



The Olympic Symbol is reinstalled after it was taken down for maintenance ahead of the postponed Tokyo 2020 Olympics in the Odaiba section on Tuesday

BSF officer killed in Pak LoC ceasefire violation in J&K

JAMMU: A Border Security Force (BSF) officer was killed on Tuesday in ceasefire violation on the Line of Control (LoC) by Pakistan troops in J&K's Rajouri district. "The Pakistan Army indulged in unprovoked ceasefire violation in Rajouri Sector on the LoC, in which BSF Sub-Inspector Paotinsat Guite attained martyrdom while displaying conspicuous bravery in not only retaliating to the enemy fire, but also by saving lives of many of his colleagues," a BSF statement said.

Ayodhya saint has 7 demands, wants to end life

AYODHYA: In an unexpected development, Mahant Paramhans Das of Tapasvi Chhavi Ayodhya, has written a letter to President Ram Nath Kovind listing his seven demands. He has sought permission to end his life if the demands are not met. Copies of the letter have been forwarded to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, home minister Amit Shah, chief minister Yogi Adityanath and district magistrate of Ayodhya.

Ayurveda row: IMA threatens strike on Dec 11

NEW DELHI: Terming their protest as "freedom struggle for modern medicine" from the forces of 'mixopathy', the Indian Medical Association (IMA) on Tuesday said it will go on public demonstration activities and withdrawal of non-essential and non-Covid services on December 11, 2020. In a statement, the medical body said that the emergency services including casualty, labour rooms, emergency surgeries will function along with ICUs, CCUs, but no elective surgical case will be posted.



REMARKS AGAINST JUSTICE N V RAMANA

SC junks PIL against Jagan

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

THE Supreme Court on Tuesday dismissed a bunch of public interest litigation (PIL) petitions seeking action against Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy for his remarks against Supreme Court judge, Justice N V Ramana.

The Bench was hearing three separate petitions seeking inquiry and action against the Chief Minister for his 'scandalizing' remarks against the second senior-most judge of the top court, Justice NV Ramana.

The petitioners - Advocates GS Mani, Pradeep Kumar Yadav and Sunil Kumar Singh, and NGO Anti-Corruption Council of India Trust - had submitted that the allegations levelled by Reddy against Justice Ramana are baseless. They also highlighted that Reddy is facing over 20 criminal cases. Mani, Yadav, and the NGO sought a judicial in-



quiry by an internal committee headed by sitting or retired judges of the Supreme Court or any authority, including the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), into the allegations raised by the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister.

The petitioners have contended that "the act (of Jagan Mohan Reddy) calls for immediate action from this court to tackle this unprecedented situation."

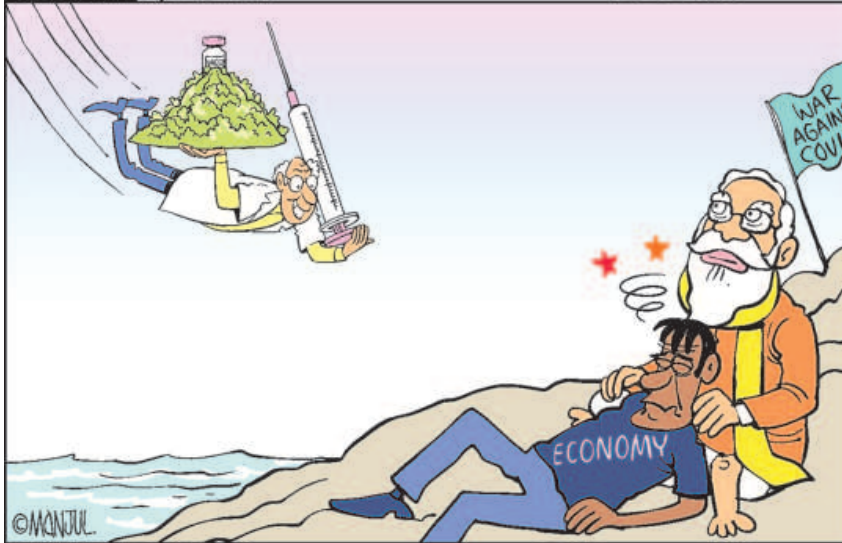
However, one petition filed by Advocate Sunil Kumar Singh was tagged with the pending appeal filed by the Andhra Pradesh government in relation to the matter. His plea sought direc-

tions to restrain Reddy from making such public statements about the Supreme Court or its judges.

After hearing the counsel for the petitioners, the Bench of Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul, Dinesh Maheshwari and Hrishikesh Roy said, "Let the matter be tagged with the pending plea. No notice."

"You pick up something from the newspaper and file whatever you want. This is not how this is done. If 100 people want to assist, then how can we allow 100 people to intervene? This will become an endless exercise," the Bench remarked.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Tepid turnout in GHMC poll

TRS buoyant about low turnout, BJP looks worried, Cong optimistic

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

BARRING stray incidents of clashes among the supporters of contesting candidates in some divisions, the elections to the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) passed off peacefully on Tuesday. The year 2020 will go down in the poll history of GHMC as the lowest polling percentage recorded ever. The polling is said to be less than 40 per cent.

In 2002, the polling percentage was around 41 per cent and during the later elections the poll percentage showed increase and by 2016 it went up to 45 per cent. The low turnout has now become a cause of worry for all political parties. The interesting aspect that was noticed was that some kind of polarisation of votes was noticed in certain



parts of the city. The voter turnout was fairly impressive in Koti and other such areas where the north Indian population particularly where communities like Marwadis was more and in the Old City areas where the AIMID has considerable hold.

The voting started on a dull note and the same trend continued till the last hour. Polling booths looked empty from afternoon to the end of

the polling day at 6 pm.

TRS working president KT Rama Rao and his wife Shailima, Union Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy, BJP senior leader Dr K Laxman, Congress leader Vijayashanthi and Telugu film actors Chiranjeevi, Nagarjuna, Amala and Rajashekhar couple and Vijay Devarakonda were among the leaders and celebrities who exercised their franchise in the city. State Chief

Secretary Somesh Kumar, DGP Mahendar Reddy and other senior officials and prominent personalities also stood in the line and cast their vote.

According to CMO, Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao spent the day analysing the polling pattern and enquired about the winning prospects of the party candidates with MLAs and senior leaders.

TRS working president KT Rama Rao held a meeting with the city leaders to ascertain the TRS performance in the elections. The party leaders are confident that the low turnout would help the TRS to win a greater number of wards. The opposition which felt disappointed over the low turnout however is putting up a brave face and claims that they would win a considerable number of wards.

FARMERS SPURN CENTRE'S OFFER TO SET UP COMMITTEE

Next round of talks likely tomorrow

NEW DELHI

THE Union government on Tuesday offered to set up a committee to look into the issues raised by farmers protesting against new farm laws, but it was rejected by representatives of 35 agitating organisations during their marathon meeting with three Union ministers that ended without any resolution.

The meeting remained inconclusive and the government has called for another round of discussions on Thursday (December 3), union leaders said.

Sources said the farmer representatives were unanimous in seeking repeal of the three laws that they have been terming as being against the interest of the farm community.

The protesting farmers have expressed apprehension that the Centre's farm laws would pave the way for the dismantling of the minimum support price system, leaving them at the mercy of big corporates.

The government has maintained that the new laws will bring farmers better opportunities and usher in new technologies in agriculture.

At the nearly three-hour-long meeting at Vigyan Bhawan here, Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar was accompanied by Railways and Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and Minister of State for



Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar and Railway Minister Piyush Goyal in a meeting with Bharatiya Kisan Union leaders on farmers' issues, at Krishi Bhawan in New Delhi on Tuesday

Trudeau backs protest; India says 'ill-informed'

NEW DELHI

CANADA'S Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Tuesday extended his support to farmers who have been protesting against the three farm laws, noting that the situation is "concerning".

Speaking on the occasion of Gurupurab to his Canadian-Punjabi con-



stituents, Trudeau said, "I would be remiss if I didn't start by recognising the

news coming from India about the protest by farmers. The situation is concerning. We are all very worried about family and friends. We know that's a reality for many of you. Let me remind you, Canada will always be there to defend the rights of peaceful protesters. We believe in the process of dialogue. Cont'd on Page 5

Commerce Som Parkash, also an MP from Punjab.

After the meeting, Bharat Kisan Union (Ekta Ugrahan) president Joginder Singh Ugrahan said it remained inconclusive and the government has called for another meeting on December 3. "We are ready for a discussion to resolve their issues. Let's see,"

Tomar had told reporters before start of the meeting. He further said the government will arrive at a solution after hearing the representatives of the farmer organisations. "The farmer's organisations rejected the government's proposal to form a five-member committee to look into the issues related to

the new farm laws," Roop Singh Sanha, member of Bharat Kisan Union (Ekta Ugrahan), said.

The government side was, however, firm in its stand that a high-level committee must be formed to look into the issues and wanted the farmer representatives to further consider the proposal.

TOP SECRET

Biden gets access to Prez Daily Brief

WILMINGTON

JOE Biden has had his first look as President-elect at the President's Daily Brief, a top secret summary of US intelligence and world events — a document former first lady Michelle Obama has called "The Death, Destruction, and Horrible Things Book."

Biden has already had eyes on different iterations of the so-called PDB, which is tailored to the way each president likes to absorb information.

More than a decade ago, Biden read President George W Bush's PDB during Biden's transition into the vice presidency. After that, he read President Barack Obama's PDB for eight years. Beginning Monday, after a four-year break, he's reading President Donald Trump's PDB.

"The briefers almost certainly will be asking Biden

what he prefers in terms of format and style," said David Priess, author of "The President's Book of Secrets," a history of the PDB. "At a minimum, they're seeing what



seems to resonate most with him so that when they make the book his book, they can tailor it to him." Obama's PDB was a 10- to 15-page document tucked in a leather binder, which he found waiting for him on the breakfast table. Later in his

presidency, he liked reading the ultra-secret intelligence brief on a secured iPad.

From now until Inauguration Day, Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris will be reading the PDB crafted for Trump, who had delayed giving Biden and Harris access to it as he contests the outcome of the election.

Trump, who prefers absorbing information in visual ways, likes short texts and graphics. "Trump himself said during his campaign and during the transition in 2016 that he did not like reading long documents — that he preferred bullet points," said Priess, who has not seen any of Trump's PDBs. "It probably has charts, tables, graphs — things like that. Not the parody that people make that it's like a cartoon book ... but something that is more visual. But we don't know for sure."

AstraZeneca vaccine safe: Serum Institute

NEW DELHI

THE Serum Institute of India, the world's largest vaccine manufacturer, on Tuesday denied allegations that a Covid-19 trial volunteer suffered serious side effects from a vaccine developed by AstraZeneca and Oxford University, saying that the vaccine is safe and immunogenic.

"We would want to assure everyone that the vaccine won't be released for mass use unless it is proven immunogenic, and safe," it said in a blog.

