

IndiaCurrents

Your Stories. Your Community.

BAY AREA CENTRIC, GRASSROOTS ACTIVISM

SF School Board Recall Recruits An Unlikely Desi Campaigner



by Ananya Tiwari

March 29, 2022



A parent led revolt in San Francisco has roiled California politics. (Image Credit: Siva Raj and India Currents)

The postman went door-to-door on San Francisco's historic Haight Street, as I waited in front of a grilled door. As he excused himself, I peeked inside and saw a steep staircase going up and Siva Raj,

a 49-year-old hailing from India greet me from above.

Stacked at the door, were boxes of posters supporting the **recent recall election** of the now dethroned school board members of the **San Francisco Unified School District** (SFUSD), which occurred last month and garnered national attention. On February 15 this year, the city voted overwhelmingly to recall its three board members – Alison Collins, Gabriela Lopez, and Faauuga Moliga – over the failure to reopen public schools, the neglect of public school children during the pandemic even while promoting social justice issues, and attempts to change merit-based admissions to Lowell School to a lottery-based system.

San Francisco's last recall election was in 1983 and it failed. This recall was driven by the various frustrations parents across the country have expressed, as schools, especially public schools, remained closed for months in the end.

And it stands out as one of the most vehement rejections of local leadership in the Bay Area. During this period, the racial inequity gap in education grew – with **data showing** that while one-third of the schoolchildren of the city attended in-person classes at their private schools (and most of them are white), its large public schoolchildren population – comprised of Asians, Latinos, and Blacks – fell behind. Moreover, there was a 10 percent drop in enrolment, and the board faces a budget deficit of **\$125 million consequently**.

Infuriated by the neglect, parents with children in SFUSD came together by the thousands to get their kids back to school in one of the most successful grassroots political campaigns in the city. Liberal city voters were maligned and accused of being **Republicans and “white supremacists”**, even as the donors and parents emailed the board members in thousands appealing to have schools reopen. **A poll conducted in February** by private pollster EMC Research also revealed that 60% of San Francisco voters—and 69% of the city's public-school parents—supported recalling the school board members.

And Raj and his partner Autumn Looijen emerged as the faces of this campaign.

Background on the Recall Duo



Siva Raj and Autumn Looijen (Image Credit: Siva Raj)

Raj, who is from the southern state of Tamil Nadu in India, with a mass of thick, curly hair, and a broad smile, ushered me indoors to his kitchen, where Looijen sat around the dining table. Both were busy working from home, with their laptops and papers strewn on the table – and the sunlight streamed in and lit up the entire room.

As Raj poured me some orange juice, I asked him what he was up to now – and he said that now both Looijen and he – who share five kids under 18 years amongst themselves – are trying to round up candidates who can be appointed to the school board to serve temporarily until elections are held. As of now, **three new board members** – Lisa Weissman-Ward, Ann Hsu, and Lainie Motamedi – were appointed by Mayor Breed on March 11.

Raj, who used to live in Rochester, New York, moved into the Bay Area suburbs in 2018, with his two children – fifteen-year-old Shriyans and nine-year-old Rishaan, after separating from his wife.

He first settled in Pleasanton, even as Looijen lived in Los Altos. They moved into the city with Looijen in December 2020, during the pandemic, and got his children admitted to public schools.

Yet the schools remained closed for in-person learning till late 2021. Elementary schools started to reopen in phases from April 19, and middle & high school students didn't go back — except for the graduating class of seniors who did a few "zoom" sessions on-site so the school district could get some of the incentive money tied to reopening, said Raj.

"I was kind of expecting schools to reopen. But they sent an email in January 2021 saying that schools will remain closed for the entirety of the year." He remembers feeling frustrated as did Looijen, who has three children in elementary and high school. And as they would soon realize, so did thousands of parents.

Shriyans, his elder son studying at **Raoul Wallenberg Traditional High School**, lost interest in all work during the online schooling, said Raj. "It was fine for a few months. And then he went on from being an honor student to hitting rock bottom in terms of his grades. He was also struggling mentally."

Even though Looijen and Raj built an app for the children to keep track of their homework, it didn't work. "He was really struggling to motivate himself and the school experience was really terrible. I mean, you know, he would have the Zoom classes, and pretty much all his peers would shut the camera off."

Raj grew up in the town of Chennai and entered the U.S. in 2000, working for Bausch & Lomb. After some interregnum periods spent in France, UK, and Dubai, he is now a long-term resident here and received his permanent residency status in 2021. Despite living on the west coast since 2018, he had not lived in San Francisco due to the lack of openings for his kids in the city's lottery school system.

"But due to the pandemic, and because so many people left the city at that point, there were openings in the school district. There were enough openings that I could look at and say, alright – there's some decent stuff here. And I was actually impressed overall," Raj admitted.

When Raj was growing up alongside his younger brother in Chennai in the 1980s, his father worked as a clerk at a multinational company that eventually shut down, forcing his small family to shift to two bare rooms on top of a cardboard factory, where his father took up a job as a security guard. Raj's family struggled to send their two kids to a private school when people like him – living in a slum area and from the working classes – did not have the means to do so.

A day before his critical math board exams in 12th grade – an exam that partially determines the various colleges one can attend – his father suffered a stroke. He remembers, “He survived after the open-heart surgery – but I didn’t know that as I was writing the exam”.

Fortunately for Raj, he got into the economics program at the University of Madras, studied econometrics for his master’s, and moved to the US with his wife.

Raj’s father got financial help from his grandmother’s brother, who lived at Berkeley and had shifted there permanently in the 1940s. Even as his mother had only a handful of saris to wear, both he and his brother, went to private schools, since education was a priority.

“If not, we would all have ended up in a government school, or something. This means that we both would’ve completely lost interest...so yeah, I was one of the lucky ones,” said Raj, reminiscing about his childhood growing up in a working-class, slum-like neighborhood.

Raj feels that his experience living in poverty may have driven him to act for a recall too. “I can see the difference that education made in my life...without that, I wouldn’t be here talking to you. That’s the only thing we have – no money, no connections, no nothing. We were living on the fringes of society. My parents worked so hard for me to afford school...I wish to work as hard for my sons too,” said Raj.

