

SEVEN DECADES, 25,000 SONGS, AN ENDURING LEGACY

Lata Lives



LATA MANGESHKAR • 1929-2022

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

YOGESH NAIK
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 6

LATA MANGESHKAR, the legendary singer beloved of countless Indians across four generations or more, was cremated at 7.14 pm with full state honours in the presence of her family, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, and thousands of

Mumbai residents who thronged Shivaji Park to pay their last respects.

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

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

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

THE LATA LEGEND PAGES 8, 9 & 14

'INDEPENDENT INDIA'S ONE CONSTANT: LATA'

THE PHENOMENON, EXPLAINED

Illustration: Srujan Dey



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



BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY

OUR INNER VOICE

THE EDITORIAL PAGE, 10

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

SUANSHU KHURANA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

LATA MANGESHKAR, one of the country's most towering cultural icons whose singing moved generations since Independence, was so impossibly prolific that she was able to do what artists rarely can. From the hymn to the love song, an entire nation in prayer to an individual heart broken,

she was the voice of their music that struck chords, both perfect and popular; an astounding blend unmatched in Hindi film music to this day.

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

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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

RUPSA CHAKRABORTY
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 6

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

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

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

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

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Hum jahan jahan challenge
aapka saaya saath hoga...

Lata Mangeshkar
1929-2022

dakuntha/AB/795

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

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

INDIA'S DOMINANT run at the Under-19 World Cup culminated in a record-extending fifth title

on Sunday. The latest triumph, however, will stand apart due to the tenacity shown in the face of unprecedented challenges off the field. The pandemic rocked the run-up and threatened the campaign itself – at one point, the team was reduced to ten fit

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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

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

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

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

EXPLAINED
E Eye on
SC votes

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

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TECH

DYING LIGHT 2 REVIEW
Dropkicking zombies is still fun



ENTERTAINMENT

LATA MANGESHKAR (1929-2022)
A pictorial tribute to the legendary singer

EXPRESS AUDIO

What are truly wireless audio devices

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

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

FROM PAGE ONE

Towards the end

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

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

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

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

"Earlier, she would listen to songs, especially ghazals, when she had to get admitted for health issues. She loved 'payals' and would often tell us about her 'payal' collection," said the nurse who declined to speak on record citing hospital norms for staff.

"But this time, she looked more fragile and frail. Due to Covid, there were strict restrictions on staff visiting her in the ICU. Healthcare workers would peek through the glass on the ICU door to catch a glimpse of her," said the nurse. Doctors involved in Mangeshkar's treatment remember her as a "down-to-earth" person.

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

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

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

President, PM join a nation to pay tribute

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

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

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

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

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

"The kind and caring Lata

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

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

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

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

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

Sister Asha Bhosle, a legend in her own right, and the entire Mangeshkar family was present at her home. Among those who called on the family to express

their condolences were superstar Amitabh Bachchan, and politicians Aaditya Thackeray, Raj Thackeray, and Sushil Kumar Shinde. Around 5.40 pm, Mangeshkar's body reached Shivaji Park in a funeral procession from Prabhu Kunji.

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

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

bills have been slashed."

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

At

Chamkaur Sahib, from where Channi has recorded three straight wins in January 2021, the juniors remained defiant till the end, prevailing over England by four wickets in the final at Antigua. But then, a glimpse of the life stories of these cricketers show why they were never rattled – from a player who lost his father to Covid to several others who overcame extreme odds to reach the pinnacle of junior cricket.

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

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

Speaking ahead of Rahul, both Sidhu and Channi said they would abide by the decision taken by the high command. Sidhu said if got the responsibility, there would be no mafia raj in Punjab. "I am an aashiq (lover) of Punjab. My love for Punjab does not ask for anything in return. I am not asking for anything from Rahul Gandhi and I will abide by his decision. I will stand and work shoulder-to-shoulder with the person who will be made CM candidate," he said. Channi, meanwhile, hinted he was aware of his name being finalised and focused on targeting the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP).

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

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

detail was covered, it was remarkable from the BCCI," Kumar said.

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

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

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

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

Then, there is the fearless wicketkeeper-batsman Bana, who finished the final with back-to-back sixes. Though the image of a wicketkeeper clinching the World Cup would seem familiar to Indian fans, Bana was not even the first choice. It was during the India B vs India F game in the Challengers Trophy that his friend Sindhu informed him: "The U-19 selectors will be here to watch our match today." Bana's reply was: "Tu bas six count karna aaj mere (You just count my sixes today)." Bana smashed a 98-ball 170, including 10 fours and 14 sixes.

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

WRITE BACK

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

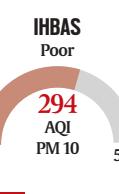
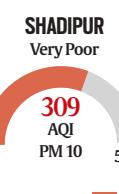
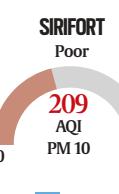
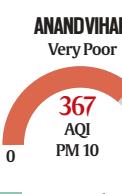
"The 2880 MW Dibang Multipurpose Project is an ambitious upcoming project of NHPc in the state of Arunachal Pradesh. The Forest Clearance Stage-I was granted by MoEF&CC, Govt of India, vide letter dated 15.04.2015 after examination of Forest Advisory Committee (FAC) constituted by Central Government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

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

recorded in the minutes of the FAC meeting held on September 22-23, 2014. They include the declaration of "the right bank of the reservoir up to the ridge line bordering the basin boundary between the Siang and Dibang up to Dri River to the north as a National Park for future preservation of ecological diversity in the River Basin."

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

The Indian Express replies: The Stage-I forest clearance for Dibang Multipurpose Project was issued to the Arunachal Pradesh government on the basis of the recommendations of the Forest Advisory Committee" that are by its report.



S K Y W A T C H
FORECAST: Feb 7
Mainly clear sky. Shallow to moderate fog in the morning.

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

AFTER DDMA ORDER

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

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

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

The new order from JNU comes after the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) allowed higher educational institutions to resume physical teaching and learning activities amid declining Covid cases in the national

capital. Crucially, an education department official said that the requirement for institutes to maintain 50% of classroom or laboratory capacity at any given time will be done away with.

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

According to the university's order, deans and chairpersons of various schools, centres and special centres may resume offline teaching, learning and academic activities from Monday. JNU will

be made fully functional with staff attending their offices at 100% capacity.

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

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

The city's night curfew, from 11 pm to 5 am, will be operational on movements of individuals on the campus as well.

During the curfew, campus gates will be closed and residents have been instructed to not move within the campus.

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



OPENING TODAY

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

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

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

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

Police said the victim, identified as Harikesh Sharma (62), is a property dealer at Nithari. A case has been registered at

Aman Vihar police station against the two men, but no arrests have been made yet.

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

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

Sharma claimed, "... They were shouting as they wanted

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

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

Seeing this, the accused panicked and fled.

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

MBA student attempts suicide over 'blackmail'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

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

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

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

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



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



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

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MAHENDER SINGH
MANRAL
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

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

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

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

Sources said the latest incident came to light last month after the administration uncovered financial transactions between the officials and Sukesh. As they

were unable to ascertain how money exchanged between officials shifted Sukesh from jail 4 as a precautionary measure and questioned staffers.

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

The assistant jail superintendent said Sukesh offered them money of his own accord. We suspect he was luring him," the official said.

Police had earlier claimed Sukesh paid around Rs 25-30 crore to jail staff to secure an entire barrack for himself. Police said CCTV footage from 10 cameras installed in Rohini jail from July 14 to August 14, 2021, was collected and these covered Ward No. 3 and Barrack No. 204 where Sukesh was lodged. "It was found that CCTVs in Sukesh's barrack were completely blocked by curtains and a mineral water bottle box..."

DCP Mohammad Ali wrote in his letter asking Tihar jail to grant approval under Section 17 (A) of the PoC Act to conduct an enquiry/investigation against officials of Rohini jail No. 10.

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

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

In conversation with



Shubhajit Roy
Associate Editor
The Indian Express

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

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

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HARDLOOK: ANGANWADI WORKERS' PROTEST

What women want

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

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

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

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

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

■ ■ ■

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

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

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

Their regular responsibilities include running the centres, where they are supposed to impart some basic early education,



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

distribute cooked meals and supplementary nutrition to children below the age of six years, and pregnant and lactating women; to maintain records of all mothers and children in their respective areas; to track the growth and weight of children below six years to monitor their nutrition; raise awareness and mobilise the community at the grassroots level for health and immunisation programmes.

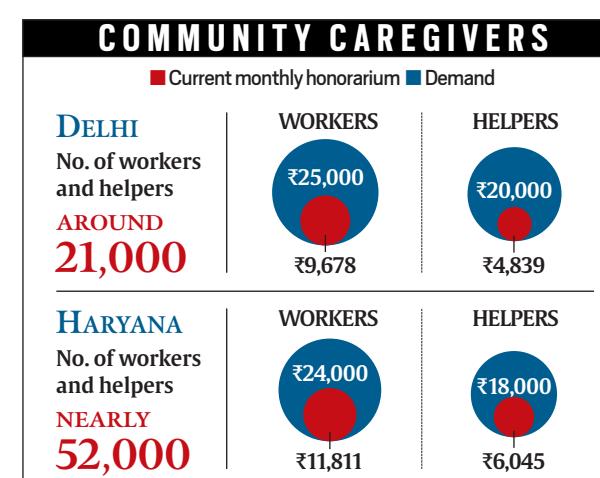
During the pandemic, in the absence of food distribution at the centres, they distributed dry ration door-to-door every month.

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

"We have to maintain a monthly progress report which

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

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



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

"If we get the status of workers (*majdoor*), our economic condition would drastically improve

as we would be entitled to social security benefits like PF, medical, pension and minimum wages.

Currently, we are classified as 'volunteers' as per the government, but our duties are full time. During the pandemic, our work increased manifold... We did not fear for our lives and performed our duty as frontline workers," said Saraswati (51),

deputy state president of the Haryana anganwadi workers and helpers union.

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

"The department has been asked to look into their demands and resolve them to the extent possible but there are limitations.

The Government of India is the parent authority of the scheme and regularisation can only be done through them. For the other work that they do such as surveys and for Pulse Polio, they receive additional honorarium. Their base honorarium is set by the Union government. All the state can do is increase its share of their payments slightly and this is being considered," said an official.

In September 2018, the Prime Minister had announced that the Centre was increasing the honorarium of workers by Rs 1,500 and helpers by Rs 750.

In both states, they say that the arrears of this hike are still pending.

■ ■ ■

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

BRIEFLY

2 more arrests in Shahdara rape case

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

Man kills wife, daughter

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

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

ABHINAV RAJPUT
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

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

Standing committee head of South MCD, BK Oberoi, said there have been bureaucratic delays but the corporation is planning to launch the scheme before the polls slated for April. He said that a tender would be issued soon:

"The modalities were being worked out and it has been decided that vendors who would be given permission to run the kitchen would also be allowed to sell other products so that the business model is sustainable."

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

Covid deaths in capital see slight dip over last six days

GAYATHRI MANI
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

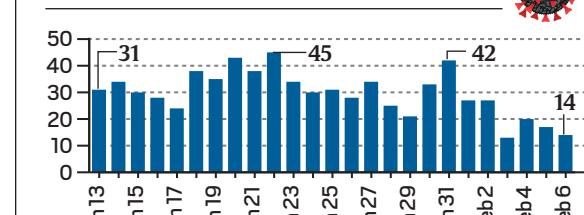
WHILE DELHI has been recording a consistent decline in the number of Covid cases and positivity rate for the past two weeks, the number of deaths has seen a slight dip over the past six days.

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

Hitting out at the BJP, Leader of the Congress in the South MCD Abhishek Dutt said shops which opened in the first leg have closed now: "They make a promise that they don't fulfil for four-and-a-half years; even if they do something in two months, the promises will not be kept." A senior BJP leader said that the scheme had fizzled out in the first leg because the party had done it with the help of workers pooling in money and it was not an organised set up. He said that the corporation wants to restart the scheme with modifications such as applicants no longer having to get consent from a local councillor to apply for a licence.

The Covid peak lasted till January 15, after which cases

TRACKING DEATHS



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

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

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

Of 310 samples taken for genome sequencing from pa-

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

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

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

leged that the BJP leader is giving land to its members for free using NGOs as a medium. This is completely unethical, he said.

