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HYDERABAD | WEDNESDAY | 27 JANUARY 2021

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WEATHER

Max: 33°C
Min: 19°C
RH: 66%
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Cloudy sky. Misty morning. Max/Min temp. 32/19 ºC

COVID-19 COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+20,936)	(+116)
1,06,89,268	1,53,724

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+189)	(+2)
TS: 2,93,590	1,592
(+146)	(+1)
AP: 8,87,212	7,150

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

10,05,56,969

DEATHS

21,57,787

COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES 219

worldometers.info/coronavirus

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari; Uttarayana
Tithi: Pushya Shuddha Chaturdasi till 1.14 am (Thursday)
Star: Punarvasu till 3.47 am
Varjyam: 3.28 pm to 5.06 pm
Durmuhurtam: 12.06 pm to 12.50 pm
Rahukalam: 12 noon to 1.30 pm

HIJRI CALENDAR

Jamadi- ul- Akhir 13,1442 AH

PRAYERS

Fajar: 5.47 am
Zohar: 12.39 pm
Asar: 4.32 pm
Maghrib: 6.14 pm
Isha: 7.24 pm
SUNSET TODAY 6.07 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.49 AM
MOONRISE TODAY 3.04 PM
MOONSET TOMORROW 3.42 AM

COUNTER POINT

Let's announce a hefty hike...no one will be able to afford fuel to run tractors!

SHORT TAKES

IMF sees 11.5% growth for India

Washington: The IMF on Tuesday projected an impressive 11.5 per cent growth rate for India in 2021, making the country the only major economy of the world to register a double-digit growth this year amidst the coronavirus pandemic. China is next with 8.1 per cent growth in 2021 followed by Spain (5.9 per cent) and France (5.5 per cent).

US plans new bases in Saudi

Dubai: The US military is exploring the possibility of using a Red Sea port in Saudi Arabia and additional two airfields in the kingdom amid heightened tensions with Iran, the military said on Tuesday. While describing the work as "contingency" planning, the US military said it already has tested unloading and shipping cargo overland from Yanbu port.

PROTESTING FARMERS BREACH RED FORT

Farmers deviate from rally route; cops fire tear gas shells; one farmer dies and hundreds of protesters injured

SANJAY KAW and BHASKAR HARI SHARMA I DC
NEW DELHI, JAN. 26

India's 72nd Republic Day was scarred by violence that erupted on the streets of Delhi as a large section of the protesting farmers who were participating in the tractor rally deviated from the agreed route, broke barricades, clashed with the police and stormed the historic Red Fort where they hoisted the Sikh flag, "Nishan Sahib".

The national flag, which is a permanent fixture on the 17th century landmark, was not touched.

The police responded with firing teargas shells and lathicharge, resulting in injuries to hundreds of protesters. About 83 police personnel also suffered injuries.

One farmer lost his life after his speeding tractor hit a barricade near ITO in central Delhi. The protesters, however, alleged that the 25-year-old victim was shot dead by the police. They wrapped his body in a tricolour and kept it near the ITO flyover. After several hours, the body of the victim, identified as a resident of Uttar Pradesh, was sent for autopsy.

Eight buses and 17 private vehicles were also damaged in the clashes.

The large-scale violence, which took place mainly around ITO, Red Fort and Nangloi, forced the government to order temporary suspension of telecom services in border areas of Delhi from 12 noon to 11.59 pm. About a dozen-odd metro stations were also shut. All the entry points leading to central Delhi were sealed.

The Samyukta Kisan Morcha, an umbrella organisation of protesting farmers' unions, distanced itself from "violent elements" who, it said, had infiltrated the otherwise peaceful movement.

■ Page 2: Flower petals welcomed protesters

A farmer ties the 'Nishan Sahib' to the flag post at the Red Fort during the Kisan Gantantra Parade in New Delhi on Tuesday. — *PTI*

More Central forces called in

New Delhi, Jan. 26: In the wake of farmers' tractor rally turning violent, the Centre on Tuesday decided to deploy additional paramilitary troops in Delhi to restore peace and maintain law and order, officials said.

The decision was taken at a high-level meeting chaired by Union home minister Amit Shah and attended by Union home secretary Ajay Bhalla, Delhi police commissioner S.N. Shrivastava among others.

Additional paramilitary troops will be brought in for deployment in sensitive places in Delhi, a home ministry official said.

The exact number of additional troops was not known immediately but officials suggested that it could be around 1,500 to 2,000 personnel (about 15 to 20 companies). Around 4,500 paramilitary personnel were already deployed for law and order duties before the Republic Day.

Rapid Action Force personnel have also been repositioned in the national capital and vigil has been intensified in view of the evolving situation.

The home minister reviewed the situation after hundreds of protesting farmers on tractors barrelled through police barricades to enter central Delhi areas. — *PTI*

Rafale turns show stopper at Republic Day parade

New Delhi, Jan. 26: The newly inducted Rafale fighter aircraft featured for the first time in the Republic Day flypast as it carried out the 'Brahmastra' formation alone and was part of the 'Eklavya' formation with four other fighter jets.

The jet took part in the Eklavya formation by flying at a height of around 300 metres along with two Jagaur and two MiG-29 aircraft. The five jets formed a V-shape with Rafale leading the pack.

The 25,000-strong audience was able to see the Rafale again when it brought up the end of the flypast by conducting the Brahmastra formation wherein it flew at a low altitude for some distance, then pulled up vertically and conducted rolls before stabilising.

The Indian Air Force's Rafale jet flies over Rajpath during the Republic Day parade in New Delhi. — *AFP*

In a major boost to India's air power capability, five French-made multirole Rafale fighter jets were inducted into the IAF on September 10 last year. A total of 38 IAF aircraft and four planes of the Indian Army participated in the Republic Day flypast on Tuesday.

— *PTI*

■ More reports on page 6

It's sarpanches vs wild boars

BALU PULIPAKA I DC
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

Telangana state has decided to appoint sarpanches as honorary wildlife wardens and give them special powers to approve the killing of wild boar that damage agricultural and horticultural crops outside of protected forest areas. This means, in one fell stroke, the state will have 12,751 honorary wildlife wardens, one for each gram panchayat in the state.

In its orders on Tuesday, the government said that decision followed a proposal from the state forest department for appointing gram sarpanches as honorary wildlife wardens "to hunt Wild pigs (wild boar), which have become dangerous to human life and property, outside the protected areas and reserved forests subject to compliance with certain conditions."

The sarpanches will have the powers to permit wild boar hunting by those having licensed weapons and "are in the panel of licensed shooters."

■ Page 4: Norms call for protection of wildlife

Governor pats state for success in several sectors

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan on Tuesday said Telangana once a worst drought-hit region, had become "Annapurna, rice bowl of the country" and gave full credit to the K. Chandrashekar Rao government's dedicated and determined efforts for the transformation.

Delivering the Republic Day speech at Public Gardens here, she also highlighted how Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the Bharat Biotech International Limited plant in the city to review the development of indigenous Covid-19 vaccine Covaxin had given great impetus to speed up the process of vaccination.

"We started the year 2021 with lot of optimism as the vaccination for Covid-19 has been started and is being administered on priority basis," she said.

She exuded confidence that the "yagna" of progress and development would be taken forward by the state government. The newly-born state has become the 'Telangana model' for the rest of the country. The successful reconstruction and rebuilding of the state was possible because the responsibility of governing it was entrusted to a leader (Chandrashekar Rao) who led the movement for separate Telangana, she added.

