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SEVEN DECADES, 25,000 SONGS, AN ENDURING LEGACY

Lata Lives

Illustration: Suvajit Dey

LATA MANGESHKAR • 1929-2022

President, PM join a nation to pay tribute to legend of music

YOGESH NAIK
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 6

LATA MANGESHKAR, the legendary singer beloved of countless Indians across four generations or more, was cremated at 7.14 pm with full state honours in the presence of her family, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, and thousands of Mumbai residents who thronged Shivaji Park to pay their last respects.

Mangeshkar, 92, died on Sunday morning at 8.12 am at Mumbai's Breach Candy hospital following post-Covid complications.

Dr Prateet Samdani, Internal Medicine specialist at Breach Candy, who had been treating Mangeshkar, said in a statement, "It is with profound

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

THE LATA LEGEND PAGES 8, 9 & 14

'INDEPENDENT INDIA'S ONE CONSTANT: LATA'

THE PHENOMENON, EXPLAINED

PM Narendra Modi pays tribute to Lata Mangeshkar at her funeral on Sunday. *Deepak Joshi*

BUSINESS AS USUAL
BY UNNY

OUR INNER VOICE
THE EDITORIAL PAGE, 10

She was voice of India's beating heart, young and old, broken and united

SUANSHU KHURANA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

LATA MANGESHKAR, one of the country's most towering cultural icons whose singing moved generations since Independence, was so impossibly prolific that she was able to do what artists rarely can.

From the hymn to the love song, an entire nation in prayer to an individual heart broken, she was the voice of their music that struck chords, both perfect and popular: an astounding blend unmatched in Hindi film music to this day.

"Kambakht galti se bhi besura nahi gaati (She doesn't sing out of tune even by mistake)," Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan had famously said about her, in mock exasperation and genuine admiration. Lata Mangeshkar was a moniker for

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Towards the end, video calls with doctor's 8-year-old

RUPSA CHAKRABORTY
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 6

THEY WOULD speak about life, songs, studios, recordings, families — even her "*payal* (anklet) collection". Over the last two years, she grew so close to one of them that she would chat with his eight-year-old daughter on video call.

For doctors and nurses at Breach Candy, the passing away of Lata Mangeshkar in the hospital was personal. "Today, my little daughter is grieving," said Dr Pratit Samdani, internal medicine specialist and consultant at the hospital.

Samdani first met Mangeshkar in 2019 when she was rushed to the hospital after complaining of breathing difficulties and placed on life support for a while before being discharged.

"We developed an affectionate relationship. Due to Covid restrictions, she refrained from visiting hospitals and on a weekly basis would consult me on video call for over an hour or so. During these calls, she would often share memories of various incidents while recording songs in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

A Covid death, a family's trials: behind U-19 trophy

PRATYUSH RAJ & DEVENDRA PANDEY
NEW DELHI, MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 6

INDIA'S DOMINANT run at the Under-19 World Cup culminated in a record-extending fifth title on Sunday. The latest triumph, however, will stand apart due to the tenacity shown in the face of unprecedented challenges off the field. The pandemic rocked the run-up and threatened the campaign itself — at one point, the team was reduced to ten fit

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

'Gareeb ka beta': Rahul names Channi as CM face

DIVYA GOYAL GOPAL & MANRAJ GREWAL SHARMA
LUDHIANA, PHAGWARA, FEBRUARY 6

CONGRESS LEADER Rahul Gandhi Sunday declared Charanjit Singh Channi as the party's Chief Ministerial face in Punjab, putting an end to speculation that has stretched for months and set off rumblings within.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

EXPLAINED

Eye on SC votes

CONGRESS IS facing the charge of non-performance in Punjab. It's hoping the move will give it an edge by consolidating Dalit votes in a state with the highest concentration of SCs in the country.

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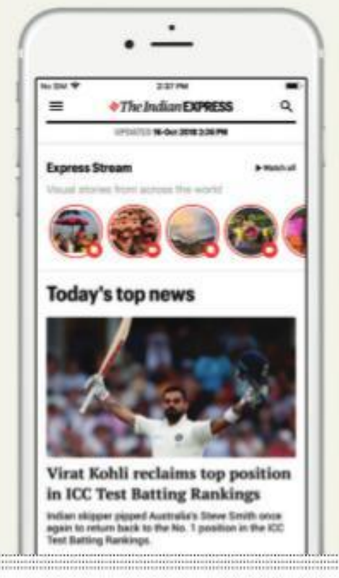

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WEB EXCLUSIVE

AUSTRIA'S NEW LAW THAT MAKES COVID-19 VACCINATION MANDATORY

The Bundesrat, the Upper House of the Austrian Parliament, passed the law by a 47-12 majority, after which it was approved by the Lower House.

TECH

DYING LIGHT 2 REVIEW

Dropkicking zombies is still fun

ENTERTAINMENT

LATA MANGESHKAR (1929-2022)

A pictorial tribute to the legendary singer

EXPRESS AUDIO

What are truly wireless audio devices

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

Here we discuss what truly wireless audio devices are. They talk about how the pandemic and work from home have transformed the audio space, how noise cancellation is growing in India

FROM PAGE ONE

President, PM join a nation to pay tribute

grief that we announce the sad demise of Lata Mangeshkar didi this morning at 8.12 am. She died because of multiple organ failure after around 28 days of hospitalisation post COVID."

As tributes poured in from across the country and abroad, the Centre announced two days of national mourning. The Maharashtra government declared a public holiday on Monday.

In a tweet, President Ram Nath Kovind said: "Lata-ji's demise is heart-breaking for me, as it is for millions the world over. In her vast range of songs, rendering the essence and beauty of India, generations found expression of their innermost emotions. A Bharat Ratna, Lata-ji's accomplishments will remain incomparable."

The President added: "An artist born but once in centuries, Lata-didi was an exceptional human being, full of warmth, as I found whenever I met her..."

In a series of tweets, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he was "anguished beyond words".

"The kind and caring Lata Didi has left us. She leaves a void in our nation that cannot be filled. The coming generations will remember her as a stalwart of Indian culture, whose melodious voice had an unparalleled ability to mesmerise people," Modi said.

Mangeshkar's songs brought out a variety of emotions, the Prime Minister said. "Beyond films, she was always passionate about India's growth. She always wanted to see a strong and developed India," he said. In a statement, the Ministry of Home Affairs said, "Government of India has decided that as a mark of respect, two days of State Mourning will be observed from February 6 to 7. During State Mourning, National Flag will be flown at half-mast from February 6 to 7 throughout India and there will be no official entertainment. It has also been decided that State Funeral will be accorded to Kumari Lata Mangeshkar."

As a mark of respect to the legend, Rajya Sabha will adjourn for an hour on Monday after reading her obituary.

Mangeshkar had been admitted to Breach Candy on January 9 after she tested positive for Covid. Doctors said that though she had recovered from the disease almost a week ago, her condition deteriorated as she suffered from multiple organ failure. Speaking to Indian Express, N Santhanam of Breach Candy Hospital said, "We tried our best, but age was not on her side. She was brought to the Covid ICU on January 9 and was on a Bipap machine."

Mangeshkar was taken off the invasive ventilator last week, but her condition turned critical on Friday, following which she was again put on invasive ventilation, Santhanam said. She lost the battle on Sunday morning. Mangeshkar's body was taken to her Prabhu Kunj residence on Pedder Road, where thousands had gathered to pay their respects to their beloved 'Didi', as she was fondly called.

Sister Asha Bhosle, a legend in her own right, and the entire Mangeshkar family was present at her home. Among those who called on the family to express their condolences were superstar Amitabh Bachchan, and politicians Aaditya Thackeray, Raj Thackeray, and Sushil Kumar Shinde. Around 5.40 pm, Mangeshkar's body reached Shivaji Park in a funeral procession from Prabhu Kunj.

Modi reached the ground around 6.20 pm, accompanied by Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari, state Cabinet Minister Aaditya Thackeray, and Opposition leader Devendra Fadnavis, among others.

The Prime Minister was received by Adinath Mangeshkar, Lata's nephew. He met her siblings Asha Bhosle, Usha Mangeshkar, Hridaynath Mangshkar, and other members of the family. At 7.14 pm, Hridaynath lit the pyre. Anticipating a huge crowd at the cremation, Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) had temporarily accorded Shivaji Park the status of a cremation ground. This was the first time this happened since 2012, when Shiv Sena founder Bal Thackeray was cremated at Shivaji Park.

Towards the end

studios, performing on stage and working with other singers. She was so humble and would often inquire about my family's well-being through messages during the pandemic," said Samdani.

"She also developed a special bond with my eight-year-old daughter. She would often video chat with her during consultation. Lata didi wanted to meet my daughter but due to the pandemic, it couldn't happen. But they met virtually several times over video call. My daughter was so fond of Lata didi that she sent handwritten letters to her," he said.

This time, too, Samdani was hopeful he would be able to send his 92-year-old patient back home in good health. But age and ailing health were not on her side. Mangeshkar was admitted to the hospital on January 9 after being detected with Covid, and placed in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). And although she recovered slightly last week, her condition deteriorated and she was put on a ventilator. At 8.12 am on Sunday, she breathed her last.

According to oldtimers at Breach Candy, the singing legend had been visiting the hospital for over three decades. Caregivers at the facility say they "have grown old with her and share a bond". Many of them were emotionally overwhelmed when doctors announced that she was no more. Several in the nurses room broke down in tears. "We provide treatment to several celebrities, but we strictly limit our personal communication with them. But Lata didi would always initiate a conversation. She never hesitated to give autographs to staffers," said a nurse who had been involved in caring for Mangeshkar for over 25 years.

"Earlier, she would listen to songs, especially ghazals, when she had to get admitted for health issues. She loved 'payals' and would often tell us about her 'payal' collection," said the nurse who declined to speak on record citing hospital norms for staff. "But this time, she looked more fragile and frail. Due to Covid, there were strict restrictions on staff visiting her in the ICU. Healthcare workers would peek through the glass on the ICU door to catch a glimpse of her," said the nurse. Doctors involved in Mangeshkar's treatment remember her as a "down-to-earth" person.

Last year, when Dr Gautam Bhansali, consultant physician at Bombay Hospital, visited her at her Peddar Road building, the singer "expressed concern about the effect of Covid on the livelihood of the poor". "She also expressed her desire to help those in need. She had a nightingale voice and a golden heart," said Dr Bhansali. At Breach Candy, the nurse summed it up: "For all of us, Lata didi was not just a patient but a family member."

Voice of nation

excellence, versatility and accessibility, one that will endure in the countless voices that are – and will continue to be -- inspired by her.

Mangeshkar, besides her 25,000 songs – each a lesson in discipline, grit, and brilliance – also did many other things. She made India and Pakistan unanimously agree over one thing: the power of her music and melody. Be it the famed story of a letter that came to All India Radio from Lahore, which said that India could have Kashmir if they could give Lata Mangeshkar to Pakistan or stories of her legions of fans on the other side of the contested border, some of them senior classical musicians who spoke of her as Partition's biggest loss for Pakistan, there was a special bond between the two countries when it came to agreeing on the magic of Mangeshkar's voice.

Noor Jehan, the iconic singer Mangeshkar admired and followed, once said of her: "People say that she admires me. Par Lata toh Lata hai. Meri nazar mein Lataji ki tarah koi aaj tak paida nahi hua."

Mangeshkar was born in Indore in a Sikh neighbourhood and raised in Kolhapur in a musical family. Her father Master Dinanath Mangeshkar was a musician from the Gwalior gharana who ran a drama company. He was Lata's first guru. She went to school only for a day. She was about five and took her sister, a young Asha (Bhosle) ,along with her. But the school wouldn't allow such a young child to sit in the class with her. She decided to never go back.

At home, she would listen to her father teaching his students and imbibe the pieces. One day, her father spotted her correcting one of his students and was astounded at how deftly the child taught. He decided to teach her the ropes of classical music. But his untimely death led Lata, the eldest child of the family, to begin work at 13.

It was Master Vinayak, her family's close friend and the owner of Navyug Chitrapat movie company, who took care of the family and helped Mangeshkar become an actor and singer. Her first song was in Vasant Joglekar's Marathi film Kiti Hasaal (1942), but it did not make the final cut. She sang a few more songs for Marathi cinema before moving to Mumbai in 1945. There, she began training under Ustad Aman Ali Khan of the Bhendibazaar gharana. Vinayak also introduced Mangeshkar to composer Vasant Desai. After his death in 1948, it was composer Ghulam Haider who took Mangeshkar under his wings and introduced her to filmmaker Sasadhar Mukherjee, who had just set up Filmistan studio.

But Mangeshkar was rejected by Mukherjee who thought her voice was too thin. Angry that his judgment had been doubted, Haider went on to proclaim, "Music composers will beg Lata to sing for them."

Haider gave Mangeshkar her first significant break with the song Dil mera toda, mujhe kahin ka na chhoda (Majboor, 1948), a piece that echoes Noor Jehan's slightly nasal style. In some years, Mangeshkar was singing differently, in that thin yet mature voice that was to fulfil Haider's vision.

When she sang Aayega aanewala, the haunting Khemchand Prakash composition from Mahal (1949), it would take a newly born nation's breath away and seal her supremacy in the Indian film industry for decades to come, with no rival in sight.

The song broke all records at Radio Ceylon and people flooded its office with letters to ask for the singer's name (The gramophone company only carried the character's name until then). Lata Mangeshkar had arrived. From the timeless Mughal-e-Azam (1960) song Pyar kiya toh darna kya or the hymnal Sahir Ludhianvi piece Allah tero naam ishwar tero naam (Hum Dono, 1961) or the playful Piya tose naina laage (Guide, 1965), every time Mangeshkar sang, left her listeners enthralled. After Independence, against the backdrop of the India-China War of 1962, when she sang Kavi Pradeep's Aye mere watan ke logon to C Ramachandra's tune, she would move a nation, and its Prime Minister, to tears.

As Mangeshkar climbed the ladder of her art and success, one song at a time, stories about rivalries came to the fore, the most significant being with her sister and veteran singer Asha Bhosle. In a radio interview to Ameen Sayani in 1984, titled 'Lata Se Darte Darte', Mangeshkar had said: "Asha is my sister and we have very different styles. She gets her share of the songs and she her fair share. There is no question of rivalry…"

Music composer OP Nayyar never asked Mangeshkar to sing for him. Another notable fallout was with Mohammad Rafi, with whom she had performed most of her legendary duets. This argument was over royalty issues. While Mangeshkar wanted royalty for her songs from the record company, Rafi believed that once the song had been sung and the singer paid for it, it wasn't the singer's property anymore. The two did not sing between 1963 and 1967.

Some of her most successful collaborations were with composers Naushad, Anil Biswas, S D Burman, Shankar Jaikishen, C Ramachandra, Salil Chowdhury, Hemant Kumar, Roshan, Madan Mohan, Khayyam, Jaidev and Ravi, among others. Mangeshkar sang for a gamut of actors – from Madhubala and Waheeda Rehman to Kajol and Madhuri Dixit. She sang through the '90s and some part of the 21st century and songs such as Yaara seeli seeli (Lekin, 1990), Maaye ni maaye (Hum Aapke Hain Koun!, 1994), Jiya jale (Dil Se, 1998), and Mere khwabo mein jo aaye (Dilwale Dulahaniya Le Jayenge, 1994) were a testament to the power of her voice to transcend the age of the actor.

Her last popular outings included Veer Zaara (2004), where composer Madan Mohan's old tunes were resurrected, and the poignant Lukka chhippi in Rang De Basanti (2006). She was awarded the Dada Sahab Phalke Award in 1989 and Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian honour in 2001, besides a host of other accolades. Lata Mangeshkar is survived by her three sisters, Meena Khadikar (90), Asha Bhosle (88), Usha Mangeshkar (86), and brother Hridaynath Mangeshkar (84). While all the siblings have had careers in film music, it was Bhosle, 88, who came closest to Lata Mangeshkar's popularity. Hridaynath Mangeshkar is a noted composer in the Hindi and Marathi film industry. His daughter, Radha Mangeshkar, is also a playback singer.

Channi CM face

"It is not a decision by Rahul Gandhi but by Punjab," Gandhi said at a virtual rally in Ludhiana. "I can have an opinion but I can't decide. The people of Punjab said we want a gareeb ghar ka CM (a CM from a poor household). I agree with this."

As he built up to the announcement, Gandhi said there was "no dearth of diamonds in the Congress". Both top contenders, Punjab Congress president Navjot Singh Sidhu and Chief Minister Channi, were present with him.

"Leaders are not made in 10-15 days. They are born from fights and struggles. Sidhu, Channi and (Sunil) Jakhar have all walked on difficult paths and learned from that. It is difficult to pick a diamond from many such diamonds," said Gandhi, before eventually naming Channi. Punjab goes to the polls on February 20.

Channi, a three-time MLA from Chamkaur Sahib, became the state's first Dalit Chief Minister in September after the ouster of Captain Amarinder Singh. Congress hopes the move will help it gain an edge in several seats by consolidating Dalit votes. At 32 per cent, Punjab has the largest concentration of Dalits in the country — there are 34 reserved seats in the 117-member Assembly — though they are not a homogenous group.

Caste is not a sharply defined parameter of social standing in Punjab, as a result of which Dalits have never voted in a bloc — even for the BSP whose founder Kashi Ram was from the state.

Channi is contesting from two seats, both in the Malwa region. The Scheduled Caste vote consolidation, however, is more likely in pockets of Doaba with 23 seats. Here, Dalits form as much as 45 per cent of the population and are relatively more homogenous than in Malwa.

Caste flare-ups are not uncommon in the belt which is home to various Dalit deras. The most famous of these is Dera Ballan, the headquarters of the powerful Ravidassia sect. Only last fortnight, Channi had spent a night at the dera, sleeping on the floor of its chief's room.

Earlier in the day, as The Indian Express toured the Doaba districts of Jalandhar and Nawanshahr, Dalits, in some pockets, said they would vote for Congress if Channi was its CM face. At Kanshi Nagar village in Phagwara, Ramesh Gaught said they have traditionally been voting for the "hathi" (BSP) but would shift towards Congress if it chose Channi.

It was the same refrain at Talhan, an affluent village with a predominance of Dalits. Mohan Lal, former panchayat member, spoke for many when he said: "If Channi is announced as the CM face, 75 percent of our village will vote for him. But if they choose Sidhu, not one person will vote for Congress." He added: "It's not just because he is from the Dalit samaj, he keeps his promises. Our power bills have been slashed."

Sarpanch Balwinder Jit Singh, however, maintained that he would support the Akali-BSP candidate Pawan Tinnu. "He has always stood by us. How can we desert him?"

At Chamkaur Sahib, from where Channi has recorded three straight wins, the announcement was greeted with jubilation at the Bagla Basti of Dalits. The party had reportedly conducted a survey before arriving at the decision to make Channi the CM face.

He said "two Hindustans" were being created in the country. "The second Hindustan of the poor has crores of people in it. We do not want two Hindustans. We want only one India where everyone has access to education and health. So when I asked my workers, candidates and people of Punjab, they said they want a gareeb ghar ka beta as their CM who understands what hunger is," said Gandhi. Gandhi tried a balancing act before the announcement, saying both Sidhu and Channi have "Punjab in their blood".

Since Amarinder's ouster as CM, Sidhu has been vying for the top post and making his case to be named Punjab's CM face.

Speaking ahead of Rahul, both Sidhu and Channi said they would abide by the decision taken by the high command. Sidhu said if got the responsibility, there would be no mafia raj in Punjab. "I am an aashiq (lover) of Punjab. My love for Punjab does not ask for anything in return. I am not asking for anything from Rahul Gandhi and I will abide by his decision. I will stand and work shoulder-to-shoulder with the person who will be made CM candidate," he said. Channi, meanwhile, hinted he was aware of his name being finalised and focused on targeting the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). After being announced as the CM face, he said: "I can only promise that I will never let this turban lose its dignity. Money earned from wrongdoing will never enter my house." He told Sidhu: "Sidhu saab, your model will be implemented now, you will do what you have planned. I will only be a medium."

Congress leader Jakhar, who recently said that 42 MLAs had backed him as the CM face and only two had opted for Channi, called Gandhi's decision "historic". Before the formal announcement by Gandhi, a meeting went on for more than two hours attended by senior Congress leaders including Jakhar, Punjab affairs in-charge Harish Chaudhary, Channi and Sidhu. After Gandhi's arrival, Jakhar was seen escorting him to the hotel and was in the driver's seat. Sidhu and Channi were in the back seat.

U-19 World Cup

players.

However, just like their seniors at Australia's Gabba in January 2021, the juniors remained defiant till the end, prevailing over England by four wickets in the final at Antigua. But then, a glimpse of the life stories of these cricketers show why they were never rattled -- from a player who lost his father to Covid to several others who overcame extreme odds to reach the pinnacle of junior cricket.

"The way people worked behind the scenes was tremendous, and nobody complained. Our manager contracted Covid and was in another city, but he was getting things done on the phone. Our physio became our doctor, our video analyst became the manager. Coaches were doubling their roles in the team," Ravi Kumar, the left-arm pacer who fetched India nine wickets in the knockout games, told The Indian Express.

After beginning the tournament on a positive note, overcoming South Africa by 45 runs, India found themselves struggling to field a playing XI. Hours before their match against Ireland, multiple players tested positive for Covid. "At one stage, there were ten of us fit to play against Ireland. The eleventh player, who was injured, had to finally play. It was an extremely professional environment. The way the practice was organised, the way every single detail was covered, it was remarkable from the BCCI," Kumar said.

Captain Yash Dhull was among the five unavailable for the second group clash against Ireland on January 19. His deputy Shaik Rasheed, Aaradhya Yadav, Manav Parakh and Siddarth Yadav were the others forced out of the Ireland and Uganda fixtures, prompting the BCCI to fly in reinforcements. Assistant coaches ran out with the drinks. Thirty minutes before leaving for the stadium to face Ireland, allrounder Nishant Sindhu was told he would be leading the team.

"I was putting tapes on my bowling hand when I saw (wicket-keeper Dinesh) Bana rushing into my room. He said, 'Tu aaj captain hai (You are the captain today)'. I thought he was pulling my leg. I went down to the lobby and was told by (National Cricket Academy head) V V S Laxman sir and (coach) Hrishikesh Kanitkar sir that both Dhull and Rasheed are Covid-positive and I would be the captain," said Sindhu, who steered India home from a tricky position with an unbeaten 50.

Sindhu led India brilliantly against Ireland and Uganda, but a day before the quarterfinal against Bangladesh, he tested positive, too. "I had no symptoms at all. It was quite weird," he says. But for those who know this team, the resilience in the face of adversity was not much of a surprise.

Captain Dhull, who braved severe Covid effects, returned with a match-winning century against Australia in the semifinal, days after he rescued his team against South Africa with a feisty 82. Dhull's grandfather Jagat Singh, an Armyman, was his guide and drove him to matches. Before passing away a few years ago, Jagat had "instilled discipline and dedication" in Dhull. Dhull's deputy, Rasheed, broke down while talking to his coach J Krishna Rao. His words were: "Sir, I think my World Cup is over. I might not recover for the knockouts." To allay his fears, Rao reminded him of the sacrifice his parents had made for their son. Father Balisha lost jobs, could hardly sustain the family at times and had to move cities, but he kept his son's cricket dream alive. Rashid pulled himself together and scored 94 in the semifinal and 50 in the final.

Vicky Ostwal, the team's most successful bowler with 12 wickets, was one of the few who played all the matches. But the joy of success came after much hardship for the lanky left-arm spinner. As a nine-year-old, Ostwal would travel from Lonavala to Mumbai every day with his father Kanhaiya to play cricket. "I saw them sometimes coming late, sometimes too early," said his childhood coach Mohan Jadhav. "One day I asked where they lived, and Vicky replied that he came from Lonavala. He is a tough kid."

Jadhav's other prodigy in the team, Rajvardhan Hangargekar, who was probably the quickest pacer of the tournament and grabbed eyeballs with his towering sixes, lost his father to Covid in June 2020. "What will you tell someone who has lost his father to this virus?" asked Jadhav. "The only thing that drives him now is bowling fast and hitting sixes."

Raj Angad Bawa, the player of the final, was banned from bowling fast by father-coach Sukhwinder Bawa. The need for speed saw the youngster bowl quick at the nets, and then request his Punjab U-16 teammates to keep it a secret.

Sukhwinder, who wanted Raj to be an all-rounder and not a tailender, ensured that his son never missed practice. At the World Cup, Raj bagged a four-wicket haul against South Africa, and followed with a 42 against Ireland. With a 108-ball 162 not out against Uganda, he surpassed Shikhar Dhawan's 155 against Scotland in 2004 as the highest score by an Indian at the U-19 World Cup. Raj saved his best for the final, though. He ran through the England middle order with figures of 5 for 31, the best bowling performance ever in a U-19 World Cup final.

Delhi-born Angkrish Raghuvanshi, the youngest in the squad, left Gurgaon at the age of 11 and moved to Mumbai to hone his skills even as his brother Krishang, now a tennis player, was diagnosed with blood cancer when he was a toddler. "Angkrish used to sleep with us in hospitals. Those five years were the most dreadful. He would never leave his baby brother alone," says mother Malika, who is in Spain's Mallorca, where her younger son is competing in a junior tournament. "We provided Angkrish with everything, but the process of Krishang's treatment made him mentally tough," she says. The opener amassed 278 runs in the tournament.

Then, there is the fearless wicketkeeper-batsman Bana, who finished the final with back-to-back sixes. Though the image of a wicketkeeper clinching the World Cup would seem familiar to Indian fans, Bana was not even the first choice.

It was during the India B vs India F game in the Challengers Trophy that his friend Sindhu informed him: "The U-19 selectors will be here to watch our match today." Bana's reply was: "Tu bas six count karna aaj mere (You just count my sixes today)." Bana smashed a 98-ball 170, including 10 fours and 14 sixes.

While parents from South Africa, England, Australia and a few other teams accompanied their wards to provide support, the Indian players relied on their teammates. As Dhull said at a press conference: "The Covid outbreak in the camp only made them more determined to win the Cup."

WRITEBACK

RESPONDING TO the report in *The Indian Express* (Ken-Betwa to new Goa airport to Odisha mine: 6 mega projects ignored green commitments they made, February 4, 2022), an NHPC spokesperson wrote:

"The 2880 MW Dibang Multipurpose Project is an ambitious upcoming project of NHPC in the state of Arunachal Pradesh. The Forest Clearance Stage-I was granted by MoEF&CC, Govt of India, vide letter dated 15.04.2015 after examination of Forest Advisory Committee (FAC) constituted by Central Government under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, wherein no such stipulation that the right bank of proposed reservoir would be national park was mentioned.

"The final approval of Forest Clearance (FC-II) was issued by MoEF&CC on 12.03.2020 after submission of compliance report by the State Government as stipulated in FC-I.

"NHPC through its hydropower projects not only contributes towards India's energy security but also ensures environment sustainability. NHPC is a responsible corporate citizen and environmentally sensitive in all aspects of hydropower development and operation."

The Indian Express replies:

The Stage-I forest clearance for Dibang Multipurpose Project was issued to the Arunachal Pradesh government "on the basis of the recommendations of the Forest Advisory Committee" that are recorded in the minutes of the FAC meeting held on September 22-23, 2014. They include the declaration of "the right bank of the reservoir up to the ridgeline bordering the basin boundary between the Siang and Dibang up to Dri River to the north as a National Park for future preservation of ecological diversity in the River Basin."

Pointing out "shortcomings" in the state's compliance report on Dibang's FC-I conditions, the Environment Ministry, in a letter dated October 16, 2019, sought an update from the Arunachal government on the compliance status of this specific recommendation of the FAC.

The Indian Express stands by its report.

ANAND VIHAR	SIRIFORT	SHADIPUR	IHBAS
Very Poor	Poor	Very Poor	Poor
367 AQI PM 10 (0–500)	209 AQI PM 10 (0–500)	309 AQI PM 10 (0–500)	294 AQI PM 10 (0–500)

0-50 Good | 51-100 Satisfactory | 101-200 Moderate | 201-300 Poor | 301-400 Very Poor | 401-500 Severe

SKYWATCH

FORECAST: Feb 7

Mainly clear sky. Shallow to moderate fog in the morning.

MAX: 26 (1.8° C above normal) | MIN: 6 (3.2° C below normal)

AFTER DDMA ORDER

Nod for offline classes at JNU from Monday, DU stays online

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

AUTHORITIES AT Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) permitted schools and centres to resume offline teaching and learning activities for students from Monday. On the other hand, Delhi University has issued an order stating that online teaching and learning activities will continue.

The new order from JNU comes after the Delhi Disaster Management Authority Friday allowed higher educational institutes to resume physical teaching and learning activities amid declining Covid cases in the national capital. Crucially, an education department official said that the requirement for institutes to maintain 50% of classroom or laboratory capacity at any given time will be done away with.

JNU has not yet issued any notification on what the policy is with regard to its hostels. According to JNUSU president Aishe Ghosh, a students' union delegation will be meeting the Dean of Students over this on Monday.

According to the university's order, deans and chairpersons of various schools, centres and special centres may resume offline teaching, learning and academic activities from Monday. JNU will be made fully functional with staff attending their offices at 100% capacity.

"The head of the schools/centres/special centres shall call the students in such numbers and manner, taking into account the available space/ infrastructure/ facilities of their schools/centres/special centres, so as to ensure that the Covid-appropriate behaviour (viz wearing a mask, maintaining of social distancing, regular handwashing etc) is complied with at all times in the schools/centres/special centres," reads the order.

All authorised canteens at JNU will also be allowed to function at 50 per cent capacity from 8 am to 11 pm.

The city's night curfew, from 11 pm to 5 am, will be operational on movements of individuals on the campus as well. During the curfew, campus gates will be closed and residents have been instructed to not move within the campus.

Meanwhile at DU, all non-teaching staff of departments and colleges have been asked to be present at their workplaces on all working days with immediate effect. "The online teaching and learning activities shall continue for all other academic programmes as per the notified Academic Calendar," the order read.

Doctors, staff at East MCD-run hospital call off salary strike

Several resident doctors, nurses, and paramedical staff at the hospital went on strike on Tuesday.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

THE STRIKE by medical staff and doctors at the East Delhi Municipal Corporation's Swami Dayanand Hospital — who had been protesting against salary delays for the past six days — ended on Sunday.

A senior official of the East MCD said a meeting was held with union officials of Group A, B, C and D employees and it was conveyed to them that if they return to work, then no disciplinary action would be taken against anyone and their demands would be considered.

Post this, the official said, the unions decided that the strike should be ended immediately and staff return to work.

Emergency services at the hospital have resumed while the OPDs will begin functioning from Monday, the official added.

Several resident doctors, nurses, and paramedical staff at the hospital went on strike on Tuesday against non-payment of salaries. They abstained from work and raised slogans on the premises. The resident doctors' association of the hospital had written a letter to the medical superintendent, stating that their salaries are pending despite many assurances from the EDMC.

EDMC Commissioner Vikas Anand had said that they would be given their salaries for February and March on time. "Also, their due arrears will be paid in the month of May as per the availability of the funds," he had said.

Probe against 3 Tihar officials for 'receiving money' from Sukesh

MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

CONMAN SUKESH Chandrashekhar has been shifted to another jail in Tihar while three officials, including two assistant superintendents, have been sent to the district lines of the jail headquarters after authorities found that one of them allegedly received Rs 1.25 lakh from Sukesh.

An initial probe revealed that instead of transferring the money directly, Sukesh allegedly sent it via a bank account of an inmate's brother. DG (Prisons) Sandeep Goel told *The Indian Express* that they have transferred Sukesh from jail 4 to jail 1: "We have also transferred three jail staffers to the headquarters and initiated an enquiry against them."

Last month, the Delhi Police had asked jail administration to allow it to probe 82 officials and staff of Rohini jail under the Prevention of Corruption Act after seven officials were arrested for allegedly helping Sukesh extort Rs 200 crore from former Fortis Healthcare promoter Shivinder Singh's wife Aditi Singh.

Sources said the latest incident came to light last month after the administration uncovered financial transactions between the officials and Sukesh. As they were unable to ascertain how money exchanged hands, officials shifted Sukesh from jail 4 as a precautionary measure and questioned staffers.

During enquiry, jail officials found an inmate's brother had received Rs 1.25 lakh in his account. "Officials then questioned the inmate, who told them an assistant jail superintendent had taken the account details. When the latter was questioned, he confessed to having taken money from Sukesh," an official said. He alleged that two more staffers also took their share from the amount. "The assistant jail superintendent said Sukesh offered them money of his own accord. We suspect he was luring him," the official said.

Police had earlier claimed Sukesh paid around Rs 25-30 crore to jail staff to secure an entire barrack for himself. Police said CCTV footage from 10 cameras installed in Rohini jail from July 14 to August 14, 2021, was collected and these covered Ward No. 3 and Barrack No. 204 where Sukesh was lodged. "It was found that CCTVs in Sukesh's barrack were completely blocked by curtains and a mineral water bottle box...," DCP Mohammad Ali wrote in his letter asking Tihar Jail to grant approval under Section 17 (A) of PoC Act to conduct an enquiry/ investigation against officials of Rohini jail No. 10..

OPENING TODAY

A worker sanitises equipment a day before gyms in the capital reopen on Monday. The Delhi Disaster Management Authority on Friday had allowed gyms to resume operations with protocols in place. *Praveen Khanna*

61-yr-old man dragged out of car, thrashed

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

A 61-YEAR-OLD man was allegedly dragged out of his car, thrashed, and robbed by two unknown persons in an incident of road rage at Rohini.

Police said the victim, identified as Harikesh Sharma (62), is a property dealer at Nithari. A case has been registered at Aman Vihar police station against the two men, but no arrests have been made yet.

According to the FIR registered on Friday, Sharma was driving towards his office when two men on a bike stopped him.

The FIR stated that the accused shouted, "Can't you give space on the road. Wait, we'll teach you (a lesson)."

Sharma claimed, "... They were shouting as they wanted space, but there was a lot of traffic. I tried to explain that I can not move my car, but they didn't listen. They walked towards me and one of them punched me. They took my spectacles, threw them and hit me again. I was scared. They dragged me out of the car and bit my fingers. My gold ring fell during the commotion. I think they stole it."

According to the FIR, locals gathered at the spot while the accused were allegedly attacking the man and they tried to stop the fight.

Seeing this, the accused panicked and fled.

A senior police officer said, "We responded to the PCR call within minutes and police is in touch with the victim. We are scanning CCTVs in the area to identify the accused. They will be arrested soon."

