

THE ASIAN AGE

NEW DELHI SUNDAY 27 AUGUST 2023



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Chhattisgarh minister gives smoking tips to tribals, sparks row



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Sonia Gandhi arrives in Srinagar for personal visit, to join son Rahul

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Long-distance races making headlines for wrong reasons when runner collapses or dies



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WINDOWS



Actress Zahia Dehar during a photoshoot for the film *L'Air de la Mer Rend Libre* during the 16th Francophone Angouleme film festival in France on Saturday. — AFP

PM: 'Shiva Shakti' spot will guide India forever

Declares Aug. 23 as National Space Day, lauds Isro scientists

M.B. GIRISH
BENGALURU, AUG. 26

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday congratulated the Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) team involved in the success of the Chandrayaan-3 mission. During his interaction with the scientists in Bengaluru, Mr Modi announced the decision to name the spot where the lander "Vikram" touched down on August 23 on the moon's south polar region as "Shiva Shakti Point".



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being welcomed by Isro chairman S. Somanath and others upon his arrival in Bengaluru on Saturday. — PTI

The Prime Minister was on a visit to South Africa and Greece when the Chandrayaan-3 lander successfully touched down on the moon. On Saturday, he arrived in Bengaluru directly from the Greek capital of Athens to meet the Isro scientists and congratulate them on their success.

The Prime Minister termed the Chandrayaan-3 mission success as "India on the moon" and "we have a national pride (national flag) on the moon".

Mr Modi turned emotional when he said, "I want to salute you (Isro)", and after a brief pause in his speech, he resumed to

state, "Salute your bravery, efforts, dedication and perseverance." The Prime Minister also announced that August 23, the day when the Chandrayaan-3 mission achieved success, will now be celebrated as "National Space Day". He said: "It is to mark the hoisting of the national flag on the moon. The National Space Day on August 23 every year will inspire the countrymen to celebrate science, technology and innovation spirits as well."

Recalling the failure of the Chandrayaan-2 mission four years back, Mr Modi said the point at

which the Chandrayaan-2 mission left its footprint on the moon will be called "Tiranga Point". On Shiva Shakti Point, Modi said that the naming of the landing spot is to derive inspiration from the successful landing and to make use of science only for the people's welfare. Over the naming of Tiranga Point on the moon, apart from being an inspiration, the Prime Minister said, "It will teach us that no failure is permanent... With a firm mind, any success would be achieved."

Lauding the efforts of the scientists for making

Shah targets Gehlot over 'red diary', dares to quit

Jaipur, Aug. 26: Union home minister Amit Shah on Saturday demanded the resignation of Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot over a "red diary" which, he alleged, contained details of corruption and black deeds of the state government. Addressing a "Sahakar Kisan Sammelan" in Gangapur city in the poll-bound state, Mr Shah said the BJP-led Central government raised the agriculture budget by six times and formed a separate ministry for cooperatives, whereas the Congress had done nothing for farmers.

Pointing to a few people who raised slogans during the event, the home minister said, "I want to tell Gehlot saab that you will achieve nothing by sending some people to shout slogans. If there is any shame left in him, he should resign over the 'red diary' issue and enter the election fray."

"Nowadays Gehlot saab is very afraid of the colour red. The colour of the diary is red, but black deeds are hidden in it. The red diary has details of multi-crore

Burning train kills 9 UP tourists in Madurai



Security personnel at the site after a fire broke out in a coach of a train at Madurai railway station on Saturday. At least 9 Uttar Pradesh pilgrims bound for Rameswaram in Tamil Nadu met with a tragic end when a fire broke out inside a stationary train compartment. — PTI

Sec. 144 imposed, mobile net suspended in Haryana's Nuh

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, AUG. 26

In view of the call for a "Shobha Yatra" in Nuh, the Haryana government on Saturday ordered the suspension of mobile Internet and bulk SMS services in the communally charged district till August 28. Director-general of police Shatrughan Kapur presided over a meeting with senior officers of bordering states through videoconferencing and called for a co-

ordinated effort to effectively deal with the situation.

In the meeting, attended by senior police officers of Punjab, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and the Union territory of Chandigarh, Mr Kapur said the administration has denied permission for the yatra due to a meeting of the G-20 sherpa group, scheduled to be held in Nuh during September 3-7, and to maintain law and order in the aftermath of the July 31 violence.

The government announced the decision to suspend mobile Internet from August 26-28, apprehending the spread of rumours through social media ahead of or during Monday's rally. The Nuh authorities had recently denied permission to hold the religious procession on August 28 after an earlier one in July was disrupted following communal violence.

On Saturday, additional chief secretary (home)

Shivraj expands Cabinet, inducts 3 new ministers

Bhopal: Madhya Pradesh chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Saturday expanded his Cabinet by inducting three BJP MLAs as ministers just months ahead of the state Assembly polls to be held by the end of the year. With this, there are now 34 members in the Chouhan-led Cabinet. State governor Mangubhai Patel administered the oath of office as ministers to three legislators at the Raj Bhavan here around 9 am. Rajendra Shukla, Gaurishankar Bisen, and Rahul Lodhi took oath as ministers. Full report on Page 3

China and Pak to hold joint air drill 'Shaheen'

New Delhi: Amid a standoff with India, the Chinese Air Force will be holding air exercise "Shaheen (Eagle) X" with Pakistan later this month at China's northwest Jiuquan and Yinchuan to "improve the level of actual combat training of their troops". The exercise will be keenly watched by India. Full report on Page 4

Island Games ceremony stampede leaves 12 dead

Madagascar: A crush at a stadium in Madagascar left at least 12 people dead and 85 injured as sports fans attended the opening ceremony of the Indian Ocean Island Games. Government spokesperson Lalatiana Rakotonirafy said that 33 of the injured remained in the HRJA hospital. — AP Full report on Page 6

COUNTERPOINT



We will win 400 seats? But sir, we are contesting only from 270 seats!

WEATHER

Max: 34°C
Min: 26°C
RH: 61%
Rain: 4
Forecast: Haze

ASTROGUIDE

Shobhakrut: Dakshinayana
Tithi: Nija Shrivana Shudda Ekadasi till 9.27 pm
Star: Moola till 7.14 am
Varjyam: 4.02 pm to 5.30 pm
Durmuhurtam: 4.51 pm to 5.40 pm
Rahukalam: 4.30 pm to 6 pm
SUNSET TODAY 6.49 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.57 AM
MOONRISE TOMORROW 5.02 PM
MOONSET TODAY 1.10 AM

Talk to us before picking candidates: BJP to allies

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, AUG. 26

Given the high stakes in the JD(U)-led Mahagathbandhan-ruled Bihar, the BJP has asked its allies in the state to consult them before finalising their candidates for the Lok Sabha elections in 2024. While the BJP will be contesting the maximum number of seats in the state, it has advised the NDA alliance partners to seek the assistance of its organisational strength in assessing their candidates before declaring their names.

Though the BJP and its allies are yet to officially declare the seat-sharing formula for the 40 Lok Sabha constituencies in Bihar, speculation is rife that the LJP, both factions, is likely to contest on six seats. Former chief minister Jiten Ram Manjhi-led HAM will contest on one seat.

Examine all pvt planes, copters during polls: EC

New Delhi, Aug. 26: The Election Commission has told the enforcement agencies to check all private planes and copters during the polls in Chhattisgarh. During a press conference on Saturday in Raipur after a two-day poll preparedness meeting with the enforcement agencies and state administration, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar said that a strict vigil will be kept on the movement of drugs, liquor, money and freebies. "Inducements of any form are prohibited and we have to be vigilant on this. There will be extra vigil on interstate borders," he said. Full report on Page 3

THOUGH THE BJP and its allies are yet to officially declare the seat-sharing formula for the 40 Lok Sabha constituencies in Bihar, speculation is rife that the LJP, both factions, is likely to contest on six seats. Former chief minister Jiten Ram Manjhi-led HAM will contest on one seat.

on with the Mukesh Sahn-led VIP, which is seeking three seats from the BJP.

Sources disclosed that the BJP poll strategists are also planning to organise public rallies of senior BJP leaders, including Union ministers, in the constituencies of its allies.

According to sources, the BJP has also advised the two LJP factions — one led by its late patriarch Ram Vilas Paswan's son Chirag Paswan and the other led by the late leader's brother and Union minister Pashupati Kumar

Paras — to sort out the "legacy" issue over the Hajipur seat. The parliamentary seat is currently represented by the Union minister and is being claimed by the late leader's son.

While the caste equation seems to be stacked in favour of the ruling Mahagathbandhan in Bihar, the BJP is eyeing the EBC votebank, which was considered JD(U) leader and chief minister Nitish Kumar's support base. However, the JD(U)'s tie-up with the Lalu Prasad Yadav-led RJD has upset this numerically strong EBC votebank, as the Yadavs in the state, because of their political and social clout, are considered the "upper caste."

Recent bypolls in the state also suggested that the EBC votes did not transfer to the RJD candidates. Unlike the Assembly polls, when the BJP faced a leadership crisis, the parliamentary polls will see the BJP-led NDA take on

PIO Vivek hints may run as Trump's veep

Washington/London, Aug. 26: Vivek Ramaswamy, an Indian-American 2024 US presidential aspirant, has hinted that he may run on a joint ticket with former President Donald Trump as his running mate if he does not win the Republican nomination, according to a media report. The remarks by Mr Ramaswamy came days after the 38-year-old multimillionaire biotech entrepreneur-turned-politician said he was 'not interested' in any job other than President. Mr Ramaswamy said he believed he could only 'reunite this country' as President, but did not rule out running with Mr Trump as V-P if



Vivek Ramaswamy

Mr Trump wins the nomination for a third time. Asked on Britain's G.B. News whether he would be 'happy to be (Trump's) V-P', Mr Ramaswamy replied: "See, this isn't about me. If this were about me, sure. That's a fine position for someone to have at my age. "This is about reviving our country and I can only reunite this country if I'm doing it from the White House as the leader and the face of our movement." — PTI Full report on Page 6

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SHORT TAKES

Partly cloudy sky predicted for today

New Delhi: The city on Saturday recorded a maximum temperature of 35.6°C, a bit above the seasonal average, the India Meteorological Department said. The national capital also witnessed a minimum temperature of 26.3°C, IMD further mentioned. The humidity oscillated between 70 per cent and 53 per cent. The weather department has predicted a partly cloudy sky for Sunday. The maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to settle around 36 and 26°C respectively. According to Central Pollution Control Board data, the Air Quality Index (AQI) stood in the 'moderate' category with a reading of 154 at 6pm. An AQI between zero and 50 is considered "good", 51 and 100 "satisfactory", 101 and 200 "moderate", 201 and 300 "poor", 301 and 400 "very poor", and 401 and 500 "severe".

DCW's notice to cops over 2 rapes

New Delhi: The Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) has on Saturday issued notice to Delhi police regarding two separate incidents of alleged sexual assault involving two minor girls in Jagatpuri area. As per the commission it was informed that two accused persons sexually assaulted two 15-year-old girls multiple times in Hotel Garden Inn, Chandar Nagar against which an FIR has been registered at the Jagatpuri police station. Several such cases in the past have been reported wherein many minor girls were allegedly sexually assaulted in the hotels, the commission stated in its release. Meanwhile the commission has sought the details of action taken against the hotel.

ABVP election panel for DUSU polks out

New Delhi: RSS affiliated Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) on Saturday has announced its election committee for the upcoming Delhi University students' union elections (Dusu). This election committee, which consists of members from ABVP, will be responsible for various matters pertaining to the elections, which also includes the selection of candidates who would be contesting from ABVP, said a release by the student union. ABVP's Delhi unit state president Dr Abhishek Tandon has been appointed as the chairman of the ABVP election committee. The ABVP election committee consists of ABVP's national girl's coordinator Manu Sharma Kataria, central working committee member Nidhi Tripathi, Delhi state secretary Harsh Attri, state organising secretary Ram Kumar and others.

WOMEN'S PART IN TECH EDU USEFUL STEP, SAYS ATISHI

New Delhi: Delhi education minister Atishi on Saturday emphasised on women's participation in technical education said that it is a positive step towards making them economically independent and self-reliant. She emphasised that there is a need to further increase the participation of female students in it is. Ms Atishi inspected the Jija-bai Women's ITI (Industrial Training Institute). The minister examined facilities such as the fashion design and technology lab, textile designing lab, hospitality management lab, and information and technology lab. While interacting with students Ms Atishi said, "Students who are receiving training from the it is under the Delhi government will script a new chapter in the future." She directed officials to design outreach plans for the upcoming session and visit Delhi government schools to educate students about the modern courses offered by it. During the interaction, students shared that their ITI courses have given them more confidence than their 11-12 or graduation studies. According to official release students who have completed ITI courses under the Delhi government's Skill University receive recognition equivalent to 11th-12th standard. This allows them to directly enrol in degree or diploma courses.



White tiger cubs Avani and Vyom play at an enclosure on their first birthday at Delhi Zoo on Saturday. — G.N. JHA

'Construction workers to get benefits under welfare plans'

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, AUG. 26

Delhi lieutenant-governor V.K. Saxena on Saturday approved the notification of 17 welfare schemes of the Delhi Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board (DBOCWWB) with specific directions for constant supervision and monitoring of the disbursement and payment process under these schemes. "The schemes approved under Section 7 of the Aadhar Act, 2016, would ensure that all financial benefits like grant of disability pension, ex gratia payment, medical assistance, maternity benefit, death benefit, etc. to the genuine beneficiaries are given only through DBT after their Aadhar-based authentication.

"The objective is to minimise leakages and promote targeted delivery of benefits while simultaneously improving the working conditions, quality of life, and ensuring the welfare of the construction workers," said the L-G office.

An official said that in this regard, the L-G has directed strict supervision and monitoring of the disbursement and payment process in the aforesaid schemes. The L-G has underlined the need for making the "registration of construction workers fully transparent, fool-proof, tamper-free, and genuine."

Mr Saxena said this will ensure that only genuine construction workers are registered and consequently benefit from the funds of DBOCWWB, said the official.



V.K. Saxena

SC set to hear today petition challenging cut in age of consent

New Delhi, Aug. 26: The Supreme Court has agreed to hear a plea by an NGO against any reduction in the age of consent, saying it jeopardises the interest of a large number of child victims of sexual abuse, especially girls. A bench of Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud and justices J.B. Pardiwala and Manoj Mishra issued notice to the Centre and tagged the plea of 'Bachpan Bachao Andolan' with a pending petition filed by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR).

