

FAMILIES RECALL HOW STUDENTS CAME TO DELHI WITH 'BIG DREAMS'

Capital tragedy: Two graduates, one PhD student, phone calls to 3 states

'Have no words to express': Families, friends from UP, Kerala, Telangana struggle to cope

VIDHEESHA KUNTAMALLA, MANISH SAHU, SHAJU PHILIP & SREENIVAS JANYALA
NEW DELHI, LUCKNOW, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, HYDERABAD, JULY 28



Parents of Tanya Soni, one of the students who died in the flooding at the UPSC coaching centre, wait outside the mortuary at Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital on Sunday. *Abhinav Saha*

Rau's CEO among 2 held, police say basement library had no approval

ARNABJIT SUR
NEW DELHI, JULY 28

A DAY after the three deaths at Rau's IAS Study Circle in the Capital, police arrested two persons — Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Abhishek Gupta and coaching coordinator Deshpal Singh — on Sunday.

Gupta has been named and identified as the "owner" in the FIR, filed under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) Sections 105 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder), 115(2) (voluntarily causing hurt) among others at the Rajinder Nagar police station.

According to police, neither did the coaching centre have clearance to use the basement as



Students protest near the coaching centre. *Gajendra Yadav*
MORE REPORTS, P.6, 7

a library, nor did it have a drainage system in the basement. Commercial activity in **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

INDIA'S FIRST OLYMPIC SHOOTING MEDAL AFTER LONDON 2012



Manu Bhaker celebrates after winning the bronze medal in the 10m air pistol women's final round in Chateauroux, France. *AP*

Manu Bhaker opens India medal account with shooting bronze

22-year-old India's first woman shooter to win at Olympics



EXPRESS AT OLYMPICS

MIHIR VASAVDA
CHATEAUROUX, JULY 28

MANU BHAKER never fancied visiting the Eiffel Tower. "I have already visited it before," she

said. She found it "okay". When she returns to India after the Paris Games, Manu will carry a piece of the iconic monument back with her. Like all the medals at the Paris Olympics, her bronze will contain within its centre, fragments of iron kept away during renovations of the famous tower.

With a gentle pull of the trigger, the shooter who stormed into the limelight as a 16-year-

old prodigy ended India's decade-plus wait for an Olympic podium finish in shooting. She won India's first medal of the Paris Games, in the 10 m air pistol event. She also shot herself into the history books as the country's first woman shooter to win an Olympic Games medal.

Manu's instinctive reaction on the firing point was to purse her lips — she had missed out on **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**



INDIA AT OLYMPICS

BOXING

■ Nikhat's comeback win in opening bout

TABLE TENNIS

■ Manika-Sreeja advance to round of 32

PAGE 19

BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY

Amidst Olympics, the game that makes headlines here: Blame Game.



SECONDARY SCHOOL REFORMS

Factor in Class 9-11 performance for Class 12 report card: Govt proposal

State boards' views sought; report to look at classwork too

ABHINAYA HARIGOVIND
NEW DELHI, JULY 28

A STUDENT'S performance — based on both exams and continuing classwork — in Classes 9, 10, and 11 should be counted towards their final marks at the end of Class 12, according to a report recently submitted to the Education Ministry by PARAKH, a unit set up in NCERT last year to standardise assessment by school boards

| COMBINED EVALUATION | | | | |
|---------------------|---------|----------|----------|----------|
| Weight | Class 9 | Class 10 | Class 11 | Class 12 |
| Formative | 70% | 50% | 40% | 30% |
| Summative | 30% | 50% | 60% | 70% |

■ Formative are classroom assessments through holistic progress cards, projects, group discussions, etc; summative are end-term examinations

■ Each class will have two terms for assessment

| Weighted marks at the end of higher secondary stage | | | |
|---|----------|----------|----------|
| Class 9 | Class 10 | Class 11 | Class 12 |
| 15% | 20% | 25% | 40% |

across the country.

In line with the National Education Policy, PARAKH's man-

date included capacity development, achievement surveys, **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

Ethanol used in petrol now more from maize, damaged foodgrains than sugar

HARISH DAMODARAN
NEW DELHI, JULY 28

CEREAL GRAINS have overtaken sugarcane as the primary feedstock for the production of ethanol used in blending with

petrol. In the current supply year (November 2023-October 2024), sugar mills and distilleries supplied 401 crore litres of ethanol to oil marketing companies till June 30. Of that, 211 crore litres or 52.7% was ethanol pro-

duced using maize and damaged foodgrains (mainly broken/ old rice not fit for human consumption), while sugarcane-based feedstocks (molasses and whole juice/ syrup) accounted for the remaining 190 crore litres. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

Chardham bypass: After red flag by SC panel, Govt cites 'landslide sites' for nod

NIKHIL GHANEKAR
NEW DELHI, JULY 28

FOUR YEARS after a high-powered committee appointed by the Supreme Court rejected construction of the Netala bypass road on the Uttarkashi-Gangotri

route under the Chardham project, the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) is going ahead with the contentious alignment and has sought forest clearance from an environment ministry panel citing "active landslide sites" on the old route, *The Indian Express* has learnt.

The 8.7-km bypass alignment, proposed between Hina and Tekhla on NH-34 in Uttarkashi district, was rejected by the committee in its July 2020 report to the Supreme Court on grounds of adverse environmental and social impacts. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

Haryana youth dies in Russia, kin say forced to go to Ukraine battlefield

SUKHBIR SIWACH
CHANDIGARH, JULY 28

A 22-YEAR-OLD man from Haryana has died on the Russian frontline after being "forced to battle against Ukraine forces", his family members said Sunday. In a communication to the family of Ravi Moun — from Matour village in Kaithal district — the Indian embassy in Moscow confirmed the death although it did not mention the circumstances in which he died.

Ravi's elder brother Ajay Moun told *The Indian Express* that the embassy has sought DNA test reports from the family, especially from Ravi's mother. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**



Ravi Moun, 22, from Matour in Kaithal district. *Express*

"As we have lost our mother, we will be sending the DNA test report of our father to the Indian embassy soon," said Ajay.

This comes days after Prime Minister Narendra Modi during **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

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TMC leader caught on video 'thrashing' woman, held and soon released

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, JULY 28

AFTER A video of a man beating a woman went viral, police in Purba Bardhaman district arrested a local TMC leader from Kalna on Saturday evening.

The local TMC leader, Gopal Tiwari, seen in the purported video was released on bail on Sunday. Sources said that police did not oppose the bail plea in the court.

According to police, the incident took place over a land dispute. "On Friday, Gopal and his gang members thrashed my mother-in-law. On Saturday, they came

again and beat me and other family members in my house. I was slapped repeatedly," the woman, who has filed the complaint, said, adding that the dispute began after a brick wall was raised on the land adjacent to her house.

Tiwari said, "I had bought a piece of land and erected a boundary wall. They (the complainant's family) broke the wall. When I went to their house, I was beaten up."

Meanwhile, the incident took a political turn with the opposition BJP accusing the TMC of hooliganism. A local TMC MLA said police are investigating the incident and "anyone who is the culprit" will be punished.

FROM PAGE ONE FULL REPORTS ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

Manu Bhaker opens India medal account with shooting bronze

a potential gold or silver medal by only 0.1 points, meaning her last shot was away from the bull's-eye by a hairline, allowing South Korea's Yeji Kim to overtake her.

But within a fraction of a second, the reality dawned upon her that she had the bronze and then, she broke into a big, wide smile that wouldn't leave her face.

At 22, Manu became India's fifth Olympic medalist in the sport -- the youngest of the lot, and the first since the London Games in 2012, when Gagan Narang and Vijay Kumar medalled.

"Obviously I dreamt about it, but being here, standing with the medal around my neck, it feels surreal. I feel like I'm on top of the world," Manu said, tightly hold-

ing her bronze medal.

This was a high-class field in the final comprising two shooters each from South Korea and China -- who had until then swept all gold medals in shooting. In the company of world champions and Olympic medallists, Manu never looked out of place.

Her coach Jaspal Rana, sitting in the stands, teared up and left the finals hall moments after the last shot was fired. Next to him, a dozen or so fans from India created a din. In front of them, the national team coaches and officials hugged and back-slapped each other.

For each of them, the wait for this medal has felt like an eternity. Shooting has been one of India's heavily invested sports,

which aided in the creation of an incredible pool of players who, for the last decade, won everywhere else but choked at the Olympics.

Manu has been the face of both the good times and the bad. Since coming into the limelight as a 16-year-old after winning the Commonwealth Games gold, her fearlessness embodied India's rise of the army of Indian teenagers in the sport. At the same time, she also ended up becoming the face of India's failure to win a single medal at the Tokyo Olympics three years ago.

She was chastised for being the "match ki mujrim" after her low scores pulled the mixed team down the leaderboard; she ran out of the competition hall in tears after being unable to qualify for

the final of the 10m air pistol event and, by the end of the disastrous Games, Manu and her coach Jaspal Rana had such a bitter public falling-out that it felt like a promising career had crash-landed just as it was taking off.

After the Tokyo Games, Manu felt like she was "done" with the sport. After a few weeks away, she rekindled her love for shooting and approached Rana again. The duo buried their hatchet and here she was on Sunday, flying off to unchartered territories.

"I believe that if you can't win something, you should take lessons from it, which, in turn, will help you improve further going forward. If I didn't have that lesson in my life, maybe I wouldn't be here today," Manu said.

India's medal drought ended -- and Manu's redemption was scripted -- in the coolest of fashions. She had been strutting around the shooting ranges in the army town of Chateauroux, some 300 km from Paris, quietly confident of her chances. And when the time came, she executed her skill with the level of composure not seen from Indian shooters on the big stage in recent years.

Manu was never out of podium positions, and, but for a slight fumble in the middle stages where she dropped points by shooting 9s, she could have finished higher on the podium.

Weirdly, for a shooter whose every action has been scrutinised and was castigated after Tokyo, there was no overt display of emo-

tions, nor was she overcome by a sense of relief. There was no time for celebration, too. "I am glad our hard work has paid off. Now, on to next one," Rana said.

The coach and ward would retreat into their own world, away from the jubilation outside, and plan for the two other medals that Manu has her eyes on -- the 10 m air pistol mixed team event, whose qualification is on Monday, and the 25 m pistol match later in the week.

Meanwhile, PM Narendra Modi called up Manu to congratulate her for the "historic medal". "This success is even more special as she becomes the 1st woman to win a medal in shooting for India. An incredible achievement," he said in a post on X.

Rau's CEO among 2 held, police say basement library had no approval

basements is deemed illegal by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD). The coaching centre and two others in the area were sealed by the MCD on Sunday evening for flouting building norms.

DCP (Central) Harsh Vardhan confirmed the arrests. According to the FIR, Gupta, a resident of Gurgaon, was present at the spot at the time of the incident.

Rau's IAS Study Circle in Old Rajinder Nagar is one of the oldest and most popular coaching centres for civil services exam aspirants. It started as a one-man operation in 1953 by Dr S Rau, when classes were held in a small room in Hotel Palace Heights at Connaught Place.

Rau's IAS Study Circle Private

Limited was incorporated in 1980. While Abhishek Gupta is the CEO, the director and chairperson is Ved Prakash Gupta.

The institute charges Rs 1.75 lakh for offline classes for General Studies (Prelims and Mains). While it has two offline centres -- in Delhi and Bengaluru -- it also holds online classes at Rs 95,000 for General Studies (Prelims and Mains), and offers distance learning study material.

On its website, the coaching institute says that in its 70 years of existence, it has produced one-third of all bureaucrats across cadres (since 1953). It says the number of students per batch is limited to 100 in offline classes, with morning and evening

batches that last 9-10 months, as well as a weekend batch that lasts 14-16 months.

In a statement Sunday, the coaching centre extended its "heartfelt condolences" to the families of the three students. Saying that it was "deeply saddened by the loss of these promising young individuals who were preparing to serve our nation with dedication and commitment", it said it "is fully committed to supporting the ongoing investigations into this tragic incident".

"We are cooperating fully with the relevant authorities and agencies to ensure that all necessary information is provided and that the investigation proceeds with the utmost diligence. We are dedicated to assist-

ing in any way possible to uncover the truth and ensure accountability," the statement said.

According to the FIR, police received a phone call at 7 pm, informing that students were trapped in the flooded basement of the building housing the coaching centre. "A police team rushed to the spot where it was found that a few students were trapped inside the basement which was flooded with water," the FIR said.

The Department of Delhi Fire Services was informed, which deployed five fire-tenders. Later, the National Disaster Response Force also deployed divers, the FIR said. Identifying Gupta as the "owner", the FIR said that he was present at the spot, and was asked

to show "papers regarding the use of the basement as a library, but was not able to show any documents".

The water from the road entered the basement "due to improper drainage system", causing the flooding and "risking the lives of students," it said. When questioned, Gupta was not able to provide details of any drainage system inside the basement, the FIR said.

A police officer said civic officials responsible for the drainage system in the area have also been summoned for questioning, and action would be taken against any person found to be negligent.

Meanwhile, Lt Governor V K Saxena has ordered a probe by the Divisional Commissioner in the matter. AAP minister Atishi has also directed the Chief Secretary to submit a report within 24 hours.

earlier a legislator from Kaithal, had written to External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar seeking his intervention "in extreme humanitarian crisis for bringing Haryana's youth from Russia-occupied territory of Ukraine".

In his letter, Surjewala gave details of six youths from Matour village and two more from Fatehabad and Karnal districts, all in the 19-32 age group.

Surjewala wrote: "On account of rampant unemployment and in absence of any opportunities to find work, these boys were made to pay Rs 8 to Rs 10 lakh each for transportation jobs in Russia. Finally, Ankit, who received the money from the boys and who is already in Russia, took them to Moscow on a tourist visa and forcibly they were sent to the war front in the Russian-Ukrainian war."

embassy wrote.

"As conveyed to you on phone, it is requested that a DNA test may please be done in India from a registered hospital/government hospital from his mother and the report be shared with the Indian Embassy in Moscow. The report will be shared with concerned Russian Authorities for identification of the body as requested by them."

Meanwhile, Ravi's family has urged Prime Minister Modi to assist them in bringing back the body to India as they don't have enough money. Reacting to the death, Congress general secretary and Rajya Sabha MP Randeep Singh Surjewala described it "heartbreaking".

On April 7, Surjewala, who was

March 12. On that day, he told us that he had been on the battlefield since March 6 and he has to go to the battlefield again. After that we lost contact with him," said Ajay.

On July 21, Ajay sent an email to the Indian embassy in Moscow to enquire about his brother. In response, Gloria Dung Dung, Second Secretary, Embassy of India (Moscow), confirmed Ravi's death a couple of days later.

"The Embassy had requested the concerned Russian Authorities for confirmation of his death and transportation of his mortal remains as requested by you. The Russian side had confirmed the death. However, to identify the body they need a DNA test from his close relatives, especially a DNA test from his mother," the

Haryana youth dies in Russia, kin say forced to go to Ukraine battlefield

his meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin earlier this month raised the issue of Indian nationals working in the Russian military and sought their early release. The Russian side had promised "early discharge of all Indian nationals from the service of the Russian Army".

The Ministry of External Affairs had in June confirmed the death of two Indians who had been recruited by the Russian Army in the war with Ukraine. One of them was from Amritsar. In March, two more Indian nationals -- from Surat and Hyderabad -- were killed at the battlefield.

According to Ravi's family members, he went to Russia in January this year. One among

three siblings, including a sister, he had studied up to Class 10.

His brother Ajay said the family spent Rs 11.5 lakh to send Ravi to Russia after selling their one-acre land. According to him, an agent from the village had assured them a transportation job for Ravi in Russia. "Ravi went on January 13 this year and later five more youths from the village went to Russia. They are still there," Ajay said. Ajay claimed that Ravi was inducted into the Russian Army and the family later saw his photos in uniform. He alleged that the Russian Army forced Ravi to go to the front-line to battle the Ukraine forces or face 10 years imprisonment.

According to Ajay, Ravi was given training to dig trenches. "We were in contact with him until

Chardham bypass: After red flag by SC panel, Govt cites 'landslide sites' for forest nod

"This bypass is recommended to be dropped because the geological infirmities on the existing alignment can be rectified and the local villagers, district administration and the MLA are not in favour," the committee had said in its recommendation to the Supreme Court.

The geological infirmities the committee referred to in its report were landslide zones on the existing NH-34, which it said could be treated.

The bypass road will involve diversion of 175 hectares of forest land and axing of 2,751 trees and acquisition of 5.4 hectares from Siror village.

The 900-km Chardham project is underway to widen and improve highways connecting four pilgrimage centres -- Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath -- and the Supreme Court granted it conditional clearance in 2021.

The project also falls in the fragile Bhagirathi Eco-Sensitive Zone (BESZ), a 4,157 sq km expanse between Gangotri and Uttarkashi town. The BESZ was notified in 2012 to protect River Ganga's ecology and watershed

near its origin.

The developments have prompted objections on two fronts. Independent members of the BESZ monitoring committee, mandated to implement the BESZ master plan, have submitted objections against the bypass road to the Uttarakhand Chief Secretary, who heads the panel.

Secondly, people residing in villages along NH-34 have also raised social and environmental concerns regarding the project to retired Justice A K Sikri, who heads an oversight committee formed by the Supreme Court. This committee is tasked with implementation of court-ordered environmental safeguards for the Chardham project.

"The BRO has started marking Deodar trees for deforestation for Netala bypass without the required EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) in violation of HPC (High-powered committee) recommendations, which isn't permissible. Therefore, the MC (monitoring committee) herein asks the BRO to first conduct the detailed EIA for the project," a letter sent to the Uttarakhand Chief Secretary by independent mem-

bers of the BESZ monitoring committee said.

"In light of the Silkyara tunnel episode, this blatant disregard of the precautionary aspects and the laws in place is totally unacceptable," the June 27 letter said, referring to the 2023 tunnel collapse in Uttarakhand. Messages and calls to Uttarakhand Chief Secretary Radha Raturi seeking comments on the objections against the bypass did not elicit a response.

A senior official of the Uttarakhand forest department confirmed that tree marking has taken place for the bypass project and that the proposal was sent to the regional empowered committee of the Environment Ministry for appraisal.

In its justification for choosing the bypass alignment, the BRO told the Environment Ministry, "Due to reduced width of the road at many places between Hina and Tekhla and 3 landslide sites being active as well as to resolve the problems of passengers and public, it has been proposed to construct a bypass in the middle of the said route at Netala."

Members of the BESZ monitoring committee said that the is-

sue of widening the entire 100-km Uttarkashi-Gangotri stretch under Chardham project was discussed before the committee on June 30 last year. The stretch on NH-34 is one of the components of the project and the Netala bypass is a part of it.

During the meeting, independent members informed the committee about the adverse impacts that muck dumping and tree felling would have on the environment and also pointed out concerns of local residents.

However, the monitoring committee cleared widening work on the entire stretch since it was extremely important from a strategic point of view, according to minutes of the BESZ monitoring committee meeting.

The BRO informed that the issue was referred to the Supreme Court-constituted oversight committee, which said that the monitoring committee should first take a call, according to the minutes.

"The proposal to widen the 100-km stretch was put forth before the committee for discussion at the last minute and the independent members had submitted a dissent note against the clear-

ance," said an independent member of the committee, who did not want to be named.

When contacted, BRO Commander Vivek Srivastava and Brigadier Prasanna S Joshi, chief engineer, Shivailik Project, Rishikesh -- who were present at the BESZ monitoring committee meeting -- directed The Indian Express to seek comments from the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH).

Queries mailed to MoRTH Secretary Anurag Jain did not elicit a response. When asked about the developments on the bypass road and objections raised by the local residents, Justice Sikri told *The Indian Express*, "I will look into the details of the project."

The local residents have conveyed their objections to Justice Sikri, saying that instead of the bypass, the existing NH-34 alignment could be widened. This, they said, would prevent environmental damage that is likely due to hill cutting and tree felling. They also raised concerns that constructing the bypass would affect their livelihoods as the business of hotels and restaurants they own along NH-34 would be affected.

2 graduates, 1 PhD student, phone calls to 3 states

A day later, long after the heavy rains and water from the broken drain that engulfed the centre's basement had subsided, all that remained were the lifeless bodies and memories of Shreya Yadav (25), Nivin Dalwin (28) and Tanya Soni (25). And the grief of their parents, and the despair that shrouded everyone who knew them. "Maybe, it was written that her life would end here," said Dharmendra Yadav, Shreya's uncle with whom she was staying in Ghaziabad. Devastated, and weary from a night waiting in front of the mortuary at the Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, he said, "We just want to take her body back to our village."

Recalling the growing dread and frantic calls after coming to know about the incident on TV, Yadav said, "I called Shreya, she did not answer. I rushed to the institute, it wasn't clear whether anyone was stuck inside the library in the basement. I then went to her PG and found the door locked. I called her friends, but they were not able to reach her. Later, we got the call from the police."

Shreya hailed from Barsawa Hashimpur village in Ambedkar Nagar and was the second of three children of Rajendra Yadav, who runs a dairy outlet, and Shanti Devi. After completing her BSc in biology from a college in

Sultanpur, she joined the IAS coaching institute this year and was preparing for her first attempt at the entrance examination. "She came to Delhi full of aspirations and big dreams," said her cousin.

Speaking to *The Indian Express* from their village, Shreya's elder brother Abhishek Yadav said, "We were sure she would clear the UPSC because she had an impressive academic record and a passion for becoming an IAS officer. My father took a bank loan to pay her fees." The family last spoke to Shreya on Friday. "We discussed what she would do after completing her coaching in December," said Abhishek, adding that their younger brother is in Class 7.

Back at the mortuary in Delhi were also students and professors from JNU, waiting to identify the body of Nivin Dalwin. "We never knew he had enrolled for IAS coaching. We found out this morning," said a friend, adding that Dalwin was pursuing a PhD in visual studies.

At Malayattoor in Kerala, where Dalwin's family is based, his parents were admitted to a local hospital after complaining of uneasiness on hearing about his death.

According to a family friend, Dalwin's mother Lancelot, a professor at the Sanskrit University, was returning home from church

when she came to know about the incident. "She was checking her mobile phone for missed calls. It was when she returned one of those calls that she came to know about the tragedy," said Betty, a family friend. Dalwin's father Suresh is a retired police officer and his younger sister Nesity an assistant professor at a local college.

"On Friday, Lancelot had called her son to ask about the heavy rains in Delhi. She knew he would be in the library on Saturday for his PhD thesis. But even on Sunday morning, they did not know about the tragedy," said Betty. "Lancelot used to tell us that her Sunday prayers were meant for dedicating her son's civil services dream to God."

The third phone call from Delhi went to Tanya Soni's father Vijay Kumar, a deputy general manager at Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) who hails from Secunderabad. At the time, Kumar, his wife, and another daughter were on their way to Lucknow in a train. "Tanya had big dreams and was highly motivated. She graduated from Delhi University and had decided to pursue UPSC... She used to call home every day," Kumar said.

"We are devastated. We are also troubled thinking about the way she died. I have no words to express how I feel," he said.

Class 9-II performance for final Class 12 report card

equivalence of school boards a common assessment standards.

After discussions with 32 school boards over the past year, PARAKH has submitted a report to the Education Ministry this month recommending measures to align evaluation of all school boards.

One key recommendation is to include performance from Classes 9, 10, and 11 in the final Class 12 report card, with a weight of 15% for Class 9, 20% for Class 10, 25% for Class 11, and 40% for Class 12.

According to the PARAKH report, evaluation should be a combination of formative assessments (continuous classroom assessments through holistic progress cards, group discussions, projects) and summative assessments (term-end examinations).

The report suggests that in Class 9, 70% of the final score be drawn from formative assessments and 30% from summative assessments. In Class 10, the final score will be based 50% on formative assessments and 50% on summative assessments. For Class 11, it will be 40% formative and 60% summative assessments. In Class 12, the weight for formative assessments will drop to 30% with 70% of the final score based on summative assessments.

Sources said this report will be shared with all school boards

EXPLAINED Holistic vs one report card

THE PRINCIPLE behind this is to ensure that a student's performance doesn't hinge on the report card on a single examination (Class X or Class XII) but base it on the entirety of secondary school. Looking at formative and summative is also meant to take a 'holistic' value of classroom work before the end-term test.

for feedback. In fact, the first round of discussions was held last week with authorities of Haryana, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

In this meeting, states are learnt to have argued for a different approach towards factoring in class-wise performance. Instead of integrating the performance of Classes 9, 10, and 11 into the final Class 12 report card, the states argued, 40% of the score from Class 9 and 60% from Class 10 should contribute to the final Class 10 score. Similarly, 40% of the score from Class 11 and 60% from Class 12 should contribute to the final Class 12 score.

PARAKH will now hold discussions with the remaining school boards in August.

The holistic progress card for classes 9 to 12, which will play a role in the formative assessments, has already been designed by PARAKH and includes the student's evaluation of themselves in aspects like "time management", teacher's assessment of the student in group project work, and peer feedback.

In its recommendations, PARAKH has also suggested that the assessments be in terms of credits: a student can earn 40 credits in Classes 9 and 10 each, and 44 credits in Classes 11 and 12 each. In Classes 9 and 10, 32 credits will be subject-specific (12 credits in three languages; four credits in mathematics; four for science, four for social science etc). Recommendations include that boards should develop a system of credit transfer in line with the National Credit Framework.

A government official said that the concept of credits suggested by PARAKH is in line with the mention of the 'Academic Bank of Credits' in NEP 2020, and that this is the basis of the proposal to "credit" a student's achievements at the secondary level and amalgamate that with the board exam performance.

Officials said this transition cannot be "abrupt" and hence deliberations with states are on to address any misgivings and arrive at a consensus.

Ethanol in petrol coming more from maize, damaged foodgrains

This is the first time that the contribution of grains to India's ethanol production has surpassed 50% -- from 27.1% in 2022-23, 16.7% in 2021-22, 13.6% in 2020-21, 9.2% in 2019-20, 5% in 2018-19 and zero in 2017-18.

Ethanol is 99.9% pure alcohol that can be blended with petrol. This is unlike the 96% extra neutral alcohol that goes to make potable liquor or the 94% rectified spirit used in paints, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals and other industrial products.

The Narendra Modi-led government has targeted 20% ethanol blending in petrol by 2025. That ratio for all-India averaged 13% this supply year till June, as against 12.1% in 2022-23, 10% in 2021-22 and only 1.6% in 2013-14.

In 2023-24 itself, there's been a steady monthly rise: 10.2% in November, 11.2% in December,

12.2% in January, 12.9% in February, 12.8% in March, 12.7% in April, 15.4% in May and 15.9% in June.

Alcohol production involves fermentation of sugar using yeast. In cane juice or molasses, sugar is present in the form of sucrose that is broken down into glucose and fructose. Grains contain starch, a carbohydrate that has to first be extracted and converted into sucrose and simpler sugars, before their further fermentation, distillation and dehydration to ethanol.

Till 2017-18, ethanol was being produced only from so-called C-heavy molasses, the dense dark brown liquid byproduct containing sucrose that mills cannot economically recover and crystallise into sugar.

The ethanol blended petrol (EBP) programme received a boost in 2018-19, when the Modi

government enabled mills to produce it from an earlier 'B-heavy' stage molasses (leaving less sugar available for crystallisation and more for fermentation) and directly from whole cane juice/syrup. Mills were paid higher prices for the ethanol produced through these routes to compensate them for revenues foregone from reduced/nil production of sugar.

A further fillip to the programme came when mills started using grains as supplementary feedstock. Companies such as Triveni Engineering & Industries Ltd (TEIL), DCM Shriram, Dhampur Sugar Mills, Balrampur Chini, EID Parry and Nirani Sugars installed multi-feedstock distilleries that could run on molasses and juice/syrup during the crushing season (November-April) and on grain in the off-season (May-October), when cane wasn't avail-

able.

The grains were mostly surplus and broken/ damaged rice sourced from the Food Corporation of India's (FCI) stocks and the open market. But with the Modi government stopping the supply of FCI rice (from July 2023) and restricting the use of cane juice and B-heavy molasses for ethanol production (from December 2023) -- on concerns over cereal and sugar inflation -- maize has emerged as the top ethanol feedstock.

That has also been incentivised by the government fixing an ex-distillery price of Rs 71.86 per litre for ethanol produced from maize. This is higher than the per-litre prices payable by oil companies for ethanol from other feedstocks: C-heavy molasses (Rs 56.28), B-heavy molasses (Rs 60.73), cane juice/syrup (Rs 65.61), FCI rice (Rs 58.50) and

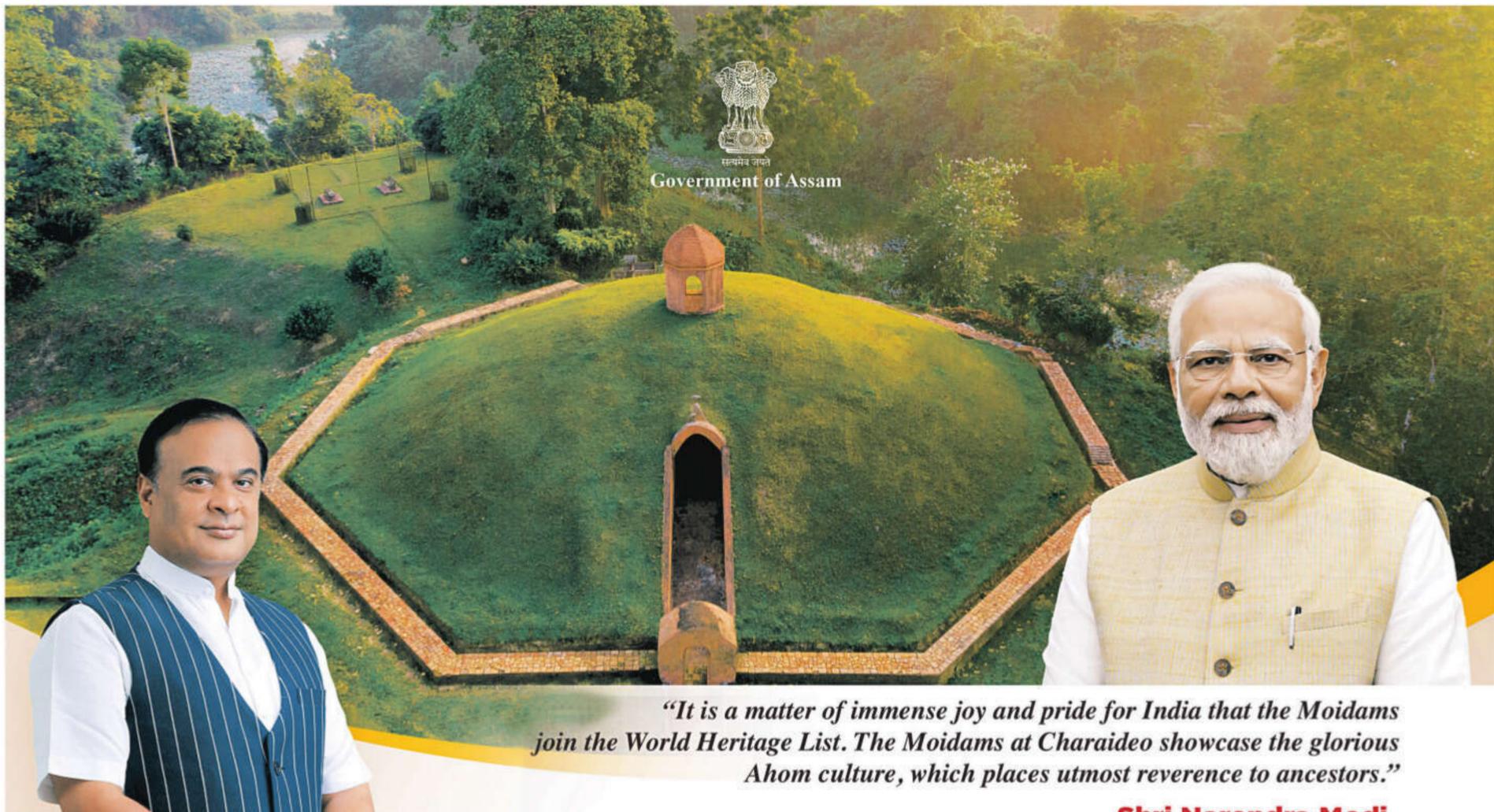
ETHANOL SUPPLIED TO OIL MARKETING COMPANIES

First time that use of grains in making ethanol has crossed 50%

| Supply Year | C-Heavy Molasses | B-Heavy Molasses | Sugarcane Juice | Surplus Rice | Damaged Grains | Maize | TOTAL |
|-------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------|-------|-------------|
| 2013-14 | 38 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 38 (1.60) |
| 2014-15 | 67 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 67 (2.33) |
| 2015-16 | 111 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 111 (3.51) |
| 2016-17 | 67 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 67 (2.07) |
| 2017-18 | 151 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 151 (4.22) |
| 2018-19 | 146 | 33 | 1 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 189 (4.92) |
| 2019-20 | 74 | 68 | 15 | 0 | 16 | 0 | 173 (5.00) |
| 2020-21 | 39 | 183 | 39 | 2 | 39 | 0 | 302 (8.10) |
| 2021-22 | 11 | 265 | 85 | 49 | 24 | 0 | 434 (10.02) |
| 2022-23 | 6 | 235 | 128 | 74 | 32 | 32 | 506 (12.06) |
| 2023-24* | 39 | 95 | 56 | 0 | 76 | 135 | 401 (13.00) |

Figures in crore litres; Supply years are Dec-Nov, Dec-Oct for 2022-23 and Nov-Oct for 2023-24; *Nov-June; Figures in brackets are blending percentages.

damaged



“It is a matter of immense joy and pride for India that the Moidams join the World Heritage List. The Moidams at Charaideo showcase the glorious Ahom culture, which places utmost reverence to ancestors.”

Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma
Chief Minister, Assam

Shri Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

Moidams of Charaideo

The 700-year-old Mound-Burial System of the Ahom Dynasty

Now a part of

UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE LIST

under Cultural Property category

Heartfelt gratitude to

Prime Minister
Shri Narendra Modi

for selecting the site as India's sole nomination for inclusion in the
UNESCO World Heritage List for 2024

Special thanks to World Heritage Committee

for inscribing the site onto the World Heritage List

The *moidams* are known for their unique architectural design, religious significance and meticulous construction, symbolising the rich cultural heritage of Assam



Third World Heritage Site of Assam after
Kaziranga National Park and Manas National Park

First cultural heritage site from Northeast India to receive the recognition

About the Site



Set in the foothills of the Patkai Ranges in eastern Assam, the site contains the **royal necropolis of the Tai-Ahom**



For 600 years, the Tai-Ahom created *moidams* (burial-mounds) accentuating the natural topography of hills, forests and water, thus forming a sacred geography



90 *Ninety moidams* of different sizes are found within the site

DAY AFTER DEATHS OF 3 STUDENTS, FELLOW ASPIRANTS HIT THE STREETS IN PROTEST

'We literally pay to risk our lives'

Flag apathy of coaching centres, say complaints fell on deaf ears

PRAGYNESH
NEW DELHI, JULY 28

BASEMENTS BEING used as libraries and mock test centres more often than not; water entering these basements after a little rainfall; 300-400 students packed in a room; multiple complaints to civic authorities on water-logging and desilting work going unheard — these have become commonplace in Old Rajinder Nagar, the hub of UPSC coaching centres, said civil services aspirants.

A day after three students — Tanya Soni, Shreya Yadav and Nivin Dalwin — died in a flooded basement of the Rau's IAS Study Circle, other UPSC aspirants in the area got together to stage a protest on Sunday. "We pay to risk our lives. Nobody from Rau's has come forward to talk to us," said a student.

Meanwhile, in a statement, Rau's offered "heartfelt condolences" to the families of the three students, and said it was "fully committed to supporting the ongoing investigations into this tragic incident". The coaching centre did not respond to questions regarding the alleged lapses.

Raising slogans, protesters blocked the road next to the Karol Bagh Metro Station, causing huge traffic snarls in the area and prompting police intervention. A few protesters were detained and taken away in a bus. Following this, many demonstrators dispersed from the area



Students protest outside the IAS coaching centre in Old Rajinder Nagar, Sunday. Amit Mehra

and police resumed the traffic movement there.

DCP (Central) M Harsha Vardhan said since Saturday evening, the road in Old Rajinder Nagar was blocked by students protesting over the incident. "We understand their (protesters') sentiments and are engaging with them constructively so the protest remains peaceful. Around 2.30 pm, some students blocked both carriageways of

Pusa Road near the Karol Bagh Metro Station, which is an arterial road with many hospitals in the vicinity," the DCP said. "Both police and administration repeatedly requested the students to not block the main road. Since they refused to clear the main road even after an hour, they were removed from there, considering the massive public inconvenience and blockade to nearby hospitals," he added.

'No one acted on our complaints'

Ramji Awasthi, who studies at Vision IAS and took the exam this year, claimed that almost every coaching centre runs a library or other operations in the basement. "Four days ago, a woman sustained an electric shock in a library because water entered the basement after a little rain. Fortunately, it was minor. But these things happen here regularly," he alleged.

While the library at Rau's centre was accessible only to students who studied at the institute, free of cost, several other coaching centres give aspirants the option to use their libraries for a fee.

"They charge Rs 3,000-Rs 5,000 monthly to allow us to sit in these libraries... We complained so many times, but no action has been taken," said a protester.

"Everyone is saying 100 students in a room is too much. But at times, there are 300-400 students in a room," said Vishal Mittal, also a student at Vision IAS.

Another protester, Shivraj Patil, alleged inaction by the civic authorities despite multiple complaints every year. "I've been here since 2022. Every year, students file complaints for desilting the drain, for live wires hanging, but no action is taken. Water

filling up the basement is a regular feature. Classes have continued even as the basement is submerged in half-a-foot of water. It's normal for centres to run like this," said Patil, who was enrolled with Vajiram & Ravi till 2023.

Saumitra Tiwari, a student at Saarthi coaching centre, said his friend was among those rescued from Rau's last night. "Around 20 people were in the library at the time. Some students decided to

step out for a walk. They asked my friend, Prabhakar, to go with them, but he decided to study. One of the students who died was his friend," he said.

He added that the crowd at Rau's is usually bigger, but there were fewer students yesterday since it was a weekend.

Recounting the incident, as narrated to him by his friend, Tiwari said water started entering the basement around 7.30 pm. "Immediately, security guards cut off the electricity... The police were the first to arrive. A head constable entered the basement and saved 4-5 people. Prabhakar was also rescued... Over an hour later, two bodies were taken out," he said.

Another student said he was not sure how to visit these libraries again. "It is scary to think... If there is a power cut and something happens, how will I get out of the library. During the monsoon at least, I will avoid going there," he said.

A father of a student at Rau's, who came to observe the protests, said: "Only yesterday, I got my daughter enrolled at Rau's. And this happened in the evening. When I arrived at the centre, she was on the third floor. I called her up and told her that the water was filling up the basement. She came out, wet till her waist. She was saved somehow. I have already paid the fees."

Besides the apathy of coaching centres, students also raised slogans against the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, the Delhi Police and AAP Rajya Sabha MP Swati Maliwal, who had come to the spot. "There are no leaders in our protest. We are here to unite the voice of all aspirants," said Vishal Sehrawat, a UPSC aspirant from Jaipur.

L-G slams AAP govt, BJP calls incident 'murder'

BJP demands resignations of Atishi, Mayor; Cong flags govt's negligence

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 28

SLAMMING THE AAP-led Delhi government over the deaths of three UPSC aspirants, L-G V K Saxena said the incident is "indicative of the larger malaise of misgovernance that Delhi has been subjected to during the last decade or so".

The Opposition BJP called it a "murder" and demanded the resignation of Power Minister Atishi and Delhi Mayor Shelly Oberoi while the Congress, on its part, flagged the negligence and incompetence of the government.

The L-G also directed Divisional Commissioner Manish Kumar Gupta to submit a report — covering every aspect of the flooding at Rau's IAS Study Circle in Old Rajinder Nagar — by Tuesday. His directions came even as PWD and Revenue Minister Atishi directed Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar to conduct a magisterial inquiry into the matter and submit a report within 24 hours.

Directing all officials concerned to take necessary measures, Atishi said: "Strongest possible action needs to be taken against those whose negligence caused this incident. Whoever is found guilty should not be spared and action needs to be taken against them on priority."

In a series of posts on X, L-G Saxena paid his condolences to the families of the deceased and wrote, "I am deeply anguished by the death of three civil services aspirants due to water-logging in the basement of a coaching centre and that of another student due to water-logging-related electrocution. That this should happen in the Capital of India is most unfortunate and unacceptable."

He said seven others had been electrocuted in the last seven days: "These incidents clearly indicate criminal neglect and the failure of basic maintenance and administration by the relevant agencies and departments."

The L-G further underlined that while nothing can "bring back the precious young lives lost due to the negligence of the administration and the criminal misconduct of those running coaching institutions, the responsibility of those who caused the loss of lives will be determined, and the guilty will be held accountable".

Slamming the AAP government, Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva at a press conference Sunday said, "This is not an accident but a murder that has taken place due to their greed and corruption. If there is any shame left, both minister Atishi and AAP MLA Durgesh Pathak, who is in charge of the MCD, should resign."

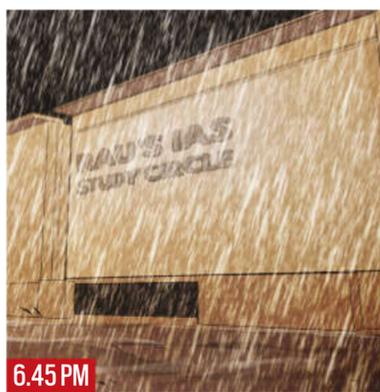
BJP MP Bansuri Swaraj claimed that since July 22, locals have been complaining about water-logging due to the choked drain in the area where the coaching centre is located but AAP MLA Pathak did nothing. She said that the death of young students was a clear case of "criminal negligence".

The BJP also sought accountability for an incident last week where a UPSC aspirant was electrocuted in Patel Nagar. Sachdeva said: "Whether it was the incident at a coaching centre in Old Rajinder Nagar last night or the accident in South Patel Nagar last week, cases should be registered against the Delhi government, MCD, Delhi Fire Services, Jal Board, power discom and the owner for investigation and action."

Taking to X, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said the lives lost was "due to criminal negligence of the government and administration".

Following a visit to the site of the incident, Delhi Congress chief Devender Yadav said: "Three students lost their lives due to official apathy and negligence of the Kejriwal government and its incompetence and corruption in carrying out desilting work... in the last 10 years, the AAP government made hollow promises. But due to the blame game between the AAP and BJP, no work gets done in the MCD..."

WHAT HAPPENED ON SATURDAY



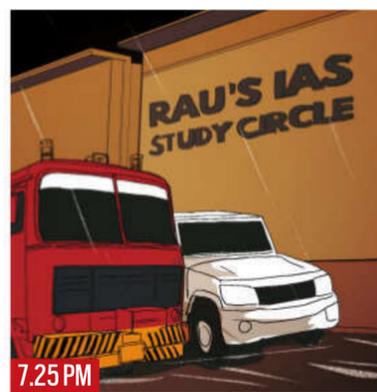
6.45 PM

Heavy rain leads to waterlogging on the road. The gate to Rau's IAS Study Circle breaks and water gushes in. It accumulates in the basement. 20-25 students are inside at the time



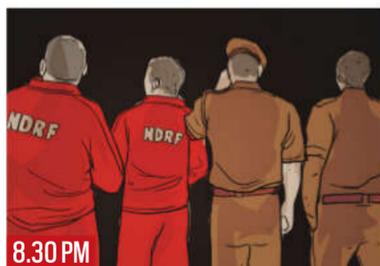
7.00 PM

15 students run out of the basement and security guards on the first floor cut electricity to prevent electrocution. 3-4 persons are pulled out. By this time, water is at level with the road



7.25 PM

Police teams along with five fire tenders reach the spot with four pumps to drain out the water from the basement to the road. Another pump is provided by the MCD



8.30 PM

Divers from the National Disaster Response Force are called in



10.39 PM

The body of a woman, Shreya Yadav, is recovered, at a level of six feet in the water



11.18 PM

The body of the second victim, Tanya Soni, is recovered subsequently



1.15 AM

The body of Nivin Dalwin is recovered after most of the water is pumped out onto the road
Illustration: Suvajit Dey

'At first, water trickled in slowly. Then it was a deluge'

ARNABJIT SUR
& PRAGYNESH
NEW DELHI, JULY 28

IT WAS close to 7 pm on Saturday. Anmol Nath, 26, was studying inside the library of Rau's IAS Study Circle, located in the basement of the three-storey building in Old Rajinder Nagar. He recollected the time because of the librarian, alerting them that the premises would shut in a few minutes.

Unbeknownst to Nath, and 20-odd UPSC aspirants, the road outside was flooded following heavy rain, the water nearly knee-deep. Soon, the gate to the academy collapsed owing to the pressure. The rainwater made its way in, pouring into the basement.



Police & rescue teams outside the centre, Saturday. Cajendra Yadav

that water was about to enter the library and that everyone should get out immediately. "At first, the water trickled in slowly. All of a sudden, it turned into a deluge. Some of us students managed to run up the stairs and get out, but 8-9 persons were still stuck inside... so we fashioned ropes out of pieces of cloth and threw them

down, but to no avail. It was a horrific scene... we couldn't understand what was happening... I then called police," said Nath.

By this time, eyewitnesses said two security guards on the second floor switched off the electricity supply to prevent electrocution and rushed to the basement to check if any stu-

dents were trapped.

At the same time, a student who had stepped out for a walk at 6.30 pm, returned to collect his belongings — his tablet and books — only to find people rushing out of the building in panic.

In 15-20 minutes, five fire tenders with four water pumps deployed by DFS Chief Atul Garg arrived at the spot by 7.25 pm. Police teams from the Central district had reached by then.

Garg said they started to pump out the water but it kept flowing back. "The water being pumped out was not getting drained out and returned to the basement. This made rescue operations difficult," he said.

Divers from the National Disaster Response Force were called in; they arrived by 8.30 pm. Said an officer, "The NDRF teams faced difficulty in spotting

the students as books and furniture were floating around in dirty water, leading to poor visibility."

At 10.39 pm, the first body, that of a woman, was recovered by the DFS and NDRF divers. "At this time, the water level was at around 6 feet so the body could be spotted... At 11.20 pm, we found the second body, also of a woman," said another officer.

An hour later, at 1.10 am, they found the the body of a man.

Sharing a video clip of the flooding outside the coaching centre on his Instagram account, Garg wrote: "This is the reason why water gushed into the basement. Because of vehicle movement, water thrust caused the main gate to collapse and allowed all water accumulated on road to rush into the building, giving very little time for students to escape."

CONDOLENCES POUR IN

The common citizen is paying the price of unsafe construction, poor town planning and irresponsibility of institutions at every level by losing his life... A safe and comfortable life is the right of every citizen and the responsibility of the governments.

RAHUL GANDHI
LEADER OF OPPOSITION IN THE LOK SABHA

This is criminal and irresponsible. Accountability must be fixed and most importantly, every construction, every activity that is illegal and life-threatening in the areas where competitive students live must be rectified.

PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA
CONGRESS LEADER

The responsibility lies directly with the Delhi government. It is a different matter that the Delhi government has announced a committee. The responsibility should be fixed and everyone should come forward to remove shortcomings.

MANOHAR LAL KHATTAR
UNION MINISTER, HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS

"Officers have been directed to meet the bereaved family of the student from Ambedkar Nagar district (Uttar Pradesh) who died in this accident and provide them all possible help by coordinating with the officials of Delhi. I pray to Lord Shri Ram to grant salvation to the departed souls. Om Shanti!

YOGI ADITYANATH
UTTAR PRADESH CM

3 UPSC ASPIRANTS DIE AT FLOODED COACHING CENTRE IN OLD RAJINDER NAGAR

'Possibility of major accident' flagged in complaint to MCD by UPSC aspirant

'Under process', reads the complaint status despite reminders to the civic body by the student

SAMAN HUSAIN & PRAGYNESH
NEW DELHI, JULY 28

NEARLY A month before three students drowned in the flooded basement of Rau's IAS Study Circle in Old Rajinder Nagar, a complaint was filed with the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) regarding the alleged illegal use of the basement.

A civil services aspirant, Kishor Singh Kushwah, filed the complaint against the coaching centre on June 26. Reminders were sent to the civic body on July 15 and July 22. "Despite not having permission, they (Rau's) are running a classroom without NOC in the basement; they are running test classes, which are affecting the lives of students and staff. There is a possibility of a major accident...big UPSC coaching institutes are running classes at illegal places by putting the lives of the students at risk," Kushwah stated in his complaint.

In the reminder on July 15, he wrote, "Sir, it is a very important and urgent issue, take strict action". In his second reminder, five days before the students drowned, Kushwah pleaded for intervention, writing, "Sir please take action... It's an issue of student safety." No action, however, was taken in the days that followed. "Under process", reads the "current status" of the online complaint.

A crackdown against coaching centres took place only a day after the tragedy. The MCD on Sunday sealed basements of 13 coaching centres in Rajinder Nagar, including that of Rau's IAS Study Circle, and nearby areas for flouting norms.

According to MCD officials, any commercial activity in basements is illegal and only storage and parking are allowed.



Security personnel outside Rau's IAS Study Circle, on Sunday. Amit Mehra

The completion certificate of the building where the Rau's IAS Study Circle was operating, dated August 9, 2021, states that the basement had permission only to house two staircases, two lifts and two lift lobbies, a parking bay, a car lift and household storage.

Mayor Shelly Oberoi ordered action on Sunday against all such centres that were conducting commercial activities in the basement.

In an official statement to the press, the MCD revealed that the coaching centre in question had violated building bylaws by using the basement for purposes other than those approved.

It also stated that the coaching centre was running in disregard to fire clearance conditions. "It did not provide free access. It used storage as the place for coaching/library. Had it followed the norms of approval, the tragedy would have been

averted. This coaching centre and other buildings along the road have unfortunately encroached and covered the storm drains by extending their buildings in the form of platforms and ramps, thereby making draining of water difficult and cleaning of drains impossible," the statement added.

'Norms bypassed regularly in the area'

Students of several coaching centres in the area said that classes and tests are held in basements regularly. A look at the coaching centres around Rau's confirms this.

Path IAS Academy, which also has two floors above a Muthoot Finance branch, runs a studio from the basement. On calling the academy office, the receiver says that the basement is not used for classes. "We only use it for content production. No classes take

place there," he said. At Vaid's ICS, an employee said that the basement is used for student counselling during admissions.

Several students said they go to independent "study points" or reading rooms spread across the area — most of them in basements. On its board, Invictus Library says it is located in the basement of building 25/24 in Old Rajendra Nagar.

Not too far, Wings Library is located in the basement of a residential building. When questioned, the caretaker of the library, Hemant, said that the library will remain closed for some days.

AAP's MCD in-charge and Rajendra Nagar MLA, Durgesh Pathak, also questioned why commercial activity was being allowed in basements.

Pathak, who before joining AAP was preparing for the civil services exam in Delhi, said, "Enough is enough. Not just in

Rajinder Nagar... but in many other localities in Delhi, coaching institutes are using basements for commercial activities... Why were the kids studying in a basement? These are criminal activities and strict action should be taken against any officer who is responsible for this. If such activities go unnoticed, then the whole of Delhi will be ruined." Asked if the waterlogging in the area was due to a lack of desilting, Pathak said, "The drains have been desilted... Just 20 days ago I met the Jal Board CEO to talk about desilting and to ask for super-sucker machines but adequate machines are not provided."

According to rough estimates, there are over 1,000 coaching centres in Delhi. The MCD conducted a survey of coaching centres after a massive fire broke out last year at one centre in Mukharjee Nagar, which is also home to hundreds of such institutes.

'L-G responsible': Bharadwaj shares old clip of meeting with bureaucrats, claims helplessness

GAYATHRI MANI
NEW DELHI, JULY 28

AS THE political blame game simmers over the coaching centre flooding tragedy, Delhi Urban Development Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj on Sunday shared a video on social media of a meeting held last month on monsoon preparation. Alleging that desilting was not carried out properly in the city, which resulted in waterlogging across Delhi, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader claimed helplessness as he said officials did not respond to the deteriorating situation that was flagged in the meeting. Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena is responsible for taking action against erring officials, he added.

Bharadwaj shared the video on X (formerly Twitter) as the Delhi L-G — in a series of posts — criticised the ruling AAP on Sunday for "(the) malaise of mis-governance that Delhi has been subjected to during the last decade or so" while condoling the death of three students in the flooded basement at Rau's IAS Study Circle in Central Delhi's Old Rajinder Nagar on Saturday.

"Delhi's truth — everyone is saying that the work of desilting in the city was not done properly. Due to this, there was waterlogging across the city, and many lives were lost due to electrocution. There is negligence on the part of the coaching institute but a big conspiracy has been hatched against the people of Delhi..." Bharadwaj wrote on X.

"Although the department is not mine, the minister who takes care of it also agrees. The elected government can neither transfer these officers nor take action. Only the L-G can..." he further added in an apparent reference to Public Works Department (PWD) Minister Atishi.

"A minister gives evidence of corruption in desilting and complains, but PWD secretary



Saurabh Bharadwaj said the meeting was held on June 28. Credit: X/Saurabh_MLAgk

Anbarasu does not take any action for a year. The next year, evidence is provided yet again but a spot-check does not follow. Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar, who is the Chief Vigilance Officer, does not take any action. The meeting was held on June 28... It is in the hands of L-G to take action," Bharadwaj posted.

Atishi, among other Delhi ministers, Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar, PWD Principal Secretary Anbarasu, and other officials were present at the meeting. In a statement, Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva said, "The same ministers who were boasting about cleaning drains and sewers until Saturday morning are now, on Sunday, blaming officials for the lack of cleanliness... they want to now show through this video that officials did not cooperate."

Responding to the clip, a senior official who was present in the meeting said, "Releasing a video of the meeting is unfortunate. The Minister who released the clip is responsible for work in his department. Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) comes under his department." The Chief Secretary, MCD commissioner Ashwani Kumar, apart from the PWD Secretary, who

was also present at the meeting, did not respond to requests for comment.

Reacting to Bharadwaj's statement that the elected government has no power to take action or transfer the officers, another official said, "As per the transaction of business rules, the Minister concerned is responsible for disposal of business pertaining to his department." According to PWD officials, the department has completed the first phase of desilting and the second phase of desilting is in the works.

"People expect Urban Development and municipal administration ministers to outline the priorities of his department for a better future," the officials added. Amid claims that the coaching centre was flooded after the bursting of a drain pipe, DJB officials rejected the allegation and said that the road comes under MCD.

In Delhi, there are at least 11 agencies that look after roads and drains of the city, including PWD, MCD, Delhi Development Authority (DDA), Irrigation and Flood Control (I&FC) Department, New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC), Delhi Cantonment Board and Delhi Jal Board.

In first meeting after LS election, PM asks MPs to 'lead charge' for 2025 Delhi polls



PM Modi with Delhi BJP MPs. Credit: X/yogenderchando1

JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI, JULY 28

IN THE first meeting after the Lok Sabha election results, Prime Minister Narendra Modi last week urged seven Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MPs to lead the charge and "break the cycle" of the party's inability to come to power in the Delhi Assembly, said sources.

The meeting took place on Wednesday and is said to have lasted around 20 minutes. The Prime Minister, according to party sources, is said to have reminded the seven BJP MPs — six of whom are newcomers — that "non-performance" and lack of "public connect" were the reasons behind the party's decision to replace their predecessors.

Asking the newly sworn-in Lok Sabha MPs to hit the ground to avoid the same fate, according to party insiders, the Prime Minister told the BJP MPs to deliver as many developmental projects in their respective Parliamentary constituencies as possible in the run-up to the Assembly elections in Delhi, due early next year.

According to party sources, the Prime Minister, underlining the party's inability to form the government in the capital for over three decades, asked the MPs to "rely little" on the party's state unit when it came

PM told the MPs to deliver as many developmental projects in their constituencies as possible in the run-up to the Assembly elections, due early next year.

to the BJP's prospects in the 2025 Delhi Assembly elections and "lead the charge" especially in terms of establishing, and nourishing a connection with the capital's citizens.

In addition to developmental projects in Delhi's unauthorised colonies, sources said, the Prime Minister was also understood to have asked the MPs to deliver on their respective 100-day plans, which they had announced while campaigning for the recently-concluded Lok Sabha elections, within the stipulated deadline.

Party sources pointed out that a majority of the BJP's Delhi MPs — especially South Delhi MP Ramvir Singh Bidhuri, New Delhi MP Bansuri Swaraj, North East Delhi MP Manoj Tiwari and North West Delhi MP Yogendra Chandolia — inaugurated a slew of developmental projects in their constituencies since the meeting with the Prime Minister.

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NOTICE OF THE 72ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Annual General Meeting
Notice is hereby given that the 72nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Company will be held on Friday, August 23, 2024 at 11.00 a.m. (IST) through Video Conferencing (VC) / Other Audio Visual Means (OAVM), in compliance with MCA circulars/ Companies Act / SEBI Regulations (collectively referred to as Statutory Provisions) as applicable, to transact the business as set out in the Notice of AGM. The proceedings of the AGM shall be deemed to be conducted at the Registered Office of the Company.

Notice of AGM and Integrated Annual Report
The Notice convening the AGM and the Integrated Annual Report for FY 2023-24 containing Financial Statements, Auditors report, etc. have been e-mailed to Members whose registered email IDs are available with the Depository Participants (DP) / Registrar & Transfer Agent (RTA). The aforesaid documents can also be accessed on the websites of the Company at www.hindustanpetroleum.com, Stock Exchanges at www.bseindia.com & www.nseindia.com and e-voting agency M/s National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL) at www.evoting.nsdl.com

E-Voting through Electronic Means:
Pursuant to the applicable Statutory provisions, the Company has arranged the provision of remote e-voting facility to its Members through NSDL as under:

| Remote e-voting | Prior to AGM | During AGM |
|--|---|---|
| Commencement | Sunday, August 18, 2024 [From 5.00 p.m. (IST)] | Friday, August 23, 2024 [from commencement till 15 Minutes post conclusion of AGM] |
| End | Thursday, August 22, 2024 [Till 5.00 p.m. (IST)] | |
| Cut-Off date (for eligibility to vote) | Friday, August 16, 2024 | |
| Web link to access | https://www.evoting.nsdl.com | |
| e-voting Event Number | EVEN - 129492 | |

Members are requested to kindly refer to the procedure for e-voting as mentioned in the Notice of the AGM.

Notes:

- A person whose name appears in the Register of Members/Beneficial Owners as on the cut-off date i.e. August 16, 2024 only shall be entitled to avail the facility of remote e-voting as well as voting at the Annual General Meeting.
- The Voting Rights of Members shall be in proportion to the Equity Shares held by them in the paid up Equity Share Capital of the Company as on August 16, 2024.
- Members who have not registered their email address or any person who becomes a Member of the Company after despatch of the Notice of AGM but before the cut-off date for e-voting i.e. August 16, 2024 can email the request to the Company at cosecy@mail.hpcil.co.in by quoting the Folio No / DP-ID-Client ID for obtaining copy of the Notice and Integrated Annual Report. Such Members are requested to follow the instructions given under the Notes to the Notice of AGM to obtain login ID & Password for remote e-voting. However, in order to facilitate ease of future communication, Members are also requested to register their email address with the RTA (In case of Physical Shares) / Depository Participant (in case of Demat Shares).
- The Members who have cast their votes by remote e-voting prior to the AGM may also attend/participate in the AGM through VC/OAVM but shall not be entitled to cast their votes again.
- The Members who shall be present in the AGM through VC/OAVM facility and have not cast their votes earlier through remote e-voting and are not otherwise barred from doing so, shall be eligible to vote during the AGM.
- The remote e-voting shall not be allowed, in any case, beyond the scheduled date and time mentioned in the above table.
- Members who are desirous of inspecting the Statutory Registers/ Documents forming part of Annual Reports can write to the Company on email ID cosecy@mail.hpcil.co.in upto the date of AGM.
- Members who would like to ask questions during the AGM need to register themselves as a speaker by sending their requests mentioning their name, DP ID and Client ID, Folio number, email ID, Mobile Number, to the email ID cosecy@mail.hpcil.co.in on Friday, August 16, 2024 (9.00 a.m. IST) to Tuesday, August 20, 2024 (5.00 p.m. IST). Only those Members who have registered themselves as a speaker will be allowed to express their views/ask questions during the AGM.
- In case of any queries, Members may refer to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Shareholders and the e-voting User Manual for Shareholders available at the download section of NSDL at www.evoting.nsdl.com or call on 022 - 4886 7000 or contact Mr. Amit Vishal / Ms. Pallavi Mhatre, NSDL at the designated email IDs at evoting@nsdl.com

Record Date, Payment of Final Dividend and Deduction of Tax at Source (TDS)
Payment of Final Dividend @ Rs. 11 per share of face value of Rs. 10 each for the Financial Year 2023-24 will be paid after deduction of tax at source as applicable within 30 days from the date of its declaration at the AGM to those Members whose names appeared in the Register of Members / BENPOS as on the Record date Friday, August 09, 2024 fixed for this purpose. The detailed communication sent through email regarding Dividend, TDS applicability and submission of tax exemption documents can be accessed at <https://www.hindustanpetroleum.com/dividend-information> It is also reiterated that in view of the SEBI mandate for payment of dividend only in electronic mode w.e.f. April 01, 2024, Members are requested to immediately update their KYC including bank account details, if not already done, with the RTA (In case of Physical Shares) / Depository Participant (in case of Demat Shares) for timely receipt of dividend.

Place : Mumbai
Date : July 29, 2024

By the order of the Board
V. Murali
Company Secretary

8 GOVT & POLITICS



DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



JOB WELL DONE

AT BJP chief ministers' conclave in the Capital, Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma received special praise from seniors as well fellow CMs for his government's programme to provide one lakh jobs in the state. The initiative drew the attention of Prime Minister Narendra Modi as it did not trigger any controversy or resentment among any sections. Sarma was asked to make a presentation at the CM's conclave and the PM had instructed Central government officials to take all the details from the state officials. The Assam team had also been asked to make a presentation to their counterparts in other BJP-ruled states. This direction assumes significance in the backdrop of unemployment becoming a key election issue across states.

BACK & FORTH

THE LOK SABHA elections may have ended for most, but the Election Commission's grievance cell is still engaged in poll-related works. Recently, some of those who complained about poll code violations received emails from the grievance cell asking for additional information. One such complainant was Jagdeep S Chhokar, a co-founder of the Association of Democratic Reforms, it is learnt. He had complained to the EC on April 22 against PM Narendra Modi's speech in Rajasthan's Banswara. The speech had led to the EC issuing a notice to BJP chief J P Nadda on April 25. On July 15, Chhokar got an email from the cell seeking more details. After he replied, the cell sent another email on July 21 informing him that his complaint had been forwarded to the officer concerned for "quick response".

SHARING GIFTS

ON THE lines of PM Narendra Modi auctioning the mementos received by him, President Droupadi Murmu will also hold an auction for selected gift items presented to her and former Presidents on various occasions. The first auction of 250 gifts will start early next month through a portal. While the proceeds from the PM's gifts' auction went to the Namami Gange programme, the proceeds from the Rashtrapati Bhavan auction will be donated to help children in need.

MGNREGS EXPENDITURE

Desilting taking lion's share, focus on agri: Govt to Andhra, Telangana

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, JULY 28

THE CENTRE has sent advisories to Telangana and Andhra Pradesh governments over generation of high persondays and selection of "renovations and desilting works" under MGNREGS, which have taken up a significant portion of their expenditures.

Around 88% more persondays have been generated in April 2024 as compared to April 2023. On comparing with FY 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 the increase in persondays are 47%, 33% and 90%, respectively, the Ministry of Rural Development said in its advisory to Telangana on May 24.

"In the current FY 2024-25 (till 16.05.2024), it has been observed that a significant portion of the expenditure (58.5%) was made towards renovation and desilting works," the ministry advisory to Principal Secretary, Department of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Telangana, said.

EXPLAINED Why the advisories are significant

THE CENTRE's advisories to two states are significant as both have used up their labour Budget of 2024-25 in the first few months of the fiscal. Telangana generated 9.93 crore persondays till July 28, 2024 against its full year labour Budget of 8 crore persondays. Andhra Pradesh generated 16.19 crore persondays till July 28, more than its full year labour Budget of 15 crore.

To Andhra Pradesh, ministry's advisory to Principal Secretary, Department of RDPR on May 7 stated that in the current FY 2024-25 (till April 2024), renovation and desilting made up 69.5% of the expenditure.

This indicates that the bot-

tom-up approach, mandated by the Act, has not been followed, instead a top-down approach for planning of works has been taken in the state to generate high persondays and high expenditure, the advisories to both the states said, adding that a serious review is required at state-level as large expenditure has been made under renovation and desilting.

The advisories also said the states should focus on agriculture and allied activities and enhance the diversity of work taken up so that livelihood opportunities of beneficiaries may be improved.

Indicating a lack of strategic action on part of both the states to address such issues, the advisory to Telangana specifically pointed to 94,241 works related to renovation and desilting (spillover and new), amounting to Rs 596.28 crore, while for Andhra Pradesh it mentioned 2.16 lakh works related to renovation and desilting are being undertaken (spillover and new), amounting to Rs 676.6 crore.

Agriculture and allied activities comprise only 30.12% of the expenditure as against the required 60% in Telangana during the current FY 2024-25 (till May 20, 2024), the advisory stated. In Andhra Pradesh, only 41.65% of expenditure has been done on agriculture and allied activities, it said.

"Your urgent personal attention and intervention is requested for better implementation of MGNREGS as per the guidelines," said the advisory, issued with "approval of competent authority".

"During a visit of the central team in July 2022, it was found that a large number of works related to desilting of MI (minor irrigation) tanks, staggered trenches in plain land, splitting of works for maintenance were undertaken in every successive year, which is in contravention of the Annual Master Circular 2022-23. It was advised earlier not to take up desilting work for the sake of employment generation without any physical outcome," the advisory said.



Mata Prasad Pandey in Lucknow on Sunday. Express

SP's Brahmin face to replace Akhilesh as LoP in UP House

81-year-old Pandey was Speaker twice

MAULSHREE SETH
LUCKNOW, JULY 28

A DAY before the start of the Monsoon Session of Uttar Pradesh Assembly, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav, in a surprise move, chose 81-year-old veteran Brahmin leader Mata Prasad Pandey to replace him as the Leader of Opposition (LoP). The post fell vacant after Akhilesh quit the Assembly to retain the Kannauj LS seat.

A seven-term MLA from Itwa in eastern UP's Sidharthanagar district, Pandey previously served as Assembly Speaker during the tenure of the Mulayam Singh Yadav-led government in 2004. He was again chosen as Speaker when Akhilesh led the SP to power in 2012.

