

A truly electrifying dancer

The gathering at Lahore was restive as the dance show began much behind schedule. This left young Yamini Krishnamurthy tasked with nursing the viewers' grievance primarily. She took up the challenge along with a risk: opening to a long piece. "If they liked it, they would stay around," the artiste would later recall the gamble. Not only did the residents of the heritage city cheer her, many among the enthralled even sang with her towards the end of the programme. Yamini was already established when this episode unveiled in Pakistan's Punjab province. Yet, practical tips during tricky junctures would invariably come from her father. "Suppose you start with a small item and many in the audience leave immediately. You are defeated easily," suggested M Krishnamurthy, who often travelled with Yamini, knowing her calibre. He foresaw the victory in the Paris of the East.

In any case, Yamini had won over her family as a little girl. At five and just into school, she told her parents that academic studies bored her. "I want to dance, nothing else," she kept announcing — louder as days passed by in the Cauvery delta where she grew up as a child. The elders were all art-inclined, but they sensed no career in anyone taking up Bharatanatyam full-time in the 1940s.

The Telugu kid living in Tamil land had her reason. A couple of minutes' walk from her house in Chidambaram would take Yamini to the imposing Nataraja temple. Its exquisite architecture featured statues that enticed her much — especially Shiva in his cosmic dancing posture. Spending all day for months together in its precincts, Yamini decided that dance alone would define her life. The determination led Prof Krishnamurthy to eventually take the child to Kalakshetra. In between, for seven years, Yamini lived in hilly Madanapalle in ancestral Andhra Pradesh. Kalakshetra was only a couple of furlongs away from their residence in Madras. It took one glance at the bright-eyed child for theosophist Rugminidevi Arundale to conclude that the aspirant was a promise. Indeed, the 12-year-old student went on to rise as an icon — and for not just Bharatanatyam. She redefined the status of Kuchipudi and made meaningful inroads into Odissi as well. As the late scholar SN Chandrashekar used to note, Yamini infused freshness while presenting the three classical forms, seldom mixing up the movements.

By the time Yamini was in her twenties, India of the 1960s had begun to acknowledge the stature of its vintage arts. At age 15, Yamini saw Tanjore Balasaraswati perform. Stunned, she strived to emulate the icon. Two years later, in 1957, Yamini's Bharatanatyam debut at Madras marked the start of her fine assimilation of two major schools: Pandanallur and Kanchipuram. The lyrical movements of the first came through Kittappa Pillai, while Ellappa Pillai's unhurriedness emboldened her rhythmic patterns. Dandayudhapani Pillai's choreographies inspired her. Devadasi Mylapore Gowriamma honed Yamini's abhinaya skills. She also learned Carnatic: vocals from the unconventional MD Ramanathan and the veena from the purist Kalpakam Swaminathan. Past her teens, Yamini's liking for Kuchipudi grew further. She decided to learn it, ignoring voices that dubbed the Andhra dance folksy. Vedantam Laxminarayana Sastry, Chinta Krishnamurthy and Venugopala Sarma guided her eminently. Around that time, she decided to learn Odissi, too, primarily under Puri-born Pankaj Charan Das, who had taught the celebrated Kelucharan Mohapatra — also Yamini's guru later. By 35, Yamini had herself become an established teacher, with 400 students. A decade and a half later, in 1990, she founded a dance institute in the national capital, which was already her home. "Till then, I was a busy performer within the country and abroad," she'd wind back. "Setting up a school implied less time for composing. Yet, I could groom a whole lot of disciples."

A Padma Vibhushan awardee, Yamini moulded her own style through eclecticism, but never insisted her pupils must follow her — even the self-invented leaps that made her distinct on the stage. "Deep knowledge about Hindu mythology, though, is essential for excellence."

Yamini's prime-time performances for rustic audiences across the Hindi belt earned her the name 'bijli'. "She was truly electrifying," notes art historian Ashish Mohan Khokar. To many, her dance was representative of the Nataraja image that stayed inside her from the toddler days that had undergone grand reinventions.

Unchanging climate in the literary world

As Amitav Ghosh has lamented, not enough cognisance is being taken of the reality of climate change

Just a week before the unimaginable human tragedy in Kerala's picturesque Wayanad region, I happened to view an animated film that was being shared on social media. It was a rendering of Malayalam writer Thakazhi Shivashankara Pillai's short story, 'Vellappokkathil' ('In the Flood'). It's the poignant tale of a dog that is left stranded in a hut while his master and family escape in a rescue boat during a severe flood. The story captures the agony of the dog who endures the ravages of weather, pangs of hunger and the insensitivity of passing humans even as he guards his master's hut. The backdrop to this tale of loyalty and resilience was the Great Flood of 1924, which had submerged much of Kerala and devastated India's first monorail system in the tea gardens of Munnar. Exactly a hundred years later, a similar tragedy recurred in Wayanad. Landslides triggered by torrential rain and a swollen river that changed course erased three villages off the map.