Last week, a volunteer in Chennai claimed to have suffered serious neurological and psychological symptoms after taking the experimental shot and has sued the company along with others and a sought compensation of Rs 5 crore.

"The incident with the Chennai volunteer though highly unfortunate was in no way induced by the vaccine and Serum Institute of India is sympathetic with the volunteer's medical condition," the Pune-based institute said. The Serum Institute is conducting trials of As-



traZeneca's vaccine in India as part of a manufacturing agreement.

"Taking into consideration the complexities and existing misnomers about vaccination and immunisation; the legal notice was sent (to the volunteer) therefore to safeguard the reputation of the company which is being unfairly maligned," the institute said. It said all the requisite regulatory and ethical processes and guidelines were followed diligently and strictly. "The concerned authorities were informed and the principal investigator,

DSMB and the Ethics Committee independently cleared and reckoned it as a non-related issue to the vaccine trial. "Post which, we submitted all the reports and data related to the incident to the DCGI (Drugs Controller General of India). It is only after we cleared all the required processes that we continued with the trials," it added.

In response to claims made by the volunteer, the institute had on Sunday stated that the allegations were "malicious and misconceived".

Dr Reddy's, RDIF commence clinical trials for Sputnik vaccine

HYDERABAD

DR REDDY'S Laboratories Ltd and the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) on Tuesday announced commencement of adaptive phase 2/3 clinical trials for COVID-19 vaccine Sputnik V in India after receiving necessary clearance from the Central Drugs Laboratory, Kasauli in Himachal Pradesh. The Indian drug maker, in a release, said this will be a multicenter and randomized controlled study, which will include safety and immunogenicity study.

Womenia



Relationship tips that couples often forget

Miscommunications can lead to some pretty ugly arguments, so if you're uncertain about something, try to discuss it calmly so you can sort things out, you may have misheard or misread something your partner said or did and taken it totally out of context, so clarify before freaking out about anything

Once a couple of people have settled into a relationship, things can fall into a bit of a rut. Routines form, the attentiveness that was present at the beginning of the courtship might be replaced by content complacency, and ultimately tensions arise. These simple tips may seem like common sense, but you may be surprised at how often people forget about their importance.

Communication is vital

Little behaviours that bother us can become more irksome over time, so it's good to address them early, before the irritation accumulates to the point of anger. Similarly, miscommunications can lead to some pretty ugly arguments, so if you're uncertain about something, try to discuss it calmly so you can sort things out, you may have misheard or misread something your partner said or did and taken it totally out of context, so clarify before freaking out about anything. Even though we may feel that we know our partners well after being with

them for several years, remember that we all grow and change over time, and methods of communication must change along with us as needed.

Never take each other for granted

Be aware of every wonderful thing that your partner does for you, and express your gratitude whenever possible. This might be as simple as thanking them for doing the dishes after you've eaten dinner, or telling them how much it means to you that they make your coffee/tea exactly the way you like it. They'll feel appreciated for the love and kindness they show you, and will express their appreciation to you in turn, so no one ever feels like their actions aren't being acknowledged.

Respect each other's alone time

Togetherness is important, but just as important (if not more so) is the ability to spend time alone. Too much time spent together can make you irritable, especially

if you feel like your personal space is always being invaded. Time alone is necessary for personal reflection, growth, meditation, or even just quiet contemplation. Remember that absence makes the heart grow fonder, and you'll appreciate your partner a lot more after having some space away from them. If you live together, it might be a good idea to have personal spaces that you can retreat to: either individual offices, or a garage workshop for one person and an attic library for another, etc.

Admit when you're wrong

This may be difficult for some people to do, but it really is important. If you discover that you've been wrong about an issue/bit of information/whatnot, own up to it: you'll gain your partner's appreciation and respect if you do, and if you don't, you're just proving yourself to be an immature, pouty jerk. Additionally, if you've

been discussing something and your partner turns out to be in the right, acknowledge that fact: they may have been filled with self-doubt, and acknowledging their awareness or knowledge may boost their self-esteem exponentially.

Be honest

Some people lie to their partners for years out of fear of hurting or offending them, but that can lead to a whole lot of ugliness on all sides. The one being lied to will know that something is wrong, and the one lying may feel more and more frustration about holding back and the relationship may end up suffering badly as a result. Alternately, there could be some serious issues that really should be dealt with, but are internalized out of fear of hurting the other person. Ultimately, honesty really is the best policy, and a strong couple will be able to work through just about anything together.



TWEET PATROL



PRIYANKA
@PRIYANKACHOPRA

Happy 2 year anniversary to the love of my life. Always by my side. My strength. My weakness. My all. I love you @nickjonas



A digital museum to preserve India's textile arts

The campaign 'Karkhana Chronicles' via curated installations in India's palaces and forts aims to pay tribute to its rich textile history by working with its custodians- the local artisans



Erstwhile royal families and historic properties have come together to pay tribute to India's textile heritage by working with karigars (or local artisan designers) from three states of India (Mayurbhanj in Odisha, Jaisalmer in Rajasthan and Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh) to launch a garment installation 'Karkhana Chronicles' for virtual viewing.

The campaign via curated installations in India's palaces and forts for three months aims to pay tribute to its rich textile history by working with its custodians- the local artisans.

Each royal house has set up a textile installation inspired by local arts they like to promote. Through the campaign, they aim to start a conversation on circularity, history and social equity, while striving to ensure



representative from the Belgadia Palace, Mayurbhanj, Odisha said, "Our local art-forms showcase our cultural heritage and through Karkhana Chronicles, we show our pride and hope that the traditional craft and textile practices get the utmost love and recognition that they deserve."

Sharing his thoughts on the sustainability of Indian textile arts, Yuvraj Chaitanya Raj Singh, the

crown prince of the erstwhile Kingdom of Jaisalmer, said that Sustainability has historically

been one of the key driving forces for the local communities of Jaisalmer as we have always had to create garments in harmony with natural elements due to the desert terrain.

He said, "Jaisalmer has always been a point where eastern and western cultural influence has been reflected in our rich textile trade as we were on the silk route which used to cut through this region."

Talking about the campaign and its impact on artisans, Jema Akshita M. Bhanjdeo, the royal

Almonds are the best source of vitamin E, which makes your skin soft and supple. Owing to its anti-ageing properties, almonds help to reduce wrinkles and fine lines on your face. Keep reading to learn how to make your face free from acne, pimples, zits, blackheads and whiteheads. Try these simple homemade tips and get a radiant and glowing skin.

For dry skin

Almonds are rich in vitamin E. Regular application of almonds nourishes and softens your skin. Almond works great for dry skin. Mix 1 teaspoon of the grounded oats, 1 teaspoon of almond powder

Homemade almond face pack you must try

and 1-2 teaspoon of raw milk to prepare a paste. Apply this pack all over your face and massage gently in circular motion. Keep it for 15 minutes and rinse off with cold water.

For oily skin

Oily skin always tends to attract dirt due to excessive sebum production. This leads to breakouts and acne. Multani mitti helps to absorb the excess oil and almond powder helps to remove the dirt from your skin. Mix 1 teaspoon of multani mitti (fuller's earth) and 1-2 teaspoon of almond

powder. Prepare a smooth paste by adding a few drops of the rose water into the mixture. Apply this pack all over your face. Rinse off with cold water after 10 minutes.

For sensitive skin

For sensitive skin, you can use raw milk and almond face pack to get a glowing face. This face pack gives you a gorgeous look. Mix 2 teaspoons of raw milk and 1 teaspoon of the almond powder. Mix them well to form a smooth paste. Apply the pack all over your face.

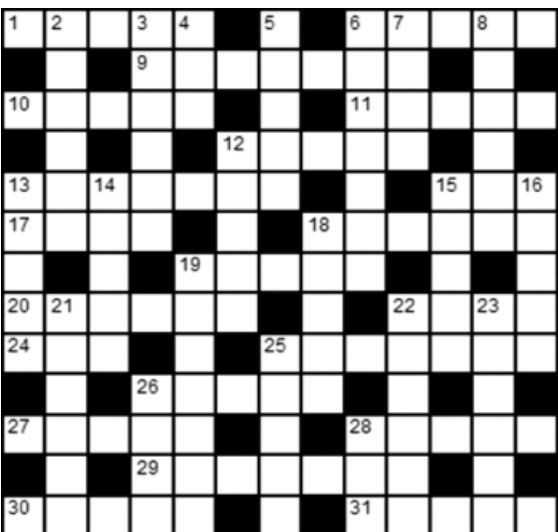
Rinse off the pack with cold water after 10-15 minutes.

For instant fairness

This magical face pack has been used since ages. Washing the face with besan is considered to be the best home remedy for clear skin. Mix 2 teaspoon of besan (gram flour), ¼ teaspoon of turmeric powder and 1 teaspoon of almond powder. Mix them well to form a paste by adding water. Apply the pack all over your face and keep it for 15 minutes before rinsing off with cold water.

For acne

Curd is used in various face packs as it helps to cleanse the face. Also, it lightens the skin tone. Almonds gently scrub off the dead cells and acne causing bacteria. Mix 1 teaspoon of hung curd and 1 teaspoon of almond powder. Mix them well to form a smooth paste. Apply it all over the face and keep for 10 minutes before rinsing off with cold water. Another health benefit of almond is that it aids in digestion and cures constipation. Do try the above mentioned face packs and don't forget to drop in your comments.



SOLUTION TO DECEMBER 01

CROSSWORD

Across

- Each (5)
- Slang to acquire by begging (5)
- Large duck (5)
- Long March leader (3)
- Chop into very small pieces (5)
- Jettison (7)
- Put in office (5)
- Possess (3)
- One of the 12 apostles (6)
- Most hideous to look at ? (7)
- Forbid; not agree (4)
- Aboard ship (4)
- Resembling a fox (7)
- Newspaper chief (6)
- Attempt or essay (3)
- Malaysian dish (5)
- Authoritative orders (7)
- Simple, unadorned (5)
- Unwell, sick (3)
- Confuse or obscure (5)
- Eskimo boat (5)
- Revolt (5)

Down

- Comfortable (5)
- Science of environment (7)
- Empty (4)
- Fresh; newer (6)
- Capitulate (5)
- Sell stolen goods (5)
- Idiot (3)
- State neighbouring Assam (7)
- Night bird (3)
- Remove something written (5)
- Twist and pull (5)
- Sterile (7)
- Rims or borders (5)
- Not suitable (5)
- Being at any time (7)
- Long trip or journey (6)
- Annoy (3)
- Risked or braved (5)
- Small drum (5)
- Old-time strongman (5)
- Eat in style (4)
- Foreman foe (3)

SUDOKU



NEWS ROUNDUP

Sunny Leone shares her mood with fans

Sunny Leone showcases her mood of the day in her latest post on social media. Sunny posted a picture on Instagram where she is seen sitting in bed, dressed in a grey-and-black striped blouse paired with black ripped jeans. "Hi!!! #mood," Sunny wrote alongside the picture.

Sunny recently shared that she is happy about her hectic schedule.