MBA student attempts suicide over 'blackmail'

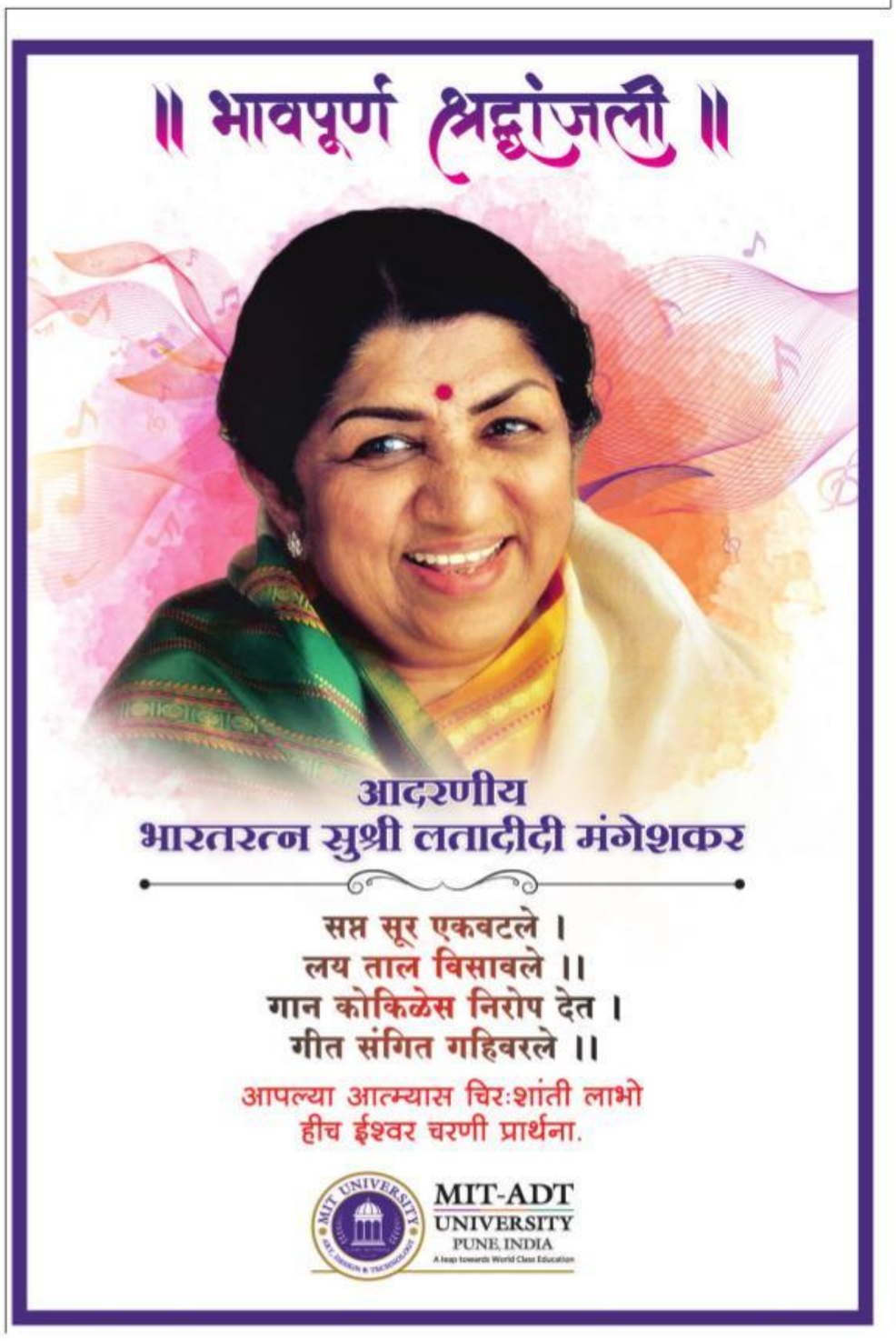
EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

A 26-YEAR-OLD MBA student attempted to commit suicide at his home in Southwest district as he was allegedly being blackmailed by his friends. Police said his friends allegedly took his private photos without his consent and were trying to extort money from him. A case has been registered against them, but no arrests have been made yet.

The incident took place Saturday when the man's family found him lying unconscious in his room. He was rushed to AIIMS, where he is undergoing treatment. In a purported note, he wrote: "Please tell police that I am not a liar... please punish them (accused) after my death."

His family claimed he was being harassed for months and police didn't act on his complaint. His uncle alleged: "They (the accused) conned him and took his photos. They would threaten to upload these and tried to take money. I think he had already paid Rs 2 lakh, but they demanded more. We approached police, but they didn't do anything." The family also accused an SHO of blackmailing and harassing the student.

Police denied the family's claims. DCP (Southwest) Gaurav Sharma said, "We had registered an FIR under sections of extortion on complaint by the student. The SHO didn't ill-treat anyone. We have been told the student consumed some toxic substance. He is stable now..."



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Detailed Instructions for filling up the employment application forms have been given on Page 3, 4 & 5 of the above Advertisement.

REGISTRAR

EXPRESS explained.Live

Russia vs the West on Ukraine: What does it Mean for the World and India?

Dr. C Raja Mohan
Visiting Research Professor, National University of Singapore

In conversation with

Shubhajit Roy
Associate Editor
The Indian Express

As Russia and the West led by the US up the rhetoric, a worried international community is watching the situation with concern. New Delhi is caught in between, as it has strategic stakes on both sides.

What are the risks involved, will it escalate, what are the windows of opportunity for de-escalation and what are its implications for India?

09 FEB 2022 | 6:00 PM | To register, SCAN

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Confirmation SMS will be your registration

Associate Partner YOJNA IAS

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CORONAVIRUS IN THE CAPITAL

VACCINATIONS IN LAST 24 HOURS	OMICRON CASES
81,757	549

PATIENTS IN HOSPITAL:	975
OXYGEN SUPPORT	231
VENTILATOR SUPPORT	95

DELHI: TOTAL CASES 18,43,933

	Total	Vacant
HOSPITAL BEDS	15,416	14,454
ICU BEDS	4,475	4,081

	Cases	Recoveries	Deaths	Tests
Feb 5	1,604	3,324	17	55,824
Feb 6	1,410	2,506	14	57,549
Total	8,869	18,09,081	25,983	3,52,53,679

*Total active cases in Delhi

NOIDA	Feb 5	Feb 6
Cases	232	119
Deaths	1	0

GURGAON		
Cases	682	565
Deaths	1	1

HARDLOOK: ANGANWADI WORKERS' PROTEST

What women want

Discontent among thousands of anganwadi workers in Delhi and Gurgaon has spilled to the streets, with women in both states pressing not just for better pay, but also full-time employment and associated benefits. A ground report

SUKRITA BARUAH & PAVNEET SINGH CHADHA
NEW DELHI, GURGAON, FEBRUARY 6

UNDERNEATH THE sloganeering, chatter, and colours at the protests by anganwadi workers and helpers in Delhi and Gurgaon simmers a deep, silent unhappiness.

The immediate demand is straightforward: anganwadi workers in Delhi, where the protest has been going on near the Chief Minister's residence for a week now, currently receive a monthly honorarium of Rs 9,678 and helpers receive Rs 4,839. Through their protest, they want this increased to Rs 25,000 a month for workers and Rs 20,000 for helpers. In Gurgaon, where their protest outside the Vikas Sadan enters its 61st day on Monday, workers receive Rs 11,811 per month and helpers receive Rs 6,045, which they want increased to Rs 24,000 and Rs 18,000 respectively.

To be sure, financial considerations and a need for security are at the heart of their demands, but deeply tied to this is a sense among these community caregivers that their labour is unrecognised and taken for granted.

■■■

Reena Shera, a 39-year-old anganwadi worker from Delhi, distinctly remembers feeling humiliated while running a creche at a voting centre during the last legislative assembly elections in the city. Across multiple voting centres on election day, creches had been set up to ease the voting experience for parents who had gone to polling booths with young children, and these were operated by anganwadi workers and helpers.

"We were there the entire time that voting took place and we had taken toys from our centre for this. But we were not offered lunch, any refreshments or even water, and there was no reward at the end of it. Sitting there, I really thought, 'What is this work I'm doing?' It felt like the helper and I were non-entities," she said.

Anganwadi services are provided under the Integrated Child Development Scheme and each anganwadi centre — envisaged to cover a population of 1,000 each — is staffed by one worker and helper. Their work is classified as "honorary" and "not equivalent to any employment". So, they are considered volunteers and are entitled to an honorarium.

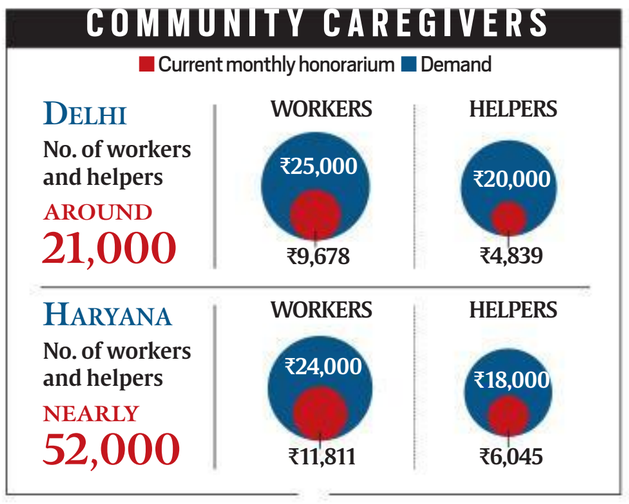
Their regular responsibilities include running the centres, where they are supposed to impart some basic early education, distribute cooked meals and supplementary nutrition to children below the age of six years, and pregnant and lactating women; to maintain records of all mothers and children in their respective areas; to track the growth and weight of children below six years to monitor their nutrition; raise awareness and mobilise the community at the grassroots level for health and immunisation programmes. During the pandemic, in the absence of food distribution at the centres, they distributed dry ration door-to-door every month.

Apart from this, they also get women to fill forms for the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana and are roped in for community surveys for which they are supposed to receive some remuneration. However, workers state that instead of this, they want to be recognised as employees, receive a wage, and be entitled to the accompanying benefits.

"We have to maintain a monthly progress report which includes details of how many men and women there are in our respective areas, how many children, a record of how many people are SC, ST and OBC. We have to maintain manual records of this in registers and also update it on the Poshan Tracker app since its introduction, which means our work is doubled. We are also the ones who have been tracking which people in the community have got Covid vaccination and who have not, and have motivated them to get it. We also helped with door-to-door surveys to see who all have symptoms, who are at high risk," said Neelam Rani (49).

Her core sentiment is echoed by women across protest sites in both states: "The governments keep introducing new programmes which is good, and because we have the best connection and relationships with communities, we get roped into them. We don't have any problem with work, but we also want the dignity, pay and recognition that should come with it."

The protest by anganwadi workers in Delhi has been going on near the Chief Minister's residence for a week now. *Praveen Khanna*



Asha (40), an anganwadi helper, said she feels it even more deeply in her position: "We are just called helpers. People think that we do no work. *Humara pad chhota hai par kaam bahut zyada hai* (our position is small but work is big)."

"If we get the status of workers (*majdoor*), our economic condition would drastically improve as we would be entitled to social security benefits like PF, medical, pension and minimum wages. Currently, we are classified as 'volunteers' as per the government, but our duties are full time. During the pandemic, our work increased manifold... We did not fear for our lives and performed our duty as frontline workers," said Saraswati (51), deputy state president of the Haryana anganwadi workers and helpers union.

According to sources at Delhi's Department of Women and Child Development, Minister Rajendra Pal Gautam has given time to meet with the workers later this month and that options are being looked at.

"The department has been asked to look into their demands and resolve them to the extent possible but there are limitations. The Government of India is the parent authority of the scheme and regularisation can only be done through them. For the other work that they do such as surveys and for Pulse Polio, they receive additional honorarium. Their base honorarium is set by the Union government. All the state can do is increase its share of their payments slightly and this is being considered," said an official.

In September 2018, the Prime Minister had announced that the Centre was increasing the honorarium of workers by Rs 1,500 and helpers by Rs 750. In both states, they say that the arrears of this hike are still pending.

■■■

For many of the women working as workers and helpers, the role presents a possibility to earn a living while completing their work at home as well. Their work hours are normally supposed to be from 9 am to 2 pm.

Meenakshi (46) has a Masters degree in Political Science. "I used to teach at a private school but had to leave because of some family troubles," she said without elaborating on it. "I joined as a worker 16 years ago, when my daughter was young, thinking that I could do this while also looking after her. I thought that with time, I would be able to make some movement and become a supervisor in the department, but this has not happened," she said.

Many of the women are also widows who started working after they lost their husbands.

Pushpa (41) had joined as an anganwadi helper in Delhi when her husband died 10 years ago: "My daughter was 6 and my son was 4, there was no one to look after them. I did not want to go work at, say, a factory, leaving them behind all day and working in an unsafe place with strange men."

Nirmal (43), a worker in Gurgaon, joined after her husband suffered a sudden cardiac arrest in 2014 and died soon after. "I had two young daughters who were studying in school at the time. I desperately needed a source of income to look after them," she said. But she has found that the work barely covers her expenses and said that Rs 3,300 out of her salary goes into paying rent for the centre in the city's Om Nagar.

"The government only gives Rs 1,500 for renting the premises for the centre. It is impossible to rent a room for less than Rs 3,000 in a metropolitan city like Gurgaon. The balance rent is paid by us workers from our paltry salaries. Salaries are sometimes delayed for months. I often have to borrow money to make ends meet," she said.

On December 29, 2021, after holding a meeting with a delegation of union workers, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar had announced Rs 1 lakh for anganwadi workers and Rs 50,000 for helpers who retired from service on December 31.

In a statement, he had said that their monthly honorarium will be increased and the arrears for two years (2019-20 and 2020-21), and an incentive of Rs 1,000 each, will be given to anganwadi workers for working as frontline workers during the pandemic. He had added that anganwadi workers will be covered under the Ayushman Bharat scheme in the future.

A government official in Gurgaon, requesting anonymity, said that they had several meetings with the union workers to discuss their demands and were working to resolve them.

"A resolution has been worked out with at least two unions that are participating in the strike. One union (CITU) continues to protest and we are trying to resolve their demands. Some of the demands have been met. Recently, the monthly honorarium has been hiked by Rs 750 for workers and helpers and a formal letter in writing regarding it has been received. We are also working out issues related to renting of anganwadi centres in Gurgaon. It is difficult to rent out a room for the centre at Rs 1,500 in an urban area, but this has also been hiked recently," said the official.

BRIEFLY

2 more arrests in Shahdara rape case

New Delhi: Police have arrested two more persons, including a 41-year-old auto driver, in connection with the Shahdara rape-assault case. On January 26, a young woman was abducted, allegedly gang-raped by her neighbours, and paraded on the streets. Police said the accused family used the auto to abduct the victim from her husband's place. R Sathiyasundaram, DCP (Shahdara), said, "We identified them on the basis of the videos, CCTV footage, and the woman's statement."

Man kills wife, daughter

Gurgaon: A man allegedly murdered his wife and five-year-old daughter after a fight with his wife in Bhangrola village late on Saturday night. Police said the accused was under the influence of alcohol and hit them with a heavy object before fleeing. **ENS**

MCD term nears end, SDMC's Atal Aahar Yojana yet to take off

ABHINAV RAJPUT
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

THE SOUTH MCD's flagship Atal Aahar Yojana continues to remain on paper despite several claims by civic body leaders that it would be launched soon. The scheme was among the BJP's most touted programmes in its manifesto before the 2017 MCD polls.

Standing committee head of South MCD, BK Oberoi, said there have been bureaucratic delays but the corporation is planning to launch the scheme before the polls slated for April. He said that a tender would be issued soon: "The modalities were being worked out and it has been decided that vendors who would be given permission to run the kitchen would also be allowed to sell other products so that the business model is sustainable."

Under the scheme, breakfast and lunch would have been offered at a subsidised rate of Rs 10 and Rs 15 respectively at around 40 places in the city. It was proposed that vendors could cut losses owing to subsidies through the sale of confectionary or other items.

The scheme was first launched by the SDMC with much fanfare on December 25, 2017, after winning the civic polls. It was meant to provide meals to the poor for Rs 10. Launched at four places then, it was stopped in six months after vendors complained of few takers and location preferences.

The corporation had tried to launch it again by working out the modalities and it took them over three years to form guidelines and get these passed by the standing committee and house.

Hitting out at the BJP, Leader of the Congress in the South MCD Abhishek Dutt said shops which opened in the first leg have closed now: "They make a promise that they don't fulfil for four-and-a-half years; even if they do something in two months, the promises will not be kept."

A senior BJP leader said that the scheme had fizzled out in the first leg because the party had done it with the help of workers pooling in money and it was not an organised set up. He said that the corporation wants to restart the scheme with modifications such as applicants no longer having to get consent from a local councillor to apply for a licence.

Covid deaths in capital see slight dip over last six days

GAYATHRI MANI
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

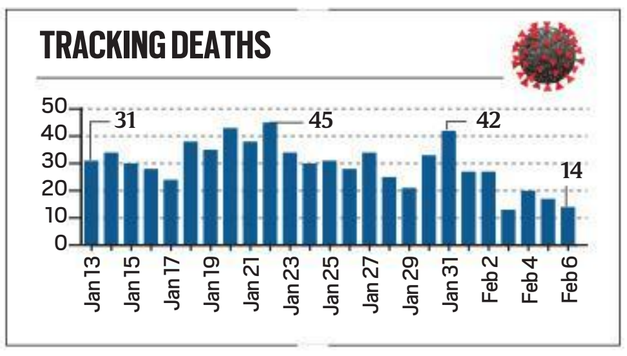
WHILE DELHI has been recording a consistent decline in the number of Covid cases and positivity rate for the past two weeks, the number of deaths has seen a slight dip over the past six days.

According to data from the government, in a period of nine days (January 26 to February 3), the city saw 256 Covid deaths. Of these, 70 were caused by the virus while the rest happened to test positive after being admitted to hospitals for another illness or had co-morbidities.

Between January 13 and February 3, the city saw 691 Covid deaths — 152 from the infection, 530 were incidental or had co-morbid conditions such as kidney, liver and respiratory diseases, diabetes, and cancer. Nine deaths were from other causes (admitted to RTA/ trauma/burn, etc).

Data shows a decline in both primary and incidental Covid deaths after January 31. A total of 119 Covid fatalities were reported in the first six days of this month. In January, 623 deaths were recorded.

"The Covid peak lasted till January 15, after which cases gradually began coming down. Now, we have passed that stage... and the positivity is below 2%. The trend of Covid deaths will continue as it always takes at least 7-15 days for deaths to come down because there are still positive patients with serious infections...," said Dr Jugal Kishore, head of the department of community medicine at Safdarjung Hospital.



He added, "The peak might be gone but the virus is still here, and we have to learn to live with it. Closing markets and schools have not proved to be helpful."

Further, as per data, the omicron variant has taken over delta in January — 79% of samples sent for genome sequencing was of omicron and 14% was delta.

Of 310 samples taken for genome sequencing from patients who had died of Covid in Delhi last month, 98 were analysed and it was found that 92% (90 samples) were detected with the omicron variant. The delta variant was detected in one sample (1%), while the rest had other variants.

On vaccinations, data shows that 109% of the adult population in Delhi has got one dose and 84% are fully vaccinated. Among teenagers aged between 15 and 17 years, 82% have got the first dose and about 39,000 children have got the second dose.

Data also shows that 95% of students at Delhi government schools and 73% at aided schools have got the first dose. However, only 63% children at private schools are vaccinated with one dose.

'Corruption' in civic bodies AAP's main poll plank

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

FIGHTING 'CORRUPTION' in the MCDs, along with sanitation, will be the Aam Aadmi Party's main poll plank in the upcoming MCD polls. To this end, the party Sunday took out a march in several wards demanding action against BJP councillor Manju Khandelwal for giving away land that was earlier used to dump waste to an NGO owned by her husband.

Senior AAP leader and MCD in-charge Durgesh Pathak alleged that the BJP leader is giving land to its members for free using NGOs as a medium. This is completely unethical, he said.

Pathak said the party would go door-to-door to tell people how "councillors have been engaged in corruption leading to work of the civic body being hampered".

Councillor Khandelwal hit back saying a proposal was passed in the house meeting that the dhalao land, which is no longer being used to dump waste, can be given to NGOs for social welfare work.

NDMC to introduce 1,000 e-scooters at 100 locations

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

IN A bid to provide last-mile connectivity and curb pollution, the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) will purchase 1,000 electric scooters under its app-based scooter rental project that has been delayed due to the pandemic. The e-scooters will be introduced in two phases at around 100 locations in the New Delhi area.

In the first phase, 500 e-scooters will be put up at 50 charging stations under a public-private partnership (PPP) model outside Metro stations, bus stops, hospitals, railway stations and other public places from where people can rent them, said NDMC vice-chairman Satish Upadhyay. Tenders have been floated for the first phase, he added.

The e-scooters will have a range of 80 km on a full charge and can ply at a speed of up to 45 km per hour.

DECISION 2022

UTTAR PRADESH • UTTARAKHAND • PUNJAB • GOA • MANIPUR

I HEREBY DECLARE

SANGEET SINGH SOM
BJP, Sardhana

TOTAL ASSETS: ₹9.7 crore
MOVABLE ASSETS: Self: ₹1.9 crore Wife: ₹1.5 crore
IMMOVABLE ASSETS: Self: ₹2.7 crore
Wife: ₹3.5 crore
LOANS FROM BANKS OR OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS: ₹72 lakh (self) ₹85 lakh (wife)
CRIMINAL CASE: 7
SOURCES OF EARNING: Business and agriculture
EDUCATION: Intermediate (1997)

SAHENDER SINGH RAMALA
BJP, Chhaprauli (Baghpat)

TOTAL ASSETS: ₹84 crore
MOVABLE ASSETS: Self: ₹33 crore Wife: ₹28 crore
IMMOVABLE ASSETS: Self: ₹9.8 crore Wife: ₹12.9 crore
LOANS FROM BANKS OR OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS: ₹5.6 crore (self) ₹5.4 crore (wife)
CRIMINAL CASE: Nil
PROFESSION: Businessman
EDUCATION: High School (1980)

HASHTAG POLITICS

• *Ka Ba* 'battle' continues

As UP draw closer, yet another '*ka ba*' song has been released by folk singer Neha Singh Rathore. The official Twitter handle of Samajwadi Party has shared a video clip of the song, which raises issues of mob lynching over beef, unemployment, inflation, among others. Before this, BJP MP Ravi Kishan had released a song titled *UP mein sab ba* (UP has everything), in response to which Rathore came out with *UP mein ka ba* (what does UP have), and the BJP hit back with *UP mein ee ba* (this is what UP has).

• Hera Pheri

After the Congress announced sitting CM Charanjit Singh Channi as its CM face for the Punjab polls, the AAP was quick to attack the choice. A tweet shared by the party's official Twitter handle has faces of Rahul, Channi and Sidhu superimposed on a still from the Hindi movie Hera Pheri, and Channi is shown telling Gandhi he will make them a lot of money in five years.

KEEPING FLOCK TOGETHER

Burnt in Goa, Manipur, Cong gets loyalty pledges from candidates

In Goa, Congress left with only one MLA of 17 who won in 2017; in Manipur, party that was single-largest in the last election with 28 seats now down to 13

MAYURA JANWALKAR & TORA AGARWALA
PANAJI, GUWAHATI, FEB 6

GOA TO Manipur, historical fort to signed affidavit, God to Rahul Gandhi. A beleaguered Congress is leaving nothing to chance to keep hold of its leaders in two states where power had been stolen right from under its nose last time as loyalties changed overnight.

On Friday, Gandhi was present in person in Panaji as 37 candidates of the Congress and three of its ally Goa Forward Party (GFP) swore by the Constitution, to a) not defect if elected till end of their term, b) be honest, and c) not resign or contest election from other parties. This affidavit was handed over to Gandhi, to be delivered to Congress president Sonia Gandhi.

On January 22, 36 Congress candidates had taken a similar oath before God, not once but thrice — at a temple, church and dargah. Party candidates have also signed letters of loyalty, just like the Aam Aadmi Party made its candidates do in Goa, pledging not to defect or to accept bribes.

Parties have a reason to be wary, especially in Goa, where as per the Association of Democratic Reforms, as many as 60% of the MLAs have jumped parties since 2017, from the ones on whose ticket they were elected. The Congress, that with 17 MLAs had emerged as the single largest party, is left with only of those: former chief minister Digambar Kamat.

Courtesy: Twitter/@INCGoa

Candidates hand over affidavits to Rahul Gandhi in Goa.

Kamat, who was among those who took the oath, said he was confident the pledge would work. "Candidates know they are answerable to the people of Goa, and hence no defection will take place."

Earlier, the party's Goa poll strategist P Chidambaram called the step "necessary and very important in the light of the past history of Goa".

Former Goa Advocate General Carlos Ferreira, the Congress candidate from Aldona, insisted taking the pledge was "not at all" uncomfortable, and that one should look at "the larger picture".

Lavoo Mamledar, who has made his way to the Congress from the MGP, via the TMC where he spent two months, welcomed the move. "It is always better to take precautions." Asked if this meant all was well, Mamledar, the Congress candidate from Marcaim, said: "We can't say anything about the future, but as of today, everybody is trustworthy."

Goa Forward Party President Vijai Sardesai, among the three from his party who took the pledge, said: "We had to disabuse the criticism from quarters like the AAP and TMC that the Congress only produces MLAs and supplies them to the BJP. They (the Congress) have tried to create a bond which is social and legal. Social, by taking them to a temple and church, and legal, with an affidavit... This is all that anyone can do."

It was the GFP's support incidentally that helped the BJP overtake the Congress to form the government in 2017. The BJP later dumped it after it got a full majority on its own thanks to defections from the Congress and the MGP in 2019.

In Manipur, Congress candidates visited, by turns, a church, temple, mosque and a traditional Meitei temple, to vow in "the house of God" that "they will not leave the party under any circumstance". Before that, they also dropped in at the historic Kangla Fort, a symbol of Manipuri pride.

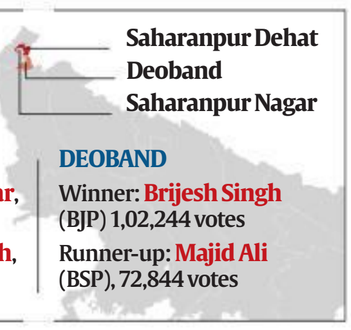
Manipur Congress vice-president Kh Devabrata Singh said "the hope was to instill the same kind of allegiance and loyalty in party members", as exemplied by the fort. Besides, he argued, the visit to shrines "reflected Congress's commitment to secularism".

The Congress had "natural concerns", he added, "having been a victim of defection time and again". The BJP can "go to any lengths".

Manipur Congress election in-charge Bhakta Charan Das and former CM Okram Ibobi Singh were among those who took the pledge.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

2017 RESULTS



SAHARANPUR DEHAT
Winner: Masood Akhtar, (Congress), 87,689 votes
Runner-up: Jagpal Singh, (BSP), 75,365 votes

DEOBAND
Winner: Brijesh Singh (BJP) 1,02,244 votes
Runner-up: Majid Ali (BSP), 72,844 votes

Owaisi, Azad can wait, say those wary of splitting anti-BJP votes

ABHINAV RAJPUT
DEOBAND, SAHARANPUR, FEB 6

A NARROW road lined with eateries and shops, selling wares from perfume to hardware, on both sides lead up to Darul Uloom Deoband, where Muslim students from across the country and the world are enrolled. As a white UP government car rolls into the Islamic seminary, Qasim Usmani says, "They had given notice to Darul Uloom over its library construction, they may have come to inspect it."

A student of Delhi's Jamia Milia Islamia, Usmani's father is a teacher in the Darul Uloom. "They want to crush us, sometimes they say our library is illegal, sometimes they want to change the name of the place. But we would not give in to this kind of hate politics," he says.

The local sitting BJP MLA Brijesh Singh has said that Deoband, a town in west UP's Saharanpur district, will be renamed "Dev Vrind" once the BJP returns to power.

Ahead of the coming Assembly polls, a local businessman Mohammad Yusuf said, "The Samajwadi Party (SP) looks like the challenger to the BJP…We do not want a repeat of the 2017 Assembly polls when the BJP won due to splitting of Muslim votes."

Muslims constitute a majority of voters in the Deoband constituency, numbering about 90,000. Rajputs are the second largest group with 57000 voters, followed by Gurjars, Brahmins and Dalits. It is in view of these social equations that the SP has fielded a Rajput candidate and the BSP a Gurjar here.

While the BJP has again fielded Brijesh, the SP has given ticket to Kartikey Rana with the BSP and the Congress nominating Chaudhary Rajendra Singh and Rahat Khalil, respectively. The Asaduddin Owaisi-led AIMIM has fielded Umair Masoodi, who belongs to Deoband's prominent Masoodi family.

There seems to be a sense of disappointment in a section of Deoband's Muslim community that the SP and the BSP did not field Muslim candidates, but they also do not want AIMIM and Congress to split the Muslim votes and cause the BJP's victory.

However, Umair Masoodi said, "This is a false narrative created against us (AIMIM). We didn't fight in 2014 or 2017 but these parties couldn't stop the BJP."

SEAT WATCH

Saharanpur Dehat

In Badheri Ghoghu village chowk, a Dalit vegetable vendor Jagpal Singh candidly asserts that "Everyone here supports Mayawati." Pointing to the poster of Chandrashekhar Azad-founded Azad Samaj Party's candidate Kurban Ahmed with his poll symbol "tea kettle", pasted nearby, Jagpal said, "Their tea will take some time to heat up."

Most of 6,000 inhabitants of Badheri Ghoghu village, which falls in Saharanpur Dehat seat, are Dalits. This seat is Azad's home turf. The SP has now fielded Ashu Malik, while the Congress has given ticket to Puran Pandey. The BJP has fielded Jagpal Singh, while the BSP has nominated Dalit candidate Ajab Singh.

Saharanpur Nagar

Barely anything looks unusual in Saharanpur town's Gurudwara Road area, which had witnessed deadly scenes on July 25, 2014, when riots had broken out between the Muslim and the Sikh communities. Three people were killed in those clashes.

After nearly eight years, the locals' memory of the riots has faded now, but its scars are yet to heal fully. Sonu Khalsa, an auto spare parts shop owner, said, "People who perpetrated it joined the SP camp. They should not open old wounds," he said.

Saharanpur Nagar has a sizeable population of both Muslims and Punjabis. The SP has fielded its sitting MLA Sanjay Garg, a Bania leader, with the BJP and the BSP giving tickets to Punjabi leaders, Rajeev Gumbar and Manish Arora, respectively.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

Keep fake samajwadis out of power: PM at virtual rally

LALMANI VERMA
LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 6

WITH JUST four days to go for the first phase of voting in Uttar Pradesh, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Sunday attacked the Samajwadi Party and its allies, urging people to keep "fake socialists" away from power.

Modi talked up the BJP government's record in development and welfare initiatives and accused the previous administrations of creating fear among the people, making false promises to farmers and delaying payments to growers of sugarcane.

Modi was virtually addressing voters from the 21 Assembly seats of Mathura, Agra and Bulandshahr districts. These seats go to the polls in the first phase on February 10.

"In five years, the Yogi Adityanath government has made payments of Rs 1.5 lakh crore to farmers. This is far greater than the payments made during 10 years of previous governments (SP and BSP)," said Modi.

Highlighting welfare and development schemes in Uttar Pradesh in the past five years, the PM said: "*UP chahe asardar sarkar, fir ek baar Yogi sarkar* (UP wants an effective government, Yogi Adityanath government once again)."

PM Modi addresses voters in Uttar Pradesh on Sunday. *ANI*

"The people of Uttar Pradesh won't support the politics of money, muscle, caste, communalism and nepotism. They have decided that the biggest issue in the current elections is the UP's development — rapid development," the PM said.

He added that Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has proven in the past five years that only BJP and its double engine government can develop UP, calling on people to "keep nakli samajwadis out of power".

Attacking Opposition leaders who toured Mathura in recent months, Modi said: "Those showing devotion for Lord Krishna ahead of elections had forgotten areas like Vrindavan, Barsana, Goverdhan, Baldev and Nandgaon when they were in power. After seeing the public support for the BJP, they have started dreaming of Lord Krishna."

The Prime Minister said those who ruled the state earlier had no concern for faith, necessities and development. "They had a single agenda—UP ko looto, (loot the state)" PM said. "*Isliye aaj woh Yogi ji ko, BJP sarkar ko paani pi- pi kar kos rahe hain* (They are cursing Yogi and the BJP government)".

He also targeted previous governments over law and order, saying criminals would loot people on highways without fear. "What happened to women and daughters on the highway, the people of Bulandshahr know very well. Illegal grabbing on shops and houses was very common that time," he said. "Girls in UP used to be scared. But under the BJP government, criminals are trembling with fear."

Karhal polls far away, first phase will deal BJP a blow: Akhilesh

ASAD REHMAN
LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 6

SAMAJWADI PARTY chief Akhilesh Yadav attacked the ruling BJP on Sunday, asserting the coming elections will be a rude shock to the government "which kept its eyes and ears shut so far".

"I feel the kind of atmosphere and the wind that is blowing. In the first phase (itself), the government's ears and eyes will be left wide open... the government which had kept its ears and eyes shut so far," Akhilesh told party workers at Karhal in Mainpuri district, his first public address since filing his nomination for the seat.

Karhal, an SP stronghold, goes to polls in the third phase of the elections. Akhilesh, who is making his electoral debut, faces BJP leader and Union Minster of State, Satya Pal Singh Baghel.

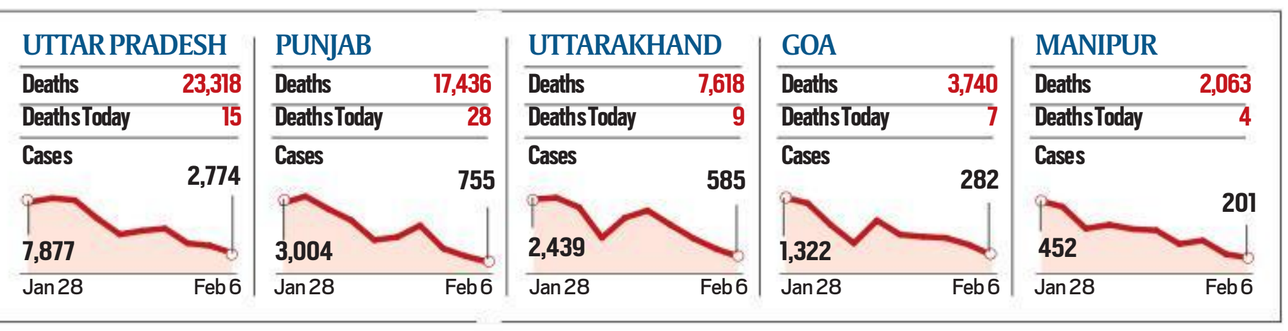
SP chief in Agra, Sunday. *ANI*

Continuing his attack, Akhilesh alleged the state government had ruined the state's farming sector and had failed on its promise of doubling farmers' income. "They also stole fertiliser. Sometimes, I think where the BJP people learnt to steal," he said, adding the BJP's "transformer" will explode due to the anger of the people of Uttar Pradesh.

Accusing the BJP government of neglecting the region, Akhilesh said when the SP was in power the government had worked without any bias. Talking about the Agra-Lucknow Expressway, he said, "We built it in record time, but did not put our name anywhere. You can check, Netaji's or my name is nowhere. But as soon as our government left, BJP people put their names where people urinate."

As he thanked the sitting SP MLA from Karhal, Sobaran Singh Yadav, for vacating the seat for him, Akhilesh said the coming election was "not just for me, but for the future of UP and to save democracy". "The connection of Netaji (Mulayam Singh Yadav) has been for ages, since he did wrestling here," he said.

TRACKING COVID IN ELECTION-BOUND STATES



SAME PITCH

Moosewala and Sidhana: Split by parties, linked by anti-Kejriwal cause

MANRAJ GREWAL SHARMA
CHANDIGARH, FEBRUARY 6

THE ISSUE of air, water and soil pollution has found two unlikely champions in Punjab's electoral battlefield. One is an internationally popular Punjabi singer known for his gangsta rap and a history of run-ins with Punjab Police. The other is an ex-gangster-turned-social activist facing about 40 cases, the latest being over the Red Fort violence during farmers' protest on Republic Day last year.

