

## LAL QILEY SE GOONJ

NEHRU SE MODI TAK

**H**  
HISTORY  
TV 18

**TONIGHT 7PM**

**NEWS 18**  
इंडिया

SIMULCAST ON



New Delhi



**Solutions Crossword 4820:** Across: 1 Heart, 4 Go-ahead, 8 Net, 9 Tide table, 10 Secrete, 11 Pound, 13 Noodle, 15 Typhus, 18 Arena, 19 Command, 21 Staghound, 23 Die, 24 Noonday, 25 Lifts. Down: 1 Hangs on, 2 Artichoke, 3 Tithe, 4 Gadget, 5 Autopsy, 6 Ebb, 7 Dread, 12 Unheard-of, 14 Leashed, 16 Sadness, 17 Occupy, 18 Arson, 20 Model, 22 Ado.


SOLUTION: ALGAE, TIBIA, SCANTY, WHAMMY  
Answer: Rigour is to the mathematician what morality is to men. - André Weil

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|   |   |   | 1 |   | 5 | 3 |   |   |
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|   | 6 | 2 |   |   | 4 |   | 5 |   |
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## SOLUTION SUDOKU 4927

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

**PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)**

 You may think you are being caring and considerate, but someone may be a little tired of what they see as your efforts to probe into their affairs. I'd say that discretion is now the order of the day. Total honesty may not be the best way to reveal secrets which can only cause consternation, so choose your words with care.







## Iran denies involvement but justifies attack on Rushdie

JON GAMBRELL  
DUBAI, AUGUST 15

AN IRANIAN official Monday denied Tehran was involved in the stabbing of author Salman Rushdie, though he sought to justify the attack in the Islamic Republic's first public comments on the bloodshed.

The remarks by Nasser Kanaani, the spokesman for Iran's Foreign Ministry, came three days after Rushdie was wounded in New York state.

The writer has been taken off a ventilator and is "on the road to recovery," according to his agent.

Rushdie, 75, has faced death threats for more than 30 years over his novel *The Satanist Verses*, whose depiction of the Prophet Muhammad was seen by some Muslims as blasphemous.

In 1989, Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, issued a fatwa, or Islamic edict, demanding the author's death, and while Iran has not focused on Rushdie in recent years, the decree still stands.

Also, a semi-official Iranian foundation had posted a bounty of over \$3 million for the killing of the author. It has not commented on the attack.

"Regarding the attack against Salman Rushdie in America, we CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

### THE WORLD



**MORE DRILLS BY CHINA NEAR TAIWAN**  
**KENYA: PRESIDENT NAMED AMID CHAOS**  
PAGE 10

### CONG MLA QUILTS OVER DALIT BOY DEATH

## 'My nephew is dead because of his caste... We are living in fear'

DEEP MUKHERJEE  
SURANA (JALORE), AUGUST 15

PAST THE Tricolour fluttering outside roadside tea stalls, past animated groups of children returning home after the August 15 celebrations in their schools, is the tin-roof house of Dewaram Meghwal, marked by the long wails of women that pierce the morning air.

It has only been hours since Dewaram carried out the last rites of his son Indra, who died in an Ahmedabad hospital on August 13, days after the nine-year-old was beaten up by his upper-caste teacher, allegedly for drinking water from a pot meant for the teacher.

Dewaram sits outside his house in Surana village, in Rajasthan's Jalore district, staring blankly at the mourners as they gather around a garlanded photo of Indra that's placed on a plastic chair.



A water tank at Saraswati Vidya Mandir. Deep Mukherjee

While police have maintained that their investigation so far hasn't revealed any caste angle to Indra's death, the family of the Dalit boy insist that the assault by the teacher on July 20 was provoked by the child's lower caste.

On Monday, the family found support from Congress MLA and Rajasthan Commission for Scheduled Caste Chairman Khiladi Lal Bairwa, who hit out at his own government over the CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

guns and waving their group's white-and-black flags.

The Taliban regime marked the occasion with sedate victory speeches by senior leaders inside a state-media auditorium in the high-security Green Zone, close to the Indian Embassy. But few civilians, either on the streets or indoors, took part in the celebrations — and no women at all.

However, a small group of women reportedly met in secret at a house in Kabul to mark their protest, and pledged to continue their resistance against the Taliban. A statement by the group, RAWA (Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan), denounced the

### BUSINESS AS USUAL



### EXPRESS NETWORK



**BEHIND MAMATA'S SUPPORT FOR ANUBRATA MONDAL**

**SOLDIER'S REMAINS FOUND IN SIACHEN AFTER 38 YEARS**

PAGE 7

## 11 lifers convicted for Gujarat riots gangrape, murder set free in Godhra

### 'Remission in Bilkis case on completion of 14 yrs, conduct'

ADITI RAJA  
VADODARA, AUGUST 15

ELEVEN CONVICTS serving life imprisonment in the Bilkis Bano gangrape case from the 2002 Gujarat riots were freed from the Godhra sub-jail on Monday after a state government panel approved their application for remission of sentence, according

to senior officials.

Gujarat Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Raj Kumar told *The Indian Express* that the application for remission was considered due to the "completion of 14 years" in jail and other factors such as "age, nature of the crime, behaviour in prison and so on".

Bilkis was gangraped and her three-year-old daughter Saleha was among 14 killed by a mob on

March 3, 2002, in Limkheda taluka of Dahod district. Bilkis was pregnant at the time.

The Supreme Court had ordered a CBI investigation in the case after Bilkis approached the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC). In August 2004, the Supreme Court directed the trial to be transferred from Gujarat to Maharashtra CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

## Bihar berozgari refrain makes way into CM's job promise

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY  
PATNA, AUGUST 15

IN HIS Independence Day speech on Monday, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar said the state government would try to create over 20 lakh jobs within and outside the government.

Nitish's remarks, days after he switched over from the NDA to the Mahagathbandhan camp, with his new Deputy Chief

Minister Tejashwi Prasad in the audience, is an acknowledgment of what the CM called "youth power" and one of its long-standing grouses against the government: *berozgari* (unemployment).

Amid the recent political churn in the state, as the BJP and Mahagathbandhan prepare to face off in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, *The Indian Express* travelled across the state and found that conversations at village chauls, and tea and paan shops are



Bihar CM Nitish Kumar with his deputy Tejashwi Yadav in Patna on Monday. PTI

## Private sector steps up hiring, but staff strength in most PSUs sees a decline

### Of the top 15 listed PSUs, employee strength of a dozen dipped in FY22

PRANAV MUKUL  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

A MAJORITY of the top 15 listed PSUs by market capitalisation continued to witness a shrinking of their headcount, an analysis of the annual reports, including for the latest financial year 2021-22 (FY 22), showed. This trend was seen across sectors from banking and manufacturing to energy and minerals.

Barring, SBI Life Insurance and IRCTC, which reported an expansion in headcount during FY 22, and LIC, which has not yet reported its numbers for the year-ended March 31, 2022, all companies in the list have been reporting a decline in the number of employees for the past several years.

*The Indian Express* had reported Monday that eight out of top 10 private companies by market capitalisation had added over 3 lakh to their human resource during 2021-22. Within the private sector, the year witnessed maximum hiring in services — particularly retail, IT services and banking — as companies tapped into Tier-2,

Tier-3 and Tier-4 cities for manpower. The companies included Reliance Industries Ltd, Infosys and TCS, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank and Bajaj Finance, and Maruti Suzuki Ltd.

India's largest bank SBI last witnessed an increase in the number of its employees in 2017-18, when it added 71,000 employees following the merger of its five associate banks and Bharatiya Mahila Bank during the year. Even prior to that, the bank was witnessing a steady decline in staff strength. SBI's subsidiary SBI Cards and Payments too saw a decline over the last three years to 3,774 people on its rolls as of March 31, 2022, compared to 3,967 as of March 31, 2020.

Bank of Baroda has been witnessing a reduction in its employee headcount for the last two years, after witnessing a bump on account of amalgamation of Dena Bank and Vijaya Bank with effect from April 1, 2019. The bank had 79,806 people on its rolls as of March 31, 2022, down from 84,283 employees as of March 31, 2020.

Coal India Ltd employee CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

## Collegium led by CJI Ramana cleared over 250 for HCs; vacancies now lowest since 2016

APURVA VISHWANATH  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

THE SUPREME Court collegium led by Justice N V Ramana as Chief Justice of India (CJI) made more than 250 recommendations for high court judge appointments, helping bring vacancies down to their lowest level since 2016.

According to data from the Ministry of Law and Justice, there are 380 vacancies against the sanctioned strength of 1,108 judges in 25 high courts as of August 1.

The average vacancy since January 2016 has been 418 judges. The highest vacancy level in this time was 478 in August 2016.

Justice Ramana, who took charge in April 2021, will demit office on August 26. Justice Uday Umesh Lalit will take charge as CJI the following day.

During CJI Ramana's tenure, the collegium also made 11 judge recommendations to the Supreme Court. The five-member collegium ended a 22-month deadlock, making nine recommendations to the top court at once in August 2021.

The list included, for the first time, three women — Justices Hima Kohli, B V Nagarathna and Bela Trivedi. Justice Nagarathna is in line to be the first woman CJI in 2027.

The collegium led by Justice Ramana's predecessor, CJI S A Bobde, made 109 high court judge recommendations in his 17-month tenure. Justice Bobde, who was CJI from November 18, 2019 to April 23, 2021, retired without making a Supreme Court single judge recommendation.

The CJI Ranjan Gogoi-led collegium (his tenure was from October 3, 2018 to November 17, CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

dominated by *berozgari*, along with that other burning issue — *mehangai* (price rise).

While the blame for *berozgari* is laid at the doors of both the Centre and the state government, the Narendra Modi regime at the Centre faces much of the heat for the rising prices. The common refrain being: "*Modi ji toh aata par bhi GST laga diye hain* (Modi has started taxing even wheat flour)." Mahesh Das, 50, a Dalit daily wagger at Hajipur, who until re-

cently worked in a Punjab factory, says, "Inflation has gone through the roof. Edible oil is selling at Rs 200 a litre and my daily earning is just Rs 300-400. Even wheat flour is selling at Rs 35 a kg. How will we survive?" But what he is more worried about is the future of his 24-year-old son Jitendra, a graduate.

After having tried for years to get a government job, Jitendra now runs a customer service CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

## In Kabul, Taliban celebrates 1 yr in power but few civilians, no women



EXPRESS IN KABUL

NIRUPAMA SUBRAMANIAN  
AUGUST 15

HUNDREDS OF Taliban fighters took to the streets of Kabul on Monday to celebrate the first anniversary of their takeover of Afghanistan, riding in open pick-up trucks, holding automatic

Taliban for being anti-women and blamed the US for the "planned" handover of power last year.

On the streets, fighters congregated through the day at a prominent roundabout in Kabul named after Ahmad Shah Massoud, whose Northern Alliance was the main resistance to the Taliban in the 1990s before he was killed by an Al Qaeda suicide bomber two days ahead of the 9/11 attacks in the US.

"We defeated America, and we won our independence. That is what we are celebrating here," said Abdul Qahar Agha Jan, from Laghman province, south of Kabul. He said he was working

in the Ministry of Defence. He said the decision to congregate at Massoud Circle, close to the US Embassy, was a message that the Taliban now rule Afghanistan. "We are in power. This place belongs to all Afghans. We also want to tell other mujahideen and the family members of Ahmad Shah Massoud that they come here and live with us in peace," said Agha Jan.

Some of the fighters were holding posters of the Haqqani group patriarch, Jalaluddin Haqqani, who died in 2018. A middle-aged Taliban delivered a speech denouncing the recent US drone strike in Kabul to kill Ayman Al Zawahiri, and declared



Taliban fighters gather in Kabul to mark a year since their takeover of Afghanistan, on Monday. Nirupama Subramanian

in the Ministry of Defence.

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**AFGHAN MISSIONS ABROAD SLAM TALIBAN REGIME P 7**

**U.S. BIPARTISAN BILL FOR CITIZENSHIP TO AFGHANS P 10**

that the Americans were "lying" that they had eliminated the Al Qaeda leader.

One group of Taliban in the back of a sand-coloured Toyota pick-up were dressed in US army uniforms with American military gear — night-vision equip-

ment, goggles, sand-coloured face masks and M4 automatic carbines. As religious songs blared from portable public address systems, a Taliban holding an M4 said the weapon had been left behind by the "Amreeki" while another held a Soviet-era gun, boasting that it "worked very well".

Across the roundabout was a huge concrete security wall around a government ministry, painted with slogans hailing the Taliban's victory last year. "Freedom is as beautiful as spring," one slogan proclaimed. "The people are our own, and we are from the people," another read. CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



New Delhi









CORONAVIRUS  
IN THE CAPITALVACCINATIONS IN  
LAST 24 HOURS  
**19,530**PATIENTS IN HOSPITAL: **594**  
OXYGEN SUPPORT **144**  
VENTILATOR SUPPORT **19**DELHI TOTAL  
CASES  
**19,85,822**

|              | Cases         | Recoveries       | Deaths        | Tests              |
|--------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aug 14       | 2,162         | 1,832            | 5             | 17,106             |
| Aug 15       | 1,227         | 2,130            | 8             | 8,421              |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>7,519*</b> | <b>19,85,822</b> | <b>26,389</b> | <b>3,97,29,246</b> |

\*Total active cases in Delhi

Total  
HOSPITAL BEDS **9,415**  
ICU BEDS **2,129**

|        | Deaths       | Tests |
|--------|--------------|-------|
| Aug 14 | <b>8,828</b> |       |
| Aug 15 | <b>1,926</b> |       |

Noida  
Aug 14 Aug 15  
Cases **N/A** **124**  
Deaths **N/A** **0**Gurgaon  
Cases **382** **357**  
Deaths **0** **0**

# Need 5 yrs to change entire system... did it in Delhi: CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

DELHI CHIEF Minister Arvind Kejriwal Monday said free education and healthcare are not 'freebies' and that access to these can eliminate poverty in one generation and help make India the number one in the world.

"We just need five years and we can change the entire system, from education to health, in the country," said the CM, speaking on the occasion of the 76th Independence Day celebrations at Chhatrasal Stadium Monday.

Paying homage to freedom fighters, Kejriwal said, "In the last 75 years, the country has made good progress and it's time to celebrate all that on this auspicious day. But while celebrating the success, we should also think about current challenges and what path we should choose in the future. Today, people are asking why India is still behind several countries... even those that got freedom after us."

Hinting at AAP's expansion, Kejriwal added: "India has a population of 130 crore and around 27 crore children go to school... 10 crore study in private schools and 17 crore in government schools. I am not saying conditions of all government schools are bad but there are several thousands of schools across the country which are in poor shape... Earlier, Delhi government schools were in the same condition but we changed it in just five years," he said.

"Humare desh mein sab kuch hai par system kharab hai... Delhi mein bhi system kharab tha... ye system theek karna padega, hum Delhi walon ko system theek karna aa gaya... humne Delhi mein theek kar ke dikhaya hai... ab poore desh mein system theek karna hai, sarkari school, hospitals theek karne hain aur ye sirf 5 saal mein ho sakta hai... jaise Delhi mein sirf 5



Kejriwal at Chhatrasal Stadium on Monday. Praveen Khanna

saal mein sarkari schools theek hue aise pure desh ki school theek ho sakte hain (We have everything in our country but the system is broken... In Delhi too, the system was broken... We changed the system, now we have to do the same for the country... we can fix the issues plaguing our schools in just five years... like in Delhi)," he said.

On the 'free ki revdi' row, Kejriwal requested the opposition not to call schemes provided to ordinary citizens 'freebies'. "I want to tell you all with folded hands that education is not a freebie... Parents skip meals to provide good education to their children... if there is fund scarcity, we people of India will skip a meal and provide good education to all..."

He also said the condition of hospitals was in shambles but the AAP government, after coming to power, improved infrastructure. "Today, even the rich from areas like Greater Kailash go to mohalla clinics for treatment... On average, the government spends only Rs 2,000 per person annually... The entire country's population is 130 crore and if we provide free healthcare to all, it will cost Rs 2.5 lakh crore only... The Centre and state governments just have to spend a little more to provide better healthcare system to the public," he said.

Kejriwal further said, "Instead of providing health insurance, construct hospitals and mohalla clinics... The country needs hospitals, mohalla clinics and medicines; insurance won't do. In five years, we can open hospitals across the country. In five years, we can ensure every citizen has access to free and fantastic healthcare."

The event saw more than 3,000 students from government schools as well as teachers in attendance. Under the 'Har Haath Tiranga' campaign, the government also distributed 25 lakh flags across Delhi.

