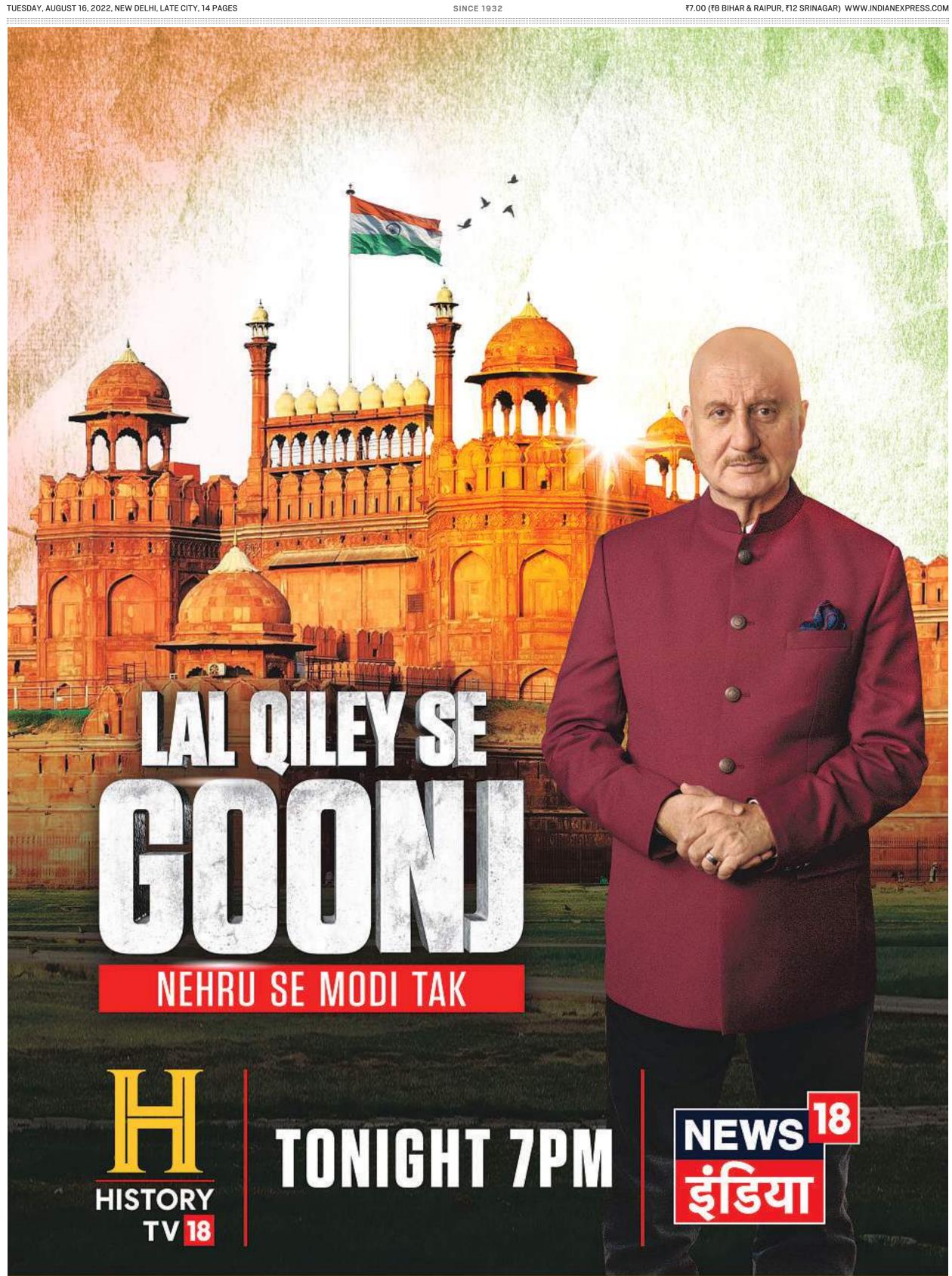
*The Indian EXPRESS

JOURNALISM OF COURAGE



SIMULCAST ON























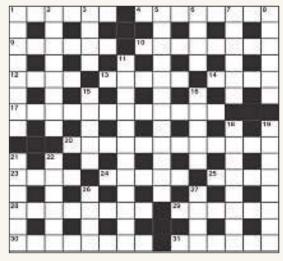






New Dell

CROSSWORD 4821



1 Lets it break to a point that could

2 Sets aside Tom's battle scars?

(4) 5 Attractive perch on top of the

6 The Bear River in America?

. 7 Name father turns up for an

11 No prime consideration (12)

 $15\,News\,articles\,from\,the\,Times$

16 Sort of show to knock you out

(5) 18 Publicly expose a lightweight

19 A brief way to stimulate fish

21 Edible seed for vegetable and

26 Shocking report of Pole in kill

22 Evebrow-raising writer (6)

(4) 27 He's buried in an avalanche

ancestor(6)

8 Join forces? (6)

understudy (8)

fruit (6)

3 One may win it by a head

ACROSS

1 Light sleep? (6) 4 Go for a walk but with a meal out

9 Sudden flood of light material

(6) 10 Type of porcelain food 12 Quality surprisingly found among the languid (4)
13 Going with some hesitation to

14 French country is profitable (4) 17 Go into battle and win some

ground (4,3,5) 20 Useless demonstration of hunger marchers? (5,7) 23 Still on level terms (4)

24 Like fifty doubled up in merriment? (5) 25 Obstinate but practical person it's said (4) 28 It means suspect can go free absolutely free (2,6)

 $29\,Is\,she\,mostly\,preferred\,for$ being fair? (6) 30 It's not for nothing you pass through it (4,4) 31 Confine one after another we

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.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



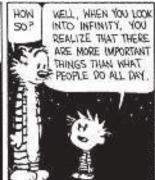






CALVIN & HOBBES by Bill Watterson





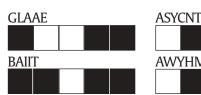


MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.





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

Difficulty Level 5s Instructions

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

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

						-		
				8		7		
8				7				5
П	1		3			2	4	
				6				П
	6	2			4		5	
7				4		63=		9
		6		3				
		3	2		1			

5 3

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

SOLUTION SUDOKU 4927

DAY TODAY

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

Please do take great care with your finances. There seems to be little doubt that rash actions now could result in increased costs later. Somehow your emotional security also seems to be involved, but perhaps you need to remember how ultimately you can only rely on yourself.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

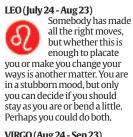
Extremely powerful planetary aspects signify that you are now sailing on uncharted waters. If you can possibly ask for help and advice. please do so. Pride is a quality you can usefully do without. It will only get you into worse difficulties. And, in any case, other people might actually have done better than you.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21) You can relax your efforts and allow others to do the arguing. No one has worked harder than you to keep

the peace but now you deserve a little time to yourself. It is a fine moment to look after number one. After all, if you don't treat yourself well, you won't treat anyone else properly, either.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23) The combined influences of those mighty planets,

Saturn and Jupiter, are about to work another major change in your private affairs. You're probably sick of hearing that your life's about to be transformed, but you've also probably become blasé, about upheavals that knock others



VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23) The good news is that if you take a path of quiet

meditation, devoted self-sacrifice and compromise, life will turn a very important corner and you'll end up with enhanced self-knowledge and understanding. And if you figure out your underlying motives, then you'll make the

BY PETER VIDAL

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23) Although it may be an indirect approach

which matters, you may be more impressed by a direct appeal for help. The point I am trying to make is that you are quite touchy and will respond irrationally to the precise manner in which others say and do things.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23) If you're sensible,

you'll consider eating humble pie, impressing others with your amazing contrition. You have much to be vain about, but overweening arrogance could cost you your happiness. If you're too complacent then you might just miss the most important developments.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)

It's not the easiest thing in the world to come to grips with your solar chart at the moment. I am concerned that you may feel victimised or martyred. If so, please try and see what led you to this situation. Then you'll figure out how to get back to the way

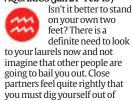
CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

you were.



potential in certain ways. For example, have you ever truly shown the world the person you really are? I suspect that you haven't - but it's never too late to start.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21- Feb 19)



yourself in. PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

whatever hole you have put



way to reveal secrets which can

only cause consternation, so choose your words with care.

indianexpress.com



I look at every side before taking a side.

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JOURNALISM OF COURAGE

TUESDAY, AUGUST 16, 2022, NEW DELHI, LATE CITY, 14 PAGES

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up hiring, but staff

strength in most

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 Satanic 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



Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivers his Independence Day address from the Red Fort, Monday. PTI

MORE REPORTS, PAGES 5, 6, 11

ADDRESS TO NATION ON 76th INDEPENDENCE DAY

PM says women's power key to national progress, flags nepotism and corruption

Other key issues: cleansing of politics, competitive cooperative federalism

HARIKISHAN SHARMA NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

IDENTIFYING CORRUPTION and nepotism as the key challenges for the next 25 years in India's journey to mark 100 years since Independence, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday that there is a need to take "corrective steps" in time before these twin threats become "for-

Addressing the nation from

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

THE IDEAS DAY

the ramparts of Red Fort on the 76th Independence Day, the Prime Minister also called for a resolve to respect women. "It hurts me to say that we have witnessed a perversion in our day-to-day speech, behaviour. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY

Between the two, they d

create better history than Pancit ji and Sandar Patel.

'PANCH PRAN': 5 RESOLUTIONS

A developed India by 2047 Removing colonial

mindset Taking pride in

roots Unity, with gender equality as a key

parameter Duties and responsibilities

Speech subtext: Underlining national resolve, linking it to governance, BJP politics

SHUBHAJIT ROY & LIZ MATHEW NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

AS INDIA celebrated the 75th anniversary of its independence on Monday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi framed his political

out a five-point "pran" (commit-

argument on two pillars, spelling

the nation. Devoid of announcements on any social sec-

ment/resolve) for the ensuing 25

years, and the twin challenges of

"corruption" and "dynasty poli-

tics and nepotism" confronting

tor schemes, Modi focused on the big picture, dwelt on the ideas for the future, urging people to embrace **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

Of the top 15 listed PSUs, employee strength of a dozen dipped in FY22 Tier-3 and Tier-4 cities for man-**PRANAV MUKUL** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

PSUs sees a decline

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

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

power. 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

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

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

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 CII the following day.

the collegium also made 11 judge recommendations for the Supreme Court. The five-member collegium ended a 22month deadlock, making nine recommendations to the top court at once in August 2021. The list included, for the first

During CJI Ramana's tenure,

time, three women — Justices Hima Kohli, BV Nagarathna and is in line to be the first woman CII 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 Cou-

rt single judge recommendation. The CJI Ranjan Gogoi-led collegium (his tenure was from October 3, 2018 to November 17, **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

CONG MLA QUITS 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

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 nineyear-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



Vidya Mandir. Deep Mukherjee

far hasn't revealed any caste anthe Dalit boy insist that that the assault by the teacher on July 20 was provoked by the child's lower caste.



A water tank at Saraswati

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**



While police have maintained that their investigation so gle to Indra's death, the family of





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

SOLDIER'S REMAINS FOUND IN SIACHEN AFTER 38 YEARS

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

DEEPTIMANTIWARY

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

switched over from the NDA to

the Mahagathbandhan camp,

with his new Deputy Chief

Nitish's remarks, days after he

and outside the government.

PATNA, AUGUST 15

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

Minister Tejashwi Prasad in the

audience, is an acknowledgment

of what the CM called "youth

power" and one of its long-stand-

ing grouses against the govern-

ment: berozgari (unemployment).

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 chau-

pals, and tea and paan shops are

Amid the recent political

March 3, 2002, in Limkheda taluka of Dahod district. Bilkis was pregnant at the time. The Supreme Court had or-

dered 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

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

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 wager at Hajipur, who until recently 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-

get a government job. litendra now runs a customer service **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

ment, goggles, sand-coloured

face masks and M4 automatic

carbines. As religious songs

blared from portable public ad-

dress systems, a Talib holding an

M4 said the weapon had been

left behind by the "Amreeki"

while another held a Soviet-era

gun, boasting that it "worked

After having tried for years to

old son Jitendra, a graduate.

