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Two days later,

warrant against

ex-R&AW officer

TWO DAYS after a Delhi court is-

sued a non-bailable warrant

(NBW) against Vikash Yadav, the

former R&AW officer who was

named by the US as a conspirator

in an alleged plot to kill pro-

Khalistan separatist Gurpatwant

Singh Pannun, the court can-

Saurabh Partap Singh Laler of

Patiala House Courts had issued

the NBW on Monday, noting that

Yadav had failed to appear before

the court in a case of alleged kid-

napping and extortion despite

repeated calls. "Issue NBWs

against accused... and notice to

his surety under Section 491

Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha

Sanhita (the procedure when

bond has been forfeited) for

On Wednesday, Yadav's

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2** 

October 17," he had said.

Additional Sessions Judge

celled it on Wednesday.

court cancels

non-bailable

**NIRBHAY THAKUR** 

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 27

**PANNUN CASE** 

TRUMP, MODI HAVE VERY GOOD RELATIONSHIP: BESSENT

## As 50% tariffs begin, US treasury secy says: End of day, we will come together

Communication lines with US open... also in touch with industry to soften impact: Commerce Ministry officials

**SUKALP SHARMA** & RAVI DUTTA MISHRA NEW DELHI, AUGUST 27

ON THE day 50 per cent US tariffs on Indian goods became effective, US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said the India-US relationship is a "complicated" one, but he believed that "at the end of the day" the two countries will 'come together".

"This is a complicated relationship. President Trump and Prime Minister Modi have a very good relationship at that level. It's not just over the Russian oil.

The Indians came in early after Liberation Day to start negotiating on tariffs and we still don't have a deal. I thought we would have a deal in May or June. I

> tapped us along in terms of the negotiations and then there is CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

> thought India could be one of the

earlier deals and they kind of

**US Treasury** 

Secy Scott

Bessent

'Called Modi and Pak, said stop war or will make your head spin with high tariff'

**SHUBHAJIT ROY** CANBERRA, AUGUST 27

LAUNCHING A broadside that has left many in Delhi bristling, US President Donald Trump, while repeating that he brokered a ceasefire between India and Pakistan in May, Wednesday claimed that he spoke to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Pakistan and said the US will not do "any (trade) deals with you". that "we are going to put tariffs on you that are so high, your

Lutnick says green card to change,

DeSantis calls H-1B visas a scam



repeats claim of brokering India-Pak ceasefire

head's going to spin" if the fight

ing doesn't stop. He claimed he stopped the India-Pakistan conflict from "going nuclear".

"I am talking to a very terrific man, Modi of India. I said, 'What's CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

says Wong, flags shared aims as **Quad partners** Penny Wong:

Australia does not back tariffs,



together

**SHUBHAJIT ROY** CANBERRA AUGUST 27

UNDERLINING THAT Australia wants a "deep, strong and trusted partnership" with India, Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong said on Wednesday that her country "doesn't support tariffs"

On the US administration's tariffs on India, Wong said: "I'll leave you to comment on your bilateral relationships. I can tell you what Australia's position is... we don't support tariffs. We believe in the logic of the post-war economic order, that openness can enable growth, and our economy is a testament to that. Australia has developed our economy and advanced over these last decades because we have traded with the world in large part."

Asked about US President Donald Trump's turn against India in recent months, Wong said: "What we would want as **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2** 



### Jammu rain: Toll rises to 41, many Vaishno Devi pilgrims among dead

**ARUN SHARMA** & BASHAARAT MASOOD

JAMMU, SRINAGAR,

AT LEAST 41 people, most of them Vaishno Devi pilgrims, died in Jammu's Reasi and Doda districts between Tuesday and Wednesday as the heaviest-ever

rainfall recorded during 24 hours in Jammu province left a trail of death and devastation.

Thirty-four people died near Adhkunwari en route to the shrine on Tuesday afternoon following a cloudburst in the area. while four died in the hilly Doda district due to rain and flash floods earlier in the morning. CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

### 'We are being lied to... responding to request to hate each other'

**PAROMITA CHAKRABARTI** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 27

MOTHERHOOD, IN much of the subcontinent's storytelling, comes wrapped in sentiment a shorthand for nurture and sacrifice, for safe harbour, for the first and most abiding of refuges. Arundhati Roy, 63, was not raised inside that fable. Her mother, **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2** 



Arundhati Roy's new book, Mother Mary Comes to Me, is set to release today. PRH

#### THE EDITORIAL PAGE

THE BIG PICTURE Even as India continues trade talks with the US, it must reiterate red lines, push ahead on domestic reforms

**EXPRESS NETWORK** 

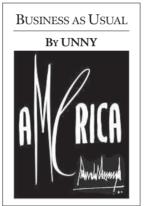
**U.S. WELCOMES** INDIA CALL TO SCRAP 11% COTTON DUTY

**INDIA POLICY SHOULD BE GLOBAL TRADE** FREE OF PRESSURE: **BHAGWAT PAGES 6, 7** 

#### **SHUBHAJIT ROY** CANBERRA, AUGUST 27

AMID THE strain in ties, the Trump administration has opened a new front, targeting skilled Indian professionals on the H-1B visa programme, a move that is expected to hit middle-class Indians in the US.

Secretary of Commerce Howard Lutnick has said the US intends to modify the current immigration system, specifically the H-1B visa programme and green cards. He said the Trump



#### **EXPLAINED ECONOMICS**

H-1B VISA DEBATE INU.S.P12

administration plans to introduce a "gold card" programme. It will allow wealthy foreigners to invest \$5 million in exchange for US residency.

"I am involved in changing the H-1B visa programme. We are going to change that CONTINUED ON PAGE 2





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#### **'PARTITION HORRORS REMEMBRANCE DAY'**

### **IHC slams NCERT modules:** Distorted polarizing history fed to schoolchildren's minds

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** NEW DELHI AUGUST 27

TERMING NCERT's new modules 'Partition Horrors Remembrance Day' as "falsehoods, with a clear communal intent," a resolution by the Indian History Congress (IHC) — an association of historians - said that "distorted polarizing history" is "being fed to tender minds of school going children.'

The resolution, dated August 25, said, "Turning history completely upside down, the modules hold not only the Muslim League but also the Indian National Congress responsible for the Partition of the country. Quite in tune with the loyalist stance of the communal forces during the freedom struggle, the British colonial rulers are given a clean chit in

these modules.' The NCERT modules – short publications on specific topics -

Partition Remembrance Day were released earlier this month, one for the secondary stage (Classes 9 to 12), and another for the middle stage

The module states that three actors were responsible for Partition: "1. Jinnah, who demanded it. 2. The Congress, which accepted it. 3. Mountbatten, who formalized and implemented it.'

The IHC resolution stated that the "reality is very different from

"The partition of India was the result of a long-term strategy of the British pursued since the 19th century of divide and rule, particularly after the revolt of 1857 which Hindus and Muslims fought together, shoulder to

"All descriptions in the modules refer to Hindus and Sikhs killed and humiliated and no mention of the retaliatory horrors inflicted on Muslims," it added.

#### • Jammu rain: Toll rises to 41

Eighteen of the 34 bodies Medical College Hospital's morbeen identified as residents of

three bodies – of a BSF iawan in Pargwal, an Irrigation Department employee in Lakhanpur, and an unidentified woman in Akhnoor –

who visited a hospital in Katra to enquire about the health of 13 injured pilgrims there, said, "A cloudburst occurred and devotees at Ardhkuwari were caught in it. It was a heart-wrenching natural calamity in which we lost precious lives. We are providing all

suspended on Tuesday due to the weather, he announced ex gratia relief of Rs 9 lakh to the families of the deceased.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, while expressing grief over the deaths, asked why officials did not stop pilgrims from treading the track when there was a weather warning. "We will have to talk about it later. When we knew about the weather, should we not have taken certain steps to save those lives? The weather warning had come to us a few days ago," he told the media

"Why were these people on the track? Why were they not stopped? Why were they not moved to a safe place? This has to be discussed later. We feel sorrow over the loss of precious lives." he

Significantly, Lt Governor Sinha is the chairman of the Shri Mata Vaishnodevi Shrine Board which monitors the pilgrimage in the Trikuta Hills

The pilgrimage was suspended after pilgrims, who had taken refuge under an iron shed due to the rains, were buried in a landslide around 3 pm on

Tuesday. The landslide struck halfway along the winding 12-km trek from Katra to the shrine.

There are two routes up to the shrine. While the vatra had been suspended on the Himkoti trek route since Tuesday morning, it was allowed on the old route until 1:30 pm, when authorities decided to suspend it until further (Classes 6 to 8).

what the modules argue."

shoulder... "it said.

### In view of the devastation, the

school education department in brought to the Government the UT had closed schools last tuary in Jammu from Katra have week, while the State Board of School Education postponed class Punjab, Delhi, Rajasthan, Madhya 11 and 12 exams across J&K. Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. Official sources said that in just

a 24-hour period, Jammu Later, with the recovery of recorded 380 mm of rainfall on Tuesday. This is the maximum rainfall ever recorded in Jammu in a 24-hour period since 1910, the toll touched 41. when the observatory was estab-J&K Lt Governor Manoj Sinha, lished, they said. The previous

record was 270.4 mm recorded on September 25, 1988 Omar also visited a fourth bridge on the Tawi River, which was damaged due to flash floods, and emphasised the need for its technical evaluation as it had been damaged during the 2014 floods possible assistance to their famias well. He directed BSNL and other private telecom operators, Pointing out that the yatra was such as Iio and Airtel, to immediately restore internet and telecom

> Vehicular traffic on the Jammu-Pathankot, Jammu-Srinagar and Batote-Doda-Kishtwar national highways was suspended following damage due to the landslides and flash floods.

Incessant rains during the past three days also created a flood-like situation in various parts of Jammu, prompting the NDRF. SDRF. police and Army to use boats to rescue people. More than 5,000 people were evacuated.

The Indian Army Aviation evacuated 22 CRPF personnel along with three civilians who had been stranded near Madhopur

Meanwhile, in Srinagar, the Iehlum river's water level was close to the danger mark. Devastated by the massive floods in 2014, the city is on high alert.

Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, said precautionary measures are in place and the water levels are being monitored. "All our deputy commissioners in south Kashmir and central Kashmir are on the ground," he said.

The government has announced that all schools and colleges in the Valley will remain closed on Thursday.

The Valley also saw a communication breakdown as both wired and mobile internet, as well as calling facilities, were disrupted. Officials said this was because of damage to the optical fibre cable along the national highway where landslides struck

### FROM PAGE ONE FULL REPORTS ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

### US treasury secy: End of day, we will come together

also the aspect of the Russian crude purchases which they've been profiteering on," Bessent said in an interview to television news channel Fox Business. "There's many levels going on

here. I do think India's the world largest democracy; the US is the world's largest economy. I think at the end of the day we will come together. I think a lot of it by the Indians has been performative. I've said it all along during the tariff negotiations. The US is the deficit country. When there is a schism in trade relations, the deficit country (is) at an advantage. It's the surplus country that should worry. So, the Indians are selling to us. They have very high tariffs and we have a very large deficit with them," the US

Freasury Secretary said. In New Delhi, Commerce Ministry officials said the communication lines with the US have not been severed and that they were also in touch with the industry to explore how to soften the impact of tariffs. US negotiators were expected to come to India on August 25 for talks to conclude the trade deal. However, the talks were called off after US President Donald Trump announced 50 per cent tariffs on

India on August 6. On being asked if he was worried that India is going to do trade using the rupee, instead of the dollar, with the BRICS countries, Bessent said, "There are a lot of things I worry about. The rupee

programme because that's terri-

ble, right? We are going to change

the green card," Lutnick said dur-

ing an interview with Fox News.

DeSantis also criticised the H-1B

visa programme, calling it a "to-

tal scam". He said it allows com-

panies to replace American work-

News, DeSantis claimed that

companies often train American

workers alongside H-1B visa

holders, only to lay off the

Americans and hire the foreign

workers. This practice, he said, is

unacceptable and hurts

Ingraham on the divide in the

Trump cabinet over the issue of

H-1B visas, DeSantis said, "I think

you are right to say the H-1B...

has become a total scam. These

companies game the system.

Some of these companies are lay-

ing off large numbers of

Americans while also hiring new

H-1B workers and renewing ex-

isting H-1B visas. Often, people

used to say, 'We are getting the

cream of the crop from all around

the world.'The reality is that's not

lawyers filed an application stat-

ing that the NBW was issued

while a lawyers' strike was under-

way, which is why they could not

against Yaday was cancelled in

view of the facts stated in the ap-

plication moved by his lawyers.

He also restored the bail bond

surety and directed Yadav to ap-

pear in person or through his

counsel on October 17, which is

December 18, 2023, by the Delhi

Police Special Cell after an FIR

was filed against him on a com-

plaint from a Rohini resident, ac-

Mary Roy – gender rights advo-

cate, educationist, founder of

Kottayam's feted Pallikoodam

The day The Indian Express

Yadav was arrested on

the next date of hearing.

ASJ Laler then said the NBW

attend the hearing on Monday.

actually what H1Bs are

Asked by anchor Laura

During an interview on Fox

ers with foreign labour.

American workers

Florida's Governor Ron

becoming a reserve currency isn't one of them. I think the rupee is near an all-time low versus the US dollar.

As trade talks were on, India's hefty imports of Russian crude suddenly surfaced as a major irritant for the Trump administration. Earlier in August, Trump announced an additional 25 per cent tariff—over and above the 25 per cent tariff announced on Îndian goods in July - as a penalty for Russian oil imports. The cumulative 50 per cent US tariff on goods took effect on Wednesday.

Bessent said the US could use more assistance from Europe on pressuring India over its Russian oil imports, given that much of the refined petroleum products exported by India go to Europe. "Our European allies need to step up. I don't see them threatening the tariffs on the Indians. As a matter of fact, they're the ones buying the refined products that's made from the Russian oil," Bessent said. He said only Canada was willing to join the US in applying secondary tariffs to pressure countries like India.

India-US trade deal negotiations had started in February this year soon after Prime Minister Modi Washington. Both leaders had announced plans to sign a bilateral trade agreement by the end of the year. The two countries had also signed the terms of reference (ToR) for the trade deal. But,

He contested the notion that

the H-1B programme attracts the

"best and brightest" talent, sug-

gesting instead that it has become

a system that benefits a specific

industry, largely dominated by

from one country, India, there's a

cottage industry about how all

those people make money off this

creasingly displacing young

workers, DeSantis questioned

why the US should import more

foreign labour instead of priori-

foreign workers when we have

our own people that we need to

strong interest in the programme,

with 250,000 people supposedly

waiting in line, and potentially

generating USD 1.25 trillion in

visa programme, US President

Donald Trump had said the coun-

try needs "very competent" and

"great" people, and this is possi-

ble through this visa programme.

cusing him of extortion and kid-

napping, and linking him to

gangster Lawrence Bishnoi. The

arrest came three weeks after

Yadav's name was listed in the

Pannun case by US authorities.

Yadav was later released on bail

even as a chargesheet was filed

plications before the Delhi court

seeking exemption from appear-

ance citing a "threat to his life"

which were approved. But he did

not move a fresh application on

Monday, prompting the court to

protesting against a notification

Lawyers in Delhi have been

Yadav had been moving ap-

by the police.

take action.

Speaking at the White House

Court cancels non-bailable warrant against ex-R&AW officer

In January, backing the H-1B

"Why would we be importing

Lutnick claimed there is

tising its own citizens.

take care of?," he said.

With artificial intelligence in-

"Most of them (H-1Bs) are

workers from one country.

system.'

hot and e cold

> THE INDIA-US relationship is a complex one, but has evolved over years, with both countries aware of the nuances. Given that talks started in February, a deal was expected soon; but that was not to be. There are many things going on, and as Bessent says, the two will 'come together'.

India's stance to maintain protec tion for its agriculture and midsized vehicles has created differences between trade negotiators.

New Delhi has said the targeting of India over the purchase of Russian oil was "unjustified and unreasonable" and said these imports began as its traditional supplies were diverted to Europe, with the US having "actively encouraged such imports by India for strengthening global energy markets stability

Washington has also been frustrated over protracted trade deal negotiations with New Delhi, given that India was initially seen as one of the front-runners for a trade pact with the US. India's stiff resistance to American demands of greater access to the country's farm and dairy sectors are among the major roadblocks in the ne-

during a joint news conference

with Oracle CTO Larry Ellison,

Softbank CEO Masayoshi Son and

OpenAI CEO Sam Altman, Trump

said: "I like both sides of the argu-

ment, but I also like very compe-

tent people coming into our

country, even if that involves

them training and helping other

people who may not have the

qualifications they do. But I don't

want to stop – and I am not just

talking about engineers, I am talk-

"We want competent people

coming into our country. And H-

1B, I know the programme very

well. I use the programme. Maitre

d', wine experts, even waiters,

high-quality waiters – you have

got to get the best people. People

like Larry, he needs engineers,

Masa also needs... they need engi-

neers like nobody's ever needed

people coming in. Now, by doing

that, we are expanding busi-

nesses and that takes care of

everybody. So I am sort of on both

sides of the argument, but what I

really do feel is that we have to let

really competent people, great

people, come into our country.

And we do that through the H-1B

issued by Lieutenant-Governor

V K Saxena, allowing police to

virtually present evidence in

courts from stations. In a circu-

lar issued last Thursday, the

Coordination Committee of All

District Court Bar Associations in

Delhi said all lawyers would ab-

stain from work and those seen

in courts would be penalised.

Wednesday marked the fifth day

associate Abdullah Khan had

moved an application before the

court for extending the release

of his passport, claiming his fa-

ther was diagnosed with blood

cancer for which he had to visit

• 'Living in an age where we are constantly being lied to... responding to request to hate each other'

On Monday, Yadav's alleged

of the strike.

"So, we have to have quality

them," he said.

ing about people at all levels."

The renewed pressure from

the US and other Western powers—pressuring India to cut down on imports from Russia—is aimed at forcing the Kremlin's hand into ending the Ukraine war. For Trump, who wants the threeyear-old Russia-Ukraine war to end within days, this is an opportune time to pressure India over its Russian imports, given the long-drawn-out trade pact negotiations between New Delhi and Washington have been hit by impediments.

source of crude for India, accounting for 35-40 per cent of New Delhi's oil imports. When Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, Moscow's share in New Delhi's oil imports was less than 2 per cent. While Trump has slapped additional tariffs on India as a "penalty" for buying Russian crude, it has not taken any such action so far against China—the top buyer of Moscow's oil.

Russia is currently the largest

Despite the extra tariffs. New Delhi continues to maintain it will buy oil from wherever it gets the best deal, as long as the oil is not under sanctions. Russian oil is not under sanctions, and is only subject to a price cap imposed by the US and its allies that applies if Western shipping and insurance services are used for transporting the oil. Indian refiners and the government maintain that they have been adhering to the price cap on Russian oil.

#### Lutnick says green card to change, DeSantis calls H-1B visas a scam

It was the second time since

While much of the focus of the crackdown is against illegal immigration, there is some apprehension here that the far-right MAGA Republican voices may force a tightening of the legal immigration channels as well.

students go to the US in large numbers to live, work or study there, along with Indian tourists, there has been some concern about how those visa categories may be affected.

Between October 2022 and September 2023, 72 per cent of the nearly 4 lakh visas issued under the H-1B programme went to Indian nationals. During the same period, top four Indian IT majors with a presence in the US -Infosys, TCS, HCL and Wipro - obtained approval for around 20,000 employees to work on H-1B visas, according to the latest US Citizenship and Immigration

Dubai, Singapore and the UK for

medical opinion. "In view of sub-

missions made, extension of re-

lease of passport is allowed till

next date of hearing on October

17," the court said on

Jalaluddin alias Sameer, was ar-

rested on July 1 for his alleged

role in the kidnapping-extortion

case. He is also out on bail. A

fourth person, Bikram Gogoi, has

moved an anticipatory bail plea

in Patiala House Courts saying

that he knew Ialaluddin since his

school days in Delhi, but wasn't

aware of his criminal an-

A third accused, Dubai-based

Wednesday.

tecedents.

programme," he said.

his election that Trump had supported the H-1B programme that employ skilled foreign nationals.

allows businesses in the US to

Since Indian professionals and

Indians are the biggest beneficiaries of the H-1B visas.

#### 'Australia doesn't back tariffs'

friends of both countries, and as, very obviously, we're an alliance partner of the United States, is to say we share so much, we share not just history, but we do share very clear objectives about the attributes of the (Indo-Pacific) region in which we live. We always encourage dialogue, and we are strong supporters of the Quad."

The Quad grouping comrises India, Australia, the US and

Interacting with a visiting delegation of Indian journalists, Vong, when asked about India's efforts to repair ties with China, said Beijing is a great power and is asserting its interests as great powers do, adding that some of those interests may not align with Australia's interests. "There will be differences in

the relationship. We also have areas where we can cooperate... We cooperate where we can. We disagree where we must. And we engage in the national interest. It describes a way of dealing with the relationship which recognises that there would be areas of differences, and recognises there will be areas of cooperation, and also recognises the importance to both our countries for mature engagement. Now, that's the approach we (Australia) take, and from my observation, it's the approach that

India seeks to take," she said. "I want to emphasise the value we place, the priority we place on our relationship with Îndia. I met with Dr Jaishankar more than any other counterpart, which reflects the priority we give to this relationship," Wong said. "We are at a time of great change. I think what you see in Australia is a very reliable, stable partner that shares a great deal of your strategic objectives, which are, what I describe as, a peaceful, stable and prosperous region in which everyone's sovereignty is respected," she said.

She said there are many areas where there is "strategic alignment", and pointed out the presence of Indian diaspora. On the impact of tension be-

tween India and the US having an adverse impact on the Quad, she said: "We are strong supporters of the Quad, and obviously I'll leave it to others to deal with, engage bilaterally on, issues that they want to deal with. But I would always say that... it's good for all of us to remember what we share. And we do have a lot of shared objectives around the Indo-Pacific. And we are Quad

partners not just because we're Quad partners, but we are Quad partners because we have those shared strategic objectives."

On the bilateral front, she recalled Quad meetings and bilateral meetings between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese. "We want a deep, strong and trusted partnership with you...We can talk through the gamut of the whole breadth of our relationship...we do a lot together, but I think fundamentally, it comes back to this. We are in a time where the world is, the global order is, being reshaped, the regional order is being reshaped, and we have a responsibility to influence that reshaping. And we want to work with India, because we see a lot of convergence and alignment in the sort of outcomes we want from that reshaping. We see the attributes of the region that we want as being shared...So, it's a very important time for us to keep working together," she said.

faced by international students in Australia, including Indian students, she said: "What we have is education exports... So international students coming to Australia is a very important part of our economy, and it's also a very important part of our bilateral relationships and our regional relationships. My father was a Colombo Plan scholar to Australia. So, I've known through my own life the importance of that experience of education, and what that means long-term for our bilateral relationship. There have been various reforms in the education area; they are about trying to improve the quality of the educational offer, and we have been really clear. We will continue to welcome international students, but we have sought to improve the quality of that education and also to stabilise the numbers, which obviously spiked as a consequence of post-Covid."

On the recent visa fee hikes

On Australia's support for India after the Pahalgam terror attack, she said: "I spoke to your foreign minister after that, and you saw, as you said, my public comments. We welcomed the ceasefire. We welcome efforts to assure peace and stability, and often, obviously, one of the key aspects of that is to counter terrorism."

(The reporter is in Australia at the invitation of the Australian Foreign Ministry.)

#### 'Called Modi, Pak, said stop war'

going on with you and Pakistan?'. Then I am talking to Pakistan, on trade. I said what's going on with you and India? And the hatred was tremendous. This has been going on for a hell of a long time, like, sometimes with different names for hundreds of vears," he said

"I said, I don't want to make a trade deal with you... You guys are going to end up in a nuclear war... I said, call me back tomorrow. But we are not going to do any deals with you, or we are going to put tariffs on you that are so high, your head's going to spin," he said.

"Within five hours, it was done. Maybe it starts again, but I will stop it if it does," he said.

Trump also claimed that seven jets or maybe more" were shot down - he did not say which country's aircraft he was referring to.

Talking to the press at the White House two days ago, Trump had claimed that he stopped seven wars around the world, including the one between India and Pakistan. He

are new books," she says. It has

said that of the seven wars he stopped, four were because he used tariffs and trade to negotiate with the parties involved in the conflict. His latest remarks, being

sonalised attack on the Prime Minister, have led to a fair amount of disquiet in Delhi. Delhi has fact-checked the US President in the last few months, but it has not stopped

viewed in Delhi as the most per-

Trump from claiming credit for brokering an end to the hostilities between India and Pakistan.

Modi had told Trump that there was no conversation be tween them on trade. On July 30, Frump announced the imposition of 25 per cent tariff on Indian goods, and followed it a week later by announcing an additional 25 per tariff over Indian purchase of Russian oil.

India and the US have had a difficult relationship and the ties have been hit adversely in the last few months over the tariffs and the India-Pakistan military confrontation

because of this hierarchical social

### SpaceX rocket places Indian startups'

**ANONNA DUTT** 

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 27

THREE HYPERSPECTRAL imaging satellites developed by the Indian startup Pixxel were successfully placed in orbit by SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket early Wednesday morning. The launch of the three satellites, along with the three launched earlier in January. marked the completion of the first

The same Falcon-9 mission also launched the payloads based on the P-30 satellite bus developed by Indian startup Dhruva Dhruva's (Launching Expeditions for Aspiring Payloads) contains two payloads: an advanced AI module and a hyperspectral imager.

phase of the Firefly constellation.

Pixxel plans to create an 18-24 satellite constellation, depending on customer needs. With the first

captured in 135 spectral bands.

The basic RGB images are captured in three spectral bands of visible light. A multi-spectral image is captured in four to 12 bands, ranging from visible to near-infrared light, while hyperspectral images are captured in 37 to more than 100 spectral bands, ranging from visible to short-wave infrared light. This produces detailed images that enable consumers to monitor Earth's ecosystems with

While many earth observation satellites can inform customers about crop health, hyperspectral images can tell which nutrients are missing from soil and can distinguish between different species and subspecies of crops.

school — was a woman who reshaped the inheritance rights of But to her two children, Roy and her brother Lalith Kumar

Christopher, she was less mother, more Mrs Roy, headmistress and distant guardian, the woman who taught them to pick their way across a minefield of shifting moods and exacting expectations, and whose love arrived like a brief clearing in otherwise turbulent weather

> meets the writer, monsoon has reduced the August afternoon to a sullen half-light, slick with rain. Inside her Jor Bagh apartment, however, there is no shadow of the squall. Age has made Begum, one of her canine companions, somewhat temperamental but Mati K Lal, her other pet, is more

easy-going, sleeping on a sofa despite the steady hum of conversation. Eight years since her second novel. The Ministry of Utmost Happiness (2017), and was because I really wanted her to be in the pages of literature, not as a hagiography, but as a woman who had no problem displaying everything that she was - good, bad, whatever," she

Roy's account unsettles the familiar myth of motherhood and replaces it with something knottier, more alive: a portrait of inheritance that is equal parts brilliance and bruise, an upbringing that was as creative and dazzling as it

was difficult and scarring. To sit across from Roy as she retraces those years is to en-

counter not just a daughter telling

her mother's story, but a writer

probing the complicated alchemy

of love, rupture and resilience. It

contextualises the chaos that has been the creative life force behind her fiction, that has given shape to her politics, born from being an outlier on what she calls "the grid this country'

to interrogate the tangled contradictions of the nation, its increasing dissonance with voices of dissent, with those who ask questions of it. Roy herself has been acutely aware of "things that can and cannot be said": not that it has stopped her from voicing things she has felt need to be said She has never been among the state's "wonderful, willing, wellbehaved, gullible subjects" that she wrote of in her essay The End of Imagination, who thrive in an echo chamber of majoritarian ex-

The unease with Roy, the activist, began about a year after the elation over Roy, the Booker Prizewinning novelist of The God of Small Things (1997). It started with the publication of The End of Imagination, decrying India's nuclear tests in Pokhran in 1998, and hardened over the course of Rov's condemnation of inequality, state

a-half decades. Fiction (2020), the collection of essays recently proscribed in  $Kashmir along side about \, 25 \, other$ books on grounds of propagating "secessionist sentiments", Roy writes, "What we need are people who are prepared to be unpopular. Who are prepared to put themselves in danger. Who are prepared to tell the truth. Brave journalists can do that, and they have. Brave lawyers can do that, and they have. And artists - beautiful, brilliant, brave writers, poets, musicians, painters and filmmakers can do that. That beauty is on our side. All of it.'

Roy is at ease with unpopularity, but the news of the ban had puzzled her. "I do not know why it's happening now, none of them

done nothing to alter her commitment to speaking up against iniustices. She has been accused at various points of time in her career of not showing India in "proper" light, but if there's a light worth shining, she says, it is always the stark glare of truth. "We are living in an age where we are constantly being lied to, constantly being ambushed, constantly responding to the request to hate each other. I think we have plenty to be ashamed of. And we should not be ashamed of saying so," she savs. In the week preceding the in-

terview, allegations of "vote chori" by the Opposition and the press conference of the Election Commission of India dismissing them as malicious have dominated national news. What happens when distrust becomes the leitmotif of public life, denying citizens the respect and space to disagree? Roy says the metastasis has been in the making for a long time. Sometimes I think that a society that practises caste has already institutionalised a lack of empathy

structure and then introduced ethnic and religious violence, corporate capitalism and a complete cold-heartedness towards the poor. I don't think there is any society like Indian society in the world today which is so cruel and so uncaring of each other. One of the biggest things that we have to overcome is that kind of hierarchical thinking which closes out the possibility of your feeling something for someone who does not belong to whatever tiny group you claim you want to belong to. It's political, it's social.it's economic but it's also psychological," she savs.

The answer, she says, does not lie in a utopian imagination of reversal. "You can't return. You have to move on and come to a new place. It won't happen soon but I sense a fatigue with the kind of shabby fascism that is being imposed on us. The whole world is in a dangerous place right now. The way people have been controlled – the digital world is a world of surveillance and control and people think that they are free - it will take time," she says.

Pune

satellites into orbit three years after her mother's Syrian Christian women in of caste, community, religion and repression, capitalism, demasix satellites, the company will be Kerala, transformed the lives of death, her new book, a memoir, everything that is 99 per cent of goguery and the genuflection of able to provide global coverage legions of young boys and girls Mother Mary Comes to Me greedy corporates in essay after every 24 hours. The satellites will with lessons in equality and self-(Penguin Hamish Hamilton, Rs Just as her memoir interrofulminating essay over two-andprovide high-resolution images of reliance, and built a formidable 899) is set to release on gates the tangled intimacies of the Earth at a 5-metre resolution, life for herself out of very little. Thursday. "The reason I wrote it family, her public voice continues In Azadi: Freedom, Fascism,

# THE (ITY



#### DEVOTION CONNECTS ALL

A replica of Kerala's Padmanabhaswamy Temple, created by Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust, illuminated as Ganeshotsav began on Wednesday. Arul Horizon

### PMC set to designate fixed feeding spots for stray dogs

**ARYESH CHAKRABORTY** PUNE. AUGUST 27

PUNE Municipal Corporation (PMC) is preparing to designate fixed feeding points for stray dogs across the city, following the recent Supreme Court ruling on the issue and the Animal Birth Control (ABC) Rules, 2023.

The Supreme Court last week prohibited the feeding of stray dogs in the streets and in public places, and directed civic authorities to create dedicated feeding spaces for strays in each municipal ward.

Dr Sarika Funde, Chief Veterinary Officer, PMC, said that a committee comprising PMC officials, the police, members of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA), housing society representatives, and dog feeders has been formed to identify suitable locations.

"We want to bring all volunteers onto one platform. Work has already begun on a format where feeders can register the number of dogs, timings, and locations of feeding to ensure everything proper. Cleanliness and hygiene at feeding points will be strictly maintained," Dr Funde told The Indian Express.

