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Rage Becomes Him

Why Bengali writer Manoranjan Byapari's rise to a life of letters and literature is an anti-caste manifesto of suffering and grit

IDEA EXCHANGE PAGE 10

'NO ONE HAS EVER DOUBTED MUSLIMS' NATIONALISM. NO ONE STILL DOUBTS IT, AND NEVER WILL'

MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI, Minority Affairs Minister

BIG PICTURE PAGES 12-13

The water truck

Maharashtra, witnessing one of its worst water emergencies in years, is critically dependent on tankers for daily needs



OPERATION SUNSHINE-2

India and Myanmar forces coordinate to destroy NE insurgent camps across border

Action between May 16 and June 8, armies stuck to own side of border, 70-80 militants caught by India forces

SUSHANT SINGH
 NEW DELHI, JUNE 15



IN A coordinated military operation conducted by the armies of India and Myanmar on their respective sides of the border, several camps of Northeast-based militant groups inside Myanmar territory were destroyed, and fleeing militants apprehended by Indian security forces.



Called 'Operation Sunshine-2', the military action that took place between May 16 and June 8, is expected to give a debilitating jolt to insurgencies in the Northeastern states. The operation included blocks by two battalions of the Indian Army — along with Special Forces, Assam Rifles and infantry Ghataks — on the Indian side of the border while clearance action was taken by four brigades of the Myanmar Army. This was a follow-up to 'Operation Sunshine-1' from February 22 to 26, when the Indian Army had acted against suspected Arakanese rebel camps inside Indian territory, and fleeing Arakanese rebels were arrested by the Myanmar Army on their side.

MAP: Myanmar's Sagaing Region, where the action against the militant groups took place. **PHOTO:** Angko Chingbo hill across the border from Manipur's Ukhrul district, where the Army carried out strikes against militant camps on June 9, 2015. *Archive*

Calling the joint operation a success, a government official told *The Sunday Express* that the operation "was coordinated at a military level" and "possible due to trust generated between the two armies by Operation Sunshine-1". The official added that "the valid grouse that Myanmar Army held after the 2015 cross-border strike of violating their sovereignty when we

hit at a NSCN-IM camp has also been laid to rest with a coordinated approach." Around 70-80 militants, who were apprehended by the Indian Army in Operation Sunshine-2, **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

5TH NITI GOVERNING COUNCIL MEET

PM announces panel with CMs for deep reforms in agriculture

Says goal to make India \$5-trillion economy challenging, but possible

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
 NEW DELHI, JUNE 15



At the NITI Aayog meeting in New Delhi Saturday. PIB/PTI

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Saturday announced the creation of a high-powered committee on structural reforms in agriculture, saying this panel "would include some Chief Ministers... and take a holistic approach on the subject". He also highlighted the Centre's commitment to double the income of farmers by 2022.

Speaking at the fifth meeting of the Governing Council of the NITI Aayog, the Prime Minister also said the goal to make India a \$5-trillion economy by 2024 was "challenging, but possible", as he asked state governments to raise economic growth targets right from the district level. That, he said, would result in the Indian economy roughly doubling its present size — estimated at \$2.75 trillion at end-March 2019 — in about five years. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

EXPLAINED

Challenges on economic front

THE FIFTH meeting of the Governing Council of the NITI Aayog comes in the backdrop of two important events. This is the first meeting of the council since the Modi government returned with a larger mandate. There are challenges on the economic front: the economy grew at 5.8 per cent in the January-March quarter, its slowest in five years. Besides, 2017-18 saw unemployment rates rising to a 45-year high of 6.1 per cent.



Banerjee with officials and Cabinet colleagues in Kolkata Saturday. Partha Paul

Mamata appeals for talks; come to NRS, say agitating doctors

RAVIK BHATTACHARYA AND DEEPTIMAN TIWARY
 KOLKATA, NEW DELHI, JUNE 15

ON DAY 5 of the "cease-work" by junior doctors in West Bengal, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee appealed again for talks, and asked the doctors to return to hospitals.

In New Delhi, the Ministry of Home Affairs issued an advisory to the West Bengal government to ensure the safety of doctors, and asked for a report on the standoff.

The Ministry issued a separate advisory on the political violence in the state, and sought a fresh report from the government in Kolkata.

"This Ministry is in receipt of a number of representations from doctors, health care professionals and medical associations from different parts of country for their safety and security in view of the ongoing strike by doctors in West Bengal. It is requested that a detailed report be sent urgently on the representations and ongoing strike by the doctors," the MHA said in its advisory.

The agitation was triggered by an attack on two doctors at Kolkata's NRS Medical College **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

Alert in J&K after Pakistan's input to India and US on threat of 'IED-vehicle' attack

Either Pak wants to avoid blame, or it is concerned since possible suspects linked to al-Qaeda: top security official

MUZAMIL JALEEL
 SRINAGAR, JUNE 15



Security personnel at the Pulwama blast site. Express

PAKISTAN IS said to have shared information regarding the threat of a possible attack in Pulwama district, probably near Awantipora, a top security official in Srinagar has confirmed to *The Sunday Express*.

At the SCO Summit in Bishkek, which Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan also attended, Prime Minister Narendra Modi told Chinese President Xi Jinping that Pakistan needs to create an atmosphere "free of terrorism", but at this stage, New Delhi has not seen that from Islamabad. The PM also said he has made efforts to

initiate peace with Pakistan, but his efforts have been "derailed". The entire security grid in J&K is on its toes after the alert, which came just days ago, regarding a possible attack by militants using an improvised explosive device mounted on a vehicle. "The Pakistanis shared this in-

formation regarding the possibility of such an attack with our High Commission in Islamabad. They had also shared this information with the Americans, who too, informed us. So this information has come directly as well as via the Americans to us," the official said. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

Govt has drought cover: a record stock of pulses

HARISH DAMODARAN
 NEW DELHI, JUNE 15

AS INDIA stares at the prospect of a sub-par monsoon — cumulative rainfall so far this season (June-September) has been 43 per cent below normal, on top of a 25 per cent deficiency in the pre-monsoon period (March-

May) — it can take heart from two things that can significantly combat any threat of food inflation.

The first is the stocks of wheat and rice with the Food Corporation of India (FCI) in the Central pool. That, at 741.41 lakh tonnes (lt) plus another 120.08 lt of unmillied paddy (equivalent to **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

PROCUREMENT OF PULSES

PERIOD	QUANTITY (in tonnes)
2001-02 to 2013-14	7,16,396.06
2014-15	3,70,589.95
2015-16	51,625.38
2016-17	12,83,588.26
2017-18	19,67,819.62
2018-19	42,54,957.83
2019-20*	8,57,882.01
2014-15 to 2019-20	87,86,463.05

*Up to 13.06.2019

Kerala constable hacks, sets afire woman colleague

SHAJU PHILIP
 THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JUNE 15

A POLICE constable hacked and set on fire a woman colleague on the road barely 100 m from her home in Vallikunnam in Kerala's Alappuzha district Saturday.

The woman constable, 31, died on the spot. Her assailant, 33, who is posted in Emakulam rural district, was caught by people at the scene of the crime, and taken into custody.

Sounya Pushpakaran, a civil police officer at Vallikunnam police station, was riding a **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**



Captain Virat Kohli with Rishabh Pant on the eve of the India-Pakistan match in Manchester. AP PAGE 20

SUNDAY STORY
 PAGE 11

Manchester united

Ahead of Sunday's game, fans of Indian and Pakistani origin are united in their worry: Will the weather hold?

Sewer deaths again: seven killed in Vadodara district

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
 VADODARA, JUNE 15

SEVEN PEOPLE were killed after inhaling toxic fumes from a septic tank outside a hotel in Dabhoi taluka of Gujarat's Vadodara district around midnight on Friday, police said. Three of those killed were employees of the hotel.

Four workers entered the sewer tank outside Darshan hotel in Fartikuvi village. None of them was wearing protective gear. When the workers did not respond for long, the three hotel staffers went in to look for them. Police have filed cases of causing death due to negligence, and culpable homicide not

amounting to murder against the hotel's owner, Hasan Abbas. He is on the run.

"Four cleaners were given the task of cleaning the tank. Every night after the hotel closed they were asked to clean the tanks. We presume that one of them entered the tank and suffocated due to some kind of gas leakage. When he did not come out, others jumped in to check on him and suffocated to death as well. Three of them were hotel staff members. We are investigating what gas they inhaled, and what exactly happened," Deputy Superintendent of Police, Dabhoi division, Kalpesh Solanki, said. The four cleaners hired by **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

I saw my colleagues being stabbed... all over in 5 min: Jharkhand Maoist attack survivor

ABHISHEK ANGAD
 SARAIKELA, JUNE 15

CONSTABLE-DRIVER Sukhlal Kudada, the sole survivor in the attack on Friday in Kurku market in Saraikelela district.

Chaibasa DIG Kuldeep Dwivedi said police have launched a "sustained operation" to arrest the Maoists involved in the attack. Kudada, who has been posted as driver at the Tirulidih police station for the last nine months, says that an hour before the incident, he had driven the team of policemen to Ichakdih



Kurku market in Saraikelela where the policemen were killed by suspected Maoists on Friday. Abhishek Angad

village to attend to a call regarding a dispute. While returning, he says, they stopped at the Kurku market and all the five policemen stepped into different shops to buy water, cold drinks.

Kudada, who claims he was seated in the car when the ambush began, says, "Suddenly, some people emerged from the crowd and started stabbing (the policemen). They all had bhujali (daggers). I rushed out and tried to save one of them, but one of the attackers swung his bhujali at me and I ran." He says there were at least four attackers for **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

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Spanish woman in Gurgaon for internship files rape complaint, accused arrested

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
GURGAON, JUNE 15

A 36-YEAR-OLD Delhi resident has been arrested by Gurgaon Police for allegedly sexually assaulting a Spanish woman earlier this week.

According to police, the accused, identified as Aanjaney, had rented a flat in Gurgaon's

DLF Phase 1, and met the woman, who is in her 20s, on a Facebook group.

"The woman moved to Gurgaon recently and was interning at a multinational company. She was looking for accommodation in Gurgaon and had joined some Facebook groups, where she put up posts saying she was looking to rent a flat," said Subhash Boken, PRO of

Gurgaon Police.

"The accused contacted her through one of these pages, and offered to show her some apartments," the PRO added. On Friday night, the accused allegedly called the woman to his flat in Phase 1 for a party, police said.

"When she reached his flat, she discovered the accused was the only one there. He allegedly misbehaved with her and sexu-

ally assaulted her. She has submitted a complaint regarding the matter and an FIR has been registered at DLF Phase 1 police station on charges of rape," said Boken.

"The accused was arrested on Friday itself. He works at a multimedia company and will be produced in court on Sunday. The matter is under investigation," he added.

BRIEFLY

Registration closes at DU

New Delhi: Despite the Delhi High Court Friday asking Delhi University to continue registration to undergraduate courses till June 22, DU's admission portal remained closed Saturday. "We received the HC order today. We've received no instruction yet to restart registrations. Once we do, it will begin," an official said.

2 arrested for murder

New Delhi: Delhi Police has arrested a 34-year-old woman and a 21-year-old man she was allegedly having an affair with for "hiring killers for Rs 7,000 to murder her husband" at the couple's accommodation in South Avenue.

2 injured in godown fire

New Delhi: A fire broke out at a cloth godown in Chandni Chowk Saturday. The fire department received a call around 8.30 pm and seven fire tenders doused the fire in 30 minutes. Two people, Kurtan and Mohameed Farid, suffered burn injuries and have been admitted to a hospital. ENS

15,000 resident docs across capital continue strike

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 15

AROUND 15,000 resident doctors across Delhi refrained from attending to patients at the outpatient department (OPD) Saturday — in continuation of their ongoing protest in support of West Bengal doctors.

Doctors from two central government-run hospitals, Ram Manohar Lohia and Lady Hardinge Medical College, along with several Delhi government hospitals such as GTB, Deen Dayal Upadhyay and Dr Baba Saheb Ambedkar, boycotted work on Saturday.

Patients faced the brunt of the ongoing stir as they waited for long hours outside OPDs. Ram Singh, who came to RML for a check-up of his wife, had to return since doctors were unavailable. "The OPDs function till noon on weekends and due to unavailability of doctors, we could not get her treated. The queue was long and only a few senior doctors were available," said Singh, who will return on Monday.

On Friday, a majority of hospitals in Delhi had joined the nationwide agitation in support of doctors in West Bengal, following a call given by the India Medical Association (IMA) and various resident doctors' associations (RDAs).

"If the demands of doctors in West Bengal are not met, we will continue our protest on Monday. We do not want patients to suf-



Doctors from Ram Manohar Lohia, Lady Hardinge Medical College, GTB, DDU and Ambedkar hospitals boycotted work. AIIMS and Safdarjung resumed operations. Amit Mehra

fer, but the government should take step to ensure safety and security of doctors," said Dr Sumedh Sandanshiv, president of the Federation of Resident Doctors' Association (FORDA).

Meanwhile, resident doctors at AIIMS and Safdarjung Hospital, who resumed work after Friday's boycott, have given a 48-hour ultimatum to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to meet demands of the state's agitating doctors, failing which they said they would go on an indefinite strike. The doctors at AIIMS carried out a candle march Saturday evening.

Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan has, meanwhile, asked states to consider enacting a specific legislation to protect doctors and medical professionals from any form of violence.

Along with a letter to all chief ministers, he attached a copy of the Draft Act provided by IMA — the Protection of Medical Service Persons and Medical Service Institutions (Prevention of Violence and Damage or Loss of Property) Act, 2017. The draft includes clauses on penalty and recovery in case of loss/damage to property.

"The Act is there in Delhi but not many people are aware of it. Once it is implemented by the Central government, enactment will become effective. Even in Delhi, temporary arrangements are made when doctors go on strike demanding better security. But security guards are again removed and the situation reverts to how it was," said Dr Ashwani Goyal from the Delhi Medical Association.



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At NITI Aayog meeting, aid for drought, farm distress top list of CMs' demands

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JUNE 15

LOOMING DROUGHT and farmer distress made up for the key issues that governed the demands of the CMs from the Centre at the Governing Council meeting of the NITI Aayog on Saturday.

ANDHRA PRADESH
Making a strong pitch for Special Category Status to Andhra Pradesh, newly-elected Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy outlined the "distressing" situation his state was facing after its 2014 bifurcation.

He argued that the state did not receive its share of benefits from the Centre after the bifurcation. "The successor state of AP inherited nearly 59% of the population, debt, and liabilities of the erstwhile AP, but inherited only 47% of the revenues... The present state of Andhra has essentially remained an agrarian state with low economic buoyancy leading to a huge revenue disability. This is evident from that fact that the per capita revenue for 2015-16 financial year of Telangana stood at Rs 14,411, whereas the same for Andhra Pradesh was Rs 8,397..." he said.

KARNATAKA
Potential state revenue shortfalls due to the withdrawal of assured compensation under the GST regime after 2022 and cutbacks in Central funds for schemes such as MGNREGA, rural drinking water and railway projects were on top of Chief Minister HD Kumaraswamy's agenda at the meeting. "Due to several structural issues, including the rates of tax, the revenues under GST have not risen to our expectations in the state. In spite of implementation challenges, the state has made its best efforts to bridge the revenue gap," he said.

The CM made a direct plea to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to increase funds for rural drinking water schemes and ensure prompt reimbursement of funds disbursed by the state under the MGNREGA scheme.