Sunny, who recently flew back to Mumbai with her husband and children from Los Angeles, is currently shooting for "Koka Kola", a horror comedy. She is also gearing up for a fictional web series and is all set to shoot for the 13th season of Splitsvilla, as a host.

There is a film lined up in the South, too. Details of the untitled project are under wraps.



POSTERS PASTED OUTSIDE HOMES

Coronavirus patients treated as untouchables: Supreme Court

NEW DELHI

THE Supreme Court on Tuesday said that once posters are pasted outside the homes of Covid-19 patients, these people are treated as "untouchables", reflecting a different "ground reality".

The Centre informed the apex court that although it has not prescribed this rule, the practice has nothing to do with "stigmatising" Covid-19 patients as it is aimed at protecting other people.



A bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan, R Subhash Reddy and M R Shah said that the

ground reality is "something different" and as once such posters are pasted at their homes, they are treated as untouchables.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, said that some states on their own are pursuing this practice to prevent the spread of the virus.

Mehta said the Centre has filed its reply to the plea in pursuance of the top court's direction asking it to consider issuing nationwide

guidelines to do away with the practice of pasting posters outside the homes of Covid-19 patients.

"Let the counter filed by Union come on record we will take it up on Thursday," the bench said.

The apex court on November 5 had asked the Centre to consider issuing the guidelines to do away with practice of pasting posters outside the homes of Covid-19 patients.

It had directed so without issuing any formal notice to

the Centre on one Kush Kalra's plea seeking framing of the guidelines.

The bench had observed that when the Delhi government has agreed in the High Court not to paste posters, why cannot the Centre come up with guidelines dealing with the matter for the entire country.

On November 3, the AAP government had told the Delhi High Court that it has instructed all its officials not to paste posters outside

homes of Covid-19 positive persons or those in home isolation; and the ones pasted have been ordered to be removed.

The government had told the high court that its officials have also not been allowed to share details of Covid-19 positive persons with their neighbours, resident welfare associations or Whatsapp groups.

Kalra, in his plea before the high court, had contended that freely circulating to Res-

ident Welfare Associations (RWAs) and on Whatsapp groups, the names of persons who tested positive for Covid-19 was "leading to stigmatisation and drawing of unnecessary attention".

The petition had stated that Covid-19 positive persons "ought to be given privacy to cope with and recover from the illness in peace and away from prying eyes".

"Rather, they are being made the centre of public attention...", it had said.

FARMERS PROTEST AGAINST FARM LAWS

MLA Sangwan withdraws support to Haryana Govt

DADRI

INDEPENDENT MLA from Dadri assembly constituency Sombir Sangwan on Tuesday withdrew his support to the BJP-JJP government in Haryana, dubbing it anti-farmer. I have withdrawn my support to this anti-farmer government. This government instead of sympathising with farmers' cause used all measures like water cannons, tear gas to stop them from marching to Delhi. I cannot continue my support to such a government, Sangwan said.

A day earlier while extending his support to the farmers gathered at Delhi's borders protesting the Centre's new farm laws, Sangwan had tendered his resignation as chairman of the Haryana Livestock Development Board. In the letter to Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, Sangwan had said, "I have resigned from my post in support of farmers. Like the entire country, farmers from my assembly constituency Dadri are also protesting against these laws. In this situation, extending my full support to them is a priority for me and my moral duty too".

Haryana Assembly has a strength of 90 members, and at present comprises 40 MLAs of BJP, 10 of ally JJP, 31 members of main opposition Congress and one MLA each from the INLD and Haryana Lokhit Party. Seven members are Independents, out of whom five including Power Minister Ranjit Singh Chautala support the ruling combine.



Dhaba gives free food to farmers

NEW DELHI

SETTING an example of goodness, a local Murthal eatery along Delhi-Haryana highway has also come up to help these farmers by feeding them. Amrik Sukhdev Dhaba, Murthal, not only opened doors for protesting farmers who are entering the state, but also offered to serve them free food for three days.

The 'Dilli Chalo' agitation has managed to grab attention from the entire nation –

many farmers who have been walking down are women and senior citizens.

Scores of farmers braved water cannons and barricades to enter Delhi, and some are still protesting from borders after being denied permission to enter. However, there are people who've been helping these farmers to overcome barriers. According to reports, a few farmers shared Prasad with policemen on the occasion of Gurupurab.

All India Taxi Union threatens strike

NEW DELHI

THE All India Taxi Union threatened to go on strike if the demands of the farmers, protesting against the Centre's new farm laws at different border points of the national capital, are not met within two days.

President of the Union, Balwant Singh Bhullar, said they are giving two days to the Central government to meet the demands of the farmers.

"We request the Prime Minister, Home Minister and Agriculture Minister to revoke these laws. The corporate sector is destroying us.

SC pulls up Guj over attempts to suppress facts on hospital fires

NEW DELHI

THE Supreme Court on Tuesday pulled up the Gujarat government over "attempts to suppress facts" in connection with fire tragedies in private Covid hospitals in the state. The top court in the last hearing took cognizance of the fire tragedy in a private Covid hospital in Rajkot which led to the death of five persons.

A bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan and comprising Justices R. Subhash Reddy and



M.R. Shah told the Gujarat government counsel, "We have seen your

counter. According to you everything is good. So far state hospital

is concerned all is well."

Justice Shah pulling up the Gujarat government said, "So far the commission is concerned (to probe the fire tragedy), it has also expired, and also the state government stand is contrary to your own chief electrical engineering officer in connection with the status of wiring in the hospital."

The bench cited the Ahmedabad fire tragedy in a Covid-19 hospital in August, where eight people died. Justice said no attempt should be made to suppress the

facts. The bench asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta to look into the matter and ensure a proper report is filed. The top court has listed the matter for further hearing on Thursday. On November 27, the Supreme Court took cognizance of a fire incident in a Rajkot hospital in Gujarat, where five patients died in the blaze. Expressing anguish over the incident, a bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan and comprising Justices R. Subhash Reddy and M.R. Shah termed it "shocking".



Urmila Matondkar joins Shiv Sena

MUMBAI

IN Indian politics, prominent personalities or leaders usually first join a party and then are rewarded with a ticket for legislatures or parliament.

In what is said to be an unprecedented change from the norms, Bollywood actress Urmila Matondkar got a 'ticket' first and then officially joined the Shiv Sena, in the presence of senior leaders, here on Tuesday. Shiv Sena President and Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray accorded Matondkar a warm welcome to the party fold while his wife Rashmi Uddhav Thackeray tied her a thread, 'Shiv Bandhan' symbolizing her ties with the new party.

"If farmers do not want such laws, then why the central government was imposing on them," asked Singh, who has retired as Inspector General in the Punjab Police.

He further said that former players would also join farmers' stir at the Delhi borders on December 5. Singh said they are also trying to contact former players in Haryana for coming out in support of farmers' agitation.

Cheema said several former players including Kaur and Arjuna awardee (shotput) Balwinder Singh have backed them.

Thousands of farmers from Punjab and Haryana have stayed put at various Delhi border points for the sixth consecutive day on Tuesday protesting against the new farm laws, which they fear will dismantle the minimum support price system, leaving them at the "mercy" of big corporates.

Former sportspersons to return Padma, Arjuna awards in support of farmers stir

NEW DELHI

SEVERAL former sportspersons including Padma Shri and Arjuna awardees have extended their support to the agitating farmers and said they will return their awards in protest against the "force" used against the peasants en route to Delhi.

Among them are Padma Shri and Arjuna awardee wrestler Kartar Singh, Arjuna awardee basketball player Sajjan Singh Cheema and Arjuna awardee hockey player Rajbir Kaur.

They said they will proceed to Delhi on December 5 and will place their awards outside the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

They slammed the Centre and Haryana government for using water cannons and teargas against the protesting farmers to stop them from going to Delhi.

"We are the children of farmers and they have been holding



peaceful agitation for the last several months. Not even a single incident of violence took place.

"But water cannons and teargas shells were used against them when they were going to Delhi. If turbans of our elders and brothers are tossed, then what will we do with our awards and honour? We are in support of our farmers. We do not want

such awards and that is why we are returning the same," said Cheema on Tuesday.

Farmers had faced water cannons and teargas when they were heading towards the national capital as part of their 'Delhi Chalo' march against the farm laws. Singh said several former players will go to Delhi on December 5 and will return their awards.

Sydney lifts water restrictions imposed since 2019 drought

SYDNEY

THE Australian city of Sydney on Tuesday lifted restrictions on water usage, which were enforced May 2019 to cope with a historic drought.

Higher levels of rainfall since earlier this year brought an end to the drought and saw dam levels rise across the State of New

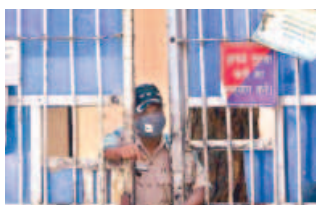
South Wales (NSW). Xinhua news agency quoted Sydney Water as saying in a statement. "Rainfall has increased our dam levels, so we're easing Level 1 restrictions to Water Wise Guidelines from today. "The re-

strictions have eased, but let's stay water wise," Sydney Water added in the statement.

Last month, Sydney received roughly double the amount of rainfall it did in November 2019, recording

69mm at the gauge on Observatory Hill. While in December 2019, the site received just 1.8mm of rainfall, the lowest on record.

NSW Minister for Water Property and Housing Melinda Pavey said the city's residents did an outstanding job during water restrictions, collectively saving 77 gigalitres of water, the equivalent of 31,000 Olympic-size swimming pools.



other cases, leaving 2,063 convicts only.

Director General, Prisons, Anand Kumar said, "We got 693 convicts back in jails while others are still to return. A notification for them has been sent to the respective district jails and SPs."

Meanwhile, eight of the 15 prisoners, who had been released on parole from Pilibhit district jail on April 29, following the state government's orders, have gone missing and did not return to jail.

