

**MONEY 6**  
E-COMM TO ACCELERATE INDIA'S  
AUTO SECTOR GROWTH: REPORT

**WORLD 7**  
IRAN TESTS ADVANCED  
NUCLEAR CENTRIFUGES

**SPORT 8**  
SUNRISERS TO FACE  
KKR IN IPL TODAY

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# Sundar Pioner

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## Violence mars Bengal polls

4 dead as police open fire on mob attacking booth in Cooch Behar; TMC man kills voter

**SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA**

Violence peaked in the fourth round of 8-phase Bengal elections claiming five lives in a blood-spattered polling, but a resolute electorate fought off terror in their own way with more than 76 per cent of them casting their votes when reports last came in at 5.30 pm.

While polling percentage for Hooghly was 76.02, it was 75.03 for Howrah. In South 24 Parganas 75.49 per cent of voters cast their votes whereas in Alipurduar the rate was 73.65 per cent. In Cooch Behar that saw maximum violence the polling rate was 79.73 per cent.

Five people on Saturday lost their lives to Central Forces firing and violence perpetrated by alleged hooligans of the Trinamool Congress, police said. While violence was recorded too in other parts of the 44 seats in five districts that went to polls on Saturday all the incidents of death took place in Sitalkuchi block of Cooch Behar district of North Bengal bordering Bangladesh, Bhutan and Assam.

As the ruling Trinamool Congress struggling hard to retain power in the face of rampant corruption and criminalisation blamed the Central Forces and the BJP for the Saturday's loss of lives, the official reports coming from the Election Commission said the Central Forces opened fire in self-defence.

Four persons Hamidul,

### CAPSULE

**10 DIE AS TRUCK FALLS INTO GORGE IN ETAWAH**  
Lucknow/Etawah: Ten people were killed and 40 injured as a truck on which they were travelling fell into a 30-foot-deep gorge in UP's Etawah district on Saturday evening. They all were going to a temple in the district when the accident took place on the Udi-Chakar Nagar road.

**FARMERS BLOCK KMP E-WAY IN HARYANA**  
Chandigarh: Intensifying their stir against the Centre's three contentious agriculture laws, farmers on Saturday blocked the Kundli-Manesar-Palwal expressway in Haryana.

**100M JABS! INDIA FASTEST VACCINATING COUNTRY**  
New Delhi: With the total number of Covid-19 vaccine doses administered in the country crossing 10 crore, the Union Health Ministry on Saturday said that India is the fastest nation to administer 100 million doses in 85 days. The Prime Minister's Office also tweeted a chart showing India as the fastest vaccination milestone.

### Setback for BJP in Tripura tribal council polls

New Delhi: Tripura's ruling BJP and its ally IPFT (Indigenous Peoples Front of Tripura) received a major setback in the Tribal Council Polls at the hands of Pradyot Deb Barman led newly-formed TIPRA (The Indigenous Progressive Regional Alliance).

The new political outfit swept the Tripura Autonomous District Council polls by securing 18 out of 28 seats. The BJP and its ally managed to win only nine seats. An independent candidate won one seat.



Security personnel keep vigil at a polling station after Election Commission ordered of stopping the voting exercise at polling station number 126 in Sitalkuchi, where clashes erupted between locals and Central Forces, at Sitalkuchi in Cooch Behar district on Saturday

Manirul and Samuil (three of the same family) died when the Central Forces opened fire to disperse a crowd of 300-400 villagers that had attacked booth number 126, following rumours that a child had been beaten to death by the CISF personnel. Five others too were injured in the firing and had been admitted to the local hospital, sources said.

A fifth person, a first-time voter Ananda Barman was shot dead outside a neighbouring booth also at Sitalkuchi by an alleged Trinamool Congress man a panchayat member, sources said.

Incidentally this is the same block where the convoy of Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh was attacked with bombs, bricks and rods a couple of days ago barely an

hour after a meeting addressed by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee where she asked the people, particularly the women to enforce their voting rights by gheraoing the Central Forces.

### Politicians' entry in Cooch Behar banned for 72 hr

New Delhi: The Election Commission on Saturday barred the entry of politicians in Cooch Behar district for the next 72 hours to prevent any possible law and order flare-up. The decision came after four people were killed in the district as Central Forces opened fire allegedly when they were attacked by locals who attempted to snatch their rifles during voting on Saturday.

## Air bubble opens Lanka for tourists

Now, India has such pacts with 28 nations, says Aviation Ministry

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

India has formed an air bubble with Sri Lanka, opening yet another overseas tourist destination for those itching to travel after a year of being at home. The Ministry of Civil Aviation on Saturday said India has established a bilateral air bubble arrangement with Sri Lanka for operation of special international passenger flights between the two countries.

Besides, Thailand is also in talks with India for creating an air bubble so that flights can resume between two countries. With this, India now has such pacts with 28 countries,

including Afghanistan, Bahrain, Canada, France, Germany, Iraq, Japan, the Maldives, Nigeria, Qatar, the UAE, the UK and the USA.

Under an air bubble pact between two countries, special international passenger flights can be operated by their airlines into each other's territories under restrictive conditions.

"India has finalised an air bubble agreement with Sri Lanka, making it the 6th such arrangement in SAARC region and the 28th in total," the Civil Aviation Ministry tweeted.

Scheduled international flights have been suspended in India since March 23, 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic. However, special international passenger flights have been operating under the Vande Bharat Mission since May last year and under bilateral air bubble arrangements since July.

## 71 companies of Central paramilitary forces to be deployed in West Bengal

**RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI**

After a request from the Election Commission of India (ECI), the Union Home Ministry on Saturday decided to deploy additional 71 companies (7,100 personnel) of the Central paramilitary forces for the conduct of the Assembly polls in West Bengal, with immediate effect. As many as 1,000 companies of the Central paramilitary forces are already deployed there for the conduct of the elections in the State.

"The ECI has requested to deploy additional 71 companies of CAPFs (Central Armed Police Forces)/SAPs (State Armed Police)/IRs (India Reserve) Bns (Battalions) in West Bengal for AE-2021 related duties. In pursuance of the recommendations of the ECI vide order dated April 10, it has been decided to deploy additional 71 coys (companies) of CAPFs and nine companies of State of West Bengal for Assembly Election-2021 related duties," reads a Union Home Ministry letter faxed on Saturday to the Chief Secretary, Home Secretary and Director General of Police of the State.

The composition of the



TMC candidate Rabindra Nath Ghosh, wearing a helmet for safety, interacts with security personnel during 4th phase of West Bengal polls in Cooch Behar on Saturday

additional deployments of the Central paramilitary forces will include 12 companies of the Central Reserve Police (CRPF), 33 companies of the Border Security Force (BSF), 13 companies of Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), four companies of Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) and nine companies of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB).

With the deployment of the 71 companies of CAPFs, a total of 1,071 companies CAPFs, SAPs and IR Battalions will be available in West Bengal for election-related duties.

## Stick to Covid behaviour or face campaign ban: EC

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

After polls in four of the five States are over, the Election Commission has woken up to the threat of coronavirus. Taking a serious view of laxity on part of some political leaders in maintaining Covid-19 safety norms, particularly not wearing face masks, saying candidates and star campaigners can be banned from holding campaign rallies if Covid guidelines issued by it last year are breached.

The Commission has advised political leaders to set an example by maintaining social distancing, wearing masks, etc., and exhorting all the local formations who attend Covid-19 safety protocols to follow Covid-19 protocol.

In a letter to leaders of all recognised political parties, the EC said, "It is widely known that in recent weeks, Covid cases are being reported in larger numbers. However, instances of election meetings/campaigns have come to the notice of the commission, where norms of social distancing, wearing of masks have been flouted in disregard to the commission's guidelines."

Pointing to the recent rise in



Covid-19 cases, the EC said the instances had come to its notice where norms of social distancing, wearing of masks, etc., have been flouted in disregard to the Commission's guidelines dated August 21, 2020, on Covid-19 safe poll campaigning.

"Instances of star campaigners/political leaders/candidates not observing Covid protocols including non-wearing of masks themselves at the stage or while campaigning have come to notice. By doing so, the political parties and candidates are exposing themselves as well as the public attending such election meetings to the grave danger of infection," noted EC.

The poll panel sought the fullest cooperation from the political parties and candidates in strictest observance of

## Daily Covid cases cross 1.5L mark, and counting

Maha plans severe curbs; UP, Delhi, TN, Karnataka hit newer peaks

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

For the first time on Saturday, India recorded more than 1.5 lakh Covid-19 cases as the pandemic marched unchecked across the country. While Maharashtra seemed to stabilise in the range of below 60,000 Covid-19 cases per day, several other States, particularly Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Delhi are recording newer peaks every day.

India on Saturday logged 1,52,383 cases with Maharashtra registering 55,000 plus cases and 309 deaths, Chhattisgarh 14,098 cases and 81 deaths, and Uttar Pradesh 12,748 cases and 66 deaths. Kerala (6,194 new cases), Karnataka (6,955) Tamil Nadu (5,989) and poll-bound West Bengal reported 4,043 new cases during the last 24 hours.

Meanwhile, stopping short of announcing a full-fledged lockdown in worst Covid-19 hit Maharashtra, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said the State Government would have no alternative but to resort to stern restrictions to break the chain of transmission



A medic administers the Covid-19 vaccine dose to a Japanese woman at IMT Industrial Association office, at Manesar in Gurugram district on Saturday

of the virus in the State.

Speaking at an all-party meeting called to evolve a strategy to tide over the Covid-19 crisis in the State, the CM said, "Our first priority is to save lives. In a health emergency like the one we are facing through, our priorities are the health and lives of the citizens."

"We may continue our war against Covid-19, but the immediate task is to arrest the rapid spread of the pandemic. During last year's lockdown, people were confined to their homes and it was easy for us to trace the patients and their contacts. Now when everything is open and we are facing practical difficulties, a fact that the Union Government should

take note of," he said.

From 9,695 cases a day earlier, India's most populous State Uttar Pradesh on Saturday reported huge jump in infections to touch 12,787 mark, its highest single-day spike of coronavirus infections since the outbreak.

Though the Union Ministry has remained evasive on the query if Mahakumbh can be a 'super spreader', health experts have not ruled out further spike in the virus in the State. Meanwhile, with the total number of Covid-19 vaccine doses administered in the country crossing 10 crore, the Union Health Ministry on Saturday said India is the fastest nation to administer 100 million doses in 85 days.

## 50 allowed at weddings in Delhi; restaurants, metro occupancy halved

**STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI**

Amid a surge in the fourth wave of the Covid-19 cases in the national Capital, the Delhi Government on Saturday announced stricter curbs, allowing Delhi Metro and DTC buses to operate only at 50 per cent capacity and limiting the number of guests at weddings at 50, officials said.

The city Government also prohibited all social, political, sports, entertainment, cultural and religious gatherings in view of the rise in Covid-19 cases. Negative RT-PCR report will be required for travellers arriving in the national Capital from Maharashtra by air, the DDMA said, adding those without a report will have to undergo 14-day quarantine.

The Delhi Disaster Management Authority said restaurants, bars can operate at 50 per cent occupancy. Delhi Metro, DTC and cluster buses will run at 50 per cent occupancy in view of the rising coronavirus cases, it said.

It said colleges and coaching institutions will remain



closed in Delhi. Not more than 20 people are allowed in funeral gatherings and up to 50 in weddings, it said. Swimming pools will also remain closed except for training of sports persons participating in national and international events.

Earlier in the day, he said imposing lockdown is not an option but some restrictions will be put in place to contain the spread of the virus.

Kejriwal visited the Lok Nayak Jai Prakash Narayan hospital on Saturday to take stock of the situation and the facilities provided to the patients in the hospital.

## India, China agree to defuse LAC stand-off expeditiously

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

India and China have agreed to expeditiously defuse tension at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) by disengagement of troops from the flash points in Eastern Ladakh. The two sides have also agreed to maintain stability on the ground.

These were the highlights of the meeting of the Corps Commanders at Chushul-Moldo border meeting point on the LAC on Friday. This was the 11th round of talks since the face-offs began in May last year. The meeting lasted for more than 12 hours.

In a statement issued here on Saturday, the Defence Ministry said the two sides had a detailed exchange of views for



The resolution of the remaining issues related to disengagement along the LAC in Eastern Ladakh.

Both sides agreed to resolve outstanding issues in an expeditious manner in accordance with existing agreements and protocols. It was highlighted that completion of disengagement in other areas would pave the way for both sides to consider de-escalation of forces and ensure restoration of peace.

Both sides agreed that it was important to take guidance

from their "leaders", continue their communication and work towards a mutually acceptable resolution of remaining issues at earliest.

The two commanders also agreed to "jointly maintain peace along the ground, avoid any new incidents and jointly maintain peace in the border areas."

The reference to border areas obviously meant Hot Springs, Gogra and Depsang valley which still remain friction points.

The first breakthrough came in February when the troops of both the armies pulled back from the southern and northern banks of the Pangong Tso/Indus in Ladakh in a smooth and planned manner.

## Patriotic fervour at Kumbh spl yajna

Balak Yogeshwar Das to start rituals today for the martyrs' souls

**GAJENDRA SINGH NEGI ■ HARIDWAR**

A Kumbh Mela which is considered as the largest religious gathering in the world, one can witness various saints engaging in different religious activities, rituals and spiritual affairs. However there are some like ascetic Balak Yogeshwar Das, who draw the attention of everyone with his unique approach and Sadhna.

In every Kumbh and Ardh Kumbh, Das since 2003 has been organising a massive 100 Shaktikundi Yajna for peace to the souls of those who have laid their precious lives for the nation. This year the Yajna would commence on April 11 and continue till April 26 at the temporary Shaheed Nagar in the Kumbh Mela area.

When this correspondent



visited the Shaheed Nagar set up in three acres of land located at Bairagi camp on the banks of the Ganga in Haridwar, Das was busy giving final touches to the preparations. This year the invitations have been sent to families of 450 martyrs which include those who laid down their lives in the 26/11 Mumbai attack, Pulwama attack and Kargil war.

Continued on Page 4



## It relieves pain: Kargil war widow

Haridwar: Like numerous others like her, Sharda Bhat of Kashmeer considers Das responsible for the positive change in her life.

Widow of Havildar Daler Singh Bhat, who attained martyrdom in Tololing hills in 1999

during the Kargil war told The Pioneer that Das visited her house after the death of her husband and persuaded her to attend the Yajna which was being organised in the town.

"The grief gets reduced by sharing and it happened with me."

Continued on Page 4

**HOMETHEATRE**

# BEAR HUG OF FICTIONALISING A TRUE STORY

**THE BIG BULL**  
Disney+Hotstar  
\*ing: Abhishek Bachchan, Illeana  
D'Cruz  
Rated: 6/10

If authenticity was not an issue with this fictionalised account of a real person with a fictional name, *The Big Bull* is quite full of moments in a journey that kept the stocks high, the middle class happy with new-age securities and the economy in a constant state of perilous box.

We all know the Harshad Mehta story, have heard and understood insider trading as a term and concept and are now even somewhat repentant about accusing him of being the sole conspirator of a ₹5,000-crore securities scam, a first in Indian history.

He died in custody and courted controversy both in life and death with allegations of induced heart attack never really settling down. He raised the bar of corruption all the way to the Prime Minister and his office and yet paid the price of oiling the loopholes in the banking system, alone.

The film on his amazing journey comes with both bull and bear runs. Some moments would go right through the roof in tickling your emotional quotient and others would make you question why did such an amazing life story need fictionalisation?