■ Page 2: Governor hints at salary hike for govt staff

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Farmers hold huge rally

Accuse Centre of favouring corporate companies

SANJAY SAMUEL PAUL | DC
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

Farmers from the state on Tuesday participated in a long procession in Hyderabad with their tractors and other vehicles in solidarity with farmers protesting in Delhi for over past two months demanding rollback of the three agriculture laws enacted by the central government. The 10-km long parade by farmers was also joined in by people from other walks of life with their cars, auto-rickshaws and two-wheelers. The event passed off peacefully. Though permission for the procession was initially refused by the Hyderabad city police, it was allowed following intervention by the Telangana High Court, which heard an urgent appeal by Telangana Rythu Sangham. The procession started from Saroornagar Stadium and culminated at Uppal Cross Roads.

Amid chanting of slogans demanding withdrawal of farm laws and making minimum support prices for various crops a law, thousands marched accusing the BJP-led government at the Centre of favouring corporate companies. Such processions, being organised all across the country, are an attempt to counter claims of the central government that protests by farmers are confined only to two or three states in the north, the rally organisers stated.

According to Saraswati Kavula, a farmer taking part in the protest, "The procession will turn out historic in India's republic as true manifestation of people's power. Majority of people of this country, who are farmers, have come to rescue democracy." She declared that the executive will have to back down before the people's power and scrap the three black laws.

Kiran Vissa, another farm leader, said "Along with farmers, people from all walks of life, including domestic workers, street hawkers, teachers and IT employees, have taken part in the rally. It sends a clear message to the central government that all citizens of the country are supporting the farmers' movement."

Telengana Rythu Sangam secretary T. Sagar felt the union government should at least now realise that the farmers' movement is not going to end unless the three laws are withdrawn.

Farmers and people participate in a huge rally 'Parade for Farmers in Hyderabad' from LB Nagar to Uppal organised by the All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee against the farm bills in Hyderabad on Tuesday. — P. SURENDRA

FLOWER PETALS WELCOMED PROTESTERS IN DELHI

From Page 1

The violence and chaos in some areas overshadowed the peaceful tractor rally that passed through other parts of Delhi. In some areas there were heartwarming, never-seen-before moments as thousands of people who had gathered by the roads and were perched on rooftops and balconies to watch the tractor parade showered flower petals, offered food and water and greeted farmers with supportive slogans and cheers. Many bystanders termed the farmers as their brothers and guests who were fighting for their rights.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which has been supporting the farmers' agitation, condemned the violence and blamed the Central government for "allowing" Delhi's law and order situation to deteriorate from bad to worse. In a statement, the Arvind Kejriwal-led AAP said the violence has weakened the farmers' protest.

Crowds began swelling at Delhi borders at around 8 am. Chants of "Kisan kanoon wapas lo" (Take back the farm laws) rent the air at borders where some tractors were playing patriotic songs such as, Aisa desh hai mera and Sare jahan se achcha.

The protesters were expected to start their tractor rally at noon to avoid interfering with morning Republic Day celebrations in central Delhi. The tricolour and flags of different farmers unions fluttered as marches began from Singhu, Tikri and Ghazipur border points, much ahead of the time decided for the tractor parade.

MISSING MAN FOUND IN SAUDI JAIL FREED

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

Abdul Majeed, from Mylardevepally in Ranga Reddy district, who went missing in Saudi Arabia on July 16, 2020, and found in a prison four months later, was released on Monday.

Majeed was working as a salesman with Al-Saiari Trading Est. in Riyadh since the last three years. Who arrested him has remained a mystery. When there was no help to find his son, Mohammed Abdul Waheed, father of Abdul Majeed, approached Amjed Ullah Khan, spokesman of MBT, to help locate his son.

Khan raised this issue with external affairs minister Dr S. Jaishankar and the Indian Embassy in Riyadh on Aug 21, 2020.

The Indian Embassy in Riyadh responded on October 11, 2020, and confirmed that Abdul Majeed is in Saudi police custody. Majeed called his parents upon his release.

60-YEAR-OLD ARRESTED IN THEFT CASES

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

The Central Zone Task Force on Tuesday apprehended a 60-year-old man involved in four thefts and recovered a scooter from him. The accused, Abdul Waheed Khan, was allegedly involved in burglary cases in Narayanguda, Nampally and automobile thefts in Chaderghat.

Police said that Khan was earlier arrested by the Nampally police in a burglary case and jailed. Upon his release, he started stealing automobile thefts and was caught at the YMCA Circle, Barkatpura, while attempting to sell a stolen scooter on Tuesday.

Govt 'rectifies' Governor's speech

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD. JAN. 26

Usually, the governments seek to project more than what it delivers but on Tuesday the K. Chandrashekar Rao regime ended up undermining its own performance due to a goof-up by some officials.

The content providers from the government for Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan's speech committed factual errors which she went on to read at the Republic Day parade here on Tuesday. The Chief Minister's Office had to send a clarification rectifying the errors later in the evening.

The Governor read out that the government had been spending ₹148 crore per annum on improving urban infrastructure while in reality the allocations are monthly.

In another instance, she said the Central Jal Jeevan Mission had declared that the Telangana state registered a major achievement by supplying drinking water through pipes to 98.46 per cent of houses in the state. "This is another feather in our cap," she said. But, according to the Chief Minister Office (CMO) clarification the coverage is cent per cent.

Governor hints at salary hike for govt employees

From Page 1

"Translating the statehood movement leaders' vision into reality, the living standards of the people in Telangana state have tremendously improved due to the creation of basic infrastructure facilities in all villages," the Governor said.

Referring to various initiatives of the government to improve irrigation infrastructure including the world's largest multi-staged Kaleswaram lift irrigation scheme, the Governor said, "Now paddy is cultivated in 1.04 crore acres as against 35 lakh acres at the time of formation of the state."

On the government's procurement policy, on which the Opposition sought to raise a political controversy accusing the government of not coming to the rescue of farmers, the Governor said the Food Corporation of India had procured 1.15 crore tonnes of paddy all over the country in the last Rabi season out of which Telangana state accounted for 64 lakh tonnes which is 55 per cent of the total procurement.

Apparently reinforcing the commitment recently given by the Chief Minister to state employees, Dr Soundararajan announced that the process of enhancing salaries to all the state employees besides increasing their age of superannuation "is in progress." Pensioners too will get benefited, she said. The Governor also assured that fresh recruitments would be taken up to fill the vacancies arising out of effecting promotions.

Union minister of state for home G. Kishan Reddy during Bharat Mata Maha Harati programme on the occasion of the Republic Day at Necklace Road on Tuesday. — S. SURENDER REDDY

Kishan invokes Bharat Mata

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

A Maha Harati was performed for a statue of Bharata Mata at People's Plaza on Necklace Road here on Tuesday. The programme was organised by the Bharat Mata Foundation.

Union minister of state for home G. Kishan Reddy participated as chief guest of the programme. Swami Paripoornanada, Sirivennela Seetarama Sastry, Nagapani Sharma, BJP OBC Morcha president Dr K. Laxman, former MLC Ponguleti Sudhakar Reddy, former minister Mothukupalli Narasimhulu and other leaders attended the programme.

Cultural programmes were organised to inculcate nationalism and patriotism among the people. Artists from across the city performed patriotic programmes.

AIR-COOLER UNIT DAMAGED IN BIG BLAZE

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

A fire broke out at an air-cooler manufacturing unit early on Tuesday, which damaged a major portion of the premises at the industrial area in MM Pahadi, Rajendranagar. The unit was closed at that time, and no casualties were reported.

Fire officials suspect that a short circuit led to the fire. "The unit was closed after work on Monday night and the workers had left. The plastic unit is located near a residential area. Locals saw the fire and thick smoke emanating from the unit early in the morning and alerted the police and fire department," officials said, adding that property loss was estimated to be of around ₹15 lakh.

