

## President of India virtually presents National Sports and Adventure Awards, 2020

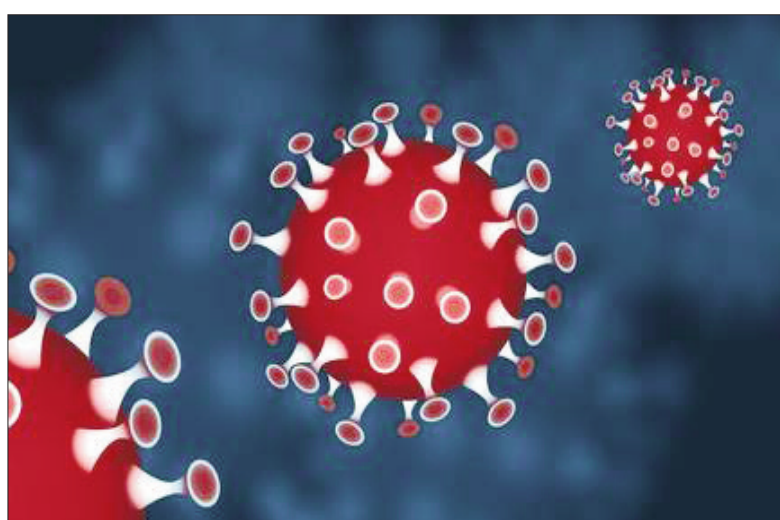
In a first ever virtual presentation of awards, the President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, gave away the National Sports and Adventure Awards, 2020 from Rashtrapati Bhavan today (August 29, 2020) and said that the achievements of these award winners were reminder of India's immense potential in the sports. Setting the bar high, the President said that India would eventually emerge as a great power in the sports and aspire to find a place in top ten countries for winning the medals in 2028 Olympics. "I am sure we will achieve this target" he said while addressing a gathering of officials, sports-persons and trainers spread over 11 different centres across the country including, Bengaluru, Pune, Sonapat, Chandigarh, Kolkata, Lucknow, Delhi, Mumbai, Bhopal, Hyderabad and Itanagar. The Union Minister of State

(Independent Charge) for Youth Affairs and Sports, Shri Kiren Rijiju also attended the ceremony and delivered the welcome address from New Delhi. The President said that COVID-19 has adversely affected the sports world too. Olympic Games have been postponed. Sports activities in our country have also been affected. Players and coaches might be feeling less motivated due to lack of practice and competitions which poses a huge challenge for their mental and physical preparation. He was happy to note that players and coaches have been connected through online coaching and webinars to overcome this challenge. He said that today's event was an attempt to continue sports related activities despite the global pandemic.

The President was happy to note the increased diversity of sports in our country. He

said that today's award winners represent more than 20 sports. The growing popularity of our traditional games like Kabaddi, Kho-Kho and Mallakhamb will help in connecting the common people with sports. Today, apart from Cricket and Football, league tournaments of sports like Volleyball and Kabaddi are gaining popularity which is a pleasant change.

The President said that the culture of sports can be promoted by the participation of all stakeholders. It is not the sole responsibility of the government. Investment in sports is a collective effort towards nation-building which strengthens society. He was happy to note that many corporate, NGOs and educational institutions are making significant contribution in promoting sports. He expressed confidence that India would emerge as a leading nation in sports



through collective efforts.

The Sports Awards are given every year to recognize and reward excellence in sports. Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award is given for the spectacular and most outstanding performance in the field of sports by a sports person over a period of four years;

Arjuna Award is given for consistent outstanding performance for four years; Dronacharya Award goes to the coaches for producing medal winners at prestigious international sports events; Dhyan Chand Award is for life time contribution to sports development and Rashtriya Khel

university in inter-university tournaments is given Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Trophy. In addition to these Sports Awards, the spirit of adventure among the people of the country is recognized by bestowing the Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Award.

## On a steep rise in corona

India has exhibited determined resolve to expand the testing which has led to an exponential hike of COVID-19 testing. Starting from a single test in one lab in Pune in January 2020, the daily testing capacity has been scaled up to more than 10 lakh in August 2020.

The cumulative tests have crossed 4.23 cr. 8,46,278 tests were conducted in the past 24 hours.

India has registered 78,512 cases in the last 24 hours (Sunday, 30th August 2020). Hence the report by certain Media Entities of about 80,000 cases in the last 24 hours is without any basis.

Seven States have contributed to 70% of these new cases in the last 24 hours. Of these, Maharashtra has contributed the maximum case load amounting to almost 21%, followed by Andhra Pradesh (13.5%), Karnataka (11.27%) and Tamil Nadu which stands at 8.27%. Uttar Pradesh with 8.27%, West Bengal with 3.85%, and Odisha with 3.84% are the remaining States contributing to the increased caseload.

