

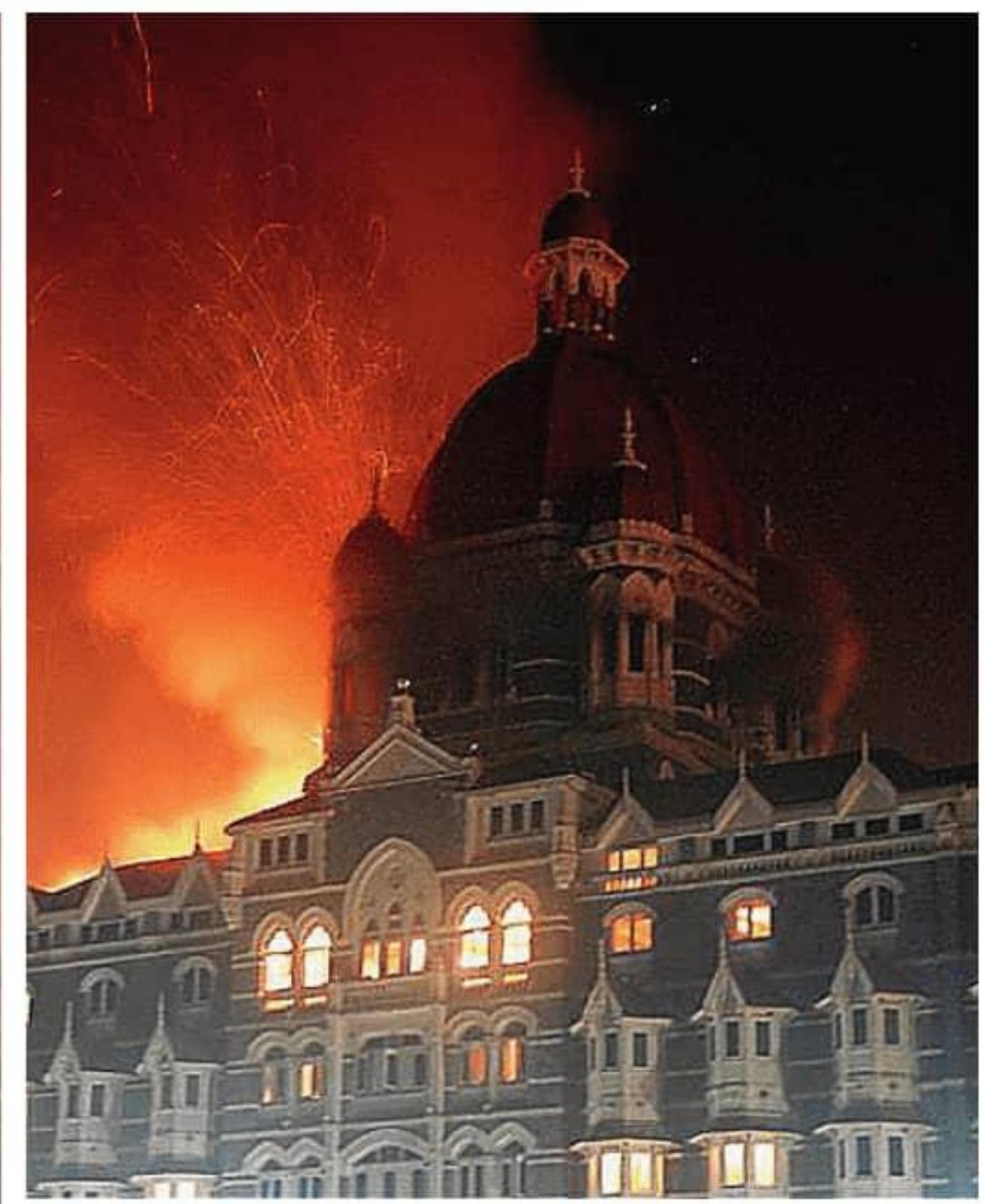
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EVASIVE TAHWWUR RANA PINS 26/11 ON PAKISTAN AND DOWNPLAYS HIS ROLE

EXCLUSIVE

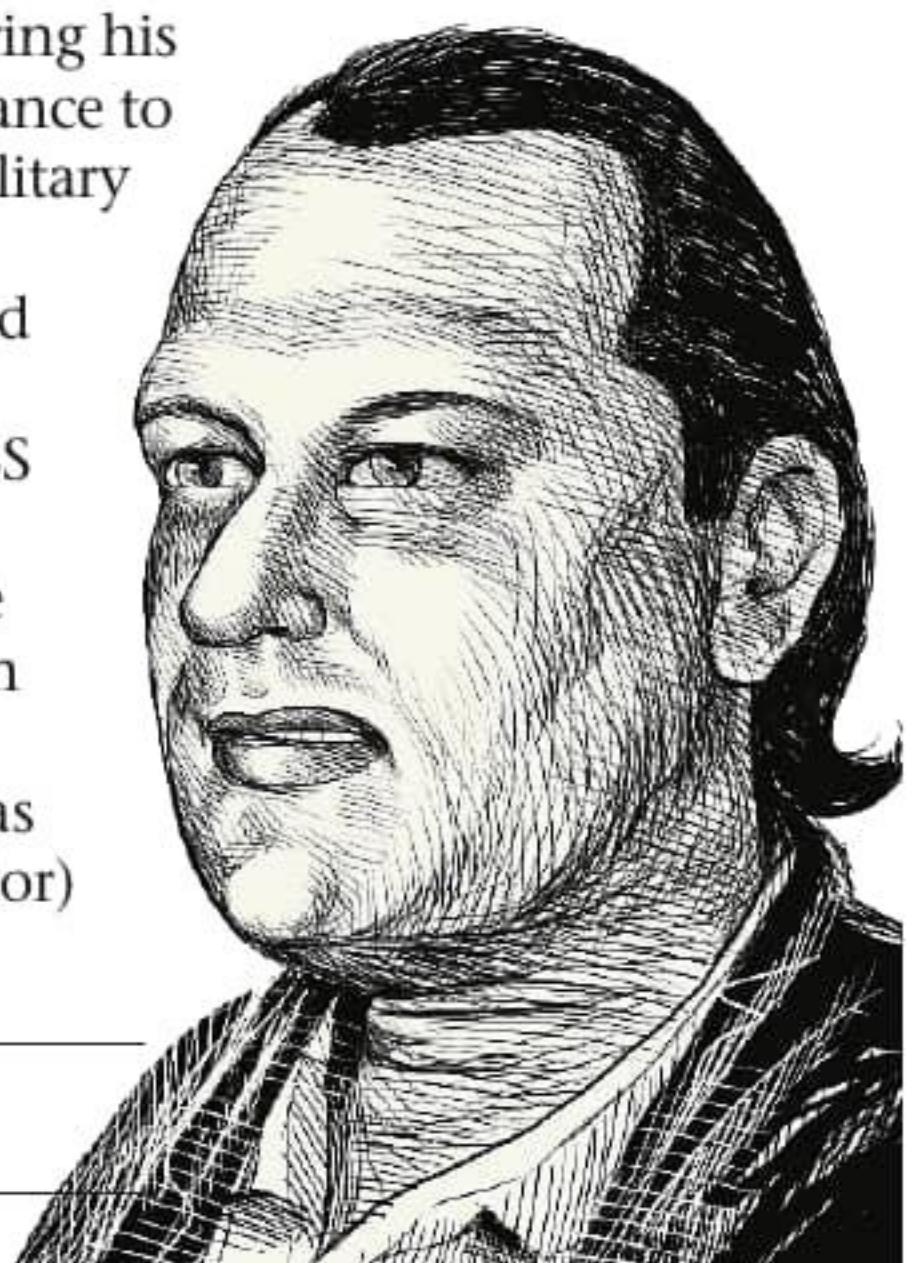
Extradited doctor, a Canadian citizen of Pakistani origin, spills the beans on Mumbai's worst terror incident as Crime Branch gets to grill him in NIA custody



| Faizan Khan
faizan.khan@timesofindia.com

Tahawwur Hussain Rana, a key conspirator in the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks, has made a series of explosive revelations during his first interrogation by the Mumbai police's Crime Branch, underlining Pakistan's deep-rooted involvement in the deadly assault. In his statement, Rana claimed he was a trusted asset of the Pakistan Army and was even sent on a covert mission to Saudi Arabia during the Iraq invasion of Kuwait—underscoring his strategic importance to the Pakistani military establishment.

Rana revealed that after completing his MBBS from the Army Medical College in Rawalpindi in 1986, he was commissioned as a Captain (Doctor) in Quetta.



After a long legal battle, ex-Pakistani military doctor, Tahawwur Rana was extradited on April 10 to be tried in India for his role in assisting David Headley (right) in the 2008 terror attack, which saw the siege of the Taj Mahal Hotel (top)

**CONTINUED
ON PAGE 6**

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SACHIN HARALKAR



Divine detour

Amitabh Bachchan during a visit to Shri Vitthal Mandir in Sion, on the occasion of Aashadi Ekadashi

Journeying back to half-home

FOR artist, photographer, and curator Akshay Mahajan, Goa has been home for over eight years. Yet, it is Mumbai — his first muse — that continues to anchor his expansive practice. Next week, Mahajan returns to the city with Roots of the Earth, a new exhibition at Jhaveri Contemporary in collaboration with Prabhakar Kamble. He will be showcasing a deeply textured



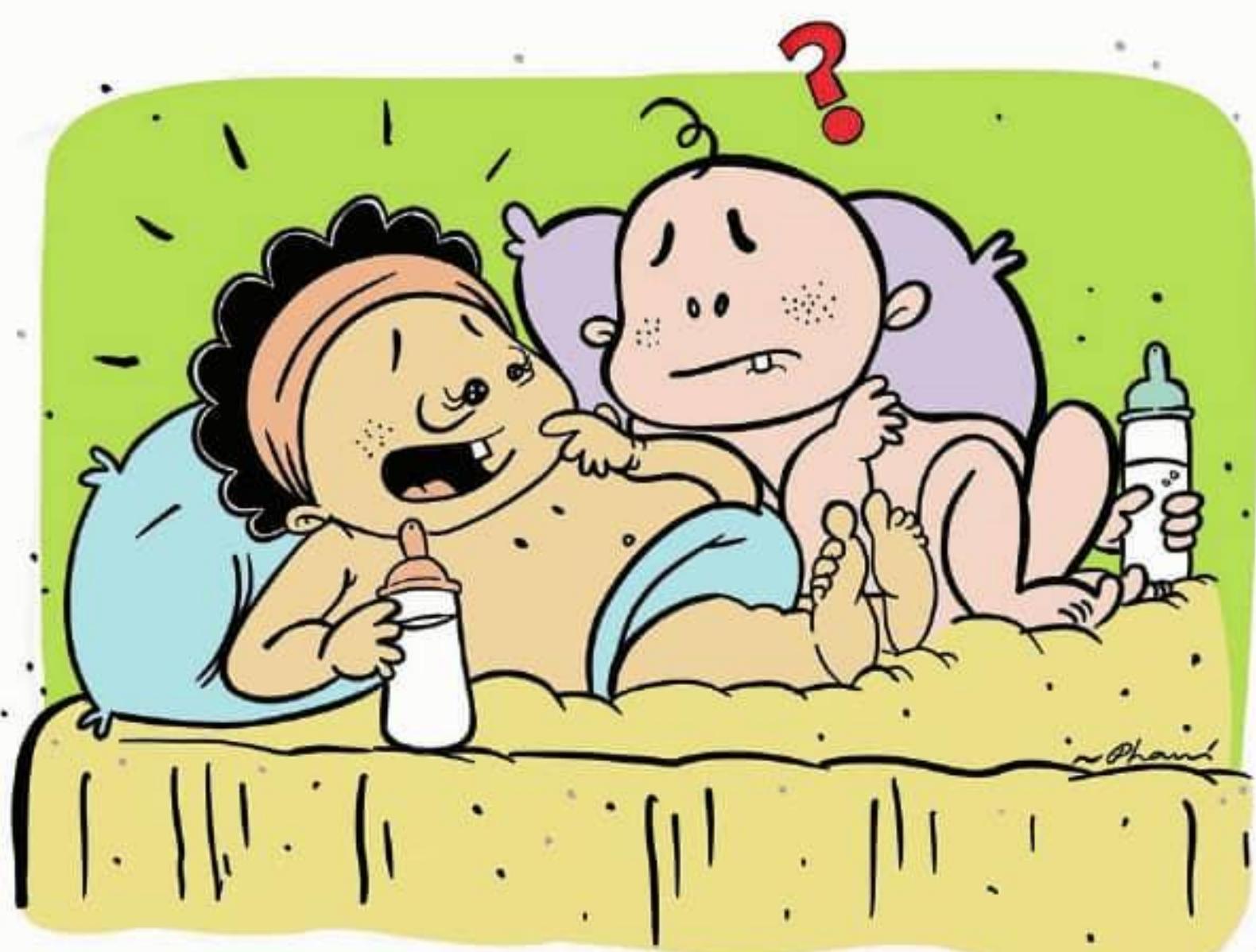
Akshay Mahajan

body of work inspired by folk songs, matrilineal rhythms, and terracotta traditions of Goalpara, Assam. "To return to Bombay with this work, once the ground I stood on, now a city I pass through — is to offer these gathered voices back to the place that first taught me how to listen," he told your diarist, "They settle for

a moment in the dust, like something half-remembered, half-home."

LIFE AT LARGE

Phani Tetali



"What should I study when I grow up, to get the best pay package???"



@ayaonx
Men will get fired, divorced, be in debt and the only thing they'll say is "I'll figure it out"

Four decades of quiet preservation

HERITAGE activism is no mean feat, especially in a country racing toward modernity. But the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) has spent the last four decades doing just that: quietly, persistently, and often against the tide. Their ongoing restoration work at the General Post Office in Fort is one such fine example. Now, as the nonprofit marks 40 years of advocacy, it is opening its archives to the public in a five-day



Katyayani Agarwal

exhibition at the Kamalnayan Bajaj Art Gallery starting August 5. "INTACH has been looking at all kinds of heritage, be it cultural, architectural, and even educational, and not just in the big cities, but at the grassroots level," says Katyayani Agarwal, convenor, INTACH. Expect a sensorial feast: models you can walk around, infographic panels, and immersive audio-visual presentations that will breathe life into their most iconic projects.



Purbayan Chatterjee with Shankar Mahadevan

A jugalbandi awaits in NYC

SITAR virtuoso Purbayan Chatterjee has all reasons to be excited. Chatterjee is part of a stellar ensemble that will be performing for Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre's first-ever international showcase at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in New York City later this September. What he's most looking forward to is sharing the stage with 'guru' Shankar Mahadevan who's also curating the show. Chatterjee has previously collaborated with the Grammy Award-winning singer for the web series Bandish Bandits 2. "Shankar ji is a very spontaneous person, and we will play whatever he wants us to," Chatterjee told your diarist, "But if I am to make any guesses, the first thing that comes to my mind is Garaj Garaj [from Bandish Bandits], because he gave me the opportunity to play that song." He also hinted at a Classical interaction — a jugalbandi perhaps?

Tailpiece

IN one of the country's most prominent business families — spanning three generations — love just rewrote the rules. When a third-generation heir fell for a woman outside their tightly knit community, the old guard didn't take it lightly. In a swift move, the elders amended the family constitution: anyone who marries outside the community without explicit approval will be cut off from the family estate. Love, among the moneyed, often comes with a clause.

IMAGE: AI



'Women falling behind in diabetes management'

Homemakers and night-shift workers face hidden health risks due to unequal care burden

I Swapnil R Mishra
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A new health study has exposed a worrying gender gap in diabetes management across suburban Mumbai, revealing that women – especially homemakers and shift workers – are falling behind in physical activity, sleep hygiene, and self-care, worsening their long-term prognosis.

Conducted by the Department of Endocrinology at Bhaktivedanta Hospital and published in the Journal of Family Medicine and Primary Care, the study assessed 356 patients with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM) using the internationally recognised "5S" model – Sitting, Stepping, Sleeping, Strengthening, and Sweating – developed by the American Diabetes Association (ADA) and the European Association for the Study of Diabetes (EASD).

While overall sedentary behaviour among patients was a red flag, the deeper concern lay in the clear gender divide. Women were significantly less likely to track steps, engage in strength training, or maintain adequate sleep – key behaviours for glycaemic control.

"I thought cooking and cleaning were enough. Nobody told me I had to exercise too," said Meena Joshi (52), a homemaker living with T2DM for six years. "I've never owned a smartwatch or counted steps."

According to the study, women made up 52.8 per cent of the participants. However, their engagement in diabetes-friendly behaviours was alarmingly low: 63.3 per cent of homemakers didn't track their steps, 61.7 per cent (mostly women) did no strength training, and 41.8 per cent reported getting less than seven hours of sleep. Women on the night or rotational shifts fared the worst.

The burden of care is falling unequally on women. They're juggling household duties, work, and health and often losing out on all three," said Dr Kosha Parikh, the study's lead author.

Researchers also found that many women, particularly homemakers and retirees, mistakenly believed domestic work was sufficient physical activity, unaware that resistance training and aerobic movement are essential to managing diabetes.

"We talk about insulin and sugar checks, but ignore whether the patient has the time, space, or social support to walk 7,000 steps a day," said Dr Chandani Seth, co-author.

Dr Ameya Joshi, co-investigator, noted that although the 5S model relies on digital self-monitoring tools, such as fitness trackers and health apps, usage was far lower among women, especially those from lower-income backgrounds. While many had smartphones, they didn't know how to download or use health apps. "There is a deep digital divide that's hurting women's health," said Dr Joshi.

Experts warned that the impact of these disparities is already evident. Women who did not engage in strength training had significantly higher HbA1c levels (a key marker of poor glycaemic control). Moreover, prolonged sitting – reported by 59.5 per cent of participants was more common among women and was associated with increased BMI and blood sugar levels. Snoring and daytime drowsiness – red flags for obstructive sleep apnea and poor metabolic health were frequently reported by female shift workers.

"The circadian disruption seen in working women is deadly in the long run. It affects hormonal cycles, insulin resistance, and mental health," said Dr Apoorva Hajirnis, co-author.

Gang selling unauthorised food on trains busted

The scam was operated through a network of fake IRCTC IDs and licences

I Aditi Thakur
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Railway Protection Force and Central Railway vigilance teams have busted a gang selling unauthorised food and water on trains.