San Franciscan parents in early 2021 were seeking a representative to do the work of amassing signatures for a recall. Eventually, it fell upon Raj and Looijen, who were ready to take on the work. They began by reaching out to Joel Engardio, a local journalist who sent out newsletters and began an online campaign.

A small, low-resolution image showing a person from behind, wearing a dark jacket and light-colored pants, walking through what appears to be a city street or park area.

Canvassing the streets of San Francisco (Image Credit: Siva Raj)

In mid-February 2021, expecting around three hundred parents to sign up for the mailing list, they were astonished to realize that over 7,000 had signed up, and their Facebook group grew to gather over a thousand followers. Looijen, with her experience working in tech and for non-profits, created directories. The couple woke up every day thinking of a new reason that recall was necessary, to be shared with their followers.

Looijen recalls of the school board members, “Collins, the way she related to people, she really did not seem concerned.” They remember how hundreds of emails were sent by the parents to Collins and the board – without any response.

Many parents were afraid they would be called racist and were also doxed. “We had people telling their friends not to donate to our campaign because they would lose their business...apparently it is like that. Campaigners had their backgrounds doxed and scrutinized, they’ve been bullied...”, said Raj. Though he did not keep a track of such incidents, he said, “The most **egregious example of**

harassment was when a political activist and school board supporter tried to steal petitions from one of our volunteers at a farmer's market."

In **late January last year**, the board hurriedly passed a resolution to introduce a lottery system for Lowell High School, which upset the significant Asian American population living in the city. By March-end, **Collin's past anti-Asian tweets** came to light. Written in 2016, Collins had written – “Many Asian Am. believe they benefit from the ‘model minority’ BS,” and that “They use white supremacist thinking to assimilate and ‘get ahead.’ ” When these tweets came to light, she hurriedly apologized.

Anti-Asian Hate and Discrimination-A History

Anti-Asian discrimination is not new to San Francisco, with its **history** encompassing one of the first Asian urban settlements in the country, starting with the era of the gold rush, the making of the railroads, the agricultural expansion of the state of California, and industrialization of the US. The sweat and blood of Asian workers from China, Japan, the Philippines, Korea, and Punjab are intertwined with that of white workers during these pivotal eras of American development.

A sampling of the controversial tweets from Collins

These Asian workers were paid less by white workers and used to silence strikes by them. Consequently, labor conflicts with white workers during a time when over 30 million white workers immigrated to the US from Europe, led to hostile marginalization of these ethnic communities and to various laws excluding them, such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 prohibiting the immigration of Chinese workers and the Gentleman's Agreement Act of 1907, which sought to restrict Japanese immigrants into the US.

Segregation of public schools was commonplace too. **On October 11, 1906**, the San Francisco school board issued an order ordering all Japanese and Korean children to attend “Oriental” schools where Chinese students were already studying. This even violated treaties the US had with Japan which sought to protect Japanese people in the US from discrimination. With the media, majority white society, labor unions, and politicians screaming aloud against the “yellow peril” growing in the city and California, Asians struggled to integrate and thrive.

It was only in 1952 that the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) allowed Asian immigrants to gain citizenship. And then, a massive civil rights movement shook the US post World War 2, when the country was forced to look at its treatment of minorities even as they fought against fascism abroad.

The term **model minority** was **coined by William Petersen**, a sociologist writing for the New York Times in 1966 while referring to the Japanese immigrants in the US. Titled “Success Story: Japanese American Style”, Petersen emphasized that the community’s hard work and work ethic had paid off to overcome discrimination.

A generation that suffered **internment during World War 2**, when people of Japanese descent – even those with American citizenship – were regarded with utmost hostility and paranoia by President Roosevelt after the bombing of Pearl Harbor by Japan in 1941, was referred to as a “model minority” for quietly, silently assimilating to American culture despite the discrimination they had faced. In the past century, Japanese immigrants – who were often more educated than other Asian immigrants – were known for being extremely American in their ways and attaining high educational status– and yet facing immense marginalization when trying to assimilate into the majority-white workforce.

Petersen lauded their work ethic and Confucian values. Yet, this term **easily masked hard-wrought freedom struggles by Asian communities**. Written during the height of the Civil Rights Movement, many critics say that the term was not only a method of the majority white community to **absolve itself of its guilt and accountability**, but also to **pit various non-white communities against each other**.

“Most immigrants don’t want to understand politics...that’s the last thing you want to do,” said Raj. “There is this complete lack of understanding and empathy about the immigrant experience, calling everyone who is hard-working a white supremacist.”

After Collin’s tweets were dug out by a volunteer made public, many volunteers began to reach out to the various Cantonese, Vietnamese, and

Korean communities, and the Filipino and black ones, and conducted outreach in the native languages. The Chinese American Democratic Club joined the efforts.

“Many Asians thought that this was particularly targeted at their community. I still don’t understand the connection, right? Because racist incidents are happening in a lot of schools. But they use that as a pretext to then push through this admission change...even if you think this is wrong or right, I

personally have no stake here...what upsets me is that you don't just push through this change in five days, and that's an illegal way to pass a resolution and make a change, right, without consulting the community," said Raj.

As the recall campaigning gathered steam, supported also by Asian Americans and other immigrants, their volunteer list grew by thousands. For the first time since the pandemic, which saw an immense rise in Anti-Asian violence, it seemed like the Asian Americans of the city were finally **asserting themselves politically.**

Powering to Victory and Beyond

A sampling of the controversial tweets from Collins.

According to various news reports, **the campaign garnered nearly \$520,000,**

with more than half of the donations being less than \$100 or equal to it. From the city attorney to the mayor, the campaign gained immense support from its citizens. Over the pandemic over 200 school boards across the nation have held recall elections or have seen frustrations expressed by parents over the closure of schools, masking and testing policies, and the inclusion of critical race theory in the curriculum. San Franciscans too followed this trend and theirs was one of the most successful ones.

On February 15, over 76% voted to recall Alison Collins, 72% Gabriela Lopez, and 69% Faauuga Moliga. Some 179,981 votes were tallied out of 499,771 registered voters. That means turnout was 36 percent of all San Francisco's registered voters, as per the Department of Elections data.

Recently Raj came out as bisexual to his children. He remembers that it was less scary than he thought. "My older son was like – alright."

