# \*The Indian EXPRESS

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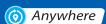
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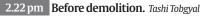
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# All Clear







2.30 pm The towers being demolished. Tashi Tobgyal



2.38 pm The skyline after the demolition. Gajendra Yadav

## Supertech twin towers turn to rubble in 12-sec operation

MALAVIKA PRASAD. **SUKRITA BARUAH** & JIGNASA SINHA NEW DELHI, AUGUST 28

TWELVE SECONDS is all it took for the Supertech twin towers in Noida's sector 93A to crumble to the ground. Delayed for months, the demolition finally took place, in line with the directions of the Supreme Court, on Sunday for violating set rules, building regulations, and fire

The towers came down at exactly 2.30 pm, and a cloud of dust engulfed the area for several minutes afterward.

There was minor damage in the adjacent society. In a state-

## THE DEMOLITION IN NUMBERS

of explosives

decibels: noise

during demolition

tonnes of debris produced

AQI at 2 pm and

3 pm was the same

50,000 tonnes of the debris will be used for reconstruction

The Apex and Ceyane towers came 12 seconds

■ Between 2.30 pm and 2.50 pm. Particulate Matter 10 increased from under 100 ppm to around 1,100 ppm

■ It fell back to under 100 ppm in an hour

ment, the Noida Authority said, "A team from the Noida Authority and Edifice Engineering inspected the spot and found that no damage/defect had been incurred by the structures of Emerald Court and ATS Village. Ten metres of the boundary wall of ATS Village has been damaged and a few glass panes have broken. This will be repaired as soon as

"The demolition process took less than 10 seconds. A plume of smoke and dust rose after the buildings were demolished, and its impact was felt for 10 minutes... The authority used tankers and sweeping machines to clean the dust that settled on the roads.'

Joint Commissioner of Police Love Kumar said: "It was a safe and successful demolition. We **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4** 

#### THE CITY

**COMMAND CENTRE** TO DRONES, OFFICIALS HAD A LONG, HECTIC DAY

FOR NEIGHBOURS, **DAY BEGAN WITH NERVES, ENDED** WITH HOPE PAGES 6, 7

## What next: Removing '80,000 tonnes' of debris in 3 months

JIGNASA SINHA & MALAVIKA PRASAD NOIDA, AUGUST 28

THE TEAM behind the Supertech demolition in Noida now has two key tasks ahead: disposing of 80,000 tonnes of debris, and analysing data from accelerometers, black boxes and other scales placed around the demolition site.

At the demolition site, 20 monitoring systems were set up by both Edifice Engineering, which handled the demolition, and Central Building Research Institute (CBRI), Utkarsh Mehta, partner at Edifice Engineering, said "We have recovered a few (of these systems). The data has been collected. It will take us 1-2 weeks to recover all the systems and collate the data."

Work to remove debris has heen handed over to Ramky Group, with three months to complete the job. "We have been allotted 90 days to clear the debris. We are working with several authorities and the Residents Welfare Association (RWA). We spoke to the RWA as they have been suffering for a long time and will coordinate with them," Mehta said.

"Ramky Group is overlooking the debris management plan **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4** 

## **CWC MEETING: VOTING OCT 17**

## After 21 yrs, date set: 'Anybody can contest' for **Cong chief post**

Anand Sharma seeks clarity on electoral rolls; party: 'no such questions' raised

MANOJCG

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 28

THE CONGRESS Working Committee (CWC) Sunday decided to hold an election for the post of party president on October 17. The meeting coming in the wake of Ghulam Nabi Azad's exit from the party while levelling damaging charges against Rahul Gandhi saw some uncomfortable moments, with G-23 leader Anand Sharma raising questions over the electoral

He said there was no clarity regarding the PCC delegates or the 9.000-odd members of the electoral college, thus pointing fingers at the sanctity of the process itself. Congress president

Crucial polls

FACING CHARGES of dynasty rule from the Modiled BJP, and questions within, the party has a task on its hand to ensure that the elections to the Congress chief post — the first since 2001 — are seen as without fear or favour.

Sonia Gandhi is learnt to have agreed with him on the need for more clarity. Significantly, soon after the

CWC announced the schedule, CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



# XCHANGE

Despite corruption charges, AAP is not willing to answer questions' ANURAG THAKUR

## Pandya's last-over six lifts India to victory in thriller against Pak



**EXPRESS IN UAE** 

SANDIPG AUGUST 28

INDIA WERE within touching distance, requiring just seven runs off five balls. But nerves could still jangle, and it nearly did, as they eked out only one run off two balls. The old-timers could sense a Javed Miandad-



Hardik Pandya after India

Chetan Sharma moment, But Hardik Pandya did not leave it too late. He swung the fourth ball over long-on to wrap up a famous win, one that could eliminate bitter memories of the last time they played Pakistan here, that ended in a galling defeat.

Later, captain Rohit Sharma said that at no point in the game did they surrender hope. "That's the kind of belief we want to have in this group, where you are not in the game and you still manage to pull it off. We want to make sure they have all been given enough clarity around what to do in the middle. I'll take **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4** 



## **WORLD**

**PAK FLOOD TOLL OVER 1,000; NATIONS PLEDGE HELP** 

## won the match. Reuters

## Conspiracies hatched to hold Gujarat back: Modi

**GOPAL KATESHIYA** BHUJ, AUGUST 28

**CLAIMING THAT conspiracies** were hatched to defame Gujarat while the state was battling natural calamities, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Sunday asserted that the state not only defeated the same but went on to progress and emerge as an CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



PM Narendra Modi in Bhuj on Sunday. Express

# IARI: New virus behind

HARISH DAMODARAN

THE INDIAN Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) has confirmed that the mysterious disease resulting in "dwarfing" of rice plants, reported mainly from Punjab and Haryana, has been caused by the Southern Rice Black-Streaked Dwarf Virus

# mystery dwarfing of rice

NEW DELHI. AUGUST 28

(SRBSDV). The virus is spread by

the white-backed plant hopper, an insect pest, which injects it while sucking the sap from

mostly young plants. "The presence of the virus was detected both in the infected plants and the body of the vector insect, whose RNA was isolated. But the virus was not found in the seeds collected from the infected plants. The virus is specific to the phloem CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

## 'Fake bills', a missing partner and TMC leader's guard in new CBI chargesheet

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

**RAVIK BHATTACHARYA** & ATRIMITRA

KOLKATA, AUGUST 28

CATTLE SMUGGLING from markets in Birbhum to Bangladesh via Murshidabad, TMC leader Anubrata Mondal's alleged links to the racket's "kingpin" through a personal security guard, a handwritten diary that provided key leads, "backdated fake bills" and a partner gone missing.

These are the major findings



TMC leader Anubrata Mondal was arrested on Aug 11. File

detailed by the CBI in its third supplementary chargesheet submitted to a special court in

Asansol this month in the crossborder cattle smuggling racket between 2015 and 2017 that also

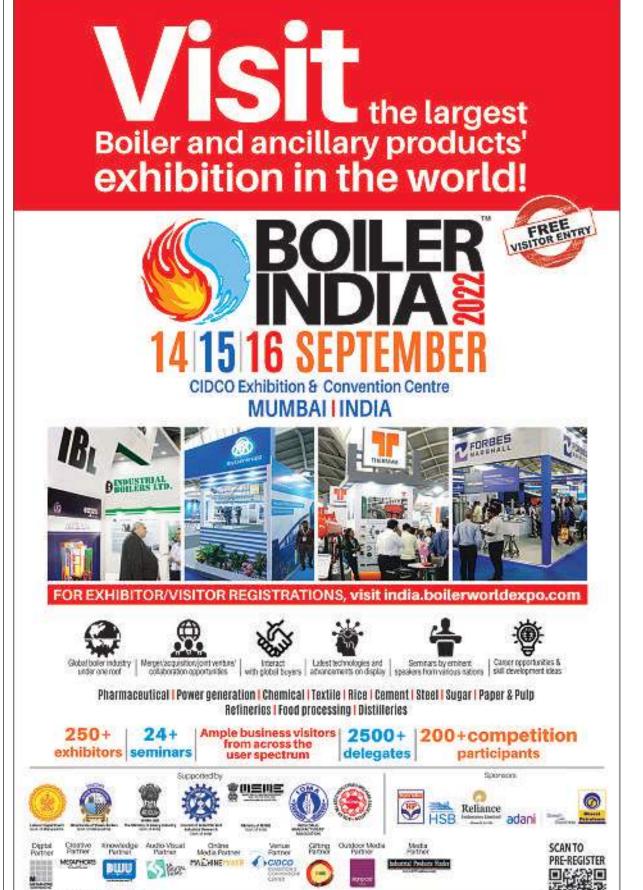
allegedly involved a "nexus" of BSF officials and Customs per-The case has political impli-

cations with Mondal, who was arrested on August 11, denying the charges and the TMC describing the probe as a move by the Centre to target its leaders The CBI's arrest of Mondal on August 11 came days after the Enforcement Directorate (ED) raided premises linked to former TMC minister Partha Chatterjee and associates in the alleged school jobs scam and claimed to have recovered over Rs 40 crore

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4** 

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## All Clear

are inspecting the site to check for any damage outside the building. We believe everything was done in a careful manner."

It took nearly 3,700 kg of explosives to bring the two towers down. What is left behind now is 80.000 tonnes of construction and demolition waste, of which 50.000-55.000 tonnes will be used for filling at the site. The rest will be sent to a construction and demolition waste processing plant. This exercise has to be completed within three months, and the Ramky Group has been assigned the task.

Within minutes of the demolition, dust control measures such as anti-smog guns and water tankers were pressed into service. According to the Air Quality Monitoring station at Noida's Sector 125, despite the dust generated at the site by the demolition, there was no change in the overall AQI value, which remained at 122 between 2 pm and 3 pm.

Supertech had handed over the mega demolition project to Edifice Engineering, a Mumbaibased firm that partnered with Africa-based Jet Demolition.

At a press conference in the evening, Jigar Chedda, partner at Edifice, said: "One side of the ATS building compound wall has been damaged but it's minor. There's no rubble on the main road. We also checked the crack gauges on neighbouring buildings. There's not much change. The buildings are fine."

Joe Brinkmann from Jet Demolitions said: "Our priority was that nobody gets hurt. There's no damage from ground vibration or structural issues. We had suspicions since one of the buildings is just 9 metres away (from the towers) but there's been no damage. Our biggest challenge was the robust structure of the twin towers. We are very happy with the results. There was one wall that was damaged but nothing else was affected. Everything worked out. We had a challenge as we only has 6 months."

Residents of Supertech Emerald Court, who had gone to court against the construction of the two towers, as well as those from the neighbouring ATS Village, were asked to evacuate their apartments by 7 am on Sunday.

Early in the morning, a stream of cars left the Emerald Court complex – of which the twin towers were a part - and ATS Village as the last residents evacuated. The majority had left the previous night. While many residents headed to homes of relatives or friends, some spent the day at the Parsvnath Prestige complex, which shares a boundary wall with ATS Village, and lay just outside the evacuation zone.

As the towers came down, residents in the Parsvnath Prestige residential complex, many of whom owned flats in the Supertech project, broke into cheers, celebrating their victory against the builder after a nine-year-long court battle.

The day, though meticulously planned, was hectic amid the police presence and high security arrangements. Although locals were advised to stay away from the 'exclusion zone', many of them rushed to the Jaypee Hospital flyover and Sector 93 chowk to witness the spectacle. Many families also set up camp at the Sector 93A park.

Vipin Kumar, a resident of Swarnim Vihar, said, "I have seen residents and others struggling to get the building razed for a decade. I came with RWA members and my friends to see it. In 10 seconds, the building vanished.'

Sushil Kumar Nigam, owner of a glass-manufacturing unit, came with his brothers and children to see the demolition. "It's a win for all of us. My childhood friend Mahendra Jain took this matter to court and fought for years. He is no more, but his good work paid off. This is bigger than any festival for us. A clear message has been sent."

More than 500 policemen, 100 firefighters, 70 RRF personnel and NDRF teams guarded all the streets near the building. At 2 pm, Noida Police Commissioner Alok Singh, Joint CP Love Kumar, DM Suhas LY, and Noida CEO Ritu Maheshwari came to the Jaypee flyover in an 'Incident

## Debris

Initially, they were apprehensive looking at the quantum of debris but have now agreed. In total, the debris is 80,000 tonnes. Almost 50.000 tonnes from the total will be used for the basement and other recon-

Command Centre' van.

## **FROM PAGE ONE**

struction... There's a lot of steel, concrete and other material which we will reuse. As a contractor, we never ask our client about the building's violations. My job is to get things done. We had a rigorous site visit exercise. There are 45 years of experience (from Jet Demolition, the project partner) and our 15 years that have gone into this. We kept working till the last minute to check everything," he said.

On August 24, Edifice Engineering had submitted a debris management plan before the Noida Authority according to which 36,000 cubic metres of debris would be generated as a result of the demolition. "Out of the 36,000 cubic metres, 23,133 cubic metres will settle in the basement of the two towers while the balance 12,867 will settle in the surrounding area in the building premises which will have to be removed. The debris falling in the basement is important to cover the same to prevent any accidents," Mayur Mehta, project manager of the demolition at Edifice Engineering, had said.

Joe Brinkmann from Jet Demolition said Sunday's demolition was perhaps the first to be carried out where nearby buildings were in such close proximity. "There are only a few buildings in the world that are 100 metres high. Also, there are other buildings in very close proximity. I don't think it's been done this way before," he said.

Asked about the damage to the boundary wall of the adjacent housing complex, ATS Village, and the textile used to cover the structures getting torn, Jigar Chedda, a partner at Edifice Engineering, said, "The textile matter is torn because of winds. There's minor damage. We are looking into it. One side of the ATS Village compound wall has been damaged, but it's minor. There's no rubble on the main road. We also checked the crack gauges on neighboring buildings; there's not much

On Thursday, after carrying out a site inspection and meeting with all stakeholders, Noida CEO Ritu Maheshwari had said that the debris generated will be processed at a construction and demolition waste management

plant in a scientific manner. A statement issued by the Authority on Friday had said that around 28,000 metric tonnes of construction and demolition waste will be sent to the processing plant situated in Sector 80 where it will be processed

scientifically. The cost of the project, however, has escalated, officials said. "We did a test blast and had a joint meeting with Joe (Brinkmann). He suggested more blast floors be added. The cost is around much more than what was expected," Chedda

Mehta had earlier explained the difference between the implosion at Kerala's Maradu Municipality, which Edifice carried out two-and-a-half years ago and the twin towers: "In Kerala, there was maximum 3-4 km of drilling and we did not blast a lot of floors. There, in an 18-storeyed building, we blasted only 5-6 floors. Here, in a 32storeyed building, we are blasting almost 18 floors. The quantum of drilling, the quantum of dismantling of internal and external brickworks, wrapping of the buildings, the process of charging the buildings with almost 3700-kg explosives, everything is more than what we undertook in Maradu, Kerala. The work that underwent in Maradu was around 20 per cent of what we have undertaken with the twin towers."

## Modi

example for the country.

"There was a time when Gujarat was facing one crisis after another. While Gujarat was battling natural calamities, there started a series of conspiracies. One after another a conspiracy was hatched to give a bad name to Gujarat, in the country as well as in the world, and to block investment here,' Modi said while addressing a public meeting in Bhuj, the district headquarters of Kutch, after launching projects worth more than Rs 5,000 crore, including the Kutch branch canal

of the Narmada project. One of the projects was Smriti Van, a memorial to the victims of the devastating January 2001 earthquake with Kutch as its epicentre. Modi had been brought in as Chief Minister by the BJP months later to manage the aftermath.

The PM appeared to be referring to the condemnation his government faced in the wake of the 2002 Gujarat riots that followed soon after, in India as well as abroad. At the time, Modi had also faced opposition from the Medha Patkar-led Narmada Bachao Andolan over the ambitious Sardar Sarovar Patel dam project.

Gujarat "left behind every conspiracy", Modi said Sunday. "It brought in a new industrial policy and charted a new path of development and Kutch benefited the most from it... Today, Kutch is home to the world's biggest cement plant, No. 2 in the world in welded pipes manufacturing... It is an example not only for India but also the entire

In his speech, Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel said "urban Naxals" had opposed the Narmada dam project, specifically naming Medha Patkar.

Speaking before the PM addressed the meeting, Patel said: "On this occasion, when Narmada water has reached Kutch, we should also remember who those people were who had deprived Kutch of this water for nearly five decades. We all know who those urban Naxals who had opposed the Narmada dam project were... One of those urban Naxals was Medha Patkar. We all know which political party these people were associated with."

Without taking names, the CM added that a party had given her a ticket to fight parliamentary elections. Patkar had unsuccessfully fought the 2014 Lok Sabha polls from Mumbai North East on an Aam Aadmi Party

"These people tried to bring the Naxal ideology to Gujarat by misguiding people of the state. But the smart people of Gujarat did not let them succeed," Patel

AAP is trying to make inroads into Gujarat in the coming elections, and is threatening

to give the BJP a stiff contest. Patel said Modi had struggled hard against anti-Narmada and anti-Gujarat elements to bring water to Kutch. "As the Gujarat CM, he even sat on a fast against the then Central government (led by the UPA) to bring water to the dry regions of the state. Within 17 days of assuming the office of PM, he gave permission to install gates on the

dam." Modi said he always had faith that Kutch would overcome the earthquake disaster. "I also said that what people see as a desert, I see in it the gateway of India. What I had dreamed in that difficult situation in 2001-02, when Kutch was asleep under the shawl of death, has come true."

Modi added that he dreams of a developed India by 2047, when the country will mark the jubilee diamond Independence. "Those who have heard and seen me in Kutch (believe in it)," he said, adding that Kutch's development post the 2001 quake was a subject of research across the world.

At the inauguration of the earthquake memorial, Modi said: "Many emotions went through my heart today... With all humility I may say that in commemorating the departed souls, the Smriti Van Memorial is at par with the 9/11 memorial in the US and the Hiroshima Memorial in Japan.'

Modi said he had reached Kutch the day after the earthquake. "I was not the chief minister of Gujarat then, I was a simple party worker. I didn't know in what way, and how many people I would be able to help. But I decided that I will be here among you in that hour of grief. And when I became the chief minister, the experience of the service helped me a lot," he said.

## New virus

(plant tissues that transport sugar and organic nutrients from the leaves to other parts) and is not transmitted by seed or grain," A K Singh, director of IARI, the premier New Delhibased institute, told The Indian

An IARI team surveyed a total of 24 fields in Sonepat, Panipat, Karnal, Kurukshetra, Ambala and Yamunanagar districts of Haryana. In the fields where the disease was recorded, the infected plants varied from 2 to 10 per cent. In a severely-affected field in Panipat, up to 20 per cent incidence was recorded.

"The affected plants showed severely stunted appearance. The roots were poorly developed and turned brownish. The infected tillers can be easily pulled out." the IARI said in its report that has been submitted to the Union Agriculture Ministry.

The institute carried out a comprehensive investigation to diagnose the cause of the mystery "dwarfing" disease, using three independent methods: transmission electron microscopy, RT-PCR and real-time quantitative PCR.

The first method indicated the presence through visualisation of the SRBSDV, which belongs to the Fijivirus genus and was first detected in China in 2008. The second method confirmed it by "using specific primers targeting two different genomic components of the virus". The third "further validated" the infection in the symptomatic samples and the white-backed plant hopper vector, besides confirming the absence of the virus in the seeds collected from the plants.

The IARI investigation has revealed the infection in as many as 12 rice varieties, both basmati (Pusa-1962, 1718, 1121, 1509, 1847 and CSR-30) and non-basmati (PR-114, 130, 131, 136, Pioneer Hybrid and Arize Swift Gold). "In general, the non-basmati varieties were more affected than basmati. Also, the late-sown paddy had less infestation than the early

sown," the report said. Given that the virus is exclusively transmitted by the whitebacked plant hopper, the IARI has advised farmers to monitor the fields every week for the presence of the insect. The pest can be managed by spraying recommended dosages of 'buprofezin', 'acetamiprid', 'dinotefuran' or 'flonicamid' insecticides at 15-day intervals.

TMC leader According to the latest chargesheet in the cattle-smuggling case, the CBI started connecting the dots after seizing the handwritten diary of an employee of Mohammad Enamul Haque. Haque has been described as the "kingpin" and was arrested in February this year by ED, which is also probing the case – he was arrested

by the CBI in November 2020. The diary of the employee, identified as Manoj Sinha, "revealed" that "various amounts were paid to one Anal on differ-

ent dates", the agency states. "Anal was an employee" of Haque and "used to work under (the) direct supervision of Sheikh Abdul Latif, partner of Md Enamul Haque," the CBI states in the chargesheet. The partner Latif, it states, allegedly managed the operation, including "political leaders protection and patronage". Latif is absconding.

According chargesheet, the role of the employee Anal was to procure cattle from local "pashu haats" (cattle markets) in Birbhum and "transport" them to "earmarked areas of Murshidabad nearing international border of India-Bangladesh"

"From these dedicated places in Murshidabad, the cattle was then smuggled to Bangladesh through the riverine border of India-Bangladesh due to active nexus of BSF officials," the CBI states, adding that cattle was also procured by Haque from Customs auctions.

The CBI had earlier filed a chargesheet in the case followed by two supplementary chargesheets. Apart from the role of Haque, these chargesheets described the alleged role of BSF officers, businessmen and a section of the West Bengal police and administration in the racket, and their alleged links to the cattlesmugglers.

## Security guard's role

The third supplementary chargesheet, filed on August 6, goes on to draw an alleged link between the smugglers and the TMC leader through "Sehegal Hossain (who) was appointed police constable in 2005" and "since 2011 has been working as personal security guard to Trinamool Congress leader Anubrata Mondal who is also district president of TMC in Birbhum district of West Bengal". Hossain was arrested on June 9 this year by the CBI.

According chargesheet, the guard "used to collect illegal gratification from accused Md Enamul Haque and Sk Abdul Latif on behalf of Shri Anubarata Mondal for extending protection and patronage towards continuing the illegal cattle procurement from the local pashu haats of Birbhum and to transport such cattle to Bangladesh".

The CBI has also alleged that Hossain, the guard, engaged "in criminal conspiracy with other accused persons" and "used to collect illegal gratification on behalf of Shri Anubrata Mondal for arranging protection and patronage towards continuing the illegal business of cattle procurements".

"By that means he (Hossain)

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## **EXPRESS** AUDIO

Game Time: Eye on the World Cup as India faces Pakistan in Asia Cup

**NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY** 

Discussing India's chances against Pakistan in the Asia Cup match, and what the team will need to consider if it hopes to win.

## 'Anybody can contest' for Cong chief post

former Maharashtra chief minister and another G-23 member. Prithvirai Chavan, told The Indian Express that while "we will be happy if Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot contests" for the top post if Sonia and Rahul Gandhi are not willing, the party will not survive if someone is made a "puppet president".

Sharma said elections should be held for all posts, including for members of the CWC. The CWC meeting, held virtually and presided over by party president Sonia, who along with her children Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra is abroad for a medical checkup, unanimously accepted the schedule placed before it by Madhusudan Mistry, the head of the Congress Election Authority. According to the schedule

announced by the party, the window for filing of nominations is September 24 to September 30. The last date of withdrawal is October 8 and the election, if there is more than one candidate, will take place on October 17, with the counting of votes and declaration of results on October 19.

The last time a contest took place for the post of Congress president was way back in 2001, when Jitendra Prasada contested against Sonia. The electoral college for the

party president's post consists of delegates of Pradesh Congress Committees (PCCs). Sharma is learnt to have said that Mistry should explain the election of the delegates, pointing out that he had received a lot of complaints that no meetings of the booth, block or district committees or PCCs were held. He asked how the lists were prepared then.

Suggesting violation of the sanctity of the process, he said the lists must be made available to every committee before the nomination process begins. Sonia is learnt to have suggested that it should be done. Mistry is learnt to have replied that the lists will be made available to the PCCs, and

already checked and signed the lists. He said any person who wants to file a nomination will also be given the lists. Some of the G-23 leaders said later that Mistry's statement that the lists will be made available to the PCCs before the nomination begins is a confir-

mation that even the PCCs don't

know who the delegates from

that the returning officers have

a state are. Addressing a press conference after the CWC meeting, AICC general secretary in charge of communication Iairam Ramesh declared: "No questions were raised at the CWC."

He then handed over the microphone to Mistry, who interestingly said: "Jinhone yeh sawal uthave, woh usi process main se guzre hain. Aur usi

process aur usi procedure ke andar se yeh sab kuchch hua hai (The ones who raised these questions, they have gone through the same process, and it is that which has been followed). They were a party to it. So I don't have to say more."

Mistry added that the electoral college consists of nearly 9000 delegates. The party was to elect a new

president to replace Sonia Gandhi between August 21 and September 20. But now the process has spilled over into October. Asked about this, AICC general secretary (organisation) K C Venugopal, who addressed the press conference with Ramesh and Mistry, said: "There are a lot many issues... Agitations, programmes, and the final decision on PCC members... should be done in a proper way... It is quite natural... a 28-day delay basically." Venugopal added that it was

an "open election" and "anybody can contest". According to the Congress constitution, all that an aspirant candidate is required to do to become eligible to contest is to get 10 PCC delegates to propose his or her name. Asked about attempts to persuade Rahul to contest, Venugopal said: "Now elections are already announced. Those who want to contest as Congress president should file a nomination before September 30th."

Ramesh said the Congress is the only political party in which elections are held for all posts, including that of president. "Elections have taken place, will take place and will continue to take place," he said.

Chavan told The Indian Express he was happy that elections for the post of president have been announced "All the organs of the party should be filled by elections, not by nominations," he said. However, he added, "There should not be a puppet president and genuine elections should take place."

While the Gandhis have reportedly decided to throw their weight behind Gehlot, he is said to be undecided. Some leaders said Sunday that he wants to continue as Chief Minister. "I am told he is ready to take over provided he is allowed to continue as Chief Minister or a person of his choice is made the CM," one leader said.

Asked about Gehlot, Chavan said he has no objections to the name. "We have been asking for elections. If Rahul Gandhi or anybody from the family is not going to be the president as Rahul Gandhi has said... then we must respect his views and wishes. We cannot keep the position vacant for a very long time... Anybody can contest... If somebody says Gehlot is ready. we will be very happy if he contests. He is a very senior Congressman, with a background in administration, organisation, party, the entire gamut... good if he contests."

also amassed huge wealth from the said accused persons which was nothing but the proceeds of crime of cattle smuggling to Bangladesh by the accused persons," the chargesheet states.

According to the CBI, Call Detail Records (CDR) show that the guard Hossain "has been in close nexus with chargesheeted accused Md. Enamul Haque during the period of offence" while 'documents have been seized showing relationship of Sehegal Hossain with Sk. Abdul Latif".

"...he (Hossain) used to receive phone calls meant for Anubrata Mondal as evident from the current CDR...There are a total of 16 mobile phone calls between accused Md Enamul Haq and Sehegal in the year 2017," the chargesheet states while listing all the calls with timelines.

The chargesheet also points to property dealings and vehicle purchases worth over Rs 5 crore of Hossain, his mother and wife -- and refers to them as "shadow purchase" which, it says, is grossly disproportionate to the total income of Sehegal Hossain and his family members during such period".

For instance, it states: "A landed property was transferred in the name of Smt. Latifa Khatun (mother of Sehegal Hossain) via two persons who stood as shadow purchase/seller. The value of the land was shown very less in the sale deed. There are oral evidence which support that Sehegal had received ransom amount of illegal gratification from accused Md. Enamul Hag on behalf of Anubrata Mondal for protection and patronage of illegal cattle busi-

"During the period 2015-2022, Shri Sehgal Hossain and his family members purchased almost total 59 immovable properties located... In Domkol, Bolpur, Suri, Bidhannagar, Rajarhut etc. Although no such declaration was given by him to department," chargesheet states.

"Besides, there were heavy vehicles purchased in the name of Samaiya Khandokar that is wife of Sehgal Hossain who was appointed as a school teacher in 2015. Thus total expenditure (Approximately) comes to Rs, total assets and expenditure has come to Rs. 5,47,90,867," it

1,37,24,846/-, after computation

#### Missing partner The chargesheet also elabo-

rates on the alleged role of Haque's partner, Abdul Latif, who is yet to be traced. According to the CBI

Chargesheet, "Sk. Abdul Latif was the key person of accused Md. Enamul Haque to procure cattle from Ilambazaar Poshu Haat and then to transport such cattle to the suitable nearest location to the international Indo-Bangladesh border. Moreover documents have been seized showing the relationship of Sehegal Hossain with Sk. Abdul Latif of Illambazar, partner of Md. Enamul Haque."

