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# \*The Indian EXPRESS

JOURNALISM OF COURAGE

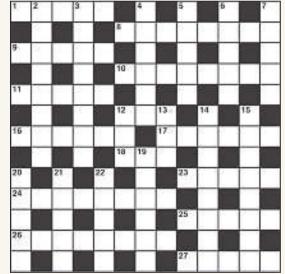
MONDAY, AUGUST 9, 2021, NEW DELHI, LATE CITY, 16 PAGES

SINCE 1932

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#### CROSSWORD 4503



#### ACROSS

- Robust half of a famous
- comedy duo (5) 8 Lift to reveal switch (8) Gently water the flowers (5)
- 10 Brief notes jazz fans sent back to the censor in Rome
- 11 Close studies on the East
- 12 Travel to a port in India (3)
- 16 Very little time (6) 17 Unpretentious old medicine
- 18 Comfortable place to sit and
- have a drink (3) 23 Ensure one has a nap standing
- up(5) 24 Repaired and put back in stock (8)
- 25 Custom made clothing (5)
- 27 Refuse to commit oneself  $about\,the\,garden\,perhaps\,(5)$
- 26 and 22 Down: Highly capricious bounders (8,5)

#### **DOWN**

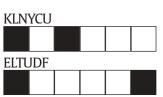
- Kind of order that should be
- kept in a fridge? (5,3) 3 Stretches toward us perhaps
- Drunk gets bottle opener before a game (6)
- Create a vacancy possibly
- 6 It holds the pieces returned
- Evidence of spiritual strength
- 12 Set to give a leg up
- 13 Cleopatra's preparations for
- death included it (3) 14 The strength of the current?
- 15 Rousing game (8)
- 19 He has compiled a vocabulary
- 20 Seagoing vagabond (5)
- 21 Is to prosecute in spring(5) 22 See 26 Across

Solutions Crossword 4502: Across: 1 Touchstone, 6 Plus, 10 Bacon, 11 Gun turret, 12 Oriental, 13 Troll, 15 Exactly, 17 Slashed, 19 Panacea, 21 Outflow, 22 Night, 24 Creditor, 27 Tolerates, 28 Ermend, 29 Maps, 30 Occasional. Down: 1 Toby, 2 Uncertain, 3 Hence, 4 Tighthy, 5 Nonplus, 7 Largo, 8 Settle down, 9 Subtract, 14 Peeping Tom, 16 Taciturn, 18 Halloween, 20 Ascetic, 21 Open sea, 23 Galop,

#### JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip. One that \_\_\_good and evil is an enemy to good. - Edmund Burke (9)





Answer: One that **confounds** good and evil is an enemy to good. - Edmund Burke SOLUTION: MOOSE, CANON, CLUNKY, FLUTED

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







#### CALVIN & HOBBES by Bill Watterson



#### **MARVIN** by Tom Armstrong



SOLUTION SUDOKU 4557

Difficulty Level 5s
Instructions
To solve a Sudoku p
every digit from 1 to

45

SUDOKU

must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

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

Genius

	5	3	12.				
8			6				9
		4			8	3	
	6			1			
5			2	8			7
			9			6	
	3	2	9		1		-
1				9			5
					7	2	

#### 4 8 1 2 3 6 7 9 5 9 6 7 8 4 5 1 3 2 5 3 2 9 7 1 2 5 6 8 3 9 1 4 3 1 8 4 9 2 6 5 7 6 9 4 5 1 7 3 2 8 1 6 8 7 9 3 5 4 2 6 5 6 7 2 9

1. Providing and fitting of fire water pipeline and allied works at SKIMS, Soura.

the a-hid document, each clarifications and submit their hids

#### **DAY TODAY**

#### ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

The moon is already creating problems and challenges in your domestic life, but nothing you can't handle. Try to see partners' criticism as well-intentioned and glean what you can from their helpful comments. After all, there is a great deal of sense in their wise words

#### TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

It is difficult to escape the fact that this is a period for hard work. Lazy Taureans might therefore run into problems, whereas those of you who have a highlydeveloped work ethic should do just fine. But you may hold certain information to yourself. You're still keeping your secrets and why shouldn't you?

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

Every now and then the planets give you an enormous shot of energy. However, it's entirely up to you whether you use this constructively or destructively. It's important to act with maturity and selfrestraint over the coming days: you'll gain respect from your friends if you do.

#### CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

Venus is in a brilliant relationship with Jupiter, one which is sure to minimise personal friction. Dreams of distant places or foreign romance may be sufficient to

distract you from the rigours of family life. Yet, there's still something missing, something you're still striving for.

#### LEO (July 24 - Aug. 23) It's not like a Leo to chop and change, but it does seem

that events may oblige you to alter a number of deeply-held opinions. In such circumstances, flexibility can only be seen as a major virtue. If you make allowances for partners now, they'll do the same for you

#### VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sept 23)



dates sorted out in advance. Yet, in a week like this, the stars are likely to have different ideas, throwing all your best plans into the melting-pot.

Rs.8,70,720/-

ing up to the date and time ment

15 days

M&R for the year 2021-22

#### BY PETER VIDAL

#### LIBRA (Sept 24 - Oct. 23)

You frequently appear to be very self-contained and happy with your own company. However,

appearances are deceptive and there does seem to be a strong likelihood that you will put yourself at someone else's mercy over the next few days. The question is, why? Only you can say.

#### SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov. 22) True, you are able to see the underlying

truth of any situation better than most people, but that doesn't make it easier for you to settle disputes. Your tendency to get emotionally involved makes you a poor diplomat at the moment, so you may have to leave other people to battle it out.

#### SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23 - Dec 22)



opportunity or invitation. Especially one which will lead to promotion, or increased status in your community - or to romantic bliss. You may have to take a leap into the dark.

#### CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20) Professional Capricorns may have



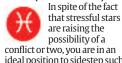
period than those of you with purely personal schemes and ambitions to pursue. Partners' generosity, or lack of it, still holds the key. You could need to wait while they make up their minds, so be patient.

#### AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)



next few days' worth of planetary aspects, is that you should believe only what you know to be right for you. Perhaps it's fine to be a little selfish for a change.

#### PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)



ideal position to sidestep such personal battles and appreciate excellent possibilities for excitement and drama. You see, what at first appears to be difficult can be turned to your advantage.

Head Office: Star House 1, Risk Management Department, Information Security Cell, 3rd Floor, East Wing, C-5-G Block, Bandra-Kurla Complex, Bandra (East), Mumbai 400 051. Email: security.information@bankofindia.co.in

#### TENDER NOTICE Bank of India invites Request for Proposal (RFP) for Procurement o

Cyber Threat Intelligence Services. Last date for submission of Request for Proposal: 30.08.2021 by 4.00 pm. Full details are available on the Bank's Corporate www.bankofindia.co.in under "Tender" Section from 09.08.2021. Amendments / Corrigendum, if any, will be kept on website only



NIT NO.: SCC/AKD/OT (P)/Unit Fabrication/050/ET-1705

SUB: Biennial Rate Contract for Fabrication of Structural Units a Vendors Premises for various projects of GRSE. **Due Date: 21 Days from date of publication** 

. Details will be available in GRSE e - Procurement portal https://eprocuregrse.co.in and websites http://www.grse.in & https://eprocure.gov.in/cppp/ Any addendum/corrigendum to this tender enquiry will be published in above websites only.

"In pursuit of Excellence and Quality in Shipbuilding' Visit us at : www.grse.in



1423

#### New Okhla Industrial Development Authority Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida-201301 (U.P.) site: www.noidaauthorityonline.in

#### **E-TENDER NOTICE**

E-Tenders are invited from firms/contractors registered with UPLC Lucknow for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened / downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website: www.noidaauthorityonline.com & https://etender.up.nic.in Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/amendments & corriaendum etc.

(1) Job No.- 03/E-Tender /SPO/2021-22. Name of Work - Procurement of Printing & Stationery Items, NOIDA, Estimated Cost: Rs. 4500130.00. Which can be uploaded by date 16.08.2021 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on date 17.08.2021 at 11.00 AM.

Office: Sector-39, Noida Store Purchase Officer, Noida CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA

#### OFFICE OF THE KORBA DISTRICT URBAN PUBLIC SERVICE SOCIETY, KORBA

SELECTION OF BIDDER FOR DEVELOPMENT,

#### No53/KDUPSS/CDC/RFP/2021-22/1419 Dated 04/08/2021 **RFP NOTICE**

OPERATION & MAINTENANCE OF DIAGNOSTIC CEN-TRE under City Diagnostic centre scheme IN Korba City Through this notice Korba Urban Public Service Society, Korba Nodal officer herein invites proposal through online Electronice Chhattisgarh Government Procurement System (eGPS) https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in for Selection or Bidder development OPERATION & MAINTE-NANCE OF DIAGNOSTIC CENTRES. under City Diagnostic centre scheme IN Korba City. Bidder may also download the Bid enquiry documents ( a complete set of document is available on website) from the web site (https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in) or

https://uad.ca.gov.in or www.korbamunicipal.in System RFP No.-80896 (1st Call) Last Date of online Bid Submission - 25.08.2021 Last Date of Physical Submission - 28.08.2021 up to 3.00PM

**Nodal Officer** Korba District Urban Public Service Society,

Korba (C.G.)

#### GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR, SHER-I-KASHMIR INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, SOURA OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MECHANICAL I-EXTENSION NOTICE

Due to no response the revised dates for e-NIT NO. 15 OF 2021-22 Dated. 27.07.2021for the work "Providing & fitting of spares to ETIOS, Ambassador car No. JKO1L-6348, JKO1L-6347, JKO1L-6401, JKO1L-7646 & painting to ETIOS & Sumo at SKIMS, Soura.." are extended as

under;	
Last date of uploading:-	upto 11.08.2021 (2.00 PM)
Last date of receipt of hard copies:-	12.08.2021 (4.00 PM)
Date of opening Cover-Ist:-	13.08.2021 (02.30 P.M. or next
	convenient date)
Date of opening Cover-2nd:-	Shall be intimated separately.

No:-SIMS 139 EXN/Mech/553/21-22 -945-51-30

**Executive Enginee** Mechanical, SKIMS



E-TENDER NOTICE FOR ONLINE BIDDING NIT NO. : DKMC/SK/OT (P)/Telescopic Hanger Turnkey/ET-1686 SUB: Fabrication, Assembly & Testing of Telescopic Hanger on Turnkey basis (SVL, YD 3025-28), Total Qty – 04 Nos.

Due Date: 21 days from date of publication Details will be available in GRSE e-Procurement portal https://eprocuregrse.co.in and websites http://www.grse.in & https://eprocure.gov.ln/cppp/ 2. Any Addendum/Corrigendum to this tender enquiry will be published in above websites only

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#### पुन: ई-निविदा सूचना

सर्वसाधारण को सृचित किया जाता है कि कार्यालय रक्षा सम्पदा अधिकारी, जागरा मण्डल आगरा छावनी द्वारा सर्वे संख्या 321 (भाग), ग्वालियर रोड. बिजलीघर के पास आगरा छावनी स्थित रक्षा भूमि जिसका क्षेत्रफल लगभग 5000.0 वर्ग फुट है, पर एक वर्ष के लिए कार, बस, स्कूटर इत्यादि पार्किंग के लिए इच्छुक व्यक्तियों/फर्म आदि द्वारा भारत सरकार, रक्षा मंत्रालय के Defence eprocurement site https://defproc.gov.in के माध्यम से ई-निविदा (E-Tender) आर्गेत्रित की जाती है। निविदा की शर्ते उपरोक्त पोर्टल पर अपलोड कर दी गई है। दस्तावेज डाउनलीड प्रारम्भ करने का दिनांक 09.08.2021 समय 09:30 वजे से तथा निविदा अपलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि 30:08:2021 समय 15:30 बजे तक रहेगी। उक्त सूचनाएँ छावनी परिषद आगरा के वेबसाइट www.cbagra.org.in पर भी देखी जा सकती है।

TNTE:- 4/1336/B दिनांक:- 06/08/2021

(राजीव कुमार) रक्षा सम्पदा अधिकारी आगरा मण्डल, आगरा छावनी

SENIOR MANAGER (JAL)-I

# *V*010*3*

#### lew Okhla Industrial Development Authority Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida-201301 (U.P.)

#### **E-TENDER NOTICE**

E-Tenders are invited from firms/contractors registered with UPLC Lucknow for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website www.noidaauthorityonline.in & http://etender.up.nic.in Please ensure to ee these website for any changes/amendments & corrigendum etc

A) (1) 34/DGM(JAL)/AO/SM(JAL)-I/21-22, Name of work : M/G Sewerage (Two Year Repairing, Raising and Cleaning of Sewer Line Manholes in Village-Jhundpura and Sector-8 to 12, Sector-14A to 16A) Noida. Cost. Rs. 64.29 Lacs. (2) 35/DGM(JAL)/AO/SM(JAL)-I/21-22, Name of work: M/o W/s

Two Year Repairing of VT. Motor and Electrical Works in Network Sector-119, 120 and 151 to 154), Noida. Cost. Rs. 55.07 Lacs. The above tenders can be uploaded by date 23.08.2021 upto 5.00 PM. Pre qualification shall be opened/downloaded on date 24.08.2021 at 11.00 AM.

Office : Sector-05, Noida

**CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA** 

#### GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR. SHER-I-KASHMIR INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, SOURA EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MECHANICAL, SKIMS MC&H, BEMINA & SKIMS ,SOURA, SRINAGAR. Tel: 0194-2402617 Ext: 2159 email:mechanicalskims@gmail.com Short term notice inviting E-tenders Gist of NIT NO. 17 OF 2021-22 Dated. 05.08.2021

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor U.T. of Jammu & Kashmir, Executive Engineer, Mechanical, SKIMS, Soura Srinagar, invites e-tenders from Registered/ Reputed and Experienced firms having expertise as detailed in the tender document for the following works: Sr# Name of the Work **Estimated Cost** 

The complete tender document is available at website http://jktenders.gov.in.Interested bidders/tenderers may view

l		le below. Tender Document contains qualifying criteria for bidders. Sp	ecifications, Bills of Quantities, & Terms and
ı	cor	nditions of the contract and other relevant details.	
L	i.	Date and time of downloading/Sale of tender	07-08-2021 at 11:00 Hour
1	l	documents(Starting Date)	
	ii.	Date & Time of Bidding Queries/clarification/Pre-bid meet	10-08-2021 upto 14:00 Hours
	iii.	Last date & Time of Bid Uploading	16-08-2021 upto 16:00 Hours
	iv.	Date of submission of hard copies. (only Original EMD/DD	17-08-2021 upto 14:00 Hours
		for Document Fee)	
	V.	Date & Time of Commercial/technical Bid (Cover-I) opening	18-08-2021 at 11:00 Hours (or next
	l		convenient day)
	vi.	Date & Time of Financial Bid(Cover-IInd) Opening of the	Shall be intimated separately
		qualifying Bidders	
	vii.	Cost of e-bid Document	Rs.500/=(Rupees five hundred only)
	viii	Amount of Earnest Money Deposit(CDR/FDR)	Rs.17500/=(Rupees seventeen
	ı	, , , ,	thousand & five hundred, only)

No:-SIMS 139 EX/MECH/20-21- 555/21-934-44 Dated. 05 /08/2021

ix. Completion Time

Budget Head

Executive Engineer, Mechanical, SKIMS DIPK-NB-2401 OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, PLANNING CIRCLE, KPDCL, BEMINA, SRINAGAR. NOTICE INVITING TENDERS.

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be do with The f	en are admissed to study the Standard Bidding Document (SED). Tender Specification served to have been done after conful future and quanting, of the procedure, ten full enderstanding of the legislations by the bidden. In the confunction of the procedure, ten ender stockment is excelled in except to the bidden section and colored limit will admine up to the data and then remetized by the bidden section and colored limit will admine up to the data and then remetized by the bidden section and colored limit will admine up to the data and then remetized by the bidden section.	ns and conditions of the Standard Edding Documers ors may view, download the e-Bid document, see
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	Sale of Bid Conservent (Start)	12-08-2023; 8-00FM
=	Tale of Bid Datament (Brid)	11-09-2023; 3:00FM
D.	Clarificación start date	16-04-2031; 11-00AM
1	Clerification End date.	01-09-2021;; 1:30FM
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6	a hid submission (Ent) does and time (submission of a trader fee, EMD and other supporting documents in (EDS/ALS format)	11.09.2021;; 3:40044
"	etind copy of tender document submission, end date (prong with Original Copy of e-tender fee, EMD feature end, and other supporting documents)	Mg-to 19-09-2001; DEROPPM in office of III CE PRP wind, PDD Complex, Beising Schoolan
	Online correspond and improval elled opening date and inne-	16-09-2023/ 02-30PM
1	there transist e-old opening dure it time (only of the technically quelified belows)	Will be communicated to the fectineous suicified bioders
•	Verse of opening of technical & financial e-tids	office of the CE PAF soing, PUD Complete Berning, Sringger
	Cost of a had document	Ps. 10, 000/- (Ps. 100/ for bred 131 unit builders registered with IEE Gest.)

DIPK-NB-2408

Superintending Engineer Planning Cardle (KPDCL), Smrager

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# **The Indian EXPRESS**

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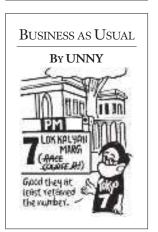
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**TALIBAN SEIZE** KUNDUZ, A KEY **AFGHAN CITY** 



**OBC BILL COMING UP, CONG SAYS WON'T OPPOSE** 

# Last week of House session, no sign of thaw, Opp wants to be heard on Pegasus

TMC puts out video of Opp in House

MANOJCG NEW DELHI, AUGUST 8

AS THIS Monsoon session of Parliament enters its final week, there is little possibility of both the Houses functioning smoothly as Opposition parties Sunday made it clear they will continue to insist on a discussion on the Pegasus spyware issue – a demand that the Government is unlikely to accede to.

Senior Congress leader

Shashi Tharoor said the Opposition should now move a no-confidence motion against the Government. "Rather than just continuing disruptions, we should probably seriously consider other parliamentary manoeuvres...including a vote of no-confidence, because I think there is genuinely no confidence

among the bulk of the

Opposition parties in this

Government," Tharoor told *The* 

Indian Express **CÔNTINUED ON PAGE 4** 

Tharoor says time for no-trust motion; 72 seconds out of 45 min: Lok Sabha TV coverage of Opp in House last sitting

> **LIZ MATHEW &** HARIKISHAN SHARMA NEW DELHI, AUGUST 8

SCHEDULED TO end August 13, Parliament's monsoon session has been disrupted by the row over alleged surveillance through the use of the Pegasus spyware.

Accusing Lok Sabha TV of shutting it out, the Opposition, which has been seeking a discussion on the Pegasus issue and



Friday, 11.07 am. Oppn MPs in the well of the House

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

TWO DAYS after the Supreme

Court criticised the CBI and IB for

"not helping the judiciary at all"

in matters relating to security of

judges, the CBI said on Sunday

that it had arrested five persons

for allegedly posting derogatory

remarks against the judiciary in

were arrested on Saturday, while

three were held last month.

Sources said YSR Congress MP

The agency said two persons

Andhra Pradesh

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 8

After CJI rebuke, CBI

against Andhra judges

says 5 held for comments

farm laws that triggered the farmer agitation, says its protests are only shown on screens inside the House, and not beamed across the country.

On Friday, when Lok Sabha last met, LSTV showed Opposition protests for all of 72 seconds - House proceedings lasted a total of 45 minutes over two sittings that day.

Opposition MPs, however, were not in their seats, except CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

SC had

helping

THE CBI statement

comes days after the SC

nothing" and "not help-

ing the judiciary" in mat-

ters related to security of

judges. The SC had also

flagged the "new trend"

to "malign" the judiciary

when adverse orders are

passed

criticised it for "doing

said: Not



## Despite red flags, Rly university gave contract to firm of Board member

All contracts are as per due process, says NTRI Acting Vice-Chancellor

#### **AVISHEK G DASTIDAR** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 8



versity run by Indian Railways. Sinha's company, 9dot9, of which he is founder and managing director, has been awarded a consultancy contract for the National Rail and Transportation Institute (NRTI), a deemed university of the government, worth Rs 65 lakh per month plus GST for



2021, according to records reviewed by The Indian Express.

interest

This happened despite Railways officials flagging the potential conflict of interest in written deliberations and pointing towards possible circumvention of provisions of the General Financial Rules (GFR) of the government which, specifically, deal with conflict of interest in con-

Sinha, the founding Dean of Indian School of Business, is **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4** 

sultancy contracts.

Har Pal Aapke Saath

# Tokyo brings curtain down on Games held in the time of Covid: 'We did it'



MIHIR VASAVDA TOKYO, AUGUST 8

THE OLYMPICS bubble didn't burst. And the Games did happen.

The strangest Olympic Games ended the same way they began: in front of empty stands, in a state of emergency, and with hundreds filling the streets, imagining what it must feel like to be inside the giant cauldron that Tokyo's National Stadium is. There was one slight differ-

ence, though

Compared to the sombre, downcast opening, the closing ceremony was peppier, with a lot more razzmatazz, reaching a crescendo that is usually associated with Olympics ceremonies.

But then, the organisers had reasons to feel good. The Covid Games, after all, didn't turn out to be a super spreader event – not vet. There were only 430 cases related to the Olympics since the



A support staff of the women's hockey team (taking selfie) with athletes during the closing ceremony at the Olympic Stadium in Tokyo on Sunday. From left, wrestlers Deepak Punia, Ravi Dahiya and Bajrang Punia, and hockey player Lalremsiami (middle). AP REPORTS P15, 16

start of July, with the positivity rate within the bio-bubble where 624,000 screening tests were

conducted, at 0.02 percent. voice of International Olympic Committee (IOC) president Thomas Bach, when he said:

There weren't any grand re-The relief was palpable in the marks of these being the "most successful" Games. Bach, however, did call it the "most challenging".

It wasn't just the pandemic. The athletes had to deal with the brutal summer heat, sidestep the **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4** 

# EXCHANGE MIRABAI CHANU,

**COACH VIJAY SHARMA** 

**PAGE 12** 

#### Better immune response from mixing Covaxin, Covishield, says **ICMR study**

#### **KAUNAIN SHERIFF M** & ANURADHA **MASCARENHAS**

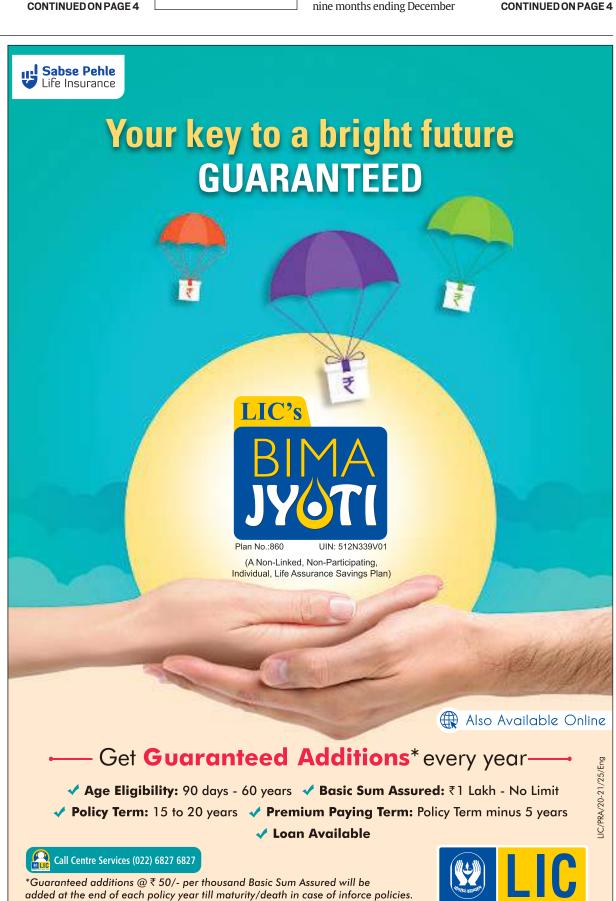
NEW DELHI, PUNE, AUGUST 8

A GROUP of 18 people, who had "inadvertently received Covishield as the first jab and Covaxin as the second", showed better immunogenicity – the ability to generate an immune response – than those who received two doses of the same vaccine, according to a new study by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

In May, 18 villagers in Siddarthnagar, Uttar Pradesh, had received Covaxin as the second dose, six weeks after they got Covishield. The study compared their reaction to 40 recipients of two doses of Covishield and 40 recipients of two doses of Covaxin.

"We compared the safety and immunogenicity profile of them (the group of 18) against CONTINUED ON PAGE 4





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Expected to go live in the United States initially, the features include use of new technology to limit the spread of CSAM online, especially via Apple platform.

#### **TECH**



**REVIEW: ASUS CHROMEBOOK C223** 

An excellent budget notebook, with long battery life

#### **HOLLYWOOD REWIND**



'GIRL WITH A PEARL **EARRING** 

**Scarlett Johansson** stuns in this coming-ofage period piece

# **EXPRESS** AUDIO

#### **Neeraj Chopra's** historic Olympic gold

**NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY** 

In today's episode of the '3 Things' podcast, we discuss javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra's career trajectory, his winning throw, and what the gold medal means for the future of athletics in India

#### FROM PAGE ONE

#### Lok Sabha TV

during the first few minutes when Speaker Om Birla paid tribute to the victims of the 1945 Hiroshima-Nagasaki bombings and congratulated India's wrestler Ravi Kumar Dahiya for winning a silver medal at the Tokyo Olympics. Members of the Congress, DMK, Left parties and TMC were in the well of the House, protesting during the proceedings which lasted from 11 am to 11.21 am.

When the House met again at noon, the government passed two key Bills - The Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2021 to do away with the policy of retrospective taxation and The Central Universities (Amendment) Bill, 2021 to provide for the establishment of a university in the Union Territory of Ladakh amidst slogan shouting by Opposition MPs.

The live telecast of the proceedings did not really reveal what exactly happened inside Lok Sabha. Sources in LSTV said the TV screens in the House are part of the CCTV system, while the camera feed used by the channel is different. "LSTV is responsible for only what is telecast. CCTVs or its cameras are not under our control," sources said.

Manoj K Arora, Editor-in-Chief cum Chief Executive of LSTV, said the channel follows rules laid down for it. "The LSTV transmission is as per the rules which say it should be a true reflection of what's happening inside the House," Arora told The Indian Express.

The channel, sources said, is expected to provide an overall view, but when the Speaker or the Chair speaks or the Prime Minister speaks, it has to focus on them. The rules also say the focus should be on the member who is speaking, be it for question-answer, matters of public importance or participation in a debate.

On Friday, The Indian Express tracked proceedings, minute by minute, from the press gallery inside Lok Sabha and the telecast on LSTV. This is what really happened:

- 11 am: Speaker Om Birla enters the House. He recalls the destruction when Hiroshima and Nagasaki were bombed 76 years ago. He calls for a pledge to live in peace and harmony.
- 11.02: Speaker congratulates wrestler Ravi Kumar Dahiya for winning a silver medal in the Tokyo Olympics. MPs join him by thumping the desk.
- 11.03: Speaker starts Ouestion Hour. Starts with a question relating to institutional deliveries by states during the pandemic. Union Ministers Bhupender Yadav, Pralhad Joshi, Smriti Irani are present. Opposition MPs leave their seats. Congress MP Manickam Tagore is the first to walk towards the treasury benches, shouting slogans, followed by TMC's Aparupa Poddar, Abu Taher Khan and Mahua Moitra, Congress's Jasbir Singh Gill, Benny Behanan,
- Hibi Eden, TN Prathapan and Dean Kuriakose. ■11.04: Mahua Moitra raises a placard and

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period of the work: 09 Months SI No. 2

Tender Notice No. TC-59-2021-SP.

Name of work: Scour monitoring of B

No.1 Up (4x45.7) between SPJ and MKPR

stations of SPJ-DBG section & Br. No. 50 (2x45.7+ 6x30.5) between BHB and DH

stations of MNE-SHC Section unde

SSE/Br./SPJ of Samastipur Division

60-2021-SPJ Name of work: Provision

SSE/Br/SPJ. **Tender Value (In₹)** 

14.32.146.34 Earnest Money (In₹)

0.00 Completion period of the work

n Bettiah Station. Tender Value (In₹):

2,79,06,59 8.23 Earnest Money (In ₹)

0.00 Completion period of the work

06 Months 1. Last Date & time for

receiving of Tender in E-Tender mode

on IREPS web portal :- 30.08.2021 upto

12.00 hours. 2. Opening Date & time for

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3. Website particulars where complete

details of tender & tender document

can be seen on Website : www.ireps.

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PR/00615/SPJ/ ENGG / T/21-22/64

Sr. Divisional Engineer/Co-ord

E.C.Railway/Samastipur

uploaded in the website

#### the slogan of "Pegasus pe jaanch karo (investi-

- 11.05: DMK's TR Baalu, NC MP Hasnain Masoodi rise from their seats. Congress MPs Gaurav Gogoi and Ravneet Singh Bittu shout slogans against the government.
- 11.06: Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya says his junior minister Dr Bharati Pawar is going to answer a question. Urges the Opposition to listen to "a tribal" woman minister. Opposition continues to protest.
- 11.07: Pawar starts her reply. Opposition MPs try to block her. Prathapan holds a placard, seeking a SC-monitored probe into Pegasus, before her. DMK's Veeraswamy Kalanidhi holds another placard.
- ■11.12: Speaker takes up another question. More Opposition MPs join the protest in the well. SAD MP Harsimrat Kaur carries a placard, seeking justice for farmers, and a wheat flower bunch. BJP's Jamyang Tsering Namgyal has a question on environmental issues in the Himalayan region. Bhupender Yadav replies.
- 11.13: Congress MP Gurjeet Singh Aujla leads sloganeering against the government.
- 11: 14: Opposition MPs are standing around the desk of reporters in well.
- 11.15: As Bhupender Yadav replies, Prathapan and Kalanidhi try to block him with placards. The minister's face is not visible on
- 11.17: Hibi Eden takes the lead in slogan shouting, says the government is scared.
- 11.18: Minister Jitender Singh replies to a question on exploration of ocean resources.
- 11.19: Speaker calls for three questions. 11.20: Sukhbir Singh Badal on his feet
- with a placard in support of farmers. Smriti Irani replies to BJD's Sarmistha Sethi's query on the national nutrition mission. Opposition intensifies slogan shouting.
- ■11.21: Speaker asks MPs to return to their seats and hold a discussion, Adjourns proceedings till noon.
- Noon: BJP's Rajendra Agrawal takes the Chair. Mahua Moitra leads TMC MPs to the well of the House. Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury rises to say: "It has been three weeks... the House has not been running properly. No work is done." At this, Ministers Pralhad Joshi and Arjun Ram Meghwal protest.
- 12.01 pm: Chowdhury says: "I want to give a warning to the government.. Mann ki Baat... What you are doing is not right. You cannot be intoxicated with power."
- 12.02: Meghwal: "It's wrong. We are ready for discussion. We have listed Covid management to discuss."
- 12.03: The Chair calls for tabling the papers as listed in the agenda. Meghwal tables the papers. Ministers table action taken reports and other statements.
- 12.04: Gogoi leads the sloganeering. Opposition MPs surround the Secretary General's table and raise slogans. The Chair asks them to return to their seats.
- 12.07: Opposition MPs raise slogans in Bangla: "Khela hobe, khela hobe." Congress MP Vishnu Pramod leads them.
- 12.09: Opposition chants slogans in Tamil, seeking a debate. ■ 12.11: Meghwal presents the Business
- Advisory Committee report for next week. ■ 12.12: Mahua Moitra leads slogans against the government.
- 12.13: Chair calls Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to move the Taxation Amendment Bill. She moves the Bill, and makes an opening remark.
- 12.14: Mahua Moitra and Aparupa Poddar start booing. Other Opposition MPs join them. Some try to block Sitharaman's face from being visible on the screen. Posters are visible on screens inside the House.
- 12.17: The Chair puts the Bill to voice vote. BJP MPs say aye. The Chair puts the Bill to vote,

#### clause by clause, and it is passed. Tender Value (In₹): 35,31,386.88 Earnest Money (In₹): 0.00 Completion period of the work: 02 Months SI No. 3. Tender Notice No. TC-C>lassifieds of inspection platform of bearing of Bridge no.20A SKI-JYG section, 283 SGL- NKE section, 304 and 325 NKE-PNYA section & 48 MNE-SHC section in SPJ Divison under 04 Months SI No. 4. Tender Notice No. TC-61-2021-SPJ Name of work: Repairs ATHENAEUM IAS GS | ESSAY | INTERVIEW of yard drainages and surface water drains **WELCOMES EMINENT FACULTY** Vivek S. Raj **Chief Editor, Civil Services Times** Ploneer since 1998 in over 500+ selections. BATCHES & MAINS Starts: 18th Oct, 2021 gov.in. Amendments/ modifications if

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## No sign of thaw, Opp wants to be heard on Pegasus

In 2010, the Winter session was washed out over protests by the BJP, then in the Opposition, demanding a JPC probe into the 2G spectrum license allocation. The party had stalled functioning of both the Houses after the CAG report on 2G allocation became public. This time, the difference is that the BIP Government has managed to introduce 12 new Bills, eight in Lok Sabha and four in Rajya Sabha. All these bills have been passed in the House in which they were introduced. Overall, ten bills -- including The

Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill, 2021 and The Essential Defence Services Bill, 2021 -- have been passed by both the Houses. Seven bills have been passed by one of the two Houses, and will come up for discussion this week. The key among them are The Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2021 and The General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2021, which were passed by Lok Sabha last week. These bills will now come for discussion and passage in Rajya Sabha -- as also the important OBC Bill, which is the Constitutional 127th Amendment Bill to restore power to the states to identify backward classes.

