometimes briefed reporters, was the first Taliban leader to announce a deal in early 2020; of Uzbek origin.

### MILITARY COMMANDERS



**SIRAJUDDIN HAQQANI,**  
48, DEPUTY LEADER

■ Son of Jalaluddin Haqqani and leader of the Haqqani network; has led much of the Taliban's recent military push.



**MULLAH MUHAMMAD**  
**YAQOUB, 31, DEPUTY**  
**LEADER**

■ Backed by the formidable pedigree of being the son of Mullah Omar, but considered much less dogmatic.



**MULLAH MUHAMMAD**  
**OMAR**

■ Founder of Taliban and leader of its 1996-2001 government.



**JALALUDDIN HAQQANI**

■ Founder of the Haqqani network, aligned himself with Taliban; died 2018.



**WALI AHMED**  
**MUTTAWAKIL**

■ Foreign minister and best known face of first Taliban regime.



**MULLAH MOHAMMAD**  
**FAZL**

■ Deputy defence minister of Taliban; was in Guantanamo.



**KHAIKULLAH**  
**KHAIKHWHA**

■ Taliban interior minister; part of 'Guantanamo Five'.

Photos: AP, Reuters, The NYT, FBI handout; Text: The NYT, AP, Reuters

### THE OLD TALIBAN

Guantanamo Bay detainees who were captured in the months after the Taliban were ousted, and who were released in May 2014 in exchange for the US soldier Bowe Bergdahl, who was captured by the Haqqani network.

Khairkhwa is Popalzai too, and was interior minister in the previous Taliban regime; Fazl, who belongs to the Durrani tribe, was deputy defence minister.

## Haqqani claimant

It is unclear if Sirajuddin Haqqani will emerge from the shadows to become an official part of the new dispensation, but he will remain a critical factor in the determining its decisions and actions. He inherited the leadership of the Haqqani network from his father Jalaluddin, has been a designated terrorist under UNSC resolution 1272 since 2007, and carries a US reward of \$5 million on his head.

The Haqqani network is a militant entity allied with the Taliban but is distinct from it, and is closest of all the groups within Taliban to Pakistan's ISI. It has found permanent shelter in Pakistan's North Waziristan, and has strong links with al-Qaeda.

## Others in the mix

Two members of the Taliban have had a high profile during the Doha talks: Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai, who ran the political office of the Taliban in Doha since 2012, and Zabiullah Mujahid, the well known chief spokesman who first revealed his face only on Tuesday in Kabul.

Then there is the youngest Haqqani brother, Anas, who has been the public face of the Haqqani network. He led a Taliban delegation on Wednesday in a meeting with former President Karzai and members of the deposed Ashraf Ghani govern-

ment for what seemed to be negotiations about government formation. Also present were Abdullah Abdullah, who led the High Peace Council of in the previous government, and former mujahideen leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

If accommodation — it is unclear what roles they might seek — Karzai and Abdullah would be useful to the Taliban in building bridges with western nations. The ageing Hekmatyar may look to old friend Pakistan for a seat in the bus.

## A possible Hazara presence

Iran's outreach to the Taliban in recent months, and its covert support to the Taliban fightback against the US, could mean that the new dispensation may have Hazara — who are Shia — representation.

A large contingent of the erstwhile pro-India Northern Alliance, made up mainly of Tajik and Hazara, flew to Islamabad on the day Kabul fell — indication that they want to be partners in the new government. Two men to watch in this delegation are Mohammed Mohaqiq, an ethnic Hazara and former mujahid from Mazar-e-Sharif, and Mohammed Karim Khalili, also Hazara and former vice-president during the Karzai presidency.

## THIS WORD MEANS: FORTIFIED RICE

# Adding micronutrients to rice: how, why, and how much

**HARIKISHAN SHARMA**  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

IN HIS INDEPENDENCE DAY speech, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the fortification of rice distributed under various government schemes, including the public distribution system (PDS) and midday meals in schools, by 2024.

## What is rice fortification?

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) defines fortification as "deliberately increasing the content of essential micronutrients in a food so as to improve the nutritional quality of food and to provide public health benefit with minimal risk to health".

In other words, rice fortification is a process of adding micronutrients to regular rice. The micronutrients are added keeping in mind dietary requirements.

Various technologies are available for rice fortification, such as coating and dusting. For rice fortification in India, 'extrusion' is considered to be the best technology. This involves the production of fortified rice kernels (FRKs)

from a mixture using an extruder machine. The fortified rice kernels are then blended with regular rice to produce fortified rice.

## How does the extrusion technology to produce FRK work?

In extrusion technology, dry rice flour is mixed with a premix of micronutrients, and water is added to this mixture. This mixture then goes into a twin-screw extruder with heating zones, which produces kernels similar in shape and size to rice. These kernels are dried, cooled and packaged for use. FRK has a shelf life of at least 12 months.

As per guidelines issued by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, the shape and size of the fortified rice kernel should "resemble the normal milled rice as closely as possible". According to the guidelines, the length and breadth of the grain should be 5 mm and 2.2 mm respectively.

## But why is rice fortification needed?

India has very high levels of malnutrition among women and children. According to the Food Ministry, every second woman in the country is anaemic and every third child

is stunted. India ranks 94 out of 107 countries on the Global Hunger Index (GHI), which puts it in the 'serious hunger' category.

Fortification of food is considered to be one of the most suitable methods to combat malnutrition. Rice is one of India's staple foods, consumed by about two-thirds of the population. Per capita rice consumption in India is 6.8 kg per month. Therefore, fortifying rice with micronutrients is an option to supplement the diet of the poor.

## What are the standards for fortification?

Under the Ministry's guidelines, 10 g of FRK must be blended with 1 kg of regular rice. According to FSSAI norms, 1 kg of fortified rice will contain the following: iron (28 mg-42.5 mg), folic acid (75-125 microgram), and vitamin B-12 (0.75-1.25 microgram). Rice may also be fortified with zinc (10 mg-15 mg), vitamin A (500-750 microgram RE), vitamin B-1 (1 mg-1.5 mg), vitamin B-2 (1.25 mg-1.75 mg), vitamin B-3 (12.5 mg-20 mg) and vitamin B-6 (1.5 mg-2.5 mg) per kg.

## Does fortified rice have to be cooked differently?



**PM Narendra Modi announced the scheme on August 15 PTI**

The cooking of fortified rice does not require any special procedure. The rice needs to be cleaned and washed in the normal way before cooking. After cooking, fortified rice retains the same physical properties and micronutrient levels as it had before cooking.

## What is India's capacity for fortification?

According to the Ministry, nearly 2,690 rice mills have installed blending units for produc-

tion of fortified rice, and the current blending capacity stands at 13.67 lakh tonnes in 14 key states. FRK production has gone up from 7250 tonnes to 60,000 tonnes within 2 years.

Existing rice mills need to be upgraded to fortification facilities. The cost of the upgrade varies from mill to mill depending on the volume of fortified rice produced. According to the Ministry, an investment of around Rs15-20 lakh would be required to upgrade a rice mill of operating capacity 4-5 tonnes/hour.

## What will be the cost of fortification?

The Ministry estimates that the cost of producing FRK with three micronutrients — iron, folic acid, and vitamin B-12 — will come to around Rs 0.60 per kg. This cost will be shared by the Centre and the states. The government will pay this cost to rice millers.

## How can a beneficiary identify that she is getting fortified rice and not regular rice?

Fortified rice will be packed in jute bags with the logo (+F) and the line "Fortified with Iron, Folic Acid, and Vitamin B12" mandatorily printed on the pack.



# EXPRESS NETWORK



Union ministers Narendra Singh Tomar and Anurag Singh Thakur during a Cabinet briefing in Delhi. *Anil Sharma*

## REVIVAL PLAN FOR N-E AGRI MARKET OUTFIT

# Cabinet nod to oil palm scheme, focus on N-E, Andaman

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

THE UNION Cabinet on Wednesday approved the implementation of National Mission on Edible Oils – Oil Palm (NMEOP) — a new Centrally sponsored scheme with a special focus on the Northeast and Andaman and Nicobar Islands. This comes less than a week after Prime Minister Narendra Modi mentioned in his Independence Day speech that oil palm has a huge potential in the Northeast.

The Cabinet also approved a revival package of Rs 77.45 crore for revival of the North Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation Limited (NERAMAC) — a central Public Section Enterprise under the administrative control of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDONER).

Through this, the government said, “remunerative price to the farmers of NER for their products will be ensured” and it will help NERAMAC to “implement various

innovative plans” to promote products of Northeastern farmers. The government mentioned that the new oil palm scheme will cost Rs 11,040 crore, of which the Union government’s share will be Rs 8,844 crore. Through the scheme, the government intends to increase the productivity and area of oilseeds and oil palm.

At the moment, around 98 per cent of crude palm oil (CPO) is imported.

The government said in a statement that due to the “heavy dependence on imports for edible oils, it is important to make efforts for increasing the domestic production of edible oils in which increasing area and productivity of oil palm plays an important part”.

It said that under the scheme, it is proposed to cover “an additional area” of 6.5 lakh hectare for oil palm till the year 2025-26 and thereby reach the target of 10 lakh hectares. “The production of Crude Palm Oil (CPO) is expected to go upto 11.20 lakh tonnes by 2025-26 and upto 28 lakh tonnes by 2029-30,” the government noted.

# Make every effort to revive Ganga, India’s future depends on it: High Court

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
LUCKNOW, AUGUST 18

THE ALLAHABAD High Court has said that the future of India to a “large extent” will depend on the well-being of the river Ganga, and that it is “imperative that every effort should be made to revive the river and make it pollution-free”.

The court made the remarks while dismissing a petition filed by by M/S Geo Miller & Co. Pvt. Ltd., which had moved court after its bid for a project under the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) in Uttar Pradesh was turned down for not having met the technical qualification criteria. The petition had alleged bias in award of contract. The court said

that “the course of action adopted by the NMCG is well within its power and does not call for any interference by this Court”.