Extreme weather patterns continue to wreak havoc, from flash floods and landslides in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand to unprecedented rain in Delhi, Maharashtra and Assam. All this, after we witnessed one of the worst summers of all time. At the recent Paris Olympics, too, climate change was a talking point as the heatwave got to the athletes, prompting gymnast great Simone Biles to exclaim that it felt "like 9,000 degrees". Climate change is a talking point when 200 mm of rain turns Dubai into a river, when fruit orchards shrink in the Himalayan region, or when photos of a rapidly melting Swiss glacier take the Internet by storm. In other words, the perils of climate change are no longer a distant possibility but an everyday reality. But have we come to grips with it, or much less, do we fully grasp its import? Many Indian writers have penned cautionary tales about environmental loss, ecological imbalance and human greed. Mahasweta Devi addressed this in her Bengali novella 'Pterodactyl, Pura Sahay and Pirtha' (1995), where the prehistoric flying reptile warns, "We are extinct by the inevitable natural geological evolution. You too are endangered.... Forests extinct, animal life obliterated outside of zoos and forest sanctuaries. What will you finally grow in the soil, having murdered nature in the application of man-imposed technology?" In similar vein, Arun Joshi's 1990 novel, 'The City and The River', is a fable that is a critique on autocracy as well as on environmentalism and the destructive consequences of development. More recently, Janice Pariat's 'Everything the Light Touches' is an exploration of the human understanding of nature and ways in which the bond can be forged.

But perhaps the one writer who has consistently engaged with climate change and been vocal about it is Amitav Ghosh. In 'The Hungry Tide' (2004) and 'Gun Island' (2019), where the Sundarbans is both the backdrop and life-force of the narrative, he captures the fragility of the



mangrove ecosystem as well as its fury when threatened by man-made interventions. 'The Living Mountain' is another allegorical wake-up call to climate reality. A few years ago, Ghosh had lamented that the literary world had not taken enough cognisance of this reality. In his book 'The Great Derangement', Ghosh wrote that the very mention of climate change was enough to relegate a novel or a short story to the genre of science fiction. "It is as though in the literary imagination, climate change were somehow akin to extraterrestrials or interplanetary travel... if the urgency of a subject were indeed a criterion of its seriousness, then, considering what climate change actually portends for the future of the Earth, it should

surely follow that this would be the principal preoccupation of writers the world over — and this, I think, is very far from being the case."

While one may not agree that science fiction deals only with interstellar explorations or apocalyptic scenarios, Ghosh may have a point about how mainstream fiction can no longer afford to sidestep the realities of climate change. "The real story," concedes acclaimed science fiction writer Kim Stanley Robinson, "is the one facing us in the next 30 years." In fact, Robinson's much-talked-about book, 'The Ministry for The Future', opens with a deadly heatwave that kills millions in India. If it sounds ominous, one can only hope that fiction doesn't meet reality.

Tenacious leader

Buddhadeb dreamt of a progressive Bengal

THE death of Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, the last Marxist Chief Minister of West Bengal, on Thursday marks the end of an era for West Bengal's political and cultural landscape. He was known for his intellectual rigour, literary acumen and a deep commitment to the ideals of socialism. He joined the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in 1966, rising through the ranks with a quiet determination that would come to define his political career. Bhattacharjee took over the reins of West Bengal in 2000, succeeding the legendary Jyoti Basu, and served as CM till 2011 when Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress won, ending the Communists' rule spanning 34 years. Bhattacharjee's life was a testament to the transformative power of conviction. He was seen as a bridge between the ideological rigidity of his party and the pragmatic demands of governance. His dedication to the cause of the Left Front was unwavering, earning him respect across the political spectrum.



Bhattacharjee's tenure was characterised by his efforts to modernise West Bengal's economy, a move that was both bold and controversial. His Singur and Nandigram land acquisition initiatives aimed to attract industrial investment, sparking widespread protests that became defining moments of his regime. Despite the controversies, his vision for a more prosperous West Bengal was clear and his efforts laid the groundwork for future development.

Beyond his political endeavours, Bhattacharjee was known for his love of literature and music, reflecting a deep appreciation for the cultural tapestry of Bengal. His simplicity and accessibility endeared him to the people, making him a leader who was both respected and loved. His legacy is a reminder of the complexities of governance and the enduring impact of steadfast leadership. His personal beliefs and principles are best demonstrated by his pledge that his body be donated to a government hospital for research.

Another August etched in memory

August 1947 redefined the Indian subcontinent. This may have been a time to celebrate Independence, but at least in the North, the shadow of Partition was overwhelming. - File photo

August 1947 redefined the Indian subcontinent. This may have been a time to celebrate Independence, but at least in the North, the shadow of Partition was overwhelming. My parents and those of their generation that I met or knew never referred to this as a moment of 'Independence' and a time of joy. There is enough anecdotal evidence to suggest that the ones who remained unaffected by Partition celebrated the break from imperial Britain, while some, whose lives were shattered, even bemoaned the schism. Few, if any, looked past the obvious to learn that much of the forces and convoluted processes that led to Partition were the direct result of colonial policy. In the immediate aftermath of this cataclysm, there were two broad categories of perspectives — those who wholeheartedly condemned the British and their exploitative measures and, surprisingly, another group that quietly whispered, 'We were better off as colonial subjects.' Both groups had reason to feel what they did. But both, no matter what take they had on the matter, had been thrown off the deep end and now, Independence or not, Partition or not, survival was all that mattered. This was a moment when humanity as a collective had failed — and miserably at that. If anything, individuals with humanity lit small lamps of hope and kindness in the mass of darkness. Some years later, in another August, war broke out with Pakistan. In 1965, General Ayub Khan launched one of our neighbour's periodic misadventures and attacked India. I was a bare toddler when this war came. We were far away from any scenes of battle. Yet, given that my parents were of the generation that had gone through Partition, its trauma remained



embedded in their minds. They, not unexpectedly, were fearful of loss and separation from their loved

ones. For me, this came in the shape of a small silver bracelet that remained with me for several years. Then it went wandering and has not returned. It may be in some odd box somewhere, but the odds are that this piece of functional ornament, worn just once, has slipped away and gone to the great 'wherever-whatsoever' of missing objects.