The chargesheet states that Latif also allegedly "participated in cattle auctions of Jangipur Customs Office in Murshidabad, in almost 16 auctions" and that the "cattle purchased by him through auction...was also smuggled to Bangladesh in active connivance with accused Md. Enamul Haque." It accuses Latif of being the

"key person to arrange Mantu Mallick@Aftabuddin Mallick of Mallick Pashu Haat at Burbhum for accused Md. Enamul Haque". It states that Mallick was behind "back dated fake cattle sale bills (Char) (that) were issued in the name of accused Enamul Hague". "These back dated bills were created by the staff of Mantu Malllick in order to justify that cattle procured by accused Md. Enamul Hague from Customs Auctions were sold to such local Haat (market) but not smuggled". More than a dozen people

have been arrested in the case so far. The CBI's FIR in the case, registered on September 21, 2020 charged the accused under IPC sections 120B (criminal conspiracy), 409 (criminal breach of trust) and 420 (cheating), and various sections of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988

#### India-Pak match wins like this over one-sided wins," he said.

Agree or disagree with him. this was one cracker of a game. The Indian chase of 148 did-

New Delhi

n't start too well. It took just two balls into the Indian innings for debutant Naseem Shah to strike -- the fast, length ball that held the line a trifle hustling K L Rahul into an undecided halfdefensive thrust, the split-second dilemma that saw the ball brush his inside edge and crash onto the stumps.

One half of the stadium erupted; the other plunged into mourning. Naseem and his colleagues were wheeling away in celebration. After they were shut out for a competitive but not formidable 147, Pakistan needed a spark of inspiration. Their batting had none of it, outthought by India's inspired seamers led by Bhuvneshwar Kumar. But in the end, Naseem's magic did not suffice, as India surpassed the target with five wickets in hand but not after enduring nervous moments, taking the audience along an emotional rollercoaster.

Earlier, it was the other half's turn to celebrate. After Rahul walked back, India could have been 2/2 four balls into the game, But Fakhar Zaman failed to cling onto a fairly straightforward catch at second slip off Virat Kohli, who drove away from his body, his feet creasestruck. Instead, Kohli was giftwrapped a second chance. Such moments could reverse momentum in high pressure games as these, and it did, as Pakistan suddenly turned ponderous and moody.

Kolhi sensed the moment of edginess, astute a reader of the game as he is. He launched a rousing counterattack. The whippy Shahnawaz Dahani was emphatically pulled through mid-wicket. It was classical Kohli, rocking fully back, getting on top of the bounce and stamping his wrists over it with a regal authority. The over after, he pulled medium pacer Haris Rauf. He did not get the connection he might have wished for, but the topedge soared over the ropes for a six. A sense of foreboding crept in among Pakistan's fans, the sinking feeling that it was not going to be their day. And in the end, it was not.

At the same time, the belief among the Indian crowd grew. They got jubilant, and their excitement only grew when Kolhi

essayed a brace of glorious fours, a swipe over covers and a smack through midwicket. Kohli seemed in his elements. once again that master orchestrator of chases.

Then landed another twis one of the many the game would behold. Mohammad Nawaz ended Rohit Sharma's laborious knock off 12 from 19 balls before he came back to dispatch Kohli to the pavilion in his next over.

Suddenly, India were 53/3, their top three ejected. Needless to say, the voice of Pakistan fans picked up. The neutrals could feel a sweaty excitement with the match rolling onto a heady climax, as Suryakumar Yadav, India's best batsman in terms of current form, and Ravindra Jadeja undertook the rescue operation. Without taking undue risks, they kept the required run-rate under check. Jadeja, promoted up the order, demonstrated his readiness with a muscled six off Nawaz, whereas Yadav picked boundaries without breaking a sweat. He just picked gaps and glided the ball to these gaps with

velvety stroke-play. The pair seemed to be shepherding India to safety before Naseem produced another moment of magic. He demolished Yadav's off-stump with a thunderous back-of-length ball that the batsman looked to slog, a rare ungainly attempt. The fortunes of the match then ebbed and flowed. Often, for all the attention, India-Pakistan games have tended to be one-sided affairs of late. But not this one.

Iadeja, in the company of Pandya, took the match further away from Pakistan with a partnership of 52 runs in 5.1 overs. Jadeja masterfully tore into Naseem rather than playing him out. A wide full ball was slaughtered through extra cover while the follow-up short ball was sledge-hammered down the crowd. Jadeja, the batsman, had cracked the Test code long ago. Here, he was displaying his white-ball prowess. But on the first ball of the final over, he perished to the left-arm spin of Nawaz, ironically Pakistan's most productive bowler of the day. But Hardik was there to finish the game. He didn't do a Miandad or a Dhoni, he did a Hardik



## Adding style to sports The Central Government is giving much emphasis on sports, talent

hunt and encouraging the sporting fraternity at large. What are your observations and suggestions, if any?

India is the youngest nations in the world and holds a lot of promise, especially in the arena of sports. There has always been an abundance of naturally gifted sportsmen in the country. All they need is proper training, thorough support, access to worldclass sports training facilities and the right guidance. The government has taken a lot of praise worthy initiatives and is doing a commendable job to ensure that our talented athletes and sportspersons lack nothing in their pursuit for attaining excellence. India's remarkable performance in sports, in the recent times, has boosted the morale of our sportsmen and taken their desire to push the envelope even further in their respective sports Initiatives like Khelo India, Fit India, Yoga Day etc have had huge success in building the health and fitness culture in India . We should also try and bid for Asian Games and Commonwealth Games . Such international events would help in building a long term infrastructure for sports in India.

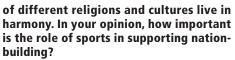
There has been an increase in medal tally at international sports competitions, such as the Olympics and CWG. According to you, has Indian sport matured, reference to some outstanding performances?

Indian sportspersons always had the talent, the dedication and the determination that play an instrumental role in helping win international sports competitions. That combined with the added advantage of an effective system along with the availability of the best infrastructure and every facility that is needed for proper training, has given them the competitive advantage to make the country proud with their spectacular performances in various sports competitions. Though we still not have achieved our due share of medals in global events like the Olympics, the results have definitely started to be-

India is a land of diversity, where people

With its motto, "From Indian, by Indian, to *Indian*", at the core of its relentless, passionate and purposeful pursuit for surpassing expectations in shaping the country's Sports Apparels and Equipments manufacturing sector,

> Shiv-Naresh, as a globally renowned brand, is a market leader whose name is synonymous with the ultimate destination for today's successful and stylish sportsperson. On the occasion of National Sports Day, Mr. Shiv Prakash **Singh,** the Director of Shiv-Naresh Sports. shared his thoughts with us.



At the core of nation-building is the unification of the people of a country and a shared sense of national pride among them. Since ages sports have proven to be a potent tool for nation-building. Any type of sport and at any level, never fails to bring people of a nation together in a remarkable and inexplicable way. This can be witnessed not only among players and teams participating in sports events and competitions but also among spectators, who might be from different parts of a country but forget their regional differences and unitedly root for their national teams and the players representing their country. The shared celebrations on Indian sportsmen's victories and the shared tears that are shed on their defeat, reflect the power of sports in connecting and unifying the people of our nation.

More and more women are participating

in sports and making the country proud with their outstanding performances. How do you view the future of women in sports in India?

The changing face of the country has also found its expression in the field of sports, with women who aspire to build their careers in sports, receiving unprecedented levels of support from all corners of the society and astounding us with their phenomenal performances. This is a welcome change. The women of our country have the potential to exceed expectations in every area of life, including sports. It can be said with certainty that the future of women in sports in India is brighter than ever. Their increased participation in all types of sports is only helping break certain stereotypical notions, promoting gender equality in sports and inspiring more and more girls to pursue their dreams. In the recently concluded Commonwealth Games, 2022 of the total 22 gold medals won by India, eight were won exclusively by women, including a his-

toric win at Lawn Bowls.

#### As a premier sporting accessories brand, how is Shiv Naresh supporting sports in India leveraging it to global standards?

Rigorous practice and intensive training helps athletes break records and accomplish their goals. Besides this, functional and innovative sportswear provides a competitive edge to sports persons, bringing them a step closer to their objective of winning. Hence, like the renowned global sports brands we are building technology in our products. New and innovative fabric technologies are being used to help the wearer improve his performance. Fibers that are light weight, soft, easy to maintain, do not shrink, and dry quickly are normally used. We are also launching a new range of footwear for runners and specialized footwear for sports like badminton, tennis, cricket, hockey and football. We have also undertaken projects for building running tracks, hockey fields, badminton and tennis, football fields etc in various states which are at par with global standards



What is the latest in product range that Shiv Naresh had researched developed and launched in the market, particularly in

We have an exciting pipeline of new and Innovative Products and Categories. Diversifying into newer Growth Categories in Footwear, Women etc. We have also developed a roadmap to achieve our sustainability vision. For us, Green is the new Black for

**What differentiates Shiv Naresh from rest** of its competitors across markers of cost, quality, range and durability?

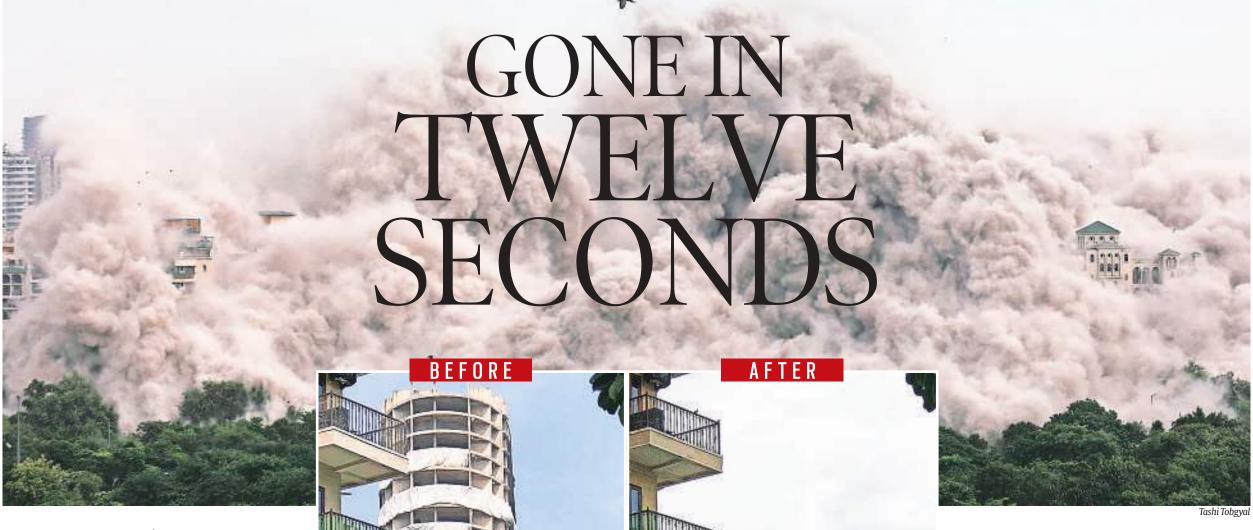
Shiv Naresh is well known as a VALUE PROPOSI-TION in the Market. High on Quality, Functionality, Performance and Affordability. We are committed to rendering High Quality Best Sports Products to Everyone - "BRAND FOR BHARAT". With unwavering enthusiasm, commitment, and continuous efforts, Shiv Naresh has been offering world-class products to our greatest champions and Emerging talent for over three decades now.

What are your Expansion Plans?

Strengthen our Omnichannel presence by leveraging our Authentic Sports Brand Leadership. By improving the customer experience, we can accelerate the expansion of the E-comm channel while strategically focusing on establishing an unique retail model by opening over 50 stores in the next



# 6 THE CITY D-DAY AT SUPERTECH TWIN TOWERS



## Command centre to drones, officials had a long, hectic day

**MALAVIKA PRASAD** NOIDA, AUGUST 28

ALL EYES were on Noida as the Supertech twin towers were demolished at 2.30 pm Sunday leaving a large dust cloud in its wake. A deafening roar was heard as the implosion happened and slight tremors were felt in areas lying in the vicinity of the towers.

In the hours leading up to the demolition, the vicinity saw a flurry of activity with top officials taking stock of preparations from an incident command centre. drones monitoring the towers, and tankers and anti-smog stationed to carry out the clean-up.

Roads in the exclusion zone, including those right outside such as portions of Gehja road and Jaypee flyover, had heavy police barricading, with entry restricted to the general public. An incident command centre was parked on Jaypee flyover where Noida Police, along with traffic police the situation since early Sunday.

The incident command centre was a hub of activity — two large LED TVs fed CCTV footage of cameras placed around the twin towers, personnel monitored the on-ground situation, along with radio equipment through which all police personnel were connected to the centre.

Speaking to The Indian Express, DCP(Central Noida) and Incident Commander Rajesh S said. "The incident command centre is a mobile unit. We get feed from seven CCTV cameras positioned around the exclusion zone, which is being monitored at the centre. We have two traffic police personnel who are monitoring traffic and giving live updates, including diversions and congestion points... We have one expert from radio department. There are five incident sub-commanders who will communicate with me through radio. Before the demolition, I will take an okay signal from all incident sub-commanders, and six people who are allowed at the site will conduct a final round of inspection. There is an initiation point which is around 100-120 metres away from the towers, where I will be present at an incident command

post, Once the sub-commanders give okay signals, I will give a signal to the blast team and the countdown will begin.' DCP Traffic Ganesh Prasad

Saha was also present at the flyover and monitored traffic along the Noida-Greater Noida expressway and other areas via CCTV footage. On the impact of demolition on traffic, Saha said earlier in the day, "Since 7 am the roads around the towers were barricaded and entry of vehicles/persons was prohibited. People who are evacuating are allowed to do so but other than them, no one can enter the vicinity of the towers. Traffic on Noida-Greater Noida expressway is normal at the moment. The expressway will be shut down 15 minutes before the demolition. Post demolition, once dust settles down, we will try our best to open the expressway in half an hour. Managing closure of the expressway will be the biggest challenge for the Noida Police. A lot of comor for long journeys, for them, we have laid down diversion schemes. Google Maps has an auto-update so commuters can access alternate routes."

Several key faces, including Utkarsh Mehta and Mayur Mehta of Edifice Engineering, the firm responsible for razing the towers. were spotted entering the centre, along with an official from Jet Demolition, Joint Commissioner of Noida Police, Love Kumar, was also seen inspecting preparations. Addressing the press, Kumar said. "A 400-500 metre exclusion zone has been created, which has been

At noon, water tankers were seen arriving at the flyover just as Noida Police commissioner Alok Singh arrived at the command centre. District Magistrate Suhas LY was also present, who along with Singh took note of preparations and the on-ground situation

Addressing the press, Singh



Traffic along the Noida-Greater Noida expressway and other areas was monitored via CCTV footage. Abhinav Saha

barricaded and entry of people is prohibited... Ambulances have been positioned at strategic points. Post-blast cleaning equipment by Noida Authority has been put in place along with fire tenders. Residents from both Supertech Emerald Court and ATS Evacuation has been carried out and ensured by committees formed by RWAs. Only a few people who are involved in the demolition preparations are on site. they will also be evacuated before the time allotted for demolition."

the area for 15 minutes. Monojit Majumdan

accessible through the centre.

out by several agencies for the demolition. Noida Police will follow orders of the Supreme Court to the best of their abilities. We have created an exclusion zone. and all living beings from this cluding pets and strays. Sub-incident commanders are inspecting assigned areas, and we are also monitoring on-ground situation through this command centre. Edifice Engineering has factored in the distance between one of the towers in Emerald Court and the twin towers, and in case there is an emergency, the National Disaster Relief Force (NDRF) teams have been strategically deployed to look after it." Singh then went to meet NDRF officials.

said, "For the past six months,

preparations have been carried

At around 1.30 pm, CEO Noida Authority Ritu Maheshwari arrived at the centre. With around half an hour left for demolition, Noida Police sent drones towards the towers to take a final look around. Countdown began with barely minutes to the demolition. and with a deafening noise the towers come down. Dust was seen flying into the parks facing the towers, and it began to dissi-

pate shortly after. At this point, large anti-smog guns were switched on. As part of the dust management plan of the Authority, tankers began sprayingroads with water. Around 4.30 pm, mechanical sweeping machines and sanitation staff were deployed for the cleaning process with more water tankers.

#### with 900 bricks, at black boxes **ATS Village** damaged 70-80 ■ Several window crack gauges panes shattered

**DUST-CONTROL MEASURES** 

## Expert recounts: When the explosives went off, I said 'thank you, lord'

NOIDA, AUGUST 28

The twin towers, Apex and Ceyane, came down at exactly 2.30 pm, after months of preparation, and a plume of dust engulfed

"WHEN THE 3,700 kg of explosives went off. I said 'thank you. lord'. We are all very emotional right now... Placing different explosives at different places, deciding magnitude and mass of these all done to minimise damage... it was challenging," said Jet Demolition managing director Joe Brinkmann about the Supertech twin towers demolition on Sunday. Over 3,700 kg of explosives was used, and the explosion was carried out with the waterfall implosion technique.

"We can't blast everything thumbs down. It has to be in a way that all rubble falls a bit distant from each other. If we dropped everything straight down, the rubble would have fallen at much more distance, impacting buildings and lives. Also, there would have been a higher ground vibration and higher air blast," said Joe.

For the South-African company, the Supertech towers is their second biggest project (in terms of the height of the building). The biggest demolition was the one in Johannesburg in 2019 the company demolished the Bank of Lisbon, a 108-metre-high



## The explosives used

**DEVICES TO** 

**STUDY DAMAGE** 

10

100

water

OFFICIALS said different types of explosives with different masses were placed in the towers. "As per our calculations, we placed them differently and strategically. Mainly, PETN and emulsion explosive were used. We need to match explosives with the breaking effect. In some special areas, the emulsion was used. In the building, lower floors have more reinforcement. As we are drilling specific holes, so usually PETN is used, but emulsion is also used to fill holes better in lower floors," said Jet Demolition managing director Joe Brinkmann. Similarly, explosives with more mass were placed on the lower floors as those have stronger columns. On the upper floors, fewer mass explosives were placed.

Other types of explosives used were Solar coal. Electric detonates and shock tubes were also used. The tubes were placed in a way that some had a 0.5-millisecond explosion capacity, while others had a 7,000-millisecond capacity.

building, in less than 30 seconds. However, Joe and his team had much more difficulty demolishing the Supertech towers that are nearly 100 metres tall. "It's weird because the closest building to the bank was hardly 7.8 metres. In Noida, the closest building was 9 metres but it was still a difficult task. Here, we have a robust concrete structure filled with steel reinforcement," said Joe.

The company worked closely with Edifice Engineering, the firm in charge of the project. Edifice's partner Utkarsh Mehta called the explosion 'a planned fall'. "We were apprehensive that rubble will touch the ATS tower compound wall as the twin towers are oblong shaped. The wall was damaged but that was it. The closest building being 9 metres away from the towers was not damaged. We had anticipated the rubble will fall towards ATS and on the roadside, and the results were the same. The ATS building is safe.

From tomorrow, excavators will already in place. Since the size of the rubble is big, it will be first broken down into smaller pieces. It will then be segregated. Pure concrete will be sent to one plant and steel to another. Over 100 workers will be deployed every day," he said.

**DOWNFALL** 

Distance between the twin towers and closest inhabited building

9 metres

**DAMAGES** 

■ 10 metre

boundary wall,

■ No damage at

**Emerald Court** 

mechanical

22

anti-smog

**DEBRIS** 

**MANAGEMENT** 

■ Debris collected

is almost two

storeys high

**■** Edifice will

deploy 100

workers to

oversee debris

removal

**500** 

workers

Edifice claimed 9 metres of the boundary wall was damaged at ATS. Nearly, 900 bricks and several windows were also damaged. Edifice will be working with the Ramky Group for debris management. The latter has a plant at Noida Sector 18, where all debris will be collected and processed to make blocks, bricks or slabs.

"When 60% of Ceyane tower was down, Apex building started crumbling. Everything happened in 10-12 seconds. The debris is not even two floors tall as it is scattered. None of the parks or residential areas were damaged,"

His team put over 10 black boxes and 70-80 crack gauges to study the damage on Emerald Court and other buildings. "We have analysed three crack gauges, and the cracks which were there before and today were almost the same. Since no debris went there, there can't be damage," added Mehta.

## SOME STILL PAYING OFF LOANS

## 'Still waiting for refund': For buyers in twin towers, demolition is cold comfort

**ARNAV CHANDRASEKHAR** NOIDA, AUGUST 28

THE DEMOLITION of Supertech twin towers is cold comfort for those who bought homes in Apex and Ceyane, with some of them still waiting for compensation.

"I had originally invested in a property worth Rs 42 lakh in the Ceyane tower, in 2010. When the structure was declared illegal, it was a blow to my entire family. Both the builders and the Noida was illegal, it should not have been approved in the first place... it just became a tower of corruption," said real-estate businessman Punit Marwaha (53).

Marwaha said based on the Supreme Court order that buyers were to receive a refund with 12.5% interest, he is owed a sum of over Rs 80 lakh. "For part of the value owed to me, I've been provided a plot in another one of Supertech's properties. A sum of Rs 31.5 lakh is still pending...

Seeing the towers come down was not pleasant, since my hardearned money is invested."

Accountant Kshitij Verma (43), also a flat owner, agreed: We took a loan to get a property worth Rs 26 lakh in 2011. We thought everything was legitimate and formalities were done. The stress of the matter took a toll on my father's health. We are still waiting for the refund, since without it we cannot buy another property, and the whole time we have been paying interest."



Residents watch the demolition, Sunday. Gajendra Yadav

they had not made deviations from the building plans, and had acted in accordance with the then building by-laws. They added that a Supreme Court order had found the building unsatisfactory on "technical grounds" and that they respected the apex court order.

"We... are committed to deliver to remaining homebuyers under the scheduled time frame. We assure all our home buyers that the order of the Supreme Court will not affect any other Another homebuyer, Bhola

Nath Verma, was among the luckier ones: "We had paid Rs 40 lakh for a flat in Ceyane in 2009. We've been paid back the money owed except for a balance of Rs 4 lakh."

UK-based Shobhit Gupta (45), who works in retail, said, "We had taken a Rs 50 lakh loan in 2009. When the original order came, it was frustrating as it was supposed to have been properly approved. We were offered an installmentbased plan, but were not confident

about it. So we opted to take another Supertech property in exchange for the one we'd bought."

Commenting on the demolition, he said, "In a way, there was also a sense of closure after the towers went down. But at the same time, we couldn't get the flat we wanted and had paid for. In the end. I think it's a lesson for society that such a thing could happen, with norms being flouted."

When asked about the refunds, a Supertech spokesperson declined to comment.









(From left) Gaurav Mehrotra, safety incharge at Emerald Court; residents watching the demolition; evacuees being welcomed at their temporary stay; Nirmal Tandon, Emerald Court Ladies Association president, spent the day in her daughter's home in Silver City. Malavika Prasad/Tashi Tobgyal/Sukrita Baruah

## BJP, SP spar over project Lucknow: As the Supertechtwin government, the building of cor-

Lucknow: As the Supertech twin towers were demolished Sunday on orders of the Supreme Court, the ruling BJP government in Uttar Pradesh and the main Opposition Samajwadi Party got into a war of words.

into a war of words.

In a tweet on Sunday, Deputy
Chief Minister Keshav Prasad
Maurya wrote, "The twin towers
of Noida are a living example of
corruption and anarchy during
Akhilesh Yadav's and SP's tenure
in power. Today, under the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi
Adityanath and under the BJP

is justice and rule of law."

The SP hit back, tweeting from its official Twitter handle: "Listen Keshav Prasad Maurya. The ones responsible for this building of corruption is the BJP. Because Supertech gives donations to BJP and they also sit with BJP people and work as middlemen. You should swear that you have not received money from Supertech and are

not partners in their corrup-

ruption will be demolished. This

# For Supertech neighbours, day began with nerves but ended in hope

SUKRITA BARUAH

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 28

WITH 30 seconds to go for 2.30

pm, a group of Supertech Emerald Court residents, gathered on a terrace in a nearby residential complex, began a countdown. They came down to "... 5, 4, 3,

2, 1," but nothing happened. Amid murmurs, all their gazes remained fixed on the twin towers located in the residential complex in which they live. Around 40 seconds later, a muffled boom was heard and the towers began to collapse into clouds of dust. Shivani Goel (59) and Mamata Agrawal (57) — walking partners — held on to each other, until Agrawal began clapping and was joined by several other residents.

"I had been feeling anxious since morning, like I felt when I was a child and had an exam later in the day," said Goel. "I was praying to god for it to go smoothly. I was feeling most nervous for the people whose homes are in the building just a few metres away from the towers. But when I saw them go down, it looked like I had imagined it would go," she said.

Till 7 am on Sunday, cars streamed out of the Supertech Emerald Court complex and the neighbouring ATS Greens Village as the last remaining residents evacuated their homes before the demolition. A majority of residents had left the previous night.



Temporary arrangements for evacuees. Abhinav Saha

While many residents headed to the homes of their relatives or friends or to hotels, some of them decided to spend the day at neighbouring complexes which had opened up their clubhouses to accommodate the evacuees for the day.

"This is a battle we have been fighting for 10 years, we can't leave it at this last step. We should be here to see the demolition and to help other residents," Naresh Agarwal (62), treasurer of the Emerald Court Residents Welfare Association, said before the demolition. He and his wife spent the day at Parsynath Prestige complex, barely half a kilometre away from the site.

"We have to be close to give confidence to all the other residents. We want to live as a community... My home is barely 30 metres from the demolition site but I am 100 per cent confident," he said.

F A Khan (62), his wife and

son spent the day in another neighbouring residential complex, Silver City. "It's a case our society has fought for 10 years and won, and we wanted to see its end. Watching it on TV is a different thing. I am sure our society will flourish after this. We used to not get any sunlight or wind in our home because of the towers," he said.

Most residents who were spending the day in neighbouring complexes had arrived with minimal belongings. Ekta Gupta said all she brought with her to Parsvnath Prestige were a fresh set of clothes for her family of four, in case they needed to spend the night there for any reason. For Gupta, the day was especially weighty. While her family lives on rent in another building in the Emerald Court complex, they own a flat in the Apex tower, one of the buildings which were

demolished.
"It's a strange feeling that it will be coming down after all these years. We are one of the families which still have not received any refund for our flat,"

Soon after she settled her family in their place of shelter for the day, Gupta began looking around for a good vantage point to view the demolition.

At the Parsvnath Prestige society, gardeners were put to work to prune some trees to ensure a clear vantage point from the

ground as well. But most Supertech residents made their way to the terrace by 2.15 pm.

The residents' welfare association of Parsvnath complex had made arrangements for residents in six rooms at its clubhouse with mattresses laid down at the squash court, table tennis room, and 'ladies spa'. They had also arranged for breakfast, lunch, evening snacks and tea throughout the day for the residents.

"Around 150 people had confirmed they would spend the day here today but we made arrangements for some additional people, just in case," said RWA president Rajnish Nandan.

AtSilver City, the RWA had set up cots and mattresses on the floor of their large clubhouse hall, and had also arranged breakfast, lunch and snacks.

While the air appeared to have cleared 20 minutes after the demolition, the primary worry for residents remains whether the dust will affect them.

Nirmal Tandon (79), presi-

dent of the Emerald Court ladies club, spent the day in her daughter's home in Silver City. "I have been sharing newspaper clippings on precautions and potential health hazards with my club members. My only concern is the after effect of the dust, especially on senior citizens. I will spend a few days in my daughter's home, I'm not hurrying back to mine," she said.

## Some residents return home: 'No damage, just some dust'

**ARNAV CHANDRASEKHAR** NOIDA, AUGUST 28

HOURS AFTER the Supertech twin towers were brought down in a controlled demolition, residents of the adjoining Supertech Emerald Court Society began to trickle back in, with some pleasantly surprised at the lack of damage and glad to see their worries laid to rest.

For home caterer Ekta Gupta (45), it was a relief to see her home unscathed when she returned around 8 pm — the tower she lives in, Bluestone 2, is within 50 metres of the demolished towers. "There was no damage... We had taken precautions for windows and glass items using bubble wrap but it was not necessary — the plan went perfectly. The only issue we are facing is dust in the balcony," she said.

Her relief was bittersweet — Ekta is among those who had bought a flat in the demolished buildings. "We had taken a loan and bought one for Rs 40 lakh in Apex tower. We are still waiting for the compensation," she said.

Another resident, school uniform supplier Priyanka Gupta (47), was impressed by the relative cleanliness of the society — she, too, only had to deal with dust in her balcony. "The sky is clear, and I don't have any difficulty breathing," she said.

Not everyone has returned though. Priyanka said, "In my tower, Emperor 3, I think I am one of the only people to return. There aren't many people in the neighbouring tower either. I hear some residents made vacation plans."

At Aspire 4 tower, home-maker Mamta Agrawal (57) was all praise for residents of neighbouring society, Parsvnath Prestige, where she and many others stayed while waiting out the demolition. "They treated us very well... it was almost like a baraat." Nothing in her home was damaged, though she now faces the task of unpacking household items. "We had packed and taken some things just in case, but it seems nothing went wrong."

Other residents are taking a more cautious approach. Nirmal Tandon (79), president of the Emerald Court Ladies Association, is waiting out the night in her daughter's home in Silver City, instead of returning to her home in the Emperor 2 tower.

the Emperor 2 tower.

She said, "We saw a lot of dust and heard window panes got cracked somewhere. But we've been told a lot of workers were sent to clean the society, so hopefully it will be clean. Tomorrow I will send my driver to check how the situation is, and how much dust is there. Being a senior citizen, one has to be health-conscious."