## INDIA CELEBRATES 76th INDEPENDENCE DAY



Navy personnel march during the 76th Independence Day function at the Red Fort, Monday. PTI

## Overcast sky does little to dampen I-Day at Red Fort; aerial displays a treat for visitors

ARNAV CHANDRASEKHAR  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

DESPITE AN overcast sky earlier in the day, the atmosphere remained festive among guests who arrived for Independence Day celebrations at Red Fort Monday. The event was kicked off by two helicopters that rained down petals on the crowd. The aerial display did not stop there. After Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address, guests were surprised by a large number of balloons in shades of the Tricolour, many of them with flags.

Guests and onlookers crowded the railings for a glimpse of the PM as he descended to greet young delegates of the National Cadet Corps (NCC) and state representatives. Tourists, who arrived after security measures were lifted, thronged the grounds to check out the metre-floral decorations and took selfies with the animatronic elephants on the premises.

Outside, on the streets, stalls popped up to take advantage of the crowds heading to the fort, with kulfi vendors and flag pin sellers navigating the traffic. At a distance from the restricted zone, kites, many of them in colours of



Tricolour balloons at the ceremony. PTI

the national flag, were spotted in the sky.

Visitors were pleasantly surprised by the changes this year. Delhi resident Sanjay Soni said, "I

have come to the Independence Day ceremony before, and it always looks good. However, they have done very well with decorations and other things this year."

There were first-time attendees as well. Saroj, who brought his family along, said, "This is the first time I have come to the Red Fort on Independence Day and I'm very impressed. I wish I had come a little earlier and avoided some of the crowd. I will definitely come next year as well."

Attendees also braved language barriers. Karthik from Tamil Nadu said, "It is a little hard getting around here. But it is a small thing to deal with to see the Red Fort. I wanted to come since it is the 75th anniversary of Independence."

For Himanshu Wadhawan, it was the satisfaction of seeing his own work on display. "Staff from my father's company and I worked hard on the seating arrangements and flooring for the ceremony as well as arrangements near the rampart. It was definitely challenging," he said.

Meanwhile, police sources said traffic was heavy in the New Delhi district with over 10,000-15,000 people visiting India Gate while over 15,000 people visited Red Fort. "We provided commuters with alternate routes in New Delhi such as Sher Shah road, Dr Zakir Hussain Marg, and Shahjahan Road. At Red Fort, people were advised to take the

Turkman Gate route, Asaf Ali road, ISBT bridge etc," said an officer from the traffic unit.

### NCC cadets meet PM

After the Prime Minister's speech ended, members of the NCC selected to attend the ceremony had the opportunity to speak to him in the minutes before security measures were relaxed. Among them was Vishal Sharma from Jammu and Kashmir, a student of the Government Degree College in Udhampur. He said: "We had been preparing for the event for 15 days and we finally got to meet the PM. Many dream of participating in the Independence Day ceremony but for us, it came true."

Rajesh from Government Degree College in Saidapet, Telangana, said: "Many of us are in Delhi for the first time... It is amazing to see these famous monuments, especially while attending such an important event."

Many cadets made the most of their time in Delhi despite a busy schedule. Vishal said: "We made sure to see the main landmarks such as India Gate. After all, one cannot leave Delhi without seeing these historical places."

## First-timers at Delhi govt's I-Day event: School students

GAYATHRI MANI  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

AMONG THOSE who attended Independence Day celebrations at Chhatrasal Stadium for the first time on Monday were hundreds of students from 15-20 Delhi government schools, including those who shifted from private schools during the pandemic.

The Indian Express spoke to these former private school students on what the shift entailed for them.

Khushboo Verma, a class 9 student of Sarvodaya Co-ed School, Malcha Marg, who was earlier enrolled at a private school, said, "Due to financial circumstances, my parents enrolled me in this school during Covid. I was against the move... but my father said government schools have improved. I was not happy at all, but when I started attending school, my perception about government schools changed completely." Verma said her old school did not have proper labs, classrooms and sports facilities. "This school has everything... teachers are also supportive... there is a lot of positivity here..." she said.

Alia, a class 9 student at GGSSS no.2, Railway Colony, Tughlakabad, said: "Earlier, I looked down on government schools and students... During the pandemic, I had to shift to this school due to financial circumstances. It is different from what I thought it was... everyone is very nice and the syllabus is very nice." She wants to become a fashion designer.

Riya Kumari, who is also an ex-private student, said, "We have lectures from IPS, IAS officers and IT professionals on different subjects and what to pursue after Class 12... I am happy that I got the opportunity to attend this event..."

"People in my neighbourhood say bad things about Chief Minister sir... I listened to him today and it was very inspiring. I also want to become a politician like him and provide education to poor children like me," said Archana, a class 8 student of Sarvodaya Co-ed school.



Govt school students at Chhatrasal Stadium

## Property dealer shot dead at point blank range

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

A 40-YEAR-OLD property dealer was shot dead by unknown assailants in Southeast Delhi's Jamia Nagar Sunday. Police said the victim was identified as Waseef Sattar Ghazi. CCTV visuals appear to show two bike-borne assailants hitting the victim's bike and knocking him down before shooting him at close range.

Police said information was received from Holy Family Hospital that a man with a bullet injury was declared dead on arrival. Police said the victim was on his motorcycle when the assailants came on a scooter and fired at him near the Moosa Masjid.

Esha Pandey, DCP (Southeast), said: "A case has been registered under section 302 (murder) of the Indian Penal Code and Arms Act sections 25 (punishment for offences) 27 (punishment for using arms), Arms rule 54 (renewal of license) and Arms rule 59 (proof test of firearms). CCTV footage from nearby spots is being checked."

## Working at Air Force station, labourer dies

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

A 40-YEAR-OLD labourer died and four others sustained injuries while constructing a column at a building inside the Air Force Station, Delhi Cantt.

The victim and his wife had been working at the site for over three weeks, constructing a mess building. Other workers alleged they had asked the construction supervisor and contractor to provide them with safety equipment but were denied the same.

Police have registered a case based on the workers' complaints under IPC sections 288 (negligent conduct with respect to pulling down or repairing buildings) and 304A (causing death by negligence) against the contractor and supervisor. No arrest has been made so far. Senior officials at the Delhi Cantt said an enquiry will be conducted against the contractor and supervisor.

The incident took place on August 10 in the afternoon. Around 5-6 labourers were making a column when it collapsed on them; they sustained injuries as heavy construction material fell on them. The deceased, Halle Kalyan, sustained injuries to his neck and died later. His wife, Seema, alleged that their employ-

### The victim's wife and other workers alleged they were not given safety gear

ers did not help and Kalyan wasn't admitted to a hospital, which led to his death.

"We'd asked for safety equipment like a crane as we knew it would be dangerous to construct a column without it. But the supervisor said other workers have never asked for any equipment... We were trying to make the column but couldn't balance it due to the height and weight of the material. It fell on us... They stopped work and gave us leave, saying it was Raksha Bandhan. The construction company owner, site supervisor and contractor didn't take us to any hospital for treatment," alleged Seema.

Kalyan went back home. Seema said he complained of headaches and neck pain. She took him to the hospital with the help of her neighbours but he was declared dead on arrival.

Kalyan is survived by his parents, wife and their two children. Seema and her family live in Delhi's Jharoda Kalan and hail from Sagar, Madhya Pradesh.

## 4 bouncers assault Armyman, his brothers after argument over playing a song in Gurgaon

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
GURGAON, AUGUST 15

FOUR BOUNCERS were booked for allegedly beating up an Armyman and his two brothers with sticks after an argument over playing music at a club in Sector 29 on Sunday night. Police said two injured men were taken to a private hospital for treatment and later discharged. According to police, the incident took place around midnight.

In the FIR, the complainant, a native of Rohtak who is posted as a naik in the Army, said he and his brothers had gone to a club in sector 29 Sunday night. "We entered the club at 11.20 pm and enjoyed for over 20 minutes, following which the club stopped playing music. My brother requested a bouncer to play one song, but he did not play the song. The bouncer started arguing with us and took us downstairs... outside the club. At the time, two bouncers were in the club and immediately after coming outside, they started beating the three of us. Two more bouncers joined them. The four bouncers thrashed us with sticks," he alleged in the FIR.

### EXPLAINED Bouncer check

After the first incident last week, the Gurgaon Police commissioner had made police verification and background checks mandatory for all security staff working in the city's bars and clubs. Police had said legal action would be taken against those who have criminal antecedents and that the exercise would be completed by August 31.

The complainant added that he suffered an injury on his head, left hand and foot: "One of my brothers suffered injuries on his arms, shoulder and left foot. My other brother sustained injuries on his ribs, right thigh and his face. The bouncers then threatened to kill us and ran away."

A police officer said, "There was an argument over playing music in a club which escalated. Four bouncers beat up three men outside the club with sticks. Among the victims, two brothers

were taken to a hospital for treatment. One had a head injury while another suffered a fracture in his arm. An FIR has been registered against four bouncers. They are absconding; efforts are on to arrest them."

The Armyman told The Indian Express, "My brothers and I had gone there to have a good time. But the bouncers became unruly and attacked us after an argument over playing music. Four bouncers attacked us with sticks and a slugger. When I fell, they asked me to hand over my wallet also. I have a head injury and I am unable to walk. I am posted in Srinagar and had come on leave. I was supposed to join duty from Wednesday. My brother, who is in the Air Force, has suffered a fracture in his arm."

The FIR was registered against the accused under IPC sections 323 (voluntarily causing hurt), 506 (criminal intimidation) and 344 (common intention), said police.

The incident comes days after six bouncers and the manager of club were arrested for allegedly beating up an MNC manager and his friends after they had confronted one of the bouncers for misbehaving with their woman friend.

## Help 'beaten, stripped' on suspicion of theft

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

A 28-YEAR-OLD woman has been arrested and her family members booked after they allegedly stripped and assaulted their 43-year-old domestic worker on suspicion of theft. Police said the family had called a 'tantrik' (occultist) to find out who among their employees had allegedly committed theft. Based on his 'verdict', the accused allegedly beat up the woman, who later attempted suicide.

Police said the incident took place in South Delhi's Maidangarhi on August 9 and was reported to them two days later. Police said the family members were booked for assault and criminal intimidation.

According to police, the family claimed they had lost gold jewellery and cash 10 months ago, so they called an occultist to find out who committed the theft. Police said he allegedly fed all domestic workers rice and lime.

The domestic help alleged in her complaint, "He (the occultist) said the mixture will turn red inside the thief's mouth. They kept in my mouth and it turned red. He called me a thief. After this, my employer and her mother took me to the children's room and

tied my hands and legs with a rope. They forced me into accepting that I was a thief... The next day, around 6 am, my employers, their mother and their relative disrobed me. They assaulted me with a rolling pin, shoes and footwear. They also kicked me."

She was allegedly tied up for hours and assaulted by the family while she was undressed. She told police she admitted to the theft just so the accused would stop beating her up. "I told them I had hidden the jewellery in a box at my native place, and my employer sent my husband to fetch the stolen articles. They returned my clothes... When I went back to my room, I found a bottle of rat poison and ingested it. I was fed up with the torture... I thought death would be better than this..." she said, as per the FIR.

The woman was then taken to a hospital where an MLC was carried out and doctors found that she had injuries on her back and hands. Doctors also stated that she had consumed poison, and police were informed.

DCP (South) Benita Mary Jaiker said: "We arrested a woman named Seema Khatoun (28) from the same house. Other accused will soon be arrested."

The woman has been working at the house for two years.



# 6 GOVT & POLITICS

## INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS



Students pay tribute to freedom fighters and social reformers at Red Road, Kolkata, on Monday. Partha Paul



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in Lucknow. AP



Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma in Guwahati. PTI



Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde in Mumbai. Deepak Joshi



Slackliner Harshdeep Pawar walks a high-line rigged at a height of 250 ft in Mumbai. PTI



Spectators at the Attari-Wagah border in Amritsar. PTI



(Top) Tamil Nadu CM MK Stalin in Chennai; BJP chief J P Nadda and Union Minister Piyush Goyal in New Delhi.

30 CBI officials honoured with President’s police medals

ENS & PTI  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

THIRTY OFFICERS and officials of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) were awarded the President’s Police Medal for Distinguished Service and Police Medal for Meritorious Service by the President of India on the occasion of Independence Day, on Monday, the agency said in a press release.

Six officials were awarded the President’s Police Medals for Distinguished Service (PPMDS) while 24 officers were awarded the Police Medals for Meritorious Service (PMMS), the agency stated.

Additional Superintendent of Police (SP) Alok Kumar, who has been tasked with preventing corruption within the agency, Deputy SPs Atul Hajela, Tejprakash Devrani and T.Sridharan, Sub-Inspector (SI) Gurmeet Singh, and Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) Narpat Singh, received the PPMDS, it said.

Deputy Inspector General Keshav Ram, and Additional Legal Advisor Vijay Kumar Sharma, who were part of the investigation in the coal scam case were awarded the PMMS.

Other CBI officials who received the medal are: SP Sandeep Kumar Sharma; Additional SPs Suresh Kumar, Bhartendar Sharma and Bharat Bhushan Bhatt; Deputy SPs Karan Singh Rana, Subhash Pandey, Gulshan Mohan Rathi, T.Selvakumar, Shri Bhagwan, and Manoj Kumar; Inspector Vijay Yadav; SIs Shibani Saha, Shashikant Rajaram Rajapure; ASIs Bishram Singh and Sham Singh; Head Constables Krishan Lal, Rajesh Babu Chauhan, Durga Singh and Tej Pal Singh; Constables Siby, P G and Ram Singh Dhani; and stenographer Dinesh Singh Pundir, the agency stated in a media release.

## In states, CMs unfurl Tricolour, make promises – from jobs to new schemes

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

CHIEF MINISTERS of different states unfurled the national flag on the occasion of 76th Independence Day and made announced new schemes. A look at what some of them said:

### UTTAR PRADESH

Yogi Adityanath, in his speech, said “service, security and good governance” are his government’s priorities. He said the UP administration is working on a plan to develop Ayodhya along the lines of “divine Kashi Vishwanath Dham”. Work is also going on for overall development of other religious places such as Braj Bhumi and Naimisharanya.

### MAHARASHTRA

Eknath Shinde said the state has begun its journey to becoming a leader of the country and his government has not stayed any public welfare scheme. After hoisting the national flag, Shinde

said his government is committed to providing reservation benefits to OBC, Maratha, and Dhangar communities.

### BIHAR

The focus of Nitish Kumar’s speech at Patna’s Gandhi Maidan was on jobs. Nitish promised that the new government will create up to 20 lakh jobs within and outside the government. Nitish referred to his deputy, Tejashwi Yadav, who had promised 10 lakh jobs during the 2020 poll campaign. Tejashwi called it a “historic announcement”.

### WEST BENGAL

Mamata Banerjee, in a series of tweets, said she wants to build a nation where no one goes hungry, no woman feels unsafe and where no oppressive forces divide people. She said Indians must uphold dignity of democratic values.

### GUJARAT

Bhupendra Patel announced an increase in eligibility criteria of beneficiaries under the National

Food Security Act from Rs 10,000 per month income to Rs 15,000. He also said 1 kg chana (gram) will be provided to each NFSA card holder at concessional rates. Patel made the announcements at an event at Modasa in Aravalli.

### TAMIL NADU

Chief Minister M K Stalin said the freedom struggle did not begin in 1857 but much earlier. “For some, the freedom struggle began only with the sepoy mutiny in 1857, but Tamils had started it long before that.” He announced a museum in Chennai that will document Tamil Nadu’s 260-year contribution to India’s freedom struggle as well as an increase in the government’s pension for freedom fighters to Rs 20,000.

### ASSAM

Himanta Biswa Sarma said “exuberant celebrations and display of love for the Tiranga” were a response to militant groups’ call to “boycott” Independence Day celebrations. The CM said the government had decided to withdraw 1

lakh minor cases, including those related to social media posts, registered before midnight of August 14 to lessen the “burden on the lower judiciary”.

### MADHYA PRADESH

Shivraj Singh Chouhan announced that a memorial of RSS founder K B Hedgewar will be built in Balaghat district’s Rampayli for his contribution to “awakening the spirit of swaraj and the freedom struggle”. Another memorial – “Veer Bharat Smarak” – will be built in Bhopal to showcase the lifestyle of freedom fighters and revolutionaries from MP, he said.

### KARNATAKA

Basavaraj Bommai announced a new scheme to provide employment to one family member of soldiers killed in line of duty. Among other new initiatives, the CM said Rs 250 crore will be allocated for a clean and hygienic environment in government schools and colleges for increasing toilet coverage, and a

loan subsidy of Rs 50,000 to backward class and SC artisans.

### KERALA

Pinarayi Vijayan said “we can realise freedom fighters’ dream as a country that incorporates its rich diversity” only by retaining federal principles. Vijayan said his government is going ahead with programmes to bridge the digital divide, eradicate extreme poverty, and address homelessness.