The NCPCR had challenged last year's order of the Punjab and Haryana high court which said that a minor Muslim girl can marry a person of her choice.

"The apex court on Friday sought the Centre's response on the issue.

The plea of the NGO, besides seeking a slew of directions and guidelines, has also sought a directive to the courts to refrain from making observations regarding the minor victim's casual relationship and promiscuous attitude while dealing with the

Atishi: Why charges against rape accused officer overlooked?

BHASKAR HARI SHARMA
NEW DELHI, AUG. 26

Delhi Cabinet minister Atishi on Saturday wrote to chief secretary Naresh Kumar asking how the official accused of raping and impregnating a minor was allowed to work in the WCD department despite previous sexual harassment complaints against him. The Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva meanwhile hitting back at AAP said, before writing a letter to the chief secretary, Atishi should ask his Cabinet colleague Kailash Gahlot why did he choose the tainted official as his OSD. Atishi should also ask Swati Malhi why she has taken no action against the accused even five years after receiving complaints against him.

Ms Atishi sought a detailed report on the

issue, including the timeline of receipt of complaints of harassment by the officer along with details of the person who handled them, by 5 pm on August 28. Premoday Khakha - a deputy director in the city government's Women and Child Development (WCD) department - allegedly raped the girl several times between November 2020 and January 2021, according to the Delhi police. His wife Semma Rani allegedly gave the girl medicine to terminate her pregnancy. Shortly before he and his wife were arrested in the case on Monday, Khakha was suspended from his post following a direction from chief minister Arvind Kejriwal.



Atishi

Incident took place in Adarsh Nagar, accused on run CRPF head constable's hand severed by husband at hotel

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, AUG. 26

A man allegedly chopped off the hand of his 28-year-old wife, who's a head constable in the CRPF, at a hotel here in Northwest Delhi's Adarsh Nagar area following a quarrel, the police said on Saturday.

The incident took place on Friday evening and the accused husband is at large, it said.

According to a senior police officer, the police received information late Friday evening from the hotel about the incident. When the police reached the spot, it found that the

hand of the woman was chopped off from the wrist.

The couple hails from Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh and had checked in at the hotel on Friday around 3.00 pm.

The woman lost a lot of blood in the incident and she was rushed to Babu Jagjivan Ram Memorial Hospital. Later, she was referred to Safdarjung Hospital where she is being treated, the officer said.

The woman, who was in a semi-conscious state, informed the police that a quarrel ensued between her husband and herself. She could not say much

according to preliminary investigation, it is suspected that accused might have given something to his wife, following which she lost consciousness and later chopped off her hand

about it as she was in pain, the officer said.

According to the preliminary investigation, it has been suspected that the accused might have given something to his wife, following which she lost consciousness and later chopped off her hand. When the woman gained

consciousness, she told the hotel staff and they informed the police. However, the facts are being verified in the ongoing investigation, the police said.

The accused does not have a stable job. The couple has a kid. A case under Section 307 (attempt to murder) of the IPC has been registered.

The husband is currently absconding and efforts are being made to nab him. The facts as well as the sequence of incidents and the exact reason behind the incident will be ascertained after his arrest, the officer added.

23-yr-old attacks a schoolkid, among 2, with knife in Narela

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, AUG. 26

A 23-year-old man allegedly attacked two persons, including a school student, with a knife without any reason on Saturday morning in North Delhi's Narela area, the police said.

As per police, information on Saturday morning received that a person has stabbed one 11-year-old Chaman, who is a student of SKV School, and Rajesh at Ramdev Chowk in Narela area, they said.

The locals also thrashed the accused person who is suspected to be mentally unstable.

Based on the information the police rushed to

the spot and learnt that injured persons were shifted to Satyawadi Raja Harish Chandar hospital, police said.

The preliminary inquiry has revealed that the accused Vinay suspected to be mentally unstable. He attacked Chaman, all of a sudden without any provocation, a senior police officer said.

Later Vinay attacked

Rajesh also when he was trying to save Chaman. Chaman received injury near his left shoulder, while Rajesh has multiple injuries on his head, face and hand. The accused attacked the victims with a knife used to cut coconuts, the officer said.

The public caught Vinay and they thrashed him at the spot. There was no specific reason for the quarrel. Legal action is being taken based on the statements of the victims, the police further mentioned.

The family members of the accused were called and they will give details about his mental health or whether he is getting treatment for the same, police added.

Delhi police G-20 'carcade' rehearsal today

Tourist police trained in soft skills to be deployed at tourist hubs to help visitors, delegates

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, AUG. 26

Around 400 police personnel specially trained in soft skills will be deployed at prominent tourist hubs, airport, railway stations and ISBTs to help delegates and other visitors during next month's G-20 summit, the officials said on Saturday.

Further the police on Sunday will hold a 'carcade' rehearsal, from various points to Pragati Maidan, traffic will be regulated at several places from 9 am to 12.30 pm to facilitate the rehearsals, the police said.

The personnel, moving in multipurpose vehicles labelled 'tourist police', will be deployed at 21 locations such as monuments, popular markets, memorials, airport terminals, interstate bus terminals and railway stations, officials at the L-G's office



Security personnel during G-20 summit rehearsals at the entrance gate of Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi on Saturday. — G.N. JHA

Each team, comprising one Indo-Tibetan Border Police commando, a gunman and a driver will be accompanied by probationer sub-inspectors as in-charges, they said.

Every tourist police unit member underwent a task-oriented training programme in association with Delhi tourism and other agencies during

which they were trained in soft skills; effective communication, including speaking in English; topography and city landmarks; and firing practice, they said.

According to the officials, the units have also been provided with booklets on do's and don'ts for tourists, physical and digital maps of Delhi and NCR.

Latest tech, backups to ensure regular power supply at venue

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, AUG. 26

In order to ensure uninterrupted power supply for the G-20 summit, authorities are leveraging the latest technology and have installed multiple backups at the venue in Pragati Maidan, officials said on Saturday.

Power discom BSES has enhanced the power supply to Pragati Maidan by establishing three separate power sources to ensure reliability.

Cables measuring 3 km have been laid to connect to the ITPO grid, offering greater flexibility, they said.

Additionally, the company has installed three 1,600 KVA distribution transformers to serve as a

power supply backup.

All three power sources for the Pragati Maidan grid now feature change-over systems or multiple levels of automatic backup, said a BSES official.

"This means that in the highly unlikely event of one cable failing, the power supply will automatically and seamlessly switch to the second cable. If the second cable also fails, the system will switch to the third source," he said.

In addition to these measures, BSES is establishing a 24x7 control room at Pragati Maidan, staffed by 20 experienced personnel at any given time. They will continuously monitor the power supply at the venue during the two-day G-20 summit, he said.

Grid-based strategy to curb pollution in Delhi

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, AUG. 26

The CSIR-National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) on Saturday said it will develop a grid-based mitigation strategy to tackle the problem of air pollution in the capital city.

Presenting the plan during the India Clean Air Summit (ICAS), 2023, in Bengaluru, S.K. Goyal, the

chief scientist and head of CSIR-NEERI, Delhi Zonal Centre, said, "We will develop a grid-based mitigation strategy, termed 'local area management plan' (LAMP), for each hotspot and for each season."

"The 'one size fits all' approach has rarely worked for air pollution mitigation," he said, adding that LAMP will allow policymakers to devise tailored strategies

inspired by a tile-by-tile concept, the approach involves segmenting the entire NCR into a grid of tiles, each covering 2 sq. km. These tiles will be closely monitored through a network of stationary and mobile sensors over two seasons.

for pollution control within their jurisdiction, aligning with the

National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) goals.

Inspired by a tile-by-tile concept, the approach involves segmenting the entire national capital region (NCR) into a grid of tiles, each covering 2 sq. km. These tiles will be closely monitored through a network of stationary and mobile sensors over two seasons.

Stationary units will provide real-time measure-

ments at fixed locations while mobile units mounted on e-rickshaws will offer finer-grained data with improved spatial resolution.

Integral to the strategy is generating a high-resolution emission inventory and conducting source apportionment studies using sophisticated dispersion models. This study aims to identify the local contribution of pollution sources.

Assembly panel visits special secy hometown to verify OBC certificate

New Delhi, Aug. 26: Amid the ongoing tussle between the ruling AAP and bureaucrats of the Delhi government, a panel of the Legislative Assembly recently visited the hometown of special secretary (vigilance) Y.V.V.J. Rajasekhara to verify his OBC certificate. In June, a complaint was filed against Rajasekhara by suspended DANICS officer Premnath that he had submitted a "fake" OBC certificate while giving the Civil Service

Examination in 1994. It was alleged by the complainant that Rajasekhara did not belong to this category.

The OBC welfare committee of the Delhi Assembly, taking cognizance of the complaint, issued a notice to Rajasekhara to appear before it to present his stand. Rajasekhara did not appear before the committee, but communicated to the panel that it has no jurisdiction in the services matters as per the extant rules.

No immediate reaction was available from Rajasekhara on the matter.

A three-member sub committee of the assembly's OBC welfare committee, headed by AAP MLA Madan Lal, earlier this week visited Vishakhapatnam and Ankapalli to check the authenticity of Rajasekhara's caste certificate. Mr Lal said the committee has issued "multiple notices" to Rajasekhara but he did not appear before it. —PTI

SEARCH FOR MISSING	
	General Public is hereby informed that a lady namely Kanchan Bhatia , W/o Dinesh Bhatia, R/o Shop No. 9, Basurkar Market, New Delhi, Age: 65 years, Height: 5', Built: Thin, Complexion: Fair, Face: Round, Identification Mark: Mentally disturbed, Wearing: Yellow and Green Colour Suit, Golden Colour Kangan in hand and Slipper in her feet has been missing from Safdarjung Hospital, New Delhi since 11.08.2023 at 07:00 pm. In this regard a DD No. 42A dated 12.08.2023 has been registered at P.S. Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi.
Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing lady but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about this lady please inform undersigned.	
E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in Ph. : 011-24368638, 24368641 Fax : 011-24368639 DP/9583/SW/2023	SHO PS Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi Ph. : 8750938971, 7065036231

SHORT TAKES

Covid scam: EOW grills BMC officer

Mumbai: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Mumbai police on Saturday questioned BMC deputy municipal commissioner Ramakant Biradar in connection with a probe into the alleged irregularities in purchase of body bags during Covid pandemic.

Cong will win 20 LS seats in Karnataka

Mangaluru: Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee working president and chief whip of Congress in the Legislative Council Saleem Ahmed has expressed confidence in the party winning a minimum of 20 seats in Karnataka during the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

2 BJP netas booked in assault case in UP

Amethi: Police have booked two district-level BJP leaders and eight other unidentified people for allegedly assaulting a Youth Congress office bearer in this Uttar Pradesh district, an officer said on Saturday.

CONG WARNS OF EGGS ATTACK ON PATNAIK'S AIDE

Bhubaneswar: A day after Odisha's Gopalpur MLA Pradeep Panigrahy faced an egg attack from a splinter group of his own party Biju Janata Dal (BJD) while proceeding to a meeting of chief minister Naveen Patnaik's private secretary V.K. Pandian, the Congress on Saturday alleged that a kind of jungle raj prevailed in the state.

Shivraj expands Cabinet, inducts 3 new ministers

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY BHOPAL, AUG. 26

Madhya Pradesh chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Saturday expanded his ministry by inducting three new ministers, hailing from the regions of Vindhya, Mahakoshal and Bundelkhand in the state.

The ministry expansion comes barely three months before the Assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh, due in November this year. The three new ministers are Rajendra Shukla, a three-time MLA from Rewa in Vindhya region, Gourishankar Bisen, a seven-time legislator from Balaghat under Mahakoshal region and Rahul Lodhi, a first-time MLA from Khargapur under Tikamgarh district under Bundelkhand region.

EC orders checking of copters, pvt planes during C'garh election

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, AUG. 26

The Election Commission of India has told the enforcement agencies to check all private planes and choppers during the elections in Chhattisgarh. Besides, strict vigil has been ordered to be kept on the movement of drugs, liquor, money and freebies, chief election commissioner Rajiv Kumar said during a press conference on Saturday in Raipur, after

THE MINISTRY expansion comes barely three months before the Assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh, due in November this year

Uma Bharti, has been inducted in the ministry to pacify her, sources said.

Firebrand saffron leader Ms Bharti has been sulking for the last several months seeking a key role in the state party for her.

She has of late started a state-wide campaign calling for prohibition in the state, landing the Shivraj government in an awkward situation.

Lodhis, who fall into the category of other backward class (OBC), constitute around eight percent of the state's population and are in a position to influence the outcome of the assembly polls in 65 seats in the state.

Mr Shukla's induction in the state Cabinet is seen as an attempt by the BJP leadership to woo the Brahmin voters in Rewa and Satna districts falling under Vindhya region.

Tragic train fire leaves 9 dead in TN

Madurai, Tamil Nadu, Aug. 26: At least nine pilgrims bound for Rameswaram in Tamil Nadu met with a tragic end on Saturday when a fire broke out inside a stationary train compartment at the railway station here in the small hours of Saturday, the Southern Railway said.

taxes minister P. Moorthy, deputised by chief minister M.K. Stalin to oversee relief efforts, said five men and 4 women perished in the incident.

VICTIMS EMBARKED on the pilgrimage from Lucknow last week in a private party coach, and most of them hailed from the Uttar Pradesh capital and its nearby areas

were three men and women each.

According to one of the survivors, only after a locked door was broken open could many even run towards safety, possibly avoiding a bigger tragedy.

While the Southern Railway initially put the toll at 10, it later revised it to nine. About 20 people were undergoing medical treatment here.

governor R.N. Ravi con- doled the deaths and wished speedy recovery for those under treatment.

"Deeply pained to learn about the tragic loss of lives in a fire accident in a stationary train near Madurai junction, Tamil Nadu, I express my heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and pray for the speedy recovery of the injured," Ms Murmu said in a post on X.

Modi: Very proud of our eternal & diverse culture

Govt to roll out 'PM Vishwakarma Yojana'

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, AUG. 26

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday addressed the "G20 culture ministers' meeting" in Varanasi — his Parliamentary constituency — via video conferencing.



People attend a programme of Prime Minister Narendra Modi outside Palam Air Force Station in New Delhi on Saturday.