Abhishek Bachchan as Hemant Shah, aka Big Bull aka Harshad Mehta, is authentic and seasoned with his performance. Just as he was while portraying Dhruvrat Ambani in *Guru* which was directed to near perfection by Mani Ratnam. Hemant Shah did not look at all like the real Harshad Mehta played by Abhishek, but then authenticity was never the aim of director Kookie Gulati, playing to the gallery. This one by Gulati is, thus, a green horn in parts and that's where you feel it is as flabby as Abhishek's pillowed paunch which he sports as unapologetically as he does his beliefs and actions.

Gulati can be faulted for raising compassion for his prime character Hemant Shah without lending adequate



evidence of his singular non-guilt. The system, the corruption in high places and the personal betrayal are all placed on the stock market to prop up this man's innocence, or should we say his personal argument.

All other characters are also real people with fake names, including the journalist who unearthed the scam — Sucheta Dalal being called Meera Rao, his lawyer Ram Jethmalani being renamed Ashok Mirchandani and Harshad Mehta himself being called Hemant Shah. The Prime Minister involved in the allegations made by Mehta was P V Narasimha Rao whose visage is shown for a few seconds without any names, perhaps in the spirit of garbing a true story with deliberate ifs and buts.

All said, what's true is that when this biggest bull of the stock market died in jail in 2001, too much time had passed to make it a lead story. But as he had tipped off the nation in the 1980s, India could never fully recover from the bear hug that was given to the stock market in the face of a crescendo that shifted public money investment from real estate and gold to the stock market. His contribution in that can't be denied, as it can't be contested that he made use of loopholes which the system accorded him and never did break any law, except the law of vertical growth.

# Where was the comedy?

**HELLO CHARLIE**  
Amazon Prime Video  
\*ing: Jackie Shroff, Rajpal Yadav, Aadar Jain, Shlok Pandit, Elnaz Norouzi  
Rated: 3/10

Bollywood should stop making comedies. Given that the makers only know how to either make slapstick or double meaning films that translate into comedy, it is time that they give up making anything under the genre. But if our filmmakers really want to continue to make rib-tickling movies, it is time that they sit down and watch some Hollywood films just to get an idea on what comedy really is.

And it is definitely not stuffing a man into a gorilla suit and putting him in a cage at the back of a truck to only have another real gorilla let loose that was flying all the way from Uganda. Not only this, director Pankaj

Saraswat then loses a set of incompetent people on the 70 mm screen.

You have Aadar Jain aka Charlie who makes blunders in every job. Who in their senses chases a fire truck and insists that they take the delivery of pizzas? It is not funny. It is downright sad. If this is not enough, you have a billionaire trying to escape the long arm of justice in a motorboat all the way to Dubai.

What was Jackie Shroff thinking when he chose to take up this role? One is sure that he is not that hard up that he would want to end up playing a role where a majority of the time he is in a gorilla suit. His Mona baby is no way as good as Ajit's Mona darling. Aadar Jain as the bumbling Charlie is too painful to watch as he destroys everything in his path. But he is the hero, so he has to come out looking like one however incredibly brainless the entire 102 minutes of the movie are.

Stay away from this one. — Shalini Saksena

# Slice of resilient life

**MINARI**  
Amazon VOD  
\*ing: Steven Yeun, Han Ye-ri, Alan Kim, Noel Kate Cho, Youn Yuh-jung, Will Patton  
Rated: 7/10

Minari may be a Korean plant in real life, but the movie by this name is larger than life, a slice of life replete with dreams, aspirations, struggles, resilience and sunshine even in its deepest darkest moments.

It is surprising that the film got its Golden Globe nomination (it won the best foreign language film award eventually) in the foreign film category despite being directed by an American and unfolding in America, actually deep into rural America. That it did not meet the Globe guideline of at least 50 per cent of it being in English language explains it, even though it would stand tall in the Best Feature film, Best direction, Best musical score and many more categories.

A family of Korean immigrants moves from California to the rural pocket of Arkansas to 'live once again', as the main protagonist puts it. The couple Jacob and Monica and their son and his maternal grandmother move to a makeshift house in a trailer to get used to a new life full of firsts and struggles in rugged terrain far removed from the bright lights of California, only to find leading roofs, a barren land to till and a farming community that is new and alien to them.

The story is as much about resilience as it is about hope with an underlying sense of gratitude to life itself, life despite all its challenges. The film is engaging though slow but when has life unfolded so beautifully and in such real terms on the big screen?



Pathos is aplenty, but lining it up well is humour, be it around the chubby child who is forced to sleep with his snoring granny or their conversations which depict the absolute contrast in local American and immigrant Korean cultures. For one, as the impudent child puts it, American grandmothers do not use cuss words or wear men's underwear, as is his granny does.

The film is a must-watch not because of its reality bites but because it is laid out so simply that it tugs at your heart from all quarters, it grows on you, it immerses you and it makes you laugh and cry at the same time.

The music is haunting as much as the story this award-winning director Lee Isaac Chung brings to you from the depth of his heart and craft.



# The genius is on show

**LEONARDO**  
SonyLiv Drama Series  
Episodes 8  
Rated: 7/10

Imagine an artist par excellence who was an expert in Nature, mechanics, anatomy, physics, architecture and weaponry, to name a few, not to mention an even better designer for machines like the bicycle, helicopter, submarine and military tanks much before they were even concepts!

A series on such a clothed genius can be nothing but enervating and *Leonardo* in that context is a thriller, tigger and a puller all rolled into one, well, canvas — a stunning canvas of an artist's life which was full of colours that his brush stroked with eternal brilliance. Illegitimate, unschooled, rebellious and yet one of the foremost Renaissance artists, Leonardo's life and times were interesting and so is his story, art and nefarious activities which put him under scrutiny and persecution back in the 15th century.

The series on him, simply called, Leonardo captures those times with finesse and keeps up the viewer's longing to continue watching the eight episodes without a break. Sepia shades and smoky environs depicting an underground band of activists and their lives is no mean achievement but Leonardo is simply tasteful and engaging.

The series takes you through the life of an impossible artist by showing you the stories behind his paintings, his continuous search for perfection and his turbulent relationship with his art as much as his life. Aidan Turner as Leonardo Da Vinci is a natural copy of the real man and he lives his moments with authenticity and elan all through the drama that is well put together by director for six episodes Daneil Percival and rest by Alexis Cahill.

The drama, however, is as close to authenticity as it is to replicating Tuscan, Italy, of those syrupy times when existence was being questioned as were norms. In fact, it looks so real that it could be mistaken for a documentary.

# TELLY TALE

## MIKA PROPOSES BHOOMI

While the competition will heat up during the upcoming episode of Zee TV's *Indian Pro Music League* with all the



teams putting their best foot forward, it seems like Punjab Lions captain Mika Singh will steal the show. Last time around, young comedian Divyansh Trivedi had suggested that Mika Singh get married to Gujarat Rockers' captain Bhoomi Trivedi. While they both had laughed it off, this time around, Mika actually proposed Bhoomi for marriage!

During the shoot of the upcoming episode, the Punjab Lions trio of Mika Singh, Ases Kaur and Rupali Jagga performed on *Sajid-Wajid's* composition — *Mujhse Shaadi Karoge*. During the act, Mika surprised one and all when he went up to Bhoomi, brought her on stage and continued his performance, while asking her *Mujhse Shaadi Karoge?* After the act, host Karan Wahi also made Bhoomi and Mika dance together and that's when Mika went down on his knees and asked her once again.

After the act, Mika expressed: "Bhoomi, ab toh bata do, mujhse shaadi karogi? Sab log Bhoomi se jude hai, maine socha main hi Bhoomi se jud jaun. What do you guys think about it?" Bhoomi Singh? Bhoomi replied: "What do you think about Mika Trivedi? But to be honest, I have come here to find a bride for you, it would be injustice to them." Javed Ali also joked: "This wedding will happen only if Mika leaves Punjab and comes to Gujarat," to which Ases replied: "No, no, bhabhi will come to Punjab."

While Mika, Bhoomi and everyone were obviously playing around, viewers will surely like watching the chemistry of these real captains. You also cannot miss the musical battle between Gujarat Rockers, Bengal Tigers, Delhi Jammers, Mumbai Warriors, UP Dabgangs and Punjab Lions

as they go all out to win the fourth super match.

**74TH BAFTA AWARDS ON SONYLIV**  
Lights! Camera! and a lot of Action is about to unfold as we gear up to watch one of the biggest award nights of the year. Celebrating excellence in filmmaking across the globe and bringing an enriching experience for movie lovers, SonyLIV will exclusively stream the British Academy of Film and Television Arts Awards, 2021 (BAFTA). The prestigious awards night will live stream today at 11:30 pm directly from the Royal Albert Hall in London. BAFTA 2021 will be hosted by Edith Bowman and Dermot O'Leary.

The much-coveted ceremony will see seventeen BAFTA winners being announced along with screenings of nominated films and behind-the-scenes footage, which will highlight the creative process that went behind curating these masterpieces. Drumming up the buzz further, BAFTA will also honour Ang Lee with the Fellowship this year. The awards night will witness presenters like Asim Chaudhry, Priyanka Chopra Jonas, Sophie Cookson, Phoebe Dynevor, Chiwetel Ejiofor, Cynthia Erivo, Hugh Grant, Richard E. Grant, Tom Hiddleston, Felicity Jones, Gugu Mbatha-Raw, James McAvoy, David Oyelowo, Pedro Pascal, Jonathan Pryce, Rose Byrne, Andria Day, Anna Kendrick and Renée Zellweger from London and Los Angeles, respectively.

With praises pouring in from world over for his incredible performance, young Indian talent Adarsh Gourav has been nominated in the Best Actor in a Leading Role category at BAFTA. Gourav will compete against veteran British actor Anthony Hopkins for The Father, French actor Tahar Rahim for The Mauritanian, Riz Ahmed for Sound of Metal, late Chadwick Boseman for Ma Rainey's Black Bottom and Mads Mikkelsen for The Danish language Film Another Round.

## MANASI LEARNS A NEW CRAFT

*Hindmat* recently released on Eros Now and Actor Manasi Rachhi is glad with the response her character has garnered. The series is set in a fictitious women's prison called *Hindmat* where Manasi plays the character of Sudha Nath, who is in prison on charges of sedition.

Manasi has portrayed various shades of a woman from being a straightforward girl in *Mujhse Fraandship Karoge*, to a tomboy for student of the year, to a fearless hacker for *24 Season 2* and then a lesbian girl who musters courage to come out of the closet for *Its Not That Simple*



**Season 2.** She performs each character with passion and tries to give it her best. She never shies away from honing her talent and learning new things for the character. It's learning to cycle and swim for *SOTV* or learning to sew for *Hindmat*.

Ask Manasi and she quips: "Yes, I learnt to use the sewing machine for the series as we had a few scenes where we needed to stitch garments or at least so. As you can see in the video, I am not a pro but at the same time I like to learn and have fun while doing the same". She adds: "Also, for the part where I stand for elections in the prison, I did a lot of referencing. A few scenes needed me to be very driven and vocal about certain issues. So, I saw videos of a lot of women politicians in the parliament and even social activists. I studied their body language during rallies and also how these women expressed themselves in public. This helped me etch out my character with a lot more precision."

## CEZANNE KHAN TO PLAY HARMAN

**COLORS'** popular show *Shakti... Astitra Ke Ehsaas Kii* has been enjoying soaring popularity owing to its engaging and interesting storyline. Harman and Saumya's chemistry was something that the audience always enjoyed and rooted for the couple to come together. While they part ways, destiny has once again brought them together and after Saumya, re-entering the show will be Harman. Essaying the character of Harman will be the popular actor Cezanne Khan.

Harman's entry in Saumya's life will mark the beginning of an extremely passionate love story that the viewers have been yearning for. Talking about playing Harman, Khan said, "Harman's character is extremely interesting. He wears his heart on his sleeves and loves Saumya unconditionally. I am excited to be back on screen and to once again breathe life into it with my style. A lot is set to unfold with Harman's return."

# ‘The script left me in tears’

**SONALI KULKARNI**, who is all set to host SET's Crime Patrol Satark: Justice Reloaded, tells **MUSBA HASHMI** what made her come on board the project and her experience

■ **What does Justice Reloaded have on offer?**

This is a chapter where we are reopening cold cases. It is quite a spine-chilling experience to go through cases that were so challenging and intriguing that they remained unsolved. How the closure finally came about is something that we will be showcasing.

■ **What made you come on board the project?**

I am an ardent fan of Anup Soni. We are friends. I had worked with him when I was yet to become a professional actor. I was in college and we had done *Badalte Rishite*, the only TV show that I have done. I have watched Anup's work since then and what he does always generates curiosity. So, *Crime Patrol* and Anup have a strong association for me, and the kind of trust and compassion that he has evoked in people's heart, is something special. Taking up this season of *Crime Patrol* is like taking the baton forward from Anup and I hope that I make him proud. The opportunity came through Rakesh Sarang and I'm so happy that he thought of me as an anchor.

■ **What difference do you aim to make?**

It is too early for me to say that. I will bring some change, but for now, I can say, I will bring some change visually as a female anchor. I will take some time to even touch the excellence that the team has achieved with Anup. I don't even dream to beat that, but I would love to take inspiration from Anup's seasons and to, at least, create some awareness amongst people by connecting with them the way he had.



IT IS TOO EARLY FOR ME TO SAY THAT I WILL BRING SOME CHANGE, BUT FOR NOW, I CAN SAY, I WILL BRING SOME CHANGE VISUALLY AS A WOMAN ANCHOR

■ **There have been many crime-based shows on TV, but only a few managed to leave a mark. Crime Patrol is one of them. Why?**

The show always tries to tell people about responsible citizens, and they always fight against blind faith. I have been one of the strongest activists of Maharashtra Andhashradha Nirmlan Samiti. I have worked for around 16 years with Dr Narendran Dabhalur who has tried to appeal to people that have faith in God and religion, but do not let anyone exploit you emotionally, mentally, economically, physically and sexually. And let no child get abused because we have blind faith. *Crime Patrol* is like a torchlight, which is trying to make us aware of what we see on news channels or social media platforms is just a glimpse, while in the real world there are a lot more crimes happening which we are not even aware of. The stories are so painful that I wish they were fiction and not reality. When I am back home from the shoot it takes time for me to compose. Not to mention that my respect for the police and judiciary is only growing day by day.



## Covid contagion reaching alarming levels in State

**Three deaths, 1,233 new patients reported on Saturday**

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The contagion of Covid-19 is reaching alarming proportions in Uttarakhand. The state health department reported a staggering 1233 cases of the disease on Saturday. This is the highest count of the patients reported in a single day since October 4.

The state now has 107479 cumulative patients of the disease. Death of three patients of Covid-19 was also reported on Saturday after which the death toll mounted to 1752 in the

state. The authorities discharged 317 patients from different hospitals of the state following their recovery from the disease on Saturday. A total of 97644 patients have recovered from the disease in the state and the recovery percentage is now at 90.85 and the sample positivity rate is 3.56 percent.

The provisional state capital has become a Covid-19 hotspot in the state. The authorities reported 589 cases of the disease from Dehradun on Saturday. One of the major concerns for the authorities is that the positivity rate in Dehradun is almost four times higher than the state average. In Dehradun 589 cases were reported after 33668 tests on Saturday which puts the positivity rate at 8.84 percent. The state positivity rate is 3.56 percent.