### PUNJAB

Bhagwant Mann expressed concern about the state’s youth immigrating abroad due to unemployment. Urging the youth to remain in Punjab, he assured that his government would “open new medical colleges, schools and stadiums in Punjab so that your children get all the opportunities here”.

FROM ENS LUCKNOW, MUMBAI, PATNA, KOLKATA, AHMEDABAD, CHENNAI, GUWAHATI, BHOPAL, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, BENGALURU, CHANDIGARH

## Challenges unique, must work together: Rijiju

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

IT’S EASY to make sweeping comments on what the executive or the legislature or the judiciary must do, but the reality is that India with its teeming population faces “unique challenges” which are “not easy to handle”, Union Law Minister Kiren Rijiju said while addressing an event to celebrate the Independence Day, organised by the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) here on Monday.

“It is not easy to handle the situation which you have in India. It

is very unique. It is very easy to pass comments and very easy to comment that the legislature should do this, executive should do that, the judiciary should finish all the pending cases...it is very easy to make sweeping comments,” Rijiju said.

Speaking of the unique challenges, Rijiju said “it is not that any organ of our State is functioning less than the other one. The fact that our country is very unique, so are the challenges.”

The minister pointed out that “each judge (in India) disposes of 40-50 cases in a day...judges of no other country have this kind of workload to handle”.



Law Minister Rijiju and CJI Ramana in Delhi. Amit Mehra

He said unlike the UK, where an MP constituency doesn’t have more than 70,000 voters, an MP in India represents an average 3-million people. Besides attending

to their concerns, the MP also has to perform his Parliamentary duties. “The only other country which is larger than India in size and population is China, which is not democratic. So, no country can face the problems which India faces,” Rijiju said.

Emphasising the need for all the organs to work together, he said “if we don’t work together, we will not understand each other. If we don’t understand each other, we will never be able to solve the problem of this country. We have to come together.”

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Justice of India N V Ramana explained how the Covid-19 pan-

demic had disrupted work in the top court and left a backlog.

“The court has inherited the backlog of nearly a year on account of Covid. In last 16 months, we could physically assemble only for 55 days. I wish the situation were different and we could be more productive,” he said.

The CJI said that “under the Constitutional framework, each organ has been given a unique obligation” and that securing justice to citizens is not the responsibility of the court alone which is made clear by Article 38 of the Constitution “which mandates the State to secure justice: social, economic and political”.

## Self-absorbed govt trivialising India’s achievements: Sonia

SOURAV ROY BARMAN  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

A DAY after BJP questioned Jawaharlal Nehru’s role in the Partition of India, Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Monday said the party will strongly oppose misrepresentation of history for “political gains” by putting icons of the independence movement “on the dock based on lies”.

In her message on the occasion of Independence Day, Sonia said attempts to “trivialise” the sacrifices of freedom fighters and the “glorious achievements” made by the country can never be accepted.

“We have achieved a lot over the last 75 years but what can never be accepted is that the current self-absorbed government is hell bent on trivialising the great sacrifices made by our freedom fighters and the country’s glorious achievements,” Sonia said in her written message issued by the Congress. “The Indian National Congress strongly opposes misrepresentation of historical facts for political benefits and putting great national leaders like (Mahatma) Gandhi, Nehru, (Sardar) Patel and (Maulana) Azad on the dock based on lies.”

Although the statement did not go into any specifics, it appeared to be aimed at BJP’s account on the Partition, released on Sunday in the form of short video clips on social media. The clip, which obliquely questioned Nehru’s role, was titled, “Where were those people who had the responsibility to fight against divisive forces?”

In a Facebook post in Hindi, Rahul Gandhi said, “We vow that we will always serve our country and its people, and will not allow divisions in the name of religion, sect, language at any cost.” Asked about the PM’s remarks on nepotism, he refused to comment.

Party general secretary (com-



Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra at AICC office in New Delhi. Prem Nath Pandey

### CONG: PM’S NEPOTISM REMARK LINKED TO BJP’S INTERNAL ISSUES

New Delhi: PM Narendra Modi’s remarks on nepotism in his Independence Day speech is linked to the “BJP’s internal issues”, the Congress said Monday, taking a swipe at Home Minister Amit Shah and his son Jay Shah, BCCI secretary. “The statements made by him appear to be connected to the BJP’s own dynastic matters. Maybe he was attacking the Home Minister or the External Affairs Minister whose son is part of a foreign think-tank. Perhaps he was attacking the Civil Aviation Minister or the son of the Defence Minister,” Congress spokesperson Pawan Kherra said. **ENS**

munication) Jairam Ramesh alleged Hindutva ideologue V D Savarkar gave birth to two-nation theory and Mohd Ali Jinnah perfected it. “The real intent of the PM to mark Aug 14 as Partition Horrors Remembrance Day is to use most traumatic historical events as fodder for his current political battles.”

## BJP turns Bihar focus to Dalits, EBCs for ’24 polls

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY  
PATNA, HAJIPUR, SARAN, AUGUST 15

ON THE fringes of Gagalaj, the ancestral village of Dalit leader and former Bihar chief minister late Ram Sundar Das in Saran district, a daily wager Bhushan Paswan sits outside his pucca house, rubbing tobacco in his palms. He is upset with LJP MP and Union minister Pashupati Kumar Paras for having split the party and jettisoned his brother late Ram Vilas Paswan’s son Chirag.

“Nobody has done as much for us as Ram Vilas ji. For us, Chirag is our leader. We will vote whichever formation he goes with,” Bhushan says, even as he praises PM Narendra Modi for his leadership. Chirag, who has floated his own party, is also aligned with the BJP-led NDA.

Barely two kilometres ahead, on the margins of Baurbani vil-



Bihar CM Nitish Kumar

lage, a small settlement of Dalits from the Ravidasi community, encompassing many thatched huts, sits right on the banks of the Ganga. Over the years, the local villagers have lost their land and homes to the river and have been struggling to reclaim their land rights.

“Modi has got Aadhaar for everyone. Doesn’t he know we have no land. We can’t even get housing. Under the BJP government, our grievances have not been heard. We hope it will happen now. We had voted for Modi in 2019. But now we will see what to do,” says Santosh Kumar, a 27-year-old Ravidasi daily wageer.

It is these caste contradictions that the BJP is now hoping

### NITISH CABINET EXPANSION TODAY

Patna: The two-member cabinet in Bihar comprising CM Nitish Kumar and his deputy Tejashwi Prasad Yadav will be expanded on Tuesday when about 30 members will be inducted from different constituents of the Grand Alliance. According to sources, the swearing-in will take place at 11.30 am. Among the invitees could be RJD chief Lalu Prasad. The state cabinet can have up to 36 ministers, including the CM. **PTI**

to manage as it faces the challenge from the formidable social coalition of the RJD and the JD(U) that Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has sought to forge now. After snapping his ties with the BJP and taking oath as the CM for the 8th time at the head of the

Mahagathbandhan government now, JD(U) supremo Nitish cast doubts on Modi’s re-election as the PM in the 2024 elections. Amid the stunning Bihar setback, the BJP seems to have been pushed to the drawing board early.

“The problem in Bihar is when Paswans come closer to you, Ravidasis begin to drift away. If you aggressively court Yadavs, other OBCs begin to move away. And striking a balance is easier said than done. It is still early stages, but there is a discussion within the party to focus on Extremely Backward Classes (EBCs) and non-Paswan Dalits, which Nitish has tried to consolidate over the years but which are also not averse to us. Our primary focus is on the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. Strategy for 2025 Assembly elections will be drawn based on what we achieve in 2024 in the state,” a senior BJP leader said.

Dalits make up 16 per cent of

Bihar’s population. Paswans and Ravidasis account for about 5 per cent and 4 per cent of the state’s population, respectively. Along with Musahars, these two communities constitute about 3/4th of the Dalit population in the state.

While Yadavs make up about 14 per cent of the state’s population and Muslims 17 per cent, the biggest chunk of voters, about 30 per cent, are said to be in the EBC group. Upper caste Hindus make up around 13-14% of the population and the rest are non-Yadav OBCs. “We have around 40 per cent votes with us. But they (Mahagathbandhan) have 60 per cent as it is a big alliance. We have to find a way to get those extra 10-12 % votes. And for that we can’t just depend on Modi magic. We have been focusing on EBCs in the past few years. Renu Devi, an EBC leader, was appointed deputy CM in the previous government,” a BJP leader said. **FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com**

### KERALA CPM LEADER’S MURDER

## Day after, blame game begins over assailants’ political links

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, AUGUST 15

A DAY after a local CPM leader was killed in Kerala’s Palakkad district, a controversy erupted on Monday over the political affiliation of the killers.

K Shajahan (40), a CPM local committee member, was hacked to death by a group late on Sunday. While a man who claimed to be an eyewitness to the murder told the media that Shajahan was attacked by his own party men, the CPM’s district secretary said the assailants had left the party years ago.

The CPM state secretariat initially referred to the killers as “anti-social elements who want to foment riots in the state”, with-

out mentioning their political affiliation. Later in the afternoon, the state secretariat issued a statement blaming a BJP-RSS gang for the murder. “It is the habit of BJP-RSS to kill CPM workers and then unleash a baseless campaign. In this case also, the BJP has started a false propaganda with the help of the media,” read the statement.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, who holds the Home portfolio, deplored the killing. Without giving any political colour for the killing, Vijayan said “stringent action will be taken against attempts to shatter peace. Police have been given direction to bring the culprits before law,” he said in a Facebook post.

Around 2am on Monday, four hours after the murder, police boked eight RSS-BJP workers as the accused, all from Kottelkad,

victim’s native place. Palakkad SP R Vishwanadh said “It is too early to talk about the motive behind the murder. Prima facie, there is no evidence to suggest that it was a political murder. A detailed probe is on. We have identified all the accused persons,” he said.

Earlier in the day, an eyewitness named Suresh told the media that there had been eight persons in the gang and two of them had hacked Shajahan. “These persons had been with the CPM in the past. Two of them, Sabareesh and Aneesh, who hacked Shajahan, had been party members. They had a dispute over subscribing to the CPM daily Deshabhimani, which Shajahan was not subscribing to. One of the accused, Sujesh, is my son,” Suresh told the media.



# Express Network



## DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



### THREE CHEERS

MORE THAN 5 crore Tiranga selfies have been uploaded on the Har Ghar Tiranga website. The website allowed people to digitally 'pin a flag' at a location based on their IP. This feature saw a huge draw, with participation from across India and the world crossing the 5-crore mark. The Culture Ministry, under minister G Kishan Reddy, had undertaken this initiative, asking Indians everywhere to display the flag at home or their place of work.

### SENT, NOT RECEIVED

INDEPENDENCE DAY celebrations organised by the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) in the top court's lawns usually sees attendance from the Union Law Minister every year. Addressing the celebrations on Monday, Law Minister Kiren Rijiju, however, said he could not attend last year's event since he had not received the invite, even though, he said, SCBA's president, senior advocate Vikas Singh, had said that the invite had been sent. "Last year, the (SCBA) president told me he had sent the invitation. (But) I never received it," he said and quipped, "we left it inconclusive whose fault was that..." Rijiju said he is extremely delighted to be a confirmed participant at the event this year.

### HURDLE CROSSED

PROF ASHOK Banerjee, faculty at IIM-Calcutta, was recently appointed the new director of IIM-Udaipur. He succeeds Prof Janat Shah, the institute's director since its establishment in 2011. Although Banerjee's joining was announced only this month, his candidature for the post had been approved by IIM-Udaipur board at least a month ago, it is learnt. The formal appointment, however, faced a few hiccups, with the Education Ministry initially objecting to the Vigilance clearance provided by Banerjee's parent institution IIM-Calcutta. Apparently, some paragraphs in an audit report on Banerjee proved to be a problem. After a lot of back and forth and explanations given by IIM-Calcutta, it seems the paragraphs were eventually dropped from the report, which finally cleared the way for his appointment.

## Afghan missions slam Taliban, want travel ban back

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

THE TALIBAN have not only failed to deliver on their commitments but also "reenacted draconian policies", including systematically erasing women from public life, Afghan diplomatic missions across the world said on Monday, on the first anniversary of the fall of the democratically elected government in Kabul.

The missions in different countries also said the international community should reinforce the UN-mandated travel ban on certain Taliban leaders, as the group has misused exemptions.

In New Delhi, the statement was put out by the Afghanistan embassy.

Most diplomatic missions of Afghanistan, including in India, are still functioning independently of the Taliban dispensation. At present, around 70 Afghan missions are in operation.

The missions said the killing of Al-Qaeda chief Ayman al-Zawahiri in Kabul last month affirmed that the Taliban are hosting and sheltering a "coterie" of foreign terrorist groups.

The missions put forward seven points for consideration by the international community to bring peace and stability in Afghanistan. These include, apart from the travel ban, enlisting new

individuals in the sanction regime, coordinated measures to address "dangerous threat" emanating from the presence of foreign terrorist groups in the country.

The missions specifically urged the international community to "reinforce the UN travel ban for Taliban leaders [concerned], as the group has continuously misused travel-ban exemptions by refusing to engage in any meaningful dialogue for a political settlement".

They called on the international community and the UN to seek "pragmatic solutions" to the current economic, political and humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan through putting in place all necessary measures to meet the urgent needs of the people of Afghanistan.

"Afghan citizens are deprived of basic services and face grave human rights abuses and violations, poverty, repression, and fear," they stated.

A year on since the takeover, the statement said, the Taliban have "not only totally failed to deliver on all their commitments but re-enacted draconian policies and directives."

"Among others, the group has banned girls from attending secondary education and systematically erased women and girls from public life by restricting their fundamental rights to work and play an active role in society," it added.

## Citizens' freedom can't be taken away: journalist Kappan's child

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
MALAPPURAM (KERALA),  
AUGUST 15

AS INDIA celebrated its 76th Independence Day, the nine-year-old daughter of Malayali journalist Siddique Kappan — jailed under the UAPA in the Hathras conspiracy case — said that "ordinary citizens' freedom be not taken away".

"I am the daughter of a journalist who has been left to languish in jail by being denied the

basic civil rights available to all Indian citizens," is how she began her Independence Day speech at her school on Monday, a video of which has gone viral.

In her speech, she said that every Indian has the right to resist or oppose; they have the choice to decide what to speak, eat or which religion to profess. She further said that there was still unrest in the country as it was evident from the violence on the basis of religion, colour or politics and that the same should be "rooted out with love and unity".

## Soldier's remains found in Siachen after 38 years

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, AUGUST 15

THIRTY-EIGHT YEARS after taking control of Siachen Glacier in Ladakh, now a Union Territory, the Indian Army on Monday recovered the remains of one of its soldiers who had gone missing during Operation Meghdoot in 1984.

Identifying him as Lance Naik Chandrashekhar Singh of 19 Kumaon, an official statement issued by Udhampur-based Defence PRO Lt Col Abhinav said that he was part of a 20-member Army patrol that was hit by an av-



Lance Naik Chandrashekhar Singh's mortal remains were identified from the Army disc. *Express*

alanche on May 29, 1984, on way to Shankar Top. He was identified

from an Army disc, the PRO said, adding that details about the soldier were retrieved from the Army records.

The remains will be handed over to Lance Naik Chandrashekhar's family in Haldwani, Uttarakhand, soon, he added. The family of Lance Naik Chandrashekhar, which included his wife Shanti Devi and two daughters, bade him a beave-heart's farewell, Lt Colonel Abhinav said.

Lance Naik Chandrashekhar's wife Shanti Devi, originally from Almora, currently lives in Haldwani's Saraswati Vihar

Colony. Haldwani sub-collector Manish Kumar and Tehsildar Sanjay Kumar, who reached Shanti Devi's house, said his last rites will be performed with full military honours.

Shanti Devi said at the time, they were married for nine years and that she was 28. Their elder daughter at the time was four and the younger one was one-and-a-half years old.

Shanti Devi said she was proud of her husband as he prioritised his service towards the country. According to information available, Lance Naik Chandrashekhar, a resident of

Dwarahat in Almora, had enlisted in the army in 1975.

Operation Meghdoot was launched by the Indian Armed Forces to take control of Siachen Glacier on the morning of April 13, 1984, pre-empting Pakistan's designs to capture it.

The Army PRO said bodies of 12 of the 20 soldiers were recovered during a search operation, while the remains of the rest, including Lance Naik Chandrashekhar Singh's, were never found.

But as the fate would have it, 38 years later, a patrol party of Rajasthan Rifles came across a

shelter that seemingly had been destroyed by an avalanche. During search of the surroundings, they stumbled upon the remains, torn clothes and an Army disc, he said.