Rajendranagar police reached the spot and four fire engines were rushed to the spot.

SHORT TAKES

HMRL MD HOISTS NATIONAL FLAG IN BEGUMPET

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

Hyderabad Metro Rail Limited (HMRL) managing director N.V.S. Reddy hoisted the National Flag at Metro Rail Bhavan, Begumpet and greeted the staff and their families.

Recalling the efforts and sacrifices of freedom fighters, he urged HMRL employees to rededicate themselves and work with renewed vigour in an innovative way to run Hyderabad Metro as per international standards.

Congratulating the engineers and employees for winning several awards, he urged them to continue to create more world class facilities in Metro Rail station areas.

URDU ACADEMY CHIEF STRESSES ON COMMUNAL PEACE

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

Moulana Abdur Raheem Ansari, president of the Urdu Academy, hoisted the Tricolour at Haj House. Speaking at the event, he said independence had been secured by adopting non-violence struggle. "We adopted a constitution which does not discriminate on religion, caste and creed," he said.

The Moulana emphasised the need for upholding the constitutional values and maintaining communal harmony. "Our Constitution gives the liberty to every citizen to choose faith and language of his choice." Academy secretary Dr Mohammed Ghouse also spoke.

CM K. Chandrashekar Rao pays homage to the martyrs on the occasion of 72nd Republic Day.

KCR PAYS TRIBUTES TO MARTYRS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

On the occasion of 72th Republic Day, Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao paid tribute to martyrs at the Amara Veerula Stupam at Parade Ground, Secunderabad, and hoisted the National Flag at Pragati Bhavan.

At the Assembly, Speaker Pocharam Srinivas Reddy hoisted the National Flag and Council Chairman Gutta Sukender Reddy unfurled the Tricolour on the Council promises.

Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar hoisted the National Flag at BRK Bhavan and IAS officers participated in Republic Day celebrations at their departments.

In Telangana Bhavan, party secretary general and MP K. Kesava Rao hoisted the National Flag.

Union minister of state for home G. Kishan Reddy participated in Republic Day celebrations at various places in the city.

To mark Republic Day, youths hold a motorbike rally to spread awareness on safe driving and to follow traffic protocols, at Necklace road, in Hyderabad on Tuesday. — *R. PAVAN*

Children wearing Tricolour dress seen playing at Sanjeevaiah Park where they came to see the tallest National Flag, in Hyderabad on Tuesday. — *DC*

Tricolour and a resolve to do better

City marks R-Day with flag-hoisting ceremonies, cultural programmes amid patriotic fervour

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

The CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) celebrated the 72nd Republic Day with its director, Dr Rakesh Mishra, recalling how the premier research laboratory discovered and created innovative ways of handling research activities while formulating cheap and robust methods of testing Covid-19 samples.

Mahesh Bhagwat, Rachakonda police commissioner, who was the chief guest, after unfurling the Flag, recalled how the CCMB's contributions have enhanced quality of life. He spoke of the lab's role in wildlife forensics and DNA fingerprinting. He recollected an earlier case of a tigress killed in the Hyderabad zoo whose pelt was traced in Maharashtra — a case that was solved by CCMB and its wildlife forensic services.

The Federation of Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry celebrated the Republic Day with Ramakanth Inani, its president, hoisting the Flag. Federation senior vice-president K. Bhasker Reddy, vice-president Anil Agarwal, Karunendra S. Jasti, Ravindra Modi, V. S. Raju, Ramakrishna Prasad, Mohan Rayudu, Rupesh Agarwal, Khyati Naravane, T. Sujatha, M Veena, and other staff members were present.

At the State Bank of India, Chief General Manager O.P. Mishra, Hyderabad Circle, unfurled the Tricolour at the head office. All staff and members of their families participated in the event which was celebrated with rendering of patriotic songs by the staff. As part of the events, the bank distributed food packets to the destitute and underprivileged at the old age homes at Rampally, Nacharam and slums located at Jiyaguda, Puranapul.

Elsewhere, the National Mineral Development Corporation staff celebrated the day with patriotic fervour. The programme commenced with flag hoisting by Sumit Deb, chairman and managing director. Others present included P.K. Satpathy, director, production, Amitava Mukherjee, director (finance), Alok Kumar Mehta, director (commercial) and V.V.S. Sreenivas, chief vigilance officer.

At the office of the National Thermal Power Corporation, Chepuru Venkata Anand, regional executive director (South), unfurled the National Flag, and the event was attended by senior executives, employees and members of their families. Anand said NTPC power stations in southern region withstood and overcome several challenges caused due to Covid-19 pandemic.

Anita Anand, president, Dakshin Deepanjali Mahila Samiti, distributed computers to 12 government schools as a part of NTPC's corporate social responsibility initiative on this occasion.

Justice C.V. Ramulu, Lokayukta, led the Republic Day celebrations at the Institution. The Upa Lok Ayukta V. Niranjan Rao, and all officers and staff of the institution, participated in the programme.

Societies hoist flag, hold cultural, sporting events

SANJAY SAMUEL PAUL I DC
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

Various housing colonies in the city celebrated the 72nd Republic Day by hoisting the National Flag and holding cultural and sporting activities.

Residents of Sainakpuri started a '*Phenko Maat*' (don't litter) campaign and cleared the garbage in open areas. They hoisted the flag along with GHMC sweepers of Sainikpuri and Vayupuri. After the flag hoisting, the sweepers were treated to 'chai-pani', said Meena Ravindran, a resident.

Devinagar Colony in Malkajgiri organised games and cultural programmes. Retired teachers and retired defence officers were felicitated and the audience listened to their experiences, said B.T. Srinivasan, general secretary, United Federation of Resident Welfare Associations.

The residents of Lal Darwaza in the Old City celebrated Republic Day by unfurling the Tricolour and hosting cultural activities and sports events, said Katkam Prasanna Kumar, president of the welfare association.

O.P. Birla, SBI Chief General Manager, Hyderabad, after hoisting the flag at the bank premises at Abids. — *DC*

Varsities unfurl tricolour amid Covid-19 guidelines

DC CORRESPONDENTS
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

Officials at universities and other educational institutions hoisted the National Flag celebrated the the 72nd Republic Day on Tuesday, amid Covid-19 guidelines.

At the TS Council of Higher Education (TSCHE) premises, Chairman Prof. Papi Reddy, along with vice-chairpersons Prof. Limbadri and Prof Venkatramana and staff and officers and those of the Fee Regulation Committee took part in the celebrations.

At the TS Board of Intermediate Education, the commissioner and secretary hoisted the flag.

JNTU, Osmania University, English and Foreign Languages University, among others, took the opportunity to thank their staff and gave the message of keeping strength in hard times, especially over the past one year.

At Osmania University, incharge Vice-Chancellor Arvind Kumar, announced the sanction of ₹300 crore from the HMDA towards the repairs of the Arts College building, an iconic and heritage structure. Amid all precautions, the event was attended by deans, principals, directors, faculty, administrative staff, non-teaching staff, research scholars and students.

- **AT THE** TS Board of Intermediate Education, the commissioner and secretary hoisted the flag.
- **JNTU, OSMANIA** University, English and Foreign Languages University, among others, took the opportunity to thank their staff and gave the message of keeping strength in hard times, especially over the past one year.

At Eflu, Vice Chancellor Prof. Suresh Kumar appreciated the efforts, co-operation, and participation of the members of the faculty, non-teaching staff, and more particularly the students in facing the challenges thrown by Covid-19 and the lockdown.