Now living in a 4-bedroom apartment on Haight Street – known for its past hippie culture and dotted with multicultural restaurants – he feels freer and more confident. "I don't feel like that in the rest of the world, and in a socially conservative place like India," said Raj. He says that his entire life he was providing for his family, and now for the first time, he is trying to figure himself out.

As the two, along with Mayor Breed, who also supported their campaign, look around for new candidates to fill the post, they say they are looking for those who understand the pandemic-wrought issues – such as the learning loss crisis. “We didn’t really know anyone at the beginning. We just had this real anger and frustration in the community. And we certainly didn’t want to get caught up in any partisan political battle,” said Raj.

Both his sons are better, and he still worries that his school hasn’t done any recent assessments. “I don’t really know how bad the situation is...and it’s hard to fix when you don’t know where the problem lies.” Being a single parent, he said, forced him to manage everything on his own, including schooling. “And all you want is that your kids have a good education, and that is the only job that the school board elected members to have.”

Ananya Tiwari is a graduate student at UC Berkeley’s school of journalism (class of 2023), where she covered education in the East Bay area as a local reporter for *The Richmond Confidential*. Previously, she worked as a local reporter for *The Indian Express* newspaper in New Delhi and covered the municipalities, state government, and the protests. You can find her on Twitter @Ananyati and her stories at [**Authory**](#).

Edited by **Pushpita Prasad**, Contributing Editor at India Currents.

© 2022 India Currents.

Proudly powered by Newspack by Automattic

**ELECTIONS**

Candidate for Arizona House of Representatives was convicted of striking ex-fiancé

Ananya Tiwari Arizona Republic

Published 10:09 a.m. MT July 13, 2022 | Updated 11:22 a.m. MT July 13, 2022

A Republican candidate running for the Arizona House of Representatives in north Phoenix has a conviction stemming from a domestic violence incident.

Christian Lamar, 37, is one of four Republicans seeking the nomination for the House in Legislative District 2. He was convicted of assault against his then-fiancé in Phoenix in 2015.

The two Republicans who receive the most votes in the Aug. 2 primary will move on to the general election in November.

As part of his conviction, Lamar had to fulfill various conditions set by the municipal court of Phoenix and served one day in confinement.

Lamar maintains his innocence, despite three courts upholding the conviction. He also sued the officer on duty that night, the Phoenix Police Department, the city and other departments over the arrest. The case was dismissed, however.

Another race: Arizona House candidate involved in domestic violence incident, attributes to PTSD from military service

Lamar's domestic assault case

Lamar was charged with domestic assault after his then fiancé called the police, accusing him of pushing her and hitting her in the face. The incident occurred on a September morning in 2015 in Phoenix, after the two had had an argument at a casino and returned separately to Lamar's apartment. His ex-fiancé went to the apartment to return his phone, as she stated in a 911 call. Both were intoxicated, per police.

Though Lamar maintains his innocence, he also told *The Arizona Republic* that he does not have complete recollection of what occurred that night, and said that he was carrying a frying pan around the apartment complex for "self-defense."

"I mean, I don't, I don't even really remember," he said in an interview when asked about his recollection of the sequence of events for the night and about carrying a pan. "Who knows what her plan was? I can't get in her head to tell you that in the past what she was planning to do, but I was prepared for it."

The Republic was unable to locate the victim for comment.

Arizona's primary is Aug. 2: Here's everything you need to know to vote

What the records show

On Sept. 27, 2015, a domestic violence complaint was filed that early morning against Lamar by his ex-fiancé, after the officer who responded noticed a mark on her face and the victim said Lamar punched her, per police records and the officer's testimony in court.

The next month the Phoenix Municipal Court convicted him, stating that "the defendant intentionally or knowingly caused physical injury to another, a Class 1 misdemeanor" in violation of the law.

He was fined, served one day in jail with four days suspended and was ordered to serve 11 months of probation. He also had to undergo counseling, enroll in a screening program and was barred from having any contact, invited or not, with the victim, nor “harm, threaten or harass” his ex-fiancé.

In November 2018, Lamar appealed to set aside the judgment, stating that he had “completed all the requirements of the sentence, I have had NO further contact with the opposing party, and NO re-occurrences of such charge or offense.” His application was granted and the judgment was set aside.

Two years prior to that, Lamar also filed a civil rights lawsuit against the officer on duty that night, the Phoenix Police Department, the city of Phoenix and others, claiming his civil rights were violated by the arrest. He sought \$7 million in damages, but the case was dismissed by a federal judge.

In this lawsuit he claimed his Fifth and 14th Amendment rights were violated. Lamar claimed the investigation was maliciously turned against him due to his race and gender.

For subscribers: Rep. Greg Stanton's GOP rival donated twice to his mayoral campaigns

A Twitter tirade against conviction

Lamar is endorsed by gubernatorial candidate Kari Lake, state Rep. Shawnna Bolick (who is running for secretary of state) and Sen. Warren Petersen — though Petersen said he wasn’t aware of the conviction and would revisit his endorsement because of it. Lake and Bolick did not respond to requests for comment about the endorsement.

On Twitter in June, Lamar posted that a “dirty dossier” on him was “pending release” regarding misdemeanor charges. He followed that post with multiple statements saying he did not commit a crime.

"I have a right to maintain my innocence. I never took a plea deal. I don't care what the court says. I never punched, slapped, palmed or hit her," he wrote in the post.



Sign up for the latest news and updates from Delhi-NCR in your inbox, daily

Enter Your Email

Subscribe



Sign up for the latest news and updates from Delhi-NCR in your inbox, daily

Enter Your Email

Subscribe



Sign up for the latest news and updates from Delhi-NCR in your inbox, daily

Enter Your Email

Subscribe



Sign up for the latest news and updates from Delhi-NCR in your inbox, daily

Enter Your Email

Subscribe

Sections



ENGLISH | தமிழ் | ਵਾਂਗਲਾ | മലയാളം | हिंदी | ಸಾರ್ಥಕ Newsletters



Friday, Sep 30, 2022

EPAPER TODAY'S PAPER



The Indian EXPRESS

JOURNALISM OF COURAGE

[Home](#) [Explained](#) [Political Pulse](#) [India](#) [Cities](#) [Opinion](#) [Entertainment](#) [Lifestyle](#) [Technology](#) [Videos](#) [Sports](#)

TRENDING

[Crossword & Sudoku](#) — [UPSC Key](#) — [Everyday Explainers](#) — [Health Specials](#) — [Academic Counselling](#) — [Follow Authors](#) — [Cricket](#)
[Home](#) / [Elections](#) / Delhi elections: In Chhatarpur, it's AAP's work versus BJP's history

Premium

Delhi elections: In Chhatarpur, it's AAP's work versus BJP's history

Those who live in JJ clusters and the unauthorised colonies have expressed appreciation for the work done by the AAP, but many villagers continue to be unmoved from their traditional stance of voting for the BJP.

