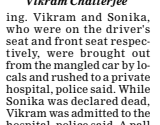


## Model killed, actor injured in car mishap

**KOLKATA, APRIL 29** /- Popular model and TV prime time host, Sonika Chauhan was killed while actor Vikram Chatterjee was injured when the SUV in which they were travelling met with an accident in south Kolkata today. Police said the SUV mounted the pavement while trying to avoid an approaching car from a nearby lane and partially tilted on one side at around 4:30 am near Rashbehari Avenue cross.



Mangled car with inflated wheel of actor Vikram Chatterjee and model Sonika Chauhan, who died after the car they were travelling in met with an accident at Rashbehari. Blood stains are also seen on the seat — Arijit Ganguly

## EC to soon call all party meeting on EVM issue : Zaidi

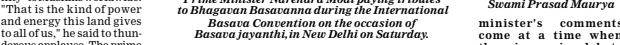
**CHANDIGARH, APRIL 29** /- The Election Commission of India (EC) will soon call a meeting of all political parties to discuss the electronic voting machines (EVMs) were tampering proof and secured. Chief Election Commissioner Nasim Zaidi said today. He also said that the commission intends to use Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) in all coming elections to bring in more transparency and boosting the confidence of people in the electoral process. "We will soon hold an all party meeting in which they will be told how our EVMs are non-tamperable and secured as per our administrative and technical safeguard system," the CEC told reporters here. He was responding to questions about allegations levelled by various political parties against EVMs. Recently sixteen opposition parties had urged the EC to revert to ballot system, claiming the faith of the people in EVMs had been "eroded". Zaidi also said that the EC is planning to "hold a challenge" for which time frame is being worked out. The electoral body is planning to throw an open challenge, asking anyone to try hacking its EVMs to dispel doubts of any misuse, it is learnt. The CEC also said that the EC had placed an order for the supply of VVPAT machines for use in elections. "For VVPAT, we have got all the funds. We have placed an order for the supply of 15 lakh VVPAT with two PSU Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) and Electronic Corporation of India (ECI)," informed Zaidi. He said it is expected that by September 2018, around 15 lakh VVPAT machines will be ready. The Commission's objective is to use VVPATs in all the coming elections, he said. India will "perhaps" be the first country where VVPAT will be used 100 per cent at all the polling stations. It will boost voters' confidence and will bring more transparency in the election process, he added. Zaidi said that an awareness campaign will be launched to create awareness about the benefits of VVPAT. VVPAT generates a receipt allowing voters to verify that the vote went in favour of the candidate against whose name the button was pressed on the EVM. After the assembly elections earlier this year in five states — Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa, Punjab and Manipur, many political parties raised their voice against the use of EVMs. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal was vociferous alleging probable misuse of EVMs while BJP leader Mayawati, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav had also raised question about the polling machines (PTT)

## All roads of the state to be metalled at end of the year

**DURGADASBANDOPADHYAY** KOLKATA, APRIL 29 /- With ostensibly panchayat votes scheduled early next year in mind, the state government has decided to concretise the entire 3500 kms of unmetalled road lying in the panchayat areas of the state. For this the state has prepared an estimate of Rs 376 crore that will be spent on the project aimed at making all the roads of the state metalled. The job will have to be finished in a year's time, the government has instructed the panchayat department and the PWD. "Of the Rs 376 crore that will be spent Rs 166 crore will be given by the Centre and the rest will be borne by the state government. These will be eco-friendly roads as materials useful to protect environment will also be planted on either sides of the roads. After the project is over we can claim that all roads in the state have been metalled," an official of the state PWD told Echo of India. He also said that the state government was taking up projects for improvement of drinking water supply system, sewerage system, improvement of the healthcare system etc in the panchayat areas. "Instructions have been sent to the officials that the work will have to be finished by the end of the year so that people in the villages have a better life," the official said.

## Don't allow triple talaq to be politicised: PM to Muslims

**NEW DELHI, APRIL 29** /- Prime Minister Narendra Modi today urged Muslims not to view the triple talaq issue from a political perspective and expressed the confidence that efforts to end the practice would be led by "enlightened" members of the community. At a function to mark the Basava Jayanti celebrations in honour of Kannada philosopher Basaveswara, Modi referred to the 12th century reformer's movement against regressive practices to spread the triple talaq. "Appeal to you not to view the triple talaq issue from a political perspective. Come out and find a solution. That solution will have its own majesty and generations will remember you," he said. Modi said he hoped that "powerful people" would emerge from society and help "eradicate outdated practices and evolve modern systems". He called upon Indian Muslims to lead not just those from the community in the country, but to show the "path of modernity" to Muslims worldwide. "That is the kind of power and energy this land gives to all of us," he said to thunderous applause. The prime minister used the platform to speak about women empowerment, equality and good governance, as preached and practised by Basaveswara. Referring to the triple talaq, Modi said, "I am sure enlightened people will also emerge from among Muslims and reformers will end this practice, liberating our Muslim daughters and mothers from the scourge. I am sure enlightened Muslims will take this responsibility upon themselves." Modi also released a digital video message of Basaveswara's works titled "Vachan" in 23 languages. The works comprise 2500 sermons delivered by the philosopher. The event assumes significance in view of the 2018 assembly elections in Karnataka, where

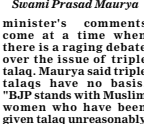


Prime Minister Narendra Modi paying tributes to Bhagawan Basavanna during the International Basava Jayanti, in New Delhi on Saturday.