India’s IT sector set to do well despite pandemic

COVID-19 pandemic is a black swan event for the global economy. Barring a few exceptions, most major economies including the US, EU, UK and India are likely to see a contraction in GDP growth. According to the World Bank, the global economy is likely to shrink by 5.2 per cent in 2020. As the severe disruption in most sectors of the economy continues, IT spend by enterprises is also expected to be adversely affected. Global consultancy firm Gartner predicts that IT spending worldwide is likely to be at \$3.6 trillion in 2020, a fall of 5.4 per cent against last year. Despite businesses taking digitisation routes to reach out to customers during this pandemic, all spending segments are projected to contract this year. While the IT services segment is expected to see a contraction of 4.6 per cent, enterprise software is likely to fall by 3.6 per cent. Similarly, data centre systems are projected to fall by 3.1 per cent, while communication

services may contract by 2.9 per cent. When global IT spending, especially the IT services segment, is predicted to witness negative growth, Indian IT firms will definitely get affected. Despite such negative projections, Indian IT players are likely to fare well this fiscal year as compared to their global counterparts. This can be gauged from the management commentary of Indian IT services firms post announcement of the second-quarter results. The country’s second-largest IT services firm Infosys has revised its revenue growth guidance upward to 2 to 3 per cent in constant currency terms for FY21 from 0 to 2 per cent earlier. Top management of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) said that a strong order book, a very robust deal pipeline, and continued market share gains give the IT firm confidence for the future. No wonder, TCS board approved a buyback worth Rs 16,000 crore, indicating this optimism. Another IT major HCL Tech-

nologies is projected to see growth in its revenues at 1.5-2.5 per cent in FY21. The growth outlook of IT biggies stems from the fact that Indian IT firms are gaining market share as compared to their global counterparts on the back of vendor consolidation. Also, the acceleration seen in cloud migration and higher digitisation is supportive of this trend. As ‘work from anywhere’ gains popularity in the IT industry, offshoring revenue is witnessing an uptick, which is good news for the sector. Though tier-I IT firms are gaining market share, the growth outlook for mid-tier IT services firms remains mixed. This is because when vendor consolidation happens, small and mid-tier companies lose outsourcing contracts to big players. Hearteningly, all prominent mid-tier firms have reported a good set of Q2 numbers, reflecting that their niche offerings have many takers in the global marketplace. Overall, Indian IT companies are expected to do well this financial year as well, as most of the companies succeeded in tuning their operations to ‘work from home’ mode during the Covid-19 crisis. That is a good sign for the country’s economy.



New team in Washington has Trump wreckage to repair

SAEED NAQVI

FOR the new team being announced by the Biden administration, any innovation can only follow repair work of the considerable wreckage that is being left behind by the outgoing team.

At this moment of transition, what construct does one place on the outgoing Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo’s participation in the cloak-and-dagger meeting with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman and Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu in the mega city of Neom being built on the Red Sea? The drama of this meeting was heightened by Netanyahu’s office denying the meeting in tones which seemed to suggest that the Israelis were not busting their guts to keep the meeting secret. A pretence of secrecy was essential because otherwise ‘MBS’ would be in ‘trouble’.

Netanyahu’s Education Minister, Yoav Galant, could not contain his joy at the “amazing achievement” because the “Sunni world” was joining the Israel-US alliance to counter “Iranian Shiite extremism”.

This Shia-Sunni confrontation, real or simulated, has been the game ever since the Shah was toppled in Iran. Why then this secrecy now? Why is MBS so scared being seen in an embrace with Netanyahu on

Saudi soil? Because his people will find out? Do his people matter? But it turns out that human right is an article of faith with the incoming Secretary of State, Antony Blinken. This may well be a source of anxiety not just for Saudi Arabia but all monarchies and authoritarian systems. Are there any in our vicinity?

A hint about MBS’s source of anxiety was available in the other crucial meeting the Saudi king had with President Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey. The Turkish strongman is part of a quadrangle which both, Washington (the incoming administration) and MBS, Netanyahu too, should be analysing.

After the Soviet collapse in 1991, it was elementary that creating a distance between Moscow and Beijing would remain a US strategic goal. But George W Bush and his deluded neo-cons asked for the moon -- full spectrum global dominance into the Amer-

ican century. The financial crisis of 2008 rapped them hard on the knuckles. American decline was well underway when Trump greased the downward slide even more effectively.

The evolving Biden team will contemplate at the menacing quadrangle I mentioned at the outset. To begin with, Moscow and Beijing have never been closer. The duet spotted the potential of Iran too, and included it in the club. After all, Washington is just about to dust up the Iranian nuclear file for a resumption of a conversation with Tehran. No sooner had Trump lost the election, than Imran Khan was on his maiden trip to Kabul. This, when the US troop withdrawal from the Afghan capital had run into the sort of snags which US representative for Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalilzad was trying to sort out. Was the Pakistan Prime Minister now effectively being positioned to handle the Afghan file? This became a very real anxiety in both Tehran and New Delhi. But Iran being re-invited on the nuclear file, mollifies it somewhat. How happy New Delhi should be with its exertions in the Quad (US, Australia, Japan, India) only time can tell. The Japanese Foreign Minister has already clarified: our membership of the Quad is not directed against any country

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So, while the US was on the Trump rollercoaster and coping with the social mayhem and galloping Covid-19, other countries were moving increasingly in concert. There has been so much continuous chanting of the Shia-Sunni conflict that real and abiding antipathies have been lost sight of.

A convenient point of departure to explain this narrative are the two events in December 1979, which rattled the Saudis, indeed the world -- Ayatollah Khomeini’s return, signalling the Iranian revolution. Around the same date, an anti-monarchy, Sunni, an extreme version of the Muslim Brotherhood, Jayuhman al-Otaybi, defied the Saudi state by occupying the holiest Muslim mosque of Mecca.

Unable to flush out Otaybi and his armed supporters, Saudis sought Western help. A situation emerged which to a non-Muslim would read like a situation comedy. Since non-Muslims are not allowed in Mecca, US and French soldiers had to be converted to Islam to enter the mosque and accomplish the holy task of killing Otaybi and his men. This “rebellion within” gives Saudis nightmares. But they feel more secure externalizing the threat. They have persistently targeted Iran and Shiaism as threats to themselves, Israel, indeed, the West. When did you last hear of the 15 days siege of the Mecca Mosque?

To point fingers at the Muslim Brotherhood (Akhwam ul Muslimeen) as the enemy would isolate most of the GCC Sheikhdoms from the larger Muslim ‘Umma’. They would then be perceived as only the ‘Wahabi’ sect of the Sunni world.

Incalculable Saudi wealth, particularly after the quadrupling of oil prices following the 1973 Yom Kippur war, had the Western Military Industrial Complex salivating on Arab petro dollars. The oil rich Sheikhs are, by formal agreements, dependent on Western arms. Their wealth plus their links to Israel give them considerable control on Western media which has quite shockingly harped only on the Shia-Sunni conflict.

When the Arab Spring dethroned Hosni Mubarak, Muslim Brotherhood’s Mohamed Morsi became Egypt’s Prime Minister. Coming to power of a Brother in Egypt caused the Saudis to load their camels with their billions and turn up in Cairo to stabilize Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi’s coup in Cairo. Brothers in power in Egypt was anathema to the Israelis too because the Hamas in Gaza would now have help from all sides. Brother in Turkey, Qatar and Egypt. They were ideologically coherent with Hamas.

At the Shia end, the Hezbollah in Lebanon, Iran, the Alawi elements in the Syrian Army, the Shia majority in Iraq, Houthis of Yemen are all supporting the Palestinian cause to the hilt.

No, it is not the Shia Sunni divide which is bothering MBS and Netanyahu. What worries them deeply is the Shia-Sunni combine zeroing in on the Israelis and the Wahabis in unlikely comradeship.

(The writer is a senior commentator on political and diplomatic issues. The views expressed are personal)

Bhai Mardana, long extolled as first Sikh

KARTHIK VENKATESH

AMONG northern India’s more unique communities are the Mirasis. The word ‘Mirasi’ comes from the Arabic ‘miras’ which means inheritance or heritage. And that more or less points towards their traditional occupation. They were the genealogists of yore who kept track of the family tree, its history and were called upon by their patrons to narrate these at family gatherings and functions. Tales of bravery by the warriors of the family, banal accounts of property transactions (especially useful in times of dispute) and the finer details of marriages and alliances — these and other snippets constituted the material that the Mirasis stored in their heads. These homegrown historians often rendered these accounts in song and hence, their skills as musicians were also in demand.

In 1459, Bhai Mardana was born into one such Mirasi family in Rai Bhoi Di Talwandi (Talvandi Rai Bhoie in some accounts) now Nankana Sahib, in the Sheikhpura district of Pakistan. His parents were Bhai Badre and Bibi Lakho. While few details are available about their lives, it would not be wrong to assume that they lived the itinerant Mirasis’ life, going from village to village singing their songs, narrating histories on demand and thus earning their keep. It is likely that owing to the nature of their work and the fact that they hailed from the same village, the family of Bhai Mardana were familiar with Mehta Kalu, who in 1469, became the father of a boy, who would eventually become known to the world as Guru Nanak.

According to the 18th century Sikh scholar and martyr (whose execution is among the more heartbreaking tales of Sikh history) Bhai Mani Singh’s Janamsakhi (there are several Janamsakhis, all of which are early biographies of Guru Nanak, blending mythology and history), Guru Nanak and Bhai Mardana first met in 1480. The young Nanak, a soulful singer, as narrated in 19th century historian, Ratan Singh Bhangu’s Prachin Panth Prakash, fashioned a musical instrument out of reeds and gave it to Mardana to play while he sang.

It was the beginning of a beautiful friendship.

Some years later, Nanak, whose saintly and spiritual demeanour had caused the family much concern, was at Sultanpur, working as a granary-store keeper with Nawab Daulat Khan Lodi, a kinsman of the Lodi dynasty which then controlled Delhi. Hearing some adverse accounts of how Nanak was doing, Nanak’s father sent Mardana to check on how his son was faring.

Mardana made the journey, reconnected with Nanak and never left his side thereafter.

To begin with, Nanak and Mardana organised the singing of hymns every evening. Mardana played the rebab (or rebeck), a stringed instrument of Arabian or Iranian origin. A Janamsakhi describes their life in Sultanpur: Every night they sang hymns... They fed everyone who came... An hour and a quarter before sunrise he (Nanak) would go to the river to bathe, by daylight he would be in the durbar doing his work.



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During one such early morning, Nanak would have his first mystical experience. Soon, Nanak decided to forgo the worldly life he was leading and embark on his travels to share with the world at large the message that had been revealed to him.

These travels or Udisis, as they are known, probably began around 1,500 and lasted close to a quarter of a century. Accompanying Nanak throughout these travels was Mardana, who — like Nanak — left behind his wife and children in order to disseminate a greater truth.

Setting out from Punjab, together, on foot, they covered an area ranging from Assam in the east to Sri Lanka in the south to Mecca in the west besides Tibet, Sikkim, Kashmir and the length and breadth of their native Punjab. (While historians do not dispute that Nanak travelled extensively, firm evidence for every one of these destinations is sometimes lacking. Nevertheless, popular lore holds that Nanak travelled to all of these places.)

In the course of these travels, the duo came upon many interesting people and incidents. In almost all of these incidents, Mardana was the perfect foil to Nanak, asking him the questions that prompted Nanak to reveal a certain truth that even-

tually became the foundation of much of his philosophy.

Legend holds that Mardana once asked Nanak about his religion and sought to convert to it. Nanak’s response was to tell Mardana, who was born Muslim, that he should strive to be a good Muslim. Likewise, a Hindu should become a good Hindu. That is how one could become Nanak’s ‘Sikh’, his disciple. So, in essence, Mardana became the first Sikh.

In Mardana’s company, Nanak is also said to have effected many miracles which have been recorded in the Janamsakhis.

