

THE ASIAN AGE

NEW DELHI SUNDAY 20 JUNE 2021



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Rahul Gandhi turns 51, decides not to celebrate b'day in view of pandemic



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US Prez Biden promotes milestone of 300 million vaccine shots in 150 days

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Sonam Kapoor looks forward to release of her upcoming movie, *Blind*



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WINDOWS



Virat Kohli during the second day of the WTC final match between New Zealand and India in Southampton, England, on Saturday. India was 146/3 when bad light stopped the game. — AP

Don't lecture us on freedom of speech: Ravi to social media

New Delhi: Union information technology minister Ravi Shankar Prasad on Saturday asked social media platforms to not lecture India on "freedom of speech" and "democracy", and asserted that if these "profit-making" firms want to earn money in India, they will have to follow the "Indian Constitution and Indian laws". The new IT rules, which were originally announced in February, give users of the platform a forum for redressal for their grievances, Mr Prasad said. ■ **More on Page 4**

₹1cr for 6 officers killed on Covid duty

New Delhi: The Delhi government announced on Saturday that they will provide financial assistance of ₹1 crore to the families of six defence personnel who died in the line of the duty. Those who will be compensated are the families of three personnel from the Air Force. ■ **More on Page 2**

Pornhub sued for earning from rape

Los Angeles: Nearly three dozen women sued Pornhub on Thursday, alleging that the firm operates as a "classic criminal enterprise" that profits from content showing rape, child pornography, sex trafficking and other nonconsensual activity. ■ **More on Page 6**

COUNTERPOINT



Wow! Now will they deposit more than ₹15 lakh in our bank accounts?

WEATHER

Max: 35°C
Min: 26°C
RH: 58%
Rain: 20%

Forecast: Partly cloudy

ASTROGUIDE

Plava: Uttarayana
Tithi: Jyeshtha Shuddha Dasami till 4.17 pm
Star: Chitta till 6.45 pm
Varjyam: 11.52 pm to 1.20 am (Monday)
Durmuhurtam: 5.05 pm to 5.57 pm
Rahukalam: 4.30 pm to 6 pm

SUNSET TODAY 5.23 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 7.21 AM
MOONRISE TOMORROW 3.40 PM
MOONSET TODAY 1.40 AM

Govt may restore J&K statehood ahead of 2022 polls: Reports

Govt invites J&K leaders for talks with PM June 24

YUSUF JAMEEL
SRINAGAR, JUNE 19

Jammu and Kashmir's mainstream political leaders are being invited for talks by the Centre next week, on June 24. The move is seen by political watchers here as the first major attempt post-August 2019 by the Narendra Modi government to end the political stalemate in the erstwhile state.

Union home secretary Ajay Bhalla has formally invited 14 J&K mainstream leaders to the meeting at the Prime Minister's residence. The invitees include former chief ministers Farooq Abdullah, Ghulam Nabi Azad, Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti, former deputy chief ministers Tara Chand (Congress), Muzaffar Hussain Baig (People's Conference) and Nirmal Singh and Kavinder Gupta (BJP), CPI(M) leader Mohammed Yousuf Tarigami, J&K Apni Party chief Altaf Bukhari, People's Conference chairman Sajjad Gani Lone, JKPC chief Gulam

“So far, we haven't received any formal invite from New Delhi for talks. If we do get it, our party's core group will first sit to discuss how to respond to it.”

— Farooq Abdullah, National Conference patron

“Yes, I got a phone call from Delhi, and I have been invited for a meeting on June 24. The meeting will be chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.”

— Mehbooba Mufti, PDP chief

Ahmad Mir, his counterpart from the BJP, Ravinder Raina, and National Panthers Party supremo Prof Bhim Singh.

J&K was pushed into a great deal of political variability on August 5, 2019, when the Centre stripped the state of its special constitutional status and split it up into two Union territories. Barring the BJP, its mainstream political leadership refused to accept what it termed as “illegal and unconstitutional” abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A and the bifurcation of the state. They also found it hard to reconcile to the series of new laws intro-

duced subsequently by New Delhi which further diluted the state's powers.

But it appears the J&K's mainstream leadership has in an apparent strategic change decided to move away from the path of confrontation to push for the restoration of the erstwhile state's constitutional status in the existing system. This became evident last week when People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), an alliance of J&K's regional Opposition parties and their allies from the national Left parties, announced that they would seize “even the smallest opportunity” in

■ **Turn to Page 4**

Chavan indicates 'ghar wapsi' of leaders from BJP

BHAGWAN PARAB
MUMBAI, JUNE 19

Maharashtra may witness 'ghar wapsi' scenes like those in West Bengal as senior Congress leader Ashok Chavan has indicated that many people who had switched their loyalties to the BJP are upset and want to return to their parent party. A decision on their home coming should be taken by the Congress at the earliest, he said.

To celebrate the birthday of senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, the Maharashtra Congress on Saturday had organised an event in Mumbai, where Sunil Deshmukh, a prominent leader from Vidarbha joined the Congress after quitting the BJP. He was welcomed into the party by former chief ministers Ashok Chavan and Prithviraj Chavan.

Speaking at the event, Ashok Chavan, who is also a state public works department minister, appealed to the state party leadership to expedite efforts to bring back

MAHARASHTRA



Sunil Deshmukh

former partymen.

“Those who left the Congress and joined the BJP are upset with their decision. The party should immediately take a call on their return. These leaders should be asked to work vigorously for strengthening the Congress in the state,” he said.

Later Ashok Chavan tweeted, “I congratulate Sunil Deshmukh on his home-coming. Several Congress leaders had earlier joined the BJP against their wish. But they have not settled there. Hence, a decision about their ghar wapsi should be taken at the earliest and they should be

■ **Turn to Page 4**

Assam's CM appeals to Opp. MLAs to join BJP

GUWAHATI, June 19: A day after four-time Congress MLA Rupjoti Kurumi



Himanta Biswa Sarma

announced his plans to join the BJP, Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday appealed to all Opposition legislators to join the ruling party.

“What will they do in the Opposition benches for five years? I would rather say they should join us. Since we are working for the welfare of people irrespective of caste, creed and religion, I appeal to them (opposition members) to join us and work together for the public,” the CM said while replying to a question on Mr Kurumi, the Congress' lone

legislator from the tea tribe community, who quit the grand old party and resigned from the Assam Legislative Assembly. The MLA from Upper Assam's Mariani constituency had also announced that he would join the BJP on Monday in the presence of the chief minister.

While leaving the Congress on Friday, Mr Kurumi had attacked the Congress leadership, alleging that the organisation has become “very weak” as the leaders “do not listen to the voice of the grassroots workers”.

The Assembly election results are a testimony of the fact as the party “failed in all the five states” where the polls were held in March and April, said the MLA from

■ **Turn to Page 4**

India reported 60,753 new cases and 1,647 deaths in 24 hours 3rd wave may hit in 6-8 weeks: AIIMS chief

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JUNE 19

A third Covid wave in India is “inevitable”, and it could hit the country in the next six to eight weeks, AIIMS chief Dr Randeep Guleria said on Saturday amid unlocking in many parts of the country after weeks of strict restrictions. The country's main challenge is vaccinating a huge population, he said.

“As we have started unlocking, there is again a lack of Covid-appropriate behaviour. We don't seem to have learnt from what happened between the first and the second wave. Again crowds are building up... people are gathering. It will take some time for the number

UN condemns Myanmar coup and calls for arms embargo

New York, June 19: In a rare move, the UN General Assembly on Friday condemned Myanmar's military coup and called for an arms embargo against the country in a resolution that demonstrated widespread global opposition to the junta and demanded the restoration of the country's democratic transition.

Supporters had hoped the 193-member UN General Assembly would approve the resolution unanimously by consensus, but Belarus called for a vote. The measure was approved with 119 countries voting “yes,” Belarus voting “no” and 36 countries abstaining including Myanmar's neighbors China and India, along with Russia. UN special envoy Christine Schraner-Burgener warned the General Assembly after the vote that “the risk of a large-scale civil war (is) real.” “Time is of the essence,” she said. “The opportunity to reverse the military takeover is narrowing and regional threat increasing.”

The resolution came after lengthy negotiations by a so-called Core Group including the EU and Western nations. — AP

■ **More on Page 6**

FAREWELL TO FLYING SIKH (1930-2021)

Nation bids adieu to legendary Milkha Singh with state honours

Chandigarh, June 19: Iconic sprinter Milkha Singh was on Saturday cremated with full state honours here, marking the end of an era in which his pioneering accomplishments on the track galvanised a newly independent India.

Milkha, who was 91, was bid a tearful adieu in the presence of his family members and several dignitaries, including sports minister Kiren Rijiju. “The Flying Sikh”, as he was fondly called, died on Friday night due to Covid-19 related complications.

His son and ace golfer Jeev Milkha Singh lit the funeral pyre.

A police contingent reversed arms and sounded the last post in the sprinter's honour. Milkha was also given a gun salute.

The Punjab government had declared a one-day state mourning and a holiday as a mark of respect to the legend.

Earlier, a wreath was also laid on behalf of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Wreaths were also laid on behalf of the Army.



Jeev Milkha Singh (above), son of Milkha Singh (inset and right), lights funeral pyre of his father who passed away at the age of 91 due to Covid-19-related complication, in Chandigarh on Saturday. (Right) A file picture of Milkha Singh sprinting during an international event during his hey days.

— PTI and Deccan Chronicle archive



The funeral procession started from Milkha's Sector 8 residence. His body was carried in a bedecked vehicle, with fans turning up along the short route to the Sector 25 cremation ground to pay their last respects to the legend.

The Padma Shri awardee is survived by Jeev and three daughters.

The legendary athlete was a four-time Asian Games gold medalist and the 1958 Commonwealth Games champion but his greatest performance remained the fourth-place finish in the 400m final of the 1960 Rome Olympics. His timing of 45.6 sec at the Italian capital remained the national record for 38 years before

Paramjeet Singh broke it in 1998.

He also represented India in the 1956 and 1964 Olympics and was bestowed the Padma Shri in 1959. Interacting with reporters after the cremation, Mr Rijiju spoke about Milkha's last wish was to see India win an Olympic gold in athletics. — PTI

■ **More on Page 8**

Capt. defends giving jobs to sons of Punjab Congress MLAs

Chandigarh, June 19: Under fire from the opposition over giving jobs to sons of two Congress MLAs, Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Saturday defended his government's decision, saying it was a recognition of the sacrifices made by their grandfathers, who laid down their lives for the country.

The Punjab cabinet on Friday decided to appoint Arjun Pratap Singh Bajwa as an inspector in the Punjab Police and Bhisham Pandey as a naib tehsildar in the state's Revenue Department as a special case on compassionate ground.

Arjun Pratap Singh Bajwa is the son of Qadian MLA Fateh Jung Singh Bajwa while Ludhiana legislator Rakesh Pandey is the father of Bhisham Pandey.

Arjun Bajwa is the grandson of former Punjab Minister Satnam Singh Bajwa, who laid his life in 1987 for the sake of peace and harmony in the state while Bhisham Pandey is the grandson of Joginder Pal Pandey who was gunned

■ **Turn to Page 4**

Telanagana lifts all Covid curbs; schools, colleges to reopen July 1

Hyderabad: All educational institutions in Telangana will reopen from July 1 with full preparedness, and the students are allowed to attend the classes physically,” the government said on Saturday as it announced the complete reopening of the state amid the receding second Covid wave. “The Cabinet has instructed the Education department to reopen all

categories of educational institutions in the state from July 1 with full preparedness, and the students are allowed to attend the classes physically,” the government said in a statement.

Schools and colleges across the country have largely remained shut since March last year because of the pandemic. ■ **More on Page 3**

of cases to start rising at the national level. Third wave is inevitable and it could hit the country within the next six to eight weeks... maybe a lit-

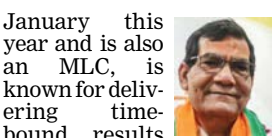
tle longer. It all depends on how we go ahead in terms of Covid-appropriate behaviour and preventing crowds,” Dr Guleria told a news chan-

Modi's trusted aide, ex-IAS A.K. Sharma, made UP BJP's vice-prez

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JUNE 19

Former bureaucrat A.K. Sharma, considered close to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has been appointed as the vice-president of the BJP's Uttar Pradesh unit. The move comes weeks after there was speculation of him being inducted in the state Cabinet.

The former IAS officer, who had joined the BJP in



A.K. Sharma

January this year and is also an MLC, is known for delivering time-bound results and was Mr Modi's secretary during his tenure as the Gujarat chief minister. He is credited for successfully handling the Vibrant Gujarat campaign to get investments to the state and was also secretary in the MSME (micro, small and

medium enterprises) ministry, a crucial department working under the PM's plan for revival of the economy following the coronavirus-triggered lockdown.

In a rejig in the state organisation ahead of the coming Assembly polls, the party in an official statement issued by its state unit chief Swatantra Dev Singh on Saturday also named Archana Mishra from Lucknow and

■ **Turn to Page 4**

Raisi won 179 m votes overall, nearly 62% of the total 28.9m cast

Hardline jurist elected Iran's new President

Dubai, June 19: Iran's hard-line judiciary chief won a landslide victory Saturday in the country's presidential election, a vote that both propelled the supreme leader's protege into Tehran's highest civilian position and saw the lowest turnout in the Islamic Republic's history.

The election of Ebrahim Raisi, already sanctioned by the US in part over his involvement in the mass execution of thousands of political prisoners in 1988, became more of a coronation after his strongest competition found themselves disqualified from running.



Ebrahim Raisi

► The election of Ebrahim Raisi, already sanctioned by the US in part over his involvement in the mass execution of thousands of political prisoners in 1988, became more of a coronation after his strongest competition found themselves disqualified from running

That sparked calls for a boycott and many apparently did stay home — out of over 59 million eligible voters, only 28.9 million voted. Of those voting, some 3.7 million people either accidentally or

intentionally voided their ballots, far beyond the amount seen in previous elections and suggesting some wanted none of the four candidates.

In official results, Mr Raisi won 17.9 million

votes overall, nearly 62% of the total 28.9 million cast. Had the voided ballots gone to a candidate, that person would have come in second place. Following Mr Raisi was former hard-line Revolutionary Guard commander Mohsen Rezaei with 3.4 million votes.

Former Central Bank chief Abdolnasser Hemmati, a moderate viewed as a stand-in for outgoing President Hassan Rouhani in the election, came in third with 2.4 million votes. Amirhossein Ghazizadeh Hashemi was last with just under 1 million. — AP

IN BRIEF

Water supply to be affected today

New Delhi: Water supply will remain affected in parts of the national capital on Sunday as production at Wazirabad, Chandrawal and Okhla plants have been curtailed due to high algae level and increase in ammonia content in the Yamuna river, the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) said. The DJB advised people to make judicious use of water while assuring them “water tankers shall be made available on demand”. The areas likely to be affected include Civil Lines, Hindu Rao Hospital and adjoining areas, Kamla Nagar, Shakti Nagar and adjoining areas, Karol Bagh, Paharganj, NDMC areas, Old and New Rajinder Nagar, Patel Nagar (East and West), Baljeet Nagar, Prem Nagar, Inderpuri and adjoining areas. Also, Kalkaji, Govindpuri, Tugalkabad, Sangam Vihar, Ambedkar Nagar, Prahladpur and adjoining area, Ramizela Ground, Delhi Gate, Subhash Park, Model Town, Gulabi Bagh, Punjabi Bagh, Jahangirpuri, Moolchand, South Extension, Greater Kailash, Burari and adjoining areas and parts of cantonment area would be affected, it added. — PTI

Drugs syndicate busted, 3 held

New Delhi: With the arrest of three persons the Inter-Border Gangs Investigation Squad of the crime branch claimed to have busted a ‘Malana module’ of illegal drugs syndicate from Vasant Kunj area. The accused have been identified as Ridhm Rana (28), Sarvesh Chaudhary (27), and Rakesh Kumar (36). A total of 1,206 grams of fine quality of Hashish has been recovered from their possession, the police said. The police said that the seized Hashish was brought for supply in posh areas of Delhi. According to the police, a tip-off was received that members of the illegal drugs syndicate would come near Fortis Hospital, Vasant Kunj for delivery of Hashish. Following this a trap was laid and the accused persons were arrested on June 12 with the contraband. A case under relevant sections of NDPS Act was registered and the investigation was taken up, the police said.

33-yr-old held for extortion attempt

New Delhi: A 33-year-old man, who suffered monetary loss during lockdown, was arrested for allegedly trying to extort money from a person in the national capital, police said on Saturday. The accused has been identified as Tarun, a resident of Mangolpuri, they said. Police said Tarun hatched a conspiracy with the victim’s ex-girlfriend. He made threat calls to the victim to give him ₹5 lakh or they will implicate the victim in rape case, police said. — PTI

Gym trainer arrested for sending obscene messages

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JUNE 19

A 22-year-old gym trainer was arrested for allegedly sending obscene messages and video clips on Messenger to induce women, police said on Saturday. The accused has been identified as Vikas Kumar, a resident of Dashrathpuri, they said, adding that he is trainer in a gym at Dwarka Sector-4. More than 100 women were abused by stalker over Facebook Messenger, they said.