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



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 pickup trucks, holding automatic 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

and blamed the US for the "planned" handover of power

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



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

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 Talib delivered a speech denouncing the recent US drone strike in Kabul to kill Ayman Al Zawahiri, and declared

INSIDE

AFGHAN MISSIONS ABROAD SLAM TALIBAN REGIME P7

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

that the Americans were "lying" that they had eliminated the Al Oaeda 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-

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

FROM PAGE ONE

PM's Independence Day speech

We have been casually using language and words that are insulting to women. Can we not pledge to get rid of everything in our behaviour, culture and everyday life that humiliates and demeans women? The pride of women will be a huge asset in fulfilling the dreams of the nation. I see this women's power ("naarishakti") and therefore I insist on it." he said.

He laid out five key resolutions, which he called the "Panch Pran", including the "big resolution" of making India a developed country.

Detailing the challenges that the country faces in the period leading to the centenary year, Modi said, "I do not want to discuss everything but would definitely want to focus on two issues. One is corruption and the other is nepotism ("bhai-bhati*jawad*") and the dynasty system ("parivarwad")...If we do not take corrective steps in time, these can become formidable.'

In his 82-minute speech, which started at 7.35 am, the Prime Minister also spoke about a range of other key issues that, he said, need to be addressed: self-reliance ("Atmanirbhar Bharat"): need for innovation ("anusandhaan"); cleansing ("shuddhikaran") of politics and institutions from a "family mentality"; ensuring cooperative federalism that is also competitive; and, respect for women.

His "Panch Pran" included making India a developed country by 2047; abandoning the mentality of servitude; taking pride in heritage; ensuring unity and solidarity; and, performing the duty of citizens.

Modi said the occasion is also "an opportunity to also solemnly acknowledge" the debt of those who fought for India's freedom and "pledge to fulfil their dreams at the earliest with deep resolve". Listing several personalities in this context, he said: "All the countrymen are deeply in-

Speech subtext

self-reliance in spirit and action.

With people participating in the

intense har ghar tiranga cam-

paign, and elections to more than

half-a-dozen states this year, he

sought their support and blessings

to fight bhrashtachar, pariwaarwad

taken up issues of importance in

the past earlier — cleanliness in

Classifieds

PERSONAL

I,Lokesh Kumar S/o-Dharam

Jharsa, Gurgaon (Haryana),

to Lokesh, for all Purposes.

I,Necy P. Jobeph,W/O Shri.BIJI

JOSEPH,R/O.54-E., POCKET.B-7.MAYUR-VIHAR PHASE-

III, DELHI-110096, have changed

my name to Nicy Biji, for

I,Ravinder Kumar,S/o Rajvir

Changed My Name To

Singh,R/o S-264/E School-Block

0040627404-3

Shakarpur Delhi-110092,Have

I,Preeti Sharma,W/O Shri Tarun Gupta R/O D-754/7,Gali No.3,

Delhi-110084,have changed my

Village Nathu Pura, Burari,

I, SATYA PRAVALLIKA W/O

H.NO.588/89 GALI NO-25-D SADH

DELHI 110045 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM SATYA

PRAVALLIKA VIDE AFFIDAVIT

DATED 06/08/2022 BEFORE NCT

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KRUSHNADEV Matrimonial- As

Brides/Grooms of all Hindu

caste/Divorcees/Widows.

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SUDHEER KUMAR M R/O

PRAVALLIKA TO T SATYA

name to Pooja Gupta.

all, future Purposes.

122001, have changed my name

Veer, H.No.1071.Village

The Prime Minister, who has

and bhai-bhatiiawad.

debted to Pujya Bapu (Mahatma Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Babasaheb Ambedkar, Veer Savarkar, who devoted all their life on the path of duty towards the nation."

Modi also invoked the country's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru while listing the "great men" who "fought the war of independence and built the country after independence"

– "like Dr Rajendra Prasad ji, Nehru ji, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Deendayal Upadhyay, Jayaprakash Naravan. Ram Manohar Lohia, Acharya Vinoba Bhave, Nanaji Deshmukh, Subramania

Even so, a sizable part of the speech — his ninth from Red Fort as Prime Minister -- was devoted to tackling corruption and nepotism. Asserting that India's fight against corruption was entering a "decisive period", Modi said "even bigwigs will not be spared". "In a country like India where people are fighting poverty... on one side, there are people who do not have a place to live, on the other side, there are people who do not have a place to keep their ill-gotten money," he said.

"This is not an ideal condition. Therefore, we have to fight against corruption with full vigour," Modi said, adding that the Government has been successful in working for the betterment of the country by saving Rs 2 lakh crore, which used to "go to the wrong hands", by using modern systems like Direct Benefit Transfer and Aadhaar.

"Those who fled the country after looting banks during the tenure of the previous government, we have seized their property and are trying to get them back. Some have been forced to go behind bars," he said.

Corruption, he said, is hollowing the country like termites. "It is our effort that those who

used his political capital to push

the message of respecting women

have looted the country are forced to return (the loot). We are trying to create that situation... With this attitude, India is marching in a decisive period against corruption," he said.

Striking a personal note, Modi said, "I have to fight against it, intensify the fight and have to take it to a decisive point. So, my 130 crore countrymen, please bless me and support me. Today I have come to seek your support and cooperation so that I can fight this battle...'

Without naming any entity or individual, the Prime Minister said that it is "a matter of great concern that although abhorrence of corruption in the country is visible and expressed, sometimes generosity is shown towards the corrupt, which is not acceptable in any country".

He said, "And many people have been so shameless that despite being convicted in court, having been proved corrupt, having been sentenced to imprisonment, while still serving time in jail, they continue to glorify, take pride and continue to elevate their status."

"Such mentality won't change", he said, "unless we develop hatred towards corruption and the corrupt, and relegate these people to social shaming".

Moving on to the other key challenge, Modi said, "When I talk about nepotism, people think that I am only talking about politics. No, unfortunately that evil in the political field has nurtured nepotism in every institution of India.'

Against the backdrop of India finishing fourth in the Commonwealth Games, he said, "It is not that our sons and daughters, the youth of India, are not achieving anything in the world of sports. But sadly they have been pushed out due to the nepotism channel. The ones that qualified to reach the competition in other countries were least bothered about winning medals for the country. But when transparency was reinstated, selection was on merit and talent was honoured on playgrounds. It is a moment of pride today to see the Tricolor flying high and the national anthem reverberating at stadiums globally."

Hitting out at dynasty politics, Modi said it "is aimed at the welfare of a family only and doesn't care about the welfare of the country". "Aaivee. Hindustan ki rajneeti ke shuddhikaran aur sabhi sansthaon ki shuddhi ke liye kadam badhayen (Come, let's move forward and clean India's politics and institutions)," he said. The PM also stressed on the need for the country to set its own standards. "The slave mentality has to be abandoned. How long will the world continue to give certificates to us? How long will we live on the certificates of the world?"

Discussing Government's focus on "Atmanirbhar Bharat". Modi said, "We have to become selfreliant in the energy sector." In this context, he emphasised on the need for innovation, adding "Jai Anusandhaan" to the slogan "Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan" which he said was the "inspirational call" of former prime minister Lal Bahadur Shastri to which "Jai Vigyan" was added by former prime minister A B Vajpayee.

On federalism, Modi said, 'Our dreams are bound to be realised if we walk shoulder to shoulder... Programmes may differ, working styles may differ, but resolutions can't differ, dreams for a nation cannot be different... There are many states which have played a great role in taking the country forward, have led and worked as examples in many fields. This gives strength to our federalism. But today the need of the hour is that we need cooperative federalism as well as cooperative competitive federalism. We need competition for development.'

2014 and getting rid of the "chalta hai" attitude in 2017 — struck a chord with women as he emphasised the "dignity" of women. He to emerge victorious in this fight.

who are part of an ever-growing and decisive — and, at times, independent of the menfolk - constituency of voters. Setting a broad direction for the next quarter of a century, he The PM has talked about it elaborated on the paanch pran -

the first being the goal of a developed India by 2047, which seeks to stoke the ambition of an aspirational society. At one point, he said those who are 25 years now will be 50 when the country turns 100. He knows his constituency - the youth. India's median age this year is 28 years. The second commitment is to "remove any trace of colonial

mindset"—a euphemism of sorts for his push towards the dictum "Indians don't need any certificates from the world". This comes from recent experiences where statements are sometimes made by foreign governments, UN bodies, international surveys, and even foreign rating agencies.

The third is "to take pride in our roots" — again a reminder to people about their rich civilisation and an attempt to reawaken that consciousness. The BIP has been seeking to push this for the last eight years — from Yoga to

While the fourth commitment Modi underlined was "unity" – amongst all workers, especially women, the fifth related to the duty and responsibility of citizens. He framed this argument by saying that while the government will try to bring in facilities and amenities for the people of the country, it is the duty of the people and the citizenry to save and conserve resources that are finite.?

By referring to corruption, he clearly targeted the Congress and the TMC. At one point, he said that while some people did not have money, some were finding it difficult to hide their money. His remarks came at a time when the Enforcement Directorate had recently recovered a huge stash of cash from a senior Trinamool Congress leader's aide in Kolkata.

While the BJP government has been criticised for allegedly using the Central agencies to target Opposition leaders, Modi said his fight against corruption is entering in a "decisive period" and warned that even the big-wigs (bade-bade chamarbandi) will not be spared.

Modi said people should hate the corrupt and hold them in contempt – a new framing in the fight against corruption. With leaders of parties such as the Aam Aadmi Party, whose crusade against corruption is its main political plank, and the Congress, finding themselves in the crosshairs of the law now, he solicited peoples' support

The second key challenge confronting the nation, according to Modi was pariwaarwad (dynasty politics) and bhai-bhatijawad (nepotism); this was not just limited to the political sphere, but other institutions and sectors too.

many times, most recently at the three-day BIP national executive meeting in early July. It assumes significance now as the BJP is gearing up for a poll battle in Telangana, where the K Chandrasekhar Rao-led TRS is accused of being dynastic in its style of functioning. While the BJP has to engage in a bitter electoral fight with Akhilesh Yadav-led Samajwadi Party in Uttar Pradesh and RJD in Bihar, where it recently lost its government and ally to arch-rival Lalu Prasad-led RJD, in the south the party has to face parties like DMK, YSRCP and TRS - all are accused of being run by families – to expand its footprints.

All this points to the larger political campaign plan for 2024 on these twin planks of "corruption" and "nepotism" – something that he is familiar with, has used in the run-up to the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, and knows that it continues to resonate among the electorate.

strength dropped from 2.48 lakh as on March 31, 2022, compared with 3.83 lakh eleven years ago in 2010-11. Power generation major NTPChad also last reported an increase in its number of employees a decade ago. At the end of 2011-12, NTPC had 25,511 employees and since then, its numbers have fallen consistently to 17,474 as of March 31 this year.

Upstream oil company ONGC, which had 27,165 employees as of March-end this year, last recruited in 2015-16. It had 33,927 people on its rolls at the end of March 2016. Privatisation-bound Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) has also reported a steady decline in the number of employees since 2013-14. At the end of 2013-14, BPCL reported 13,214 employees – one person more than it had as of March 31, 2012 – and has witnessed a fall to 8,594 as of March

31, 2022. GAIL India saw a net addition to its headcount five years back in 2016-17, when it reported 22,604 employees. It has since witnessed a fall to 17,828 people as of March 31, 2022. India's biggest stateowned oil marketing company Indian Oil has been witnessing a decline in employee numbers since 2018-19. It had 31,254 employees at the end of 2021-22. compared with 33,498 at the end

Ticketing platform IRCTC, which had 1,971 people on its rolls as of March 31 this year, saw a decline in 2020-21 to 1.417 from 1,446 employees in 2019-20. SBI Life Insurance has also been seeing a consistent rise in headcount over the past several years to 18,515 people as of March 31,2022 from 13,207 as of March 31, 2018.