The authorities also reported 254 patients from

Haridwar, 129 from Nainital, 90 from Udham Singh Nagar, 58 from Tehri, 50 from Pauri, 16 from Chamoli, 14 from Almora, six Pithoragarh, four each from Bageshwar and Champawat and three from Uttarakashi on Saturday.

The health department reported the death of one patient each at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Rishikesh, Himalayan hospital Jollygrant and Mahant Indresh hospital Dehradun on Saturday.

The state now has 6241 active patients of the disease. Dehradun continues to be at the top of the table of active cases of the disease with 2568 patients, Haridwar has 1782, Nainital 646, Udham Singh Nagar 332, Tehri 251, Almora 90, Pithoragarh 78, Bageshwar 66, Rudrapur 60, Champawat 39, Uttarakashi and Chamoli 34 active cases

of Covid-19 each.

In the vaccination drive 45684 people were vaccinated in different parts of the state on Saturday. In the state 1097676 people have been fully vaccinated so far as they have received both the first and second dose of the vaccine.

The Chief Operations Officer (COO) of state Covid-19 control room, Dr Abhishek Tripathi said that 519 vaccine sessions were organised in different parts of the state on Saturday. In Dehradun 92 vaccine sessions were organised in which 6120 persons above 45 years of age, 198 healthcare workers and 138 front line workers were vaccinated on Saturday.

In Haridwar 94 sessions were organised on the day in which 6215 persons above 45 years of age, 63 health care workers and 307 front line workers were vaccinated.

**State to receive 1.38 lakh vaccine doses today**

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Facing some shortage of the vaccine, Uttarakhand would receive a consignment of 1.38 Lakh doses on Sunday. The state immunisation officer, Dr Kuldeep Singh Martolia said that all preparation to supply the vaccine doses to the districts has been made. It is pertinent to mention here that the vaccination drive which had gathered momentum in the state got slowed down in the last two days due to less availability of the vaccine.

On Thursday (April 8), 107658 people were vaccinated in different parts of the state which was a record but in the last two days the vaccination number has reduced substantially. With new consignment of the vaccine is expected to give fillip to the vaccination in the state.

## Night curfew imposed in Dehradun city, relaxation provided in some cases

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Following the cabinet decision to impose night curfew in Dehradun city considering the rising numbers of Covid-19 cases, the Dehradun district magistrate Ashish Kumar Srivastava ordered night curfew in the city from Saturday night.

The night curfew announced under Uttarakhand Epidemic Diseases, Covid-19 Regulations 2020, Epidemic Disease Act 1897, Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPc) section 144 and the Disaster Management Act 2005 will be in force from 10 PM to 5 AM in the city area under the purview of the Municipal Corporation of Dehradun (MCD) and the cantonment

areas in the city. While all public movement will remain prohibited during these hours, relaxation has been provided to essential and emergency services. Vehicles involved in medical and essential services including supply of fruits-vegetables, milk, petrol and gas will be allowed to ply during the night curfew.

Further, medicine shops and petrol pumps will also be allowed to remain open. The persons travelling by flight, train and bus will also be allowed to move for this purpose.

Apart from this, construction works in public interest will be allowed to continue and the labourers involved in the same will also be allowed to

move during the night curfew.

Workers employed in industrial areas will be allowed to move to and from their unit on presenting their identification card. Further, relaxation has also been provided to any person passing through the city area in his or her own vehicle to reach another district or state.

Those attending marriage functions will be provided relaxation on showing the marriage invitation card. The MCD has been directed to ensure that an elaborate sanitisation campaign is undertaken every Sunday till 11 AM. Action will be taken under relevant sections against the persons found violating the night curfew.

## Ex-CM defends his decisions on Gairsain & Devasthanam Board

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The decision to make Gairsain a commissionerate had been taken to develop the area into a new confluence of the cultures of Garhwal and Kumaon regions. The decision taken by the cabinet on Friday to suspend this announcement is according to the thinking of the current state government. Former chief minister Trivendra Singh Rawat said this while interacting with media persons on Saturday.

Rawat said that the commissionerate decision taken during his term had been taken for planned development of the Gairsain area and keeping the future in mind. He said, "I had taken the opinion of the local MLAs before announcing the decision to make Gairsain a commissionerate. I had anticipated that questions would be raised but on the issue of the commissionerate, all had stated that none should have any objection to it as Gairsain is the



summer capital and the decision was important for its development." As far as the decision of the cabinet to suspend the commissionerate decision is concerned, Rawat refused to comment on it stating that it was the government's thinking and decision. However, he added that his plan was to develop Gairsain as a major cultural centre of Garhwal and Kumaon. The former CM said that he had

prepared a 10-year roadmap of works worth Rs 25,000 crore for planned development of the Gairsain capital area, adding that work has been started on this. The idea behind making Gairsain a commissionerate was to ensure its development, facilitate swift redressal of public issues and to make senior IAS and IPS officers regularly sit there, said Rawat. On the issue of reconsideration of the Devasthanam Board, he said

that it had been formed to provide better management for crores of devotees. He said that Badrinath and Kedarnath shrines were already being managed by the Badrinath Kedarnath Temple Committee under an Act with 51 temples under it. Not a single temple had been brought under the board. "The only intention behind formation of the board was to ensure better facilities for the crores of devotees. The temple committees had themselves suggested a body on the lines of Vaishno Devi shrine board," said Rawat.

Referring to the surge in Covid cases, the former CM action should be taken on the basis of expert suggestions. Expressing concern at people not following Covid guidelines, he said that all the people need to be more careful. On being asked about rising cases in Dehradun and Haridwar, Rawat said that a strict approach being adopted by the government will be in the interests of the public.

## Jangam Sadhus adding melody, flair to Kumbh Mela



PNS ■ HARIDWAR

In the Kumbh Mela, a group of saints are attracting the attention of people due to their attire. They can be easily distinguished by their special headgear consisting of peacock feathers. Wearing white and saffron clothes, these Sadhus sing songs of Lord Shiva and visit different Akhadas of the saints. Interestingly these Sadhus seek Bhiksha (Alms) only from other Sadhus and not from the general public. During Kumbh one can witness them visiting one

Akhada after another and singing songs in the glory of Lord Shiva. One Jangam Sadhu told The Pioneer that there are about 5,000 Sadhus like them in the country. Legend has it that these Sadhus were created by Lord Shiva himself from his thigh at the time of his marriage with Parvati.

The Jangam Sadhus are Shaivites and have families. From childhood, they are taught Shiv Puran and other scriptures related to Lord Shiva and they make their living from seeking alms from other Sadhus.

## Mela administration ready to handle Covid situation

PNS ■ HARIDWAR

Devotees are thronging Haridwar considering the second and third Shahi Snans of the Kumbh Mela to be held on April 12 and 14 respectively. The situation is more challenging for the authorities who are also focusing on safety from Covid-19.

The health department claims to have made all necessary arrangements to handle the situation. The Kumbh Mela health officer Dr Arjun Singh Sengar said that devotees are expected to arrive here for the Shahi Snans also from states where Covid has surged alarmingly. Considering this the mela health department is checking every person arriving here and if needed providing medical facilities to them. He assured that the department is taking all necessary measures to ensure a safe and grand Kumbh Mela.

The doctor further informed that a 550 bed Covid hospital had been set up at Dudhahari Chowk. Apart from this a Covid centre is already active at the Mela hospital where patients can be kept in isolation if needed. Additional arrangements have also been made at various hospitals in Dehradun and Rishikesh for use if needed, he added.

### Doors are now open for Timmersain Mahadev Yatra. Let's brighten our lives with Mahadev's blessings.

**Welcome to Timmersain Mahadev (Swayambhu Baba Barfani) yatra.**

Baba Barfani sits as a self-manifested (Swayambhu) Shivaling in Timmersain located in the Niti Valley of Chamoli district, the frontier district of Uttarakhand. A 10-feet-high Swayambhu Shivaling is formed out of snow during the winter season every year. This is the place where Lord Shiva rested during the night of his Kailash Yatra, hence this place is famous by the name of Sausa Mahadev. Now the devotees will not need to get permission (Inner Line Permit) to visit the restricted area of Niti Valley so that they can easily visit Timmersain Mahadev and see Lord Shiva. The yatra will continue from 7th April to 30th April 2021. We hope that this year you will receive the blessings of Baba Barfani, a symbol of Lord Shiva's faith.

**Other attractions:**

Jai Failla Temple, Gamshali village | Failla Panchag Temple, Village Bampa | Hiramani Mata Temple, Malari Village

**How to reach the temple** - After travelling 87 km from Joshimath by road, move towards Niti village via Malari Gamshali, then walk for about 1.5km. from there to reach Baba Barfani in Timmersain.

**Health related information:** Heart patients, devotees suffering from high blood pressure or hypertension, should go on the journey only after physical examination. One can contact the team of doctors at the ITBP Check Post, Gamshali to diagnose any health related problem during the journey.

**Take precautions against Covid-19**

- Always wear masks properly
- Maintain social distancing
- Always wash hands with soap for at least 20 seconds after touching anything

Note: The Yatra will be conducted under the guidelines issued for Covid-19.

Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board, Pt. Deendayal Upadhyay Paryatan Bhawan, Near ONGC Helipad, Garhi Cantt., Dehradun-248001  
Contact No.: 91-135-2558898, 2559997, E-mail: utdb@gmail.com, Website: www.uttarakhandtourism.gov.in

Helpline no.: Disaster Management : 01372291437  
Tourism Department : 01388222181  
Medical Department : 9897082316

www.gmvtourism.com, www.kmvt.in  
Uttarakhand Tourism @UTDBOfficial

# Prepare tourism plan for year round tourism, directs CM

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Chief minister Tirath Singh Rawat said that adventure tourism activities need to be expanded in the state. He directed officials to prepare such a tourism plan which facilitates tourism activities throughout the year. While stating that domestic tourism should also be encouraged, he also pointed at the need for working for an international airport in the state. The CM said this while chairing a review meeting of the tourism department here on Saturday.

The CM directed the officials to ensure all arrangements are made considering the coming Char Dham Yatra, tourism season and the Covid-19 situation. "We have to facilitate conduct of tourism activities while also ensuring observance of the Covid guidelines. For this, all arrangements should be made, people connected with tourism, their suggestions and coopera-



tion should be sought," said Rawat. The CM further said that adventure events should be held at various places to encourage adventure tourism. Attempts should be made to maximise the number of local youths connected to tourism through home stays. Referring to the Char Dham Yatra, he said that all arrangements should be made with special focus on sanitation and public facilities

on the Yatra route. Work should also be done on the tourist safety management system, added the CM. Tourism minister Satpal Maharaaz said that religious circuits should be developed and widespread publicity should be undertaken. The guidelines which are made for tourism considering Covid should be followed. The interest of those involved in the tourism industry should also be

considered as far as possible, he added.

Tourism secretary Dilip Jawalkar said that the tourism department is working towards the aim of safe, consistent and inclusive tourism. While an adventure tourism wing has been formed, work on the eco tourism wing is underway. A total of 3,107 and 7,486 on been registered with the department so far, he added.

# Mela officer Rawat meets ailing ABAP chief



PNS ■ HARIDWAR

The Kumbh Mela officer Deepak Rawat met the president of the Akhil Bharatiya Akhada Parishad (ABAP) Narendra Giri on Saturday and inquired about his health. The Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kumbh Mela, Janmejy Khanduri also accompanied

Rawat. Giri is admitted in a private hospital located in Jagtarpur area of Haridwar following some health issues. Rawat inquired about the health of Giri and wished him a speedy recovery. On Saturday Swami Kailashanand, Swami Balakand and others also visited the hospital and inquired about the health of Narendra Giri.

# Block level training for Panchayat representatives organised

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

A major training programme being organised in all the development blocks of 11 districts of Uttarakhand, the Panchayati Raj department is imparting training to the Panchayat representatives.

These programmes were organised in all the districts barring Almora due to enforcement of model code of conduct for the Salt by election and Haridwar where the process of election of Panchayats is underway. The training sessions are being provided under theegis of centrally funded Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan.

The two day training programme in the 78 blocks of 11 districts ended on Saturday. In the programme the Village Pradhans and Members of Block Panchayats were trained on the various aspects of the



Panchayati Raj. The officials of all the linear departments associated the local self governance. On Saturday the District Magistrate (DM) of Pauri Vijay Kumar Jogdande gave information about the Panchayati Raj at the auditorium of Kot block of Pauri. He also distributed certificates to the participants.

The department officials informed that the department would now organise a two day training programme at Nyay Panchayat level for the members of village panchayats and the village level employees of the linear departments of Panchayati Raj.

# Duped people by posting fake job ads online, held from Kolkata

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has arrested a 48-year-old man from Kolkata for allegedly duping people by posting fake jobs advertisements online. Police said that the accused has confessed to have cheated over 25 persons for jobs abroad.

The accused has been identified as Samir Arvind Parekh, a resident of Guwahati, Assam. The police said the accused and his associate contacted victims online and promised to provide them jobs abroad. On this assurance, the accused along with his associate got the victims to deposit money on the pretext of registration fee, medical examination and interview.

According to Atul Kumar Thakur, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), South district, the matter came to notice after one of the victim's approached with her complaint.

"In her complaint, the woman alleged that she runs a home food delivery service from Chattarpur in collaboration with her business partner. During the first week of March 2021, she saw a job advertisement online for abroad as chef, accordingly, she contacted the concerned person who offered

her 2,000 Dollar salary to work as a chef at a restaurant in the USA. She and her business partner deposited Rs. 36,000 each as registration fee for the same. Later, when they tried contacting the concerned person, the phone number was found to be switched off," said the DCP.

"A case was registered and during the probe, we found that all the contact numbers were taken on fake addresses. Bank statements of the beneficiary accounts were obtained and analyzed, which revealed many other victims were also cheated by the fraudster for jobs in the USA and Canada," said the DCP.

With the help of technical details, the accused was identified and a police team was sent to Kasba, Kolkata and after several raids, the accused, Samir Arvind Parekh was arrested on April 7," said the DCP.

The accused is involved in various cases of job fraud cases. He works as a labour contractor and got ideas to cheat people on the pretext of providing them jobs abroad. Four ATM debit cards, one forged Aadhar card, PAN card and a smart phone were recovered from the accused," said the DCP adding further investigation is underway.

## COVID-19

# Fresh cases surge to 7,897 in Delhi, toll 39

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi recorded 7,897 fresh Covid-19 cases on Saturday, while 39 more people died due to the infection, taking the death toll to 11,235.

The positivity rate recorded 10.21 per cent on Saturday, according to the health department. The national Capital has seen a massive spike in cases in the last few weeks.

According to the health bulletin, 77,374 tests were taken on fake addresses. Bank statements of the beneficiary accounts were obtained and analyzed, which revealed many other victims were also cheated by the fraudster for jobs in the USA and Canada," said the DCP.

The number of cumulative positive cases on Saturday stood at 714423. Over 674415 patients have recovered from the virus, the bulletin said.

The number of people under home isolation increased to 13,188 from 15,266 on Thursday while the number of containment zones mounted to 5,236 from 4,768 a day before, the bulletin said.

According to the health department of the Delhi

Government the highest single-day spike in Delhi till date - 8,593 cases - was reported on November 11 in 2020, while on November 19, the city had recorded 131 COVID-19 deaths, the highest single-day fatality count till date. On Friday 8,521 cases were reported in Delhi, highest since November 11 last year.

The city had recorded 7,437 cases on Thursday, which was the first time that over 7,000 cases had been reported in a day this year. On the preceding two days, the case count had stood above 5,000.

On November 27 last year, the city had recorded 5,482 cases and 6,224 cases on November 24 and 7,486 on November 18, as per official data.