This bracelet had my name on the obverse and the address at the back. In essence, it said, 'If found, please return bracelet and wearer to owner.' This bracelet was my parents' way of writing down my home and origin, should I get separated from them. Once the air-raid siren sounded, we would troop down to a room in a neighbour's house that the Civil Defence had designated as the safest place to be. Almost everybody carried flasks of tea or coffee and something to eat. Our windows had been pasted over with brown paper crosses — "Shattering glass can be lethal". In a canvas satchel, my father had a first-aid kit, with the essentials of the 1960s — gauze bandages, cotton wool, mercurochrome and tincture. In that half-darkened space, there must have been around 20 adults and children. In this world that has become increasingly hateful, and with people who had survived hate, what I recall in that room is an extraordinary sense of calm. Most, if not all, religions were represented. As older memories become sharper and sounds heard long ago are not echoes but ring clear, apart from the occasional cough or sneeze, or of a flask being opened and closed, the only sounds were of rosaries clicking and a merging hum of the 'Gayatri Mantra' and the 'Japji Sahib'.

Statue of Pak's 1971 surrender vandalised in Bangladesh, Shashi Tharoor reacts

New Delhi: The iconic statue at the 1971 Shaheed Memorial Complex in Bangladesh has been vandalised amid protests in the nation, and Congress MP Shashi Tharoor has reacted sharply to the incident, calling out "anti-India vandals". The statue commemorated the moment Pakistan surrendered in 1971, thereby ending the Bangladesh Liberation War and the Indo-Pakistan War.

Taking to X, he shared a picture of the broken statue, and said he was "sad" to see such developments. "Sad to see images like this of statues at the 1971 Shaheed Memorial Complex, Mujibnagar, destroyed by anti-India vandals. This follows disgraceful attacks on the Indian cultural centre, temples and Hindu homes in several places, even as reports came in of Muslim civilians protecting other minority homes and places of worship," Shashi Tharoor tweeted. The Congress MP further wrote that the attacks on minorities in Bangladesh clearly show



the "agenda" of some of the agitators. Shashi Tharoor urged Bangladesh interim government head, Nobel Peace Prize winner Muhammad Yunus to take

"urgent steps" to restore law and order in the country in the "interest of all Bangladeshis of every faith". "India stands with the people of Bangladesh at this

turbulent time, but such anarchic excess can never be condoned," his tweet read.

Called the 'Instrument of Surrender', the statue depicted the signing of a document on December 16, 1971, by the Pakistan Army to the Indian forces and Bangladesh's Mukti Bahini.

Major-General Amir Abdullah Khan Niazi, representing the Pakistani side at the time, surrendered with his 93,000 troops before Lieutenant General Jagjit Singh Aurora, who was then General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of India's Eastern Command.

He was also the joint commander of the Bangladesh forces. AK Khandker, then Deputy Chief of Staff of the Bangladesh Forces, represented the Provisional Government of Bangladesh at the ceremony. It was the world's largest military surrender, in terms of number of personnel, since World War II.

The student protests in Bangladesh initially

started as demonstrations against quotas in government jobs, but turned into anti-government, leading to the deaths of more than 400 people and the ouster of Sheikh Hasina as the Prime Minister. On August 5, she resigned and escaped to India, and continues to hide in an unspecified site.

Amid the unrest, minorities, especially Hindus, have been facing attacks, in which mobs have vandalised and looted their houses, and even lynched them. The attacks have caused a massive accumulation of Bangladeshis in the India-Bangladesh border states, mostly Bengal. Muhammad Yunus has termed the attacks on minorities "heinous" and pleaded with the citizens of the country to protect all Hindus, Buddhist and Christian families from harm. Reaching out to students, who are at the forefront of the protests, the 84-year-old cautioned them not to let their efforts be sabotaged by those seeking to undermine their progress.

"Congress Involved In Creating Economic Anarchy": BJP On Hindenburg Report

New Delhi: The Congress "wants the stock market to crash" the BJP's Ravi Shankar Prasad said Monday as the ruling party continues to hit back at the opposition over short-seller Hindenburg Research's latest allegations of financial misconduct against the Adani Group. The ex-Law Minister also claimed the Congress is "involved in creating economic anarchy" and "hatred against India".

He also underlined India's position as a "safe, stable and promising market". Ravi Shankar Prasad's scathing comments come a day after party colleagues Rajeev Chandrasekhar launched a similar attack on the Congress, declaring the party is "seeking foreign help to discredit (and) destabilise our financial markets and to create chaos in the country... by spreading anarchy". "After losing for a third time (referring to the 2024 general election) and the Congress and its closest 'toolkit' allies now want to make the Indian economy unstable. Congress today has developed hatred against India. What Congress wants is to bring back 'control Raj'..." Mr Prasad told reporters. "This report was released on Saturday... they raised this aggressively on Sunday so the stock market can take a hit," he continued, "Politics of Congress has 'toolkit' and 'chit politics'."

"We are proud the Indian stock market is stable today. We want to salute small investors... this basically means they do not believe in the 'toolkit' and the Hindenburg report," Mr Prasad raged. Last week United States-based Hindenburg released a new report claiming Securities Exchange Board of India chief Madhabi Puri Buch had a stake in obscure offshore entities used in alleged financial wrongdoing by the Adani Group.

Kolkata rape-murder: AIIMS Delhi doctors make 6 demands amid uproar, strikes on

New Delhi: Thousands of doctors and post-graduate students held strikes across the country to protest over the rape and murder of a 31-year-old woman trainee doctor, whose body was found in Kolkata's RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, last week and triggered shockwaves.