## Notice Inviting Expression of Interest

tion." ENS

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(Under International Competitive Bidding)

Block No. KG-DWN-98/3 (KG-D6)

Reliance is India's largest private sector company, with a consolidated revenue of ₹ 792,756 crore (\$104.6 billion), cash profit of ₹ 110,778 crore (\$14.6 billion), and net profit of ₹ 67,845 crore (\$9.0 billion) for the year ended March 31, 2022. Reliance's activities span hydrocarbon exploration and production, petroleum refining and marketing, petrochemicals, retail and digital services. Reliance is the top-ranked company from India to feature in Fortune's Global 500 list of "World's Largest Companies"

Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), as Operator, on behalf of itself & its co-venturer BP Exploration (Alpha) Limited invites Expression of Interest (EOI) from reputed and experienced Contractors/ Vendors for following categories, for Deep-water Block No. KG-DWN-98/3

Category Number	Category Description
OAM/KGD6/2022/1	Interior work of E&P Business Visibility and Operation Centre
OAM/KGD6/2022/2	Audio-Visual System Hardware & Software for E&P Business Visibility and Operation Centre

Interested Contractors/Vendors are requested to visit our website www.ril.com (eB2B> For Suppliers> E&P Notice for EOI) for further details on the above and submit their EOI through e-mail on deveoiresponse.eandp@ril.com, on or before 12 September 2022. For documents size beyond 10 MB, Contractors/Vendors should request RIL through e-mail to provide FTP link for uploading EOI documents. Subject of the mail should mention "RIL/E&P/EOI/2022/03" along with category number.

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**ADVERTORIAL** 



# NATIONAL SPORTS DAY

## Celebrating the Successful Phase of Sports in India

"IT is not my country's duty to push me ahead. It is my duty to push my country ahead." These words of Indian field hockey legend, Major Dhyan Chand Singh, reflect the zealous dedication, unwavering resolve, heightened sense of purpose and the single-minded pursuit of excellence that is ingrained in every Indian sportsperson, who is driven by immense national pride to exceed expectations as a global sports representative of the country.

The occasion of the forthcoming National Sports Day, on the 29th of August, provides us the perfect opportunity to celebrate the achievements, victories, grit, dedication and the hard work of our country's sports personalities. India has been celebrating its National Sports Day annually since 2012 on August 29 to commemorate the birth anniversary of the renowned Indian field hockey phenomenon, Major Dhyan Chand Singh, who has been rightly hailed as "The Wizard" of hockey owing to his prowess that was instrumental in India bringing home the gold medal in Olympics in the

years-1928, 1932 and 1936 and him scoring over 1000 goals in his illustrious career.

The commendable performance of the Indian team in the recently held 2022 Commonwealth Games in England's Birmingham, where India won a total of 61 medals, has given every Indian an added reason to rejoice on our 10th National Sports Day. The 210-member strong team that represented India at the 2022 Commonwealth Games, competed in 16 sports and did the nation proud by winning a total of 22 gold medals, 16 silver medals and 23 bronze medals, which helped India gain 4th position in the competition. The fact that Indian sportswomen won 23 medals, reflects the changing face of the country, where more and more women are feeling empowered to break the mould and participate in sports and are also receiving the support that they need to pursue and flourish in their sports careers. The motivation of our sportspersons is at an all-time high. India is witnessing an unprecedented level of success in various tournaments and winning accolades in all



types of sports. The various initiatives taken by our government for promoting sports in the country have aided in fostering an environment where sports is thriving.

For a fast-growing economy, such as India, where the sports industry has attained a faster growth than the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) and where 66% of the total population is below the age of 35 years, the future of sports holds immense potential. Apart from having access to world-class training facilities and receiving training from experts, nutrition is a key factor that makes all the difference in a sportsperson's journey to success. Steadfast Nutrition, India's premium sports nutrition brand, has eastablished itself as the most trusted and preferred choice of athletes, sportspersons and

sports enthusiasts globally, who are looking for high-quality supplements. Mr Aman Puri, the founder of India's fastest-growing sports nutrition brand- Steadfast Nutrition, says, "Supplements give you an edge in your training when taken along with a healthy diet. They make it easier to obtain the nutrients needed to build muscle and improve stamina and performance."

Steadfast Nutrition, which has revolutionized sports nutrition in India, has been committed to making top-grade nutritional supplements easily accessible to Indian sportsmen. The brand has catapulted various Indian athletes to award-winning performances in countless national and international sports events, including the Olympics. Indian Steadfast Atheletes of international repute include:

Nilakanta Sharma:
The Indian hockey
team's mid-fielder
helped his team win a
silver in the Commonwealth Games 2022. The

oking 27-year-old Steadfast Athlete has contributed immensely to the team's performance since he broke into the senior squad in 2017. Nilakanta has established his position in the team owing to his perfect balance of offensive and defensive. He credits his tremendous form to hard work and Steadfast Nutrition's energy and recovery supplements. He says, "Hockey is a

do without taking supplements.

Priyanka Mohite:

The 30-year-old made In-

dia proud by becoming the first Indian woman to climb five peaks above 8,000 m. The Steadfast Athlete ascended the third highest

peak in the world, Mount Kanchenjunga, which is 8586 m above sea level. Priyanka says there was no food at high altitudes, and she used Steadfast Peanut Butter and a protein supplement, Power Active, to keep her going in the

New Delhi

physically demanding sport. One cannot

crucial final 2000 m climb. **Dalima Chhibber:** The defender in

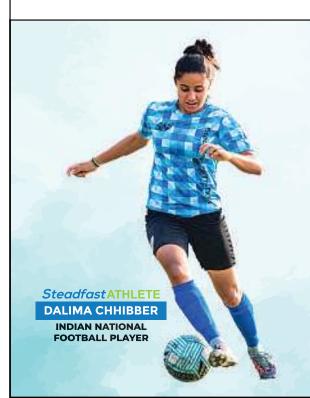
South Asian Games in

the Indian Women's Football team has made a mark for herself in the Indian team ever since she made her debut for India at the

2016. Dalima, who was awarded the Most Valuable Player of the Tournament at the 2019 SAFF Women's Championship, emphasizes the importance of healthy diet, good nutrition and supplements, which according to her, are integral to an ath-

lete's performance and recovery.

Our National Sports Day is a time to reflect on how with the power of right nutrition and the best training our sportsmen can go from strength to strength. It is also a day to acknowledge and celebrate sports' unique ability to not only contribute to the growth of India's economy but also help boost national integration among our diverse population.





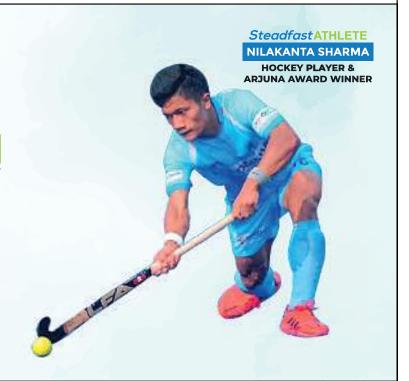
Steadfast NUTRITION
PREMIUM SPORTS NUTRITION

Saluting the Spirit of

on the occassion of

**Sports & Fitness Enthusiasts** 

**NATIONAL SPORTS DAY** 



# 8 GOVT & POLITICS





## In His Words

LIKE ATAL Bihari Vajpayee, Prime Minister Narendra Modi also used to pen down poems – but he prefers to call himself an "admirer of words" not a poet. An English translation of his "innermost thoughts", which he had jotted in his diary during his travels before he became the Prime Minister, has just been published. "Letters to Self" is translated from Gujarati by Bhawana Somaaya. The poems - some joyous, some anguished scribbles as Modi says in the preface written in 2007– should not be equated to his position, but "reflects" his "feelings experienced" from his "little window of life". But party leaders from Gujarat said some of them helped them understand Modi during his tenure as Chief Minister of Gujarat. They gave this one as an example: "Who cares about destiny? I am up for challenges/ I don't borrow light/ I am the burning lantern/Not dependent on outside glitter/I am confident with my own shine." Modi wrote this in one titled as "Innocent".

## LIKE OLD TIMES

BHUPENDRA SINGH Chaudhary, the BJP's newly appointed Uttar Pradesh chief, received a warm welcome when he called on Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Sunday. A close aide of Tomar said the minister congratulated Chaudhary for his new assignment. The meeting refreshed their old memories of working together, when both leaders were tasked with the Assembly elections in Haryana. Tomar was in charge of the last Haryana Assembly elections, while Chaudhary was co-in-charge. For Chaudhary, the meeting was also significant in another way because Tomar, as a BJP general secretary, has been the party's in-charge of UP affairs for a decade.

## THE BENGAL CONNECT

WITH WEST Bengal being at the top in the BJP's electoral agenda list, the party appears to be taking no chance when it comes to its preparations ahead of the next Lok Sabha election. The party continued its trend to flaunt the Bengali connection in its appointments to the state organisation. Like his predecessors, the newly appointed general secretary in charge of the state Sunil Bansal also has strong Bengali connections - his brothers are settled in Kolkata and he understands the language. Earlier, both Kailash Vijayvargiya and Sidharth Nath Singh, general secretary and secretary in charge of the state, respectively, had a strong Bengal connection as well - their wives were from the state. Varun Gandhi, the general secretary in charge of the state before Vijayvargiya, was also connected to the state through his wife Yamini Roy. BJP leaders think the connection has always worked in the party's favour.

## M V Govindan Master is new CPM Kerala secy

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE THIRUVANANTHAPURAM** AUGUST 28

SETTING THE stage for a reshuffle in the CPI(M)-led Kerala Cabinet, central committee member and local self-government minister M V Govindan Master was on Sunday selected as the party state secretary. Govindan was made the CPI(M) state chief after incumbent Kodiyeri Balakrishnan stepped

down on account of poor health. Govindan, a prominent leader from the CPI(M) stronghold of Kannur, was selected at a committee meeting held in Thiruvananthapuram Sunday. It was attended by general secretary Sitaram Yechury, politburo members Prakash Karat, M A Baby and A Vijayaraghavan, and

CM Pinarayi Vijayan. An ailing Balakrishnan, who



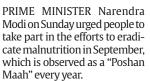
Govindan is a state minister

has been leading the party's state unit since 2015, had earlier expressed his desire to step down.

Picking a minister as party secretary is likely to result in a reshuffle of the Cabinet led by Viiavan. who recently completed a year in his second consecutive tenure as CM. The party has not officially spoken about a reshuffle.

Balakrishnan, who assumed office as state secretary in 2015, stepped down in November 2020 citing ill-health. This was also the time when his son Bineesh Kodiyeri was arrested in a money laundering case in Bengaluru. In December 2021, Balakrishnan returned as the party state secretary.

## **HARIKISHAN SHARMA** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 28



In the 92nd episode of his monthly radio programme 'Mann Ki Baat', the Prime Minister said, "The month of September is dedicated to festivals as well as a big campaign related to nutrition. We celebrate the Poshan Maah every year from the 1st to the 30th of September."

"Efforts for social awareness play an important role in tackling the challenges of malnutrition. I would urge all of you to take part in the efforts to eradicate malnutrition in the coming nutrition month," he said.

**ABHISHEK ANGAD** 

WITH UNCERTAINTY over the

continuation of Chief Minister

Hemant Soren refusing to end, the

ruling UPA allies in Jharkhand -

the JMM, Congress and RID - on

Sunday accused the opposition

BJP of misusing constitutional

bodies and conspiring to bring down the government.

press conference, leaders of the

three parties asked Governor

Ramesh Bains why there has been

no official response from him yet

when reports have indicated that

Soren has been disqualified as an

MLA. Claiming that the delay is

leading to attempts at horsetrad-

ing by the BJP, they urged the

Governor to clear the confusion

prevailing over the past four days.

getting a mining lease last year in

Angara block of Ranchi district.

Although he surrendered it, the

BJP said it was misuse of official

position as he holds the Mining

portfolio, and sent a petition to the

tion under the Representation of

Election Commission, the poll

panel sent its decision to the

Governor. On August 25, The

Indian Express learnt that the EC

has recommended disqualifica-

tion of Soren as MLA under

Section 9A of the RPA, which pro-

hibits elected representatives

from entering into any contract

with the government for "supply

of goods" or "execution of any

make the decision public, the rul-

Lucknow: A 34-year-old business-

man filed a complaint against SP

MLA Azam Khan while alleging

that the former state minister's

aides had threatened him with

dire consequences if he recorded

his statement in a 2019 case in

With the Governor yet to

**2019 CASE AGAINST SP LEADER** 

works undertaken" by it.

After it was referred to the

the People Act (RPA).

The matter relates to Soren

Putting up a united front at a

RANCHI, AUGUST 28



Prime Minister Narendra

Mann Ki Baat: PM urges people to

join campaign against malnutrition

The Prime Minister mentioned various initiatives and campaigns being run to end malnutrition in the country. "Many creative and diverse efforts are being made all over the country against malnutrition. Better use of technology and also public participation has become an important part of the nutrition campaign," he said.

Among the government initiatives he mentioned was launch of a Poshan Tracker to monitor the accessibility of Anganwadi services, move to provide mobile devices to millions of Anganwadi workers, in-

NO OFFICIAL WORD YET ON SOREN CONTINUING

Clear air, delay will spark

horsetrading: UPA to Gov

ing coalition on Sunday ques-

EC [that Soren should lose

Assembly seat], the Governor

should make it public and an-

nounce his decision. Developme-

ntal works are being hampered

due to the confusion." senior IMM MI A and state minister Cha

Soren said at the press conference.

"This is a strange situation now

and there is no specific reason. We

got to know the EChas sent the let-

ter and it is with the Governor, but

he has not released an official re-

sponse. Democracy and the peo-

ple in this state are being disre-

spected. The environment we see

in the country, like horse trading

of MLAs we saw in Maharashtra...

the same is happening in

Jharkhand, Our coalition is strong."

a minister, said: "This is a well-

planned conspiracy to disrespect

the people of Jharkhand.... If the EC

Rampur trader alleges threat from Azam aides

which the politician is an accused

in Rampur. An inquiry was or-

Shanu, had accused Khan and

others for allegedly demolishing

his house and decamping with

In 2019, the complainant,

dered Saturday, said police.

Congress's Banna Gupta, also

"If there is any report from the

tioned the delay.

Iharkhand CM Hemant Soren with state Cong in-charge

Avinash Pandey during a meeting in Ranchi on Sunday. PTI

has decided something then it

UPA MLAs said. "Does Rai Bhavan

want to fuel horsetrading by buy-

ing time (in making the decision

public)? ... We have seen how the

dignity of the post of Governor

was degraded in Maharashtra and

JMM has 30 MLAs, Congress 18,

state chief Deepak Prakash said,

and former CM Babulal Marandi

tweeted: "The CM, who made ex-

cuses ranging from illness to oth-

ers while asking for more time

from constitutional institutions [in

sending his response to the EC] is

in such a hurry that he is pressur-

ing EC/Governor to come to a deci-

sion. It seems the MLAs with him

household items, police said.

SHO Kotwali Police station,

Gajendra Tyagi said, "Shanu has

alleged that over last 10 days

three persons have been threat-

ening him not to record his state-

won't stand for even two days."

"Law will take its own course."

and RJD one. The BJP has 26.

In the 81-member House, the

Reacting to the statement, BIP

BJP Legislature Party leader

es This is unfortunate

Later, in a joint statement, the

should be made public.'

clusion of girls aged 14-18 years under the purview of the Poshan Abhiyan in the all Aspirational Districts and North-East states.

"The solution to the malady of malnutrition is not limited just to these steps. In this fight, many other initiatives also play an important role. For example, take the Jal Jeevan Mission...this mission is also going to have a huge impact in making India malnutrition free," Modi said.

about the Speaking "Sampoorna" project being run in Assam's Bongai village, the Prime Minister said, "The purpose of this project is to fight against malnutrition and the method too is very unique. Under this, the mother of a healthy child from an Anganwadi centre meets the mother of a malnourished child every week and discusses all the nutrition-related information.

That is, one mother becomes a friend of another mother, helps her, and teaches her."

"In this region, in one year, malnutrition has been eradicated in more than 90 per cent children," Modi said.

Observing that 2023 has been declared International Year of Millets, he said, "Today, around the world, craze for these coarse grains, millets, is rising... For the last some time, when any foreign guests come to India, when Heads of State come to India, it is my endeavor to get dishes made from the millets of India, that is, our coarse grains in the banquets."

He also mentioned the availability of 4G services in Jorsing village in Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh. "There has been a new sunrise in the form of 4G in the remote areas of Arunachal and North-Fast: Internet connectivity has brought a new dawn."

## Senior J&K Cong leader Taj Mohiuddin latest entrant in Azad camp



Mohiuddin is a former minister in the erstwhile

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** SRINAGAR, AUGUST 28

THE JAMMU and Kashmir Congress Sunday lost another senior Valley leader, Taj Mohiuddin, to the Ghulam Nabi Azad camp

Mohiuddin, a former minister in the erstwhile state, said Azad has no tie-up with the BJP and the new party announced by him could ally with the NC or Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) if needed.

"I have written to the Congress president and AICC general secretary that I am resigning from all the party posts and also from the basic membership of the party," Mohiuddin said at a press conference in Srinagar on Sunday.

A prominent Gujjar leader, Mohiuddin hails from the made the Valley's border region of Uri his political turf.

Mohiuddin was a cabinet minister during the PDP-Congress and the NC-Congress coalition governments.

On Sunday, he said: "Azad sahib may have personal relations with the BJP or Prime Minister Narendra Modi but that doesn't mean he will have political relations with the BIP. I swear by God that we have no connection with the BJP. We have a sec-

ular tradition. The Azad camp has already seen support from some high profile J&K Congress leaders. Earlier, a group of leaders from Jammu and Kashmir met Azad in New Delhi to show support. The leaders include GM Saroori, Jugal Sharma and Abdul Rashid Dar.

Dar, a former Congress legislator from north Kashmir's Sopore resigned and joined Azad, A resident of Dangerpora village of Sopore, Dar has been a two-time Congress MLA from

## Sena on felicitation of Bilkis convicts: Is this Hindu culture?

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** MUMBAI, AUGUST 28

SLAMMING THE felicitation of 11 men convicted for raping Bilkis Bano in Gujarat in 2002, Shiv Sena on Sunday asked whether the gesture was "part of Hindu culture". The convicts were recently re-

leased under a remission policy. "Who is Bilkis Bano? Just because she is a Muslim does not mean that atrocities against her, rape and murder of her child, is pardonable. What if she was our

mother or sister? We cry out loud when similar atrocities take place in neighbouring Pakistan and Bangladesh. Then where has our sensitivity gone in case of Bilkis Bano? Neither the Prime Minister nor our Union Home Minister have spoken a word on this. What is the reason?" read a piece in the party's mouthpiece Saamana. The article was a part of

Rokhthok, a weekly column of Shiv Sena Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Raut, presently in jail after being arrested by ED. This Sunday, the column went by the byline 'Kadaknath Mumbaikar.'

Bilkis Bano was five months pregnant when she was gangraped while fleeing the riots, which broke out after the Godhra train burning in 2002. Her threeyear-old daughter was among seven from her family killed in the violence. The 11 men convicted in the case walked out of the Godhra sub-jail on August 15 after Gujarat government allowed their release under its remission policy.

"Whenever Modi would visit Guiarat next, he should go to her and extend support. This is not about Hindu-Muslim, but about the soul of Hindutva and pride of our greatest culture. If Bilkis's rapists are released for the sake of Hindu votes in upcoming Guiarat elections, then this tendency would destroy us," the column said. It added that in such case, the "religion is converted into communalism and anarchy".

in the 75th year of India's Independence, the "bell of justice has gone missing" Quoting NCP chief Sharad

The article further stated that

Pawar, who said "PM Modi does not practise what he preaches". the article stated: "The Bilkis case has proven him right." "It is surprising that the con-

victs were released when PM Modi spoke of women empowerment in his Independence Day speech," the article stated.



Governor Kalraj Mishra with katha vachak Vijay Kaushal at the Ram Katha programme. Express

## In Rajasthan, 'Ram Katha' at Raj Bhavan raises eyebrows

RAJASTHAN GOVERNOR Kalraj

Mishra's decision to organise a "Ram Katha" programme at the Raj Bhavan presided over by a former RSS pracharak has raised

This is the first time a Ram

which is being telecast live on **EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** Kaushal's YouTube channel, is enter the Raj Bhavan after fur-

Katha event is being organised at the Rai Bhavan. Though the Congress-led state government has not yet commented on the matter, a civil liberties outfit alleged that the Congress-led state government's Directorate of Information and Broadcasting was promoting the event. The BJP too has not commented on the matter but its leaders were in attendance on the first day of the five-day event that began on Saturday.

Every day of the programme, a katha vachak (narrator of holy text) named Vijay Kaushal will read the Ram Katha daily from 4 pm to 7 pm. Sources said Kaushal was from Vrindavan in Uttar Pradesh and was an RSS pracharak earlier. The event,

nishing their identity cards. Before the start of the event

on Saturday, Mishra conducted a puja of Hindu deity Ram and the Ramcharitmanas. The governor also inaugurated an exhibition in which devotional artwork is being displayed. Among the attendees on the first day were the BJP's Rajya Sabha MP Ghanshyam Tiwari and BIP MP from Jaipur Ramcharan Bohra.

In a statement, the Raj Bhavan quoted Mishra as saying that Ram Katha enriches life with values and that it was a matter of good fortune that a katha vachak such as Vijay Kaushal had accepted the request to narrate "Ram Katha".

PUCL Raiasthan chief Kavita Srivastava said in a statement that it goes "against the dignity of his (Mishra's) constitutional post to organise a religious ceremony in the Raj Bhavan", added that it was against "secular values enshrined in the Preamble of the Indian Constitution"

under pressure, even if someone

doesn't need hospitalisation, it is

advised as per the convenience

the recent controversy, a deci-

sion has been taken to ensure

that calls regarding admissions

of VIPs are taken strictly as per

the advice of the team or med-

ical board formed to check them.

non-VIP natients is creeping up

at Woodburn Block since Partha

Incidentally, the number of

Sources said that following

of the patient."

## In a Bengal govt hospital, a 'home away from home' for politicians

Kolkata's SSKM Hospital caught in controversy as multiple TMC leaders facing summons or arrest go in for the low-rate, 'royal suite' Woodburn Block

**SWEETY KUMARI** KOLKATA, AUGUST 28

IT'S EASY to see why Woodburn Block in the government-run SSKM Hospital in Kolkata is the first stop for "ailing" politicians, particularly those one step away from detention. With its rooms furnished with refrigerators and LEDTVs, this VVIP wing is far-removed from the rest of the premier multi-speciality institute, with long queues of patients

ried staff struggling to keep up. In the past few years, almost all members of the ruling Trinamool Congress facing cases have landed up here. In 2015, then Transport Minister Madan Mitra was here for five of the six

waiting to be attended and har-

months of his arrest in the Saradha chit fund scam, In 2021, late Panchayat Minister Subrata Mukerjee and former Kolkata mayor Sovan Chatterjee were both lodged here post their arrest in the Narada case. On July 24. the Enforcement Directorate claimed before the Calcutta High Court that former minister Partha Chatterjee, arrested in the teachers' recruitment case, was "faking illness" at SSKM. The court ordered that Chatterjee be checked by AIIMS Bhubaneswar instead, and after AIIMS ruled that he didn't require hospitalisation, the former TMC No. 2 was finally arrested.

Days later, on August 8, SSKM finally turned away Anubrata Mandal — who had done a 17-day stint here in April while evading CBI summons in a cattle smuggling case — leading to his arrest. The Woodburn Block is

named after British lieutenant governor Sir John Woodburn, who is known for his commendable work during the plague that swept Calcutta (as it was known then) in the early years of the 20th century. Incidentally, apart from hospitals, he had carried out extensive reforms in the Prisons Department of Bengal.

The Woodburn Block has 35 rooms in all, of three kinds — the most expensive are for a reasonable Rs 4,000 a day, and others for Rs 2,000 or Rs 2,500. An attendant comes at an equally easy-on-thepocket Rs 750 for 24 hours.

Marzuana Bibi, a resident of Murshidabad, is among those who have been waiting at the



Woodburn Block has 35 cabins, the steepest for Rs 4,000 a day

hospital for a room in its Orthopaedic Department. She has heard of the politicians parked at SSKM for days, she says; among viral memes doing

the rounds, one describes the hospital as "a home away from home" for TMC leaders.

"I have been trying to get a bed for three days. But my

the ward, with doctors saying they will allot a bed as soon as one is free," says Marzuana.

mother is being treated outside

Opposition parties accuse the TMC government of having reduced the Woodburn Block to a "resort" for tainted party leaders, with those admitted here able to lie low till the case is diluted or they manage to get bail.

Says BJP state president Sukanta Maiumdar: "These leaders enjoy State hospitality at SSKM. It is easy to influence government hospital authorities and get reports in their favour. This must stop."

Dr Manas Gumta, Secretary of the Association of Health Service Doctors, said: "Doctors are under pressure from political leaders. If a request comes from the highest

authority, what can one do?" TMC leader Madan Mitra,

among those to have had an extended stay at SSKM, is full of pride while describing Woodburn Block as a "royal suite". "If BJP leaders are ever summoned and they want to take shelter here. I will get them admitted. Woodburn is like a royal suite in a palace. You get top facilities in a government set-up... at half the rates. Of 35 cabins, 30 are mostly occupied by ordinary peo-

ple, so BJP's claims are nonsense." Dr Gautam Das, Professor of Surgery at SSKM Hospital, says: 'Anyone can get a bed in the Woodburn Block, But it is true that

VIPs are making the most of it." Pointing out that the Block is not equipped to handle patients who need immediate interven-

tion, Dr Das said: "Sometimes

Chattterjee was sent to AIIMS in a snub. When The Indian Express visited the block, 90 per cent of the beds were occupied, and there was not a single VIP patient.

CM Mamata Baneriee holds the Health portfolio. The Medical Superintendent of SSKM refused to comment on the matter.

# EXPRESS NETWORK

## **CHHATTISGARH** Man drowns in waterfall, 5 missing

Raipur: A 26-year-old man drowned and five people went missing while bathing in the Ramdaha waterfall in Chhattisgarh's Korea district on Sunday, officials said. A group of 15 people from Singrauli district in neighbouring Madhya Pradesh had travelled to the waterfall for a picnic, they said. Two people - a man and a woman – were pulled out of the water. Ratnesh Singh (26) was declared dead at the hospital while the woman is out of danger, a police official said.

## **ASSAM**

## Internet blocked in 27 districts over govt exam

Guwahati: Internet services across 27 districts of Assam were suspended for over four hours on Sunday for the second time this month to prevent possible malpractices during written examination for recruitment in various state government departments. The authorities decided to go ahead with its decision to suspend internet services during exam hours, after the Gauhati High Court refused to stay it following a writ petition against the order.

## **UTTAR PRADESH** Six killed as tanker rams into tractor-trolley

Bareilly: At least six people, including two children, were killed and 24 others injured when a tractortrolley in which they were travelling was hit by a tanker here on Sunday, police said. The accident occurred at the Kichha-Khatima road near Sirsa outpost in the Bahedi area, they said. The vehicle carrying 35 people was hit by the tanker from behind, **Assistant Superintendent** of Police (Rural) Raikumar injured are in critical condition, he added.

## **WEST BENGAL**

## TMC leader's son killed in road accident

Kolkata: TMC leader Ram Pavre Ram's son was killed on Saturday night after the car he was driving was crushed by a truck in Babubazar in Kolkata's Kidderpore area, police said on Sunday. According to eyewitnesses, the truck driver lost control and the truck overturned on the car. A crane was brought to lift the truck, after which the car's door was cut open using gas cutters, police said. The TMC civic body councillor's son, Ram Kinkar (38), died on the spot.

# Karnataka mutt seer booked for sexually abusing minors

Yediyurappa calls charges false, CM Bommai says probe will reveal truth

KIRAN PARASHAR

BENGALURU, AUGUST 28

THE CHIEF pontiff of an influential Lingayat mutt of Karnataka — Jagadguru Murugarajendra Vidyapeetha Mutt – has been booked for allegedly sexually abusing minors who lived in a hostel.

The case against Shivamurthy Murugha Sharanaru and four others was registered on Friday after the victims approached a legal cell.

The complaint, filed by Chandrakumar C of the district child protection unit, was based on the statements of two students who lived in the hostel. According to sources in the police department, the case was registered after the victims reached Mysuru and approached the Odanadi Seva Samsthe, an NGO that works for the rescue and empowerment of human trafficking victims.

The FIR states that the girls were counselled after which they revealed that they had been sexually abused. Later, the NGO approached the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) and a police

J&K cancels

recruitment

CBI probe

JAMMU, AUGUST 28

into the matter.

process, orders

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** 

THE J&K administration Sunday

cancelled the recruitment process

for Finance Account Assistants

(FAAs) and Junior Engineers (Civil)

and recommended a CBI probe

ment has been cancelled & a CBI

probe recommended into selec-

tion process," announced J&K's

Department of Information and

Public Relations on its Twitter

handle Sunday evening, "Govt

assures all aspirants that culprits

will not be spared & there won't

be any compromise on merit.

Fresh recruitment process for

FAAs and JE Civil will start soon."

State Services Recruitment

process for selecting candidates

to fill up 1,200 vacancies of po-

lice sub inspectors, 972 vacan-

cies of FAAs and 163 JEs (Civil),

which were referred to it by the

UT administration. These were

some of the major recruitment

drives which were nearing com-

istration had in July last can-

celled the selection process for

police sub inspectors and recom-

Significantly, the UT admin-

pletion last year.

lection process.

