

Expressions



Volume: I, Issue: XI

November 2020

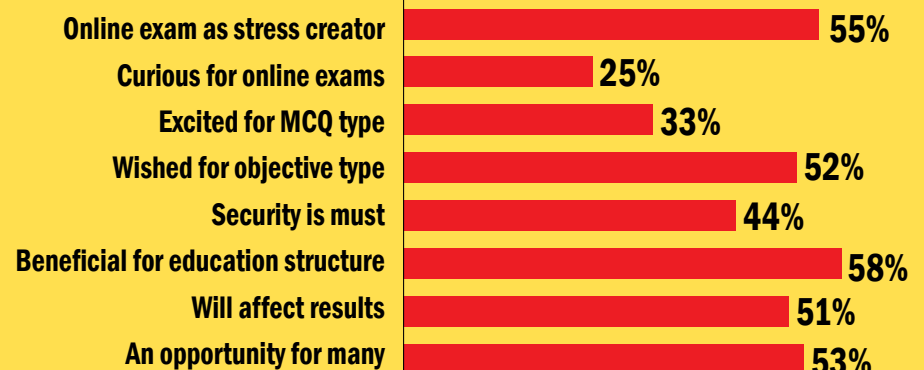
Online exams: A curiosity or stress generator

Riddhi Bhargava

A relationship that stays with every individual in the sphere of education is that of pen and paper. Ever since we step on the ladder of education, pen and paper become an indispensable part of our lives. However, the current scenario has done away with that bond, switching towards the online mode of education and examination thus evoking mixed feelings.

Pooja Sharma, an executive from Gurgaon, said that her siblings studying in class 2 and post-graduation are enjoying the online mode whereas Hritviz, a class 12 student from Mirzapur, is tensed with the format of pre-board online examinations. To analyse these varying emotions, I surveyed students and faculties wherein 54% voted for online exams and 46% still preferred going for offline examinations. Maximum people are stressed and nervous about the online exams and only 25% felt curious about this virtual mode.

STRUGGLING TIME



On the one hand, some people felt that this is an opportunity for many students to improve their academic record, whereas on the other hand, some felt that this can lead to bad performance and even unfair activities during exams. Around 58%

respondents expressed confidence and said that online examination will usher in change in the education sector while 51% felt that this new mode might affect the students drastically.

Continued on P3



Editor's Desk

The online semester teaching for all students barring first year batch came to an end and online examinations began in the first week of November-2020 at Amity University Lucknow as well as Noida Campus.



As a special case for the Law students, in compliance with the Bar Council of India (BCI) guidelines, an option to give both

offline and online exams were proposed. Those students who chose to appear for on campus examinations were provided accommodation in campus hostels. The university management ensured strict compliance of SOPs to conduct the examinations in the campus.

To avoid overcrowding, the exam authorities prepared a schedule to conduct the exam in “staggered manner” ensuring adequate room capacity with seating arrangement at a distance in the designated examination rooms in the AB-1 Block.

To ensure social distancing norms, the students were strictly made to sit at a distance with only a minimal number allowed in the examination rooms duly manned by the invigilating faculty. As per the Ministry of Health Guidelines, specific arrangements were made for students stay in hostels with safety standards and health protocols in place.

Students have been made to wear face masks and observe social distancing during their entire stay and movement in the campus.

Students appearing for the exams and the staff/invigilators had to undergo thermal screening besides wearing “triple-layer medical mask”. The authorities ensured handwashing before entering the sanitized Examination Rooms.

A regulated ‘on rotation’ duty was performed by the faculty who manned the Institutional Help Desk in the respective institutions to assist students appearing in the online examination from their respective remote locations.

Though campus witnessed few familiar faces meeting each other while performing their duties but the usual hustle-bustle was missing.

Prof (Dr) Sanjay M Johri



‘Amity gave my life a perspective’

CI graduated from Amity in 2016 but my story begins when I joined this illustrious university in 2013 after school. Amity School of Communication or as we dearly refer to it— ASCO— did not just give me a degree in journalism but a perspective on life, wonderful friends and faculty.