While singer Sidhu Moosewala is the Congress candidate from Mansa, activist Lakha Sidhana is the fledgling Samyukta Samaj Morcha (SSM)'s nominee from the neighbouring Maur constituency for the 20 February state Assembly elections. They have often been at loggerheads with each other. But, in their poll campaign, they seem to be united by their advocacy for the cause of environment and their pitch against AAP supremo and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal.

As he goes canvassing from village to village in Mansa, Moosewala has one key message: "We need to clean up air we breathe, water we drink, food we eat, and our political system." On why he joined politics, he told a gathering at Khiwa Khurd village, "When I was 23 I chose a profession (music) to transform the life of my parents. At 27, I have fame and money to give my parents, but can't buy air… rich or poor, we breathe the same air."

Barely half-an-hour drive away, Sidhana tells people the human civilisation will perish if we continue to harm the environment. "Our underground water is drying up, there are so many toxins in our environment that are known to be linked to cancer. We need to act fast," he says.

As the clamour for change grows louder in the Malwa region and the AAP posters get more visible across villages, especially in Mansa, the two are equally scathing in their criticism of Kejriwal and his "Delhi model".

"Have you heard of the girl who was raped and paraded recently (in Delhi)…Is that the Delhi model? The 'mahaul' in Punjab is a lot better, we respect women…we don't have communal riots like Delhi," Moosewala tells a gathering.

Both banking on the growing clamour for change in Malwa.

Sidhana's attack is more pointed as he lists Kejriwal's backing for the SYL canal as well as the abrogation of Article 370 besides his government's alleged "implementation" of the now-repealed farm laws. "We need a model tailor-made for our state, not the Delhi model," he thunders.

Both assure their audiences that they will stand by them. "I am not running away anywhere, I intend to live here. And if you give me your vote, I will have your back," Moosewala tells them. Sidhana makes the same promise to a group of traders at Maur Mandi, saying "You can call me at midnight and I will come."

Both showcase their "probity". Moosewala tells a gathering he may not be able to change the system, but he will never take a penny. "People tell me I have to to loosen my purse strings to win, I tell them I helped my mother Charan Kaur win the Sarpanch election by just distributing peanuts."

With their opponents — Moosewala faces Dr Vijay Singla (AAP) and Prem Arora (SAD), while Sidhana is pitted against veteran leader Jagmeet Brar (SAD), Manoj Bala (Cong) and Sukhbir S Myserkhana (AAP) — targeting their controversial past, the two have firmed up their defences.

At every meeting, Sidhana says "I have a past and I have never hidden it".

On his part, Moosewala, when asked by reporters about his cases — he had been booked for allegedly promoting violence and gun culture in his songs besides using an AK 47 at a police range — says he was "misguided". "At times the very people (police) who asked me to do something, booked me for it later…Punjab Police first commissioned a song amid corona and then booked me for it," he claimed.

Despite their huge popularity on social media, the two face a stiff challenge at the hustings. While Moosewla's songs have ranked high on global music charts, in Mansa, as he speaks inside a community centre, some people tell you that their votes are going to "Jharoo" (AAP's poll symbol). He hushes up young fans playing his songs and admits, "These polls have been a revelation. I really don't know what people want. I am just sticking to what I think is right for them."

Sidhana also faces an uphill task. A local journalist Sukh Jagraon says Sidhana's winning margin may be slim. "Sidhana is very strong on his seat but we can't discount the other parties. Also, lack of a party symbol could pose a problem for him," he says.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

OPPOSITION PROTESTS ACTION AGAINST MEDIA ONE

Go to Shah, I&B Minister told Kerala MPs

MPs say they met Anurag Thakur, submitted memorandum to his office and to Home Ministry

KRISHN KAUSHIK
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

TEN LOK Sabha MPs from Kerala met Union I&B Minister Anurag Thakur a day after the ministry revoked the broadcasting licence for Media One, a Malayalam channel promoted by prominent Jamaat-e-Islami members.

Thakur advised the MPs to approach the Union Home Minister, since it was his ministry that had denied security clearance to the channel. The MPs included Kodikunnil Suresh and K Sudhakaran from Congress, and N K Premachandran of the Revolutionary Socialist Party.

MPs cutting across party lines — Supriya Sule of the NCP, Mahua Moitra of Trinamool Congress, ET Mohammed Bashir of IUML, and Digvijaya Singh of Congress — have extended their support to Media One.

Kunwar Danish Ali of BSP tweeted that the government "should not bring back the Emergency with new forms of attack on media freedom". On Sunday, DMK's Kanimozhi tweeted, "The voices of the people, media, and civil society are to be heard in a democracy. Silencing dissent, debate and dialogue is very unhealthy for a democracy."

Thakur did not respond to the criticism.

The MPs from Kerala submitted memorandums to Thakur and to the office of Home Minister Amit Shah against the "shocking and unfortunate incident of revocation of Uplinking and Downlinking licence to MediaOne News". The "government has not been forthcoming as to what those concerns are" because of which security clearance was denied, the MPs said.

Basheer, Hibi Eden, Abdussamad Samadani, N Prathapan, Adoor Prakash, Dean Kuriakose, and Rajmohan Unnithan were also part of the delegation.

Suresh, who led the delegation, told *The Indian Express* "seven to eight" Lok Sabha MPs had met Thakur on the issue after Budget presentation on February 1.

Anurag Thakur

"First we met him inside the House. After that outside, in the lobby, we had a detailed discussion with him. He told us that action was not taken by the I&B Ministry. We (I&B) are not responsible for the cancellation of the licence of the Media One channel. At the same time, he said, Ministry of Home Affairs asked I&B not to renew the channel's licence because of security reasons."

The MHA, Suresh said, has "not clearly indicated the reason; they have only said due to security reasons." "(Thakur) told us, I am not able to do anything, because it is not an I&B decision, it was taken by MHA, so you have to meet the Home Minister, and they will take a decision. If they ask us to withdraw the cancellation, then immediately we will withdraw. I&B Ministry has no problem," Suresh said.

He said the delegation had tried to meet the Home Minister in his chamber in Parliament House, but were informed that he was busy. They had handed over the memorandum to the minister's staff, but "so far the Home Minister's Office has not informed us about an appointment to discuss the matter," Suresh said.

Premchandran of the RSP said Thakur had told them "he is helpless", and "we (I&B) have nothing to do with this, only the Home Ministry can do."

There was "no justification" for the ban, Premachandran said. "The Home Ministry has to either seek an explanation from them, or they have to give a charge — that you have not complied with this, or the content is anti-national. But such a notice has never been issued."

Thakur did not respond to requests seeking comments about his meeting with the Kerala MPs.

In their memorandum to Thakur, the delegation said: "As per our understanding, the channel was in the process of renewing the licence with the Ministry and all required documentations were done properly and on time... This is a unilateral move from the Ministry to silence a media house which is on air since 2013. The basic principle of natural justice to hear the accused before punishment is blatantly denied here."

Earlier, on January 31, when the order was issued, John Brittas of CPM, who heads Kairali TV, and Hibi Eden of Congress had also written to Thakur expressing concern.

On Sunday, Congress leader in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury wrote to Thakur saying "curbing the freedom of press in the garb of vague charges like security reasons would degenerate our State into a totalitarian regime", and asked him to immediately lift the licence ban.

EYEING CIVIC POLLS

Hindutva fringe outfit seeks to make inroads into TN politics

ARUN JANARDHANAN
CHENNAI, FEBRUARY 6

HINDU MUNNANI, a Hindutva fringe organisation known for raking up various communal issues in Tamil Nadu for about a decade, has now issued a statement, calling for unity among Hindu voters and asking them to collectively decide to support candidates, irrespective of political parties, in the February 19 state urban local body polls, who would uphold "Indian values and culture".

A resolution was adopted in this regard by the Hindu Munnani executive committee during its meeting at Trichy on February 5.

Hindu Munnani would not define Indian culture and tradition that it demands poll candidates to uphold, but it has clearly sought to make it a key aspect of its agenda to mobilise supporters of Hindu identity politics in a bid to make inroads into the state politics.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Hindu Munnani president Kadeswara Subramaniam claimed his outfit was not part of electoral politics. "But look at a *jamaat* (Muslim congregations), it has a larger say in the decisions of the Muslim community in polls. Christians may have divisions within, but they often take a collective decision to support someone when it comes to elections. They discuss and take a decision. Hindu Munnani is not a political party, but we also aim to have such a collective and united Hindu front when we, as a community, face troubles. That is the main purpose of this move," he said.

Subramaniam made it clear that one of their main issues is the demand for an anti-conversion legislation in Tamil Nadu. "We have been demanding it for so many years. So the political parties who support this cause also gets our support," he said.

Hindu Munnani has all along backed the BJP in various polls. It has however claimed now that a candidate need not be a Hindutva supporter or from the BJP to get its backing. "Take the case of late DMK leader K Anbazhagan. He used to be a leader who would come and attend our functions on Vinayaka Chaturti and other such events. Even within the DMK, there are leaders with Hindu sentiments, even though they wouldn't be showing it in public. We support anyone who shares Hindu sentiments," Subramaniam said.

In view of the Hindutva fringe group's track record mired in controversies arising from its bids to take up communal issues, from beef ban to cow protection, and indulge in self-styled vigilantism on various local matters, senior leaders of the ruling DMK and the principal Opposition AIADMK refused to comment on Subramaniam's statements. "Why should I comment on a group which exists only on its letterhead. I don't even want to comment on them," said a former AIADMK minister.

The Tamil Nadu Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department Minister, P K Sekar Babu, on being asked about Hindu Munnani's latest move, said such a political plan will not work in Tamil Nadu.

"Let it be a church or a *jamaat* or a temple, there may be someone from there who would suggest to people to vote for a party. But people will be voting for a better leader. Why? Because we are a secular country, we live together," said Babu, who never flaunts an atheist identity in his public life despite being a DMK leader.

The Dalit party VCK's MP D Ravikumar said, "In 2017, the Supreme Court Constitution Bench had issued an order categorically stating that the government in India is secular and that the election is a secular process."

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Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s), Guarantor(s) and Mortgager(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of **Punjab National Bank,** Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" on the date as mentioned in the table herein below, for recovery of its dues due to the **Punjab National Bank,** Secured Creditor from the respective borrower(s), guarantor(s) and Mortgager(s). The Reserve Price and the Earnest Money Deposit will be as mentioned in the table below against the respective properties.

SCHEDULE OF THE SECURED ASSETS

Lot. No.	Name of the Branch / Name of the Account / Name & Addresses of the Borrower/ Guarantors Accounts	A) Dt. of Demand Notice u/s 13(2) of SARFAESI ACT 2002 B) Outstanding Amount as on C) Possession Date u/s 13(4) of SARFAESI Act 2002 D) Nature of Possession Symbolic/Physical/ Consructive	Description of the Immovable Properties Mortgaged/Owner's Name (Mortgagers of property(ies))	A) Reserve Price (Rs. in Lacs) B) EMD (Last date of submitting KYC for depositing EMD) C) Bid Increase Amount	Date/ Time of E-Auction	Details of the encumbrances known to the secured creditors
1.	**Branch:** Patliputra Colony OBC, Patna (2160) **A/c No.:** 21604011000078, 21607011000123 **Borrower:** Apollo Paints Industry, Prop.-Sri Binod Kumar S/o Late Mundrika Prasad	A) 01.03.2021 B) Rs.5508523.44 plus upto date interest & other charges C) 21.12.2021 D) Symbolic	1. EM of Land & Building situated at Mouza-Lakhna (Abgila), Survey Thana-Masaurhi, Hal Thana-Gaurichak, Sub Registry-Masaurhi, Sadar Registry and Distt-Patna, Tauzi No.15/38, Thana No.65, Khata No.50, Khesra Survey Plot No.1386(P), Area-7 Kattha (21.875 Decimal) covered by Sale Deed No.22701 dated 03.09.2013 pertaining to Sri Binod Kumar S/o Late Mundrika Prasad, Bounded by:- North-Hal Kharidar Anil Singh, South-Niz Bikreta, East-Smt. Ranju Devi, West-Plot No.1385. 2. EM of Land & Building situated at Mouza-Ahiyapur Lakhna, Tola-Abgila, Thana-Punpun, Hal Thana-Gaurichak, Sub Registry-Masaurhi, Sadar Registry and Distt-Patna, Tauzi No.15/38, Thana No.65, Khata No.50, Plot No.1386(P), Area-2 Kattha 7 Dhur (7.34375 Decimal) covered by Sale Deed No.4878 dated 01.06.2015 pertaining to Sri Binod Kumar S/o Late Mundrika Prasad, Bounded by:- North-Part of Plot No.1386, Smt. Manju Devi, South-Sri Binod Kumar, East-Smt. Manju Devi, West-Pain and Aahar.	A) 97,50,000/- B) 9,75,000/- (21.02.2022) C) 1,00,000/-	25.02.2022 From 11:00 am to 12:00 noon	Nil
2.	**Branch:** Langartoli, Patna (47420) **A/c No.:** 0474250010159, 0474300015552 **Borrower:** Sri Santosh Kumar, S/o Lok Nath Rai Smt. Sita Devi, W/o Lok Nath Rai	A) 29.06.2021 B) Rs. 7,85,059.97 with upto date interest C) 16.09.2021 D) Symbolic	EM of land and building situated at Mouza-Paharpur, Thana-Phulwari, Sadar registry and Distt-Patna, Thana No.14, Survey Plot No.319, Khata No.124, Area-1 Kattha, Name of owner: Smt. Sita Devi, W/o Lok Nath Rai, Boundaries as per deed:- North-Niz Mokir, South-Ajit Kumar Srivastav & Ram Niwash Pandey, East-Police Colony, West-Parmeshwar Singh and others then Rasta.	A) 39,38,000/- B) 3,93,800/- (21.02.2022) C) 50,000/-	25.02.2022 From 12:00 noon to 1.00 pm	Nil
3.	**Branch:** East Gandhi Maidan, Patna (3041) **A/c No.:** 3041008700008766 **Borrower:** M/s Maa Iron & Cement Prop.: 1. Amitabh Kumar, S/o Late Ramadhar Sharma	A) 21.10.2016 B) ₹8084889.00 with upto date interest C) 31.05.2017 D) Symbolic	The property is a vacant land, situated Mouza-Nauru, Hall Thana-Paras Bigha, Khata No.5/89, Khesra No.2774/1637(P), Dist-Jehanabad, Title Deed No.1172, dated 17.03.2009, Khata No.5/89, Thana No.350, Sub & Sadar Registry & Distt.-Jehanabad, Area-3.125 decimal. Bounded By: North-Sri Satish Kumar, South-Sri Akhilesh Singh, East-Patna-Gaya Main Road (N.H.-83), West-Doman Yadav	A) 5,00,000/- B) 50,000/- (21.02.2022) C) 10,000/-	25.02.2022 From 1:00 pm to 2.00 pm	Nil
	2. Smt. Krishna Mani Devi W/o Late Ramadhar Sharma	The property is a vacant land, situated in developing residential area of Mohalla-Adarsh Nagar and located in east side of branch road (Jehanabad-Pandui Road) and at about 300m away towards south from Rly Bridge & Patna Gaya main Road (NH-83) Near Jehanabad Civil Court, Erki, Ward No.-27, Jehanabad. Land bearing Regd. Mort. Deed No.-1174 dated 21.02.2014, Plot No.-62, Khata No.-251, Thana No.346, Mouza-Erki, PS-Anchal Nagar Parisad, Sub & Sadar Registry & Distt.-Jehanabad, Area-11 Decimal. Bounded By: North-Sri Jitu Yadav, South-Sri Lakhan Yadav, East-Sri Jhunni Yadav, West-Branch Road (Jehanabad-Pandui Road).	A) 46,00,000/- B) 4,60,000/- (21.02.2022) C) 50,000/-	25.02.2022 From 3:00 pm to 4.00 pm	Nil
	3. Amitabh Kumar, S/o Late Ramadhar Sharma	The property is a vacant land, situated at Mauza-Babhana, Thana-Jehanabad, Thana No.379, Ward No.1, Khata No.186, Plot No.232, P.S Anchal, Nagar Parishad, Sub & Sadar Registry & Distt-Jehanabad, Area-3.90625 decimal, Vide Deed No.2619 dated 30.03.2012. Boundary: North-Nij, South-Nij, East-Samir Kumar, West-Ramashish Singh & Awadh Singh.	A) 8,00,000/- B) 80,000/- (21.02.2022) C) 10,000/-	25.02.2022 From 4:00 pm to 5.00 pm	Nil
4.	**Branch:** SK Puri UBI (59920), Patna **A/c No.:** 0599210031903 **Borrower:** M/s Aayesha Electriclas. Prop.: Madhumita Mazumdar	A) 24.08.2021 B) ₹27,76,782.00 with upto date interest C) 16.11.2021 D) Symbolic	EM of Residential Flat vide Deed No.2494 Dtd. 26.02.2009 situated at Flat No.302 on the 3rd Floor of the Residential Building known as "PAWAN-PRADEEP ENCLAVE" at West Boring Canal Road known as 'Khetan Lane' Mauza-Dhakanpur, P.S-Sri Krishnapuri, Survey Thana-Phulwari, Paragna-Azimabad, Town and District-Patna within the limit of Patna Municipal Corporation, bearing Tauzi No.228, Khata No.530,531 and 517, Plot No.57 and 58 and part of Plot No.64, Ward No.15, Thana No.3, Total Area 1334 Sq.Feet along with undivided proportionate share in the Land and Common Assets and Common area in the name of Smt. Madhumita Mazumdar. Boundary of Flat No.302: North-Flat No.301, South-Open Space, East-Open Space, West-Open Space.	A) ₹49,30,000/- B) ₹4,93,000/- (21.02.2022) C) ₹50,000/-	25.02.2022 From 11:00 am to 12:00 noon	Nil
5.	**Branch:** SME, Patna (3891) **A/c No.:** 3891008700001560 389100ND00005952 389100IB00006244 389100IB00006688 **Borrower:** M/s Om Aastha Indo Energy Private Ltd. **Mortgager:** Sri Bishambhar Singh, Smt. Sudha Pratap, Sri Shailendra Pratap	A) 17.05.2018 B) ₹86334000.00 with upto date interest C) 06.09.2018 D) Symbolic	Flat No.502 on 4th floor in Swadha Glory Apartment with car parking, Mauza-Dhanaut, Rupaspur, Zone-03, PS-Rupaspur, PS No.20, Plot No.492, Distt.-Patna, Flat Area 1040 sq.ft. in the name of Smt. Sudha Pratap. Boundary: North-15ft wide road, South-Apartment, East-Apartment, West-12ft wide road.	A) 25,00,000/- B) 2,50,000/- (21.02.2022) C) 50,000/-	25.02.2022 From 12.00 noon to 1.00 pm	Nil
		Vacant Land at Mohalla-Rampur Kharhara, PS-Kahalgaon Thana No.375, Halka No.3, Khata No.92, Plot No.789, Distt-Bhagalpur, Area-50 decimal, Boundary: North-Road, South-Ranju Devi, E-Ramkrishore Singh, W-Sumitra Nandan Singh.	A) 21,66,000/- B) 2,16,600/- (21.02.2022) C) 50,000/-	25.02.2022 From 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm	Nil
6.	**Branch:** Morcha Road (2916), Patna. **A/c No.:** 1775300500045 **Borrower:** Sri Anil Kumar Singh S/o Late Jagdeesh Singh	A) 25.01.2017 B) ₹48,87,910.00 with upto date interest C) 21.09.2021 D) Symbolic	EM of Land and Building situated at Ashok Nagar, Road No.-8A-1, Mouza-Changar, Mahal-Mahammadpur Pakaulo, Pragana-Ajimabad, Survey Thana-Phulwarisharif, Present Thana-Kankarbagh, Thana No.-24, Tauzi No.-167, Khata No.-31, Survey Plot No.-49(P), Distt. Registry Office and Distt-Patna, Area-2 Kattha 2 Dhur 1 Dhurki vide Sale Deed No.-3315 dated 15.04.2015 pertaining to Sri Anil Kumar Singh S/o Late Jagdeesh Singh and Sri Vishwanath Singh S/o Late Laddu Singh. Boundary: North-10 feet wide Sahayak Rasta, South-Smt. Kishwanti Devi, East-5 feet wide Sahayak Rasta Badahu Smt. Girja Devi, West-Smt. Snehlata.	A) ₹59,00,000/- B) ₹5,90,000/- (05.03.2022) C) ₹50,000/-	09.03.2022 From 11.00 am to 12.00 noon	Nil

1. The sale shall be subject to the Terms & Conditions prescribed in the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 and to the following further conditions.
2. The properties are being sold on "as is where is basis" and "as is what is basis" and "Whatever there is baiss".
3. The particulars of Secured Assets specified in the Schedule hereinabove have been stated to the best of the information of the Authorised Officer, but the Authorised Officer shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omission in this proclamation.
4. The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the Website https://www.mstcecommerce.com on date & time as per detail given above.
5. For detailed term and condition of the sale, please refer www.ibapi.in, www.tenders.gov.in, www.mstcecommerce.com, https://eprocure.gov.in/epublish/app

STATUTORY 15/30 DAYS NOTICE UNDER THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002

Date : 07.02.2022
Place : Patna

Authorized Officer
Punjab National Bank

indianexpress.com

Notice Inviting Offer

ONGC

Sale of Gas from Chinnewala Tibba field

ONGC Ltd. invites offers from interested Buyers for purchase of **0.15 MMSCMD** gas from Chinnewala Tibba field of Rajasthan Kutch Onland Exploratory (RKOE) Asset, Jodhpur (Rajasthan).
Interested parties are requested to download Request for Proposal (RFP) and Gas Sales Agreement (GSA) from: **https://eps.buyjunction.in/gasbidding**

Contact: **ongcgasbidding@mjunction.in**
e-Bidding Partner - mjunction services ltd.

ANDHRA PRADESH CENTRAL POWER DISTRIBUTION CORPORATION LIMITED
Dr.Y.S.R VIDYUT SOUDHA, CORPORATE OFFICE, ITI COLLEGE ROAD, VIJAYAWADA-520 008

Paper Notification, Dt: 07-02-2022

The APCPDCL invites applications from the manufacturers of power Transformers (5MVA, 8MVA, 10MVA and 12.5MVA Capacities) and Distribution Transformers (Single Phase 16KVA & 25KVA; Three Phase 16KVA, 25KVA, 63KVA, 100KVA, 160KVA and 315KVA Capacities) for Registration of vendors, so as to facilitate APCPDCL to carryout vendor evaluation through a third party agency regarding manufacturing capacity assessment, quality control measures, following relevant IS, testing facilities and other aspects etc., on or before 22-02-2022.

It is to inform that these vendors will only be considered for further tender participation for a period of two years with an option to extend for one more year. Ph: 0866-2955455 & Email:cgmpmm.cpdcl@apcpdcl.in.

Chief General Manager/ P&MM, APCPDCL, Andhra Pradesh

AIR FORCE STATION
Rajokri, New Delhi- 110038

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tender is invited from individual/firm of sound financial and business background by Air Force Station Rajokri, New Delhi- 110038 for running of Regimental Shops for the period from 01 Apr 2022 to 31 March 2023. Tender forms can be obtained from SI office of Air Force Station Rajokri on 21 Feb 22 to 22 Feb 22 (between 1300hrs to 1400hrs) on cash payment of Rs. 100/- (non refundable) a sum of Rs. 10,000/- (refundable) is to be deposited with SI office as earnest money separately on 02 Mar 22 to 03 Mar 22 (between 1300hrs to 1400hrs). Tender form completed in all respect alongwith the photo copy of earnest money receipt are to be dropped in tender box kept at Main Guard Room Air Force Station Rajokri latest by 1100 hrs on 08 Mar 22. Tenders will be opened at 1105 hrs on 08 Mar 22 in the presence of all vendors applied. The Station Commander Air Force Station, Rajokri reserves all rights to accept/reject any tender or all tenders without assigning any reason.

Name of Regimental Shops

1) PROVISION SHOP-I
2) PROVISION SHOP-II
3) ELECTRONICS SHOP
4) TAILOR SHOP
5) BAKERY SHOP
6) BARBER SHOP
7) ELECTRICAL REPAIR SHOP
8) CYBER CAFE
9) VEGETABLE SHOP
10) DHABA
11) KABADI

Classifieds

PERSONAL

I,Satyabhama Behera,W/O Amulya Nidhi Behera R/O,HNO.3169,Street.No-8 Ground-Floor,Ranjeet-Nagar,New Delhi.State that my Name wrongly-mentioned Satya Bhama Behera in my son (Shubham Kumar Behera)school-record. Correct-name is Satyabhama Behera. 0040601706-10

I,SAGAR KATARIA S/O-DINESH KATARIA,HOUSE.NO.477, BAZIDPUR SABOLI, BAZIDPUR SABOLI(57), SONIPAT,HARYANA-131029,have changed my name to SAGAR. 0040601706-11

I,Gopal Dutt,R/o C-172,Pandav Nagar,Delhi-110092,have changed my minor son's name from RAIN MAULEKHI to RACHIT MAULEKHI,for all purposes. 0040601706-9

I, Gopal Dutt,R/o C-172, Pandav Nagar,Delhi-110092,have changed my minor son's name from RAIN MAULEKHI to RACHIT MAULEKHI, for all purposes. 0040601678-5

I,Puspa D/o-Nepal Singh,R/o-18,Village- Vaina Baina Bena-Khair,Aligarh Uttar-Pradesh-202165,have change my name Puspa to Pushpa Talan,for all Purposes. 0040601706-8

I Tarsem Singh Bhatti S/o Gurdev Singh R/o Plot No. C-57, Navyug Block, Vishnu Garden, New Delhi - 110018 have changed my name to Tarsem Singh. 0040601695-1

I Monica Kumari W/O, Saurabh Rathor R/o 46, Vyas Kunj, Sec 11 Dwarka, New Delhi, 110075 have changed my name to Monica Singh Rathor for all purposes. 0040601657-1

I Manjeet Kaur Bhatti W/o Tarsem Singh R/o Plot No. C-57, Navyug Block, Vishnu Garden, New Delhi-110018 have changed my name to Manjeet Kaur. 0040601668-1

I, Aditya Mohan S/o Shri. Arvind Mohan Johari R/o 25, Babar Road, Ground Floor, New Delhi – 110001 have changed my name from Aditya Ranjan and shall hereafter be known as Aditya Mohan. 0050191586-1

"IMPORTANT"

Whilst care is taken prior to acceptance of advertising copy, it is not possible to verify its contents. The Indian Express (P) Limited cannot be held responsible for such contents, nor for any loss or damage incurred as a result of transactions with companies, associations or individuals advertising in its newspapers or Publications. We therefore recommend that readers make necessary inquiries before sending any monies or entering into any agreements with advertisers or otherwise acting on an advertisement in any manner whatsoever.

इंडियन बैंक Indian Bank
इलाहाबाद ALLAHABAD

APPENDIX-IV { Rule-8(1)} POSSESSION NOTICE [Section 13(4)] (For Immovable Property)

Whereas: The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the Indian Bank, **Oriental College, Patna Branch** under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with rule 8 and 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice dated **20.10.2021** calling upon the borrower **M/S Shitla Cement** (Pro-Shri Sujit Kumar) At-Mehandiganj, Gulzarbagh, Patna City, Patna-800007, Shri Sujit Kumar S/o Late Prahlad Mahato Resident of Mohalla-Mehandiganj, P.S-Mehandiganj, P.O-Jhauganj, Patna City, Patna-800008, Shri Bhubneshwar Prasad S/o Faujdari Shah Resident of Mohalla-Mehandiganj, P.S-Mehandiganj, P.O-Jhauganj, Patna City, Patna-800008 & Smt Malti Devi W/o Late Prahlad Mahato Resident of Mohalla-Mehandiganj, P.S-Mehandiganj, P.O-Jhauganj, Patna City, Patna-800008 (A/C-50141829354) with our **Oriental College, Patna Branch** to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being **Rs. 25,05,276.00 (Rupees Twenty Five Lakhs Five Thousand Two hundred Seventy Six Only)** within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The Borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13 (4) of the said Act, read with Rule 8 and 9 of the said rules on this **2nd day of February 2022.**

We draw attention to the provisions of section 13(8) of the SARFESI Act and the rule under which deals with your rights of redemption over the securities. As per the said provision the right of redemption available to the borrower/Mortgagor is restricted to the date of issuance of sale notice.

The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Indian Bank for an amount of **Rs. 26,005,50.00** (Rupees Twenty Six Lakhs five hundred fifty Only) as on 02-02-2022 and interest thereon.

Description of the Immovable Property

Equitable Mortgage of all part and parcel of property situated at Mouza-Ranipur (North of NH), Mohalla-Mehandi Ganj, Thana-Mehandiganj, Distt-Patna, Thana No-19, Tauzi No-113, hal Tauzi-Bihar sarkar, Khata No-1113, survey Khesra No-1254 part & Khata No-1151 survey Kheshra No-1255 part, area admeasuring435.52 sqft (01 Decimal) in the name of Smt Malti Devi vide Registered sale deed no-2247 dated 05/03/2016 Book No-01, volume No-43, page no-381-392 CD No-07/2016 **Boundary (As per Deed)** :-North- Nij Lekhyakari Shri Kisun Mahato, part of kheshra no-1255, South-sahayak Rasta, East-Mahavir Asthan, Kheshra No-1253, West-Smt Neelam Devi

Date : 02.02.2022
Place - Patna

Sd/-Authorised Officer
Indian Bank

PFC CONSULTING LIMITED

(A Wholly Owned Subsidiary of PFC Limited)
Regd. Office: First Floor, "Urjanidhi", 1, Barakhamba Lane, Connaught Place, New Delhi-110001, Fax: 011-23443990

GLOBAL INVITATION (THROUGH E-BIDDING ONLY)
FOR SELECTION OF TRANSMISSION SERVICE PROVIDER ON BUILD, OWN, OPERATE AND TRANSFER (BOOT) BASIS FOR INTER-STATE TRANSMISSION PROJECTS

PFC Consulting Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of Power Finance Corporation Limited (A Government of India Undertaking), invites proposals for setting up of transmission projects on Build, Own, Operate and Transfer (BOOT) basis following single stage two envelope process of "Request for Proposal" (RFP).

Interested bidders may refer to the RFP notification and RFP documents available on the website **https://www.mstcecommerce.com** and **https://www.pfcclindia.com.**

The Bidders may obtain the RFP documents on all working days between 10:30 hrs (IST) and 16:00 hrs (IST) **from 07.02.2022 to one working day prior to bid submission for the projects mentioned below** on payment of a non-refundable fee of Rs. 5,00,000/- or USD 7,000 plus applicable GST @18% for each project in the form of demand draft in favour of "PFC Consulting Limited" payable at New Delhi, from 9th Floor, Wing – A, Statesman House, Connaught Place, New Delhi - 110001, Tel.: 91-11-23443996; Fax: 91-11-23443990; e-mail: **pfccl.itp@pfcindia.com.** The RFP documents can also be downloaded from **https://www.mstcecommerce.com** and **https://www.pfcclindia.com,** however, in such case, interested party can submit Response to RFP only on submission of non-refundable fee of Rs. 5,00,000/- or USD 7,000 plus applicable GST @18% separately. The survey report and clarifications to RFP documents shall be issued to those bidders, who have obtained/purchased RFP documents by paying requisite fee at least one working day prior to bid submission date. Bidders should regularly visit website to keep themselves updated regarding clarifications/amendments/time extensions etc., if any. The important timelines in this regard are as follows:

S. No.	Name of Transmission Scheme	Last Date for seeking clarifications (dd/mm/yyyy)	Last Date for submission of response to RFP (dd/mm/yyyy)	Date of opening of Response to RFP (dd/mm/yyyy)
1.	Transmission system for evacuation of power from REZ in Rajasthan (20 GW) under phase III –Part A1	28.02.2022	18.04.2022 up to 15:00 hrs (IST)	18.04.2022 up to 15:30 hrs (IST)
2.	Transmission system for evacuation of power from REZ in Rajasthan (20 GW) under Phase-III Part A3	28.02.2022	18.04.2022 up to 16:00 hrs (IST)	18.04.2022 up to 16:30 hrs (IST)

Note: PFC Consulting Limited reserves the right to cancel or modify the process without assigning any reason and without any liability. This is not an offer.

Bid Process Coordinator: PFC CONSULTING LTD. (A wholly owned subsidiary of PFC Ltd.) (A Govt. of India Undertaking)
An Initiative of: Ministry of Power, Government of India
Initiative Partner: Central Electricity Authority

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, Elan Ltd. is in the process of undertaking development of a Commercial Colony, in Sector-50, Gurugram Manesar Urban Complex, Gurugram, Haryana over an area measuring 3.35 acres (1.3557 Hectare) in accordance with the provision of License No. 32 of 2020 dated 31.10.2020 and License No. 29 of 2021 dated 18.06.2021, granted by Director, Town & Country Planning, Haryana, Chandigarh ('DTCP').

And whereas, Building Plans earlier approved vide DTCP Memo No. ZP-1452/AD(RA)/2021/3372 dated 10.02.2021 over an area measuring 2.0 Acres, (Approved Building Plans) for this Commercial Colony are now proposed to be revised for which In-principle approval has been granted by DTCP, vide Memo No. ZP-1452/AD(RA)/2022/2504 dated 31.01.2022 .over an area measuring 3.35 Acres ('Revised Building Plans').

The approved building plans of 2.0 Acres and revised Building Plans of 3.35 Acres are available for perusal/reference of the existing allottees on:- a) our website www.elanparadise.com ; b) in the office of the undersigned and c) in the office of Senior Town Planner, Gurugram, Town & Country Planning, Haryana, HSVP Complex, Sector-14, Gurugram, Haryana.

Objections, if any, on the revised building plans may be filed in the office of the Senior Town Planner, Town & Country Planning Department, HSVP Complex, Sector-14, Gurugram and in the office of the undersigned within thirty (30) days of publication of this Public Notice.

Place: Gurugram
Date: 07.02.2022

Elan Limited
3rd Floor, Tower–A, Golf View Corporate Towers, Golf Course Road, Sector -42, Gurugram

DELHI CONFIDENTIAL

HOUSE STATEMENT

UNION HOME Minister Amit Shah will make a statement in Parliament on Monday on the attack on AIMIM MP Asaduddin Owaisi and the action taken by police. The occasion is expected to have some fireworks as Owaisi has already said that he is not satisfied with the police action and wants terror charges pressed against the arrested accused. In a snub to the government, the Hyderabad MP has rejected the Z category security accorded to him by the Ministry of Home Affairs after the attack. Owaisi's car was fired at by two assailants while he was returning to Delhi from Meerut after campaigning for the Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh on Thursday.

GOOD TERMS

CONGRESS LEADERS Ghulam Nabi Azad and Manish Tewari may have been kept out of the party's campaign list. But another leader, who is the part of the group of leaders advocating for change in the leadership's style of functioning, appears to be in coaxed by his state unit leaders. Shashi Tharoor, who is said to be being wooed by another political party, had two important visitors last week at his office in the national capital. Both Kerala state unit president K Sudhakaran and the party's legislative leader V D Satheesan made sure they spent quality time with Tharoor in discussions during their visit to Delhi. With Sudharakaran, Tharoor said, "We laughed about the media's habit of distorting our remarks. Our focus is on strengthening the party for the fight ahead." For Satheesan, he said, "We see eye to eye on most things. Onward & forward!"