Sources said a section of the party wanted Akhilesh's uncle and SP founder-member Shivpal Singh Yadav to take over as LoP but after long discussions, the leadership decided against it. With the party having contested the Lok Sabha polls on the plank of reservation and its PDA - pichhde (the backward), Dalit, alp-sankhyak (minority) - formula, its decision to appoint a Brahmin as LoP is aimed to create balance in its Assembly leadership team.

The SP also made two more significant appointments. While Kanth MLA Kamal Akhtar - a former Rajya Sabha MP and Cabinet minister in the Akhilesh government - will be its chief

whip in the Assembly, Raniganj MLA R K Verma who is a Kurmi leader from Pratapgarh will serve as the deputy whip. Verma had joined the SP ahead of the 2022 Assembly polls.

Pandey's appointment assumes significance following the exit of Manoj Kumar Pandey, former chief whip and a Brahmin leader, who joined the BJP in February ahead of the Rajya Sabha elections that month.

The move to nominate a Brahmin face as LoP came as a surprise to some within the party but a senior leader said a Brahmin leader would help the party consolidate the community's votes, especially in the Purvanchal region, and provide it with a more well-rounded appeal given that it already has the support of its traditional Muslim-Yadav base and now also some non-Yadav OBC groups.

Pandey contested his first election from Itwa in 1980 as a Janta Party candidate.

On Sunday, he said, "This government has given only problems to people of the state, thus there is no dearth of issues to raise. There is the problem of law and order at the top, unemployment, problems of students, farmers etc. We will fight for all these issues."

Referring to Pandey as a "prakash ka stambha (pillar of light)", Akhilesh said the leader "has the long experience of knowing, understanding and making others follow healthy traditions at the Vidhan Sabha".



Tripura CM Manik Saha, Rajasthan's Bhajan Lal Sharma, Madhya Pradesh's Mohan Yadav, Manipur's Biren Singh, Gujarat's Bhupendra Patel and Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath during a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi, Sunday. PTI

PM Modi shares 'Mann Ki Baat' on Paris Olympics, Khadi, 'Har Ghar Tiranga Abhiyan'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 28

IN HIS monthly Mann Ki Baat radio broadcast on Sunday, PM Narendra Modi urged the citizens to cheer for Indian sports persons taking part in the Paris Olympics.

"At this moment, the flavour of the season globally is the Paris Olympics. The Olympics give our players a chance to hoist the Tricolour on the world stage, give them a chance to do something for the country. Let us encourage our players... Cheer for Bharat," Modi said.

He also said Khadi Gramodyog's business has crossed Rs 1.5 lakh crore for the first time, and that the rising sale of Khadi and handloom were creating new job opportunities in large numbers. "...Do you know how much the sale of Khadi has gone up? 400%... the rising sales of Khadi and handloom are creating new job opportunities in large numbers," he said.

He also interacted with Indian students who performed well in recently held International Mathematical Olympiad.

"Our team performed its best and won four Gold and one Silver medals. Youth from over a 100 countries participate in the International Mathematics Olympiad, and in overall, our team has been successful in reaching the top five," he said.

Modi, while reiterating the theme 'Har Ghar Tiranga Abhiyan' in runup to Independence Day, said: "For the last few years, everyone's fervour for the 'Har Ghar Tiranga Abhiyan' remained high... Everyone feels proud waving the Tricolour... That means, 'Har Ghar Tiranga Abhiyan' has become a unique festival in upholding the glory of the Tricolour. Like earlier, this year too, you must upload selfies with the Tricolour on harghar Tiranga.com." WITHPTIINPUTS

Building development legacy key to Viksit Bharat: PM to BJP CMs

Modi calls for concerted efforts to make India a \$5-trillion economy

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 28

ADDRESSING CHIEF ministers from BJP-ruled states on the second day of their two-day meeting - "Mukhyamantri Parishad" - Sunday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that India would certainly become a developed nation if the Centre and the state governments work in unison for it.

He said the "development of heritage as well as building a legacy of development were important for viksit Bharat".

All 13 chief ministers and all 15 deputy CMs of BJP-ruled states took part in the meeting, which was also attended by party president J P Nadda, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Home Minister Amit Shah, among others.

PM Modi called for concerted efforts to make India a \$5-trillion economy and to associate people with development measures. He also called for use of social media to acquaint people with

government policies.

The convenor of the BJP's good governance cell, Vinay Sahasrabudhe, said in a release that such meetings of BJP CMs are regularly organised and this was the second such meet this year.

Earlier, addressing the meet on Saturday evening, Nadda pointed out "the benefits of such meets - CMs getting to learn from the vast experience of the Prime Minister and other senior leaders, sharing their experiences in governance, and also getting the inspiration to perform better".

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan addressed the delegates on the new education policy and the expectations from states for its successful implementation.

There were also presentations on specific schemes of state governments such as the village sachivalaya scheme of Uttar Pradesh, government employment initiatives of Assam, Gujarat's solar energy initiatives and Bihar's attempts to curb illegal mining.

Why Uttar Pradesh is BJP's new battleground — for the war within

The faultlines between Yogi and his detractors need deft political handling. The stakes are high not only for the party in UP but this will shape the challenge beyond

In private, many speak about "sabotage" in the election and the manner, for instance, in which Rajputs - the community to which Yogi belongs - "sat at home" or voted against the BJP. During the campaign, many Rajputs said they had "heard" that with "400 paar" the BJP brass could shunt Yogi out of Lucknow and send him to Delhi.

There is growing concern in the party now that it has to win back the support of the non-Yadav OBCs, and Dalits in UP who this time switched to vote for the Samajwadi Party (SP) and the Congress. The party is also aware that once these ground-level shifts start in UP - given their scale and scope - it may be difficult to reverse course.

Yogi is increasingly being

seen today as a leader of the Rajputs with Maurya being hardly a match. In the Lok Sabha elections, the party fared poorly in what is considered the Maurya belt (the Allahabad division). Given the way the BJP functions, it is hard to believe that Maurya can take a swipe at the CM, or stay away from a "review" meeting, without the support, tacit or otherwise, of powerful quarters in the party.

For his part, Yogi has let it be known - and reportedly also conveyed to the RSS leadership - that his views on candidates were not taken on board by the central leadership; that he wanted many sitting MPs replaced but his voice was ignored; and that his photos were absent from PM poll posters.

The open tug-of-war in the

party over UP and in UP begs the question: does the central leadership see Yogi as part of the party's recovery plan in the state? Is the current turbulence a way to maintain pressure on Yogi and circumscribe the CM's powers, restoring a balance between the two factions in Lucknow?

Messages are being sent to both Yogi and his detractors from the high command to step back from the line rather than push it. The coexistence of a powerful PM and a strong CM poses challenges in the best of times; it becomes more problematic when the party begins to rapidly lose ground in a vital state.

The BJP leadership knows only too well that adventurism in UP is a risky proposition. Though state elections are three years away, a

victory doesn't look like a BJP cakewalk. The 2024 chemistry between "UP ke do ladke" (Akhilesh Yadav and Rahul Gandhi) has also contributed to the resurgence of the SP and the Congress.

Moreover, Yogi Adityanath is not a Shivraj Chouhan. Though Chouhan was responsible for taking the BJP to victory in Madhya Pradesh, he was not made the CM. Chouhan was readily accommodated in the Cabinet with a portfolio he has a solid record in.

Yogi is a different mould. He isn't one to walk away into the sunset. As head of the influential Goraknath Mutt, he has a following independent of the BJP. His loyal foot soldiers in the Hindu Yuva Vahini may have been dormant in recent years but can be

rallied around. As CM, he acquired an appeal beyond UP and was sent to campaign for the party in other states. His over-reliance on the bureaucracy and his wariness of political colleagues may have come in for criticism but he is seen as a no-nonsense leader who has improved the "law and order" situation in the state.

The Sangh is ambivalent. The RSS backed him for CM's post in 2017 but some in the organisation view him as an "outsider" although one who is a Hindutva icon and may further the RSS agenda. The UP order, now stayed by the Supreme Court, to display the name of the owner of eateries on the Kanwar Yatra route, was calculated to polarise.

The BJP leadership would also be wary of rocking the boat in UP

in the run-up to the crucial state elections in Maharashtra, Haryana, and Jharkhand, states where the party suffered reverses. A victory in these states is critical for Modi to seize the political initiative again, counter the impression that the party is losing ground. A win in Maharashtra, for example, could strengthen the party's hand to take a risk in UP.

Clearly, UP is the post-2024 battleground for the BJP, the state where the reduced tally's shadow looms the largest - making Akhilesh Yadav and Rahul Gandhi smile.

Neeraj Chowdhury, Contributing Editor, The Indian Express, has covered the last 11 Lok Sabha elections. She is the author of How Prime Ministers Decide



THE NEERAJ CHOWDHURY COLUMN

Weekly insight into what's changing in national politics - and why

IT IS just under two months since the Lok Sabha poll results came out but the dust has not settled in Uttar Pradesh, where the BJP was pulled down the most and where the party remains convulsed by bickering, not-so-veiled criticism of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, and counter-moves by the beleaguered CM.

It may still be early to call it a revolt but the face of the resistance is Deputy CM Keshav Prasad

K Kailashnathan: Modi's 'eyes & ears' in Gujarat, now Puducherry L-G

PARIMAL A DABHI
GANDHINAGAR, JULY 28



Puducherry Lt Governor Kailashnathan

A MONTH after voluntarily retiring as Chief Principal Secretary in the Gujarat Chief Minister's Office (CMO) last month, a post created specifically for him in 2013, K Kailashnathan has a new responsibility: serving as the Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry. Kailashnathan's appointment comes amid growing differences in the ruling coalition of the All India NR Congress and the BJP.

The 72-year-old KK, as Kailashnathan is popularly known in bureaucratic and political circles of Gujarat, spent 45 years in various ranks of state officialdom, emerging eventually as a power centre under Narendra Modi. When Modi moved on to the Centre in 2014, he continued to be the PM's "eyes and ears" in Gujarat, and was often referred to as the "Super CM".

After he quit bureaucracy in June, speculation was rife that Kailashnathan was set to be given a bigger role by the Centre.

Originally from Kerala and a chemistry post-graduate from Madras University, Kailashnathan is a Gujarat cadre officer of 1979 batch. His first posting as Collector was in Surendranagar district, followed by Surat. Later, he served in various departments and corporations of Gujarat, such as Rural Development, Industries, Gujarat Maritime Board, Narmada Board, and Urban Development. The BOOT (Build-Own-Operate-Transfer) policy of Gujarat Maritime Board was framed during his tenure, said an IAS officer.

As Ahmedabad Municipal Commissioner between 1999 and 2001, Kailashnathan is credited with having developed the Waska Project for Emergency Water Supply to the city in record time — including laying of a 43-km pipeline — to solve a drinking water crisis. It was at the end of 2001 that Modi took over as CM and Kailashnathan soon caught his eye. By 2006, Kailashnathan was appointed to the CMO. He would not leave for 18 years.

In 2013, when he superannuated as Additional Chief Secretary in the CMO, the Modi government in the state created the post of Chief Principal Secretary to the CM for Kailashnathan. Over the next 11 years, he kept getting extensions at regular intervals and was given charge of Modi's pet projects such as GIFT City, Narmada and then the Gandhi Ashram redevelopment.

Since Modi moved on as PM, three CMs followed: Anandiben Patel, Vijay Rupani and Bhupendra Patel. But, there was no diminishing of Kailashnathan's stature. A senior official said: "Kailashnathan was seen as more powerful than Chief Secretary, and at times even the CMs (after Modi). He called the shots in transfers and postings of IAS and IPS officers. His views would be solicited even on matters that did not fall within his purview."

Row after Church-run Kerala college turns down demand for namaz room

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
JULY 28

THE DEMAND by some students for a space to offer namaz at a college run by the Catholic Church in Kerala, and its denial by the college administration, have triggered a controversy, with the BJP on Sunday attributing the students' demand to "extremist elements".

The issue began on Friday, when a group of girl students from the Muslim community asked authorities at Nirmala College in Muvattupuzha to allot a room for them to offer prayers.

When the demand was not met, other students also got involved and they allegedly gheraoed the college principal, Father Kannadan Francis.

Father Francis said the college had received a complaint that a group of girls were using a common room at the college for namaz.

"A mosque is only 200 metres away from the college. Boys at the college go to the mosque at noon for prayers. It is allowed in all educational institutions and we have also allowed it. However, the girls wanted to use a college room for their prayer, saying that they were not allowed at the mosque. We have told them the college cannot al-

low a room for prayers," he said. The principal said the students who made the demand did not belong to any particular student organisation.

BJP state president K Surendran waded into the issue on Sunday, saying some people were trying to create trouble at educational institutions run by Hindus and Christians.

"Extremist elements are behind the demand. The Left and the Congress are supporting it. Do colleges under Muslim management give premises for prayer for students from other religious communities? If Muslim groups are trying to foment trouble at colleges, BJP will give protection," he said.

The Students' Federation of India (SFI), the student wing of the state's ruling CPI(M), and the Muslim Students Federation (MSF), the student wing of Indian Union Muslim League, distanced themselves from the controversy, issuing statements that said their workers were not involved with the demand.

SFI state president K Anusree said the organisation stood for ensuring secularism in campuses. If campuses allow religious practices of any particular community, such a move will affect the secular nature of the college campuses, she said, adding: "We are not associated with the demand raised at Nirmala College."



TUNING IN

Indian Navy personnel, aboard INS Tabar, participate in Russia's Navy Day celebrations in St Petersburg on Sunday. PPT

Bring back Netaji's remains from Japan: Grandnephew to PM

Kolkata: Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's grandnephew, Chandra Kumar Bose, wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday, urging him to bring back the freedom fighter's remains from Japan's Renkoji by August 18.

Chandra, a former BJP leader, also expressed the need for a final statement from the Centre to put an end to false narratives and theories about Netaji. "It is time that the Government, under your able leadership, has taken the initiative to declassify Netaji-related files and come to a closure. After the release of all the files (10 enquiries — national and international), it is evident that Netaji perished on 18 August, 1945, it is therefore, imperative that a final statement is made from the Government, so that false narratives about the Liberator of India is laid to rest," he wrote in his letter to Modi.

"Efforts must be made to bring the mortal remains of an immortal Hero to India. My humble appeal to you is to bring back his remains from Renkoji to India by August 18," he said. ENS

From LS poll snub to Jharkhand Governor: Why UP BJP veteran Gangwar was picked

LALMANI VERMA
NEW DELHI, JULY 28



Jharkhand Governor Santosh Kumar Gangwar

WITH THE appointment of veteran BJP leader Santosh Kumar Gangwar as the new Governor of Jharkhand, which goes to polls later this year, the party has appeared to send a signal to the OBC Kurmi community whose votes shifted to a significant degree towards the Opposition INDIA bloc in the recent Lok Sabha elections.

Gangwar is an OBC leader from the Kurmi community, a traditional BJP voter base that veered to the Opposition in UP and Bihar in the parliamentary polls. The decision to deny him a ticket to contest from the Bareilly Lok Sabha seat had upset his supporters and a large section of Kurmi voters in Bareilly and adjoining constituencies such as Badaun and Aonla. Though the BJP won Bareilly, it lost both Badaun and Aonla.

Gangwar was first elected as an MP from Bareilly in 1989 and he represented the seat for a record eight terms, the first six of which were consecutive. His only loss was in 2009 to Praveen Singh Aron, then of the Congress.

In the BJP governments at the Centre, Gangwar served as the Minister of State (MoS) and MoS (independent charge) in various

ministries. He was a minister in the first and second terms of the Narendra Modi government but was dropped during a reshuffle in July 2021. At the time, he was an MoS (independent charge) for Labour and Employment.

A law graduate, Gangwar is known in Bareilly as a "down-to-earth politician" and has been able to win votes from Muslims because of his "personal connection" with locals. In 2024, too, he was preparing to contest the Lok Sabha polls from Bareilly, as he had done over the past three decades. But his supporters were left shocked when the BJP dropped him and gave the ticket to Chhatrapati Singh Gangwar, a former state minister who also is Kurmi.

Sources in BJP said Gangwar was denied the ticket because of differences within the BJP, particularly within his community. The Gangwars are a farming community that is the most dominant OBC group in central UP's Ruhelkhand region and has over three lakh voters in Bareilly. PTI

'I thank India and China': Maldives Prez on support to strengthen 'fragile' economy

Beijing/Male: President Mohamed Muizzu has thanked India and China for helping strengthen the Maldives' fragile economy, highlighting the importance of the two countries in addressing the island nation's looming debt crisis and its future development.

China and India provide the most assistance in repaying the country's debt, Muizzu said on Friday at an official function held to mark the 59th anniversary of the country's Independence. "I thank the Chinese and Indian governments on behalf of the Maldivian people for their cooperation to strengthen the economy, to assure our economic sovereignty, for the sake of the Maldivian people," Muizzu was quoted as saying by Maldivian news portal adhadhu.com.

He also praised Rs 400 crore assistance by India and sought to restructure debt owed to India by Maldives. The marked change in his policy towards India came as in May 2024 when the IMF warned the Maldives that it faces a high risk of debt distress without significant policy changes. After this, the Muizzu government sought the restructuring of loans from China. Maldives debt to China reportedly amounted to over \$1.3 billion. PTI

Priyanka's Israel criticism in contrast to Cong stand

MANOJ CG
NEW DELHI, JULY 28



Priyanka is set to make her poll debut from Wayanad

CONGRESS GENERAL secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra has once again spoken out strongly against Israel's deadly and devastating offensive in Gaza, calling the war that has claimed the lives of thousands of people so far "barbaric" and asking every country to condemn the Israeli government's "genocidal actions" and force them to stop.

Her remarks Friday came after Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu, in his first address to the US Congress since the start of the Israel-Hamas war last October, said he would settle for nothing less than "total victory" against Hamas. He also framed the war as a "clash between barbarism and civilisation".

"It is no longer enough to speak up for the civilians, mothers, fathers, doctors, nurses, aid workers, journalists, teachers, writers, poets, senior citizens and the thousands of innocent children who are being wiped out day after day by the horrific genocide taking place in Gaza," Priyanka posted on X. "It is the moral responsibility of every right thinking individual including all those Israeli citizens who do not believe in hatred and violence, and every government in the world to condemn the Israeli government's genocidal actions and force them

to stop. Their actions are unacceptable in a world that professes civility and morality. Instead we are subjected to the image of the Israeli Prime Minister being given a standing ovation in the US Congress."

"He calls it 'a clash between barbarism and civilization'. He is absolutely correct, except that it is him and his government that are barbaric and their barbarism is being given the unstinting support of most of the western world. It is truly a shame to watch."

It is not the first time Priyanka has spoken on the Israeli invasion but her fresh remarks come as she prepares for her electoral debut from Wayanad, which has a considerable Muslim population.

Amid the rising death toll in Gaza, Priyanka, in October last year, attacked Israel, accusing it of violating every international law. "Even after the killing of 7,000 people in Gaza, the cycle of blood-

shed and violence has not stopped. Out of these 7,000 people, 3,000 were innocent children," she said. "There is no international law that has not been trampled upon... There is no such rule which has not been flouted... When will humanity wake up?" she said.

She then slammed the Modi government after it abstained from voting on the resolution on the Israel-Hamas conflict at the UNGA in October.

Cong position

The war, triggered by Hamas' attacks in Israel on October 7, initially put the Congress, which has historically been sympathetic to the Palestinian cause, in a bind. The Congress initially did not name Hamas and refrained from using the word terror to describe its audacious attack on Israel, prompting some leaders such as Lok Sabha MP Shashi Tharoor to point out at a meeting of the CWC on October 9 that its resolution should condemn the Hamas attack on Israel, name the outfit, and use the word "terror".

The resolution, however, did not mention the Hamas attack at all. "The CWC expresses its dismay and anguish on the war that has broken out in the Middle East

where over a thousand people have been killed in the last two days. The CWC reiterates its longstanding support for the rights of the Palestinian people to land, self-government and to live with dignity and respect. The CWC calls for an immediate ceasefire and for negotiations to begin on all outstanding issues including the imperative issues that have given rise to the present conflict," it said.

Seeking to strike a balance, Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge later condemned the "brutal attacks by Hamas on the people of Israel", while adding that the "indiscriminate actions by Israel's military forces in civilian areas, that includes a siege of the Gaza Strip and bombings in it" are also unacceptable.

While the Congress has always been sympathetic to Palestinian cause, the Nehru-Gandhi family had close ties with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. It is often said Arafat treated Indira Gandhi as his sister and kept publicly at her funeral. He also attended the funeral of Rajiv Gandhi, while Sonia Gandhi met Arafat many times after joining politics.

In an article in *The Hindu* in the last week of October, Sonia hit out at Israel for its unprecedented military response to the Hamas at-

tack. "The power of the Israeli state is now focused on exacting revenge from a population that is largely as helpless as it is blameless. The destructive might of one of the world's most potent military arsenals is being unleashed upon children, women and men who have no part in the Hamas assault; they, instead, for the most part, have been at the heart of decades of discrimination and suffering," she wrote.

She wrote, "the world stands diminished again by Israel's disproportionate and equally brutal response". There is a historical context too. In 1948, India was the only non-Arab country that voted against a UN-proposed partition plan of Palestine in the General Assembly that led to the creation of Israel.

But the needle shifted slightly in 1992, when the then Congress government headed by P V Narasimha Rao opened an Indian Embassy in Tel Aviv. While India-Israel ties grew, the Congress-led UPA government ensured India remained a friend of the Palestinian Authority, supporting its inclusion as a full member of UNESCO in 2011 and co-sponsoring a resolution at the UNGA to induct it as a non-member observer state at the UN without voting rights.

Amid unease in ties, Jaishankar holds talks with Blinken in Tokyo

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
TOKYO, JULY 28



EAMS Jaishankar interacts with the Indian diaspora in Japan's Edogawa, Sunday. PPT

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS Minister S Jaishankar on Sunday held "wide-ranging" talks with his American counterpart Antony Blinken against the backdrop of an unease in India-US ties following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Russia three weeks back. The duo is in Tokyo to attend a meeting of foreign ministers of the four-nation grouping Quad or Quadrilateral coalition on Monday.

The talks between Jaishankar and Blinken also came amid Washington consistently seeking accountability from New Delhi in the case relating to the alleged foiled plot to kill Sikh extremist Gurupatwant Singh

Pannun in New York. It is not immediately clear whether Modi's visit to Russia and the murder-for-hire plot figured in the Jaishankar-Blinken talks.

In a post on X, Jaishankar said: "Great to catch up with @SecBlinken in Tokyo today..."

Our bilateral agenda progresses steadily. Also had a wide-ranging discussion on regional and global issues."

In his post on X, Blinken wrote that he met Jaishankar "to deepen US-India collaboration and affirm our shared commitment to regional peace, security, and prosperity". It is learnt that the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the situation in Gaza figured in the talks.

The US and several of its allies were outraged over the timing of Modi's July 8-9 visit to Moscow as it coincided with the NATO summit in Washington.

US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Donald Lu told a US Congressional hearing on Tuesday that the US was disappointed by the "symbolism" and "timing" of Modi's visit to Russia.

Ministry of Culture
Government of India

Prime Ministers Museum and Library cordially invites you to a Talk on

The Rise and Growth of the Pasmanda Movement in India by **Dr. Mohammad Arshad** Fellow, PMML

Tuesday, 30 July 2024 at 3:00pm

Venue: Seminar Room, Prime Ministers Museum and Library Teen Murti House, New Delhi

All are Welcome.

Those wishing to have their names added to the email list may please email us at: ccs2nmml@gmail.com

CBC 09142/12/0015/2425

GOVT. OF BIHAR
BIHAR COMBINED ENTRANCE COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION BOARD
I.A.S. Association Building, Near Patna Airport, Patna-14.

POST GRADUATE DENTAL ADMISSION COUNSELLING (PGDAC)-2024 for MDS in Govt./ Private Dental colleges of Bihar

Advt. No.- BCECEB(PGDAC)-2024/05 Dated : 28.07.2024 bceceboard.bihar.gov.in

2nd round Counselling से सम्बन्धित आवश्यक सूचना

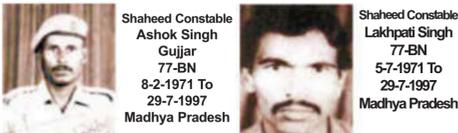
विज्ञापन संख्या- BCECEB(PGDAC)-2024/03 दिनांक 16.07.2024 एवं 2024/04 दिनांक 25.07.2024 के क्रम में PGDAC-2024 से सम्बन्धित सभी अभ्यर्थियों / संस्थानों / सर्व साधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि:

- वैसे अभ्यर्थी जो PGDAC-2024 Counselling हेतु Security Deposit की राशि जमा करते हुए पूर्ण रूप से आवेदन भर चुके हैं परन्तु किसी कारणवश Round-1 Counselling हेतु Choice filling नहीं कर पाये हैं तथा Round-2 Counselling में Participate करना चाहते हैं तो वे भी निम्नवत् कार्यक्रम अनुसार Choice filling करने हेतु पात्रता-प्राप्त हैं, जिसके लिए उन्हें निम्नवत् कार्यक्रम अनुसार Online counselling Portal के माध्यम से Online Registration-cum-Choice filling करना अनिवार्य होगा।
- विज्ञापन संख्या- BCECEB(PGDAC)-2024/04 दिनांक 25.07.2024 के अलावा वैसे अभ्यर्थी जो Free Exit हुए हैं एवं Round-2 कॉन्सलिंग में participate करना चाहते हैं तो वैसे सभी अभ्यर्थी निम्नवत् कार्यक्रम अनुसार Round-2 Counselling हेतु अपने Online counselling Portal के Account में Login कर Fresh choice filling करना अनिवार्य होगा।
- Round-2 Seat Allotment / Document Verification / Admission से सम्बन्धित कार्यक्रम निम्नवत् है:**
 - Date of online registration-cum-choice filling for seat allotment (2nd Round) : 30.07.2024
 - Last date of online registration-cum-choice filling for seat allotment and locking (2nd Round) : 01.08.2024
 - 2nd Round provisional Seat Allotment Order publication : 04.08.2024
 - Downloading of allotment order (2nd round) : 04.08.2024 to 06.08.2024
 - Document Verification/Admission (2nd round) : 05.08.2024 to 06.08.2024
- पूर्व प्रकाशित विज्ञापन संख्या-BCECEB(PGDAC)-2024/03 दिनांक 16.07.2024 एवं 2024/04 दिनांक 25.07.2024 को अन्य शर्तों / नियम यथावत् रहेगी।

परीक्षा निर्वन्क

SALUTE THE SOLDIER

**CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE
MANIPUR
29 July 1997**



Shaheed Constable Ashok Singh Gujjar 77-BN 8-2-1971 To 29-7-1997 Madhya Pradesh



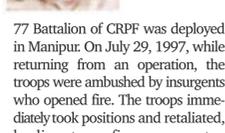
Shaheed Constable Lakhpati Singh 77-BN 5-7-1971 To 29-7-1997 Madhya Pradesh



Shaheed Constable Narayan Chavan 77-BN 1-7-1971 To 29-7-1997 Karnataka



Shaheed Constable P. Venkateshan 77-BN 6-5-1968 To 29-7-1997 Tamil Nadu



77 Battalion of CRPF was deployed in Manipur. On July 29, 1997, while returning from an operation, the troops were ambushed by insurgents who opened fire. The troops immediately took positions and retaliated, leading to a fierce encounter.

With no cover available, the troops advanced using heavy fire. Despite severe injuries on both sides, the valour and bravery of the troops forced the insurgents to flee. Five CRPF troopers laid down their lives on the same day, and one braveheart succumbed to his injuries on July 30, attaining martyrdom.

**CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE
JAMMU & KASHMIR
29 July 1995**



Shaheed Sh. B. S. Rahi, Asst. Comdt. 30 BN 01-04-1944 To 29-7-1995 Punjab

30 Battalion of CRPF was deployed in Jammu and Kashmir for anti-terrorist operations. On July 29, 1995, during an area domination patrol at Bemina, P.S. Parimpora on the Srinagar-Baramulla

bypass road, the troops encountered an ambush. Militants detonated an IED and opened indiscriminate fire on the troops. One vehicle bore the brunt of the blast, and Shaheed Sh B S Rahi, Asst. Comdt., sustained severe injuries. Despite his injuries, he immediately took position with his troops and retaliated. After a fierce encounter, the militants fled the area. Shaheed Sh B. S. Rahi led his men from the front, ultimately laying down his life for the nation. His gallant actions are a shining example of courage, leadership, and selfless devotion, upholding the finest traditions of the CRPF.

**CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE
ANDHRA PRADESH
29 July 2001**



Shaheed Head Constable Din Bhandhu Basak 63-BN 29-04-1965 To 29-7-2001 West Bengal



Shaheed Head Constable Rajesh Singh Chauhan 01-01-1963 To 29-7-2001 Madhya Pradesh

CRPF troops of 63 Battalion were stationed at PS Etrunagar, district Warangal. On 29 July 2001, Maoists from the PWG, disguised as civilians, placed a tractor trolley loaded with explosives near the police station gate and took strategic positions. They detonated the explosive and opened a heavy fire on the police station. The troops immediately retaliated. The Maoists intended to annihilate the troops and loot their weapons, but the steadfast response from the CRPF thwarted their plans. In the fierce gun battle, both sides sustained injuries. Despite being injured, Shaheed HC Din Bhandhu Basak and Shaheed HC Rajesh Singh Chauhan continued to fire and direct their comrades until they attained martyrdom, keeping the morale high and repelling the attack.

**CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE
Manipur
29 July 1999**



Shaheed SI Mohan Singh 120-BN 15-08-1949 To 29-7-1999 Uttarakhand

Shaheed SI Mohan Singh Bisht of 120 Battalion of CRPF, deployed in Manipur for counter-insurgency operations, displayed exceptional courage on July 29, 1999. During an operation in Imphal, he led a ferocious attack on holed-up insurgents, inflicting heavy losses on them. Despite being severely injured by grenades lobbed by the insurgents, he continued to fight bravely and later succumbed to his injuries. For his gallant action, he was posthumously awarded the Police Medal for Gallantry.

**CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE
JAMMU & KASHMIR
29 July 2005**



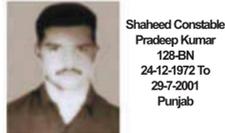
Shaheed Constable Tirmal Santosh Sukadeo 43-BN 1-6-1979 To 27-7-2006 Maharashtra

On 29 July 2005, two militants attacked BSF and civil police posts. CRPF troops, led by the DIG, rushed to the location to identify the militants' positions. As they advanced, the militants opened heavy fire, injuring several, including HC/RO Ram Bhuwan Yadav, who later succumbed to his injuries and attained martyrdom at the altar of duty. The joint forces continued the operation and successfully neutralized both militants.

**CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE
ASSAM
29 July 2001**



Shaheed Constable Farooq Ahmed 128-BN 01-12-1995 To 29-7-2001 Jammu & Kashmir



Shaheed Constable Pradeep Kumar 128-BN 24-12-1972 To 29-7-2001 Punjab

On 29 July 2001, CRPF troops of 128 Battalion launched an operation against insurgents in village Bhaukaj, PS Rangiya, district Kamrup. As they approached their target, the insurgents ambushed them with an IED blast and indiscriminate fire. Despite sustaining injuries, the troops launched a counterattack. In the ensuing fierce gunfight, the insurgents fled. Three bravehearts—Shaheed Ct. Farooq Ahmed, Shaheed Ct. Pradeep Kumar, and Shaheed Ct. Parash Ram Yadav—fought valiantly despite their injuries. Two succumbed on the same day, and one attained martyrdom on 30 July. The nation will forever remain indebted to them and their families.

**CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE
Jammu and Kashmir
29-07-2018**



Shaheed Constable Nasir Ahmad RATHER 182 BN 05-05-1985 To 29-7-2018 Jammu & Kashmir

Under mounting pressure from security forces, terrorists began targeting armed forces personnel to instill fear and dissuade local youth from joining the military. Constable Nasir Ahmad RATHER of 182 Bn fell victim to this strategy. On 29 July 2018, while unarmed in Naira, Pulwama, unidentified terrorists opened fire on him, inflicting severe injuries. He succumbed to his injuries during evacuation, attaining martyrdom.