While I had always wanted to pursue mass communication, it was only after entering ASCO that I realized, there is so much more to it than just news and anchoring. I was a part of the college’s radio team, advertising team and eventually became a major choice for emceeing events along with others. But when films happened, there was no looking back. Had I not gone to Amity and challenged myself to take up an independent documentary project, which was appreciated; I would not have been the person that I am today.

In the third year of graduation, I had started with my first venture ‘Kati Patang Films’, which was a production house based in Lucknow. A few talented colleagues from Amity, friends and I was the core team and this venture happened due to my love for making documentary films. Here Development Communication course, which I undertook at ASCO really fuelled my wish to combine development with films that pushed me towards making documentaries. I worked with various NGOs based out of Delhi and Lucknow including PRADAN, YES Foundation, Sahbhagi Shikshan Kendra among others.

My work in the field of documentary filmmaking drew my attention towards rural devel-

opment and community strengthening. I’m right now working with Graamvaani as a content officer, prior to which I worked with Video Volunteers on ChangeChitra - a documentary film training project where I worked with 65 young people from across the country to produce some of India’s most beautiful social short documentary films.

All this would not have been possible without the help of my faculty. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the people who have shaped me into the person that I am today.

Our HoD Dr Sanjay Mohan Johri and other senior faculty like Areena ma’am, Chander Sir, Himani ma’am, Sabharwal sir, Shruti ma’am and Sheena ma’am who not only introduced me to some very important aspects of not just journalism and filmmaking but also life.

Here I would also like to name an excellent mentor and support system— Soumen Bhattacharya sir, who perpetually went out of his way to help me succeed the journey of my academia.

It is always wonderful coming back to Amity, and I will forever be here for this family, come what may. Signing off I would like to say to the current batch: ‘Just keep doing your thing; you will figure it out eventually.’

Mohona

Batch of 2013-2016

Content Officer, Gender and Child Rights, Gramvaani



Online exams: A curiosity or stress generator

Continued from P1

Not only students but teachers are also unsure about this new mode as online classes alone were full of unforeseen difficulties in terms of network connectivity and teaching of practical subjects. At Amity University, there are various modes of exams like OBE, OBE proctored, MCQ, Regular Proctored, and well-planned efforts are being made to familiarise students with the new set-up so that they perform well in the exams. Portals to be used, scanning apps, and various other guidelines are being communicated to students for smooth conduct of examination.



Undeniably, the online mode is creating curiosity because it is something new but at the same time generating nervousness and stress levels because of its unpredictable problems like network connectivity, tech issues etc.

According to an Indian Express article, many Delhi University teachers have called these exams as “mockery”, “biased” among other things. They have even placed their views that the Open Book Examination (OBE) was not in line with the course structure.

So even while it is a universal fact that technology has been a life saver during this pandemic, however, when it comes to examinations in virtual mode some are for it while others prefer the offline mode. The bottom line though is that we should believe in ourselves more than the bond of pen and paper and change with times.

ALUMNI CORNER

Chinese, Indian goods fight pitched battle in city markets

Yashita Arora

The onset of winter season marks the beginning of festivities with the most celebrated one of the year- Diwali. Even with the Covid 19 pandemic looming large, people flocked the markets throwing all caution to the wind for Diwali shopping. However, the junta was divided on one thing as many still opted for Chinese goods while others went for the desi ones denouncing goods from the 'Dragon country.'

Every year during Diwali I face a stiff competition from Chinese goods. This year the pandemic has added fuel to the fire

Sandeep Singh | HANDMADE SELLING OF DIYAS AND SCULPTURES

The Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) general secretary Praveen Khandelwal also requested people via a series of tweets to purchase local products this Diwali and go vocal for local.

Even after government imposed sanctions on goods produced in China due to the recent border clash between both the countries, yet the anti-China sentiments that raged after the Galwan dispute appears to have mended the fissures with local markets suffused with imports from neighboring country, as the festival is nearing houses are flickered up with dull Chinese lights.