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

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

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

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

In the first phase, 500 e-scooters will be put up at 50 charging stations under a public-private partnership (PPP) model outside Metro stations, bus stops, hospitals, railway stations and other public places from where people can rent them, said NDMC vice-chairman Satish Upadhyay. Tenders have been floated for the first phase, he added. The e-scooters will have a range of 80 km on a full charge and can ply at a speed of up to 45 km per hour.

New Delhi



I HEREBY DECLARE

SANGEET SINGH SOM
BJP, Sardhana

TOTAL ASSETS: ₹9.7 crore

MOVABLE ASSETS: Self: ₹1.9 crore

Wife: ₹1.5 crore

IMMOVABLE ASSETS: Self: ₹2.7 crore

Wife: ₹3.5 crore
LOANS FROM BANKS OR OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS: ₹72 lakh (self) ₹851 lakh (wife)

CRIMINAL CASE: 7

SOURCES OF EARNING: Business and agriculture

EDUCATION: Intermediate (1997)

SAHENDER SINGH RAMALA
BJP, Chharpauri (Baghpat)

TOTAL ASSETS: ₹84 crore

MOVABLE ASSETS: Self: ₹33 crore

Wife: ₹28 crore

IMMOVABLE ASSETS: Self: ₹1.5 crore

Self: ₹9.8 crore
Wife: ₹12.9 crore
LOANS FROM BANKS OR OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS: ₹5.6 crore (self) ₹54 crore (wife)

CRIMINAL CASE: Nil

PROFESSION: Businessman

EDUCATION: High School (1980)

HASHTAG POLITICS

• Ka Ba 'battle' continues

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

• Hera Pheri

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

KEEPING FLOCK TOGETHER

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

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



Courtesy: Twitter/@INCGoa

MAYURA JANWALKAR & TORA AGARWALA
PANAJI, GUWAHATI, FEB 6

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

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

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

Parties have a reason to be wary, especially in Goa, where as per the Association of Democratic Reforms, as many as 60% of the MLAs have jumped parties since 2017, from the ones on whose ticket they were

elected. The Congress, that with 17 MLAs had emerged as the single largest party, is left with only of those: former chief minister Digambar Kamat.

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

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

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

look at "the larger picture". Lavoo Mamledar, who has made his way to the Congress from the MGP, via the TMC where he spent two months, welcomed the move. "It is always better to take precautions."

Asked if this meant all was well, Mamledar, the Congress candidate from Marcaim, said: "We can't say anything about the future, but as of today, everybody is trustworthy."

Goa Forward Party President Vijai Sardesai, among the three from his party who took the pledge, said: "We had to dislodge the criticism from quarters like the AAP and TMC that the Congress only produces MLAs and supplies them to the BJP. They (the Congress) have tried to

create a bond which is social and

legal. Social, by taking them to a temple and church, and legal, with an affidavit... This is all that anyone can do."

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

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

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

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

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

FULL REPORTON
www.indianexpress.com

2017 RESULTS

Saharanpur Dehat
Deoband
Saharanpur Nagar

DEOBAND
Winner: Brijesh Singh (BJP) 1,02,244 votes
Runner-up: Jagpal Singh (BSP), 75,365 votes

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

ABHINAV RAJPUT
DEOBAND, SAHARANPUR, FEB 6

A NARROW road lined with eateries and shops, selling wares from perfume to hardware, on both sides lead up to Darul Uloom Deoband, where Muslim students from across the country and the world are enrolled.

As a white UP government car rolls into the Islamic seminary, Qasim Usmani says, "They had given notice to Darul Uloom over its library construction, they may have come to inspect it."

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

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

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

Muslims constitute a majority of voters in the Deoband constituency, numbering about 90,000. Rajputs are the second largest group with 57,000 voters, followed by Gurjars, Brahmins and Dalits. It is in view of these social equations that the SP has fielded a Rajput candidate and the BSP a Gurjar here.

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

There seems to be a sense of disappointment in a section of

Deoband's Muslim community that the SP and the BSP did not field Muslim candidates, but they also do not want AIMIM and Congress to split the Muslim votes and cause the BJP's victory.

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

Saharanpur Dehat

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

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

Saharanpur Nagar

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

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

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

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

Keep fake samajwadis out of power: PM at virtual rally



PM Modi addresses voters in Uttar Pradesh on Sunday. ANI

LALMANI VERMA

LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 6

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

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

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

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

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

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

BJP, they have started dreaming of Lord Krishna."

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

He also targeted previous governments over law and order, saying criminals would loot people on highways without fear. "What happened to women and daughters on the highway, the people of Bulandshahr know very well.

Illegal grabbing on shops and houses was very common that time," he said. "Girls in UP used to be scared. But under the BJP government, criminals are trembling with fear."

As he goes canvassing from village to village in Mansa, Moosewala has one key message: "We need to clean up air we breathe, water we drink, food we eat, and our political system." On why he joined politics, he said a gathering at Khiwa Khurd village, "When I was 23 I chose a profession (music) to transform the life of my parents. At 27, I have fame and money to give my parents,

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



ASAD REHMAN

LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 6

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

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

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

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

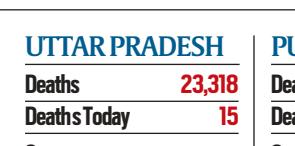
former" will explode due to the anger of the people of Uttar Pradesh.

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

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

Continuing his attack, Akhilesh alleged the state government had ruined the state's farming sector and had failed on its promise of doubling farmers' income. "We need a model tailor-made for our state, not the Delhi model," he thundered.

Both assure their audiences that they will stand by them. "I am not running away anywhere. I intend to live here. And if you give me your vote, I will have



Both banking on the growing clamour for change in Malwa.

Punjab is a lot better, we respect women... we don't have communal riots like Delhi," Moosewala tells a gathering.

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

Both assure their audiences that they will stand by them. "I am not running away anywhere. I intend to live here. And if you give me your vote, I will have

your back," Moosewala tells them. Sidhana makes the same promise to a group of traders at Mau Mandi, saying "You can call me at midnight and I will come."

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

With their opponents — Moosewala faces Dr Vijay Singh (AAP) and Prema Arora (S

OPPOSITION PROTESTS ACTION AGAINST MEDIA ONE

Go to Shah, I&B Minister told Kerala MPs

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

KRISHN KAUSHIK
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

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

Thakur did not respond to the criticism.

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

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

Suresh, who led the delegation, told *The Indian Express* "seven to

Anurag Thakur

Emergency with new forms of attack on media freedom". On Sunday, DMK's Kanimozi tweeted, "The voices of the people, media, and civil society are to be heard in a democracy. Silencing dissent, debate and dialogue is very unhealthy for a democracy."

Thakur did not respond to the criticism.

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The MHA, Suresh said, has "not clearly indicated the reason; they have only said due to security reasons." "(Thakur) told us, I am not able to do anything, because it is not an I&B decision, it

was taken by MHA, so you have to meet the Home Minister, and they will take a decision. If they ask us to withdraw the cancellation, then immediately we will withdraw. I&B Ministry has no problem," Suresh said.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Hindu Munnni president Kadeswara Subramaniam claimed his outfit was not part of

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

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

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

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

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E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of immovable assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s), Guarantor(s) and Mortgagor(s) that the below described immovable property-mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of **Punjab National Bank**, Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" on the date as mentioned in the table herein below, for recovery of its dues due to the **Punjab National Bank**, Secured Creditor from the respective borrower(s), guarantor(s) and Mortgagor(s). The Reserve Price and the Earnest Money Deposit will be as mentioned in the table below against the respective properties.

SCHEDULE OF THE SECURED ASSETS

| Lot. No. | Name of the Branch Name of the Account Name & Addresses of the Borrower/ Guarantors Accounts | A) Dt. of Demand Notice u/s 13(2) of SARFAESI ACT 2002 B) Outstanding Amount as on C) Possession Date u/s 13(4) of SARFAESI Act 2002 D) Nature of Possession Symbolic/Physical/ Conscriptive | Description of the Immovable Properties Mortgaged/Owner's Name (Mortgagors of property(ies)) | A) Reserve Price (Rs. in Lacs) B) EMD (Last date of submitting KYC for depositing EMD) C) Bid Increase Amount | Date/ Time of E-Auction | Details of the encumbrances known to the secured creditors |
|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| 1. | Branch: Patliputra Colony OBC, Patna (2160) A/c No.: 21604011000078, 21607011000123 Borrower: Apollo Paints Industry, Prop.- Sri Bind Kumar S/o Late Mundrika Prasad | A) 01.03.2021 B) Rs.5508523.44 plus upto date interest & other charges C) 21.12.2021 D) Symbolic | 1. EM of Land & Building situated at Mouza-Lakhna (Abgila), Survey Thana-Masaurhi, Hal Thana-Gaurichak, Sub Registry-Masaurhi, Sadar Registry and Distt-Patna, Taazi No.15/38, Thana No.65, Khata No.50, Khesra Survey Plot No.1386(P), Area-7 | A) 97.50,000/- B) 97,75,000/- (21.02.2022) C) 1,00,000/- | 25.02.2022 From 11:00 am to 12:00 noon | Nil |
| 2. | Branch: Langartoli, Patna (47420) A/c No.: 0474250010159, 0474300015552 Borrower: Sri Santosh Kumar, S/o Lok Nath Rai Smt. Sita Devi, W/o Lok Nath Rai | A) 29.06.2021 B) Rs. 7,85,059.97 with upto date interest C) 16.09.2021 D) Symbolic | EM of land and building situated at Mouza-Paharpur, Thana-Paharpuri, Sadar registry and Distt-Patna, Thana No.14, Survey Plot No.319, Khata No.124, Area-1 Katha, Name of owner: Smt. Sita Devi, W/o Lok Nath Rai, Boundaries as per deed:- North-Niz Mokri, South-Aji Kumar Srivastav & Ram Niwas Pandey, East-Police Colony, West-Parmeshwar Singh and others then Rasta. | A) 39,38,000/- B) 3,93,800/- (21.02.2022) C) 50,000/- | 25.02.2022 From 12:00 noon to 1.00 pm | Nil |
| 3. | Branch: East Gandhi Maidan, Patna (3041) A/c No.: 3041008700008766 Borrower: M/s Maa Iron & Cement Prop.: 1. Amitabh Kumar, S/o Late Ramadhar Sharma | A) 21.10.2016 B) 78084889.00 with upto date interest C) 31.05.2017 D) Symbolic | The property is a vacant land, situated Mouza-Nauri, Hall Thana-Paras Bigha, Khata No.5/89, Khesra No.2774/1637(P), Dist-Jehanabad, Title Deed No.1172, dated 17.03.2009, Khata No.8/9, Thana No.350, Sub & Sadar Registry & Distt-Jehanabad, Area-3.125 decimal. Bounded By: North-Sri Satish Kumar, South-Sri Akhilesh Singh, East-Patna-Gaya Main Road (N.H.-83), West-Doman Yadav | A) 5,00,000/- B) 50,000/- (21.02.2022) C) 10,000/- | 25.02.2022 From 1:00 pm to 2.00 pm | Nil |
| 2. | Smt. Krishna Mani Devi W/o Late Ramadhar Sharma | The property is a vacant land, situated in developing residential area of Mohalla-Adarsh Nagar and located in east side of branch road (Jehanabad-Pandu Road) and at about 300m away towards south from Rly Bridge & Patna Gaya main Road (NH-83) Near Jehanabad Civil Court, Erki, Ward No.-27, Jehanabad. Land bearing Regd. Mort. Deed No.-1174 dated 21.02.2014, Plot No.-62, Khata No.-251, Thana No.146, Mouza-Erki, Panchal Nagar, Sub & Sadar Registry & Distt.-Jehanabad, Area-11 Decimal. Bounded By: North-Sri Jitu Yadav, South-Sri Lakhman Yadav, East-Sri Jhunni Yadav, West-Branch Road (Jehanabad-Pandu Road). | A) 46,00,000/- B) 4,60,000/- (21.02.2022) C) 50,000/- | 25.02.2022 From 3:00 pm to 4.00 pm | Nil | |
| 3. | S. Amitabh Kumar, S/o Late Ramadhar Sharma | The property is a vacant land, situated at Mauza-Babuha, Thana-Jehanabad, Thana No.379, Ward No.1, Khata No.186, Plot No.232, P.S. Anchal Nagar Parishad, Sub & Sadar Registry & Distt-Jehanabad, Area-3.90625 decimal, Vide Deed No.2619 dated 30.03.2012, Boundary: North-Niz, South-Niz, East-Samir Kumar, West-Ramashish Singh & Awadh Singh | A) 8,00,000/- B) 80,000/- (21.02.2022) C) 10,000/- | 25.02.2022 From 4:00 pm to 5.00 pm | Nil | |
| 4. | Branch: SK Puri UBI (59920), Patna A/c No.: 0599210031903 Borrower: M/s Aayesh Electricals, Prop.: Madhumita Mazumdar | A) 24.08.2021 B) ₹27,76,782.00 with upto date interest C) 16.11.2021 D) Symbolic | EM of Residential Flat vide Deed No.2494 Dtd. 26.02.2009 situated at Flat No.302 on the 3rd Floor of the Residential Building known as "PAWAN-PRADEEP ENCLAVE" at West Boring Canal Road known as 'Khetan Lane' Mauza-Dhakanpur, P.S-Sri Krishnapuri, Survey Thana-Phulwari, Paragon-Azimabad, Town and District-Patna within the limit of Patna Municipal Corporation, bearing Taazi No.228, Khata No.530,51 and 517, Plot No.57 and 58 and part of Plot No.64, Ward No.15, Thana No.3, Total Area 1334 Sq.Ft, equal with undivided proportionate share in the Land and Common Assets and Common area in the name of Smt. Madhumita Mazumdar. Boundary of Flat No.302: North-Flat No.301, South-Open Space, East-Open Space, West-Open Space. | A) ₹49,30,000/- B) ₹4,93,000/- (21.02.2022) C) ₹50,000/- | 25.02.2022 From 11:00 am to 12:00 noon | Nil |
| 5. | Branch: SME, Patna (3891) A/c No.: 3891008700001560 389100ND00005952 389100IB0006244 389100IB00006688 Borrower: M/s Om Aastha Indo Energy Private Ltd., Mortgager: Sri Bishambhar Singh, Smt. Sudha Pratap, Sri Shailendra Pratap | A) 17.05.2018 B) ₹86334000.00 with upto date interest C) 06.09.2018 D) Symbolic | Flat No.502 on 4th floor in Swadha Glory Apartment with car parking, Mauza-Dhanaut, Rupasur, Zone-03, P.S-Rupasur, PS No.20, Plot No.42, Distt-Patna, Flat Area 1040 sq.ft. in the name of Smt. Sudha Pratap. Boundary: North-15ft wide road, South-Apartment, East-Apartment, West-12ft wide road. | A) 25,00,000/- B) 2,50,000/- (21.02.2022) C) 50,000/- | 25.02.2022 From 12:00 noon to 1.00 pm | Nil |
| 5. | Vacant Land at Mohalla-Rampur Kharhara, PS-Kahalgao Thana No.375, Halka No.3, Khata No.92, Plot No.789, Distt-Bhagalpur, Area-50 decimal, Boundary: North-Road, South-Ranju Devi, E-Ramkrishna Singh, W-Sumitra Nandan Singh. | A) 21,66,000/- B) 2,16,600/- (21.02.2022) C) 50,000/- | 25.02.2022 From 1:00 pm to 2.00 pm | Nil | | |
| 6. | Branch: Morcha Road (2916), Patna. A/c No.: 1775300500045 Borrower: Sri Anil Kumar Singh S/o Late Jagdeesh Singh | EM of Land and Building situated at Ashok Nagar, Road No.-8A-1, Mouza-Changar, Mahal-Mahammadpur Pakaulo, Pragan-Ajimabad, Survey Thana-Phulwarisharif, Present Thana-Kankarbagh, Thana No.-24, Taazi No.-167, Khata No.-31, Survey Plot No.-49(P), Distt. Registry Office and Distt. | A) ₹59,00,000/- B) ₹5,90,000/- (05.03.2022) C) ₹50,000/- | 09.03.2022 From 11:00 am to 12:00 noon | Nil | |
| 6. | Patna, Area-2 Katha 2 Dhrur 1 Dhurki vide Sale Deed No.-3315 dated 15.04.2015 pertaining to Sri Anil Kumar Singh S/o Late Jagdeesh Singh and Sri Vishwanath Singh S/o Late Laddu Singh. Boundary: North-10 feet wide Sahayak Rasta, South-Smt. Kishwanti Devi, East-5 feet wide Sahayak Rasta Badahu Smt. Girja Devi, West-Smt. Snehalata. | 1. The sale shall be subject to the Terms & Conditions prescribed in the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 and to the following further conditions. 2. The properties are being sold on "as is where is" and "as is what is" and "Whatever there is". 3. The particulars of Secured Assets specified in the Schedule hereinabove have been stated to the best of the information of the Authorised Officer, but the Authorised Officer shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omission in this proclamation. 4. The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the Website https://www.mstcecommerce.com , https://eprocure.gov.in/ epublish/app | 1. The sale shall be subject to the Terms & Conditions prescribed in the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 and to the following further conditions. 2. The properties are being sold on "as is where is" and "as is what is" and "Whatever there is". 3. The particulars of Secured Assets specified in the Schedule hereinabove have been stated to the best of the information of the Authorised Officer, but the Authorised Officer shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omission in this proclamation. 4. The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the Website https://www.mstcecommerce.com , https://eprocure.gov.in/ epublish/app | STATUTORY 15/30 DAYS NOTICE UNDER THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002 | Authorized Officer Punjab National Bank | |

