



CHINESE SOUGHT TO ERECT STRUCTURES JUST ACROSS LAC: MEA

# Govt rejects China claim to Galwan, says PM's no-intruder remark was on situation after clash

## PMO acknowledges: This time, Chinese came in much larger strength to LAC

SHUBHAJIT ROY & KRISHN KAUSHIK  
NEW DELHI, JUNE 20

WITH QUESTIONS being raised about Prime Minister Narendra Modi's remarks Friday that neither has anyone intruded into Indian territory nor has anyone captured any military post, the government made it clear Saturday that his remarks pertained to the situation in Galwan Valley after the violent clashes on the night of June 15.

This came on the day Delhi rejected Beijing's claim to the Galwan Valley, underlining that it was going against its own position in the past.

The Prime Minister's Office, in a statement, said the "focus of the PM's remarks" at the all-party meeting Friday "were the events of 15 June at Galwan that led to the loss of lives of 20 Indian military personnel" and that "attempts are being made in some quarters" to give it "a mischievous interpretation".

"The sacrifices of the soldiers of the 16 Bihar Regiment foiled the attempt of the Chinese side to erect structures and also cleared the attempted transgression at this point of the LAC on that day," the PMO said.

"As regards transgression of LAC, it was clearly stated that the violence in Galwan on 15 June arose because Chinese side was seeking to erect structures just across the LAC and refused to desist from such actions."

INSIDE



READY, DETERMINED, SAYS IAF CHIEF

KATHMANDU, KABUL HOPE FOR PEACE  
FULL COVERAGE PAGE 7

Hours later, Anurag Srivastava, spokesperson for the Ministry of External Affairs, while responding to the claim by Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian that "Galwan Valley is located on the Chinese side of the Line of Actual Control", echoed the PMO statement. He said "the Chinese side departed from these understandings in respect of the LAC in the Galwan Valley area and sought to erect structures just across the LAC" and that Beijing's claim to Galwan "are not in accordance with China's own position in the past" – not since the Sino-Indian war of 1962.

The PMO did, however, say  
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Army vehicles near Leh on Thursday, on way to Eastern Ladakh, which saw a clash with China recently. Wangailkaya

## Opp asks why Army said opposite, why silence on Pangong

MANOJ CGG  
NEW DELHI, JUNE 20

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi's statement at the all-party meeting that nobody had entered Indian territory triggered a political firestorm on Saturday with the Opposition asking whether he had "surrendered" Indian territory to China.

The Congress asked the government to immediately clarify its position on China's claim to the entire Galwan Valley in Ladakh.

"PM has surrendered Indian territory to Chinese aggression.

If the land was Chinese: why were our soldiers killed? Where were they killed," senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi tweeted.

"China has now claimed the entire Galwan Valley as theirs... the Chinese are present in the Galwan Valley. The Prime Minister says there are no Chinese troops in Indian territory. Keep the two statements next to each other, the conclusion is horrifying," senior party leader P Chidambaram said.

"Before we spell out those horrible conclusions, I would ask the government to answer  
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## LAC remains on edge, fear of fresh flare-ups, calls to de-escalate

SUSHANT SINGH  
NEW DELHI, JUNE 20

THE MOOD on the Line of Actual Control has changed dramatically ever since the death of 20 Indian soldiers in clashes with Chinese troops in the Galwan Valley on the night of June 15. So tense is the situation that there is a possibility it could deteriorate rapidly should there be another faceoff any time soon.

The Galwan incident – the first deaths on the Sino-Indian border in 45 years, and the most serious breakdown of the 1993 understanding between the two

nuclear-armed neighbours who also agreed not to use firearms along their large and often undefined border – has stalled the process of disengagement by the two sides in Ladakh.

More worryingly, the circumstances of the death of the 20 soldiers have increased chances of an escalation into a military conflict on the LAC since adherence to old protocols and SOPs will now be very hard to enforce.

"If de-escalation does not take place fast, the chances of more such clashes taking place will increase. When you have troops eyeball-to-eyeball, there  
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## The Dharavi unlock: How daily new cases down to single digit

SANJANA BHALERAO  
MUMBAI, JUNE 20

DHARAVI, the 2,400-square-meter slum sprawl, which had emerged as a Covid-19 hot spot in Mumbai by mid-April, and had the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) deeply worried, has witnessed a steady decline in the number of new cases in June. On Saturday, addition to cases was in single digit for the first time since the area reported its first case on April 1.

The drop in new cases in Dharavi is characterised by a steep fall in the doubling time of 18 days in the last week of April to 78 days as of June 19. At 78 days, it has the longest doubling time in Mumbai, where overall the cases are now estimated to double in 34 days.

On April 1, Dharavi reported its first Covid-19 case and also the first death due to the virus, albeit in a multi-storey residential complex in Baliga Nagar with good sanitisation facility and scope for social distancing. But alarm bells rang four days later,



Doubling rate in slum now longest in Mumbai. Express

### EXPLAINED Making of a new model

From roping in private and local medical practitioners to classifying every Covid-19 contact as 'high risk' given the density in the Dharavi slums, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation took bold and smart calls over the last two months.

when the virus found its way to one of the largest and most  
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### TRACKING INDIA'S COVID CURVE

LOCKDOWN DAY	88	CASES:	3,95,048	RECOVERED:	2,13,830	DEATHS:	12,948
		TESTS:	66,16,496	DOUBLING RATE:	20.16"		



KEY STATES WATCH	TOTAL CASES	SURGE IN 24 HRS	7-DAY AVG. GROWTH	DOUBLING RATE
Maharashtra	1,24,331	3,827	2.99%	24.06
Gujarat	26,198	538	2.16%	33.36
Delhi	53,116	3,137	5.37%	13.40
Tamil Nadu	54,449	2,115	4.25%	16.96
Bihar	7,290	250	2.59%	27.82
West Bengal	13,090	355	3.56%	20.20

\* Compounded Daily Growth Rate over last 7 days \*\* Calculated over 7-day growth

**CONCERN** DELHI: More than 3,000 new cases on Friday. Set to overtake Tamil Nadu case load

**CAUTION** HARYANA: The numbers had been going down, but more than 200 in last two days

**A GLIMMER** TRIPURA: One of the fastest growing not too long ago, growth now below 3 per cent

**Vencobb**

Ex Farm Broiler Chicken Rate ₹ 80 per kilo  
Retail Sale Rate Live ₹ 108 per kilo  
Dressed (with skin) ₹ 132 per kilo  
Retail Rate Per Dozen of Eggs ₹ 58 per Dozen



PM Modi launches Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan Saturday. ANI

## Make villages shine now: PM at launch of job scheme for poor

SANTOSH SINGH  
PATNA, JUNE 20

ISSUING A call to "turn adversity into opportunity", Prime Minister Narendra Modi Saturday launched the Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan, a skill-based employment scheme aimed primarily at migrant workers who have returned to their villages to escape the Covid lockdown distress.

"This programme is dedi-

cated to workers. We understand your sentiments and also your needs. This programme is a big platform to achieve this. So far, you had been making cities shine with your efforts, now you will boost your villages and localities," Modi said.