MADHYA PRADESH
Nationwide agricultural reforms, water conservation and internal security made up the thrust of Chief Minister Kamal Nath's speech. He stressed on a need to amend the Agriculture Produce Market Committee Act and the Essential Commodities Act to favour farmers. Speaking about the National Agriculture Market Scheme, Nath said states were facing trouble because a digital payments system was yet to be put in place. Apprising the committee of his government's steps to combat the drought-like situation, Nath also pitched for nationwide measures to conserve water. On internal security, Nath spoke about the need to share information between states, in-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi chairing the NITI Aayog Governing Council meeting in New Delhi on Saturday. ANI

cluding those in left-wing extremism affected regions.

RAJASTHAN
Bringing up the issue of several stalled projects and procedural deadlocks in welfare schemes, Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot brought up water scarcity and management, droughts and rainwater harvesting in the state. One of his key demands was for the Centre to designate the Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project (ERCP) as a national project. When completed, the project is expected to supply drinking water to 13 districts and make irrigation water available for an additional two lakh hectares. Gehlot asked for external financial aid approvals for two irrigation projects.

Speaking of the Centre's flagship Ayushman Bharat scheme, Gehlot said the current health insurance scheme in the state was benefiting about 1 crore families identified under the National Food Security Act, while Ayushman Bharat would only benefit 59.71 lakh families as it was based on the 2011 census. He recommended that the scheme's basis be changed in order to ensure the NFAS families were also covered.

CHHATTISGARH
Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel focused on reforms for rural economy and highlighted the Congress government's flagship 'Narwa, Garuwa, Ghurwa Baadi (NGGB) agricultural scheme. He also spoke of a need for a coordinated national plan to combat left-wing extremism and stated that changes were needed in surrender and rehabilitation policies adopted by states.

Speaking about NGGB,

Baghel said it was launched to develop local resources and improve comprehensive environment conservation. He also outlined the challenges in providing amenities such as roads, power, irrigation and water to tribals living in forest areas. Baghel reiterated that the administration could prevent youngsters from taking up arms only if they were able to provide them with jobs and development.

ASSAM
Iterating that floods and soil erosion impact the state every year, Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal advocated for effective management and said Disaster Relief Fund norms governing relief and rehabilitation needed to change. He also asked the Aayog's intervention in getting soil erosion designated as a 'calamity' for funding under the National or State Disaster Relief Fund.

Sonowal highlighted his government's endeavour to distribute land pattas to one lakh farmer families within the current financial year. Saying there was an urgent need to update data for providing benefits of flagship programmes Sonowal said data from the Socio Economic Caste Census, 2011, for these schemes did not provide an adequate picture. He also urged the Centre to take steps to provide funds to anchalik panchayats and zila parishads under the 15th Finance Commission.

UTTAR PRADESH
Sticking to compensation for drought-affected farmers, credit given to farmers of the state and the Centre's digitisation drive, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath recommended that the 33 per

cent crop damage criteria be brought down in drought-hit areas to 20 per cent. Among his other recommendations for the Centre was issuing farmer credit cards on the basis of land area rather than crop area. He also said the land records in the state have been computerised.

KERALA
Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said the NITI Aayog, in its present form, had not played the much-expected role of a facilitator over the past four years. He stated that Kerala would be continuing with five-year plans and is implementing development projects accordingly. He mentioned that going away with the Planning Commission had caused the state to lose a source of funding for five-year plans.

Vijayan called for meaningful cooperative federalism, requiring more flexible fiscal space for states and added that they should be able to perform their constitutionally assigned developmental role effectively. An aspirational district programmes, which was in the agenda of the meeting, Vijayan said Kerala is of the opinion that the "one size fits all approach" of centrally-sponsored schemes goes against the principle of cooperative federalism. He also asked the Centre to promptly address the concerns of states including Kerala in the terms of reference of the 15th Finance Commission.

PUNJAB
While he was not able to attend the meeting personally, Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh addressed it through a letter that was circulated among those attending. Expressing concern over the water crisis in

north India, he sought Prime Minister Narendra Modi's support in upgrading the state's water distribution infrastructure and called for a fresh river waters tribunal to address disputes among neighbouring states.

He also called upon the PM to provide a one-time debt waiver for farmers. He spoke of proper development of Punjab's border areas, which he said was a national responsibility. He also called for greater inter-state cooperation to tackle cross-border crimes and an increase in the deployment of paramilitary forces along the border, as well as a special financial assistance package for upgrading the state police in order areas, where they formed the second line of defence.

DELHI
Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal raked up the issue of full statehood to Delhi and sought the Centre's cooperation in the AAP government's project for natural storage of water in the Yamuna flood plains. He added that according to the 14th Finance Commission, states get a 42 per cent share in Central taxes, whereas the capital gets only Rs 325 crore.

ODISHA
Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik raised the Special Category Status issue, four days after pushing for the 'Special Focus State' status in view of its vulnerability to natural calamities. He also pitched for simultaneous Lok Sabha and state Assembly polls.

He also said the primary sector, especially agriculture, has to be always taken care of and judicious utilisation of water resources holds the key.

GUJARAT
Drought relief was a major part of Chief Minister Vijay Rupani's address in view of deficiency of rainfall in the state over the recent years. He said the State Disaster Relief Fund usage norms must be revised. Current norms stipulate relief aid for 90 days, he said.

This, he said, adds additional burden on the state exchequer. He added that the mid-day meal and anganwadi schemes should be brought under the ambit of the SDRF and that during a drought, the number of days in the MGNREGA should be increased to 200 or, the SDRF should cover the additional expense after the current 150 days.

TAMIL NADU
With severe drought looming large, Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami asserted the need for the Centre's help. He requested the Centre to make the Rain Water Harvesting a Pan-India movement.

Palaniswami also demanded that the Centre prioritise the project to link Godavari river in Andhra Pradesh with the Cauvery river. The CM also recommended providing a 100% subsidy on insurance premiums to women farmers and suggested measures to direct insurance companies to compulsorily open branches at the block level. Another suggestion of his was to revive a project for a new green field airport for Chennai as the existing one was inadequate to handle passenger traffic. He also repeated the demand that the Centre release pending IGST arrears worth Rs 4,458 crore.

With PTI inputs
FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com



Former PM Manmohan Singh with MP CM Kamal Nath, Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot, Karnataka CM HD Kumaraswamy and Puducherry CM V Narayanasamy. PTI

Manmohan meets CMs of Congress-led states

LALMANI VERMA
NEW DELHI, JUNE 15

BEFORE HEADING for the Niti Aayog meeting, four Congress chief ministers and Karnataka Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy met former prime minister (PM) Manmohan Singh at Congress central headquarters on Saturday, to shortlist matters related to Forest Act, tribals and farmers to be taken up during the meet.

MP CM Kamal Nath, Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot, Puducherry CM V Narayanasamy and Kumaraswamy met the former PM. Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel also joined the meeting later.

They discussed the proposed agenda/issues of Congress and Congress allies governed states to be discussed at the Niti Aayog meeting, sources said.

Sources said that the issues discussed with Singh were rejuvenation of water bodies, including rivers, need of fresh efforts from the Centre in the agricultural sector and seeking amendment in the Forest Act to improve lives of tribals. They also discussed a need for drafting a

policy for drawing investment for development in Maoist affected and tribal areas instead of exploiting natural resources there.

Sources said the flagged issues had been focus areas in the past Congress governments.

Baghel, Kumaraswamy and Narayanasamy also called PM Modi separately and discussed issues of their respective states.

Puducherry CM talked with PM Modi about including the state in the 15th Finance Commission, statehood for Puducherry, increase in the grant amount from 26% to 42% and the 7th pay commission arrears not paid by Central Government.

Baghel tweeted that in meeting with PM Modi he requested for redressal of the pending issues related to 70 lakh tribals and 58 lakh poor families in Chhattisgarh.

Meanwhile, Gehlot met the Union Minister of Finance Nirmala Sitharaman and discussed financial issues related to his state.

He also requested approval for proposals of several pending drinking water projects and ensure timely release of funds of centrally-sponsored schemes.

Mamata, KCR skip meet

SREENIVAS JANYALA
HYDERABAD, NEW DELHI, JUNE 15

CHIEF MINISTERS Mamata Banerjee and K Chandrashekar Rao skipped the meeting of the Governing Council of Niti Aayog on Saturday.

The meeting was attended by all other chief ministers, administrators of Union territories and the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir. Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh did not attend the meeting due to health reasons, sources said.

Rao's absence was attributed to his being busy with arrangements for inauguration of Kaleshwaram irrigation and drinking water supply project on June 21. However, sources in TRS said that KCR was being given a cold shoulder by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"KCR often says there is no cooperative federalism as the Centre does not respond to requests for help from states where BJP is not in power.

Telangana government had sought financial help for Kaleshwaram project, but the Centre has not even replied. Similarly, there is no response on other requests like increasing quota for SCs and STs and minorities. The friendship also hit a low after KCR's daughter K Kavitha was defeated by BJP candidate in Nizamabad in the Lok Sabha elections," a TRS leader said. Sources in the TRS said that since the Centre won't act on any requests or demands made by Telangana, KCR felt there was no point in attending the meet.

"KCR is of the view that NITI Aayog was formed for transformation of India but no such transformation is visible. The Centre is also working against the spirit of cooperative federalism," a TRS leader familiar with the matter said.

In a letter to Modi, the West Bengal CM had expressed her inability to attend the NITI Aayog meeting, saying it is "fruitless" as the NITI Aayog has no financial powers to support state plans.

(WITH INPUTS FROM PTI)

Bypolls to 6 RS seats from 3 states on July 5

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 15

THE ELECTION Commission on Saturday announced that by-elections to fill six Rajya Sabha seats from Bihar, Odisha and Gujarat will be held on July 5. The vacancies were caused by the election of four sitting members to the Lok Sabha, election of one to state Assembly and resignation of another. The bypolls will be held to fill these vacancies for the remainder terms only.

In Bihar, one seat fell vacant following election of Union minister Ravi Shankar Prasad to Lok Sabha last month. The term of office for this seat is till April 2024.

In Gujarat, bypolls will be held for two seats that were vacated due to election of BJP chief Amit Shah and Union minister Smriti Irani to Lok Sabha. Both these terms end in August 2023.

In Odisha, three seats were vacated due to election of Achyutananda Samanta in Lok Sabha, election of Pratap Keshari Deb to Odisha Assembly and resignation of Soumya Ranjan Patnaik.

Notification will be issued on June 18 and June 25 is the last date of nominations. Scrutiny of nominations will be done on June 26 and June 28 is the last date of withdrawal of candidature. Polling is scheduled on July 5 and counting of votes will be done the same day.

The EC clarified that vacancies

EXPLAINED
E.
Cong may frown on separate poll principle

The EC announcement that each RS vacancy will be considered a separate vacancy and separate poll will be held is likely to draw fire from the Congress, which had voiced its objections to this principle even before the announcement. Separate elections for each of the two seats in Gujarat means the Congress is unlikely to win any seat there because BJP has the majority in the Assembly.

for bypolls to all Houses, including Rajya Sabha, are considered as separate vacancies and separate notifications are issued and separate poll is taken for each of the vacancies, though the schedule for the bypolls may be common.



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AFTER RUCKUS IN AURANGABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

Citing Balakot, Sena 'warns' AIMIM corporators

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI, JUNE 15 Citing the example of attacks on terrorists carried out by the Narendra Modi-led government across the Pakistan border, the Shiv Sena, in its editorial in the party mouthpiece on Saturday, said it would deal with the AIMIM corporators, who had created a ruckus in Aurangabad Municipal Corporation on Thursday, in a similar fashion. The Sena was referring to the loss of Aurangabad Lok Sabha seat that it had held for 30 years. The Saamana editorial read:

"One accidental defeat with a small margin from Aurangabad Lok Sabha does not make Hindustan impotent in Sambhaji Nagar (Sena's preferred name for Aurangabad). Just as Prime Minister Narendra Modi carried out an attack on terrorists in Pakistan by breaking into their homes, we are capable of launching a similar attack. Hindus have wrists strong enough to clobber Aurangzeb's progeny in Aurangabad within Sambhaji Nagar." In the editorial titled 'Sambhaji Nagarat ahdais suro, tar gharat ghusun maru' (Turmoil in Sambhaji Nagar, will break into homes and hit), the Sena said, "This should be a warning for those rubbing Hindus the wrong way". The Aurangabad election result was "strange" when there was a Hindutva wave not just in Maharashtra but across the country, the editorial said. The Sena, which had been winning the seat for 30 years, was defeated on account of a party rebel. The victory of Imtiyaz Jaleel, of the Hyderabad-based AIMIM led by Asaduddin Owaisi, from Aurangabad seat "was a shock to the history, geography and culture of Aurangabad", said the editorial. Sena's Chandrakant Khaire, a four-time MP, was defeated by Jaleel by 4,492 votes. The editorial came after the AIMIM corporators created a ruckus in the civic body over the proposal to congratulate Jaleel for becoming Aurangabad MP on Thursday. "The ruckus was created neither on the people's issues nor on the issues of national interest but to congratulate Jaleel on his accidental victory in Lok Sabha," the Sena noted. In the 113-member Aurangabad Corporation, the BJP-Shiv Sena alliance has 51 corporators while AIMIM has 25, the Congress has 10, NCP has three and others have 24. "It is sedition to congratulate those who take stands against the nation," the editorial added.

NO ONE IS ABOVE LAW, SAYS PUNJAB CM

Day after woman beaten, Congress councillor held

RAAKHI JAGGA LUDHIANA, JUNE 15 A DAY after a woman was dragged out of her home in Muktsar and beaten with belts and sticks, allegedly by relatives of a Congress councillor, the latter was arrested on Saturday. Police have so far arrested seven of the 10 accused, including Congress councillor from ward no. 29 Rakesh Chaudhary. Chief Minister Capt. Amarninder Singh tweeted a copy of the FIR saying: "Accused in the video from Muktsar have been arrested by @PunjabPolice and booked for attempt to murder u/s 307 IPC. No one is above the law and such acts of violence will not be tolerated." A member of the Punjab Women Commission (PWC) and AAP leaders arrived in Muktsar and met the woman, who is admitted in a civil hospital. Police had on Friday registered an FIR against 10 persons on charges of attempt to murder, outraging the modesty of women and criminal conspiracy. According to the complaint, the councillor's brothers Sunny and Suresh and some others had gone to the woman's house to collect Rs 23,000 which she had borrowed from them. Soon after, they dragged her out of her house and on to the road, and started beating her with belts and sticks and kicked her, the complaint said. A four-minute video of the incident was shot by the victim's son, which later went viral. Earlier in the day, Chaudhary had posted a message on social media saying, "The video which is going viral on social media is not depicting the truth. Before this incident, Sunny's wife had gone to meet the woman and her family misbehaved with her. Later, a few persons went to talk to her about the incident. They are our relatives, my brother



S Jaishankar with Tajikistan President Emomali Rahmon in Dushanbe on Saturday.

Terror gravest threat in Asia, says Jaishankar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA DUSHANBE, JUNE 15 TERRORISM POSES the "gravest threat" to the people in Asia and terrorists and their victims must never be equated, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said here on Saturday. Addressing the fifth Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) Summit in the Tajik capital, Jaishankar said that the CICA members are the victims of terrorism. "Terrorism is the gravest threat we face in Asia. CICA members are its victims and so it should be clear that terrorists and their victims must never be equated," he tweeted. His statement came a day after PM Narendra Modi, addressing the SCO Summit in Bishkek, lashed out at countries "sponsoring, aiding and funding" terrorism and said that such states must be held accountable. The CICA is a pan-Asia forum for enhancing cooperation and promoting peace, security and stability in Asia.