Of the total cumulative number of cases, 43% are recorded in just three states of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. While Tamil Nadu has contributed 11.66% of the total cases. Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka also account for about 50% of the deaths added in the last 24 hours due to COVID-19, with Maharashtra leading with 30.48%.

The Union Government is regularly engaging with States/UTs that are reporting a spurt in cases and those with higher fatality rate. They have been advised to undertake aggressive measures to ensure higher testing, effective clinical management to lower fatality and save lives along with efficient monitoring at various levels.

## Editorial

# There she was.....And she is.....

- Arkaprava Das

Mrs and Mr Lahoti ended their breakfast in absolute silence. Morning was warm and calm. But, the family was allowing sufficient time for Mrs Lahoti to deal with her present disturbances. It was all very usual in the House of Lahotis. Mr Lahoti went out quietly after completing his breakfast, rest of the family was out of sight and Mrs Lahoti went to her room letting the maid do her task saying nothing. She sat for sometimes, arranged her room carelessly, tended her window herbs and went on doing a couple of other things in absolute ignorance. She never tried to talk or explain herself to anyone. Yet, she was fuming inside and wished to transmit it somewhere as soon as possible.

Lahotis were settled residents in a good corner of the city, with two children, one student another TV anchor, living along with their spiritual grandmother. Mrs Lahoti's cousin stayed with the family and worked for a web portal. There was a private arrangement made between Mrs Lahoti and her cousin and she stayed their paying a monthly sum. Mrs Lahoti was quite coerce regarding the matter while Mr Lahoti remained calm and reluctant. Apart from that, the household had a maid, a gardener and a driver. The driver was particularly engaged for Mrs Lahoti's trips. Mr Lahoti worked in administrative wing of a big college while Mrs Lahoti ran a boutique. It was a prominent household in the locality comprised of people with contrasting mind forms. Among them, Mrs Lahoti obtained some extra significance for her unpredictable conducts. The family accepted and sometimes even fostered her traits since they thought her conducts as harmlessly silly outbursts.

Mrs Sukhani and Mrs Chawla were merrily chit-chatting as Mrs Lahoti entered the store in her lush casual. They looked with pleasant smiles on their faces and greeted her warmly. She greeted in response showing an equal charming smile. She let her driver arrange her office kits in her sitting space and go away silently. She had to check the status of sales of her unit, discuss on the upcoming exhibition that they were thinking to arrange, the promotions and new launch that they had to decide together. Mrs Lahoti was handling everything showing no sign of discomfort. Actually, she believed herself to be better than any known or unknown men in the area of business, that too in the field that she loved. Her boutique was nice and preferred by many picky customers and received regular good feedbacks. Mrs Sukhani and Mrs Chawla were her two associates. Three of them ran the boutique as well as a small workshop and training centre for fashion accessories.

"So, what about Mr Lahoti dear.....I'm sure he has loads of plans for his retired days....." Mrs Chawla asked very lightly.

Mrs Lahoti looked up and she felt the anvil to be still heated inside her mind throwing ashes of last night's little incidents. They flew around to haze her sight, choke her throat and make her absent once again.

".....What happened.....?"

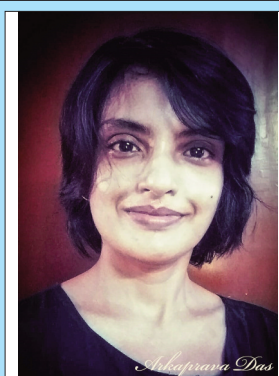
".....Nothing.....Oh, Yes.....He's going to throw a party this weekend to celebrate his retirement....." Mrs Lahoti smiled and answered Mrs Chawla.

".....That's very nice.....But.....I tell you.....Mr Lahoti looks so young still now.....No one will believe him to be retired unless you say.....Better don't tell anyone....." Mrs Chawla smiled at her length and Mrs Sukhani anticipated her with an even bigger smile.

".....I'll be letting him know what you said.....He'll dance on clouds....." Mrs Lahoti joined her associates in their merriment.

With a delighted heart, Mr Lahoti declared his retirement to the family last night in dinner and received various reactions at once.

"Now, Dad.....you'll search my assignment's references.....I get really confused sometimes, you know....." Cheered the daughter.



audience except me.....And he always ignores my appreciations.....I want you to watch and say the same....." giggled the sis-in-law.

Mr Lahoti was smiling and looking at everyone with glad submission. The joyful dinner ended well and finally Mr Lahoti found time to come together with to Mrs Lahoti. He saw her making some arrangements in the room. Mrs Lahoti said nothing, not even looked at Mr Lahoti who was watching her.

".....I've enough time to taste your salt less plates.....I was really waiting for this time to come.....believe me....." Mr Lahoti finally broke the placidity.

".....Too old complement to make me revolt....." Mrs Lahoti smiled and replied.