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EYEING CIVIC POLLS

Hindutva fringe outfit seeks to make inroads into TN politics

BIDDING FAREWELL



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

‘She was our country’s pride and glory’

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

ALAKA SAHANI
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 6

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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



Posted on President Kovind’s Twitter handle. @rastrapati_bhvn

LEADERS PAY TRIBUTE

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

RAM NATH KOVIND
PRESIDENT

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

NARENDRA MODI
PRIME MINISTER

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

AMIT SHAH
UNION HOME MINISTER

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

RAHUL GANDHI
CONGRESS LEADER

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

MANMOHAN SINGH
FORMER PRIME MINISTER

Outside home: Fans, police band, memories

YOGESH NAIK
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 6

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

Fans had also come outside her home and traffic at Peddar Road was moving at a slow pace. Many sobbed as her body was brought to the ground floor and as the

cortege left home. As her body was brought down, officers from three armed services draped it and on her. Some of the family members were allowed to climb atop the truck carrying her body. The traffic was halted for nearly 30 minutes as the cortege left home.

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

Shivaji Park gets temporary status as cremation ground

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 6

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

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

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

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

Mourning Across the Country



Tricolour at half-mast on Rashtrapati Bhavan. Praveen Khanna

GOA

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

MADHYA PRADESH

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

KARNATAKA

TWO DAYS of mourning declared in Karnataka, during which no official pub-

lic events will be held. Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai expressed his condolences, saying, “She will remain an eternally shining star in the world of music. Her songs are in the air every second in some or the other part of the country. Lata will remain in our hearts every moment.”

JHARKHAND

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

JAMMU AND KASHMIR

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

KERALA

NO OFFICIAL function will be held in Kerala on February 6 and February 7. The national

Public holiday in Maharashtra today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 6

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

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

A senior bureaucrat said that though it is a rare instance in the recent past to announce a public holiday, there has been a precedent for



At the funeral procession. Ganesh Shirsikar

announcing such holidays in history. “The state wants to show its affection for the legendary singer through this,” said the bureaucrat.

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

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has ex-

pressed grief at the demise of Mangeshkar. “The death of Lata Mangeshkar was the end of a glorious era. Her melodious voice was immortal and she will continue to live among us,” said Thackeray.

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

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

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

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

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



BY PRASOON JOSHI

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

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

They say she was 92. The lilt in her intonation, the twinkle in her eyes and the agility of her wit belied a young girl at heart. The voice of Lata Mangeshkar—the nightingale of India, Bharat Ratna, swar kokila, queen of melody—has journeyed through generations of Indians, in fact, generations of people across the Indian subcontinent. Her voice and songs crossed geographical and generational boundaries. Independent India's last seven-and-a-half decades and living memories have one constant—Lata Mangeshkar. Today, for many who have never met her but have just heard her voice, it seems that they are in mourning for the death of a family member. And indeed so, for her voice has been a companion, through the flush of young love and romance—*Chalo sajna jahan tak ghata chale* (Mere Hamdan Mere Dost, 1968), *Ehsaan tera hogu mujh par* (Jungle, 1961), *Lag ja gale* (Woh Kaun Thi?, 1964)—to poignant moments—*Bekas pe karam* (*Mughal-E-Azam*, 1960), *Jo humne dasatan apni sunayi* (Woh Kaun Thi?), from sheer devotion—*Ae malik tere bande* (*Do Aankhen Barah Haath*, 1957), *Jyoti kalash chhalke* (*Bhabhi Ki Chudiyen*, 1961), *Vaishnav Jan to, to empower*—*Aaj phir jeene ki tamanna hai* (*Guide*, 1965), and from loss—*Luka chuppi* (*Rang De Basanti*, 2006), *Dil hoom hoom kare* (*Rudaali*, 2003) to collective pain—*Ye mere watan ke logon...* the list is rich.

Can a single voice have the mastery, the power to reach out to the soul, skim myriad sentiments and deep dive into an ocean of emotions? What made Lata Mangeshkar so valuable as an artiste? Her formidable talent, her rooted classical music training, her love for the language or the single-minded devotion to her chosen path? Perhaps, all of these and, maybe, none of these. For, I believe that a true artiste is always seeking—to fill a gap, to surpass herself, to find the sublime. It's this search that defines an artiste's journey. Lataji sang for not a classical but a popular art form, the world of cinema, demonstrating once again that there is no—or ought to be—high-brow or low-brow art form; that what shines through the field of art is the sheer calibre of the artiste.

For me, Lataji signified a blessing. As a young 20-something, I was fortunate to have had the legendary Lata Mangeshkar sing my first Hindi film song for *Lajja* (2001), directed by Rajkumar Santoshi. The illustrious *Ilaiyaraaja* was the composer. It was a dream debut for someone like me, unconnected to the film industry. I recall I was in the midst of an ad film shoot on the outskirts of Mumbai when I got a call informing me that Lataji would be going to the studio in Mahalaxmi that evening to record the song and wanted the team to be

present. Racing against time, I wrapped up my shoot and got into the car. A few kilometres down, amid the sea of vehicles in the infamous Mumbai traffic, I realised there was little chance of me reaching the studios on time. Thoughts raced in my head; how could I, as a professional, not be present for my work and more critically, how could I ever lose the opportunity to witness Lataji—the great Lata Mangeshkar—render voice to my words? I got off the car and ran to the local train station only to confront the swarming sea of humanity that Mumbai is during peak hours. Jostling my way through, I daren't without a ticket, for there was simply not a nanosecond to spare, I somehow made it to the studios a second before Lataji entered. Collecting myself under her penetrating gaze, I read aloud the lyrics. She had studied them already and launched into a discussion on the use of the word “pawan” (wind), about its grammar, whether in Hindi it is masculine or feminine. After a discussion where I convinced her about its usage in my lines, she smiled and said, “Aap apna kaam jaante hain, apko aata hai (you know your work)”. Coming from Lataji, who had worked with great poets and lyricists, I was simply thrilled. It was a blessing to have begun my journey with greats like Ilaiyaraaja and Lataji.

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

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

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

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

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



Photos: Express Archive

'Every song from her is a teaching school'

A lyricist and playback singer shares how Mangeshkar influenced generations



BY SWANAND KIRKIRE

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

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



Mangeshkar with Jaikishan and Rafi

the subcontinent.

She started under the influence of icons such as Noor Jehan and Shamshad Begum, with songs in *Mahal* (1949) and *Andaz* (1949), which is why one hears her singing in a nasal tone, but slowly as she found her own voice, different facets started to unfold.

The musical octave where she would take the heroine's voice in the most ordinary

manner, was exemplary. Otherwise, the way the actors spoke and the way they sang sounded different. Lataji's voice matched that speaking voice and that's something that influenced generations at large. People have always said that Asha (Bhosle) was the vamp's voice but Lata, too, came with those variations. She also sang in so many languages.

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

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

(ASTOLD TO SUANSHU KHURANA)



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

'She was a voice from my childhood'



BY KS CHITHRA

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

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

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

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

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

KS Chithra is a playback singer and Carnatic musician

(ASTOLD TO ARUN JANARDHANAN)

Meri awaaz hi pehchaan hai...

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



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

brilliant composition, Mangeshkar's voice and Madhubala as Anarkali immortalised the song which would become a lover's rallying call.

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

ALLAH TERO NAAM, ISHWAR TERO NAAM (HUM DONO, 1961): This evocative bhajan by Jaidev had Sahir merge “Allah” and “Ishwar” in a single sentence to give India a message of unity.

