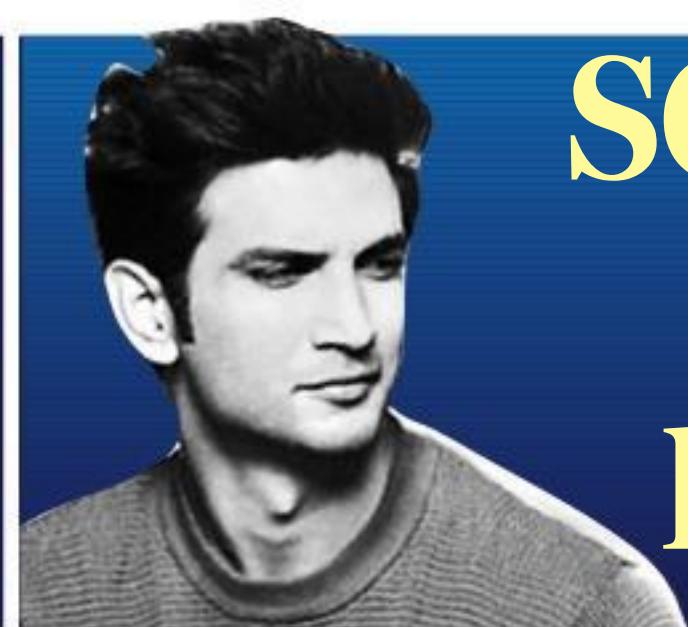


10,800 DELHI FIRMS GIVEN TAX NOTICES

SEE PAGE 18



SC says truth must come out as CBI probes SSR death

SEE PAGE 3

GC MURMU QUILTS AS J&K LT. GOVERNOR

SEE PAGE 2

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# MAIL TODAY

NEW DELHI, Thursday, August 6, 2020 www.mailtoday.in / www.mailonline.in

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## FROM TENT TO TEMPLE: 30 YEARS OF LEGAL AND POLITICAL BATTLES

# 'Foundation of India's unity'

Glorious chapter for India, says PM as he performs historic Bhoomi Pujan for Ram Temple in Ayodhya



PM Narendra Modi performs groundbreaking ritual for Ram Temple as RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat and others celebrate, in UP's Ayodhya on Wednesday.

Every heart is illuminated. It's an emotional moment for the entire country. Wait of centuries has ended. A grand temple will now be built for our Ram Lalla who had been living under a tent for many years.

- NARENDRA MODI, PM

So many had sacrificed, they couldn't be here physically. Advani ji must be at his home watching this. There are some who should have come but could not be invited because of the current coronavirus situation.

- MOHAN BHAGWAT, RSS CHIEF

### 9 bricks

sent by devotees from across the world in 1989 laid. 40-kg silver brick used for the symbolic foundation laying by PM.

Soil from 2,000 pilgrimage sites, water from 100 rivers brought for the rituals. 175 guests including Governor & CM of UP, besides RSS chief.

3.5 years construction will take at ₹300 crore. ₹104 crore makeover for Ayodhya Rly station on the model of Ram Temple.

REPORTS ON PAGES 4-9

Ram Mandir digital billboard at New York's Times Square to mark the laying of the temple's foundation.



**BIG 'IMPACT'**

By Mail Today Bureau  
in New Delhi

**INDIA** Today Group Vice-Chairperson Kalli Purie has been conferred upon the prestigious 'Impact Most Influential Woman Award' for the year 2020.

This is the 9th edition of the award and she has been part of the list seven times and has made it to the top-5 twice.

These awards are given to recognise and acknowledge the immense contribution, inspiring leadership and remarkable body of work of some of the trailblazing women achievers from the Indian advertising, media and marketing industry.

The awards jury was chaired by Sam Balsara, Chairman, Madison World, and also had other distinguished members, including Animesh Kumar, Chief People Officer, Zee Entertainment; B. Srinivasan, MD, Vikatan Group; Delna Avari, Founder, Delna Avari & Consultants; Ferzad Palia, Head, Youth, Music and English Entertainment, Viacom18; Gurmit Singh, General Manager, Quora; Partha Sinha, President, Response, TOI Group; Punitha Arumugam, Founder, Arumugam & Consultants; Rana Barua, CEO, Havas Group; Ravish Kumar, Head Regional Entertainment Cluster, Viacom18; Shalini Kamath, Founder & CEO, SK & Associates; Tarun Katial, CEO, Zee5 India; and Vikram Chhachhi, Principal, Global Consumer

# India Today Group V-C 'Most Influential Woman' of 2020

*Top honour for media's Gold Standard*



Clockwise from left: Nawal Ahuja, Co-Founder, Exchange4media; Sam Balsara, Chairman, Madison World; Anurag Batra, Chairman & Editor-in-Chief, BW Business World; and Kalli Purie, Vice-Chairperson, India Today Group.

Markets, Heidrick & Struggles. The winners were selected on parameters such as contribution to their respective roles, size of the business they head/lead, impact on their work on the profession/industry and other notable achievements.

Speaking on the achievement, Kalli Purie said, "I would like to thank exchange4media for awarding me the 'Most Influential Woman of the Year'."

This award will always be very special to me, coming in the time of Corona, which has tested every imaginable aspect of my leadership and character. Because the award is for influence, I would like to dedicate it to my team that produces the Gold Standard of Journalism, which gives the India Today Group and me this power. I am deeply grateful to all of them."

Her contribution to the media

ecosystem has been exemplary. With the electronic media changing at an unprecedented pace, the India Today Group under her leadership has been able to carve out a niche for itself distinctly in the industry.

The pioneering spirit demonstrated by her transcends the barriers of media platforms – the Digital First News YouTube Diamond for the Lallantop.com and the 20th straight year

undisputed reign of Aaj Tak have been nurtured under her leadership, and so has the multiplatform Digital Constellation of the 'TAKs'. Her most successful experiments in the media space include India's first Hindi News HD Channel – Aaj Tak HD, and the foray of India's biggest News Brand 'INDIA TODAY' into TV as India Today TV.

Among the many hats she wears, she is also the source of inspiration behind some of the biggest IPs like the India Today Conclave, Agenda Aaj Tak, Sahitya Aaj Tak and Mind Rocks.

In the recent past, Kalli Purie was also honoured with the 'Outstanding Media & Entertainment Award' at the annual '21st Century Icon Awards' in London as well as 'India's Most Powerful Women in Media' award at the famed 'Confluence Excellence Awards' at the British Parliament.

A graduate from Oxford University, the UK, in Politics, Philosophy & Economics, Kalli Purie is also pursuing Management Program from Harvard Business School in Boston, USA. Her acumen in being able to make the India Today Group a stellar and fast rising multi-media platform has been globally recognised.

# Stoic silence in the streets of Kashmir

By Kamaljit Kaur Sandhu  
in Srinagar

THE one year of abrogation of Article 370 and 35-A was marked with stoic silence, deserted streets and total shutdown despite no call given by any separatist organisation. While local BJP Units organised flag hoisting ceremony in different locations in Kashmir Valley, but largely August 5 remained lacklustre. At least two minor incidents of stone pelting were reported in Rainawari on August 5.

Mehbooba Mufti's daughter Iteja Mufti called it a black day for Kashmiris.

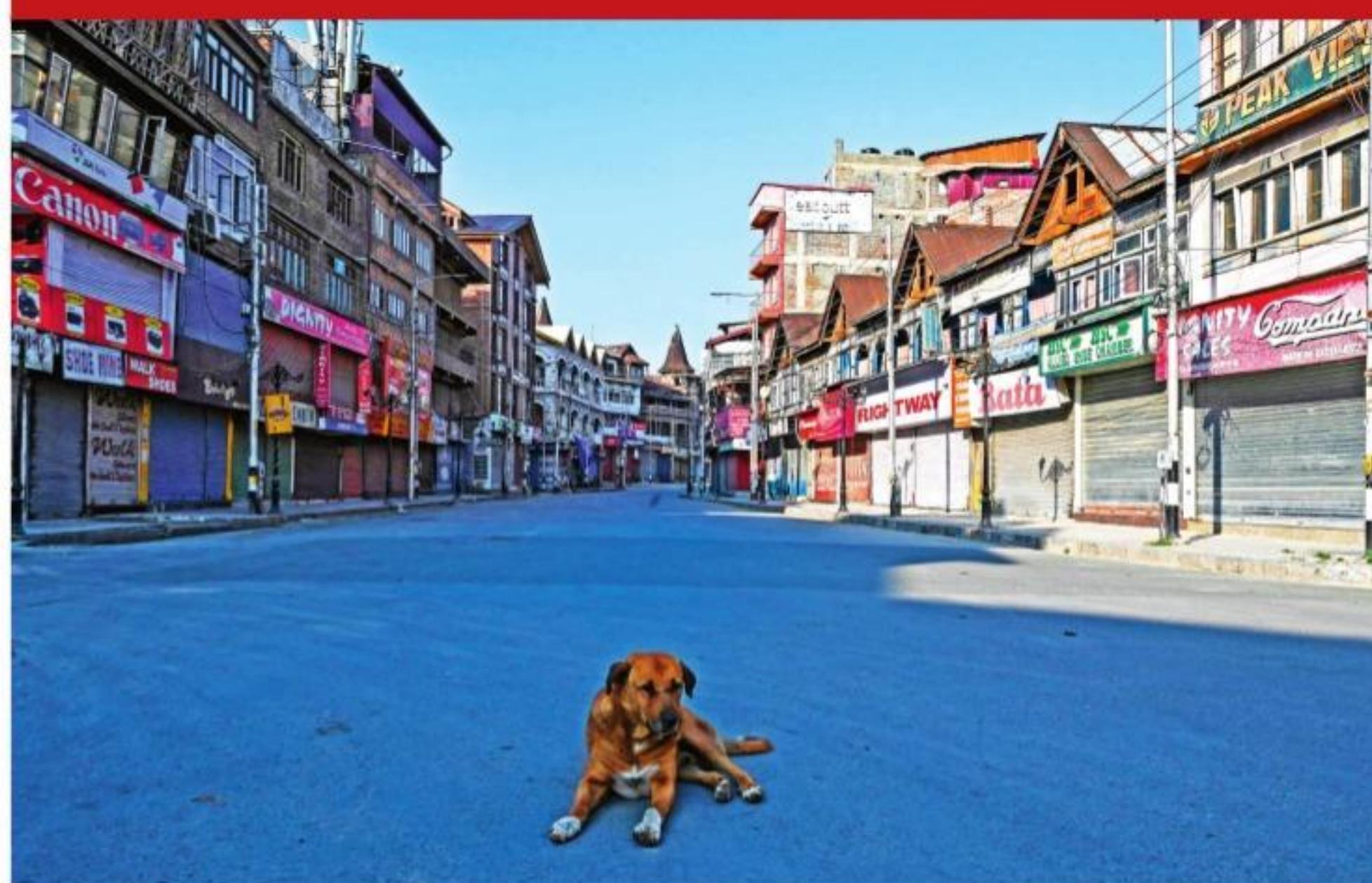
Despite the stringent & unofficial curfew, a handful of PDP workers managed to stage a protest in Srinagar today. The number might seem insignificant but symbolises how tough it is for the people of J&K to peacefully protest.

Meanwhile, former CM Omar Abdullah took potshots at the Centre. He tweeted, "BJP displaying its hypocrisy. They can gather & celebrate. The rest of us can't even meet to discuss what's happening in J&K." While Waheed Para of PDP said silence of the people of valley should not be misconstrued as there is resentment within. Wednesday masked a year since Article 35-A and Article 370 were revoked and Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) were divided into two union territories (UT) of Ladakh and J&K by the BJP government on August 5, 2019.

Most political leaders, who were detained after the two constitutional provisions that offered limited autonomy to J&K were revoked have steered clear of mentioning the issue after their release several months later.

Mehbooba Mufti, the PDP president, and former chief minister, continues to be detained under the Public Safety Act (PSA) in her residence, which

## ONE YEAR OF ART 370 ABROGATION IN J&K



A view of an empty street in Srinagar on Wednesday.

has been declared as a sub-jail. On July 31, Mehbooba Mufti's PSA was extended by three months. She along with Farooq and Omar Abdullah were among the three former Chief Minister's detained after the abrogation of Article 370.

However, senior party leader Naeem Akhtar has reportedly said that his party will use all democratic, constitutional and peaceful means to resist the 'onslaught' on Kashmir.

Analysts believe the Mufti's seemingly uncompro-

Despite the stringent & unofficial curfew, a handful of PDP workers managed to stage a protest

mising stand is aimed at salvaging her image and that of her party that was sullied due to the PDP's alliance with the BJP in 2014.

They say the PDP is in a disarray as many of its leaders have joined JK Apni Party (JKAP) floated by the former PDP leader and minister, Altaf Bukhari, which many believe has the backing of the BJP, after the removal of Article 370.

Omar Abdullah broke his silence on July 27 for the first time in an article he wrote in a newspaper. He said that he won't contest assembly elections till

statehood is restored in J&K.

He said there was no constitutional, legal, economic or security justification for what was done to J&K on August 5, 2019. His father, Farooq Abdullah, reportedly said the changes were betrayal of trust reposed by the people of Jammu and Kashmir when the state acceded to the Union of India. He hoped that the Supreme Court would render justice by striking down the repeal of Article 370.

Earlier, when the Centre announced the new domicile law in the UT, Omar seemed more concerned about its timing than the law itself, which has caused great anxiety in Kashmir.

**J&K L-G Murmu resigns, amid strong buzz he may become India's next CAG**

A LACKLUSTRE day of August 5 turned into news frenzy with reports of GC Murmu, the first Lieutenant Governor putting in his papers. He is likely to fill in as India's new auditor, the CAG sources told India Today.

Sources said Murmu resigned on August 5. He left at 12:30 pm from Srinagar and reached Jammu in afternoon after he is said to have resigned. He is taking a morning flight to Delhi, sources said.

Though the decision said to have taken people of J&K by surprise, sources say it has been in offing for sometime.

Rajiv Mehrishi is turning 65 on August 8, which leaves little time for government to find a replacement. Sources said Mehrishi name in reckoning as

**Rajiv Mehrishi may replace him**

replacement for incumbent LG. His name was amongst front runners when UT was first announced but it did not materialise.

But, current circumstances, sources say, could lead to a possible swap. "Ideally we were expecting the developments post August 15, but age and time both were factors here."

Officials in Home Ministry and Rashtrapati Bhawan remain tight-lipped over development.

The post of the Comptroller Auditor General, (CAG) is falling vacant as incumbent Rajiv Mehrishi turns 65. The constitutional post cannot be left vacant.

While the provision bars a CAG from taking office of profit but post of Governor is constitutional, hence paves way for the current change in guard.

—Kamaljit Kaur Sandhu

# SC wants truth to be out as CBI starts SSR probe

By Aneesa Mathur and Munish Pandey  
in New Delhi

**T**HE investigation in the Sushant Singh Rajput death case was handed over to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the Centre told Supreme Court on Wednesday.

Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, who is representing the Union of India in the case, said that the Bihar government's recommendation has been accepted by the Centre and investigation in the Sushant death case has been transferred to the CBI. Senior advocate Mukul Rohtagi for Bihar government said that they welcomed the decision. At the Supreme Court hearing, Sushant's family lawyer Vikas Singh said that the evidence is being tampered with by Mumbai Police.

He also said that the Mumbai Police must cooperate with Bihar Police. Meanwhile, the lawyer for Maharashtra government, R Basant, said that the allegations against the Mumbai Police are politically motivated and that the Bihar Police have no jurisdiction to register an FIR. He said that there has been no FIR filed in Mumbai till now. He said that the Bihar Police has no right to sit in judgement of Mumbai Police's investigation.

The court said that the Mumbai Police have registered a case of unnatural death and the FIR in Patna has raised other issues as well. The court also said that the case has hogged too much of media time and attention, and the quarantining of a police personnel does not send a good message. Meanwhile, the Supreme Court has asked Maharashtra government, Bihar government, the Centre and Sushant's family to file their replies within three days.

The Maharashtra government has also been asked to file a report on the state of their investigation. The next hearing in the case will be held next week. The transfer of investigation to the Supreme Court was recom-

## THE SUSHANT DEATH CASE

mended by Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar on Tuesday morning. Bihar Governor Phagu Chauhan had also consented to a CBI probe into Sushant Singh Rajput's death case on Tuesday evening. Sushant was found dead in his Bandra apartment in Mumbai on June 14.

### ED SUMMONS RHEA

On Wednesday, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) summoned Rhea Chakraborty in the money laundering case. She has been asked to appear on Friday. Earlier, the ED had lodged money laundering case against Rhea and her family. Sushant's family had accused Rhea of taking ₹15 crore from the late actor. They said that it should be investigated as to how much of that money has been defrauded by Rhea and her associates.

The ED also questioned the house manager of Sushant on Wednesday, in connection with the money laundering case lodged against Rhea. India Today TV has learnt that Samuel Miranda's statement was recorded under the PMLA. Miranda, the house manager and alleged aide of Rhea, is an accused in the case. Sushant's brother-in-law and IPS officer, OP Singh, says if Miranda is kept in custody informally for a day, then he will spill the beans about Rhea, who was allegedly controlling Sushant's life. Miranda was recruited by Rhea and was looking after the employees and house expenses.

—Inputs from Rohit Singh in Patna, [www.indiatoday.in](http://www.indiatoday.in)

KASIF



File photo of Sushant Singh Rajput.

## BIHAR COP HAS TO TAKE COVID TEST, SAYS BMC

AS the case of Sushant Singh Rajput's death has been transferred to CBI, the Bihar Police, who were also investigating the case, are out of the picture. Bihar IPS Vinay Tiwari (SP, Patna Central), who landed in Mumbai to investigate the case, was "forcibly quarantined" for 14 days. BMC has said that Tiwari will have to get tested for the coronavirus if he wants to leave before his quarantine is over.

Senior officials of BMC said that if Tiwari has to leave without completing his quarantine, he will have to undergo test for Covid-19. If he is negative he will be allowed to go. BMC's Additional Municipal Commissioner, P Velrasu, advised Tiwari to conduct his work through online platforms like Zoom, etc.

—By Mustafa Shaikh in Mumbai

## NEW TWIST IN DISHA SALIAN'S SUICIDE CASE

SUSHANT Singh Rajput's ex-manager Disha Salian's post-mortem report has revealed that she had suffered injuries to her head and had multiple other unnatural injuries. Disha lived on the 14th floor of a building in Mumbai, from where she was said to have jumped off. India Today TV has accessed the post-mortem report of Salian, which details injuries on her body.

The important point in the post-mortem report is about sexual assault. Her father, Satish Salian, wrote a letter to the Mumbai Police, claiming that "news of his daughter's rape and murder are cooked up".

—By Divyesh Singh and Mustafa Shaikh in Mumbai, inputs from [www.indiatoday.in](http://www.indiatoday.in)

# Cyclone-like mayhem in Mumbai

By Vidya in Mumbai

IN line with the Indian Meteorological Department's (IMD) prediction, heavy rain and high-velocity rains lashed Mumbai for a second consecutive day on Wednesday. Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray's office has appealed to citizens to remain indoors.

According to inputs, wind speed gushing up to 106 kilometre/hour was reported

### Trees fall, houses collapse, trains stuck in heavy rain, strong winds

from Mumbai's Colaba area on Wednesday. This was way more intense than what Mumbai had to face during the recent cyclone Nisarg. While a photograph of the BSE sign over the landmark Bombay Stock Exchange toppled over went viral, huge metallic panels from Jaslok Hospital in upmarket Mumbai were seen flying in the air in another viral video.

Many homes lost their roofs that were made of tin shed. Navi Mumbai too witnessed chaotic scenes with cranes toppling over in the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust Area. As many as six complaints of walls and houses collapsing in various parts of Mumbai were brought to the attention of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation but no injuries have been reported yet. In addition, 141 complaints



Commuters make way through a waterlogged road in Mumbai on Wednesday.

of trees being uprooted in different parts of Mumbai came to light. A video of a tree falling on Western Railway tracks and sparks flying around with loud noise near Wankhede stadium also went viral.

Railway services too could not escape the wrath of incessant rain as rainwater inundated tracks. The Central Railway line between CSMT and Kurla has been

temporarily shut along with Harbour line between CSMT and Vashi. Authorities have arranged for shelters near railway stations for stranded commuters. Total 15 teams of the NDRF were deployed across Maharashtra to engage in rescue operations as the IMD issued fresh red alert.

—Inputs from Sahil Joshi and Saurabh Vaktania in Mumbai

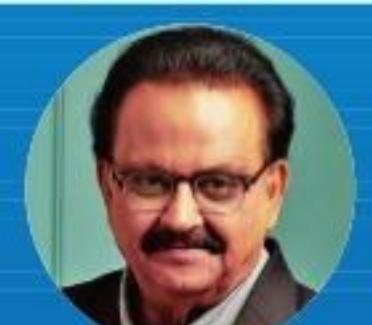
## COVID-19 PANDEMIC

52,509 FRESH CASES ACROSS INDIA TAKE TOTAL TO 19,08,254

857 MORE DIE, TOLL NOW 39,795

1,076 NEW CASES IN DELHI, TOTAL NOW 1,40,232

11 MORE DIE, TOLL RISES TO 4,044



■ Noted singer SP Balasubrahmanyam tested positive for Covid-19 on Wednesday.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath at the foundation stone laying ceremony in Ayodhya on Wednesday.

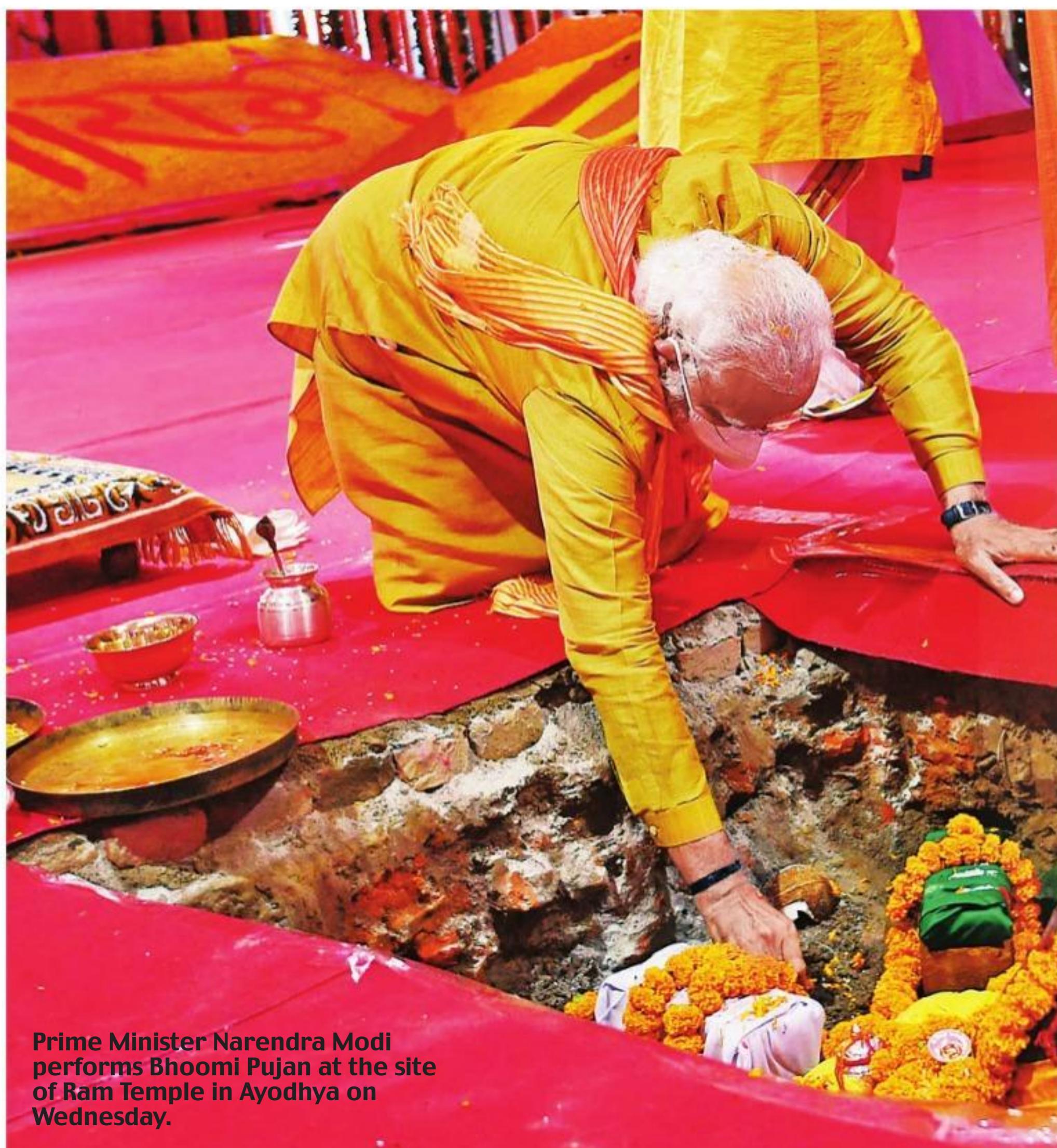
By Aishwarya Paliwal in Ayodhya

**L**IT diyas, street side rangoli, flags atop every house, that's the way Ayodhya residents welcomed Ram Lalla into their homes and hearts. Every nook and corner of the temple town was reverberating with Lord Ram's name, hymns played over loudspeakers, sadhus and saints from across the country made their way to Ayodhya.