The streets of Lucknow told a different story almost all electric appliance shops were filled with plethora of lights. There were rows of shops selling fairy lights, LED Blubs, electric lamps, paper lamps etc. with 'made in China' sticker on them. A street vendor who just started selling China-made lights for Diwali said he had no option as Coronavirus halted his driving business. "I have to earn money for my family and so I will sell anything. What option do I have?", he questioned. While an electric shop owner Satish stated that he is selling only in Indian made lights because the import of Chinese products has been banned.

Many consumers opted to buy more diyas as compared to fairy lights this festive season, however, Chinese lights sure 'dimmed' their business. Diya making in India has always been a small-scale handicraft industry spearheaded by traditional artisans. Potters are facing

The streets of Lucknow told a different story almost all electric appliance shops were filled with fairy lights, LED Blubs, electric lamps, paper lamps etc. with 'made in China' sticker

fulcrum crisis as Chinese lights have sequestered their sale including the unprecedented pandemic that has made the situation even worst for them.

Sandeep Singh, who has been selling handmade diyas and sculptures of god and goddess including other Diwali essentials for past 21 years, rued, "Every year during Diwali I face a stiff competition from Chinese good. This year the pandemic has added fuel to the fire."

Amid the din and noise in the market, another diya seller Mustafa sits on the streets waiting for people to buy his diyas while across the street an electric shop is flooded with people. Mustafa states that most days he has to go home empty handed. He blames Covid-19 for this situation more than Chinese goods. He also adds that since past three years he has earned less in comparison to street vendors dealing in lights instead of diyas.

A walk through the market revealed the true story of Atamnirbhar Bharat localities were lit with multicolored Chinese lights, however, there were few people like Bani, resident of Aashiyana, who decorated her house with handmade diyas and flowers.

China happens to be India's biggest trading partner, as per government data trade between the two countries has been \$87 billion in fiscal year ended March 2019 with a trade deficit of \$53.57 billion skewed in favor of China. The government after the intrusion has launched measures to prevent routing of Chinese goods



in India but that effort has only been limited to banning of apps.

Chinese items are usually imported in the month of July and August at major Indian ports, as per The Economics Times, India annually imports festive lights valued at over Rs.1000cr and gift items worth Rs.3500cr, with 70-80% sale during Diwali period.

Even after the Boycott China movement in India, the import from neighboring country this year came down to only 29% between April and August while the total import shares of neighboring country in India has gone up to 19% in comparison to 14% last year. However, as per the CII, this year sale of Chinese goods during Diwali dipped by almost Rs 40,000 crore but still it did well as compared to desi diyas and other products.

The statistics say it all. It was a mixed Diwali fare in the pandemic-ridden year with the battle lines once again being drawn between Chinese and Indian-made goods with the former holding an upper hand.

Karwa Chauth amidst Covid

Bhargavi Singh & Soumya Uppadhyay

Maybe a few years ago, if someone identified themselves as an artist on social media they would be met with some snickers of mockery or even a comment by nosy aunties reminding them that is not a real job. But with Covid pandemic forcing everyone inside and online, this misunderstood job has found a new place on the societal mantle.

Covid-19 notwithstanding the annual celebrations of Karwa Chauth, wherein married women observe fast for the entire day to ensure the long and healthy life of their husband, did not change much except in some places where women decided to skip going to markets and ordered puja, clothes etc online.

However, some of the markets saw usual rush as a good number of women went on a shopping spree. Mehendi artists were seen sitting at every nook and corner and even salons and boutiques witnessed a huge rush like previous years. The mehendi artists and make-up artists were seen wearing PPE kits in some locations while helping their customers get ready.

Heavy crowd was also seen at sweet shops as people purchased fast-related delicacies.

Educated and socially aware families performed puja in smaller groups with close family and friends in attendance. In some places women this year wore matching masks with their fancy sarees/suits and got henna designs inspired by Covid-19.

Taking this trend forward, the Karwa Chauth Sargi that is the pre-dawn meal and gifts given to the ladies by their mother-in-law's included sanitizer and mask this time. Keeping the traditions alive, ladies celebrated with a twist by performing the pooja while maintaining social distancing and sanitizing frequently.