The Jammu and Kashmir

"JKSSB FAAs & JE Civil recruit-

Shivamurthy Murugha Sharanaru

complaint was filed.

The victims approached the CWC in Mysuru as they were convinced that the authorities were under the influence of the seer and the mutt which was frequently visited by political leaders.

The Nazarbad police in Mysuru registered the case under Sections 376 (2), 376 (3) and 149 of the Indian Penal Code and 17,5 (L) and 6 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. According to the FIR, the minors were subjected to the sexual abuse since 2019.

The Jagadguru Murugarajendra Vidyapeetha Mutt is a prominent and influential Lingayat mutt and is frequented by political leaders in bid to woo the Lingayat community ahead of the Assembly elections next year.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi had recently received the "Ishtalinga Deekshe" from Shivamurthy Murugha Sharanaru.

On Sunday, B S Yediyurappa, former Chief Minister and member of the BIP parliamentary board committee, called the charges false. Even before the police officials shared the investigation details, Yediyurappa said: "It is a false charge. There is no truth in it and after the completion of the investigation, he will come out clean.

Following the case, the politicians in the state made attempts to stay away from the issue.

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Sunday said: "A POCSO case has been registered and in the meantime a kidnapping case has been registered... It is not good to speak about the issue when an investigation is under progress. Police have total freedom to look into the matter and the probe will reveal the truth."

The kidnapping case has been filed by the warden of the hostel where the minors lived, who is one of the accused in the POCSO case. In the counter complaint, the warden has accused the mutt's former administrator and his wife of allegedly moving the girls to a private facility after they left the hostel premises.

The counter-FIR named JD(S) leader and former MLA Basavarajan and his wife Soubhagya as the accused under IPC provisions related to wrongful restraint, wrongful confinement, kidnapping, criminal conspiracy and criminal intimidation.

While Karnataka Congress chief D K Shivakumar refused to comment on the issue, JD(S) leader and former Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy said he was not surprised as there had been some discussion on the matter five or six months ago. "This issue should have been taken care of at the initial stage and should not affect the religious fraternity,'



## GANGA OVERFLOWS

A flooded locality in Varanasi on Sunday. The Ganga's water level has crossed the danger mark, inundating agricultural and residential areas on the banks of the river and its tributaries. PTI

## Ready to hand over Phogat death case to CBI if necessary: Goa CM

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** PANAJI, AUGUST 28

GOA CHIEF Minister Pramod Sawant on Sunday said his government was ready to hand over the probe into the death of Harvana BJP leader and actor Sonali Phogat to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), if necessary.

mended a CBI probe into the se-Sawant, who holds the Home portfolio, said, "The Chief Minister "JKP Sub-Inspector recruitof Haryana called me personally vesterday. He said her (Phogat) ment has been cancelled and a CBI probe has been recomfamily members had met him. He mended into the selection requested that if necessary the process. Culprits will be brought case should be handed over to the to justice soon," Lieutenant CBI. The Goa government is open Governor Manoi Sinha had said. to hand over the case to the CBL "It's a first big step towards se-The necessary investigation is becuring future of our youth & govt ing carried out in the case but as requested by the Haryana CM, if will soon decide future course of action for fresh recruitment." the need arises, we are prepared This followed recommendato hand over the case to the CBI."

> So far, Phogat's personal assistant Sudhir Sangvan and his aide Sukhwinder Singh have



Sonali Phogat

been arrested for allegedly committing her murder and a separate offence under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act has been filed against three others -owner of the Curlies beach shack in Anjuna Edwin Nunes, alleged drug peddler Dattaprasad Gaonkar and Rama Mandrekar,

who was arrested on Sunday. "No one will be spared in this case. Anyone who is directly or indirectly involved will be behind bars. We have so far arrested five people. Any links with drugs and its spread will not be tolerated in Goa," said the Chief Minister.

He said that the state has upped its vigil against drugs. "The Anti-Narcotics Cell has

been activated. Tourists come here for the scenic beauty of Goa and they should come here and enjoy it but we will not allow drugs here," said Sawant.

Phogat, who arrived in Goa on August 22 with the two men now charged with her murder, had visited the popular Curlies beach shackin Anjuna, CCTV footage had shown the accused making Phogat sip a drink out of a bottle. The footage also showed Phogat being held and escorted towards the bathroom by one accused.

According to Goa Police, Sangvan and Sukhwinder had allegedly "forcefully" given Phogat an "obnoxious chemical substance" which was later identified as Methamphetamine by the police. Phogat was declared dead on the morning of August 23 at the St Anthony's Hospital in Anjuna. On Sunday, a magistrate

court remanded Nunes, Gaonkar and Mandrekar to five days in police custody.

## Body of 18-yr-old girl exhumed after Dalit youth found dead in UP village

**MANISH SAHU** 

LUCKNOW, AUGUST 28

IN A suspected case of "honour" killing, police on Sunday exhumed the body of an 18-yearold Muslim girl, a day after she was buried by her family members in a village in Basti district.

Police decided to exhume the body of the girl after they recovered the body of a 19-year-old Dalit man, who used to live in the same village and had gone missing two days ago.

Police have booked the two brothers of the girl and her cousin for murder and destruction of evidence. Police have also invoked the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act against them.

"We are waiting for the autopsy reports of the two bodies to reach any conclusion. The next course of action will be taken on the basis of the reports," Inspector General (Basti Range) Ram Krishna Bhardwaj said.

According to police, the villagers told them that the Muslim girl, who belongs to an affluent family, and the Dalit man, a tractor driver, were in a relationship but the girl's family was opposed to it. Police said they found injury marks around the Dalit youth's neck. Police are also scanning his cellphone, which was found near the field from where his body was recovered.

Speaking to The Indian Express, the Dalit youth's brother said the 19-year-old used to regularly visit the house of the girl's family and drove the tractor owned by her brother.

having food at home when my brother received a call from the girl's brothers. After having dinner, my brother left home without telling anything to us. When he did not return till late in the evening, we went to the girl's house to ask about him. But the girl's brothers told us that they had no information about him. We then started to look for him. On early Saturday morning, we got to know through villagers that the girl had died and the family were burying her in the village. We suspected foul play and started looking for our brother near their house. Around 100 metres from the girl's brother's house, we found my brother's body and immediately informed the police," the Dalit youth's brother said.

"On Friday evening, we were

"We believe they killed my brother in their house and threw his body in the field," he added. When asked whether his

brother was having an affair with the girl, he said that though the villagers talked about it, he never saw his brother with her.

Police detained the two brothers of the girl for questioning.

Meanwhile, a heavy police force has been deployed in the village, which is dominated

Additional Superintendent of Police (Basti) Deependra Nath Chaudhary said: "It has come to light that the girl died under mysterious circumstances on Friday night -- the same night the youth was called by her brothers, as alleged by his family. An FIR has been lodged and

## Jharkhand: Woman set on fire dies, Sec 144 imposed in Dumka

**ABHISHEK ANGAD** RANCHI, AUGUST 28

A 19-YEAR-OLD woman from on fire Tuesday by a man harassing her, succumbed to her injuries in the early hours of Sunday. Her death triggered protests by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Bajrang Dal in Dumka town, following which prohibitory orders were placed.

Police said one Shahrukh Hussain, 19, had been harassing the woman for "some time" "She was sleeping by a window which faced a sidewalk connecting to the main road. In the early hours of August 23, the accused poured petrol on her through the window and set her on fire. She screamed for help. She saw the accused running... We have her dying declaration," said Dumka SP Ambar Lakra.

Shahrukh was arrested the same day along with one more person, Chotu Khan, who supplied the petrol. Police sources said both will be booked for murder.

Dumka Sub-Divisional Officer Mahaeshwar Mahato said Section

144 of the IPC has been invoked in the town area. In a statement, Mahato said: "Without any prior permission all public gathering including protests, religious proces-

The woman had been admitted to Phoolo Jhano Medical College Hospital in Dumka and was later referred to Ranchi's Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences, where she died.

RIMS spokesperson Dr Rajiv Ranjan said: "(The) patient had suffered 45 per cent burn iniuries and the cause of her death is cardio-respiratory failure."

Dumka Deputy Commissioner RS Shukla said: We have recommended a speedy trial and have given a compensation of Rs 1lakh to the victim's family. We are in the process of getting the family more compensation... The accused used to harass the woman. The authorities did not know this because the family never complained."

The woman's father told The Indian Express: "It was around 4 am when we heard her scream-We rushed to her room and doused the fire. She said Shahrukh had done this. She died between Saturday

ductive, industrial suburban

pockets, agrarian Tiruvallur at-

tracts workers from the most ru-

ral and socially-deprived areas

and communities in Tamil Nadu

and Andhra Pradesh. But this

labour force is also highly vul-

#### **'IRREGULARITIES'**

Mumbai's Bhendi Bazaar makeover project gets 'stop work' notice

YOGESH NAIK MUMBAI, AUGUST 28

AFTER A debate in the Assembly during which irregularities were alleged in the Saifee Burhani Upliftment Trust (SBUT) project, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation has issued a 'stop work' notice to the project which aims to give a complete makeover to the Bhendi Bazar area and provide better houses to its residents.

The notice was issued Saturday by executive engineer Rajesh Dholay of the BMC's building proposal department. It said if the SBUT does not comply with the notice, the department will take action against it under the BMC Act and the Maharashtra Regional Town Planning Act. "There was a discussion in the Assembly and Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said he will inquire into it. Hence, we decided to issue a 'stop work' notice," a deputy city engineer of the department told The Indian Express.

The SBUT project was envisioned in 2009 to raise the living standards of around 25,000 people living and working in south Mumbai's Bhendi Bazaar. The redevelopment project covers 16.5 acres, involving more than 250 decrepit buildings, 3,200 families and 1,250 shops.

Speaking in the Assembly on Thursday, Fadnavis said the 'irregularities' in the project will be probed. He said the plan of the SBUT was changed, reducing the width of roads and giving more area to developers. "I have asked the municipal commissioner to probe who is behind the corruption and irregularities in the project," the deputy CM said.

In a statement, an SBUT spokesperson said, "In accordance with the unexpected notice from the BMC, we have ceased all construction work on the site. This upliftment project aims to positively impact the lives and livelihoods of around 25,000 people and upgrade the dilapidated infrastructure of Bhendi Bazaar. The entire project has been planned as per the provisions of Development Control Regulations 33(9) and is being carried out in line with the approvals and permissions of all concerned authorities."

...As per the Hon'ble Deputy CM's recent statement the Bhendi Bazaar redevelopment positive that the notice will be lifted soon," it said.

## Two arrested in Assam for 'terror activities'

**PRESSTRUST OF INDIA** BARPETA, AUGUST 28

TWO PEOPLE were arrested in Assam's Barpeta district on Sunday for allegedly indulging in terror activities, police said. Akbar Ali and Abul Kalam

Azad were detained from a

house in Sorbhog area of the district on Saturday night, they said. "Following their interrogation overnight, they were

arrested on Sunday," a police officer said. When produced before a lo-

cal court, they were remanded to 10 days in police custody, he

Corporation for Development of

Women Ltd., the IJM is also sup-

porting and mentoring the brick

kiln project in its operative as-

pects. Mahalir Thittam is similar

to Kerala's Kudumbashree,

which is the poverty eradication

and women empowerment pro-

gramme implemented by the

Mission (SPEM) of the

The district government or-

Government of Kerala.

State Poverty Eradication

## PSI scam: After months on run, women's topper held

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** BENGALURU, AUGUST 28

FOUR MONTHS after the sub-inspector recruitment scam unravelled in Karnataka, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) has arrested the women's category topper who is accused of tampering with answer sheets.

Rachana Hanamant, a 24vear-old engineering graduate, was at large for more than three months, police said.

She was nabbed Saturday near the Hirolli check post at the Karnataka-Maharashtra border, sources said. She was then taken to Bengaluru.

to police, According Hanamant allegedly tampered with answers in OMR sheets to secure the first rank with a score of

153.25. She got 25 marks out of 50 in descriptive writing and 128.25 out of 150 in objective answers.

tions made by a three-member

panel which looked into the al-

legations of irregularities.

Soon after the scam was revealed, the state government withdrew the results. Hanamant had then protested the government's move saving it would affect "honest" students as well. The examination for 545 po-

lice sub-inspector posts was held on October 3, 2021. Around 54,041 people appeared for it.

Irregularities surfaced after the OMR answer sheet of one accused, Veeresh N, was examined. Veeresh, who obtained the seventh rank among 67 candidates selected from the Kalyana Karnataka region, was found to have obtained 121 marks despite answering only 21 out of 100 questions in 150 mark paper as per the carbon copy of his OMR sheet.

**ARUN JANARDHANAN** CHENNAL AUGUST 28

TAMIL NADU'S Tiruvallur district, located to the north of the capital city of Chennai, has long been notorious for the prevalence of bonded labour. Now, around a hundred emancipated labourers and their families are shaping their own future – by co-owning and operating a brick kiln, launched three months ago by the district administration.

The workers are primarily members of the Irula community that falls under the Scheduled Tribe category.

District Collector Dr Alby John Varghese first proposed the idea in February. An official opening ceremony for the brick kiln took place in April. June marked the start of the kiln's first fire. By the end of July, they had **GOVERNANCE** AN EXPRESS SERIES **TAMIL NADU** 

manufactured 82,000 bricks, valued at around Rs 7 lakh. Approximately half of the total production - 41,000 bricks was sold to the projects under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) scheme. According to Dr Varghese, the revenue department regularly purchases bricks from this kiln for the PMAY scheme. As such, since there is assured demand for the kiln's bricks, there is a certainty that the kiln's produce will find a market.

"Since the market is tied up, returns to the workers are also assured. They are now working



Brick by brick, rescued bonded labourers build a new life

Officials inspect the brick kiln in Tiruvallur, Tamil Nadu. Express

on diversifying into hollow bricks as well. It is evolving as a successful project — a self-sustained community enterprise as workers manage it on their own along with the support and guidance from various govern-

Due to its proximity to ment agencies," he said. The project was started as a

pilot project with just 20 such families. The district administration provided Rs 5 lakh for the project's initial phases: Rs 4 lakh for infrastructure, raw materials, and wages, and Rs 1 lakh to source the wood for fuel.

Chennai and several highly pro-New Delhi

nerable due to the nature of these industries, the lack of regulations, and the lack of informed and streamlined industrial networks. According to Helen Barnabas of the International Justice Mission (IJM), an organisation that plays a key role in the rescue of bonded labourers in the state, the choice of site for the brick

near where many rescued bonded labourers are living. Along with the state government's Mahalir Thittam, a socioeconomic empowerment programme for women being implemented by Tamil Nadu

kiln was significant because it is

ganised the rescued workers into Self Help Groups (SHGs) so that they could all work together to improve their financial situation. "As there were 100 families of bonded labourers, three SHGs were formed and they were given different responsibilities in batches in production," said Barnabas, Children of rescued bonded labourers have been enrolled in schools again as a result of the project, according to her.

# THE EDITORIAL PAGE

WORDLY WISE

LIBERTY MAY BE ENDANGERED BY THE ABUSE OF LIBERTY, BUT ALSO BY THE ABUSE OF POWER.

— JAMES MADISON

## **The Indian EXPRESS**

∞ FOUNDED By ∞

Ramnath Goenka

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

## ROCKING THE SHIP

India-China war of words shows Beijing in poor light — for trying to pull into its tensions with US a country struggling to survive

HE WAR OF words between the Chinese Ambassador and the Indian High Commission in Colombo over the Yuan Wang episode shows the India-China relationship in unseemly light in a third country. It puts host Sri Lanka, already in a tough place, in a corner over its relations with both countries. Significantly, the Chinese envoy appeared to frame India-China tensions as part of the wider geopolitical rivalry between the US and China in the Indo-Pacific. Delhi's approach so far has been to delink its difficult relationship with Beijing from its relations with the US, and with other Quad members. This has helped prevent India's border issue with China from getting entangled in a big power race for supremacy. And to keep the responsibility for resolving the issue within the bilateral relationship. This is why Delhi has appeared more restrained than many western countries in pronouncements on China. External Affairs minister S Jaishankar said the other day that India-China relations are going through an "extremely difficult phase". In recent statements on the Taiwan issue, India expressed concern and neutrally urged "restraint, avoidance of unilateral actions to change status quo, de-escalation of tensions and efforts to maintain peace and stability in the region."

It is surprising that after China's emphatic assertion that the ship had no military purpose, Chinese envoy Qi Zhenhong, who set off the spat with an article in a Sri Lanka publication, should draw a parallel between the visit of US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan and the Yuan Wang in Hambantota port. His assertion that China and Sri Lanka "jointly safeguard each other's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity" (Colombo had made a statement during the Taiwan crisis reiterating its support for the one-China policy) and that Sri Lanka had faced "aggression" from its "northern neighbour", are clearly attempts at escalating the row. The Indian High Commission, in turn, accused the Chinese envoy of violating diplomatic etiquette, "which may be a personal trait or reflective of a national attitude", and said the Chinese ambassador had "given the game away" by giving a geopolitical colour to the ship's visit. It also used the word "militarisation" for the first time with reference to China's response to the Pelosi visit.

India need not have risen to the bait. But if what the Chinese envoy says is correct, it shows Beijing in poor diplomatic light for trying to widen its tensions with the US by pulling into it a country struggling to survive its economic collapse. It seems that his intention was also to derail India-Sri Lanka ties. Colombo needs help with money at the moment, not a geopolitical crisis on its territory. China has not yet said how it intends to help Sri Lanka restructure its debt, despite a formal request from Colombo. If Beijing is really a steadfast friend of Sri Lanka, the Sri Lankan people and the world would like it to show more purpose on this front instead of stirring the geopolitical pot.

## ON SHAKY GROUND

Jharkhand's CM Soren has invited serious allegations of misuse of office that do disservice to his office and state

HE FUTURE OF the Jharkhand government hangs in balance after the Election Commission recommended the disqualification of Chief Minister Hemant Soren as MLA under the Representation of the People Act, 1951, last week. The EC has found Soren guilty of misusing his position to allot a stone mining lease to himself last year. Governor Ramesh Bais is yet to take a call on the issue. But the episode could trigger political instability again in a state that has had 11 governments, and three spells of President's rule, in 22 years. Jharkhand's largest Opposition party, the BJP, has sharpened its criticism of the state government, while the JMM-led ruling coalition is taking conspicuous steps to keep its flock together — the CM has held marathon meetings and even taken legislators on a bus and boat ride out of Ranchi. This uncertainty could have been avoided had CM Soren, who also holds charge of the mining ministry and the related portfolios of geology and environment, adhered to fundamental norms of political propriety. Conflict of interest was writ large in the award of the mining lease in question.

Jharkhand boasts of 40 per cent of India's mineral reserves and nearly 30 per cent of the country's coal deposits. But the state's record in the governance of these resources has been marred by frequent scams and political instability. In 2017, in a case that had shone unflattering light on the collusion between entrenched mining oligarchies and state agencies, a special CBI court convicted former Chief Minister Madhu Koda for irregularities in the allocation of coal blocks between 2006-2008. Soren came to office in 2019 on the back of a "Badlav Yatra" (campaign for change) during which he promised a propeople administration in Jharkhand. His government has constituted a task force to investigate issues related to illegal mining and the CM has repeatedly called for urgency in cleaning up the "bad image" given to the state by "the mining mafia". Plans to install CCTV cameras in mining areas and start a toll-free number to receive mining-related complaints are reportedly on the state government's anvil.

But the Jharkhand government's responses to allegations of nepotism against the CM have been far removed from its slogans and claims. For instance, the BJP has accused the state's industry department — also headed by the CM — of handing out an 11-acre plot in Ranchi industrial complex to a firm headed by Soren's wife. The department has brazened out allegations of the misuse of the CM's office with the unconvincing answer that no rule was broken in the land allocation. In the mining lease case too, it's clear that red lines were transgressed. The CM's defence that he surrendered the lease is unpersuasive. There can be little doubt that Hemant Soren has severely undermined his position as Jharkhand CM. His party and his allies need to decide on the cost of standing by him.

## FREEZE FRAME

E P Unny



# SC must undo injustice



Bilkis Bano was not heard, and it is her voice that ought to be taken into consideration

Indira Jaising

THE SUPREME COURT (SC) on August 25 issued a notice in a petition challenging the remission of the 11 convicts in the Bilkis Bano case. The petition was filed by CPI(M) MP Subhashini Ali, journalist Revati Laul and academic Roop Rekha Verma challenging the Gujarat government's decision. The court also asked the petitioners to implead the 11 convicts and listed the matter after two weeks.

While discussing the remission granted to the accused in the Bilkis Bano case, we must first answer the question of whether the communal violence that took place in Gujarat in 2002 was "spontaneous" or if it was waiting to happen through the systemic degradation of the ecosystem due to the long-term build-up of hate speech against the minority community. While the SC held in the Zakia Jafri case that the violence was "spontaneous", no evidence was placed before the Court to substantiate this statement. Let us revisit the issue as it unfolded in

In 2003, a writ petition by the NHRC to the Supreme Court (SC) pointed out that widespread communal violence had taken place in Gujarat. It also noted that the accused were being acquitted without a proper trial and requested the SC needed to intervene. In response, the SC appointed Harish Salve as amicus curiae and set up a Special Investigation Team (SIT). It asked for reinvestigation in nine cases of atrocities in nine districts. While there may or may not have been a conspiracy, one fails to understand the Court's reason for describing the violence as "spontaneous". Bilkis Bano had also approached the Court about the mass murder of her family members and her own gang rape. Salve was also appointed an amicus in her case. The pattern of atrocities now becomes clear.

The SC transferred the trial of the accused in the Bilkis Bano case to Maharashtra. All of them, now set free, were found guilty and convicted.

Let us now focus on the remission granted to the convicts after the completion of 14 years and five months of their sentence. Rape, by any reckoning, can never be said to We are confronted here with a civilisational, moral and constitutional issue.
Immoral decisions cannot get the imprimatur of the SC, or any court in India.
The morality of democracy in India has been damaged — I hope not beyond repair.
This, in turn, has damaged our constitutional morality.
The SC must also explain

how and why a judgment of

the Gujarat HC was quashed

not in an appeal against the

judgment but in a petition

filed under Article 32.

be "spontaneous". It was for this atrocity that they were convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment. We know that in law, a life sentence means a sentence for the rest of one's natural life. However, the Criminal Procedure Code does contain provisions that permit remission after 14 years in prison.

Now comes the question of whether mass murderers and gang rapists ought to be granted remission. In any civilised system of jurisprudence, the crimes committed against Bilkis Bano would count as crimes against humanity, as they were committed during a period of communal violence against a minority community. Whether such convicts can be granted remission after 14 years is the question that the SC will have to deal with, now that it has issued a notice and a PIL by concerned citizens is calling for a quashing of the order of remission.

Guidance can be obtained from the Rome statute, which deals with crimes against humanity. There is a clear indication that such convicts can be granted a sentence of up to 30 years, depending on the gravity, brutality, and the context in which the crime occurs. India is not a party to the Rome statute. But this only means no case can be brought against India under the statute. Also, the obligation of nation states to prosecute and punish crimes against humanity would constitute customary international law.

Rape is regarded as "an impact crime". Such a crime is committed not only against the person but also against the community she represents. It's a message to the community as a whole and sends waves of everlasting fear through it. The message here was clear — this is revenge on you for being a member of the minority community.

The Constitution guarantees to all citizens, under Article 15, that there shall be no discrimination based on sex, caste, religion, and place of birth. It's time that the enforcement of criminal law is judged on the touchstone of the Constitution and we wake up to the reality of selective enforcement and benefits to the accused.

There is a disturbing issue with the SC judgment of May this year, when it asked the

Gujarat government to consider the application of one of the convicts for premature release - as per the state's 1992 remission policy. Gujarat was the "appropriate government" to decide on questions like remission or early release because it was there that "the crime was committed and not the state where the trial was transferred," the court ruled. However, the Gujarat High Court had, on another petition filed by one of the convicts, held that the appropriate government to grant remission was Maharashtra, as the trial had taken place there. That apart, the law requires that the judge who sentenced the accused persons must be consulted. This was not done. Justice UD Salvi of the Bombay HC has gone on record to say that he was unaware of the fact that remission was proposed for the convicts. He has also said that they showed no remorse even after their release. On the contrary, they were felicitated.

We are confronted here with a civilisational, moral and constitutional issue. Immoral decisions cannot get the imprimatur of the SC, or any court in India. The morality of democracy in India has been damaged — I hope not beyond repair. This, in turn, has damaged our constitutional morality. The SC must also explain how and why a judgment of the Gujarat HC was quashed not in an appeal against the judgment but in a petition filed under Article 32. In Mirajkar (1966), the SC said that no judgment of any court can be challenged under Article 32 and that the appropriate remedy would be an appeal. As part of constitutional morality, can we not expect the SC to follow its judgments or, at the very least when they depart from them to tell us what is the basis of this departure? I believe that the SC will be confronted with these questions while hearing the PIL filed by concerned citizens. We can only wait.

Can we expect the SC to undo the injustice? Bilkis Bano was not heard, and it is her voice that ought to be taken into consideration

The writer is a senior advocate and former Additional Solicitor General of India

## CURTAINS FOR PEGASUS

Court has brought an end to a manufactured controversy

Anand Bose

WITH THE SUPREME Court-appointed Committee rubbishing the Congress's charges of the government spying on individuals using Pegasus, a spyware developed by Israeli cybersecurity firm NSO Group, the truth is finally out. The truth is that Congress, its leader Rahul Gandhi and other Opposition leaders once again tried to create a false narrative against the Narendra Modi government and sully India's reputation globally.

The Committee, supervised by retired Supreme Court judge, R V Raveendran, did not find any definitive proof of the use of Pegasus, thus absolving the government of the charges of spying made by a consortium comprising the Congress party and a section of the Opposition, dubious global and Indian NGOs, biased media houses and so-called civil rights activists.

The entire episode once again points towards a well-hatched controversy against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the central government. The Pegasus issue is nothing but an extension of the tirade against the prime minister, which the nation has been witnessing since 2014.

Deeply disturbed by the growing popularity of PM Modi and the continued electoral successes of the BJP, the Congress party has been trying to derail India's growth story, and defame India on various interna-

INDIAN EXPRESS

The BJP government has strengthened consumer rights in many areas. With the Supreme Court ruling that privacy is a fundamental right of every citizen, the Narendra Modi government is formulating a comprehensive framework to ensure data protection and privacy to protect citizens in the current digital age.

tional fora. By repeatedly disturbing the proceedings of Parliament using fake narratives and falsehood, the Congress party has been indulging in impropriety, trying to demean our rich democratic heritage.

The Congress party and its leaders have a history in this regard. An example of this is the Rafale deal, which Rahul Gandhi and the Congress party tried to scuttle to hurt India's defence preparedness.

Similarly, we saw Rahul Gandhi and the Congress party casting aspersions and creating confusion over the "Made in India" Covid-19 vaccines. During Congress rule, it used to take years for vaccines to reach India, and no efforts were made to develop indigenous capabilities for creating life-saving vaccines.

The Congress should remember its past. It should not forget how the UPA government tapped phones and watched email accounts and that its Home Minister was accused of bugging the office of another senior Congress minister. Who can forget the 2013 Prism phone spying controversy by a foreign government in which the then Congress government did nothing to protect Indian citizens?

More recently, the Congress government in Rajasthan was involved in a phone tapping controversy. Congress has a long history of infringing on people's privacy and freedom. This is the true character of the party and its leaders.

Now contrast this with the efforts of the Narendra Modi government to protect the rights of Indian consumers in the digital age. The BJP government has strengthened consumer rights in many areas. With the Supreme Court ruling that privacy is a fundamental right of every citizen, the Narendra Modi government is formulating a comprehensive framework to ensure data protection and privacy to protect citizens in the current digital age.

The Supreme Court has brought the curtains down on the manufactured Pegasus controversy and what has once again come to the fore is the irrelevance of the Congress party and the Gandhi family. The Congress has failed to come to terms with the growing popularity of PM Modi and the BJP cementing its position as the world's largest political organisation. Rahul Gandhi is desperate as senior Congress leaders are deserting the party by the hour.

But the question is: Will Rahul Gandhi and the Congress party apologise to the nation for disrupting Parliament, breaking the trust of the people and misleading the nation, yet again?

The writer is a former chief secretary

## AUGUST 29, 1982, FORTY YEARS AGO

## Parties Clash

THERE WAS A pandemonium at New Delhi railway station when a fight erupted between Congress (I) workers and Maneka Gandhi's supporters who had gone to receive the latest addition to the Sanjay Gandhi Vichar Manch, Kalpanath Sonkar, till now a Congress (I) MP, from Uttar Pradesh. As frightened passengers fled in all directions, youths clad in kurta-pyjamas robbed a railway soft drinks stall of bottles and hurled them at each other. No one was injured. Afterwards, both parties registered complaints with the police who have filed two cases, of rioting agsint the Congress (I) work-

ers and one of attempted murder and rioting against J N Mishra of the Manch.