PMC aims to roll out the initiative by the end of September,

**KATRAJ-KONDHWA ROAD** 

after consultations with volunteers, many of whom are already working with organisations like Shashwat Foundation, among others.

Dr Funde clarified that the cost of setting up feeding points will not require a major budget allocation and can be managed through existing resources. Dog feeders in Pune have

welcomed the move but stressed the need for trans-

"Every location has its own volunteers. Instead of picking up dogs randomly for sterilisation, if PMC can coordinate with one local representative, it will help keep track of which dogs are picked, sterilised, and dropped back," Tina Malkani of Karmanye Foundation, who feeds nearly 300 dogs in Kharadi, said.

She also pointed out that dogs are territorial, and therefore multiple feeding points will be needed within a locality to avoid conflict among packs.

"If packs are forced to mix at one spot, there will be fights, and then people will call the dogs aggressive. Proper distribution of feeding spots is essential," she clarified.

Dr Ankita Chandra, a maxillofacial surgeon and dog feeder from Viman Nagar, welcomed the move.

"This is a very good decision by the Supreme Court and PMC.

Strays should not suffer. But at the same time, the public must be educated about sterilisation, vaccination, and rabies prevention," said Dr Chandra.

While some dog feeders have faced harassment from residents in Delhi and other cities despite court orders, PMC officials have assured that such complaints will be handled strictly as per ABC rules.

"Community dogs are allowed to be fed, and both feeders and residents must comply with the law. We will verify complaints thoroughly and ensure proper enforcement," Dr Funde said.

Dr Funde had told The Indian Express a few days ago that Pune has an approximate stray dog count of 1.8 lakh.

"We are yet to conduct a census, but with the merger of villages, we anticipate the stray dog population to rise to at least 2.5 lakh," she added.

In 2024-2025, as per data from the civic body, 56,537 stray dogs were sterilised and vaccinated; the count was 57,444 in 2023-2024. From April to June this year, 14,297 stray dogs have been sterilised and vaccinated.

In light of the ongoing Ganpati festival, the PMC is expected to hold online and offline meetings with dog feeders in the coming weeks before finalising the locations for feed-

The land acquisition will be un-

dertaken soon, and Rs 470 crore

will be allocated to the district ad-

ministration for this purpose. The

PMC plans to complete the road

work by December next year,'

said Municipal Commissioner

The municipal commissioner

said the road is among the 50

civic projects included in the

PMC 'war room' for regular track-

ing and acceleration of work.

Naval Kishore Ram

Pune civic body earmarks Rs 470 crore

for land acquisition for road-widening

has been in poor condition and

frequently witnesses fatal acci-

dents due to the presence of

heavy vehicles and an increase

in smaller vehicles, caused by

The civic body approved the

Katraj-Kondhwa road expansion

in 2018, but it had not progressed

due to land acquisition issues and

was planned to be 84 metres

wide, but now it has been decided

"The Katraj-Kondhwa road

a lack of funding.

rapid urbanisation in the area.

#### 'NON-PAYMENT OF FEES': HINDUSTAN ANTIBIOTICS SCHOOL FACES PROBE

## Parents allege students humiliated, photos shared on WhatsApp group

**SOHAM SHAH** 

PIMPRI-CHINCHWAD Municipal Corporation (PCMC)'s education department has set up an inquiry against Hindustan Antibiotics School following allegations of humiliation of students over nonpayment of fees. Parents of Class students have alleged children who have not paid their fees were singled out in class, made to stand together and photographed,

which was then shared on the parents' WhatsApp group.

The school is a governmentaided school run by the Deccan Education Society. It was established in 1958 mainly for the wards of Hindustan Antibiotics Ltd employees and children from low-income families in the neighbourhood.

Requesting anonymity, the parent of a Class 7 student told The Indian Express, "The school had no communication with parents regarding the fees. They

told the students a couple of times and my child reminded me about the fees, but I could not pay it due to financial constraints. But why was my child humiliated? Is it right to humiliate children and their parents

on WhatsApp groups over fees?" "It is my fault that I was not able to pay the fees. What is the child's fault? Why single them out in class and take photos? It is only natural that now the other kids will make fun of them," he added. After receiving the message

Monday, the parent approached the Republican Party of India (Athawale), which helped him file a complaint with the PCMC.

Sangita Bangar, administra-

tion officer at PCMC's education department, told The Indian Express, "We have formed a three-member committee, including myself and two other members, to investigate the issue. As today is a leave for both the department and the school, we will visit the school tomormary inquiry and found out that due to some students' fees not being received, a class teacher clicked photos of the students and shared it in the parents' group. We will investigate tomorrow and find out why and how the teacher did this and what this fee was regarding."

Asha Mane, vice-principal of Hindustan Antibiotics School, told The Indian Express such photos should not have been taken and

### Who is Atharva Sudame, content Waiter arrested for creator in the eye of a storm?

**SOHAM SHAH** PUNE, AUGUST 27

CONTENT CREATOR Atharva Sudame's tryst with controversy has ironically come from the same platform that has made him a popular face in the state -Instagram reels.

A 'reelstar' and regular Marathi content creator with over 1.7 million followers on Instagram, Sudame's latest reel on religious unity before the Ganapati festival has made him the target of certain groups. In the reel, Sudame promotes

Hindu-Muslim unity by purchasing a Ganesh idol from a Muslim shopkeeper.

After a section of social media users and the Akhil Bharatiya Brahman Mahasangh voiced their opposition, Sudame deleted the video and apologised for hurting sentiments.

Sudame has gained fame with parodies of stereotypical characters commonly found in neighbourhoods, videos on festivals and events, and music and cricket videos. He also performs live shows with his team. In 2023, Maharashtra Navnirman Sena chief Raj Thackeray expressed appreciation for Sudame at an event. "You are my favourite, I watch all your videos." Thackeray said.

Sudame's feed reveals collaborations with stars like Asha Bhosle, Survakumar Yadav, Harbhajan Singh, Yuvraj Singh,



Marathi content creator Atharva Sudame. Express

and Kane Williamson.

He was one of the social media influencers who was called by the Mahratta Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Agriculture (MCCIA) to guide entrepreneurs on how to harness the power of social media last

A student of Modern High School, Sudame completed his education from the Marathwada Mitra Mandal's College of Commerce and married his long-time friend, Rucha, in 2023.

Sudame's content depicts him as the boy-next-door, but he has garnered his share of criticism, with social media users pointing out how some reels and iokes are problematic. A video by Sudame titled 'Gen-Z Kids Nowadays' makes light of conditions like anxiety, depression, panic attacks, and suicide.

In another reel titled 'Men will be Men', Sudame lists the names of the women he had romantic relationships with in college to his friend. As his wife walks into the frame, his friend makes an excuse to get Sudame out of trouble. As soon as his wife leaves, Sudame starts talking about another woman.

Reddit user RKoi123 commented on a post on r/LGBTindia, "Danny pandit. And his friend Atharva Sudame. I find their skits homophobic and misogynistic."

Journalist Sunandan Lele, who collaborated with Sudame for cricket-related content, said, "I don't want to say anything specific about the reel, it is a part of an individual's creativity. But I can say for sure that the reel was made with a good heart. He never intends to create any controversy. Some of these things have become so unnecessarily sensitive that one is baffled about where things are headed."

### killing restaurant owner after argument over drinking: Police

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE PUNE. AUGUST 27

A WAITER working at Peacock Restaurant and Bar in the Uttam Nagar area of Pune city was arrested Wednesday for allegedly murdering his employer after they had an argument over his drinking habit.

The Uttam Nagar police identified the deceased as Santosh Sundar Shetty, 44, a resident of Sneha Vihar in Shivane, who owned the restaurant at Kondhawe Dhawade on NDA Road, where Umesh Dilip Giri, 38, had been working as a waiter for the past 22 days.

"The probe so far has revealed that Giri was consuming liquor. Santosh Shetty warned Giri that he would be sacked from his job if he was found working under the influence of alcohol," said Mohan Khandare, a senior police inspector at the Uttam Nagar station.

The incident happened on Tuesday night.

According to Khandare, Giri allegedly said he would leave the job and demanded his

"But Shetty refused to give the salary as Giri had joined just

counter when the accused allegedly assaulted him with a kitchen knife 22 days before and had also taken some money in advance.

The police said the

owner was working at

the restaurant's cash

side the kitchen, took a knife, and attacked Shetty," he said. The police said Shetty was working at the restaurant's cash counter when Giri allegedly assaulted him multiple

So Giri got angry. He went in-

times with the kitchen knife. He was rushed to a hospital but was pronounced dead by the doctors.

At the time, Giri was staying in the staff quarters of the

The police said Giri had no

previous criminal record. **Assistant Police Inspector** Feroz Mulani is investigating the murder case registered under Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita sec-

The FIR was registered at the Uttam Nagar police station early Wednesday.

tion 103 (1).

### 'Deemed-to-be-university status will enable IIPH to design courses relevant to emerging health needs'

**ANURADHA MASCARENHAS** 

PUNE, AUGUST 27

THE CONFERRING of deemedto-be-university status to the Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI)'s Indian Institutes of Public Health (IIPH) will enable the institute to design and deliver courses most relevant to the Indian population's existing. emerging and anticipated health needs, according to Dr K Srinath Reddy, founder president and Chancellor, PHFI Institute of Public Health Sciences.

"PHFI was earlier handicapped by the limitations of not being able to award degrees without affiliation to existing universities. Now with the conferring of Deemed to be University status,



Dr K Srinath

it has come of age," Dr Reddy told The Indian Express.

Under Dr Reddy's leadership, PHFI established five Indian Institutes of Public Health. The IIPH in Hyderabad and sister institutions in Bengaluru and Bhubaneswar have been conferred with the status of a deemed-to-be-university under a distinct category by the Ministry Education, Centra Government. The recognition was formally notified through the

Gazette of India in July. Two other

are awaiting final clearance to join the cluster of 'constituent units' of this new university. Public Health

campuses (Delhi and Shillong)

Foundation of India (PHFI) has been actively expanding through its Indian Institutes of Public Health (IIPH), yet it was in search of a cohesive identity, added Dr Reddy, who was also earlier Head of Cardiology at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi.

He said that public health must aim to promote health, prevent disease, and restore health through effective, equitable, empathetic, and economically efficient health systems as well as by aligning policies and programmes in other sectors to public health goals. "Across the country, India's

health indicators vary widely. Even among key indicators, which have been targeted for several decades, like infant mortality and maternal mortality, there are considerable differences between states, districts, and urban-rural divides. For efficient design, delivery, monitoring, and evaluation of health programmes, health systems need public health ex-

He explained that PHFI established six Indian Institutes of Public Health in different regions of the country to provide this. "These IIPHs provide multi-disciplinary education which can be translated into multi-sectoral action on different determinants of health," he added. The Chancellor also observed

pertise," Dr Reddy said.

that since the determinants of human health lie across multiple sectors, the faculty and student population represent a confluence of diverse but complementary disciplines.

They include biological, social, environmental, data, and management sciences. Through the university, we hope to strengthen public health education, research, and public health practice while working closely with central and state governments to develop people-friendly health policies and impactfully deliver a wide array of health programmes." Dr Reddy said. The university has started its

formal operations by appointing an acting VC and has initiated the formal process to select a VC. During the period, directors of the IIPHs will continue to guide the conduct of teaching, training, research, he said.

### What every liver donor should know about post-transplant recovery

**ANURADHA MASCARENHAS** PUNE, AUGUST 27

**AJAYJADHAV** 

PUNE, AUGUST 27

THE MUCH-DELAYED road de-

velopment project connecting

Katrai to Kondhwa is set to receive

a vital boost as the Pune

Municipal Corporation (PMC) has

decided to allocate Rs 470 crore

for land acquisition, which will

enable the completion of road

The Katraj-Kondhwa road

work by December next year.

DEATH OF a liver donor is extremely rare and so when a tragic incident occurred in Pune - a 42-year-old woman died of low blood pressure and multiorgan failure after donating a part of her liver to her husband - questions have been raised about how risk-proof the trans-

plant procedure is. As reported, 42-year-old Kamini Koamkar had donated a part of her liver to husband Bapu Balkrishna Koamkar on August 15. Bapu passed away after the transplant surgery. Kamini recovered and was doing well initially till she, what the Sahyadri Hospital authorities said, devel-

oped hypotensive shock (when the body's circulatory system fails to move oxygenated blood and nutrients to cells) and multiorgan failure despite advanced treatment. While the health department is conducting a review, transplant surgeons and doctors reiterated that liver donation was a safe option. "With proper evaluation of the

donor's medical status and care. it is completely safe. By donating, you are not losing anything — instead, you are giving someone a new life, and that is the greatest blessing," says Dr Bipin Vibhute, liver and multi-organ transplant surgeon, Jupiter Hospital, Pune. "If there's any risk, that's too small. By that logic every surgery has that tiny risk," says Dr Harshal Rajekar, liver transplant surgeon at Medicover Hospital, Pune.





Kamini Koamkar and her husband Bapu Koamkar

#### Chance of serious complication less than one per cent

Donor death is an extremely rare event. "Globally, the chance of serious complications is less than 1% and the risk of death is extremely rare — only 0.1 – 0.2%," says Dr Vibhute. That's because, he explains, the liver is a unique organ. It has the power to regenerate. This means the portion left in the donor and the portion given to the patient both grow to normal size in a few weeks. With a strict medical evaluation of both the donor and recipient and an experienced team, liver donation is safe and standard-

per the Liver International Transplantation Society, 3,183 living donor liver transplants were done in India in 2022, the highest in the world

#### Who can be a donor?

The donor selection process is very strict. "The donor should be between 18 and 55, healthy, with no diabetes, hypertension or liver disease. The blood group must match the patient's and the donor must pass detailed blood tests, CT scan/MRI, heart health and psychological evaluation. Only completely fit individuals are accepted as donors," says Dr Vibhute. Even after rigorous testing for heart and lung function, Dr Rajekar explains why a thor-

ough psychological assessment is done. "This is a major surgery and the donor should rightly feel proud of themselves for having done a good deed. It is not an easy thing to do," he says.

#### What complications can a donor face?

Donors usually do very well after a transplant surgery. Some may experience pain, bleeding, infection or bile leakage in the early days. Rarely, severe problems such as blood clots or poor liver function may occur. However, such complications are uncommon, and more than 95 per cent of donors recover completely and return to their normal lives

#### Dos and don'ts for a liver donor

Eat a healthy diet and stay active with light exercise. Follow all instructions before surgery. Take medicines regularly and attend follow-up visits after surgery. Don't smoke, drink alcohol or take unnecessary medicines that may harm the liver. Avoid lifting heavy weights for at least three months after surgery. Experts insist donors can live a completely normal and healthy life without restrictions in the long run. "The donor recovers fast and can usually be discharged from the hospital within 10 days.

# Careers



(A Deemed-to-be University, Established by the Reserve Bank of India) Film City Road, Santosh Nagar, Goregaon (East), Mumbai – 400065

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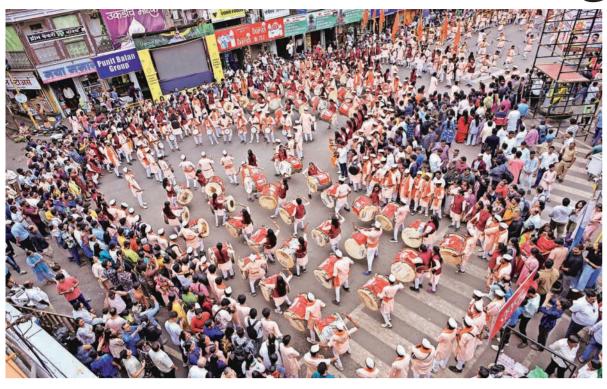
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THE INDIAN EXPRESS, THURSDAY, AUGUST 28, 2025

# 4 THE CITY

# Celebrations begin on a high note





On the occasion of Ganesh Chathurthi, marking the beginning of 10-day festivities, various processions carrying Ganpati idols and accompanied by beats of dhols and tashas, were taken out in Pune on Wednesday. Pavan Khengre

#### **IDOLS MADE OF SHAADU MAATI**

### At Yerawada jail, inmates turn artistes for festival, shaping idols and hope

This year, 150 idols are being produced and over 100 are already booked; prices range between Rs 251 & Rs 3,000

VIRAJ MANDAR PARANJAPE PUNE, AUGUST 27

AT YERAWADA Central Jail in Pune, clay has replaced steel, and brushes have replaced bars - at least for Ganeshotsav

Prisoners here are handcrafting eco-friendly Ganeshidols, an initiative that the department calls "reformative and environmentally urgent".

This year, 150 idols are being produced, and over 100 have already been booked.

Prices range between Rs 251 and Rs 3,000, with popular designs including Vakratunda, Kamal Aasan, and replicas of Pune's iconic Dagdusheth idol. The tallest Ganpati stands at 1.75 ft, and each idol is sold with a wooden paat for installation.

The project began at Nashik Central Jail in 2017, where sales crossed Rs 13 lakh in the first year, before being introduced at Yerawada jail.

In Pune, 250 idols were sold in 2021. This year's idols are being crafted by five convicted prisoners, chosen through the work allotment committee

They work under the guidof Sunil Dhamal, Superintendent of Prison; Pallavi Kadam, Deputy Superintendent of Prison; factory manager Shivaji Patil, and technical officer PW Kharolkar.

Emphasising the programme's discipline and inclusivity, Kadam says: "Only convicted prisoners are selected, not those on trial. But during Ganeshotsav, people from all communities



Ganesh idols at MaKa shop. Express

come together inside the jail some place photos of Bappa in their barracks, some chant aartis. For 10 days, there is a different atmosphere in the prison."

The idols are made of shaadu maati, natural clay that dissolves easily in water and avoids the environmental damage of Plaster of Paris (POP) idols. Kadam adds, "We want to create more awareness among citizens about ecofriendly Ganeshotsav. Punekars should encourage the prisoners working on these efforts."

Sales are managed through the Maharashtra Karagruha (MaKa) shop opposite the Yerawada sub-post office, run by Saniay Tiwatne. Demand is consistent, and the department now plans to introduce designs to

make the idols more marketready and expand both production and participation.

Kadam notes that the idolmaking process has noticeable effects on those involved.

"You can see the prisoners" concentration and discipline improving. Their mental health is better, and when they carve the eyes of Bappa, you can feel the devotion," she says.

She also offers a note of caution to youngsters, "Today's youth are influenced by movies or by people who glorify crime. They think it is trendy, but the reality inside is very different. These prisoners are trying to channel their energy into something constructive. The society should recognise that.'















(Clockwise from top left) a Ganesh idol being taken on a tractor as part of a procession; dhols and tashas are played with great enthusiasm; a child dressed in a Ganpati-themed attire; people gather on road for celebrations: devotees click pictures of a Ganesh idol.

#### **AMID CONCERNS ABOUT RISING POLLUTION**

### Ganeshotsav with solar power, eco-friendly traditions: a few mandals show the way

**DIPANITA NATH** PUNE. AUGUST 27

IN A major boost to an ecofriendly Ganeshotsav in Pune, the Shree Shivraj Mitra Mandal in Bhavani Peth has created a solar garden and solar tree along with solar panels to supply its electric-

ity needs "This is the first time in the history of Ganeshotsay in Pune that a mandal is going to create electricity by themselves. The solar tree has eight lights of a 50 watts each, and four panels of 165 watts each. This is more than enough for us to light eight 50 watts lights in the 25x35 ft mandal," says Piyush Shah, an art director and the brain behind the

Shah adds that the mandal will have a charging station, solar lamps, a solar fountain and a solar cooker, among others. "Solar is a big source of green

energy, so this is a huge project. There are solar panels on the Narmada, so our message to the administration is also that we could think of a canal from Khadakwasala to Camp that could have solar panels," says Shah. Pralhad Bhau Thorat is the president of mandal.

Incidentally, India ranks fourth globally in renewable energy installed capacity, and holds the third place in solar power capacity, according to the Government of India.

As the city begins its greatest festival of the year, amid concerns about rising pollution, many Ganesh mandals are showing the

Sanjeev Javale, president of Shrimant Bhausaheb Rangari



A solar garden and solar tree at Shree Shivraj Mitra Mandal in Bhavani Peth. Express

Ganpati Trust, the historical first sarvajanik Ganpati, says that the idol of the deity was made in 1892 from paper pulp, sawdust and binder.

"The first idol, itself, was ecofriendly," he says.

For 134 years, the "green" idol has decided how the mandal celebrations. "Whatever music we play are bhakti songs. The level of noise is deliberately kept very moderate. This ensures that the mandal does not add to the sound pollution," says Javale.

The Shrimant Bhausaheb Rangari Ganpati idol shows the god in an aggressive stance, slay-

ing a demon The symbol is nationalistic from the time that freedom fighters were trying to bring down the

Today, the God could just as

well be signalling the need to defeat polluters and climate de-

"Until recent times, we had a rule about not using gulal. At present, due to the enthusiasm of the young generation, we have allowed a little gulal during the celebration. We are careful that this practice does not lead to air pollution," says Javale.

While many homes and mandals use shaadu maati idols, the Naviyot Mitra Mandal Trust in Yerwada has gone a step ahead by distributing shaadu maati idols in the neighbourhood to

more than 50 families. "We have a permanent idol that we worship the year around, as well as a small idol that we place during Ganeshotsav. The latter is immersed during visarjan. We switched to shaadu

maati a few years ago because we

did not like how Plaster of Paris idols impact water bodies," says Amit Iadhay of the mandal.

Jadhav adds that people in the locality also receive a bucket and a cloth with their shaadu maati This way, they can immerse the idol at home, sieve it and

bring back the soil for recycling organisation Punaravartan. "Shaadu maati comes from

Guiarat and is a limited resource. We should be careful about using it, hence we collect the soil and give it for recycling," says Jadhav.

For those still buying their idols, a word of advice - Shaad maati Ganpati must be handled with care and devotion for a fall can damage it. "But, we treat Ganpati idols like our children anyway," he adds.

### Maharashtra BJP MLC taking on 'cow vigilantes': Who is Sadashiv Khot?

**PARTHA SARATHI BISWAS** PUNE. AUGUST 27

BJP MLC Sadashiv Khot's allegation on Monday of a cow vigilante "lobby" in Maharashtra "harassing" farmers has got flak from his own party, but it ties into his journey as a leader emerging from farmer groups.

Khot considers Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis as his political guru but also emphasises that farmer leader Sharad Ioshi is his agricultural guru. "In the late 1990s, Joshi wrote about the need to repeal the Maharashtra Animal Preservation Act, 1976. This law, as per Joshi, was a threat to the farm economy and required amendments," Khot said, articulating his position on the subject.

Joshi, Khot underlines, argued for farmers to have the authority to decide what to do with their animals.

For over a month now, traders and traditional butchers in Maharashtra have been on a strike in protest against "cow vigilantism". The Maharashtra Oureshi Association, a body of the Muslim community that has traditionally



MLC Sadashiv Khot

butchers, said they are unable to carry out their trade due to these vigilantes, with their animals often seized. Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar has also spoken on the matter and has directed police to take action against such vigilantism. Khot has also been speaking of the protests by the Qureshi community since Day 1 and arguing that the stopping of butchering and cattle trade is hurting farmers and their interests.

#### From the ground up

Khot, who belongs to Sangli district of Maharashtra, has been associated with agricultural issues, especially that of sugarcane farmers, for 30 years.

He joined hands with former MP Raju Shetti when he formed organisation was formed to ensure a better price for sugarcane and carried out an agitation against the powerful sugar mills of Western Maharashtra.

Khot became a debutant MLC in 2016 with the support of the BJP and became Minister of State for Agriculture in Fadnavis's first term as CM. In 2018, Shetti decided to part ways with the BJP, but Khot stayed on with the party, and continued as a minister and an MLC. He later went to form the Rayat Kranti Sanghata, another farm outfit, but did not break his association with the BJP. In 2024, Khot was re-elected as an MLC.

Within the BJP, Khot's opposition to the cow slaughter ban has been raising many eyebrows, with Fadnavis amending the 1976 Act in 2015 to ban the slaughter of animals of cow progeny (bulls, bullocks, ox, oxens).

Khot bases his argument on the economics of the milk trade. "A simple back-of-the-envelope calculation shows this. Animals require feed and fodder worth Rs 300 per day. Once they start yielding milk, the income from them is Rs 450 per day, if we consider production as 15 litres daily, with a base price of Rs 35 per litre," Khot

says. Hence, if a farmer spends Rs 9,000 per month on an animal, he or she roughly makes Rs 13,500 from them in return. Their net profit: Rs 4.500.

The above expenditure, Khot says, is a "dead investment and would not yield any returns" if the animal is below two years of age, when it starts giving milk, or when it is older. The only way out, according to him, is selling the animals. "A farmer looks at an animal as a fixed deposit. When they sell these mature animals, they get a return on their investment and the very process of selling is now being threatened by the so-called cow vigilantes," he says Khot claims that desi (indige-

nous) varieties of cows are never sold by farmers. "Such animals are always kept till their end as farmers consider them sacred. The trade is carried out in the milkyielding or crossbred animals," he says. Asked about the opposition he is facing from the BIP for his stance against cow vigilantes, Khot says the criticism is coming from people who have never milked a cow. Khot has claimed that his supporters and him faced physical violence at a gaushala (cow shelter) in Pune, which led him to lodge a complaint Monday.

## 12 killed as unauthorised building collapses in Palghar

Woman, one-yr-old daughter among dead; builder held after VVMC complaint

**PRESSTRUST OF INDIA** PALGHAR, AUGUST 27

TWELVE PERSONS, including a mother-daughter duo, were killed and six others seriously injured after a portion of an unauthorised four-story building collapsed on an adjacent vacant tenement at Virar in Maharashtra's Palghar district on Wednesday, officials said.

While six bodies were retrieved from under the debris, six others died during treatment at various hospitals.

The operation to remove rubble at the crash site has been go ing on even after more than 20 hours have passed since the rear portion of Ramabai Apartment collapsed at 12.05 am.

The Vasai Virar Municipal Corporation (VVMC) stated in a release that six persons remain admitted to various hospitals in the area and Nalasopara on the outskirts of Mumbai.

Three others were discharged after treatment.

Police arrested the builder af-



NDRF personnel during a rescue operation after the rear portion of a four-storey building crashed onto a chawl at Virar on Wednesday. PTI

ter Vasai Virar Municipal Corporation (VVMC) lodged a complaint.

Authorities have so far identified seven of the twelve deceased as Arohi Omkar Iovil (24), her oneyear-old daughter Utkarsha Jovil, Laxman Kisku Singh (26), Dinesh Prakash Sapkal (43), Supriya Nivalkar(38), Arnav Nivalkar(11), and Parvati Sapkal.

District Collector Indu Rani Jakhar has said that some more persons may still be buried under the debris

Luckily, the chawl or tenement on which the building collapsed was vacant, said Vivekanand Kadam, District Disaster Management Officer of Palghar. As a precautionary measure.

building have been vacated and occupants shifted to safer places,

Constructed in 2012, Ramabai Apartment has 50 flats, and the collapsed part had 12 apartments, said Kadam. A spokesperson of the Vasai Virar Municipal Corporation confirmed that the

building was "illegal".

The removal of debris was delayed because officials initially struggled to bring heavy machinery to the crashed building located in a congested locality.

"As of now, debris clearance is still underway. For the first several hours, the debris had to be cleared manually by civic teams and two units of the NDRF. Now, the operation is being carried out with machinery and progressing on a war footing." VVMC Assistant Commissioner Gilson Gonsalves said. "All affected families have been temporarily housed at Chandansar Samajmandir. We are providing food, water, medical assistance, and other essential serv-

### As prices of soybean, cotton and tur drop below MSP, Maharashtra farmers hope for govt intervention

**PARTHA SARATHI BISWAS** PUNE. AUGUST 27

VILAS UPHADE'S soybean crop, spread over 4 acres at the Takli village in the Latur district of Maharashtra, is healthy and in the advanced stage of pod formation. However, Uphade is less concerned about the unpredictable monsoon, and more about drop in prices of his crop.

As the June-September monsoon season comes to a close, farmers like Uphade are concerned that they will face challenges with pricing again this year. "The new crop is expected to hit the markets in about 45

days, but at Latur's wholesale market prices are between Rs 4,600-4,650/quintal as against its Minimum Support Price (MSP) of Rs 5,328. There is going to be a bloodbath once the new crop

If Uphade is worried about his soybean crop, Manikrao Kadam in the neighbouring Parbhani district is concerned about both cotton and tur (pigeon pea). "Rains have been satisfactory and the crop condition is good, but we are worried about prices," he said.

Kadam said farmers in Parbhani primarily grow cotton, soybean, and tur as their main kharif crops, with prices being the main topic of discussion at the

moment, "Though heavy rains caused flooding in Nanded and Hingoli a few weeks ago, the crop condition is good overall."

Soybeans are currently in the pod formation stage, while both cotton and tur are in their flowering and pod formation stages. Farmers expect to harvest their soybeans within the next 45 days. Cotton harvesting will begin after September, and tur harvesting and marketing are scheduled for the end of this year.

However, for growers of the three kharif crops, prices below the MSP have become a concern. Grown over 119.51 lakh hectares this year, soybean is trading below its MSP even before the start of the

Similar are the cases with cotton (108.47 lakh hectares sown area) and tur (43.98 lakh hectares). At Latur's wholesale market, tur is trading at Rs 6,600/quintal against its MSP of Rs 8,000. The cotton lint crop is trading at Rs 7,200/quintal against its

#### Factors affecting prices

The influx of imported tur is driving down prices, while US tariffs are adversely affecting cotton

In the last fiscal year, the country imported 770,000 tonnes of tur. "Imported tur is trading at Rs 4,400/quintal, and this is affecting the prices," said a trader from

The purchase of cotton yarn by textile industries has decreased significantly due to the 50 per cent tariff the US imposed on imports from India. Traders say that a better price for cotton is nearly impossible in such a situation.

Soybean prices are down mainly due to a slack in exports of protein-rich soymeal, the solid residue left after oil is extracted from the bean. Traders across the country said the chances of any price rise appear slim.

Farmers are now hopeful for government intervention to increase procurement and ensure

### Cabinet extends PM SVANidhi for street vendors, enhances loan amount lakh new ones, a government

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** NEW DELHI. AUGUST 27

THE UNION Cabinet Wednesday approved the restructuring of the PM SVANidhi loan scheme for street vendors, extending it till March 31,2030 and enhancing the

The scheme was launched in 2020 as a part of the government's economic package during the pandemic and lockdown.

On Wednesday, the Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, extended the lending period from December 31, 2024 to March 31, 2030,

which is expected to benefit 1.15

crore beneficiaries, including 50

statement said. As per the statement, the first

tranche was increased from ₹10,000 to ₹15,000 and the second tranche from ₹20,000 to ₹25,000. The third remains ₹50,000. The revamped scheme, which was a part of the Budget, will also give vendors incentives of up to ₹1,600 cashback for retail and wholesale digital transactions. The scheme will be implemented by the Ministry of

Department of Financial Services, "The key features of the restructured scheme include enhanced loan amount across first

and second tranche, provision of

Housing and Urban Affairs and the

UPI-linked RuPay Credit Card for beneficiaries who have repaid the second loan, and digital cashback incentives for retail and wholesale transactions. The scheme's coverage is being expanded beyond statutory towns to census towns, peri-urban areas etc. in graded manner," the government said.

The scheme's total outlay would be ₹7,332 crore, it said. As of July 30, 96 lakh loans worth ₹13,797 crore have been disbursed to 68 lakh street vendors.

"The extension of the scheme envisages the holistic development of street vendors by offering a reliable source of finance to support business expansion and opportunities for sustainable growth..." the government said.

### THE EVER FLOURISHING ORGANISATION

#### **ADVERTORIAL**

### Imran Shaikh's Blueprint for Building Businesses That Last

translating into progress. India-based business transformation consultant Imran Shaikh launches his new

Every business hits a point where effort stops

book "The Ever Flourishing Organisation", a practical guide for leaders to build companies that are adaptive, antifragile, and built to endure.