With a 125-workday mandate to create public infrastructure, with the involvement of 11 central departments, the Rs 50,000-crore initiative will focus on job creation in 116 districts  
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## India's hopes up as 26/11 wanted Rana re-arrested in US

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY  
NEW DELHI, JUNE 20

ONE OF the key accused in the 26/11 Mumbai attacks, Taha-wur Hussain Rana, is likely to soon face extradition proceedings in the US based on a request from India.

Released recently after testing positive for coronavirus, Rana has been re-arrested by US authorities based on a provisional request from the National Investigation Agency. This paves the way for extradition proceedings to begin against him in a US court, sources said. India's request for his extradition has been pending for years.

A Pakistan-born Canadian citizen, Rana is serving a 14-year sentence in the US for his involvement in a terrorism plot against a Danish newspaper and

for providing material support to the Lashkar-e-Taiba. The 59-year-old resident of Chicago was arrested in 2009 on charges of plotting the 26/11 terror attacks.

According to Indian agencies, he was a close friend of convicted 26/11 accused David Coleman Headley and had helped the latter set up an immigration business in Mumbai as a cover for his reconnaissance activities. Rana had also helped Headley get forged identity documents.

In 2013, Rana was sentenced to 14 years of imprisonment, followed by five years of supervised release.

"He was recently released after he reported that he had tested positive for Covid-19. Following this the US authorities on June 10 executed our request for his provisional arrest. This  
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### SUNDAY STORY

#### ASA DISTRICT UNLOCKS AN EXPRESS SERIES

PAGE 10



Unlock, unlock, unlock, PM Modi recently told CMs. Beginning today, The Indian Express drops anchor in Bhagalpur to track this unlockdown

#### BRAZIL PAST 1 MN MARK IN CASES

PAGE 12

## 80 cases of child marriage stopped, 16 FIRs filed since lockdown enforced

SADAF MODAK  
MUMBAI, JUNE 20

AFTER RECEIVING letters and WhatsApp messages from minor girls seeking help and anonymous alerts from vigilant villagers, the state government and NGOs have intervened to stop as many as 80 instances of child marriages in Maharashtra since the nationwide lockdown was enforced in March. So far, FIRs have been registered in 16 other cases in which the incidents came to light after the marriage ceremonies.

According to data collated by the state's Women and Child Development (WCD) department, a surge is being seen in cases of child marriages due to

factors including the lockdown, and the resultant closure of schools, impact on rural economy and lack of financial security and uncertainty over livelihood which has pushed many into poverty.

"Most number of cases were reported in Solapur, Buldhana and Aurangabad districts so far with 11, 10 and eight cases respectively so far," said WCD assistant commissioner Manisha Biraris. She added that steps were being taken to study the reasons and to continue to stall such forced marriages through interventions from child marriage prohibition officers and child protection committees across the state.

The National Crime Records  
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# Meet private school principal in Telangana, forced to sell idli on a cart

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

SREENIVAS JANYALA, SANTOSH SINGH & ABHISHEK ANGAD  
HYDERABAD, PATNA, RANCHI, JUNE 20

THE PRINCIPAL of a private school in Khammam is running a food cart, trying to sell idli, dosa and vada. A Social Science teacher in Ranchi is working on his paddy field. And an English teacher in Nalgonda has started

selling insurance policies. The sweeping economic distress triggered by the Covid pandemic and lockdown has pushed countless out of jobs, set off one of the biggest reverse migrations in recent times and pushed millions of small businesses to the edge.

One of the hardest hit has been private education. In cities and small towns across the country where private schools were seen as a passport to aspiration, teachers are on their knees, with parents unable to pay fees and managements left without money to pay salaries. In most cases, these teachers

are the sole breadwinners, which has meant that the distress has affected entire families. And several of them, heading households in cities like Patna and Ranchi, say they don't have the luxury of packing up and going back to their villages.

"If the students do not return to school by July-August, things will get worse for us," says Vidyasagar, a 28-year-old Science teacher in Bihar's Shekhpura who is supporting his family with loans and a credit card.

"Schools are telling teachers that they cannot pay salaries as students have not paid fees since



Maragani Rambabu, a private school principal, now runs a food cart with his wife at Sathupalli in Khammam. Express

their parents have not got salaries or are out of jobs," says Shabbir Ali, who heads a private schools teachers' association in Telangana.

"What can we do?" asks Sanjay Kumar, who owns Ankur Public School in Danapur near Patna. "We have started online classes but over 70 per cent of parents are still not able to pay the fees. Many don't have smartphones for their children to access the online classes. We are all trying not to sink together."

The Sunday Express tracked down several private school teachers, from north to south—

and found all of them caught between the Covid distress and their dream of providing a better life for their families.

MARAGANI RAMBABU, 36 PRINCIPAL, KHAMMAM; SALARY: Rs 22,000, NOW: ZERO

He was in charge of Millenium English Medium School in Telangana's Khammam till the lockdown was announced and the school management decided that they don't need a principal till the school reopens. With no other source of income to support his wife, two children and mother,

Rambabu started a food stall when the lockdown was relaxed on June 5. "It felt odd at first... I bought a cart with Rs 2,000, and started selling idli, vada and dosa, along with my wife. At the end of the day, we make a profit of around Rs 200," he says.

BADETI RAVI, 30 ENGLISH, NALGONDA; SALARY: Rs 16,000, NOW: ZERO

Ravi was a teacher at Krishnaveni English Medium School in Nakrekal near Nalgonda in Telangana. "The  
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# 6<sup>th</sup> INTERNATIONAL YOGA Day

## SAHAJA YOGA - Today's Maha Yoga

### 50 Glorious years (1970-2020)

#### MEDITATION as Inner Peace Day

Shri Mataji travelled across various countries to give self-realisation to seekers (All castes, colours and religion) of truth which gave them relief from stress and INNER PEACE. Sahaja Yoga Meditation is observed as Inner Peace Day on March 21 by 32,00,000 students of 970 Schools in 51 countries. Improved memory and concentration, self-confidence, teamwork, and self-discipline has been observed in students who started doing Sahaja Yoga Meditation.

Inner Peace began as Inner Peace Day, an international celebration of 21<sup>st</sup> March (Birthday of Her Holiness Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi) as the World Day for Inner Peace. The idea is to establish a day in schools dedicated to World Peace, where students could experience inner peace for themselves. Meditate to Regenerate was set up to spread the message of peace in some of the most troubled areas around the world: refugee camps, occupied territories and places devastated by war.

#### Sahaja Yoga Unites the World on International Yoga Day Sunday, 21st June 2020

Global Experts, Professionals, Social Activist, coming LIVE with 30+ sessions from more than 20 countries in more than 10 languages performing from Sunrise to sunrise, to share the unique method of YOGA by Kundalini Awakening and Self Realization through which one can achieve a Beautiful state of Thoughtless Awareness.

