

IN BRIEF



China creates app to recognize Pandas
BEIJING
China has developed an app that allows conservationists to identify individual pandas using facial recognition technology, state-run Xinhua news agency reported on Friday. Researchers have also built a database with over 1,20,000 images and 10,000 video clips of giant pandas that would allow them to correctly identify individual animals. AFP



BBC to make Indian epic A Suitable Boy into series
CANNES
Director Mira Nair will shoot a television version of Vikram Seth's bestselling novel *A Suitable Boy*, she said at the Cannes. The series for the BBC has been scripted by Andrew Davies, the doyen of literary adaptations for the small screen, who has turned books like *The House of Cards*, *Pride and Prejudice* into TV classics. AFP



SpaceX delays launch of 60 Starlink satellites
WASHINGTON
SpaceX postponed a launch of 60 satellites into low-Earth orbit that was scheduled for Thursday night, possibly until next week, citing a need for software updates. The SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket launch was to be the first of potentially thousands in its Starlink project to beam broadband internet across the planet. AFP

China to host fest of Indian New Wave

Largest such retrospective to feature 12 films of Ritwik Ghatak school

NAMRATA JOSHI
CANNES
A retrospective of Indian New Wave Cinema from the 50s to 70s is set to play this October in China at the Pingyao International Film Festival.
The 12-film package will arguably be the biggest retrospective of its kind in China. The country normally is known to not allow more than 10 films in a foreign retrospective.

The aim of the retrospective is to focus on iconic Bengali filmmaker Ritwik Ghatak. "No one in China knows who Ghatak is," says Marco Mueller, curator of the retrospective and the artistic director of PYIFF.
Mr. Mueller has been working on the project for over a year. But his passion for and interest in the Indian New Wave goes back decades. "He wants to keep the memory of those works alive... The retrospective is about the formal breakthroughs in the cinematic medium," says programme coordinator Deepti DCunha.
PYIFF retrospectives each year zoom in on the national New Wave cinema; last year it showcased the Russian New Wave.

As part of the programme this year two of Ghatak's films, *Ajantrik* (1957) and *Meghe Dhaka Tara* (1960), will be screened. His lineage – works of some of his stu-



Ken Loach, director of *Sorry We Missed You*, in Cannes. ■ AFP

dents at the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) like Mani Kaul and Kumar Shahani – will also be show cased.
The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, the National Film Archives of India and the National Film Development Corporation will be co-hosting the retrospective and have been the key facilitators in putting it together.
"Some of the key films of the Indian New Wave had been financed by the NFDC and the Film Finance Corporation. They are repositories of history," says Mr. Mueller.
Ms. DCunha hopes that all the films will be restored and digitised well in time for the festival. "Curation is pushing for the restoration," she says.

Cannes diary
A ubiquitous recent urban phenomenon has been that of the app based service providers. The people at the end

of these logistics chains and in direct contact with consumer – the drivers working with Uber or Ola and the delivery boys of Zomato or Swiggy – often make one wonder about their lives and relationships and the many stories that might be lurking in them.
Ken Loach, a master chronicler of the British working class and underprivileged, brings alive one such tale with a rare journalistic rigour, research and detailing. At the base of the script of *Sorry We Missed You* are the interviews conducted with several workers, as has been spelt out in the end credits.
But Mr. Loach does much more. He packs in the sympathy and sensitivity of a humane filmmaker as well as the savage critical perspective of a persistent social observer in a film that is already being pitched as a frontrunner for the top cate-

gory prize: Palme D'Or.
He takes us into the world of Ricky, a construction worker, who on losing his job to the economic crash, becomes a freelance delivery guy for a company called Parcel Delivery Fast. His wife Abbie is a caregiver of several old and afflicted souls.

Freelance but not free
Mr. Loach gives us a no holds barred look into exploitative world of the emerging freelance economy in which the workers are sold the lie of being their own bosses and in this guise are provided with no benefits or incentives whatsoever. They have extreme accountability and strict targets but no rights worth speaking of.

It's all about more work and less hours for yourself and your family. It's amply clear that as the world gets less and less equitable, it's getting tougher for the working class to get by. The "warriors" are the "losers" eventually.
Mr. Loach shines a light on the inherent dehumanisation in the new economy by bringing the less than ordinary world of Ricky and Abbie under the microscope. Could there be a film on their endless problems, the mounting debts, the troubles with a teenager at home? Yes, indeed. A compelling and incredibly moving one at that.