Mangeshkar's concert-regular soon became a popular school prayer.

AYE MERE WATAN KE LOGON (1963): Composer C Ramchandra and

Mangeshkar were not speaking for five years, over an argument about a recordist she didn't like, when Kavi Pradeep wrote this piece in the aftermath of the Sino-Indian War. But Mangeshkar was the sole choice for this patriotic piece, which has different chord progression in each stanza.

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

AAJ PHIR JEENE KI TAMANNA HAI (GUIDE, 1965): Among SD Burman's

greatest compositions, if *Tere mere sapna* was the most intense piece of writing by Shailendra, *Aaj phir jeene ki tamanna hai* became an expression of feminine liberation.

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

CHALTE CHALTE (PAKEEZAHI, 1972): This seminal piece by composer Ghulam Mohammed and poet Kaifi Azmi, set

along a looped tabla groove in Keherwa (eight-beat) *taal*, is the contemplation of a courtesan, Sahilbaan (Meena Kumari).

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

EK PYAR KA NAGMA HAI (SHOR, 1972): This meditative Laxmikant-Pyarelal song, also one of their finest, had

Mangeshkar singing about life and death. Written by Santosh Anand, it had Pyarelal playing the violin.

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

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

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

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

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

Hridaynath Mangeshkar's composition. **SUNIYOJI ARAJI MHARI (LEKIN..., 1991):** The long *alaap* will go down in history as one of the finest beginnings to a piece. The *bandish* was composed in raga Vihangini, a raga created by Pt Mani Prasad of Kirana gharana.

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

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

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

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

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



INDIA'S SONG

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

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

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

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

THE MISSING GREEN

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

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

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

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

FREEZE FRAME

E P UNNY



PRATAP BHAWAN MEHTA

Our inner voice

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

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

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

It is in this context that Lata Mangeshkar's playback singing achieved its unique status. Much can be written about the tone and pitch

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

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

But try 'Phaili hui hain sapanon ki bahein' from *House No 44*. It will be hard to come by a better combination of lilting innocence, and soaring dreams. The incomparable gift she gave us.

sang will probably bear a greater burden of their gendered values, than, say, the ones that Rafi or Kishore got. (Just listen to that trancelike duet with Hemant Kumar, "Chupa lo yun dil mein pyar mera"; the line "Tumhare charan ka phool hun main" will now make you wince). For someone who sang in any every emotional register, it is hard to imagine a single song as a send-off. But try "Phaili hui hain sapanon ki bahein" from *House No 44*. It will be hard to come by a better combination of lilting innocence, and soaring dreams. The incomparable gift she gave us.

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

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

The writer is contributing editor, The Indian Express



SHILPA PHADKE

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

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

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

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

In the anti-CAA protests, women occupied public space as citizens defending citizenship rights. The country saw many leaderless, peaceful protests, like the one at Shaheen Bagh, several helmed by Muslim women. Eighty-two-year-old Bilkis Bano became an icon of the movement. At Jamia Millia Islamia in December 2019, two stu-

WHEN SHE SPEAKS UP

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

dents, Ayesha Renna and Ladeeda Farzana, stood between the cops and one of their male friends who was being assaulted. The image of Renna's raised index finger became symbolic of the resistance.

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

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

there has been growing violence against Muslims and in December 2021, at a religious conclave, there were repeated calls to kill Indian Muslims.

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

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

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

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

FEBRUARY 7, 1982, FORTY YEARS AGO

PM's CONCERN

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

ANTULAY TRUST

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

UNGA ON ISRAEL

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY adopted a resolu-

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



Lata ji

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



MRINAL PANDE

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

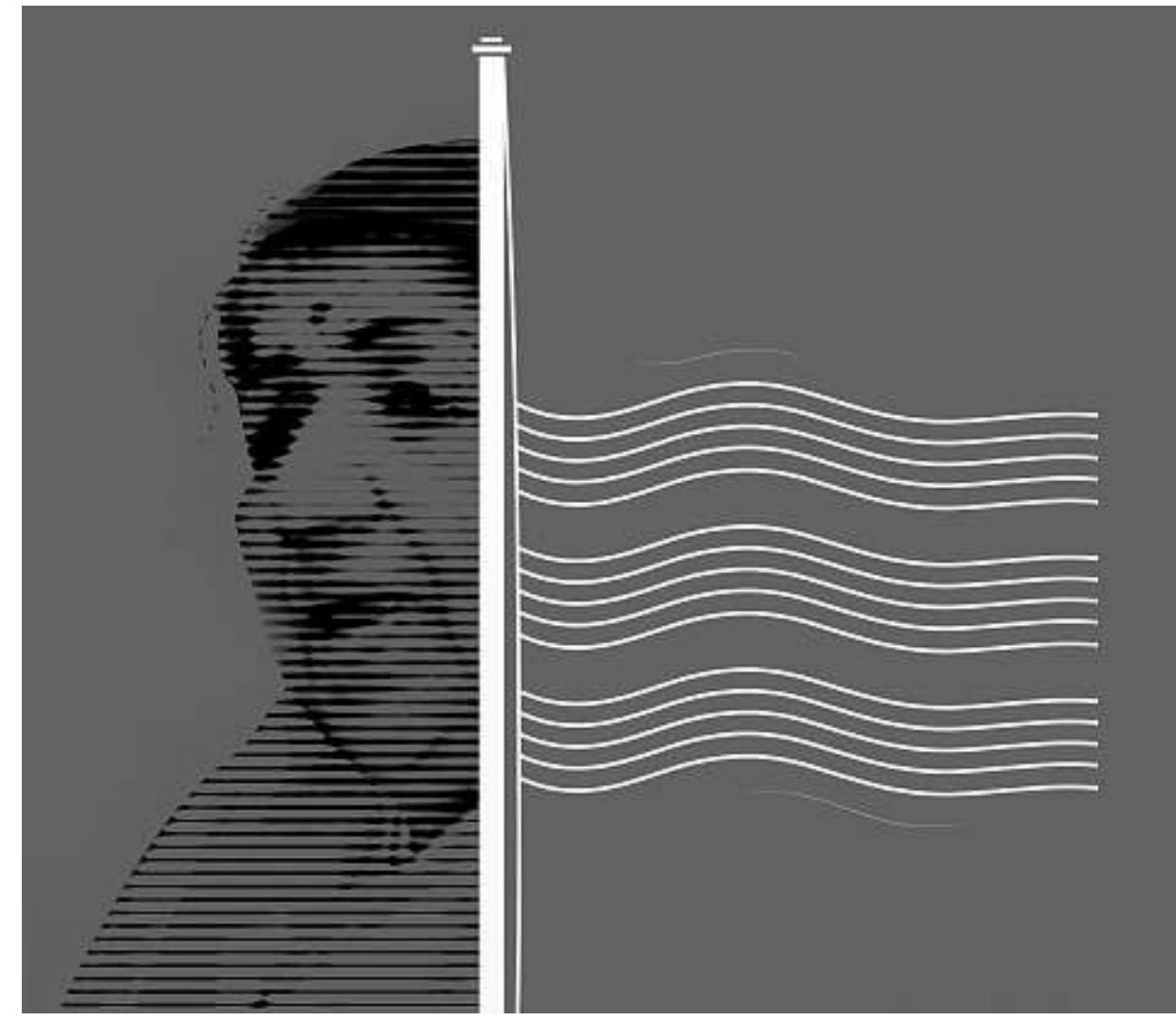
Gloria Steinem

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

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

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

Another loveable part of Lata Mangeshkar's life was her deep and genuine love for cricket. In the cricket establishment she found the action-man dimension perhaps of a father she had lost early in her life. Stories about her romantic dedication to one such legend were also rife



CR Sasikumar

also a realisation of the paternal dreams and aspirations she had imbibed as a young girl. She was a rock to her family till the end.

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

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over the years. But she chose not to marry for reasons we will never know. The truth or otherwise remained between them. She never cared to discuss it publicly and none of the columnists and society reporters dared ask her about it. She did make clear that she did not wish to be reborn. Ever. And that her favourite poet was Meera Bai who sang "Mai mai, kaise jiyun ree (Oh my mother how can I survive)". "One should gracefully accept sorrow like happiness", she said in one of her last interviews to a Mumbai daily.

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

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

The writer is former chairperson, Prasar Bharati

Branding faith

Statue of Equality discourse points to perils of making spirituality fashionable

VAMSEE JULURI

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

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

Now, politicians can be given to hyperbole, and gurus to tales of magic and miracles to inspire love and faith. But what seems to be happening with modern Hindu religious organisations is a more fundamental confusion of purpose. And like all confusions, it stems from a disconnect with social and economic realities

of class, and protestations notwithstanding, perhaps, caste privilege too. A giant gold statue can be declared as the solution to global income inequality. A gallery featuring Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, and Abraham Lincoln besides Ramanujacharya can be set up to hail them all as great "reformers". Why not Martin Luther, then? Or other "reformers" closer home?

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

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

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

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

There is, I think, also an issue of class privilege playing out in these two dimensions of

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

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

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

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

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

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

— THE GUARDIAN

Plugging power reforms

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



ANN JOSEY AND SREEKUMAR NHALUR

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

RDSS prioritises investments and grants towards dedicated agricultural feeders to accelerate feeder solarisation. States must leverage this grant support to provide reliable supply and reduce subsidy requirements.

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

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

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

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

The writers are with Prayas (Energy Group)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DIGITAL ISSUES

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

Sanjay Chopra, Mohali

THE REAL DRAG

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

H N Bhagwat, Chiplun

CLIMATE AND INDIA

THIS REFERS TO the article, "The Climate Cost of AI" (IE, February 3). The examples of Amazon, Microsoft,

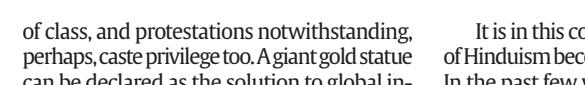
Alphabet announcing "net-zero policies" are less suited for the Indian scenario where the main factors of climate degradation are poverty, population, urbanisation, rising use of power, intensification of agriculture etc. India has been an early initiator of change in market regulations when SEBI, in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

Arerika Singh, Chandigarh

THE RIGHT MASK

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

Varun Das via e-mail



VAMSEE JULURI

Statue of Equality discourse points to perils of making spirituality fashionable

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

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of class, and protestations notwithstanding, perhaps, caste privilege too. A giant gold statue can be declared as the solution to global income inequality. A gallery featuring Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, and Abraham Lincoln besides Ramanujacharya can be set up to hail them all as great "reformers". Why not Martin Luther, then? Or other "reformers" closer home?

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

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

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

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

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of class, and protestations notwithstanding, perhaps, caste privilege too. A giant gold statue can be declared

PUSHKAR SINGH DHAMI, CHIEF MINISTER, UTTARAKHAND

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Liz Mathew: But why did he withdraw his nomination?

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

Avaneesh Mishra: There's an accusation that the delay in taking action in the *dharm sansad* issue in

IDEA EXCHANGE

WHY
PUSHKAR SINGH
DHAMI

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

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

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

Liz Mathew: But why did he withdraw his nomination?

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

Avaneesh Mishra: There's an accusation that the delay in taking action in the *dharm sansad* issue in

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

Harikishan Sharma: According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey, the



Illustration: Suvajit Dey

Hardwar and then the taking of action were both done after considering political gains and losses.

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

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

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

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

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

First, we are working to encourage self-help groups

so that along with themselves, they can provide employment to others as well. We are also thinking of simplifying and expanding the ongoing Homestay *yojana*.

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Harikishan Sharma: According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey, the

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

it in the form of a capital.

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

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

Aakash Joshi: The way Hinduism was practised in Uttarakhand is different from other states. There is a complaint that since animal slaughter was made illegal in

temples, there are a few people who are doing it clandestinely and people in local politics are taking advantage of that. Do you think it was right to pass legislation on an issue which is connected to people's faith? Do you think these older traditions (of animal slaughter) were wrong and the law had to interfere in them?

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

Harikishan Sharma: You said you have been given less time; you have completed only 208 days since your term began in July. There seems to be a trend that the sitting CMs lose their seats – your two predecessors, Congress's Harish Rawat and BJP's BC

Khanduri lost theirs. In 2012, you won Khatima with a margin of more than 5,000 votes, but in 2017, the vote margin reduced to around 2,700. Will your constituency be a challenge for you this time?

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

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

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

Avaneesh Mishra: Elections in

Uttarakhand have always focused on the Army. Congress, AAP and your party are all making a lot of promises but Congress has given tickets to only

three former Army men and your party has given a ticket to only one – Ganesh Joshi.