A complaint was received at Sagarpur police station where a woman reported that an unknown person has been repeatedly harassing her by sending lewd messages and obscene videos on Messenger with a Facebook profile created using fake name Shital Thakur, a senior police officer said. The alleged person was continuously stalking her despite telling him not to do so. The alleged user also told the complainant that he knows her personally, police said.

During technical analysis, it was found that the location of accused was found near the complainant’s address. Later, the user of Facebook ID was identified and nabbed, the officer said.

“The accused person used to entice women by creating fake Facebook accounts in the name of female. So far, three accounts have been identified using which he befriended

Surveillance can check Covid surge: AIIMS chief

Says coronavirus-appropriate behaviour needs to be followed aggressively

New Delhi, June 19: If Covid-appropriate behaviour is not followed and crowding not prevented, the next wave of the viral infection can strike the country in the next six to eight weeks, AIIMS director Randeep Guleria warned on Saturday. “Until a sizeable number of the population is vaccinated, Covid-appropriate behaviour needs to be followed aggressively,” he said, stressing on the need for stricter surveillance and area-specific lockdowns in case of a significant surge.

Mr Guleria reiterated that till now there is no evidence to suggest that children will be affected more in the next wave of the infection.

Earlier, India’s epidemiologists had indicated that a third wave of Covid-19 is inevitable and is likely to start from September-October.

India was hit severely by a brutal second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic in April and May, claiming a



People visit Sadar market that reopened after further ease in Covid-induced lockdown restrictions in New Delhi on Saturday. — PTI

massive number of lives daily, with shortage in oxygen supply at various hospitals adding to the woes.

However, the number of cases has shown a downward trend and the positivity rate too has been shrinking in the last several days.

From a daily case count of over 4 lakh, the number of new Covid-19 cases has been hovering around

60,000 in the last couple of days. “If Covid-appropriate behaviour is not followed, the third wave can happen in the next six to eight weeks. We need to work aggressively to prevent another large wave till vaccination kicks in,” Mr Guleria told a news agency.

There needs to be an aggressive surveillance strategy in Covid hotspots and lockdowns in case of

any significant surge. The moment a significant surge in cases is noted in a particular area and the positivity rate goes beyond 5 per cent, area-specific lockdown and containment measures should be implemented, he said.

“However, a national level lockdown cannot be a solution (to rein in the pandemic) keeping economic activity in mind,” he added.

With 60,753 new Covid cases being reported in a day, India’s total tally rose to 2,98,23,546, while the number of active cases stand at 7,60,019, the lowest in 74 days, according to the Union health ministry data updated on Saturday.

The death toll climbed to 3,85,137 with 1,647 fresh fatalities and active cases comprise 2.55 per cent of the total infections while the national Covid-19 recovery rate has improved to 96.16 per cent, the data updated at 8.00 am showed. — PTI

Families of 6 who died in line of duty to get ₹1cr: Sisodia

BHASKAR HARI SHARMA
NEW DELHI, JUNE 19

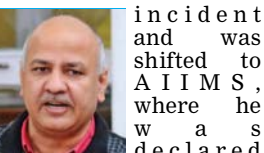
Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia on Saturday said the families of six IAF, Delhi police, and civil defence personnel who died in the line of duty will get ₹1 crore ex gratia each and asserted that the city government stands shoulder-to-shoulder with the kin of these bravehearts.

Sisodia, while making the announcement during an online briefing, said the decision to honour these men and support their families was taken during a meeting on Saturday.

Of the six men, three were from the Indian Air Force, two from the Delhi police, and one from the city’s Civil Defence wing, he said.

Sanket Kaushik was an assistant commissioner of police in Delhi. He was checking vehicles at Rajokri flyover on July 25, 2020, when a truck hit him leading to his death on the spot. He left behind his wife and three daughters who now depend on her for sustenance.

Vikas Kumar, a Delhi police constable, was on picket duty when the driver of a four-wheeler “knowingly increased the speed” and hit him when asked to stop the vehicle. He was injured in the



Manish Sisodia

Rajesh Kumar from Safdarjung is a “martyr who lost his life while serving the Indian Air Force.” His aircraft took off from Jorhat in Assam and later went missing. The wreckage was found in Arunachal Pradesh and Kumar was found dead on June 3, 2019. He had gotten married just three months ago.

Flight Lieutenant Sunit Mohanty, from Dwarka in Delhi, was on the same flight as Rajesh Kumar. He also died in the plane crash on June 3, 2019. He was living with his family, including his aged father, mother, and a younger sister; the government said.

Meet Kumar, a squadron leader in the Indian Air Force, died on July 18, 2018, after his MIG-21 crashed in an operational flying sortie in the Kangra hills of Himachal Pradesh.

Pravesh Kumar, a civil defence personnel, was on duty at Mangolpuri flyover on September 19, 2020, when a truck rammed into him and fled.

Cabbie dies after being hit by drunk cop driving car

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JUNE 19

A 35-year-old cab driver died after his vehicle was hit from behind by a car driven by a drunk Delhi Police constable at the Barapulla flyover. According to police, the accident took place on Barapulla flyover around 10.40 pm on Friday. The deceased has been identified as Premal of Agra.

During inquiry, it was found that the K100 driven by constable Mohit Bhardwaj (35) hit the cab from the rear side. Bhardwaj, a resident of Gautam Budh Nagar, has been arrested, DCP (southeast) R.P. Meena said. A case has been registered at the Nizamuddin Police Station, he said.

Bhardwaj has been serving as constable in the Delhi Police since 2009 and was posted in New Delhi district. His father, Hariom, is a sub-inspector and posted in the security unit. After finishing his duty, Bhardwaj had consumed alcohol in his vehicle before leaving for his house. The MLC report showed his alcohol level was 63 mg per 100 ml at the time of the incident, Meena said.

Youth Cong organises vaccine camps, distributes ration kits

New Delhi, June 19: The Congress’ youth wing observed former party president Rahul Gandhi’s birthday by distributing ration kits among the needy and organising vaccination camps on Saturday. Gandhi turned 51 on Saturday. He has decided not to celebrate this birthday in view of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Indian Youth Congress, in a statement, said the day was observed as ‘Sewa Diwas’ as part of which financial assistance was offered to the unemployed and disabled people.

The Delhi Congress also distributed face masks, medicine kits and cooked meals for free to the poor in



People stand in a queue to collect free ration outside Youth Congress office on the occasion of Rahul Gandhi's birthday in New Delhi on Saturday. — G.N. JHA

the national capital. “Ration distribution programmes are being organised at many places in Delhi. Free vaccination camps have been set up for

citizens across India and financial assistance is being provided to citizens who have lost their jobs,” Youth Congress president Srinivas B.V. said. — PTI

2,95,000 vaccines available for 18-44 age group: Delhi govt

▶ **THE NATIONAL** capital recorded seven deaths due to Covid-19, the lowest since April 1, and 135 fresh cases of coronavirus infection on Saturday

age group,” said Atishi. “The present stock of Covishield and Covaxin doses would last for 14 and two days, respectively. So we urge more youngsters to book their slot on the CoWin app and get themselves inoculated,” she added.

Talking about the vaccine stock available for people above 45 years, Atishi said there are almost 8,50,000 Covid doses in the present stock, of which 7,65,000 are Covishield and 80,000 Covaxin.

“While the Covaxin stock is good enough to last for six days, the Covishield stock would

last for another 58 days,” she said.

On Friday, a total of 77,345 doses were administered in Delhi, out of which 62,230 were first doses and 15,115 second doses.

The national capital recorded seven deaths due to Covid-19, the lowest since April 1, and 135 fresh cases of coronavirus infection on Saturday, as the positivity rate dipped to 0.18 per cent, according to data shared by the health department here.

These new fatalities have pushed the death toll in the city to 24,907.

This is also the first time the daily fatality count has slipped into single-digit since April 1 when the city had recorded nine deaths and 2,790 cases, the data stated.

Delhi had on April 3 recorded 10 deaths due to Covid-19. — PTI

13 injured in gas cylinder blast in Mangolpuri area

New Delhi, June 19: Thirteen people sustained burn injuries on Saturday following a gas cylinder blast at a house in Delhi’s Mangolpuri area, officials said. The police received a call about the blast at 6.44 pm, they said, adding that the fire has been doused.

Fire department officials said three fire tenders were rushed to the spot to douse the blaze.

The house belongs to a man named Ganesh. His wife Savitri was reportedly changing the gas cylinder when it exploded due a leakage, deputy commissioner of police (outer) Parvinder Singh said.

The injured — Savitri,

▶ **THE HOUSE** belongs to a man named Ganesh. His wife Savitri was reportedly changing the gas cylinder when it exploded due a leakage, deputy commissioner of police (outer) Parvinder Singh said

Sachin, Geeta, Prince, Laxmi, Vinod, Vivek, Chhatarpal, Sanju, Sandhya, Nirmala, Mahima and Monishka — were rushed to the Sanjay Gandhi Hospital, police said.

Later, four of them — Savitri, Sachin, Geeta and Prince — who sustained major burn injuries were referred to the Safdarjung Hospital, police said. — PTI

MOVIE REVIEW

Sherni’s roaring politics is delivered by Balan with quietude

SUPARNA SHARMA

Sherni has a very simple story: An *aadam-khor* tigress is on the prowl under the jurisdiction of the Bijnasur Van Vibhag in Madhya Pradesh.

The forest department has to tranquillise and capture her and then release her in the national park. Or, it has to goad her passage into the wild, away from the humans she is threatening.

Writer Aastha Tiku and director Amit V Masurkar take this guileless story to plot a survivor thriller that courses through the treacherous terrain of a nation that is self-sabotaging.

Sherni’s screenplay is woven with India’s reality, which is irony in perpetual motion. We get a macro and micro view of the ecological destruction that is taking place, one crisis, one government scheme at a time. While making plans to save the environment, contracts are given out to plunder and profit from it. Forest cover, animals’ habitat, people’s lives and livelihoods — all are under threat in a deadly cycle of devastation and superficial patch-ups that is made unending by electoral politics.

Amit Masurkar’s 2017 was a sharp commentary on India’s claim to be a republic. It had a snarky screenplay that looked for the absurd as the dance of democracy played out between the officious and the bewildered. Packed with fast and crackling dialogue, its excellent performances have stayed with us because the film made us think while we laughed.

At many levels, *Sherni* and *Newton* are similar in their concerns and setting.

Sherni’s political credentials are secular, chivalrous and inclusive.

The characters it front-loads, the names and jobs assigned to them are a delightful leap from how Christian and Muslim characters are often portrayed by Bollywood.

There is an interfaith marriage, a married woman who doesn’t want kids, a biryani meal shared by all and politicians bayoning for blood as they play politics



Sherni

CAST: Vidya Balan, Vijay Raaz, Brijendra Kala, Neeraj Kabi, Mukul Chadda, Sharat Saxena

DIRECTOR: Amit V Masurkar

RATING: ★★☆☆

Streaming on Amazon Prime

in sight, she tells her husband over a video call.

Always at the service of the resource-strapped *van vibhag* is a zoology professor from a local college. Noorani (Vijay Raaz) understands animal behaviour; cares for them and wants to help.

On top of them sit several people.

The big babu, Nangia (Neeraj Kabi), who has a cultivated manner and grey beard. He seems to be cynical but learned, intellectual but also well networked. This package of false impressions feeds his inflated ego and hides a withered spine.

Then there is Rajan Rajhans urf *Pintu bhaiyya* (Sharad Saxena) who runs a retreat nearby. He calls himself a conservationist but is a hunter looking for his next kill.

On top of them all are politicians of various hues and clout.

Close to the bottom is T12, the man-eater of Bijnasur.

And squished right at the bottom, below T12, are the trapped villagers — forced to take their cattle to a particular patch of jungle because the traditional grazing ground is now a profitable teak plantation that the government is proud of.

Vidya Vincent is focused, upright but low-key in the way women often are in a system populated by men with fragile egos.

Assembly elections are underway and after two villagers are killed, the man-eater becomes an election mudda between two rival candidates. One promises to kill the tiger and save people, the other lies about a third death.

Passions are roused over dead bodies, officers are attacked, a jeep is burnt and a hawan is organised in the office to predict who will triumph — the tigress or Bansal.

The threat to T12 rises from within the system that is working at cross purposes. While one lot sets out to capture and release her, the other lot is armed and keen to kill because elections have to be won...

It is easier to “act” when there is action, lots to do, heavy dialogue to maaro. Actors can rehearse and train for it.

It is also relatively easier for actors to have a trait, a stand-out emotion they can project.

Balan plays a married woman and a female officer with the glory of commonness.

She is measured, believable and warm. She fits seamlessly in the officious entourage and yet she stands out as she carries *Sherni*’s roaring politics with quietude.

Neeraj Kabi is excellent as the posturing, creepy narcissist. As the one who gives hope and then smashes it, he becomes symbolic of all that is wrong with the “system”.

Vijay Raaz and Brijesh are talented but are also given to over-acting. Here they give restrained performances.

Director Amit Masurkar has pulled off a feat thanks to the screenplay by Aastha Tiku that is political, intelligent and very well researched. There isn’t much action and yet the film says a lot.

Sherni is also cinematically simple, with a few flourishes thrown in for our joy.

In *Sherni*, females populate all spaces — the office, the field, the village, the jungle — and the casting is nicely done. They all seem to belong to the spaces and roles assigned to them. The problem is that most remain part of the landscape and never come alive.

Like Sharat Saxena. He is not bad. But there is something about his presence, his oily, *bahubali* act that, together with the two rival politicians and the villagers, feels reductive and strikes a stale note.

SHORT TAKES

MP launches special vaccination drive

Bhopal: Madhya Pradesh government is set to launch a 10-day special drive for vaccination of people in the state on Sunday. The government has set a target to vaccinate 10 lakh people on the opening day of the drive. This was announced by chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan here on Saturday. Addressing eminent citizens of the state, Mr Chouhan said elected representatives of local civic bodies, social activists and eminent citizens in the localities would be roped in to join the campaign for mass vaccination of the people during the period. Eminent citizens of the locality along with the health workers would visit people in their houses to extend an invitation to them with 'rice mixed with turmeric' (a traditional way of inviting guests) to drop in the vaccination Centres for inoculation during the period, he added. The slogan of the campaign would be 'get vaccinated, save life', he said.

'Centre, Assam govt to discuss coal mining'

Guwahati: A tripartite meeting among the Union ministries of coal and environment and the Assam government will be held next month to discuss resumption of coal mining in the state, chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Saturday. After a meeting with officials of PSU major Coal India Limited (CIL) at Margherita in Tinsukia district, Sarma said that issues like pollution, and forest and environmental clearances are involved in resuming mining activities. He discussed various issues pertaining to restarting mining activities by the North Eastern Coalfields (NEC), an official release said. The NEC, a unit of the CIL, had announced suspension of all its mining operations in the state in June last year following protests against the company's activities inside the Dehing Patkai forest. — PTI

Coronavirus: DPIIT secy passes away

New Delhi: Secretary in the department of industry and internal trade (DPIIT) Guruprasad Mohapatra died of Covid related complications at AIIMS on Saturday. Mohapatra, 59, was admitted to AIIMS in mid-April. He is the first serving secretary to the Government of India to have succumbed to Covid. Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed grief over Mohapatra's demise. "Saddened by the demise of Dr. Guruprasad Mohapatra, DPIIT Secretary. I had worked with him extensively in Gujarat and at the Centre. He had a great understanding of administrative issues and was known for his innovative zeal. Condolences to his family and friends. Om Shanti," Mr Modi said in a tweet. — PTI

RATS NIBBLE DEAD MAN'S FACE IN INDORE HOSPITAL'S MORGUE

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY
BHOPAL, JUNE 19

In a shocking incident, a dead man's face was found to be nibbled by rats in the district hospital in Indore on Saturday. The sight of the badly mauled face of the deceased has left his kin, including his widow, shell-shocked, the police said.

According to the police, one Krishna Kant (41) of Sejbay village in Dhar district in Madhya Pradesh consumed poison following a

Open activities in a calibrated manner: MHA tells state, UTs

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JUNE 19

Union Home ministry has in an advisory sent out to all states on Saturday cautioned that they should be extremely careful in the entire reopening process and the move should be well-calibrated after the second wave of coronavirus pandemic which saw a massive surge in the cases.

The ministry has advised the states to ensure a fivefold strategy of "coronavirus-appropriate behaviour, test-track-treat and vaccinate."

In his letter to the states Union home secretary Ajay Bhalla also asked stressed the need to expedite the vaccination drive in their respective areas will all possible assistance from the Centre.

Taking note of the massive crowds that have once again started visiting public places ever since the reopening process Centre has said that while the decision to impose or easing of restrictions has to be decided by the resistive states keeping in view the local situation these should be done in a very "careful and calibrated manner." The ministry has also said that in case there is an increase in the number of cases in any particular zone these should be contained at the local level itself so that the coronavirus does not spread rapidly to other parts of the states.

"As the situation is dynamic a close watch needs to be kept at the local level on sudden surge increase or rise in the number of active or positive cases. A robust mechanism should be put in place at the micro-level to ensure whenever cases rise at the local level they have contained there itself through local containment measures," the home secretary said in his advisory.