THE DILEMMA

THE Ministry of Education and the National Testing Agency are currently consulting vice-chancellors of central universities to decide the pattern of the common university entrance test (CUET) that will be rolled out this year. The government, it is learned, is worried that the new common entrance test may just end up working in the coaching industry's favour. The last few meetings with the V-Cs have been centred on this dilemma. Apparently, the government is seriously considering dropping the proposed aptitude test component of CUET. With just subject-focused questions – based on the programme the students want admission – and a respectable weightage to the Class 12 board results, the government thinks that candidates may not feel the pressure to take coaching for the exam.

NADDA CAMPAIGNS IN DEHRADUN

BJP national president J P Nadda campaigns door-to-door for his party's candidate Sahdev Pundir, in Dehradun on Sunday. *PTI*

EC: Ban on roadshows to remain, but curbs on rallies relaxed in poll-bound states

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

THE ELECTION Commission on Sunday said the ban on roadshows and vehicle rallies in election-bound states will continue to remain in effect, but added that restrictions on indoor and outdoor public meetings will be further relaxed.

"Restrictions regarding outdoor meeting/indoor meetings/rallies will be further relaxed subject to condition that the number of persons attending the indoor/outdoor meetings/rallies will be limited to maximum of 50 per cent of the capacity of indoor halls and 30 per cent of the open ground capacity or as fixed by DEO (District Election Officer) as per requirement of social distancing norms and whichever is less," the EC said in a statement.

On January 31, the EC had extended the ban on physical rallies and roadshows until February 11.

On Saturday, the commission held a meeting with the Union Health Ministry to assess the Covid-19 situation. According to the EC, the Union health secretary said Covid-19 cases are fast receding in the country and election-bound states account for "a very small proportion of the total reported cases in the country".

The EC said that in the poll-bound states of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Manipur and Goa, the total number of Covid-19 cases have reduced from around 32,000 at the peak of the surge in January 22 to around 7,000 by February 5.

The commission added that vaccination coverage in these states, even among the 17-18 age group, was "very satisfactory".

"Chief secretaries of poll going states have written to the Commission and have apprised that there has been significant improvement in the prevailing Covid situation, a considerable decrease in the number of positive cases of Covid and also decrease in cases of hospitalisation. Most of them have recommended to the Commission to consider for relaxation and allow increased number of persons in the indoor/outdoor campaign meetings," the EC said.

The commission had appointed 15 former bureaucrats as Special Observers for the poll-bound states.

"Many Special Observers have sent their reports and have stated that the Covid situation has improved substantially and positivity rate has come down significantly," the EC said.

EC reschedules biennial polls for UP council local authorities' seats

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

THE ELECTION Commission on Sunday announced that the biennial elections to 36 legislative council seats spread across 35 local authorities' constituencies in Uttar Pradesh will be rescheduled and will now be held after the assembly polls. The polls will now be conducted on April 9.

"The said elections were to be conducted in two phases with scheduled poll dates of March 3 for 29 constituencies and March 7 for six constituencies, keeping in view the schedule of the ongoing general elections to legislative assembly," the EC said.

The EC received requests from parties seeking to reschedule the UP MLC elections and hold them after completion of the assembly polls. "The parties have, inter-alia, mentioned about difficulties in simultaneously carrying out their election management matters in the two elections," EC said.

DELIMITATION PANEL SECOND DRAFT

10 J&K Assembly seats with less than one lakh people each

Three in Kashmir: Gurez in Bandipore district, Karnah in Kupwara, and the newly-carved Kunzer in Baramulla

NAVEED IQBAL
SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 6

AT LEAST 10 Assembly seats across Jammu and Kashmir with a population of less than a lakh have been proposed in the second draft of the working paper prepared by the Delimitation Commission.

While these calculations of constituency size are based on the 2011 census, the majority of the 10 seats with a population of less than one lakh persons are in the Jammu province.

Kashmir has three such seats -- Gurez in Bandipore district, Karnah in Kupwara and the newly carved Kunzer in Baramulla. The delimitation draft notes a population of 37,992 for Gurez, just above 87,000 for Karnah and over 99,000 in Kunzer.

In Jammu, there are seven such seats - Bani in Kathua district, Mughalmaidan in Kishtwar, Padder (Kishtwar), newly created Shri Mata Vaishno Devi in Reasi, KishtwarKishtwar, Basholi in Kathua and Ramgarh in Samba.

The populations in these segments range between 74,000 to 94,000.

Meanwhile, at least 19 constituencies that currently exist are being merged with other constituencies or being renamed or split to form 28 new Assembly segments, across J&K.

The mainstream political parties in J&K, including the National Conference, have rejected these proposed changes in the delimitation draft. The party's three sitting MPs serve as associate members to the delimitation commission.

The NC General Secretary Ali Muhammad Sagar on Sunday denounced the delimitation commission's second draft proposal, saying the party will not accept attempts to "divide" the people of J&K. The report, he said, is a "sheer mockery of universally accepted and constitutionally established norms of representation."

Meanwhile, CPIM leader MY Tarigami said that the commission has proposed "an arbitrary overhaul in the existing territorial constituencies with no regard for even the terrain, let alone the population that tends to be a basic parameter for redrawing the boundaries of assembly and parliamentary segments."

People's Conference chairman Sajad Lone termed the whole process, "an exercise in disruption."

The newly-carved constituencies include, South Srinagar, Larnoo, Anantnag East and West, Chhanapora, Rohama- Rafiabad, Kathua North and South, Jammu South, Udhampur East and West among others. Constituencies that are likely to be omitted from the list of Assembly segments include Shangus, Harzatbal, Wachi, Batamaloo, Gulabgarh, Gool Arnas among others.

As per the J&K Reorganisation Act, 2019, seven new constituencies were to be added to the J&K Assembly. Once these proposed additions are made, the total number of Assembly constituencies in J&K will rise to 90 — in Jammu, the number of seats will go up to 43 from 37, and in Kashmir, by one seat to 47.

Of the seven additional Assembly constituencies in the Union Territory, one each was proposed in the districts of Kathua, Samba, Rajouri, Reasi, Doda and Kishtwar in Jammu division, and Kupwara in the Kashmir Valley.

An additional 24 seats are proposed to be reserved for Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

RULING PARTY DENIES CHARGE

Rajasthan: BJP says stones pelted at state chief's car, blames Cong

DEEP MUKHERJEE
JAIPUR, FEBRUARY 6

RAJASTHAN BJP president Satish Poonia was allegedly targeted during a protest against him while he was travelling in Bundi district of the state on Sunday.

The Opposition BJP pointed the blame at Congress for allegedly pelting stones at Poonia's car. The ruling party denied the allegations.

Later in the day, Bundi Police registered an FIR over the alleged incident, but no arrests were made yet.

Videos circulated by the BJP on social media show a crowd gathered around Poonia's car, shouting slogans and displaying black flags. A voice from an unidentified person says stones are being pelted at the vehicle.

"I had gone to Kota today for a condolence meeting of a member of the erstwhile Kota royal family. I normally keep only 1-2 cars and use cavalcades only during events. Suddenly, without any reason, 200-300 people surrounded us. They tried to drag me out of the car and also roughed up my gunman. Even when the gunman threatened that he would open fire, they didn't back down. I have never seen anything like this in my thirty years in politics," Poonia told *The Indian Express* on Sunday.

Satish Poonia blamed state minister Shanti Dhariwal and Congress leader Rajendra Sankhla

Poonia alleged that those present in the protest were close to urban development and housing minister Shanti Dhariwal and named another Congress leader Rajendra Sankhla.

"The crowd was chanting slogans in favour of Shanti Dhariwal… People told me that people involved included Congress leader Rajendra Sankhla, who is close to Shanti Dhariwal... I called up the DGP who said that he will see...I even called up the leader of opposition and deputy leader of opposition. Had I got out of the car, they would have assaulted me. Somehow the driver managed to take the car away," Poonia, who was unhurt in the incident, said.

When contacted by *The Indian Express*, Sankhla -- who identified himself as a Congress member and a former NSUI district president of Kota -- denied the allegations. "We had gone to the Kota-Bundi border today to show black flags to Satish Poonia, who earlier in the day, during a press conference, had said that Congress is not even equal to the shoes of BJP. But we didn't pelt stones nor attack the car. The allegations are absolutely untrue. We later helped the car to go past the crowd," Sankhla said.

Dhariwal did not respond to requests for comment.

Poonia denied that the statement could have triggered the incident and said, "Such a reaction doesn't happen because of a statement. The attack took place because the Congress is totally on back foot on REET question paper leak and Alwar rape case. This was an effort to scare us but we won't be afraid."

Bundi Police registered an FIR, naming Sankhla among the accused, based on a complaint filed by BJP workers.

"An FIR has been registered under sections 143 (unlawful assembly), 323 (voluntarily causing hurt), 341 (wrongful restraint), 427 (mischief causing damage to the amount of fifty rupees) and 504 (intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of the peace) of the IPC. So far no arrests have been made," said sub-inspector Brajohan Meena of Talera police station in Bundi.

BJP fields Dayashankar from Ballia for UP polls, drops 10 more MLAs

LALMANI VERMA
LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 6

DAYS AFTER denying ticket to minister Swati Singh from Sarojini Nagar in Lucknow, the BJP on Sunday announced its decision to field her husband and UP unit vice-president Dayashankar Singh from Ballia Nagar seat in Ballia district for the upcoming Assembly polls in Uttar Pradesh.

In the list of 45 candidates declared on Sunday, the party has denied tickets to at least 10 sitting legislators.

Dayashankar, like his wife, was seeking a BJP ticket to contest from Sarojini Nagar and had already launched a door-to-door campaign. However, the party decided to field him from Ballia, where he had come fifth in 2007 Assembly elections. To accommodate Dayashankar, the sitting Ballia Nagar MLA, Anand, has been shifted to Bairia.

Notably, the sitting Bairia MLA Surendra Singh, who has been in news often for making controversial remarks and speaking against the state government, has been dropped.

In Amethi, the BJP has decided not to field sitting MLA Garima Singh, and instead has given ticket to her husband Sanjay Singh, a former Congress MP who had joined BJP in 2019.

The BJP has not fielded former Congress MP RPN Singh, who joined the BJP just a week ago.

The party has denied tickets to its sitting legislators from Sultanpur, Lambhua, Tanda, Alapur (SC reserved), Rudhauli and Salempur.

'Mamata the only power centre in TMC'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, FEBRUARY 6

DISMISSING ALLEGATIONS that he is calling the shots at the organisational and administrative level in the state, Trinamool Congress (TMC) national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee on Sunday said that there is no "power centre" in his party other than Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, his aunt.

In an interview with the Bengali news channel Zee 24 Ghanta, he said that opposition parties are spreading a false narrative about him to tarnish TMC's image.

Abhishek Banerjee

Responding to queries about if he takes decisions on transfers and appointments of IPS and IAS officers, Abhishek Banerjee said, "Nothing happens on my instruction at the administration level. There is no question of my taking such decisions as I do not belong to the administration. I also don't have any plans to join the administration in the next 20 years. This is a completely wrong narrative which is being spread by the Opposition.

"It is also being said that there are two power centres in TMC. Let me tell you clearly that Mamata Banerjee is the only power centre in TMC. There is no other power centre in our party," he said.

Assam carries out eviction to clear Sattra land of 'encroachers'

TORA AGARWALA
GUWAHATI, FEBRUARY 6

AT LEAST 37 families have been evicted from Assam's Barpeta district as part of a government drive to clear land belonging to the Barpeta Sattra – a 16th century Vaishnavite monastery – from alleged "encroachers", authorities said on Sunday. The drive came days after controversy erupted over Congress legislator Sherman Ali Ahmed's alleged "instigating" comments during a visit to the area, which falls under his constituency Baghbor.

Following the eviction on Saturday, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said that his government was committed to freeing up encroached Sattra lands across Assam. "Despite provocative and highly communal statements by an MLA,we managed to evict 37 families & cleared 40 bighas of land belonging to the revered Barpeta Satra from Mandia mouza under Baghbor Police Stn. We are committed to clearing any encroached Satra lands elsewhere in Assam," he tweeted.

It was alleged that almost 40 bighas belonging to Barpeta Sattra was encroached by the Bengali Muslim population. "The area, which is about 6-7 km from the Sattra, historically belonged to it. The Sattradhikar (head) has highlighted the issue and also written an application to the government for the land to be cleared," said Kusum Mahanta, secretary of Assam Sattra Mahasabha, an umbrella organisation of all Sattras in the state.

On Saturday, the district administration, aided by the police, conducted the eviction drive in Bardalani village, under Mandia revenue circle. "The drive was peaceful and the land under encroachment was cleared, without any resistance from the people," said Barpeta SP Amitabh Sinha.

Barpeta DC Tej Pratap Bhusal said the cleared land was handed over to the Sattra's managing committee. "All Barpeta Sattra land has been more or less cleared now," he said.

The eviction drive being carried out in Assam's Barpeta district on Saturday. *Express*

The evicted families have been in the area for more than ten years, said Rejaul Karim Sarkar, president of All Assam Minority Students' Union (AAMSU). "They are from the Baghbor area and were compelled to move here after being displaced by floods and erosion," he said, adding that some of the families had moved in 2020 itself, after getting a notice from the government. "The others could not move because they simply had no choice. They are extremely poor farmers."

Sarkar said those who were evicted have now taken refuge under tin sheet roofs in a government Khas land nearby. "They are in a terrible condition, without basic amenities," said Sarkar.

EXPLAINED

The Sattras factor

SATTRAS ARE influential monastic institutions created as part of the 16th century Neo-Vaishnavite reformist movement started by Vaishnavite saint-reformer Srimanta Sankaradeva. Over the years, there have been allegations of "encroachment" and "land grabbing" of Sattra land by suspected immigrant populations in the surrounding areas — particularly highlighted by the BJP government in Assam in the past few years.

DC Bhusal said the families were given notices three times last month. "They have now made their own arrangements and taken shelter in the nearby areas," he said.

Meanwhile, an FIR was lodged by the Barpeta district police on Friday against Congress's Ahmed on the basis of a complaint filed by the management committee of Barpeta Sattra. "The complaint said that Ahmed had made threatening comments," said Barpeta SP Sinha.

In a video clip, Ahmed, who visited the village on Friday, is purportedly heard saying: "Nobody could evict you till I am alive. Almighty Allah will protect you." He also said that the BJP would rule the state for just five years, and after that those evicted can reclaim their lands.

Following that, groups such as Hindu Yuba Chattra Parishad demanded that Ali be arrested and the Congress distanced itself from its legislator's remarks.

Raut slams MVA for not acting against BJP leaders

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 6

SHIV SENA leader Sanjay Raut has criticised the Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government for not taking action against BJP leaders, who he alleged were involved in wrongdoings.

Raut, in his weekly column in the party mouthpiece *Saamana*, asked how the Maharashtra government is tolerating the statements of BJP leaders that other ministers from the government will be in a cell next to the former home minister Anil Deshmukh.

"Deshmukh, the former Home Minister, is in jail due to the action by the ED. Few people with the security provided by the Centre are threatening that other ministers will soon go to a cell next to Deshmukh. The question arises as to how the Maharashtra government is tolerating this," said Raut adding that all non-BJP chief ministers should come together against the arbitrary actions by central investigating agencies.

Raut's outburst comes in the backdrop of Enforcement Directorate (ED) arresting businessman Pravin Raut, a relative of Sanjay Raut under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The ED, in its supplementary chargesheet filed against Deshmukh, has also included allegations levelled by former Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh against Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray and his son and cabinet minister Aaditya Thackeray.

"The BJP leaders are not clean and they have laundered huge amounts of money through power and malpractices...At this time, it feels that Maharashtra's Home Ministry and Law and Judiciary Ministry need to be rejuvenated," remarked Raut.

THE LATA LEGEND 1929-2022

BIDDING FAREWELL

(*From left*) Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray; NCP leader Sharad Pawar; actor Shah Rukh Khan; and cricketer Sachin Tendulkar at the funeral of Lata Mangeshkar, in Mumbai on Sunday. *Pradip Das*

'She was our country's pride and glory'

Fans gather at Shivaji Park for a last glimpse of legendary singer — and a part of their childhood

ALAKA SAHANI
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 6

AS A group of Lata Mangeshkar fans eagerly wait for police to let them enter Dadar's Shivaji Park, they offer a befitting tribute to the legend. They start singing '*Tera jaana, dil ke aramaanon ka loot jaana...*' from *Anari* (1959), their eyes fixed on their smartphone screens for the lyrics.

Strangers till some minutes ago, they met on Sunday afternoon as they queued up for the last glimpse of the singer. Preetu Rani Singh and Abhishek Bhardwaj, who are part of a music band, led the chorus while the others who sang along were just music lovers.

For Singh, catching a glimpse of her idol was not the only reason why she came rushing there with Bhardwaj as soon as they got to know of the venue. She said she wanted to express her gratitude to Mangeshkar.

Fifteen years ago, when Singh moved to Mumbai from Bokaro, she earned her living by performing popular songs of the legendary singer at a hotel and bar in Chembur.

"In Mumbai, I met Abhishek, who is like a guide and big bother. He formed an orchestra group and that is how I have been making my living. We perform regularly at shows in different places. I have even got a house of my own in Mumbai now. My group and I will continue to sing her songs," said Singh. Her keyboardist husband could not come as he is taking care of their daughter, she said.

She picks '*Lag jaa gale*' from *Woh Kaun Thi* (1964) and '*Naam gum jayega*' from *Kinara* (1977) as two of her favourites.

As the news that Mangeshkar's last rites would be held at Shivaji Park spread, people from far and wide trooped in through the day, hoping to get a glimpse of the cultural icon.

Some from outside planned a trip in advance to the city when they got to know that the singer was once again put on ventilator support. One of them was Lata Vijay Londhe, 36, from Karnataka who was at the park with her mother-in-law and two aunts-in-law.

Londhe works as a domestic help while her husband is a housekeeper. After very proudly emphasising that her name too is 'Lata', she said, "*Didi bahut bhaari thi. Woh hamare desh ke aan baan aur shaan thi* (Didi was remarkable. She was our country's pride and glory)."

Her favourite songs, she said, was the one that was playing at the cremation area — *Lag Jaa Gale* — and *Ae Mere Watan Ke Logon*, which Mangeshkar performed at the Republic Day celebrations in Delhi in 1963.

Visually challenged Audambar Tushiram Banker, 40, left Pune for Mumbai in the morning after coming to know of the death. Banker, who performs for an orchestra in Pune, said he once met his favourite singer and her younger sister Usha Mangeshkar at an event. He was at Shivaji Park with fellow admirer of Mangeshkar, Sunandha Mokashe, 70. "I wanted to express my love and respect for Lata Didi one last time," said Banker.

People line up to pay their last respects to Lata Mangeshkar at Shivaji Park in Mumbai on Sunday. *Deepak Joshi*

Posted on President Kovind's Twitter handle. *@rashtrapatibhvn*

LEADERS PAY TRIBUTE

"Lataji's demise is heart-breaking for me, as it is for millions the world over. In her vast range of songs, rendering the essence and beauty of India, generations found expression of their inner-most emotions."

RAM NATH KOVIND
PRESIDENT

"The kind and caring Lata Didi has left us. She leaves a void in our nation that cannot be filled. The coming generations will remember her as a stalwart of Indian culture, whose melodious voice had an unparalleled ability to mesmerise people."

NARENDRA MODI
PRIME MINISTER

"A complementer of notes and music, Lata Didi, through her melodious and spellbinding voice, imbued generations of India and the world with the sweetness of Indian music. Her contribution to the world of music cannot be expressed in words. Her demise is a personal loss for me."

AMIT SHAH
UNION HOME MINISTER

"Received the sad news of Lata Mangeshkar ji's demise. She remained the most beloved voice of India for many decades. Her golden voice is immortal and will continue to echo in the hearts of her fans. My condolences to her family, friends and fans."

RAHUL GANDHI
CONGRESS LEADER

"...India has lost a great daughter. She was the Nightingale of India and through her songs made an immense contribution to the cultural integration of the country."

MANMOHAN SINGH
FORMER PRIME MINISTER

Outside home: Fans, police band, memories

YOGESH NAIK
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 6

A MASSIVE crowd of fans, well-wishers, former associates and employees of Lata Mangeshkar turned up at her home Prabhu Kunj on Peddar Road after news of her passing away on Sunday morning.

Raghunath Patil, one of those who arrived outside her residence, worked as a driver at Yashraj Films and had come from Badlapur with a garland. "Many years back, I used to drive her to many places. I am waiting to see her and pay respects,"' Patil said.

The singer's body was brought to her home from the Breach Candy Hospital at around 1 pm.

Her house help, Bimal Sonawane (79), said, "I worked with Didi for 42 years. We used to give her medicines, clean her room, accompany her on tours to Pune and Kolhapur. During the Ganesh festival, my friends used to come for her Ganpati celebrations. I have brought laddoos for her earlier and she used to eat them. I had never travelled in a plane till I joined her services. Only because of her, I used to travel in planes." However, police stopped Bimal from entering the building her requests to go inside.

A person, who had come from Vasai, said, "I was disappointed at the way police organised the funeral. Common people were barely allowed to get darshan. I grew up hearing her songs and can't imagine music without Lata Mangeshkar."

The Mumbai police band also played many of her songs outside her building.

Asha Bhosle at the Prabhu Kunj home on Mumbai's Peddar Road. *Yogesh Naik*

Meanwhile, several celebrities and politicians, including Actor Amitabh Bachchan, MNS chief Raj Thackeray and singer Suresh Wadkar met the Mangeshkar family at their home. A lot of singers and people who came from the film industry were stopped by the police and political activists and were pleading to be allowed to go and pay respects.

Fans had also come outside her home and traffic at Pedder Road was moving at a slow pace. Many sobbed as her body was brought to the ground floor and as the cortege left home. As her body was brought down, officers from three armed services draped it and on her. Some of the family members were allowed climbed atop the truck carrying her body. The traffic was halted for nearly 30 minutes as the cortege left home.

At Prabhu Kunj, contingents from the Mumbai Police, the Dogra Regiment of Indian Army, Navy and Air Force came to pay their respects. A contingent of Army and police officials accompanied the body to Shivaji Park.

Shivaji Park gets temporary status as cremation ground

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 6

THE BRIHANMUMBAI Municipal Corporation (BMC) on Sunday decided to give special clearance to Shivaji Park, allowing it the status of a cremation ground, to make way for funeral of singer Lata Mangeshkar in the open ground of the premises in Dadar. The last time a cremation was held at Shivaji Park was in November 2012, when Shiv Sena founder Bal Thackeray was cremated on the ground.

Municipal Commissioner Iqbal Singh Chahal used powers vested in BMC through section 440 (2) of Mumbai Municipal Corporation (MMC) Act, 1888 that allowed public cremation at Shivaji Park, which is designated as open space in the Development Plan of Mumbai.

Chahal, while speaking to a TV channel, said that the arrangements were made for Mangeshkar's last rites at Shivaji Park following the directions from the state government. The BMC has allowed the use of a 2000-sq foot portion of the park for funeral arrangements. The site where the 92-year-old singer's funeral was performed is about 100-metres away from Shiv Sena founder Balasaheb Thackeray's memorial, on the west side of the Park.

Officials said the decision to allow the cremation to be carried out in the open was taken as huge crowds, including dignitaries, were expected to arrive for the funeral.

Mourning Across the Country

GOA
STATE MOURNING was declared in Goa from February 6-8. Chief Minister Pramod Sawant flew to Mumbai on Sunday to attend Lata Mangeshkar's last rites. "Anguished by the demise of the nightingale of India, Bharat Ratna Lata Mangeshkar ji....," he said in a tweet.

MADHYA PRADESH
TWO DAYS of state mourning, from February 6-7, announced in Madhya Pradesh. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said in a statement: "The nightingale is no more. The great era of Indian music has come to an end. Lata didi, without you this country is deserted, the songs and music of this country are lost. Every house is empty, the heart is empty. No one can ever fill your gap. People will continue to worship you as the goddess of music. Humble salutations at the feet of Lata didi."

KARNATAKA
TWO DAYS of mourning declared in Karnataka, during which no official public events will be held. Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai expressed his condolences, saying, "She will remain an eternally shining star in the world of music. Her songs are in the air every second in some or the other part of the country. Lata will remain in our hearts every moment."

Tricolour at half-mast on Rashtrapati Bhavan. *Praveen Khanna*

KERALA
NO OFFICIAL function will be held in Kerala on February 6 and February 7. The national flag will be flown at half-mast. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan paid tribute to Lata Mangeshkar, saying she was a "matchless singer who conquered the hearts of the world with her mellifluous voice".

ASSAM
CHIEF MINISTER Himanta Biswa Sarma, along with other state ministers, observed a minute of silence during a BJP function on Sunday. "Lataji was very close to our heart and she shared a very special bond with the people of Assam....,"Sarma tweeted.

JHARKHAND
THE JHARKHAND government announced two days of mourning, during which flags will fly at half-mast and there will be no government functions.

JAMMU AND KASHMIR
THE UNION Territory of Jammu and Kashmir notified that the national flag would fly at half-mast in the UT from February 6-7, and that there would be no official entertainment during this period.

Public holiday in Maharashtra today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 6

IN A rare instance, the Maharashtra government on Sunday declared a public holiday on Monday across the state to mourn the death of legendary singer Lata Mangeshkar. Sources in the government said that this is a rare instance in the recent past of the state government announcing a public holiday as a mark of respect.

The state government notification said: "Bharat Ratna Lata Mangeshkar passed away on Sunday, February 6, 2022. Her death has caused an immense loss to the music, art world and it's the great loss of the nation. To pay tribute to this legendary singer, a public holiday is being declared in the state on Monday 7th February 2022." The notification added that the state is exercising the powers vested in it under Section 25 of the Negotiable Instrument Act, 1881.

A senior bureaucrat said that though it is a rare instance in the recent past to announce a public holiday, there has been a precedent for announcing such holidays in history. "The state wants to show its affection for the legendary singer through this," said the bureaucrat.

At the funeral procession. *Ganesh Shirsekar*

Notably, no public holiday was announced in the state after the death of Bharat Ratna Pandit Bhimsen Gururaj Joshi who passed away in 2011. No state holiday was announced on the death of Shiv Sena founder Balasaheb Thackeray, who was also cremated at the Shivaji Park in 2012.

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has expressed grief at the demise of Mangeshkar. "The death of Lata Mangeshkar was the end of a glorious era. Her melodious voice was immortal and she will continue to live among us," said Thackeray.

"She was a symbol of a motherly blessing. Her voice has brought alive all situations in everyone's lives. Her voice broke all the barriers of language, region, caste, creed and religion," he added.

Thackeray also said that Lata Mangeshkar shared warm relations with his family. "She was an avid photographer and had knowledge about good cameras and different lenses. We often discussed photography and she was present at my photo exhibitions to bless me. Recently, when I was hospitalised, she enquired about my health," said the CM.

Following the state government order, University of Mumbai will remain closed on Monday, February 7 to mourn the demise of Mangeshkar. In view of this, the online exams of MA and MCom by Institute of Distance & Open Learning, which were scheduled to be held on Feb 7, have been postponed. A revised examination schedule will be announced soon.

THE LATA LEGEND 1929-2022

'Lata Mangeshkar was a legend but dedicated herself to the song like a newcomer'

One of India's biggest cultural icons, Lata Mangeshkar leaves behind a legacy of unparalleled excellence

BY PRASOON JOSHI

ARTISTES, BY nature, shape-shift. The calling, intensity, purpose and expression change as they make and unmake themselves and, in turn, their craft in the journey of life.

The work of true artistes has the power to inspire, tear apart, hurt and heal. Living at the crossroads of potential and manifestation, very few transcend to immortalise their craft. Lata Mangeshkar was this artiste and more.

They say she was 92. The lilt in her intonation, the twinkle in her eyes and the agility of her wit belied a young girl at heart. The voice of Lata Mangeshkar — the nightingale of India, Bharat Ratna, *swar kokila*, queen of melody — has journeyed through generations of Indians, in fact, generations of people across the Indian subcontinent. Her voice and songs crossed geographical and generational boundaries. Independent India's last seven-and-a-half decades and living memories have one constant — Lata Mangeshkar. Today, for many who have never met her but have just heard her voice, it seems that they are in mourning for the death of a family member. And indeed so, for her voice has been a companion, through the flush of young love and romance — *Chalo sajna jahan tak ghata chale* (*Mere Hamdam Mere Dost*, 1968), *Ehsaan tera hoga mujh par* (*Junglee*, 1961), *Lag ja gale* (*Woh Kaun Thi?*, 1964) — to poignant moments — *Bekas pe karam* (*Mughal-E-Azam*, 1960), *Jo humne dastan apni sunayi* (*Woh Kaun Thi?*), from sheer devotion — *Ae malik tere bande* (*Do Aankhen Barah Haath*, 1957), *Jyoti kalash chhalke* (*Bhabhi Ki Chudiyan*, 1961), *Vaishnav jan to*, to empowerment — *Aaj phir jeene ki tamanna hai* (*Guide*, 1965), and from loss — *Luka chuppi* (*Rang De Basanti*, 2006), *Dil hoom hoom kare* (*Rudaali*, 1993) to collective pain — *Ae mere watan ke logon*... the list is rich.

Can a single voice have the mastery, the power to reach out to the soul, skim myriad sentiments and deep dive into an ocean of emotions? What made Lata Mangeshkar so valuable as an artiste? Her formidable talent, her rooted classical music training, her love for the language or the single-minded devotion to her chosen path? Perhaps, all of these and, maybe, none of these. For, I believe that a true artiste is always seeking — to fill a gap, to surpass herself, to find the sublime. It's this search that defines an artiste's journey. Lata*ji* sang for not a classical but a popular art form, the world of cinema, demonstrating once again that there is no — nor ought to be — high-brow or low-brow art form; that what shines through the field of art is the sheer calibre of the artiste.

For me, Lata*ji* signified a blessing. As a young 20-something, I was fortunate to have had the legendary Lata Mangeshkar sing my first Hindi film song for *Lajja* (2001), directed by Rajkumar Santoshi. The illustrious Ilaiyaraaja*ji* was the composer. It was a dream debut for someone like me, unconnected to the film industry. I recall I was in the midst of an ad film shoot on the outskirts of Mumbai when I got a call informing me that Lata*ji* would be going to the studio in Mahalaxmi that evening to record the song and wanted the team to be present. Racing against time, I wrapped up my shoot and got into the car. A few kilometres down, amid the sea of vehicles in the infamous Mumbai traffic, I realised there was little chance of me reaching the studios on time. Thoughts raced in my head; how could I, as a professional, not be present for my work and more critically, how could I ever lose the opportunity to witness Lata*ji* — the great Lata Mangeshkar — render voice to my words? I got off the car and ran to the local train station only to confront the swarming sea of humanity that Mumbai is during peak hours. Jostling my way through, I daresay without a ticket, for there was simply not a nanosecond to spare, I somehow made it to the studios a second before Lata*ji* entered. Collecting myself under her penetrating gaze, I read aloud the lyrics. She had studied them already and launched into a discussion on the use of the word "*pawan*" (wind), about its grammar, whether in Hindi it is masculine or feminine. After a discussion where I convinced her about its usage in my lines, she smiled and said, "*Aap apna kaam jaante hain, aapko aata hai* (you know your work)". Coming from Lata*ji*, who had worked with great poets and lyricists, I was simply thrilled. It was a blessing to have begun my journey with greats like Ilaiyaraaja and Lata*ji*.

Some years later, we met again at AR Rahman's studios in Chennai to record *Rang De Basanti*'s *Luka chuppi*, a poignant song made immortal in her voice. This was the last song written in the film, an afterthought that struck us after watching the initial rushes. Rahman got cracking, and came up with the opening bars of the *mukhda* (refrain). The scene was of the state funeral of a young Indian Air Force officer who had sacrificed his life. However, rather than a predictable *deshbhakti* (patriotic) song for this scene, the thought which struck me was that of a mother's loss of her only child and her memories of his childhood, of the game of hide-and-seek between a mother and her little son. The only difference here is that the son is now hidden forever. Lata*ji* caught onto the heartbreaking loss and emotion of this song. It was an experience seeing her immerse herself. She was a legend but dedicated herself to the song like a newcomer. She refused to take her art or her stature for granted. She took two to three days, memorised the entire piece, and rehearsed it. Only then did she record the song. I think the recording went on for seven-eight hours, and she stood all through despite her advancing age. *Luka chuppi* has her immortal touch — a song which, even now, moistens the eyes and moves many a heart.

Lata*ji* was blessed. Perhaps, the inexplicable is expressed through true artistes, for they are not just talents but an energy field, a manifestation of a divine boon. A gifted artiste should not be dissected, for they are layered, and what should truly matter is how deeply one was moved by the sheer force of her talent.

For those who decried her for expressing staunch support to her beliefs, the governance and love for the nation, the shallowness of that judgement and the magnitude of her genius will, perhaps, be felt more today. For what better tribute can there be than to have us sing in unison — in honour of a voice that melted mountains.

Death is not always a matter of sadness; it also connotes a completion. Lata*ji* has completed her journey with aplomb. She leaves behind a lilting legacy which will hum and sing to our soul.

Prasoon Joshi is a poet, lyricist and chairperson of the Central Board of Film Certification

Photos: Express Archive

The house in Pune where Lata Mangeshkar lived with her father, Deenanath Mangeshkar, between 1940 and 1942. *Pavan Khengre*

'She was a voice from my childhood'

BY KS CHITHRA

LIKE MANY families, everyone at my home in Kerala was fond of Hindi songs. So, Lata*ji* was a familiar voice for me from my childhood, even if I didn't know who she was. We used to have a collection of albums and records, including Lata*ji*'s famous ones that had some of her well-known recordings from London.

My first meeting with Lata*ji* was in 1989, when she was felicitated at the Madras Telugu Academy after winning the Dadasaheb Phalke Award. I wasn't invited, but I had a recording with SPB sir (SP Balasubrahmanyam) that day. He told me that he wanted to finish early and leave for the event. I begged him to take me along and he agreed. After the event, he introduced me to her. She said, "I have heard you singing." That was a trophy for me, the most significant recognition.

Later, there was a concert in Mumbai to celebrate her 75th birthday in 2004. On the day of the concert, I was very tense but I managed to go to her and introduce myself. That day, I sang *Rasik balma* (*Chori Chori*, 1956), one of her favourites, and *Rulake gaya sapna* (*Jewel Thief*, 1967).

On her 80th birthday, I recorded an album titled *Nightingale*, and my husband sent that to Lata*ji*. After a few days, she called me. I was surprised to hear her voice. She told me that she had heard all the songs and she loved them.

After the demise of my daughter, I was closeted at home. That is when I was selected for an award in the name of Lata*ji* in 2012. When the organisers called me, I told them that I could not attend the event. That same evening, Lata*ji* called me. She consoled me and insisted that I should not be withdrawing from the world. She told me that I had to attend the event and receive the award. I was promised that she would also come, but she failed to make it due to personal reasons. That was my last call with Lata*ji*.

KS Chithra is a playback singer and Carnatic musician

(AS TOLD TO ARUN JANARDHANAN)

'Every song from her is a teaching school'

A lyricist and playback singer shares how Mangeshkar influenced generations

BY SWANAND KIRKIRE

IF YOU consider a note to be a circle, then Lata Mangeshkar would hit the *shruti* (micronote) at the centre of it — every note came with so much perfection. In my conversations with Hindustani classical legend Kumar Gandharva, he would say, "*Gaane sunne hain toh Lata ke suno, aur wahan se seekho*."