"The sacrifice made by this soldier shows the spirit of the Indian army which is 'Service before self'. His devotion to duty is manifested as even though the terrain is unforgivable, the climate ghastly, he still kept advancing and eventually made the supreme sacrifice. This discovery augmented the sense of duty of every soldier who is currently serving in the Siachen Glacier," Lt Col Abhinav said. **(WITH PTI INPUTS)**



A Dornier 228 Maritime Patrol Aircraft being handed over to Sri Lanka Navy by the Indian authorities during a ceremony, in Colombo on Monday. *PTI*

## India gifts aircraft to Lanka, day before China ship docks

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

INDIA GIFTED a Dornier maritime reconnaissance aircraft to Sri Lanka on Monday, a day before a high-tech Chinese missile and satellite tracking ship docks at the island nation's strategic Hambantota port.

Vice Chief of Indian Navy Vice Admiral S N Ghormade, who is on a two-day visit to Sri Lanka, accompanied by Indian High Commissioner in Colombo Gopal Baglay, handed over the aircraft to the Sri Lanka Navy at the Air Force base in Katunayake. Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe was also present at the ceremony.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Monday that the aircraft would act as a force multiplier, enabling Sri Lanka to

tackle multiple challenges such as human and drug trafficking, smuggling and other organised forms of crime in its coastal waters more effectively.

"Induction of the aircraft is timely in view of the current challenges to Sri Lanka's maritime security," the MEA said.

Speaking on the occasion, Baglay said that induction of the aircraft will help create a peaceful environment for progress and prosperity of both countries.

Gifting of the Dornier aircraft underscores the cooperation between the two maritime neighbours in defence and security spheres. Such cooperation is envisaged to add further capability and capacity to Sri Lanka and is in line with the vision of Security and Growth for All in the Region, the statement said.

It also noted that maritime se-

curity has been identified as a key pillar of the Colombo Security Conclave.

"Security of India and Sri Lanka is enhanced by mutual understanding, mutual trust and cooperation. Gifting of Dornier 228 is India's latest contribution to this cause," Baglay said at the handing over event.

In his address, Wickremesinghe thanked India for gifting the aircraft and said it will help start cooperation between Sri Lanka Air Force and Navy with Indian Navy in maritime surveillance.

The aircraft is being provided from the inventory of the Indian Navy to help the country meet its immediate security requirement. The Indian Navy has already provided extensive training to a team from Sri Lanka's Navy and Air Force.

### MAN ATTACKED WITH KNIFE IN SHIVAMOGGA

## Sec 144 imposed amid tension over attempt to remove Savarkar poster

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
BENGALURU, AUGUST 15

Prohibitory orders under Section 144 of CrPC was imposed in Shivamogga of Karnataka on Monday following tension over an alleged attempt to remove a banner of V D Savarkar from Ameer Ahamed Circle, in the heart of the city, leading to mild use of force by police.

In the aftermath of the incident, a local shopkeeper, identified as Prem Singh, 25, was attacked with a knife by unidentified persons in the city's Upparkeri area while he was standing near a shop, according to police. Singh is recuperating at Mcgann Hospital in the city.

Shivamogga DC, R Selvamani, said prohibitory orders were imposed for three days to bring the situation under control.

Police used mild force as ac-

tivists suspected to be linked to SDPI tried to remove the banner put up on Ameer Ahamed Circle. Bajrang Dal activists subsequently staged a protest.

On Saturday, an official of Shivamogga city corporation, Pramod H P, filed a police complaint over an attempt to prevent display of images of freedom fighters after a local SDPI activist, M D Asif, raised objections to the display of an image of Savarkar at a local mall and demanded that images of freedom fighters from the Muslim community be put up as well. A case of wrongful restraint and causing intentional insult (under Sections 341 and 504 of IPC) was registered.

Asif was arrested on the basis of this complaint.

The communally sensitive city had witnessed the murder of a Bajrang Dal activist in February this year, and the funeral led to stone-throwing and arson, al-

legedly by activists of Hindutva outfits. The procession was led by local BJP MLAs Eshwarappa and the MP, B Y Raghavendra.

Meanwhile, in Bengaluru, a case was registered on Sunday under the Prevention of Insult to National Honours Act, 1971, and under IPC Section 295-A (outraging of religious feelings) over alleged vandalism of an image of Tipu Sultan put up by the Congress at the city's Hudson Circle.

The complaint was filed by a Congress worker, B Manjunath, alleging that miscreants ripped apart flex banners put up by the party to mark the 75th anniversary of Independence Day. The banners had images of Tipu Sultan and the national flag, the complaint stated.

Halasurage police subsequently arrested a right-wing Hindutva activist, identified as Puneeth Kerehalli, and two of his associates over the incident.

However, rising in defence of Mondal, Mamata on Sunday launched a blistering attack on the BJP-led Centre, asserting that she will stand by the Birbhum party strongman and announced to "start a movement" against alleged excesses of the central agencies like the ED and the CBI.

"What has Keshto (Mondal) done? What evidence you have against him? I asked him to go to Rajya Sabha, but he declined saying he would love to work for the party organically." **New Delhi**

### MUMBAI TRAIN BLASTS CASE

## Convict seeks inquiry into police report on accused

**SADAF MODAK**  
MUMBAI, AUGUST 15

CLAIMING THAT an absconding accused, named in Mumbai 2006 serial train blasts case alleged to have brought Pakistani men to the city to plant bombs, was in prison between 2005 and 2007, death row convict Ehtesham Siddiqui has approached various government authorities and the special court seeking further investigation into this.

In another plea last month, Siddiqui, who along with four others was sentenced to death in 2015 by a special court for the train blasts, had also sought a reinvestigation into the case on various grounds claiming that the probe was based on fabricated evidence.

In his communication to authorities including the Union Home Ministry and the special court, Siddiqui has referred to a purported report filed by the Hyderabad police into the suicidal death of Abdul Razzak alias Masood. Razzak had committed suicide in Hyderabad on October 10, 2012.

Siddiqui has cited the police inquiry report submitted before a local court in 2013. The report said that Razzak was booked in the Sai Baba temple trust blast case in 2002 and was arrested in 2005. He was subsequently granted bail in 2007. In a letter in Urdu found in his pocket, the report said, Razzak had written that he was fed up with the police cases against him and felt that there was no possibility to come out of them. He was also told that his name

was listed as an absconding accused in the Mumbai train blasts case, the report said. It concluded in the final report that he had committed suicide due to mental stress and that there was no foul play in the death.

Siddiqui has also specifically referred to the deposition of three witnesses, seeking action against them for perjury. One of the witnesses referred to is a man who deposed that he had seen Razzak at the home of convict Faisal Shaikh in 2006 along with three Pakistani men. Two of these men were claimed to have been dead.

Relying on the report, Siddiqui has sought further investigation stating that Razzak was lodged in jail during that period and could not have been in Mumbai or brought Pakistani men to the city. The prosecution had also claimed that Razzak had helped the three Pakistani men enter India from the Gujarat border in 2006.

Before the special court in another plea, the prosecution has been asked to file a reply to Siddiqui's plea and the case is likely to be heard later this week.

An appeal filed by those convicted in the case is pending before the Bombay HC. Siddiqui has been approaching various fora stating that the investigation has not been proper. The special court in 2015 had concluded that the case where 188 persons had lost their lives fell in the 'rarest of rare' category and sentenced five, including Siddiqui, to death penalty.

When contacted, ATS Maharashtra chief Vineet Agarwal, did not respond to messages.

## Two injured in separate grenade attacks in J&K

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
SRINAGAR, AUGUST 15

TWO PERSONS, including a civilian from minority community, were injured in two grenade attacks by militants in Kashmir on Monday, police said.

The ultras carried out two grenade attacks within an hour — one at a minority habitation in Chadoora in Budgam district and another at Police Control Room in Srinagar, police said.

"Terrorists hurled grenade in Gopalpora Chadoora area of Budgam in which one civilian namely Karan Kumar Singh got

injured. He has been shifted to Srinagar hospital for treatment where his condition is stated to be stable. Area cordoned off. Further details shall follow," a police spokesman tweeted.

"Terrorists hurled grenade at Police Control Room Kashmir, resulting in minor injuries to one policeman. Area cordoned off," he said in another tweet.

In another incident, A policeman, who was injured in an encounter in Srinagar's Nowhatta on Independence Day eve, succumbed to injuries on Monday. Constable Sarfaraz Ahmad, a resident of Ramban district, died at a hospital, officials said

## Why Mamata is throwing her weight behind Anubrata Mondal

**ATRI MITRA**  
KOLKATA, AUGUST 15

DAYS AFTER the Trinamool Congress (TMC) sought to distance itself from its Birbhum district president Anubrata Mondal after he was arrested by the CBI in a cattle-smuggling case, the West Bengal Chief Minister and party supremo, Mamata Banerjee, has made it clear now that the party will stand by Mondal, who has been remanded in the CBI custody till August 20.

Close on the heels of Mondal's



Anubrata Mondal

arrest on August 11, minister and TMC leader Chandrima Bhattacharya had said that "Party has zero tolerance on corruption. The accused should prove their innocence before the law."

This was in line with the stance the TMC took a fortnight earlier when party heavyweight

Partha Chatterjee was arrested by the ED over his alleged role in the teacher recruitment scam. The ED also arrested Chatterjee's associate Arpita Mukherjee and recovered over Rs 50 crore from her flats in Kolkata.

Swinging into action, Mamata had then sacked Chatterjee from her cabinet and suspended him from the TMC, even as her nephew and second-in-command Abhishek Banerjee had distanced the party from the seized cash.

EXPLAINED

sation. Why has he been arrested? The central agency went on a rampage at Keshto's house," Mamata said while addressing a rally Independence Day eve in South Kolkata's Behala.

"How many people will be arrested? I will hold a Jail Bhara movement with everyone. Come down to the streets. If tomorrow they go to my house, what will you do? Will you take to the streets?" she asked party workers.

A TMC section played down the buzz in political circles that Mamata's bid to back Mondal betrayed a "disconnect between the

party's old guard and its youth leadership".

A senior TMC leader said, "Abhishek is a young leader. Didi (Mamata) is a veteran politician. She can clearly see that after the arrest of Mondal, many people in the party are getting anxious, especially after the party sought to leave him to fight his own battle with a central agency. Didi understands that such a feeling among party rank and file is dangerous. So Mamata stood by Anubrata and asked the party to gear up to face such battles." **Full Report On** [www.indianexpress.com](http://www.indianexpress.com)







# 9 THE IDEAS PAGE



AMITAVA KUMAR

LISTEN, YOU ARE young and I understand you will only be sitting in a room doing nothing for many, many years. I hope you will find time to read this letter.

The world learned last week that you are 24. The man you tried to kill is 75. I don't know about you but when I was 24, I was reading that man's writings with great devotion. You might even say I was a bit fanatical in my habit.

The following year, when I was 25, there was a fatwa issued by Ayatollah Khomeini, calling for this man's death for his novel *The Satanic Verses* — and that murderous edict resulted, after three decades, in the terrible act you perpetrated with such savagery. The man you tried to kill survived your attack; I'm guessing that now there will be no bounty for you. Only an eternity in prison.

I'm just pointing out the basic facts here. As the man you tried to kill might put it, in his own light-hearted way, it didn't turn out to be such a profitable investment for you.

I apologise. I sound petty. When I sat down to write this letter, I hadn't intended to be bitter. In fact, I wanted to meet you with my own twenty-four-year-old self. That particular version of me would want you to read books. Instead of listening to old men railing from the pulpit, men who believe they carry the word of God, and who decide who can live or die — instead of listening to them, will you not heed more human voices?

Let me begin with the voice of the man you tried to kill.

After that appalling fatwa, issued on Valentine's Day, the writer went into hiding. He lived in safe houses under police protection. On the first anniversary of the fatwa, in a short poem that he published in *Granta* magazine, to "sing on, in spite of attacks, / to sing (while my dreams are being murdered by facts) / praises of butterflies broken on racks."

You will perhaps grasp the brutality, but do you also see the beauty? That image of butterflies broken on instruments of torture is so striking and so powerful that I see at once why the great literary critic Edward Said once commented that the man you tried to kill represented "the intifada of the imagination."

Ten years after the fatwa, in a piece in *The New Yorker* entitled 'My Unfunny Valentine', the writer who you tried to kill stated that he was now going to write only of love. "Love feels more and more like the only subject. At the centre of my life, of my new work, of my future plans, I now find nothing else." Can you imagine what it meant for a young man, a little older than you, to be given the gift of such words to shape his own identity as a writer?

Do you read? I ask not to diminish you or humiliate you, but to offer an invitation. It hurt me terribly some years ago to learn that the killer of a writer in India had never read the woman he had shot to death. The dead writer was a journalist of enormous courage. Her killer was reportedly paid Rs 10,000 by people who told him nothing more than that this woman was hurting their religion. This writer's name was Gauri Lankesh. The man who allegedly shot her, Parshuram Waghmare, was only two years older than you are now when he committed the murder. He is in prison. Forces of fundamentalist belief, that use religion as an excuse for destroying lives, have been unleashed in different parts of the world.



DATTATREYA HOSABALE

HAVING COMPLETED 75 years after attaining Independence from foreign rule, Bharat has embarked on a new journey to play a lead role globally. While the next phase of its civilisational journey has begun, every citizen is in a boisterous and jubilant mood as the Amrit Mahotsav got underway with a new purpose. Our nation completed this journey after having crossed numerous obstacles and problems. It has been an arduous, exciting and momentous journey. We have a vivid picture of the nation that became independent but faced the tragedy of Partition and suffered the trauma of violence unleashed after. Immediately after this tragic experience, its borders were attacked. The issues that the country faced post-independence could not dent our resilience, defeat our capabilities or shackle the potential of our nation. Taking the challenges head-on has led to the strengthening of Bharat's democratic foundations.

Today, we can hardly imagine how the nation celebrated its greatest festival of democracy in 1952 and set up an elected government after having suffered the trauma of Partition and the attack on its borders. It was indeed the willpower and efforts of the people that ensured integration of those areas that were left out of the Union in 1947, such as Goa, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Hyderabad and Puducherry. Often, a question arises as to how a nation

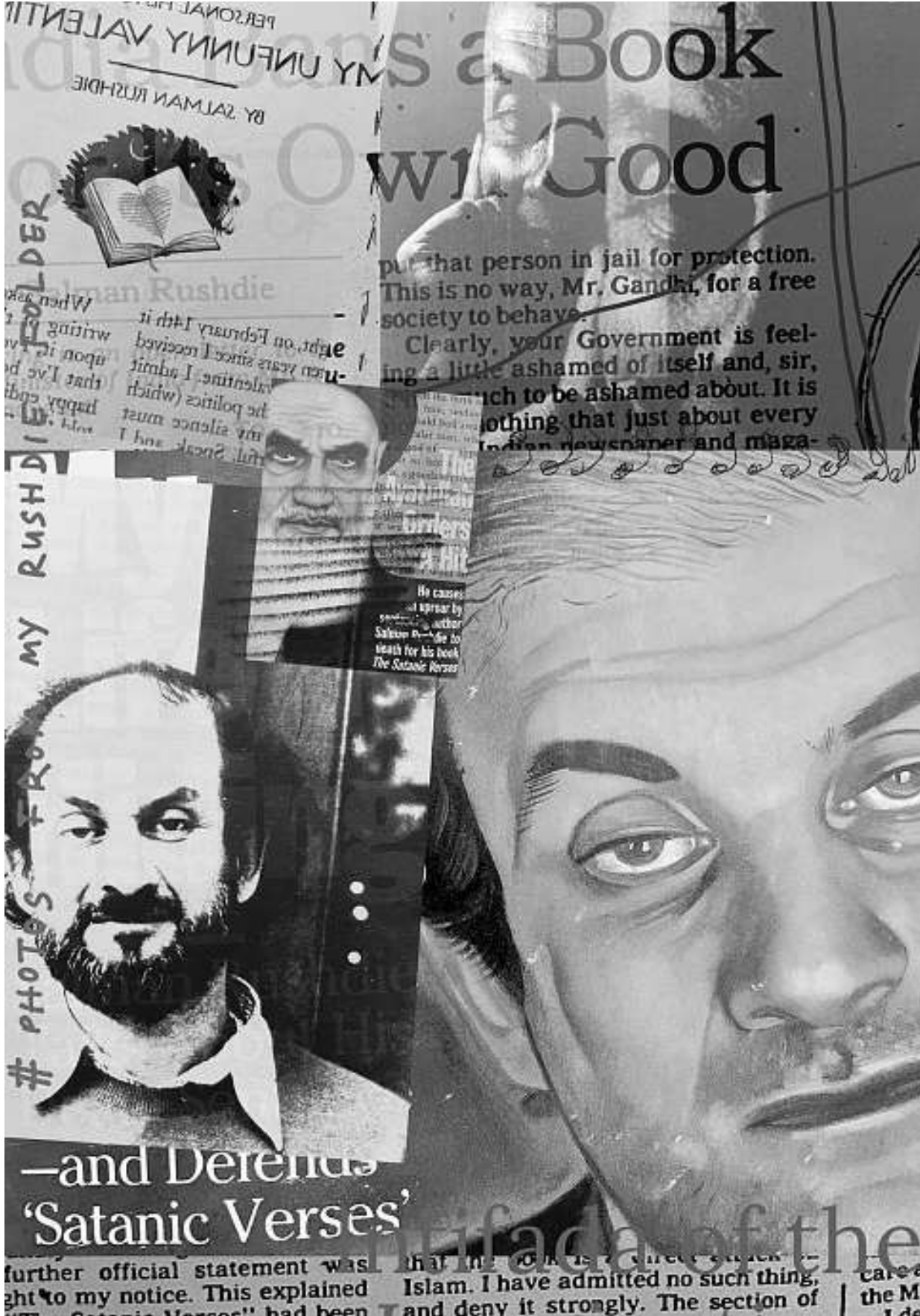


Image Courtesy: Amitava Kumar

—but there's a further point I'm trying to make. People have been posting his lines on social media, they are discussing the influence of his work. Over the past three days, I have read nothing but his words in essays, novels, and interviews. (My son, only 12, has declared his interest in reading *The Satanic Verses*. I think he should wait.) Do you see what I'm getting at? You have failed—as any act of violence, and in such circumstances, inevitably would—because you have succeeded only in returning us to his words.