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Three hurt in Hardoi clash, MLA booked

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE LUCKNOW, JUNE 15 ONE person suffered a gunshot injury and two suffered minor injuries after an argument between alleged supporters of Hardoi BJP MLA Ashish Kumar Singh and Nagar Palika Parishad chairman Ankit Jaiswal turned violent on Friday, with stones pelted and shots fired from both sides. Nine persons, including Ankit Jaiswal, a BJP member, and his brother Siddharth aka Siddhu, were arrested in connection with cross-FIRs. MLA Ashish Kumar Singh was also booked. "Nearly 100 persons, claiming to be supporters of the local MLA, gathered outside the resi-

dence of Nagar Palika Parishad chairman Ankit Jaiswal and argued with his supporters. Soon, the argument turned violent," said Bilgram circle officer (CO) Pratap Singh Chauhan. MLA Singh claimed he had "nothing to do with the incident" and that his name was added in the FIR as part of a "conspiracy from a higher level".

BJYM activist killed near Jabalpur

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE BHOPAL, JUNE 15 A BHARTIYA Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM) activist was allegedly murdered by unidentified persons in Bhedaghat near Jabalpur. The body of Rishabh Jain, who was in his early 20s, was found on Friday. Rishabh, a general secretary of BJYM's Bhedaghat unit, was missing since Friday. His motorcycle and a blood-stained slipper led

the family members to the body that was buried in sand. The post mortem and cremation took place on Saturday. BJYM president Abhilash Pandey said 'The End' was written on the sand heap. He said the BJP's youth wing has given a 48-hour ultimatum to the police to trace the killer or else they will start an agitation. Jabalpur SP Amit Singh told The Indian Express that they are close to solving the case. They have picked up a suspect and are questioning him. Sources said the alleged killer could be a friend.

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE Office of the Executive Engineer, SWD-Koramangala Valley, BBMP, 9th Floor, Shopping Complex, 4th Block Jayanagara, Bengaluru - 560 011. INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT) (Two Cover System) (Through Gok e-Procurement Portal only)

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Bullets fired at TMC worker's house, 3 dead

Kolkata: Three people were killed and one injured after a group of assailants allegedly fired bullets and hurled bombs at the house of a Trinamool Congress worker in Domkal's Kuchiyamira village in Murshidabad early Saturday. The deceased were identified as Sohel Rana (19), Khairuddin Sheikh (55) and Rahidul Halsana (25). Three people were arrested, police said. While the TMC accused "Congress-backed goons" for the attack, the latter denied the claims and blamed infighting in the TMC. "Three people have been killed and probe is on. We have arrested three persons. Motive behind the murder is still uncertain," said SP Mukesh Kumar. According to the police, the assailants attacked when the victims were sleeping inside their house. Before the locals could react, the attackers escaped.

Meanwhile, tension erupted in Jagdla's Ghoshpara in North 24 Paraganas district after traders allegedly attacked police and damaged their vehicles. Combat force and RAF have been deployed in the area. On Friday, shops in the area were looted, following which a mob blocked Ghoshpara Road demanding action. When police tried to intervene, the mob attacked them. ENS

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE Office of the Executive Engineer, SWD, Bommanahalli Zone, BBMP, 9th Floor, Jayanagara Shopping Complex, 4th Block, Jayanagara, Bengaluru-560011. SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT) (Through GOK e-Procurement Portal Only)

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Western Rly withdraws proposal for massage on trains New Delhi/ Mumbai: Mumbai-headquartered Western Railway on Saturday said it had withdrawn a proposal to provide foot and head massages to passengers on board 39 trains originating from Indore in Madhya Pradesh, a senior official said. Indore is part of Ratlam division of Western Railway. WR chief spokesperson Ravinder Bhakar said, "The proposal...was initiated by Ratlam Division of Western Railway. "As soon as this proposal came to the notice of higher authorities of Western Railway, it had been decided to withdraw this proposal of starting massage services in trains," the statement said.

10 IDEA EXCHANGE

NEWSMAKERS IN THE NEWSROOM

The reduction in the representation of minorities, especially of Muslims, in Parliament cannot be blamed on the BJP... Their representation has been going down every year over past 35-40 years



WHY MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI

As the NDA government led by Narendra Modi embarks on its second term, riding on the promise of 'Sabka Vishwas', Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, Union Minister of Minority Affairs and the Cabinet's only Muslim face, will have a key role to play. He has continued in the Cabinet with the same portfolio as in the last government but

perhaps with a bigger mandate to fulfill. Soon after taking over, the government announced scholarships for five crore students from minority communities. During Naqvi's previous stint in the ministry, the Haj subsidy was done away with and women were allowed to go on the pilgrimage without a Mehram or male companion



"Mamata ji's reaction began after her (election) loss. She's clamping down on people who utter 'Jai Sri Ram'. In Bengal, the BJP is a strong, effective alternative for the people. It was a straight fight between Trinamool, BJP

ABANTIKA GHOSH: What are the milestones you crossed in your last tenure and what remains to be done?

Last time, we had committed to two-three agendas, which have been completed to a large extent. We wanted to bring down the dropout rate among Marathi Muslims, specifically of girls, to zero. From 72 per cent, we could only bring it down to 42-43 per cent. In Karnataka, Maharashtra and Assam, the dropout rates have fallen. We are again committed to bringing the rate down to zero. We have increased our scholarships. Our campaign 'Padho aur Badho' will encourage people to send their children, especially girls, to school. Under 'Hunar Haat', we created a platform and market for skilled craftsmen, in Mumbai, Delhi, Puducherry, Goa, Lucknow and Allahabad. This time, starting next month in Bengaluru, we plan to hold it in more than a hundred places and provide opportunities to 5 lakh craftsmen.

Through the Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram, we want to correct the inadequacy of educational infrastructure in far-away places. The number of schools is few, there are no ITIs, polytechnics, commerce centres, or hostels. The scheme, earlier present in 90 districts, is now in 308 districts. We aim to fill the gap in 100 days.

ABANTIKA GHOSH: 'Minority' is a politically sensitive term in our country. Who, in your and the Prime Minister's opinion, is a minority?

We have six notified minorities — Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Jain, Buddhists and Parsis. Earlier, a school would be constructed, or facilities like water and electricity would be provided, only if the minority population was at least 70 per cent. But we removed the concept last year under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram. Even if the minority presence is only 25 per cent, if we build a school in that area, all people from the poorer sections will be able to study there. The step had a positive impact in Telangana where we started Open Schools, modelled on the concept of gurukuls. In two years, we have built 92 schools. We want to build centres of formal education for minority communities, unlike a madarsa.

COOMI KAPOOR: As Minority Affairs minister, does it worry you that your party does not have a single elected Muslim member of Parliament? What is the way out? Separate electorates?

The Centre has six notified minorities. Different states also decide their own minorities keeping in mind the socio-economic conditions, etc. For example, in Maharashtra, the Jew community is a minority. Approximately seven states, including Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, have given Jains the status of a minority community, after which the Centre, keeping in mind the individual state-wise conditions, had included the Jain community in the list of notified minorities. We spoke to Mehbooba Mufti's government in Jammu & Kashmir, and to the principal secretaries of Nagaland, Manipur and other Northeastern states, about what can be done for the actual minorities in those states. The states are free to decide what facilities the minorities in those states should get.

P VAIDYANATHAN IYER: One of the allegations against the NDA government is that it hasn't been able to take Muslims along — that they are made to feel insecure and unequal, and have to provide a certificate of nationalism. What are your thoughts?

Most of the talk around intolerance is done keeping Modi in mind, especially after 2014. After 2014, count the number of incidents where Muslims were targeted. I can tell you about the incidents before that. I have faced two-month-long curfews when I lived in Allahabad. We couldn't leave our homes except for the one hour when the curfew was broken, during which we would buy vegetables. For every 10 innocent (Muslims) who died, 400 were put in the jail too.

Second, there have been no terrorist attacks in the past five years. The government's strong political and nationalist will has played a part in it, and the country's people also had a big contribution in it, especially the Muslims. If IS (Islamic State) or al-Qaeda could not establish their roots in our country, even though they did it in big European nations, it's thanks to Indian Muslims. This is why no one has ever doubted their nationalism and bhakti (patriotism), no one still doubts it, and never will. As far as their freedom is concerned, there is what the Constitution guarantees them. India is the only country where they get to read the namaaz even on the streets, where the azaan is broadcast through loud-speakers in mosques.

ANANTHAKRISHNAN G: In February, the Supreme Court referred to the National Commission for Minorities a petition about the decline in Hindu population in eight states and them being given the minority status. What

'No one has ever doubted Muslims' nationalism. No one still doubts it, and never will'

Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi talks about the trolls he gets subjected to, says more than 32 per cent minorities have benefited from Mudra Yojana and claims discrimination against the community has "reduced"



Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi with Senior Assistant Editor Abantika Ghosh in *The Indian Express* newsroom. Gajendra Yadav

is your view?

The Centre has six notified minorities. Different states also decide their own minorities keeping in mind the socio-economic conditions, etc. For example, in Maharashtra, the Jew community is a minority. Approximately seven states, including Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, have given Jains the status of a minority community, after which the Centre, keeping in mind the individual state-wise conditions, had included the Jain community in the list of notified minorities. We spoke to Mehbooba Mufti's government in Jammu & Kashmir, and to the principal secretaries of Nagaland, Manipur and other Northeastern states, about what can be done for the actual minorities in those states. The states are free to decide what facilities the minorities in those states should get.

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I'm not saying that there is no discrimination; it has been happening for the past 70 years. But discrimination has reduced, though it should completely end.

ABANTIKA GHOSH: Your party performed well in West Bengal and your campaign was distinctly Hindutva in tone. 'Jai Sri Ram' has taken on a political colour. How does this fit in with your definition of secularism?

If you believe Jai Sri Ram is communal, then so was Mahatma Gandhi with his 'Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram, Patit Paavan Sita Ram'. If you go to a village, you will see both Muslims and Hindus saying Ram Ram ji (as way of salutation), does that make them communal? Jai Sri Ram cannot be a political slogan, it is part of our culture.

I feel Mamata ji's reaction has become a joke. That reaction began after the election. After her loss, she started clamping down on people who utter Jai Sri Ram. In Bengal, the BJP is an effective and strong alternative for the people. It was a straight fight between the TMC and the BJP.

RAVISH TIWARI: The 2019 election results showed that the Yadav-Muslim combination did not work, and the BJP won't give ticket to Muslims in UP-Bihar. So where does the Muslim voter go?

The socialist movement started by Acharya Narendra Dev, Ram Manohar Lohia, and later by George Fernandes, Raj Narain, Janeshwar Mishra — that long line

of leadership has ended. After that came Mulayam Singh's era but that was limited only to UP, though the socialist revolution was prevalent in Maharashtra and, in a very large way, in Karnataka. Socialism became a politics of convenience, and then eventually, the revolution got scattered. The socialists had a 'gair Congressvaad (anti-Congress) stand. That is where they began and from there, they ended up in the Congress's lap. That is when it ended. Look how badly the Yadav-Muslim combination failed.

COOMI KAPOOR: You were part of Atal Bihari Vajpayee's Cabinet too. Are you a token Muslim for the BJP?

This time, when the PM set an agenda in the Central Hall of Parliament, with Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, he added, 'Sabka Vishwas (everyone's faith)'. To complete this agenda, the responsibility was, of course, on everyone, but was even more on the shoulders of the Ministry of Minority Affairs.

ABANTIKA GHOSH: Was 'Sabka Vishwas' said in reference to the Muslim community? Was this an acknowledgment of a trust deficit?

No, no, Sabka Vishwas includes everyone — the faith of the poor, faith of the backward communities, even of the people whom the light of progress has not reached. It is infinite. We cannot say that 100 per cent of the Indian population is with us, 50 per cent might have misconceptions, and we have to align them with us.

RAVISH TIWARI: WhatsApp played a big part in this election, especially with a surge in messages that promoted polarisation. What do you make of this phenomenon?

I think social media is a good thing, but anti-social activities are not. I'm subjected to so many abuses every day that I'm forced to acknowledge them. For example, when our ministry announced that five crore students would get scholarships in five years — and there are six notified minorities — the troll army started accusing us of Muslim appeasement. Yesterday, a colleague was telling us that we give more scholarships to the SC and ST community.

But one good thing that has happened is that people slowly become aware of the fabricated nature of these messages and differentiate it from real news, though I can't tell you about its reach and impact. These days people have mobile phones in every village.

SHALEEN AGRAWAL: There were a series of lynchings that happened during the previous NDA term. There have also been instances of Cabinet ministers garlanding lynchings, etc. How will people have faith?

The Rajasthan lynching incident (dairy farmer Pehlu Khan was lynched allegedly by a mob of gau rakshaks in Alwar, Rajasthan) and one incident in Haryana, which was revealed later to be a family feud, have seen immediate arrests. In the Rajasthan incident, the culprit was not bailed for six-eight months. The state machinery and government should take action. Instead of seeing them for what they are — as heinous crimes — they are given a communal colour. That only strengthens the conspirators.

ABANTIKA GHOSH: The recent incident in Bengal, where doctors were beaten up, has taken a communal colour.

I agree with that. For so many years, clashes would break out over bursting of firecrackers after a cricket match and people would kill each other. Such incidents have gone down, but should stop completely.

SHALINI NAIR: The civil society has long demanded an anti-discrimination legislation to protect all religious minorities. But Muslims are still denied homes in cities and judged on their eating habits. There's also confusion

about the Uniform Civil Code.

Not giving homes etc. to people because they belong to a certain religion or community is an illness of the mindset which needs to be eradicated. As for the Uniform Civil Code, some say that with it you won't be able to read the namaaz, or go to a church or gurdwara. Your right to your religious identity will be erased. This is wrong. It doesn't imply any limitations on religious rights. There can be discussions on personal laws. The Uniform Civil Code won't happen without consultations.

ABANTIKA GHOSH: During your last tenure, the Haj subsidy was done away with. What was its impact on Haj 2018?

It was the decision of Modi's government, and we informally spoke to many stakeholders. That time, however, the quota increased from 1,50,000 to 1,75,000, and that became a bigger problem as we had to take more people. The removal of subsidy helped in making it cheaper from embarkation points like Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Kochi and Lucknow, and it increased a little in other points, by Rs 1,000-1,500 in Srinagar and Guwahati, and by Rs 100-200 in some other places. We were being lured in the name of subsidy. The current lot of two lakh people are also going without subsidy. The removal of mehram — the condition that women Haj travellers cannot travel without male companions — was a boost too, a rule that earlier governments had set probably keeping in mind the crowds there. Last year, 1,300 women travelled alone, and this time, 2,400-2,500 are going.

RAVISH TIWARI: A big asset of the Muslim communities is the Waqf property. But it has not been leveraged.

Around 6,00,000 properties are registered under the Waqf Board. Defence has the most land in the country, followed by Waqf, and then the Railways. We are trying to geo-map the properties in a year. We will connect the Waqf boards through video-conferencing, conduct weekly consultations, encourage them to build schools, hospitals, skill-development centres, hostels and ITIs there. And, fund them 100 per cent under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram because the Waqf boards don't have money. We have given five employees to every Waqf board. The problems of the Waqf are of their own. The mafia or the encroachers are within the Waqf boards.



"There have been no terror attacks in last five years. Govt's strong will played a part in it... (Muslims) also had a big contribution... If IS or al-Qaeda did not take roots here, it's thanks to Indian Muslims



The India-New Zealand match at Nottingham was washed out. All eyes are now on Manchester

Manchester united

One of the most enduring rivalries on the cricket field plays out once again today as India meet Pakistan in a World Cup match. Away from the Old Trafford stadium, SRIRAM VEERA meets people, both of Indian and Pakistani origin, as they grapple with questions of identity, nationalism and religion. But for now, they are united in their biggest worry: will the weather hold?