He also mentioned the new education policy and urged the faculty and students to offer suggestions to revise the curricula to make them multi-disciplinary.

At JNTUH Prof. A. Govardhan, Rector, and Dr Manzoor Hussain, registrar, began the celebrations by garlanding the statues of Dr B.R. Ambedkar and Jawaharlal Nehru Nehru on the campus. A gathering of teaching and non-teaching staff, outsourcing staff and students of JNTUH was addressed by a speech amid Covid-19 safety protocols.

At Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Prof. S.M. Rahmatullah, Vice-Chancellor, paid homage to Mahatma Gandhi and said the Father of the Nation in his book '*Mere Sapnaon ka Bharat*' had echoed views that were later enshrined in the Constitution.

Referring to the new education policy, Prof. Rahmatullah said that Manuu has started preparation of electronic content (e-content) and hoped Manuu will become the first university in the country to do this kind of work.

Prof. Siddiqui Mohammed Mahmood, Registrar, Prof. Abul Kalam, Proctor, Mr. M G Gunasekaran, Finance Officer and other officials and heads of the different departments were present on the occasion.

Governor felicitates awardees on R-Day

Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan felicitates awardees from the state on the occasion of Republic Day. The Governor appreciated their dedicated services and bringing laurels to the state and country, in Hyderabad on Tuesday. — *By arrangement*

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan on Tuesday felicitated Santoshi, the wife of Galwan martyr Col. Santosh Babu's wife, and other awardees from the state on the occasion of Republic Day.

Col. Babu was conferred the Maha Vir Chakra, the second highest war-time gallantry medal, for gallantry in action. He laid down his life fighting against the Chinese incursions last year at Galwan valley.

The Governor also felicitated IPS officials Shikha Goel and N. Shiva Shankar Reddy, on being conferred the President's Police Medal. Chadalavada Hemesh, who was conferred the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar was also felicitated. The 13-year-old had developed a wearable device that helps those afflicted with Alzheimer's disease.

- **Col. Babu was conferred the Maha Vir Chakra, the second highest war-time gallantry medal, for gallantry in action. He laid down his life fighting against the Chinese incursions last year at Galwan valley.**

The Governor feted Lt Gen. T.S.A. Narayanan, Commandant of the Military College of EME, Secunderabad, for being conferred the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal. The Governor appreciated their dedicated services and bringing laurels to the state and country.

LT GEN. MOHAN CONFERRED PVSM FOR HIS WORK AS COMMANDING OFFICER OF CORPS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

Lt Gen. Y.V.K. Mohan (Retd), was conferred the Param Vishishisht Seva Medal on Republic Day.

Lt Gen. Y.V.K. Mohan

Lt Gen. Mohan (retd) is an alumnus of Korukonda Sainik School, AP and the National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla, Pune. He was commissioned into the 7th Battalion of 11th Gorkha Rifles in 1981. After serving in different terrains along the frontiers, he became Assistant Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (Joint Operations) at Integrated Defence Staff headquarters, New Delhi.

The officer had the unique distinction of being the Commandant of both the National Defence College, New Delhi, and the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington, Tamil Nadu. He moved to Yapral, Secunderabad, on January 1 after 39 years of dedicated service to the nation.

He was conferred teh Param Vishisht Seva Medal for his services as General Officer Commanding of a Corps and Commandant of Defence Services Staff College.

DARING | ACT

DC reported story first, which encouraged cop to apply for the award

CI bags Prez award for rescuing 2 lives

DC CORRESPONDENT
KARIMNAGAR, JAN. 26

Jammikunta circle inspector Koripelly Srujan Reddy, who saved the lives of two persons stuck in a well in 2019, has been awarded the prestigious Uttam Jeevan Raksha Padak on the occasion of 72nd Republic Day.

Srujan Reddy figures in the list of 40 Jeevan Raksha Padak awards announced by the Union home ministry on Monday evening. Of the awards, the Sarvotham Jeevan Raksha Padak is given to one person, the Uttam Jeevan Raksha Padak to eight persons and 31 others are awarded the Jeevan Raksha Padak for conspicuous acts of bravery to rescue people in trouble.

On May 28, 2019, two persons, Ollala Mallaiah and Marepalli Ravinder, residents of Madipelli village in Jammikunta mandal, entered a well to deepen it but fainted inside due to inhalation of noxious gases.

Without giving thought to his own safety, Srujan Reddy, who rushed to the spot on hearing of the incident, held a rope and slid down the well twice to a depth of about 60 feet and brought them up. The officer received appreciation for this brave act from various circles.

- **CI SRUJAN REDDY,** said he got to know about the award through a phone call from one of his close associates. "My friends, family members and relatives have started calling and congratulating me. I am overwhelmed by their wishes", he stated.

Speaking to this newspaper, Srujan Reddy expressed his thanks to *Deccan Chronicle* for publishing the news first. The story was then followed up by others. He was motivated to apply for the award following a suggestion by Karimnagar police commissioner V.B. Kamalasan Reddy.

The CI said he got to know about the award through a phone call from one of his close associates. "My friends, family members and relatives have started calling and congratulating me. I am overwhelmed by their wishes," he stated.

Srujan Reddy expressed his special thanks to the police commissioner for informing him about the awards and helping him in applying for them.

File photo from May 19, 2019, shows circle inspector Koripelly Srujan Reddy, climbing down a the well to rescue two persons who had fallen inside, in Jammikunta mandal.

TRS-BJP posing threat: Uttam

TPCC says BJP and TRS governments trying to kill democracy

MADDY DEEKSHITH I DC
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

State Congress president and Nalgonda MP N Uttam Kumar Reddy on Tuesday alleged that the BJP at the Centre and the TRS in the state posed serious threats to the survival of democracy.

Speaking after hoisting the National Flag at Gandhi Bhavan on the 72nd Republic Day, Reddy welcomed the awarding of Mahaveer Chakra to Col. Santosh Babu, martyred in a clash with the Chinese army last year on the India-China border. He said Col. Santosh Babu and he himself were aluminis of the National Defence Academy (NDA).

The TPCC president said that while the BJP government was hurting the spirit of the Constitution, the TRS government was trying to kill democracy. Both the parties were not showing any respect for the Constitution. It was unfortunate that efforts were being made by some elements to divide the country on religious lines.

Telangana Congress president N. Uttam Kumar Reddy along with party leaders protests against the farm Bills while sitting on a tractor at Gandhi Bhavan on Tuesday. He had earlier unfurled the Tricolour on Republic Day. — *P. SURENDRA*

The Nalgonda MP criticised the attitude of the BJP government in not repealing the farm laws although the farmers were protesting against these for the last two months. He said Prime Minister Narender Modi was ignoring the demands of farmers. "The Modi government has mortgaged the interests of farmers and is bent on helping a few corporates like the Ambanis and Adanis," he alleged.

He also criticised Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao for "taking a U-turn" on the farm laws. TRS participated in the Bharat Bandh against the farm laws, but the CM took a U-turn after visiting Delhi.

Reddy said the Congress party would continue its agitation until the TRS government withdrew its decision on shutting down the procurement centres. Every grain produced by farmers must be procured at Minimum Support Price (MSP), he said.

The Congress leader said the Modi government was inciting communal feelings while Chandrashekar Rao behaved like a dictator. The TRS rule is noted for its corruption and the ruling party leaders were using the ill-gotten money to win elections. He said the BJP, the TRS and the MIM have entered into a secret pact to finish off the Congress in Telangana state.

Reddy appealed to intellectuals, academics and others to take note as to how elections were being conducted in Telangana state. Strengthening of the Congress was essential for restoration of democracy. He praised Congress workers for the spirit with which they "served" the people despite facing "several obstacles and harassment" from the ruling party.