Referring to Kashi as one of the oldest living cities, the PM mentioned Sarnath, a place close by Varanasi, where Lord Buddha delivered his first sermon. He urged the guests to witness the Ganga Aarti, pay a visit to Sarnath and try out the delicacies of Kashi.

"We in India are very proud of our eternal and diverse culture. We also attach great value to our intangible cultural heritage," Mr Modi said, as he underlined that India has been working hard to preserve and revitalise its heritage sites.

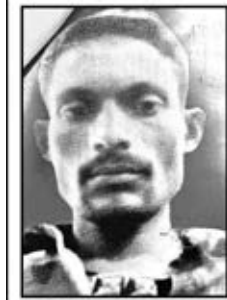
The Prime Minister informed, India has brought back hundreds of such artefacts showcasing the glory of its ancient civilisation. He also commended the efforts towards living heritage, as well as contributions to "culture for life". Mr Modi said cul-

ture heritage is not just what is cast in stone, it is also the traditions, customs and festivals that are handed down the generations.

"India takes pride in its 2,000-year-old craft heritage, with nearly 3,000 unique arts and crafts," the Prime Minister said in a recorded video message as he highlighted the "one district, one product" initiative which showcases the uniqueness of Indian crafts, while fostering self-reliance at the same time.

Mr Modi informed that India is going to roll out the "PM Vishwakarma Yojana" with an initial outlay of 1.8 billion dollars.

SEARCH FOR MISSING



General Public is hereby informed that a male person namely Tarkeshwar Rai, S/o Rama Shankar Rai, R/o H.No. I-29, Krishna Vihar, Sultan Puri, Delhi, Age: 35 years, Height: 5'6", Complexion: Dark, Face: Oval, Build: Thin, Wearing: Blue Colour T-shirt and Lower has been missing from his home since 19.08.2023 at 10:00 pm.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing person but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about this person please inform undersigned. E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641 Fax: 011-24368639 DP/9553/OD/2023

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr.P.C. Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused (1) Inder Singh, S/o: Mamma Ram, (2) Shashi, W/o: Inder Singh, (3) Gagan, S/o: Inder Singh, R/o: H.No. A-1/2, Budh Vihar, Phase-I, Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 06/2018, U/s 323/354/506/34 IPC, P.S.: Vijay Vihar, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused (1) Inder Singh, (2) Shashi, (3) Gagan cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused (1) Inder Singh, (2) Shashi, (3) Gagan has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said (1) Inder Singh, (2) Shashi, (3) Gagan accused of FIR No. 06/2018, U/s 323/354/506/34 IPC, P.S.: Vijay Vihar, Delhi is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before 20.10.2023. Ms. Kanika Jain, Metropolitan Magistrate-01, Mahila Court, North-West, Room No. 106, First Floor, Rohini Court, Delhi DP/9608/RD/2023-(Court Matter)

Minister gives smoking tips to C'garh tribals, sparks row

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY RAIPUR, AUG 26

Unmindful of the health warning that smoking causes injury to health, Chhattisgarh industry minister Kawasi Lakhma, a tribal from Sukma district under Bastar in the state, feels "elated" sharing the tips on his "newly-developed breathing exercise" with his fellow folks in his area, if a video showing his weird behaviour is an indication.



Chhattisgarh minister Kawasi Lakhma teaches a villager how to smoke via nose. — ASIAN AGE

Mr Lakhma was on Saturday caught in a video "teaching" a fellow tribal in his area on how to enjoy smoking through the "breathing exercise", by inhaling through mouth and exhaling through nose. He was seen in the video even sharing the tips on how to enjoy smoking with a fellow villager by puffing at a "bidi" (tobacco wrapped

in tendu leaf) and then releasing the smoke through his nose. "Inhale through your mouth and exhale through your nose", he was heard teaching the villager while walking in a narrow lane with his security guards accompanying him in the Naxal-infested Sukma.

In the video, a man not seen in the camera was seen asking another person, coming towards the minister, to move away

so that the minister can be photographed smoothly.

In the video, he was seen stopping at a place and calling the tribal to come near him and giving himself a demo of smoking the "bidi" by inhaling through his mouth and exhaling through his nose.

He was then seen in the video moving ahead with satisfaction when the villagers "mastered" the art of smoking in the minister's style.

The 30 second-video has gone viral triggering a political row here.

BJP spokesman Anurang Singhdeo slammed the minister for not only smoking in a public place but also promoting smoking by teaching another person how to smoke.

"It amounts to promoting smoking and drugs. It is highly objectionable for a minister to smoke in public", he said.

15L families devoid of toilets in C'garh: CM

AGE CORRESPONDENT RAIPUR, AUG 26

Chhattisgarh chief minister Bhupesh Baghel on Saturday urged the Centre to ensure improved toilet facilities for 15 lakh families in the state, left out of the coverage under the Open Defecation Free (ODF) scheme.

In a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the chief minister said that despite Chhattisgarh having been declared ODF state by the previous government, "there remains a segment of 15 lakh families devoid of access to improved toilet facilities".

Urging the Centre to extend this essential facility to the deprived families, Mr Baghel has also proposed an enhancement in the financial provided for the construction of toi-

let facilities from ₹12,000 to ₹30,000 per family. He also requested the approval for construction of toilets in the Maoist-affected and remote areas through gram panchayats.

Mr Baghel referred to the National Family Health Survey 2019-21 (NFHS-5) to justify his claim. Notably, the physical inspection of toilets during the recent socio-economic survey by the state government aligns with the data released by the NFHS-5, he said.

In the letter, the chief minister elaborated that under the previous government's tenure, over 32 lakh toilets were constructed in the state, and in January 2018, the entire state was declared ODF.

An expenditure exceeding ₹4,000 crores was allocated for these toilet constructions, he said.

₹6cr assets seized in raids on Cong leader

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, AUG. 26

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Saturday said that it has frozen the assets and deposits worth more than ₹6 crores, that have been seized in searches against former Punjab minister and Congress leader Bharat Bhushan Ashu and some others as part of a money laundering case probe linked to an alleged tender scam.

The probe agency conducted raids on August 24 in 25 locations in Punjab. Besides the premises of the former minister, the ED also conducted searches at those of Raman Balasubramaniam, a former chairman of the Ludhiana Improvement Trust (LIT), and some others under provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.

Advertisement for Delhi Police's AITRAAZ campaign. It features a woman in a red dress and text in Hindi: 'कार्यस्थल पर किसी भी व्यक्ति की नियुक्ति पुलिस वेरिफिकेशन के बिना होने पर आपको AITRAAZ होना चाहिए'. The ad promotes vigilance and safety, with contact information for reporting suspicious activities.

SHORT TAKES

Over 50cr Jan Dhan A/Gs opened in 9 yrs

New Delhi: More than 50.09 crores accounts have been opened under the PM Jan Dhan Yojana in the last nine years, and the deposit balance swelled to over ₹2.03 lakh crores, the finance ministry said on Saturday. The PM Jan Dhan Yojana was launched on August 28, 2014, with the aim to provide universal banking services through the opening of zero-balance bank accounts for every unbanked household, based on the guiding principles of banking the unbanked, securing the unsecured and funding the unfunded. Financial Services Secretary Vivek Joshi said 33.98 crores RuPay cards were issued to PMJDY account holders as of August 2023, up from 13 crores at the end of March 2015. "Currently there are 225 crore bank accounts in the country. Overall, in terms of account opening, we are nearing saturation," Mr Joshi said. PTI

Pak spy held, docus seized in Kolkata

Kolkata: An alleged Pakistan spy, who is a resident of Bihar, was arrested from Kolkata; sensitive documents were seized from his possession, a senior police officer said on Saturday. Acting on a tip-off, Kolkata Police personnel nabbed the man from his residence in Howrah on Friday. "He was found directly involved in activities prejudicial to the safety of the country," the officer said. The man was arrested late on Friday night after hours of grilling, he said. "Secret information in the form of photographs, videos and online chats were found in his mobile phone. These were sent by him to a suspected intelligence operative of Pakistan," the officer said. The accused, who was working with a courier service company in Kolkata, earlier stayed in Delhi. —PTI

Man, son drown in lake in U'khand

Gopeshwar: A 45-year-old man and his son on Saturday allegedly drowned in Amrit Sarovar lake being built under MNREGA in a remote village in Chamoli district, the village head said. The incident took place in Maiduli Tok ahead of Sutol village. The bodies of Nandan Singh and his son Anil Singh (19) have been recovered from the lake, Sutol's village head Rajpal Kunwar told reporters. Sutol village is situated at a distance of about 40 km from Nandanagar tehsil headquarters and is one of the remotest villages in the district. Par Singh, a social worker of the village, told PTI on the phone that people of the village live in the rainy season at Maiduli, five kilometres ahead of the village, where the construction of an Amrit Sarovar is going on. The Amrit Sarovar lake is spread over a large area and is in spate following heavy rains these days, the social worker said. PTI

10th wargames will be held in August China, Pak to hold joint air drill; India watches closely

PAWAN BALI NEW DELHI, AUG. 26

Amid a standoff with India, the Chinese Air Force will be holding air exercise "Shaheen (Eagle) X" with Pakistan later this month at China's northwest Jiuquan and Yinchuan to "improve the level of actual combat training of their troops". The exercise will be keenly watched by India at a time when there has been an increase in hostile air activities by China at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) after the stand-off at Ladakh started in 2020. The Indian security establishment has always looked at the possibility of a two-front war with its twin hostile neighbours. India has seen with suspicion the Chinese military aid to Pakistan, which is facing an economic crisis. "Based on the annual plan and bilateral consen-

sus, China-Pakistan joint air force training exercise 'Shaheen (Eagle) X' will be held in northwest China's Jiuquan and Yinchuan from late August to mid-September," said China's ministry of national defence on Saturday. "This is the 10th joint training exercise between the Chinese and Pakistani air forces, which will help further deepen practical cooperation between the two militaries and improve the level of actual combat training for their troops," it added. The last edition of the exercise "Shaheen (Eagle)-IX" was held at Pakistan's Bholari air base in December 2020 in the arid region of Sindh, which is less than 200 km from India. Interestingly, Pakistan had not deployed an American F-16 during the exercise with China. Last month, Pakistan Air Force (PAF) chief, Air

Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, visited Beijing and met with Chinese defence minister Gen. Li Shangfu. During the meeting, Gen. Shangfu said that China and Pakistan are all-weather strategic cooperative partners and iron-clad friends. "The cooperation between the Chinese and Pakistani air forces has yielded fruitful results. The two sides should make good use of the 'Shaheen (Eagle) X' joint training platform to actively carry out experience exchanges, further enhance synergy, and expand the depth of cooperation," he was quoted in a statement issued by the Chinese defence ministry. Mr Sidhu had said that the air force is a key force on the future battlefield, and the PAF is willing to further deepen cooperation and exchanges with China in combat.

Opp. slams BJP 'hate politics' after Muzaffarnagar slap row

Teacher booked for ordering students to slap Muslim classmate in UP

BHASKAR HARI SHARMA NEW DELHI, AUG 26

Soon after the slap incident in Muzaffarnagar intensified, outrage poured in from all quarters including political parties and celebrities, the police on Saturday booked the teacher who was accused of making communal comments and ordering students to slap their Muslim classmate for not doing his homework. The school was also served a notice by the state education department in connection with the matter. The Opposition parties hit out at the BJP for "politics of hate". Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said the teacher was "sowing the poison of discrimination in the minds of innocent children" and "turning a holy place like a school into a marketplace

of hatred". BJP MP from Pilibhit Varun Gandhi too condemned the incident and termed it shameful. He said, "The feeling of hatred towards a child in the temple of knowledge has made the whole country hang its head in shame. A teacher is assumed as a gardener building not only a personality but a nation also, by putting fertiliser in the form of knowledge in the primary rites." The teacher, Tripti Tyagi, was booked a day after a video showing her asking her students to slap the Class 2 boy at Neha Public School in Khubbapur village and also making a communal remark went viral. The video elicited strong words from several political leaders with NCP, the apex child right body, demanding action against

THE TEACHER, Tripti Tyagi, was booked a day after a video showing her asking her students to slap the Class 2 boy at Neha Public School in Khubbapur village.

IN HER defence, Ms Tyagi, said that the video had been tampered with in order to stoke tensions. She claimed the video was

shot by an uncle of the boy. She said though it was wrong on her part to get a student slapped by his classmates, she was forced to do it as she was handicapped and was not able to stand up and reach the student who had not done his assignment. Basic Shiksha Adhikari of Muzaffarnagar Shubham Shukla said that a show cause notice had been served to the school management through the secretary of the management committee. Ravinder tyagi. It had been asked to furnish its response by August 28 as to why the government recognition of the school should not be cancelled. A criminal case would be registered against the authorities of the school where the incident took place, the BSA said, adding that a team had been sent there.

Ajit's camp will stop use of Pawar's photographs

SONU SHRIVASTAVA MUMBAI, AUG. 26

For the first time after joining the Eknath Shinde and BJP-led government and taking oath as deputy chief minister, Ajit Pawar on Saturday visited Bara-mati, the bastion of the Pawar family. In a show of strength, thousands of NCP workers welcomed Mr Ajit and felicitated him. He is also scheduled to hold a public rally on Sunday in Beed, where Mr Sharad Pawar had held a rally earlier this week. Both the developments are being seen as Ajit's signal that he is prepared to take on his uncle. The Ajit Pawar faction has also decided not to use Mr Sharad Pawar's photo in their events. Lok Sabha member Sunil Tatkare said, "Ajit is now national president of the NCP." "Pawar saheb has told us not to use his photo otherwise he will sue us in court. We do not want him to take trouble of going to court," Mr Tatkare said. Mr Ajit held a mega road show in his hometown. His supporters greeted him by bursting firecrackers and showering flowers on their leaders. The party workers came with a cake, displaying a message "future chief minister...full and final", and left no stone unturned to show the strength of Mr Ajit Pawar in Bara-mati.

Cops warned of posting pics, videos to avoid honeytrap Follow social media rules: Govt to CAPF

AMRESH SRIVASTAVA NEW DELHI, AUG. 26

Amid fear of honeytrap, the Central Armed Police Forces have reminded its personnel to strictly follow the social media guidelines and asked them to refrain from posting their photos in uniforms, making online friendships with strangers and sharing the location of the posting on any social media sites. The CRPF has recently issued an internal communication asking its troopers not to make comment on the political or controversial issue while

the other forces like BSF and ITBP have also been asked not to share the details of their posting on the forward areas on the Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly known as twitter) or any other social media platforms and also accepting friend requests from the unknown people. The move came after analyzing a detailed examination of the social media posts of the central security personnel, besides the alerts from the intelligence agencies that they could be vulnerable to the honeytraps laid by hostile agencies from the neighbouring countries.