THE CONCH shell booms. "Om Jai Jagadish hare, swami..." the chant fills the oldest temple in Manchester. The Friday sun has set and dark skies return to drench the city. Inside, priest Krishan Joshi, who came to England 23 years ago, performs an *aarti* after finishing the chants. A few Indians, eyes shut, dwell on their dreams.

In her 40s, Sarbani Chatterjee — "Manchester is okay I guess, it's not Kolkata, it's raining all the time here," she says — wants to enroll her son Ishaan into a cricket club. Joshi offers help, his son is at a cricket club. "80 pounds for four weeks. It's very good," he says.

Joshi's son, who is at cricket and comes later, wants to play cricket for England. "Younger son... opposite. No cricket. His mother brought him a 150-pound Apple watch and in three days, he opened to find out what is inside," he says. Laughter. Sarbani coaxes the priest, asking for help to get her son into the same cricket club as his son. "Kuch kariye na (Please do something), they are not answering my calls." Priest as medium to God and cricket.

"Do you have tickets for the India-Pakistan match? Ishaan would love to go," she asks Joshi next. Sarbani is disappointed with the reply — Joshi talks about how in his WhatsApp group, the 70-pound ticket is being offered at 1,000. Outside, the pitter-patter continues.

While a dry Friday afternoon had raised hope, rains came down on Saturday afternoon, raising worries about Sunday's cricket's biggest blockbuster event, the India vs Pakistan match at Manchester's Old Trafford stadium. For the teams, the result of this league game will play a crucial role in their qualification to the knock-out stage, but for the fans, it isn't just a fight for the two points at stake. It's about bragging rights.

At a kebab house, not too far away from the temple, Amir Bhatti, a middle-aged man who came from Pakistan 12 years ago and now runs this shop, is amazed that pavilion tickets are being sold in the black market for 4,000 pounds. "A regular job would earn you 1,500 to 2,000 pounds a month. So that would mean more than two months' salary for a ticket. *Shauk hai, logon ka. Apni apni marzi* (People have their interests)."

Amir's "shauk" is watching the Indian television show *Crime Patrol*. He has subscribed to it on his phone. "The show tells you what can happen when life gets out of control. I tell my children also to watch it." He is trying his best to keep his life in control. The wife and children are in Pakistan, in colleges, and he didn't want to disturb their education. "Once they finish studies, maybe I will bring them here. Not now."

Back at the temple, Sarbani says, "I don't know too many Pakistanis. There are lots of them here. They are not bad." And adds, "They have been okay to me. I don't have any Pakistani friends but I buy all my stuff in their shops."

Perhaps, one of the earliest Indians to come to this city was in the 1880s — an elephant named, what else, 'Maharajah'. Bought in an auction by a rich Englishman, Maharajah was much admired and his remains are now

at the Manchester museum. Soon after Maharajah, around the 1850s, commoners started pouring in from the subcontinent.

The Manchester migration story is an old one. The city's reliable power supply from rivers in the Pennines, its soft water that was perfect for washing and bleaching clothes and the damp air which ensured the cotton threads didn't snap as easily as it did in some other places, ensured that the city became the Cottonopolis of the world.

Thousands of Pakistanis and Indians were employed in "dark, satanic (textile) mills", with several iconic black-and-white photographs freezing that image of smoke swirling out of tall mill chimneys. A BBC documentary records the health hazards to the workers — the loss of fingers, breathing problems due to cotton dust and how children were entrusted with the dangerous job of crawling under machines to pick any loose bits of cotton threads. At its peak in 1853, Manchester had 108 cotton mills and in 1912, eight billion yards of cloth were produced. The World Wars slowed down the process before another cotton boom in the 1950s had Pakistanis and, to a lesser extent, Indians pouring in to the city again.

Sarbani's husband Barun Chatterjee, who works in the tax and revenue department, has a wry smile when he talks about how the English bastardised "Chattopadhyay" to "Chatterjee" in the colonial years because they couldn't pronounce it. "But now, they can't even pronounce Chatterjee — most here call me ChatterGEE."

"Yeh sab dono mulk key siyason ka problem hai (These are all problems created by governments in both countries)," says Amir, the kebab shop owner, as he sits down for a chat after slicing the meat hanging from a hook. "After the English, our second largest customers here are Indians. Then Pakistanis. We don't talk about Kashmir or whatever — even when it comes up, it's usually talked about as failures of governments. We have no problems between ourselves. All of us get along well here."

The Tatas have a base in Manchester and a number of Indians work and live in the city. A couple of weeks ago, there was a bit of a ruckus at Amir's kebab shop — almost as if a scene from *Crime Patrol* had spilled out. "A white man walked in and started to yell racist profanities at our staff. A few Indian customers then helped us to send the man out. I must add that the English are usually okay.



Joshi, a priest at a Manchester temple. His 10-year-old son wants to play cricket for England; (right) Amir Bhatti, who owns a kebab shop in the city, came from Pakistan 12 years ago



PAST ENCOUNTERS

Since the inaugural 1975 World Cup, India and Pakistan have played against each other six times. India has won all of them

MARCH 4, 1992, SYDNEY

By 1992, the insurgency in Punjab was almost dead. At the SCG, some spectators in the Pakistani section of the crowds raised posters supporting the Khalistani movement. But as always, players from the two sides were friends off the field and Javed Miandad's slapstick jumps to protest Kiran More's hyperactive appealing was more comedy than attrition. India won by 43 runs

MARCH 9, 1996, BANGALORE

The World Cup quarterfinal between India and Pakistan was played at the Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore. The 1996 World Cup was co-hosted by India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. India won the match by 39 runs

JUNE 8, 1999, MANCHESTER

The two teams played a match against each other at the World Cup Super Sixes at the Old Trafford as their countries fought the Kargil War. The players of both the teams conducted themselves brilliantly on the field. Yet again, India beat Pakistan by 47 runs

MARCH 1, 2003, CENTURION

The two teams met after a long time for a World Cup match at SuperSport Park in Centurion, South Africa. This time too, India won, batting second, by six wickets

MARCH 30, 2011, MOHALI

Then Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh met his Pakistani counterpart Yousuf Raza Gilani for the World Cup semifinal match in Mohali. The scars of the Mumbai 26/11 attacks were still fresh. But on the sidelines of the match, peace talks resumed as Gilani invited Singh to Pakistan. India won by 29 runs

FEBRUARY 15, 2015, ADELAIDE

India and Pakistan started their World Cup campaign by playing against each other at the Adelaide Oval. Before the match, Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif, which a section of the media described as cricket diplomacy. On the field, it was business as usual. India won by 76 runs

One in ten creates some problems now and then. *Unka desh hai, we have come to work here — I guess some might have problems with that. Jaayaz hai (It's natural).*"

Identity and nationalism are hot-button subjects in this country, especially in the times of Brexit. Ironically for an imperial nation that once ruled the world, Britain is now trying to define itself. Podcasts, broadsheets, intellectual magazines such as the *London Review of Books* sweat a lot about "Englishness". The writer Madeleine Bunting wrote, "Why does that make us shiver? What is about Englishness that makes polite society nervous? The definition of English nationalism has been abandoned to football hooligans and the far right."

How then do Indian- and Pakistani-origin people in Manchester deal with questions of identity and nationalism?

At the Manchester temple, Shivanjali Pandya, a 20-something dentistry student, who is here to offer her gratitude at how her exams have gone so far, says she was born in England. "Whenever someone asks me, I say I am an Indian. I am from a Gujarati family. I started to speak English only after I went to school," she says in a British accent.

And what about when no one asks? "Hmm... mixed identity, I guess. Part-Indian, part English. That's fine, right?" Sitting next to her, Ishaan, the 10-year-old son of the priest, pipes up: "I see myself as mixed too. I am not Indian, I am not English, I am mixed." At Stockport Road, inhabited by Pakistani establishments sprinkled alongside three mosques, is a bustling market called 'Longsight'. Here, about 200 shops sell everything from clothes to jewellery, fruits and Pakistani mangoes. Mohammad Shaghir has a shop that sells *kurtas* and other traditional clothes. Twenty years ago, Shaghir moved here from Mirpur in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir — "Azad Kashmir," as he calls it.

He now lives in Bradford, a multi-racial town with Muslims forming a quarter of the population and which is some 40 miles from Manchester. As the talk veers to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Pakistani counterpart Imran Khan and his hopes of peace, he suddenly says: "Can I tell you something? Who are Lahore and India to decide the fate of Kashmir? *Yeh inki baap ki jaagir nahi hai* (It's not their ancestral property)."

An elderly man is walking around the Manchester temple hall, collecting Indian flags to be carried for the game. "There were

so many but people never return them. *Vaapas hi nahi dete.*" Priest Joshi calms him down. "Hota hai, uncle. *Apne log hi hain* (It happens, they are our own)." "Bhai, these things aren't cheap. I need them now as NDTV guys called. They want me to come to the ground on Saturday with the flags." Nationalism and religion in a temple.

Trilok Saini came to England 50 years ago. He started off as a sales representative of encyclopaedias, then did odd jobs. His wife, who was a teacher in India, joined the post office in Manchester, retired as its head and now gets a "good pension".

In his telling, it was because India insisted on proper passports and documentation in the 1950s that there are more Pakistanis than Indians in Manchester. "They just loaded themselves into ships and planes and left. Not us. This happened because of Nehru's idealism. Else, we would have been more (than the Pakistanis). Now that Modi is here, everything will be fine."

A mini-rant ensues about the familiar thorny issues between India and Pakistan. He admits there aren't too many problems between Pakistanis and Indians in England. "Kya hogi idhar? Na desh hamara, na zameen hamari — idhar hi jeena hai ek saath, idhar hi mama hai (What will happen here? Neither is this country ours, nor the land — we live here together, we die here.)"

Shahid Hashmi, a senior AFP journalist from Pakistan, talks about how he met a dhabawala at Bristol. "Rana ka Dhaba, born in Rawalpindi, brought up in Amritsar, and he has now been running a dhaba in Bristol for many years. He told me, "I don't serve just food. I serve love from our two nations."

Amir, the kebab shop owner, has done his bit to extend that love in Manchester. Four years ago, when a travelling Indian journalist was struggling to find a way to get *raakhi* from his sister as he didn't have a fixed address, Amir suggested that the journalist give his sister the shop's address. The courier arrived soon after.

Meanwhile, a lot of banter is swirling up at the University of Manchester between Indians and Pakistanis. Shivanjali, the dental student, says they have had a match for a while now — Indians vs Pakistanis. Mixed teams of boys and girls, born and brought up in England, playing the age-old cricketing rivalry.

"It is great fun. First we used to keep count of our wins and losses — but as it went on, that stopped."

Even in this dentistry college, some old tropes refuse to die: "The Pakistanis seem to have the better bowlers," Shivani laughs. "Our games usually become bowlers vs batsmen." The group of Indian and Pakistani youngsters went to the Oval to catch the India vs Australia game; some also went to one of the Pakistan matches. No one in that group, though, could afford to get hold of a ticket for the India-Pakistan game on Sunday. "I guess, it might be rained out, anyway," Shivani says.

Interestingly, her WhatsApp cricket group has been silent about the match. "Because my Pakistani friends think India is a much stronger team and that we will win! I am sure the messages will start coming in on match day — and depending on which team is on top, it will escalate. Whoever wins, we shall all celebrate later."

12 BIG PICTURE



5:00 AM Jagannath Rupanwar spends his nights on the roof of the driver's cabin of the truck



5:30 AM Every morning, he washes his vehicle and recites a quick prayer before hitting the road



8:02 AM Dhamodi, a village of 452 people, is where the truck makes its first halt. The village depends entirely on the well for its water



11:19 AM Rupanwar's next destination is a percolation tank, one of three filling points in Mokhada tehsil where the tank is filled



1:51 PM At Kundachapada, there is chaos as soon as the water starts gushing out. Villagers push and shove and knock pots around



7:26 PM "We cook in the truck and sometimes eat together. We even sleep here," says Rupanwar

Record heat adds to woes

AMITABH SINHA

A SHORTAGE of water in the weeks leading up to the monsoon season is not unusual in many parts of the country. By this time, water stored in reservoirs, ponds and wells from the previous season's rains are near complete depletion, and the demand for water is at a peak due to high temperatures.

This year, however, the water shortage has been a little more acute in the states of Maharashtra, Gujarat and Karnataka. Water expert Madhav Chitale described the situation in Maharashtra as a "one-in-25-year event".

To add to the woes, temperatures this summer have been abnormally higher, especially in the western half of the country where the water shortage is more acute. Average monthly temperatures in the months of March, April and May have been 1-2 degree Celsius higher than normal in most areas in western India.

In the month of May, in almost the entire western half, from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, and the entire south, maximum and mean average monthly temperatures were 1-2 degree Celsius higher than normal.

The demand for water is at its peak in summer. That is not unusual. The hotter it is, the more the demand for water, mainly for use by humans and cattle.

And because this summer has been unusually hotter, the demand has been higher. Consequently, the supply of water has been put under strain. The fact that it did not rain in the pre-monsoon season, and rainfall has been deficient even otherwise, has led to acute shortage.

EXPLAINED Inefficiency in water usage

EXPERTS SAY one of the biggest reasons for water shortage is the inefficiency in usage. Wastage is rampant in domestic use, which accounts for about 5 per cent of total water available.

country has been going down consistently due to population pressure, and also from a rise in demand from industries. As of now, the per capita availability would be somewhere around 1400 cubic metre per year. We are already officially categorised as water-stressed.

India's per capita water availability has fallen from 5,178 cubic metre per year in 1951 to 1,544 cubic metre in 2011, mainly because of the tripling of population from 361 million to 1.21 billion. In 2015, the per capita water availability is said to have fallen below the 1,500-cubic-metre mark for the first time.

While the demand has been rising rapidly, the supply has been constant, even dwindling. India receives an annual precipitation of about 4,000 billion cubic metres, and this is the primary source for replenishing rivers, ground-water, lakes, reservoirs and ponds.

"We are in a crisis situation, not this year and not just in Maharashtra. And we need to do much more than we are currently doing to address this," says Hegde.

The water truck

Maharashtra is witnessing one of its worst water emergencies in years, with the government deploying 6,597 tankers to supply water to 5,243 villages and 11,293 hamlets — the highest ever deployment of these vehicles in the state. SANDEEP ASHAR spends a day with MH 09A 9646 and its driver as they travel 148 km to deliver water to some of the most parched villages of Palghar district

PHOTOGRAPHS: PRASHANT NADKAR



At the filling station in Mokhada tehsil, Trucks refill their tankers at least twice a day

ITS ON a Wednesday morning and Jagannath Rupanwar, 50, has risen much before the sun. Driver of a tanker that supplies water to villages in Mokhada, a tehsil in Maharashtra's Palghar district, he washes the vehicle, fixes two 40-foot-long pipes on top of the tanker, recites a quick prayer, and by 5.45 am, has hit the road for his first trip of the day — a 40-km journey to Dhamodi village from the Mokhada junction, where Rupanwar has spent the night, stretched out on a thin mattress on the roof of the driver's cabin of the truck.

While several unusually extreme factors have combined to make this a particularly bad year for water, experts say the shortage is more of a structural problem, and the situation would not improve significantly even in a good monsoon year.

At the filling station, Rupanwar stations his truck next to a generator. A site assistant attaches a pipe from the tanker to the generator, which sucks water out of the reservoir and drops it inside the tanker. Once the tanker is filled, Rupanwar assesses the water's potability.

As he drives to the filling station, eyes firmly on the road ahead, Rupanwar recalls how, growing up in Sangli, he had to cycle several kilometres to fetch water. As the truck passes a village, a man waves the vehicle down and hands over a tiffin to Rupanwar. "He is the local schoolmaster. He often cooks for me... a kind man."