On Sunday, the Trinamool Congress put out a three-minute video clip on what Opposition leaders have said on the Pegasus issue and the farmer's protests on the floor of the House during passage of the Bills. Sources said the idea behind the video put out by TMC Rajya Sabha leader Derek O'Brien is to show how Opposition leaders used the words 'farmers", "Pegasus" and "spyware" during discussions on various Bills in an attempt to voice these issues. "When the official channels are being denied, this is a new way to reach the masses," said O'Brien.

"PM @narendramodi seems to have lost his nerves. Why is he not keen on answering questions in Parliament? The opposition parties are ready for discussions in Parliament, but @BIP4India govt is stalling the proceedings so that the truth doesn't get to the people," Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge said in a tweet to post the video, which is a compilation of mainly clips from RSTV. "You are not allowing the discussion we have been asking for in the past 14 days...You are passing that Bill now. If you have courage, begin the discussions on Pegasus now," Kharge is heard saying on the floor of the House in the video.

The compilation includes Opposition speakers such as Vandana Chavan (NCP), Manoj Jha (RJD), Deepinder Hooda (Congress), Sukhendu Shekar Roy (TMC), Priyanka Chaturvedi (Shiv Sena), Elamaram Kareem (CPM) -- and Lok Sabha MP Manish Tewari (Congress) among others "We had demanded discussions on three

important issues -- Covid management, farmer's issues and price rise," Congress leader in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury told The Indian Express. "The Government tried their best to scuttle any discussion on price rise. Then the issue of Pegasus came, it was a key issue of national security. We wanted a discussion but the Government has so far not agreed despite our repeated pleas. They are more interested in trying to divide the Opposition," he said. Referring to the OBC Bill, Chowdhury said: "Even now, the Government is trying to do that.'

The Congress, however, does not plan to oppose the Bill and may even pause the protests to allow a discussion to prevent the Government from projecting it as a party that is opposing a key legislation related to OBCs.

"We have no opposition to the Bill. It is our issue, because we had warned the Government in 2018 that you are committing a mistake...taking away powers of the states. Now they are being forced to bring the Bill... but the Government is trying to be too clever by half...we will point it out. We will not stand in the way of passage of the Bill," Chowdhury said. The Opposition parties made it clear that

they will continue to demand a discussion on the Pegasus issue. "The Government does not want the words 'Pegasus', 'national security', 'repeal farm laws' and 'price rise' to be mentioned on the floor of the House. They are running scared. The Opposition is united in holding them accountable," O'Brien told The Indian Express. "They have bulldozed 25 bills at an aver-

age of ten minutes per Bill. It's a disgrace that just one out of ten Bills passed are being scrutinised. They are making popcorn, not legislating. PM (Narendra) Modi has not answered a single question on the floor of Parliament in the last five years. We want to say, 'Come listen to us, Mr Modi'. Also importantly, another session of Parliament will conclude without a Deputy Speaker being appointed," he said. "We expect the House to resume its busi-

ness at least from tomorrow onwards. We are insisting on a discussion on Pegasus... We cannot be a party to just participating in legislative business," DMK's Tiruchi Siva said.

Summing up the Opposition mood, Tharoor said: "The Government's refusal to be answerable in any way, shape or form on an issue of national and international importance has made a mockery of democracy and ordinary Indians which the Government claims to represent. Avoiding discussion and accountability is a real insult to Parliament."

teers doubled up as cheerleaders. They were the only link to the local population for the thousands of athletes who were not allowed to step outside the Olympic Village and their venues. In the closing ceremony, the organisers tried to give the competitors a taste of the city that they never got to experience. They recreated the famous Yoyogi Park -- a massive green space in the city's centre -- complete with fake grass and everyday scenes: dance troupes, joggers, freestyle footballers, yogis and picnickers.

And for the first time, a confident Tokyo was prepared to show what it really was. They showcased the Ainu culture, and set the feet tapping with a dose of Japanese song and dance before handing over the stage to Paris, which will host the next Olympics, for 10 minutes.

But it was again a reminder of these strange times that just as the organisers spoke about the "hope" these Games brought, the trailer for the Paris Olympics was remotely done due to the pandemic. So remote that they went as far as outer space, from where French astronaut Thomas Pesquet helped perform the national anthem on his saxophone from the International Space Station.

It was all very unusual, but then what isn't about these Games?

Paris tried to charm with a video of the city's romantic sights, packed rooftops, jets painting the skies around Eiffel Tower in the country's colours and a little bit of break dancing, which will make its debut as an Olympics sport in 2024. The scene finally cut back to Tokyo, wherethe flame was extinguished, and the athletes sauntered off the field to feel-good music.

Then, the volunteers, the real heroes of these Games, took centre stage. They posed for selfies, ran mock races on the track and shed a tear when the word 'Arigato' (Thank you) appeared on the big screen. The Games that few thought could take place, and the build-up for which went on forever, were finally closed.

Arigato Tokyo. Bonjour Paris.

#### ICMR study

that of individuals receiving either Covishield or Covaxin. Lower and similar adverse events following immunisation in all three groups underlined the safety of the combination vaccineregime," said the study which is yet to be peer reviewed. "Immunogenicity profile against Alpha, Beta and Delta variants in the heterologous group was superior: IgG antibody and neutralising antibody response of the participants was also significantly higher compared to

that in the homologous groups," it said. "Overall, this study demonstrates that immunisation with a heterologous combination of an adenovirus vector platform-based vaccine followed by an inactivated whole virus vaccine is safe and elicits better immunogenicity than two doses of homologous vaccination, using the same vaccines," it said

While Covishield is built on a viral vector vaccine platform and uses a weakened version of adenovirus, a common cold virus that causes infection in chimpanzees, Covaxin is built on an inactivated whole virus vaccine platform.

The study is the first scientific evidence emerging from India on superior immunogenicity profile demonstrated in mixed-vaccine doses. However, the researchers have underlined that to conclusively prove these preliminary findings, "multi-centre" randomised control trials need to be carried out. They have also flagged the study's limitations: the sample size of 18 participants is small: follow-up period is only 60-70 days after first dose; baseline serological and immunological data of participants is not available.

According to the study, the findings have an "important implication" for the Covid-19 vaccination programme wherein "heterologous immunisation will pave the way for induction of improved and better protection against the variant strains of SARS-CoV-2".

"This is the first report of heterologous immunisation with an adenovirus vector based and an inactivated whole virion vaccine in humans demonstrating safety and significantly improved immunogenicity... Immunogenicity profile studied against the variants of concerns, Alpha, Beta and Delta variants, demonstrates significantly higher titers in the heterologous group," it said.

The researchers have said such mixed regimens will help to "overcome the challenges of shortfall of particular vaccines" and "remove hesitancy around vaccines in people's mind that could have genesis in programmatic 'errors' especially in settings where multiple Covid-19 vaccines are being used".

On safety, reactogenicity analysis showed that in the heterologous group, 11 per cent reported pain at the injection site; however, during the second dose, no such local adverse event was reported, it said.

The most commonly reported systemic adverse event was pyrexia (raised body temperature) and malaise (discomfort): 33.3 per cent reported this during the first dose, and 5.5 percent during the second dose.

**FULL REPORTS ON** www.indianexpress.com

#### ■ 12.19: The Chair calls Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan to move the Central Universities (Amendment) Bill 2021.

- 12.20: Pradhan moves the Bill for consideration and passage. He makes opening remarks. Opposition intensifies slogan shouting.
- 12.24: Pradhan takes his seat. Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury says: "We have raised a genuine demand to roll back the farmers' Bills." Meghwal says: "You are responsible for not having a debate." The Bill is put to vote and passed. Opposition MPs shout: "Jawab do, jawab do (give us a reply)". House adjourns for the day to meet again on Monday.

#### Kly university

among the founders and trustees of Ashoka University. He has been closely involved in setting up the NRTI, a deemed to be university and loosely termed the "Railway University" in Vadodara. Sinha's 9dot9 consultancy is also the strategic partner of US lobby firm Albright Stonebridge Group, chaired by Madeleine Albright, former US Secretary of State.

Incidentally, this is the second contract given to Sinha's firms by the institute where he is part of the top management team.

Last year, Harappa Education, of which Sinha is also the Founder and Managing Director, got an assignment to impart training to Railway officials on management practices and Artificial Intelligence. Sources said that engagement is for around two years and payment is on the basis of participation of officials. So far, around Rs 40 lakh has been released, sources said. In the case of 9dot9, the Railway Board approved the contract on April 8 after officials put down in writing that it must comply with the "conflict of interest" provisions laid down in the GFR. Significantly, in June, too, this was flagged again when the engagement of 9dot9 was to be formalized through paperwork involving RITES —the Railway PSU engaged by Railway Board to execute the matter.

The GFR provisions cited by officials specifically mandate that the consultant hired should strictly avoid conflicts with other assignments or his/its own corporate interests and acting without any consideration for future work.

The provisions say that it is a conflict of interest if the bidding firm or any of its affiliates are either involved in the consultancy contract to which procurement is linked. Records show that RITES informed the Railway Board that the decision to engage 9dot9 was arrived at after competitive bidding and due diligence.

Asked for his comment on the contracts, Sinha referred The Indian Express to Alka Arora Misra, interim Vice Chancellor of NRTI, and said she is "the best and most appropriate person to speak" on this. When contacted, Misra, who is also Railway Board Additional Member (Human Resources), conveyed through a Railway ministry spokesman that all contracts were awarded as per rules and due process.

The "Railway University" was a project envisaged in the first term of the Narendra Modi government. Railways carved out the NRTI from the existing infrastructure in the sprawling campus of National Academy of Indian Railways in Vadodara.

#### Days after CJI rebuke

Nandigam Suresh and former MLA Amanchi Krishna Mohan were also questioned in the case. "The CBI has arrested two more accused on 07.08.2021 in an ongoing investigation of a case relating to making derogatory posts on social media against judges and the judiciary," the agency said in a statement.

The accused, identified as Pattaru Aadarsh and Lavanuru Samba Siva Reddy, were produced before a court in Guntur on Sunday. The CBI said Dhami Reddy Konda Reddy and Pamula Sudheer were arrested on July 28, while Lingareddy Rajasekhar Reddy, who was residing in Kuwait, was arrested on July 9 when he landed in India.

On Friday, the Supreme Court had said police and CBI don't respond to complaints from judges. Heading a two-judge bench which took up the suo motu case registered by the Supreme Court in connection with the death of Dhanbad Additional Sessions Judge Uttam Anand. Chief Iustice of India N V Ramana said "there are several cases in the country which involve gangsters and where high profile people are accused" and that judges are sometimes "threatened mentally also by sending messages on WhatsApp, SMS" or harassed through social media posts. Though CBI probes were ordered in some instances, he said the agency had "done nothing".

The CJI also flagged what he called a "new trend in this country" to malign the judiciary when adverse orders are passed. "It is a new trend in this country. If an adverse order is passed, then the judiciary is maligned. If judges file a complaint to police or CBI, they do not respond. Intelligence Bureau and CBI are not helping the judiciary at all," he said.

The case in Andhra Pradesh relates to alleged derogatory comments against the judiciary, accusing the judges of bias and incompetence, which began when the High Court set aside a government order making English the medium of instruction at all government schools. More such posts followed when the court set aside an order removing State Election Commissioner N Ramesh Kumar. Some of the posts also referred to the castes of judges.

On November 11 last year, the CBI registered a case against 16 people and took over the investigation of 12 FIRs from the CID, following the Andhra Pradesh HC's orders. The original FIRs were registered on complaints filed by the Registrar General of the Andhra Pradesh HC. "It was alleged that the accused, by inten-

tionally targeting the judiciary, made derogatory posts on social media platform against hon'ble judges and judiciary, following some court verdicts," the CBI said. "After registration of the case, CBI traced 13 of the 16 accused named in FIRs in the case on various digital platforms. Three of them were found to be abroad. CBI examined 11 of 13 accused, and arrested

five of them. Evidence against remaining six accused persons is being evaluated for further necessary legal action," it said.

"It was also found that one accused was al $legedly\,using\,a\,passport\,with\,a\,name\,different$ from his real identity. To investigate larger conspiracy, CBI has also examined certain persons including an MP. ex-MLA and continued investigation into the role of other persons who were not mentioned in the FIR," it said.

The CBI said it had taken action to get the objectionable posts removed from social media platforms and other public domains. "Investigation is continuing, including through the channels of MLAT, Interpol to collect evidence from abroad," it said.

#### -WITH ENSINPUTS, HYDERABAD Tokyo downs curtains

thunderstorm warnings and, amidst all this, focus on what they were here for: be the best at what they do. But the Tokyo Olympics went much be-

yond merely going faster, higher and stronger. They served another reminder that even during tense, highly competitive moments, there is space for spirit and solidarity. Tai Tzu Ying was reduced to tears when PV Sindhu, in a touching gesture, consoled the

on to lose the gold medal match — a feeling the Indian shuttler can very well relate to. The story of Gianmarco Tamberi of Italy and Qatar's Mutaz Barshim, who chose to share the

player who beat her in the semifinal but went

high jump gold instead of forcing a playoff, is sure to go down as one of The Olympics stories. These Games will also be remembered for the women taking centre stage.

journey from a refugee to one of the greatest athletes of all time, becoming the first to win medals in 1500m, 5000m and 10,000m. The USA's Allyson Felix lived up to the lofty

expectations, becoming the most successful

Dutch runner Sifan Hassan completed her

sprinter at the age of 35. And, gymnast Simone Biles and tennis star Naomi Osaka didn't even have to be on the field of play to leave a mark, telling the rest of the sporting world that it is okay to say 'no' if you

aren't up for the challenge psychologically.

Women's power was reflected in India's best-ever medals tally, too. Weightlifter Mirabai Chanu, Sindhu and boxer Lovlina Borgohain set the stage for a grand finish, before Neeraj Chopra became the country's first athletics gold medalist. India's tally of seven medals, which placed them 48th, is still glaringly low when one looks at the 113 medals, including 39 gold, won by table-toppers USA and second-placed China's tally of 88 (38 gold).

But it was Japan's march that really changed the mood around these Olympics. As the host nation's athletes raked in the medals -- 27 gold to finish third — the public began to lap up the event. Barred from entering the venues, Tokyoites started lining up outside the stadiums to support their athletes.

Inside the empty arenas, the polite volun-New Delhi





NEW DELHI, AUGUST 8

PROGRAMMES OFFERED earlier

in existing technical institutes

have seen a restructuring of fees

after being brought under the

Delhi Skill and Entrepreneurship

University. The university, which

comes under the Delhi govern-

ment, is conducting its first ever

uploaded on its website, for the

15 full-time diploma courses on

offer, the fee for the first year is Rs 15,000, for the second year is

Rs 16,500, and Rs 18,150 for the

third year. According to last

year's brochure, first-year fees

for full time diplomas at Delhi

government institutes of tech-

nology and polytechnics was Rs

6,000 for boys and Rs 5,000 for

girls with refundable security

fees are Rs 1,50,000 in the first

year and increase slightly each

year to go up to Rs 1,99,650 in the

final year. The BA, BCom, BBA,

BSc and BMS courses have yearly

fees within the range of Rs

The fee structure has come

For its B.Tech courses, the

deposit of Rs 2,000.

30,000 to Rs 60,000.

According to the fee structure

cycle of admissions.

TOTAL CASES <b>14,36,761</b>		HOSP	PITAL BEDS	16,797	16,472
		ICU B	EDS	3,677	3,545
	Cases		Recoveries	Deaths	Tests
Aug 7	72		22	1	73,681
Aug 8	66		95	0	67,316
Total	530	<b>5</b> *	14,11,159	25,066	2,42,22,336

#### **BRIEFLY** —

#### 1 dead, 19 injured in bus accident in **Greater Noida**

Greater Noida: A woman died and 19 others were injured in a bus accident in Greater Noida on Sunday. According to police, a private bus was heading from Punjab to Bihar when it rammed into a stationary truck early Sunday morning. The injured passengers are being treated in a government hospital. As per police, the truck was parked on the side of one of the lanes on the Peripheral Eastern Expressway. The bus collided into the rear of the truck around 5 am, said police. The front portion of the vehicle was damaged. The bus was ferrying more than 100 persons, said officials. An FIR is being filed at Dadri police station for rash driving against the bus driver, who is yet to be arrested, police said. The deceased woman is yet to be identified, said police. Most of the passengers, who were sleeping at the time, sustained head injuries due to the impact of the collision.

#### 2 arrested for celebratory firing on b'day

New Delhi: Delhi Police has arrested a man and his friend for firing shots during a birthday celebration in Outer Delhi's Paschim Vihar (East). The arrest of the accused comes after the police took cognizance of a widely circulated video showing a man firing shots in the air at the celebration organised on the rooftop of a house. DCP (Outer) Parvinder Singh said, "Taking cognizance of a video on social media, a case under section 336 (act endangering life or personal safety of others) of the IPC has been registered... The revolver used in the firing belongs to Sumit Tanwar's friend Adana, which is being verified. The two accused are being questioned for recovery of the firearm," Singh

#### South MCD's e-book on heritage sites

New Delhi: The South Municipal Corporation has launched the first volume of its eheritage book, which contains information and pictures of 108 out of 475 notified heritage sites under its jurisdiction. Through SDMC's first ebook on heritage sites, people can learn about historical monuments, ancient buildings and memorials in the area, said a senior official. ENS

#### I-Day: Police intensify patrolling

New Delhi: Ahead of Independence Day, the Delhi Police has tightened security across the capital by intensifying patrolling, conducting anti-sabotage checks and deploying extra pickets at the border areas to thwart any untoward incident, officials said on Sunday. As part of the anti-terror measures, enhanced police presence, intensive checking at vulnerable points. checking of hotels and guesthouses, SIM card and second-hand car dealers, sensitisation of cyber cafe owners and verification of tenant and servant drives are being carried out by all police stations, they said. PTI

#### FOR ADMISSION, BOARD EXAM QUERIES

# Students from classes X to XII can visit schools from today

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 8

STUDENTS OF classes X to XII can visit their schools from Monday for help with "admission-related work including counselling/guidance and practical activities related to board exams", said the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) in an order on Sunday.

It also stated that health checkups and referral services conducted from schools can resume, and children of all ages may come for these with their guardians.

This is the first step towards permitting students to come to school since the second Covid wave hit the city. Delhi schools have largely been shut since March last year. Starting January, senior students (classes IX-XII) were allowed to visit for board

**ABHINAV RAJPUT** 

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 8

EAST DELHI BJP MP Gautam

Gambhir is planning to hold a T20

cricket tournament, featuring

teams from the 10 constituencies

of East Delhi, at the upgraded

Premier League, the tournament

will have three selectors who have

played cricket at the international

level. Teams from the constituencies - Jangpura, Okhla, Trilokpuri,

Kondli, Patparganj, Laxmi Nagar,

Vishwas Nagar, Shahdara, Krishna

Nagar and Gandhi Nagar — would

Express that the tournament will

start from the last week of

October and go on till November.

He said special coaches, sports

kits for players, physiologists,

and other facilities that players

get at the domestic level would

tween 17 and 36 years. Trials

would be held, and international-

level players would select players

from each constituency... trans-

parency would be ensured in

"The age criteria will be be-

Gambhir told The Indian

be selected after trials.

be made available.

Touted as the East Delhi

Yamuna Sports Complex.

East Delhi will get its

own cricket event,

says MP Gambhir



Since the start of the pandemic, parental consent has been

and final-exam preparations and their practical work, to clear doubts, and meet teachers. These were suspended as cases

spiked in April. Three months after the peak of the second wave, and a dip in cases, the Delhi government is tentatively considering how and

these trials and only people who

are residents of the constituency

can represent the teams," he said.

tioned after fixing a base price and

the money generated from the

sponsors would be used to pro-

eting experiences to people of the

constituency. In the process, if we

find talented players whose po-

tential has gone unnoticed due to

lack of facilities, they would be fur-

ther groomed," said the cricketer

able to see these matches or not

would depend on the Covid proto-

the Yamuna Sports Complex,

which was recently upgraded to

Ranji Trophy standards with two

international-level dressing

rooms, four pitches, practice

pitches, flood lights, electronic

scoreboard, canopies, dressing

room, sponsors box, and a side

mat, where there are sponsors,

jerseys, mentors, and replicate it

at the local level, said an aide of

The idea is to use the IPL for-

col during that time, he added.

Whether spectators would be

The matches would be held at

vide facilities to players.

turned politician.

screen.

Gambhir.

The matches would be held at the Yamuna Sports Complex,

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संख्या :: 56/17/E-2/संक्रिकअध्याधिरोधा2019-20 दिनीक :: 08 अगस्त, 2021

विव्रपि

उत्तराखण्ड सम्पिलित राज्य (सिविल) अवर अधीनरथ सेवा मरीक्षा-2021

के अन्तर्गत उत्तराखण्ड शासन के दिनिन्न विभागों में समूह-"ग" के रिक्त

पदो यथा नामब तहसीलदार, जप-कारापाल, पूर्वि निरीक्षक, विमणन

निरीक्षक, श्रम प्रवर्तन अधिकारी, आधकारी निरीक्षक, ज्येष्ठ गन्ना विकास

निरीक्षक, गन्ना विकास निरीक्षक एवं खाण्डसारी निरीक्षक पर सीधी गर्ती

हारा चयन हेतु अन्यर्षियाँ से ऑनलाईन आवेदन-पत्र आमंत्रित किये जाते हैं :-

मती से सम्बन्धित नियम, अर्हता और शर्त आदि विज्ञापन में एल्लिसित है

र्जाकि आयोग की वेबलाईट <u>www.ukpsc.gov.in</u> पर उपलब्ध है। अभ्यर्थी आवेदन करने से पूर्व विज्ञापन का भली-मॉलि अवलोकन करना सुनिहिच्छ करे।

01. ऑनलाईन विद्वापन जारी करने की तिथि

अन्तिम तिथि

03. कुल पद

02. ऑनलाईन आवेदन-पत्र जमा किये जाने की

The last date of application is 24/08/2021

which was recently upgraded to Ranji Trophy standards

Each team would be auc-

"The idea is to give good crick-

when to re-open schools. For this, the DDMA Friday had decided to set up a committee of experts comprising officials of the Education and Health departments to chalk out a detailed plan and standard operating procedures (SOPs).

Last month, Deputy Chief

vited parents, students, teachers, and principals to write in through email to the government with suggestions on whether schools and colleges should re-open and in what manner. Since the start of the pandemic, parental consent has been central to the return of children to physical classes. When schools had reopened in a limited manner for senior students, children could only report to school with written consent from parents.

Among the suggestions sent to the government, some parents emphasised on the need for vaccines before a move towards re-opening.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has in the past said vaccination options for children should be explored soon so that schools can reopen in a safe environment. At present, vaccination for children has not started



#### SAY A PRAYER

Tourists at Akshardham Temple on Sunday. Abhinav Saha

## **GRAP for Covid-19** in force from today

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 8

DELHI'S GRADED Response Action Plan (GRAP) for Covid came into force on Sunday, with the Delhi Disaster Management Authority ordering implementation if the preconditions have

Under the Covid GRAP, certain actions such as shutting markets and malls are mandated in a graded manner in the event that cases, positivity rate or average oxygenated bed occupancy rise.

Four colour-coded levels of alert – yellow, amber, orange and red — and their criteria have been recommended in the plan. For example, if the positivity

two consecutive days, or there are 1,500 cases in a week, or the average number of oxygenated beds occupied is above 500 for a week, shops in markets will be allowed to open only under the odd-even scheme, and cinema halls, gyms and banquet halls will be closed.

GRAP was approved by Lieutenant Governor Anil Baijal on July 9. With DDMA's order, it comes into force now.

"As soon as any parameter (out of three parameters) reaches the specified level of alert, "the order of alert" shall be issued and permitted / prohibited / restricted activities prescribed at such level shall become operational automatically in the territory of NCT of Delhi..., the order stated.

## officials point to assistance **EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** Tie-up with

Fees high at Skills Univ,

New Delhi: Admissions are likely to open next month for an Advanced Diploma in **Automotive Mechatronics** at the Delhi Skill and Entrepreneurship

Mercedes-Benz

University as part of a tieup with Mercedes-Benz India. As part of this, the company will extend apprenticeship and placement support to students of the programme. ENS

from Rohini Vijender Gupta, who alleged that it is "creating financial barricades for students from poorer sections to attain higher education".

"In the name of bringing 12 existing polytechnics under the Delhi Skill and Entrepreneurship University, their fees have been increased by three times. The fees in polytechnics have been increased from Rs 5,000 to up to Rs 24,200. Fees for BTech and MCA courses have been increased from Rs 35.000 to Rs 1,44,000 yearly... Children are under criticism from BJP MLA not applying for seats," said

Gupta in a video uploaded on his social media handles.

University representatives said they are pointing potential students towards financial assistance schemes that they can avail of. "We are focused on being inclusive and that is part of the vision at the university. We have been carrying out outreach programmes in low-income areas and slums near our campuses to encourage and help young people there to apply, said a university representative.

The website also lists schemes and financial assistance programmes offered by the Delhi and central government that students can avail such as the 'merit-cum-means linked financial assistance scheme for pursuing higher education in state universities of Delhi' under which reimbursement of 100%, 50% and 25% is offered to 'meritorious students' and EWS students, those having an annual family income of Rs. 2.5 lakh, and those having annual family income below Rs 6 lakh.

Other schemes include those in which the government bears the interest on education loans for EWS students or provides the guarantee to banks to provide education loans to students

# 3 dead in accident on Yamuna Expressway

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 8

THREE MEMBERS of a family died after a car rammed into their vehicle in Greater Noida on Sunday. According to police, they received a call about the accident on Yamuna Expressway. The three victims were declared dead on arrival at Kailash Hospital, while one person is undergoing treat-

"We received information about an accident that took place on the expressway. A family was returning from Mathura and had parked their car briefly on the side of the highway. A speeding car hit their vehicle from behind, causing severe injuries. We are gathering evidence from the spot. An FIR is being filed and further investigation is pending," said an official from Dankaur police station.

the ICU at Kailash Hospital. Poonam is posted as a subinspector in Delhi Police. She, along with her children and sister Kanchan, had gone to Mathura to visit a temple and were returning to Delhi when the incident took place.

returning to Delhi

after visiting a temple

The family was travelling in

a Honda City and had a flat tyre

as they were nearing Greater

Noida. Two of them got down

to change the tyre when a car

rammed into their vehicle. The

impact of the collision was such

that the vehicle was pushed

passersby, who called police.

IPC sections 304 A (death by

negligence) and 279 (rash

driving) against unknown

persons. Police are yet to get

CCTV footage of the collision

since there are no cameras on

most stretches of the express-

way. Locals in the area are be-

ing questioned for a descrip-

tion of the vehicle to trace the

accused.

The accident was spotted by

The FIR is being filed under

ahead, police said.