Justices Ritu Raj Awasthi and Dinesh Kumar Singh of the court’s Lucknow Bench pointed out that after being elected as Prime Minister in May 2014, Narendra Modi said that it was his “destiny to serve Maa Ganga”.

“Looking at the large public interest involved, even if it is assumed that there has been some technical and procedural aberration in awarding the contract in favour of respondent No.4 but since, same has been without any malafide or arbitrariness, public interest would demand that such aberration is to be ignored,” said the judges.

# SC gives Centre 4 more weeks to frame Covid relief norms

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

THE SUPREME Court Monday granted the Centre’s application for four more weeks to frame guidelines regarding compensation to kin of those who died due to Covid-19. The earlier deadline set by the Court was August 15.

The relief was granted by a Bench of Justices D Y Chandrachud and M R Shah, while directing the Centre to file

an affidavit on the steps taken by it on other issues as directed by the Court in a June 30 order. These included framing of guidelines on death certificates, mentioning the exact cause of death, and steps taken on the recommendations of the XVth Finance Commission regarding social security and welfare measures in the wake of Covid 19.

Seeking more time for the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to frame the Covid compensation guidelines,

# India decides to ratify Kigali Amendment to Montreal Protocol

**AMITABH SINHA**  
PUNE, AUGUST 18

FOLLOWING SIMILAR decisions by the United States and China in the past few months, India on Wednesday decided to ratify a key amendment to the 1989 ozone-saving Montreal Protocol negotiated five years ago. The Kigali Amendment, named after the Rwandan capital where it was negotiated, enables the phase-out of hydrofluorocarbons, a set of chemicals notorious for their capacity to warm the planet.

The 2016 amendment was seen as one of the most important breakthroughs in the global efforts to fight climate change, because the HFCs, a set of 19 gases used extensively in the air-conditioning and refrigerant industry, are known to be hundreds, even thousands, of times more potent than carbon dioxide in their ability to cause global warming. It is estimated that a complete phase-out of HFCs by 2050 would prevent about 0.5 degree Celsius rise in global temperatures by the end of this century.

This important instrument,

## EXPLAINED Ozone-saving provisions

THE 1989 Montreal Protocol is not a climate agreement. It is instead aimed at protecting the earth from ozone-deestroying chemicals like the chlorofluorocarbons, or CFCs, that were earlier used in the air-conditioning and refrigerant industry. The widespread use of CFCs had caused a hole in the Ozone layer of the atmosphere, which allowed some harmful radiations to reach the earth. These radiations were considered potential health hazards.

The Montreal Protocol led to the replacement of CFCs with HFCs which do not destroy the Ozone layer. But they were later found to be extremely potent in causing global warming. So, the HFCs solved one problem, but were contributing in a major way in another.

But theses could not be eliminated under the original provisions of Montreal Protocol which was meant to phase-out ozone-deestroying chemicals only. The Kigali Amendment enabled the Montreal Protocol to mandate the elimination of HFCs as well.

therefore, is crucial to achieving the target of restraining the increase in global temperatures to 2 degree Celsius from pre-industrial times. As pointed out by a recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the average temperatures of the planet

has already risen by about 1.1 degree Celsius.

The decision to ratify the amendment was taken at a meeting of the Union Cabinet on Wednesday. It comes close on the heels of similar decisions by the United States and China, the world’s largest producers and



PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti with her mother Gulshan Nazir outside the ED office, in Srinagar on Wednesday. *ANI*

# 2nd time in 30 days, Mehbooba mother appears before ED

**BASHAARAT MASOOD**  
SRINAGAR, AUGUST 18

FORMER JAMMU and Kashmir chief minister and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti’s mother, Gulshan Nazir, appeared before the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in Srinagar on Wednesday in connection with an alleged money laundering case.

Mufti accompanied her mother to the ED office, and later tweeted that the Centre has “weaponized” central agencies to “harass and punish political opponents”.

This was the second time Nazir, wife of late Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, former Union Home minister and CM of the erstwhile state of J&K, was questioned by the central agency in connection with the case. The

ED had first first questioned her on July 17 in the case lodged after the agency allegedly seized diaries from associates of former Mehbooba Mufti.

The diaries allegedly listed many payments made out of the Chief Minister’s discretionary fund.

Mufti later tweeted, “In New India, being summoned by agencies like NIA and ED has become a ritual for whoever disagrees with Gol’s divisive agenda and policies. In my mother’s case the chronology is quite clear. The last time she received a summon was when PDP boycotted the Delimitation Commission followed by another summon when I staged a peaceful protest on 5th August criticizing the illegal abrogation of Article 370.”

She posted, “Unfortunately agencies like NIA and ED that should have been working on se-

consumers of HFCs. According to a recent factsheet issued by Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), a US-based environmental organisation, and The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), 122 countries had ratified the Kigali Amendment by the end of July.

Under the Kigali amendment, the United States, China and India are in separate group of countries, with different time schedules to phase out their HFCs and replace them with climate-friendly alternatives. India has to reduce its HFC use by 80 per cent by the year 2047, while China and the United States have to achieve the same target by the year 2045 and 2034 respectively.

India on Wednesday said it will draw up a national strategy for phase-down of HFCs by the year 2023 in “consultation with all industry stakeholders”. It said that existing domestic laws that govern the implementation of the Montreal Protocol would be amended by the middle of 2024 to facilitate the HFC phase-down. India’s reductions have to begin only after 2028.

# IUML draws flak over move to freeze women students’ wing

## Action taken after women leaders filed sexual harassment complaint

**SHAJU PHILIP**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, AUGUST 18

THE INDIAN Union Muslim League (IUML) is facing criticism over its decision to “freeze” the state committee of Haritha — the women’s wing of the Muslim Students Federation (MSF), the party’s student organisation — days after Haritha leaders complained to the state women’s commission against some MSF leaders.

On August 13, two Haritha leaders filed a sexual harassment complaint with the state women’s commission against MSF state president P K Navas, Malappuram district president M Kabeer and district general secretary V A Wahab. The MSF leaders are alleged to have made lewd remarks against the women at the state committee meeting in June this year.

The women first complained to the IUML leadership. With no action taken, they then approached the commission.

Termining their action as “indiscipline”, the IUML on Tuesday suspended the state committee of Haritha, after the women leaders refused to withdraw their complaint.

Taking on the IUML leadership on Wednesday, MSF national vice-president Fathima Thahiliya said Haritha leaders were facing personal attacks and insults on social media.

“We are being hunted on social media. It is really sad that the

IUML has decided to freeze the Haritha state committee. We hope the party will take an apt decision after hearing the MSF leaders facing sexual harassment charge. Don’t think that we are alone. Why did they freeze the Haritha committee alone? What about the MSF, which is facing the allegation,” she said.

Thahiliya said her “role model is not E M S Nambudiripad, but K R Gouri, who fought against male dominance (in the CPM)”.

Coming out in support of the women, 11 district committees of the MSF have written to the IUML leadership, urging them to lift the “freeze” on the state committee of the Haritha and to take action against the MSF leaders facing the allegation. The MSF unit in the University of Calicut resigned en masse in protest against the party’s action.

Defending the party’s decision, IUML state general secretary P M A Salam said: “They (Haritha) took the issue to the public when the party was trying to find a solution... The dispute between Haritha and MSF was before the IUML. The women leaders should have waited for our decision. We have asked the MSF leaders to explain and a decision was proposed within two weeks”.

“The party is adept at handling the issue. The Haritha leaders should not have resorted to a stand that has given opponents a stick to beat the IUML with,” said senior party leader and legislator M K Munner.



Bhupender Yadav in a meeting with Alok Sharma. *PTI*

# Working out finance plan for developing countries: COP26 president in India

**ESHA ROY**  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

CONCLUDING HIS three-day India visit on Wednesday, COP26 president Alok Sharma said that he has requested the Indian government to consider raising ambitions in emission reduction targets and reiterated that a delivery plan on finance for developing countries is being put in place ahead of the conference in Glasgow later this year.

The President of the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26), on his second visit to India this year, met new environment minister Bhupender Yadav for the first time, apart from power minister RK Singh, commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal as well as finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman. He said he has assured the ministers that a deliv-

ery plan is being worked out.

The Indian government has so far resisted increasing ambitions ahead of the COP26 this year, preferring instead to meet already set ambitions and targets, and reiterating several times that it will look at increasing ambitions during the review process in 2023.

“I have reiterated the consistent ask that I have had with all countries — firstly in terms of emission reduction targets, so more ambitious NDCs for 2030, net zero targets for mid-century and had a discussion around finance. It’s become very important to reiterate that delivering on that 100 billion (dollars) a year has become a matter of trust for developing countries and we are pushing forward in putting together a delivery plan on finance,” said Sharma, addressing a media round table at the residence of the British High Commissioner.

**FULL REPORT ON**  
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## KODANAD ESTATE ROBBERY-MURDER

# AIADMK protests probe revival, Stalin says no political agenda

**ARUN JANARDHANAN**  
CHENNAI, AUGUST 18

A DAY after Tamil Nadu Police recorded fresh statements of one of the main accused in the 2017 Kodanad estate robbery-murder case, the Opposition AIADMK on Wednesday staged a protest and walked out of the Assembly claiming that the DMK government was reviving the probe to falsely implicate its leaders.

The police took the statement of accused K V Sayan, who in January 2019 made serious alle-

gations, linking the then chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami to the robbery at late chief minister Jayalalithaa’s 800-acre tea estate. The allegations were denied by Palaniswami and later by the police.

Sayan’s fresh statements were recorded ahead of the next court hearing on August 27.

On Wednesday, after AIADMK and its allies staged the walkout, Palaniswami and former deputy chief minister O Panneerselvam told reporters that their party will continue to

protest against the move. Panneerselvam said they will boycott the assembly session in the coming days as well.

