



President Ram Nath Kovind during the inaugural event of 60th year of Goa's liberation at Campal near Panaji on Saturday

## India crosses grim milestone of 1 crore Covid cases

NEW DELHI: India's Covid-19 caseload surpassed one-crore mark on Saturday, adding 10 lakh cases in nearly a month, while the total number of recoveries surged to 95.50 lakh, according to the Union Health Ministry data. ►P3



Union Home Minister Amit Shah with former TMC leader Subhendu Adhikary, who joined BJP, during an election rally in West Midnapore district on Saturday

## Adhikari joins BJP at Amit Shah's rally

NEW DELHI: TMC dissident leader Suwendu Adhikari on Saturday joined the BJP in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah at a rally in West Bengal's Midnapore. His formal induction into the saffron party has put to rest weeks of speculation about his political future. Adhikari, who has been at odds with West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee for the past few weeks, had exited the Trinamool Congress on Thursday and resigned as the party's MLA earlier this week. Besides Adhikari, several other TMC leaders defected to the BJP at the mammoth rally.►P3



# Will inoculate 30 cr people in 6 mths: Centre

NEW DELHI  
UNION Health Minister Harsh Vardhan on Saturday said that India will have the capacity to inoculate about 30 crore people with Covid-19 vaccine in six to seven months. He said the country's scientists and health experts have developed an indigenous vaccine. "Our scientists and health experts have worked on the development of a vaccine by genome se-

quencing and isolation of the coronavirus and developed an indigenous vaccine. In 6-7 months, we will have the capacity to inoculate about 30 crore people," the Health Minister said. Harsh Vardhan stressed



that India has one of the highest Covid-19 recovery rates in the world at 95.46 per cent as over 95 lakh people have recovered from the disease so far. "There have been a little over one crore cases of Covid-19 in India. Of that, 95 lakh 50 thousand cases have recov-

ered successfully. India has one of the highest recovery rates in the world at 95.46 per cent," he said. With 25,152 new positive cases of Covid-19 in the last 24 hours, the total number of infected patients in the country has crossed the one crore mark. Nearly 10 lakh cases have been reported in nearly a month, while the total number of recoveries surged to 95.50 lakh, according to the Union Health Ministry data.

NEW DELHI

Biting cold conditions prevailed in the national capital on Saturday as the minimum temperature dropped to 3.9 degrees Celsius, the lowest this season so far. "The Safdarjung Observatory, which provides representative data for the city, recorded a low of 3.9 degrees Celsius, four notches below normal. The maximum

## Delhi shivers at 3.9 deg C

temperature is likely to settle around 21 degrees Celsius," an IMD official said. The mercury dipped to 3.3 degrees Celsius and 3.4 degrees Celsius at Lodhi Road and Ayana-gar, respectively, as icy winds from snow-laden Western Himalayas contin-



ued to sweep the city, the India Meteorological Department said. On Friday, the

minimum temperature had plunged to 2.7 degrees Celsius at Jafarpur. The city had recorded a "severe" cold day on Thursday as the maximum temperature dropped to 15.2 degrees Celsius, seven notches below normal and the lowest this

season so far. On Friday, it rose to 19.8 degrees Celsius. A "cold day" is when the minimum temperature is less than 10 degrees Celsius and the maximum is at least 4.4 degrees Celsius below normal. A "severe" cold day is when the maximum temperature is at least 6.5 notches below normal. Partly cloudy skies are predicted over the national capital towards the evening, the IMD said.



# FARM REFORMS STARTED YIELDING BENEFITS: PM

Investors' mindset has changed from 'Why India' to 'Why Not India'

NEW DELHI

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said the new farm reform measures taken by his government have started yielding benefits for the farmers.

Speaking at an ASSOCHAM event, he said that in a bid to make India self-reliant, the country is committed to take up reforms across sectors. His statement came even as a large protesting multitude continued to pressure for rollback sitting at Delhi's doorstep.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi today hard sold his government's reforms spanning from manufacturing to taxation to labour, saying they have changed the world perception about the country from 'why India' to 'why not India' and went on to quote record foreign investment during the pandemic as a testimony to that.

He cited scrapping of 1,500 old and obsolete laws and farming new ones that in tune with the changing



investment order as an example of his government's outlook. Previously, a web of regulations and rules were cited by investors to

ask why to invest in India but easing compliance burden in the new labour laws have made them say 'why not India', he said. "Red tape previously made investors say 'Why India' but a red carpet is now making them say 'why not India,'" he said.

From a non-existent culture for innovation to a new ecosystem promoting and nurturing startups has given the world confidence



**Will decide next course of action in 2-3 days: Farmers**  
NEW DELHI: Farmer unions protesting against the three agri laws on Saturday said they will decide their next course of action in the next two-three days, after the Supreme Court earlier this week pointed out it was thinking of setting up an "impartial and independent" panel of agriculture experts and peasants' unions to resolve the deadlock.

to say 'why not India'. "Earlier there was so much government interference that investors said 'why India'. Today the faith reposed by the government in the private sector and encouragement of foreign investors have made the same people say 'why not India'," he said.

He stated that new India is pushing towards Aatmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India).

## There can be a way out for talks: Khattar

NEW DELHI

THERE can be a way out for the next round of talks between the government and farmer unions protesting against the Centre's new farm laws in a day or two, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar said after meeting Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Saturday.

# Defence forces ready to protect India: Rajnath

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

APPRECIATING the Defence Forces for carrying out an unprecedented fight against terrorism, Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday said that they were equipped enough to protect the sovereignty of the country at any time. The Union Minister for Defence made these remarks while addressing a passing out parade of the newly-inducted cadets of Indian Air Force at Dundigal Air Force Academy here, on Saturday. Continued on P4



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh reviews the Combined Graduation Parade (CGP), at Air Force Academy (AFA) Dundigal in Hyderabad on Saturday

# No dissidence, says Congress

STRATEGY MEET DECIDES TO HOLD CHINTAN SHIVIR SOON

PURNA SINGH NEW DELHI

AMID differences and outrage in the party, Congress interim president Sonia Gandhi held a strategy meeting with a group of party leaders, including some who had written to her seeking complete organisational overhaul. At the meeting, they discussed ways to strengthen the party at all levels and it was decided to hold con-



Congress leaders Pawan Bansal, Prithviraj Chavan and Harish Rawat after a meeting with party's interim President Sonia Gandhi on Saturday

claves similar to Panchmarhi and Shimla to chalk out the way ahead, senior Congress leader

Harish Rawat said, adding that there is no doubt about the leadership and everyone in the party has full faith in the leadership of Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi. The five-hour meeting, which also included some of Sonia Gandhi's close associates, was significant as it was the first effort by the Congress leadership for a rapprochement with the 'letter-writers' who had raised questions over the leadership. Continued on Page 4



## Third wave of Covid under control: CM

NEW DELHI: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said the national capital has now overcome the third wave of Covid-19 infections and is conducting the highest number of daily tests in the country, even more than the US, to detect the coronavirus disease.

Kejriwal said on Saturday that Delhi saw the first wave of Covid-19 in June, the second in August-September, and the third strong wave towards the end of October and November. He also said that pollution induced by stubble burning led to the third wave of coronavirus in November. "It appears that the third wave of Covid-19 in Delhi is now ending. Around 90,000 daily tests are being conducted in Delhi today. This is the highest number of daily tests in the country," he said while addressing a press conference.

## Covid vaccine can turn people into crocs, says Brazilian Prez

BRASÍLIA

BRAZILIAN President Jair Bolsonaro has launched an attack on coronavirus vaccines, even suggesting that the one developed by Pfizer-BioNTech could turn people into crocodiles or bearded ladies.

The far-right leader has been sceptical of the coronavirus since it first emerged late last year, branding it 'a little flu.' This week he insisted he would not be vaccinated, even while launching the country's mass inoculation program.

"In the Pfizer contract it's very clear: 'we're not responsible for any side effects.' If you turn into a crocodile, it's your problem," Bolsonaro said on Thursday. That vaccine has been undergoing

In the Pfizer contract it's very clear: 'we're not responsible for any side effects.' If you turn into a crocodile, it's your problem



tests in Brazil for weeks and is already being used in the United States and Britain.

Continued on Page 4

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# TRS' SILENCE ON GHMC POLL SHOW REVIEW BAFFLES NETAS

A fortnight after GHMC results no review by the ruling party

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

IT has been a fortnight since the announcement of the results of GHMC the TRS has not reviewed or analysed the reasons for the poor performance of the party in Greater Hyderabad elections and the leaders are a confused lot as to what was happening in the party.

After facing the thrubbing in Dubbaka, the ruling TRS had to face embarrassment in the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation elections as the party's tally has gone down from 99 to 56 and it could only manage to become the single largest party. The BJP on the other hand made a dent into the vote bank of the ruling party by winning 48 divisions which is 44 more from the previous elections.

The TRS leaders had announced to deeply analyse the reasons for the loss of the party in the elections. However, there



● There has been silence in the party after the Delhi visit of Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao

● The party did not take the defeat in Dubbaka seriously and underestimated the opponents

were no meetings of the party except for the one to one meeting of the corporators with the TRS working president KT Rama Rao. The TRS leader had addressed

some of the important leaders while meeting the corporators. The leaders are said to be in confusion as nothing was happening in the party for some

time. There has been silence after the Delhi visit of Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao. There was no clarity as to what the party would do in GHMC as there is no talk of mayor election. Party sources said that the party would like to maintain the status quo for some time without staking claim on the post of mayor as term of the existing body is till February 10.

A senior leader said that party would certainly deliberate about the reasons for the loss. The party did not take the defeat in Dubbaka seriously and underestimated the opponents and the party had to face humiliation in the GHMC, he said. He also said that the party would have to take corrective measures as there are more elections in the coming days including the Nagarjunasagar bypoll. Apart from the bypoll, the elections for Warangal and Khammam corporations are also due in the next three months.

# SCR GM flags off 'Fit India Cyclothon'

HYDERABAD

SOUTH Central Railway (SCR), General Manager Gajanan Mallya, along with SCR officials, Women's Welfare Organisation members flagged off "Fit India Cyclothon" on Saturday. The event was organised by SCR Sports Association as part of Fit India Thematic Campaign "Fitness Ka Doze...Adha Ghanta Roz" being held from 7th to 31st December, 2020 under the aegis of Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports.

Speaking on the occasion, Gajanan Mallya complimented the sports association in taking up this appropriate and important initiative on SCR. He stressed on the importance of staying fit which is very important and need of the hour. The cycling activity is very good for health and now a day many people in other countries are coming back to cycling to maintain fitness. Cycling is environment friendly activity and improves health also. During the fit India campaign railway employees and families are participating in large scale along with all the events/activities being organised.



The event was organised by SCR Sports Association as part of Fit India Thematic Campaign

Jayanthi Mallya, President, SCR Women's Welfare Organisation said that the event fit India campaign really brings healthy spirit amongst the participants of the activity. Fit SCR team is going strong with several

fitness activities being conducted. She also said that, she is a beneficiary of the activities of fit India campaign due to which her health has shown a very good improvement. The encouragement provided by the team members in the FIT SCR App Group developed is highly appreciable.

The Cyclothon is part of the fit India movement which includes Thematic campaign, fitness assessment through 'FIT INDIA APP' and 'FIT INDIA Cyclothon'. Participants have been asked to take fitness videos of their choice for 10 seconds and upload it on the digital platforms of the Ministry.

# PROTEST BY IAF EMPLOYEES' UNION



Indian Air Force Employees' Union with other employees' union organised a hunger strike near Defence Gate at Turkapalli of Alwal. The union demands abolition of Central pension scheme and restoration KF old pension scheme to the employees. K Nageswar ex-MLC and Kapilavai Dileep Kumar, ex-MLC and president of Telangana Rashtriya Lok Dal spoke on the occasion.

## Employees to hold lunch hour protest tomorrow

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

TELANGANA Employees' Association has called for a lunch hour protest on Monday for realisation of their pending demands including PRC implementation, release of DA. Association president C Sampath Kumar Swamy has appealed to employees, teachers and pensioners to take part in the protest and make their voice heard. He said PRC and DA are employees' right and the State government must fulfill them at the earliest.

# Two of a family killed, 3 others hurt in road mishap

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

IN a ghastly road accident, two persons of a family were killed while three others were injured in the wee hours on Saturday at Kothur village in Shadnagar. The deceased were identified as father and son, K Kalyana Chakravarthy and K Satyanarayana and the injured were, Hamsa Priya and Sharada and they are believed to be in critical condition, whereas another injured Raghunandan suffered minor injuries. It is said that the son was driving the car.

According to the police, the family hailed from Saidabad and was returning home after offering prayers at

Tirumala, but they met with an accident at Shadnagar when their car crashed into an oil tanker which was taking a 'U' turn.

As they were travelling at full speed the driver could not control the speed of the car upon noticing the tanker and went on to hit the tanker leading to instant death of two persons.

However, the passersby who witnessed the accident alerted the police. The police arrived the spot and shifted the injured to a nearby hospital and the deceased were shifted to Osmania mortuary for postmortem. A case under relevant sections of IPC has been registered and the matter is being investigated, said the police.

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

TELANGANA BJP threatened to launch an agitation if the State government fails to roll back implementation of property registration through Dharani portal till shortcomings in the system are rectified.

Addressing media here on Saturday, party national leader and BJP Madhya Pradesh in-charge P Muralidhar Rao said that the stated objectives of the implementation of Dharani portal are good. But, the software being developed has miserably failed to meet the objectives.