Amitava Kumar is the author, most recently, of *The Blue Book* (HarperCollins, 2022)

## India's centenary challenge

Time to find homegrown solutions, fortify internal systems

that secured political independence only a few years earlier could pick up the pieces and move forward so quickly. One cannot comprehend this without understanding the Bharatiya society as a whole. Even while suffering the acute pain of invasions and other crises, the Bharatiya society did not forget the *sutra* of its unity. Only if genuine attempts are made can one understand the freedom struggle of Bharat that left its footprint over towns, villages, forests, mountains and the coastal areas: Whether it is the Santhal uprising or the armed struggles in southern India, there's a single underlying principle. Every one of our heroes yearned for the country's independence. This craving for swarajya was not for themselves, but for the society and the nation.

Restlessness in the Bharatiya society was so intense that people made supreme sacrifices. This was why the independence movement spread as far as the UK, the US, Japan and so on. In fact, the India House in London was one of the major centres of the freedom movement.

Innumerable people sacrificed their lives in search of freedom. Some of them are household names while we hardly know about several others who submitted their lives at the altar of independence. This legacy of heroism, unparalleled patriotic fervour, supreme sacrifices and bloodshed seems to have served as the perfect launch pad for the citizens to win

glory for the country. This desire on their part reflects Bharat's societal aspiration rather than being fuelled by political leaders. This very aspiration came to the fore when internal Emergency was imposed and democratic institutions were attacked during 1975-77. Citizens from across the spectrum were at the forefront of the struggle against anti-democratic and authoritarian forces.

The 75th year of independence may also be the right time to introspect and plan for the centenary year, 2047. Also, at a time when the whole world is coming to terms with the post-Covid-19 social order and facing uncertainty, we should set our own distinct goals as a nation and society. Undoubtedly, the last decade has been a period of achievements for Bharat. We may have to build on our recent successes.

Providing access to affordable and quality healthcare, housing, education and achieving financial inclusion apart from citizens' empowerment are areas where we have made large strides. For instance, Bharat's ingenuity and intelligence were at their best while developing a safe and affordable vaccine against Covid-19 in a short period. The vaccine served as the perfect antidote and saved billions of lives globally.

Going forward, we have to recognise and confront several internal and external threats from known and unknown sources. Achieving societal harmony should be a priority area for

Bharat. Given the inalienable link between society's strength and harmony amongst her communities, we may have to channelise our energies in this direction.

On the economic front, Bharat has made rapid strides. But a lot more has to be achieved, given the aspirations of a 1.4 billion population. There's untapped potential in several areas. Unless we place Bharat's home-grown businesses and enterprises at the forefront of our policy formulation, providing work opportunities to all may remain a pipe dream. Bharat will emerge strong in the true sense only when it is self-reliant.

A reorganisation of our policy and democratic institutions may have to be done in sync with the expectations of our people and requirements at a time Bharat seeks to play a lead role among global communities by drawing strength from its millennia-old civilisation. Making the judiciary, executive and all public institutions accessible to common people, who feel distraught and helpless, may be very significant in our onward march.

Global challenges in the short term can be faced only when our internal systems are strong. Apart from economic and political empowerment, finding home-grown solutions to tackle social challenges and fortifying Bharat's internal systems should get a big push.

The writer is sarkaryavah, RSS

## WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

“The violent attack on Rushdie on Friday was not just a heinous attempt on the life of one of the world's most insightful storytellers but an attack on the right to disagree, on liberal democracy and on freedom itself.”  
—THE GUARDIAN

## Walk back from the extremes

Commitment to inclusivity and social justice should guide the nation's march towards 2047



KANIMOZHI KARUNANIDHI

INDIA AT 100, to me, is an incredibly powerful thought. When I look at the Bay of Bengal, the sea stretches to touch the horizon, and from this shore, my wishlist reaches to touch the sky.

Naturally, there are a lot of questions. How inclusive will the growth be? Would the shift in society be along the lines of social justice? How central will equality be to the dynamics of the society? Rooted in these questions, the growth and forward movement of our society become a complicated affair.

I do not doubt that India will be one of the most decisive forces in several spheres of influence by that time. It is an essential voice in some global conversations, but I sense the voice will only grow louder by several hundred decibels by 2047. Considering global challenges like climate change, increased levels of inequality, and fluctuations in geopolitical blocs, the camaraderie needed within the Indian Union cannot be explained in simple terms.

There is a price that the India project will have to pay for this journey, though. It's an expensive deal. Well, one can say that the top one per cent, which contributes 33 per cent of the wealth in the country with 1.4-billion-people country, can take care of it. With my years of public life, I've now understood that it just won't be enough. The cost that India has to pay can only be achieved by every single person contributing towards it. All hands on deck!

This brings to the fore two of the critical drivers of growth for any nation — inclusivity and social justice. This moment in history is a clarion call to the common sense of the society to stand against the might of majoritarian forces. Riding on draconian laws, fragments of society are being driven to the extremes. The top 10 per cent of India makes up 64.6 per cent of the country's wealth, whereas the bottom 50 per cent makes a mere 5.9 per cent. Economic growth that is not inclusive will extend this asymmetry and guide the India project to a very different place, one where the ramifications can be compared to the dark ages of history.

This is also the time to reawaken the conversation around social justice on a larger scale. There is no substitute for social justice in the vision statement of such a large constitutional democracy. The Preamble was the first proponent of this: "...to secure to all its citizens: Justice, social, economic and political..."

Social justice ensures equality. It tells the citizens of this Union that for the next 25-odd years and every single day after that, the catalyst for a positive change in the society is the promise of holistic growth.

Tamil Nadu's growth in the past few decades is a testament to the success of setting up a strong base for development



grounded in social justice. Our leaders, including Thanthai Periyar, Kamarajar, C N Annadurai and Kalaingar M Karunanidhi have been proponents of the inclusive character of democracy. Take, for example, the initiative led by Kalaingar in setting up government medical colleges in Tamil Nadu that opened opportunities for everyone back in the day. With low fees, they made sure the medical dream of any young child is accessible. In the present day, the NEET has entered as a disruptor in the system. We have stood against oppression and imposition in the past for the collective good and now our Chief Minister MK Stalin is championing this fight.

The strand of history to which we belong is soaked in the dye of patriarchy. This makes change hard. Women contribute just 18 per cent of the labour income in the country today. Lack of access, systemic prejudices about skill levels, and unaccounted familial duties move the spotlight away from women. I hope to see a significant shift by 2047. I hope 33 per cent is not just a number but a reality so that we can join hands and work towards 50 per cent strongly. On a more basic level, women participating in the labour force significantly increases the output. But when you go deeper, you understand something even better. Economists suggest that this effect on the economy influences the big picture, the reverberations of which benefit everyone.

Freedom, by its very nature, gives everyone choices. For instance, the choice to adhere to a religion. Individuals choose to practise the religion that they feel connected to.

A true sense of freedom on an individual level also means the distribution of rights and privileges irrespective of identities, especially minority identities. By 2047, the LGBTQ+ community, one of the most oppressed sections of society, should be able to lead a life

on the socio-political plane without being challenged by regressive norms. There is a lack of empathy in the system, which does not treat the minorities with the dignity they deserve. The unfair treatment was a characteristic fed into the system. A beautiful canopy of equity, equality, and social justice will be where their voices will be heard, their concerns will be echoed.

We need a course correction so that our upcoming generations witness a free and prosperous society. We should ensure our republic protects all citizens and approaches checkpoints in this journey with a scientific temper.

I am reminded of this famous adage, "History is written by the victors". I think "the future is written by the hopefuls". Well, hopefuls when they have freedom of expression. The Indian jails today are home to numerous hopefuls who were denied their freedom of expression. A denial rooted in an inconsistent dialogue of interpretations propagated by an authoritarian state. But we'll continue to write bold words, talk louder, and walk the talk towards 2047, for we have words of the revolutionary Tamil poet Subramaniya Bharathiyar in our minds:

*There should be no one in poverty or in slavery/ There should be no one in India oppressed in the name of caste/ Let's praise the wealth of education/ Join in happiness/ And live in equality as we all are one.*

The writer is a DMK MP

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### SCOUNDREL TIMES

THE ATTACK ON Salman Rushdie is a terrifying reminder of the forces of hate, bigotry and intolerance that have emerged around the world. How does one confront them and the questions that stare us in the face are complex: How and why have we reached this stage? Are there political and social conditions that give rise to such forces? However, the overarching thought that crosses my mind is that when will we reach a stage where a difference of opinion, a contrarian point of view and even an iconoclastic vision be accepted as part of human discourse? Salman Rushdie has paid a horrifying price in these scoundrel times.

Saeed Mirza, via email

### HER COUNTRY

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, '1-Day, Her Day' (IE, August 15). It is beyond tokenism and lip service that women, constituting half the population, are given the freedom they deserve in every aspect of life. Unfortunately, as the editorial points out, had it not been for the electoral might of women, the latter would still have been struggling to come out of their assigned traditional roles. Men are loath to forsake their control both in the personal and professional fields, irrespective of the superfi-

cial changes we see in society. It will take more than a Droupadi Murmu, ascending to the highest office of the land, to bring the required transformation in our male-dominated world.

Vijai Pant, Hempur

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, '1-Day, Her Day' (IE, August 15). It was heartening to read the ideas shared by women who have proven themselves in their chosen fields, on Independence Day. Their views about India after 25 years, when it will complete century of its freedom, are visionary. They touched almost all the relevant fields where India as a nation needs to work and perform.

Devendra Awasthi, Lucknow

### BARBARIC ATTACK

THIS REFERS TO the report, 'Severed nerves in arms, Salman Rushdie is put on ventilator, may lose an eye' (IE, August 14). The barbaric attack on Salman Rushdie at the Chautauqua Institution in New York state — which occurred, with savage irony, as he was being introduced to give a talk on artistic freedom — has left writers and readers alike stunned. For 33 years, Rushdie has embodied freedom and the fight against obscurantism. Our thoughts are with him and here's wishing him a speedy recovery.

SS Paul, Nadia



TOPOF THE  
WORLDIran minister Hossein Amirabdollahian. *File*

## IRAN

## Tehran set to respond to EU's Nuke deal text

IRAN WILL respond to the EU's "final" draft text to save a 2015 nuclear deal by midnight Monday, its foreign minister said, calling on the US to show flexibility to resolve three remaining issues. "Our answer will be given to the EU tonight at 12 midnight... There are three issues that if resolved, we can reach an agreement in the coming days," Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian said, suggesting Tehran's response would not be a final acceptance or rejection of the EU text. "We have told them our red lines should be respected... We have shown enough flexibility..." **REUTERS**

## COVID

## UK approves variant-adapted Moderna shot

BRITAIN, THE first country to approve a coronavirus vaccine in late 2020, has now also given the first green light to a variant-adapted shot that targets both the original and Omicron version of the virus. The UK medicines regulator gave the so-called bivalent vaccine made by US drug company Moderna conditional approval as a booster for adults on Monday. Hours later, the country's Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) recommended all adults in the United Kingdom be offered boosters this autumn. **REUTERS**

## RUSSIA

## Griner appeals conviction amid Biden's offer

THE DEFENCE team for Brittney Griner, the American basketball star sentenced to prison in Russia on drug smuggling charges, said on Monday that it had appealed the verdict as Russian diplomats began to speak more openly about a potential prisoner exchange with the US. Over the weekend, Aleksandr Darchiev, a high-ranking Russian diplomat, said that political negotiations with the US were already underway, including discussion of Russians held by the US whose release Moscow seeks in order to secure Griner's freedom. **NYT**

## PAKISTAN

## Indian plane in Karachi, sparks buzz

A CHARTER airplane from India with a dozen passengers on board landed at Jinnah International Airport in Karachi on Monday, according to a media report. An aviation official said the flight had flown in from India and it had no connection whatsoever with the country other than that. The flight had departed from Hyderabad. It is not yet clear why the plane had landed at Karachi. The incident comes after two planes from India landed in Karachi last month due to technical issues. **PTI**

## BEIJING 'CONTINUES TO TRAIN, PREPARE FOR WAR'

## China seethes, holds more military drills around Taiwan over US lawmakers' visit

**RYAN WOO & BEN BLANCHARD**  
BEIJING/TAIPEI, AUGUST 15

CHINA'S MILITARY said it carried out more exercises near Taiwan on Monday as a group of US lawmakers visited the Chinese-claimed island and met President Tsai Ing-wen, who said her government was committed to maintaining stability.

The five lawmakers, led by Senator Ed Markey, arrived in Taipei on an unannounced visit late on Sunday, the second high-level group to visit following that of US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi in early August, which set off several

days of Chinese war games.

The Chinese military unit responsible for the area adjacent to Taiwan, the People's Liberation Army's Eastern Theatre Command, said it had organised multi-service joint combat readiness patrols and combat drills in the sea and airspace around Taiwan on Monday. The exercises were "a stern deterrent to the United States and Taiwan continuing to play political tricks and undermine peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait", it added.

China's Defence Ministry said in a separate statement that the lawmakers' trip infringed on China's sovereignty and territorial integrity and "fully exposes the true face of the United States

The lawmakers with President Tsai Ing-wen on Monday. *AP*

as a spoiler and spoiler of peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait".

"The Chinese People's Liberation Army continues to

train and prepare for war... and will resolutely crush any form of 'Taiwan independence' separatism and foreign interference."



**MALTA MARKS 'OP PEDESTAL' ANNIVERSARY:** A re-enactor fires a cannon in Valletta, Malta, to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the arrival of the Santa Marija convoy in the country. The convoy was part of Britain's 'Operation Pedestal', which saved Malta from falling to Axis forces during World War Two. *Reuters*

## JAPAN MARKS WWII SURRENDER

## Ministers at war shrine, Kishida vows peace

**IRENE WANG & ELAINE LIES**  
TOKYO, AUGUST 15

JAPAN PRIME Minister Fumio Kishida vowed on the anniversary of Japan's World War Two surrender on Monday that his country would never again wage war, as members of his cabinet visited a shrine that honours war dead, angering South Korea and China.

Japan's ties with China were

already strained after China conducted unprecedented military exercises around Taiwan following the visit there by US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi this month. During the drills, several missiles fell in waters inside Japan's Exclusive Economic Zone.

"We will never again repeat the horrors of war. I will continue to live up to this determined oath," Kishida told a secular gathering in Tokyo, also attended

by Emperor Naruhito.

The anniversary is traditionally marked by visits to Tokyo's Yasukuni Shrine, which is seen by South Korea and China as a symbol of Japan's past militarism.

Yasukuni honours 14 Japanese wartime leaders convicted as war criminals, who are among some 2.5 million war dead commemorated there.

Kishida, on the dovish side of the conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), faced a

tricky balancing act, hoping to avoid irking neighbours while keeping happy the more right-wing members of the party — particularly after the killing of former premier Shinzo Abe last month.

Kishida sent an offering to the shrine without visiting, Kyodo news agency reported, and made just an oblique reference to Japan's wartime actions.