Rupanwar parks his truck next to the village well, and climbs up to hurl down the pipes. He attaches one end of a pipe to the tank's tap and directs the other end to the well. Just as the water comes gushing out, two women rush towards the tanker carrying plastic pots tied at the neck with ropes. Their homes are the nearest to the well and they had heard the truck as it entered the village. Minutes later, other women and children come running towards the well, vessels in hand.

For seven days of the week, Rupanwar's routine involves filling up water from this tank, heading out to a village, emptying water, and then coming back for a refill. Some days, he covers three villages, four on others, covering an average of 150 km a day.

An hour and a half later, around 9:40 am, on his way to the filling station, the truck halts near Mokhada's main junction, at a tea stall that is a popular stopover for tanker drivers. It is time for some chai-naasta. "As we run on tight schedules, there is no time for a lunch break. So we eat a quick, small breakfast," he says, ordering chai and bhaji.

same. In no time, others do the same, their pots rattling down the well.

"This tanker comes every alternate day. So I will have to stock up for tomorrow," says Sailee, adding that she will have to draw about 10 pots of water to see her family through the next couple of days. As Guniben dangerously bends over the wall of the well, now peering into the inky black water, she brusquely dismisses those who ask her to step back.

Over the years, the local administration has found it difficult to get contractors to work in this backward region. This year, bids had to be floated six times before the administration signed up Shinde — his firm was the only one that applied. "These areas are challenging. Villages are spread out and the water has to be carried over longer distances. Many roads aren't motorable. Besides, there is no petrol pump or garage in the entire tehsil. So if your vehicle breaks down in this heat, you have to travel at least 30 km to another tehsil to get a mechanic to fix the truck," says Shinde.

Two years ago, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis had set 2019 as the year to make Maharashtra "tanker-free", vouching for the water conservation and drought-proofing works carried out under the government's flagship Jaluykt Shivar initiative.

As he greets some of the other tanker drivers, he says, "Most of the tanker drivers in Mokhada are from Sangli. We have been employed by the same contractor. We are like family." Soon, the contractor, Vijay Shinde, 47, and his associate, Kakasaheb Patil, 49, both from Sangli, join in.

Over tea, Shinde complains about the state of the water business. "It isn't as good as it used to be. The rent we get from the government has gone up, but our margins have dropped," he claims. Patil admits that



This colour-coded map, accessed from the website of the India Meteorological Department, shows the deviation of maximum temperature over India from its normal value on June 13. Shades of yellow, pink and red represent temperatures higher than normal while shades of green, blue and purple represent temperature lower than normal. The area over Gujarat and Rajasthan turned red as the water truck has been listed as drought-hit. Of these, 107 talukas have been listed as having severe drought conditions

KARNATAKA OF 176 talukas, 156 have been listed as drought-hit. Of these, 107 talukas have been listed as having severe drought conditions

MAHARASHTRA Residents of 5,243 villages and 11,293 hamlets are solely dependent on tanker water supply for daily needs

in the past contractors could inflate bills, "but since 2015, there are GPS devices on each truck. Tankers are tracked on a real-time basis".

Shinde has a fleet of 44 trucks, of which 34 run in Mokhada and the others in neighbouring tehsils. Of the 34 trucks, Shinde himself owns seven and has hired the rest from other tanker owners for a fee. At Rs 158 per 1,000 litre, Shinde gets a rent of Rs 1,896 per tanker per day from the government. Along with the Rs 24 that they get for every kilometre travelled, contractors such as Shinde make about Rs 5,500 per tanker per day.

At some distance from the filling point, the tankers line up. Rupanwar's truck leads the queue of eight trucks. Patil and Sonar carefully inspect the dirt road, walking for about a kilometre to make sure the road — the soil still soft from the overnight rains — can take the weight of the trucks. Patil then signals Rupanwar to bring in his truck to the filling station.

At the filling station, Rupanwar stations his truck next to a generator. A site assistant attaches a pipe from the tanker to the generator, which sucks water out of the reservoir and drops it inside the tanker. Once the tanker is filled, Rupanwar assesses the water's potability.

It is past noon. The refilled tanker is now headed to Kundachapada, about 22 km away. "We are behind schedule. Let's move," directs Sonar, who is still in Rupanwar's truck. A Nashik resident, Sonar's daily routine involves catching a 5.15 am bus to come to Mokhada, 62 km from his home. One here, he goes to the filling station, ensures the tankers are filled, checks the water quality, coordinates with the tanker drivers and the contractor, and visits some villages for "surprise inspections".

"During these summer months, I usually wrap up work only after 9:15 pm and reach home after 11:30 pm," he says. Rupanwar drops Sonar off at a nearby junction, where some villagers are waiting to meet him.

There is chaos as soon as the water starts gushing out. Schoolchildren, still in their uniforms, clamour on to well with their pots. Villagers push and shove, elbowing each other and knocking pots around. Since the bottom of the well is muddy, most people rush to collect water directly at the point where it enters the well. "We have been waiting since 8 am for the truck to arrive," says Vanita Jadhav, 27, angrily.

With a population of around 700, Kundachapada is served by two tankers every day. But with the overnight rain causing a hold-up at the filling station, the tanker that was to deliver water in the morning, has not yet arrived, while Rupanwar himself is running a couple of hours behind schedule.

Dharti Digha, 32, balances four pots on her head and walks home briskly. "I cannot speak. I have to make multiple trips for water. It will take me at least three hours," she says.

The tank now empty, Rupanwar leaves the villagers squabbling around the well and heads out. He will have to refill the tank again, before moving to the next destination — Hattichapada.

As he drives to the filling station, eyes firmly on the road ahead, Rupanwar recalls how, growing up in Sangli, he had to cycle several kilometres to fetch water. As the truck passes a village, a man waves the vehicle down and hands over a tiffin to Rupanwar. "He is the local schoolmaster. He often cooks for me... a kind man."

As Rupanwar starts emptying the water into the well, Ramdas Nadge, 37, walks up to him and pats him on the back. "You are a good man. You are our lifeline." His wife, Thekki, pleads, "Please do something to get us a water supply connection."

This is the last trip of the day and Rupanwar is visibly tired, his right hand on the steering wheel and the left slumped on the gear stick. He turns on the music system — Yuh! chala chali, it plays. Rupanwar turns on the volume knob and hums along.

Around 6:15 pm, he parks his truck near the Mokhada intersection; there are other water tankers here before him. "We cook in the truck and sometimes eat together. After dinner, all of us sleep in our vehicles itself. It's a hard life, but at least we are doing our bit to help people," says Rupanwar. Once the monsoon arrives, and reservoirs fill up, he knows he will be back home.

Around 8:30 pm, the drivers are all back in their trucks. As he hops into the driver's seat, Rupanwar turns on the ignition key, looks at the odometer and smiles: "Look, we rode 148 km today."

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A VENDOR ON A TRAIN

The hawkker's song

A Surat hawkker was recently arrested for selling on trains without a licence. Much like him, as Subhash Chander hawks and sings to draw customers — jingles featuring PM Modi and names of companies and universities — he does so in the hope that he will get a licence some day. Then, he says, he will write the PM a 'Thank You' note

DIVYA GOYAL
LUDHIANA/JALANDHAR

"Green green matar khaao, Modi ke gun gaao... Santrey ki goli khaao, Smart City Ludhiana jao... Kaali khatti goli khaao, Blackberry company ke maalik ban jao... Lal-lal goli khaao, Lovely University mein jao..." (Eat green peas, sing Modi's praises; eat orange candies, go to Smart City Ludhiana; eat black and sour candies, be the owner of Blackberry; eat red candies, go to Lovely University)..."

It's 9.30 am and the Chandigarh-Amritsar Intercity Express, late by almost 35 minutes, has just pulled into Ludhiana station. With two cloth bags stuffed with candies and snacks, Subhash Chander, 45, enters one of the general coaches. He is one of the many vendors who hawk their wares on running trains, hopping on at stations and disembarking at the next halt.

With almost all of them operating without permits, these hawkkers often run the risk of getting rounded up during special drives by the Railway Protection Force. On June 1, the Railway Protection Force in Surat arrested a hawkker after filing an FIR under several sections of the Railway Act, including for hawkking and begging, "spreading nuisance or using abusive language in railway carriage" and for "unlawful entry into train", among others. Avdesh Dubey, the hawkker, was arrested came days after a video of him mimicking and mocking politicians, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Congress leaders Sonia and Rahul Gandhi, went viral on social media. While the Railways said Dubey was a "repeat offender" and had been caught several times for selling goods on trains without a licence, his arrest led to an uproar, with claims that he was targeted for mocking the PM.

Chander says he feels for Dubey, calling it "injustice being done to poor". "This shouldn't have happened in Modi raj. Modi is a good boy... He is Made in India," smiles Chander, who has studied up to Class 12.

Much like Dubey who used parody to draw customers, Chander sings self-composed jingles — featuring everything from Smart City to Blackberry, Google to Lovely Professional University and Ludhiana's Clock Tower. But it's Modi who features more often than anyone else.

"Aaj ke zamaane mein advertising ke bina kuch bikte dekha hai aapne (Have you seen anything getting sold without advertising these days?)" he says, adding that he is not scared about his jingles on Modi. "If I use the PM's name and that gets me two meals a day, what is wrong with that? In fact, the poor will bless Modi," says Chander, who calls himself a "good salesman".

As he spots a child pestering his mother for candies, Chander sings, "Khatti meethi goli khaao, Google ke scientist ban jao (Eat sweet-sour candies, be a Google scientist).

His jingles now get more local, featuring names of private companies, tuition and



Subhash Chander, who hawks his wares on running trains, wants the government to legalise hawkkers like him and issue licences. Gurmeet Singh

coaching centres and wedding halls. "I have tied up with these companies and every time I sing about them. I get a commission. This gives some extra income," he claims. He doesn't disclose "the commission" and moves ahead to the next coach.

Jalandhar Cantonment station is just a few minutes away and that is where Chander will disembark and catch a train back to Ludhiana.

"It is safer to get off at Jalandhar Cantonment because at the station after that, Jalandhar City, there will be policemen and extra checking. If I get caught, my next two working days will be wasted. Everytime we are caught, we have to do sewa of policemen or pay a bribe of at least Rs 500 to get away. Once they took away all that I had earned the entire day. And if I get arrested, I call my wife and she gets me released," he says, adding that he has been caught at least five times in the past.

A "Modi fan", Chander, however, has a

few complaints. "Modi has forgotten that he was a vendor like us and used to sell tea. Then why are we being stopped now," he asks. But he is also hopeful. "I use Modi's name while singing because he is an honest PM. I will soon write him a letter, asking him to legalise hawkkers like me and issue us licences. We are ready to pay the licence fee. It will be even better if the government hires us and gives us a monthly salary. If such a day ever comes, I will write him a Thank You letter" he says.

Polio-stricken in his left leg and hand, Chander, who is from Khalilabad in Uttar Pradesh, has been living in Punjab since 1984. He claims he became a railway hawkker after government officials demanded a bribe of Rs 5 lakh when he applied for the post of a stenographer under the handicap quota.

"Before calling us illegal, politicians should clean up the system. I did not choose to become a hawkker. Where would I have got the Rs 5 lakh to bribe officials? I threw away

my Class 12 certificate in anger. Now, I earn 500-700 a day. When I was in Class 4, my mother had gone around begging because she did not have Rs 10 to pay my school fee. At least I am not begging," says Chander, who lives in Jalandhar city with his wife, in a room rented for Rs 1,500 a month.

Every day, he packs his lunch and leaves home at 7 am, getting back at 7 pm after making at least 15-20 trips a day between Ludhiana and Jalandhar. Once home, he prepares for the next day's work — making small packets of toffees, candies and savouries that he buys from wholesale markets.

Unable to ride a vehicle due to his disability, he walks around 6 km every morning from his home to Jalandhar City station. For the next 12 hours, Chander barely gets to sit as he walks from one compartment to another, carrying heavy bags. "I never board a train when it is moving. It is risky with my physical condition. But I have to walk between compartments and across tracks. All

this is risky," he says.

It's around 10.40 am and the train stops at Jalandhar Cantonment. Chander gets off the train and walks towards a "safe" spot on Platform Number 2 — a bench under a tree, where he sits down to have his first meal of the day. "Even if there is a good train approaching, I do not get up when I am eating. After all, aren't we all working to fill our stomachs," says Chander, taking a bite of his roti.

What are "good trains"? "Those on which I can make money. I do not get into AC chair coaches. Rich people there get offended. I also don't get onto trains from UP and Bihar. No customers there... they don't spend. My target customers are the middle-class who do not mind buying candies and biscuits," says Chander.

The Gazipur Express stops and goes, but Chander is waiting for the Malwa Superfast Express to take him to Ludhiana. That's a "good train".

TAKE 5

FACES ON THE FRINGES OF NEWS

A CLEANER AT THE PATIALA HOUSE COURTS COMPLEX IN NEW DELHI



"The courtroom has not been swept," Pragya Thakur had said

'People spit gutka & throw cigarette butts'

While attending a hearing in Mumbai on June 7 in the 2008 Malegaon blasts case, BJP MP Pragya Thakur refused to sit, saying the courtroom "has not been swept, I have allergies". A 62-year-old cleaner at Delhi's Patiala House courts speaks on what it takes to keep the courtroom clean

1 Recently, BJP MP Pragya Thakur complained about a dusty courtroom in Mumbai.

I have never heard of her... But the courts get dirty because people spit gutka and throw cigarette butts all over. They drink tea and throw cups around. Shouldn't they throw them in dustbins. We work very hard daily to keep the court clean.

2 How many people do the job?

There are about 12-14 cleaners and each person has to clean six to seven courtrooms. If any cleaner is absent, we have to do his or her work as well.

3 How long are your shifts?

We start working at 6.30 am. On most days, work continues till 3 pm. But, sometimes, it stretches to even 6 pm. We work for five-six days a week and receive a monthly salary of Rs 46,000.

4 What are your tools at work?

We use wipers, mops, brooms and phenyl.

5 Were you trained on the job?

No, I have been doing this work since my youth. I was only 20 years old when I first got a job as a court cleaner.

ANANYA TIWARI
(The writer is an intern)

Home they brought Hari Singh, Palu Ram

Seventy five years after they were declared missing in action while fighting for the British Army, their remains come home to families who stake claim to their legacy — through demands for statues, jobs

AMITAVA CHAKRABORTY

ON JUNE 1, the panchayat allotted us some space in the village. We did a bhumi puja. Now, we want the (state) government to install a statue of Sepoy Hari Singh there," says Bhim Singh, 50, about his paternal uncle, who died over two decades before he was born but whose ashes have just made their way home to Noganwa, Jhajjar district.

But "we don't know how he looked," says Ranbir Singh, who works at the district Sainik Welfare Office. "No one has a photograph of Hari Singh. Not even the Army."

A part of the British Indian Army's 13 Frontier Force Rifles' 4th Battalion, Hari Singh, then 20, had been declared 'Missing in Action' (MIA) on September 13, 1944, during a World War II battle against Germany's 362nd Infantry Division in Poggio Alto (near Florence). Recently, Italian authorities identified some remains found at the site as belonging to Singh.

On June 2, two urns, carrying ashes of Hari Singh and Sepoy Palu Ram, a resident of Nangthala near Hisar, who also died in the same battle, were flown in from Italy. The authorities there carried out a cremation of the remains, and the ashes were sent home to give their descendants an opportunity to complete their last rites.