NEW STYLE STATEMENT: FACE MASKS

Lensman: Trilochan S Kalra



While many businesses were forced to sink or swim amid Covid-19 pandemic and prolonged Lockdown, it also created opportunities some enterprising people.

To begin with some entrepreneurs started their venture of making cotton masks, face covers and very soon famous apparel brands too joined the bandwagon in producing high-end fashionable to affordable prêt-à-porter.

As cotton masks and face covers have become a necessary tool for surviving this pandemic, Indie brands like Fabindia and Tjori created masks in beautiful block-prints and weaves while others like women's workwear brand Fable Street have made masks in subtle prints and colors.

Masks are now a global trend with many brands experimenting by incorporating their signature styles into masks. "Our initial focus was to make masks that were comfortable, soft, and sanitized," says Shagun Verma an young entrepreneur from Mad House. She further adds, "We started small with one variety of masks and realized soon that there was a clear demand for such face covers."

With government making it a mandatory requirement and the Delhi government even imposing a fine of Rs 2000 for not wearing mask, it has become a stable part of one's wardrobe. Hence face masks are not just the new 'normal' but they are also turning into fashion accessories. Apart from opening business opportunities for home sewers, luxury brands have also been cashing in on its increasing demand by making pricey face masks.

From varying prints to colors and designs, some designers are also adding face masks to their runway collections.

According to a report by Quartz, a lot of these luxury fashion companies seem to have made a limited number of masks and are donating some or all the proceeds from sales to Covid-19 relief efforts or other causes. While face masks began to surface as protective gear, their designer counterparts are more than that — they are as much about the visual statement.



A fine of
₹2000
for not wearing
mask.



Budding Tata-Birla's hold key to India's future

Aakarsh Bajpai

Do you know that India is the 3rd largest startup ecosystem hub in the world with an annual growth of 10-15%! A country with handful new companies a decade ago can now boast of having more than 50,000 startups. Bangalore, Mumbai and NCR are top startup destinations with over 65% of the total Indian startups.

Bangalore has also been listed among the world's 20 leading startup cities in the 2015 startup Genome Project ranking. Additionally, it also carries the tag of one of the world's five fastest growing startup cities.

The Indian startup ecosystem is the foundation stone to the vision of an 'Atmanirbhar Bharat.'

Such awards create a great excitement among young entrepreneurs and promote their innovative ideas before the masses and propel the startups to new geographies and markets

Shubhangi Mishra |

A FASHION ENTREPRENEUR

To appreciate this success story and acknowledge the contribution of startups to the Indian economy, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade organised National Startup Awards 2020.

The winners of the **National Startup Awards 2020** focussed on eco-green technology, environment-friendly ventures while keeping convenience, efficiency and worker-friendly aspects in mind. Some of the notable winners are as follows:

World's first 100% eco-friendly cell created by Indian startup Aloe E-cell. As the name suggests the 1.5 V AA size batteries are made using Aloevera replacing toxic chemicals. It is built at a 10% cheaper cost and with 1.5 times more durability.

Nava Design & Innovation Private Limited (SAPER): Co-co-sap tappers have moved from this tedious and unrewarding job towards more lucrative and better paying jobs. To solve this problem Nava Design came up with SAPER that automates the process of tapping and collection of sap. It is controlled by a wireless network powered by solar electricity. It is a complete autonomous farming solution.

SAPER reduces the number of human tree climbs to just 2 times in 3 months from a tiring 270. **The device has patent in 28 countries that comprises of more than 90% of coconut growing area in the world.**

Sukriti: An NGO, in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, have developed a smart public toilet named Ecomitra. The solar powered toilet automatically cleans the toilet without any use of sensors. It also has manual flush system as a backup.

The waste water of the toilet is treated and reused for flushing the toilet. No sensors for this automated process strikes off the chances of any physical damage to the sensors or even their theft.