She was someone who reached the art form's pinnacle, showcasing the greatness it was capable of. She made the complex process seem so effortless that music reached every household in the subcontinent.

Mangeshkar with Jaikishan and Rafi

She started under the influence of icons such as Noor Jehan and Shamshad Begum, with songs in *Mahal* (1949) and *Andaz* (1949), which is why one hears her singing in a nasal tone, but slowly as she found her own voice, different facets started to unfold. The musical octave where she would take the heroine's voice in the most ordinary manner, was exemplary. Otherwise, the way the actors spoke and the way they sang sounded different. Lata*ji*'s voice matched that speaking voice and that's something that influenced generations at large. People have always said that Asha (Bhosle) was the vamp's voice but Lata, too, came with those variations. She also sang in so many languages.

She was criticised for asking for the singer's share of royalty and had a tiff with (Mohammed) Rafi *sahab* over the same but she was ruling the industry at the time and knew her rights.

There are so many songs, such a massive oeuvre that she leaves us with, but one that I'll always remember is *Allah tero naam, ishwar tero naam*. It's not just a *bhajan*, it's a lesson for life. There is no other way that it could have been sung. Every song from her is a teaching school. If you can replicate even one song with as much purity, you would have learned a lot of music.

(AS TOLD TO SUANSHU KHURANA)

Meri awaaz hi pehchaan hai...

Twenty-five iconic Lata songs that defined 20th and 21st century Hindi film music

SUANSHU KHURANA

FROM SINGING in stuffy studios, once upon a time, to standing for eight hours for *Luka chuppi*, here are 25 iconic songs by Lata Mangeshkar that defined Hindi film music in the 20th and 21st century:

AAYEGA AANEWALA (MAHAL, 1949): With this haunting Khemchand Prakash composition, Lata Mangeshkar sealed her unrivalled supremacy in the Indian film industry. The song broke all records at Radio Ceylon and people flooded their office with letters asking for the singer's name (the gramophone company only carried the character's name, Kamini). Lata Mangeshkar had arrived.

UTHAYE JA UNKE SITAM (ANDAZ, 1949): Picturised on Nargis, written by Rajendra Krishan and composed by C Ramchandra, this wistful number catapulted Mangeshkar into success. The nasal timbre of her voice in this was the result of Mangeshkar's admiration for Noor Jehan.

YEH ZINDAGI USI KI HAI (ANARKALI, 1953): In this top-grossing film, in which Mangeshkar sang eight songs, this song in the sombre raga Bhimpalasi became the defining sound of heartbreak.

AAJA RE PARDESI (MADHUMATI, 1958): This haunting number, from the Bimal Roy masterpiece, set to tune by Salil Chowdhury, impressed lyricist Shailendra to gift flowers to Mangeshkar.

PYAAR KIYA TOH DARNA KYA (MUGHAL-E-AZAM, 1960): Shakeel Badayuni's fearless lyrics, Naushad's brilliant composition, Mangeshkar's voice and Madhubala as Anarkali immortalised the song which would become a lover's rallying call.

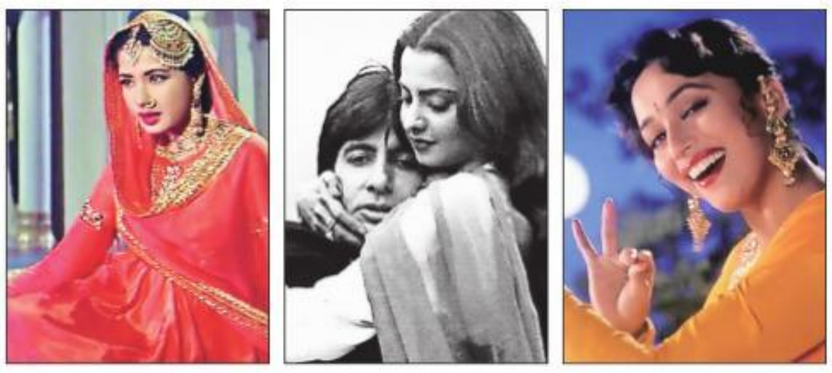
O SAJNA BARKHA BAHAAR (PARAKH, 1960): This raga Khamaj-based rain song by Salil Chowdhury was a high point for Mangeshkar and a most delightful moment in the Bimal Roy film.

ALLAH TERO NAAM, ISHWAR TERO NAAM (HUM DONO, 1961): This evocative *bhajan* by Jaidev had Sahir merge "Allah" and "Ishwar" in a single sentence to give India a message of unity. Mangeshkar's concert-regular soon became a popular school prayer.

AYE MERE WATAN KE LOGON (1963): Composer C Ramchandra and Mangeshkar were not speaking for five years, over an argument about a recordist she didn't like, when Kavi Pradeep wrote this piece in the aftermath of the Sino-Indian War. But Mangeshkar was the sole choice for this patriotic piece, which has different chord progression in each stanza.

LAG JAA GALE (WOH KAUN THI?, 1964): A fine composition by Madan Mohan, Mangeshkar's hauntingly beautiful voice soars through the top notes and descends with equal ease.

AAJ PHIR JEENE KI TAMANNA HAI (GUIDE, 1965): Among SD Burman's greatest compositions, if *Tere mere sapne* was the most intense piece of writing by Shailendra, *Aaj phir jeene ki tamanna hai* became an expression of feminine liberation.



Lata Mangeshkar sang for popular films such as *Pakeezah*, *Silsila* and *Hum Aapke Hain Koun..!* (left to right)

KUCHH DIL NE KAHA (ANUPAMA, 1966): This is, perhaps, the most underestimated of her songs. Hemant Kumar composed Kaifi Azmi's verses delicately and Mangeshkar rendered them an ethereal quality.

CHALTE CHALTE (PAKEEZAH, 1972): This seminal piece by composer Ghulam Mohammed and poet Kaifi Azmi, set along a looped tabla groove in Keherwa (eight-beat) *taal*, is the contemplation of a courtesan, Sahibjaan (Meena Kumari).

RAINA BEETI JAYE (AMAR PREM, 1972): For someone who almost always worked with Asha Bhosle, RD Burman approached his wife's elder sister, Mangeshkar, for this prayer of a song, composed in raga Lalit. Bhosle would pick a fight with him that he'd give all the good songs to "*didi*".

EK PYAR KA NAGMA HAI (SHOR, 1972): This meditative Laxmikant-Pyarelal song, also one of their finest, had Mangeshkar singing about life and death. Written by Santosh Anand, it had Pyarelal playing the violin.

NAAM GOOM JAYEGA (KINARA, 1977): RD Burman's uniform composition elevated Gulzar's austere lyrics: the phrase *Meri awaaz hi pehchaan hai/gar yaad rahe* will eerily ring true now that its female voice has fallen silent.

YEH KAHAN AA GAYE HUM (SILSILA, 1981): Composed by Hindustani classical maestros Pt Shiv Kumar Sharma (santoor) and Pt Hariprasad Chaurasia (flute), and interwoven with Amitabh Bachchan reciting poetry, the song remains ever-charming.

AYE DIL-E-NADAAN (RAZIA SULTAN, 1983): In this ambitious venture by Kamal Amrohi, composer Khayyam created one of his career-best melodies with immortal lyrics by Jan Nisar Akhtar.

MANN KYUN BEHKA (UTSAV, 1984): One of the few Lata Mangeshkar-Asha Bhosle duets, the tender number was a breath of fresh air in the disco-ruled '80s. The story goes that Bhosle would sing her lines and look at her elder sister and only Mangeshkar's nod would bring her relief.

YAARA SEELI SEELI (LEKIN, 1991): Mangeshkar, whose achingly beautiful notes soared to thrilling registers with *yeh bhi koi jeena hai, yeh bhi koi marna*, won the National Award for her brother Hridaynath Mangeshkar's composition.

SUNIYO JI ARAJ MHARI (LEKIN..., 1991): The long *alaap* will go down in history as one of the finest beginnings to a piece. The *bandish* was composed in raga Vihangini, a raga created by Pt Mani Prasad of Kirana *gharana*.

DIL HOOM HOOM KARE (RUDAALI, 1993): The use of the word *hoom hoom* by Gulzar, an onomatopoeia for heartbeat, was a masterstroke in this song from the Kalpana Lajmi film based on Mahasweta Devi's short story of the same name.

MAAYE NI MAAYE (HUM AAPKE HAIN KOUN..!, 1994): A play on Shiv Kumar Batalvi's poem of the same name, Mangeshkar was 65 when she sang this for Madhuri Dixit. Her voice had started showing signs of age, but the notes were perfect in this popular song from the '90s, along with *Didi tera dewar deewana*.

MERE KHWABON MEIN JO AAYE (DILWALE DULHANIA LE JAYENGE, 1995): Mangeshkar struke a chord with the youth with this Jatin-Lalit composition that had Kajol dancing in a towel.

JIYA JALE JAAN JALE (DIL SE,1998): AR Rahman convinced Mangeshkar to sing the gentle, romantic song. It was the late '90s and she'd become extremely picky, but she sang and the number was a huge hit.

LUKA CHUPPI (RANG DE BASANTI, 2006): Mangeshkar stood bare feet, recording this heartrending Rahman-composed piece written by Prasoon Joshi, for eight hours. It will remain a reminder of her undying brilliance.

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

WORDLY WISE

I WOULD LIKE TO CONTINUE SINGING TILL MY VOICE GIVES UP ON ME. SINGING IS ALL THAT I KNOW. — LATA MANGESHKAR

The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

INDIA'S SONG

Lata Mangeshkar gave the nation a song for every mood, moment, journey. The stillness after her will be broken by her songs

"THE VERY HEART of India throbs in your voice," music composer Naushad once wrote to Lata Mangeshkar. Much of India's population has not lived in a world that did not have her in it. The artist whose voice has been the sound of a nation ever since it gained independence, especially of its women, who expressed themselves in her voice even when they could not find their own, breathed her last in Mumbai on Sunday. With Mangeshkar's passing, India is struck silent, so essential has she been to how it imagines itself through music and song. If there is succour in this moment, it is to be derived from the formidable and multi-hued oeuvre that she leaves behind. It isn't often that musical virtuosity falls in place with lyricism, spirituality, integrity, expression — and soars.

Be it the defiant "*Pyaar kiya toh darna kya*" in *Mughal-e-Azam* (1960) or the watershed moment of her career, "*Aayega aanewala*", so hauntingly picturised on Madhubala, or Waheeda Rehman dancing to "*Aaj phir jeene ki tamanna hai*" in *Guide*, the anthem and freedom song for a whole generation of Indian women, or the voice of the lovelorn courtesan in *Pakeezah* who sang "*Yoon hi koi mil gaya tha/ sare raah chalte chalte*", to one of the most secular and uplifting bhajans from the Indian film industry, "*Allah tero naam*" (*Hum Dono*) — Mangeshkar defined the gold standard of playback singing. Female vocalists in the country aspired to sing like her. In recent times, there was "*Dil hoom hoom kare*" from Kalpana Lajmi's *Rudaali* (1993), in which Mangeshkar sang of unbearable pain, and upbeat numbers that lifted newer films such as *Hum Aapke Hain Koun* (1994) and *Dilwale Dulhaniya Le Jayenge* (1995) off the ground. Through a universe of film songs in a number of languages and a large and varied repertoire of non-film pieces, Mangeshkar gave India not just a song for every mood, moment and journey, she also gave its people a feeling of shared cultural pride they had not known in quite the same way before. India had the Taj Mahal and Lata Mangeshkar, these were the wonders, and only one of them could sing. It isn't often that India and Pakistan, the two peoples and governments, are completely agreed on anything, but there has never been any difference or doubt on Mangeshkar. The tributes that are flowing in from across the borders — from Pakistan and Bangladesh — are emotional and exquisite.

At a 1974 concert held at Royal Albert Hall in London, the late actor Nargis Dutt was asked to invite Lata Mangeshkar to the stage. "*Yun samajhiye, jaise kisi dargah ya mandir mein jaayen, toh wahaan pahunch kar sar ibaadat ke liye khud-bakhud jhuk jaata hai, aur aankhon se besaakhta aansoo behate hain* (As if one goes to a shrine or a temple, where the head bows in reverence and tears roll down from the eyes, of their own accord)". That was Lata Mangeshkar. It is why the stillness that she leaves behind will be broken by her songs that live on.

THE MISSING GREEN

Failures to honour environment commitments point to institutional deficits. Government must apply correctives

FOR DECADES, ENVIRONMENTALISTS in the country have been alleging that a large number of infrastructure projects are implemented without mandatory due diligence and green clearance procedures are often riddled with irregularities. Their criticisms have sharpened in the past 15 years because successive governments have diluted ecological safeguards — the public hearing requirement in the Environmental Impact Assessment notification, for instance — under the ruse of streamlining the clearance procedures. Two years ago, an Environmental Performance Index of Yale University ranked India 168 amongst 220 countries. Now an investigation by this newspaper has revealed that six mega initiatives cleared between 2004 and 2020 — the Mopa International Airport in Goa, the Dibang Hydel project in Arunachal, Kulda Coal Mine in Odisha and Tamnar Thermal Project in Chhattisgarh, the Subansiri Hydel Project on the Assam Arunachal border — have failed to fulfil their green commitments. The omissions are particularly glaring because experts had questioned the environmental sustainability of these projects since their inception.

At the heart of what has gone wrong is the absence of an effective mechanism to ensure environmental compliance. As the newspaper's investigation revealed, the Ministry of Environment and Forests has less than 80 officials to conduct field visits. The state pollution control boards and environmental tribunals are almost always short-staffed. Instead of strengthening the monitoring mechanism, governments at the Centre and states have been relying on procedures such as post-facto clearances and trying to goad project developers into compliance by giving them incentives — subsidies, for instance — despite Supreme Court strictures. In 2020, for instance, a two-judge bench of the Court called out the practice of allowing project developers to report a violation retrospectively as "a derogation of the fundamental principle of environmental jurisprudence". "Allowing for an ex-post facto clearance would essentially condone the operation of industrial activities without the grant of an environmental clearance (EC). In the absence of an EC, there would be no conditions to safeguard the environment," the court pointed out.

As India strives to grow into a $5-trillion economy — the budget presented by the finance minister last week, for instance, talks of rapid infrastructural development — its policymakers will need to ensure that such prosperity doesn't come at the cost of the environment. This is especially imperative because sites of developmental projects are often located in ecologically fragile zones. Corridors between coal mines and thermal plants — such as the one between Kulda and Tamnar — are known to be rife with pollutants that harm people's health, contaminate water bodies, and impair farm productivity. Obviating such hazards requires strong checks and balances. But environmental experts have often complained that short-shrift is given to the autonomy of institutions mandated to protect the environment in the country. The government must summon the will to apply correctives.

FREEZE FRAME

E P UNNY

Our inner voice

Lata Mangeshkar represented us collectively. She also represented each one of us in our singularity

PRATAP BHANU MEHTA

IT IS A measure of Lata Mangeshkar's achievement that all tributes and any adjectives seem like a gross understatement. It is hard to imagine any comparable artiste, in the annals of any country, who so saturated the cultural, emotional and affective life of their nation. This is not just a statistical achievement. The tens of thousands of songs recorded in 18 languages, the total domination of playback singing for a half century, the ability to define a whole genre of music, the innovations of tonality, pitch and modulation, would alone be formidable. But her impact cannot be measured in technical terms. A great artiste might give pitch perfect expression to a variety of emotions. Lata Mangeshkar went further: Her songs became the totality of our emotions to the point where it was impossible to think of an affective life outside of her songs.

Lata Mangeshkar was coming of age when a new nation was coming into being. But a new nation needed a new grammar across the whole gamut of our lives. It needed new cultural forms that could unite rather than divide a country just emerging from Partition. It is often said that Hindi cinema was that cultural form. But in retrospect that seems to be a bit of mischaracterisation. If Hindi cinema acquired a distinct identity as a genre it was largely because of playback singing. In retrospect, it is remarkable how much of that cinema is utterly forgettable. What is not forgettable is the music. The music became our public poetry and our public melody, it became our private therapy and consolation; it seemed to offer an utterance for every emotion and occasion: From loyalty to betrayal, from joy to sadness, from heightened spirits to the depths of despair. One can get too sophisticated about this. But it is hard to imagine an Indian, above a certain age, whose articulation of their inner life is not in the words of a Bollywood lyric. And the voice will invariably be Lata Mangeshkar's.

It is in this context that Lata Mangeshkar's playback singing achieved its unique status. Much can be written about the tone and pitch of her voice over the years. But what is indisputable is the fact that only she could give expression to literally every situation or emotional register. It is not just the melody, but that precision about words and emotions in her singing, that made her an ideal carrier of the totality of our lives. Someone once said, in a profound remark, that the greatness of playback singing in Bollywood's halcyon days, was that no actor really needed to act. The entire affective burden of movies was carried by the songs: In fact the songs were the script, if there was such a thing.

> It is difficult to gauge how significant she will be for future generations. It has to be said that there is no dearth of extraordinary musical talent, but the historical conditions that produce the need for a Lata Mangeshkar will probably never come again. The lyrics she sang will probably bear a greater burden of their gendered values, than, say, the ones that Rafi or Kishore got. For someone who sang in any every emotional register, it is hard to imagine a single song as a send-off: But try '*Phaili hui hain sapanon ki bahein*' from *House No 44*. It will be hard to come by a better combination of lilting innocence, and soaring dreams. The incomparable gift she gave us.

But the success of this genre required three things. It required great poetry and musical compositions. It required a genre of singing that exuded a sincerity with poetry that Lata Mangeshkar had in full measure. The singing would not overwhelm the meaning of the lyric, it would give it perfect expression. But most of all what it required was the creation of singers who could become everyone. The singer had to be a neutral enough medium so that they could appear to be every actor's voice. But in a much more difficult act, the singer had to exude a kind of trust that they also became every listener's voice and the grammar of their emotion. It is, I think, for this reason, more than anything else, that Bollywood playback singing was dominated by a few singers. For every time you heard a voice you also wanted it to be familiar so that you could think of it as your own.

Much has been said about how Lata Mangeshkar managed to define the pitch and tonality of what the Indian female singing voice should be like, often to the exclusion of many other registers. But this worry misses the point: Could such a playback role have been performed by any other voice, one in which everyone, as an individual, could find themselves?

It is difficult to gauge how significant she will be for future generations. It has to be said that there is no dearth of extraordinary musical talent, but the historical conditions that produce the need for a Lata Mangeshkar will probably never come again. The lyrics she sang will probably bear a greater burden of their gendered values, than, say, the ones that Rafi or Kishore got. (Just listen to that trance-like duet with Hemant Kumar, "*Chupa lo yun dil mein pyaar mera*"; the line "*Tumhare charanon ka phool hun main*" will now make you wince). For someone who sang in any every emotional register, it is hard to imagine a single song as a send-off: But try "*Phaili hui hain sapanon ki bahein*" from *House No 44*. It will be hard to come by a better combination of lilting innocence, and soaring dreams. The incomparable gift she gave us.

If Lata Mangeshkar became representative of India, it was because the lyrics she sang, and the forms in which she expressed them, contained all of India in them: All of its languages, cultural registers, even its conflicts. It was not benchmarking India to a single measure; it was rather connecting its superabundance. She could give voice to collective emotions and mark the turning points in its collective life, as in "*Aye mere watan ke logo*," the song that made Nehru and a whole nation break down. But what made her the ideal representative of the new nation was not that she represented us collectively, but that she could represent each one of us in our singularity: In every role we can imagine.

Much has been made of the fact that her image was in part propelled by the ideal of the ascetic performer. She made the world of art acceptable to a conservative India, by projecting an ascetic femininity onto it, taking Bollywood out of a courtly grammar of self-presentation. But at the end of the day the focus on her persona, her personal asceticism, humility are beside the point. For it is the mark of her greatness that her music transcended every division and identity that was imposed on it. The most dedicated group of fans she has is in Pakistan, where identification with her is more vivid than in India. She had no equal and will never have one.

The writer is contributing editor, The Indian Express

WHEN SHE SPEAKS UP

There's a link between assertiveness of minority women and attacks like Bulli Bai

SHILPA PHADKE

JANUARY 2022: BULLI Bai deals, where Muslim women, particularly those who have been visible and articulate, were being auctioned, appeared on GitHub. A similar tool called Sulli Deals had appeared on GitHub in July 2021.

January 2021: While hearing petitions challenging the constitutional validity of the farm laws, the then Chief Justice of the Supreme Court suggested that women and children should not participate in protests.

January 2020: Women, particularly Muslim women, were on the frontlines of the anti-CAA protests.

One might see women's leadership in the anti-CAA protests as the culmination of the claims that they have been making to public space. Campaigns like those led by Blank Noise, the Why Loiter movement, Pinjra Tod, to name only some, have pushed back against restrictions on women's mobility. The book *Why Loiter? Women and Risk on Mumbai Streets* that I co-wrote with Sameera Khan and Shilpa Ranade suggested loitering as a way for women to gain unconditional access to public space as citizens. Once a niche, even radical idea, loitering has now entered the feminist vocabulary of access to public space.

In the anti-CAA protests, women occupied public space as citizens defending citizenship rights. The country saw many leaderless, peaceful protests, like the one at Shaheen Bagh, several helmed by Muslim women. Eighty-two-year-old Bilkis Bano became an icon of the movement. At Jamia Millia Islamia in December 2019, two students, Ayesha Renna and Ladeeda Farzana, stood between the cops and one of their male friends who was being assaulted. The image of Renna's raised index finger became symbolic of the resistance.

> While almost every woman has a story of street sexual harassment, many also have stories of online harassment, stalking, and, in the case of the more visible and articulate ones, rape and death threats. In the Bulli Bai case too most of those targeted have been articulate and visible on social media. At the same time, there has been growing violence against Muslims and in December 2021, at a religious conclave, there were repeated calls to kill Indian Muslims.

Only months before passing the Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2019, the government had passed the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019, which criminalises instant triple talaq, setting up Muslim women as victims of Muslim men and reminding one of postcolonial scholar Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's comment in regard to White men saving Brown women from Brown men. In August 2019, the government abrogated Article 370, revoking the special status of Jammu and Kashmir. Several ministers were reported as commenting on the possibility of buying land in Kashmir and marrying fair Kashmiri women. Muslim women are simultaneously clients of state largesse and the exoticised other to be claimed.

While a part of the anti-CAA protests was already taking place online, the pandemic virtually took away access to the streets for these protests. Relevantly, just as streets are seen as dangerous to women in the mainstream narrative, so also women are asked to be careful online. While almost every woman has a story of street sexual harassment, many also have stories of online harassment, stalking, and, in the case of the more visible and articulate ones, rape and death threats. In the Bulli Bai case, too, most of those targeted have been articulate and visible on social media. At the same time, there has been growing violence against Muslims and in December 2021, at a religious conclave, there were repeated calls to kill Indian Muslims.

All women are targeted online and Muslims have become increasingly unsafe in the country. Muslim women are marginalised and discriminated against both as Muslims and as women. They are seen as victims of their religion, community and men; as clients under the dubious protection of the state, but also simultaneously as pawns in the demonstration of Hindutva power and masculinity, who might be assaulted in order to show Muslim men their place, as seen, for instance, in the sexual violence against Muslim women in 2002 in Gujarat.

The visibility of Muslim women in public as articulate, fierce and brave, fundamentally shifts something about how they must be perceived. If they can be out on the streets, sleeping under the open sky for three months, then clearly they cannot be only the relentlessly oppressed and silenced victims. It is this claim to citizenship, to free speech, that has created no little discomfort.

Bulli Bai and Sulli Deals must be located within these larger events of the growing visibility of Muslim women and a growing atmosphere of intolerance to diversity and tolerance of hate speech and acts towards Muslims. They are a way of silencing both women and Muslims, demonstrating that neither is safe in contemporary India.

Phadke is the co-author of Why Loiter? Women and Risk on Mumbai Streets

FEBRUARY 7, 1982, FORTY YEARS AGO

INDIAN EXPRESS

Antulay to stay as chairman of trust

PM'S CONCERN

PRIME MINISTER INDIRA Gandhi expressed serious concern over the country's prospects of foreign economic aid and said: "We are going to face increasing difficulties." Mrs Gandhi, who was addressing a press conference in Ahmedabad at the end of her two-day visit to Gujarat, made this remark when she was asked about the World Bank decision to cut aid to this country. Asked if she saw in the World Bank decision an indication of the US economic offensive against this country, she said: "It is for you to judge." The prime minister is understood to have taken a grim view of the economic situation facing the country.

ANTULAY TRUST

THE INDIRA PRATIBHA Pratishthan would continue to function as before, the chairman of the trust A R Antulay said in Bombay on Saturday. The former Maharashtra chief minister told newsmen after a four-hour meeting of the trustees that reports saying some of the trustees had resigned were baseless. Antulay, who presided over the meeting held amid speculation about its future, denied that he had ever offered to quit the trust as its chairman.

UNGA ON ISRAEL

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY adopted a resolution on Friday calling on all UN members to stop aid, trade and diplomatic ties with Israel to punish it for annexing the occupied Syrian Golan Heights. The vote was 86-21, with 34 abstentions. The resolution climaxed a six-day emergency special session on the December 14 Israeli annexation. The Security Council called the session after the United States vetoed a council resolution to penalise Israel for its action. A council resolution would have been binding on all 157 UN members. The Assembly resolution amounted to no more than a recommendation. Israel condemned the resolution and said it was part of a UN attempt "to undermine the very existence of Israel."

THE IDEAS PAGE

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"Patent waivers — backed by the US, but still opposed by the UK and EU — and technology transfer should begin now. Poorer countries can wait no longer."

— THE GUARDIAN

Lata ji

She became the female voice of a newly independent country. Through it all, and till the end, she also remained her own person

MRINAL PANDE

"Like art, revolutions come from combining what exists into what has never existed before"

Gloria Steinem

C R Sasikumar

LATA WAS ONE of the three daughters born to a well-known performer in Marathi theatre, Dinanath Mangeshkar. Her father recognised her talent early on, and began training her when she was only five. Her younger and very talented sister Asha Bhosle told the Dogri poet Padma Sachdev later how their lives changed when their father passed away suddenly. The eldest, Lata *didi*, was only 13. The family first went to stay with their mother's family in Thalner village in Dhule, then moved to Mumbai to a small house in Nana Chowk. Lata ji's initial years in the Mumbai film industry of the early '40s were full of struggle. Music directors used to the loud and somewhat shrill and nasal voices of singing stars from courtesan families, were reluctant to give the frail teenager a chance for playback singing. They found her voice "too thin".

A person less in need of money may have argued and told them that screen voices needed to be more natural and fluid in the age of the new recording technology. But Lata's overwhelming need was to earn enough for her family of three siblings and a widowed mother. So she played Eliza Doolittle to their Professor Higgins for a while. Flexibility is something young fatherless children learn early on in life. Lata did too. But like a true singer, even as she adapted to the composers' demands, she kept alive her classically trained real voice and soon rose to be the patron saint of the "new" female voice of independent India. With her first hit song "*Aayega aanewala*", from *Mahal*, she was no longer the awkward in-between singer. Even the great Bade Ghulam Ali Khan sahib is reported to have said of her that ever since he heard her sing in Raga Yaman, he forgot his own rendering, and that the girl just never goes off-key ("*Jab se iss ladki ka Yaman kaan mein pada, main apna wala Yaman bhool gaya! Kambakht kabhi besuri hi nahin hoti!*"). Another great composer of film music, Naushad, wrote about her: Watch her voice leap up like a ball of fire ("*Shola sa lapak jaaye hai, awaaz tau dekho*!").

In the '50s, Lata Mangeshkar was an undisputed star singing for all renowned composers: Shankar-Jaikishan, Naushad, SD Burman, Laxmikant-Pyarelal, Hemant Kumar and Madan Mohan. She sang some of the biggest hits for Madhubala in *Mughal-e-Azam*, including the timeless, "*Mohey panghat pe Nandlal…*". Her long and distinguished career is not a tragic tale of continuing to shoulder the burden of someone else's idea of how a woman should sing. She was a genuinely many-voiced singer who considered it an asset to be able to sing for a Madhubala, a Jaya Bachchan and even a Preity Zinta. Hers was a voice of a simple but grand inheritance from Marathi theatre, also a realisation of the paternal dreams and aspirations she had imbibed as a young girl. She was a rock to her family till the end.

Still it would be wrong to pin her down to a single identity, of a grand dowager queen of music, all white sarees, and an isolation of fervent religiosity and meditational silences. True, as an individual, Lata ji remained fiercely protective of her private life. But she was very much her own person. She did not follow the usual pattern of marriage, children and the possibility of a life long contention with a male who felt his masculinity threatened by an eminent wife. She chose, instead, to sing as and when and how she wished, and maintain her personal relationships with various men and women she cared for. She had little interest in theatrics. Her love for all things, from diamond jewellery to devotional music, was not a put-on act. Those aesthetics came naturally to her like to so many of our great musicians. But one admires her for, even as she pursued her music, rightly demanding that musicians be paid royalties, not be sent off with a one-time payment. If this created some disaffection between her and a few big ticket male singers, so be it. Her innate understanding of her self worth remained subtle and capacious till the very end.

Another loveable part of Lata Mangeshkar's life was her deep and genuine love for cricket. In the cricket establishment she found the action-man dimension perhaps of a father she had lost early in her life. Stories about her romantic dedication to one such legend were also rife over the years. But she chose not to marry for reasons we will never know. The truth or otherwise remained between them. She never cared to discuss it publicly and none of the columnists and society reporters dared ask her about it. She did make clear that she did not wish to be reborn. Ever. And that her favourite poet was Meera Bai who sang "*Mai mai, kaise jiyun ree* (Oh my mother how can I survive)". "One should gracefully accept sorrow like happiness", she said in one of her last interviews to a Mumbai daily.

> Her long and distinguished career is not a tragic tale of continuing to shoulder the burden of someone else's idea of how a woman should sing. She was a genuinely many-voiced singer who considered it an asset to be able to sing for a Madhubala, a Jaya Bachchan and even a Preity Zinta. Hers was a voice of a simple but grand inheritance from Marathi theatre, also a realisation of the paternal dreams and aspirations she had imbibed as a young girl. She was a rock to her family till the end.

Of late, one sees a sudden swell in those who claim to have known her over the years and emphasise how she sang because Veer Savarkar urged her to sing or that singing a song like, "*Ai mere watan ke logo…*" was an ideal public display of true *rashtra bhakti*. From what one gathers about this unusually gifted singer, she abhorred histrionics or public displays of love or hate. She was among those like George Bernard Shaw who believed that patriotism is basically a conviction that the best country is the one that one is born in.

Professionally and personally, the marvellous weight of the pleasure her singing gives embarrasses hyperbolic tributes. Certainly, obituaries will call her "the last of a kind", the "Sur Saraswati" in Hindi film music or "the greatest female singer in the Bollywood firmament". For once, they will not be soppy clichés, for once they will ring true.

The writer is former chairperson, Prasar Bharati

Plugging power reforms

Central, state governments need to be flexible to ensure success of the revamped power distribution scheme

ANN JOSEY AND SREEKUMAR NHALUR

LAUNCHED IN JULY 2021, the Revamped Distribution Sector Reform Scheme (RDSS) is the latest of many central government grant-based programmes towards electricity distribution network investments. Others include urban loss reduction schemes such as the Accelerated Power Development Programme and rural connections and network expansion focussed schemes such as SAUBHAGYA. These have played a significant role in increasing access and improving performance.

RDSS's outlay of Rs 3 lakh crore for five years can enable financially-strained electricity distribution companies to get similar support. Half of the outlay is for better feeder and transformer metering and pre-paid smart consumer metering. The remaining half, 60 per cent of which will be funded by central government grants, will be spent on power loss reduction and strengthening networks.

But RDSS has inherited several design issues from its predecessors. These include complex processes and conditions for fund disbursal. Only 60 per cent of the total Rs 2.5 lakh crore grants allocated in past schemes were disbursed. Lack of public review and regulatory oversight in states is another issue. The prescriptive approach of the scheme design impedes effective implementation. For example, RDSS emphasises loss reduction investments over system strengthening. However, high losses are typically connected to sustained poor quality service which, in turn, is affected by inadequate investment in system strengthening. RDSS stipulates universal pre-paid metering but post-paid options may be suitable in many contexts. Similarly suggested measures in RDSS such as privatisation and franchisee adoption should be critically examined.

As required, states are submitting action plans detailing their contexts, commitments and interests. Despite the challenges, there are opportunities for discoms under RDSS.

It is important to strengthen rural networks to meet growing demand. In the past decade, 4.9 crore poor households have been electrified and more than Rs 50,000 crore has been invested in rural networks. However, actual investments have been much less than planned. Moreover, connections given to rural homes were for 250 or 500 watts, assuming few lights, fan and TV. This does not account for use of appliances such as refrigerators and mixers. Transformer and sub-station capacities were designed to meet this minimal demand. Increased supply hours, appliance usage and the needs of rural enterprises will need more network investment. Without this, the risk of power outages is high. The RDSS system's strengthening plans can focus on this challenge.

About 25 per cent of electricity sales is to highly subsidised, agricultural consumers who also receive erratic, poor quality supply. Under the national KUSUM scheme, daytime, low-cost supply can be provided to a large number of farmers by installing megawatt scale solar plants, which supply eight hours of quality power directly to dedicated agricultural feeders. This would address farmers' demand for reliable supply and almost halve the discom's cost and subsidy requirements. For this to work, separate feeders for agricultural consumers are needed. RDSS prioritises investments and grants towards dedicated agricultural feeders to accelerate feeder solarisation. States must leverage this grant support to provide reliable supply and reduce subsidy requirements.

Third is the need for "automatic" metering of distribution feeders. Despite efforts, unmetered consumers and non-functional meters at the consumer and feeder level persist. Without functioning meters, accurate energy accounting and loss monitoring is a challenge. Often, discoms under-estimate losses by over-estimating unmetered consumption in a bid to demonstrate loss reduction. For greater veracity, all feeders must be equipped with meters capable of communicating readings without manual intervention. States should leverage RDSS's emphasis on automatic meter reading for this.

So far, the experience with smart metering and pre-paid metering has been limited. RDSS prescribes a phase-wise roll-out of consumer smart meters, starting with commercial and industrial consumers and urban areas. Such an approach provides states with an opportunity to understand implementation issues, adopt suitable strategies for metering and evolve frameworks for assessing benefits vis-a-vis the costs. This is possible if discoms, the state regulator and consumers play an active role in designing the roll-out to suit state realities, address implementation issues and assess benefits. In their action plans, states should emphasise the need for this flexibility and allow the discoms to make an informed choice between pre-paid and post-paid metering. To realise benefits, the state regulator must stipulate a framework to evaluate cost reduction and performance improvement due to smart meters and protect consumers from undue tariff impacts due to such investments.

Next, the network can be prepared for charging electric vehicles. Discoms can avail 60 per cent of grants under RDSS for network investments required to address the demand of charging infrastructure for electric vehicles. This can accelerate a shift away from petrol and diesel fuels.

To leverage various opportunities, states must emphasise the need for flexibility in prioritising investments in their action plans. This should be accompanied by state-level commitments towards accelerated but deliberate implementation. Central government agencies should also be flexible in the monitoring, tracking and fund disbursal mechanisms. Without these efforts, despite its potential, RDSS will likely be important but limited in its impact, like its predecessors.