Members of the Resident Doctors' Association (RDA) of Delhi's AIIMS put forth six demands, including the need to hand over the case to the CBI for an inquiry, strict action against the culprits, adequate compensation to the victim's family, termination of principal and security in-charge of the hospital, written assurance from Central Government for implementation of Central Protection Act for doctors, and the declaration of a building or library in institute in her name. The trainee doctor was found in a seminar hall at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital with injury marks on her body, and an autopsy later confirmed that she was raped before being murdered. The accused, a civic volunteer, was arrested on August 10 (Saturday) and has been sent to 14-day police custody.

The civic volunteer was not officially associated with RG Kar Medical College and Hospital but was known to frequent the premises.

MEDICAL COLLEGE PRINCIPAL RESIGNS

Dr Sandip Ghosh, the principal of RG Kar Medical College, resigned as junior doctors, interns and postgraduate trainees of the facility continued their strike for the fourth day on Monday, demanding a magisterial inquiry into the rape and murder of a 31-year-old woman trainee doctor. The doctors and medical students had been demanding the resignation of Dr Ghosh. Speaking to reporters, Ghosh said that he was "getting defamed on social media" following the heinous crime, adding that the victim was "like my daughter". "As a parent, I resign. This should not happen to anyone in the future," he added.

Patients faced inconvenience as the outdoor centres of RG Kar College and Hospital remained closed due to protests by doctors and medical students over the incident. Over the past three days, junior doctors had been attending to emergency duties, but as of Monday morning, they have ceased even those responsibilities, sources told news agency PTI. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has vowed to seek the death penalty for the accused. She said she would transfer the case to the CBI if the Kolkata Police were not able to crack the case by Sunday (August 18).

RG Kar Hospital horror: Kolkata police on high alert to ensure women safety

New Delhi: In the wake of the RG Kar hospital horror killing, higher officials in Kolkata police department have issued an alert order for women's safety in the city. Guidelines have been released by the department, and they have assured there would be zero tolerance towards such incidents henceforth. The police will first identify areas prone to crimes against women and adequate measures will be adopted to ensure their safety. This includes frequent police patrolling across the city. CCTV cameras will be installed in public places wherever possible and a CCTV cell will be set up in order to take immediate action against crime.

The city police would further review the security system at government hospitals, homes, and women's hostels. Measures will be taken to ensure such incidents are not repeated. Soon, the police plan to have more interactions

with the public to spread a message about women's safety.

here is also a need for the police to interact more with women doctors,



college students (female), school students (female) to find out issues that threaten their safety. Women police forces may be utilised efficiently, and they would also visit hospitals and colleges. All officers in-charge have been asked to brief their respective

subordinates on women's safety. They must also be told how to behave in public. And how to talk to women and elderly people.

There is also a need to interact more with staff of government hospitals, including doctors, nurses and others, to let them know that the police are always available to help them. Security at medical colleges/government hospitals should be reviewed. In case of resource constraints, measures must be taken to ensure security is in place at the premises. Important helpline numbers (100 dial), email addresses, and other contact numbers should be provided to the public. The order read, "There is a need to monitor our own people. We are part of a disciplined force. People look to the police for help. We cannot be seen on the wrong side of the law. This must be clear to one and all in the department."

Haryana BJP expels ex-Delhi Minister within 6 hours of joining party

New Delhi: Former Delhi Cabinet Minister Sandeep Kumar was expelled from the Haryana BJP just six hours after the party leaders discovered his controversial past, which he allegedly tried to conceal. BJP leaders stated that Kumar deliberately hid his previous tenure as an AAP leader and minister. "Sandeep Kumar has been suspended from the primary membership of the party for hiding certain facts about his past life," announced Haryana BJP in-charge Surendra Puniya on the microblogging platform X. Kumar, who was involved in several controversies, was removed from the Delhi Cabinet on August 31, 2016, after a CD emerged showing him in a compromising position with two women. He was subsequently arrested

by Delhi Police on September 3, 2016, after a woman accused him of giving her a spiked drink, raping her, and filming the act. The video went viral on social media, prompting Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to



remove him from his ministerial post. The victim claimed she was exploited under the pretence of receiving a ration card, while Kumar denied the allegations, calling them an attempt to

defame him. Kumar also sparked controversy by dedicating a government school to his wife, Ritu, and claiming he touched her feet daily. He gained attention in 2015 after defeating five-time MLA Jai Kishan and was subsequently inducted as a minister in Kejriwal's government, overseeing the Women and Child Development Department. Before joining the BJP, Kumar formed his political outfit, 'Kirti Kisan Shere Punjab,' in 2021. He joined the BJP in the presence of Haryana CM Nayab Singh Saini but was suspended after his controversial past came to light. Kumar hails from Sargathal village in Sonapat, graduated from Delhi University in 2004, and earned a law degree from Chaudhary Charan Singh University in 2009.