I.M. Pei, a pillar of modern architecture, passes away

Known for his designs with sharp lines and stark structures



Architectural poetry: The Louvre Pyramid in Paris, and, right, a general view of the new Islamic Museum of Art in Doha, both designed by architect I.M. Pei, below. ■ AP/AFP

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
NEW YORK
I.M. Pei, the preeminent U.S. architect who forged a distinct brand of modern building design with his sharp lines and stark structures, has died in New York, his sons' architecture firm said Thursday. He was 102 years old.

From the controversial Louvre Pyramid in Paris to the landmark Bank of China tower in Hong Kong, the Chinese-born Pei was the mastermind behind works seen as embracing modernity tempered by a grounding in history.

Pei Partnership Architects confirmed Mr. Pei's death.
"Contemporary architects tend to impose modernity on something. There is a certain concern for history but it's not very deep," Mr. Pei, with his owlish round-rimmed glasses, told The New York Times in a 2008 interview.

"I understand that times have changed, we have evolved. But I don't want to forget the beginning," he said.

"A lasting architecture has to have roots."
His work earned the 1983 Pritzker Prize, considered architecture's Nobel. Of his nearly 50 designs in the United States and around the

world, more than half won major awards.

Modern angles
Born in China in 1917, Ieoh Ming Pei came to the U.S. at 17 to study architecture, receiving an undergraduate degree in the field from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1940.
He then enrolled in Harvard University's Graduate School of Design, where he received a master's degree in architecture in 1946. He became a naturalised U.S. citizen in 1954.

In one standout undertaking, he deftly inserted into the monumental structures of the capital of his adopted country the modern angles of the East Building of the National Gallery of Art, opened in 1978.

It was "a composition of angular stone forms... that remains the most visible emblem of modern Washington," said a New York Times review 30 years after its unveiling.

French president Francois Mitterrand was so impressed that he had Mr. Pei hired to build a glass pyramid into the courtyard of the Louvre, the world's most visited museum.

The project was deeply controversial in Paris and Mr. Pei endured a roasting



from critics before the giant glass structure opened in 1989, but his creation is now an icon of the French capital.
"I received many angry glances in the streets of Paris," Mr. Pei later said, confessing that "after the Louvre, I thought no project would be too difficult."

Grace and drama
Other well-known and characteristic Pei projects – often graceful combinations of geometric planes – include the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland, Ohio; the Miho Museum of Shigo in Japan; the Morton Meyerson Symphony Center in Dallas and The John F. Kennedy Library in Boston.

He brought drama to the Four Seasons Hotel in Manhattan and Raffles City in Singapore.

Elton biopic takes Cannes by storm

Rocketman is among the most searingly honest biopic in years, say some critics

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
CANNES
The Elton John biopic *Rocketman* took the Cannes film festival by storm Thursday, with the warts-and-all movie about his wild rock 'n' roll years wowing critics.
The extended standing ovation for the film brought

its director Dexter Fletcher and star Taron Egerton – who plays the singer – to tears.
With some critics saying it was among the most searingly honest biopic in years, *Variety*'s Stuart Oldham tweeted minutes after the end that "*Rocketman* is fantastic, a

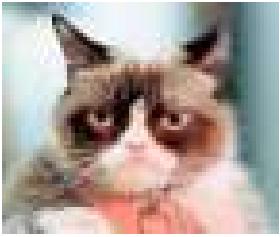
musical drama that hits all the right notes, especially the sad ones."
Indiewire predicted a box office smash for this "ambitious full-on bio musical with 20 songs".
Elton could not hide his joy at the reception, hugging the cast and his longtime lyr-

icist and friend Bernie Taupin, who is a major character in the film.
The 72-year-old British musical megastar seemed to have difficulty walking as he posed for the paparazzi on the red carpet before the premiere. He did not perform at the premiere.

Internet star Grumpy Cat, who made millions smile, dies aged 7

Hundreds of fans posted condolence messages on Facebook

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LOS ANGELES
Internet star "Grumpy Cat" has died at the age of seven, her owners said on Friday.
"We are unimaginably heartbroken to announce the loss of our beloved Grumpy Cat," they said in a statement on Twitter.
The famous feline, whose frowning visage endeared her to millions of fans across social media and saw her photographed with celebrities, including Stan Lee and Jennifer Lopez, passed away on Tuesday "in the arms of her mommy, Tabatha" at her home in Arizona.
"Despite care from top professionals, Grumpy encountered complications from a recent urinary tract infection that unfortunately



Grumpy cat appeared on magazine covers, ads and has a film to her credit. ■ AP

became too tough for her to overcome," they said.
"Grumpy Cat has helped millions of people smile all around the world – even when times were tough. Her spirit will continue to live on through her fans everywhere."
Hundreds of fans posted messages of condolences on social media. "Rest in peace,

darling. Your scowl towards me was one of the best moments of my life," Hollie-Ann Brooks posted on Twitter.