People are busy, targets are being chased, meetings are happening, but things feel like they're circling. The same problems keep coming back. Improvements don't hold. And everything starts to rely too much on individual follow-up.

That's where this book begins.

It's based on what I've experienced, what I've learned, and what I've helped build, inside real companies, with real teams, facing real pressure.

Before I became a consultant, I spent over two decades in industry. I've led companies, sat across the table from customers, fought for cash flow, chased delivery commitments, and dealt with the daily pressure of "why isn't this working yet?" All those experiences shaped how I approach transformation now.

This book isn't about fixing symptoms. It's about building a business that works, consistently, reliably, and profitably. One that doesn't rely on heroic effort to meet basic goals. One where the systems support the people, not the other way around.

I've worked with companies across sectors, engineering, automotive, plastics, and more,



to bring this approach to life. I focus on fundamentals: identifying constraints, improving, flow, aligning teams, and managing the business with control and confidence. Using the knowledge, experience, wisdom and the best practices to solve the right problems at the right time. Every chapter in this book comes from the ground. The scenes, the conversations, the decisions, they're all drawn from real work. The changes that stuck didn't come from big projects or sweeping plans. They came from small, focused actions, taken consistently.

This book is for leaders who want to build companies that run better, where sales, operations, finance, and people move in sync. Where problems are solved at the root. Where systems make the work easier, not harder. If you've been carrying the same questions for a while now, I hope this book gives you a way to move forward.

—Imran Shaikh

#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Imran Shaikh is a business transformation consultant with over 25 years of experience across industry and consulting.

He is the founder of Profound Consulting, a firm that works with companies to improve operational and financial performance through focused, system driven execution. He worked in leadership roles across operations, marketing & sales, strategy, supply chain, finance and JVs. He's led organisations, turned around business units, and knows what it takes to deliver under pressure.

Founder, Profound Consulting

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Author:

Imran Shaikh

At Profound Consulting, he works directly with companies to improve their operational and financial performance using practical, system-driven methods.

His approach is hands- on and focused on results, built around identifying the right problems, designing clean solutions, and helping teams execute them with discipline.

Imran is an engineer, management professional, Certified Lean Six Sigma Black Belt, a TOC Expert, and a QMS Auditor. He is a senior member of the American Society for Quality and advisor to multiple firms. He's a frequent speaker at industry forums and a guest lecturer at business and engineering institutions & also a mentor to various startups.

He believes good businesses don't need complexity to grow, they need focus, flow, actions and follow-through.

#### Scan the QR codes to get the book:









**Transforming Organisations** 

4 J&K Rajya Sabha

# decision to remove

**HARISH DAMODARAN** 

NEW DELHI AUGUST 27

THE US Department of Agriculture (USDA) has welcomed the Narendra Modi government's recent decision to remove the 11% import duty on cotton. The duty-free imports "is expected to increase US cotton bookings" and will also provide relief to support India's textile and garment industry, "which faces challenges from higher U.S. tariffs and rising domestic fiber costs", the agency has said in a statement.

The Finance Ministry, on August 18, had issued a notification doing away with the 11% tariff on cotton imports, comprising a 5% basic customs duty, 5% agriculture infrastructure and development cess and a 1% surcharge on both. The exemption is temporary, from August 19 to September 30. to align with start of India's new cotton marketing year from October 1.

But the USDA statement said that it would still "help Indian textile exporters access cheaper, high-quality raw materials, particularly US cotton, which is valued for being contamination free".

Competing countries like Bangl adesh, Indonesia, Cambodia and Vietnam "benefit from significantly low US tariff rates, putting Indian exporters at a disadvantage," it noted.

The value of US cotton exports to India rose from \$147.13 million in 2020 to \$211.32 million in 2021 and \$491.20 million in 2022, before falling to \$223.69 million and \$209 million in the following two calendar years. The first six months of 2025, however, has seen exports surge 109% to \$181.46 million, from \$86.89 million during January-June 2024. According to the USDA, nearly

95% of imported US cotton is processed and re-exported as textiles and apparel. And the US happens to be India's largest market, accounting for \$6 billion of its cotton-based textile and apparel exports. It remains to be seen whether the Modi government will extend the duty-free imports measure beyond September 30. The USDA believes that the heavy rain in central and southern India may delay harvesting of the new crop. That, along with the government's higher minimum support price, is likely to raise domestic

#### **SALUTE THE SOLDIER**

**Border Security Force** Director General and all Ranks of Border



CONSTABLE VIJAY KUMAR 07.05.1959 -28.08.1998

Security Force remember its gallant Jawan Head Constable T Vijay Kumar on his Balidan Diwas. On this day, he sustained fatal bullet injury in a fierce encounter with mili tants in area of Argem, Bandipur (J&K) and made ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

Director General and all Ranks of Border



HOM BAHADUR CHETTRY 28.08.1989

CONSTABLE

Security Force remember its gallant Jawan Constable Hom Bahadur Chettry on his Balidan Diwas. On this day, he sustained fatal injuries in an IED blast triggered by militants in area of Aliwal, Punjab and made ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. Director General and all Ranks

HEAD CONSTA-Border Security Force remember its BLE DEONIS gallant Jawan Head Constable Deonis Xalxo on his Balidan Diwas. On this 07.08.1964 day, he made ultimate sacrifice while 28.08.2000 on operational duty in area of BOF



Veer Balidani Constable Bodh Ra 2 Bn 17-1-1969 To 28-8-2001



Constable Kamleshwar Bhaga 1-1-1971 To

Director General and all Ranks of CRPF remember its valiant troopers Constable Bodh Raj and Constable Kamleshwar Bhagat of 2 Bn, CRPF who made supreme sacrifice while vehemently repulsing an attack by insurgents on 28 August 2001 in Tripura. CRPF salutes the bravehearts and pledges never to let their sacrifice go in vain



Veer Balidani Head Constable Hassan Akhtar 15-2-1965 To 28-8-2001

Director General and all Ranks of CRPF remember its valiant trooper Head Constable Hassan Akhtar of 93 Bn, CRPF, who made supreme sacrifice while vehemently repulsing an attack by the maoists on 28 ugust 2001 in Jharkhand. CRPF salutes the braveheart and pledges



Lance Naik Omkar Singh 25-5-1952 To 28-8-1990

never to let his sacrifice go in vain. Director General and all Ranks of CRPF remember its valiant trooper ance Naik Omkar Singh of 33 Bn CRPF, who made supreme sacrifice when his vehicle was attacked by the terrorists on 28 August 1990 in Punjab. CRPF salutes the braveheart and pledges never to let his

#### **PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given that **M/s. Satguru Promoters and Builders, LLP** having address at Flat No. 11, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Gaikwad Heights, Near Punjab National Bank, Aundh, Pune 411007 through its Partners Mr. Pawan Raghumal Wadhwani, Mr. Ashwin Anil Bora and Mr. Anand Premraj Munot are the owners of the said Land described in the Schedule hereunder written. The said Owners have agreed to absolutely sell and convey the said Land to our clients for consideration and on certain terms and conditions. The said Owners have represented to my clients that they have a clear and marketable title to the said Land and the same are free from encumbrances and reasonable doubts.

All person/s having any claim against or in respect of the said Land described in the Schedule hereunder written or any part thereof by way of sale, mortgage, exchange, charge lease, lien, inheritance, gift, trust, maintenance, possession easement or otherwise are hereby required to make known the same to the undersigned at the address mentioned below within 15 (Fifteen) days from the date thereof, failing which the transaction shall be completed without any reference to such claim or claims if any and will be deemed

waived and/or abandoned. **SCHEDULE ABOVE REFERRED TO** 

All that piece and parcel of well defined and demarcated portion of land admeasuring **31 Ares** i.e. 3100 square meters assessed at Rs. 01=95 paise carved out of **Survey** No. 21 Hissa No. A/1 total admeasuring 01 Hectare 88 Ares assessed at Rs.11=81 paise situate at village Sus, Taluka Mulshi, District Pune and within the limits of Pune Municipa Corporation and within the sanctioning jurisdiction of Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority, Pune and within the jurisdiction of the Sub Registrar. Haveli Nos. 1 to 27, Pune and bounded as follows:-

On or towards the **East** 

by 12 meter wide road owned by J.P. Corporation LLP.
by land out of Survey No. 21/A/1 On or towards the West owned by J. P. Corporation and

J. P. Realty. On or towards the North: by land out of Survey No. 21/A/1 owned by J. P. Corporation and J. P. Realty.

On or towards the South: by land out of Survey No. 21/A/1 owned by Mr. Manoj Oswal Pune, Dated this 27th day of August, 2025.

> **Prasanna S Darade**, Advocate Flat No. 7, 4th Floor, Abhilasha Apartments

Bhuwaneshwar Society Lane Opp. Gate No. 6 Abhimanshree Society Pashan Road, Pune - 411 008.

## USDA welcomes govt Jointness of forces was key to import duty on cotton Op Sindoor success: Rajnath

**AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA** 

MHOW, AUGUST 27

THE SUDARSHAN Chakra Mission is India's resolve for selfdefence, under which, all important places in the country will be covered with a shield of modern and indigenously developed technology in the years to come, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said Wednesday.

He added that the "jointness and integration" of the Armed Forces played a pivotal role in Operation Sindoor success, so there was a need to strengthen the joint strategic communication. Addressing on the second day

of Ran Samwad 2025, at the Army War College in Mhow, Madhya Pradesh, Singh said, "DRDO has recently successfully completed the first test of the Integrated Air Defence Weapon System," adding that the DRDO, in the recent past. has also successfully tested a highpowered directed energy weapon, "I think these successes are not just of DRDO or the Armed Forces but of the entire India."

"I believe that the jointness and integration of our forces played a major important role in the success of Operation Sindoor. Therefore, I think we should also move forward in strengthening the joint strategic communication," he said.

Talking about Operation Sindoor, he said that every war

**AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA** 

THE NAVY is committed to inte-

grating its command and control,

communications and combat ca-

pabilities with the Army and the

Air Force to align with the the-

aterisation goal, Navy Chief

Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi

said Wednesday. Separately, CDS

General Anil Chauhan pledged to

address any "dissonance" within

the services on the creation of

ent is Rs. 1085.25 Lacs

UBN No. PWD2526WSOB09838, UBN No. PWD2526WSOB09839

UBN No. PWD2526WSOB09840, UBN No. PWD2526WSOB09841,

UBN No. PWD2526WSOB09842, UBN No. PWD2526WSOB09843,

क्रमांक : एफ()नपरा/इंजी/ई निविदा/14/2025-26/4539

निविदा क्रार्यक्रम

कार्य की संख्या

कार्यो की अनुमानित लागत

निविदा अपलोड की तिथि

निविदा डाउनलोड प्रारम्भ तिथि

प्री–बिड मिटींग की तिथि व समय

ऑनलाईन निविदा प्रस्तुत करने की अन्तिम तिथि

भौतिक रूप से दस्तावेज जमा करने की तिथि

ऑनलाईन निविदा खोलने की तिथि

ऑनलाईन निविदा हेतु वेबसाईट

दोष निवारण अवधी

UBN NO-

नगरपरिषद राजसमन्द

राज.संवाद / सी / 25 / 8834

Orchid Pharma Limited,

Dated this 28th day of August 2025

MHOW, AUGUST 27

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, CDS Gen Anil Chauhan. IAF Chief Air Chief Marshal A P Singh and Navy Chief Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi at Army War College, in Mhow. PTI

Committed to synergise combat capability, command: Navy Chief

leaves us with some important learnings. "In the course of battle, we are able to realistically assess the level of our preparedness," he said, adding it was indeed a striking demonstration of technology-driven warfare.

"Be it offensive or defensive techniques, operational practices, quick and efficient war logistics, the seamless integration of our forces or matters of intelligence and surveillance- Operation Sindoor gave us a wealth of lessons," he said, adding that it provided us with a glimpse of the kind of challenges and responses that could serve as valuable guidance for any future conflict.

Singh said its achievements have once again underlined that

The top military officers' com-

ments came a day after Air Chief

Marshal A P Singh said the the-

aterisation plans should not be

rushed, while emphasising set-

ting up a joint planning and coor-

dination centre in Delhi under the

Chiefs of Staff Committee instead

for bolstering jointness among

the three services. All three offi-

cers made the comments at Ran

Samwad 2025 at the Army War

The comments had brought

(J.P.Gupta)

Superintending Enginee

P.W.D. Circle Kota

दिनांक :- 21.08.2025

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----- Transferor Company / Petitio

— Transferee Company / Petitione

Pawan Jhabakl

Counsel for the Petitione

New No. 115. First Floor, Luz Churc

Road, Mylapore, Chennai - 600004

College in Mhow.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER PWD

CIRLCE KOTA

(NIT No. 07/2025-26) Bid for various road works in District Kota (7 Works) is Invited from interested bidders up to 06.00 PM of 12.09.2025 (Friday). Other Particulars of the bids may be visited on the procurement porta

(http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.rj.nic.in) of the Rajasthan State. The approximate value

कार्यालय नगरपरिषद, राजसमन्द

टेलिफोन नं. 02952—220034, फेक्स नं. 02952—221233, ई—मेल rajsamandnagarpalika@gmail.com

<u>ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या 14/2025-26</u>

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BEFORE THE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL

**BENCH AT CHENNAI** 

CP(CAA)/52(CHE)/2025

CA(CAA)/58(CHE)/2024

In the matter of sections 230 to 232 and other relevant provisions of the Companies Act, 2013;

And

In the matter of Scheme of Amalgamation and Arrangement of Dhanuka Laboratories Limited ("Transferor Company") with Orchid Pharma Limited

("Transferee Company") and their respective shareholders and creditors

A company incorporated under the provisions of the Companies Act. 1956

A company incorporated under the provisions of the Companies Act, 1956

and having its registered office at Plot No.121-128, 128A-133, 138-151, 159

164, SIDCO Industrial Estate, Alathur, Chengalpattu, Tamil Nadu – 603 110.

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that by an order dated 05th day of August 2025, the

Chennai Bench of the Hon'ble National Company Law Tribunal has fixed the date of hearing of the Company Petition, filed by the Petitioner Companies

under Section 230 to 232 of the Companies Act, 2013 for the sanction of Scheme, on the 24<sup>th</sup> day of September 2025. Any person desirous of

supporting or opposing the said Petition should send to the Petitioner'

Advocate, notice of his intention, signed by him or his Advocate, with his

name and address, so as to reach the Petitioner's Advocates not later than

two days before the date fixed for hearing of the Petition. Where he seeks to

oppose the Petition, the grounds of opposition or a copy of his affidavit shall be furnished with such notice. A copy of the Petition will be furnished by the

undersigned to any person requiring the same on payment of the prescribe

and having its registered office at Linbuzz Business Centre, 2910B, 14th

Main Road Anna Nagar West, Chennai, Tamil Nadu – 600 040.

नगर परिषद राजसमन्द द्वारा विकास कार्यो हेतु समस्त विभागों में पंजीकृत संवेदकों

theatre commands.

in the times to come, self-reliance is an absolute necessity. "We have indeed made significant progress on the path of self-reliance, but there is still a long way ahead that we must travel," he said.

#### 'Must be ready for every situation'

Singh said that during Operation Sindoor, the Navy maintained strategic positions and limited the enemy's movement completely in the Arabian Sea. "Our Navy's presence in the Indian Ocean is keeping our maritime borders completely secure. Our government is also working with full readiness to make the Navy even stronger and more robust," he said.

to the fore the difference in

views of the three services over

the structures of the theatre

gising our command and control,

communications and combat ca-

pability with the Indian Army and

the IAF." the Navy Chief said.

adding that with the theaterisa-

tion plan being the ultimate goal,

"we are propelling ahead with the

goal of unified planning, common

picture and integrated operation".

isation plans have been under

discussion since 2019 and have

The Indian military's theater-

"We are committed to syner-

strengthening our forces." Underlining that changing

tiative for formation of Rudra Brig-

tinuously strengthening itself by inducting everything from longrange missiles to next-gen Beyond Visual Range weapons. "The counter UAS Grid is being strengthened in view of the increasing use of drones. Whether it is procurement or policy-related changes, we are always moving forward in the direction of

technology and the changing world necessitate adaptation by the forces, Singh said, "I have been told our Army has taken the iniade, ShaktiBaan Regiment, Divyastra Battery, Drone Platoon and Bhairav Battalion." "These things have undoubtedly become necessary, keeping the future in

Singh said that in today's era, wars have become so sudden and unpredictable it is difficult to predict when any war will end and how long it will last. "We must be prepared for every situation. We must be prepared for this so that our surge capacity is sufficient," he said. "That is, if any war stretches for two months, four months, a year, two years, even five years, we should be fully prepared for it. That is why we need to streamline our defence industry," Singh said. "We do not want anyone's land, but we are ready to go to any extent to protect our land," he said. without referring to any country.

seen multiple iterations over the

The Navy Chief also voiced his concerns over unregulated and illegal fishing and activities of survey vessels in strategic waters, in a veiled reference to China.

last few years.

"Technology has equipped gray-zone actors with tools to apply pressure and disturb order at sea. Fishing fleets fitted with satellite communication and long range sensors now act as extension of national strategy, remaining at sea while relaying posiintelligence in real time," he said.

Under Article 83, the Rajya

every two years. Due to imposition of Presi-

dent's Rule multiple times over past 30 years, the terms of the &K seats in RS have become concurrent. While a similar situation exists in Punjab and Delhi – due to a state of Emergency being declared in the past, and creation of a new Assembly under the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, 1991 sources said that the EC had sought the presidential order only for J&K. While Punjab sends seven

members to RS, Delhi sends

The terms of the four RS members from J&K ended in February 2021, when the UT was under President's Rule. While a new Assembly was elected in October last year, the EC is yet to fill the four RS seats. It means I&K will have no representation in the RS when elections are held for the post of Vice-President on September 9. J&K has five MPs in the Lok Sabha.

Earlier, there was no J&K pres-

### seats vacant: Law Ministry says no to staggering of terms

DAMINI NATH

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 27

THE UNION Law and Justice Ministry has turned down the Election Commission's request for a presidential order so as to stagger the terms of the four Raiva Sabha seats from I&K. which currently have concurrent terms, and have been vacant for the past four-and-a-half years.

On August 22, the Law Ministry told the EC that there was no provision in the law for such an order, according to two sources aware of the development.

Sabha is a permanent House with one-third of its members, who have a tenure of six years. retiring every second year. The EC had earlier this year written to the Law Ministry seeking a presidential order that would set the terms of the J&K seats in such a way that one-third fell vacant

A long vacancy THE 4 J&K seats have been vacant since February 2021, when the UT was under

President's Rule. The seats

I&K now has an elected

Assembly, and the Omar

Abdullah government has

expressed concern over this.

have not been filled though

ence in the RS during the Presidential election of 2022, when Droupadi Murmu won.

As per Section 154 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, there have been two presidential orders so far to curtail terms of RS MPs so that one-third of them retire every two years. The first was in 1952, when the first Rajya Sabha was elected, and the second in 1956, as per the Constitution (Seventh Amendment) Act, 1956.

"Upon the first constitution of the Council of States, the President shall, after consultation with the Election Commission, make by order such (a) provision as he thinks fit for curtailing the term of office of some of the members then chosen, in order that, as nearly as may be, onethird of the members holding seats of each class shall retire in every second year thereafter," the Section says.

It adds: "In order that, as nearly as may be, one-third of the members may retire on the second day of April 1958, and on the expiration of every second year thereafter, the President shall, as soon as may be after the commencement of the Constitution (Seventh Amendment) Act, 1956, after consultation with the Election Commission, make by order such provisions as he thinks fit in regard to the terms of office of the members

#### OFFIC OF THE SUPERINTENDENT, ASSOCIATED GROUP OF HOSPITALS, JODHPUR.

Tel. Ph.: 0291-2636390, Email:- superintendentmgh@gmail.com

E-TENDER NOTICE 06,07,08/2025-26 Bids for High Skilled, Unskilled, Skilled Labour at Mahatma Gandhi Hospital, Jodhpur is invited fronterested bidders up to closing date. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement ortal (http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in of the state

(NIB Code SMC2526A0121) (NIB Code SMC2526A0122) UBN No. SMC2526SLRC00140) (NIB Code SMC2526A0123) Sd/-UBN No. SMC2526SLRC00142)

> Associated Group of Hospital M.G.H., Jodhpu



DEDICATED FREIGHT CORRIDOR CORPORATION OF INDIA LIMITED A Government of India (Ministry of Railways) Enterprise

Notice for Request for Proposal NIT No.: HQENTMC-DTEPCTMDERNOM12Y Date: 26.08.2025 Name of Work

peration & Maintenance of DFCCIL's 1 (one) PCTM and 1 (one) DTE Machine icluding supply of spares and other ite ns for 12 years within DFCCÍL Network und APM/TM/New Dadri Shed." [RFP Doc No. HQENTMC-DTEPCTMDERNOM129 26,08,2025] DFCCIL livities open E-Tenders/offers on Single Stage Two Packet System on prescribed forms from firms/Companies/Joint Ventures having requisite System on prescribed forms from infms/companies/John Ventures having requisite technical experience and financial capacity for undertaking of the capitioned projec (through IREPS). The complete RFP document bearing same reference number & containing requisite instructions/information for RFP/bid submission, have beer uploaded on IREPS website-www.ireps.gov/in and DFCCIL websites/fccil.com fo downloading from 26.08.2025. Amendment/Modification in RFP, if any, will be ploaded on the websites only. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised RF Bid online up to closing date and time only. Manual tenders/offers are not allowed and Closing Date/Time: 29.09.2025/15:00 Hrs.

Website: www.pspcl.in (Contact No. 96461-01116)

XEN/Grid Construction, 312, Thermal Colony Bathinda invites open e

Tender for outsourcing work of erection, testing and commissioning of bay

& control equipment(matching work) related to augmentation of Power transformer on partial turnkey mode under RDSS scheme under Grid

Construction Division Bathinda, under Grid Const. Circle, Ludhiana. For

detailed NIT Tender Specifications please refer to & http://eproc.punjab.gov.in from 28.08.2025 (11.30 AM onwards).

Note: Corrigendum and amendments, if any, will be published online a

Dated: 28.08.2025 St

Tender Enquiry No. 03/BTI/GCD/TS/PSPCL/2025-26

 ${\bf http://eproc.punjab.gov.in.}$ 

Punjab State Power Corporation Limited Regd. office: PSEB head office, The Mall Patiala-147001 Corporate Identity No. UP0109PB2010SGC033813

NO. 2632/PB

**PUBLIC SHORT TENDER NOTICE NO.02/2025-26** Under Mukhya Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana Part- 2, Batch-1 in Satara District Talukas- Man Estimated cost

**TENDER NOTICE (E-Tendering Mode Only)** 

Contract Period 2 Years Earnest Money Deposit ₹ 36,403/Cost of Tender Document (Non-Refundable) ₹ 1,000/- Inclusive of all taxes and duties through e-payment

Tender Processing Fee(Non Refundable) ₹ 1404/-Inclusive of all taxes and duties through e-payment

an be downloaded from website www.tenderwizard.com/CCIL only. Further, Corrigendum/Addendur

to this Tender, if any, will be published on website www.concorindia.co.in, www.tenderwizard.com/CCIL and Central Procurement Portal (CPP) only. Newspaper press

MAHARASHTRA RURAL ROAD

DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION,

**EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, PRADHAN** 

MANTRI GRAM SADAK YOJANA, SATARA

08.09.2025 at 15:30 hrs.

From 28.08.2025 at 15:00 hrs. to 07.09.2025 upto 16:00 hrs.

Executive Director, Area-

CONCOR invites E-Tender in Single Bid System of tendering for the following work

stimated Amount ₹ 18,20,150.16/-(Including GST)

Date & time of opening of tender

ast date & time of submission of tender upto 08.09.2025, 15:00 hrs.

of Rs. 12495.84 Lakhs for Total 2 Packages, 26 Works E-Tender Notice No.02/2025-26 is Published on the website https://mahatenders.gov.in dated 28/08/2025 from 11.00 am. (Y. A. Desai)

dgipr/2025-26/2270

**Executive Engineer** PMGSY, MRRDA, Satara

VOCPA E-Tendering Website : https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app NIT No. 03/ PD/Effective Capacity/2025-26/D. 2786 Date: 28.08.2025

For further details, visit port Website: www.vocport.gov.in / CPP Portal Ph.No: 0461-2372306 Email: ce@vocport.gov.in

ing Minimum quantity to be quoted | 100% of the total tendered quantity.

The Nawanshahr Cooperative Sugar Mills Ltd; Nawanshahr E-mail:dcsm\_nsr@yahoo.co Website: www.eproc.punjab.gov.in Short term E-Tender **COMPETITIVE** e-bidding Online e-Bids are invited through e-Tender on Govt e-Tender portal http://eproc.punjab.gov.in for physical export of 5409 MT sugar from experienced overseas buyers or their authorized representatives in India. Export Houses/Merchandisers, Govt./Cooperative Institutions (In which State Govt./Central Govt. has/have invested share capital) having valid Importer/Exporter License code and experience of exporting sugar.

documents on e-procurement 29.08.2025 portal. Date and Time of Start of 29.08.2025, from 05:00 PM. submission of e-tender. Last Date and Time of 05.09.2025 upto 05:00 PM on Govt. Website: www.eproc.punjab.gov.in 06.09.2025 at 11:00 AM. in the O/o Date and Time of Technical e Sugarfed Punjab, Plot No. 53, Phase-2 Opp. Bassi Cinema, Mohali-160055. bid opening Date and Time of Financial e-To be Intimated later on bid opening The General Manager, The Nawanshahr Coop. Sugar Mills Ltd., Nawanshahr, Distt. S.B.S. Nagar Punjab-144514 Address for communication

For participation in e-tender the bidder shall have to register themselves with www.eproc.punjab.gov.in. For User ID, Password, Class-2 or Class-3 Digital Signature is Mandatory. For any assistance, please contact on Mobile No. 78373-15002, 94176-74718, 62801-76907. Any Corrigendum/ Addendum/Corrections/Cancellation will be published or **GENERAL MANAGER** 

Pune

#### V.O.CHIDAMBARANAR PORT AUTHORITY Civil Engineering Department **TUTICORIN – 628 004** SAGARMALA **GLOBAL NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

V.O.Chidambaranar Port invites tenders (Online tenders) in "Two bid

Name of Work	Consultancy services for Effective Capac Assessment of All Major Ports by using Standardized Methodology				
Bid Security Amount	Rs.10,00,000/- (Rupees Ten Lakhs only)				
Downloading of Tender from VOCPA online e-tendering website / CPP Portal	28.08.2025 to 18.09.2025				
Pre Proposal Conference date	03.09.2025 at 12:00 hrs through Vide conference (Link will be sent to the bidders who show interest via mail)				
Last date and time for submission of Tender through online	18.09.2025 upto 15:00 Hrs				
Online Technical Bid opening date and time	19.09.2025 at 15:30 Hrs				
Period of completion	9 months				
Validity of tender	120 days from the last date fixed for receivir the tender				

(Only Through E-Tendering Mode) system" from interested, reputed, well experienced Consultants

**CHIEF ENGINEER** 

## Trade should be voluntary, not under pressure: Bhagwat

**DEEPTIMANTIWARY** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 27

IN THE backdrop of the United States imposing a 50% tariff on goods Wednesday, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat said India's national policy should ensure that international trade is done on a "voluntary basis and not under

any pressure" Speaking at Vigyan Bhawan on the second day of a three-day lecture series titled "100 Years of the Sangh's Journey - New Horizons", Bhagwat laid out the Sangh's vision on self-reliance, cultural values, governance, and India's role in shaping a global "dharmic" order as the organisation approaches its centenary. Wednesday's lecture saw diplomats from more than 55 countries in attendance. Thirty-plus international organisations also partic-

Bhagwat's remarks came hours after the new US tariffs kicked in, a move seen as escalating trade tensions between the two countries. "Why should we import goods that we can produce ourselves? We will import only life essentials that are not manufactured in our country," Bhagwat said.

"In our national policy, international trade should be voluntary and not under pressure. The world runs on mutual self-reliance just as a family thrives on interdependence. There will always be give and take, but we should be self-reliant and practise 'swadeshi'," he added.

Urging Indians to prefer domestic products and local consumption, Bhagwat said, "What can be made at home should not be bought from outside. In summer, you can make 'shikanji' (lemon water) at home, so why buy Coca Cola and Sprite?'

#### Self-reliance and 'swadeshi'

Explaining the Sangh's emphasis on 'swadeshi', Bhagwat clarified that self-reliance does not mean isolationism. "When we talk about 'swadeshi', people think we want to sever ties with foreign countries. It is not so. Swadeshi means we prioritise what we can make ourselves. In the summers, make 'shikanji' at home; why buy Coca Cola or Sprite. It's okay to have pizza once in a while, but you don't need to eat out every Sunday," he said

Bhagwat urged people to sup-

port local economies by buying goods produced within their vil lages, states, and regions. "If your state manufactures cars, buy them from your state. When we ignore what's made locally and get goods from outside, our villages suffer," he said.

He extended this principle to culture and lifestyle as well, calling on people to embrace "bhasha, bhusha, bhojan, bhawan aur bhajan" (speaking in their mother tongue, wearing traditional attire, eating local cuisine, living in traditional homes, and maintaining prayer practices).

"If your home doesn't have a prayer room, you are not practising Hinduism. Whatever is convenient, we should wear, but we must know how to wear a dhoti," Bhagwat added

Stressing the importance of constitutional values, Bhagwat urged people not to take the law into their own hands even when provoked. "In every situation, we must follow the rule of law and the Constitution. If someone mocks, disrespects, or abuses your faith, go to the police... Do not resort to violence," he said.

#### Warning against radicalism, wokeism

Touching on global socio-political trends. Bhagwat warned against rising radicalism, social fragmentation, and what he called radicalism, disputes, and unrest are on the rise. We cannot say that the Third World War is not already underway," he said.

"People who believe there should be no values in life are promoting this radicalism. We are cancelling anyone who disagrees with us. New words like wokeism have come up — it's a big crisis before the world. Elders across the globe are worried because nothing connects us anymore," he added.

Quoting Mahatma Gandhi, Bhagwat said consumerism and "ruthless materialism" were giving rise to "seven social sins" - "Work without Wealth, Pleasure without Conscience, Knowledge without character, commerce without morality, science without humanity, religion without sacrifice, and politics without principle.'

role in the region, Bhagwat said the country must start by reconnecting with its neighbours. "Most

### SC orders inquiry after NCLAT judge alleges pressure

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 27

CHIEF JUSTICE of India B R Gavai has asked the Supreme Court Secretary General to inquire into the revelation by a member of the Chennai bench of the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) that a member of the higher judiciary had tried to influence him.

Sources said the CJI took note of August 13 order wherein the judge Justice Sharad Kumar Sharma, had highlighted the issue. Justice Sharma had recused from a case after recording that a member of the higher judiciary had tried to influence its outcome

"We are anguished to observe that one of us, Member (Judicial), has been approached by one of the most revered members of the higher judiciary of this country for seeking an order in favour of a particular party. Hence, I recuse to hear the matter," the judge noted, while referring to himself in his order.

The case, involving insolvency proceedings against Hyderabad-based real estate company KLSR Infratech Ltd, was reserved for orders on June 18, with parties allowed an additional week to file their written submissions. The company had filed an appeal against a decision by the Hyderabad bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), which allowed a creditor, AS Met Corp Pvt Ltd, to initiate the Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process

(CIRP) against it. According to court records.