I am the son of a soldier. There are also other people, including Ganesh Joshi, who are from Army families. I am proud that I am a soldier's son and my party has given me the opportunity to work in the role of a CM. Our party always respects soldiers, while other parties just pretend to do so. A Congress leader used to say that (recently deceased Chief of Defence staff) General (Bipin) Rawat is a *gallu ka gunda* (street gangster). When it comes to votes, they are posting big photographs of him now.

Another party used to ask soldiers for accounts of the surgical strike and incite riots. The people of Uttarakhand are well aware, very nationalistic and proud. They know what people

have done.

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

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

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

The people of Uttarakhand know that it's only the BJP that has done work and will continue to do so. The other parties

are not able to fulfill their promises in other states, how will they fulfill them in Uttarakhand? They raise issues of price rise and unemployment but in states where they are in government – Punjab, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan – they have not been able to solve these issues. Then how will they be able to solve them in Uttarakhand? They were here for 10 years – did they end unemployment?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 6

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

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

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

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

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

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

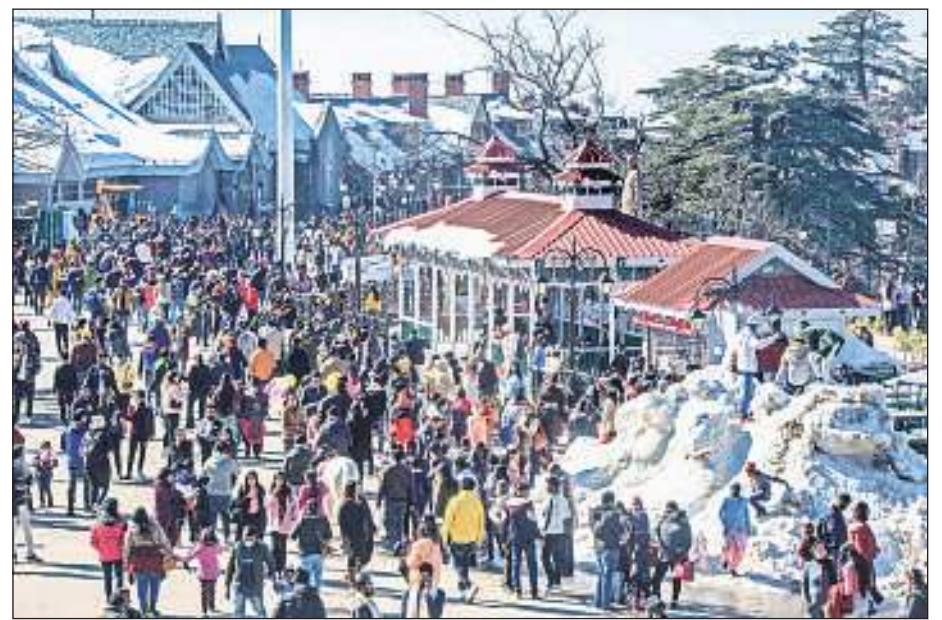
The autopsy report said the girl was strangled, said police.

MAN ARRESTED FOR ABDUCTION, RAPE OF MINOR IN BHARATPUR

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

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

PTI



WHITE ALL AROUND

Tourists at the Ridge in Shimla on Sunday. PTI

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

ABHISHEK ANGAD
RANCHI, FEBRUARY 6

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

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

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

State labour minister Satyanand Bhokta found out about their case last month and alerted Chief Minister Hemant Soren, who directed the state's migrant cell to confirm their identities. Three weeks later, with the help of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the

diplomatic outreach, seven of the workers returned to their homes in Hazaribagh and Giridih districts. Officials said the others will return in a phased manner.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 6

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

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

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

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

KARNATAKA HIJAB ROW

2 held for carrying lethal weapons near Udupi college protest site

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, FEBRUARY 6

Drug regulator okays single-dose Sputnik Light for restricted use

V in the vaccination drive so far.

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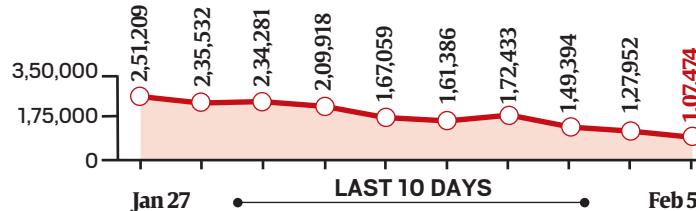
TRACKING INDIA'S COVID CURVE

DASHBOARD, AS ON FEB 5

706
DAYS SINCE
PANDEMIC
BEGANNew cases
1,07,474 | Active cases
12,25,011 | Deaths
865

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

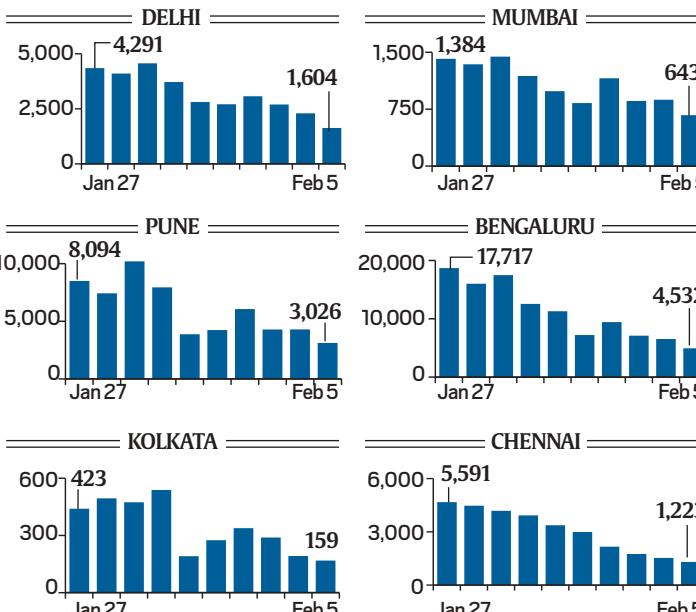
NEW CASES, DAILY



SURGE IN THE STATES

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

CASES IN THE CITIES, LAST 10 DAYS



TOTAL TESTS

74,01,87,141

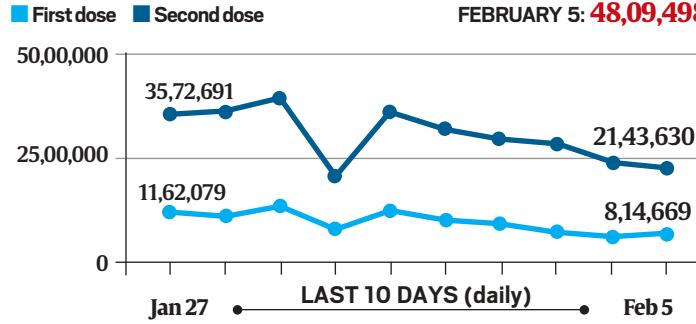
TESTS ON FEB 5 | WEEKLY POSITIVITY | OVERALL POSITIVITY
22,54,908 | 8.56% | 5.70%

INDIA TOTAL DOSES

169,46,26,697

(Adults 1st dose: 89,97,98,864; 2nd: 72,51,53,271; 15-18 age group

1st dose: 4,92,84,464; 2nd: 56,62,424; precautionary: 1,47,27,674)



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The ecological cost of creating artificial snow for Winter Olympics

SHASHANK NAIR
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

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

How is artificial snow created?

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

For the Beijing Games, machines from an Italian company, TechnoAlpin, have been creating artificial snow since November 2021. These pump out ice particles and a thin mist

of water vapour, which are launched up to 60 m in the air where they combine to become snow and fall to the ground. TechnoAlpin has been using 290 snow cannons in Beijing, according to *The Sunday Times*.

Is this the way in all Winter Games?

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

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

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

Where does so much water come from?

According to a *New York Times* report, Beijing diverted water from Baiheba reservoir

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

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

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

The Chinese have said that they would

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

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

What is the future of such attempts?

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

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EXPLAINED CULTURE

The Lata phenomenon

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



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

SUANSHU KHURANA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

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

Undisputed queen

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

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

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

As films moved to less formulaic tropes, Bollywood, too, underwent changes. Directors moved towards authenticity in representation, and, here Mangeshkar was a huge success, setting standards in playback singing. She sang the way her heroines spoke, moving away from the thick, nasal *gayaki* popularised by Noor Jehan or Shamshad Begum, that had, till then been the standard. She could sing for an entire range of characters — from a poetry-loving village girl in a prison (*Mora gora ang layi le, Bandini*, 1963), to a witty and defiant courtesan in Akbar's Sheesh Mahal (*Pyaar kiya darna kya, Mughal-e-Azam*, 1960), to a



Singing for various heroines

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

As films moved to less formulaic tropes, Bollywood, too, underwent changes. Directors moved towards authenticity in representation, and, here Mangeshkar was a huge success, setting standards in playback singing. She sang the way her heroines spoke, moving away from the thick, nasal *gayaki* popularised by Noor Jehan or Shamshad Begum, that had, till then been the standard. She could sing for an entire range of characters — from a poetry-loving village girl in a prison (*Mora gora ang layi le, Bandini*, 1963), to a witty and defiant courtesan in Akbar's Sheesh Mahal (*Pyaar kiya darna kya, Mughal-e-Azam*, 1960), to a

woman savouring the rains as she shares an umbrella with the man she loves (*Pyaar huya iqar huya, Shri 420*, 1955) to an emotional mother trying to feed for her children by ploughing the field (*Duniya mein hum aaye hain toh, Mother India*, 1957), to a young woman who has just broken away from the shackles of a claustrophobic relationship (*Aaj phir jeene ki tamanna hai, Guide*, 1965) to a young singer who's lost her unborn child (*Tere mere milan ki, Abhimaan*, 1973). And who can forget Kavi Pradeep's seminal *Aye mere watan ke logo*, in the wake of the Sino-Indian war of 1962, that reduced then prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru to tears and has been a fixture at every patriotic function for nearly five decades?

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

Committed to perfection

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

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

SHE LENT HER VOICE TO...



DUNIYA MEIN HUM AAYE HAIN

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

AAJ PHIR JEENE KI TAMANNA HAI

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

PYAAR KIYA TOH DARNA KYA



PYAAR KIYA TOH DARNA KYA

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

CHALTE CHALTE

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

RAINA BEETI JAAYE



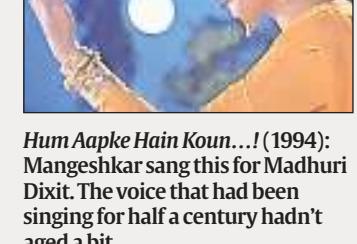
RAINA BEETI JAAYE

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

YAARA SEELI SEELI

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

MAAYE NI MAAYE



MAAYE NI MAAYE



MEANWHILE

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION MUST END: POPE

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

TOP OF THE WORLD



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

PERU

After four days on job, Peru PM resigns

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

UNITED KINGDOM
Giuffre case: Prince Andrew to give proof next month

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

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

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

'Allow credible visit by rights envoy to China'

United Nations: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told Chinese leaders on Saturday that he expected authorities to allow UN human rights chief Michelle Bachelet to make a "credible visit" to the country, including Xinjiang, the UN said.

Guterres met with China's President Xi Jinping and Foreign Minister Wang Yijun on the sidelines of the Winter Olympics, according to a UN readout of the meetings. "The Secretary-General expressed his expectation that the contacts between the office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Chinese authorities will allow for a credible visit of the High Commissioner to China, including Xinjiang," said the UN readout of Guterres' meetings. **REUTERS**

Rishi Sunak admits to attending Downing Street lockdown party

HSRAO
LONDON, FEBRUARY 6

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

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

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

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

The Chancellor, however,

EXPLAINED **E** Who is Rishi Sunak?

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

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

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

Tories not near point of deposing Johnson: Minister

KATE HOLTON
LONDON, FEBRUARY 6

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

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

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

He further angered colleagues last week when he falsely accused the leader of the opposition Labour party of failing to prosecute a child sex abuser when he was in charge of public prosecu-



Boris Johnson

tions. That, critics said, shows Johnson is incapable of changing, or showing true remorse.

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE NEW YORK TIMES & AP
WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 6

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

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

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

The officials stressed that US intelligence analysts still did not

GERMAN LEADER TO VISIT U.S. THIS WEEK

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

deaths of 25,000 to 50,000 civilians, 5,000 to 25,000 members of the Ukrainian military and 3,000 to 10,000 members of the Russian military. The invasion, they said, could also result in one million to five million refugees, with many of them pouring into Poland.