Nearly two lakh registered health care workers (HCWs) and frontline workers (FLWs) in Odisha have not taken vaccine shots against Covid-19. A letter issued by the state health department to district collectors, commissioners of municipal corporations, chief district medical, and public health officers revealed on Saturday. As per the document, a

Colleges, schools to open in T'gana July 1

Decision was taken after examining reports by medical, health dept

Hyderabad, June 19: After over a month of imposing lockdown curbs to check the Covid surge, the Telangana government on Saturday decided to lift the shutdown in the state from Sunday in view of a decline in coronavirus cases and also reopen educational institutions from July 1.

The state cabinet, which met on Saturday, took decisions to this effect and directed officials of all departments to remove all restrictions imposed during the lockdown, an official release said. The decision was taken after examining reports submitted by medical and health department officials that Covid cases have come down in the state and the virus is now under control, it said.

Telangana on Friday reported 1,417 new Covid cases, pushing the tally

to 6,10,834, while the toll rose to 3,546 with 12 more deaths. According to the release, the cabinet took note that the virus is coming under control in neighbouring states as well. On June 8, the Cabinet had decided to extend the lockdown for 10 days.

As part of the lockdown that came to an end on Saturday, relaxation has been given from 6 am to 5 pm with a grace period of one hour

(up to 6 PM) for people to reach home. The education department has been directed to reopen all categories of educational institutions from July 1 with students allowed to attend classes physically.

In view of the decision to reopen educational institutions, the cabinet has asked the education department to prepare guidelines on different issues, including students' attendance and online classes and release it at the earliest, it said.

Observing that the decision (to end lockdown) was taken with the view that the livelihood of common people should not suffer, the cabinet sought support and cooperation from people, reminding them that Covid precautions like wearing masks and maintaining social distancing should be followed. — PTI

Pawar: Don't lower guard against Covid

SONU SHRIVASTAVA
MUMBAI, JUNE 19

Maharashtra deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar on Saturday asked people not to lower their guard against Covid in view of the possible third wave of the pandemic. He warned people against visiting tourist attractions just because restrictions have been eased. Mr. Pawar said that the warning of a third wave needs to be taken seriously.

Mr Pawar held a review meeting with officials over the coronavirus situation in Pune district.

Later speaking with reporters, he said that if the people go out for tourism purposes, the administration would



Ajit Pawar

not be left with any option except imposing a 15-day quarantine regime on such people after their return to home.

As per the state's weekly review of the five-level unlock categories, Pune city is under level-II, which means most of the establishments can be allowed to open with time restrictions. Mr. Pawar said that the coronavirus numbers are coming down, but as a precautionary measure, it has been decided that all the shops under the non-essential category, malls, hotels, and restaurants in Pune will remain closed on weekends.

Minority affairs ministry to launch vaccine campaign

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JUNE 19

A nationwide campaign to create awareness about the ongoing Covid vaccination drive will be launched by the minority affairs ministry on June 21, which will also see prominent persons and religious leaders including Delhi's Jama Masjid's Shahi Imam, Syed A h m e d B u k h a r i, Fatehpuri Masjid's Imam Mufti Mukarram Ahmad, Jain guru Acharya Lokesh Muni and Delhi Sikh Gurudwara management committee president Manjinder Singh Sirsa participating in the campaign. The campaign *Jaan Hai To Jahaan Hai* will be launched by minority affairs minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi from UP's Rampur.

2L Covid warriors not jabbed in Odisha

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO
BHUBANESWAR, JUNE 19

Nearly two lakh registered health care workers (HCWs) and frontline workers (FLWs) in Odisha have not taken vaccine shots against Covid-19.

A letter issued by the state health department to district collectors, commissioners of municipal corporations, chief district medical, and public health officers revealed on Saturday.

As per the document, a

total of 1,97,217 registered health care and frontline workers have not taken vaccines so far. It includes 1,36,170 health care workers and 61,047 frontline workers.

Interestingly, HCWs and FLWs, who are honoured with the status of Covid warriors for leading the fight against the pandemic, were the first priority group in the vaccination drive.

The health department shared a district-wise list of HCWs and FLWs who have registered in the

government's CoWIN app but have not taken the jabs yet.

As per the list, the highest number of 17,407 health care and frontline workers have not taken the jabs in Bhubaneswar followed by Sundergarh (14,856), Ganjam (13,613), Bhadrak (11,892), and Khordha (11,858).

Three other districts, which have more than 10,000 such unvaccinated health and frontline workers, are Mayurbhanj (10,519), Cuttack (10,347), and Balasore (10,316).

BJP for whitepaper on corona deaths

Bhubaneswar: Odisha state BJP unit on Saturday came down heavily on BJD and demanded a whitepaper on the total number of deaths due to the Covid in 2020 & 2021. BJP leader and Opposition chief whip Mohan Majhi further said that the healthcare system is a shambles in the state and hence people are facing a lot of problems.


Jharkhand on high alert as black fungus cases rise

Ranchi, June 19: With a rise in mucormycosis or black fungus cases in Jharkhand, the state government has directed the health machinery to be on high alert and extend all possible care to the affected people, an official said on Saturday.

A total of 79 confirmed and 53 suspected cases have been reported to date in 18 of the 24 districts, he said. "The state has thus far registered 26 deaths due to mucormycosis, while 50 people have recovered from it," Ravi Shankar

Shukla, mission director of the National Health Mission (NHM) Jharkhand, told PTI. Mucormycosis is a fungal infection leading to prolonged morbidity and even mortality among Covid patients.

— PTI



Can Fin Homes Ltd
Corporate Office: Sector-3, Noida
Branch Office: Sector-18, Noida

CAN FIN HOMES LTD.

CIN: L85110KA1987PLC008699

Above Canara Bank Building First Floor, Plot No. C-3, Email: Noida@canfinhomes.com

Ph.: 0120-2970164, /65/67 Mob.: 7625079126

[Rule 8(1)] POSSESSION NOTICE (for immovable property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Can Fin Homes Ltd. in exercise of the powers conferred under Sec 13(2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 read with Rule 8 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued demand notices calling upon the following Borrowers/Co-Borrowers/Guarantor/s to repay the amounts mentioned in the notices and interest upto the date of final payment, within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notices.

The borrowers as well as the guarantors have failed to repay the amount. Notice is hereby given to the borrowers in particular and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the properties described herein below against each borrower, in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002 on the mentioned date below in table

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the following properties and any dealings with these properties will be subject to the charge of Can Fin Homes Ltd. Noida Branch for amounts mentioned against each property, which is payable with further interest thereon until payment in full.

S. No.	Name of Borrowers	Description of the properties mortgaged	Date of Demand Notice	Date of Possession	Amount Outstanding
1.	Mrs. Anita Gupta and Mr. Jatin Gupta	Upper Second Floor, Property No. 344 & 347, Khasra No. 53/2, Guru Ramdas Nagar, Laxmi Nagar, Delhi, 110092. East by:- Plot No 345 West by:- Plot No 343 North by:- Other South by:- Road	05.04.2021	17.06.2021	Rs. 26,49,912/- and interest thereon
2.	Mrs. Anushka Sharma and Mr. Anshaj Bhardwaj	Plot No. C-4/239, First Floor, Block - C-4, Yamuna Vihar, Delhi. East by:- Plot No C-4/238 West by:- C-4/240 North by:- Road South by:- Other Property	05.04.2021	17.06.2021	Rs. 20,22,560/- and interest thereon
3.	Mr. Krishan Kant Sharma and Mrs. Bhawana Sharma	Flat No. F-3, First Floor (without Roof Right), Plot No. G-8, Lajpat Nagar, Loni, Distt. Ghaziabad, UP. East by:- Plot No 1 & 2 West by:- 40' wide Road North by:- Plot No 09 South by:- Plot No 07	05.04.2021	17.06.2021	Rs. 9,00,543/- and interest thereon
4.	Mrs. Rajkumari and Mr. Anil Kumar, Bimlesh Devi, Sandeep Gautam, Deenu Devi	Plot No. 98, Kh. No. 309/6, Nehru Garden, Khora Colony, Ghaziabad 201005 East by:- Road 30 Ft West by:- Plot No. 93 North by:- Road 20 Ft South by:- Other Plot	05.04.2021	17.06.2021	Rs. 23,37,809/- and interest thereon
5.	Mrs. Rajbala Sharma and Gajender Sharma	Flat No. GF-3, Ground Floor, Back side, Plot No. 928, Sector -3, Vasundhara, UP. East by:- Road Entry West by:- Other Property North by:- Plot No 3/927 South by:- Plot No 3/929	05.04.2021	17.06.2021	Rs. 27,45,886/- and interest thereon
6.	Mr. Rajesh Ranjan and Mrs. Shivani Saxena	Plot No. 168, Entire Second Floor With Roof Right, Shakti Khand -4, Indrapuram, Ghaziabad, UP. East by:- Plot No 181 & 182 West by:- 30' Wide North by:- Plot No 169 South by:- Plot No 167	05.04.2021	17.06.2021	Rs. 42,35,125/- and interest thereon

Date: 18.06.2021

Place: Noida

Sd/-
Authorised Officer
Can Fin Homes Ltd.

EXTENSION OF SPECIAL TRAINS

For the convenience of Rail Passengers, Railways have decided to extend the Periodicity of the run of following Special trains as per the details given below:-

Train No. & Name	Frequency Days of Run	Notified Upto	Extended Upto
02317 Kolkata - Amritsar Special	Sun, Wed	30.06.2021	till further advice
02318 Amritsar - Kolkata Special	Tue, Fri	02.07.2021	till further advice
02325 Kolkata - Nangal Dam Special	Thursday	24.06.2021	till further advice
02326 Nangal Dam - Kolkata Special	Saturday	26.06.2021	till further advice
02329 Sealdah - Anand Vihar T. Special	Tuesday	29.06.2021	till further advice
02330 Anand Vihar T. - Sealdah Special	Wednesday	30.06.2021	till further advice
02349 Godda - New Delhi Humsafar Exp. Spl.	Monday	28.06.2021	till further advice
02350 New Delhi - Godda Humsafar Exp. Spl.	Tuesday	29.06.2021	till further advice
02353 Howrah - Lalkuan Special	Friday	25.06.2021	till further advice
02354 Lalkuan - Howrah Special	Saturday	26.06.2021	till further advice
02371 Howrah - Bikaner Jn. Special	Monday	28.06.2021	till further advice
02372 Bikaner Jn. - Howrah Special	Thursday	01.07.2021	till further advice
03005 Howrah - Amritsar Special	Daily	30.06.2021	till further advice
03006 Amritsar - Howrah Special	Daily	02.07.2021	till further advice
03167 Kolkata - Agra Cantt Express Special	Thursday	24.06.2021	till further advice
03168 Agra Cantt - Kolkata Express Special	Saturday	26.06.2021	till further advice
03429 Malda Town - Anand Vihar T. Special	Friday	25.06.2021	till further advice
03430 Anand Vihar T. - Malda Town Special	Saturday	26.06.2021	till further advice
02323 Howrah - Barmer Festival Special	Friday	25.06.2021	till further advice
02324 Barmer - Howrah Festival Special	Wednesday	30.06.2021	till further advice
02327 Howrah - Dehradun Festival Special	Tue, Fri	29.06.2021	till further advice
02328 Dehradun - Howrah Festival Special	Wed, Sat	30.06.2021	till further advice
02331 Howrah - Jammu Tawi Festival Special	Tue, Fri, Sat	29.06.2021	till further advice
02332 Jammu Tawi - Howrah Festival Special	Thur, Sun, Mon	01.07.2021	till further advice
02369 Howrah - Dehradun Festival Special	Mon, Wed, Thu, Sat, Sun	30.06.2021	till further advice
02370 Dehradun - Howrah Festival Special	Mon, Tue, Thur, Fri, Sun	01.07.2021	till further advice
03009 Howrah-Yog Nagri Rishikesh Festival Spl.	Daily	30.06.2021	till further advice
03010 Yog Nagri Rishikesh-Howrah Festival Spl.	Daily	02.07.2021	till further advice
03019 Howrah - Kathgodam Festival Special	Daily	30.06.2021	till further advice
03020 Kathgodam - Howrah Festival Special	Daily	02.07.2021	till further advice
08237 Korba - Amritsar Jn. Special	Tri-Weekly	25.06.2021	29.12.2021
08238 Amritsar Jn. - Bilaspur Jn. Special	Tri-Weekly	27.06.2021	31.12.2021
08215 Durg - Udhampur Special	Weekly	23.06.2021	29.12.2021
08216 Udhampur - Durg Special	Weekly	24.06.2021	30.12.2021
02883 Durg - Hazrat Nizamuddin Superfast Spl.	Tri-Weekly	28.06.2021	30.12.2021
02884 Hazrat Nizamuddin - Durg Superfast Spl.	Tri-Weekly	29.06.2021	31.12.2021
02549 Kamakhya - Anand Vihar T. Superfast Express Special	Daily	01.07.2021	till further advice
02550 Anand Vihar T. - Kamakhya Superfast Express Special	Daily	03.07.2021	till further advice

Note: The above Special trains will run to the existing timings, stoppages and fare structure.

For any kind of information such as detailed Time-Table and stations enroute etc., passengers are requested to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or may visit Indian Railways website: www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in or NTES App.

All norms of the State and Central Government regarding COVID-19 including Social distancing, sanitization etc., may be followed in the trains and at the Railway stations. All other precautions associated with COVID-19 should also be ensured.

RailMadad Helpline No.	Visit RailMadad website: www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in	Follow us on :-	NORTHERN RAILWAY
139	Download Railmadad App	YouTube Instagram Facebook	Your Convenience - Our Concern
Visit us at : www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in			

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Maha revokes 5 cops' suspension

Jalna, June 19: Days after five police personnel were suspended for searching the public relations office of BJP leader and Union minister Raosaheb Danve in Jalna allegedly without a legal warrant, the Home department of the Shiv Sena-led Maharashtra government has ordered to revoke their suspension, a police officer said on Saturday.

Local Shiv Sena leader Arjun Khotkar had alleged that district superintendent of police Vinayak Deshmukh suspended the five policemen under political pressure from Danve, the MP from Jalna.

— PTI

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

The general public is hereby informed that a person namely **Shiva S/o Unknown R/o Unknown** about 50 years of age had been found in an unconscious condition at Hedgegar Hospital, after first aid, he was referred to GTB Hospital, Delhi. During the treatment, he was declared dead by doctors at 18.06.21. In this regard, a vide has been registered with **DD No: 99-A, dated 15.06.2021 at PS Farsh Bazar, Delhi**. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to identify the deceased person, but no clue has come to light so far.

The description of the UIDB is as under: **Name:** Shiva, **Sex:** Male, **Age:** 50 Years, **Height:** 5'5", **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Face:** Oval, **Built:** Thin, **Wearing:** Black colour jacket, grey colour shirt and drak brown colour pants.

If anyone has any information about his relatives, kindly inform the SHO/Farsh Bazar, Delhi.

E-mail : cbc@cbl.gov.in
Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641
Fax : 011-24368639

SHO
P.S. Farsh Bazar, Delhi.
Ph. No. 011-22303600

DPI/472/SHD/2021



Shiva

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



Toilet. During the treatment doctor declared him brought dead. In this regard a **DD No. 98-A, dated 14.06.2021** has been lodged at **P.S. Welcome, Delhi**.

Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.