Written by [Ananya Tiwari](#)

New Delhi | February 5, 2020 2:38:13 am



0



The constituency is a mix of urban villages, posh farmhouses, unauthorised colonies and JJ clusters

A constituency that was carved out in 2008 and has elected an MLA each from the **BJP**, Congress and AAP since, South **Delhi**'s Chhatarpur is an area where allegiances have changed thrice.

The area is a mix of urban villages, posh farmhouses, unauthorised colonies and JJ clusters. Those who live in JJ clusters and the unauthorised colonies have expressed appreciation for the work done by the AAP, but many villagers continue to be unmoved from their traditional stance of voting for the BJP.

An area dominated by gujar voters, the villages that are part of Chhatarpur have brought the BJP to power thrice since 1993.

In Jaunapur village, BJP remains a strong contender because of its central leadership. Satpal Ambavata (48) a kirana store owner, said, "I really like Modi, and that's it."

SUBSCRIBER ONLY STORIES

[View All](#)


Tucked away in the heart of Kolkata's Cossipore area lies the city'...

How RBI has cut the growth forecast by raising it

Shashi Tharoor: 'I don't think everyone who voted BJP in 2014...

Ahead of Centre's ban, chorus from Sangh, affiliates

Between 1993 and 2008, the area was part of the Mehrauli constituency. After delimitation in 2008, close to 90% of what was earlier the Mehrauli constituency comprised the Chhatarpur constituency.

And while the BJP has traditionally held sway in the area, AAP MLA Kartar Singh Tanwar is a popular choice, especially in the JJ clusters and unauthorised colonies. He is up against three-time BJP MLA Brahm Singh Tanwar and Satish Lohia from Congress.

At the Sambhav Bapu JJ cluster colony, owner of a food shop and head of the area Aman committee Mohammad Younis (65) said, "Tanwar stopped demolition of the JJ colony. No other MLA has been like that. He has done a lot here — made the roads, improved water supply, given electricity for free, and established schools."

Ritik Nayak (19), who grew up in Shanti Colony, said the schools in the area had seen a lot of improvement. "I have seen schools improve in front of me. Earlier, kids would be running around, there was no discipline, the building crumbling. Now, there is cleanliness, technology and students are better off. I love Modi ji, but for CM, I will vote for Kejriwal," he said.

 **The Indian Express is now on Telegram. Click [here](#) to join our channel (@indianexpress) and stay updated with the latest headlines**

First published on: 05-02-2020 at 02:38:13 am



NEXT STORY ►

Coronavirus fears: India cancels all visas to Chinese nationals

TAGS: Aam Aadmi Party BJP[Post Comment](#)

SUBSCRIBERS READING NOW



G-23 bigwigs leave Shashi Tharoor to fend for himself, he hits back: 'They cannot even decide for the 23 ...'



Ponniyin Selvan 1 review: Mani Ratnam's largely faithful and brilliant adaptation has no dull moments



Newsmaker | Mallikarjun Kharge: The man who thrice lost CM race in Cong now stares at the party's biggest prize



Russia Ukraine War Live Updates: Biden says Russia violating International law after Putin's annexation declaration; NATO chief assures 'unwavering support' to Ukraine



Noise inside Vande Bharat is 100 times lesser than in an aeroplane: PM Modi



Vikram Vedha review: Story is the biggest star in this smart Hrithik Roshan-Saif Ali Khan thriller

MOST POPULAR

- 1 Ponniyin Selvan 1 review: Mani Ratnam's largely faithful and brilliant

adaptation has no dull moments

2 Russia Ukraine War Live Updates: Biden says Russia violating International law after Putin's annexation declaration; NATO chief assures 'unwavering support' to Ukraine

3 PAK vs ENG 6th T20 Live Score Updates: England beat Pakistan by eight wickets!

4 Grand Omaxe Noida demolition Live Updates: Bulldozers tear down illegal encroachments, residents stage protest

5 Vikram Vedha vs Ponniyin Selvan box office day 1: Mani Ratnam's epic to outgross Hrithik-Saif's remake with Tamil Nadu figures alone

FEATURED STORIES



Why MS Dhoni doesn't carry his phone and what we can learn from him



Why Supreme Court's abortion verdict must be read by Indian gynaecologist...



Why do fast bowlers suffer frequent stress fractures these days?



What is the significance of Archaeological Survey of India's recent findi...



Rewind & Replay | The rise of Indira Gandhi, and the shrinking of Raj...

Amid 'strains of unity', Congress begins Bharat Jodo march in Karnataka

TOP NEWS

5G services to be rolled out tomorrow; how will your experience change?



Gas prices hiked 40%; CNG, PNG to cost more



REWIND & REPLAY

Rise of Indira Gandhi, and shrinking of Rajasthan CMs



Vladimir Putin illegally annexes Ukraine land; Kyiv seeks NATO entry



Tucked away in the heart of Kolkata's Cossipore lies the city's oldest Durga Temple



EXPRESS RESEARCH

How successful were the Cholas as empire builders



Dussehra Quiz: Our infinite tussle with good & evil



MEDIA PARTNERSHIP

Tamil Nadu: How this project is taking the Covid shot to marginalised people



SPONSORED

Planning Parenthood: What Is The Right Time?