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

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

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

US women's jail fostered culture of abuse: Report

MICHAEL BALSAMO & MICHAEL R SISAK
WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 6

INSIDE ONE of the only federal women's prisons in the US, inmates say they have been subjected to rampant sexual abuse by correctional officers and even the warden, and were often threatened or punished when they tried to speak up.

Prisoners and workers at the federal correctional institution in Dublin, California, even have a name for it: "The rape club."

An Associated Press investigation has found a permissive and toxic culture at the Bay Area lockup, enabling years of sexual misconduct by predatory employees and cover-ups that have largely kept the abuse out of the public eye.

In one instance, a female inmate said a man, who was her prison work supervisor, taunted her by remarking "let the games begin" when he assigned her to work with a maintenance foreman she accused of rape. Another worker claimed he wanted to get inmates pregnant. The warden – the man in charge at Dublin – kept nude photos on his government-issued cellphone of a woman he is accused of assaulting.

One inmate said she was "overwhelmed with fear, anxiety, and anger, and cried uncontrollably" after enduring abuse and retaliation at Dublin. Another said she contemplated suicide when her cries for help went unheeded and now suffers from severe anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder. **AP**

UNREST IN OTTAWA ENTERS 10TH DAY

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

Xi and Imran vow to promote CPEC projects in Pakistan

KJM VARMA
BEIJING, FEBRUARY 6

CHINA ON Sunday pledged closer cooperation with Pakistan under the \$60 billion CPEC investment programme and called for resolving the Kashmir issue properly and peacefully, while opposing any "unilateral actions" that could complicate the situation as Prime Minister Imran Khan held talks with the top Chinese leadership, including President Xi Jinping.

He said China is willing to join hands with Pakistan to push forward the in-depth development of the CPEC and ensure the implementation of key projects.

Both sides reiterated that a

peaceful and prosperous South Asia is in the common interest of all parties," said a joint statement issued at the end of Khan's visit to China.

"They emphasised the importance of pursuit of dialogue and resolution of all outstanding disputes to promote regional cooperation and advance the goals of lasting peace, stability and shared prosperity in the region," it said. The China-Pakistan joint statement also said that China recognises Pakistan's sacrifices and efforts in the fight against terrorism adding that both sides reaffirmed their commitment to fighting terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. **PTI**

In his meeting with Khan, Xi said China firmly supports Pakistan in safeguarding national independence, sovereignty, dignity and fighting terrorism, state-run *Xinhua* news agency reported.

He said China is willing to join hands with Pakistan to push forward the in-depth development of the CPEC and ensure the implementation of key projects.

"Both sides reiterated that a

THREATENS TERMINATION OF PACT

Donor sets Feb-end deadline for Nepal to ratify \$500 million deal

Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba and Maoist chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal dated

February 3, MCC Acting CEO

Mahomoud Bahi has asked them to

have the deal ratified "as promised".

"Without action on your part by February 28, the MCC board will discuss next steps at its March meeting, including whether to continue with the deal. In case of absent ratification, it is within the board's authority to discontinue Nepal's eligibility to receive \$500 million grant from the US. Such a decision will end MCC's partner-

ship with Nepal," he added.

Bahi's letter is in response to a "confidential" joint letter from Deuba and Dahal written on September 29 in which both had sought additional time to get members to agree to ratify the grant in Parliament.

Dahal and his party have taken a rigid stance against the MCC deal, saying, if adopted with the current provisions, the deal would undermine Nepal's sovereignty and have implications on "non-aligned foreign policy".

WITH A BLEND OF FAMILY MEMOIR AND RESEARCH, BOOK RECOUNTS HOLOCAUST IN TRANSNISTRIA

Book aims to shine light on Romanian role in Holocaust

STEPHEN MCGRATH
BUCHAREST, FEBRUARY 6

MAKSIM GOLDENSTEYN recounts a story his late grandmother once told him about how, as a 4-year-old child, she snuck out of a Jewish ghetto during World War II to retrieve her favourite dolls that had been left behind the day her family was forcibly evicted from their home in occupied Soviet Ukraine.

"She knew even at that age that because she had lighter hair and blue eyes, she could pass for a local Ukrainian girl," said Goldenshteyn. "She put on a kerchief and slipped out of the ghetto."

It is one of the stories that Seattle native Goldenshteyn tells in his book, "So They Remember," which recounts – with a blend of intimate family memoir and vigorous historical research – the Holocaust in Transnistria, a territory in occupied southern Ukraine that was controlled by Romania, a close ally to Nazi Germany for most of the war. In that territory, where around 150 camps and ghettos operated, there played out a lesser-known but equally sinister chapter of the Holocaust, where hundreds of thousands of Jews were brutalised, exploited, and murdered.

Goldenshteyn, 33, whose family moved to the US as refugees

from the former Soviet Union in 1992, says he heard fragments of his family's past while growing up, but he never linked it to one of humanity's darkest chapters. "They didn't really align with the image of the Holocaust that I thought was representative," he

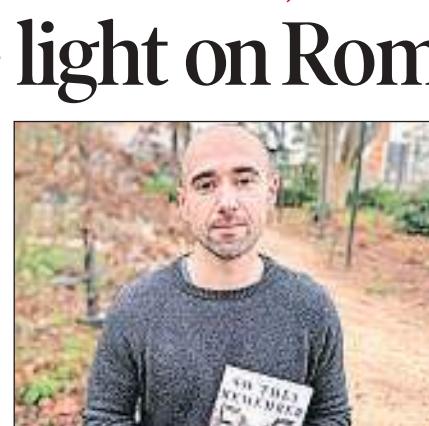
said. Then, 10 years ago, his mother told him the story. "I was shocked at first," he said.

Moved by what he'd learned, Goldenshteyn embarked on a decade-long journey researching a part of the Holocaust he feels is largely overlooked.

Awareness of Romania's role in the Holocaust, at home and abroad, is far less than that of the Nazis' role. But in Romanian-controlled territories under the military dictatorship of Ion Antonescu, between 280,000 and 380,000 Jews, plus some 12,000 Roma, were killed during the war. The decades of communism that followed, much like in the Soviet Union, all but erased

memories of the Holocaust.

In a push for wider public awareness, Romanian lawmakers passed a bill last fall to add Holocaust education to the national school curriculum, an move that was applauded by many. But it was met with controversy in January when the far-right Alliance for Romanian Unity, which holds seats in parliament, called it a "minor topic" and an "ideological experiment." Goldenshteyn believes that Romanian authorities have made progress in recent years in acknowledging the country's role in the Holocaust, and said he was troubled by the party's comments but also encouraged by the reaction of the diplomatic community. **AP**

Author Maksim Goldenshteyn poses with his book 'So They Remember' in Seattle. *AP*

COMBINED SHARE AT 14.79% IN LISTED COS

Retail investors, MFs cushion FPI exit impact, raise holdings to record high

GEORGE MATHEW & SANDEEP SINGH

MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 6

RETAIL INVESTORS and domestic mutual funds are increasing their presence in companies listed on the NSE, even as foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) are exiting from Indian stocks. Despite a decline in key indices, the share of retail investors — individuals with up to Rs 2 lakh shareholding — in companies listed on the NSE reached an all-time high of 7.32 per cent as on December 31, 2021 as against 7.13 as on September 30, 2021.

As a result, the value of retail holding in listed companies touched an all-time high of Rs 18.98 lakh crore from Rs 18.16 lakh crore in September 2021, an increase of 4.54 per cent. This was despite the fact that Sensex and Nifty declined by 1.48 and 1.50 per cent, respectively, during this period.

The share of high net-worth individuals (HNIs) — individuals with more than Rs 2 lakh share-

holding — in NSE-listed companies also reached an all-time high of 2.26 per cent as on December 31, 2021 from 2.12 percent on September 30, 2021, thus taking the combined retail and HNI share to also an all-time high of 9.58 per cent, according to Primeinfo-base.com, an initiative of PRIME Database group.

Simultaneously, the share of FPIs in listed companies is on the decline amid indications that US Federal Reserve is likely to tighten the monetary policy and hike interest rates. According to Pranav Haldea, MD, PRIME Database Group, net outflows from FPIs of Rs 38,521 crore during the quarter resulted in FPIs' share declining to a 9-year low of 20.74 per cent as of December 2021, from 21.46 per cent as on September 30, 2021.

FPIs pulled out Rs 44,820 crore from financial services and software sector during the quarter while investing Rs 20,334 crore in retail. Holding of FPIs (in Rs value terms) in companies listed on NSE stood at Rs 53.78 lakh crore as on December 31, 2021, a decrease of

1.67 per cent from Rs 54.69 lakh crore as on September 30, 2021.

With investors channelling funds through SIP (systematic investment plan) schemes of MFs, the share of domestic mutual funds in companies listed on the NSE continued to rise and reached 7.47 percent as of December 2021, up from 7.36 per cent in September 2021. This was after five quarters of consecutive decline from March 31, 2020 (7.96 per cent) to June 30, 2021 (7.25 per cent). The share has increased to command a lion's share of investments in equities by insurance

mutual funds of a huge Rs 51,909 crore during the quarter, Haldea said.

In value terms too, the holding of domestic mutual funds went up by 3.26 per cent to an all-time high of Rs 19.36 lakh crore as of December 2021 from Rs 18.75 lakh crore in September 2021.

Retail investors have been pumping money into equity schemes of mutual funds in the last several months. Retail investors and MFs' share is at 14.79 per cent.

The share of LIC, the largest investor in Indian stocks, across 278 companies — where its holding is more than 1 per cent — declined marginally to an all-time low of 3.67 per cent as on December 31, 2021 from 3.69 per cent as on September 30, 2021 and from all-time high of 5 per cent as on June 30, 2012. However, in value terms, it reached an all-time high of Rs 9.53 lakh crore in the quarter ended December 2021, an increase of 146 per cent over previous quarter. LIC also continues to command a lion's share of investments in equities by insurance

companies (77 per cent share).

Share of insurance firms as a whole declined to a 6-year low of 4.79 per cent as on December 31, 2021 down from 4.81 per cent as on September 30, 2021. In Rs value terms though, it went up 1.3 per cent from the previous quarter to an all-time high of Rs 12.42 lakh crore as on December 31, 2021.

Share of domestic institutional investors (DIIs), which includes domestic mutual funds, insurance companies, banks, financial institutions, pension funds etc., as a whole, increased to 13.22 per cent as on December 31, 2021 from 13.12 per cent as on September 30, 2021, on the back of net inflows from DIIs of a huge Rs 66,262 crore during the quarter. In value terms, DII holding too went up to an all-time high of Rs 34.27 lakh crore as on December 31, 2021, an increase of 2.48 per cent over the last quarter. The total institutional share — FPIs and DIIs — also declined to a 3-year low of 33.95 per cent in quarter ended December 2021, down from 34.59 in quarter ended September 2021.

DEPARTMENT OF Economic Affairs Secretary AJAY SETH said the capex push in next fiscal year's Budget should lead to job creation at three different levels, leading to a "much larger and much lasting multiplier effect". In an interview with SUNNY VERMA, he said the balanced policy approach of the government has served the country well. Edited excerpts:

There is a view that fiscal consolidation has been on the lower side and gross market borrowing is higher than expected. Could it crowd out private investment?

You have made three points. One, fiscal consolidation is not good enough, we should have done more. The Finance Minister last year gave a commitment to meet 4.5 per cent by 2025-26. We should appreciate this aspect that in a pandemic year, expenditure, including support to the needy and other expenditure on health, has been increased significantly, which led to deficit rising sharply. From there to suddenly go in (for 4.5 per cent), it's like moving at a high speed and suddenly putting a break, it would have created a huge problem for the economy and this strong revival would have been extremely difficult or delayed. So, it is necessary to adopt a glide path. And the glide path means that gradually we land up by 2025-26. There will be another commitment that we go beyond four-and-a-half per cent. But that's really not the goal now. It has been brought down to 6.9 per cent already, and 6.4 per cent is the target for next year.

The second wave, which was very intense, and then we have a third wave, these also led to a lot more expenditure, but still the government managed the fiscal deficit to be 6.9 per cent. And, that is inclusive of whatever monies have been given to settle Air India (liabilities). So, whatever was committed in the glide path, this half a percentage point in one year in a fiscal consolidation is not less. Several economists and informed analysts had advised that don't go for a sharp correction, go for a gradual correction.

So that is one, second, borrowings are more than expected.