Streets, temples and houses were sanitised every two hours coupled with regular water sprinkling keeping in mind the pandemic scare.

Nestled in a by-lane, a few kilometres

## Foundation of Ram Temple laid, Ayodhya sees massive celebrations



Prime Minister Narendra Modi performs Bhoomi Puja at the site of Ram Temple in Ayodhya on Wednesday.

# 'INDIA STARTS A GLORIOUS CHAPTER'

from the famous Hanuman Garhi temple was the site where the groundbreaking ceremony was held, where 175 guests had gathered including RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat and UP CM Yogi Adityanath.

In a departure from the usual practice of chanting 'Jai Shri Ram', Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday began his address in Ayodhya with the chant of 'Jai Siya Ram', a call for both Sita and Ram.

PM called the event a historic occasion. "I am grateful to wit-

ness history being made. Crores of Indians cannot believe that this day has come. The entire country is in the spell of Lord Ram," he said.

He laid down a silver brick to mark the foundation ceremony of Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

The images which crores of Indians saw on their television screens made many emotional. Two brothers whose family devoted their life for stitching clothes for Ram Lalla, had tears streaming down their eyes while watching the ceremony.

For many residents this was a dream come true. 80-year-old Savitri Devi, told India Today TV that she believes she is lucky to be alive to see this day. Her family believes it was Savitri's determination to see the construction of the temple that kept her alive.

In Hindu tradition, prasad is served after pooja and the Prasad, just like the event, was special and one-of-its-kind.

Speaking after performing the main rituals of the bhoomi pujan ceremony at the Ram Janmabhoomi Sthal, Modi said, "A grand temple will now be built for our Ram Lalla who had been staying in a tent for decades. Today Ram Janmabhoomi breaks free of the cycle of breaking and getting built again that

### For locals, it was a dream come true

had been going on for centuries."

In a conversation with Aaj Tak, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said, "Some of these people are chanting the name of Lord Ram now were also responsible for removing the idol of Ram Lalla. They wanted to do the shilanyas 200 metres away from the actual spot." He added, "Lord Ram is for everyone. People should never try to divide the society using his name. We have only tried to unite people through Lord Ram."

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and other like-minded organisations worked for nearly 30 years to fulfil the resolve of a grand Ram temple in Ayodhya, said RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat.

## Kashmiri kesar, Kerala cashew for laddoos



By Aishwarya Paliwal  
in Ayodhya

**KESAR** from Kashmir, cardamom, cashew and raisins from Kerala, and ghee from Karnataka were the main ingredients used for making 1.25 lakh laddoos that were distributed on the occasion of Ram Mandir's bhoomi pujan ceremony in Ayodhya on Wednesday.

The Prasad, just like the event, was special and one-of-its-kind.

A team of 100 persons, who originally hail from Karnataka, were given the tough task to prepare the prasad. Twenty-

four hours before the ceremony, they had prepared 51,000 laddoos with set a target of making 1 lakh more in the next 24 hours.

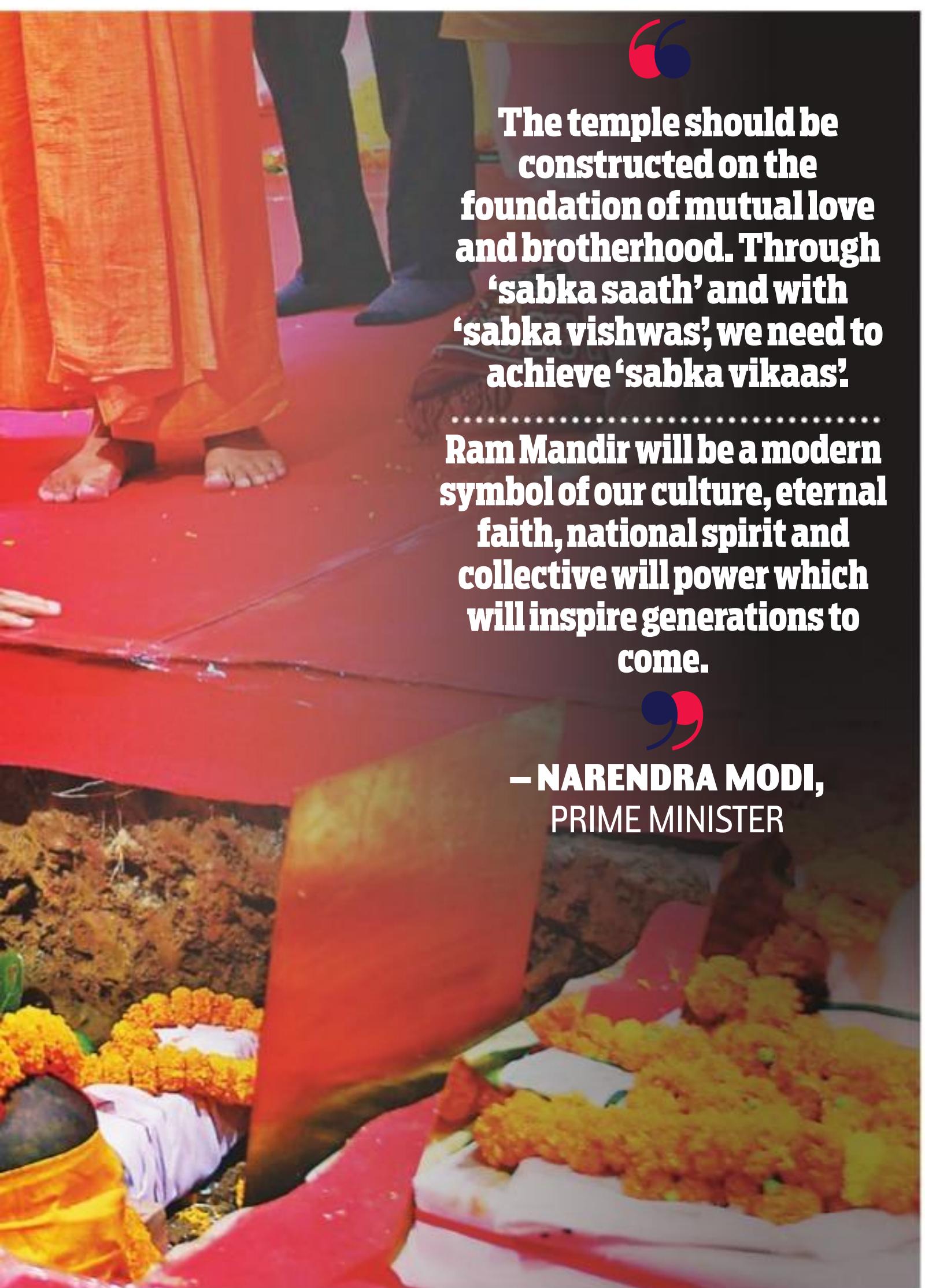
As the city of Ayodhya was decked up like a bride for the pooja which was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, special emphasis was also laid on the quality of laddoos that were to be served as prasad after the ceremony.

A team of 100 caterers worked hard at the Amwa temple barely 2 km from the Hanumangarhi temple.

It took half an hour to make a 100-gm laddoo, the weight of each piece, one of the caterers told India Today.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi offers prayers at Hanumangarhi in Ayodhya on Wednesday.



The temple should be constructed on the foundation of mutual love and brotherhood. Through 'sabka saath' and with 'sabka vishwas', we need to achieve 'sabka vikaas'.

Ram Mandir will be a modern symbol of our culture, eternal faith, national spirit and collective will power which will inspire generations to come.

— NARENDRA MODI,  
PRIME MINISTER

**1.5 L**

Iaddoos made from Kesar from Kashmir, cardamom, cashew and raisins from Kerala, ghee from Karnataka.

**₹104 cr**

makeover for Ayodhya railway station on the model of Ram temple

# Ayodhya Jn to get makeover, budget hiked



The new design will add a host of amenities besides increasing capacity to handle more passengers.

By Aishwarya Paliwal  
in Ayodhya

THE temple town of Ayodhya got a facelift and in about two years, the Junction too will be transformed into a new temple-like railway station.

The budget for the same has been increased from Rs 80 crores earlier to 104 crores now. Officials said the project has been expedited.

Railway minister Piyush Goyal tweeted on Sunday: "For the crores of devotees visiting the Ram temple, Railways is redeveloping the Ayodhya station under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi."

The current Ayodhya station was earmarked for redevelopment a few years ago. The redevelopment hasn't begun yet, but officials say work will start soon. The idea is to complete this redevelopment before the temple construction gets over. The new design will add a host of amenities besides increasing capacity to handle more passengers.

While the first phase will see the development of platform areas, the second will see the erection of new station building

The redevelopment is being done in two phases. While the first phase will see the development of the platform areas, the second will see the erection of the new station building with amenities like more toilets, dormitories, ticketing and circulating areas etc.

This revamp will be done in anticipation of the increased footfall the city will see once the temple is built in 2023-24. Once built, the station is expected to span one lakh square feet.

The redevelopment is also in line with PM's vision of positioning the religious tourism sector as a major engine for job creation and a driving force for economic growth.

Being built in tune with law, Ram Temple defines India's spirit of social harmony and people's zeal. It will be a testimony to ideals of Ram Rajya... .

— RAM NATH KOVIND,  
PRESIDENT



The building of Ram temple in Ayodhya is much more than a religious affair and the structure will stand as a tribute to the best of timeless human values. .

— M VENKAIAH NAIDU,  
VICE PRESIDENT



The consecration of the Ram temple by PM Narendra Modi at Lord Ram's birthplace has written a golden chapter in the history of our culture and civilisation. .

— AMIT SHAH,  
UNION HOME MINISTER



The consecration of a Ram temple at Ayodhya by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is a historic moment that brings joy and pride to all. .

— J P NADDA,  
BJP CHIEF



The Rashtriya Swayam-sevak Sangh and other like-minded organisations worked for nearly 30 years to fulfil the resolve of a grand Ram temple in Ayodhya. .

— MOHAN BHAGWAT,  
RSS CHIEF



The laying of foundation stone for a Ram temple by PM Narendra Modi marks the beginning of a new era. This new era is of dedicated service for public welfare. .

— YOGI ADITYANATH,  
UTTAR PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER

## Temple may be ready by Feb '24

By Rahul Shrivastava  
in Ayodhya

THE Bhoomi Pujan for the Ram Temple in Ayodhya is done but does the temple town's most famous deity get a permanent residence?

Sources in the Shree Ram Teerth Kshetra, the committee formed by the government for temple construction after the Supreme Court order, said that the temple may take almost three-and-a-half years from foundation to Shikhar or the top.

VHP member Champat Rai, the key organiser in the committee, says that the clearing and foundation work is going to start soon. Those familiar with the work on say that monsoon season is not the most suitable for levelling and foundation work. And the process may be slow.

Rai stated that the plinth level and the ground floor construction may take almost 18 months. One of the members of the design team says that the toughest part of a temple is the plinth and ground floor construction. However the committee is confident that most of the large pillars and slabs for the ground and plinth level are ready with carving at the VHP karyashala.

The next two floors are expected to take something between 14-18 months. The next six mon-



The exterior of how the Ram Temple will look after completion.

ths are going to be dedicated to finishing touches and the shikhar or the top which is going to be 161-feet-high. In fact there will be five domes to the temple which may take a lot of time.

Even the Lord's temple has to comply with local and municipal rules. The design of the temple is now ready to be submitted to the Ayodhya Development Authority

for clearance. The temple committee has already put together almost Rs 2 crore levy which has to be paid for getting clearances.

The Covid-19 spread has thrown a spanner in the works. The committee has decided that no government funds would be accepted for the construction of the temple. The VHP has almost 35 years experience in fund raising for Ram Temple. The parishad was planning a huge public out-

reach for collecting funds for the temple. There was a proposal to reach out to 10-15 crore people for donations.

But the exercise is running behind schedule due to the pandemic. The parishad is waiting for the spread curve to dip a bit.

However, the final decision on the timeline rests on the BJP and RSS top brass. If one goes by the three-and-a-half year deadline, the temple may be ready by February 2024.

VHP is planning a huge public out-reach for collecting funds for the temple



— YOGI ADITYANATH,  
UTTAR PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER

# Temples across Capital were decorated as special rituals marked grand bhoomi pujan in Ayodhya

By Ram Kinkar Singh  
in New Delhi

**C**OLOURFUL lights and saffron flags adorned temples in the national capital and chants of Jai Shri Ram rent the air as devotees thronged them to perform special puja on the occasion of ground-breaking ceremony for a Ram temple in Ayodhya.

At a Chattarpur temple, devotees started arriving around 6 am, just after the morning puja ended, temple's administrator Kishor Chawla said. "A puja has been going on non-stop for three days. The 'Ram darbar' has been decorated. A replica of 'shila' (foundation stone) has been prepared and it will be sent to Ayodhya along with other material," he said.

Thirty-two pandits performed a special puja amid beating of dholaks and tambourines and recital of bhajans. Considering the restrictions due to Covid-19, only a limited number of people are allowed at any given time. A self-dispenser machine has been installed for 'prasad' distribution, Chawla said.

Alankar Yadav, a 57-year-old resident of Chattarpur, clapped vigorously as the loudspeakers blared Ram dhun. "It's a dream come true. I am lucky that I am alive to see this day," he said.

Anukriti Bansal, 41, drove to the temple in the middle of rain to have darshan of 'Ram lalla'. "I could have watched it on television, but I chose to come here and spend some time listening to 'Sunderkand', she said.

Delhi BJP unit chief Aadesh Gupta, along with his Dalit supporters, witnessed LIVE streaming program of the bhoomi pujan and lit 101 diyas in Valmiki Mandir at Mandir Marg.

## Diyas, sweets and havans in city's temples

At the Jhandewalan temple in Karol Bagh, people started trickling in as early as 5 am. Vinod Gandhi, the manager of the temple, said the entire premise has been decorated with colourful lights and recital of the Ramayan has been going on for the last 24 hours.

The staff distributed special prasad to devotees after the puja. The temple had also planned a diya lighting event in the evening.

Vinod Mishra of the Birla Mandir in central Delhi said the temple had sent its soil to Ayodhya which will be used in the construction of the Ram temple. Saffron flags adorned the walls of the temple and colourful bulbs hung from its dome. Devotees performed puja amid non-stop Ram bhajan and kirtan. Mishra said the administration has not allowed large gatherings as per the Covid-19 protocols.

A festive atmosphere prevailed at the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) headquarters at RK Puram, once the nerve centre of the Ram Janmabhoomi movement, as senior leaders of saffron outfits gathered to watch the live telecast of the ground-breaking ceremony for a Ram temple in Ayodhya on Wednesday.

In 1984, a 'Dharm Sansad' (religious conclave) of Hindu seers

PHOTOS: QAMAR SIBTAIN



# TEMPLE RUN: FROM AYODHYA TO DELHI



Prasad being distributed at the Valmiki Mandir in Delhi.

was held in Delhi where it was decided that the VHP will undertake the activities related to Ram Janmabhoomi, joint general secretary of VHP Surendra Jain said.

VHP stalwart Ashok Singhal was among those who spearheaded the movement. In the next few years, the headquarters served as a centre of initial discussions among prominent leaders of the movement.

"Ashok Singhal ji used to have discussions with a close group of 15-20 persons over how to achieve the goal of Ram temple in Ayodhya, at the meditation hall of this building," Jain said.

On Wednesday, a giant LED screen was installed in an open area of the VHP headquarters at Sankat Mochan Ashram, where proceedings of 'bhoomi pujan'

were watched by a gathering of locals, New Delhi MP Meenakshi Lekhi and several leaders and members of the outfit.

As the prime minister raised the slogan of Jai Siya Ram in Ayodhya, the audience at the VHP headquarters too burst into loud chants of 'Jai Shri Ram'. Many sat with folded hands and calls of 'Jai Shri Ram' were heard periodically, as the bhoomi pujan telecast progressed.

"Whatever happened in Ayodhya, you can feel its pulse at this office that was a centre of the movement for Ram temple in Ayodhya," said Jain.

A 'yagna' was performed at the VHP headquarters and was followed by kirtan and LIVE telecast from Ayodhya.

— With inputs from PTI

## CITY CELEBRATES WITH FIREWORKS, COLOURS

By Sushant Mehra  
in New Delhi

NOT JUST Ayodhya, an atmosphere of joy resonated on the day of Ram temple's ground-breaking ceremony in the national capital as well. In many places across Delhi, it seemed like Diwali was being celebrated.

While some chose to worship Lord Ram in their homes, some sang hymns and some organised puja to mark the occasion. At some places, some people even

played Holi and used fireworks in celebration. LIVE telecast was screened at Sri Ram Mandir in Laxmi Nagar and Vivek Vihar. Thousands of diyas were lit at the Birla Mandir.

BJP MP Pravesh Verma built a grand Ram gate outside his government residence at Windsor Place, which was decorated with lights. A large banner of the Ram Temple was also placed outside his house. The saffron-coloured flag was installed as well.

PANKAJ NANGIA



People play with colours as they celebrate Ram Temple's foundation laying ceremony, in Delhi on Wednesday.



# OPPN DIVIDED OVER BHOOOMI PUJAN EVENT

By Anand Kumar Patel  
in New Delhi

**THE OPPOSITION** parties were a divided house on the occasion of the ground-breaking ceremony for Ram Temple construction in Ayodhya on Wednesday. Former Congress President Rahul Gandhi praised Lord Ram as an epitome of tolerance and justice.

Samajwadi Party leader Akhilesh Yadav and Bahujan Samaj Party supremo Mayawati were guarded in their response. AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi was extremely critical of PM Narendra Modi leading the bhoomi pujan ceremony.

'Secular' credential of the opposition parties was at stake on the day PM Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of Ram Temple in Ayodhya. The opposition leaders failed to put up a united voice against the BJP on the issue and voices in different tones were heard.

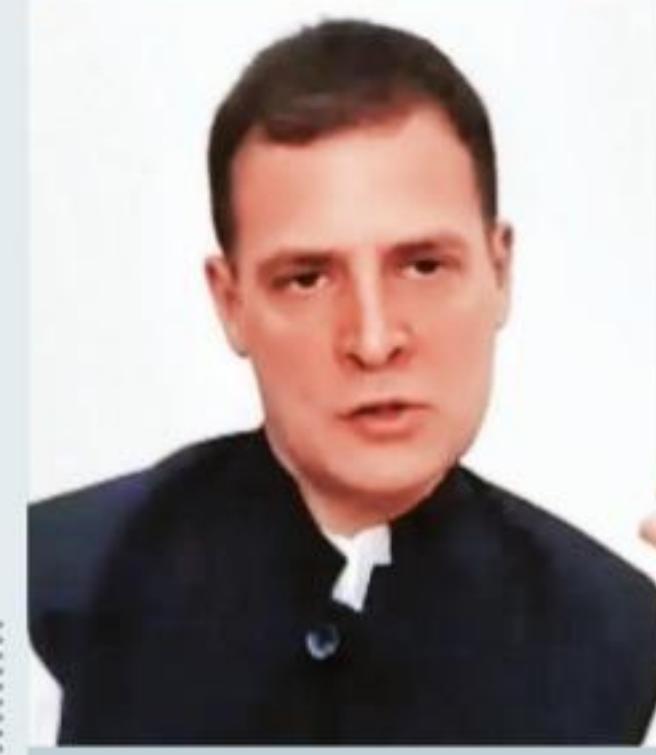
Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi was careful in his response. He was all praise for Lord Ram. In his tweet, the Congress leader said, "Lord Ram represents supreme human qualities and



A mandir or a masjid cannot be a symbol of any nation, today's event & a PM participating in it just make it Hindutva's success... — ASADUDDIN OWAISI, AIMIM CHIEF

is the ultimate soul of humanity deep-rooted inside us."

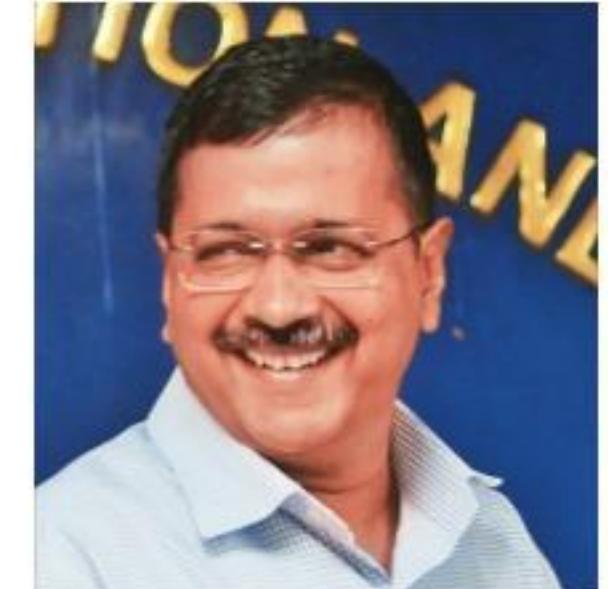
"Ram is love, he can never be identified with hatred, Ram is compassion as he can never be cruel, Ram is justice as he can never be identified with injustice," he added. There was no mention of Ram Temple or the ground-break-



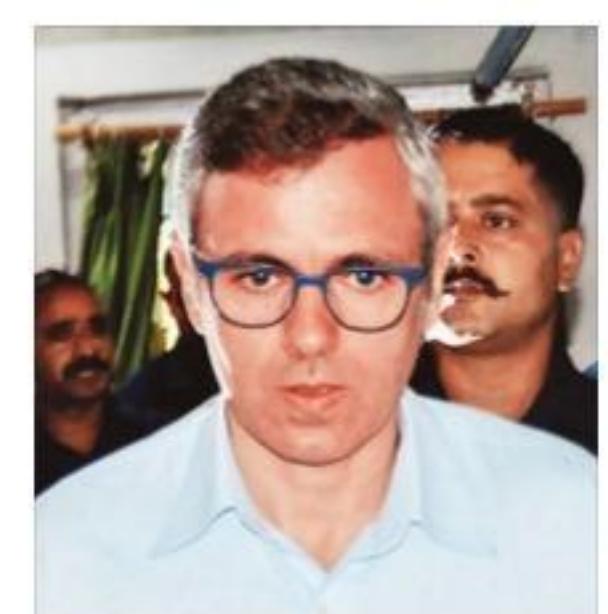
Lord Ram represents supreme human qualities and is the ultimate soul of humanity deep-rooted inside us. — RAHUL GANDHI, CONGRESS LEADER

ing ceremony in Rahul's tweet as against the statement put out by Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. In her tweet, she had lauded the construction of Ram Temple.

But Priyanka's rivals in Uttar Pradesh were guarded in their response and stopped short of welcoming the temple construction. Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav in his tweet said, "Jai Mahadev, Jai Siya-Ram, Jai Radhe Krishna, Jai Hanuman; Let all be filled with welfare from Lord Shiva, Lord Ram's fearlessness and the unfettered gesture of Lord Krishna."



Congratulations to the entire country on the occasion of bhoomi pujan. May India show the path to the world in times to come. Jai Shri Ram! Jai Bajrang Bali. — ARVIND KEJRIWAL, DELHI CHIEF MINISTER



BJP displaying its hypocrisy. They can gather & celebrate. The rest of us can't even meet to discuss what's happening in Jammu and Kashmir. — OMAR ABDULLAH, FORMER J&K CM

## 'MUST PRESERVE UNITY TILL LAST BREATH'

By Indrajit Kundu  
in Kolkata

**HINDU-MUSLIM-SIKH-ISAAI,** aapas mein hain bhai bhai! Mera Bharat mahaan, mahaan hamara Hindustan, said a message shared by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on the day Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for the grand Ram temple in UP's Ayodhya.