#### **Constitutional values**

"wokeism". "In the present times,

#### Reconnection with neighbours

Laving out a vision for India's

# from higher judiciary AS Met Corp alleged that an

outstanding amount of Rs 2,88,79,417, along with mutually agreed-upon interest, remained unpaid by KLSR Infratech. As per the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, an operational creditor (who supplies goods or services to a company) can initiate insolvency proceedings if there is a payment default provided there are no disputes over the existence of

Court records show that KLSR Infra contended it was "a profit-making company with a turnover of over Rs 300 crore for the past five years and therefore not insolvent." It also claimed that a First Information Report (FIR) had been filed on June 30, 2022, against the creditor's directors, alleging misconduct, and claimed that the directors were absconding. It was argued that the pendency of the criminal proceedings showed the existence of disputes between the parties, and hence, insolvency proceedings must not be initi-

The creditor responded that the FIR was lodged only after the issuance of the demand notice and, therefore, could not constitute a pre-existing dispute. It also clarified that the directors had been granted anticipatory bail by the Telangana High Court and were not absconding, and that a petition for quashing of the FIR was also pending before the high court. The NCLT agreed with this submission and allowed for insolvency proceedings to be initiated. This decision was challenged before the appellate



RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat during an event to mark 100 years of the Sangh, in New Delhi on Wednesday. ANI

of India's neighbours were once part of India — it's the same people, geography, jungles, and rivers. Just lines have been drawn on maps," he said.

The first duty is to connect with those who are our own. On the basis of our inherited values, India must contribute to their progress. India is the biggest country in the subcontinent, and stability, peace, and prosperity here will benefit the entire region," Bhagwat said, calling for "man-toman contact and heart-to-heart talk" to rebuild trust.

#### 'Dharm', not religion

Bhagwat devoted a signifi-

cant part of his lecture to the concept of "dharm", distinguishing it from religion, "Dharm is not about ways of prayer or eating habits. It is above religion — it is religion on top of religion. Dharm accepts diversity and teaches balance between individualism, society, and nature,"

"What we need is to make our lives 'dharmic' and inspire the world. Today the world is yearning for relationships, and India, as a 'dharmic' country, is at the forefront of valuing relations. Swami Vivekananda used to say India has to give 'dharm' to the world. For that, we must prepare the country," he said, adding that 'Hindu Dharm' would evolve into a 'Vishwa Dharm' aimed at bringing global peace.

#### RSS as a global example

Bhagwat concluded by saying the Sangh must become a model for the world. "We have to build an RSS that sets an example globally. India must formulate governance and economic policies rooted in its own vision - where there is no mass production but production

### Five dead in flash floods in Chhattisgarh

**JAYPRAKASH S NAIDU** RAIPUR, AUGUST 27

FIVE PERSONS, including four of a family, died after incessant rain over the past two days triggered flash floods in four districts of Chhattisgarh's Bastar region. police said on Wednesday.

In the first case, an engineer, his wife and their two daughters - Rajesh Kumar G (42), Pavithra (32), Sautaniya (10) and Saumaika (8), respectively, all residents of Raipur – were killed after their car was swept away while crossing a flooded culvert near Kanger Valley National Park in Bastar.

Rajesh — after visiting his friend, Anupa Das, in Bastar's Jagdalpur city – hired a local driver Lala Yadu for attending a wedding in Andhra Pradesh's Tirupati, police said. At around 9 am on Tuesday, the car the family was travelling in got swept away while crossing the culvert, near National Highway 30. "The car had an automatic lock system, and the family got trapped inside the car. The driver managed to save himself by holding onto a tree branch... After the water receded at around 2 pm, the car was found 200 metres away from the accident spot," a police officer said.

Das said: "Rajesh called me

and said they were taking a detour due to heavy rain triggered flash floods. I called the emergency number, but he said they will manage by themselves. Later, their cellphones switched off. When I called the driver, he amid the flash floods and inun-

told me their car got swept away while crossing a flooded culvert. He somehow managed to save himself, but could not help the four family members.

As many as 2,196 people have been evacuated to 43 shelters

Bastar region, a government official said. The flash floods have killed 17 livestock, partially damaged 165 houses and completely destroyed 86 others in 25 villages of Bastar, Dantewada, Sukma and Bijapur districts.

Date: 27.08.2025

#### KANPUR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, KANPUR

Ref. No. D/356/AA-1/KDA/2025-26

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

#### **SELECTION OF CONSULTANT FOR DRP PREPARATION OF INTEGRATED DIVISION OFFICE FOR KANPUR DIVISION, KANPUR**

Kanpur Development Authority (KDA) invites proposals from experienced & repute Architectural agencies for selection of consultant for DRP preparation of integrated Division office for Kanpur Division, Kanpur. Details of Project, scope of work, qualification criteria and process of submission of proposals is available and can be downloaded from the http://etender.up.nic.in. The bidder shall submit bid online on e-tender portal nttp://etender.up.nic.in and the bid queries should be sent to both of the following Email IDs: kda@kdaindia.co in & kdakannur636@gmail.com

iD3. Kua@kuairiula.co.iii & kuaka	inpuroso@gmail.com.
Period of Availability	y of Tender, Date Schedule are Given Below :
Bid Upload Date	28 August, 2025
Proposal Start Date	28 August, 2025 at 12:30 hrs.
Pre-Bid Query Submission	08 September, 2025 17:00 hrs.
Pre-Bid Conference	09 September, 2025 13:00 hrs. Pre-bid Venue: Conference Hall, Kanpur Development Authority, Kanpur Online at Google Meet at following link: <a href="https://meet.google.com/uby-ukqc-qpn">https://meet.google.com/uby-ukqc-qpn</a>
Proposal end date/last submission date	20 September, 2025 15:00 hrs.
Opening of Technical Bids	20 September, 2025 17:00 hrs.
Opening of Financial Bids	To be communicated
KDA reserves the right to accept	any proposal or reject any or all the proposals without

assigning any reasons of annul the bid process without any liability whatsoever including **EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, ZONE-1** KANPUR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, KANPUR



56+ crore Jan-Dhan bank accounts opened, making the poor a part of the formal banking system

₹2.6 lakh crore deposited in Jan-Dhan accounts - the nation proudly witnessed the strength of the poor

99.9% of villages now have access to banking services - with 2 out of 3 accounts in rural and semi-urban areas; 56% accounts in the name of women

JAM (Jan-Dhan, Aadhaar, Mobile) trinity helped remove 10+ crore fake beneficiaries, saving the nation ₹4.3 lakh crore ₹45 lakh crore directly reached real beneficiaries via DBT—freeing the system

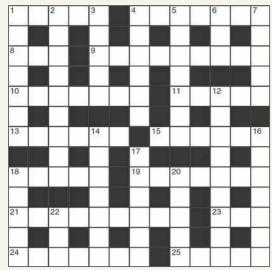
During once-in-a-century pandemic, Jan-Dhan became a safety shield, ensuring ₹31,000 crore of support reached women in need

For the first time, crores of the poor have been connected to modern banking services like Rupay debit cards, insurance, credit, and UPI

Today, No One Can Deny the Rights of the Poor, They Now Hold the Power of Jan-Dhan Account

from middlemen





1 Understood one to be in diplomacy (5) 4 Various pages lead us to a famous horse (7) 8 Desert creature (3)

9 I'm in time to get a letter of improvisation (9) **10** Bill and Cyril involved in making textiles (7) 11 Thoughtless when dizzy (5) 13 Former top tennis player

said to be better (6) 15 The price of saving derelict manors (6) 18 After six it's not in order to

**19** Failure of French umpire's tennis call (7) 21 Out in Spring? Yes (9) **23** Transport of internal combustion (3)

24 Division has key men mounted outside (7) 25 Give someone a sharp reminder?(5)

1 Upset a caterer in a domestic row(7)2 Drops of water that will harm the eyes (9)

3 Difficulty in hearing (5) 4 Father quick to get high religious office (6) **5** East European country that's

stated in US (7) 6 Fool takes a retrograde step **7** Learning duty's to be changed (5)

12 Bud's tired out having been

roused from sleep (9) 14 Show much interest then change occupation (7) 16 Painter out in sea mist (7) 17 Not in control yet I draft a new order (6) 18 Saves wrecked vessels (5)

20 He ran a novel criminal class(5) **22** Suitable material for cheap newspaper(3)

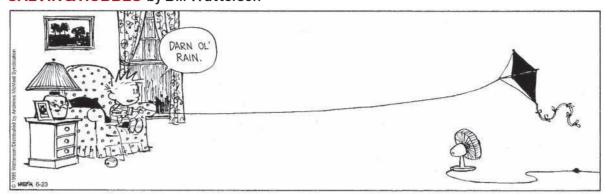
Solutions Crossword 5765 Across: 1 Deathwatch, 8 Dwelt, 9 Drainer, 10 Futures, 11 Pains, 12 Errata, 14 Pencil, 17 Eerie, 19 Version, 21 Canteen, 22 Makes, 23 Spare parts Down: 2 Elector, 3 Tutor, 4 Widest, 5 Traipse, 6 Hindi, 7 Grasslands, 8 Difference, 13 a, 15 Cricket, 16 Avenue, 18 Rings, 20 Rumb

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





#### **CALVIN & HOBBES** by Bill Watterson



#### MARVIN by Tom Armstrong







#### **JUMBLED WORDS**

Airplane travel is nature's way of making you look like your

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.

**ORAMU** 

**PSTTOY IHPPIE** 

Answer: Airplane travel is nature's way of making you look like your passport photo. -

#### Difficulty Level 2s To solve a Sudoku puzzle

every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes

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

SUDOKU

	9	4	0		5			
				8	1	5		7
		5						
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2		8	1		9	3		5
	6			4				
						6		
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			8		3	1	4	

5	3	5	8	4	9	7	2	6	1
9	1	9	4	8	6	2	5	3	7
SOLUTION SUDOKU 60	7	6	2	5	1	3	9	8	4
00	6	8	5	3	4	9	7	1	2
lls.	2	1	9	7	5	8	6	4	3
Ž	4	3	7	1	2	6	8	9	5
잂	5	7	3	9	8	4	1	2	6
ΙĠ	8	4	6	2	7	1	3	5	9
NO.	9	2	1	6	3	5	4	7	8
0,									-

#### **DAY TODAY**

BY PETER VIDAL



you'll probably need all the help you can get. You may follow your stars and build up a network of contacts for use at work as well as in your leisure life.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21) The period you are now entering

will put pressure on you to move home, in terms of a time-scale of at least six months but the point is that any premature decision will either not come to pass or be severely delayed.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21) Long-buried feelings and desires

should come to the surface. This is a positive phase, favouring all long-term adventures and far-flung possibilities. Integrity is a must. The moment your standards slip, then your plans will

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)



are not your responsibility However, if you can possibly also spread the word that you are not solely to thank for favourable moves, and that other people should humility will eventually be rewarded.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23) Please don't imagine that you have been passed by. There is enough

in today's stars to indicate that you should accept first that cooperation is vital, and second, that other people's feelings should be taken into account. In other words, selflessness wins the day!

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23) There's still no let-up at work In fact, there is every indication

that life is about to get even busier. Please don't unconsciously, you are inviting fresh responsibilities and letting yourself in for extra hard work.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23) Your romantic and social prospects are not perfect,

per cent there. Do give all personal contacts, from the most intimate liaisons to casual meetings, your fullest attention. The last thing you want to do now is make a slip that will upset someone who matters to you.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)



intense fashion. If I were you, I'd wait until the dust settles before acting on current feelings. Perhaps, though, you can press on with unimportant plans.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22) If you're holding

discussions. conducting a debate or attending an interview, well done: you are totally in tune with your stars. In any case, please do make a point of sharing all your desires, hopes and plans with everyone who is concerned, however remotely

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

You're in with a better than average chance of a windfall. The important

point is not to get bound up with the details of income and expenditure, but to resolve to deal with money better. A positive attitude now equals prosperity in

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19) Take control. At

work, at home, in love and in business. this is the day to make a fresh start. Material spring-cleaning should be comprehensive, thorough and all-embracing. Leave no stone unturned.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20) You may try to

make things easier for yourself by being as flexible as you can over long-term emotional engagements. Your standards are high

and getting higher, so you must know what you want of yourself before demanding it of others. That's only fair.

#### **POULTRY** Pimpri ChinchwadBroiler

Traders Association Rate On 28.08.2025 For Live Big Birds Rs. 108 Live Small Birds Rs.124 Gawran Rs.195, AL-Tagdeer Food's (Sira) Shaikh)9860025625 0090378076-1

28.08.2025 For Live Big Birds Rs. 107 Live Tandoori Birds Rs.124 Momin Poultry (Asif Momin) 26336349/ 7798626754 0090379203-1

Pune Broilers Traders'

Association Rate On

Vencobb today's ex-farm

gate big birds price at Pune Rs.66 per kg. Contact (9522)22872417, Pune (9520) 24269414. 0090374220-1

NECC suggested farm gate price for 100 eggs on 28.08.2025 in Pune without tray is Rs.555 (Five Hundred Fifty Five 24270724, 9970662588, Dealer: 9130089779,

#### OTHER **CLASSIFIEDS**

I Have Changed My Old Name Pushpatai Maruti Yadav to New Name Pushpa Mohan Gaikwad Gazette No. P-2546873 Dated-07/08/2025.

0090384284-1

0090384278-3

I, Shakuntla, wife of No. 15151949K, Rank-Ex Sepoy, Name- Gavade Ramchandra Shashikant, Resident at Vill-Holkar Chowk. Chipari, Tal-Shirol, Dist-Kolhapur (MH) 416101, have changed my name from Shakuntla to Shakuntala Ramchandra Gavade as per affidavit no 57877/2025 at Kolhapur.

Jagatap, spouse of No. JC-818048X Ex Sub Jagtap Maruti Joti, Banewadi, Teh-Kavathe ahakal. Dist- Sangli. have changed my name from Savitri Devi to Savitridevi Maruti Jagatap vide affidavit no. 507 dt. 18/08/2025 0090384278-1

I. Savitridevi Maruti

I, Rekha, Spouse of No

14904336K Rank: Ex-Nk (TS) Rekha Balwant Raut, V/PO-Sartale, Tal. Jawali, Dist. Satara-415513 have changed my name from Rekha to Rekha Balwant Raut Affidavit no: 42178 Date 26/08/2025

0090384285-3

I, Phulla Bai Spouse of 13828499L, Ex-Hav, Late Sopan Madne, Vill-Garaawadi PO- Diskal, Tal Khatav Dist Satara-415504 have changed my name from Phulla Bai to Phulla Bai Sopan Madne vide Affidavit no:42174 Date: 26/08/2025

0090384285-7

I. Mule Parbati Bai Mother of No-7431414H Hav Mule Ashok Devidas serving at 1 FID/3 Corps Int Bn declare that I have change my name from Mule Parbati Bai to Parvati Devidas Mule Vide Affidavit 248/2025 of 25/08/2025

0040807630-1

I, Mukta Bai Spouse of JC136225H, Ex-Sub, Late Bhausaheb Mohite, V/PO- Mol, Tal Khatav Dist Satara-415504 have changed my name from Mukta Bai to Muktabai Bhausaheb Mohite vide Affidavit no: 42176 Date: 26/08/2025. 0090384285-5

I am changing my old name Manesh Saini to my new name Manesh Kumar Saini for passport

0090384276-1

I, Kamal, Spouse of No. 2768384X Rank: Ex-Nk, Dilip Nana Salunkhe, V/PO- Kival, Tal, Karad. Dist. Satara-415106 have changed my name from Kamal to Kamal Dilip Salunkhe Affidavit no: 1394/2025 Date: 26/08/2025

0090384285-2

I AM CHANGING MY NAME FROM APRAJITA KUMARI TO APRAZITA KUMARI FOR PASSPORT ISSUANCE AFFIDAVIT NO - B-2695/2025

0090384243-1

L Appaso father of No-15672578H RHM Mane Shrikant Appaso serving at Southern Command Signal Regt declare that I have change my name from Appaso to Appaso Maruti Mane Vide Affidavit 246/2025 of 25/08/2025

0040807630-3

I am changing my old name Meenakshi Saini to my new name Hem Lata for passport issuance

0090384276-2

My name previously Anant kumar Deenanath Dubey, is now changed as Anant Deenanath Dubey. 0090384273-1

I, Vaishali, wife of No. 15156414A, Rank- Ex Hav, Name-Gawade Sagar

Biru, Resident at Vill-Bhairavwadi, PO-Kurundwad, Tal- Shirol, Dist-Kolhapur (MH) 416106, have changed my name from Vaishali to Vaishali Sagar Gawade as per affidavit no. 57876/2025 at Kolhapur. 0090384278-2

753579Y Ex-Nb Sub Dnyanaba have changed my name from Subhadra to Subhadra Jalinder Zalake vide Affidavit 249/2025 of 25/08/2025 0040807855-1

I Subhadra Wife of JC-

Command Signal Regt declared that my son have changed his name from Sravan Kumar to Mane Shravan Kumar Shrikant vide Affidavit 245/2025 of 25/08/2025 0040807630-4 I Varsha, wife of No. I. Sulochana Spouse of 10120379H, Rank-Hav, Name-Dorkar Bandu

Appa, Resident at Vill &

PO-Miraj Tal -Miraj, Dist

Sangli (MH) 416410, have

changed my name from

Varsha to Varsha Bandu

Dorkar & my correct DOB

July 1980 as per Affidavit

No. 1470/2025 at Sangli.

Anant kumar Deenanath

0090384273-1

Dubev. is now changed

My name previously

as Anant Deenanath

I Sunita, wife of No.

Name-Karande

Sunita to Sunita

per Affidavit No.

1472./2025 at Sangli

I No.10120379H, Rank -

Bandu Appa, Resident at

Miraj, Dist -Sangli (MH)

my Army record my son

correct name is Pranav

Minakshi to Minakshi

Bandu Dorkar as as per

Affidavit no. 1471/2025

ame is wrongly written

416410 Declare that in

Hav, Name-Dorkar

Vill & PO-Mirai Tal-

as Pranav whereas

Bandu Dorkar and

daughter name

753579Y Ex-Nb Sub

to Subhadra Jalinder

249/2025 of 25/08/2025

0040807855-1

Zalake Jalindar

at Sangli

JC272391W, Rank-Sub,

Duryodhan Bhagwan,

Kagani Tal -Atpadi, Dist

Sangli (MH) 415306, have

changed my name from

Duryodhan Karande as

0090384283-3

Resident at Vill & PO-

Dubey

0090384283-2

1552501N, Ex-Hav, Dattatrava Ramchandra Jadhav, V/PO-Ner, Tal Khatav Dist Satara-415502 have change name from Sulochana to Sulochana Dattatray Jadhav vide Affidavit no: 42175 Date: 26/08/2025.

I No-15672578H RHM

Mane Shrikant Appaso

serving at Southern

0090384285-6 I Laxmi, wife of No

2777600Y, Rank- Hav. Name-Nalavade Bhagayat Dhondiram. Resident at Vill & PO-Borgaon Tal-Kavathemahankal, Dist-Sangli (MH) 416419, have changed my name from Bhagawat Nalavade as per Affidavit No.

1466/2025 at Sangli 0090384283-1

I Kamal Wife of No-1558208M Ex-Hav Indore Savakar Bandu have changed my name from Kamal to Kamal Savkar Indore and DOB 04/07/1968 to 04/07/1967 vide Affidavit 250/2025 of 25/08/2025

0040807852-

I Janabai, wife of No.15110182N, Rank Hav, Name-Bhosure Chandrakant Namdev, Resident at Vill-papde wasti & PO-Fursungi Tal Haveli, Dist-Pune (MH) 412308, have changed my name from Janabai to Janabai Chandrakant Bhosure as per Affidavit No. 2673/2025 at Pune.

0090384283-5 0090384283-4 I No-7431414H Hay Mule

Ashok Devidas serving I. No. 15151949K, Rank- Ex at 1 FID/3 Corps Int Bn Sepoy, Name-Gavade declared that my son Ramchandra have changed his name Shashikant, Resident at from Mule Devrai Ashok Vill- Holkar Chowk, Chipari, Tal- Shirol, Distto Devraj Ashok Mule vide Affidavit 247/2025 Kolhapur (MH) 416101, of 25/08/2025 have changed my sons names from Lucky to 0040807630-2

Lucky Ramchandra Gavade & Rohit to Rohit I Subhadra Wife of JC-Ramchandra Gavade as per affidavit no. 57878/2025 at Kolhapur. Dnyanaba have changed my name from Subhadra

I. Vimal, Spouse of 10435771Y, Ex-Hony Nb-Sub, Govind Mohite, Vill-Phadtarwadi PO-Ner, Tal Khatav Dist Satara-415502 have changed my name from Vimal to Vimal Govind Mohite vide Affidavit no:421787 Date: 26/08/2025.

 $\infty$ 

0090384285-4

I. Jagubai, Spouse of No. 2756459X Rank: Ex-Nk, Shankar Bhosle, V/PO-Sap, Tal. Koregaon, Dist. Satara-415511 have changed my name from Jagubai to Jagubai Shankar Bhosale Affidavit no: 1391/2025 Date: 26/08/2025 0090384285-1

I am changing my old name Sharaf Ali to my new name as Sharafali Fidahusain Mushki for my passport issuance. 0090384281-1

### **THANKSGIVING**



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throughout the world Sacred Heart of Jesus. of Miracles pray for us. nine time for nine days

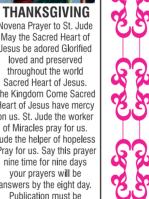
Jesus be adored Glorified loved and preserved The Kingdom Come Sacred Heart of Jesus have mercy on us. St. Jude the worker Jude the helper of hopeless Pray for us. Say this prayer your prayers will be



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# EXPRESS NETWORK

#### **BRIEFLY**

#### **RAJASTHAN**

#### **HC dismisses** Asaram's plea for extending interim bail

Jodhpur: The Jodhpur bench of Rajasthan High Court on Wednesday dismissed self-styled godman Asaram's plea for an extension of interim bail in a 2013 rape case, ruling out any critical health situation. His bail term will end on August 29, after which he is required to surrender in Jodhpur Central Jail. The court relied on the medical report of Ahmedabad Civil Hospital doctors, indicating Asaram's "illness was not critical enough" to merit further extension of his bail. However, it permitted him to be taken to AIIMS Jodhpur for examination, if required.

#### **GUJARAT**

#### Three killed in two accidents during Ganesh processions

Surat: A day before Ganesh Chaturthi, three men escorting Ganesh idols in Gujarat's Navsari district were killed in two separate incidents on Tuesday, the police said. In the first incident, two men were electrocuted and five others suffered severe burns on Tuesday evening after their handcart, made of iron and wood, struck a high-tension overhead electric line while the group was escorting a 13.6-ft Ganesh idol. In the second case, 20year-old Nayan Halpati. seated in a 'DI-loaded tempo' that was accompanying a vehicle carrying a Ganesh idol, died after he lost balance and fell on the road in

#### **KERALA**

#### **ADGP Mahipal** Yadav dies 3 days before retirement

Thiruvananthapuram: A 1997 Kerala-cadre IPS officer, ADGP Mahipal died Wednesday – just days before he was scheduled to retire from service on August 30, and hours before the Kerala Police was slated to accord an official farewell function for him online. Yadav died in Jaipur, Rajasthan, where his family had taken him for treatment after his health deteriorated recently. A recipient of the President's Police Medal for meritorious service, Yadav served as the Kerala excise commissioner and was recently appointed ADGP (Crimes), before going on medical leave. He worked with BSF and CBI on dep-

## **Govt clears Justices Pancholi,** Aradhe as apex court judges

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 27

TWO DAYS after the Supreme Court Collegium recommended their names, the Centre on Wednesday appointed Justice Alok Aradhe, Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court, and Justice Vipul Pancholi, Chief Justice of the Patna High Court, as top court judges.

Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal made the announcement on X. This comes amid the dissent by Justice B V Nagarathna, one of the five members of the Collegium, over the recommendation for Justice Pancholi. Besides Chief Justice of India Bhushan R Gavai, the other members of the Collegium are Justices Surva Kant, Vikram Nath and JK Maheshwari.

Sources in the Supreme Court told *The Indian Express* that the Collegium nod for Justice Pancholi came after two consultee SC judges — Justices K Vinod Chandran and Ahsanuddin Amanullah – gave "positive remarks" on his proposed elevation.

Whenever a High Court judge is proposed to be elevated to the SC, the Collegium calls for opinion from SC judges who were formerly part of the HC from which the elevation is proposed.

In her dissent note, Justice Nagarathna is learnt to have flagged the circumstances behind Justice Pancholi's transfer from the Gujarat High Court to the Patna High Court in 2023. She also cited his overall seniority and imbalance in regional representation.

Justice Pancholi currently ranks 57th in the all-India list of seniority of High Court judges. With his appointment, the Gujarat HC will have three of its judges in the top court. He will likely become the CJI on October 3, 2031, succeeding Justice Joymalya Bagchi, for an 18-month term that will end on May 27, 2033.

Justice Pancholi, who had been

#### Kerala HC gives anticipatory bail to rapper Vedan in rape case

**SHAJU PHILIP** AUGUST 27

THE KERALA High Court Wednesday granted anticipatory bail to rapper Vedan in connection with a woman doctor's allegations that the artiste had repeatedly subjected her to sexual exploitation on the promise of marriage.

The allegations against Vedan alias Hiran Das Murali pertain to the period between 2021 and 2023. In her complaint, the woman claimed the trauma had left her depressed, leading to delay in filing the complaint. Last week, the court had allowed the complainant to implead in the anticipatory bail plea of Vedan who has been facing a lookout notice issued by the police.

In the meantime, Vedan also faced another rape case.

A Dalit voice in the Kerala rap scene. Vedan hit the news in April this year after police arrested him in drug cases. The recent rape allegations have led to the cancellation of his concerts.

#### **ELEVATION DISSENT** SHOULD BE MADE **PUBLIC: JUSTICE OKA**



SC judge **Justice** 

New Delhi: Former Supreme Court judge Justice Abhay S Oka Wednesday said the dissent in the Collegium on the elevation of Justice Vipul Pancholi must be made public. "This is a question of great deal of concern...We have to define what is transparency. You are right when you say that one judge has dissented we must know what is that dissent, there is nothing wrong in that. You will be iustified in criticising why the dissent is not on the public domain," he said. **ENS** 

a judge of the Gujarat High Court since 2016, was transferred to Patna High Court in 2023 where he became Chief Justice in July. Sources aware of the developments then said the transfer came after a complaint of judicial impropriety against him. They said an inquiry cleared him of wrongdoing.

The then SC Collegium's decision to transfer him to Patna was opposed by the Gujarat High Court lawyers at that time. In a representation to the then CJI, the Gujarat High Court Advocates' Association said "the experience of members of GH-CAA who have appeared before him is almost uniform and without any complaint...'

Sources said the government also cleared the names of 14 advocates who were recommended for appointment as judges of the Bombay High Court on August 19. FULL REPORTON www.indianexpress.com

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** 

KERALA POLICE on Wednesday

registered an FIR against Palakkad

was suspended from the Congress

on August 25 after he stepped

down as the Youth Congress's

Kerala state president, in the wake

of allegations of misconduct from

come forward with a formal

Though no woman has so far

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,

#### **NEXT IN LINE FOR CJI POST**

Justice Pancholi is set to become CJI in October 2031



**JUSTICE SURYA KANT** PARENT HC: Punjab & Haryana HC CJI ON: November 24, 2025 RETIREMENT: February 9, 2027

**JUSTICE VIKRAM NATH** PARENT HC: Allahabad HC **CJI ON:** February 10, 2027 RETIREMENT: September 23, 2027



**IUSTICE B V NAGARATHNA** PARENT HC: Karnataka HC CJI ON: September 24, 2027 RETIREMENT: October 29, 2027

**JUSTICE PS NARASIMHA Elevated from Bar** CJI ON: October 30, 2027 RETIREMENT: May 2, 2028



**JUSTICE J B PARDIWALA** PARENT HC: Gujarat HC **CJI ON:** May 3, 2028 RETIREMENT: August 11, 2030

**JUSTICE K V VISWANATHAN Elevated from Bar CJI ON:** August 12, 2030 RETIREMENT: May 25, 2031



**JUSTICE JOYMALYA BAGCHI** PARENT HC: Calcutta HC CJI ON: May 26, 2031 RETIREMENT: October 2, 2031

**JUSTICE VIPUL M PANCHOLI** PARENT HC: Gujarat HC CJI ON: October 3, 2031 RETIREMENT: May 27, 2033

**MLA was** 

over

suspended

**by Congress** 

misconduct

Kerala MLA booked for 'stalking'

complaint against Rahul, the po-

lice acted upon complaints the

state police chief had received

and registered an FIR under sec-

tion 78(2) of BNS for offences of

stalking, and section 120(0) of

Kerala Police Act, which deals

with repeatedly causing annoy-



ance to a person through any

from the state police said, "The

complaints were examined and

found that they were included in

the category of cognizable offence.

direction of the state police chief

(Ravada Chandrasekhar). Crime

Branch Deputy SPPC Binu Kumar

Pinarayi Vijayan said legal action

will be taken and assured com-

Earlier in the day, Kerala CM

will probe into the case."

plainants of protection.

An official communication

means of communication.

#### GUWAHATI, AUGUST 27 CHECKS BY the Special Branch of the Assam Police to examine "coercion" or illegality, source of funds for the purchase, potential effect on "social cohesion", and "national security" implications:

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** 

these are part of a Standard

Operating Protocol (SOP) ap-

proved by the Assam Cabinet

Wednesday to regulate the

transfer of land between mem-

Biswa Sarma said this will also

Chief Minister Himanta

Last year, Sarma had said that

consent necessary for land sale

permissions for land transac-

Finance Minister Ajanta Neog's

Budget speech this year as well

when she cited "sensitivities in-

volved in land transfer matters

in the state" and said that "all

bers of different religions.

land in the state.

**Chief Minister Himanta** Biswa Sarma in Guwahati on Wednesday. PTI

Assam CM: Police to probe

inter-religion land transfers

cases of inter-religion land transfers between individuals will be given effect only after due approval of the state government".

apply to NGOs based outside The SOP requires that when a proposal for a land transfer is Assam which are seeking to buy received by a Sub-Divisional Magistrate, in the case of a land the state could make the CM's transfer proposal between people of two different religions, they will forward it to the DC's office after carrying out the usual tions between Hindus and Muslims. This featured in checks and verification.

Sarma told reporters after the Cabinet meeting: "The DC will immediately send it to the Revenue Department of the state government. There will be

Department, After the Revenue Department gets the proposal, the nodal officer will send it to the Special Branch of the Assam Police. The Special Branch will examine four things. First, whether there is any element of fraud, coercion or illegal transfer. Second, if someone wants to buy the land, what is the source of money? Whether it is white or black money. Third, what kind of effect will this have on the social cohesion of the place. Fourth, they will also examine (the land transaction) from the (point of) view of national security."

According to the SOP, the proposal will be sent to the state government with the Special Branch's inputs, which will send it back to the DC for a final decision.

"This will also be applicable to NGOs from outside the state. In the last few days, we are seeing that from places like Kerala, lots of NGOs are buying land in Assam and they are holding events which in the future could be detrimental to national security," the CM said.

### Residents 'evict themselves' from Assam colony: 'Best to go quietly'

**SUKRITA BARUAH GUWAHATI, AUGUST 27** 

ON 27 August, over 171 concrete shops and homes on government land in the busy junction of Jengoni Tiniali in Assam's Nagaon district had been earmarked for eviction. A night before, however, authorities learnt the area had been cleared - by the residents themselves.

The residents of this stretch of 50-odd bighas received eviction notices in the last week of July. According to officials, around 1,000 Bengali-origin Muslim people were affected.

After receiving the notices, some of the residents met Commissioner Devashish Sharma seeking a month's time, which was granted. After the month was up, Sharma and other officials visited the site on August 22.

Using a loudspeaker, he addressed the crowd, saying: "When we say eviction, we have the image of someone crying in their house, a ICB being brought. houses being broken. We are also situation is created when a notice is given, and people do not leave." The residents were being

given three more days, he said. Wahidur Rehman, a teacher

whose family also had a house in the area, was one of the people who had met the district admin-



A still from a video shared by the Assam CM shows houses being razed in Nagaon district's Jengoni Tiniali. X/@himantabiswa

istration last month.

"We were given additional time for a month. After the DC came, we understood that it's best to go quietly. If we resist, it could become a clash and we will be the ones to suffer. After discussion, everyone decided that it's best to empty the area ourselves because we cannot fight the government," he said.