Despite that, South Korea and China denounced the visits to the shrine. **REUTERS**

## Facebook misses election misinfo in Brazil, says new report by NGO

**BARBARA ORTUTAY**  
AUGUST 15

FACEBOOK FAILED to detect blatant election-related misinformation in ads ahead of Brazil's 2022 election, a new report from Global Witness has found, continuing a pattern of not catching material that violates its policies the group describes as "alarming."

The advertisements contained false information about the country's upcoming election, such as promoting the wrong election date, incorrect voting methods and questioning the integrity of the election — including Brazil's electronic voting system.

This is the fourth time that



**Facebook is Brazil's most used social media platform**

the London-based nonprofit has tested Meta's ability to catch blatant violations of the rules of its most popular social media platform — and the fourth such test Facebook has flubbed. In the three prior instances, Global Witness submitted advertise-



**Many of the 76,000 Afghans evacuated last year entered the US on temporary immigration status.** *Reuters*

## US: Dems, Republicans sponsor Bill to provide citizenship to Afghans

**REUTERS**  
WASHINGTON, AUGUST 9

BIPARTISAN LEGISLATION has been introduced in both houses of US Congress to establish a path to American citizenship for thousands of Afghan evacuees admitted to the US on temporary immigration status.

The Bill also would expand eligibility for Special Immigration Visas beyond Afghans who worked for the US government to those who fought alongside US forces as commandos and air force personnel, and to women who in counterterrorism teams.

Identical versions of the Bill were introduced days before the first anniversary of the final US troop withdrawal from Kabul.

"We must keep our commitment to provide safe, legal refuge to those who willingly put their lives on the line to support the US mission in Afghanistan," Democratic Representative Earl

**EXPLAINED**  
**E** Widening the scope

IF PASSED, the law will allow Afghan evacuees to apply for permanent legal status if they submit to additional background checks, instead of applying for asylum or through Special Immigration Visas, which are beset by major backlogs. It also will expand eligibility for SVIs to Afghans who fought alongside US forces.

Blumenauer, co-sponsor of the House Bill with Republican Peter Meijer, said in a statement.

A congressional aide, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the measure likely will face "resistance" from anti-immigration Republicans.

## Nawaz to return to Pak in September: minister

**M ZULQERNAIN**  
LAHORE, AUGUST 15

THE RULING PML-N's supreme leader and deposed PM Nawaz Sharif will return to Pakistan from London next month, ending a three-year long self-exile, a federal minister said Monday.

"Upon his return, the PML-N will not let him to go to jail," Federal Minister Mian Javed Latif told a press conference.

Latif's announcement comes days after Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan

claimed efforts are underway to bring Sharif back to the country under "some deal".

Indirectly referring to the powerful military establishment, Khan alleged: "A plot is hatched to disqualify me in Toshakhana and the prohibited funding cases to pave way for PML-N supreme Sharif's return from London next month."

Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah, who is considered close to Sharif, said that "certain

amendments" might be made through the Parliament to undo the lifetime disqualification of the three-time premier. **PTI**

## Suu Kyi's jail term up by 6 yrs after ruling in more cases

**GRANT PECK**  
BANGKOK, AUGUST 15

A COURT in military-ruled Myanmar convicted the country's ousted leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, on more corruption charges on Monday, adding six years to her earlier 11-year prison sentence, a legal official said.

The trial was held behind closed doors, with no access for media or the public, and her lawyers were forbidden by a gag order from revealing information about the proceedings.

In the four corruption cases decided Monday, Suu Kyi was alleged to have abused her position to rent public land at below market prices and to have built a residence with donations meant for charitable purposes. She denied all the charges, and her lawyers are expected to appeal.

She already had been sentenced to 11 years in prison on sedition, corruption and other charges at earlier trials after the military ousted her elected government and detained her in February 2021.

Analysts say the numerous charges against her and her allies are an attempt to legitimise the military's seizure of power while eliminating her from politics before the military holds an election it has promised for next year.

The army seized power and detained Suu Kyi on February 1, 2021, the day when her party would have started a second five-year term after it won by a landslide in November 2020 polls. **AP**

## 'PEACEFULLY' TAKEN OFF LIFE SUPPORT, DAYS AFTER BEING DECLARED BRAIN DEAD

## Anne Heche, known for her '90s Hollywood roles, dies at 53

**RICHARD SANDOMIR**  
AUGUST 15

ANNE HECHÉ, an actress who was as well known for her roles in films like "Six Days, Seven Nights" and "Donnie Brasco" as for her personal life, which included a three-year romance with the comedian Ellen DeGeneres, died on Sunday in Los Angeles, nine days after she was in a devastating car accident there. She was 53.

Her death was announced by a representative, Holly Baird, who said late Sunday in an email

that Heche had been "peacefully taken off life support."

Heche was critically injured on August 5 when a Mini Cooper she was driving crashed into a two-story home in the Mar Vista neighborhood of Los Angeles.

A statement released by her publicist on behalf of her family on Thursday night said: "It has long been her choice to donate her organs, and she is being kept on life support to determine if any are viable," the statement said.

On Friday, a representative said Heche had been declared brain-dead on Thursday night.



**Heche (right) had alleged that Hollywood had blacklisted her for her relationship with Ellen DeGeneres.** *AP*

Heche was a soap opera star before she became known to movie audiences. She won a Daytime Emmy Award in 1991 for outstanding younger actress in a drama series. By the mid-1990s, she was a rising star in Hollywood.

Heche began a relationship with DeGeneres in 1997, at a time when same-sex relationships in Hollywood were not fully accepted. The relationship became widely known in April of that year when they appeared, hand in hand, at the annual White House Correspondents' Dinner in Washington.

A few days later, DeGeneres's character on her sitcom, "Ellen," came out as gay.

Heche's decision to reveal that she was in a lesbian relationship, *The New York Times* wrote, "confronted Hollywood with a highly delicate problem: how to deal with a gay actress whose career has been built on playing heterosexual roles."

Heche told *The New York Post* in 2021 that she had been "blacklisted" in Hollywood because of her relationship with DeGeneres. "I didn't do a studio picture for 10 years," she was quoted as saying. **NYT**



# THE INDIAN EXPRESS, TUESDAY, AUGUST 16, 2022

# E. EXPLAINED



@ieExplained

#ExpressExplained

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

## ATAGS, the India-made howitzer used in 21-gun salute on Aug 15

**SUSHANT KULKARNI**  
PUNE, AUGUST 15

IN A first, an indigenously developed howitzer gun, ATAGS, became part of the 21-gun ceremonial salute during the Independence Day ceremony at Red Fort on Monday. Developed by the DRDO, the Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System (ATAGS) was used alongside the traditional British-origin '25 Pounders' artillery guns.

Referring to the gun, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said: "Today, for the first time since Independence, a Made-in-India artillery gun was used in the 21-gun salute that is given to the Tricolour. ....I want to thank our armed forces for carrying the responsibility of *atmanirbharta* on their shoulders."

### The tradition of the salute

When the National Anthem is played by the military band after the unfurling of the

Tricolour at the Red Fort by the Prime Minister, a 21-volley gun salute is fired by a ceremonial battery from an artillery regiment.

The tradition of gun salutes comes from the practice of firing guns from ports and incoming ships in a particular manner to convey the absence of belligerent intention. This tradition was adopted for official welcomes to the Crown, royals, military commanders, and heads of state. India inherited it from the British, whose gun salutes had 101, 31, or 21 volleys depending on hierarchy. In India, artillery gun salutes are fired on Republic Day, Independence Day, at the oath ceremony of the President, and some other occasions.

Over the years, the 21-gun salute — using blanks — have been fired by World War-era British-built howitzers called 'Ordnance Quick Fire 25 Pounders' or just '25 Pounders'.

### DRDO's ATAGS project

This year, two ATAGS howitzers joined the battery that fired along with the 25 Pounders,



DRDO started the ATAGS project in 2013 to replace older guns in Army. Photo: DRDO

officials said. The ATAGS is an indigenous 155 mm X 52 calibre howitzer gun developed by DRDO, with the Pune-based Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE), being the nodal agency.

Howitzer is an umbrella term for a category of long-range artillery guns.

The ATAGS project was started by the DRDO in 2013 to replace older guns in the Army with modern 155 mm artillery guns. Besides ARDE, other DRDO facilities that joined the development effort included Instruments Research and Development Establishment (IRDE), Vehicle Research and

Development Establishment (VRDE), Proof and Experimental Establishment (PXE), Centre for Artificial Intelligence and Robotics (CAIR), and Defence Electronics Applications Laboratory (DEAL). ARDE also collaborated with Bharat Forge Ltd and Tata Advanced Systems Ltd for manufacturing the gun.

In July 2016, proof-firing of ATAGS was conducted during technical trials in Balasore. In August and September 2017, a record target range of around 48 km was achieved at the Pokhran Field Firing Range.

The system has subsequently undergone various levels of trials in multiple weather and terrain conditions. In 2020, the ATAGS reported a mishap during test firing in Pokhran, which was investigated by the DRDO.

The system is currently undergoing evaluation by the Directorate General Quality Assurance (DGQA) — the final stage before the Army places orders for it. The DGQA is the nodal agency for the quality assurance of all arms, ammunition, and equipment sup-

plied to the armed forces.

### Features of the ATAGS

The armament system of ATAGS mainly comprises the barrel, breech mechanism, muzzle brake, and recoil mechanism to fire 155 mm calibre ammunition with a longer range, accuracy, and precision.

The ATAGS is configured with an all-electric drive to ensure maintenance-free and reliable operation over a longer period of time. It has advanced features such as high mobility, quick deployability, auxiliary power mode, advanced communication system, and automatic command and control system with night firing capability in the direct fire mode.

During the September 2017 test in Pokhran, maximum ranges of 38.5 km and 48 km with boat tail and extended range full bore types of projectiles, were achieved. These, DRDO officials say, are at least 20% more than the ranges achieved by any contemporary gun system.

## THIS WORD MEANS

### POSTAL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

Introduced on Aug 15, 1972 to ease mail sorting, PIN code narrows down delivery to the specific post office



Even though fewer Indians are dependent on letterboxes and postmen now than earlier, the PIN code remains a key part of postal addresses. Partha Paul/File

**DIPANITA NATH**  
PUNE, AUGUST 15

AS INDIA celebrated 75 years of Independence, another milestone was reached — the PIN code, inalienable part of postal addresses, turned 50. It was on August 15, 1972, that the Postal Index Number (PIN) was introduced in the country.

### Need for the PIN code

According to the Department of Posts, there were 23,344 post offices, primarily in urban areas, in India at the time of Independence. But the country's population was growing rapidly, and the postal network had to keep pace.

The PIN code was meant to ease the process of mail sorting and delivery in a country where different places often have the same or similar names, and letters are written in a wide variety of languages.

### How does PIN work?

The PIN is made up of six digits. The first number indicates the postal region (northern, eastern, western, southern); the number 9 signifies the Army Postal Service. The second number denotes a sub-region, and the third the sorting district. The remaining numbers narrow down the location to the specific post office delivering the mail.

### Man behind the initiative

The person behind the initiative was Shriram Bhikaji Velankar, an additional sec-

retary in the Union Ministry of Communications, and a senior member of the Posts and Telegraph Board.

Velankar was also a Sanskrit poet of eminence who was conferred the President's Award for Sanskrit in 1996, three years before his death. Among Velankar's 105 books and plays in Sanskrit is the *Viloma Kavya*, which is considered a literary masterpiece — it comprises verses in praise of Lord Ram when read from one side, and verses dedicated to Lord Krishna when read backwards.

Velankar set up the Dev Vani Mandiram, which worked to create awareness about Sanskrit. He was also the chairman of the World Philatelic Exhibition, called Indipex, which was held in Delhi in 1973 and featured 120 countries. He retired from government service in 1973.

### Global parallels with code

The Zone Improvement Plan (ZIP) code was introduced in the US on July 1, 1963. "Under the old system letters went through about 17 sorting stops — the new system was going to be considerably less time-consuming", says the Library of Congress.

In the UK, the sorting of mail was mechanised in the mid-1960s. "The key to mechanisation is an alphanumeric postal code that provides for sorting by machine at every stage of handling, including the carrier's delivery route," says the Encyclopedia Britannica.

Japan created its postal code address system in July 1968.

**HARIKISHAN SHARMA**  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

IN HIS Independence Day address from the ramparts of the Red Fort, Prime Minister Narendra Modi targeted corruption and nepotism and dynastic politics, which he identified as formidable challenges facing the nation. While Modi has referred to *bhrastachar* (corruption) in all his Independence Day speeches since 2014 barring the one in 2020, *bhai-bhatijawad* (nepotism) and *parivarwad* (dynasty system) found prominence in 2022.

In his hour-and-22-minute speech on Monday, Modi mentioned *bhrastachar* 14 times, *parivarwad* 11 times, and *bhai-bhatijawad* six times. He framed his observations better than in earlier Independence Day speeches, and appeared to focus more sharply on political rivals.

"...I would definitely like to focus on two issues. One is corruption, and the other is nepotism and the dynasty system," Modi said. He seemed to point to the recovery of cash during raids by the Enforcement Directorate on Trinamool Congress leaders: "...[While] people are struggling with poverty and do not have a place to live, there are some who do not have a place to keep their ill-gotten money. This is not an ideal situation."

He also attacked the Congress: "We have seized the properties of those who fled the country after looting banks during the tenure of the previous government... Some have been forced to go behind bars. We are trying to ensure that those who looted the country are compelled to return."

The PM indirectly referred to protests by the Congress over the ED's questioning of Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi. "Although the abhorrence of corruption is visible and expressed, sometimes generosity is shown towards the corrupt, which is not acceptable in any country," he said. "Unless there is hatred towards filth in society, the consciousness for cleanliness does not arise, unless we develop hatred towards the corrupt and corruption, until we socially shame these people, this mentality will not change. That is why we need to be very aware of corruption and corrupt people," he said.

*Parivarwad* and *bhai-bhatijawad* were "good reasons for corruption", Modi said. "Nepotism has gripped many of our institutions today. This is sadly harming the immense talent pool of our country."

### Corruption

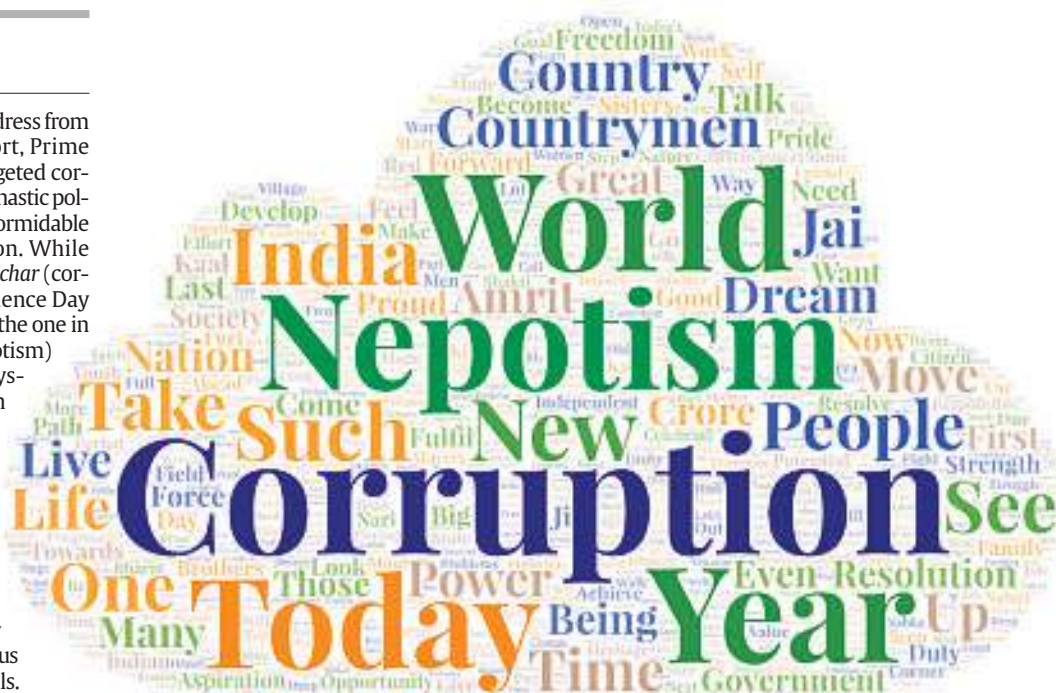
Before his speech on Monday, the PM had

spoken the most on corruption during his Independence Day address of 2015, the year before he announced the demonetisation of high-value currency notes. An analysis of the original Hindi text of the Prime Minister's speeches released by the PIB from 2014 to 2022 shows the following patterns:

■ On August 15, 2015, Modi mentioned corruption at least 19 times. Corruption, he said, was eating the country like termites — and the process to get rid of it must start from the top.

■ In 2016, he mentioned corruption once.