SHO
P.S. Welcome, Delhi
Ph.: 011-22822746, 22826808

DP/851/NE/21

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of male **Age:** Approx 35 years, **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Height:** 5'10", **Built:** Medium, **Face:** Round, was wearing White Check Shirt and Black Slippers in feet, was found in unconscious condition at Kabooter Market near



SHORT TAKES

Man, 70, friend held for raping teen girl

Buldhana: A 70-year-old man and his 50-year-old friend were arrested for allegedly raping a 19-year-old mentally challenged girl in Buldhana district of Maharashtra and burning her four-month-old aborted fetus, police said on Saturday. The victim used to visit the farm of the 70-year-old accused in Islampur in Jalgaon Jamod tehsil of the district when he allegedly raped her in September 2020. Later, his friend also raped the victim on multiple occasions till March 2021, an investigating officer said. "After the victim girl became pregnant, the accused duo forced her to take abortion pills. They also burnt the four-month-old fetus," he said. The police had received a written complaint describing the entire incident recently. A case was registered against the accused under various sections of the IPC for rape and other charges. — PTI

CRPF deployed at NIA Mumbai office

Mumbai: A day after the NIA arrested former police officer Pradeep Sharma in the case of explosives-laden SUV found near industrialist Mukesh Ambani's house and the murder of businessman Mansukh Hiran, teams of CRPF were deployed outside its office in South Mumbai on Friday. Sharma, famous as "encounter specialist" when he was in the Mumbai police force, was the fifth serving or former police official to be arrested in the case. In view of the latest developments in the probe, CRPF teams were deployed outside the NIA's Cumballa Hill office where the accused are lodged, a police official said. CRPF teams besides local police had also accompanied NIA sleuths on Thursday when they searched Sharma's house in J.B. Nagar in suburban Andheri East, he said. — PTI

Raj to hire 10,453 computer teachers

Jaipur: Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot has given approval for the creation of 10,453 posts for computer teachers and asked for immediate recruitment on contract basis, according to a statement issued on Saturday. According to the proposal, a total of 9,862 posts of basic computer instructor and 591 senior computer instructor posts will be created in the education department. A basic instructor will get ₹18,500 per month as remuneration, ₹23,700 per month for senior instructor and ₹33,800 per month for senior instructor on promotion. The eligible candidates will be employed on these posts with transparency through competitive examination, the statement said. — PTI

GOV TRYING TO MALIGN BENGAL PEOPLE: TMC

Kolkata: The Trinamul Congress on Saturday claimed that West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar, who visited New Delhi for five days, has been trying to malign the people of the state on the post-poll violence issue for electing the Mamata Banerjee-led party, and demanded that he should be removed from his post. TMC chief whip in the Rajya Sabha, Sukhendu Sekhar Roy, also alleged that it is a deep-rooted political conspiracy that Dhankhar is exaggerating "stray incidents" as post-poll violence and meeting Union Home Minister Amit Shah and other central leaders in Delhi. The governor went to Delhi on Tuesday, a day after a delegation of BJP MLAs petitioned him on alleged deterioration of the law and order situation in the state. Mr Dhankhar met Mr Shah twice, on Thursday and on Saturday. During the first meeting, he is believed to have briefed the home minister about the law and order situation in the state. "The governor has been making rounds in Delhi durbars of Shah. This is his effort to malign the state and its people who have elected Mamata Banerjee," Roy told reporters. After its claim of winning over 200 seats fell flat, the BJP is busy hatching a conspiracy and the governor is acting as the microphone of the saffron camp, he alleged. — PTI

'Social media platforms will have to follow Indian laws' Don't lecture India on freedom of speech, democracy: Prasad

Pune, June 19: Union information technology minister Ravi Shankar Prasad on Saturday asked social media platforms to not lecture India on "freedom of speech" and "democracy", and asserted that if these "profit-making" firms want to earn money in India, they will have to follow the "Indian Constitution and Indian laws".

The new IT rules, which were originally announced in February, give users of the platform a forum for redressal for their grievances, Mr Prasad said, adding that they are aimed at regulating content on social media firms and making likes of Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter more accountable to legal requests for swift removal of posts and sharing of details on the originators of messages.



Criticise the Prime Minister, criticise me, ask tough questions, but why would you not obey Indian laws? If you want to do business in India, you have to follow India's Constitution and India's laws.

— Ravi Shankar Prasad, IT minister

"The new rules require social media companies to set up an India-based grievance redressal officer, compliance officer, and the nodal officer so that millions of social media users get a forum for grievance redressal," Mr Prasad said, adding that no one was "asking for the moon" by getting firms to appoint three officers based in the country for this purpose.

"These are basic requirements. Let me reiterate emphatically that India

does not need a lecture on freedom of speech and democracy from a profit-making company that stays in America. India has free and fair elections, an independent judiciary, media, civil society. Here I am talking to students and taking questions, and this is true democracy. So these profit-making companies should not lecture us on democracy," he said.

"When Indian companies go to do business in America, do they not follow American laws? You

earn good money, good profits as India is a digital market, there is no problem. Criticise the Prime Minister, criticise me, ask tough questions, but why would you not obey Indian laws? If you want to do business in India, you have to follow India's Constitution and India's laws," the minister, who also holds the law and justice portfolio, emphasised.

Mr Prasad said these firms got three months to comply with the new IT rules, the period expiring on May 26. "I said I will give them extra time by a way of goodwill gesture. They did not comply. Therefore, it was exhausted because of the consequences of the law and not because of me. Now, what will happen? They will have to respond to court proceedings, investigative proceedings," Mr Prasad said.

Rahul Gandhi turns 51, decides not to celebrate b'day

New Delhi, June 19: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday turned 51 with party leaders and workers wishing him on his birthday, which he has decided not to celebrate in view of the Covid pandemic. Rahul was born to Rajiv Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi on June 19, 1970, in Delhi.

The Delhi Congress has decided to observe the day as "Sewa Diwas" and is distributing face masks, medicine kits and cooked meals free of cost to the poor in the national capital.

The National Students' Union of India (NSUI), the Congress' students' wing, is organising a free vaccination camp to mark the occasion, while the Youth Congress is distributing free ration to the needy in Delhi.

Some state Congress committees are observing the day by distributing ration and other essentials at no cost to the poor and the needy.

Wishing their leader, the Congress said on Twitter, "We wish Shri Rahul Gandhi health and happiness on his birthday."

"In view of the second Covid wave and the incredible difficulties people are facing, Mr. Gandhi has chosen not to celebrate his birthday. Instead, he has urged Congress workers to continue their relief work around India," the

CM Uddhav takes veiled swipe at leaders of Cong

People won't tolerate self-centred politics, warns CM

Hindutva is nationalism: Uddhav tells Sena workers

SONU SHRIVASTAVA
MUMBAI, JUNE 19



Uddhav Thackeray

Shiv Sena president and Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray on Saturday reiterated his commitment to Hindutva. Addressing his party workers on its 55th foundation day, Mr Thackeray said "Hindutva is Nationalism".

The Sena chief also said that though he has joined hands with the Congress and Nationalist Congress Party to form the government in Maharashtra, it does not mean that Shiv Sena has abandoned Hindutva.

"Speaking about Hindutva, many people misconstrue that forming Maha Vikas Aghadi means we have aban-

doned Hindutva. It is not a patent for anyone. Hindutva is in our hearts," he said.

Referring to Trinamul Congress's victory in West Bengal Assembly election, Mr Thackeray said, "West Bengal gave 'Vande Mataram' to the country. Today it has given the mantra to preserve regional pride."

should offer confidence and courage to people. Otherwise people will ask what plans the party has to provide them livelihood, jobs," he added.

Sena is not desperate for power...we will not unnecessarily carry others' burden. We will always take a firm stand to protect the interests of common man. Even we can give a call for contesting elections without alliance," he said.

Economy and health were the two key issues before the country, Mr Thackeray said. "The time has come for all the political parties to decide whether they want political success for the sake of it or for finding solutions on the economic front. Social unrest would be a harsh word to describe it, but the country is heading for social unease for sure," he said. — PTI



Dr Swati Binnani with newborn triplets conceived by the IVF technique at a hospital in Bikaner on Saturday.

Induction of Rafale aircraft into IAF by 2022: IAF Chief

Hyderabad, June 19: IAF Chief R.K.S. Bhaduria Saturday said the induction of 36 Rafale aircraft into the Indian Air Force would take place by 2022.

The IAF is absolutely on target with respect to the Rafale induction plan, he said, while responding to a reporters' query on the timeline for receiving all the 36 fighter jets from France.

"The target is 2022. It is absolutely on target. I mentioned earlier: Except for one or two aircraft, minor delays because of Covid related issues, but, in fact, some deliveries have been ahead of time.

So, broadly, we are absolutely on target on the Rafale induction plan.

On the operationalisation plan, you are aware, we are fully operational. So, in terms of time, we will be absolutely on



R.K.S. Bhaduria

time," he told reporters after reviewing the Combined Graduation Parade (CGP) at the Air Force Academy in Dundigal here.

In 2016, India had signed an inter-governmental agreement with France to procure 36-Rafale jets at a cost ₹59,000 crore.

Asked for his assessment on the situation in eastern Ladakh on the Indo-China border, the IAF Chief said talks are on between the two sides and the first attempt is to

continue with the parleys and carry out the disengagement at the "balance friction points."

According to the IAF chief, so far 11 rounds of talks have been held between the Indian and Chinese commanders and the grounds are being prepared for another one.

"The first attempt is to continue with the talks and do the disengagement at the balance friction points. And, of course, follow it up with de-escalation," he said.

"However, in parallel, the ground realities are being monitored closely. Whatever is the reality across, in terms of current leftover locations, deployments, any changes, that is being monitored closely and whatever actions are required on our part, we are taking," Air Chief Bhaduria said.

— PTI

Govt invites J&K leaders

■ **Continued from Page 1** their just fight for the rights of the people of all the three regions of J&K — Jammu, the Valley and Ladakh.

Reports emanating from Delhi suggest the Central government is willing to restore the statehood of J&K ahead of holding the Assembly elections sometime later early 2022.

The BJP and its government are, however, keen to hold these elections after the restructuring of J&K's Assembly constituencies.

The Delimitation Commission for Jammu and Kashmir was constituted by the Centre on March 6, 2020, to redraw Lok Sabha and Assembly constituencies of the Union Territory. The commission headed by Justice (retired) Ranjana Desai is likely to submit its report before its extended one-year term comes to end on March 5, 2022.

PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti confirmed that she has received an invitation for the talks slated to be held in New Delhi on June 24. "Yes, I got a phone call from Delhi, and I have been invited for a meeting on June 24. The meeting will be chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi," she told a local news agency KNO. She, however, added, "I haven't decided yet whether to attend the meet or not." She feigned ignorance about other mainstream

leaders too being invited to talks.

Farooq Abdullah said that his National Conference party's core group will first sit to discuss how to respond if a formal invitation from the Centre comes and evolve a "strategy" for such an engagement "keeping the interests of the J&K people above everything else".

He said, "So far, we haven't received any formal invite from New Delhi for talks. If we do get it", PAGD is also likely to hold a meeting in the next couple of days to work out a joint strategy vis-à-vis the Centre's latest move seeking to break the ground in J&K.

Former minister in the PDP-BJP government and J&K Apni Party chief Altaf Bukhari said that the solution to J&K's problems lies with New Delhi.

"We openly state that we have a relationship with Delhi. Solutions to J&K's problems lie at New Delhi not Islamabad, New York or London. Delhi's invitation to J&K's political parties is a welcome development".

Meanwhile, PDP's senior vice president Muhammad Sartaj Madani who happens to be Ms Mufti's maternal uncle was released from a six-month-long detention on Saturday, apparently to create a conducive atmosphere for proposed talks.

Sarma asks Opp. MLAs to join BJP

■ **Continued from Page 1** the tea tribe community which plays a decisive role in polls in Upper Assam.

"It appears that the party leadership is not willing to give an opportunity to people from the tea tribe or other marginalised communities but it is seen that people from a particular religious community are given prominence in the party," he said.

Leader of Opposition in the Assembly Debabrata Saikia has termed Mr Kurmi's exit as a loss for

the party.

Another senior Congress leader Juri Sharma Bordoloi, who was the president of the Guwahati city district Congress and former national office-bearer of Mahila Congress, had also resigned from the party on Friday.

Ms Bordoloi claimed that more than 100 supporters have decided to leave the party with her.

There are speculations that a few more Congress leaders, including an MLA, will quit the party and join

the BJP in the next few days.

With Mr Kurmi's resignation, the strength of the Congress in the 126-member Assam assembly has come down to 28. The BJP currently has 60 MLAs, while its allies AGP has nine and UPPL five.

The Congress, which was in power in Assam for three successive terms from 2001, has been in opposition since 2016 when the BJP-led coalition formed the government for the first time.

— PTI

Modi's trusted aide is UP BJP V-P

■ **Continued from Page 1** Amit Valmiki from Bulandshahr as secretaries of the state unit. The BJP has also appointed new heads of frontal organisations, including the state's youth wing, women's wing, kisan morcha, backward morcha, scheduled tribe morcha, minority morcha and scheduled caste morcha.

With Assembly elections

scheduled next year, the party leadership has been rejigging its state organisation keeping in mind the caste arithmetic.

Prior to Mr Sharma's appointment, the BJP central leadership held a series of meetings with the state leadership, including chief minister Yogi Adityanath.

The Adityanath government's mishandling of the

devastating second wave of Covid-19 is likely to be a major factor in the Uttar Pradesh elections. Earlier this month, BJP national general secretary (organisation) B.L. Santhosh and UP in-charge Radha Mohan Singh visited state capital Lucknow to take feedback on the government's handling of the pandemic and to review poll preparedness.

'Ghar wapsi' of Congress leaders

■ **Continued from Page 1** used for the party's growth." Prithviraj Chavan also said that many former Congress leaders are regretting their decision to join the BJP, he added.

Mr Deshmukh was elected from the Amravati Assembly constituency on

a Congress ticket in 2004 elections. However, he was denied a ticket in 2009 elections by the party, which instead fielded Raosaheb Shekhawat, son of the then President Pratibha Patil.

Irked by the decision, Mr Deshmukh rebelled against the party, but lost the keen-

ly contested fight to Mr Shekhawat.

In West Bengal, many former Trinamul leaders, who had joined the BJP before the assembly polls, are making a bee-line to return to their parent party after the landslide victory of Mamata Banerjee.

Capt. defends giving jobs

■ **Continued from Page 1** down by terrorists in 1987, the government had said on Friday.

The chief minister on Saturday said those who make a sacrifice for the nation can, and should, never be forgotten.

Their families deserve to be compensated for the loss, he further said while informally interacting with media persons outside the residence of Milkha Singh, where he had gone to pay his last respects to the legendary athlete.

Taking a swipe at the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which have criticised the government's move, the chief minister said if these parties provide names of any youth whose father/grandfathers have made similar sacrifices for the nation, they will also be provided jobs in the state government.

The chief minister said he had tried to find such people in these parties but could find none, he said. He asserted that he would give jobs to anyone coming from a family that had made similar sacrifices.

The chief minister pointed out that Punjab had been through tough times in the dark days of terrorism, when 35,000 innocent lives had been lost to senseless violence. As many as 1,700 police personnel had

also died, he recalled, adding that it was not sufficient to pay tributes to these people at their memorials, and the state needed to do something more to compensate their families.

We cannot allow their sacrifices to go waste, said the chief minister, adding that Punjab salutes those who have shed blood for the country, and his government will continue to recognise their contribution to the state's peace and harmony.

Meanwhile, the SAD urged the Punjab governor to dismiss the Congress government by taking suo motu notice of the manner in which the chief minister was allegedly purchasing the loyalty of Congress legislators to save his chair by doling out jobs to their wards illegally.

SAD leader Bikram Singh Majithia also asked the youth whose rights had been usurped by Congress leaders to 'gherao' the chief minister and ministers to demand jobs for deserving and meritorious students.

He said in case the governor did not take action in the matter, the president should take note of the unconstitutional appointments and dismiss the Amarinder Singh government immediately.

— PTI

THE ASIAN AGE

20 JUNE 2021



Ranjona Banerji

Off the beaten track

Man, they don't write songs like that anymore

When I was about 11, my parents bought the album of Andrew Lloyd Weber-Tim Rice's rock opera, *Jesus Christ Superstar*. It was a family favourite and to this day, we all know the lyrics and music by heart.

There was a special something for me there too. It was Ian Gillan's voice, as Jesus Christ (although every performer on that original album was superb). His rendition of "Gethsemane" (I only want to say) can still move me to tears, over 55 years later.

From there it was a bang, clash, crash straight into rock music. In 1974, Alyque Padamsee put up a fabulous version of *Jesus Christ Superstar* in Bombay. The performers were Bombay's best from Nandu Bhende as Judas, Madhukar Chandra Dhas as Jesus, Poornima Bhende as Mary Magdalene and Keith Stevenson as Herod, to name just a few of that stupendously talented cast. It was a glorious masterpiece and one which Padamsee recreated. I watched it again in 2015, recovering from surgery and wanting to get out of myself. The electrifying performance of Tirthankar Poddar as Judas was the standout.

But over and over, as I was allowed to operate the family record player myself (careful with the needle, don't scratch the records, put them back carefully), it was Ian Gillan's voice and from there a quickstep to Deep Purple and their *Machine Head* album. There was no looking back after that.

But maybe I've started all wrong. Maybe I should start at the beginning, with my parents and how their taste in music set the foundation for whatever followed. I belong to an in-between generation. Born in 1962, we were on the edge of change and rebellion but never part of it. Philip Larkin said something or the other about this too. So too were my parents — young enough to twist and shout but too old to be hippies!

The luxury of owning a record player meant that you spent delightful hours at Bombay's Rhythm House or Melody Corner (and much later in Calcutta), going into those curtained booths to listen to records and choose. My parents' best friends had an Osibisa album they all loved, with the Afro-rock band's signature psychedelic flying elephants on the cover. Which is why I refused to go to their concert when they performed in Calcutta, a few years later. Eeee, music my parents listened to!

And what appalling snobbery that was! Our house was filled with Carole King, Joan Baez, Judy Collins, Joni Mitchell, Don McLean, Elton John. Yehudi Menuhin and Ravi Shankar's East Meets West concert conducted by Andrew Previn was a big favourite. As was Offenbach's *Gaite Parisienne* as my sister and me pretended to be ballet dancers.

At some point though, you make a break. Cassette players meant that you could have your own music and your own mixes. Somebody's somebody's cousin might bring down a latest album which hadn't hit the Indian market yet, and it would be painstakingly shared.

I remember clearly the first two major breaks I made with family listening time — Pink Floyd's *Dark Side of the Moon* and then eponymous Dire Straits debut album. This meant a big fight with my grandparents — both sides — who had commandeered the family music system for Nazia Hassan's *Disco Deewane*. Don't ask.