Now, there I will say that perhaps that entire information has not been appreciated by the people who are making that comment. Of course, this absolute borrowing has to be seen in relative proportion of GDP, not a number per se, absolute amount per se. But even in absolute basis... is not a significant increase. But coming back to this that how it is going to be financed. There are several sources out there, including small savings, drawdown from cash balances. And small savings in current year are going to be close to about Rs 6 lakh crore this year. Next year, our estimate is that small savings collections may go down to about Rs 4.25 lakh crore as people may find more attractive avenues than putting money in a small saving.

In another post-budget interaction with industry body Assocham, Sitharaman said that the Central government would bring up the issue of including aviation turbine fuel at the next meeting of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) meeting.

Responding to questions and suggestions put forth by SpiceJet founder Ajay Singh, the Finance Minister said rising global oil prices were not a concern just for the aviation industry but for the entire economy.

On Singh's request that the industry be given the status of priority lending like the infrastructure sector, Sitharaman said that she would have a word with the banks.

MARKET WATCH

FPIs NET SELLERS IN FEB SO FAR

New Delhi: Foreign portfolio investors pulled out Rs 6,834 crore from markets in the first four trading sessions of February. As per depositories data, FPIs took out Rs 3,627 crore from equities, Rs 3,173 crore from debt segment and Rs 34 crore from hybrid instruments. PTI

INTERVIEW WITH SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

'Infra push has larger, lasting multiplier effect, will create demand, jobs'



Ajay Seth

Express file

crowd out (private investment). Now, that happens when the private sector is investing and consumption is at higher level, where people are competing with the money available in the economy. But, we have a situation where the credit off-take, non-food credit is very moderate. So, here is a classic case of crowding in private investment. When the economy is running at full potential, then government increasing its borrowing will crowd out, but not at this stage.

Between April-November, capex spend has been less than 50 per cent of Budget Estimates. Will the Budgeted money be spent the money this year? And will capex plan get fully executed next year?

Certainly, as far as current year capex is concerned, we should keep in mind that in the first quarter supply chains were operational despite the second wave unlike the first wave. Supply chains were fully operational, but it did impact adversely the pace of expenditure on infrastructure needs and implementation. So, what we see, the performance is not in eight or nine months, you are talking about November figure, but somewhere around five to six months' kind of expenditure and we have been watching it every month. So, first quarter was a low figure and then it started picking up from there. So I'm confident that Rs 5.51 lakh crore - we will almost reach there. Moving to the next year, increase is basically about Rs 2 lakh crore, of which Rs 1 lakh crore has been earmarked for the states. So instead of just confining it to the Central ministries it has been given, and they have a huge capacity and their projects are just beyond national highway and the railways. Good projects that can lead to job creation. At the same time, about Central ministries, extensive discussions have been held with Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, Railways, they are the two major agencies which have a ready shelf of projects or ongoing projects, where they can step up investment provided money is given. So now the money has been provided, we see full possibility of utilising the allocation that has been done.

On digital rupee, have you identified which denomination currency will be launched first and will it be part of the money supply?

It is through the enterprises that lead to large-scale employment. For example, MSMEs. It's well accepted that they are very large employers. Our sense is that they require hand holding for another year. So, instead of saying that this guarantee cover for additional working capital is no longer available, it has been extended by 1 year, up to March 2023. Plus, hospitality-related sectors like tourism, etc, are yet to reach pre-pandemic levels. So, for them this specific window has been created of Rs 50,000 crore. And, remember, ECLGS is one option that is not with the bank. It is for the units to say they want additional working capital and that is provided, so that support has been provided.

Second, what we should also look at is that this is not a question of this year capex being increased, last year also was a 34.5 per cent rise. Those investments and what has been announced this year, first of all, it straight away leads to increasing demand for goods and services which flows into the infrastructure - steel, cement, con-

struction industry, transport sector; that generates demand as well as jobs. Plus it generates the secondary level jobs. And, the third level of job creation comes soon, when these projects get completed and the productive capacity of the economy itself increases. So, it's well-calibrated that taking the route of investment in infrastructure, which has a much larger and much lasting multiplier effect.

Certainly it will be part of the money supply. It's like any other fiat currency, not any other; it is the currency, the rupee. We have coins or we have using printing technology, paper notes. This will be Digital rupee, it's rupee by another technology. Full interview on www.indianexpress.com

SECTOR WATCH

GREEN ENERGY

RE push: Rules to be brought in for pooling solar tariffs

KARUNJIT SINGH

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

THE CENTRE is set to come up with rules to pool solar tariffs and is also aiming to increase bundling of renewable energy (RE) in existing thermal Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) to boost the procurement of green energy. Power Secretary Alok Kumar told *The Indian Express*. The government is aiming to boost installed RE capacity to 500 GW by 2030.

"The intention is to have a pool, in which various procurements that are done over a year, two or three years, their tariffs are pooled so that there is no problem that (some tariffs are) 5 paise lower/5 paise higher," Kumar said on the issue of discoms (power distribution companies) waiting for solar tariffs to fall further instead of entering into long-term PPAs.

Mishra said a move to pool tariffs could help speed up procurement of solar power by addressing concerns, among discoms, of losing out on lower solar tariffs in the future.

Kumar noted that the government intended that about 10,000 MW of RE-based power be bundled with fossil-fuel-based power over the next 4-5 years, and this would help lower total cost of power procurement for certain discoms.

Mishra said a move to bundle cheaper renewable energy under these deals would help discoms lower their average cost of power procurement.

The trend of lower solar tariffs has led to many players waiting on tariffs to fall further instead of entering into long-term PPAs

"been falling for a very long time," said Debasish Mishra, partner and leader at Deloitte India, adding solar tariffs had recently begun to stagnate or fluctuate. Mishra said SECI (Solar Energy Corporation of India Ltd) was "often finding it difficult to find buyers at discovered prices because discoms expect the tariffs will continue to fall even further and many of them have already met renewable purchase obligations."

Mishra said a move to pool tariffs could help speed up procurement of solar power by addressing concerns, among discoms, of losing out on lower solar tariffs in the future.

Kumar noted that the government intended that about 10,000 MW of RE-based power be bundled with fossil-fuel-based power over the next 4-5 years, and this would help lower total cost of power procurement for certain discoms.

Mishra said a move to bundle cheaper renewable energy under these deals would help discoms lower their average cost of power procurement.

Full report on www.indianexpress.com

Discoms' outstanding dues to gencos dip 5% in Feb

Total outstanding dues owed by electricity distribution companies (discoms) to power producers dipped 5.1 per cent year-on-year to Rs 15,972 crore in February 2022, according to the latest PRAAPTI data

₹1,22,226 cr
owed by discoms to power generation firms in February 2021, according to portal PRAAPTI (Payment Ratification And Analysis in Power procurement for bringing Transparency in Invoicing of generators)

Power producers give 45 days to discoms to pay bills for electricity supply. After that, outstanding dues become overdue and generators charge penal interest on that in most cases

On a sequential basis also, total dues in February 2022 declined from Rs 16,834 crore in January 2022

PRAAPTI portal was launched in May 2018 to bring in transparency in power purchase transactions between generators and discoms

In February, the total overdue amount, which was not cleared even after 45 days of grace period offered by generators, stood at Rs 1,03,014 crore as against Rs 99,394 crore in the same month a year ago

Source: PRAAPTI/PTI

FM: Prepared to deal with US Fed move on monetary easing

EN SECONOMIC BUREAU

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 6

THE GOVERNMENT is prepared to deal with all kinds of risks that may arise out of global developments, including those that may crop up due to the US Federal Reserve's decision to roll back monetary easing, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said.

In a post-Budget interaction with senior executives from Indian industry, Sitharaman said that the government would do everything to deal with these situations to ensure that the domestic economy does not suffer. She was speaking at an event organised by industry body Ficci.

"What I would seek from India Inc is its time now for us, as Team India, to rise. We are such a juncture where revival of the economy is very clear. All of us say it, see it,



Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman at a Ficci session. via @ficci_india Twitter

and also feel it. It may not be equal across the board, yet it is observable. This recovery is going to place India as the fastest growing economy among the larger economies and that would continue even the next fiscal," she said.

To ensure that the economy continued to grow, the Indian industry must ensure that the coun-

try does not miss the growth bus this time, Sitharaman said, adding that the country had missed an opportunity post the global financial crisis of 2008.

In another post-budget interaction with industry body Assocham, Sitharaman said that the Central government would bring up the issue of including aviation turbine fuel at the next meeting of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) meeting.

Responding to questions and suggestions put forth by SpiceJet founder Ajay Singh, the Finance Minister said rising global oil prices were not a concern just for the aviation industry but for the entire economy.

On Singh's request that the industry be given the status of priority lending like the infrastructure sector, Sitharaman said that she would have a word with the banks.

missing in online learning today. The completion rate is less than 10 per cent in online learning.

Through a Metaverse, we are going to bring social and community back to learning. I come from Twitter, so I know the power of building social, of community. During Covid times, I saw how people connected online and built community. I want to bring the same to learning.

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'WE DIDN'T FEEL ANY PRESSURE, BECAUSE WE WERE PREPARED FOR EVERYTHING.'

YASH DHULL

India's got talent

Raj Bawa snags five wickets in the final, takes Indian colts to fifth U-19 World Cup title with win over England



Indian players celebrate after the winning runs were scored. This was the fifth U-19 World Cup won by the country.
BCCI/Twitter

Baby pacers scorch Windies shores

SRIRAM VEERA & DEVENDRA PANDEY MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 6

WHEN IT was young pacer Ravi Kumar's turn to ask the guest motivator Virat Kohli a question ahead of India's U-19 World Cup final, he dug one nicely short. "I asked him what is his weakness. And he replied, 'kyun abhi se out kame ki training kar raha hai kya' (laughs)?" Who better than Kohli to know all about the menace Indian new-age quicks are capable of causing to hopping batters. England were about to find out.

Raj Angad Bawa's grandfather scored a hockey goal against England in India's first Olympics after independence. The grandson of the 1948 hero cleaned up England's top order in the final with a five-for. Ravi Kumar's father serves in law enforcement back in India, while the son rocked England in the U-19 final with a four-for. Together the teenagers unleashed ferocious bouncers, leg cutters, balls that leapt off a length, deliveries that curved in the air and it was apt that all this happened in the Caribbean, the spiritual home of fast bowlers.

England. An allrounder, he already has the highest individual score in the tournament and has dazzled with his bowling as well.

Couple of years back, George Bell's father had said that it would be a touch "frightening" if his son came up against pacers like Jofra Archer. He must have got a glimpse of that world when Bawa kicked up a 'perfume ball' as the West Indian pacers used to call their bouncers. It flew up at the throat of Bell who put up his bat as a shield; the face was saved, wicket wasn't as the ball skimmed the outside edge.

It was the left-handed Ravi Kumar who had the first stab at the English with a lovely swinging delivery that curled past the left-handed opener Jacob Bethell to rap him plumb lbw on the back foot. He then had England's captain Tom Prest chop on an attempted pull on to his stumps to leave England wobbling at 18 for 2 in the fourth over. Bawa then snared four in quick succession to leave England gasping. He had the aggressive George Thomas miscut to covers, William Luxton caught behind before he produced the ball of the final over to take Bell. The way his team-mates swooped to mob him told a story.

He then produced a peach, kicking up from short of length, to produce a hurried jab from Rehan Ahmed which was snapped up in the slips. If it wasn't for the left-handed James Rew, a wicket-keeper batsman for Somerset but playing just as a batsman here. In his first professional game for his county, with his parents and family in the audience, he got out playing a reverse sweep for 20. That's a shot I play and will continue to play, he had said then and it hasn't been a surprise to see him unfurl many a reverse sweep in this tournament.

Running in with his hands whirling over each other as if he were concocting a magic potion, he harassed England with a spell that had the entire range. Seam, swing, and disconcerting bounce. Bawa's father Sukhwinder is a cricket coach who honed the skills of Yuvraj Singh and VRV Singh and would have been proud to see his son stun, shock and awe

and with a combination of doggedness and innovation, he pulled England out of trouble.

Kumar would return to take two more wickets, including Rew, caught at the boundary just 8 short of a hundred, and Bawa grasped the chance to complete a five-for by taking out the last English wicket. Earlier he had quizzed Kohli about nerves in finals. "He told us there is nothing like finals, each game just give your best shot. Express yourself in the ground and just enjoy the game."