#### Sahaja Yoga

A Divine Gift to Humanity, H.H Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi. Please follow the Link to listen, these Global Speakers on

<https://www.SahajaYoga.org.in/YogaDay>

Also Visit for more details on Sahaja Yoga :

- [www.sahajayoga.org](http://www.sahajayoga.org)
- [www.nirmaldham.org](http://www.nirmaldham.org)
- [www.sahajayogamumbai.org](http://www.sahajayogamumbai.org)
- [www.sahajayoga.org.in](http://www.sahajayoga.org.in)
- [www.freemeditation.com](http://www.freemeditation.com)

“ You cannot know the meaning of your life until you are connected to the power that created you ”



HER HOLINESS SHRI MATAJI NIRMALA DEVI  
The Founder of Sahaja Yoga

#### Self-realisation by Kundalini awakening

On this International Yoga Day, we all the Sahaja Yogi children of the world gratefully bow down to You again and again, that You discovered Sahaja Yoga and worked untiringly for the emancipation of the mankind. Millions of Sahaja Yogis across the globe are enjoying the blessings showered by Thee.



Birth Place Chindwara (M.P)  
21st March 1923

Nirmal Dham Delhi (Samadhi)  
23rd February 2011

Her Holiness Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi incarnated on 21<sup>st</sup> March, 1923 at 12.00 noon, at Chindwara (M.P). Her father Shri P. K. Salve was a man of great character. Nationalist to the core, he became a prominent figure in the India's freedom movement. On 7<sup>th</sup> April 1947, She married Shri C.P. Srivastava, IAS, who later became Secretary to Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri. Later Shri C.P.S. became secretary, International maritime origination for 16 years. After fulfilling her family duties, Shri Mataji launched Sahaja Yoga – the system of en masse Self-Realisation and through Kundalini awakening, on 5<sup>th</sup> May 1970. With Sahaja Yoga Meditation, millions of seekers today are leading peaceful and stress free lives.

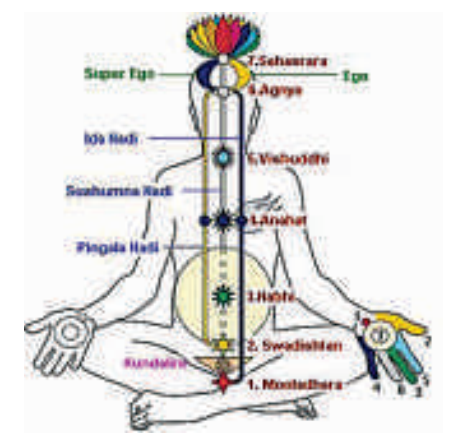
#### Yoga recognised Globally

Today, Yoga is practiced in various forms around the world and continues to grow in popularity. Recognizing its universal appeal, on 11 December 2014, the United Nations proclaimed 21 June as the International Day of Yoga by resolution 69/131. The International Day of Yoga aims to raise awareness worldwide of the many benefits of practicing yoga.

The draft resolution establishing the International Day of Yoga was proposed by India and endorsed by a record 175 member states. The proposal was first introduced by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Sh. Narendra Modi, in his address during the opening of the 69<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly, in which he said: "Yoga is an invaluable gift from our ancient tradition. Yoga embodies unity of mind and body, thought and action... a holistic approach [that] is valuable to our health and our well-being. **Yoga is not just about exercise; it is a way to discover the sense of oneness with yourself, the world and the nature.**"

The resolution notes "the importance of individuals and populations making healthier choices and following lifestyle patterns that foster good health." In this regard, the World Health Organization has also urged its member states to help their citizens reduce physical inactivity, which is among the top ten leading causes of death worldwide, and a key risk factor for non-communicable diseases, such as cardiovascular diseases, cancer and diabetes.

In the words of Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi, "What is Yoga? In simple words, it is taking your attention to the Spirit. What does the Kundalini do? She raises your attention and takes it to the Spirit. Only after knowing the Spirit you can know God."



#### Proclamation in memory of Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi

The Mayor of the District of Columbia, Vincent C. Gray, in recognition of Shri Mataji's achievements, has proclaimed March 21, 2012 as 'SHRI MATAJI NIRMALA DEVI DAY', in Washington, D.C. He also called upon residents to join in observing this day, enhancing one's inner awareness and world peace. On this occasion, there was a special segment dedicated to Shri Mataji during the celebration on March 21.

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi was born on March 21, 1923 to Prasad and Cornelia Salve in India. In 1970, she founded a unique method of achieving inner peace, balance and personal growth called Sahaja Meditation, also

known as Sahaja Yoga, with the message and practise spreading to over 100 countries. Since, 1998, the National Institute of Health has been hosting weekly Sahaja Yoga Meditation programmes for patients and staff.

Shri Mataji has been nominated twice for the Nobel peace prize for her universal vision of a unified humanity and her extraordinary global work.

She has also created number of NGO and authored a book called 'Meta Modern Era', which offers deep insights and solutions for the crisis of modern times, and has merited and love and respect of countless friends and family.

#### Why Sahaja Yoga Meditation? (for good health & well being)

Sahaja Yoga is a simple and effective form of meditation that helps to reduce stress and enhance physical, emotional, mental and spiritual well-being. It is an effortless meditation. With pure desire to have self-realisation (SR), a seeker gets it in just a minute or few. There is no physical exercise or mental exercise involved, but the state of thoughtless awareness is achieved.

Sahaja Yoga meditation grants a seeker 'YOGA' or union with the all-pervading power, by awakening the Sacred Energy (Kundalini) lying dormant in three and half coils, in the sacrum bone of every human being. The awakening of the Kundalini is felt by the seeker as a cool breeze either on top of his head or on the palm of the hand. Once the Kundalini starts flowing freely through the subtle instrument of the seeker he/she enters into a meditative state and becomes conscious of the profound and peaceful silence known as "Thoughtless Awareness". After regular meditation, a seeker can give self-realization to others.

The Founder of Sahaja Yoga, Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi, brought forth the divine knowledge of how to give en-masse self-realization on May 5, 1970. Shri Mataji gave self-realisation to a small group

of seekers to start. Today Sahaja Yoga has spread more than 140 countries and seekers practising this meditation have experienced transformation in their lifestyle and are easily able to manage stressful situations. Sahaja Yoga/Self-realization is always free of charge, in line with the principle laid down by Shri Mataji.

- Sahaja Yoga meditation is very easy and can be done along with professional and family life
- People from all walks of life can derive benefits, irrespective of their religion, caste or creed
- Health improves. Relief from mental illness due to stress and other health and psycho-somatic problems. And natural cure from addictions.
- No need for any sort of rituals, penance, fasts, asceticism or physical deprivations
  - For students – progress in studies due to improvement in memory & concentration
  - Latent artistic talents get developed
  - Peace, contentment and joy are the hallmarks of Sahaja Yoga
  - Entirely scientific technique with no promotion of blind faith
  - Self-realization through Sahaja Yoga is entirely free

# 4 THE OUTBREAK THE CITY

## No profit since March, many gyms go digital, some shut shop

**SRINATH RAO**  
MUMBAI, JUNE 20

RAVINDRA DAS described the end of the first lockdown in distant April as being a literal do or die situation. As an experienced personal fitness trainer, he had two choices — wait until gyms were allowed to open again or go online. Two months hence, he's glad he chose the second option. "It was a question of survival," he said.

Like other businesses in the city, the \$821-mn Indian fitness industry, too, has buckled under the weight of the lockdown and with no date of resumption in sight, Mumbai's gyms and fitness centres are unsure how long they can carry on paying crushing rents and keep employees on their rosters.