“Instead of working on the pressing issues of the people of the state, the DMK is targeting opposition parties by abusing power. We will resist this move. They are trying to revive the case to come up with fake evidence to target us. That process has been happening for the past few days. We will not surrender before such threats, we will fight it out legally,” Panneerselvam said.

Sources close to Palaniswami



Stalin pays tribute to Telangana and Puducherry Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan’s mother and Congress leader Kumari Ananthan’s wife Krishnakumari, in Chennai. *PTI*

said his office has sought an appointment with Governor Banwarilal Purohit in this regard on Thursday. Panneerselvam is also likely to accompany him.

Chief Minister M K Stalin, however, said in the assembly that there was no political motive in the case.

“It was in our poll promises that we will probe the case. There is no need for anyone to worry about the probe. The heist, murder and a number of deaths that followed the incident raised doubts in the mind of public. That is why we made a promise that

we will bring all culprits to law,” said Stalin. “It has no political agenda. We will go ahead with the probe as per judicial norms.”

During the 2017 robbery, a security guard at the bungalow, Om Bahadur, was murdered. His body was found hanging upside down from a tree with his throat slit and mouth stuffed with cloth. Later, Dinesh Kumar, a CCTV operator at the estate, committed suicide.

Sources in the investigation team said another security guard who was also attacked during the robbery, Krishna Bahadur, is

missing now.

After a police probe was launched, Sayan, who is from Kerala, was arrested and during interrogation the role of C Kanagaraj, a former driver of Kodanad estate, surfaced. On the day a lookout notice was issued against him, Kanagaraj was killed in a road accident at Attur, which his family alleged was a planned murder. On the same day, Sayan, who was out on bail, also met with an accident near Palakkad in which he was injured seriously and his wife and daughter were killed.







## HOME APPEAL

MANSUKH MANDAVIYA will on Thursday visit his home state Gujarat for the first time since taking over as the new Union Health Minister. Mandaviya and his team expect significant crowds at the three Jan Ashirwad Yatra rallies, which he is scheduled to address. The organisers will have to keep a close watch on compliance with Covid-19 appropriate behaviour at the events. On Wednesday, the Health Minister posted a tweet in Gujarati, requesting his supporters to strictly follow Covid-19 appropriate behaviour at the rallies that he will be addressing.

## SAFE HOME

INDIA'S EFFORTS to evacuate its citizens from Kabul has come in for praise, but another evacuation has won the hearts. On Tuesday, three K9 dogs who secured the Kabul embassy for three years were brought back home in one of the evacuation flights that landed at Hindon air base. They were taken to the ITBP Chhawla camp on Wednesday. "These hero K9s have done an outstanding job in securing the embassy. They report that all three brave darlings are extremely happy to touch Indian soil and come back to familiar sights, smells and sounds of our nation," said the ITBP.

## VACCINATION OFFER

ON A three-day visit to India, COP26 president Alok Sharma has said that in order to get as many delegates as possible to attend the COP26 meeting in Glasgow in November, the presidency will provide vaccination to those who have not managed to get vaccinated in their home countries and is working with the UN to ensure that this is done expeditiously so that the delegates can travel. As a precaution, vaccinated delegates from red list countries will be quarantined for five days, while unvaccinated delegates from those countries will be quarantined for 10 days.

## Delhi, Dhaka sign disaster management MoU

*New Delhi:* India and Bangladesh have signed an MoU for cooperation in the field of disaster management, resilience and mitigation, the government said Wednesday. "The MoU seeks to put in place a system, whereby

both India and Bangladesh will be benefited from the Disaster Management mechanisms of each other and it will help in strengthening the areas of preparedness, response..." a statement from the MHA said. **ENS**

# Covid R-value drops below 1, including in Kerala, N-E states

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

AFTER BREACHING the value of one in the first week of August, the R number, which reflects how rapidly the pandemic is spreading, has been steadily ebbing in the country including Kerala and some northeastern states, according to researchers.

The R-value between August 14-16, calculated by the researchers, now stands at 0.89. If R is less than one, it means the number of newly infected people is lower than the number of infected people in the preceding period and the disease incidence is going down.

"India's R has fallen to around 0.9," Sitbara Sinha of the Indian Institute of Mathematical Science, who is leading the research, told *PTI*, citing their data. The R-value of Kerala, which has the highest number of active cases in the country, is now below one, signalling a relief to authorities who have been struggling to bring down the infection levels in the state.

Earlier this week, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya, visited Kerala with a

central team to review the Covid-19 situation in the state.

The minister said the Centre has allocated Rs 267.35 crore to the state to strengthen its health infrastructure and will also provide 1.11 crore vaccines in August and September.

There are 4,98,630 people under surveillance in various districts of the state.

Kerala, which recorded the first Covid case in the country, received accolades for effectively handling the first wave, but the state government has been under criticism after the second wave.

The northeastern states seem to have finally come out of the second wave, Sinha said.

The R-value for Maharashtra, another state which has a high number of cases, is 0.89, the data shows. Himachal Pradesh continues to have an R-value of above one, although it reduced in the last few days, while Tamil Nadu and Uttarakhand still have R very close to one, Sinha said.

The reproduction number or R refers to how many people an infected person infects, on average. In other words, it tells how "efficiently" a virus is spreading.

A smaller R value indicates the disease is on a decline.

## Andhra Pradesh to give kids pneumonia vaccine

**SREENIVAS JANYALA**  
HYDERABAD, AUGUST 18

TWO DAYS after schools reopened across Andhra Pradesh, the state government on Wednesday decided to administer pneumococcal conjugate vaccines to children and test students with symptoms for Covid-19. Health department officials also reviewed Covid protocol in schools. The move comes as part

of preparations for an anticipated third wave. Deputy Chief Minister A Krishna Srinivas, who also holds the health portfolio, said the government is focusing on vaccinating school teachers and staff.

Meanwhile, officials said there were 17,218 active cases; the recovery rate was at 98.45 per cent while the overall positivity rate is 1.94 per cent. The positivity rate is less than three in 10 districts, and ranges from 3 to 6 per cent in three districts.

## JAL JEEVAN MISSION

# Bihar minister disputes Centre data, flags higher number in state scheme

**HARIKISHAN SHARMA**  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

BIHAR WATER Resources Minister Sanjay Kumar Jha on Wednesday disputed figures reported by the Centre on the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) dashboard, saying only 8.44 lakh tap water connections have been provided in Bihar under the central scheme for rural households, and not 1.46 crore as shown.

The rest of the tap water connections, Jha said, were provided under two other schemes, including Har Ghar Nal Ka Jal scheme which is run by the Nitish Kumar government on its own and which accounts for the largest chunk of the total number.

This is the first time a state — one ruled by the JD(U) in alliance with the BJP — has disputed the figures on the JJM dashboard.

Reacting to *The Indian Express*



**Bihar Water Resources Minister Sanjay Kumar Jha**

report based on dashboard figures that say Bihar provided 1.46 crore tap water connections to rural households under the JJM since it began in 2019, Jha in a tweet gave the breakup of the connections under different schemes.

"Thanks to vision of Hon CM Shri @NitishKumar, 87% of Bihar rural households have access to clean tap water. The scheme-wise breakup of tap connections provided in Bihar is as follows: 1. Har Ghar Nal Ka Jal: 152.16 lakh; 2. Jal Jeevan Mission: 8.44 lakh; and 3. NRDP: 2.32 lakh," tweeted Jha, who is also the national general secretary of the JD(U).

The Bihar minister's objection is significant as Bihar has the single largest contribution in the central data. If Bihar's numbers are discounted, the national figure will drop to 3.36 crore from 4.74 crore as reported on the JJM dashboard on Wednesday.

In his Independence Day speech, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said: "I am happy that in just two years of Jal Jeevan Mission, more than 4.5 crore families have started getting tap water."

An email sent by *The Indian Express* to the spokesperson for Union Jal Shakti Ministry, seeking a response on the data, remained unanswered till press time.

Jha said the Bihar government has provided tap water connections to rural households with its own money. "Our Har Ghar Nal Ka Jal scheme was conceived in 2015 and implemented from 2016. The state government has been run-

ning this scheme from its own money. This has been possible only due to personal monitoring by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar," he told *The Indian Express*.

He said the Bihar government has used the Jal Jeevan Mission in less than 5 per cent of rural wards in the state to provide the tap water connections to rural households. "Under @jaljeevan, Bihar has done work in 4,891 wards out of a total of 1,14,651 rural wards. 1,346 wards taken up under the erstwhile NRDP. Remaining 1,08,414 wards covered under state government's Har Ghar Nal Ka Jal scheme," he tweeted.

Tagging *The Indian Express* report, he tweeted, "This is a remarkable story! Giant vision of CM Shri @NitishKumar of Har Ghar Nal Ka Jal... has ensured 87% of rural households in Bihar with tap water connections — among top 4 best states in India."

## India, Australia sign document to boost naval ties

*New Delhi:* Chiefs of the Indian and Australian navies on Wednesday signed a guidance document to streamline interaction between the two forces at various levels.

The Navy said in a statement that the signing ceremony for the 'Joint Guidance for the Australia-India Navy to Navy Relationship' document was held via videoconference between Navy Chief Admiral Karambir Singh, and Admiral Michael Noonan, Chief of Navy, Australian Navy.

Australia and India, along with the US and Japan are members of the four-nation Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, or the Quad, which has irked China. The navies of the four Quad nations will also participate in the Malabar Naval Exercise later this year. **ENS**

## PEGASUS CONTROVERSY

# SC notice to Centre, Bengal on plea against inquiry panel

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

SUPREME COURT on Wednesday issued notice on a plea to quash the July 27 notification of the West Bengal government setting up a two-member panel to inquire into allegations of use of Pegasus spyware for illegal surveillance.

A bench of Chief Justice of India N V Ramana and Justices Surya Kant and Aniruddha Bose issued notice to the Centre as well as the West Bengal government, seeking their response, on the plea filed by NGO Global Village Foundation. The bench said the matter will be taken up on August 25 along with other pending petitions seeking court-

monitored inquiry into the controversy.