Assam Police prevents 4 Bangladeshi migrants from entering state amid unrest

New Delhi: Assam Police prevented the unauthorised entry of four Bangladeshis who were trying to enter India through the Karimganj sector of the India-Bangladesh border late on Sunday. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, on X, said that the migrants, who attempted to enter India amid unrest in Bangladesh, have been identified as Motiur Seikh, Mushiur Mullah, Tania Mullah, and Rita Mullah. "This morning at 1:30 am, Bangladeshi citizens identified as Motiur Seikh, Mushiur Mullah, Tania Mullah, and Rita Mullah attempted to enter India through the Karimganj sector of the India-Bangladesh border. However, police effectively intervened at the zero point and promptly repelled them, preventing their unauthorised entry," he said in a post on X. The Chief Minister had earlier said that the situation in Bangladesh is a matter of concern for the Northeast from two angles, with people

likely to enter through the border and the neighbouring country might also again become a hub of insurgents from the region. He had maintained that the borders are secure with the state



government maintaining a strict vigil and, as of now, nobody has been allowed to cross into the country from Bangladesh except those who have valid passport, visa and are bonafide citizens of India. Director General of Assam Police GP Singh had said that a high alert has

been issued along the Indo-Bangladesh border to ensure that no person can enter the state illegally, with BSF as the first line of defence along the border and the Assam Police as the second line.

he Assam Police has heightened surveillance along the India-Bangladesh border to prevent any unauthorized entry from Bangladesh. Early on Sunday, 11 Bangladeshi nationals were arrested while trying to infiltrate into India through the international border in West Bengal, Tripura and Meghalaya, the Border Security Force (BSF) said on Sunday. The border guards have thwarted a number of infiltration attempts and sent back thousands of Bangladeshi people over the last few days with the help of the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) at many points along the Bangladesh frontier. Last week, the Union Home Ministry formed a committee under the BSF Additional Director General (ADG) (Eastern

Command) to look into the safety and security issues being faced by minorities in Bangladesh following the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government.

BANGLADESH PROTESTS

Amid student protests, violence erupted on August 5 after Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled to neighbouring India, where she is currently staying. The minorities, especially Hindus, have faced attacks in the Islamic nation after a violent uprising led to the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government. Over 230 people have died since the fall of the Awami League government on August 5. Nobel Peace Prize winner Muhammad Yunus was sworn in as the head of the country's caretaker government. The noted economist was recommended for the role by student protesters who led the protests against former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, which forced her to leave the country and brought down her Awami League government.

NEWS BOX

England captain Ben Stokes helped off field with possible hamstring injury ahead of Sri Lanka series

Stokes, who had bowled 15 overs in the match, retired hurt on two runs with England teammate Harry Brook coming out to replace him.

MANCHESTER. England captain Ben Stokes had to be helped off the field after suffering an injury while playing for Northern Superchargers in The Hundred domestic cricket competition on Sunday, raising concerns he could miss the upcoming test series against Sri Lanka. The 33-year-old Stokes pulled up while running between the wickets as the Superchargers chased a victory target of 153 against Manchester Originals at Old Trafford. Stokes appeared to clutch his left hamstring as he was completing a quick single from the non-striker's end. Stokes, who had



bowled 15 overs in the match, retired hurt on two runs with England teammate Harry Brook coming out to replace him. Asked about Stokes, Brook told Sky Sports: "It doesn't look great unfortunately but I think he'll be getting a scan tomorrow (Monday) and see how he is." Stokes led England to a 3-0 series sweep against West Indies last month. England opens its test series against Sri Lanka on Aug. 21 at Old Trafford, with the third and final test at the Oval from Sept. 6.

Stokes was alongside his teammates on the bench Sunday to watch the climax as the Superchargers won by seven wickets. He was on crutches as he shook hands with the opposition.

Badminton, archery, boxing: India's Paris hopefuls falter, finish without medal

New Delhi After a historic performance at the Tokyo Olympics three years ago, where India set new records with a contingent of 117 athletes, hopes were high for an even better showing at the Paris Olympics 2024. There was anticipation that India might achieve a double-digit medal count for the first time in history. However, despite some bright moments, the campaign ended with six medals—one silver and five bronze.

The total medal count could still change, pending a decision on wrestler Vinesh Phogat's appeal for a silver medal. While India fell just one medal short of its Tokyo tally, the Paris Olympics marked its third-best performance at the Summer Games, following Tokyo 2020 and London 2012. India's archery, badminton, and boxing teams were considered strong medal contenders, but none of these sports managed a podium finish in the recently-concluded Paris Games.

Archery

India's archery team faced another disappointing Olympic run. Deepika Kumari's struggles on the Olympic stage continued, while Tarundeep Rai and Pravin Jadhav also failed to make a significant impact. Only Dhiraj Bommadevara and Ankita Bhakat, along with Bhajan Kaur to some extent, managed to enhance their reputations. The archery team's closest brush with a medal came in the mixed team event, where they narrowly missed out on bronze, finishing fourth against the USA. This marked India's first semifinal appearance in Olympic archery history—a notable achievement—but considering the substantial time and resources invested in this priority sport, the lack of a medal raises concerns. The archers themselves may not be entirely to blame. The federation, however, must answer for the low performance, especially regarding the absence of the high-performance director and the South Korean coach during the games.

Badminton

For the first time since 2008, India's badminton contingent returned from the Olympics without a medal. Despite recent successes in team events, such as the Thomas Cup victory in 2022 and the Badminton Asia Team Championships in 2023, these achievements did not translate to individual glory in Paris. Lakshya Sen came closest to winning a medal but ultimately fell short in the bronze medal match.

Pairs Olympics 2024: In the end, India's campaign a case of glass half full

India's flagbearers shooter Manu Bhaker and retired men's hockey team goalkeeper PR Srejeesh during the closing ceremony of the 2024 Summer Olympics at Stade de France, Paris on Sunday; India finished with six medals (five bronze and a silver)



PARIS. The lights are dimmed. The curtains are slowly drawing close. The show is over. Tales of valour, extraordinary human feats, moments of joy and ecstasy, losses and despair are slowly being stored in the leaves of Olympic history. Just like when a theatre gets over, the lights switch on in the hall, it's time for the audience to wake up to reality and discuss the acts each athlete played. Paris soaked in the summer sun. There was a

feeling of emptiness as the grandest sporting show on the planet ended on Sunday. USA and China are firmly perched on the top. Somewhere in the bottom half was India, 71 with one silver and five bronze. For a country that won seven medals in Tokyo 2020 in 2021 including a gold, this seemed a case of one step backward. If one adds the six fourth finishes and Vinesh Phogat's heartbreaking disqualification, then one can say it was just about alright.