The State government said that the new system is advanced than the Computer-Aided Administration of Registrations Department (CAARD) that was being implemented before the launch of Dharani portal.

The Dharani is developed by Telangana State Online, a subsidiary of TCS. And, it claimed advanced features like slot booking, computer-generated documents without the discretionary interference by the officials (Sub-Registrar), and an auto-

- If any person could not attend physically, they will have to pay afresh to book a slot
- Dharani system does not provide checking the legal status of property
- Out of 100 documents, the Dharani system shows only three categories for the registrations

matic mutation of the transaction.

For implementing this the State government has launched the Dharani portal after three months of stalling the entire registrations in the State.

However, the whole exercise turned disastrous for the State and posing untold hardships to people, small and big builders, stamp vendors and those from the MSME sector, he added.

Rao said that the Registration Act is central and is a subject in the concurrent list of the constitution.

As per the said act stamp duty has a perpetual validity. But, small stamp vendors in the State have been facing the following new changes brought by launching Dharani portal.

He said annually, 14 lakh out of 16 lakh registration are non-

agriculture properties, comprising about 80 per cent of the total registrations in the State. Fetching Rs 6,700 crore revenue to the State. The registration of agriculture and non-agriculture lands being carried at the mandal revenue offices and 142 independent sub-registrar offices have come to grinding halt causing loss of revenue to the State as well as to the people.

He said that the Dharani system does not provide checking the legal status of property tracking the link documents at the time of sale. In turn, it is turning a boon for the fraudster, land grabbers and people registering fake documents.

What is more shocking is that a sub-registrar has no authority to refuse to register a document unless it falls under only one exception given under section 22A

of the act. Further, there is no provision for General Power of Attorney and Special Power of Attorney on behalf of people to carry out registrations. Similarly, there is no facility for the guardian on behalf of the minors.

If any person could not attend physically due to emergencies and other unavoidable circumstances, then, the stamp duty paid has been retained. And, people will have to pay afresh to book a slot, he pointed out.

Similarly, the documents issued after registrations are not fulfilling the legal validity to accept the same for the pledge and provide loans against property. Similarly, people are facing problems in the registration of the sale of combined and joint properties.

Out of 100 documents the Dharani system is showing only three categories for the registrations. Also, lack of proper training to the staff added to the troubles and the staff remained clueless on how to handle any document or registration falling outside those provided for in the Dharani system.

# CS tells babus to prepare action plan on road safety

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

STATE Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar Saturday held a review meeting on the issue of road safety and directed officials to prepare a framework for action plan on road safety for every district in the State. He also reviewed the unified action plan on emergency care and mapping of ambulance services, hospitals and trauma care centres to bring down the fatalities and to extend health services within the golden hour. He directed the officials to arrange training programme on emergency medicine from NIMS to the healthcare workers

of trauma care centres.

Somesh Kumar advised the Health Department to identify staff for taking master training on active bleeding control to reduce the mortality and morbidity from road accidents in the State. He also directed the officials to constitute a team to study each and every aspect related to Outer ring road duly focusing on fencing, crossings, signages, illumination, ANPR camera based speed enforcement at vulnerable locations to minimise accidents. He asked the officials to make arrangements for conducting one-day training for government drivers on safe driving and maintenance of vehicles.

# 'Cow Deeksha' by TTD member tomorrow

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

DEMANDING that cow be declared as National Animal, TTD Board member and Chairman of Yuva Tulasi Foundation Kolishetty Shiva Kumar has decided to undertake 1-day 'Cow Deeksha' at Dharna Chowk near Indira Park on Monday.

Film actor Suman and others are likely to participate in the Deeksha. It may be mentioned here that The Hans India had carried Vox Populi on the same issue for over one week from across the two Telugu States, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh and majority of them had expressed their opinion favouring cow as National Animal.

# Hyd-based oil manufacturers booked by CBI in bank fraud case

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

THE Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Saturday booked a criminal case against Hyderabad-based Agarwal Industries Chairman and management director Anirudh Pershad Agarwal and four others in Rs 200.17 crore bank fraud case. The accused include Agarwal Industries CDM's two sons, Murarilal Agarwal and Satish Kumar Agarwal. The company is situated at Afzalgunj, Hyderabad and manufactures and exports refined oils, Vanaspati and special fats in the name of Gold Mohar, Gold Coin.

According to CBI, they re-

The company is situated at Afzalgunj, Hyderabad and manufactures and exports refined oils, Vanaspati and special fats in the name of Gold Mohar, Gold Coin.

ceived a complaint from the manager of Allahabad Bank (now merged with Indian Bank) wherein, he stated that, the company availed a loan amount of Rs 5 crore and non capital working limit of Rs 50 crore was also sanctioned to the company in 2014. In 2018, the company also received a higher loan.

However, independent investigation ordered by the bank revealed that, the Agarwal's fabricated the audit financial statements and diverted the loan to other businesses for personal gains.

The company submitted false stock statement to the bank to conceal their irregularities. The

directors falsified their books of accounts and willfully defaulted in repayment. This graft has caused a loss to the tune of Rs 200.17 crore, CBI said in its FIR.

The issue came to light when a Delhi-based chartered accountant conducted an independent forensic audit as ordered by the bank and it was proved in the audit that the company was indulged in such irregularities. Based on the complaint filed by the bank manager the CBI has booked the proprietors under section 120 (B) r/w 420, 468, 471 and 477 - A of the Indian Penal Code and section 13(2) r/w 13 (1) (d) of the Prevention of Corruption Act.

# Graduation day brings joy among St Peter's students

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

ST Peter's Engineering College celebrated its 10th Graduation Day on Saturday on its campus. The celebrations started with the academic procession in which the dignitaries.

Rammohan Reddy Director Academic and Audit Cell and Officer on special duty to the Vice Chancellor JNTUH attended as the chief guest. The HODs called out the names of the graduates of their respective departments who were awarded with the degree certificates by the guest of honor, chief guest, secretary and the principal. Parents expressed joyful gratitude to the faculty



and the management in molding their wards as professionals in

the course of study in our institution.



# India crosses somber milestone of 1 cr Covid-19 cases, death toll 1,45,136

NEW DELHI

INDIA on Saturday crossed the somber milestone of one crore COVID-19 cases, adding 10 lakh infections in nearly a month, even as the virus spread slowed and recoveries surged to over 95.50 lakh, according to Union Health Ministry data.

The country's COVID-19 case tally had surpassed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 30 lakh on August 23, and 40 lakh on September 5.

It went past 50 lakh on September 16, 60 lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11, 80 lakh on October 29, and surpassed 90 lakh on November 20.

The health ministry's data updated at 8 am on Saturday showed the total number of cases

mounted to 1,00,04,599, and the death toll to 1,45,136 with the virus claiming 347 more lives in a span of 24 hours.

Kerala reported 5,456 cases in the last 24 hours. West Bengal 2,239, while Maharashtra 1,960, the ministry said.

However, the COVID-19 case fatality rate has further declined to 1.45 per cent.

India reported its first COVID-19 case 323 days ago on January 30 in Kerala, while the first death was reported on March 10 in Karnataka.

Asked if the worst was over for India, Dr Samiran Panda, the Head of Epidemiology and Communicable Diseases at the Indian Council of Medical Research, said the epidemiological curve has come



down for some states, while there is a fluctuation for others. "More states, we have seen effective control while in some of the states we need to be

mindful and watchful. The state scenarios are different from each other," Panda told PTI.

When asked if a second peak of COVID-19 can be worse, noted clinical scientist Gagandeep Kang opined the transmission will not be as rapid as was seen the first time and peak will not be as high.

"I don't think the exposure is enough to say that we have herd immunity and won't need to worry about it again, but I think it is enough to ensure that we will some level of protection so that the transmission will not be as rapid as was seen the first time and peak will not be as high as we saw the first time.

"The problem has not gone away it will not go away with herd immunity, but I don't think neces-

sarily we will see second higher peaks as has been seen in the West," she said. India is in the number one position in terms of the number of recovered coronavirus cases, followed by Brazil, according to the Johns Hopkins University, which has been compiling COVID-19 data from all over the world.

India is the second worst-hit nation in terms of COVID-19 cases after the US, while it is in the third spot in terms of fatalities globally after the US and Brazil, according to JHU data.

The worst affected states and UTs with highest number of COVID-19 cases are Maharashtra (18,88,767), Karnataka (9,07,123), Andhra Pradesh (8,77,806), Tamil Nadu (8,04,650), Kerala (6 93,865), Delhi (6,14,775) and Uttar Pradesh (5,72,196).

## BJP leader and ex-Union Min backs farmers' stir

Nagaur MP Beniwal resigns from 3 Parl panels in support of farmers' Farmers protest goes on amid season's lowest temperature in Delhi

NEW DELHI

FORMER Union minister and senior BJP leader Birender Singh has extended his support to the ongoing farmers' agitation against the three agriculture-marketing laws passed by the Centre.

Singh is grandson of Sir Chhotu Ram, a prominent politician during the pre-independence era who championed the interest of farmers. Singh, whose son Brijendra is a sitting BJP MP, said it was his moral responsibility to stand with the farmers who he said are "worried" as they fear the new legislations will have an "impact" on their economic condition.

"Whatever I have achieved in politics, would not have been possible had I not been the grandson of Sir Chhotu Ram," Singh said on Friday.

"Therefore, it is my moral responsibility to stand with the farmers in their fight today and,



A Nihang holds the Tricolor at Ghazipur border during farmers' protest against Centre's agri-laws, in New Delhi

therefore, I have decided to support this (farmers') fight," said Singh, a prominent Jat leader in Haryana.

Singh further said that he along with his supporters will soon ob-

serve a symbolic hunger strike in Haryana's districts bordering Delhi. Under the banner of Chaudhary Chhotu Ram Vichar Manch, the former Union minister along with his supporters had sat on a

protest at Rohtak on Friday.

Rajasthan's Nagaur MP Hanuman Beniwal on Saturday resigned from three parliamentary committees in support of farmers' agitation against the Centre's agriculture-related laws.

Beniwal, a convener of the Rashtriya Loktantrik Party and the BJP's ally at the Centre, submitted his resignation to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla.

Braving the harsh cold of Delhi, thousands of farmers protesting against the three recent agri laws remained steadfast in their demands of repealing the legislations as their agitation entered its fourth week.

According to the India Meteorological Department, the national capital recorded its coldest day on Saturday with the minimum temperature dropping to 3.9 degrees Celsius at the Safdarjung Observatory, which provides the representative data for the city.

### Farooq Abdullah's assets worth ₹12 cr attached

The ED has attached assets worth Rs 11.86 crore of former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Farooq Abdullah and others in connection with its money laundering probe linked to alleged financial irregularities in the Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association, official sources said on Saturday. They said the agency has issued a provisional attachment order under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act and the attached properties are located in Jammu and Srinagar.

Two immovable assets are residential, one is a commercial property while three other plots of land have also been attached by the Enforcement Directorate, they said. While the book value of these attached properties is Rs 11.86 crore, their market value is about Rs 60-70 crore, they added.

## India may not have 2<sup>nd</sup> Covid-19 peak: Experts

NEW DELHI

HEALTHCARE experts have said that there may not be a second peak of COVID-19 in the country, and even if it occurs, it is unlikely to be as strong as the first one.

The comments come as the country's COVID-19 caseload surpassed the one crore mark, though the number of daily cases and daily fatalities have been continuously coming down.

Noted virologist Dr Shahid Jameel said India's curve for daily cases is on a downward slope since a peak in mid-September.

"At this time, we are getting about 25,500 cases daily compared to over 93,000 cases per day in mid-September. I believe the worst is over. But there will be small peaks in the future just as

### 'Unplanned lockdown' didn't win battle: Rahul

CONGRESS leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday alleged that the unplanned lockdown did not manage to "win the battle in 21 days as the PM claimed", but it "destroyed" millions of lives in the country.

India's COVID-19 caseload surpassed the somber one-crore mark on Saturday, adding 10 lakh cases in nearly a month, while the total number of recoveries surged to 95.50 lakh, according to the Union Health Ministry's data. Taking a dig at the prime minister's remarks in March that the Mahabharata war was won in 18 days and the war against coronavirus will take 21 days, Gandhi tweeted, "1 crore Covid infections with almost 1.5 lakh deaths! The unplanned lockdown did not manage to 'win the battle in 21 days' as the PM claimed, but it surely destroyed millions of lives in the country."

we witnessed in late November," he said. "I don't think there would be a second peak as we have gone through the festive season (Dussehra to Diwali) and a state election without a significant

jump. What is the reason for this? If we go by the second national serosurvey, likely cases were 16 times confirmed cases. By that factor, India would have 160 million cases now," he told PTI.

## RSS ideologue MG Vaidya passes away

NAGPUR

VETERAN journalist, ex-legislator, senior Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) ideologue and its first spokesperson Madhav Govind Vaidya passed away in a private hospital here on Saturday, according to official sources.

Vaidya, 97, is survived by his wife Sunanda and eight children, among them are three daughters Vibhavari G. Naik, Pratibha U. Rajhans, Bharti J. Kahu, five sons Dhananjay, Manmohan, Srinivasa, Shashibhushan and Ram, besides a large extended family.

One son, Dr. Manmohan is a senior RSS head and another is the co-convenor of Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh.

Vaidya, a former Member of Maharashtra Legislative Council, had recently recovered from a

Covid-19 infection, but was active and alert till the end.

However, his health suddenly deteriorated on Friday and he was rushed to the Spandan Hospital where he breathed his last around 3.30 pm this afternoon, said a senior RSS worker.