Appearing for the Centre, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta termed the constitution of the committee "unconstitutional". Stating that he will assist the bench on the point of constitutionality, he said, "It is unconstitutional is all I can say."

Advocate Saurabh Mishra, who appeared for the petitioner, said the notification is being challenged on grounds of lack of jurisdiction. He sought an interim order in the form of a stay, submitting that the commission had already issued a public notice and proceedings had started and wondered why a state committee should continue while the Supreme Court is already seized of the matter.

# As Punjab ramps up facilities, a 'cancer train' turns a corner

**SHIVNARAYAN RAJPUROHIT**  
BIKANER, AUGUST 18

WITH PUNJAB ramping up its healthcare facilities, the Abohar-Jodhpur passenger train may be on course to shedding its morbid sobriquet of the 'Cancer Train'.

Since 2018, the number of people from Punjab who take the train for treatment at Bikaner's government-run Acharya Tulsi Regional Cancer Treatment and Research Institute has fallen sharply. According to estimates by the cancer treatment facility, the daily inflow of patients from Punjab has plummeted to five-10 from over 100 several years ago.

From 27.48% of the total new out-of-state patients at the tertiary care centre in 2015, Punjab's share dropped to 13.11% in 2019 and further to 9.09% in 2020.

Hospital authorities peg the dwindling patient numbers from Punjab to an increase in healthcare facilities in the Abohar region of the state. Dr Neeti Sharma, head of the cancer department, said Punjab has improved its medical facilities, inaugurating state-run cancer hospitals at Bhatinda, Sangrur, Faridkot and Fazilka in the Malwa region, one of the worst affected by cancer.

"New patients have reduced significantly. But we still receive follow-up patients who have been getting treatment since years, or those who are recommended by families or relatives who have been treated here," said Sharma.

In contrast, the hospital has seen a steady rise of patients from Uttar Pradesh, mostly from western UP. The state's share rose to 35.39% in 2020 from 16.69% in 2015. Haryana continues to retain the top state, accounting for more than half of the new registrations over the last seven years.



The 'cancer train' arrives at Bikaner railway station. *Express*

Sharma said most UP patients are those settled along polluted stretches of the Ganga-Yamuna Doab region. "A majority of them have gall bladder cancer (in contrast with the profile of cancer patients from Rajasthan and Haryana)," she said.

According to a Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) report, UP has 12 river stretches polluted by untreated discharge of effluent and sewage. Of them, three of the four most polluting stretches in Hindon, Kali and Yamuna rivers are in western UP. The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has in various orders said that polluting rivers have led to a high number of cancer cases in some villages along the Hindon and Kali rivers. In its report in February this year, an NGT-formed oversight committee criticised the state for its slow pace in installing treatment plants along the stretches.

Restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic have also taken a financial and physical toll on many patients. Waiting for his wife Khushnabi's turn for a radiotherapy session at the hospital, Muslimeen (47), a farmer from Amroha, said he spent Rs 70,000-80,000 for five-six trips to Bikaner between January and May when trains were shut. His wife was diagnosed with breast cancer. "A farmer does not earn much. We had to borrow to pay

# SC dismisses Maharashtra ex-minister plea against CBI FIR

Rejects state govt plea against HC order allowing probe by the central agency

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

THE SUPREME Court Wednesday dismissed former Maharashtra Home minister Anil Deshmukh's plea challenging the FIR registered by CBI against him in connection with the allegations of corruption levelled by former Mumbai Police commissioner Param Bir Singh.

A bench of Justices D Y Chandrachud and M R Shah junked Deshmukh's appeal against the July 22 order of the Bombay High Court, which had also turned down his prayer to quash the FIR, saying that no case for interference was made out.

The apex court bench also rejected a plea by the Maharashtra government against the HC order allowing the CBI probe.

Appearing for Deshmukh in his petition challenging the Bombay HC order, senior advocate Amit Desai contended that the CBI could not take up investigation without prior consent of the state. He argued that the HC had only ordered a preliminary enquiry, and subsequently it had to seek State sanction under Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act before registering FIR.

Additional Solicitor General Aman Lekhi, appearing for CBI, opposed this and said the inquiry was based on High Court's order and the power of the constitutional court to order inquiry cannot be excluded or curtailed.

The bench did not agree with Desai's contentions and said that insisting on sanction under the provision for FIR can defeat the ends of justice in a situation

## DESHMUKH SKIPS ED SUMMONS AGAIN

*Mumbai:* Former Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh on Wednesday skipped ED summons served to him in connection with a money laundering and corruption case. Deshmukh sent a letter to the agency through his lawyer saying the Supreme Court, while refusing him interim relief, granted him liberty to seek remedy under the Code of Criminal Procedure. **ENS**

where a court is forced to order a CBI probe owing to lack of confidence in state police. "Why investigation is ordered in the first place? Because the state can't be trusted. If you say you still have to abide by 17A, that will defeat the ends of justice. State government will never grant sanction. If state had to give sanction, it would have investigated the case in the first place," Justice Chandrachud said.

Rejecting the Maharashtra government's contention, Justice Chandrachud asked senior advocate Rahul Chitnis, who appeared for the state, "Normally when FIR is filed, police has jurisdiction u/s 167 CrPC for all the facts related. Police are bound to take into consideration all facts. How can we draw a line that CBI will only investigate abuse of law with regards to particular facts?"

Justice Shah added that the "manner in which the postings were made are the subject matter for investigation".

# Samajwadi MP booked for sedition over Taliban remarks

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
SAMBHAL, AUGUST 18

SAMAJWADI PARTY MP Shafiqur Rehman Barq has been booked for sedition following his recent remarks allegedly defending the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan and equating it with India's own freedom struggle, police said on Wednesday.

He was charged under Indian Penal Code section 124A (sedition) following a complaint from BJP leader Rajesh Singh on Tuesday, Superintendent of Police Chakresh Mishra said.

Following registration of the case, Barq on Wednesday said he was quoted out of context and wrong charges have been levelled against him. "I am with the policies of India," he said.

The MP has been also booked under sections 153A (promoting enmity between different groups) and 295A (outraging religious feelings), Mishra said.

Besides Barq, two others — Mohammad Muqueem and Chaudhary Faizan — have been booked under these sections, the officer said. Following the Sambhal MP's remarks, Samajwadi Party workers Muqueem and Faizan posted material on social media in support of the Taliban, according to the FIR.

Responding to questions from reporters on Monday, Lok Sabha member Barq had said the Taliban wanted to free their country and it was Afghanistan's internal matter. The MP had said that when India was under British Rule, the entire country fought for independence.

The remarks drew sharp criticism from Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. In the state legislative council, the chief minister on Tuesday slammed the opposition MP.



# ECONOMY

SENSEX: 55,629.49 ▼ 162.78 (-0.29%) NIFTY: 16,568.85 ▼ 45.75 (-0.28%) NIKKEI: 27,585.91 ▲ 161.44 HANG SENG: 25,867.01 ▲ 121.14 FTSE: 7,160.27 ▼ 20.84 DAX: 15,919.62 ▼ 2.33

International market data till 1900 IST

**‘ACTUAL PAT FOR FY20 ALMOST HALF OF THE NEGATIVE ₹60K CR PROJECTION’**

## ‘Grossly inflated’: PowerMin on FY21 discom loss estimates of ₹90K crore

ENSECONOMICBUREAU  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

STATE-OWNED POWER distribution companies (discoms) posted losses of Rs 32,898 crore in FY19-20, the Power Ministry said in a statement on Wednesday in response to estimates that pegged the losses at Rs 60,000 crore for FY20 and about Rs 90,000 crore for FY21. The Ministry said a loss estimate of Rs 90,000 crore for state discoms in FY21 was “grossly inflated”. The NITI Aayog had also used the estimate in its report on the power distribution sector published in August.

“...actual PAT figure for FY2020 is almost half of the negative -Rs 60,000 crore projected by Icr for FY2020, thereby indicating that

the Icr estimates of even FY2020 are significantly flawed. Icr has further built up the losses for FY2021 on their erroneously estimated figures of FY2020 by adding another Rs 30,000 crore due to Covid,” the Ministry said. It did not, however, provide any data on actual losses for discoms in FY21. The Ministry said Icr may have assumed that a Rs 30,000-crore increase in discom dues to creditors between March and December 2021 reflected additional losses for discoms noting that the increase was actually a result of cash flow problems.

“As a result of the above erroneous projections by Icr, the loss figures of Rs 90,000 crore for FY2021 seem to be grossly inflated,” the power ministry said. Icr said its estimate of net

**EXPLAINED**  
**Aiming to cut losses**

THE GOVERNMENT is aiming to cut commercial losses in the range of 12-15 per cent and reduce the difference between the average cost of supply and average revenue realised to zero by FY25.

losses of Rs 56,000 crore for FY20 was based on continued high distribution losses for discoms and that tariff revisions had remained muted over the past three years. “We would be able to reconcile our estimated loss figures for

FY2020 with the loss estimates for FY2020 reported by the Ministry of Power only after detailed accounts prepared by PFC (Power Finance Corporation) are available. It would be especially important to look at the regulatory assets and grants booked by the discoms for FY2020,” Icr said in an official statement. Discoms can book regulatory assets for costs incurred in a particular fiscal allowing them to lower overall losses for a fiscal with a view to recovering those costs from consumers in the future.

The Ministry had noted that through the true-up mechanism, discoms would be able to recover losses due to change in consumption patterns due to the pandemic through tariffs in subsequent years and that Icr had also noted this in

its report. “To the extent that such revenue losses claimed by discoms are approved by the SERCs (State Electricity Regulatory Commissions) under the true-up, the incremental revenue gap of discoms would be lower than the Rs 30,000 crore estimated by Icr,” the ratings agency said adding that any compensation by state governments by way of subsidies or grants could also result in lower booked losses for discoms.