The writers are with Prayas (Energy Group)

Branding faith

Statue of Equality discourse points to perils of making spirituality fashionable

VAMSEE JULURI

"WE ARE SURE even Ramanujacharya will be horrified," began a post on a small western working-class Hindu human rights group's social media feed. It is one thing to build a beautiful statue to honour a revered Guru. It may even be acceptable in a culture that values richness in worship to put a lot of gold into it. But does it make sense to call it a "Statue of Equality"?

This is a question that might well have occurred to people as they watched Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurate a giant statue of Ramanujacharya in Hyderabad on February 5. On the one hand, it seems compassionate that the visionary driving the project, the respected Chinna Jeeyar Swamiji, has chosen to celebrate Ramanuja's chief contribution as advocacy for equality. But at the same time, as we read in the website for the statue about how Ramanujacharya heralded social equality because "males did not learn in front of the females so as to keep the knowledge secret" and how the "church controlled monarchs" and how "tongues were cut" and "ears were filled with molten lead," we are left wondering what exactly Hindu religious leaders are hoping to achieve with their spectacular social change simulation daydreams.

Now, politicians can be given to hyperbole, and gurus to tales of magic and miracles to inspire love and faith. But what seems to be happening with modern Hindu religious organisations is a more fundamental confusion of purpose. And like all confusions, it stems from a disconnect with social and economic realities of class, and protestations notwithstanding, perhaps, caste privilege too. A giant gold statue can be declared as the solution to global income inequality. A gallery featuring Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, and Abraham Lincoln besides Ramanujacharya can be set up to hail them all as great "reformers". Why not Martin Luther, then? Or other "reformers" closer home?

Reality seems to be in as short a supply as platitudinous secular ideals are in a glut.

There seem to be two different threads in the experience of what is called Hinduism today. One is the practice of traditional rituals such as *yajnas*, *pujas*, *veda paaraayanas*, and so on, passed on from one generation to another. The other is the discourse around the meaning of Hinduism, a communicative, modern predilection, that manifests in forms as diverse as best-selling mythology books and the culture of volunteerism among new-age Hindu spiritual movements.

The politics of what is often called "Hindu nationalism," is yet another dimension, which intersects with each of these in different ways. There are traditionalists who support the notion of sacred lands and oppose their transformation into mass tourism sites by the government, as well as more reformist or civic nationalists who are represented in the prime minister's "toilets not temples" slogan, perhaps.

Arguably, all of this is Hinduism as it is today, at the crossroads not only of various political forces but also of intergenerational changes and choices.

It is in this context that the NGO-ification of Hinduism becomes an interesting problem. In the past few years, I have seen brochures and websites from organisations ranging from traditional Hindu lineages to the modern, more international ones increasingly erasing any discussion of the guru's teachings, philosophy, or "inner" world of Hinduism in any form, for the outward demonstration of NGO-type service.

One spiritual tradition, despite the highly sophisticated philosophical depths of its founder, represents itself now with glossy photos of schools, toilets, computers, medical camps and so on. I did not find even a token quote from the guru in their recent publication.

Now, there is clearly nothing to criticise in the performance of service as a spiritually fulfilling activity. But where the issue becomes more complicated is when it comes to the question of what, finally, is the purpose of whatever is called Hinduism. If everybody's "religion" (for lack of a better word) ends up looking like United Nations slogans about empowerment and social justice, what remains of the vast ocean of experience, creativity, art and thought that are not the business of NGOs or UN type organisations to support?

Why blame others for the vanishing of these rich traditions if these are not recognised and nurtured by Hindus who otherwise seem capable of building very large organisations (and statues)?

There is, I think, also an issue of class privilege playing out in these two dimensions of Hinduism, with the "multiplex" or "OTT" Hindus (to borrow some phrases from recent debates on cinema) taking to the performance of service (coupled with some private meditation and stress-busting perhaps) with little interest in the old-fashioned rituals and miracles of the common people, and the latter thronging the ancient temples with complete devotion to the deity and the specific traditions and customs followed in his or her (the deity's) sacred dwelling.

For the people, the "statue" is of a divinity. For the colonised urban upper classes, the statue represents, perhaps a concept, a modern ideal, a figure enshrined as "real" in "history". One group will seek miracles, and the other will seek (what it thinks) are facts. Will these two streams accommodate each other? Or will one, by sheer force of privilege, negate the experiences of the masses, seeking to constantly "reform" them?

The discourse around the "Statue of Equality" offers a poignant case study. Two different worlds are being sought to be recast as the same, when both could stay in their place for the good of all. A guru or *sampradaya*'s message should not be so flippantly changed from what it was to whatever the miseducated elites think the secular cosmopolis deems fashionable. We should listen to the people, and their *bhakti*. They obey the gods, not the desires of social status and recognition.

The writer is professor of media studies, University of San Francisco

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DIGITAL ISSUES

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, "The digital rupee" (IE, February 4). FM's Budget statement that RBI will issue digital rupees confirms the suggestion by GoI's high-level inter-ministerial committee. In 2017, it advised the RBI to introduce its own central bank digital currency (CBDC). A CBDC is not just another digital payment option. Its effects for the banking system are not clear. If there is a partial shift away from bank deposits to CBDCs, what are the implications for the role of banks in credit creation? What will be the implication for monetary policy? Such questions must be answered.

Sanjay Chopra, *Mohali*

THE REAL DRAG

THIS REFERS TO the article, "The inequality drag" (IE, Feb 4). For two successive years, the Centre provided almost 70 per cent of the population free grains to tide over hunger and distress. The insistence to put money in the pockets of the poor to generate demand to invigorate the economy or to strengthen schemes like MGNREGA is a throwback to the political economy of socialism that has failed everywhere. China became rich only after embracing market economy. The drag to our economy is ideological.

H N Bhagwat, *Chiplun*

CLIMATE AND INDIA

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'The Climate Cost of AI', (IE, February 3). The examples of Amazon, Microsoft, Alphabet announcing "net-zero policies" are less suited for the Indian scenario where the main factors of climate degradation are poverty, population, urbanisation, rising use of power, intensification of agriculture etc. India has been an early initiator of change in market regulations when SEBI, in 2012, adopted sustainability reporting and the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) related disclosures as part of the Business Responsibility Report (BRR) for the top 100 listed entities became mandatory. In 2021, the BRR was substituted by Business Responsibility and Sustainability Report (BRSR) enabling market participants to identify and assess sustainability-related risks and opportunities. BRSR will soon become mandatory for top 1,000 listed entities. India also has the National Action Plan on Climate Change.

Aerika Singh, *Chandigarh*

THE RIGHT MASK

THIS REFERS TO the article, "Why I wear a mask" (IE, February 3). The writer's arguments are based on a strong belief that masks are highly effective in preventing Covid-19. While it is true that several public health officials recommend masking, a Randomised Controlled Trial study conducted in Denmark had found no significant reduction in Covid-19 transmission due to masking. Many experts have also warned that cloth masks have no impact on viral spread.

Varun Das *via e-mail*

PUSHKAR SINGH DHAMI, CHIEF MINISTER, UTTARAKHAND

People say I didn't get enough time... I'm the last driver who has to take the vehicle to the station

Pushkar Singh Dhami discusses the BJP's chances in the coming Assembly elections, divisions in the party, the *dharm sansad* in Haridwar and dealing with challenges unique to a hill state. This session was moderated by Harikishan Sharma, Assistant Editor, *The Indian Express*

IDEA EXCHANGE

WHY PUSHKAR SINGH DHAMI

As Uttarakhand goes to the polls on February 14, Pushkar Singh Dhami, who took over as chief minister just seven months ago, has his task cut out. The state's youngest CM takes on the Congress led by veteran Harish Rawat. Will he be able to lead the BJP to victory in a state known to vote the incumbent out?

Illustration: Suvajit Dey

Harikishan Sharma: Uttarakhand has elected four Vidhan Sabhas from 2000 and, in every election, it has changed the government in power. How will you buck this trend?

Earlier there was another trend too — ever since the state was formed, whoever formed the government in the state, didn't win in Parliament elections and vice-versa. Whether it was in 2004 or 2009, this was the trend but it changed once Narendra Modi became Prime Minister of the country. There was a Congress government in Uttarakhand in 2014 and all the five Lok Sabha seats were won by the BJP. In 2019, it won the five seats again. Since Modi*ji* became the PM, the entire country's trend changed too. If you see, earlier, we never used to form the government in Assam, but now we have formed it twice. We never used to form a government in Haryana, we have done it twice. In UP, we could not form a government since 1991 but we did that in 2017 and will be doing it again in 2022, according to all opinion polls. We are confident we will form a government in Uttarakhand and that too with a huge majority.

Liz Mathew: Uttarakhand's BJP unit is famous or infamous for internal divisions. How do you see this and how will you overcome it? What are you doing to keep the party together?

Our party is united and there are no differences. Maybe there are some small differences but we are united and fighting the elections together. We have announced our candidates, the tickets have been given, our booth-level (candidates) and *panna pramukh* have been announced. Our work has started. We have always given due respect to everyone. We are all working together. Our party will form a government and with a huge margin.

Liz Mathew: The older, senior leaders in the party are unhappy that they are not getting due respect. How will you handle this in ticket distribution and campaigning?

There's nothing like that, we have given respect to all senior leaders. Did someone tell you that they haven't been given respect? Give me one name and I will tell you how much the party has paid respect to them.

Liz Mathew: You and the previous CM Trivendra Singh Rawat had to repeal the Char Dham Devasthanam Board due to the VHP's demand. You have to deal with more hardliners in your support base in Uttarakhand, when compared to other states. Ahead of the elections, have you had any discussions with the VHP?

That issue was not related to politics. The opposition to the Char Dham Devasthanam Board was not from one section of the society; there was opposition from *teerth purohits*, people from the *panda samaj*, Rawals, priests from that area. We had formed a committee under the chairmanship of our senior leader Manohar Kant Dhyani that had worked for three months. The committee submitted its report and then we created a sub-committee of the *mantri mandal*, which also gave its report. Then we took a decision to repeal the board. There's no question of politics there. Other people work for votes, we didn't work for votes. We respected everyone's sentiments and based our decision on the committee report.

> The *dharm sansad* at Haridwar was not an official event. When action was taken, they thought it was taken by the government, when it wasn't, people thought the government hadn't done anything

Liz Mathew: What do you have to say on statements by hardliners such as Yati Narsinghanand?

He talked about me, too, but I had no role in it. The law will take its course, no one can interfere with the law.

Liz Mathew: Former CM Trivendra Singh Rawat is siding with the dissenters and even withdrew his nomination. What do you have to say on it?

There's no issue of unhappiness. He was the CM for four years and is a senior leader. There's no question of unhappiness.

Liz Mathew: But why did he withdraw his nomination?

He himself said that he will work and campaign to help the party win the state. He will go to every area. Our party is big and there's no unhappiness.

Avaneesh Mishra: There's an accusation that the delay in taking action in the *dharm sansad* issue in Haridwar and then the taking of action were both done after considering political gains and losses.

The law is equal for everyone and everything followed the course of law. There's no controversy.

Avaneesh Mishra: Will you accept that there was delay in taking action?

As and when we received information, the administration did its work.

Devyani Onial: Employment is a big issue for the entire country but specially in Uttarakhand where traditionally people have migrated in search of work, leaving behind 'ghost' villages. What measures are you taking to generate employment?

First, we are working to encourage self-help groups so that along with themselves, they can provide employment to others as well. We are also thinking of simplifying and expanding the ongoing Homestay *yojana*. We are encouraging tourism, we have started bringing down prices of heliservices; we have lowered the VAT on Aviation Turbine Fuel from 20 per cent to two per cent. We are also talking of opening wellness centres in Kumaon *mandal*, Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam, and such places. To curb migration and provide work to people where they live, we started an idea series called Bodhisattva, where we invited people from NITI Aayog, scientists, advisors to the Government of India, educationists from the state, environmentalists and sociologists. We are creating a road map for the next 10 years.

Harikishan Sharma: According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey, the unemployment rate of Uttarakhand is higher than the national average. In the last year, we saw that even when the average national unemployment rate dropped a little, it increased in Uttarakhand. It seems that the work the government is doing is not percolating down to the grassroots.

We had started the work but then there was a lockdown. Therefore, a lot of work that was supposed to happen didn't happen. But the work will definitely be done and we have a long-term vision.

Vandita Mishra: On the *dharm sansad* issue, you talked about the law taking its own course. But there's also the question of moral and political responsibility. You are the CM of the state, don't you think you should have said something on such talk that vitiates the atmosphere and makes it difficult for people to live together?

It was not an official event nor had they asked us anything. Neither did we sponsor the event nor did we invite them. When action was taken, they thought it was taken by the government and when action was not taken, people thought the government had not done anything. There was no role of the government. When the matter came before the law, the law followed its course.

Vandita Mishra: You didn't think there was a need to make a political statement?

It's not an issue related to us, so why would we give a statement?

Aakash Joshi: Since the formation of Uttarakhand, there has been an accusation that there's more focus on the Terai region, the plain regions, while the state was created for the hills. If you win, will Gairsain be made the capital?

We have already made Gairsain the summer capital and it is our priority. Gairsain is the centre of our sentiment. It's at the heart of the state and the Uttarakhand movement. The people have connections to Gairsain. We will develop it in the form of a capital.

Aakash Joshi: Your popularity has been quite high in the opinion polls. But there's a complaint from the ground level that you have not been given enough time. Do you have any regrets that you didn't get enough time before the elections?

People are saying I got less time and even I say that. The people of Uttarakhand know that I used my strength and energy (to work for the state). Keeping that in mind, the people will give us the next five years.

> How will development take place or tourists come to the state if there are no roads? Our state is centred around tourism, pilgrimage and power. But going forward, we will take care of our ecology and economy

Aakash Joshi: The way Hinduism was practised in Uttarakhand is different from other states. There is a complaint that since animal slaughter was made illegal in temples, there are a few people who are doing it clandestinely and people in local politics are taking advantage of that. Do you think it was right to pass legislation on an issue which is connected to people's faith? Do you think these older traditions (of animal slaughter) were wrong and the law had to interfere in them?

Some things don't change because of a law — people have to understand. People are slowly incorporating good practices and older traditions are slowly ending. People are moving forward from the practices of those times.

Harikishan Sharma: You said you have been given less time; you have completed only 208 days since your term began in July. There seems to be a trend that the sitting CMs lose their seats — your two predecessors, Congress's Harish Rawat and BJP's BC Khanduri lost theirs. In 2012, you won Khatima with a margin of more than 5,000 votes, but in 2017, the vote margin reduced to around 2,700. Will your constituency be a challenge for you this time?

There's no challenge. Every election is different. They were difficult elections for me but the people helped me win and blessed me. This time, the people have asked me to tour the state and have said they will take care of the poll in my constituency. Hence, I am not even thinking about my constituency. It was only on their advice that I filed my nomination from there.

> We have already made Gairsain the summer capital. It is our priority. Gairsain is at the centre of our sentiment. It's at the heart of the state and of the Uttarakhand movement

Harikishan Sharma: Do you think the protests over farm laws will affect the polls in your constituency, which has many farmers and Sikhs?

I am a farmer myself. All the people of Udhamsingh Nagar are happy that I became the CM. All of them will work to form a government because they feel their brother or son has reached this place.

Avaneesh Mishra: Elections in Uttarakhand have always focused on the Army. Congress, AAP and your party are all making a lot of promises but Congress has given tickets to only three former Army men and your party has given a ticket to only one — Ganesh Joshi.

I am the son of a soldier. There are also other people, including Ganesh Joshi, who are from Army families. I am proud that I am a soldier's son and my party has given me the opportunity to work in the role of a CM. Our party always respects soldiers, while other parties just pretend to do so. A Congress leader used to say that (recently deceased Chief of Defence staff) General (Bipin) Rawat is a *galli ka gunda* (street gangster). When it comes to votes, they are posting big photographs of him now. Another party used to ask soldiers for accounts of the surgical strike and incite riots. The people of Uttarakhand are well aware, very nationalistic and proud. They know what people have done.

Avaneesh Mishra: Be it BC Khanduri or TPS Rawat, whenever ex-servicemen have entered politics, they have made a mark. Don't you think if more servicemen get tickets, it would send a positive message among the public?

In our party, we chose candidates from the names that emerged from the workers. We definitely chose those people on a priority basis.

Avaneesh Mishra: Congress and AAP are promising several things in their campaigns but the BJP's campaign is centred around what it has done, rather than saying what it will do in the future.

The people of Uttarakhand know that it's only the BJP that has done work and will continue to do so. The other parties are not able to fulfill their promises in other states, how will they fulfill them in Uttarakhand? They raise issues of price rise and unemployment but in states where they are in government — Punjab, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan — they have not been able to solve these issues. Then how will they be able to solve them in Uttarakhand? They were here for 10 years — did they end unemployment?

Avaneesh Mishra: But I think BJP's electoral promises are fewer this time...

We don't want to give any false promises. The people of Uttarakhand believe in us and Modi*ji* and we only talk about the things that we can deliver. People have seen Modi's performance in the last five years.

Avaneesh Mishra: Many people who wanted to contest on a BJP ticket are planning to fight independently. Do you see that as your loss?

When you are in line to become a candidate and then you don't get a ticket, you feel a little bad. But we have spoken to all of them. They are our old workers, they won't go anywhere and will stay with the party.

Liz Mathew: Usually, the contest in Uttarakhand has been between Congress and the BJP. This time there's a lot of buzz around AAP. In how many constituencies do you think there will be a fight between BJP and AAP? How do you look at the emergence of AAP?

We won't have a fight with anyone, the election will be one-sided. Our slogan this time is "*Ab ki baar*, 60 *paar*." Now your survey is showing 45-50, but till the election day we will reach 60. The blessings of the people of Uttarakhand are with us and with Modi*ji*.

Harikishan Sharma: Going into the elections, what do you think will work in your favour and what will go against you?

We have people's blessings and they know we have fulfilled our promises. These are the factors that will favour us. The six months or so that the people of Uttarakhand, my leadership, PM Modi, the party's national chairman and the high command gave me, I have tried to give my 100 per cent. I have devoted every moment to it. There are no factors against us. Everyone is saying that I got less time, so I am requesting for more time so that I can work more.

Shubhajit Roy: It seems that you are projecting the work that you have done in the last six-seven months while you've not highlighted the work of the previous two chief ministers from your party.

I talk about the six months because I was working more and taking more decisions. People before me have also done good work. The vehicle has started moving, only the driver has changed. I am the last driver who has to take it to the station and, hence, I can talk more about the time I have driven the vehicle.

Shubhajit Roy: There's a lot of support among people for you. Who do you give this credit to? To the three previous CMs, Modi, Amit Shah or to Yati Narsinghanand?

Definitely, it is Modi*ji*. Any poll that happens today cannot happen without him because of the work he has done for the poor, the common man and people at the lowest rung of society. The work Modi*ji* has done for aviation, rail, road, giving free COVID-19 vaccines, or bringing in Ayushman Bharat Yojana, Swachh Bharat, Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, Ujjwala Yojana, and several other schemes, no one else has. That's why I want to give credit only to Modi*ji*.

Devyani Onial: Do you think so many big infrastructure projects — widening of highways, the Char Dham corridor — in an ecologically fragile state such as Uttarakhand may have short-term benefits but can do harm in the long run?

Roads are necessary to travel from one part of the hills to another. How will development take place or tourists come to the state if there are no roads? How will pilgrims come? Our state is centred around tourism, pilgrimage and power. But going forward, we will take care of our ecology and our economy. We also have to move towards *atma nirbharata* (self-reliance). We have done a lot of homework on this.

Dalit minor girl raped, killed in UP, 2 held: cops

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 6

GONDA POLICE on Saturday arrested two youths for alleged gangrape and murder of a 17-year-old Dalit girl when she had gone out for some work. A third accused in the case is absconding.

Police said the main accused, against whom a reward of Rs 25,000 was earlier announced, was arrested after a brief encounter. He suffered a bullet injury in the leg and is undergoing treatment, said police

According to police, they recovered the body of the minor girl in a field on Thursday night. "There were injury marks on her face. During preliminary examination, it was found that the girl was sexually assaulted before she was killed," police said.

On the father's complaint, an FIR was lodged against unidentified persons on charges of gangrape and murder.

"With the help of surveillance, police came to know the involvement of the three men in the case. Later, in separate encounters, two accused were arrested," said a police officer, adding that so far the accused don't have any criminal history.

"One of those arrested is the girl's neighbour, while another hails from a neighbouring village. One of the accused was known to the girl," added the police officer.

The autopsy report said the girl was strangulated, said police.

MAN ARRESTED FOR ABDUCTION, RAPE OF MINOR IN BHARATPUR

Jaipur: A 26-year-old man has been arrested for allegedly abducting and raping a minor girl while she was on her way to school in Rajasthan's Bharatpur district, police said on Sunday.

Bharatpur SP Shyam Singh said Vikram Singh Jatav was arrested on Saturday based on a complaint lodged by the girl's father. The complainant alleged that the accused abducted his daughter and raped her on gun point, police said. The SP said a case under relevant sections of IPC and the POCSO Act has been registered. **PTI**

WHITE ALL AROUND

Tourists at the Ridge in Shimla on Sunday. *PTI*

First batch of workers stuck in Mali return home: 'Relieved'

ABHISHEK ANGAD
RANCHI, FEBRUARY 6

WEEKS AFTER their distress calls, the first batch of seven Indian workers out of the 33 who were stranded in Mali without their earnings and their passports returned to the country on Saturday.

After landing at the Ranchi airport, they kissed the ground in relief. Their ordeal was over.

The issue first came to the Jharkhand government's attention in January as the workers appealed Indian authorities for help on social media. They said it was their last hope as their employer did not pay them for months and their contractor, who recruited them for the job in the west African nation, allegedly vanished with their passports.

State labour minister Satyanand Bhokta found out about their case last month and alerted Chief Minister Hemant Soren, who directed the state's migrant cell to confirm their identities. Three weeks later, with the help of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the diplomatic outreach, seven of the workers returned to their homes in Hazaribagh and Giridh districts. Officials said the others will return in a phased manner.

Santosh Mahato, 26, is one of them. He told *The Indian Express* he went to Mali in January 2021 to work as a "fitter" (technician) with a power transmission company

"We had gone last January through a local contractor, and we were promised around Rs 27,000 per month but we were not paid the same amount. Some were not paid for six months and some were paid Rs 27,000 for three months of work… We wanted our money, but the contractor vanished with our passports. We did not know what to do. On social media, we cried for help and we are so relieved to get back home." Mahato said from his home in Hazaribagh.

The Migrant Control Room's head Johnson Topno said that they started the process of verification and contacted the family members of the workers. "Everyone was in panic and we calmed them down, got all the details of the workers," he said.

Once the details were verified, Jharkhand labour commissioner A Muthukumar wrote to the Indian Embassy in Mali on January 17, saying: "It is to submit that 33 workers belonging to district Hazaribagh and Giridih have sent messages through social media that they are stranded in Mali . They have not been paid salaries from the last three months by the Company Kalpataru Power Transmission Limited. They have requested to get back to India. Kindly look into the matter and help in expediting their return to India as early as possible."

Two days later, Mali officials and the Indian Embassy held a meeting along with the company employees and an agreement was signed, according to the Jharkhand Migrant Control Room official.

In the agreement, the company said it will facilitate the return of the Indian workers – employed in Bougouni and Hermenkoro for a power transmission line project in Mali -- and guarantee two months' salary for each of the 33.

Topno said: "The entire machinery became active and the Centre and the state coordinated with Mali officials."

J&K: BSF kills 3 Pak smugglers, seizes 36 kg drugs

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 6:

THREE PAKISTANI nationals, who were attempting to smuggle narcotics, were killed along the international border in Samba sector of the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir, said the Border Security Force officials on Sunday.

On Sunday, the BSF troops who were maintaining high alert despite prevailing chilly and foggy weather conditions noticed three people crossing the International Border from the Pakistan side trying to smuggle narcotics, said a BSF spokesperson. The troops opened fire killing all of them on the spot, the spokesperson added.

Later during search, the troops seized 36 kg of heroin-like narcotics contained in one kg packet each, one 9mm pistol made in Italy along with a magazine and nine rounds, Pakistani currency worth Rs 9820, a knife, a plastic pipe and a bottle of cough syrup, the spokesperson added.

"The troops have in a year seized a total of 79 kgs of heroin," D K Boora, IG BSF Jammu Frontier, said.

Drug regulator okays single-dose Sputnik Light for restricted use

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

THE INDIAN drug regulator on Sunday granted emergency use permission to Russia's single-dose Sputnik Light Covid vaccine in the country – adding to the arsenal of shots approved for use against the pandemic in the country.

Sputnik Light is the ninth vaccine to be granted restricted-use approval by the Drugs Controller General of India for adults in India. "This will further strengthen the nation's collective fight against the pandemic," Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya tweeted.

Developed by Russia's Gamaleya Center, Sputnik Light is built on a human adenovirus vector platform – when instructions are sent through a proxy and a harmless virus to trigger an immune reaction.

Sputnik Light is the same as component-1 of the Russian two-dose Sputnik V vaccine that has been used in India's vaccination drive. India has administered close to 12 lakh doses of Sputnik V in the vaccination drive so far.

The decision comes days after the subject expert panel on vaccines recommended DCGI to grant emergency use authorisation (EUA) to Russia's Sputnik Light, sources said on Friday.

According to the Russian Direct Investment Fund, which backs and funds Sputnik, the single-shot vaccine demonstrated around 70 per cent efficacy against infection by the Delta variant.

It can be effective as a booster dose against the Omicron variant, RDIF recently announced. "A preliminary study of the Gamaleya Center has found Sputnik Light significantly increases virus neutralising activity against Omicron based on sera 2-3 months after revaccination with 100% of individuals revaccinated with Sputnik Light as a booster having developed neutralizing antibodies against this variant," RDIF had said.

On Sunday, RDIF's head Kirill Dmitriev reiterated in a statement that Sputnik Light can be the "the solution to increase efficacy and duration of other vaccines, including against Omicron variant".

(WITH AGENCY INPUTS)

KARNATAKA HIJAB ROW

2 held for carrying lethal weapons near Udupi college protest site

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, FEBRUARY 6

THE KARNATAKA police on Sunday said they have arrested two people who were allegedly carrying lethal weapons at Udupi district's Kundapur where Government PU College students are staging a protest since Friday opposing the ban on wearing hijab (head scarf) on the campus.

The police said they arrested Abdul Majeed (32) and Rajab Gangolli (41) of Gangolli village near Kundapur. "Based on an information, we found out that there were five people who were carrying lethal weapons, we managed to nab two, while the others escaped," police added.

A case has been registered in Kundapur police station.

The police said the accused were near Government PU college in Kundapur where the Muslim students were staging protest against the college administration, which denied entry to students wearing hijab. On Thursday, the Government PU College, Kundapur in Udupi district denied entry to 25 students who were wearing hijab.

Meanwhile, on Sunday, students of the Kundapur College submitted a memorandum to Additional Deputy Commissioner Sadashiva Prabhu requesting to allow them inside classrooms wearing hijab.

In a directive validating decision of state education institutions prohibiting Muslim girl students from wearing the hijab, the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in the state, on Saturday, had said "clothes which disturb equality, integrity and public law and order should not be worn".

The Karnataka High Court has listed this matter for Tuesday.

Meanwhile, speaking on the issue, former chief minister and Janata Dal (Secular) leader HD Kumaraswamy, on Sunday, said, "In schools and colleges where they were already wearing the hijab, let them continue to do so, but in the colleges where the demand has started now, let it not be allowed."

Caretaker, son held for ignoring 77-yr-old Parsi man's sickness causing his death

SAGAR RAJPUT
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 6

THE MATUNGA police recently arrested a caretaker and her son on charges of criminal conspiracy and culpable homicide not amounting to murder for intentionally ignoring the sickness of a 77-year-old Parsi man that eventually led to his death at his residence in Dadar.

The case was registered on December 15, over a year after the man, identified as Yezdiar Edel Behram, died, after which the police arrested the duo as the investigators ascertained that the they purposely did not rush him to hospital after he fell critically ill to usurp his property.

DCP Vijay Patil (zone IV) confirmed the arrest and said, "We have found that they intended to cause his death so that they can take over the victim's property. Because soon after his death, the caretaker, Mangal Gaikwad, transferred the electric meter of his Dadar Parsi colony home on her name."

Police said Behram died on October 8, 2020. His caretaker Gaikwad was looking after his basic needs since the time his wife passed away in 2016. Gaikwad was hired by Behram's daughter Natasha Sethna, who stays with her family in Andheri.

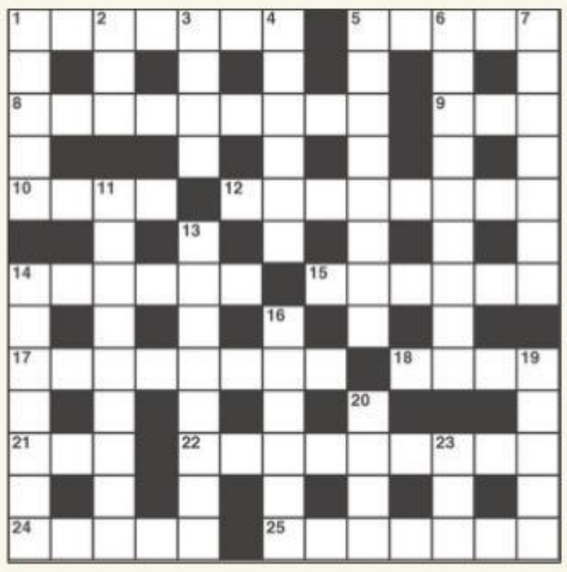
According to the statement of Sethna to the Matunga police, Behram turned critically ill on October 5, 2020, and Gaikwad called up the family doctor, who sent his assistant to check.

The assistant advised Gaikwad, who by then had given people an impression that she was related to him, to take Behram to a hospital as he was critical. But she ignored the assistant's advice.

The incident came to light when the duo took his remains to the Tower of Silence to conduct the final rights. The priest there, who knew the family, called his daughter and informed her that a woman, who claims to be his wife had got his remains there and was conducting the final rights.

The investigators further added that the duo were released on bail and they are on the lookout for a private doctor, who helped them with a forged death certificate.

CROSSWORD 4657



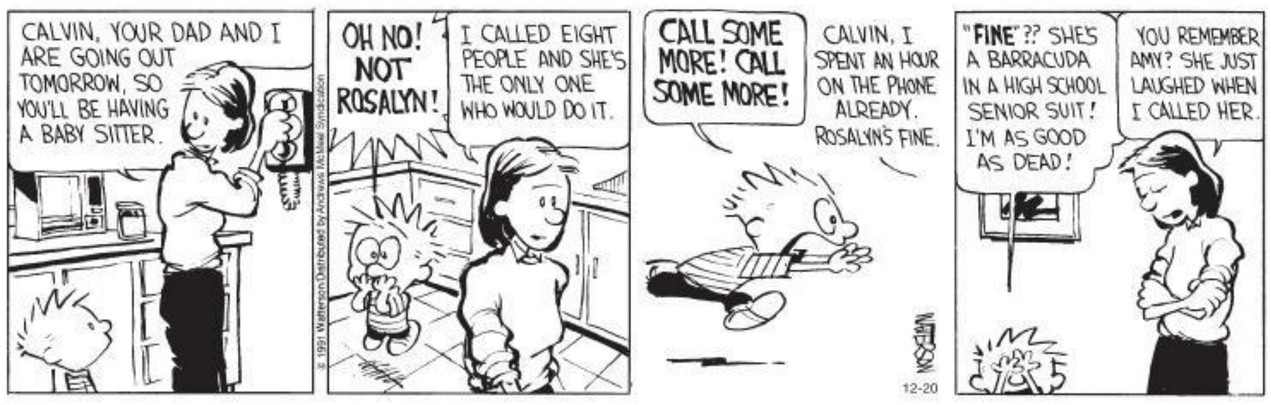
ACROSS
1 Reads about Perseus (7)
5 A boring tool for a carpenter to use (5)
8 Wake up to a neighbourly invitation (4,5)
9 A point-to-point animal (3)
10 An aspect of spin? (4)
12 Wool gatherer? (8)
14 Visit but speak without entering? (4,2)
15 A vote to the other side? (6)
17 Moneylender's overtures? (8)
18 Appear to make a sound joint (4)
21 Black salt (3)
22 No longer in the cast but in touch (3,2,4)
24 Acted as a beginner (5)
25 Emergency rations for fighting? (7)

DOWN
1 Steps - quiet ones (5)
2 Spirited trumpet piece (3)
3 A certain agreement (4)
4 A variety we hear still to be discovered (6)
5 Interview everybody in the theatre (8)
6 Imposing design - or a disaster (9)
7 Makes someone take notice? (7)
11 Set free and handed over (9)
13 Standing directive for road users (8)
14 Quite out of order (7)
16 Worst cry of pain to give (6)
19 A month to live perhaps (5)
20 A return of service that's way off (4)
23 Part of the arable acreage (3)

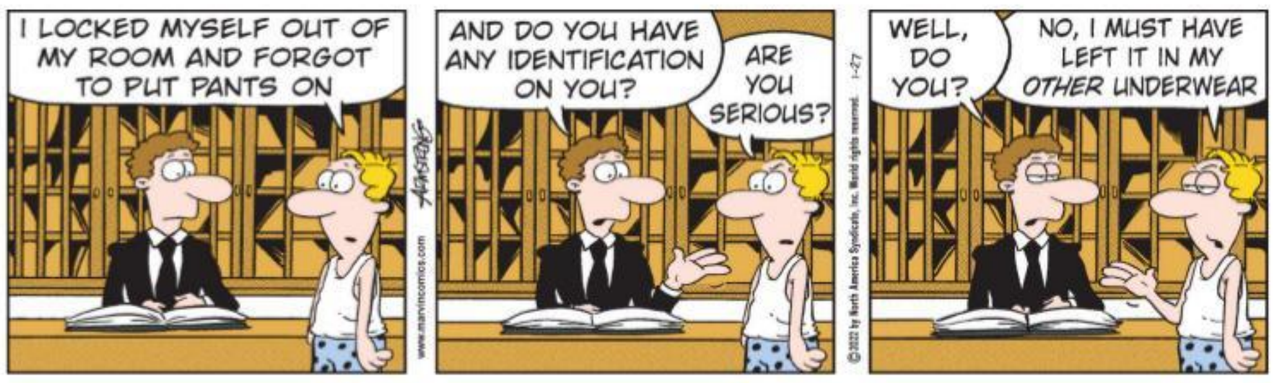
Solutions Crossword 4656: Across: 1 Hastings, 5 Skis, 9 Rimed, 10 Exhibit, 11 And fast rules, 13 Larger, 14 Spread, 17 Horse soldier, 20 Bifocal, 21 Scorn, 22 Toes, 23 Prospect. **Down:** 1 Hard , 2 Seminar, 3 Indifference, 4 Grease, 6 Kabul, 7 Set aside, 8 Chiropodists, 12 Alphabet, 15 Eyesore, 16 Bowler, 18 Rifle, 19 Unit.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis

CALVIN & HOBBES by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)
Please don't wait for others to give you the green light. The Sun is now mixing with a sector of your horoscope responsible for thought and communication, so it's time to get going. Prevaricate no longer, for if you blow this week's opportunity, you might have a long wait until the chance comes around again.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)
There are significant lunar alignments coming up in a few days' time, an indication that the right moves this week could lead to a very profitable business association in the near future. Expect heartening news by the end of the week, and set your sights on your highest goals.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
The Moon is now playing a deeply sociable role. If you need friends, allies and supporters later in the week, now is the time to do the spadework, convincing other people and partners that you are the face of the future. Just one problem though, the facts may be anything but clear.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
Let's look at the long-term for a change: special planets together are urging you to make a renewed bid for freedom, re-establishing your personal independence in all the areas that count. Sheer enthusiasm takes you part of the way, but you'll have to put in the extra hours as well.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)
Professional schemes should now be under way. You still have a few weeks to discuss plans, cross the t's and dot the i's, but the foundations should now be laid. From this vantage point you should broaden your horizons and contemplate a more fulfilling existence.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)
Because this week's lunar patterns stimulate lively regions of your chart, your priority will be to be noticed. This is no time to hide behind a poor self-image or a mistaken notion that certain goals are beyond you. The future will be here sooner than you think.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)
Stick to the rules and conventional methods and you won't go far wrong. You see, whatever your feelings today, the week's planetary configurations run solidly in your favour, and there is little that can go wrong. The Moon, by the way, could help you clear up a mystery.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 22)
Certain things need to be said and a few home truths delivered, especially now that Mercury is edging towards its confrontational relationship with Pluto. Clear the air now and you'll avert traumas in weeks to come. Not only that, but partners will thank you for it.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23 - Dec 22)
Don't expect instant results or demand that partners fit in with your plans. Imminent lunar patterns are bound to adjust your ideas, so whatever is decided now will be changed by the end of the week. That's why you'll do best to keep your options open and your diary free.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)
Maximise the feel-good factor. It is clear from this week's stars that the potential is present for a radical boost in your physical well-being. Now is the time to take whatever appropriate action is called for. Rest and relaxation are required.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)
Powerful lunar movements overshadow your emotions this week. Therefore, don't just sit around day-dreaming about exotic places, do something about it. If family members are waiting to hear from you, don't delay. Get out there and let them know you care.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)
You have an unfortunate habit of being too self-critical. You may therefore imagine that you have offended people or embarrassed yourself when in fact your behaviour has either gone unnoticed, or, in some cases, it's actually been highly appreciated.

JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.

___is never without ____, but seldom with a good One - Benjamin Franklin (5,.,6)

HVAEE
ANOINT
ADARR
STOGIE

SOLUTION: HEAVE, RADAR, NATION, EGOIST
Answer: **Anger** is never without **Reason**, but seldom with a good One
- Benjamin Franklin

SUDOKU 4738

Difficulty Level 3s
Instructions
To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

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

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

SOLUTION SUDOKU 4737

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

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

TRACKING INDIA'S COVID CURVE

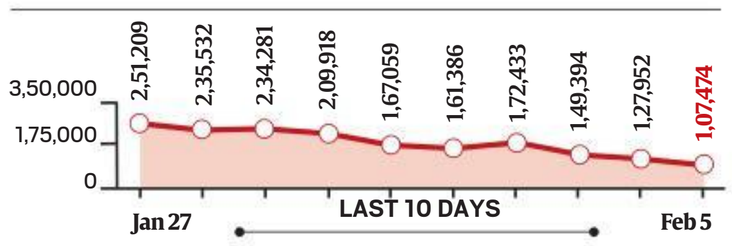
DASHBOARD, AS ON FEB 5

706 DAYS SINCE PANDEMIC BEGAN

New cases	Active cases	Deaths
1,07,474	12,25,011	865

Weekly CFR: 0.37% | Overall CFR: 1.28% | Total deaths: 5,01,979

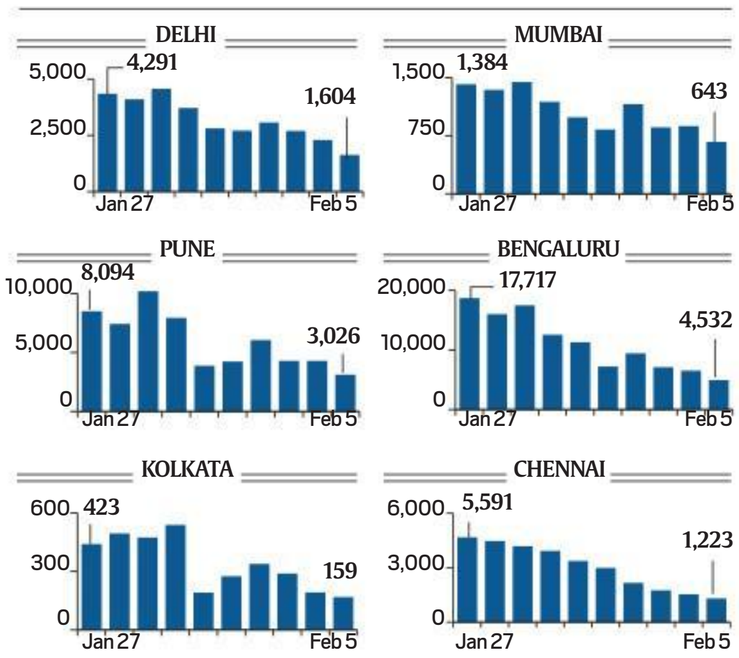
NEW CASES, DAILY



SURGE IN THE STATES

State	ON FEBRUARY 2			Weekly positivity
	New cases	Active cases	Deaths	
Kerala	33538	3,53,152	444	39.77%
Karnataka	12009	1,09,236	50	13.09%
Maharashtra	11394	1,33,655	73	10.27%
Tamil Nadu	7524	1,38,878	37	11.05%
Rajasthan	5602	51143	19	14.53%

CASES IN THE CITIES, LAST 10 DAYS

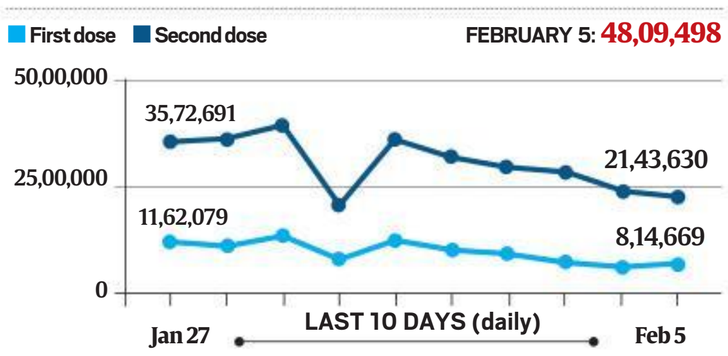


TOTAL TESTS 74,01,87,141

TESTS ON FEB 5	WEEKLY POSITIVITY	OVERALL POSITIVITY
22,54,908	8.56%	5.70%

INDIA TOTAL DOSES 169,46,26,697

(Adults 1st dose: 89,97,98,864; 2nd: 72,51,53,271; 15-18 age group 1st dose: 4,92,84,464; 2nd: 56,62,424; precautionary: 1,47,27,674)



EXPLAINED CULTURE

The Lata phenomenon

What made Lata Mangeshkar, who died on Sunday, the soundtrack for generations in the subcontinent? Exploring the musician through her songs, her commitment to perfection, and the women she gave voice to

Then PM Jawaharlal Nehru with Lata Mangeshkar in Mumbai in May 1960. *Express Archive*

SUANSHU KHURANA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

WHEN A newly-independent India, still coming to terms with the bloodbath of the Partition, heard Lata Mangeshkar sing *Yun hi muskuraye ja, aansu piye ja… uthaye ja unke sitam* from the Nargis Dutt-Raj Kapoor-Dilip Kumar-starrer *Andaz* (1949), it seemed like a salve for broken hearts. When the song reached the other side of the border, the Naushad composition had the same effect — after all, the separation pangs were the same on either side. The song turned a 20-year-old Mangeshkar, a newcomer from Kolhapur, into a superstar and the gold standard of genius.

Undisputed queen

"*Kambakhat, galti se bhi besuri nahi hoti*," Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali had once said of her. Indeed, so pervasive was Mangeshkar's influence that generations have grown up listening to her, singing her songs, and, in the case of women musicians, aspiring to be like her.

If Hindi films have been the life of India's masses, the soundtrack to their lives has been its music. The audience formed an emotional connection with the singers: you were either a Rafi believer or a Kishore Kumar acolyte. But when it came to Mangeshkar, she was the undisputed queen, who could sing everything from bhajans such as *Allah tero naam* (*Hum Dono*, 1961, composed by Jaidev and penned by Sahir Ludhianvi) to love songs such as *Ye zindagi usi ki hai* (*Anarkali*, 1953) or nostalgic numbers such as *Mere saaya saath hoga* (*Mera Saaya*, 1966).

Through several decades, Lata Mangeshkar sang for the righteous and chaste Indian woman on-screen, while her sister Asha Bhosle sang numbers that called for sensuality. Mangeshkar had such charisma that filmmakers and composers realised very early on that having her in a project signalled credibility and impeccable standards. Much before a film was shot, the composer, lyricist and singers were signed on for the project. This meant that several films that did badly at the box office had outstanding music helmed by Mangeshkar, that reached listeners through radio, a ubiquitous mode of entertainment in those early days after Independence. In fact, it was radio that took her voice to different parts of the country and made her synonymous with Hindi playback singing.

Singing for various heroines

Mangeshkar never took talent for granted. She would spend time on her rehearsals, practise her diction and ensure immaculate renditions. Once, when superstar Dilip Kumar told her to improve her diction, she asked a family friend, an imam, to come and teach her to read and write Urdu. She sang in a range of Indian languages — from Bengali to Marathi — her mother tongue — to Punjabi. If those in Punjab sang alongside her rendition of Baba Bulleh Shah's *Heer*, those in Maharashtra swayed to the tune of her *Saanwre rang rachi* and her *Na jeyo na* was a staple at every Durga Puja function in West Bengal. She was a unifying factor, who brought the nation together as a repository of its culture, entertainment and, of course, music.

As films moved to less formulaic tropes, Bollywood, too, underwent changes. Directors moved towards authenticity in representation, and, here Mangeshkar was a huge success, setting standards in playback singing. She sang the way her heroines spoke, moving away from the thick, nasal *gayaki* popularised by Noor Jehan or Shamshad Begum, that had, till then been the standard. She could sing for an entire range of characters — from a poetry-loving village girl in a prison (*Mora gora ang layi le*, *Bandini*, 1963), to a witty and defiant courtesan in Akbar's Sheesh Mahal (*Pyaar kiya toh darna kya*, *Mughal-e-Azam*, 1960), to a woman savouring the rains as she shares an umbrella with the man she loves (*Pyaar huya iqrar huya*, *Shri 420*, 1955) to an emotional mother trying to fend for her children by ploughing the field (*Duniya mein hum aaye hain toh*, *Mother India*, 1957), to a young woman who has just broken away from the shackles of a claustrophobic relationship (*Aaj phir jeene ki tamanna hai*, *Guide*, 1965) to a young singer who's lost her unborn child (*Tere mere milan ki*, *Abhimaan*, 1973). And who can forget Kavi Pradeep's seminal *Aye mere watan ke logo*, in the wake of the Sino-Indian war of 1962, that reduced then prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru to tears and has been a fixture at every patriotic function for nearly five decades?

One of the lesser-known facts about Mangeshkar is that she transformed the way Indian music concerts were perceived in the West. Her first performance outside of India was at London's prestigious Royal Albert Hall in 1974. Until then, film music concerts were song-and-dance affairs held in community halls and colleges and rarely taken seriously. Mangeshkar made a demand that was inconceivable back then — she asked to sing in mainstream halls only. This was an honour that until then bestowed upon classical musicians as a result of Pandit Ravi Shankar's collaborations and performances in the West. But it was an honour afforded to her.

Committed to perfection

Even when technology brought in changes, demanding less and less finesse on part of playback singers, fixing flaws in pitch and sur on the console instead, Mangeshkar remained steadfast in her commitment to perfection. Until the 1990s, when Mangeshkar sang more regularly, performances resembled live-stage performances, preceded by extensive rehearsals. They were communal affairs, with 100-piece orchestras divided into string, wind and rhythm sections, coming together in mammoth studios to record one song. If one didn't nail it the first time, the process had to be repeated all over again. But the arrival of auto-tuners changed the game and that used to rankle with her.

If she taught the musicians how to approach music with clarity and focus, for listeners, she was an institution in herself. In her death, India has lost one of her most revered musicians, but she has left behind an immaculate oeuvre that will continue to give listeners joy, comfort and courage for times to come.

SHE LENT HER VOICE TO...

DUNIYA MEIN HUM AAYE HAIN

Mother India (1957): As Nargis is shown ploughing the field to support her family, one hears the struggle in Mangeshkar's voice

AAJ PHIR JEENE KI TAMANNA HAI

Guide (1965): Mangeshkar sang for Waheeda Rehman who played Rosie, a woman who finds freedom from a loveless marriage

PYAAR KIYA TOH DARNA KYA

Mughal-e-Azam (1960): Mangeshkar sang this defiant number for Madhubala who played a feisty courtesan dancing in Akbar's court

CHALTE CHALTE

Pakeezah (1972): Picturised on Meena Kumari, who plays the courtesan waiting for the man who fell in love with her ghungroo-laden feet

RAINA BEETI JAAYE

Amar Prem (1972): Sharmila Tagore plays a simple woman who becomes a sex worker to support herself, but what she has is purity in her music

YAARA SEELI SEELI

Lekin (1990): Mangeshkar sang this for Dimple Kapadia, who plays a restless ghost in search for salvation. The octave shifts by Mangeshkar made it into one of her finest hours.

MAAYE NI MAAYE

Hum Aapke Hain Koun…! (1994): Mangeshkar sang this for Madhuri Dixit. The voice that had been singing for half a century hadn't aged a bit.

The ecological cost of creating artificial snow for Winter Olympics

SHASHANK NAIR
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

THE COST of the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing has been a snow-making operation by China that has highlighted the poor ecological conditions of the area, and massive amounts of water that have gone into the effort. A report released by Sport Ecology Group at Loughborough University and Save Our Winters has looked into the dangers of artificial snow on athletes' bodies and the amount of water used up to produce the snow.

How is artificial snow created?

Snow injected with water to harden it, and then treated with chemicals to keep it in place, is a form of artificial snow recommended for winter competitions. High volumes of water and energy are required to create slopes of artificial snow that are competition-ready.

For the Beijing Games, machines from an Italian company, TechnoAlpin, have been creating artificial snow since November 2021. These pump out ice particles and a thin mist of water vapour, which are launched up to 60 m in the air where they combine to become snow and fall to the ground. TechnoAlpin has been using 290 snow cannons in Beijing, according to *The Sunday Times*.

Is this the way in all Winter Games?

For the 2014 Sochi Olympics, Russia used 80% artificial snow. That rose to 90% for the Pyongyang Games. The 2010 Vancouver Games had to use helicopters to fly in snow.

The Beijing region is known to be low on water and thin on ice, thanks to an over-reliance on groundwater coupled with the melting of glaciers since the 1950s. According to a Greenpeace study in 2018, China's glaciers had melted by 82% and one-fifth of the ice cover had been lost since the 1950s.

These Games are estimated to require around 49 million gallons of water to be converted into snow. For perspective, that much water would fill 74 Olympic-sized pools.

Where does so much water come from?

According to a *New York Times* report, Beijing diverted water from Baihebao reservoir to the Guishui river, which is usually dry during the winters. Earlier, water from Baihebao would be directed to households in Beijing. Even before the Games' preparations began, Beijing was facing a water crisis and had to connect a series of waterways that transported trillions of gallons of water from the south of the country to the north.

Officials in Zhangjiakou have turned off tens of thousands of acres worth of irrigation water to create artificial snow. Farmers have been resettled in high-rise apartments.

What is the environmental cost?

Another major problem in the region is that its average precipitation over the last four decades periodically is below 8 mm. That combined with dry weather means water gets lost to evaporation and winds during the ice-making process. Therefore, water is being pumped into the soil, which will harden and create a surface where artificial snow will not melt. An experiment by researchers in Switzerland found that at least 35% of the water used to make artificial snow was lost.

The Chinese have said that they would limit the impact of snow-making by reusing this snow to boost groundwater reserves. "We've collected surface water for snow-making, and we don't need to tap any underground water. It has no impact on the environment," Li Zhenlong, facility manager at the national cross-country skiing centre in Zhangjiakou, told *The Sunday Times*.

An International Olympic Committee evaluation report said mountains in Beijing had "minimal annual snowfall" and the country's hosting was completely dependent on the production of artificial snow.

What is the future of such attempts?

The Loughborough University report states that by 2050, only 10 of the 20 venues that have hosted the Winter Olympics since 1924 will be able to produce an amount of snow that is capable of holding an international-level competition like the Winter Olympics. The survival of the Winter Games is based on the production of artificial snow.

WARMING GAMES VENUES

By midcentury, many prior Winter Games locations may be too warm to ever host the Olympics again.

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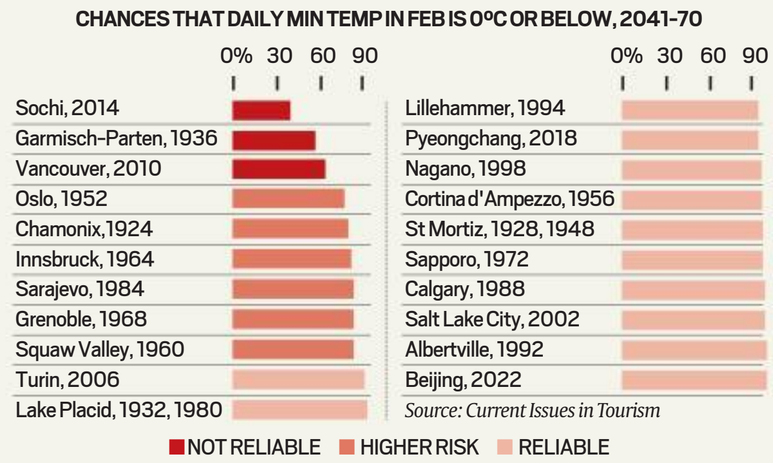

Source: Current Issues in Tourism

Note: Charts represent a high emissions future (RCP 8.5)
Graphic: The New York Times

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MEANWHILE

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION MUST END: POPE

Pope Francis condemned female genital mutilation and trafficking of women for prostitution, calling them humiliating affronts to women's dignity and urging officials to do everything possible to end both. "This practice, which is unfortunately common in various parts of the world, humiliates the dignity of a woman and gravely attacks her physical integrity," Francis said, speaking on the UN International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation.

TOP OF THE WORLD

President Pedro Castillo said on Friday he would reshuffle the Cabinet. *Reuters*

PERU

After four days on job, Peru PM resigns

Lima: Peruvian Prime Minister Hector Valer confirmed on Saturday that he is departing just four days after being named to the post, following allegations that he beat his daughter and late wife, creating a new leadership vacuum in the Andean nation. President Pedro Castillo said on Friday he would reshuffle the Cabinet in light of the allegations, but did not address whether Valer would leave. Castillo must now name his fourth cabinet in just six months, which he said will incorporate representatives of a range of political groups. It is unclear when an announcement will take place. **AP**

UNITED KINGDOM

Giuffre case: Prince Andrew to give proof next month

London: Britain's Prince Andrew will give evidence next month in the sex abuse lawsuit brought by Virginia Giuffre, a source close to the Prince said on Saturday. The Duke of York, who denies accusations that he sexually abused Giuffre two decades ago when she was 17, will speak under oath in London, the Daily Telegraph reported. "We agreed to voluntarily produce the Duke for a deposition on March 10. Despite repeated requests, Giuffre still hasn't committed to a date or location for her deposition," the source said. **REUTERS**

MOROCCO

5-year-old boy trapped in well dies before rescue

Rabat: A five-year-old boy trapped in a well in northern Moroccan for five days died before rescuers were able to reach him late on Saturday and retrieve his body, government officials said. Footage posted on social media showed the scene after his body was recovered, with hundreds of distraught rescue workers and onlookers gathered at the site. Rayan Awram fell into the well at his village of Ighran on Tuesday, triggering a huge rescue effort that engrossed the country. **REUTERS**

Rishi Sunak admits to attending Downing Street lockdown party

H S RAO
LONDON, FEBRUARY 6

UK'S INDIAN-ORIGIN Chancellor Rishi Sunak has admitted to attending Prime Minister Boris Johnson's lockdown birthday party in 2020 but refused to say what happened when he entered the room and claimed that he was there for a meeting to discuss the Covid-19 situation.

His comments came after Johnson's five aides, including longstanding policy chief Munira Mirza, chief of staff Dan Rosenfield, principal private secretary Martin Reynolds and communications director Jack Doyle, resigned on Thursday.

Sunak, who lives next door to the PM in Downing Street, is also reported to have attended a surprise birthday party for Johnson in No. 10's Cabinet Room in June 2020.

He acknowledged that the scandal surrounding parties during lockdown at Downing Street has damaged the public's trust in the government, the *BBC* reported. I can appreciate people's frustration. And I think it's now the job of all of us in government, all politicians, to restore people's trust."

The Chancellor, however, said that he believed his plans to deal with the cost of living crisis would help restore it.

Sunak, 41, insisted that Johnson, who is facing growing calls for his resignation, has his "full support." Dismissing talk of him replacing Johnson, the Chancellor said the Prime Minister had always told the truth about the parties. Some Tory MPs believe that Sunak, as one of the most powerful figures in the government, is the frontrunner to replace Johnson. **PTI**

EXPLAINED

Who is Rishi Sunak?

RISHI SUNAK, who has had a high profile role in publicising the government's support for the economy during the pandemic, is one the names doing rounds to replace PM along with foreign minister Liz Truss, who is popular among grassroots party members. However, Sunak has quelled such talk and said the Prime Minister has his full support.

Tories not near point of deposing Johnson: Minister

KATE HOLTON
LONDON, FEBRUARY 6

Boris Johnson

SENIOR MEMBERS of Boris Johnson's Conservative Party urged challengers to the Prime Minister to rein in their ambitions and focus instead on steering Britain through the biggest plunge in living standards in a generation.

Johnson is battling for his political career amid a crisis which has gripped his government over three months, with a growing number of lawmakers calling publicly for a change at the top to rebuild trust with voters.

Johnson has apologised after he and staff held parties during strict coronavirus lockdowns, at a time when many people could not say farewell in person to dying relatives, events that are being investigated by the police.

He further angered colleagues last week when he falsely accused the leader of the opposition Labour party of failing to prosecute a child sex abuser when he was in charge of public prosecutions. That, critics said, shows Johnson is incapable of changing, or showing true remorse.

Iain Duncan Smith, a former Conservative Party leader, told *BBC* TV that the time was not right for a challenge but said such events had been hugely damaging and Johnson needed to show contrition so he "never ever gets to this point ever again".

Many people were struggling with soaring energy costs and food inflation, which were "the number one priority", he added.

Kwasi Kwarteng, Britain's business minister, said he did not think the party was near the point of deposing Johnson, adding "I don't see what he's seeing" when asked about a formerly loyal lawmaker's assertion that it was inevitable the leader would go. **REUTERS**

US troops arrive in Poland to reinforce Eastern Europe allies on Sunday. *Reuters*

Top Biden aide says Ukraine invasion could come 'any day'

US warns of grim toll, says could kill as many as 50k civilians

THE NEW YORK TIMES & AP
WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 6

WHITE HOUSE national security adviser Jake Sullivan said on Sunday that Russia could invade Ukraine "any day," launching a conflict that would come at an "enormous human cost." "If war breaks out, it will come at an enormous human cost to Ukraine, but we believe that based on our preparations and our response, it will come at a strategic cost to Russia as well," Sullivan said.

Senior Biden administration officials told lawmakers this past week that they believed the Russian military had assembled 70 per cent of the forces it would need to mount a full invasion of Ukraine, painting the most ominous picture yet of the options that Russia's president, Vladimir V. Putin, has created for himself in recent weeks.

During six hours of closed meetings with House and Senate lawmakers on Thursday, the officials warned that if Putin chose the most aggressive of his options, he could quickly surround or capture Kyiv, the capital, and remove the country's democratically elected president, Volodymyr Zelensky. They also warned that the invasion could prompt an enormous refugee crisis on the European continent, sending millions fleeing.

The officials stressed that US intelligence analysts still did not assess that Putin had made a final decision to invade. But satellite imagery, communications among Russian forces and images of Russian equipment on the move show that he has assembled everything he would need to undertake what the officials said would constitute the largest military operation on land in Europe since 1945.

They also warned of enormous possible human costs if Putin went ahead with a full invasion, including the potential deaths of 25,000 to 50,000 civilians, 5,000 to 25,000 members of the Ukrainian military and 3,000 to 10,000 members of the Russian military. The invasion, they said, could also result in one million to five million refugees, with many of them pouring into Poland.

Should Putin decide to invade, American officials believe he is not likely to move until the second half of February. By that point, more ground will have frozen, making it easier to move heavy vehicles and equipment, and the Winter Olympics in Beijing will have ended or be winding down, which could help Putin avoid antagonising President Xi Jinping of China, a critical ally for the Russian president.

Late Saturday, after the briefings became public, Russia's deputy ambassador to the UN, Dmitry Polyanskiy, denounced the assessment. "Madness and scaremongering continues," Polyanskiy wrote on Twitter. "What if we would say that US could seize London in a week and cause 300K civilian deaths? All this based on our intelligence sources that we won't disclose. Would it feel right for Americans and Britts? It's as wrong for Russians and Ukrainians."

Whether Putin decides to go through with a maximalist approach or a more scaled-down version is the question with which American, European and Ukrainian officials are all grappling.

GERMAN LEADER TO VISIT TO U.S. THIS WEEK

Berlin: German Chancellor Olaf Scholz is flying to Washington this week on a mission to reassure Americans that his country stands alongside the United States and other NATO partners in opposing any Russian aggression against Ukraine. Scholz has said that Moscow would pay a "high price" in the event of an attack, but his government's refusal to supply lethal weapons to Ukraine, bolster its troop presence in eastern Europe or spell out which sanctions it would support against Russia has drawn criticism abroad and at home. **AP**

UNREST IN OTTAWA ENTERS 10TH DAY

Protesters camped out in the Canadian capital outnumber the police and control the situation, the city's mayor said on Sunday, as a demonstration against vaccine mandates clogged parts of the city for a 10th day. The 'Freedom Convoy' began as a movement against a Canadian vaccine requirement for cross-border truckers but has turned into a rallying point against public health measures and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government.'. *Reuters*

After Houthi attacks, senior US general in UAE to bolster defences

Abu Dhabi: US Marine General Frank McKenzie arrived in the United Arab Emirates on Sunday for talks on efforts to bolster the Gulf state's defences after a series of missile attacks launched by Houthi fighters in Yemen.

McKenzie, who oversees US forces in the Middle East as head of Central Command, said he moved up his planned visit in response to the Houthi attacks, hoping to underscore the US commitment to the Gulf state's defence.

"I think it's a very worrisome time for UAE. They're looking for support. We're here to help them to provide that support," McKenzie told reporters.

Earlier this month, the Pentagon announced a US deployment of advanced F-22 fighter jets and a guided missile destroyer, the USS Cole, to partner with the UAE navy ahead of a port call in Abu Dhabi. McKenzie said the F-22s would provide the UAE with "one of the best look-down radars in the world," capable of identifying targets, including land attack cruise missiles and drones. **REUTERS**

Xi and Imran vow to promote CPEC projects in Pakistan

K J M VARMA
BEIJING, FEBRUARY 6

CHINA ON Sunday pledged closer cooperation with Pakistan under the $60 billion CPEC investment programme and called for resolving the Kashmir issue properly and peacefully, while opposing any "unilateral actions" that could complicate the situation as Prime Minister Imran Khan held talks with the top Chinese leadership, including President Xi Jinping.

Khan called on President Xi on the last day of his four-day visit to China to discuss a host of issues, including the slow pace of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and increasing concerns of Beijing over recurring attacks on Chinese personnel working in its various projects in Pakistan.

In his meeting with Khan, Xi said China firmly supports Pakistan in safeguarding national independence, sovereignty, dignity and fighting terrorism, state-run *Xinhua* news agency reported.

He said China is willing to join hands with Pakistan to push forward the in-depth development of the CPEC and ensure the implementation of key projects.

"Both sides reiterated that a peaceful and prosperous South Asia is in the common interest of all parties," said a joint statement issued at the end of Khan's visit to China.

"They emphasised the importance of pursuit of dialogue and resolution of all outstanding disputes to promote regional cooperation and advance the goals of lasting peace, stability and shared prosperity in the region," it said. The China-Pakistan joint statement also said that China recognised Pakistan's sacrifices and efforts in the fight against terrorism adding that both sides reaffirmed their commitment to fighting terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. **PTI**

THREATENS TERMINATION OF PACT

Donor sets Feb-end deadline for Nepal to ratify $500 million deal

YUBARAJ GHIMIRE
KATHMANDU, FEBRUARY 6

AS NEPAL'S key political parties in the ruling coalition appear taking conflicting stance on Parliamentary ratification of the $500 million US grant, donor Million Challenge Corporation (MCC) has set February 28 as the deadline to take a final call. It has also warned that the failure to arrive at a decision may lead to termination of the deal, which was signed in 2017.

In a letter addressed jointly to Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba and Maoist chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal dated February 3, MCC Acting CEO Mahomoud Bah has asked them to have the deal ratified "as promised".

"Without action on your part by February 28, the MCC board will discuss next steps at its March meeting, including whether to continue with the deal. In case of absent ratification, it is within the board's authority to discontinue Nepal's eligibility to receive $500 million grant from the US. Such a decision will end MCC's partnership with Nepal," he added.

Bah's letter is in response to a "confidential" joint letter from Deuba and Dahal written on September 29 in which both had sought additional time to get members to agree to ratify the grant in Parliament.

Dahal and his party have taken a rigid stance against the MCC deal, saying, if adopted with the current provisions, the deal would undermine Nepal's sovereignty and have implications on "non-aligned foreign policy".

US women's jail fostered culture of abuse: Report

MICHAEL BALSAMO & MICHAEL R SISAK
WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 6

INSIDE ONE of the only federal women's prisons in the US, inmates say they have been subjected to rampant sexual abuse by correctional officers and even the warden, and were often threatened or punished when they tried to speak up.

Prisoners and workers at the federal correctional institution in Dublin, California, even have a name for it: "The rape club."

An *Associated Press* investigation has found a permissive and toxic culture at the Bay Area lockup, enabling years of sexual misconduct by predatory employees and cover-ups that have largely kept the abuse out of the public eye.

In one instance, a female inmate said a man, who was her prison work supervisor, taunted her by remarking "let the games begin" when he assigned her to work with a maintenance foreman she accused of rape. Another worker claimed he wanted to get inmates pregnant. The warden — the man in charge at Dublin — kept nude photos on his government-issued cellphone of a woman he is accused of assaulting.

One inmate said she was "overwhelmed with fear, anxiety, and anger, and cried uncontrollably" after enduring abuse and retaliation at Dublin. Another said she contemplated suicide when her cries for help went unheeded and now suffers from severe anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder. **AP**

'Allow credible visit by rights envoy to China'

United Nations: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told Chinese leaders on Saturday that he expected authorities to allow UN human rights chief Michelle Bachelet to make a "credible visit" to the country, including Xinjiang, the UN said.

Guterres met with China's President Xi Jinping and Foreign Minister Wang Yi on the sidelines of the Winter Olympics, according to a UN readout of the meetings. "The Secretary-General expressed his expectation that the contacts between the office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Chinese authorities will allow for a credible visit of the High Commissioner to China, including Xinjiang," said the UN readout of Guterres' meetings. **REUTERS**

WITH A BLEND OF FAMILY MEMOIR AND RESEARCH, BOOK RECOUNTS HOLOCAUST IN TRANSNISTRIA

Book aims to shine light on Romanian role in Holocaust

STEPHEN MCGRATH
BUCHAREST, FEBRUARY 6

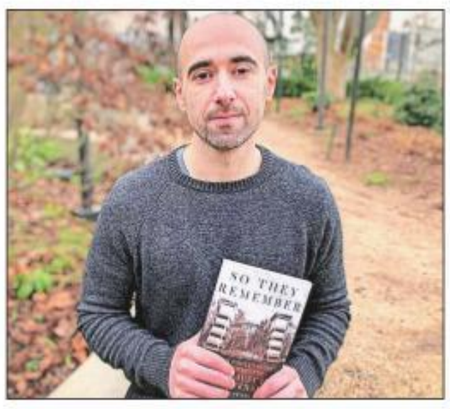
MAKSIM GOLDENSHTEYN recounts a story his late grandmother once told him about how, as a 4-year-old child, she snuck out of a Jewish ghetto during World War II to retrieve her favourite dolls that had been left behind the day her family was forcibly evicted from their home in occupied Soviet Ukraine.

"She knew even at that age that because she had lighter hair and blue eyes, she could pass for a local Ukrainian girl," said Goldenshteyn. "She put on a kerchief and slipped out of the ghetto."

It is one of the stories that Seattle native Goldenshteyn tells in his book, "So They Remember," which recounts — with a blend of intimate family memoir and vigorous historical research — the Holocaust in Transnistria, a territory in occupied southern Ukraine that was controlled by Romania, a close ally to Nazi Germany for most of the war.

In that territory, where around 150 camps and ghettos operated, there played out a lesser-known but equally sinister chapter of the Holocaust, where hundreds of thousands of Jews were brutalised, exploited, and murdered.

Goldenshteyn, 33, whose family moved to the US as refugees from the former Soviet Union in 1992, says he heard fragments of his family's past while growing up, but he never linked it to one of humanity's darkest chapters.



Author Maksim Goldenshteyn poses with his book 'So They Remember' in Seattle. *AP*

"They didn't really align with the image of the Holocaust that I thought was representative," he said. Then, 10 years ago, his mother told him the story. "I was shocked at first," he said.

Moved by what he'd learned, Goldenshteyn embarked on a decade-long journey researching a part of the Holocaust he feels is largely overlooked.

Awareness of Romania's role in the Holocaust, at home and abroad, is far less than that of the Nazis' role. But in Romanian-controlled territories under the military dictatorship of Ion Antonescu, between 280,000 and 380,000 Jews, plus some 12,000 Roma, were killed during the war. The decades of communism that followed, much like in the Soviet Union, all but erased memories of the Holocaust.

In a push for wider public awareness, Romanian lawmakers passed a bill last fall to add Holocaust education to the national school curriculum, a move that was applauded by many. But it was met with controversy in January when the far-right Alliance for Romanian Unity, which holds seats in parliament, called it a "minor topic" and an "ideological experiment."

Goldenshteyn believes that Romanian authorities have made progress in recent years in acknowledging the country's role in the Holocaust, and said he was troubled by the party's comments but also encouraged by the reaction of the diplomatic community. **AP**

MARKET WATCH

FPIs NET SELLERS IN FEB SO FAR

New Delhi: Foreign portfolio investors pulled out Rs 6,834 crore from markets in the first four trading sessions of February. As per depositories data, FPIs took out Rs 3,627 crore from equities, Rs 3,173 crore from debt segment and Rs 34 crore from hybrid instruments. **PTI**

COMBINED SHARE AT 14.79% IN LISTED COS

Retail investors, MFs cushion FPI exit impact, raise holdings to record high

GEORGE MATHEW & SANDEEP SINGH
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 6

RETAIL INVESTORS and domestic mutual funds are increasing their presence in companies listed on the NSE, even as foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) are exiting from Indian stocks. Despite a decline in key indices, the share of retail investors — individuals with up to Rs 2 lakh shareholding — in companies listed on the NSE reached an all-time high of 7.32 per cent as on December 31, 2021 as against 7.13 as on September 30, 2021.