Delhi Health Minister Satyendra Jain said, "To combat the rising Covid cases in Delhi & meet the demand of medical personnel, the tenure of presently working SRS/RSs will be extended for 6 months. In addition, candidates will be hired for the vacant

# Tenure of senior, junior resident doctors extended for six months

SAPNA SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Amid rising cases of Covid-19, the Delhi Government on Saturday ordered to extend the tenure of working senior and junior resident doctors for six months. Besides this, the Government also issued a notice to engage fourth and fifth year MBBS students, interns, BDS doctors, while Medical Superintendents, CDMOs and Directors of Delhi Government hospitals are now authorised to issue oxygen concentrators to discharged covid patients.

The positivity rate recorded 10.21 per cent with 7,897 positive cases and 39 deaths in 24 hours.

In a series of tweets, Health Minister Satyendra Jain said, "To combat the rising Covid cases in Delhi & meet the demand of medical personnel, the tenure of presently working SRS/RSs will be extended for 6 months. In addition, candidates will be hired for the vacant

posts." In order to meet the increased demand for manpower during the ongoing pandemic, all Delhi Govt hospitals are directed to engage 4th & 5th year MBBS students, interns and BDS doctors. The situation demands for all hands on deck, and we hope to fight this surge soon." During the surge in covid cases, swiftness of the process is a must. In view of the same, in addition to CDMOs, all Medical Superintendents & Directors of Delhi Govt hospitals dedicated for covid, are now authorised to issue oxygen concentrators to discharged covid patients, "Jain tweeted.

To deal with tough corona battle, the government has decided to use the medical staff with full potential.

In an order issued by health secretary, it said, "In view of rising number of COVID cases and in order to augment the medical staff and

meet the shortage of medical doctors, permission is hereby granted to the Head of Medical Institutions, to either extend the tenure presently working SRS/RSs, whose tenure is completing soon on March 31, 2020 or completing soon, for a period of six months and/or recruit SRS/RSs against sanctioned posts from those candidates also who have completed resident tenure as per the residency scheme of Government of India in case of non-availability of fresh candidates doctors.

To meet the demand of increased manpower, all Directors, Medical Superintendents/Director of all COVID hospitals of Government of Delhi of NCT authorised to engage 4th and 5th year of MBBS students and interns BDS pass doctors," the order stated.

Delhi government will announce some restrictions to contain the spread of coronavirus.

# Centre following Delhi's micro-containment zone model: Sisodia

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With the AAP Government's concept of home isolation, creating micro-containment zones and other Covid-19 protocol followed by other States and even the BJP-ruled centre is reiterating the same, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia Saturday requested the Prime Minister Narendra Modi to cooperate with Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and engage in fruitful dialogue for our nation's progress.

"We are happy that the Central Government is following the Covid-19 protocol conceptualised by the Delhi Government. I would recom-



mend Prime Minister Narendra Modi to please cooperate with the Chief Minister and engage in fruitful dialogue for our nation's progress," said Sisodia.

DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER MANISH SISODIA SATURDAY REQUESTED THE PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI TO COOPERATE WITH DELHI CHIEF MINISTER ARVIND KEJRIWAL AND ENGAGE IN FRUITFUL DIALOGUE FOR OUR NATION'S PROGRESS

Sisodia said that Arvind Kejriwal is the only leader in the nation to hold a vision for the same. He said that Arvind Kejriwal's model of governance is now being emulated by other political parties. The senior leader said that the electoral campaigns of BJP and Congress were based on the Arvind Kejriwal model of governance.

"Since the BJP was now fol-

lowing the Kejriwal model of governance, he hoped that they would not act as an obstructionist in Delhi Government's initiatives for citizens," he said.

Sisodia also said, "In Assam, Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi has promised free electricity. Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh has announced free rides for women in public buses despite the fact that there are not enough public buses in Punjab. I have noted that the BJP and the Congress are fighting elections across the country on the foundation of the Kejriwal model of governance. This proves that Kejriwal is the only leader with a vision for the nation," he said.

# FCI to set up counters in Narela Mandi for sale of wheat at MSP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In order to facilitate sale of wheat at "Minimum Support Price (MSP)" fixed by the Government, it has been decid-

ed to set up counters in Narela Mandi by the Food Corporation of India (FCI) from Monday for registrations, Delhi Agriculture Minister Gopal Rai said on Saturday.

The decision was taken in a joint meeting between the agriculture department, mandi officials and senior officers of the FCI.

Rai said that he himself went to the Narela Mandi to review whether the counters have been set up and discovered that the FCI counters were not set up.

He said that the setting up of counters will help farmers in a way that their time will be saved and they will be saved from the long and tedious process of registration, and won't be forced to run from pillar to post to sell their crops.

# It relieves pain....

From Page 1

I attended the Yagya and found that I am not the only one who is in misery.

The Yagya gives a sense of inner peace to me," she said. The ascetic even encouraged Sharda Bhatu to join politics after seeing her inclination. In the last year's BDC elections Sharda won with a record margin in Akhnour.

# Patriotic fervour at Kumbh spl....

From Page 1

"I got the idea of a special Yagya for the martyrs after the martyrdom of Major Ajay Singh Jasthroia. The pain of his family motivated me to do something for the martyrs," he said.

"If these young men can offer their lives for the country they cannot offer oblation of rice, ghee and things in the Yagya for them," he added.

The ascetic who has many Ashrams in the country and community is considering following worldwide said that initially it was difficult for him to convince the families of the martyrs for the Yagya. "I personally visited the martyrs' families in all parts of the country and persuaded them. Gradually they accepted the idea and started attending the Yagya. During the Yagya the family members share their grief. In some cases the families have entered into matrimonial associations also," he said.

The Ganga and with a massive 60 feet entrance gate of the site where Yagya would be offered by more than 500 priests and the relatives of the martyrs. At the apex of the whole makeshift structure a large pole with tricolour is placed.

The pictures and portraits of the martyrs including the freedom fighters would be placed everywhere in the Shaheed Nagar before the start of the Yagya. Arrangements for the comfortable stay of the family members of the martyrs have also been made. Das' Ashram even pays for the travel expenses of the families of the martyrs for the

# Chandigarh asks WII, Dehradun to conduct wildlife census from May 1

MANOJ KUMAR ■ CHANDIGARH

Chandigarh will have a wildlife census from May 1 to June 30 this year to determine the animals and birds in the Union Territory.

Chief Conservator of Forest and Chief Wildlife Warden Debendra Dalai on Saturday said that Wildlife Institute of India (WII), Dehradun has been asked to carry out a wildlife census in Chandigarh along with Haryana which would carry out wildlife census from May 1 to June 30.

Talking to 'The Pioneer' over the phone, Dalai said that to prepare an inventory of wild animals, the UT Forest and Wildlife Department has planned to carry out a second wildlife census in Chandigarh. The first wildlife census was held in 2010.

"We earlier had a verbal communication with the director of WII, Dehradun, to carry out the wildlife census in Chandigarh along with Haryana. Now, we will soon write a letter to WII, Dehradun, regarding the same. If our proposal is accepted then the wildlife census in Chandigarh would also start along with Haryana from May 1," he said.

Dalai further said that the availability of funds is no longer an issue. The department would not need a large fund to carry out wildlife census in Chandigarh. The wildlife census would be carried out in the Sukhna Wildlife Sanctuary, spread over an area of 26 square kilometres in the catchment area of the Sukhna Lake.

It would take nearly a week to complete the wildlife census exercise in Chandigarh. The master trainers of WII Dehradun will give adequate training to all the staff in Chandigarh and those who

would be part of the wildlife census exercise.

The Chandigarh Chief Wildlife Warden said that the first wildlife census was carried out in the Sukhna Wildlife Sanctuary a decade ago. The second census could not be carried out in the last year due to the pandemic and Covid-induced lockdown in the country, he added.

Another senior officer of UT Forest and Wildlife Department said that a team of experts from the WII, Dehradun, environmentalists, representatives of NGOs and biology and zoology students from Panjab University took part in the first census held in 2010.

The team took three days to count nine species of mammals and 65 species of birds by using direct evidence, including animals and birds spotted in the area, and indirect evidence such as footprints and animal faeces.

# Farmers block KMP Expressway in Haryana as part of protest against farm laws

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

As part of their stir against the Centre's three agricultural laws, farmers on Saturday blocked the 136 km Kundli-Manesar-Palwal expressway in Haryana. They, however, said emergency vehicles such as ambulances were allowed to ply.

The call for a 24-hour blockade was given by the Samyukt Kisan Morcha, an umbrella body of farmer unions spearheading the agitation.

The blockade started at 8 am and will last 24 hours till Sunday morning.

Farmers, including women, carried flags of their organisations and raised slogans against the Government. They squatted on the expressway while slamming the central government for not repealing the farm laws.

**THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS**  
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In my service record my wife's name has been wrongly entered as NEETU whereas her correct name is NEETU CHHETRI. Both the names pertain to same person. It should be updated for all future purposes Name Akum Toshi, C/o 56 APO Address: 289, Garhi Cantt, Dehradun-248002.

In my service record name of my wife wrongly recorded as Sangeeta whereas her correct name is Damor Sangita Kumari. No.9424995P Hav. Damor Jitendra Kumar Nathaji, Unit. HQ 135 INF BDE CAMP, C/o 56 APO.

मेरी यात्रा नाम Manjula Baraliy से बदलकर Manjula Thapa रख दिया है। यह मेरे मेरे Manjula Thapa के नाम से जाना जाये। Manjula Thapa D/o Mr. Jeet Bahadur Thapa, R/o 533-M, Tapkeshwar Colony, Garhi Cantt, Dehradun

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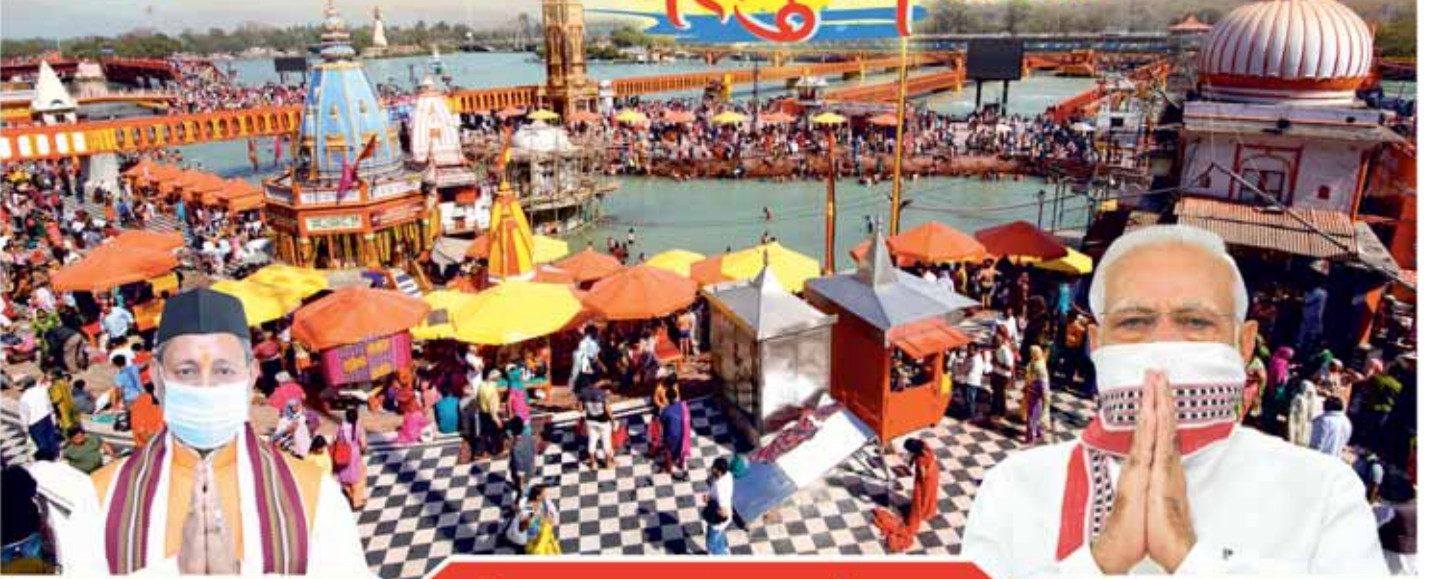




उत्तराखण्ड सरकार

सुंदर स्वच्छ सुरक्षित

# महाकुम्भ हरिद्वार



तीरथ सिंह रावत  
मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तराखण्ड

शाही स्नान 12, 14 व 27 अप्रैल, 2021

कुम्भ नगरी हरिद्वार में आपका स्वागत है

नरेन्द्र मोदी  
प्रधानमंत्री

## 11 से 15 अप्रैल, 2021 को होने वाले शाही स्नान की खातायात व्यवस्था

स्नान पर्व पर दिल्ली-मेरठ-मुजफ्फरनगर की ओर से आने-जाने वाले वाहनों की मार्ग, पार्किंग व स्नानघाट व्यवस्था

आने का मार्ग: मेरठ-सूफकी बाईपास-नगला इमली अण्डरापास-मैदाखेर तिरहा-लवसर-सुल्तानपुर-फेरुपुर-जगजीतपुर तिरहा पुलिस स्टेशन-सिद्धिदेव मंदिर चौक-मातुसटन-दल पार्किंग  
वापसी का मार्ग: दल पार्किंग-बुल्ले माला तिरहा-देहरादून-सिद्धिदेव-गढ़ीव राजमार्ग-334-कोर कालेज-सूफकी बाईपास-नगला इमली-मेरठ



पार्किंग स्थल से स्नान घाटों की दूरी

• हट्टीपुर प्राकृतिक घाट	450 मी०	• दिवांग घाट	2 कि०मी०
• लक्ष्म घाटिका घाट	500 मी०	• बस्तीराम पाठशाला घाट	500 मी०
• काली मंदिर घाट	500 मी०	• बैरागी क्षेत्र प्राकृतिक घाट	1.5 कि०मी०
• बैरागी कैम्प घाट	500 मी०	• सती घाट	500 मी०

स्नान पर्व पर पंजाब-हरियाणा-सहारनपुर की ओर से आने-जाने वाले वाहनों की मार्ग, पार्किंग व स्नानघाट व्यवस्था

आने का मार्ग: सहारनपुर-इमलीखंड-पानीपत-पठर-पठर चौक-हजूर-चौपल तिरहा-सलैमपुर तिरहा-सिद्धिकुल मार्ग-किराबी चौक-विन्मव डिग्री कालेज-शिवालिक नगर तिरहा-बी०एच०ई०एल० मध्य मार्ग-लेहस दूध कैंड पार्किंग/गुरुद्वारा पार्किंग/पीपली पार्किंग/पीठ बाजार पार्किंग  
वापसी का मार्ग: लेहस दूध कैंड पार्किंग/गुरुद्वारा पार्किंग/पीपली पार्किंग/पीठ बाजार पार्किंग-शिवालिक नगर-बी०एच०ई०एल० मध्य मार्ग-सिद्धिकुल मार्ग-किराबी चौक-विन्मव डिग्री कालेज-शिवालिक नगर तिरहा-सलैमपुर तिरहा-चौपल तिरहा-पठर-पठर चौक-इमलीखंड-सहारनपुर