"The lockdown has wiped out our profits," said Badal Makwana, a franchise holder of Anytime Fitness and managing



At a gym in Bandra. There is a proposal to make temperature checks, masks, gloves and visors as well the Aarogya Setu app compulsory at fitness centres. Amit Chakravarty

director (MD) of its gym in Andheri West.

Branded gyms in upscale neighbourhoods like Lokhandwala and Khar West, where Makwana's gyms are located, require a base investment of anywhere between Rs 2 crore and Rs 3 crore. Purchasing state-of-the-art equipment, hiring experienced trainers and maintenance staff costs extra.

Gyms, fitness centres and swimming pools were shut on March 13 with just a day's notice. The closure has left questions of memberships fees and refunds unanswered. "Things are complicated because no revenue is coming in. We are being pressured into paying rents and are still in talks over a waiver," Makwana said.

Vikas Jain, MD of Anytime Fitness India and general secretary of industry body India Active, said that many smaller fitness centres in Mumbai have shut shop permanently and sold

equipment. India Active estimates that there are two lakh gyms, fitness centres, yoga studios and businesses selling fitness equipment and food supplements in the country, employing nearly 50 lakh people. Gyms, added Jain, comprise half of those establishments and employees.

In a recent survey of 331 gyms in Mumbai and Delhi conducted by India Active, over 55 per cent respondents said their businesses would not survive if the shutdown continued past June. Those respondents rose to 71.9 per cent and 88.52 per cent when asked to rate their chances of survival if conditions persisted in July and August, respectively.

In a letter sent on Thursday to the Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises, India Active wrote: "Majority of these fitness centres are registered with MSME and the debt continues to rise with no sign of in-

come returning anytime soon... which has already led to massive unemployment and business loss for the entire ecosystem."

The unprecedented shutdown has forced cult.fit, which operates 16 centres in Mumbai and a Fitness First Centre in Oshiwara, to press pause on subscriptions paid by members and offer live workout sessions on video instead, said a company spokesperson. 48 Fitness, another chain with multiple centres in Mumbai, also plans to branch out into digital fitness, said CEO Vijay Thakkar.

Persuading clients to train on video link from their homes is easier for an experienced trainer like Das, who has spent a decade chiseling bodies. "Junior personal trainers and general trainers don't have any clients at the moment because they do not have the contacts that seniors do. Many junior trainers have been calling me asking for

clients who they can train online. But when I am struggling for clients myself, I do not know how to help someone else," he said.

Das worked with 12 active clients at the gym prior to the lockdown. He is now down to just three.

"Many of my clients are either depressed due to the lockdown or lack the motivation to train. Many are also facing financial difficulties," he said.

Das' employer Makwana has retained all his employees by paying them a lumpsum package at the outset of the lockdown to make up for his inability to pay them salaries. Faced with seeing out the lockdown with just his savings, Das decided to take on addition clients — training a small group of novices remotely at a discounted rate.

Yet, if a recent survey of 12,000 gym-goers across the country conducted by India

Active's is an indicator, 59 per cent of those surveyed expressed willingness to return to the gym either immediately or within a month of them reopening.

The trade body has proposed a host of changes to workouts once restrictions are lifted — making temperature checks, masks, gloves and visors as well the Aarogya Setu app compulsory; reducing the number of members per exercise slots; ensuring greater distances between individuals; discontinuing the use of showers; mandating that members bring separate gym shoes and disinfecting equipment, surfaces and washrooms at regular intervals.

"Fitness centres help build immunity. The government needs to understand that people staying locked up in their homes need to stay healthy. If you can open up malls and places of worship, why not gyms?" asked Jain.

### LOCKDOWN VIOLATION, SPIKE IN COVID CASES IN NORTH MUMBAI

## Police propose lockdown in four areas, civic officials say not feasible

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
MUMBAI, JUNE 20

WITH NEARLY three in every four cases registered for violation of lockdown norms over the past week reported from the northern suburbs and a subsequent increase in the number of Covid-19 cases, the Mumbai Police at a joint review meeting with senior Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) officials on Friday proposed that a complete lockdown should be re-imposed in four areas extending from Goregaon to Dahisar. Civic officials, however, have maintained enforcing a lockdown was not feasible.

Dahisar, which falls in the R-North civic ward, has recorded the worst doubling rate of the novel coronavirus disease at 16 days among the 24 administrative wards. On Friday, the total number of cases in the ward were recorded at 1,318. The neighbouring R-Central ward, including Borivali West, recorded the second-worst doubling rate at 18 days with 1,882 cases, till Friday. As of Saturday, Mumbai's doubling rate is 34 days.

The P-North ward, which recorded fifth-highest number of virus cases in the city at 3,488, has the maximum population density in Mumbai with around 10 lakh people spread over

Malvani, MHADA compound, Marve Road, Kurar village among others.

A complete lockdown was re-imposed in parts of Malad East (also in P-North ward) last week as the number of Covid-19 cases in the area went up — from the 2,664 cases recorded till June 13, the number of Covid-19 cases at the P-North ward went up to 3,488 on June 19.

An IPS officer said, "Since the past 10 days, there was a complete lockdown at Appapada and Kokanipada areas in Malad East and the results were good. The number of cases went down. Following this, we have suggested to the BMC that the lockdown be extended there and at two more places — Kajupada in Kandivali East and Ganpat Patil Nagar in Dahisar West. The discussion with BMC officials was held in presence of the joint commissioner of police (law & order), and the civic officials seemed convinced. We are now awaiting their orders."

On Saturday, Bhagyashree Kapse, Assistant Municipal Commissioner of R-Central ward, said though the Mumbai Police suggested that a complete lockdown be re-imposed in the areas owing to growing cases, "but it is not feasible". "In my ward, 70 per cent of the cases are from high-rises, and only 30 per cent are from slums that are declared as containment zones...

We are tightening the movement of citizens in high-rises considering the number of cases is higher there," Kapse said.

The officer added that following the review meeting with the top brass, north Mumbai has seen the deployment of seven extra platoons of State Reserve Police Force in addition to the two they already had to ensure compliance of lockdown precautions.

At R-North Ward, Assistant Municipal Commissioner Sandhya Nandekar said the number of containment zones had been decreased and clubbed the buffer zones. "We are tightening the movement of those in containment zones in order to ensure the Covid-19 cases come down. We are expecting the number of cases will come under control in the coming days, and there is no plan to re-impose complete lockdown for the ward," Nandekar said.

According to the data shared by Mumbai Police, between June 13 and 18, a total of 431 FIRs were registered in the north region alone of the total 591 cases registered across the city. Maximum cases were registered under Dahisar, Samta Nagar and Kandivali police stations and a majority of these cases were related to not wearing masks, shops not shutting down as per time limit and people going double seat on motorcycles.



Crowded RRT Market in Mulund on Saturday. Express

## As cases rise in T ward, violation of social distancing norms & low contact tracing blamed

**SAGARAJPUT**  
MUMBAI, JUNE 20

IN THE last two weeks, T ward, which covers Mulund, has seen a steep increase in the number of Covid-19 cases. Till June 2, before the lockdown was relaxed in the state, the area had only reported 832 cases. Two weeks later, the number has risen by 101.4 per cent to 1,676 cases.

What compounds the problem further is the ward's low contact tracing ratio — while 3.5 contacts are traced per positive patient here, Mumbai's expected average is 10.