Near Hassan Abdal, close to Islamabad in Pakistan, Mardana complained of thirst. Nanak instructed him to trudge up a hillock where a Muslim saint, Wali Qandhari, lived by a pool. Qandhari, on learning about Nanak who was purportedly a saint, thereby refused to allow Mardana use of the pool, asking him to tell his own saint to find water. Nanak, on learning of Qandhari’s rejection, nevertheless insisted that Mardana make the steep climb two more times, before pushing aside a rock near where he sat, to reveal a gushing fountain. Qandhari’s pool soon dried up and enraged, he threw a rock at Nanak from atop the hillock. Nanak is believed to have stopped this with his bare hands. A rock with a

handprint is enshrined at the Gurdwara Panja Sahib, which now stands near where this incident occurred.

In another incident narrated in a Janamsakhi, Mardana and Nanak were taken prisoner by the Mughals at Saidpur. Nanak was given a load to carry on his head and Mardana to lead a horse by its reins. Mir Khan, the Mughal commander, purportedly saw that the Guru’s bundle was floating above his head and Mardana’s horse was following him without the reins, establishing the unusual credentials of the duo.

These stories of miracles were part of the popular imaginings of the time that sought to establish the saint’s credibility and message. Throughout their time together, music was their constant companion and the many pictorial renderings of Nanak almost always show him singing accompanied by Mardana on the rebab. Nanak, of course, wrote much poetry in Punjabi. So did Mardana. At least three of his poems find place in the Guru Granth Sahib.

Mardana passed away in 1534. There is some disagreement as to where he died. It is likely that he was at Kartarpur, where Nanak had settled down post his Udisis. Some accounts though state that he died in Baghdad, where Nanak was on an Udasi (while it is fairly certain that Nanak did go to Baghdad, the dates are uncertain and hence this disparity). A deep and abiding friendship that had lasted more than half-a-century had come to an end. Nanak followed in 1539.

To remember Nanak is to necessarily remember Mardana, who is extolled as the first Sikh, who stood by his friend and mentor and played an important role in enabling his message to reach a wider audience.

(This article was first published on www.firstpost.com. Reprinted with their permission)

This is not a movement by farmers

KAILASH VIJAYVARGIYA

IN the name of opposing the Farmers’ Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020, the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill 2020, the people who have come to Delhi are saying that ‘Indira ko thok diya tha, Modi ko bhi thok denge’. The only objective of those who are involved or supporting the agitation in the garb of farmers movement is to oppose the central government, the Bharatiya Janata Party and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Some of the so-called agitators are also instigating farmers who used to go to Shaheen Bagh to oppose the Citizenship Amendment Bill 2019. Surprisingly, despite the pro-Khalistan slogans about Indira Gandhi, the leaders of the Congress and other parties are keeping quiet on the objectionable rants of the so-called farmers. Does the Congress have no objection to ‘Indira ko thok diya tha’?

Various media reports indicate that the people agitating in Punjab are being fully backed by the Congress government in the state. Ration is being provided to the agitators. The Northern Railway had to suffer a revenue loss of Rs 891 crore till last week due to the agitation against agriculture bills. Indian Railways has also incurred a loss of Rs. 2220 crores.

The agitation was abolished by farmers’ organisations after the Central government’s clarification on the questions raised on the agriculture bills and continuation of MSP. Various media reports say there is a big conspiracy behind the agitation. Food is being distributed to the people at mosques. People like Nazir Mohammad, who was involved in Shaheen Bagh, are roaming around wearing turbans. The elderly lady Momina from Shaheen Bagh, is also roaming around as a farmer. These are just a few examples. Like Shaheen Bagh and the Delhi riots, the truth behind such an agitation will also come out before to the public after the conspiracy is exposed.

The kind of mistake that Indira Gandhi had made by encouraging Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale is again being made by the Congress government in Punjab led by Amarinder Singh. The activities of Khalistan supporters are increasing during the Amarinder regime. It was even being discussed that some people could try to unfurl Khalistani flags in Delhi. People are already suffering due to the outbreak of the Corona pandemic. All business has been affected. The number of people dying from Corona in Delhi is increasing. Union Home Minister Amit Shah himself had to hold a meeting about the deteriorating condition of the pandemic outbreak in Delhi. Para-military forces had to be deployed in light of the shortage of doctors. In the guise of opposition to the agriculture bills, people who have come to the Capital with intention of camping

in Delhi will only aggravate the agony of Coronavirus.

Why are the agriculture bills facing the maximum opposition in Punjab? Because the government is preparing people for the agitation. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi led the agitation by sitting on a sofa placed on a tractor in Punjab. It is worth noting that last year, 80 per cent of paddy and 70 per cent of wheat were from Punjab and Haryana were procured by the government.

The BJP is the only party that thinks about the interests of farmers. Other parties have just used farmers for politics. The central government is sending money to the farmers’ accounts. Prime Minister Modi has repeatedly said that our goal is to double the income of farmers. The agricultural reforms will provide new opportunities to farmers to sell their produce. This will increase their profitability. Farmers will get the benefit of modern technology and emerge stronger. Because of these bills, with the role of middlemen being eliminated, the so-called farmer leaders who acted as brokers have been the worst hit.

MSP has nothing to do with these Agriculture Bills. Confusion is being spread among the farmers that MSP will be abolished. Just as the Citizenship Amendment Act has nothing to do with the citizens of this country, MSP has nothing to do with the farm bills. The politics of spreading confusion by opposition parties won’t last long.

(The writer is national general secretary of the Bharatiya Janata Party. Views expressed are personal)

AP CM is just changing stickers of old schemes, alleges Naidu

- Former CM says Jagan will go down as a 'sticker CM'
- Claims that he is owning up his projects giving his name to them
- Alleges Rs 4,500 cr corruption has taken place in housing scheme during YSR rule

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

TDP national president and former chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Tuesday accused the YSRCP government of hijacking the projects and programmes launched by the previous TDP government and renaming them after Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy without any scruples. He said that he had no objection for this strange practice since it would be only Jagan who would go down into history as a 'sticker CM' forever. This Chief Minister was not making any efforts to spend public money on any project or implement any new idea but was showing eagerness to own up the TDP projects as his own.

The Leader of Opposition made a scathing attack on the ruling party during the debate on the TIDCO houses in the AP Legislative Assembly. He said that CM Jagan had not begun any efforts in the past 18 months to start works on the 30 lakh houses he promised to construct for the poor.

He challenged the Chief Minister to construct new houses as per his promise and compare the same to the TIDCO houses built during the TDP regime. Instead of that, the YCP regime was giving advertisements, re-naming TIDCO project after the CM's name and comparing it to the scheme implemented by the TDP. Over eight lakh houses were built for the poor by the TDP regime but the government was not giving them to the beneficiaries.

Stating that the poor families were being harassed, the TDP chief said that even the deposits were not being returned to the beneficiaries. Moreover, false advertisements were given in newspapers. The Chief Minister was having multiple palaces in different metro cities but he seemed bent on keeping poor people in huts forever.

He asserted that his government constructed best houses with shear wall technology and



Leader of Opposition N Chandrababu Naidu leads a rally by his party MLAs and MLCs demanding handing over of TIDCO houses to poor on his way to Assembly at Velagapudi on Tuesday. **Hans Photo: Y Vinay Kumar**

TDP demands handover of TIDCO houses to poor

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

TDP MLAs and MLCs led by former chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu took out a rally up to the Assembly on the second day of the winter session on Tuesday, demanding the government hand over the completed TIDCO houses to the poor families immediately. Holding placards and raising slogans, the TDP members alleged that the houses were already completed under their regime but the government was not handing them over to the intended beneficiaries out of political reasons. The Opposition would continue its struggle till the TIDCO houses were given to the deserving poor families.

In addition Naidu, TD Legislature Party deputy leaders K Atchannaidu, Nimmala Ramanaidu and others took part in the rally.

The TDP leaders also questioned the government as to what happened to the Chief Minister's promise to construct 5 lakh houses per year. As per this, nearly 7.5 lakh houses need to be constructed in the past 18 months but the ruling party leaders were not talking about this at all. The Chief Minister only knew how to make empty promises to break them freely without any accountability to the people, they said. Stating that lakhs of houses

- ▶ Party chief leads a rally of MLAs and MLCs up to Assembly
- ▶ Criticises Jagan for failing on his 5 lakh houses-a-year promise
- ▶ Seeks Rs 30,000 compensation per acre for cyclone-hit paddy farmers

were completed under the previous government, the TDP MLAs asserted that the YSRCP government had no right to spoil those houses by keeping them empty. The ruling party leaders should realise that they would be making a great disservice to the people if they cause damage to the TIDCO houses.

The TDP leaders raised slogans, praying that the YSRCP eclipse that was casting its shadow on the TIDCO houses, should go away soon. They demanded that fair compensation should be given to all those who suffered losses in the Nivar cyclone which ravaged many parts of the state.

The Opposition leaders demanded Rs 30,000 per acre for paddy farmers and Rs 50,000 for horticulture crops.

Also, Rs 10,000 should be paid to the poor families who lost their livelihoods and work opportunities. Artisans, weavers, fishermen and others should be paid Rs 15,000 for suffering heavy losses.

ilities were all provided. Whereas, the 14.5 lakh houses project landed in corruption in the YSR regime.

AP Assembly passes five Bills on Day-2 by voice vote

- ▶ Bill on gaming covers online gaming seeking to mete out stern punishments offenders
- ▶ AP Municipal Laws (Second Amendment) Bill is to amend house tax structure with a nominal hike, but Minister assures there will be no burden on people living in 375 sft houses
- ▶ Three more Bills intended to regulate aqua seed and feed are also passed by voice vote

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

ASSEMBLY on Tuesday passed the AP Gaming (Amendment) Bill 2020 and the AP Municipal Laws (Second Amendment) Bill 2020 in addition to three other Bills by voice vote.

The amendment to the Gaming Bill was necessitated to bring online-gambling into its ambit as the cases of online betting have been increasing with the wide use of the internet and youth and students falling prey to gambling.

The Bill proposes stringent action and increased penalty and imprisonment for online and offline gambling, minister for home M Sucharitha said while



Municipal Administration and Urban Development Minister Botcha Satyanarayana speaking on Municipal Laws (Second Amendment) Bill in Assembly on Tuesday

explaining the salient features.

Intervening in the discussion on the Bill, Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy said that strict action would be taken on any offenders irrespective of their social status. "Recently, a distant relative of our minister was involved in such an activity and he was not spared. Our government is transparent and will not spare anyone," he said.

He said though the previous

government made tall claims on internet-based services, they failed to see how the youth and young people were lured and duped by the online platform. Driven to debts some of the young people have committed suicide, he added.

The Bill was passed by voice vote and members welcomed it.

The House also passed the AP Municipal Laws (Second Amendment) Bill which pro-

poses to amend the house tax structure with a nominal hike. However, there will be no burden on people living in 375 sft which is just Rs 50 per annum.

The Bill was also passed by voice vote while the Opposition took exception to the contents of the Bill which was clarified by minister Botcha Satyanarayana.

