

FACTRING IN SAFETY**Major industrial accidents point to the need for a stronger worker safety law**

India's record in promoting occupational and industrial safety remains weak even with years of robust economic growth. Making work environments safer is a low priority, although the productivity benefits of such investments have always been clear. The consequences are frequently seen in the form of a large number of fatalities and injuries, but in a market that has a steady supply of labour, policymakers tend to ignore the wider impact of such losses. It will be no surprise, therefore, if the deaths of four people, including a senior officer, in a fire at the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation gas facility in Navi Mumbai, or the tragedy that killed nearly two dozen people at a firecracker factory in Batala, Punjab are quickly forgotten. Such incidents make it imperative that the Central government abandon its reductionist approach to the challenge, and engage in serious reform. There is not much evidence, however, of progressive moves. The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2019, introduced in the Lok Sabha in July to combine 13 existing laws relating to mines, factories, dock workers, building and construction, transport workers, inter-State migrant labour and so on, pays little attention to the sector-specific requirements of workers. One of its major shortcomings is that formation of safety committees and appointment of safety officers, the latter in the case of establishments with 500 workers, is left to the discretion of State governments. Evidently, the narrow stipulation on safety officers confines it to a small fraction of industries. On the other hand, the Factories Act currently mandates appointment of a bipartite committee in units that employ hazardous processes or substances, with exemptions being the exception. This provision clearly requires retention in the new Code.

A safe work environment is a basic right, and India's recent decades of high growth should have ushered in a framework of guarantees. Unfortunately, successive governments have not felt it necessary to ratify many fundamental conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO) covering organised and unorganised sector workers' safety, including the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981. Those ILO instruments cover several areas of activity that the NDA government's occupational safety Code now seeks to amalgamate, but without the systemic reform that is necessary to empower workers. It is essential, therefore, that the new Code go back to the drawing board for careful scrutiny by experienced parliamentarians, aided by fresh inputs from employees, employers and experts. Industries that use hazardous processes and chemicals deserve particular attention, and the Code must have clear definitions, specifying limits of exposure for workers. Compromising on safety can lead to extreme consequences that go beyond factories, and leave something that is etched in the nation's memory as in the case of the Bhopal gas disaster.

<u>Words</u>	<u>Kind</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
Robust	Adj.	Healthy, strong, vigorous, sturdy, muscular
Priority	Noun	Prime, concern, first, concern, pressing, matter
Bonafide	Noun	Interest, welfare, well being, satisfaction
Consequences	Noun	Result, upshot, outcome, repercussion, aftermath
Clear	Adj.	Explicit, lucid, pellucid, perspicuous, coherent
Fatalities	Noun	Death, casualty, mortality, victim, lost
Tend	Verb	Incline, lean, suring, veer, gravitate
Ignore	Verb	Disregard, shrug off, take no notice of, push aside
Tragedy	Noun	Disaster, calamity, catastrophe, catalysm
Imperative	Noun	All important, vital, crucial, indispensable
Reductionist	Adj.	A person who analysis and describes a complex phenomenon
Challenge	Noun	Dare, provocation, summons, gauntlets
Reform	Noun	Improvement, betterment, amelioration, refinement, rectification
Parlous	Adj.	Severe, critical, dire, dreadful, awful
Evidence	Noun	Proof, confirmation, verification, corroboration
Progressive	Adj.	Continuing, increasing, growing, ongoing
Discretion	Noun	Circumspection, care, caution, wariness
Stipulation	Noun	Condition, proviso, prerequisite, specification
Mandate	Noun	Order, command, decree, diktat, injunction
Hazardous	Adj.	Dangerous, pernicious, cataclysmic, perilous
Substances	Noun	Matter, material, stuff, fabric, medium
Exemption	Noun	Immunity, exception, dispensation, indemnity
Retention	Noun	Possession, use, control
Usher in	Verb	Begin, start, incept, kick off
Ratify	Verb	Confirm, approve, endorse, corroborate, authorize
Convention	Noun	Agreement, accord, protocol, compact
Several	Adj.	Some, assorted, sundry, diverse, variety of
Amalgamate	Verb	Combine, merge, unite, integrate, blend
Scrutiny	Noun	Examination, inspection, survey, perusal
Aid	Verb	Help, assist, abet, avail, succour, second
Exposure	Noun	Subjection, submission, vulnerability

Compromising	Adj.	Revealing, settling
Extreme	Adj.	Utmost, ultimate, paramount, acute
Etch	Verb	Engrave, carve, inscribe, incise, chisel
Disaster	Adj.	Catastrophe, calamity, tragedy
Detrimental	Adj.	Dangerous, perclous, noxious, pernicious
Perish	Noun	Area, community, distnct, congregation
Adept	Noun	Expert, dexterous,. Skilled, adroit, past master