Classifieds

PERSONAL

I, Harish Kumar s/o Ramesh Chand r/o C -3/3, Rana Pratap Bagh, Delhi-7 have changed my name to Harish Kumar Mehta permanently.
0040740732-1

I, Naresh Sachdeva, w/o Late Sh. Mahendra Kumar Sachdeva, r/o D-103, OmSatyam Apt, Plot13, Sec-4, Dwarka, Delhi-78, shall henceforth be known as Naresh Kanta Sachdeva affidavit IN-DL24479002685460W sworn before notary, A.N.MAGO, 25/07/2024. I declare that both - Naresh Sachdeva and Naresh Kanta Sachdeva- are my names.
0130043816-1

I, SACHIN KUMAR TYAGI S/O AJIT KUMAR TYAGI R/O H NO 1085 SECTOR 38 BEHIND MEDANTA MEDICITY GURUGRAM, have changed my name to SACHIN TYAGI.
0130043813-1

I, Dharmbir S/o Rajkaran, R/O-village & Post office-Jamalpur Gurgaon, Haryana-122503, have changed my name to Dharmbir, Permanently.
0040740801-1

I, Naveen Aggarwal S/o Gulab Chand, R/o 9909, Gali No.5, Multani Dhandha, Pahar Ganj, New Delhi-110055, have changed my name to NAVEEN KUMAR AGGARWAL for all purposes.
0040740800-1

I Poonam Ronchiya W/O, Parveen Kumar R/o R/o.611 POKET 3 Paschim Puri New Delhi (west)110063 have changed my name to Poonam.
0040740802-1

LOST & FOUND

The ICSE Class X pass certificate of Anaghaa Arya (index number-1212892/054) who passed the Class X board examination in 2021 from Shikshantar Senior Secondary School has been irretrievably lost.
0120024547-1

I Gurpreet Kaur D/o S. Manjeet Singh R/o 11/17, Gali No.5, Rashid Market, Delhi -110051 have lost my Agreement to Sell, Payment Receipt, Will & Possession Letter executed on 06.02.2006 by Prem Nath in favour of Nafeesa Begum W.R.T. Property No.11/17, Gali No.5, New Rashid Market, Delhi -110051. Finders may contact at above address.
0040740701-5

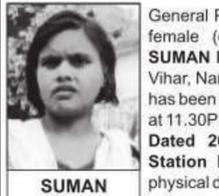
PUBLIC NOTICE

IT IS HEREBY INFORMED THAT MY CLIENT NIVEDITA SHARMA W/O SH. RAJESH KUMAR SHARMA R/O B-8/27, SWASTIK ENCLAVE, SECTOR 18 ROHINI, DELHI IS THE OWNER OF BUILT-UP PROPERTY BEARING NO. C-4823, SITUATED AT SECTOR 28, ROHINI, DELHI AND SHE HAS MISPLACED/LOST ORIGINAL DEMAND LETTER, DDA POSSESSION, IDA SITE POSSESSION, G.P.A. AT&S & RECEIPT IN RESPECT OF ABOVE SAID PROPERTY & MY CLIENT HAS ALSO FORGOTTEN A FRANCHISE VIDE LR NO. 2132402023 DATED 04.03.2023 AT POLICE STATION, SECTOR BRANCH, SECTOR 18, ANY BODY FINDS THE SAID DOCUMENT, PLEASE INFORM HER AT THE ABOVE SAID ADDRESS OR PH. NO. 9806121212. IF ANY OTHER CLAIMANT HAS ANY RIGHT IN THE ABOVE SAID PROPERTY, HE/SHE SHOULD FILE AN FIR & GIVE INTIMATION TO ASSISTED/RY DIRECTOR (L&R) WITHIN 10 DAYS FROM THE DATE OF ISSUE OF THIS NOTICE.

ALIBAG MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, DIST. RAIGAD
e-Tender Notice No. 1893 For 2024-25
ALIBAG Municipal Council invites e-Tender for the work of Improvement to Alibag Water Supply Scheme Under Nagarotthan Maha-abhayan Tal. Alibag, Dist. Raigad in the State of Maharashtra, valued at Rs. 39,55,41,637/- Please visit website www.mahatenders.gov.in for detailed information.
Date: 29.07.2024

Sd/-
(Angai Salunkhe)
Administrator & Chief officer
Alibag Municipal Council

SEARCH FOR MISSING



General Public is hereby informed that one female (depicted in the photo) namely SUMAN D/o Ram Chander R/o T-30 Nihal Vihar, Nangaloi, New Delhi. Aged: 32 Years has been reported missing since 24.07.2024 at 11.30PM from RML Hospital GD No. 030A Dated 26.07.2024 registered at Police Station North Avenue, New Delhi. Her physical description is as under :-

Complexion: Wheatish, Hair: Black, Height: 5', Face: Round, Built: Strong, Clothing: Light blue colour suit, pink slipper on her feet, Identification Mark: short hair and pimples mark in hand.
Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing female but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone have any information about this missing female, please inform to the following.

SHO
Website: http://cbl.nic.in P.S. North Avenue, New Delhi
DP/9883/NDD/2024 Mob.: 8750406888 & 011-23093040

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr.P.C.
Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Madhu Jain, W/o Pankaj Jain, R/o: B-309, Amarpali Leisure Valley, Greater Noida, UP has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 601/2022, U/s 420/406/467/468/471/120B IPC, P.S. Vivek Vihar, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Madhu Jain cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Madhu Jain has absconded (or is concealing herself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said Madhu Jain accused of FIR No. 601/2022, U/s 420/406/467/468/471/120B IPC, P.S. Vivek Vihar, Delhi is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 29.08.2024.

By Order
Ms. Vidhi Gupta Anand
Chief Metropolitan Magistrate
Room No. 59, 3rd Floor, Shahdara
Karkarduma Court, Delhi
DP/9923/SHD/2024

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COURT NOTICE

NOTICE TO SHOW CAUSE (GENERAL FORM)
[Order V, Rule-20 of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908]
District: Rayagada (Orissa)
IN THE COURT OF DISTRICT JUDGE, RAYAGADA(ORISSA)
Arbitration Petition No.03 of 2017. M/s Purushottam Tractors & Dealers MalickApplicants
Versus
CNH Industrial (India) Pvt. Ltd, New DelhiRespondent
TO CNH Industrial (India) Pvt. Ltd, earlier known as New Holland Fiat (India) Pvt. Ltd., Head Office (Tractor Division) at 301, Copia Corporate Suite, Plot No.09, Jodisai District Centre, New Delhi-110025. Whereas the Applicants as above has presented an application under Section 34 of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 before this Court to set aside the ex parte Award dated 07.7.2017 and that notice / summons could not be served upon you in ordinary way, orders for service of notice / summons by way of advertisement in locally circulated daily newspaper has been ordered by the Court.
You are hereby warned to appear in this Court in person or by a Pleader duly instructed on the day of 06th August, 2024 at 10.30 A.M in the forenoon, to show cause against the application, failing whereon, the said application will be heard and determined ex-parte. Given under my hand and the seal of the Court, this day of 20th June, 2024. Sd/- District Judge Rayagada (Orissa)

2 Karnataka villages separated by a river, united by grief after landslide

SANATH PRASAD
SHIRUR, JULY 28



Search operations continue in Shirur village. Jithendra M

AT TWO Karnataka villages located on either side of the river Gangavali, nestled in the picturesque Western Ghats, familiar sights of a bustling riverside tea shop and people going about their daily chores suddenly changed to scenes of death and destruction earlier this month, when a landslide wreaked havoc and took several lives.

The landslide hit Shirur village in Uttara Kannada district on the morning of July 16, and swept away everything in its path, including a teashop, trucks, and people. On the other side of the river, in Uluvare village, residents said the river water rose like a "tsunami wave" after the landslide, destroyed several houses, fishing equipment, and led to the death of a 52-year-old woman.

Eight bodies have been recovered since the landslide and three people remain missing. The ongoing search operation has been massive, involving the National Disaster Response Force, the State Disaster Response Force, the Army, and the Navy. It has continued for the nearly two weeks that have passed since the disaster.

The tea shop that was washed away was owned by Lakshman Naik, a father of two. The shop, located near the Gangavali river on NH-66 in Shirur, had been a regular stop for truck drivers Arjun and Saravana — from Kerala's Kozhikkode and Tamil Nadu's Namakkal, respectively.

On July 16, when the landslide hit, Naik (42), his wife Shanti (36), and their children Avantika (6) and Roshan (11) were in the tea shop. So were patrons Arjun (30)

and Saravana (39), who had stopped for cups of tea. The landslide swept the teashop away. The bodies of Naik and his family, and of Saravana, were recovered. The quest to find Arjun continues, while his truck was located deep beneath the river. The landslide also swept away Saravana's LPG tanker and everything else in its path, leaving tonnes of debris on land and in the river.

There was also a trail of destruction in Uluvare, on the other side of the river. While some residents say it was the explosion of Saravana's LPG tanker that triggered the river water to come down in the form of a massive wave, others say it was the force of the debris washed into the river by the landslide.

Eight houses were destroyed, and a week later, the body of a 52-year-old woman from the village, who was swept away while she was cooking, was found. The eight bodies found were identified as Lakshman Naik, Roshan Naik, Avantika Naik, Shanthi Naik, Sanni Hanumathagouda, Saravana, Lokesh, and Murugan. Arjun, Jaganath Naik, and an unidentified person remain missing. Arjun, from Kozhikkode, has

been the backbone of his family since his father died when he was in class 10, his uncle Abhilaash Chathamangalam said. "He took the onus of his entire family on himself. Through his hard work, he managed to help his elder sister become a bank manager, his younger sister to pursue nursing, and his younger brother with his school education," said Abhilaash.

In the days before the landslide, Arjun was making arrangements to celebrate his son's birthday. "Arjun kept telling his family that he had to earn money as his son's birthday was coming up in July end," said Abhilaash.

The search for Arjun has got incessant coverage in Malayalam TV channels, but Abhilaash said the family knew it would be difficult to find him alive. "But we still have some hope left," he said.

The tea shop Arjun was in when the landslide hit was popularly known as 'Lakshman hotel', even though it formally did not have a name. Its proprietor, Lakshman Naik, is familiar to almost everybody in Shirur and neighbouring villages, and is known as a good samaritan. His tea shop welcomes customers

with a big picture of the late Kannada actor Puneeth Rajkumar. Srinivas Naik, Lakshman's brother-in-law, told *The Indian Express* that Lakshman had been running the eatery for the last 20 years. "He did not hesitate to help these lorry drivers. He welcomed them with open arms and ensured that all the drivers get what they need during their journey," said Srinivas. "On the day of the landslide, Lakshman, his wife and children were all in the eatery. Right after the landslide swept them away, I got a call from villagers. I rushed to the spot and witnessed the disaster unfold in front of my eyes. I saw the Gangavali river turn monstrous... swallowing everything — from shops to trucks. There was literally a hill on the river," he recalled. Four members of his family were washed away, and their bodies were later located downstream.

In the village on the other side of the river, 52-year-old Sanni Hanumathagouda had lit firewood and was preparing kanji (porridge) when the river swelled up and swept her away.

"She was so engrossed in household chores that she didn't notice the disaster unfolding outside. Her son works as a labourer in construction sites and he is the breadwinner of the family," said Padma K, her cousin.

Nobody from the administration has visited Uluvare since the incident, said Nagaraj Naik, a resident. "Our main occupation is fishing. Our fishing nets, boats and houses have been destroyed due to the landslide and incessant rains. Nobody visited us and heard our grievances. All that everyone is highlighting is the plight of Arjun. How should we lead our lives from here on?" asked Nagaraj.

MAHARASHTRA 'HONOUR KILLING' CASE

Police denied us protection, says murdered Dalit youth's wife

MANOJ MORE
PUNE, JULY 28

THE WIFE of a Dalit youth, who was allegedly murdered in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar by his in-laws for marrying from another caste, on Sunday alleged that the couple had earlier alerted the police about threat to their lives but they were denied any protection.

On July 14, 25-year-old Amit Murlidhar Salunkhe was allegedly attacked with sharp weapons by the father and a relative of Vidya Kirtishahi (18), whom he had eloped with and married. He was immediately admitted to a local hospital where he passed away on July 25.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Vidya said: "On May 2, we had a registered marriage. After my husband's family accepted us, we

started living at their home. However, our close friends told us that my family was threatening to kill us. They were telling us that they will take a Sairat-type revenge (referring to the popular Marathi movie which highlighted the menace of 'honour killings') for marrying outside the caste."

Vidya claimed that on June 10, she and her husband had gone to Jawahar Nagar police station in city. "Both of us were told to file separate complaints in writing. We wrote in the complaint that there was threat to our lives from my family. We also told police that we should be given police protection. However, we were not given any protection," Vidya alleged.

On July 14, around 10 pm, Amit was allegedly asked to come out of the house in Indira Nagar by an unidentified person. "As soon as my husband walked up to 100 metres, he was attacked by two

persons. After hearing the commotion outside, we all rushed outside. Amit was lying in a pool of blood. He was conscious. He told us that my father and a distant relative had attacked him with sharp weapon. We immediately took him to the hospital," Vidya said.

When asked about Vidya's allegations, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Zone II) Navneet Kumar Kavat said: "The matter is being investigated." Kavat said they have provided security to the girl and her in-laws. After 10 days of being hospitalised, Amit died on July 25. In his dying declaration, Amit has named the two attackers, who have been arrested, Kavat said.

They were identified as Appasaheb Ashok Kirtishahi (35), a relative of Vidya and Geetaram Bhaskar Kirtishahi (52), her father. Kavat said they have also arrested a third person, whose name has not been revealed yet, in the case.

No entry in Western, skimpy clothes: Ratlam temple priest

Ratlam (MP): Devotees clad in "skimpy western dress, and shorts" will not be allowed to enter Goddess Kalika temple in Madhya Pradesh's Ratlam, its priest said. "Devotees dressed in western and skimpy attire, and shorts (half pants) won't be allowed to enter the temple to protect its sanctity," priest Rajendra Sharma told PTI.

Several plaques mentioning the type of banned clothes are put up around this four-century-old temple. "Any devotee clad in indecent dress won't be allowed to enter the temple or the sanatorium," Sharma said, adding that such devotees can have a *darshan* from outside.

The temple is looked after by the Ratlam district administration under the Court of Wards Act. "I have learnt the temple management committee's decision to ban the western outfits," tehsildar Rishabh Thakur said. Sharma claimed King Ratan Singh, who carved Ratlam, had built this temple 400 years ago and consecrated the clan goddess.

Welcoming the decision, a devotee said the western attire is an attack on India's rich culture and Sanatan dharma. PTI

'Have no kosher butcher': Chicken items off menu at Kolkata's Nahoum

SANTANU CHOWDHURY
KOLKATA, JULY 28



KOLKATA'S FAMOUS Jewish bakery Nahoum and Sons has taken chicken items off its menu, citing "unavailability of a kosher butcher". The 122-year-old bakery has also decided to keep the shop shut on Saturdays. According to an employee, the shop in the city's New Market area has been ordered to remain shut every Saturday (*Shabbath*) as it is a rest day for Jews.

The 122-year-old bakery — Nahoum and Sons — has also decided to keep the shop shut on Saturdays. File

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Jagadish Chandra Haldar, General Manager, Nahoum and Sons, said the decision to close the bakery on Jewish holidays and stop the sale of chicken items

was taken by the owner who lives in Israel. "Adam Nahoum (owner), who is a physician and stays in Jerusalem, asked us to stop selling chicken items. So, we stopped making chicken items. But we continue to sell fish pan-

theras, fruit cake, rum balls, and egg chops. The decision was taken due to the unavailability of a kosher butcher," said Haldar. Kosher refers to food that meets Jewish dietary laws that include specific rules for the types of meat that can be eaten and how they must be prepared.

According to sources in the bakery, the person who used to deliver them kosher chicken died last year. With kosher meat no longer available in Kolkata, owner Adam Nahoum decided to remove chicken items from the shelves. Adam Nahoum is the fourth-generation owner of Nahoum and Sons which was established by his great-grandfather Nahoum Israel Mordecai, a Baghdadi Jew, in 1902.

Indian Overseas Bank
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT
Central Office: 763, Anna Salai, Chennai-600002

Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) invites bids for the following:
GOVERNMENT E-MARKET PORTAL-ENGAGEMENT OF AGENCY FOR MANAGING BANK'S GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE AND HYPERLOCAL PRESENCE
BID NO: GEM/2024/B/5194992 DATED 23.07.2024

The Above GEM Tender document is also available and can be downloaded from the following websites
www.iob.in & www.gem.gov.in
For Tender details and future amendments, if any, keep referring to the following website
www.gem.gov.in

How educated mothers of young kids can be asset for NIPUN



EXPERTS EXPLAIN
SANJAY KUMAR & RUKMINI BANERJI

THE NEW National Education Policy (NEP 2020) was launched on July 29, four years ago. One of NEP 2020's key recommendations was to ensure that by the time children reach Grade 3, they have acquired foundational literacy and numeracy skills.

To this end, the Centre launched the NIPUN (National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy) Bharat Mission on July 5, 2021. The mission has seen energetic implementation in many states, with a new framework for the foundational stage of education developed and released well before frameworks for other stages.

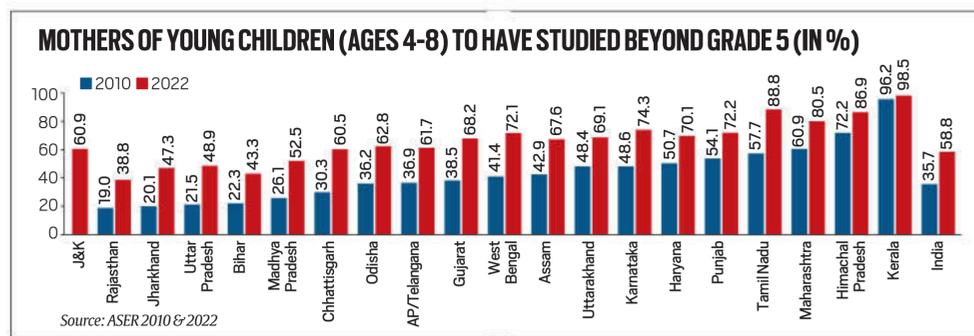
oriented towards the new goals, specially designed teaching-learning materials for use by children and teachers in early grade classrooms, etc. But in addition to these in-school efforts, there are a set of interlinked social and demographic trends which, if leveraged, could provide a boost to the NIPUN efforts.

Here we focus on parents, specifically the mothers of young children (between ages 4 and 8), to see how their contribution can help in strengthening children's learning journey.

Two demographic trends

School enrollment levels (between ages 6-14) have shown a remarkable rise in the last few decades. With the launch of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in 2001, school enrollment levels reached well above 90% in rural India by the early 2000s. The push for universal elementary education has meant that not only are more children getting enrolled into schools, but increasingly, a higher proportion of each cohort is completing elementary education.

The data on education levels of mothers with children between ages 4 and 8 — the target age of the NIPUN mission — show a steep rise over the last decade. According to the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) sur-



veys, between 2010 and 2022, the number of such mothers to have studied beyond Grade 5 jumped from 35% to nearly 60%. In fact, in 2010, less than 10% of young rural mothers had completed more than 10 years of schooling. By 2022, this number was well over 20%.

In states like Uttarakhand, Maharashtra, Punjab, and Haryana, 30-40% of mothers of young children have had schooling beyond Grade 10. In Tamil Nadu, this figure is close to 43%, while in Himachal, it is higher than 54%.

Kerala tops this list with almost 72% of these mothers receiving high school education.

However, young women in India are not joining the labour force at a rate comparable to the rest of the educated world. According to latest data from the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2022-23, the over-all female labour force participation rate — LFPR shows the percentage of the population which is looking for a job — in India is only 37% (41.5% in rural, 25.4% in urban India). For women in

the 15-29 age-group, the LFPR is even lower at 24.5% (25.8% in rural, 20.8% in urban India).

Leveraging educated mothers

The economic implications of India's low LFPR are debated in India's public policy circles. There is undoubtedly scope for much improvement in this area.

But educated mothers provide a uniquely positioned resource for supporting young children's learning. Although father's education

matters as well, 65.5% of young men (ages 15-29) in rural India are a part of the workforce, and thus, not as available to be with children.

The data outlined above suggests that due to the push towards universal elementary education, India today is in a unique position to leverage young mothers' schooling levels as a resource in their children's journey to acquire foundational literacy and numeracy.

The pandemic, which was a difficult and disruptive, has already laid the ground for this higher engagement. With schools closed for more than a year, parents — regardless of their own education levels — had to get involved in their children's education. Before the pandemic, parents largely left the business of learning to schools.

The active participation of families, especially mothers, should be further encouraged to meet the goals of the NIPUN Bharat Mission. For young children to grow and thrive, nothing can be more powerful than teachers and mothers joining hands.

Sanjay Kumar is Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education, Government of India. Rukmini Banerji is CEO, Pratham Education Foundation

EXPLAINED GLOBAL

GAZA'S TELL UMM AMER NOW A WORLD HERITAGE SITE: WHY THIS MATTERS

THE WORLD Heritage Committee (WHC) on Friday decided to include the Palestinian site of Tell Umm Amer in both the UNESCO World Heritage Site List and the List of World Heritage in Danger during its 46th session in New Delhi.

Also known as the 'Monastery of Saint Hilarion', the site lies in the Gaza Strip which continues to reel under Israel's relentless assault.



Ruins of the Monastery of Saint Hilarion. UNICEF

Fourth century monastery

Situated on the coastal dunes of the Nuseirat Municipality, just 10 km south of Gaza city, the ancient Christian monastery was founded in the fourth century by Hilarion the Great (291-371 CE), considered by some to be the father of Palestinian monasticism.

Born in Tabatha, close to where his monastery would eventually come up, Hilarion became a monk at the age of 15. As his fame grew, his small hermitage turned into a thriving monastery, which attracted followers from all over, many of whom would choose Hilarion's mendicant lifestyle.

The present-day archaeological remains of the site span more than four centuries, from the time of Hilarion to the Umayyad period. The ruins comprise "five successive churches, bath and sanctuary complexes, geometric mosaics, and an expansive crypt" making the monastery "one of the largest in the Middle East", according to The World Monuments Fund, an independent organisation which facilitates the preservation of "the world's most treasured places".

The monastery was likely abandoned after a seventh century earthquake, only to be uncovered by local archaeologists in 1999.

ducing much of the Gaza strip to rubble, monuments and sites of cultural significance have not been spared either.

According to Mahmoud Hawari of the Institute of Palestinian Studies, as of February this year, "207 archaeological sites and buildings of cultural and historical significance... have been reduced to rubble or severely damaged". The site of Tell Umm Amer was also "damaged", Hawari wrote in "Israel Destroys Palestinian Cultural Heritage Sites in Gaza" (February 28, 2024).

This is why Tell Umm Amer's inclusion in the aforementioned UNESCO lists matters. The World Heritage Convention of 1972, of which Israel is a party to, sets out duties for identifying, protecting, and preserving World Heritage sites. States cannot take any deliberate measures which are likely to cause direct or indirect damage to this site.

The inclusion on the list of World Heritage in Danger automatically opens the door to enhanced international technical and financial assistance mechanisms to guarantee the protection of the property and, if necessary, to help facilitate its rehabilitation, the UNESCO statement on Friday said.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, JULY 28

LAST WEEK, the Supreme Court agreed to hear a case whose outcome will likely shape the contours of the "right to be forgotten", known in European information privacy regulation as the "right to erasure", in India. The top court now has to decide whether the right to be forgotten is a fundamental right and, if so, how it relates to other fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution of India.

A three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) D Y Chandrachud will hear a challenge against a Madras High Court ruling that on February 27 directed legal search portal Indian Kanoo to take down a judgment in a 2014 rape and cheating case. The acquitted man had moved the Madras HC in 2021, saying that he had been denied the citizenship of Australia because his name appears in the judgment that is publicly available on the legal portal.

What is the right to be forgotten?

The right to be forgotten can be loosely described as the right to remove one's digital footprint (from internet searches, etc.) where it violates the right to privacy. In May 2014, the Luxembourg-based Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU), the highest court in matters concerning the application and interpretation of EU law, affirmed that there exists a right to be forgotten.

In what is commonly referred to as the "Google Spain case", the court ruled on the plea of Spanish lawyer Mario Costeja González to have Google remove information from 1998 regarding the forced sale of his property due to social security debt.

Citing Articles 7 (respect for private and family life) and 8 (protection of personal data) of the EU Charter on Fundamental Rights, the CJEU ruled that search engines must cater to individual requests to remove data that "appear to be inadequate, irrelevant or no longer relevant or excessive in the light of the time that had elapsed".

Informational self-determination — an individual's right to control and limit her personal information — is now widely recognised in EU law. Article 17 of the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) describes the right to erasure. From victims of so-called



A restaurant in Pescara, Italy, where a man stabbed his brother in 2008. In 2019, the 'right to be forgotten' privacy law was used to force a former editor of an Italian news website to delete a story about the incident. *The New York Times*; (left) In 2014, the EU's top court ruled in favour of Spaniard Mario Costeja González who asked for Google to remove information about him dating back to 1998. *Reuters*

"revenge porn" to individuals whose personal cases are on the Internet, the right to be forgotten is a crucial remedy.

How is the right interpreted in India?

In India, there is no statutory framework that prescribes the right to be forgotten. However, not all constitutional rights need to be written in black and white. Until the 2017 judgment in *Justice K S Puttaswamy v Union of India* — in which the apex court explicitly recognised the right to privacy as a fundamental right, placing it as a facet of the right to life, right to equality, and the right to freedom of speech and expression — there were also questions on the right to privacy.

A concurring opinion in the *Puttaswamy* ruling by Justice S K Kaul mentions the right to be forgotten. Justice Kaul said that this right "does not mean that all aspects of earlier existence are to be obliterated... It would only mean that an individual who is no longer desirous of his personal data to be processed or stored, should be able to remove it from the system where the personal data/information is no longer necessary, relevant, or is incor-

rect and serves no legitimate interest". Justice Kaul also gave a list of valid justifications for the right to be forgotten to be violated. These included "exercising the right of freedom of expression and information, for compliance with legal obligations, for the performance of a task carried out in public interest, on the grounds [of]... public health, for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes, or for the establishment, exercise or defence of legal claims".

How have courts ruled on the issue?

In several isolated pleas, mostly asking the court's permission to take down information in court rulings, courts have passed orders with regard to this right.

In the landmark 1994 ruling in *R Rajagopal vs. State of Tamil Nadu*, the SC had talked about a "right to be let alone".

"A citizen has a right to safeguard the privacy of his own, his family, marriage, procreation, motherhood, child-bearing and education among other matters. None can publish anything concerning the above mat-

ters without his consent whether truthful or otherwise..." the SC had said. But the ruling drew a distinction between the right to be let alone and the publication of public records, such as court decisions. "This is for the reason that once a matter becomes a matter of public record, the right to privacy no longer subsists and it becomes a legitimate subject for comment by press and media among others," the two-judge Bench had held.

More recently, several High Courts have passed rulings that often conflict with one another.

In *Dharamraj Bhanushankar Dave vs State Of Gujarat* (2017), the petitioner had asked the Gujarat HC to remove details of his acquittal in a murder and kidnapping case, saying that it had come up during background checks while he was applying for an Australian visa. The court refused to grant him relief, holding that court orders are allowed to be in public domain.

However, in *[Name Redacted] vs The Registrar General, the Karnataka HC in 2017* ensured that the name of the petitioner would be protected in an annulment case. Although the court did not substantially engage with jurisprudence on the right to be forgotten, it said that the ruling is in keeping "with the trend in the Western countries where they follow this as a matter of rule... in sensitive cases involving women in general...".

In 2021, the Delhi HC extended the right to be forgotten to even a criminal case by allowing a ruling involving Jorawar Singh Mundy, an American law student, to be taken down from search results. Mundy was acquitted in a customs case involving narcotics. The HC cited "the irreparable prejudice which may be caused to the Petitioner, his social life and his career prospects" as reason for taking down the details of the case.

The Orissa HC in 2020, while hearing a criminal case which involved "revenge porn" said that the legal possibilities of being forgotten "online or offline cries for a widespread debate".

"It is also an undeniable fact that the implementation of the right to be forgotten is a thorny issue in terms of practicality and technological nuances... It cries for a clear cut demarcation of institutional boundaries and redressal of many delicate issues which hitherto remain unaddressed in Indian jurisdiction," the HC said.

Progress of the monsoon: Taking stock at halfway stage of rainy season

ANJALI MARAR
 BENGALURU, JULY 28

WE ARE almost halfway through the June-September four-month monsoon season. Although the overall rainfall over the country has been good, there have been large variations in the distribution of rainfall, in spatial as well as temporal terms. While at least 10 states/UTs continue to receive below normal rainfall, central and peninsular regions have either received normal or excess rainfall, so far in the season.

Rainfall performance

The monsoon got a good start in June. It covered the southern peninsula ahead of time, bringing widespread rainfall until it covered central India. However, the June rainfall over the country ended at being 11% below normal.

The rainfall picked up intensity after the monsoon covered the entire country on July

2. A majority of regions continued to experience good rainfall throughout July.

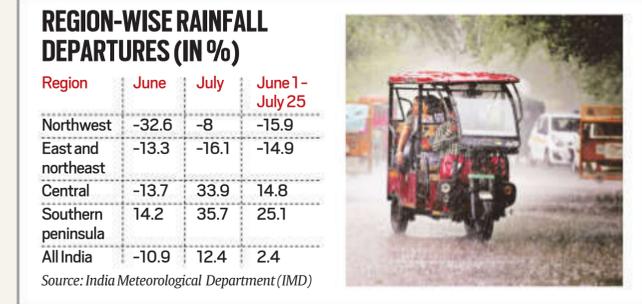
The overall seasonal performance improved due to the rainfall recorded between July 18 and July 24. During this period, a low pressure system developed in the Bay of Bengal and subsequently intensified to keep the monsoon either active or vigorous. The system weakened around July 23.

Between July 19 and July 25, India received 41% surplus rainfall, which was 80.5 mm against a normal of 57.2 mm. The rainfall was largely concentrated over southern peninsular (except Tamil Nadu) and central India regions.

EXPLAINED CLIMATE

Region wise performance

IMD data show that between June 1 and July 19, Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Madhya Pradesh received close to normal rainfall. In the same period, Odisha and Chhattisgarh reported rainfall deficits of 25% and 34%, respectively. Until the third week of July, 12 states were in the "deficit" category.



The situation turned around as the west coast and central regions began to receive unabated heavy rainfall between July 18 and July 24. During this period, Central India recorded 107% excess rainfall — 137.8 mm against the normal of 66.6 mm — and southern peninsular India received 82.6 mm against the normal of 42 mm — 97%



surplus for this time of the season. Gujarat, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Goa, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu received excess rainfall. Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Kerala, and Lakshadweep saw normal rainfall. However, regions along the northwest,

extreme north, east, and northeast India remained largely dry in recent weeks — rainfall deficits here are between 8% and 16%. Despite early monsoon onset in these parts, significant rainfall is yet to be realised.

High rainfall receiving areas such as Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Jharkhand, Bihar, Haryana, Chandigarh, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu and Kashmir have remained in the rainfall "deficient" category.

Behind skewed distribution

The central and southern peninsular regions have received a surplus rainfall primarily due to the position of the monsoon trough — a semi-permanent, low-pressure area extending between Pakistan and the Bay of Bengal during the monsoon season — which usually oscillates between north and south within the season. Whenever it moves towards the south, as it has done in the present case, more rainfall can take place in central, eastern, and peninsular India. When it shifts towards the north, the Himalayan

foothills are likely to receive more rainfall but the rest of India sees a drop in rainfall.

Other rain-bearing weather systems such as an off-shore trough (a shallow trough of low pressure, which develops along India's coast during the monsoon) have also contributed to the surplus rainfall in the central and southern peninsular regions.

As the monsoon trough is yet to move northwards, rainfall has remained deficient over northwest, extreme north, east, and northeast regions, so far this season. Moreover, there have been fewer rain-bearing weather systems, and those that formed did not reach and bring rainfall over these regions.

IMD's forecast does not indicate much rainfall for northwest or north India during early August.

The skewed rainfall distribution can severely impact Kharif crops — sown between June 15 and July 15 — and their yield. For instance, excessive rainfall in Maharashtra's Sindhudurg district forced many paddy farmers to resow their crops this season.



WORDLY WISE
WE ARE IN DANGER OF DESTROYING OURSELVES BY OUR GREED AND STUPIDITY.
—STEPHEN HAWKING

The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

Kargil, the unfinished tasks

Steps taken by the Vajpayee government to reform national security need to be taken forward



C UDAY BHASKAR

KILLING STUDENTS

Will Honourable Delhi CM fix accountability from Tihar Jail? Do traumatised parents have to line up at Raj Bhawan?

THE DEATHS OF Shreya Yadav, Nevin Dalwin and Tanya Soni on July 27, after they were trapped in the flooded basement of a UPSC coaching centre in Delhi's Old Rajinder Nagar, tell a grim story of criminal failures. There is, first, the failure of the coaching centre to prioritise the safety of the students over profits. It flouted the city's building-by-laws to house a library and reading room in the basement, with just one exit/entry point. When water gushed in following the bursting of a nearby drain, there was no way for the students to escape as the door remained shut. Then, the failure of callous local authorities that allowed the unregulated growth of the coaching industry, with overcrowded centres operating in residential buildings, disregarding safety norms. But the tragedy also points to a larger failure — of a government being run, allegedly run, by a chief minister in jail. The AAP government seems much too convulsed by its internal disorders to attend to the tasks of governance in India's capital city, including building and maintaining the infrastructure that can support the aspirations of students who flock to it.

Even as the lapses that led to this incident are investigated, a larger reckoning is called for, accountability must be fixed at multiple levels. The business of coaching is a multi-crore, nationwide behemoth built on the anxieties of young people hoping to crack the civil service exams as a ticket to success in a jobs-starved economy. The pursuit of profit is legitimate but too often, it comes with administrative negligence and a regulatory system that exists only on paper. Witness the industry's exponential growth riding on centres that lack basic safety equipment, or toilets or proper electrical wiring, evident in past incidents — such as the 2019 fire in a Surat coaching centre that killed 20, after the sole exit from the rooftop class, a wooden staircase, was engulfed in flames. Following this incident, an inspection by the Delhi fire department found that several coaching centres around the city had flouted fire safety norms and called for their closure. But little has changed on the ground. When a fire broke out in a Mukherjee Nagar coaching centre last year, students had to use ropes and wires to rappel down the building. That young people around the country are forced to study in unsafe conditions in such institutes, points to the need for a law which can enable regulation of the industry — not mere guidelines, like those issued by the Union government earlier this year.