Vaidya's last rites shall be performed at his home in Pratapnagar and the cremation shall be held Ambazari Ghat in Nagpur on Sunday morning at 9.30 am.

A close family friend, Barrister Vinod Tiwari said, "Vaidya was among the rare organisation veterans who had personally worked with all the Sarsangchalaks (heads) of the 95-year-old RSS," including its founder K. B. Hedgewar, acting head L. V. Paranjpe, M. S. Golwalkar, M. D. Deoras, Rajendra Singh, K. S. Sudarshan and the current chief Mohan Bhagwat.

### Cops asked to probe Akhtar's defamation complaint against Kangana

MUMBAI

A court in Mumbai on Saturday directed the police to probe the defamation complaint filed by Bollywood lyricist Javed Akhtar against actor Kangana Ranaut, and asked them to submit a report on January 16.

Akhtar had last month filed a criminal complaint against Ranaut before the Andheri Metropolitan Magistrate, for allegedly making defamatory and baseless comments against him in television interviews. He had sought action against the actor under relevant sections of the law. The magistrate court on Saturday asked Juhu police to investigate the matter and submit their report on January 16, his lawyer Niranjan Mundargi said.

## Court orders release of 2 bros held under anti-conversion law

MORADABAD

A court in Uttar Pradesh's Moradabad district has ordered the release of two brothers who were arrested earlier this month under the anti-conversion law, an official said on Saturday.

The Muslim man and his brother were arrested on December 4 when he visited the registrar's office to record his marriage to a Hindu woman, whose

family filed a complaint.

A video purportedly showed Bajrang Dal activists asking the couple if the woman had given notice to the district magistrate over her intention to change her religion, a requirement under the new ordinance.

The Kanth police had submitted a report that it could not



find evidence of the case after Pinki denied the allegations of forceful conversion by Rashid and his brother Salim, following which the chief judicial magistrate ordered the release of the brothers from jail, prosecuting officer Amar Tiwari said.

The jailor of the district jail, Manish, said they had received the releasing order and the two would be released later in the day.

The recently promulgated Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Ordinance nullifies marriages if they are carried out for the sole purpose of religious conversion. The punishment can extend up to 10 years if a minor is involved.

## Rlys lost 700 frontline workers due to Covid in last 9 months

ANANYA SENGUPTA  
NEW DELHI

THE Railways has lost around 700 frontline workers, among the 30,000 infected with COVID-19 in the last nine months, according to sources who said that most of those who lost their lives were working amid the general public to facilitate the running of trains during the pandemic.

Railway Board Chairman had said that around 30,000 railway employees have been infected with coronavirus so far and hailed their sacrifice for the public during the pandemic.

"It is true that around 30,000 railway employees were infected with COVID. However, the way

that we have developed and provided treatment to our employees, most of them have recovered. However, there have been some unfortunate deaths. Railway has opened COVID care centres and COVID care facilities in every zone and division and we have taken care of each one of our employees.

"In the beginning we had dedicated 50 hospitals for COVID care now there are 74 such hospitals," Yadav had said on Friday.

Sources on Saturday said that the death toll is around 700.

"Most of the 700 employees who died due to coronavirus were all who were involved in direct interaction with the general public and most susceptible to the disease. They were frontline workers who

helped the Railways facilitate the movement of migrants and run the special trains. They were on platforms and in areas were catching the infection was most probable. They are like railways' unsung heroes," the source said.

In a reply in Parliament, the Railway Ministry had said no compensation is granted to the families of the railway employees who die during performance of their bona fide duties. The compensation is granted in the form of ex gratia payment as per the guidelines of the Department of Pension and Pensioners Welfare. However, death on account of any disease is not included in these guidelines.

While no breakup of the 30,000

infected is currently available, in a reply to a question on the issue in Parliament in September, the ministry had provided details of 336 deaths among railway employees and 14,714 who were infected.

According to the reply, a maximum of over 2,200 infections were reported by the South Central Railway, followed by 1,323 cases in the Central Railway, 1,307 in the Northern Railway, 1,145 in the Southern Railway and 1,013 cases in the East Central Railway.

India's COVID-19 caseload surpassed the one-crore mark on Saturday, adding 10 lakh cases in nearly a month, while the total number of recoveries surged to 95.50 lakh, according to the Union Health Ministry data.







TDP activists take out a rally demanding the arrest of real culprits involved in Lingala incident, in Pulivendula town on Saturday

# Tension prevails over TDP’s Chalo Pulivendula stir

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
KADAPA

TENSE situation prevailed in Pulivendula on Saturday as police prevented TDP leaders from entering police station as part of Chalo Pulivendula programme called by state Telugu Mahila president Vangalapudi Anitha over the rape and murder of a Dalit woman in Lingala mandal. The TDP leaders reached the police station from R&B guesthouse in the town in a rally demanding justice to the Dalit victim.

They raised slogans against the government for its failure in maintaining law and order and protecting women. TDP activists entered in to heated exchanges with the police after they were prevented by police from entering the police station for submitting a memorandum to the DSP E Srinivasulu. Police said it would not be possible to allow them all in to the office in view of coronavirus prevalence in the town.

However, after half-an-hour

- Led by Telugu Mahila State chief Vangalapudi Anitha, TDP leaders and activists take out a rally to police station
- Police prevent them from entering them into station, but allow after heated arguments
- Anitha alleges that the govt is trying to hush up Dalit woman Nagamma’s rape and murder case as it took place in CM’s constituency

of stand off, police allowed 10 leaders into the station. They submitted a memorandum the DSP demanding arrest of real culprits and repostmortem.

Speaking on the occasion, Telugu Mahila president Anitha alleged that police were trying to shield the real culprit involved in the rape and murder of 45-year-old Dalit woman Nagamma in Peddakudala village of Lingala mandal as the crime took place in Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy’s own constituency lest it may dent his image.

She alleged that police washed of their hands by merely registering a case against two minor boys and sending them to Juvenile home. She questioned if minor boys were really involved in the incident, what was the need for women and villagers attacking Kancharla Gangaraju, 55, of the village. She demanded police to answer as to why they were still keeping Gangaraju in custody and have not yet revealed the post-mortem report till date.

The TDP leaders said if the YSRCP government was sincere in its commitment to protect women, it should initiate stern action against real culprit by ordering repostmortem over the incident.

Police arrested two minors aged 15 and 16 years in the Nagamma murder case and sent them to juvenile home.

TDP leaders B.Tech Ravi, V S Amir Babu, R Venkata Subba Reddy, Gurrappa, Swetha Reddy, Sridevi and others took part in the agitation.

- Minister for Health Alla Nani says the State govt is giving top priority to health and education sector
- 9,700 posts of doctors and other health personnel have been filled to strengthen health services
- Performs ground-breaking ceremony for construction of 200-bed hospital building in Nuzvid

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

THE state government filled 9,700 posts of doctors and other health personnel in order to strengthen the health services in the state. “The government is according to top priority to health and education sectors. An amount of Rs 16,000 crore was sanctioned to medical and health department this financial year,” said health minister Alla Kali Krishna Srinivas (Nani).

Alla Nani along with the Nuzvid MLA Meka Pratap Appa Rao performed ground-breaking ceremony for construction of 200-bed hospital building at a cost of Rs.21.15 crore in Nuzvid



Health Minister Alla Kali Krishna Srinivas interacts with a kidney patient after inaugurating a dialysis centre at Nuzvid in Krishna district on Saturday

on Saturday. Addressing the gathering on the occasion, the minister said about 400 to 500 patients visit the Nuzvid area hospital for the treatment a day. The medical services in the hospital will be improved with the construction of new hospital building with 14 wards.

He said the state government will construct one medical college along with super specialty hospital in each parliamentary constituency in the state adding five multi-specialty service hospitals will be constructed at a cost of Rs 50 to 60 crore in five

ITDA areas in the state.

He said the government had decided to provide medical services to the white ration card holders under Aarogyasri scheme in Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Chennai cities. Referring to Krishna district, he said 640 village clinics will be formed in the district to render medical services to the rural population.

The health minister inaugurated the 20-bed dialysis centre in Nuzvid on the occasion. He spoke to patients and enquired about the services provided at

the hospital. A dialysis patient, Haj Khan, said he was grateful to the government for sanctioning Rs 10,000 pension to patients who needed dialysis.

Nuzvid MLA Meka Pratap Appa Rao, who presided over the meeting, said with the help of donors 20-bed dialysis centre was set up in Nuzvid to treat the kidney patients. Joint collector K Mohan Kumar, district health and medical officer Dr Suhasini and the officials from medical, health, revenue and other departments attended the inauguration.

## AP Chambers hails new Tourism Policy

VIJAYAWADA

DESCRIBING the new Tourism Policy 2020-25 announced by the state government as the ‘best tourism policy’ in the country, the Andhra Pradesh Chamber Of Commerce and Industry Association (AP Chambers) said here on Saturday that the state is clearly way ahead of any other in the incentives and benefits for the tourism sector.

President of AP Chambers K V S Prakash Rao and general secretary Potluri Bhaskara Rao said in a statement that the investors’ first choice will be Andhra Pradesh now with the investor-friendly measures in the new tourism policy. The reduction of lease amount from 2 per cent to 1 per cent, reimbursement of 100 per cent of net SGST for all new tourism projects for a period of five years were great incentives, they said.

## APSRTC to operate 3,607 special services for Sankranti

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

THE Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC) will operate 3,607 special buses for the Sankranti season in the next month. Of the total 3,607 buses, the highest number of 1,251 will be operated from Hyderabad and other Telangana districts to various parts of Andhra Pradesh from January 8 to 13. As many as 433 special buses will be run from Bengaluru to various destinations in the state and 133 special buses from Chennai.

Sankranti is the first and one of the most important festivals for the Telugu people in the year. Lakhs of people hailing from coastal districts settled in Hyderabad, Rangareddy in Telangana, Bengaluru and Chennai will come back to their native places to celebrate the festival in a grand manner.

A total of 1,817 services will be operated from other states to Andhra Pradesh. RTC executive director (op-

- Highest number of 1,251 will be run from Hyderabad and other Telangana districts to various parts of the State from Jan 8 to 13
- RTC ED (operations) Brahmananda Reddy says 201 special buses will be operated from various parts of AP to Vijayawada and 551 buses to Vizag

erations) K S Brahmananda Reddy in a press release on Saturday said 201 special buses will be operated from various parts of AP to Vijayawada and 551 buses to Visakhapatnam. Besides, 1,038 buses will be operated between various destinations. The RTC had operated more than 2,000 buses last year for Sankranti season. Due to Covid pandemic and the agreement reached between the APSRTC and TSRTC on sharing of routes, the number of special buses to be operated from Telangana to Andhra Pradesh may come down this festive season.

# Vizag ACP warns against false propaganda

- Dwaraka ACP Murthy is referring to social media posts alleging that YSRCP activists attacked CI Emanuel Raju during a protests by ruling party cadres against TDP MLA
- Says CI fell down and the YSRCP activists were helping him to steady himself

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VISAKHAPATNAM

DWARKA ACP D V S N Murthy said it was not proper to spread false propaganda against police who were on duty.

On Friday, YSRCP activists staged a protest



Dwarka ACP D V S N Murthy speaking at a press conference on Saturday in Visakhapatnam

at Visakhapatnam East MLA Velagapudi Ramakrishnababu’s residence, to express their ire against the MLAs view on the three-capital move. It may be recalled that during the protest, CI Emanuel Raju, who was on duty, fell down. Immediately, YSRCP activist Ramesh extended

a helping hand to steady himself. However, the ACP said, these scenes were circulated widely on social media presenting as if the YSRCP was manhandling the CI.

Addressing the media here on Saturday, Murthy pointed out that a campaign on social media was launched that YSRCP leaders were attacking the police. Responding to the video forwards, the ACP warned that the police were not working for any political party and hence will not tolerate any false propaganda.

He advised caution against those forwarding such false videos and warned them to refrain from circulating them on the social media. CI P Ramanaiah participated in the conference.

## Covid vaccine can turn people into crocs, says Brazilian Prez

Continued from P1

“If you become superhuman, if a woman starts to grow a beard or if a man starts to speak with an effeminate voice, they will not have anything to do with it,” he said, referring to the drug manufacturers. When launching the immunization campaign on Wednesday, Bolsonaro also said it would be free but not compulsory. But the Supreme Court on Thursday ruled that the vaccine was obligatory, although could not be “forced” on people. That means authorities can fine people for not being vaccinated and ban them from certain public spaces, but not force them to take it.

Brazil has recorded more than 7.1 million cases and almost 185,000 deaths from Covid-19 amongst its 212 million population.

Bolsonaro said that once a vaccine has been certified by Brazil’s regulatory agency Anvisa, “it will be available for everyone that wants it. But me, I won’t get vaccinated.”

“Some people say I’m giving a bad example. But to the imbeciles, to the idiots that say this, I tell them I’ve already caught the virus, I have the antibodies, so why get vaccinated?”

There have been a small number of cases of apparent reinfection although there is no certainty over whether a person can be reinfected or how long immunity lasts. Bolsonaro caught the virus in July but recovered within three weeks.

Brazil is in the middle of a second wave of coronavirus infections. After peaking in June to August cases had been dropping but that changed in November. On Thursday, Brazil surpassed 1,000 daily deaths from covid-19 for the first time since September.

## DEFENCE FORCES READY TO PROTECT INDIA: RAJNATH

Continued from P1

Speaking at the occasion, the Minister took on Pakistan and China for waging proxy wars, for promoting terror and for trying to encroach on Indian land. “India is no longer a weak country and has capacity to give befitting reply to the enemy resorting to any form of aggression,” he said.