But while I was choosing between bands and fandoms, we went to the Jazz Yatra, 1977, at Kala Mandir, Calcutta. And a giant parallel movement was born in my head. This was mighty competition to rock and so many decades later, I still don't know who won.

In between of course, there was Rabindrasangeet and that proverbial *master-moshai* who never missed a single afternoon lesson in the sapping Calcutta heat. We resented a bit then but now find ourselves in family singsongs. Age can be a really nasty experience, the way it proves your parents right!

And all those old Hindi film songs that my Mother hummed and sang and listened to, the movies we saw together in the 1960s and 70s, and the music that wafted up from Tardeo to our flat on the top of Altamount Road in Bombay. About 90 per cent were songs from Rajesh Khanna films, because that's the time frame. Those never go away. Nor do the voices of Begum Akhtar and Bhimsen Joshi.

Of course, if you listened to music in 1970s India as a teenage girl, you could not escape the horror of teenage boys. Full of know-it-all swagger, they were ready to lecture you on the nitty-gritty of the lives of every rock, pop and disco star. I mean, come on. Being female didn't mean that you could not read a magazine or the back of an album cover! Just for the fun of it I would invent rubbish about musicians, just forcefully enough to sow confusion into their minds. If any of you are reading this, no, Giorgio Moroder was not Donna Summers in disguise.

I also invented names of sports cars to annoy big talkers because I found the topic interminably boring: "You mean you've never heard of a Lamborghini Aubergine Orechiette? And you call yourself a fan?" But that's another story. Sorry.

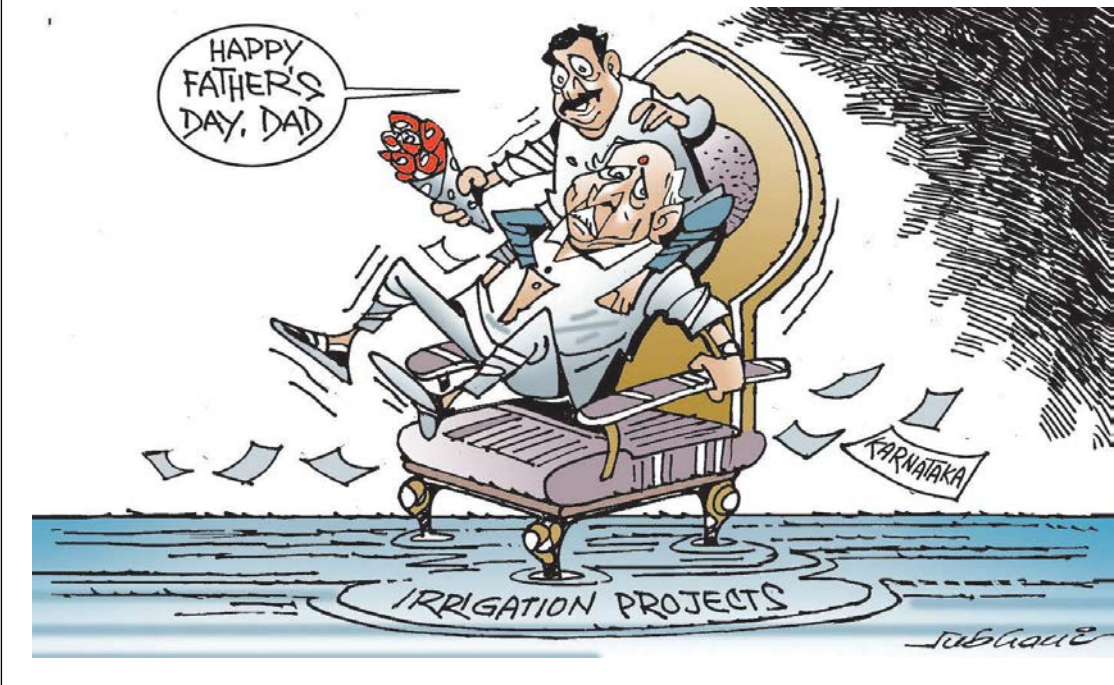
The upshot is that from this century to that, I haven't moved. I'm stuck somewhere between 1964 and 1990s. All right, maybe a few forays into the early years of the 21st century. Where would you place Guns & Roses? Somewhere there. And of course, whatever music they played at Totos and Ghetto. That would do.

I should be embarrassed, shouldn't I? I had to look up Dua Lipa the other day. Nothing that I read about the Grammys makes sense to me any more. And since I stopped travelling by Mumbai autos and going to the gym, I know nothing about what's happening now music-wise.

But I do remember those goosebumps the first time I heard Roberta Flack singing "Killing Me Softly". Who cares about the rest?

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

Subhani



Modi pause on Chumar set the tone for Galwan



Manish Tewari

State of the Union

On June 15, 2020, 20 Indian soldiers were martyred in a barbaric clash with the People's Liberation Army (PLA) in the Galwan Valley. It was the most grave confrontation after the October 20 1975 ambush by the Chinese at Tulung La in which four Assam Rifles personnel lost their lives.

On June 20, the Prime Minister gave a rather bizarre twist to the entire tragedy when he told an all-party meeting that "neither have they intruded into our border, nor has any post been taken over by them (China)". Then why did we lose 20 brave? Did India then intrude into Chinese territory?

Herein lies the nub of the problem qua China. The NDA/BJP government by repeatedly underplaying both the aggressiveness of Chinese intent and blatant intrusions into areas that lie within the Indian perception of what is the Line of Actual Control (LAC). This has exposed a serious chink in their armour that the Chinese have now exploited to the very hilt. That fissure is the government's desperation to protect its narrative of muscular nationalism at any cost. It makes them both muddle and mask the truth.

The problem started way back in 2014 when Modi decided to swing with Xi Jinping in Ahmedabad deliberately playing down the Chinese transgression into Indian territory in Chumar. It is inconceivable that the PLA would embark on this adventurism on the LAC without explicit political clearance from the standing committee of the politburo especially when Xi was visiting India.

The Chinese had tried this stunt a year earlier too in Depsang plain's area. The 19-kilometres deep incursion by an armed patrol of China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) into the strategically delicate Daulat Beg

Oldie sector in the Aksai Chin region was noticed on April 16, 2013, and immediately interdicted by the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP). It came just weeks before Chinese premier Li Keqiang's visit to India between May 19 and 21 and Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh's visit to Japan later that month between May 27 and 30.

The Depsang incursion was designed to send twin messages. First, Chinese were experimenting their new found assertiveness as general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), president of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the chairperson of the Central Military Commission (CMC). Second, it was also a caution to India against expressing overt support to Japan against the background of steadily worsening tensions between China and Japan over the Senkaku (Diaoyu) Islands.

The Chinese were as worried then as they are today about the Quad then. The Standing Committee of the Politburo China's top decision making forum apprehended that the US was again engaged in putting together a broader alliance in the Asia Pacific comprising India, Japan, Vietnam, the Philippines and Australia to contain China's rise.

The Depsang intrusions were handled firmly but with élan by the then UPA government. It was acknowledged upfront that the Chinese had indeed come across India's perception line. A firm message therefore was sent to Beijing that Premier Li Keqiang who was undertaking his first foreign trip would not be very welcome in Delhi if status quo ante was not restored. On May 5, 2013, the Chinese fell back to their default position on the LAC.

As B.G. Verghese pointed

out in a signed column on May 28, 2013, "that the government can stand its ground and take farsighted decisions was proven by the way it handled the Chinese intrusion into the Depsang plain without getting rattled or pushed by chauvinistic clamour. At the end of the day, the Chinese blinked and pulled back. That the joint statement issued later did not mention the word 'intrusion' — the PM used the phrase 'incident' — signified a welcome restraint and desire to avoid teasing statements".

However, a year later when Chumar happened on the cusp of Xi Jinping's visit from September 17 to September 20, 2014, an over-sanguine Prime Minister desperate to flaunt his new-found importance in his backyard of Gujarat did not send word to Xi Jinping that he would not be very comfy in India if the Chinese did not withdraw before the visit commenced. Having recently won an election, Prime Minister Modi had the political capital to do that but he blinked. This set the tone for the future.

In Doklam, in the June of 2017, the NDA/BJP government was more interested in a propaganda triumph rather than a substantive outcome. Not only was the withdrawal sequential rather than simultaneous with India withdrawing first, but the Indian government took its eye off the ball and allowed the Chinese to occupy substantial parts of the Doklam plateau within one year of the standoff.

This was followed by the opaque summits in Wuhan in 2018 and Mamallapuram in 2019. A subservient media and a deferential strategic community did

When Chumar happened, an over-sanguine PM desperate to flaunt his newfound importance in his backyard of Gujarat did not send word to Xi Jinping that he would not be very comfy in India if the Chinese did not withdraw before the visit commenced

not ask the hard questions as to what really was achieved at these informal tête-à-tête's. By that time the Chinese had sussed out the Indian leadership and had concluded that were they to launch an intrusion across a broad front along the LAC the NDA/BJP government would cover it up rather than deal with it candidly.

This is precisely what happened in April 2020. When the Chinese decided to saunter across the LAC first the government tried to palm it off to differing perceptions of the LAC.

In fact, they had already started running this narrative from December 2019 onwards. Speaking in the Lok Sabha on December 4, 2019, defence minister Rajnath Singh said, "Due to different perceptions of the LAC, sometimes incidents of incursion occur. I accept it. Sometimes the Chinese Army enters here and sometimes our people go over there."

The government stuck to this chicanery from April to the June of 2020 as a mortified country bristling under a harsh lockdown was trying to keep body and soul together. Only after the Galwan tragedy when the body bags could not be kept under the wraps did the nation wake up to the enormity of the challenge. There again the Prime Minister unleashed the mendacities that he has perfected to an art form much to the delight of the Chinese as it endorsed their position that they have never intruded into Indian territory.

One year later this sad saga continues unchecked. After vacating significant territorial positions on the South Bank of Pangong Lake under a yet-to-be-microscopically-evaluated disengagement plan the government tries to escape the antiseptic glare of sunlight by not even allowing Parliament to have a full-fledged debate on perhaps the most portentous national security challenge that India faces today.

The author is a lawyer, Member of Parliament and former Union information and broadcasting minister. The views expressed are personal. Twitter handle @manishtewari.

LETTERS

GOODBYE, MILKHA

Apropos the report "Legendary sprinter Milkha Singh dies after battling Covid", published on June 19 in your esteemed newspaper, it's extremely sad-denying to learn about the demise of Singh, "The Flying Sikh", in Chandigarh owing to post-Covid complications. Singh — who won four Asian Games gold medals in his career — was the first Indian track and field athlete to clinch gold in the then British Empire and Commonwealth Games in Cardiff in 1958. In the 1960 Rome Olympics, the legend finished fourth in the 400m final in a photo-finish. Undoubtedly, with his passing away, our country lost one of its greatest sportsmen. It could be said for sure that he would always remain in the hearts of all Indian sports lovers. Rest in peace, Milkha Singhji.

Sourish Misra
Kolkata

FORGOTTEN WOMEN

DOMESTIC WORKERS have been the worst-hit segment in the labour market during the one-and-a-half years of the Covid-19 crisis. Many in India employ domestic workers at exploitative wages. Some of them mistreat them as well. During the lockdown, most domestics were asked by employers to stop working but were denied their wages. These women also form the largest group of workers in the female labour force in India after farmers. The government needs to immediately form a policy to provide a legal and social security net to these workers.

Bhagwan Thadani
Mumbai

GOVT DILEMMA

UNLIKE OTHER social media platforms, Twitter has shown a marked reluctance to follow the orders of the Indian government. It should be remembered that Twitter also defied then American President Donald Trump and is unlikely to be afraid of the Government of India. Problems arose only after the tag of 'manipulated media' was given to the tweets of important BJP leaders. A ban would have ended all discussion. But what would happen to the millions who follow the PM and his party on Twitter?

Anthony Henriques
Mumbai

BJP RUMBLINGS

BJP'S NATIONAL GENERAL secretary and Karnataka in-charge, Arun Singh, has done well to crack the whip on dissenters, who are clamouring for a change of guard in the state. The BJP core committee battled for B.S. Yediyurappa's continuation as chief minister and warned disgruntled elements of dire consequences if they did not mend their ways. The chief minister also rubbished corruption allegations against his son, BJP vice-president B.Y. Vijayendra made by MLC A.H. Vishwanath. We believe that Mr Yediyurappa's camp is gunning for the suspension of Mr Vishwanath, who has become a thorn in the flesh for the party with his frequent outbursts. Improving the image of the party and the government is the need of the hour.

N.J. Ravi Chander
Bengaluru

Every Monday the best letter of the week wins ₹500. Email: asianage.letters@gmail.com.

Lessons in summitry: Meet 'em halfway

A.G. Noorani



Summits, as meetings between heads of state and government are called, are as old as mankind itself. The recent summits which President Joe Biden undertook hold lessons in summitry which has provoked a mass of literature of uneven quality. On his visit to the UK, he was treated to all the pageantry for which the British are famous. Of his 'summit' with Prime Minister Boris Johnson, the less said the better.

The entire objective of Biden's excursion was to repair the damage which Donald Trump had inflicted on America's ties with Western Europe and with Nato. "I want all Europe to know that the United States is there." He amplified "Nato is critically important to us" and that Article 5 is a "sacred obligation".

This provision of the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 embodies the pledge that a military attack on a member of the alliance will be regarded as an attack on each and all. This was not evident after 9/11. The allies rushed to declare

their responsibility. President G.W. Bush decided to go it alone while asking for the allies to contribute their troops.

On June 16, Biden went to Geneva to meet Russia's President Vladimir Putin but not before he had let loose a volley of epithets on Putin. He had referred to him as a "killer".

It was Winston Churchill who first used the word 'summit' in 1953 soon after Stalin's death. He proposed that "a conference on the highest level should take place between the leading powers without long delay". He added that "if there is not at the summits of the nations the will to win the greatest prize... doom-laden responsibility will fall upon those who now possess the power to decide". After this speech the word became part of political vocabulary. However, Churchill's own foreign office balked at the idea. The US secretary of state was cool to it. Accordingly, only a foreign ministers' conference took place that year. The only postwar Big Four Summit to meet

was the Geneva Conference from July 18 to 23, 1955.

On the one side are those who regard summitry as a panacea for all international ills. On the other stand the critics who condemn it as worse than useless, as in fact positively dangerous.

There are examples of successful summits held not after some improvement in relations but while the countries were tottering on the brink. The Nehru-Liaquat meeting in 1950, for instance. What distinguished them was that, although the objective situation was bad, there was on both sides such an overwhelming desire to mend matters as to make the summit worthwhile. There must be at least the will to listen, to confer and to compromise. Without these, the best prepared summit will fail.

However, such is the complexity of most modern problems that even where the will to meet does exist, the summit would be futile if the diplomatic groundwork is not done well and in advance.

Lack of prior preparation is the principal ground of expert criticism of summits. George F. Kennan has explained the necessity for such preparation: "The multitude of ulterior problems that press upon a Prime Minister or a head of state is so great that no single subject, especially one not regarded as of primary importance, is apt to receive detailed and exhaustive attention. Nor can the senior statesmen stay with a problem for any great length of time. Their time is precious, other responsibilities take them away."

There has, however, recently come into being a new variant of the old summit. It is a summit at which you just get to know and to understand without professedly negotiating. Winston Churchill himself wanted a conference which "should not be overhanging by a ponderous or rigid agenda, or led into mazes and jungles of technical details, zealously contested by hordes of experts and officials drawn up in vast, cumbrous array. ... It should meet with a measure of informality and a still

greater measure of privacy and seclusion". There is little question that where there exists some misunderstanding as to each other's intentions such talks could be useful. President Kennedy wanted to size up his man and warn him of the dangers of miscalculation at Vienna in 1961.

But such is the charm of the summit that these hazards are often lost sight of. The summit becomes an end in itself. The instrument of policy becomes its master.

The result is a complete absence of policy and a corruption of diplomacy. This then is the balance sheet. There are advantages and disadvantages. Whether a summit should be held or not is a purely practical question which should be answered without any sentimentality. Heads of state can resolve impassés better than officials. But preparation and a spirit of compromise are a must especially if problems are complex.

By arrangement with Dawn

SHORT TAKES

PLANE CRASHES
IN SIBERIA,
KILLS FOUR

Moscow, June 19: Four people were killed and four others seriously injured on Saturday after a plane carrying parachutists crashed in Siberia, Russian authorities said.

The L-410 plane carrying 19 people crashed around 10:00 am local time (0300 GMT) during a training flight at the Tanay airfield in the Siberian region of Kemerovo — also known as Kuzbass — authorities said. The TASS news agency cited the local prosecutor's office as saying that the failure of one of the plane's engines caused the crash.

GEORGIA TO
PURGE 1L VOTERS
FROM THE ROLLS

Atlanta, June 19: Georgia's secretary of state is making public a list of nearly 102,000 voters who will be removed from the rolls unless they act to preserve their registration.

Republican Brad Raffensperger announced the list, part of an every-other-year bid to remove voters who may have died or moved away. The state has about 7.8 million voters and his office said the removals include 67,000 voters who submitted a change of address form to the US Postal Service, and 34,000 voters who had election mail returned. Voter purges in Georgia became a hot-button issue during the 2018 governor's race between Democrat Stacey Abrams and Republican Brian Kemp. Secretary of state before being elected governor, Kemp oversaw aggressive voter purges during his tenure.