Collegium

2019) made 130 recommendations for the high courts and 14 for the Supreme Court.

CJI Ramana's tenure also saw the most appointments being cleared by the government. While the government appointed 266 judges to the high courts in Justice Ramana's time as CJI, only 104 appointments were made when Justice Bobde was CJI and 107 when Justice Gogoi held the post.

The government Sunday appointed 11 additional judges to the Punjab and Harvana High Court.

A three-member collegium makes recommendations for judge appointments to high courts and a five-member collegium makes recommendations for the Supreme Court, The CJI Ramanaled collegium for high court appointments comprised Justices Lalit (CJI-designate) and A M Khanwilkar, who retired on July 29. The next collegium headed by Iustice Lalit will also include Justices D Y Chandrachud and Sanjay Kishan Kaul.

The Supreme Court's strength will be at 30 when CII Ramana retires on August 26. Three more judges, Justices Lalit, Indira Banerjee and Hemant Gupta, are expected to retire this year.

Berozgari refrain

centre for a bank in his village. "Each time I appeared for a government exam, the paper got leaked. Then there were long delays. There is also a lot of cheating that happens in these exams. After all that, I lost hope," he says.

Prabhu Sharma, who belongs to a tribal community, is a small farmer in Terasiya Tola in Hajipur. He sold off his land to send his only son to college. "Pet kaat ke padhaye ladka ko (I went hungry to give my son education). But he is not getting a job. He can't even do farming... starts sweating profusely when I ask him to even operate the handpump," he says.

A few kilometers away, at Kalyan Bigaha, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's ancestral village in Nalanda district, Shivam Pandey, 20, a BA student, pins his hopes on the new coalition government. "RJD had promised 10 lakh jobs in the last elections. Okay, they may have lost one and a half years. But then they should deliver at least 7.5 lakh jobs," he says.

In the 2020 elections, RJD's Tejashwi, who had made unem-

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EXPRESS AUDIO

India at 75: What should

we be celebrating?

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

On the 75th Independence Day, we ask a political scientist, an economist and a filmmaker what they think is worth celebrating. Pratap Bhanu Mehta, Jayati Ghosh, and Saeed Mirza answer this

ployment his main campaign plank, drew huge crowds as he promised that one of his first acts as CM would be to sign on his promise of 10 lakh jobs. Now, with the RJD in a position of power, the expectations are back.

Asked about the new political dispensation in the state, Raja Malik, a Dalit from the Dom subcaste in the village, says, "Forget politics, we have the bigger problem of unemployment. Please write about that."

Malik is a graduate who has been trying for a job for the past five years without any success.

The Agniveer scheme is still a simmering issue. "Just getting one job is so difficult. Now you are asking me to start looking for another after four years," says an army aspirant in Saran district.

Many acknowledge that the Modi government's free ration scheme was a big help to landless labourers during the pandemic and even after.

Santosh Kumar, a Dalit daily wager from Baurbani village in Saran district, says, "We have no land and no house. During the pandemic, we had no work either. Had the Modi government not given us free ration, we would have been in big trouble."

Yet, the scheme now appears to have precipitated a labour crisis for farmers.

"The free ration has meant that farm labourers do not want to work most of the time. They have a place to live and get free food. All they need to earn is a little extra for clothing and medicines," says Mukesh Kumar, a farmer from Harnaut in Nalanda.

Though many BJP and ID(U) leaders that The Indian Express spoke to acknowledged that unemployment and inflation are factors that could influence how Bihar votes in 2024, few came up with solutions.

"Bihar has no land bank for industrialisation. We were trying to use the shut sugar mills to set up small units, but that did not take off in a big way. And now we are out of the government," said a BJP leader. The leader conceded that price rise was an issue among voters but said the government was taking steps to ease inflation.

A JD(U) leader said, "Inflation is for the Centre to handle. As far as unemployment is concerned, the BJP cannot corner us — they were with us all this while. But the new alliance is committed to creating jobs and this matter is being discussed within the alliance."

Bilkis case

after Bilkis alleged death threats from the accused.

On January 21, 2008, CBI special court judge UD Salvi convicted 13 accused, sentencing 11 to life imprisonment on the charge of gangrape and murder following an in-camera trial in Mumbai. In May 2017, the conviction was upheld by the Bombay High Court.

In 2019, the Supreme Court awarded compensation of Rs 50 lakh to Bilkis -- the first such order in a case related to the 2002 riots. "It is very apparent that what should not have happened has happened and the state has to give compensation," the apex court bench of the then CJI Ranjan Gogoi, and Justices Deepak Gupta and Sanjiv Khanna, had said.

The 11 who have been set free are: Jaswant Nai, Govind Nai, Shailesh Bhatt, Radhyesham Shah, Bipin Chandra Joshi, Kesarbhai Vohania, Pradeep Mordhiya, Bakabhai Vohania, Rajubhai Soni, Mitesh Bhatt and Ramesh

In its 2008 verdict, the CBI court held that Jaswant Nai, Govind Nai and Naresh Kumar Mordhiya (who died later) raped Bilkis while Shailesh Bhatt killed Saleha by "smashing" her on the ground. The other accused were convicted for rape and murder, as being part of "an unlawful assembly" distributes the liability of the crime, the court said.

On Monday, Additional Chief Secretary (Home), Raj Kumar, said: "The 11 convicts have served a 14year sentence in total. According to law, a life term means a minimum period of 14 years after which the convict can apply for remission. It is then the decision of the government to consider the application. Based on eligibility, prisoners are granted remission after the recommendation of the prison advisory committee as well as district legal authorities."

In this case, Kumar said: "Among the parameters considered are age, nature of the crime, behaviour in prison and so on...The convicts in this particular case were also considered eligible after considering all the factors since they had competed for 14 years of their life term."

Panchmahals collector Suial Mayatra told PTI: "A committee formed a few months back took a unanimous decision in favour of remission of all the 11 convicts in the case. The recommendation was sent to the state government, and yesterday we received the or-

ders for their release." In the verdict of 2008, CBI special court judge Salvi termed Bilkis's "courageous deposition" as the turning point in the case. The judge also considered the testimony of a minor and photographs of bodies of the victims without footwear -- and observed that the "bodies had been moved, without footwear, from the scene of crime, indicating a conspiracy"

The judgment also considered that Bilkis had identified all the accused during the trial - she told the court that most of them were known to her and had purchased milk from her family.

The CBI court upheld the prosecution's case that Bilkis was gangraped, assaulted and left to die at Randhikpur. 250 km from Ahmedabad, when 17 members of her family were walking to flee their riot-hit town.

According to the prosecution, the group was attacked with swords and sticks, and eight of Bilkis' kin were killed, including her daughter, while six went missing. On March 4, 2002, dressed only in a skirt and bleeding. Bilkis walked down the hill where her family had been massacred to seek help, the court was told. She found a tribal woman who gave her clothes and met a home guard who took her to the Limkheda police station to lodge a complaint, the prosecution said.

Constable Somabhai Gori had been awarded three years imprisonment for shielding offenders. In the Supreme Court, the Gujarat government had said that action was taken against the police personnel convicted in the case -- a pension cut for three personnel who had retired and demotion by two ranks for R S Bhagora, who was promoted to the IPS in 2007 and was close to retirement at the time. Bhagora had been charged

The counsel for Bilkis, Shobha Gupta, had told The Indian Express in 2019: "On March 3, 2002, Bhagora brought Bano to constable Somabhai and recorded her statement, in which he intentionally removed all 12 names of the accused, Then, on March 6, district collector Jayanti Ravi visited the camp and took her statement again in which all accused were named. Ravi forwarded the file to the Dahod SP for action who then forwarded the file again to Bhagora. Despite repeated reminders, Bhagora did nothing till July 2002, and eventually filed the closure report, saying that the event is true but undetected and the accused are untraceable. The Bombay High Court judgment had called the role of police officials as callous." (PTIINPUTS)

Dalit boy death of the boy and rubbished

police's claim that they had found

As the issue snowballed, Congress MLA from Baran-Atru, Pana Chand Meghwal, on Monday submitted his resignation to Assembly Speaker CP Joshi and Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, saying he was "hurt at the constant atrocities being committed upon Dalits and the marginalised, even after 75 years of Independence".

of Islam and crossing the red lines Chail Singh, the accused of over 1.5 billion Muslims and also

teacher, was arrested on Saturday, the day the child died, with the FIR accusing him of beating up Indra and abusing him with casteist slurs after the boy drank from the

water pot meant for the teacher. "My nephew died because of his caste. Dalits face inhuman treatment in our region. Even today, we have to go several kilometres to find barbers who can cut our hair. Ever since we registered the FIR, we have been living in fear for our own safety," said Kishore Kumar Meghwal, Indra's uncle and the complainant in the case.

Indra's elder brother, a student of Class 5 in the same school, seconded the family version.

On Monday, Jalore SP Harsh Vardhan Agarwalla and his team recorded the statements of several students of the school, including those who were present on July 20, when the incident happened.

"We are investigating the allegation that the boy was beaten up because he drank from a certain pot, and are also interrogating people from the school. But our preliminary investigation hasn't proved this allegation," said SP Agarwalla.

Indra's classmate, whose name is being withheld for reasons of privacy, told The Indian Express that on July 20, Indra and he had an argument over a piece of paper and that Singh slapped both

Singh, the accused teacher and owner of the school, has also found support from his staff, who say that no drinking water pot was kept in the building.

"I can't say what exactly took place on July 20. However, most of the staff in this school are from SC/ST communities and we have never been discriminated against. Nobody here drinks from any pot; students and teachers drink water from a tank," claimed Ashok Ieengar, a teacher from the school. who is from the Dalit community.

Indra's family, however, alleged that the Dalit teachers of the school were under pressure to back Singh, their employer.

According to Himmat Charan, the investigating officer in the case, of the eight teachers in the school, three are from SCs, two from STs, one from OBC category and two others, including Singh, Raiputs.

Bairwa, the Raiasthan SC Commission chairman who visited the family on Monday, said, "The police report that was sent to us said there was no caste angle. But after talking to people here, I know that is the reason... If police are trying to suppress the motive, I will recommend the suspension of the entire police station."

Bairwa, who is Congress MLA $from\,Baseri\,in\,Dholpur, also\,hit\,out$ at his party-led government for declaring a compensation amount of Rs 5 lakh for Indra's family and demanded Rs 50 lakh and government jobs to two members of the victim's family.

Iran

don't consider anyone deserving reproach, blame or even condemnation, except for (Rushdie) himself and his supporters," Kanaani said. "In this regard, no one can blame the Islamic Republic of Iran," he added.

"We believe that the insults made and the support he received was an insult against followers of all religions."

Iran has denied carrying out other operations abroad against dissidents in the years since the country's 1979 Islamic Revolution, though prosecutors and Western governments have attributed such attacks to Tehran. Rushdie was attacked Friday

as he was about to give a lecture in western New York. He suffered a damaged liver and severed nerves in an arm and an eye.

His alleged assailant, 24-yearold Hadi Matar, pleaded not guilty to attempted murder and assault. In his remarks Monday, Kanaani implied that Rushdie

brought the attack on himself. "Salman Rushdie exposed himself to popular anger and fury through insulting the sacredness

red lines of followers of all divine religions," Kanaani said.

Kabul

Many Taliban fighters also gathered at the Wazir Mohammed Akbar Khan hill, a few kilometres from the roundabout, anticipating a formal flaghoisting on top. With a song praising jihad in the background, they did the "atan" (a traditional pashtun dance) around a flagpole on which the Afghan Republican flag gifted by India had flown until the collapse of the republic last year.

Asked why no women were participating, a Talib said, "they have their own work to do": another said "it was not allowed under sharia"; and, a third assured "you will see women next year".