Lingayats are a formidable community. Basaveswara, also known as Basavanna, is their most powerful icon. The prime minister used the platform, hosted by the Basava Society to repeat his government's message of "Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas (United with all, Development for all)" and said people had to progress without discrimination. "People should get homes, access to power without discrimination. Farmers should get fertilisers and insurance benefits without any distinctions. That is the meaning of our government's message of 'Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas'," he said. Interspersing his 40-minute address with the sayings of the poet-philosopher, he said today's youth were ignorant about the preachings of the reformers of the Bhakti movement. "Call it loopholes in our education system or our propensity to ignore our own heritage, the youth today would know nothing of how eminent and evolved Indians like Basavanna spoke against evil social practices and in favour of women's empowerment as long back as 700 years," he said at the function, also attended by union minister Ananth Kumar and Karnataka BJP chief BS Yeddyurappa. Modi recollected that India had been blessed with saints and reformers who had transformed society. India's history, he added, was not only about defeat, poverty or colonialism.

## Muslims choose triple talaq to satisfy lust: UP minister

**BASTI (UP) APRIL 29** /- UP cabinet minister Swami Prasad Maurya has charged that Muslims use triple talaq to change wives and satisfy their "lust", remarks that are likely to spur a controversy. The BJP



minister's comments come at a time when there is a raging debate over the issue of triple talaq. Maurya said triple talaqs have no basis. "BJP stands with Muslim women who have been given talaq unreasonably and arbitrarily," Maurya, who was here to participate in a function at the house of a local BJP leader here, told news persons last night. "These talaqs have no basis... if someone only for satisfying his lust keeps changing his wives and forces his own wife and children on the streets to beg... no one will call this as right," he said. Maurya said BJP stands with such victims to help them get respect. (PTI)

## Positive about SC ruling on triple talaq : Justice Ganguly

**KOLKATA, APRIL 29** /- Former Supreme Court judge Asok Kumar Ganguly today said that he was positive about the outcome of the apex court's ruling on constitutional validity of 'triple talaq', hearing of which was scheduled on May 11. "I think none is above the Supreme Court. The justice which will be delivered after hearing will be final. I am positive about the outcome," Justice Ganguly told reporters on the sidelines of a seminar on triple talaq. He has been asked about the Muslim Personal Law Board's stand on the issue. "I have full confidence in the constitutional accountability of the Supreme Court," he added. "I wonder for how long women would be considered as commodity in this society. I think the Muslim women don't feel free under the present triple talaq system," Justice Ganguly said. Justice

Ganguly referred to the outcry when Rammohan Roy had spearheaded the 'Sati Sado' (anti-bride burning) movement and Iswarchandra Vidyasagar called for widow remarriage in Hindu society in the 19th century. The Supreme Court on March 30 had decided that a Constitution Bench would hear petitions challenging the constitutional validity of 'triple talaq', 'nikah halala' and polygamy among Muslims from May 11. The Secretary of Progresst Muslim Samaj, one of the organisations of the seminar, Robul Islam said, "We, the Joint Movement Committee will undertake a concerted movement against triple talaq in Delhi

in the run-up to the SC hearing. "Over 8000 signatures, mostly from Muslim women, against triple talaq have been collected to be taken to Delhi," he said.

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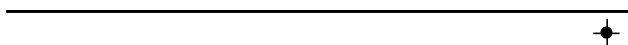
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## JK stone pelters part of pan-Islamic intifada movement: Kashmiri Pandits' body

**AHMEDABAD, APRIL 29** /- Kashmiri stone pelters are part of "global terrorism" and a larger "pan-Islamic intifada fundamentalist movement", a frontal organisation of displaced Kashmiri Pandits said here today. Ashwani Churungoo, president, Panun Kashmir told reporters that while stone pelting was not new in Kashmir (its origin dating back to 1931), stone pelters in contemporary times are part of a larger pan-Islamic intifada fundamentalist movement and global terrorism. "Stone pelting has been a part of politics in Kashmir since 1931. Today stone pelting has been adopted as a means to cover the terrorism movement in Kashmir," he said. "The minority community of Pandits were the first target of this stone pelting culture, and then (when) the Pandits were forced out of the valley, the practice was used to settle scores with political rivals in the state," he said. Churungoo was here to meet displaced Kashmiris settled in Gujarat as well as city mayor Gautam Shah to discuss issues pertaining to the Kashmir situation. The Panun Kashmir chief also came down heavily on "so-called mainstream politicians of the valley for supporting stone pelting," adding that such politicians have used the issue to meet their political ends. "Thus, it is not astonishing that the so-called mainstream politicians of the valley have come out in support of the stone pelters. We expect the Government of India to take a stand and decisive action against them, and this nationalist forces need to be strengthened in order to tackle fundamentalists," he said.



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