"Our country has always upheld the age-old legacy of unity in diversity, and we must preserve this to our last breath!" the CM posted on social media.

The Trinamool Congress chief,

however, refrained from directly commenting on the events in Ayodhya or the PM's participation. In fact, the TMC leadership has maintained silence on the 2019 Supreme Court verdict paving way for the construction of a temple in Ayodhya.

Questioning Banerjee's stance, Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankar tweeted, "Long wait over, thanks to historic judicial verdict. Appeasement

silence stance resonates. Ram Sita in our Constitution."

The West Bengal government has enforced a total lockdown in the state on Wednesday as part of its weekly Covid containment strategy. BJP supporters gathered outside a party office in north Kolkata's Dum Dum park area and conducted a havan to mark the occasion.

"We have organised a havan. Let police do their job but let me clarify, the date for



Mamata Banerjee

today's foundation stone laying ceremony was announced well in advance. We don't think the Bengal CM believes this state is a part of India. She wants to hurt the sentiment of Hindus. Every person has the right to defend his religion," a local BJP leader who had organised the event told India Today TV.

In West Midnapore district, police arrested a few BJP supporters for flouting lockdown norms and congregating to organise a puja next to a party office in Midnapore town.

In Kharagpur, BJP workers clashed with police after a few party workers were arrested for violating the lockdown.



Today is a historic day and we can all feel the joy of this moment. The grand Ram temple is also the temple of the country... a celebration of India's pride... — RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD, UNION MINISTER

## Celebrations at Ravana temple in Noida to mark bhoomi pujan



Priests perform puja at the Ravana temple at the Bisrakh village in Greater Noida.

By Abhishek Anand  
in Greater Noida

AT THE Bisrakh village of the city, a handful of devotees gathered at the temple of Ravana and celebrated the bhoomi pujan of Ram Mandir in Ayodhya. Ravana is said to be born in the Bisrakh village and it has a one of its kind temple dedicated to the 'Rakshas Raja'.

The priest of the temple Ashokanand Maharaj said Ravana is incomplete without Lord Ram as he is the one who gave him moksha (salvation). A handful of soil from the Ravana's temple was also sent to Ayodhya for the ground-breaking ceremony. Soil from various temples and cities, related to the legendary epic Ramayana was sent to Ayodhya for the bhoomi pujan.

"At this occasion, when Ram Lalla is

going to get his home after 500-year-long struggle, we the residents of Ravana's village of Bisrakh, are extremely delighted. We have organised religious ceremonies at the Ravana's temple to celebrate the homecoming of our Lord Ram," said Ashokanand.

Asked why the residents of the village worship Ravana and why they are celebrating, Ashokanand said, "Hinduism is a religion of diversity. Fear of god is not a concept in Hinduism. It's all about karma. God is everywhere, in all living and non-living things, in the good, in the bad and in all of us. Ravana was a devotee of Lord Shiva, and he wasn't a bad person till he started misusing his powers. He became so powerful that he had everything sans salvation. He knew that the only person who could bring him to salvation is Lord Ram."

Ravana is incomplete without Ram, said the temple priest



Lord Ram holds a unique place in our culture & civilization. His life teaches us the importance of truth, justice, equality of all and compassion... — ASHOK GEHLOT, RAJASTHAN CHIEF MINISTER



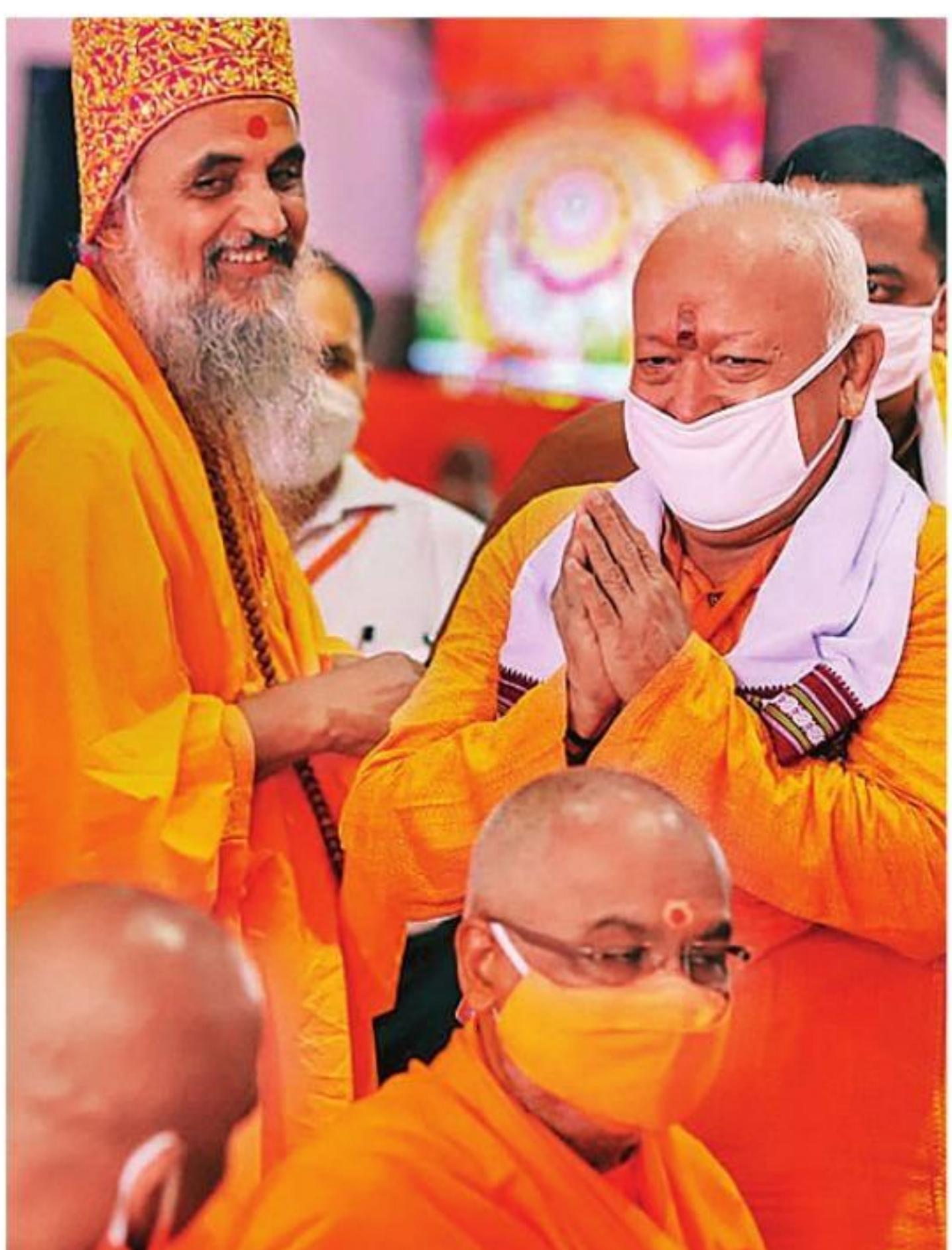
PM Narendra Modi and UP CM Yogi Adityanath visit Hanumangarhi in Ayodhya on Wednesday.

(Right) Members of Gayawal Pandas community light earthen lamps to celebrate the event in Ayodhya.



# GROUNDBREAKING!

Diwali comes early across country as people light lamps, offer prayers to celebrate Ram Temple Bhoomi Pujan in Ayodhya



RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat at the event in Ayodhya. (Right) Fireworks light up the night sky to celebrate the Ram Temple event, in Jodhpur.

PHOTOS: AGENCIES



(Above) Women of Muslim community shower flower petals on an artist dressed as Lord Ram, to celebrate the groundbreaking ceremony of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, organised by Yuva Sanskritik Manch in Bhopal.

(Above, right) Indians take out a tableau on 'Ayodhya's Shri Ram Mandir' around the US Capitol Hill to celebrate the groundbreaking occasion of the temple, in Washington.

(R) PM Narendra Modi's mother Hiraba watches the live telecast of the foundation-laying ceremony of Ayodhya's Ram Mandir.



UP CM Yogi Adityanath and Yoga guru Ramdev greet each other during the function ahead of the inception of Bhoomi Pujan, in Ayodhya.  
(Left) Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu offers prayers on the occasion of the Bhoomi Pujan for Ayodhya's Ram Temple, at Upa-Rashtrapati Nivas in Delhi.



A priest performs 'Maha Aarti' to celebrate the event, at Pushkar in Ajmer as devotees light earthen lamps at Ramchandra Ji Temple in Jaipur.

## DAY IN WORDS

[GI tag] can be issued for goods originating in the territory where a given quality is attributable to its geographical origin.

— AMARINDER SINGH, Punjab CM, asking PM Modi not to allow geographical indication tagging of basmati to Madhya Pradesh

Discernment is good, and integrity, and justice. Justice. Justice is so important for me; if anyone's not being treated fairly.

— KATY PERRY, singer, on what values she wants to pass on to her unborn daughter



[Willian] is a good footballer. He is calm and humble and it will be sad if I don't see him again as a team-mate

— ANTONIO RÜDIGER, Chelsea centre back, on his teammate Willian's transfer

## DAY IN NUMBERS

₹42 L ₹27k cr

loss faced by Maharashtra govt as many Shramik Special trains run empty in a month

worth of investment made in Karnataka since March, ensuring 46,000 jobs

## AROUND THE WORLD

THE INDEPENDENT  
ON MISOGYNY IN SOCIAL MEDIA

## Abuse against women online a serious issue

ACCORDING to a recent report, half of Gen Z young men believe that "feminism has gone too far". For those of us who have been active on social media for the last 10 years, this is nothing new.

The question is, why? We are supposedly living in a progressive society.

## Sites ban feminist voices while promoting hate

Male politicians and celebrities are regularly criticised, but the criticism is usually targeted at their intellect or policies. It is rare to see a male figure threatened or being told a variation of, "you're only saying this because you're ugly".

By banning feminist voices whilst promoting anti-female hate, these sites are reinforcing the idea that it is acceptable to degrade and threaten women for voicing an opinion you do not agree with.

They are allowing a culture of punishment to form, where the rebuke is more important than the reason for it. Where the aim is not to suggest another way of thinking, but to leave women afraid. In short, it is becoming a how-to guide for abusive males.

## DAILY HUMOUR

“Nothing ever fatigues but doing what I do not like.”  
— Jane Austen

## DREAMING BUDDHA

PTI



Sculptors resume work on sculptures at a workshop, during unlock 3.0, in the heritage town of Mamallapuram, Tamil Nadu, on Wednesday.

# Ram Mandir and BJP's poll tests



by Minhaz Merchant

**T**HE symbolically powerful *bhumi pujan* at the site of the proposed Ram Mandir in Ayodhya on August 5 marks the beginning of a three-pronged electoral strategy by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Each prong of the *trishul* has a short-term and long-term strategic objective.

## Numbers game

The first obviously is to coalesce the majority vote. The Bihar and West Bengal assembly elections in 2020 and 2021 respectively are the short-term targets. The Uttar Pradesh assembly election in 2022 and the Lok Sabha poll in 2024 are longer term objectives. All these have the same aim: build on the BJP's core vote base.

Consider the math. The BJP has 180 million members. Assume an average of two voting adults per family. That translates into 360 million captive voters who are likely to be eligible to vote. (Over 911 million Indians were eligible to vote in the 2019 general election, according to the Election Commission of India, of whom 610 million voted.) Thus the BJP has a lock on over 35 per cent of all eligible voters even before campaigning starts.

But that may not be enough. If the Opposition comes together, the BJP needs a minimum vote share of 42-45 per cent to win a majority in the Lok Sabha and stay in power. The NDA has atrophied: the JD(U) is a pale shadow; the Akalis are in disarray; and the Paswans are too small to matter.

To ensure a clean majority in 2024, the BJP knows it has to also win a share of the moderate Hindu vote that traditionally favours "secular" national or regional parties. In 2019, the BJP won 37.36 per cent vote share. In 2024, it will have to increase that significantly in the

absence of strong allies and the possibility of Opposition consolidation.

The construction of the Ram Mandir has been carefully timed: it is expected to be ready to admit its first devotees three months before the 2024 Lok Sabha poll. The optics will worry the Opposition. Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi-Vadra has already hedged her party's bets by declaring: "Ram is in everyone." Opposition parties know the emotive impact of the Ram Mandir being constructed "after 500 years of a historical wrong." The BJP, however, is taking nothing for granted. Hence the other two prongs in its *trishul* strategy.

The second prong is time-tested: welfare benefits. Modi has turned India into a quasi-welfare state. The poor will receive food grains from over 50 lakh ration shops at between ₹one and two per kilogram from any state in India, not just from the state where the ration card was issued. Free gas cylinders (and subsidised refills) have transformed the lives of rural households. Electricity is patchy but available where it never was since and before independence.

## A question of optics

Toilets may have been converted into storerooms in some villages but in many poor homes sanitisation has vastly improved.

Direct benefit transfers of subsidies into Jan Dhan Yojana bank accounts of several hundred million Indians who never had bank accounts has removed middlemen siphoning off cash. Ayushman Bharat health insurance that gives poor families medical cover of up to ₹5 lakh has been a boon in tier 2 and tier 3 towns where health care remains rudi-

mentary as the Covid-19 pandemic has cruelly exposed.

The combination of Ram and welfare is what the BJP believes will not only deliver it a third term in office at the Centre but victories in the crucial states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh as well as make further inroads into West Bengal. There is a fly in the ointment though: the faltering economy. Modi knows that polarisation and welfare may not be enough to guarantee victory. The third prong in the BJP's strategy, however, is the most vulnerable. If the distressed economy doesn't recover quickly, the BJP could still face the wrath of the jobless on the one hand and over-taxed middle-class professionals on the other.

## The weakest link

The Modi government's macro-economic management has been abysmal. India has regressed on many fronts. The country is more protectionist than it has been for nearly 30 years. Over-regulation has antagonised global investors. One company alone, Reliance Industries, has attracted more FDI in calendar 2020 than the rest of India put together.

The economy is likely to shrink by 5 per cent in 2020-21. Unless there is a quick bounce back in the second half of this fiscal, the economy could put a wrench in the BJP's electoral strategy. The idea that the economy does not matter to the majority of voters is simply not true. A new generation of 18-to-23-year-olds will vote for the first time in 2024. All of them are zoomers, born after 2000. For them education and jobs matter as much as the Ram Mandir and social welfare benefits.

It is this demographic slice of new India that the BJP needs to capture in Bihar, in UP, in West Bengal and in the rest of India. Ayodhya is a powerful force multiplier. But the rising force lies with the young Indian.

—The writer is an author and publisher. The views expressed are personal.



## SO FUNNY

If you cannot laugh at yourself, I can do it for you.

“If it's the Psychic Network why do they need a phone number?”

—Robin Williams



# BOOMTOWN RAP

ARAVIND GOWDA

# Indisposed, CM sparks discontent



**C**HIEF Minister BS Yediyurappa is out of action for at least 15 days as he tested positive for Covid-19. The Cabinet expansion planned in August is now postponed indefinitely, intensifying unrest among aspirants and disgruntled leaders. Discontent has been brewing in the party in the state unit for two months, as Yediyurappa has been accused of neglecting party loyalists while expanding the Cabinet. The CM wanted to appoint at least three powerful BJP leaders to the Cabinet. But now their waiting period has been extended. A section of the BJP, led by Deputy Chief Minister Laxman Savadi, was in New Delhi to bring the growing discontent among the state leaders to the notice of the party's central leadership. There are six berths in the Council of Ministers



Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa; (above left) Deputy CM Laxman Savadi

- three loyalists and three legislators - who switched sides to join the BJP and played a crucial role in installing Yediyurappa as the CM - shortlisted to be sworn in as ministers. However, the loyalists are against inducting the three turncoat politicians into the Cabinet.

This prompted the CM to appoint 22 legislators to various boards and corporations to try

and appease them. Several of them expressed dissatisfaction, contending that they were fit for ministerial jobs and not as chairman of boards and corporations.

So far, three of them have not assumed charge; they feel they are too senior to handle such 'junior' assignments.

Yediyurappa then tested positive while five senior ministers, in

his close network, were in-home quarantine. The chief minister has declared he will continue to function from the hospital.

The delay in the Cabinet expansion is bound to impact the political landscape. The CM's aides have requested the ministerial aspirants to wait for another three weeks.

*The writer is a publicist, film scribe and political journalist.*

## Tough times for movie halls

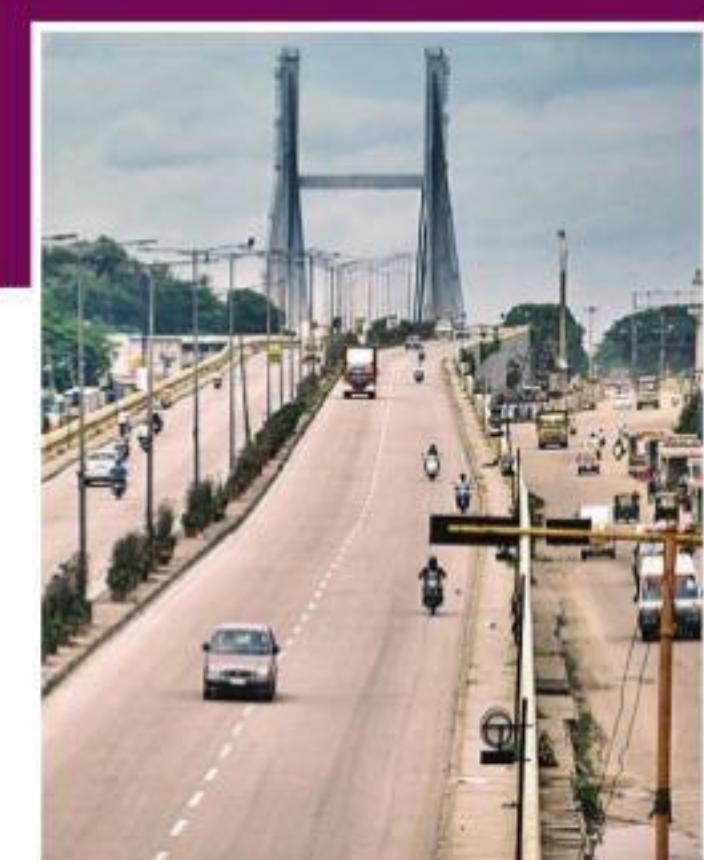
FILM exhibitors in Karnataka are facing an uncertain future, with many of them planning to shut down the theatres permanently or convert them into alternative uses. All the movie screens (240 multiplex screens and 615 single screens) have been shut since the end of March following the outbreak of Covid-19 in the country.

Though the government has proposed to open the theatres with a maximum occupancy of 25

**Ticket prices may go up to recover costs**

per cent (to maintain social distancing), theatre owners find it economically unviable. Majority of the single screen theatres are located outside Bengaluru and 150 of them have already announced closure. Film screening is a risky business while ticket prices vary depending on the language. Theatre owners have to increase the ticket prices to recover the cost of screening a movie with just 25 per cent occupancy.

**THE ecologically fragile Western Ghats in Karnataka continues to face unprecedented threat owing to development works. In the latest move, the Regional Expert panel has approved the widening of the Kumta-Sirsi Road, which passes through the Sharavathi Valley Wildlife sanctuary, habitat for endangered species like the elusive lion-tailed macaque and tigers. The 67-km road between the two towns has already witnessed a record number of wildlife deaths.**



The almost empty roads of Bengaluru in the lockdown

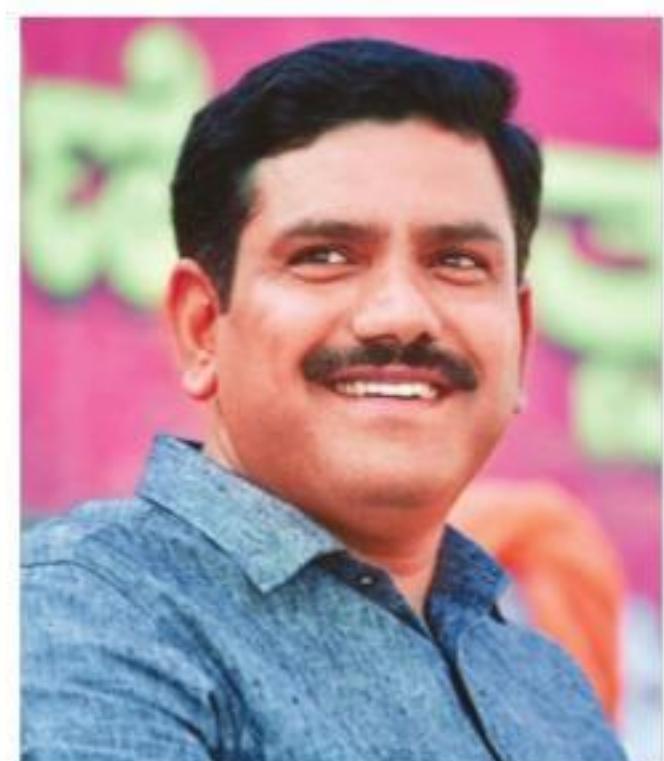
## COVID SPREADING TO THE HINTERLAND

THE one-week lockdown of Bengaluru in mid-July has emerged as one of the major reasons for the sudden spike in Covid-19 positive cases in the hinterland. An estimated 50,000 people, especially daily wage workers, and unemployed people, left Bengaluru for their hometowns ahead of the lockdown in July.

Now, it is believed that these people have spread the pandemic to many districts.

Data shows that Bengaluru accounted for a bulk of the

Covid-19 positive cases until June 21 (44 per cent cases across the state were from the city). The city's share increased to 67 per cent by June end. However, following the one-week lockdown, Bengaluru's case burden reduced to 28 per cent by the end of July while other districts experienced a spike. Kalaburagi district registered a rise of 408% in positive cases. Udupi saw a 129% increase, Ballari a 259% while Belagavi witnessed a 158% rise in the number of cases.



BY Vijayendra

## The rise of Jr. Yediyurappa

THE BJP may deny that it opposes dynastic politics but makes exceptions in the cases of regional leaders such as CM Yediyurappa.

Last week, the BJP appointed Yediyurappa's second son BY Vijayendra as the vice-president of the state unit.

Vijayendra has been waiting in the wings for several years. In the 2018 Assembly polls, he had identified a constituency for himself in Mysuru; campaigned extensively and indi-

### He had been waiting in the wings

rectly declared himself as the party's candidate. At the last moment, the party denied him a ticket because it felt that the BJP, which opposed dynastic politics, could be subjected to public criticism. Besides, Vijayendra's elder brother BY Raghavendra is already an MP from Shimoga.

Undeterred, Vijayendra continued to work for the BJP hoping for a party ticket at least in the next Assembly elections.

Now, he is being seen as a successor to Yediyurappa at the state level.



Former commissioner Bhaskar Rao with Kamal Pant (left) the new Bengaluru police commissioner

## UNPLANNED CHANGE OF GUARD FOR POLICE

THE abrupt transfer of Bengaluru City Commissioner of Police Bhaskar Rao was not only surprising but shocking. Not many people expected the government to transfer an officer, who was performing exceptionally well, especially during Covid-19. While senior IAS officers and healthcare experts took credit for controlling the pandemic in the city in March and April, equal credit goes to Rao, who was effective in ensuring a

complete lockdown. The new police commissioner is Kamal Pant.

It was a year ago that Rao became Commissioner for Bengaluru, soon after the BJP formed the government.

While the government maintained that his transfer was routine, as the officer had completed one year in office, civil society felt otherwise. There have been instances of police commissioners serving longer tenures in the city.