In the afternoon, all roads led to the auditorium of state-owned Radio Television Afghanistan, where children sang a song in praise of Mullah Omar, the Taliban founder who died in 2013, with lines about how peace had returned. VIPs spoke about the government's achievements. The road to the Green Zone was jammed with vehicles, including unmarked Toyota Prados ferrying Taliban leaders to the function, But the top leadership was not pres-

ent, including Sirajuddin Haqqani. Mullah Omar's son Mullah Yaqoub, who heads the defence ministry, said the Taliban had restored security in the country. Those who are plotting rebellion

will be punished," he said. "We should evaluate our performance of the year and ask ourselves if it is enough or not," he said, adding that international recognition, sanctions and black-

lists did not matter. Amir Khan Muttaqi, who is in charge of the foreign ministry, said Afghanistan wants good relations with all countries. He said the Taliban's foreign policy was geared towards maintaining a balance in the region. "We don't want to get into trouble with anyone. We have satisfied all countries that we will not allow the soil of Afghanistan

to be used against anyone" he said. Although the day had been declared an official holiday, most of Kabul's residents seemed to have decided not to step out, making this a Taliban-only celebration. At the secret protest by RAWA, the participants reportedly pledged that their voices would not be drowned by gunfire -- a reference to the aerial firing that the Taliban resorted to on Saturday to disperse a protest by women demanding

"work, bread and education". In a statement, RAWA declared that the women of Afghanistan would continue to resist. "It was easily predictable that women and girls would be the prime victims of this barbaric rule and are facing devastating and inhumane suppression in all areas of life. However, the women of our country proved that no force could impose their reactionary ideologies or hold them captive inside their homes," it said.

"Afghan women made history by raising the flag of struggle against the Taliban and for freedom and justice. Since the first days of Taliban's takeover, these women have protested on the streets without any fear of guns or whiplashes; they were suppressed, threatened, and humiliated, but bravely continued their fight," RAWA said.

It said that "the inquisitionbased government" was "so reactionary, abhorred, and brutal" that no country had officially recognised it, "not even their supporters and patrons". It denounced the US for "claims that they were surprised" by the fall of Kabul and the escape of President Ashraf Ghani -- and for supporting the Taliban regime by giving it financial aid.

"We have full faith in this great struggle and the extraordinary potential hidden in our Afghan women, and we warmly shake the hands of every justice-seeking force and individual in this crucial battle for Afghanistan and its people and to continue hoisting the banner of struggle against Taliban and Jihadi fundamentalism," the

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INDIA CELEBRATES 76th INDEPENDENCE DAY

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, Keiriwal 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 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.



Kejriwal at Chhatrasal Stadium on Monday. Praveen Khanna

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 lational Cadet Corps (NCC) and state representatives. Tourists, who arrived after security measures were lifted, thronged the grounds to check out the multimetre 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

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 decora-

tions and other things this year."

dees 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 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

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 rrangements 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 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 Independence Day ceremony but for us, it came true."

Rajesh from Gover 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

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 bikeborne 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, (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 injures to his neck and died later. His wife, Seema, alleged that their employThe 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 equip-

ment 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

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.

Kalvan 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.



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 ment. 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 34 (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.

on suspicion of theft

Help 'beaten, stripped'

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 43year-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

New Delhi

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 The woman was then taken to

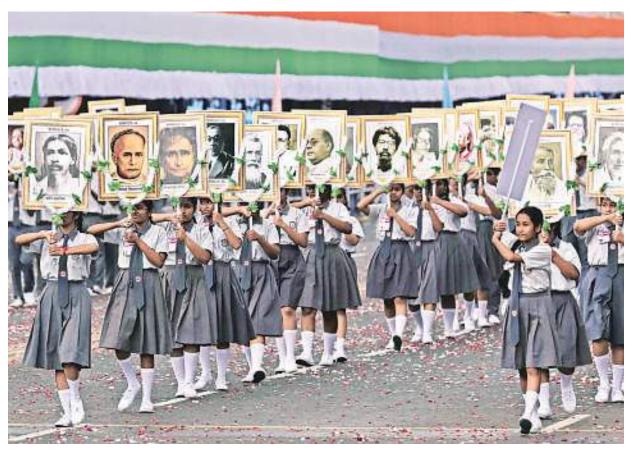
a hospital where an MLC was carried out and doctors found that she had injuries on her back and hands. Doctors also stated that she had consumed poison, and police were informed.

DCP (South) Benita Mary aiker said: "We arrested a woman named Seema Khatoon (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



Stalin in Chennai; BJP chief J P Nadda and Union Minister Piyush Goyal in New Delhi.

30 CBI officials honoured with In states, CMs unfurl Tricolour, make President's police medals

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

THIRTY OFFICERS and officials of the Central Bureau of (CBI) were Investigation 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) 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 Sandeen 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. Raiesh Babu Chauhan, Durga Singh and Tej Pal Singh; Constables Siby, P G and Ram Singh Dhami; and stenographer Dinesh Singh Pundir, the agency stated in a media release.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

CHIEF MINISTERS of different states unfurled the national flag on the occassion 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 becomgovernment 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.

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.

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 ar event at Modasa in Aravalli.

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.

Himanta Biswa Sarma said "exuberant celebrations and display of love for the Tiranga" were a "boycott" Independence Day celebrations. The CM said the govern-

related to social media posts, registered before midnight of August 14 to lessen the "burden on the lower judiciary".

lakh minor cases, including those

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.

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.

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.

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 Puniab so that your children get all the opportunities here"

FROM ENSLUCKNOW, MUMBAI, CHENNAI, GUWAHATI, BHOPAL, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, BENGALURU. CHANDIGARH

Self-absorbed govt promises — from jobs to new schemes 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 strongly opposes misrepresentation of historical facts for political benefits and putting great national leaders like (Mahatma) Gandhi, Nehru, (Sardar)Pateland(Maulana)Azad on the dock based on lies."

Although the statement did not go into any specifics, it appeared to be aimed at BIP'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 tism, he refused to comment.

about the PM's remarks on nepo-Party general secretary (com-

Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandi 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 "BIP's 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

munication) Jairam Ramesh alleged Hindutva ideologue V D Savarkar gave birth to two-nation theory and Mohd Ali Iinnah 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."

Pawan Khera said.

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

"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 finishall 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 CII 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 3million people. Besides attending 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." Riiiiu 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 NV Ramana explained how the Covid-19 pantop 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".

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 affilia-

tion 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

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

left the party years ago.

filiation. 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 BIP has started a false propaganda with the help of the media," read the statement.

out mentioning their political af-

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 bokked eight RSS-BJP workers as the accused, all from Kottekad,

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 Shaiahan, "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.

BJP turns Bihar focus to Dalits, EBCs for '24 polls Mahagathbandhan government

DEEPTIMANTIWARY PATNA, HAJIPUR, SARAN, AUGUST 15

ON THE fringes of Gangajal, 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 LIP MP and Union minister Pashupati Kumar Paras for having split the party and jettisoned his brother late Ram Vilas Paswan's son

"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 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 27year-old Ravidasi daily wager.

It is these caste contradictions that the BJP is now hoping

NITISH CABINET EXPANSION TODAY Patna: The two-member cab-

inet 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.

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

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 "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 eader said. FULL REPORT ON

www.indianexpress.com

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

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

policies", including systematically Afghan diplomatic missions

group has misused exemptions.

are in operation.

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

seven points for consideration by the international community to bring peace and stability in Afghanistan. These include, apart from the travel ban, enlisting new coordinated measures to address "dangerous threat" emanating from the presence of foreign terrorist groups in the country.

nity 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".

current economic, political and humanitarian crisis Afghanistan through putting in place all necessary measures to

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

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.'

banned girls from attending secondary education and systemati $cally\,erased\,women\,and\,girls\,from$ public life by restricting their fundamental rights to work and play an active role in society," it added.

Soldier's remains found in Siachen after 38 years

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE JAMMU, AUGUST 15

THIRTY-EIGHTYEARS 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

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

The remains will be handed Lance to 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 beaveheart'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 vounger one was one-and-ahalf years old.

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

SADAFMODAK

tion into this

MUMBALAUGUST 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 govern-

ment authorities and the special

court seeking further investiga-

Siddiqui, who along with four oth-

ers was sentenced to death in

2015 by a special court for the train

blasts, had also sought a reinvesti-

gation into the case on various

grounds claiming that the probe

was based on fabricated evidence.

thorities including the Union

Home Ministry and the special

court, Siddiqui has referred to a

In his communication to au-

In another plea last month,

MUMBAI TRAIN BLASTS CASE

Convict seeks

inquiry into

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)

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.

THE TALIBAN have not only failed to deliver on their commitments but also "reenacted draconian erasing women from public life, 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

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

The missions said the killing of

The missions put forward

The missions specifically urged the international commu-

They called on the international community and the UN to seek "pragmatic solutions" to the meet the urgent needs of the people of Afghanistan.

"Among others, the group has

day before China ship docks tackle multiple challenges such as **EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** human and drug trafficking, NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15 smuggling and other organised forms of crime in its coastal wa-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

Admiral SN Ghormade, who is on

a two-day visit to Sri Lanka, ac-

companied 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.

Affairs (MEA) said on Monday that

the aircraft would act as a force

multiplier, enabling Sri Lanka to

Odisha taking

steps to contain

Mahanadi flood

Bhubaneswar: With water level of

Mahanadi river rising fast follow-

ing heavy rain in catchment areas,

Odisha government on Monday

closed eight more gates in

Hirakud reservoir in an effort to

contain impending flood within

have already been affected by

flood and Monday night was be-

ing considered crucial for the delta

region, as the major volume of

water will flow through the

Mahanadi river system during the

period. The heavy rain in the up-

per and lower catchment areas

have led to the rise in the water

levels in all tributaries of

Mahanadi. Special relief commis-

sioner PK Jena said more water is

entering Hirakud reservoir due to

heavy rainfall in the upper catch-

ment areas in Chhattisgarh and

the situation has deteriorated

with Tel river discharging over 3

lakh cusecs into the Mahanadi in-

stead of the expected 1.5 lakh

Thirteen districts in the state

medium range, sources said.

The Ministry of External

Hambantota port.

nation's strategic

Vice Chief of Indian Navy Vice

authorities during a ceremony, in Colombo on Monday. PTI

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

A Dornier 228 Maritime Patrol Aircraft being handed over to Sri Lanka Navy by the Indian

India gifts aircraft to Lanka,

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-

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

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

dent, a local shopkeeper, identi-

fied as Prem Singh, 25, was at-

tacked 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

said prohibitory orders were im-

posed for three days to bring the

Shivamogga DC, R Selvamani,

Police used mild force as ac-

Mcgann Hospital in the city.

situation under control.

In the aftermath of the inci-

use of force by police.

BENGALURU, AUGUST 15

MAN ATTACKED WITH KNIFE IN SHIVAMOGGA

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

'Security of India and Srilanka 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.

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.

Sec 144 imposed amid tension over

attempt to remove Savarkar poster

tivists suspected to be linked to

SDPI tried to remove the banner

put up on Ameer Ahamed Circle.

Bajrang Dal activists subsequently

Shivamogga city corporation,

Pramod H P, filed a police com-

plaint 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 re-

straint and causing intentional in-

sult (under Sections 341 and 504

Asif was arrested on the basis

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-

of IPC) was registered.

of this complaint.

On Saturday, an official of

staged a protest.

Jeweller arrested for issuing death threats to **Mukesh Ambani**

SAGARRAJPUT MUMBAI. AUGUST 15

A 56-YEAR-OLD jeweller has been arrested from Borivali for allegedly dialling the helpline number of South Mumbai-based HN Reliance Foundation Hospital and issuing death threats to Mukesh Ambani, the chairman and managing director of Reliance Industries Ltd.

Police said the incident took place between 10.39 am and 12.04 pm on Monday when the accused, identified as Vishnu Vidhu Bhaumik, called at the hospital nine times and issued death threats. In one of the calls, the accused identified himself as Afzal, and stated that he may do something in the next three hours.

An official from DB Marg police station said, "He abused the receiver and later gave death threats to Mukesh Ambani. He even gave a reference of late Dhirubhai Ambani."

Soon after the last call, a security officer lodged a complaint.