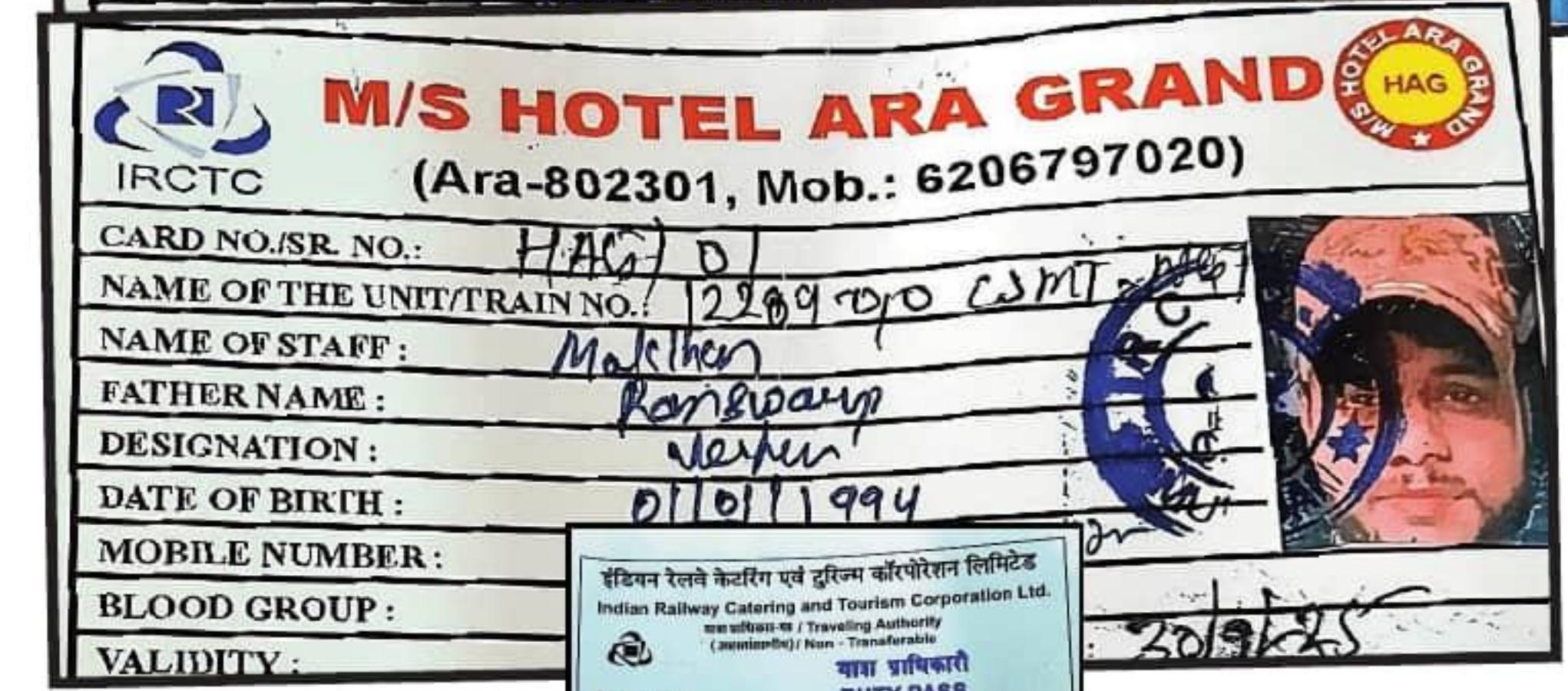
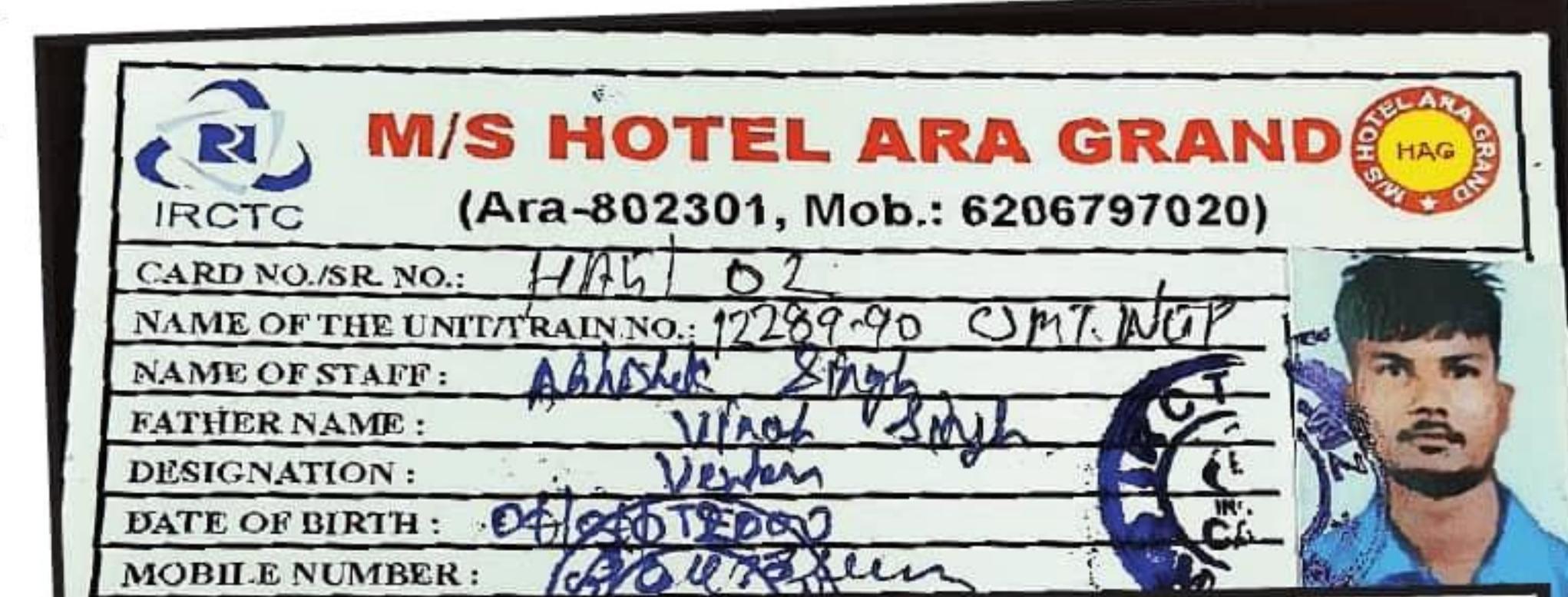
The scam, operated through fake Indian Railways Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) IDs and licences, was uncovered on Duronto Express.

The teams, who were on the tail of these rail rogues for the past two months, received a tip-off: A gang was hawking unapproved food packets and non-Rail Neer water bottles on the 12289 Duronto Express, en route from Mumbai CSMT to Nagpur. A team of more than 15 officials, comprising CR vigilance and RPF personnel, boarded the train.

The operation culminated in a bust at Kasara Station, where the Duronto makes a halt. Three accused were arrested and officials seized 57 packets of biryanis and 15 boxes of water bottles.

Police confirmed that the trio had fake IDs and licences purportedly from IRCTC. They were identified as: Arbaz Ahmed Khan, Mukkam Kapoor Singh and Ajay Ravi Rathod. The police are now looking for the mastermind.

"We have nabbed three people from Kasara in a joint operation of the railway commercial and RPF,"

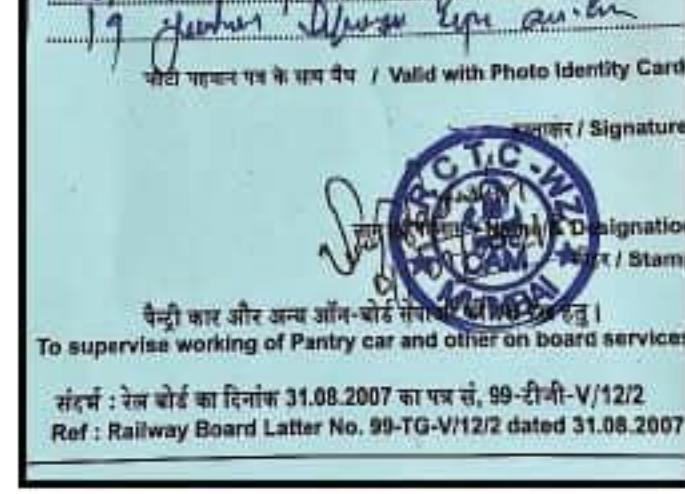


Fake documents used by the three people arrested on Duronto Express

said Senior DSC Mumbai Division, Rishi Shukla.

"They have been charged under Section 144 (unauthorised entry or sale) and 147 (trespass) of the Indian Railway Act," he added.

IRCTC GGM Gaurav Jha said:



"Yes, the incident occurred, and three people have been held. The IDs and licences are indeed fake."

In April, the RPF cracked down on 36 unauthorised hawkers in the long-distance express who were selling food and water in IRCTC uniforms. The accused were arrested with a large water bottles inside authorised Rail Neer cartons.

Storing expired food items: 5 quick-com licences suspended

Minister confirms 43 violations in 3 months; govt mulls stricter storage rules

I Faizan Khan
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The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is auditing warehouses of food delivery companies, including Swiggy, Blinkit and Zomato, following reports of irregularities in the storage and handling of products. The government confirmed the investigation after legislators Chitra Wagh, Prasad Lad and Pravin Darekar raised concerns in the assembly last week.

The FDA chief told Mumbai Mirror that five licences have been suspended so far due to violations of food safety regulations.

According to Food and Drug Administration Minister Narhari Zirwal, inspections carried out by the FDA revealed that expired, misbranded and substandard food items were being stored in these warehouses. Officials noted that, in many cases, online delivery services allegedly failed to ensure the timely disposal of expired products.

In response to these findings, the FDA has launched detailed audits of the implicated warehouses. Preliminary reports confirm that



A food item delivered earlier this year, well past the expiry date

expired products were stored even in temperature-controlled facilities, prompting the FDA to initiate legal proceedings against those responsible. However, the FDA clarified that, despite concerns raised by legislators regarding expired milk packets, no evidence has yet been found indicating that milk was sold to customers.

According to a statement made in the assembly by the minister, between April and June 2025, FDA inspections uncovered 43 cases of irregularities related to online delivery services across Maharashtra.

The FDA has issued notices in these cases and sent an additional 32 food samples to laboratories for further test-

ing. Officials said that action will be taken under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, once laboratory reports are finalised.

"We have suspended five licences of storage houses of some prominent food delivery apps, including Zepto. These storage houses are located in Borivali, Malad, Dharavi, and a few other places. Multiple complaints were made to us, and we are monitoring the storage conditions of these online food delivery apps," said Rajesh Narvekar, Commissioner of FDA, Maharashtra.

On June 18, a Zepto customer, Nikhil Mishra, raised a complaint through the company's in-app support chat, reporting that a USB cable (Aroma C21 – 2.4 Amp) had arrived damaged, and multiple food items, including chocolates and cookies intended as a gift for his mother, were discovered to be expired.

"If the expiry dates hadn't been noticed, we would have consumed the food items," Mishra told the support executive.

He also warned that the matter would be escalated to senior management through Twitter and an official email.

BMC to OK access control roads at only 2 junctions

Proposals for the remaining 2 junctions axed by civic body

■ Sushant More
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The BMC plans to approve access control roads at two of the initially planned four junctions on Eastern and Western Express Highways. The proposals for the remaining two junctions have been axed.

New flyovers and underpasses are set to spring up at Sudhir Phadke Road in Borivali and the BKC Connector (southbound), providing much-needed relief to drivers battling peak hour traffic snarls. Originally, four junctions were eyed for these enhancements, including Milan Subway, Maruti Mandir Road at Vile Parle, Sudhir Phadke Road in Borivali, and the BKC

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The access-controlled roads will connect the Sudhir Phadke Road flyover to the Western Express Highway, which will mean vehicles need not go towards Dahisar (left) to reach Mumbai; a U-turn flyover is in the works to link the BKC Connector (right) with the Eastern Express Highway

Connector. However, the municipal corporation has scrapped the access control road projects at Milan Subway and Vile Parle Maruti Mandir Road.

An official said that with two existing bridges connecting Andheri to Mumbai Airport's

Terminal One and Terminal Two to Bandra, there's no need for additional infrastructure at Vile Parle. Efforts to reduce traffic at Captain Vinayak Gore Bridge and Vile Parle East will instead focus on Sudhir Phadke Road and the BKC Connector. Plans for a flyover on SV Road near Milan Subway are already underway, leaving no space for further developments.

Drivers navigating the Sudhir Phadke Road flyover currently struggle without direct access to the WEH. Vehicles are forced to reverse direction towards Dahisar and turn under the Ovaripada bridge to reach Mumbai, causing significant congestion at the National Park and Ovaripada Metro junction. The new access control road will feature an underground passage and

widened roads to streamline traffic flow and alleviate these bottlenecks. At the BKC Connector, a U-turn flyover is in the works to link the Chunabhatti BKC Connector with the Eastern Express Highway. This bridge will facilitate smoother travel towards South Mumbai, with primary work already progressing on the U-turn flyover.

Exposed: The rot at the heart of Shatabdi Hospital management

Illegal hiring practices, forged workload data, employment of unqualified technicians in life-critical roles

■ Swapnil R. Mishra
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A major recruitment and regulatory scandal has erupted at Kandivali's Bharat Ratna Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Municipal General Hospital — popularly known as Shatabdi Hospital — exposing illegal hiring, forged workload data, and the continued employment of unqualified technicians in life-critical roles.

The official documents accessed by Mumbai Mirror reveal a workload submission of 112.24%, well beyond the maximum permissible 100% limit used in BMC calculations for staffing justification. Experts say such figures are mathematically impossible and point to intentional data manipulation.

"A hospital can never exceed 100% workload under BMC norms. These numbers have likely been inflated to justify unauthorised recruitment," said one of the hospital staff on the condition of anonymity. He further alleged that the workload metric — a key input for staff allocation and budget requests — appears to have been exploited. The hospital authorities, including the hospital chief, submitted exaggerated data to the civic body to greenlight unsanctioned hiring across departments, staffers alleged.

An audit of internal records revealed that the hospital appointed staff beyond sanctioned posts across multiple designations. "No financial provision exists for excess appointments. If these employees are getting paid, it raises serious questions about fund diversion or ghost budgeting. Only higher BMC authorities can sanction additional posts," said a senior hospital official, requesting ano-



Hospital authorities have submitted exaggerated data to BMC to greenlight unsanctioned hiring, sources say

nymity.

Moreover, the hospital employed ECG, laboratory, and X-ray technicians who are not registered with the Maharashtra Paramedical Council — a direct breach of the Maharashtra Paramedical Council Act, 2011. "Section 31 of the Act explicitly states that no person shall practice as a paramedic unless registered with the council. Violators are subject to imprisonment of 3–10 years and fines between Rs 5,000 and Rs 25,000. The offence is cognisable and non-bailable," said a senior civic official.

Such unqualified personnel handling diagnostics could lead to misdiagnoses, incorrect treatments or fatal errors — putting thousands of

patients at risk. "Unqualified staff are playing with people's lives. Manipulated data allows the misuse of public funds. This is not just negligence — it's criminal," said health rights activist Abhijeet More, convenor, Jan Arogya Abhiyaan.

Repeated calls and messages to Medical Superintendent Dr Ajay Gupta and Chief Medical Superintendent Dr Chandrakant Pawar went unanswered.

However, this is not the first instance of malpractice at Shatabdi Hospital. In 2008, two blood bank technicians — Shraddha Darekar and Ruchira Wagh — were appointed without meeting qualification norms. The Food and Drug Administration

(FDA) subsequently revoked their approvals, but both continued working at the hospital as of mid-2025.

"Complaints were filed repeatedly. No action was taken, and both individuals remain embedded in the system. It's as if the rules don't apply here," said a former employee. Hospital insiders allege that the hospital chief was directly involved in manipulating the workload figures. A senior BMC official confirmed the system's weak oversight. "Hospitals self-report their data. There's no regular audit due to the scale of operations. If figures are falsified at the local level, it's difficult to detect without whistleblower input or media scrutiny," the official said.

POST	SANCTIONED	APPOINTED
Clerk	9	10
Lab Technician	13	15
OT Assistant (PTRA)	11	12
Pharmacist	6	7
Ward Assistant (RA)	9	10
Staff Nurse	9	10

VIOLATIONS

- Excess recruitment beyond sanctioned posts — violating BMC's HR policy
- Submission of falsified workload data — administrative malpractice
- Employment of unlicensed paramedics — criminal breach of the Paramedical Council Act

KEY DEMANDS

- Immediate audit of all recruitment, payroll, and workload records at Shatabdi Hospital
- Suspension of the hospital chief pending inquiry
- FIRs against officials under the Maharashtra Paramedical Council Act
- Licence verification drive across all BMC hospitals

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

He served in sensitive military zones across Pakistan, including Sindh, Balochistan, Bahawalpur, and the Siachen-Balotra sector.

In perhaps the most damning part of his disclosure, Rana said David Coleman Headley—his longtime associate and co-conspirator—underwent multiple stages of training with the terror outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba between 2003 and 2004. Headley himself reportedly told Rana that Lashkar was less about ideology and more about espionage, describing them as functioning primarily as a “spy network” rather than devout followers.

These revelations, made during his interrogation after his extradition from the US in April, point not only to Rana's deep ties with Pakistan's military and intelligence networks but also to the operational overlap between Pakistan-backed terror groups and military assets.

The 26/11 attacks claimed 166 lives. Despite numerous arrests, 49 accused remain at large, reportedly sheltering in Pakistan.

Rana was extradited to India after a prolonged legal battle in US courts. He was handed over to Indian authorities on April 10, when the National Investigation Agency (NIA) arrested him upon his arrival in Delhi. The main case related to the 26/11 Mumbai attacks, however, remains with the Mumbai Crime Branch. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has expressed confidence that Rana will soon be brought to Mumbai to face trial. The Crime Branch is expected to seek Rana's custody soon.

“We are in the process of initiating a request for his custody from the NIA. Discussions are ongoing, and there are differing opinions that need to be considered,” a senior officer of the home ministry has told Mumbai Mirror.

Rana said he completed his primary education at Rainiaz High School in Chichawatni. From 1974 to 1979, he studied at Cadet College Hasan Abdal in Punjab, Pakistan, where Headley was his classmate.

Rana said he learned Headley's mother was an American and that his father a Pakistani. During their time at the military college, Headley spoke Urdu with a Punjabi accent and



later went on to learn several other languages, including English, Hindi, Arabic, and Pashto. Rana further revealed that due to harassment by his stepmother, Headley left his home in Pakistan and moved to the US to live with his biological mother, Serril Headley.

In his statement to the Crime Branch, Rana made additional revelations about Headley. He said that between 2003 and 2004, Headley attended three training courses with Lashkar-e-Taiba. While he could not recall the names of all the courses, he mentioned that some were called Aam and Khas.

Asked whose the idea it was to open the First Immigration Centre in Mumbai, Rana said it was entirely his idea, not of Headley's. He specifically stated that his Mumbai branch was managed by Mahrush Bharucha, and not by Headley.

Regarding money transfers to Headley, Rana said the funds were sent as part of business expenses. Rana also admitted the office's location in Mumbai posed challenges in securing clients.

Circling back to his earlier Army career, Rana said he suffered from pulmonary oedema during an assignment at Siachen, which caused him to remain absent from duty. As a result of this prolonged absence, he was dubbed a deserter and discharged.

The Pak troika

Rana said in 1993, he moved to Germany for further studies, before relocating to England. In July 1994, he travelled to the US, where he passed the Medical Licensing Examination in 1997. Between 1997 and 2000, he obtained Canadian citizenship and began living in Ottawa. In 2000, Rana received an American Investor Visa and moved to the US, where he established a meat processing plant in Kings, Illinois. Around the same time, he also started a real estate business in Chicago and operated a grocery store.

Tahawwur Rana is in NIA custody after being extradited from the US on April 10. Mumbai police will soon take his custody to investigate his role in helping David Headley (left)

Rana also admitted to knowing Abdul Rehman Pasha, Sajid Mir, and Major Iqbal, all of whom are from Pakistan and are said to have played a key role in 26/11. In reference to Rajaram Rege, a Mumbai man who claimed to be a political fixer, Tahawwur Rana said that Rege had demanded a bribe, though he did not clarify the nature of the work involved. Rege was known to have been in contact with David Headley, who allegedly sought his assistance in conducting a recce of the Shiv Sena office in Mumbai. Rege was recently arrested by Kolkata Police for allegedly surveying the office of TMC leader Abhishek Banerjee. He had earlier turned approver in the 26/11 case. During Headley's

deposition in the Mumbai court, it was revealed that Headley had planned to use Rege in a terror plot and had passed along his details to both Major Iqbal and Rana.

According to sources, when questioned about forwarding emails to Pakistan's Major Iqbal, Tahawwur Rana did not provide a clear reason and appeared evasive in his response.

Asked about the false information in Headley's visa application to the Indian Embassy in the US, Tahawwur Rana blamed the embassy, claiming they failed to properly scrutinise the documents. However, according to the US Department of Justice, Rana allegedly agreed to open a Mumbai branch of his immigration business and appointed Headley as the office manager, despite Headley having no prior immigration experience.

On two separate occasions, Rana is said to have assisted Headley in preparing and submitting visa applications to Indian authorities that contained information Rana knew was false. Additionally, Rana allegedly provided documentation—through his unsuspecting business partner—in support of Headley's attempt to secure formal approval from Indian authorities to establish the Mumbai branch.

Over a period of more than two years, Headley reportedly met repeatedly with Rana in Chicago, during which he described his surveillance activities conducted on behalf of LeT and their potential plans to attack Mumbai.

Rana, however, denied any knowledge of the landing sites for the Mumbai attacks, saying Headley did not share such information with him.

Rana admitted to knowing Bashir Shaikh, who allegedly went to receive Headley at Mumbai airport. Shaikh is believed to be a resident of Santa Cruz, Mumbai, but the agencies have no current information on his whereabouts. It is suspected that he may be in Canada. Shaikh's exact role and affiliations remain a mystery to security agencies.