Assam's evictions have turned violent on multiple occasions. While many families have cleared out before earlier evictions as well, the people at Jengoni Tiniali

"One of the boys was able to arrange a JCB because he works as an operator. People thought that rather than have the administration break down the buildings badly, we can break them ourselves so that we can at least recover and take the building

material since it is expensive," Rehman said.

Seeing them take matters into their own hands, the district administration supplied them with three more excavators. By 10 pm on Tuesday, all buildings in the area were razed and those

into relatives' homes. DC Sharma said the way the eviction took place was because the administration decided to "try something new". "When they asked for more time, we

with homes in the area moved

gave it to them..." he said. fraction of 19,000 bighas of land earmarked for eviction in Nagaon district alone. "It worked this time, it may not work every time. If the people do not cooperate in some other place, we

will have no choice but to go ahead as usual," said Sharma.

### Gadchiroli: Four Maoists HC bail for Bangladeshi woman: 'Right to liberty' killed after 8-hr shootout

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** NAGPUR, AUGUST 27

FOUR MAOISTS, including three women, were killed Wednesday after an eight-hour-long encounter with security forces in the Koparshi forest area along the Gadchiroli-Naravanpur border.

According to the police, they received intelligence inputs about the presence of Gatta Dalam, Company No. 10, and other Maoist formations of the Gadchiroli Division in the forest on August 25.

A search operation was launched in the forest by a team of police and paramilitary forces. The team came under fire from Maoists, prompting retaliatory action. The gun battle, which stretched for nearly eight hours. resulted in the death of four Maoists, police said. One SLR rifle, two INSAS rifles and a .303 ri**MANRAJ GREWAL SHARMA** CHANDIGARH, AUGUST 27

THE PUNJAB and Haryana High Court Wednesday granted bail to a Bangladeshi woman accused of forgery, cheating, and staying in India without valid documents, holding that the right to personal liberty under Article 21 applies to foreigners too. The court held that prolonged pre-trial custody, especially for an undocumented migrant unable to arrange sureties, would amount to "irreversible injustice.

Farida Praveen, who also went by the name Shikha Gaur, has been in custody since February 5 in a case registered in Faridabad under Sections 420, 467, 468, and 471 of the IPC and Section 14-A of the Foreigners Act.

The FIR is based on a complaint by one Santosh Sharma, who accused Praveen of inducing her son into a relationship and taking cash and gold jewelery. In the court, the counsel for Haryana

is a foreign national "and residing in India without legal documents... she has prepared her Aadhaar, voter ID, and PAN on the basis of fake documents and changed her name to Shikha Gaur". The court was informed that

government contended that she

during police interrogation she confessed to have illegally entered India and that photocopies of her Aadhaar, passport, and Bangladeshi ID were recovered. A chargesheet was filed in April and the case is now before the Chief Judicial Magistrate, Faridabad.

Granting bail, the court noted that the petitioner had spent over six months in custody with no criminal history. "Given the penal provisions invoked vis-àvis pre-trial custody, coupled with the prima facie analysis of the nature of allegations, and the other factors peculiar to this case, there would be no justification for further pre-trial incarceration." the court observed.

Citing Supreme Court rulings, the court reiterated that foreigners are entitled to protection

### As India explores exotic foods, Blueberry having a field day — Kullu to Ooty

**ANJU AGNIHOTRI CHABA** JALANDHAR, AUGUST 27

WHAT DOES a former engineer who lived in Delhi before the pandemic, a garments industrialist from Ludhiana and an Ooty-based seasoned floriculturist have in common? All three are among the growing crop of progressive farmers cultivating blueberries, the blackish-blue superfood that has caught the fancy of Indian agriculturists over the past few years.

Before he moved home to Dharabag in Himachal Pradesh's Kullu in 2020, Vishal Thakur, 34, had been working as an engineer for seven years in Delhi. Instead of sticking to cultivating persimmons, a tomato-like fruit grown widely in China and Japan, he decided to grow "something else".

"I thought about growing custard apple, dragon fruit, but both were incompatible with Kullu's climate. Then, I heard about someone growing blueberries in Kullu. In 2022, I started experimenting with 250 saplings of a dozen varieties," he said over telephone.

Like him, farmers across Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka have been experimenting with blueberries since the past few years. Before blueberries, they had already experimented with exotic high-value crops like avocados, strawberries, kiwis, dragon

Experts said the shift from traditional farming practices was driven by rising urban demand for exotic produce, better margins than cereals, and lower water and



fruit, persimmons and pecan nuts.

fertilizer requirements compared 2,500-3,000 tonnes — farmers to paddy. "Growing blueberries said blueberries are commanding can be remarkably rewarding. a wholesale price of Rs 1,200-They can generate an estimated 2,000 per kg at present. India curprofit of Rs 64 lakh per acre by year rently imports over 20,000 tonnes five of plantation," said a farmer. of blueberries annually in fresh Though domestic production and processed forms, mainly from is still negligible – just around Chile, Peru and Panama.





Blueberry varieties grown at the PAU farm (left)

Consumed fresh, frozen or in processed forms like jams, juices, liqueurs, baked goods and even pharmaceuticals, a report in Blueberries Consulting said the global production of blueberries may nearly double from the current 1.86 million metric tonnes in five years. Most farmers The Indian Express spoke to said they had been experimenting with varieties (including Biloxi, Emerald, Misty, Legacy and Robin Blue) that require different chill hours (cumulative cold hours a plant needs during dormancy to prepare for healthy fruit growth), cultivation spots (growbags, raised beds or greenhouses) and climates.

Thakur said his first harvest was modest — "100-200 grams per plant" - which he sold to online vendors for nearly Rs 30,000.

"By 2024, my yield rose to nearly 2 kg per plant. I have planted 4,000 saplings on 2.5 acres at another local site. By year four, each plant should yield nearly 5 kg," he said. Since blueberries are grown from saplings, Thakur has set up a governmentlicensed nursery to import varieties from the US, South Africa, the Netherlands, Ukraine and Italy that he sells for Rs 400-850 each. Thakur, whose pioneering ef-

forts earned him an award from Kullu's Dr Y S Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry, added, "I suggest planting at least three varieties for cross-pollination. Blueberry farming is costly to start (nearly Rs 1,500 per plant with infrastructure), but it can transform high-value farming in the hills... Blueberries love acidic conditions. The soil pH should be between 4.5 and 5.5

Not just individuals, even corporations have jumped on the farming bandwagon.

Neva Plantations, owned by Ludhiana-based Neva Garments, has been growing blueberries at Gopalpur in Palampur since 2021. Owner Nirmal Jain said a trip to Canada a decade ago "inspired" him to grow blueberries. "In 2021, a year after we imported 1.500 saplings from the US and Holland. we planted them under a halfacre polyhouse (a type of greenhouse) at the farm. Our average yield this year was 3 kg per plant. We sold 4,500 kg of blueberries for Rs 1,200-1,600 per kg," he says.

The company, which runs one of India's few licensed tissue culture laboratories for blueberry propagation, has sold over 50,000 saplings over the past two years.

Marketing head Parvinder Guleria said, "Farmers receive technical support and 50% subsidy on plants (which cost around ₹300 per sapling after the subsidy)." Two years ago, they supplied 200 trial plants to PAU, **FULL REPORT ON** Ludhiana.

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Pune

# THE EDITORIAL PAGE

#### WORDLY WISE

YOU CANNOT CONTROL YOUR OWN POPULATION BY FORCE, BUT IT CAN BE DISTRACTED BY CONSUMPTION — NOAM CHOMSKY

### The Indian **EXPRESS**

SFOUNDED BY 

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

### THE BIG PICTURE

Even as India continues trade talks with the US, it must reiterate red lines, push ahead on domestic reforms

HE US ADMINISTRATION has pressed ahead with its decision to impose a 25 per cent penalty on Indian imports effective from August 27. This takes total tariffs to 50 per cent, effectively pricing out Indian goods in the US market. The sheer double standard in imposing this penalty needs to be called out. Such action has not been taken against other countries that import from Russia. For instance, according to the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air, in June, China accounted for 47 per cent of Russia's crude exports, with the EU and Turkey importing 6 per cent each. In the case of Russia's LNG exports, the EU was the largest buyer at 51 per cent, followed by China (21 per cent) and Japan (18 per cent). Tariffs, however, do not seem to be the only issue. There has also been talk about the H-1B visa. For instance, Howard Lutnick, the US Secretary of Commerce, has called the visa system "a scam", and spoken about changing it. By all accounts, relations with the US could remain mired in uncertainty.

The 50 per cent tariff rate now makes trade with the US infeasible in most segments. Several sectors ranging from shrimps to diamonds, gold and jewellery, textiles, leather and footwear are expected to be badly hit, though some like pharmaceuticals, electronics and petroleum products have been exempted. The Global Trade Research Initiative, a think tank, estimates that two-thirds of exports to the US will be hit by the 50 per cent tariff. There will be economic pain and companies will face disruptions. For instance, textiles and apparel manufacturers in Tirupur, Noida and Surat have reportedly stopped production. Labour will be impacted and diversifying away from the US and finding new markets will not be easy. There may also be indirect impacts. For instance, companies, both domestic and foreign, may be less inclined to launch fresh investments in the country amid uncertainty.

The Indian government has stood firm in the face of mounting pressure. It should continue to stick to its red lines in trade agreements, even as it must continue its talks with the US. On Monday, the two countries spoke about energy security and defence cooperation under the India-US 2+2 Intersessional Dialogue. But who India trades with — Russian oil deliveries for the coming months would give a better picture of shifts, if any, in sourcing of crude — should be determined by the country's own cost-benefit analysis, not by US President Donald Trump's pressure. And while the government must continue to pursue trade deals with other countries, it must also aggressively push forward the domestic reform agenda. As per a report in this paper, two new informal groups of ministers (GoMs) have been set up to "prescribe reforms in the economic and social sectors". The government must move ahead on this with urgency.

### MAPPING THE MARGINS

Tribal ministry does well to propose that Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups be counted separately

N JULY 17, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) wrote to the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India (RGI), requesting it to consider including Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) — the most marginalised tribal groups in the country — in the upcoming Census exercise. As reported in this newspaper, the MoTA has asked RGI to separately count the number of PVTG households and individuals, along with their distinctive cultural, demographic and socio-economic features. If this is done, it will be the first time that the PVTGs are enumerated separately since the category was introduced. Earlier, in the 2011 Census, 40 PVT groups were counted within the broader category of Scheduled Tribes (STs). Currently, there are 75 PVT groups across 18 states and one Union Territory. The MoTA's initiative to count the most marginalised groups separately to facilitate targeted policies of uplift and redress is a welcome move.

The PVTGs entered political discourse for the first time after the Dhebar Commission was constituted to investigate and report "on the problems of the Scheduled Tribes"; the committee submitted its report in 1961. It identified the inequalities within the tribal groups. This led to the creation of the category Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) in 1973, based on four criteria — pre-agricultural level of technology, low level of literacy, economic backwardness and a declining or stagnant population. In 2006, the name was changed to PVTG, as the word "primitive" was seen as problematic. The female literacy rate among the PVTGs is the lowest in India. A recent study that surveyed research work on 13 PVT groups in Odisha between 2000 to 2023, published in the *Journal of Health*, *Population and Nutrition* (2024), highlighted their precarious health indices. In 2023, the Centre launched the Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM JANMAN) to provide basic facilities to PVTGs. For the successful implementation of any developmental scheme, sociological mapping is necessary, and the proposed inclusion of PVTGs as a separate category in the Census would help serve this purpose.

Alongside, the government could consider rethinking the definition of PVTG ahead of the enumeration exercise. The existing criteria are decades old and risk excluding some communities, as ground realities have changed due to the intervention of state and non-state actors. For example, the use of "pre-agricultural level technology" — modernisation of technology has equipped many marginalised communities to use "developed" tools. A careful step towards not only identifying but also addressing PVTGs is necessary to facilitate social inclusion, instead of assimilation.

### STARBUCKS-ISH

In Pyongyang, tourists are treated to consumerism with communist characteristics

VEN IN NORTH Korea, the idea of a good life looks something like a Starbucks. And Uggs. And onion rings and "lego sets" that are inspired by similar products — down to their packaging — found in the vigorously capitalist societies beyond the borders of the self-identified socialist utopia. If "the tendency to swallow things of others undigested or imitate them mechanically" was anathema to "Eternal President" Kim Il Sung, under his grandson Kim Jong Un the infamously hermetic nation appears to have decisively swerved on to the path of conspicuous consumerism.

Recent pictures obtained by *The New York Times* from foreign visitors to North Korea show a country that appears to bear a striking similarity to the rest of the world. They show a brightly coloured water park, coffee shops that mimic the interiors and products of South Korean and American cafes, and a home decor store bearing a strong resemblance — down to the products — to the Swedish furniture giant Ikea. This is a change that has been in the making for a while, a strategy that seems designed to distract from the chronic deprivations that continue to make life miserable for the vast majority of North Koreans; as per long-established protocol, none of the visitors was allowed to venture beyond a carefully curated list of glitzy venues designed to impress.

Meanwhile, across the DMZ, an actual Starbucks that opened late last year claims to offer a view of the real North Korea. As long as they are equipped with a pair of binoculars, visitors to the Aegibong Peace Ecopark in South Korea's Gimpo city can peer at their northern neighbours going about their lives — a mere glimpse maybe, but one that could offer a fuller picture than the manicured images of Pyongyang that are allowed to tourists.

# Countering the tariff

US action violates its commitments under WTO. India must diversify its export basket and destinations

JAYANT DASGUPTA

THE US HAS imposed "secondary tariffs" of 25 per cent on Indian products (barring a few exceptions) with effect from August 27. This is in addition to the "reciprocal tariff" of 25 per cent imposed from August 7. The Trump orders exclude pharmaceuticals, semiconductors and mobile phones, lumber and some chemicals from their purview for the time being.

Following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's White House meeting with President Donald Trump on February 13, an ambitious plan to elevate bilateral goods trade to \$500 billion by 2030 was announced. Negotiations for a two-tranche bilateral trade agreement to give concrete shape to the target were to commence immediately. As a show of its earnestness, India almost immediately educed its tariffs on bourbon, high-end motorcycles and electric vehicles. It also withdrew the equalisation levy for offshore entities, which had been objected to by successive US administrations.

From Trump's press statements, it appears that India offered zero or near-zero duty tariffs on a wide range of goods, which included not only almost all industrial products but some agricultural products as well. It needs to be borne in mind that in global trade, the shares of industrial products vis-à-vis agricultural products are roughly 90:10. Thus, by all accounts, India offered a very attractive deal to the US.

As far as its "red lines" are concerned, Delhi made it clear from the start that it would not be able to negotiate on the access to genetically modified food (GMO), soya, maize and some other cereals and dairy products, because of its serious concerns relating to its vast numbers of small and marginal agriculturists and dairy farmers, their livelihoods and food security.

A few other points have a bearing on this subject. First, the US's focus has moved on from GMOs and other agricultural products to the purchase of Russian oil. It has not imposed tariffs on the EU and China, the two largest buyers of energy from Russia. Even if India had stopped the purchase of Russian oil, the goalposts could have easily shifted to stopping purchases of Russian defence equipment, walking out of BRICS and not trading in the currencies of its other bilateral partners.

Second, India is reported to have offered to

lateral trade deficit, which was a major Trump concern. Third, in a bilateral trade agreement, there has to be mutual benefit, and India is understood to have sought a reduction of US tariffs on certain products of its interest. Fourth, other potential FTA partners like the EU would also have sought similar concessions. Thus, India could not have gone overboard in its offers without factoring in medium-to-long-term consequences.

It has been estimated that 55 per cent of

buy more energy from the US to reduce the bi-

It has been estimated that 55 per cent of the \$89-billion goods exports to the US will be hit by the tariffs. India's major exports to the US comprise pharmaceuticals, mobile phones, electronic items, other engineering goods, gems and jewellery and textiles and clothing. Barring pharmaceuticals and mobile phones, the other industries, especially the labour-intensive ones, are going to be badly affected. Since our competitors from South and Southeast Asia enjoy substantially lower tariffs, most of our low-to-medium-valued orders are likely to be diverted to them. Also, because of the 90-day extension granted to China on August 12 and the 30 per cent tariff rate, it is likely to benefit from the situation.

India's major imports from the US are mineral fuel and mineral oil, uncut and unpolished diamonds, capital goods and machinery, organic chemicals and plastics, edible fruits and nuts. Most of these products are used as raw materials or intermediate products. Retaliating against the US by raising tariffs will only hurt our own domestic and export markets. Also, tariff retaliation can result in cross-sectoral retaliation in services, which needs to be avoided.

The way other major countries, barring China, have all succumbed to US pressure and agreed to face tariffs of 10 per cent (only the UK) or more, the chances of India getting a reprieve in the short term appear dim. What could, however, happen is that inflationary pressures, job losses and a pushback from Trump's base in the run-up to the mid-term elections in November 2026 result in a tempering of his actions. The other possibility is that the tariffs could be declared beyond the authority of the US President by the judiciary, which could take the matter to the US Supreme Court. Also, even if the administration loses the case in the Supreme Court, it

might be tempted to use other pieces of legislation to achieve the same ends.

The WTO has a two-stage dispute settlement system, with the second stage appeal being decided by three members of a sevenmember permanent body called the Appellate Body (AB). All seven members of the AB have to be selected by consensus by WTO members. President Trump, in his first term, had persistently blocked the nomination of new members to the body. Since 2019, the AB has had no members. Thus, the dispute settlement system has become non-functional. Therefore, filing a dispute against the US may only serve as

a symbolic gesture.

The tariffs violate the US's binding commitments to all the members of the WTO. They also violate the Most Favoured Nation principle — not discriminating between different countries in terms of tariffs, except under a free trade agreement. President Trump's actions and the silent but willing acquiescence of all the developed countries show that the consensus which had led to the setting up of the GATT in 1947 (which later transformed into the WTO in 1995) lies in a shambles.

There are some steps India can take to minimise the effects of the tariffs.

India's export basket is not very broad and spans only a few sectors. We are also heavily dependent on the US (17 per cent of our goods exports) and the EU. The most important thing which needs to be done is to diversify both our export basket and destinations. This will require, of course, at least a few years and will need robust public-private partnerships.

Second, we need to conclude our FTA with the EU as quickly as possible and deepen and widen our existing FTAs with Japan, Korea, ASEAN and Australia. Third, we must explore expanding trade with the BRICS countries. Finally, we need to bring in multi-sectoral domestic reforms spanning both the Centre and the states to provide the impetus to economic growth.

This turn of events should not be viewed as a disaster but as a wake-up call. It is an opportunity to reform and grow, as we did in 1991.

The writer served as India's ambassador to the WTO (2010-14)

### Addiction, Not Play

Ban on online real-money gaming will protect mental health of the young

Alisha Lalljee

THE EDITORIAL ON the ban on online realmoney gaming ('The wrong answer,' *IE*, August 25) presents an account of the move's economic, legal, and regulatory implications. But it overlooks one of the most critical dimensions of this issue: Mental health, particularly of children and adolescents.

Online gaming, especially real-money gaming, operates on psychological principles nearly identical to gambling: Variable rewards, intense engagement loops, and the pursuit of rapid gratification. These mechanics are designed to sustain play, extract payments, and create dependency. When introduced to young, impressionable users, it often leads not to leisure, but to addiction.

Parents often discover the problem too late — when credit card bills spike, academic performance collapses, or a child's mental health has begun to deteriorate. Families describe a toxic home atmosphere, filled with secrecy, arguments, and emotional distress. In such cases, therapy is not enough. Prevention through regulation or, when necessary, prohibition is a legitimate and urgent public health response.

Online gaming today is not what it was a decade ago. What appears to be harmless entertainment is, in reality, designed to keep users hooked. These games are not simply "fun distractions". They are immersive environments that condition the brain to crave more play, more wins, more risk. The line between skill and chance blurs rapidly. Many adolescents

### DEAR EDITOR, I DISAGREE

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largest buyers of energy from

A column in which we invite readers to tell us why, when they differ with the editorial positions or news coverage of 'The Indian Express'

India's youth deserve more than just a firewall. They deserve understanding, support, and care. By reframing online gaming addiction as a behavioural and mental health issue, and by combining thoughtful regulation with robust counselling, the country can create a safer digital environment.

lose track of time, lie about usage, steal to fund gameplay, or suffer from anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation when they lose or are forced to stop. The resulting tension often spills into the household, straining relationships and eroding trust between parents and children.

This addiction is not theoretical. Across India, there are numerous cases of children draining family bank accounts, falling into debt, or spiralling into behavioural and emotional distress. In some tragic instances, the consequences have included suicide. Despite these human costs, the mental-health dimension of this crisis is too often absent from policy discussions and public commentary.

A ban can seem like a protective measure, removing the source of harm. It also offers families an immediate sense of relief by reducing conflicts and financial losses. Partial bans or stricter age-gating can be particularly effective, helping protect minors while allowing informed adults to engage responsibly. By limiting exposure for younger users, partial restrictions can delay the onset of addictive behaviours and offer parents a safer environment to guide healthy digital habits.

However, the psychology of addiction is rarely that simple. When compulsive behaviour is forcibly interrupted without therapeutic intervention, it often re-emerges in other forms, a phenomenon known as psychological displacement. Children who lose their primary coping mechanism may turn to more

harmful behaviours such as compulsive pornography consumption, social media overuse, or even substance abuse. Without guidance, the family environment can remain tense, with children seeking escape in even less regulated spaces.

Children caught in the grip of addiction often become irritable, secretive, or aggressive when access is restricted. To truly protect children and adolescents, any form of ban must be accompanied by a comprehensive mental health framework. This means integrating routine mental health screenings in schools, expanding access to child-friendly counselling services, and training educators and parents to recognise warning signs of distress. Awareness campaigns on digital addiction must target students and caregivers alike.

By treating this issue as a behavioural health challenge rather than a purely disciplinary problem, India can begin to heal the emotional rifts that gaming addiction creates within families. India's youth deserve more than just a firewall. They deserve support and care. By and by combining thoughtful regulation with robust counselling and prevention programmes, the country can create a safet digital environment, one where families find balance, and children grow up with healthier relationships to technology.

The writer is a psychologist and special educator



### AUGUST 28, 1985, FORTY YEARS AGO

#### Coup in Nigeria

THE 20-MONTH-OLD military government of Gen Mohammed Buhari in Nigeria was overthrown in what appears to be a bloodless coup. The nation he inherited was in a terrible financial state. The price of oil, virtually its only export earner, was in the doldrums, and foreign debts totalled about \$15 billion. After the coup, critics of the government complained of slow progress towards recovery. The army chief, Ibrahim Babangida, has been named president.

#### Punjab Poll Prep

THE CHIEF ELECTION Commissioner has called a meeting on August 29 of senior offi-

cials of the Punjab government to review security arrangements for conducting a peaceful poll. Before this meeting, state officials will have another round of discussions in the Home Ministry to discuss the plans prepared, keeping in view all the aspects of the situation and the requirements of the state government

#### PROGRESS IN THIMPHU

INDIA'S EFFORTS TO ensure the Thimphu talks between the Sri Lankan government and the Tamil groups are resumed at an early date appears to have made some headway at the end of yet another round of talks on between the foreign secretary, Romesh Bhandari, and the

leader of the Sri Lankan delegation to the Thimphu talks, H W Jayewardene. Sri Lankan High Commission sources told ENS later that "something concrete" might emerge.

#### Sri Lanka Blast

SIX NAVY PERSONNEL and a woman were killed when their jeep hit a landmine in northeast Sri Lanka, Defence Ministry sources said. They said the woman, a civilian employee in a navy office, was also in the jeep when the landmine blew up at Palampattaru near Trincomalee naval base. They said the mine was planted by Tamil guerillas. The blast brought to 46 the toll during the past two days in the northern and eastern provinces.

- DAWN, PAKISTAN

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, THURSDAY, AUGUST 28, 2025

# THE IDEAS PAGE

## Who am AI?

An artificial intelligence-powered Bhagavad Gita project raises troubling questions of identity, selfhood and authenticity



**GURCHARAN DAS** 

ONE WINTRY EVENING in Delhi, I received an unusual call from New York. At the other end was a soft, charming voice that belonged to someone who was bringing out the world's classics using Artificial Intelligence. They'd chosen the Bhagavad Gita from India and wondered if I'd be a guide for this interactive AI book. The voice explained that the AI book would encourage readers to ask questions while reading the text. Answers would come from my cloned voice, based on 15 hours of interviews conducted in advance. At the end of each chapter, the reader would engage in a discussion with my clone.

I was fascinated and perturbed. I wished I'd had such a personal tutor while reading the Gita for the first time. But I was also troubled with questions of identity, selfhood and authenticity. It felt strange having a twin speaking in my voice. Ironically, these are the same questions — who am I? — that the Gita also addresses.

The friendly voice reassured me that their company had already published half a dozen classics. Well-known names like Salman Rushdie and Margaret Atwood had signed up to do future classics. I was ambivalent but I agreed. After hanging up, I was left to deal with my AI monsters.

Nine months later, I'm hard at work on this project. I have three AI interns to assist me: ChatGPT is the most empathetic, Perplexity is best at research, giving links to follow up, and Claude has a literary style. Gemini is a good standby. They are hugely competent and cheerful. ChatGPT can translate a Sanskrit verse into English in 3 seconds, which is 100 times faster than Patrick Olivelle, the great scholar. When I have oc $casionally\ pointed\ out\ that\ something\ is\ not$ quite right, they try again, without a hint of complaint or the need for approval. And they keep getting better. While they have taken away the drudgery of research, I'm troubled by my lack of ownership, feeling an alienating distance from the Al output.

Since the invisible labour of research has been eased, I have more time to think, to play thought games: What if the Buddha had been Arjuna's charioteer? How is it that MK Gandhi, the apostle of non-violence, and Heinrich Himmler, the Nazi apostle of violence, were both inspired by the Gita? Himmler used to train SS officers quoting from the Gita.

I worry about being cloned by a machine. What will my friends think of me spouting fake rubbish? Will my twin know my thoughts, memories, things I don't want to talk about? What if a friend of mine actually developed a closer relationship with my compassionate clone? I'd feel jealous, cheated, and a fool. It feels eerie having him running around giving talks, making podcasts, racking up thousands of listeners. Worse, what if he cleaned out my bank account, confirming transactions on the phone via voice recognition software?



C R Sasikumar

AI raises fundamental questions about what it is to be human. The only thing I am sure of at this moment are the thoughts and feelings going through my head. If I look into my consciousness, I cannot find the thinker of my thoughts, the feeler of my feelings. Western philosophers and neuroscientists have tried to locate the self but haven't found it either. The Gita claims that my sense of identity is an illusion, created by the human ego. My true self is the atman, which is identical with the cosmic brahman. Awareness of the oneness of everything is the Gita's central teaching. Buddha also faced this problem but reached the opposite conclusion. He resigned himself to living with the idea of no-self (anatman).

AI has added a second layer of falsehood. "Who am I?" is a question based on lived experience, not to be answered by a machine. The idea of a "cloned twin" of my thoughts providing answers feels like betrayal. Already shaken by the realisation that my exalted liberal self is a fictional narrator, AI has added a double fiction, leaving me totally befuddled. Mark Twain must have felt this absurdity when he quipped, "There is no difference between fiction and non-fiction — only that fiction has to make sense!

That AI might become sentient is my other fear. Before it happens, I believe, AI has formidable hurdles to cross. One, the human experience is inherently subjective and cannot be explained in objective terms. When Lobserve a red apple, it invokes all kinds of feelings of redness inside me. It could be the memory of blood oozing out of my brother's leg in an acI worry about being cloned by a machine. What will my friends think of me spouting fake rubbish? Will my twin know my thoughts, memories, things I don't want to talk about? What if a friend of mine actually developed a closer relationship with my compassionate clone? I'd feel jealous, cheated, and a fool. It feels eerie having him running around giving talks, making podcasts, racking up thousands of listeners. Worse, what if he cleaned out my bank account, confirming transactions on the phone via voice recognition software?

cident; or the red cheeks of Renoir's young girl in his painting. Philosophers call this subjective content "qualia". The question is how AI will duplicate qualia, the private, unspoken product of the subjective consciousness of eight billion humans?

Another obstacle is to replicate my brain's biological neuron-specific physiology in my subjective experience. AI may copy the objective red colour — its wavelength of 650 nanometres - but it cannot access my subjective redness that emerges from my brain's 86 billion neurons and 500 trillion synapses. Both these hurdles lead to a third one. Essential to human consciousness is spontaneity, a freedom to choose my goals. That autonomy, the Gita tells me, comes from the life force, atman. AI today can follow commands based on algorithms and data. It has far to go to achieve self-awareness.

While I am charmed by the wonderful possibilities of AI in teaching classics to the world, I am deeply concerned about its downside. Re-reading the Gita, however, has made me rethink my own values. In the "real world" of work, I was valued for being sharp and acquisitive. What I admired, though, were kindness and generosity, traits of failure in the "real world". What is at stake is our conception of success. The present crisis in public life around the world may lie in this. There are parallels between the Gita's lament and the things we might say about our leaders today

Das has interrogated the Mahabharata in his book, The Difficulty of Being Good

## A stronger air shield

"As the Israeli occupation of Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese land has shown, the Zionists very much intend to deliver on their promise of 'Greater Israel'. Therefore, unless the slaughter of Palestinians is stopped, large swathes of the

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

region may soon be devoured by the Zionists."

Successful test of air defence system shows depth of Indian research, how collaboration with private, foreign partners can fill gaps



Ajai Shukla

LAST SATURDAY, THE Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) announced the maiden flight test of a new, allindigenous, Integrated Air Defence Weapon System (IADWS) off the coast of Odisha. The IADWS is a three-layered system for shooting down enemy aircraft, drones and missiles when they are as far away as 30-35 km. It comprises a Quick Reaction Surface-to-Air Missile (QR-SAM) with a range of 30 km, an Advanced Very Short Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS) with a range of up to 6 km, and a high-power, laser-based, directed energy weapon (DEW) with a range of 2-4 km. The integrated operation of all three systems is controlled by a Centralised Command and Control Centre, developed by the Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL) — the DRDO's nodal laboratory in charge of this development programme.

"During the flight tests, three different targets, including two high-speed, fixedwing unmanned aerial vehicles and a multicopter drone, were simultaneously engaged and destroyed completely... All the weapon system components, including the missile systems and drone detection and restriction systems, performed flawlessly," stated the DRDO. The IADWS missile defence system incorporates multiple technologies that the DRDO has developed over time, in different labs. This provides a demonstration of how capabilities built in individual technology realms can be integrated into weapon systems that serve specific battlefield requirements.

India began this technological synergising with the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP) that was set up in 1983 by APJ Abdul Kalam. The IGMDP's "missile cluster", located mainly in Hyderabad, consists of five laboratories, each directed to a specific, but linked, purpose. The so-called missile cluster, which includes the Advanced Systems Laboratory (ASL), specialises in rockets and missiles. It has developed and honed the Agni and Prithvi series of ballistic missiles, which form the delivery end of India's nuclear deterrent. Over the vears, the DRDO has developed these two ballistic missiles into a highly advanced anti-ballistic missile (ABM) shield, an antisatellite (ASAT) missile system and into advanced capabilities such as multi independently targetable re-entry vehicle (MIRV).

Similarly, as part of the IGMDP, the development of a series of tactical missiles, including the anti-aircraft Trishul and Akash and the anti-tank Nag missile, were entrusted to the DRDL. These, too, have been developed further into a range of more capable tactical missiles.

The IGMDP has also spawned the DRDO Young Scientists Laboratory for asymmetric technologies, such as AI and quantum computing. There is the Terminal Ballistic Research Laboratory that specialises in warhead design. The most essential is the Research Centre Imarat, which specialises in critical missile technologies such as navigation and control, guidance and homing systems, command and control systems and high temperature materials that are essential for long-range missiles and aircraft.