As per service records, Palu joined the

British Indian Army on April 7, 1942, at the age of 17. His nephew Ramji Lal, who is not sure about his own age, says, "My grandfather Pat Ram had three sons, Palu, Birbal (both died in 1944) and my father Mojji (passed away in 1956). Palu joined the Army about the same time that I was born. So I don't have any memories of him. And no living member in this family has ever seen him."

However, growing up, Ramji Lal says, he heard stories about him. "Grandfather would say that after joining the Army, Palu came home only once. And then the War began."

After Palu went missing, the family kept receiving pension for as long as his parents were alive. "I won't lie... that helped in running the family," says Ramji, sitting on a cot at the family home in Nangthala village.

Even as the last of the people who knew Hari and Palu died waiting for news, in 1996, human bones turned up at Poggio Alto. Italian doctors started investigating these bones around 2010. On April 26, 2018, military historian and Italian Colonel Antonino Zarcone sent an email to the Defence Wing of the Indian Embassy in Rome, saying they may have finally found Hari and Palu.

The email said: "About 22 years ago, near Montale (about 15 km from Poggio Alto) were found the rest of the bodies of two Indian soldiers KIA [killed in action] while serving in the 8 Army (13 Frontier riflettere regiment). We were able to find the names of the soldiers



(Left) Hari Singh's relatives in Jhajjar's Noganwa village, Palu Ram's nephew Ramji Lal at his home in Nangthala, (below) box with Hari Singh's ashes. Amitava Chakraborty

who died (on) September 13, 1944. Hari Singh and Paul (Palu) Ram. Those bones are still stored in Prato by the Pubblica assistenza. The Commonwealth Grave Commission (CWGC), an organisation of six countries, including India, that maintains graves of Commonwealth soldiers who died in the two World Wars) was interested to get the permission to bury them inside the War Cemetery of Florence."

On May 23, 2018, the Defence Attache at the Indian mission, Colonel Rohit Teotia, wrote to the Army Headquarters in South Block mentioning Colonel Zarcone's letter, and added, "DNA and anthropometric tests conducted in 2012 revealed the remains to be those of non-European young adults of about 21 years of age... Data referenced from the CWGC relating to the time and loc (location) of the Battle (of Poggio Alto) and the List of missing pers (persons), led the investigation to conclude that the remains are those of Hari



Singh, 20 yrs old from Rohtak, and Palu Ram, who was 19 yrs old and came from Hissar."

That the 13 Frontier Force Rifles regiment was allocated to Pakistan army after the 1947 partition further complicated the search.

Colonel (retired) AS Yadav, the Sainik and Ardh Sainik Welfare Officer in Hisar, who partly oversaw the search operation, said, "DNA-matching was not done with members of the family. DNA was collected from the bones of the soldiers to determine, among other things, their age and height. Based on the age profile, the investigating team (in Italy) compiled a list of names of soldiers who were declared 'Missing in Action' from the Battle of Poggio Alto. The team then provided the details to the Indian Army and we carried out a search for the families. When they were identified, we took no-objection certificates from them and the cremation was carried out in accordance with CWGC norms."

Ex-servicemen and welfare organisers like retired Indian Navy official Dalvir Singh and retired Subedar Major Gulshan Kumar Bhatia carried out extensive searches on the ground for the families of the two soldiers. "Although we managed to narrow down the area with the help of information that had been provided, the search was not easy as both the soldiers were unmarried, hence without direct descendants. We went about asking members of panchayats and villagers to identify their other family members," says Dalvir Singh, adding, "I asked an acquaintance, Lilu Ram, a member of the Nangthala panchayat, about Palu Ram's family. When he confirmed, we visited Ramji Lal's house."

The most difficult phase of the search began then. "The absence of identification documents of the soldiers made verification extremely difficult. The family members had no documents that could be treated as proof of ancestry. In Palu Ram's case, we finally managed to find a *bahi* (a book with financial details maintained by his father Pat Ram) that mentioned his name," says Dalvir Singh.

Bhatia says "it was a race against time" as the documents had to be verified and the status report had to be submitted on or before August 2, 2018. "We had to get an NOC from a family member to have the soldier cremated in Italy and the ashes brought to India," he says.

The ashes were flown to Delhi on June 2, 2018, and handed over to the families the next day. In Jhajjar, a ceremonial function, attended by Haryana Agriculture Minister Om Prakash Dhankar, was organised by the soldiers' welfare board to hand over the urn containing Hari's ashes to his family, in Nangthala, hundreds of people from neighbouring villages gathered at Ramji's house to pay their tributes.

Palu's family returned two days later after immersing his ashes in the Ganga in Haridwar. Ramji and his three sons, Ram Swarup, 41, Mohan Lal, 38, and Ramesh, 37, work in the 10-acre field adjacent to the house that Ramji inherited from his father following the death of his two brothers.

The families say they aren't satisfied. Taking a long drag on his *hookah*, at his mod-

est two-room home in Noganwa village, Bhim Singh says, "After signing the NOC, I informed the Sainik Board that I would like to attend the last rites of my uncle in Italy. We never heard back. We still do not know the exact date when the pyre was lit. All we got for a six-foot man (Hari Singh) is an urn containing ash."

Not just compensation, the two families also want recognition. Bhim Singh has held meetings with Noganwa village sarpanch Ramkrishn, 58, and with the Zila Sainik Board seeking the 'martyr' tag and a government job for a family member.

Bhim Singh's son Naveen, 23, is employed in the Army and is pursuing a course in sonar technology at Jamnagar, his daughter Preeti, 26, works as a stenographer in the District and Sessions Court in Faridabad. Ramji Lal wants a government job for one of his sons, a statue of Palu, the *kuchra* road in front of his house to be made *pucca*, and the sole village high school be named after his uncle.

"Palu Ram's parents would have received all the benefits, including pension, since he was unmarried at the time of his demise. There is no provision to provide any sort of financial assistance to anybody else... Also, there is no term 'Martyr' in MoD parlance. Either it is battle casualty or physical casualty, which could be attributed to military service depending on the circumstances of death," says Captain (Indian Navy, retired) Pradeep Bali, who is currently serving as the Sainik and Ardh Sainik Welfare Officer in Hisar.

With the Haryana Assembly elections due later this year, Bhim Singh says he is waiting for the right moment to make his demands. "As the Lok Sabha election is over, it is unlikely they (political leaders) will agree to our demands. So, we will wait and put our demands across when they come here for campaigning."

As for the unavailability of Hari and Palu's photographs in order to build a statue, Ramji Lal has a solution. "Take a picture of me when I was young and a current picture of mine. Mix the two faces in the photographs and that is how the statue should look. He was my uncle, must have looked like me," he says, smiling.

'I shudder every time I hear a knock on the door'

TAKE 5
FACES ON THE FRINGES OF NEWS

LALLAN KUMAR,
62, RAILWAY PASSENGER

'Railways should provide clean drinking water... and run trains on time'

Four senior citizens travelling from Agra to Coimbatore in Kerala Express died reportedly of heatstroke on June 10. As the mercury touched 48 degrees Celsius in parts of North India, the railways has appealed to passengers to carry enough water with them during journeys and call the toll-free number 138 if they need help



'I prefer to travel by train because of the concessions available.' Sarah Khan

1 How often do you travel by train?

I am traveling to Patna. I make this trip between Delhi and Patna about seven to eight times in a year.

2 What precautions are you taking to beat the heat?

I drink as much water and liquids as possible to keep myself hydrated. I eat a lot of fruits and also carry extra food items which I can have during the journey.

3 Recently, four senior citizens died reportedly of heatstroke while travelling in a train. Did you hear about the news?

Yes. This may happen to anyone. It may happen to me or my wife. It's a very worrying situation.

4 Do you still prefer trains to other modes of travel?

There are many benefits, especially for elderly people like me. The Railways provides rebates to senior citizens — while I got a 40 per cent rebate, my wife received 50 per cent. Travelling by train has become more feasible as compared to before. I prefer to travel by train instead of a flight, especially because of the concessions available.

5 How can the Railways help passengers beat the heat?

The Railways should provide clean drinking water at cheaper rates in trains and stations along with other food items which will help passengers beat the heat. They should also ensure that trains run on time.

SARAH KHAN
(The writer is an intern)

He struck in the afternoons, turning up on the pretext of reading the electricity meter — a modus operandi he allegedly employed to murder at least seven women. A few others luckily escaped. How a CCTV footage gave away Burdwan's 'serial killer'



Partha Paul

He forced himself in and grabbed me by my neck... He sat on my back, banged my head against the floor and punched me

I get nightmares of being murdered and raped. I cannot stay alone in the house. I want nothing but death penalty for him

As the door of the house was still open, I managed to run outside. He then fled and vanished on his motorbike

SANTANU CHOWDHURY

ON A hot afternoon in March, the 20-year-old was in her kitchen, cradling her two-month-old baby. Her husband was working in the fields. Her single-storey tin house, in West Bengal's East Burdwan district, is a little distance away from the main road, hidden behind mango trees and fenced gardens.

A man in his forties arrived on his bike and knocked on the woman's door. He claimed he wanted to read the electricity meter. Reluctantly, she agreed to let him in.

Almost immediately, her worst fears came true. The man allegedly whipped out a steel chain and strangled her. Then, he smashed her head against the floor repeatedly and punched her face. Convinced she was dead, he allegedly began to undress her. Just then, the 20-year-old, who had been trying to fake her death, got up and raised an alarm. Shocked, the man fled the house and escaped on his bike.

"I haven't been able to sleep at night since that day (March 31). I get nightmares

of being murdered and raped. I cannot stay alone in the house. I want nothing but death penalty for him," she says.

Last week, her attacker, Kamruzzaman Sarkar, 42, was arrested by the West Bengal Police for murdering at least seven women and having sex with their corpses, besides injuring several others over the past five months in and around East Burdwan and the neighbouring Hooghly district. He has been booked under IPC Sections 302 (murder), 307 (attempt to murder) and 376 (rape), and is now in 12-day police custody.

A scrap trader and father of three, Sarkar, who originally hails from Murshidabad district, settled in Kalna two years ago. For the past five months, say police, the 42-year-old followed the same modus operandi. After a recce, he would turn up outside the house he wanted to target and ask for permission to read the electricity meter. He would then attack the women and, after murdering them, say police, attempt to have sex with their bodies. Later, he would leave the homes after stealing valuable items.

Police say he chose his prey carefully and

usually struck in the afternoons, when the men were away at work. He also chose houses not far away from the main road, giving him an easy escape route if things did not go as planned. Also, he chose homes that were surrounded by fields and gardens, and which had no other houses in the vicinity.

Police, who had been tracking the case for a while, finally arrested Sarkar on June 2 based on the CCTV footage recovered from near the house of one of the victims. In the footage, Sarkar is seen in a red helmet, riding a red bike with a nylon bag tied to the pillion seat — from the bag, police recovered the chain and iron rod that Sarkar allegedly used to attack his victims.

"Sarkar displayed necrophilic tendencies — so far, we have found that he had sex at least with two women immediately after killing them, and also inserted foreign objects inside their genitals," says East Burdwan SP Bhaskar Mukherjee.

Police sources say they have found Sarkar's links with murder cases dating back to 2013 and are now probing them.

During the investigation, some of the victims helped police make a sketch of Sarkar, which was then circulated to all police sta-

tions in the area. The probe intensified in May, when three such attacks were reported in less than 10 days in East Burdwan district — a woman was murdered on May 22; another was killed five days later; and on May 30, the accused allegedly attacked a minor who later succumbed to her injuries. It was from the CCTV footage outside one of these homes that police identified Sarkar, leading to his arrest.

Sarkar's victims were aged between 20 and 75, and while seven of them lost their lives, several others escaped the terrible fate. A 44-year-old anganwadi worker was among the lucky ones. "Every time I see a stranger at my doorstep, I feel a shiver down my spine," she says, sitting at her home in East Burdwan district.

On February 13, when her husband was away, Sarkar arrived to "check the electricity meter". However, his plans hit a wall when Ghosh told him that the meter was outside the house.

"But then he insisted on checking the electronic goods in the house. I refused, but he forced his way inside and started punching my face. As the door of the house was still open, I managed to run outside. He

then fled and vanished on his motorbike," says the woman, adding that Sarkar "looked like a decent man".

One of Sarkar's oldest victims is a 75-year-old. She spent 12 days in a local hospital after three of her ribs were broken when Sarkar attacked her on February 1. She then spent four months at her daughter's home and came back home only recently.

"That day, my son had gone to the fields and my daughter-in-law was attending a wedding. He forced himself in and grabbed me by my neck... He sat on my back, banged my head against the floor and punched me. Fortunately, someone came to my house just then. He hurriedly took my gold bangles and fled," she recalls.

She has been wary of staying alone at home since that day. "I shudder every time I hear a knock on the door in the afternoon," she says.

At her home in Kalna, Sarkar's wife Jahanara Bibi says, "He would go out in the afternoons, but we had no idea that he was out killing women. Whenever he returned, there was nothing about his behaviour that made us suspect anything. If he did what he did, we want strong action against him."

Meerut gangster and a two-month-old cat-and-mouse chase

Named as prime accused in 43 cases, including seven of murder, Badan Singh Baddo lived it up until his arrest in 2017. One day, he gave police the slip

ANAND MOHAN J

ON MARCH 28, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed an election rally near the Sivaya toll plaza in Meerut, about 18 km away, Badan Singh Baddo, 51, one of Uttar Pradesh's most wanted men, sat drinking in a hotel in the city. With him were six policemen, who were supposed to escort him from a court in Ghaziabad to the Fatehgarh jail, but Baddo had allegedly bribed them to divert their vehicle to the hotel. Later, as the policemen sat in drunken stupor, Baddo fled in a businessman friend's car.

The 51-year-old's dramatic escape, especially when the city was on high alert, has come as a major embarrassment for the Uttar Pradesh police. All the policemen who were with Baddo that day were immediately suspended and later arrested. Their involvement is currently being investigated.

Named as prime accused in 43 cases, including seven of murder, registered in Meerut, Ghaziabad and New Delhi, Baddo — who was handed a life sentence by a Sessions Court in Greater Noida on October 26, 2017, for the murder of advocate Rajender Pal in 1996 — continues to be on the run.

Since March 28, police in Meerut have been working overtime to track him. "Whether or not the Prime Minister was there, Baddo would have escaped. It was a well-planned conspiracy involving 17 people, top financiers and traders in the city," says Additional Superintendent of Police (Meerut) Akhilesh Narayan Singh.

Despite being placed under technical surveillance, with a team of more than 30 policemen from the UP Police and the Delhi Crime Branch tracking him, a few days after

his escape, Baddo, a resident of Meerut's Beripura area, managed to make threat calls to advocate Rajender Pal's brother Devender and an owner of a private firm, whose employee he had allegedly killed, asking the two to stop attending court hearings.

Local police describe Baddo as a "pistol-toting criminal", who often turned up at his rivals' homes with a large gang armed to the teeth. Officers investigating his cases describe him as a fan of Hollywood crime dramas, someone who has been influenced by Al Pacino's portrayal of the mafia don Michael Corleone in *The Godfather* and Tony Montana in *Scarface*.

"He is a Class 8 dropout who prefers to wear Louis Vuitton shirts and two-piece business suits and travels in luxury vehicles. He attends social events and tries to attract people with his charm. This is how he gathers followers," says an officer in the Transport Nagar police station in Meerut.

"Almost all the accused are people he met over the past 10 years at social events. While some claim to have acted out of fear, there are others who depend on Baddo to run their businesses," says Additional SP Singh.

Among those held is Bhopender Singh, owner of Karan Public School, who is accused of allegedly helping Baddo flee from Hotel Mukut Mahal in Meerut on March 28. However, the owner of the hotel, Mukesh Gupta, who is alleged to have been in touch with Baddo's entourage and played a role in planning the escape, has not been held because of a stay order on his arrest, issued by a court.