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Loudspeaker row: Reform must but not now, say community

It is not as if progressive Muslims are unaware of the nuisance loudspeakers create, having raised the issue several times in the past, but just as Hindus who protest the cacophony during their festivals are a minority easily ignored, so too are the reformists

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The Bombay High Court order earlier last week directing the Mumbai police to file a detailed report on the procedure followed in making the city 'loudspeaker-free', came as an unexpected balm for the Muslim community. Shaken by the relentless campaign since April that resulted in the removal of loudspeakers from most masjids, Muslims had resigned themselves to life without hearing the azaan, even in their own mohallas.

Indeed, among the most vivid symbols of ex-BJP MP Kirit Somaiya's 'bhonga mukt Mumbai' campaign, is that of a police officer arguing with mosque trustees inside Madanpura's Badi Masjid, before its loudspeaker was removed. This over a century old landmark, is one of two masjids in the city from where the official announcement regarding the sighting of the Eid moon is made.

Police have entered mosques during riots; but it was beyond imagination that, in peace time, police would enter a mosque located in the heart of the oldest Muslim quarter, to forcibly remove its loudspeakers.

Other images, posted by Somaiya, have defined his campaign: him striding through Muslim ghettos, party workers in tow; holding forth inside police stations, seated alongside the Sr Inspector while uniformed staff listen attentively.

The triumphant tone of these posts, and his notes of commendation to the police for obeying his orders, have sent a clear message: this man, denied an election ticket since 2019, and holding no party post, has the backing of the state in a mission



For many years, rational voices have advocated the use of alarm clocks and wristwatches for keeping track of namaz timings, especially in mixed residential areas

directed against one community. For, not a single of his posts mentions loudspeakers in any non-Muslim place of worship.

It is not as if Muslims are unaware of the nuisance these loudspeakers can create. In fact, many years ago, when Sena chief Bal Thackeray had wanted them removed, Muslim students in Madanpura had told this reporter how simultaneous azaans relayed five times a day by the many masjids in the area made it difficult for them to study.

But they dared not complain. Rational voices had, even then, advo-

cated the use of alarm clocks and wristwatches for keeping track of namaz timings, especially in mixed residential areas.

However, just as Hindus who protest the cacophony during their festivals are a minority easily ignored, so too were these Muslims.

For Hindu festivals, the State itself has often approached the court for relaxation in loudspeaker deadlines. Muslims have never enjoyed such benevolence, but the policy of "live and let live" allowed azaan to be relayed on loudspeakers all these years.

That laissez faire era ended when

Yogi Adityanath made it his government's mission to obliterate all public markers of Muslim identity, and in doing so, became a role model for other Hindutva leaders. Muslims sensed the changed mood, and so, when MNS chief Raj Thackeray warned in 2022 that his party would recite the Hanuman Chalisa in front of Mumbai's masjids till loudspeakers were removed, the community quietly cooperated with Police Commissioner Sanjay Pande. Pande's tactful approach, backed by the Uddhav Thackeray-led government, not only succeeded in blunting Raj

Thackeray's bravado, but also emboldened many Muslims to appeal to their community to substitute loudspeakers in this digital age with mobile azaan apps.

Since then, the loud blaring of the azaan has been considerably muted outside Muslim ghettos. Hence Somaiya's campaign should have been ignored as unnecessary at best and a threat to communal peace at worst. Yet, only one police station cited potential law and order problems to bar him from their jurisdiction.

In their defence, police cited the January 2025 High Court order on loudspeakers, but there, seizure of loudspeakers came as the very last step of a lengthy procedure. It's noteworthy that as police went around collecting fines of Rs 5,000 and cancelling loudspeaker licences even though they'd fallen silent after having been disconnected by the trustees (the High Court petition lists many such instances), not a single untoward incident took place, even in the densest Muslim mohallas.

Should this be seen as a sign of restraint by Mumbai's Muslims, or a realisation that their voice didn't count under this government? With a meeting with Ajit Pawar yielding nothing, and public opinion against them, most were cynical about approaching court.

For now, the cynics have lost. But in this atmosphere of siege, so have the reformists. Had they persisted in 2022, under a more inclusive government, they might have been able to convince a substantial section of the community that loudspeakers are unnecessary. But today, given the insensitivity that's characterised the "Bhonga Mukt Mumbai" campaign, talk of reform seems like a betrayal.

Hundreds of trees allegedly cut for Kalyan-Badlapur railway expansion

Court-mandated survey currently underway, but trees already bulldozed allege environmentalists

Apoorva Agashe
apoarva.agashe@timesofindia.com

Environmentalists in Ulhasnagar and surrounding areas have raised concerns over the alleged felling of hundreds of trees in a lush green zone for railway track expansion along the Kalyan-Badlapur stretch.

Adv. Sarita Khanchandi, founder of the Hirali Foundation, spoke to Mumbai Mirror and voiced concern over the incident.

"Tracks 3 and 4 are set to be expanded, and we have gone from pillar to post trying to save the trees. I filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL), and the Bombay High Court directed that no trees be cut until a

survey is completed. Just yesterday, some local environmentalists sent a video clearly showing damaged trees – some uprooted, others bulldozed. It's disheartening that the authorities seem to have turned a blind eye," she said.

The court directed the Ulhasnagar Municipal Corporation (UMC) to conduct a survey and explore alternative land where trees could be relocated or replanted. That survey is still ongoing. If any trees have been cut, it constitutes an illegal act," added Adv. Khanchandi.

According to UMC officials, no permission was granted for tree felling in the area.

"We are currently surveying as per the court's order. We have not

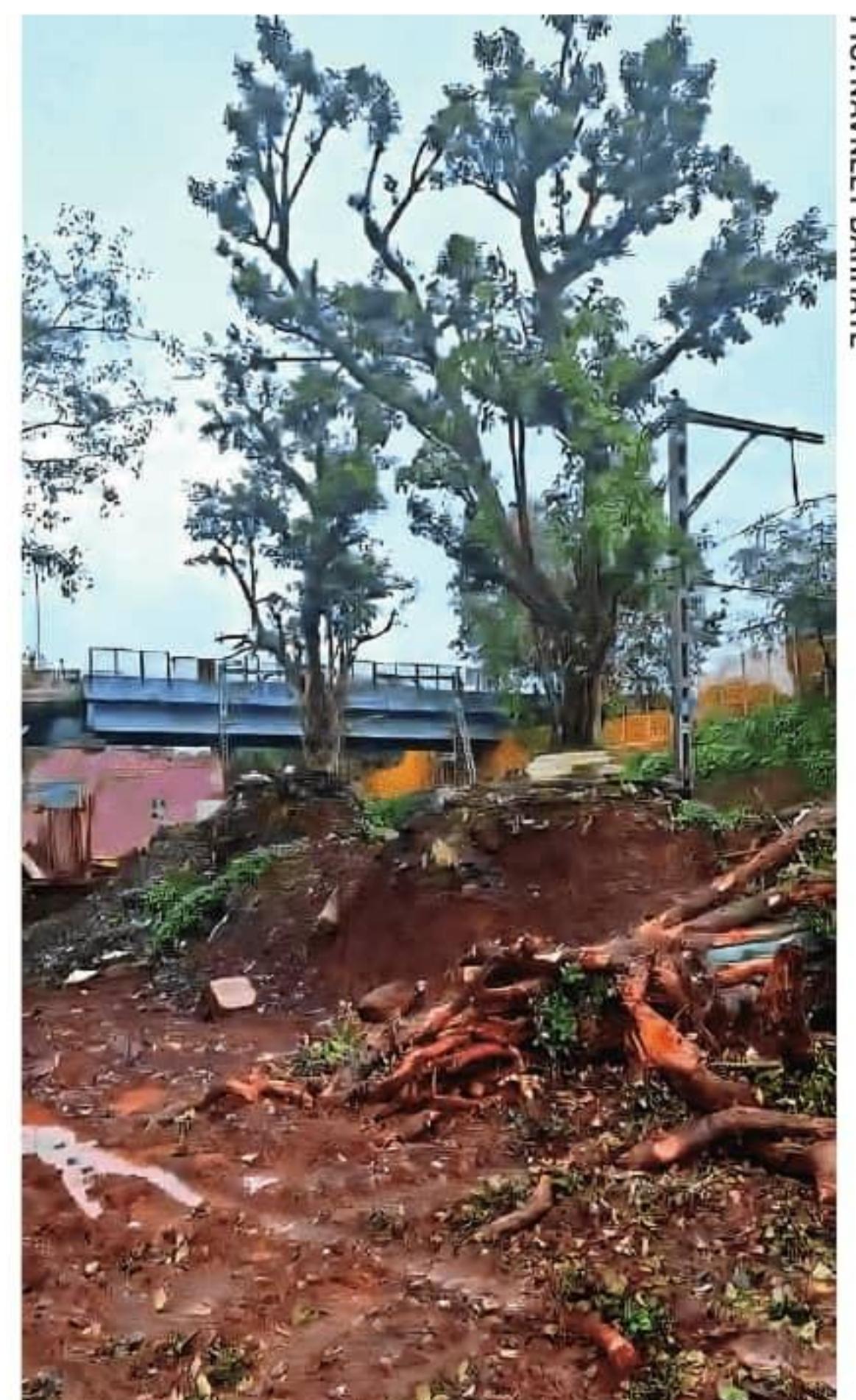


issued any permission to cut trees. The goal is to determine which trees, if any, can be safely removed, and whether alternative planting areas can be identified," a UMC official told Mumbai Mirror.

The Mumbai Railway Vikas Corporation (MRVC), responsible for the track expansion, assured that due procedures are followed.

"MRVC executes all projects in strict adherence to relevant rules, regulations, and environmental guidelines," said Sunil G. Udasi, Chief Public Relations Officer of MRVC.

"Where tree cutting is unavoidable, appropriate permissions are obtained from competent authorities, and joint inspections are carried out. MRVC places the highest importance on environmental responsibility. The issue that has now come to our attention is being examined, and suitable action will be taken if required."



Uprooted trees from the lush green zone between Kalyan and Badlapur

SUICIDE IS KILLING YOUNG INDIANS MORE THAN ANY SERIOUS DISEASE

One in six deaths among India's young is by suicide — a rate that hasn't budged in two decades

EXPLAINER

I Bansri Shah
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A recent study shows that of all the deaths in the age group 15 to 29 in India, one in six is due to suicide. The number, alarmingly high for a country with a very large young population, has remained stubbornly consistent over the past two decades.

This figure, drawn from the Sample Registration System (SRS) Cause of Death Report for 2020–2022, offers grim proof that India's youth are in crisis.

A generational burden
The burden of suicide in India is not evenly distributed — it skews heavily toward the young.

According to the data by the SRS report, 17.1% of all deaths among people aged 15–29 were suicides. Even within this demographic, those aged between 15 and 24 are more vulnerable.

But the crisis doesn't end with the youth. Among people aged 30–44, suicide accounted for 9.4% of deaths, making it a bigger killer than cancer, diabetes, or heart disease.

The only decline appears with age. There's a clear drop in the rate of suicides as the population gets older: 5.2% for people between 45 and 59 years old and 1.3% for anyone above 60 years of age.

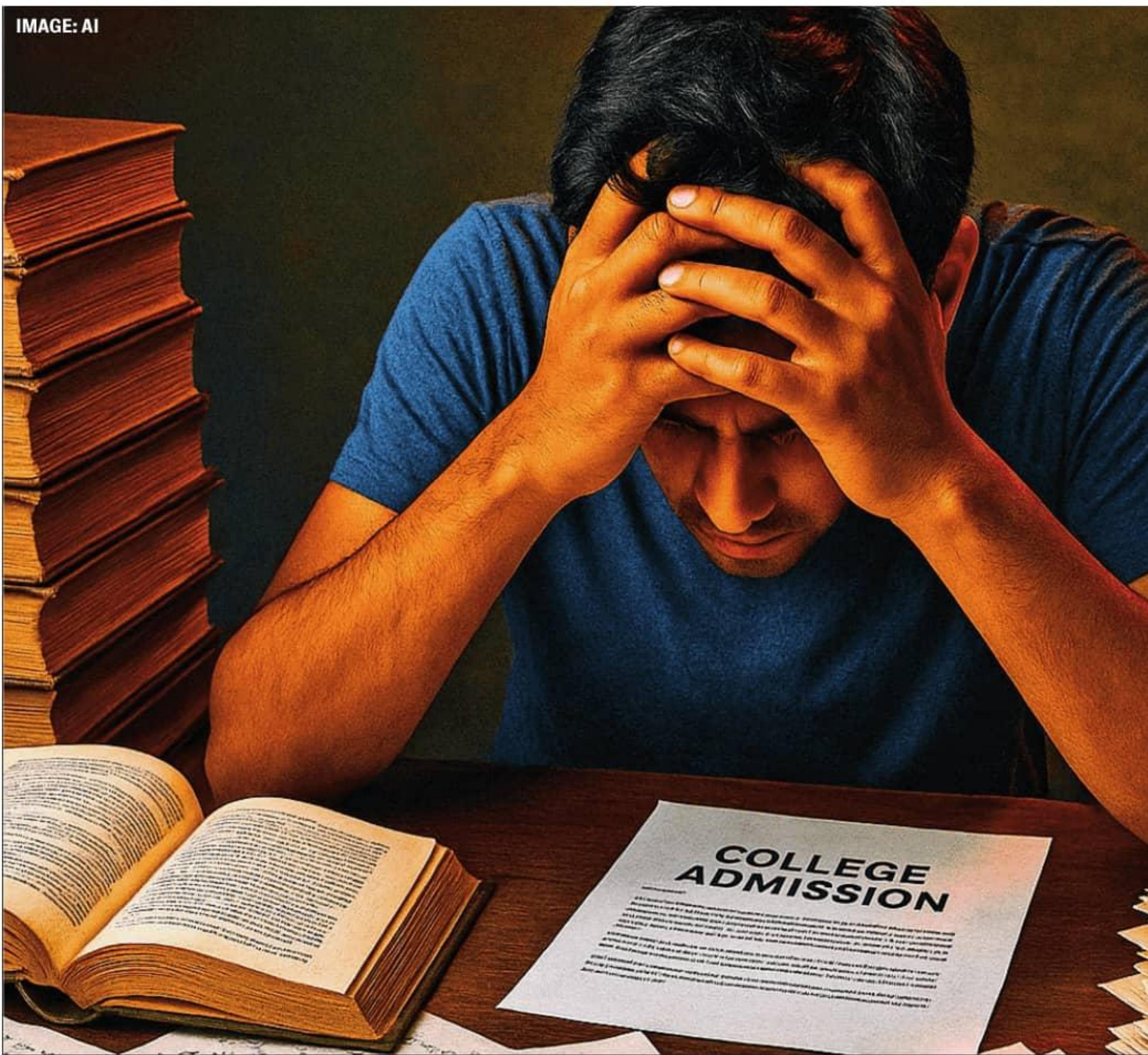
A clear pattern emerges — the younger you are, the greater your risk.

Geography of despair
Suicide rates are especially high in India's more developed states. In non-EAG states, 20.9% of deaths among 15–29-year-olds were suicides — one in five.

In the Empowered Action Group (EAG) states and Assam, the figure is lower at 12.2%, but still enough to make suicide the second-leading cause of death in that age group.

Rural areas reported a slightly higher suicide rate (17.5%) than urban areas (15.5%), showing the issue cuts across geography — not just a rural or urban problem, but a national one.

IMAGE: AI



WHAT ARE EAG STATES?

Group of socioeconomically-backward states in India that have been prioritised for targeted interventions aimed at improving their development indicators, especially in the areas of health and family welfare. They include:



Women at a higher risk

India has one of the highest youth suicide rates in the world — and women are particularly vulnerable. Globally, Indian men have a higher suicide rate than their counterparts elsewhere. But within India, women are at greater risk. The SRS data shows that 18.2% of deaths among women were suicides, compared to 16.3% among men. In urban areas, the figure rises to 17.6% for young women. India has a female suicide rate nearly six times the global average. These gender-specific pressures — rooted in patriarchy and economic uncertainty — explain why the numbers look the way they do. Factors like early marriage, domestic violence, and limited social freedom heighten this risk for young women. For young men, pressures tied to academic performance, employment, and societal expectations fuel these statistics, the research said.

Who is more vulnerable to suicidal behaviour?

Suicidal behaviour among youth is strongly linked to gender disadvantage, with higher vulnerability among girls who:



Do not attend school or college



Experience domestic physical or sexual abuse



Have histories of independent decision-making or premarital relationships



Show signs of common mental disorders

A seasonal spike

A 2024 study on the patterns, trends and risk factors of suicides among young Indians says that suicides among the young peak between March and July, which align with exam season, results, college admissions, and the start of a new academic year.

"Earlier, 35% was the passing grade. Now, that value is attributed to someone who scores 70% to 75%," said Meeti Vaidya, a psychologist based out of Mumbai. "There is a constant upping of levels of competition. You cannot settle for something less, anymore."

WHAT PUSHES YOUNG PEOPLE TO SUICIDE?

Academic pressure:

The great importance assigned to academics leads to their self-worth being directly connected to how they fare in their studies

Social media: The endless scroll of seemingly perfect lives can deepen insecurities, distort reality, and add another layer of stress to already burdened minds

Familial pressures:

Young people face constant expectations — to succeed, to conform, to make choices that reflect well on their families

Taboo against getting help: Despite an increase in conversations about the importance of mental health, the number of people who actually decide to get help still remains small

Relationship problems: Relationships remain a taboo topic, especially for young people in India. Many struggle in silence, feeling isolated and unsupported

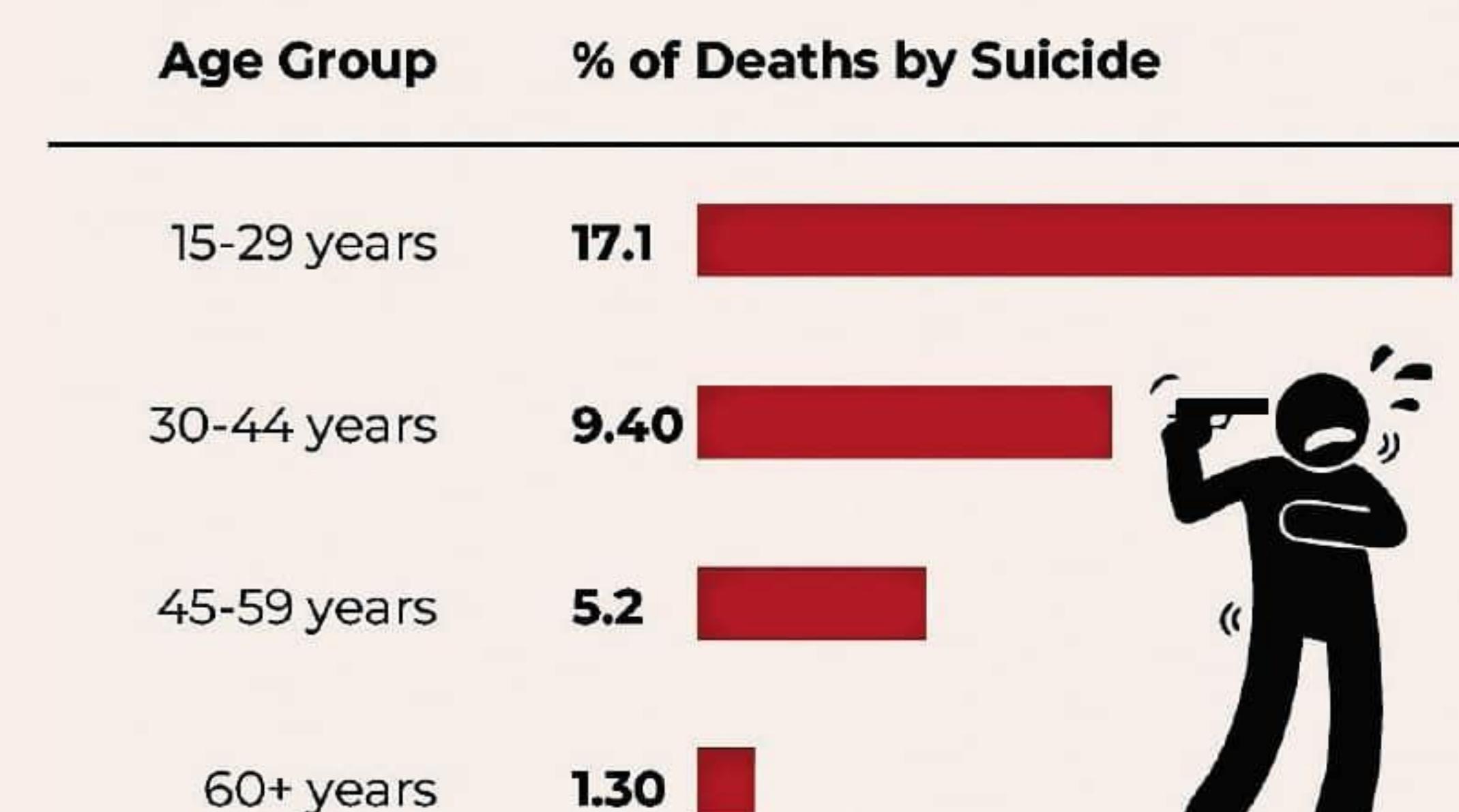
Substance abuse: Drug use remains heavily stigmatised in Indian society, especially among the youth. Many young people find themselves caught between conflicting voices — parents warning them against it, and peers pressuring them to fit in. This tension, combined with emotional distress or a need for escape, can lead to patterns of harmful substance abuse



Those in distress can seek help and counselling at the BMC's mental health helpline:

022-24131212 (24x7)

THE SRS DATA SHOWS A CLEAR AGE GRADIENT IN SUICIDE MORTALITY





In chaos, a compass

How trusted financial advisers helped investors ride out the market mayhem — and come out stronger

Kayezad E Adajania
& Yasmin Hussain
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In September last year, a 56-year-old retiree from Mumbai reached out to her financial planner, Santosh Joseph, CEO of Germinate Investor Services. The former public sector bank employee wanted to invest in equities for the first time. She had parked her money in fixed deposits (FDs) for most part of her working life and now wanted to get a taste of equities.