It was indeed an old complement that was tagged to Mrs Lahoti since her beginning days in the Lahoti family and the complement carried sweet and sour memories. It was mentioned by many that Nirupa had a good sense of cooking during her wedding days with Tunir Lahoti. After the marriage, Nirupa was shown the kitchen by her mother-in-law with a tender authority that Nirupa followed with sincere silence. She never showed any hesitation or unwillingness. She prepared food and served the family on lunchtime.

Nirupa was hugely appreciated by everyone that day, particularly by her father-in-law added with just a single rectification remark of lack of salt in the food that she prepared. Nirupa blushed but never shied from saying that she made it a practice since she was a bit concerned about health. She added further to her father-in-law that he should check eating more salt for his own good since Nirupa knew that her father-in-law had heart trouble.

From that day, Nirupa's upstart manner became the talk of the family. She was loved as well as mocked for it. Nirupa never showed any repercussion and took them with her charm. She merged with the family in a very normal way. She was particularly noticed by her father-in-law, who enjoyed ignoring all her advices and making her skittish. He remained snoopy on her gardening ventures but spent every evening sitting in the small patch of garden that Nirupa raised in front of the house. Nirupa's mother-in-law happily allowed her husband to mingle with Nirupa. Now, she relaxed herself with her religious scriptures. And Tunir was silently pleased.

But, one day, she expressed her desire to everyone in the family that she wanted to open a boutique. It was a little shock for the family yet they allowed her to move in her way. Thus, she was detached from all her household occupations. Gradually, with the growth of her enterprise she became detached with the family too and never happen to know what they were saying about her. Mrs Lahoti became totally devoted in her business.

She stayed silent on the day of demise of her father-in-law. A few torn pieces of words reached her that bore the note that she was not at all careful to her family and was totally worthless. Mrs Lahoti showed no reaction. She came to her mother-in-law the night when all ceremonial events ended. Mrs Lahoti

said nothing but only embraced her mother-in-law deeply and kept holding her for long.

"Am I guilty?" She spoke at last.

"No....." said her mother-in-law.

They stayed together the whole night until the beginning of the next day. The days passed by afterwards to bring back everything in their normal pace.

"Will you cook.....please....." Asked Tunir.

Mrs Lahoti gave her consent easily, "Yes, why not....."

"I'm going to enjoy the evening time in your garden now.....I'm going to watch it now and see how you made it....." Tunir gave a pleasant smile.

"Speaking just like your father.....But I don't make the garden now.....Even I don't know how it looks....." Mrs Lahoti smiled too.

"Yes, of course.....Father really liked everything that you did.....I'm going to watch them now.....All those things that you left long time ago....."

"I haven't left any of these Tunir.....I just shifted my attention to the things where I can move ahead and it has shown up well.....I think you know....."

"I know....."

"I wanted to say something to you....."

"Say....."

"I don't want to feel that you're retired and away from the working area.....I want you to do something....."

Mr Lahoti looked up at Mrs Lahoti.

"But I want to rest.....I think I've worked for long.....Don't you think.....I'll see the things that I missed all these days.....I think you'll let me do that....." He said.

"I can say one thing.....Your thoughts will change within one month.....It's just up to you to think.....I don't have anything to say....." Nirupa left the room suddenly. Tunir watched her leaving.

Tunir went out of his room after a while to find Nirupa watching TV in the dark. She wore the headphone. There was the usual silence of the night all around. The family was peacefully sleeping. He came and sat beside her. After a while, he laid his head on her lap and slept soon.

The banquet was filled and bright. Mr Lahoti was a happy person and he looked happiest at the moment. Every arrangement was done with the neatness that were grabbing everyone's attention. He admired his wife once again and let it remain enclosed in him. But, she was not with him. Mrs Lahoti stayed back at the time the family was leaving for the party. The family let her stay. They went to greet the awaiting guests. All of them were charming in the party and everything went in perfect pleasantness.

"Congratulations, Lahoti Ji....." A guest appeared in front of Mr Lahoti and proceeded to shake hands.

"So.....now, you become another person to rejoice the real happiness of life....." He warmly shook his hands giving his best wishes.

".....I know you'll find it difficult to choose the best thing that you're going to do.....But, that is the joy.....the real joy.....You know.....I'm sure, you'll enjoy....." He made a big laugh and stopped.

Mr Lahoti laughed too and agreed with him.

Mr Tiwari, Mr Lahoti's neighbour, was already exhorting with quite a lot of impressive ideas of spending retirement days. Mr Lahoti listened and smiled. He was actually missing Nirupa. She did everything to make this wonderful party yet she never spoke anything that related the purpose of it. She was always so strange and Mr Lahoti never found the way to crack the mystery lock of the case within which his wife hid all her expressions. In all these days, he felt it too difficult for him and thus just relaxed and let her go by. Now, at this moment, strangely

enough, Mr Lahoti became too willing to get inside Nirupa's mind. But, Mrs Lahoti was nowhere near him.