The Assembly also passed three Bills to give impetus to aquaculture. The AP Fisheries University Bill 2020, AP Aquaculture Seed (Quality Control) (Amendment) Bill 2020, and the AP Fish Feed (Quality Control) Bill 2020 by voice vote. The Bills have a provision to set up a regulatory mechanism to check the quality of fish feed and fish seed as the aqua farmers have been experiencing losses due to spurious and low-quality fish feed and fish seed. The Fisheries University will be coming up in West Godavari district.

The Chief Minister was told by the aqua farmers during his padayatra about their plight and the losses they were incurring due to low-quality fish feed and seed which form the main investment component, said animal husbandry minister S Appala Raju. The three Bills were passed by voice vote.

AP logs 685 new Covid cases, four deaths

AMARAVATI

STATE reported 685 fresh coronavirus cases, 1,094 recoveries and four deaths in 24 hours ending 9 AM on Tuesday. The state's Covid-19 chart showed 8,68,749 total positives, 8,54,326 recoveries and 6,996 deaths so far. The latest bulletin said the number of active cases dropped to 7,427. Only Krishna district reported 146 fresh cases while 12 other districts added less than 100 cases each to their tally. Anantapuramu, Chittoor, Guntur and West Godavari reported one fresh Covid-19 fatality each in a day, the bulletin added.

2 burglars held; booty worth ₹37 lakh seized

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NELLORE

TWO property offenders were held by the Kavali Police on Monday night and recovered property worth Rs 37 lakh that include cash, gold, and motorbikes from them.

The accused were identified as Nellore Shafi and Sk Ghouse Basha from Chinna Harijanawada area of North Mopuru village in Allur mandal.

Addressing the media, SP Bhaskar Bhushan said that the duo were involved in many property offences since 2018 and have not been held by any police station till now. "The two accused are childhood friends in the village and were involved in housebreaking offences in the district for easy money. On November 23, the two looted Rs 66,000 worth property in a house in Yenugula-baavi village in Bitragunta mandal. Local people observed them while leaving the house and tried to obstruct them, but Shafi left his motorcycle there and escaped from the place along with Ghouse on another bike," said the SP.

Trudeau backs protest; India says 'ill-informed'

Continued from P1

We've reached out through multiple means to the Indian authorities to highlight our concerns. This is a moment for all of us to pull together."

This is the first time a foreign leader has voiced his opinion on the farmers' protests in India. However, the Indian government reacted sharply and called the remarks made by Canadian leaders as "ill-informed" and "unwarranted". The Ministry of External Affairs official spokesperson said, "we have seen some ill-informed comments by Canadian leaders relating to farmers in India. Such comments are unwarranted, especially when pertaining to the internal affairs of a democratic country. It is also best that diplomatic conversations are not misrepresented for political purposes."

TDP stages walkout over houses

AMARAVATI

THE TDP MLAs led by former chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Tuesday staged a walkout from the Assembly in protest against the government not handing over the TIDCO houses completed by the TDP government to the poor families for whom the allotments were already made by lottery.

However, finance minister Bugana Rajendranath Reddy moved a motion suspending the TDP members except Naidu from the House for the day. The Speaker accepted the motion and ordered to that effect. The TDP members were upset over the manner in which Naidu was not given a chance to speak elaborately on the issue. Though he was given brief time, the CM and the Ministers were allowed to interrupt his speech.

Later, addressing the media, Naidu accused the Jagan regime of making false promises through fake advertisement. He demanded the Chief Minister to give free houses to the poor in all the three categories of 300 sft, 365 sft and 430 sft.

He demanded the government to refer the property tax bill to the Select Committee instead of rushing through to impose an unbearable burden on the people. Just for the sake of the Central funds and more loans, the YSRCP regime was bringing in this arbitrary law. Naidu said that gross injustice was being done to the poor beneficiaries in the house sites as well. Only 2,000 acres out of the total 68,000 acres were locked in litigation cases but the Government was not distributing even the remaining land to the poor.

The YSRCP was passing the blame on to the TDP in order to escape from its responsibility, he said.

Lokesh dares Ministers on Naidu's book

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

TDP national general secretary and MLC Nara Lokesh on Tuesday strongly objected to the manner in which ministers were spreading 'misinformation' among people on comments allegedly made by former chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu on agriculture.

Lokesh challenged ministers Botcha Satyanarayana and K Kannababu to prove where exactly Naidu had said that cultivation would be a wasteful effort. He gave this counter on the floor of the Legislative Council which witnessed heated exchanges following some comments made on Naidu's book 'Manasulo Maata'.

Stating that the YSRCP had dubious origins, Lokesh asserted that the TDP had ample proof to show how Satyanarayana and Kannababu had made serious comments against Chief Minister Y S Jaganmohan Reddy before joining the YSRCP. These leaders even called the YSRCP a 'Chanchalaguda

- ▶ Demands Botcha, Kannababu to show where the former CM said agriculture is 'waste'
- ▶ Reminds the abusive comments they made against Jagan before joining YSRCP
- ▶ Moves Privilege notice against Guntur Urban SP for threatening him on social media for criticising



Party', meaning that the leader of the party was bound to go to jail in the illegal investments cases.

Lokesh said that both Satyanarayana and Kannababu started heaping all praise on Y S Jagan Reddy only after joining his party and eventually they both became ministers. Unfortunately, the Ministers and MLAs were not

checking their past statements before targeting the TDP regarding criticism as the Chief Minister.

Lokesh also moved a privilege notice against Guntur Urban SP Ammi Reddy. He made a formal complaint to the Council Chairman saying that Ammi Reddy had threatened him by making posts on social media.

The TDP MLC said that when he found fault with the false arrest of TDP activist Mani Ratnam, the SP made comments on social media threatening him and trample on his rights as an MLC. If the police officer had any complaint, he would have to come through the proper channel and bring the same to the notice of the Council Chairman, he said.

'Govt bought ₹2,582 cr worth agri products during lockdown'

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

AGRICULTURE minister K Kannababu said the state government procured perishable and other agriculture products worth Rs 2,582 crore during the corona lock down period to help the farmers and had been implementing minimum support price (MSP) to the agriculture products.

He informed the state Legislative Council on Tuesday, the second day of the session that the state government had started new policy of giving MSP to the products like banana, sweet lime, onions, minor millets, etc., to help the farmers.

Agriculture Minister Kannababu says the YSRCP govt has provided MSP to many crops like banana, sweet lime, onions unlike the Centre which pays MSP to only limited number of crops

He participated in the discussion on payment of insurance to the farmers for the crop loss caused by heavy rains.

He said the Union government was giving MSP to specific agriculture products and not to all products. He said the state

government had purchased tobacco worth Rs120 crore from the farmers and was planning to sell the produce. He said flowers, banana, onions and other agriculture produce were also procured from farmers during the lockdown.

Kannababu said the state government had allocated funds for the market intervention and help the farmers, when prices drastically fall in the market. Milk collection centres would be opened in 9,000 villages in the state to help the farmers get better price and the state government was formulating Food Processing Policy-2020 to boost food processing units in the state.

DELHI WEDNESDAY 2 DECEMBER 2020

BIZ BRIEFS

SIDBI launches MSME portal

Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), apex financial institution for the promotion, financing and development of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME), has launched a web portal arm-msme.in to help MSMEs take benefit of Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) MSME restructuring guideline. With the help of this Do-It-Yourself (DIY) asset restructuring web module, MSMEs will be able to prepare restructuring proposals by keying in only the most essential data of their past financials, etc. Manoj Mittal, Deputy Managing Director, SIDBI, said, "We have developed this module in collaboration with our associate, India SME Asset Reconstruction Company Limited (ISARC), which is an asset reconstruction company (ARC). This step would aid in the economic recovery and complement the benefits of far reaching initiatives announced by Government of India in this direction. It will provide hand-holding support to MSME units seeking restructuring."

Emami unveils health product

Emami Limited launched Emasol, a complete range for home hygiene products. With this launch, the company entered into the homecare segment. It kills 99.9 per cent germs and also features advanced antimicrobials action that offers upto 24 hours protection from virus, germs and bacteria. Mohan Goenka, Director, Emami Limited, said "Emami is thrilled to capture the topical relevance of the time and make foray in the home hygiene space by introducing Emasol range of home hygiene products. It offers a strong combination of Emami's leading brand equity plus a superior R&D innovation offering up to 24 hours of protection from virus, germs and bacteria, which is a first in Indian market. We expect a very encouraging market response from this launch as consumers are on lookout for hygiene products."

Yamaha rolls out FZ edition

Yamaha on Tuesday introduced the 'Vintage edition' for the FZ brand enthusiasts of the country. A mix of both worlds, style & technology, the Vintage edition of FZS-Fi is ready to boost the iconic style quotient of Yamaha in India. It gets the same style and DNA of the FZ brand. Apart from the timeless vintage graphics that augment its iconic legacy, a new leather finish single piece two level seat will further add to its styled-up antiquity. The new Vintage edition of FZS-Fi will also have the latest introduced features like Bluetooth connectivity 'Yamaha Motorcycle Connect X' application for various utilities.

YES Bank's initiative

Yes Bank has re-energised Yes Premia, a premium banking programme that offers personalized solutions focused on the particular needs of key consumer segments from small business owners to salaried professionals and senior citizens. It provides customised banking solutions that complement the lifestyles indulgences and expectations of different consumer groups. The programme caters to all their financial and lifestyle needs through a mix of products. Rajan Pentel, Global Head Retail Banking, Yes Bank, said, "Yes Bank is committed to providing customers with solutions which are customised based on micro-segmentation of their product interests, tastes and preferences."

Mfg loses steam, falls to 3-mth low

PMI has fallen from 58.9 in Oct to 56.3 in Nov, says monthly survey

NEW DELHI

INDIA's manufacturing sector activity lost momentum and fell to a three-month low in November amid slower increases in factory orders, exports and buying levels, a monthly survey said on Tuesday. The seasonally adjusted IHS Markit India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) fell from 58.9 in October to a three-month low of 56.3 in November, indicating that the manufacturing sector growth remained strong, despite losing traction. In PMI parlance, a print above 50 means expansion, while a score below that denotes contraction.

“The Indian manufacturing sector remained on the right path to recovery, with strong growth of new orders and output sustained during November,” Pollyanna De Lima, Economics Associate Director at IHS Markit, said. Lima further noted that “the softening of rates of expansion seen in the latest month does not represent a major setback, since these are down from over decade highs in October, a spike in Covid-19 cases and the possibility of associated restrictions could undermine the recovery”.

As per the survey, aggregate new orders rose at the slowest pace in three months. The companies indicated that sales growth was underpinned by resilient demand, though curbed by the Covid-19 pandemic, it added. “Companies noted that the pandemic was the key factor weighing on growth during

November, with Covid-related uncertainty also restricting business confidence,” Lima said. Business optimism faded slightly in November. “Output growth is still predicted for the year ahead, but concerns about public policies, rupee depreciation and the Covid-19 pandemic dampened overall confidence,” according to the survey.