These sophisticated technologies, mostly developed by public sector agencies like the five IGMDP laboratories, are trickling down into defence products manufactured by capable private sector technology companies, such as Carborundum Universal Limited (CUMI). Earlier this year, CUMI announced the signing of a "Licensing Agreement for Transfer of Technology" with the DRDO for manufacturing ceramic radomes - essential, state-of-the-art technology for missiles and high-performance aircraft during flight regimes. Radomes experience extremely high surface temperatures, especially during flight regimes such as re-entry from space. To withstand that, radomes at the tip of Indian missiles are made of specialised ceramics developed in the DRDO's laboratories.

Besides the growing synergy between India's public and private sector defence firms, there are opportunities for working with foreign partners, such as the Israeli military, in developing integrated air defences that can repulse combined operations by the Pakistani and Chinese air forces, such as during Operation Sindoor earlier this year. How would such a technology partnership function? The DRDO could partner with Israel's military and defence industry in developing lavered air defence systems such as the Iron Dome. Its sophisticated radar detects, identifies and tracks incoming threats within a 160-km radius. Its Tamir interceptor missile, which travels at one kilometre per second, leaves the Iron Dome battery with less than a minute to respond to a missile launch. Working fast, the battery commanders analyse the threat and launch their Tamir interceptors. In seconds, the incoming warheads would have detonated into lethal fragments of high-speed metal.

In the modern battlefield, money is everything. An interceptor's cost determines how many can be fired. The Tamir initially cost about \$1,00,000 each to produce, but the Israeli industry brought down the price to \$40-\$50,000. The technology challenge involves integrating the individual elements of the missile shield. For targets at ranges beyond the Iron Dome's 160 km, Israel deploys the US-supplied Terminal High Altitude Area Defence System (THAAD), which intercepts ballistic missiles outside the atmosphere at ranges out to 200 km. The next layer is David's Sling, with a range of 300 km. For the outer layer, Israel's Arrow 3 system destroys medium-range ballistic missiles at ranges out to 2,400 km.

When India enters into an international collaboration that involves joint development, we have thus far followed the rule of sharing our strengths and complementing our weaknesses. When we developed the BrahMos cruise missile with Russia, our clearly defined work share included the navigation system and the mission control. We had done a similar exercise in the case of the LR-SAM, where it was reported that we would develop the rear section and the Israelis would provide the front section and the seeker. Since we are doing the entire integration, it will be an Indian product.

When we began jointly developing the LR-SAM with the Israeli weapons industry, we knew that no such system was available with the Israelis. The Israeli Navy came forward to collaborate only because they badly wanted a new system for their warships. The Indian Navy also wanted a new system. We never enter into a collaboration for a product that already exists.

> The writer is a retired army officer and journalist

## A bitter dose of tariff therapy

To prepare, India needs improved regulation and governance

Ajay Vir Jakhar

IN 1990, MILITARY strategist Edward Luttwak coined the term "geo-economics". Loosely, it is about using economic strength as a tool to achieve strategic and foreign policy goals, rather than solely for economic welfare. Enter US President Donald Trump with his expected transactional approach, which caught India unawares. Though it is safe to think that, over time, the 50 per cent tariff that came into effect on Wednesday will be whittled down to 20-25 per cent.

The UK has succumbed to 10 per cent, the EU 15 per cent, Indonesia 19 per cent and Vietnam 20 per cent import duty. More countries are poised to do the same. It is important to work out the math. India refusing trade concessions and paying 20-25 per cent may be the better option when compared to opening the Indian agricultural markets. In practical terms, India would be competing with a disadvantage of about 5 per cent, which the country can live with. In ignoring the things that governments do right, we omit half the story, and farmers should appreciate the PM's reaffirmation to safeguard Indian farmers' interests

However, the impact of tariffs will broaden beyond directly affected industries. Growth in the manufacturing sector is an absolute imperative for creating employment. Despite the high-profile "Make in India" campaign, the share of manufacturing in GDP is still 14 per cent, well short of the 25 per cent target set for 2025. After 10 years, possibly for the first time, there

are more unemployed graduates than nongraduates. There is a danger that not only will existing manufacturing be hit, but that businesses will see no reason to grow their businesses in India. Growth, then, does not just stall; it starts contracting.

China created globally successful companies by subjecting them to fierce competition, not protection. In contrast, Indian manufacturing is a pampered space, failing to deliver on expected growth or employment generation. It remains uncompetitive. It is about time for the industry to get a small, bitter dose of tariff therapy.

Allowing agricultural imports with quantitative quotas from the US should be acceptable if it results in import duty concessions for India's manufacturing sector. Such imports could be problematic but manageable, given that normally these are a few percentage points of the production of a particular crop. India is a humongous importer of such agricultural produce as pulses and edible oil, of which some quantity could be specifically allocated for US imports. I would treat this not as a capitulation but as pragmatism. Farmers and the government have observed that if Indian farmers are not allowed to grow GM crops, there is no justification for allowing the import of GM crops. That is a valid point as per the World Trade Organisation (WTO) - but its dispute resolution mechanisms, especially vis-à-vis the US, are all

Dairy, however, is the backbone of small

farmers' livelihoods in India. The American dairy sector will find it tough to compete with the Indian dairy sector. Instead, the American corporate sector can and will use predatory pricing to sell its produce at a loss for 10 years to kill the Indian dairy sector. Once the Indian farmer stops keeping milch animals, it will be difficult to get farmers to rear them again. This will be a death knell to the rural economy.

India recently signed a trade deal with the UK, allowing for duty-free Indian agricultural imports. While the deal appears to be a good one, India's internal regulatory issues with agricultural inputs will lead to high-value farm exports failing the UK's safety norms at ports of entry. These may well be termed "non-tariff" barriers later. Besides, concessions around "data" appear to be an oversight.

There is also the issue of the quantum of subsidy the US or EU give their farmers vis-à-vis Indian farmers, which is neither new nor unexpected. Whining about it is not an effective strategy for the future. Realism is all about dealing with the circumstances, not the ones that one may

A trade deal is not the end of the road, but an important step forward. Our policies and structures must evolve constantly to be competitive in the future. Since the WTO came into being, the US, China and the EU have regularly changed their farm support mechanisms. India did not and now runs afoul of the WTO. As far as the

Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) treaty is concerned, many exporters of basmati rice, coffee and tea, which initially opposed the RCEP, now regret their position. The WTO is not dead, and the concessions that the US extracts from India will inevitably become part of the WTO 2.0. The EU, with which India hopes to seal a trade deal soon, will demand the same concessions. A graver issue than the tariffs is the acceptance of US standards and certification.

A once-in-a-generation opportunity beckons, provided the establishment wakes up from its slumber. Not only is the population in the developed world ageing, but it is also shrinking. Radical nationalism will not allow countries to bring in cheap migrant labour, and, in less than 20 years, they will not have sufficient people to work on their farms. Since Trump took charge, the price of fruits and vegetables in the US has already gone up 35 per cent. To prepare, India needs improved regulation and governance, for which it lacks administrative and political capacity.

One view is for nations to simply hang on till the midterm elections in the US, when a political reset is expected. The bottom line is that there is no finality to the trade negotiations with the US. Like the Russian oil tariff, the next barrier will be the carbon tax.

> The writer is chairman, Bharat Krishak Samaj

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### INTEGRITY MATTERS

THIS REFERS TO the editorial 'Test for the Fed' (IE, August, 27). Indeed, it is the era of political high handedness over autonomous institutions like central banks which are supposed to be managed by experts and apolitical officials with the utmost integrity. Political interference will erode the credibility of not only public institutions but the democratic apparatus of a country itself. This phenomenon of making autonomous institutions subservient has grown consistently across the world in the last decade. India is no exception.

Vasant Nalawade, Satara

### Double Standards

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'A thinning line' (IE, August 27). The editorial correctly identifies a critical flaw in our governance: The selective application of the law. While agencies pursue those without proper documentation, a more insidious threat exists where these same institutions help create fraudulent cards. This double standard doesn't just "thin"

the line between legal and illegal; it completely undermines the constitutional guarantee of due process of law. This is a profound betrayal of public trust and requires a complete overhaul of the systems that allow "guardians of the law" to become its primary exploiters.

Krishan Kumar Chug, New Delhi

#### REACT NOW

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Man and machine' (IE, Aug 27). The growing debate on whether artificial intelligence deserves rights may seem futuristic, but it reflects a deeper moral question. Technology is no longer a mere tool; it is becoming a mirror of human thought and behaviour. While machines are not conscious, their increasing ability to imitate emotion and decision-making demands that society prepare ethical frameworks in advance. Ignoring this will only leave us reacting in panic when the line between code and cognition blurs. It is better to begin the conversation now than to wait for a crisis to decide what dignity and responsibility mean in the age of AI.

Dattatray S Giri, Pune

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## Why Evergrande collapsed, why its problems matter

An analyst of China's economy explained to RISHIKA SINGH why the real estate giant's death shows the limits of a debt-fuelled, property-centric growth model



Lizzi C Lee

ON AUGUST 25, shares of the property developer Evergrande, which was once one of the biggest companies in China, were delisted from the Hong Kong Stock Exchange

In 2018, Evergrande was the world's most valuable real estate company. By 2021, it had collapsed in spectacular fashion. At the time of its collapse, Evergrande had more than 1,300 incomplete projects across 280 cities in China.

#### What is the story of Evergrande's dizzying rise?

Evergrande's story is intertwined with China's urbanisation boom. The founder of the company, Hui Ka Yan, who is now 66 years old, rose from poverty to ride a once-in-a-generation wave in the country's real estate sector. The boom was due to huge migration from the countryside to cities, an unprecedented demand for housing, and a policy environment

that rewarded aggressive expansion.

According to data from the World Bank, from 1960 to 1980, the share of the urban population in China's total population grew from around 16% to 20%. By 1990, it stood at 26%, by 2000 at 36%, and by 2024 around 66%. Another frequently quoted statistic is that China used more cement between 2011 and 2013 than the United States did in the entire 20th century.

Evergrande stepped into this context, and perfected the high-leverage, high-turnover model: buy land at scale, pre-sell apartments, use cash flow to fund the next wave.

Later on, the company diversified into everything from health care to finance, and even sports, buying the Guangzhou Football Club. At its peak in 2017, Evergrande was valued at nearly HK\$400 billion (\$51 billion), symbolising China's real estate-driven growth model.

#### And what led to its downfall?

The unravelling was years in the making.

The Chinese government introduced a "three red lines" policy in 2020 as an attempt to discipline overleveraged developers by making the conditions for borrowing stricter. That policy was the proximate trigger, cutting off the cheap credit that Evergrande and other developers depended on.

But the deeper problems were structural. Demand for housing had been slowing as demographics shifted to an ageing population, and many urban households already owned multiple properties. Evergrande relied on perpetual pre-sales, where it would use the money to immediately start developing the next project. In addition to the thin cash buffers this made it uniquely vulnerable once credit became tighter and sales softened, partially due to macroeconomic headwinds. Today, there is a glut of millions of empty homes, as well as many unfinished projects across China.

#### What is meant by Evergrande's 'collapse'? What does the delisting of its stock indicate about its future?

Collapse does not mean liquidation overnight; it has been a drawn-out process.

Evergrande defaulted on its offshore debt. saw its chairman investigated for fraud, and has been under court-ordered liquidation. The Hong Kong Stock Exchange delisting,

after 18 months of suspended trading, is symbolic: it marks the end of Evergrande as a publicly traded company. However, its obligations remain enormous. Debt restructuring is ongoing, liquidation managers are pursuing asset recovery, and lawsuits are mounting. According to a Reuters report, liquidators say they have sold \$255 million of the firm's assets 18 months into the liquidation process, but received creditor claims totalling \$45 billion.

The government's role has been selective: ensuring "housing delivery" for ordinary buyers while leaving creditors to absorb losses. The delisting underscores that Evergrande is now only a debtor in managed unwinding.

#### What have been the spillover effects on the Chinese economy as a whole?

Evergrande wasn't the only domino to fall in China's real estate crisis, but it was the biggest piece to fall with spectacular scale. Other major companies, including Country Garden, have also stumbled.

What is critical is the way in which the property sector's downturn bled into the broader economy: construction slowdowns hurt steel and cement, local governments lost vital land-sale revenue, and household wealth tied up in property eroded confidence.

Today, policymakers are trying to stabilise the sector, shifting focus to completing unfinished projects and easing mortgage rules – but they are not reviving the old model of perpetual expansion.

Even in the most optimistic scenario, the bottoming out of property market prices will not materialise until late next year. And with the sector shrinking, an era of China's growth has definitively ended.

To dismantle Evergrande, a Hong Kong judge last year appointed Alvarez & Marsal, the same company that restructured Lehman Brothers

Is the Evergrande crisis comparable to the collapse of the investment bank that

triggered the 2008 financial crisis? The Lehman comparison captures the drama but misses key differences. Lehman's collapse triggered a global financial meltdown because of the way its debts were interwoven with the global banking system.

Evergrande, by contrast, has been managed through a slow-motion, state-guided unwinding. The appointment of Alvarez & Marsal, veterans of Lehman's restructuring, shows the complexity of the case, but Beijing has worked to firewall systemic contagion. So far, it has worked. China's banking system remains stable, and the crisis has been largely ringfenced within the country (as opposed to escalating into a global financial shock).

The Evergrande episode is less a "Chinese Lehman moment" and more a reckoning with the limits of China's debt-fuelled, property-centric growth model. It is a sobering lesson that China's growth playbook has run out of road. The challenge to transition into a healthier, more sustainable path is extremely daunting.

Lizzi C. Lee is a Fellow at the Center for China Analysis, Asia Society Policy Institute, Washington DC

### EXPLAINED SCIENCE

### SCIENTISTS DISCOVER QUADRUPLE STARSYSTEM: WHY THIS IS SIGNIFICANT

A TEAM of scientists has discovered a rare quadruple star system in the Milky Way. The system — known as UPM J1040-3551 AabBab — consists of a pair of cold brown dwarfs orbiting a pair of young red dwarf stars, a configuration never seen before, a new study reported.

The study, 'Benchmark brown dwarfs I. A blue M2 + T5 wide binary and a probable young [M4+M4]+[T7+T8] hierarchical quadruple', appeared in the September issue of the journal Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society. The research was led by Professor Zenghua Zhang of Nanjing University, and also involved scientists from the University of Hertfordshire (the UK), the Brazilian National Astrophysics Laboratory, the Southern Astrophysical Research (SOAR) Telescope at Cerro Tololo Inter-American Observatory (Chile), and the Center for Astrobiology (Spain).

The scientists involved in the study have said that their findings will could improve the understanding of brown dwarfs, which are difficult to detect and examine.

#### What are brown dwarfs?

Brown dwarfs are curious celestial bodies that share some similarities with stars and others with planets. For instance, these objects form like stars from collapsing clouds of gas and dust. However, they do not have enough mass to consistently fuse hydrogen, a process that heats a star and makes it shine. That is why they are often known as "failed stars".

They have atmospheres similar to gas giants such as Jupiter and Saturn. Their atmospheres can consist of clouds and molecules like H2O. Brown dwarfs can also be up to 70 times more massive than Jupiter.

#### Why are brown dwarfs difficult to detect?

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Brown dwarfs can be difficult to detect as they are cold and faint. As a result,

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astronomers typically search for brown dwarfs orbiting companion stars, which often burn brighter. This also helps them study these celestial bodies because if a brown dwarf is part of a multiple system with a brighter star, the chances are they were formed out of the same material, at the same place and time.

"Measuring the brighter stars, then, can be useful for estimating the properties of the fainter brown dwarfs, like their age, temperature and composition," according to a report by The New York Times.

That is why the recent discovery of the quadruple star system is significant Although the two brown dwarfs, which are both about the size of Jupiter, of the system emit almost no visible light, there is a pair of young dwarfs - the most common type of stars in the Milky Way – which are nuch brighter than their companions.

Hugh Jones, co-author of the study and researcher at the University of Hertfordshire, in a statement, said, "This is the first time a quadruple system has been found with two T-type brown dwarfs orbiting a pair of stars... Unlike our Sun, which is a singleton, most bigger stars are part of multiple-star systems... But smaller stars and brown dwarfs are usually single, and our findings are exciting because the chances of a low-mass brown dwarf having a companion are less than 5%.

#### Why do scientists study brown dwarfs?

can help astronomers better understand the conditions that are necessary for the formation of stars and planets.

Determining the abundance and distribution of brown dwarfs gives key information on the distribution of mass in the universe to astronomers. Note that much of the universe's mass has thus far been undetectable and is known as dark matter **EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** 

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#### **EXPLAINED ECONOMICS**

## H-lB visa debate in US

US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick says the H-1B visa program, the most desired pathway for Indians to migrate to America, is a 'scam'. Figures on the American Left agree, even if for different reasons

**ARJUN SENGUPTA** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 27

UNITED STATES Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick on Tuesday called the H-1B visa program a "scam" and asked "all great American businesses" to "hire American".

"The current H-1B visa system is a scam that lets foreign workers fill American job opportunities," he said in an interview to Fox News. "... Now is the time to hire American."

Lutnick's criticism echoes the views of several influential figures in the Donald Trump administration, including White House deputy chief of staff Stephen Miller who is said to be the architect of Trump's immigration policies. Forbes reported last month that the Trump administration plans to "end or significantly change the annual H-1B visa lottery".

The H-1B program has long been a highly desired pathway for Indians to migrate to the US - more than 70% of all approved H-1B petitions since 2015 have been from Indians, according to United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) data.

#### For 'skilled' workers The H-1B visa program allows American

employers to hire immigrant workers in occupations that require "a high level of skill" and "at least a bachelor's degree", according to the US Department of Labor.

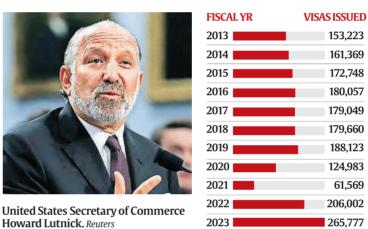
The visa category was created by the Immigration Act, 1990, which intended to help "employers who cannot otherwise obtain needed business skills and abilities from the US workforce by authorising the temporary employment of qualified individuals who are not otherwise authorised to work in the US".

The H-1B program was preceded by a long tussle between industry groups and workers' unions in the US. Business groups such as the US Chamber of Commerce successfully lobbied Congress to loosen restrictions on hiring immigrant workers.

Big Tech was the biggest beneficiary. In the 1990s, as the technology sector boomed, companies like Microsoft and Oracle, and later Google and Amazon, needed specialised talent to fuel their growth but domestic supply was found wanting. The H-1B program allowed these companies to hire lakhs of highly skilled workers from countries like India and China to meet the shortfall.

In an influential working paper published

#### H-1B VISAS ISSUED BY US STATE DEPT (2013-2024)



**HOW THE H-1B VISA WORKS** 

**CAN BE ISSUED** for a maximum six years at a stretch, after which the visa holder has to either leave the US for at least 12 months before returning, or apply for and receive permanent residence (green card).

ANNUAL NUMERICAL LIMIT (regular cap) of 65,000 new statuses/visas each fiscal year, with an extra 20,000 visas available to those with a Master's degree or higher from a US university.

or government research organisations.

**NOT ALL H-1B PETITIONS are** 

employment" do not fall under

institutions or nonprofit

the cap, neither do those seeking

employment at higher education

nonprofit research organisations.

entities affiliated to such institutions,

subject to the annual cap. Petitions

in 2024 were double that of "initial

for "continuing employment", which

in 2004, economist Britta Glennon, who is currently at the Wharton School, argued that restrictive immigration policies pushed US firms to hire abroad, and programs such as H-1B were necessary for the US to gain and maintain a competitive edge in cutting edge tech research and development. ('How do restrictions on high-skilled immigration affect offshoring? Evidence from the H-1B program')

In a more recent paper. Glennon said that "hiring skilled immigrants leads to positive performance effects... [on] both productivity and innovation for...a significant subset of large firms, and they are critical for start-ups, both as founders and hires". ('Skilled Immigrants, Firms, and the Global Geography of Innovation', 2024)

This has been at the heart of arguments made by proponents of the H-1B program. Trump's former ally Elon Musk, whose companies hire thousands of H-1B workers, had promised to "go to war" to defend the program.

#### Right meets Left

The H-1B program has had critics on both sides of the political spectrum — the prounion, pro-worker American Left as well as the nativist American Right

In January, Senator Bernie Sanders, a selfproclaimed democratic socialist, wrote in response to a pro-H-1B post by Musk on X: The main function of the...program is not to hire "the best and the brightest," but rather to replace good-paying American jobs with low-wage indentured servants from abroad. The cheaper the labor they hire, the more money the billionaires make.

Sanders' argument was similar to that of Steve Bannon, a prominent ideologue of the Make America Great Again (MAGA) movement. "[Musk] will do anything to make sure that any one of his companies is protected or has a better deal or he makes more money... The American working people in this country are not going to tolerate it," Bannon said in an interview to the Italian newspaper Corriere della Sera in January.

The rise of anti-immigration far right forces in US politics, which powered Donald Trump to the presidency, has strengthened such criticism. Trump's campaign rhetoric targeted Mexicans and low-skill migrant labour which he claimed "stole jobs" from the American working class, which has long suffered due to high unemployment, low wages, inflation, a housing crisis, and other economic problems.

In many ways, the criticism of the H-1B program is focused similarly, though in the context of higher-paying jobs. When a Musk or a Bill Gates flags the shortage of "excellent engineering talent", these critics hear them saying, "Americans are too expensive to hire".

#### Indians and H-1B

Indians have been the biggest beneficiaries of the H-1B program, accounting for more than 70% of successful H-1B petitions. The Chinese, who account for 12-13%, are a distant second, USCIS data show.

An analysis by The Indian Express this January of salaries offered to approved H-1B petitions found that 25% of successful petitions were for salaries between \$100,000 and \$150,000 per annum, and only 5% were for more than \$150,000. The vast majority of Indians going to the US were thus earning less than \$100,000 per annum – below the median salary for IT professionals in the US (\$105,990 as of May 2023, according to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics).

In his interview, Lutnick noted that an average American earned \$75,000 a year while the average green card recipient earned \$66,000. "Why are we doing that? It's like picking the bottom core," he said. (Most H-1B visa-holders apply for a green card.)

## Richard Osman's The Thursday Murder Club: glow-up for cosy crime on OTT

#### **PAROMITA CHAKRABARTI** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 27

IT STARTS, as all good mysteries do, with a

body. A local builder, dead under suspicious circumstances, found at Coopers Chase, an upmarket retirement home in the fictitious English countryside of Fairhaven near Kent. At first, it's only a curiosity, fodder for the Thursday

Murder Club, a group of septuagenarians in the home who meet weekly in the Jigsaw Room to drink instant coffee and comb through cold cases. But the trail soon grows hot — and leads them away from the safety of the what-might-have-been to real

and present danger at their doorstep.

British writer Richard Osman's recordmaking bestseller, The Thursday Murder Club, is now a Netflix adaptation, set to release on August 28, with a cast that could comfortably fill out several BAFTA awards categories

- Helen Mirren, Pierce Brosnan, Celia Imrie, Ben Kingsley, and David Tennant.

**Drishti IAS** 

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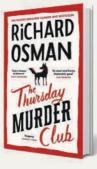
#### Enter the sleuths At the heart of Osman's story are four re-

tirees — sharp-as-a-tack former intelligence agent Elizabeth, Ron, the ex-trade union firebrand with a soft spot for football and a talent for disruption, Ibrahim, a psychiatrist who prefers logic to emotions, and

Joyce, a former nurse, whose **EXPLAINED** dithery and slightly nosy diary entries anchor much of the narrative with warmth and wit. Osman's central premise is disarmingly

simple: that life after retirement doesn't mean irrelevance. His characters are sharp, messy, grieving, flirtatious, and resourceful. Their appeal lies in their ordinariness, made extraordinary only in their refusal to disappear quietly.

There's something radical about making four septuagenarians the beating heart of a narrative, as fully realised protagonists



The Thursday Murder Club, Richard Osman,

and not as comic relief or embodiments of tragic decline. The Thursday Murder Club not only gives its characters a second act, it argues they never stopped being centre-stage.

Netflix's adaptation, directed by Chris Columbus, leans into the story's warmth, its meditations on aging, grief, loneliness, and purpose, while retaining its dry wit and deft plotting, and the essential chemistry between the four friends

#### A nice cosy crime What's cosy about crime? It's not

merely the absence of gore — the violence is mostly at a polite removal — but a tonal alchemy: small communities, amateur detectives, a moral universe where justice is ultimately served. In the world of cosy crime, intelligence

is not the preserve of tortured geniuses with traumatic backstories. Evil exists, sometimes for no reason, but the emphasis is on the possibility of order being restored. In other words, if death is the mystery, life is the central tenet of such dramas.

#### Streaming boom

Whether it's Only Murders in the Building, with Steve Martin, Martin Short, and Selena Gomez, Enola Holmes, headlined by Millie Bobby Brown, Daniel Craig as Benoit Blanc in the Knives Out universe, or classics such as Midsomer Murders, or, even *The Chelsea Detective*, cosy crime — long considered the gentle cousin of the noirsoaked thriller – is having a moment.

The genre has staged a comeback across streaming platforms, each offering a variation on a familiar pleasure, updated for modern sensibilities. Imagine Miss Marple, only more meta. Unlike Scandinavian noir, cosy crime deals in containment. The case is solved, the community survives. There is resolution, even if it arrives with a slice of Battenberg and a raised eyebrow.

It is tempting to write off the genre as escapism, particularly now. The world, after all, is awash in chaos — geopolitical, ecological, algorithmic. In such a climate, a fictional murder, solved over tea, feels like a balm.

But the comfort of cosy crime isn't only about familiarity. It's about control. In a world that increasingly denies coherence, these stories offer a tidy, human-scale order. There are clues. There are consequences. Someone, in the end, is accountable. It is a low-stakes emotional investment with a guaranteed return.

#### Talent of Osman

Osman, a popular quiz show co-host, understands this. His books are written in a tone of conspiratorial warmth – half crime novel, half therapy session. His prose flirts with self-awareness but rarely tips into cynicism. And that may be the secret of

He knows the mystery is only part of the draw. What we really want is the company. That the murders drive the plot, but it's the community - the layered lives of the people affected — that keeps us watching.

Cosy crime, then, is not a retreat from the world, but a reimagining of how to be in it. A genre where death is present, but not defining. Where age does not mean irrelevance. And where justice still feels possible.

In the end, The Thursday Murder Club is not just a story about solving murders. It's a story about people who refuse to stop paying attention. And in that refusal - persistent, stubborn, oddly thrilling - there is a whiff of something that feels quite like hope.

Pune

# 13 ECONOMY

**△** ₹1.01.270

Note: Gold, silver rates at Delhi spot market, gold per 10g, silver per 1 kg; Crude oil (Indian basket) per barrel as of August 20



**♦** \$69.74

₹1,20,000

SENSEX: 80,786.54 ▼ 849.37\* (-1.04%) NIFTY: 24,712.05 ▼ 255.70\* (-1.02%) NIKKEI: 42,520.27 ▲ 125.87 HANG SENG: 25,201.76 ▼ 323.16 FTSE: 9,243.55 ▼ 22.25 DAX: 24,057.58 ▼ 95.29

**'SCAM THAT LETS FOREIGN WORKERS FILL AMERICAN JOBS': US COMMERCE SECY** Trump tariffs offer space to

## **Amid US H-1B rhetoric, govt officials** say visas helped American companies

**SOUMYARENDRA BARIK** & AGGAM WALIA

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 27

THE RISING criticism in the United States of the H-1B visa — of which Indians are the prime beneficiary - could impact India's IT sector and its workers, resulting in fewer US-based contracts from them, a senior government official said. However, the government believes that the H-1B visa has inevitably helped American companies the most, and it could be difficult for them to find equally skilled American people.

"It could certainly limit access for Indian workers in the US, leading to fewer IT companies here getting US based contracts which could contract their revenue. But the visa has immensely helped American companies in finding the right workers across the world. and whether they can substitute that with American people is not

cal signalling, the reality is that the visa helps American companies the most," a senior government official told The Indian Express.

On Tuesday, United States Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick called the popular H-1B visa programme a "scam that lets foreign workers fill American job opportunities," adding that hiring American workers should be the priority of all US businesses. The US administration has signalled significant overhaul of the visa programme, which involves a lotterybased allocation. Immigration is one of the most polarising subjects in the US currently, with the discourse now shifting from illegal immigration to programmes like the H1-B system.

People born in India are the largest beneficiaries of the H-1B programme. Data from the US government show that Indians account for more than 70 per cent of all H-1B petitions approved each

**PEOPLE BORN IN INDIA LARGEST BENEFICIARIES** 

■ People born in India are the largest beneficiaries of the H-1B programme. Data from the US government show that Indians account for more than 70% of all H-1B petitions approved each year since 2015. People born in China come a distant second

China come a distant second, hovering at the 12-13 per cent mark since 2018.

Between October 2022 to September 2023, 72 per cent of the nearly 4 lakh visas issued under the H-1B programme went to Indian nationals. During the same period, top four Indian IT majors Wipro – got approval for around 20,000 employees to work on the H-1B visa, as per latest US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) data.

One of the key concerns in the US administration on the H-1B visa is that it is used by American corporations to hire talent from overseas at a cheaper cost than what it would take them to hire a native born US citizen. While there is some truth in

that, data collected by the nonprofit American Immigration Council (AIC) showed that H-1B workers do not earn low wages or drag down other workers' wages In 2021, the median wage of an H-1B worker was \$108,000, compared to \$45,760 for US workers in general. Moreover, between 2003 and 2021, the median wage of H-1B workers grew by 52 percent. During the same period, the median wage of all US workers in-

creased by 39 percent.

American companies, AIC said that between FY 2010 and FY 2019, eight US companies that would later participate in the development of a COVID-19 vaccine

ANILSASI

to address.

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 27

WITH THE steep 50 per cent

American tariffs on Indian goods

exports kicking in from

Wednesday, policymakers in New

Delhi have their work cut out. The

problem for them, however, is not

knowing how long these tariffs

will persist and if a policy inter-

vention can be cogently rolled out

without clarity over the timeline

of the very disruption that it seeks

triggered serious deliberations on

These tariffs have, however,

- Gilead Sciences, Moderna Therapeutics, GlaxoSmithKline, Inovio, Johnson & Johnson Pharmaceuticals, Regeneron, Vir Therapeutics, and Sanofi – received approvals for 3,310 biochemists, biophysicists, chemists, and other scientists through the H-1B programme.