“This is new India which will not tolerate any aggression. Though our objective is to resolve any issue through dialogue rather than conflict, we will not resort to any form of aggression and suppression. When the country was passing through difficult times of the Covid-19 pandemic, China displayed its evil intentions at the border. But we proved to them that India is not a weak nation and have given them a strong reply,” Rajnath said. Shifting his focus on Pakistan, Rajnath said that the “country is still waging proxy wars with us despite losing four battles”. The Defence Minister added, “Indian armed forces were fighting a relentless battle against terrorism and they are prepared to wage any kind of war, be it on ground, air and water. Apart from it, there is also another threat in the form of cyberwar and we have to be prepared to face it.” “The Indian Air Force has a glorious history. It has always displayed gallantry and bravery right from the Annexation of Goa in 1961 to the Battle of Longewala in 1971 and to the recent Balakot airstrikes. All these events will be recorded as golden chapters in India’s history,” said the Union Minister. The Union Minister appreciated the services of Indian Air Force and stated that it was doing a commendable job in fighting the enemy and protecting the integrity of the country. The arrival of the Rafale aircraft has reinforced the strength of IAF and enhanced its self-confidence.

The passing out parade is conducted after successful completion of pre-commissioning training of flight cadets of various branches in the Indian Air Force. The Minister conferred the President’s commission to the graduating trainees. The ceremony includes presentation of ‘wings’ and ‘brevets’ to flight cadets, completing flying and navigation training.

First in the Order of Merit was flying officer Aishish Khateri, who was awarded the Chief of the Air Staff Sword of Honour for excellence in overall training by the Defence Minister. The event also had an aerobatic display by the SU-30 aircraft, the famous Surya Kiran Aerobatic Team, Sarang Helicopter Display Team, Pilatus PC-7 trainer and a flypast by formations of PC-7, Kiran and Hawk aircraft. Union Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy and Air Chief Marshal R K S Bhadauria also took part in the combined graduation parade ceremony.

## NO DISSIDENCE IN PARTY, SAYS CONG

Continued from P1

Asserting that there was no dissidence in the Congress, party leader Pawan Bansal, a Sonia Gandhi loyalist, said the meeting was held on a positive note and in a congenial atmosphere with all the leaders expressing their views and suggesting ways to make the party stronger. This was also the first time that Gandhi met Congress leaders in person since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. Former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi and AICC general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra were among those who attended the meeting. “Discussions were held on a positive note at the meeting where leaders talked about how to strengthen the party at all levels. Congress chief Sonia Gandhi said we all are one big family and we all should work to strengthen the party. Rahul Gandhi also talked about strengthening the party,” Bansal told reporters after the meeting.

“There is no dissidence in the Congress party and all are committed to working unitedly to energise the party and fight all those forces which are trying to put upend the idea of India, as enshrined in the Constitution and as articulated by the founding fathers of India’s Constitution,” Bansal said.

Congress leader and former Maharashtra chief minister Prithviraj Chavan said this was the first meeting to discuss ways to strengthen the party and more such meetings would be held. He said ‘chintan shivir’ like those held in the past in Shimla and Panchmarhi would be organised.

Those attended the meeting from among the letter-writers were Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Ghulam Nabi Azad, deputy leader of the party in the upper House Anand Sharma, former chief ministers Bhupinder Singh Hooda and Prithviraj Chavan, and MPs Manish Tewari, Vivek Tankha and Shashi Tharoor.

## Atchanna calls out CM on BC empowerment

- States that BCs are deprived of 16,800 local and civic body posts in AP under the new govt
- Says giving posts of chairpersons and directors of BC corporations which have no powers and funds while cutting down their posts in local bodies is nothing but gross injustice to the communities who constitute 50% of population

AMARAVATI

TDP state president K Atchanna said that having made huge promises at the time of elections, Chief Minister Y S Jaganmohan Reddy started ‘betraying’ the backward classes in all respects after coming to power in Andhra Pradesh.

Atchanna accused the Chief Minister of turning ‘social justice’ upside down in the past 19 months by giving far less nominated and advisor posts to the BCs who constituted more than 50 per cent of the state’s population. Jagan came to power by promising more than

50 per cent reservations for BCs in nominated posts and works but now he was bent on doing gross injustice to these communities.

In a statement here, the TDP leader said that the YSRCP government gave 672 directors’ posts in the BC corporations but they were not given powers or funds. Whereas, by cutting down reservations in the local and civic bodies, the BCs had lost over 16,800 posts in civic and local bodies that had both powers and funds. These posts included zilla parishad chairpersons, mandal parishad chairpersons, mayors, municipal chairpersons, sarpanches, ZPTCs, MPTCs, corporators, councilors, ward members, etc.

Atchanna said that by cutting down local body posts, Jagan Mohan Reddy had distanced the BCs from positions of power out of sheer political considerations. The BCs were not given even 10 per cent of top level posts like advisors to the CM, vice-chancellors and top level nominated posts in the prestigious bodies like the TTD and the APIIC.



# THALAIVAR WELCOME IN MURKY WORLD OF POLITICS

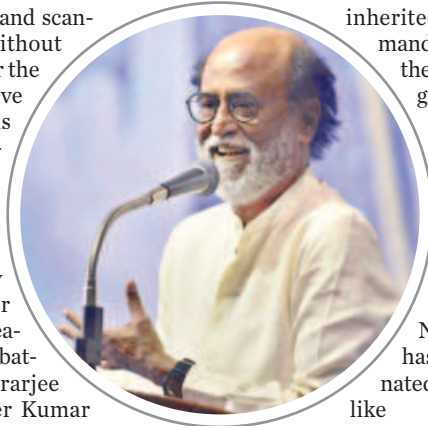
FINALLY, Rajinikanth took the bite after debilitating far too long the perennial question of 'to be or not to be'. His decision to contest all the 234 seats and announcement to formally campaign on 31st December has already created too many bubbles in turbulent political waters of Tamil Nadu. It is definitely going to upset many equations, but the million-dollar question remains whether Thalaivar could hog the spotlight for himself or act as vote cutter to give edge to ruling AIADMK dispensation.

His rags to riches story, from a coolie to superstar, keeps on inspiring the young and the old, his down to earth living standards where he treats all his co-stars and fans with same respect are so endearing in this make-believe world. His spiritual connection and his retreat to Himalayan caves after every movie to be at peace with himself all make Rajinikanth a real human. No one except Rajinikanth has dared to return money to producers and distributors if a film of him doesn't do well. He has lived in a world which is considered cess

pool of sex and scandals but without any taint for the last five decades is commendable.

At 70, his decision to enter politics is hotly debated for his health reasons. It is debatable. If Morarjee Desai, Inder Kumar Gujral, Ronald Reagan, Donald Trump and Joe Biden could assume office after 70, why can't Rajinikanth do the same? Question is not whether he can be an NTR or an MGR but what kind of politics he wants to represent in the muddy waters of TN. People had seen enough of political shenanigans of both AIADMK and DMK and want change from the hackneyed and corrupt ways.

BJP's piggy ride with AIADMK and freshly recruited Khushbu will find it tough as star appeal of Rajinikanth far exceeds the Khushbu factor. Stalin, who has



inherited political mandate of his father and is still a greenhorn will find road to the Chief Minister's office is all paved with hurdles and obstacles.

Tamil Nadu politics has been dominated by film stars like MGR,

Karunanidhi and Jayalalithaa who together ruled almost 44 years and the rest of 9 CMs spent 24 years in the office speaks volumes. This shows how popular film stars are with the masses. Rajinikanth's remarks against Periyar created lot of noises and it was sure to create bubbles in Dravidian stronghold. Either remarks were well thought out or plain act of putting foot in the mouth, but it sure signalled that Rajinikanth stood by it and even the High Court dismissed the case against him. He speaks what he believes not what is po-

## Long wait for vaccine likely to end soon

NOT one, not two... AstraZeneca has agreed to give 300 crore vaccines in one go. Vaccine trials around the world have been suspended due to a serious illness of a young British man who was vaccinated as part of trials. The New York Times reports that a young man in Britain has burns on both sides of his spine. It also seems to increase the risk of vertebral damage. It is unknown at this time what caused the infection, but whether it was caused by a vaccine or some other cause. AstraZeneca has not yet made an official statement in this regard.

Some side effects still occur in those who have undergone corona vaccine trials, but doctors have not yet commented on the side effects of the corona vaccine. Moderna Pharma Company has already completed the third phase of trials. Pfizer on the other hand has completed the third phase of trials and released the results. In addition, Oxford University has also released the results of the second phase trials. Experts say that as part of these three vaccine trials, they have been shown to be effective in improving immunity. However, there are many drawbacks to this. Vaccine trials are discontinued if any disturbances occur in the body as part of any vaccine trials. Of the three vaccines currently available, Moderna, Pfizer, and the vaccine are reported to have the most side effects. However, scientists say that the corona vaccine is expected to be available in the market by the end of this year. Those vaccinated under the third phase trials in the UK ranged in age from five to 70 years. With this comes the news that the impact on others is also being considered. Scientists say this is not the case with the vaccine and that trials will begin soon.

On the other hand, the news has raised concerns among those raising hopes on vaccine. Doubts began to arise as to where the vaccine would be further delayed. Pfizer has not yet commented on the news. Company representatives declined to answer the question of whether there were any challenges in the preparation. Pfizer partner BioNTech chief executive Ugur Sahin has said that they will provide 10 crore doses in the first phase. Oxford University, on the other hand, is a key evolution of the vaccine that AstraZeneca is jointly developing. The vaccine is set to become available in the new year. This was revealed by the Serum Institute CEO Adhar Poonavalla. Serum is known to have conducted vaccine trials at Oxford University in India. Despite some intermittent interruptions, trials of the vaccine are progressing rapidly. Currently, the most critical third-stage trials of the vaccine are nearing completion. The Covid-19 vaccine will be available in India by January 2021, Poonavalla said.

Dr N Khaleel,  
KPHB Colony, Hyderabad

## Time has come to welcome a brighter year

IN less than a fortnight, we are bidding farewell to the year 2020 that proved to be most horrific in the history of this millennium. We are heading towards a new year filled with hopes to put an end to the year that made our lives so miserable. We never experienced such a critical situation in our life any time before. The year 2020 has been a black year all through and we have led dark days. In this year, especially as never before, our lives were filled with unusual fear and confusion leading to a great deal of struggle in every walk of life.

It was for the first time we came across new words like "coronavirus" and "Covid-19". We had to abruptly come up with a new development during the 1st quarter of this year, wherein the outbreak of the previously unheard phenomenon had started inflicting people by causing mild to severe symptoms of cold, cough and fever in a few people initially and thereupon swiftly started spreading to many in the later course.

As there is apparently no possible cure to this disease so far, people had to die every day in large numbers as has been reported in the media. It has been an awful experience to watch the reportage on TV that projected the number of positive cases rising up each day with a heavy toll of deaths on a parallel scale. The year 2020 which we are abandoning is exceptionally the "corona year" that has left diabolical experiences in our lives. Everyone lived with fear by restricting their movements and meetings with others.

This kind of situation has caused a

lot of inconvenience and has left freedom of social movement and normal activity totally curtailed. Also, the economic activity has come to a standstill causing desperation to the people and the government. The lives of all people were nonetheless restricted to social distancing. Every one's attention was drawn towards observing health awareness and health protocol as prescribed medically by the doctors under the supervision of WHO.

"Stay home, stay safe" has become a popular slogan which one ought not to ignore as a rule, in order to be on the safer side. Also maintaining social distance has been the norm that needed to be followed scrupulously by one and all. Further, sanitisation has been a must practice invariably on all these days. So also, quarantine has been a compulsory duty to undergo in case of those affected by corona. The novel coronavirus initially originated in the Wuhan city of China in October, 2019 has since been prevalent not at a single place, region, city or country but it has come to stay as a worldwide phenomenon by wiping out not mere thousands but lakhs of lives all through and all across since its outbreak.

In India, while some State governments did extremely well to keep the pandemic under control, some States have failed to live up to the expectations in such a task of playing their role. However, the Centre under the leadership of Modi has kept no stone unturned to set the house in order by dispensing all necessary care and interest while passing through different spells of lockdown and unlock after the corona wave hit the nation.



After the end of the year 2020, when we enter into the new year 2021, all our hopes are pinned on the invention and use of a vaccine to relieve us from all our trouble and torment we have undergone as a result of "corona year" 2020. Fortunately, we have at our disposal several candidates which are on active trials globally. These vaccines developed so far and are in final stages of trials include Pfizer, Biotech Moderna, Covaxine, Astrazeneca, Sputnik-V etc. which are likely to come to our rescue and save our future lives from the monstrous effects of coronavirus.

During the year 2020, the entire human activity has come to a grinding halt. It is still uncertain whether the corona wave would further continue to haunt / torment us also in the year 2021 or would subside on its own to give us relief. A new ray of hope for the suffering humanity in the new year 2021 is expected to dawn in the form of a life-saving and a clinically approved vaccine that can work out at any cost.

Hence, a transition from the year 2020 to 2021 seems to be highly hopeful to dispel darkness and bring in brightness eventually. 2021 is the year to celebrate for the arrival of vaccines to combat Covid-19 that is affecting humanity.

Bh Indu Sekhar, Hyderabad

## No room for actors in TN politics

THIS is with reference to your editorial 'At 70, can Rajinikanth pull off an NTR?' (Dec 17). The editorial brings to fore the reality that Rajinikanth is likely to face in the wake of his decision to join politics and float his own political party in Tamil Nadu. He will surely be a late entrant - age vice. It must be said in the same breath that either it is Kamal Haasan or Rajinikanth, the new generation of film actors do not possess the charisma as MGR and NTR to take the masses along, the massive and impressive fanfare and gatherings notwithstanding.