SPONSORED

Young Legislators From All Across The Country To Be On One Platform In A Historic Effort At NYLC



LATEST NEWS

Irish House's Kalaghoda outlet to shut down today; Copper Chimney's fate too hangs by a thread

Pakistan apprehends 2 fishing boats with 16 fishermen onboard

Two women killed, five critically injured after LPG cylinder blast in Vadodara

MahaRERA to soon red-flag 'stressed' project

Google+ to Inbox: A look at all the services, apps that Google killed over the years

Mumbai Police to disband horse-mounting unit it brought back into force in 2019

BMC says will concretise all roads in three years; court says will ask urban development department to consider its request for single road authority: HC

Unhygienic Sabarmati water forces triathlon to indoor pool

4 major demands met, Vadodara Municipal Corporation employee union ends protests

At 130kmph, new train starts journey to Mumbai; trip to become faster soon

'There's never been more buzz around one man passing a drink to another'

SPONSORED

Travel More, Shop Less:
Cleartrip Brand Campaign
Hijacks The Festive Season



Coverage only 27% as Centre's 75-day free precaution dose drive ends

No graft will be tolerated: Fadnavis

Centre likely to allot land for Mahul pumping station: BMC

Shinde faction announces new executive committee of Yuva Sena; Sena leaders' sons dominate panel

ADVERTISEMENT

LIVE BLOG

**PAK vs ENG 6th T20 Live Score Updates:
England beat Pakistan by eight wickets!**

54 mins ago

**Russia Ukraine War Live Updates: Biden
says Russia violating International law
after Putin's annexation declaration;
NATO chief assures 'unwavering support'
to Ukraine**

2 hours ago

**Mumbai news live updates: Maharashtra
CM Eknath Shinde launches Swachha
Maharashtra Abhiyan (Urban) 2.0; new**

schedule for sub-urban trains from Oct 1;
light rain predicted till Sunday

4 hours ago

Congress President polls LIVE Updates:
Mallikarjun Kharge files nomination;
Tharoor says, 'If you want change, come
with me'

5 hours ago

 The Indian EXPRESS

Confused about Academic choices after 10th & 12th



BEST OF EXPRESS



BJP sniffs an opportunity: 'Cong MLAs' resignation proper, may go to court'



Cities
Hyderabad: Four juveniles accused of raping minor to be tried as adults



Entertainment
Vikram Vedha movie review: Story's the biggest star in this smart Hrithik

Roshan-Saif Ali Khan thriller



Entertainment
Ponniyin Selvan 1 movie review: Mani Ratnam's largely faithful and brilliant

adaptation has no dull moments



Trending
Mimicry artist imitates Hrithik Roshan, Ajay Devgn, Aamir Khan etc

playing dandiya in Navratri. Watch

**Trending**

This Durga Puja pandal has bought Vatican City to Kolkata

**Sports**

Super-sub Axar makes an impact

**Sports**

Unhygienic Sabarmati water forces triathlon to indoor pool

**Opinion**

New CDS must build a bridge between a govt in a hurry and an organisation

resistant to change

**Explained**

Short history of the bans imposed on RSS since 1947

**Lifestyle**

Durga Puja 2022: From a pandal honouring singer KK, to one dedicated to pets; check out these themes

**Technology**

Apple iPhone 14 Pro Max review: The iPhone for Pro users

ADVERTISEMENT

MUST READ**Sports**

Super-sub Axar makes an impact

**Sports**

Unhygienic Sabarmati water forces triathlon to indoor pool

**Sports**

'There's never been more buzz around one man passing a drink to another'

**Technology**

Apple iPhone 14 Pro Max review: The iPhone for Pro users

**Technology**

PM Narendra Modi to inaugurate 5G services tomorrow

**Technology**

India porn ban: Full list of 63 banned websites

**Lifestyle**

Durga Puja 2022:
From a pandal honouring singer KK, to one dedicated to pets; check out these themes

BUZZING NOW**Trending**

Mimicry artist imitates Hrithik Roshan, Ajay Devgn, Aamir Khan etc playing dandiya in Navratri. Watch

**Trending**

This Durga Puja pandal has bought Vatican City to Kolkata

**Trending**

'Don't call me bhaya or uncle': Uber India replies to tweet that showed a driver's request

**Trending**

'Go mommy!': Little boy cheers mother during her graduation ceremony

ceremony

**Trending**

'Like a painting': Norwegian diplomat shares stunning images of Spiti Valley

Valley

Sep 30: Latest News

Putin calls 'sabotage' against Nord Stream an 'act of international terrorism': Kremlin

BJP launches special fortnight campaign, cleans 100 statues in Mumbai in one day



FIFA-AFC delegation meets promoters of ISL, national coach Igor Stimac



Maharashtra: Govt opens anganwadis in Mumbai for adoption



Delhi: Social media influencer Bobby Kataria arrested for smoking inside SpiceJet plane



Notice to authorities on bridge under construction for over 2 years



Qatar 2022: Nuts & bolts of FIFA's "The show must go on" shtick



TN govt denies permission for RSS processions on Oct 2



Mumbai-Pune Expressway Missing Link project: Maharashtra to get India's highest cable-stayed road bridge

Mumbai: Woman from Addis Ababa held for 'smuggling cocaine'

TOP CATEGORIES

Explained News	Political Pulse	Latest Opinion	Mumbai News
Delhi News	Pune News	Bangalore News	Bollywood News
Health News	India News	Sports News	Lifestyle News
Jobs	Mobile & Tabs	Tech Reviews	Gadgets
Mobile & Tabs	Food & Wine	Travel	Fitness

TRENDING NEWS

Horoscope	India News	Art & Craft Classes For Kids	Fitness Classes For Kids
Dance Classes For Kids	Entertainment News	UPSC News	Buy All-Access Pass
Subscribe To The Indian Express	Buy Digital Premium	Gen Anil Chauhan Assumes Charge As The New CDS	India Weather News Live Updates:
Ponniyin Selvan 1 Release And Review LIVE UPDATES:	Mumbai News Live Updates:	Russia Ukraine War Live Updates:	Ghaziabad Murder: Victim's Minor Daughter Apprehended,

LATEST STORIES

MahaRERA To Soon Red-Flag 'Stressed' Project	Google+ To Inbox: A Look At All The Services, Apps That Google Killed Over The Years	Mumbai Police To Disband Horse-Mounting Unit It Brought Back Into Force In 2019	BMC Says Will Concretise All Roads In Three Years; Court Says Will Ask Urban Development Department To Consider Its Request For Single Road Authority: HC
Unhygienic Sabarmati Water Forces Triathlon To Indoor Pool	4 Major Demands Met, Vadodara Municipal Corporation Employee Union Ends Protests	At 130kmph, New Train Starts Journey To Mumbai; Trip To Become Faster Soon	'There's Never Been More Buzz Around One Man Passing A Drink To Another'

FOLLOW US



DOWNLOAD APPS



 The Indian Express website has been rated GREEN for its credibility and trustworthiness by Newsguard, a global service that rates news sources for their journalistic standards.