■ In 2017, he mentioned *bhrastachar* at least five times, and said he had launched a war on corruption. "*Bhrastachar aur bhai-bhatijawad se koi samjhauta nahin hoga*. (There will be no compromise with corruption and nepotism)," he said.







GOLD

₹52,915



RUPEE

₹79.66/USD



OIL

\$98.45



SILVER

₹59,166

Gold, silver rates at Delhi spot market, gold per 10g, silver per 1 kg; Crude oil (Indian basket) as of August 11

## EBLR, RLLR INCREASE BY 50 BASIS POINTS

## Fifth rate hike since Apr: SBI raises MCLR by 20 bps; EMLs to get dearer

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU  
MUMBAI, AUGUST 15

STATE BANK of India (SBI) on Monday raised its marginal cost of funds-based lending rate (MCLR) by 20 basis points (bps) across tenures, a move that will make EMLs expensive.

MCLR for one year, which is considered important as long-term loans like home loans are linked to this rate, is now at 7.70 per cent, as per information on the lender's website. The bank also raised MCLR for loans of other maturities — shorter maturities at 7.35 per cent, six months at 7.65 per cent, two years at 7.90 per cent and three years at 8 per cent.

## 'EXPECT TO SUSTAIN 15% CREDIT GROWTH'

New Delhi: SBI Chairman Dinesh Kumar Khara said the bank expects to sustain credit growth of about 15% this fiscal with rising demand from retail and corporate borrowers despite hardening of lending rate. **PTI**



File

It also raised the repo-linked lending rate (RLLR) and external benchmark lending rate (EBLR) by 50 bps each to 7.65 per cent and 8.05 per cent, respectively.

Since April, SBI has cumulatively hiked MCLR by 70 bps. In April, May and July, the state-run bank had raised the MCLR by 10

bps each, and in June, the same was increased by 20 bps.

Along with SBI, other banks too are raising lending rates. This comes in the wake of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) increasing benchmark policy rates by 50 bps earlier this month to tame headline inflation. The central

bank has raised the policy interest rates by 140 bps since April. So far, major lenders like Bank of Baroda, ICICI Bank, Bank of India, Punjab National Bank and Yes Bank have raised their MCLR rates in the range of 5-10 bps. They have also raised their RLLR. While MCLR gets revised each month, a revision in repo rate by the RBI gets automatically reflected in the RLLR of banks.

SBI also increased interest rates on domestic term deposits of some maturities, effective August 13. For deposits below Rs 2 crore, it has raised interest rates by 15 bps. The new interest rates to be paid by the bank stand in the range of 5.45-5.65 per cent and are applicable on deposits maturing in 1 year to less than 2

years, 2 years to less than 3 years, 3 years to less than 5 years, 5 years and up to 10 years. On deposits above Rs 2 crore, the bank has increased interest rates on almost all maturities in the range of 25-100 bps.

The total deposit growth rate of the entire banking system is lagging the pace of credit growth, as per latest RBI data. The non-food credit rose 15.1 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) as of fortnight ended July 29 to Rs 123.7 trillion while deposits grew 9.1 per cent y-o-y to Rs 169.7 trillion during the period.

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das had said earlier that banks cannot rely on the central bank and will have raise deposits to support credit offtake. **FE**

## SOFT LAUNCH AT DELHI &amp; BENGALURU AIRPORTS

## DigiYatra beta rollout: How contact-less check-in works

PRANAV MUKUL  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

THE DELHI International Airport Ltd (DIAL), run by GMR, and Bangalore International Airport Ltd on Monday announced the soft launch of the Centre's paperless passenger processing initiative DigiYatra, rolling out the beta version of the app for Android platforms at their respective airports. DigiYatra, the passenger processing system based on facial recognition technology, has been piloted at the Delhi airport and has had the required infrastructure set up at the airport's Terminal 3.

## What is DigiYatra and how will it work?

DigiYatra envisages that travellers pass through various checkpoints at the airport through paperless and contact-less processing, using facial features to establish their identity, which would be linked to the boarding pass. With this technology, the entry of passengers would be automatically processed based on the facial recognition system at all checkpoints — including entry into the airport, security check areas, aircraft boarding, etc.

## How can people avail the DigiYatra facility?

To use this facility, passengers will need to first download the DigiYatra app. The Android version of the app is out, while the iOS version is expected to be released in the coming weeks. Users can register on the app using Aadhaar credentials, followed by a selfie with the Aadhaar card. After this, vaccination details using CoWIN credentials will have to be added to the app. Then, the person will have to scan his or her boarding pass with the QR code or Bar



The DigiYatra processing e-gate at Terminal 3 of the Delhi airport. via DIAL

code, after which the credentials will be shared with the airport.

For entry into the airport, passengers will need to scan their boarding passes at the e-gate and look into the facial recognition system camera installed there. A similar method will be applicable for entry into other checkpoints.

## How is DigiYatra being implemented?

Last month, the Consultative Committee of the Ministry of Civil Aviation met to discuss the DigiYatra project. The project is being implemented by the DigiYatra Foundation — a joint-venture company whose shareholders are the Airports Authority of India (26 per cent stake) and Bengaluru Airport, Delhi Airport, Hyderabad Airport, Mumbai Airport and Cochin International Airport. These five shareholders equally hold the remaining 74 per cent

EXPLAINED

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of the shares.

The DigiYatra Foundation will be the custodian of the passenger ID validation process. It will also define the criteria for compliance and guidelines for the local airport systems. There will be regular audits of the various compliances and guidelines (including guidelines on security, image quality, and data privacy) defined by the DigiYatra guidelines for the local airport Biometric Boarding Systems.

## Which other airports will have DigiYatra?

In the Consultative Committee meeting, it was proposed that in the first phase, DigiYatra will be rolled out at Varanasi and Bengaluru this month, and at five airports — Pune, Vijayawada, Kolkata, Delhi and Hyderabad — by March next year. The Airport Authority of India (AAI) will identify the airports where DigiYatra will be implemented in a phased manner.

SECTOR WATCH  
PETROLEUM

## ₹1.4L-cr for clean energy, petrochem, gas over 5 yrs: BPCL

PRESSTRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

STATE-OWNED BHARAT Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) will invest Rs 1.4 lakh crore in petrochemicals, city gas and clean energy in the next five years as it looks to non-fuel businesses for growth.

BPCL, the nation's second-biggest oil refining and fuel marketing company, is "recalibrating its strategies to leverage emerging opportunities while mitigating risks," its Chairman and Managing Director Arun Kumar Singh said in the firm's latest annual report.

As countries across the world opt for cleaner, carbon-free fuel, oil companies are looking at businesses to de-risk their mainstay hydrocarbon operations. Gas is being seen as a transition fuel as electric mobility and hydrogen pick pace. "The company has firmed up plans to diversify and expand in adjacent and alternative businesses to create additional revenue streams and provide a hedge against any possible future decline in liquid fossil-fuel business," he said.

BPCL, which owns 20,217 out of 83,685 petrol pumps in the country, is looking at not just selling petrol and diesel at the bunks but also providing electric vehicle (EV) charging as well as fuels of the future like hydrogen.

"Mindful of the need to reinvent ourselves with the changing times, we are com-

## 'FUELS OF THE FUTURE'

■ BPCL — which owns 20,217 out of 83,685 petrol pumps in the country — is looking at not just selling petrol and diesel at the bunks but also providing electric vehicle (EV) charging as well as fuels of the future like hydrogen

mitted to and progressing towards transforming our fuel stations into energy stations, where all forms of energy solutions for mobility, like petrol, diesel, natural gas, EV solutions, flexi fuels and, eventually, hydrogen, would be available," he said.

BPCL owns 14 per cent of India's oil refining capacity of 251.2 million tonnes. It has refineries at Mumbai, Bina in Madhya Pradesh and Kochi in Kerala.

Six strategic areas, he said, have been identified as pillars of future growth and sustainability.

These are petrochemicals, gas, renewables, new businesses (consumer retailing), e-mobility and upstream, while the core businesses of refining and marketing of petroleum products continue to serve as a solid foundation, providing stability and consistent cash flows.

## 'Inflationary impact on FMCG price, margin to continue in Q2'

Inflationary pressure on some raw material inputs for the FMCG industry is abating, but manufacturers expect its impact on price and margins to continue this quarter

## MIXED APRIL-JUNE RESULTS

were delivered by listed FMCG companies, including HUL, ITC, Godrej Consumer Product, Nestle, Dabur and Britannia, with:

■ Impact on their margins and mostly

■ Drop in volume in some categories

Margins were put under pressure for fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector in April-June quarter due to inflation in key raw materials, and packing materials Source: PTI

## Mahindra unveils 5 new electric SUVs, first launch by 2024-end

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
LONDON, AUGUST 15

WITH INCREASED consumer awareness and government support in place, it is the opportune time to enter the electric passenger vehicle (PV) segment, said Mahindra Group chairman Anand Mahindra on Monday.

With an eye on gaining leadership in the electric four-wheeler segment, the Indian auto major announced that it will launch five new electric sports utility vehicles (SUVs) for both domestic and international markets, with the first four likely to hit the road between 2024 and 2026. The company would introduce the first of the five e-SUVs towards the end of 2024, starting with the Indian market.

At present, Mahindra doesn't have a presence in the electric PV segment. It, however, is the leader in the domestic electric three-wheeler space with over 70 per cent market share.



Credit: Company

"Today with government support, rapid lowering of the cost of ownership and increased consumer awareness of environmental awareness issues, we believe that the time is ripe and right for us to enter the four-wheeler markets with our range of battery electric vehicles," Mahindra stated here.

Mahindra noted that BII has already committed to invest up to \$250 million in the company's electric vehicle venture.

## Deeper tie-up with VW

Meanwhile, Mahindra Group and global auto major Volkswagen said Monday they have inked a pact to further explore co-operation in the EV segment. The two have inked a term sheet on the supply of MEB (modular electric drive matrix) electric components for the Mumbai-based automaker's new electric platform INGLO, deepening the partnering agreement from earlier this year.

## VW testing EVs under Skoda brand for India mkt

New Delhi: German auto major Volkswagen group has started testing some electric vehicles from the ŠKODA brand in India as it evaluates the products to be brought to the country for electromobility targeting mass segment, according to a senior company official.

The group, which has given the responsibility of leading its growth in India to ŠKODA AUTO, will also continue to focus on internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles as it feels that bringing EVs at a large scale will depend on the ecosystem and infrastructure development in the country, ŠKODA AUTO Volkswagen India MD Piyush Arora said.

"We recognise that there is demand in India for electric vehicles, so we have already launched Porsche Taycan and the Audi e-Tron which are doing extremely well in the Indian market," he said. **PTI**

## Ola Electric to enter EV car segment, eyes first model by 2024

TUSHARGOENKA  
BENGALURU, AUGUST 15

OLA ELECTRIC on Monday said it plans to foray into the electric car segment, with plans to launch its first model by 2024, setting an ambitious target of selling 1 million such vehicles by 2026-2027. It also announced the launch of the Ola S1 electric two-wheeler, which was initially cancelled.

Ola founder and CEO Bhavish Aggarwal's fresh announcement comes at a time when the company is under fire for its scooters catching fire, numerous customer complaints, and late deliveries. Aggarwal said Ola Electric aims to provide a range of electric two-wheelers and electric cars, priced in the range of Rs 1 lakh to Rs 50 lakh.

"We definitely have a full roadmap in the works in the car space... We will definitely have



BHAVISH AGGARWAL

Founder &amp; CEO, Ola PTI file

cars at the entry price market. We're starting with a premium car and that comes out in 18 to 24 months," he said when asked about the company's plans for electric cars.

He further said, "We are envisioning across all the products (that) we will launch, maybe by 2026 or 2027 we will target a million cars a year by volume". Aggarwal, however, did not elaborate on how many electric car models the company would have by 2026-2027. **FE**

## Income tax e-filing, GSTN portals working 'pretty well': Infy CEO

Bengaluru: The income tax e-filing and GST Network portals are working "pretty well" and the systems are running effectively, Infosys CEO Salil Parekh has said.

The Indian IT major has developed both the portals and is also the backend technology support provider.

In an interview to PTI, Parekh highlighted the high GST collections, and 5.8 crore I-T return filings within the set deadline of July 31 to assert that both of these are seeing a huge positive impact from the government's digital programme.

The ITR (income tax return) filings have been smooth, he said. "It is working pretty well at this stage," Parekh said when asked about I-T e-filing and Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN) portals.

The users of the e-filing portal had experienced difficulties



SALIL PAREKH

CEO, Infosys PTI file

when it was launched on June 7 last year and since then it has seen glitches happening on and off. Asked if the glitches been resolved, Parekh affirmed all those had been sorted out.

"In fact, July 31 was the deadline and... on the last day, we had something like 70 lakh returns that were filed. And in some of the hours... more than 5 lakh (returns were getting filed) per hour," Parekh said. **PTI**

## BRIEFLY

## '\$5 tneconomy'

New Delhi: D Subbarao, RBI ex-Governor, said India may become a \$5-trillion economy by FY29 only if GDP grows at 9% a year consistently for next five years. **PTI**

## Japan GDP up

Tokyo: Japan's GDP expanded an annualised 2.2% in April-June, data showed.

## Unity, AppLovin

Bengaluru: Unity Software Inc rejected AppLovin Corp's \$17.54 billion takeover offer and said it would go ahead with its planned buy of IronSource. **REUTERS**

## Irdai, tech

New Delhi: Irdai has invited entities to develop technology-driven solutions for automated death claim settlement, curtail miss-selling, and other areas. **PTI**

## PBOC CUTS RATE ON ONE-YEAR LOAN TO 2.75% FROM 2.85%

## China cuts rate to shore up sagging economy

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
BEIJING, AUGUST 15

CHINA'S CENTRAL bank trimmed a key interest rate Monday to shore up sagging economic growth at a politically sensitive time when President Xi Jinping is trying to extend his hold on power.

The People's Bank of China (PBOC) cut its rate on a one-year loan to 2.75 per cent from 2.85 per cent and injected an extra 400 billion yuan (\$60 billion) into lending markets after growth in factory output and retail sales weakened in July and home sales fell by double digits.

Growth in factory output in July fell to 3.8 per cent over a year ago, down 0.1 percentage point from the previous month, as per the National Bureau of Statistics. Growth in consumer spending fell to 2.7 per cent, down 0.4 percentage points from June.



The People's Bank of China headquarters, Beijing. Reuters file

## Sichuan cuts power supply

Meanwhile, according to a Reuters report, producers of lithium, fertilisers and other metals shut plants or curbed output in China's southwestern Sichuan province on Monday after it rationed industrial electricity consumption amid its worst heatwave in 60 years.

Industrial users across 19 out of 21 cities in the province were

ordered to suspend production from August 15 until August 20 to prioritise residential power supply, as per a notice issued on Sunday by the Department of Economy and Information Technology of Sichuan.

An official at the department confirmed to Reuters that it had implemented power rationing but declined to discuss details of the plan.

## Oil falls over \$5/bbl on weak Chinese data

Singapore: Oil prices fell by more than \$5 a barrel on Monday after disappointing Chinese economic data renewed concerns of a global recession that would be expected to reduce fuel demand.

Brent crude futures fell \$3.88, or 4 per cent, to \$94.27 a barrel by 1634 GMT after settling 1.5 per cent lower on Friday. US West Texas Intermediate crude was down \$3.68, or 4 per cent, at \$88.41 after dropping 2.4 per cent in the previous session.

Brent futures were close to their lowest since before Russia sent troops into Ukraine on February 24, while WTI futures touched their lowest on Monday since early February.

A damaged oil pipeline component that disrupted output at

several offshore US Gulf of Mexico platforms was repaired late Friday, prompting oil producers to reactivate some of the halted production, a Louisiana official said last week.

"Supply disruptions at several offshore oil platforms within the Gulf coast region that added to last week's price strength appear to have stabilized for now with output resuming," said Jim Ritterbusch, president of Ritterbusch and Associates LLC in Galena, Illinois. Brent crude open interest this month is down by 20 per cent from August last year. The central bank in China cut lending rates to revive demand as data showed the economy slowing unexpectedly in July. **REUTERS**



WASHINGTON OUT OF ZIMBABWE SERIES

Off-spinner Washington Sundar's return to international cricket will be further delayed as a left shoulder injury sustained during a 50-over game for his county side Lancashire has now ruled him out of three-match ODI series against Zimbabwe starting August 18.

PTI

Cricket would probably end up being a franchise-based competition: Houghton

Zimbabwe head coach feels the sport will follow football, and there will only be a 3-month window for International action in future

PRATYUSH RAJ  
AUGUST 15

LIFE HAS come full circle for Zimbabwe's head coach Dave Houghton. He was his country's first Test captain, scoring a fantastic 121 against India in the drawn match at Harare. Thirty years later, Houghton, in his second spell as a coach of Zimbabwe, is ready to take on India with his new 'fearless brand of cricket.'