When March 2025 lows came, she was distraught. Her portfolio had lost 15% in just three months. She regretted her decision, thinking that venturing into equities was akin to gambling and that she ought to have stayed away. However, a call from Joseph changed her mind—and her fortunes. Ten months later, she has not just recovered her losses, but made a smart profit as well.

Stories like these aren't rare. As market volatility has tested investor nerves, financial planners have quietly played the role of steady navigators — booking profits, tweaking asset mixes and, most importantly, stopping panic in its tracks.

Between August 2024 and June 2025, the Sensex swung nearly 14,500 points. Bond yields seesawed (but largely fell), and mid-cap and small-cap stocks corrected. For the average investor, it was a nerve-wracking ride. However, those with experienced financial planners by their side found ways to not just survive, but thrive.

We spoke to several such advisers to understand how smart strategy and steady counsel had made all the difference.



SMART ALLOCATION

In 2023, when small-cap equity funds were all the rage with investors, with net inflows worth ₹41,035 crore, Gurugram-based financial adviser Ashish Chadha sent out a note to his investors to go slow on equities.

Chadha, director of Chadha Investment Consultant, had stopped recommending them small-cap funds back then. He had even dissuaded



them from fresh systematic investment plans (SIP) and, instead, channelled their savings to government securities and gold funds.

"The year 2023 was bad for business," says Chadha, referring to the contrarian call, when everyone wanted a piece of equities as the S&P BSE Sensex went up by 20% that year.

Dilshad Billimoria (MD & Chief Financial Planner, Dilzer Consultants) increased the time period of her clients' systematic transfer plans (STP) in 2024 as equity markets were going up

Having witnessed an impressive influx of more than ₹41,000 crore, small-cap funds posted more inflows than outflows that year.

At the time, Chadha's only recommendation in equity was large-cap funds and Nifty Next50 index passive funds. A year later, his investors not just recovered losses, but made a smart profit as well. "Typically, a 60% allocation in equities is ideal. Going slow in mid-caps and equities in 2023 and much of 2024 helped our clients' allocation to equities come back to around 60%," says Chadha.

The ongoing SIPs aside, investors

and advisers also look for opportunity moments to step up their investments. This is not market timing, but the point where, after a persistent fall in the markets, it seems reasonably safe to put in a small lump sum. On March 4, when the Sensex hit a low of 72,989 points, smart advisers saw a little downside from thereon and nudged investors to step up their equity investments.

Gajendra Kothari, managing director & chief executive officer, Etica Wealth, a Mumbai-based distribution firm, advised his clients to resume lump-sum investments in equities that day and continued reinforcing his message throughout the week. "We invest a lot via SIPs. So most of my clients have been investing regularly,

but many don't do it through SIPs. We dug into our database and found those who don't, and reached out to convince them that it was a good time to get back in," says Kothari.

He adds that his firm deployed nearly ₹10 crore that week between fresh inflows, additional lump-sum top-ups and switches from liquid funds. Of this, ₹2.26 crore came through fresh purchases and ₹5 crore via 234 additional purchase transactions.

We generally build a high margin of safety when we make financial plans

Suresh Sadagopan
Founder, Ladder7 Financial Advisories



in 2024 as equity markets were going up. The STP facility helps transfer money from liquid or short-term debt funds to equity mutual funds.

It helps investors with a lump sum in hand to deploy money steadily into equities.

We invest a lot via SIPs. So most of my clients have been investing regularly, but many don't do it through SIPs. We dug into our database and found those who don't, and reached out to convince them that it was a good time to get back in (in March)

Gajendra Kothari

Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer, Etica Wealth





Market falls and recoveries

Peak date	Peak value	Trough date	Trough value	Fall from peak	Sensex recovery date	Sensex value	Time for fall	Time for recovery	Total time for fall & recovery
4 Jun 1986	659	28 Mar 1988	390	-41%	30 Sep 1988	663	1 year, 10 months	6 months	2 years, 4 months
9 Oct 1990	1,559	25 Jan 1991	956	-39%	26 Jul 1991	1,600	4 months	6 months	10 months
22 Apr 1992	4,467	26 Apr 1993	2,037	-54%	12 Aug 1994	4,508	12 months	1 year, 4 months	2 years, 4 months
12 Sep 1994	4,631	4 Dec 1996	2,745	-41%	14 Jul 1999	4,710	2 years, 3 months	2 years, 7 months	4 years, 10 months
21 Apr 1998	4,281	20 Oct 1998	2,764	-35%	5 Jul 1999	4,306	6 months	8 months	1 year, 2 months
11 Feb 2000	5,934	21 Sep 2001	2,600	-56%	2 Jan 2004	6,027	1 year, 7 months	2 years, 3 months	3 years, 10 months
8 Jan 2008	20,873	9 Mar 2009	8,160	-61%	4 Nov 2010	20,894	1 year, 2 months	1 year, 8 months	2 years, 10 months
14 Jan 2020	41,952	23 Mar 2020	25,981	-38%	9 Nov 2020	42,597	2 months	8 months	10 months
				Average		1 year, 1 month		1 year, 3 months	2 years, 4 months
				Maximum		2 years, 3 months		2 years, 7 months	4 years, 10 months
				Minimum		2 months		6 months	8 months

Source: ACE MF, FundsIndia Research

"If somebody had an STP programme of 12 weeks, we increased it to 20," she says. Billimoria's firm also dug deep into the clients' portfolios to identify non-performers and took advantage of the rising markets to consolidate.

CALMING INVESTORS

Even if your SIPs are on, there are special situations that may require deft handling. If these come up amidst market mayhem and global uncertainty, it could cloud your judgement. Here's where a guiding hand is reassuring. Suresh Sadagopan, founder of Ladder7 Financial Advisors, tells us about a client who was a senior executive in her company, but was constantly stretched financially on account of multiple loans and high cost of her children's education.

In February, at the height of the US trade tariff uncertainty, Sadagopan

in another instance, according to Sadagopan, a client who retired in November 2024 got a large sum as retirement benefit, including the provident fund and gratuity. Equity markets had already started to fall by then; the Sensex had fallen by 8% between the peak of September and November-end. While regular income needs were to be met from debt investments, Sadagopan had to ensure longevity of the corpus by investing a chunk in equities. A large lump sum (part of retirement benefits) is usually invested through STPs. The question was by what time.

Here, he says, his firm initiated STPs of 20-24 weeks, instead of the usual 10-12 weeks. "It worked out quite well. The STPs were started when equity markets were at relatively lower points. We also put some money in gold and silver assets."

TACTICAL VS STRATEGIC

If you have invested wisely and are continuing with your SIPs, what does a financial adviser bring to the table?

Most advisers we spoke to said that they didn't need to do anything with a majority of their clients. Sadagopan adds that none of his clients asked him to stop the SIPs. He says that volatile periods like the one prevalent sin-

Typically, a 60% allocation in equities is ideal. Going slow in mid-caps and equities in 2023 and much of 2024 helped our clients' allocation to equities come back to around 60%

Ashish Chadha

Director, Chadha Investment Consultant

realised that she had a lot of employee stock options from her US-based company that were lying in a US-based depository account.

Sadagopan said that the company itself wasn't in a great shape. "We sold a small portion of her US shares to close some of her loans. We retired quite a few of her loans so that a larger portion of her regular salary here could be directed towards savings," says Sadagopan.

ce September 2024 don't really call for significant action because "we generally build a high margin of safety when we make financial plans". Besides, it's a fact that what goes down, eventually comes up (see table).

"Knowing that their basics are covered helps clients stay invested with more confidence," says Rohit Shah, founder & CEO, GYR Financial Planners.

In the past 10 months, Shah says none of his clients have stopped their

Knowing that their basics are covered helps clients stay invested with more confidence... none of (our) clients have stopped their SIPs, even as volatility has surged

Rohit Shah
 Founder & CEO, GYR Financial Planners



When an investor's portfolio lost 15% in just three months, she regretted her decision to venture into equities. However, a call from Santosh Joseph (CEO, Germinate Investor Services) changed her mind—and her fortunes

SIPs, even as volatility has surged. Sometimes, however, volatility provides tactical opportunities. Shah recalls a client for whom he had already planned, sometime last year, to deploy money in mid-cap funds once valuations became attractive, over six months.

But when mid- and small-cap indices dropped sharply in late 2024, Shah reached out with a suggestion: "Let's pre-empt the next few instalments."



Money was already parked in liquid funds and an STP was on. "Based on our analysis, that segment was offering good value," he recalls. The client agreed, and they redeployed the capital at a lower NAV (net asset value).



The right guidance at the right time holds the potential of changing investor fortunes

ISTOCK



TRUMP'S DEPORTATION REPORT CARD

The president has largely shut down the southwest border by ending asylum programs and deploying troops. But those moves have shrunk the pool of easy-to-deport migrants

Mary Beth Sheridan
mirrorfeedback@timesofindia.com

#TIJUANA, Mexico

When President Donald Trump pledged to launch the "largest deportation operation in American history," this border city swung into action. The local government declared a state of emergency. Federal authorities built a shelter for up to 2,600 deportees, complete with beds, showers and white-coated chefs.

It was, one local official said, the "zombie apocalypse scenario."

But five months after Trump took office, the shelter is nearly empty. So few deportees have arrived—an average of 38 a day—that one of the two floors has been mothballed.

The situation is similar in other Mexican border communities. While the Trump administration's aggressive immigration arrests have sparked protests in Los Angeles and other US cities, some of the migrants' home countries have been surprised how few have been sent back.

"The reality is, up until now, there haven't been mass deportations," said Mónica Vega, the Baja California state official in charge of the Tijuana reception centre.

The empty shelters represent a little-noticed irony in Trump's campaign against illegal immigration. He has largely shut down the northbound flow of migrants through Mexico by ending US asylum programs that had attracted hundreds of thousands of foreigners. As a further deterrent, he has sharply boosted troop levels along the border.

While the Trump administration's aggressive immigration arrests have sparked protests in Los Angeles and other US cities, some of the migrants' home countries have been surprised how few have been sent back

But those moves have dried up the pool of recently arrived, easy-to-deport migrants. For Trump to meet his goal of deporting 1 million migrants in his first year, he is turning to the more complex search for people who have lived in the United States

without permission for years.

It's hard to get precise information on how many people have been removed so far by the Trump administration. The Department of Homeland Security's statistics office has stopped publishing monthly data on immigration enforcement. DHS did not respond to a question on why it's no longer available.

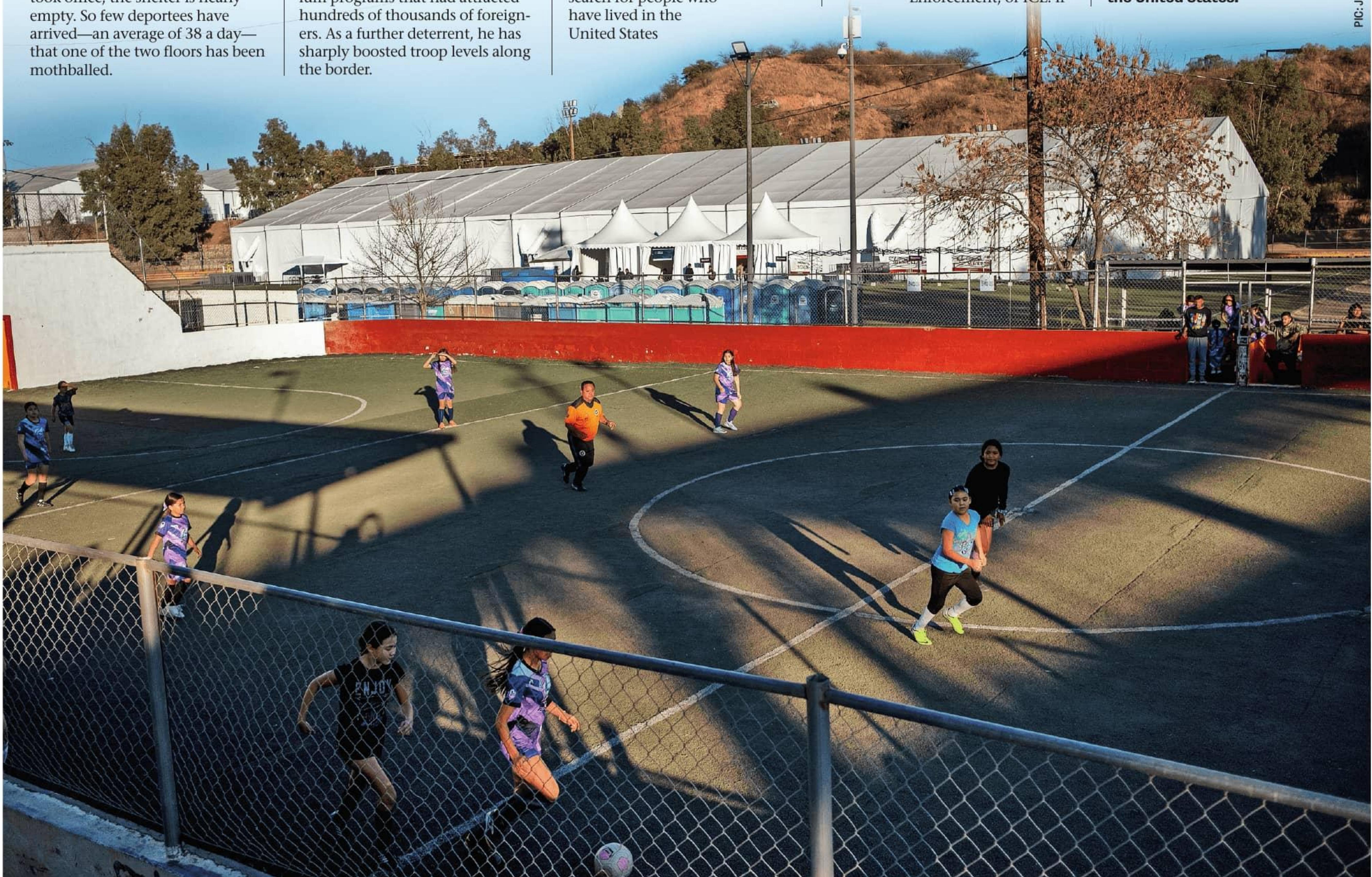
Spokeswoman Tricia McLaughlin told The Washington Post that more than 239,000 migrants had been deported since Trump took office. She did not respond to a query on whether that included people detained by both the Border Patrol and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE. If

it does—as analysts said was likely—it would be significantly fewer than the 341,060 repatriated from February through June last year under President Joe Biden.

McLaughlin noted the administration has intensified its raids in American communities. "ICE made more at-large arrests in the first few weeks of President Trump's presidency than the entire last year under the previous

People play soccer near a temporary government shelter in Nogales, Mexico, in February, part of the country's "Mexico Embraces You" program to receive citizens deported by the United States.

PIC: JOEL ANGEL JUAREZ



administration," she said. More than 56,300 migrants are in custody, the most in years, according to the Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse at Syracuse University. Deportations appear to be rising.

But many of those immigrants are entitled to court hearings before being removed from the country, which could delay their departure. In addition to the logistical challenges of deporting them, the administration is facing a backlash from communities and industries in which migrants live and work.

More than 239,000 migrants have been deported since Trump took office. If this figure included people detained by both the Border Patrol and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, it will be significantly fewer than the 341,060 repatriated from February through June last year under President Joe Biden

"Trump has already achieved his objective of closing the border," said Tonatiuh Guillén, a former director of Mexico's immigration agency. Conducting large-scale deportations from the US interior, however, is a different story. "The resistance of communities, the opposition to government policies and the resistance of all kinds of associations—churches, lawyers' offices—will act as a brake."

Mexico prepared for lakhs of deportees

In the weeks before Trump took office, President Claudia Sheinbaum's government worked feverishly to build 10 shelters along the border, with a total capacity of 25,000 deportees. The logic was clear. At 5.5 million, Mexicans make up the largest share of migrants living without authorization in the US, according to the nonpartisan Migration Policy Institute.

"We really thought we would be inundated," said the Rev. Patrick Murphy, a Catholic priest who runs the Casa del Migrante, a nongovernmental shelter here.

In Tijuana, the federal government needed a big site, fast. It rented Flamingos, a party venue overlooking a busy highway, normally used for wedding and quinceañera celebrations. In other border cities, the military erected giant white tents to serve as shelters.

Trump launched his deportation campaign with a stunning series of actions. He ordered the construction of a 30,000-bed detention centre at the Guantánamo Bay Naval Base in Cuba. He sent more than 200 Venezuelans to a harsh anti-terrorism prison in El Salvador. By late April, the administration claimed "Skyrocketing Arrests and Deportations."

But illegal border crossings quickly plunged, reducing the number of people who could be



Makeshift beds line an outdoor tent at the Casa Del Migrante, the largest shelter in Piedras Negras, Mexico, in February.

returned relatively quickly and easily. In the first five months of 2025, Border Patrol agents apprehended just 32,776 Mexicans at the border—an 86 percent drop from the same period a year earlier.

"Border encounters are down to the lowest in American history," said McLaughlin, the DHS spokeswoman. She acknowledged: "Such minuscule encounters mean low number of returns."

In Latin America, some countries were startled to realize they were receiving fewer deportees from the United States, not more. The number arriving in Mexico, Guatemala and Colombia in the first five months of this year dropped more than 30 percent from the same period in 2024, according to data from their migration agencies.

Historically, those nations' information hasn't necessarily been comparable with U.S. data. DHS figures include a broader range of deportees than some countries do—for example, foreigners returned without an immigration hearing. Still, in some major migrant-sending countries, the trend of declining numbers of deportees was clear.

That wasn't true everywhere: Venezuela, whose authoritarian government had accepted very few US deportation flights, reversed course under pressure from Trump. It's now receiving around two flights per week, according to Tom Cartwright, who tracks deportations by ICE for the immigrant advocacy group Witness at the Border.

In Tijuana, Trump's border policies have transformed the landscape. In recent years, shelters run by charities were packed, sometimes leaving migrants to sleep on the ground outside. Now, many of the facilities are nearly vacant.

"There's no legal way to ask for asylum," Murphy said. "When



Demonstrators during the "No Kings" protest following federal immigration operations, in Los Angeles, California on July 4. According to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) figures, 722 migrants were arrested in Los Angeles and the surrounding area from June 1 to 10

people understand that, they don't come."

In a further shift, the US government is increasing the percentage of Mexicans it deports directly to the south of the country, by plane.

Toward the end of his administration, Biden intensified deportations. But he spared most undocumented immigrants from the interior of the country and said Congress should allow many to become citizens.

The Trump administration is now focusing on removing such residents. "We are putting the American people first by removing illegal aliens who pose a threat to our communities," McLaughlin said.