 $US\, President's\, former\, aide\, and$ tech mogul Elon Musk has also come in support of the H-1B pro-

three issues that have been loom-The H-1B programme was ing on the horizon for years, but started in 1990, with the intention certain inertia in New Delhi, combined with an increasingly defenof helping "employers who cansive trade outlook, led to connot otherwise obtain needed certed policy inaction. Some of business skills and abilities from that is now back on the table, prethe US workforce by authorising cipitated by US President Donald the temporary employment of Trump's tariff action and the requalified individuals who are not otherwise authorised to work in alisation that this stance could continue for the better part of the

> ■ One, the heavy reliance of Indian exports on the US market is now a matter of serious debate, given that America has been India's largest trading partner for the fourth consecutive year now. The nearly \$45 billion trade surplus with the US in 2024-25 has largely counterbalanced the trade deficits with other countries, especially China. ■ Second, to de-risk from this

next three years.

overreliance on the US as a market, there might be a case to aggressively push ahead with not just bilateral deals, but also to be open to the possibility of joining a big multilateral deal in order to integrate into the global supply chains. While China-led RCEP is unlikely to be that option, the Japan-led Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership or CPTPP could be a possibility. Especially, given that the UK has joined the CPTPP, and the European Union has applied to join the 12-nation pact. China is not yet in. There is a view in New Delhi that India should try to get in by formally applying for a membership to the CPTPP, before China attempts to get in. For this, however, India will have to go through the accession process to join the CPTPP, unlike in the RCEP, where India was an original negotiating State. The positive thing, cluding Japan, Australia and the ASEAN countries are keen that India joins in. A section within the Union government, though, continues to be vehemently against multilateral trade deals, citing objections from sections of industry,

especially the bigger enterprises. ■ Third, while the US has repeatedly peddled its trade deficit with India, the fact is that America runs close to a \$40 billion overall surplus in its trade with India. if revenues from digital services, financial activities, royalties, education and arms trade are taken into account. Analysts have said that this misplaced deficit claim by the US should be counteracted with the overall deficit figures, in a bid to strengthen India's negotiating

position, as and when trade talks

Others

494

838

590

Textbooks/

<u>stationery</u>

1,664

2,867

2,002

deleverage overreliance on

US market, push reforms

**Vulnerability** of strategy

THE PROBLEM for India's export sector is that it got used to the comforts of the US market - the fact that there was easy access to that big consumer market and that America's streamlined customs procedures and entry norms offered a seamless experience for exporters. That vulnerability of strategy now stands exposed.

resume. There is a belief that the secondary tariffs will go away at some point in the next few months, but the primary 25 per cent tariffs could stay. So the worst case scenario from India's point of view is already here. "One can only go up from rock bottom," an official said

#### Excessive reliance on the US market

The real big problem for India's export sector is that it has gotten used to the comforts of the US market — the fact that there was easy access to that big consumer market and that America's streamlined customs procedures and entry norms offered a seamless experience for exporters. Till Trump took charge in January, Indian goods going into the US faced just an average 4 per cent tariff and virtually no non-tariff barriers. This lulled Indian exporters and the supporting government machinery to double down on the American market. with virtually no real efforts to hedge this exposure over the years. That vulnerability of strategy now stands exposed, just as Europe's overdependence on the US defence blanket has not been

As of 2024, the US accounted for around 18 per cent of India's total exports, a rise from 15 per cent in 2017 and 11 per cent during the lows of the post-financial crisis in 2010. The share of Chinese exports, meanwhile, going to the US has declined from 20 per cent to 14 per cent since 2017, as Beijing consciously diversified its export basket. India's overreliance on a single market has given Trump a crucial leverage point with India, which he is unabashedly exploiting at the cost of the strategic and diplomatic relationship, which both sides had painstakingly invested in over the last three decades and one that New Delhi had pretty much taken for granted. The belief in government circles here that even in the worst

case scenario, Washington DC would maintain a tariff differential between India and China is now a pipedream, at least till Trump's next tariff tweak.

With the steep 50 per cent tariffs kicking in, India's exports of low-margin and labour-intensive goods ranging from apparel, textiles, gems and jewellery to shrimps, carpets and furniture, are set to become unviable in the American market, jeopardising low-skilled jobs in India. The impact to the economy as

a whole might be somewhat overstated, given that exports to the US accounts for less than 2 per cent of India's GDP and that nearly 40 per cent of export sectors including pharma and electronics are exempted from the punitive tariffs for now. The problem for policymakers, however, is the outsized impact of this disruption on the employment sector, given the labour-intensiveness of India's export basket to the US. Meanwhile, competitors like Vietnam, Bangladesh, Cambodia, and even China and Pakistan, which currently face lower tariffs from the Donald Trump administration, are set to benefit from India's potential losses.

To counterbalance the immediate impact, exporters have asked for facilitating access to big domestic buyers, including the Indian Railways and procurement by various government departments and undertakings. The Centre is exploring the possibility of a stop-gap package, including cheaper credit. The problem is that it is not known how long this pain will last and if there is no visibility into how the demand itself will be impacted, credit sops can only solve a small part of this problem. The Federation of Indian Export Organisations said Tuesday that textiles and apparel manufacturers in Tirupur, Noida, and Surat have halted production amid worsening cost competitiveness and uncertainties over flow of fresh orders.

#### **Positive factors**

On the brighter side, India is now in a much better position to negotiate multilateral deals as compared to when it jettisoned the RCEP talks, given that New Delhi has now shed some of its diffidence on the trade front. In the UK deal signed earlier this year, some degree of realism in opening up segments of imports in areas where the country has been relatively weak or in sectors such as intermediate goods. That is being seen as a positive step, given India's tariff structure currently has rigidities that include high tariffs on inputs and intermediate goods, which acts as a disadvantage to domestic players. With the UK. India has shown accommodation in certain areas that the other side has pushed for, which officials in New Delhi termed as part of a "structured and balanced market access offer" that followed a "development-oriented quota based liberalisation" process. This includes Scotch whiskey and cars.

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

#### year since 2015. People born in with a presence in the US clear. Certainly it's not an easy Govt pushes for e-commerce exports; MSMEs ask govt to allow FDI in inventory-led model

**RAVIDUTTA MISHRA** 

NEW DELHI. AUGUST 27

THE COMMERCE and Industry Ministry has begun consultations with industry stakeholders rangplayers including American retail firms Amazon and Walmartowned Flipkart to Indian smallscale manufacturers and midsegment retailers to explore models that could boost e-commerce exports, a source told *The* Indian Express. This comes in the backdrop of sharp 50 per cent US tariffs on India.

"One round of consultation has taken place and the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has invited stakeholders for a second round of talks next

**EU trade** 

commissioner

New Delhi: European Comm-

issioner for Trade Maros Sefc-

ovic is likely to visit India next

month to take stock of progress

of free trade agreement nego-

tiations with Commerce

Minister Piyush Goyal, an offi-

cial said on Wednesday. PTI

Auction of five

critical mineral

blocks cancelled

New Delhi: The government

has cancelled the auction of five

critical mineral blocks, includ-

ing a rare earth element (REE)

block in Karnataka, in the fifth round of auction due to poor re-

sponse. There were no bids for

three blocks — two glauconite

mines in Gujarat and Chhattisgarh and one Nickel

and PGE (Platinum Group

Element) block in Karnataka

which led to cancellation of

their auction, the mines min-

istry said in a notice.

Employment in

industries rises

5.92% in FY24

New Delhi: Employment in in-

dustries increased by 5.92 per

cent to 1.95 crore in 2023-24

from 1.84 crore in 2022-23

according to the latest Annual

Survey of Industries (ASI) re-

leased on Wednesday.

Govt appoints

likely to visit

week. The current agenda is to explore ways to boost exports under the e-commerce Export Hubs (ECEHs) model that was announced in the Union Budget and explore what can be done to aid MSMEs," the source quoted above said.

The source said that various methods to boost e-commerce exports are being explored, but there is a major difference of opinion among stakeholders regarding the inventory-based model of e-commerce. "MSMEs have asked the government to allow FDI in the inventory-based model as it could help ease the compliance burden, but there is significant opposition," the

At present, 100 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI) is allowed under the automatic route

Under the inventorybased model of e-commerce inventory of goods and services can be owned by e-commerce entities and sold directly to consumers

in the marketplace model of ecommerce, but FDI is not permitted in the inventory-based model of e-commerce. "The government is looking at the inventory-based model to see if MSMEs can benefit from it amid US tariffs. MSMEs want it as it could ease compliance burden but retailers oppose the

Under the inventory-based model of e-commerce inventory of goods and services can be owned by e-commerce entities and sold directly to consumers. The marketplace-based model, by contrast, only allows e-commerce companies to have a digital and electronic network to act as a facilitator between buyer and seller.

Notably, India's e-commerce industry is primarily dominated by small businesses that export products valued between \$25 and \$1,000, with popular items including handicrafts, art, books, ready-made garments, gems and jewellery. According to think tank GTRI, India's e-commerce exports have the potential to reach \$350 billion by 2030.

Experts say that Indian exports through e-commerce curwhereas China's exports have reached \$300 billion. As per a GTRI report. India's e-commerce exports have the potential to grow at a faster pace than its IT exports did in the early 2000s. But despite this potential, India's current ecommerce export numbers remain far below expectations.

"India's current e-commerce export provisions are a patchwork of rules framed for regular B2B exporters. This creates an enormous compliance burden on small firms, and India needs to address all such issues in one place. To address such needs, the report recommends that the Indian government issue a separate e-commerce export policy. E-commerce policies in China, Korea, Japan, Vietnam, etc., have helped many firms sell globally," GTRI said in the report.

#### FINANCE MINISTRY'S MONTHLY ECONOMIC REVIEW FOR JULY

### Secondary, tertiary effects of US tariffs on economy pose challenges: FinMin report

**ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 27

THE IMMEDIATE impact of an extra 50 per cent US tariff on Indian exports may appear limited, but their secondary and tertiary effects on the economy pose challenges that must be addressed, the Finance Ministry said in its latest monthly economic report.

In this context, the ongoing India-US trade negotiations will be crucial, it said in its July review of the economy, even as uncertainties persist on whether the tariff quantum could be min-

The US government has im-

'India may be

and the private sector, acting in tandem and concert, can keep the disruptions to a minimum' - FINANCE MINISTRY'S

🥊 ... the government

MONTHLY ECONOMIC REVIEW

posed a total of 50 per cent additional tariffs on Indian exports to America, barring a few sectors, beginning Wednesday. The tariff increase will make Indian goods uncompetitive in several sectors, as many other Asia Pacific countries attract a 15-20 per cent tariff.

While India is actively pursuing a diversified trade strategy to sustain its resilient trade performance, "these initiatives will take time to show results and may not fully address the shortfall in exports to the US that may arise if the current tariff rates on India persist," the Ministry said.

India recently concluded free trade agreements (FTAs) with the UK and EFTA and ongoing FTA negotiations with the US, EU, New Zealand, Chile, and Peru.

While upgrading India's rating to 'BBB' from 'BBB-', S&P Global Ratings recently said though the US is India's largest trading partner, "we do not expect the 50 per cent tariffs (if imposed) to pose a material drag on growth." India's exports to the US constitute about 2 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Factoring in sectoral exemptions on pharmaceuticals and consumer electronics, the exposure of Indian exports subjected to tariffs is lower at 1.2 per cent of GDP.

"While near-term risks to economic activity, principally exports and capital formation, remain due to tariff-related uncertainties, the government and the private sector, acting in tandem and concert, can keep the disruptions to a minimum," the Ministry said.

It said setbacks eventually make "us stronger and more agile, if handled properly."

#### **STATISTICS MINISTRY SURVEY**

#### Almost half of all 11th, 12th urban students take private coaching private coaching during the year,

Uniforms

887

1.540

1,070

the 2nd-largest **SIDDHARTHUPASANI** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 27

released.

economy by 2038 in PPP terms'

New Delhi: India's economy could reach \$20.7 trillion in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP) by 2030 and may emerge as the second-largest economy by 2038 with \$34.2 trillion GDP, an EY report said on Wednesday

The report also said that with appropriate countermeasures, India can limit the adverse impact of higher US tariffs on selected Indian imports to about 10 basis points of real GDP growth.

India is emerging as one of the most dynamic among the world's five largest economies, with strong economic fundamentals including high savings and investment rates, favourable demographics, and a sustainable fiscal position, said the the August 2025 issue of EY Economy Watch.

ban students in classes 11th and

12th are spending Rs 9,950 per

year on average on private coach-

ing, more than twice as much as

their rural counterparts, who are

**Private** ALMOST HALF of all urban Indian students in the 11th and 12th standard have taken private Rural 3,979 1,793 1,359 coaching classes in the current ac-15,143 3,988 3,082 ademic year, according to a new Urban survey by the Statistics Ministry All-India 7,111 2,409 1,842

AVERAGE EXPENDITURE PER STUDENT

As per the Ministry of Note: All figures in rupees for the academic year | Source: MoSPI Statistics and Programme Implementation's (MoSPI) Comprehensive Modular Survey: Education, released on Tuesday, 44.6 per cent of all urban students in the higher secondary segment were taking or had taken private coaching during the year, with the proportion for rural areas lower at 33.1 per cent. On the whole, 37 per cent of all Indian students in classes 11th and 12th took private coaching this year. In terms of expenditure, ur-

spending Rs 4,548. At an all-India level, the average expenditure per student on private coaching in the higher secondary segment is Rs 6,384, survey data showed. The amount of money being spent on private coaching by Indian households will be a concern to policymakers, with India seeing a boom in online and offline classes in recent years amid a race to secure high marks and coveted seats in the top educational institutions of the country. As per data provided by the

collected in 2019-20. Big chunk of As per MoSPI's most recent

education ministry in July 2024 to the Rajya Sabha, the Goods and

Services Tax (GST) from coaching institutions had risen to Rs 5,517.45 crore in 2023-24, more than double the Rs 2,240.73 crore by The Indian Express.

### household spending

Household Consumer Expenditure Survey (HCES) the annual consumption expenditure of Indian households in rural areas in 2023-24 was Rs 49,464. Urban households, meanwhile, spent Rs 83,952 on average in a year on all goods and services. As such, households whose children are in 11th and 12th may be spending as much as 9-12 per cent of their annual consumption expenditure just on private coaching classes, per calculations

As per the 2023-24 HCES, 'education' accounted for 3.24 per cent of rural households' monthly per capita consumption expenditure, almost half the urban households' figure of 5.97 per cent.

Across all levels, the MoSPI survey data released on Tuesday showed 27 per cent of all Indian students were taking or had taken

with the proportion being higher in urban areas at 30.7 per cent compared to 25.5 per cent in rural areas. In terms of the costs, the average annual household expenditure on private coaching per student in urban areas was Rs 3,988, Rs 1,793 in rural areas, and Rs 2,409 at a national level. The survey, part of the 80th

round of the National Sample Survey (NSS), was conducted during April-June and covered 52,085 households in total -28,401 in rural areas and 23,684 in urban areas - with data collected from 57,742 students currently enrolled in schools across India. "Although the survey mainly aims to generate nationallevel estimates to support the requirements of the Department of School Education and Literacy, wherever possible, disaggregated estimates at the sub-national level have also been presented in

the report," MoSPI said. To be sure, the survey does not cover private coaching for skills such as coding and foreign language classes or extracurricular activities like art, dance, music

The last time a survey on household consumption of education was conducted was from July 2017 to June 2018, which showed that 19.8 per cent of students attended private coaching centres. However, the statistics ministry cautioned on Tuesday that the findings of that survey "cannot be directly compared" with those of the latest one as anganwadi centres were previously not classified under pre-primary education and expenditures on school education earlier included private coaching.

#### **Transport expensive** than uniforms

Private coaching classes apart, school-going children spent as little as Rs 2.639 in a year on a government school education in rural areas to as high as Rs 35,758 in unaided private schools in urban areas.

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

Pune

Corporation of India.

has been appointed as the MD of state-owned Solar Energy

New Delhi: Akash Tripathi, an IAS officer of the 1998 batch

Akash Tripathi as SECI MD

# THE WORLD

#### **TOPOFTHE** WORLD



Abbas Araqchi. File

#### IAEA back in Iran, no deal over inspections yet

Dubai: UN nuclear inspec-

tors have returned to Iran for the first time since it suspended cooperation with them in the wake of Israel's attacks on its nuclear sites, Iranian state mereported on Iranian Wednesday. Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi told lawmakers Tehran had still not reached an agreement on how it would resume full work with the UN's IAEA watchdog, parliament news agency ICANA reported. But he said the inspectors would supervise the changing of fuel at Iran's

#### **PAKISTAN**

#### Imran's party to boycott upcoming bypolls

Bushehr nuclear power

plant. The comments come

after Iran met with France.

Britain and Germany over

UN sanctions. **REUTERS** 

Islamabad: Jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's party has decided to boycott the upcoming byelections for national and provincial assemblies, in line with the opinion of its founder. Several seats of the national and provincial assemblies became vacant last month after the conviction of leaders of Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for their involvement in the May 9, 2023 riots. The decision to boycott the by-elections was taken by the party's political committee, which met to consider Khan's input following a meeting with his legal team at Adiala Jail on Tuesday, The Dawn newspaper reported.

#### **AFGHANISTAN** Passenger bus crash kills 25

in Kabul: Govt Islamabad: A passenger bus overturned

Afghanistan's capital early Wednesday, killing at least 25 people, a Taliban official said. It happened early in the morning in the Arghandi area of Kabul. The bus was coming from southern Afghanistan with passengers from Helmand and Kandahar, Reckless driving caused the accident, which also injured 27 people, Interior Ministry spokesman Abdul Mateen Qani said. The accident comes less than a week after a crash that killed about 80 people in the western province of Herat.

#### MORE THAN 80% OF GAZA IS ISRAELI MILITARY ZONE NOW

## Israel tells Gaza City residents to leave, US to host talks on post-war situation

WAFAA SHURAFA, SAM METZ& SALLY ABOU ALJOUD GAZA CITY, AUGUST 27

ISRAELI AND US officials were to meet Wednesday in Washington to discuss post-war Gaza, even as Israel's military called the evacuation of Gaza City "inevitable" ahead of a new offensive and no signs of a ceasefire

The meeting comes amid mounting outrage over this week's double Israeli strike on a southern Gaza hospital that killed journalists, emergency responders and others. The toll from the attack on Nasser Hospital rose to 22 after two more people died Wednesday, Gaza health officials said.

The Israeli military, which has said it will investigate, offered no immediate explanation for striking twice and no evidence for an assertion that six of

#### 'US influence ops in Greenland': Denmark summons envoy

**REUTERS** 

COPENHAGEN, AUGUST 27

DENMARK'S FOREIGN minister has summoned the top U.S. diplomat in Copenhagen over intelligence reports alleging covert influence operations by US citizens in Greenland that aimed to whip up opposition to Danish rule, the ministry said on Wednesday.

Public broadcaster DR reported that at least three Americans with ties to the Trump administration were suspected of involvement in the efforts, which also sought to promote Greenland's secession from Denmark to the US. "If anyone thinks they can influence it by creating a 'fifth column' or that type of activity then it is contrary to the way states cooperate," said Danish Foreign Minister Lars Lokke



Palestinian families leaving Gaza City on Tuesday. AP

the dead were militants. President Donald Trump was presiding over a policy meeting on the Gaza war on Wednesday with input from former British Prime Minister Tony Blair and former Trump Middle East envoy Jared Kushner, a senior

TIMEVANS&BENBREWER

A BLACK-CLAD gunman killed

two children and wounded 17

other people on Wednesday,

when he opened fire on students

attending Mass at a Minneapolis

Catholic school, authorities said.

early 20s, fired dozens of rounds

through the church windows

and then took his own life, offi-

shotgun and a pistol, they said.

violence against innocent chil-

dren and other people worship-

ing. The sheer cruelty and cow-

ardice of firing into a church full

of children is absolutely incom-

prehensible," Minneapolis Police

Chief Brian O'Hara told reporters.

days after school started at

Annunciation Catholic School, a

The shooting occurred two

cials said.

The assailant, a man in his

He was armed with a rifle, a

"This was a deliberate act of

MINNEAPOLIS, AUG 27

White House official said. Trump, top White House officials, Blair and Kushner were discussing all aspects of the Gaza issue, including escalating food aid deliveries, the hostage crisis, post-war plans and more, the of-

The Israeli military on Wednesday told residents of Gaza City to prepare to leave. "The evacuation of Gaza City is inevitable," spokesperson Avichay Adraee wrote in Arabic on X. He said Israeli forces have surveyed vast empty areas south of the city "to assist the evacuating residents as much as possible." He said the displaced would receive space for tents, and infrastructure would be set up to distribute aid and water.

More than 80% of Gaza is designated as an Israeli military zone or subject to displacement orders, the U.N. humanitarian agency said in June.

Israel has pressed ahead with plans to mobilize tens of thousands of reservists. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said the military will launch its offensive while simultaneously pursuing a ceasefire. Hamas said last week that it accepted a ceasefire plan from Arab mediators. AP WITH REUTERS INPUTS

Gunman opens fire in Minneapolis school,

Parents comfort their children near the crime scene, after

the shooting on Wednesday in Minneapolis. Reuters

kills two children, himself, say officials

#### **UNSC** members. except for US, say famine in Gaza is 'man-made crisis'

**ALL UNITED Nations Security** Council members, except the United States, on Wednesday said the famine in Gaza was a "manmade crisis" and warned that the use of starvation as a weapon of war is banned under international humanitarian law.

In a joint statement, the 14 council members called for an immediate, unconditional and permanent ceasefire, the release of all hostages held by Hamas and other groups, a substantive surge of aid throughout Gaza, and for Israel to immediately and unconditionally lift all restrictions on aid. The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification system said Friday that 514,000 people in Gaza are experiencing famine. REUTERS

name and said they were trying

tigating multiple online videos

to determine if they were posted

by the shooter, according to two

sources who spoke on condition

were treating 15 children and

two adults, with many suffering

regular basis in the U.S., spurring

ongoing debates about gun laws

and school safety. There have

been more than 140 such inci-

dents so far this year, according

to the K-12 School Shooting

thoughts and prayers right now.

These kids were literally praying.

It was the first week of school.

They were in a church," Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey

said at a news conference, visibly angry. **REUTERS** 

"Don't just say this is about

Local hospitals said they

School shootings occur on a

Law enforcement was inves-

to identify a motive.

of anonymity.

gunshot wounds



The site of a Russian strike in Sumy region, Wednesday. Reuters

### Kremlin opposes Europe plans on Ukraine security

European troops in Ukraine would mean a NATO presence, says Moscow

**REUTERS** 

MOSCOW, AUGUST 27

RUSSIA TAKES a negative view of European proposals on security guarantees for Ukraine and will not accept any presence of NATO troops on its neighbour's terri-tory, the Kremlin said on Wednesday.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov praised U.S. President Donald Trump's efforts to end the war in Ukraine as "very important" however, and said Moscow hoped they would continue. As part of a potential peace settlement, Ukraine's European allies are working to put together a set of guarantees for Ukraine that would protect it from a possible future attack by Russia.

But Peskov said a European troop deployment in Ukraine would mean a NATO presence there, which he said was something Russia had aimed to prevent from the start. "In fact, at the very beginning, it was the advancement of NATO military infrastructure and the infiltration of this military infrastructure into Ukraine that could probably be named among the root causes of the conflict situation that arose," he said "So we have a negative attitude towards these discussions."

All sides agree that security guarantees for Ukraine must be part of any peace deal, but disagree fundamentally on what form they should take.

Russia says it should be one of the guarantors of Ukraine's security and wants to revive a proposal that was discussed between the two sides in 2022, in the early weeks of the war. Kyiv rejects that, saying it would have given Moscow an effective veto over any outside military support for Ukraine. Peskov said security guarantees were "one of the most important topics" but that Russia did not believe it was helpful to discuss them in public. He said that this month's U.S.-Russia summit in Alaska between presidents Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin had been "very substantive, con-

structive and useful". Meanwhile, Russia launched a massive drone attack on energy and gas transport infrastructure across six Ukrainian regions overnight, leaving more than 100,000 people without power, Ukrainian officials said on

### US to allow 6 lakh Chinese students, Trump says colleges will struggle without them

**ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON** & DIDITANG

WASHINGTON, AUGUST 27

PRESIDENT DONALD Trump seemingly caught his loyal conservative base off-guard and sparked backlash by saying he would allow 600,000 Chinese students into American universities.

That would be a departure for the Trump administration after it added new vetting for student visas, moved to block foreign enrollment at Harvard and expanded the grounds for terminating international students' ability to study in the United States.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio has singled out China, the second highest source of international students in the US, saying in May that the State Department would revoke visas for students tied to the Chinese Communist Party and boost vetting of new applicants.

🏴 l hear so many stories about 'We are not going to allow their students,' but we are going to allow their students to come in... We are going to allow it. It's very important -600,000 students"

- DONALD TRUMP US PRESIDENT

"President Xi would like me to come to China. It's a very important relationship. As you know, we are taking a lot of money in from China because of the tariffs and different things," he said. "I hear so many stories about 'We are not going to allow their students,' but we are going to allow their students to come in. We are going to allow it. It's very important —

Trump's announcement Monday adds to the confusion about the administration's restrictive visa policies and its approach to China as the superpowers tussle over trade and intensifying tech competition. It also marks another divide with figures in Trump's "Make America Great Again" base, who tout an "America First" agenda and had contested the U.S. inserting itself in the recent Israel-Iran war.

private elementary school with

about 395 students connected to

a Roman Catholic church in a res-

idential area in the southeast

part of Minnesota's largest city.

Local TV showed parents duck-

Some of Trump's most ardent supporters — from US Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene to former adviser Steve Bannon and far-right activist Laura Loomer — rejected the idea of welcoming more Chinese students. It's not immediately clear why the figure Trump cited was so high - more than twice the number of Chinese students enrolled in the 2023-2024 school year. The total also has been falling in the past few years. AP

#### Trump admn to tighten duration of visas for students, media

ing under yellow police crime

tape and leading students out of

not have an extensive criminal

history. They did not provide his

Officials said the shooter did

the school.

Washington: The Trump administration aims to tighten the duration of visas for students, cultural exchange visitors and members of the media, according to a proposed government regulation issued on Wednesday, part of a broader crackdown on legal im-

migration. The student and exchange visa periods would be no longer than four years, the proposed regulation said. The visa for journalists - which currently can last years - would be up to 240 days or, in the case of Chinese nationals, 90 days. The visa holders could apply for extensions, the proposal said.

#### To preserve Lumbini, Nepal SC orders ban on industries

Kathmandu: The Nepal Supreme Court Wednesday issued a ban on setting up new industries in Lumbini, and ordered shifting of the existing ones, to save the birth place of Gautam Buddha.

A division bench of the Supreme Court comprising justice Kumar Regmi and Sunil Pokhrel ruled that the shrine must be protected, and polluting industries must be either shut down or shifted within two years

In its verdict on a petition filed by senior advocate Prakash Nani Sharma, the court said: "If Lumbini, the most revered shrine for Buddhists... and equally revered by the Hindus... dies, it can not be recreated, but industries can be set up elsewhere.' Apart from the heritage, Lumbini has also been home of 652 of the total 697 species of cranes found in Nepal, the verdict said. **ENS** 



BERLIN, AUGUST 27 GERMANY'S LEADERS on



Germany, a leading NATO and European Union member. has moved to modernize its long-neglected military since Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

New Chancellor Friedrich Merz's coalition this year pushed plans through parliament to enable higher defense spending by loosening strict rules on incurring debt. Merz has said repeatedly he wants the Bundeswehr to be "the strongest conventional



**German Cabinet clears** 

proposal for voluntary

military service, opens

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz

army in Europe.'

Germany had some 181,000

active servicepeople at the end of last year. But the government says it needs to increase that in the long term to 260,000, plus some 200,000 reservists.

"The Bundeswehr must grow - the international security situation, above all Russia's aggressive behavior, make this necessary, Defense Minister Boris Pistorius said Wednesday. The plan still needs parliamentary approval.

The plan allows for the government to move toward compulsory service "if, in the course of the next one, two or three years, we see that the target figures aren't being reached," Merz said.

#### Polls Say Immigration Has Become British Voters' Biggest Concern; Migrants & Ethnically Diverse Communities Feel Targeted

### England flags spark pride and concern amid anti-immigration protests

**CATARINA DEMONY & VITALII YALAHUZIAN** LONDON, AUGUST 27

THE RED and white St George's Cross and the Union lack flags have proliferated along streets across England in recent weeks in what supporters say is a campaign to show national pride, but others fear is part of growing anti-immigration sentiment.

The flags have emerged during a politically charged summer in Britain that has been dominated by the subject of migration, with the YouGov monthly sentiment tracker showing that tion has overtaken the economy as voters' biggest concern.

"It's our flag, we should be able to feel proud to fly it," said Livvy McCarthy, a 32-year-old bartender, as she walked past a pedestrian crossing in the Isle of Dogs, London, painted to resemble the English flag. "Every other country can do the same, so what's the problem?"

National flags often hang from public buildings in Britain, but it is rare for them to appear in the streets outside of sporting, royal or military events. The appearance of flags has coincided with a wave of protests in recent weeks

outside hotels sheltering asylum seekers. Fuelled by social media, the movement appears to have originated with the Birminghambased Weoley Warriors, with several groups now encouraging the display of more flags.

The Warriors call themselves a group of "proud English men" on their fundraising page, which says they want to show how 'proud we are of our history, freedoms and achievements".

In the 1970s, the Union flag was adopted as a symbol by the far-right National Front party, which openly promoted white supremacist views, while the Cross of St George, the patron saint of



The appearance of flags has coincided with protests in recent weeks outside hotels sheltering asylum seekers. Reuters

England, likewise was brandished Britain, with nearly half of resiby English soccer hooligans and extreme right-wing groups.

While some regard displaying the flag as showing patriotism, others, including those from migrant communities or ethnically diverse backgrounds, are concerned they are being targeted.

Stanley Oronsaye, a 52-yearold hospitality worker from Nigeria and a resident of the Isle of Dogs, said people should be free to express their views on migration policy, so long as it remains within the law. Yet he felt uneasy. The Tower Hamlets borough, which is home to the Isle of Dogs, is one of the most diverse areas in dents born outside the UK.

"The worry is from the fact that if it escalates it can turn into something else," Oronsaye said. 'It's worrisome when... nationalism is allowed to take a different tone." Iason, 25, who declined to give his last name, said the flags were about "getting English culture back... We are seeing more of other cultures than we are of our

The protests outside hotels housing asylum seekers in recent weeks were triggered in part after an Ethiopian asylum seeker staying in a hotel north of London was charged last month with sexual assault. He denies the charge It follows a wave of riots last summer targeting asylum seekers and ethnic minorities in several British cities, after three young girls were murdered, with social media falsely attributing the attack to a radical Islamist immigrant.

PM Keir Starmer said at the time the violence was the result of "far-right thuggery". Asked about the flag movement, a spokesperson for Starmer said the PM views flags as symbols of the nation's heritage and values but has recognised that some want to use it to cause conflict. Some councils have removed flags, citing safety reasons. REUTERS

■ BWF World C'ships: Round of 16: 1:30 pm onwards; Live on Star Sports & JioHotstar ■ US Open: Round 2: 8:30 pm onwards;

Live on Star Sports & JioHotstar

#### **BRIEFLY** –

#### Para Worlds: Antil to lead Indian charge

New Delhi: Three-time Paralympics medallist high jumper Mariyappan Thangavelu was one of the notable omissions from India's 73-strong team, led by star javelin thrower Sumit Antil, for next month's World Para Athletics Championships, being hosted by the country for the first time. Another high jumper Sharad Kumar, who won a bronze and a silver in Tokyo and Paris Paralympics, also failed to find a place in the squad, which has 19 women. The Indian squad was announced during the unveiling of the jersey of the players for the championships to be held at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here from September 27 to October 5. Thangavelu, 30, is a highly decorated para athlete of the country. He won a gold in the 2016 Rio Paralympics, a silver in the Tokyo edition and a bronze in the Paris Games. PTI

#### Narayana wins gold, Nirupama bags silver

Ahmedabad: Indian weightlifters Ajith Narayana and Nirupama Devi Seram delivered superlative performances to clinch the gold and silver medals in the men's 71kg and women's 63kg category respectively at the Commonwealth Championships. Narayana recorded a total lift of 317kg (145kg snatch + 172kg clean & jerk) to secure the top position on the podium, setting new Commonwealth records in the process. Naravana's victory came after a thrilling contest with Nigeria's Joseph Edidiong Umoafia, who claimed the silver medal with a total of 316kg (146kg snatch + 170kg clean & jerk), while Nauru's Ezekiel Moses won bronze, managing a total of 290kg (135kg snatch + 155kg clean & jerk). In women's 63kg, Nirupama produced an impressive performance to finish second with a total of 217kg (91kg snatch + 126kg clean & jerk). PTI

#### Bhanwala wins 25m rapid fire pistol silver

Shymkent: India's Anish Bhanwala once again showed why he is the best rapid fire pistol shooter in the country, clinching the silver medal in the Asian Shooting Championships here on Wednesday. The 22-year-old Olympian finished with a total of 35, just one shy of gold winner Su Lianbofan of China. The bronze went to Korea's Lee Jaekyoon. The Indian had a one-point lead after the first four series but fell behind after that. Another Indian in the competition, Adarsh Singh, finished fifth. Bhanwala, the 2018 Commonwealth Games gold medallist, was placed sixth with a score of 290 after the precision round of 30 shots on Tuesday, but in the rapid fire round on Wednesday, the Haryana marksman shot a superb 293 to jump to fourth place, aggregating 583 points. PTI

#### Sixth skin-cancer surgery for Clarke

Melbourne: Former Australia captain Michael Clarke has undergone a sixth surgery for skin cancer, this time to remove a lesion from his nose. The 44year-old 2015 World Cup-winning skipper posted a post-operative picture on Instagram, urging people to prioritise regular skin checks, especially in countries with high sun exposure such as Australia. "Skin cancer is real! Especially in Australia. Another one cut out of my nose today. A friendly reminder to get your skin checked. Prevention is better than cure but in my case, regular check ups and early detection is key," he wrote on instagram. Clarke was first diagnosed with skin cancer in 2006. PTI

#### **BWF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS**

# Slow start, smooth finish

As in her first match, Sindhu had to come back from the brink in first game; will have to begin better against World No. 2 Wang Zhi Yi

**VINAYAKK MOHANARANGAN** 

NOT COUNTING her walkover due to injury at the 2022 edition in Tokyo, PV Sindhu has never lost a completed match against Chinese opponents at the BWF World Championships. It is a stunning statistic that summarises her brilliant record at the marquee event, where she has won five medals.