The family was

in Mathura

The deceased have been identified as Bhaskar Sharma (25), his sister Bhavya Sharma (19), and aunt Kanchan Sharma (55). The siblings' mother, Poonam Sharma, is admitted to

#### Traffic constable suspended for 'misbehaviour'

Ghaziabad: A traffic policeman in Ghaziabad has been suspended for allegedly misbehaving with three women after consuming alcohol. The accused constable, Yogendra Singh, allegedly harassed three women in an autorickshaw while in his uniform after finishing his duty. The action was taken after an inquiry was concluded on Saturday. ENS





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//सर्व संबंधित को सूचना//

भारत सरकार, पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय द्वारा जारी ई.आई.ए. नोटिफिकेशन 2006 (यथ पुंशोधित) के तहत सर्व संबंधित को सचित किया जाता है कि (1) मेसर्स महावीर कंस्टक्शन कंपनी (पार्टनर- श्र ाशांत बोहरा) खसरा क्रमांक-471,472 एवं 473/2(पार्ट), लीज एरिया 1.295 हेक्टेयर खदान उत्खनन क्षम 25,000 टन प्रतिवर्ष, ग्राम-कलकसा, तहसील खैरागढ, जिला-राजनांदगाव (2) मेसर्स श्रीमती मीना रंगलान कलकसा लाईम स्टोन क्वारी ) खसरा क्रमांक-235/3 एवं 242 लीज एरिया-1 498 हेक्ट्रेयर खदान उत्खन क्षमता- 28,000 टन प्रतिवर्ष, ग्राम-कलकसा, तहसील- खैरागढ, जिला-राजनांदगाव (3) मेसर्स कलकसा लाई स्टोन क्वारी (प्रो-श्री परेश कुमार), खसरा क्रमांक-254, लीज एरिया-1.214 हेक्टेयर, खदान उत्खनन क्षम 20,000 टन प्रतिवर्ष ग्राम-कलकसा तहसील खैरागढ़ जिला राजनांद्रगाव (4) मेसर्स श्रीमती अरूणा जोगेव (कलकसा लाईम स्टोन क्वारी), खसरा क्रमांक-252, लीज एरिया-0.85 हेक्टेयर, खदान उत्खनन क्षमता-10,00 टन प्रतिवर्ष, ग्राम-कलकसा, तहसील-खैरागढ, जिला- राजनांदगाव (5) मेसर्स श्रीचंद चाचरा (कलकसा लाईम स्टो क्वारी ), खसरा क्रमांक-240/2 एवं 241. लीज एरिया-0.647 हेक्टेयर खदान उत्खनन क्षमता-5.000 टन प्रतिवर ग्राम-कलकसा, तहसील-खैरागढ, जिला-राजनांदगाव (6) मेसर्स श्रीमती सुमन सिंह (कलकसा लाईम स्टोन क्वारी) खसरा क्रमांक-476 एवं 482/1, लीज एरिया-0.566 हेक्टेयर, खदान उत्खनन क्षमता-7,000 टन प्रतिवर्ष ग्राम कलकसा. तहसील-खैरागढ जिला-राजनांदगाव ( ७ ) मेसर्स श्रीमती समन सिंह ( बल्देवपर लार्डम स्टोन क्वारी ). खस क्रमांक-867 (पार्ट), लीज एरिया-0.85 हेक्टेयर, खदान उत्खनन क्षमता-10.000 टन प्रतिवर्ष, ग्राम-कलकस तहसील-खैरागढ, जिला-राजनांदगाव (८) मेसर्स श्री भाऊराम चक्रधारी (बल्देवपुर लाईम स्टोन माईन), खर क्रमांक-869, 870, 876 (पार्ट) एवं 877, लीज एरिया-1.295 हेक्टेयर खदान उत्खनन क्षमता-12,500 टन प्रतिवर्ष, ग्राम- बल्देवपुर, तहसील- खैरागढ, जिला-राजनांदगाव (१) मेसर्स बल्देवपुर लाईम स्टोन माईन (प्रो.- श्रीमर्त राखी टुरहाटे), खसरा क्रमांक-875/1,2,3,4,5,6 एवं 7, लीज एरिया-1.112 हेक्टेयर, खदान उत्खनन क्षमत 25,000 टन प्रतिवर्ष, ग्राम-बल्देवपुर तहसील-खैरागढ, जिला-राजनांदगाव (10) मेसर्स श्रीमती कविता पारेख (बल्देवपुर लाईम स्टोन माईन), खसरा क्रमांक-907 एवं 909/1 लीज एरिया-0.667 हेक्टेयर, खदान उत्खन क्षमता-14,274.88 टन प्रतिवर्ष, ग्राम-बल्देवपुर, तहसील-खैरागढ, जिला-राजनांदगाव (11) मेसर्स खैराग मिनरल्स (बल्देवपुर लाईम स्टोन माईन), खसरा क्रमांक-348/3,4,5 एवं 6, लीज एरिया-0.809 हेक्टयर, खदान उत्खनन क्षमता-15,345 टन प्रतिवर्ष, ग्राम-बल्देवपुर, तहसील- खैरागढ, जिला-राजनांदगाव के लिये पर्यावरणी स्वीकृती हेतु संयुक्त लोक सुनवाई बाबत छत्तीसगढ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर में आवेदन किं गया है। उक्त परियोजनाओं के संबंध में आपत्ति/सुझाव/विचार/टीका-टिप्पणी इस सूचना के जारी होने के दिनांक र 30 दिवस के अंदर क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, छत्तीसगढ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, 5/32 बंगला, भिलाई जिला-दर्ग में मौखिव अथवा लिखित रुप से कार्यालयीन समय में प्रस्तुत की जा सकती है। **उपरोक्त परियोजनाओं हेतु संयुक्त लोक सुनवा**ई दिनांक 15/09/2021 को समय दोपहर 12.00 बजे से स्थान-ग्राम पंचायत कलकसा भवन के प्रांगण में ग्राम **ठकसा, तहसील-खैरागढ, जिला-राजनांदगाव (छ.ग.) में नियत की गर्ड है।** यह भी सचित हो किः

लोक सुनवाई के दौरान सम्मिलित होने वाले व्यक्तियों को फिजीकल/सोशल डिस्टेसिंग का पालन कर लोक सनवार्ड के दौरान सम्मिलित होने वाले व्यक्तियों द्वारा मास्क का प्रयोग किया जावेगा तथा समय-समय प

सेनेटाईड्रर का प्रयोग किया जाना अनिवार्य होगा। लोक सुनवाई स्थल पर सम्मिलित होने वाले व्यक्तियों की बैठक व्यवस्था कम से कम 02 मीटर की दुरी रख

अनिवार्य होगा।

कोरोना वायरस के नियंत्रण एवं रोकथाम हेतु शासन द्वारा जारी समस्त दिशा-निर्देशो का अक्षरशः पालन कि

ई.आई.ए. नोटिफिकेशन 14 सितम्बर 2006 (यथा-संशोधित) के अनसार संबंधित व्यक्तियों के अवलोकन/पठन हे डाफ्ट ई.आई.ए. रिपोर्ट, कार्यपालक सार हिन्दी एवं अंग्रेजी भाषा तथा सी.डी.(सॉफ्ट कॉपी) डायरेक्टर, भारत सरका . ार्यावरण वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, जोर बाग रोड, नई दिल्ली क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय (डब्ल्यू सी. जेड) पर्यावर वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार, ग्राउण्ड फ्लोर ईस्ट विंग न्य सेक्रेटरिएट बिल्डिंग सिर्विल लार्ड-नागपुर (महाराष्ट्र) कलेक्टर, कार्यालय कलेक्टर, जिला-राजनांदगाव, मुख्य कार्यपालन अधिकारी, जिला पंचायत जिल नांदगाव, महाप्रबंधक, जिला व्यापार एवं उद्योग केन्द्र, जिला-राजनांदगाव, सरपंच/सचिव ग्राम पंचायत कलकस जेला-राजनांदगाव, सरपंच/सचिव ग्राम पंचायत बल्देवपुर जिला-राजनांदगाव, सरपंच/सचिव- ग्राम पंचायत गर्रापार जिला-राजनांदगाव सरपंच/सचिव ग्राम पंचायत प्रकाशपुर, जिला-राजनांदगाव सरपंच/सचिव ग्राम पंचायत टोलागाव जिला-राजनांदगाव, सरपंच/सचिव ग्राम पंचायत घोटिया जिला राजनांदगाव सरपंच/ सचिव ग्राम पंचायत जुरलाक जेला-राजनांदगाव, सरपंच/सचिव ग्राम पंचायत पेण्ड्रीकला, जिला-राजनांदगाव, सरपंच/सचिव ग्राम<sup>े</sup> पंचाय पिपलाकछार, जिला राजनांदगाव, सरपंच/सचिव ग्राम पंचायत कम्ही, जिला राजनांदगाव, सरपंच/सचिव ग्राम पंचायत दपका जिला राजनांदगाव, सरपंच/सचिव ग्राम पंचायत भरदाकला, जिला-राजनांदगाव, सरपंच/सचिव ग्राम पंचाय देवरीभाट, जिला-राजनांदगाव सरपंच/सचिव ग्राम पंचायत बढईटोला, जिला-राजनांदगाव, सरपंच/सचिव ग्राम पंचाय दामरी, जिला-राजनांदगाव, सरपंच/सचिव ग्राम पंचायत टेकापार, जिला-राजनांदगाव, सरपंच/सचिव ग्राम पंचाय साल्हेभरीं, जिला-राजनांदगाव, सरपंच/सचिव ग्राम पंचायत झीकादाह, जिला-राजनांदगाव, क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, छत्तीसग र्ग्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, 5/32, बंगला, भिलाई, जिला-दुर्ग एवं मुख्यालय छत्तीसगढ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल पर्यावार भवन सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर जिला-रायपुर में रखी गई है।

छत्तीसगढ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल नवा रायपुर अटल नगर रायपुर (छ.ग.)

#### HSIIDC

#### Car & Truck Parking Sites at Sector 3, IMT Manesar

Truck Parking: Car Parking:

Location of Parking	146.65	Location of Parking
Location of Parking	Nos.	Location of Parking
Site-B Near Plot No.171 & 172	36	Site-A Near Plot No.184 to 192
Site-C Opposite Plat No.76 to 92	249	Site-D Near Plot No.98 & 109
Site-E Opposite Plat No.46 to 50	49	
Site-G Near Plot No.3	16	Site-F Near Plot No.12
Total	350	Total
Pocos	wa La	aco Bontal:

Description of site	Reserve lease Rentals (Monthly)			
	(I) Reserve Lease Rentals	(I) Rs.14,62,500/- per month		
Site for Truck &	(ii) EMD	(ii) Rs.7,31,250/-		
Car Parking	(iii) Bid Increment	(iii) Rs.15,000/-		

31.08.2021 (upto 23:59 Hrs)

09 अगस्त, 2021

29 अगरत, 2021

(कर्मेन्द्र शिष्ठ) सचिव।

(पदवार आरक्षण शासनादेशानुसार)

All details including extension in schedule of e-auction, clarification, amendments addenda, corrigenda etc. will be uploaded on the HSIIDC website www.hslidc.org.in and will not be published in newspapers. Hence, applicants to regularly visit website of HSIDC to keep themselves updated about such developments. The Corporation may without assigning any reason withdraw the site from the e-auction process at any stage and is not bound to accept even the highest even if it is above the reserve price HSIIDC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the bids or cancel/postpone the

Haryana State Industrial & Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. Regd. Office: C-13 & 14, Sector-6, Panchkula, Ph. 0172-2590481-83, Fax: 2590474, e-mail: contactus@hsidc.org.in, web: www.hsidc.org.in, CIN: U29199HR1967SGC034545

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# Invites applications for allotment of

Registration Portal: http://hsiidc.bidx.in

Si

Nos. 70 30 120

Description of site	Reserve lease Rentals (Monthly)			
# 1,000 + 00 100 to 4,000 to 400	(I) Reserve Lease Rentals	(I) Rs.14,62,500/- per month		
Site for Truck & Car Parking	(ii) EMD	(ii) Rs.7,31,250/-		
	(iii) Bid Increment	(iii) Rs.15,000/-		
pening of Registration	Closing of Registratio	n/ Tentative Date of e-au		

bidding process without assigning any reasons thereof

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SKYWATCH

#### MIN: 26

# Close to 60% of city's healthcare, frontline staff fully vaccinated

SOURAV ROY BARMAN NEW DELHI, AUGUST 8

THE SHARE of healthcare workers (HCWs) in the capital who have got both doses of the Covid vaccine is 58.65%, while 57.79% of frontline workers (FLWs) are fully vaccinated so far, according to data shared by the health department in the Delhi Assembly.

As per the response shared in the House on July 29, 75.6% of healthcare workers and 87.17% of frontline workers have received one dose. The answer, signed by Additional Chief Secretary (Health) B S Bhalla, came in response to a question by AAP MLA Sanjeev Jha.

States such as Odisha, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Jharkhand have fared significantly better in inoculating its healthcare and frontline workers. Mumbai, with 51.06% fully vaccinated healthcare and frontline workers, is trailing Delhi, data from the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai shows.

Delhi has around 3.5 lakh healthcare workers and 5.3 lakh frontline workers, while Mumbai has set out to vaccinate 5.75 lakh healthcare and frontline workers.

The relatively low share of fully vaccinated healthcare and frontline workers in the capital has been a matter of concern for some time. Even in May, NITI Aayog Member (Health) Dr VK Paul had flagged that the inoculation rate

of these professionals in Delhi is less than the national average.

Senior government officials pointed out that Delhi's overall vaccination figures (including percentage of fully vaccinated) are far better than the national average despite inadequate supply of doses and crippling shortage in April and May due to manufacturers not sticking to commitments.

In April, when vaccination was open only for 45+, the Centre had criticised Delhi for low rate of vaccination among healthcare workers. Health Minister Satvendar Iain had attributed the situation to low supply of doses and low rate of vaccination at Centre-run hospitals. Break up of vaccination among HCWs at Delhi and Centre hospitals not immediately available

Among the southern states, Andhra Pradesh claims to have fully vaccinated its healthcare and frontline workforce; Kerala has administered two doses to 83% of healthcare workers and 82% of frontline workers; Karnataka has vaccinated 72% of its healthcare workforce and 38% of its frontline workforce.

In Jharkhand, 81% of healthcare and 75% of frontline workers are fully vaccinated; Chhattisgarh has fully vaccinated 72% and 78% of healthcare and frontline workers; Odisha has 82.5% and 87.8% fully vaccinated healthcare and frontline workers; and 80% frontline and healthcare workers have been

## **DELHI GOVT LAUNCHES FOOD SCHEME**

# Some warm comfort at capital's 209 shelter homes: Assured meals twice a day

**ASHNA BUTANI** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 8

EVERYTHING ABOUT 10-yearold Alisha's life changed since the lockdown in 2020: her family left their rented apartment and moved to a shelter home in Sarai Kale Khan, she dropped out of her school in Ghaziabad, and now spends most of her time taking care of her one-year-old sister, Jannat.

"Jannat will keep eating a dish if she likes it," said Alisha as she fed her halwa, which was part of the meal provided at the home on Sunday.

At noon. Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal launched the Mukhyamantri Poshahaar Yojana, a shelter home feeding initiative in collaboration with non-profit organisation Akshava Patra Foundation, at Sarai Kale Khan. Food will be permanently served at all 209 shelter homes, run by the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board, twice a day.

The CM said. "The first duty of any responsible government is to work towards the betterment of the poorest of the poor, but the governments did not serve the cause because they were not their vote-bank. But the Aam Aadmi Party government is a sensitive and responsible gov-

Over 5,000 people are cur



Alisha and her family at a shelter home in Sarai Kale Khan; (left) CM Kejriwal launches the Mukhyamantri Poshahaar Yojana.

rently residing in these shelters and the number is expected to double in winter. Many of them, like Alisha's family, left their old lives behind during the lock-

At the inauguration of the new scheme, Alisha was among the children who gave a handpink chart paper and wrote the word 'myself' on it.

However, she said she has forgotten how to read and write and cannot do so without help. Even though classes are taking place online, the family does not have a smartphone or the teacher's contact number so she had to drop out eventually.

Alisha's parents used to work as beldars or found jobs as caterers in functions and weddings. Her mother Nagini (32) said they had been forced to leave their rented house in Ghaziabad, eight days after the first lockdown.

"Without work, we could not pay the Rs 4,000 rent ... we took to the streets and somehow found our way to the shelter home," she said. The family is originally from Agra, but they do not have a big enough house or any land there.

A few months later, Jannat was born in Safdarjung Hospital, and expenses have been mounting ever since. She and her husband search for catering or beldari work every day but get employed once in a blue moon. On such days, Alisha steps in and takes care of Jannat.

Nagini said, "We used to get at least one good meal a day here... but we still have to buy milk. We need at least 1 litre in a day." She added that Jannat renothing helped, they took her to a private doctor and spent Rs 1,200 on her treatment.

The tasty food on Sunday was the only semblance of her old life, said Alisha, who enjoyed the paneer and hoped they would get it every day.

Tabrez Ahmed (28) shares a similar fate as her family. Ever since the lockdown last year, the B.Tech dropout from Patna has been running from pillar to post to get a stable job. His employers, a private company in Chennai, did not pay him for months last year. He then shifted to Delhi and worked at a hotel in Chandni Chowk where he was paid Rs 2,000-Rs 3,000 less than the promised amount of Rs 8,000. He was staying in a shelter home nearby.

Ahmed said: "In the last few years, I have faced financial and personal problems and cannot go back to my family in Bihar."

Twenty days ago, he quit his ob and came to the Sarai Kale shelter; he plans to stay here until a new job materialises.

The food on Sunday made his day too. "Food has been my biggest expense. Without worrying about this, I can earn a little through odd jobs, go for an interview in Noida, and hopefully land a job with a private company in the next month,"

# Maha Vir Chakra stolen from Retd Brigadier's home

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 9

POLICE ARE on the lookout for two men who broke into a retired Army Brigadier's house in South Delhi's Defence Colony and decamped with his fatherin-law's Maha Vir Chakra (MVC) medal, jewellery, and cash.

July 23 when the complainant was travelling, and he reported the robbery when he returned on July 27. DCP (South) Atul Kumar Thakur said, "On the basis of Brig. Arjun Singh's complaint, we have registered an FIR of house theft. Teams have been formed to arrest the accused."

Singh told The Indian Express, "We are more concerned about the MVC medal awarded to my father-in-law, Lt Gen MM Khanna. We hope Delhi Police recover it."

In his complaint, Singh stated, "After my retirement in 2005, I stay in D block of Defence Colony along with my wife. My two sons live in Singapore and we went to meet them. I have one permanent help; his verification was done. As we were travelling abroad, we left our two dogs in his care..

Singh told police that his help called him on April 29, saying his brother had died of Covid and he wanted to take his body to Jharkhand. "The help claimed he had paid Rs 50,000 to the ambulance and asked me for his salary. I paid him and he assured me he would return in three days, but he never did," he alleged in the

The MVC medal was awarded to the complainant's father-in-law,

Singh further alleged: "We The incident took place on recovered CCTV footage from the DVR, which showed two men entering the house through the help's washroom on July 23. They ransacked the bedroom and smashed CCTV cameras. They also turned off CCTV from the main switch and fled.'

> DCP Thakur said Singh, in his complaint, alleged the medal, 20,000, silver and gold objects

for the 1947-48 Indo-Pak war.

According to the official website of the National Defence College, Lt Gen Khanna took over as the Commandant on December 21 in 1966. He remained Commandant until

Lt Gen MM Khanna

earrings were stolen.

Lt Gen MM Khanna was the recipient of the Maha Vir Chakra, for gallantry on the battlefield.

November 1968.

The Maha Vir Chakra is awarded for acts of conspicuous gallantry in the presence of the enemy, whether on land, at sea or in air. It may be awarded

and utensils like a silver jug, siltwo gold parker pens, two dia-A highly decorated soldier,



old Indian currency of around Rs ver spoons, two watches and mond bracelets and pink topaz

the second highest decoration



DOWNPOUR

Delhi saw moderate rainfall and cloudy skies on Sunday. For the coming week, the India Meteorological Department has forecast light rainfall on Monday followed by dry days, strong surface winds and overcast skies. Over the next seven days, maximum temperature is likely to be between 34 degrees Celsius and 36 degrees Celsius. Gajendra Yadav

# Gang that ran schemes inspired by 'Special 26' busted

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 9

WITH THE arrest of five men who allegedly duped people across states by impersonating CBI officers, Central district police claim to have busted an interstate 'Irani gang' which took inspiration from the Bollywood movie 'Special 26'.

DCP(Central district) Jasmeet Singh said the accused have been

identified as Mohd Sabir (52). Mohd Imran (45), Anwar Ali (45), Shoukat Ali Jafari (55) and Mukhtiyar Hussain (35). "All the accused persons are of Iranian ancestry and their ancestors came to India several decades ago. Currently, they are residents of Irani Mohalla near the railway station in Bhopal," Singh said.

The accused are involved in over 25 cases and have been declared proclaimed offenders in more than 10 cases. They are also

wanted in several cases registered in West Bengal, Delhi and

Uttar Pradesh. 'We received a call on July 27 that 300 grams of gold were snatched by persons who impersonated CBI officials at Bank Street in Karol Bagh. Five men approached the complainant pretending to be CBI officers and took gold chains on the pretext of checking his bag,'

Singh said. Shoukat and Anwar were earlier involved in pickpocketing at the railway station by posing as hawkers, he said.

"The men later formed a gang after roping in close relatives. They adopted a unique modus operandi for commission of crime in which they first identify a noted jewellery market in any state, got information about the supplier/agent/customers of jewellers, and then targetted them by posing as CBI officers," Singh explained.

# **Inflammatory** slogans raised at Jantar Mantar event

lacking permission

**MAHENDER SINGH** MANRAL & ABHINAV **RAJPUT** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 8

INFLAMMATORY, anti-Muslim slogans were allegedly raised at Iantar Mantar on Sunday during a march "against Colonial-era laws" in the country — an event the Delhi Police said organisers had no permission for, though until late Sunday evening, no ac-

tion had been taken. The rally, called by Supreme Court lawyer and former Delhi BJP spokesperson Ashwini Upadhyay, had hundreds of people in attendance. Purported videos of the event showed people shouting slogans threatening harm to Muslims.

Upadhyay, who had called for the march under the 'Bharat Jodo Movement', could not be reached for comment. He had filed a PIL in the SC last month against the Indian Penal Code, seeking a judicial panel or a body of experts to draft a 'comprehensive' and 'stringent' penal code for ensur-

ing rule of law and equality. "There was a protest against colonial laws used to suppress Indians by the British, which still exist. We were there to protest against those laws and for a Uniform Civil Code because our demand was that there should be one rule in one country," said Shipra Srivastava, media incharge of Bharat Jodo Movement.

"There was no such (inflam-

matory) slogan in my knowledge... there were 5,000 people and if five-six people in some corner would be shouting such slogans, then we disassociate ourselves from them," she claimed.

A senior police officer from the New Delhi district said, "We refused permission after informing them about DDMA guidelines (which do not allow for gatherings in view of the Covid protocol), and later we got to know that Ashwini Upadhyay was looking for an indoor venue. Police arrangements were in place and we thought around 50 people would come, but suddenly many people in small groups started gathering. They were protesting peacefully, but started raising slo-

gans when they were dispersing.' Asked about the purported videos, DCP (New Delhi district) Deepak Yadav said, "We are verifying all the video clips." He refused to comment on how such a large number of people man-

aged to gather at Jantar Mantar. A senior police officer from the Intelligence Wing said Delhi Police's Special Branch had informed tĥe New Delhi district about the event and that people were likely to turn up in large numbers.

Last month, police had granted permission to 200 farmers to protest at Jantar Mantar following long discussions and meetings. Special permission had to be taken from the Delhi L-G, who is also the DDMA chairperson, for that protest.

#### DJB's 'CITY OF LAKES' PROJECT

# For 50 water bodies in the capital, a fresh lease of life by the year end

#### **ABHINAYA HARIGOVIND**

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 8

THE DELHI Jal Board (DJB) project to revive lakes in the city is inching forward with around 50 water bodies set to be 'rejuvenated' by the end of the year. Of these 50, work on around 17 water bodies is nearly finished.

At Paschim Vihar, a Rs 10 crore project is under way to lay a 4-km long pipeline from the treatment plant at Keshavpuram to replenish the lake with treated water. Among the other projects, work on con-

structing a drain alongside the Bhalswa Lake to divert wastewater into an STP was recently approved. Work on the Roshanara Lake is likely to begin in the next 30 days, while at the 50-acre Tikri Khurd lake in North Delhi, pipelines are being laid from the STP at Narela to recharge the lake. Rejuvenation includes a

small water treatment system is connected to the water body, or pipelines are drawn from an existing sewage treatment plant (STP) near the water body, to ensure a perennial source of treated water that is of a quality fit for groundwater recharge. Additionally, landscaping and planting native trees is undertaken.

The DJB classifies ponds of around 1 to 1.5 acres as 'water bodies' and larger ones as lakes. Lakes are being connected to existing treatment plants to ensure a source of water.

Some of the water bodies on the list are awaiting power connections for adjoining treatment systems. This system, which is a 'natural' STP in most cases, will draw wastewater from nearby areas, treat it, and feed it into the water body. A natural STP is a



sedimentation tank combined with a constructed wetland that can remove pollutants. Floating rafters with an aeration system are used in some cases to treat

This 'city of lakes' project was launched in 2018 to augment water supply by recharging ground water and recycling treated wastewater with the intention of meeting the city's wa-

Work on construction of a drain alongside the Bhalswa Lake to divert wastewater was recently approved. Archive

New Delhi

ter demand of 1,140 million gallons (MGD) per day. The current supply of 940 MGD falls short of the demand by 200 MGD. Setting up new groundwater recharge reservoirs and rejuvenating existing lakes was the crux of the plan.

For 155 water bodies, the DJB has allocated a sum of Rs 376 crore, followed by around Rs 200 crore for another 90 water bodies, officials associated with the project said.

Lakes, including the ones at Rohini and Timarpur, have separate allocations of around Rs 64

crore each, while around Rs 10

Bhalswa Lake. While Delhi has over a 1,000 water bodies, only about 600 of

crore has been allocated for the

these can be "revived" since the remaining have been built over or turned into parks. Of the 600, around 255 water bodies have been included under Phase I of the project.

Around 500 MGD of wastewater is being treated at 35 of the DJB's STPs. This is set to go up to around 630 MGD by the end of the year with the small treatment plants that are being installed alongside water bodies.

# GOVT & POLITICS





#### TWEETING STORM

A DAY after the Twitter account of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi was temporarily locked over a photograph he posted with the family of the nine-year-old Dalit rape victim, several of his party leaders Sunday tweeted the same photograph and a photograph posted by the National Commission of Scheduled Castes of its members meeting the victim's family members. They called it a double standard by Twitter and asked how fearful it is of the Narendra Modi government that it is singling out Rahul's account when government bodies did the same thing. The party also fielded four women spokespersons -Supriya Shrinate, Ragini Nayak, Alka Lamba and Amrita Dhawan – to target the government and question the silence of the women ministers in the government on the issue.

#### THE NUDGE

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT employees are not participating well enough in the government's campaign to set a record of maximum people singing the national anthem ahead of Independence Day. People are supposed to participate by uploading individual videos of themselves singing the anthem on Rashtragaan.in and get a certificate of participation. The Culture Ministry has now sent out a communication to all ministries that the participation by employees is "below expectation" and that a mechanism of accountability needs to be devised so officials upload their videos and WhatsApp their certificates to a person of responsibility in their respective departments.

#### PANIPAT PRIDE

NEERAJ CHOPRA'S Olympics achievement has found an admirer in another "Panipat boy" – US acting envoy Atul Keshap. Soon after Chopra won the gold in javelin throw, Keshap tweeted a video clip of Chopra on the podium with the national anthem playing in the background. The accompanying message said: "Olympic GOLD for India! From Roosevelt House in New Delhi, this Panipat boy bursts with joy and pride for a sporting hero from Panipat, Neeraj Chopra!" Keshap's grandparents used to live in Panipat, and he used to visit them with his NRI father in his teens in the 70s till the early 80s.

# Hopeful of IT panel taking up Pegasus issue, says Tharoor

MANOJCG NEW DELHI, AUGUST 8

**ALTHOUGH THE Parliamentary** Standing Committee on Information Technology could not take up a discussion on the Pegasus snooping issue at its last meeting after BJP members on the panel blocked proceedings of the meeting citing lack of quorum, panel chairman Shashi Tharoor on Sunday said he was hopeful that the committee will take up the issue going forward.

The last meeting on July 28 also saw, what Tharoor calls, "last minute refusal" by representatives of three ministries to attend it. Tharoor wrote to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, asking him to take "serious cognizance" of the matter and called the officials' conduct "unprecedented", "breach of parliamentary privilege" and "contempt of the House".

Talking to The Indian Express, Tharoor said the IT committee had been conducting discussions on citizens' data privacy and security for the past two years. He said cyber security topics had also featured in its agenda under the previous

The Pegasus issue therefore

clearly falls under the purview of the IT committee and within these subjects on its agenda. So, it is only expected that members of the IT committee will ask questions about it when these topics arise. It is no secret that the committee's meeting on its established agenda was disrupted by RIP members who did not want Pegasus to be discussed," he said.

Arguing that accountability to Parliament is a cornerstone of India's democracy, Tharoor said "but it is increasingly being tossed aside in the current regime's headlong rush to autocracy".

"Despite this disappointing approach I am hopeful that we will be able to take up the question going forward. And I would say that though we will take it up to the extent that the committee is able to act, I have proposed from the start that what we really need is a Supreme Court monitored inquiry headed by a serving judge or a recently retired judge to conduct a fair, impartial and thorough investigation of the Pegasus issue," Tharoor said.

**FULL REPORT ON** www.indianexpress.com

# **CJI: Threat to human rights** is highest in police stations

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 8

POINTING OUT that custodial torture and other police atrocities are problems that still prevail in society, Chief Justice of India N V Ramana Sunday said the "threat to human rights and bodily integrity are the highest

He flagged the issues of human rights and dignity, saying these are "sacrosanct".

in police stations".

"The threat to human rights and bodily integrity are the highest in police stations. Custodial torture and other police atrocities are problems that still prevail in our society. In spite of constitutional declarations and guarantees, the lack of effective legal representation at the police stations is a huge detriment to arrested/detained persons," the CJI said, addressing an event organised by National Legal Services Authority (NALSA).

The decisions taken in these

Farmers at a Jind village to

mobilise support for their

**BKU** announces

'Tiranga Yatras'

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** 

THE BHARTIYA Kisan Union

(BKU), led by Gurnam Singh

Chaduni, has announced that it

will hold mega 'Tiranga Yatras'

across Haryana on August 15. The

BJP's two-week long 'Tiranga

Yatras', aimed at creating a pas-

sion for patriotism among youths,

out by farmers on tractors and

motorcycles on Independence

Day. The BKU has already started

villages to mobilise more farm-

ers for the yatras to energise the

ongoing agitation against the

events of BJP-JJP leaders for the

past eight months as part of their

agitation. However, this was first

instance when the agitators de-

cided against opposing BJP's

Tiranga Yatra. The farmer lead-

ers had called it a "trap to defame

farmers if they would have op-

undertake 'Tiranga Yatras' to em-

phasise that farmers are the real

patriots. "Our sons secure the

borders and even got martyr-

dom for the honour of the

Tricolour," said Azad Palwa, Jind

formed three teams of farmers

and majdoor leaders to make peo-

ple aware about our events. We

have already covered 150 out of

306 villages of lind district and will

hold yatras at five places," he said.

"In Jind district, we have

Now, the BKU has decided to

posed the yatras'

BKU president.

Farmers have been opposing

Centre's three farm laws.

Meetings are being held in

preparations to hold the vatras.

Chaduni Sunday confirmed

will conclude on August 14.

in Haryana on

CHANDIGARH, AUGUST 8

August 15

Tiranga Yatra.



CJI N V Ramana

early hours will later determine the ability of the accused to defend himself. Going by the recent reports even the privileged are not spared third-degree treatment," he said.

"To keep police excesses in check, dissemination of information about the constitutional right to legal aid and availability of free legal aid services is necessary. The installation of display boards and outdoor hoardings in every police station/prison is a step in this direction," CJI Ramana said, as he called upon NALSA to carry out nationwide

**ASAD REHMAN** 

LUCKNOW, AUGUST 8

AS PART of his strategy to bring

together smaller parties, espe-

cially non-Yadav OBCs, ahead of the Uttar Pradesh Assembly

elections next year, Samajwadi

Party (SP) president Akhilesh

Yadav on Sunday addressed

party workers of Mahan Dal, an

OBC-based party headed by

Keshav Dev Maurya, in Lucknow.

meeting as its chief guest, Akhilesh lashed out at BJP, accus-

ing it of wedging a divide in the

backward class community by pitting Yadavs against other

"The BJP says Yadavs are tak-

ing all the resources. Sometimes

they say that we have snatched

away what was yours. This nar-

rative becomes more visible

when elections approach... The

BJP is just doing politics. You and

I are Backwards. We follow the

footsteps of Dr Bhimrao

party of the backwards and de-

mands the rights for all its peo-

ple," Akhilesh Yadav said, adding

that if Mahan Dal and SP work-

ers would work together in the

election, the alliance could win

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA** 

AHEAD OF Uttar Pradesh

Assembly elections next year, BJP

ally Apna Dal (S) on Sunday de-

manded a separate Union min-

istry for the welfare of OBCs and

a caste-based census across the

country to ascertain the exact

of the BIP after ID (U) to have

raised the demand for a caste-

based census.

Apna Dal (S) is the second ally

"Caste-based census is the

need of the hour to ascertain the

exact population of each seg-

ment, especially the OBC," work-

ing president of Apna Dal (S)

population of the community.