EXPRESS GROUP

The Indian Express	ieTamil.com
The Financial Express	ieBangla.com
Loksatta	ieMalayalam.com
Jansatta	inUth
The ExpressGroup	MyInsuranceClub
Newsletters	26/11 Stories of Strength
Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Awards	Online Classes for Kids
Light House Journalism	Compare Term Insurance

QUICK LINKS

T&C	Privacy Policy
Advertise with Us	Brand Solutions
Contact Us	Subscribe
Statutory provisions on reporting (sexual offenses)	This website follows the DNPA's code of conduct
CSR	

Copyright © 2022 The Indian Express [P] Ltd. All Rights Reserved

ENGLISH

தமிழ்

বাংলা

മലയാളം

हिंदी

मराठी

Follow Us:




Sunday, October 31, 2021

[Home](#) [India](#) [World](#) [Cities](#) [Opinion](#) [T20 WC](#) [Entertainment](#) [Lifestyle](#) [Tech](#) [Videos](#) [Explained](#) [Au](#)
[SUBSCRIBE](#)
[Fraper](#) [Sign in](#)
[Home](#) / [coronavirus outbreak](#) / Food, money running out, Delhi's daily wagers start heading to villages— on foot

Food, money running out, Delhi's daily wagers start heading to villages— on foot

Since Delhi announced a lockdown on Monday, followed by a nationwide lockdown announced by PM Modi on Tuesday, hundreds of migrant labourers have—in the absence of public transport and with borders sealed—decided to walk home.

Written by [Ananya Tiwari](#) | New Delhi |

Updated: March 25, 2020 10:33:35 pm

AMIT MEHRA 

Like pilgrims, the men bundled up their clothes and walked through deserted roads to their villages in Uttar Pradesh. (Express photo by Amit Mehra)

Antresh Kumar started walking at 3 am on Wednesday. After thinking about what a 21-day lockdown would mean for him and his fellow daily-wagers, the 21-year-old decided that heading home to Moradabad in Uttar Pradesh would be his best option. Even if it means walking 175 kilometres, a journey likely to take at least two days and convincing police to let them keep walking.

Since Delhi announced a lockdown on Monday, followed by a **nationwide lockdown announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi** on Tuesday, hundreds of migrant labourers have—in the absence of public transport and with borders sealed—decided to walk home to escape hunger, insecurity and, in Antresh's case, his landlord.

'We'll Die If The Govt Doesn't Help', Say Rickshawalas Amid Coronavir...



"We have no income anymore. We would earn Rs 200-250 daily. Since the gradual shutting down of the city, work has come to a standstill. I was not earning but the landlord kept asking for rent," he said. With no food, water or money, the group left. At Anand Vihar, they drank from a canal. "All shops are closed. We can't even buy water if we want," he said.

[READ | India lockdown: Groceries, pharmacies, ATMs, here's a list of exemptions](#)

Like pilgrims, the men bundled up their clothes and walked through deserted roads to their villages in Uttar Pradesh.

With clothes in his small bag and a few rotis with salt as sustenance, 25-year-old Aram Singh, a labourer, started from Preet Vihar in East Delhi for Badaun in Uttar Pradesh. He, along with a few others who live in Preet Vihar as well, said they had no option but to cover the 215-kilometre distance on foot.

“Our families are at home, they are fine. But since there is no food to eat here, we are heading back. We will sleep wherever we find space, eat and drink whatever we can find, but we have to go home.” He said that the police, so far, had been cooperative.



AMIT MEHRA 

A day after PM Modi announced a 3-week nationwide lockdown, Delhi's roads are deserted. (Express photo by Amit Mehra)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had, in his address, [asked people to stay where they are](#).

The Delhi government has **started giving food to those in need at night shelters** twice a day. While the number of people eating there has increased, those who left the city said they did not know about the option.

For Umesh Kumar, 28, the journey is somewhat shorter. He and a handful of men have to cover a distance of 55 kilometres to Ghaziabad's Lal Kuan. He lives alone in Delhi, and the lack of cooked food and water made him long for his family. "All places to eat are shut," he said.

Some men took loans of a few hundred rupees before heading East. Virender Singh Yadav, 23, left Laxmi Nagar for Lal Kuan after having a meal. "There was a dhabha open in the lanes, and we had been eating there for the past few days. Now everything is shutting and we have no work either," he said. He and three others have a total of Rs 500 among themselves: "We will walk and rest when we can. Since there is no food available and no bus, there is nothing else we can do."



Get the latest updates on the coronavirus pandemic and the race for a vaccine, in your inbox

ananyatiwarijournalism@gmail.com

[Subscribe](#)

► *The Indian Express is now on Telegram. Click [here to join our channel \(@indianexpress\)](#) and stay updated with the latest headlines*

For all the latest **Coronavirus Outbreak News**, download [Indian Express App](#).

NewsGuard

 The Indian Express website has been rated GREEN for its credibility and trustworthiness by NewsGuard, a global service that rates news sources for their journalistic standards.

© The Indian Express (P) Ltd

TAGS: [Coronavirus](#) [India Lockdown](#)

[CCPA Notice](#)

House Hunting in Oakland? Compare Lenders With NerdWallet.

Compare great mortgage lenders with NerdWallet to find the right one for you.

Sections

ENGLISH | தமிழ் | વાંલા | ମଲ୍ଯାଳମ | ગુજરાતી | हिंदी | ਸ਼ਰਧੀ | BUSINESS | ବିଜ୍ଞନେସ

Newsletters



Thursday, Nov 03, 2022

EPAPER TODAY'S PAPER



JOURNALISM OF COURAGE

[Home](#) [Explained](#) [Political Pulse](#) [India](#) [Cities](#) [Opinion](#) [Entertainment](#) [Lifestyle](#) [Technology](#) [Videos](#) [Sports](#)
TRENDING[T20 World Cup](#)[Himachal Polls](#)[UPSC Key](#)[Health Specials](#)[Gujarat Polls](#)
[Home](#) / [Cities](#) / [Delhi](#) / Insufficient funds hit Delhi govt's solar scheme for resident welfare association
Premium

Insufficient funds hit Delhi govt's solar scheme for resident welfare association

Under the scheme launched in 2018, housing societies opting for the Renewable Energy Service Co (RESCO) model will get solar panels installed for free by solar developers in return for a commitment to keep them in place for 20-25 years.