Nothing to celebrate except for the medallists. The backdrop under which the athletes competed too should be considered. The Sports Authority of India said they had spent about ₹470 crore for the preparation of the athletes in the last Olympic cycle. There was no lack of support from the SAI, national sports federations (NSFs) and some NGOs who have been providing necessary assistance to almost all athletes. Perhaps that prompted India badminton team coach

Prakash Padukone to say that the athletes also should take some responsibility as well. Indian Olympic Association president PT Usha, who had finished fourth at the Los Angeles Olympics, felt that we should think about the future. There are quite a few debutants (about more than half of the 117-member contingent). She felt that the primary objective would be to save and protect these athletes. "They are the future of our country and we need to preserve them," she said. Chef de mission Gagan Narang, London Olympic bronze medallist, said that it was a creditable performance. "There are 21 players who medalled," he said alluding to the 16-member hockey team. He also felt that the athletes should be guided well. "Wrap them in cotton wool," he said.

The sports administrators right from SAI to NSFs must go into a huddle and find where they went wrong. They must find a solution to India's inability to reach the double-digit mark. Or else the six here will count for nothing. For a nation that wants to bid for the 2036 Olympics, six medals definitely won't reflect the sporting superiority on the global stage.

Dhoni, Kohli, KL Rahul contribute memorabilia to Cricket for Charity Auction

MS Dhoni, Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma, KL Rahul and other cricketing stars have contributed historic cricket memorabilia for the Cricket for Charity auction. KL Rahul and Athiya Shetty are organizing the unique auction of cricket memorabilia.



New Delhi In a remarkable initiative blending the passion for cricket with philanthropy, iconic cricket stars Rahul Dravid, MS Dhoni, Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma, KL Rahul and many other renowned Team India and international cricketers have contributed their historic memorabilia for a charity auction benefiting the Vipla Foundation. L Rahul and Athiya Shetty are organising this unique auction of cricket memorabilia, "Cricket for a Cause: To Benefit the Vipla Foundation," an organization committed to empowering underprivileged communities across India. The auction will feature rare and iconic cricket items, making it a must-attend event for cricket enthusiasts and

philanthropists alike. The auction will take place online on Pundole on 23rd August 2024 at 6:30 PM IST, offering cricket enthusiasts a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to own exclusive pieces of cricketing history while supporting a noble cause. Vipla Foundation has been empowering women and children for over 36 years, and has a special school for the hearing impaired and intellectually disabled. The school complex features state-of-the-art infrastructure such as smart classrooms, speech therapy rooms, a library, a canteen, a dining area, a play area and many other such facilities. The Cricket for a Cause auction is an initiative to support the school to provide quality education to special children from disadvantaged

communities. Vipla Foundation's Trustee, Mana Shetty says, "This is not just an auction; it's an opportunity for all of us to come together and make a difference. It's heartwarming to see the cricketing legends come together for such a noble cause. Every item tells a story of passion, hard work, and triumph. By participating in this auction, you're not just owning a piece of cricket history—you're supporting a cause that can change lives. Every contribution counts, and together, we can create a brighter future for so many children and women. Please join us in making it a success." The auction features 27 extraordinary items, each with deep historical significance, generously donated by the legends of the game. Highlights include: S Dhoni's Signed Cricket Bat (IPL 2024): A symbol of leadership and composure, this bat represents Dhoni's unmatched ability to steer his team through high-pressure moments. Virat Kohli's Signed Team India Jersey (ICC World Cup 2019) and Signed Batting Gloves (ICC World Cup 2019): Worn by Kohli during his last ODI World Cup as captain, this jersey embodies his excellence and leadership that propelled India to the semi-finals.

New Zealand name spin-heavy squad for Greater Noida Test vs Afghanistan

New Delhi New Zealand picked five spin-bowling options as they named their squad for their Only Test against Afghanistan to be held from September 9 at the Greater Noida Sports Complex Ground. The Black Caps picked Mitchell Santner, Ajaz Patel and Rachin Ravindra, Michael Bracewell and Glenn Phillips in their spin department. Fast bowlers Will O'Rourke and Ben Sears are set to play their maiden overseas Tests, having already represented the national team in whites. "It's always great when young guys force their way into squads through performance and I know Will and Ben are really looking forward to the challenges of Test cricket in the sub-continent," Gary Stead, the head coach, was quoted as saying. "Michael's had to show plenty of resilience to rehabilitate his injuries and force his way back into the BLACK CAPS across all three formats. His all-round skills, and ability to take the ball away from the left-hander make him a great asset, especially on what we expect will be turning wickets in India and Sri Lanka," Stead added.