DCP Neelotpal (zone II) said, "We have registered a case under Section 506 (II) (criminal intimidation) of the IPC." Simultaneously, the investi-

gators started tracing the culprit, when the accused was located at his residence in Borivali (west). "He had used his own mobile

phone to call and through his call data record he was traced to his house" added an officer "Bhaumik also owns a iew-

ellery shop in south Mumbai," added another investigator.

"He was arrested on Monday and we also want to know the reason for calling," said an officer.

legedly by activists of Hindutva

outfits. The procession was led by local BJPMLAKS Eshwarappa and

case was registered on Sunday un-

der the Prevention of Insult to

National Honors Act, 1971, and un-

der IPC Section 295-A (outraging

of religious feelings) over alleged

vandalism of an image of Tipu

Sultan put up by the Congress at

Congress worker, B Manjunath, al-

leging that miscreants ripped

apart flex banners put up by the

party to mark the 75th anniver-

sary of Independence Day. The

banners had images of Tipu Sultan

and the national flag, the com-

quently arrested a right-wing

Hindutva activist, identified as

Puneeth Kerehalli, and two of his

associates over the incident.

Halasurgate police subse-

plaint stated.

Why Mamata is throwing her weight behind Anubrata Mondal

The complaint was filed by a

the city's Hudson Circle.

Meanwhile, in Bengaluru, a

the MP, BY Raghavendra.

purported report filed by the Hyderabad police into the suicidal death of Abdul Razzak alias Masood. Razzak had committed likely to be heard later this week. suicide in Hyderabad on October

Siddigui 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.

police report on accused

> cused 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

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

Two injured in separate grenade attacks in J&K injured. He has been shifted to

PRESSTRUSTOFINDIA SRINAGAR, AUGUST15

He was also told that his name

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 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 en-

counter 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

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

PRESSTRUST OF INDIA MALAPPURAM (KERALA), AUGUST 15

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

"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".

ATRIMITRA 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 leader Chandrima Bhattacharva 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.

tion, 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

Swinging into ac-

However, rising in defence of Mondal, Mamata on Sunday launched a blistering attack on the BIP-led Centre, asserting that she will stand by the Birbhum party strongman and an-

nounced 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

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 ar-

sation. Why has he been arrested?

rested? I will hold a Jail Bharo movement with everyone. Come down to the streets. If tomorrow they go to my house, what will vou 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 belove to work for the party organi-New Delhi trayed a "disconnect between the

leadership" A senior TMC leader said,

party's old guard and its youth

"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

WORDLY WISE

TURN IN ANY DIRECTION YOU LIKE, CASTE IS THE MONSTER THAT CROSSES YOUR PATH.

— B.R. Ambedkar

The Indian **EXPRESS**

S FOUNDED BY S

PANNIATELL COENTY

Ramnath Goenka

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

THE IDEAS DAY

By linking Nari Shakti to national progress, roots to scaling heights, PM enlivens the idea of aspiration

N HIS INDEPENDENCE Day speech from Red Fort, his ninth, Prime Minister Narendra $Moditook\,a\,long\,and\,large\,view.\,This\,was\,not\,a\,speech\,about\,schemes, programmes$ or plans, even though he mentioned several – from Swachhta Abhiyan to Atmanirbhar Bharat, Nal Se Jal to National Education Policy, ethanol blending to Covid vaccination drive. This was not about the problems and choices that crowd the nation's present moment. This I-Day, instead, the prime ministerial viewfinder framed a country that has turned 75 and is moving towards its centenary. It captured big ideas of that journey. Of course, many of these ideas are not new, some have come up against hurdles in the past or lack of sincerity on the ground, others remained excluded from his rendition. But what was not in doubt was his attempt to re-enliven the ideas that he spoke about – by expanding one, or imparting greater urgency to another through a more vivid connect with the aam citizen. For instance, this was not the first mention of Naari Shakti, woman power, one of the themes he emphasised. It is constantly spoken of, seldom acted upon. But the PM called it "desh ki poonji (the wealth of the nation)", and drew a link between giving the woman her rightful place and the nation's ease in fulfilling the goals it sets itself in the next 25 years, the Amrit Kaal. This enunciation was powerful.

The PM spoke evocatively about the pride the nation must take in its own inheritance. "Jab ham apni dharti se judenge, tab hi toh ooncha udenge (we can fly truly high only when we have feet on our own ground)". Only an India in touch with its roots can give "vishwa ke samadhan", answers to the world's problems, he said, be it indigenous solutions to climate change, or the crisis of family values. And that even as India feels the world's gaze, it must liberate itself from psychological enslavement to the need for external validation — the affirmation should lie within. His mention of "vividhta (diversity)" was perfunctory, while he spoke feelingly of an aspirational society that is impatient for change even as it is in the throes of a "punar jagran (re-awakening)".

But there was something missing, something lost, in the PM's talk of "saamoohik chetna (collective consciousness)", "sankalp (resolve)", "samarthya (capability)", and "anusandhan (innovation)". There was no outreach to those who feel excluded or left out from the collective, as it is defined by the PM's party and government, or those who are weak and need a leg-up to participate in the fulfilment of ambitious national goals. The PM's emphasis on "nagrik ka kartavya (citizen's duties)" also seemed to be the other side of a silence — on the government's responsibility to be more compassionate and sensitive to the needs of those who aspire, first, to an unquestioned sense of belonging and inalienable community. It's a thought, perhaps, that could be developed more in the PM's next eloquent I-Day speech, as the nation moves a year closer to its centenary.

DEATH BY INEQUALITY

Violence against Dalit student in Rajasthan is stark reminder of nation's unfinished tasks. Gehlot government must act swiftly

N SATURDAY, AS the nation prepared to commemorate its 75th Independence Day, a nine-year-old Dalit child from Rajasthan's Jalore district succumbed to his injuries, allegedly inflicted by a person who should have given wings to his dreams — his teacher. The FIR in the case should be read as a sobering reality check on the terrible inequalities that continue to afflict and debilitate the nation as it aims to become the "destination," where as Prime Minister Narendra Modi said from the ramparts of Red Fort, "aspirations are met". "Indra was a child. He didn't know that the matki (earthen pot) that he drank from had been kept separately for the savarna jati (upper caste) teacher"... "the teacher abused him with casteist slurs and beat him up, resulting in internal injuries", the FIR says. These words should prick the nation's conscience, and remind policymakers of unmet promises and unfinished tasks, as India begins the "Amrit Kaal" to the centenary of its Independence. The Ashok Gehlot government must ensure that due processes are rolled out swiftly and surely to provide justice in this case.

That casteist violence is a grim lived reality — at odds with India's constitutional principles — for a large section of the country's Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities is borne out by numerous reports and surveys. National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data show that a crime was committed every 10 minutes against a person from an SC community in 2020. Rajasthan along with Bihar, UP and Madhya Pradesh accounts for two-thirds of such crimes though these four states constitute about 40 per cent of the country's population. Cases registered in Rajasthan under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act went up from around 6,000 in 2018 to more than 8,500 in 2020. Worryingly, the conviction rate in the state in such cases has gone down from 11 per cent in 2016 to less than 8 per cent in 2020.

From the lack of enabling measures that force thousands of SC &ST students to drop out of institutions of learning every year to the persecution that can drive a young scholar like Rohith Vemula to take his own life, the discrimination faced by Dalit youth is endemic and deeply ingrained. Swift action in the case of the atrocity at Jalore will signal the state's resolve to stamp out the oppression that bedevils the aspirations of its young. That should also be an urgent imperative for a nation aspiring to be a knowledge hub.

HE BET ON INDIA, WON

Jhunjhunwala was bullish on India, put his money where his mouth was, inspired many to buy into growth story

AKESH JHUNJHUNWALA, WHO passed away on Sunday morning, was widely known as the "Big Bull" of the Indian stock markets. The epithet describes an investor who buys stocks and shares with the firm belief that they will grow in value. And while its use in common culture is often laced with an accusation of irrationality, in Jhunjhunwala's case, it was the real deal. Jhunjhunwala came from a middle-class background and was known for his integrity. His father, who was his lifelong idol, was an income tax officer. Jhunjhunwala started investing in the stock market in the 1980s when he was still in college, beginning with Rs 5,000 and ending with a net-worth north of Rs 45,000 crore (\$5.8 billion).

By rising from nowhere to become one of the richest Indians on the basis of his investments, Jhunjhunwala not only created his own legend but also gave hundreds of thousands of Indian investors the confidence that they too could invest in the stock market and become rich. His influence on scores of foreign investors, who were warily watching India open up its economy during the 1990s, was equally dramatic. Jhunjhunwala was bullish on India and its long-term growth. He put his money where his mouth was, and inspired many others to buy into the India growth story.

In the three decades since economic liberalisation, several shocks, both domestic and international, have buffeted the economy. At each stage, it was natural for investors to give in to doubts, book their profits (or cut their losses) and leave. The Indian markets needed a champion and they found him in Jhunjhunwala, whose belief in India's growth trajectory was unwavering till the end. In doing so, he created an ecosystem where investors (both domestic and foreign) have learnt to trust and lend to Indian companies and entrepreneurs. That is Rakesh Jhunjhunwala's lasting legacy.

Diplomacy for Viksit Bharat



India remains trapped in a framework that emerged 75 years ago. That must change

C RAJA MOHAN

THE NEW AMBITION outlined by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to make India a developed country, "Viksit Bharat", by 2047 will demand significant changes in Indian foreign policy tradition. Some of those changes, already set in motion in recent years, must now acquire greater purpose and speed. But can India's foreign policy community get out of its old mindset?

Our diplomatic discourse remains trapped in a framework that emerged when India was weak and vulnerable 75 years ago. The fears of a "developing nation" can't be the guiding principles for the diplomacy of a "developed nation". Your global perspectives must necessarily change when you move from the bottom of the scrum to the top of the heap. While the geographic imperatives of a nation endure, the changing nature of the Indian economy, evolution of external conditions, emergence of new regional challenges, and shifts in the global power hierarchy all demand new foreign policy strategies.

While India is well on its way to becoming the third-largest economy in the next few years, that does not necessarily make it a developed nation. Many of the tasks of becoming a developed nation are indeed domestic — promoting social justice, internal unity, economic modernisation, resilient political institutions, and deep bases of science and technology.

Three major foreign policy tasks present themselves in the hopeful journey to a Viksit Bharat. The first is the need to overcome the residual legacies of Partition that continue to undermine Delhi's geopolitical position. Resolving the problems left over by Partition on India's northwestern frontier looks quite hard despite the efforts by successive PMs in the last three decades.

Deterring the dangers from across the Western frontier must remain a major priority until Pakistan is ready for a productive relationship with India. Meanwhile, Delhi must continue to build on the recent good work in overcoming the bitter legacies of Partition in the east — including the settlement of the boundary dispute with Bangladesh. If Partition weakened India, Delhi struggled to retain the regional primacy it had inherited from the

Deterring the dangers from across the Western frontier must remain a major priority until Pakistan is ready for a productive relationship with India. Meanwhile, Delhi must continue to build on the recent good work in overcoming the bitter legacies of Partition in the east — including the settlement of the boundary dispute with Bangladesh. If Partition weakened India, Delhi struggled to retain the regional primacy it had inherited from the British Raj in the Subcontinent and the Indian Ocean. The reclaiming of a prominent role for India in the region can't be by fiat, but by making cooperation with Delhi more attractive to the neighbouring elites in the Subcontinent and beyond.

British Raj in the Subcontinent and the Indian Ocean. The reclaiming of a prominent role for India in the region can't be by fiat, but by making cooperation with Delhi more attractive to the neighbouring elites in the Subcontinent and beyond.

The initiatives of the last few years on intensifying connectivity, trade ties, and security partnerships with the neighbours will need a sustained push in the coming years. India also needs to double down on strengthening regional and trans-regional institutions. As the world's third-largest economy that wants to be a developed state, India must look beyond the immediate neighbourhood to more effectively engage with Africa, Latin America and Oceania where Delhi's footprint remains light, despite some recent initiatives.