The tragedy of the Rajinder Nagar deaths is compounded by the political bickering in its aftermath. The blame-game between the AAP on one side and the BJP and the Delhi Lieutenant-Governor on the other, is predictable and unseemly. It also distracts attention from the real governance problems in a state where, in the absence of a firm and clear line of accountability, basic municipal responsibilities, such as desilting and clearing of drains, have become so contested that the High Court is forced to demand a timeline. The deaths of the three students must be investigated urgently. But justice for them can only come when those who are responsible for their safety and well-being act decisively to set their own house in order. The highest court has to clean up the mess after an exam paper leak, maybe grieving parents now need to knock on its door for justice.

AN INCOMPLETE VICTORY

Twenty-five years after Kargil, reforms of India's national security system are still too incremental and tentative

A QUARTER OF a century after the Kargil War ended, a serious reflection would suggest India's victory or "vijay" is incomplete. Pakistan's Kargil aggression in the spring of 1999, just weeks after Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's peace mission to Lahore, highlighted three broad challenges in the domains of defence, deterrence, and diplomacy. On the defence front, the Kargil surprise exposed the multiple vulnerabilities of India's security. India did reverse the Pakistani ingress across the LoC, thanks to the extraordinary courage of officers and men. But sacrifice of its best men is no way of defending a nation's territory; what India needed was a root and branch overhaul of its higher defence organisation, modernisation of its armed forces, upgrading its rusty defence industrial infrastructure, revitalising its intelligence mechanisms, and restructuring the decision-making on national security. The Kargil Review Committee headed by K Subrahmanyam produced a series of defence reforms. Over the last 25 years, Delhi did seek to restructure the national security system. But these reforms have been incremental and sub-optimal. The intensification of the conflict on the China frontier has highlighted India's two-front challenge and the case for faster transformation.

The second was the challenge of countering Pakistan's pursuit of cross border terrorism under the shadow of its nuclear gun. After a period of hesitation, Delhi began to experiment with bolder efforts to raise the costs of Pakistan's terror policy. The 2016 "surgical strikes" across the LoC, and the 2019 air attacks on a terror camp in PoK following the Pulwama attacks demonstrated Delhi's new political will to enhance deterrence. Pakistan's successful riposte in 2019 that saw the downing of an Indian Air Force Mig-21 pointed to a stalemate. India needs a massive military superiority that can inflict decisive punishment on the Pakistan Army for effective deterrence — it is nowhere near achieving that kind of military edge.

Finally, military means alone will not bring the desired results. They need to be matched by diplomacy. The overall balance of power has indeed tilted in favour of India, thanks to Islamabad's economic failures since Kargil and Delhi's rapid growth. Many traditional friends of Pakistan, except for China and Turkey, now see India as a more valuable partner. Yet, Delhi should not delude itself that it can unilaterally define the terms of engagement on Kashmir and other disputes. The change in the constitutional status of Kashmir in 2019 and India's hard line on talks with Pakistan have not eliminated Rawalpindi's capacity to create trouble. The upsurge in cross-border terror attacks in Jammu offers evidence of Rawalpindi's capacity for mischief. Delhi must find ways to engage the political classes and civil society in Pakistan that can create the conditions for transcending the bitter legacies of Partition that were at the root of the Kargil war and continue to hobble the bilateral relationship.

ON JULY 26, the 25th anniversary of the Kargil war, Prime Minister Narendra Modi led the nation in paying tribute to the bravehearts, who displayed extraordinary valour in the face of enormous tactical difficulties posed by the craggy Himalayan topography to safeguard the country's sovereignty. The choice of Dras in the Himalayan heights was appropriate for this solemn occasion.

Whether the Kargil war of mid-1999 was a victory or a case of the armed forces evicting Pakistani troops from Indian territory at a high human cost is a matter of debate. However, PM Modi highlighted a very important aspect of that war. "In Kargil, we not only won the war, we also presented an incredible example of truth, restraint and strength," he said. The endeavour was helmed by then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who headed the first BJP-led NDA government, and the then National Security Adviser, Brajesh Mishra.

The Kargil war has several distinctive facets, each of which merits detailed discussion, but some aspects are particularly important. In the post-Cold War period, this was the first such exigency in which two states with nuclear weapons capability, also proximate neighbours, were engaged in a limited but intense conventional war over territory.

Despite some feckless sabre-rattling by Pakistani diplomats at the UN in the early stages of the war, in hindsight, it is evident that both sides exercised nuclear restraint and the apocalyptic escalation that was feared did not occur. PM Vajpayee arrived at a very prudent politico-military decision: India will evict the intruders even if at high human cost but would not cross the Line of Control and take the war into Pakistan. This reassured the global community that the Kargil war had a limited military objective.

Kargil was also the first televised war in India, and this added to citizen awareness and emotive nationalism — Captain Vikram Batra's battle cry "Yeh Dil Mange More" is now part of collective memory. But Kargil@25 is also an opportune moment to reflect on major omissions and inadequacies. Here, the military and

intelligence domains merit scrutiny.

Over the years, a reasonable body of information detailing the fine print of the Kargil war has accumulated. In hindsight, it may be averred that inter-service cooperation and the spirit of jointness, particularly between the Army and the Air Force, left much to be desired. The numerous first-person accounts testify to such failures and more.

From Pakistan's perspective, Kargil was a gamble, secretly planned by General Musharraf — it was tactically audacious but strategically imprudent. The stealthy intrusion by Pakistani troops has been ascribed to a lack of timely intelligence inputs. Some accounts have placed the onus of the failure on the R&AW (Research and Analysis Wing). Others contest this view but the embedded lessons from the conflict are instructive for the Modi government.

The Vajpayee government was a caretaker one since it had lost the vote of confidence by a single vote in April 1999. However, the outcome of the war paid rich electoral dividends and the Vajpayee-led NDA was back in office later in the year. To his everlasting credit, PM Vajpayee took ownership of the lapses in Kargil and the Cabinet Committee on Security was tasked to analyse the "lessons to be learnt" — an unprecedented step for the Indian governance machinery. The detailed chronology of the decisions that followed is breathtaking.

PM Vajpayee set up a Kargil Review Committee (KRC) on July 29, 1999. The committee's report was submitted to the government in mid-December 1999. The KRC made it clear that it was not set up to conduct an inquiry "but to examine the sequence of events and make recommendations for the future."

Following the submission of the Report, Vajpayee constituted a Group of Ministers (GoM) on April 17, 2000, to review the national security system in its entirety. The Committee was directed to examine the KRC's recommendations and formulate specific proposals for implementation. The GoM held its first meeting on April 27, 2000, and set up four Task Forces (TF) — on intelligence apparatus, internal security, border manage-

ment and (higher) management of defence.

Domain experts from outside the government were invited to head these TFs. They included G C Saxena, N N Vohra, Madhav Godbole and Arun Singh. It is pertinent to note that the Vajpayee team had no hesitation in inviting Arun Singh, who had been a minister in the Rajiv Gandhi cabinet, to be part of the exercise in reforming the outdated national security architecture.

All the TFs submitted their findings and recommendations by the end of September 2000 and these documents were placed before Parliament. Redacted versions were placed in the public domain. However, the Vajpayee government's attention was diverted by other events, including 9/11 and the terrorist attack on Parliament in December 2000. The implementation of the GOM TF recommendations, therefore, remained incomplete.

It is a matter of regret that in the last two decades, India was again "surprised" by the adversary — in Mumbai in November 2008 and in Galwan in June 2022. Reviewing and reforming the Indian national security edifice — both external and internal — and making it nimble and more effective will require time. PM Vajpayee took the first major step by investing in transparency and encouraging deliberations in Parliament — though the Congress used every opportunity to attack the government (remember George Fernandes and "Coffin Gate"?). Will PM Modi be able to complete the task begun by his illustrious predecessor in the BJP and use the same toolkit?

National security matters must not be exploited for short-term electoral gain and politicised. But that seems to be the current state of play in domestic politics. Bemoaning this trend, at Dras, PM Modi claimed that "it is not the party (BJP) but the country that is paramount for me". In his third tenure, which will also define his legacy, Modi must lead by example. Not doing so will amount to dishonouring the sacrifices of the country's soldiers in Kargil.

The writer is director, Society for Policy Studies, New Delhi

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ANNAPURNA BHATTACHARYA

KAMALA HARRIS AND I

Because of her, for the first time, I also saw myself in American politics

ON NOVEMBER 5, I will be a first-time American voter. By the looks of it, I'll be voting for a candidate who shares my grandmother's first name.

Vice President Kamala Harris is now the Democratic Party's presumptive presidential nominee. To many Indians at home and in the diaspora, the vice president's arrival at the forefront of the presidential election has brought on many feelings. For those in the country, living through a deeply nationalistic moment, this is another step into the world. For Indian Americans, it feels more like coming home.

The Indian-American community of today largely traces its beginnings to the 1960s. In 1965, the Immigration and Nationality Act abolished national origin, race and ancestry as bases for immigration into the US. Instead, it permitted immigrants on what then President Lyndon B Johnson called their "merit as [men.]" As a result, foreign professionals, whose skills would benefit the US, were ushered in. A significant section of this group came from India, where, after two centuries of colonial rule, huge investments were made in developing a graduate and professional class.

My maternal grandparents were a part of this first flush of Indian immigrants to the US. Both doctors, they graduated at the top of their class in the Calcutta National Medical College and moved to the US. They raised three children in the US and eventually became American citizens. Even though they

remain deeply Indian, both in behaviour and belief, they are grateful for the home that the US has provided them for 50 years.

Like my grandparents, I grew up in India. I was born in Delaware and moved to the IIT Kharagpur campus when I was two. We returned to Delaware each summer to a 1950s-style bungalow that's been ours since before I was born. Growing up, I felt rooted in both India and America.

For each of the four US presidential cycles following my move, I watched from afar. At four, I didn't understand the paradigm shift that Barack Obama's 2008 win was — its significance dawned on me after witnessing the entirely opposite direction that 2016 took. The next four years challenged my perception of both the US and my place in it.

Joe Biden's 2020 victory renewed my sense of belonging, not least because, Biden, Delaware's golden boy, had alongside him Kamala Harris: A woman who shares a past and a name with my family.

With her, the US had many firsts: The first vice president to be a woman; the first Black, Asian and South-Asian vice president. Because of her, for the first time, I also saw myself in American politics.

And because I did, because I do, I am torn between awe and apprehension.

Harris has been a part of an effective presidential term. In the three-and-a-half years since Biden and she came into office, they have overseen the mass distribution

of Covid-19 vaccines, passed legislation that has dropped the unemployment rate in the US to the lowest it's been since 1969, and created the most significant gun regulation of the past 30 years. Under them, the US rejoined the Paris Climate Agreement and passed the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill that has funnelled huge investments into public infrastructure.

Yet, as effective as their partnership has been, I worry that by herself, Harris may not have everything that made her and Biden such a good team. Joe Biden is a veteran politician; an establishment man who managed to get things done by calling on relationships he's built over five decades. He also happens to be a White man.

Kamala Harris is a biracial Black and Indian-American woman. I don't know how the country will react to her — even if she does win. It's uncomfortable to put this into words because it reflects a feeling I have about myself and who I am to America.

Perhaps, the best thing to do right now is mark the significance of this moment. Whatever happens in November, Kamala Harris's place at the top of the presidential ticket is a celebration of American and Indian plurality, both of which, at present, are fighting against forces that attempt to condense and abbreviate them.

The writer is a second-year student of mathematics and journalism at Duke University, USA

JULY 29, 1984, FORTY YEARS AGO

KAR SEVA DIVIDE

THE VETERAN SIKH religious leader, Baba Kharak Singh, announced his willingness to undertake *kar seva* in the Golden Temple complex and drew a retort from the Nihang chief, Baba Santa Singh, who said this could precipitate a confrontation. While Baba specified no condition, the SGPC, Sikh high priests and the Akali Dal demanded that security forces be withdrawn from the Temple to enable Baba to carry out his *kar seva*.

DONS LET OFF

SUCCUMBING TO PRESSURES from various

quarters, the Maharashtra government has reportedly let off two underworld dons — Haji Mastan Mira and Karim Lala — and 39 others who were arrested under the National Security Act for their alleged involvement in the recent communal riots in Bombay and other places. Their release has surprised many.

J&K WHITE PAPER

THE JAMMU AND Kashmir government has in a "white paper" said that the state Governor, Jagmohan, was not bound by the advice of the council of ministers in relation to the appointment of G M Shah as Chief Minister on July 3 after Farooq Abdullah lost majority in the

Assembly. The 32-page document says that there is no clause in the Jammu and Kashmir Constitution which says that the governor is debarred from taking note of a "fact which is unmistakably proved before him."

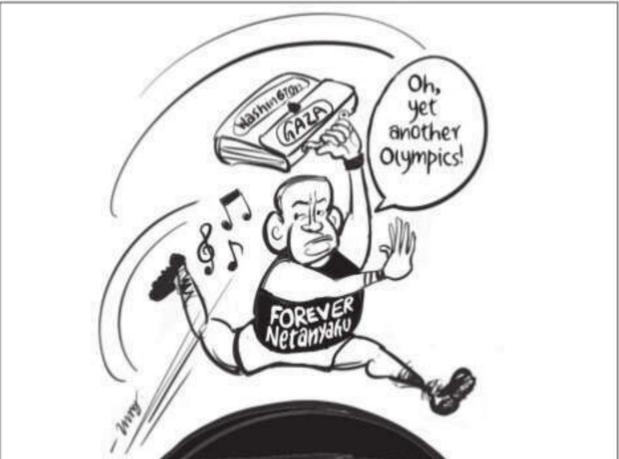
DHAKA-DELHI HEAT UP

BANGLADESH ON SATURDAY expressed "surprise and disappointment" at a statement by the Home Minister, PV Narashimha Rao, that India will go ahead with plans to build an anti-immigrant fence along the border between the two countries. Rao told Parliament that India's decision concerned no one else and that it would not be discussed with Dhaka.



FREEZE FRAME

E P UNNY



DIS/AGREE
THE BEST OF BOTH SIDES

A fortnightly column, which offers not this-versus-that, but the best of both sides, to inform the debate



C.R. Sasikumar

A recent circular allows central government employees to participate in RSS's activities. Does this undermine the neutrality of the steel frame? Or is the Opposition repeating old allegations reflexively?

Attacking RSS is diversionary

Its opponents must engage in debate, which the Sangh welcomes



RAKESH SINHA

THE CENTRE'S CIRCULAR lifting the ban on government employees from participating in RSS activities has revived the controversy over whether the latter is a political or cultural organisation. This is not the first time the issue is being discussed. What is lacking is intellectual honesty in understanding the problem. The RSS's reach is visible: More than three dozen affiliates work on almost every aspect of life, including programmes for tribals, Dalits and marginalised sections. However, the RSS is not an NGO. Its actions are more than philanthropic and not confined to social and economic empowerment. The ideology of Hindutva is behind all its actions. The RSS believes that India's civilisational deficit cannot be resolved by a compartmentalised approach to definitions of secularism, liberalism, nationalism, multiculturalism and Hindu civilisation. It does not avoid economic or political questions. Therefore, its definition of culture encompasses issues affecting national life.

In the past, the ban has been discussed in Parliament, going back to the colonial era. The debate begins, and is deliberately abandoned. The Indian intelligentsia's selective use of facts blinks our vision.

The vexed question cannot be addressed polemically. This is obvious from the Rajya Sabha debate on the nature of the RSS on July 3, 1968. More than half a dozen members, including the then Home Minister Y.B. Chavan, minister of state Vidya Charan Shukla, Communist leader Bhupesh Gupta and RSS thinker Dattopant Thengadi spoke on the issue. The immediate reason was the resolution at the RSS's annual general body meeting in March 1968 against the Kutch Award (mediation by the British government through a Tribunal on the rights of India and Pakistan over Kutch in Gujarat). S.K. Vaishampayan blamed the Sangh for violating its commitment to the government in 1949 to not meddle in politics. When Chavan asked Thengadi whether the said resolution "does really come under culture", Thengadi replied with a question that remains unanswered: "Is it the contention of the honorable Home Minister that the problems of national security and national integrity are mere political problems and not problems of national importance which should be taken cognisance of by nationalist organisations, and if the RSS has taken cognisance of national security and national integrity, merely on that ground, can it be dubbed as a political organisation?" The home minister said it was a philosophical question, which he would discuss later. During the colonial era, when the British government prohibited government employees from participating in RSS activities, the issue was discussed on two days (March 7 and 8, 1934) in the Legislative Council of Central Provinces. All 14 members who participated in the debate opposed the government which

The RSS has been used as a convenient tool by pseudo-seculars to hide their political sins and opportunism. They have blamed the RSS for criminal acts, in defiance of facts. One of them is the assassination of M.K. Gandhi.

was compelled to withdraw the order. In our democracy, ignorance is often celebrated. Political actors interpret ideologies lazily and the intellectual class is divided in a caste system of its own: Ideological prejudices transferred from one generation to another. The RSS has been used as a convenient tool by pseudo-seculars to hide their political faults and opportunism. They have blamed the RSS for criminal acts, in defiance of facts. One of them is the assassination of M.K. Gandhi. Nathuram Godse, in his letter to V.D. Savarkar, shows his highest contempt for the RSS. He wrote that it was wasting the energy of Hindu youths. He echoed Savarkar who once said, "the epitaph of a RSS volunteer is [that] he is born, lives as and dies as a Swayamsevak without accomplishing anything." Godse argued that the RSS's social philosophy replicated socialism.

Hindu Mahasabha leaders, including Savarkar, were angry at the RSS because it refused to be a part of their political ambitions. There are fundamental differences between the two organisations on both ideology and strategy. Since its inception, the RSS has rejected majoritarianism and taken the social-cultural path to create nationalist consciousness among Hindus. Most non-RSS votaries of Hindutva cannot comprehend K.B. Hedgewar's dictum of "organisation for the organisation". In the Sangh worldview, conservatism and communalism are deeply rooted in Indian society. Tackling them requires consistent and committed cultural actions. The RSS believes cultural consciousness can have a moral influence on politics. Nevertheless, it is not absurd to question the RSS's political role. Its opponents must engage in debate — which the Sangh welcomes — instead of merely repeating old allegations.

The RSS has a historical relationship with the BJP, and earlier, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS). It helped in the formation of both parties. The RSS was besieged after Gandhi's assassination and its isolation led it to use its organisational strength to form the BJS. It is true that RSS-trained cadres dominated both the BJS and the BJP — but the RSS itself remains at a distance. Its views on secularism, nationalism and culture remain under attack. The BJP represents its ideology in politics. In the last seven decades of parliamentary

The writer is a former Rajya Sabha MP

Normalising a shadow executive

Government order could make bureaucracy beholden to RSS agenda



MANOJ KUMAR JHA

VERY FEW WOULD disagree that government employees ought to adhere to a code of conduct which ensures efficiency, impartiality, predictability, and professionalism. By restricting political activities and ensuring accountability, conduct rules for government officials help maintain the integrity and neutrality of public administration. By prohibiting political affiliations and activities, the conduct rules aim to ensure that government employees act impartially and are not influenced by a political belief that may override the requirement of rational-legal objectivity. This reduces the likelihood of arbitrary actions under the influence of a political ideology. A key feature of bureaucracy or officialdom is a well-defined organisational structure where each level has distinct responsibilities and authority. Most importantly, the chain of command is well-enunciated and anchored in constitutional principles.

Membership of an organisation like the RSS, which has expressed a lack of faith in the Constitution of India, criticised the tricolour and harboured delusional ideas about regional and global geopolitics, can be particularly disastrous. Despite the official restriction on government servants, it is a well-known fact that high officials and foot soldiers affiliated with the so-called cultural organisation exist everywhere in the Indian

The recent order is merely a diversionary tactic by the government to shift focus from the attack of an Opposition strengthened by the mandate of the people of India. We must counter the push to align bureaucratic operations with the RSS's ideology.

broader agenda of subverting the Constitution. By compromising the independence of officialdom, it aims to create an administrative machinery that is subservient to its ideological goals. Simultaneously, by exerting control over academia, it seeks to ensure that intellectual and cultural discourse aligns with its vision of Hindu nationalism.

This pursuit of power and influence at the expense of constitutional principles and intellectual freedom is a grave threat to Indian democracy. It is imperative for citizens to recognise and challenge this duplicity, ensuring that the autonomy of the state and the intellectual community is preserved. Only by doing so can India remain true to its democratic ideals and continue to uphold the values of diversity, pluralism, and intellectual freedom.

The RSS keeps up the pretence of being a cultural organisation alongside the open claim to having cultivated and supported the

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which now dominates Indian politics. The RSS's involvement in political strategy, candidate selection, and policy formulation is well-documented. Its sway over the BJP ensures that its ideological goals — centred on Hindu nationalism — are pursued at the highest levels of government. The RSS has consistently harboured ambitions to direct the political future of India.

The recent order, allowing government employees to participate in RSS activities, is merely a diversionary tactic by the government to shift focus from the attack of an Opposition strengthened by the mandate of the people of India. However, we must reiterate the facts, as many times as needed, to counter the push to align bureaucratic operations with the RSS's ideology, effectively seeking to create a parallel system of governance that adheres to the organisation's principles rather than the Constitution.

This move undermines the autonomy of the state apparatus, which is supposed to function impartially and uphold the Constitution. Instead, government officials could well be pressured to follow the RSS line, compromising their professional integrity and the foundational principle of neutrality in public service. This subversion of bureaucratic independence for ideological gain is a direct attack on the constitutional framework that upholds Indian democracy.

Let me remind you that the RSS also seeks to exercise control over the academic and intellectual sphere. Efforts to rewrite history textbooks, influence curriculum design, and suppress dissenting voices in universities reflect a broader strategy to mould the intellectual landscape in accordance with its vision. Curiously, to encroach on academic freedom, the broader Sangh Parivar has sought to silence public intellectuals and academics by trying to bring them under the rules for bureaucracy and officialdom that otherwise did not apply to them. This assault on intellectual autonomy is equally if not more dangerous as it seeks to indoctrinate future generations and reshape the cultural and historical narrative of the nation.

The RSS's strategy of on the one hand, loosening the rules of political engagement for the bureaucracy, while shackling intellectuals on the other, serves its broader agenda of subverting the Constitution. By compromising the independence of officialdom, it aims to create an administrative machinery that is subservient to its ideological goals. Simultaneously, by exerting control over academia, it seeks to ensure that intellectual and cultural discourse aligns with its vision of Hindu nationalism.

This pursuit of power and influence at the expense of constitutional principles and intellectual freedom is a grave threat to Indian democracy. It is imperative for citizens to recognise and challenge this duplicity, ensuring that the autonomy of the state and the intellectual community is preserved. Only by doing so can India remain true to its democratic ideals and continue to uphold the values of diversity, pluralism, and intellectual freedom.

The writer is Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), Rashtriya Janata Dal

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"Democracy worldwide remains under challenge from rising illiberalism and authoritarianism. But the story halfway through this year is one of resiliency. Democracy is not a perfect system, but millions of people around the world, doggedly — and wisely — prefer it to the alternatives." — THE WASHINGTON POST

After Budget, the challenges

In an era of high inflation and large debts, Budget 2024 prioritises debt reduction over increased spending



PINAKI CHAKRABORTY

THE UNION BUDGET 2024-25 seems to be an admission of the various challenges confronting the economy. The Finance Minister started her budget speech by citing two important macro risks — rising global economic uncertainty and inflation. The upfront mention of these two risks underlines how an emerging economy like India is vulnerable to them. The Finance Minister said that despite these risks, India will continue to have resilient growth. The fundamental requirement for such resilience is a stable macroeconomic regime, sustainable debt, buoyant domestic investment, stable inflation and rising consumption demand.

Fiscal stability in an uncertain economic environment is always challenging. However, the complexity of achieving fiscal balance needs to factor in two competing priorities. First, creating the fiscal space for social and development spending. Second, reducing the level of debt. Some key budget numbers in this context may be useful to understand the issue. The total size of the Union Budget 2024-25 is Rs 48.21 lakh crore, up by Rs 3.96 lakh crore from the previous year. What explains this rise?

Out of this increase, interest payments are around Rs 1 lakh crore higher as compared to the previous year, accounting for roughly 25 per cent of the rise. The rest is in central sector schemes (Rs 70,000 crore), centrally sponsored schemes and other central grants and transfers to states. A part of this additionality in transfers to states is also due to the new expenditure scheme allocations provided to Andhra Pradesh and Bihar in lieu of their demand for special category status. However, as a percentage of GDP, the central expenditure shows a decline from 15.06 per cent of GDP to 14.77 per cent between 2023-24 and 2024-25 (BE). The gross tax revenue of the Union government as a percentage of GDP is expected to remain stagnant at 11.7 during this period and the debt-to-GDP ratio is expected to remain at around 56 per cent.

A faster reduction of debt is critical as the interest burden of the Government of India is now Rs 11.62 lakh crore. When around 25 per cent of the additional increase in expenditure is only due to the interest liability of the government, it is natural for it to prioritise fiscal consolidation over creating fiscal space for non-interest expenditure. However, fiscal consolidation beyond a point can have its own adverse distributional, development and growth consequences. There is a need to rethink the existing framework of fiscal consolidation.

Globally, a reassessment of the conven-

tional wisdom on fiscal rules and the accumulation of public debt is underway. Since the budget is a cash flow accounting in most countries, fixed numerical limits on deficits can make adherence to such rules challenging during macroeconomic uncertainties. Also, as the level of inflation is very high, a large part of the debt may be knocked off by high inflation without a significant reduction in interest outgo from the Budget. This is the case in India also.

Though the debt-to-GDP ratio of the Government of India is set to decline from its Covid-19 peak of 61 per cent in 2020-21 to 56 per cent in 2024-25, the interest payment to GDP ratio remained above 3.5 per cent during this period. This stickiness of interest liability, despite the debt reduction, is acting as a major constraint to increasing development expenditure. A time-bound debt reduction path is critical to reduce the strain of interest burden on the Union Budget. That would also conform with the amendments to the FRBM Act in 2018. As per these amendments, the government was required to reduce Union debt to 40 per cent of the GDP and general government debt to 60 per cent by March 31, 2025. Though this is not possible given the COVID-19 shock and the consequent rise in the debt ratio, a debt reduction path as a framework of fiscal consolidation is necessary, particularly, in the era of high inflation and large debts. This will ensure greater fiscal prudence.

This Budget has also made several announcements that are in the domain of states, such as the next-generation reforms related to land, labour, capital and use of technology. However, these are complex areas of reform. For example, encouraging states which charge a lower stamp duty for property registration may not be easy. A similar kind of reform was tried as a part of the Jawaharlar Nehru Urban Renewal Mission. However, the dispersion in rates across states is still very large. This difference in rates is intimately linked to the nature of the property market in individual states, the valuation of land and also their revenue needs. Though the rationalisation of the stamp duty rate is important, it also requires critical reforms in the land market.

The Union government can only act as a facilitator. Experience suggests that these reforms cannot be top-down, driven by the Centre. Carrying out any major reforms in taxes that are in the domain of states would be more challenging now as they have lost substantial fiscal autonomy post the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax. A bottom-up consultative process with the states would be critical for the success of the implementation of such reforms. Their success would also depend on Union-state coordination and the willingness of the latter to undertake such reforms without compromising their fiscal autonomy.

The writer is visiting Distinguished Professor at the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy and the vice-chairman of the Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

INTROSPECTION IS KEY

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Cutting down rivals' (IE, July 28). The BJP ought to introspect more earnestly than it appears to be at the moment. It is looking for faults everywhere, except within itself. The high command-driven culture that it was deriding in Congress has crept into the BJP with a stronger hold. Candidates recommended by the regional leadership were ignored. Such a dismissive attitude worked in Gujarat. But if the BJP wants to get some any seats back, introspection is necessary.

R Narayanan, Navi Mumbai

CHEER THEM ON

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Simone and Vinesh' (IE, July 27). For many in India, sports is one of few options available to climb the social ladder. With odds stacked against them, against the tide, when players like Vinesh Phogat and Simone Ashley emerge, the world should have one job: Cheer them on. The way the wrestlers' protest against ex-WFI chief Brij Bhushan Singh played out and the lack of accountability was disheartening to witness. Speedy justice is the only acceptable path here.

Shreya Thomas, Thane

A LARGER FAILURE

THIS REFERS TO the report, '3 students dead as UPSC coaching centre gets flooded' (IE, July 28). How do incidents like this keep occurring? In a country like India, where thousands of engineers are being minted at any given moment, simple engineering keeps failing us. Roads,

bridges, coaching centres — there are failures at all levels. The approach to urban planning needs to move beyond the "growth" model. Infrastructure should be climate resilient and above board. Losing the youth to avoidable tragedies is unacceptable.

Pria Hema, New Delhi

BLUES, BLUER

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Pioneer of Blues' (IE, July 27). John Mayall revived blues rock in Britain and the US. Legends like Muddy Waters popularised electric blues rock. While Eric Clapton calls him a surrogate father, several great musicians were re-born in Mayall's cradle of music. Even as musicians came and went, he continued in the pursuit of his performance, undeterred even at 90. For the work that he has done, and all those he has influenced, he barely got his due. He will be deeply missed.

Raja Bandopadhyaya, Vadodra

ZERO TOLERANCE

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Justice for Faizan' (IE, July 25). A 23-year-old man being subjected to such brutality by the Delhi Police underscores the spread of communal propaganda even among the men in khaki. His mother alleged that he was denied medical care. The Court's remarks about the probe as "too little and too late" is apt. One hopes that the perpetrators will be brought to book without further delay now that the case is with the CBI. There must be a zero tolerance policy against officers who misuse their position to target specific communities.

SH Quadri, Bikaner

14 THE WORLD



EXPECTED TO BE PUT OUT IN A DAY CANADA WILDFIRE UNDER CONTROL: OFFICIALS

Progress has been made suppressing fires in the Canadian tourist town of Jasper, with the remaining ones expected to be put out by the end of the day, authorities said on Saturday. The fires are said to have destroyed about a third of the town. **REUTERS**

TOP OF THE WORLD



Prime Minister Anthony Albanese. File

AUSTRALIA Albanese rejigs Cabinet months ahead of polls

Sydney: Australia's Prime Minister Anthony Albanese on Sunday announced a cabinet reshuffle after two senior ministers said they planned to retire at the next election. The reshuffle, the first since the centre-left Labor Party swept to power at a general election in May 2022, marks an attempt by Albanese to refresh his team ahead of the next poll, expected in 2025. "I would expect that this is the team that I will take to the election when it is held some time in the future," Albanese said in a televised media conference in Canberra. **REUTERS**

BLINKEN SAYS U.S. DOES NOT WANT FURTHER ESCALATION OF CONFLICT

Israel says 12 killed in Hezbollah rocket strike on Golan Heights, vows to hit hard

Hezbollah denies involvement in attack; Israeli jets hit south Lebanon, to weigh heavier response

REUTERS
GOLAN HEIGHTS, JULY 28

ISRAEL SAID on Sunday it would strike hard against Hezbollah after accusing the Iran-backed group of killing 12 children and teenagers in a rocket attack on a football field in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights.

Hezbollah denied any responsibility for the attack on Majdal Shams, the deadliest in Israel or Israeli-annexed territory since Hamas' Oct. 7 assault sparked the war in Gaza, which has since spread to several fronts and now risks spilling into a wider regional conflict.

Israeli jets hit targets in southern Lebanon overnight but a stronger response was expected following a meeting of the security cabinet at 6 pm. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu returned from a visit to the United States and met security officials ahead of the meeting.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said there was every indication that the rocket that hit a sports field where children were playing football had been fired by Hezbollah and said



At the funeral of the 12 people killed on a football field in Golan Heights on Sunday. Reuters

Washington stood by Israel's right to defend itself. But he said the US did not want a further escalation of the conflict, which has seen daily air strikes and exchanges of fire between Israel and Hezbollah in south Lebanon.

The football pitch was hit on Saturday evening. Hezbollah had

earlier announced it had fired rockets at Israeli military sites, but swiftly denied involvement in the attack on Majdal Shams, saying it had "absolutely nothing to do with the incident, and categorically denies all false allegations."

"Hezbollah is the entity that is unequivocally responsible for yes-

terday's massacre," Israel's foreign ministry said. "The rocket... was an Iranian rocket and Hezbollah is the only terror organization which has those in its arsenal." Defence Minister Yoav Gallant visited Majdal Shams and said: "We will hit the enemy hard."

The Israeli military said the

rocket launch was carried out from an area located north of the village of Chebaa in southern Lebanon. Several aerial attacks hit towns in southern Lebanon and one location in the vast eastern Bekaa Valley overnight and into Sunday morning, according to security sources in Lebanon.

EXPLAINED How worse can the conflict get?

A LOT. Despite the ferocity of hostilities, this is seen as a relatively contained confrontation. Benjamin Netanyahu said in December that Beirut would be turned "into Gaza" if Hezbollah started a war. Israel expanding the conflict will result in "devastation, destruction and displacement" in Israel, said Sheikh Naim Qassem, Hezbollah deputy chief, in June. The war in 2006 also saw heavy damage and displacement on both sides.