As a result, the value of retail holding in listed companies touched an all-time high of Rs 18.98 lakh crore from Rs 18.16 lakh crore in September 2021, an increase of 4.54 per cent. This was despite the fact that Sensex and Nifty declined by 1.48 and 1.50 per cent, respectively, during this period.

The share of high net-worth individuals (HNIs) — individuals with more than Rs 2 lakh shareholding — in NSE-listed companies also reached an all-time high of 2.26 per cent as on December 31, 2021 from 2.12 percent on September 30, 2021, thus taking the combined retail and HNI share to also an all-time high of 9.58 per cent, according to Primeinfobase.com, an initiative of PRIME Database group.

Simultaneously, the share of FPIs in listed companies is on the decline amid indications that US Federal Reserve is likely to tighten the monetary policy and hike interest rates. According to Pranav Haldea, MD, PRIME Database Group, net outflows from FPIs of Rs 38,521 crore during the quarter resulted in FPIs' share declining to a 9-year low of 20.74 per cent as of December 2021, from 21.46 per cent as on September 30, 2021.

FPIs pulled out Rs 44,820 crore from financial services and software sector during the quarter while investing Rs 20,334 crore in retail. Holding of FPIs (in Rs value terms) in companies listed on NSE stood at Rs 53.78 lakh crore as on December 31, 2021, a decrease of 1.67 per cent from Rs 54.69 lakh crore as on September 30, 2021.

With investors channelising funds through SIP (systematic investment plan) schemes of MFs, the share of domestic mutual funds in companies listed on the NSE continued to rise and reached 7.47 per cent as of December 2021, up from 7.36 per cent in September 2021. This was after five quarters of consecutive decline from March 31, 2020 (7.96 per cent) to June 30, 2021 (7.25 per cent). The share has increased on the back of net inflows by domestic mutual funds of a huge Rs 51,909 crore during the quarter, Haldea said.

In value terms too, the holding of domestic mutual funds went up by 3.26 per cent to an all-time high of Rs 19.36 lakh crore as of December 2021 from Rs 18.75 lakh crore in September 2021. Retail investors have been pumping money into equity schemes of mutual funds in the last several months. Retail investors and MFs' share is at 14.79 per cent.

The share of LIC, the largest investor in Indian stocks, across 278 companies — where its holding is more than 1 per cent — declined marginally to an all-time low of 3.67 per cent as on December 31, 2021 from 3.69 per cent as on September 30, 2021 and from all-time high of 5 per cent as on June 30, 2012. However, in value terms, it reached an all-time high of Rs 9.53 lakh crore in the quarter ended December 2021, an increase of 1.46 per cent over previous quarter. LIC also continues to command a lion's share of investments in equities by insurance companies (77 per cent share).

Share of insurance firms as a whole declined to a 6-year low of 4.79 per cent as on December 31, 2021 down from 4.81 per cent as on September 30, 2021. In Rs value terms though, it went up 1.3 per cent from the previous quarter to an all-time high of Rs 12.42 lakh crore as on December 31, 2021.

Share of domestic institutional investors (DIIs), which includes domestic mutual funds, insurance companies, banks, financial institutions, pension funds etc., as a whole, increased to 13.22 per cent as on December 31, 2021 from 13.12 per cent as on September 30, 2021, on the back of net inflows from DIIs of a huge Rs 66,262 crore during the quarter. In value terms, DII holding too went up to an all-time high of Rs 34.27 lakh crore as on December 31, 2021, an increase of 2.48 per cent over the last quarter. The total institutional share — FPIs and DIIs — also declined to a 3-year low of 33.95 per cent in quarter ended December 2021, down from 34.59 in quarter ended September 2021.

EXPLAINED

Eyes on US Fed

SHARE OF foreign portfolio investors in listed companies is on the decline amid indications that US Federal Reserve is likely to tighten the monetary policy and hike interest rates.

INTERVIEW WITH SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

'Infra push has larger, lasting multiplier effect, will create demand, jobs'

DEPARTMENT OF Economic Affairs Secretary AJAY SETH said the capex push in next fiscal year's Budget should lead to job creation at three different levels, leading to a "much larger and much lasting multiplier effect". In an interview with SUNNY VERMA, he said the balanced policy approach of the government has served the country well. Edited excerpts:

Ajay Seth *Express file*

There is a view that fiscal consolidation has been on the lower side and gross market borrowing is higher than expected. Could it crowd out private investment?

You have made three points. One, fiscal consolidation is not good enough, we should have done more. The Finance Minister last year gave a commitment to meet 4.5 per cent by 2025-26. We should appreciate this aspect that in a pandemic year, expenditure, including support to the needy and other expenditure on health, has been increased significantly, which led to deficit rising sharply. From there to suddenly go in (for 4.5 per cent), it's like moving at a high speed and suddenly putting a break, it would have created a huge problem for the economy and this strong revival would have been extremely difficult or delayed. So, it is necessary to adopt a glide path. And the glide path means that gradually we land up by 2025-26. There will be another commitment that how we go beyond four-and-a-half per cent. But that's really not the goal now. It has been brought down to 6.9 per cent already, and 6.4 per cent is the target for next year.

The second wave, which was very intense, and then we have a third wave, these also led to a lot more expenditure, but still the government managed the fiscal deficit to be 6.9 per cent. And, that is inclusive of whatever monies have been given to settle Air India (liabilities). So, whatever was committed in the glide path, this half a percentage point in one year in a fiscal consolidation is not less. Several economists and informed analysts had advised that don't go for a sharp correction, go for a gradual correction.

So that is one, second, borrowings are more than expected.

Now, there I will say that perhaps that entire information has not been appreciated by the people who are making that comment. Of course, this absolute borrowing has to be seen in relative proportion of GDP, not a number per se, absolute amount per se. But even in absolute basis. . . is not a significant increase. But coming back to this that how it is going to be financed. There are several sources out there, including small savings, drawdown from cash balances. And small savings in current year are going to be close to about Rs 6 lakh crore this year. Next year, our estimate is that small savings collections may go down to about Rs 4.25 lakh crore as people may find more attractive avenues than putting money in a small saving.

On the other hand, if the small saving collections were to be as high as current year, obviously borrowings will go down. The market borrowings will go down compared to what has been projected. Now, third one is whether it will crowd out (private investment). Now, that happens when the private sector is investing and consumption is at higher level, where people are competing with the money available in the economy. But, we have a situation where the credit off-take, non-food credit is very moderate. So, here is a classic case of crowding in private investment. When the economy is running at full potential, then government increasing its borrowing will crowd out, but not at this stage.

While the government has this idea that capex will create jobs and incomes, but there is also a view not much has been done forthe troubled segments of the economy and society.

The balanced approach which the government has adopted in the past two years has served the economy extremely well - direct support to those on the demand side, who needed the direct support in a targeted manner, and taking care of a whole lot of supply side issues, that led to a sharp recovery into the economy. And I'll also draw your attention to some of the analysis, which has come out that the countries that adopted direct support, without looking at the supply-side issues, have run into high inflation, which we did not do. The government has done very prudent management of the pandemic ... The government adopted something which was suitable for Indian conditions and that has served us well. Now, moving to this aspect that how do we propose to support further the sectors which may require support?

It is through the enterprises that lead to large-scale employment. For example, MSMEs. It's well accepted that they are very large employers. Our sense is that they require hand holding for another year. So, instead of saying that this guarantee cover for additional working capital is no longer available, it has been extended by 1 year, up to March 2023. Plus, hospitality-related sectors like tourism, etc, are yet to reach pre-pandemic levels. So, for them this specific window has been created of Rs 50,000 crore. And, remember, ECLGS is one option that is not with the bank. It is for the units to say they want additional working capital and that is provided, so that support has been provided.

Second, what we should also look at is that this is not a question of this year capex being increased, last year also was a 34.5 per cent rise. Those investments and what has been announced this year, first of all, it straight away leads to increasing demand for goods and services which flows into the infrastructure - steel, cement, construction industry, transport sector; that generates demand as well as jobs. Plus it generates the secondary level jobs. And, the third level of job creation comes soon, when these projects get completed and the productive capacity of the economy itself increases. So, it's well-calibrated that taking the route of investment in infrastructure, which has a much larger and much lasting multiplier effect.

Between April-November, capex spend has been less than 50 per cent of Budget Estimates. Will the Budgeted money be spent the money this year? And will capex plan get fully executed next year?

Certainly, as far as current year capex is concerned, we should keep in mind that in the first quarter supply chains were operational despite the second wave unlike the first wave. Supply chains were fully operational, but it did impact adversely the pace of expenditure on infrastructure needs and implementation. So, what we see, the performance is not in eight or nine months, you are talking about November figure, but somewhere around five to six months' kind of expenditure and we have been watching it every month. So, first quarter was a low figure and then it started picking up from there. So I'm confident that Rs 5.51 lakh crore - we will almost reach there. Moving to the next year, increase is basically about Rs 2 lakh crore, of which Rs 1 lakh crore has been earmarked for the states. So instead of just confining it to the Central ministries it has been given, and they have a huge capacity and their projects are just beyond national highway and the railways. Good projects that can lead to job creation. At the same time, about Central ministries, extensive discussions have been held with Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, Railways, they are the two major agencies which have a ready shelf of projects or ongoing projects, where they can step up investment provided money is given. So now the money has been provided, we see full possibility of utilising the allocation that has been done.

On digital rupee, have you identified which denomination currency will be launched first and will it be part of the money supply?

Certainly it will be part of the money supply. It's like any other fiat currency, not any other, it is the currency, the rupee. We have coins or we have using printing technology, paper notes. This will be Digital rupee, it's rupee by another technology. *Full interview on www.indianexpress.com*

SECTOR WATCH
GREEN ENERGY

RE push: Rules to be brought in for pooling solar tariffs

KARUNJIT SINGH
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

The trend of lower solar tariffs has led to many players waiting on tariffs to fall further instead of entering into long-term PPAs

THE CENTRE is set to come up with rules to pool solar tariffs and is also aiming to increase bundling of renewable energy (RE) in existing thermal Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) to boost the procurement of green energy, Power Secretary Alok Kumar told *The Indian Express*. The government is aiming to boost installed RE capacity to 500 GW by 2030.

"The intention is to have a pool, in which various procurements that are done over a year, two or three years, their tariffs are pooled so that there is no problem that (some tariffs are) 5 paise lower or 5 paise higher," Kumar said on the issue of discoms (power distribution companies) waiting for solar tariffs to fall further before entering procurement agreements. He added the Power Ministry was working with the MNRE and would release rules to address the issue.

Solar tariffs have fallen consistently over the past decade to a low of under Rs 2 per unit (1 unit = 1 kWh) in December 2020 due to the falling price of solar panels and lower financing cost. The trend of lower solar tariffs has led to many players waiting on tariffs to fall further instead of entering into long-term PPAs.

"Solar tariffs have fallen to as low as 3 cents or less than Rs 2.5 per kWh (kilowatt-hour) because solar panel prices have been falling for a very long time," said Debasish Mishra, partner and leader at Deloitte India, adding solar tariffs had recently begun to stagnate or fluctuate. Mishra said SECI (Solar Energy Corporation of India Ltd) was "often finding it difficult to find buyers at discovered prices because discoms expect the tariffs will continue to fall even further and many of them have already met renewable purchase obligations."

Mishra said a move to pool tariffs could help speed up procurement of solar power by addressing concerns, among discoms, of losing out on lower solar tariffs in the future.

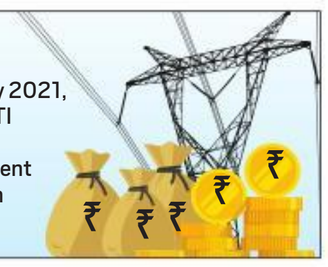
Kumar noted that the government intended that about 10,000 MW of RE-based power be bundled with fossil fuel-based power over the next 4-5 years, and this would help lower total cost of power procurement for certain discoms. Mishra said a move to bundle cheaper renewable energy under these deals would help discoms lower their average cost of power procurement.

Full report on www.indianexpress.com

Discoms' outstanding dues to gencos dip 5% in Feb

Total outstanding dues owed by electricity distribution companies (discoms) to power producers dipped 5.1 per cent year-on-year to Rs 1,15,972 crore in February 2022, according to the latest PRAAPTI data

₹1,22,226 cr owed by discoms to power generation firms in February 2021, according to portal PRAAPTI (Payment Ratification And Analysis in Power procurement for bringing Transparency in Invoicing of generators)



On a sequential basis also, total dues in February 2022 declined from Rs 1,16,834 crore in January 2022

PRAAPTI portal was launched in May 2018 to bring in transparency in power purchase transactions between generators and discoms

In February, the total overdue amount, which was not cleared even after 45 days of grace period offered by generators, stood at Rs 1,03,014 crore as against Rs 99,394 crore in the same month a year ago

***Power producers** give 45 days to discoms to pay bills for electricity supply. After that, outstanding dues become overdue and generators charge penal interest on that in most cases*

Source: PRAAPTI/PTI

FM: Prepared to deal with US Fed move on monetary easing

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

THE GOVERNMENT is prepared to deal with all kinds of risks that may arise out of global developments, including those that may crop up due to the US Federal Reserve's decision to roll back monetary easing, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said.

In a post-Budget interaction with senior executives from Indian industry, Sitharaman said that the government would do everything to deal with these situations to ensure that the domestic economy does not suffer. She was speaking at an event organised by industry body Ficci.

"What I would seek from India Inc is its time now for us, as Team India, to rise. We are such a juncture where revival of the economy is very clear. All of us say it, see it, and also feel it. It may not be equal across the board, yet it is observable. This recovery is going to place India as the fastest growing economy among the larger economies and that would continue even the next fiscal," she said,

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman at a Ficci session. *via @ficci_indiaTwitter*

To ensure that the economy continued to grow, the Indian industry must ensure that the country does not miss the growth bus this time, Sitharaman said, adding that the country had missed an opportunity post the global financial crisis of 2008.

In another post-budget interaction with industry body Assocham, Sitharaman said that the Central government would bring up the issue of including aviation turbine fuel at the next meeting of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) meeting.

Responding to questions and suggestions put forth by SpiceJet founder Ajay Singh, the Finance Minister said rising global oil prices were not a concern just for the aviation industry but for the entire economy.

On Singh's request that the industry be given the status of priority lending like the infrastructure sector, Sitharaman said that she would have a word with the banks.

BRIEFLY

Forex, money markets closed

Mumbai: With February 7 being declared a public holiday by the Maharashtra government as a mark of respect to Lata Mangeshkar, money, government securities and forex markets will remain closed, as per an RBI statement. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meet has also been rescheduled to February 8-10. **ENS**

2021: ADB lends $4.6 bn

New Delhi: The Asian Development Bank has said it provided a record $4.6 billion loans to India in 2021, including $1.8 billion towards Covid response. **PTI**

INTERVIEW WITH FORMER TWITTER INDIA HEAD AND METAVERSITY CO-FOUNDER

'Metaversity joining VR, identity, assets for holistic education'

THERE NEEDS to be a fundamental change in the way education is thought of and that should not be limited to uploading videos of educational and professional courses online, former Twitter India head and Metaversity co-founder MANISH MAHESHWARI believes. In an exclusive interview with AASHISH ARYAN, he says higher education should not be limited to only those who can afford to go to such campuses. Edited excerpts:

What is the idea behind launching Metaversity as a platform?

In the last two years, education has gone online, not by choice but by compulsion. Before Covid, it was unfathomable that classes would be online, people would get degrees online. As a result, a lot of quick fixes appeared. Software meant for office communication was being used for classroom teaching.

What we are now building is a combination of virtual experience, identity and assets and bringing together all these so that we can holistically solve for students - from the beginning. Instead of watching a class happening, you would actually be sitting, experiencing the class. A simple VR (virtual reality) device will help you do that. The hardware cost is going down. Our view is that in the next few quarters, this would probably be about $100, which is Rs 7,000-Rs 10,000. The bandwidth is also almost free. So why should you then not experience the feeling of being in a classroom?

The most amount of learning for me in college came from before and after the class when I hung out with my friends in libraries, cafeteria and auditoriums. There was so much networking. That is all missing in online learning today. The completing rate is less than 10 per cent in online learning.

Manish Maheshwari *Credit: company*

Through a Metaversity, we are going to bring social and community back to learning. I come from Twitter, so I know the power of building social, of community. During Covid times, I saw how people connected online and built community. I want to bring the same to learning.

Are you a pioneer in the meta space or you are too early with a platform for an ecosystem which is still in early stages?

Our view is that the world is ready now. The number one reason is Covid. People have accepted that things can be done virtually and that is here to stay. Even if Covid goes away, everyone might not go to the campus all days a week. They might go one or two days a week. The world is also ready for a metaverse. People like more immersive experience, and in education, there has not been any fundamental innovation so far. People are also just hanging out in virtual spaces. Our view is that this space is innovating very fast.

How do you plan to compete with other bigger companies in the metaverse who will come at you with much deeper pockets?

Zoom was nowhere two years ago and look at where it is now. How did it become so big now? Everyone will try to get into this space. But we are single-mindedly focusing on education. We are not going to build a layer which is for everything. We will remain student focused. Yes, everyone will try to do it, but that is the beauty of it.

The market is huge. There will be different variations of solving one problem and a small nimble team is much more likely to pivot and find the answer than a larger team at a larger company.

Metaverse is a very different layer from internet. My view would be that it resets the playing field and creates a new way of doing things. Different players will come and occupy different verticals. Our desire is to occupy the educational part of metaverse.

I think existing companies have a huge legacy baggage that they have to unload and things cannot move as fast. They may not see a new trend on the horizon.

How big is your company? Where do you plan to expand it?

We are a global, US-based company with a team of about 50 people now. We have a tech team in Bengaluru. What we are building has global applicability. We are expanding as a lot of people want to work on the cutting edge of both education and metaverse. Our plan is to run two courses in India first and then one in the US, and then invite schools and colleges to re-create their campuses online. Many colleges want to do that because they realise that the real estate that they have had, for the past two-three years, is lying waste.

Students can be anywhere and it is brutal to expect them to travel to a town, leave their home and attend some course. We are getting good traction from students as well. Our first course starts in May in the Metaversity campus. We are adding and hiring more.

Full interview on www.indianexpress.com

BCCI TO GIVE CASH PRIZE TO INDIA TEAM

The BCCI has announced cash rewards of Rs 40 lakhs each to the members of the Indian under-19 team while support staff will be honored with rupees 25 lakh each. The board is planning to felicitate India under-19 team in Ahmedabad on February 11. Left-arm pacer Ravi Kumar could soon find a place in the Ranji Trophy squad of Bengal while few Haryana players like Nishant Sindhu and Dinesh Bana might also see their names in Ranji Trophy squad. ENS

'WE DIDN'T FEEL ANY PRESSURE, BECAUSE WE WERE PREPARED FOR EVERYTHING.'

YASH DHULL

India's got talent

Raj Bawa snags five wickets in the final, takes Indian colts to fifth U-19 World Cup title with win over England

Indian players celebrate after the winning runs were scored. This was the fifth U-19 World Cup won by the country. *BCCI/Twitter*

Baby pacers scorch Windies shores

SRIRAM VEERA & DEVENDRA PANDEY
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 6

WHEN IT was young pacer Ravi Kumar's turn to ask the guest motivator Virat Kohli a question ahead of India's U-19 World Cup final, he dug one nicely short. "I asked him what is his weakness. And he replied, 'kyun abhi se out karne ki training kar raha hai kya' (laughs)?" Who better than Kohli to know all about the menace Indian new-age quicks are capable of causing to hopping batters. England were about to find out.

Raj Angad Bawa's grandfather scored a hockey goal against England in India's first Olympics after independence. The grandson of the 1948 hero cleaned up England's top order in the final with a five-for. Ravi Kumar's father serves in law enforcement back in India, while the son rocked England in the U-19 final with a four-for. Together the teenagers unleashed ferocious bouncers, leg cutters, balls that leapt off a length, deliveries that curved in the air and it was apt that all this happened in the Caribbean, the spiritual home of fast bowlers, the land of Andy Roberts, Malcolm Marshall, Courtney Walsh and Curtly Ambrose.

By the time the duo was done with their opening spells, England were at 61 for 6 and if not for a 95 from James Lew, whose first professional scalp as a county player was a lighting-quick stumping to remove Cheteshwar Pujara, it would have been all over rather too quickly. Such was the craft from Bawa and Kumar after England had chosen to bat.

We might be in 2022 and the Indian senior team's pace battery is the envy of the world but there is still something about watching a young Indian knock out a batsman with a bouncer. Bawa blasted out the middle-order batsman George Bell with a snorter that is destined to become one of most watched videos over the next couple of days.

Running in with his hands whirling over each other as if he were concocting a magic potion, he harassed England with a spell that had the entire range. Seam, swing, and disconcerting bounce. Bawa's father Sukhwinder is a cricket coach who honed the skills of Yuvraj Singh and VRV Singh and would have been proud to see his son stun, shock and awe

Together the teenagers unleashed ferocious bouncers, leg cutters, balls that leapt off a length, deliveries that curved in the air and it was apt that all this happened in the Caribbean, the spiritual home of fast bowlers.

England. An allrounder, he already has the highest individual score in the tournament and has dazzled with his bowling as well.

Couple of years back, George Bell's father had said that it would be a touch "frightening" if his son came up against pacers like Jofra Archer. He must have got a glimpse of that world when Bawa kicked up a 'perfume ball' as the West Indian pacers used to call their bouncers. It flew up at the throat of Bell who put up his bat as a shield; the face was saved, wicket wasn't as the ball skimmed the outside edge.

It was the left-handed Ravi Kumar who had the first stab at the English with a lovely swinging delivery that curled past the left-handed opener Jacob Bethell to rap him plumb lbw on the back foot. He then had England's captain Tom Prest chop on an attempted pull on to his stumps to leave England wobbling at 18 for 2 in the fourth over. Bawa then snared four in quick succession to leave England gasping. He had the aggressive George Thomas miscue to covers, William Luxton caught behind before he produced the ball of the final over to take out Bell. The way his team-mates swooped to mob him told a story.

He then produced a peach, kicking up from short of length, to produce a hurried jab from Rehan Ahmed which was snapped up in the slips. If it wasn't for the left-handed James Rew, a wicket-keeper batsman for Somerset but playing just as a batsman here. In his first professional game for his county, with his parents and family in the audience, he got out playing a reverse sweep for 20. 'That's a shot I play and will continue to play,' he had said then and it hasn't been a surprise to see him unfurl many a reverse sweep in this tournament. He has a plucky all-round game, alternating between Neil Fairbrother to Eoin Morgan, and with a combination of doggedness and innovation, he pulled England out of trouble.

Kumar would return to take two more wickets, including Rew, caught at the boundary just 8 short of a hundred, and Bawa grasped the chance to complete a five-for by taking out the last English wicket. Earlier he had quizzed Kohli about nerves in finals. "He told us there is nothing like finals, each game just give your best shot. Express yourself in the ground and just enjoy the game,"

All this was achieved with the poise of experience pros. "The best part was we were not thinking about the future, we were all in the present. We spoke to Virat Kohli bhai and everyone asked him a few questions. Few asked him about handling pressure and performance in big games. Then after that we all saw the 1983 film together, it was a kind of motivation for us to win the finals. We saw how Kapil (Sir) team went to lift title, it was great motivational thing for us," Ravi said.

Two kids from varying backgrounds, Bawa with hockey and cricket in his blood, and Kumar, with a para-military parent's background, pushed India to another World Cup triumph.

Watching from the commentary box was the son of someone who set the Caribbean shores alight way back in 1970s. Rohan Gavaskar, there as commentator, though, wasn't terribly surprised it was the Indian pacers rather than opening bats like Sunil Gavaskar, making heads turn in West Indies. "I think Indian pacers have been best in the world for the last few years. We have been producing some very good fast bowlers lately so I wasn't that surprised to see another crop of good pacers," he said.

Unlike storied times when only Indian spin quartets were feared, Gavaskar reckoned it was the pacers who were at the vanguard of action. "I thought one of the strengths of this team was their bowling unit . Everyone knew their role and performed it beautifully. The pacers provided early breakthroughs and the spinners then capitalised on it and made inroads with the middle order. This is why they were able to bowl out teams in the World Cup. Credit to the coaching staff of Hrishikesh Kanitkar, Sairaj Bahutule and VVS," he said.

BOYS SHOW THE WAY

Unlike Indian senior teams at ICC events, the colts showed big match temperament.

WEATHERING EARLY STORM In the semis against Australia, India were 37 for 2. Openers Angkrish Raghuvanshi and Harnoor Singh, who had been prolific earlier in the tournament, were dismissed. But Yash Dhull and Shaik Rasheed had a big partnership and took India to safety.

In last year's T20 World Cup against Pakistan, the Indian Senior side lost Rohit Sharma for a duck and never recovered.

PACERS SET THE TONE Ravi Kumar and Raj Bawa were not overwhelmed by the occasion in the final. They stuck to their plan and bowled in the right areas. Bawa and Kumar took nine wickets between them.

In the 2003 World Cup final against Australia, Indian bowlers Zaheer Khan, Javagal Srinath and Ashish Nehra famously lost the plot.

USEFUL LOWER ORDER In the final, India were 97/4 needing 92 more runs. Nishant Sindhu and Raj Bawa didn't lose their nerve. They showed a calm head and game sense in a big match.

In the 2019 World Cup semifinal against New Zealand, the Indian team lost early wickets and couldn't recover despite MS Dhoni and Ravindra Jadeja scoring half-centuries.

INTERVIEW: S SHARATH

"Challenge now is to sail in the ocean, from the lake"

DEVENDRA PANDEY
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 6

THE BCCI junior selection committee chairman **S Sharath** is delighted after India under-19 clinched the colts World Cup in West Indies. In a chat with *The Indian Express*, the former Tamil Nadu player spoke about the challenges of picking a team in times of pandemic. Excerpts:

It's only been a few months since you took over as chairman of selectors, can you tell us how you decided to go about the process?

When Rahul was coach at the NCA, we decided a roadmap. We decided to have a pool of players. After the Vinoo Mankad tournament, we picked 90 players, we divided them into six teams and had matches thereafter.

What were the challenges as a selector especially in the time of Covid?

In the first place credit should go to the BCCI for conducting a tournament. In the last two years there was no cricket due to the pandemic, I spoke to the players and they told us how frustrating it was to sit at home. It was mentally taxing for everyone and all felt refreshed when the boys came and played cricket. We saw new talent and some we saw were ready, ready for first class cricket. We still have good players, who are not in the squad because there was so much talent available.

Is there any reason you picked Yash Dhull as the captain instead of Sandhu, whose team won the Vinoo Mankad Trophy?

We wanted someone who can look after a team. Can communicate with everyone. Nishant is a good player but what we felt is that the all-rounder's plate is already full and sometimes, they couldn't think on a macro level. As Dhull is a batsman, a Delhi boy and a street-smart cricketer, we felt he is our best bet.

The best part of this under-19 team is it had a good bowling unit and more all-rounders?

Yes, we wanted to give options to the captain and team management, Like Bawa is a bit deceptive, Rajvardhan Hangargekar bowls quick and he hits the deck hard. Same with spinners, all are different. The West Indies is near the Ocean, so breeze plays a vital part, two new balls will be used, so swing will come into play. We tried to cover each area. We wanted multi-dimensional players, players who can bat till number 10. We couldn't find a decent leg-spinner, so we picked a left-arm spinner to cover up.

What piece of advice will you offer to these players?

The bigger challenge starts now for these boys. They will now get picked ahead in senior or Indian teams because of their domestic performance and not because of India under-19 performance. These boys will sail in the ocean from the lake. Ranji Trophy can be ruthless. Be ready to grind. All those who played for India after under-19 success they all grind hard in domestic cricket. At this age it's very easy to get excited about things. They will walk with sun-glasses now, IPL will come, they will change as a person. However, ultimately they will be judged only by their first class cricket.

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Bopanna-Ramkumar pair lifts Tata Open trophy

The title is Bopanna-Ramkumar's second in as many months. *PTI*

Pune: India's Rohan Bopanna and Ramkumar Ramanathan won their second ATP World Tour title together after pipping the top seeded Australian pair of Luke Saville and John-Patrick Smith in the final of the Tata Open Maharashtra, here on Sunday.

The second-seeded Indians erased the first set deficit to win 6-7(10), 6-3, 10-6 in one hour and 44 minutes. Bopanna and Ramkumar had combined as a team on the ATP Tour for the first time at the Adelaide event last month in the run-up to the Australian Open and won the trophy. For Bopanna, it was his 21st ATP doubles title while for Ramkumar it is his second trophy at this level and it will push him inside doubles top-100 for the first time in his career. They split $16370 as prize money and earned 250 ranking points each. Bopanna had won this event with compatriot Divij Sharan in 2019.

"I did a lot of yoga and it has made a difference and that really shows as long as I am playing matches, competing and doing something that is physically appealing," Bopanna, 41, said after the match.

Portugal's Joao Sousa beat Emil Ruusuvuori in the singles final to win his first ATP singles title since May 2018 and fourth overall. Ranked 137, the 32-year-old Sousa defeated his 22-year-old sixth seed rival from Finland with his experience win 7-6 (9), 4-6, 6-1. **PTI**

China win Women's Asian Cup

Navi Mumbai: China came back from two goals down to defeat Korea 3-2 in a dramatic final and clinch their record-extending ninth title of the AFC Women's Asian Cup here on Sunday. Korea looked to be cruising to their maiden crown after taking a 2-0 lead at half-time but China fought back after the goals from Tang Jiali, Zhang Linyan and Xiao Yuyi, who netted the winner deep into added time to seal her side the title at the DY Patil Stadium. China entered the final chasing a record-extending ninth AFC Women's Asian Cup title against a Korea side who had never laid their hands on the coveted trophy. China, unbeaten in seven meetings with Korea, started the game brightly but conceded in the 27th minute, with Lee Geum-min breaking into the box before sending a cross to Choe Yu-Ri to score the 100th goal of the tournament. Ji So-yun converted a penalty to make it 2-0, before Tang Jiali scored from the spot in the 68th minute for China. Zhang Linyan and Xiao Yuyi then made it 3-2. **PTI**

Mumbai City end winless run

Margao: Defending champions Mumbai City FC ended their seven-game winless run in the Indian Super League (ISL) with a 1-0 victory over Chennaiyin FC here on Sunday. The match was decided by a late goal from Vikram Partap Singh (85th minute) whose strike was enough to elevate Mumbai to fifth place, level on points with fourth-placed Jamshedpur FC. Des Buckingham's men were dominant in possession during the first few minutes and created more scoring chances than their opponents. Igor Angulo tested the goalkeeper with a meek left-footed shot in the 18th minute which was saved easily. The game headed into the last ten minutes without a goal on the board. However, the breakthrough finally came from Vikram Pratap Singh. The winger was fed by Bradden Inman on the far post, found himself unmarked and placed the ball in the back of the net from close-range. The five minutes for stoppages were not enough for Chennaiyin to find an equaliser as the Islanders took all three points. **PTI**

Rohit wins toss, match, top scores

Sharma impresses in first assignment as full-time captain as India outclass West Indies in 1000th ODI

TUSHAR BHADURI
FEBRUARY 6

Yuzvendra Chahal (4/49) dismissed West Indies captain Kieron Pollard for a first-ball duck with a googly. *PTI*

WITH THE next 50-over World Cup more than 18 months away, every One-Day International is an attempt by two teams to get missing pieces of the jigsaw in place.

Sunday in Ahmedabad saw a contest between a team that had lost its last four matches across formats and another coming off a bilateral series defeat to Ireland. There were a lot of questions about the sides' approach and efficiency in ODIs. It would be premature to suggest that India has found any answers, but their superior bench strength and the ineptitude of the West Indian batting resulted in a six-wicket win for the hosts with 22 overs to spare.

The likes of Shimron Hetmyer and Evin Lewis are not part of the ODI series, but still the display put up by their batsmen was shoddy, to put it mildly. That their best batsman was an all-rounder coming in when half the side was back in the pavilion with just 71 on the board puts the performance of the top order in perspective. Jason Holder was the only reason that West Indies avoided the ignominy of a double-digit score. As it turned out, a total of 176 with more than six overs left unused was never going to challenge India in its 1,000th ODI, Rohit Sharma's first as full-time skipper in white-ball cricket.

When India replied, it made the difference in class obvious. Sharma was making a comeback after missing the South Africa tour due to a hamstring injury, but seemed to toy with the Caribbean attack. Gone are the days when West Indian speedsters put fear into the hearts of batsmen. Kemar Roach has had a long career, but was shown scant respect by the Indian captain. He would step out to lift him over mid-off and chip him over mid-wicket nonchalantly. And when Roach or Alzarri Joseph went shorter in length, they didn't have the pace or bounce to trouble Sharma or his new opening partner Ishan Kishan.

The left-hander was pitchforked into the opening slot after Shikhar Dhawan tested Covid positive and Mayank Agarwal, added to the squad at the 11th hour, had to undergo quarantine. But Kishan slipped effortlessly in the slipstream as Sharma (60 off 51 balls) made a mockery of the asking rate.

Virat Kohli had a rare brief stint at the crease, caught in the deep on the hook, but even though India lost four wickets for 32 runs, an asking rate of less than two allowed Suryakumar Yadav and debutant Deepak Hooda to play without pressure and take the team home.

For the West Indies, Joseph got Sharma and Kohli in the same over, while left-arm spinner Akeal Hosein showed some promise.

Damage already done

But the outcome was decided in the first innings.

It is hard to judge what type of bowling is tougher for the current generation of batsmen coming out of the Caribbean. Seemingly seduced by the 20-over format, they hardly show the prowess needed to build an innings in longer format. Shai Hope is their big batting hope, but was castled by Mohammed Siraj while trying to drive away from the body.

Darren Bravo is a veteran, but was rushed by rookie Prasidh Krishna's bouncer, not a badge of honour for a No.3 batsman. Brandon King, Shamarh Brooks and Nicholas Pooran were done in spin. Captain Kieron Pollard should know better than to go for an expansive drive off his first ball when his team was already four-down. It turned out to be Yuzvendra Chahal's googly which went through the wide-open gate to hit off-stump.

Jason Holder was the only reason that West Indies avoided the ignominy of a double-digit score. As it turned out, a total of 176 with more than six overs left unused was never going to challenge India in its 1,000th ODI, Rohit Sharma's first as full-time skipper in white-ball cricket.

India didn't have Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami on the park, but the bowling attack at Sharma's disposal was more than enough for the outclassed West Indies.

The pitch was offering purchase for spinners, and Chahal (4/49) put it to good use, though he was not challenged too much by the West Indian batsman, apart from Holder, who seemed worthy of a promotion in the batting order.

Washington Sundar (3/30) is not an off-spinner known for getting a lot of turn, but he too was finding deviation off the Motera pitch. His two wickets in one over put the skids under the West Indies and they never recovered. Holder and Fabian Allen (29) added 78 for the eighth wicket from 79/7, but it was only an effort in avoiding complete embarrassment and an even earlier finish.

Another interesting facet of the game was Sharma's prowess with the Decision Review System. Mahendra Singh Dhoni was considered astute about when to use the challenges, and on Sunday, Sharma got all three reviews right as fielding captain – two on LBW decisions and one on a caught-behind appeal.

Ironically, Sharma himself failed to get a reprieve after being adjudged LBW, even if only on 'umpire's call.'

Looking ahead to the rest of the series, there seems to be a gulf between the teams. India would like to seal the series on Wednesday, but will nevertheless have one eye on trying to find the right men for the right jobs going into the 50-over showpiece next year – especially the middle order and the composition of their bowling attack.