Others who have been apprehended include Lulu Makkad, an influential trader who nurses political ambitions, Sonu Sehgal and Jawahar Lal, all residents of Meerut, and Anil Chhabra and Dipin Suri,



owners of transport companies.

Baddo's father, Charan Singh, who drove a truck for a living, moved from Jalandhar to Meerut's Beripura in the late 1970s. The youngest of seven brothers, Baddo dropped out of school after Class 8. "His eldest brother died in a road accident and three of his other brothers passed away at an early age due to illness," says the officer.

Baddo married in 1994 and divorced from his wife in 2015. Police say that after his arrest in 2017, Baddo entrusted his son,

Sikander, 24, who allegedly hatched the escape plan, with his gang's extortion, land-grabbing and liquor smuggling operations.

"Baddo supplied liquor to local bars and stole container trucks operating on highways," says a police officer. He was arrested twice under the Excise Act and five times under the Arms Act, and faces two cases under the National Security Act, three under the UP Gangsters and Anti-social Activities (Prevention) Act and six under the UP Control of Goondas Act. In 2003, he was also arrested



A Class 8 dropout, Badan Singh Baddo (above) wore Louis Vuitton shirts and traveled in luxury vehicles; (left) Hotel Mukut Mahal, from where the gangster managed to give policemen the slip. Praveen Khanna/Archives

for allegedly forging government documents.

As per his history sheet, the first murder case against Baddo was registered in 1988, when he killed Rajkumar, a Beripura resident, over a property dispute. One of the cases against him is of opening fire at a few Meerut residents in an attempt to grab their land. He was arrested with a rifle and 15 live cartridges later that year. In 1994, he allegedly shot dead a youth, Prakash Singh alias Janni, in Meerut.

However, it was the murder of advocate

Rajender Pal in 1996 that led to his incarceration.

Rajender's younger brother, Devender, still remembers the night. "We were visiting a mutual friend, Pawan Soni, a gas agency owner. Baddo turned up outside his house with 30 men armed with rifles and pistols. Baddo killed my brother because he had slapped him a day earlier — Baddo had made some inappropriate remarks against Soni's wife and this had infuriated Rajender," Devender says.

Since his brother's murder, Devender has been actively convincing witnesses to appear in court. "Baddo was never convicted of murder, except in my brother's case. I had to fight for over two decades to get justice," he says.

In Beripura, locals mostly refrain from speaking about Baddo. However, banquet-hall owner Mayank Jain remembers him as a "gentleman" who helped his family out when his son went missing around five years ago. "Not many people used social media then. Singh put posts on his Facebook page requesting help. When my son was found, he was the first to pose for photographs," Jain says, adding that Baddo largely kept to himself.

Two months since he fled, Baddo has managed to evade law enforcement agencies. Raids have been conducted in Punjab, Haryana and Delhi, and police officials have contacted higher authorities in Nepal, to where the gangster is suspected to have fled, and Australia, where his divorced wife currently lives.

For now, the only clue that remains is an audio clip in which Baddo is heard threatening a man a few days after he fled on March 28: "If in 10 days my son's name is not removed from the case, I will kill all your children. Ultimatum de raha hoon."



A song of ice and fire... or water?

Buoyed by the recent head-to-head record and strong side, India's mantra is 'keep calm and carry on'. Under pressure Pakistan, however, will be psyched up and going for the jugular. That is, if the heavens permit the money match in Manchester today



Pakistan coach Mickey Arthur has told his players that Sunday's match against India is an opportunity for them to enter cricketing folklore. AP



EXPRESS AT WORLD CUP

SRIRAM VEERA
MANCHESTER, JUNE 15

FORMER PAKISTAN pacer Aaqib Javed narrates a story about bowling to Viv Richards for the first time. It's a rave about Imran Khan's captaincy, but also reveals Pakistan cricket's ecosystem. Sensing Aaqib was nervous, Imran told him, "Maaro b*****d ko bouncer". The effect on Aaqib was startling: "After that I started to feel like a lion". Conventional wisdom says that you need to stay calm to handle high-pressure games. Pakistan don't do such banality. Therefore, Mickey Arthur, Pakistan's South African coach, has told his players: "It doesn't get bigger than this, doesn't get more exciting. I am telling the players that you could be a hero tomorrow. Your careers are going to be defined by a moment in the game. You do something incredible; you will be remembered forever." Basically, talk-

I'm telling our players in the dressing room, 'you could be a hero tomorrow. Your careers are going to be defined by a moment in the game. You do something incredible tomorrow, you'll be remembered forever'."

MICKY ARTHUR
PAKISTAN COACH

ing up the game, using pressure as an inspiration. Arthur knows that all that piffle about trying to keep them calm isn't the Pakistan way. No wonder, in their last game against India in an ICC tournament — the two teams have played each just once after that — when Hasan Ali tried to be calm and subdued in the 2017 Champions Trophy final, thinking it would help. Sarfraz Ahmed shouted at him: "Calm sab chodd de, bhaag!"

There is a story how MS Dhoni told his team-mates not to celebrate after beating Ricky Ponting's men in Australia. He even coached Rohit Sharma how to shake hands with the Aussies — firm, don't show joy, stay calm. The idea was to show the Australians this wasn't a big deal but

just another day at work. No wonder then that a day before the biggest game of the World Cup, Virat Kohli went the opposite way to Arthur. "It's to understand that the game starts tomorrow at certain time and it finishes at a certain time, so it's not going to last a lifetime for you, whether you do well or you don't. The tournament doesn't finish tomorrow."

Arthur talking about a moment lasting a lifetime; Kohli saying the world doesn't end tomorrow. Extremely different ways of handling a pressure game; effectively tailored to each team's philosophy. The Indians staying calm suits their team, Pakistan ratcheting it up suits their psyche.

For all the firebrand presence of Kohli, India are a pretty calm and collected unit. Dhoni gets excited only in advertisements (or, lately, in IPL matches). Mumbai Indians' captaincy has calmed Rohit Sharma and matured him a great deal. KL Rahul, unless he is on a chat show, likes to keep a lid on his emotions. Vijay Shankar, the possible middle-order inclusion, isn't the over-the-top kinds. Hardik Pandya comes with a combustible tag, but he is one of the more composed big-hitters out there. Perhaps, he thinks it's cool to be like that. Hit and swagger down the track. In other words, this team should

be okay on Sunday. Serenity, now, is India's way, and it makes sense to try to continue living in that bubble.

Pakistan, on the other hand, are different. They can get too mellow and almost self-defeating if they try to play things down. Hence, Arthur's urges to go for the jugular.

As for us, the Indian watchers, how have India-Pakistan matches turned in character in the last few decades? There was that Miandad six moment in the '80s, of course. But for someone from that generation, the last straw that broke the camel's back, the one that dispelled any notion that Miandad's game might have been one-off and matches against Pakistan don't have to be fretted about, came when Salim Malik pulled off an

The best way to approach something like this... it's not going to last a lifetime for you, whether you do well or you don't. Our tournament, whether we do well as a team tomorrow or we don't, is not going to finish."

VIRAT KOHLI
INDIA CAPTAIN

even bigger heist.

Malik's robbery came after Miandad's, and it happened at home, in Kolkata. Malik carted, carved and sliced India to a loss. Those two games combined to make the '80s generation look at the '90s warily. That premonition wasn't misplaced as until nearly the end of that decade, an Indian win retained surprise. Things rapidly changed in the 21st century. Captured perfectly by Wasim Akram's jest about the highlights of games shown on Indian television during his frequent recent visits to India: "Hum ney bhi bahut jeete hain, bhai! They only show the recent years!"

The complexion of the teams changed. Pakistan lost quite a few big names and India surged ahead not just against Pakistan but in world cricket. Where the '80s and '90s games against Pakistan prepared you for rejections, the subsequent triumphal decades delivered abundance.

It's a sentiment that's shared by Pakistani fans in England. "India ka palda bhaari hai," they say about India's dominance. But of course, they all believe that Pakistan retain that indefinable part in their psyche which can push them to create magic.

"That unpredictability tag always sort of hangs around that makes us very ex-

citing. I don't particularly like when commentators talk about, oh it depends which Pakistan team turns up today, because as coach we prepare these guys exceptionally well every time. But we are exciting," Arthur said.

Would the weather allow us a game, though? Friday afternoon was dry, infusing hope in one and all, and it only rained later in the evening. Saturday too dawned bright and dry, but there was drizzle in the afternoon. There is forecast of light rain with sunny spells on Sunday, but the possibility of an ironical end to the much-awaited game remains.

Not that it has dampened the fans' mood. As a Pakistani cabbie put it: "Theek hai na, baarish hua toh hua, (if it rains, it rains, its fine). Maybe the two teams can meet in the final."

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS

IND VS PAK

3 pm onwards from Old Trafford



WEATHER FORECAST
Intermittent rain and a moderate breeze

PACER-TURNED-YOUTUBER

On Akhtar TV: Blunt opinions, sharp analysis, Indo-Pak bonhomie

GAURAV BHATT
JUNE 15

"Yaar Harbhajan, hum cricketers ko TV pe kya ho jaata hai? We just had this lovely cricketering discussion. But hum jab koi channel me bathe hote hain, hum kyu mukhtalab ho jaate hain? (What happens to us cricketers on television? When we are at some news channel, why are there such differences?)"

Shoaib Akhtar's previous question to Harbhajan Singh, the interviewee of the day on his YouTube channel, was an innocuous "what will you do tomorrow if you win the toss". After discussing the art of chasing, spin bowling, batsmanship and probable line-ups for Sunday's clash, Akhtar dropped the loaded question, and Harbhajan responded without skipping a beat.

"See it depends on who is there. If you listen to my statements, they are never like that," said Harbhajan. "Political context should be kept separate. But I have always said that my cricketering heroes are from India, from Pakistan. Even from Australia."

Akhtar pressed some more. "No, this happens from both sides. Why do we play into their hands? Main bas mahaul banana chahta hun, that we can sit with each other

and enjoy cricket. Remember when Chennai clapped for the Pakistan team?"

"A part of it is because of the media." Harbhajan finally broke. "A simple match is scandalised like anything. It should be fun. Two countries come together, sit with each other. Ek dusre ke jaise dikhte ho, ek dusre ke jaise bolte ho. Enjoy the match together."

Mission accomplished. Welcome to the channel of diplomat-cum-YouTuber Shoaib Akhtar.

The ongoing cricket World Cup has resulted in a free-for-all, with those boasting of even the slightest of cricketering credentials being pinched and seated in a studio or mic'd up for a news channel. Conversations in the commentary boxes and panel discussions in turn have been overtly sanitised, plain banal or simply cringe-worthy.

This is also the first World Cup where the internet has challenged television's status as the obvious mothership of broadcasting. Star Sports' streaming platform Hotstar racks up viewers by the millions, and every major media house has a web-exclusive show. Akhtar, a regular at TV panels, jumped ship to YouTube, where he is again melting the speed guns. From terrorising batsmen and rebelling against the authority, Shoaib Akhtar 2.0 now requests his audience to like

and subscribe to his channel.

Akhtar started the channel in January — the minute-long teaser shows a borderline-disgusted Akhtar switching off his television sighing: "Kya bakwaas analysis hai yaar" — and grew it to a respectable 80,000 subscribers by late May. With the World Cup, it has gone into overdrive. Currently, it's at 675,000, outdoing decade-old media houses and sports websites. But this is hardly a case of Akhtar piggybacking off cricket's biggest event. The relationship has largely been symbiotic.

Much like his playing days, Akhtar has been a wellspring of headlines and click-bait-fodder, with a blunt opinion on everything under the shy sun in the United Kingdom. Sometimes two, contrasting opinions. Akhtar's most recent Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde routine came last week as news broke of AB de Villiers' late request to join the South Africa squad.

"Be a man!" chided Akhtar. "Apne sirf paise ki khaatir apne mulk ko chhod diya. Banda mard ka baccha tab banta hai jab paise chhod deta hai."

Two days later, on PTV, Lance Klusener nodded along to Akhtar's changed tune.

"Come on! He deserves a chance to make a comeback. You don't know his fi-



Akhtar's videos also have an unrefined, intimate air of listening to a particularly brash friend in his living room.

nances and economics. What if he needs the money? Why are you forgetting so much he's done for South Africa?"

Akhtar's success as a YouTuber is down to tapping into a demographic which almost never tires of cricket discussions and extreme opinions. Former cricketers like Ramiz Raja, Rashid Latif and Aakash Chopra have done it with varying levels of success. But in addition to being a bigger star, Akhtar isn't afraid to stick his neck out. Calling it as he sees has stopped being a trait, and has become a necessity for the medium. Everybody saw Sarfraz Khan walk out for the toss, but only Akhtar called him the "most unfit Pakistan captain I have seen".

"Jab toss karne aaya. Itna pet uska nikla

hua hai. Itna mota uska muh hai."

There's no way of knowing whether the outburst lit a fire under Sarfraz. It sure did wonders for Akhtar. The channel's daily subscriber growth to that day had ranged from 5 to 15k. Going after Sarfraz and Co got him 68,000 new subscribers in a day.

Barring the stylised, well-produced minute-long teasers for the channel, Akhtar's videos also have an unrefined, intimate air of listening to a particularly brash friend in his living room. The eclectic mix of Urdu, Punjabi and Hinglish means phrases like "phenta laga dena" have entered the lexicon of subcontinental cricket fans.

Akhtar is at his raconteur best when he narrates snippets from his playing days. Like

the backstory behind the 161.3kmph delivery. "My teammates said I was slower than Allan Donald. I couldn't take wickets at Sharjah. I thought, ye syaapa hi khatam karta hun aaj."

Another of Akhtar's shtick is to play the seer. He criticised the Pakistan squad but also did predict that the team will defeat England. He also foretold that out-of-favour Wahab Riaz and Mohammad Aamir will be on the flight to England.

His latest prediction came during the chat with Virender Sehwag. Hosting his motor-mouthed counterpart from across the border, Akhtar went on record saying: "If Pakistan wins the toss and bowls first on Sunday, we will win."

And during the chat with Sehwag, Akhtar also made known his opinion of KL Rahul. "Bada player hai, but aisa lagta hai ki jagah ke liye khel raha hai."

Akhtar also tried his statesman routine with Sehwag. "I can say for a fact that no Indian will want Pakistan to crash out of the World Cup right now. I have worked in India for so long. I know that they would want India and Pakistan to face off in a final, or semifinal."

But Sehwag, a Delhi Jat impervious to the Punjabi charm that worked on Harbhajan, left it well alone.

"I don't think we care what other team is doing. We want India to win. Who's there in semifinals or finals doesn't matter."

Sehwag however did make one admission. "This chat was a lot of fun for me. It's different when you are on news channels," said Sehwag. "Ye chat alag hain. Ye direct jaati hain, dil se."

LEADING SCORERS

342 Aaron Finch (AUS), 281 David Warner (AUS), 279 Joe Root (ENG)

LEADING WICKET-TAKERS

13 Mitch Starc (AUS), 11 Pat Cummins (AUS), 10 Mohammad Amir (PAK)

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A hostile jugalbandi

In Amir, Riaz & Afridi, Pakistan have three left-arm seamers who can make India's batsmen dance to their sinister tunes



Mohammed Amir has found his verve in this World Cup with a fifer against Australia. His swing and nip will pose a stern test to India. Reuters

SANDIP G
JUNE 15

MOHAMMED AMIR is known for his sorcery. Wahab Riaz has the snarl and Shaheen Afridi showcases sharpness. Together the three Pakistan left-arm seamers can produce the most sinister tunes the Indian batsmen might have yet tuned into this damp English summer. And the fact that India's two main batting pillars, Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, haven't quite mastered the arcs and angles of a left-arm pacer bowling adds an intriguing dimension to the must-watch Sunday duel.