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 8

BJP ally Apna Dal calls

for caste-based census

Presiding the Mahan Dal

sensitisation of police officers. He said the concept of free le-

gal aid to the needy has its roots in the freedom movement. "Those days, the legal luminaries rendered pro-bono services to freedom fighters, who were targeted by the colonial rulers. This spirit of service found reflection in the Constitution, with those very same legal luminaries serving as members of the Constituent Assembly."

Stressing the need to work on access to justice for all, irrespective of their socio-economic status. CII Ramana said this is imperative to ensure that we remain a society governed by rule of law.

"If we want to remain a society governed by the rule of law, it is imperative for us to bridge the gap of accessibility to justice between the highly privileged and the most vulnerable. For all times to come, we must remember that, the realities of socio-economic diversity which prevail in our nation, cannot ever be a reason for denial of rights," he said.

At Mahan Dal meet, Akhilesh

400 seats in UP.

The UP Assembly has 403

Once again reiterating the

demand for a caste-based cen-

sus. Yadav accused both the BIP

and the Congress of refusing to

do so. "First the Congress refused

to do a caste census, then the BJP.

The BJP will never do a caste-

based census because they know

I assure all our people that when

we will form the government,

we will do a caste census," he

port from Backward communi-

Ashish Patel told PTI.

but not of OBCs.

The Mahan Dal enjoys sup-

He said the population of SCs

"As a result, there is no

proper estimate of the OBC pop-

ulation. Therefore, I request the

government that the next cen-

sus should be caste-based to as-

certain the exact population of

each segment, especially the

OBCs. This would ensure that the

share of a particular caste seg-

ment is based on their popula-

tion," said Ashish Patel, husband

of Union minister Anupriya

mands a separate ministry for

welfare of OBCs.

He said the party also de-

and STs have been calculated in

all censuses post-Independence

reaches out to non-Yadav OBCs

Akhilesh Yadav said if Mahan Dal and SP workers work together

in the election, the alliance could win 400 seats in UP. Express

termine the future, he said that project "Access to Justice" is an unending mission for the countrv so that it can dream of a future based on legal mobility, a future where equality is a reality. "If, as an institution, the judiciary wants to garner the faith of the citizens, we have to make everyone feel assured that we exist for them. For the longest time, the vulnerable population has lived outside the system of

justice," the CJI said. Pointing out that "prevailing obstacles like lengthy, painstaking and expensive formal justice processes add to the woes of realising the goals of Access to Justice", CJI Ramana said: "As an institution, the toughest challenge before us is to break these barriers first."

Making it clear that accessing justice in India is not merely an aspirational goal, he said, "We need to work hand in hand with various wings of the government to make it a practical reality."

ties like Maurvas, Khushwahas,

Express, Mahan Dal chief Keshav

Dev Maurya said his party's only

aim is to remove the BIP from

power. "All communities are suf-

fering - the Backwards, the

Dalits, and the Muslims," he said.

seat-sharing arrangement with

have. But it is too early to disclose

it... "Our slogan is Mahan Dal ne

thahna hain, Samajwadi Party

sarkar banana hain (Mahan Dal

has decided to make Samajwadi

SBSP's Rajbhar

rules out alliance

Lucknow: Suheldev Bharatiya

Samaj Party (SBSP) president

Om Prakash Raibhar on Sunday

ruled out an alliance with the BJP

for next year's Uttar Pradesh

Assembly elections, saying his

"doors are open to all parties ex-

led SP, he said people feel "only

SP can challenge BJP" and

claimed that the BJP would not

win even one seat in eastern UP

if the SP joined hands with the

coalition of small parties that the

SBSP is a part of. "...There is no

way I am going with the BJP...My

main goal is to remove the BJP

from power and have a govern-

ment led by us," he said.

Praising the Akhilesh Yadav-

Party government)."

with BJP

cept the BJP".

Asked if they have reached a

Speaking to The Indian

Sakhyas and Sainis.



NEW DELHI, AUGUST 8

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** 

PM to chair UNSC

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi will chair a high-level open debate on the topic "Enhancing Maritime Security — A Case for International Cooperation" on Monday via video conferencing.

The Ministry of External Affairs on Sunday said the meet $ing\,is\,expected\,to\,be\,attended\,by$ several heads of state and governments of United Nations Security Council (UNSC) member states, along with high-level briefers from the UN system and key regional organisations.

"Modi would be the first Indian Prime Minister to preside over a UN Security Council Open Debate," the MEA said in a state-

The open debate will focus on ways to effectively counter maritime crime and insecurity, and strengthen coordination in the maritime domain. Russian President Vladimir Putin is expected to attend the session,

The UN Security Council has discussed and passed resolutions on different aspects of maritime security and maritime crime, the MEA said. However, this will be the first time that maritime security will be discussed in a holistic manner as an exclusive agenda item in such a high level open debate.

'Given that no country alone can address the diverse aspects of maritime security, it is important to consider this subject in a



PM Narendra Modi

holistic manner in the United Nations Security Council. A comprehensive approach to maritime security should protect  $and\,support\,legitimate\,maritime$ activities, while countering traditional and non-traditional threats in the maritime domain,' it said.

In 2015, Modi had put forward the vision of SAGAR - an acronym for "Security and Growth for all in the Region" which focuses on cooperative measures for sustainable use of the oceans, and provides a framework for a safe, secure, and stable maritime domain in the region.

This initiative was further elaborated in 2019 at the East Asia Summit through the Indo-Pacific Oceans' Initiative (IPOI), with a focus on seven pillars of maritime security, including Maritime Ecology; Maritime Resources; Capacity Building and Resource Sharing; Disaster Risk Reduction Management; Science,

Technology and Academic Cooperation; and Trade Connectivity and Maritime Transport, the MEA said.

## Karnataka minister: BJP is strong, workers told to hit back if touched

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** BENGALURU. AUGUST 8

IN A provocative statement, senior BJP leader and a minister in the Karnataka government, K S Eshwarappa, said on Sunday that if a "BJP worker is touched", the "instruction is to hit back with the same stick" and to "take away two, if even one is taken".

Speaking at a meeting of Eshwarappa, state minister for rural development and panchayat raj, said the BJP has "become very strong" and its workers are now capable of giving back in equal measure when provoked or attacked by rivals.

"In the past, they would murder our activists. Those days, our elders in the Sangh would say stay calm at all costs. We had to be calm, irrespective of the situation and how much we were attacked. We did not have the strength," he said.

"Today, the BIP has grown the world over, and if a BJP worker is touched anywhere in any corner, the instruction is to hit back with the same stick. In the past, the decision was to stay calm at all costs. Now, the decision is to take away two, if even one is taken. We have become very strong. Nobody will come to trouble us," Eshwarappa said.

Reacting to his remarks, Congress and SDPI leaders have called for his resignation. State Congress working president Saleem Ahmed said Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai should sack him immediately. "Eshwarappa is not worthy of



ter, on account of his provocative statements. The Speaker must expel him from the Legislature, the CM must drop him from the Cabinet, and the Governor should intervene and ensure peace and stability in the state," said SDPI

spokesperson Afsar Kodipet. Eshwarappa, a veteran BJP leader who helped build the party in Karnataka along with former CM B S Yedivurappa, is known to frequently make provocative statements on communal lines.

A few days ago, he said the BIP would have a "nationalist leader" as the CM the next time it comes to power since compromises had to be made this time to accommodate many newcomers in the party.

The statement was an oblique reference to the fact that Bommai is not an original member of the Sangh Parivar or the BJP, but shifted from the ID(U) in 2008.

While Eshwarappa did not make provocative statements when Yediyurappa was CM, there is apprehension that BJP may use such remarks by key leaders in the new regime under Bommai to stir up sentiments in the runup to the 2023 Assembly polls.

# In MP lawmakers' booklet of words to avoid: anyay, sasur

**IRAM SIDDIQUE** BHOPAL, AUGUST 8

LAWMAKERS INSIDE the Madhva Pradesh Assembly would do well to tread carefully while mentioning the word 'postman'. Or anyay (injustice). Or, for that matter, ventilator, habitual, bechara (poor person), halla (noise). bhedbhav (discrimination), *yaar* (friend), and *bandhuwa* mazdoor (bonded labourer).

These words are among the hundreds of words and phrases expunged from the Madhya Pradesh House between 1954 and 2021 — and they have now found their way into an official advisory booklet for MLAs.

Released by the Madhya

Pradesh Assembly on Sunday – a day before its Monsoon Session begins — it is meant to help MLAs exercise restraint in speech during heated arguments.

According to Speaker Girish Gautam, the words by themselves do not seem unparliamentary - but the context makes them so.

The booklet, compiled by Assembly officials, begins by flagging the word sasur (fatherin-law) that was expunged on September 23, 1954. It moves on to tanasha (dictator) that was removed on March 31, 1967; galat (wrong) that was expunged on July 4, 1980; and dikkat (difficulty) that was removed on

February 26, 2021. Among the phrases that



MP Speaker Girish Gautam with CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Leader of Opposition Kamal Nath at all-party meeting ahead of the monsoon session of the Assembly, in Bhopal. PTI

MLAs are expected to avoid are the colourful 'budget mein khoda pahad, nikla chuhiya' (much ado

about nothing), 'bhains ke aage been bajana' (casting pearls before swine), 'Aapko bhagwan ki

kasam hai' (swearing on God), 'Lage raho munna bhai', and ʻghadiyali aansu mat bahaiye' (crocodile tears).

Gautam told The Indian Express: "There are two booklets. one of them handed to the MLAs. that have details of the context in which these words were said that led to them being expunged. It is up to us to maintain the sanctity of the institution."

The Speaker said this was a small step to ensure public representatives don't use such words and phrases inside the Vidhan Sabha. He also said a two-day training programme was being planned which would groom MLAs on how to conduct themselves in the House.

"Leaders like Kamal Nath and

Shivraj Singh Chouhan have been members of multiple Lok Sabhas and Vidhan Sabhas. They understand the functioning owing to their experience. But not all MLAs are so well-versed, there are

many first-timers," said Gautam. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, who was present during the launch, welcomed the initiative. He pointed out that once a group of students who had come to observe the working of Vidhan Sabha had described it as a "fish market".

At the event, Leader of Opposition Kamal Nath guestioned the need for the booklet. "Why had such a need risen at all that a book on unparliamentary words and sentences had to be released?" he asked.

## AAP, Gomes joins Cong **EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**

Months after qutting

PANAJI, AUGUST 8

ELVIS GOMES, former convenor of AAP in Goa, joined the Congress at a ceremony here on Sunday.

The bureaucrat-turnedpolitician was AAP's CM candidate for the 2017 Assembly polls, in which it drew a blank.

Gomes said he had a meeting with senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in Delhi two days ago, after which he decided to join the party. "After leaving AAP I had not joined any party for eight-nine months. I have given it a lot of thought. I have come on my own terms," he said.

New Delhi

Gomes was inducted at a ceremony at Congress House in the presence of Goa Pradesh Congress Committee president Girish Chodankar and Leader of Opposition and former CM Digambar Kamat.

He said he always wanted to put Goa above all else, "I looked at an ideology (of the Congress) that is intact for 70 years. People may have come, they may have defected, betrayed and that was the main reason I was a vocal critic of Congress. But my criticism was based on facts. And I will continue to criticise if this happens again,' Gomes told The Indian Express.

He is expected to contest from Cuncolim seat in South Goa.

# EXPRESS NETWORK



Akhil Gogoi

**ASSAM** 

#### Mamata-led alliance in works, says Akhil Gogoi

Guwahati: Raijor Dal chief Akhil Gogoi on Sunday said that an alliance of regional parties under the leadership of West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is in the making to oust the BJP from power at the Centre in 2024. The Independent MLA from Assam's Sibsagar claimed that Banerjee has invited him to merge Raijor Dal with the Trinamool and a decision is likely to be taken at his party's executive meeting. Assam Trinamool president Gopinath Das said: "There were no talks with Raijor Dal in Assam. Madam (Banerjee) is pursuing it."

#### **GUJARAT**

#### Man kills wife by injecting cyanide in drip bottle

Bharuch: A 32-year-old man has been arrested in Ankleshwar town of Bharuch district for allegedly murdering his 38year-old wife by injecting cyanide solution in her saline drip bottle while she was admitted in a hospital a month ago. According to police, the  $accused \, Jignesh \, Patel \, and \,$ Urmila Vasava were going through marital troubles. VN Rabari, police inspector, Ankleshwar city police station, said, "The accused was arrested for murder a month after the FSL report came out. He had injected the cyanide solution when there was patient's room."

#### **TRIPURA**

#### TMC workers arrested after clash released

Agartala: Fourteen Trinamool Congress activists, who were arrested in Khowai district on Sunday after a clash with BJP workers in Dhalai district were granted bail and interim bail in separate cases by a local court on Monday. Soon after they were released, Trinamool leaders said all of those released would be taken to Kolkata on an "urgent basis" as they had suffered Trinamool youth leaders Sudip Raha and Java Dutta were injured in Sunday's clash.

#### **UTTARAKHAND**

#### **ITBP inducts** women officers in combat roles

Mussoorie: The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) on Sunday commissioned its first two women officers in combat after they completed their training here. A total of 53 officers passed out from the ITBP officers' training academy located in Mussoorie after a parade was held, with Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami officiating as the chief guest. Dhami and ITBP director general S S Deswal put the ranks of **Assistant Commandant** on the shoulders of the two officers - Prakriti and Diksha – after the passing

# Terror funding case: NIA searches 56 locations in J&K linked to Jamaat-e-Islami

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** NEW DELHI, JAMMU, SRINAGAR AUGUST 8

THE NATIONAL Investigation Agency Sunday searched 56 locations allegedly linked to the banned Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI) in Jammu and Kashmir as a part of its probe into a terror funding

The searches, conducted along with the Jammu and Kashmir Police, began early in the day and were going on till the evening. They were carried out in Kashmir's Srinagar, Budgam, Ganderbal, Baramulla, Kupwara, Bandipora, Anantnag, Shopian, Pulwama and Kulgam districts

and Jammu's Ramban, Doda, Kishtwar and Rajouri districts.

IeI was banned by the government on February 28, 2019 shortly after the Pulwama attack. Sources said NIA registered the terror funding case on February 5 under the Unlawtul Activities Prevention Act.

An NIA statement said: "The members of the organisation have been collecting funds domestically and abroad through donations particularly in the form of Zakat, Mowda and Baitul-Mal purportedly to further charity and other welfare activities but these funds are instead being used for violent and secessionist activities.

It said these funds were

channelled to banned groups such as Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, Lashkar-e-Taiba and others.

"JeI has also been motivating impressionable youth of Kashmir and recruiting new members (Rukuns) in J&K to participate in disruptive secessionist activities," It said.

NiA said the raid locations include the premises of office bearers of JeI, its members, as well as offices of trusts purportedly run by the organisation. "During the searches today,

various incriminating documents and electronic devices were seized from the premises of the suspects," it said.

The houses raided by the central agency include that of

former chief Sheikh Ghulam Hassan at Kulgam and former senior leader Gazi Moin in Srinagar. It also searched the premises of the affiliated Falahe-Aam Trust that runs schools in the Valley, said sources.

The Ministry of Home Affairs had banned Jamaat-e-Islami for five years following a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

In the aftermath of the Pulwama attack, that left 40 CRPF personnel dead, police and paramilitary forces had launched a crackdown against the organisation on the night of February 22, 2019, raiding the houses of dozens of members and detaining more than 250.

# Bengaluru crackdown on drugs: Steep rise in cases filed, arrests

**JOHNSONTA** 

BENGALURU, AUGUST 8

THE DEATH of a 27-year-old Congolese national in the custody of the Bengaluru police after being arrested for alleged trafficking of party drugs comes amidst a crackdown on drug traffickers in the city over the last two years -- resulting in a nearly 10-fold rise in registered drug cases, from 285 in 2018 to 2.766 in 2020. 2021 has already seen 2,550 cases being registered.

The wide net cast by police authorities has seen the busting of celebrity drug networks serviced by foreign suppliers, who are believed to bring in drugs via various means, such as parcels to post offices, purchases on the dark net, and from cities like Delhi and Mumbai.

The number of foreigners arrested on drug trafficking charges has also seen a corresponding jump - from 82 in 2018-19 to 184 in 2020-21. In the seven months of the current year, 100-odd foreigners have been arrested. The quantity of

**TORA AGARWALA** 

**GUWAHATI, AUGUST 8** 

Olympian boxer

ment in public eye".

In a complaint to Dispur Police

Station in Guwahati on Friday, the

director of DIPR requested that

"appropriate legal action against

the web portal" be taken under

pletely false and fabricated infor-

mation designed to malign the

under Sections 294A/500/505(2)

of the IPC and Section 45A of the IT Act on Friday. "The complaint

came to us on August 6. We regis-

tered the case and now we are in-

vestigating it," said an officer in

posted on the Facebook page of

Assamese news website The

CrossCurrent Friday afternoon, re-

portedly questioned the use of

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa

Sarma's photos on multiple

hoardings put up in Guwahati in

the run-up to the Olymics - one

congratulating Borgohain and the

other commemorating the death

anniversary of Assam's first chief

The hoardings had large im-

minister Gopinath Bordoloi.

The now-deleted news clip,

Dispur Police Station.

The police registered a case

images of innocent persons".

creased from 876 grams in 2018-19 to 2.571 kg in 2020 and 7.777 kg in 2021, police data show.

Lauding the police efforts, former chief minister B S Yediyurappa had said last year, "This is the first time in the country that strong action is being taken against drug usage."

Sources involved with the op-

erations say police have managed to tap into the drug supply and consumer network - a tightly bound unit, with suppliers selling only to known purchasers through systematic arrests". The leads from a drug haul in November 2018, of 1.5 kg of heroin and 1.930 Ecstasy tablets worth an estimated Rs 1.5 crore, for example, led police last year to two actresses and other known names, as well as Loom Pepper, a Senegalese national and allegedly a major drug supplier.

Officers say police call records and WhatsApp data have helped police zero in on users and suppliers. "The network operates on mobile phones and messaging services," said a source.

Police claim to have zeroed in on Congolese national Joel

Case against Assam portal for

'fake news' on boxer hoardings

died in police custody on August 2, through an informant. His custodial death, resulting in protests, was not the first such incident. In May 2021, a Nigerian national, Peter Ofor, had been found dead near a lake after he was reportedly picked up by police on drug trafficking charges. In 2017, another Nigerian, Ifeanyi Madu, had died reportedly when he fell off a scooter while being pursued by the narcotics wing of

the Bengaluru Crime Branch. There are rival gangs among foreign drug suppliers. Many times seizures occur due to tipoffs provided to police on account of the rivalries," an officer said.

A senior officer admitted that police have been known to use high-handed measures, particularly against African nationals, many of whom are found to be overstaying after expiry of their visas. In fact, filing of cases ends up allowing them to remain in the country after release on bail, on account of pending trials. In 2019, the Karnataka High Court had ordered that illegal foreigners awaiting trial in the state be lodged in detention centres and

## Those fully vaccinated can use Mumbai locals from Aug 15: Uddhav

**VISHWAS WAGHMODE** MUMBAI, AUGUST 8

PEOPLE WHO have been fully vaccinated and completed 14 days after receiving the second dose of an anti-Covid vaccine will be allowed to travel by Mumbai suburban local trains from August 15, Chief Minister Uddhav

Thackeray announced Sunday. Mumbai has fully vaccinated 19 lakh people, most of whom likely entirely dependent on public transportation.

Thackeray said a meeting would be held with the state Covid Task Force on Monday to discuss easing curbs for places of worship and providing more relaxation to the hotels, restaurants and malls

'We are allowing the local trains to the general public from August 15. In the first phase, those who have taken both the doses of vaccines and have completed 14 days after taking the second dose, will be allowed to travel by the local trains. We have prepared a mobile application where fully vaccinated people can register to get a railway pass," Thackeray



Uddhav Thackeray

said while addressing the state through social media Sunday. The CM further said people

will have to provide details of two doses of vaccines, completion of 14 days after the second dose and a QR code, which will help the railways to verify authenticity, to obtain the travel pass. People who have smartphones can download the pass from the mobile application. Those who don't have smartphones, the CM said, can get the pass through the BMC offices and Mumbai suburban railways offices

"At present, there are around 19 lakh people in Mumbai who have taken the two doses of (Covid) vaccines and have completed 14 days after the second dose. This number will go up daily till August 15. And once we become habituated to the pass system, then we will open up restaurants, malls and others in a phase-wise manner," he added.

#### TRACKING THE SECOND SURGE **NEW CASES: 34,629**



**ACTIVE CASES: 4,02,683** TOTAL VACCINATION: **50,68,10,492** 

TOTAL DEATHS | 4,28,309 WEEKLY CFR 1.32%



TESTS TODAY: 18.06.290 | TOTAL TESTS: 48.18.45.475 WEEKLY POSITIVITY: 2.24% | OVERALL POSITIVITY: 6.63%

#### STATES REPORTING MOST CASES

STATE	NEW Cases	ACTIVE Cases	WEEKLY Positivity	TOTAL VACCINATION
■ Kerala	18,607	1,77,012	12.52%	2,17,82,466
■Maharashtra	5,508	71,510	3.12%	4,66,87,572
■ Andhra Pradesh2,050		19,949	2.54%	2,36,21,506
■ Tamil Nadu	1,956	20,407	1.26%	2,51,39,694
■ Karnataka	1,598	23,956	1.11%	3,27,70,543

#### STATES REPORTING MOST DEATHS

STATE	DEATHS	DEATHS	CFR	CFR				
■ Maharashtra	153	1,36,336	2.53%	2.19%				
■ Kerala	93	17,826	0.82%	0.54%				
■ Odisha	69	6,488	3.04%	0.67%				
■ Tamil Nadu	28	34,317	1.64%	1.35%				
■ Karnataka	20	36,793	1.94%	1.27%				
Note: Data as on Aug 8; vaccination numbers as of Aug 7. Deaths include those caused by comorbidities.								

# Houseboats to hotels, Kerala tourism feels the pinch after months of curbs

FOREIGN TOURISTS DOMESTIC TOURISTS

**SHAJU PHILIP** THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,

AUGUST 8

LAST YEAR, the Covid slump pushedTVinodout of his job as Operations Manager at a resort in Munnar, the popular hill station in Kerala. The 38-year-old, hailing from the upper reaches of Idukki, tried his hand at several small jobs to feed his family of three -- from working in the construction sector to selling cloth masks -- and shifted his son from a private school to a government institution to cut costs.

Down south near the coast, Devassia Varghese, who was a driver on a houseboat till last year, is now desperately looking for work as a farm hand. The 56-yearold with a family of five in Chambakkulam village of Kuttanad has been without a job "for the last 14 months".

'Many of my colleagues in the houseboat sector are going for inland fishing or other daily wage work," says Varghese. "Last week, I signed up for the rural jobs scheme (MNREGS)," says Vinod. From the hill stations of

Munnar and Wayanad to the ba-

**JAGDEEP SINGH DEEP** 

POLICE IN Punjab believe the

killing of Shiromani Akali Dal

youth leader Vikramjeet Singh

could have been an act of re-

venge connected to his sus-

The former Students

known as Vicky

Organisation of India president,

Midhukhera, was killed in broad

daylight in Mohali on Saturday.

bullets at Midhukhera and

around nine bullets had hit him.

The assailants had sprayed

pected ties to gangsters.

MOHALI, AUGUST 8

ckwaters of Alappuzha, the pandemic has shattered Kerala's tourism industry, which employs 15 lakh people and contributes 11.5 per cent of the state's GDP.

**DIP IN TOURISTS** 

2021\*

11.88 lakh

3.40 lakh

14,489

According to state Tourism officials, the total earnings from the sector in 2019 was Rs 45,010 crore. In 2020, it was only around Rs 11,000 crore -- mainly during the months of January to March, before the pandemic struck, and mid-November onward, when the first wave eased (see box).

Officials said domestic arrivals fell by 72.86 per cent in 2020 from 2019, and international by 71.36

In the first three months of this vear, before the third wave surged, the state logged a decline of 40.53 per cent in domestic and 95.65 per cent in international arrivals from the same period last year.

It could have been out of personal

enmity. Although we are work-

ing on other theories, revenge

killing seems to be the plausible

they were investigating the link

with the murder of Rana

Kandowalia, a gangster, who was

allegedly killed by Lawrence

Bishnoi gang at a private hospital

were aware of Midhukhera's po-

litical connections and believed

that Midhukhera used to help

Bishnoi. This killing could also

have a link with the killing of

"The rival gangs of Bishnoi

in Amritsar last week.

Sources in the police said that

reason," a police officer said.

1.83 crore 49.88 lakh 2.2 lakh \*January-March Kochi-based tourism consult-

ant Sanieev Kumar Nair says a large number of properties are up for sale. According to All Kerala Houseboat Owners Association representative, Tomy Pulickattil, there was "a short period of relief" in December-January after the first wave waned. "Many of us spent Rs 5 lakh to

Rs 8 lakh to re-launch since the houseboats needed repairs after lying idle. Then came the second wave, and with the third now looming large, we are wary of making any fresh investment. The high fuel prices have also made resumption of operations unviable," says Pulickattil.

In Wayanad, resort operator F T Jamshith says a large number of properties are in crisis "without a paisa to resume business".

"Several resorts and homes-

Rana Kandhowala. Bishnoi gang

was allegedly involved in killing

Rana. So the rival gang could have

targeted Midhukhera for aveng-

ing the killing," the officer said.

Midhukhera was never directly

involved in any criminal activity,

his closeness with Bishnoi could

have made him a target. Another

police officer said that

Midhukhera was a soft target

and by killing Vicky, the rivals

wanted to deal a blow to the

said that their teams were work-

ing on the case and nothing more

Mohali SSP Satinder Singh

Bishnoi gang.

Sources said that though

SAD youth leader killing could be revenge: cops

tays have been closed. Many are up for sale at half the rate of pre-Covid days. Those who have taken properties on lease have abandoned them. The only relief is that bikers are now checking in at offroad resorts," says Jamshith.

The sector has to "immediately go into survival mode", says Jose Dominic, CEO of CGH Earth Group of Hotels.

"Loan schemes of the government will not work as that will only increase liability. The only solution is opening up the sector... The negative publicity emerging from the high number of Covid cases is a matter of concern," says Dominic. On Saturday, Kerala recorded

20,367 new cases, taking the total caseload to 3,533,918. It reported 139 Covid-linked deaths, with the total toll reaching 17,733.

On Sunday, Tourism Minister P A Mohammed Riyas announced that his department will celebrate Onam this month-end virtually, showcasing the state's culture and destinations digitally. Rivas said the state government is planning revival packages, including a working capital support scheme. **FULL REPORT ON** 

www.indianexpress.com

could be disclosed at this point.

at his village of Midhukhera in

Muktsar district on Sunday.

Midhukhera was cremated

SAD alleges PCR vehicle was

near crime scene, police deny

SAD leader Charanjeet Singh

Brar alleged that a PCR vehicle

was parked at some distance

from the crime scene at the time

PCR vehicle present near the

crime scene, SSP Satinder Singh

said that these were false allega-

tions and a PCR vehicle had ar-

rived after receiving the call and

taken Midhukhera to a hospital.

Asserting that there was no

of the incident.

#### POLICE HAVE registered a case against a Guwahati-based news portal after the Directorate of Information and Public Relations (DIPR), Assam alleged that the website aired "fake news" - related to hoardings that featured Lovlina Borgohain — to "malign the the image of the Minister of Information and Public Relations, Pijush Hazarika and the depart-

One of the hoardings on boxer Lovlina Borgohain that had been put up in Guwahati. CM Himanta Biswa Sarma has expressed

ages of Sarma. In the Borgohain hoarding, the boxer's photograph was not featured at all; it had two accompanying lines that said "Congratulations and best wishes to Lovlina Borgohain for qualifying for Tokyo Olympic 2020" and "You are the pride of Assam". In the Bordoloi hoarding, the former chief minister's face was relegated to the periphery, with Sarma's occupying most of the space. Neither carried the name of the

department which sanctioned it. Borgohain's hoarding kicked up a storm on social media, with many users criticising the government for not featuring her photo and instead using Sarma's. Another set of hoardings congratulating Borgohain featured Assam Sports Minister Bimal

Thursday about the Bordoloi hoarding, saying he did not endorse it. "I do not endorse this kind of branding at all. Instruction has been issued not to use my picture from now onwards without prior approval of my office," he tweeted. On Friday, The CrossCurrent shared a four-minute clip in

Sarma himself tweeted on

Assamese titled 'Was Pijush Hazarika admonished for trying to flatter Himanta Biswa Sarma?'

While the video is not available online now, Gautam Gogoi, the website's news editor, said the clip asked who was behind these hoardings. "Usually the DIPR makes such hoardings. So we just raised questions asking if they installed it, and if they had not, who approved it? We also asked if Himanta Biswa Sarma had backfired... since the latter said he did

not approve of the hoarding." Hazarika told The Indian Express that he was not "personally involved" in the case against the website. "The complaint has been filed by the DIPR and I am not involved in it. They [the news portall had aired a news clip regarding two hoardings - however, neither I nor the DIPR had anything to do with the hoardings," he said.

Gogoi alleged they were "being targeted" for "raising basic questions". The CrossCurrent was launched in 2018. "We have done a lot of news reports before too... questioning the government. That is probably why they picked us out," he said.

Apolice officer said Gogoi was summoned for questioning. "We questioned him, took a statement and let him go," the officer said.

## Khattar meets Dahiya kin, promises school, end to water issues in village

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** CHANDIGARH, AUGUST 8

HARYANA CHIEF Minister Manohar Lal Khattar Sunday met the family of Olympic silver medallist Ravi Dahiya in the wrestler's home village of Nahri. The family and residents made a number of requests - fixing a drainage problem, setting up a school, and ensuring clean drinking water — which the CM said would be resolved on priority.

"The chief minister, while congratulating the parents of the wrestler, also resolved several issues of the area on the spot...Ravi Dahiya's father Rakesh, uncle Mukesh Dahiya, members of the gram panchayat and former sarpanch of Nahri village were present alongwith other representatives. The family of the wrestler and village representatives invited the chief minister to visit Nahri, which was promptly accepted by



CM Khattar with wrestler Ravi Dahiya's father Rakesh

him...," a spokesperson said.

The village representatives presented a demand letter to Khattar, listing grievances. "The chief minister immediately took up the grievances and asked the officers concerned to resolve them on priority basis. Among the key issues was the problem of water drainage in the area. The chief minister spoke to the deputy commissioner, Sonipat, matter immediately. The representatives urged the CM to open a Model Sanskriti School in the demand letter, which was accepted by him on the spot. Besides this, the CM asked officers to resolve the issue of clean drinking water of the area as well," the spokesperson said. Home Minister Anil Vij, mean-

while, went to Olympic gold medallist Neeraj Chopra's home in Panipat to congratulate his parents. After presenting them with a turban and a shawl, Vij bowed down and touched their feet.

He said if Chopra wants to set up an academy to train youngsters, the government would consider it.

Also on Sunday, the Karnataka government announced Rs 10 lakh as a token of appreciation for Olympic gold medalist Neeraj Chopra's coach Kashinath Naik. The coach hails from Sirsi, a town, in Uttara

Kannada district of Karnataka.