According to BMC officials, wards that saw less cases initially have started seeing a substantial rise in the numbers. "Wards like R and RC also had a few cases ini-

tially, but suddenly there has been a spike. Even we are clueless on how this is happening," T ward officer Kishor Gandhi said.

Officials claimed that the failure of the local residents to follow social distancing norms have led to the spike. "A sizeable portion of local residents are custom clearing agents, who have been travelling frequently across Mumbai. The failure to maintain social distancing rules in vegetable markets has also made the population vulnerable to infections," said a civic official.

"More than 1,000 people got infected after the lockdown was relaxed. Since then, markets have been filled with people and no one is observing social distancing. I have seen people sharing cigarettes, triple riding without masks and travelling with four persons

in cars," Mulund MLA Mihir Kotecha said.

BMC officials said that unlike popular perception that slum pockets are more vulnerable, the ward has witnessed a rise in cases in gated societies. "The numbers of cases from the slum pocket is well under control. We are trying to ascertain how cases are constantly increasing in the residential societies," Gandhi said.

Also, BMC does not seem to have been very aggressive in conducting contact tracing in the ward.

In the last week of May, BMC Commissioner Iqbal Singh Chahal had instructed that for every Covid-19 positive patient, at least 15 close contacts should be traced in slums. While the contact tracing ratio for T ward is as low as 3.5 persons per patient, in some in-

stances, not a single high-risk contact has been traced after a positive case was reported.

A 39-year-old security guard had got himself tested on May 26. "The next day, I was informed that I have tested positive. I went to Mithaghar Municipal School (a makeshift Covid care centre) and got myself admitted," he added.

However, no contact tracing was conducted, as no one from the BMC approached him. Also, none of his family members were quarantined or tested.

Days later, his wife and father started showing symptoms of Covid-19. His father went on to test positive on May 28 and passed away at a local hospital on June 10. "None of the BMC officials approached me or my family after I tested positive. Only once a disinfecting team visited

our place," the guard said.

Data shows that T ward has traced a little over 5,000 high-risk contacts till now, which is the lowest among all wards. Of the 5,000, 2,779 were quarantined. With 116 residential buildings sealed and 10 containment zones in slums and chawls, the ward ranks low among all wards on these parameters too. When it comes to screening senior citizens, BMC has checked 6,697 people here.

BMC officials claimed people living in societies refuse to go to quarantine centres. "They say they don't want to be in institutional quarantine, as they have their own toilets and bathrooms. Many a times, we have taken help from the police in taking them to quarantine centres," added Gandhi.

### Two more Mumbai Police constables die, toll rises to 32



**CORONA WATCH**

Mumbai: Two more Mumbai Police constables have succumbed to Covid-19, taking the toll in the department due to the virus to 32, officials said. Of the 2,349 personnel from the department who tested positive for the infection, 1,579 have recovered, they said.

Head constable Pradip Vinerkar, 54, who was posted at Tardeo traffic division, died at KEM Hospital Friday. An officer said, "A Parel resident, Vinerkar was admitted to KEM hospital after he developed breathing problems and was subsequently tested positive for the infection."

While the 54-year-old did not have any comorbidities, his health continued to deteriorate and he succumbed Friday morning.

Constable Rajendra Shelar, 55, died Saturday morning, police said. He was admitted to Bombay Hospital on June 4 after he developed novel coronavirus-like symptoms. "He had diabetes and had recently undergone a bypass surgery due to which he could not fight back the infection," an officer said, adding that he was not reporting to work. **ENS**

### US-based Pfizer Foundation extends support to Dharavi quarantine centres

Mumbai: The US-based Pfizer Foundation has committed to provide basic equipment, including oxygen concentrators, blood gas analyser machines, and nebulizers, for quarantine facilities at Dharavi.

The social arm of the pharmaceutical company is working to expand the donation of N95 masks to support smaller hospitals and nursing homes as well.

About one lakh N95 masks will be provided to frontline public healthcare workers across 15 cities in India, a statement from the foundation said, adding that it has already re-

leased a grant of \$2.50,000 to support initiatives for combating Covid-19 spread in India. The foundation has also donated 75,000 tablets of Trulimax 500 mg (Azithromycin) to HLL Lifecare for use by the government in its Covid-19 relief efforts.

"...There is an urgent need for setting up additional Covid care and quarantine facilities. Pfizer is supporting one such facility at Kalina, in Mumbai, with 75 beds and associated equipment such as oxygen concentrators, multi-parameter monitors, crash carts, ECG machine etc," the statement added.

The foundation has donated three ventilators and organised for food distribution to unorganised labourers in Goa as well. **ENS**

### 8 Mumbai Fire Brigade men have died due to Covid: officials

Mumbai: Eight Mumbai Fire Brigade personnel have so far died due to Covid-19 while 22 personnel are in hospital battling the infection, an official said on Saturday. He said another 25 personnel are in quarantine, and 44 have been discharged following recovery. **PTI**



Health workers screen people for coronavirus-like symptoms at Ambedkar Nagar area in Thane, on Saturday. Deepak Joshi

## Implement SC order on providing Covid test reports directly to patients or relatives: Bombay HC to civic body

**OMKARGOKHALE**  
MUMBAI, JUNE 20

THE BOMBAY High Court on Saturday asked the BMC and the Maharashtra government to implement Friday's Supreme Court directive that had asked the state to handover reports of Covid-19 tests directly to the patients or their family members.

A division bench of Justice SJ Kathawalla and Justice Nitin R Borkar was hearing a writ petition filed by Vinod Mishra, BJP corporator from Malad, seeking to set aside BMC's June 13 circular.

According to circular, private labs should first share the report of a positive patient with BMC and only if a patient tests negative, can

the report be shared directly with him or her. Even the results of the tests conducted in hospitals by private labs will have to be shared with BMC first, the circular had added. However, the Supreme Court Friday had asked the lawyer representing the Maharashtra government before it to advise the state to issue an appropriate order permitting handing over of Covid-19 test reports directly to the patients or their family members.

On Saturday, senior advocate Anil Sakhare, appearing for BMC, challenged the maintainability of Mishra's plea and said that the issue concerned the well-being of the general public and should have been filed as a public interest litigation. The BMC also submitted that the decision was taken

to ensure better bed management and as on June 18, Mumbai has 18,294 bed for the infected, of which 5,424 are unoccupied.

Mishra's lawyers Amogh Singh and Jeet Gandhi said that since BMC was not made a party to the case before the Supreme Court, its order was not applicable to the civic body and sought appropriate order from the HC.

Following this, the HC noted that the top court, in its order, had said that "it had no doubt that the states and all concerned authorities shall supply a copy of the report to the patient or his or her relatives and the hospital". In view of this, the HC, while disposing the plea, refused to pass any orders and asked the BMC to abide by the SC direction.

# 5 MAHARASHTRA

## Mumbai records over 100 deaths on second consecutive day, toll 3,561

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
MUMBAI, JUNE 20

FOR THE second consecutive day, Mumbai recorded over 100 deaths due to the novel coronavirus. On Saturday, 136 people succumbed to the infection, which also the highest single-day toll in the city since the first death was registered on March 17. The total death toll in Mumbai now stands at 3,561. On Friday, too, the city had registered 114 deaths.