New Zealand are set for a hectic schedule. After the Test against Afghanistan, they will tour Sri Lanka for a two-match series followed by three Tests on Indian soil. Thereafter, they are scheduled to host England for three Tests, which also mark the beginning of their summer. Former Pakistan spinner Saqlain Mushtaq is also back to the New Zealand setup as the bowling coach for the series against the Afghans and Sri Lanka. The Kiwis are currently placed third in the points table in the 2023-25 cycle of the World Test Championship (WTC). New Zealand squad: Tim Southee (c), Tom Blundell (wk), Michael Bracewell, Devon Conway, Matt Henry, Tom Latham (vc), Daryl Mitchell, Will O'Rourke, Ajaz Patel, Glenn Phillips, Rachin Ravindra, Mitchell Santner, Ben Sears, Kane Williamson, Will Young

Paris 2024: Manpreet Singh pays tribute to family after India win hockey bronze

New Delhi Manpreet Singh expressed gratitude to his family after India won the bronze medal in hockey at the Paris Olympics 2024. India, led by Harmanpreet Singh, had a chance to fight for gold, but they lost to Germany in the semi-final. However, they made amends after beating Spain 2-1 in the bronze-medal clash. Manpreet dropped a post where he can be seen resting on his mother's lap. His wife Illi Najwa Sadique and their daughter Jasmine also featured in the adorable picture. Manpreet thanked them for being by his side through thick and thin. He also expressed gratitude to them for making sacrifices and dedicated the bronze medal to his father. "This is a special thank-you note for the three angels in my life—my mother, my wife, and the centre of my universe, my heart Jasmine.



Feeling incredibly proud and blessed—resting in my mother's lap with my 2nd Olympic medals for the country" Manpreet wrote. "This moment truly embodies my journey and achievements. Thank you for always being by my side, the

unconditional support and sacrifices you guys have made - this medal belongs to you and specially for daddy as much as it belongs to me!", Manpreet added.

India found themselves under pressure against Spain after going 0-1 down. But then, Harmanpreet scored back-to-back goals to put India into the lead. Once India started dictating terms, they did not look back. Back in 2021, India ended their 41-year-long wait of winning a medal in the Olympics. Back then they won the bronze medal under Manpreet's leadership. This time around, it was Harmanpreet, who led the team from the front. Paris Olympics 2024 was also a swansong for goalkeeper PR Sreejesh, who retired from international hockey and also became India's flag-bearer in the closing ceremony on Sunday.

Jordan Chiles stripped of bronze medal in Paris, USA Olympic officials to appeal

New Delhi USA Olympic officials are challenging a recent court decision that has led to American gymnast Jordan Chiles being asked to return the bronze medal she earned in the floor exercise at the Paris Olympics. The decision came from the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), which annulled the initial on-floor appeal made by Chiles' coach. The reasoning behind the annulment was that the coach's appeal allegedly occurred four seconds past the one-minute limit allowed for scoring inquiries. In response, USA Gymnastics has contested the CAS ruling, arguing that it was based on incorrect timing. According to a statement released by the organization on Sunday, USA Gymnastics presented video evidence indicating that coach Cecile Landi initiated the appeal 13 seconds before the one-minute deadline elapsed. "The time-stamped, video evidence submitted by USA Gymnastics

Sunday evening shows Landi first stated her request to file an inquiry at the inquiry table 47 seconds after the score is posted, followed by a second statement 55 seconds after the score was originally posted." On Saturday night, the International Gymnastics Federation (FIG) declared its intent to respect a recent court decision, which mandated the adjustment of the competition outcome. This judicial ruling necessitated the elevation of Romanian gymnast Ana Barbosu to third place, following an intense scrutiny of her performance scores. Further cementing the impact of this decision, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) confirmed the ruling on Sunday. In a rare move, the IOC announced it would reallocate the bronze medal from Monday's final. We firmly believe that Jordan rightfully earned the bronze medal, and there were critical errors in both the initial scoring by



the International Gymnastics Federation (FIG) and the subsequent CAS appeal process that need to be addressed," the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee statement said. In a recent ruling, the CAS

concluded that Team Landi's request to amend Chiles' score came too late. The CAS determined that Landi's appeal, which sought to add 0.1 points to Chiles' score, was submitted 1 minute and 4 seconds after the original score was posted. The IOC clarified its stance, stating that it would engage with the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC) concerning the return of Chiles' bronze medal. Furthermore, the IOC intends to coordinate with the Romanian Olympic Committee to deliberate a reallocation ceremony to honor Romania's Ana Barbosu, who stands to benefit from this development. "The initial error occurred in the scoring by FIG, and the second error was during the CAS appeal process, where the USOPC was not given adequate time or notice to effectively challenge the decision," said a USOPC statement, which was released Sunday.

Jasmin Bhasin

Issues Clarification After Sharing Cryptic Note, Says 'Stop Judging And Assuming'

Jasmin Bhasin and Aly Goni have been dating each other for a long time. The couple has never shied away from expressing this in public. Fans also love this adorable couple. Well, recently Jasmin Bhasin shared a note about 'Love Leaving' which left all her fans worried. Everyone started guessing that the couple had parted ways. However, later Jasmin again issued a clarification asking fans to stop judging and assuming. Taking to her X handle, Jasmin wrote, "Let's remember that not everything shared reflects someone's reality. Posts and quotes can be random thoughts, not a window into someone's life. Let's stop judging and assuming. Spread



kindness and understanding instead. #StopAssuming #SpreadKindness." As soon as she shared the post, fans also reacted. One of the fans wrote, "Simply ignore the haters and focus on the bright side". Another wrote, "Ignore them Jas. Some people always find negativity in each and everything. But we love you both. Sending you lots of love and positivity from #JasLyians."

Recently, Jasmin made headlines following a corneal damage mishap. Aly Goni, took to Instagram to publicly show his support for her. Sharing an adorable picture of the couple, dressed in traditional attire and beaming with happiness, Aly referred to Jasmin as the "strongest." The heartfelt post garnered a lot of love from fans, who have been following their relationship closely since it became public during their time on Bigg Boss 14.