The second is about coping with the growing power gap with China. Beijing has been the greatest beneficiary of India's Partition. China unified itself after an extended civil war in 1949 just after India chose to be divided in 1947. Beijing has leveraged the divisions within the Subcontinent to constrain India. Delhi's ability to raise its level of engagement in the extended neighbourhood and beyond also runs into substantive Chinese presence.

India has compounded that problem over the decades by persistent romanticism about China and overestimating the potential for collaboration with Beijing — whether it was Nehru's notion of an "area of peace" in Asia or the pursuit of a "multipolar world" since the 1990s in partnership with Beijing. The first came crashing down in 1962 and the second now confronts the nightmare of a "unipolar Asia" dominated by an assertive China. To make matters worse, the Chinese military can choose its time and place today to raise the temperature on the disputed Sino-Indian border as it has done in 2013, 2014, 2017, and 2020.

All the policies outlined by the Modi government to address the China challenge — securing our frontiers, retaining India's regional position, strengthening India's manufacturing sector, improving domestic technological capabilities, and producing more weapons at home — lead us to the third task.

It is about building stronger partnerships

with other major powers. But collaboration with other great powers has been hobbled by old ideas of "non-alignment" and "strategic autonomy". All countries practice strategic autonomy to the extent they can; it is not a special characteristic of Indian diplomacy. India's problem as it becomes the third-largest economy is not about seeking autonomy from other powers, but joining them in shaping a stable

balance of power system in the world.

This might involve both competing and collaborating with other major powers — sometimes doing both at the same time. Building partnerships is not ceding ground to other powers, but negotiating mutually beneficial terms in dealing with complex problems. While much of the domestic debate on India's Ukraine policy has been rooted in the familiar framework of "external pressures", Pakistan's former Prime Minister Imran Khan has praised Delhi's successful pursuit of its own interests. If India can do this with a \$3-trillion economy, its ability to engage the other powers can only improve along with the growth of its comprehensive national power.

Becoming the third largest economy and a developed society can't just be about geopolitics and balance of power. It is also about global leadership in managing the consequences of the unfolding technological revolution, stabilising the economic order, and addressing the challenges of climate change and pandemics.

India's innocent internationalism after Independence soon ran headlong into harsh realities in the high Himalayas. The uncritical acceptance of globalisation in the early 21st century has created economic problems of its own. On its way to 2047, Delhi will have to temper its soaring universalism with geopolitical sensitivity and combine the pursuit of multilateralism—at the UN, G-20, and WTO—with coalitions of like-minded nations. Getting power and principle to reinforce each other will help herald India's arrival as a developed nation and a major power.

The writer is senior fellow, Asia Society Policy Institute and contributing editor on international affairs, The Indian Express



APPROPRIATING A LEGACY

Many political groups contributed to India's freedom struggle. RSS didn't

D R AIA

AS THE country celebrates the 75th anniversary of Independence, it's an irony of history that the RSS is now trying to appropriate the legacy of our secular and inclusive struggle. Indian independence was the result of a century-long mass struggle, with many streams of political thoughts and ideologies merging in opposition to British rule and liberating the masses from oppression.

Our struggle was not just a movement to remove the British from power. It also had an agenda for the country's future. That agenda of social reforms and liberation from poverty and inequality was the outcome of a dialogue between the major ideological currents fighting for independence. The most important among these were the school of thought represented by Mahatma Gandhi through the policies and programmes of the Congress party, the communists and socialists, and advocates of social reforms best represented in the work of BR Ambedkar. Dialogue and debates between these streams produced the values that best define our struggle against colonialism and gave a coherent shape to the future republic and state, with secularism and welfarism at its core. These values are under threat from an organisation that played no role in our long fight for independence, the RSS.

At the time of Independence, the form of government India should opt for was much debated. Discussions around the Westminster system and the American presidential system were common. A majority of the leaders preferred parliamentary democracy. In his address to the nation on the 50th anniversary of Independence, the then President K R Narayanan said: "The Drafting Committee in

When the nation was uniting to drive away the British, the RSS was busy finding the 'enemy within'. They soon found the Muslim bogey to unite the Hindus under their divisive hold. This has led the RSS to declare open war on the country's past as they continue their attempts at demonising Muslims. For the nation, the enemy was British colonialism; for the RSS, it was Muslims.

choosing the parliamentary system for India, preferred more responsibility to more stability, a system under which the government will be on the anvil every day." This idea of collective responsibility is under strain today due to the encroachments made by the executive on other branches of the state under the influence of the RSS.

During the freedom struggle itself, the RSS was not pleased with representative democracy and constitutional safeguards. Its admiration for the European fascists and their emphasis on the leader principle made it incompatible with the very functioning of a democratic society. B S Moonje, mentor to RSS founder K B Hedgewar, met the leader of Italian fascists, Benito Mussolini, and told him, "I shall have no hesitation to raise my voice from the public platform both in India and England whenever occasion may arise in praise of your Balilla and fascist organisations. I wish them good luck and every success." The RSS still follows the rule of subservience to one supreme leader. When we say that democracy itself is under threat from the RSS-BJP, the seeds can be found in the very foundation and functioning of the RSS.

Another example is the case of secularism, a foundational value of our freedom movement. Hindus and Muslims fought shoulder-to-shoulder in the fight against the British. However, it is widely known and clear from the writings of RSS leaders and ideologues that their objective is to establish a hierarchical, exclusionary and discriminatory Hindu Rashtra. Ambedkar had warned about this: "If Hindu Raj does becomes a fact, it will, no doubt, be the greatest calamity for this country."

When the nation was uniting to drive away

"enemy within". They soon found the Muslim bogey to unite the Hindus under their divisive hold. This has led the RSS to declare open war on the country's past as they continue their attempts at demonising Muslims. For the nation, the enemy was British colonialism; for the RSS, it was Muslims. The difference in identifying what we are fighting against made a crucial difference between Indian nationalism and the RSS's narrow Hindutva nationalism.

the British, the RSS was busy looking for the

Social reform was integral to our fight for independence. Two major components of this reform programme were related to caste and the status of women in society. The Manusmriti, a compilation of the ordinances of Manu, was held responsible for the caste system in India by Ambedkar, who fought hard and established political equality, along with safeguards for the historically deprived sections through the Constitution. However, for the RSS, the Manusmriti has remained a source of authority and law in society. Less than a week after the ratification of the Constitution, the RSS mouthpiece Organiser wrote on November 30, 1949: "To this day his (Manu's) laws as enunciated in the Manusmriti excite the admiration of the world and elicit spontaneous obedience and conformity. But to our constitutional pundits that means nothing,"

It should be underlined that our freedom fighters lived and died for a secular, democratic, egalitarian and inclusive India. Ironically, those who stayed away from the freedom struggle are now trying to redefine what freedom meant and distributing certificates of patriotism.

The writer is general secretary, CPI



AUGUST 16, 1982, FORTY YEARS AGO

PM's I-Day Speech

PRIME MINISTER INDIRA Gandhi called on the people on August 15 to stand firm before disruptive forces, which were weakening the nation's unity. There was a need to rekindle the spirit of sacrifice and striving that characterised the freedom struggle. Speaking after unfurling the national flag at Delhi's Red Fort to mark the country's 36th Independence Day, the PM said no progress was possible in the absence of unity and hard work. The task of loosening poverty's grip, lessening injustice and taking the benefits of independence down to everyone was gigantic. She admitted that despite all efforts, injustice, oppres-

sion and corruption continued to exist. But these problems could not be combated by a weak government.

ISRAEL'S DEMANDS

THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT demanded a check of the list of Palestinian guerrillas to leave Beirut, and insisted that it get back a captured air force pilot before the evacuation began, a cabinet statement said. Despite optimistic talk of an imminent agreement, a senior government official said Israel suspected that the PLO was planning to leave several thousand guerrillas in Beirut after it departed.

DANCER BARRED

THE INDIAN AMBASSADOR to Pakistan, K D Sharma, clarified that it was the Pakistan government which had decided not to allow Bharati Shivaji, Indian classical dancer, to give performances in Pakistan on the occasion of India's Independence Day celebrations.

AMITABH IMPROVES

FILM STAR AMITABH Bachchan's condition "though still serious, showed improvement", according to a medical bulletin issued by the Breach Candy Hospital, where he is undergoing treatment for intestinal injury.

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, TUESDAY, AUGUST 16, 2022

THE IDEAS PAGE

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

Dear Hadi Matar

You have failed — we are all returning to Rushdie's words



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 butter-flies 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.

that person in jail for protection. This is no way, Mr. Gandhi, for a free society to behave. Subt, on February 14th it Clearly, your Government is feel--uren years since I received di noqu ing a little ashamed of itself and, sir, Valentine. I admit that I've ich to be ashamed about. It is he politics (which my silence must othing that just about every ndian rewspaper and maga-HSH 2 ž -and Derenda 'Satanic Verses' further official statement was that in ght to my notice. This explained Islam. I have admitted no such thing,

It is a threatening feature of the apocalyptic landscape of modern geopolitics.

Like the man you tried to kill, I too am a writer. As my life has been given over to reading and writing books, I hold on to the belief that if we read widely and deeply, we will encounter people and places unlike ourselves. This sense of difference, its pleasures and challenges, will perhaps steer us away from intolerance. Many people in this country (the US), including Malcolm X, discovered reading in prison—and were transformed. I hope that you too will find a similar liberation in learning.

We have seen the universal outpouring of grief and concern for the man you tried to kill

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.

—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)

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.

Ido 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 percent, 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 Kalaignar M Karunanidhi have been proponents of the inclusive character of democracy. Take, for example, the initiative led by Kalaignar 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 M KStalin 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

India's centenary challenge

Time to find homegrown solutions, fortify internal systems

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.

and Nagar Haveli, Hyderabad and Puducherry. Often, a question arises as to how a nation

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

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, 'I-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

vijai Pailt, Hempi

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'I-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.

S S Paul, Nadia

10 THE WORLD



JURY SELCTION BEGINS

KELLY TRIAL ON HEARING FIXING CHARGE

The R and B singer is accused of rigging his 2008 child pornography trial by threatening and paying off a girl who he allegedly filmed himself having sex with when he was around 30 and she was around 14. The woman, now in her 30s, will be the government's star witness.

TOPOFTHE _ WORLD



Iran 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 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 variantadapted shot that targets both the original and Omicron version of the virus. The UK medicines regulator gave the socalled 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 (ICVI) recommended all adults in the United Kingdom be offered boosters this **REUTERS** autumn.

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.

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 Chineseclaimed 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 highlevel group to visit following that of US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi in early August, which set off several

LIBERATION DAY

Seoul's carrot

to get North to

denuke: aid for

SOUTH KOREAN President Yoon

Suk Yeol offered "audacious" eco-

nomic assistance to North Korea

on Monday if it abandons its nu-

clear weapons program, while

avoiding harsh criticism of the

North days after it threatened

"deadly" retaliation over a Covid outbreak it blames on the South.

called for better ties with Japan,

saying their shared values will

help them overcome historical grievances linked to Japan's bru-

tal colonial rule before the end of

dialing up pressure on South

Korea when it doesn't get what

it wants from the US. Some ex-

perts say North Korea may stir

up tensions around joint military

exercises the US and South Korea

national security director, said

Seoul is willing to provide eco-

nomic rewards at each step of a

phased denuclearisation process

if North commits to a "roadmap"

and proceeds with the

"freezing...and dismantlement" of

its nuclear weapons program. AP

Kim Tae-hyo, Yoon's deputy

North Korea has a history of

World War II.

start next week.

In a speech celebrating the end of Japan's colonisation of the Korean Peninsula, Yoon also

its economy

KIM TONG-HYUNG

SEOUL, AUGUST 15

The Chinese military unit responsible for the area adjacent to Taiwan, the People's Liberation 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."

in her office, said China's exercises had greatly affected regional peace and stability.

"We are engaging in close cooperation with international allies...At the same time we are doing everything we can to let the world know that Taiwan is determined to safeguard stability and the status quo in the Taiwan Strait," she said, in video footage provided by the presidential office.

Markey told Tsai that "we have a moral obligation" to do everything to prevent an unnecessary conflict.