# Vantage POINT

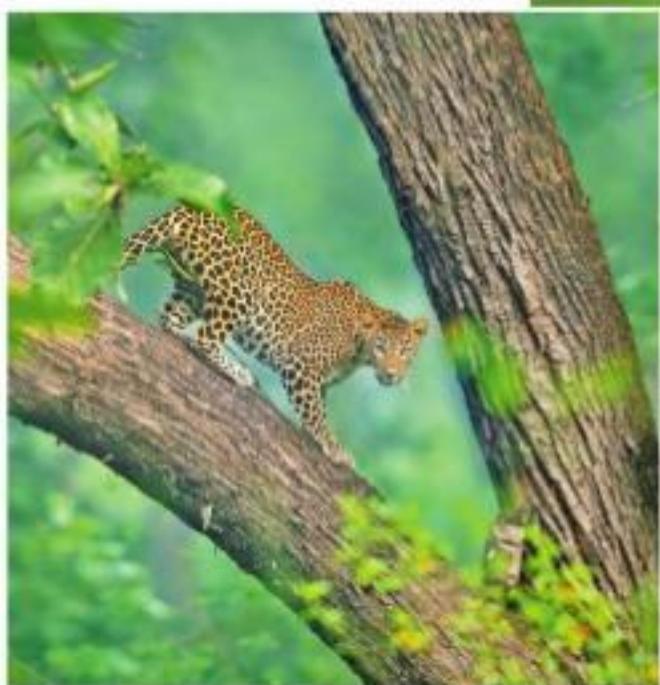
Celebrated wildlife photographer and big cat specialist Shaaz Jung realised the power of nature while he was tracking the melanistic leopard.

by Saimi Sattar

**T**HE PICTURES of Saya (Shadow) going viral means nothing," says Shaaz Jung, a professional wildlife photographer and cinematographer and big cat specialist, who, after tracking and documenting leopards for 10 years in Nagarhole National Park, became an overnight sensation with his pictures of Saya, a melanistic tiger.

He explains why he sounds dismissive of the pictures being shared by the who's who of the celeb world. "These pictures should mean nothing because we live in a digital age where the power of social media is huge. I clicked these two and a half years back and today, there is a story which is packaged well. The internet needs something every day and found this. The photographer's job is to be at the right place at the right time and click the picture." He gives credit to the forest department for working to ensure that enthusiasts can get a glimpse of these animals and the locals for safeguarding the forests against the fire.

He has grown up amidst the jungle as his parents ran a wildlife lodge close to Bengaluru. Jung, who is related to three royal families—the Pataudis, the Nawab of Hyderabad and Bhopal, first heard about Saya in 2015. "Melanism in leopards takes place because they lack the gene which regulates colour. He is double recessive which means he has an abundance of melanin and that is why he is black. It



is not a different species, as many believe," he says of the leopard which many have compared to Bagheera from *The Jungle Book*. What made the find unusual was that melanistic leopards are usually found in extremely thick and dense jungles, like Malaysia, where they've been documented with trap cameras. "What made Saya very unique was that he was thriving in a forest where he didn't belong against the odds of natural selection," says Jung. There

are several reasons which makes the survival of a melanistic leopard in South India difficult. "For six months, the forest is dry, making it next to impossible for him to camouflage and hunt. Moreover, a black coat ensured that he absorbed heat so, in summers you would see him becoming thin and extremely sleek where his ribs would show," he explains. However, Saya was aware that he was different. "These animals perceive colour differently. It comes from the heightened sense of awareness that its survival depends on it. This made him twice as aggressive. He often courted several females at the same time

— something which was never seen before," says Jung. Since his black coat made him much easier to be spotted by prey, Saya used the shadows to his advantage, sometimes lying completely flat and almost lifeless in shade—which has been captured by Jung for a National Geographic documentary. The

*Real Black Panther*

Tracking the melanistic leopard taught Jung the art of being patient. "We spent hours in the park in search of him and we felt lucky if we saw Saya once a week. This sighting could last 15 seconds or couple of minutes or if he was on a tree, a couple of hours. There was always an ele-

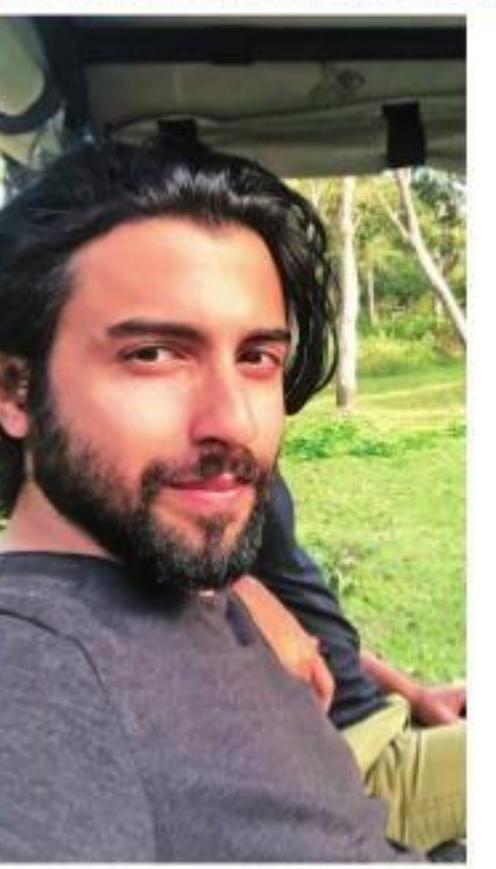
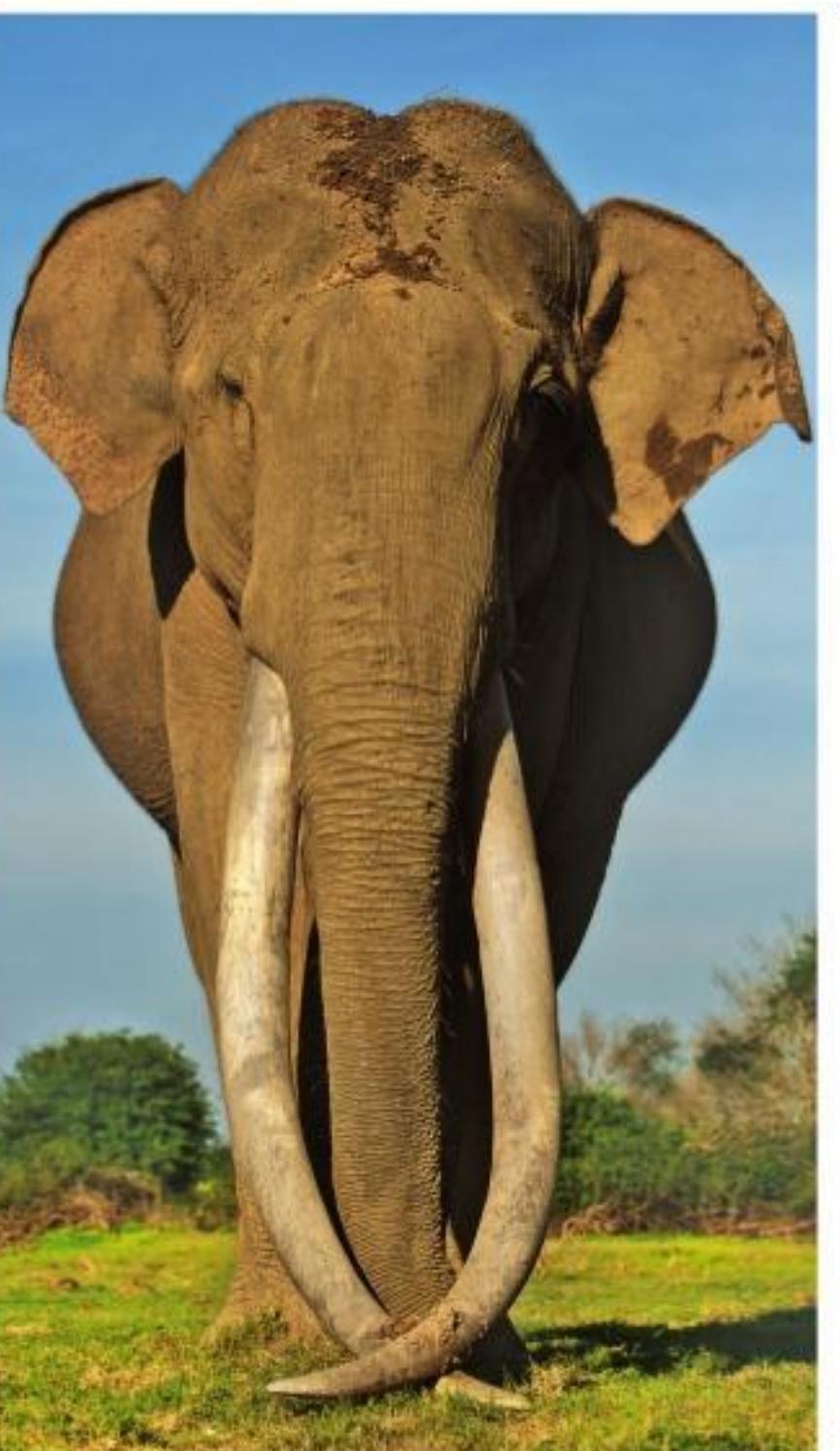
ment of luck and that is the beauty of wildlife. It is unpredictable and that is what draws me to it. Wildlife writes its own script," says Jung thoughtfully.

Jung, an Economics graduate,

gave up a corporate career in favour of staying in the jungle, as he believes he was not cut out for it. "I was creative. I loved being in nature. I was a people's person. I wanted to use my language skills to raise awareness," he recalls. He headed to his family lodge, saw a leopard which reigned his love affair with the forest which had been brewing since childhood. "While tracking leopards I discovered new corners of the jungle and different species. I started

nature. I was a people's person. I wanted to use my language skills to raise awareness," he recalls. He headed to his family lodge, saw a leopard which reigned his love affair with the forest which had been brewing since childhood. "While tracking leopards I discovered new corners of the jungle and different species. I started

## The Shadow of Bagheera



(Clockwise from top):  
Bhogeshwara, the elephant,  
in his full glory; Shaaz Jung  
gave up his corporate  
career in favour of wildlife;  
face to face with Saya and a  
leopard climbs a tree.

learning more from animals than humans. I could have never understood the lessons I learnt by being in nature's lap. I changed and was aware of my surroundings. I became a better person. That's what made me stay on," he says. He started guiding people on safaris. "It was a beautiful experience when people who'd never seen an elephant or a leopard or never switched off the car to listen to the birds did so for the first time. They came upset due to their environment and I just loved watching the way they transformed during their stay."

Jung keeps on going back to the forest as it makes him feel insignificant. "It is important to feel small because that keeps us grounded. I come to the city and I see materialism and economic growth being prioritised at the cost of environmental damage," he says and points out that Nature is way more powerful than we credit it to be.

"I see the human race down on its knees due to a tiny organism. That's the power of nature. This organism has destroyed economies and completely changed who we are," says Jung who elaborated on the concept at a webinar organised by WeWork recently.

But there are lessons to be learnt. "We should emerge as a wiser and a stronger race from this pandemic. But most important, as a more educated race, that values nature."

## AN ECLECTIC PLATFORM FOR YOUNG IGNITED MINDS

Students exchanged notes with a panel of renowned speakers at Laissez Faire, an inter-school competition hosted by the Social Science department of Vasant Valley School

VASANT Valley School recently organised the 17th Laissez Faire, an annual Inter School Competition hosted by the Social Science Department for students of Class XI and XII. The focus this year was on giving students an eclectic platform to integrate the knowledge they've acquired across various domains of Social Sciences and apply it to current issues such as the Covid-19 pandemic.

These were further reinforced through interactions with peers and by absorbing diverse views of renowned speakers.

P. Sainath,

Editor of the People's

Archive of Rural India

and a Magsaysay Award winner, spoke about 'Migrant Crisis', and Dr Shamika Ravi, Director Research Brookings Institution, highlighted the 'Social and Economic Impact of the Pandemic on Rural and Urban Poverty'.

They responded to pertinent questions raised by students.

There were four main events: The Quiz, Eco Online, Psynergy and Biz Bash, in which over 200 students from 22 schools from different parts of the country participated.



Speakers at the Laissez Faire event held at Vasant Valley School

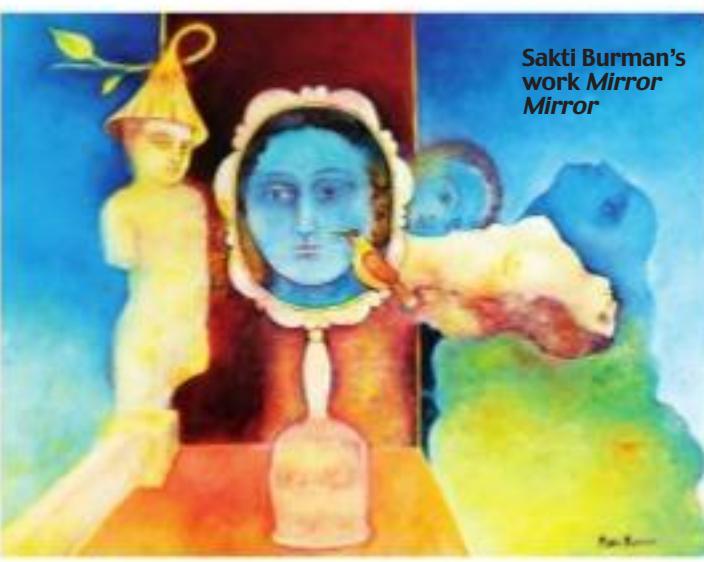


By Rewati Rau

ART show inaugurations over wine and cheese are a thing of the past. So are discussions over your favourite piece of artwork. But that doesn't stop people from enjoying art in the confines of their home. That is why Sunaina Anand, director, Art Alive Gallery, decided to kickstart the art season with the Collectors' Weekend. Every alternate Friday, the gallery's website will showcase works of different sets of artists.

The series started with the works of five Masters of Contemporary Indian Art—SH Raza, Krishen Khanna, Sakti Burman, Jogen Chowdhury and Thota Vaikuntam. Says Anand, "The idea is to keep the whole energy of art alive. The term, new normal, has become so common and one is now thinking of ways to normalise things. The art season has started and instead of opening a physical show I thought of doing this." Anand plans to get artists across different genres and also young and promising artists.

In the current show, the aesthetic vision of Raza is beautifully captured in the master's recurrent and most iconic symbol of the *Bindu* while Sakti Burman's distinct style plays out on the canvas as he draws inspiration from mythology, experience and history. Caught between imagination and desire and constantly being navigated through personal experiences, Krishen Khanna's expressionist brush technique offers a glimpse of many untold stories. Jogen Chowdhury's practice, deeply rooted in understanding the socio-political fabric of society depicted by bold brush strokes that dominate his monochrome canvas. On the other hand, Thota Vaikuntam's art comes to life showcasing the vibrant colours of Telangana through his graceful feminine characters.



Sakti Burman's work *Mirror Mirror*

## WEEKEND WITH THE MASTERS



(Left) Thota Vaikuntam's painting; SH Raza's *Nisha*

# WORLDLY WISE

**PM Narendra Modi expressed shock at the loss of lives in the massive explosion that rocked Beirut and said India's thoughts and prayers are with the bereaved families.**



**• The US stands ready to assist Lebanon. We will be there to help. It looks like a terrible attack. They seem to think ... it was a bomb of some kind, yes. •**

— DONALD TRUMP, U.S. PRESIDENT

# BEIRUT BLEEDS

135 dead, and 4,000 injured after blasts in Lebanese capital

**L**EANESE rescue workers dug through the mangled wreckage of buildings on Wednesday looking for survivors after a massive warehouse explosion sent a devastating blast wave across Beirut, killing at least 135 people and injuring nearly 4,000.

Officials said the toll was expected to rise after Tuesday's blast at port warehouses that stored highly explosive material.

The blast was the most powerful ever to rip through Beirut, a city still scarred by civil war three decades ago and reeling from an economic meltdown and a surge in coronavirus infections.

It sent a mushroom cloud into the sky and rattled windows on the Mediterranean island of Cyprus, about 100 miles (160 km) away.

President Michel Aoun said 2,750 tonnes of ammonium nitrate, used in fertilisers and bombs, had been stored for six years at the port without safety measures.

## Casualties are expected to rise even further

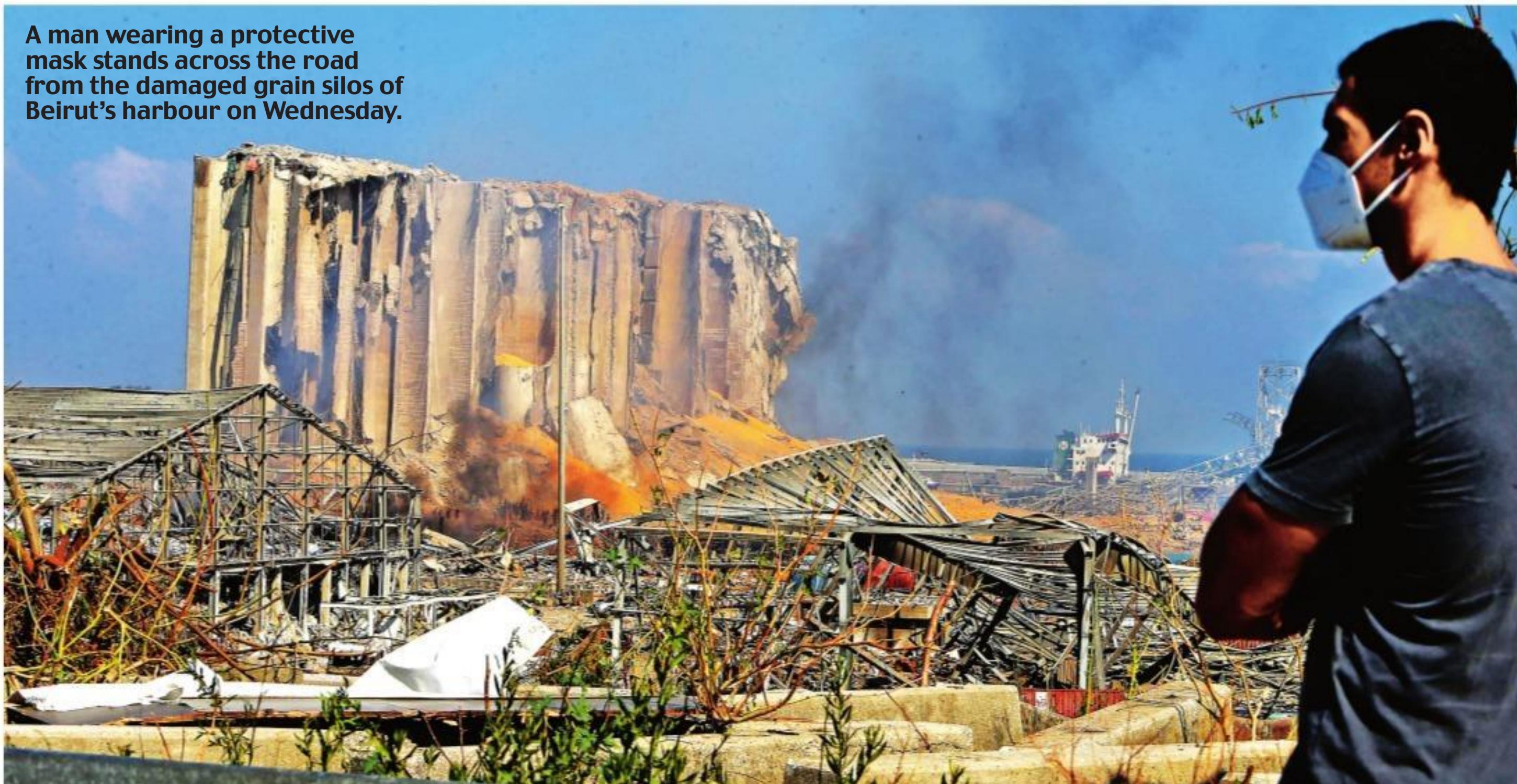
He told the nation the government was "determined to investigate and expose what happened as soon as possible, to hold the responsible and the negligent accountable, and to sanction them with the most severe punishment."

An official source familiar with preliminary investigations blamed the incident on "inaction and negligence", saying nothing was done" by committees and judges to order the removal of hazardous material.

Ordinary Lebanese, who have lost jobs and watched savings evaporate in Lebanon's financial crisis, blamed politicians who have overseen decades of state corruption and bad governance.

"This is a catastrophe for Beirut and Lebanon," Beirut's mayor, Jamal Itani, told Reuters while inspecting damage he estimated ran into billions of dollars.

A man wearing a protective mask stands across the road from the damaged grain silos of Beirut's harbour on Wednesday.



A woman who was injured in Tuesday's blast in Beirut.

## TRACING THE MISSING

Relatives gathered at the cordon to Beirut port seeking information on missing relatives, Lebanon's MTV footage showed.

The intensity of the blast threw victims into the sea where rescue teams tried to recover bodies. Many of those killed

were port and custom employees and people working in the area or driving through during the Tuesday evening rush hour.

The Red Cross was coordinating with the Health Ministry to set up morgues because hospitals were overwhelmed, Kettani said.

—Reuters

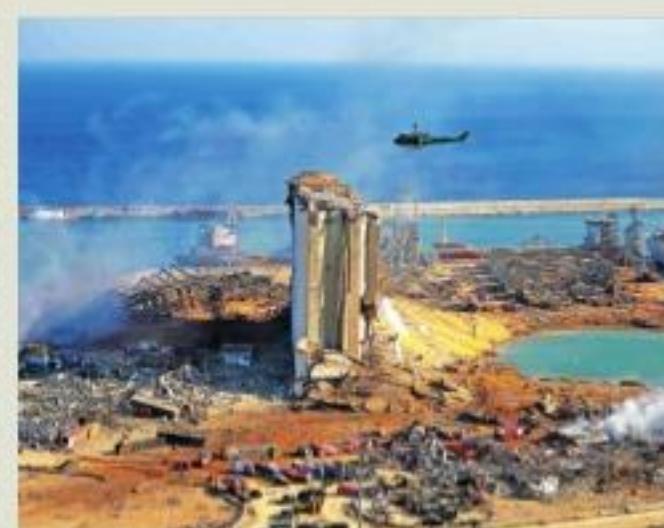
## Ammonium nitrate led to blast?

By Col Vinayak Bhat  
in New Delhi

THE MYSTERIOUS blast at the Beirut port that has killed over a hundred people has put the lens of suspicion on a ship impounded with 2,750 tonnes of ammonium nitrate in 2014 raising questions on authorities.

It's still unclear what triggered the explosion but the unloaded ammonium nitrate from the ship dumped in a warehouse at the port after being confiscated is being seen as the cause of the blast that could have been sparked by excessive heat.

The Merchant Vessel Rhosus called on Beirut Port reportedly somewhere in mid



Beirut port after the blast.

October 2013. Not much is known about the activities of this ship.

Lebanese President Michel Aoun has said that leaving the ammonium nitrate uncheck for six years was completely unacceptable. The ship owned by a Russian

born Cyprus citizen Grechushkin Igor was travelling under a Moldovan flag.

After a proper inspection, it was found to be carrying 2750 tons of ammonium nitrate, considered highly dangerous cargo.

The vessel was impounded with the crew staying on the vessel until the proceedings were completed.

The available satellite images of Beirut Port indicate that the MV Rhosus was impounded on 03 May 2014.

The ship, however, is not observed after 09 Dec 2017 on satellite images.

This indicates that the dangerous cargo was unloaded and possibly allowed to leave the port.

## French President Macron will travel to Beirut today

FRENCH President Emmanuel Macron is travelling to Lebanon on Thursday to offer support for the troubled country after a massive, deadly explosion that has drawn global pledges of medical and humanitarian aid.

Macron's office said that the Emmanuel Macron

French leader will meet with Lebanese political leaders. It provided no further details. Lebanon is a former French protectorate and the countries retain close political and economic ties. France is also sending several tons of aid and emergency workers after the explosion.

—AP

## ISRAEL SAYS IT HAS NO ROLE IN EXPLOSION

ISRAEL has denied having anything to do with the huge explosion in Beirut, adding that the country was ready to give humanitarian and medical assistance to Lebanon.

The huge explosion in port warehouses near the city centre has killed at least 135 people, injured over 4,000 and sent shockwaves that shattered windows, smashed masonry and shook the ground.

"Israel has approached Lebanon through international security and diplomatic channels and has offered the Lebanese government medical and humanitarian assistance," a written statement from Israeli Defence Minister Benny Gantz and Foreign Minister Gabi Ashkenazi said.

The offer comes after two weeks of heightened



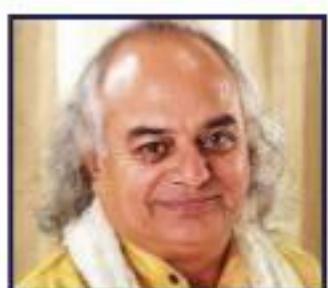
A street in Beirut on Tuesday. tensions between the rival neighbours, which involved a series of border clashes between the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) and Hezbollah on Israel's northern frontier.

Earlier this month, Israel accused Hezbollah of trying to send gunmen across the UN-demarcated Blue Line and said it held the Lebanese government responsible for what it termed an attempted 'terrorist' attack.