RECENTLY A case of 'honeytrap' was revealed in CISF where a constable deployed at Visakhapatnam steel plant was found to be in touch with a woman intelligence officer in Pakistan.

The Delhi police have also issued similar instructions to its officials and constable to refrain from commenting on posts, or transmit, or disseminate any confidential information related to cases or trial of any suspect or arrested person. Recently a case of 'honeytrap' was revealed in

CISF where a constable deployed at Visakhapatnam steel plant was found to be in touch with a woman intelligence officer in Pakistan, and it is apprehended that the said constable might have shared a few details to them. It was also learnt that Pakistan's notorious spy agency ISI have also tried to call the control rooms of various forces as senior officers. In January this year, the CRPF had issued fresh guidelines for its personnel, asking them not to comment on issues relating to personal grievances and political matters.



Congress leader Sonia Gandhi and her son Rahul in Srinagar on Saturday. — PTI

Sonia joins Rahul in a pvt J&K visit

Srinagar, Aug. 26: Congress leader Sonia Gandhi on Saturday reached Srinagar on a personal visit, even as her son Rahul Gandhi arrived here from his week-long Ladakh tour the previous day. Upon her arrival at the airport on Saturday afternoon, Mrs Gandhi was welcomed by senior leaders of her party, including Congress central working committee members and Jammu and Kashmir pradesh Congress committee president Vikar Rasool Wani. Immediately after her arrival, Sonia visited the Nigeen Lake here and enjoyed a boat ride, a senior Congress leader said. Mr Rahul, who was in Ladakh for the past week, arrived in Srinagar on Friday, after addressing a public rally in Kargil earlier in the day. He stayed at a houseboat in Nigeen Lake and the family was likely to stay at a hotel in the Rainawari area on Saturday. Rahul's sister Priyanka

Gandhi, along with her husband Robert Wadra, was also likely to join the duo, the party leader said. The family was likely to visit Gulmarg on Sunday, he added. The leader, however, said no political engagements were scheduled for the family. "It is a completely a personal family visit and no political engagement or meeting with any party leaders will happen," he said. Mr Rahul reached Ladakh on August 17, his first visit to the region since it was granted UT status after being carved out from Jammu and Kashmir in August 2019. He, over the past week, visited famous places in the region, including the Pangong Lake, Nubra Valley, Khardungla top, Lamayuru and Zaskar, on his motorbike before reaching Kargil on Thursday. Jammu and Kashmir was also turned into a UT with its special status under Article 370 revoked. — PTI

Mobile Internet suspended in Nuh

Continued From Page 1 T.V.S.N. Prasad issued the order to suspend mobile Internet. The district administration has also imposed Section 144 of the CrPC, prohibiting the assembly of four or more people in an area, as a precautionary measure. This order will be effective from August 26-28, said officials. During this period, no person will be allowed to carry weapons such as licensed firearms, lathis, axes and others. According to an official statement on Saturday, the state police chief said that despite permission being denied for the yatra, there are inputs that certain organisations have invited people from Haryana and

neighbouring states to reach Nuh on August 28. Mr Kapur said all necessary arrangements have been made by the Haryana police in view of the yatra. Police personnel have been deployed to maintain law and order. As a preventive measure, mobile Internet has been suspended in Nuh. While emphasising the need for sharing intelligence inputs to effectively deal with the situation, Mr Kapur asked the senior police functionaries of bordering states to ensure regular monitoring of social media, share information about the people who try to disrupt peace through hate speeches and take action against them

according to law. He asked the police officers of bordering states that in case any incident that can disrupt communal harmony comes to their attention, it should be shared on a real-time basis so that preventive action can be taken on time. "Inter-state barricading should also be done to prevent any kind of mobilisation of people. Nobody will be allowed to take the law into their hands," Mr Kapur said. Additional DGP (law and order) Mamta Singh will be the nodal officer and will be stationed in Nuh. The order suspending mobile Internet read, "...This order is issued to prevent disturbance of peace and

public order in the jurisdiction of district Nuh and shall be in force with effect from August 26, 1200 hours, to August 28, 2359 hours." On Friday, Nuh deputy commissioner Dharendra Khadgata wrote to Mr Prasad, bringing to his notice that the Sarv Jatiya Hindu Mahapanchayat had called for a Brij Mandal Shoba Yatra in the district on August 28. In his Saturday order, Mr Prasad said there is a clear potential for disruption of public utilities, damage to public assets and amenities and disturbance of public law and order in Nuh via the spread of rumours and inflammatory content through the Internet.

Shah dare Gehlot to quit

Continued From Page 1 corruption," he said. Sacked Rajasthan minister Rajendra Gudha had claimed that the red diary which he had secured from the residence of Congress leader Dharmendra Rathore during an income tax raid in July 2020 on the directions of the chief minister had details of Mr Gehlot's financial transactions. Assembly polls in Rajasthan is slated for later this year. Addressing the event, Mr Shah said the BJP government at the Centre has done a lot for farmers and initiated several schemes for them. He said that during the erstwhile Congress regime, the agriculture budget was ₹22,000 crore and the Narendra Modi government raised it by six times in nine years to ₹1,25,000 crore. Mr Shah, who also holds the Cooperation portfolio, said the BJP government fulfilled the long-pending demand of farmers and constituted a separate ministry for cooperative societies. "Ever since Modi ji became the Prime Minister, he is doing works that had not been done before," he said. Referring to it, Mr Shah



Union home minister Amit Shah waves at farmers during 'Sahakar Kisan Sammelan' organised by Ifco in Gangapur city, Rajasthan, on Saturday. — PTI

slogans today." On the successful landing of Chandrayaan-3 on the moon, he said, "A few days ago, our Chandrayaan reached the south pole of the moon waving the tricolour. In a way, new energy, new faith has been infused in the entire country. The south pole of the moon remained a mystery. India has become the first country to reach the south pole. It is a matter of pride for the entire country." Addressing the event, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said the cooperative revolution in the country has helped change the economy of farmers, labourers, the poor and the youth. Prime Minister Modi and home minister Shah have worked to take this revolution to every state, he said. He said the farmers have been made self-reliant by providing loans at nil interest rate. Mr Birla said there is a need to establish food processing organisations in villages. "If you want to end corruption in the cooperative sector and bring transparency, then bring such a government. Bring a government that also provides loan at 0 per cent interest rate," he said. — PTI

Kharge holds rally in T'gana, slams KCR for siding with BJP

Hyderabad, Aug. 26: As many as 26 Opposition parties came together to fight against the Modi government but Telangana chief minister K. Chandrababhan Rao who calls himself secular has not attended even a single meeting, AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge alleged on Saturday. Addressing a public meeting at Chevella near here, Mr Kharge said KCR never spoke about the unity of secular parties to defeat the BJP. "You call yourself a secular party here. But, you are in cahoots with BJP from inside there," he said. Her said PM Narendra Modi and Union home minister Amit Shah (who is scheduled to address a BJP rally at Khammam on Sunday) question Congress' contributions to the country. "Who gave IIT, who gave IIM, who gave AIIMS, who made DRDO, who made HAL, who made ONGC, who made SAIL. We built so much of public sector," he said. — PTI

Talk to us...

'Shiva Shakti site will guide India'

Continued From Page 1 the Mahagathbandhan in the state under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership. During the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, when the JD(U) was part of the NDA, the alliance under Mr Modi's leadership had won 39 out of the total 40 seats, with the BJP winning 17, JD(U) 16 and the LJP had won six seats. Mr Modi said new opportu-

Continued From Page 1 the Chandrayaan-3 mission possible, Mr Modi said the mission "is not only for India but to help other countries explore avenues in the moon mission and help to meet the challenges on earth". He stated: "Looking at the images of the moon is magnificent. It's for the first time images of the moon are visible for mankind owing to the efforts of Bharat (Indian) scientists." Mr Modi said new opportu-

nities are opening up in the 21st century and experts are of the opinion that the Indian space sector is expected to cross \$16 billion from \$8 billion in the years to come. He asserted: "A lot of space sector reforms are going on in the country." Stating that India is one of the four nations to reach the moon, Mr Modi said today's India has come out of the third-world nation tag and emerged as the fifth-biggest economy in the world.

"Today, India stands in the front row, jumping to the third row and the jump in position is because of the efforts of institutions such as ISRO, among others," said the Prime Minister, adding, "In the 21st century, India will be in a position to address major issues in the world." Earlier, ISRO chairman S. Somanath welcomed the PM and briefed him about the Chandrayaan-3 mission. He received a pat on the back from Mr Modi.



THE ASIAN AGE

27 AUGUST 2023



Krishna Shastri Devulapalli

Off the beaten track

About how 'proud' I was last week

Last week, a dear friend whom we hadn't met in a while invited us out for lunch. He thought going to a restaurant that was serving a special buffet to celebrate Madras Week would be a good idea. Madras Week has become a thing over the last decade and has been creating an exponential increase in the Pride of Madras. Curious as to what 'Madras' cuisine they would be serving, we went with the idea. Here are some of the items they had at the buffet: Periamet Pizza, Besant Nagar Baclava, Sowcarpet Sushi, and, above all, at the counter that had the largest queue, Rajnikanth Rasam. The last item lived up to its promise, I must say. It made me go once but it felt like I had gone a hundred times. I have recovered though, thanks to an Electoral drip, and an archana done in my name by Roja Bai our cook at the Mariamman Koil.

Which brings me to the idea of Madras Week. (Or, for that matter, Mysore Month, Faridabad Fortnight or Bangalore Biennial.) And our Pride. And our need to celebrate everything. Mostly by eating. Incessantly. And before I forget, our Pride.

Yes, yes, we are all proud of Madras (or Delhi, Bombay or Prayag Raj). And we are all Proud Madrasis. And never mind that some of us currently live in Palo Alto, and our patriotic son has his lawn manicured by a Hispanic guy called Javier, Madras will always be home. And we will celebrate it... Proudly.

I, too, am a Proud Madrasi, mind you. Of the five books with my name on them, three are all about Madras. One has the word 'Madras' in the freaking title. So where is my award, dammit? Can't you guys see the selfless service I've done for Madras? And doesn't this obvious Pride entitle me to a garish zari shawl from some officious fool which I will gracefully accept at a felicitation ceremony where other Proud Madras Mamas and Mamis has a fight unto death over the bondas being served?



Here's the thing. I wrote about Madras not because Madras Mata appeared in my dreams and told me 'Son, I appoint you my chronicler because no one is more qualified than you. Go forth and sing my praises and cover yourself in glory', but because I'd lived here all my life and the city organically became the setting for my stories.

Here's the thing. I wrote about Madras not because Madras Mata appeared in my dreams and told me 'Son, I appoint you my chronicler because no one is more qualified than you. Go forth and sing my praises and cover yourself in glory', but because I'd lived here all my life and the city organically became the setting for my stories.

I stayed back in the city of Madras and it became my permanent home not because I refused Cameron Diaz's marriage proposal in the late '90s because that would mean moving to LA, nor did I turn down the post of UN secretary-general because that would mean doing without my weekly visit to Mount Road to stand outside where Safire Theatre used to be, and sob uncontrollably as I looked at the uncleared rubble.

I stayed because I didn't really attempt to leave. I stayed because fabulous non-Madras opportunities didn't present themselves to me. I stayed because I wasn't adventurous enough to leave. I stayed because I was a tiny bit of a coward. Most people who've remained where they are, whether it's Madras, Pune or Bobbarlanka, do so for roughly the same reasons. Especially the ones who claim to be Proud Madrasis, Nellorites or Gurugramvasis.

What Pride are you talking about when your sole effort was remaining immobile?

Let's take the other lot: the ones who scoot at the first given opportunity, not that there is a thing wrong with that. And come back at specific times to their 'beloved city' like they are doing it a massive favour — purely to buy saris and jewellery, take part in some tired old festival, or to send off vestigial parents from assisted-living facilities — claiming Madras will always be home. And how Proud they are of it.

How the heck is it your home? You left, remember? And, to my knowledge, no one made you leave.

For both types of Proud Madrasis, before you get all sentimental and orgasmic about your 'hometown', it might be good to ask yourselves what you've done for the city, whose lives in the city you've quietly improved and what you have genuinely given up to remain here.

The irony being that such folk — and they do exist — don't usually feel the need to speak of homes, hearts and Pride.

I did get a tiny bit of revenge a couple of years ago though on some Proud NRIs. I was visiting a cousin from, where else, the Bay Area. And he dragged me to the kind of party that I wouldn't have gone to back at home had I been roofied and taken unconscious in a JCB. The selling point, apparently, was that there would be a bunch of Mamas who were all Proud (insert school's name)-ites, and I had gone to the same school, too.

My antecedents were declared loudly by my cousin as soon as we entered so his buddies would know the interloper had sound bona fides. Fourteen Mamas of various sizes, bursting with Pride and the good life, surrounded me to see how much Pride I had for studying in this particular school. Which year? Who was princi? Which batch? Do you remember Simran Bhalla? The questions came fast and thick.

"I hated the ****ing school," I said. "May I now have a whisky?"

Krishna Shastri Devulapalli is a humour writer, novelist, columnist and screenwriter

Subhani



Revive democracy, codify parliamentary privileges



Manish Tewari

State of the Union

The recently concluded Monsoon Session of Parliament witnessed the arbitrary suspension of parliamentarians across Opposition parties on specious grounds without being afforded an adequate opportunity to present their case either before the privileges committee or before the concerned House itself.

Even though a suspension from the House may ostensibly be temporary or even for an indeterminate period of time, the fact such suspension at all takes place without providing an opportunity to the concerned member to be heard before any action is initiated is in violation of the fundamental principle of natural justice, *Audi alteram partem* (or *audiatur et altera pars*) — let the other side be heard as well.

At present, decisions regarding the suspension of a Member of Parliament are made through Rule 374 and Rule 256 of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha Rules of Procedure and Conduct, respectively. Under these rules, a Member of Parliament can be suspended immediately upon a motion being introduced and put to a vote without being afforded an opportunity to be heard before the said motion is put to vote.