Donald Trump with his running mate JD Vance at a rally in St. Cloud, Minnesota, on Saturday. AP

I haven't changed: Trump makes it clear he is done with calls for unity

Former President escalates attack on Harris, Vance calls her 'overly liberal'

MICHAEL GOLD
ST CLOUD, MINNESOTA, JULY 28

EARLY IN his speech in Minnesota on Saturday night, former President Donald Trump made clear just how quickly he has jettisoned the appeal for national unity that he made after he survived an assassination attempt in Pennsylvania two weeks ago.

"I want to be nice," Trump said. "They all say, 'I think he's changed. I think he's changed since two weeks ago. Something affected him.'"

But to a cheering crowd of thousands, Trump quickly conceded the point. "No, I haven't changed," he said. "Maybe I've gotten worse. Because I get angry at the incompetence that I witness every single day."

Propelled by the upheaval in the presidential race caused by President Biden's decision to end his campaign six days ago, Trump Saturday once more escalated his attacks against Vice President Kamala Harris, the presumptive Democratic nominee. During a speech lasting roughly 90 minutes, Trump called Harris "evil," "unhinged" and "sick." He lied about her views on abortion in effort to paint her as extreme, mocking her laugh and demeanor.

"We have a brand-new victim," Trump told thousands inside

the Herb Brooks National Hockey Center. "And, honestly, she's a radical left lunatic."

Trump spent considerable time attacking Harris's views on public safety, taking aim at her efforts to portray herself as a "rule of law" prosecutor who contrasts starkly with Trump's two impeachments, four criminal indictments and 34 felony convictions.

Trump's focus on public safety and his accusations that Democrats have allowed crime to run rampant in cities have been at the heart of his three political campaigns. His return to that message in Minnesota demonstrated how central his plea to law and order will most likely be to his effort to win over moderate independent voters.

Trump and his team are eager to flip Minnesota, which last voted for a Republican president in 1972, but which also has a large population of working-class voters and union workers, groups that Trump drew support from in previous elections. He lost the state by just 1.5 percentage points in 2016, only to lose it by a wider margin in 2020.

Saturday's rally was Trump's second joint rally with Senator JD Vance of Ohio since he chose him to be his running mate. Vance largely echoed Trump's attacks, calling Harris overly liberal and a "card-carrying member of the San Francisco lunatic fringe." **NYT**



IRAN Khamenei backs Pezeshkian as Iran President

Dubai: Iran's supreme leader formally endorsed Masoud Pezeshkian as the country's president on Sunday, after he won an election this month by pledging a pragmatic foreign policy and easing repression at home. Pezeshkian, a relative moderate who will be sworn in on Tuesday, is taking office at a time of escalating Middle East tensions over the Israel-Hamas conflict in Gaza and Iran-backed Hezbollah in Lebanon. With Khamenei calling the shots on all state matters, Pezeshkian is not expected to usher in major shifts on Iran policies like support for militia across the region. **REUTERS**

UNITED KINGDOM Priti Patel in race to replace Sunak as Opp leader

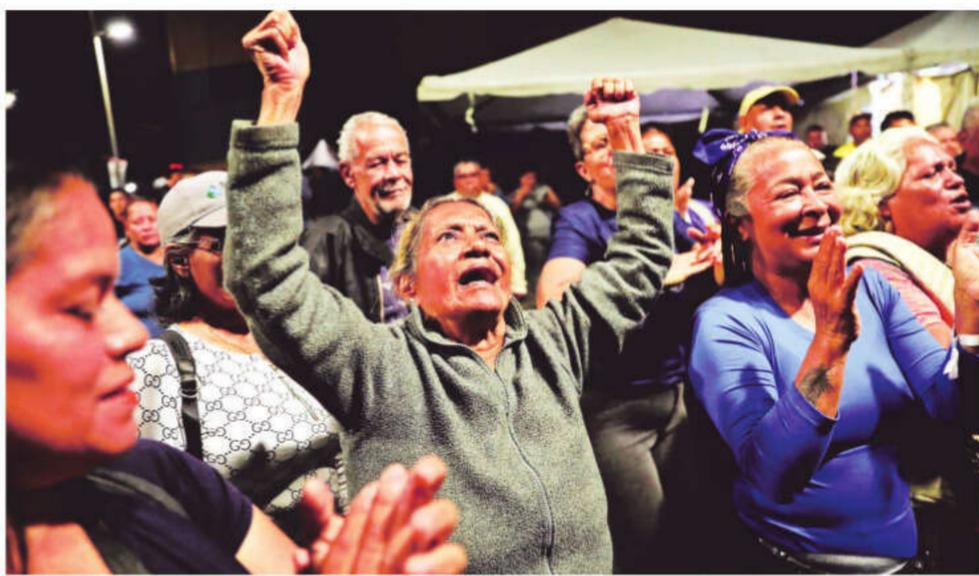
London: Priti Patel, the UK's former home secretary, on Sunday became the first female and Indian-origin candidate to enter the race to replace Rishi Sunak as leader of the Opposition Conservative Party. The 52-year-old parliamentarian pledged to unite her party and turn the Conservatives into an election "winning machine" once again under her leadership. The Conservative Party earlier this month faced a historic defeat under the leadership of former prime minister Sunak in the general election. **PTI**

Bangladesh restores mobile internet, social media still down

Dhaka: The mobile internet connection was restored in Bangladesh on Sunday, 10 days after it was shut down by the authorities across the country to stop the spread of fake news on social media amidst the deadly nationwide violence over reforms in the quota system in government jobs.

Addressing a press conference here, Minister of State for Information and Communication Technology Zunaed Ahmed Palak announced that 5GB internet will be given for free to all users for three days after the connection is restored, the Dhaka Tribune newspaper reported.

Regarding access to social media platforms, Palak said the Bangladesh Telecom Regulatory Commission has sent letters to social media platforms, including Facebook, Tiktok and YouTube. "Their representatives have to come to Dhaka by July 31 to give explanations. Then... we will make a decision," he said. **PTI**



'WAKE UP, VENEZUELA'

People cheer to the sound of an army bugle to wake up residents, a tradition since the times of late President Hugo Chavez, to encourage people to get up and cast their votes in the Presidential election, in Caracas on Sunday. Reuters

Putin warns US of Cold War-style crisis over missiles in Germany

REUTERS
MOSCOW, JULY 28

RUSSIAN PRESIDENT Vladimir Putin on Sunday warned the United States that if Washington deployed long-range missiles in Germany then Russia would station similar missiles in striking distance of the West.

The United States said July 10 that it would start deploying long-range missiles in Germany from 2026 in preparation for a longer-term deployment that will include developmental hypersonic weapons.



President Vladimir Putin at the Navy Day parade in St Petersburg Sunday. Reuters

In a speech to sailors from Russia, China, Algeria and India on Russian navy day at St Petersburg,

Putin warned the US that it risked triggering a Cold War-style missile crisis with the move.

"The flight time to targets on our territory of such missiles, which in the future may be equipped with nuclear warheads, will be about 10 minutes... This situation is reminiscent of the events of the Cold War related to deployment of American medium-range Pershing missiles in Europe," Putin said.

"We will take mirror measures to deploy, taking into account the actions of the United States, its satellites in Europe and in other regions of the world."

In Beijing, Meloni vows to 'relaunch' China ties after BRI exit, set to meet President Xi

REUTERS
ROME, BEIJING, JULY 28

ITALIAN PRIME Minister Giorgia Meloni vowed on Sunday to "relaunch" cooperation with China, signing a three-year action plan during her first official visit to Beijing since taking office, Italian news agency ANSA reported.

Meloni made the announcement during a meeting with Chinese Premier Li Qiang, as Rome seeks to improve trade ties with Beijing after it exited President Xi Jinping's flagship Belt and Road infrastructure scheme last year.



Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni; Chinese Premier Li Qiang

The Italian leader said her five-day trip was a "demonstration of the will to begin a new phase, to relaunch our bilateral cooperation", reported. The action plan will aim to experiment with new

forms of cooperation, she added.

Meloni, who sees Chinese investment as a way to spur Italy's anaemic economic growth, will meet Xi and China's top legislator, Zhao Leji, third in the leadership hierarchy. Bilateral trade and industrial agreements are expected to be signed during Meloni's official visit, a source close to the planning has said.

She also attended an Italy-China business forum, to which companies including Italian tyre-maker Pirelli, energy group ENI, defence group Leonardo and fashion groups such as Dolce & Gabbana were invited.

"China and Italy should adopt a win-win mentality and increase trade and investment cooperation, making cooperation even more dynamic and sustainable," said Li at the opening of the forum.

In 2019, Italy became the only Group of Seven country to join the massive Belt and Road Initiative but withdrew last year under US pressure over concerns about Beijing's economic reach. Chinese state media said the trip was aimed at "clarifying some misunderstandings" over Italy's withdrawal from the Belt and Road and stressing the importance of economic ties.

A FEW YEARS' DELAY IN ACCESS TO GOOD TECH CAN LEAD TO A FEW DECADES OF ECONOMIC DELAY: RESEARCHERS

Experts worry about language divide as AI models focus more on English

SARA RUBERG
JULY 28

STANFORD RESEARCHERS gave a popular artificial intelligence chatbot a language test.

They asked the bot in Vietnamese to write a traditional poem in the form known as "song th?t?c bá" that follows a pattern of lines made up of seven, seven, six, then eight words. When the bot spit out an answer, it wrote a poem but didn't follow the format.

The team also asked what the proper Vietnamese word was for a mother's younger

brother, and it responded with the words for a father's siblings.

These flaws are not unique to Claude 3.5 by the AI company Anthropic that the researchers queried, but they illustrate some of the ways in which AI can get language outside of standard American English wrong.

While the use of AI has exploded in the West, much of the rest of the world has been left out since most of the technology is trained in English. Experts worry the language gap could exacerbate technological inequities and that it could leave many regions and cultures behind.

A delay of access to good tech-



Low-resource languages include Hindi, Bengali and Swahili, as well as lesser-known dialects spoken by smaller groups. NYT

nology of even a few years "can potentially lead to a few decades of economic delay," said Sang Truong, a doctoral candidate at the Stanford AI Laboratory.

The tests his team ran found that AI tools across the board could get facts and diction wrong when working with Vietnamese, likely because it is a "low-resource" language, which means that there aren't sufficient data sets and content available online for the AI model to learn from.

Low-resource languages are spoken by tens and sometimes hundreds of millions of people around the world, but they yield less digital data because AI tech

development and online engagement is centered in the United States and China. Other low-resource languages include Hindi, Bengali and Swahili, as well as lesser-known dialects spoken by smaller populations.

An analysis of top websites by W3Techs, a tech survey company, found that English makes up more than 60% of the internet's language data. While English is widely spoken globally, native English speakers make up about 5% of the global population.

The consequences of the language gap in AI tools can be numerous. The technology has potential to increase productivity

and change workplaces, but without reliable data in local languages, some regions of the world could miss out on the economic benefits, according to AI experts.

AI's lack of knowledge in low-resource languages has the potential to raise security concerns as well. Sara Hooker, the head of Cohere for AI, the nonprofit research arm of the startup Cohere, said users could bypass safety measures of AI products by asking questions in other languages.

"You can easily, for example, still get very dangerous instructions about how to build a bomb just by switching to a different language," Hooker said. **NYT**

15 ECONOMY

MARKET WATCH

MCAP OF 6 OF TOP-10 VALUED COS JUMPS

The combined market valuation of six of the top 10 valued firms jumped Rs 1,85,186.51 crore last week, with Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) and Infosys emerging as the biggest gainers. Last week, the BSE benchmark climbed 728.07 points or 0.90 per cent. **PTI**

AUCTION ANNULLED TWICE DUE TO LOW INVESTOR INTEREST

After setbacks, more exploration of J&K lithium block likely before another auction

AGGAM WALIA
NEW DELHI, JULY 28

INDIA'S LITHIUM ambitions hit a snag after the Ministry of Mines annulled the auction for the block in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K)'s Reasi district for the second time on July 25. The repeated setback has officials weighing the need for further exploration before attempting another auction, *The Indian Express* has learnt. The block, which holds an estimated 5.9 million tonnes of lithium ore, has failed to get auctioned off due to insufficient investor interest.

The first auction was annulled on March 13 after less than the required minimum of three bidders cleared the first round. The very next day, the Mines Ministry put the block for auction in a second attempt, which was also annulled last week after failing to clear the first round. Notably, the minimum bidder requirement is waived off for second attempts as per auction rules, which require an auction to move to the second round even if less than three bidders qualify in the first round. However, with no qualified bidders at all, the auction of the J&K lithium block could not proceed.

BLOCK HOLDS ESTIMATED 5.9 MT OF ORE

THE BLOCK, which holds an estimated 5.9 million tonnes of lithium ore, has failed to get auctioned off due to insufficient investor interest

THE FIRST AUCTION was annulled on March 13 after less than the required minimum of three bidders cleared the first round

THE NEXT DAY, the Mines Ministry put the block for auction in a 2nd attempt, which was also annulled last week after failing to clear the first round

"Critical Minerals are auctioned in the country for the first time. Like any other auction, in auction of critical minerals also, required number of response may or may not be received," the Mines Ministry said when sought for comments. "With respect to Lithium block in Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, ministry is examining whether further exploration is required," it said.

"We have started exploration work in J&K where GSI (Geological Survey of India) identified lithium deposits in collaboration with the J&K government. As soon as possible, we will complete the exploration and auction it to start work on mining lithium with full force," Union Minister of Coal and Mines G Kishan Reddy told the Rajya

EXPLAINED

Critical mineral used in EVs, energy storage

LITHIUM IS a critical mineral that is used extensively in electric vehicle (EV) batteries, energy storage systems, and consumer electronics. The first auction for the J&K lithium block for a composite licence, which was launched in November last year, was annulled after less than three bidders qualified the technical bids round.

many times since, if a block being auctioned fails to secure the participation of at least three technically qualified bidders, it can be put on auction again as a second attempt. For such auctions, the rules require bidding to "continue to the second round even in case the number of technically qualified bidders is less than three". They also require the reserve price in the second attempt to be the "highest initial price offer of the technically qualified bidders if any in the first annulled attempt,"

which in the case of the Reasi lithium block was 11.25 per cent.

According to a document with the ministry, prospective bidders during the first attempt had sent queries ranging from the bid document having limited information on the block to the size of the block being too small "to apply modern mineral systems-based tools and look at areas where larger alteration haloes or deposit traps might exist". Another asked if any beneficiation study had been conducted to assess the feasibility of extracting and processing lithium from the resources identified in J&K, to which the ministry replied in the negative. The first auction of the J&K lithium block was part of the ministry's first tranche of critical mineral auction, which also included a lithium block in Katghora in Chhattisgarh's Korba district that was awarded to Kolkata-based Maiki South Mining Pvt Ltd on June 24 for an auction premium of 76.05 per cent.

Last month, *The Indian Express* had reported that India's plans to develop domestic mining of lithium made progress in Korba district with the successful auction of one block and promising exploration results from other nearby blocks.

'Among the petroleum items, crude oil could be brought under GST first'

High duty on gold was distorting market: CBIC Chairman

HIGHER DUTY on gold was not only fuelling smuggling but also causing market distortion and revenue loss, as it led to imports in non-bullion forms under various free trade agreements (FTAs) where they qualified for lower or even nil rates, Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC) Chairman **SANJAY KUMAR AGARWAL** said in an interview with **SOUAMYARENDRA BARIK** and **RAVI DUTTA MISHRA**. Agarwal stated that tariff rationalisation is undertaken with an objective to promote domestic manufacturing and boost exports and that the roadmap to bring petroleum products under the ambit of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime could start with crude oil as it would help integrate the entire petroleum product supply chain. Edited Excerpts:



lapsing on March 31, 2025.

THE EXPRESS
INTERVIEW
WITH
SANJAY KUMAR AGARWAL
CHAIRMAN, CENTRAL BOARD OF INDIRECT TAXES & CUSTOMS

What is the rationale for reducing duty on mobile phones?

Initially, the duty on mobile phones was zero, and everything was imported. Some manufacturing began, but with minimal value addition. Everything was assembled and sold without significant value addition.

Then the government included this sector in the PMP, implementing a graded duty structure, increasing duties to 20 per cent on mobile phones and printed circuit board assemblies (PCBA). PCBA accounts for 55 per cent of a mobile phone's cost. If PCBAs are manufactured, assembled, or populated domestically, value addition occurs here, even if some parts are imported. This approach deepens the value chain. As a result, production has risen significantly, reaching Rs 4.1 lakh crore last year. Exports are increasing, with India producing more mobile phones for export. Despite higher production, PCBA imports have declined, indicating domestic production. The objective is being met.

What are the possible areas for future duty reductions?

Our proposals are based on a clear thought process: tariff barriers should be lowered where we want to prioritise domestic manufacturing. If an item is covered under the Phased Manufacturing Programme (PMP), then duties will be adjusted according to the PMP. For export-oriented industries, we are looking at ways to make their products more competitive internationally. We will conduct a thorough review with these objectives in mind and consider proposals as they come.

Very elaborate exercise was carried out to review the rates this time too because there are certain items which are imported under conditional exemption notifications. Now in the law also, there is a requirement to review such conditional notifications within a set period.

So that exercise will be carried out in respect to notifications which otherwise would be

Why were duties on telecom equipment, components raised?

To encourage the manufacturing of PCBAs for telecom equipment, we need to maintain a slightly higher rate, to incentivise domestic production. We hope this will be as successful as it has been for mobile phones.

What was the reason for a sharper than expected gold duty reduction?

The duty rate on gold has been reduced after it was temporarily increased in 2022 due to specific circumstances. It was a temporary move. Once those circumstances changed, the rate was lowered again. We noticed that there was a tendency to bring gold in non-bullion form under different FTAs where those forms were entitled for concessional rates and even nil rate. This prompted certain import restrictions too. Besides, the expected revenue increase did not materialise, and smuggling rose, fuelling illegal activities.

What should be the roadmap for bringing petroleum products into GST?

Crude oil could be the first item brought under goods and services tax (GST), followed by natural gas. Although carving out compressed natural gas (CNG) may lead to complications, it can be considered. The reason is that crude oil goes into refineries as a feedstock and bringing crude oil in GST will integrate the entire supply chain. Subsequently, other fuel items used in transportation can be included under GST.

The Standing Committee on Chemicals and Fertilisers recommended lowering GST on fertilisers. Your thoughts?

This can be reviewed by the rate rationalisation committee. Such changes often have significant revenue implications. If revenue decreases, it must be recovered or compensated else-

ULTRATECH TO MAKE OPEN OFFER FOR 20% AT RS 390 PER SHARE

Srinivasan exits India Cements, sells 32.72% stake to UltraTech Cement for ₹3,954 crore

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, JULY 28

CONSOLIDATING ITS number one position in the cement sector, UltraTech Cement Ltd, owned by the Aditya Birla group, has acquired 32.72 per cent stake of N Srinivasan and associates in India Cements for Rs 3,954 crore.

With this sell-out, Srinivasan will exit from the company set up in 1946. As the Birlas will shell out Rs 390 per share for the acquisition, it will trigger a mandatory open offer for another 20 per cent stake in the company from the public at Rs 390 per share. The open offer, which will cost around Rs 2,400 crore, will be done subsequently after obtaining all regulatory approvals, the company said on Sunday. The Birlas will now have a stake of 55.49 per cent in India Cements.

India Cements is currently controlled by the N Srinivasan and family. Srinivasan was earlier chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC) and president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). While Srinivasan is the vice-chairman and MD of India Cements, his daughter Rupa Gurunath is an executive director of the company and his wife Chitra Srinivasan is a non-executive non-independent director on the board. They are likely to quit from these positions when the takeover comes into effect.

On June 27 this year, UltraTech Cement has acquired a 22.77 per cent stake in India Cements at a price of Rs 268 per share, triggering speculation about a takeover of the South India-based cement major. The move marked a further intensification of the battle for

INDIA CEMENTS CHANGES HANDS AFTER 78 YEARS



INDIA CEMENTS Ltd was founded in 1946 by SNN Sankaralinga Iyer and TS Narayanaswami

FROM A 2-plant company having a capacity of just 1.3 million tonnes in 1989, India Cements has grown in the last two decades to a total capacity of 15.5 million tonnes per annum.

THE COMPANY has now 8 integrated cement plants

control of India's cement market, which was dominated for long by Kumar Mangalam Birla's company until the Adani Group entered the sector in 2022 and has since become the country's second biggest player.

When the Birlas bought the 22.77 per cent stake in India Cements in June this year, it said the stake purchase was only a "financial investment". If the Birlas get the full 20 per cent subscription in the open offer, their stake will increase to 75.49 per cent in India Cements. India Cements has a total capacity of 14.45 mtpa of grey cement. Of this, 12.95 mtpa is in the South (particularly Tamil Nadu) and 1.5 mtpa is in Rajasthan. The transaction is subject to regulatory approvals. India Cements shares rose 3.65 per cent to Rs 374.60 on the BSE on Friday. It has a market capitalisation of Rs 11,608 crore. UltraTech shares gained 2 per cent at Rs 11,679.25 on Friday.

Kumar Mangalam Birla, chairman, Aditya Birla group, said, "UltraTech Cement's investments

over the years, both organic and inorganic, have been designed to propel India to become a building solutions champion globally. Every investment in a core sector like cement accelerates economic activity and drives progress."

"The India Cements opportunity is an exciting one as it enables UltraTech to serve the Southern markets more effectively and also accelerates our path to 200 per cent MTPA capacity," Birla said.

On June 13, Adani Group owned Ambuja Cements said it has signed a binding agreement for the acquisition of Hyderabad-based Penna Cement Industries Ltd (PCIL) at an enterprise value of Rs 10,422 crore. Ambuja Cements will acquire 100 per cent shares of PCIL from its existing promoter group P Pratap Reddy and family.

The spate of acquisitions by the Birlas and Adani is expected to intensify the battle for market share in the cement sector in the coming days.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

Chennai Super Kings ownership not affected

VENKATA KRISHNA B
CHENNAI, JULY 28

DESPITE UTRATECH'S acquisition of 32.72 per cent stake in India Cements on Sunday, IPL's most successful franchise Chennai Super Kings will remain firmly within the grip of N Srinivasan and his family, according to sources.

Since 2015, the franchise has been operating under a separate entity called Chennai Super Kings Cricket Limited (CSKCL) and it is not part of the takeover deal. However, what is not clear at this stage is what will happen to the position of MS Dhoni, who is the vice-president of India Cements. Other than Dhoni, several distinguished cricketers including Rahul Dravid, R Ashwin are employed with India Cements.

On Sunday, UltraTech revealed in a statement that its board has approved the purchase of 32.72 per cent stake in India Cements from its promoters, which now takes its overall tally to 55.49 per cent. However, CSKCL is not part of the deal as following the conflict of interest issue that made Srinivasan relieve all his roles in the BCCI, India Cements had made the franchise an independent one.

The shareholding pattern of the CSKCL mirrored that of India Cements with Srinivasan and his family holding 29 per cent of it. With Srinivasan's daughter Rupa Gurunath entering cricket administration with Tamil Nadu Cricket Association (TNCA), the



MS Dhoni, former captain of Chennai Super Kings. **File**

entire holding was under India Cements Shareholder Trust, which was formed to help the cricketers employed by India Cements. And subsequently after Rupa stepped down as TNCA president, the 29 per cent of those stakes has gone back to Srinivasan's family with CSK's annual report making a clear mention of it.

As per the report, Srinivasan & his family own 28.14 per cent of the shares in CSKCL.

However, what is not clear at this stage is what will happen to the future of the cricketers currently employed with India Cements. Apart from past and current India players, there are several players from Tamil Nadu who are employed with India Cements for long, representing the teams run in the TNCA First Division for long.

BRIEFLY

Colgate-Palmolive receives ₹248 cr tax demand notice

New Delhi: Colgate-Palmolive (India) Ltd has received a tax demand notice of Rs 248.74 crore from the Income Tax Authority in a transfer pricing-related issue. **PTI**

Govt clarifies on tax clearance certificate

New Delhi: On a Budget proposal making it mandatory to get tax clearance certificates for going abroad, the Centre has clarified that proposed amendment is only for those accused of financial irregularities or having substantial tax arrears. **PTI**

Private sector owns over 52% of installed power generation capacity in the country

Private sector owns over 52% of the total installed power generation capacity of 446GW in the country, playing an important role in the sector, Parliament was recently informed

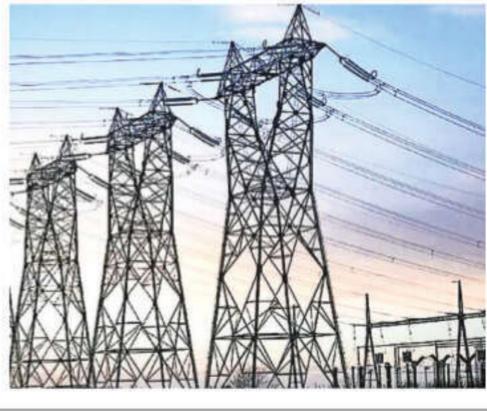
4,46,190 MW

Total installed capacity in the country as on June 30, 2024

2,34,065 MW

Approximate contribution of the private sector, i.e. 52.5% of the total

"Generation is a de-licensed activity as per the Electricity Act, 2003 and 100 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI) in the power sector in India is permitted for generation from all sources (except atomic energy)," Minister of State for Power Shripad Naik said in a written reply in Lok Sabha



In another reply to the House, the Minister said that with the rapid expansion & growth of the Indian economy, the demand of electricity is also witnessing an unprecedented growth

9% growth in electricity demand in India for the years 2021-22 and 2022-23

Total emissions have increased commensurate with the increase in generation of electricity. However, due to the increasing share of renewable energy, the carbon intensity of the grid is reducing

9% decrease in average carbon emission factor of the grid electricity in India from 2013-14 to 2022-23

In order to meet estimated demand by 2031-32, generation planning studies have been carried out by Central Electricity Authority

Source: PTI

Foreign investors put over ₹33,600 crore in equities in July so far

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, JULY 28

FOREIGN INVESTORS injected over Rs 33,600 crore into Indian equities so far this month on the expectation of continued policy reforms, sustained economic growth and a better-than-expected earnings season.

However, they pulled out over Rs 7,200 crore from equities in the last three trading sessions (July 24-26) after the government hiked taxes on Futures and Options trades (F&O) and capital gains from equity investments in the Budget. Market experts believe that Indian equity is well-positioned for the year to attract foreign investments. However, there may be some monthly volatility due to short-term news.

"Indian equity market and bond market are favourably placed for the year. This should attract foreign flows into the country. There could be some volatility in the flows on a month-on-month basis due to short-term news flows," Nimesh Chandan, CIO of Bajaj Finserv AMC, said.

According to the data with the depositories, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have made a net inflow of Rs 33,688 crore in equities this month (till July 26).



File

This came following an inflow of Rs 26,565 crore in equities in June, driven by political stability and the sharp rebound in markets. Before that, FPIs withdrew Rs 25,586 crore in May on poll jitters and over Rs 8,700 crore in April on concerns over a tweak in India's tax treaty with Mauritius and a sustained rise in US bond yields.

"Economically, India stands on a strong footing. Moreover, the better-than-expected earnings season so far has improved corporate India's balance sheet that would help in building investor confidence.

"Furthermore, there is growing anticipation of an interest rate cut by the US Federal Reserve in September," Himanshu Srivastava, associate director - manager research at Morningstar Investment Research India, said.

Investment in equity MFs surge five-fold

New Delhi: Investment in equity mutual funds surged over five-fold to Rs 94,151 crore in the June 2024 quarter against Rs 18,358 crore a year ago, driven by a strong economic environment, supportive government fiscal policies, investors confidence and robust stock return.

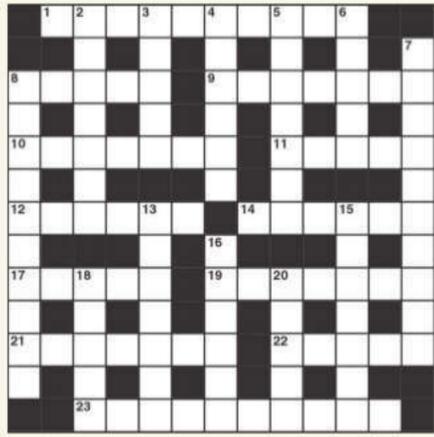
This has also pushed the industry's assets under management (AUM) by 59 per cent to Rs 27.68 lakh crore in June from Rs 17.43 lakh crore a year ago, data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) showed.

The robust gain in the asset base was also replicated in the growth of investors in equity mutual funds, with the number of folios closing at 13.3 crore, adding an investor base of over 3 crore.

According to the AMFI data, equity-oriented mutual fund schemes invested Rs 94,151 crore in the quarter ended June 2024. This comprises Rs 18,917 crore in April, Rs 34,697 crore in May and Rs 40,537 crore in June.

The investment in equity-oriented mutual funds jumped five-fold to Rs 94,151 crore in the June quarter from Rs 18,358 crore in the quarter ended June 2023 and increased 32 per cent Rs 71,280 crore witnessed in the preceding March 2024 quarter. **PTI**

CROSSWORD 5428



- ACROSS**
- Fresh enthusiasm and a source of dairy produce (3,7)
 - Some lifelong criminal (5)
 - It's a ban put out, so keep away (7)
 - Restore two kinds of fabric (7)
 - Large marble passage (5)
 - Slit at the front (6)
 - Domestic storm centre (6)
 - The land transformed by Ali (5)
 - His part is arranged for one in the orchestra (7)
 - Fight and thrash a tough character (7)
 - Lanky, like unwanted plants (5)
 - A chance one is fortunate to get (5,5)
- DOWN**
- It puts us in the shade, naturally (7)
 - Hope saved its captive after all (5)
 - In the publicity the labyrinth caused a shock (6)
 - Still a variety of sausage (7)
 - Give a protracted speech (5)
 - Concerned in making my tap shiny (2,8)
 - Excellent start at school? (5-5)
 - Quite out of order (7)
 - Fancy me being found in a broken chair (7)
 - Retiring worker seen in a humble dwelling (6)
 - There's rising hostility in this quarrel (5)
 - Quarrelsome oarsman (5)

Solutions Crossword 5427 Across: 1 Attack, 4 Encore, 9 Armenia, 10 Reaps, 11 Knife, 12 Realist, 13 Slot machine, 18 Anxious, 20 Layer, 22 Cacti, 23 New leaf, 24 Renege, 25 Stodge Down: 1 Alaska, 2 Tempi, 3 Content, 5 Norma, 6 Ovation, 7 Ersatz, 8 Hair-raising, 14 Lexicon, 15 Halfwit, 16 Saucer, 17 Trifle, 19 Owing, 21 Yield

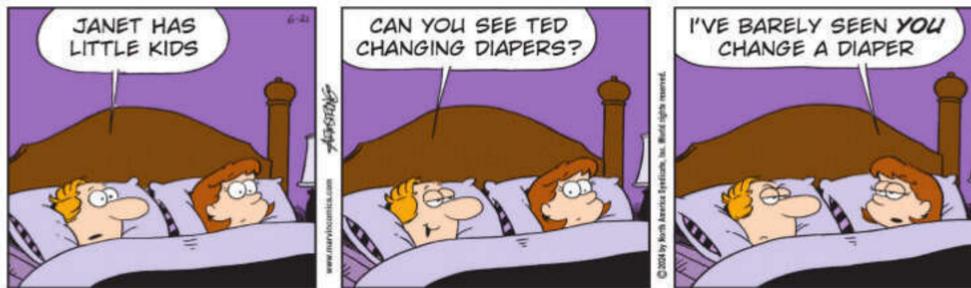
OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.

