

'Not here to create obstructions... am a bridge connecting Centre and state'

His statement on Ram Mandir and mediation between Chief Minister and Varanasi Mayor for development in Prime Minister's constituency notwithstanding, Governor Ram Naik tells **Maulshree Seth** about his priorities

You have had an eventful five months as Governor. What's next?

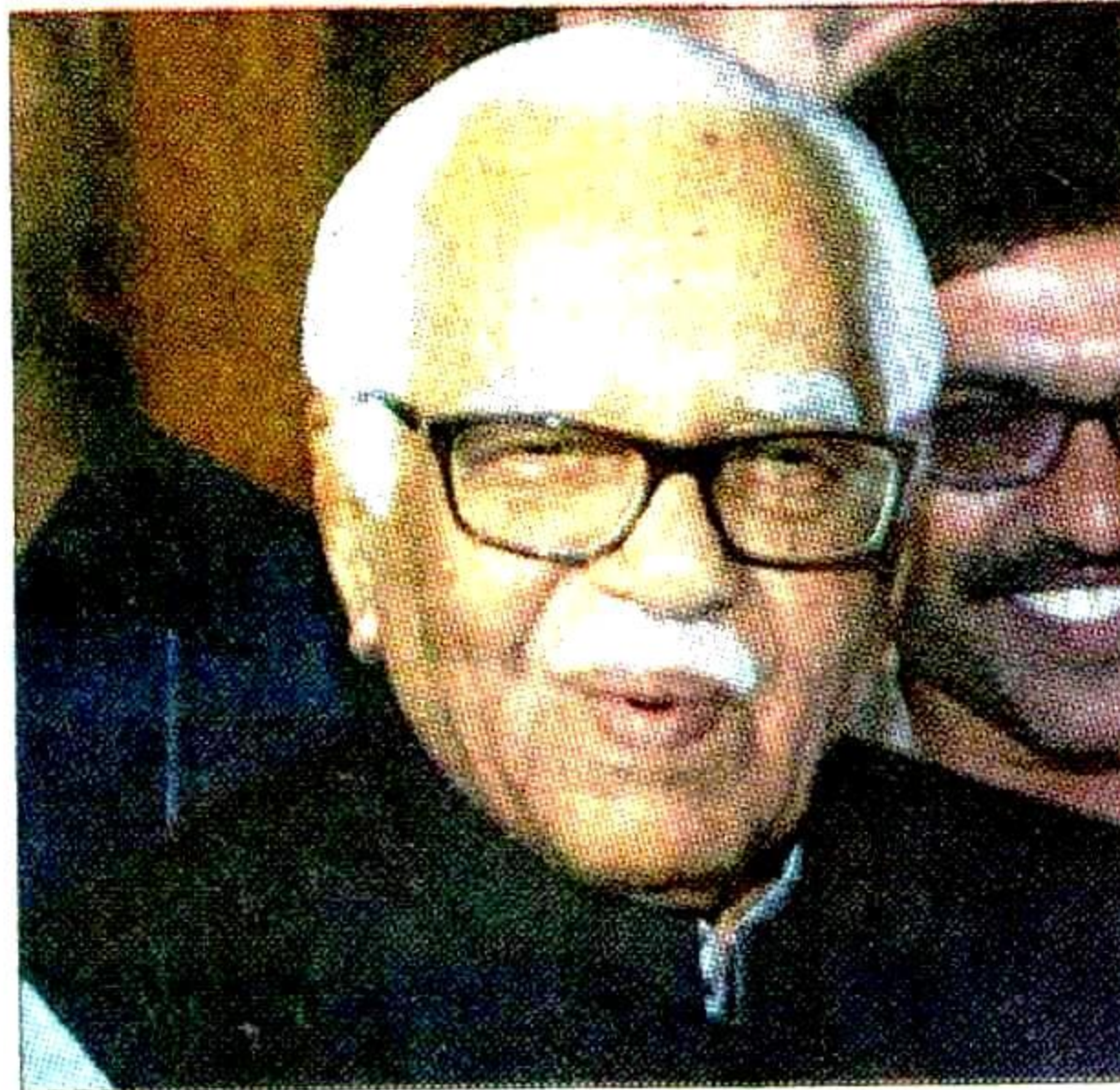
I follow three principles — smile and appreciate; do not belittle others, and there is always a better way of doing things. When I joined as Governor, many universities were not holding convocations or delaying them. I streamlined them. It is my job to act as a bridge between the state and the union government and I did that to resolve the power issue. I took up the issues of Varanasi because its Mayor had given me the memorandum and had met me when Prime Minister had arrived last time.

But opposition reacted strongly to the way you mediated talks between CM and Varanasi Mayor?

People unnecessarily created controversies because it is PM's constituency. I get lots of complaints daily and I refer them to respective departments or even to the CM, whichever is required. My doors are open to all and I try to resolve them all.

Cabinet Minister Azam Khan said that you were acting like a priest and were crossing your boundaries?

I would not react to the individual political reaction of a minister. I have expressed my opinion on this issue to the Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav. As far as my relations with CM are concerned, they are very cordial and even he has



INTERVIEW

GOVERNOR RAM NAIK

also said it.

But, your statement on construction of Ram Temple in the public interest attracted lot of opposition and Congress even demanded your removal?

Whatever I had to say, has been said. There is no need to repeat it and there should not be any controversies about it. What I felt and said was that the issue would be resolved with mutual consent. There is nothing more to say to it.

You have questioned the urgency of the ordinance seeking to give cabinet minister rank to the chairman of the UP Minority Commission?

I am not here to create any obstructions.

I am here to see that government functions in accordance with the Constitution. After an ordinance comes to me, it is examined as per the process. An ordinance is brought whenever there is an urgency otherwise government should bring it in the House. What many people do not know is that I have also cleared an ordinance of the state government in one day, which sought changing the name of Shakuntala Mishra University as Shakuntala Mishra National Rehabilitation University. I noticed that invitation of the University for convocation had different name as mentioned in its Act. The Act was not changed and degrees of the students carried the new name. I cleared the ordinance in a day before the convocation. There is no ordinance pending with me at present.

It has been over two months since you had asked UP government to send details of action taken on Lokayukta reports. Has there been any reply? Has Lokayukta sent any fresh reminders over delay?

I had sent 12 reports of UP Lokayukta to the state government as action was being delayed on them. I have not got any response so far. Lokayukta must have sent some fresh reminder but I have not received it so far. However, I have already asked the Chief Minister about the action taken on them.