With over 1,000 new cases reported Saturday, the number of positive cases in the financial capital stands at 65,329.

The total Covid-19 cases recorded across Maharashtra, meanwhile, went up to 1,28,205 with 3,874 new cases recorded on the day. The state's toll stands at 5,984.

A total of 1,380 patients were discharged Saturday taking the total number of patients to have recovered from the disease to

1,28,205

TOTAL POSITIVE CASES  
IN MAHARASHTRA

Number of deaths 5,984

Total number of people discharged 64,153

Number of people tested 7.54 lakh

Total number quarantined 25,099

Number of new cases 3,874

64,153. As on Saturday, there are 58,054 active cases in the state. The state's recovery rate stands at 50.04 per cent, while its fatality rate is 4.67 per cent.

Of the total 160 deaths recorded on the day, Mumbai saw the highest fatality at 136, followed by Jalgaon at 10, Aurangabad 6, Pune 5, and one each in Solapur, Jalna and Beed.

### MUMBAI COVID CASES

## Ensure transparency in bringing true picture in front of people: Fadnavis writes to Uddhav

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
MUMBAI, JUNE 20

ACCUSING THE state government of turning a blind eye towards serious lapses in Covid-19 medical facilities in Mumbai, BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis on Saturday wrote to Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, saying that the casual approach of the administration to overlook such lapses would aggravate the current crisis.

Referring to a story published in *The Indian Express* on Friday, which reported about how the state was yet to officially record the deaths of many people who had tested positive as Covid-19 deaths and had not been named in the official death list, Fadnavis said the actual number of deaths in Mumbai was still being hidden.

"It is important to pay attention to the numbers being put out by the municipal corporation and ensure clarity and transparency in bringing the true picture in front of the people," Fadnavis wrote.

"In the first 18 days in June, positive cases have increased by 43.86 per cent in Maharashtra. During the same period, the rise

in Mumbai is 36.88 per cent," he added.

He maintained that it is "unpardonable" that the "lackadaisical approach" of the government in providing proper medical facilities is leading to a loss of lives. "The CM should intervene to set things right immediately," he added. Reiterating that the state government had been trying to cover up reality, the former CM said: "The increasing number of Covid-19 positive cases should be a cause of serious concern and requires effective measures. Instead, the administration appears to be on the defensive."

"The state government should address the pandemic on war footing. It should direct the BMC to make public factual numbers," he added.

Fadnavis said that in KEM Hospital's emergency ward, 10 patients have died because of a drop in oxygen level. Earlier, at Jogeshwari Trauma Care Hospital, 12 patients had lost their lives due to a technical glitch resulting in non-supply of oxygen, he added.

"In the absence of adequate medical facilities, people are paying with their lives," said Fadnavis.

### FOR MILD TO MODERATE PATIENTS

## Glenmark announces launch of Favipiravir to treat Covid patients

Pune: Glenmark Pharmaceuticals on Saturday announced the launch of antiviral drug Favipiravir (brand name FabiFlu®) for the treatment of mild to moderate Covid-19 patients.

Glenmark has received man-

ufacturing and marketing approval from India's drug regulator, making FabiFlu the first oral Favipiravir-approved medication in India for the treatment of Covid-19, officials said at a press conference organised online. **ENS**

## As lockdown eases, AQI sees slight increase but remains 'satisfactory'

SANJANA BHALERAO  
MUMBAI, JUNE 20

WITH THE easing of lockdown rules and vehicles being back on the roads in the city, the Air Quality Index (AQI) marked a slight increase on Saturday - it stood at 55, which is 'satisfactory'. On June 4, Mumbai had recorded its best AQI for this year at 17. For April and May, the AQI ranged between 17 and 29.

An AQI from 0 and 50 is considered 'good', 51 to 100 'satisfactory' and 101 to 200 as 'moderate'. An AQI between 201 and 300 is considered 'poor', 301 to 400 'very poor' and 401 to 500 'severe', while AQI above 500 falls under the severe plus category.

"The first two weeks after the lockdown rules were relaxed were rainy days, which washed away particulate pollutants. Also, the difference between the 'good' and 'satisfactory' category of AQI is very small

and doesn't pose a health risk. Overall, the good to satisfactory category is expected to continue during monsoon," said Gufran Beig, director, System of Air Quality Weather Forecasting and Research (SAFAR).

According to the analysis by SAFAR, Mumbai witnessed a 60 per cent increase in nitrogen dioxide (NO2) levels (from vehicular emissions and fossil fuel burning) compared to levels recorded during the fourth phase of the lockdown. NO2 levels are mainly controlled by its major source of emissions - vehicular traffic. SAFAR compared pollution levels between June 1 and June

## After years of drought, some in Jalna lose kharif crop to flood just days after sowing

KAVITHA IYER  
MUMBAI, JUNE 20

IN DROUGHT-PRONE Jalna district's Badnapur region, elated with the plentiful showers in the first week of June coinciding with Cyclone Nisarga and then more rainfall around June 8-10, Balasaheb Dake and other farmers in and around Kajla village had begun sowing for an early kharif season for their cotton, pigeon pea, soybean and corn crops. By dusk this Thursday, however, 25-year-old Dake was standing in ankle-deep muck at the edge of his 14-acre farm that now resembled a lake.

Farm bunds and small water retention structures collapsed in heavy rainfall on June 18, bringing mud and silt to farmland in the trough between Kajla and Ghotan villages, located 15 to 20 km from Jalna city.

"I feel helpless, we are staring at one more year of losses," Dake said. The last 10 to 12 days have brought heavy rainfall to the arid Marathwada region. While sowing is still underway in Beed,



Balasaheb Dake on his farmland on Friday.

Hingoli, Aurangabad and Parbhani districts, farmers in large parts of Jalna completed their sowing early this week after the region received several plentiful showers.

While the normal average rainfall for Badnapur taluka at this time of the year is about 79 mm, as of Saturday the taluka recorded an average rainfall of 139.4 mm or more than 176 per cent of its normal average rain for June 20.

Villages around Roshangaon

have received nearly 200 per cent of their normal rainfall. In neighbouring Bhokardan, too, average rainfall recorded Saturday was 200 per cent of the normal average for this time of the year.

"Those who are downstream of nullahs and natural streams were hit hard," said Dake. "My field was flooded, like a river. The water level has receded now but my just-sprouting crop was washed out. The soil is also still

mucky, and more rainfall is anticipated."

Dake, a third-year law student, found himself suddenly the head of the family when his father died in 2015. A younger brother is studying in Pune. "I had never imagined that I would be a farmer. My father was a graduate too. We are a well-educated family. We have 14 acres of land. When I decided to take up agriculture, a few other youngsters in the village had

followed my lead," he said over the phone.

After the family incurred losses when their sweet lime orchard had to be hacked down during the last few years' drought conditions, 2020 had appeared promising until Thursday's rain when Dake's nearly Rs 50,000 investment sank.

In Ghotan village, Vishnu Jagtap owns seven acres of farmland including a three-acre sweet lime orchard. "The trees had to be cut in 2012 when there was no rain, but my entire farmland was inundated on Thursday and Friday, with several inches of silt on the ground now. Worse, my drip irrigation system is destroyed - my losses are nearly Rs 2 lakh," said Jagtap, 50.