Jasmin and Aly's relationship has been the subject of much curiosity and admiration. The couple, who has been open about their love for each other, continues to charm their fans with their strong bond. In a recent

interview, Jasmin addressed the inevitable question about their marriage plans. She shared that while they are deeply committed to each other, there are no immediate plans to tie the knot. "Honestly, on that front, both of us don't have any plans. We have not sat and had this conversation ki kal kar lete hai ya parso kar lete hai (whether we will do it tomorrow or the day after). Every time we discuss, we say that we will do it when we feel like it. But both of us are also very ambitious and strong individuals," she explained.



When Anushka Sharma Said She Was 'Attracted' To Ranveer Singh: 'If We Had To Be In A Relationship...'



Anushka Sharma and Ranveer Singh first shared the screen in the 2010 hit Band Baaja Baaraat. When host Simi Garewal asked why they weren't dating during a 2011 appearance on Simi Selects India's Most Desirable, Anushka admitted she was attracted to him but was aware that their personalities didn't quite match. She had also said how dating an actor would be tough for her. Opening up about Ranveer, she had said, "Being in a relationship with an actor right now is a little difficult for me. I was attracted to Ranveer, but that's it... it was just attraction, and I thought, 'This guy is a nice guy', that's it... It ends there."

She also revealed that if people got to know them better, they'd see just how different they are. "If people get to know us really well, they will realise that we are very different people, the two of us. We have a very volatile relationship. We can kill each other... I'm serious. I can take his head off, he can take mine off. If we ever had to be in a relationship, we would want two different things from a relationship. We see life in a very different way. He is a very practical person, I'm a completely impractical. I like him, he is attractive," she had said. Anushka Sharma later got married to cricketer Virat Kohli on December 11, 2017, in a gorgeous pastel-themed ceremony in Italy. The couple have a daughter named Yamika and a son named Akaay. Ranveer is married to Deepika Padukone and the couple is expecting their first child.

Back in 2011, in a chat with Mid Day, Ranveer had almost professed his feelings for Anushka. He had said, "We are so close, we can complete each other's sentences now." About dating Anushka, he had said, "Even today I'd love to date her." Anushka Sharma and Ranveer Singh went on to work together in Dil Dhadakne Do.

Anant Ambani's Wife Radhika Merchant Blushes In Rare and Unseen Photos With Friends, Pics Go Viral



A month after Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant got married, photos have surfaced online showing Radhika with her bridesmaids. In photos shared on Instagram, Radhika was seen surrounded by her girl pals and posing for the camera. In the photos, Radhika looked gorgeous as she dressed in a yellow outfit. In the first photo, Radhika was seen laughing her heart out with her friends. In the second, Radhika was seen evidently blushing while it seemed like her friends were teasing her. The photos were shared by a bridal couture brand. Check out the photos below:

Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant tied the knot on July 12 in Mumbai. The wedding was a star-studded affair, with several Bollywood stars present at the bash. From Shah Rukh Khan and Salman Khan to Priyanka Chopra and Deepika Padukone, almost every big Bollywood star was present at the wedding celebrations. Nick Jonas, John Cena and Kim Kardashian also flew down to India to be a part of the wedding ceremony.

Their honeymoon began in Costa Rica, where they stayed at a resort in the stunning Guanacaste region. According to Tico Times, the General Directorate of Migration confirmed that the couple arrived in Costa Rica on August 1. Following the wedding celebrations, Anant and Radhika flew down to Paris, to attend the Olympics 2024.

They joined Mukesh Ambani and Nita Ambani at the games. Nita Ambani is a member of the International Olympic Committee from India. Apart from watching a few games, Anant and Radhika were also seen stepping out on dates together. Radhika was also spotted bonding with the family members during their stay in Paris. Several videos of Radhika with Anant and the family members went viral earlier this month.

Karisma Kapoor

and Raveena Tandon 'Hit Each Other' With Their Wigs During a Catfight



Raveena Tandon recently clarified that she and Karisma Kapoor did not have a showdown at an airport during an outdoor shoot of their film, Aatish. However, Farah Khan once revealed that Karisma and Raveena did get into a nasty catfight during the making of their film, Aatish: Feel The Fire (1994). Farah was on the sets to choreograph a song when she allegedly saw Karisma and Raveena 'hitting each other' with their wigs. Farah recalled the incident while speaking with Karan Johar during an episode of Koffee With Karan in 2007. She brought up the fight after Karan asked her, "Which is the worst fight you have seen between two actresses?"

"I was once doing a song with Karisma Kapoor and Raveena Tandon, long ago, in a film called Aatish. They were both having some kind of teenage spat. They were hitting each other with their wigs," she shared. "They were wearing these wigs with plaits and beads in it. One was hitting, the other was stamping her foot with her heel. It was quite childish. I am sure they will laugh about it now," Farah told Karan.

Their fight continued on the sets of Andaz Apna Apna. It reached to the point where Raveena and Karisma communicated to each other via Rajkumar Santhoshi, who was directing the film. Fed up with their fight, the filmmaker, Aamir Khan and Salman Khan tied the two actresses to the pole which forced them to talk to each other. While Raveena has previously admitted that the incident on the sets of Andaz Apna Apna is indeed true, in a recent interview she dismissed claims that she and Karisma had a tiff at an airport. "That was never a catfight. I beg to differ. There was never a catfight. There might be a discussion, there might be a 'why are you doing this, and what is the need to do this, and let's bridge this gap' but there was never a catfight. It was all hyped and of course, mirch masala and everything. In those days, there was no social media. You couldn't really reach out and how much do you really clarify?" she told Filmfare.