## UNIFORM CIVIL CODE

"IT IS HIGH time that we brought reforms in the Muslim personal law, first of all to do away with polygamy, so that we can stop the misuse an misapplication of the personal law not only by Muslim men but also men of other religions to marry a second wife", says Noorjehan Razack, the AIADMK MP in the Rajya Sabha. Razack, who is also a practising advocate, had made a statement in the Rajya Sabha on August 13 requesting the central government to stop the exploitation of

Muslim women, especially in marriage and divorce by enacting a common civil code applicable to all communities including Christians, Muslim, Parsis and Sikhs.

## India And Japan

INDIA AND JAPAN are coming round to the view that greater content should be added to their bilateral relations. This was evident after the talks between Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshio Sakurauchi and Minister for External Affairs Narsimha Rao in New Delhi. The leaders stressed the fact that relations between the two important Asian countries had to be improved.





-THE DAILY STAR

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, MONDAY, AUGUST 29, 2022

# THE IDEAS PAGE

# Light on dark matter

Much of the universe remains unknown. The James Webb telescope will hopefully provide a powerful window to help resolve some of the cosmos's many mysteries



Shobhit Mahajan

HUMANKIND'S FASCINATION with the heavens is as old as humankind itself. The sight of countless stars and the faint band of light which stretches from horizon to horizon must have been the cause of amazement and awe for the earliest homo-sapien as she trudged along the plains of East Africa. From the hunter-gatherer to our own times, every culture has developed its own cosmology – the system of beliefs or theories, which explain the origin and structure of the universe.

To study the heavens, a variety of instruments have been used throughout history. From sundials and astrolabes to telescopes and now gravitational wave detectors, we have tried to observe, chart, study and measure the universe. These observations have, in turn, led to the formulation of our theories of the universe. Thus, it was Kepler's observations of the planets which provided the impetus to Newton to formulate his law of gravitation which still forms the basis of celestial mechanics. In the early 20th century, the observation of receding galaxies by Hubble led to the model of the expanding universe.

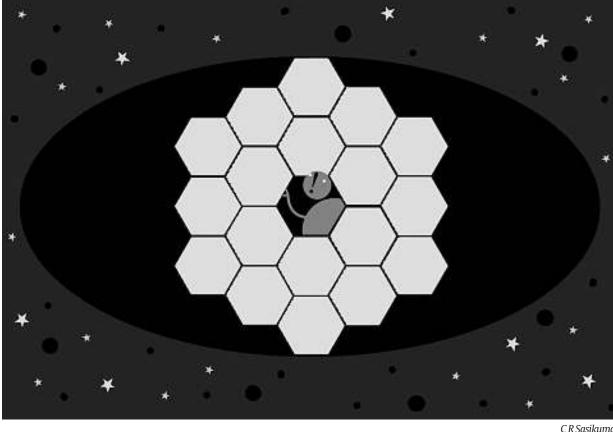
The quest to probe the universe received a major impetus with the commissioning of the James Webb Space Telescope. Costing around \$10 billion, the telescope has taken more than three decades from planning to commissioning and is truly a symbol of humanity's intellectual and creative potential.

Launched in 2021, it reached its final orbit at a distance of around 1.5 million km from the Earth in early 2022 and it took the engineers and scientists another six months to ready the instruments before they could be used. The observatory has four major components — the Integrated Science Instrument Module (ISIM) which houses four instruments to analyse the light that is captured by the optical telescope element that has a 21 feet diameter gold-plated beryllium primary mirror made of 18 hexagonal mirrors and a secondary mirror to guide the light collected by the primary mirror to the instruments. There is also a huge foldable sunshield to block the radiation from the Sun. Earth and the Moon since the instruments need to operate at a temperature of -220 degrees celsius. Finally, there is the spacecraft bus with all the equipment for the operation

of the observatory.

And then finally it happened: In July, it released its first images and they were truly breathtaking. The images of galaxies that might date back to almost 13 billion years ago, the cosmic cliffs of the Carina nebula, the Cartwheel galaxy, the Stephan's quintet each of them was spectacular even though the colours were artificial since the images were infrared images and not visible light. It also provided an analysis of the atmosphere of a giant gas planet orbiting a star about a thousand light years away. The analysis indicated the presence of water in the atmosphere.

Developments in telescope technology (in all regions of the electromagnetic spec-



C R Sasikumar

trum and not just the visible range) over the last century have allowed us to know with reasonable certainty a lot about our universe. We know that at the "beginning" of time, all the energy was concentrated in a primeval fireball of extremely high temperature and density. Then with a massive explosion, termed dramatically the Big Bang about 14 billion years ago, the universe began and has been expanding since. At some point, a couple of hundred million years later, the first stars started forming.

Although the broad contours of the universe are fairly well established, the details are still missing. This is especially true of the earliest times in the history of the universe. It is here that the Webb telescope offers a unique opportunity.

Our window to the universe is electromagnetic radiation. These waves, which span a whole spectrum of wavelengths from the very long radio waves through visible light to the ultra-short gamma rays, travel at the speed of light. This means that in cosmology. given the enormous distances involved, if one is looking at waves emitted from an object which is very far, one is actually observing the object as it was in the distant past looking into the distance means looking into the past. The expansion of the universe also stretches the waves and so visible light could be stretched into the longer infrared part of the spectrum. Infrared radiation has the advantage that it passes through dust clouds more easily than visible light.

The Webb has four instruments to observe and analyse infrared waves. This makes it singularly suitable to observe the light emitted from the earliest epochs of the universe. This will give us an insight into how the first stars and galaxies formed from the primaeval soup of matter and radiation. Because it can peer so far into the past, it will also allow us to compare the earliest galaxIn July, it released its first images and they were truly breathtaking. The images of galaxies that might date back to almost 13 billion years ago, the cosmic cliffs of the Carina nebula, the Cartwheel galaxy, the Stephan's quintet — each of them was spectacular even though the colours were artificial since the images were infrared images and not visible light.

It also provided an analysis

of the atmosphere of a giant

about a thousand light years

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the presence of water in the

gas planet orbiting a star

ies (those that are furthest) to those that we observe today in our own cosmic neighbourhood. And since it operates in the infrared, it can see through the dust clouds that obscure regions where star and planet formation is taking place.

The Webb doesn't just produce pretty pictures. It also produces a huge amount of spectroscopic data which reveals, among other things, the chemical composition of the region producing the radiation. Studying the chemical composition of exo-planets the planets orbiting other stars — would determine whether life as we know it is possible on these extraterrestrial worlds.

In 1543, the Polish astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus published a book which revolutionised our thinking of the cosmos. We were displaced from being the centre of the universe to just another planet revolving around the Sun. Centuries of observations since have made us even more insignificant. In the last few decades, it has been shown that the kind of matter that our world is made of — the stuff of our iPhones, our earth and even us, is a mere 3-4 per cent of the overall matter and energy in the universe. The rest is some combination of a mysterious kind of matter called dark matter and an even more mysterious unknown substance called dark energy. Not only are we not at the centre of the universe, we are not even made up of the kind of stuff that the universe is mostly made of. Any vestigial remnant of our species' anthropic arrogance has been finally demolished by cosmology. The universe is vast and most of it is unknown. We hope that the Webb, over its lifetime would provide us with a powerful window to help resolve some of the many mysteries of the cosmos and make it a little bit more comprehensible.

> The writer is professor of physics and astrophysics, University of Delhi

## Not so ebullient

"What is a whole generation of Rohingya youth to do, except languish in the camps, leading a half life, with no foreseeable change? Now is the time for the international community to come forward and put pressure on Myanmar for the Rohingyas'

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

Granular picture of economy reveals continuing deficit in employment opportunities, subdued wage growth, limited mobility, rising inequality



safe and dignified return."

Ishan Bakshi

IN A FEW days from now, the GDP estimates for the first quarter of the ongoing financial year will be released. The Reserve Bank of India has pegged growth for the quarter at 16.2 per cent in its most recent update. For the full year, it expects the economy to grow at 7.2 per cent, marginally lower than the International Monetary Fund's most recent forecast of 7.4 per cent. These projections imply that over the course of these turbulent years, India will be one of the fastest-growing economies in the world. But, beyond the headline numbers, there are several contradictory impulses in the economy.

First, while the economy has surpassed its pre-pandemic level, the labour market, especially the informal segment, continues to be mired in distress. The clearest indication of the continuing stress comes from data on work demanded by households under MGNREGA. So far, in every month this year (April-July), the number of households demanding work has been significantly higher than those demanding work over the same period in the pre-pandemic period.

This heightened demand for work under MGNREGA indicates the continuing absence of more remunerative employment opportunities and points towards the persisting divergence between the formal and informal parts of the economy. For if both were growing at a similar pace then the labour market distress in both segments would have eased at a comparable rate. Further, these diverging trends also indicate rising productivity/growing capital intensity of production, which is more likely to occur among the larger firms in the formal sector. An obvious corollary is the continuing struggles of the micro, small and medium-sized firms which suggest that the labour market stress is unlikely to dissipate immediately.

Second, this continuing slack in the informal labour market reflects in subdued wage growth in this segment, even as there are signs of the labour market tightening at the other end of the wage spectrum in the formal segment. Data on rural wages shows that over the past year, wage growth across three principal occupation categories - general agricultural labourers, construction workers and non-agricultural labourers - has been lower than retail inflation. This translates to an erosion of the real purchasing power of households. Several firms have alluded to this trend in their quarterly earnings, pointing towards a drop in sales volume.

In direct contrast, reports of high attrition rates, despite record pay hikes in sectors such as IT point towards a tightening of the labour market at the other end of the spectrum. They also suggest a rise in the return to skill/higher education during this period, indicative of a deepening of the labour market dualism (at one end are the wellpaid highly skilled/educated workers, while at the other are the low-paid semi- or unskilled, informal casual workforce).

Third, the lack of employment opportunities and subdued wage growth imply that household mobility continues to be adversely impacted, even as inequality is likely to have risen during this period. Put differently, as household movement up the income ladder has slowed down, the number of families in the higher spending cohorts isn't increasing fast enough, even as the purchasing power of those in the top spending cohort has risen dramatically. Thus expenditure, especially on high-end discretionary goods and services, is growing at a fast clip, but overall consumer sentiment, as measured by the RBI, remains in the "pessimistic zone", well below levels seen before the pandemic, as purchasing power remains subdued. Across various markers of upward mobility, there are indications to this effect.

As per data from SIAM, in 2021-22, sales of two-wheelers were roughly a quarter lower than their pre-pandemic level in 2019-20. Similarly, sales of entry-level cars are also facing headwinds, even as purchases of high-end cars (sedans and SUVs) are growing at a fast clip. As per CRISIL, cars priced above Rs 10 lakh (the premium segment) grew by 38 per cent last year, while those priced lower grew by a mere 7 per cent. A similar trend seems to be playing out in residential real estate. As per data from JLL, in seven cities (Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai, and Pune), in the first six months of the year (January-June), real estate transactions above Rs 1.5 crore grew at more than twice the pace of those below Rs 50 lakh. In fact, during this period, the number of transactions above Rs 1.5 crore was more than half of the volumes seen in the Rs 50 lakh category.

Fourth, at the firm level too, these contradictory impulses can be observed. Corporate profits are at record highs even though business sentiment, as measured by the central bank's business assessment index, is lower than what it was around a year ago. A possible explanation for these opposing trends is that even as the larger formal firms have gained market share at the expense of the smaller players, subdued employment prospects and sluggish wage growth imply that the overall size of the market isn't expanding as hoped.

Thus, despite the central bank's surveys showing that capacity utilisation rates have risen to levels exceeding their long-term average, there aren't enough concrete indications of a broad-based pick-up in private investments across a range of sectors. Investment activity, as proxied by bank credit (adjusting for lower inflows from bond and commercial paper issuances) and internal accruals (there are reports of higher dividend payouts by firms) remains subdued. Firms seem to be hesitant to commit to fresh investments.

Thus the granular picture that emerges is of a continuing deficit in employment opportunities and subdued wage growth; of limited mobility and rising inequality; of pessimistic consumers and uncertain business prospects. This implies that economic activity is not as ebullient as many would believe. To what extent these contractions deepen or get resolved will determine the country's medium-term growth prospects.

treated as inferior after Independence:

PM' (IE, August 28). The fate of Khadi,

which Mahatma Gandhi used as a sym-

bol of sacrifice during the anti-colonial

struggle, may be headed towards an in-

different fate. The Narendra Modi gov-

ernment has introduced a change to the

Flag Code of India, permitting the use

of polyester instead of Khadi in a bid to

bolster its "Har Ghar Tiranga" campaign.

This move can lead to a grave loss of

ishan.bakshi@expressindia.coms



## A Priyanka-Sachin ticket

atmosphere.

Rahul Gandhi hasn't shown consistency. But Congress can still upset BJP applecart

MANY APPEARED GOBSMACKED by Ghulam Nabi Azad's resignation from the party. The timing was characteristically spectacular; the grand old party, somnambulating for the most part since 2014, has been showing some signs of resuscitation with the announcement of the Bharat Jodo Yatra. That's what smart politicians do — they ensure amplification of their

Azad has ensured that his resignation has at least temporarily hijacked, if not somewhat smeared, Congress's call for a national renewal, a second freedom struggle of sorts against the authoritarian predispositions and sectarian manifestations of the BJP-led NDA government. His letter is unambiguous in terms of what and who he holds singularly responsible for his bye-bye moment — former Congress President Rahul Gandhi and his new kids on the block. Ask the disgruntled members of G-23 and they will agree with Azad's comments. The majority of Congress members, however, for decades conditioned to the formidable might of the Gandhi family name, will treat Azad's resignation as an act of exaggerated self-importance of an ageing stalwart in the December of his political career. And therein lies the problem. The Congress is refusing to see the writing on the wall. That is why they cannot read it. One should treat every resignation seriously.

The notorious word "coterie", a cabal of dubious lieutenants of the 1970s is back in circulation, because the grand old party has become an anachronism even as India has moved ahead. Tragically, it is the Congress that has constructed modern India, despite some terrible aberrations like the Emergency, establishing a democratic infrastructure, unleashing the animal spirit of economic liberalisation and privatisation, hi-tech and revolutionary telecompenetration. So how come the current existential dilemma amidst a climate of utter despondency? It all points towards leadership. There is a popular adage that is often used in the corporate world: A company becomes like its leader. It is no different for a political organisation. So let us go back to who Azad is explic-Ever since the lethal blowout in the 2014

itly targeting, Rahul Gandhi. general elections, Congress has been atrophying at a galloping rate. It needed an inspirational leader, someone who motivates cadres, engages energetically with seniors and leaders across tiers and encourages a political culture of candid conversations. That's what internal democracy is about. Instead, Rahul Gandhi, abruptly thrust into the forefront in 2013, went into a cocoon. He literally disappeared, surfacing sporadically during state assembly elections as a star campaigner. His "Suit Boot Ki Sarkar" and "Fair and Lovely" were masterstroke soundbites, but the consistency disappeared soon. I tried meeting Rahul myself with a detailed PPT presentation that Prashant Kishor would have found intellectually stimulating perhaps but was stalled by his obdurate gatekeepers. Ideation was replaced by genuflecting adulation. A leader, hugely fortified by

SPG security, can often be given a visa to hallu-

cination island by self-serving parasites. It is this caucus that has Azad, Anand Sharma and even Jaiveer Shergill hopping mad. The buck stops at the top, and Rahul must take the blame for barricading himself from his own wellmeaning party colleagues.

An illustrious member of this august coterie once told me his preposterous theory: "The Congress must strictly avoid TV shows. Once the Congress vs BJP slugfest is off the menu card, their TV ratings will drop. And we will not be subjected to the unwarranted prejudices of TV anchors". His advice clearly worked because following the 2019 Lok Sabha defeat, the party boycotted TV channels for an extended period. I spoke fervently against this, arguing that mainstream media is a vehicle for public outreach, especially for an Opposition party. Abandoning the platform altogether was committing hara-kiri. A miffed member of Rahul's team subtly conveyed to me: "Lay off or there will be consequences". Six months later, a suitably chastised Congress was back in the TV studios. There are innumerable such instances. The fact is that Rahul's band of boys (some are astute political entrepreneurs on a self-serving mission) have become an unassailable lobby because Rahul prefers to work with interlocutors rather than engage directly. This circuitous antediluvian model of communication has clearly boomeranged.

Ironically, despite the several setbacks and the continuing headwinds, Congress still possesses the exceptional talent, political experience, policy formulation capabilities, organisational base, and frontal organisations to galvanise the disillusioned voter. It also remains the true inheritor of the fast vapourising idea of India. A week is a long time in politics. A rejuvenated Congress can still upset the BJP's applecart in several state elections till December 2023 where the two parties are in a head-tohead contest (Gujarat, HP, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, Chhattisgarh). But it needs to be bold. Instead of being irrationally obstinate, the party should let Rahul fight the battle without necessarily being the numero uno. Congress needs a Priyanka Gandhi-Sachin Pilot ticket.

Priyanka possesses a natural charisma, enjoys meeting people from all walks of life, and thoroughly relishes the big fight. She will also keep the Gandhi loyalists both within the party and outside content that the once-magical political brand is not going anywhere. And Pilot, a hardworking ambitious man who enjoys the theatre of political contests, can kickstart a bottom-up revival of the party. It is possible. But will Congress dare to reinvent itself or fade away, ensconced in its make-believe notion of infallibility? They should remember that "too big to fail" is a risky gamble. Ask Lehman Brothers. Or the two big traditional parties in France, the Socialists and the Republicans who are virtually non-existent

THIS REFERS TO the report, 'Khadi Not just Azad but India will be watching.

The writer is a former member of the Congress

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## AZAD'S EXIT

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Before Bharat jodo, Congress jodo' (IE, August 27). Ghulam Nabi Azad's grouse seems that he no longer finds himself in the coterie that now surrounds the Gandhis. He had been a known face for 40 years, and because of this very reason he came to enjoy power, both in the party and government. He has little following in his home state, Jammu and Kashmir, where he intends to start his political party. It should not be surprising that his future politics will benefit the BJP as his cozying up to the same is no secret.

Samiul Hassan Quadri, Bikaner

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Before Bharat jodo, Congress jodo' (IE, August 27). Azad's exit from Congress is yet another nail in the coffin for the party. For a long time now, their arrogance has been at the root cause of their own retrogression at the national level. If they do not stop to introspect, they will soon be extinct. Having a strong Opposition at the national level is imperative in running a robust democracy. By failing to meet those standards, Congress is not just failing itself, but the whole nation.

AN INDIFFERENT FATE

Naeem Akhtar, Lakhimpur

GREEN ECONOMY

livelihoods.

SS Paul. Nadia

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'RBI's green

challenge' (IE, August 27). With climate change wreaking havoc around the world already, it is now high time we create a political and economic defence against it. RBI's monetary policy committee can make the required policy shifts by making a certain degree of green-finance mandatory in the credit ecosystem of the country. Mandatory reserves can be maintained under the banking system for sustainable finance. Incentives can also be given in the form of differential interest rates on green credit. It will not only help in reducing the carbon intensity in the economy but also augment India's bargaining power in the international forum on climate

Nilanshu Kumar, Begusarai

# 12 THE WORLD



ON ITS 40TH ANNIVERSARY

**UAE, TURKEY, IRAN OFFER SUPPORT** 

## CHARLES GUEST EDITS BLACK NEWSPAPER

UK's Prince Charles has guest edited an edition of the country's only Black newspaper to honour contributions of African-Caribbean communities to arts and society. The Voice records Charles' 'long-standing collaboration with Black leaders'.

Pak flood toll over 1,000

as countries pledge help

## TOPOFTHE WORLD



**PAKISTAN** Under fire, Imran vows to continue rallies

OUSTED PM Imran Khan has said his political rallies against his rivals will continue even when the crisishit country is severely affected by floods as his fight was for 'haqeeqi azadi' (real freedom). Speaking at a rally in [helum district of Punjab province, Khan, 69, said he is waging war against the "thieves" who looted Pakistan for 30 years and also fighting for the supremacy of the law, the Dawn reported. Khan was recently booked under an anti-terrorism law for "threatening" a female judge and senior police officers at a rally. A five-judge bench of Islamabad HC will be hearing a contempt case against him.

**TURKEY** 

## Ankara says Greece locked missiles on jets

**GREEK MISSILES locked** on to Turkish F-16 fighter jets carrying out a reconnaissance mission in international airspace, Turkey's state-run Anadolu news agency said Sunday. This is the latest claim from Turkey that its neighbor and NATO member Greece has been targeting its aircraft above the eastern Mediterranean and Aegean Seas. The F-16s were at an altitude of 10,000 feet to the west of Greece's Rhodes island when the Russian-made S-300's target tracking radar locked on the report said. It added that radar lock-ons are considered an act of hostility under

NATO rules. **ANGOLA** 

## Ex-leader's funeral held amid vote row

REUTERS

ANGOLA HELD a funeral on Sunday for long-serving ex-leader Iose Eduardo dos Santos, who died in Spain in July but whose burial was delayed by a family request for an autopsy. Dos Santos died on July 8 at the age of 79. His funeral was taking place days after an election that appeared to have returned his MPLA party to power but whose results have been disputed by the opposition. Dos Santos and his family dominated Angolan politics for the 38 years he ruled until 2017. His rule was marked by a 27-year on-off civil war but also an oil boom.REUTERS

## US warships sail through Taiwan Strait in first since Pelosi's visit, Beijing wary

**AP & REUTERS** 

TAIPEI, AUGUST 28

THE US Navy sailed two warships through the Taiwan Strait on Sunday, in the first such transit publicised since US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi visited Taiwan earlier in August, at a time when tensions have kept the waterway particularly busy.

The USS Antietam and USS Chancellorsville are conducting a routine transit, the US 7th Fleet said. The cruisers "transited

Tripoli tense

after clashes

of wider war

MILITIAS PATROLLED nearly de-

serted streets in Libya's capital

Sunday, a day after clashes killed

32 people and ended Tripoli's

Saturday and pitted militias loyal

to the Tripoli-based government

against other armed groups al-

lied with a rival administration

that has for months sought to be

deadlock could explode into a

wider war. Libya has plunged into chaos since a NATO-backed upris-

ing toppled and killed longtime dictator Moammar Gadhafi in

2011. The oil-rich county has for years been split between rival ad-

ministrations, each backed by

militias and foreign governments.

out of the failure to hold elections

dren," said a woman who was

trapped in an apartment.

The current stalemate grew

Residents fear the fighting that capped a monthslong political

seated in the capital.

The fighting broke out early

monthslong relative calm.

raise fears

**SAMY MAGDY** 

CAIRO, AUGUST 28

through a corridor in the Strait that is beyond the territorial sea of any coastal State." the statement said.

The operation demonstrates the US' commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific, and the US military flies, sails and operates anywhere international law allows, the US navy added.

The Chinese military's Eastern Theater Command said it was following the ships and warning them.

China conducted many military exercises in the strait as it

'EUROPE'S LARGEST STREET PARTY'

**PAVEL POLITYUK** 

RUSSIAN ARTILLERY fired at

Ukrainian towns across the river

from the Zaporizhzhia nuclear

power plant overnight, local of-

ficials said on Sunday, adding to

residents' anguish as reports of

shelling around the plant fuelled

there was more Ukrainian

shelling of the plant over the past

24 hours, just a day after Moscow

and Kyiv traded accusations of

targeting Europe's biggest nu-

Russia's defence ministry said

fears of a radiation disaster.

& MAX HUNDER

KYIV, AUGUST 28



USS Antietam during an operation in the Taiwan **Strait on Sunday.** Reuters

sought to punish Taiwan after Pelosi visited the self-ruled island against Beijing's threats.

China has sent many warships sailing in the Taiwan Strait and waters surrounding Taiwan since Pelosi's visit.

#### Median Line breached **SAJJAD HUSSAIN**

Meanwhile on Sunday, Taiwan's defence ministry said it detected 23 Chinese aircraft and eight Chinese ships operating around Taiwan on Sunday, as Beijing continues its military activities near the island.

UN expected to issue flash appeal of more than \$160 mn ISLAMABAD, AUGUST 28 THE DEATH toll from the devastating floods in Pakistan has crossed the 1,000-mark after another 119 people died due to deluge-related incidents across the country in the last 24 hours, according to the official data

#### Floods triggered by the torrential rain since June 14 have wreaked havoc, inundating a vast swathe of land in the south The flood has rendered millions homeless. Reuters and southwest of the country.

Hope IMF bailout tranche takes Authority damage into account: Minister to deal with the calamity, said said on Sunday that 119 people had died in the previous 24 Islamabad: Pakistan needs financial help to deal with hours as heavy rains continued "overwhelming" floods, its

"So far, 1,033 people have died and 1,527 persons injured across Pakistan," it said, adding majority of deaths of 76 persons were reported in Sindh province in the last 24 hours.

The National Disaster

(NDMA), the main body tasked

to lash parts of the country.

Floods have destroyed 3,451 kilometres of road, swept away 147 bridges, destroyed 170 shops, and partially or fully damaged about 9,49,858 houses.

on Sunday.

Management

Pakistan is ill-prepared to deal with such a huge crisis and has sought international help.

The UN is expected to issue a flash appeal of over USD 160 million on August 30 to support Pakistan. Friendly countries have begun to step in to offer support, days after Pakistan briefed foreign diplomats. The UK has announced it will provide up to 1.5 million pounds for relief efforts. This is a time to stand together: GB is providing urgent support of 1.5 million pounds for #FloodRelief," British High Commissioner Christian Turner nomic situation," he said. The South Asian

that he hoped financial institutions such as the IMF would take the economic fallout into account. "I haven't seen destruction of this scale, I find it very dif-

foreign minister said

on Sunday, adding

ficult to put into words ... it is overwhelming," said Pakistan's Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari in an inter-

view. "Obviously this will have an effect on the overall eco-

> nation was already in an economic crisis, facing high inflation, a depreciating currency and a current account deficit. The IMF board will decide week on this whether to release \$1.2 billion as part of

the seventh and eighth tranches of Pakistan's bailout programme, which it entered in 2019. **REUTERS** 

tweeted on Saturday. Leaders of the UAE, Turkey, and Iran also

Bilawal

pledged support. According to the UAE's WAM news agency, President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan has ordered the provision of ur-

gent relief aid to Pakistan. The UAE's relief aid includes some 3.000 tonnes of food supplies, as well as tonnes of medical and pharmaceutical supplies. Terror case against 100

Meanwhile, over 100 people were booked under terrorism charges in Sindh province after they attacked police personnel, pelted stones and damaged public properties during a visit by PM Sharif and Foreign Minister

## Pakistan allowing US drones to use country's airspace: Taliban minister

**REUTERS** 

KABUL. AUGUST 28

THE TALIBAN'S acting defence minister on Sunday said Pakistan had allowed American drones to use its airspace to access Afghanistan, a charge Pakistan has recently denied following a US air strike in Kabul.

Acting Minister of Defence

likely to approve Trump request for arbitrator

Mullah Mohammad Yaqoob told reporters in Kabul that American drones have been entering

"According to our information the drones are entering through Pakistan to Afghanistan, they use Pakistan's airspace, we ask Pakistan, don't use your airspace against us," he said.

Pakistan did not immediately respond to request for comment.

Pakistani authorities have denied involvement in or advanced knowledge of a drone strike US said it carried out in Kabul in July that killed al Qaeda leader Avman al-Zawahiri. Yagoob's comments could

exacerbate tension between the two countries at a time when the Afghan Taliban is mediating talks between Pakistan and the

## Nigeria varsity deadlock Mar-a-Lago files to be assessed for risk; judge completes sixth month

The annual Notting Hill Carnival has returned to the streets of London for the first time since 2019, with more than 1 million

people expected to take part in Europe's largest street party on Sunday and Monday. The carnival, which celebrates the

Caribbean culture at the end of August every year, took place online for two years due to the Covid pandemic. Express

Abujia: A strike by the Academic Staff Union of Universities in Nigeria has now clocked six months, affecting millions of students, many of whom are now working to survive.

in December and PM Abdul University strikes are com-Hamid Dbeibah's refusal to step mon in Nigeria, which has more than 100 public universities and down. In response, the country's east-based parliament appointed an estimated 2.5 million stua rival PM, Fathy Bashagha, who dents. The latest strike, however, has for months sought to install is biting harder on an education his government in Tripoli. sector that is struggling to re-Residents recounted horrific cover from a Covid lockdown scenes. "We see death before our and an earlier strike that lasted eyes and in the eyes of our chilfor most of 2020.

No alternative means of learning is provided for students because "more than 90%" of lecturers in Nigerian universities are members of the academic staff union, according to Haruna Lawal Aio, director of public affairs at Nigeria's universities commission.

Ukraine nuke plant shelled again as

US slams Moscow for ignoring risk

Zaporizhzhia region. Reuters

clear plant, which has prompted

Ukrainian nuclear company

Energoatom said it had no new

information about attacks on

grave international concern.

The striking lecturers are demanding a review of their conditions of service, besides improved funding for universities.

Many lecturers are moving abroad for better opportunities and improved pay, while many students are moving to other countries to start afresh.

"My life is stagnant," said Ahmed, a student working two jobs, one as shoemaker.

**AGENCIES & NYT** WASHINGTON, AUGUST 27

The US State Department said

on Sunday that Moscow did not want to acknowledge the grave

radiological risk at the

Zaporizhzhia plant and had

blocked a draft agreement on nuclear non-proliferation because it

Regional governor Oleksandr

Starukh said on Telegram on

Sunday that Russians struck

homes in the region's main city

of Zaporizhzhia, about a two-

hour drive from the plant, and

the town of Orikhiv. On Saturday,

Starukh said, residents were be-

ing taught how to use iodine in

case of a radiation leak, **REUTERS** 

mentioned such risk.