Kohli, generally a competent player of any variety of bowling, has looked vulnerable while facing left-armers, especially the ones from across the border.

The unfortunate Junaid Khan, who narrowly missed out on a World Cup spot, used to brag about his one-upmanship over Kohli: 24 balls, 2 runs, 3 dismissals. Wahab Riaz has nailed him twice; so could have Amir but for the slip fielders greasy fingers in the Champions Trophy final. In 12 innings against Pakistan, on the 10 dismissed occasions, he has surrendered to left-armers six times. Such a frequency is no coincidence, but a definite weakness.

Kohli has also been dismissed in identical fashions. Riaz had him twice caught at point or backward point, when the Indian skipper had tried to stab at the ball angling across him. Junaid too had him caught behind twice and once bowled with a late-swinging delivery.

And then the most famous of them all, not for its beauty but the sheer context, came

SITTING DUCK

24 Left-armers with the ability to hoop the ball into the pads are a waking nightmare for Rohit Sharma, who has been dismissed 24 times in his career by them. Of those, he has been expelled by an in-swing on 13 occasions.

as it did in the Champions Trophy final. Kohli almost walked across to work the ball on the leg-side. The previous delivery was an out-swing that had taken his edge, which the first slip had spilled. He second-guessed that the follow-up could be the late-bending in-swing, the one that had consumed Rohit.

But this one nearly straightened after the pitching and took the leading edge of his closed bat-phase. Kohli, here, was trying to get inside the line, so that he could get on top of the ball and force it leg-side.

Riaz's burst of energy

More than Kohli's, Rohit's lbw was the classical Amir dismissal. Then left-armers with the ability to hoop the ball into the pads are a waking nightmare for Rohit, who has been consumed 24 times in his career by them. Of those, 13 times he was expelled by an in-swing.

They say Trent Boult has him in his pocket. With Riaz, you don't fear the lbws, because he seldom swings or seams the ball into the right-hander from over the stumps. But the Indian batsmen, as well acquainted with him as they are, would know that he can explode in a sudden burst of energy. He is known to

crank it up a notch or two, making the ball bounce and move without giving any hint.

He doesn't swing the ball as much as Amir with the new ball—though with the old ball in Tests he could—but he's quickest of the three, besides in possession of a heavy ball. He also has that pantomime villain aggro that makes him infuriatingly thrilling to watch.

His most intimidating weapon, arguably, is the bouncer, which's quite awkward to face as he generally targets the body, often pitching on middle-stump and congesting the batsman for any room whatsoever. Another dangerous gift is his ability to move the ball away from the right-hander from around the stumps.

The steadiest of them is the 19-year-old Afridi. Still cutting his teeth at this level, he hits the good length consistently, and the 6' 6" frame ensures that he procures more bounce from good length than Riaz. Sometimes, he gets too overawed with the bounce he generates and tries to bang the batsmen with a flurry of short balls. But he could be lethal if he corrects his length, apart from slipping in those devious yorkers that made him an instant PSL celebrity. The extra bounce can fool batsmen into thinking that they're misjudging his length.

What makes the three-pacers unit most difficult to face is the lengths they probe. Amir trades in fuller length, Riaz obsessed with back-of-length and Afridi a good-length predator. Amir beguiles you, Riaz intimidates and Afridi harasses. They could be a three-man jugalbandi emitting sinister tunes to the Indian ears, both batsmen and fans.

EXPLAINED

E

Right-handed batsmen vs left-arm pacers

The southpaw's in-swing is the right-handed batsman's old foe. If it's angling away, he can just thrust his front-foot across and play outside the line. But if it's breaking in, the early commitment could entangle him. Since he has committed to the line early, he is bereft of time or space to make that second, smaller movement to adjust to the swing. He is left relying on just the hands, and when the ball bends back in, the front-pad invariably gets in the way. Like Rohit has on several occasions. To neuter this, several batsmen, most noticeably Sachin Tendulkar, press half-forward before the bowler releases the ball. That allows him to time and space to adjust to changing line and length of the ball. However, Indian batsmen of this generation tend to shuffle across, which is fatal.

after his coming-out century on Wednesday against Pakistan at cozy Taunton, went back in his shell in the open plains of the Oval to try and preserve his wicket.

Despite Warner's restraint, Finch's placement and untidy fielding helped the openers tally their fourth half-century partnership of this World Cup. They were 80 without loss when Warner tried to cut Dhanajaya de Silva but the ball came on straighter and took the top of his middle stump.

Usman Khawaja was circumspect, too, and Australia went from overs 11-20 without scoring a boundary. Khawaja was out trying to up the pace, and it took the arrival of the equally aggressive Smith to free up Finch again.

Finch launched de Silva twice over long on, surged from 73 to 91, and reached his hundred off 97 balls with a six over long off. The floodlights came on as if to put more of a spotlight on the skipper, and he looked good for a double century. But as soon as he equaled his best ODI score of 153 not out in March against Pakistan, Finch skied Udana to a catch in the covers. He banded his bat against his pads and walked off to a deserved ovation.

Sri Lanka took three quick wickets, all of them involving Udana, to finish on a high, but the 334 total will intimidate a side which hasn't batted for 11 days.

BRIEF SCORES: Australia 334 / 7 (Finch 153, Smith 73) beat Sri Lanka 247 (Karunaratne 97, Kusal Perera 52, Starc 4-55) by 87 runs.

Proteas breathe fire, dismantle Afghans for 125

Cardiff: Spinner Imran Tahir took four wickets as South Africa dismissed Afghanistan for 125 in 34.1 overs in their rain-affected on Saturday, giving Faf du Plessis' team a good chance of securing their first win at this year's World Cup. Tahir took two wickets in his first over and finished with figures of 4-29 off seven overs as Afghanistan collapsed after a second rain break at Sophia Gardens. Andile Phehlukwayo also helped engineer the downfall with two wickets in his first two overs after a 75-minute break as the Afghans slipped from 69-2 to 77-7. A cameo of 35 from Rashid Khan took them into three figures before he became Tahir's fourth victim. Chris Morris then finished off the tail with figures of 3-13.

Afghanistan took advantage of some sloppy bowling from the South Africans to make a positive start before Hazratullah Zazai was caught in the ninth over when Rassie van der Dussen took a low catch sliding in from deep midwicket off the bowling of Kagiso Rabada. At 69-2 after 20 overs, when rain stopped play, the Afghans looked to have the potential to post a decent 200-plus score against a South African side lacking in confidence but failed to build on the promising start. South Africa have lost three of their opening four games, with the other one called off due to rain. **REUTERS**

BRIEF SCORES: Afghanistan 125 (Rashid Khan 35; Imran Tahir 4/29) vs South Africa.

Sri Lanka fight, but Australia canter

REUTERS/AFP
LONDON, JUNE 15

AUSTRALIA CAPTAIN Aaron Finch struck a superb 153 and Mitchell Starc took four wickets to lead the defending champions to an emphatic 87-run victory over Sri Lanka in the Cricket World Cup on Saturday.

Finch and Steve Smith (73) shared a fine partnership of 173 as the Australians accelerated smoothly in the second half of their innings to post an imposing total of 334 for seven at The Oval.

Dimuth Kurunaratne and Kusal Perera got Sri Lanka's reply off to a flying start with an opening stand of 115, but Perera was bowled by Starc for 52 and Kurunaratne's dismissal by Kane Richardson for 97 ended their hopes of a record World Cup run chase.

Starc completed figures of 4-55 and Richardson picked up three wickets as Sri Lanka were bowled out for 247 in the 46th over. Australia's fourth win of the tournament lifted them top of the 10-team standings while Sri Lanka stayed fifth with only one win from five games.

Earlier in the day, captain Finch's century propelled Australia to their third consecutive 300-plus total and biggest yet of this campaign. Finch was well supported by Steve Smith, who made a splendid 59-ball 73. After Finch and Smith were out in the 43rd and 44th overs, Glenn Maxwell plundered 46 from 25 balls but, as against Pakistan, Australia wasted wickets in hand

POINTS TABLE

Team	M	W	L	T	N/R	PT	NRR
Aus	5	4	1	0	0	8	+0.812
NZ	4	3	0	0	1	7	+2.613
Eng	4	3	1	0	0	6	+1.557
Ind	3	2	0	0	1	5	+0.539
SL	5	1	2	0	2	4	-1.778
WI	4	1	2	0	1	3	.666
Ban	4	1	2	0	1	3	-0.714
Pak	4	1	2	0	1	3	-1.796
SA	4	0	3	0	1	1	-0.952
Afg	3	0	3	0	0	0	-1.493

Top 4 teams after the ninth round will qualify for the semis.

at the end by losing three wickets in the space of 10 balls. Still, Sri Lanka was left with a daunting chase in its first match in 11 days after two washouts.

Isuru Udana, the fast-bowling allrounder, starred with the wicket of Finch and Shaun Marsh, two run outs, and a catch. And this was after he hurt his left shoulder from sliding into the advertising boards in the fourth over. Finch lost the toss for the fifth match in a row but made all the running early for Australia. Opening partner David Warner,

1 WORLD CUP
• 10 COUNTRIES • 1000 OPINIONS

How can we not mention Mr Orwell

The London Times doesn't miss any Indo-Pak clichés while stressing the social, geopolitical, historical, cultural and all other worthy references while signifying the importance of the Manchester game. It goes with the headline — One billion pairs of eyes focused on a match that captivates region — that serious underestimates the country's millions cricket-haters and also those for whom sports still remains a past-time that is beyond their means.

Cliches in bold: In a tournament being played in a host nation where television viewing figures are pitiful, the game in danger of being ghettoised by a generation of restricted broadcast coverage, the clash between these great rivals will generate one of the largest television audiences in global sport. It will bring much of the sub-continent to a standstill, one billion pairs of eyes focusing intently on the action. If sport is war minus the shooting, as George Orwell suggested, the backdrop of military tensions between two nuclear powers is unavoidable in the context of this fixture.

with all the distortions of distance.

He writes: "Life on the subcontinent will halt this Sunday. An audience of more than a billion people is guaranteed. Even the Taliban in the remotest parts of the north-west frontier will lay down arms and pay attention. All the religions of the subcontinent — Sikh, Buddhist, Muslim, Hindu, Parsi, Christian and others — will be transfixed by the excitement of a glorious, historic and all too rare sporting event. When India and Pakistan eventually, as they surely will, resolve their differences and find a way of living in harmony, cricket will have helped to bring about the solution. The two countries have so many things in common and cricket is one of the most important. I can't wait."

Hyderabad or Lahore at Old Trafford

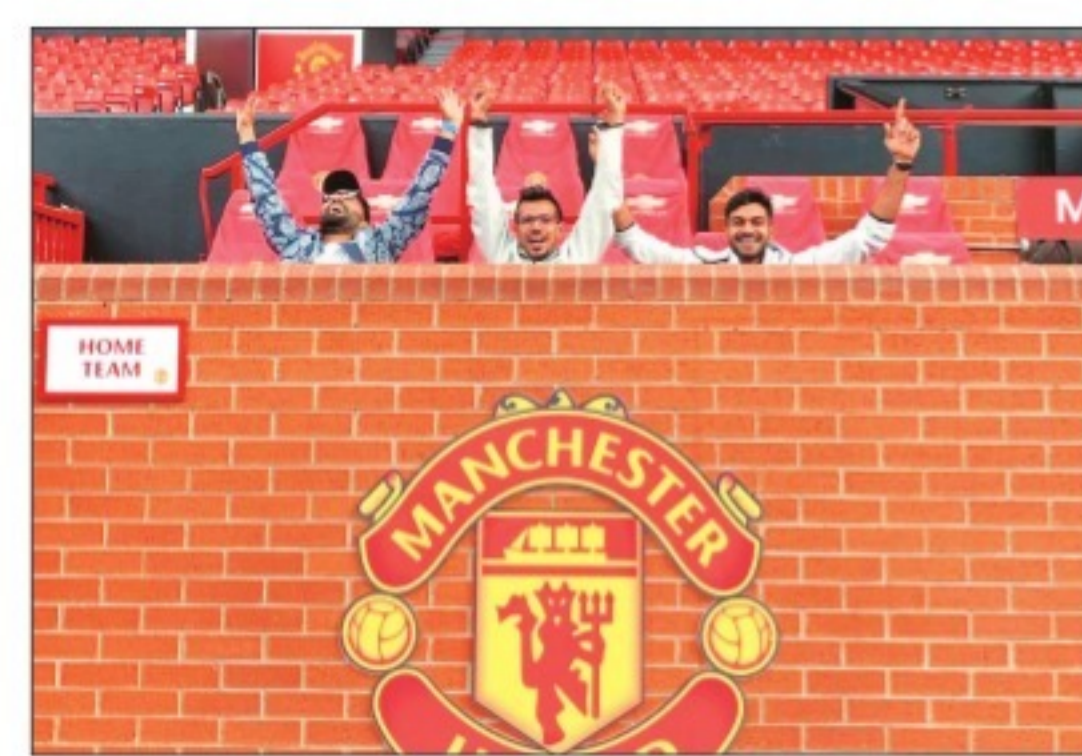
Russia TV, the state-owned Russian television network does not just call it the biggest match of the World Cup, but goes on to claim that it will 'generate interest to rival any other sporting event this year, including the American extravaganza of the Super Bowl and the recent UEFA Champions League final.'

The RT report talks about the political backdrop in which the 'one of the fiercest rivalries in sport' will play out. It also mentions the recent Pakistani advertisement, a parody on Indian Air Force pilot Abhinandan Varthaman, and the controversy over MS Dhoni's gloves, saying it has added 'spice to the encounter.' "India versus Pakistan is a match imbued with the cricket obsessions of both countries' populations, but also the broader rivalry between the two neighbours," the report says. "Added to that, the large number of Indian and Pakistani fans in the UK will ensure the atmosphere at the famous 26,000-seater Old Trafford is just as fervent as if the game was being played in Hyderabad or Lahore."

Current and exes weigh in

They are bound to run into them at some point as opponents, but interest in the Ind-Pak match spills over to stars from other teams too. Rajasthan Royals released a video during this year's IPL that has five of their foreign players — Steven Smith, Oshane Thomas, Ben Stokes, Jos Buttler and Ish Sodhi — admitting unequivocally that they were keenly looking forward to the 'match of the tournament.' "Playing an India-Pakistan match at Old Trafford or Birmingham is like playing in either Delhi or Karachi," Stokes said inviting guffaws. Smith and Stokes predicted an India win, while Buttler and Thomas said they were rooting for Pakistan. Sodhi broke the tie with: "India." He dubbed this the loudest match of the decade.

On his twitter handle, Brian Lara put up a photograph of his next to a private-jet with the caption: "One cricket match I always wanted to witness India vs Pakistan." The home veterans drowned in the familiar sulk. Pakistan's pitiful fielding got Ramiz Raja frowning. "I don't mean to be disheartening but this fielding from Pakistan is rubbish!!" Shoaib Akhtar who's been pouring scorn on Sarfaraz Khan, put up a meme — hinting at a damp squib owing to the incessant rains. In the image, the green field is replaced by sea, and Virat Kohli and Sarfaraz Khan are being chased by a shark. The caption reads: "Kohli and Sarfaraz returning to the pavilion after the toss," while Akhtar labelled the photo as "Sunday looking a bit like this." **ENS**



THEATRE OF DREAMS

Dinesh Karthik, Yuzvendra Chahal and Vijay Shankar paid a visit to Manchester United's Old Trafford ground. Instagram/Yuzi_Chahal23