Employment, on the other hand, decreased again as companies observed social distancing guidelines. The rate of job shedding was solid and little-changed from October. “Employment remained in contraction territory, however, with companies reportedly keeping the minimum possible number of workers as per government guidelines,” Lima said. On the price front, input

costs and output charges rose at accelerated rates that nevertheless remained below their respective long-run averages.

Meanwhile, India's economy recovered faster than expected in the September quarter as a pick-up in manufacturing helped GDP clock a lower contraction of 7.5 per cent. The gross domestic product (GDP) had contracted by a record 23.9 per cent in the first quarter of 2020-21 fiscal (April 2020 to March 2021) as the coronavirus lockdown pummeled economic activity. The second straight quarter of contraction pushed India to its first technical recession.

MANUFACTURING WOES

Rupee fall, pandemic dampen the spirit

The rate of job shedding was solid

Covid curbs may slow recovery

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NEW DELHI

TOTAL corporate bond issuances during the first half of the current fiscal rose by 25 per cent to Rs 4.43 lakh crore despite economic contraction due to the Covid-19 pandemic, an official statement said on Tuesday.

During the same period last year, corporates had issued bonds worth Rs 3.54 lakh crore. “COVID-19 has drastically affected the investment climate in all economies of the world, causing a sharp decline in the demand and supply equilibrium everywhere. India has been no exception to this unprecedented economic shock.

“Yet, investment sentiment in the Indian economy has been buoyed by the frequent and active intervention of the Government of India despite being hit by a world-wide pandemic,” the finance ministry said.

The Indian growth story continues to expand as is demonstrated by the trends in Foreign Portfolio Investment (FPI), Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and corporate bond market flows that indicate and underline the beliefs of investors in the strength and resilience of Indian economy, it pointed out.

GST revenues cross ₹1L cr mark for 2nd mth

Tax collections touch ₹1,04,963cr during Nov

NEW DELHI

GST collections posted growth for the third month in a row in November over the previous year collections, in signs that the economy continues to reflate after a strict lockdown. Collections of tax on the sale of goods and rendering of services came in at Rs 1,04,963 crore in November, the finance ministry said in a statement on Tuesday. The collections were higher than Rs 1.03 lakh crore recorded in November 2019 but were Rs 192 crore lower than October 2020 collections. The Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections, which directly reflect the state of economic activity, had plummeted to a record low of Rs 32,172 crore in April after the government imposed a nationwide lockdown to curb the spread of coronavirus.

Subsequent easing of lockdown restrictions helped collections rise.

The collections witnessed the first year-on-year growth in September and last month, it crossed the psychological Rs 1 lakh crore mark. November is the second straight month in GST collections in November stood at 1.4 per cent while in October and September, it was at 10 per cent and 4 per cent, respectively. “In line with the recent trend of recovery in the GST revenues, the revenues for the month of November 2020 are 1.4 per cent higher than the GST revenues in the same month last year. During

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TS BJP leaders observe daylong fast against SEC, police inaction

Accuse the TRS leaders of distributing money and liquor to influence the voters

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE State BJP observed a day-long fast in protest against the inaction of the State Election Commission (SEC) and the police towards the brazen violation of the poll code and irregularities by the ruling Telangana Rashtra Samithi. BJP national president of OBC Morcha Dr K Laxman, party national vice-president DK Aruna, former MP and senior BJP leader Vivek Venkataswamy sat on a day-long fast at the State party headquarters.

Addressing the media, the agitating leaders highlighted the undemocratic roles played by the SEC and police at the behest of the TRS-led State government. They highlighted how the ruling party had brought in its cadre from outside of the city and stationed them in different municipal divisions for the dis-



BJP national president of OBC Morcha Dr K Laxman, party national vice-president DK Aruna, former MP and senior BJP leader Vivek Venkataswamy on a daylong fast at the State party headquarters in Hyderabad on Tuesday

tribution of money and liquor to influence the voters. Also, how the Ministers, MLAs and leaders of the TRS were allowed to stay

in the city by hiring function halls, and the police turning a blind towards the violation of poll code to benefit the ruling

TRS. The BJP leaders ended their fast with Union Minister G Kishan Reddy offering them lemon water.

KNRUHS announces MBBS, BDS seats under convenor quota

HANS NEWS SERVICE
WARANGAL

KALOJI Narayana Rao University of Health Sciences (KNRUHS) on Tuesday released the notification for the first phase of web counselling to fill MBBS and BDS seats from December 2 to 4. The university authorities, in the notification, stated that candidates need to register for the web options between 7 am to 7 pm from December 2 to 4. All the candidates, whose names were listed in the final merit list displayed in the university website, are eligible for web counselling and all of them should give college-wise options in order of preference. The information regarding College-wise vacancies is also available on the website. The statement said more information can be had at the university website www.knrhuhs.telangana.gov.in

Two children drown in Krishna River

HANS NEWS SERVICE
GADWAL

TWO children drowned in Krishna River on the outskirts of Gondimalla village of Alampur mandal in the district on Tuesday. According to witness, two children - Mythili (10) and Deekhsita (8) went to the Krishna River banks on the outskirts of Gondimalla village. They entered the river to wash cloths but slipped into the water and both were drowned in the high flowing water. After learning about the missing children, police and villagers searched for the duo and fished them out. The deceased lives in Mersu Colony in the village.

Provide quality treatment to patients: Collector Sikta

HANS NEWS SERVICE
ADILABAD

DISTRICT Collector Sikta Patnaik told doctors to provide quality medical services to the patients, who visit the hospital and they should be available always.

On Tuesday evening, the Collector visited RIMS Hospital here and inquired about the services with Director Balaram Banoth. Citing a recent incident where an anaesthesia doctor was not available in the hospital during a medical emergency, she directed the doctors should always be available to the patients, since government hospitals are meant to serve poor people.

She enquired the Director the



District Collector Sikta Patnaik during a visit to RIMS Hospital in Adilabad on Tuesday

details of doctors' posts sanctioned to the hospital and vacancies. RMO Dr Chandu, Dr Naresh Rathod and others were present on the occasion.

Later, the Collector inspected the wellness centre and inquired

the duty doctor about the medical services provided to the employees, distribution of medicines, medical staff working at the wellness centre. She told them to supply medicines in a timely manner.

Covid-19 tests in Bandapalem village

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KODAD (SURYAPET)

COVID-19 tests have been conducting successfully at Bandapalem of Tammara Bandapalem under Kodada urban primary health center limits. DM&HO Dr Harshavardhan and Deputy DMHO Dr Niranjana examined the tests on Tuesday.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Harshavardhan said that masks must be distributed to all the people in Bandapalem village to protect them from contracting coronavirus. Everyone was told to wear masks strictly. He expressed satisfaction over the manner in which the tests were being conducted and advised the medical health staff to conduct as many tests as possible.



DMHO Dr Harshavardhan enquiring about Covid-19 testing process being carried out by health staff in Bandapalem village on Tuesday

Urban Medical Officer Dr Shailaja, Dr Satish Reddy,

Srinivas Reddy and villagers participated in the programme.

Villagers demand action on erring sarpanch

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KODAD (SURYAPET)

VILLAGERS of Redlakunta Thanda of Kodad mandal staged a protest against the police, who seized a tractor carrying sand for household works here on Tuesday. They argued with the police and questioned them whether they were blind when Redlakunta Thanda sarpanch Apparao was dumping 500 tractors of sand illegally and minting money by selling it. Villagers tried to stop the police from shifting the seized tractor to police station but in vain.

Demanding action to be taken on the sarpanch first before taking action on them, the villagers staged sit-in protest on the road and raised slogans against cops' double standards. They alleged that the police were acting as agents of sarpanch Apparao for kick backs.



Villagers staging a protest in front of the seized tractor in Redlakunta Thanda on Tuesday

AIDS Control contract staff seek wage revision; to move court

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KARIMNAGAR

THE representatives of Telangana State AIDS Control, Lab Technicians and Employees Union staged a protest wearing black ribbons and maintaining social distance and demanded the government to announce pay revision and to stop labour exploitation, in Karimnagar on Tuesday.

Speaking on the occasion, union State general secretary R Sajeeth Gandhi alleged that from the past several years, the AIDS control workers have been constantly seeking pay revision from National AIDS Control Organization (NACO), but even after giving commitment, the NACO has given pay revision to senior medical officers only and excluded other contract workers working under it.

"At present almost all AIDS control contract workers are doing extra work due to the outbreak of Covid-19 in addition to their regular work. Apart from that,

Deworming camps held to vaccinate livestock

HANS NEWS SERVICE
MOPAL (NIZAMABAD)

DISTRICT Collector C Narayana Reddy has advised to administer deworm medication to the livestock at the camps organised by the Department of Animal Husbandry and to protect them from diseases.

He was the chief guest at the inaugural function of the Deworm Prevention Week organised by the Department of Veterinary and Animal Husbandry at Mopal mandal centre on Tuesday.

Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that from Tuesday (December 1) to December 7, camps will be organised and medicines will be given for deworming sheep and goats. He urged the farmers and owners of sheep, goats and dairy cattle not to neglect but to utilise this free deworming camps to protect their livestock.

Narayana Reddy suggested that efforts should be made to grow financially by constantly following the suggestions and



District Collector C Narayana Reddy administering deworm medicine to a sheep at Mopal mandal on Tuesday

instructions of the officials of Animal Husbandry department to prevent the death of cattle.

Collector Narayana Reddy also said that cattle would be vaccinated against foot and mouth disease free of cost for 60 days starting from December 15.

Informing that sheds may be constructed for livestock under Employment Guarantee Scheme, he asked interested farmers to use this opportunity

and should apply to the MPDO or the Animal Husbandry Department officials.

The Collector said the government had issued orders in February directing to distribute sheep to Yadavs but it could not be grounded due to the spread of coronavirus.

District Veterinary Animal Husbandry Officer Yellanna, MPDO Veer Singh, officials, farmers and others participated in the programme.

Music Park by December end

HANS NEWS SERVICE
WARANGAL

EFFORTS are on to complete the Sarigamapadanisa Park near Padmakshi temple. Municipal Commissioner Pamela Satpathy, who inspected the progress of work onsite on Tuesday, directed the officials to expedite the work and complete before the end of December. It may be noted here that the authorities have already procured music instruments from Bhuvaneshwar. This apart, the plan includes plantation of ornamental saplings. Pamela Satpathy said that their focus is on greenery as well to provide a perfect ambience for the visitors to spend some time. She told the officials to keep their focus on the park until it was thrown open for the public. Kakatiya Urban Development Authority (KUDA) project officer E Ajith Reddy, EE Bheem Rao, DE Rajkumar, AEs Bharat and Siddharth Naik were among others present.



Farmers arguing with the organisers of a IKP procurement centre in Bomraspet on Tuesday

Farmers smell a rat in IKP procurement

Allege weighing machines are manipulated

HANS NEWS SERVICE
MAHBUBNAGAR

INDIRA Kranthi Patham (IKP) Self-help Group centers in Bomraspet of Kodangal constituency of Mahbubnagar district are allegedly cheating the farmers by manipulating weighing machines and steeling excess paddy grains up to 500 grams for every bag and causing great loss to the farmers.