There have been numerous similar border spats.

—Daily Mail

# TWO PAGES OF ASTROLOGY, PUZZLES AND GENERAL KNOWLEDGE



By Dr Ajai Bhambi

## ARIES Apr 14-May 14

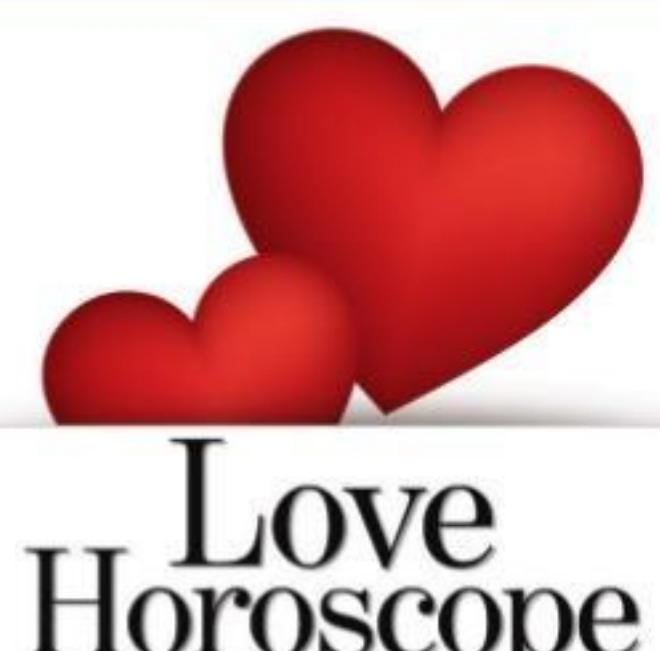
Wisdom will dawn on you after a long struggle to bring positive changes into the relationship. You feel it is worth the wait as this new chapter begins.

## TAURUS May 15-June 15

Your confidence level will be at an all time high. You are going to put into practice some change you had thought of to make your relationship run more smoothly and calmly.

## GEMINI June 16-July 15

You may not be in the right frame of mind to take an important decision and will need help from a loved one for this. No harm in this as it is for your betterment.



# Love Horoscope

\*Dates based on Vedic Sun Signs

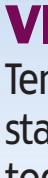
## CANCER July 16-Aug 15

An emotional churning is indicated and you would do well to settle everything there and then. You may not get the right moment later to get your point of view heard.



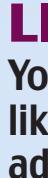
## LEO Aus 16-Sep 15

You could find yourself in a challenging situation and may need to fight back to prove your worth to your beloved. This can take up a lot of energy but victory is indicated.



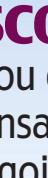
## VIRGO Sep 16-Oct 15

Tension and misunderstanding can be expected today as you struggle to find your place and battle with demons you see in a relationship that is very rocky.



## LIBRA Oct 16-Nov 15

Your charming manner is likely to win you lots of admirers and keep you in a cheerful mood. An encounter can turn out to be very happy to add to your good mood.



## SCORPIO Nov 16-Dec 15

You could feel restless and unsatisfied with the way things are going. Your lover will do the best to help and see that you are comfortable.



## SAGITTARIUS

Dec 16-Jan 13

Being spiritually inclined, you would like to share this wavelength with your love partner. Once this is done, you will be quite happy and contented.



## CAPRICORN

Jan 14-Feb 11

The going will be good. You and your sweetheart will pay a lot of attention to each other, understanding the nuances that are inherent, enabling a better future.



## AQUARIUS

Feb 12-March 13

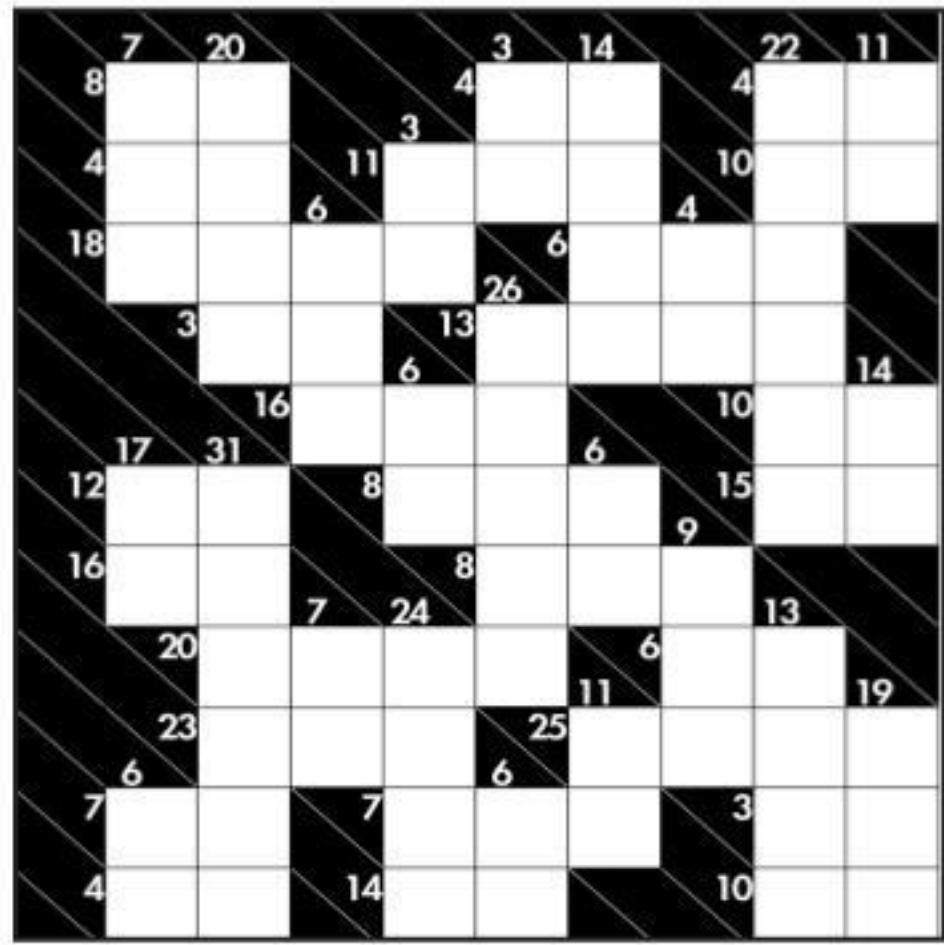
In spite of your best efforts your lover may be unresponsive and this could have a negative influence on you. It might be better to have a heart to heart talk.



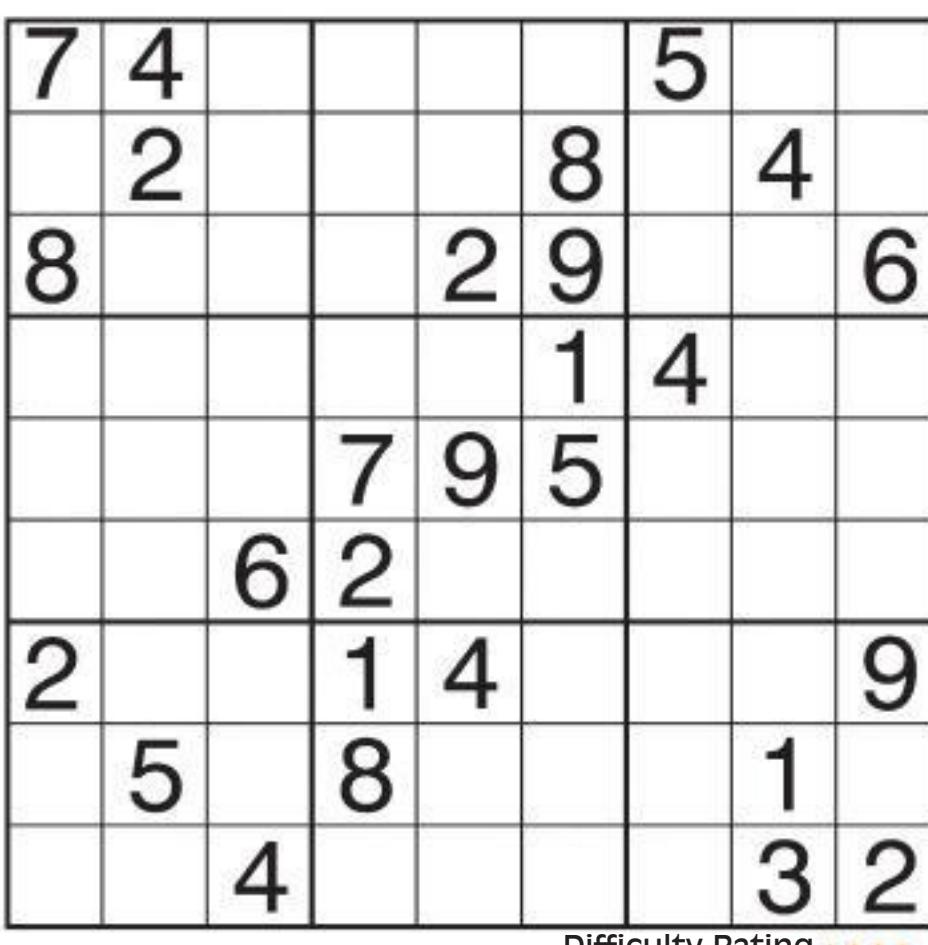
## PISCES Mar 14-Apr 13

Raring to go, you have your lover with you and are ready to explore the world. There is chance of going on a long journey to see a new place.

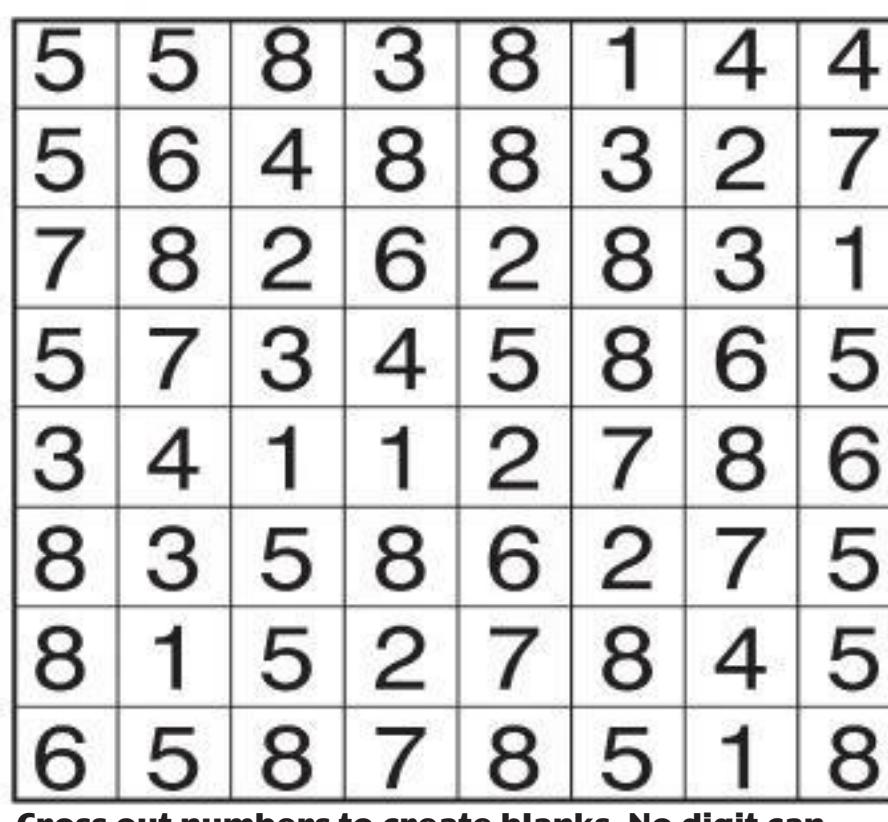
# KAKURO



# SUDOKU CLASSIC



# HITORI



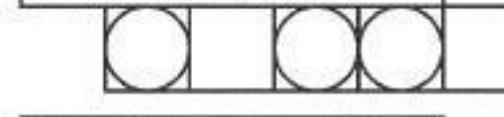
Cross out numbers to create blanks. No digit can appear in a row or column more than once. No two adjacent squares can be blacked out. All the squares left unblacked must be connected — vertically or horizontally — to form a single shape.

# DAILY JUMBLE

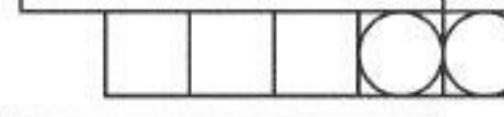
## JUMBLE

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

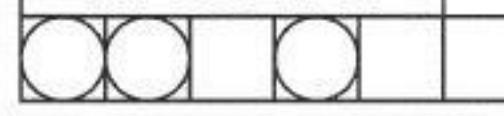
IGNAA



SOGSR



NRCEETH

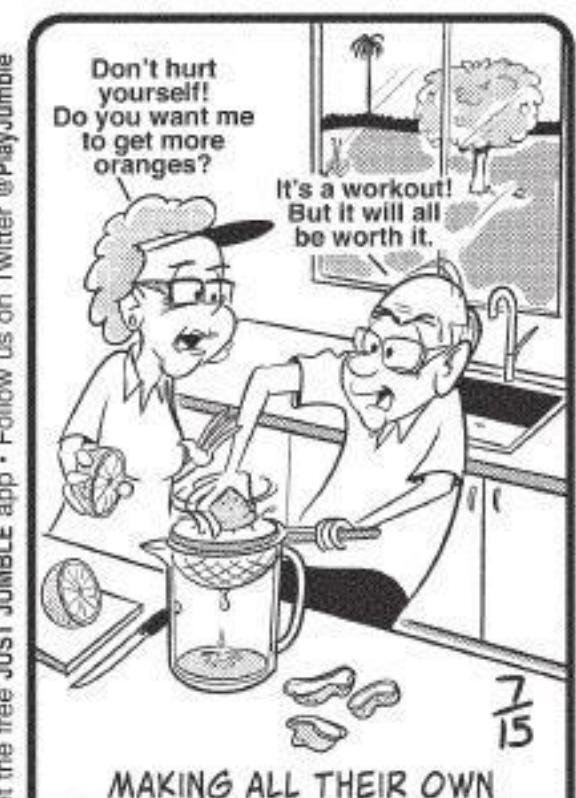


YLASAW



THAT SCRABMED WORD GAME  
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble



MAKING ALL THEIR OWN LOW-PULP ORANGE JUICE ---

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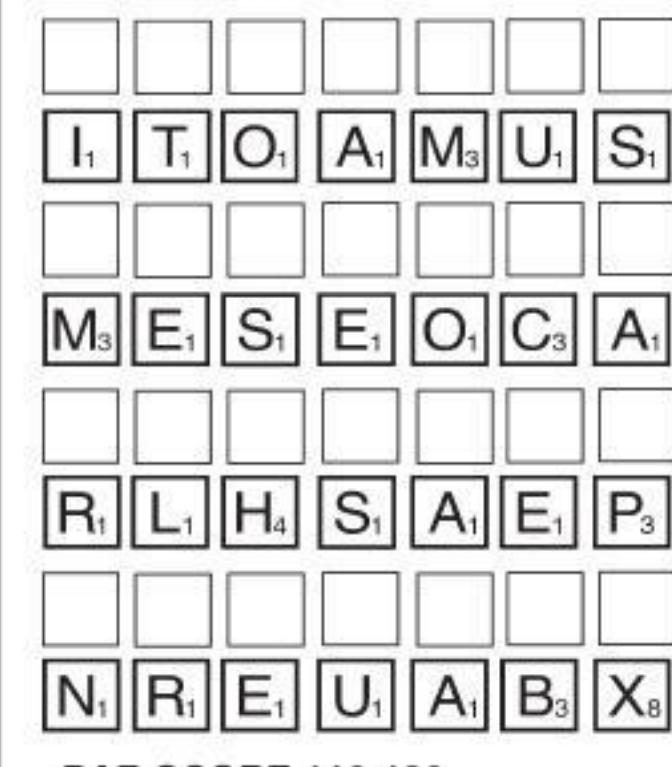
Ans.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

# SCRABBLE GRAMS

## SCRABBLE<sup>®</sup> BRAND

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PAR SCORE 110-120

by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL  
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary.

# MINI SUDOKU



Difficulty Rating ★★★

# SUDOKU



Difficulty Rating ★★★★

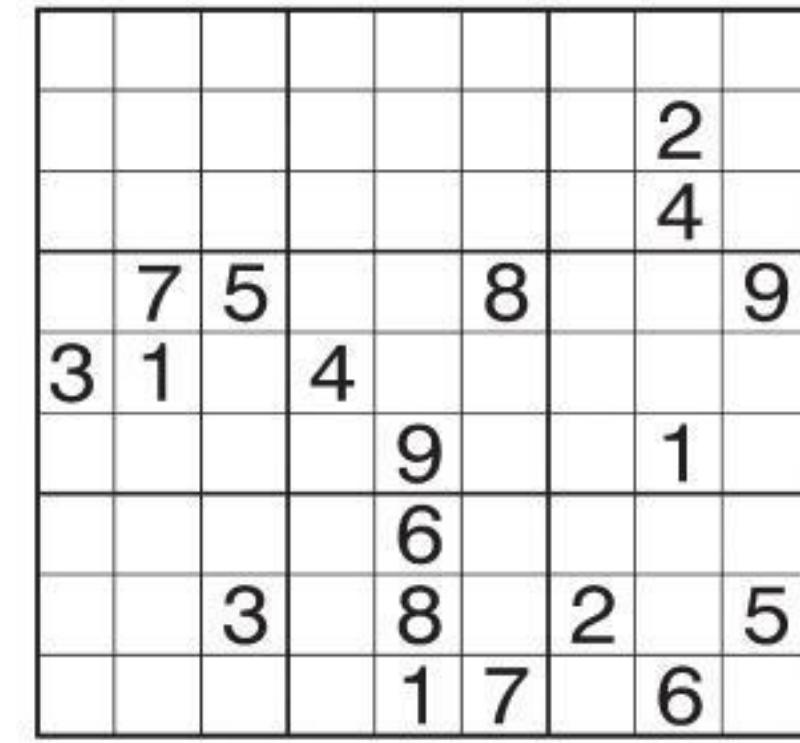


Difficulty Rating ★★★★



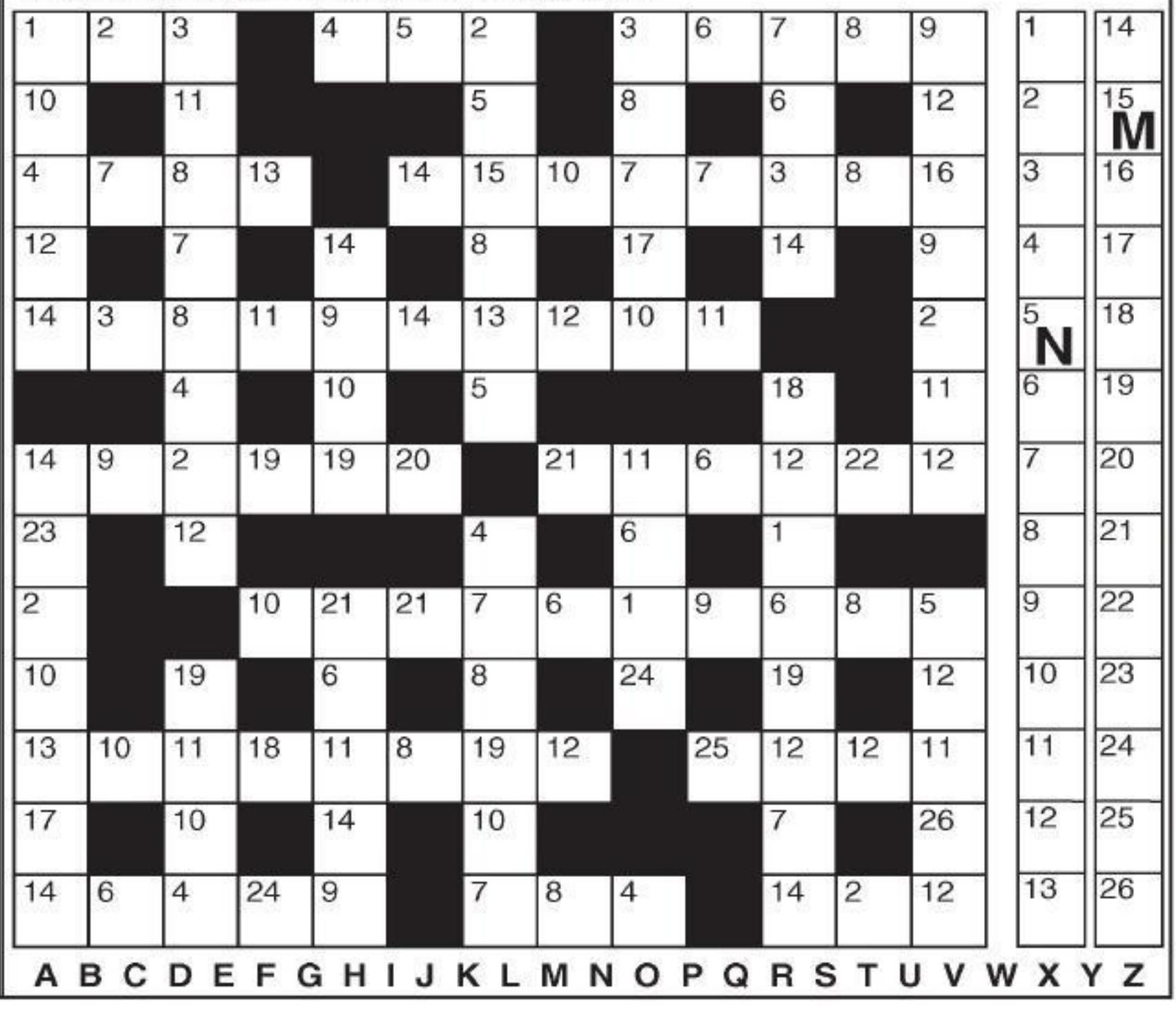
Difficulty Rating ★★★★★

# SUDOKU X



# CODEWORD

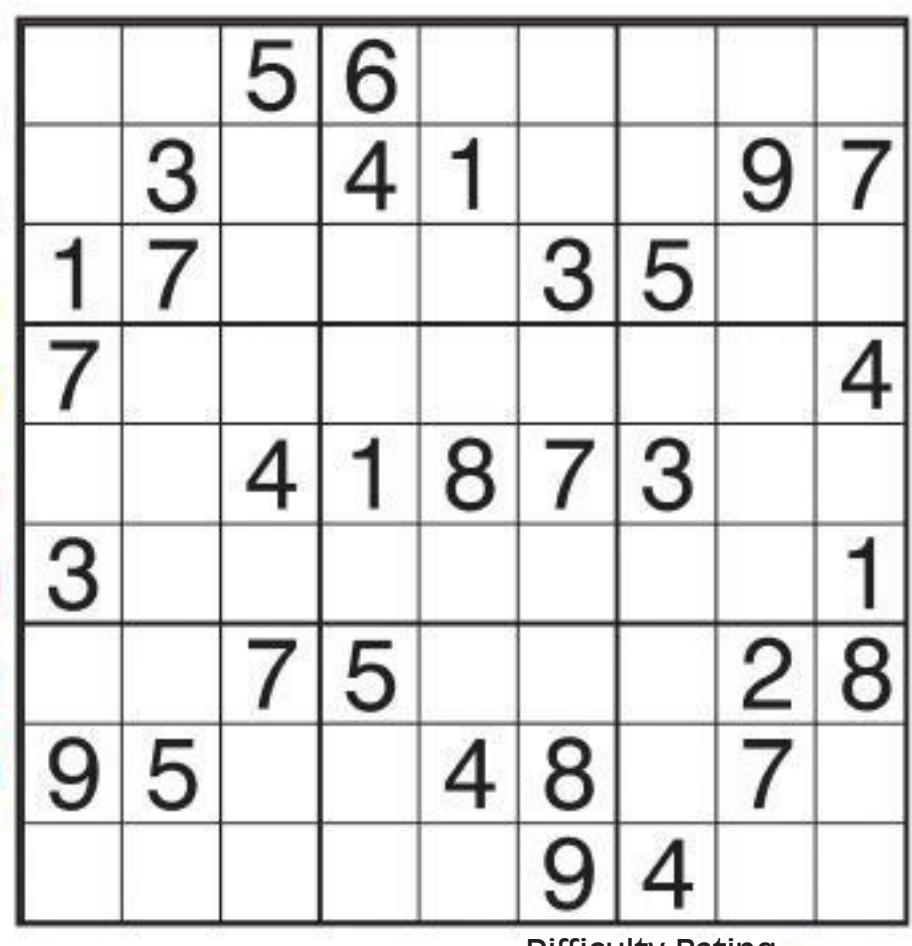
EACH number in our Codeword grid represents a different letter of the alphabet. For example, today 5 represents N so fill in N every time the figure 5 appears. You have two letters in the control grid to start you off. Enter them in the appropriate squares in the main grid, then use your knowledge of words to work out which letters should go in the missing squares. As you get the letters, fill in other squares with the same number in the main grid and control grid. Check off the list of alphabetical letters as you identify them.