The Cabinet, in June, announced a Rs 3.03 lakh crore incentive-based scheme to strengthen financial position of discoms. The government is aiming to cut commercial losses in the range of 12-15 per cent and reduce the difference between the average cost of supply and average revenue realised to zero by FY25.

## Economy normalising towards pre-Covid activity levels: Birla

ENSECONOMICBUREAU  
MUMBAI, AUGUST 18

THE ECONOMY is rapidly normalising towards pre-Covid activity levels even as uncertainty exists about mutations and repeated infection waves, Aditya Birla Group chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla said on Wednesday.

“Uncertainty about virus mutations and repeated infection waves has not gone away. Yet, one gets a strong sense that there are more silver linings to the economic scenario today than at most points during the pandemic,” he said at the annual general meeting of group firm UltraTech. “Economic indicators show that the economy is also rapidly normalising towards pre-pandemic activity levels.”

According to him, the fiscal stance clearly seems to be poised for an acceleration of government



Aditya Birla Group chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla. File

capex in the coming years, especially in relation to the National Infrastructure Pipeline projects. Alongside, there are very strong signals of a pick-up in the private sector capex cycle, he said.

Birla said the three factors of cyclical upswing, conducive policy impulses and an improving global backdrop are likely to align themselves to position India for a virtuous cycle of growth and investments in the medium term.

## LPG dearer by ₹25; 2nd hike in as many mths

ENSECONOMICBUREAU  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

THE PRICE of domestic cooking gas LPG was on Wednesday hiked by Rs 25 per cylinder, the second straight month of increase in rates.

The rates were hiked by Rs 25.50 per cylinder on July 1. Non-subsidised LPG rates too were hiked on August 1 by the same proportion, with subsidised cooking gas prices being raised now.

Subsidised LPG in Delhi now costs Rs 859 per 14.2-kg cylinder, according to a price notification by oil companies. Monday's hike in subsidised LPG price has taken the total rate hike since January 1 to Rs 165 a cylinder. The price of domestic cooking gas has more than doubled in last seven years.

## MARKETS WATCH RBI REPORT

### ‘Unicorn listings bring in new era’

ENSECONOMICBUREAU  
MUMBAI, AUGUST 18

WITH THE recent debut IPO offerings by Indian unicorns making waves, the Reserve Bank of India has said “a new era has clearly begun” and “another growth impulse is igniting financial markets”.

“These IPOs of new age companies arrive as bullishness about India mounts, especially around Indian tech. In fact, India's tech boom has been long awaited, with strong global and domestic appetite for what are widely believed to be world class businesses in the pipeline,” the central bank said in its “State of the Economy” report.

“2021 could well turn out to be India's year of the IPO,” the RBI said. “These listings coincide with a broader rush by Indian companies to tap the market and the FOMO (fear of missing out) factor driving investors, which have taken the benchmark indices to records,” it said.

However, it said this explosion of interest in these companies will only be sustained if they are able to convert innovative ideas into metrics such as breaking even at the level of earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation



The BSE in Mumbai. File

(EBITDA) level without expensing business development costs, followed by cash flows and profits. “The jury is still out. Investors will closely scrutinise their stories,” it said.

As per the report, markets regard them as “concept stocks” because they flout the existing conventions — they have neither made profits nor issued any guidance on ever getting to profitability. There are already warnings of systemic risks to financial stability that monetary policy authorities should not ignore as the unicorn IPO party gets going. “The bursting of the dotcom bubble in 2001 showed that many start-ups could go bust, but risk management practices have changed to diffuse this risk over many newcomers. And those that survive can go on to become the Googles, Facebooks and Amazons of the future,” it said.

Full report on [www.indianexpress.com](http://www.indianexpress.com)

## ‘Recovery broad-based, India Inc credit outlook at positive’

A broad-based recovery is on for India Inc currently, said Crisil Ratings, while upgrading its credit quality outlook to ‘positive’ from the earlier ‘cautiously optimistic’

**>2.5x** Rise in credit ratio, which illustrates the number of upgrades to downgrades, in first four months of the ongoing fiscal, against 1.33 times in second half of FY21

**28** Sectors that are set to witness a recovery in demand back to pre-pandemic levels by end of FY22; for the remaining ones, demand will be upwards of 85% of pre-pandemic level

**Survey details: Crisil studied 43 sectors, excluding financial sector, accounting for 75% of overall ₹36 lakh crore in outstanding debt**

Source: Crisil Ratings/PTI



**FACTORS THAT DROVE REVISION IN OUTLOOK:**  
■ Strong economic growth both domestically and globally  
■ Estimate that domestic demand will be buoyant even if a third wave materialises

## Locker norms: Bank liability to be 100 times annual rent

ENSECONOMICBUREAU  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

THE RESERVE Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday released revised guidelines for hiring of lockers under which the liability of banks will be limited to 100 times its annual rent in case of fire, theft, building collapse or frauds by employees.

As per the revised norms, which shall come into force from January 1, 2022, banks will be required to incorporate a clause in the locker agreement prohibiting the hirer from keeping anything il-

**Revised norms shall come into force from Jan 1**

legal or hazardous in lockers. The instructions will be applicable to new and existing safe deposit lockers and the safe custody of articles facility with the banks. Banks would also need to adopt the model locker agreement to be framed by IBA. Banks will have to put in place a Board-approved policy outlining the responsibility owed by them for any damage to the lockers due to their negligence.

## Oil bonds aim to ‘insulate’ customers: Experts see ‘scope for fuel cess cuts’

SUNNY VERMA  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

THE GOVERNMENT'S argument that it cannot reduce taxes on fuel due to the burden of past oil bonds is not convincing and the Centre has the wherewithal to provide relief to consumers from high prices of petrol and diesel, economists said. Congress leader and former Finance Minister P Chidambaram told *The Indian Express* that Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has presented a “hollow argument” as subsidies were financed through borrowings by the UPA government, and there is scope for the present government to provide relief to consumers.

“What the FM has argued doesn't make any sense. They have collected more than Rs 15 lakh crore in last five years from taxes (on fuel). This is absolute treachery to say that prices cannot be reduced due to burden of oil bonds. If they do not want to reduce (taxes), they should simply say that we will not reduce,” said a chief economist

**“Whether the government borrowed directly or borrowed through its surrogates (oil companies), the effect is the same”**

P CHIDAMBARAM  
FORMER FINANCE MINISTER

with a bank who did not want to be named.

Sitharaman said on Monday that “the Government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is today paying for the oil price reduction done by the UPA in 2012-13.” “Look at their trickery,” she said, noting that the previous government had cut taxes on fuels but left the current government with oil bonds.

Before fuel prices were deregulated, petrol and diesel as well as cooking gas and kerosene were sold at subsidised rates during UPA rule. The then government issued oil bonds totalling Rs 1.34 lakh crores in lieu of subsidy.

Chidambaram said: “The FM's argument is a hollow argument and betrays colossal ignorance. If she had consulted any economist, she would have understood that

the subsidy on fuels (given by the UPA) was financed by borrowing. Whether the government borrowed directly or borrowed through its surrogates (oil companies), the effect is the same. In either case, the interest burden has to be borne by the government. If she has the courage, the FM should say that the subsidy on fuels given by the UPA to lessen the burden on the consumer was not justified at that time. I dare the FM to say that.”

He said government has the scope to provide relief to consumers. “Government's greed for money has led it to impose huge cesses on petrol and diesel which are cruel and oppressive. There is scope to cut the cesses and give relief to the consumer. Since people are crying for relief, they must be given some relief,” he said.

Economists said the oil bonds were issued to insulate consumers.

“In the past when oil prices were over \$120 a barrel, the oil bonds were issued to minimise impact on consumers and keep oil marketing companies profitable. If that was not done, the retail

prices would have been much higher at that point in time. It would have led to higher inflation, lower disposable income for consumers, affecting consumption and growth. Lower growth in turn would have led to lower tax collections. It is difficult to say, which decision was optimal. But this is how consumers were insulated,” said DK Pant, chief economist and head-public finance, India Ratings and Research Pvt Ltd.

“What you need to look at the government's aim is to minimise losses, but the loss minimisation should not be at the cost of welfare loss of general population,” Pant said.

The Centre hiked the excise duty on petrol to Rs 32.98 per litre in May 2020 from Rs 19.98 per litre, and on diesel to Rs 31.83 from Rs 15.83.

The Centre's revenue from taxes on crude oil and petroleum products jumped 45.6 per cent in 2020-21 to Rs 4.18 lakh crore. Excise duty on petroleum products jumped over 74 per cent year-on-year to Rs 3.45 lakh crore in 2020-21, according to government data.

## Cong deregulated fuel, leading to global impact on local prices, says Puri

ENSECONOMICBUREAU  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

THE GOVERNMENT is “sensitive” towards the prices of the petroleum products and is taking all possible steps to address the issue, Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said on Wednesday, and blamed the Congress for the current trend of hike in petrol and diesel prices.

If state governments want, they can lower the prices of petrol and diesel, as a state did so recently, he said in a press conference at the Delhi BJP office.

The Congress government in 2010 deregulated prices of petrol and diesel, meaning there would be a local impact of international rates, he said. “The Centre imposes excise tax on petrol and diesel, while states impose VAT on it. We use this excise money to fund schemes...,” he said. Puri said the Congress government, before 2014, issued oil bonds of Rs 1.34 lakh crore to control prices of petrol and “passed on their problem to us.” He said the figures on oil bonds presented by it were “flawed” and challenged the Congress to ask states ruled by it to reduce VAT on petrol and diesel.