WITH PTI INPUTS

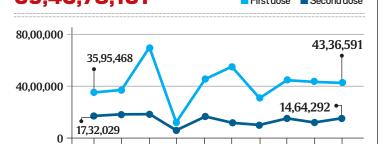
New Delhi

# and asked him to resolve the

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

#### CORONAVIRUS DASHBOARD

#### TOTAL VACCINATED IN INDIA (at least one dose) 39,43,78,151 ■ First dose ■ Second dose



LAST 10 DAYS (daily)

**COVISHIELD** 

87.7%



(Sputnik V's **5**,**70**,**957** doses not represented in pie)

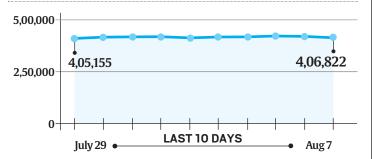
DOSES ON AUG 07 58,00,883 **AUG 06: 56,82,014** (1ST DOSE: 44,10,510; 2ND:12,71,504)

#### **INDIA ACTIVE CASES**

4,06,822

**COVAXIN** 

12.2%



Note: The August 7 figures in these graphs are based on the government updates on August 8

INDIA TOTAL CASES 3.19.34.455 Source: Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, updated at 11 pm on August 8

#### Device that detects SARS-CoV-2 in saliva sample in one hour

ENGINEERS AT MIT and Harvard University have designed a small tabletop device that can detect SARS-CoV-2 from a saliva sample in about an hour. In a new study in Science Advances, they showed it is as accurate as PCR tests, MIT said in a press statement. It said the device can also be used to detect specific viral mutations

linked to some of the variants now circulating.

The new diagnostic, which relies on CRISPR technology, can be assembled for about \$15, but those costs could come down significantly if the devices were produced at large scale, the researchers say. It is based on SHERLOCK, a CRISPR-based tool.

First, a pre-processing step disables enzymes called salivary nucleases, which destroy nucleic acids such as RNA. Once the sample goes into the device, the nucleases are inactivated by heat and two chemical reagents.

Then, viral RNA is extracted and concentrated by passing the saliva through a membrane.

This RNA sample is then exposed to freeze-dried CRISPR/Cas components. The reaction amplifies the RNA sample and then detects the target RNA sequence, if present.

> The researchers designed the device, which they call minimally instrumented SHERLOCK (miSHERLOCK), so that it can have up to four modules that each look for a different target RNA sequence. The original module detects any strain of SARS-CoV-2. Other modules are specific to mutations including B.1.1.7, P.1, and B.1.351.

The Delta variant was not yet widespread when the researchers performed this study, but they say it should be straightforward to design a new module to detect that variant.

Source: MIT



#### **EXPLAINED THE PANDEMIC**

# Vaccination: the road ahead

Worldwide, there is a gap between vaccine supply and demand, and disparities between developed and developing countries. Where will new vaccines come from, and what challenges must they meet?

#### **EXPERT EXPLAINS**

VIRANDER S CHAUHAN

From The Indian Express panel of specialists, exclusive insight

SARS-CoV-2 continues to play havoc in different parts of the world with several of its more virulent forms, particularly the Delta variant, now driving new waves of infections.

Vaccines developed against the virus are the most effective scientific intervention to control the pandemic. Developed at an amazing pace, as many as 19 vaccines have already been approved for immunisation in some part of the world or the other.

#### **Glaring disparities**

These vaccines are the result of intense scientific collaborations among scientists in academia and industry, and early huge funding from many governments. Unfortunately, the initial collaborative efforts did not translate into equitable access, and the trajectory of access has largely replicated the classical paradigm of developed and the underdeveloped parts of the world. Glaring disparities and differences in vaccine types, their availability and distribution have emerged in vaccination programmes across the globe.

The initiative COVAX, led by the World Health Organization (WHO), has struggled to procure and distribute vaccines to lowand middle-income countries.

While the western and resource-rich countries have mostly relied on the novel platforms of mRNA based vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna, and viral vector vaccines of AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson, the low- and middle-income countries find themselves relying mostly on vaccines developed in China and Russia.

As of now, around 4.1 billion shots of various vaccines have been rolled out worldwide, with China (1.61 billion), India (455 million) and USA (344 million) accounting for more than half of these. Many developed countries have vaccinated more than half their populations. On the other hand, resource-compromised countries have barely started their vaccination programmes.

The gap between supply and demand of vaccines needs to be filled quickly. Clearly, we need more vaccines, but where will they come from?

#### Vaccines in development

Among the 19 vaccines approved for use, large number have been developed and ap-



Queue for vaccination in Jaipur last week. India has administered over 50 crore doses, and hopes to procure 135 crore vaccines by December. Rohit Jain Paras

THE EXPERT

**VIRANDER S CHAUHAN** 

is a former chairman of

**International Centre for** 

**Genetic Engineering and** 

Biotechnology. He is best

known for his efforts

towards developing a

vaccine for malaria.

UGC and a former

director of the

developing countries such as Cuba, Iran, Turkey and Kazakhstan. In addition, more than 30 vaccines are in large efficacy trials with a few already waiting for emergency use approval. More than 90 vaccine candidates have entered phase I/II trials. Therefore more than 120 vaccines, including many in the developing world, are under development.

Given the fact that so far only five vaccines have been abandoned following clinical trials, many of these vaccine candidates are destined to reach the regulatory stages in various countries. Although currently there is a huge shortage in supply, the space for introducing new vaccines can-

not be unlimited, and only the best may be able to compete with the existing ones.

Also, manufacturers of currently in-use vaccines have announced major increases in production at multiple locations. For example, Pfizer has recently announced production of its vaccine in South Africa, specifically for use in African countries. The most cost-effective vac-

cine of AstraZeneca, which is approved in more than a hundred countries, is already being manufactured in many countries.

There will be additional challenges for the new vaccines. The current first-generation vaccines were tested against the original strain of the virus, but phase III trials of the new vaccines will have to deal with multiple, highly infectious variants.

Further, organising large phase III trials in itself will become more complex, particularly in locations where a large proportion of adult populations are vaccinated and/or inproved in China, and more recently a few in fection rates have significantly declined.

Ethically too, phase III trials with placebo control groups may not be justifiable any more, given that efficacious vaccines are already in use.

#### **Hopes & challenges**

The next generation of Covid vaccines could address the issues of stability at higher temperatures for easy transportation and storage, a real concern in poor countries. Large-scale immunisation through the

injection route has always been complex and at least partly contributes to vaccine hesitancy. To avoid the needle and deliver vac-

cines through nasal or oral routes will also be an attractive target. Several non-injectable Covid vaccines are under development, including in India.

Perhaps the most exciting development in the new vaccine arena is the recent phase III trial results of the protein-based vaccine of Novavax, which has shown an effi-91.4%. cacy of Importantly, these trials were conducted at a time

when several virus variants had already emerged. However, the US regulator is yet to approve its emergency use.

Another protein-based vaccine being developed by Biological E in India, in collaboration with Baylor College of Medicine, US, has shown excellent safety and efficacy results in human trials conducted so far. Such protein-based vaccines will undoubtedly be major game-changers since they are not only safe, time tested, and highly efficacious, but also easy to produce, stable at higher temperatures, and generally very cost-effective.

But the lower-than-expected efficacy of

47% emerging from a large pivotal trial of the mRNA vaccine from CureVac, Germany, has seriously dampened hopes of its role in vaccination programmes in the European Union and elsewhere. The disappointing results underscore the risks and challenges for new vaccines, which will have to demonstrate efficacy against viral variants now prevalent all over the world.

Yet, new vaccines are being introduced at regular intervals. China has approved six vaccines and vaccinated a staggering 20 million people per day for more than a week in mid-June this year. Recently China has started vaccination of all minors using its own vaccines. There have been concerns about the efficacy of these vaccines in some Asian countries, including Indonesia and Thailand.

#### India, now & later

With 500 million (50 crore) vaccines already administered so far, India set its own record of vaccinating nearly 9 million people in a day on 21 June 2021. India's vaccination programme so far has been mainly driven by Covishield of AstraZeneca/Serum Institute of India and Covaxin of Bharat Biotech accounting for over 87% and 12% of all vaccinations respectively. Sputnik V from Russia, which was approved in April 2021, is yet to make any sizeable contribution to the vaccination programme

According to revised estimates, the vaccine programme in India hopes to procure 135 crore vaccines by December 2021. The overall average supply of all vaccines has hovered around 4 million per day for the last two months. Clearly, the supply will need to be more than twice the present rate.

It is hoped that both Covishield and Covaxin production will be scaled up, with Covaxin to be produced at multiple locations. Likewise, Sputnik V supply through imports, or through its production in India, is expected to fill the gap.

Manufacturing and approvals of proteinbased vaccines of Novavax and Biological Ewill be crucial to the supply chain in India. Novavax has demonstrated safety and high efficacy of its vaccine and may seek approval for its use in India before it is approved elsewhere.

The DNA based vaccine developed by Zydus Cadila, which requires three shots for full vaccination, is also expected to be rolled out in the coming months. Biological E was also slated to manufacture the single-shot vaccine of Johnson & Johnson, which, however, is yet to be approved for use in India.

If all falls into place, India should be able to produce more than 1-2 billion doses of Covid vaccines by 2022. India is well known for its ability to produce high quality vaccines at affordable cost and it should hope to occupy its rightful position of the largest producer of vaccines, especially for developing

# When a silver disappoints but a bronze thrills

#### **ATIKH RASHID**

PUNE. AUGUST 8

IN AN interview almost 70 years after he won a silver medal at the Stockholm Olympics of 1912. American runner Abel Kiviat described the 1,500m race as a "nightmare". "That race was the biggest disappointment of my life. I never saw Jackson," said Kiviat, who died in 1991. He was referring to Britain's Arnold Jackson, who had defeated him by just 0.1 seconds.

In the 2020 Olympics just ended, Indian wrestler Ravi Kumar Dahiya voiced similar disappointment after winning silver in the  $57\,\mathrm{kg}$ freestyle category." I had come here with only one target, a gold medal. This (silver medal) is okay, but it's not gold," he told reporters.

#### Their emotions, on scale

In a 1995 paper in The Journal of Personality

#### **MEAN HAPPINESS RATINGS** Silver Bronze At the medal stand **Immediate** In a 1995 study, bronze winners

fared better than silver winners **on a happiness scale.** *Medevec et al* 

and Social Psychology, psychologists Victoria Medvec, Thomas Gilovich and Scott F Madey examined why silver medallists may be feeling the way they do. They concluded that silver medallists fare poorly on a happiness scale because of the human tendency to indulge in

'counterfactual thinking' — to think of alternative circumstances to real-life events.

Bronze medallists score better than the silver medallists who had outperformed them. "We were interested in whether the effects of different counterfactual comparisons are sufficiently strong to cause people who are objectively worse off to sometimes feel better than those in a superior state," Medvec

and his colleagues wrote in the paper.

The researchers collated video footage from the 1992 Olympics and edited them in three master tapes, showing the medallists' reaction immediately after the results, while receiving the medals, and during interviews they gave about their performance.

In one part of the study, university students unaware of the results were asked to rate, on a 10-point "agony to ecstasy" scale, the immediate reactions of 41 athletes, and their reactions on the medal stand (see

graphic). In a second part, the participants reviewed television interviews of 22 silver and bronze medallists and rate their expressed feelings on a 10-point scale. "To the silver medallist, the most vivid

counterfactual thoughts are often focused on nearly winning the gold," the researchers explained. "... For the bronze medallist, in contrast, the most compelling counterfactual alternative is often coming in fourth place and being in the showers instead of on the medal stand."

#### Similar findings

Three other researchers, who repeated the experiment in the 2016 Olympics, reconfirmed that counterfactual thoughts were higher among silver medallists than bronze winners. They found, however, that the differences in the expressed emotions were trivial or negligible.

# How Apple will scan for child exploitation images on its devices

**NANDAGOPAL RAJAN** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 8

APPLE HAS announced that software updates later this year will bring new features that will "help protect children from predators who use communication tools to recruit and exploit them, and limit the spread of Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM)".

Expected to go live in the US initially, the features include use of new technology to limit the spread of CSAM online, especially via the Apple platform. There will be on-device protection for children from sending or receiving sensitive content, with mechanisms to alert parents if the user is below age 13. Apple will also intervene when Siri or Search is used to look up CSAM-related topics.

What is the tech Apple is using?

In a blog post, Apple said it will use cryp-

tography applications via iOS and iPadOS to match known CSAM images stored on iCloud Photo. The technology will match images on a user's iCloud with these known images, provided by child safety organisations. And this is done without actually seeing the image, and only by looking for what is like a fingerprint match. If there are matches crossing a threshold, Apple will "report these instances to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

Apple clarified that its technology keeps user privacy in mind, and hence the database is transformed into "an unreadable set of hashes that is securely stored on users' devices". The technology will determine a match without revealing the result.

At this point, the device creates a "cryptographic safety voucher" with the match result and additional encrypted data, and saves it to iClouds with the image. Threshold secret sharing technology ensures that these vouchers cannot be interpreted by Apple unless the iCloud Photos account crosses a threshold of known CSAM content. This threshold, the blog claimed, has been put in place to "provide an extremely high level of accuracy and ensures less than a one in one trillion chance per year of incorrectly flagging a given account". So a single image is unlikely to trigger an alert. But if the threshold is exceeded, Apple

can interpret the contents of the safety vouchers and manually review each report for a match, disable the user's account, and send a report to NCMEC. Apple said users will be able to appeal if they think they have been wrongly flagged.

#### How do the other features work?

Apple's new communication safety for Messages will blur a sensitive image and warn a child about the nature of the content. If enabled from the backend, the child could also be told that their parents have been alerted about the message they have viewed. The same will apply if the child decides to send a sensitive message. Apple said Messages will use "on-device machine learning to analyse image attachments and determine if a photo is sexually explicit" and that Apple will not get access to the messages. The feature will come as an update on accounts set up as families in iCloud for latest operating system versions. Also, with the update, when a user tries

to look up potential CSAM topics, Siri and Search will explain why this could be harmful and problematic. Users will also get guidance on how to file a report on child exploitation if they ask for it.

#### Why is Apple doing this, and what are the concerns being raised?

Big tech companies have for years been

under pressure to crack down on the use of their platforms for exploitation of children. Many reports have over the years underlined how enough was not being done to stop technology from making CSAM content available more widely.

However, Apple's announcement has been met with criticism, with many underlining how this is exactly the kind of surveillance technology many governments would want to have and love to misuse.

Also, cryptography experts like Matthew Green of Johns Hopkins University have expressed fears that the system could be used to frame innocent people by sending them images intended to trigger the matches for CSAM. "Researchers have been able to do this pretty easily," he told NPR, adding that it is possible to fool such algorithms.

But The New York Times quoted Apple's chief privy officer Erik Neuenschwander as

New Delhi

saying these features will not mean anything different for regular users. "If you're storing a collection of CSAM material, yes, this is bad for you," he told the publication.

#### Do other big tech companies have similar technologies?

Yes. Microsoft, Google and Facebook have been alerting law enforcement agencies about CSAM images. Apple has been lagging behind because any such technology would have gone against its muchtouted commitment to user privacy. As a result, in 2020, when Facebook reported 20.3 million CSAM violations to the NCMEC, Apple could report only 265 cases, The New York Times reported.

It is only now that it has been able to find the technology sweet spot to do this without impacting regular users, or at least spooking them. However, as the initial backlash has shown, it is still a tightrope walk.

# THE EDITORIAL PAGE

WORDLY WISE

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN THE OLYMPIC GAMES IS NOT WINNING BUT TAKING PART.

— PIERRE DE COUBERTIN

# The Indian **EXPRESS**

∞ FOUNDED By ∞ RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

# THE RISING FLAME

Tokyo 2021 busts many myths about Indian sports, points to the country's emergence as a sporting nation

UGUST 7, 2021, Tokyo would be as much of a watershed moment for Indian Olympics sports lore as June 25, 1983, Lord's was for cricket. In its magnitude and potential influence, Neeraj Chopra's Olympic gold-medal-winning feat has only one parallel in the country's sporting heritage, the World Cup victory 38 years ago, a moment that changed India's sporting sensibilities. In a similar way, Chopra's accomplishment could alter perceptions of how Indians perceive athletes. This is a mythbusting gold medal, a testimony that Indian, or even Asian, athletes can not only match their European adversaries but also beat them, provided they get access to world-class facilities, top-draw coaching and unfettered support of the sporting fraternity. The unscientific assumption about Indians having inferior athletic DNA, something that undermines their medal-winning chances on the global stage, was hurled out the window and it landed 87.58 metres far. Chopra's gold would not only draw a clear route-map to global success but also banish the inferiority complex that Indian athletes carry to elite events. Athletics now has the momentum to jump in the sand pit of global competition and wrestle with the best.

Though India improved the London count by just one medal, the significance of that one medal cannot be overstated enough. Each of the medals they won was a statement of India's incremental rise as a sporting nation. It is foolhardy to expect India to match the US or China overnight, but the trajectory of the graph is constantly moving upwards. That those medals came in various streams is a further reason for optimism. In badminton and wrestling, it's time India is considered among the powerhouses; in weightlifting, there is a generational talent in Mirabai Chanu; in boxing, there is finally someone to look beyond Mary Kom. The revival of men's hockey would not have been better timed, the often-ignored women's hockey too blazed in promise. Shooting was an aberration — expect many of those who left in tears to bounce back stronger and hungrier. Overall, the Tokyo Games could leave a long-lasting influence on Indian sports.

The Olympics itself would be remembered as a metaphor of hope in the Covid-altered world. There were fears that the event would emerge as a super-spreader of the virus, it would see a stoppage and the competition wouldn't be top-notch. It has answered negatively to each of those doubts. With no runaway leader on the medals tally — just one gold separated the US and China — this was the most closely fought Games in recent times. Tokyo showed that with coaches seamlessly crossing borders and sporting knowhow spreading, the Olympic world was flattening. Top German coaches sitting in Chopra's corner as he left his Dresden-born arch-rival, Johannes Vetter, far behind was a frame that best captured the levelling of the playing field.

## STANDING WITH KABUL

UNSC meet exposes duplicity of Taliban and Pakistan, who talk peace and pursue war at the same time

SPECIAL MEETING of the United Nations Security Council on Afghanistan convened under India's presidency last Friday, did not produce a new international consensus on arresting the tragedy triggered by Taliban's military offensive with the full support of the Pakistan army. On Afghanistan, there is no unanimity among the five permanent members, which is critical for any consequential decisions by the world body. An ambitious China seeking to extend its regional footprint, and an opportunistic Russia that tags behind Beijing seem to support Pakistan's game plan to reinstall the Taliban in Kabul. Given its special ties to the Pakistan army, London tends to be wobbly on the Taliban. The US, which spent much blood and treasure in rebuilding Afghanistan after ousting the Taliban from power in 2001, has ceded much ground by deciding to withdraw all its troops in Afghanistan by the end of this month. In Europe (represented by France which has a permanent seat in the UNSC) too there is a decline in political support for a continued Western military intervention in Afghanistan.

Although the UNSC discussion may not have moved the political needle on Afghanistan, it has laid bare the depth of the crisis there and the duplicity of the Taliban and Pakistan that talk peace and pursue war at the same time. Addressing the UNSC, the head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, Deborah Lyons, pointed to the "dangerous turning point," in the nation. "Ahead lies", she added, "either a genuine peace negotiation or a tragically intertwined set of crises: An increasingly brutal conflict combined with an acute humanitarian situation and multiplying human rights abuses." That the Taliban could not have mounted the massive military operations on its own was the burden of the presentation by the Afghan envoy to the United Nations, Ghulam M Isaczai. He told the Council that more than 10,000 foreign fighters are in the country, including from a number of UN designated terror organisations, participating in the Taliban's military offensive. He also pointed to long-standing Taliban sanctuaries in Pakistan and Rawalpindi's massive logistical support for the Taliban's current military offensive in Afghanistan.

Although the world was optimistic about the peace talks in Doha ending the prolonged conflict in Afghanistan, the Taliban and Pakistan have merely used them to delay negotiations on devising a new political order in Afghanistan while stepping up their violent campaign to overthrow the legitimate government in Kabul. India must continue to stand with the people of Afghanistan, whose dreams for a peaceful future are being shattered. Delhi must continue to mobilise international opinion in all global forums as well as work with its close partners to mount pressure on Pakistan and the Taliban to stop fighting and start talking peace with Kabul.

#### FREEZE FRAME

**EPUNNY** 



# Mending fences

Goodwill amongst Assam, Mizoram, all Northeast states, holds key to Act East Policy

Sanioy Hazarika

THE INITIAL STEPS have been taken in calming the roiling waters on the Assam-Mizoram border confrontation. First, the FIRs and cases which were filed against each other's leaders — involving both Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and K Vanlalvena, Mizo National Front (MNF) MP - have been withdrawn. Cases against officials from both states have been dropped. While these should not have been initiated in the first place, stepping back in this manner is a good way to reduce the political and emotive temperatures, which were soaring on both sides.

A sharp war of words and aggressive social media posts on either side did not help. Indeed, an outsider may be excused, if after listening to, watching or reading the passionate, angry and even, in some cases, inflammatory remarks by either side, for being perplexed by these declarations – were they, s/he may well have wondered, by citizens of neighbouring states or opposing nations. Some have added fuel to the fire by casting aspersions on the citizenry of their brethren on the disputed border or referring inappropriately to a part of their own state. These need be seen in the background of the extensive suffering faced by the region as a result of misunderstanding and ill will.

Second, the Assam chief minister's decision to send two ministerial emissaries from Assam to Aizawl is a good gesture to open dialogue and appears to have paid off initially. Both states have agreed to the deployment of neutral Central forces at the disputed stretches of the interstate border. Atul Bora, one of the ministers sent to Aizawl is from the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) in the BJP-led coalition, and also party president. The significance of an AGP leader in the peace mission should not be underestimated. The AGP led a regional coalition in the 1980s and 1990s in the Northeast that emerged as an anti-Congress front. The MNF had been part of this process and has had good relations with the AGP from that time.

Part of the confidence-building measures

Communities at the border, stakeholders such as business leaders and transporters as well as civil society need to be involved in conversations and dialogue for sustainable settlements. Political leaders must set the pace and provide the platform. However, since both sides use different yardsticks of history and geography to negotiate, it is difficult to visualise a situation where either side will emerge as a clear winner. There will have

to be give and take, count net

gains against losses.

has been the welcome withdrawal of the Assam government's travel advisory which asked people not to travel to Mizoram and urged people from the state working or staying there to "exercise utmost caution".

There is a third element that has become a seemingly endemic part of political confrontation between states. These are the blockades that have closed roads and highways in Assam leading to Mizoram – and in the past few days to Tripura. This has happened repeatedly in confrontations between different states in the region such as Nagaland and Manipur and last year between Assam and Mizoram.

These crackling tensions go far beyond interstate border disputes and have regional, national and international repercussions. For one, they have adverse economic impacts which are felt most sharply at the local level, leading to a rise in prices and shortage of commodities. This is a time when Covid-19 cases continue to rise in all the states of the region, including Mizoram and Assam, and essential supplies cannot be blocked by public agitations.

The economic fallouts of such actions are felt down the entire supply chain, from producer to transporter and receiving customers/markets. National highways are the direct responsibility of the Centre and it must ensure that these economic veins remain clear for passenger and freight traffic.

In addition, images, especially of violence and confrontation, go "viral" without delay. They move from mobile to mobile, over social platforms, one group to the other, leaping across boundaries of state and nation. Among those who look at them are potential investors and policymakers, not just in Delhi but other state and national capitals. The adverse impacts of these can be consid-

For decades, we must remember, the public image of the Northeast was shaped by conflict and confrontation, bandhs and violence. It had been shedding that image slowly and steadily, facing many hurdles, agitations and risks. Sustainable peace continues to be elusive although flawed insurgencies have failed and fallen. There are new challenges such as border divides and sharpening sectarian tensions. Economic growth is visible as are continuing concerns. Lakhs of young people from the region, despite discrimination and pressures, have moved and made their lives in other parts of the country, engaging with the idea of India, before, dur-

ing and after the waves of the pandemic. That is why communities at the border, stakeholders such as business leaders and transporters as well as civil society need to be involved in conversations and dialogue for sustainable settlements. Political leaders must set the pace and provide the platform. However, since both sides use different yardsticks of history and geography to negotiate, it is difficult to visualise a situation where either side will emerge as a clear winner. There will have to be give and take, count net gains against losses. That is the practical side which politicians are best equipped to deliver. Herein lies the importance of the concept of a Development Corridor on the border that would have to be agreed to by both sides and guaranteed by the Centre. This could build on the natural advantages of the bordering states - vegetable, meat and fruit processing, handicrafts and designer handlooms to name just five — and create jobs, livelihoods and better incomes for people on the border and beyond, building an equitable supply

A fundamental point needs to be underscored: The visionary Act East Policy and its predecessor Look East Policy rest on the pillars of peace and trust, not just better roads and physical infrastructure. They depend on good relationships between neighbours which enable economic cooperation, transport and trade not just cultural and social collaboration.

> The writer is director, Centre for North East Studies and Policy Research, Jamia Millia Islamia

# Ending Police Brutality

Prompt action against errant personnel is a must to stop custodial torture

M P NATHANAEL

THE DEATH OF a fruit stall owner, 47-yearold A Murugesan, allegedly as a result of a brutal thrashing by a special sub-inspector of Tamil Nadu police in Vazhapadi in Salem district on June 22, has revived memories of Bennix and his father Jayaraj who died in custody last year in June in Thoothukudi. While two other policemen stood watching the gory scene, Murugesan's friends pleaded for him to be spared but to no avail. Ân army man Resham Singh was brutally

tortured while his mother and two sisters in Pilibhit, UP, were humiliated on May 3, drawing the Allahabad High Court's ire. Two subinspectors and six constables were booked, and the station house officer sent to lines. Singh's medical report confirmed injuries due to brutal torture.

On May 21, an 18-year-old vegetable vendor Faisal Hussain was allegedly beaten to death in Bangarmau police station in UP's Unnao district for violation of Covid-19 directives. Though the market in the town was open, Hussain was beaten up and taken to a police station from where he was shifted to a hospital. He was declared dead on arrival. The post-mortem report attributed his death to head injuries. Two police constables and a home guard have been charged with murder. Custodial deaths in police stations, even

in jails, seem to be commonplace these days. Union Home Minister Amit Shah, while speaking at the inauguration of the Centre of Excellence for Research and Analysis of Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances of the

INDIAN EXPRESS

It's up to senior officers to ensure that prompt actions are initiated against policemen who resort to brutal torture. When erring personnel are promptly punished, the message goes out loud and clear to other rogue policemen that the law will catch up with them. In the case of custodial deaths, those guilty should be tried for murder.

National Forensic Sciences University in Ahmedabad on July 12, said that the police in our country are accused of either "No Action" or "Extreme Action". He has hit the nail right on the head. Victims of crime shudder at the thought of having to visit a police station. More so if one happens to be from a marginalised section of society

According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data, 100 cases of custodial deaths were reported in 2017, 42 of which were in police custody. Thirty-three policemen were arrested while 27 were chargesheeted. Forty-eight police personnel were charge-sheeted and three convicted in cases of human rights violation. Overall, 2,005 cases were registered against police personnel, 1,000 of whom were charge-sheeted. With 456 cases, Maharashtra topped the list, while Gujarat and Rajasthan followed with 191 and 169 cases, respectively; 128 personnel were convicted.

According to the NCRB's 2019 figures, 85 cases of custodial deaths were reported in the year with Tamil Nadu registering the highest number of cases followed by Gujarat, Punjab and Rajasthan and Odisha. No policeman was convicted, though 14 personnel of Gujarat were arrested, and charge-sheeted. For six custodial deaths in Rajasthan, three magisterial inquiries and two judicial inquiries were initiated against erring policemen.

In a written reply in the Lok Sabha, the former Minister of State for Home Affairs G Kishan Reddy stated that 1,697 custodial deaths were registered between April 2019 and March 2020, of which 1,584 deaths were in judicial custody while the rest (113) were in police custody. Uttar Pradesh topped the list with 400 custodial deaths followed by Madhya Pradesh (143). This meant that about five custodial deaths took place every day in our country. But on August 3, Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai stated in the Lok Sabha that 348 custodial deaths and 1,189 cases of torture by police were reported across the country in the last three years.

While several policemen do get convicted, there are good reasons to believe that many go scot free - by manipulating records, intimidating complainants or political patronage. It's up to senior officers to ensure that prompt actions are initiated against policemen who resort to brutal torture. When erring personnel are promptly punished, the message goes out loud and clear to other rogue policemen that the law will catch up with them. In the case of custodial deaths, those guilty should be tried for murder.

Police personnel who remain spectators when people in custody are being tortured are also complicit in the crime. Sub divisional police officers and superintendents of police should be held accountable for the impropriety committed by those under their su-

The writer is a retired Inspector General of

# AUGUST 9, 1981, FORTY YEARS AGO

#### CABINET RESHUFFLE

PRIME MINISTER INDIRA Gandhi carried out a minor reshuffle of her cabinet on August 8. Naravan Dutt Tiwari has been shifted from the Planning Ministry to the Industries Ministries. S B Chavan has been moved from the Education Ministry to planning. The Minister of State for Industry, Charanjit Chanana, who has been looking after the industry ever since Indira Gandhi returned to power will continue in his position with Tiwari heading the ministry. Tiwari will continue to hold the temporary charge of the labour portfolio. The PM is vet to announce the name of the new education minister. She has asked Shiela Kaul, minister of state for education and culture, to take temporary charge of the ministry. Mrs Gandhi is said to be looking for talent outside the parliamentary party but the search is yet to bear fruit.

#### AMU EXPULSIONS

THE VICE-CHANCELLOR OF the Aligarh Muslim University, Uttar Pradesh, Saiyid Hamid, has rusticated Irfanullah Khan, president of the dissolved union of the university and convener of the Students Action Committee for a period of five years. Fifteen other students were also rusticated for a period ranging from two to five years for what the university called, "acts of indiscipline". Nine student leaders were expelled last month for a period of one to three years.

#### DACOITS STRIKE IN UP NINE POLICE PERSONNEL and three villagers lost their lives in an encounter with

dacoits in Uttar Pradesh's Etah district. The

dacoits, who are reported to have num-

bered approximately 45, were from the

gangs of Chabiram Yadav, Poti Yadav and Anar Singh Yadav. LOANS WRITTEN OFF THE UNION GOVERNMENT has taken a decision not to recover about Rs 1,412 crore

given to states as assistance between 1977-78 and 1978-79 for coping with natural calamities. It has proposed to treat this amount as an additional assistance for these years.

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, MONDAY, AUGUST 9, 2021

# THE IDEAS PAGE

# Engineering a crisis

Constant tampering of curricula without giving students knowledge of the basics, a deficit in industry-instruction link continue to be the bane of country's technical education



SS Mantha and Ashok Thakur

ENGINEERING IS AN applied science and therefore its pursuit preconditions a sound knowledge of its civil, mechanical and electrical branches, these being its building blocks. Offshoots like metallurgy and chemical engineering have sprung up from mechanical engineering and a host of other branches like electronics, communications, computer science and IT grew from the electrical branch of engineering. A common thread that bound these specialisations was a sound engineering base rooted in materials, applied physics and thermodynamics.

Private entrepreneurs took the lead to meet the growing demand of the country in technical education in the mid-Eighties, but with little idea of the subject. As a result, the faculty of these institutions drove the agenda of their management - and sometimes their own. When the management's agenda entered academic bodies of various universities, the first casualty was the curriculum. Important courses such as those mentioned above were the first to be jettisoned since they were both tough to teach for the teachers and tough to pass for the students. Subjects like materials, applied physics and thermodynamics became dispensable. Several universities merrily revised their curriculum at the expense of these courses.