Written by [Ananya Tiwari](#)

New Delhi | Updated: December 27, 2019 8:20:03 am





While IREDA is one of the agencies listed for funding under the scheme, an official from the agency said the project was too small in scale. (Express Photo by Amit Mehra)

Cooperative group housing societies in **Delhi** wishing to install solar panels on rooftops through the Mukhyamantri Solar Rooftop Yojana scheme are struggling to get funding or installations done free of cost, which are guaranteed by the project.

Under the scheme launched in 2018, housing societies opting for the Renewable Energy Service Co (RESCO) model will get solar panels installed for free by solar developers in return for a commitment to keep them in place for 20-25 years.

At the Arya Group Housing Society in Patparganj, the resident welfare association (RWA) planned to install solar panels a year ago, but a company that showed interest in setting up the project was denied funding by the Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA). The society had opted for the RESCO model as society members did not want to foot installation charges of Rs 35 lakhs.

Sandeep Bandu, RWA member, said, "Around a year ago we decided to get rooftop solar installations in the RESCO model for around 200 kW. Our society has a capacity of 80-90 kW and we wanted to generate extra power. With lowered tariffs, plus selling surplus energy at Rs 4.50/unit, we hoped to save Rs 12-14 lakh a year. However, the solar company could not get funding from IREDA."

SUBSCRIBER ONLY STORIES[View All](#)

CEA Anantha Nageswaran: 'It's a story of the dollar's strength. It's not...

The US midterms primer: All you need to know about the November 8

Draft telecom Bill: A move that turns back the clock

UPSC Key-November 2, 2022: Why you should read 'Hindus as Minority' or '...

While IREDA is one of the agencies listed for funding under the scheme, an official from the agency said the project was too small in scale. "IREDA finances commercial projects above 2 MW capacity, depending on profit margins. IREDA has financed rooftop projects for schools and railways," the official said.

The Arya Group Housing Society gave up the project after it failed to get loans from banks as well. The same story played out for some other societies.

As per the Delhi government scheme, most domestic installations, even aggregated ones, range below 1 MW, said an official at the power department of the Delhi government.

Government officials admitted the scheme is facing problems. Padmini Singla, secretary of power department of Delhi government, said, "RESO projects are running into problems because banks are not giving funds. Ultimately, banks need finances to fund projects. Also the return from such investments takes a long time, around 25 years."

DELHI NEWS

1 [Transport department rolls out revamped 'One Delhi' app](#)

2 [Delhi court grants bail to 38-year-old retired army man in rape case](#)

3 [For women, by women: Delhi opens first mahila mohalla clinic, more to follow](#)

[More from Delhi](#)

A K Jha, advisor to Delhi government's power department, said, "There are around 10-12 societies in Delhi that have installed panels through RESCO, and around 35-40 using their own money. In the past six months, around 500 projects of around 15,000 MW capacity for domestic and social institutions have been sanctioned. However, for the past few months, funding is getting difficult for such projects," he said.

First published on: 27-12-2019 at 02:45:19 am



NEXT STORY ►

Ram Madhav: 'Don't be influenced by violence spread by Oppn parties, communal forces'

SUBSCRIBERS READING NOW

[Seven bypolls tomorrow: Regional parties look to upset BJP applecart](#)
Seven bypolls tomorrow: Regional parties look to upset BJP applecart



[Savarkar vs Nehru and Gandhi: Different versions of nationalism](#)



[CPI\(M\) & BJP unite to march in favour of Adani's Vizhinjam seaport, as the protest against the project takes a communal turn](#)



[Why the SC threw out a plea against Justice DY Chandrachud: who filed it, what it said](#)



[Arshdeep Singh: The left-arm India wanted](#)



[Why Sachin Pilot spoke out: Ashok Gehlot's frequent barbs, silent high command](#)

MOST POPULAR

Follow Us:



Sunday, October 31, 2021

[Home](#) [India](#) [World](#) [Cities](#) [Opinion](#) [T20 WC](#) [Entertainment](#) [Lifestyle](#) [Tech](#) [Videos](#) [Explained](#) [Au](#)[SUBSCRIBE](#)
[Franner](#) [Sign in](#)[Home](#) / [Cities](#) / [Delhi](#) / Covid fallout: At Sadar Bazaar, Rakhi fails to bring festive cheer this year

Covid fallout: At Sadar Bazaar, Rakhi fails to bring festive cheer this year

Several traders are either relying on leftover stock from last year or have sourced substantially lower number of goods this season.

Written by [Ananya Tiwari](#) | New Delhi |

Updated: July 27, 2020 2:38:16 am



Wholesaler Rahul Dabla said he did not buy anything this year and was selling last year's stock of rakhis. (Express photo)

Hit by the lockdown and a lingering fear of Covid among customers, wholesalers at Sadar Bazaar are witnessing an unusually low demand for rakhis just over a week before the festival on August 3. Several traders are either relying on leftover stock from last year or have sourced substantially lower number of goods this season.

The demand remained low even on Saturday, when traders say most of their customers arrive at Sadar Bazaar mostly via trains from across NCR, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and other neighbouring states.

The wholesale rakhi traders source their products from Mumbai, Kolkata, Ahmedabad, and even Rajasthan. Most of their customers are local Delhi traders and those hailing from the National Capital Region, and beyond in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

Fear of the virus, lockdown and the lack of the regular train network — used by the traders to tour Mumbai, Kolkata and Ahmedabad for goods and also the means for traders to arrive at Delhi to buy goods — were cited as the main reasons for the drop in sales by most traders.

Ritesh Sharma (34), a wholesaler at Sadar Bazaar, said, “There is a lockdown in UP on weekends, otherwise traders from Ghaziabad, Meerut, Baghpat, Faridabad and Lucknow, all come directly to this market by trains. Usually weekends are remarkably busy. We also tour cities for rakhis by train, sometimes even flights. People value their lives also and are fearful due to the virus.”

Another wholesaler Deepak Jaisal (37) reiterated, “We usually order Rs 1-1.5 lakh worth of rakhis, but did not this year as local trains were shut. Around 80 per cent of the trade is gone.”