THE US intelligence community will assess the potential risk to national security of disclosure of materials recovered during the search of former President Donald Trump's Florida residence, according to a letter seen by Reuters.

This comes as a federal judge in Florida gave notice of her "preliminary intent" to appoint an independent arbiter, known as a special master, for a review of the highly sensitive documents.

(DNI) Avril Haines' letter dated Friday to House Intelligence Committee chair Adam Schiff and Oversight Committee chair Carolyn Maloney said the Justice Department and DNI "are working together to facilitate a classification review" of materials including those recovered.

The heavily redacted affidavit released by the US Justice Department underpinned the FBI's extraordinary search of Mar-a-Lago in which agents seized 11 sets of classified records including some labeled

"top secret" as documents that could gravely threaten national security if exposed.

In the affidavit, an unidentified FBI agent said the agency reviewed and identified 184 documents "bearing classification markings" containing "national defense information" after Trump in January returned 15 boxes of government records sought by the US National Archives. Other records, according to the affidavit, bore notes written by Trump.

Meanwhile, on Saturday, in an unusual action that fell short of a formal order, Aileen M. Cannon, a

judge of the Federal District Court for the Southern District of Florida, signaled she was inclined to agree with Trump and his lawyers that a special master should be appointed to review the seized documents, the New York Times reported. Judge Cannon was

appointed by Trump in 2020.

On Friday, only hours after a affidavit was released, Trump's lawyers filed court papers to Judge Cannon reiterating their request for a special master to weed out documents taken in the search that could be protected by executive privilege.

AGENCY SAYS MISSIONS NOT SIMPLY A DO-OVER OF APOLLO LANDINGS

## For Mars and more: Why NASA is again sending astronauts to the moon

#### **KENNETH CHANG** AUGUST 28

"WE ARE going." That is the catch phrase that NASA is using in the lead-up to the debut flight of its new moon rocket, which could launch as early as Monday at 12:30 pm GMT. It is a phrase repeated by agency officials, added as a hashtag on social media postings and proclaimed on banners hung around the launch site at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

If you are not a space buff, sending astronauts back to the moon might seem like a big

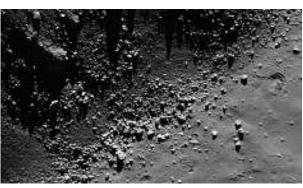
yawn. Why? We already went. Why should NASA repeat what it did half a century ago, especially since astronauts will not actually step on the moon for several years, and by that time, NASA will have spent about \$100 billion?

NASA officials today argue that the moon missions are central to its human spaceflight program and not simply a do-over of the Apollo moon landings from 1969 to 1972.

"It's a future where NASA will land the first woman and the first person of color on the moon," Bill Nelson, the NASA administrator, said during a news conference this month. "And on these increasingly complex missions, astronauts will live and work in deep space and will develop the science and technology to send the first humans to Mars.'

That's a change from as recent as 2010, when President Obama delivered a speech at the site where Americans launched to the moon and said NASA should aim for more ambitious destinations like asteroids and Mars and move beyond the moon. "We've been there before," Obama said.

Today's program, Artemis, was named so during the Trump



NASA officials say there's also concern that China, with its space ambitions, will claim moon as its 'exclusive zone'. NASA

administration. Its first step will be the upcoming test flight of the moon rocket, known as the Space Launch System, with the Orion capsule on top where astronauts will sit during future missions. Orion will swing around the moon before returning to Earth, to wring out any issues with the spacecraft before putting people on board.

In addition to the mission's function as a proving ground for technologies needed for a much longer trip to Mars, NASA is also hoping to jump-start companies looking to set up a steady business of flying scientific instruments and other payloads to the moon, and to inspire students to enter science and engineering fields. "We explore because that's

part of our nature," Nelson said. It's not just NASA that wants to go to the moon these days. In recent years. China has successfully landed three robotic missions on the moon. India and an Israeli nonprofit also sent landers in 2019, although both crashed. A South Korean orbiter

is on its way. Nelson said that China's expanding space ambitions, which include a lunar base in the 2030s, also provided motivation for

of the things that we look at." For scientists, the renewed focus on the moon promises a bonanza of new data in the com-

Artemis. "We have to be con-

cerned that they would say: 'This

is our exclusive zone. You stav out," he said. "So, yes, that's one

ing years. "As scientists, we understand

that the moon is in some sense a Rosetta Stone," said David A Kring of the Lunar and Planetary Institute near Houston, "It is the best place in the solar system to study the origin and evolution of planets in the solar system."

#ExpressExplained

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

## THIS WORD MEANS

## **FULL COURT MEETING**

Convened at the discretion of the Chief Justice of India, these meetings discuss issues of importance for the judiciary and also look at administrative amends



Justice of India U U Lalit at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi, Saturday.

#### **EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 28

SOON AFTER taking charge, the new Chief Justice of India, Justice U U Lalit, called a meeting of the full court on Saturday where the judges discussed how to deal with issues relating to listing and backlog of cases.

#### The meeting, attendees

A full court meeting literally means a meeting that is attended by all the judges of

There are no written rules about when these meetings are held. As per convention, full court meetings are called by the CJI to discuss issues of importance for the judiciary. Senior designations of advocates in the Supreme Court and High Courts are also decided in full court meetings.

#### Significance

The basic idea is to take everyone along. Full court meetings are an ideal occasion to arrive at solutions to deal with larger problems that beset the country's legal system and to make changes, if necessary, in the administrative practices of the court.

#### Past meetings, decisions

Full court meetings are convened at the discretion of the Chief Justice of India, and do not follow any particular calendar.

Full court meetings have been held many times in the past. In March 2020, it was convened to discuss demands by associations of lawyers to close the court till further notice following the Covid-19 outbreak and its subsequent spread among court staff.

Also, a full court meeting held on May 7, 1997 decided that "every judge should make a declaration of all his/her assets in the form of real estate or investment" held in own name or in the name of spouse or any person dependent within a reasonable time and thereafter make a disclosure "whenever any acquisition of a substantial

The meeting resolved that an in-house procedure should be devised by the CJI to take suitable remedial action against judges who by their acts of omission or commission do not follow the universally accepted values of judicial life, including those indicated in the "Restatement of Values of Judicial Life" that lays down judicial standards and principles to be observed and followed by SC and HC judges.

## Less active dogs more likely to get doggy dementia: study

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 28

JUST LIKE dementia in humans, dogs too experience a decline in cognitive functions. which is known as canine cognitive dysfunction (CCD) or doggy dementia.

A large sample-size study published in the journal Scientific Reports on August 25 has reported that a dog's chances of developing CCD rise by 52% with each additional

"Among dogs of the same

age, health status, breed type,

NEW RESEARCH

PAPER

and sterilization status, odds of CCD were 6.47 times higher in dogs who were not active

compared to those who were very active," the study said. It noted that odds of having CCD went up in cases where the dogs had a history of eye, ear, or neurological problems.

Some earlier studies have found dementia can occur in at least 14% to 35% of older dogs, The New York Times reported.

The results of the new study were arrived at after analysing data from surveys completed by the owners of 15,019 dogs as part of the Dog Aging Project.

The disease, the study said, is difficult to diagnose as it is often confused with agerelated issues among canines like loss of vision or hearing. However, symptoms that

pet owners should look out for include changes in the dog's sleep cycle, forgetting years of house training, wandering around the house as if lost. among others. Another clinical sign that the study points to is altered social interaction with the dog either being withdrawn or getting aggressive.

According to the researchers, the risk factors linked to CCD mirror some of

the factors for humans with dementia.

"Given increasing evidence of the parallels between canine and human cognitive disease, accurate CCD diagnosis in dogs may provide researchers with more suitable animal models in which to study aging in human populations," the study said.



## SIMPLY PUT

# Pakistan's monster monsoon

That's how Climate Change Minister Sherry Rehman has described the extremely wet rainy season that has caused floods in 110 of the country's 150 districts, affecting 33 mn people, and killing at least 1,000

**AMITABH SINHA** 

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 28

WHILE Europe, China and some other regions of the world are experiencing a severe drought, Pakistan is facing one of the worst floods in its recent history. Reports say about 110 of the 150 districts in the country are affected by the flooding. Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) said on Sunday that over 1,000 people were confirmed dead in the floods so far.

The flooding, the result of an unusually wet monsoon season in Pakistan this year, started in July, but has worsened over the last couple of weeks. The regions of Sindh and Balochistan, comprising the western half of Pakistan, have been badly hit, although Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa too have been affected.

#### Worse than superflood of 2010

Pakistan's Minister for Climate Change Sherry Rehman on Sunday shared data from Pakistan's NDMA that said nearly 33 million people, about 15% of the country's population, had been affected by the floods. That makes this a more widespread flooding event than the one in 2010, described as a 'superflood' in which about 20 million people were affected, according to most assessments. More than 2,000 people are supposed to have been killed in the 2010 event.

Pakistan's Dawn newspaper reported on Sunday that "more than half of Pakistan" was currently under water, and that millions had been rendered homeless. At least half a million people had been evacuated and shifted to safer places, news reports said, citing Pakistan's NDMA. News television has been running eyewitness accounts about people, especially children, getting swept by raging rivers. Several people are reported to have died in house collapses triggered by flash floods and landslides in the hilly areas.

Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has said that most of the country was likely to remain dry - "hot and humid" over the next two days, but some rain was expected in the upper catchments of the major rivers. That means the flow in the rivers is unlikely to subside for the next few days.

The Flood Forecasting Division of the PMD in its bulletin on Sunday warned that the Kabul river, which originates in Afghanistan and flows through the northern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province before join-



 $A\,man\,wades\,through\,flood\,water\,carrying\,his\,grand daughter\,in\,Charsadda.\,\textit{Reuters}$ 





Pakistan army troops distribute food in flood-hit areas in Punjab on Saturday; displaced families take refuge on the roadside in Peshawar. Al

ing a tributary of the Indus river not very far from Islamabad, was in a "very high flood level" near Nowshera city, and that this situation was likely to continue for at least one more day. The Indus was flowing at "high flood level" near Chashma town in Punjab and Sukkur in Sindh province, it said.

## An extremely wet monsoon

The current flood is a direct result of an extremely wet monsoon season this year.

in Pakistan as well. The monsoon season in Pakistan, however, is a little shorter than in India. That is because the rain-bearing monsoon winds take time to travel northward from India into Pakistan. The official monsoon season in Pakistan begins on July 1 and extends until September, although most of the rainfall happens during the months of July and August. The active rainfall season is

The same southwest monsoon that brings

the bulk of India's annual rainfall causes rain

only one and a half months.

The normal rainfall for Pakistan as a whole during this three-month monsoon season is 140 mm, according to PMD. But because the season is quite short, there is a wide variation in the monsoon rainfall every year.

This year, the country saw plenty of rain from late June itself. But August has been exceptionally wet. Minister Rehman shared PMD data that showed until Friday, August had produced two and a half times its normal rainfall - 176.8 mm against the expected 50.4 mm. In Sindh, it has rained almost eight times the normal amount during this period; Balochistan has received over five times more.

'Pakistan has never seen an unbroken cycle of monsoon like this. Eight weeks of nonstop torrents have left huge swathes of the country under water. This is no normal season. This is a deluge from all sides, impacting 33 million plus people which is the size of a small country," Rehman said on Twitter.

Thus far in this season, Pakistan has already received 354.3 mm of rain, more than three times the normal of 113.7 mm until this time. Rehman said Pakistan is currently witnessing the eighth spell of rain in this season. Normally, there are about four to five spells in the entire season. Meanwhile, the PMD director general

said that the flood situation could have been even worse but for the timely forecast. The predictions for very heavy rainfall were made in April and May, which gave some time for the government agencies to prepare.

#### Different situation in India

The rainfall situation in Pakistan has been quite different from that of India so far, though incidents of extreme rainfall and flooding have happened here as well.

In August, India has received rainfall that is barely 6 per cent more than the normal. For the entire season so far, the country has received 7 per cent more than normal rainfall.

However, because India is such a huge country, the overall numbers hide marked variations at the regional and local levels. Just last week, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand experienced torrential rainfall, triggering landslides and flashfloods that killed over 30 people.

In August, central India, comprising mainly Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and parts of Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Maharashtra, has received 26% excess rainfall.

## US President's power to declassify info Officials with the authority to classify or parallel to separate criminal penalties Congress also procedures for the removal of classifica-

PRESIDENT JOE Biden on Friday mocked his predecessor Donald Trump's claim that he had declassified all the documents that the FBI seized in its search of Trump's home in Florida on August 8, telling a reporter in jest, "I just want you to know I've declassified everything in the world. I'm President, I can do it", before adding, "C'mon!"

Trump has claimed that before he left the White House in January 2021, he had declassified all the documents that the FBI found in Mar-a-Lago. His office said on August 12 that as President, he had issued a "standing order" that materials "removed from the Oval Office and taken to the residence were deemed to be declassified the moment he removed them".

What can a US President do and not do with regard to removing protections for government secrets?

## What is the classification system?

It is the administrative process by which the federal government controls how executive branch officials handle information whose potential public exposure is deemed likely to damage national security.

declassify matters can deem information as falling into three categories: 'confidential', 'secret' or 'top secret'. Exceptionally sensitive information can be designated 'SCI', for "sensitive compartmented information".

Only officials with proper security clearances and a "need to know" are permitted to see documents containing classified information or be told of their contents. There are also rules on how they can be stored, physically transported, or electronically transmitted.

The legal basis for the classification system comes from the President's constitutional authority as commander-in-chief. Presidents have established and developed it through a series of executive orders dating to the era of World War II and the early Cold War. The current directive, Executive Order 13526, was issued by President Barack Obama in 2009.

## Is the classification system enforced by

For the most part, the classification system is about bureaucratic controls. The main punishment for disobedience is administrative: officials can be admonished, lose their security clearances, and be fired.

As such, the classification system exists in

The Market

Abuse Unit

of the US

**Securities** 

Exchange

picked up

suspicious

trading

patterns.

Commission

and

has imposed to protect security secrets.

For example, the Espionage Act of 1917 – one of the laws cited in the Florida search warrant — protects secrets that it defines as defence-related information that could harm the US or aid a foreign adversary.

#### Who has the power to classify and declassify information? Officials who have been designated as

'original classification authorities" in federal departments and agencies can normally do so. They are considered to be exercising the US President's power over such matters, which has been delegated to them.

#### Are there formal procedures for declassifying information?

Yes. The 2009 Executive Order directs the head of the department or agency that originally deemed information classified to oversee declassification reviews, and it sets some standards for them.

The executive branch has regulations laying out the process that should be followed - such as, a requirement to make sure that other agencies and departments with an interest in the secret are consulted. There are

tion markings on documents.

#### **Can American Presidents declassify** matters directly? Yes, because it is ultimately their consti-

tutional authority. Normally, Presidents who want something declassified direct subordinates overseeing the department or agency with primary responsibility for the information to review the matter with an eye to making more of it public. But on rare occasions, Presidents declassify something directly.

#### Do Presidents have to obey the usual procedures? There is no Supreme Court precedent de-

finitively answering that question. Even if it is true that Trump had declassi-

fied the documents while he was in office, he clearly did not follow the regular procedures. In the unlikely event that the Justice

Department were to charge him under the law that makes the unauthorised retention or removal of classified material a crime a novel legal question would arise if Trump were then to repeat the claim as a defence. THE NEW YORK TIMES

## Story of a Wall Street fraud, starring two IIT alums who met in the US

#### **RAGHU MALHOTRA** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 28

A FORMER Goldman Sachs Group Inc. vice president and banker, Brijesh Goel (37), was arrested on July 24 for allegedly being part of an insider trading fraud with his friend, Akshay Niranjan (33), a co-conspirator in the case who worked for Barclays. Between 2017 and 2018, Goel allegedly tipped off Niranjan on at least seven deals that, according to federal prosecutors, resulted in approximately \$290,000 in illegal profits. The Wall Street fraud played out years after the two met at a US business school and became friends – until one of them decided to

## The actors

Both Goel and Niranjan had been students at different campuses of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) before they met

help authorities catch the other.

at the University of California Berkeley Haas School of Business in 2012, where they completed their Master's degrees. After graduating in 2013, both moved to New York to pursue lucrative careers in finance, Bloomberg reported.

Goel joined Goldman Sachs and rose to be vice president, while Niranjan did interest-rates structuring and foreign-exchange trading at Barclays bank. For a while, they lived in the same luxury high-rise building in Manhattan, travelled overseas together, and played squash at local clubs.

Niranjan moved to London in June 2018 and began working at a proprietary trading firm. The two, however, continued to be

## The fraud

While working at Goldman Sachs, Goel regularly received material nonpublic information (MNPI) about corporate merger and acquisition transactions, as well as potential



public offerings in which his investment bank was acting as a financial adviser. MNPI remains undisclosed to the general public because its release could affect the market.

From February 2017 onwards, Goel, it has been alleged, used confidential information from strictly internal emails and gave Niranjan, who was employed at Barclays Bank Plc, the names of the potential target companies.

Niranjan then allegedly used that MNPI to trade call options, which are financial contracts that give the buyer the right, but not obligation, to buy or sell certain stocks. The indictment against the two states that these call options would become profitable if the price of a company's share, that was targeted for acquisition, increased.

Niranjan allegedly placed the trades in a personal brokerage account held in his brother's name. After their acquisitions were publicly announced, Niranjan sold, exercised or assigned the options in the account. Niranjan and Goel then divided the profits netted from the insider trading scheme.

In August 2021, they exchanged written communication about a loan Niranjan was supposed to give to Goel. The next month. Niranjan sent Goel \$85,000 via wire transfer.

"There was no loan, and in fact, the payment represented profits from the trading scheme," the prosecutors have stated.

## The 'cover-up', betrayal

The US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) turned its focus on the duo after its Market Abuse Unit (MAU) through its Analysis and Detection Centre detected suspicious trading patterns.

Court documents state that on May 23, Goel met Niranjan in New York, and told

New Delhi

him that FBI agents had questioned him about insider trading. He also allegedly asked Niranjan to delete certain text messages like he had done. On June 3, the two met again — and this

time, unknown to Goel, Niranjan secretly recorded the conversation as demanded by federal prosecutors, perhaps to receive a lower sentence or immunity.

The two met again soon, where Niraranjan recorded the two discussing plans to delete evidence about insider trading.

Other than the charges of security fraud, Goel has also been charged with obstruction of justice for deleting the messages and asking Niranjan to destroy evidence. Goel has pleaded not guilty.

However, according to the Bloomberg report, there is no indication that Niranjan faces or will face criminal charges, but the SEC is suing him along with Goel for insider trading. This could lead to a fine and ban from the financial industry.

# 14 IDEA EXCHANGE NEWSMAKERS IN THE NEWSROOM

AAP is a party of highs and lows — high on liquor, lies and deceit, and low on morals and ethics. It has become a habit for them to shoot and scoot. Have you got the answers to the five questions we have raised to them on the liquor scam?

Liz Mathew: I have been seeing you since you were just an MP, then, the head of the youth wing of the party, then you became MoS, handling the Finance Ministry during a crisis like the pandemic, then you became a Cabinet Minister. What have been the challenges in this journey?

My father was a professor in Jalandhar and wanted me to join the Armed Forces. But at the age of 11, I ran away from home for a couple of days to play cricket. I started playing for Jalandhar district, then became captain of Punjab, but my father suffered a heart attack. I was the eldest son and he wanted me to leave cricket and do something else. So I started an export house with my cousins at the age of 20. I moved again and became a cricket administrator. I never thought of joining politics but contested a by-election and entered the 14th Lok Sabha. I was lucky enough to be re-elected in the 15th, 16th and then the 17th Lok Sabha.

#### Liz Mathew: Both in the Finance Ministry and in Youth Affairs and Sports, there have been many challenges. So what are the big things that you are focusing on right now?

If I were to talk about finance, I think it was a great learning experience for me because of the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Nobody knew what to do, how to get out of it, the way forward, but after 7-10 days I started meeting the Prime Minister every morning – me, Nirmalaji (Nirmala Sitharaman) and Amit bhai (Amit Shah). There were day-long meetings, starting at 9.30 in the morning, with only a lunch break for an hour-and-ahalf. In that time, I had to go home, eat lunch, and call at least 10 to 15 district DCs or SPs or ministers. Every minister was given a state or a couple of states to speak to various people to get feedback for what was happening in the states.

(Coming to sports), it is a state subject so we have limitations. I can give something for the elite athletes, I can start a few more centres, I can handhold the federation for their annual calendar and the training expenses, I can allow them to host big events like we did for the Chess Olympiad. We have the support of the Prime Minister to make India a sporting nation but it's a state

#### Liz Mathew: What do you feel about consolidation of corporate power in the media and what's your take on what has happened in the last

Any Indian can invest in any company, I believe. And there is nothing new in corporates investing in companies.

## Liz Mathew: But when there is consolidation of corporate power in

Nobody forced them to get the corporate onboard. Can I restrict corporates? Can I restrict institutes to invest? No. If they're doing it as per the law of the land, as per the policy, one should be open to looking

#### Liz Mathew: Many people have apprehensions about the way the media is going and the impact that it will have on democracy. As a politician, what do you feel about it?

I have a lot of faith in the Indian media. There should not be any fear. I think there's enough competition in this field. I personally feel they should be technology-driven. People should be paid well because of the kind of hard work they put in. I see people waiting for hours just to take a byte, or for a 20-second video.

#### Ritu Sarin: So what in your view are the challenges before the Indian media today? Are you concerned about our falling rankings in the World Press Freedom Index? We were 142 last time, we are 150 now. I believe the government has also set up a committee to try and improve it. So is

this one area of concern, and what are the other areas? There's a big question mark on the peo-

ple who did the survey. Did they meet any of you when they did the survey? The credibility also comes from the organisation and the people they meet in India. restrict anyone... There might be a few peo-

Nobody's putting pressure on anyone to ple from different political parties who might be reaching out for favours. I'm not going to comment on them. Since five days they haven't answered the five questions asked. We are talking about Ram rajya, they are talking about rum rajya.

Ritu Sarin: So this ranking doesn't have much credibility in your view? And is it true that a committee has been set up



One of the prominent young leaders of the BJP and a four-time Lok Sabha MP from Himachal Pradesh, Anurag Thakur, who has headed the youth wing of the party and was MoS for Finance and Corporate Affairs during the COVID-19 pandemic, is at present Union Minister for Information and

Broadcasting, Youth Affairs and Sports. Former president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India, Thakur is a voice of the government and has been at the forefront of the BJP's political attack on Aam Aadmi Party on the excise policy, which has now been withdrawn.



We should check how many freebies are being given and if they are only for political gain or for things that are necessary... There should be a debate on how many freebies can a particular state give out

# 'Despite corruption charges, AAP is not willing to answer questions. They're drunk on power'

Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Youth Affairs and Sports, Anurag Thakur, on AAP and its contentious excise policy, consolidation of corporate power in the media, and dynasty politics. The session was moderated by Deputy Political Editor Liz Mathew



Anurag Thakur, Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Youth Affairs and Sports, in conversation with Liz Mathew, Deputy Political Editor, The Indian Express Abhinav Saha

## to try and improve the ranking?

If my country's media doesn't have any difficulty and can work freely and the environment doesn't impose any restrictions on them, then India doesn't need a certificate from any other country. If you think we have restricted you in any way, then I'm here to listen to you. But if anyone comes with an agenda and gives a rating, I don't want to comment on it. It doesn't affect me.

Sandeep Dwivedi: In the Commonwealth Games we won medals in disciplines where we generally, historically, didn't do well. So now there is this push for India going for events where there are more medals, like athletics and swimming. As a minister, what is your vision? Do you want to focus on your traditional strength or want to take this big leap? And how will you do that?

There are new disciplines, games where India has started doing very well, where we didn't see any medal in the past. We have put in effort towards the Target Olympic Podium Scheme, by pumping in money, taking care of their boarding, lodging and training facilities, not only locally but globally, their participation in events locally as well as globally, everything is taken care of by the Government of India. In addition, six lakh rupees per annum is given as an out-of-pocket allowance, which has never happened before.

Second is the Khelo India Youth Games and the University Games, which created a pipeline or bench strength for future events. Corporates are also pitching in by starting their academies or centres, or picking a few players to help them financially. I personally feel our players should get more leagues and tournaments. Another is a trainer's programme to train our trainers to the next level. Third is research and development – we should pump in more money there.

#### Liz Mathew: Now that elections in Himachal Pradesh are nearing and seeing that you take on the AAP every day, are you going for a bigger role in

state politics? AAP is a party of highs and lows — high on liquor, lies and deceit, and low on morals as well as ethics. It has become a habit for them to shoot and scoot. Have you got the answers to the five questions we have raised to them on the liquor scam? No. I, as a BJP MP, have the right to ask questions on the liquor scam. But the accused in the scam, (Delhi's Deputy Chief Minister) Manish Sisodia, and the kingpin of the liquor scam, Arvind Kejriwal, did not say even a word on the questions raised by the BJP in the last five-seven days. Their first Health Minister (Satyendar Jain) is in jail, their Health Minister in Puniab (Viiav Singla) is facing corruption charges and is also in jail. Despite the corruption charges, they've abandoned decency. They're drunk on power. They're not willing to answer

Liz Mathew: In the AAP press conference, they raised some allegations against the BJP. You raised some allegations, you said it was a quid pro quo. This money has gone to Punjab. You both don't give us any proof or evidence that this money was spent in the Punjab election. Where's the proof or evidence?

Proof is in the documents of the Delhi government. I'll ask you one thing, why was there a deviation from the policy? They (the expert panel) had given a notice on October 25, 2021 to the companies... what action was taken? There were clear recommendations that the manufacturer, retailer and distributor cannot be one. The commission (for the government) was raised from 2 to 12 per cent. Why was it raised? Where has the money gone? When poor people were running away from Delhi (during the Covid lockdown), the Delhi government had given Rs 144 crore (in the form of waivers) to liquor vendors. It should have gone to the Delhi exchequer. Why were they refunded? Not a single person from AAP has answered these questions. All they say is that this is a beautiful policy. If it was such a good policy then why has it been rolled back? AAP has swindled money. They've been unjust to the people of Delhi.

Nihal Koshie: Whenever there is this debate by the BJP about dynastic politics, the Opposition brings the example of BCCI where you have relatives of officials taking over from them. What do you have to say about it?

I'm glad you raised this question. But are they democratically elected by the members of the BCCI? Yes, they are. Voters have elected them. They are not appointed. There's a big difference.

#### Harikishan Sharma: How do you see Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Nitin Gadkari from the top decision-making body of the party?

It's an ongoing process. Once it was Atal Bihari Vajpayee, LK Advani and Murli Manohar Joshi, From time to time, the party takes decisions that are in its favour. If the party decides that we should leave our ministerial post and work as party workers in a state, we will happily accept that. This is BJP's speciality. This is why Narendra Modi is the PM of the country while the Gandhis have only captured their party. Now Ghulam Nabi Azad and several veteran leaders have resigned from the Congress because the party is not able to escape the clutches of one family. This is the difference between the BJP and other parties.

#### Harikishan Sharma: Will the BJP welcome Azad?

He is a senior politician, he can take his own decisions. Give him some time to decide. I have good personal relations with him. This is one of the advantages of being in Parliament, I have good relations with senior and junior leaders. I have good relations with Rahul Gandhi too.

Liz Mathew: There is no camaraderie between the ruling party members and the Opposition benches now. Even in states, every other regional party has this complaint that the federal structure is in danger and the BJP is using its brute majority to just bulldoze things.

I enjoy very good relations with others. I think Central Hall is one place where people don't restrict themselves just to their party members but engage with oth-

I got an opportunity to contest because I did well in the field of sports... Yes, I had an advantage. But when you talk about dynasty, it's about the political parties that are run by families. It's not about one seat

ers too. There is an exchange of ideas in Central Hall and outside also. Earlier, politicians were there in Parliament for a long time. Today, there is churning because new faces are entering Parliament.

#### Divya A: In the recent Punjab Assembly elections, AAP had massive success. Do you think their plank of health and education will resonate with Himachal Pradesh and later Haryana?

I request you to visit Punjab today. You will see the scene on the ground after four months. (There have been) more than 30 murders in broad daylight. It has the worst law and order situation. Whether people are comfortable under AAP rule in Punjab or not. I request you to do a survey on that They talked about corruption, but they had to kick out their Health Minister in Punjab within two months. People have seen the mohalla clinic turn to mohalla theka (liquor shop). You can't find medicines there but you can find booze at every doorstep. Nobody's looking at that model They won't win a single seat in Himachal Pradesh. The people of Himachal have understood how the arrival of AAP in Punjab has lead to crime, murders and corruption.

Divya A: This government is using social media in a big way to reach out to people. There's a perception that at times it is being used to delegitimise mainstream media. At times, questions are raised on individual journalists.