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Bids are invited from Experienced reputed civil contractor registered in 'AA' class in RRVPNL and 'AA' class in other Govt. Department, eligible for participation as per BID amount in Central/ State/ other State Govt. Deptt./NCR, Experienced Company having executed similar in Govt. Deptt. And Govt. owned entity having experienced of similar work through E-Procurement system for the work described in NIT No. 08/2021-22 under Se (Civil), RVPNL, Jaipur in the prescribed BID format. All information regarding BID are available on websites <https://eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in> and [www.rvpnl.co.in](http://www.rvpnl.co.in) and <https://sppp.raj.nic.in> UBN:- VFN2122WLOB00524

RRVPN/TR-5211/2021  
Raj.Samwad/C/21/4959

Superintending Engineer (Civil), Jaipur

**COIMBATORE CITY MUNICIPAL CORPORATION**  
**NOTICE INVITING TENDERS (NIT)**

**Tender Notice No. e-1/Jnnurm/ 2021-22** **Date : 17.08.2021**  
The Commissioner, Coimbatore Corporation hereby invites bids through both on-line and off line from eligible bidders for the following works:

Sl. No.	Name of work	Value put to tender Rs.	Bid Security Rs.	Period of Completion
1	Improvement of Sanganoor Pallam from Mettupalayam Road to Sathyamangalam Road at Coimbatore Corporation- from Chainage 2300m to 3300m (Package - II) (Second Call)	28.00 Crore	28.00 Lakh	18 Months

A two cover bidding procedure will be adopted. The bidders shall satisfy the qualification criteria and the financial criteria as mentioned in the bid document. The bidding documents will be available from **18.08.2021 to 16.09.2021** and downloaded / uploaded from the website <https://tntenders.gov.in> on or before at **15.00 Hours on 16.09.2021 through online**. Tender Submission will be closed at **15.00 hours and opened at 16.00 hours on 17.09.2021 through offline**.

**Roc. No. 3615 (Pack -II) /2012 / JN 4**  
**Off: 0422-2396026 / 0422-2391122**  
**e-mail: commr.coimbatore@tn.gov.in**  
**e-mail: sejjnnurm@ccmc.gov.in**  
DIPR / 2453 /TENDER/2021

**The Commissioner, Coimbatore Corporation, Coimbatore Corporation Office Building, Big Bazaar Street, Coimbatore-641001. Commissioner, Coimbatore Corporation**

## BRIEFLY

### HDFC Bankcards

**Mumbai:** HDFC Bank MD-CEO Sashidhar Jagdishan said the bank will regain and grow its credit card customer market share and revenue market share. **FE**

### OMO by RBI

**New Delhi:** The Reserve Bank said on Wednesday it will conduct an open market operations (OMO) to purchase government securities of Rs 25,000 crore on August 26, under the G-sec Acquisition Programme (G-SAP 2.0).

### WTO report

**London:** The global merchandise trade is continuing its robust recovery from the shock of the Covid-19 pandemic, according to the WTO's Goods Trade Barometer, which hit a record high in its latest reading issued on Wednesday. **PTI**

### T-mobile breach

**Bengaluru:** T-Mobile US Inc said Wednesday a probe into a data breach revealed that personal data, including social security numbers and driver's license information, of over 40 million former and prospective customers was stolen. **REUTERS**

## 5TH MEETING OF BRICS INDUSTRY MINISTERS

### Goyal: Horizon of NDB should be expanded to strengthen social infra

ENSECONOMICBUREAU  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

COMMERCE MINISTER Piyush Goyal Wednesday called for the NDB to expand its horizons to fund service delivery in the education and health sectors besides funding infrastructure and industry development.

The New Development Bank

(NDB) is a multilateral development bank aimed at funding sustainable development projects in the BRICS nations. It has committed funding to a number of major infrastructure projects in India, including the Mumbai Metro rail and many renewable energy projects, besides a \$1-billion emergency assistance loan for economic recovery post Covid-19.

“The horizon of NDB should be

expanded and resources be utilized for strengthening social infrastructure, especially for funding service delivery in education and health sector, besides promotion of infrastructure and industrial sector,” Goyal said at the 5th meeting of BRICS industry ministers.

He added the vision of an Aatmanirbhar Bharat was “engaging with the world with a spirit of competitiveness.”

## Minutes show US Fed split over jobs, bond-buying

REUTERS  
WASHINGTON, AUGUST 18

US FEDERAL Reserve officials felt the employment benchmark for decreasing support for the economy “could be reached this year,” but had not yet been satisfied, as per minutes from the US central bank's meeting last month.

“Most participants anticipated that the economy would continue to make progress toward those goals” and that the standard “could be reached this year,” said the minutes of the July 27-28 meeting, released on Wednesday.

Fed officials said they still had faith in the economic recovery



US Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell. Reuters file

even as the Delta variant fuelled a rise in Covid cases, and continued laying plans for eventual end of the central bank's monthly purchases of Treasury bonds and mortgage-backed securities. Fed Chair Jerome Powell may provide information in remarks at next week's Jackson Hole conference.

**एसपीपीयू – आयुका संयुक्त एम. एससी.**  
**भौतिकी (खगोल भौतिकी)**  
**कार्यक्रम प्रवेश – 2021**

सावित्रीबाई फुले पुणे विश्वविद्यालय (एसपीपीयू) और इंटर-यूनिवर्सिटी सेंटर फॉर एस्ट्रोफिजिक्स (आईयूसीए) ने संयुक्त एम.एससी. भौतिकी (खगोल भौतिकी) कार्यक्रम 2021 के प्रवेश के लिए आवेदन आमंत्रित किए हैं। प्रत्याशित आवेदकों की (बी.एससी. द्वितीय वर्ष के स्तर पर) गणित के साथ भौतिकी में बी.एससी. डिग्री या इंजीनियरिंग की किसी भी शाखा में बी.ई./बी.टेक. की डिग्री, न्यूनतम 55% अंकों के साथ पूर्ण होनी चाहिए। शैक्षणिक वर्ष 2020-2021 में इस प्रकार की डिग्री न्यूनतम 55% अंकों के साथ पूरी करने की उम्मीद करने वाले भी आवेदन करने के लिए पात्र होंगे। इसके अतिरिक्त, प्रत्याशित उम्मीदवारों को भौतिकी में जॉइंट एंट्रन्स स्कीमिंग टेस्ट (JEST - 2021) में उत्तीर्ण होना चाहिए। पात्रता एवं चयन प्रक्रिया के बारे में अधिक जानकारी <http://www.unipune.ac.in/dept/science/physics/default.htm> पर या <https://www.iucaa.in/SPPU-IUCAA-MSC-Physics-Astrophysics.html> पर उपलब्ध है।

पात्र एवं इच्छुक आवेदक <https://www.iucaa.in/msc> पर ऑनलाइन आवेदन करें। ऑनलाइन आवेदन जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि – रविवार, 29 अगस्त 2021 है।

एम.एससी. कार्यक्रम के लिए चयन, योग्यता डिग्री के पूरा होने के अधीन, JEST-2021 में प्राप्त अंकों पर आधारित होगा। चयनित उम्मीदवारों को कार्डेंट्रलिंग के लिए आमंत्रित किया जाएगा, जहाँ वे प्रवेश लेने से पूर्व कार्यक्रम के बारे में अधिक जानेंगे।



TOPOF THE  
WORLD

Aleksandar Vucic

## SERBIA

President dares  
Twitter: 'Delete  
my account!'

Belgrade: Serbia's auto-cratic leader Aleksandar Vucic challenged Twitter on Tuesday to close his account like it did with Donald Trump's, after several media outlets under his control were labeled state-affiliated by the social media site. "I can't wait for them (Twitter) to close my account so I become another Trump in the world," Vucic said. Twitter in January deleted the account of the former US president because of the risk of further incitement of violence after his supporters stormed the US Capitol on January 6 after he lost the presidential election. **AP**

## VATICAN CITY

Pope urges to  
get vaccines for  
the good of all

Vatican City: Pope Francis issued an appeal on Wednesday urging people to get inoculated against Covid-19, saying the vaccines could bring an end to the pandemic, but needed to be taken by everyone. "Thanks to God's grace and to the work of many, we now have vaccines to protect us from Covid-19," the pope said in a video message made on behalf of the nonprofit US group the Ad Council and the public health coalition COVID Collaborative. "They grant us the hope of ending the pandemic, but only if they are available to all and if we work together." **REUTERS**

## MALAYSIA

King wants new  
premier to face  
confidence vote

Kuala Lumpur: Malaysia's king will name a new prime minister as soon as possible but the appointee will have to face a confidence vote in parliament to prove his majority, the palace said in a statement Wednesday. Muhyiddin Yassin resigned as prime minister on Monday after conceding he had lost his majority in parliament but remains caretaker premier until a successor is named. In a statement, the palace said the prime minister appointed by the king must table a motion of confidence in parliament as soon as possible to prove "legitimately that he has the majority". **REUTERS**

## US steps up airlift: Kabul safe passage open

Pentagon says in talks with Taliban to accelerate the pace of the evacuation

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
WASHINGTON, AUGUST 18

THE TALIBAN have agreed to allow "safe passage" from Afghanistan for civilians struggling to join a US-directed airlift from the capital, President Joe Biden's national security adviser said Tuesday, although a timetable for completing the evacuation of Americans, Afghan allies and others has yet to be worked out with the country's new rulers.

Jake Sullivan acknowledged reports that some civilians were encountering resistance — "being turned away or pushed back or even beaten" — as they tried to reach the Kabul international airport. But he said "very large numbers" were reaching the airport and the problem of the others was being taken up with the Taliban, whose stunningly swift takeover of the country on Sunday plunged the US evacuation effort into chaos, confusion and violence.

Pentagon officials said that after interruptions on Monday, the airlift was back on track and being accelerated despite weather problems, amid regular communication with Taliban leaders. Additional US troops arrived and more were on the way, with a total of more than 6,000 expected to be involved in securing the airport in coming days.

The Pentagon said Wednesday that senior US military officers at the Kabul airport are talking to Taliban commanders in the capital about Taliban checkpoints and curfews that have limited the number of Americans and Afghans able to enter the airport.