HARD FOUGHT GLORY

With his 19th Grand Slam win, Nadal closes in on Federer's record in the race for tennis' apex

Rafael Nadal's relationship with hard courts can be described as tenuous at best. While he is the king of clay and quite adept on grass, the acrylic has often been his bane. Over the years, the Spaniard has found the surface unforgiving; from his back to both his hips right down to his knees, all have suffered significant wear and tear. Yet, none of this stopped the 33-year-old from securing his fourth U.S. Open title on Sunday, making him the most successful champion at Flushing Meadows this decade above Novak Djokovic (3). The thrilling five-set win over Russian Daniil Medvedev gave Nadal his 19th Major and puts him just one short of record-holder Roger Federer. To be sure, the surface is still his least favourite. Last month, when he won the Rogers Cup in Montreal, it was the first time in his illustrious career that he had defended a hard court title. As recently as in 2017-18, there was a stretch during which he retired or withdrew from 11 of the 12 hard court events he had entered. However, the latest triumph showed what a healthy, well-rested and mentally sharp Nadal could achieve. While in 2018 he had left New York limping, after three long, bruising encounters, Nadal this time, at least until the final, was supremely efficient. The court did its bit too; slightly below medium-pace, it gave Nadal a fraction extra to set up his shots and at the same time rewarded his recently acquired aggressive streak.

The success is also another indicator that the Big 3 of Federer, Nadal and Djokovic, all in their thirties, are still the hegemonic class in men's tennis. Medvedev appeared to usher in the next generation for a fleeting set or two but couldn't deny a 12th straight Major for the celebrated trio. In fact, an astonishing 51 of the last 59 Slams dating back to the 2005 French Open have been cornered by the three. What it now does is set up a tantalising endgame in the race to most Grand Slam titles. It is a competition that the protagonists Federer (20), Nadal (19) and Djokovic (16) attest to being least interested in. But coming as it does when the threat from the younger crop appears genuine, it is a compelling scenario for the fans at least. On the women's side, however, the thrill of novelty continued unabated with Canadian teen sensation Bianca Andreescu becoming the latest first-time Slam winner.

In her remarkable straight sets victory over Serena Williams, the 19-year-old played with the kind of intelligence, imagination and audacity that is usually the preserve of the sport's very best, as she left the American legend's dream of a record-equalling 24th Major in tatters, yet again.

<u>Words</u>	<u>Kind</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
Tenuous	Adj.	Slight, insubstantial, filmy, dubious
Clay	Noun	Earth, soil, loam
Adept	Noun	Expert, adroit, dexterous, skilled, past master,
Acrylic	Noun	Paint
Bane	Noun	Scourge, ruin, plague, ruination, destruction
Unforgiving	Adj.	Stern, unrelenting, grim, inexorable
Wear & tear	Noun	Depletion, depreciation, erosion, ablation
Flushing	Adj.	Blush, redden, turn, scarlet, crimson
Meadow	Noun	Field, pasture, paddock, grassland
Thrilling	Adj.	Exciting, arousing, exhilarating, stimulating
Defend	Verb	Protect, guard, safeguard, pressure, shield
Illustrious	Adj.	Eminent, distinguished, acclaimed, prominent
Triumph	Noun	Victory, win, conquest, success
Limp	Verb	Hobble, falter, wack with difficulty
Bruise	Verb	Contuse, lesion, mark, injure, hurt
En-counter	Noun	Experience, face, confront, run into
Aggressive	Adj.	Bellicose, belligerent, truculent, antagonistic, hostile
Streak	Noun	Band, line, strip, vein, slash
Hegemonic	Adj.	Primacy, superior, sceptre, clout
Fleeting	Adj.	Temporary, transient, transitory, ephemeral
Trio	Noun	Threesome, triumvirate, triad, troika
Tantalise	Verb	Tease, torment, torture, bait, agorise
Protagonist	Noun	Supporter, upholder, adherent, proponent
Compel	Verb	Force, coerce into, pressurize into, prevailon
Thrill	Noun	Excitement, thrilling, stimulation, titillation
Unabated	Adj.	Determined, dogged, pertinacious, unflagging
Sensation	Noun	Commotion, stir, uproar, furore, outrage
Remarkable	Adj.	Extraordinary, astounding, exceptional
Intelligence	Noun	Intellect, judgement, acumen, perspicacity
Audacity	Noun	Boldness, impudence, impertinence, insolence
Preserve	Verb	Conserve, protect, maintain, carefor, safeguard
In tatters		regard, tatterect, torn, ripped, frayed