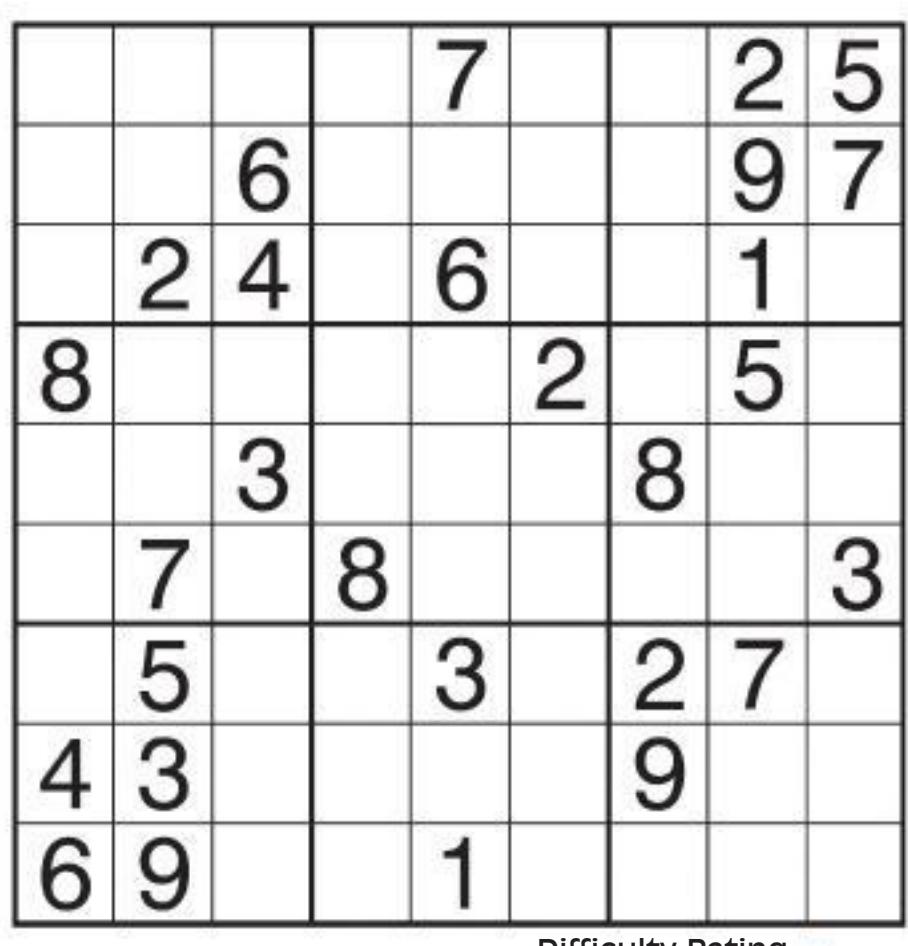
Top  
Page  
Break

**SUDOKU**

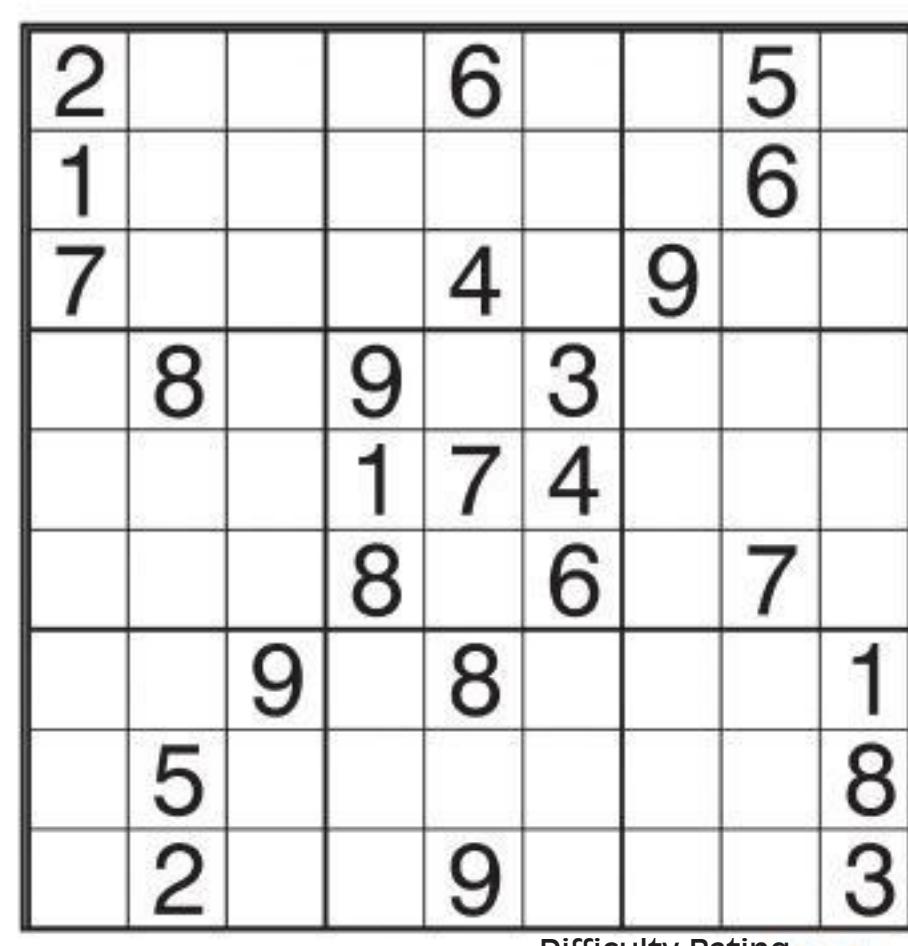
Fill in all the squares in the grid so that each row, column and each of the 3x3 squares contains all the digits from 1 to 9. Solutions are below.



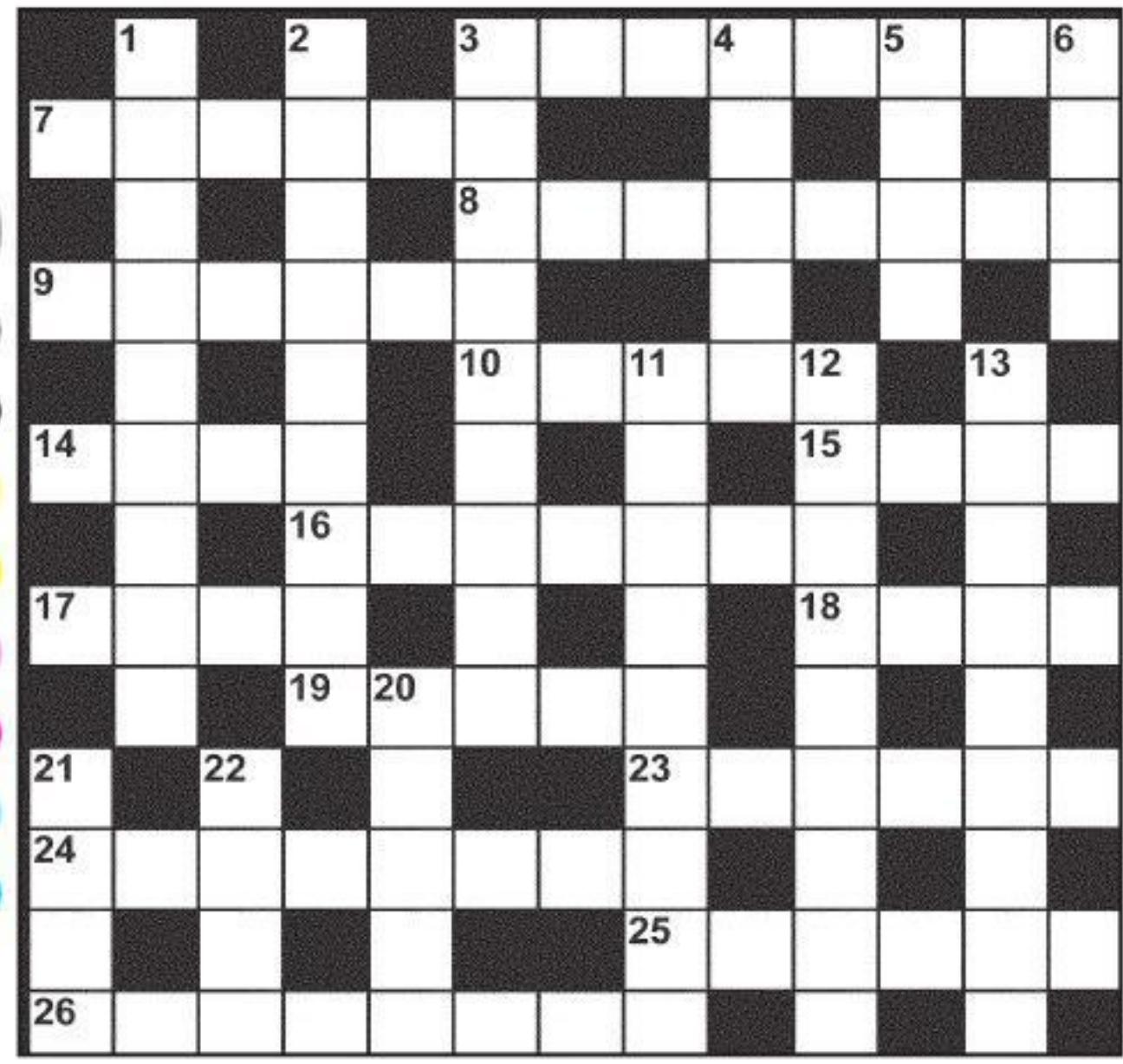
Difficulty Rating ★



Difficulty Rating ★★



Difficulty Rating ★★★

**CRYPTIC CROSSWORD****ACROSS**

- 3 How Ned and Peter reformed (8)
- 7 Ill-will shown when Alice is given a thousand (6)
- 8 Ed's showing pride now that he was in the chair (8)
- 9 Is unable to or can lead the singing? (6)
- 10 That hero, Dennis, has a way to wear one down (5)
- 14 Courtiers show their rank (4)
- 15 Little Norman is up to par (4)
- 16 If you want to be pronounced holy, stay less in bed (7)
- 17 It's so festive in that cafe, Terry! (4)
- 18 No palace has one so beautiful (4)
- 19 Prevent Ted from going back to meet the queen (5)
- 23 Let's face it! I've to have gas! (6)
- 24 A verse about Public Relations in the East? You can keep it! (8)
- 25 Right! I send it out to have

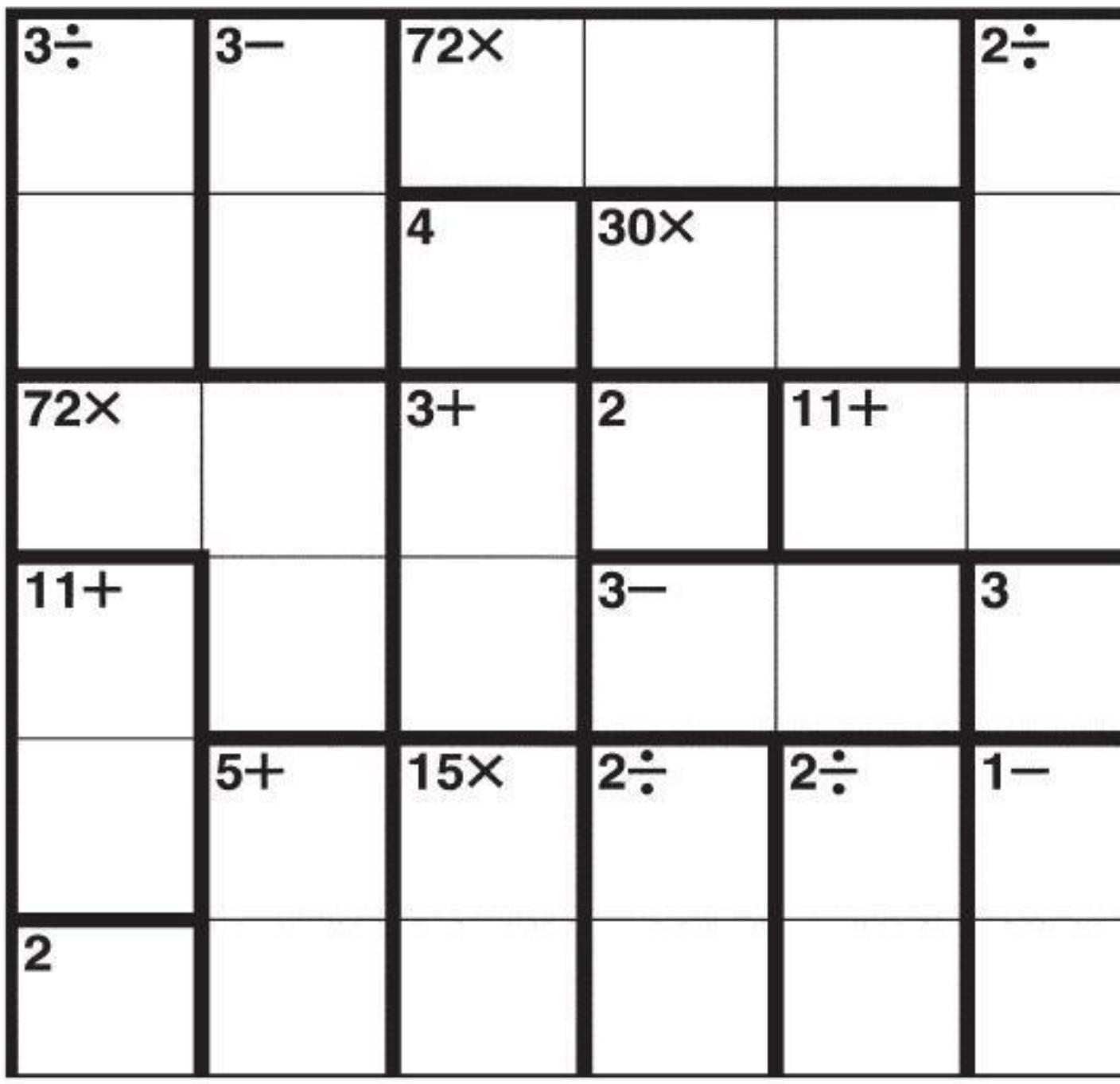
it washed - lightly, though! (6)  
26 Changes hats - has a rest then breaks off (8)

**DOWN**

- 1 They hang on for praise in Tasmania (9)
- 2 That's right! Sid had his debut interrupted (9)
- 3 About today - let this serve as a symbol for it! (9)
- 4 It's almost ceased and how this has comforted! (5)
- 5 Why it takes 500 to keep it so neat (4)
- 6 Some old bird seen at two parties (4)
- 11 They may be flighty but they don't miss much! (9)
- 12 I'm all done with grins! I'm sanctioning it! (9)
- 13 They shed a tear when you sling off at their figures (9)
- 20 You have to make a choice when Lee gets 100 to tea (5)
- 21 You pass out on seeing springs? (4)
- 22 It's the same in a flat-top (4)

**KEN-KEN**

Each row & column must contain numbers 1 to 4 (easy) or 1 to 6 (difficult). The numbers within the heavily outlined boxes must combine to produce the numbers in the top-left corner.

**QUICK QUIZ**

Andy Warhol was born on August 6, 1928.

4. Name his NY studio that became a well-known gathering place and brought together distinguished intellectuals and wealthy patrons.

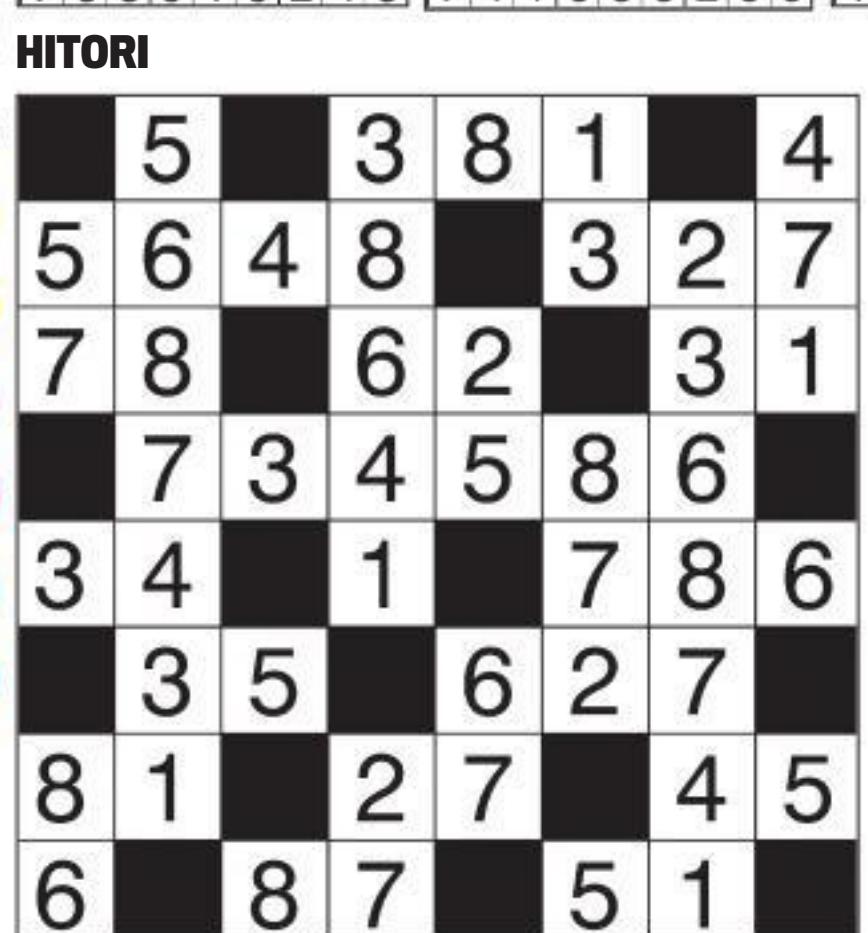
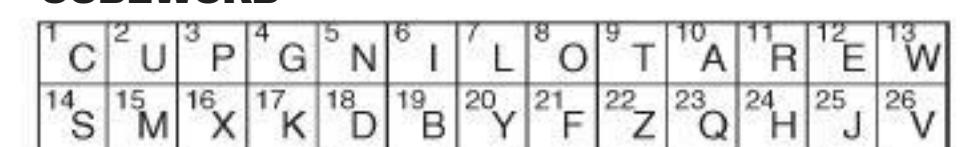
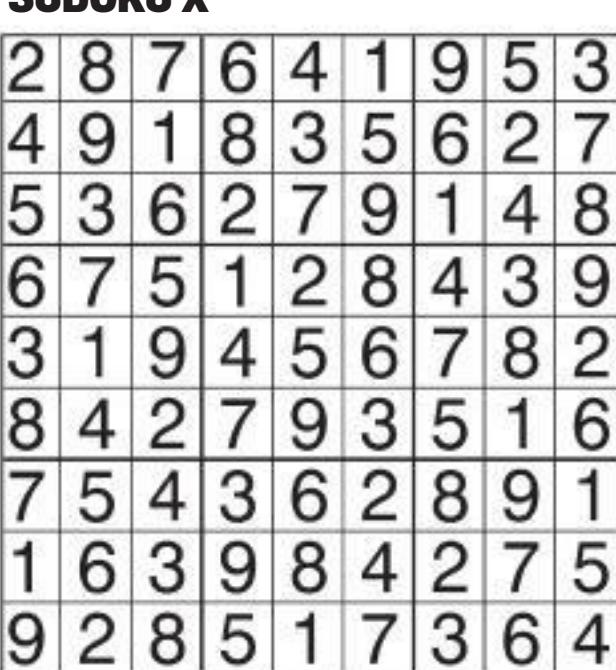
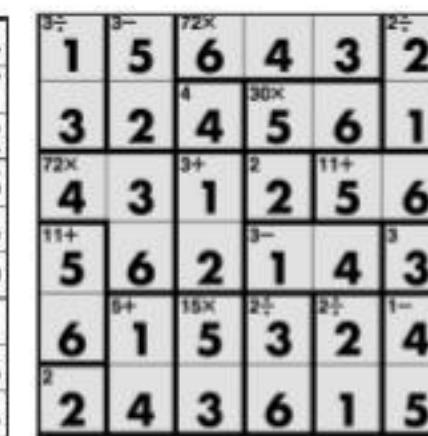
5. On June 3, 1968, a radical feminist writer shot Warhol and Mario Amaya, art critic and curator, at Warhol's studio. What's her name?

6. In the late 1960s, he managed and produced an experimental rock band. Name this band.

7. In the *Andy Warhol Diaries*, he recorded how excited he was to see two musicians together at a party in the mid 1980s. One was Billy Idol; who was the other?

8. Warhol died in Manhattan on February 22, 1987. How old was this American artist?

1. Warhol initially pursued a career as a commercial illustrator. Which Pennsylvania city was he born and raised in?
2. Who taught young Warhol silk screen printmaking techniques in Manhattan?
3. Warhol promoted a collection of personalities and is credited with coining the expression '15 minutes of fame'. What are these personalities called?

**TODAY'S SOLUTIONS****SUDOKU****HITORI****KAKURO****CODEWORD****CRYPTIC CROSSWORD****SUDOKU X****KEN-KEN****MINI SUDOKU****SUDOKU CLASSIC****SCRABBLE GRAMS**

SCRABBLE® BRAND		GRAMS SOLUTION BY JUDD					
© 2019 UFS, Dist. by Andrews McMeel Syndication							
A	U	T	I	S	M	RACK. 1 = 8	
C	A	M	E	O	S	RACK. 2 = 11	
P	L	A	S	H	E	R	RACK. 3 = 86
E	X	U	R	B	A	N	RACK. 4 = 66
PAR SCORE 110-120						JUDD'S TOTAL 171	

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**QUICK QUIZ:** 1. Pittsburgh; 2. Max Arthur Cohn; 3. Warhol superstar; 4. The Factory; 5. Valerie Solanas; 6. The Velvet Underground; 7. Prince; 8. 58

**ASTRO FOCUS**

by Manisha Koushik

**ARIES** Mar 21-Apr 20

Your will adopt a balanced approach in financial matters. Due to this you will enjoy prosperity and will remain satisfied. It is a day of earning for showroom owners and retailers.

**TAURUS** Apr 21-May 20

You will be able to implement financial plans. The money situation will remain favourable. It is a day of making money for freelancers and contractors.

**GEMINI** May 21-June 21

It is advisable to save money, although necessary expenses will have to be incurred. Do not blindly trust anyone, particularly at workplace.

**CANCER** June 22-July 22

Profit is possible during property related transactions. You will clear the obstacles to advance in career by giving expensive gifts to influential.

**LEO** July 23-Aug 23

You will not face money related problem. Investments made in the past are giving excellent returns. There is pressure to complete the work in limited period.

**VIRGO** Aug 24-Sep 23

The struggle to save money will continue. The working conditions will remain satisfactory. You will be ready to take on additional work responsibilities.

**LIBRA** Sep 24-Oct 23

Before discussing anything to the senior, get a sense of his or her mood. You will get rid of health problems. Finances may remain tight due to loan liabilities.

**SCORPIO** Oct 24-Nov 22

Financial worries will end with bonus or salary increment. You will be able to stay healthy while following a disciplined lifestyle. You will try to maintain harmony and peace at workplace.

**SAGITTARIUS** Nov 23-Dec 21

Full price can be recovered in lieu of defective goods. You have an answer for adverse working conditions operating at workplace. Regular health routines will keep you away from diseases.

**CAPRICORN** Dec 22-Jan 21

Investments made in the past have started generating profits. Old love affair may rekindle. You will get proper guidance regarding making progress in career.

**AQUARIUS** Jan 22-Feb 19

Businessmen are playing their innings cleverly. That is why they will be able to crack ambitious deals. Mutual understanding and spontaneity in love shows promising future.