Bellatrix Aerospace: A private aerospace company focusing on advanced propulsion systems for satellites and reusable micro launch vehicles. Its award-winning achievement is indigenous design, development and manufacturing of high performing green propellant, Hydroxyl Ammonium Nitrate (HAN). Its unique selling point being its 30% higher performance as compared to traditional propellant. The advanced electric propulsion systems, offers 10X more fuel efficiency with 3X more payload carrying capacity and 2X less mission cost.

Brand Storytelling: The future of marketing

Rahul Mohanto

Storytelling has lubricated the hoop of humanity for zillions of years. Ever since early childhood, stories have formed an integral part of our lives. Be it the bedtime story from our parents or the numerous ones coming from our grandparents, they have the power to soothe as well as inspire.

We are engulfed with stories every day. Remember when your teacher explained the complex concept through stories, TEDx speakers narrating their tales to convey an idea or your favourite comedian makes up your day with their funny anecdotes. The music you tune in to, the films you watch, and the photos you see, everything is narrating a story. Stories are indomitable. They make us happy, grin, cry, and sad and more so, they leave an imprint in our minds.

So, what's brand storytelling? It is an art of gaining momentum in the sea of marketing world using a narrative that stimulates interest and curiosity in the minds of the target audience. In this new age of integrated marketing communication and rapidly evolving consumer habits, storytelling has emerged as a paramount channel for delivering the brand message to achieve the desired result. As per the research conducted by Stanford Graduate School of Business, stories are 22 times more memorable than facts and figures.

Do you think renowned brands like Coca-Cola, Mag-

gi, Titan, and Tanishq sell only products? Well, they sell emotion, feelings, and warmth. From the famous sofa ad to the butter chicken ad, we all can recall the brand without naming it. This is the power of storytelling. Have you guessed it yet?

Many studies claimed that, if people enjoy the brand story, there are 55% chances that they will buy the products in the future, 44% will share, and 15% will immediately purchase the product. Apple founder Steve Jobs once said that the most powerful weapon in the world is storytelling as it strategically whisks vision, values and agenda. Nick Morgan, the author of Blue clues and Founder of Public Words, Communication firm, advocated that in this information-driven world, business leaders won't be heard unless they narrate sticky stories admixed with emotions and feelings.

Today modern marketing aims at delivering a positive consumer experience in a way that appeals to customers, partners, stakeholders more than anything else. Storytelling opens doors to the brand to express more about themselves that can humanize them more than their competitors in the market.

How you can touch and transform people's lives through your brand story matters. Don't create customers but build a tribe and storytelling does just that. It enhances brand equity, brand value, goodwill and ultimately brand affinity. So go ahead and grab a packet of your favourite snack and before you pop it into your mouth just take a minute to think what made you buy it when you saw the advertisement.

Tech savvy Gen Z vs ethics: The debate continues...

Sristi Rai & Nitish Kumar

Ethics play an important role in our society. It shows an individual's behaviour in different situations, enhances the decision-making power in the right perspective and helps in developing the personality. "Ethics is always important both in professional and personal life," says millennial Swetlana Rai, working in an MNC.

Ethics is one of the major aspects of a professional environment. It shows the sincerity towards the work in a positive way. The new generation has ample amount of knowledge and are tech savvy, however, many people of the older generation feel that it has taken away key qualities of patience, compassion that are integral to maintaining good ethical values.

"Technology doesn't necessarily mean that people become more informative and knowledgeable. It is just a medium of accessing data/information and not the source of values that will be inculcated inside someone," says Upasana Saxena, faculty at Amity University.

Commenting on the change in attitude of Generation Z, majority of which behaves aggressively when someone tries to make them understand the error or digression of their ways, college student Kanika Gupta says, "We are moving towards technology forgetting our roots. Life is not a bed of roses and we all have to be prepared to face challenges that can only be done by taking advice of elders and following our moral ethics."

However, master's student Alankrit Nigam differs. "The younger generation is not aggressive. It is more connected to technology as they grew up in an era of internet, mobiles, laptops etc. It is only natural they have more affinity towards it. There is nothing wrong with it."

Tabu: An evergreen actor

Nitin Kumar

Called an intelligent man's actor, Tabu, who can easily slip into a Shakespearean character or a masala film like *Golmaal Again*, is again in the limelight for her role in web/TV series 'A Suitable Boy' helmed by acclaimed director Mira Nair.