He claimed that the Congress was strong at the ground level and it would return to power in the next elections.

SHORT TAKES

11-YR-OLD DIES AFTER CATRACT SURGERY

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD JAN. 26

An 11-year-old allegedly died after he had a cataract surgery at a private eye hospital in Panjagutta on Tuesday evening.

According to the Panjagutta police, the deceased, identified as Prashant Reddy, a resident of Alwyn Colony of Kukatpally, had gone to Dr Agarwal Eye Clinic on January 20 for the surgery. "He allegedly fell sick after the surgery and was rushed to a private hospital in Somajiguda, from where he was again moved to a children's hospital in Banjara Hills, where he breathed his last," said the police.

Following a complaint from the boy's father, Ganapathy Reddy, a case was booked under Section 174 (suspicious death) of the CrPC and the body moved for the post-mortem examination, which will ascertain the cause of death.

NORMS CALL FOR PROTECTION OF WILDLIFE

From Page 1

If such a person is not available, then "any other hunter available at the village/mandal/district concerned, who has a license for possession of fire arms," can be permitted to hunt the animals. "The person identified shall be an expert shooter and own a rifle powerful enough and capable of killing a wild pig," the orders said.

The orders from the government do not make it clear if they apply to all the 12,751 gram panchayats. The state has not been appointing honorary wildlife wardens over the past few years claiming that this opens a Pandora's box with several of those appointed in the past because of political pressure using their status beyond what their supposed roles were in the honorary positions. The only exception to this unofficial ban was the appointment of a follower of a TRS MLA as following intense political pressure.

While the January 26 orders of the government make these appointments for the express purpose of killing wild boar, the guidelines for such appointments as per the Wildlife Protection Act make it very clear that the purpose of such appointments are for the protection of wildlife.

Such persons, according to the guideline for such appointments should have a genuine concern for wildlife conservation, and free of any personal record of involvement in any activity detrimental to the interests of nature and wildlife conservation. The appointees also get power to inspect records of licences under section 47 (b) of the Act, have powers of entry, search, seizure, and detention under Section 50 for prevention and detection of offences under the Act. The states, however, are also allowed to delegate any other power under the aforesaid Act, as it may consider necessary.

Deccan Chronicle had reported on January 8 in its report 'Permit panchayats to deal with problematic wild animals: National Board of Wildlife' that the National Board for Wildlife under the Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change advised all states and union territories to give gram panchayats powers to deal with situations relating to 'problematic' wild animals.

THE APPOINTEES also get power to inspect records of licences under section 47 (b) of the Act, have powers of entry, search, seizure, and detention under Section 50 for prevention and detection of offences under the Act.

IN THE COURT OF THE HON'BLE XVI ADDL. DISTRICT AND SESSION JUDGE, R.R. DISTRICT AT MALKAJGIRI
O.S. No. 77 OF 2018
Between:
Sri Iqbal Ameen ... Plaintiff
And
1. Ahsaan Ameen and others ...Defendants
To,
1. Ahsaan Ameen 2. Akram Ameen, 3. Naseem Sultana, 4. Shameem Sultana, 5. Shaheen Sultana, 6. Nadeem Sultana, 7. Nasreen Sultana, 8. Nayeem Sultana All legal heirs of late Shaik Imam ...Defendants
Please take notice that the above named plaintiff has filed a suit for partition and separate possession in respect of land 5 acres, under Sy. no. 307 Part. Gajula Ramaram, Qutubullapur Mandal, RR District, vide OS No. 77 of 2018 on the file of XVI Addl. District and Session Judge, RR District at Malkajgiri. The said suit is posted on 3.2.2021, for your appearance.
By order of the court.
MOHD OSMAN SHAHEED,
MOHD ADNAN, ADVOCATES
YWCA lane, Bogulkunta, Abids, Hyd-1.
Cell: 9390033484, 98493020211

AIMIM President and Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owasis hoists the National Flag on the 72nd Republic Day celebrations at Medina Circle in Hyderabad, on Tuesday. —*PTI*

Owaisi hoisted National Flag at Madina Circle

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi hoisted the National Flag on Tuesday at Madina Circle and Jamiat-ul-Mominath, the Deeni Madrasa for girls, Moghalpura, on the occasion of the 72nd Republic Day.

Owaisi released white pigeons at Madina Circle after hoisting the flag and reciting the National Anthem. After hoisting the Tricolour at Jamiat-ul-Mominath, he said education of girls is as important as educating boys.

OWAISI RELEASED white pigeons at Madina Circle after hoisting the flag and reciting the National Anthem.

He appreciated the management for providing a high standard of religious education. Dr Mufti Mohammed Mastan Ali welcomed the gathering and Dr Hafiz Mohammed Sabir Pasha proposed a vote of thanks. Nasreen Sultana, corporator, Shaik Rasheeda, Manager, SBI, Dr Rizwana Zareen and others were presented.

Centre follows ideology of Ambedkar, says Bandi

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

BJP state president Bandi Sanjay said the Narendra Modi government at the Centre was following the ideology of Dr B.R. Ambedkar in its working.

After hoisting the National Flag as part of the Republic Day celebrations at the BJP office, Sanjay alleged that Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao was indulging in corruption and taking commissions in a manner no other CM had done.

He alleged that the state government was working for only one family. If Dr Ambedkar were alive he would have felt troubled by Chandrashekar Rao's administration.

Sanjay said all parties need to come forward to help out in case of any danger to the Hindu community. Those who are not interested in clearly stating that they Hindus they have no right to ask to ask the community for votes. "When a Muslim can say he is a Muslim, why can't a Hindu say that he belongs is a Hindu," Sanjay asked.

He claimed that 3 lakh kar sevaks had sacrificed their lives for the construction of the Ram mandir in Ayodhya.

Sanjay said Prime Minister Narendra Modi wanted every family to be involved in the construction of the Ram mandir. BJP workers had sacrificed their lives for the construction of the temple, while none of workers other parties had come forward to demand the Ram Mandir reconstruction.

Telangana BJP Chief Bandi Sanjay along with Union minister of state for home G. Kishan Reddy and others hoists the National Flag at the BJP Office on the occassion of Republic Day in Hyderabad on Tuesday. — *S. SURENDER REDDY*

Owaisi: Govt discriminates on religion

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi said the government is distorting the basic tenets of the Constitution by enacting laws to discriminate against the citizens on the basis of religion.

He was addressing a public meeting in Bidar on the topic "Save Constitution-Save India'.

Owaisi said that in the country of Gandhi, Babasaheb Ambedkar and Maulana Azad, legislation had been passed on 'love jihad'. He said an attempt was being made to spoil the Constitution by enactment laws contradicting the statute.

He said he had taken the canonical opinions of religious scholars, Muftis and even ulema of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board about the status of the masjid in Ayodhya to be built as a replacement for Babri masjid. "All of them had opined that it must not be called a masjid and prayers cannot be performed there. Performing prayers and contributing for the construction of that masjid is haram (not permissible)," Owaisi claimed.

"Muslims should not perform prayers in that masjid. Instead of contributing to the construction of that Masjid, Muslim should contribute to the marriages of poor girls," Owaisi said.

Owaisi said those who had faith in the teachings of Dr Ambedkar should mould their lives within the frame of the Constitution. "We will enjoy the fruits of independence if we ensure liberty, equality, fraternity and justice in a true spirit for every citizen," Owaisi said.

Owaisi quoted Dr Ambedkar as saying, 'until you achieve independence you will not prosper. Until you ensure equality you will not get justice and without fraternity no one will come near you' and said these four basic principles were mentioned in the preamble to the Constitution.