CNIIO **AERUCC**

IYNNN **GIINGV**

Answer: Convinced yourself doesn't win an argument. - Robert Half (10)

Difficulty Level 1s

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

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

SUDOKU 5636

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

SOLUTION SUDOKU 5635

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

PRESS NOTICE INVITING PERCENTAGE RATE e-TENDER

Executive Engineer(C), Postal Civil Division, New Delhi invites on behalf of The President of India, online percentage rate (CPWD-7) e-tenders for the following work:
N.I.T. No.: NIT/EEPCND/2024-25/19 dated: 26.07.2024
Name of Work: Misc. civil repair works i/c external and internal finishing works of 15 nos type-II and 2 nos type-III qtrs at Postal staff colony Raj Nagar, Ghaziabad.
Estimated Cost: ₹ 4004375/-
Earnest Money: ₹ 80088/-
Period of completion - 90 days
Last time and date of submission of bid: 08.08.2024 at 15:00 hrs.
The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the website <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>

PRESS NOTICE INVITING PERCENTAGE RATE e-TENDER

Executive Engineer(C), Postal Civil Division, New Delhi invites on behalf of The President of India, online percentage rate (CPWD-7) e-tenders for the following work:
N.I.T. No.: NIT/EEPCND/2024-25/21 dated: 26.07.2024
Name of Work: Civil repair and maintenance of HauzKhas PO, New Delhi.
Estimated Cost: ₹ 3333861/-
Earnest Money: ₹ 66677/-
Period of completion - 60 days
Last time and date of submission of bid: 08.08.2024 at 15:00 hrs.
The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the website <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>

PRESS NOTICE INVITING PERCENTAGE RATE e-TENDER

Executive Engineer(C), Postal Civil Division, New Delhi invites on behalf of The President of India, online percentage rate (CPWD-7) e-tenders for the following work:
N.I.T. No.: NIT/EEPCND/2024-25/18 dated: 26.07.2024
Name of Work: Civil work for repair and maintenance of Jhilmil HO Bldg, Delhi.
Estimated Cost: ₹ 3978128/-
Earnest Money: ₹ 79563/-
Period of completion - 90 days
Last time and date of submission of bid: 08.08.2024 at 15:00 hrs.
The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the website <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>

भारतीय विद्युत नियंत्रण बोर्ड
CONCOR CORPORATION OF INDIA LTD.
CONCOR Annex, NSIC MDBP Building, 3rd Floor, Okhla Industrial Estate, New Delhi-110020

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

CONCOR invites E-Tender in single Packet System of tendering for the following Services (Operation and Maintenance work):

| | |
|---|--|
| Tender No. | CONCOR/EP/ELCTI/AMC/2024 |
| Name of Work | Services pertaining for O&M of Electrical installations, Window/Split Air Conditioners & Fire detection/fighting system of CONCOR's Corporate Office C-3 Mathura Road, US Complex, Additional office Space at NSIC MDBP Building, 2nd & 3rd floor, Training Centre at Gurgaon and CONCOR's flats situated at different locations at Delhi. |
| Estimated Cost | ₹ 2,35,42,818/- (Inclusive of all) |
| Completion Period | 24 Months |
| Earnest Money Deposit | ₹ 2,67,800/- (through e-payment only) |
| Cost of Tender Document (Non-refundable) | ₹ 1,000/- (inclusive all taxes & duties through e-payment) |
| Tender Processing Fee (Non-refundable) | ₹ 3,540/- (inclusive all taxes & duties through e-payment) |
| Date of sale of Tender (online) | From 29.07.2024 (11:30 Hrs.) to 19.08.2024 (up to 17:00 Hrs.) |
| Date & Time of submission of Tender | 20.08.2024 up to 17:00 Hrs. (E-Tendering Mode Only) |
| Date & Time of Opening of Tender | 21.08.2024 at 11:30 Hrs. |

For financial eligibility criteria, experience with respect to similar nature of work, etc, please refer to detailed tender notice available on website www.concorindia.co.in, but the complete tender document can be downloaded from website www.tenderwizard.com/CCIL only. Further, Corrigendum/Addendum to this Tender, if any, will be published on website www.concorindia.co.in, www.tenderwizard.com/CCIL and Central Procurement Portal (CPP) only. Newspaper press advertisement shall not be issued for the same.
General Manager/Projects, Phone No.: 011-41222500

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed Tenders on item rate basis are hereby invited on behalf of Governor of H.P. by Executive Engineer, NH Division, HPPWD, Hamirpur (H.P) from the experienced contractor/ firms enlisted in appropriate class with HPPWD for the following works. The tender shall be received in this office on 12.08.2024 up to 11.00 A.M. and the same shall be opened on the same day at 11:30 A.M. in the presence of Contractor/Firms or their authorized representatives who wish to be present at the time of opening of tender. The application for issue of tender document shall be received on dated 08-08-2024 up to 4:00 PM. and tender document will be issued on 09-08-2024 up to 5:00 PM. on cash payment of ₹350/- (Non-Refundable) If the office happens to be closed on the scheduled date the tender form document will be sold/ opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.

| Sr. No. | Name of work | Estimated Cost | Earnest Money | Time Allowed |
|---------|--|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| 1. | Annual repair and Maintenance on NH 70(New NH-03) Km 58/400 to 114/0 (SH- Repair of Patch/Pot holes in Km. 58/400 to 71/00) | 497954.00 | 10000.00 | One Month |
| 2. | Annual repair and Maintenance on NH 70(New NH-03) Km 58/400 to 114/0 (SH- Repair of Patch/Pot holes in Km. 72/200 to 85/0) | 499168.00 | 10000.00 | One Month |
| 3. | Annual repair and Maintenance on NH 70(New NH-03) Km 58/400 to 114/0 (SH- Repair of Patch/Pot holes in Km. 90/00 to 92/300) | 499042.00 | 10000.00 | One Month |
| 4. | Annual repair and Maintenance on NH 70(New NH-03) Km 58/400 to 114/0 (SH- Repair of Patch/Pot holes in Km. 93/00 to 96/00) | 498803.00 | 10000.00 | One Month |
| 5. | Annual repair and Maintenance on NH 70(New NH-03) Km 58/400 to 114/0 (SH- Repairing of Patch/Pot holes in Km. 96/500 to 100/0) | 498438.00 | 10000.00 | One Month |
| 6. | Annual repair and Maintenance on NH 503A Km 0/0 to 70/0 (SH- Construction of Breast wall at RD 55/060 to 55/095(RHS). | 482865.00 | 10000.00 | One Month |
| 7. | Restoration for road damages caused by laying of OFC on NH-503 Extn. Km 28/0 to 44/700 (SH- Repair of Patch/Pot holes in Km. 35/0 to 39/850 (4-Lane Portion) | 474292.00 | 10000.00 | One Month |
| 8. | Restoration for road damages caused by laying of OFC on NH-503 Extn. Km 28/0 to 44/700 (SH- Repair of Patch/Pot holes in Km. 39/850 to 44/700 (4-Lane Portion) | 493709.00 | 10000.00 | One Month |
| 9. | Restoration of road damages caused due to laying of OFC on NH- 503 A. at Km 0/0 to 70/00 (SH- Dressing and concreting of berm at Km. 26/0 to 30/0) | 491798.00 | 10000.00 | One Month |
| 10. | Annual repair and Maintenance on NH-70 (New NH-03) Km 58/400 to 114/0 (SH- Construction of U-shape drain and 80mm thick interlocking paver blocks in Km. 114/0 (Near Mini secretariat and Text stand Nadaun (R.H.S). | 489855.00 | 10000.00 | One Month |
| 11. | Annual repair and Maintenance on NH 503AKm 0/0 to 70/0 (SH- Construction of Breast wall at RD 49/300 to 49/335 (LHS). | 482865.00 | 10000.00 | One Month |
| 12. | Annual repair and Maintenance on NH 503AKm 0/0 to 70/0 (SH- Construction of Breast wall at RD 49/340 to 49/375 (LHS). | 482085.00 | 10000.00 | One Month |
| 13. | A/R & M/o on NH 20A(New NH-503) Nagrota Bagwan -Ranital -Mubarakpur road Km 39/0 to 91/0 in the state of Himachal Pradesh (SH- Repair of Patch/Pot holes in Km. 43/0 to 46/0) | 499894.00 | 10000.00 | One Month |
| 14. | A/R & M/o on NH 20A(New NH-503) Nagrota Bagwan -Ranital -Mubarakpur road Km 39/0 to 91/0 in the state of Himachal Pradesh (SH- Repair of Patch/Pot holes in Km. 56/0 to 59/0) | 499167.00 | 10000.00 | One Month |
| 15. | Annual repair and Maintenance on NH 70(New NH-03) Km 58/400 to 114/0 (SH-Hiring of JCB and labour in Km. 58/400 to 85/0) | 484577.00 | 10000.00 | One Month |
| 16. | Annual repair and Maintenance on NH 70(New NH-03) Km 58/400 to 114/0 (SH- Hiring of JCB and labour in Km. 85/0 to 114/0) | 483019.00 | 10000.00 | One Month |
| 17. | Annual repair and Maintenance on NH-503 Extn. Km 0/0 to 19/0 (SH-Hiring of JCB and labour in Km. 0/0 to 19/0) | 487018.00 | 10000.00 | One Month |
| 18. | Annual repair and Maintenance on NH 70(New NH-03) Km 58/400 to 114/0 (SH- Clearing and grubbing in Km. 76/0 to 96/0) | 495000.00 | 10000.00 | One Month |
| 19. | Annual repair and Maintenance on NH 20A(New NH 503) Km 39/00 to 91/00 (SH- C/o Un-lined drain and clearing of grass from km. 38/0 to 39/250) | 352332.00 | 7100.00 | One Month |
| 20. | A/R & M/o on NH 20A(New NH-503) Nagrota Bagwan -Ranital -Mubarakpur road Km 39/0 to 91/0 in the state of Himachal Pradesh (SH- Providing and Laying 80mm thick interlocking paver block 59/570 to 59/615 & providing and fixing MS grating at RD 59/410. | 470358.00 | 10000.00 | One Month |
| 21. | Annual repair and maintenance on NH 20A (New NH 503) Km 39/00 to 91/00 (SH- Hiring of JCB and labour km 65/0 to 91/0) | 483019.00 | 10000.00 | One Month |
| 22. | Annual repair and maintenance on NH 20A (New NH 503) Km 39/00 to 91/00 (SH- Hiring of JCB and labour km 39/0 to 65/0). | 483019.00 | 10000.00 | One Month |
| 23. | Annual repair and maintenance on NH 20A (New NH 503) in Km 39/0 to 91/00 (SH-Supply and stacking road bond (Ready Mix pot seal) in km.39/0 to 91/0) | 438750.00 | 9000.00 | One Month |
| 24. | Annual repair and maintenance on NH-70(New NH-03) in Km 58/400 to 114/0 (SH-Supply and stacking road bond (Ready Mix pot seal) in Km.58/0 to 100/0) | 438750.00 | 9000.00 | One Month |
| 25. | Annual repair and Maintenance on NH 20A(NewNH-503) Km 39/0 to 91/0 (SH- Construction of Retaining wall at Km. 75/710 to 75/723 (LHS). | 499039.00 | 10000.00 | One Month |
| 26. | Annual repair and Maintenance on NH-503 Extn. 19/0 to 44/700 (SH- Hiring of JCB and labour in Km. 28/00 to 44/700). | 406800.00 | 8500.00 | One Month |

Draft notice inviting/ specification special conditions can be seen in this office on any working day ambiguous/ conditional tenders shall not be entertained/ considered in any case. The contractors/ firms are requested to insert the rate of each item in words as well as in figure, the intending contractors/ firms are requested to see the site of work before submitting the tenders from any nationalized bank duly pledged in favour of Executive Engineer. The application without earnest money will not be entertained and out rightly rejected.

CONDITIONS: - The following document are required to be attached with the application:- 1. A copy of valid enlistment and renewal certificate. 2. A copy of GST. 3. Earnest money duly pledged in favour of Executive Engineer Any application not accompanied by above documents shall not be entertained. The tender shall be issued to those contractors/ firms who are found eligible, suitable and competent. The decision of the Executive Engineer, regarding suitability, eligibility and competence of the contractor/ firm applying for issue of tenders shall be final. In case, of any information supplied by the contractor/ firm, is found false at any stage the tender is liable to be rejected and action taken against contractor/firm.

Executive Engineer, NH Division, HPPWD, Hamirpur.

DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)
You still have a fair amount of energy, and you mustn't waste time if you have important matters to complete. By next week your stars will be more relaxed, which could be a relief but also indicates that things might be somewhat less easy.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)
Seen from one angle your stars present you as being on the winning side and not likely to be deceived or exploited. The essential message, though, is that you can turn all available circumstances to good advantage if you throw yourself into endeavours.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
The weight of celestial patterns is still on your side, enabling you to swing almost any development to your benefit. At home, it's all a question of being businesslike, and insisting that people obey the rules, watch the clock and do what they're told.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
You can keep a secret, but only for a little while longer. Today's stars tell a double story; urging you to talk to partners, but advising you to hold your tongue when it comes to certain delicate matters. The last thing you want to do now is cause offence.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)
The business of day-to-day survival looms large, and it is those little but necessary things that you must turn your attention. No item should be considered too small or too dull to warrant your best efforts. And don't imagine that it's OK to leave routine matters to others.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)
Happily, lunar alignments are infusing and enthusing the region of the zodiac occupied by your sign. The consequence is that you could be rather more sensitive than usual, but also increasingly able to appreciate emotional improvements. And if you feel better, pass it on.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)
You would be wise to keep yourself to yourself today, at least when you sense that irrational opposition is looming. There may be a family mystery to solve, but it seems unlikely that answers will be available before tomorrow, so you should be patient.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)
There is much to be said for teamwork today, so make an effort to co-operate, and don't even think about going it alone. If you're still recovering from a trauma at work or a rejection at home, you will probably have forgotten all about it by next week.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)
No amount of argument must prevent you from forging ahead with major alterations in your personal life. Partners' advice, while well-intentioned, often seems to miss the point, so make your own decisions today. Mind you, you'll have to accept responsibility if your plans don't work out.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)
There seems to be a powerful indication of long-distance contacts today, perhaps associated with family connections. You may actually be dreaming of life in distant parts. It would be nice to escape, if only for a while. Why not see an arrangement?

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)
The general planetary indications are positive, but the upside is that you'll be given a chance to make firm constructive progress, and then to sort out a hundred and one practical details and irritations. Other people will accept your plans, but only if you give them good reason.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)
This is one week when planetary patterns urge you not to postpone a fresh start any longer. There are personal contacts out there which should now be converted into firm friendships. Close partners should collaborate.

विशेष शाखा पुलिस मुख्यालय मध्यप्रदेश भोपाल
क्रमांक- विशा/स्टोर/2024-25 (254), दिनांक- 23/07/2024

निविदा सूचना का शुद्ध पत्र (Corrigendum)

विशेष शाखा पुलिस मुख्यालय को निविदा सूचना क्रमांक SB/Store/2024- 25 (205), Bhopal, Dated 19-06-2024 द्वारा Explosive Vapour Detector & Other 5 Items के क्रय हेतु ई-निविदा सूचना जारी की गई है। उपरोक्त आमंत्रित निविदा के माध्यम से क्रय किये जाने वाले उपकरण के समय-सारणी में "अतिरिक्त संशोधन" के संबंध में "शुद्ध पत्र" (Corrigendum) जारी किया गया है जो website <https://mptenders.gov.in/nicgep/app> पर तथा विभाग की वेबसाइट www.mppolice.gov.in पर उपलब्ध है।

हस्ता./-
उप पुलिस महानिरीक्षक,
सुबुवाली, म.प्र. भोपाल
दूरभाष क्रं.-0755-2443654
Email: sec25-sb@mppolice.gov.in

SPECIAL BRANCH POLICE HEADQUARTER, M.P., BHOPAL

NO. SB/Store/2024-25 (259), Bhopal, Dated 29-07-2024
"ONLINE E-TENDER NOTICE"

E-tender are invited by Assistant Inspector General of Police, Special Branch (G) M.P. Bhopal on behalf of DGP MP Bhopal for the following item on website <https://mptenders.gov.in/nicgep/app>:-

| S.No | Name of Item(s) | Qty. | Tender Fees (Rs.) | EMD (Rs.) | Tender No. |
|------|---|------|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| 1 | Rate Contract for Catering and Cafeteria arrangement at Integrated Command Centre | 1 | 1,000/- | 25,000/- | 2nd Tender |

- Cost of tender document (Tender Fee) is non refundable and cannot be exempted in any condition & must submit online through website <https://mptenders.gov.in/nicgep/app>.
- Tender document can be download from the website of MP Police (www.mppolice.gov.in)
- Bids shall be submitted online only at MP Tenders website: <https://mptenders.gov.in/nicgep/app>
- Tender Schedule:

| No. | Tender Activity | Date & Time |
|-----|---|----------------------------|
| i | Submission of written queries through e- mail: sec25-sb@mppolice.gov.in | 30/07/2024 up to 1700 hrs. |
| ii | Pre Bid Meeting along with written queries | 31/07/2024 at 1100 hrs. |
| iii | Bid Submission Start Date | 07/08/2024 at 1000 hrs. |
| iv | Last date of online e-Tender submission | 13/08/2024 up to 1600 hrs. |
| v | Bid will be opened on | 14/08/2024 up to 1600 hrs. |

Sd/-
D. I.G. of Police (Intelligence) M.P. Bhopal
Tel. No. 0755-2443654
G-13989/24

H.P. STATE CIVIL SUPPLIES CORPORATION LIMITED.
BLOCK 16 & 17, SDA COMMERCIAL COMPLEX, KASUMPTI SHIMLA-9 (HIMACHAL PRADESH) (INDIA)
Phone No.0177-2621583 Email:mdhpscsc@himapurtl.com

E-TENDER NOTICE

Himachal Pradesh State Civil Supplies Corporation Limited, Shimla invites Global E-Tenders for the procurement of **Double Fortified Salt for six months supply.** The detailed tender notice, tender documents and other instructions can be downloaded or viewed on-line from the portal <https://hptenders.gov.in>. The last date of submission of on-line tenders, samples, earnest money deposit, tender document fee and processing fee shall be till **20-08-2024 upto 5:00(PM)**. The tenders of Double Fortified Salt shall be opened on **21-08-2024 at 11.00 (AM)**.

Managing Director

यूको बैंक UCO BANK
Honours your trust
Branch : Pinahat (0097) : Raghunathpura Pinahat Agra-283123, U.P. e-mail : pinaha@ucobank.co.in

Gold Auction Notice, Terms & Conditions

- The Bank does not guarantee the weight or purity of the Jewellery/Ornaments/Coins, either of its gold contents or otherwise
- The jewel is available for inspection by the intending bidders during business hours on any working day in the Bank
- The intending purchasers shall make an earnest money deposit of 25% of Reserve Price.
- The jewel will be handed over to the highest bidder on payment of the balance amount within 24 hours or on the next working day of the Bank during its business hours.
- If the successful bidder fails to pay the amount, the bidder shall forfeit the earnest money and the jewel may be resold within 30 days from that date and shortfall if any in excess of the earnest money shall be recoverable from the bidder who has successfully bid at the earlier auction but did not take delivery of the jewel against payment
- The unsuccessful bidder shall be entitled for the refund of the earnest money immediately after the auction is over
- It shall be lawful for the Bank to stop the auction at any stage without assigning any reason thereto in which case the earnest money shall be returned to whoever makes the deposit
- Ultimate decision regarding acceptance of an offer for purchase of Jewellery through auction would be that of the Bank and the Bank is not bound to accept the highest offer.

| Name of the Borrower/ Address/Account No. | Sale of Gold Weight | Place of Auction | Auction Date/Time and Reserve Price |
|---|--|--------------------------|--|
| Branch Pinahat (0097): Branch Manager : Contact No. - 87566 53131 | | | |
| Borrower: Shri Krishan Kant S/o Shri Yash Pal Address: 178 Malkapur Karkoli Agra U.P. A/c No.: 00970610011577 | 4 Chudi having total weight of 24.330 grams & 1 Haar with weight of 18.570 grams | UCO BANK: Pinahat Branch | Date : 14.08.2024 Time : 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM Outstanding balance of Rs.1,62,500/- (Excluding un-applied Interest & Other Charges) Reserve Price : Rs. 3,05,000.00 (Rupees Three Lakh Five Thousand Only) |

Note:- Hindi & English versions of this Notice are being published in Hindi & English Newspapers respectively. It is clarified that in case of any contradiction in Hindi and English version of the Notice, the English version of the Notice will prevail.
Date: 28.07.2024 Place: Pinahat Agra Branch Manager (UCO Bank)

17 IDEA EXCHANGE

NEWSMAKERS IN THE NEWSROOM



NON-INDEPENDENT DIRECTOR, KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK

WHY UDAY KOTAK

As one of India's foremost bankers and the founder of the Kotak Mahindra Bank, he played a key role in developing India's banking and financial sector. As the MD & CEO of the bank till September 2023, he turned the institution into the fourth-largest private sector bank in India, enabling it to emerge as one of India's leading financial conglomerates. He has also served on several committees closely linked with the formulation of government and regulatory policies

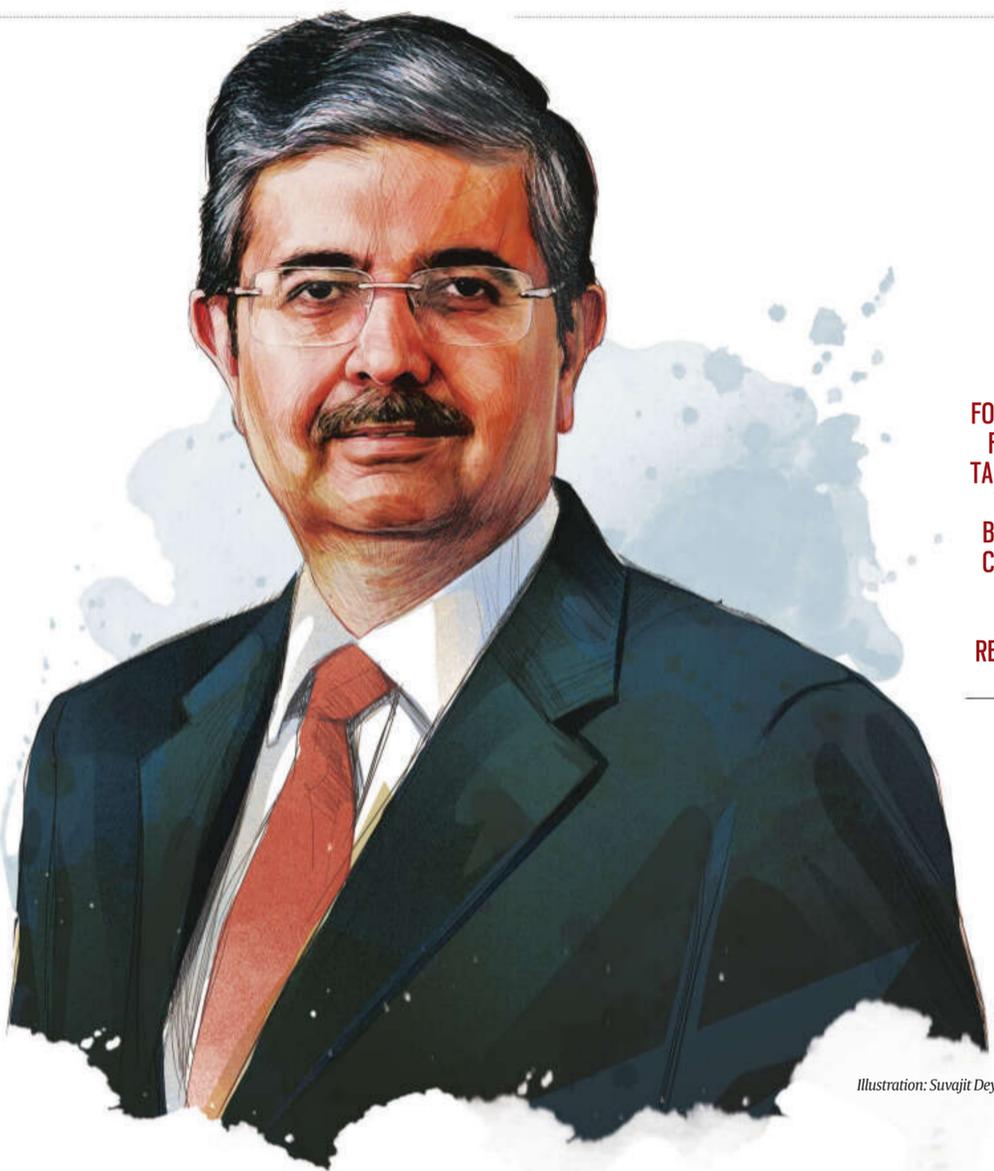


Illustration: Suvajit Dey

'Software isn't adding jobs it did... We have to reinvent ourselves on where we can create new jobs'

Uday Kotak, Non-Independent Director, Kotak Mahindra Bank, on the recent Union Budget, government's silence on privatisation and disinvestment and reservation in the private sector. The conversation was moderated by P Vaidyanathan Iyer, Executive Editor, *The Indian Express*

P Vaidyanathan Iyer: In light of the recent elections and post-pandemic economic recovery, which has seen over 7 per cent growth in the last three years, what were your first impressions of the budget?

The budget has been well-thought-through and for a specific set of reasons. First, a fiscal consolidation commitment has brought the fiscal deficit to 4.9 per cent. Second is the realisation that when a nation of savers moves to becoming a nation of investors, it's a paradigm shift. Therefore, there is a need to ensure the gradual narrowing of the gap between taxation on interest earnings versus capital gains, keeping in mind the needs of the capital of the country, and therefore a tweaking on the taxation side. Keeping the two big focus areas — employment and MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) — is necessary. The corporate sector must play its part and should make sense from a business point of view. We have to keep in mind that we are in NDA 3.0, and the budget needs to be sensitive to the political economy. Overall, I feel that by maintaining macroeconomic stability and keeping on the broader trends of the financial sector, we are reasonably on track.

P Vaidyanathan Iyer: During NDA's first two terms, when they had absolute majority, they tried bold initiatives. Do you think that this budget is maintaining the status quo and not ruffling any feathers?

I don't think they have withdrawn any of their prior statements. Therefore, whether it is disinvestment or privatisation, the government has not made any statement in the budget that pulls back from the earlier commitments or statements they have made. One would assume that they will continue down that path. Secondly, we have to keep in mind that this is an NDA budget and, therefore, it has to reflect the political economy of our times. Thirdly, despite that, they have not strayed away and gone into any populism, including any direct credits to people. How do we make the employment scheme work? That's where I think all our minds should be. The budget has defined an intent to move in that direction.

ON REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

INDIA'S MACROECONOMIC STABILITY IS A SHINING EXAMPLE OF HOW THE REGULATORY SYSTEM ACROSS THE BOARD — BANKING, CAPITAL MARKETS, AND THE INSURANCE SYSTEM — HAVE HELD THEIR GROUND

P Vaidyanathan Iyer: The budget has been silent on disinvestment, on privatisation of some banks (which it talked about two or three years back), and on fertiliser subsidy reforms. Could you specifically address the issue of demand?

There are two parts to it. One is when you're continuing down the path of fiscal consolidation, you are taking a disciplined call that there will be an X amount of money which will be available. Point two is that once that X amount of money is available, there are two choices. You do revenue expenditure or capital expenditure. Revenue expenditure will directly boost demand. Capital expenditure will indirectly boost demand by creating more fundamentals. If you talk to any economist, they'd always prefer capital expenditure as a priority because it is more long-term. And that's what the budget has continued to do. It has kept its capex at the same level as last time. In this context, we should ask ourselves why are we not making capital expenditures and investments in the private sector. The government is holding the level of capex, mainly public expenditure. It's time for the private sector, as its capacity utilisation goes up, to take on the load of the expenditure side, which in turn will enable the fiscal side to open up space for more consumption push.

Udit Misra: It seems like the government has finally given up on the FRBM (Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management) framework. While it is true that our fiscal deficit is coming down, it was never achieved in the 10 years of Modi government. It seems like we're not even going to target a fiscal deficit at 3 per cent of the GDP. Is moving towards a framework where we target debt-to-GDP ratio a good move?

There was and therefore we have to come to the first goalpost, which is 4.5 per cent, for which it seems we are in good shape in 2025-26. We will have to look at the state of the economy, the level of economic growth, and the political economy at that stage, to then take a view. At the same time, I think we are now at 58 per cent of GDP on the borrowing side. And this year's budget is projecting another 1.2 or 1.5 per cent lower. So we are moving steadily towards a lower borrowing as a percentage of the GDP. One is to ensure that we carry on. Second is, do we put a target? The target depends on variables, as long as we carry on with the journey while keeping in mind that demand continues to grow because India has historically been a consumption economy. If you tighten the fist too fast, you also have the demand side issue. It's an important balancing act.

Udit Misra: While the government's capex has gone up substantially, if we take it along with the central PSUs, that number has been stagnant. One argument is that while capex is high, when taken together between the central PSUs and the central government, it has been largely flat. That is given as a reason as to why it has not yielded the kind of result that the government wanted. What's your take?

If you look at this year's disinvestment and

other proceeds, the target continues to be a very modest Rs 50,000 crore. If I read the message of the budget, it is saying that we are not pushing central PSUs to give us disproportionate dividends. If you have capital expenditure plans, please reinvest. We are not in a hurry to divest but effectively telling central PSUs that we are not asking you to give us everything as dividends to meet our fiscal requirements. If you have capital expenditure needs, you are

ON EMPLOYMENT

WE REALLY HAVE TO REINVENT OURSELVES ON WHERE WE ARE GOING TO CREATE THE NEW JOBS... WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO TO REIMAGINE OUR FUTURE? THERE'S A HUGE OPPORTUNITY FOR INDIA TO BECOME THE FRONT OFFICE OF THE WORLD, NOT JUST THE BACK OFFICE

free to go ahead and that's an important signal. But we cannot shy away from the fact that private capex needs to now come to the fore. And capacity utilisation in many sectors is moving steadily up. The demand side is clearly unequal. At the higher income end, the demand is more robust. At the lower income end, it has challenges, which is why the push towards employment is extremely important. Look at how software is no longer adding as many jobs as it did. We really have to reinvent ourselves on where we are going to create the new jobs and how are we going to reposition ourselves on high employment-oriented jobs.

There's a huge opportunity in the post-COVID world for India to become the front office of the world, not just the back office.

Shyamal Majumdar: A suggestion put forth by the Economic Survey was that India's inflation-targeting framework should exclude food. With RBI continuing to maintain a stance that 4 per cent is Arjuna's eye, what do you think of the suggestion?

In the current CPI (Consumer Price Index) basket, is the representation and the weightage of food appropriate? The weight of food is probably larger than what would be justified in terms of today's consumption patterns. Therefore, relooking at the basket would be a step that we should consider. For the common man, you cannot avoid the fact that if food costs more, it takes away the rest of the discretionary basket and we cannot get away from it in a country like India. Food should continue to be in the basket, but the weights should reflect today's times.

Shyamal Majumdar: In the past you've said that there should not be too many regulatory guardrails because they might affect economic growth. In view of the series of actions that have taken place on

banks and NBFCs (Non-Banking Financial Companies), do you believe that?

We have to give credit to the regulators. They have navigated very well, particularly in the COVID and post-COVID period. India's macroeconomic stability today is a shining example of how the regulatory system across the board — banking, capital markets, and the insurance system — have held their ground. We need to think about the windshield in front of us over the next five to 10 years. And it's always a very delicate balance between the levels of enterprise versus the levels of risk. That is the ongoing equilibrium on which practitioners, policymakers and regulators will have to constantly evolve. A zero-accident policy has significant risks to growth. We need to minimise accidents. But we must also have a quick mechanism that should accidents happen, our responsiveness to handle those accidents has to be at alacrity.

Anil Sasi: Those from the industry have claimed that the government is on the right track but stopped short of investing. Why do you think that the voluntary exercise of employment and internship will take off?

We have to look at the fine print. The Finance Minister made a valid point. It should not be an arbitrage for jobs. Otherwise the cor-

porate sector would've had it in any case. It has to be a net addition. That is where the nuance of the policy is going to be important. That is where the corporate sector will have to figure out that if we took those additional people, how would that create value for future growth? As long as there is no arbitrage played by the corporate sector and it is additional jobs and the cost of that administration and other costs of that job is coming as a CSR activity, you

ON DEMAND FOR RESERVATION IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

PEOPLE NEED TO BE ENABLED WITH OPPORTUNITY BUT IF WE MOVE AWAY FROM MERITOCRACY, WE RUN THE RISK OF SUSTAINABILITY. THE COST OF CREATING OPPORTUNITY NEEDS TO BE TAKEN BY THE STATE. PRIVATE SECTOR CAN GIVE MERIT, OPPORTUNITY AND BE A PARTNER

are really investing for the future.

Anil Sasi: What is stopping the private sector from investing, given that banks are flush with funds?

For the last 30-50 years, we've been atuned to a traditional model as the basis of financing India. If there is any country in the world after the US that can get the balance between the saver-borrower model and develop the markets model, it is India. And if India handles it with maturity, it can have the capacity to attract more capital sustainably, while serving the broader needs of the real economy with

both the models working rather than the historical situation, which was the saver-borrower model and disproportionately dominant.

Shobhana Subramanian: Liquidity seems to be determining interest rates rather than policy rates. Given that deposit growth has been slow, it seems to indicate that the level of loan rates will remain high. Will interest rates remain high?

This is where a holistic view of the financial sector is important and some of the steps in the budget are moving in that direction. The hurdle to put money as a saver into a deposit at the highest marginal tax rate, is naturally moving to higher risk, higher return, lower taxation bucket, which is into the investor model. So the saver is becoming the investor. That trend will continue. This slightly higher capital gains tax is still a step in the right direction. The gap between the interest rate tax versus capital gains on the short term, which is 20 per cent, is still large enough for the saver to continue being an investor. It's a good step in the longer term. Depositors with smaller amounts is what the banks will have to move towards a lot more. And the second area where the banks have to be clear is that money is moving into the markets, the transaction flows. Granular retail and transaction flows are the ways the banks will have to counter it. Banks have to reinvent themselves to the new paradigm.

Harish Damodaran: The twin balance sheet problem is history, right? It looks like we are in for a structurally higher interest rate. So are our households a weak point? Does it make sense to do cash transfers to stimulate consumption?

ON FOOD IN CPI BASKET

FOR THE COMMON MAN, IF FOOD COSTS MORE, IT TAKES AWAY THE REST OF THE DISCRETIONARY BASKET. FOOD SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE IN THE BASKET, BUT THE WEIGHTS SHOULD REFLECT TODAY'S TIMES

The budget has taken a view that rather than cash transfers, let's create jobs and support MSMEs. The risk with direct transfers is that at some point it becomes competitive populism and difficult to control, not only at the central level, but even at the state level. Then you start losing control over a lot of macroeconomic parameters.

Sukalp Sharma: Will the increase in securities transaction tax for the derivative segment, bring a lot more sanity into that segment, considering that a lot of retail investors were entering and booking significant losses?

There are two approaches to take. One is to put the brakes. Second is to put sands in the wheel. I'm of the view that it should be the second. Therefore, increase securities transaction tax, lean against the wind, some sand in the wheels, and make sure that you let the marketplace find itself while you're putting some corrective action without putting a hard break.

George Mathew: Money flow to the markets has been rising sharply, especially through mutual funds. People are breaking FDs to invest. The government has already talked about the high market cap-to-GDP ratio. Are these valuations justifiable? Should there be some kind of moderation?