John Kirby, the chief Pentagon spokesman, told reporters that Navy Rear Adm Peter Vasely is communicating with Taliban

NATO SET TO HOLD  
EMERGENCY MEETING  
ON AFGHANISTAN

Brussels: NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg says he will chair an emergency meeting of foreign ministers from the 30-nation military alliance on Friday to discuss developments in Afghanistan.

Stoltenberg tweeted on Wednesday that he has convened the videoconference "to continue our close coordination and discuss our common approach on Afghanistan." **AP**

commanders in an effort to further accelerate the pace of the evacuation, which faces an August 31 deadline set by President Joe Biden, even as thousands of American citizens and others scramble to get out of the country.

Kirby said that over the past 24 hours about 2,000 people, including 325 American citizens, have been flown out of the Kabul international airport on 18 flights by US Air Force C-17 transport planes.

The spokesman said the Biden administration is considering its options for dealing with a separate but related problem — the abandonment by Afghan security forces of an array of military equipment, weapons and aircraft that have fallen into the hands of the Taliban or other militant groups around Afghanistan.

"We don't, obviously, want to see our equipment in the hands of those who would act against our interests or the interests of the Afghan people and increase violence and insecurity inside Afghanistan," Kirby said.



Taliban fighters patrol Kabul's Wazir Akbar Khan neighbourhood on Wednesday. AP

Body parts found  
in landing gear  
of flight from  
Kabul: US officials

THE NEW YORK TIMES  
WASHINGTON, AUGUST 18

THE US Air Force acknowledged Tuesday that human body parts were found in the wheel well of an American military C-17 cargo plane that took flight amid chaos at Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul.

Air Force officials have not said how many people died in the episode Monday, but said the service was investigating "the loss of civilian lives" as a crowd of Afghans, desperate to escape the country after their government collapsed to the Taliban, climbed onto the plane's wings and fell from the sky after it took off.

A harrowing video of the episode, recorded by the Afghan news media, has circulated around the world, instantly making the horrific scene — of American military might flying away as Afghans hung on against all hope — a symbol of President Joe Biden's retreat from Afghanistan.

Afghan woman ex-footballer tells  
players to burn kits, delete photos

IAIN AXON  
LONDON, AUGUST 18

THE FORMER captain of the Afghan women's soccer team has urged players to delete social media, erase public identities and burn their kits for safety's sake now that the country is again under Taliban rule.

Copenhagen-based Khalida Popal told Reuters in a video interview on Wednesday that the militants had killed, raped and stoned women in the past and female footballers were scared of what the future might hold.

The co-founder of the Afghan women's football league said she had always used her voice to encourage young women "to stand strong, to be bold, to be visible" but now she had a different message.

"Today I'm calling them and telling them, take down their names, remove their identities, take down their photos for their safety. Even I'm telling them to burn down or get rid of your national team uniform," she said. "And that is painful for me, for someone as an activist who stood up and did everything possible to achieve and earn that identity as a women's national team player."



People line up at a Taliban checkpoint on the road leading to the French embassy in Kabul on Tuesday evening. NYT

Popal said soccer had enabled women to take a strong stand for their rights, and to defy those who would have them silenced. "They are so afraid. They are worried, they are scared, not

only the players, but also the activists... they have nobody to go to, to seek protection, to ask for help if they are in danger," she said of the situation now. "They are afraid that any time the door will be knocked. What we are seeing is a country collapsing."

A spokesperson for FIFA said the world soccer body shared "concern and sympathy with all those affected by the evolving situation". **REUTERS**

British lawmakers  
slam Johnson, Biden

REUTERS  
LONDON, AUGUST 18

BRITISH LAWMAKERS vented their anger on Wednesday at Prime Minister Boris Johnson and US President Joe Biden over the collapse of Afghanistan into Taliban hands, calling it a failure of intelligence, leadership and moral duty.

Speaking at an emergency session of parliament, recalled from its summer break to discuss Afghanistan, Johnson said the Taliban would be judged on their actions, not their words, after they sought to convince the world they would not seek revenge.

But, barely a minute into his opening address, Johnson faced a critical interruption from a member of his own Conservative Party.

Johnson, who attempted to head for a holiday on Saturday only to return as the Taliban closed in on the Afghan capital, was accused of "careless leadership" by opposition Labour leader Keir Starmer. "There's been a major miscalculation of the resilience of the Afghan forces and staggering complacency from our government about the Taliban," Starmer said.



Labour leader Keir Starmer on Wednesday. UK Parliament/AP

Former Conservative prime minister Theresa May also asked how Britain could have so miscalculated the strength of the Taliban. "Was our understanding of the Afghan government so weak? Or did we just feel that we have to follow the United States and hope that, on a wing and a prayer, it would be all right on the night?"

Tom Tugendhat, a Conservative lawmaker and chairman of parliament's Foreign Affairs Select Committee who served in Afghanisan, told the chamber, "To see (Biden) call into question the courage of men I fought with, to claim that they ran, is shameful. Those who have never fought for the colours they fly should be careful about criticising those who have."

## Baradar's rise charts Taliban's long road back to power

KATHY GANNON  
WASHINGTON, AUGUST 18

THE TALIBAN'S top political leader, who made a triumphal return to Afghanistan this week, battled the US and its allies for decades but then signed a landmark peace agreement with the Trump administration.

Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar is now expected to play a key role in negotiations between the Taliban and officials from the Afghan government that the militant group deposed in its blitz across the country. The Taliban say they seek an "inclusive, Islamic" government and claim they have become more moderate since they last held power.

But many remain skeptical, and all eyes are now on Baradar, who has said little about how the

group will govern but has proven pragmatic in the past.

Baradar's biography charts the arc of the Taliban's journey from an Islamic militia that battled warlords during the civil war in the 1990s, ruled the country in accordance with a strict interpretation of Islamic law and then waged a two-decade insurgency against the US.

Baradar is the only surviving Taliban leader to have been personally appointed deputy by the late Taliban commander Mullah Mohammed Omar, giving Baradar near-legendary status within the movement. And he is more far more visible than the Taliban's current supreme leader, Maulawi Hibatullah Akhunzada, believed to be in hiding in Pakistan.

On Tuesday, Baradar landed in Kandahar, the birthplace of



Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar helped found the Taliban in 1994. File

the Taliban movement he helped found in the mid-1990s, ending 20 years of exile.

Baradar, who is in his early 50s, was born in the Uruzgan province. Like others who would eventually become Taliban leaders, he joined the ranks of the CIA- and Pakistan-backed mujahideen to fight against the Soviet Union

during its occupation of the country that ended in 1989.

In the 1990s, the country slid into civil war, with rival mujahideen battling one another and carving out fiefdoms.

In 1994, Mullah Omar, Baradar and others founded the Taliban, which means religious students. Their unsparing interpretation of Islam unified their ranks and set them apart from the notoriously corrupt warlords.

During the group's 1996-2001 rule, the president and governing council were based in Kabul. But Baradar spent most of his time in Kandahar, the spiritual capital of the Taliban, and did not have an official government role.

The US invaded Afghanistan after the 9/11 attacks. Baradar, Omar and other Taliban leaders fled into neighboring Pakistan.

Baradar was arrested in

Karachi in 2010 in a joint raid by the CIA and Pakistan's counter-terrorism forces.

At the time, he had been making peace overtures to Afghanistan's then-President Hamid Karzai, but the US was bent on military victory and it appeared that Pakistan wanted to ensure control over any political process. Baradar's removal empowered more radical leaders within the Taliban who were less open to diplomacy.

In his first comment after the capture of Kabul on Sunday, Baradar acknowledged his surprise, saying that "it was never expected that we will have victory in Afghanistan".

"Now comes the test," he said. "We must meet the challenge of serving and securing our nation, and giving it a stable life going forward." **AP**

400 people booked for harassing,  
molesting Pak YouTube girl

M ZULQERNAIN  
LAHORE, AUGUST 18

LAHORE POLICE have booked 400 people who allegedly harassed and molested a YouTube girl on Pakistan's Independence Day at the historic Minar-i-Pakistan, officials said.

The police got into action following the videos of her harassment and molestation that went viral on social media with calls to Prime Minister Imran Khan and Punjab Chief Minister Usman Buzdar to take action against the culprits.

The incident took place on August 14 when hundreds of youngsters were celebrating Independence Day at Azadi

Chowk near Minar-i-Pakistan in Lahore.

In the videos, hundreds of young men can be seen throwing the girl in the air for fun, dragging her, tearing her clothes and molesting her.

"After the videos went viral on Tuesday, the police approached the girl on the order of the high-ups and persuaded her to register FIR," a senior police official told PTI. He said the girl was still traumatised and broke into tears while narrating what had happened to her on Independence Day.

She said in the FIR that she and six other members of her YouTube channel visited Azadi Chowk to record a video clip of the Independence Day celebrations.

"They tore my clothes and molested me. They dragged and tossed me up in the air for fun. They also beat my team members, and used abusive language," she said.

She alleged that during the incident, her cell phone, a gold ring and cash worth PKR 150,000 were snatched as well.

The police officer said with the help of video footage the suspects will be arrested soon.

There were reports on social media that the girl was carrying an Indian and Pakistani flag to use them for her TikTok video clip in connection with the Independence Day of both countries. Someone from the crowd objected, leading to the incident.

The police however did not confirm this. **PTI**

Hong Kong police arrest four  
students for 'advocating terror'

JESSIE PANG  
HONG KONG, AUGUST 18

HONG KONG police said on Wednesday four students were arrested for "advocating terrorism" after their student union passed a motion last month mourning the death of a 50-year-old who stabbed a policeman before killing himself.

Police have said an officer was stabbed from behind on July 1, while on duty with other policemen preventing protest gatherings on the anniversary of the former British colony's return to Chinese rule in 1997.

The man then stabbed himself in the chest with the knife and died later in the hospital. The



A student of Hong Kong University (centre) is escorted by police officers after a home search. AP/PTI

policeman, 28, suffered a punctured lung, but survived what Secretary for Security Chris Tang described as a terrorist act.