He asked Muslims to refrain from competing with Dalit and Backward Classes.

"The time has come to cooperate with them. If these three communities start cooperating with each other, you will be able to end the 70 years of rule by upper caste people who constitute only 22 per cent of the population," Owaisi said.

POLITICAL CLASH **Leaders hope to catch high command's eye for big jobs**

TRS MLAs vie to criticise BJP

DC CORRESPONDENT
ADILABAD, JAN. 26

TRS legislators and leaders hoping for posts in party and government are now vying with each other in attacking BJP leaders in erstwhile Adilabad district. On their part, prominent leaders in the saffron party too have intensified their campaign against TRS government, with claims of being an alternative for the ruling party in Telangana.

The attacks against BJP by many TRS leaders have increased at a time when the state government has started making appointments to the nominated posts in various corporations and other bodies. Not to be left behind, BJP leaders too have been attacking the top leadership of Telangana Rashtra Samithi in a bid to increase the footprint of the saffron party. More so after BJP has won the by-election in Dubbaka and captured a significant number of seats in elections to the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC).

TRS MLAS Balka Suman of Chennur and Jogu Ramanna of Adilabad have taken the lead in attacking BJP and its leaders, generating much heat within Adilabad district's political arena.

TRS MLAs Balka Suman of Chennur and Jogu Ramanna of Adilabad have taken the lead in attacking BJP and its leaders, generating much heat within Adilabad district's political arena.

Not to be marginalised, Congress party leaders too have intensified their attacks against both TRS government in the state and BJP ruling the centre on issues of new farm laws and payment of pending crop insurance amounts to farmers under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana.

Congress leaders allege that both TRS and BJP have come to a mutual understanding among themselves in Telangana. That is the reason why Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar has started supporting farm laws, Congress leaders point out.

TRS MLA Jogu Ramanna and Adilabad MP Soyam Bapurao of BJP have been at loggerheads of late, while Chennur MLA Balka Suman has intensified his verbal attacks against the state leadership of BJP.

OBITUARY

With profound grief we regret to inform the sudden demise of
Smt. J. NIRMALA
on 25.01.2021.
Cremation will be performed on 27.01.2021 after 1:00 PM at East Marredpally Cremation Ground.
DOB: 27.1.1949 DOD: 25.1.2021
Inserted by:
P. Jagadishwar (Husband)
Retd. S.E. Panchayat Raj Dept.
Daughters and Sons-in-law
Mob: 9885246162
L/L: 040-27734082
H.No. 10-3-115/2,Teachers Colony, East Marredpally Secunderabad-500026.
(S/2021/D01127)

10th DAY CEREMONY

With Profound Grief We Inform the Sad Demise of
Shri DURGA PRASAD SISTA
On 18th January, 2021
10th Day Ceremony will be held on Wednesday, 27th January 2021 at LIG "B"-59, Dr. A.S. Rao Nagar, ECIL, Hyderabad.
In Grief: **ALL FAMILY MEMBERS**

Precious in the sight of the Lord is The death of His saints, -Psalm 116:15
79th BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE & 5th ANNIVERSARY

Rapaka Mary Vazram, B.A., B.ED.
W/o. Sri. R.V.S.Paul
D/o, Late Rev. Vijeswarapu Israel and Aseervadamma
DOB:27-01-1942 DOD: 27-01-2016
Inserted by **R.V.S.Paul, M.A.,** - Husband

OBITUARY

MRS AMALA NELSON
SLEPT IN THE LORD ON 26.01.2021.
DATE OF BIRTH : 12.12. 1944
BURIAL AT METTUGUDA CHRISTIAN CEMETERY AT 11 AM ON 27.01.2021.
INSERTED BY SON JUDE NELSON, DAUGHTER IN LAW NENCY AND GRAND CHILDREN KEILAH, ASHRIEL AND ELIJAH.

MEMORIAL SERVICE
When the time is right, I, the Lord, will make it happen. Isaiah 60:22

Mrs. Beatrice Rathniah
W/o Late Bandugula Rathniah
Entered into Glory - 23-01-2021
Memorial Service on Wednesday, the 27th January 2021, at 6 pm, at CSI Wesley Church, Musheerabad.
Inserted by: **Children, Grandchildren, Great Grandchildren and Relatives**
Ph: 9849462587, 9440428451 & 9700080009

CALLED HOME

KADAMANDLA JACOB JOSEPH
(Retd. Teacher, CSI - Parkal)
DOB: 01.06.1939 DOD: 26.01.2021
Inserted by:
KADAMANDLA FAMILY
Ph: 9502454275, 9502264284

OBITUARY
"Whoever Believes in Jesus Christ will not perish but have everlasting life" ***John 3:16***

B. ROHIT DAVID
S/o B. Vasanth Rao
DOB: 11.11.1987 DOD: 26.01.2021
Burial at Attapur Cemetery **on 27.01.2021 @ 2.00 PM.**
Inserted by: **FAMILY MEMBERS**
Ph: 7893412349, 9391008259

DEATH ANNIVERSARY

R.P. DUBE
Addtl. Suptd of Police (Retd)
"If tears could build a stairway and memories a lane, we would walk right up to heaven and bring you back again. Baba we all miss you a lot"
Inserted by:
Chitra Dube (Wife), Children and Grand Children
Ph:9246375729/ 27635729

Precious in the sight of the Lord is The death of His saints, -Psalm 116:15
79th BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE & 5th ANNIVERSARY

Rapaka Mary Vazram, B.A., B.ED.
W/o. Sri. R.V.S.Paul
DOB:27-01-1942 DOD: 27-01-2016
Inserted by **Children & Spouses**
Luther Rapaka and Anne
Arun Rapaka and Moses
Madhuri Rapaka and Kiron

1st Death Anniversary
I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Timothy 4:7

Sarojini Devapalana
(Retd. Headmistress)
Stanley Girls High School, Abids, Hyd
DOB: 16.12.1929 DOD: 27.01.2020
We miss you every moment in our life, your presence continues to surround us, in our hearts, you are always there.
Inserted by: **Family Members**
Ph.: 9989117760

BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE

RUMALLA KONDAIAH
Senior Advocate
DOB: 27-01-1932 DOD: 02-09-2012
You were loved and respected by everyone. Your memories are always remain in our hearts forever.
Inserted by:
Smt. Rumalla Pramila (Wife) Sons, Daughter, Son-in-law, Daughters-in-law, Grand Children and Great Grand Daughters and all Family Members.
(S/2021/D01125)

3rd ANNIVERSARY
Safe in the arms of Jesus
IN LOVING MEMORY OF

C.A. SAMARPAN ADAMS
Eldest Son of Late Prof. C.A. ADAMS
Prop. Deen Dayal Camera & Co.
Hyderabad, Bangalore
Inserted by : C.A. DANIEL ADAMS & Staff of Deen Dayal Camera & Co. Chikkadpally, Hyderabad. Ph:7396204502

BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE

C. SNEHALATHA BHOOPAL
27-01-1928 TO 19-10-2016
D/o. Bollampalli Ranga Reddy
W/o. Late C. Sreeram Bhoopal
Samasthan Sirnapalli.
P. Anuradha Reddy

Precious in the sight of the Lord is The death of His saints, -Psalm 116:15
79th BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE & 5th ANNIVERSARY

Rapaka Mary Vazram, B.A., B.ED.
W/o. Sri. R.V.S.Paul
DOB:27-01-1942 DOD: 27-01-2016
Inserted by **Grand Children**
Sanjana, Susan, Meghana, Aaron and Steven

"I will dwell in the House of the Lord forever". Psalms 23:6
17th ANNIVERSARY
In Fond Loving Memory Of

Mr. GANDURI SUNIL PRAKASH
DOB: 30.07.1969 DOD: 27.01.2004
Sunil, "Your Love and Sweet Memories will always be with us".
Inserted by **Parents: Mr. G. Joseph, Mrs. G.M. Dayasheela** (Bible Society)
Wife: Mrs. G. Subitha
Son: G. Aaron Joseph Vijay Prakash
Brother: G. Sukanth Prakash &
Sisters: Sumalini, Sushma, Madhuri.
Phone: 040-27061698, 9502304091
(S/2021/D01123)

SHORT TAKES

MAN KILLED IN ACCIDENT, WIFE INJURED

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

A 28-year-old was killed and his wife sustained injuries in a road accident late on Monday night on the Outer Ring Road. The Abdullapurmet police booked a case and started an investigation.