Fake news sometimes creates tension in society. It's very important to crosscheck news. If fake news about our friendly nations is being published, it is against India. Those activities are illegal. More than 102 such web portals, YouTube channels and websites have been banned. None of them were from mainstream media. We should ban websites and YouTube channels and flag videos that spread fear, superstition and rumours. If an individual is running an outlet that is publishing credible news, we have no problem

Vandita Mishra: You spoke about AAP and both Sisodia and Kejriwal, whom you called the kingpin of corruption. I see two issues here. One of propriety — as a senior minister, you are pronouncing on a chief minister and also on a state minister. The second is due process — as a minister who has to promote the practice of due process, when you say that a CM is corrupt, where is the due process?

If Kejriwal has any morality left, then he should answer the five questions I raised. Kejriwal is the kingpin of corruption and Sisodia is also involved. I will continue to

New Delhi

say that till they prove their innocence.

#### Aakash Joshi: Today, political parties, including AAP, take such maximalist positions in political speeches. hamper the work the Centre and states have to do together as part of cooperative federalism?

When we were in the Opposition, I had to make a speech on the Commonwealth Games (CWG) scam. After the speech, a Congress leader got 10 other leaders of her party to my table in the Central Hall and told them she felt proud of what I had said. If I criticise the Congress, it's not as if we stop talking. It's only about highlighting what you have done and getting it into the public domain, whether it's in Parliament or on the street. I don't have an individual fight with anyone.

#### Liz Mathew: What's your take on the revdi or freebies culture?

We should check how many freebies are being given and if they are only for political gain or for things that are necessary... For example, when Telangana was formed, it had a lot of money. Today, it has a loan of around Rs 2 lakh crore. Where did the money go? Did it lead to any asset creation or was it spent on freebies? There should be a debate on how many freebies can a particular state give out.

#### Liz Mathew: Do you see giving rations to 800 million people as freebies?

It was the need of the hour because during the pandemic people were under a lockdown, they had no income.

#### Liz Mathew: When you hear about dynasty politics, do you feel uncomfortable?

Not at all. I got an opportunity to contest because I did well in the field of sports. My father's name is Prem Kumar Dhumal, my name is Anurag Singh Thakur, and my sons names are Udayveer and Jaiditya Singh. My sons don't use my surname. I don't use my father's name. But I'm proud of my father and what he has achieved as a farmer, professor and CM, and the way he did clean politics for more than four decades. Yes, I had an advantage. But when you talk about dynasty, it's about the political parties that are run by families. It's not about one seat... There they are holding power from Mulayam Singhji to Akhilesh (Samajwadi Party), from Karunanidhi to MK Stalin (DMK). Similarly, N Chandrababu Naidu to others (TDP), from Mamata Banerjee to Abhishek Banerjee (TMC) and Pandit Nehru to Indira Gandhi to Rajiv Gandhi to Sonia Gandhi to Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi (Congress)... They are holding power for so many years.



## M-CAP OF 7 OF TOP-10 COS TUMBLES

New Delhi: Seven of the top-10 valued firms suffered a combined erosion of Rs 1,54,477.38 crore in market valuation last week, with IT majors Tata Consultancy Services and Infosys emerging as the biggest laggards. PTI

## MOST ECONOMISTS KEEP PROJECTION BELOW RESERVE BANK'S ESTIMATE

# Led by base effect & services pickup, Q1 GDP growth seen in double digits

**ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 28

INDIA'S ECONOMY is estimated to have grown in double digits in April-June, the first quarter of fiscal year 2022-23, with real gross domestic product (GDP) growth rates seen in the range of 13-16.2 per cent, as per estimates by economists. A base effect of 20.1 per cent growth in the corresponding period a year ago along with the moderation in the impact from the Russia-Ukraine war and a pickup in service sector activity is likely to have supported growth, they said.

Though economic growth is expected to increase, most economists have kept their estimates lower than the 16.2 per cent estimate of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). Moreover, the Q1 GDP data — scheduled to be released on August 31 — will be closely eyed for monitoring the progress from the pre-Covid levels seen in 2019. The impact of a

high base will be strongly evident this time.

"Our Q1FY23 forecast is 13.3%, this is mainly due to base effect. Even with expected 13.3% growth in Q1FY23, CAGR between Q1FY20 and Q1FY23 will be 1.2%. Even if it is a 15% growth, CAGR between Q1FY20 and Q1FY23 will be 1.7%," said Devendra Kumar Pant, chief economist, India Ratings.

tracted 23.8 per cent during O1FY21 after the onset of the pandemic. It then surged next year in Q1FY22 to 20.1 per cent on the low base, even as it contracted by 8.5 per cent from the pre-Covid level of Q1 2019-20.

prices on volumes as well as

GDP growth rate had con-

"In ICRA's assessment, there has been a shift in demand towards contact-intensive services from discretionary consumer goods for the mid-to-higher income groups. This, in conjunction with the emerging cautiousness in export demand, and the impact of high commodity

wherever applicable with part-

ners, researchers, and security

experts, from whom it can ben-

figuration error related to Akasa

Air's log-in and sign-up service

was reported to it on August 25,

resulting in the user information

probably being viewed by unau-

firmed that other than name.

gender, email address and phone

number, no travel-related infor-

mation, travel records or pay-

ment information was compro-

mised. The airline said that on

being made aware of the inci-

dent, it stopped the unautho-

rised access by shutting down

the associated functional ele-

and sign-up services after adding

additional controls. "We self-re-

ported the incident to CERT-In

(which is the government's au-

thorized nodal agency tasked to

deal with incidents of this na-

ture)," Akasa Air said. CERT-In

comes under the Ministry of

Later on, it resumed log-in

ments of its system.

Electronics & IT. FE

However, the airline con-

thorised individuals.

A temporary technical con-

efit to strengthen its systems.

**MAJOR Q1 FORECASTS** 

■ RBI: 16.2%

■ India Ratings: 13.3%

■ ICRA: 13%

■ State Bank of India: 15.7%

■ DBS Group Research: 16%

■ Barclays: 16%

margins for the industrial sector, are likely to result in a relatively moderate industrial growth," Aditi Nayar, chief economist, ICRA, said. The rating agency estimates GDP growth rate to be 13 per cent in Q1FY23.

Recent moderation in commodity prices are expected to ease inflationary as well as mar-

gin pressures and translate into improved demand for discretionary goods and higher valueadded growth going ahead, according to economists.

"...private final consumption

expenditure in real terms

(which) had declined significantly by Rs 4.77 lakh crore in Q1FY21 owing to Covid-19 pandemic recovered by 46% in Q1FY22. It remains to be seen how the remaining 54% pent up demand recovered in Q1FY23. We believe it is likely to be more than 54%, indicating a strong recovery in consumer demand, specifically in services which has helped in the likely strong Q1FY23 numbers. This also accounts for 6.8% of the total GDP contribution in Q1FY23," State Bank of India (SBI) said in its research report. According to SBI, Q1FY23 GDP growth is expected at 15.7 per cent, with a large possibility of an upward bias.

The strong growth rate in Q1 will provide room for more rate hikes by the RBI, DBS Group reeconomist, DBS, said, "India's 2Q22 (Q1FY23) growth likely rose 16% YoY. Most lead indicators were up despite the Omicron wave, also helped by base effects ... The impact of high commodity prices and heatwave will emerge as counterweights."

Barclays India, in its report, said that while some supply headwinds were evident in the form of lingering intermediategoods shortages and higher input costs, the domestic goods and services sectors are expected to show "impressive recoveries" in Q1. "The economy will likely show a full recovery from Covid in Q2 2022, with the services sector fully open, trade activity at a peak and domestic demand holding strong. We see modest upside risks to our GDP growth forecast of 7.0% y/y for FY 22-23. We forecast India's economic growth accelerated to 16.0% YoY in April-June FY 2022-23," Rahul Bajoria, India economist, Barclays, said.

1,505 Infrastructure projects, of Rs 150

the Ministry of Statistics and

(MoSPI), out of which 386

many as 661 projects were

cost of implementation of the

completion cost of the 1,505

(22.19% of original cost)

₹13,50,275.69 crore:

of the anticipated cost

delayed as of July

1,505 projects

reported cost overruns and as

₹21,21,793.23 crore: Total original

**₹25,92,537.79 crore**: Anticipated

projects, which reflects overall cost

overruns of Rs 4,70,744.56 crore

projects till July 2022, or 52.08%

511: Number of delayed projects,

is calculated on the basis of the

latest schedule of completion

year of commissioning nor the

which decreases from 661, if delay

581: Projects for which neither the

## PM: Maruti Suzuki's success symbol of strong India-Japan partnership



(Left to right) Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Suzuki Motor Corporation chairman Osamu Suzuki and the company's president Toshihiro Suzuki in Gandhinagar, on Sunday. Nirmal Harindran

## **PARIMAL DABHI**

GANDHINAGAR, AUGUST 28

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Sunday said that India has targeted to be self-reliant in meeting its energy requirement in the next 25 years. He was addressing a gathering at Mahatma Mandir Convention Centre here to virtually lay foundation stones for an electric vehicle (EV) battery manufacturing plant of Japanese automobile giant Suzuki Motor Corporation in Hansalpur, Gujarat and Maruti Suzuki's vehicle manufacturing facility at Kharkhoda, Haryana, while also commemorating 40 years of Suzuki in India.

"Friends, in the Amrit Kaal of next 25 years, it is our target that India become atmanirbhar (selfreliant) in meeting with its energy requirement. We know that a big chunk of energy consumption is associated with transport. And therefore, innovation and efforts in that direction must be our priority. I am confident that with cooperation from all of you and all the friends from auto sector, India will attain this target," the Prime Minister said.

In this context, Modi also referred to various efforts being made by his government to give impetus to the EV ecosystem in India by offering various incentives to the buyers of EV vehicles. "The speed with which the EV market has grown, one would not have imagined it some years ago. One big characteristic feature of electric vehicles is they are silent. Whether it is a twowheeler or four-wheeler, they don't make noise. This silence is not only of its engineering, but also of the beginning of a silent

## SUZUKI TO SET UP **R&D UNIT IN INDIA**

■ Suzuki Motor **Corporation president** Toshihiro Suzuki, at the programme, announced setting up of a new company -Suzuki R&D Center India – a whollyowned company by Suzuki, Japan

revolution in this country." He expressed happiness that Suzuki was working on alternatives like biofuel, ethanol blending, hybrid EV etc, and suggested the company also start projects in exploring possibilities related to compressed bio gas (CBG).

Modi also congratulated Maruti Suzuki for completing 40 years of partnership, calling it a symbol of the strong partnership between India and Japan. "The success of Maruti Suzuki is also a symbol of strong partnership between India and Japan. In the last eight years, this relationship between the two countries has achieved new heights. Today, the bullet train between Maharashtra and Gujarat and Rudraksh Center in Banaras of Uttar Pradesh are examples of India-Japan friendship," he said, while remembering the late former Japanese Prime Minister

The Prime Minister said Japan has maintained a special bond with Gujarat since the organisation of the Vibrant Gujarat Summit, where Japan has always been a partner country. "The relation between India and Japan

Diesel exports fall

11% in July on levy of

is much higher than diplomatic limits," he added.

Recollecting his days as the Chief Minister of Gujarat, Modi said he then used to say he wanted to create a "mini-Japan" in the state. "The feeling behind that (sentence) was to ensure that our guests from Japan get the feel of Japan. We made attempts to ensure that the companies of Japan and their people do not face any difficulty here (in Gujarat). We paid attention to small things," Modi said, adding how he started having golf courses (as people of Japan are very fond of playing golf), restaurants offering Japanese cuisine etc in the state. He also said people in the state are also now learning the Japanese language.

The Prime Minister said it is due to such efforts that today. over 125 Japanese companies are functioning from Gujarat.

The event in Gandhinagar was also attended by Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, Gujarat BJP president CR Patil, Ambassador of Japan to India Satoshi Suzuki, Maruti Suzuki non-executive chairman RC Bhargava, Suzuki Motor president Toshihiro Suzuki and Suzuki chairman Osamu Suzuki. Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar attended the function virtually.

In his address to the gathering, Toshihiro Suzuki announced setting up of a new company — Suzuki R&D Center India – a wholly-owned company by Suzuki, Japan. He added that the company is aiming to strengthen its research and development (R&D) competitiveness and capabilities in new fields of technology not only in India, but also for global markets.

## Data breach at Akasa Air; 'self-reported' to CERT-In, says airline

**ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 28

AKASA AIR said on Sunday that personal information of its registered users pertaining to name, gender, email address and phone number may have been compromised due to a technical glitch. Though the carrier reported the incident to the government body Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In), it said there was no "intentional hacking attempt".

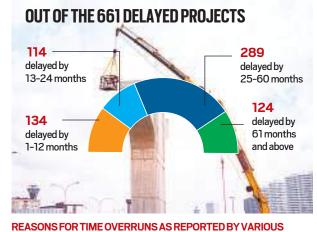
"At Akasa Air, system security and protection of customer information is paramount, and our focus is to always provide a secure and reliable customer experience. While extensive protocols are in place to prevent incidents of such nature, we have undertaken additional measures to ensure that the security of all our systems is even further enhanced," said Anand Srinivasan, co-founder and chief information officer, Akasa Air.

He said that the airline will continue to maintain its robust security protocols, engaging

## overruns of ₹4.7 lakh crore As many as 386 infrastructure projects, each entailing an

investment of ₹150 crore or more, have been hit by cost overruns of more than ₹4.7 lakh crore, as per MoSPI a report

386 infra projects show cost



PROJECT IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES INCLUDE:

- Delay in land acquisition Delay in obtaining forest and environment clearances
- Lack of infrastructure support Law and order problems
- financing ■ Finalisation of detailed engineering

■ Delay in tie-up for project

ordering and equipment supply

Project agencies are not reporting revised cost estimates and commissioning schedules for many projects, which suggests that time/cost overrun figures are under-reported

Source: MoSPI/PTI

## BRIEFLY -

## FPIs in August

New Delhi: After turning net buyers in July, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have become aggressive shoppers of Indian equities and pumped in Rs 49.250 crore so far in August on improvement in corporate earnings and macro fundamentals. This was way higher than a net investment of nearly Rs 5,000 crore by FPIs in the entire July, data with depositories showed. FPIs had turned net buyers for the first time in July, after nine straight months of massive outflows.

## OVL, Vietnam

New Delhi: ONGC Videsh Ltd got the seventh extension to explore for oil and gas in a Vietnamese block in the waters of the South China Sea, officials said.

## Reliance AGM

New Delhi: Reliance Industries will Monday broadcast its 45th annual general meeting simultaneously on a virtual reality platform as well as on five social media platforms, sources said.

## Goyal, GeM

New Delhi: Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal called for taking "strong" legal and punitive actions against buyers and suppliers, registered on the public procurement portal GeM, who indulge in fraudulent activities. **PTI** 

## AIRSPACE RESTRICTED AHEAD OF DEMOLITION OF BUILDINGS

## Noida towers razing: How flights flew around dust cloud

**PRANAV MUKUL** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 28

AHEAD OF the Supertech twin towers demolition which took place in Noida on Sunday afternoon, authorities had activated airspace restrictions to prevent aircraft from being potentially affected by the dust cloud that emerged following the destruction of the buildings.

#### What were the airspace restrictions?

Airspace with an area with a radius of 1 nautical mile (or 1.8 km) around the demolition site was declared as unavailable for  $flights to \, operate \, at \, the \, time \, of \, the \,$ demolition exercise. The air traffic controllers (ATCs) operating the Delhi airspace had to ensure that flights are routed to avoid the re-

#### Were flights affected? Given that only a small and lo-

calised portion of the airspace was declared unavailable for use, it only potentially added up to 8-10 minutes of flight time for aircraft approaching Delhi Airport from east. Aircraft were already made to avoid overflying the demolition site, according to information sourced from flight tracking portal Flightradar24.

#### What problems did flights face due to the demolition?

When flying over the demolition site, aircraft would typically





Flight paths around the demolition site on August 27 (top) and on August 28 (bottom). via Flightradar24

have had already begun their approach into the Delhi Airport and would have been descending, while already flying at less than 8.000 feet. The dust cloud, in the af-

termath of the demolition, came with the risk of causing visibility issues for pilots flying through the area. Authorities had said that the dust will remain in the air for at least 15-20 minutes after the clearance operation.

When do authorities generally

EXPLAINE

Authorities declare airspaces unavailable there are potential hazards along a flight route or a particular location that could af-

restrict airspaces?

Airspace restrictions are also imposed in case of security threats as deemed by relevant authorities.

For example, Delhi airspace is restricted for certain time periods at the time of Independence Day Celebrations and Republic Day Celebrations as well as rehearsals.

## Financial inclusion major step towards inclusive growth: FM

New Delhi: Financial inclusion is a major step towards inclusive growth which ensures the overall economic development of the marginalised sections of the society. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Sunday.

The success of the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), since August 28, 2014 is reflected in terms of opening of over 46 crore bank accounts with deposit balance of Rs 1.74 lakh crore with its expanded coverage to 67 per cent rural or semi-urban areas as well as 56 per cent of women Jan Dhan account holders, she said on eighth

anniversary of the flagship finan-

"Continuation of PMJDY beyond 2018 saw a marked shift in approach to meet challenges and requirements of the emerging FI (financial inclusion) landscape in the country

cial inclusion scheme.

"There has been a shift in focus from 'every household' to 'every adult', with added emphasis on usage of accounts by enhancing Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) flows through these accounts, promoting digital payments through the use of RuPay cards, etc," a statement quoted her as saying. PTI

## windfall profit tax New Delhi: Diesel exports fell by

11 per cent in July and overseas shipment of petrol dropped by 4.5 per cent after the government slapped a windfall profit tax on such sales, official data showed. Diesel exports dropped to 2.18 million tonnes in July from 2.45 million tonnes a month back, data from the Oil Ministry's Petroleum Planning

and Analysis Cell (PPAC) showed. Similarly, petrol exports fell to 1.1 million tonnes from 1.16 million tonnes in June. India first imposed windfall profit taxes on July 1, joining a growing number of nations that taxes super normal profits of energy companies. Export duties of Rs 6 per litre were levied on petrol and ATF and Rs 13 a litre on diesel.

The duties were partially adjusted in three rounds on July 20, August 2 and August 19, and have now been removed for petrol, with Rs 7 per litre and Rs 2 per litre remaining for diesel and ATF, respectively. The export levies helped ease the strain on domestic fuel supply. The levies were aimed at deterring firms like RII and Nayara Energy from choosing overseas markets for their fuel they make instead of supplying locally. PTI

## Space-based broadband: US court upholds SpaceX satellite deployment plan

**DAVID SHEPARDSON** WASHINGTON, AUGUST 28

AUS appeals court on Friday upheld the decision of the United States Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to approve a SpaceX plan to deploy some Starlink satellites at a lower Earth orbit than planned as part of its push to offer space-based broadband internet

Elon Musk's SpaceX won FCC approval in 2021 to fly 2,824 satellites at a lower orbit to provide high-speed broadband in-



A SpaceX Falcon 9 lifts off from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station Saturday, in Cape Canaveral, Florida. AP

New Delhi

ternet services to people who currently lack Competitors Viasat Inc and DISH Network Corp challenged the FCC approval. Viasat said on Friday it believes the "decision is a setback for both space safety and environmental protection." The company said if the court

had forced the FCC to address "complicated issues surrounding deployment of mega-constellations in (low-earth orbit), we believe harmful impacts that otherwise may persist for decades or even centuries to come could have been avoided." **REUTERS** 

## to win over Forest; Gerrard under fire

**REUTERS** AUGUST 28

HARRY KANE missed a penalty but scored twice to surpass 200 league goals in his career and give Tottenham Hotspur a 2-0 victory at Nottingham Forest that kept up their strong start to the Premier League season.

Forest, who have signed 17 players for about 150 million pounds (\$176 million) since promotion, made the early running before Spurs' prolific striker silenced the crowd with a low fifth minute strike from inside the

Later, Kane uncharacteristically missed a penalty, before making amends with a closerange header in the 81st minute. That was his 201st club goal: 187 in the Premier League, nine in the Championship and five in League One.

Spurs' third victory in four games, plus one draw, left them third in the Premier League on 10 points - two behind north London rivals Arsenal who have had a flawless start.

Forest, roared on at a raucous City Ground which waited 23 years for top-flight football to return this year, had plenty of possession and chances. Lewis O'Brien forced a smart save while Morgan Gibbs-White shot just over. But Spurs are the counter-attack masters, and both Kane and strike partner Son Heung-min could have struck more.

#### Gerrard consoles fans

Aston Villa manager Steven Gerrard said he could understand some fans booing following a 1-0 home defeat by West Ham United on Sunday, Villa's third loss in four Premier League games. Gerrard's side were the better team in a dull first half but lacked attacking spark and  $were \, then \, undone \, late \, on \, by \, a \, deflected \, Pablo \,$ Fornals shot that looped over Emiliano

Villa have managed only three goals in their opening four games and with leaders Arsenal away on Wednesday followed by a meeting with champions Manchester City, a poor start might be about to get even worse for Gerrard. "I have been in the game long enough. If you lose three games out of four it is not the start the supporters wanted and certainly not the start I wanted," he said. "Of course, I understand. I have two ears and I hear a lot of things. I heard the fans' frustration.

"So yeah, I pick up everything."

## KEY RESULTS

0 2 Tottenham 1 Newcastle Wolves 0 1 West Ham Aston Villa

# Kane leads Spurs to win over The search for Serena's successor

Consistency has been rewarded for much of the 2022 WTA season but a US Open favourite is hard to pick

**NAMITKUMAR** AUGUST 28

FEW CAN question Serena Williams' claim to the title of the greatest tennis player of her generation, and she did it with some style. Her dominance was unwavering throughout her career which saw her win 23 Grand Slam titles and end five years as the World No.1, but what was most remarkable was the consis-

In the upcoming weeks, ahead of the Williams' US Open swansong, much will be made of her legacy, on and off the court. And a defining aspect of that legacy, an enduring reminder of her greatness, will be the consistency of her results on tour.

By 2007, Williams had already won seven Majors – four in a row between 2002-03 – which would have put her among some of the greats of the game. But in the next 12 years, the American did not fail to reach the final of at least one Grand Slam. She was undoubtedly the best player on the tour, and she had the results to show for it. The same can't be said about the players lining up to lift the US Open title

Consistency has been rewarded on the women's tour this year. Iga Swiatek tops the list for match wins in 2022, which saw her 37-match winning streak take 4 WTA 1000 titles and a second French Open crown. Simona Halep, back from injury purgatory under a new coach, is second. She opened the year with a title, reached the semifinals in Wimbledon, and won her first hardcourt tile in 5 years at the WTA 1000 in Toronto this month.

Ons Jabeur, and Beatrice Haddad Maia are tied at third, and both produced their best on grass. Jabeur converted by reaching final at Wimbledon, backing up titles in Madrid and Berlin, as well as a final in Rome. In Cincinnati last week, Caroline Garcia became the first qualifier to win a WTA 1000 title. But the fact that she is fifth on this list shows that the result was less of a shock, and more of a reward for her consistency.

Swiatek is now the undisputed World No.1, Jabeur and Halep have consolidated their places in the top 10, Haddad Maia has risen nearly 70 places in the rankings since the start of the year, and Garcia is a few good results away from qualifying for the year-end Championships. Despite all of the consistent performances, the US Open feels more open than ever.

The same can be said about the men – both pre-US Open Masters tournaments were won by unseeded players – but in Rafael Nadal, who remains unbeaten at the Grand Slams this year, there is a clear favourite. In Carlos Alcaraz, there is a teenage sensation to support, and in Daniil



By 2007, Williams had already won seven Majors – four in a row between 2002-03 – which would have put her among some of the greats of the game.

Medvedev, despite a poor run to the Open, there are expectations on the defending champion and World No. 1.

Much of the unfairly perceived lack of quality in women's tennis recently has been due to the frequent chaos in the Majors. Consistency may be reflected in the rankings, but there is more attention and coverage in the two-week period of a Grand Slam - which used to be Williams' domain – than most of the year combined. The top players have not capitalised on that attention.

#### Who after Serena?

Since 2020, seven different players have won the 10 Grand Slams on the women's tour. In comparison, only four have won on the men's side, and eight of those have been split between Nadal and Novak Djokovic. The narrative around men's tennis' 'Big 3' is not based on who wins the most titles, or who finishes the most years at No. 1. The Majors are what matter, and neutral fans tune in to watch the trio compete for them year after year.

There are several valid debates around men's and women's tennis: Best-of-five vs best-of-three, the huge differences in prize money away from the Slams, the poor TV deals, how the women do not get equal claim to the stage. But take out the Big 3's domination of the Majors and similar chaos is likely to ensue.

## **MEN'S FIRST ROUND**

- ■(1) Daniil Medvedev vs Stefan Kozlov
- **■**(24) Francisco Cerundolo vs
- **Andy Murray** ■(4) Stefanos Tsitsipas vs Daniel
- Alexander Ritschard vs (6) Felix Auger-Aliassime
- Kyle Edmund vs (5) Casper Ruud

#### **WOMEN'S FIRST ROUND**

- Danka Kovinic vs Serena Williams
- Leolia Jeanjean vs (12) Coco Gauff
- ■(7) Simona Halep vs Daria Snigur

Brengle

■ Tatjana Maria vs (3) Maria Sakkari ■(5) Ons Jabeur vs Madison

This year's US Open is likely to be no different. A dozen different players could emerge as contenders, and there are no clear favourites. Swiatek may be the top seed, and but the dust has settled from her

landmark summer, and a lacklustre buildup, as well a tough quarter that has former Slam champions like Petra Kvitova, and exciting upstarts like Zhang Qinwen, could cause problems.

Halep has been solid all year, and with the Toronto title under her belt, confidence will be high. But the thigh injury that kept her out of Cincinnati last week might shake things up. She's in the same quarter as Garcia, who may be in the form of her life, but there are question marks over her ability to handle the pres-

Eyes are also on former champions Emma Raducanu, who is still in her first full year on tour and has struggled to keep up with the expectations that have followed her since her fairytale triumph in New York last year, and Naomi Osaka, who has not been the same dominant force she once was on hardcourts since her break last year to prioritise her mental health. They are both in the same quarter, alongside Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina and Australian Open finalist Danielle Collins, both of whom have plenty to prove.

Williams' farewell is likely to bring in the crowds, the anticipation, and the eyeballs, and rightly so. Few can argue she transcended the sport, and forever changed how women athletes are perceived. The big question, however, remains who can usher the women's game into the next generation?

## Verstappen goes from 14th to 1st, wins Belgium GP

**ASSOCIATED PRESS** 

AUGUST 28

Formula One points champion Max Verstappen quickly carved his way through the field from 14th to win the Belgian Grand Prix on Sunday and widen his lead in in the title race.

Verstappen, who in the final race before F1's summer break drove from 10th to the win in the Hungarian Grand Prix, produced another imperious drive and moved closer to a second straight world title. His lead in the standings is now 93 points — but it is over Red Bull teammate Sergio Perez because Charles Leclerc dropped to third in another poor Ferrari showing.

Verstappen was leading the race by lap 12, and he earned a bonus point for fastest lap. His third straight win was his ninth this season and 29th overall.

Perez finished second to jump ahead of Leclerc in the standings. Carlos Sainz Jr. started from the pole for Ferrari and finished a disappointing third. Leclerc started 15th and finished fifth behind the Mercedes of George Russell, but Leclerc dropped to sixth after he was handed a five-second penalty for speeding in the pit lane.

That pushed Alpine driver Fernando Alonso into fifth, and Leclerc, who is now 98 points behind Verstappen in the standings, was shocked by the penalty and seemed defeated in the championship race. "I didn't even know, no one told me," a

surprised Leclerc said of the penalty. "Why did I get the penalty?" As for his title race with Verstappen? "I'm not focusing so much on the championship now. Red Bull were on another planet today," Leclerc added.

"We need to know why we're so far away." Lewis Hamilton's bid for a sixth straight podium ended on the first lap when he clipped Alonso and briefly went airborne.

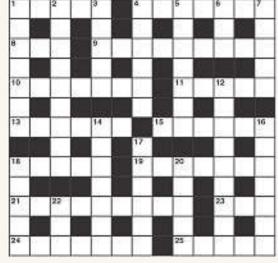
Sainz started from the pole because Verstappen and Leclerc were among the several drivers to be hit with grid penalties. Sainz got away on the start and Russell and Hamilton zoomed past Perez and behind

Hamilton then overtook Alonso on the outside but clipped the side of his Alpine, sending Hamilton's Mercedes up in the air. Race stewards reviewed and took no action, though Alonso clearly felt Hamilton had not left him enough room as he tried passing him back. "What an idiot closing the door from the outside," Alonso ranted.

"We had a mega start but this only knows how to drive and start in first." Hamilton later cut off an interviewer who attempted to relay Alonso's comments to him.

"It doesn't matter what he said," said Hamilton, who added he didn't see Alonso "in my blind spot."

## CROSSWORD 4832



## ACROSS

1 Quickly gets into underwear 4 Was defiant in a way? Hardly! 8 A snake appears so quietly

9 Certainly not obtained without resources (2,2,5) 10 Gear for a new Renault (7) 11 Speak when you're spoken to

13 Make harder to fathom? (6) 15 He may have set features at work(6) 18 Sailors may take a turn round

them (5) 19 It's disturbing having the wrong spirit in work (7) 21 Communist and German worker no longer needed

23 King emerging from bitter exile 24 Many are found to follow 25 I raced around and looked (5)

## 1 Marked dates in wrongly

2 Trumped in error that's indiscreet (9) 3 Like a judge with robes in disarray (5) 4 May be in leaf at last

5 Shut up (7) 6 Leaves note attached to article 7 What neglected study may easily become (5)

12 Pour or tip out a delightful mixture (9) 14 Concentration points to sound state of mind (7) 16 Slackened and become loose in  $a\, rush(7)$ 17 Animals unleashed on society?