The actor has made it her habit to impress us with her on-screen performance before disappearing into her own world. Who is not mesmerized with Tabu's personality blooming with time? She always stands tall with her nuanced portrayal of characters.

Born as Tabassum Fatima Hashmi in a conservative Muslim family of Hyderabad, Tabu had no aspira-

Not just Bollywood, the versatile actor delivered hit and critically acclaimed films in South as well. Till date Tabu has done more than 90 films in several Indian languages and is fluent in speaking over 8 languages

tion to become an actress. At the age of 14, when director Vijay Anand's wife, Sushma spotted her at a birthday party and thought she would be perfect as Dev Anand's daughter in 1985 film 'Hum Naujawan', Tabu's reluctant journey to stardom began as a child artiste.

Although after 'Hum Naujawan', Tabu thought that the film distract-



ed from academics and decided not to do it again. She spent her days with her actor-sister Farah in Mumbai and pursued studies in Arts from St. Xavier's College. But destiny had it otherwise.

Her film career took off in 1994 with 'Vijaypath' starring Ajay Devgn and the song 'Ruk, ruk, ruk arre baba ruk', sung by Alisha Chinai, made her the heartthrob of the nation. Tabu won the Filmfare award for best female debut that year.

After doing several commercially successful films she reached the turning point of her career in 1996 with Gulzar's 'Maachis' for which she won the National Award for best actress. Then came a slew of films that established her as an actor who rose above the script with her nuanced performances in *Astitva*, *Chandni Bar*, *Hu Tu Tu*, *Virasat*, *Maqbool*, *Haider* to name a few. She has received two National Awards for best actress and Padma Shri in

2011.

Not just Bollywood, the versatile actor delivered hit and critically acclaimed films in South as well. Till date Tabu has done more than 90 films in several Indian languages and is fluent in speaking over 8 languages.

While millions laud her acting skills, the tall, shy actor considers herself a 'director's actor who is fully devoted to the art without thinking of the final outcomes.'

For her role in Vishal Bhardwaj's adaptation of *Hamlet*, *The New York Times* said that the film should have been titled 'Ghazala,' (after her character) rather than *Haider*.

In the international circuit too, Tabu earned laurels for her performances in films like *Life of Pi* (2012) and *The Namesake* (2006). Now, with 'A suitable boy' opposite Ishaan Khattar, the actor has once again struck a chord with both critics and audiences alike.

Pandemic hits pundits hard

Anjali Singh

Even as states like Delhi and Gujarat are busy combating the second wave of Covid 19 while others are on the brink of it; life is gradually limping back to normalcy albeit with masks, sanitisers and social distancing being the 'new normal.' However, issues of migrant labourers to education and other sectors hogged the lime-light; the one profession that usually sees a boom almost the entire year around got a big shocker as religious activities in public places came to a standstill following lockdowns thus leaving the pundits at their wits end.

Pundits, who are dependent on the earning through overtaking rituals in temples or hawan, puja, and wedding ceremonies, faced an im-

Although the temples have been opened again, there are major restrictions that have to be followed and this has really affected us

Krishna Tiwari | PUNDIT OF DURGA MAA TEMPLE, FARIDABAD

mediate attack on their livings. As temples were closed, wedding ceremonies, socio-religious programmes cancelled and/or postponed in the early days of the lockdown- the pundits were left with no option but to eke out a living through other means.

Here is what some pundits had to say when asked how the pandemic affected them.

'Source of income gone'

Krishna Tiwari, pundit of Durga Maa Temple in Faridabad said, "When our country was hit by the novel coronavirus, we were hoping that the



lockdown would not be imposed on temples, but it was not so. Temples being closed directly affected my income and it was a real tough time for all the pundits as no hawans, pujas as well as other socio-religious programmes could be performed. Although the temples have been opened again, there are major restrictions that have to be followed and this has really affected us."