This softening of subjects coupled with unfettered expansion in the early and mid-2000s, though it ensured that everyone who aspired to technical education could find a seat commensurate with his/her abilities, resulted in real dilution of the overall standards in the country. At its peak in 2014-15, AICTE-approved institutes had almost 35 lakh seats, mainly due to the increased employment opportunities in the country. However, a series of reports by this paper in December 2017 revealed no takers for at least 51 per cent of the 15.5 lakh seats in 3,291 undergraduate engineering colleges in 2016-17. These reports laid bare the regulatory gaps, poor infrastructure, lack of qualified faculty and the non-existent industry linkage that contributed to the abysmal employability of graduates from most of these institutes.

Some consolidation is bound to happen in every expanding system, but that also calls for intelligent interventions to connect with the available employment opportunities if the fruits of expansion are to be enjoyed. Since 2015-16, at least 50 colleges have closed each year and this year, AICTE approved the closure of 63 institutes. However, 54 new colleges were approved for the academic year, 2021-22 in backward districts. Similar statistics rule every year. Did anyone also study the available employment opportunities in those districts before approving them? When political and economic reasons override the establishment of new entities, why discuss declining standards? Several such decisions only contributed to the cumulative deterioration of standards overall.

Not a single industry body, be it CII, FICCI or ASSOCHAM has managed to effectively



inform the education planners on the growth in different employment sectors. Nor has the government taken any tangible steps to set up an independent body to advise AICTE on this vital aspect. In the absence of any credible information on demand side numbers, investments made by institutions will only be based on perception. Yesterday, it was IT and its applications that propelled a growth in IT and Computer Science courses. Today, it is automation. Be it RPA, AI, ML, blockchain, hard robotics or IOT, the thrust is on complete automation. What happens when these areas get saturated? Several jobs have already disappeared with the base of the pyramid having shrunk considerably.

Lack of adequate number of teachers, lack of quality in those available, inability of the management to make adequate investments in a dynamic environment, lack of employment opportunities, shelf life of skills coming down with every technology-related intervention and a constant experimentation with curriculum have all been the bane of quality in technical education. Rather than being reactive, institutions must proactively define the practicing elements of education. The corrective measures for these shortfalls are technology intensive, are experiential, and need investments in teaching. Colleges are unwilling or not in a position to make those investments resulting in serious decline in quality.

Not all experiments are worth doing though. A constant fiddling with the curriculum, reducing total credits, giving multiple choices in the name of flexibility, dispensing with mathematics and physics at the qualification level, teaching in local languages may all be good arguments, but one must assess their utility and their effect on technical education in the long run. An IT-heavy curriculum in every specialisation is not called for. Not a single industry body, be it CII, FICCI or ASSOCHAM has managed to effectively inform the education planners on the growth in different employment sectors. Nor has the government taken any

tangible steps to set up an independent body to advise AICTE on this vital aspect. In the absence of any credible information on demand side numbers, investments made by institutions will only be based on perception. Yesterday, it was IT and its applications that propelled a growth in IT and Computer Science courses. Today, it is

Reducing total credits has not only reduced the rigour of engineering education, but also meant loss in jobs for several faculty streams. National pride may be non-negotiable, but then will teaching in Marathi or Tamil increase employment opportunities besides causing several pedagogy and copyright-related issues? Is there a national report available on this? Over a period of time, such experiments tend to reduce interest levels in technical education itself.

The ultimate measure of performance is embedded in quality assurance. Various rating and ranking agencies insist that programme and course outcomes are paramount for quality. The larger question, however, is if these can be measured in the spirit in which they are written and if the gap in performance can be used to improve the system akin to a closed loop control system? What if the guaranteed outcomes are not realised? Can the stakeholders sue the administrators on reneging on promises? The need of the hour is to create a truly autonomous quality assurance body at an arms-length from the government, manned by eminent persons both from industry as well as academia.

The education paradigm is staring at a large shift, due to the pressures of a large growing and young population, the exponentially increasing cost of education and the need to reach the unreached with quality, which is being fast forwarded by Covid-19. That being said, Steve Jobs' words of 2005 ring true - "You can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards. So, you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future." Will we be able to connect ours?

> Mantha is Former Chairman AICTE and Thakur Former Secretary GoI, MHRD

# The job gap

"There have been times when it seemed Olympic sport would go the way of other sports, and be more about cynicism than grace, contracts than courage. Even in the absence of crowds, however, there have been plenty of moments in

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

these Games that have shown the original flame still flickers."

Decline in unemployment rate is based on a statistical approach that masks the deterioration in quality of employment on the ground



RADHICKA KAPOOR

A QUICK LOOK at the recently released Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) reveals a decline in the unemployment rate from 5.8 per cent in 2018-19 to 4.8 per cent in 2019-20. This fall in the unemployment rate from the 45 year high of 6.1 per cent as reported in the first PLFS (2017-18) is indeed a respite. However, these statistics need to be interpreted with caution. They are based on the "usual status" approach wherein the activity status of a person is captured for a reference period of 365 days preceding the date of survey. Those who are reported as unemployed by this approach are those who are chronically unemployed. In developing countries, where casual and intermittent work and part-time and temporary jobs are widespread, employment estimates based on this approach tend to include the under-employed workforce. Consequently, unemployment rates derived from the usual status approach give a misleading picture of the extent of labour underutilisation and the employment challenge faced by the economy. In PLFS (2019-20), we observe that the unemployment rate based on the weekly status (which corresponds to the activity status of a person for a reference week) is not only higher than the usual status measure, but has also remained unchanged at 8.8 per cent compared to 2018-19. The divergence in these statistics only reinforces the need for anchoring the policy discourse in India on weekly status measures and not the usual

Significantly, even beyond the issue of using the weekly status measures, the lower unemployment rate (based on usual status approach) appears to be a consequence of economic distress and lack of gainful employment opportunities which have pushed jobseekers into low productivity and low paying work, thereby intensifying the challenge of under-employment.

To begin with, an examination of the composition of the workforce by employment type shows that the share of self-employment in total employment has increased to 53.5 per cent, up from 52.1 per cent as reported in the previous two PLFS rounds (2017-18 and 2018-19). Self-employed workers comprise three broad categories – own-account workers (those who run their enterprise without hiring any labour); employers (those who run their enterprise by hiring labour) and unpaid family workers/helpers in household enterprises. The third group comprises those who are engaged in their household enterprises, working full or part time, but do not receive any regular salary or wages in return for the work performed. It is this latter category, considered as poor quality employment, that has witnessed an increase in its share in total employment from 13.3 per cent (2018-19) to 15.9 per cent (2019-20) and contributed to the falling unemployment rate. The increase in this category of workers is reflective of rising underemployment. As the number of members working

in household enterprises rises, each worker simply works for less time than before and a large section of the workforce is underemployed. The share of the other two categories of self-employed workers, that is, own account workers and employers has declined. The share of regular salaried workers, which had been steadily rising in India until the PLFS 2018-19 and is considered as a more stable and secure form of employment, is now showing a decline. Significantly, even amongst regular salaried workers, those who are not eligible for any social security benefits has increased from 51.9 per cent to 54.2 per cent suggesting that formalisation would have been adversely impacted.

Interestingly a sectoral breakdown of the workforce shows that the share of the workforce engaged in agriculture has risen to 45.6 per cent (2019-20) from 42.5 per cent (2018-19). This increase is significant as it is the firsttime that the share of agriculture in total employment (in percentage terms) has increased since the NSS surveys started. This is indicative of a stalled structural transformation process, one which had picked up pace after 2004-05 with both the share and absolute numbers of workers engaged in agriculture declining with a concomitant rise in the non-agricultural sector. However, as non-agricultural sectors have failed to create jobs at a rapid pace in recent times, many jobseekers have been pushed back into the agricultural sector resulting in its emergence as an "employer of last resort".

Two trends that point to a deterioration in quality of employment merit attention vis-à-vis the sectoral composition. First, in the non-agriculture sector, the share of those engaged in informal enterprises increased from 68.4 per cent in 2018-19 to 69.5 per cent in 2019-20. Second, within the agricultural sector, much of the increase is coming through the category of unpaid family helpers. Their share in agricultural employment has increased (from 25.7 per cent to 29.7 per cent), while that of own account workers and employers has declined (48.4 per cent to 44.5 per cent) between the two rounds. Significantly, the share of rural women engaged in agriculture has increased substantially from 71.1 per cent (2018-19) to 75.7 per cent (2019-20) and these women are increasingly being employed in the category of unpaid family workers.

It is worth noting that India has been witnessing a rapid decline in female Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) since 2004-05. This trend has been partly attributed to the withdrawal of women from the workforce as a consequence of an "income effect" – an increase in their family's income. The PLFS 2019-20, however, shows a sharp increase in the female LFPR by 5.5 percentage points. Much of this is driven by the increased LFPR of rural women. This rise coupled with their increasing engagement as unpaid family workers (and not better forms of employment such as regular salaried work) appears to mark a reversal of the trend of reduction in distress participation of women in the workforce.

These metrics suggest that the decline in unemployment rate based on the usual status approach masks a deterioration in the quality of employment and rising underemployment, challenges which are only likely to have intensified post Covid.

The writer is a senior visiting fellow at ICRIER

# Securing the Indian Ocean

automation.

UNSC debate seeks to address maritime security peacefully, holistically

Asoke Mukerii

INDIA'S DECISION TO convene an open debate of the UN Security Council (UNSC) on enhancing maritime security, to be chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on August 9, reflects India's international evolution as a maritime nation. The objective of the debate is to highlight effective international maritime cooperation to respond holistically to natural and manmade threats to maritime

The fallout of the 2004 tsunami, which took a heavy toll on human and natural resources, led to the creation of an Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System by the UN in 2005. Early warnings through an international network seek to prevent a recurrence of such devastation. Faced with the increased threat from piracy originating off the coast of Somalia since 2007 to shipping in the western Indian Ocean, the Indian Navy participated robustly as part of a UNSC mandated 60-country Contact Group on Piracy off the coast of

With a coastline of over 7,500 km, India has a natural interest in enhancing maritime security. The Indian Ocean region transports 75 per cent of the world's maritime trade and 50 per cent of daily global oil consumption. India's Security and Growth for All (SAGAR) policy, unveiled by PM Modi during a visit to Mauritius in March 2015, proposes an integrated regional framework to meet such an

objective in the Indian Ocean.

The five pillars of SAGAR are: One, India's role as a net security provider in the Indian Ocean region (IOR). Two, active engagement with friendly countries in the IOR. India would continue to enhance the maritime security capacities and economic resilience of these countries. Three, developing a network to take effective collective action for advancing peace and security in the region. Four, a more integrated and cooperative focus on the future of the IOR, which would enhance the prospects for the sustainable development of all countries in the region. Five, the primary responsibility for peace, stability and prosperity in the IOR would be on those 'who live in this region". India would continue its engagement with other nations having strong interests and stakes in this region through dialogue, visits, exercises, capacity building and economic partnership.

Sustaining international cooperation to enhance maritime security requires two supportive frameworks in the policy and operational areas. An effective legal policy framework must underpin a rule-of-law based approach to securing the maritime domain. The open debate will focus on the application of the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), bringing to the fore new challenges to peace and security including from non-state actors such as terrorists, pirates and criminal gangs engaged in drug trafficking.

The discussion can become the catalyst for reviewing the operational effectiveness of the UNCLOS, especially regarding the enforcement of its provisions on freedom of navigation, the sustainable exploitation of maritime resources, and the peaceful resolution of disputes. India's credentials in presiding over this discussion are enhanced by the fact that in July 2014, it accepted an UN-CLOS tribunal award on the maritime boundary arbitration between India and Bangladesh, contributing a new impulse to effective international economic cooperation among the littoral states of the Bay of Bengal (BIMSTEC).

Securing the sea lanes of communication SLOCs) that traverse the oceans is of central importance to enhancing maritime security. The debate must focus on ensuring equal and unrestricted access to SLOCs by states while resolving differences through peaceful means. In the Indian Ocean, three major SLOCS that play a crucial role in the energy security and economic prosperity of states include the SLOC connecting the Red Sea to the Indian Ocean through the Bab al-Mandab (that transports the bulk of Asia's international trade with its major trading partners in Europe and America), the SLOC connecting the Persian Gulf to the Indian Ocean through the Strait of Hormuz (transporting the bulk of energy exports to major import destinations like India, ASEAN, and East Asia), and

the SLOC connecting the Indian and Pacific Oceans through the Straits of Malacca (integral to the smooth flow of trade with ASEAN.

East Asia, Russia's Far East and the US). Sharing data on threats to commercial shipping is an important component of enhancing maritime security. India's initiative to establish an International Fusion Centre (IFC) for the Indian Ocean region in Gurugram in 2018, jointly administered by the Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard, serves the objective of generating Maritime Domain Awareness on safety and security issues. It is projected that 40 international liaison officers from partner countries will eventually be located at the IFC.

The debate would illustrate the increasing role of the private sector in the maritime domain, whether it is in shipping, sustainable development through the Blue Economy, or using the maritime domain to provide the critical submarine fibre-optic cables supporting the Digital Economy. The ability of the UNSC to respond to the debate by endorsing a multiple stakeholder approach to enhancing maritime security would be a significant outcome, setting a paradigm for upholding "multi-dimensional" security in the 21st century.

The writer is a former ambassador and Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations in New York

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### **IMAGE DENTED**

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Better late', (IE, August 7). There's a saying that it is only the bad laws that receive unanimous support. This is true for the retrospective tax law. In its near-decade of existence, the law didn't just attract a bad rep for doing business in India but also for the hypocrisy of the political structure which, despite criticising the law back in 2014, made no efforts to rectify it. As per the ministry statement, the deal was not in consultation with Cairn, which leaves it as a wild card.

Udit Sarkar, Kolkata

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Better late' (IE, August 7) The government's move to refund dues to Cairn is a correct one, even though it waited for an arbitration push to do so. Junking an unfair amendment of 2012 after nearly a decade exposes Centre's indecisiveness. This episode should be a case in point on how to avoid being caught napping by being proactive in resolving all pending, contentious matters. Else, investor friendly-promises shall remain as dubious as the sudden rise in our rankings in the ease of doing business. Raja Bandopadhaya, Vadodara

#### SHAMEFUL ATTACK

THIS REFERS TO the report, 'Casteist abuse shameful, says women hockey team skipper' (IE, August 7). It is disheartening that in our country, people

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cannot come to terms following the

drubbing of our team. Our women's hockey team has accomplished a exceptional feat and it is our moral duty to embolden and motivate them.

Aanya Singhal, Noida

#### GREAT GAMES

THIS REFERS TO the report, '87.58m, a billion hearts, first athletics medal: Neeraj Chopra makes history' (IE, August 8). India's campaign at the Tokyo Olympics ended on a high on Saturday with Neeraj Chopra winning India's first-ever Gold medal in Athletics. The previous best medal haul came at the

2012 London Olympics SS Paul, Nadia

**EXCHANGE** 

ever before Tokyo has India enjoyed

start to the Olympics, with

Mirabai Chanu winning silver

in 49-kg weightlifting, with a

total lift of 202 kg, on Day 1.

Thus, helped by her coach of

Manipuri superstar erased

the memories of Rio,

where she had

a single lift

struggled to make

seven years, Vijay Sharma, the

MIRABAI CHANU,

**VIJAY SHARMA** 

# 12 IDEA EXCHANGE NEWSMAKERS IN THE NEWSROOM

cycle from the hostel). In the last five years,

she hasn't been home for even 10 days,

she has missed her

own sister's wedding

and she has done

nothing but eat, sleep

and train. These

things are very tough

for other talented

Mira has had many

issues in the past.

mystery back issue and problems with

her shoulder. In a power sport like

make a comeback after injury?

weightlifting, how challenging is it to

weightlifters.

NIHAL KOSHIE:

There was the

#### MIRABAI CHANU, OLYMPICS SILVER MEDALLIST; COACH VIJAY SHARMA

# Khushi ke maare neend nahin aati. We waited so many years for this... I feel one day I'll also have a record lift

Chanu talks about putting the heartbreak of Rio behind, missing her mother, and retaining composure in the face of pressure; coach Vijay Kumar explains the determination and discipline which lie at the heart of his 26-year-old ward's success. The session was moderated by Senior Assistant Editor Shivani Naik

SHIVANI NAIK: Which was more stressful — the snatch of 87 kg or the clean & jerk of 115 kg?

Mirabai: The last snatch was the most tense because technique-wise, I fell a little short. I gave my best and tried, but I

#### SHIVANI NAIK: Coach Sharma, what was going through your mind at the

Vijay Sharma: Definitely during each lift, the blood pressure shoots up, but after the first lift you can relax a little. This time, I was feeling a lot more pressure thinking about Rio. Even though we had some great performances after that, psychologically, there is always the feeling that this is the Olympics, hope nothing goes wrong. That was the idea behind the 84, 87 kg starts, to take it safe and secure a medal. When the snatch finished, we relaxed a little thinking, 'Yes, we are in the competition now. Kar lenge (We'll do it)'.

#### NIHAL KOSHIE: Mira, after the Rio Olympics, did you discuss your future with your mother? How big an influence is she?

Mirabai: She has been my pillar. She likes sports, and the family has dreamt of me becoming a sportswoman one day. In earlier days, there were problems with getting a good diet. My mother tried, she went all out. She told me, 'Don't look back, whatever comes, we are there to support you'. She once said I can't feed you properly but I will try my best to take you to the top. If I had a bad day, or didn't have a good day, she would come to know from my voice. She knows when I'm sad or not feeling well. I would lie many times but she would come to know. She used to motivate me regularly, that 'If today is your bad day, keep working hard, tomorrow will be your good day'.

#### NIHAL KOSHIE: How crucial was her support after Rio?

Mirabai: Just after my competition got over in Rio, I called my mother and couldn't control my weeping. I told her I could not win a medal despite training so much. I knew somewhere she was also disheartened. She told me, 'When you come back, we will talk about it'. I asked her what more I needed to do. I even thought maybe I should give up weightlifting, Later, I asked her if I should do so. She said winning and losing are part of sports, that whatever happened has happened, it's past now, that I should try to plan my future, think of how much more hard work I can do. Later, I realised that I can do a lot, I can plan something. 'Whatever happened has happened'... it was great motivation from my mother.

#### SHIVANI NAIK: What did your coach tell you post Rio?

Mirabai: After Rio, I was clueless. I had done all the hard work but failed. I didn't know what to change. I used to ask him what more I needed to do. Where was I going wrong? Coach made me understand, he changed my style of training, he changed my technique. After I changed my technique, my coach said, I can go ahead in my game and in the next Olympics I will surely win a medal. He motivated me a lot.

#### DEVENDRA PANDEY: Coach Sharma, one year after the Rio Games, Mirabai became the world champion. What changed in that one year?

Vijay Sharma: The Rio 2016 setback was a very bad time for us. But two

'Whatever happened has

happened'... it was great

motivation from my

mother (after Rio). Later, I

realised that I can do a lot, I

can plan something

months later, we were back in proper training. Mira took a couple of months to mentally and physically regain her form. Her mother's role in that period was instrumental. I too was there for her at that time. We discussed training - what to do, what not to do, how to go about it.

what all was there to achieve. But all of it was possible because of how determined Mira is — if she wants to achieve something, she will absolutely achieve it.

#### **DEVENDRA PANDEY: What was the** thinking behind the entry list total weight of 210 kg (at the Olympics)?

Vijay Sharma: There are some psychological aspects to the game that a coach must consider. Mira had a problem physically before the event and the declaration of weight was tactical.

#### SRIRAM VEERA: Mira developed menstrual cramps the day before the event. How did you guys handle it?

Vijay Sharma: It's a coach's duty to keep tab of everything, from small to big. That is why bonding is so important. We need to know what's happening in her body and we can speak about these things only when the relationship is completely open and we trust each other.

With Mira, let's put it this way: if not A to Z, I know A to W at least of her! We share a lot. This time in the US, we met a gynaecologist as we have had problems with this in the past. We asked that gynaecologist what to do if it crops up. We also did Zoom chat with a doctor Mira had been in touch with from before. So we had our bases covered as this can happen to a woman any

> We also carried precautionary medicines to Tokyo.

The thing is, you can't be sure 100% with these things. And that's what happened. missed the 117-kg lift - she had done 119 kg just a few days ago. So if that

(menstrual cramps) hadn't set in, she might perhaps have done even better. But this is part of the game, you have to be ready for anything. But yes, it does affect performance.

#### SHIVANI NAIK: How much would you say Mirabai has evolved since she started to train with you, and how much of a learning experience has this been for you as well?

Vijay Sharma: Mirabai came into the national camp after she had won a medal in the junior championships. At that time, I was in charge of the men's team but training used to happen together. She has been with me since the 2014 Commonwealth Games. When she won a silver then, she had lifted clean & jerk weight of 98 kg. Slowly from there, we worked hard, and today she can lift 119 kg in the same category. It has been a long and tough journey but Mirabai has put in honest work and discipline, the result of which is her being here, at this position.

#### **DEVENDRA PANDEY: Coach Sharma,** it's all about the medal now, but how tough were the last few years with

this single-minded pursuit? Vijay Sharma: The bond between a coach and the athlete is significant. Luckily, my bond with Mira gradually became as strong as a father-daughter's. That is why we bounced back after every injury, every problem, and gave this re-

This was a pursuit of five years. 2019 and 2020 were absolutely crucial for us. At the Kolkata nationals (in February 2020, where Mirabai won gold), we performed brilliantly and there was regular improvement. And suddenly, we got to know that the Olympics had been postponed. We were distraught. But again, it's the resolve. In our hearts we knew that we have to do this, it will be delayed now, but we will perform. We didn't go back home during the lockdown. The thought process then was whatever happens, happens for the best. We didn't spare any opportunity. In rooms, corridors, whenever we got any opportunity, we trained.

#### SANDEEP DWIVEDI: Mira, the pandemic time must have been a setback for you guys. How much did it impact your training and how much of a difference does no crowds

Mirabai: Everyone likes crowds, they bring a different energy.

SANDEEP DWIVEDI: What is the thinking like after each lift? When does the thought of a medal kick in?

**Mirabai:** I was not thinking about a medal, every player has a different way of thinking. We have six lifts, first three and later three. My first goal was to clear the first three lifts. If I think about the medal after one lift, things will be over for me. I was thinking about giving my best performance.

#### SANDEEP DWIVEDI: Do you ever get angry in real life, because there is hardly any tension on your face?

Mirabai: Sometimes I do get angry (laughs). It happens

**SANDEEP** DWIVEDI: Do you meditate or read to bring that calmness?

sometimes.

Mirabai: I have been like this since childhood. The mind needs to be relaxed as a relaxed mind always helps.

#### SRIRAM VEERA: What was going through your mind between lifts?

Mirabai: You do feel the pressure as everyone is watching you, there is pressure to do well. I recall the time I spent during training, I keep calm, I tell myself that the way I pull through during my training, I will do the same here. The situation then feels normal.

#### SHIVANI NAIK: Coach Sharma, how is Mirabai different from the other lifters you have trained?

Vijay Sharma: Talented bachche bahut hain (There are many talented children). But the two things that separate Mira from these other weightlifters are her discipline and her self-determination. Aaj bhi cycle pe training karne aati hai hostel se

Vijay Sharma: In these eight years with Mira, there must have been at least three moments where we wondered, 'Will we be able to do it or not?'. It happened in Rio, though it wasn't an injury but a technical issue. The back problem after the 2018 Commonwealth Games was much more difficult. Even I couldn't figure out the reason. And there wasn't a physical therapist or doctor in India that we didn't go to. That was another phase where we thought, 'Will we be able to do it again or not?'. People said, 'That's it,

Illustration: Suvajit Dey

they're done'. But we never lost hope. We A coach must keep tab of kept trying and I got in touch with Dr all... what's on in her body. Aaron (Horschig, We can speak of things like American physiotherapist) through menstrual cramps only due Instagram. After talking with him I to trust. If not A to Z, I learnt that it was a know A to W of her! biomechanical issue, not an injury. There was some weakness

> in muscles. We began working on that. That benefited us a lot in training. After the lockdown, I requested TOPS (the government's Target Olympic Podium Scheme) that going to Aaron would help us a lot. TOPS cleared us and I can't explain how much going there helped us. I learnt a lot there.

Injuries will happen when you are lifting this much. The responsibility of a coach is to track the recovery of an athlete; if a part of the body is fatigued or injured, how to properly rest and recover. The role of the coach becomes paramount in phases like these. I tried very hard to make sure that there is neither an injury nor a dip in performance. God

SHIVANI NAIK: Mira, what did you miss about home when you were in the US?

Mirabai: I used to think about home every day. There was not a day when I didn't miss my mother and my family. I

We didn't go home during the lockdown... In rooms, corridors, any opportunity, we trained... In 5 years, Mira home for not even 10 days, missed her sister's wedding

years now. At the same time I would tell myself that I was in the US so that I could win a medal for my country. I had to keep my emotions aside and focus on my training.

have not been home

for the past few

SHIVANI NAIK: How does a coach balance between training and injury management in weightlifting?

Vijay Sharma: When you are regularly watching a student, even a small difference during their lifts should tell you that there is fatigue, the body isn't working properly today. Then, depending on the communication with the athlete, you will immediately know if there is a problem and you have to change the training.

SRIRAM VEERA: The stereotype is that

weightlifting is an aggressive sport and lifters work themselves into almost a frenzy before lifts. Mira is calm, composed...

Vijay Sĥarma: It's up to the DNA of every wrestler. You can be quiet and calm and perform really well. Some need to get really hyper, they shout loudly, to perform. It differs from person to person. It depends on your nature and we tailor the training according to it.

SHIVANI NAIK: Mira, how do you typically react when you hear, say, that Chinese lifter Zhizhi Hou (the eventual champion), has lifted a record 96 kg? Does it add to the pressure?

Mirabai: There was no pressure. She had a good snatch and I will just try to match it someday. I feel one day I will also lift 96 kg so I need to continue my hard work and keep training.

SRIRAM VEERA: Coach Sharma, in these tense and emotional times of preparation, have there been any lighter incidents that stick in the

Vijay Sharma: Our federation's secetary general Sahadey Yaday ii, who was in daily touch with us and took care of all the details, had met a sports psychologist who said, 'Keep Mira laughing, don't allow her to get stressed, just light-hearted stuff daily'. Twice daily, for 5-10 minutes, we would keep her laughing. Just to not let her get too serious.

#### SHIVANI NAIK: Mira, how good was returning home after long?

Mirabai: I'm very happy, the way I was welcomed. Everyone here is happy, be it my family, my friends. I got plenty of gifts. I am just happy.

#### NIHAL KOSHIE: Mira, after winning at Tokyo, whom did you call first?

Mirabai: I did speak to my mother, she told me there were celebrations back home. Lot of well-wishers had come by. We couldn't speak much, but I saw it on TV later. I wanted to talk more to her, but

#### SHIVANI NAIK: How did you celebrate the medal back at the Athletes

Mirabai: Due to the pandemic, I couldn't celebrate after I won because there were too many restrictions. I didn't enjoy it much either. I spoke to Sir and he said it was a dream which everyone had seen together for the last five years. We worked so hard to get this. Finally, the day had come. We sat in the evening and recalled those past five years.

SRIRAM VEERA: We have read that two years ago, when you couldn't sleep well, you used to reverse count from 100 to 1. Is the problem solved?

Mirabai: It has been solved. There is no issue now.

SRIRAM VEERA: So after winning a

## medal now, do you get good sleep?

Mirabai: (Laughs) Khushi ke maare neend nahin aati (Now I can't sleep out of sheer happiness). We waited so many years for only this day.

#### SHIVANI NAIK: Do you miss training now? And what will be the challenges ahead of the Paris Olympics? Mirabai: Yeah, I miss it a lot. I want to

go back to training!

Three years is less time. I have to start again. Time is running fast. There will be qualification rounds and later the Commonwealth Games and Asian Games. I have very little time actually.

#### FPIs invest ₹1,210 cr in Aug so far

New Delhi: Overseas investors were net buyers to the tune of Rs 1,210 crore in domestic markets in the first five trading sessions of August on the back of domestic factors. In equities, they invested Rs 975 crore during August 2-6, as per depositories data. PTI

#### FIRMS LIKELY TO STRUCTURE ASSETS ACCORDINGLY WHILE DOING DEALS HEREON

# Retro tax repeal: Sovereign right to tax intact post-2012, but mist clears for cos

**AANCHAL MAGAZINE** 

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 8

THE GOVERNMENT'S recent move to bury the controversial policy of retrospective taxation will provide relief to companies that undertook indirect transfer of assets before May 28, 2012, but the country still continues to retain its sovereign right to taxation under Section 9(1)(i) of the Income-tax Act. With the removal of the retrospective feature, however, a clear and predictable taxation law and intent has been presented to the companies, which are expected to structure their assets accordingly

while doing deals hereon. Experts said this removal of the

**GEORGE MATHEW** 

WITH INSURANCE claims go-

ing through the roof amid the

Covid pandemic, insurance

companies are sitting on al-

most one-third of the claims

submitted by patients since

the pandemic hit the country

Over 3.06 lakh Covid

in the beginning of 2020-21.

claims for Rs 10,703 crore are pending before insurance

companies as of August 6, in-

dicating the pressure being

faced by insurers despite Delhi

High Court and Irdai, directing

insurance firms to complete

the settlement of Covid claims

Health insurance compa-

nies have received a total of

23.06 lakh claims worth Rs

29,341 crore as on August 6,

2021, according to figures com-

piled by General Insurance

Council. However, insurance

firms have settled only Rs

17,813 crore involving 18.99

lakh claims worth Rs 14,783

crore came between April 1

and August 6, 2021 during

2021-22 while 9.86 lakh

claims for Rs 14,560 crore were

reported during the financial year ended March 2021.

sharp rise in Covid claims has

hit them substantially. "Yes,

health claims have gone up a

lot. While the number of

claims went up, the average

cost of a covid claim is twice

the size of non-covid claims.

Thus, the hit has been substan-

tial," said Kamesh Goyal, chair-

The big rise in claims even

According to insurers, the

Of the total claims, 13.19

claims so far.

in an hour after discharge.

MUMBAI, AUGUST 8

retrospective aspect now also provides clarity for deals between companies of countries where these are not covered under any tax treaty benefits.

"... Any indirect transfer of assets where underlying assets are in India, the tax is payable in India and accordingly they will arrange their assets. That is tax planning as far as the future is concerned. And for the future, the amendment in the law is now settled, and you arrange the assets in a manner that tax liability is reduced to the minimum." said V Lakshmikumaran. managing partner, Lakshmikumaran & Sridharan Attorneys.

The immediate beneficiaries would only be those who did their transactions before 2012 and from

As per insurers, the

sharp rise in Covid

substantially

claims has hit them

forced some insurance compa-

nies to stop issuing health poli-

cies for some periods. Many

companies were even forced

to go slow on issuing term poli-

cies as death claims also shot

up. "I'm sitting on a 400 per

cent loss in Covid claims," said

the regional manager of a pub-

Council, the representative

body of 34 general insurers in

the country, has laid down a

basic framework for seeking

the cooperation from hospitals

to implement the directives. It

has asked hospitals to submit

all the patient discharge docu-

ments in one go without hav-

ing to be reminded of the miss-

ing documents like cashless

treatment approval reference,

copy of the case sheet, pre-

scriptions, diagnostic reports,

bills, discharge summary,

Covid positive and the subse-

quent Covid negative reports.

when the patient's progress is

good and discharge is planned

for the next day, hospitals

should inform the insurance

company or TPA of the im-

pending discharge the soonest

and submit the available docu-

ments and bills. "Balance doc-

uments and bills pertaining to

the last 24 hours could be sub-

mitted at the discharge time so

that the insurance company or

TPA could also start working on

the discharge simultaneously,"

it had said.