पार्किंग स्थल से स्नान घाटों की दूरी

• पैमलगर आश्रम घाट	3.5 कि०मी०	• नया घाट	3.7 कि०मी०
• चण्डा नगर घाट	3.6 कि०मी०	• छाव घाट	3.7 कि०मी०
• गोविन्दपुरी घाट	3.5 कि०मी०	• चौधरी राधे सिंह घाट	3.7 कि०मी०
• नया गोविन्दपुरी घाट	3.5 कि०मी०	• जटवाघ पुल घाट	1.0 कि०मी०
• विश्वकर्मा घाट	3.7 कि०मी०	• स्वामी लावण घाट	3.5 कि०मी०

स्नान पर्व पर देहरादून-श्रद्धिकेश-गढ़वाल की ओर से आने-जाने वाले वाहनों की मार्ग, पार्किंग व स्नानघाट व्यवस्था

आने का मार्ग: लेपाली फार्म-हरिपुर कला प्राईमरी स्कूल के बचर से (समस्त छोटेवाहन)-दुधियाबंद पार्किंग सततश्रद्धि पार्किंग/शान्तिकुंज पार्किंग व समस्त रोडवेज बसें/दुधिया चौक-मैंगे हेटल से दूधिया लेकर मोतीपुर पार्किंग में जावेगी एवं फाईवेट बसें/दुधिया चौक-आर.टी.ओ. चौक-दुधिया पार्किंग  
वापसी का मार्ग: दुधियाबंद पार्किंग/सततश्रद्धि पार्किंग/शान्तिकुंज पार्किंग/मोतीपुर पार्किंग से दुधिया चौक सततश्रद्धि पुलिस चौकी से फाईवेट ओवर को उपर से



पार्किंग स्थल से स्नान घाटों की दूरी

- शान्तिकुंज पार्किंग एवं सततश्रद्धि पार्किंग :- दुधियाबंद क्षेत्र में ठोकर नं० 01 से 18 तक, गुरु करणी घाट, बिरुवा घाट (500मी०)
- दुधियाबंद पार्किंग से आने वाले श्रद्धालु:- स्वामी वैद भारती घाट, लोकनाथ घाट, शालीग्राम घाट, फूलमती घाट, स्वामी प्रकाश मखन घाट, कुम्भानंद घाट, रुस्सगी घाट, गुवाल्नंद घाट, शिव की पैरी घाट, स्वामी नारायण घाट, गणेश घाट, फूलमती घाट, चमगादड़ टापू घाट, पंढरीपुर घाट एवं पंढरीपुर परिसर घाट (300मी०)
- रेलवे स्टेशन मोतीपुर एवं आई०एस०बी०टी० मोतीपुर से आने वाले श्रद्धालु:- स्वामी वैद भारती घाट, लोकनाथ घाट, शालीग्राम घाट, फूलमती घाट, स्वामी प्रकाश मखन घाट, कुम्भानंद घाट, रुस्सगी घाट, गुवाल्नंद घाट, शिव की पैरी घाट, स्वामी नारायण घाट, सदानंद घाट, गणेश घाट (500मी०)

स्नान पर्व पर नजीबाबाद-कोटद्वार-नैनीताल की ओर से आने-जाने वाले वाहनों की मार्ग, पार्किंग व स्नानघाट व्यवस्था

आने का मार्ग: नजीबाबाद/कोटद्वार/नैनीताल-4.2 कि०मी० श्रद्धिकुंज-पूनी नहर की पश्चिमी नहर पटरी-गोरी शंकर पार्किंग/नीलवाघ पार्किंग  
वापसी का मार्ग: गोरीशंकर पार्किंग/नीलवाघ पार्किंग-सिद्धिकुल रघुनाथ मंदिर तिरहा-छत्री चौक-4.2 कि०मी० श्रद्धिकुंज-नजीबाबाद-कोटद्वार/नैनीताल



पार्किंग स्थल से स्नान घाटों की दूरी

- नमामी गोरी घाट - 200 मी०
- चंडी टापू घाट-500 मी०

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- हरिद्वार मखकुम्भ में आने वाले श्रद्धालुओं को पंजीकरण करवाना अनिवार्य है।
- पंजीकरण हेतु स्वास्थ्य प्रमाण-पत्र, फोटो पहचान पत्र एवं आर.टी.पी.सी.आर. नेगेटिव रिपोर्ट जो 72 घंटे से ज्यादा पुरानी न हो, आवश्यक है।

कुम्भ मेला पुलिस हेल्पलाइन नं०: 1902, 9411112988 एवं आपातकालीन हेल्पलाइन नं०: 112

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# Raina returns with firepower

Suresh's 54 in his first match since 2019 final, Sam Curran's quick 34 guide Super Kings to 188-7

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Suresh Raina announced his IPL comeback with a blazing 36-ball 54 and powered Chennai Super Kings to a solid 188 for seven against Delhi Capitals here on Saturday.

Sam Curran smashed away to 34 off only 15 balls to prop up the CSK innings towards the end. Curran hit four fours and two sixes.

The last five overs yielded 52 runs for CSK, thanks to Curran's power-packed innings. Asked to bat first by Rishabh Pant, Ruturaj Gaikwad got CSK off the mark with a pleasing drive through the off side between point and cover, two deliveries after being beaten all ends up by a Chris Woakes outswinger.

Last season's runners-up DC didn't have to wait long for their first breakthrough as Avesh Khan (2/23 in 4 overs) had Faf du Plessis trapped in front of the wicket in the second over.

In the first ball of the third over, Woakes had Gaikwad caught in the slip cordon as CSK slipped to seven for two.

The English pacer drew Gaikwad into a push with a ball that moved a slightly on pitching.

In came Raina — he had missed the last IPL owing to personal reasons — and in the company of Moeen Ali, the seasoned campaigner revived CSK's innings and looked to put up a challenging total against a strong DC batting line-up at the Wankhede Stadium.

During his 24-ball 36, Moeen struck four boundaries



Chennai Super Kings batsman Suresh Raina raises his bat after he completes his fifty against Delhi Capitals

and two sixes, playing a fine helping hand to Raina. Experienced off-spinner

Ravichandran Ashwin cut short Moeen's innings when the all-rounder got himself into an

uncomfortable position while going for a reverse sweep, the ensuing top-edge ending in a

good catch by Shikhar Dhawan, who ran backwards from short third man to hold on to the ball.



Sam Curran reads as he hits his sibling Tom Curran for six during IPL clash between Delhi and Chennai

Ambati Rayudu came in and straightaway got into the act, hitting a couple of sixes and a four to race away to 23 off 16 balls before Tom Curran ended his stay in the middle.



Meanwhile Raina went about his task in a manner that did not give the impression that he was coming back to top-flight after a long hiatus.

Raina got himself going with a four off Woakes and then worked Ashwin for two successive boundaries, not afraid to dance down the wicket against the wily spinner's flight.

Using his feet well, the veteran southpaw hoicked leg-spinner Amit Mishra for two and also got a maximum against Ashwin.

It was no different with Marcus Stoinis as Raina pulled the Australian medium pacer for another six before being run-out following a mix-up with Ravindra Jadeja (26).

## Consistent Sunrisers meet flashy KKR

KEY PLAYERS	
	<b>RASHID KHAN</b> Afghanistan premier spinner's four over spell will decide result of the game
	<b>ANDRE RUSSELL</b> After disappointing season last year, the West Indian will be eager to leave his impression

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Former champions Kolkata Knight Riders will look to strike a perfect balance under the astute leadership of Eoin Morgan when they open their IPL campaign against a consistent Sunrisers Hyderabad at Chepauk on Sunday.

In his first stint as full time captain, all eyes would be on the ODI World Cup-winning English skipper who will look to transform the misfiring army of cricketers and bring back the glorious days of two-time IPL champions. In Shubman Gill, they have a fantastic young top-order batsman who can easily shift gears, while the likes of Rahul Tripathi, Nitish Rana and veteran Karthik, who's free from the captaincy burden, can form the core of their Indian batting.

Then there is skipper Morgan who will look to bat through the overs while hoping that 2019 MVP Andre Russell gets back his explosive touch after a quiet season in 2020.

Russell had the worst season by his standards averaging 13 in nine innings without a single match-winning performance as the over-dependence on the Jamaican cost KKR dear last season.

Another West Indian who dropped big time in the UAE was Sunil Narine.

It's time that they think beyond the Trinidadian and try out Shakib Al Hasan, their buy in this year's auction.

They also have a mystery spinner in Varun Chakravarty who struck it rich in absence of Narine last year but his fitness remains a concern.

One the other end, SRH will be bolstered by the return of Bhuvneshwar Kumar who played just four games in last year due to a hip injury.

Fresh from his fine form during the white-ball leg of the England series at home, Bhuvneshwar will spearhead their attack with yorker specialist T Natarajan by his side.

### VENUE: CHIDAMBARAM STADIUM, CHENNAI

HEAD TO HEAD	
Matches	19
Sunrisers Hyderabad	07
Kolkata Knight Riders	12

### LAST YEAR'S MATCHES

Kolkata Knight Rider defeated Sunrisers Hyderabad by 7 wickets at Abu Dhabi

Kolkata Knight Rider beat SRH in Super Over after match ended in a tie at Abu Dhabi

912

Sunrisers Hyderabad opening batsman and captain David Warner who scored 912 runs at an average of 45.60 in 23 innings of as many matches for Delhi Daredevils and Sunrisers Hyderabad is the second highest run-getter against Kolkata Knight Riders in IPL history

1459

Andre Russell who made 1459 runs at an average of 31.04 in 57 innings of 67 matches, needs 41 runs to become the fourth batsman to score over 1500 runs for Kolkata Knight Riders in IPL

Falset Features

pretty balanced in their attack. But the real strength of SRH will be their destructive top-order with the duo of David Warner and in-form Jonny Bairstow. They also have Kane Williamson and Manish Pandey, forming a solid top four. But it remains to be seen who will play the role of the finisher for the SRH as they seem to lack muscle power teams badly need in the last five overs.

## Knew my role in RCB since I was traded: Harshal

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Harshal Patel was told well in advance that he will be death overs "points-man" for Royal Challengers Bangalore, a role he played to perfection in the IPL opener against Mumbai Indians.

Harshal's career-best 5 for 27 was one of the two match-winning performances for RCB with the other coming from AB de Villiers.

"When I was traded from Delhi Capitals, I was told what role I will play for the franchise," the Haranya pacer said at the post-match press conference.

He was brilliant at the death and just like skipper Virat Kohli said, Harshal also knew that he is expected to perform the tough job for

which he had planned meticulously. "There were clear instructions 'that I will be bowling in the last two overs' (he bowled 18th and 20th). That gave me a lot of clarity. It helped me prepare certain plans against batters and kept my preparations concise."

Harshal said that change of pace and the slow yorkers have been his biggest strength. "The ball started reversing at one stage. It was important to bowl the yorkers and slower balls," he said.

According to Harshal, he has been bowling those slow yorkers that got rid of Ishan Kishan and Marco Jansen, for almost two seasons now. "Just that when you don't get wickets of slow yorkers, people don't tend to see that. I

always had the yorker but earlier couldn't take it into the game.

He did a lot of simulation of bowling yorkers during training session to get it right during the match.

"In the past 15-20 days, I was trying to put myself into situations."

**'OUR DEATH BOWLER'**  
Royal Challengers Bangalore skipper Virat Kohli was all praise for Harshal Patel's match-winning bowling performance, terming him their designated death bowler in this edition of the IPL.

"We brought Harshal in a trade from Delhi. He is a good bowler and is clear with his plans. He was the difference today (Friday). He is going to be our death bowler. As a captain you want players with clarity, and he has that," Kohli said at the post-match press conference.

## MI favourites to lift trophy: Anjum

HARSHIT BISHT ■ NEW DELHI

Former skipper of India's national women's cricket team and commentator Anjum Chopra backs Mumbai Indians to have a hat-trick of the IPL titles after winning back-to-back tournaments in the UAE last year.

The side, led by Rohit Sharma, defeated Delhi Capitals in the 2020 final in Dubai on November 10 and, in five months, is back on the field to take part in the 2021 edition.

Speaking to *The Pioneer* ahead of the 2021 season, Chopra said: "Mumbai Indians will start as the favourites because there are no loopholes in that line-up. Just six (five) months back, they won the last championship. And they haven't changed many players from that squad. At least the playing eleven remains the same. The majority of their players are in good form and you can never discount them from the competition because of their consistency."

In March, Mumbai Indians middle-order batsman Suryakumar Yadav and Ishan Kishan made their India debut, with both scoring 50s in their maiden International innings against England in the recently-concluded T20 International series.

Also in the One Day Internationals,

Krunal Pandya hit 50 in his first match. Ahead of the auction in Chennai this year, Mumbai — who have lifted the trophy on five occasions — retained the core group, apart from adding the likes of experienced Piyush Chawla, Kiwi all-rounder Jimmy Neesham and pacer Adam Milne, besides a few rookies including Arjun Tendulkar.

In fact, the 20-year-old, 6'8" South African left-arm pacer Marco Jansen made his debut against Royal Challengers Bangalore in the season's opener on Friday and took 2-28 in his four-over spell. And if that was not enough, the return of Hardik Pandya as a bowler is a welcome boost for the side. Hardik didn't bowl in the last season but, with his remodelled action, he picked up the ball against England in the T20I series. However, whether he will bowl during the tournament is still

unclear.

Talking about other teams, Anjum, who is part of the *Star Sports* commentary team for this IPL, said the form of Virat Kohli and AB de Villiers will be crucial for Royal Challengers Bangalore's chances despite the team having the likes of T20 specialist Glenn Maxwell.

"Like every year, there are high expectations from RCB. Last time, they came close (finished third after losing Qualifier 2 against Delhi Capitals). But again the onus lies on two players — Virat Kohli and AB de Villiers. It's good to have Glenn Maxwell but Virat and AB's form will be decisive," she said.

After the final T20I against England on March 20, Virat announced that he will open the innings in IPL, as well. Anjum believes that it is a well-planned move by the Indian skipper to get into the groove ahead of the T20 World Cup in India later this year. "It (Virat as opener) just broadens the options. If he wants to open, no one will stop him and, I think, before he

### SUMMER SLAM



WERE A TEAM: Delhi Capitals players and support staff pose for group photo at the end of final training session ahead of IPL 14 first game against Chennai Super Kings



HES BACK: Rajasthan Royals pacer Mustafizur Rahman poses for photo after he joins Royals bio-bubble



Mumbai Indians skipper Rohit Sharma wears rhinoceros costume during the IPL opener against Royal Challengers Bangalore on Friday to help build awareness about conserving the endangered species

**COVID-19 REPORT MUST AT WANKHEDE**  
The Mumbai Cricket Association has asked its Apex Council members to produce a Covid-19 negative certificate in order to enter the Wankhede stadium, which will host 10 matches of the 14th edition of the IPL. "Dear Apex Council members. As per BCCI's protocol, all the officials who would be attending the IPL 2021 matches at Wankhede Stadium are required to produce a Negative report of RT-PCR test conducted within 48 hours of the match day," MCA secretary Sanjay Naik, wrote in a note to all the members. "The tests are mandatory even for those who have been vaccinated. The report will have to be produced at the time of entry to the stadium on each match day."

decides to open, he definitely would have worked out the combination of the Indian line-up as well. The IPL matches are just going to give him that greater exposure to open and structure the innings because we (India) are leading into the World Cup.

"And if Virat and Rohit Sharma open in the World Cup and lay a strong foundation, it will be easy for players like Suryakumar and Hardik to follow," she added.

One thing that makes this edition different from yesteryears is that there are no home games for any team. It is going to play a key role in the tournament, according to the former India captain.