Andrew Selee, director of the Migration Policy Institute, cautioned that deporting such people is "a complicated process."

"The big numbers have always been people captured at the border," he said.

Deportations are now starting to accelerate

Danilo Rivera, head of Guatemala's migration agency, says the number of deportees is picking up. More than 3,600 landed in May, a 44 percent increase from a month earlier. Guatemala's government agreed in a meeting with Secretary of State Marco Rubio to receive more planes carrying deportees, Rivera noted.

"Instead of five or six per week, we now have 14," he said in an interview.

US deportation flights around the globe rose from 125 in April to 190 in May, the highest monthly total since September 2021, Cartwright said.

Trump's giant tax and immigration bill will likely mean a far bigger jump in removals. Until now, the deportation operation has been constrained by the number of immigration agents, detention facilities and planes available. The legislation signed by Trump on

Friday would fund thousands of additional immigration law enforcement agents and could more than double the number of detention beds to 100,000.

"I wouldn't encourage at all the Sheinbaum government to take down those tents" on the border, said Adam Isacson of the Washington Office on Latin America, an advocacy group. "They're going to need them before the year is out."

Even with more resources, however, US agents will likely run into obstacles detaining immigrants who have become a structural part of the workforce for farms, restaurants and hotels. Those industries have lobbied aggressively for an exemption from the raids. They won a reprieve from Trump last month, but it was quickly reversed.

The men arriving in recent days at the government shelter in Tijuana exemplified the complexity of such deportations. One, Carlos Tafolla, 31, who picked grapes in California's Sonoma County, said he worked in the United States for 13 years and had three children who lived there with their mother, an American citizen. Another man, who identified himself only as José, a 45-year-old construction worker, said he had three children under the age of 12 in San Diego.

He'd been away from Mexico for 20 years. Asked what he intended to do next, he looked out at the busy highway, still stunned. "I don't know," he said. "I have no plans."

Samantha Schmidt in Bogotá, Colombia, Valentina Muñoz Castillo and Gabriela Martinez in Mexico City, Claudia Méndez in Guatemala City, Ernesto Eslava in Tijuana and Emmanuel Martinez in Washington contributed to this report.



Health Tip: A new study has found that 11 minutes of moderate activity daily reduces early mortality by 23 per cent



Yoga therapy: Somatic yoga, combining traditional yoga with mindful movements, has been shown to reduce chronic body pain



ASK THE SEXPERT
Dr Tanaya Narendra, aka Dr Cuterus, is an Oxford-trained doctor, bestselling author and one of the country's most trusted voices on sexual and reproductive health

1 I'm 40, male, and I watch porn almost every night and can stay hard but then go soft during actual sex. I feel like a fraud. My partner notices and asks if I'm bored. I love them, but it kills my confidence. Do I need to quit porn or see a doctor?

Let's take a porn hiatus. Your brain is overtrained on high stimulation porn and under stimulated by real life cues. Just like in nutrition, porn can act as a supplement to your sex life, but it should never replace actual meals. You're not a fraud, and this can be fixed. Take a break, rewire with slow, partnered intimacy, and see a sex therapist and a urologist to help you.

2 I am 35, female, and when I sleep over with my boyfriend, I wake up with dry mouth and a sore throat. I think I breathe through my mouth. Is there a sexual side to this or just poor sleep hygiene?

Wow, the boyfriend must be seriously good at sex to leave you parched. New sleep environments could change sleeping patterns, possibly causing mouth breathing in your case. Try a humidifier to ensure upstairs and downstairs both stay wet.

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Paws for Privilege

From aromatherapy massages to hydrotherapy sessions and signature grooming styles, Mumbai's pets are being pampered like never before

Gauri Gutte
mirrorfeedback@timesofindia.com

Actor Kartik Aaryan's dog Katori may have a loyal following of 156,000 on Instagram, but it is the city's less-famous furry residents who seem to be living the real red carpet lives. From gourmet meals and chauffeur-driven rides to pawdicures and hydrotherapy, these pampered pooches and feline divas enjoy a level of care that suggests that many now view the idea of looking after a pet as the most rewarding ways to look after themselves.

Spa days and pawdicures
The growing affluence of Mumbai's upper middle and elite classes, combined with a deeper emotional bond between people and their pets, has created fertile ground for a booming petcare and lifestyle industry. The language itself has evolved. One is no longer a 'pet owner', one is a 'pet parent'. As Manali Mohite of Powai-based pet grooming salon, The Bark Tub, observes, "People don't think of their pets as dogs or cats, but rather as a member of the family."

This shift is as cultural as it is economic. Millennials and young professionals, many of whom are delaying or rethinking parenthood, are devoting significant time, money and emotion to raising their pets as they would children. And consequently, at 'pet spas' like

Petgascarr, which has branches in Bandra, Colaba, BKC, Andheri and Pedder Road, services go beyond haircuts.

Aromatherapy oil massages, conditioning treatments and custom cuts are standard offerings. Founder Lishaa Motwani says the goal is to create a positive sensory experience. "It calms pets down, soothes them and our treatments also moisturise the skin and treat issues like dry skin."

Ziggy, a Shih Tzu who visits the spa weekly, is so much a part of the Petgascarr family that her specific grooming routine is now known as the "Ziggy Cut". Her parent, Worli resident Neha Basu, 44, who is a family photographer, says: "Every year on her birthday, we take her to Juhu Beach. And right after that, we make it a point to drop her off at the spa. She goes in looking like a ragdoll and comes out looking like a princess."



Model Carla Dennis' poodles get massages every ten days

Meanwhile, Carla Dennis, 39, a model and actor, based in Bandra, has two poodles — Kyubi and Rosie — who enjoy massages every ten days. For Dennis, it's about reciprocating the joy they bring into her life. "They're the centre of our lives," says Dennis. "More and more millennials are embracing pet parenting with the same intention and commitment they would give to raising children," she adds. This

often involves creating a holistic routine aimed at wellness. Kyubi and Rosie, for example, start their mornings with massages delivered by the well-trained hands of the family chef; they also enjoy balanced meals, playtime, and scheduled beauty sleep.

So, not all pampering is cosmetic. At The Bark Club, hydrotherapy sessions have become a key part of wellness plans. Beyond being therapeutic, the pool is also a social space, Presswala shares. "Dog birthday parties and playdates often end with group swims. And, particularly, for injured or ageing pets, these moments of movement and stimulation can be life-changing."

Personalised diet plans

Pet families realise that diet is just as important as exercise, which is why it's not unusual for nutritionist

Anjali Kalachand, who runs A Petter Life, to find herself customising fresh meals based on breed, age and health conditions. "I get all kinds of requests, from



Every year on her birthday, we take her to Juhu Beach. And right after that, we make it a point to drop her off at the spa

—Neha Basu, pet parent to Ziggy

gluten-free birthday cakes to Norwegian pink salmon for pets with particular taste," Kalachand shares. These customised meal plans may include natural supplements, preservative-free treats, and chews to support wellness. "We also make celebratory cakes that look good enough to grace any child's birthday table. They're made with species-appropriate ingredients and are entirely gluten free. Birthday accessories and party favours have also become part of the experience," says Kalachand, who adds, "Even vegetarian families now understand the importance of a meat-based diet for dogs and cats. Many have put aside personal beliefs to do right by their pets."

Young and beautiful

Beyond wellness, aesthetics are given due importance, too. Mohite talks about a trendy Asian fusion haircut, especially popular among Shih Tzus and Golden Retrievers that "gives dogs a youthful appearance". Mohite, who is also frequently approached to colour pet hair, points out that she uses pet-safe hair dyes made from fruit and vegetable extracts. "Yes, we have received requests to colour the hair of pets," she confirms. "The colour lasts for about a month and causes no harm."

Kalachand, on the other hand, curates a range of tested grooming products, toys and accessories for pets. "After all, the lives of pets are too short," she says, "If we can enhance the quality of their lives, it may just add years — and no one wants to lose their best friends prematurely."



The dark side of Made in America

Netflix's new documentary on American Apparel unpacks how Dov Charney turned patriotism and image into a brand — and what that reveals about the stories we buy into



Scene from Netflix's *Trainwreck: The Cult of American Apparel*, showing American Apparel's LA factory

Shweta Shiware
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In 2025, "Made in America" still sparkles with promise. It suggests local pride, ethical labour, and the glow of buying premium.

Like the iPhone — marketed as American innovation but made elsewhere — it signals virtue while skipping the fine print.

Netflix's *Trainwreck: The Cult of American Apparel*, a brisk 54-minute watch directed by Sally Rose Griffiths, takes a scalpel to that illusion. What unfolds is a messy, magnetic portrait of a brand and a founder who preached one set of values while living another. This isn't just a fall-from-grace story. It's about how easy it is to believe the label and miss what's stitched underneath.

The focus is Dov Charney, the Canadian founder who launched American Apparel in 1989 and turned it into a hipster-era phenom. Think tight tees, skater dresses, nylon disco pants and hyper-sexual ads — often shot by Charney himself — featuring staff and friends in suggestive or nude poses. "They were basically softcore porn," one former staffer says, as the footage veers from cheeky to explicit.

Charney's "Made in America" promise felt radical at the time. Everything was produced in downtown Los Angeles, sweatshop free. But a later audit revealed around



Dov Charney, founder of the brand

1,500 factory workers were employed using fake documents. While Charney publicly campaigned for open immigration — "Why do we even have borders?" — his company quietly relied on a vulnerable labour force, camouflaging exploitation behind a patriotic veneer.

Inside the company, things were no better. Former employees describe a workplace with no boundaries, emotional or physical. Charney walked around naked, gifted vibrators to new hires, screamed at staff and pitted colleagues against each other. "That was a regular day," says one, recalling 36-hour shifts and late-night phone abuse. "He called me just to say 'I hate you' over and over."

Hiring leaned into the outsider exposé. It's a sharper look at the tension between image and ethics, and how easily a label — any label — can sell identity, hide abuse and draw us into the myth.

someone shoplifting, let 'em know we're hiring."

Beyond the toxic culture, the film digs into sexual harassment claims. Civil rights attorney Toni Jaramilla, who represented several employees, explains how NDAs kept most women silent.

Netflix sidesteps this by using actors to read excerpts: one describes Charney walking in the office in a towel, another that he invited an 18-year-old to his bedroom. Jaramilla outlines the emotional toll and the power dynamics that shaped the company.

The documentary also points to something deeper: a cult-like intensity with Charney at the centre. Staff lived and breathed the brand, folding identity into company loyalty. Charney cast himself as a renegade genius, but ex-employees recall a man who thrived on chaos, loyalty tests and emotional control.

After American Apparel filed for bankruptcy in 2015, Charney returned with Los Angeles Apparel and later joined Ye's (aka Kanye West) Yeezy brand as CEO. He's also been linked to the "White Lives Matter" T-shirts. The documentary closes with his parting shot: "I'm not sorry about sh—."

Trainwreck isn't just a brand exposé. It's a sharper look at the tension between image and ethics, and how easily a label — any label — can sell identity, hide abuse and draw us into the myth.

05 THINGS TO DO TODAY



Stretch it out

If you've had a long and tiring Monday, end it with some breathing exercises and a nice yoga stretch. You can choose from different types of yoga, including Hatha, Vinyasa, and Yin. There will be an expert to guide you through the session.

WHERE: Glu Studios, Khar West WHEN: 5 PM onwards
ENTRY: ₹1,500 BOOK: district.in

Step into the spotlight

Develop your acting skills with Parichay Theatre's 10-day acting workshop. It will be led by director Shakeel Sayani. The programme will include sessions on voice modulation, body movement, character building, scene study, performance techniques and audition preparation.



WHERE: Parichay Theatre Association, Andheri West WHEN: 2 PM ENTRY: ₹5,000 BOOK: allevents.in



Buy handmade treasures

Visit Bombay Splash, a monsoon-themed exhibition offering handcrafted items from across India as well as international shopping zones. You can explore live astrology sessions, seasonal decor, Karigar Galli's traditional art and various wellness products.

WHERE: Arcade Shopping Centre, World Trade Centre, Cuffe Parade WHEN: 10 AM onwards ENTRY: ₹50 BOOK: bookmyshow.com

Let the kids be kids

Take your child for a day filled with fun and games, featuring a range of indoor activities, including umbrella painting, DIY crafts, monsoon bingo and storytelling. They can also play on the slides.



WHERE: Hamleys, Jio World Drive, BKC WHEN: Till July 31, 11 AM onwards ENTRY: ₹800 onwards CALL: 02235051111

Catch a modern spin on a classic

Watch Monolith Theatre's *The Overcoat*, a Hindustani adaptation of Nikolai Gogol's classic. Saurabh Sharma, theatre actor, stars as Akaky Akakievich, a lowly clerk whose life unravels when his prized coat is stolen. This 70-minute play explores identity, dignity and urban alienation.

WHERE: Chaubara, Andheri West WHEN: 8 PM ENTRY: ₹350 onwards BOOK: bookmyshow.com



Naseeruddin Shah is reportedly all set to play JRD Tata in a series

@ARMAANMALIK



Armaan Malik

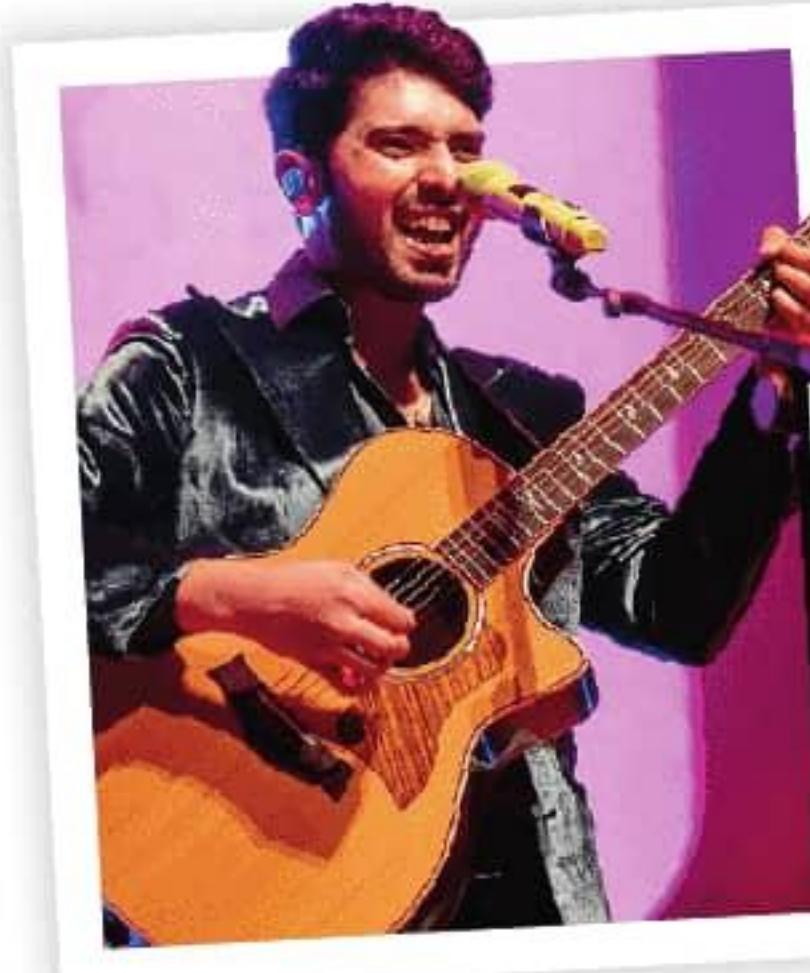
I need a departure from my good boy image: Armaan Malik

By Vinay MR Mishra
vinay.mishra@timesofindia.com

Singer Armaan Malik is feeling "rebellious". "I've always believed you must be on your best behaviour because you're a public figure. I am 90% a good boy, but I think that I've tapped into that little edgy side of mine for my latest song. I need a departure from my good boy image. I have matured so much in the last few years. I just want to dabble in something different and show a different side of mine," says the singer.

His latest track, *Baari Baari*, marks that shift — one he describes as "a very fresh Armaan Malik." For the 28-year-old singer, the track isn't just about sonic experimentation. It's also a statement. "I've always done things which are off the beaten path. Everyone loves to put you in a box. I just want to break open that box," he says. Known primarily for his romantic numbers, Armaan

If an artiste doesn't push himself beyond his own capacity, he won't break new ground. You get stuck in just that one space. And unfortunately, in India, for the longest time, playback singers have experienced this



acknowledges how his success has also boxed him in creatively. "I haven't offered much of my artistic side to my fans and my listeners at large. I feel what happened to me is that because I sang so many romantic songs, everyone thought I sang only that. Unfortunately, it's not in our control, because if one song becomes a hit, everyone comes to you for that vibe again," he reflects.

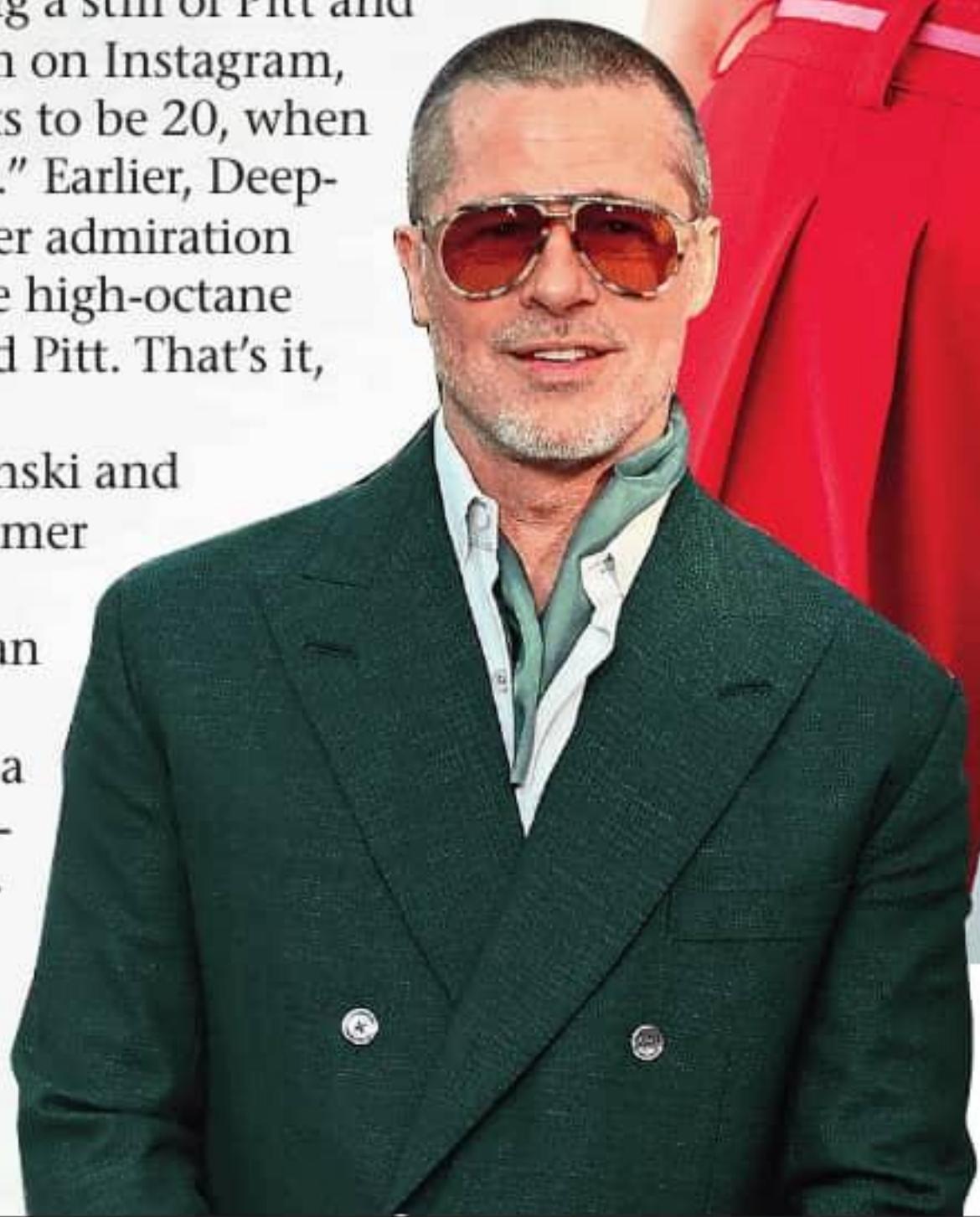
@KAREENAKAPOORKHAN

'Who wants to be 20 when you can look like this at 60'

Kareena Kapoor Khan on Brad Pitt

Brad Pitt has fans, including Kareena Kapoor Khan gushing over him with his latest film *F1*. Sharing a still of Pitt and co-star Javier Bardem on Instagram, Kareena wrote, "Who wants to be 20, when you can look like this at 60." Earlier, Deepika Padukone also shared her admiration for Pitt's performance in the high-octane racing drama, writing, "Brad Pitt. That's it, that's the post. IYKYK."