According to the police, Sharat Kumar, a civil engineer, was travelling towards Boduppal, heading for his home with his wife, Jyothi, at Boduppal via ORR after attending an event at Kokapet when they met with a mishap.

"Around quarter to 1, Sharat rammed the car into a lorry moving ahead on the ORR. While he succumbed to injuries on the spot, Jyothi survived with minor injuries," said Abdullapurmet inspector V. Swamy.

Jyothi mentioned in the petition that a possible brake fail might have caused the mishap, but police said that a vehicle inspection will ascertain the same. A case was booked and the body was shifted to Gandhi Hospital mortuary for post-mortem.

2 COLLECTORS, SP IN AP RELIEVED FROM DUTIES

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, JAN. 26

In response to the State Election Commission's order, several officials in AP including district collectors from Chittoor and Guntur have been relieved of their duties and their charges were handed over on Tuesday.

Chittoor collector N. Bharat Gupta handed over charge to joint collector-1 D. Markendeyulu. So did Guntur collector I. Samuel Anand who handed over charge to joint collector-1 A.S. Dinesh Kumar.

Superintendent of police, Tirupati Urban, Avula Ramesh Reddy handed over charge to SP, Chittoor, Senthil Kumar. Police officers including DSP Srikalahasthi and four CIs from Macherla, Punganur, Rayadurgam and Tadiparti are also being relieved of their duties. DSP Palamaneru, who got promoted as additional SP, is to be barred from poll-related work.

The SEC named nine officials for their failure in preventing aberrations in the election processes in the past and also for incidents of poll-related violence. Despite repeated requests to the chief secretary to remove these tainted officers, and as no response was forthcoming, the SEC invoked the plenary powers under article 243 (K) read with article 324 to remove them and issued the orders on January 22.

BLASTING DAMAGES YAGANTI TEMPLE

DC CORRESPONDENT
KURNOOL, JAN. 26

The centuries' old stone beam of Yaganti Temple has developed cracks due to blasts being carried by those undertaking mining operations in the area. Yaganti is a unique temple, where crows do not caw. Archaeology Department officials say they have put in temporarily supports for the beam. They would examine the damage and send a detailed report to state authorities.

Yaganti Umamaheswara Swamy temple in Kurnool district draws pilgrims from across the country. The stone beam at the top of the temple developed cracks due to mining blasts going on in the surrounding areas.

Archeology conservation assistant Y. Dhaka Reddy said mining for marble stones has been going on in the vicinity in an area of 1.5 kilometres from the temple site. Some corporate companies like JiyoJyothi (now Maha Cement), apart from local YSRCP leaders, have taken up mining despite the fact that 12 leases have been suspended in the area a few years back.

Mining assistant director Rama Siva Reddy said the issue of mining in and around the Umamaheswara Swamy temple will be examined. If anybody is found violating the law, the individual or organisation will be taken to task. He pointed out that last year, 12 mining leases in the area had been cancelled.

When asked if there was any unauthorised mining going on, he said that he would check it throughly and initiate action through the Mines Department at Banaganapalle.

TRS aims to keep BJP out of GHMC panels

TRS-MIM have the strength to elect all 15 panel members

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

After chalking out plans for capturing the top seats of Mayor and Deputy Mayor, the TRS aims to keep the BJP out of the standing committee meetings by way of resort to preferential voting in the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) council. The TRS-AIMIM members have the required strength to elect all 15 standing committee members.

According to the GHMC Act, 10 corporators from any political shade could elect one standing committee member. If more than 15 candidates are in the fray, a vote would follow.

TRS sources said that though the BJP can nominate its standing committee members, the saffron party did not have a majority in the council. With 100 corporators, the TRS and the MIM would take advantage and elect all 15 members through secret ballot. However, officials said as per the GHMC Act, all parties will have their due share based on the number of corporators elected from each party. The TRS would have six members, BJP five and MIM four. However, these officials said there are brighter chances of preferential voting.

As per the GHMC Act, a standing committee consisting of not less than five and not more than 15 members can be chosen by the corporators from among themselves. Every issue shall be decided by majority vote in the standing committee and the presiding authority will have a second or casting vote when required so.

The members of the standing committee shall hold office for a period of one year from the date of their selection. The Mayor or in his absence the deputy mayor shall be the ex-officio chairperson of the standing committee.

A GHMC official said it would conduct co-option and standing committee election soon after the oath-taking ceremony of the 150 ward members followed by the mayoral election. The term of the existing standing committee would expire on February 10. The nodal officer would issue a separate notification to conduct standing committee election. Asked about the lacunae in the GHMC Act pertaining to preferential voting, the official refused to comment.

Serial killer strikes again after murdering 16 women

NAVEEN KUMAR I DC
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

A serial killer who robbed and murdered 18 women in the past two decades has been arrested by the North Zone Task Force on Tuesday. He had been given life sentence by a court after he was found guilty of 16 murders and thefts and killed two more while he was out on bail in the last few months, police said.

Forty-year-old Maina Ramulu, a stone-cutter, was caught by police during investigation into a woman 'missing' case under Mulugu police station limits. The Siddipet and Ghatkesar police of Rachakonda effected the arrest, said Hyderabad police commissioner Anjani Kumar.

Police said he had been arrested several times in the past in connection with 21 cases, including 16 of murder and robbery, four property offences and one case of escaping from custody while being admitted at a mental institution.

Police said he was a life convict and on bail following an appeal he made to the high court.

The arrest was made after a complaint came to the Jubilee Hills police that resident Kavala Venkatamma 50, was missing. Her body was found near the railway track of Ankushapur village in Ghatkesar after a week of her disappearance.

To detect the case, the North Zone Task Force team along with Ghatkesar Police verified approximately 500 CCTV footages from the Yousufguda toddy shop compound to the Ankushapur railway track. The cops verified the modus operandi of the accused and identified the culprit as Ramulu.

"As he was a habitual offender with a criminal history, he was detained for questioning. He confessed to have killed the missing woman and also another woman. The second woman is yet to be identified."

The man confessed that he took the woman with him after they met at a toddy outlet to a secluded place, strangled her to death and fled with her valuables, said the commissioner.

Hyderabad police commissioner Anjani Kumar addresses a press conference on the arrest of a serial killer, in Hyderabad on Tuesday. — *By arrangement*

Took to crime after wife, lover eloped

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

Maina Ramulu's wife eloped with her lover a short while after marriage. Ramulu was aged 21 and deeply upset. He bore a grudge and started targeting married women. He would engage them in an affair with him. He ended up as a serial killer.

"The men who are married to these women will also suffer like I did. I wanted to avoid that and spare the men that pain by killing the women who came with me," Mania told the cops during questioning.