Rajini's new political party known as Makkal Sevai Katchi with its party symbol of an auto rikshaw may seem impressive with their cinematic advantage to his fans; but the times have changed for the electorate to be swayed by such effects. While the erstwhile leaders from the class, who made it to the top echelon of political leadership, may not seem a reality in the present situation in Tamil Nadu. The fact that J Jayalalithaa reigned supreme for six times as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu was in a way the mesmerising political magic of MGR on the electorate.

It will be a bad idea for Rajini to join hands with Kamal Haasan as the latter is still clueless about the plan of action in Tamil Nadu, and is needlessly antagonising the Centre by irrational and unwarranted comments, which raise a question mark on Kamal's intellectual depth and political maturity to tackle things since there is need for inclusiveness in terms of national level. Kamal already began commenting amateurishly about the Hindi imposition in Tamil Nadu that holds no water with the present thinking of people of the State.

K V Raghuram, Wayanad

## Farmers agitation causes huge loss to exchequer

THE Supreme Court gave a prudent order in resolving the ongoing farmers' agitation mainly by BKU from Punjab, who have been blocking the routes to Delhi on the highway, through talks and by forming a panel consisting of those farmers unions who are in support of the farm bills. The agitation is causing thousands of crores in loss to the exchequer, which is entering the third week already. Unless the crisis is resolved, there is no telling for how long the protests will continue to make the life miserable for the commuters

and other retail vegetable vendors and other products in procuring their supply from Punjab and Haryana, to be sold in other parts of the national capital. It remains to be seen if the BKU will relent to the government's proposal of the farm bills as several amendments have already been incorporated into them. But the agitating farmers want nothing less than repeal of the three farm laws, without having a clear notion or idea about what exactly is their demand or expectation. It is time for the Centre to insulate all connections that the vested interests have made in the present agitation, and identify those elements involved in it, so that some clarity emerges in ending the blockade, that is undoubtedly assuming sadistic proportions.

K R Parvathy, Mysuru

## Healthcare system needs some booster shots



to be strengthened and same is needed to extended in the rural areas. The public health foundation of India is a positive step for it strengthen training, research and policy development in public health. Public health requires a road map to better health for all that can be used by States, communities, professional organisations like IMA and all other sectors. School health, mental health, referral system and urban health remain a weak link in India's health system.

Revival of rural health infrastructure, elementary education and nutrition programme along with integrated child development services (ICDS) would certainly contribute towards public health. Population stabilisation, reducing the impact of climate and disaster on health are equally important in

improving public health. Community participation with effective addressing of public health challenges in cooperation with private sectors, civil societies, health workers, communities, other national and international health agencies play a vital role in public health system. Challenges that threaten the health of the population, it becomes important that the government and community should rise to face the challenges. Social determinants of health and economic issues must be dealt with which will be valuable service to the concept of right to health. Since Indian Medical Association (IMA) deals with the healthcare system, it becomes imperative social responsibility to help, participate in promotion of public health.

Dr B N Rao, president elect,  
Telangana State IMA

## Placate or prostrate, Modi can't win public trust

IT is strange that the Prime Minister begs the farmers to trust him. It is true that people have not given power to the BJP because of its ideology or track record or in recognition of its extraordinary efficiency in addressing the crippling issues of the vast majority of the people of the country. It was purely because the entire country was upset with the corrupt regime of the Congress and the inability of the Opposition to project a leader who could lead a team and tackle the affairs to the satisfaction of all. So, it is merely an accident that the BJP could come to power. Right from the time it assumed office, the party is openly exhibiting its commitment to the rich and hostility to the poor and the toiling mass.

The first thing it did was to do away with the Wealth Tax indicating its agenda. Then without any proper planning, it came with demonetisation which took away the lives of more than hundred, stripped off the employment of millions, ensured the closure of thousands of Medium and Small Scale Industries hitting the economy of the country as well as the livelihood of the have nots. None of the reasons the Prime Minister

quoted could be proved at the end. Similar unplanned major imposition was introduction of GST. The council is still not in a position to make it a smooth affair. The experience is that some increase in the tax collection is boasted of but still it is not able to establish as a fool proof system. Till now what is to be taxed to what extent is not clear.

When condom is tax free life-saving and essential medicines and medical equipment are taxed, which amounts to taxing the people for having fallen sick, which is neither an affair of luxury nor a wanton act of the people. The Prime Minister announced with a massive publicity his government's health policy, which has ultimately turned out to be a big bonanza for the corporate health care institutions and insurance companies. The education policy the Prime Minister had announced exposed the hidden agenda of his party than addressing the real issues involved in the system. The policy paves way for more private players taking the centre stage than equipping the government institutions in the field. When the labour force in the country is



expecting provisions for their better livelihood, the Prime Minister came with the shocking Codes that removed 44 Labour Acts and placed 4 Labour codes in its place.

Instead of healing the wounds, amputation was done leaving the entire toiling mass as enslaved lot. In the name of power reforms, the small farmers are left without even the small benefits and supports they were deriving from the government. The subject being a State related one implementation is ensured by coercion. States would not be entitled to avail overdraft facility in case of not implementing the reforms. A clear example is AP, a State plunged in funds crunch due to

creation of a new State. On one hand, financial assistance assured during bifurcation is not extended and on the other, the State is coerced to implementation of power reforms. The State, naturally, had to succumb to pressure.

Though information about Covid-19 had been flashed much earlier the Prime Minister did not take it seriously and assured the nation to clear of the virus in 21 days with the mere lockdown programme without any other arrangements for meeting the challenge. The result is more than a lakh had to die, millions had to face the wrath of the pandemic, crores left in the lurch without livelihood provisions. His characteristic un-

planned announcement of lockdown plunged crores of migrant labours in untold hardships with historic and inevitable long march with their families to native places, nil wage or shelter, no transportation till the court intervened, livelihood issues etc. The media has exposed all the pre-planned arrangements like acquiring lands, building huge godowns, registering companies to deal with acquiring, stocking and trading farm products by a few corporate managements. The Prime Minister stands again exposed with his farm reforms as they are brought to help the corporate managements rather than the small and medium farmers. The logics put forth to convince the agitating farmers are just theories but in practice it is believed to be an effort to monopolise entire farming sector by a few corporates. When the government is seeking funds from all source including from workers to contribute days wage, Prime Minister goes ahead with Central Vista project with a huge expenditure for a luxurious home for the Prime Minister and a new Parliament, buying most modern planes for his foreign tours, buying arms etc.,

which cannot be a priority at all for any government in a situation like the one the country is facing. When the leading economists are suggesting the government to push cash in the hands of the working class and the poor to spend and revive the deplorably dwindling economy, the Prime Minister still pushes huge funds in production sector leaving the market to dry further. When the lives of 20 soldiers were lost in the border tussle with China, the Prime Minister says, 'No intrusion, no aggression and not an inch is lost', which was proved to be totally false.

With all such activities that are hostile to the public but designed to benefit the favoured few, the Prime Minister requesting the farmers to trust him is just a futile attempt. In none of the elections held recently, his party could produce better results indicating the withering trust of the people. It is time to change policies to be people-oriented instead of corporate-oriented, which would enhance people's trust on him. Because it is the work, people are looking for not mere words.

A G Rajmohan,  
H L C Colony, Anantapur



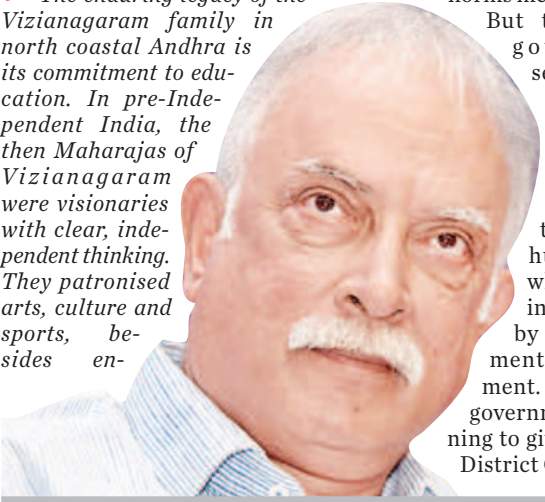
# ‘MANSAS trust will not lose sanctity’

KOPPARA GANDHI

The Raja Saheb of Vizianagaram, PVG Raju, had replaced the motto of his estate ‘ever loyal’ with “true to one’s own self”, it is said. Do you think this noble thought lies shattered now because one does not seem to be true to one’s own self?

The motive and ideology of our Samsthanam established by my forefathers still remain with us. Our aim is to support the society in education and cultural aspect. But some outsiders have suddenly appeared on the screen and are trying to shatter the glory of the Maharajah Alak Narayana society for arts and science (MANSAS) Trust, but I don’t think that they would succeed in this aspect.

● The enduring legacy of the Vizianagaram family in north coastal Andhra is its commitment to education. In pre-Independent India, the then Maharajas of Vizianagaram were visionaries with clear, independent thinking. They patronised arts, culture and sports, besides en-



The scion of Pusapati royal family, Ashok Gajapathi Raju decided to stay back in ruling class like his father and brother even after kingdoms crumbled after Independence. Being a member of a family known for its philanthropic activities, Raju worked as a Union Minister and chairman of Maharaja Alak Narayana Society for Arts and Science Samsthanam (MANSAS). Disturbed over the trust being targeted by the State government, Raju opens up his heart to The Hans India. Excerpts:

couraging social reform. Vizianagaram was also known as Vidyanagaram. Do you think that legacy is in jeopardy now?

We gave acres of lands to maintain hostels, choultries (Satrams) and temples in this State. The MANSAS trust has its by-laws and we never violate the norms mentioned in it.

But the present government seems to be aiming on the valuable lands and planning to grab it. The trust has huge lands, which are being monitored by the Endowments Department. But now the government is planning to give powers to District Collectors to

allot Endowment lands to private parties on lease or rent. If it happens, all the lands would go into the hands of realtors. This would be a major mistake, the government would be committing.

● From the beginning, MANSAS has adapted to the change and pace of moving times, yet it has kept its core values intact. The educational institutions endeavour to foster the spirit of girl child and woman empowerment through education. Alleviating socio-economic conditions and providing excellence in education with a sound value system is what it strives for. Do you think the latest developments derail this commitment and if so why?

The present rulers, who have taken oath on Indian Constitution are intentionally violating the norms to target us. As you know that the government has withdrawn the mandatory of personal police enquiry on trust

board members to be appointed in nine rich temples in Andhra Pradesh. It means the government can induct any person from other religions into the trust boards of Hindu temples including Tirupati, Annaram, Simhachalam, Srisailem and others. This is a major mistake being committed by the government. Can the government take such decision regarding other religions? Will they agree? But the government is intentionally targeting us and trying to weaken our trust.

● The present controversy seems to have less to do with service aspect and more to do with real estate. How do you view this? Are you afraid that this would affect the cherished goals in future?

Yes, their goal is to grab the valuable lands and make them into money making machines. But we are confident over judicial sector in the country. We are battling in court of justice.



Even the Supreme Court also delivered its judgement on Padmahabhaswamy Temple in Kerala and stated that hereditary trustees won’t be eliminated, and they should be continued. They can’t be separated from the temples. They would have all rights and powers with them. So, we are hoping the same judgement here. We believe that constitution and law would be with us.

● The MANSAS Trust seems to be losing the trust of the people due to the perceived politicisation. Where would things head if this continues?

No, No, the MANSAS trust will not lose its sanctity. But the educational institutions may be affected due to these conspira-

cies. The colleges have enough funds and deposits, but the present governing body is simply defaming the reputation of these organisations.

● Do you think that the role of outsiders is considerable in the present controversy and it should not have been allowed to happen?

Yes exactly. Only the outsiders are causing for all these unrests. A person, who changes her father frequently (in social media) is creating the nonsense here. If she would have been visited Vizianagaram in the past and resided here with us, she would have been understood the culture and greatness of the MANSAS trust.

tate... How painful is the progress or decline?

Yes, it’s painful for us, if they target us, they can hit us in another way but disfiguring the educational institutions and damaging the trust is not good. If they want, they can kill us, but they should not damage the educational institutions. What is wrong with us? Is it a crime to run colleges and provide education for common man?

● How are you going to defend all these unwanted developments happening for the past few months?

We believe that the law and justice would be with us. Actually, the entire Andhra Pradesh has mostly 230 hereditary trustees in various temples. But why the government is targeting us? What is wrong with us? All the temples are being supported by the devotees, they are not my own properties and we never involve into those assets. Our forefathers gave 370 acres of land in Srikakulam to run a Satram with 450 students. These students are being fed with the income getting from those 370 acres of land. But if the District Collector allot those lands to some other companies and firms, what would be the future of these children here? Who will feed them? The government should consider all these consequences and keep out of it.

## Scientists discover eye exam for early diagnosis of Parkinson’s

A simple eye exam combined with powerful artificial intelligence (AI) machine learning technology that could provide early detection of Parkinson’s disease, suggest the findings of a recent study. The research is being presented at the annual meeting of the Radiological Society of North America (RSNA).

Parkinson’s disease is a progressive disorder of the central nervous system that affects millions of people worldwide. Diagnosis is typically based on symptoms like tremors, muscle stiffness, and impaired balance - an approach that has significant limitations. “The issue with that method is that patients usually develop symptoms only after prolonged progression with a significant injury to dopamine brain neurons,” said study lead author Maximilian Diaz, a biomedical engineering PhD student at the University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida. “This means that we are diagnosing patients late in the disease process.”