Directed by Joseph Kosinski and produced by Jerry Bruckheimer and Formula 1 icon Lewis Hamilton, *F1* follows veteran driver Sonny Hayes (Pitt), returning to the sport after a 30-year break. With adrenaline-fuelled races, and cameos from stars like Tom Cruise, *F1* has received widespread acclaim since its June 27 release.



Kareena Kapoor Khan and Brad Pitt



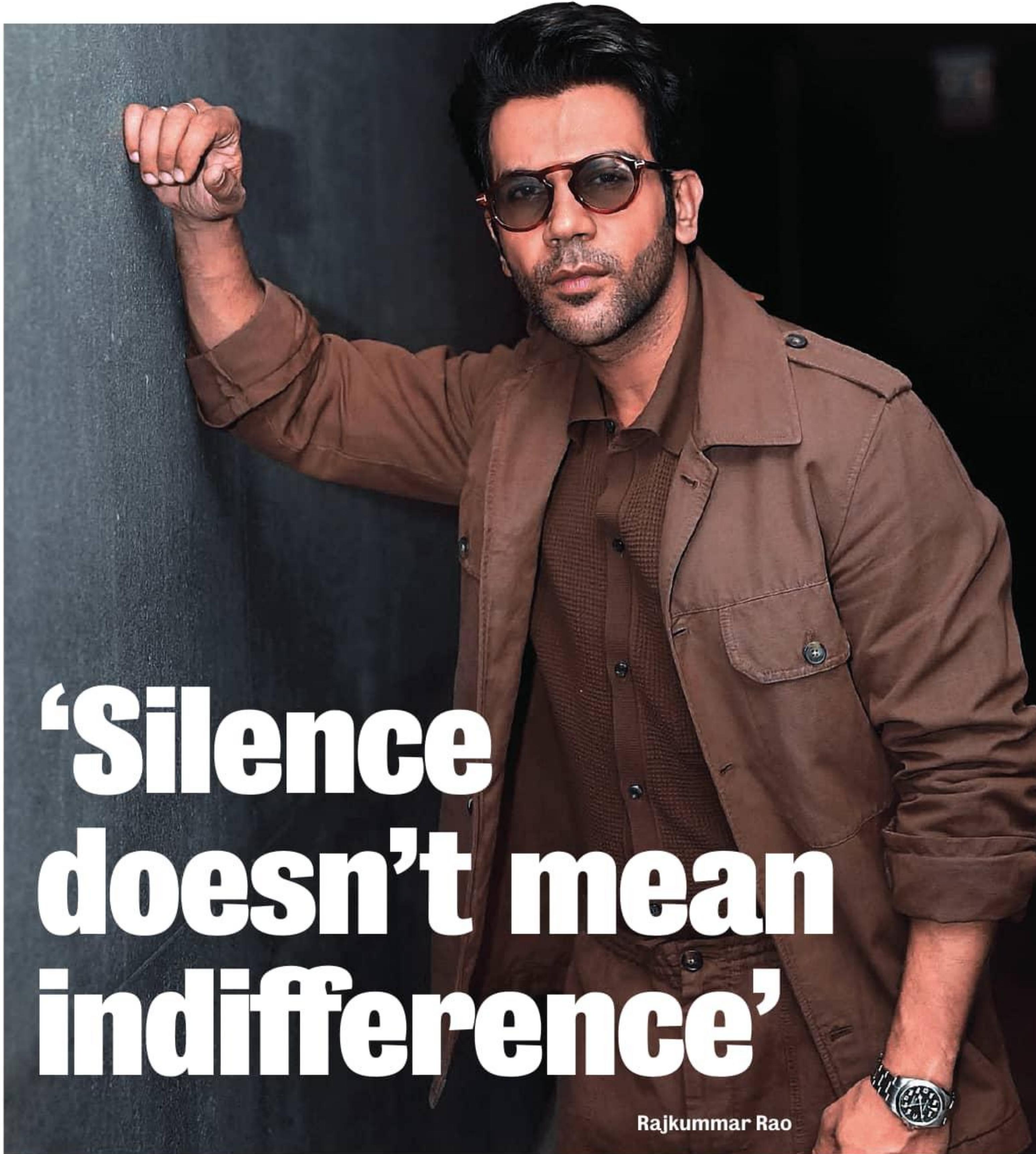
Meet Varun's Raja Babu

Varun Dhawan, who is away from home and busy shooting outside Mumbai, took to Instagram on Saturday, where he confessed to feeling homesick. He shared some heartwarming moments with his daughter Lara and dog Joey. He captioned the post, "My raja babu #joey #missmybabies (sic)."

What caught the eye of netizens was the picture of Varun holding his pet Joey under his umbrella to protect him from the rain.



Varun Dhawan with his pet Joey and (inset) a still from the film Raja Babu



'Silence doesn't mean indifference'

Rajkummar Rao

Rajkummar Rao opens up about the silence of Hindi film actors on sensitive topics

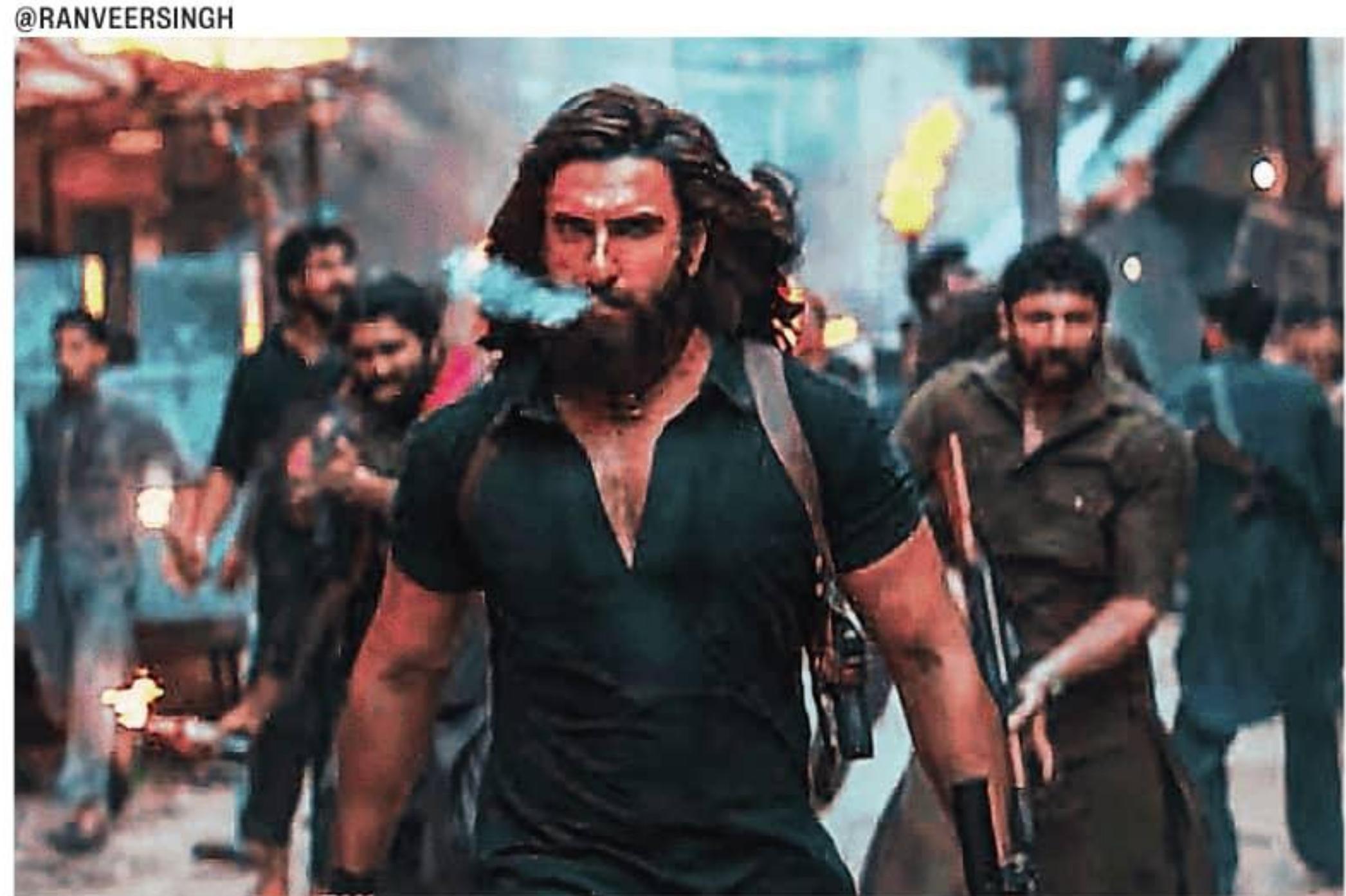
Actors are often accused of staying silent on sensitive issues. In a recent conversation, Rajkummar Rao shared his thoughts on why not every actor speaks out publicly on every matter — and how silence doesn't necessarily mean indifference.

When asked whether Bollywood actors avoid controversial topics to remain politically correct, Rajkummar said, "I think if there's an issue you feel strongly about, you should definitely talk about it. But it's not necessary to speak on every issue. And just because you don't post about something on social media doesn't mean you don't care about it. I think that's a bit strange."

The Street actor further added, "I love my country, I love my country immensely. But even beyond the country — if something happens, of course, I feel very bad. Especially as actors, we are very sensitive people. I feel very bad. But if I don't post about it on social media, then it's assumed that I didn't feel bad. Since when did social media become the platform to decide whether or not someone cares? If you post, it means you care — and if you don't, it means you don't feel anything? Who decided that? There are so many people in this country, in this world, who aren't on social media. Don't they feel bad? They do. Don't they feel good when something good happens? Of course, they do."

—IANS

Ranveer Singh drops first look of his film Dhurandhar



Ranveer Singh in the film

Ranveer Singh channels raw rage in the first look of Dhurandhar, directed by Aditya Dhar. The actor appears fierce — long hair, cigarette in mouth, and bloodied hands — as he takes down enemies. The film also stars Sanjay Dutt, R. Madhavan, Akshaye Khanna, Arjun Rampal and Tamil actor Sara Arjun.

The promo drop followed a surprise social media wipeout by Ranveer, who deleted all Instagram posts on Saturday evening. He later teased the number "12:12" with sword emojis, which turned out to be a prelude to Dhurandhar's reveal — coinciding with his birthday on July 6.

I'm not a quitter, I like to stay in the game: Aahana

The actress talks about her passion for cinema and turning producer



Aahana Kumra

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onkar.kulkarni@timesofindia.com

Last year, Aahana Kumra decided to venture into production after facing a lack of acting opportunities. "I haven't received an offer in more than three years," she was reported saying. Now she is turning her dream into reality. Together with her co-partner, casting director Apurva Singh Rathore, Aahana has launched a production company and has begun shooting for her first project, which is a music video. Talking about what encouraged her to take this step, she says, "I didn't want to settle for peanuts that were being offered to me by producers. Roles for women are limited, and within that, so many actresses are

struggling to get that one job. If I fail, then I fail. It's not a big deal. I will try something else then."

Aahana shares, "As a producer, there's a lot of responsibility, which you didn't even know existed when you're on the other side. I thought this is probably the right time to get out of my comfort zone. There are times when you have to make hard choices, so either you leave or stay in the game. I'm not a quitter. I'm someone who likes to stay in the game. I've always loved fame and the medium."

Though she isn't acting in her first production, Aahana is open to the idea. "I am not opposed to the idea of developing a script where I can be a part of it as an actor. However, right now, I'm really enjoying being a producer."

Ibrahim Ali Khan gets ready for his next



Ibrahim Ali Khan has shared a series of intense stills from his upcoming action-thriller Sarzameen on Instagram, giving fans a glimpse of his rugged avatar



Today (Saturday), he showed how complete a batter he is. It reminded me of the previous Indian number four — almost a carbon copy of that genius."

-Former England batter Jonathon Trott on Shubman Gill

STAIRCASE OR ELEVATOR?

Should teen sensation Vaibhav Suryavanshi be fast-tracked into Team India?

Gaurav Gupta
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Fourteen is normally an age when you look to chill out with your friends in school and beyond, play movies or songs on your devices, and study in your spare time. However, there's nothing normal about Vaibhav Suryavanshi. In IPL 2025, the 14-year-old from Samastipur in Bihar treated bowlers twice his age with disdain, even smashing a sensational 35-ball century for the Rajasthan Royals against Gujarat Titans (101 off 38 balls). Picked for India's Under-19 tour of England, the prodigiously talented Bihar lad is again telling the world: stop what you're doing and watch me bat.

On Saturday, India's rising star made headlines once again by smashing the fastest century in Men's Youth ODIs during the fourth Youth ODI between England and India at Worcester. Smashing a 52-ball hundred, which included 10 fours and seven sixes, the explosive left-hander broke the previous record held by Pakistan's Kamran Ghulam, who scored a hundred in 53 balls. Suryavanshi eventually ended up scoring a blistering 143 off 78 balls, which included a total of 13 fours and ten sixes.

In the first Youth ODI against England, he scored 48 off 19 balls, followed by 45 off 34 balls in the second match. In the third game, he smashed 86 off 31 balls, which also made him the second-fastest Indian to score a Youth ODI fifty (in 20 balls). In four matches so far, Suryavanshi has blazed away to 322 runs at an average of 80.50, with a hundred and fifty—the most by any batter on either side in this series so far. One can expect

him to dazzle in the Under-19 World Cup in Jan next year in Zimbabwe and Namibia.

He had also shown his wares in the red-ball format. Last year, in the U-19 Men's Youth Tests against Australia, he smashed the second-fastest youth Test century, scoring it off 56 balls, emulating England's Moeen Ali who achieved the feat in 2005.

Vaibhav has not only brought glory to Bihar, but has also made the entire nation proud. Achieving such a milestone at such a young age is testament to his hard work, dedication, and mental strength. This is just the beginning; Vaibhav's century is the first of many records that are yet to be broken. With the kind of talent and determination he has, we believe he will continue to rewrite cricket history in the future," says Bihar Cricket Association (BCA) President Rakesh Tiwari, who had told this correspondent two years back: "Watch out for Vaibhav. He's going to be Bihar's Sachin Tendulkar!"

The remarkable consistency and dominance that Suryavanshi has shown in this series make you wonder—is he too good for this level? Should he be fast-tracked to the senior level, at least in white-ball cricket? Back in 1989, India's selectors, led by Raj Singh Dungarpur, showed tremendous courage and vision when they gave a 16-year-old Tendulkar a maiden India call-up for the Pakistan tour. Should Ajit Agarkar & Co take a similar punt or show similar faith with Suryavanshi? Former India wicketkeeper and ex-national chief selector Kiran More told Mumbai Mirror that Suryavanshi's power-packed game does remind him of a young, prodigiously talented Tendulkar, who was his teammate on that Pakistan

OR



Suryavanshi, 14, smacked the fastest century in Men's Youth ODIs during the fourth game against England

I got a lot of inspiration from him (Gill) because I saw the game. After making 100 and 200, he didn't leave the game and took the team ahead. I will try to make 200 in the next match."

—Vaibhav Suryavanshi

tour. Showering ultimate compliments on Suryavanshi, More says, "He reminds me of a young Sachin who burst onto the scene in the late 80s. Sachin too was brutal on the bowlers. Like Sachin at that time, Suryavanshi looks to dominate the bowlers. I like his attitude. He's fearless. He has a God-gift.

"He looks to be mentally very strong. He looks to be the next big thing in Indian cricket. I think that he should, and he will be given an opportunity for the India A first."

Another former India wicketkeeper and ex-national chief selector MSK Prasad advises 'caution' in providing Suryavanshi an 'escalator' to the Team India dressing room. "India has always amazed us year after year by producing extraordinary cricketing talent, and Suryavanshi is one such rare gem. Watching a 14-year-old score a century in the IPL is nothing short of a marvel and probably it's the eighth wonder we have seen in our lifetime. However, as we look to elevate him to the next level, it is crucial that we proceed with caution.

"It's important not to rush his journey but rather nurture this exceptional talent who has the potential to serve Indian cricket for a long time. Along with his undeniable skill, equal

attention must be given to his physical and mental development—both of which are critical to sustaining success at the highest level. After all, the moment a player dons the Indian cap, they are seen as demigods by millions," Prasad told Mumbai Mirror.

Rather than rushing him to the top level, Prasad wants Suryavanshi to go through the normal grind of Under-19 cricket, First-Class cricket, and then India A cricket for the next two seasons before he is asked to wear the India shirt and cap.

"During this crucial phase, mentorship will play a key role. Under the guidance of Rahul Dravid (at RR in the IPL) and VVS Laxman (at U-19 and India A levels), he is in the best possible hands. Their combined experience and nurturing approach will undoubtedly prepare him to take on international cricket with confidence and grace," Prasad said.

Grass, it's not for everyone!

All the early upsets could stem from a lack of experience on the surface

#LONDON

Successful as Novak Djokovic has been on the grass courts of Wimbledon — he's won 100 matches and seven of his 24 Grand Slam trophies there — it's not as if he grew up plying his talents on the surface.

Indeed, he never competed or even practiced on it at all until 2005, when he entered the qualifying event held at the nearby Roehampton facility and won three matches there to earn the right to make his debut at the All England Club at age 18. "That was actually the first year I



men — who lost in the first round were the most at any major since they began seeding 32 in brackets in 2001. "Grass," 2022 champion Elena Rybakina said after her third-round exit Saturday, "is very unpredictable."

With her departure, and defending champ Barbora Krejcikova's loss to Emma Navarro a few hours later, there is guaranteed to be yet another first-time women's title winner this year at the All England Club. Whoever takes home the trophy on July 12 will be the ninth woman to do so in the event's past nine editions.

Plenty of top players learned to play tennis on hard courts, especially in

North America, or clay courts, especially in Europe and Latin America. Grass? Not so much, except for those from England or Australia. It's an acquired taste and skill, and it doesn't help anyone that the portion of the season spent on the turf is so abbreviated. "Usually when I was on grass," joked Eva Lys, a 23-year-old German who reached the second round at Wimbledon, "it was when I was tanning."

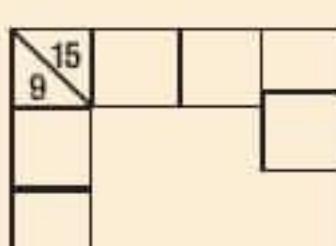
There are more than 35 hard-court tournaments listed on the 2025 WTA calendar, 11 held on clay and seven on grass, which is used from June 9 through Wimbledon. "It's not just that we only play on grass for about a month," said Lorenzo Musetti, a semifinalist at the All England Club a year ago and a first-round loser as the No. 7 seed this time. "It's a surface that requires a lot of adapting. You have to go by feeling."