"The neutral venue concept will affect a lot in this tournament because teams make strategies according to home conditions. When it was announced that the tournament would be held in India, it meant seven home games for every team. So everyone picked the players according to that but now when it is not there, it will have an impact," Anjum opined.

On the "one player to watch out for" in the tournament, she put her weight behind Hardik Pandya. "He will have a fantastic tournament. He had one in Dubai too and, this time, he will do even better," she concluded.



# the pioneer agenda



## A rare Jugalbandi

A book that provides the political account of Vajpayee & Advani, and steers through the major events of right-wing politics

2

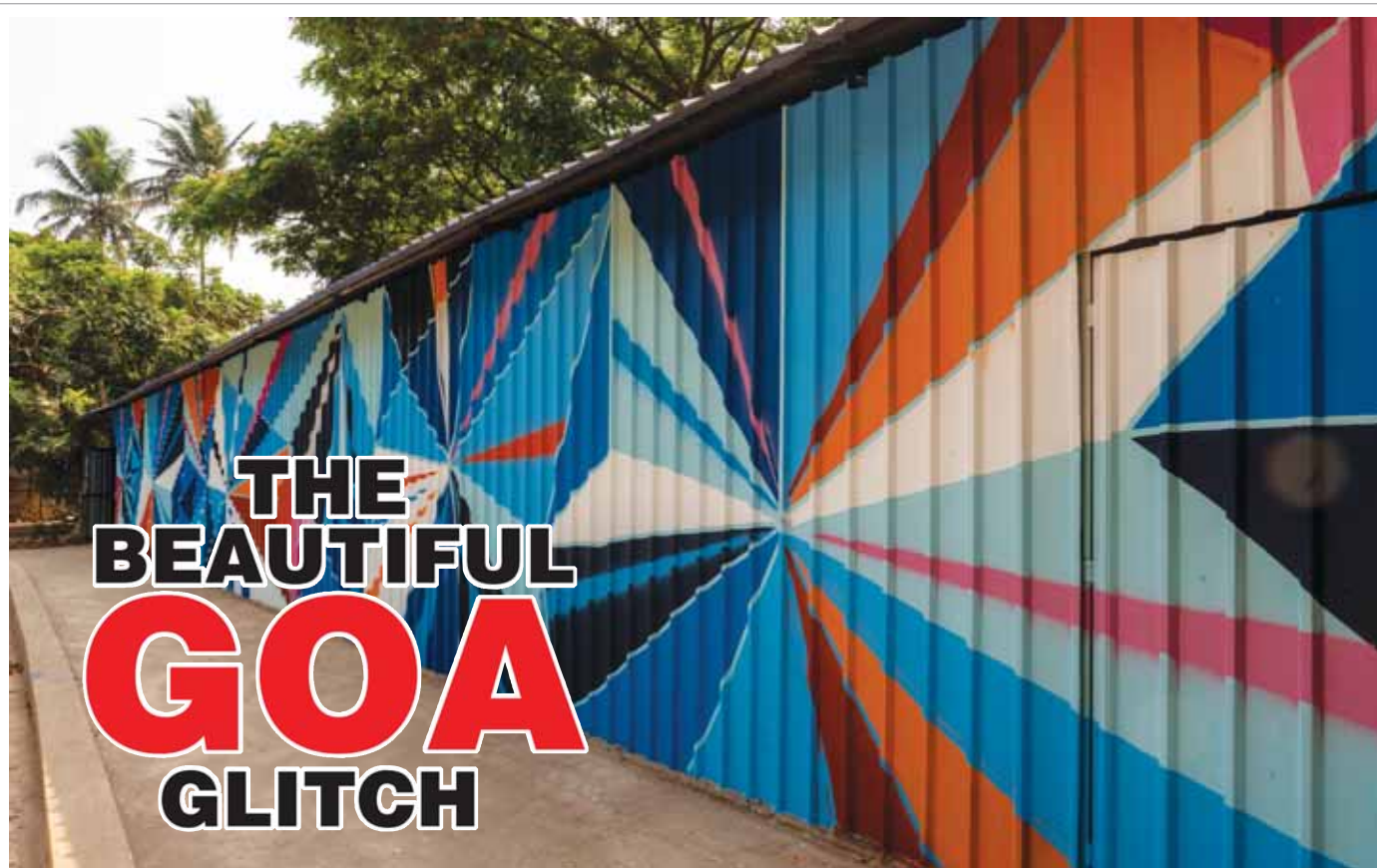


4

## Controlling monkey mind

Pursuing *Dhyana*, with focus on Lord Hanuman, would inspire the seeker to imbibe his spirit

I'm afraid of everything. But maybe when you're afraid of everything, it sort of seems like you're scared of nothing  
— Natalie Portman



Street artist and co-founder St+art India, Hanif Kureshi, Bombay Sapphire's Stir Creativity, Serendipity Arts Foundation and the Corporation of the City of Panaji join hands to paint Goa's dry waste sorting stations and turn them into works of art. NAVNEET MENDIRATTA speaks to the artist

**Y**ou just cannot miss the beautiful mural painted in colours of Goa as you drive past the busy road in Dona Paula, Panjim, Goa. It's an unusual canvas. Painted in bright hues, mostly blue, this work of public art is painted on Goa's dry waste sorting stations, making for an attractive selfie point.

Called Goa Glitch, this mural is a joint initiative of Bombay Sapphire's Stir Creativity, Serendipity Arts Foundation, the Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP) and St+art India co-founder Hanif Kureshi. The idea being to tap into the imaginative spirit of those passing by. The mural features geometric visuals in beautiful hues of the Bombay Sapphire blue, representing the spirit of adventure and the openness of Goa, and bringing to life the endless coastlines, and the expansive blue skies of the city.

"The mural is about exploiting the colours of Goa, like a glitch," says Kureshi in a candid conversation post the unveiling of the mural. "I visualised it as glitching of the colours of Goa's sky — in summer, monsoon, winter, morning, afternoon and noon..."

Different shades of blue that could also be interpreted as colours of water, more specifically the ocean. It's like the glitch of both skies and the ocean and that's why Goa Glitch," he says. Kureshi has been working with Serendipity Arts for the last four years or since it started. In the first edition, Kureshi participated as an artist and then from the next edition onwards he worked as a curator, where he brought in St+art India and put together street art editions in Panjim. Bombay Sapphire's Stir Creativity platform aims to revive and enable creative self-expression amongst the audience. For over three decades, the

brand has collaborated with designers, artists, architects, and individuals from outside the creative industry to create artworks that reawaken creative potential.

"Each mural has a story. It's interesting when you work on the street, you find that there are so many stories that are waiting to be told. As for this, I am kind of familiar with Panjim's landscape and whenever a new structure comes up, we look at it as a possible canvas," he shares. This, or shall we say, these canvasses have been particularly interesting. "Not many are aware that these new structures are actually dry waste sorting stations. This is where CCP segregates the waste of dry kind such as paper, plastic, sharp objects, glass, steel and metal. These sheds play a very important role in the whole recycling scheme of things. Our idea was to bring attention to the process and promote recycling. We wanted to give it a new life and make it not look like a dustbin. And we thought what better than art to get the conversation started," he says, speaking of the collaboration.

Considering Dona Paula is one of the busiest public areas in Goa, the mural highlights the artist's message on the importance of sustainability and recycling very effectively. In India, Goa is one of the cities that recycles 80% of their waste with a strong model created for waste management and sustainability. In addition to stirring creativity among the community, the collaboration builds awareness for environmental sustainability and encourages people to be more conscious of their actions, he shares. Besides this shed, Kureshi is collaborating to paint at least three more in a year.

An alumni of Baroda School of Art, Kureshi started painting on streets in 2008. He began with Graffiti and gradually moved on to the world of street art which he says, he finds "more free". "The difference between Graffiti and Street Art, you could say, is the sense of style. While Graffiti can

be likened to vandalism, Street Art is more positively thought out and refined. So, yes, you could say that I sought an expression that is more positive and would provoke people to think," he shares.

From getting German street artist, Hendrick ECB to paint the 150 ft mural of Mahatma Gandhi at the Police Headquarters in New Delhi, as part of the St+art Delhi street art festival in January 2014 to commemorate the martyrdom of the Father of the Nation, to putting together Street Art festival in Shahpur Jat and Hauz Khas in Delhi, the entire process evoked the idea on gentrification in the city. "The awareness regarding the street art grew as we moved towards Lodhi Colony and worked with the government properties. However, working at a central location like Lodhi Colony, we realised that there is no room for gentrification there. We have been doing similar work in Chennai and Mumbai," he shares.

While Kureshi shares that the response and reception to street art has grown in the past decade, the element of planning in the urban landscape continues to elude in the country. "There's no urban planning element to street art as of now. And that's why, I feel, it becomes more important for art to cover up for all that is not planned," he avers. Delhi's Lodhi Colony perhaps is a case in point but then there is a catch. "Maybe at some point, Lodhi Colony will be demolished and there would be high rises instead. But I still feel the art that found place there would leave a lasting impact. I think about the children growing up in Lodhi Colony and their imagination and what they would like think about art and perhaps, choosing art as a career option," he says.

On the subject of Street Art versus vandalism, Kureshi has a take: "There is a thin line between vandalism and street art. Personally, when I set out to do graffiti, I could have gone on to become a rebel. More so in principle, as there is a school that produces rebels and is more of a breeding ground where you adopt a bottom down approach. Street art, on the other hand, takes a top down approach where you get on the ground with more voices on the street to inspire more people to express themselves. You can be vocal about issues with the same amount of rights which any other company has in terms of putting in money and making an ad and

putting on the face. If carried out properly, with requisite permissions, even the people start owning street art. That's when the real change takes place."

This is also not the first time that Kureshi has lent his creativity to a cause. Kureshi has recently partnered with Art For Change, a virtual art challenge and exhibition, as one of the jury members. The initiative aims to change the narrative by turning the focus away from the victim and putting the spotlight on the perpetrator. Organised by Gordon Thomas Honeywell-GA & Ogilvy India in partnership with UN Women India, Girl Up (UN Foundation), reputed academic institutions like National Institute of Fashion Technology, Delhi (NIFT) and Symbiosis Institute of Business Management, Pune (SIMB), this initiative seeks to unleash the power of creativity to transform the way our society deals with survivors of rape & sexual violence, shifting the accountability from the survivor to the perpetrator.

"Art for Change is a project all about violence against women, which includes domestic abuse. It is about inviting ideas about how we can change the situation so the project moves people to act instead of being mute spectators," he says.

Besides Delhi, Kureshi has been working a lot in Chennai. "We did a district called Kannagi Art District. I find cities in south India to be much more welcoming than the cities in north India. The art culture is there and people understand and respect the art as well as the artist," he shares.

Similarly, Kureshi-led St+art has worked on creating Mahim Art district in Mumbai; Ukadad Art District in Coimbatore and Maqtha Art District in Hyderabad. "Different cities have different styles. So in Maqtha, which is predominantly a Muslim district, we try not to paint portraits. The focus is to be more abstract in that space, trying to be more sensitive to the surroundings. It is also about encouraging people to own the art and the space," he shares. Ask him about the dream city to paint. Kureshi says: "We are okay with the metros that we are painting. There really is no dream city as such in our mind. The idea, however, is to go to cities where people are excited and reach out to the grassroots of India. For that is where the real artist would love to leave their mark."

NOT MANY ARE AWARE THAT THESE NEW STRUCTURES ARE ACTUALLY DRY WASTE SORTING STATIONS. THIS IS WHERE CCP SEGREGATES THE WASTE OF DRY KIND SUCH AS PAPER, PLASTIC, SHARP OBJECTS, GLASS, STEEL AND METAL. THESE SHEDS PLAY A VERY IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE WHOLE RECYCLING SCHEME OF THINGS. OUR IDEA WAS TO BRING ATTENTION TO THE PROCESS AND PROMOTE RECYCLING





The book not only provides the political account of Vajpayee and Advani, it also delicately steers through all the major events of the Indian politics, mainly right-wing, writes MOHAMMAD IRSHAD

# A rare Jugalbandi

The book, *Jugalbandi: The BJP before Modi* by Vinay Sitapati presents a fascinating account to trace the journey of the two tallest and major drivers of the 'India Right-wing' as they remained at the helm and navigated through the testing times beginning from Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) to managing and executing the affairs of the Bhartiya Jan Sangh (1951) and Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP). Book offers a larger ambit to study the rise of 'L.K. Advani and AB Vajpayee' and analytical chronology of all the organisations cemented on the idea to unite Hindus that is Hindu Mahasabha, RSS (1925), Bhartiya Jan Sangh (1951), VHP (1964), BJP (1980) and Bajrang Dal (1984) and Sawdeshi Jagran Manch (1991).

Sitapati, an academic's shadow falls over the book. He is aptly thoughtful in metaphorically chosen title, *Jugalbandi* — demonstrates the relationship between Vajpayee and Advani — means the melody of the ragas in Indian classical music concerts by two musicians playing different instruments, however perfectly in tune with the other. Neither of the artists does survive under the shadow of the other, instead mutually complimentary to mesmerise through that music recall. Sitapati had pitifully utilised all the available resources, to tease out the argument to his book and left a mark of solid scholarship. It took him three straight years to complete book.

Book not only provides the political account of Vajpayee and Advani, it also delicately steers through all the major gleaming events of the India politics mainly right-wing, who have marked a substantial presence on the political map of this country. Markedly, ranging from their struggle — to register mass acceptability, electorally — prevailing in the early years of the post-independent India to the rise of *bahujan* politics, Khalistan movement in Punjab globalisation and Babri Masjid demolition movement. Conspicuous shift had taken place in 1980, the author says: 'After decades in which Advani was subordinate to Vajpayee, by 1980 their relationship had become more equal. While Advani had always needed Vajpayee, he was now needed. They were now a classical *jugalbandi*.' (p 108-109) Before 1980,

Vajpayee with support of Advani was busy crafting a space for himself by political burying leaders like Balraj Madhok — founded ABVP in 1948 — ML Sodhi, Nanaji Deshmukh, and others.

First chapter of the book puts light on events that caused the emergence of RSS (1925) and Hindu Mahasabha and prepares a background which helped Advani and Vajpayee joined politics with a resolve to unite the Hindus of all sects. Sitapati, theoretically spurns a widely believed argument followed after the murder of Mahatma Gandhi by Nathuram Godse, that Godse was a direct beneficiary/borrower of RSS' religious-political ideas — on the contrary, he argues far from supporting political violence, RSS had wanted nothing to do with politics during this period (p. 33). He maintained considering Godse's differences with RSS, Godse went on to repeatedly criticise him throughout the mid-1940s. Book detests the fact that RSS was remotely involved in the murder of the Mahatma Gandhi. This could be a matter of great further academic dispute.

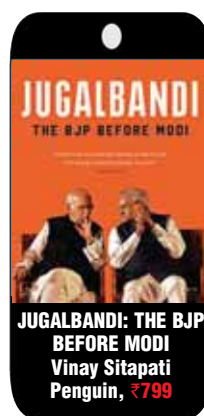
Through the journey of both the leaders — nurtured by the RSS — during the formative years of the modern Indian state, book exposes the hypocrisy and inconsistency in their ideology to accomplish political goals, whether it was their shift from adopting 'Gandhian Socialism' to drift towards capitalism as a core economic principle and approach towards the minorities especially Muslims and Christians. Jinnah grandson, Nusli Wadia, was the first one wealthiest business person to fund the party; Bhartiya Jan Sangh (BJS) and BJP find no hesitation in accepting the donation from him. Advani perhaps paved his debt back to Nusli's grandfather, Jinnah, — founder of Pakistan — during his visit to Pakistan and hailing him as 'secular', 'Great Man' and Apostle of 'Hindu-Muslim Unity'. In my reading, this 'political *jugalbandi*' was to deceptively trick non-Hindus to garner the political acceptability to further marginalise them masking their much admired fascist ambition under the garb of so called secularism followed by Vajpayee to spear the right-wing.