A few hundred farmers in this belt are similarly affected, he said. No government survey has been initiated yet, but residents estimate that nearly 1,000 acres of farmland were damaged in this belt alone. Farm ponds, built with a subsidy from the government under a popular scheme, also collapsed.

Not far from the Ghotan-Kajla-

Ranjangaon-Butegaon-Saigaon belt, the new Samruddhi Mahamarg, a super communication expressway is coming up. The ambitious high-speed road link between Mumbai and Nagpur will cut through parts of Marathwada. "While so much money is spent on the highway, corruption and disinterest will rob farmers of relief and better policy," said Dake.

All of Jalna's talukas show a similar trend of excess rain - Mantha has received 125 per cent of normal average until now, Ghansawangi received 166.9 per cent, Partur 134.6 per cent, Ambad 187.9 per cent, Jalna taluka 169.3 per cent, Jalrahad 187.6 per cent and Bhokardan 198.4 per cent.

Other districts in Marathwada have received rainfall above normal averages as well. By Saturday, Aurangabad received 161.4 mm (normal average 65.9 mm), Beed 141.9 mm (73.9 mm), Jalna 112.3 mm (67.7 mm), Latur 135.5 mm (68.5 mm), Nanded 100.2 mm (65.3 mm), Hingoli 118.6 mm (71.6 mm), Parbhani 129.2 mm (69.8 mm) and Osmanabad 119.3 mm (73.9 mm).



## Uddhav urges Ganpati mandals in Mumbai to keep height of idols small

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
MUMBAI, JUNE 20

CHIEF MINISTER Uddhav Thackeray on Saturday urged the Ganpati mandals in Mumbai to keep the height of the idols small and celebrate the 10-day Ganesh festival, beginning August 22, in a low-key manner.

"Due to the Covid-19 crisis, there will be restrictions on the celebrations this year. All the Ganesh mandals should think to keep the height of the idol small. The size of the pandal should also be small. All social distancing and health measures should be followed while planning the festival," said Uddhav in a video conference with the office-bearers of the ganesh mandals from Mumbai.

**Due to the Covid-19 crisis, there will be restrictions on the celebrations this year. All the Ganesh mandals should think to keep the height of the idol small. The size of the pandal should also be small. All social distancing and health measures should be followed while planning the festival."**

UDDHAV THACKERAY

He further said that after the Covid-19 crisis is over, the festival can be celebrated on a grand scale next year.

Uddhav sought views from the office-bearers regarding the

height of the idols and immersion procession among others.

Swapnil Parab, secretary of the Lalbaug Sarvjanik Utsav Mandal, said that the idols are likely to be immersed in artificial lakes this year.

"We raised the query that whether only the immersion of the idol will be allowed at Girgaum Chowpatty. The CM said that it looks difficult and suggested that we keep the height of the idol small so that they can be immersed in artificial lakes," said Parab.

He added that Uddhav is likely to announce a decision in this regard in the next few days.

The CM, meanwhile, inaugurated the 100th Covid-19 testing laboratory in the state in the Gokuldas Tejpal Hospital in Mumbai.

## Taximen's union urge govt to allow ferrying of non-essential passengers

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
MUMBAI, JUNE 20

TO IMPROVE business for the nearly five lakh autorickshaws and taxi operators registered in the city, who have been badly hit due to the lockdown, Mumbai Taximen's Union leader A L Quadros urged the state government to allow their drivers to ferry non-essential passengers as well.

In a letter addressed to Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, Quadros urged the government to cancel its May 31 order that allowed taxis and autos to ply on the road, but ferry only essential workers. He said while the government has allowed offices and

traders to re-open, the taxi and autorickshaw operators have not been allowed to transport their employees who form a major junk of their passenger base.

Under the 'Mission Begin Again', taxis were allowed to transport two passengers while autos just one passenger. Quadros alleged that the traffic police were imposing penalty on taxi and auto drivers and also detaining their vehicles for days further troubling the drivers who have been badly hit by the three-month-long lockdown.

There are over two lakh taxis and another 45,000 autorickshaws in Mumbai. Even after the partial lifting of the lockdown only 30 per cent had started plying fearing police action.

## Frame policy for street vendors to earn livelihood in lockdown, HC directs state

OMKAR GOKHALE  
MUMBAI, JUNE 20

THE BOMBAY High Court on Friday asked the state government to form a policy to enable street vendors to earn their livelihood during Covid-19 lockdown.

A division bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice K K Tated was hearing public interest litigation (PIL) filed by one Manoj Jalamchand Oswal, through advocate Ashish Verma, raising concerns pertaining the loss of livelihood of street vendors due to the lockdown.

Oswal said since hotels and restaurants were allowed to operate, street vendors should also be permitted to conduct their businesses. The court said the petitioner could not equate hotels and restaurants with street vendors and sought to know the state government's stand on the issue.

The bench said just as courts had physically re-opened in a staggered manner outside containment zones, the state could consider framing an appropriate policy to enable street vendors to earn their livelihood.

After Advocate General Ashutosh Kumbhakar sought time for the state to respond on consideration of policy for street vendors, the court granted two weeks to the state to respond and posted further hearing on July 7.

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# THE SUNDAY EXPRESS MAGAZINE

# eye



**SPOTLIGHT**

**Stronger Together**

Mental health is not an individual problem, it is a collective responsibility, writes Shelja Sen



**BOOKS**

- Review of Chandan Gowda's *A Life in the World: UR Ananthamurthy in Conversation with Chandan Gowda*
- Historian Ira Mukhoty on her new book on Akbar & why his vilification is a British legacy

## THE FUTUREPOLIS

How will the pandemic change the city?

Shiny Varghese

**T**HINK OF a city that has a skin that can inflate and deflate, depending on the number of people it needs to accommodate. A house that can be lifted on a crane and perched on skyscrapers and detached when your work in the city is done. What if a city can hang off an airship and land overnight in a place, with a kit of moveable parts? In the late 1960s, when modernism was making chunky cubes of houses for people to live in and grids for urban layouts, a group of six British architects came together to form Archigram. They began with a single-page magazine that was filled with collages, poems and visuals of utopian possibilities of a city — flexible, mobile and adaptable. The group would challenge generations of architects to build, dream and envision possible futures. Though Archigram never built any city and critics called them out for their assumption that the earth had endless resources, many of their ideas seem to have found their way into our everyday, from escalators to monorails.

The novel coronavirus pandemic and the lockdowns that were put in place across the world to tackle it pose questions about the future of urban living. In India, among the images seared into public memory are those of crowds cheering on balconies of towering apartments and private homes, and that of workers streaming out of cities, walking hundreds of kilometres to their homes. Some of "us", for whom home remained a safe place, raised the drawbridges, switched on our WiFi and disconnected from the outside. We created islands for ourselves within our homes, while the migrant worker moved out of his dwelling place.

"Today it's the pandemic, tomorrow it could be an intense heat wave or a global climate crisis. Confined living will become the way forward," says Thiruvananthapuram-based urban designer and architect Manoj Kumar Kini. A possible future model, he says, lies in the example of Arcosanti.