But the streak will be tested to the fullest on Thursday in Paris, where she faces world No.2 Wang Zhi Yi. For the Indian superstar to stand any chance, she'd have to be at her best from the word go. On Wednesday, Sindhu once again overcame a slow start to defeat Letshanaa Karupathevan from Malaysia 21-19, 21-15 in 43 minutes.

There are a couple of ways to look at Sindhu's campaign at the 2025 edition thus far. One, the most obvious, is that she is through to the round of 16 without dropping a game against her two lower-ranked opponents. That was broadly what was expected from her. The other, slightly more concerning, is the slow starts she has made to both her matches. On another day, or two, she might have been made to pay — perhaps been forced to play three games and waste unnecessary fuel at the start of the tournament.

In her opening-round match against Bulgarian teenager Kalyona Nalbantova, Sindhu trailed 7-12 at one stage and then faced two game points before the youngster snatched at the chance to take the lead.

It was even more precarious on Wednesday against Letshanaa, who was up 18-12 in the opener on the back of some impressive attacking play. But on both occasions, the Indian held her nerve - and just as importantly, her younger opponents rushed at chances to close it out – to take the lead. Once she pocketed the opener, however, Sindhu's attacking strengths saw her sail through the second game.

She blew away Nalbantova with a flurry of cross-court smashes, while against Letshanaa it required the use of her pace variations, with coach Irwansvah's inputs in the intervals coming handy. On Day 1, it was perhaps a combination of unknowns – an opponent she couldn't have seen much of before and playing at the arena for the first time. "Once I understood the court, I think I was playing my game. First game in the tournament, first match, it definitely took me some time to get used to it (the playing conditions)," Sindhu had told AFP on Tuesday.

#### Different approach

While she could hit her way out of trouble against Nalbantova, against Letshanaa, it required more tactical guile. The Malaysian was hitting some wonderfully precise smashes to either flank of Sindhu, and the Indian seemed a yard off the pace in defence.

Scrambling around on the court often, Sindhu was unable to dictate the tempo of rallies as much as she would have liked. But all that changed from 12-18 down as she reeled off six straight points with a nervous Letshanaa unable to keep up her earlier attacking tempo. One smash echoed off Sindhu's racket after she nailed it down the line.

When coach Irwansyah walked over to Sindhu during the interval, he had a smile on his face, of satisfaction that his ward was able to turn things around. Sindhu nodded back.

**MATCHES PLAYED-4** 

SINDHU 2-2 WANG

SINDHU 15, WANG 2

Win-loss record in 2025

**SINDHU 8-12, WANG 39-8** 

**Current Ranking** 

**Head-to-Head** 

**PV Sindhu vs Wang Zhi Yi** 



PV Sindhu once again overcame a slow start to defeat Letshanaa Karupathevan from Malaysia 21-19, 21-15 in 43 minutes on Wednesday. BWF/Badminton photo

understanding what she had to do right.

"Yes. Don't start slow, don't follow her tempo.'

Sindhu was aware of taking the first game, as it freed her of any unnecessary pressure.

"It was very important for me to win the first game, I have managed quite well given the conditions. But I hope I don't make unforced errors from the beginning and be focused in the next match," Sindhu told olympics.com. "From 12 to 18 in Game 1, I kept pumping myself up, that it was not over. I was alert from the start in Game 2, once I knew how she was playing, I was able to maintain the lead."

That should well be Sindhu's mantra when she faces Wang in the Round of 16. She has a 2-2 record against the current world No.2. but both of her wins came well before Wang became the outright second-best player in the world. If not for the machine that is An Seyoung, she could have had a few more titles to her name

Wang's style is often likened to Chen Yufei's, a strong all-round game with no glaring weakness. And a physical ability to even push the likes of An to the limits as one saw in the epic All England final earlier this year.

Sindhu's proud record of winning all her matches against Chinese opponents at the World Championships – some of the biggest names to have played the game – will perhaps face its sternest test yet because of the current gap between the two players. But if she can mix the adaptability she has shown so far with a faster start, there might yet be a chance.

**MALAYSIA MASTERS 2024 (FINAL)** 

**PREVIOUS MATCHES** 

**ARCTIC OPEN 2023 (SF)** 

Sindhu won 21-18, 21-13

Sindhu lost 21-16, 5-21, 16-21

Sindhu lost 12-21, 21-11, 7-21

Sindhu won 21-9, 11-21, 21-15

**SINGAPORE OPEN 2022 (FINAL)** 

ALL ENGLAND OPEN 2022 (R32)

### Post setbacks on and off the court, Sat-Chi on quest to find magic again

**SHIVANI NAIK** AUGUST 27

IT'S IN that understanding silence after a clumsy clash of racquets down the middle, with the lead whittled to 20-19. Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty were flying so high from 2021-2023 that a mistake like that was unthinkable. It's in Chirag learning to linger back and letting Satwik negotiate the front court interceptions, even if he isn't nail-

ing those. Or Satwik gesturing to let it go, knowing Chirag will mull and beat himself up over his service dipping into the net. The SatChi magic is biding its time to explode, the SatChi friendship, though, is filling the cracks like Kintsugi gold and making their bond indestructible.

For a pair of fairly happy athletes riding the sunny waves — Satwik was happy-go-lucky even - the last year has been nothing short of a nightmare. Grief, on-court disappointments, injuries, and even going out of the Top 10. It's why they are on Mission: Finding Sat-Chi now. rather than fixating on medals.

Starting off at the Paris World Championship against the yuppie Taiwanese pairing of Liu Kuang Heng - Yang Po Ha speedy, restless and with a sleeve of tattoos Satwik-Chirag gulped down a few scares, and then cruised to make the Round of 16

with a 22-20, 21-13 win. A major change implemented for a few months now by coaches Tan Kim Her and Sumeeth Reddy, is that Satwik is encouraged to play front court; be in the eye of the speed storm that Asian pairings unleash with their parallel games. Liu-Yang were additionally a left-right combination, and quite upbeat about their chances to slash at the big-hitting giants. While Chirag can comfortably hit big from the back court – he is in possession of the second hardest smash in the world -Satwik has to completely inhabit that front court matrix that demands agility, quick footwork, interceptions and sharpness on shots



Satwik and Chirag beat Chinese Taipei's Yang Po Han and Liu Kuang Heng 22-20, 21-13 to enter the pre-quarterfinals. BWF/Badminton photo

at the net. He is far too good, skilled, and hard-working not to get great at it. But for rotations to click in organically, he has to get comfortable. He can kill pace on lobbed lifts, but the short-smash with the wrist at the net, makes excruciating demands of timing.

So, even when they broke from 8-8 to lead 18-14, the opponents fancied sneaking in a few points. The Indians had reached 20-16 with vintage rotating 1-2 smash, where both rise and smack it down in turns. It was almost perfect. But Satwik-Chirag know how the most perfect situations can morph into disasters in the blink of an eye. Here, the Taiwanese roared back to 20-20.

It's when Chirag had had enough. He blew them apart with the final point of that set. There was not a semblance of resistance in the second from their opponents.

#### Comeback fairytale?

So, are they looking like on their way to a comeback fairytale? Not so fast. There's Liang Weikeng-Wang Chang of China next.

Satwik will make for the goofiest philosophers, but he always finds the best direct words. "No goal. One match at a time.

matter if we win or lose. But we want that A game. It's been a while since we played that A Game, so once we are there, maybe we can do somethina here.' **SATWIKSAIRAJ RANKIREDDY** 

"Just give our best. We want to

find the SatChi back. Doesn't

Not thinking too far ahead," he told BWF after the win. "Just give our best. We want to find the SatChi back. Doesn't matter if we win or lose. But we want that A game. It's been a while since we played that A Game, so once we are there, maybe we can do something here. But we are not hoping... just give our best to get that Chirag and Satwik back and see where it goes.

Once we are there, maybe we can do something here: that is Dory's equivalent of "Just keep swimming" in Finding Nemo.

The opening set in Paris, a city that can appear like a stranger even if they've won twice there, and love it to bits — for the Olympic loss was scalding – was sobering.

"It's always tricky playing the first game, first set. You don't know what's coming, how courts are. You have to hold your nerve when leading. It's happened quite a lot of times that first game is tough, next game we got comfortable," Satwik said.

Liang-Wang are tough opponents. But they have their own goofy moments and clumsy spirals, and the Weikeng smash is as mellowed as Satwik's with shoulder troubles. A month back at a fashion show in China, Weikeng walked on the ramp, turned around and forgot to pose for a final time, and disappeared into the wings, leaving Wang perplexed. That was comical, but doubles pairings in badminton all go through moments of utter bewilderment at what the partner is up to.

Sometimes, 'Finding SatChi A game' is a good enough goal. Medals can be quite the

#### IN SEARCH OF GREENER PASTURES

### After IPL retirement, 'explorer' Ashwin could be Hundred's biggest catch

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** AUGUST 27

AFTER SAYING goodbye to the Indian Premier League (IPL), spin great Ravichandran Ashwin could be the biggest Indian catch for The Hundred tournament in England, with the media in that country claiming he is likely to turn out for one of the franchises next season.

In his retirement note on X, Ashwin said that now he will explore playing opportunities in leagues around the world.

"They say every ending will have a new start; my time as an IPL cricketer comes to a close today, but my time as an explorer of the game around various leagues begins today,' Ashwin posted on social media. "Would like to thank all the franchisees for all the wonderful memories and relationships over the years and most importantly the @IPL and the

@BCCI for what they have given me until now. Look forward to enjoying and making the most of what's ahead of me."

Soon afterwards, reports emerged that the off-spinner could be seen in action in England next year with The Daily Telegraph saying it "understands that Ashwin would be eager to play in next season's Hundred tournament.'

"Ashwin plans to play in several leagues around the world over the coming years, and has identified the Hundred as a competition in which he would be eager to appear," the report stated.

Wicketkeeper-batsman Dinesh Karthik retired from Indian cricket and appeared for Paarl Royals in the last edition of the SA20 league. Getting top Indian names for their domestic competitions has been the aspiration of boards around the cricketing world to attract eyeballs, social media attention and advertisers, but BCCI doesn't allow its players to turn out in



Ashwin began and ended his IPL career with his home franchise Chennai Super Kings (CSK), playing a key role in successive titles in 2010 and 2011. File

In his retirement note on X, Ashwin said that now he will explore playing opportunities in leagues around the world.

leagues in direct competition with the IPL unless they retire from all forms of Indian cricket international as well as domestic.

After retiring from international cricket midway through the tour of Australia late last year, and from the IPL now, he has thrown his hat in the ring to attract other franchise

The speculation around Ashwin playing The Hundred could be fuelled by the fact that at least four of the eight franchises are wholly or partly owned by owners of IPL teams, with a fifth, London Spirit 49 percent-owned by Tech Titans, a Silicon valley consortium led by Nikesh Arora, the CEO of Palo Alto Networks. It includes other Indian-origin tech tycoons such as Google's Sundar Pichai, Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella and Adobe CEO Shantanu Narayen. That there's a big Indian diaspora in Britain that the league would be keen to tap into goes without saying.

Ashwin began and ended his IPL career with his home franchise Chennai Super Kings (CSK), playing a key role in successive titles in 2010 and 2011. He also has two Champions League T20 crowns (2010 and 2014). He also turned out for Rising Pune Super Giants, Delhi Capitals, Kings XI Punjab and Rajasthan Royals. In 221 games since making his IPL debut in 2009, he managed 187 scalps, making him the fifth-highest wicket-taker in the league's history, conceding only 7.20 runs an over in the batsman-

In the 2025 season, the 38-year-old played nine games, getting seven wickets at

an average of 40.43 and an economy of 9.13. Not playing regularly had prompted Ashwin to seek clarity on his role with the franchise.

"Last season, I played only nine games; in all my years of playing in the IPL, that was the first year I played just nine games. I always used to play every game... so it was my first experience like that," he had said on a podcast on his YouTube channel. "I asked for clarity from my side, but I asked for it during the IPL season itself.

CSK acknowledged the contribution of one of their stalwarts. "Chepauk's own. The carrom-ball thiruppura-sundaran! From your first run-ups in Yellove on the dusty tracks of Anbuden to absolute spin domination in the world's grandest arenas, you've given us everything," the franchise posted on

"You've pillared our legacy and made Fortress Chepauk roar like no other! You truly have the streets, Ashwin!'

### Cabinet clears India's 2030 CWG bid, names Ahmedabad as 'ideal' host city

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** NEW DELHI, AUGUST 27

THE UNION Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Wednesday approved submission of India's bid for the 2030 Commonwealth Games. A press release from the Press Information Bureau stated that the Cabinet has further given its approval to sign the Host Collaboration Agreement (HCA) along with the required Guarantees from concerned Ministries, Departments and Authorities and sanction of required grant-in-aid to Gujarat Government, in case the bid gets accepted.

Additionally, it also named Ahmedabad as an "ideal" venue because of its "world class stadiums, cutting-edge training facilities, and a passionate sporting culture". "The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved the proposal of the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports for submission of bid for the Commonwealth Games (CWG) 2030." stated the PIB release.

The decision comes just days after the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) gave its nod to the proposal after a submission of the 'Expression of Interest' in March. "It also gave its approval to sign the Host Collaboration Agreement (HCA) along with the required Guarantees from concerned Ministries, Departments and Authorities and sanction of required grant-in-aid to Gujarat Government, in case the bid gets accepted," the release added.

August 31 is the last date to submit the bid for the event and the IOA is expected to complete the formalities in the next 48 hours. India last hosted the CWG in 2010.

The General Assembly of Commonwealth Sport will decide the host country in the last week of November in Glasgow. India's chances of bagging the event have brightened as Canada has pulled out of the race citing budgetary constraints. The PIB statement after the cabinet meeting stated that Ahmedabad would be the ideal host city for the Games. "Ahmedabad is an ideal host city offering world class stadiums, cutting-edge training facilities, and a passionate sporting culture. Narendra Modi Stadium, the largest stadium in the world, has already demonstrated its capability by successfully hosting the 2023 ICC Cricket World Cup Final," it said.

The cabinet further stated through the PIB that hosting the event in India would "leave a lasting impact" on "tourism, creating jobs and inspiring millions of young athletes."

'Apart from that, a large number of professionals will be getting opportunities in Sports science, Event Operations and Management, Logistics and transport coordinators, Broadcast and media, IT and communications, Public relations and communications and in other fields as well.

"Hosting such a globally prestigious event will foster a strong sense of national pride and unity. It will provide a shared national experience and boost the morale of our Nation. It will inspire a new generation of athletes to enter into Sports as a career option and encourage greater participation in sports at all levels.

India is also aiming to conduct the 2036 Olympic Games and for that too, Ahmedabad is a front-runner as the host citv. The citv's sporting infrastructure is being upgraded in line with this ambition. The Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Sports Enclave is one of the prime venues that is currently under construction and apart from the Narendra modi Cricket Stadium, it is designed to house an aquatics centre and a football stadium along with two arenas for indoor sports.

It also gave its approval to sign the **Host Collaboration Agreement** (HCA) along with the required **Guarantees from concerned** Ministries, Departments and Authorities and sanction of required grant-in-aid to Gujarat Government, in case the bid gets accepted.'

**PIB STATEMENT** 

# Shining diamond before the big gold

Tonight's finale will be the first of Neeraj's two major targets, the other being World Athletics C'ship

**NIHAL KOSHIE** 

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 27

RAINY WITH light winds, humidity and the temperature around 18 degrees Celsius – the conditions are set to be tough on Thursday night when India's Neeraj Chopra and six other javelin stars compete in the Diamond League Final at the Letzigrund stadium in Zurich. Chopra returns to a venue where he made history three years ago, becoming the first Indian to win a Diamond League Final. In the two subsequent finals, he finished runner-up with only a centimetre separating him from the winner, Grenada's Anderson Peters, at last year's finale in Brussels.

Peters, a two-time world champion, cannot be written off in the big events even though on current form Neeraj will watch out for the clear and present danger from a German, Julian Weber, who gave him a run for his money this season.

Since the Paris Olympics, the name of a human hulk from across the border gets often mentioned as a real threat to Chopra's World Championship ambitions, the most-anticipated track and field competition this year. Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem, however, has not competed since winning the gold medal at the Asian Athletics Championships in South Korea's Gumi in May. Since the Olympics final, Neeraj and Nadeem have not featured in the same competition. Nadeem has focused on post calf-surgery rehabilitation. Those seeing the men's javelin only through the India-versus-Pakistan lens should start paying attention to Germany's Weber.

At the Diamond League final in Zurich on Thursday, Neeraj will run into Weber, the 30vear-old without an Olympic or a World Championship medal. But this could be the year, the 2022 European champion leaves an imprint on the world stage. If he does so, Weber will also restore Germany's status as a powerhouse in men's javelin. The last German to finish on the podium at the World Championship or the Olympic Games was Johannes Vetter, a bronze in 2019.

#### Germany's lost glory

Over the past half decade, injuries to Vetter and 2016 Rio Olympics champion Thomas Röhler have hit men's javelin stocks in the country. For Weber it's been a case of so near yet so far in the Neeraj-Nadeem-Anderson Peters era. He finished fourth at three major competitions — the Tokyo Olympics in 2021, the Eugene World Championships in 2022 and the Budapest World Championships in 2023 - and was sixth at the Paris Olympics.

However, Weber's season so far has been bookended by two impressive throws, the



Neeraj Chopra returns to Zurich where, in 2022, he became the first Indian to win the Diamond League Final. Diamond League /X

latest less than a week before the Diamond

At the Doha Diamond League in May, Weber raised his game even as Chopra did. Both men entered the 90-metre club for the first time, Weber in dramatic fashion with 91.06 metres in the final round after Chopra had produced his best-ever 90.23 in the third round. The direction of the wind in Doha helped the throwers but what stood out was Weber's resilience to fightback when he seemed destined to finish second best.

On the eve of the Diamond League final Chopra said if he gets his technique right in competition, he is capable of consistently hitting the 90-metre mark. "I really want to throw more and more consistently... 90 metres. It (Doha) was early in the season, but I still tried to find good technique. In training we are doing really good with my coach Jan Zelezny. I need to focus on the same technique in competition," Chopra said.

When asked about his speed on the runway, he added: "In the run up I am really, really fast, but I don't think I am using speed right now. In Doha the 90 meter throw was really good, but technically I don't want to say that was perfect. If my left leg is straight and I use the perfect block that will be a really good throw. Then I will be satisfied with my speed."

India's world champion also said he was taking inspiration from Zelezny on how to produce big throws. "When Jan competed he threw more than 50 times over 90 metres,

THE FINAL FIELD 90.23m 90.23m Neeraj Chopra (Ind) Julian Weber (Ger) 91.06m 91.06m Anderson Peters (Grn) 93.07m 84.51m 92.72m Julius Yego (Ken) Keshorn Walcott (TTO) 86.30m 90.16m Andrian Mardare (Mda) 82.38m 86.66m

79.33m | 79.44m

he was at another level. I always followed him, how he managed all the pressure and these distances. He was really consistent. He always said, technique is my biggest weapon. So I really try to understand what he wants to say, and what he tells me during training. Because technically I don't think I am at a good level, so I am trying to improve technique," Chopra added.

Simon Wieland (Sui)

After winning in Doha, Weber was asked if he had peaked too early in the season. He said there was more to come. "It is a big motivation for me. I know I have much more potential," he said.

He sent out another warning with an impressive 89.65 metres to win the Brussels Diamond League last week with Chopra pulling out. "It will mean a lot (winning a medal at the World Championships) for me. I mean I have been fourth three times at the World Championships and the Olympics,'

Since Doha, Neeraj and Weber have split honours in the two competitions they have competed in together — Weber (86.12m) winning in Chorzow, Poland, in May and Neeraj staving off Weber in the Paris Diamond League in June.

But the real test for Weber will be if he can deliver a medal on the big stage at next month's World Championships. He has bitter memories of World Championships and Olympics, and will want to change that. He's spoken about how the pressure of expectations got to him at the Eugene World Championships. "That was the first time where I had difficulties with mental things. Before, I never had problems. I was always on beast mode, competition mode, throwing much farther in competition than training. But this time there was pressure on me. I made it for myself, but also from my surroundings. The news was (saying) the Germans are not any good at sport, there are not many medals, I felt I was one of the only hopes," Weber had told World Athletics. He bounced back to win the Europeans Championships but the big medal has eluded him.

He started off early in athletics but then turned his attention to handball from the age of 12 to 16. It was his athletics coach who convinced him to return to javelin because of his strong right arm. After a series of disappointments at the big events, Weber, at 30, seems primed to achieve his full potential. Live on Diamond League

YouTube Page, 11.15pm

### Pragg stays in the hunt for Sinquefield Cup

**MAYANK** 

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 27

THE 2025 Sinquefield Cup has been a slowmoving affair. The impressive field and eight tightly contested rounds have ensured that no single player has managed to secure an unassailable lead. The standings are incredibly cramped, so much so that even seventhplaced Samuel Sevian has a genuine shot at finishing in the top two.

R. Praggnanandhaa, a joint-leader ahead of the penultimate round, played a safe draw against the USA's Wesley So. Another co-leader, Fabiano Caruana, also shared points with France's Maxime Vachier-Lagrave, ensuring the status quo remained unchanged heading into the final round. Both Praggnanandhaa and So played a spotless game with an identical accuracy of 98.9 percent, giving each other practically no chance to make any inroads.

The GM from Chennai will now take on Levon Aronian in the final round, while Caruana will lock horns with Gukesh D in a double dose of Indo-American clashes. Praggnanandhaa may fancy his chances if the tournament moves to a tiebreak against Caruana, considering all three of his classical wins in 2025 — at the Tata Steel Masters, the Superbet Chess Classic Romania, and the Uzchess Cup — were secured in tiebreaks. 'This year, playoffs have been good for me. But you never know what's going to happen,' Praggnanandhaa said.

Gukesh, who had nothing to lose after a mediocre event, went up against Aronian for his eighth round clash and played the Queen's Indian game. Coming in with a fighting approach, Gukesh gained a slight advantage out of the opening. He created a material imbalance in the hope of striking with the light pieces but Aronian had no real difficulty in equalising the position in the middle-game

In an extremely difficult endgame to convert with a bishop pair and a two-pawn advantage against a rook and a bishop, Gukesh gave it all. He kept on asking difficult questions to Aronian in an attempt to break him down. The American started to lose his grip towards the fag end of the game, but the position being so complex to handle, Gukesh failed to find any winning ideas. The moment he allowed his opponent to exchange the light-squared bishop, the in-form Aronian pounced on the opportunity and chopped off Gukesh's two extra pawns in exchange for his one pawn. The position equalised.

Soon after, Gukesh -- desperately looking for a win under a severe time crunch -- made a one-move blunder by misplacing his other bishop with just eight seconds left on the clock. The position was resignable for White, but this time, it was Aronian, who missed the winning move. Gukesh quickly exchanged all the remaining pieces left on the board, sealing the fate of the game in a draw.

### Gauff's new-look serve is still throwing up familiar old problems

#### **NAMITKUMAR**

SERVING FOR the win in the third set of what was meant to be a routine tournament opener at the US Open but turned into a humdinger Coco Gauff was confronted with a familiar

Up 5-4. Gauff panicked, committing two double faults to take her total for the match to 10, and giving her opponent, the unseeded Australian Ajla Tomljanovic, a way back into the match. After composing herself again, she stood up to the challenge with a familiar steel, returning serves with force and producing phenomenal defence to steal the break of serve

and eventually seal the 6-4, 6-7(2), 7-5 victory. There may have been positives in Gauff's performance; she rode the crowd's raucous support at the tournament she considers the most important, and she showed her typical appetite to grit and grind out a victory upon which she built both the Major triumphs of her career. But the iffy performance of her serve – the part of her game that has troubled her throughout the season and for which she made a high-risk, last-minute change on the eve of the tournament – continues to rankle. Gauff had let go of her successful partner-

ship with Brad Gilbert, who guided her to her first Major at her home slam in New York in 2023, last year. He had paved the way for Matt Daly, more of a technician than a psychological ker, who was expected to fix the more concerning issues in her technique.

Daly had made adjustments to the western grip of her weaker forehand and tried to get her to stop retreating behind the baseline and become more of the aggressor in baseline exchanges. But most crucially, he concerned himself with her serve, suggesting its flimsiness needed to be fixed via a change in grip.

The results were nonexistent. In 2025, Gauff ticked off a major goal, winning her second Major at the French Open and making sure to avoid the tag of a one-hit wonder. She had a positive clay season, reaching two WTA 1000 finals on the surface too. But away from the dirt, her season has been lacklustre to say the least; in Australia, she was out in the quarterfinal, and in Wimbledon she lost in the first round. Since the Paris triumph, she has only won five of her nine matches.

And the service is the major sticking point. For a player of her quality, she falters on the sin-



The service has troubled Coco Gauff throughout the season, Al

gular controllable of the sport a phenomenal amount. This year, prior to the start of the tournament, Gauff had made an astonishing 320 double faults, 95 more than the next-worst player. She has won just 42.7% of the points behind her second serve.

Daly's inputs were uninspiring, so Gauff hit the reset button. A week before the start of the Major in Flushing Meadows, Gauff announced she had parted ways with Daly and hired biomechanics specialist Gavin MacMillan.

MacMillan had previously worked with current World No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka, taking her from a double fault machine to one of the most consistent servers on the tour MacMillan's methods are simple but not

simplistic. He does not believe double faults re a sign of mental fatigue nor of a longstanding technical deficit. The service motion, right from the ball toss to the point of impact, is the area that requires adjustment. And in Gauff's first match since hiring the

specialist, he had indeed seemed to have influenced some change. Gauff served with a slower, more assured motion. She was evidently trying to go for greater accuracy and spins as opposed to speeds. She was trying to place the ball outside of her opponent's comfort zone as opposed to blowing her off

It worked, and then it didn't. The American 21-year-old fought back from a break down in the first set and then led by a break in the second before she cracked. The double faults started pouring out, and once again, she began trying to serve bombs, with plenty of errors.

The serve is not the only area of Gauff's game that needs improvement. Tomljanovic's singular strategy seemed to be

to repeatedly test her weaker forehand, especially while returning second serves, and there were stretches in the match where it worked almost too well.

It shows that for all the prodigal talent and early success she has enjoyed, there are still huge margins for improvement. This season has been a testament to that. The US Open may be a testament to whether a sudden shake-up can be effective in creating those refinements, or whether the call is a panicked, last-minute punt.

She had to do it the old way on Tuesday. She can't always rely on that.

KEY RESULTS: Men's singles Rd 1: 1-Jannik Sinner (ITA) beat Vit Kopriva (CZE) 6-1 6-1 6-2; 27-Denis Shapovalov (CAN) beat Marton Fucsovics (HUN) 6-4 6-4 6-0; Jacob Fearnley GBR) beat Roberto Bautista Agut 7-5 6-2 5-7 6-4 (ESP) Roman Safiullin (RUS) beat Gael Monfils (FRA) 6-42-66-13-66-4

Women's singles Rd 1: 23-Naomi Osaka JPN) beat Greet Minnen (BEL) 6-3 6-4; 3-Coco Gauff (USA) beat Aila Tomlianovic (AUS) 6-46-7(2) 7-5; 8-Amanda Anisimova (USA) beat Kimberly Birrell (AUS) 6-3 6-2; 18-Beatriz Haddad Maia beat Sonay Kartal (GBR) 6-3 1-6 6-1 (BRA)

### Even in her sunset and semis loss, Joshna shows she is not a spent force

**PRITISH RAJ** 

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 27

THE DAY ended bitterly for Joshna Chinappa. The timeless talisman of Indian squash lost in the semi-finals of the National Squash Championships against Akanksha Salunkhe on Wednesday. But not after the 18-time-national champion, now 38, showed her characteristic grit in pushing her 26-year-old Goan adversary in a four-match game.

Joshna's body has endured rigours in her two-decade-long career. She underwent a knee surgery after the 2023 Asian Games, had a small coaching gig with the Indian team, when she travelled for the World Squash Team Championships in Hong Kong last December, and most of her contemporaries had long bade farewell to the game. But Joshna's heart still beats for the game inside the hard, glassed cages that she picked up in her early teens.

The fuel, she tells The Indian Express, is the pride in putting on the national stripes. "Well, a lot of it has to do with playing for the country and winning medals. That has been a huge motivation for me from the time I started. Today, it keeps changing because it's much harder at this stage to put in that same level of effort and work and play in tournaments. Somehow I find the energy to do it, but there are days where it's tough. But I have a really good team around me, coaches, trainers, dieticians, psychologists, everything," she says.

Motivation aside, she listens to her ageing body to keep up the game that is getting faster by the day. "I think a lot of it comes down to training. What I could do in my 20s and early 30s, I can't do now. I have pushed a lot during that time but I can't do it today," she said. "One needs to be smarter. For example. I came back from a knee surgery last year, so I am just looking after my body. Yes, I can get the best out of my body even today but I have to train correctly and listen to what my body tells me.'

She still trains at her old haunt, the Squash Academy in Chennai, with a familiar face, the former India international and double Asian Games gold medallist Harinder Pal



Joshna Chinappa lost National C'ship semifinals to Akanksha Salunkhe. Pritish Raj

Sandhu. Harinder, two years her junior and teammate in numerous tournaments, says training her is as challenging as it is with the younger lot. "It's challenging for sure. I have played on tours with Joshna and that is one of the reasons our chemistry is good. But it comes with a different set of challenges as I have to keep her body in mind," he says.

"For someone like Joshna, there is more emphasis on how to give her an edge on the court over the young competitors. We focus on patterns of play and how she can anticipate the attacks of her opponents. Also, the patterns vary from player to player, so it is important to adjust those patterns as well," he explains.

While she has played three tournaments in India including the nationals, Joshna hasn't featured much on the international tour playing just one tournament in Bermuda. "Playing the PSA tour is like living out of the suitcase. During my peak days, it was just me and Dipika Pallikal playing. Our standards have gone up at the international level since the last few years and now we are pushing for more and more PSA tours which is good," she said.

Not looking at Olympics

With Squash included in the 2028 LA Olympics program, the buzz around the sport has considerably increased around the globe. The sport is buzzing in India too, with a raft of youngsters such as Anahat Singh, Abhay Singh, and Velvan Senthilkumar coming through the ranks. Will the old guard of Joshna and Dipika return for one last tango? 'Well, three years is a long way off. I am only taking it one month at a time right now. It takes a lot out of me every day with training and recovery and things like that. So I just want to be smart and selective with what I play. So LA 2028 is a little bit of a stretch right now," Joshna says.

The Asian Games, though, is just a year away. It's a more realistic target, she says. "Asian Games is certainly on the back of my mind and doubles is a great option there but it all depends on certain questions like how am I playing, am I fit, can I earn my spot in the team," admits Joshna. Her march to the semi-final, and the fight she showed, showed that she has the tenacity to launch another medal challenge in the Games.

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