Such actions circumscribe the principle of free speech and expression — a sine qua non of any parliamentary democracy — for it takes away or at the very least strongly abridges the right to represent constituents, either territorial in the case of the Lok Sabha or the state they represent in case of the Council of States.

This procedure subverts the essence and substance of Article 105 (1) of the Constitution of India that states, "Subject to the provisions of this constitution and the rules and standing orders regulating the procedure of Parliament, there shall be freedom of speech

in Parliament." This freedom of speech includes the right of dissent, the right to offend, the right to say even the sharpest words in the bluntest manner possible without, of course, resorting to expletives and as the Late Arun Jaitley used the operative phrase, "there are but rare occasions in history when parliamentary obstructionism is a part of legitimate parliamentary tactics".

The rare has unfortunately become routine for an obtuse government refuses to discuss issues critical to the very idea of our nationhood. The Opposition having to resort to a no-confidence motion to force a discussion on Manipur being but the latest attempt to surmount the cussedness of the Treasury benches.

The history of parliamentary privileges can be traced back to the Privileges of Parliament Act passed in 1512. This Act served as a shield to protect representatives from the monarch's suppression of dissenting voices. England's history is marked by deliberate attempts by monarchs to seize power and limit the influence of Parliament. The foundation of modern parliamentary privilege can be found in the Bill of Rights of 1689. This bill enhanced the privileges guaranteed to Parliament, and provided legitimacy to Locke's principle of constitutionalism, thereby introducing regulations to restrain the unchecked power of the sovereign.

Regrettably, little progress has been made in further developing the existing framework of parliamentary privileges in India since 1950. The Venkatchaliah Committee, established in the early 2000s, proposed changes to constitutional provisions concerning privileges. However, to date, no action has been taken to pursue these recommendations. Furthermore, the absence of a concrete framework has created a void that cannot

At present, decisions regarding the suspension of a Member of Parliament are made through Rule 374 and Rule 256 of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha Rules of Procedure and Conduct, respectively

not be filled by the existing Rules of Procedure for the Conduct of Business in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. Rules governing parliamentary conduct cannot disregard the core jurisprudential principles that underpin a parliamentary democracy. The current set of rules grants wide discretionary power to the presiding officers of either House. Though the conventions of Parliament envisage that the presiding officers must act as impartial umpires in interpreting parliamentary rules and tradition, the safeguards to make their autonomy absolute have still not been put in place.

By way of example in the United Kingdom there is a convention that the outgoing Speaker is assured of re-election with the rival parties not putting up candidate in his/her constituency. Once re-elected there is an implicit assurance of continuity as Speaker even if his/her party is not the one forming the government.

In this manner, the Speaker becomes substantially non-partisan de hors personal biases and ideological predilections ensuring respect for the doctrine of natural justice, in particular the maxim of "nemo iudex in causa sua", or no one should be a judge in their own case which becomes difficult to uphold if the person concerned has to seek a ticket for re-election from his original political party and then has to depend on that party's machinery for victory. The presiding officer of the Council of States is, however, much better insulated in terms of Article 67 of the Constitution of India to perform his functions as the ex-officio chairperson of the Council of States in a non-partisan manner.

To codify parliamentary privileges the recommendations concerning the

same as outlined in the Venkatchaliah Committee report must be implemented. A tribunal with the authority to adjudicate complaints related to breaches of privilege by Members of Parliament and of MPs must be established. This tribunal should consist of the following members: (1) The Chairperson of the Rajya Sabha or the Speaker serving as the Chairperson as the case maybe for the house concerned whose breach of privilege is being adjudicated. (2) The Leaders of the Opposition in the house concerned whose breach of privilege or of the Member thereof is being adjudicated (3) A sitting Supreme Court judge nominated by the Chief Justice of India.

It also needs to be ensured that all written or even verbal communications made by any parliamentarian to the Speaker/Chairperson or any Union minister/minister in the state government or any other Central/state government official, public or private sector functionary or any other person be regarded as privileged communication qua the member concerned. Members of Parliament must have a right to audience in all courts of law on issues of public interest, notwithstanding whether they are lawyers or not. A member of the Lok Sabha represents, on an average, close to two million of the electorate and may have close to another million more living in his territorial constituency. Similarly, a member of the Council of States represents vital state interests for India is but a union of states.

The privileges so codified must ensure that no member should face unwarranted interference, threats, obstruction, or assault while performing their parliamentary duties.

In conclusion, to fortify democracy, address biases and strengthen oversight, it is must that parliamentary procedure is revisited and a proper legal architecture is provided to parliamentary privileges.

The writer is a lawyer, MP and former Union information and broadcasting minister. Twitter handle @manishtewari.

LETTERS BURNING QUESTION

Ten people were killed while 20 others were injured after a fire broke out in the Bharat Gaurav tourist train near Madurai on Saturday. The loss of lives in fires and other accidents on trains is heartrending. Reports suggest that the fire originated due to cooking activities involving a gas cylinder by devotees aboard the train and, after starting in one compartment, it quickly spread to the adjacent ones. It's bewildering how the railway security authorities in the station allowed pilgrims to carry the gas cylinder into the train. Also, why did the fire engine at Madurai railway station not swing into action soon as the fire was spotted?

N. Sadhasiva Reddy Bengaluru

RADIOACTIVE PACIFIC?

JAPAN'S RELEASE of treated radioactive water is a step forward in decommissioning the nuclear facility that suffered meltdown during the 2011 tsunami. But this has sparked protests from fishing communities and in South Korea while China has banned imports of sea food from Japan fearing radioactive contamination. The initial release process did not detect any anomalies, so in the coming 17 days, 7,800 tons of treated water will be released in the Pacific. While the scientific process involving in the release of the treated water is highly reliable, vigilant eyes should be kept on it to assure regional safety and peace.

Arka Goswami Durgapur, West Bengal

WATER FROM AIR!

PEOPLE HAVE been choosing river basins to settle down since time immemorial and, if we talk numbers, approximately 1.7 billion people reside here. Due to the excessive misuse of river water by them all these years, more than one-fourth of the world's population will be living in water-stressed areas by 2025. However, India has come up with a solution to generate water from the atmosphere by processing the moisture in the air and making clean potable water. A Bengaluru-based company called Uravu Labs has come up with this technology. The water in the atmosphere regenerates in 7-8 days whereas groundwater takes almost 1,400 years to regenerate. What an idea, Sir!!

Noopur Baruah Tezpur, Assam

Mahir Ali



US push for Saudi-Israeli deal faces a few hurdles

Last week, Joe Biden hosted the leaders of South Korea and Japan at Camp David to nudge them towards increased economic and "security" cooperation, as part of the US administration's aggressive pushback against Chinese ambitions. Living memories of Japan's brutal rule in Korea have stood in the way of bonhomie between the two staunch American allies. The push for closer coordination coincides with a US-endorsed resurgence in Japanese militarism.

A similar impetus is behind a parallel US push for a formal diplomatic deal between a repressive monarchy and a diminishing democracy in the Middle East. Saudi Arabia enjoys reasonably cordial relations with China. Its de facto ruler, Mohammed bin Salman, knows that this — not least the Beijing-sponsored rapprochement between Riyadh and Tehran — irritates Washington, and is leveraging it.

The Saudis are not shy of implying they could shift their source of military

imports to China, even Russia, if America falls short. The conditions for a deal with Israel reportedly include a mutual defence pact, a civilian nuclear plan involving the enrichment of uranium, and Israeli 'concessions' to Palestinians that would preserve the possibility — rather, the fiction — of a two-state solution.

Many of Israel's traditional friends among the American commentariat have been critical of the regime's aggressive attempts to subjugate the judiciary, some even arguing that the US should curtail aid to Israel. An open letter from over 750 Israeli intellectuals to the American Jewish community urges it to stop supporting apartheid.

The judiciary's future and the brutal occupation of Palestinian territories tend to be viewed as distinct issues. Mass mobilisations in Israel in defence of its discriminatory democracy have ignored the redoubled efforts towards ethnic 'cleansing'. Israeli courts may have acted to restrict government ex-

cesses, but they are a part and parcel of the oppression since the 1940s, when the horrific Shoah segued into the Nakba. Both words mean the same: catastrophe. The first, among the biggest crimes against humanity, ended in 1945. The second is ongoing, and it is inconceivable that the present regime would agree to ameliorate it, given its commitment to annex the West Bank by subterfuge. That, anyhow, is not something the Saudis demand as part of the price for a diplomatic deal.

Most Arab leaders have never cared much about the fate of the Palestinians, despite leveraging the occupation for political purposes. The Palestinian Authority falls into the same category, serving as a puppet dispensation for an administration that ignores it. No wonder it has lost the allegiance of most Palestinians. Back when the Abraham Accords were announced, the UAE claimed they had forestalled the annexation of the West Bank by the Netanyahu regime; under the current vari-

ant of the same disease, the transgressions have only gathered momentum.

None of this likely to faze MBS, whose mission to turn the nation named after his family into a sporting superpower is going gangbusters, with golf in the bag and men's football almost in the net. Underlying patterns of repression remain intact despite dramatic superficial changes. Raves in the desert and concerts by scantily clad Western performers — alongside the latest Hollywood movies, professional wrestling tournaments and horseracing — are no longer verboten. But even mild dissent on social media can earn you a decades-long prison term.

This week's horrific revelations from Human Rights Watch about Saudi massacres of hundreds, and quite possibly thousands, of Ethiopian refugees on the Yemeni border — children, women and men — help flesh out a more complete picture of the regime's nature. All too many European nations have a ruthlessly inhuman attitude towards

would-be immigrants, including ignoring mass drownings in the Mediterranean. But none of them has thus far resorted to mass killings by gunshots.

It's not very hard to imagine elements in Israel as well as some among the variegated range of border-control fanatics in the US viewing this evidence of pathological misanthropy with a degree of envious admiration.

The Saudis have been dealing with Israel for several years, although the collaboration has been stepped up in the past decade. Perhaps Bibi missed an opportunity by failing to frame his judicial 'reforms' as a means of conforming with the Middle Eastern norm — after all, right across the region, judges tend to take their instructions from the powers that be. There are numerous hurdles to an Israeli-Saudi conjugal union. But if and when it occurs, it's less likely to be a shotgun wedding than a marriage made in heaven.

By arrangement with Dawn

SHORT TAKES

NIGER: TROOPS TOLD TO BE ON MAXIMUM ALERT

Niamey, Aug. 26: The junta in Niger has ordered its armed forces to go on highest alert, citing an increased threat of attack, according to an internal document issued by its defence chief on Friday.

The document, which was shared widely online on Saturday, said the order to be on maximum alert would allow forces to respond adequately in case of any attack and "avoid a general surprise".

"Threats of aggression to the national territory are increasingly being felt," it said.

The main West African bloc ECOWAS has been trying to negotiate with the leaders of the July 26 coup, but has said it is ready to deploy troops to restore constitutional order if diplomatic efforts fail.

IRAN: BUS WITH MOUNTAINEERS PLUNGES, 10 DEAD

Tehran, Aug. 26: A minibus carrying mountaineers in Iran plunged into a ravine, killing 10 people, state media reported Saturday.

The accident occurred on Friday near the city of Varzaghan, in East Azerbaijan province, said the provincial emergency services spokesman, Vahid Shadinia, according to state news agency.

The minibus was heading towards a tourist village in the mountain region when it overturned for an undetermined reason and fell into the ravine, said the official.

"Ten people including the driver were killed and eight were injured," Shadinia said, adding that, "If the seat belts had been buckled, the number of victims would have been lower".

KENYANS GET POWER AFTER 14-HOUR OUTAGE

Nairobi, Aug. 26: Electricity was being restored in most parts of Kenya on Saturday, 14 hours after the longest outage in recent memory, the majority government-owned power distributor said.

There was still no clear explanation for the outage that hit on Friday night, shutting down the country's main international airport, affecting major hospitals and even the President's office compound.

"I am really sorry for what has happened," transport minister Kipchumba Murkomen said in a statement. "There is no excuse worth reporting and there is no reason why our airport is in darkness."

Kenya Power later on Saturday said it had restored service in most areas.

DISINFORMATION IS THE FIRST SIN OF JOURNALISM: POPE

Vatican City, Aug. 26: Pope Francis on Saturday denounced "disinformation" and fake news spread in an effort to influence public opinion as journalism's principal offence.

"Disinformation is the first of the sins, the mistakes — let's say — of journalism," Francis told Italian journalists at a Vatican gathering to bestow a journalism prize.

The pontiff returned to the term "sins" to list what he called the four misdeeds of the media.

"Disinformation, when journalism does not inform or informs badly; slander (sometimes this is used); defamation, which is different from slander but destroys; and the fourth is... the love of scandal."

WILL SEEK FUNDS FOR NEW COVID VACCINE: BIDEN

South Lake Tahoe, Aug. 26: US President Joe Biden said on Friday that he is planning to request more money from Congress to develop another new coronavirus vaccine, as scientists track new waves and hospitalizations rise, though not like before.

Officials are already expecting updated COVID-19 vaccines that contain one version of the omicron strain, called XBB.1.5.

It's an important change from today's combination shots, which mix the original coronavirus strain with last year's most common omicron variants. But there will always be a need for updated vaccines as the virus continues to mutate.

It's not clear exactly when people can start rolling up their sleeves for what officials hope is an annual fall COVID-19 shot. Manufacturers all are brewing doses of the XBB update.

Vivek hints at joint poll effort with Trump in '24

Can only reunite this country if I am the face: Prez aspirant

Washington/London, Aug. 26: Vivek Ramaswamy, an Indian-American 2024 US Presidential aspirant, has hinted that he may run on a joint ticket with former president Donald Trump as his running mate if he does not win the Republican nomination, according to a media report.

The remarks by Ramaswamy came days after the 38-year-old multi-millionaire biotech entrepreneur-turned-politician said he was not interested in any job other than President.

Ramaswamy said he believed he could only reunite this country as President, but did not rule out running with 77-year-old Trump as vice president if the former president and frontrunner wins the nomination for a third time.

When asked by a news channel whether he would be happy to be (Trump's) VP, Ramaswamy replied, "See, this isn't about me. If this were about me, sure. That's a fine position for someone to have at my

HANDSOME GUY: JOE ON TRUMP'S MUGSHOT

President Joe Biden told reporters he saw the mug shot photo from former President Donald Trump's arrest for felony charges in connection to his attempt to overturn the 2020 presidential election.