Sometime in the 1970s, Italian architect Paolo Soleri planned a future city that would meld ecology and architecture. In the Arizona desert, he envisioned the utopian metropolis, Arcosanti. Its ribbed vaults allowed ample light and air to filter into spaces, and encouraged a sense of community. One could walk to the office or workshop, compost with one's neighbour or walk out of one's house into the thick of cultural action. While it had its faults, be it the people who lived there or the unadaptability of the structure, it offered a worldview that could change the way we live.

Closer home, Auroville near Puducherry aimed to be a place with "a new consciousness", with like-minded people from all over the world making it their home. "In the future, urban living could be like something between an apartment and a township like Dwarka in Delhi, where compact living will be the norm, with people choosing to walk, cycle or take public transport, because distance will compress. We will travel less, have a smaller ecological footprint, and have more time with family," says Kini.

Could buildings of the future be about empathy, about an architect who "places himself/herself in the role of a future dweller and tests the validity of the ideas through this imaginative exchange of roles and personalities?" asks Finnish architect and thinker Juhani Pallasmaa in the book *Architecture and Empathy* (Periphrase Projects; 2015). Will buildings become a shared resource? Can a university and a corporate office be in the same campus? Can government administration and cultural centres coexist? "Maybe it will open up spaces in the city, between building and non-building, where designers and architects will need to intervene to revitalise, renovate, and renew. We will have to get off our Autocads and get our hands dirty. Just the way you now want a hairdresser to come home, people might want an architect to come home and use what they have to build anew, since money and building resources will be hard to come by," says architect Moulshri Joshi of the Delhi-based firm Space Matters.



"Until now, we were aware of those who lived on pavements, in slums and *chawls* and overcrowded small apartments. But we didn't realise there is another lot of people who live in corridors, garages, attics, mezzanines, and lofts in every city, and their numbers are staggering. When the city turns its back on them, where can they go?" says architect and habitat professional Kirtee Shah, who lives



ILLUSTRATION: SUVAJIT DEY

in Ahmedabad.

For the poor migrant to the city, there is a place called home in the village and a city where he earns his daily bread. "For some, the home is a 'resort' but for those who don't have that privilege, the city was their home. It gave them certainty. What does it mean to not have that in a lockdown? There are no easy answers, but we need to think of ideas of care and how we can create those spaces in our cities. How can we create different levels of communities and what will those spaces be?" says Mumbai-based architect and urbanist Rupali Gupta.

In a recent letter to Praveen Pardeshi, former municipal commissioner of Mumbai, Shah offered suggestions for handling the slum crisis in the city. From using vacant houses and unsold inventory in housing for migrants and using rooftops of public buildings to create temporary housing stock, Shah pushed for more dignified dwelling units.

He recounts his keynote address at the opening of the "State of Housing" exhibition in Mumbai in 2018. He asked an audience of nearly a 100 people, a majority of them architects, if they had heard of Indira Awaas Yojana. "Only a few hands went up. It was one of the

world's biggest social housing projects, which lasted nearly 30 years and built more than 20 million houses, but India's architects barely intervened. It speaks volumes about the disconnect architects have with society," he says.

While architects design on a computer, the drawings are executed by masons, carpenters and unskilled labourers. "They are the ones who convert our dreams into beautiful projects. So I asked, 'Since most of you visit your sites at least every two weeks, how many of you have seen the conditions in which the workers live?' Barely one hand came up," says Shah. "We need to rethink and reshape our cities which are inhuman and hostile to the people who build them."

In the letter, Shah suggests renegotiating terms with employers so that workers are provided better places to live. "... [It] could be a rented place in a slum redevelopment colony, in an affordable low-income settlement, in a slum where a family is willing to rent a room, or in a liveable tent on a public building terrace."



The comfort of home for migrants is also

Lankan civil war refugees and those displaced by the 2004 tsunami in Nagapattinam, Tamil Nadu. Many of the Sri Lankan women, for instance, were skilled at weaving mats. Balsavar, with his team at Artes-Human Settlements Development Collaborative, encouraged them to use these as partitions for their new homes. "That should be the way forward for families returning to their villages, too, during the lockdown. None of them want anything free, they are glad to engage their skills in a productive manner. That is what we should be doing, respecting dignity and pride in their work," he says.

Home is about identity and self-definition, an expression of belonging. While our cities privilege privacy and gated elements and also disconnection from the larger masses, in our villages networks are cyclical and form the basis of life. The city and its lack of interdependency is what causes alienation. Pratik Dhanmer of Design Jatra, a rural research and architectural firm in Dahanu, Maharashtra, speaks of how the layout of houses in villages enhance interaction, where verandahs face each other and children are secure playing on the streets.

Balsavar recounts what he noticed in Nagapattinam soon after the tsunami. Several families had abandoned their newly-built concrete-box shelters. These fine engineered solutions for living put the kitchens at the back of the house. The original homes had the kitchens in the front, which enabled women to talk among themselves, keep an eye on their children playing on the street, not to mention the excellent cross-ventilation they afforded. However, in the new homes, the kitchen was pushed to the back of the house, which meant the women worked in isolation, their front doors were shut and the streets empty. "The idea of a rural home has many layers, which architects, sociologists and engineers can learn from," says Balsavar.

While we rejoiced in employing our city balconies as a stage for approval, with all the bells and whistles, it has rarely become a site for interaction all these years. It's the park view we seek and not the sense of community. In fact, in many homes, balconies are seen as obstacles in the way of carpet area.



Delhi-based architect Gautam Bhatia has planned a design where the community is not compromised. In cities where we privilege privacy, what are the possible combinations which allow for the public and the private to come together? "Over the last couple of decades, life has been going into lockdown by itself. Within homes, too, entertainment was becoming private and recreation was getting isolated. So, the idea of an apartment that shares community values yet allows you to keep your privacy is the aim. These would be about 800-1,000 sq. ft houses, varying from one-two bedrooms. The remaining spaces are given over to the community, with meeting rooms and games areas. The idea is to force you out of your confinement. You pay much less for private space and get more shared space. You will be forced to go out into verandahs. Unlike high-end apartments that are self-contained, where there is no sense of sharing," he says. There is the need to change by-laws in our cities to accommodate more public spaces and integrate all classes to live side by side. The future, Bhatia says, is in smaller homes and rental housing.

The coronavirus has exposed the artificial and abnormal in society, argues Delhi-based Shuddhabrata Sengupta of Raqs Media Collective, which is curating the Yokohama Triennale 2020. "There is an enormous amount of resources spent to ensure that our society is not democratic. Delhi, for instance, is a lot about gated communities and large resources are used to keep people out. We are living in a highly artificially maintained dystopia. Architects and urban designers can show a new way and plan how our cities can be for the next 100 years. But I don't see them coming together to demand a commitment to urban housing from any regime." "Ultimately, it will not be about big projects but keeping life cycles intact, which our vernacular societies have always done, where life is not a straight line and relationships are important," says Thautam.

Maybe, our cities ought to be like Ersilia, from Italo Calvino's novel *Invisible Cities* (1972), where relationships nurture life, and "its inhabitants stretch strings from the corners of their houses" across the city to mark connections, be it for trade or fellowship. So that, even when walls come crumbling down and homes cease to exist, the "labyrinth of taut strings" will continue to exist.