Rahul Dabla, a wholesaler at Sadar Bazaar, said, “I go to these cities on tour for 10-15 days in February-March to buy rakhis worth Rs 10-15 lakh, sometimes even worth Rs 20-25 lakh. With local trains not running now, there is no demand... We haven’t bought anything this year, we are selling last year’s stock.”

The Indian Railways is currently running only 230 “special trains” on important routes as against 13,000 regular trains before the pandemic. [The Indian Express](#)

had earlier reported that even in these trains, as of July 22, full occupancy was reported only in 20 per cent of the trains.

Delhi News

Can't celebrate Diwali for third year in a row due to salary delays: North MCD staff

Delhi: Shanties collapse at under-construction mall in Chandni Chowk, worker missing

Gurgaon namaz row: Members of right-wing outfits to conduct puja at Sector 12 on Friday

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE](#)

Another wholesaler, Montu Khosla (60), said, "We are seeing only 40 per cent of our business."



Sign up for the latest news and updates from Delhi-NCR in your inbox, daily

ananyatiwarijournalism@gmail.com

[Subscribe](#)

► *The Indian Express is now on Telegram. Click [here to join our channel \(@indianexpress\)](#) and stay updated with the latest headlines*

For all the latest **Delhi News**, download [Indian Express App](#).

NewsGuard

 The Indian Express website has been rated GREEN for its credibility and trustworthiness by NewsGuard, a global service that rates news sources for their journalistic standards.

© The Indian Express (P) Ltd

CCPA Notice

10 Reasons to Upgrade to Samsung's Galaxy Z Fold3 5G

Foldable devices like Galaxy Z Fold3 5G are opening up a new world of mobile

ENGLISH

தமிழ்

বাংলা

മലയാളം

हिंदी

मराठी

Follow Us:



Sunday, October 31, 2021

[Home](#) [India](#) [World](#) [Cities](#) [Opinion](#) [T20 WC](#) [Entertainment](#) [Lifestyle](#) [Tech](#) [Videos](#) [Explained](#) [Au](#)
[SUBSCRIBE](#)
[Franner](#) [Sign in](#)
[Home](#) / [Cities](#) / [Delhi](#) / Panchayats keep farmers protest fire burning

Panchayats keep farmers protest fire burning

“The next target is to bring together 40 lakh tractors. We will go to every village of the country. Our manch and panch shall remain at Singhu and neither shall break. Our movement is not limited to Delhi,” BKU leader Rakesh Tikait said.

Written by [Ananya Tiwari](#) | New Delhi |

February 11, 2021 1:30:34 am



Protesters take rest in a tractor trolley at Singhu. (File Photo: Amit Mehra)

Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU) leader [Rakesh Tikait](#) and Jagtar Singh Bajwa of the Kisan Andolan Committee addressed protesters at Singhu border Wednesday, saying that their aim is to add 40 lakh tractors to the movement across the country.

Over the last week Tikait, who has grown in prominence at the Ghazipur protest site, has spoken across Haryana on mobilising more farmers. He reiterated this at the Singhu border.

“The next target is to bring together 40 lakh tractors. We will go to every village of the country. Our manch and panch shall remain at Singhu and neither shall break.

Our movement is not limited to Delhi. Wherever farmers protest with their tractors in the country, they become a part of this movement,” he said.

A week after internet restrictions were lifted from the border protest sites, farmers at Singhu said they are arriving in batches, often in bigger numbers than before.

Protesters at Singhu are largely from Punjab, while some are from Haryana. They said their village union committee or panchayat enlists members from each family to attend the protest in batches.

Gurpreet Singh (25) from Lakhnaur Sahib in Ambala district could be seen with five-six other men from his village Wednesday.

“As no one knows how long this protest will go on, at our villages the committees are making a list and assigning protest duty to each individual from a family. A team of 6-10 people is listed,” he said. The men had arrived Sunday.

Hardeep Singh (40) from Jandali village in Fatehgarh Sahib district had left the protests site on January 28 and is now back. “The panchayat at the village takes a decision and enlists people. Every family has to send one person. I am an MBA graduate and have a business at Mohali but I’m here with my brother. This way the movement stays disciplined and is made stronger,” he said.

Several farmers from Haryana said they follow the same process.

Tej Veer (50) from Matour village in Kaithal district said, "The village panchayat draws up the lists. We get a duty of around seven days. This is my first time here. We have got 11-12 tractors; earlier there were just 5-6."

The Indian Express 

@IndianExpress



We are proud to announce that Jharkhand CM @HemantSorenJMM will be the Chief Guest of the discussion 'Decoding India's internal migration' on February 12 at 2pm.

Register here to join: zoom.us/meeting/register...

11:29 PM · Feb 8, 2021



 194  12  Copy link to Tweet

[Tweet your reply](#)

Shatpal Singh (50) from Kharal village in Jind district said, "Around 15-20 men come and go in batches. We get all the supplies. Now there are more men committed to the protest than before."

A project to take away our land

Tikait, meanwhile, claimed the government has another law in the pipeline. “The government will be introducing the Seed Bill, according to which the government will decide which seeds shall be sown and from which company it shall come. All of this is a business, so that farming goes away from the hands of the farmers and the large businesses enter it. This is a project to take away our land.”

Addressing the crowd, Tikait also alleged that the government was behind the Red Fort incident. “So what if at a public monument someone put their flag? Now the government is thinking how can this be punished by law... Lakhs of farmers came inside Delhi on that day, not a leaf was taken out of place by them.”

He said that those in the media who want to present news in favour of the protests are being arrested or FIRs are being filed against them. “This is harassment and an attack on democracy. Bandook ka pehra pen aur camera pe hai,” he said.

Tikait reiterated that the movement is apolitical. “This is not a movement to win votes. This is a fight to protect our livelihood.”

 **The Indian Express is now on Telegram. Click [here](#) to join our channel (@indianexpress) and stay updated with the latest headlines**

For all the latest [Delhi News](#), download [Indian Express App](#).

NewsGuard

 The Indian Express website has been rated GREEN for its credibility and trustworthiness by Newsguard, a global service that rates news sources for their journalistic standards.

TAGS: [Farmers Protest](#) [Rakesh Tikait](#)

ADVERTISEMENT