'Took a loan for the first time'

While Nandan Prasad, pundit of Bala Ji Temple in Faridabad said, "Due to the lockdown, I was forced to take a loan for the first time in my life to feed my family. Temple is the only source of earning for me and the government didn't even bother to take any actions or provide any kind of help to us."

'Online pujas provided relief'

However, there was a silver lining

to the gloomy Covid cloud as online activities increased and soon people started performing rituals etc in the virtual mode. Speaking about it, Mohan Dev, pundit of Devi Mata Temple in Faridabad, "Online celebration of Navratri festival, as well as wedding ceremonies and other rituals are a boon for us." Navaratri, a festival that is celebrated with so many preparations, generates good revenue for the temples and is considered a great time for the pundits as they can earn well. This time the celebrations were done but through online pujas on zoom and skype where the customers were provided with an option to attend the puja online and pay the pundits by offering them a 'dakshina'.

Although like everyone else, the pandemic has affected the pundits, but their hopes are not destroyed. They are now looking forward to the wedding season commencing from December to boost their earnings.

'Prevention is better than an elusive cure'

Sanjana Saxena

With Delhi, Rajasthan and Gujarat witnessing a sharp increase in Covid 19 cases this month and the state governments mulling over mini lockdowns to curb the viral infection, the country like many parts of Europe is almost on the brink of the second wave of the deadly pandemic.

Britain, Belgium and France have already announced Lockdown-2 to deal with the second wave. Meanwhile, winter has arrived early this year in India due to several Western disturbances thus adding fuel to the fire as this is the ideal climatic condition for the virus to thrive and with immunity levels of people already low besides many ignoring Covid norms one can only guess at the outcome.

News about new infections caused by Hanta virus, brucellosis and consistent cases of COVID-19 present a bleak scenario

Anika Gupta | MEDICAL STUDENT OF
RAJARSHI DASHRATH MEDICAL COLLEGE

AIIMS Delhi director Randeep Guleria has warned the nation about a possible second wave of Coronavirus because of the negligence of people. In addition, we are fighting a combination of problems now like dengue, cholera, typhoid and air pollution, which is an enemy of all, especially Covid-19 patients.

Dr. Maryada Jauhari from Mumbai too warned of a second surge advising people to follow Covid-preventive measures. "A second surge of pandemic awaits us as the sea-



sonal change and our callous attitude towards preventive measures can be blamed for it. The solution is very simple, follow all preventive measures (mask, sanitizer, etc.) and maintain social distancing."

COVID-19 SECOND WAVE

Meanwhile, the race for finding a cure has intensified with vaccines being developed by Pfizer and Astra-Oxford claiming over 90% immunity after being administered to people. But the final reports on them are still awaited following which, only if the World Health Organisation (WHO) is satisfied will it give the approval. Till then it is all about coping up with the 'new normal' while taking precautions.

Expressions reporter spoke to some individuals about their take on the situation and this is what they had to say.

Anika Gupta, a medical student of Rajarshi Dashrath Medical College, Ayodhya, says, "As a medical student, I think the new normal is far from over. News about new infections caused by Hanta virus, brucellosis and consistent cases of COVID-19 present a bleak scenario. We still have a long way to go and keeping ourselves safe and healthy

is the only option. Research for finding a cure is the only hope and we should wait for that while following Covid norms."

Her views were echoed by Namita Pathak, a faculty at Amity University. "The world paradigm, as we knew, has changed and so did the definition of normal. I think the pandemic will continue to co-exist with us and we will need to respect the new normal. I believe it is difficult to be prepared for everything, however, we should aspire for a world that is open and responsive to science, respect its citizens and resources at hand," she said.

Journalism student Shikhar Mehrotra stressed on the need to strengthen the immune system, "I feel the second wave will hit us hard. However, I believe we should focus more on our health, and strengthen our immune system to be ready for whatever the future holds."

The bottom line is that till a cure is found the age-old adage 'prevention is better than cure' is the only option left. As doctor Jauhari says, "Even if we get a vaccine by this year or first quarter of next year, it will take months to reach the common people in a nation with such a huge population. Carrying out economic activities while taking precautions against COVID-19 is the only way to cope up with the new normal."