ONTARIO CABINET
GETS TWO MORE
INDO-CANADIANS

Toronto, June 19: Two more Indo-Canadian politicians have been appointed as ministers in a Cabinet reshuffle in Canada's Ontario province, taking the representation of the community members in the Executive Council to three.

Ontario Premier Doug Ford on Friday reshuffled his Cabinet, with former finance minister Rod Phillips — who resigned from his post following a Caribbean vacation during the Covid-19 pandemic — returning as the new minister of long-term care.

Indo-Canadian Prabhmeet Sarkariya, 30, has now been promoted to take over as president of the Treasury Board.

Parm Gill, 47, took on the new portfolio of citizenship and multiculturalism.

Nina Tangri was appointed associate minister of small business and red tape.

POLARISED BY
WAR, ARMENIA
VOTES TODAY

Yerevan, June 19: Armenia's leader is facing a tough challenge at the polls after a humiliating defeat for Armenian forces in last year's fighting with Azerbaijan over the separatist region of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan called the early election for Sunday, seeking to assuage public anger over the peace deal he signed in November that triggered months of protests demanding his resignation.

The Moscow-brokered agreement ended six weeks of fighting between Armenian and Azerbaijani forces, but saw Azerbaijan reclaim control over large parts of Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding areas that had been held by Armenian forces for more than a quarter-century.

The deal was celebrated as a major triumph in the Azerbaijani capital of Baku.

STORM BRINGS
RAIN, FLOODS TO
GULF COAST

New Orleans, June 19: Tropical Storm Claudette formed Saturday morning along the US Gulf Coast, bringing heavy rains and flooding to coastal states including Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama.

The National Hurricane Center in Miami said in a 4 am CDT advisory that the storm was located 45 miles (75 kilometres) southwest of New Orleans with maximum sustained winds of 45 mph (75 kph).

Flooding had already begun overnight Friday into Saturday, with local reports of high water over roads and stranded vehicles. Flash flood warnings dotted the coast while flood watches were in effect. With virus restrictions loosened, business owners had been anticipating an influx of tourist cash after a year of lost revenue. But those hopes have been dimmed by the storm.



Participants take part in an illegal rave party in a field in Redon, north-western France, on Saturday.

— AFP

Partygoers, police injured at
curfew-busting French rave

Paris, June 19: A 22-year-old man lost his hand and several others were also injured amid clashes as police tried to break up an unauthorised rave party in western France, authorities said Saturday.

The tensions erupted in a field near the Brittany town of Redon on Friday night, just two days before France lifts an overnight virus curfew that's been in place for more than eight months — and has prompted growing frustration among young people. Police repeatedly fired tear gas and charged clusters of violent partygoers who hurled metal balls, gasoline bombs and other projectiles at security forces, according to images of the clashes shared online and the top government

22-year-old lost his hand, according to police who said they believed he had picked up an object that exploded without elaborating.

08 months of overnight virus curfew that has prompted growing frustration among young people, is to be lifted in France but two days prior to that, the unauthorised rave party was held in Redon.

07 hours taken by the police to disperse the crowd. Authorities were still evacuating people from the field even on Saturday morning.

official in the region, prefect Emmanuel Berthier.

Local authorities estimated about 1,500 people took part. Berthier accused the attendees of “extre-

me” and “inexcusable” violence. It took police more than seven hours to disperse the crowd, and authorities were still evacuating people from the

field Saturday morning.

Berthier told reporters. He said an investigation is under way into the overnight events, including how the 22-year-old lost his hand.

Regional gendarme chief Pierre Sauvegrain told France-Info radio that the man was believed to have picked up an object that exploded, without elaborating. An underground New Year's Eve rave party in the same area drew at least 2,500 people and led to multiple arrests.

France has been gradually lifting restrictions in recent weeks as infections wane and vaccinations rise. France's curfew, among the strictest and longest in Europe, is set to expire Sunday.

— AP

UN condemns Myanmar
coup, calls for arms ban

United Nations, June 19: In a rare move, the UN General Assembly condemned Myanmar's military coup and called for an arms embargo against the country in a resolution demonstrating widespread global opposition to the junta and demanding the restoration of the country's democratic transition.

Supporters had hoped the 193-member world body would approve the resolution unanimously by consensus, but Belarus called for a vote. The measure was approved with

119 countries voting “yes,” Belarus voting “no,” and 36 countries abstaining.

The resolution was the result of lengthy negotiations by a so-called Core Group, including the European Union and many Western nations and the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations known as Asean, which includes Myanmar. A UN diplomat said there was an agreement with Asean to seek consensus, but in the vote its members were divided with some, includ-

ing Indonesia and Vietnam, voting yes and others, including Thailand and Laos, abstaining.

The resolution didn't get the overwhelming support its backers wanted. But the action by the General Assembly, while not legally binding, reflects international condemnation of the February 1 coup that ousted Aung San Suu Kyi's party from power and put her under arrest along with many government leaders and politicians.

— AP

No bail for Apple
Daily editor, CEO

Hong Kong, June 19: A Hong Kong court ordered the top editor of pro-democracy newspaper *Apple Daily* and the head of its parent company held without bail Saturday in the first hearing since their arrest two days ago under the city's national security law.

Ryan Law, the chief editor, and Cheung Kim-hung, the CEO of Next Digital, have been charged with collusion with a foreign country to endanger national security in a case widely seen as an attack on press freedom in the semi-autonomous Chinese territory.

Chief Magistrate Victor

So said there was not sufficient grounds to believe they would not violate the security law again, and ordered them held at the Lai Chi Kok detention center. He set the next hearing for August 13.

Law and Cheung arrived at the court in an unmarked white van with covered windows. A handful of activists held up a banner and copies of the *Apple Daily* outside before the hearing began.

Three others also arrested Thursday two *Apple Daily* senior editors and another executive have not been charged yet and were released on bail late Friday.

— AP

India ‘twisting’ Jadhav case: Pak

Islamabad, June 19: Pakistan on Saturday accused India of “misrepresenting” the verdict of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in the Kulbhushan Jadhav case and asserted that it is ready to fulfil all obligations under the international law.

India on Thursday asked Pakistan to address the “shortcomings” in a bill brought out to facilitate reviewing the case of Jadhav, saying the proposed law does not create a mechanism to reconsider it as mandated by the ICJ.

Spokesperson in the Ministry of External Affairs Arindam Bagchi in New Delhi said the Review and Reconsideration Bill 2020 does not create a mechanism to facilitate effective review and reconsideration

of Jadhav's case as mandated by the ICJ judgment. He added that municipal courts cannot be the arbiter of whether a state has fulfilled its obligations in international law.

Jadhav, a 51-year-old retired Indian Navy officer, was sentenced to death by a Pakistani military court on charges of espionage and terrorism in April 2017. The Hague-based ICJ ruled in July 2019 that Pakistan must undertake an “effective review and reconsideration” of the conviction and sentence of Jadhav and also to grant consular access to India without further delay.

Pakistan's Foreign Office (FO) on Saturday said Islamabad abides by all its international obligations, and this applies to the ICJ



Kulbhushan Jadhav

judgment in the case of Jadhav.

“It is regrettable that the Government of India has chosen to misrepresent the ICJ judgment which clearly states in Paragraph 147 that Pakistan is under an obligation to provide, by means of its own choosing, effective review and reconsideration of the conviction and sentence of Jadhav,” the FO said.

Biden for 300mn
shots in 150 days

Prez step in quest to bring virus under control

Washington, June 19: President Joe Biden took a cautious victory lap in his quest to bring the Covid-19 pandemic under control, announcing that 300 million vaccine shots have been administered in the 150 days since he took office. Biden credited scientists, companies, the American people and his whole-of-government effort on the milestone.

The president noted that 65 per cent of adults have received at least one shot, setting the stage for most Americans to have a relatively normal summer as businesses reopen and employers hire.

We're heading into a very different summer compared to last year, the president said. A bright summer. Prayerfully, a summer of joy.

But as Biden marks one milestone, he is in danger of failing to meet another: his target to have 70 per cent of Americans at least partially vaccinated by July Fourth, in a little over two weeks.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says 305 million vaccine doses had been administered as of June 10. About 141.6 million people, or 42.6% of the U.S. population, have been fully vaccinated.

The pace of new vaccinations in the US has dropped significantly from a high of nearly 2 million per day about two months ago, jeopardising Biden's ability to hit the 70 per cent mark.

The White House said its whole-of-government approach to the vaccination effort has put the virus in retreat, which in turn has brought Covid-19 cases, hospitalisations and deaths to their lowest levels in more than a year. But Biden noted in his remarks that some communities in states with lower vaccination rates are seeing cases and hospitalisations increase.

The administration is in the middle of a monthlong blitz to combat vaccine hesitancy and the lack of urgency some people feel to get the shots, particularly in the South and Midwest. CDC Director Rochelle Walensky said Friday that she expects the Delta variant of the Coronavirus will become the dominant strain in the US. That strain has become dominant in Britain after it was first detected in India.

During an appearance on *ABC's Good Morning America*, she told Americans who get their shots that you'll be protected

Record 2nd day
high in Moscow

Moscow, June 19: Russia's capital Moscow on Saturday reported a pandemic high for new Coronavirus cases for the second consecutive day, as the city's hospitals are flooded with new patients due to the Delta variant.

The city registered 9,120 new Coronavirus infections in 24 hours, according to government figures, a second consecutive high topping the previous day's total of 9,056 cases.

Those figures have ballooned from just 3,000 daily

just two weeks ago, with Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyenin saying Friday that the highly infectious Delta variant first identified in India represents nearly 90 percent of new cases. Having claimed the worst of the pandemic had passed over winter, officials are now scurrying to reintroduce pandemic restrictions and roll out new beds dedicated to Coronavirus patients after months of near-normal life. On Monday, Saint Petersburg announced

S. China airport
cancels flights

Beijing, June 19: The airport in China's southern city of Shenzhen cancelled hundreds of flights and tightened entry controls Saturday after a restaurant employee tested positive for the Delta Coronavirus variant.

Anyone entering the facility must show a negative virus test from the last 48 hours, Shenzhen Airport Group said in a statement on its official WeChat social media account. City health officials

said a 21-year-old waitress at Shenzhen Baoan International Airport had been infected with the Delta variant of the virus.

The woman tested positive during a routine test for airport staff conducted Thursday, they said.

Shenzhen, a mainland Chinese city neighbouring Hong Kong, is home to some of Asia's biggest tech companies, including telecoms equipment maker Huawei and gaming giant Tencent.

— AFP

UK HOLDS FIRST
FESTIVAL SINCE
PANDEMIC START

London, June 19: Thousands of heavy metal fans are camping, singing — and even moshing — in the rain at Britain's first full music festival since the start of the Coronavirus pandemic.

The three-day Download Festival, taking place at Donington Park in central England, is one of a series of test events to see whether mass gatherings can resume without triggering outbreaks of Covid-19. About 10,000 fans, a tenth of the festival's pre-pandemic attendance, have tickets to watch more than 40 bands including Frank Carter & The Rattlesnakes and Bullet for My Valentine. Attendees all took Covid-19 tests.

— AP

RAPE | ALLEGATION

NYT article in 2020 accused adult giant of posting illegal content online

Pressure on Pornhub grows after 34 women sue

Montreal, June 19: Pornhub has been increasingly under the gun as the adult video site was sued this week by 34 women who say they appeared without consent in footage showing rape, sexual abuse, revenge porn or images of them when they were minors.

“This is a case about rape, not pornography,” the plaintiffs said in the statement of claim, describing the website as “likely the largest non-regulatory repository of child pornography in North America and well beyond.” Their lawyers accuse MindGeek, the controversial adult entertainment empire that runs Pornhub, of being a “classic criminal enterprise” with a business model based on exploiting non-consensual sexual content.

According to the suit, which was filed in California, MindGeek owns more than 100 pornographic sites, including Pornhub, RedTube, Tube8 and YouPorn, and sees some 3.5 billion visits each month.

“I'm hoping (the lawsuit) will motivate Pornhub, and then also the other companies in this industry, to put in safety measures so that this doesn't happen to anybody else,” one of the plaintiffs, who identified herself as Rachel, said on Friday.

The 38-year-old Canadian, who spoke on condition that her real name not be used, recently recounted her years-long struggle to have removed from the internet a video of her being sexually assaulted by her own husband as she lay unconscious, and later posted to Pornhub without her consent.

Although Pornhub took

the video down, it had already spread to countless other sites.

“Today is a monumental day,” commented Laila Mickelwait of the Traffickinghub campaign to shut down Pornhub and hold its executive accountable, backed by 2.2 million people who signed an online petition. “This lawsuit makes it clear that Pornhub and its parent company Mindgeek are not just a

tech company that makes a (content) moderation mistakes,” the sex trafficking expert said in a video message on Twitter.

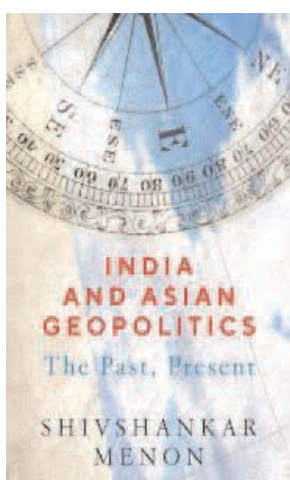
The porn giant has faced a growing backlash since the *New York Times* published an article in December 2020 in which Pornhub was accused of posting illegal content online, including child pornography and rape videos — which it has denied.

— AFP

INDIAN TOP 10
BESTSELLERS

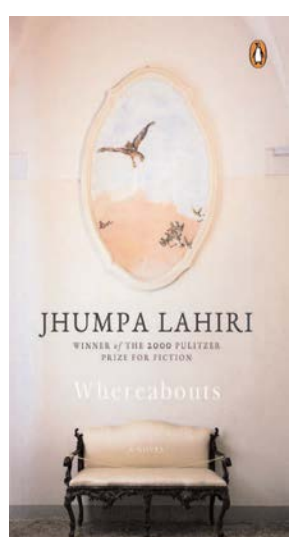
NON-FICTION

- 1 **INDIA AND ASIAN GEOPOLITICS: THE PAST, PRESENT**
Shiv Shankar Menon
Penguin, ₹699
- 2 **THE POWER OF GEOGRAPHY**
Tim Marshal
Simon & Schuster, ₹699
- 3 **INDIA'S POWER ELITE**
Sanjaya Baru
Penguin, ₹699
- 4 **LANGUAGES OF TRUTH**
Salman Rushdie
Penguin, ₹799
- 5 **WANDERERS, KINGS, MERCHANTS**
Peggy Mohan
Penguin, ₹599
- 6 **THE PREMONITION: A PANDEMIC STORY**
Michael Lewis
Allen Lane, ₹999
- 7 **THE FRONTIERS OF KNOWLEDGE**
A.C. Grayling
Penguin Viking, ₹799
- 8 **REMNANTS OF A SEPARATION**
Aanchal Malhotra
HarperCollins, ₹599
- 9 **REPUBLIC OF HINDUTVA**
Badri Narayan
Bagri, ₹499
- 10 **THE LIGHT OF ASIA**
Jairam Ramesh
Penguin Viking, ₹799



FICTION

- 1 **WHEREABOUTS**
Jhumpa Lahiri
Penguin, ₹499
- 2 **KLARA AND THE SUN**
Kazuo Ishiguro
Faber & Faber, ₹699
- 3 **TURN A BLIND EYE**
Jeffrey Archer
Pan Macmillan, ₹450
- 4 **THE BEGUM AND THE DASTAN**
Tarana Husain Khan
Tranquebar, ₹499
- 5 **A GAMBLING MAN**
David Baldacci
Pan Macmillan, ₹699
- 6 **THE LAST QUEEN**
Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni
HarperCollins, ₹599
- 7 **MURDER AT THE MUSHAIRA**
Raza Mir
Aleph, ₹799
- 8 **A TIME FOR MERCY**
John Grisham
Hodder & Stoughton, ₹699
- 9 **CLUB YOU TO DEATH**
Anuja Chauhan
Picador, ₹499
- 10 **SHUGGIE BAIN**
Douglas Stuart
Picador, ₹499



Bahrisons, New Delhi

Fantasy beats auto-fiction, but 'magic realism' trounced by fact



Farrukh Dhondy

review

This book could — and perhaps should — have been called “A Defence of Fantasy”. It's an eloquent, erudite and, in parts, startlingly informative defence of all forms of imaginative, or rather imagined fantasy.

Through essays, lectures, addresses and tributes to dead friends, these themes of the imagination in writing and art emerge, the dominant one being a defence of his own favourite fictional genre of “magic realism”. I don't think Salman likes the term and insists that the magic, the inheritance that contemporary writers, or at least those of a slightly previous generation, have been bequeathed by the legends and epics of all the nations of the planet, is the rabbit hole to reality.

Salman contends that publishing today favours the revealing, racially, sexually and culturally situated autobiography and names several black American writers (none of whom, I apologetically admit, I've read) who draw on or portray their own lives in their novels without the inventions of fantasy that the school of “magic realism” has in the past brought alive. His assessment, though he gives us no summaries or descriptions of the themes or stories of these writers, is fulsome — granting perhaps that there are many fictional vehicles which tell the truth.