All this was achieved with the poise of experience pros. "The best part was we were not thinking about the future, we were all in the present. We spoke to Virat Kohli bhai and everyone asked him a few questions. Few asked him about handling pressure and performance in big games. Then after that we all saw the 1983 film together, it was a kind of motivation for us to win the finals. We saw how Kapil (Sir) team went to lift title, it was great motivational thing for us," Ravi said.

Two kids from varying backgrounds, Bawa with hockey and cricket in his blood, and Kumar, with a para-military parent's background, pushed India to another World Cup triumph.

Watching from the commentary box was the son of someone who set the Caribbean shores alight way back in 1970s. Rohan Gavaskar, there as commentator, though, wasn't terribly surprised it was the Indian pacers rather than opening bats like Sunil Gavaskar, making heads turn in West Indies. "I think Indian pacers have been best in the world for the last few years. We have been producing some very good fast bowlers lately so I wasn't that surprised to see another crop of good pacers," he said.

Unlike storied times when only Indian spin quartets were feared, Gavaskar reckoned it was the pacers who were at the vanguard of action. "I thought one of the strengths of this team was their bowling unit. Everyone knew their role and performed it beautifully. The pacers provided early breakthroughs and the spinners then capitalised on it and made inroads with the middle order. This is why they were able to bowl out teams in the World Cup. Credit to the coaching staff of Hrishikesh Kanitkar, Sairaj Bahutule and VVS," he said.

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BOYS SHOW THE WAY

Unlike Indian senior teams at ICC events, the colts showed big match temperament.

WEATHERING EARLY STORM

In the semis against Australia, India were 37 for 2. Openers Angkrish Raghuvanshi and Harnoor Singh, who had been prolific earlier in the tournament, were dismissed. But Yash Dhull and Shaik Rasheed had a big partnership and took India to safety.

In last year's T20 World Cup against Pakistan, the Indian Senior side lost Rohit Sharma for a duck and never recovered.

PACERS SET THE TONE Ravi Kumar and Raj Bawa were not overwhelmed by the occasion in the final. They stuck to their plan and bowled in the right areas. Bawa and Kumar took nine wickets between them.

In the 2003 World Cup final against Australia, Indian bowlers Zaheer Khan, Javagal Srinath and Aakash Nehra famously lost the plot.

USEFUL LOWER ORDER In the final, India were 97/4 needing 92 more runs. Nishant Sindhu and Raj Bawa didn't lose their nerve. They showed a calm head and game sense in a big match.

In the 2019 World Cup semifinal against New Zealand, the Indian team lost early wickets and couldn't recover despite MS Dhoni and Ravindra Jadeja scoring half-centuries.

INTERVIEW: S SHARATH

"Challenge now is to sail in the ocean, from the lake"

DEVENDRA PANDEY
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 6

THE BCCI junior selection committee chairman **S Sharath** is delighted after India under-19 clinched the colts World Cup in West Indies. In a chat with *The Indian Express*, the former Tamil Nadu player spoke about the challenges of picking a team in times of pandemic. Excerpts:

It's only been a few months since you took over as chairman of selectors, can you tell us how you decided to go about the process?

When Rahul was coach at the NCA, we decided a roadmap. We decided to have a pool of players. After the Vinoo Mankad tournament, we picked 90 players, we divided them into six teams and had matches thereafter.

What were the challenges as a selector especially in the time of Covid?

In the first place credit should go to the BCCI for conducting a tournament. In the last two years there was no cricket due to the pandemic. I spoke to the players and they told us how frustrating it was to sit at home. It was mentally taxing for everyone and all felt refreshed when the boys came and played cricket. We saw new talent and some we saw were ready, ready for first class cricket. We still have good players, who are not in the squad because there was so much talent available.

Is there any reason you picked Yash Dhull as the captain instead of Sandhu, whose team won the Vinoo Mankad Trophy?

We wanted someone who can look after a team. Can communicate with everyone. Nishant is a good player but what we feel is that the all-rounder's plate is already full and sometimes, they couldn't think on a macro level. As Dhull is a batsman, a Delhi boy and a street-smart cricketer, we felt he is our best bet.

The best part of this under-19 team is it



had a good bowling unit and more all-rounders?

Yes, we wanted to give options to the captain and team management. Like Bawa is a bit deceptive, Rajvardhan Hangarkar bowls quick and he hits the deck hard. Same with spinners, all are different. The West Indies is near the Ocean, so breeze plays a vital part, two new balls will be used, so swing will come into play. We tried to cover each area. We wanted multi-dimensional players, players who can bat till number 10. We couldn't find a decent leg-spinner, so we picked a left-arm spinner to cover up.

What piece of advice will you offer to these players?

The bigger challenge starts now for these boys. They will now get picked ahead in senior or Indian teams because of their domestic performance and not because of India under-19 performance. These boys will sail in the ocean from the lake. Ranji Trophy can be ruthless. Be ready to grind. All those who played for India after under-19 success they all grind hard in domestic cricket. At this age it's very easy to get excited about things. They will walk with sun-glasses now, IPL will come, they will change as a person. However, ultimately they will be judged only by their first class cricket.

Bopanna-Ramkumar pair lifts Tata Open trophy



The title is Bopanna-Ramkumar's second in as many months. PTI

Pune: India's Rohan Bopanna and Ramkumar Ramanathan won their second ATP World Tour title together after pipping the top seeded Australian pair of Luke Saville and John-Patrick Smith in the final of the Tata Open Maharashtra, here on Sunday.

The second-seeded Indians erased the first set deficit to win 6-7 (10), 6-3, 10-6 in one hour and 44 minutes. Bopanna and Ramkumar had combined as a team on the ATP Tour for the first time at the Adelaide event last month in the run-up to the Australian Open and won the trophy. For Bopanna, it was his 21st ATP doubles title while for Ramkumar it is his second trophy at this level and it will push him inside

doubles top-100 for the first time in his career. They split \$16370 as prize money and earned 250 ranking points each. Bopanna had won this event with compatriot Divij Sharan in 2019.

"I did a lot of yoga and it has made a difference and that really shows as long as I am playing matches, competing and doing something that is physically appealing," Bopanna, 41, said after the match.

Portugal's Joao Sousa beat Emil Ruusuvuori in the singles final to win his first ATP singles title since May 2018 and fourth overall. Ranked 137, the 32-year-old Sousa defeated his 22-year-old sixth-seed rival from Finland with his experience win 7-6 (9), 4-6, 6-1. PTI

China win Women's Asian Cup

Navi Mumbai: China came back from two goals down to defeat Korea 3-2 in a dramatic final and clinch their record-extending ninth title of the AFC Women's Asian Cup here on Sunday. Korea looked to be cruising to their maiden crown after taking a 2-0 lead at half-time but China fought back after the goals from Tang Jiali, Zhang Linyan and Xiao Yuyi, who netted the winner deep into added time to seal her side the title at the DY Patil Stadium. China entered the final chasing a record-extending ninth AFC Women's Asian Cup title against a Korea side who had never laid their hands on the coveted trophy. China, unbeaten in seven meetings with Korea, started the game brightly but conceded in the 27th minute, with Lee Geum-min breaking into the box before sending a cross to Choe Yu-Ri to score the 100th goal of the tournament. Ji So-yun converted a penalty to make it 2-0, before Tang Jiali scored from the spot in the 68th minute for China. Zhang Linyan and Xiao Yuyi then made it 3-2. PTI

Mumbai City end winless run

Margao: Defending champions Mumbai City FC ended their seven-game winless run in the Indian Super League (ISL) with a 1-0 victory over Chennaiyin FC here on Sunday. The match was decided by a late goal from Vikram Partap Singh (85th minute) whose strike was enough to elevate Mumbai to fifth place, level on points with fourth-placed Jamshedpur FC. Des Buckingham's men were dominant in possession during the first few minutes and created more scoring chances than their opponents. Igor Angulo tested the goalkeeper with a meek left-footed shot in the 18th minute which was saved easily. The game headed into the last ten minutes without a goal on the board. However, the breakthrough finally came from Vikram Pratap Singh. The winger was fed by Bradden Inman on the far post, found himself unmarked and placed the ball in the back of the net from close-range. The five minutes for stoppages were not enough for Chennaiyin to find an equaliser as the Islanders took all three points. PTI

Rohit wins toss, match, top scores

Sharma impresses in first assignment as full-time captain as India outclass West Indies in 1000th ODI

TUSHAR BHADURI
FEBRUARY 6

WITH THE next 50-over World Cup more than 18 months away, every One-Day International is an attempt by two teams to get missing pieces of the jigsaw in place.

Sunday in Ahmedabad saw a contest between a team that had lost its last four matches across formats and another coming off a bilateral series defeat to Ireland. There were a lot of questions about the sides' approach and efficiency in ODIs. It would be premature to suggest that India has found any answers, but their superior bench strength and the ineptitude of the West Indian batting resulted in a six-wicket win for the hosts with 22 overs to spare.

The likes of Shimron Hetmyer and Evin Lewis are not part of the ODI series, but still the display put up by their batsmen was shoddy, to put it mildly. That their best batsman was an all-rounder coming in when half the side was back in the pavilion with just 71 on the board puts the performance of the top order in perspective. Jason Holder was the only reason that West Indies avoided the ignominy of a double-digit score. As it turned out, a total of 176 with more than six overs left unused was never going to challenge India in its 1,000th ODI, Rohit Sharma's first as full-time skipper in white-ball cricket.

When India replied, it made the difference in class obvious. Sharma was making a comeback after missing the South Africa tour due to a hamstring injury, but seemed to toy with the Caribbean attack. Gone are the days when West Indian speedsters put fear into the hearts of batsmen. Kemar Roach has had a long career, but was shown scant respect by the Indian captain. He would step out to lift him over mid-off and chip him over mid-wicket nonchalantly. And when Roach or Alzarri Joseph went shorter in length, they didn't have the pace or bounce to trouble Sharma or his new opening partner Ishan Kishan.

The left-hander was pitchforked into the opening slot after Shikhar Dhawan tested Covid positive and Mayank Agarwal, added to the squad at the 11th hour, had to undergo quarantine. But Kishan slipped effortlessly in the slipstream as Sharma (60 off 51 balls) made a mockery of the asking rate.

Virat Kohli had a rare brief stint at the crease, caught in the deep on the hook, but even though India lost four wickets for 32 runs, an asking rate of less than two allowed Suryakumar Yadav and debutant Deepak



Yuzvendra Chahal (4/49) dismissed West Indies captain Kieron Pollard for a first-ball duck with a googly. PTI

Hooda to play without pressure and take the team home.

For the West Indies, Joseph got Sharma and Kohli in the same over, while left-arm spinner Akeal Hosein showed some promise.

Damage already done

But the outcome was decided in the first innings.

It is hard to judge what type of bowling is tougher for the current generation of batsmen coming out of the Caribbean. Seemingly seduced by the 20-over format, they hardly show the prowess needed to build an innings in longer format. Shai Hope is their big batting hope, but was castled by Mohammed Siraj while trying to drive away from the body.

Darren Bravo is a veteran, but was rushed by rookie Prasidh Krishna's bouncer, not a badge of honour for a No.3 batsman. Brandon King, Shamarr Brooks and Nicholas Pooran were done in spin. Captain Kieron Pollard should know better than to go for an expansive drive off his first ball when his team was already four-down. It turned out to be Yuzvendra Chahal's googly which went

through the wide-open gate to hit off-stump. Jason Holder was the only reason that West Indies avoided the ignominy of a double-digit score. As it turned out, a total of 176 with more than six overs left unused was never going to challenge India in its 1,000th ODI, Rohit Sharma's first as full-time skipper in white-ball cricket.

Washington Sundar (3/30) is not an off-spinner known for getting a lot of turn, but he too was finding deviation off the Motera pitch. His two wickets in one over put the skids under the West Indies and they never recovered. Holder and Fabian Allen (29) added 78 for the eighth wicket from 79/7, but it was only an effort in avoiding complete embarrassment and an even earlier finish.

Another interesting facet of the game was Sharma's prowess with the Decision Review System. Mahendra Singh Dhoni was considered astute about when to use the challenges, and on Sunday, Sharma got all three reviews right as fielding captain – two on LBW decisions and one on a caught-behind appeal.

Ironically, Sharma himself failed to get a review after being adjudged LBW, even if only on 'umpire's call.'

Looking ahead to the rest of the series, there seems to be a gulf between the teams. India would like to seal the series on Wednesday, but will nevertheless have one eye on trying to find the right men for the right jobs going into the 50-over showpiece next year – especially the middle order and the composition of their bowling attack.

MARUTI SUZUKI

NEXA

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