The way to respond to the markets is supply. Stocks which are small and mid-cap or low liquidity with high government or promoter ownership bring supply to the market. If there is more money coming which creates a demand for the stocks, it's a great time to encourage supply and flow of stocks particularly in low liquidity stocks whether in the private sector or in the government sector. A proper framework of regulation and thereafter letting market forces find the levels is the right thing.

Udit Misra: Was the corporate tax cut poorly timed?

You're more than five years into the new corporate tax regime. I think we're ensuring that enough surpluses are happening in the corporate sector to be able to invest. What I would much rather focus on is how do we get investments going in this economy? If you look at the global rates for corporates, including the US, the tax rates for corporates have been lower than individuals in most parts of the world, because finally it is going into productive investment. Therefore, we have a benchmark. We need to be careful at this stage. We should actually encourage animal spirits to go out and invest and bring the much-needed private capex coming into play.

P Vaidyanathan Iyer: Haryana and now Karnataka have proposed job quotas for locals. Given India's political economy, do you foresee a demand for reservation in the private sector? Is corporate India doing enough in terms of affirmative action?

I am a believer in one India. And therefore, there has to be free movement of people within one India. The second is a very difficult choice between enablement and opportunity for a broader India versus meritocracy. And this difficult choice has to be carefully calibrated. We understand the challenges of politics. But for a country to be competitive and efficient, we certainly need some level of flow of people who are enabled with opportunity. But at the same time, if we move away from meritocracy, we run the risk of sustainability. This balance is a very delicate. One needs to find a market mechanism to find an answer. The cost of creating opportunity needs to be taken by the state. And the private sector can give merit, opportunity and be a partner.



Manu Bhaker shot 221.7. AP

THE MOMENTS WHEN BHAKER STOOD STRONG

In a final of eight contestants, five betrayed their nerves. Only Korea's Oh ye Jin, Kim Yeji and India's Manu Bhaker were consistently in the running for the medal positions. Here's how it played out.

STAGE 1: NO STAGE FRIGHT

The first 10 shots in the 10m Air Pistol final are crucial. Manu was third after 10 shots – scoring 50.4 after five and 100.3 after 10 – but Korea's Oh ye Jin was clearly in some next-level form, shooting an incredible Olympic final start of 52.2 in her first five shots, and reaching 101.7 with her next 5.

AFTER 1ST 5 SHOTS

| Shooter | Total |
|-----------|-------|
| Oh ye Jin | 52.2 |

All five shots: 10.7, 10.8, 10.2, 10.6, 9.9

| | |
|-------------|------|
| Manu Bhaker | 50.4 |
|-------------|------|

All five shots: 10.6, 10.2, 9.5, 10.5, 9.6

| | |
|----------|------|
| Kim Yeji | 49.7 |
|----------|------|

All five shots: 9.8, 10.4, 10.5, 9.3, 9.7

STAGE 2 SETS THE STAGE

The best indicator of Manu's intentions came with two shots. A 10.5 and 10.4 back-to-back in the midst of a field frantically trying to chase the Koreans, which put her at the front of the chasing pack. Good shots matter even more when they come at the right moment.

SHOTS 11 AND 12

| Shooter | Total |
|-----------|-------|
| Oh ye Jin | 121.8 |

Both shots: 10.0, 10.3

| | |
|-------------|-------|
| Manu Bhaker | 121.4 |
|-------------|-------|

Both shots: 10.5, 10.4

| | |
|----------|-------|
| Kim Yeji | 120.4 |
|----------|-------|

Both shots: 9.2, 9.5

KOREANS COMPLETE THE ONE-TWO

Manu's level stayed good enough to keep her in medal contention thereafter, but with high nines and low 10s. Before the final two shots, she was 0.6 behind Yeji. Their first shots saw Yeji hit a 9.4 and Bhaker a 10.1, giving the Indian a 0.1 lead going into the final. Bhaker went first and hit a competitive 10.3 but Yeji came up clutch and managed a 10.5.

MANU' FINAL SHOTS

| Silver/Bronze race | Total |
|--------------------|-------|
| Kim Yeji | 221.8 |

Both shots: 9.4, 10.5

| | |
|-------------|-------|
| Manu Bhaker | 221.7 |
|-------------|-------|

Both shots: 10.1, 10.3

FINAL MEDAL STANDINGS

| Shooter | Total |
|-------------|--------|
| Oh ye Jin | 243.2* |
| Kim Yeji | 241.3 |
| Manu Bhaker | 221.7 |

*(OR)

SHASHANK NAIR



I believe if you can't win something, you should take lessons from it, which, in turn, will help you improve going forward. If I didn't have that lesson, maybe I wouldn't be here today.

MANU BHAKER, BRONZE MEDALLIST, 10M AIR PISTOL

Manu's Tale of Two Cities

Usain Bolt's autobiography, Bhagavad Gita, unique training methods among reasons for 22-year-old's reset after Tokyo debacle



EXPRESS AT OLYMPICS

MIHIR VASAVDA
CHATEAURoux, JULY 28

THE OPENING act of this coming-of-age tale takes place in Granada.

In February this year, Manu Bhaker was in the medieval Spanish town for a shooting World Cup. The tournament was a mixed bag – in her individual event, the pistol shooter fetched a bronze medal. The mixed team event, though, didn't go too well.

The Manu of old would've taken a shuttle back to the hotel and spent the rest of the day in her room 'sulking'. "But (this time) I was like, 'okay fine, next match!'" she told The Indian Express in an interview in May. "You can always live life, come on. And you can always make mistakes."

She put on her best dress, wore fine boots and stepped out for a stroll around the narrow cobble-stoned lanes, past the majestic medieval castles and the imposing Alhambra. On a whim, she entered a cinema hall.

"The movie was in Spanish. I don't know the language and there were no subtitles. So I sat there and was like, 'ab shayad yeh isko yeh bol raha hai, phir isne yeh kahan shayad'... the entire movie I was simply guessing. Fun experience," she said.

It was dark outside by the time Manu returned to the hotel, where she spent some time with her teammates 'gossiping'. "Actually, I just listen to what everyone has to say," she interjected.

After a while, she called it a day. "A very, very good birthday," she smiles.

Manu turned 22 that day. Before sleeping, she made herself a promise: To banish the 'sour' memories of the Tokyo Olympics in Paris.

On Sunday, she did just that.

The pistol shooter won India's first medal of the Paris Olympics, a bronze in the 10m air pistol. In doing so, she ended India's long wait for a shooting medal at the Olympics and also became the first Indian woman shooter to finish on the Games podium.

After the 'nightmare' in Tokyo, where she ended in tears after every event, Manu looked in different directions to reignite her love for shooting – and found it in books, scriptures and coach Jaspal Rana's unconventional methods.

She even turned a believer. "I've become a lot more religious," she said but quickly adding: "Kattar nahi but I do believe a lot now that there is some energy somewhere which is guiding and protecting us," she said.

A person she calls her 'guardian angel', coach Rana, even nudged her into reading the Bhagavad Gita. The scriptures helped her in improving her decision-making. "Especially when I am on the firing line and nerves are taking over me. He gives me examples of what Krishna said to Arjuna during hard times. He'll keep giving such examples," Manu said.

Unlikely inspiration

At her lowest point, Manu – whose sport demands stillness – found motivation in a man who never stood still. He ran, and ran so fast that no one has been able to catch up even now – Usain Bolt.

When she buried herself in the Jamaican sprint star's autobiography, Manu realised



22-year-old Manu Bhaker (R) became the youngest Indian shooter, and first woman, to win an Olympic medal in the sport after clinching bronze in the women's 10m air rifle on Sunday. AP

the trials and tribulations an athlete has to go through before standing on the Olympic podium.

"I noticed some things are common for every athlete. *Mein still rehti hoon, woh speed mein rehte hai* (I stay still, he deals in speed); sports are different... but journeys are the same," she said.

The first common thread, she says, was the start of the match. Manu's one shot takes more time than Bolt's entire race, but dealing with nerves before the event was something she found relatable.

"At the start, although his event is much shorter than ours... there are nerves; to control it is very difficult," Manu said. "He talked about his nervousness before races, during a race and even after they are over. It was all very relatable. He talked about injuries, different phases of an athlete's career. How his first Olympics were (eliminated in the first round in the 200m) and how he had a blast at his second Olympics!"

It gave Manu hope and pushed her to look at the Paris Olympics through a different prism. Then, after she patched up with Rana, a champion shooter himself back in the day, his unconventional training methods helped her improve the shot groupings.

Rana, Manu says, challenged her during training sessions when they worked on technical aspects. "For example, you keep a target, and if you score that much, then it's fine. If not, for the deficit in points... Say the target is 582 and you score 578, you pay a fine in the currency of the country you are training in," she said.

The money collected as fine would be used for community service – either distribute it among the needy or make other kinds of donations. And the amount of fine would depend on the intensity of the session. Higher the intensity, higher the fine.

The end goal was to ensure Manu shot high scores under pressure. If Sunday was anything to go by, the tactic worked.

At her lowest point, Manu – whose sport demands stillness – found motivation in a man who never stood still. He ran, and ran so fast that no one has been able to catch up even now – Usain Bolt

Despite bitter public falling out, how going back to coach Rana revived a career

MIHIR VASAVDA
CHATEAURoux, JULY 28

LOOKING BACK, a brief call might have just changed Indian shooting's future course. A call Jaspal Rana never expected. Reaching out to him was Manu Bhaker.

It lasted a few minutes during which there was no delving into the past and no holding on to egos – only a cry for help.

And just like that, the now famous athlete-coach pair was reunited.

On Sunday, when Manu entered the finals hall, the first thing she did was to look towards the stand to see where Rana, a former World and Asian Games champion, was seated.

He was in the third row to her left, with a stop clock in one hand and shot targets on his phone. During every key moment, she looked towards him.

"I was making sure I was only looking at him and nobody else. Looking at him gives me courage," Manu said. Rana added: "We communicate through eyes. There's no need to speak."

There was a period of more than a year after the Tokyo Olympics when the two didn't communicate.

Their falling out, in full public glare, was so bad that it seemed they had reached a point of no return.

Manu blamed Rana for the shocker she endured in Tokyo. Rana called her immature and mocked her by printing a message sent to him by Manu's mother on his t-shirt and walked around wearing that at the shooting ranges.

The national federation, too, got involved with former president Raninder Singh holding Rana responsible for the entire shooting debacle three ago.

In the aftermath, Rana went on a sabbatical. And Manu continued to struggle. "I was losing (everywhere) in 2021. Entire



Manu Bhaker's coach Jaspal Rana (R) with Abhinav Bindra. X/Abhinav_Bindra

2022, I was struggling. And it continued in the first half of 2023," she said.

Going back to go forward

At that point, with the Paris Olympics approaching, Manu realised she worked best only with one coach – Rana. She'd been coached by four different people – all national and international champions in their own right. "But I felt Jaspal sir brings out the best in me, builds my confidence," Manu said.

Manu was advised against it by most of the people in her inner circle.

Rana's straight-talking and no-nonsense approach had led to him developing a reputation of being a 'rabble rouser'. He had been practically ostracised within the shooting community – his stint as the coach of the junior team was cut short and even at the ranges, few communicated with him.

This, despite the fact that during his tenure as junior coach, several world-class

shooters rose to prominence. That included Manu, who was shrewd enough to recognise that if she wanted her shooting career resurrected, there could be no space for egos.

"He lets me be happy. You'll never see me sulking anymore. And so, the matches also would go well. I am grateful for that because I missed that part of myself in the last two and a half years," Manu said.

"Since we had already worked with each other, he knew what needed to be done to bring me back on the right path. Hence he said it wasn't difficult."

The bad times, Rana said, 'taught us a lot of things'. Most importantly, they recognised there was no time for petty fights.

Manu calls the reunion with Rana a 'life-changing' moment for her.

"I feel God sent him for me," she said. "He does something, maybe magic. He played a huge role in the medal, it's the sweat and blood of both of us and many more."

WHAT TO WATCH

INDIA VIEWFINDER: RAMITA JINDAL, ARJUN BABUTA, MEN'S ARCHERY TEAM IN MEDAL CONTENTION

SHOOTING
10M AIR RIFLE WOMEN'S FINAL: 1 PM
RAMITA JINDAL

A superb turnaround after a slow start saw Ramita qualify for the final. She now stands a chance to win a medal.

SHOOTING
10M AIR RIFLE MEN'S FINAL: 3.30 PM
ARJUN BABUTA

Arjun, along with Ramita, was on the brink of a medal match in the mixed team event. But like his partner, Arjun course corrected to make it to the individual final.

BADMINTON
GROUP STAGE: 12 PM
SATWIK-CHIRAG, LAKSHYA SEN

After solid wins in their opening group-stage matches, Lakshya Sen and Satwik-Chirag take to the courts again to keep up the momentum.

ARCHERY
MEN'S TEAM EVENT, QF TO MEDAL MATCHES: 6.30 PM
There was heartbreak for the women's team. Now, it is over to the men's team, seeded third, to look to end India's long wait for an archery medal. They'll play the quarterfinal against the winner between Colombia and Turkey, but either way, pressure is on.

HOCKEY
MEN'S POOL B, INDIA VS ARGENTINA: 4.15 PM

A thrilling win against New Zealand shouldn't mask the fact that India weren't at their best in the opener. They'd have to come up with improvements quickly in another tricky test against Argentina.

TABLE TENNIS
SINGLES RD OF 32: 12.30 AM (TUESDAY)
S NATARAJ, DHINI DH DESINGHU

Manika Batra was pushed by Anna Hursley in the opener, but showed composure to get past the opening round. She next takes on France's Prithika Pavade.



RAMITA JINDAL

FINALIST IN 10M WOMEN'S AIR RIFLE

WORLD VIEWFINDER: RECORD-BREAKER IN ACTION

DIVING
MEN'S SYNCHRONISED 10M PLATFORM FINAL: 1 PM
TOM DALEY

Britain's Tom Daley will hope to defend his synchronised 10m platform gold alongside new partner Noah Williams with stiff competition from Chinese duo Yang Hao and Lian Junjie.

FOOTBALL
WOMEN'S GROUP B, USA VS GERMANY: 12.30 AM (TUESDAY)

Reigning champions USA kicked off their title defence in style with a 3-0 win over Zambia, but the next clash against Germany is expected to be greater test.

ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS
MEN'S TEAM ALL-ROUND FINAL: 9 PM

Simone Biles notwithstanding, the men's team final could be the most enthralling gymnastics event in Paris. Defending champions Japan are set to do battle with China for the gold.

SWIMMING
WOMEN'S 400M INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY: 12 AM (TUESDAY)
SUMMER MCINTOSH

17-year-old Canadian sensation Summer McIntosh, fresh off a silver medal in the 200m freestyle, takes part in the 400m individual medley, in which she is a world record holder. She will later take part in the women's 200m freestyle.

Olympics a stage for slugfest over De Coubertin's legacy

MIHIR VASAVDA
PARIS, JULY 28

TWO BOOKS hit the stands across Paris in the months leading up to the Olympics. One was written and published by the family of Pierre de Coubertin, replete with nuggets from his personal life and the stories behind the revival of the Olympics.

"We saw it as an incredible opportunity... he is a figure that can kind of come back from the dead and be put on the spotlight in France," Alexandra de Navacelle de Coubertin, a fourth-generation descendant of the 'founder' of the modern Olympics, tells *The Indian Express*.

The second, released in May, was more of a biographical essay in French. Its title, translated literally, gives away its contents: "Pierre de Coubertin: the man who did not invent the Olympic Games."

In the backdrop of the Paris Olympics, another tussle is being played out: to define the legacy of Pierre de Coubertin.

Across the world, de Coubertin is celebrated as a visionary who revived the Olympics. At his home, the Paris-born aristocrat is at the heart of the debate over 'cancel culture'.

His admirers hail him for 'introducing sport at schools', 'opening the doors of stadiums to women two decades before they were allowed to vote' and envisioning 'peace' through the medium of the Olympics.

De Coubertin's detractors, especially in France, have accused him of being a 'misogynist', called him a 'fanatical colonist' and even criticised him for a correspondence with Adolf Hitler after the 1936 Olympics.

His family has contested all these charges. "I don't want to simplify by saying cancel culture... but today, we have this generation that's very, very proactive in trying to correct history. And I think that in doing so, they may be judging harshly on things that we can't really understand fully because we're not in the times," Alexandra, de Coubertin's great-granddaughter, says.

Throughout the build-up to the Paris Games, de Coubertin's role in reviving the Olympics has been severely downplayed. He did not feature prominently in any official narrative, until the last few weeks when the International Olympic Committee and local organisers spoke about him more openly.

Political hot potato

But politically, de Coubertin's legacy has also been the subject of a slugfest in France. In 2022, former Olympic champion Guy Drut and French academician Erik Orsenna wrote to the country's President Emmanuel Macron to induct Coubertin into the Pantheon. The request, till today, has been ignored.

Last month, when a tribute concert was held at the Sorbonne University in central Paris, government officials, including Paris mayor Anne Hidalgo, stayed away.

It took an outsider, International Olympic Committee president Thomas Bach, to 're-mind' the French of his legacy. "The Olympic Games and the sporting model he created have stood the test of time. That's why France can be proud of Coubertin and his legacy," he said during the function at the Sorbonne.

Alexandra doesn't directly address the question of the government snub. "Politics is politics. I think they have a different agenda and I'm not here to judge," she says. "I would say that the people who are really carrying the Olympic role and the responsibility of making the Games happen speak of Coubertin. That is IOC, Tony Estanguet (organising committee chief), David Lappartient, the president of the

French NOC (National Olympic Committee)." Alexandra is one of the faces representing the de Coubertin family in trying to bust the 'myths' surrounding their forefather — not to 'glorify' him, she adds, but to 'understand' his character. It's been a battle, she adds, because of the 'typical French' trait to not eulogise people.

"I lived in the US for many years and the American spirit is to celebrate their heroes. They do it a bit too much in my personal opinion... (But) the other extreme is the French," she says. "They are huge critics and they do it because they have this need to make sure that they are thinking thoroughly and deeply; not fooling themselves and that they are aspiring to speak the truth. But, in a way, that is creating constant doubt, the constant need to question everything. So it's a country that does not celebrate itself."

Critical eye

One of the biggest criticisms levelled at de Coubertin is that he did not advocate the participation of women athletes. According to France24, de Coubertin said during a radio interview in 1935 that the role of the women should be to 'crown the winners'.

"The real Olympic hero is, in my eyes, the individual adult male," he reportedly said. "I personally do not approve of women taking part in public competitions, which does not mean that they should refrain from practising a large number of sports, but without making a spectacle of themselves. At the Olympic Games, their role should be — above all, as at the old tournaments — to crown the winners."

Alexandra says it is important to read these statements in the context of the time they were said.

"(Back then) women did not really have much of a place. They were hiding behind a man. They never showed their ankles. They had dresses that covered their necks. I mean, they were kind of seen as fragile..."

"So the thinking at the time was not paired to see a woman showing her legs, running on the field, sweating. This was just shocking. And Pierre de Coubertin was concerned that men who went to see women were not looking at sports. They were looking at something not decent. So his idea was to protect women. In today's context, it's of course absurd."

She also denies the allegations of racism and adds that the letter to Hitler — in which de Coubertin praised the 1936 Olympics — is taken out of context.

"There is a letter from Pierre de Coubertin saying 'Great Games'. Does that mean he's a Nazi? When you look at the times, this is 1936. The Olympics were not what they are today. No one was paying attention, money or investment. It was the first time that a country built a massive stadium and put in such energy... it was never done in the history of the Games. So in that aspect, (de Coubertin wrote) 'Great Games'. Now, it was instrumentalized for terrible ideologies. That is awful. Was Pierre de Coubertin supporting that? No. Because when you read his speeches, he's always saying 'no nation, no race, no religion, no work should be excluded from the Olympics.'"

During the closing montages of Friday's opening ceremony, which captured the Games' journey over the last century, the man with thin, grey hair and a thick moustache made a blink-and-you-miss appearance.

That split-second moment answered at least one question that was the elephant in an Olympic-sized room: if — or how much — prominence would be given to that man during the Paris Games. But the dispute over his legacy continues.



Pierre de Coubertin is hailed as the founder of the modern Olympics. Reuters

Simone smiles & shines

Legend had left Tokyo Games with 'twisties', then testified against a serial abuser, but comes back in style

SHIVANI NAIK
JULY 28

SIMONE BILES has five elements — two each on Vault and Floor exercise and one on Beam — named after her. There's a very good chance that the city of Paris cedes its title rights to these Games, and turns 2024 altogether into the Simone Biles Olympics. The start to this high-style takeover, on Sunday, was sensational.

Olympic medals never come easy, extracting every ounce of fight from an athlete. So, Simone limped at one point after a dodgy landing during the All-Around team championships qualification. And then she crawled towards her teammates on her hands and knees till she found strength in her giggling ankle and calf. They talk of the glamour and grandeur of her superhuman feats in the air, but Simone was all grit in her Paris opening, as she went from limp-crawl to fly, a 0 to 100, on the cue of a start.

A sporting career that's underpinned with the biggest bounce-back from trauma, saw her literally rise from that crawl, and hit the apparatus routines, as she took flight. The usual bounce looked greatly clipped, but Simone Biles is rock solid even when warding off a prowling injury.

She must've been in pain, but didn't wince. On her crawl, she literally laughed. For someone who battled twisties at Tokyo, and testified representing hundreds of victims of abuse, a tweaked calf was not going to stop her march. So she just landed at the four rotations, and put on a show that made her the human model of the air-water-fire-earth ambigrom, combining energy and balance of nature itself as she launched herself into orbit.

On her singularly difficult Yurchenko double pike vault, Simone garnered a 10-mongous score of 15.800, including 9.4/10 for execution, despite a step-back. That double pike through air is called Biles II, and she owns it. In past tense, and present continuous, at every big event.

On the Balance Beam, considered the toughest apparatus, she soared and landed without a wobble. A small part of the Biles charm is in picking the toughest routines to crunch them and make them look easy. Her ankle was heavily taped before she started



USA's Simone Biles is all smiles after her performance during the team event on Sunday. Reuters

on the floor. But once she hit the first line, there was no flinching from her Biles I — which has a double layout with a half twist, nor Biles II — that's even more bonkers : a triple-double with three twists and two back flips.

At the forefront

She finished Day 1 leading America to three points clear of next-placed Italy, herself tallying 59.566, while leading in vault and floor. Her coach casually remarked she could do better, even as the USA led 1-2 with Suni Lee.

Italy, China and Brazil are all stunningly strong teams, but Simone is determined to become the oldest woman at 27 to win an Olympic All-Around, and regain gold after Tokyo where, despite everything, they won silver. The last time anyone older won the gold was 72 years ago, when it last rained at the opening ceremony at Helsinki.

On her widely-roared comeback on Sunday with the tall stadium filled to the rafters, gymnastics' GOAT, for once, got the United States and the rest of the world properly distracted from swimming. Tom Cruise and Greta Gerwig were in attendance as

celebrities lined up to cheer for the USA. More of Hollywood is expected to fly in, and head straight to the gymnastics on Tuesday.

The injury concerns add another chapter to Simone's story as she looks to add to her four gold medals, as does a brand new element she unveils in the city of stylistic innovation.

The Olympics have always needed the Bolts and the Phelps. Paris though might've lucked out big time — they have the flesh-&-bones human VFX motherboard of all time, and she goes by the name, Her Royal Airness Simone Biles.

Zareen gets into zone after slow start

SHASHANK NAIK
JULY 28

THERE WOULD be no nerves on her debut for Nikhat Zareen. Well, maybe some when she lost the first round on the judges' scorecard 2-3. But as soon as that little blip occurred, she went into the zone and emerged with a unanimous 5-0 win in her opening round against Germany's Maxi Carina on Sunday.

It took a while for the 28-year-old to get to this stage and the start reflected that. Zareen, masterful at maintaining range, wasn't dealing well with Carina charging forward. It led to situations where she was open and got dealt with a few crisp right hooks. It was a tough round to score for the judges and three out of five went the way of the European boxer.

But the second round was where Zareen came alive. She had to because boxing scorecards are untrustworthy and the cleaner the punches you land, the tougher it is for judges to give the bout away to the other boxer. The Nizamabad native landed two clear-as-day hooks clean on Carina. That shot continued to come in handy as every exchange between the two would end with Zareen exiting with that shot out of range. Carina tried to force what worked for her in the first but the Indian had figured her range out and was landing at will. The judge took a point from each for landing blows at the back of the head, but once the scorecards were in, each of the judges unanimously agreed that the two-time Zareen had taken that round.

In the last round, she experienced clinching, a ploy others could use against her.



India's Nikhat Zareen (in blue) during her bout against Germany's Maxi Carina on Sunday. PTI

Towards the middle of the round, she would attempt to move on the inside of Zareen. The strategy was sound — tired arms equal powered-down punches. But towards the end, Zareen managed to still connect a few of her shots and got a 10-9 on all five cards.

Zareen next faces Yu on Thursday. The current Women's 50 kg World Champion against the current Women's 54 kg World Champion promises to be the first possibly three more tough bouts for the Indian.

Since Wu has made the step down to the 50kg category, there have not been many challengers to her. She beat Chuthamat Raksat at the 2023 Asian Games — after the Thai boxer had taken Zareen down in the semi-final.

Zareen next faces Yu on Thursday. The current Women's 50 kg World Champion against the current Women's 54 kg World Champion promises to be the first possibly three more tough bouts for the Indian.

Paddlers progress

In table tennis, Sreeja Akula and Manika Batra came through their round of 64 clashes unscathed. Batra scored a 4-1 win over Anna Hurshey while Akula defeated Christina Kallberg 4-0 on an impressive debut showing. It's the first time India will have two players in the TT women's singles round of 32 at the Olympics. But in a major upset, veteran Achanta Sharath Kamal went down fighting against Deni Kozul of Slovenia, to bow out of singles contention. After a back-and-forth battle, Sharath was leading by 6 points in the sixth game looking to force a decider, but the Slovenian fought back to take it to tiebreaks where errors by Sharath cost him dearly.

In archery, there was hope, but then there was disappointment. The women's team of Deepika Kumari, Ankita Bhakat, and Bhajan Kaur had an outside to reach the podium but came unstuck in the quarterfinals against Netherlands to lose 0-6. It was a case of missed opportunities against a lower-seeded team as Ankita and Deepika struggled to hit 9+ consistently, with the former shooting a 4 at one point.

(Inputs from Vinayakk Mohanarangan)

MEDAL'S TALLY

| Pos. | Country | G | S | B | Total |
|------|-----------|---|---|---|-------|
| 1. | Australia | 4 | 2 | 0 | 6 |
| 2. | Korea | 3 | 2 | 1 | 6 |
| 3. | China | 3 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| 4. | Japan | 3 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| 5. | France | 2 | 2 | 2 | 6 |
| 22. | India | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |

At midnight

STORY OF MEDALS

South Korea get their 'Perfect 10'

In the semifinals, Netherlands threatened to pull off an upset. In the finals, China came within centimeters of producing the unthinkable. But in the end, South Korea won their 10th consecutive gold medal in women's team archery, pulling off a nail-biting shootout. It didn't matter in the end that Korea selected a team of three first-time Olympians, with even triple gold medalist from Tokyo Olympics An San missing the cut. China came back from 0-4 down in the final to force a shootout at 4-4. In shootoff, it came down to two arrows getting upgraded to 10 as China finished with silver. The win means recurve archery powerhouses South Korea maintained their complete dominance of the event, winning every gold medal since women's team archery was introduced at the Olympics in 1988. The Perfect 10. ENS

Nadal makes majestic return to Roland Garros

REUTERS
JULY 28

SPAIN'S RAFA Nadal made a triumphant return to Roland Garros on Sunday to blast his way into the second round of the Olympic tennis tournament, and set up a blockbuster clash with nemesis Novak Djokovic of Serbia.

That the Nadal-Djokovic clash will not determine gold was the only slip in the Olympic script as the Spaniard found a second wind on a Roland Garros stage on which he has built his legend, to beat Hungarian Marton Fucsovics 6-1 4-6 6-4.

As Nadal fired a forehand winner on his third match point the crowd roared and stood as one to hail the Spaniard who has thrilled them for two decades.

For sure there have been better performances from Nadal on this showcourt, but few more warmly welcomed.

In the women's draw, Chinese sixth seed Qinwen Zheng made a mockery of former French Open runner-up Sara Errani's clay cre-



Rafael Nadal celebrates after his opening round win on Sunday. Reuters

dentials, pummeling the Italian 6-0-0 to advance.

Greece's Maria Sakkaris also wasted no time dispatching Danka Kovinic, smashing the Montenegrin 6-0-6-1.

U.S. flagbearer Coco Gauff will light up the evening session on Sunday when she takes on Australian Ajla Tomljanovic, while reigning Olympic champion Alexander Zverev of Germany closes Day Two's play against Spaniard Jaume Munar.

But the day belonged to Nadal as the 2008 Olympic champion kept alive dreams of a golden sunset to his glorious career.

Nadal's backyard

Such was the atmosphere in Nadal's professional backyard, it seemed not beyond the realms of possibility that even members of Fucsovics' household may have been rooting for the 38-year-old.

The years have not diminished Parisians' love for the man who first stormed the French capital 19 years ago, before maintaining an unprecedented stranglehold on Court Philippe Chatrier for the better part of two decades.

Fourteen of his 22 Grand Slam titles came at Roland Garros during that period as Nadal established himself as the undisputed king of clay.

The long hair and pirate pants are long gone but the slingshot forehand is as potent as ever and the Spaniard wielded it with terrifying efficiency to wrap up the first set before Fucsovics could really settle.

It was bad enough that the Hungarian was fighting a man who had won 112 of his previous 116 matches at Roland Garros, but he was also fighting a nostalgic centre court crowd and, seemingly, destiny.

Some brutal baseline bashing saw Fucsovics haul himself back into the contest as Nadal's range faltered, but the Spaniard broke in the fifth game of the third and final set, before sprinting to the finish.

Earlier, ninth seed Barbora Krejickova recovered from a slow start to grind her way past Spain's Sara Sorribes Tormo 4-6-6-0-7-6(3).

"It feels great because I didn't really play well here (before today)," said the Czech, who had not won a singles match at Roland Garros since 2021.

Men's sixth seed Casper Ruud swept aside Japan's Daniel Taro 7-5-6-1 while Kei Nishikori, was ousted by Britain's Jack Draper 6-1-6-4.

Sri Lanka breeze past India to clinch women's Asia Cup

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JULY 28

BREEZY HALF-CENTURIES from captain Chamari Athapaththu and Harshitha Samarawickrama, besides Kavisha Dilhari's all-round exploits, enabled Sri Lanka defeat defending champions India by eight wickets and claim the Asia Cup in Dambulla on Sunday. Though India were favourites, the outcome does not come as a complete surprise as Lanka had been on a red-hot winning streak, having lost only three of their last 17 games.

From the moment India decided to bat after winning the toss, Sri Lanka were purposeful and perseverant. Despite the brisk opening-wicket stand of 44 runs from 6.1 overs between Smriti Mandhana and Shafali Verma, they didn't panic. Dilhari made the ball straighten just enough to ping an on-charge Verma on the pads in front of the off-stump. Even though Mandhana continued to

Men wrap up series with game to spare

Pallekele: India beat Sri Lanka in a rain-affected clash by seven wickets via the Duckworth-Lewis-Stern method in Pallekele on Sunday, securing their first series win under new head coach Gautam Gambhir and Twenty20 captain Suryakumar Yadav.

BRIEF SCORES: Sri Lanka 161-9 in 20 overs (K Perera 53; R Bishnoi 3/26) lost to India 78-3 in 6.3 overs (Y Jaiswal 30) by DLS method

bat fluently at one end, Sri Lanka made regular dentures from the other end.

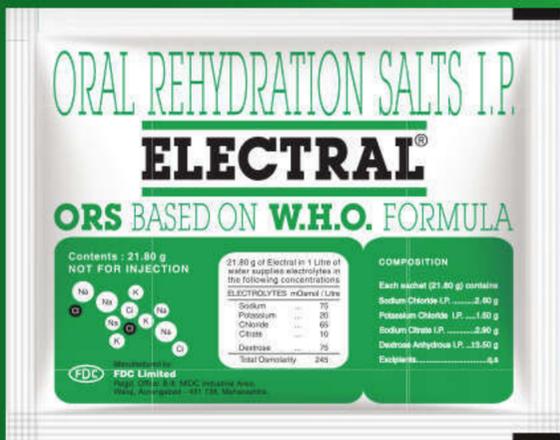
BRIEF SCORES: India 165-6 (Mandhana 60) lost to SL 167-2 (Samarawickrama 69*, Athapaththu 61) by 8 wickets



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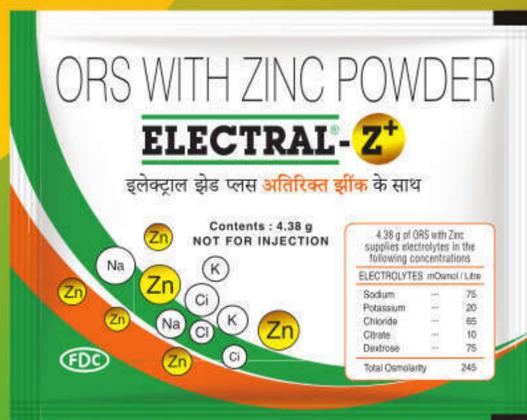


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