18 Restriction on a nobleman

20 Ceremonies said to produce 22 Currency check? (3)

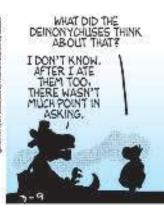
Solutions Crossword 4831: Across: 1 Astronomer, 8 Synod, 9 Colonel, 10 Precise, 11 Rondo, 12 Rimmed, 14 Adored, 17 Outdo, 19 Oarsmen, 21 Italies, 22 Miner, 23 Greengages. **Down**: 2 Sunbeam, 3 Radii, 4 Nickel, 5 Mildred, 6 Run in, 7 Blood donor, 8 Supersonic, 13 Emotive, 15 Romance, 16 Cousin, 18 Twang, 20 Rumba

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









## **CALVIN & HOBBES** by Bill Watterson









## MARVIN by Tom Armstrong







## OH ... WELL, I'M NOT SURE HOW





1 9 6 7 2 8 4 5 3

## **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. A hero is no braver than an ordinary man, but he is braver

-RW Emerson (4,7)

**VITAS** 

ATTMNU DEIRFV

- K W Emerson wer: A hero is no braver than an ordinary man, but he is braver **five minutes** longer SOLUTION: ELITE, VISTA, MUTANT, FERVID

#### Difficulty Level 4s Instructions To solve a Sudoku puzzle.

SUDOKU

every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns. in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

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

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

## **SOLUTION SUDOKU 4940** 6 1 3 9 2 8 4 7 5 3 2 8 4 5 9 1 6 7 1 8 7 4 5 3 2 287531649 5 3 4 9 6 2 8 7 1 7 5 9 3 8 6 2 1 4 8 1 3 2 4 5 7 9 6 6 4 2 1 9 7 3 8 5

## **DAY TODAY**

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20) There's great

optimism in your chart today and, in my opinion, you can exploit it to the full. If you meet what seems like an insurmountable obstacle, you may overcome it by sheer belief. In the end, you may be forced to slow down, relax and put your feet up.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21) Pull out all the stops and, whatever else happens, don't allow anyone to convince you that your ideas

and schemes are impractical. Actually, the twist is that it doesn't matter whether they're practical or not. What is important is your ability to improve the quality of your life in any way that suits you.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21) Mercury's curious motion now affords

you the perfect opportunity to give time and thought to what can only be described as affairs of the heart. Don't shy away from analysing your feelings, for if you understand your desires, then you'll also realise why you are attracted to a certain sort of person.

#### CANCER (June 22 - July 23) I know it takes an enormous amount of courage to let go and walk away from

difficult situations, but the result will be a massive growth in your self-confidence. You will have realised that you really do have the power to free vourself from the past.

#### LEO (July 24 - Aug 23) You are now in the closing stages of

alignments more inherently helpful than any which are due to return until well into the next decade. Your goal now is to turn the world on its head, transforming

lingering problems into VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23) It's good to spare some time for monetary matters

although not to the exclusion of everything else. Do pay very great attention to partners' wants and needs. You've been behaving like a person in a great hurry recently, but have you thought about where you're going?

ponder.

## BY PETER VIDAL

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)

Obviously this is a

tricky time for finances but, then,

what's new? One thing I can promise is that recent problems lie firmly in the past, and that you may now get on and make a few very wise long-term decisions. That doesn't mean life won't be free of difficulties, it's just that

#### they'll be different ones. SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23) You may be in the mood for fun. Even

if you're at work, the key to a productive day is creative self-expression. This means you've got to do what you want, and the authorities had better realise it. Mind you, don't imagine that you're always right. You're not

#### SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22) Matters close to home still require

your attention, so do be prepared to rise to the challenge at a moment's notice. It's in the nature of today's sensitive lunar alignments that you require extra sympathy and affection. But use your intuition wisely. CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

#### Try to remember that current planetary activity

complements your financial prospects - and keep your hopes up. Even what now seem to be highly unlikely possibilities will look very different by the beginning of next week. Nothing is for ever, despite what it feels like at

#### AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19) The important thing in your life at the moment

is partnership. Beyond the daily ups and downs of your various emotional and professional relationships lies the fundamental issue of what you actually are looking for from other people. It could be financial security - and there's nothing wrong with that.

#### PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20) Stay busy, keep active and don't



have about a week left in which to take the initiative and sort out a whole host of complications. After that, you'll have to shift the burden on to others.

US Open, 8.30pm, Live on Sony Sports Network **FOOTBALL** 

FIFA U-20 Women's WC final, 7.30am, Live on Sports-18; Durand Cup, 3pm, Live on Sports-18

## **BRIEFLY** —

## Axelsen, Yamaguchi win 2nd world titles

Tokyo: Viktor Axelsen underlined his red-hot form and confidence when he won his second world badminton championship after beating first-time finalist Kunlavut Vitidsarn 21-5 21-16 on Sunday. Axelsen ran his winning streak to 37 matches, not having lost since March. Akane Yamaguchi won her second straight women's world title after overcoming Olympic champion Chen Yufei 21-12 10-21 21-14. Yamaguchi surprisingly didn't medal in her home Olympics in Tokyo a year ago but has rebounded with consecutive world crowns and the undisputed No. 1 ranking. Axelsen added to his first world title in 2017 by not dropping a game at Tokyo Metropolitan Gymnasium. AP

## Vinerkar wins 10m air pistol T5 title

New Delhi: Ruchita Vinerkar of the Railways claimed the women's 10m air pistol T5 gold in the national shooting selection trials at the Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range here on Sunday. She shot 16 in the gold medal match to edge out Divya TS of Karnataka, who shot 14. Ruchita finished fourth in the qualifiers in the 294-strong field with a score of 576 after the allocated 60 shots. Divya was seventh with 574, while Maharashtra's Sakshi Suryavanshi topped with a score of 580. Haryana, however, claimed both the top spots in the junior women's T5 10m air pistol with Suruchi defeating Rhythm 17-15 in yet another close final. Suruchi had shot 568 to claim the seventh qualifying spot, while Rhythm was second with a score of 579. PTI

## Green stars as Aus beat Zim in 1st ODI

Townsville: Cameron Green claimed his maiden five-wicket haul before David Warner and Steve Smith made light work of the run chase to set up a five-wicket victory for Australia over Zimbabwe in the first ond-day match of a three-match series, the African nation's first one-day international series in the country since 2004. Green, took 5-33 as the tourists lost its last six wickets for 15 runs and was bowled out for 200. Australia then made light work of the run chase, as Warner scored 57 off 66 balls and Steve Smith played the anchor role of the innings to make an unbeaten 48 off 80 balls to set up the victory. AP

## 4 Indians make the cut in Sweden

Skafto (Sweden): Vani Kapoor and three other Indian women made the 36-hole cut at the Didriksons Skafto Open, a Ladies European Tour event, here on Sunday. Leading the Indians into the final round was Vani, who in a stretch of seven holes had five birdies on the front nine. She dropped one shot on the back nine to finish the day with a card of threeunder 66. She was tied-32nd, while the other Indians making the cut were Tvesa Malik (69), Amandeep Drall (70) and Diksha Dagar (71). who all were T-45. The trio was twoover for 36 holes as the cut fell at three-over and 72 players made it. Neha Tripathi (69-69) finished fourover and Ridhima Dilawari (74-75) at five-over missed the cut. PTI

# India bouncer back

India's pacers take all 10 wickets using an effective short ball strategy to put behind last year's wicketless outing in World Cup



**SANDIP G** DUBAI, AUGUST 28

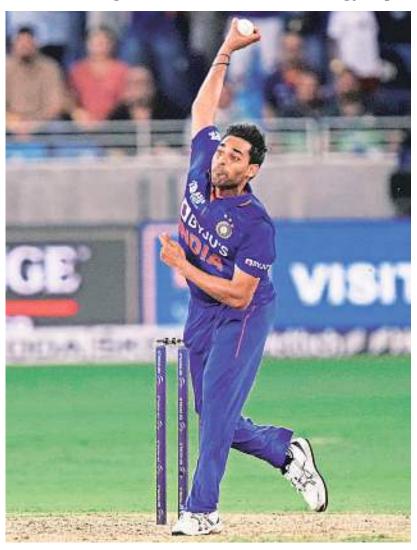
AS BABAR Azam walked off, after he was rushed into a pull shot off Bhuvneshwar

Kumar, Hardik Pandya galloped from mid-on, furiously wagging his index finger, implying that he masterminded the wicket, that it was his suggestion to bounce out the masterful Pakistan captain. Bhuvneshwar, unused to wild celebrations, nodded his head in approval. Babar's was not the only wicket the short ball from the Indian quartet was to consume

as the innings unfolded. The short-pitched balls were to be the kryptonite of the top-five batsmen. Shortly after Babar departed, Fakhar Zaman lashed his bat at a wide short ball off Avesh Khan, only for the extra bounce to defeat his purpose. Then Pandya inflicted triple blows off his short balls to eject Iftikhar Ahmed, Khushdil Shah and Mohammad Rizwan and crush the backbone of the Pakistan batting line-up. Each wicket was wildly celebrated by the Indian supporters, the bowler's name chanted like a divine mantra.

Less than 10 months ago had India's bowlers failed to prise out a single Pakistan wicket on a Sunday night of utter embarrassment. This night, they had plucked all 10, and fittingly all by their pace quartet of Bhuvneshwar, Avesh, Hardik and Arshdeep Singh. Before the match, all the chatter was about how India would cope with the absence of Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami, arguably the most devastating cross-format new-ball pair for India ever. And at their peak, two of the finest in the world, though they could not bargain a single Pakistan wicket on

Therein lies the glorious irony of India's lat-



Bhuvneshwar Kumar bowled just one short ball in his first spell — and that fetched the wicket of Pakistan skipper Babar Azam. AF

est bowling effort. None of them had the riveting pace of Bumrah, the smouldering sharpness of Shami, neither their gifts or guile. But they had the single-minded devotion to execute their plans. They came with a plan in place

and executed it with geometrical precision, neither under-doing nor over-doing it.

Quite often, bowlers would be reluctant in ing was indeed a novelty tactic by the Indian seamers. Or in their enthusiasm they would overuse it, more so if the team has two young seamers, still cutting their teeth at the international level. But all four maintained utmost

It was expected of Bhuvneshwar, one of the coolest and underrated operators in world cricket around and one who could, on current form, walk into any team in the world. Nothing frazzles him, neither his fall from grace in Test cricket — not because of lack of skill or craft but because of repeated injuries — nor the occasion that is an India-Pakistan game. Without any hype or fanfare, he has evolved into a complete T20 bowler. There is nothing he cannot do — he can bowl yorkers, bouncers, cutters, slower balls, the knuckle trick, still swing it both ways when needed, and is well-schooled in manipulating the seam, upright, scrambled, side of the hand, back of the hand, he could choose his tools at his whim. Such superfluous gifts could confuse a bowler or clutter his mind, but Bhuvneshwar does not needlessly indulge in his variations. He has a sparkling sense of clarity, the game-awareness to understand what he needs to bowl at what time. For instance, he bowled just one short ball in his first spell — and that fetched the wicket of Babar.

#### Surprise weapon

A lot of batsmen discount Bhuvneshwar's deception with the short ball. His bouncers are not as devilish as Shami's or as thrilling as Bumrah's. His is the most innocuous, and batsmen don't expect to be hopped around by Bhuvneshwar, not least in the early exchanges. They expect him to nip the ball around at full length. His bouncers are quicker than they expect, a reason they feel tempted to pull and not weave away as they would have to against Shami or Bumrah. They feel compelled to play before they realise that the ball is rushing them, a yard quicker, an inch higher. Just the subtle changes one needs to dismiss the world's best

Comparatively, Pandya dispenses the short balls more frequently. So, batsmen are not entirely caught off-guard. But he is adept at bowling different types of short balls. Not quite an Andy Roberts in range but still with enough ammo to rattle batsmen. The one to Rizwan was sharp and fast, angling in deviously and following the batsman. Rizwan tried a ramp, but the ball just kept climbing. The one to Ifthikar was more short-of-length and more of a lifter as Bumrah would bowl it. Clearly, it was his effort ball, one could hear the grunt in his follow-through. Khushdil received a staple short ball, banged in properly short and slower than the Rizwan one, but the batsman could not get under the ball. Pandya, too, mixed his lengths, usually resorting to good and short of length before blasting in the bouncer. The only natural bouncer bowler was

Avesh. He, though, tends to bowl too short and

provide batsmen ample time to get underneath it. But here he was thriftier and employed the bouncer as a surprise weapon. Not to forget the impressive Arshdeep, whose mastery of angles and relentless energy troubled Pakistan's openers. He does not purchase prodigious seam movement, or whip up disconcerting pace, or possess a rich repertoire of variations, but he doesn't pretend otherwise either. That trait applies for all four pacers. They are unpretentious, even unassuming, like Bhuvneshwar, but they could collectively achieve what Bumrah and Shami could not. SCOREBOARD: Pakistan: M Rizwan c A Khan bHPandya43, BAzamcASinghbBKumar10, FZaman c D Karthik b A Khan 10, I Ahmed c D Karthik b H Pandya 28, K Shah c R Jadeja b H Pandya 2, S Khan lbw B Kumar 10, A Ali c S Yadav b B Kumar 9, M Nawaz c D Karthik b A Singh 1, HRauf Not Out 13, N Shah Ibw B Kumar 0, S Dahani b A Singh 16; Extras: 1B, 4W 5; Total (19.5 overs): 147 all out; Fall of Wickets: 1-15 Azam, 2-42 Zaman, 3-87 Ahmed, 4-96 Rizwan, 5-97 Shah, 6-112 Ali, 7-114 Nawaz, 8-128 Khan, 9-128 Shah, 10-147 Dahani; Bowling: Bhuvneshwar Kumar 4-0-26-4, Arshdeep Singh 3.5-0-33-2, Hardik Pandya 4-0-25-3, Avesh Khan 2-0-19-1, Yuzvendra Chahal 4-0-32-0, Ravindra Jadeja 2-0-11-0 India: R Sharma c I Ahmed b M Nawaz 12, L Rahul b N Shah 0, V Kohli c I Ahmed b M Nawaz 35, R Jadeja b M Nawaz 35, S Yadav b N Shah 18, H Pandya Not Out 33, D Karthik Not Out 1; Extras: 0B 5LB 9W 14 Total (19.4 overs): 148-5; Fall of Wickets: 1-1 Rahul, 2-50 Sharma, 3-53 Kohli, 4-89 Yadav, 5-141 Jadeja; **Bowling:** Naseem Shah 4-0-27-2, Shahnawaz Dahani 4-0-29-0, Haris Rauf 4-0-35-0, Shadab Khan 4-0-19-0, Mohammad Nawaz 3.4-0-33-3

## Pakistan's rising star Naseem Shah: Pace, skill, fighting spirit

**SRIRAM VEERA** MUMBAI, AUGUST 28

ON THE eve of Naseem Shah's departure from Pakistan for the Asia Cup, his mentor and son of Abdul Qadir Sulieman Qadir told him, "Ab aapki zindagi ki udaan shuru hue hain. (The time has come now for you to fly high in your life!) These six months, starting from Asia Cup, if you perform for Pakistan, then you will also become a super star like Shaheen Shah. Nadeem, Sulieman says, promised him he will do his utmost best. "Banega superstar, aap dekhna! (He will become a superstar, you wait and watch).

Naseem took his first steps on his actualising his promise on Sunday in Dubai right away from his first over. KL Rahul hung his bat out at a skidding thunderbolt outside off to drag it back onto his stumps. He then nipped one back in to Virat Kohli before cleverly dangling one full and well outside off-Kohli's nemesis in the last year and half - and nearly had his man but the second slip clanged a difficult chance. He then hurried both Kohli and Rohit Sharma. He returned later to take out Suryakumar Yadav with a fast straight one that rushed past the attempted big hit to knock out the off pole.

Not just mentors from home rave about him but one of the brainiest pacer of them all Andy Roberts too has been keeping a close eye



Naseem Shah claimed two wickets for 27 runs against India. Reuters

on him. Seven years ago or thereabouts, Roberts had worked with Shah during a threeweek pace camp in Lahore.

"Wonderful talent, I remember. Just a

young kid then. You see young talent and see some good stuff but this boy was something else. Had everything: pace, skill to move the ball, and was aggressive – he was very eager to

learn," Roberts says. The talent and eagerness had obviously

stayed with Roberts who recalled the last day of the camp. "He was almost crying, tears in his eyes that I was leaving and camp was ending. I used to wonder what happened to him." Good and bad things have happened to

him since then. In 2019, on his debut tour to Australia, a night before a tour game in Perth. Babar Azam was shaken by a WhatsApp call from Qadir's son Suleiman from Lahore. Naseem's mother had died, and Sulieman. who had taken in a fresh-faced teenager at his Abdul Qadir Academy, wanted the team to break the news gently. "Let him sleep now, no point in waking him and shock him. Please tell the manager to tell the news gently to him," Sulieman recalled telling Babar.

Not long after Roberts left, a serious back injury had Naseem worried about his future. That's when he ran into Mudassar Nazar, the former player who runs the National cricket

"Not just one but three stress fractures on the back." Mudassar told this newspaper.

"Mera kya hoga, sir? (What will happen to me?)Will I be able to play again? Will I be able to bowl as fast as before? Baccha tha, young boy, he used to keep asking and I would keep counseling him that he can if he works hard. His friends and peers like Musa Khan and Hasnain Mohammad were all going past him and that also makes one wonder, na?"

Mudassar suggested a few course corrections: the action was modified a bit. "His front leg was going too far across at the crease, twisting his back, and that was changed. His overall strength was increased. All this means, not only did he have to do gym sessions but also change his action – and practise it a lot to make it natural" Naseem was at it for 9 months.

The real deal

"To bowl fast, you need to be aggressive and ou need to want to bowl fast. It causes pain to the body and you need to withstand it. It's the nuances that Mudassar strived to inculcate "The angles, for example. How to use the crease better. I would say something about the need to bowl from round the stumps and he would quickly pick it up and do it in training. How to bowl different lengths. But I would say he was already really good when he came to me."

How far can the boy go? Couple of years ago, Mudassar Nazar predicted to this newspaper: "All the way, I would say. He is the real deal. From what I see, he has everything, it's up to him now." Roberts says.

Sulieman was at Shah's house for the mother's funeral. "I spoke to him that day. And told him 'remember how happy your mother would be. You are born to do this: be a great fast bowler. Just focus on it'. What did he say? "I will try my best, Playing for Pakistan has been my dream. Mein karoonga.

## An overenthusiastic 'keeper, a star whose poor form goes under the radar

## **ROLLERCOASTER**

## Avesh's efforts pay off

The other day at the training session, Avesh Khan was incensed as he was made to put through an extended spell of catching practice under the searing Dubai sun, After a while, he threw the ball in anger and implored the support staff to give him a break. At one instance, he refused to run for a coach, angering the fielding coach, who put him through further drills. But the effort Avesh put in, though reluctantly, paid off. Not one of the safest catchers in the team, he perfectly judged Mohammed Rizwan's ramp, kneeling down in sync with the dipping ball and getting his palms and eyes right under the ball. After the catch, he flashed a sheepish grin and gestured towards the Indian dressing room.

## New cool king in town

Hardik Pandya knows he is a cool cat. At times, he lets people know it too. He hit the match-winning six, accepted a bow from Dinesh Karthik, looked up at the dressing room and signalled a 'telephone ring' kind of wiggle. The same wiggle that Shahnawaz Dahani does after taking wickets though perhaps there was no connection between the two here. As it would happen. Dhani was one of the first player he would bump into after that celebration, and there ensued a sweet moment between the two. Smiles and animated happy faces. But the coolest moment happenned after the third ball of the final over. He had just moved outside leg stump and tried to smash it through the off side but couldn't beat the infield. He then looked across at Karthik, shut his eyes and nodded his head - the Indian way to say 'all is well, hum hain na, it's all cool, nothing to fret'. And next ball he smashed the orb over the wide long-on boundary. Rayindra Jadeja, who played a screamer of a knock, also raved about Pandya. "He was very clear when he came to bat. He said, I will play my shots no

## A mixed start for Kohli

Edged a wide one, dropped. Flirted with a well-outside off ball, missed. Inside-edge,



Hardik Pandya celebrates the dismissal of Pakistan's Iftikhar Ahmed. AP

missed the stumps. Mistimes a drive, falls just clear of mid-off. That was Virat Kohli's initial few moments at Asia cup. After a few months where he was left ruing his luck once he even threw his head to the skies and cried out, "What else do you want me

to do?", is luck turning his way? There was one stunning shot in all this iffy play and miss. The first bouncer from a Pakistani bowler, after India had picked so many with them, was eagerly awaited and when Shanawaz Dahani, called "trump card for Pakistan" by Waqar Younis, bounced one short, it didn't quite rise as much as he perhaps envisaged. Kohli swivelled into a fiery pull, way in front of the square, and with lot of time on his hands.

## Nawaz's redemption

In 2017, Pakistan's left-arm spinner Mohammad Nawaz was suspended for two months after admitting to the charge of failing to report a suspect approach by a bookmaker in Pakistan Super League. "Nawaz was charged with a single violation, on one occasion, which he failed to disclose to the PCB vigilance and security department, full details of the approaches and invitations received by him to engage in corrupt conduct," the PCB had said then. He married next year to a Diagonistc Radiographer Izdihaar who lives in South Africa. Slowly, his cricketing life to returned to tracks as he made his way to Pakistan team in 2019. Perhaps, his biggest day in international cricket came today, in two balls to be precise, taking out Rohit

Sharma and Virat Kohli.He was just hit for a six over cow corner by Rohit but persisted in his teasing trajectory. First Rohit holed out to long-on and off the first ball of his next over, he had Virat Kohli, perhaps trying to go inside-out with spin to a ball from middle and leg, but instead holing out at long-off.

## Rohit's travails



Amid the hullabaloo over Virat Kohli's elongated lean patch, Rohit Sharma's poor form has slipped under the radar a bit. The India captain had a

laboured stay in the middle today. Rohit got stuck, had a few close shaves against Naseem Shah and Haris Rauf, attempted an ungainly heave against Shahnawaz Dahani and mistimed a whack off Mohammad Nawaz on the leg-side that landed between two fielders in the deep. He was on six off 15 balls, when the release shot came - a six over long-on against Nawaz. It proved to be a false dawn, as Rohit

New Delhi

departed a couple of balls later, falling prey to a miscued lofted drive against the leftarm spinner. The opener made 12 off 18 balls. He has now scored just two half-centuries in his last 11 international innings.

#### A keeper captains dread Captains dread over-optimistic wicket-

keepers. And Babar Azman has one in the form of Mohammad Rizwan. In Rizwan's utopian world, anything that passes the batter is caught behind and a pad thud is equal to lbw. Plus he also has the acting skills that could get him a role in serious cinema. At least once an over he would break into a victory dance, it is such a convincing act with potential to con the most seasoned of umpires. So when Ravindra Jadeja missed a pull shot and the ball reached Rizwan's hands, as expected the celebrations started behind the stumps. Babar looked confused. Having played with Rizwan for a long time, he knew he needed to be careful. There seemed a seed of doubt in the Pakistan captain's mind but the prospect of getting the wicket of Jadeja was tempting. DRS showed Jadeja hadn't edged. Rizwan was sheepish but he seemed to be indicating the din in the stadium. You can never win with

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NDIA

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'PADAK LAO, PADAK BADHAO'

# Haryana, the Nation's sports factory

Following an impressive performance by Haryana sportspersons in the Birmingham Commonwealth Games (CWG), CM Manohar Lal applauded the players and urged youths of the state to pursue sports as a career

NDIA won 61 medals in the recently concluded Commonwealth Games (CWG) 2022 and secured the 4th position in the tournament. A good share of the country's medal tally was due to the talented sportspersons from Harvana, who won 20 medals- 9 Gold, 4 Silver and 7 Bronze medals.

Among the Gold medal winners from Haryana were the wrestlers Bajrang Punia, Sakshi Malik, Deepak Punia, Vinesh Phogat, Ravi Dahiya and Naveen Kumar, Para Powerlifter Sudhir, Boxers Amit Panghal and Neetu Ghanghas. Wrestler Anshu Malik, boxer Sagar Ahlawat and Shefali of the Indian women's cricket team, and national hockeyteam players Abhishek and Surendra won silver medals for the country.

Similarly, Pooja Sihag, Pooja Gehlot, Deepak Nehra and Mohit Grewal won a bronze in wrestling, Boxer Jasmine Lamboriya and athlete Sandeep Poonia won the bronze medal for our country. Savita Punia, Jyoti, Monika Malik, Nisha Warsi, Neha Goel, Udita, Navneet, Sharmila and Sonika from Haryana were part of India's women's hockey team which won the bronze medal.

Harvana Chief Minister (CM) Manohar Lal has urged the sportspersons of the state to perform even better in the times to come with the slogan Padak Lao Padak Badhao. Lal has urged the youth of the state to pursue sports as a career. The CM said that India's ambition is to top the next CWG in the medal tally. This can be definitely achieved by the players of Haryana, he added. He also called upon the players of the state to imbibe the five vows given by Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi, who, along with Home Minister Amit Shah, have praised Haryana's sports policy and sportspersons, the CM said. Haryana is the sports capital of the country that is inspiring the rest of the country.

At a function organised in Gurugram, the CM gave cash prizes and mementoes to CWG winners and participants from the state. Gold medalists received a cash prize of Rs 1.5 crore, Rs 75 lakh for silver medalists and Rs 50 lakh for bronze medalists. Sportspersons who were placed at the fourth position in their competitions were given Rs 15 lakh. Participants received Rs 7.50 lakh. In the Birmingham Commonwealth Games-2022, a total of 29 players including the players included in the Indian women's hockey team from Haryana have won medals. According to the sports policy of the state, a total cash prize of Rs 25.8 crore was awarded to them. In addition, the players were also given job appointment letters.

## STATE RESOUNDS WITH JUBILATION

Lal said that the sportspersons of Haryana are being discussed all over the country. They are also appreciating the Haryana government's policy that provides incentives and preparation facilities right from the school level. There is a festive atmosphere in the entire state due to the achievements of the players.

The CM said Sudhir is the first Indian to win a gold medal in Para Powerlifting. In the Indian women's hockey team, which won the bronze medal, almost nine of the 11 players are from Haryana, he said. Poonia, who hails from Sirsa, led the Indian hockey team as the captain, he added. "The players





**SAKSHI MALIK** GOLD IN WRESTLING







of Haryana won 28 per cent of the total medals for the country. If hockey is also included in this, then it increases to 32.7 per cent," he said.

## SPORTS AS A NEW CAREER PATH

Lal said that the state government has provided several facilities and incentives to nurture the sports talent of the youth. This has given birth to a new sporting culture in the state. The state government





**AMIT PANGHAL** GOLD IN BOXING



**SAGAR AHLAWAT** SILVER IN BOXING

has framed the Haryana Outstanding Sportspersons (Group A,B & C) Service Rules 2021 to ensure employment for the players. For them, 550 new posts have been created in the sports department.Moreover 190 sportspersons have been given government jobs. The government has reserved class one to class four government posts for sportspersons. The honorarium of sportspersons who win Arjuna, Dronacharya and Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratan Awards have been increased from Rs.5,000 to Rs.20,000 per month. The government provides Rs 20,000 per month to Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Award winners and Rs 5,000 per month to Bhim Award winners.

## **EXCELLENT INFRASTRUCTURE** FOR SPORTS PREPARATION

To develop a sports culture in the state, the government has built excellent infrastructure from the village level to the state level. "In the last eight years, we have spent about Rs 526 crore to develop sports infrastructure in the state. To develop a sports culture among children, 1,100 sports nurseries are being opened in the state. This will benefit about 25,000 budding players in the state. A scholarship of Rs 1,500 per month will be given to the players between the age group of eight to 14 years and Rs 2,000 per month to the players between the age group of 15 to 19," said Lal. The state government has been working on a policy to groom the players from childhood. He said that work is on to develop a Sports University at Rai in

## HARYANA AWARDS THE HIGHEST CASH PRIZE TO PLAYERS

Among the other states of the country, Haryana gives the maximum cash prize money to medalwinning players. A Haryana State Development



Sonepat.







more than Rs 335 crore have been provided sportspersons. In the Olympic Games, a cash prize of Rs 6 crore was awarded to the gold medalists, Rs 4 crore for the silver medalist and Rs 2.5 crore for the bronze medalist. Haryana is the first state in the country, which has made arrangements to give an advance amount of Rs 5 lakh to the player preparation as soon as they qualify for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Medal winners in

Fund has been

formed to provide

cash prizes and other

facilities to the

players in the state.

Cash prizes worth

medal-winning

Paralympics and Olympic, Asian and Provision Games have also been given cash prizes. The cash award for sportspersons with disabilities is at parwith able-bodied sportspersons. A new policy has also been implemented for the mountaineers of the state who climb the world's 10 highest mountain peaks. The climbers will be given a cash prize of Rs 5 lakh and a Grade-C certificate in the sports category.