Disease progression is characterised by

nerve cell decay that thins the walls of the retina, the layer of tissue that lines the back of the eyeball. The disease also affects the microscopic blood vessels, or microvasculature, of the retina. These characteristics present an opportunity to leverage the power of AI to examine images of the eyes for signs of Parkinson’s disease.

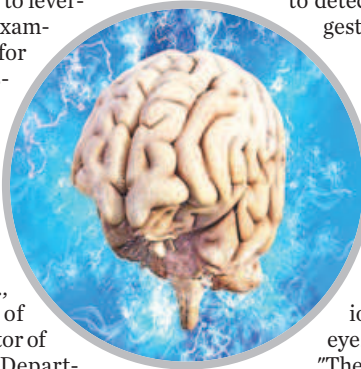
For the new study, Diaz collaborated with graduate student Jianqiao Tian and University of Florida neurologist Adolfo Ramirez-Zamora, M.D., under the direction of Ruogu Fang, PhD, director of the J. Crayton Pruitt Department of Biomedical Engineering’s Smart Medical Informatics Learning and Evaluation Lab (SMILE).

The researchers deployed a type of AI

called support vector machine (SVM) learning that has been around since 1989. Using pictures of the back of the eye from both patients with Parkinson’s disease and control participants, they trained the SVM to detect signs on the images suggestive of disease.

The results indicated that the machine learning networks can classify Parkinson’s disease based on retina vasculature, with the key features being smaller blood vessels. The proposed methods further support the idea that changes in brain physiology can be observed in the eye.

“The single most important finding of this study was that a brain disease was diagnosed with a basic picture of the eye,” Diaz said. “This is very different from traditional approaches where to find a



problem with the brain you look at different brain images.”

Diaz noted that those traditional imaging approaches with MRI, CT, and nuclear medicine techniques can be very costly. In contrast, the new approach uses basic photography with equipment commonly available in eye clinics to get an image. The images can even be captured by a smartphone with a special lens.

“It’s just a simple picture of the eye, you can have it done in less than a minute, and the cost of the equipment is much less than a CT or MRI machine,” Diaz said. “If we can make this a yearly screening, then the hope is that we can catch more cases sooner, which can help us better understand the disease and find a cure or a way to slow the progression.”

The approach may also have applications in identifying other diseases that affect the structure of the brain, such as Alzheimer’s disease and multiple sclerosis, Diaz said. (ANI)



## Click, then drive: Last-minute US holiday shoppers do curbside pickup

MELISSA FARES

MANY US holiday shoppers, wary of entering stores during the latest surge of Covid-19, went from their computers, phones and other devices to their cars on the Saturday before Christmas to make last-minute gift purchases and then drive to the store to pick them up. Super Saturday is traditionally the busiest day of the year for holiday purchases, and this year online retail has been extra busy, and high-priority vaccine shipments have many Americans fretting that deliveries could be delayed this week. “The lines have gone from waiting to get inside the store to waiting to get your product brought outside the store,” said Marshal Cohen, chief retail industry adviser at NPD Group. “That’s what you’ll see as the day goes on.”

US retailers are expected to ring in record sales, with over 150 million American shoppers slated to buy holiday gifts Saturday online or in-store, up by more than 2 million from last year, the National Retail Federation said on Thursday.

As coronavirus cases spike and some states enforce stricter mandates, most last-minute holiday shoppers will go online, the trade group said.

At King of Prussia Mall, the largest retail shopping space in the United States and owned by Simon Property Group, “It’s absolutely dead,” said Bill Park, a partner at DeLoitte & Touche LP, at around 10:00 a.m. EST.

“Ninety percent of stores aren’t even open yet, and foot traffic is practically non-existent.

However, stores including Walmart and Target were by no means empty early on Saturday, according to three retail analysts making checks in Miami, New York and Chicago. Curbside business

was bustling, the analysts said, and masked shoppers who ventured outside were efficient in making their purchases of groceries and hot products, such as TVs and games consoles.

Many retailers have clocked record digital sales during the pandemic, overwhelming traditional shipping companies including FedEx, UPS and the USPS. Vaccine shipments are a priority now, and this week, delivery drivers in the Northeast have had to contend with a major snowstorm. Retail experts said the well-publicized shipping crunch has many consumers in the driver’s seat themselves. “Because so many people are shopping online and can’t rely on delivery ... people are going to get nervous and do more buy-online-pick-up-in-store or curbside,” said Amy Shulman, global head of professional services at retail data firm Sensormatic Solutions.

Department stores like Nordstrom and J.C. Penney are dangling perks such as free gift wrapping and extra discounts for those who “click and collect” online orders.

“The goal, even with pickup, is to get you in the store,” NPD’s Cohen said. “If I can get you in, I have a chance.” Some say this approach is at odds with messages from public health officials urging people to stay home and stop the spread of Covid-19. Retailers have responded by spelling out the safety measures they have taken.

Craig Johnson, president at retail consultancy Customer Growth Partners, expects people to spend \$36.1 billion this year on Super Saturday, up from \$34.4 billion last year. This estimate includes in-store and online purchases but excludes sales at gas stations, restaurants and automobile dealers.

### Indian NGO distributes free food to needy in Myanmar

An NGO formed by the Indian community is providing free food and medical aid to those affected due to the COVID-19 pandemic in Yangon and other parts of Myanmar. Since the outbreak of COVID-19 many people, especially daily wage earners, have lost their jobs and businesses in Myanmar.

Dr Ram Niwas, convener of Hindu-Buddhist Samanvaya, South-Eastern Countries and other members of the Indian community formed ‘COVID-19 Hindu families Relief Group’ to help the needy. “We have been in social service since the outbreak of COVID-19. We created an organisation called COVID-19 Hindu families Relief Group and have been providing medical aid and food items including grocery to the needy across the country”, Dr Ram Niwas said.

“Besides helping the Indians living in Myanmar, we are even helping the locals who are in the need during this crisis,” he added.

In Yangon, there are 42 townships where quarantine centres have been established. Stressing that daily wage earners are badly affected due to the COVID-19-induced lockdown, Niwas said: “We are providing Indian food at these quarantine centres during the evening time. We have distributed some 32,000 food packets to date. We have even provided grocery items to some 1,500 families.” There are over 114,000 coronavirus cases recorded in Myanmar. Yangon region is worst hit with over 40,000 cases and 1,166 deaths. (ANI)

## ALOFT, ALOFT IN THE BLUE SKY!



Spectators watching an IAF sky show (inset) during the Combined Graduation Parade to mark the successful completion of training of Flight Cadets of various branches of IAF at Air Force Academy, Dundigal, on the outskirts of Hyderabad on Saturday. Photo: Ch Prabhud Das

## Ghalib: ‘A Wilderness at My Doorstep’ opens a new window

Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib was born in Agra in the closing years of the 18th century. A precocious child, he began composing verses at an early age and gained recognition while he was still very young.

He wrote in both Urdu and Persian and was also a great prose stylist. He was a careful, even strict, editor of his work who took to publishing long before his peers. His predilection for writing difficult, obscure poetry peppered with complex metaphors produced a unique commentary tradition that did not extend beyond his work.

Commentaries on his current Urdu ‘divan’ collection of poetry have produced a field of critical

writing that eventually lead to the crafting of a critical lens with which to view the classical ghazal. The 19th century was the height of European colonialism. British colonialism in India produced definitive changes in the ways literature was produced, circulated and consumed.

Ghalib responded to the cultural challenge with a far-sightedness that was commendable. His imagination sought engagement with a wider community of readers. His deliberate switch to composing in Persian shows that he wanted his works to reach beyond political boundaries and linguistic barriers.

Ghalib’s poetic trajectory begins from Urdu, then moves to com-

posing almost entirely in Persian and finally swings back to Urdu. It is nearly as complex as his poetry. However, his poetic output in Persian is far more than what he wrote in Urdu. More important is that he gave precedence to Persian over Urdu. Ghalib’s voice presents us with a double bind, a linguistic paradox.

Exploring his life, works and philosophy, ‘Ghalib: A Wilderness at My Doorstep’ (Penguin) by Mehr Afshan Farooqi, an authoritative critical biography of the poet, opens a window to many shades of India and the subcontinent’s cultural and literary tradition.

Mehr Afshan Farooqi grew up in Allahabad. A multiple gold

medallist from Allahabad University, Farooqi is currently associate professor of Urdu and South Asian Literature at the University of Virginia. Her research publications address complex issues of Urdu literary culture particularly in the context of modernity. She is interested in bilingualism and how it impacts creativity.

A well-known translator, anthologist and columnist, she is the editor of the pioneering two-volume work ‘The Oxford India Anthology of Modern Urdu Literature’. More recently, she has published the acclaimed monograph ‘The Postcolonial Mind: Urdu Culture, Islam and Modernity in Muhammad Hasan Askari’.





# Internet of Behaviours, the next big tech trend?

It can potentially become a great marketing and sales tool



Suresh Reddy

Picture this, it's non-Covid time, and you are in a mall, just out to do window shopping. You are going from an electronics store to cosmetics to a book store to crockery and finally, end up buying from a shoe store. And then you meet your spouse at the food court and go to the movies together. What if someone was non-intrusively watching what you were doing and gave you a discount coupon for both of you for the right movie. That would surely shock you. Data is being collected by a web of internet-connected devices in the modern malls and public places. The techie jargon for this is IoT (Internet of things). The number of IoT devices across industrial and retail applications have skyrocketed across the world. They have been spewing out data at amazing rates and led to a data-overload situation.

The expectation now is that we are entering the next phase of this initiative where the data coming out from the IoT devices needs to be intelligently processed. In keeping up with the tradition of having smart acronyms, this new and upcoming area is christened as Internet of Behaviours (IoB). Gartner recently listed IoT amongst top tech trends in 2021.

Coined back in 2012 by University of Helsinki Psychology Professor Gote Nyman, the 'Internet of Behaviour' or IoB, builds on IoT's capabilities to produce detailed use and behavioural data that can be collected and crunched to produce a detailed picture of the customer. It is an amalgamation of



**IoB can be a very useful Covid surveillance tool. For instance, say a boarding gate that can automatically close to anyone with a high temperature**

Artificial Intelligence, data analytics and behavioural science in trying to make sense of human behaviour through data mining. Devices related to location, facial recognition and more can essentially act as guides to mapping customer behaviour. In terms of value, IoB can potentially become a great marketing and sales tool for businesses and organisations across the world. In addition to giving insights about customer behaviours on and offline, it allows the marketers to predict future behaviour.

The data gathered from the IoT will be the foundation upon which companies will be able to plan their development, marketing and sales efforts. This can be a very useful Covid surveillance tool. For instance, say a boarding gate that can automatically close to anyone with

a high temperature. Covid has created a scenario, where public-good trumps private interests, accelerating the acceptability of such technology.

The dirty question to pop up here is: Is it ethical to do this and how does policing work concerning sharing and utilisation of personal information. Marketers will be able to build a profile with a lot more than what you like on Instagram or Twitter. Their data sources will expand to wearables, voice-assistants, beacons, home and car cameras, to name a few.

## Future of IoB

Since the IoB is an extension of the IoT, the pair will grow simultaneously. Estimates say that by 2023 individual activities of 40 per cent of the global population will be digitally trackable.

The writing on the wall is fairly clear. In a few years, IoB will become the intelligence and wisdom in the digital ecosystem, which monitors and aids human behaviours. We have to watch and see how businesses will use this technology sensibly and how governments will regulate them from abusing the privacy and security of ordinary citizens.

*(The author is Chairman and CEO of Hyderabad-based Brightcom Group)*

# 'TReDS will support more MSMEs, corporates'

The electronic platform facilitates financing, discounting of trade receivables for MSMEs

KUMUD DAS

**How does the TReDS platform function?**

TReDS brings together suppliers, corporate buyers and financiers. The platform allows either sellers or buyers to initiate the transaction and upload invoices. Invoices move to the bidding queue, post-approval from the interest-bearing party. Once the lowest bid is accepted, the seller receives funds against the invoices factored within 48 hours of acceptance. The buyer's account is debited on the repayment date and the financier's account is credited. The whole process is automated here with the help of the National Automated Clearing House (NACH) mandates.

**What has been the impact of Covid-19 on RXIL?**

One of the major reasons for the introduction of TReDS was to ensure timely payments to MSMEs, allowing them to access credit at an interest rate which would be offered to their buyers. The other reason for bringing TReDS was formalisation, to provide MSMEs an alternate source of creating credit history. If you see the journey since the lockdown period, the transactions on RXIL's platform had seen a dip to Rs 60 crore but started picking up from June. It has surpassed the pre-Covid levels and has consistently crossed Rs 500 crore in the last three months. This month, we have reached about Rs 600 crores. There has been a month-on-month growth of Rs 100 crore in the throughput since the lockdown. RXIL has settled trade receivables worth Rs 3,000 crore so far this financial year and aims at closing in on Rs 6,000 crore. The lockdown resulted in RXIL seeing a tremendous increase in the number of MSMEs requesting to be onboarded to the TReDS platform. On an average, we have received about 2,000 requests every month

Trade Receivables and Discounting System (TReDS), an electronic platform for facilitating the financing and discounting of trade receivables of MSMEs through multiple financiers, has proven its worth during Covid-19 by facilitating capital infusion for MSMEs through clearing invoices within 48 hours without any recourse. "Receivables Exchange of India (RXIL) is India's first TReDS platform, backed by leading institutions of the country counting NSE, SIDBI SBI, ICICI Bank and YES Bank as its shareholders. It aims at settling trade receivables worth Rs 6,000 crore for this financial year," Ketan Gaikwad, RXIL's Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, tells *Bizz Buzz* in an exclusive interview



Ketan Gaikwad

since the lockdown began. Considering that we have digitised the onboarding process, it is now easier for MSMEs to avail the benefits of TReDS if their corporate buyers are registered on the platform.