"Handsomeness, wonderful guy," Biden quipped to reporters. Biden has largely avoided commenting on Trump's legal troubles, with White House officials saying they want to preserve judicial and prosecutorial independence.

age. This is about reviving our country and I can only reunite this country if I'm doing it from the White House as the leader and the face of our movement."

He added that he had fresh legs and was almost half [Trump's] age, but would ask him to serve as my most valued adviser in the White House.

Rumours of a joint ticket between the two men in the 2024 race were fanned by the Trump campaign's praise for Ramaswamy after the first Republican primary debate on Wednesday, in which he

emerged as a breakout star.

A self-declared outsider who has no experience as an elected official has pledged to pardon Trump for any federal convictions on day one of his presidency and continue his legacy in the White House with an America First 2.0 agenda, The Telegraph newspaper said.

In previous interviews, Ramaswamy had denied becoming the former president's running mate, insisting that he could only change the country if he won the top job.

"I'm not interested in a different position in the government. Frankly, I'd drive change through the private sector sooner than becoming number two or three in the federal government," he told a news channel on Saturday.

His popularity rating and online fundraising have surged after his impressive performance at the first Republican presidential primary debate on Wednesday.

The first poll that came out after the debate said that 28 per cent of the 504 respondents said Ramaswamy performed the best. He was followed by Florida Governor Ron DeSantis with 27 per cent, and Pence (13 per cent). Indian-American Nikki Haley received the vote of seven per cent.

According to reports, Ramaswamy was the most Go o g l e - s e a r c h e d Republican candidate after the debate. He was followed by fellow Indian-American Haley.

Both the Indian-Americans were standing next to each other on the debate stage. — PTI

Madagascar: 12 killed after stadium stampede

Madagascar, Aug. 26: A crush of people at a stadium in Madagascar left at least 12 dead and 85 injured as sports fans attended the opening ceremony of the Indian Ocean Island Games, authorities said Saturday.

The stampede at the Mahamasina Stadium in Antananarivo, the capital of the East African island nation, happened Friday as people gathered at an entrance for the official opening of the regional multi-sports event.

A government spokesperson said Saturday that 33 of the injured remained in the hospital in Antananarivo.

Prime Minister Christian Ntsay said on Friday that 11 people were in critical condition following the crush, which happened at around 4.30 p.m. local time. Ntsay visited the injured at the hospital.

His office also issued a statement Saturday offering condolences and promising that the government would transfer the victims' bodies to their families and pay for the medical treatment of the injured.

"The Prime Minister and all members of the government reiterate their



Bodies being brought to a hospital in Antananarivo on Friday following a stampede at a stadium. — AFP

STADIUM A SITE OF EARLIER DISASTERS

- One person died and at least 37 were injured in a stampede ahead of a qualifying game for the African Cup of Nations soccer tournament between Madagascar and Senegal in 2018.
● In 2019, at least 15 people died in a stampede at a concert at the stadium.

condolences to the families of the victims of the unfortunate event in Mahamasina," Ntsay's office said.

Rakotondrazafy did not give any update on those who were critically injured in her statement posted on Facebook.

The opening ceremony still went ahead. President Andry Rajoelina was there and

asked the crowd at Mahamasina Stadium to observe a moment of silence.

The Indian Ocean Island Games is a multi-sports event featuring nations from the region. Athletes from Comoros, Maldives, Mauritius, Mayotte, Reunion and Seychelles also compete at the games, which were first held in 1979.

Russia blames Ukraine as attacks force three major airports to shut operations

Drone attack: Moscow grounds flights

Kyiv, Aug. 26: A new drone attack on Moscow early on Saturday forced a temporary shutdown of all three major airports serving the city, Russian state media reported.

Officials blamed Ukraine for what appeared to be the latest of near-daily strikes on the Russian capital and the surrounding region.

Kyiv has since early this year sought to take the 18-month-war into the heart of Russia, also saying recently that it was behind strikes on Russian military assets far behind the front lines.

Russia's defence ministry and Moscow Mayor Sergey Sobyanin said that a drone was shot down over the Istra district of the Moscow region, some 50 kilometers west of Red Square. Sobyanin said there were no immediate reports of any casualties or damage.

According to Russian state Tass agency, the S h e r e m e t e v o ,



War crime prosecutors work at the site of a shelling in the village of Podoly near Kupiansk, Kharkiv.

Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered Wagner fighters to sign an oath of allegiance to the Russian state after a deadly plane crash believed to have killed Yevgeny Prigozhin, the chief of the mercenary group.

Domodedovo and Vnukovo airports all suspended flights for over an hour early on Saturday.

Russian Telegram channels on Saturday posted

videos, some of them apparently from home security cameras, of what they claimed was Russian air defense downing the drone. One video shows a

GROUND ZERO

Ukrainian forces believe they have broken through the most difficult line of Russian defences in the south and will now be able to advance more quickly, a commander said. Russian defence lines reinforced by minefields have slowed Ukraine's southward advance towards the Sea of Azov.

New Zealand on Saturday announced a new pathway to residency for people fleeing the Ukraine war. Permanent residency will be available to people who travel to New Zealand on the temporary Special Ukraine Visa before March 15 next year.

car parked outside what appears to be suburban home, its alarm beginning to blare seconds after two loud blasts sound in the distance. — AP

TWO KILLED AS RUSSIA STRIKES CAFE IN UKRAINE

Kyiv, Aug. 26: Two people were killed and one wounded on Saturday after Russian forces shelled a village near the town of Kupiansk in Ukraine's northeastern Kharkiv region, hitting a cafe, officials said.

Officials in Kupiansk, four miles (six kilometres) from the frontline, had urged vulnerable residents living near the town to evacuate earlier this month as Russia stepped up attacks to recapture the area.

"According to the preliminary information of the medical staff, two people died in Podoly village as a result of the shelling, another one was wounded," Kharkiv governor Oleg Syngubov said on social media. — AFP

4 ASTRONAUTS LAUNCH OFF TO WORK ON ISS

Kennedy Space Centre, Aug. 26: NASA and SpaceX's Dragon spacecraft blasted off on Saturday carrying four astronauts to the International Space Station.

The Crew-7 mission is commanded by American Jasmin Moghbeli and includes Andreas Mogensen of Denmark, Satoshi Furukawa of Japan and Konstantin Borisov of Russia.

The Dragon spacecraft carried by a Falcon 9 rocket lifted off at 3:27 am local time from Launch Complex 39A at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida, in front of around 10,000 people gathered to watch the launch.

"We have liftoff!" NASA said on X. Cheers could be heard in the mission control room soon after the Dragon craft separated from the Falcon 9 rocket with the crew in orbit.

The launch was pushed back to Saturday to give engineers an extra day to review a component of the Crew Dragon capsule's environmental control and life support system, NASA said in a blog post. The crew will spend six months aboard the ISS, where they will carry out science experiments including collecting samples during a spacewalk to determine whether the station releases microorganisms through its life-support system vents. — AFP

UN: IS doubled territory in strife-hit Mali in a year

United Nations, Aug. 26: Islamic State extremists have almost doubled the territory they control in Mali in less than a year, and their al-Qaida-linked rivals are capitalizing on the deadlock and perceived weakness of armed groups that signed a 2015 peace agreement, United Nations experts said in a new report.

The stalled implementation of the peace deal and sustained attacks on communities have offered the IS group and al-Qaida affiliates a chance to re-enact the 2012 scenario, they said.

That's when a military coup took place in March

TERROR WAVE

PAK DOC SENTENCED FOR HELPING TERROR OUTFIT

A Pakistani doctor, who worked in the US on an H1-B visa, has been sentenced to 18 years in prison for attempting to provide material support to terror organisation ISIS and conduct "lone wolf" terrorist attacks in the US.

and rebels in the north formed an Islamic state two months later. The extremist rebels were forced from power in the north with the help of a

8 ULTRAS HELD IN PAK, 'TERROR PLOT' FOILED

Eight suspected terrorists of banned organisations, including ISIS and Al-Qaeda in Pakistan's Punjab province have been arrested. The Counter Terrorism Department said it has foiled a "major terror plot" during operations in different areas of Punjab.

French-led military operation, but they moved from the arid north to more populated central Mali in 2015 and remain active. — AP

TWO HELD FOR ARSON AS FIRES RAVAGE GREECE

Athens, Aug. 26: Greek officials arrested two on Saturday for allegedly deliberately starting wildfires as hundreds of firefighters battle blazes that have been blamed for 21 deaths.

One man was arrested for allegedly deliberately setting fire to dried grass on the island. The fire department said the man confessed to having set four other fires in the area in July and August.

A second man was arrested in central Greece, also for allegedly deliberately setting fire to dried vegetation. Judicial authorities were informed in both cases. — AFP

Chinese vessels, aircraft breach Taiwan's territory

Beijing, Aug. 26: Taiwan's defence ministry said on Saturday that China sent dozens of aircraft and vessels toward the island, just days after the United States approved a \$500-million arms sale to Taiwan.

The defence ministry said 32 aircraft from the People's Liberation Army and nine vessels from the navy were detected in the 24 hours between 6 am on Friday and 6 am on Saturday.

Of these, 20 aircraft either crossed the median line of the Taiwan Strait or breached Taiwan's air defense identification zone. In response, Taiwan tasked its own aircraft, vessels and missile systems to respond to the activities, the defence ministry said.

China sees self-ruled Taiwan as a renegade province to be taken by force if necessary.

The Chinese military launched drills around Taiwan last week as a

XI: CONSERVE 'HARD-WON' SOCIAL STABILITY

Beijing, Aug. 26: Chinese President Xi Jinping made a rare visit to Xinjiang on Saturday, calling on officials to conserve "hard-won social stability" in a troubled region where Beijing is accused of severe human rights abuses. The Chinese government has pursued a years-long campaign against what it describes as terrorism and Islamic extremism in the northwestern region, detaining large numbers of Uyghurs and other Muslims. — AFP

stern warning after Taiwan's vice president stopped over in the US while on an official trip to Paraguay. — AP

Govt standoff to be solved: Scholz

Berlin, Aug. 26: German Chancellor Olaf Scholz vowed that his coalition government will quickly resolve a dispute over child benefits that has marred attempts to put months of damaging public infighting behind it.

Center-left Social Democrat Scholz leads a coalition of three parties that are broadly socially liberal. But their approaches to economic and other issues are often at odds, in particular between his two junior partners: the

environmentalist, traditionally left-leaning Greens and the pro-business Free Democrats.

The two squabbled at length earlier this year over a plan to replace fossil-fuel home heating systems, which helped drag down the government's poll ratings.

Top officials had hoped to project a more united image after the summer break, but more trouble erupted as the Cabinet held its first post-vacation meeting on Aug. 16. — AP

TIMELESS | LEGACY Secrecy shrouds luxury brand Bucherer's sale as deal value undisclosed

Swiss watchmaker sells decades-old firm to Rolex

Zurich, Aug. 26: Over more than a century, three generations of Bucherers built one of the most exclusive watch and jewelry retailers in the world, selling expensive time pieces and glittering gems to the global rich and famous.

Now, the secretive 87-year-old Swiss billionaire behind the eponymous luxury boutiques — Chairman Jörg G. Bucherer — has agreed to sell Bucherer AG to Rolex in a move that has stunned the world of high-end watch retailing. The companies didn't

disclose the terms of their deal and arriving at an estimate isn't easy since neither Switzerland-based firm publishes financial results.

Jean-Philippe Bertschy, an analyst with Vontobel Holding AG, put annual sales at Bucherer's more than 100 stores at about 2 billion Swiss francs (\$2.3 billion), giving the firm an enterprise value of as much as 4 billion Swiss francs. He estimated Bucherer accounts for about 5 per cent of Rolex's sales.

The octogenarian Bucherer's decision to dis-

BY BUYING Bucherer, Rolex is giving itself a major presence in consumer sales for the first time, a shift from reliance on external distributors. The only store currently owned and operated by Rolex is in its home city of Geneva.

pose of the closely held family business took the industry by surprise partly because of the intense secrecy surrounding himself and the two watchmakers, whose histories have been closely entwined for decades. In a

statement about the agreement, Rolex said his choice was made "in the absence of direct descendants."

By buying Bucherer, Rolex is giving itself a major presence in consumer sales for the first time, a strategic shift from reliance on external distributors. The only store in the world currently owned and operated by Rolex is in its home city of Geneva.

The deal, which still requires approval from authorities, comes amid what UBS Group AG has dubbed the greatest trans-

fer of wealth in history over the next two decades as business founders and investors grow older. Yet it's unclear where Bucherer plans to direct the proceeds from the sale. A spokesperson for the firm declined to provide any details beyond the Rolex statement, adding that Bucherer "has always been a very discreet company."

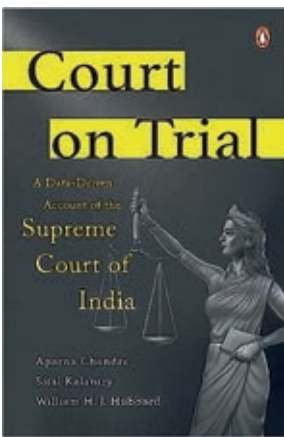
What's clear is that the move will put an end to dynastic control over the purveyor of pricey jewelry and watch brands including Rolex, its own Carl F. Bucherer, Chopard

and Blancpain. The business traces its roots to 1888 when entrepreneur Carl-Friedrich Bucherer and his wife Luise opened a shop in Lucerne, according to the company's website.