According to the Council,

The General Insurance

lic sector insurer.

SECTOR WATCH

**INSURANCE** 

Covid health claims

of ₹10,703 cr pending

HC, Irdai directive

before insurers despite

this tax brought in

THE GOVERNMENT had, in 2012, retrospectively amended the Income-tax Act. This was in response to a Supreme Court verdict, which had held that Vodafone cannot be taxed for a 2007 transaction that involved its purchase of a 67 per cent stake in Hutchison Whampoa.

them the government will not collect the tax. And if collected, they

During August 1-7 in 2020, the

power consumption was 25.69

Recovery in power demand and

consumption in the first week of

August 2021 is consistent and

would further improve as many

states have eased lockdown

**AASHISHARYAN** 

&SUNNYVERMA

NEW DELHI, AUGUST8

told The Indian Express.

THE DEPARTMENT of Telecomm-

unications (DoT) may find it diffi-

cult to convince the Finance

Ministry to give the go ahead for

telecom sector-specific relief as the

latter has expressed apprehen-

sions about the bailout options laid

out by the department, sources

tions chosen by the DoT are a pos-

sibility of extending the morato-

rium on spectrum payment

obligations by another couple of

years or allowing the telcos to en-

cash, for some years, the bank

guarantees the companies have

submitted before asking them to re-submit these, the sources said.

sector-specific relief will be difficult

because the government has re-

ceived requests from other sectors

such as the food and beverages, ho-

tels industry as well for relief," a senior government official said. The

discussions for relief to the telecom

sector have gained pace after

Kumar Mangalam Birla, former

non-executive chairman and direc-

"The discussions are still on. A

Among the relief package op-

BU. It was 25.18 BU during

August 1 to 7 in 2019

Power consumption up

9.3% in August first week

The country's power consumption grew 9.3 per cent in the

first week of August to 28.08 billion units after easing of

lockdown curbs, as per Power Ministry data

The government has proposed amendments to the Income-tax Act and Finance Act, 2012 to effectively state that no tax demand shall be raised for any indirect transfer of Indian assets if the transaction was undertaken before May 28, 2012.

Section 9(1)(i) of the Incometax Act states that any income accruing or arising outside India due to a business connection in India is deemed to accrue or arise in India and shall be taxable in case of all assessees irrespective of their residential status. Companies are now expected to withdraw their litigation claims for deals prior to 2012, experts said.

"They are not saying that the

restrictions for boosting

Power demand as well as

consumption would see

improvement due to higher

commercial and industrial

only fear is another wave of

pandemic

April 2021 saw year-on-year growth of nearly 38.5 per cent. The second

and industrial power demand as states started imposing restrictions

wave started in the middle of April and affected the recovery in commercial

demand in coming days but the

Task cut out for DoT to convince

FinMin on telecom relief package

ON THE TABLE

■Among the relief

couple of years or

sources said

to keep Vi going.

package options are a

possibility of extending

payment obligations by

for some years, the bank

guarantees the firms have

submitted before asking

them to re-submit these.

tor of Vodafone Idea (Vi), wrote to

the Central government in June of-

fering to "hand over" his 27 per cent

stake in the company to any public

sector, government, or domestic financial entity or to any other firm

that the government may think fit,

not the first time that Birla had

raised the request for a package

from the government. In

December 2019, he had, following

the Supreme Court judgment on

adjusted gross revenue, said that

Vodafone Idea would have to "shut

shop" if there was no relief forth-

coming from the government.

The June letter, however, was

moratorium on spectrum

law was wrong. They are just saying the retrospectivity in the law is wrong which they are taking back. There is not much future planning shift which can happen, it is only the past which has been corrected. For the future, there is no new law in place...the companies don't have a reason to continue with the arbitration (for cases before 2012) because they have been given a winningdeal.Whatevertheywere saying, the government has now agreed to it. They stand to gain by withdrawing the litigation and then there will be a refund of any taxes that have been already paid or refunded in respect of any demands that have been adjusted," Neha Malhotra, tax partner, Nangia & Co said.

**PEAK POWER** 

188.59GW in the first

week of August, which is

the same period last year

Source: Power

Following his comment, the

majority stakeholder in Vi,

Vodafone Group's chief executive

officer Nick Read too had ruled out

any further equity infusion in the

debt-laden telecom joint venture

been unsuccessfully scouting the

globe, trying to either raise funds

of up to Rs 25,000 crore or bring in

a strategic partner. In his June 7 let-

ter. Birla made a mention of the

company's efforts to raise the

funds and said that all the non-

Chinese investors they had talked

to so far had asked to be assured

that the Indian government

wanted to "have a three-plaver

fundraising, potential foreign in-

vestors (mostly non-Chinese and

we are yet to approach any

Chinese investors) want to see

clear government intent to have a

three-player telecom market (con-

sistent with its public stance)

through positive actions on long-

standing requests such as clarity

on AGR (adjusted gross revenue)

liability, adequate moratorium on

spectrum payments, and most im-

portantly, a floor pricing regime

above cost of service," Birla wrote.

"To actively participate in this

telecom market".

For some time now, Vi has

it runs in India.

Ministry/PTI

14 per cent higher than

met or the highest supply

**DEMAND** 

in a day stood at

165.42 GW in

# New chemistry cell battery tech

**ANILSAS** 

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 8

WITH AT least three energy storage-linked projects of scale being planned in India, new advanced chemistry cell battery technologies, which could potentially enable battery storage ecosystems to diversify away from the established lithium-ion formula and scale up the viability threshold, offer an array of potential options to policymakers. The suitability of some of these frontier battery technologies are likely to be evaluated based on the end-use application of the battery storage projects in the works – electricity storage for the grid or their use in electric vehicles (EVs).

While policymakers in the NITI Aayog and the Power Ministry maintain that the established lithium-ion ecosystem is likely to continue to be the mainstay for the projects that are on the verge of being rolled out, there is now a fresh impetus to examine these new technological breakthroughs from an improved viability and end-use perspective while drafting new

The government has already commenced work on a blueprint for a project of around 4,000megawatt hour of grid-scale battery storage system at the regional load dispatch centres (RLDCs) that control the country's power grid, primarily to balance the vagaries of renewable generation. Apart from this, Reliance Industries Ltd has recently announced plans to set up an Energy Storage Giga factory while state-owned NTPC Ltd has floated a global tender for gridscale battery storage project.

The Union Power Ministry's large grid-scale battery storage project is being envisaged as an intervention mechanism aimed at counterbalancing any sharp fluctuation in grid frequency because of renewables, with part of the envisaged capacity set to be reserved

**FRESH IMPETUS** 

■There is now a fresh impetus to examine these new technological breakthroughs from an improved viability and end-use perspective while drafting new project proposals

as an ancillary for the grid controllers, and part to be made available to the project developer to be leveraged on a commercial basis by storing energy during off peak hours and drawing from it during peak hours. Mega battery storages are expected to add to the stability of India's electricity grids. Posoco, India's electricity grid operator, manages the grid through the National Load Despatch Centre and a combination of five RLDCs and 33 state load despatch centres. The storage is planned at the RLDC-level to manage growing share of renewables in the country's electricity generation mix.

There are also other wings of the government that are active in this area. The Department of Science and Technology has launched a "Materials for Energy Storage" and "Materials for Energy Conservation and Storage Platform" programme, and set up centres on batteries and supercapacitors with Indian Institute of Technology Bombay and Indian Institute of Science, respectively, for developing energy materials for efficient electrochemical energy storage devices. This is in addition to the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy supporting a broad-based Research and Development Programme on en-

ergy storage One of the the new breakthrough technologies globally, announced in July, is by US company Form Energy Inc: a rechargeable iron-air battery capable of delivering electricity for 100 hours at a claimed system cost competitive with conventional power plants and at less than 1/10th the cost of lithium-ion "We conducted a review of available technologies and have reinvented the iron-air battery to optimise it for multi-day energy storage for the electric grid," according to Mateo Jaramillo, Form Energy's CEO and co-founder. "With this tech, we are tackling the biggest barrier to deep decarbonisation: making renew-

multiple days of extreme weather or grid outages." The battery leverages the concept of 'reversible rusting' - the battery uses oxygen from the air and converts iron metal to rust while discharging, and while charging, the application of an electrical current transforms rust back to iron and the battery releases oxygen back into the air. But the problem pertains to the battery's size and weight, which makes its application impractical in EVs. In case of grid storage, though, it works well as it's about the size of a small refrigerator.

The other really promising technology involves solid-state batteries that use alternatives to aqueous electrolyte solutions - an innovation that could lower the risk of fires, sharply increase energy density and potentially take only 10 minutes to charge an EV, cutting the recharging time by two-thirds. Despite the improvements in lithium-ion batteries over the last decade, long charging times and weak energy density are still barriers.

Some of the alternatives being fostered globally to achieve more optimal options include:

■ Toyota's solid state battery:

■ Apple battery tech: Apple

■QuantumScape's solid-state

■ Tesla's new tabless battery: A tab is part of the battery that forms a connection between the cell and what it is powering. Tesla

Full report on

# set to diversify, disrupt sectors: From electricity storage to EVs

project proposals.

The new technologies include a novel rechargeable iron-air battery developed by a US-based startup for electricity grid storage that promises to deliver power at less than a tenth of the cost of lithium-ion batteries, alongside solid-state batteries that use alternatives to the aqueous electrolyte solutions — an innovation that could lower the risk of fires, sharply increase energy density and potentially take only 10 minutes to charge a battery — that are being explored by mobility.

The Japanese automaker is attempting to wrest back the lead from the Chinese, who are current Li-ion battery pack leaders. It plans to be the first company to sell an EV equipped with a solid-state battery and will unveil a prototype this year. Nissan, too, is in the fray.

has said it's moving forward with self-driving car technology and will target 2024 to produce a pas-

battery: Earlier efforts to create a solid-state separator (electrolyte) capable of working with lithium metal had to compromise on its other aspects like cycle life, operating temperature, cathode loading.among others.OuantumScape seems to have circumvented this. and its use of a solid state separator technology eliminates the side reaction between the liquid electrolyte and the carbon in conventional lithium-ion cells' anode.

will produce its new batteries inhouse, which CEO Elon Musk predicts will help dramatically reduce costs and help sell EVs for the same price as petrol-powered ones.

www.indianexpress.com

#### INTERVIEW WITH FOUNDER AND CEO OF EMCURE PHARMACEUTICALS

able energy available when and

where it's needed, even during

# 'On track to deliver 60 mn doses of our mRNA vaccine by yr-end'

population with Covishield and Covaxin, the country's first mRNA vaccine developed by Gennova (a subsidiary of Emcure Pharma), is all set to be made available by end of the year. SATISH MEHTA, founder and CEO of Emcure Pharmaceuticals, told SANDEEP SINGH that while he is satisfied with the primary outcome on safety of the vaccine, he will soon submit the data with CD-SCO and apply for next phase trials. Mehta said while he is focussing on meeting government target of supplying 60 million doses by year-end, he is also in talks with potential partners, both in India and abroad, to augment the capacity substantially. Edited excerpts:

There are concerns of a third Covid wave. Do you think we are well prepared to handle it and what do you make of the pace of vaccination?

Some studies are projecting daily peaks of anywhere between 80,000 and 1,50,000 in the third wave. If it remains to that level we should be able to handle it well. Also, all across the country there has been massive learning after the second wave

Also, with higher number of vaccinations now, hospitalisation and fatalities would be lower. Data coming from US shows that people who have taken two shots are getting Delta variant, but hospitalisations are low.

I think India has done a great iob on vaccination and, in the hind-

sight, one can always say we could have done better. At the same time, while there has been learning and we may be prepared, there could



Satish Mehta

be surprises and we don't know what the Delta variant would do.

#### Gennova has been given the target to supply vaccines by the year-end. What stage are you on your mRNA vaccine?

The government has given us a target of 60 million doses by the end of the year. We are on track and committed to delivering it. Right now we are in Phase 1. We are very satisfied with the primary outcome of safety. As we speak, secondary outcome of efficacy or immunogenicity is also being reviewed and studied by drug safety and monitoring board - an independent body. Post that, we will submit our data with the Central Standard Control Drugs Organisation and apply for phases 2 and 3. That's when the regulatory bodies would comment and guide us in terms of next steps.

We are on track but there are different types of challenges. First and foremost is that the product has to be shown safe through the clinical trial process. Simultaneously, the supply chain aspects are daunting because gaining access to some of the key raw materials (particularly for the mRNA vaccines) is a big challenge.

So we are taking efforts to plan for manufacturing and securing raw material supply. We are repurposing some of our own capacities within the company for fulfilling the requirement of the vaccine.

#### By when do you think you would you be able to do second and third phase trials?

We don't have a timeline for that and it is very difficult for me to say that as of now. We can focus on the processes and do them diligently, then we have to work closely with government agencies. I am very optimistic. The government is handholding and supporting us quite a lot.

#### How do you see your vaccine and demand for it?

We are very bullish on our mRNA vaccine because within 45-50 days the vaccine can also be developed for the new variant including Delta variant. Unlike other vaccines (that we have), which has Adenovirus or attenuated live virus, this has a dynamic platform where you can come out with a new vaccine. It is important because I think this cat-and-mouse game would go on for 2-3 years.

While mRNA is undoubtedly the best vaccine that we have, Pfizer and Moderna are supplying to the regulated markets. The rest of the world (EMs) would be happy to take mRNA and we see them as a market. While Moderna and Pfizer are required to be kept at very low temperatures, the vaccine that we have developed is stable between 2 and 8 degrees, and that makes the job lot easier.

Full interview on www.indianexpress.com

## BRIEFLY —

man, Digit Insurance.

#### Sebi probed 94 new cases

New Delhi: As many as 94 fresh cases pertaining to flouting of securities norms were taken up for investigation by Sebi in 2020-21, marking a fall of 42 per cent from the preceding financial year, as per the regulator's latest annual report. PTI

#### **US** board diversity

New York: The US Securities and Exchange Commission approved a proposal from Nasdaq that requires its listed companies to have diverse boards or explain why they do not. The proposal requires that companies have two diverse directors, including one who identifies as female and another as an underrepresented minority or LGBTQ+. REUTERS

# Rankings must be transparent; digital dominance a concern: CCI Chairman

**KARUNJITSINGH** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 8

ONLINE PLATFORMS must make ranking systems transparent and treat all sellers in a non-discriminatory manner, CCI Chairman Ashok Kumar Gupta told The *Indian Express* in an interview.

Gupta said instances of digital players abusing their market power had become a concern for the competition regulator. The CCI has ordered investigations into the conduct of major online platforms including Flipkart, Amazon and MakeMyTrip. The CCI is also conducting investigations into Google's conduct in the smart tv, mobile operating system and on-

line payment platform spaces. "Of late, instances of digital players abusing their dominance or market power by adopting anticompetitive means, have been brought to the attention of the



CCI Chairman Ashok Kumar **Gupta.** via @CCI\_India Twitter

Commission. That is a concern," said Gupta, adding while the Commission did not think it was always necessary for there to be multiple players in a market segment, dominant players should not abuse their market power.

The Commission is currently investigating allegations against Google: that the tech giant requires original equipment manufacturers in the smartphone and smart TV space to sign agreements which prevent such manufacturers from making forked versions of Android operating system and require they include the entire suite of Google apps on their devices if they want to pre-install the Google Play Store on their devices.

Gupta also highlighted key issues of opaque ranking systems, exclusive selling arrangements and deep discounting. "In search rankings, you have

to be transparent and your algorithm has to be unbiased. You cannot just rank businesses in your own opaque ways, which nobody knows," said Gupta, noting that it was important that platforms charge commissions to sellers in a non-discriminatory manner.

"When people don't have effective alternatives, you become like an essential facility, you acquire the characteristics of a public good," he said. CCI officials have previously said a large number of sellers are becoming increasingly

dependent on online platforms. "Prima facie we have also seen

that the ecosystem of exclusive agreements, deep discounting, and preferred sellers put together by online platforms commanding market power are also raising competition concerns," he said. Gupta added differential treat-

ment in terms of commissions charged to sellers were also a cause of concern. The National Restaurants Association of India has approached the CCI, alleging Swiggy and Zomato have misused their market power by unilaterally raising commissions charged to restaurants and masking consumer data from restaurants.

"Our endeavour is that people should be able to shift lock, stock and barrel from one platform to another seamlessly. One hindrance in that is the absence of data portability. If you want to shift from one platform to another, you may lose your data," Gupta said.

# 14 THE WORLD/SPORT



Ochre markings painted on stalagmites. Reuters

#### **SPAIN** Cave paintings show Neanderthals were artists

NEANDERTHALS MAY have been closer to our species of prehistoric modern human than previously believed after cave paintings found in Spain proved they had a fondness for creating art, one of the authors of a new scientific report said. Red ochre pigment found on stalagmites in the Caves of Ardales, near Malaga in southern Spain, were created by Neanderthals about 65,000 years ago, making them possibly the first artists on earth, according to the study published in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences journal. **REUTERS** 

#### **PAKISTAN**

#### 2 cops killed in blast near luxury hotel in Quetta

AT LEAST two policemen were killed and eight others injured on Sunday when a powerful blast targeted their vehicle near a luxury hotel in Quetta, the capital of Pakistan's Balochistan province, officials said. "The initial probe showed that the bomb was fitted with a motorbike," a Balochistan government spokesperson said, adding that the blast targeted the police mobile van at Tanzeem Square near Serena Hotel in Quetta. PTI

# TOPOFTHE Taliban seize key Afghan city of Kunduz

Sar-e-Pul, another provincial capital, also captured; insurgent group pushes into Taliqan city

CHRISTINA GOLDBAUM, NAJIM RAHIM, SHARIF HASSAN & **THOMAS GIBBONS-NEFF** KABUL, AUGUST 8

THE TALIBAN seized the city of Kunduz in northern Afghanistan on Sunday, officials said. It is the first major city to be overtaken by the insurgents since they began their sweeping military offensive in May, and it happened iust weeks before US forces were set to complete a total withdrawal from Afghanistan.

It was also the third provincial capital to be overtaken by Taliban in three days, and a major blow to the Afghan government.

Kunduz, the capital of a province of the same name, is a significant military and political prize. With a population of 374,000, it is a vital commercial city near the border with

"All security forces fled to the airport, and the situation is critical," said Sayed Jawad Hussaini, the deputy police chief of a district in Kunduz city.

Clashes between government forces and Taliban fighters were continuing in a small town south of the city, where the local army headquarters and the airport are situated, security officials said.

Security forces, who had retreated to the town earlier in the morning, began an operation to flush Taliban fighters out of the city on Sunday evening, accord-



In Kunduz on Sunday after fighting between Taliban and Afghan security forces. AP

ing to security officials.

In the two preceding days, the Taliban had taken two other provincial capitals: Sheberghan, the capital of Jowzjan Province in the north, and Zaranj, the capital of Nimruz Province on the Afghanistan-Iran border. As Kunduz was collapsing on Sunday morning, the Taliban also seized Sar-e-Pul, the capital of another northern province of the same name, officials said.

"Taliban are walking in the streets of the city. Local residents are terrified," said Sayed Asadullah Danish, a member of the Sar-e-Pul provincial council. Provincial officials had taken shelter in an army base on the outskirts of the city,

where clashes were continuing,

he added.

After sweeping through the country's rural areas, the insurgents' military campaign has shifted to brutal urban combat in recent weeks.

Taliban fighters pushed into another northern provincial capital on Sunday, local and military officials said. The fighters had been contained at the gates of Taliqan, the capital of Takhar Province, since June. But as the Kunduz city centre fell, the insurgents moved toward Taligan, threatening to topple a fifth provincial capital in three days.

"The situation is chaotic, and the front lines are not clear now." said Mohammed Omar, a district governor in Takhar who is leading militia fighters in Taliqan. NYT

Kunduz a major win for Taliban

TALIBAN IN recent days have stepped up their efforts to seize provincial capitals, and on Sunday, they pushed into three, including the strategically important Kunduz city. It represents a significant victory for the group as it is the first major city they have captured since foreign troops announced their departure. The city is also important because it serves as a gateway to the mineral-rich northern provinces and Central Asia.

#### Official: Airstrikes in Lashkar Gah hit clinic, school

Kabul: Airstrikes damaged a health clinic and high school in capital of southern Afghanistan's Helmand province. a provincial council member said Sunday. A Defence Ministry statement confirmed that airstrikes were carried out in parts of the city of Lashkar Gah. It said forces targeted Taliban positions, killing 54 fighters and wounding 23 others. Majid Akhund, deputy chairman of the Helmand provincial council, said airstrikes hit a health clinic and a school in the city on Saturday. AP

#### Air Force pilot killed in Kabul bombing

Kabul: An Afghan Air Force pilot was killed by a bomb in Kabul on Saturday, officials said, in an attack claimed by the Taliban. The pilot, Hamidullah Azimi, died when a sticky bomb attached to his vehicle detonated, officials said, adding that five civilians were wounded in the explosion. Azimi was trained to fly US-made UH60 Black Hawk helicopters and had served with the Afghan Air Force for almost four years, the force's commander, Abdul Fatah Eshaqzai, told Reuters. He had moved to Kabul with his family a year ago due to security threats, Eshaqzai said. REUTERS



against Covid-19 vaccine passports, in Paris on Saturday. Thousands of people marched in Paris and other French cities to protest against the special pass and what they see as restrictions of personal freedoms. AP

## Britain eases travel restrictions for India

**ADITI KHANNA** LONDON, AUGUST 8

THE UK on Sunday eased travel restrictions for India by moving the country from its "red" to "amber" list, which means fully vaccinated Indian passengers will no longer be subjected to a compulsory 10-day hotel guarantine on their arrival in Britain.

The Department of Health and ocial Care (DHSC) has confirmed that all arrivals from India who have been vaccinated in India. which is on the amber list as at 4 am local time on Sunday, are re-

quired to isolate at home or their designated location mentioned on the compulsory locator form.

While the requirement for a compulsory 10-day self-isolation in a government-approved facility at an additional cost of £1,750 per head will no longer apply, only those vaccinated in the UK or EU would qualify for an exemption of the home quarantine requirement. "We recognise there are a large variety of Covid-19 vaccines being administered worldwide and work is ongoing to determine which non-UK vaccines and certification solutions to recognise," a DHSC source said.

## Iran sees highest daily virus case, death counts

**ASSOCIATED PRESS** TEHRAN, AUGUST 8

IRAN, GRAPPLING with its most severe surge of the coronavirus to date, reported more new infections and deaths across the country on Sunday than any other single day since the pandemic began.

Health authorities logged over 39.600 new cases and 542 deaths from the virus. The fatality count shatters the previous record set

surge that gripped the country last November, signalling the current wave will likely only get worse. The new all-time highs push Iran's total number of infections over 4.1 million and death toll over 94,000 - the highest in the Middle East.

during Iran's deadliest coronavirus

The crush of new cases have overwhelmed hospitals. The country has never seen so many Covid patients in critical condition, with 6.462 more severe cases reported Sunday.

## Rocked by sexual assault allegation, Alibaba launches investigation

**REUTERS** 

SHANGHAI, AUGUST 8

CHINESE E-COMMERCE giant Alibaba said on Sunday it has suspended several staff following an employee's allegations on the company's intranet that she was sexually assaulted by her boss and a client.

The woman's account, published via an eleven-page PDF that went on to circulate widely online, prompted a social media storm on China's Twitter-like microblogging website Weibo. Police in the city of Jinan said on Sunday morning that they were investigating the incident.

"Alibaba Group has a zero-tolerance policy against sexual mis-

conduct, and ensuring a safe workplace for all our employees is Alibaba's top priority," a spokesperson said in a statement.

"We have suspended relevant parties suspected of violating our policies and values, and have established a special internal task force to investigate the issue and support the ongoing police investigation."

Late on Saturday, a female Alibaba staffer's account of an incident she said took place while on a business trip went viral on Chinese social media

The woman alleged that her boss coerced her into going on a business trip with him to meet one of her team's clients in the city of linan, about 900 km from Alibaba's headquarters in Hangzhou.

According to the woman, on the evening of July 27, the client kissed her. After consuming alcohol, she woke up in a hotel room the following day with her clothes removed and no memory of what happened the evening before. CCTV footage she obtained from the hotel showed that her boss entered the room four times over the course of the evening, she added.

#### Messi breaks down, says wasn't ready to leave **ASSOCIATED PRESS** MADRID ALIGHST 8 LIONEL MESSI began crying before he even started speaking. The

"most difficult" moment of his career had arrived and he wasn't It was time to say goodbye to Barcelona after more than two

decades with the Catalan club.

"I don't know if I'll be able to speak," he said while trying to compose himself during his farewell news conference at the Camp Nou Stadium on Sunday. "It still hasn't sunk in that I'm leaving this club, that my life will be changing completely. It will be a difficult change for me and especially for my family. But we have to accept it and move on."

Messi struggled to control his emotions and cried profusely as he stepped up to the podium at the Camp Nou. "This is very hard for me after so many years, after being here my entire life," he said. 'I wasn't prepared."

Messi said that, unlike last year when he asked to leave, he had his mind set on staying with Barcelona and did everything possible to make it happen, including reducing his salary by 50%. He said he was surprised to hear he wouldn't be able to stay because of the club's debt and the Spanish league's financial fair-play regulations. "In these last few days I was thinking about what I would say today, but to be honest I couldn't come up with anything. I was blocked, like I still am right now," Messi said. "I was convinced that we would remain with the club, which is our home."

Messi's family and some of his teammates were at the Camp Nou for the emotional farewell. He was applauded several times by those in the audience.

The 34-year-old Messi avoided speaking specifically about his future, saying he received offers from several clubs after the announcement that he would leave the Catalan club. When asked about Paris Saint-Germain, considered the frontrunner to sign him, Messi admitted it was "a possibility."

"At this moment I don't have a



Lionel Messi avoided speaking about his future, saying he has offers from several clubs. Reuters

want to play for survival. Our intent kept us ahead. It's hard work of three odd weeks for our bowlers with the bat." "Most likely this will be our

template in this series, but adaptability has been our strength. The conditions and the pace on the wicket needs to be seen, but this team will be our template. England and India have always been a blockbuster, and looking forward to the next Test." As part of the new World Test

was important. We just didn't

The day-five washout at Trent Bridge means both India and

England log four World Test Championship points each

Day 5 washed out, but

Kohli finds 'template'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

THISTEAM will be "our template"

going ahead, Indian captain Virat

Kohli said after the rain-marred

opener against England ended in

a draw on Sunday, meaning they

will stick to the 4-1 pace-spin

combination in the remainder of

five-Test series. So it will be a toss-

up between Ravindra Jadeja and

Ravichandran Ashwin in the up-

coming four matches, with the

former preferred for the first Test

in which India were deprived of a

victory owing to persistent rain

days three and four but it chose to

come on day five. It would have

been enjoyable to play and watch,

but it's a shame," Kohli said after

the match. "This is exactly what

we wanted to do; start strong. On

day five we knew we had our

were on top of the game.'

bowled.

"We were expecting rain on

that washed out the fifth day.

NOTTINGHAM, AUGUST 8

Championship cycle, both India and England logged home four points each. Only 250 plus overs out of a maximum 450 were possible due to the weather. India, chasing a target of 209, were wellplaced at 52 for one in 14 overs at the end of fourth day. Though India had their nose ahead, English skipper Joe Root said rain marred "what would have been a very interesting final day".

chances. We certainly felt like we India needed to score 157 runs on the final day but the rain did not allow a single ball to be "Getting that lead was crucial, but it's a shame we couldn't finish day five. Getting to fifty overnight

"Great Test match to play in and watch as well. Sets up the series really well and hopefully we can take it into the next games. We certainly believed we could win. We knew we would have opportunities if we took our catches and kept our fields. It's a shame it ended this way," Root said.

deal with any club," he said. PSG has been in talks over the veekend with Messi's team trying to finalize a deal.

Sports daily L'Equipe reported on its website Sunday that Messi was to fly to Paris later Sunday to put the finishing touches on the deal with a view to having a medical exam on Monday morning. An email from The Associated

Press to PSG seeking to confirm the report was not immediately answered. Messi said he hopes to return

to Barcelona in some capacity one day and that he wished he could have said goodbye to fans in a match with a capacity crowd chanting his name. He said it was sad to leave after not being able to play in front of fans for nearly a year and a half. He said his best moment was

his first-team debut in 2004, because "that's when it all started." He said he has "no regrets," but believed he was part of a generation that should have won more Champions League titles.

In these last few days I was thinking about what I would say today, but to be honest I couldn't come up with anything. I was blocked, like I still am right now. I was convinced that we would remain with the club, which is our home."

**LIONEL MESSI** 

He said it will be "strange" to see Barcelona without Messi. "but with time people will get used to it." He said the club still has good players and can continue to succeed without him.

Barcelona announced Thursday it could not keep its greatest player because it wasn't able to fit a new contract within the Spanish league's financial fairplay regulations. The club's salary cap has been significantly slashed because of its huge debt. President Joan Laporta blamed the club's struggles on the coronavirus pandemic and particularly on the previous administration led by Josep Bartomeu.

Messi asked to leave at the end of the 2019-20 season but had his request denied by Bartomeu, with whom he had clashed. "I wanted to leave then, but not now," he said. "I didn't expect it, so it's sad to have to say goodbye."

Messi spent nearly two decades with Barcelona after arriving from Argentina as a 13year-old to play in its youth squads. He made his first-team debut as a 17-year-old, then played 17 seasons with the main squad. He helped the club win the Champions League four times, the Spanish league 10 times, the Copa del Rev seven times and the Spanish Super Cup eight times. Messi leaves as Barcelona's alltime leading scorer with 672 goals. He played in 778 matches with the club, also a record. He is also the overall top scorer in the Spanish league with 474 goals from 520 matches

# means for Barcelona

What Messi's exit

**SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY** AUGUST 8

LIONEL MESSI broke down at his final press conference as a Barcelona player. Since making his senior debut at Camp Nou in 2003, Messi has played 778 games for the Catalan club, scoring 672 goals. He claimed he wanted to stay at the club and had even accepted a 50 percent salary cut to sign a new contract. But as it turned out, Barcelona couldn't even afford a cut-price Messi.

Why is Messi's Barcelona exit a football tragedy?

Messi has spent over two decades at Barcelona, and is the most decorated player in the club. Even his children are Argentine-Catalan. There were several brinkman-

ship attempts when things didn't go well on the pitch, including a call to leave the club ahead of the 2020-21 season. He shared an

acrimonious relationship with erstwhile club president Josep Bartomeu, But when Ioan Laporta replaced Bartomeu, Messi committed his future to Barcelona.

By July 1 he was a free agent, with a new contract being formalised. "... at the last minute, it couldn't happen. This year I wanted to stay and I couldn't. Last year I didn't want to stay, and I said it," Messi said.

#### What did Barcelona say on Messi's exit?

On August 5, Barcelona confirmed that Messi "will not continue" with the club. A day later, Laporta said: "Leo wanted to stay and the Club wanted him to stay, but with the LaLiga rules it has not been possible." The club wanted to extend the 34-year-old's contract by two years, but LaLiga's Financial Fair Play (FFP) rules prevented it. As per the rules, Barcelona's wage-to-turnover percentage has to be 70 percent.

New Delhi

Why can't Barca afford Messi?

Barcelona couldn't have resigned the six-time Ballon d'Or winner even if he had played for free. As Laporta explained, with Messi on board, the club's wageto-turnover percentage was 110 percent. And without him, it would have been 95 percent-well above the FFP cut-off mark. As per the latest financial report, the club's debt exceeded £1 billion, which includes money owed for Philippe Coutinho and Frenkie de Jong. The wage bill for their firstteam squad is around £235 million-a-year.