There is enough evidence in Salman's career, with all the glittering prizes and accolades, with the “fatwa” which V.S. Naipaul cruelly alluded to as “the severest form of literary criticism”, and the sometimes nasty reviews of his work (even of this very book in, say, UK's *Observer* newspaper) to contend that his work is “Marmitic”. You either love it or you hate it.

(I have taken the liberty of inventing the term in imitation of the word games that Salman says he used to play with his friend and supporter Christopher Hitchens).

The “haters” will be forced to admit that deriving inspiration from the epics, fables and parables from the *Arabian Nights*, from the *Panchatantra*, from *Beowulf* from *Götterdämmerung* is perfectly legitimate, but they may ask if the resulting constructs live up to the tasks of fiction — to what fiction owes to the “languages of truth”.

Consider the essay in which Salman, writing about the “hijras” of India, begins with a scene from John Irving's book *A Son of the Circus* in which a surgeon who is not a surgeon cuts off, without administering an anaesthetic, the penis and testicles of a voluntary male to turn him into a “hermaphrodite” or initiate him into being part of “another sex”. Irving's fiction is appallingly graphic and may have been the recreation of some researched piece. My own

queries to a renowned consultant urethra-genital doctor, about the hijra clans I saw in my childhood wandering around India's streets, resulted in a different account. Hijras, according to this medical scientist, are not “hermaphrodites” — whatever that is. They are “cryptorchids” — born male with penises, but as they grow the deviant bone structures in their crotches, crush their testicles and prevent them from dropping and developing. Hence, they, through early adolescence, manifest both male and female secondary features triggered by the body producing both male and female hormones — beards and breasts and altered skeletal development. In the West, this deviance in bone structure can be and is easily detected and rectified by nurses and doctors who check on boy babies and release their testicles, as a consequence of which there aren't any hijras stalking the weddings and traffic light crossings of London,

New York and the rest. Go figure!

These poor cryptorchids, handed over to the hijra clans by in all cases poor and even peasant parents in early adolescence, lead miserable lives as beggars and prostitutes. Turning this phenomenon of the tragic degradation of a society, which should but doesn't afford adequate medical care to children, into “magic realism” is, to some (me too, *yaar!*) unacceptable.

Salman's essay is not unsympathetic to the hijras and charts the structure of their social existence and pleads for some attention to the risks they face through HIV and AIDS. It's John Irving who sacrifices truth to fictional sensationalism — and some readers mistake it for the truth.

Salman deals at length in one essay about the adaptations of books into films. He finds the adaptation by David Lean of E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India* absurd and clumsy, as do I, but he forgives him for having given the world *Lawrence of Arabia* and, for my money, *Doctor Zhivago*. He ventures no illuminating theory of adaptation from one form to another, and while telling us about the adaptation of his own *Midnight's Children* to the stage, says nothing about Deepa Mehta's film of the same novel. Since he wrote that film adaptation and it wasn't a successful film, to say the least, some consideration from his insightful mind as to what went wrong would have been illuminating.

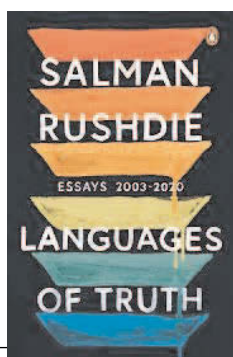
It's not the function of a reviewer to carp about what he wanted to read. The essays and speeches are peppered with insights into Salman's life as a child in Bombay (which is how he insists on remembering it — he doesn't approve of

“Mumbai”) and his experience of racism in public school in Rugby. There are insights into, or confessions about, his progress into becoming the writer he always wanted to be. And then, after the recollections and paens to dead friends such as Hitchens and Harold Pinter and a panegyric approval of writers such as Philip Roth and notes of his acquaintance with him, there are the outspoken pieces about writers subject to tyrannical, censorious silencing, jailing and death in China, Russia, Turkey and now in previously liberal India.

In an essay entitled “Osama bin Laden (Fish be Upon Him!)”, Salman attacks the hypocrisy of Pakistani policy which supports terrorism while taking billions of dollars from the United States to purportedly fight it.

Salman professes in several of these pieces to be not simply an advocate against but an activist fighter for freedom of speech. He is clearly, in all his attitudes and accomplishments, against the denial of free speech and in support of the voices that have suffered neglect and suppression. It's a brave and commendable stance, but he doesn't go on to say what he thinks of the outcry against, for instance, J.K. Rowling's opinion that transgender women are not really women. Germaine Greer also has similar controversial opinions. Should they, in the interests of the free speech Salman so ardently argues for, be heard and challenged through argument rather than censored? A regrettable silence on that one. I would have liked to know.

In his words: “I am just a professional writer, which means I don't do blogs and try and get money for whatever I write.”

LANGUAGES OF TRUTH:
ESSAYS 2003-2020SALMAN RUSHDIE
Penguin Random
House, pp. 356, ₹799

THE ELOQUENT OUTSIDER, LOVINGLY REMEMBERED...



Partha Chatterjee

review

Yasser Usman's book on Guru Dutt is a labour of love but submerged in adulation, although there is a show of criticality. This is a work unlike that of Nasser Munni Kabir's whose book stuck closely to Guru Dutt's films while touching upon his life.

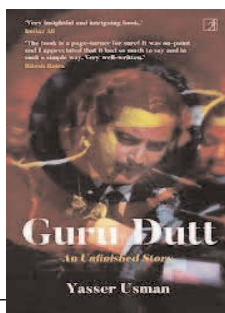
Usman's book is on the problematic though gifted director's life; a detailed record of it while being adulatory about the films.

Guru Dutt was only 39 when he died in 1964 of an overdose of sleeping pills, torn between two women; the first his wife Geeta Dutt (nee Roy), a gifted singer, the second, Waheeda Rehman, his very talented actress who featured in all his important films, whom he

had discovered. In his short, intense, sad but artistically fruitful life (in retrospect) he managed to communicate with a large audience who paid to see his films and sustained his production company; an absolute necessity in commercial Hindi cinema.

Guru Dutt had the rare ability of being loved and commanding the loyalty of those who came in contact with him. Dev Anand and he remained dear friends through the years of struggle to their superstardom in subsequent years. His unit members S. Guruswami, who ran Guru Dutt Films, Abrar Alvi, scriptwriter, V.K. Murthy who became an excellent cameraman, working with him, actors Rehman and Johnny Walker, who gave their best work in Guru Dutt's films remained staunchly loyal to him.

His training as a dancer under maestro Uday Shankar at his cultural centre in Alnora and his inborn sense of rhythm gave his song picturisation a fluency and glow. Even almost 60 years later they hold our attention and evoke admiration. He was the first in Hindi

GURU DUTT: AN
UNFINISHED STORYBy YASSER USMAN
Simon & Schuster,
pp. 317, ₹599

cinema to create real flesh and blood characters. Vijay, the cheated progressive poet (*Pyaasa*), Suresh Sinha, the charismatic filmmaker ruined by hypocritical social sanction (*Kaagaz Ke Phool*), even Bhootnath, the observer somehow rescued by luck (*Sahib Biwi Aur Ghulam*) are all outsiders, misfits in a heartless, insensitive society, as is the reporter from the last incomplete film (*Baharein Phir Bhi Aayengi*) a remake of

an earlier New Theatres hit, *President*. All these characters were played onscreen by Guru Dutt. He was the first one to create sensitive individuals who did not belong in a society where herd mentality was the norm.

A word about *Kaagaz Ke Phool*. It did not fail because it was badly scripted but because it was about the short-lived fulfilling love between a really fine filmmaker, (unhappily married) and his talented protegee whom he leads to stardom but is forced to leave because of emotional blackmail by his underage daughter pressured by her snobbish, upper-class mother. In other words, legally a story about adultery to be condemned in public by people who love to be in love but have not the guts or heart to go through with it. The situation has not changed all that much. It is Guru Dutt's most moving film and most modern, also very expressively shot.

Partha Chatterjee writes on cinema, music, literature and related cultural matters. He is also a filmmaker.

FAST FACT: One of the most underrated writers of the last century? That would be the novelist Elizabeth Taylor. English critic Philip Hensher called her *The Soul of Kindness* a novel “so expert that it seems effortless”. Her nuanced yet trenchant *A Wreath of Roses* has been adapted into a film that never ceases to haunt the viewer. Taylor died of cancer at 63. She was briefly a member of the British Communist Party, then a Labour supporter.



A handshake across Himalayas, amid Terai rumblings



Anand K Sahay

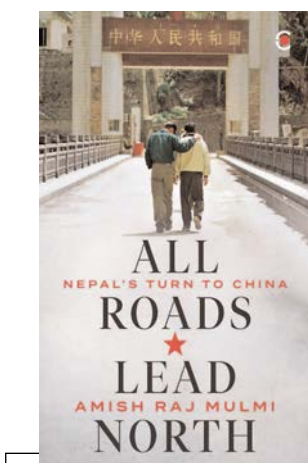
review

Nepal's Turn to China”, the subtitle of this book, may be thought of as only an approximate summation of the 10 journalistic essays, replete with conversations and site reflections, that make up this work. The real thrust, captured in the last chapter, is far more unambiguous. Says the writer, “On that cold, wind-swept plain, 16,000 feet high, there was little imagination required to understand why Nepal's held a dramatic view of China as a superpower, a stark contrast to the view of India as an interfering, unsympathetic neighbour.”

Mulmi's writing has exciting fluency for the better part. This is especially evident in the first section entitled “Borderlands” in which the Nepali-Tibetan social, commercial, and power encounters commencing in

mid-19th century are discussed. Some elements of the reportage, covering precarious journeys in the middle Himalayas where icy winds blow, are really quite thrilling. There are also charming vignettes here of letters, diary excerpts, even telegrams, sent home by Newari Buddhist traders from settlements on the Tibetan side of the line or messages received by them from loved ones back home.

The remainder of the book is less feature writing, more matter-of-fact stuff, sometimes impressionistic. There is frequent recital even of the recent record, which can get tedious. Mundane details such as trade statistics and of tourist arrivals in particular periods, to flag the deemed inevitability of China's occupation of the Nepali mind-space, fill many pages. The author's presentation may have



ALL ROADS LEAD NORTH

By AMISH RAJ MULMI
Westland, pp. 290, ₹799

been more textured if the political imagination of the “terai” region had also been sought to be examined.

The Epilogue resembles more a set of newspaper clippings on domestic politics, rather less an extrapolation through reasoned discussion into Nepal's future relationships with major foreign powers. Was this required

even to irrevocably etch a particular viewpoint, one wonders, when that thinking is reflected across the volume.

To wit, “Throughout history, China had been part of Nepal's imagination, an amorphous idea more than a reality, a ‘card’ against India than an actual hand. It was only in the 21st century that China became ‘real’ for Nepal... (It) is a superpower, a beneficent aid-giver; a friend in need, an essential provider... and a vision of a developed future... As China declares itself on the world stage, Nepal wants to tag along for the ride... Relations need to be sustained. It is in Nepal's interest to do so, and imperative to do it in a way that acknowledges its own aspirations.” The endorsement is pretty steamy.

However, an unquestionable lacuna is the absence of an attempt to engage with any suggestion that may indicate what that “aspiration” is or ought to be. We learn that republican Nepal backs China's “sovereignty project” in Tibet, that it stands against the anti-police state protests in Hong Kong, and that it backs Beijing's policies that trample on human rights in Xinjiang. There aren't

many countries that do all of these.

In addition, Nepali officials are taken to task by Kathmandu for publicising flagrant Chinese violations of the Tibet border with Nepal, and Nepal does not outright reject China's implied claims to Mount Everest. If this trend line in policy is sustained, who knows the PLA could be at the Indian boundary at Birgunj — scraping Bihar — before long, just as it crossed the LAC in Eastern Ladakh — and Kathmandu may be less than horrified even if it demonstrably wrings its hands, or some of its politicians do.

This is not a book on international relations or regional politics. It is not a history of Nepal-China or Nepal-India relations either, though prominent markers (not all) get a look-in. A decided strength of the book is that it fills crucial gaps for Indian readers on the rapidity with which China has captured the political, economic and strategic terrain in Nepal. (This is a reminder, if one were needed, of the failure of Indian journalism to inform its readers.)

The author's first book is well worth a read to better understand Beijing's ways.

Odia literary star's fine vignettes, wicked wit, social insights



Rupa Gulab

review

Times change but human nature doesn't, which is why *Six and a Third Acres* is a hardy survivor. It was first serialised as *Chha Mana Atha Guntha* in *Utkal Sahitya* (a literary monthly) between 1897 and 1899, when India was under colonial rule.

A scripture-quoting narrator with tongue firmly in cheek relates the story of a devious zamindar and moneylender in a village in Odisha. He sees through all of Ramachandra Mangaraj's pretensions, including the religious fasts he strictly observes. Mangaraj's suffering and largely ignored wife is not his soul-mate—that honour is reserved for Champa, one of his large household's many maids. But perhaps the worst thing about Mangaraj is his covetousness. When he wants something, he will stop at nothing to get it.

Which brings us to the six and a third acres that Mangaraj has had his beady eyes on for years. It belongs to a childless couple from a weaver family, Bhagia and Saria. While Bhagia is not one of the world's greatest thinkers, he is perfectly content with his lot in life. Saria, however, is not in a happy place — her desire for a child drives her to distraction. This weakness is what the wily old zamindar and his cohort play on.

While the book deals with dark subjects, the hand that writes it is beautifully light, and gives you many occasions to smirk or even laugh out loud. The narrator with his wicked wit introduces you to almost every inhabitant of the village across the caste spectrum — what they do, where and how they live, and tops it off with some delicious gossip about them. As he says, “There can be a pond without fish, but no village without back-biters”, so be prepared for delightful incidents of subterfuge and counter-subterfuge!

There are marvellous descriptions of village life as well. Jackals with their hourly howling at night were like clocks to the villagers. They were useful in other ways too: “In the countryside, where there are no municipal commissioners, these agents see to the disposal of dead dogs, rats, cats, and assorted dirt and filth.”

Enjoyable digs are occasionally made at the British. There's a sessions judge who delayed court proceedings because he was “in the middle of scribbling a letter to his ‘My Dear Lady’”, anxious not to miss the weekly Wednesday mail to England. India's “gentleman babus” are not spared either: “Flounder they might when asked to recite the names of their own grandfathers, but the names of 15 generations of the ancestors of British King Charles the Third roll off the tips of their tongues.”

Apart from the riveting story, it's the style—the dark humour in particular — that makes it one of the shining stars of Odia literature. Humour often gets lost in translation, but the translators of *Six and a Third Acres* — Leelawati Mohapatra, Paul St-Pierre and K.K. Mohapatra — have done a wonderful job.

Rupa Gulab is a freelance writer and the author of Girl Alone, Chip of the Old Blockhead and The Great Depression of the 40s

PENGUIN TO PUBLISH TWO TITLES BY ANEES SALIM

New Delhi: Penguin Random House India on Friday announced the acquisition of two new titles by award-winning contemporary writer Anees Salim.

The two new titles, *The Odd Book of Baby Names* and *The Bellboy*, will be published under the Penguin's Hamish Hamilton imprint in 2021 and 2022, respectively. While *The Odd Book of Baby Names* is a historical fiction tracing the last days of one of the last kings in India who is rumoured to have fathered more than 100 children, *The Bellboy* is a story about a 17-year-old bellboy from an island that's slowly disappearing off the face of earth. “These two books are entirely different in terms of craft and characterisation. Salim's published works include *Vanity Bagh*, *The Blind Lady's Descendants* and *The Small-Town Sea*. “As in my previous works, I find a bit of myself in both these books,” said the author.

— PTI

SHORT TAKES

Kohli props up India on Day One

Southampton: Virat Kohli's watchful effort in challenging conditions helped India reach 120 for three at tea on day two of the World Test Championship final here on Saturday. India, who had reached 69 for two at lunch, was only able to add 51 runs in the afternoon with the loss of Cheteshwar Pujara (8 off 54). Kohli (35 not out off 94) had the company of his deputy Ajinkya Rahane (13 off 54) when early tea was taken due to bad light. Compared to the morning session, New Zealand's all pace attack showed much more discipline to not allow the batsmen any easy runs. Earlier, Rohit Sharma (34 off 68) and Shubman Gill (28 off 64) staved off the initial swing threat posed by the opposition pace attack with disciplined batting before New Zealand fought back to leave India at 69/two at lunch. — *PTI*

Brief Scores: India 120/3 (Virat Kohli 35 batting, Ajinkya Rahane 13 batting, Rohit Sharma 34; Kyle Jamieson 1/14, Neil Wager 1/19) vs New Zealand.