When the farmers raised doubts about the weighing machines and confronted the IKP organisers about the excess weighing here on Tuesday, the IKP authorities spoke with them rudely and dared them to complain to anyone over this. Aggrieved over this, the farmers staged a protest and lodged a complaint with local MPTC Shraavan Kumar Goud.

Later, the farmers and the MPTC lodged a complaint with Bomraspet Tahsildar and agriculture department officials. Based on their complaint, a team of officials led by Tahsildar Shaidda Begum, agriculture officer Rajesh and the MPTC vis-

ited all the 15 IKP centers established in Bomraspet mandal and found out that the organisers were weighing 500 grams excess for every bag.

Tahsildar Shaidda Begum said that they had already acknowledged the complaint and found out that the organisers were misleading the farmers by manipulating the weighing machines and weighing an excess of 500 grams during their field investigation. A report was submitted to the higher authorities and soon action will be taken against all those IKP procurement centres, where the authorities are cheating the farmers and causing them a great loss, she added.

The farmers alleged that all the IKP centres were doing the same thing and looting them. "We are bringing our produce to sell at IKP centers because the government is procuring paddy at a minimum support price of Rs 1,888. However, the IKP organisers are causing a great loss to us by looting 500 grams per every bag," a farmer vented out his anger.



AIDS Control contract workers staging a dharna with black badges in Karimnagar on Tuesday

over the past few years, 25,000 contract workers have been extending their services and stood as pillars to the AIDS control programme and also successfully implemented several initiatives directed by NACO time to time," he stated. But NACO is showing discrimination and neglecting the AIDS control contract workers, who rendered better services with full of commitment. So in protest

against the negligent behaviour of the NACO and for showing discrimination against the AIDS control contract workers and demanding pay revision on wage, the AIDS control contract workers staged a dharna in their respective offices across the country on the occasion of World's AIDS Day on December 1 wearing black badges, Sajeeth Gandhi informed.

Union State general secretary

Sujeeth Gandhi warned if the NACO does not revise the pay revision soon, the union representatives will intensify agitation and halt the services in the respective State AIDS Control societies present in different states across the country.

Even if justice is not done, then all the AIDS control contract workers will go to the Supreme Court, he added.

India look to avoid 1st 'whitewash' vs Oz in 20yrs

NEW DELHI

INDIAN bowlers will have pride to play for and also gain some confidence ahead of the T20 and Test series when they take on Australia in the third and final ODI at the Manuka Oval in Canberra on Wednesday.

If Australia, who are leading the three-match series 2-0, win the final match, it will be the first time they will sweep an ODI series against India at home in 20 years, though not necessarily in a bilateral series. The last occasion when India suffered a whitewash was in 1999-2000 when they lost all their four games in the triangular series that also featured Pakistan.

India's worry has been their bowling as it has failed to stop Australia from getting to record totals. The



Visitors may bring in Kuldeep for leg-spinner Chahal

Aussies made 374 in the first ODI and 389 in the second to take the game out of India's reach. These are the highest totals the Aussies have scored against India in 50-over games. While there is very little time for the bowlers to rebound as the surface at Manuka Oval is likely to be batting friendly again, the visitors may ring in a change, bringing in Chiman bowler Kuldeep Yadav for leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal who has conceded 160 runs in 20 overs during the two games and picked just one wicket.

Kuldeep hasn't played much cricket in recent times but his angle as Chinaman, with the ball turning into a right-hander, could be handy. He played just five games in IPL while his last ODI was 10 months back, on February 5.

Indian middle-order batsman Shreyas Iyer on Tuesday admitted that the bowling has not been up to the mark but promised that the team would play positively in the final match.

"...despite the two losses we are going to play positively. We have played really good cricket in terms of batting. Obviously, the bowling wasn't up to the mark but I am sure the bowlers are really positive...good to see a few of the bowlers going out there and practicing with certain plans. We are very determined to go out there and win the next game and see to it that we don't suffer a clean sweep," Iyer told reporters on Tuesday.

The Indians had an optional practice on Tuesday and a few of the bowlers and batsmen went out to iron out the chinks.

For Australia, the biggest question would be who will open in place of David Warner who will miss not just the final ODI but also the T20

International series that follows.

Skipper Aaron Finch said that they have plenty of options although they haven't finalised the replacement yet.

"We haven't picked a team yet. We have a few options, though. Whether we go with (Matthew) Wade or Marnus (Labuschagne) comes up to open the batting. Alex Carey has done a lot of it in the past. I can see there being a number of roles for each one of those guys. We'll wait and see. We haven't seen the wicket yet. Once we see the wicket we'll have a clearer idea on how that's going to look," the 34-year-old said. (ANS)



Match Starts at 9:10 am IST

Australia's Aaron Finch (right) shakes hands with India's Yuzvendra Chahal as Navdeep Saini (left) watches after the one day international match at the Sydney Cricket Ground in Sydney, Australia on Sunday

Natarajan or Shardul could replace Saini

ANBERRA

LEFT chasing shadows in the first two games, a listless Indian team would most certainly tweak its bowling combination in order to avoid a second successive clean-sweep when it takes on Australia in the third and final ODI here on Wednesday.

A 0-3 defeat against Australia would be their second rout in consecutive ODI series having met the same fate in New Zealand earlier this year.

Skipper Kohli has been the first to admit that they have been "outplayed" in the two games and it is expected that some corrective measures will be taken in order to get their campaign back on track.

Navdeep Saini, India's fastest bowler, like a lot of others on his first tour of Australia, has looked clueless. Such has been his plight that Kohli was forced to bowl a half-fit (bowling wise) Hardik Pandya and even Mayanag Agarwal to complete Saini's spell after he gave away 70 runs in seven overs.

It could well be possible that one among Shardul Thakur, with an experience of 27 international games, or the 'yorker sensation' rookie left-arm Thangarasu Natarajan will be seen replacing Saini. In case of Natarajan, it could be his international debut and a chance to test himself in an inconsequential game before the start of the T20 series where he is sure to play a part.

It could well be a case of both Shardul and Natarajan being given a go in case Kohli decides to rest both Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami, who need to remain fit and fresh for the big-ticket Test series.

Natarajan, with his clever variations and change of pace, could provide a different dimension, as the cutters might work well and a bit of swing may be on offer on a ground which is not exactly a closed concrete jungle and may aid a bit of swing. Never had an Indian attack looked so out of sorts as it did in the two games -- hit for 69 boundaries and 19 sixes.

Kohli said that switching of formats from T20 to ODIs can't be an excuse for a team whose core has remained pretty much the same for a considerable period of time. The bowlers have had no idea where to bowl to Steve Smith, who has decided to single-handedly torment the opposition with back-to-back 62-ball-hundreds. Add to it, Glenn Maxwell's power-packed finishing at the end of the innings is giving them those extra 30 runs which are creating the difference from India's perspective as the margin of defeats of 66 and 51 respectively would suggest. (PTI)



Shardul Thakur



Thangarasu Natarajan

Hyderabad look to improve game as Jamshedpur eye first win

VASCO

WHEN Jamshedpur FC face Hyderabad FC in their next match of the Indian Super League (ISL) at the Tilak Maidan Stadium here on Wednesday, they will be looking for their maiden win.

Hyderabad may have not conceded a goal in the two games they have played thus far, but they have not scored many either; they have managed to score just one. Additionally, Hyderabad would also need to deal with injuries to midfielder Luis Sastre and forward Joel Chianese. Hyderabad's only goal came through a penalty in their opening game against Odisha FC scored by striker Aridane Santana. Coach Manuel Marquez came into the season with a team that could not keep a single clean sheet throughout last season and he is now concerned with getting his team to create more chances up front.

"We need to improve not only in defence but also in the final part of the op-



Hyderabad FC players practice on the eve of their Hero ISL7 match against Jamshedpur



goals this season but conceded four as well, and are yet to record a win.

Coach Owen Coyle, who is yet to taste a win with Jamshedpur, stated that they would need to respect their opponents as they know what they are capable

ponent's box. We have to create more clear chances. In two games, we have only one goal from a penalty," he said on Tuesday. Jamshedpur striker Nerijus Valskis has already scored thrice and Marquez knows what the Lithuanian is capable of doing. They have scored a total of three

of doing. "We are very respectful of the quality Hyderabad has. Aridane is a wonderful player. We are well aware of the threat they have. But we know if we perform the way we did in the first half (against Odisha), then we are capable of getting the three points," Coyle said. (ANS)

3 more Pak players in NZ test +ve,

NEW DELHI

THREE more members of the Pakistan cricket team in New Zealand have tested positive following the second round of Covid-19 testing taking the number of affected players to 10. The result of one more test is pending.

The New Zealand health ministry is still investigating if the cases are historical.

"Day 6 swabs were taken yesterday from the 46 members of the Pakistan cricket squad in Christchurch who to date have returned negative test results for Covid-19. Of those, 42 have subsequently returned a further negative test result. Three are under investigation to determine whether they are historical cases, and one test result is pending," a statement from the Ministry of Health, New Zealand, said on Tuesday. (ANS)

Hamilton tests positive for Covid-19, to miss Sakhir GP

LONDON

SEVEN-time world champion Lewis Hamilton has tested positive for novel coronavirus and will thus miss this weekend's Sakhir Grand Prix, Mercedes announced on Tuesday.

Hamilton, who sealed this year's title in Turkey and won Sunday's Bahrain Grand Prix, was tested three times last week including Sunday afternoon as part of the regular testing program, returning a negative result each time, according to Mercedes.

However, on Monday morning, he woke up with mild symptoms and was informed at the same time that a contact prior to arrival in Bahrain had subse-

quently tested positive. He therefore took a further test and returned a positive result. The Briton is now isolating in accordance with Covid-19 protocols and public health authority guidelines in Bahrain.

"Apart from mild symptoms, he is otherwise fit and well, and the entire team sends him its very best wishes for a swift recovery," the Mercedes statement read.

He is the third F1 driver to test positive for the deadly virus this season, following Sergio Perez at Silverstone and Lance Stroll in Germany.

Mercedes reserve driver Stoffel Vandoorne will travel to Bahrain after Formula E testing in Valencia on Tuesday.

However, the team is yet to confirm who will replace Hamilton, saying they will do so in due course. (ANS)



Giant Oly rings return to Tokyo Bay

TOKYO

THE giant Olympic rings returned to Tokyo Bay on Tuesday four months after being removed for safety and maintenance checks. The Olympic Symbol,

which is 32.6 meters wide and 15.3 meters high and weighs 69 tons, was brought back by a salvage barge to Tokyo's waterfront and reinstalled in the waters of Odaiba Marine Park, with the landmark Rainbow Bridge a few

hundred meters behind, reports Xinhua news agency.

The symbol was officially inaugurated on the evening of January 24, exactly six months before the original opening date of the Olympics. (ANS)

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