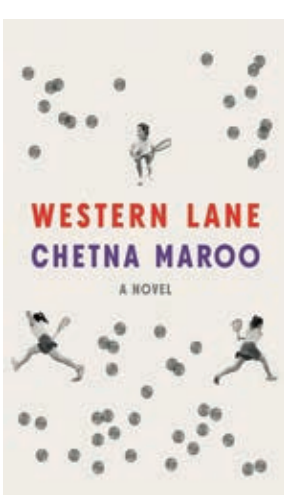
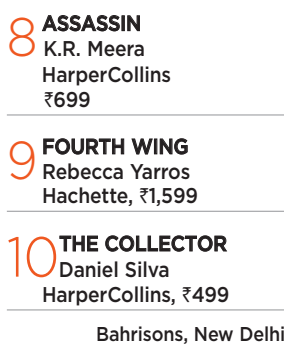
Their sons Ernst and Carl Eduard joined the business in the early 1920s, with Ernst reaching an agreement with Rolex founder Hans Wilsdorf in 1924 to add the brand to its product line. Third-generation Jörg took over management in 1977, expanding into Austria in the 1980s and then Germany a decade later. — Bloomberg

INDIAN TOP 10 BESTSELLERS

- NON-FICTION**
- HOW PRIME MINISTERS DECIDE**
Neeraj Chowdhury
Aleph, ₹999
 - UNSEALED COVERS**
Gautam Bhatia
HarperCollins, ₹699
 - COURT ON TRIAL**
Aparna Chandra
Penguin
₹699
 - SHADOWS AT NOON**
Joya Chatterji
Penguin
₹799
 - SMOKE AND ASHES**
Amitav Ghosh
HarperCollins, ₹699
 - OPPENHEIMER (AMERICAN PROMETHEUS)**
Kai Bird
Atlantic Books
₹899
 - THE INDIANS HISTORY OF A CIVILISATION**
G.N. Devy
Aleph
₹1,299
 - VAJPAYEE**
Abhishek Choudhary
Picador India
₹899
 - IN THE LANGUAGE OF REMEMBERING**
Aanchal Malhotra
HarperCollins
₹799
 - THE IMPORTANCE OF SHINZO ABE**
Edited by Sanjaya Baru
HarperCollins
₹699



- FICTION**
- QUARTERLIFE**
Devika Rege
HarperCollins, ₹599
 - THE COVENANT OF WATER**
Abraham Verghese
Grove Press, ₹899
 - YELLOWFACE**
Rebecca F. Kuang
HarperCollins, ₹699
 - THE GREATEST INDIAN STORIES EVER TOLD**
Arunava Sinha
Aleph, ₹999
 - THE HOUSE OF DOORS**
Tan Twan Eng
Penguin
₹899
 - WESTERN LANE**
Chetna Maroo
Picador, ₹750
 - THE BOOK OF EVERLASTING THINGS**
Aanchal Malhotra
HarperCollins, ₹799
 - ASSASSIN**
K.R. Meera
HarperCollins
₹699
 - FOURTH WING**
Rebecca Yarros
Hachette, ₹1,599
 - THE COLLECTOR**
Daniel Silva
HarperCollins, ₹499



Aiyar's pink curiosities nearly cost him his diplomatic career



Mani Shankar Aiyar

excerpt

I returned to India on the morning of 15 July 1963. That very evening, I found myself with the President of India in his large bedroom at Rashtrapati Bhavan. He lay in his four-poster bed, propped up against a wall of fluffy pillows to receive his personal guests. His son, the well-known historian, Dr S. Gopal, was in attendance. My mother, with characteristic chutzpah, had leveraged her connection with Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan dating back to the early 1930s, when she was his paying guest at the Andhra University vice-chancellor's palatial residence in Visakhapatnam. She had got on famously with Gopal, who was then a little boy, and the call had been arranged through him. Dr Radhakrishnan brushed away my stuttering explanations to focus on the nub of the issue. 'Did you,' he said, 'join the Communist Party in Britain?' I replied I could not have because I was not a British citizen. And, of course, as the Indian Intelligence Bureau (IB) well knew, I had not joined the Communist Party in India. In that case, remarked the President, how could I be kept out after passing the exam so convincingly? [...] He turned to Gopal and instructed him, 'Please ask Lal Bahadur to see me.' Lal Bahadur Shastri was then the home minister. [...]

wondered why I had not been to see him. [...] He [Mr Singh] began, 'You are not a prisoner in the dock. I just want to ask you a few questions.' I nodded. The questions started. I fielded them as best I could but found myself suddenly in the middle of a heated argument with the special secretary (home) over the true meaning of democracy. Just that morning, the papers had said that Harold Macmillan in England had been succeeded as Prime Minister by a belted fourteenth earl. Lord Home (pronounced 'Hume') who was still to divest himself of his ermine and get elected to the House of Commons. Did he call that 'democracy'? Warming to the subject, I referred to President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt. Everyone called him a dictator, I said, but if he held an open election in his country an over-

whelming majority would vote for him as he was an Arab icon. L.P. Singh listened to me with unwonted patience but riposted that the only time he had ever been abroad was to the United States, and, on his way back, he had halted overnight in Cairo. That night Nasser had rounded up the leaders of the Coptic community and had them all either exiled, thrown into prison or shot dead. Did I call that democracy? At that point, I went berserk. I reminded the special secretary that he had begun by telling me that I was not to regard myself as a prisoner in the dock, but I was being denied three privileges to which a prisoner was entitled. What, asked the domineering L.P. Singh, were those three privileges? First, I said, the prisoner in the dock is assumed innocent until proved guilty. I was being asked to prove my innocence. Second, I said, picking up steam, a prisoner in the dock is told what the charges against him are; I had no idea what was the evidence the intelligence authorities had gathered against me. Third, I went on more angrily, a prisoner in the dock is provided an attorney if he cannot afford one himself; I was not even being allowed to call my witnesses. Exhausted at my own temerity, I slumped back in my seat. The special secretary pulled the cigar out of his mouth and barked, 'Aiyar, you're in. Now out.' And I walked out wearing the haze of smoke from his cigar like a halo!

It took another two weeks for Home Minister Gulzarilal Nanda to overrule his officers. He noted that he had seen me and talked to me at some length. It seemed to him that although I had pursued an intellectual association with Marxism, he had no reason to disbelieve that I had never been a member of the Communist Party, let alone an active worker. He therefore recommended to the Prime Minister (who was also the external affairs minister) that there remained no justification to debar me from government service. Nehru entirely endorsed this, adding that he too had heard good reports of me. Thus, under Prime Minister Nehru's personal signature, I crossed my personal Rubicon on 24 October 1963. [...] Many decades later, when I was at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), I became friendly with IB chief, M.K. Narayanan. He volunteered the information that it was he who was my case officer in IB and added, with an air of regret, that every time he thought he had me by the short hairs, yet another VIP missive would land on his table and he would have to start writing his negative recommendation all over again. [...] Many decades later, when staying with him in Raj Bhavan, Kolkata, in 2009, where he was serving as governor of West Bengal after a decade as the national security adviser, I asked him whether he had got his information from the BIS. He nodded. At which, I told him BIS stood for British Information Service; UK's intelligence agencies were Scotland Yard and MI5/MI6. So, had I been charged on the basis of newspaper reports? He did not answer. The last word, however, remained with my dear friend, Shekhar Dasgupta, as so often in my life: 'You found you were a Marxist — but of the Groucho variety!'

Excerpted with permission from Juggernaut

OFF THE SHELF



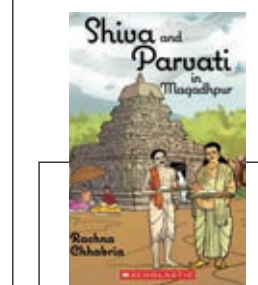
THE EXILED
By LUCY FULFORD
Coronet
pp. 384; ₹1,323

Uganda, August 1972. President Idi Amin makes a shocking pronouncement — the country's 80,000-strong South Asian population is being expelled. They have ninety days to leave. After packing scant possessions and countless memories, 50,000 Ugandan Asians vied for limited space in countries including Canada, India and the United Kingdom. More than 28,000 expellees from Britain's former colony arrived in the UK and began building new lives — but their incredible stories have, until now, remained largely hidden. Fifty years on from the exodus, *The Exiled* draws on first-hand interviews and testimonies, including from the author's family, to illuminate a time of painful alienation and incredible courage. As an entire people stepped into the unknown, a global diaspora was born, and the fate of the United Kingdom changed forever. Journeying across continents and decades, this staggering work of reportage illuminates an essential, and under-explored, chapter in post-colonial history, challenging politically expedient narratives to uncover the true fate of minorities at the end of empire.



STOLEN HOURS AND OTHER CURIOSITIES
By MANJULA PADMANABHAN
Hachette
pp. 278; ₹599

In twenty-five exhilarating stories, Manjula Padmanabhan brings her trademark twist to familiar reality, dreaming up inventive futures and capturing today's world with equal flair. From bejewelled party guests suddenly stripped naked to a teenager who steals time, from mosquitoes that infect people with Gandhian pacifism to a dystopia where everyone breathes canned air, this remarkable collection poses urgent questions: what does it mean to live in a society, and this one in particular? Where are we headed, and do we even want to get there? At once funny, provocative and profound, *Stolen Hours and Other Curiosities* is science fiction served up with a dab of ghee and a sprinkling of dark matter that will hold you captive till the very last page.



SHIVA AND PARVATI IN MAGADHPUR
By RACHNA CHHABRIA
Scholastic
pp. 96; ₹299

Goddess Parvati and Lord Shiva visit the town of Magadhpur in disguise. Parvati is impressed by the devotion of two people — the rich grain merchant, Mani Ram, and the poor washerman, Golak Nath. Shiva states that the merchant is shrewd while the washerman is careless with his blessings. She challenges Shiva and tries to change Golak Nath's destiny. Shiva agrees to this bet as long as both devotees are accorded with the same opportunities. Every time Parvati tries to help Golak Nath, he messes up. Mani Ram, on the other hand, becomes more wealthy. Will Golak Nath make the most of these blessings in disguise? Or will Parvati lose the bet with Shiva?

HOW BIRDS HELPED SALIM ALI REDEEM SELF

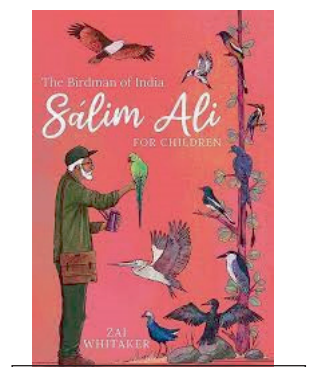


Shashi Warriar

review

Here's hope for those young people who are mediocre with mathematics and other studies, and likely to be uninterested in business. Salim (pronounced *Saalim*, not *Saleem*) Ali's interest in birds began to awaken when he shot a male sparrow, standing guard over its mate's nest, with an air rifle. Next morning he found that another male sparrow had taken its place, and he shot that too. This went on until he had shot eight male sparrows, and then wonderment took the place of what-ever had urged him to shoot those sparrows. This wonderment gave his life a foundation of incredible strength. It enabled him to survive the loss of several salaried jobs, and, later, the loss of Tehmina, his wife, who, throughout their 21 years together, supported his efforts wholeheartedly. This book is his life story, told simply, and for children. It's the author's well-founded belief that Salim Ali's life offers today's children a role model. The author makes no effort to sugar-coat the story. Salim's initial difficulties with academics are covered in some detail, as well as mediocre performance in school, and

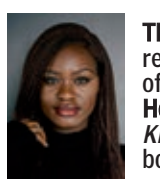
his inability, found in many others of his extended family, to run a business successfully. This mediocrity at school had nothing to do with his powers of observation,



THE BIRD MAN OF INDIA: SALIM ALI FOR CHILDREN
By ZAI WHITAKER
Hachette
pp. 142, ₹350

though. For example, it was known that the houbara bustard he saw in Sind (now in Pakistan), under normal hot and dry conditions, has a colour that affords perfect camouflage, enabling it to hide easily in the sand. Salim discovered, however, that the bustard's colour changes in the rains, enabling it to hide in wet sand as well! Also included is the story of Salim's relationship with Colonel Richard Meinertzhagen, a former British Intelligence officer. The Colonel's claims to being a hero might have been authentic, but his claims as an ornithologist were proven false in the 1990s, decades after his death. It illustrates Salim's naivete with people, but also warns youngsters of the possibility of charlatanism in science. My favourite story, though, is about Salim's encounter with a bandit in the summer of 1945. Near the Tibetan border, poking around among the bushes, he saw a bandit armed with a dagger and a rifle. Escape was impossible, so he resorted to a ruse. He had a collapsible chair, a small folding seat on a stick. He pretended that the stick was a rifle barrel, and clicked the folding seat open to give the impression that he was loading and cocking his own rifle. It worked, for the bandit fled. So here's proof that commitment, integrity, and hard work — combined with observation, quick thinking, and luck — will get you where a great academic background won't. A terrific lesson for youngsters, and packaged well, to boot.

Shashi Warriar has written fairy tales, thrillers, a semi-fictional biography, satires, and a love story. Besides writing, he teaches strategic communication at a business school.



TRIVIA: Did you know that #BookTok is all the rage? It's a TikTok subculture where users share short-form videos discussing their favourite reads and recommend books to their followers. Recently, the app released the list of winners of its first-ever Book Awards. The BookTok Book of the Year award went to *Honey & Spice*, the debut novel by **Bolu Babalola** (in photograph). The "BookTok Author of the Year" award went to **Holly Jackson**, known for her *Good Girl's Guide to Murder* series. And the award for "Best Book to End a Reading Slump" went to *Everything I Know About Love*, a memoir by *Sunday Times* columnist, **Dolly Alderton**. **Alice Oseman's** *Heartstopper*, first published in 2020 and on two gay boys, won the "Best Book I Wish I Could Read Again For The First Time". Romance seems to be the platform user's favourite, all in all!