Sneh earns draw for India women

Bristol: The one-off women's Test between India and England ended in a draw on the final day here on Saturday, with the visitors defying the home side attack to score 344 for 8 in their second innings after following-on. India were forced to follow-on on Friday after conceding a 165-run first innings lead to England. But the visitors recovered from a middle-order batting collapse in their second innings to defy the home side bowlers on a sluggish pitch on the fourth and final day. No. 8 batter Sneha Rana top-scored in the second innings with 80 not out off 154 balls. Rana and number 10 Taniya Bhatia (44 not out) shared 144 runs for the unbroken ninth wicket as they frustrated England bowlers for 30.4 overs. Earlier, India reached 243 for 8 at tea. — *PTI*

Brief scores: England Women 396/9 decl. d/w India Women 231 & 344 (Sneh Rana 80 n.o., Shafali Verma 63, Deepti Sharma 54; Sophie Ecclestone 4/118).

Argentina boss over Uruguay

Brasilia: Guido Rodriguez scored the only goal of the game as Argentina edged past fierce local rivals Uruguay in a disappointing Copa America clash on Friday. The victory sent Argentina joint top of Group 'A' with Chile on four points while Uruguay remain without a point. These two sides have played each other more times than any other local rivals and played the first ever international match to be held outside the United Kingdom. They have won the Copa 29 times between them but familiarity can breed caution and for much of the encounter they canceled each other out. Six-time *Ballon d'Or* winner Lionel Messi had the first real chance, cutting in from the right onto his favored left foot to force a full stretch save from goalkeeper Fernando Muslera, who was relieved to see Lautaro Martinez unable to turn in the rebound. Moments later, Cristian Romero rose highest in the area to meet a Rodrigo De Paul cross but Muslera made a comfortable save. — *AFP*

Scotland, England play drab draw

London: England missed a chance to book their place in the Last 16 at Euro 2020 as Scotland kept their own hopes alive with a well deserved 0-0 draw on Friday. Gareth Southgate's side would have been guaranteed to advance from Group 'D' with a win over their old rivals at Wembley. But lethargic England managed just one shot on target and Scotland's combative display could easily have earned all three points. Despite a flop that saw them booed off at full-time, England have four points and will be certain of qualifying if they avoid defeat by the Czech Republic in their last group game on Tuesday. — *AFP*

MILKHA FLIES AWAY

New Delhi, June 19: The track, to him, was like an open book in which Milkha Singh found the "meaning and purpose of life". And what a life he made for himself. Before his 91-year-old body lost to Covid-19 on Friday after fighting it for a month, Milkha won the kind of battles that not many would have survived, forget about living long enough to tell the world about them. "Don't worry, I am in good spirits...I am surprised. How could I get this infection?...I hope to get over it soon," Milkha had said before being hospitalised, sounding his usual jovial self, supremely confident of his legendary fitness.

One of independent India's biggest sporting icons was a tormented man but refused to let that come in the way of accomplishments which were unheard of in his era.

He saw his parents being butchered during partition, indulged in petty crimes to survive in refugee camps of Delhi, went to jail for those and failed three attempts at joining the Army.

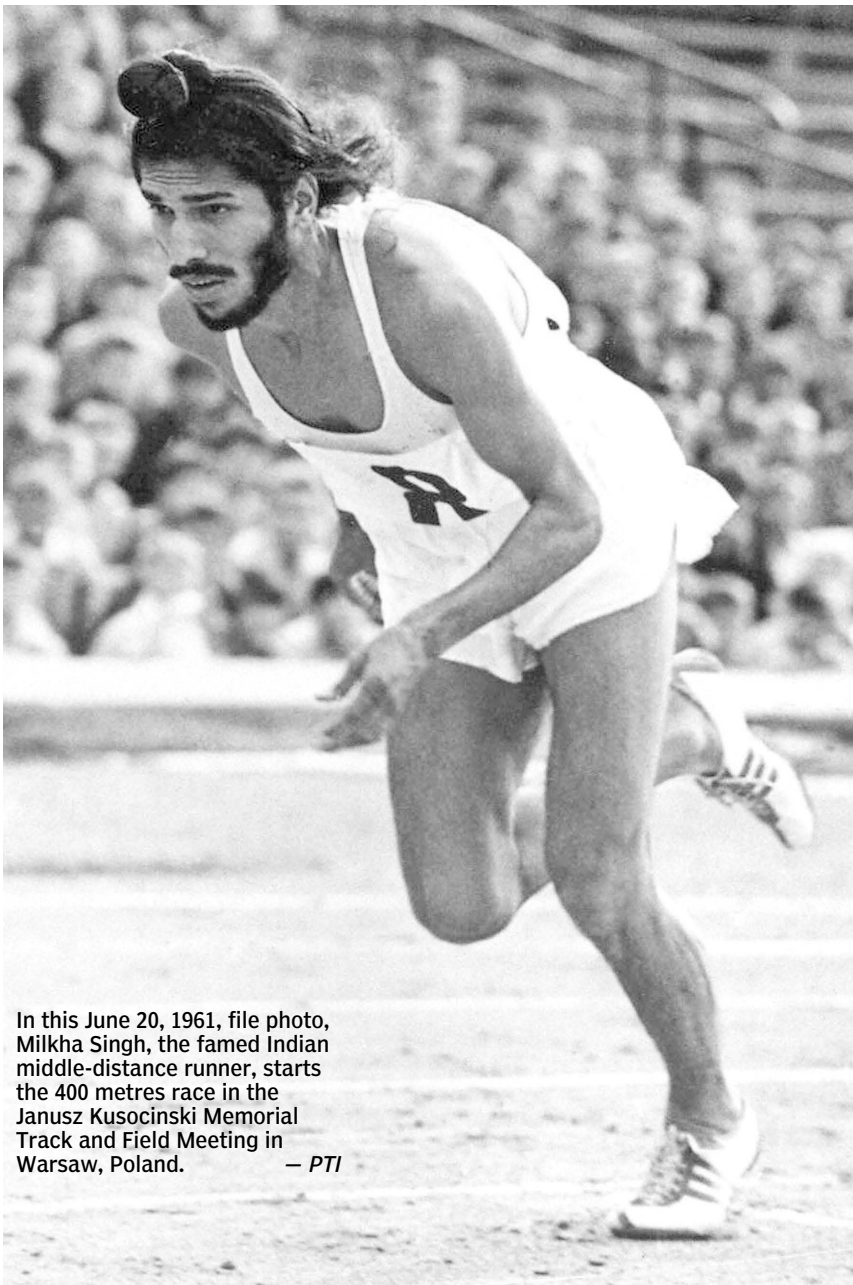
Who could have thought a man like that would get the sobriquet of 'The Flying Sikh'? But Milkha earned it and earned it with a master-class on how to be bigger and better than one's circumstances.

He "revered" the track like "the sanctum sanctorum in a temple where the deity resided."

To him running was both his God and beloved as he created his own little fairytale out of what what could have easily been a tale of horrors.

To talk of medals, the legendary athlete was a four-time Asian Games gold-medallist and the 1958 Commonwealth Games champion but his greatest performance was a near miss, the fourth place finish in the 400m final of the 1960 Rome Olympics.

His timing at the Italian capital remained the national record for 38 years and he was



In this June 20, 1961, file photo, Milkha Singh, the famed Indian middle-distance runner, starts the 400 metres race in the Janusz Kusocinski Memorial Track and Field Meeting in Warsaw, Poland. — *PTI*

bestowed the Padma Shri in 1959.

But more than anything else, Milkha was the one who put Indian athletics on the world map by winning the gold in the then 440 yards race of the 1958 British and Commonwealth Games.

He became the first Indian athlete to win an individual gold in a Commonwealth Games, which led to then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru declaring a national holiday on his request. Milkha put his career

record at 77 wins out of 80 races. He also claimed to have bettered the 'Olympics record' of that time in a race in France, but with sketchy records available, it is difficult to confirm just like his actual date of birth which is officially November 20, 1929.

He lost the race of his life in the Rome Olympics, finishing the 400m final in 45.6 seconds, 0.1 second short of the bronze medal mark.

Hard to believe but he had slowed down in a

colossal error of judgement as he wanted to preserve himself for the final 150m.

He remained tormented by that miss, one of the only two incidents in his life, which he described as unforgettable — the other being the killing of his parents in Pakistan.

"The one medal I had yearned for throughout my career had just slipped through my fingers because of one small error of judgement," Milkha wrote in his autobiography. — *PTI*

Legend, positive right till the end

New Delhi, June 19: Even after testing positive to Covid-19, sprint legend Milkha Singh exuded optimism, a trait that he carried all his life, through triumphs and defeats.

"Yes *Bachcha*, I tested positive for Covid-19 yesterday (May 19). But I am fine, I have no problem, no fever, no cough. It will go away. My doctor told me I will be alright in three-four days," he said after tested positive for the virus.

The 91-year-old died at Chandigarh's PGIMER hospital on Friday night after battling the infection for a month.

Milkha was first hospitalised at Mohali's Fortis hospital on May 23 as a precautionary measure.

While there, he was joined by his former national volleyball captain wife Nirmal Kaur, who died six days ago on Sunday because of Covid complications.

The couple shared a room before Milkha was discharged on the family's request.

Milkha was subsequently hospitalised again on June 3 after his oxygen saturation levels dipped, this time at the PGIMER where he battled it out till Friday night.

"Our cook had fever but he concealed it from us. We

Yes *Bachcha*, I tested positive for Covid-19 yesterday (May 19). But I am fine, I have no problem, no fever, no cough. It will go away. My doctor told me I will be alright in three-four days.

— **MILKHA SINGH** after tested Covid-19 positive

sent him to his home (native village). After that we thought it's better that all the family members should get Covid-19 tests done," Milkha had said during the May 20 conversation detailing what exactly led to the positive tests.

"I am surprised. How could I get this infection?" he wondered.

At that point Milkha did not feel any symptoms and said that he had even been jogging and exercising.

"I have been keeping indoors except for morning jogging and exercise. I did jogging just yesterday. Don't worry, I am in good spirits," he asserted.

And it was this lifestyle that he was banking on to recover.

"Though I am surprised to have tested positive, I hope to get over it soon," he said. — *PTI*



INDIAN CRICKETERS PAY HOMAGE, WEAR BLACK ARMBANDS

Southampton, June 19: The Indian cricket team on Saturday wore black armbands on the second day of the World Test Championship final against New Zealand here as a mark of respect to 'Flying Sikh' Milkha Singh.

Top Indian players, including skipper Virat Kohli and coach Ravi Shastri, had already posted their condolence messages on Twitter and the entire Indian team on the day wore the arm band as a mark of respect for the departed soul.

This is one of the rare occasions when Indian cricket team wore black armbands for a legend of Olympic sports.

"The Indian Cricket Team is wearing black armbands in remembrance of Milkha Singhji, who passed away due to Covid-19," the BCCI media cell posted a message. — *PTI*

SPORTS UNIVERSITY TO HAVE A CHAIR AFTER FLYING SIKH

Chandigarh, June 19: A chair will be established after Milkha Singh's name at the Sports University, Patiala, Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh announced here on Saturday.

"We are going to have a Milkha Singh Chair in Sports University, Patiala," the Chief Minister told reporters outside Milkha's Sector 8 residence.

Singh, accompanied by state Sports Minister Rana Gurmit Singh Sodhi, had gone to meet Milkha's son Jeev and other family members to offer his condolences. — *PTI*

Sprint King cremated with state honours

Chandigarh, June 19: Iconic sprinter Milkha Singh was on Saturday cremated with full state honours here, marking the end of an era in which his pioneering accomplishments on the track galvanised a newly-independent India.

Milkha, who was 91, was bid a tearful adieu in the presence of his family members and several dignitaries, including sports minister Kiren Rijiju.

His son and ace golfer Jeev Milkha Singh lit the funeral pyre.

Punjab Governor and Chandigarh Administrator V. P. Singh Badnore, Punjab Finance Minister Manpreet Singh Badal, Haryana's Sports Minister Sandeep Singh were among the other dignitaries who attended the last rites.

Prof Jagat Ram,



Police personnel pay last salute to legendary sprinter Milkha Singh, who passed away on Friday night, in Chandigarh on Saturday. — *PTI*

'RECORD-BREAKER' PARAM PAYS TRIBUTE TO HIS IDOL

New Delhi, June 19: Inspired by Milkha Singh, he broke the very record that the iconic sprinter had against his name for 38 years and as Paramjit Singh mourned his idol's demise, he said he would forever cherish the time spent in awe of and with the "pioneering legend".

Singh broke Milkha's 400m national record in 1998, 38 years after the Milkha set it in the Rome Olympics for a fourth place finish. The 91-year-old ran that memorable race in 45.6 seconds. "Milkha Singh *Ji* was so kind and generous that I was invited for a dinner at his place in Chandigarh after I broke his national record. He told me I should work harder to achieve success at the global level," Paramjit said on Saturday.

"Milkha Singh *Ji* said he wants to see an Indian win an Olympic medal before he dies," said the 49-year-old, who broke the national record during the National Championships in Kolkata. Milkha was officially hand-timed at 45.6 seconds during his fourth-place finish in the Olympics, though an unofficial electronic timer at the Games clocked him at 45.73 seconds.

"It is a huge loss for the country that Milkha Singh *Ji* is no more. He was the pioneering legend of Indian athletics." — *PTI*

Compete abroad: P.T. Usha remembers Singh's advise

Chennai, June 19: "You must compete in international meets abroad to improve," was the piece of advice P.T. Usha received from Milkha Singh when she met him way back in 1982 as she remembers the iconic athlete, who died on Friday.

Herself a track and field legend, Usha said she met Milkha Singh during an international competition in Korea. "I met Milkha *ji* for the first time in 1982 and it was a memorable one. He advised me to focus on participating in international meets to improve my level," Usha said.

"Go and run outside the country, only then you can improve and compete with the foreigners, he would insist," she added. The 'Payoli Express' said



P.T. Usha with Milkha Singh in this file pic.

it was her coach O.M. Nambiar, who introduced her to Milkha and she never missed an opportunity to learn the tricks of the trade from him. "Ever since I got introduced to

Milkha *ji* through my coach, I always used to ask him a lot of questions. And, he was always ready to answer them. He offered suggestions and spoke in an inspiring manner."

Usha said Milkha Singh would remain in the hearts of millions of Indians.

"I was shocked after hearing the news of Milkha Singh's death. He was a great athlete...An inspiring personality. He will continue to inspire many and will remain in the hearts of millions of Indian people," the 56-year said.

"He used to call me PT. He was a very nice person and whenever I met him he used to enquire about my son, husband. He used to ask about my academy and the trainees," she added. — *PTI*

WHAT THEY SAID



In the passing away of Shri Milkha Singh *Ji*, we have lost a colossal sportsperson, who captured the nation's imagination and had a special place in the hearts of countless Indians.

— NARENDRA MODI Prime Minister

India has lost its star. Milkha Singh *Ji* has left us but he will continue to inspire every Indian to shine for India. My deepest condolences to the family.

— KIREN RIJITU sports minister

Rest in Peace our very own 'Flying Sikh' Milkha Singh *ji*. Your demise has left a deep void in every Indian's heart today, but you shall keep inspiring several generations to come.

— SACHIN TENDULKAR cricket legend

A huge loss for the sport of athletics today. Rest well #MilkhaSingh *ji*.

— ANJU BOBBY GEORGE Indian athlete

Saddened to hear about the passing away of the great Milkha Singh *ji*. May God give strength to his family to overcome this irreparable loss.

— ABHINAV BINDRA ace shooter

We lost a Gem. He will always remain as an inspiration for every Indian. May his soul Rest in peace.

— NEERAJ CHOPRA star javelin throwers

After winning World Championship U20 title and medal in Asian Games, I still remember a call from #MilkhaSingh *ji* that "Hima just keep on working hard, you have ample time and you can win a Gold medal for our country at a global level. I will try to fulfill your dream sir."

— HIMMA DAS Indian sprinter

A legacy that inspired a whole nation to aim for excellence. To never give up and chase your dreams. Rest in Peace MilkhaSingh *ji*. You will never be forgotten.

— VIRAT KOHLI India cricket captain

Had the honour of meeting you and you blessed me so many times .. The kindest and warmest Palms up together RIP Milkha Singh *ji* .. The world will miss a legend like you

— SANIA MIRZA tennis star

Really sad about the demise of our national hero and a legend Shri Milkha Singh *ji*. My heartfelt condolence to the bereaved family. RIP #MilkhaSingh

— M. C. MARY KOM boxing great

Extremely saddened by this news ..RIP, India's one of the greatest sportsmen..You have made young Indians dream of becoming an athlete..Had the privilege of knowing you so closely.

— SOURAV GANGULY BCCI chief

We may not have seen you compete, but every time we ran fast as kids, we ran 'like Milkha Singh'. And for me, that will always be the legend you leave behind. You didn't just run, you inspired. Rest in peace, sir. #MilkhaSingh.

— SUNIL CHHETRI India football captain

Dearest Milkha *ji*, A part of me is still refusing to accept that you are no more. Maybe it's the stubborn side I inherited from you.. the side that when it sets its mind on something, just never gives up.

— FARHAN AKHTAR Indian actor who essayed Milkha Singh in Bhaag Milkha Bhaag

In grief... Milkha Singh passes away... The pride of India... A great athlete... A greater human.

— AMITABH BACCHAN Bollywood superstar

Warm and welcoming, you made our first meeting so special. I have been inspired by your excellence, touched by your humility, influenced by your contribution to our country Sending love and prayers to the family. #MilkhaSingh.

— PRIYANKA CHOPRA Indian actor