AP

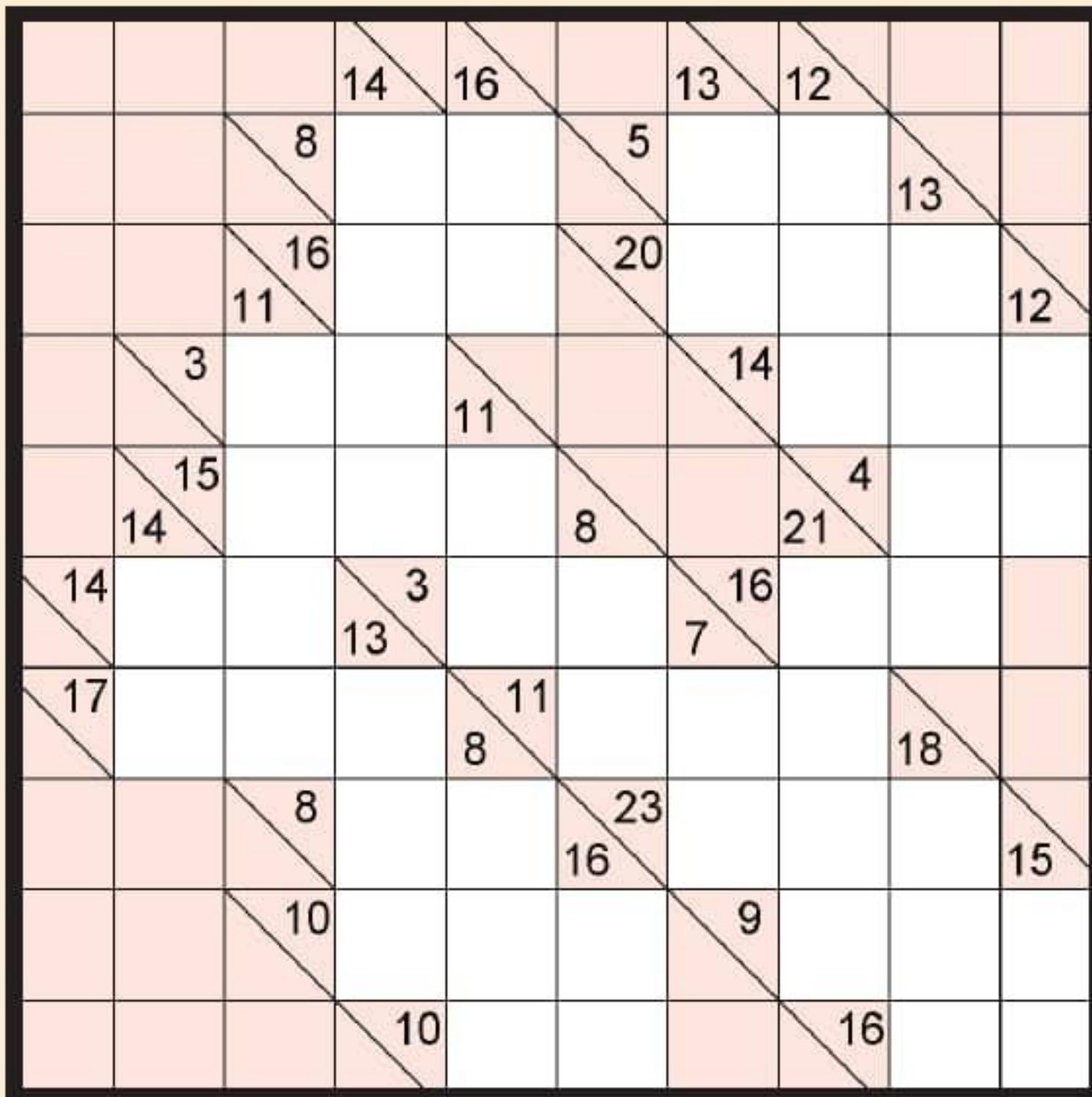


KAKURO

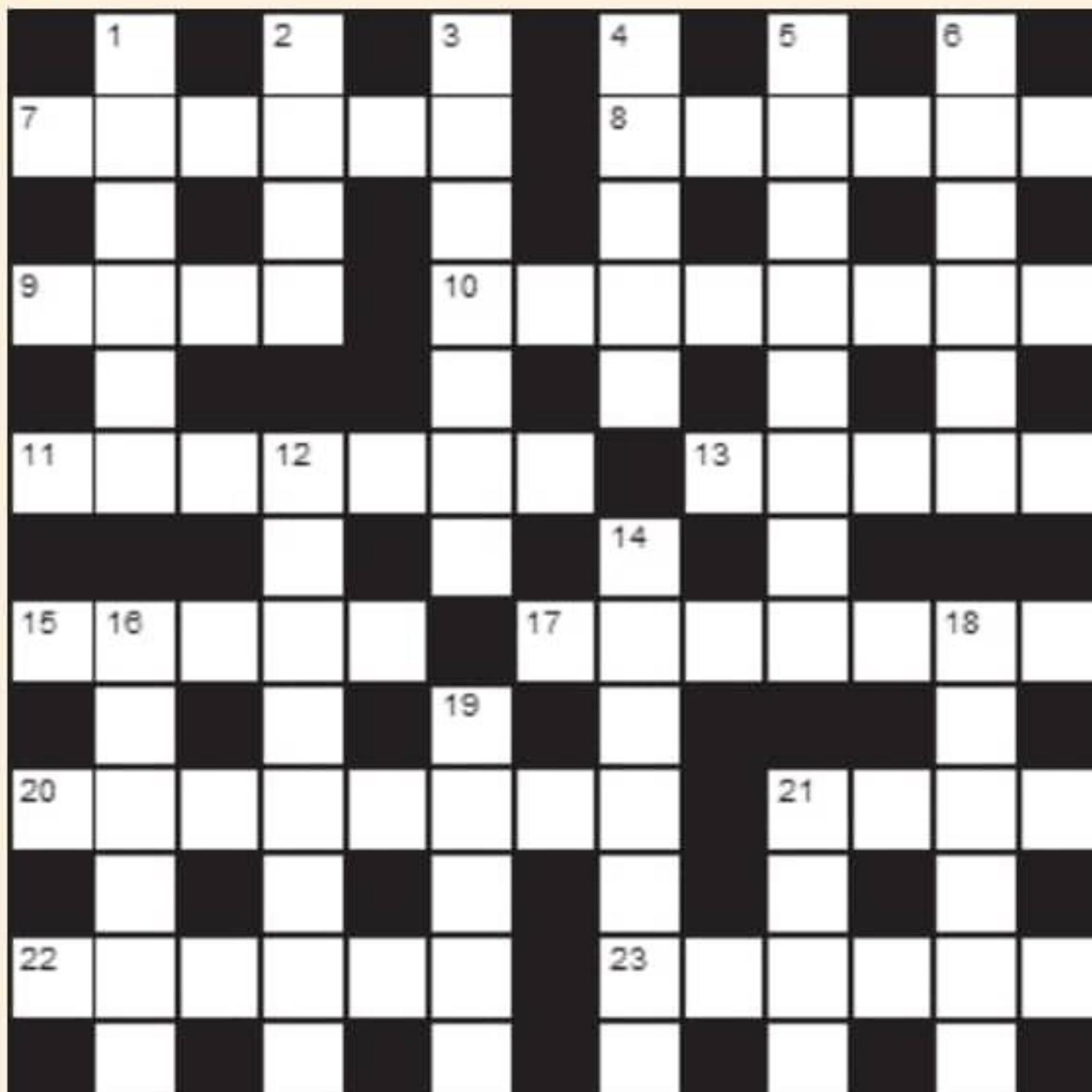
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas



for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9. Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



QUICK CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 7 Cosmetics (4-2)
- 8 Assistant or aide (6)
- 9 Jeff's comic-strip partner? (4)
- 10 A flowing stroke from the batsman (3-5)
- 11 Discoverer of penicillin (7)
- 13 Priest's headdress (5)
- 15 Utilizing (5)
- 17 The real old Mumbai locale? (7)
- 20 Visitor's signal (8)
- 21 Urban area (4)
- 22 Brief outline (6)
- 23 Small two-door cars (6)

DOWN

- 1 Mr Jackson of Hollywood (6)
- 2 Ninth month, abbr. (4)
- 3 Assign or designate (7)
- 4 Move (5)
- 5 Making indistinct (8)
- 6 Waiter (6)
- 12 Mosque towers (8)
- 14 Local variety of speech (7)
- 16 Stores of goods etc. ready for sale (6)
- 18 Loosened the laces, perhaps? (6)
- 19 Our capital New ____ (5)
- 21 Membrane enclosing foetus (4)

RIDDLER

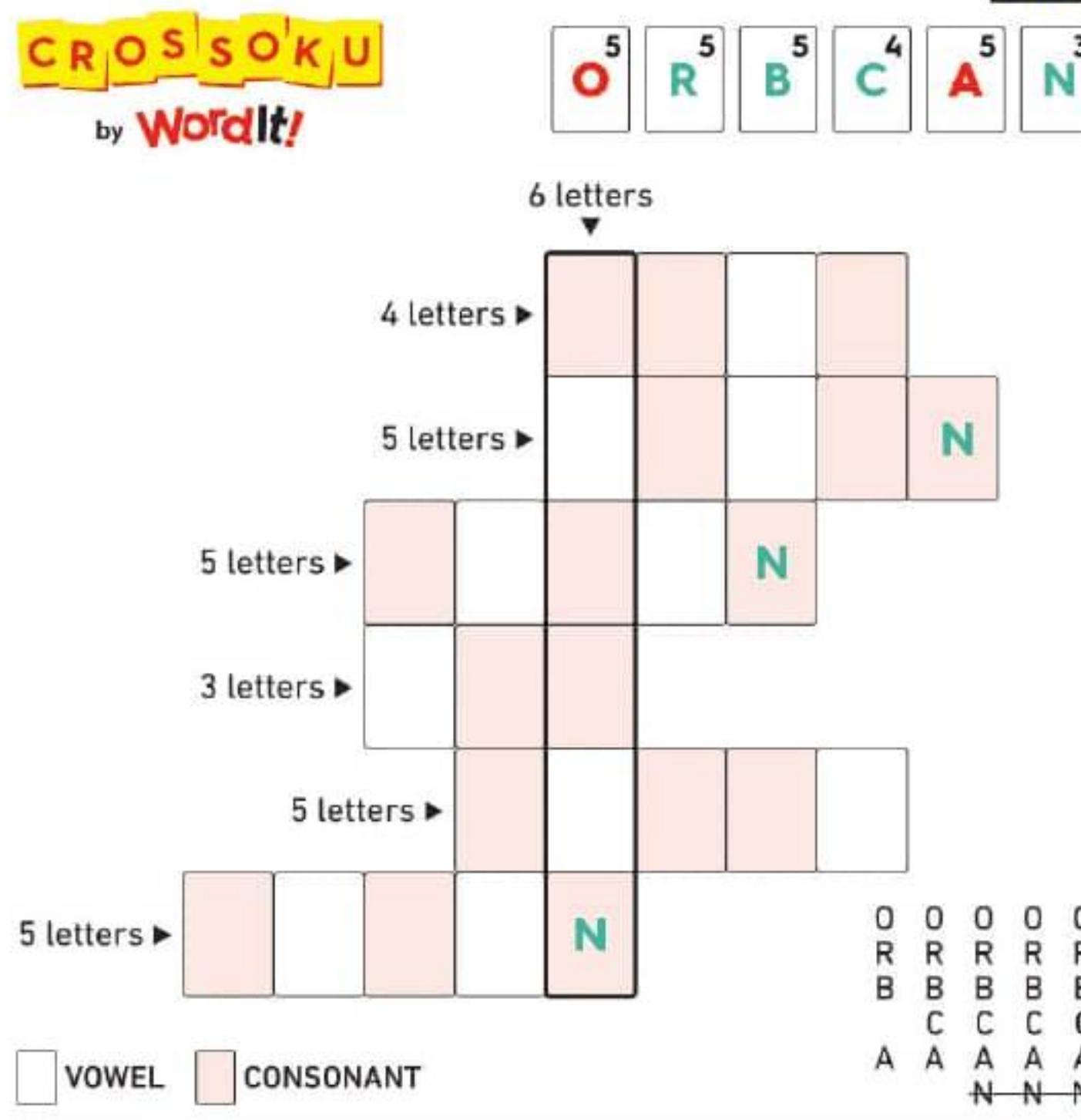
What do these four things have in common?

Clock, Mattress, Mousetrap & Trampoline

CROSSOKU

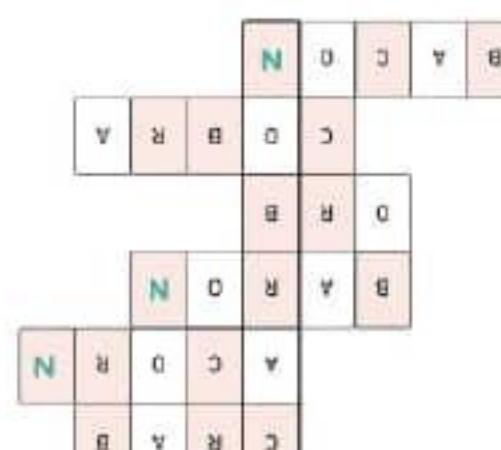
by WordIt!

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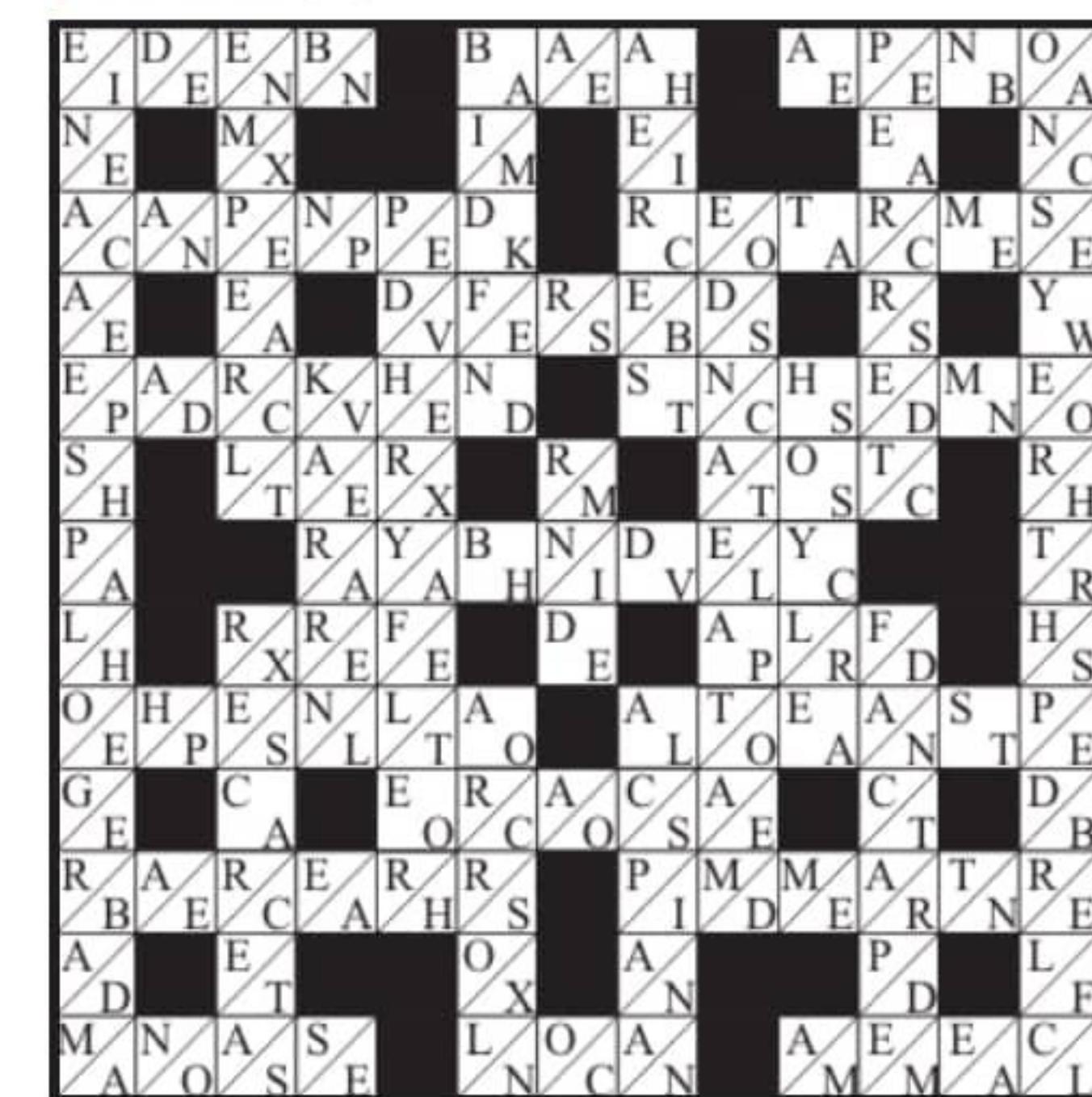


Form 7 words using the letters above in the grid. Each letter's count is marked beside it. Vowels go only in the white boxes. No row or column should repeat a letter.

Time yourself:
 Excellent 2 mins
 Great 4 mins
 Good 6 mins



STRIKEOUT



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

MUMBAI MINI CROSSWORD



Across

- 2 B in BARC (6)
- 5 South Mumbai's famous auditorium (4)
- 6 Tiff (4)
- 9 In-flight entertainment (3)
- 11 Person who wanders around the countryside in torn, old cloths (5)
- 12 Loved You: Song from Carousel (2,1)
- 13 Napoleon's isle (4)
- 17 Capture (4)
- 18 College off Pedder Road (6)

Down

- 1 Popular card game (3)
- 2 History or language students? (3)
- 3 Rap sheet letters (3)
- 4 Picnic spot and milk dairy (5)
- 7 Alternative strategy (4,1)
- 8 Piece of advice (3)
- 10 Pavilion: Colaba's popular Chinese restaurant (5)
- 11 Bind (3)
- 14 Town in Ladakh (3)
- 15 One time (singly)? (2,1)
- 16 Government hospital in Parel (3)

GOFIGURE

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

The operators



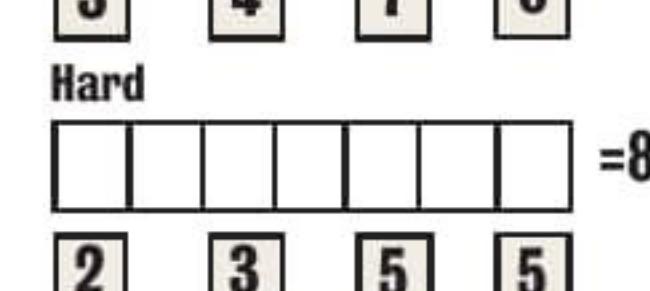
Easy



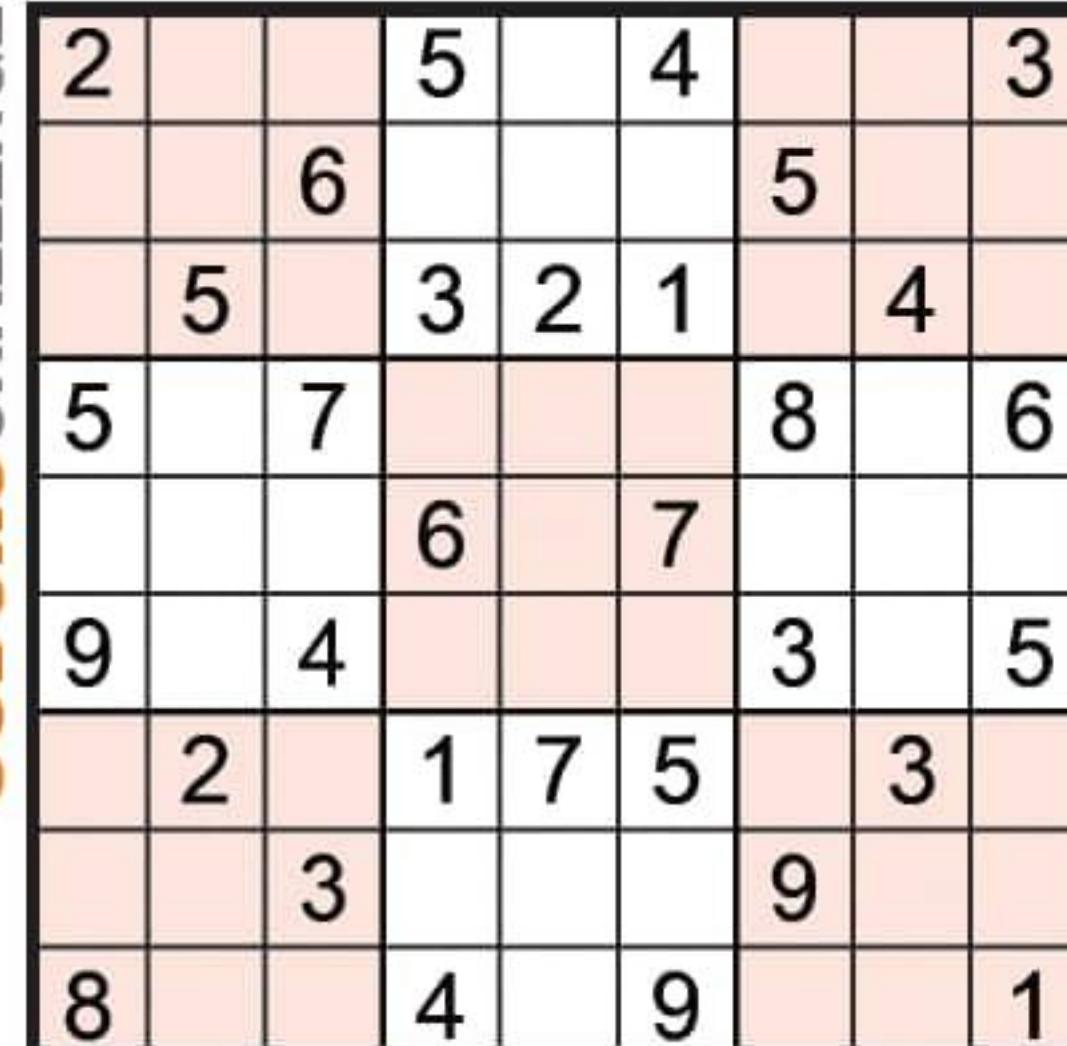
Medium



Hard



SUDOKUCHALLENGE



To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

WORDSEARCH

Check Out

Can you find the words connected in one way or the other with the theme indicated by the title in today's Word Search?