Angsty examination of our body of laws through lens of gender



Ranjona Banerji

review

A book of essays that examines law, gender and society is always relevant. But it seems more so, now as we as a society grapple with images which have emerged out of Manipur, of women being used as weapons in warfare, as victims of violence in identity and political battles and crimes against women being used as political counterpoints. In all these, the women themselves are irrelevant and immaterial. They are symbols of society at its worst which is often society at its most malevolently powerful. As Aaliya Waziri writes in her opening chapter, on the "Nirbhaya" gangrape case of 2012 which woke us up, only to send us to apathetic sleep again, "They saw injustice never lives forever. They're wrong. Brutality does. Insanity does. Inhumanity does. Fear is palpable. It's something we women carry." Waziri used this trigger — the indescribable pain she says she still carries from the horror of that gang rape — to embark on her in-depth study of Indian law, in statutes, in investigative methods and in our courts. It is not an easy journey, neither

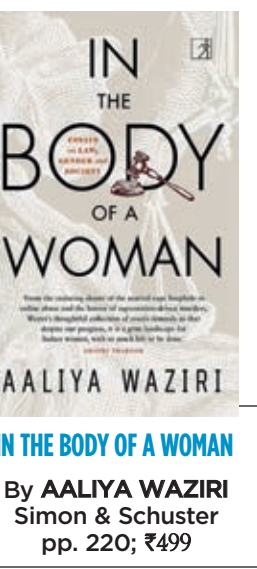
for her nor for the reader. What Waziri lays bare are the inequalities of our gender laws. The insensitivity of our judicial pronouncements. And the long road ahead for what is a fundamental right of equality of gender to be translated into social and psychological realities. In the Sonapat rape case of 2017, the Punjab and Haryana high court suspended the sentence of all three accused, and made the following observation, that the victim was of "a promiscuous attitude and voyeuristic mind". Such sentiments are not uncommon in our courts, because the woman is still seen as something between a virgin and whore. Sexual feeling or behaviour is unacceptable in women. And that is why judgments so often mimic the social inclination of the "what was wearing" school of thought. That is, a woman of a

promiscuous and voyeuristic bent cannot claim to have been abused or assaulted by a man, because she may have been "asking for it". Although as Waziri outlines, the Law Commission has several times updated itself, what is in the minds of judges is less easy to update. Consent itself is not easily defined or understood. Or rather the problem appears to be between what women say and what men interpret that as, including in the minds of the judges. In Waziri's words, "*Neti, neti* is a Sanskrit expression, found in the Upanishads, which translates to 'neither this nor that'. It refers to what we are not. Similarly, the present definition of consent is an example of *neti, neti*." What is evident in reading these essays is that the law, not just in India, still sees rape as a form of violent sex. Not as an expression of power and subjugation, which is how psychology, sociology and women's movements themselves interpret rape. What we see in the viral video of the

naked women being paraded in Manipur is not an act of sexual excitement but a violent statement of power. As Waziri looks at the issue of marital rape in India, this dichotomy is further underlined. The facts, as she quotes, show that women are more likely to face sexual and physical violence from their husbands, compared to strangers. Yet, since marriage is seen as sacred, "nonconsensual sex" is regarded "as an extension of 'disagreement in married life and the bedroom'." Waziri looks at the opposing judgments which struck down the provision of marital rape as a crime as she examines the subject. And then speaks for herself, a 26-year-old woman and a lawyer: "Often people say that women have recourse... a litany of statutes... But... we are not addressing the basic issue of violation of basic personal autonomy caused by marital rape."

The "indescribable pain" lies below the surface and will emerge for any woman who read this book. But it is also an education for the reader, a study of laws and court cases. For someone so young, this is a work of great insight and focus.

The writer is a senior journalist who writes on media affairs, politics and social trends. She tweets at @ranjona.



IN THE BODY OF A WOMAN
By AALIYA WAZIRI
Simon & Schuster
pp. 220; ₹499

SHORT TAKES

Pragg & Gukesh in Asiad camp

Kolkata: The Asian Games-bound Indian men's chess team, which includes World Cup silver medalist GM Rameshbabu Pragganandhaa along with three other quarterfinalists, will undergo a four-day tactical camp here from August 30...

Sethuraman bags national chess title

Pune: S. P. Sethuraman of Petroleum Sports Promotion Board emerged champion in the 60th National Chess Championship here on Saturday, after settling for a draw in the ninth and final round to finish with 9.5 points.

Top-seed Grandmaster Abhijeet Gupta, playing on board two, drew a marathon match against Aronyak Ghosh with white pieces to finish one point behind Sethuraman.

FC Goa cruise into Durand Cup semi

Guwahati: Former champions FC Goa marched into the 132nd Durand Cup football tournament semifinals, defeating Chennaiyin FC 4-1, here on Saturday.

Rojas clinches 4th straight gold

Budapest, Hungary: Venezuela's Yulimar Rojas snatched victory from the jaws of defeat in astonishing style to win a fourth consecutive women's triple jump at the World Athletics Championships on Friday.

FOURCE TO RECKON

De Villiers feels Kohli is perfect for No. 4 spot at World Cup

New Delhi, Aug. 26: Virat Kohli would be the perfect answer for India's No.4 conundrum at the World Cup as he can put the innings together and play any kind of role in the middle order, feels South Africa great AB de Villiers.

India have struggled to find a suitable No.4 ever since Yuvraj Singh retired from cricket. With the 50-over World Cup less than two months away, there has been a lot of discussion around who will bat at the spot.

"We're still talking about who will be the No. 4 batter for India. I've heard some rumours about Virat possibly taking up that position. I would be a big supporter of that," de Villiers said on his YouTube channel.

"I think Virat is perfect for No. 4. He can put the innings together, play any kind of role in that middle order. I don't know if he would like to do that.

"We know he loves his No. 3 position; he's scored all his runs there, but at the end of the day, if the team needs you to do something, play a certain role, you have got to put your hand up and got for it," de Villiers added.

While Kohli prefers to bat one down, he has a decent record coming in at No. 4. In 39 innings, he has scored 1,767 runs at an average of 55.21 and strike rate of 90.66.

However, it has been over three years since Kohli batted in the No. 4 position in January 2020 when he played against Australia in Mumbai.

Both Shreyas Iyer and KL Rahul have recovered from their injuries and are a part of the 17-member Asia Cup squad.

Iyer has done 20 matches at No. 4, scoring 805 runs at 47.35 with two centuries and five fifties. He is most likely to reclaim the spot.

Earlier this week, skipper Rohit Sharma stressed on the need to have flexibility in the batting order.

DISAPPOINTED TO SEE CHAHAL BEING AXED Leg-spinner Yuzvendra



Virat Kohli

Chahal failed to make the India squad for the Asia Cup as the selectors gave preference to wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav and spin all-rounder Axar Patel.

"Chahal has been dropped, selectors making their intentions clear who they will be picking. It's a bit of disappointing drop for me, Yuzi is always

very handy and it's great to have the leg-spinning option in your team. We know how skilful he is," de Villiers said.

DUTCH BANK ON CAMPS, PRACTICE GAMES IN INDIA TO MAKE IMPACT

Bengaluru, Aug. 26: Netherlands might be entering the ICC World Cup 2023 as rank outsiders, but their coach Ryan Cook is banking on camps in India and practice matches to make an impact in the quadrennial extravaganza.

Netherlands will arrive in India mid-September to have an acclimatization camp in Bengaluru, where they will play a couple of local sides.

Following that, they will face India and Australia in the pre-tournament warm-up matches at Thiruvananthapuram.

Cook hoped that the time spent in India would blend with his team's inherent desire to win matches.

"We are preparing as hard as we can. There will be a couple of camps and practice matches in India. We hope they will serve us well in the tournament proper. Once you enter the tournament, it will be inspirational for everyone to do well," Cook said on Saturday.

The Dutchmen qualified for the World Cup earlier in July ahead of teams like two-time champions West Indies.

However, since that day they have not played any international matches, leaving them a tad raw ahead of the big-ticket event to be played in India across October and November.

The furrows on Dutch faces will grow long as they are yet to win a World Cup match in India despite playing in two editions — 1996 and 2011.

But Netherlands captain Scott Edwards did not read much into the history.

WORLD | ATHLETICS

Chopra primed to win top prize

Budapest, Aug. 26: A single big throw having taken him to the final once again while his close rivals struggled, Neeraj Chopra is primed to nail the World Championships javelin throw gold medal here on Sunday, to lift the gloom in the Indian camp after the country's disappointing campaign so far.

Chopra, who won silver in the last edition, sent his spear to 88.77m in his first attempt in the qualification round on Friday to also qualify for 2024 Paris Olympics. It was his season's best effort and fourth best throw of his career.

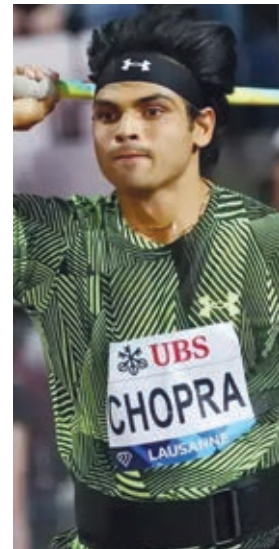
The 25-year-old has won gold medals in Olympics (Tokyo in 2021), Asian Games (2018) and Commonwealth Games (2018), besides becoming the Diamond League champion last year.

It is no secret that the Olympic champion prefers to throw big in his first attempt and having done that, he packed up and left the competition arena without making any further attempt to preserve strength for the all-important final on Sunday.

Chopra did the same in the last edition qualification round in USA with a 88.39m — though he finished second behind eventual champion Anderson Peters of Grenada, who threw 89.91m.

The same happened in Tokyo Olympics also, where he won a historic gold.

Even though Chopra has competed in just two top events this season —



Neeraj Chopra

winning title in both Doha and Lausanne Diamond League Meetings, his top class throw here on Friday showed that he's in great form and rhythm, and on course to win the only yellow colour medal missing in his decorated cabinet.

The absence of defending champion Peters in the final will also make Chopra's job easier though the Grenadian has been struggling for some time. He could not even touch the 80m mark in his three qualifying round throws.

That left only Jakub Vadlech of Czech Republic and Julian Weber of Germany from among the throwers Chopra had had gruelling duels in the last two years after Tokyo Olympics as top contenders for the gold on Sunday.

BAJRANG SKIPS WORLDS TRIALS, FOCUSES ON ASIAD

New Delhi, Aug. 26: Olympic medalist Bajrang Punia is set to leave for Issyk-kul in Kyrgyzstan to train for the upcoming Asian Games after skipping the trials for the World Championship held in Patiala on Saturday.

The World Championship is scheduled to commence in Belgrade on September 16 and with Bajrang skipping the trials, he has made it clear he just wants to concentrate on the continental showpiece in Hangzhou.

"Bajrang did not appear for the trials for the Worlds in Patiala today. He has submitted his fitness certificate as required by the Sports Authority of India and should leave for Kyrgyzstan shortly to

train for the Asian Games," said IOA-constituted ad-hoc committee member for wrestling Gian Singh on Saturday.

Bajrang had requested the Sports Ministry he wanted to skip the World Championships trials and instead focus on his preparations for the Asian Games from September 23.

The ministry had then asked for a fitness certificate from Bajrang, which he provided and was accepted by the Mission Olympic Cell.

Bajrang will be accompanied on his five-week-long training stint in Kyrgyzstan by his coach, strength & conditioning expert, physiotherapist and sparring partner.

WRESTLING | SELECTIONS

Sehrawat seals Worlds berth

Patiala, Aug. 26: Aman Sehrawat asserted his supremacy in the men's 57kg free-style category as he clinched a World Championship berth while seasoned Olympian Deepak Punia skipped the national trials, here on Saturday.

Aman defeated Atish Todkar in the final to make it double joy for him this year.

Besides Aman, Akash Dahiya will be representing India in the 61kg after getting the better of Neeraj, while Anuj Kumar will be seen in action in the 65kg category, where Olympic medalist Bajrang Punia ply his trade.

Bajrang, his close aide Jitender Kinha and Olympic medalist Sakshi Malik's husband Satyawart Kadian, all those who were a part of the sit-in protest at Jantar Mantar demanding arrest of former WFI chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh on allegations of sexual harassment, didn't take

part in the trials. But it turned out to be a double whammy for Vishal Kaliraman as his dreams of representing the country in both Asian Games and World Championships was shattered.

Kaliraman won the Asian Games trials but was kept on standby after Bajrang was given a direct entry.

Kaliraman, however, has an outside hope after Bajrang on Thursday said that he would withdraw from the Asian Games if all the panchayats that backed him during the protest at Jantar Mantar ask him to do so during the Khap Mahapanchayat on September 10.

SELECTION TRIALS RESULT Men's Freestyle: 57kg Aman (RSPB), 61kg Akash Dahiya (SSCB), 65kg Anuj Kumar (Haryana), 70kg Abhimanyu (Delhi), 74kg Naveen (Haryana), 79kg Sachin More (Haryana), 86kg Sandeep Singh (Punjab), 92kg Pruthviraj Patil (SSCB), 97kg Sahil (Punjab), 125kg Sumit Malik (Haryana).

WORLD | GAMES

WOMEN'S BLIND CRICKET TEAM REIGN SUPREME

Birmingham, Aug. 26: The visually challenged Indian women's cricket team, on Saturday, scripted history winning a gold medal beating Australia by nine wickets at the IBSA World Games.

India restricted Australia for 114/8 in the allotted 20 overs and then chased down the revised target of 42 in 3.3 overs.

Cricket for visually challenged made its debut in International Blind Sports Federation World Games this year. This was the first final in the World Games and India won the ultimate showdown beating Australia by nine wickets in a rain-affected final.

Opting to bat first, Australia got off to a bad start as the side lost the first wicket in the 4th over. Feeling the pressure of finals, Australia carried their innings slowly, scoring 29 runs in the powerplay.

India picked two wickets in the eighth and ninth over as Australia were left reeling at 39/3. C. Lewis and C. Webeck then carried Australia's innings stitching a 54-run partnership.

However, India came back in the game picking wickets at regular intervals and reduced Australia to 109/8 in just 3 overs. In the end, the team from down under was just able to score 114/8 in the allotted 20 overs.

Chasing a paltry target of 42 runs, India came all guns blazing on Australia bowlers. The Women In Blue never looked out of form as the side chased down the target in just 3.3 overs.



The visually challenged Indian women's cricket team celebrate after winning the IBSA World Games final against Australia in Birmingham on Sunday.

Prannoy settles for bronze at Worlds

New Delhi, Aug. 26: H. S. Prannoy's fantastic run in the BWF World Championships in Copenhagen came to an end on Saturday after he went down in a close contest against former world junior champion and third seed Kunlavut Vitidsarn in the men's singles semifinals.

The world No.9 Indian began strong and clinched the opening game with an aggressive approach. But the effort of beating two former world champions in marathon encounters in the earlier rounds seemed to catch up with him as he went down 18-21, 21-13, 21-14. Prannoy will bring home the country's only bronze medal from this edition of the championships.



Prannoy adopted a simple game plan of not allowing Vitidsarn to settle into any sort of rhythm. He was good at anticipating his opponents cross court smashes and opened up a 11-5 lead at the mid-game interval after winning seven straight points.

The 31-year-old Indian was put under pressure thereafter by Vitidsarn but kept his nerves to convert the second game point. With the momentum in his favour, Prannoy opened up a 4-0 lead in the second game before Vitidsarn slowed the game down, forcing his opponent to take more risks

while going for the winners. The ploy worked as he won five consecutive points to take a 11-7 lead at the mid-game interval.

The Thai shuttler was in complete control after that as he forced a decider and it felt like Prannoy needed to summon up all his reserves to keep his hopes of making the final alive.

Prannoy began aggressively again but Vitidsarn relied on his defence to force the Indian into long rallies tiring him further.