Shortly after the attack, a few

dozen members of the Hong Kong University student union passed a motion, since withdrawn, to commemorate the 50-year-old's death and "appreciate" his "sacrifice."

The union's campus office has severed ties with the union and banned about 30 students who signed the motion from entering its premises.

"The motion is very shocking," Senior Superintendent Steve Li told reporters.

"It tried to rationalise and glorify terrorism," Li said, adding that it "encouraged people to attempt suicide" and it did not align with "our moral standards." **REUTERS**

US health officials call for  
Covid-19 booster shots

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
NEW YORK, AUGUST 18

US HEALTH officials Wednesday announced plans to dispense COVID-19 booster shots to all Americans to shore up their protection amid the surging delta variant and evidence that the vaccines' effectiveness is falling.

The plan, as outlined by the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other top authorities, calls for an extra dose eight months after people get their second shot of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine. The doses could begin the week of September 20.

"Our plan is to protect the American people, to stay ahead of this virus," CDC Director Dr

Rochelle Walensky said.

Health officials said people who received the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine will also probably need extra shots. But they said they are waiting for more data.

Top scientists at the World Health Organization bitterly objected to the US plan, noting that poor countries are not getting enough vaccine for their initial rounds of shots.

"We're planning to hand out extra life jackets to people who already have life jackets, while we're leaving other people to drown without a single life jacket," said Dr. Michael Ryan, the WHO's emergencies chief.

WHO officials have long called for vaccine equity and "solidarity" among countries.







# Indians on podium in 4x400m mixed relay at junior Worlds

NIHAL KOSHE  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

LESS THAN a month ago, Barath Sridhar was nursing a ligament injury in his left ankle which put his participation in the World U20 Championship in doubt. In June, the 18-year-old from Viluppuram district in Tamil Nadu tested positive for Covid-19 and missed nearly a month of practice.

Sridhar made it to Nairobi despite a medical doctor telling him he would have to sit at home. Physios at the national camp in Patiala strapped his ankle and worked their magic to get him on the plane. The coaches managed his workload smartly.

Sridhar didn't run the 4x400m mixed relay heats but the Indian team management in Nairobi placed their faith in him for the final. He pushed his body to the limit, unmindful of aggravating an injury to give the Indian team a solid start.

Sridhar in Lane 3 began the baton-run for India which would end with a bronze medal for the 4x400 metres mixed relay team at the junior world championships. From Sridhar to Priya Mohan, from Priya to Summy and from Summy to Kapil, the surge of this young Indian team that left the Jamaicans trailing in fourth place gave track and field another famous moment to cherish less than a fortnight after Neeraj Chopra's historic javelin gold at the Tokyo Olympics.

The timing of 3:20.60 of the junior team wasn't way off the mark set by the senior squad at the Tokyo Olympics (3:19.93).

An abridged schedule in Nairobi made it tougher for those participating in multiple events. The six-day event was crunched into five days at the 11h hour. World Athletics said the change was necessitated because of 'the impact of Covid on teams travelling and logistics of moving vital equipment around the world'.

The final tested the will and physical conditioning of the two women in the team. Priya and Summy were running their third 400 metre race of the day, after the women's individual heats and the qualification round of the relay.

"The first race was ok, but after that the physiotherapist helped us a lot to recover. We went to the hotel and had a nice lunch and then we prepared our minds," Priya, who has qualified for the individual final,



(FROM LEFT): India's quartet of Kapil, Priya Mohan, Summy and Barath Sridhar finished third in the final of 4x400m mixed relay. *Express*

said.

### Close contest

Priya helped the team nose into third place, Summy maintained the spot and at one point nearly got past the Polish athlete in second place.

Kapil, running the anchor leg, was on the shoulder of the Nigerian and Polish teams with 200 metres to go. Though the top two surged ahead in the final stretch, Kapil must be credited for not losing steam and keeping the Jamaicans at bay. Kapil said after the race that he was going all out and not just trying to hold onto third spot. "In my mind, I was trying to win gold," he said.

On an emotional day for the team, Sridhar's mind went back to the time when he injured his ankle because he wasn't used to training regularly on a synthetic track. "In Ambattur, I train with my coach Pugezhendhi on a mud track which is just 200 metres long. So when I came to the national camp, I got injured running on a synthetic track. The curve of the 200 metres track is smaller compared to a 400 metres track and that also takes time to get used

to," Sridhar said.

The biggest take away from the first day of the U20 championship is India's proven bench strength ready to graduate to a higher level, a good sign with three major senior competitions - including the world championships - lined up for next year.

"Since we have not won a medal in athletics ever (at the Olympics), the whole thought was 'that we have done everything but we can't win a medal'. And with Neeraj showing that you can win a medal, youngsters have self-confidence. Otherwise, we always felt that 'are we missing something' which other countries have. This (Chopra's gold medal) has removed a huge mental block from Indian athletes," Athletics Federation of India president Adille Sumariwala said from Nairobi.

This edition of the junior world championships, however, has a depleted field. Some of the top nations have pulled out, including the United States, Britain, Germany, Australia and Japan. But for a nation starved of medals at major championships for years, every podium finish calls for celebration.

# Thiem to miss rest of season with wrist injury

REUTERS/AP  
NEW YORK, AUGUST 18

AUSTRIA'S DOMINIC Thiem will not defend his US Open title after having to pull out of the hardcourt major with a wrist injury, the world number six said on Wednesday. Thiem, who suffered the injury in June at the Mallorca Open and was also forced to skip the grass-court major at Wimbledon, said on Twitter that he will miss the rest of the 2021 season.

"The past six months, I've been following the medical advice, wearing the wrist splint, doing exercise to stay in shape... but then last week I hit a ball during training and started to feel some pain again," said the 27-year-old. "After some tests, they (the doctors) said my wrist needs more time, so we've all agreed on being conservative and to give my wrist some time to recover... It has been a tough decision but I know this is what I have to do." This is the second straight year that the defending champion at Flushing Meadows has withdrawn from the event after Rafa Nadal skipped the 2020 edition due to concerns over the coronavirus.

The US Open runs from August 30 to September 12.

### Wildcard for Venus

Two-time champion Venus Williams will be back at the U.S. Open after being given a wild card Wednesday into the Grand Slam tournament.

The 41-year-old Williams has won seven major titles, including victories at Flushing Meadows in 2000 and 2001. But with her current WTA ranking of No. 112, she has fallen outside the top 104 who received direct entry into the women's main draw.

Williams hasn't missed the U.S. Open since 2006, when she was sidelined by a left wrist injury. She reached her last major semi-final there in 2017.

CoCo Vandeweghe, who also reached those semifinals, also was awarded a wild card by the U.S. Tennis Association. The former No. 9-ranked American has battled injuries and is currently No. 160.

American teenagers Caty McNally, Hailey Baptiste and Katie Volynets also received women's wild cards, along with 20-year-old Emma Navarro, the NCAA champion at Virginia, and Ashlyn Krueger. Krueger, 17, won the USTA Girls' 18s national championship to earn a wild-card spot.

# Ronaldo set to stick around to spearhead Allegri 2.0 mission

REUTERS  
ROME, AUGUST 18

CRISTIANO RONALDO has been linked with a host of clubs this summer but he seems set to stay put at Juventus, tasked with an even more important role in revitalising the Italian giants. Be it a return to boyhood club Sporting Lisbon, a move Ronaldo's own mother suggested was a possibility, or another shot at the English Premier League with Manchester United, the 36-year-old has been subject to much transfer talk.

This week, Italian newspaper *Corriere dello Sport* reported Ronaldo's agent Jorge Mendes has offered his star client to English champions Manchester City, while Spanish TV show *El Chiringuito* claimed a return to Real Madrid could happen.

After Juve stuttered to a fourth-placed finish last season and were knocked out at the last 16 stage of the Champions League, Ronaldo, in the twilight years of his career, could be forgiven for seeking pastures new, to better his chances of further silverware before retiring.

But, as yet, no such move has materialised, with Real coach Carlo Ancelotti distancing himself from the man who won four Champions League winners medals in the Spanish capital. "Cristiano is a Real Madrid legend and he has all my love and respect," Ancelotti tweeted on Tuesday. "I have never considered signing him. We look forward."

Ronaldo therefore appears likely to remain at Juve as they look to win back the Scudetto from Inter Milan, with last season's top goalscorer in Serie A the focal point of the club's title tilt once again.

New coach Massimiliano Allegri, back at Juve for a second spell in charge, has in fact called on Ronaldo to offer even more this season. "Ronaldo is an extraordinary player and an intelligent guy," Allegri told a news conference last month. "We talked as we talked with other players and I told him that it will be an important season, he will have a completely different and greater responsibility than three years ago. "He can't just be a goalscorer, I expect him to take responsibility as the man he is, given we have a lot of younger players in the team."

"I can only imagine the difficulties that have been here over these two years."

Coming into last season on the back of



Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti has ruled out the possibility of the club re-signing Cristiano Ronaldo. *Reuters*

nine successive Scudetti, Juve looked well set to make it 10 titles in a row under the tutelage of rookie coach Andrea Pirlo.

While Pirlo lacked managerial experience, he understood the demands of the club, having won four league titles with Juve as a player between 2011 and 2015, and was expected to bring a more attractive brand of football to the team.

Allegri's five seasons at the helm from 2014 to 2019 brought five league titles, four Coppa Italia wins and two runners-up finishes in the Champions League.

However, Juve decided after winning the 2019 Scudetto at a canter that it was time to evolve from Allegri's effective but often unattractive football towards a more progressive style.

Two unsuccessful attempts to do that later, after Maurizio Sarri and Pirlo both lasted one season each, Juve are back where they started.

According to reports in Italian daily *La Repubblica*, upon his departure in 2019, Allegri told Juve chairman Andrea Agnelli to move Ronaldo on, as his large wages and influence on the side was holding them back.

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