**PISCES** Feb 20-Mar 20

Time is lucky for both money and love. Your capabilities will be well-known in your profession. You will have a pleasant time with friends. You will put efforts to cheer up your stable but boring love life.

PANKAJ NANGIA



## THE WAIT IS OVER

BJP supporters celebrate before the Bhoomi Pujan ceremony of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, in New Delhi, on Wednesday.

### YOUTUBE ► trends

#### 1) ROCK ON PARTY KING! (CLASH OF CLANS 8TH ANNIVERSARY)



The video has gained 8.9 million views within days of being uploaded.

#### 2) KURTA PAJAMA (TEASER) NIRVAIR PANNU | R NAIT | AFSANA KHAN | NEHA MALIK

Singer: Nirvaip Pannu; Female Vocal: Afsana Khan; Lyrics: R Nait; Music: Mr Rubal; Mix / Master: B Sanj

#### 3) PYAR NAAL — ANUSHKA SEN & DARSHEEL SAFARY | VIBHOR PARASHAR



Play DMF presents Pyar Naal by Vibhor Parashar ft. Anushka Sen & Darsheel Safary.

#### 4) BYN: HOW TO TOP MATHS ONLINE TEST FEAT. VIDYA BALAN

The video has gained more than 700K views within a day of its upload.

#### 5) READY FOR HOSPITAL! CHOURDHARY FAMILY | VIVEK C I KHUSHI PUNJABAN

This video has gained about 3 million views within hours of its upload.

### LETTERS

#### Social media space seems to be getting too abusive

OF LATE, it has become an unpleasant fad for some social media users to target celebrities and post unsavoury comments about them.

Most often these comments are found to be irritable and repugnant, and often celebrities lose their cool and are forced to stoop to the level of these people whose only aim is to get publicity and pose as a 'hero' in the social media domain.

In recent times we have seen Indian superstar and Bollywood icon Amitabh Bachchan being targeted by some, commenting unsparingly on the legendary actor and that too using immodest and indelicate comments. What these 'commentators' forget is that by using derogatory remarks just for public stunt they themselves are getting degraded in front of the public and losing their very honour.

Freedom of expression is permitted but then many do not understand that being abusive and passing provocative comments does not come under this right. A response to such cheap comments often leads to further conflicts, that at times can even lead to legal procedures and court battles.

Let us learn from 'Big B', who often responds even to provocative comments in a decent and a wise manner.

—M PRADYU, Kannur

#### A year on, the situation in J&K doesn't look good

ON THE completion of one year of the abrogation of Article 370, hindsight seems to suggest that it was an exercise in futility.

The Centre has forcefully kept complete control over the newly-created Union Territory. Almost all of J&K's politicians and activists are kept under detention, and therefore forcing them to accept the abrogation of Article 370 which proves that the Central government is being authoritarian and relying on force to curb those opposed to the law.

This is no way for a democracy to function. The government will do well to realize that more force can't bring an everlasting solution because he who is convinced much against his will be of the same opinion still!

#### WRITE TO THE EDITOR

You can now email your opinion to [letters@mailtoday.in](mailto:letters@mailtoday.in)

### QUESTION

*of the day*

Mail Today poll

PHOTO FOR REPRESENTATION



The Capital's hospitality sector is staring at an uncertain future with hotels continuing to remain closed for over four months in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. Is it time for the hotels to open up?

#### YESTERDAY'S QUESTION

There has been a rise in the cases of car thefts in the National Capital during the lockdown, particularly as the metro remains shut. Should the cops in the city look into this matter urgently?

#### YESTERDAY'S RESPONSE

YES	75%
NO	25%

cle 370 which proves that the Central government is being authoritarian and relying on force to curb those opposed to the law.

This is no way for a democracy to function. The government will do well to realize that more force can't bring an everlasting solution because he who is convinced much against his will be of the same opinion still!

With this the Centre's initiative to bring peace in the J&K has been exposed and it seems to have failed miserably. The government will do well to rethink the situation.

—BHAGWAN THADANI, Mumbai

#### India will now become the world's spiritual hub

WITH the laying of the foundation stone of Ram Mandir by the Prime Minister, we are reminded of the traditions of our ancient Indian culture of treating the world as one family, 'Vasudev Kutubhkam' and all remain happy 'Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah'. From the life of Maryada Purushottam Ram, we can learn many lessons especially to be modest and respect everyone in all sections of society. Behaving in dignified manner with boatmen and tribals is important example which needs to be followed even today. Teachings of Ram are for every human being and not for any particular community. Therefore, all should now join to make India a spiritual hub in the world.

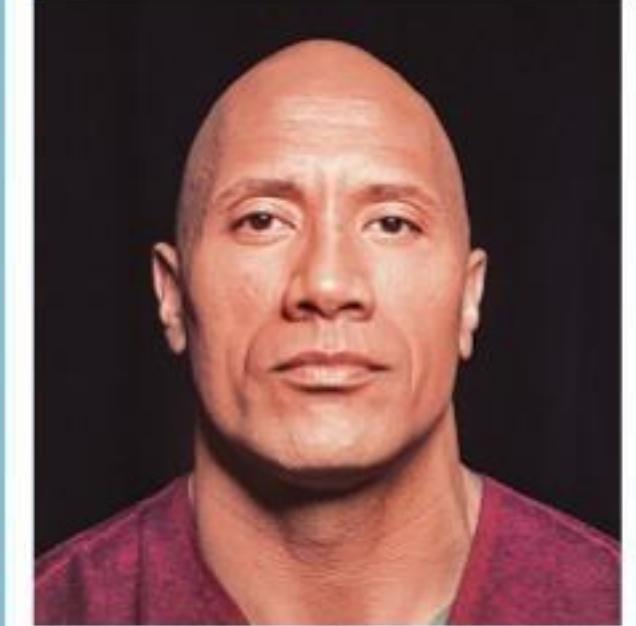
—SUBHASH VAID, Delhi

### BLOGS *of the day*

#### JOHNSON ASKS RYAN TO PLAY HAWKMEN

DWAYNE 'The Rock' Johnson has ordered Ryan Reynolds to play Hawkman in 'Black Adam', after the 'Deadpool' had denied reports that he was going to star in the film. Ryan had taken to social media to deny reports that he is to star as the comic book character in the DC Extended Universe movie, but 'The Rock' insists he has no choice. In response to Reynolds, Dwayne tweeted: "You ARE playing Hawkman and that's that."

[contactmusic.com](http://contactmusic.com)



#### 'IT'S AN EMOTIONAL ROLLERCOASTER'

KATY Perry says being pregnant during a pandemic is "an emotional rollercoaster" but her mental health battle over the past few years has helped her. The 35-year-old singer is expecting her first child with fiancé Orlando Bloom, 43, but admitted that the Covid-19 global health crisis has made her pregnancy extra challenging. She said, "Every day your options change, and you don't know what's what. Especially being pregnant in a pandemic, it's an emotional rollercoaster."

[contactmusic.com](http://contactmusic.com)

# MY BIZ

**Delhi govt pulls up 10,800 companies for tax evasion**

By Ashutosh Mishra  
in New Delhi

THE Delhi government on Wednesday issued notices to as many as 10,800 companies for tax evasion. All of these companies collected tax from citizens but have failed to pay full tax to the government.

Around 970 of these companies have paid no tax to the government from January to March this year. All the defaulters have been served notice under the GST Act to pay taxes that are due within 15 days.

Delhi deputy chief minister and finance minister Manish Sisodia said the government will take stringent action against the tax defaulters if they do not comply immediately.

**GST collection not passed on to the govt**

Sisodia on Tuesday held a meeting with the officials of the department where it was said that around 15,000 companies were analysed, following which the Delhi government sent tax evasion notices.

Till now around 15,000 companies out of around 7 lakh companies registered under GST have been evaluated and further vetting will be conducted. Companies who have defaulted on GST returns will face action, Sisodia said.

Along with these companies, 111 liquor companies have also been issued notice as they have not paid VAT.

The Delhi government has started issuing notices to the defaulting 10,800 taxpayers and in case they fail to file their return within the prescribed time (15 days), the department will proceed with further actions.

GST collections in Delhi had dipped from January to March by approximately Rs 3,777 crore due to the economic crisis triggered by the pandemic.

## Tax scrutiny cases dip

By Mail Today Bureau  
in New Delhi

THE proportion of income tax returns picked up for scrutiny has fallen to 0.25 per cent of the total ITRs filed in assessment year (AY) 2018-19, from 0.55 per cent in AY 2017-18, the Finance Ministry has said.

I-T department is changing its role from just enforcement to facilitating better taxpayer services.

As part of this exercise the number of cases selected for scrutiny has come down drastically over the years, the ministry said in a tweet late on Tuesday. Official data released showed the number of income tax scrutiny cases was 0.71 per cent in AY 2015-16, 0.40 per cent in AY 2016-17.

Maruti Suzuki said it has launched the S-Cross model with a petrol engine, priced between ₹8.39 lakh & ₹12.39 lakh. The model, which was earlier available in diesel engine only, now comes with 1.5 litre petrol powertrain.



### NUMBER OF THE DAY

**₹406 crore**

is net profit of Canara Bank in Q1 compared with ₹651 cr loss last year.

### QUOTE OF THE DAY

‘The Centre will soon come up with an exclusive R&D policy for the pharma sector. If a scientist in a govt institute invents something that is commercially viable, we should reward him.’

— PD VAGHela, SECRETARY, DEPT OF PHARMACEUTICALS



# Zydus Cadila's Covid vaccine clears first human trials



**Lupin too rolls out virus drug**

LUPIN Ltd on Wednesday became the latest Indian drugmaker to launch a version of the antiviral drug favipiravir to treat COVID-19 in the world's third most affected country.

A slew of generic drug manufacturers including Cipla Ltd, Sun Pharma and Hetero Labs have been developing favipiravir after India approved it as an emergency treatment for mild to moderate COVID-19.

Indian hospitals have suffered a shortage of critical COVID-19 drugs such as remdesivir in recent weeks, but the bottlenecks are expected to ease soon as manufacturers ramp up production.

Favipiravir has shown promise in clinical trials in India and Russia, but faces uncertain prospects in Japan, where it was originally developed by Fujifilm Holdings, after disappointing clinical studies.

Lupin's version of the drug, called Covihalt, will be priced at Rs 49 per 200 mg-tablet, it said.

‘We now begin the phase II clinical trials and look forward to evaluating the safety and immunogenicity of the vaccine in the larger population.’

—PANKAJ R PATEL, Zydus Cadila chairman

## Ajay Tyagi gets 18-month extension as Sebi chief

By Mail Today Bureau in New Delhi

AJAY Tyagi was on Wednesday given an 18-month extension, till February 2022, as the chairman of markets regulator SEBI, according to a Personnel Ministry order.

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved extension of Tyagi's term for 18 months, with effect from September 1 2020 up to February 28, 2022, it said.

Tyagi, a 1984 batch IAS (retired) officer of Himachal Pradesh cadre, was appointed as the SEBI chairman in March 2017 for three years.

He was earlier this year given a six-month extension till August. Prior to joining as the chief of the markets regulator, Tyagi was Additional Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs under the Finance Ministry.



He was then handing the portfolios of capital market, investment, infrastructure and currency and coinage divisions.

Tyagi did his graduation in Electrical Engineering and post graduation in computer science. He holds a Masters in Public Adminis-

tration from Harvard University.

The Centre had earlier started a search process to find a new chairman of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) and had called for applications from interested candidates before February 10.

At the time Sebi's whole-time member Madhabi Puri Buch, whose tenure was to end in April was reported to be a contender for the top post.

The other names doing the rounds were N S Vishwanathan, deputy governor, RBI, and Jeti Srinivas, secretary, ministry of corporate affairs.

However, after Ajay Tyagi's three-year term ended in March he was given a six months extension.

The 62-year-old was eligible for reappointment as according to rules, a person can hold the chairman's position until the age of 65.

# Virgin Atlantic seeks bankruptcy cover

Broke British airline looks for \$1.5 billion bailout

By David Shepardson & Kate Holton in Washington/London

**V**IRGIN Atlantic Airways Ltd is seeking protection from creditors in the United States under Chapter 15 of the U.S. Bankruptcy Code, which allows a foreign debtor to shield assets in this country, according to a court filing on Tuesday.

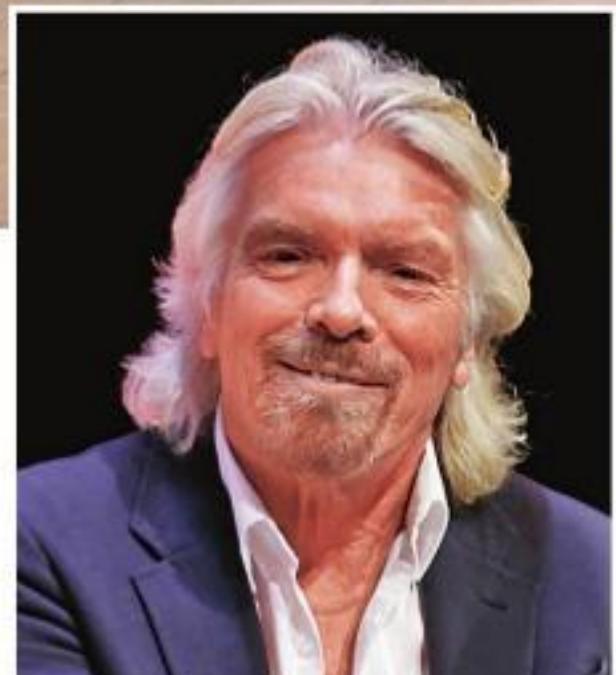
Virgin Atlantic's filing in U.S. bankruptcy court in the southern district of New York said it has negotiated a deal with stakeholders "for a consensual recapitalization" that will get debt off its balance sheet and "immediately position it for sustainable long-term growth."

In July, Virgin Atlantic said it has agreed a rescue deal with shareholders and creditors worth 1.2 billion pounds (\$1.57 billion) to secure its future beyond the coronavirus crisis.

The U.S. filing is an ancillary proceeding tied to a separate action filed in a British court, where Virgin Atlantic obtained approval Tuesday to convene meetings of affected creditors to vote on the plan on Aug. 25.

An airline spokeswoman said the restructuring plan was before a British court "to secure approval from all relevant creditors before implementation." She added the "process is proceeding with the support of the majority of our creditors."

Bloomberg reported Virgin Atlantic told a London court it



Richard Branson (inset)-led Virgin Atlantic has been hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic.

could run out of money in September if a restructuring deal is not approved.

Non-U.S.-companies use Chapter 15 to block creditors who want to file lawsuits or tie up assets in the United States.

In July, the airline said its private deal with stakeholders eliminates the need for support

from the British government that billionaire founder Richard Branson had sought. The reorganization is expected to be completed towards the end of this summer and be spread across the next 18 months.

The airline, 51% owned by Branson's Virgin Group and 49% by U.S. airline Delta, closed its Gatwick base and cut more than 3,500 jobs to contend with the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic, which has grounded planes and hammered demand for air travel.

"Delta said it supported the

plan and was 'optimistic' that

it would help Virgin Atlantic "maintain its position" in the travel market.

Virgin Atlantic said it needed to recapitalize "to not only survive the exigent threats posed by the COVID-19 global pandemic but to thrive once the immediate global health crisis passes." It added in a court filing reservations are down 89% from a year ago and current demand for the second half of 2020 is at approximately 25% of 2019 levels. Virgin Atlantic also owns Virgin Atlantic Holidays, a tour operator business and Virgin Atlantic Cargo.

## Airtel inks pact with Amazon for cloud biz

TELECOM company Bharti Airtel on Wednesday announced a multi-year strategic collaboration with Amazon Web Services to offer a suite of cloud solutions to businesses in India.

Under the partnership, Airtel Cloud will build an AWS Cloud Practice supported by AWS Professional Services, as well as develop differentiated Airtel Cloud products and capabilities, leveraging AWS services, Airtel's data centre capabilities, and Airtel's network and telecom offerings, a joint statement said. Airtel customers are expected to benefit from integrated sales, consulting, and support approach from both firms.



Airtel chairman Sunil Mittal

—MT Bureau

## BMW skids into first loss in a decade

GERMAN luxury carmaker BMW said Wednesday that it swung into its first loss since 2009 as the coronavirus pandemic ravaged car sales but said it still hopes turn an operating profit for the year.

The Munich-based company reported an operating loss (EBIT) of 666 million euros (\$787.6 million), compared with an operating profit of 2.1 billion euros in the same period of 2019, after selling around 25 percent fewer cars year-on-year in the three months to the end of June. The group kept net loss to just 212 million euros, as the damage was mitigated by an accounting boost over its car leasing business. The company kept its 2020 guidance unchanged, with several key caveats including the potential impact of a second wave of infection and possible new lockdowns or deeper recessions in its key markets. BMW added that the guidance is based on the assumption that demand in all key markets will be significantly reduced in light of the coronavirus pandemic and containment measures.

—APF

## India bans more apps of Chinese companies

By Sankalp Phartiyal, Aditya Kalra in New Delhi

INDIA has banned some mobile apps of Chinese companies such as Xiaomi Corp and Baidu Inc, three sources told Reuters on Wednesday, in New Delhi's latest move to hit Chinese companies following a border clash between the neighbours.

India in June outlawed 59 Chinese apps for threatening the country's "sovereignty and integrity", including ByteDance's video-sharing app TikTok, Alibaba's UC Browser and Xiaomi's Mi Community app.

Another ban was imposed in recent weeks on about 47 apps which mostly

Xiaomi Mi Browser Pro & Baidu apps on ban list

contained clones, or simply different versions, of the already banned apps, the sources said.

Unlike its June move, the government did not make its latest decision public, but there are a few new apps that have made it to that list, including Xiaomi's Mi Browser Pro and Baidu's search apps, the sources said.

It wasn't immediately clear how many new apps have been affected.

India's IT Ministry and the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi did not respond to a request for comment. China has previously criticized India's decision to ban the apps. A spokesman for Xiaomi in India said the company was trying to understand the development.

## Gold prices leap by ₹1,365 per 10 gms

By Mail Today Bureau  
In New Delhi

GOLD prices jumped Rs 1,365 to Rs 56,181 per 10 gram in the national capital on Wednesday following a strong rally in global market, according to HDFC Securities. The yellow metal had closed at Rs 54,816 per 10 gram in the previous trade.

Silver also depicted a strong trend as it zoomed Rs 5,972 to Rs 72,726 per kg from Rs 66,754 per kg in the previous trade, it said.

In the international market, gold soared to a record high of \$2,044.34 an ounce on Wednesday as a weakening dollar, falling returns on U.S. bonds added momentum to buying by investors seeking a safe store of value.



As the COVID-19 pandemic has roiled markets, gold has gained nearly 35% this year and is one of 2020's best performing assets.

Kishore Narne, head of commodity & currency at Motilal Oswal Financial Services, said gold and silver have been the best performing assets so far

this year with 40 per cent and 50 per cent returns, respectively, and the uptrend is likely to continue. With central banks pushing unprecedented amounts of liquidity, trade war concerns, geo-political uncertainty, rising COVID-19 infections and threat of a second wave of infections, prices of both precious metals are likely to go higher, Narne added.

Investors fear economic stimulus unleashed in response to the pandemic will trigger inflation, devaluing other assets, and keeping bond yields historically low, which enhances the appeal of non-yielding gold.

Breaking above \$2,000 for the first time on Tuesday and hitting a new high of \$2,044.34 an ounce earlier on Wednesday, spot gold was up 1.1% at \$2,041.09.

## MARKETS

### SENSEX

37,687.91

TUESDAY'S CLOSE

37,663.33

WEDNESDAY'S CLOSE

-24.58

H: 38,139.96

L: 37,550.60

### NIFTY

11,095.25

TUESDAY'S CLOSE

11,101.65

WEDNESDAY'S CLOSE

6.40

H: 11,225.65

L: 11,064.05

### TOP GAINERS

% change

Price (₹)

1 TATA STEEL 6.33 395.80

2 TITAN 2.85 1,105.50

3 MARUTI 2.61 6,526.85

4 M&M 1.93 614.15

5 AIRTEL 1.83 558.85

TOP LOSERS

% change

Price (₹)

1 POWERGRID -1.35 175.95

2 HDFCBNK -1.30 1,027.85

3 RELIANCE -1.14 2,126.65

4 TECHM -0.62 648.85

5 HCLTECH -0.59 688.10

### BULLION

### GOLD/10 gm

₹746

₹55,297

SILVER/1 kg

₹2,110

₹71,907

45,000

40,000

35,000

(GOLD)

Thu Fri Mon Tues Wed

400

380

350

(SILVER)

Thu Fri Mon Tues Wed

### EXCHANGE RATE

### Dollar

₹75.12

₹74.84

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## HIMACHAL PRADESH, PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Ph: 01899-240618, 292000, & fax 01899-240618, 242156 E-mail- ee-dal-hp@nic.in

### INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

The Executive Engineer HP PWD Division Dalhousie HP on behalf of Governor of HP invites the item rate bids, in electronic tendering system from the eligible class of contractors registered with HP PWD for the works as detailed in the table.

Sr.	Name of work	Estimated Cost (Rs.)	Starting Date for downloading Bid.	Earnest Money	Deadline for submission of bid	Time Limit	Eligible Class
1	Construction of Bridge over Kaned Nallah on Nainkhad Chuhan road at RD 29/630 (SH- C/O 33.50 mtr. span steel truss Bridge including approaches and metal-lining and tarring) under RIDF-XXV	29132050/-	13.08.2020	324000/-	26.08.2020 up to 03:00 P.M	Twelve Months	Class "A" only
2	Restoration of damage due to laying of OFC on Shapur Sihunta Chowari road Km. 40/0 to 76/0 (SH- Protection of toe of Kalighar land slide prone area at RD 49/045 to 49/150).	21171114/-	13.08.2020	244220/-	26.08.2020 up to 03:00 P.M	Twelve Months	Class "A" only

**Submission of original Document:-** The original instruments in respect of cost of documents and EMD should and other Technical Documents be submitted to the tender inviting Authority i.e. Executive Engineer, Dalhousie Division HPPWD Dalhousie **opening of tender i.e. 26.08.2020 at 3:30 P.M.**

The undersigned has right to extend or cancel the bids without declaring any reasons thereof.

The bidders are advised to note other details of tenders from the department website [www.hptenders.gov.in](http://www.hptenders.gov.in)

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer,  
Dalhousie Division,  
HP.PWD, Dalhousie.

2031/2020-2021, Date-05.08.2020

"Him suchna Avam Jan Sampark"

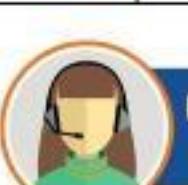
## ENSURING PARCEL DELIVERY WITH SPEED AND RELIABILITY

Avail The Service of Parcel Cargo Express Trains of Northern Railway



To fulfill the commitment towards nation and the people, Northern Railway has been running time-tabled parcel trains to transport essential commodities like medicines and perishable as well as commercial items to various destinations across India during the current situation, Northern Railway also facilitates the service for a specific destination, if a party books the full parcel train. The details of scheduled parcel trains are as under:

Parcel Spl. No.	Station From	Dep. Time	Station to	Arr. Time	Days of Run	Dates of run
00401	Guwahati	01:30	New Delhi	13:15	Fri, Sun	Upto 31.12.2020
00402	New Delhi	14:30	Guwahati	02:30	Tue, Thu	Upto 31.12.2020
00463	Howrah	17:30	Amritsar	08:45	Mon, Sat	Upto 31.12.2020
00464	Amritsar	18:00	Howrah	08:30	Wed, Fri	Upto 31.12.2020
00465	Guwahati	01:30	Amritsar	19:45	Wednesday	Upto 31.12.2020
00466	Amritsar	07:50	Guwahati	02:30	Friday	Upto 31.12.2020
00467	Howrah	17:30	Amritsar	06:30	Thursday	Upto 31.12.2020
00468	Amritsar	20:40	Howrah	08:30	Monday	Upto 31.12.2020
00621	KSR Bengaluru	17:00	Hazrat Nizamuddin	14:00	Wed, Fri	Upto 25.12.2020
00622	Hazrat Nizamuddin	21:00	KSR Bengaluru	18:30	Fri, Sun	Upto 27.12.2020
00761	Renigunta	05:45	Hazrat Nizamuddin	15:50	Daily	Upto 31.12.2020
00762	Hazrat Nizamuddin	10:15	Renigunta	20:45	Daily	Upto 31.12.2020
00763	Hyderabad Deccan	19:00	Amritsar	09:10	Friday	Upto 25.12.2020
00764	Amritsar	05:00	Hyderabad Deccan	18:50	Monday	Upto 28.12.2020
00901	Bandra Terminus	20:00	Jammu Tawi	08:00	Tue, Thu, Fri, Sun	07.08.20 to 14.08.20
00902	Jammu Tawi	18:30	Bandra Terminus	06:30	Mon, Wed, Fri, Sun	Upto 09.08.2020



Commercial Control/Head Quarter  
**9717638775**



Commercial Control/Delhi Division  
**9717649915**



Security Helpline No. **182** / Integrated Helpline No. **139**



For more information about the Time-Table and running status of PCETs, please visit the website [www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in](http://www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in) or App of National Train Enquiry System (NTES)



**NORTHERN RAILWAY**  
[www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in)

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20

Mail Today, New Delhi, Thursday, August 6, 2020



## RAILWAY ELECTRIFICATION, JAIPUR

NIT No: KCRE/EL/20-21/ETENDER/04

Date: 01.08.2020

### E-TENDER NOTICE

Open e-tenders are invited by Deputy Chief Electrical Engineer, Railway Electrification, Ratlam for & on behalf of President of India for following work.