**What are the key factors that have contributed to this jump in transactions?**

"There are multiple factors to consider here, but the three main factors are -- The change in the mindset of CPSEs and corporate buyers towards TReDS. We have observed that corporates who had previously registered on the platform as a formality have started transacting since the lockdown began. Corporates that were earlier shying away from the platform have now realised the importance of supporting the MSME ecosystem. It is only when the ecosystem is supported, with the marginalised participant taken care of, only then the overall economic growth can be ensured. Second, the registrations by MSMEs and corporates have jumped in the last two quarters as the registration fee was waived off under SIDBI's Swavalamban Crisis Response Fund (SCRF). Thirdly, complete transparency is one of the key factors for the platform's success. The government

has complete information access - total invoices uploaded for consideration, invoices accepted and invoices due for clearance."

**What could improve further for TReDS to reach its total financing potential?**

Between the three companies, we have a combined potential of 1 lakh crore. More companies, particularly PSUs and CPSEs, need to start transacting on the platform. The MSME Ministry is playing an active role to support TReDS by asking them to onboard the platform. Collectively, while 160 PSUs would have registered between the three TReDS platforms, only 15-odd PSUs are transacting on the platform. PSUs and large corporates utilising the platform have immensely benefited in terms of savings in the form of cost of funds, which can go as low as 4.9 per cent per annum, as opposed to paying 12-13 per cent a year, through traditional debt-funding instruments like OD.

**How MSMEs have benefitted through the TReDS platform?**

TReDS has so far processed over 24,000 crore worth of invoices that have helped over 14,000 MSMEs with better liquidity and access to

funds on favorable terms since 2017. RXIL alone fulfilled over 237,620 invoices amounting to Rs 6165 crore. This is a step towards bringing the dream of Atmanirbhar MSMEs into reality by giving them the liquidity from their own invoices. Considering that we have digitised the onboarding process, it is now easier for MSMEs to avail the benefits of TReDS if their corporate buyers are registered on the platform. TReDS as a solution has never been more appropriate to not just help MSMEs mitigate and tide over these uncertain times but also enable large corporates to honour their payments to MSME suppliers.

RXIL's target is to onboard 6,000 to 7,000 MSMEs, out of which 3,500 have already registered so far. We urge MSMEs and corporates to register with TReDS and avail the benefits of quick and easy financing. TReDS offers a win-win proposition to large corporate buyers and their MSME sellers. The MSMEs get their dues paid on time while the corporates can enjoy an extended credit period. While 14,000 MSMEs have benefitted so far, there is still a huge scope for TReDS to reach out to many more such enterprises across the length and breadth of the country.

# Sleep, eat, net, repeat: Net addiction in co-Covid world

Many people today are not able to function a few hours without social media



Viiveck Verma

Just a few days ago, Mumbai lost power for 15 hours and the whole city came to a halt. I spoke to a team member of mine, asking them what the situation was like at home. I was expecting concern, of course, but I had not thought I would hear such distress in their voice. "Life has come to a standstill! To be honest, I feel paralysed. I don't know what to do with myself..."

In a lockdown world where much of our functioning happens online, workers were understandably concerned about getting the ball rolling for the day. But this wasn't regular concern. This was fear, and such fear is unfortunately common. Many young students and workers today would not be able to function a few hours without the constant stimuli that social media throws at us.

This is a self-perpetuating addiction. Once it's kick-started, it needs no external force to sustain it. This is because social media milks your brain for the "want" hormone 'dopamine'. Your brain releases dopamine when it senses that a particular situation will lead to a reward, such as when you see a plate of food or a notification from Instagram. Your brain is anticipating a reward and thus gives you a burst of feel-good hormones, and this is the root of all addiction - the more dopamine our brain becomes used to, the more it takes to get the same kind of high. So what starts off a harmless break for 30 minutes per day becomes a constant 24-hour necessity.

Moreover, the co-Covid world is possibly set to make it worse. With people spending more time at home and a lot more time on screen, the exposure to such advertisement and enticement increases. Furthermore, the radical shift in the nature of the whole world's functioning will only push a stressed population to any form of escape available. The trend over the last 20 years has



been a shift from substance abuse to internet addiction as the most common dependency. The promise of a co-Covid world is potentially to enable the exact conditions that would exacerbate this trend.

The Facebook and Tumblrs of the world will have us believe we can't survive without them. They capitalise on our need for community, for external assurance of our own humanness and belonging. More so in a co-Covid world, these virtual communities become all the more important. When social distancing norms must be followed, virtual interactions become our only interaction. Capitalising now on people's heightened sense of loneliness, platforms like TikTok, Instagram, Omegle allow for a semblance of human to human connection.

This is not a victimless phenomenon. Like any other addiction, internet addiction changes the very structure of the brain. It determines which parts of your brain are able to function and control the others. Today, the average person has a reduced attention span, which impacts the ability to reflect, retain, introspect, and think critically. YouTube's 2x speed feature is proof of this trend. This dependence on instant gratification ends up "undermining willpower and enhancing impulsive behaviour." Immediate shots of dopamine take precedence at the expense of long-term goals.

How did we get here? First, the current generation was exposed to technology at an incredibly young age. Parents often sit their toddlers before a

fun video so they have a moment's rest. Learning their ABCs or taking a break, their whole day is accompanied by a device and a WiFi connection. It's intuitive that these early exposures are crucial in habit-formation.

That is not to say this is bad parenting. The pressures on working parents today are huge and keeping their children engaged in education videos is a better solution than many. However, it does come with the side-effect of a higher dependence on these same escapes later in life. Second, the market has an incentive to glamorise productivity. The more the cogs in the machine turn, the more the machine runs. The youth have been told time and again that the 'Ideal Student' or the 'Ideal Employee' does as much as they can in as little time as they can. Work more, work faster, work harder. This not only leads to higher screen time for work purposes, but also for entertainment to distress from the constant competition. Studies have shown a correlation between high levels of stress and high screen-addiction. Our excessive obsession with productivity is driving us to depend on screens for an instant escape.

Third, tech companies have an incentive to keep you hooked. Everything is calculated to ensure you spend more time and money on their platforms. Ever wondered why message notifications that appear on your desktop icons are red? Red instills a sense of urgency in humans, so we're compelled to check the app. YouTube will keep

suggesting videos, Netflix will automatically play the next episode, Instagram will curate your perfect endless scroll. As with all addictions, it's not the addict's fault. Some products are designed to make you crippledly dependent.

So what's the solution? Many developed nations have been quiet to identify and treat internet addiction like any other. Net addiction camps are quite an extreme answer and perhaps harmful in their own ways. We don't need to go as far, rather just start off with a dopamine detox. This involves setting out one day in the week where you engage in no or only non-technological stimulation. No Netflix, no YouTube, no checking Facebook for five minutes. Nothing, for 24 hours, you de-stimulate, give your brain a break from the harsh and constant barrage of stimuli from screens.

Next, set a time cap for every day. Install an activity-tracking app on your phone and allow yourself only a set duration for mindless scrolling and binge-watching. This may not seem necessary. Many people are entirely functional and successful despite their addictions. But think of it this way - there is no down side to de-stimulation. It only improves people's decision-making abilities. The media we don't watch today will still exist tomorrow. There is nothing to lose.

Lastly, figure the root cause of the addiction: What are we looking for in social media that we don't think we could get from elsewhere? Is it stress relief? Is it validation? These factors existed (perhaps even more so) before the internet. We just have to rediscover their other sources in our lives. Setting our own fitness goals without worrying how many likes our selfies will get. Talking about a new hobby, but not showcasing it to the world for affirmations. Deleting our Bumble accounts and spending time on the reflection and introspection that the internet doesn't let us indulge in. It's time to push back by making spaces of self-building for ourselves that don't involve a screen!

*(The author is Founder - Upsurge Global & Senior Advisor - Telangana State Innovation Cell)*

QUIZ NO. 152

## HANS BIZ QUIZ

'108 YEARS OF FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM'

1. By signing which bill, President Woodrow Wilson introduced the Federal Reserve System, an independent agency of the US Government on 23 December 1913?

- a) Adamson Act
- b) Owen-Glass Act
- c) Banking Legislation Bill
- d) Bretton Woods Agreement

2. Before the Federal Reserve System, America's banks functioned in widely divergent ways. These varied banking practices resulted in four major financial crises in less than forty years. When does the Federal Reserve begin its operations?

- a) November 1914
- b) April 1914
- c) July 1914
- d) January 1914

3. To a certain extent, the Federal Reserve's presidents and the boards are appointed by the Government. The Federal Reserve System was created more on the lines of which banks?

- a) Bank of England
- b) Banca Monte dei Paschi di Siena
- c) The Banque de France and The German Reichsbank
- d) Bank of Scotland and Metzler Bank

4. Which of the below from the United States Senate played a significant role in establishing the US financial regulatory system and helped draft and establish the Federal Reserve System?

- a) Carter Glass and Robert Latham Owen
- b) Thomas Gore and John C. W. Beckham
- c) John W. Smith and Charles B. Henderson
- d) Marcus A. Smith and John F. Nugent

5. Who served as the first Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System?

- a) Daniel R Crissinger
- b) William P G Harding
- c) Charles Sumner Hamlin
- d) William Gibbs McAdoo

6. Who was the United States Federal Reserve's longest-serving Chair, holding the position from 2 April 1951 to 31 January 1970?

- a) William McChesney Martin
- b) William P G Harding



c) Daniel R Crissinger  
d) Thomas B. McCabe

7. The longest-serving Chairman of the United States Federal Reserve Bank worked under how many Presidents of the United States?

- a) 2
- b) 4
- c) 5
- d) 6

8. Under which Federal Reserve chairman's stewardship, the US stock market gave the highest returns ever?

- a) Paul Volcker
- b) Arthur F. Burns
- c) Alan Greenspan
- d) Daniel Crissinger

9. Under which Federal Reserve chairman's tenure, the US stock market gave the worst returns ever?

- a) Paul Volcker
- b) Eugene Meyer
- c) Alan Greenspan
- d) Daniel R. Crissinger

10. Under which Federal Reserve chairman's leadership, the US stock market remained neutral with a mere 0.4 per cent returns?

- a) Marriner S. Eccles
- b) Eugene Meyer
- c) William PG Harding
- d) Arthur F Burns

The Hans Biz Quiz has been compiled by **Sunil Dhavala**, CEO, The Third Umpire Media. He had held senior management roles at Bertelsmann, NGC, Fox Broadcasting, Star TV and others. He is an alumnus of Indian Institute of Foreign Trade

KEY

1B 2A 3C 4A 5D 6A 7C 8D 9B 10A



# India slump to record low 36; Oz win 1st Test

ADELAIDE

AUSTRALIA scored a sensational eight-wicket victory against India the first Test, a day-night affair, to take a 1-0 lead in the four-Test series at the Adelaide Oval. After their pace bowlers Pat Cummins (4/21) and Josh Hazlewood (5/8) caused a carnage to skittle out India for 36, their lowest Test total, Australia reached the target of 90 for the loss of just two wickets.

Opener Joe Burns remained unbeaten on 51 off 63 balls. Having conceded a 53-run first innings lead, with the Indians adding a further nine to it on Friday night itself, Australia moved into driver's seat early in the first session itself as they ended Indian innings at 36.

Pat Cummins took four for 21 in 10.2 overs while Josh Hazlewood took five for eight in five overs to share nine wickets as India innings ended at 36/9 for their lowest Test total in their 82-year Test cricket history. India's worst Test innings total before this was 42 against Mike Denness' England at Lord's in 1974. Mohammed Shami, the No. 11 batsman, retired hurt and could not bat.

India, who began at the overnight score of nine for one, had a night-marish start when they lost four wickets at the team total of 15 and then four runs later at 19 lost their sixth wicket in the form of skipper Vi-

rat Kohli. They then lost Wriddhiman Saha and R. Ashwin on successive deliveries to be 26 for eight. Hanuma Vihari then scored a four and got a single to get India clear of the three lowest scores in Test history, 26 by New Zealand and 30 twice by South Africa.

However, Vihari fell as the ninth batsman at the team score of 31.

Earlier, India lost four wickets on 15. Overnight batsman Jasprit Bumrah, who had walked in as nightwatchman on Friday, was caught and bowled by Pat Cummins off a change of pace. Then Cheteshwar Pujara was caught behind off Cummins' delivery that moved just a bit as the India No. 3 fell for an eight-ball duck.

Josh Hazlewood then got two wickets in one over as he removed opener Mayank Agarwal, getting him caught behind off his first ball and followed it up with the wicket of Ajinkya Rahane, who was also caught behind for a four-ball duck.

Skipper Virat Kohli got a four towards third man but was soon after caught at gully by Cameron Green off Cummins.

The carnage by Aussies saw India lose five wickets for four runs in just under six overs, from 15/1 to 19/6. They were 26 for eight at the drinks break. At the score of 26, they lost Wriddhiman Saha, caught at short midwicket and R. Ashwin who was caught behind to be eight down for 26. The Indian innings lasted just 21.2 overs.