Houghton, 64, took over from Lalchand Rajput and immediately produced the results. Zimbabwe secured its first ODI series over a fellow top-tier team since 2017 when it chased down 291 in the second ODI against Bangladesh. They also won the T20I series 2-1 for its first-ever T20 series win over a top-tier team.

The Indian Express caught up with Houghton, who had probably played the best knock of the 1987 World Cup (142 off 137 against New Zealand), spoke at length about cricket in Zimbabwe, its decline, the future of international cricket, and the upcoming three-match ODI series against India.

Excerpts

India will present a more formidable challenge than Bangladesh. What are your expectations from your team, and what kind of cricket do you want them to play against India?

Let's not disrespect the Bangladesh cricket team because they are a good side, particularly in white ball cricket. We are playing good attacking cricket. We are enjoying playing the aggressive brand of cricket, and it had led to some recent success. It will be a good test for us, considering the strength of India. The series will tell us whether we are progressing or if it was just a flash in the pad.

Fearless cricket has become a new buzzword these days, with 'Bazball' in England being a trendsetter, you have spoken about instilling fearlessness in the Zimbabwe players. Can you define what precisely this fearless cricket is?

I don't set to relate what we are doing to what Brendon McCullum has done with England's Test team. For me, fearless cricket is when cricketers express themselves in the middle, no matter who the opposing team is.

It worried me when I took over this side; the players I have seen playing some breathtaking shots in the local cricket were too scared to play similar strokes while playing for the national side. They were too afraid to play reverse sweep or improvise because they were worried about the repercussions of getting dropped in the next game. That was the fear that I am trying to get rid of.

In cricket, you live and die by your success individually as well as the team. So that responsibility is still there, but they won't be lambasted in the change room because they have played a rash shot. And if you are that fearful, you can never progress. So that is the fearlessness I am trying to instil in this team.

What is the difference between fearlessness and foolishness, and how do you explain this to your boys?

There is a fine line. They will only learn the difference between fearlessness and reckless with experience. It is not what coaches have told you in the team meeting; one

must use their senses during the game and learn from others, be it the teammates or the opposition.

You've been involved with Zimbabwe cricket for almost half a century. From being a competitive side in the 90s, it declined drastically, and after that, they failed to produce players with the same skill sets.

It was a very experienced team. A lot of the players played in that era, including me; we got to play more international cricket. We didn't even have domestic cricket back then, other club cricket. We learnt at the international scene. By the time we got to 1999, and we had a couple of good additions too, Murray Goodwin coming back from Australia, Neil Johnson from South Africa. Shortly after that, players left the country; there was a collapse in cricket around 2003. A lot of people retired; some went off to play in England. And we had to start again. And in the restart, the board started first-class cricket, which is now known as franchise cricket. It took them a long time to start producing their homegrown talent. People like Sikandar Raja, Craig Ervine, and Sean Williams are the product of the aftermath of the collapse.

From its traditional white strongholds, how far has the game spread to the average Zimbabwean?

Now you can see the influx of young players coming through the first-class system. That's the big difference between now and how it was in the mid-2000 and early 2010s. The late 90s side had a good 13-14 players, but there was no depth, and that's why the collapse happened. But things have changed now.

T20 franchise tournaments have become the most preferred option for cricketers now. Do you think ODI cricket, the bilateral series, will soon be a thing of the past?

Tough to guess. Everyone is guessing. But in my own opinion, I think cricket has almost reversed itself, instead of having so much international cricket throughout the year. I believe cricket will probably end up like football. There would be more franchise-based competition globally, and there will be only a three-month window for International cricket.

Can you name a few promising youngsters from your team whom you think are capable of playing in the overseas T20 leagues in the future?

Wessly Madhevere: Top order batter, very, very exciting prospect. An all-format cricketer and he is only 21. He is a stylish right-handed batsman and bowls some decent off-spin, and is an excellent fielder as well.

Tony Munyonga: A right-handed middle-order batter, played a couple of brilliant cameos against Bangladesh in the recently-concluded series. He is a finisher, and I look forward to seeing him excel in that role. Blessing Muzarabani: We are without Blessing, which is disappointing. He suffered a thigh muscle tear during the ICC T20 Men's World Cup qualifier. But a top-class bowler. Victor Nyauchi: Another outstanding seam bowler. Slightly wrong-footed but can surprise the batters with the extra pace and bounce.

TV: : LIVE on SONY SIX (English), SONY TEN 3 (Hindi) & SONY TEN 4 (Tamil & Telugu) at 12:45 pm from August 18.



Zimbabwean coach Dave Houghton greets John Masara after the 2nd ODI against Bangladesh at Harare Sports Club.

AP

After failing in last two attempts, focus on qualifying for 2023 World Cup: Chakabva

TUSHAR BHADURI  
AUGUST 15

BEATING BANGLADESH in T20 and ODI series may not prepare Zimbabwe to face the might of India — even a side missing several of the top stars — but it can certainly inject some much-needed confidence through the ranks.

For a team that didn't make it to the 2019 50-over World Cup and last year's T20 World Cup, any victory is good news, especially a first ODI series win over a Test-playing nation since 2017 and a first-ever T20 series win over such opposition.

The upheaval in Zimbabwe cricket over the last several years has forced a reset. The team that beat Bangladesh was missing a few regulars and stand-in skipper Regis Chakabva, who will be at the helm again, feels it's a start of better times.

"It was a very important series for us. But we have come down from that high now and are back in the trenches. We have had some good success in the most recent past, and are just trying to focus on the process, which is trying to play good competitive cricket," Chakabva told The Indian Express ahead of the three-ODI series against India, led by KL Rahul.

One of the players that India may have to watch out for is 36-year-old Sikandar Raza, the Pakistan-born all-rounder who starred against Bangladesh with two hundreds and contributes regularly with the ball as well.

"He (Raza) is one of the senior-most players in our squad and has had a fabulous run over the last few months. He is a very big player for Zimbabwe," Chakabva said.

The hosts chased down two big totals in the ODIs against Bangladesh, with the



Skipper Regis Chakabva, who will be at the helm again, feels it's the start of better times for his nation.

AP

stand-in skipper also hitting a hundred in the series-clinching win.

The recent wins have come as a breath of fresh air for Zimbabwe cricket, which was reeling after failing to qualify for the last two limited-overs ICC showpiece events. That, coupled with the frequent instances of administrative troubles and financial strife, resulted in the team losing several quality players with some casting apprehensions over the future of the game in the African nation.

"It was a big blow and very painful for all of us, especially the fans who are always looking forward to seeing the team play in all the big tournaments. But all that is in the past and we have taken our lessons from that. Now with the ODI Super League in place, which is the pathway to World Cup qualification, we hope to get as many points as we can along the way," Chakabva said.

"Majority of our guys are young. One can say they are inexperienced at the in-

ternational level, but it's very exciting for these guys coming in to showcase what they can do. In the recent games, it was nice to see a few of these players putting their hands up, which is what is needed when we are missing a good number of our senior players.

With Dave Houghton (head coach) and Stuart Matsikenyeri (assistant coach) back in the dressing room, there is reason for optimism.

"It has been good for pretty much everyone who has come up in the various phases in the domestic set-up that a good number of guys who had left are back coaching and things like that.

"It has been really good having those guys (Houghton and Matsikenyeri) with us because they bring an understanding and different knowledge about all the players they have come across. I have played with Stuart for quite a long time and he has a very good understanding of me and my game. He is somebody I can look up to," the stand-in skipper said.

With the feel-good factor back in Zimbabwe cricket, the public will expect their team to put up a good performance against India, even if hardly anyone would expect a repeat of the results against Bangladesh.

"The Zimbabwe public has always backed us, even though we haven't always had the best of results for them. The last few series have been good, as we have managed to produce some good results for them. After the India series, we leave for Australia for three one-day games, which are part of the World Cup qualification process. So, there are two huge series coming up for us, and of course the T20 World Cup in a couple of months' time. We look forward to as much cricket as we can get," Chakabva added.

England excited by 'Bazball' ahead of S Africa series: Anderson

REUTERS  
LONDON, AUGUST 15

ENGLAND SEAMER James Anderson says his side now only know one way to play and will not deviate from their attacking brand of cricket even if they are under pressure in the three test series against South Africa that starts at Lord's on Wednesday.

New coach Brendon McCullum and captain Ben Stokes have orchestrated four thrilling test wins in a row this summer, chasing over 275 in the fourth innings on each occasion. Those wins over New Zealand and India have come via their new 'Bazball' style of relentlessly attacking with bat and ball, even when the side is seemingly in trouble.

The switch in fortunes comes after England had won just once in their previous 17 tests before the new leadership group took over. "At the minute, Ben and Brendon have an idea of how they want us to play our cricket so we are buying into that and trying to play our way and we are absolutely loving doing it," Anderson told reporters on Monday. "There might be times when we do come unstuck and moments when things don't go our way, but I think the fact that we are buying into this and enjoying doing it is exciting for the whole group."

Anderson, who is England's all-time leading test wicket-taker with 657, turned 40 last month, but believes he still has plenty to offer the team.

"I don't feel old or like I'm slowing down or anything," he said. "The last few weeks I've been working hard at training, trying to work on my bowling again and keep that ticking over." The last couple of days I've felt in great rhythm and hopefully I can show that on the field."

England will have the chance to climb the ICC Test Championship ladder from their current seventh position as they host table-topping South Africa, who have a number of injury concerns and a relatively inexperienced top six batting line-up that Anderson will be keen to get stuck into.

- 1st Test: 3:30pm, 17th August (Lord's, London)
  - 2nd Test: 3:30pm, 25th August (Old Trafford, Manchester)
  - 3rd Test: 3:30pm, 8th September (The Oval, London)
- Live on Sony Sports Network*



At the minute, Ben and Brendon have an idea of how they want us to play our cricket so we are buying into that and trying to play our way and we are absolutely loving doing it. There might be times when we do come unstuck and moments when things don't go our way, but I think the fact that we are buying into this and enjoying doing it is exciting for the whole group."

JAMES ANDERSON  
ENGLAND PACER

INDEPENDENCE DAY SPECIAL

The Raj Era Cricket vs Polo fight, featuring Mahatma Gandhi, & also Seinfeld

SRIRAM VEERA  
AUGUST 15

EVEN BEFORE the Indian National Congress was officially formed in 1885, under the presidency of Womesh Chondra Bannerjee, cricket was at the heart of an early struggle over the rights of citizenry. In October 1881, a petition was floated by the cricketers, addressed to the Governor of Bombay, James Fergusson, asking the ground encroached by the European polo players to be cleared for cricket.

This is how it read: "Bombay, India, 1881. Ever since the British introduced the noble game of cricket among the natives of Bombay nearly twenty years ago, more than five hundred young men of all ages and of all castes pursue this healthful sport on the Parade Ground where alone they are permitted to play and which is the only ground suitable for cricket. Therefore, we cannot understand that the comforts and convenience of the half-a-dozen English gentlemen, who generally play polo, should be preferred to the necessary healthful recreation of over five hundred native youths. The polo ponies completely ruin the turf and render the ground unsuited to cricket. Under the cir-

cumstances, will your Excellency and council please request that the English play polo on another spot or allow your Petitioners to play along with the English on the ground at present reserved for the exclusive use of the English cricketers and which is much too large for their requirements?"

The petition did the trick, and they got their ground cleared off anything apart from cricket. But within a year, the Polo players were back, claiming the grounds for two days a week. Cricketers sulked again.

But news came in 1891 that the new Governor from England Lord Harris had arrived. There has been a lot of hagiography about Harris and his relationship with cricket in India in the distant past, which has been effectively dispelled by the historian Ramachandra Guha in his numerous works, but for now, the focus is just on his initial foray into cricket in India.

The cricketers realised that Harris was a famous cricketer, a former captain of England, an esteemed member of London's MCC — and so he could be in theory coaxed to give full control of the ground to cricketers. And so they petitioned him.

This is what they wrote: "... fully believe that your Excellency is fully aware that even



Cricket was at the heart of an early struggle over the rights of citizenry. (Mahatma Gandhi and Jerry Seinfeld in photo)

in England there are vast grounds reserved for cricket alone and the very idea of the turf being spoilt by the polo ponies would not be for a moment tolerated by the authorities' (or indeed, by the cricketers)."

Harris sorted out the conflict by allotting

land, 'reclaimed' from the sea for the exclusive use of native Indian cricketers. The land was carved up in three plots: for Parsis, Hindus, and Islam Gymkhanas.

Cricket got its piece of land. Of course, never mind the fact that polo itself is consid-

ered of Indo-Iranian in its origins, and it could be argued that it was more indigenous than cricket, which came from the British. But in the 19th century Bombay, polo wasn't a common-man's sport. Who could afford a pony, after all?

As the popular line from Jerry Seinfeld's eponymous sitcom goes, "I hate anyone that ever had a pony when they were growing up." And when the Polish grandmother character is hurt and leaves the dinner table, Seinfeld would let out an anguished stream: "I didn't know she had a pony. How was I to know she had a pony? Who figures an immigrant's going to have a pony? Do you know what the odds are on that? I mean, in all the pictures I saw of immigrants on boats coming into New York harbor, I never saw one of them sitting on a pony. Why would anybody come here if they had a pony? Who leaves a country packed with ponies to come to a non-pony country? It doesn't make sense.. am I wrong?!"

The Indian cricketers didn't quite use those lines but their direct formal plea worked.

"No Government, and no governing class in the world, ever gave to the governed voluntarily, readily, or cheerfully any rights or

privileges which in fairness belonged to them. These are always, as history teaches us, obtained after struggles of more or less persistency," wrote the historian Shapoorjee Sorabjee, the author of The Struggle: Polo versus Cricket'.

It would eventually lead to formation of a Pentangular cricket with Parsis, Hindus, and Europeans in a triangular contest. Later, a team of Muslims would join to make it four-pronged. Later, a team of "Rest" was formed to accommodate the other religious denominations.

Years later, just before independence, Mahatma Gandhi would urge the countryman to stop the "communal" pentangular tournament, and it would soon be disbanded.

"I would like the public of Bombay to revise their sporting code and erase from it communal matches. I can understand matches between colleges and institutions, but I never understood reasons for having Hindu, Parsi, Muslim and other communal Elevens. I should have thought that such unsportsmanlike divisions would be considered taboos in sporting language and sporting manners," wrote Gandhi. "Can we not have some field of life which cannot be touched by the communal spirit?"



**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

**Everything will be placed in front of the Supreme Court on August 17 which is also the last date of filing nomination for the post of AIFF president**

## Chelsea, Spurs managers charged with 'improper conduct' following 2-2 draw

**REUTERS**  
AUGUST 15

"Huge, huge misinterpretation of situations. I'm happy to let the game go, but let it go in every direction please and not like this. I don't even know if I will get punished for my sentences now."



Chelsea manager Thomas Tuchel clashed with Tottenham Hotspur manager Antonio Conte after Sunday's 2-2 draw in London. *Reuters*

**AGENCIES**  
AUGUST 15

It was a far from ideal season debut for

Anelotti went through an evening of high nerves as Almeria defended in numbers and constantly threatened Real with counter attacks. It wasn't until he sent on veterans Luka Modric, Eden Hazard and David Alaba from the bench that Real managed to recover.



## Serena Williams is on a farewell tour

edly the one to watch though.

## Serena's farewell tour

Serena Williams' retirement announcement jolted tennis fans all over the world, and now on her farewell tour, her outing in Cincinnati becomes all the more intriguing as she takes on reigning US Open champion Emma Raducanu on Tuesday.

Williams' big groundstrokes, strong serve, and natural power have all waned, and her game is surviving on clutch play and mental toughness. Raducanu, a year on from her triumph in New York but still in her first full season on tour, has struggled physically and mentally.

The Brit becomes the perfect player to face for Serena. If it is to be one of her final matches, the stakes are high. For Raducanu, a high-profile scalping of the out-of-form great may be exactly what she needs.

While both players are undoubtedly two of the biggest names in women's tennis at the moment, they are highly unlikely to win in Cincinnati.

World No. 1 Iga Swiatek may have forgotten how to lose between March and June, but she has meandered on tour since, and will be looking to gain some momentum in America's Midwest.

The Pole is placed in the trickiest section of the draw, with Toronto finalist Beatrice Haddad Maia, heavyweight Jelena Ostapenko, Coco Gauff and Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina all in her quarter. The bottom half remains open with Toronto champion Simona Halep unsure of playing, regardless of which of her performances over the past few months have made her a favourite for New York. Belinda Bencic, Aryna Sabalenka, and Paula Badosa will all be looking to pounce.

**MARUTI SUZUKI**

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