**E-Tender No.:** KCRE/EL/20-21/ETENDER-04, **Name of work:** "Providing buried rail Earthing Station at all switching post in RTM-COR-KOTA section (Gr.-214)". **Estimated Cost:** ₹ 543610.52, **EMD:** ₹ 10900.00, **Completion Period:** 06 Months, **Cost of Tender Document:** ₹ 2000/-, **Validity:** 45 Days. **Similar Nature of Work:** Not applicable for this Tender. **Last Date and Time of Submission:** 27.08.2020 15:00 hrs. at [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in). Bidders will be able to submit their original / revised bids online up to the closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offers received shall be summarily rejected. JV/consortium/MOU not allowed in this tender. Complete details & tender document of above E-tender is available at the website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in).

EEE / RE / KOTA

PR/472/2020/ANU FOR & ON BEHALF OF PRESIDENT OF INDIA

"Serving Customers with a Smile"

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life & STYLE  
Every Friday



## Punjab State Power Corporation Limited

(Regd Office PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala -147001

Corporate Identity Number U40109PB2010SGC033813 Website: [www.pspcl.in](http://www.pspcl.in)

E-Tender Enquiry No. 282 /P-2/EMP-W11722 dt 31.07.2020 & ID:2020\_POWER\_51454\_1

**Scope of Work:** Assistance in Breakdown/ Preventive maintenance and annual overhauling of ATRS, HPBP, STC, APRDS, Generator instrumentation and Analyzer system of unit 3 to 6 of GGSSTP, Rupnagar. **EMD:** Rs 51,000.00

Time period As per NIT

Date & time up to which tender shall be received: 08.09.2020 & 11:00 AM

Date & time of opening of tender: 15.09.2020 & 11:30 AM

Tender specification can only be downloaded from website [https://eproc.punjab.gov.in](http://eproc.punjab.gov.in) & no hard copy of the same will be issued by this office.

**Note:**

- In case any difficulty regarding uploading of the tender the prospective bidders are requested to get clarification from this office or M/s e-procurement system Government of Punjab. Contact No.+91-(172)-2970284/63. It is also requested to get their digital signature well in time so as to submit tenders through e-tendering only.
  - It is informed that in case tender process is not completed due to any reason, no corrigendum will be published in newspapers. Details regarding corrigendum may be seen on website: [eproc.punjab.gov.in](http://eproc.punjab.gov.in)
- RTP-34/2020  
I/60113/2020, Date-05.08.2020  
Sd/- Dy. CE./Monitoring  
GGSTP, Rupnagar

## APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of male **Namely:** Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, **Age:** about 40 years, **Height:** 5' 5", **Complexion:** Shallow, **Face:** Round, who was admitted to Dr. RML Hospital where he died during treatment.



In this regard a case **DD No.**

**61-A Dated 30.07.2020 has been registered at P.S. North Avenue, New Delhi.**

Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.

**Sd- SHO**  
**P.S. North Avenue, New Delhi.**  
**DP/92/NDD/2020 Tel.: 011-23093294, 23093040**

## NORTHERN RAILWAY

### EOI for the development of goods sheds in Lucknow Division through public private participation under BOT (Build, Operate and Transfer) scheme

Lucknow Division, Northern Railway invites Expression of Interest (EOI) from interested Individuals/Customers/Agencies/startups/Companies and other entities for undertaking infrastructural development of 14 Goods Sheds over Lucknow Division under Public Private Partnership model. The infrastructural development of Goods Sheds will be undertaken and will include improvement in loading/unloading platform surfaces, circulating area, lighting arrangements, labour resting facilities, Merchant meeting facilities, approach road from Goods Shed to main road, basic amenities and other improvement as per National Green Tribunal norms. The goods sheds with current traffic potential (Avg. number of rakes per month) are as: Alannagar-42 (AMG), Barabanki-16 (BBK), Faizabad-26 (FD), Vyasnagar-6 (VYN), Amausi-6 (AMS), Sindurwa-0.8 (SYW), Mohanlalganj-7 (MLJ), Unchahar-2 (UCR), Raebareli-13 (RBL), Shahganj-19 (SHG), Shivpur-29 (SOP), Sonic-6 (SIC), Sultanpur-13 (SLN) and Chaukhandi-6 (CHH). The interested parties may visit terminals to assess the actual scope of work. Against such investments, incentives may be given by the Railways as per the existing traffic potential and revenue may be shared with Indian Railway with the growing traffic at the terminal. Interested parties may kindly send their EOI/suggestions along with details of the proposal for each goods shed separately up to 15:00 hours on 25.08.2020 to the DRM Office, Northern Railway, Hazratganj, Lucknow-226001, through e-mail id: [srdcmfsko@gmail.com](mailto:srdcmfsko@gmail.com). After receiving the proposal, a meeting will be called with the interested parties for further deliberations. Investors may come up with their EOI/Suggestions and revenue sharing model with Railways.

Office of the Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager/Freight & Services,  
DRM Office, Northern Railway, Hazratganj Lucknow 226001.

1714/2020

Contact no. 9794833953, 9794833986

**SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE**

# Sports Mail



## Manchester City sign Bournemouth's Ake

# STRONG START

**Babar Azam slams incredible fifty as visitors take charge on opening day of first Test**

**P**AKISTAN'S Babar Azam underlined his status as one of the world's leading batsmen with a fine unbeaten fifty against England on an interrupted opening day of the first Test at Old Trafford on Wednesday.

When bad light forced an early close, Pakistan were 139-2, with Babar 69 not out and Shan Masood unbeaten on 46.

But left-handed opener Masood was twice missed on 45 by England wicketkeeper Jos Buttler either side of a lengthy rain break, with off-spinner Dom Bess the unlucky bowler on both occasions.

The prolific Babar has now reached a half-century in five successive Test innings, with his previous five matches yielding four hundreds.

Former England captain Nasser Hussain, commentating for Sky Sports, said Babar could be considered alongside players such as India captain Virat Kohli.

"If this lad was Virat Kohli, everyone would be talking about it but because it is Babar Azam, no one is talking about it," said Hussain.

"He's young, he's elegant, he's got all the swagger, he added."

"They keep going on about the 'Fab Four' (Kohli, Australia's Steve Smith, New Zealand's Kane Williamson and England captain Joe Root) -- it's the 'Fab Five' and Babar Azam is in that."

When play resumed in the early evening after a long rain delay, Root was soon bowling his occasional off-breaks

**Masood also chips in with 46 runs in the first innings**

in tandem with Bess to try and keep the match going under grey skies after Jofra Archer had pitched short to Babar.

But even with two spinners bowling and the floodlights on, the umpires still called a halt at 6:12 pm (1712 GMT).

Pakistan were 43-2 when Babar came in to bat after captain Azhar Ali, who had won the toss, fell lbw for a duck to Chris Woakes.

Babar started cautiously but after the lunch interval he unfurled an array of stylish attacking shots.

He struck express paceman Archer down the ground for four before driving Bess for another boundary to bring up Pakistan's hundred.

Bess, however, should have removed Masood for 45 when he took the left-hander's outside edge but Buttler dropped the chance.

Then, following the rain delay, Buttler missed a chance to stump Masood after the batsman charged down the pitch.

The mistakes will revive discussion about the wicketkeeper's place in the side with Ben Foakes, arguably a superior gloveman, waiting in the wings. —AFP

**Chris Woakes reacts during the opening day of the Test.**

### SCOREBOARD

#### PAKISTAN BATTING

Batsman	Dismissal	R	B
Masood	batting	46	152
Abid	b Archer	16	37
Azhar	lbw b Woakes	0	6
Babar	batting	69	100
<b>Extras:</b>	(b 1, lb 6, nb 1)		8
<b>Total:</b>	(2 wickets; 49 overs)		139
<b>Fall of wickets:</b>	1-36, 2-43		

#### ENGLAND BOWLING

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Anderson	8	2	32	0
Broad	11	4	24	0
Woakes	8	2	14	1
Archer	10	3	23	1
Bess	9	1	30	0
Root	3	0	9	0

Stumps Day 1

### TV times

England vs Pakistan, Live from Manchester, on Sony Six from 3.30pm



Babar Azam raises his bat after scoring a half century. (Left) Shan Masood in action.



**Shyam Sunder and local archers in Bikaner contribute money to buy target board during lockdown.**

## MAIL TODAY EXCLUSIVE

By Aditya K Halder in New Delhi

**I**T HAS been a long wait for the Tokyo 2021 Olympics and Paralympics-bound and -probable archers across the country as Sports Authority of India continues with its efforts to resume a national camp soon.

The same has been the situation for sports such as wrestling, swimming, rowing among others with the process seeing further delay due to de-recognition of National Sports Federations.

In cases of wrestling (a contact sport), swimming and rowing, (water-based sports), the peculiar natures of the disciplines has become the impediment in camp resumption. The same excuse doesn't imply to a non-contact sport like archery.

As reported earlier by MAIL TODAY, senior officials are hopeful of resuming a camp for all elite recurve archers and para archers by early September in Pune.

However the wait isn't helpful for most of the bow and arrow experts with Olympics and Paralympics less than a year away.

Despite the setback, para archers are not willing to give up on their Paralympic ambitions and have found interesting makeshift ways to hone their skills.

**Paralympics bound archers find interesting ways to train as national training camp resumption remains doubtful**



# NEVER GIVE UP

Haryana-based recurve archer Harvinder Singh, who secured Tokyo quota in the W2/ST category in Netherlands last year, has made the most out of empty wheat farms in his village in Kaithal district to shoot arrows from a distance of 50m.

"I thought since farms were empty after the season for wheat was over, I could utilise the space for training," the 2018 Para Asian Games gold medallist told the paper. "Interestingly, many youngsters took interest in the game when they saw me train everyday and now I have started training them as well."

However, the increasing crowd also meant that it became difficult to maintain social distancing and safety measures for a dangerous sport like archery and the 28-year-old TOPS athlete had to shift his training ground back to his home's courtyard.

In Bikaner, Tokyo-quota winner and para archer Shyam Sunder, who is training with young archers in his locality at a makeshift training centre, revealed that he faces problems with the requirement of the target board during the lockdown.

However, the 25-year-old made arrangements for it after all the archers in the locality contributed money to buy the board which costs ₹5,000.

But it's only a short-term solution as 2017 World Para Champi-



onship gold medallist Shyam explains a board can't be used for more than 3-4 months when used from a distance of 50m regularly; worrying him of his Paralympic medal quest.

"I am certain of winning medal at the Paralympics. But if I continue to train like this then I can't guarantee what will be the colour of my medal. It's important that I start training in a proper facility soon," said the TOPS athlete.

The situation seems further grave for wheelchair-bound compound archer Rakesh Kumar, who unlike Harvinder and Shyam is unable to train outdoors and is forced to shoot



Rakesh Kumar (left) makes his own target board using tyres after facing shortage of equipment.

Harvinder Singh (in red) trains in farm field, inspiring youths in his village in Haryana to train with him.



## BALE LEFT OUT OF MADRID SQUAD



Gareth Bale

WALES forward Gareth Bale has been left out of Real Madrid's 24-man squad for the Champions League last-16 second-leg tie against Manchester City on Friday.

City won 2-1 in the first leg in Spain in February before the coronavirus pandemic caused the competition to be halted for almost five months.

Bale, 31, has played twice, with only one start, in 11 Real games since football in Spain restarted in June.

The winners of the tie will play either Lyon or Juventus in the quarter-finals.

All the games in the Champions League from the last eight onwards will be played in Portugal over a 12-day period from 12 August with the final on 23 August.

Bale joined Real in a then-world record transfer of £85m from Tottenham in September 2013. He has helped the champions win the Champions League on four occasions.

—Agencies

I thought since farms were empty, I could utilise the space for training. Interestingly, youngsters took interest in the game when they saw me train everyday and now I have started training them as well.

—HARVINDER SINGH,  
RECURVE PARA ARCHER

I am certain of winning medal at the Paralympics. But if I continue to train like this then I can't guarantee what will be the colour of my medal. It's important to train in a proper facility soon.

—SHYAM SUNDER,  
COMPOUND PARA ARCHER

# WFI IS STILL WAITING FOR WRESTLERS' GREEN SIGNAL.

By Chetan Sharma  
in New Delhi

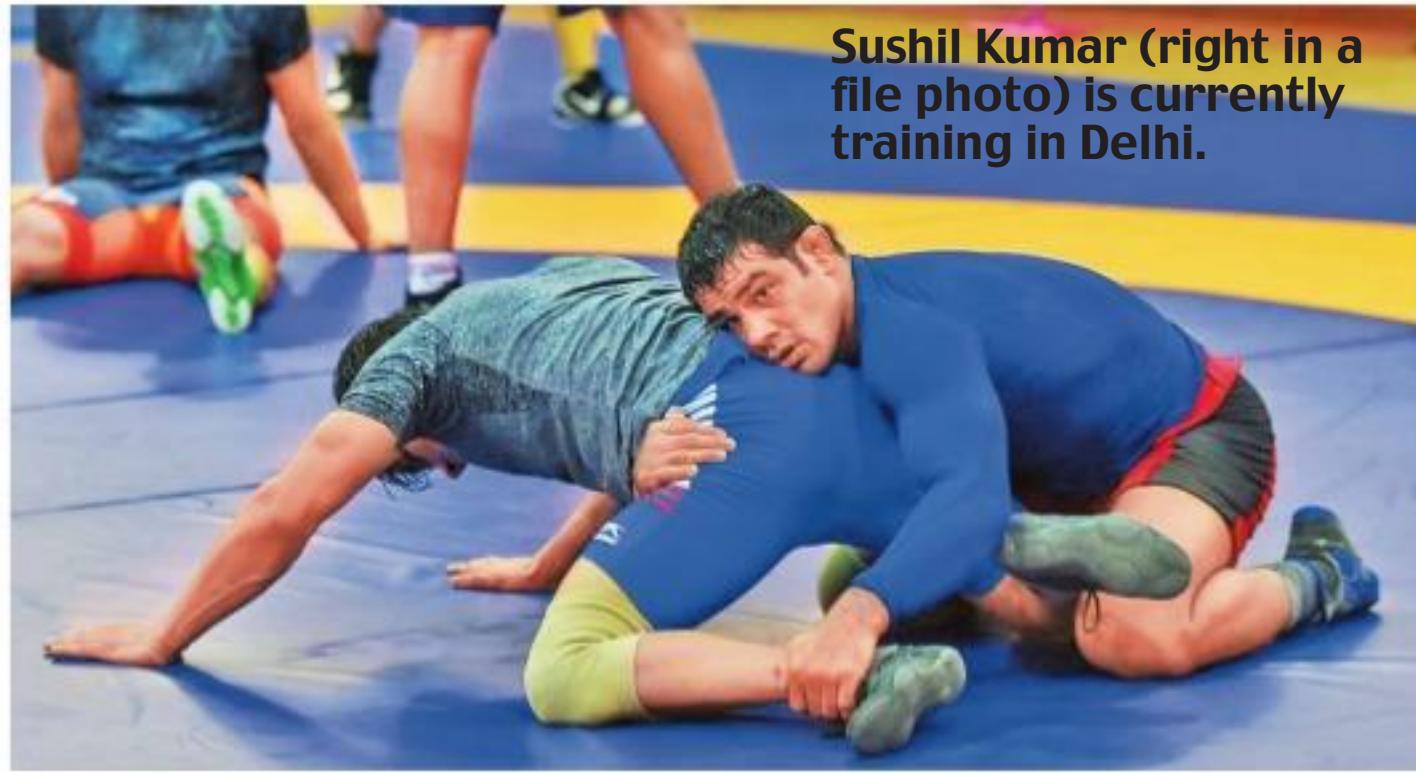
IT seems that the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) is still in no mood to hold a national camp anytime soon. There were reports that the camp might resume in the first week of August in Lucknow and Sonepat.

However, till date no official is ready to give an exact date. Speaking to MAIL TODAY, a WFI official cited rising Coronavirus cases to be the reason behind the delays.

"We understood that our wrestlers are still not in favour of it (camp). Our president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh doesn't want to force anybody to attend it because safety of the athletes is paramount," the WFI official said.

"We will speak to athletes again and take their concern. Some wrestlers have suggested shifting the venue of women's camp to Sonepat. So we are discussing all this and announce the plan very soon."

When contacted the few Indian wrestlers, they also were clueless about the Camp. "No, I didn't get any information from the federation as yet. I spoke to Kuldeep Sir (coach) and he is also not aware about of any news on camp. Let's see where and when it will take place," Rio Olympic bronze medal-



Sushil Kumar (right in a file photo) is currently training in Delhi.

list Sakshi Malik told the paper.

Two-time Olympic medallist, Sushil Kumar said, "Whatever the federation decides will benefit the athletes. I have no information of camp as if now."

With all Olympic qualifying events postponed to 2021 by the United World Wrestling, the only event for Indian wrestlers this year would be the World Championships tentatively scheduled for December. Both the senior (December 12-20) and junior (December 4-10) Worlds will be held in Belgrade "to help reduce risk and control the safety of the events" as per UWW.

• We understood that our wrestlers are still not in favour of it (camp). Our president doesn't want to force anybody to attend it because safety of the athletes is paramount.

—WFI OFFICIAL

## Families allowed to accompany players in IPL

Coronavirus pandemic.

Families of players and support staff, team owners and Dope Control Testing Officers are among the other members apart from players, match officials, team doctors who will be allowed to be in the UAE in biosecure environments during IPL 2020.

Players and support staff, both domestic and overseas, will have to undergo 5 Covid-19 PCR tests before entering the bio-secure environment in the UAE. Family members of the players and support staff will also have to undergo the tests.

Dope testing officers are to be part of the UAE contingent as well

## 258 JUNIOR ATHLETES IN TOPS LIST

THE Sports Authority of India (SAI) on Wednesday shortlisted 258 athletes from across 12 sporting disciplines for support through Target Olympic Podium Scheme Developmental Group, also known as Junior TOPS. The support will be extended through a group/systems approach and a monthly out-of-pocket allowance of ₹25,000 will be given to every athlete. Of the 12 disciplines, 16 athletes have been shortlisted in athletics, 34 in archery, 27 in badminton, four in cycling, seven in table tennis, 70 in shooting, 14 in swimming, 11 in judo, 36 in boxing, 16 in weightlifting, 5 in rowing and 18 in wrestling.

—PTI

## 'Games to be held with COVID'



although there are still widespread doubts about the Games taking place successfully.

Muto added: "It was the National Government that decided to delay a year."

"With that, the situation has changed a little. Furthermore, to hold an Olympics during corona means the anti-virus strategy is crucial – the COVID-19 strategy has to be set at the national level."

Muto hopes to have a new budget in place by October, with the priority for the Organising Committee to cut costs where possible.

A slimmed down Games has repeatedly been promised and

Tokyo official says the global health crisis will likely not have disappeared by the time of 2021 Olympics

• It is important to deliver an Olympics for people who must live with COVID-19. The anti-virus strategy is crucial to host it.

—TOSHIRO MUTO,

ORGANISING COMMITTEE CHIEF

there is speculation that events could be held behind closed doors.

Japanese companies have collectively spent around \$3.1 billion to sponsor the Games, with it being estimated it will cost Japan \$25 billion.

—Mail Today



## Arsenal's loan deal for Coutinho in advance stage

# RAFA PULLS OUT OF US OPEN

Says he would 'rather not travel' amid pandemic

**R**EIGNING champion Rafael Nadal shocked the US Open by declaring that he will not defend his title in New York this month.

His announcement came just hours after the clay court Madrid Open - to which he had committed - announced that it was not going ahead in September due to the rising number of Covid cases in the Spanish capital.

It was easy to conclude from that the likelihood that Nadal would travel to New York, but instead he swiftly put out a statement saying that he would not go under any circumstances.

He joins women's world No 1 Ash Barty in declining to play, and it is becoming clear that this is going to be a somewhat depleted field at Flushing Meadows, assuming that the event goes ahead at all.

"After many thoughts I have decided not to play," said Nadal. "The situation is very complicated worldwide, Covid cases are increasing, it looks like we still don't have control of it."

"We know that the reduced tennis calendar is barbaric this year after four months stopped with no play. I understand and thank them for the efforts they



are putting in to make it happen."

"All my respects to the USTA (US Tennis Association), the US Open organisers, and the ATP for trying to put the event together for the players and fans around the world through TV."

With Roger Federer out injured, two of the three players contesting the race to be the all-time highest Grand Slam winner are sure not to play.

Having expressed reservations, and kept a low profile since his disastrous Adria Tour, the indications are that Novak Djokovic

World No. 2 Rafael Nadal won the title last year but will not be defending his crown. Meanwhile, the event's organisers confirmed Novak Djokovic (inset) is set to appear.

may be coming round to the idea.

He has been seen practising on hard courts in Spain, and is reported to have had the US Open balls shipped to him for his training.

Ranking-wise Nadal had little incentive to play in New York, as under a temporary new system he will be able to continue counting his haul of 2,000 points from winning the title last year.

He will surely turn his atten-

tions to the French Open, which is now due to happen in late September, although so much can change between now and then with events far beyond the control of the tennis world.

The indications are that the US Open wants to plough on with no fans, despite the multiple logistical challenges it faces.

Aside from Nadal and Barty other prominent no-shows on the men's side are

expected to include Gael Monfils, Fabio Fognini, Stan Wawrinka and Jo Wilfried Tsonga.

There is also a large question mark around Wimbledon champion Simona Halep, although Serena Williams has declared her willingness to compete.

If it survives the Italian Open is now meant to be the warm-up event for Roland Garros, although that will also have to go ahead without fans. These are difficult times indeed for a global sport like tennis.

—Daily Mail



The World No. 2 calls the revised calendar 'barbaric'

## Nagal gets direct entry into US Open singles main draw

YOUNG Indian tennis player Sumit Nagal is set to compete in his second Grand Slam main draw after receiving a direct entry into the US Open, which several top players will miss due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The world number 127 is the last man to receive a direct entry, according to the tournament website. It will be Nagal's second appearance at the US Open, starting August 31, and he is the only Indian in the men's field with Prajesh Gunneswaran, ranked 132, missing out.

"It feels good to make a main draw of a Slam again since I have only made one main draw yet. I understand the situation is not the same this year. I am looking to fly to USA after my challengers in Czech Republic," Nagal said from Germany before

a training session.

Last year, Nagal reached his maiden Grand Slam at the US Open after winning all his qualifying round

**It will be his second appearance in New York**

matches to set up a dream encounter with the legendary Roger Federer. In the much-anticipated clash, the 22-year old from Jhajjar took a set off Federer before going down 6-4 1-6 2-6 4-6.

Talking about this year, Nagal said, "I don't have much expectations, I just want to go and do what I enjoy which is playing tennis."

Nagal said he won't have to serve a quarantine period after he reaches New York.

"We are supposed to stay in a bubble area and can only go to the hotel and back to the courts. We will have COVID-19 tests every second day."

Three-time US Open champion and world no. 1 Novak Djokovic headlines the field with the likes of Federer and Rafael Nadal giving the tournament a miss. While Federer has withdrawn from all competitions this year owing to a knee injury, defending champion Nadal pulled out due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

—Agencies



Sumit Nagal had set-up a dream clash against Roger Federer at the Grand Slam last year.