The words may be read horizontally, vertically or diagonally either forwards or backwards, but always in straight lines. Use a ruler to cross them through as you find them



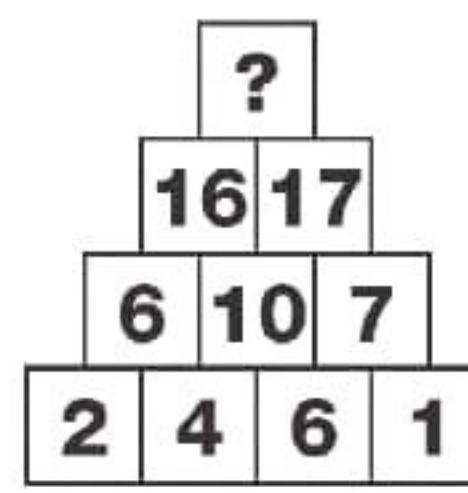
Wordlist:

Avon, Blackwater, Dart, Derwent, Dove, Evenlode, Exe, Greta, Humber, Itchen, Mersey, Otter, Ouse, Ribble, Rother, Severn, Stour, Swale, Tees, Thames, Trent, Tweed, Tyne, Usk, Wear, Wharfe, Windrush



MENAPUZZLE

Which number replaces the question mark and completes the puzzle?



SOLUTION

Starting with numbers on the bottom row, add numbers in the adjacent boxes together, and put the result in the box directly above. Continue in this way, up the triangle.

BULL'S EYE

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.



04 Average 05 Good
06 Outstanding

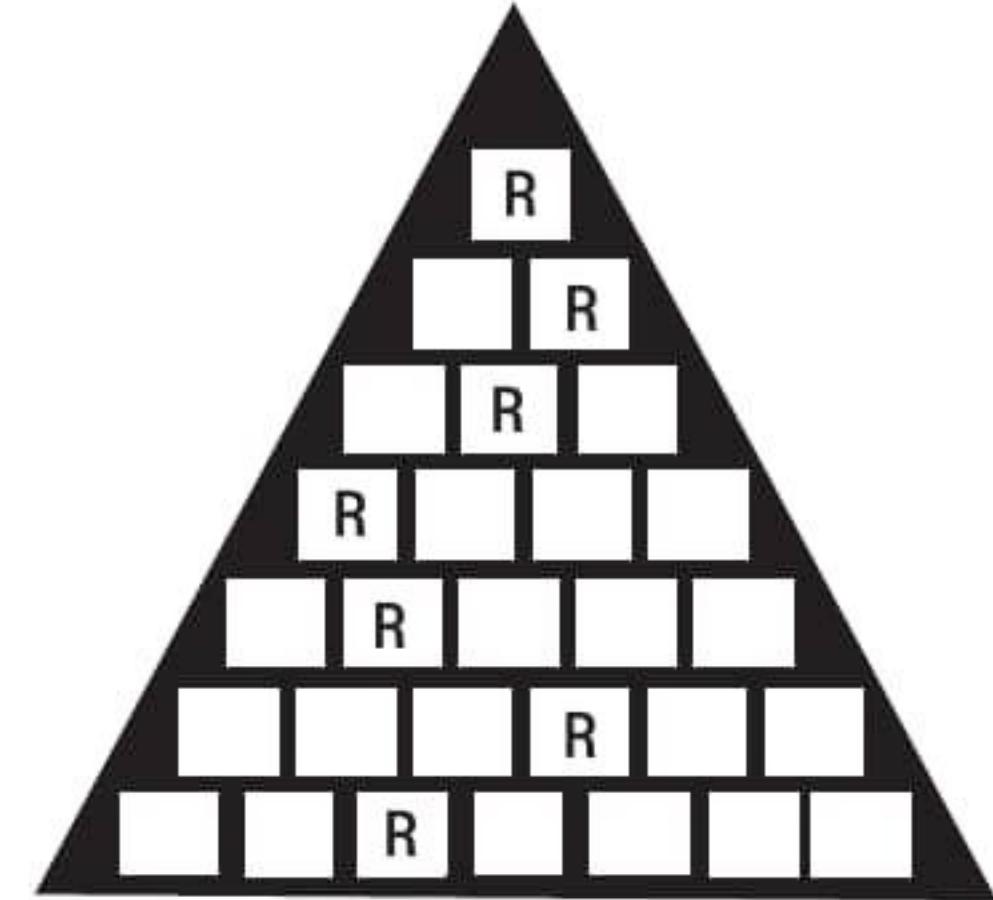
ALPHATRIANGLE

Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

1 A unit of radiation exposure 2 Senior, abbr.

3 Day divs. 4 Hurry 5 Brief contact

6 Arrogance 7 Polish



DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE >>>

COMICS | DOONESBURY BY GARRY TRUDEAU



CUL DE SAC BY RICHARD THOMPSON



BETTY BY GARY DELAINY AND GERRY RASMUSSEN



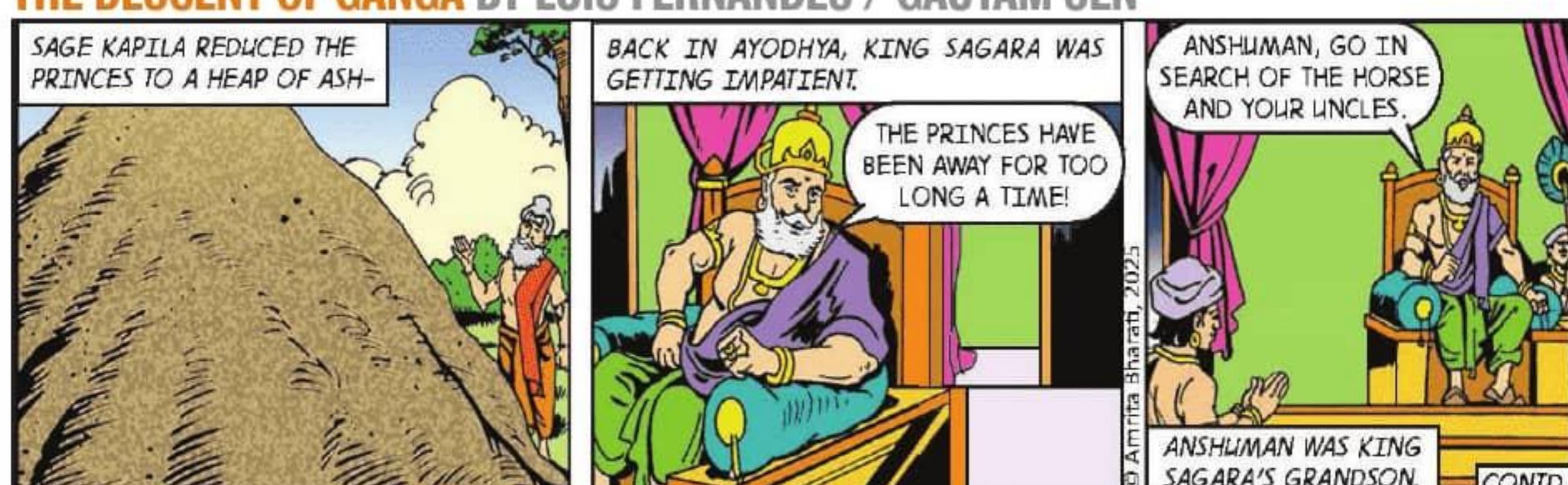
PEARLS BEFORE SWINE BY STEPHAN PASTIS



PEANUTS BY CHARLES SCHULZ



THE DESCENT OF GANGA BY LUIS FERNANDES / GAUTAM SEN

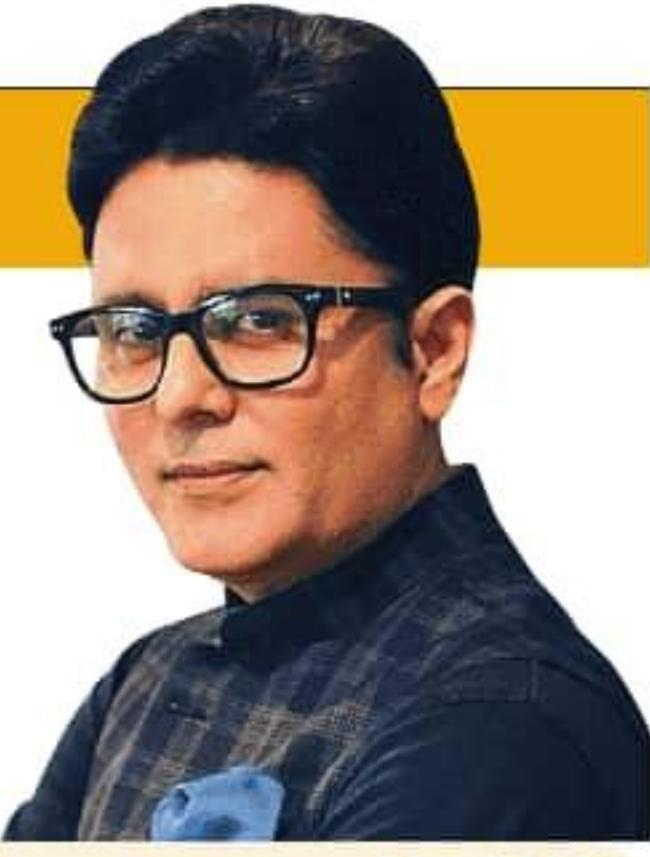


WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR

If it's your birthday today

Is it your birthday today? You're stepping into your most charismatic year yet. Travel will involve people, groups, collaborations, maybe even a whirlwind romance. Career momentum is social: your network is your net worth. The future holds delightful detours and loyal allies. Your energy draws opportunities you used to chase.



CAPRICORN

Surround yourself with good energy. You're doing better than you think, Capricorn. Let go of unnecessary worry and enjoy the present. Celebrate small wins with people who remind you of your strength.



TAURUS

Step outside your comfort zone, Taurus. New career possibilities await if you take a small risk. Trust that stability follows courage. Growth begins the moment you believe there's more out there.



VIRGO

You're handling challenges like a pro. Don't downplay your resilience, it's a real superpower. Celebrate your comeback and keep moving forward. You've proven you can bounce back stronger than ever before.



AQUARIUS

Bridge the gap with kindness. If someone feels distant due to money differences, reassure them. Make it clear that connection means more than status. Your empathy brings hearts closer today.



GEMINI

Take charge today, Gemini. Instead of delegating, dive into tasks yourself. You'll gain insight, appreciation, and sharpen your own skills. Leading by doing helps you grow and earns lasting respect.



PISCES

Out with the old, literally! Let go of past baggage and treat yourself to something fresh. You've earned a little indulgence. Embrace the present and create joyful memories that uplift your spirit.



CANCER

Be mindful of your spending today. Saving now creates security for tomorrow. Reassess your priorities, set small goals, and take control of your finances. Abundance grows when you act with intention.



ARIES

Money matters, but peace matters more. Today brings a reminder that happiness comes from within. Focus on joy, connection, and balance, you'll find success and contentment in more ways than wealth.



LEO

Today, set work aside and live a little. Fun is fuel, tool Laughter and good company will restore your spark. Balance leads to success, so make joy part of your day.



SAGITTARIUS

Reconnect with your people today. A simple gesture can revive old bonds. Show your loved ones they matter, you'll feel more fulfilled, supported, and joyful when you rekindle the warmth between you.

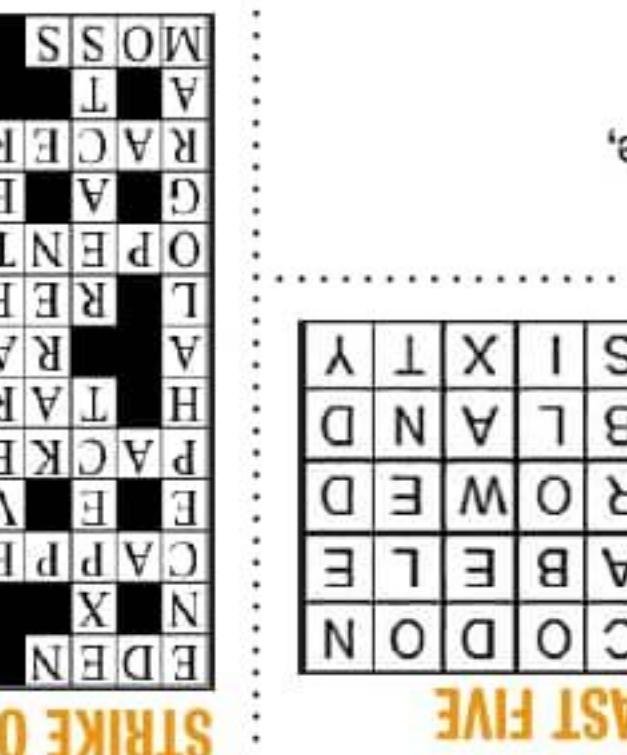
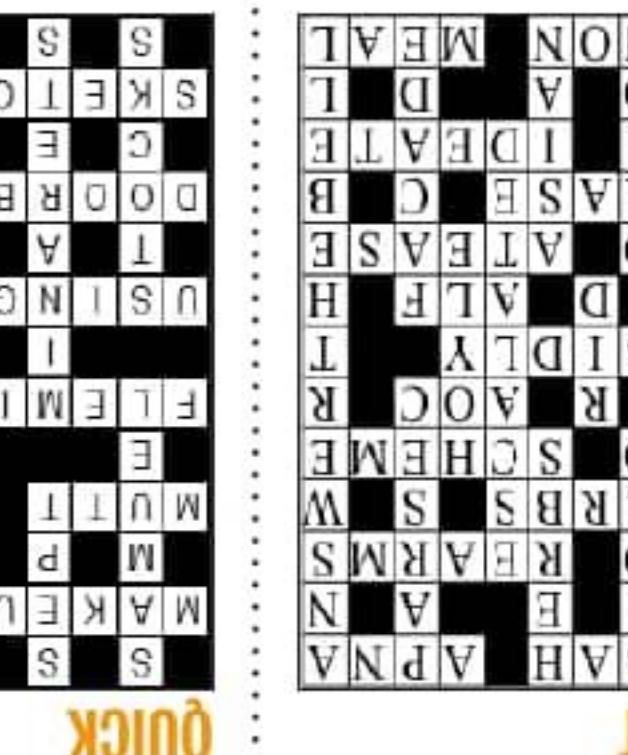
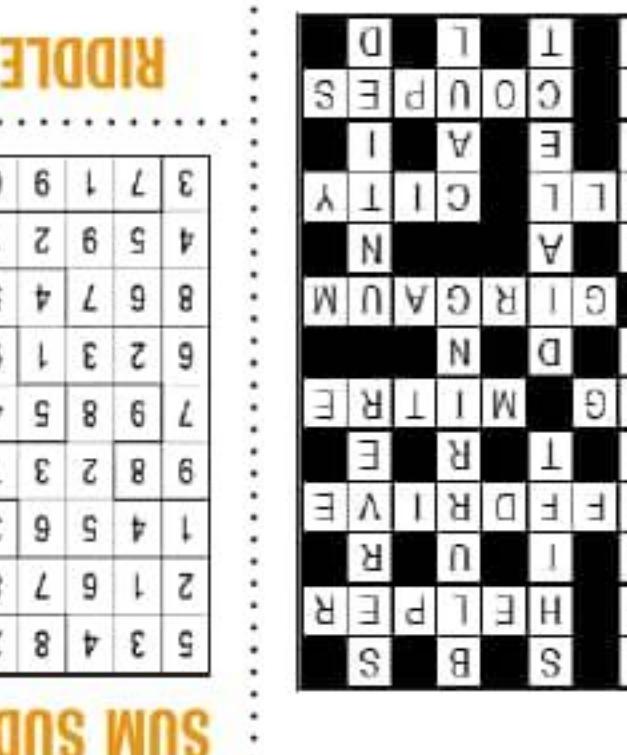


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HIDATO



SOLUTIONS



LAYING DOWN A NEW MARKER

Crowd reception and the presence of elite athletes make Neeraj Chopra Classic in Bengaluru a resounding success

Biju Babu Cyriac

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#BENGALURU

ights, camera, and javelin. Each time Neeraj Chopra picked up a brightly coloured javelin, either for practice throws or the six times during competition, there was a huge roar around the Sree Kanteerava Stadium here. When the javelins zoomed into the night sky, in the World Athletics 'A' category event on Saturday, the spears etched new marks not just for athletics in India but for the participation of private entities in promoting Olympic sports.

This was something the national federation could never pull off. But Neeraj, who won India's first gold in Olympic track and field in Tokyo 2020 after the country celebrated two fourth-place finishes for decades, is in a different league. He has the skill to pull off big throws consistently across the season, which won him the top rank last year in the rankings released by the world statisticians body. Now, he has proved that he can be equally good at organising world-level athletic meets. That's something that top corporates, who keep Olympic sports at arm's length, should take note of.

"This was my dream, and I'm happy that it went off well," Neeraj told reporters after pulling off a successful event, his victory making the inaugural edi-



SYED ASIF

CAN WE HAVE MORE? With over 15,000 fans packed in at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru, the Neeraj Chopra Classic was an instant hit

tion even sweeter. "I was a bit worried about how people would respond, but now they showed their love," he added.

Neeraj's close friend and former world champion Julius Yego enjoyed every moment of the action. "Congratulations to Neeraj for organising such a big event. I really enjoyed every other throw. Coming to India to improve my performance and throw my season's best is something that I really liked," Yego said.

"When I first heard from my manager about this event, the first thing I told him was that I'm going to India to support Neeraj because he is my friend. We want to make this sport very popular. India is known for cricket and Kenya for long-distance running. I brought a different event into Kenya, winning a World Championship and getting a silver at the Olympics," said Yego, who bagged the silver.

"The organisation was really nice,

With this event, Neeraj has completely changed everything. Not only in India but across the world. Having an event like this with a lot of fans in the stadium is something big, and World Athletics might be thinking, 'India is ready for big events.'"

-Julius Yego, Javelin World Champion

faced from the Kenyan.

'A lighthouse event'

Former Olympic champion Thomas Rohler, who won the gold at the 2016 Rio Games, said: "It was a lighthouse event for javelin. We all need to be thankful for the work Neeraj put into this event. There were nearly 15,000 people coming to watch sticks flying far, and that's a beautiful thing. The best part of the trip was the friendship we had. Olympic champions sat together at one table; we had Indian food together. It was just a great experience," the German, who managed only an 11th place with a best of 75.85m, said.

American Curtis Thompson also gave a big thumbs up for the event. "I'm so happy for Neeraj to have so much support. I'm so glad to see so many fans out here supporting not just him but also javelin as well. It helps our sport to grow," said Thompson, who finished sixth with a best of 81.5m.

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We offer tailor-made solutions for all your Logistics needs. Big or small, we move it all.


DP WORLD
CHANGE WHAT'S POSSIBLE

The advertisement features a modern interior room with a large flat-screen TV on a wooden-paneled wall, a blue sofa, and a potted plant. To the left, a silver SUV is parked. On the right, Sachin Tendulkar, wearing a dark blue patterned suit, is smiling and gesturing with his hands. The background is a dark blue gradient.