Joe Burns then scored a quick half-century to help Australia knock off the runs in 21 overs. (HANS)

## Lowest totals in Test cricket's 142-yr history

INDIA'S total of 36 on Saturday in the second innings of the first Test against Australia at the Adelaide Oval is also the joint fourth lowest total in the history of Test cricket that has seen 2,396 Test matches played over 142 years. It is also the second lowest score in the post World War II period, just 10 runs more than the 26 by New Zealand in 1955, the lowest-ever in Test cricket.

Among the four lowest totals scored across seven different innings, the pre-War South African teams take the largest share, getting out for 30 twice and 35 and 36 once each.

Behind New Zealand's 26-run total, are South Africa's two scores of 30, first in 1896 against England at Port Elizabeth and then against the same team in Birmingham in 1924.

South Africa also made 35 in 1899 at Cape Town, also against England. The 1932 South African team could score just 36 against Australia at Melbourne.

The Aussies of 1902 were skittled out by England at Birmingham for 36, the same score as India got in the second innings at the Adelaide Oval in this week's pink-ball Test.

India's previous low of 42 now stands as joint sixth in the list of low scores. Ireland's 38 at Lord's in 2019 against England is the fifth lowest score.

Ranked alongside India, on joint sixth spot with 42, are the Australian team of 1888 (vs England) and the New Zealand team of 1946 (vs Australia). (HANS)

ADELAIDE

AFTER the meek surrender at Adelaide Oval against Australia, which saw them get bowled out for a record low of 36 and lose the first Test by eight wickets, India have now lost three consecutive Tests for the first time under Virat Kohli's captaincy.

India under Kohli had lost two successive Tests on three occasions before -- in South Africa in 2018, in England in 2018 and in New Zealand this year. Including those two Tests in New Zealand, India have now lost three Tests in a row.

## Kohli loses 3 Tests on trot for first time as captain

Kohli, who took over as regular skipper of the Indian team in 2015 in Australia at the Sydney Cricket Ground, had led India in a 2-0 defeat in the two-Test series in New Zealand this year prior to the Covid-19 pandemic in February-March. They lost the first Test at Wellington by 10 wickets and the second at Christchurch by seven wickets against Kane Williamson's boys. They lost the Adelaide game by eight wickets on Saturday to complete a hat-trick of losses.

India did not play a Test match after the New Zealand tour in February-March and the pink-ball Test here was the first after that.

Prior to the series loss in New Zealand, India had registered victory in seven successive Test matches -- two in West Indies and five in

India against South Africa and Bangladesh. That run of seven wins also included a day-night Test match against Bangladesh at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata.

Before this string of three losses, including the two losses in New Zealand, Kohli had led India to two

successful Test losses on two occasions. In 2018, during the tour of England, India lost two successive Tests twice. They lost the first two Tests at Birmingham and Lord's and then won one at Nottingham. They then lost the last two Tests at Southampton and at The Oval.

A few months before that, in January, 2018, they lost the first two Tests against South Africa in Cape Town and Centurion before winning the last one in Johannesburg.

Kohli has captained India in 56 Tests, winning 33 and losing 13. He has drawn 10 Tests. Twelve of his losses have come abroad with the only loss in India coming against Australia in Pune in February, 2017.

He is already India's most successful cap-

## SCOREBOARD

India 1st Innings 244 all out  
Australia 1st Innings 191 all out  
India second innings

Prithvi Shaw b Cummins -----4  
Mayank Agarwal c Paine b Hazlewood -----9  
Jasprit Bumrah c and b Cummins -----2  
Cheteshwar Pujara c Paine b Cummins -----0  
Virat Kohli c Green b Cummins -----4  
Ajinkya Rahane c Paine b Hazlewood -----0  
Hanuma Vihari c Paine b Hazlewood -----8  
W Saha c Labuschagne b Hazlewood -----4  
R Ashwin c Paine b Hazlewood -----0  
Umesh Yadav not out -----4  
Mohammed Shami ret'd hurt -----1  
Extras: -----0

Total: (For 9 wickets in 21.2 overs) -----36

Fall of Wickets: 7-1, 15-2, 15-3, 15-4, 15-5, 19-6, 26-7, 26-8, 31-9

Bowling: Mitchell Starc 6-3-7-0, Pat Cummins 10.2-4-21-4, Josh Hazlewood 5-3-8-5.

Australia 2nd Innings

Matthew Wade run out -----33  
Joe Burns not out -----51  
M Labuschagne c Agarwal b Ashwin -----6  
Steven Smith not out -----1

Total: (For 2 wickets in 21 overs) -----93

Fall of Wickets: 70-1, 82-2

Bowling: Umesh Yadav 8-1-49-0, Jasprit Bumrah 7-1-27-0, Ravichandran Ashwin 6-1-16-1.

## COMPARISON BETWEEN INDIA'S 2 LOWEST TEST TOTALS

### 1974 vs Eng & 2020 vs Aus

NEW DELHI

INDIA'S lowest Test innings total of 36 on Saturday at the Adelaide Oval against Australia is in many ways different from their previous lowest of 42 that Ajit Wadekar's team managed in 1974 at Lord's against England.

Though there was one major similarity -- India did not lose all 10 wickets as the No. 11 on both occasions was injured.

To start with, the Lord's innings came after the Indian team was already under the cosh following on in the face of a 327-run deficit. England had hammered 629 in the first innings and India could reply with 302 in their first. India already had their backs to the wall entering the second innings back then, unlike this time when they went into the disastrous second innings with a 53-run lead in first innings. In fact, nine runs were already added to the lead for the loss of just one wicket on Friday night, the second day of the ongoing day-night Test.

Then, India were reduced to 19/6 on Saturday which is their lowest at six wickets down. In that Lord's Test, India lost their sixth wicket at 28.

The fiasco at Lord's, which was hosting the second Test of the series, had followed a Test loss at Manchester by 113 runs. The ongoing Test at Adelaide is the first of the series.

In that Lord's Test, at least one batsman managed to get into double figures with Eknath Solkar managing an unbeaten 17-ball 18, hitting a six and two fours.

In the innings at Adelaide, no Indian batsman could get into double figures with Mayank Agarwal's nine being the highest.

India's worst play on Saturday came during a phase of just under six overs between the last ball of the eighth over and the fourth of the 14th over when they lost five wickets for just four runs. They lost four wickets at the team total of 15.

Back at Lord's, though they lost wickets regularly, the middle-order did not cave in on one single total. They lost multiple wickets only at the end, losing three at 42.

While their innings lasted 21.2 overs at Adelaide, it had lasted just 17 overs in the 1974 Test.

But there are similarities too. Both the carnages were caused by two bowlers.

Right-arm pace bowlers Geoff Arnold and Chris Old picked five and four wickets respectively in the 1974 Test. At the ongoing Adelaide Test, Josh Hazlewood and Pat Cummins took five and four wickets respectively.

Also, in both Tests India did not lose the last wicket as the No. 11 both times was hurt.

In the 1974 Test, leg-spinner Bhagwath Chandrasekhar was absent hurt and India could not lose the last wicket. At Adelaide 2020, pace bowler Mohammed Shami got injured after being hit on the hand by a Pat Cummins delivery and had to retire hurt. (HANS)



Adelaide: Australia's Joe Burns (right) is congratulated by teammate Steve Smith after hitting a 6 to win their Test match against India on the third day at the Adelaide Oval, Australia on Saturday

# The OTP to forget is 49204084041: cricket world reacts after India's debacle

ADELAIDE

WITH shock and amazement, the cricket fraternity reacted to the nightmare that the Indian team endured in broad daylight before crumbling to its lowest-ever Test score of 36 here on Saturday.

India's much-vaunted batting line-up was blown away by the menacing pace duo of Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood as Australia recorded a convincing eight-wicket win inside two and half days in the opening Day/Night Test.

"The OTP to forget is 49204084041," former India opener Virender Sehwag tweeted in reference to the batsmen's sequence of scores in the second innings. None of the Indian batsmen managed to reach double digits.

Sehwag's idol, Sachin Tendulkar, conceded India were outclassed. "With the way India batted & bowled in the 1st innings, they were in the driver's seat, but the Aussies came back really hard this morning.

"That is the beauty of Test cricket. It's NEVER over till it's over. India was outclassed in the 2nd

half. Congratulations to Australia!" Tendulkar wrote. India's previous lowest Test score was 42 against England at the Lord's in 1974.

Batting great Sunil Gavaskar felt the Australian pacers were brilliant. "... It's not fair to blame the Indian batsmen for the way they got out because it was just simply superb bowling by the Australian bowlers," Gavaskar told Channel Seven.

While pointing out the current batsmen's defensive frailties, former batsman Sanjay Manjrekar observed, "36 will no doubt be looked at in isolation & should be too, but here's India's totals in last 3 Tests (2 in NZ) when the ball has moved around - 165, 191, 242, 124, 244, 36.

"Clearly India needs to improve its defensive skills. Easier said than done in today's environment."

Australian spin legend Shane Warne said, "Wow!! What a bowling display that was from Pat Cummins & Josh Hazlewood here in

Adelaide. Just outstanding. Have to feel for the Indian batsman as never saw that coming - it was one of those days where the batsman nicked everything & didn't play and miss at all! Unbelievable..."

David Warner, who missed the four-match series opener due to a groin injury, was delighted with the result that gave his team a 1-0 lead in the rubber. "Unreal win by the lads today,



Australia's Pat Cummins (left) throws the ball in celebration after he caught and bowled India's Jasprit Bumrah (right) on Saturday

bowlers what an effort today!! Simply unbelievable day of cricket," Warner wrote.

After the abject surrender, former England skipper Michael Vaughan remarked, "Told ya ... India are going to get hammered in the Test Series."

Former India pacer R P Singh said, "It was a bad day today no doubt but remember it's a 4 match series. We have bounced back in past and this team can do that too."

Ex-India spinner Pragyan Ojha wrote, "The game was evenly poised and we were in it... but one session went badly against us."

There were no demons in the Adelaide Oval pitch but Hazlewood (5-3-8-5) and Cummins (10.2-4-21-4) displayed fast bowling of highest quality, the impact of which will be far-reaching with three more Tests to go. Chasing an easy target of 90, Australia achieved it in only 21 overs. (PTI)



Josh Hazlewood

## Hyd face tough test against Mumbai

VASCO (GOA)



HYDERABAD FC, enjoying an unexpectedly good start to the Hero Indian Super League Season 7, will hope to keep their unbeaten run going when they take on table-toppers Mumbai City FC at the Tilak Maidan Stadium on Sunday.

Manolo Marquez's men bounced back from a run of three straight draws when they downed SC East Bengal in their previous game. But they will have their task cut out against a Mumbai side that will be looking to put a disappointing 1-1 draw against Jamshedpur FC behind them. That is not something that's lost on Marquez.

### Match Result

FC Goa lose to Chennaiyin FC 1-2

"Mumbai City, in my opinion, are the favourites to win the regular season," Marquez said. "They've got a very good team with a lot of quality and a top coach. They play good football, are good in the high press, good in set-pieces. For me, they are one of the more difficult games that we will play."

As tough as the challenge may be, Marquez knows he has enough

TODAY'S MATCHES

Hyderabad FC vs Mumbai City FC at Tilak Maidan Stadium 5pm  
Kerala Blasters FC vs SC East Bengal at GMC Stadium Bambolim 7.30pm

firepower to come back with all three points. He will no doubt be buoyed by the form of Aridane Santana, who has netted four times in the league already. "Of course, we will have possibilities to win the game. We can win or lose with all the teams and it depends on our performance. We've prepared for the game in the same way we've prepared for other games. Of course, we have looked at videos of the opponent. They are a team that wants to keep the ball, the same as our team. We have to be prepared to defend very well," Marquez added.

## India rise to 53rd on FIFA women's football rankings

Zurich: India moved two places to 53rd on the FIFA rankings for women's international football, the sport's global governing body announced on Friday.

India gained from Belarus's fall to 56 from 53, which is the biggest drop by ranks. India are tied with South Africa for the spot ahead of Venezuela who rose to 55. Meanwhile, top ranked USA will see out 2020 at the top of the standings with their highest points total for over six years. Germany and France remain second and third respectively.

The most significant point-increase (+37) came from Malta, who ascended 16 places thanks in particular to away wins in Georgia (114th) and Israel (68th). This was the final rankings released this year. (HANS)

## Boxing: Panghal clinches gold, injured Satish bags silver at Cologne World Cup

NEW DELHI

WORLD silver-medallist Amit Panghal (52kg) notched up a gold medal without having to fight his final bout, while veteran Satish Kumar (+91kg) settled for silver after an injury prevented him from competing in his summit clash at the Cologne World Cup in Germany on Saturday.

Panghal was given a walkover by Germany's Arigishti Terteryan. Satish, who made the final after beating France's Djamil Dini Moindze in the semi-final last night, had to withdraw against Germany's Nelvie Tiafack owing to an injury.

Also making the final were Sakshi and Manisha in the women's 57kg category. The two boxers will now take on each other in the final late on Saturday night. While Manisha defeated two-time world championship silver medal-winning compatriot Sonia Lather 5-0, Sakshi got the better of Germany's Ramona Graff 4-1.

However, Asian Games bronze winner Pooja Rai



settled for a bronze medal after going down to the Netherlands' Nouchka Fontijn. Also ending with bronze medals were Mohammed Hussamuddin and Gaurav Solanki in the men's 57kg category. Hussamuddin lost to local hope Hamsat Shadalov. Solanki, on the other hand, was out-punched by Frenchman Samuel Kistohurry.

The event featured boxers from the host country, Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, France, Moldova, Netherlands, Poland and Ukraine. (PTI)