"Before anything, I want to explain that we have received a terrible inheritance from the previous board," Laporta said. "There's no room to manoeuvre and the

> (FFP) rules mark the limits... we had to accept an agreement that mortgaged the Club's TV rights for half a century and FC Barcelona is above everything else."

#### Is this the end of Messi at Barcelona?

A tearful goodbye suggests so. Messi has been the Spanish league's most lucrative player in  $terms\,of\,commercial\,deals\,and\,TV$ rights, and according to some pundits, this could well be a pressure tactic from Barca to force LaLiga to water down its FFP rules. Interestingly, Real Madrid also released a statement, attacking LaLiga, on the heels of Barcelona confirming Messi's exit.

#### Is Messi going to PSG?

Messi remained coy on his next move. But he has reportedly spoken with PSG coach Mauricio Pochettino and the club is making arrangements for an Eiffel Tower unveiling of Messi. PSG are one of the very few clubs that can afford the Argentine. Also, owned by Oatari investors, Messi's arrival could unlock huge commercial possibilities ahead of the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

# Men behind the medals: Seven foreigners, 1 Indian

The podium has place for only the athletes who perform in front of the world. But there's always guiding hands and wise counsel that show the right path to a medal. The seven medals India won at Tokyo too owe a lot to the coaches who worked behind the scenes to ensure their wards succeeded on the biggest stage.

#### **UWE HOHN** (HEAD COACH) & DR KLAUS BARTONIETZ (BIOMECHANICAL EXPERT)

COUNTRY: GERMANY ATHLETE: NEERAJ CHOPRA **EVENT: JAVELIN THROW** 



THE JAVELIN thrower's body is like a bow and the javelin an arrow. This is Dr Bartonietz's philosophy and it worked like a

charm for Chopra. Bartonietz has immense knowledge about the intricacies of the event and is credited with making Chopra stronger, vet more elastic, in his movements. He was part of the core team which developed javelinspecific work-out machines German throwers swear by. UWE HOHN, the only man to throw

the spear over 100 metres, coached Chopra when he won the **Commonwealth and Asian Games** gold medals in 2018. He roped in Bartonietz for his expertise in early 2019. Both Germans had worked with the Chinese national team earlier.

#### (CHIEF NATIONAL COACH)

COUNTRY: INDIA ATHLETE: MIRABAI CHANU DISCIPLINE: WEIGHTLIFTING 49KG MEDAL: SILVER



MIRABAI CHANU came under the guidance of Sharma a former national champion, in 2014, the same year he took charge of the men's

team for the Commonwealth Games. Sharma's own career as a weightlifter was curtailed because of a wrist injury. He has been a constant during the highs and lows faced by Chanu. After she failed to produce one legal lift in the clean and jerk at the 2016 Rio Olympic, it was Sharma, along with her mother, who coaxed her out of thoughts about retirement. Sharma joined the national camp in 2012 after UP, the state he coached, became national champions.



**GRAHAM REID** COUNTRY: AUSTRALIA TEAM: MEN'S HOCKEY MEDAL BRONZE

#### **KAMAL MALIKOV**

COUNTRY: RUSSIA ATHLETE: RAVI DAHIYA EVENT: 57KG FREESTYLE WRESTLING

**BROUGHT IN to prepare Sushil Kumar for** Tokyo Olympics' qualification, Malikov was meant to be a fitness trainer, a sparring partner and observer for India's two-time medallist. But once that was no longer feasible, Malikov was employed from April 2021 under the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) to help Dahiya. For the Indian wrestler, Malikov was able to procure prime sparring partners in Vladikavkaz (Russia). The 23year old's defeat in the gold medal match at the Poland Open would prompt the 34-year-old coach and student to work harder at improving reaction times and the speed of counters. Dahiya is a product of wrestling coach Satpal Singh and the set-up at Delhi's Chhatrasal

THE STINT with the Indian team was a shot at redemption for Reid, who was at the helm with Australia when they crashed out of the Rio Olympics in the quarterfinals with a 4-0 thrashing against the Netherlands. He has changed the team's psyche, making them less prone to

#### **SHAKO BENTINIDIS**

COUNTRY: GEORGIA ATHLETE: BAJRANG PUNIA EVENT: 65KG FREESTYLE WRESTLING MEDAL: BRONZE



BAJRANG'S RISE to become one of the top wrestlers in the 65kg category occurred after Bentinidis took over the reins of the 26-

year-old. An animated coach, Bentinidis has facilitated sparring partners for Bajrang from the United States and Russia. The wrestler from Haryana, thus, travelled across the world looking for wrestlers who can attack him with speed. The goal - to improve his leg defence, an aspect that continues to be a weakness, and his reaction times. While still not perfect, the influence of Bentinidis has led to improvements in Bajrang's arsenal and an Olympic bronze medal to boot.

making costly errors at inopportune moments. After the loss to Belgium in the semifinal, it was Reid's job to pick the team up for the bronze-medal playoff against Germany, and India gave one of their most rousing performances in a long time. Earlier in the tournament.

#### **RAFFAELE BERGAMASCO** (HIGH PERFORMANCE DIRECTOR)

COUNTRY: ITALY ATHLETE: LOVLINA BORGOHAIN EVENT: WOMEN'S WELTERWEIGHT BOXING MEDAL: BRONZE



**SONOF**an Olympian. Bergamasco was a five-time national champion and took part in the Beijing, London and Rio

Olympics as a coach. After guiding the Italian women's team from 2001 to 2007, he took over their senior and junior men's sides and contributed to six Olympic medals. He was let go after a barren run in Rio, and found his way to India in 2017, orchestrating the country's best ever medal haul at Youth Boxing Championships (five gold, two bronze) that November. A month later, he was promoted to high performance director for senior women.

after the 7-1 hammering against

in hockey after a gap of 41 years.

history will record that he was in charge

when India climbed the Olympic podium

Australia, Reid ensured the team didn't panic and fought on level terms with all teams. He has toughened the team and

**PARK TAE-SANG** 

COUNTRY: SOUTH KOREA ATHLETE: PV SINDHU EVENT: WOMEN'S SINGLES BADMINTON MEDAL: BRONZE



SINDHU'S GAME was based on strength and impressive hand speed, and she often overpowers opponents. But she needed more variety

and dimensions to win consistently against the best players in the world. Enter Korean coach Park, who had chiselled into shape players like Sung Ji-Hyun, whose on-court movement had the smoothness of a swan in still water. Park not only gave Sindhu assurance in her stride, but importantly, worked long quality hours on her defence always a target owing to her rangy frame. He would also inject confidence in Sindhu's game at the net. Where she would earlier swat at the shuttle and lift copiously to move the battle away from the forecourt, in Tokyo Sindhu expertly engaged with Akane Yamaguchi and didn't shy away from the dribbles. The smash-tap forced opponents to dig deep, and that mostly worked in the Indian's favour. Park was also animated -

something Sindhu draws great energy from.

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** 

#### **TOKYO** MOOD

#### **GOVERNOR IN THE RANKS**

THERE'S A GOVERNOR in the mix for the American women's volleyball team. Not your typical politician though, this one wasn't elected by a traditional vote. A popularity vote instead gave Jordan Larson the moniker The Governor.' And you can understand why. The six-foottwo American team captain comes from the small town of Hooper in Nebraska, with a population no more than 900. Naturally, everybody knows everybody. And everybody there makes a lot of noise throughout the state about who Larson is to the point that she's now become a very recognisable figure all over the state, and the most popular player in the country.

That's what led the brother of a teammate to give her the nickname. And there was no way one passing through the town could go without knowing the name. In her first Olympic appearance at London 2012, every store in the town had posters up of her, and a large banner was put up at the entrance of the town reading "Ĥome of Olympian Jordan Larson USAVolleyball women's national team." That sign was removed a year later when authorities realised it was put-up without permission. Larson was in the team that won silver in London and bronze at 2016. Tokyo, she said, will be her last Olympic Games. And she's leaving it by conquering the highest stage.

#### DEBUT AT 40 **THE LOWEST** point of her sporting

career. Caroline Gattaz says, is when she didn't make the Brazilian national volleyball team for the 2008 Olympics. She watched the event from close quarters, working as a sports commentator for the Games that saw Brazil win it's first women's volleyball gold medal. Four years later, when the Brazilians defended their title in London 2012, she again didn't make the cut and by 2013 stopped playing for the national team. In Tokyo, the Brazilians are up against the American team in the final, just as it was in Beijing and London. For the first time in eight years, Gattaz has been called in to play for the national team. At 40, she's making her Olympic debut and she's just a match away from winning gold. **ENS** 

# Sporting world flattens

Reading the medal tally: Tightest race ever between Top 2, record gold-winning nations, more countries on podium

#### TUSHAR BHADURI, SHAHID JUDGE & **GAURAV BHATT**

IN A final day swoop at Tokyo 2020, the United States earned the bragging rights of Tokyo 2020 by moving ahead of China on the medal table. The three golds that they clinched on Sunday just put their noses in front at the finish line, 39-38. The one in women's basketball may have been on expected lines, but the women's volleyball team winning their first ever gold drew them level, and Jennifer Valente's cycling gold proved to be the clincher. The one-medal gap between the top two is the closest ever. Before Tokyo, it was at Athens 2004 that the USA with 36 gold and China with 32 gold were involved in a tight race.

The other interesting aspect of the tally was the emergence of first-time medal winners. In what is the largest list of medal-winning countries at any Games, 93 different nations earned a podium finish. The number of gold-winning nations at an edition — 63 also broke the record of 59 set at Rio 2016.

Just like in Rio, where Jordan, Kosovo and i medalled for the first time, the Tokyo Games ended with three new countries joining the medal table - San Marino. Turkmenistan and Burkina Faso. The newest on the list of gold-winning nations are Qatar, Bermuda and the Philippines.

The final tally seemed unlikely with just a few days left when China had a significant lead in the gold medal count. Over the last several editions, the top position on the gold medal table has been the preserve of the USA or China. In fact, the last Games where a third nation topped the standings was Barcelona 1992, with the 'Unified Team' of the erstwhile Soviet Union states securing the most gold

#### Fluctuating fortunes

The US's gold medal count of 39 this time is down from the 46 golds they won at Rio 2016 and London 2012 each. China, which dominated on home turf in Beijing 2008 with 48 gold, won 26 gold in Rio 2016, just one behind Great Britain who finished second. In Tokyo though, the Chinese have equalled the gold medal haul they achieved in London 2012.

The American haul this term dropped in



The one gold medal gap between the top two countries is the closest ever. Before Tokyo Olympics, it was at Athens 2004 that the USA with 36 gold and China with 32 gold were involved in such a tight and frenetic race. AP

their traditional strongholds like swimming (16 in Rio, 11 in Tokyo), athletics (13 in 2016 and seven now) and gymnastics (four and two). The retirement of Michael Phelps and the withdrawal of Simone Biles affected the tally. But the Americans still managed to gain new strides in other events - wrestling, shooting, golf, fencing, and the new 3x3 basketball and surfing events.

China meanwhile improved their already impressive performance in weightlifting (seven gold medals this time compared to five in Rio) while matching the seven they won in diving from five years ago. Shooting was a successful event, as they clinched four gold, compared to the solitary gold Zhang Mengxue won in the 10m air pistol event in Rio. They also tripled their gold medal in

G	S	B TOTAL	
39	41	33	112
38	32	18	88
27	14	17	58
22	21	22	65
20	28	23	71
17	07	22	46
10	12	14	36
10	12	11	33
10	11	16	37
10	10	20	40
01	02	04	07
	38 27 22 20 17 10 10 10 10	38 32 27 14 22 21 20 28 17 07 10 12 10 12 10 11 10 10	38 32 18 27 14 17 22 21 22 20 28 23 17 07 22 10 12 14 10 12 11 10 11 16 10 10 20 01 02 04

swimming to three, but couldn't defend their women's volleyball title.

#### New horizons

The Americans won gold in Tokyo in several events not always considered their

strengths. Lee Keifer won an individual foil gold in fencing, Nevin Harrison won in canoeing while Anastasija Zolotic triumphed in taekwondo's featherweight class. For China, gymnastics was

a big success with four gold medals (including trampoline), while in Rio they failed to win a single gold medal. They also secured top

spots on the podium in sports like canoeing, fencing, rowing, sailing and cycling.

#### India's new high

With their best-ever tally (one gold, two silver, four bronze), India finished 48th on the table — their highest position since the 1980 Moscow Olympics which was boycotted by 66 countries because of the Soviet-Afghan War. India finished 23rd in Russia, having won just the men's hockey gold. In fact, the 48th position in Tokyo is India's best finish at any Olympics where they won more than two medals (they were ranked 26th with a gold and bronze at Helsinki 1952).

#### Golden sunrise in Japan

Japan finished third – their best – in the overall medal table for the third time (after Rome 1960 and Tokyo 1964). The 58 medals in 2021 make this their most successful edition. A stellar performance in judo helped the hosts in the overall ranking. In London, Japan won one gold medal in the sport and three in Rio. Over the 15 events in Judo this past fortnight, they won nine gold, two silver and a bronze.

they won - 27 gold, 14 silver and 17 bronze -

The Japanese also dominated the new skateboarding event, winning three of the four gold medals on offer. They also maximised the return of baseball and softball to the Games' line-up, taking both gold medals.

#### Different name, similar haul

Since the end of the Cold War, this was the sixth Olympic Games where 'Russia' competed as a country. But they could not use their name, flag or anthem based on International Olympic Committee (IOC) sanctions due to the country's infamous doping scandal in 2014. Instead the contingent went by the name Russian Olympic Committee (ROC). This was also the second

smallest contingent from the country, 333 compared to the 282 that travelled to Rio.

In terms of total number of nedals won in Tokvo, the 71 (20) gold, 28 silver and 23 bronze) put ROC third on the leaderboard. But they were fifth based on gold medals - the official standard - behind the USA, China, Japan and Great Britain.

This was a better performance from the ROC compared to the 19 golds each in London and Rio. The gold medal in the women's team gymnastics event - their first ever as Russia - made the difference.

#### The Olympic 'Ashes'

A rivalry that transcends sports, Great Britain again pipped the Australians in the gold medal tally, 22 to 17 to finish fourth and sixth respectively in the overall tally, though the latter had a much better showing this time – they won just eight golds in Rio. The Australians, courtesy Ariarne Titmus' double gold over USA's Katie Ledecky, won nine golds in swimming compared to the three from Rio. Meanwhile the Brits continued dominating the cycling event like only the Brits can, winning six gold, four silver and two bronze medals just as they did five years ago.

**IRISH HERO** 

# Cleaner at pyschiatric hospital, LGBTQ idol and now boxing champion

#### **SRIRAM VEERA** AUGUST 8

A HORSE carriage from a neighbour, the bunting from a recent funeral of a loved figure is all over her street, helium balloons from a resident, gifts from the local 'lollypop lady', a song recorded by neighbour the neighbourhood in Dublin's north innercity is waiting proudly for the return of the gold-winning Irish boxer Kellie Harrington.

When she won the semi-final bout of women's boxing lightweight event to enter the final, she plunged for the most philosophical line of our times from Lion King: "Like I said. Hakuna Matata, it means no worries." A role model for the inner-city kids, Harrington is openly lesbian, a parttime cleaner in a psychiatric hospital and someone who loves her job and the jabs.

It's a long cry from her teens when she feared she might end up in prison, "That's (prison) was a great possibility. Thankfully I didn't. There's no doubt it was the boxing (that turned my life around). I just needed something and boxing was cheap, cheerful and there's a boxing club on every second corner in the inner city," she said in 2019. "I could never have gone to sailing or GAA or horse riding. One, my family wouldn't have had the money and two, they're not in the area. "It's nearly like a tradition in the inner city. Everyone has a family member who's boxed. For me, that was my option. Growing up, you would always see people walking around with their (kit)bags or out jogging. Ever since then I haven't looked back.'

Boxing gave her gold and also a partner. She met Mandy Loughlin, who doesn't box anymore but is a coach. "She's not competitive anymore. But that's how we ended up meeting. It's a small world.'

Putting smiles on people gives her the greatest joy. Like her cleaning job at the hospital, which she has held for 10 years. She used to be in the catering department before shifted to cleaning. Some patients saw it as a demotion. "Ah Jesus, Kellie' and I'll say, 'What's wrong with you? "And she'll



Ireland's Kellie Anne Harrington after her bout with Brazil's Beatriz Ferreira in the lightweight 60-kg boxing gold medal match in Tokyo. AP

say, 'I'm so sorry you got demoted'. "I'm on the deck laughing, I'm like, 'Don't worry about it, someone has to do it, it's a tough job but someone has to do it'," she told reporters in '18. "It's a rewarding job for me. The job itself is not so great but it's the interaction. They're vulnerable people and I just like being able to go in and put a smile on their face basically.

The Irish Times has this lovely snippet from a meeting with the parents Yvonne, the mother, and Christy Harrington, the father. Here is the mother about the strange events after her daughter's win. "Two lads arrived from a newspaper and they wanted to photograph us sprinkling around holy water from Lourdes, " laughed Christy." They said no. "Then he wanted Christy to water the plants with it," said the mother Yvonne. "I think it's because I say I go out into the garden and pray when Kellie is on - as any mother would. But I'm not hugely religious: if you do a good turn for someone, that's my belief.'

The father compared the thrill of watch-

ing her daughter to the famous bouts of Mohammad Ali and Jo Frazier. "I was confident watching her. You know by Kellie when she is getting into the ring when she is focused, focused. you just know she is going to give everything. It was like when we were kids, you got up to watch Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier, except that was our Kellie."

There is a famous Dublin landmark near

home with an Indian connection. The Five Lamps, at the intersection of five streets that includes Harrington's Portland Row is in honour of a general who served in India. It's claimed that the lamps symbolise five battles fought by the British in India in the 19th century. The website Dublin Live also posits that it represents the "five lamps lit for luck during the Hindu festival". Whatever be its origins, it's about to turn golden in the night to celebrate the best boxer of their neighbourhood and the world.

On the fight day, the neighbourhood congregated in masks in a common area with a big screen hoisted on a pole from a tempo van. Dublin Live covered it live, breathlessly for over an hour. Buntings fluttered above their heads, drinks in their hands, and Irish cheers and screams of 'C'mon Kellie!' rung the air. As the seconds ticked towards the end, everyone started to scream her name. And a slight hush fell as they waited for the verdict. Raucous cheers go up as the announcer's voice went.. 'in the red..' and an impromptu dance starts. Tears. Laughter. And all start to run along the rainsoaked street to Harrington's home. The family emerges dazed, euphoric, emotional and more screams and tears flow.

Kellie's mother, clad in a t-shirt with her daughter's face plastered, is joyously tearful and is hoisted upon the shoulders. On a t-shirt of her grandma, the text runs, "Hakuna Matata!" and she too finds herself on shoulders. Music blares from a speaker and dance breaks out in the street. The mother then waves a homemade banner, "Kelli, Our Golden Girl ... The Olympic Champion". And someone screams, "oh what a day!"

# SPORT



TOKYO **MOOD CLOSING CEREMONY** 



Athletes from the United States walk into the Olympic Stadium for the closing ceremony.

# Japan's flag bearer, one to watch out for in Paris

THEY ACED the debuting sports in Tokyo, and Japan have seemingly thrown down for

Paris 2024 as well. One of the flag bearers for the hosts at the closing ceremony was Ramu **'Ram' Kawai.** the 2018 youth Olympics breaking champion. As per qualification process, the Kanagawa-

born B-girl first floored the judges with a one-minute, unedited video of her performance, then won the continental qualifier in Taipei City before wind milling and head spinning her way to gold In Buenos Aires.

Last December, breaking - the competitive form of breakdancing - was confirmed as part of the final line-up for the Paris Games. And Kawai, a member of one of the most famous breaking crews in the world 'Floorrioz', is earmarked to become the first female Olympic breaking champion.

In Tokyo, Japan won 12 medals across the four debuting sports (skateboarding, surfing, climbing and karate); two more if you count the returning baseball and softball.

#### Vignettes of Tokyo for those who missed out

Just after a stunning light show, a Sunday afternoon park in Tokyo was recreated to the accompaniment of orchestral music. Just to give a representation of what Japanese people are up to in a park on Sunday. An idea germinated to give the athletes unable to get out of the village due to covid restrictions. If they and the fans (not allowed this Olympics) had stepped out to the streets, this is what they would have witnessed.

#### Sombre to peppy: Contrasting ceremonies

In contrast to the sombre, almost brooding, ruminative theme is the opening ceremony, the end was immensely peppy. Orchestral bands and DJ Matsunaga, a winner of works DJ championship, strutted his stuff on the turntable. Before the Greece flag went up in honor of where it all began.

#### **Eiffel Tower misses out** because of bad weather

The plan was to use Eiffel tower in Paris as the largest flag pole in the closing ceremony shots but due to bad weather they had to drop the plan. They did a successful rehearsal

SRIRAM VEERA, GAURAV BHATT



CURTAIN FALLS: The word Arigato, thank you in Japanese, appears on a giant screen during the closing ceremony of the Tokyo Olympics on Sunday.

# Gold for sound artists

Thousands of high-tech microphones captured every thud, swish, grunt and relayed it to millions

**EXPRESS AT OLYMPICS** 



**MIHIR VASAVDA** TOKYO, AUGUST 8

VIKTORIA LISTUNOVA walks up to the uneven bars. Pauses. Mutters some words. Takes a deep breath.

Latches onto the bar and twirls on it. Completes her routine, bows and walks back in an empty, silent arena. Watching it from the stands, it felt a little hollow.

But then, you watch it on the TV, and the experience transforms: when the Russian gymnast walks onto the platform, you can hear her soft, small steps. When she pauses at the edge, you can hear the words she mutters and feel the tension when she deeply inhales; and when her hands slap the wood while she performs, you can hear every thud and the flexing of the bar.

The surreal Tokyo Olympics took place in diums, where it was mostly deathly silence, and the other on the television, where the sights and sounds felt more intimate than ever before: where it almost didn't matter that the athletes were performing in front of empty stands. When it was announced that the Games would be held without spectators, owing to the pandemic, the grand fest that the Olympics is was instantly reduced to a made-for-TV event.

For Nuno Duarte and his team, this meant the challenge to make sure the emotions of the venue and the feelings of the athletes reached every living room across the world got even more thrilling.

Duarte, the senior manager, audio, of the Olympic Broadcasting Services, puts the channels of information into two brackets: moving images that we see, and the sound we hear. The latter, many think just happens. But Duarte, who has won Emmys for the sound design of the London and Rio Olympics, explains his biggest challenge: making the sport accessible to even those



Nuno Duarte, senior manager (audio) of the Olympic Broadcasting Services, at the International Broadcasting Centre in Tokyo.

who do not understand it through the sound of it. "It's the perception of emotions," Duarte tells The Indian Express.

'For example, the famous movie of (Steven) Spielberg, Shark... if you see that movie without sound, you don't have emotion or suspense. (But) Once you put the sound, all emotions change. It's the same in

To generate the same emotions without

the fans in the stadiums, who are an integral part of it, was a challenge. In Tokyo, the organisers tried to recreate a semblance of that atmosphere by playing fake crowd noises at some of the venues. For Duarte, a purist, this wasn't an option

for the Games' broadcast even though it practically became a norm for all matches that were held without fans.

The OBS, instead, decided to transmit what actually was happening in the stadium. "If we do synthetic or fake crowd, we are not showing what's going on in the heart of the athletes and competition," he says.

It is here, his secret 'weapons' made a difference: 3,600 microphones of 32 different models. "It's important to use correct microphones," he says, holding up his latest toy, which shaped like a spike-protein, hung on the roof of the venues and is so small that, from a distance, it can be hard to spot it at a venue. That mic, a prototype that is being used for the first time at the Olympics, captures the ambient sounds at almost all venues, which helps in creating the 'immersive sound' experience that Duarte is excited about for these Games.

#### Discreet placements

The other mics are placed discreetly, so they don't get in an athlete's face but still capture all the sounds. They are hung on the nets. submerged in sands and underwater, on the cars and underneath the carpets.

In archery, for instance, mics are placed not just near the shooting line, but they are also hidden under the carpet leading up to the target to capture the 'whoosh' of the arrow when it pierces through the air. In the pool, when the swimmers touch the wall, a production official leans over and dips a camera that has a mic attached to it so as to get the sound of what goes on underwater.

On the golf course, another production assistant walks the entire course with the golfers with a boom mic, not getting too close

to them but close enough to capture all the drama. The toughest, perhaps, is rowing where most of the action takes place in the bay, and it's not always possible to get the mic close to the rowers to capture the sound of the paddle hitting the water.

"Here, if the mics fail, then we use artificial sounds. But that's just a backup option in case something goes wrong," Duarte says. 'You need to see a sport like music. All sports have a sound, and we have to capture it. The best way to capture is mics. The international federations understood the importance of the sound of the sport. So, they also allow this to get near to the athletes, to get their sound. If you have the sound, you understand the sport better."

He gives the example of skiing, where some former players told him they were able to gauge if the snow was hard or soft just by listening to the sound of the pole swooshing through it. "That way, they know if the athlete will be faster or slower than the previ-

The mics are most essential in capturing the sound on sight. From there, it travels to an OB van that's at the venue. There, the engineers make the mix, which is then sent to the International Broadcasting Centre (IBC).

The IBC is where all the action is in terms of the broadcast of the Games. It's located inside a funnel-shaped building by the Tokyo bay and in a tiny corner office, a supervisor, with control to audio from all venues, completes the final checks.

The sound is then synced with the video and then, it is transported through the fibre cables under the sea to all TV stations that have the rights to broadcast the Olympics before it is finally relayed to millions of homes. 'That's a simple way of putting it," Duarte says. "All this happens in milliseconds to get

Sometimes, the broadcasters add fake crowd noise to their production. Like it has happened in Tokyo, in some cases. Duarte, a purist, scoffs at the mere thought of it. For him, an ideal sound of sport is basic. "The one where I close my eyes, I can feel emotions of the venue and feel of the athletes."

Many watching the Tokyo Olympics from home might have had the best seat in the

## Kipchoge is marathon king again

**ASSOCIATED PRESS** SAPPORO, AUGUST 8

ELIUD KIPCHOGE just decided it was time to sprint away. Simple as that. He never really even looked back.

Except near the finish, simply to see if anyone was there. Of course, no one was even close.

**Kipchoge** pulled away late and pretty much went for a stroll in the park - Odori Park as the 36-year-old Kenyan defended his

Olympic marathon title Sunday.

Immediately after his finish, he held up two fingers to acknowledge his back-to-back marathon titles.

Clearly, though, he's No. 1. "King," one of his fellow racers said as he walked by.

Kipchoge finished in 2 hours, 8 minutes, 38 seconds on a breezy and humid day along the streets of Sapporo. It was 80 seconds ahead of runner-up Abdi Nageeye of the Netherlands. Bashir Abdi of Belgium earned bronze to close out the track and field portion of the Tokyo Games.

This was a running clinic put on by Kipchoge, who even fist-bumped a fellow racer. Kipchoge becomes the third athlete to win multiple gold medals in the men's marathon, joining Abebe Bikila (1960, 1964) and Waldemar Cierpinski (1976, 1980).

About his reaction before making his move: "That smile is the happiness." Kipchoge said. "They say to enjoy this world is to be happy." About that late surge: "I wanted to test my fitness. I wanted to test how I'm feeling. I was feeling right.'

About his legacy: "I want to be the inspiration for the next generation.

The temperature was around 77 degrees Fahrenheit (25 degrees Celsius) at the start and climbing to 84 degrees (29 degrees). The men's race stayed at the same time after the women's race was moved up an hour the day before to avoid the heat. It was humid, though, at around 81% as the runners wound their way through Sapporo, about 500 miles north of Tokyo. The race was moved to es-

cape the extreme heat.

# 'He may be an Olympic champion but I still dread sharing a room with Neeraj'

#### **TEJASWIN SHANKAR**

**BY INVITATION** 

THIS MORNING when I was asleep, I got a video call from Wavne Lombard, a dear friend and scientific advisor of the Indian women's hockey team. I picked up Wayne Bhai's call and saw a smiling Neeraj with a medal around his neck.

I was still half-asleep and for a moment thought it was a dream. I quickly went to the bathroom and washed my face and applied some talcum powder. "Bhai tu soh raha tha na?" (You were sleeping?), Neeraj asked me. "Of course, you'll find most people asleep at six in the morning," I replied.

But I was touched. I am not an emotional person but had tears in my eyes which I tried best to hide with a little help of the powder. Neeraj took me through his throws. I was only concerned if he was okay because after the fourth throw, he seemed to be in some discomfort. I was relieved when he told me

He is very different from us. Imagine he has won India's first-ever athletics medal but he's telling me that he's feeling bad for (Johannes) Vetter. He's one of those persons who can never say no to you if you're his friend. I remember him telling me once that a lot of people had borrowed money from him and that he's not even cared to make a note or a list. I honestly feel he's too nice for his own good.

#### **Inspirational**

The moment Neeraj sealed the gold, I had a rush of adrenaline and, believe it or not, I went down on the floor and did 20 push-ups. I was so pumped up that Paris 2024 was already running in my mind.

In 2016 after his Junior World Championship gold medal, I was taking a walk with Neeraj at the ISW facilities in Bellary. I asked him what he's done with all the prize money or if he's secured a govern-



Tokyo Olympics gold medallist Neeraj Chopra and high jumper Tejaswin Shankar during the Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast.

He's one of those persons who can never say no to you if you're his friend. I remember him telling me once that a lot of people had borrowed money from him and that he's not even cared to make a note or a list.

ment job. He didn't seem interested in the conversation at all and was extending his arm and doing this weird throw action. I asked him, "What are you doing? Why aren't you responding?" He replied, "You know, I can easily add another two metres if I get my block (the extension of his left leg at the point of release) right. I realised that day that money and recognition don't matter to him. He had his eyes set on just improving himself. From that day, he became a person I

But I think he owes me something. After his World junior medal, his Instagram got flooded with messages, especially from women. Although he wasn't interested in any of them, for courtesy's sake, he asked me to reply to them. He told me what he wanted me to write in Hindi and I would do the rest.

We even shared a room for 15 days in Bangalore, Honestly, he may be an Olympic champion now but I still dread sharing a room with him. He's a bit disorganised. If you enter his room, you'll find his clothes drying on the bed or his socks in the middle of the room. I didn't say anything to him because sharing a room with Neeraj was a huge thing for me. We bonded over fried rice and matka kulfi for the next fortnight. The only boys' talk we had was about video games. He was crazy about Mini Militia then and now he's into PubG. I'll ask him if has a girlfriend when I

meet him next time. We spoke before the qualification round

and he just said how I knew for sure that my brother would win the gold. After the fourth round, I was on my feet shivering in nervous excitement. I have not seen PT Usha ma'am or (GS) Randhawa sir but I have seen Neerai

and I am blessed to be born in this generation. I met Neeraj for the first time in a dopetesting room in Hyderabad back in 2015 and had no idea who he was. I was like, who is this guy with hair. We spoke and later exchanged numbers. Our real bonding happened during the 2016 South Asian Games. We both were among the youngest athletes and I was feeling a bit out of place as I didn't have any friends. I spoke to Neeraj and he told me that I belong here and like other athletes, I too have met the qualification standard to be there. That's where our friendship began and it didn't take long for it to blossom into brotherhood

(TEJASWIN SHANKAR IS THE NATIONAL RECORD HOLDER IN MEN'S HIGH JUMP. **HESPOKE TO ANDREW AMSAN)** 

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