First appearance
The mixed-breed cat, whose real name is Tardar Sauce, found fame when a photo of her as a kitten was posted on Reddit in September 2012, her website says.
Despite her permanent frown, she was "super cute and cuddly."
She has 8.5 million fans on Facebook, 2.5 million followers on Instagram and 1.5 million on Twitter.
She went on to appear on magazine covers and television advertisements. She even starred in a movie *Grumpy Cat's Worst Christmas Ever*.

Making strides



Head-turners: Actress Priyanka Chopra, left, and Deepika Padukone upon their arrival at the premiere of the film *Rocketman* at the 72nd international film festival in Cannes, southern France. ■ AP/AFP



French doctor charged with 'poisoning' 24

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BESANCON
A French doctor already under investigation for poisoning seven patients has been charged with poisoning 17 more people at a clinic in eastern France, one of his lawyers said.
Frederic Pechier, 47, now stands charged in 24 cases, nine of which resulted in death, after working as an anaesthesiologist at two private clinics in Besancon.
If convicted, Mr. Pechier could face a life sentence. He was freed last night on conditional release.
Mr. Pechier, first charged in 2017 for two deaths in seven poisoning cases over last 10 years, was brought in for questioning this week over 66 more suspicious cardiac arrests during operations.

Big Bang Theory bids farewell after 12-year run

The show began in 2007 and went on to win 10 Emmy awards, four of them for Jim Parsons

REUTERS
LOS ANGELES
The *Big Bang Theory*, the show about four brilliant but socially inept scientists that made geeks and comic book nerds pop culture cool, began in 2007 and went on to win 10 Emmy awards, four of them for Jim Parsons as quirky theoretical physicist Sheldon Cooper, has ended its 12-season run.
For the past seven years, it has been the No. 1 comedy on U.S. television with an audience of some 20 million people, and with fans as far afield as Russia and France.
Thursday's one-hour series finale gave fans the kind of closure many had been hoping for, including the repair of the broken elevator in



Emotional closure: The cast of *The Big Bang Theory* in this file photo. ■ AFP

Sheldon's apartment building that had been a running gag since 2007.
"I'm sobbing so much right now. Not only because it's the finale, they fixed the eleva-

tor," tweeted a fan with the Twitter handle kylong.
Sheldon and his neurobiologist wife Amy (Mayim Bialik) won the Nobel Prize for physics; experimental

physicist Leonard (Johnny Galecki) and wife Penny (Kaley Cuoco) announced they were pregnant; and hopeless romantic astrophysicist Raj (Kunal Nayyar) got a date

with *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* actress Sarah Michelle Gellar.
But the most touching moments came when self-centered Sheldon put aside a long, prepared speech accepting his Nobel and turned to salute his friends in the audience. "I apologise if I haven't been the friend you deserve but I want you to know, in my way, I love you all," he told them.
The final scenes sent fans into an emotional meltdown. "Sheldon's greatest speech ever. I'm smiling and crying at the same time," wrote Vaughn Ramden on Twitter.
"I can't stop sobbing like a baby at every single scene in the final episode," tweeted James O'Grady.

Don't fall for misleading 'miracle' cures on social media: doctors

Tata Memorial Centre issues clarification for second time

JYOTI SHELAR
MUMBAI
Indian oncologists are increasingly battling unscientific miracle treatments for cancer shared widely on social media. On Thursday, Mumbai's Tata Memorial Centre (TMC) issued a rebuttal on a strange cancer remedy attributed to them in a widely circulated WhatsApp message, which stated that hot coconut water can destroy cancer cells of all types.
"There is no data to suggest that hot coconut water can provide cures for any type of cancer. Public are requested not to be misinformed by such false and

harmful messages sent on social media," read a statement issued by the TMC's director Dr. Rajendra Badwe.
This is the second time that the Institute has issued an official clarification on a social media message. Last year, a fake health warning on WhatsApp linked breast cancer to wearing a black bra in a message attributed to the TMC. "This is being repeated often. We thought it was necessary for us to clarify," Dr. Badwe told *The Hindu*, adding that social media is not a place where medical treatment and solutions should be discussed. "It is not the right forum," he said.

Nearly 1 million new cancer cases are diagnosed in India every year.
Last month, BJP candidate from Bhopal Pragya Singh Thakur claimed that her breast cancer had been cured by cow urine, whereas Ms. Thakur had opted for a bilateral mastectomy to prevent recurrence of her cancer. "These intentional, irrelevant and widely circulated unscientific remedies defer cancer treatment in many patients," said Dr. Sourav Datta of Kolkata's Narayana Superspecialty Hospital, who believes that it's a form of false propaganda aimed at hitting science.