*Jugalbandi* of the Advani and Vajpayee took shape on the foundation of organisational Hindu unity and theocratic principles, meanwhile if we take to

first decade of post-independent India, *Jugalbandi* of Nehru and Patel build on democratic-secular values, which thrive on adequate scope to diverse viewpoints, still remains as a major glue to unite the country.

In Sitapati's argument there is a fundamental flaw, he only takes into account Vajpayee's verbal conflict with RSS on various subjects but it largely ignores his assessment on the basis of the power and positions including prime ministership, happily cherishing on the RSS' support in his political life, more than benefit taken by Advani, therefore Sitapati's argument fails on merit, as Vajpayee markedly compromised on his principles in public life to peddle the idea, Right wing fundamentally stands for.

Book suggests Vajpayee's politics was formulated during the PT Jawaharlal Nehru's golden era perhaps that amplified his never ending discontent with the RSS in contrast his public political actions largely contradict Nehruvian vision except on countable occasions. For instance, after the Babri Masjid demolition, Vajpayee is famously known to be quite disturbed; however, he followed the party route and surprisingly demonstrated himself as secular leader to later stage the power in Delhi. This morally does not carry any weight as Vajpayee never distanced himself officially to fight back the inbred, inhuman and degrading ideas. It, however, will remain a perennial irony that the person who drove the



When the right-wing could not obtain desired outcome, they tacitly decided to follow the essence of *Brahman* — described as absolute knowledge in *Advaita vedantic* philosophy — known to us as *neti neti* (not this, not that), similarly, without projecting a clear vision of its hierarchical and communal philosophy to gather support from all non-Hindus to establish and politically empower RSS and BJP. *Neti neti*, basically, here means it advocates nothing but accepts everything as long as it suits them to expand organisation, to secure the throne of Delhi, which Indian right-wing always imagined ever since its inception, to declare India as 'Hindu Rashtra'. Had Deendayal Upadhyay and Balraj Madhok survived strategies employed against them, we would have read their *Jugalbandi*.

Book seems lost in its argument as it attempts to strike a balance when two contentious historical subjects require the definite response of the author. It could be an intentional move, since the book is devoid of mere subjective convictions and prejudices as the author approaches them purely, while using considerable references.

Despite other things, it is the Hindu nationalism and call for the organisational unity that kept them together. They were devoted to their ideology. At the end book, attempts to see through the new developing *jugalbandi* between Modi-Shah.

Book points out their similarities and dissimilarities; as new on-going *jugalbandi* is more hostile towards the opposition though adhere to age old conviction of public display of internal unity (p 299). New *jugalbandi*'s expanded social base from upper castes, to tribals, middle castes and even dalits (p 300), mastered the strategy to hide their failures by directly channelising the Hindu anger towards the Muslims on all the matters, to conveniently safeguard the ideology and galvanising the support for the larger good of Hindutva. It aims at Hindutvisation of Dalits, Advaitas and OBC, this trait is a unique and distinct attribute of the Modi-Shah *jugalbandi*. It is authoritative, less democratic in its functioning as only the few are allowed to speak the truth to power. The Vajpayee-Advani relationship was more ideological than the Modi-Shah's relationship. But still to conclude their relationship, could be a little unfair as long as the artists of new *jugalbandi* (Modi-Shah) have not gone off stage after the delivering performance.

This book engages the reader and is written sedately. Sitapati has interwoven all the major events and figures essentially required to make it an intriguing read to students of right-wing politics and post-colonial Indian Politics in general.

The reviewer is Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, Indraprastha College for Women, DU

## NEW ARRIVALS



**WRITTEN ON THE WIND**  
Anuradha Kumar-Jain  
Rs. 295

Set in pre-Partition Lahore, from the turn of the century to the time of Independence, this is the story of two women, both strong and willing to challenge the limits of the acceptable, but in their own way and under very different circumstances. Harjeet, belonging to a landlord family of Punjab, is married to Gautam, from an equally prominent Khatri family of Lahore. Deeply dissatisfied with her life, Harjeet enters into a passionate affair with Haider, a Muslim. The book explores their relationship against the backdrop of the growing Hindu-Muslim divide, and the politically turbulent times they are living in. Author Anuradha Kumar Jain offers a powerful accounts of desire, love, society and politics, and takes a probing look at the struggles and aspiration of a nation and its people.

**#ME TOO**  
Karan Puri  
Invincible Publisher, ₹199

The book is a miniature of human life as it comprises real-life sentiments. Readers can feel this book close to their life as they continue flowing between emotions like dreams, passion, love, betrayal etc. Just like in real life. The book talks about speaking up for oneself irrespective of their age, gender, profession, and financial background, etc. *#MeToo* comes as an eye-opener for the people who think it is okay to be hurt when it is not. In India, where individuals and institutions give tremendous amounts of significance to respect and social image, living with hampered self-esteem is incorrect. The book highlights that every human is eligible for personal space. Anybody violating the pre-defined boundary is dis-respecting and harming that individual space of yours which is nothing but a serious crime.

Dear partner, this is for you. Menopause can be a big deal, and maybe your partner is having a hard-enough time to have given you this book. This is unlikely to be easy. Sorry. This is not a slight blip in the road; you are effectively on a journey together that will take some time to get to the end — estimates range from 4 to 14 years. There will be challenges and setbacks but, at the end of it, you and your partner have the potential to be astounding. But you will both need to work together and have a clear understanding of what you want from this second phase of your lives together.

The fact that she has given you this book is an indication that she loves you and wants your support. She is also saying that she is in need of some words to successfully communicate with you what this is like.

### THE ICEBERG EFFECT

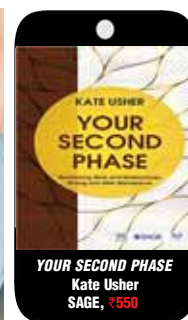
Menopause is like an iceberg, in that the majority of what is going on is beneath the surface. You might think you are getting the rough end of the deal. While I sympathize with you, I can assure you, you are not.

Your partner's hormones are slowly but surely receding to their steady post-Menopausal state. They play such a pivotal role in her sense of self, and how she is in the world that as they diminish, they cause havoc with her sense of self and her day-to-day behaviour. Their increasing absence delivers a whole host of symptoms as well.

You are likely at the sharp end of her symptoms, vicariously experiencing them with her. Most women require reassurance that their partners are still committed to them and the relationship. It's easy to believe that you're all right and that this is her problem. To some degree it is, but it would be unfair of you to believe that this was com-

# FOR YOUR PARTNER

Your Second Phase: Reclaiming Work & Relationships During & After Menopause by Kate Usher is a survival guide for women to cope with menopause at work, home and play. An edited excerpt:



what the other person is saying whilst giving them your full attention.

Once you have actively listened, ask questions and share how you feel about it. Please note, this about listening, sharing and reconnecting, not about point scoring or arguing. If you find that you are descending into this, you may need to walk away and come back later. You are both adults and equal partners — you are not a winner or a loser, a leader or a follower, in charge or subservient. You are a team of two equal parts.

Excerpted with permission from Your Second Phase: Reclaiming Work and Relationships During and After Menopause by Kate Usher, published by SAGE Publications India.

pletely the case.

You are a team of two that no doubt has had to face adversity before. How did you manage it? What was the dynamic between you? Is this the same or different? If it's the same, due to its unpredictability or that one of you needs additional consideration and support, you already have a model of how to work together. If it's different, what kind of different is it? If it's different because it was you who needed support and now it's her, then there is an element of quid pro quo. How did she manage it, what did she do that was so effective and also, what was ineffective and why? These are all

things you both can learn from. Discuss between you what worked and what didn't and identify what you can use here.

### WHAT IS THIS THING THAT'S HAPPENING TO HER ... AND ME?

Earlier in this book, you will find a section on symptoms where we discuss the variability in women's experience of Menopause by duration, type and their severity. Please read through it, as awareness is a considerable part of successfully supporting your partner.

First, Menopause is not a sprint, which is essentially what the monthly period experience was, or even an 800m run,

which was pregnancy. No, Menopause is an endurance race, and it goes on for years. With this in mind, it's important to make yourself aware of what your partner might be experiencing and think about what support she might need.

Please note, this does not give her a licence to be revolting to you without any form of comeback. If her behaviour makes her more difficult to handle than a bag of poisonous snakes, you have a right to say so. This is about creating a psychologically safe place for both of you to air your grievances without a shouting match or sulky silences. This space should

be non-judgmental, with no fear of consequences. You are adults and now is the time to behave like it.

### FIRESIDE CHAT

Where do the two of you get uninterrupted time to chat face-to-face? Whether over breakfast, dinner or some other time, whenever it is, choose a day when you know neither of you will be preoccupied or focused on something else. Be clear that this is a conversation about understanding what is happening and what it feels like for her. Make sure you are actively listening — a method of intently listening to



# CHINA'S GAME ON NORTH KOREA

China has spread its tentacles across almost all corners of the world. With North Korea, China has employed a unique strategy both to support stability and to have a grip over the nuclear gear of this mysterious land.

Successive Chinese leaders have maintained three distinct strategies towards North Korea: first, not to provoke a war; second, to maintain the status quo; and finally, no to nuclear arsenal.

Succinctly, China is North Korea's all-weather friend. Thus, though Beijing ostensibly condemns North Korea's nuclear developments, it avowedly opposes harsh global sanctions on that mysterious nation. And China's strategy is aimed at addressing two major critical concerns: to obviate massive refugee influx across 870-mile border area that it shares with North Korea and prevent an immediate collapse of the Kim rule.

The relationship between China and North Korea can aptly be described through this Chinese proverb: "Chun wang chi han" (If the lips are gone, teeth will be cold). It rightly indicates that both the countries are intimately interdependent. Beijing's support for Pyongyang dates back to the historic 1950-53 Korean War. Those were the days, China under Chairman Mao, was more than eager to aid its northern Communist ally North Korea, against the capitalist South Korea. Its support to North Korea continues irrespective of whoever comes to power in Pyongyang.

Kim Il-sung from 1948-94, Kim Jong-il (1994-2011) and now Kim Jong-un since 2011 till date, China has been offering both political and economic support to various regimes of Kims.

On record, China is North Korea's biggest trade partner till date. In fact, from 2000-2020, the bilateral trade between both the nations have increased almost ten-fold. Even amid tougher international trade

sanctions against North Korea, the long China-North Korea border is still open for established trade routes in commodities such as mobile phones, silk worms, fuel, seafood, etc.

Much beyond these regular economic activities, China has established a high-speed railway link between its border cities like Dandong and Shenyang so as to boost trade with North Korea. Both the nations have also opened a cargo and container shipping route to enhance the supply of coal from North Korea to China. China also offers aid to North Korea primarily in food and energy sectors.

Besides China, the US, Japan and South Korea provided more than 75 per cent of the food aid to North Korea since 1995. The country's severe famine was caused by heavy floods and droughts that took lives of more than million people in the 1990s. Unfortunately, the country has not been able to come out of this prolonged food crisis till date. Thus, Pyongyang is fully dependent on China and its goodwill.

As per the estimates revealed by the UN agencies, more than 43 per cent of the country's population is malnourished. Though Kim Jong-un is focusing on rapid economic development, the country has not been able to attract any foreign investment because of severe international sanctions. Its only hope is China and the country is looking for robust economic ties with the former.

However, China's continued support to Pyongyang came under severe strain when the latter tested a nuclear weapon in October 2006. Subsequently, Beijing had to back a UN Security Council Resolution No. 1718 that led to the imposition of severe sanctions against North Korea. And for the first time, the international community witnessed transition of China's tactics from sustained diplomatic support to outright punishment towards its Northern



Communist neighbour.

When in November 2017, Kim again tested a missile, Beijing called on Pyongyang to restrict all actions that create tensions in the Korean Peninsula. These all clearly

demonstrate that China is wary of North Korea's belligerent moves that may militate against the mutual interests of both the countries.

Beijing has played the role of a powerbroker during all

high-profile global negotiations on North Korea. After two crucial summits between then US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, international policy makers have so far

focused mainly on denuclearisation steps, immediate measures towards peace in the Korean peninsula and finally, corresponding sanctions relief. However, Pyongyang has been becoming an Asian tinder box. Kim's madness and clandestine nuclear programme could turn the entire Korean peninsula into a serious war zone of the continent.

Probably, China knows best how to tackle Kim dynasty. But then at times some foundational questions arise as to whether North Korea is a strategic liability or an opportunity for China. The Communist leaders in Beijing must have realised the fact that its northern neighbour is to be tamed and to be used for all possible gains both domestically and internationally.

The world brands North Korea as a pariah state, but Beijing takes the Kim regime otherwise. Though apparently China has backed the UN sanctions against North Korea over its incessant efforts to become a formidable nuclear state, its financial and trade support directly and effectively facilitated Kim's nuclear machine for long. This has also helped North Korea economically survive so far. Further, these Chinese efforts are indirectly dashed the hopes of the reunification of both the Koreas.

The US is literally pressuring North Korea to abandon its nuclear programme. Washington says once it is done, there could be a guarantee of trade, diplomatic relations, aid and normalisation of ties with the rogue state. Though the US and China both are interested in denuclearising North Korea, their approaches to the same goal are completely different. America wants China to use its economic leverage to pressure or convince Kim to abandon its nuclear ambition. Thus Washington officials look at China as a part of the solution but unfortunately Beijing is fast becoming part of the Korean conundrum only. For Xi, the

Chinese President, who is now a life-time leader, wants to use North Korea to win brownie points at the domestic front. US President Joe Biden is fully aware that only China can maintain stability in the region if not solve the Korean puzzle for now. Certainly, Beijing will use this opportunity to turn in its favour other vital issues that are constantly pestering Xi, like Hong Kong, Taiwan, Tibet, Xinjiang and South China Sea.

What is the problem with Kim? Kim wants to sustain his family rule. And for him, the nuclear button is the only guarantee for him to maintain both his hereditary regime and to threaten the neighbours and the world. Despite the leverage over North Korea, China and South Korea have failed to bring Kim to a negotiating table. Kim is totally against bringing reforms in his country. As such reform measures might bring down the curtain on his rule. The elites in North Korea know very well that its central problems lie within, not outside. Thus, they, along with Kim, ensure no reform takes place, in order to solidify their control over its impoverished populace.

Clearly, hollow summitry will not work with Kim. He demands serious negotiations on the nuclear front. It is better for Biden to extend grand gestures the way Trump did. At times, Beijing's bosses have displayed stern attitudes towards Kim Jong-un. But Western nations, particularly, America will never ever believe the intentions of China. Because nowhere Chinese leadership has indicated its commitment towards implementing even the limited trade restrictions over this reclusive nation. And the whole world knows that only China keeps North Korea going and precisely surviving against all odds. Many in the West have accused China of circumventing global sanctions against North Korea.

(The writer an expert on international affairs)

**Though the US and China both have voiced concern over North Korea's nuclear ambition, their approaches to the same goal are distinctly different. America wants China to use its economic leverage to pressure Kim to abandon nuclear ambitions. However, China under Xi, is willing to do only what suits its interests**



MAHAN SARKIS

## PERSPECTIVE

# No Olympic participation: Kim's message for Biden

North Korea has become the world's first country to drop out of the Tokyo Olympics, ostensibly because coronavirus has spread its deadly tentacles. It is true that the rogue nation is extremely sensitive about Covid-19, knowing that a widespread outbreak in a country with an already battered health system could be disaster.