Mr Lahoti looked at the entry door and saw someone. He recognised at last. Nirupa was there standing at the door. She was looking in front. She stepped inside and walked closer to him. Mr Lahoti wished to identify her but before he could, Mrs Lahoti came and stood beside him.

"Hello.....We're all really missing you in the party Mrs Lahoti.....My heartiest regards to you too....." Said one.

"Sorry.....It took me sometime to prepare myself and come here....." Nirupa replied.

"Yes.....Yes.....Of course.....You two are wonderful together.....Let me tell you.....Something that may be you never heard from Lahoti himself.....Mr Lahoti waited for this day to come.....To spend time particularly with you....." Said Mr Joshi, Mr Lahoti's colleague, jocularly glancing at Mr Lahoti.

Nirupa smiled a little and said, "He has told me this last night. He wishes to see what all I did once. There are many things that he overlooked actually.....Its OK.....No one finds everything.....And I don't want to let him lose the pleasure of what he found....."

"But.....I want to know....." Mr Lahoti spoke out.

Mrs Lahoti looked at him.

"You've to say what other things I've overlooked....." Mr Lahoti urged again.

His eagerness spread in the cluster and drizzled on Mrs Lahoti and she chirped up.

"Can we have a little walk first.....?" She asked.

They walked together and met the guests. They were cheered and wished in different ways. After a while, they stopped. They looked around.

"Can I have a few moments from all of you.....Since I wanted to say something....." Mrs Lahoti spoke to everyone present there.

"I thought it for him actually.....But I wish to say it now.....And let him listen here.....So, May I.....?" Mrs Lahoti paused and was appreciated at once from all sides. Both of them were given enough space to stand and be heard.

She never waited for Mr Lahoti to respond and he made none.

In the middle of all, Mrs Lahoti held Mr Lahoti's hand and began.

".....Once we're unknown, but lived together for long....."

".....As we're destined to stay together with one another....."

".....He wishes me to tell something he doesn't know....."

".....But he doesn't know that I wished the same from him....."

".....Yet.....we stayed together for such a long time....."

".....But, I can say we just know a little bit....."

".....May be we will remain unknown to the rest of our lives....."

".....I just wish to refresh the moments of being with him....."

".....Always and what else I can say....."

".....Let the rest of us remain unknown....."

The party clapped together for long. The moment went by in a nice way.

The family came back to home late at night. Mrs and Mr Lahoti talked as they sat together in the bed.

"I cannot understand poems properly you know.....But it was good....." Tunir said to Nirupa.

"Its OK....." Nirupa replied.

"I haven't got my answer still....."

"I cannot reply....."

"I wanted to say something to you....." Said Tunir and Nirupa looked up at him.

"In the party, Deshmukh offered me a part-time job in the library of our Institute and I accepted....."

Nirupa kept looking at Tunir.

"Thanks....." At last she replied.

## Soneva Fushi Reveals New Water Retreats in the Maldives

Soneva Fushi's new Water Retreats are soon to be ready to welcome guests, adding yet another facet to the original barefoot luxury resort. Guests can expect innovative designs and some new changes to the iconic Water Retreat designs that can be found at Soneva Jani. Reached by a gently curving jetty near Dolphin Beach, at the opposite end of the island to the Out of the Blue dining destination, the eight Water Retreats have been designed to ensure the utmost privacy for guests, as well as to make the most of the picture-perfect ocean vistas. The 1 Bedroom Water Retreats (584 Sq.m./6,286 Sq.ft) and 2 Bedroom Water Retreats (857 Sq.m./9,224 Sq.ft.) are the largest one- and two-bedroom overwater villas in the world. The spacious interiors and exterior living spaces give guests more to love, as well as making them perfect for families. As each of the rooms in the Water Retreats can be sealed off, the doors out onto the deck can be locked, and the children's room is located at the back of the master bedroom, they are child-friendly and suitable for young Soneva guests of all ages. The 1 and 2 Bedroom Water Retreats, all have water slides, will open their doors to guests on September 25, 2020. "We are very proud to announce this exciting new phase for Soneva Fushi," says Sonu Shivdasani, Soneva's CEO and Founder. "When we first launched Soneva Fushi in 1995, we redefined tourism in the Maldives with our unique vision that pioneered the concept of sustainable luxury. After 25 years at the forefront of the global luxury tourism sector and as a bucket-list destination in the Maldives, we are always striving to evolve with our guests' ever-changing needs. While we will always remain true to the much-loved spirit and laid-back ethos of Soneva Fushi, the new Water Retreat villas will elevate our offering. Having overwater villas gives our guests the luxury of choice, to stay amongst the deep greens of the jungle with the beach just steps away, or wake up to panoramic views of the ocean."