Taiwan's Defence Ministry said 15 Chinese aircraft had crossed the median line of Taiwan Strait on Monday. **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 el-

igibility for Special Immigration Visas beyond Afghans who worked for the US government to those who fought alongside US forces as commandoes 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

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 SIVs 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 Pakistan from London next month, ending a

said Monday. "Upon his return, the PML-N will not let him to go to jail," Federal Minister Mian

three-year long self-ex-

ile, a federal minister

laved Latif told a press conference. Latif's announcement comes days after Pakistan Tehreek-e-

Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan

bring Sharif back to the country under "some deal". Indirectly referring to the

powerful military establishment, Khan alleged: "A plot is

claimed efforts are underway to

hatched to disqualify me in Toshakhana and the prohibited funding cases to pave way for PML-N supremo Sharif's return from London next month."

Interior Minister Rana Sanaullahm, 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.



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

JAPAN PRIME Minster 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 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 tradition-

ally 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

Iapanese wartime leaders convicted as war criminals, who are among some 2.5 million war dead commemorated there. Kishida, on the dovish side of

conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), faced a

avoid irking neighbours while keeping happy the more rightwing members of the party - particularly after the killing of former premier Shinzo Abe last month.

tricky balancing act, hoping to

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

Despite that, South Korea and China denounced the visits to the RFUTFRS

Suu Kyi's jail in Brazil, says new report by NGO

Nawaz Sharif

Ruto declared Kenya's president, Facebook misses election misinfo some poll officials disown results

DUNCAN MIRIRI & AYENAT MERSIE NAIROBI, KISUMU, AUGUST 15

KENYA'S ELECTIONS chief declared Deputy President William Ruto the winner of a tight presidential race on Monday but some senior election officials disowned the result, fuelling fears of violence like that seen after previous disputed polls. Hailing the electoral commis-

sion as "heroes", Ruto said "There is no looking back. We are looking to the future. We need all hands on deck to move forward." The 55-year-old had made

Kenya's class divisions the centrepiece of his campaign to be-



Scuffles erupted before the results were declared. Reuters

come Kenya's fifth president, promising to reward low-income "hustlers" and pouring scorn on Kenya's political dynasties.

Minutes before the chairman of the electoral commission Wafula Chebukati announced

that Ruto had won the vote, his deputy Juliana Cherera had told media at a separate location that she and three other commis-

sioners disowned the results. "We are not able to take ownership of the results that will be announced, because of the opaque nature of this last phase of the general election," she said.

The electoral commission has seven commissioners. Diplomats and international observers were whisked out of the tallying hall before Chebukati

spoke, as scuffles broke out. Before announcing Ruto as the winner, Chebukati said two commissioners and the panel's Chief Executive had been injured and were being treated.

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 advertisements containing violent hate speech to see if Facebook's controls – either human reviewers or artificial intelligence - would catch them. They did not.

"Facebook has identified Brazil as one of its priority countries where it's investing special resources specifically to tackle election related disinformation," said Jon Lloyd, senior advisor at Global Witness. "So we wanted to really test out their systems with enough time for them to act. And with the US midterms around the corner, Meta simply has to get this right — and right now.'

Brazil's national elections will be held on October 2 amid disinformation threatening to discredit the polling process. AF

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 HECHE, 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.

#ExpressExplained

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

HARIKISHAN SHARMA

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 supplied 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.

speeches in 2017, 2018, and 2019. In

2017, he said there would be no com-

The Prime Minister mentioned

In 2019, however, Modi had men-

lenges of terrorism faced by Afghanistan,

tion in Modi's Independence Day speeches

in 2015 and 2018. He had referred to terror-

ism at least eight times in his speech of 2017,

14 times in 2016, and twice in 2014.

The word aatankwad did not find men-

Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka.

Other buzzwords

SIMPLY PUT

I-Day focus: corruption, nepotism

From Red Fort, PM launched an attack on bhrastachar and bhai-bhatijawad. They have been his targets earlier too, though the intensity and focus have varied. His other buzzwords: virasat, azadi, aspirational

POSTAL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

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

- THIS WORD MEANS



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

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

Political Science & IR

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

Drishti IAS

GENERAL STUDIES (P+M) FOUNDATION BATCH

Karol Bagh, Delhi | Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi | Prayagraj | Jaipu

Geography

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 as 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

Japan created its postal code address system in July 1968.

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15 promise with nepotism; in 2018, he said his government had put an end to IN HIS Independence Day address from nepotism; the following year he unthe ramparts of the Red Fort, Prime derlined the "unimaginable" damage Minister Narendra Modi targeted cornepotism had done to the country. ruption and nepotism and dynastic pol-In his eight previous Independence Day speeches, Modi had mentioned itics, which he identified as formidable challenges facing the nation. While parivarwad only once - in 2019. "...In Modi has referred to bhrastachar (corpolitics too, family bias or dynasty has ruption) in all his Independence Day done the most injustice to the country's strength," he said. "[Parivarwad] speeches since 2014 barring the one in 2020, *bhai-bhatijawad* (nepotism) becomes a way to benefit only the and parivarwad (dynasty sysfamily and has no connection to the tem) found prominence in national good." **Terrorism** In his hour-and-22minute speech on Monday, Modi mentioned bhrasterrorism (aatankwad) only once tachar 14 times, parivarwad on Monday. Last year and in 2020 too, he had made only solitary 11 times, and bhai-bhati*jawad* six times. He framed mentions of aatankwad. his observations better than tioned terrorism 14 times — and within earlier Independence Day speeches, and appeared to focus out naming Pakistan, hit out at the more sharply on political rivals. country for supporting and exporting "...I would definitely like to focus on terrorism. He also mentioned the chal-

two issues. One is corruption, and the other is nepotism and the dynasty system," Mod said. He seemed to point to the recovery of during 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 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 leased by the PIB from 2014 to 2022 shows the following patterns:

On August 15. 2015. Modi mentioned corruption at least 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 bhaibhatijawad se koi samjhauta nahin hoga. (There will be no compromise with corruption and nepotism)," he said.



The Prime Minister at Red Fort on August 15, 2022-2014; from left to right, top row downward. (*Top*) The most important words in his speech on Monday.

chhodne wala nahin hoon... (We will not forgive [the culprits of] black money, corruption. No matter what difficulties arise, I will not waver)," he said in his Independence Day speech that year. ■In 2019, cor-

■ In 2018,

Modi mentioned

corruption twice,

and announced

his government's

commitment to

fight it. "Hum

kaala dhan, bhras-

nahin karenge.

Kitni hi afatein

kvon na aayen, is

marg ko toh main

tachar ko maaf

ruption figured twice in Modi's

speech, and he linked it with the dynasty system: "You know very well that corruption and nepotism have damaged our country beyond imagination." ■In 2021, he mentioned corruption once.

Nepotism

Before 2022, the PM had used the term bhai-bhatijawad in his Independence Day

Other words that appeared in the Prime Minister's speech on Monday were virasat, azadi, and Aatmanirbhar Bharat. The last mentioned - self reliance - had been a buzzword in Modi's Independence Day speech in 2020, along with vistarwad, or expansionism. He had used aatmanirbhar once earlier in his 2018 speech. In 2020, as India and China faced off in Ladakh, Modi used vistarwad at least five times. On Monday, the Prime Minister men-

tioned the word rozgar (employment) only twice – the same as in his 2021 speech. He had used rozgar seven times in 2020 and 2017, six times in 2019, five times in 2015, four times in 2016 and 2014, and twice in

In 2014, Modi used the word "job" five times. He mentioned the word once each in his Independence Day addresses of 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2021. Modi's speech this year was a little longer

at 8,353 words than last year; s (7,797 words). He had given longer speeches in 2020 (9.438 words), 2019 (10,131 words), 2018 (9,082 words), 2016 (11,242 words), and 2015 (8,915 words); and shorter ones in 2017 (6,598 words) and 2014 (7,583 words).

A brief history of South Korea's basement homes made famous by 'Parasite'

NEHA BANKA

KOLKATA, AUGUST 15

AUTHORITIES IN South Korea's capital, Seoul, have announced that they will phase out semi-basement flats after 13 people were killed in flooding, and three were killed after being stranded in such homes. The country witnessed record rainfall last week, the heaviest in 80 years, resulting in severe flooding

L 8010440440

and damage to public and private property. Seoul's semi-basement homes were spotlighted by Bong Joon-ho's Oscar-winning 2019 film Parasite, which depicted the life of a low-income family compelled by their socio-economic circumstances to live in a semi-basement home, called banjiha in

What are 'semi-basement' homes?

According to a CNN report, banjihas were first built in the 1970s to serve as bunkers as tensions between South Korea and North Korea increased. Although these spaces had not been built for residential purposes, that changed as Seoul grew as a metropolis over the following decades, and there was need to accommodate migrant workers.

The unsuitability of banjihas for residential purposes is apparent in the way their occupants face problems like inadequate ventilation, drainage, and lack of sunlight. some of which were depicted in Parasite as well. The spaces are often extremely cramped, with sometimes entire families living in them.

But the demand for this type of accommodation has grown in Seoul's real estate market, in which the young and working classes find it difficult to get comfortable housing that is also affordable.

According to a Reuters report from March this year — just before elections in the country — the average price of an apartment in Seoul had more than doubled over



The banjihas have always been susceptible to flooding, as the Oscar-winning film Parasite showed — as did the tragedy in Seoul last week.

the past five years to \$963,000, making it less affordable than New York, Tokyo and Singapore, relative to income. By contrast, the monthly rent for a banjiha would be

around \$450, making it relatively more affordable for salaried workers in their 20s, who might typically earn a monthly salary of around \$1,700.

banjihas come attached with social stigma, one that its residents are conscious of. Parasite highlights this stigma and its associated problems.

But although the rents are cheap, the

Has the problem with banjihas been recognised only now?

Conversations around safety concerns in the banjihas came up in 2010 and 2011 as well, during periods of major flooding. The government had then promised to prohibit banjihas in areas prone to extreme flooding, and passed a law to this effect.

However, according to a report by The Korea Herald newspaper, tens of thousands of banjihas were built even after the law was passed, making use of loopholes.

Parasite brought the problems of banjihas to the fore once again, this time before a massive international audience. But soon after the film was released, restrictions brought on due to Covid-19 meant that the

New Delhi

government stopped paying attention to its plans to address the problems of the semibasement-style homes.

So what is planned now?

This past week, South Korea's President Yoon Suk Yeol visited the flooded semibasement house in Seoul where a family had died in the flooding, a move for which he received some criticism after photos were released. A report by The Korea Herald indicated that Seoul is planning to phase out these homes, but there are concrete plans for rehabilitation of the occupants.

According to CNN, which cited a government statement, the process of phasing out of banjihas "will include a 'grace period' of 10 to 20 years for existing banjihas with building permits, and tenants will be helped to move into public rental housing, or receive housing vouchers". Following the rehabilitation, the government plans to put the banjihas to non-residential use.

12 ECONOMY

Note: Sensex, Nifty, currency and gold/silver data as of August 12 as domestic equity, forex and bullion markets were closed on Monday on acco

SOFT LAUNCH AT DELHI & BENGALURU AIRPORTS

DigiYatra beta rollout: How

contact-less check-in works



SENSEX: 59,462.78 ▲ 130.18 (0.22%) NIFTY: 17,698.15 ▲ 39.15 (0.22%) NIKKEI: 28,871.78 ▲ 324.80 HANG SENG: 20,040.86 ▼ 134.76 FTSE: 7,474.73 ▼ 26.16 DAX: 13,755.19 ▼ 40.66

EBLR, RLLR INCREASE BY 50 BASIS POINTS

Fifth rate hike since Apr: SBI raises MCLR by 20 bps; EMIs 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 EMIs expensive.

MCLR for one year, which is considered important as longterm 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.