However, North Korea also has previously used big sporting events to set up diplomacy with the United States meant to win it much-needed sanctions relief in return for nuclear disarmament pledges. Some see pulling out of the Olympics as the North sending Washington a message.

Purportedly, there is legitimate coronavirus fears. A state-run website has claimed that North Korea's Olympic Committee has decided not to take part in the Tokyo Games slated to begin in July "to protect players from the world public health crisis caused by Covid-19".

North Korea has previously boycotted Olympics and other international sports events for political reasons or failed to appear when none of its athletes or teams qualified. But this is the first time North Korea has pulled out of a major international sports event citing an infectious disease, according to Seoul's Unification Ministry.

Pyongyang has developed a reputation for withdrawing from talks with Seoul and Washington before returning at the last minute to boost its bargaining power. But given that the country has been on high alert over Covid-19, experts say there is little chance that it will



In this Feb. 15, 2019, file photo, North Korea's Olympic Committee President and Sports Minister Kim Il Guk, left, and South Korean Sports Minister Do Jong-hwan attend a meeting with the IOC for their bid to co-host the 2032 Summer Olympics, at the IOC Headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland.

reverse its Olympics decision.

North Korea has shown "a coronavirus-related neurosis since it declared an emergency anti-virus system in January last year," said Park Won Gon, a professor of North Korea studies at Seoul's Ewha

Womans University.

Park said it is highly unlikely that North Korea will secure enough vaccines for its 26 million people or report major progress in its anti-virus fight by July.

North Korean officials

know how disastrous a major virus outbreak would be in a nation with public healthcare infrastructure that has been in a shambles for decades. North Korea has so far taken some of the world's most draconian anti-virus steps, including a 15-



month-long closure of its international borders and the departure of foreign nationals.

North Korea still officially claims to be coronavirus free, an assertion many foreign experts dispute.

North Korea's decision to skip the Olympics shows that it "thinks contact with foreigners is the most dangerous thing now," said Seo Yu-Seok at the Seoul-based Institute of North Korean Studies.

However, there is certainly a message for US President Joe Biden. The North Korean announcement, three months before the Games begin, could signal that Pyongyang is rejecting a repeated push by Seoul to use the Olympics to create a mood for dialogue. It could also show a determination to boost pressure on the new US administration of President Biden.

North Korea is sending the message that it wants to deal directly with the US now rather than using the Olympics as a venue to reach out to Washington for talks, said Kwak Gil Sup, head of One

Korea Center, a website specialising in North Korea affairs.

Now-deadlocked nuclear talks between Pyongyang and Washington began in 2018 after an assertion on the Korean Peninsula following North Korea's participation in the Pyeongchang Winter Games in the South earlier that year.

During those Olympics, athletes from the Koreas marched together under a single unification flag during the opening ceremony and formed the Korea's first-ever joint team in women's ice hockey. Kim Yo Jong, the influential sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, became the first member of the North's ruling family to visit South Korea since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War.

There's been little progress in nuclear talks the past two years. North Korea recently fired two ballistic missiles into the sea in the first such weapons tests in a year. Kim Yo Jong has warned Washington not to "cause a stink" and called South Korea's president "a parrot raised by America."

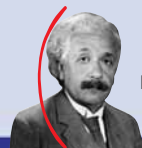
Experts say North Korea eventually wants talks with the Biden Administration to win sanctions relief and achieve better ties because its economy has been devastated by the pandemic, US-led sanctions and natural disasters last year.

Analyst Seo said North Korea likely wasn't sure about the benefits of attending the Tokyo Games because Biden has made it clear that he won't engage in made-for-TV summits with Kim Jong Un like his predecessor Donald Trump did.

"They knew that they would return home empty-handed from Tokyo," Seo said. But North Korea's domestic difficulties may push it to pursue talks with the United States soon. Seo said North Korea could perform big weapons tests, such as an intercontinental ballistic missile launch, in coming months if it's not satisfied with the Biden Government's North Korea policy review expected to be completed soon.

(With inputs from AP)





NO PROBLEM CAN BE  
SOLVED FROM THE SAME  
LEVEL OF CONSCIOUSNESS  
THAT CREATED IT  
—ALBERT EINSTEIN



**YOUR  
WEEK  
AHEAD**

MADHU KOTIYA

**ARIES** March 21-April 19

Those seeking fitness must follow a proper workout regimen. Negativity around and within is disappearing. Your presence of mind and wisdom is unmatched. You feel strong both physically and mentally. Professionally, you will be working hard but results are awaited. You find it difficult to earn accolades for a job well done. Be careful on the financial front. Reschedule your investments. Restrict your expenditure as this will help you to maintain balance. On the relationship front, a fresh start is indicated. You are not ready for a commitment yet, even though others might be pressing you for one. Now is the time to make it. This is a positive period for your love life.

**Lucky number** 20  
**Lucky colour** Mauve  
**Lucky day** Monday

**LEO** July 23-Aug 22

This week you need to be strict and draw a line in certain matters. No compromise should be made on the health front. Direct or indirect spiritual influence is needed to bring balance in life. Your casual attitude in health may result in seasonal ailments. Be cautious of cold, cough, constipation, bowel syndrome and weight related problems. On the professional front, the situation is getting better and stronger for you. You are ready to take any type of challenge. You are creative and very enterprising. If you have applied for a job, you may get an interview call this week. Shifting or change of office or home is likely. In love relations, a better understanding between you and your partner is indicated. Allow your partner to have his/her space.

**Lucky number** 18  
**Lucky colour** Silver  
**Lucky day** Wednesday

**SAGITTARIUS** Nov 22-Dec 21

In terms of health, you need to be practical. Listen to the body, and not the heart. You have to change your food habits or craving for sweet food. You will have to make some efforts to improve your health situation. You need more exercise, nutritional education to improve your health. At work, something planned meticulously is likely to take off smoothly if you go with the flow. Be cautious in your verbal communication. Face the challenges with a cool mind. Your ability to logic and reasoning are giving you full benefits in this week. On the personal front, feel free to express your feelings. If you have some loving words to say, say them now before it is too late. Attending a family function is likely.

**Lucky number** 8  
**Lucky colour** Magenta  
**Lucky day** Friday

**TAURUS** April 20-May 20

You need to think about improving your health. Your health and feelings of well-being should be a priority. This is a great time to take some time off and just go for an improved lifestyle, nutrition and balancing your work. A need for balance in body, mind and soul is required. You need to have patience at the workplace. Make strategies to get more outputs and productive results but try to keep it to yourself. You may need some assistance to find a better approach to work and don't hesitate to ask. If you're looking for work, you may need to look in a different way or a different field than the one you've been pursuing. On the relationship front, warmth, care and concern for each other at home and in a loving relationship is indicated.

**Lucky number** 17  
**Lucky colour** Green  
**Lucky day** Saturday

**VIRGO** Aug 23-Sep 22

Value your health and make it a priority. Count your blessings. Your health may not be all that good as you would like it to be, but it is better than that of many other people. Be grateful for what you have. Career-wise, you must not impose restrictions on yourself. Be careful in your communication. If you are bent upon trusting your suggestions down somebody's throat, don't get surprised if she/he rebels. Arguments and conflicts are on the cards which will go against you. On the personal front, make peace with someone, who seems to be against you. There is a need for liberating the mind and reconnecting with the heart. You need to reintroduce trust and find a way of freeing yourself from suspicion, mistrust and jealousy.

**Lucky number** 6  
**Lucky colour** Purple  
**Lucky day** Friday

**CAPRICORN** Dec 22-Jan 19

A good message in terms of your health is on the cards. Those who are waiting for test results need to know that nothing so serious is indicated. You need a small course of medication to free yourself from the health problem you are suffering from. Increase intake of liquids, juices and fibrous food in your diet. On the work front, new opportunities will be on the horizons making you hopeful about the future. Money inflow looks good this week. A prestigious assignment is yours if you play your cards right. On the relationship front, something may be troubling. Serious differences with spouse may take place. You can be stubborn when the circumstances demand but make an exception when your near and dear ones are involved. Don't be in too much of a hurry.

**Lucky number** 13  
**Lucky colour** Brown  
**Lucky day** Saturday

**GEMINI** May 21-June 20

This week you will manage balancing challenges and blessings with ease. This will improve your health and bring great hope. You will be full of life this week. The negativity in the past is dissolved. You are hopeful and playful now. Spending money on medical tests, for better living is on the cards. On the career front, you have some plans in your mind. It could be a change of job, or starting a new venture or any other thing that enhances your liability. Even if things have been lousy at work for the last few months, there is cause for hope and positive anticipation. In terms of love, you are ready to start something new. If you are in a committed relationship, there's something positive on the cards.

**Lucky number** 3  
**Lucky colour** Pink  
**Lucky day** Sunday

**LIBRA** Sep 23-Oct 22

This week you need a break. Take time out of your monotonous schedule. Those waiting for test results are likely to get favourable news. You may take spirituality as a stress buster and lead a healthy life. This is the right time to get involved in Yoga, Pranayam and meditation. Good news awaits this week on the career front. At work, someone's advice will come in handy in tackling a complicated issue. You may be tempted to take on more duties and responsibilities. Regularise your work. On the personal front, you might be having some doubts about the issues regarding the ancestral property. Discuss them with someone you trust in the family. Worry on accord of children's future, their study, marriage and expenses is indicated.

**Lucky number** 15  
**Lucky colour** Sky Blue  
**Lucky day** Thursday

**AQUARIUS** Jan 20-Feb 18

This week you will feel enthusiastic and adventurous enough to take on challenges life throws at you with full spirit. You are on the right path on the health front. Your health concern is paying you rich dividends now. You feel very chirpy, vibrant, energetic and full of life. Your positive mindset and cheerfulness will add charm to your personality. Work-wise, you take life easy with a positive mindset and stay focused on your work. Your mind and thoughts are in harmony. There are chances that others might take advantage of your efforts. Use your judgment, instead of blindly following orders to remain on the right track. On the personal front, great fun is in store. Your goodwill and reputation will pay you rich dividends.

**Lucky number** 14  
**Lucky colour** Green  
**Lucky day** Thursday

**CANCER** June 21-July 22

This week you will feel lost due to work overload. Neglecting your health at this point is not advisable. Be alert physically and mentally. Listen to your body. Nurture it, care for it and feed it with natural food. Avoid junk and oily food. You have to give up all the bad habits. Prevention is better than cure. On the career front, you may be moving to a new position or a new set of responsibilities. Promotion, hike in salary or business profit is on the cards. You feel at ease on the financial level. Business expansion plans could materialise this week. This is a good week for students. On the personal front, something undesirable may occur on an emotional level. You may lose your cool in a strenuous relationship.

**Lucky number** 12  
**Lucky colour** Peach  
**Lucky day** Tuesday

**SCORPIO** Oct 23-Nov 21

This week you will be filled with energy and vitality. Your body, mind and soul are in perfect harmony. You are focused and know what you want from life. You are smart enough to bring balance between professional and personal commitments. On the work front, leaving nothing pending at work will work in your favour. If you have started a new business or job recently, this may cause some worry. Things may not seem clear. Ask questions and practice active listening to make sure that you and your co-workers understand each other perfectly. Relationship-wise, expect to harmonise your bonding with someone who had offended you in the past. Love blooms and so will you. Happiness, contentment in all relations is on the cards.

**Lucky number** 19  
**Lucky colour** White  
**Lucky day** Tuesday

**PISCES** Feb 19-March 20

This week balance is needed in all areas of life. You should know how to handle your professional and health commitments. Take care of your diet, exercise, and relaxation time. A nap between the busy hours would help you relax and refresh you to take on the challenges. On the career front, the financial part is looked after well this week. Those in media, finance, and artwork are likely to do better. Use your inner power, communication skills and wisdom. Time is favourable, crack your full potentials. New contacts in this period will prove fruitful for you. On the relationship front, stop being too formal with your partner, it may keep you away from expressing your true feelings. Your loved ones need your attention too.

**Lucky number** 11  
**Lucky colour** Beige  
**Lucky day** Sunday

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**ASTROTURF**

BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

# Controlling the monkey mind

Lord Hanuman is believed to have surrendered himself in service of his ideal, Lord Rama. Driven by his intense sense of love, he put in his heart and literally merged his identity with his ideal's consciousness. Having thus, being fully in tune with his ideal, he could avail of the wholesome powers intrinsic to the consciousness element. No wonder he could perform such extraordinary feats as would find no parallel.

In prayer mode, when you put in your whole, you acquire the virtues of what you remain focused to. So says The Bible: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all his goodness, and all that get added on to you."

The paradox, however, is that Lord Hanuman ordinarily remained ignorant about immense power, he was endowed with. Evidently, under usual circumstances, he would be driven by his animalistic instincts. But when reminded, Lord Hanuman could invoke his indwelling powers if ever needed.

As the Ramayana story line runs, Lord Hanuman was entrusted with the task to locate Sita, who had been kid-

napped and was in Ravana's captivity. As per available indications Sita was somewhere in Sri Lanka. To make it to his desired destination, Hanuman had to cross over the ocean, which appeared impossible. But when reminded by Janvanti, the bear chief-tan, about the powers latent in him, he realised that he could fly across ocean. So, he invoked his untapped power base and then made it to Sri Lanka.

Hanuman story is similar to human dilemma. Human beings are armed with immense power. If full human potential gets unfolded, one would know no limits. The irony, however, is that invariably human beings are not aware of their own true self. Fact remains that human beings are born with a clouded and preconditioned mind. Stuck to the limits circumscribed, human beings fail to have access to full land space of mind. One's mind power, thus, remains limited. It is said that human beings have access to just 5 to 7 percent of their mind-power by default.

More than that is subject to our conscious efforts. If, however, even if they are able to make optimum use of



whatever they have in hand, they could successfully negotiate the usual callings of life with ease and comfort.

The irony, however, is that an ordinary mortal, caught up in the thought web of their own making, dissipate a considerable sum of their mind power over inconsequential acts — dealing with carryover effect of negative imprints picked up in the past, which in turn induces a sense of insecurity over assumed thoughts and thereby stress; over assumed dream perceptions. Consequently, they are hardly left with enough to do justice to their priority preferences, and with obvious consequences.

Human beings too carry both animalistic instincts as well as humanistic virtues. Which of the two drives a being would depend on how one's mind is oriented. The irony of the whole situation is that one's animalistic instincts keep playing their part involuntarily from the front. But one's virtues need to be identified, acknowledged, honed, and then consciously invoked to be put to use.

What stands in the way is the fact that human mind is fragile. It keeps

randomly flirting around with varied thoughts, something like a monkey randomly and unthinkingly jumping from one branch of a tree to the other. It, thus, becomes incumbent upon a being to first control one's monkey-mind before the indwelling virtues to play out unhindered. And that can be achieved following the two-stage meditation process as discussed in the previous chapter.

Pursuing *Dhyana*, with focus on Lord Hanuman, would inspire the seeker to imbibe his spirit. Accordingly, one would be tempted to explore, identify, and acknowledge, inlaid virtues, and then hone them, so that they become worth use in contemporary terms.

And because Lord Hanuman is identified with valour, reflecting on his imagery may also help to get over the sense of fear and insecurity if any. Also, it may grant the will and resolve needed to take on the challenges ahead in life in all strength.

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