PRESSTRUSTOFINDIA

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

ond-biggest oil refining and

fuel marketing company, is

"recalibrating its strategies to

leverage emerging opportu-

nities while mitigating risks,'

its Chairman and Managing Director Arun Kumar Singh

said in the firm's latest an-

As countries across the

world opt for cleaner, carbon-

free fuel, oil companies are

looking at businesses to de-

bon operations. Gas is being

seen as a transition fuel as

electric mobility and hydro-

gen pick pace, "The company

has firmed up plans to diver-

sify 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

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

"Mindful of the need to

of the future like hydrogen.

reinvent ourselves with the

changing times, we are com-

BPCL, which owns 20,217

business," he said.

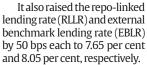
nual report.

BPCL, the nation's sec-

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15

'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



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

SECTOR WATCH

Petroleum

₹1.4L-cr for clean

energy, petrochem,

gas over 5 yrs: BPCL

'FUELS OF

THE FUTURE'

■ BPCL — which

83,685 petrol

pumps in the

country – is

vehicle (EV)

like hydrogen

but also

owns 20,217 out of

looking at not just

selling petrol and

diesel at the bunks

providing electric

charging as well as

fuels of the future

mitted to and progressing to-

wards transforming our fuel

stations into energy stations,

where all forms of energy so-

lutions for mobility, like

solutions, flexi fuels and,

eventually, hydrogen, would

India's oil refining capacity of

251.2 million tonnes. It has

refineries at Mumbai, Bina in

Madhya Pradesh and Kochi

have been identified as pil-

lars of future growth and sus-

gas, renewables, new busi-

nesses (consumer retailing),

e-mobility and upstream,

while the core businesses of

refining and marketing of pe-

troleum products continue to

serve as a solid foundation.

providing stability and con-

sistent cash flows.

Six strategic areas, he said.

These are petrochemicals,

BPCL owns 14 per cent of

be available." he said.

in Kerala.

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

'Inflationary

impact on FMCG

price, margin to

continue in Q2'

material inputs for the FMCG

MIXED APRIL-JUNE RESULTS

including HUL, ITC, Godrej Consumer

Impact on their margins and mostly

■ Drop in volume in some categories

industry is abating, but

Inflationary pressure on some raw

manufacturers expect its impact

on price and margins to continue

were delivered by listed FMCG companies,

Product, Nestle, Dabur and Britannia, with:

est rates by 140 bps since April. So far, major lenders like Bank of Baroda, ICICI Bank, Bank of India, Puniab 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 reporate by the RBI gets automatically re-

flected 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

or at par with

profitable growth in coming

quarters, companies have to:

and business unit profitability

nvestment levels in marketing

Relook channel

■ Work on stabilisation

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**

spective 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.

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 paper-

less passenger processing initia-

tive DigiYatra, rolling out the

beta version of the app for

Android platforms at their re-

What is DigiYatra and how

DigiYatra envisages that trav-

ellers pass through various checkpoints at the airport through paperless and contactless processing, using facial features to establish their identity, which would be linked to the boarding pass. With this technology, the entry of passengers 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 air-

For entry into the airport, passengers will need to scan boarding their 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 jointventure 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 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? 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 im-

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

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

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA LONDON, AUGUST 15

WITH INCREASED consumer port 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 fourwheeler 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 fourwheeler 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 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.

EVs under Skoda brand for India mkt New Delhi: German auto major

VW testing

Volkswagen group has started from the ŠKODA brand in India as it evaluates the products to be brought to the country for electromobility targetting 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

several offshore US Gulf of

Mexico platforms was repaired

late Friday, prompting oil pro-

ducers to reactivate some of the

halted production, a Louisiana

eral offshore oil platforms within

the Gulf coast region that added

to last week's price strength ap-

pear 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**

"Supply disruptions at sev-

official said last week.

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

TUSHARGOENKA

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 & 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 ighlighted the high GST collec-

tions, 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 efiling and Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN) portals.

The users of the e-filing por-



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 —

'\$5tneconomy'

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 Increjected 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 Oil falls over \$5/bbl

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

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

ordered to suspend production

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

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

New Delhi

tal had experienced difficulties

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.

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

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

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

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

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 fearless 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

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

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

Tony Munyonga: A right-handed middleorder batter, played a couple of brilliant cameos against Bangladesh in the recentlyconcluded 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

Victor Nyauchi: Another outstanding seam bowler. Slightly wrong-footed but can surprise the batters with the extra pace and

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.

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

TUSHAR BHADURI

BEATING BANGLADESH in T20 and ODI series may not prepare Zimbabwe to face the might of India - even a side missing sev-

eral 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, espe-

cially 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

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



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

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

"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 sen-

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

"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 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," Chakabya 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 iniury 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 presidentship 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 circumstances, 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 poloponies 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, 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

'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 dis-

"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?"

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FIFA firm on stand, ministry tells CoA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI. AUGUST 15

 $WORLD\,FOOTBALL\,governing\,body\,FIFA\,has$ informed the Sports Ministry that it remains firm in its opposition to individual members' inclusion in the electoral college for the upcoming All India Football Federation's (AIFF) elections. Seeking clarity on FIFA's demands and the sports ministry's stand on the Indian football imbroglio, the Committee of Administrators (CoA) on Monday received a communication from the ministry, sources in the know of things said.

"In the letter, the union sports ministry has mentioned everything about the suggestions given by FIFA during their meeting with the ministry." a source said.

FIFA wants individual members of electoral $college \,to\,come\,from\,the\,state\,associations\,and$ other entities. The letter from the ministry was received a day after the CoA wrote to them asking for concrete advice based on FIFA's requirements and the ministry's stand on the same. "We have given our stand on AIFF in a written reply to CoA which will be put before the court in the next hearing," a ministry official said.

Everything will be placed in front of the Supreme Court on August 17 -- Wednesday -- which is also the last date of filing nomination for the post of AIFF president, left vacant since Praful Patel's ouster by the

FIFA had also earlier said that it was "not a prudent idea" to have equal number of eminent players alongside the state association representatives. However, the world body is okay with the executive committee having 25 per cent former players as Co-opted members. The elections to the executive committee of the AIFF will be held on August 28 and the poll process had started following the notification by the Returning Officer, according to the order of the SC which is hearing the matter.

The top court had approved the time-line of the AIFF elections prepared by the CoA which is currently running the affairs of the national federation.

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

'eminent' players Post derby, sparks fly

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

REUTERS AUGUST 15

THOMAS TUCHEL and his Tottenham Hotspur counterpart Antonio Conte have been charged by the Football Association (FA) following their confrontation after Sunday's heated Premier League draw at Stamford Bridge.

The two managers shook hands after a 2-2 draw where tempers flared but then faced off on the pitch before being separated by players and staff from both teams.

Both managers were also shown red cards by referee Anthony Taylor as a result of the fracas. "It is alleged that the behaviour of both managers was improper following the end of the fixture," the FA said in a statement. Theys

have until Thursday to respond to the charges. The FA is also investigating Tuchel's comments after the German coach slammed Taylor for his decisions.

Tuchel said he felt that Kai Havertz had been fouled in the build-up to Tottenham's first equaliser and that Richarlison was offside and blocking the view of keeper Edouard Mendy.

He added that new signing Marc Cucurella had had his hair pulled by Tottenham centre back Cristian Romero shortly before Kane's dramatic leveller. "Pull someone else's hair, stay on the pitch and attack the last corner. This is for me without any explanation and I don't want to accept it,"Tuchel told reporters. "Both goals should not stand and it's a fair result because we were brilliant, deserved to win. This is my point of view.'

An online petition calling for referee Taylor to not be given Chelsea games was launched on change.org shortly after the draw and has received more than 64,000 signatures. When asked about Chelsea fans' view that Taylor should not be allowed to officiate the club's matches in future, Tuchel said, "Maybe it would be better."

'Huge misinterpretation'

"But honestly, we also have VAR to help make the right decision," Tuchel, who could face sanctions for his criticism of the referee, added. "If he does not see it, I do not blame him. I didn't see it. But we have people at VAR who check this. Then you see it and how can this not be a free kick and a red card? This doesn't even have to do with the referee in this case.

"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

Real's strategy backfires, Barca struggle, Gattuso's Valencia shine

AGENCIES

REAL MADRID recovered from conceding an early goal to beat newly-promoted Almeria 2-1 as Barcelona were held to a goalless draw by Rayo Vallecano on the opening match of La Liga on Sunday. Gennaro Gattuso, meanwhile, debuted as Valencia coach with a 1-0 win against promoted Girona, Here are the talking points from the season's opening weekend:

LEWANDOWSKI STRUGGLES

Rayo Vallecano spoiled Robert Lewandowski's Barcelona debut as they held the Spanish giants for a disappointing goalless draw in front of their home crowd.

It was the first time in the eight seasons that the Bundesliga's second-highest all-time scorer behind the late Gerd Mueller didn't score in a season debut. Against Rayo Vallecano, Lewandowski struggled against Rayo's five-man defence who did a superb job in shackling the twice FIFA Best Player of the Year winner. The Polish striker, who will turn 34 this month, barely touched the ball the entire game as Xavi Hernandez Barca showed some of the same problems of last season, lacking aim and effectiveness despite controlling most of the possession.

It was a far from ideal season debut for

Barcelona, who were Europe's biggest spenders in the close season as they splashed out around 150 million euros trying to end their three-year LaLiga title drought.

GATTUSO'S WINNING DEBUT

Gennaro Gattuso debuted as Valencia coach with a 1-0 win against promoted Girona in a match in which his team played a man down during most of the second half.

Carlos Soler converted a penalty kick in firsthalf stoppage time, then the hosts held on despite Eray Comert's sending off with a straight red card shortly after halftime at Mestalla Stadium. Gattuso took over from José Bordalás, who was fired despite leading Valencia to the Copa del Rey final in his single season in charge.

REAL'S ROTATIONS BACKFIRE

Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti started the season with several rotations to his starting 11 and his gamble almost backfired with his team forced to fight back to beat newly promoted Almeria 2-1, leaving questions about the depth of group.

Ancelotti 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.

Nadal's comeback, Serena's farewell raise stakes at Cincy

NAMIT KUMAR

AUGUST 15

THE WESTERN and Southern Open is one of the biggest non-Grand Slam events on the professional tennis tour.

America's midwestern city of Cincinnati plays host to one of the few events on the circuit that concurrently runs men's and women's draws, and the occasion acquires added significance with it being the final tune-up ahead of the US Open.

This year, the event is not bereft of storylines, and with huge names highlighting an uncharacteristically stacked main draw, the stakes are that much higher.

Nadal, Medvedev look for form

The narrative in Cincinnati is likely to be tailored around the top two seeds – the winners of two of the last three US Opens and the reigning hardcourt Major champions -Rafael Nadal and Daniil Medvedev.

World No. 1 Medvedev, the best vaccinated hard-courter on tour, has a lot of points to defend until the end of the year, including his US Open title. The Russian has had a quiet season ever since losing his two-set lead in the Australian Open final. The Russian won in Los Cabos earlier this month, but his early defeat in Montreal to Nick Kyrgios, who is a good pick to go deep in Cincinnati and New York himself, puts him in desperate need of form.

Nadal, on the other hand, faces a different kind of challenge. The Spaniard has been sensational this year, still unbeaten in Majors and his loss to Carlos Alcaraz in Madrid being his only defeat not related to an injury.

But the Spaniard's success comes despite his mounting physical issues. He started the year fresh off a minor operation for his chronic foot issue, which flared up again at the French Open where he won after using anaesthetic injections. A rib injury broke him down in the Indian Wells final and curtailed the start of his clay season, and an abdominal tear led to his withdrawal from Wimbledon.

Cincinnati - where he plays for the first time since 2017 - is likely to be a test of his physicality more than a title push.

This could leave the door open for a few others. Casper Ruud and Hubert Hurkacz come into the event on the back of an excellent week in Montreal. Alcaraz, placed in a less crowded part of a draw, will be looking to gain some momentum ahead of the US Open. The Spaniard's meteoric rise to the top of the men's game has been marred by a few nervy final losses recently, and he will be looking to add to his breakthrough year.

Kyrgios, having won in Washington and reached the final at Wimbledon, is undoubt-



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 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.

















Ventilated Seats