"His modus operandi is to approach married women in toddy compounds, usually aged between 35-45, and get them drunk before convincing them to come out with him to have sex. After taking them to a secluded area, he would strangle them and burn their faces by pouring alcohol so that identification would be difficult," said the cops.

He started the murders in 2003 and was sentenced to life imprisonment by the IVth additional district and sessions judge in 2011. This, after he was arrested by the Narsingi police. He was also slapped with a fine of ₹500. In the same year, he was admitted to Erragadda mental hospital for treatment and analysis.

He escaped from there with five other inmates and was caught by the cops in 2013. By then he had already murdered five more women. His latest two killings were done after he was released on bail in July 2020, police said.

Speed up Sectt work: CM to officials

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao inspected the progress of the ongoing construction works of New Secretariat complex on Tuesday.

The Chief Minister went around the campus and interacted with the engineers on the site and representatives of the constructing contractor.

The Chief Minister instructed them to speed up the work and asked them to maintain the highest quality standards in construction.

The Chief Minister visited the main entrance, the gates and the place where the main building complex is coming up and examined the designs.

Telangana ministers Vemula Prashanth Reddy, Mohammod Ali, Talasani Srinivas Yadav, Koppula Eshwar, government's chief adviser Rajiv Sharma, Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar, roads and buildings principal secretary Sunil Sharma, Engineer-in-Chief Ganapathi Reddy, Rythu Bandhu Samiti president Palla Rajeshwar Reddy, MLA Muthireddy Yadagiri Reddy accompanied the Chief Minister during the visit.

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao inspects plans for the new Secretariat building during a visit to the site on Tuesday. — *BY ARRANGEMENT*

DON'T DISCLOSE PHONE NUMBER ON DATING SITES: POLICE

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

The Cyberabad police on Tuesday cautioned people against disclosing their personal phone numbers on dating applications and social media platforms following the discovery of a new scam by inter-state gangsters from Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan. According to Cyberabad police Commissioner V.C. Sajjanar, the conmen set up a video call with a woman to random WhatsApp numbers. If the victim picks up, the women begins undressing to lure the victim.

"Once the victim falls in their trap, they record the video and threaten to post it on social media if the victim doesn't pay up," Sajjanar said.

Generally, the gangs collect the victims' contact details from dating applications and identify their social media accounts, and details of their friends and family members.

"In most cases they target reputable and financially sound persons who can afford to pay ransom. Hence, the police advise netizens to not pick up video calls from unknown numbers, and to not reveal data on social media apps," the official said. Those who are being targeted can approach the police, the police commissioner said.

- **"ONCE THE** victim falls in their trap, they record the video and threaten to post it on social media if the victim doesn't pay up," police commissioner Sajjanar said.
- **GENERALLY, THE** gangs collect the victims' contact details from dating applications and identify their social media accounts, and details of their friends and family members and blackmail them.

MSc grads stopped from teaching med students

KANIZA GARARI I DC
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

- **THE ASSOCIATION** president said that scientists teaching non-clinical subjects, like basic and allied medical sciences, is common across the world.

There is uproar over National Medical Commission (NMC) excluding MSc graduates from the list of those who can teach non-clinical subjects like microbiology and pharmacology in medical colleges of the country.

Reacting to the exclusion, National M. Sc Medical Teachers Association (NMMTA) pointed out that the Education Department does recognise MSc graduates as being qualified for teaching microbiology and pharmacology in medical colleges.

But in its latest guidelines, NMC has excluded them from being qualified in teaching non-clinical subjects in medical institutions. NMMTA, however, underlined that curriculum of these subjects does need to be upgraded basis on advances made in these sciences.

Association president Dr. Sridhar Rao says, "In absence of a regulating scientific council, there have been variations in these courses with respect to mode of admissions, course duration and dissertation.

The curriculum thus needs to be upgraded in keeping with changing times. Although the University Grants Commission recognises these courses, the Education Ministry has done little to modify these courses for teaching in medical colleges. The courses thus need reform," Dr Sridhar stated. He pointed out that there are more than 7,000 teachers teaching these courses. National Medical Commission excluding M. Sc graduates from teaching these subjects will severely affect their job prospects. NMMTA has already approached the health ministry taking objecting to guidelines issued by NMC in this regard.

The association president said scientists teaching non-clinical subjects, like basic and allied medical sciences, is common across the world. He demanded that the Health Ministry look into the matter immediately as it affects not only employment of post-graduates but also proper education of medical students.

Gangster stabbed to death

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

A rowdy-sheeter, identified as Feroz, was stabbed to death by unidentified persons in the RK Society area of Sanathnagar late on Monday night. Preliminary enquiries revealed that previous enmity is suspected to have led to the killing. Feroz was attacked with knives, resulting in bleeding injuries.

He was immediately shifted to the nearby hospital, where doctors declared him dead. The Sanathnagar police which began an investigation, is checking footage from surveillance. Sources said Feroz was earlier involved in the murder case of Wahed, a rowdy sheeter. Police suspect Wahed's associates could be behind the murder.

AP tries to make gram panchayat polls unanimous

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, JAN. 26

The state government on Tuesday enhanced incentives for the unanimous election of sarpanches and ward members in gram panchayats.

With Opposition parties raising a hue and cry against unanimous elections, dubbing them as acts of coercion by the ruling party, the state government sought to clarify that successive governments have been incentivising the display of unity by the villagers by electing their representatives unopposed.

Appealing to all stakeholders to strive for unanimous elections as they are being held on non-party basis to preserve peace and harmony in the villages, panchayat raj minister P. Ramachandra Reddy told mediapersons that it would be prudent to encourage unanimous elections so that the political interference would be reduced, chances of violence would be decreased and peace and harmony would exist in the villages.

Ramachandra Reddy said in 2001, villages with a population up to 5,000 were awarded ₹15,000, villages with a population between 5,000 and 15,000 were given ₹30,000 and ₹50,000 was given for villages with population above 15,000

In 2008, gram panchayats with population up to 15,000 were rewarded with ₹5 lakh and those having population of above 15,000 were given ₹15 lakh. In 2013, it was increased to ₹7 lakh and ₹20 lakh respectively.

Mr Ramchandra Reddy said under the leadership of Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, panchayat raj Act was amended and the incentives were increased.

Gram panchayats with a population less than 2,000 will be awarded ₹5 lakh, those with a population between 2,000 and 5,000 will be given ₹10 lakh, gram panchayats with a population between 5,000 and 10,000 will be awarded ₹15 lakh and those with population above 10,000 will be given ₹20 lakh. Municipal administration minister Botsa Satyanarayana said the government has increased the incentives to strengthen the administration at village level.

STONE LAID FOR NEW RESEARCH BODY ON QURAN

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

Former minister Mohammed Ali Shabbir, along with eminent Islamic scholar Moulana Shah Mohammed Jamal-ur-Rahman and religious leaders laid the foundation for the Holy Quran Research Centre and inaugurated Masjid-e-Bi Jaan Bi at Shivnoor, Narsingi in Medak district on Tuesday. Speaking to media persons after the inauguration of the mosque, Shabbir Ali, former Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Council, said that the mosque is located on four acres of land on National Highway 44. "It houses a beautiful mosque which has been constructed on the basis of Moghal and Turkish architecture resembling some of the beautiful mosques of Afghanistan. Besides a mosque, the complex will have a Holy Quran Research Centre, a residential hostel and other facilities," Shabbir Ali said. He said facilities like washrooms and dining area had been created for those travelling on NH 44. Passengers, especially those travelling to Bodhan, Nirmal, Nizamabad and Adilabad, could halt at the masjid complex to freshen up and offer prayers. He said that the research foundation would promote modern education and research by providing all facilities to the scholars.

Moulana Shah Jamalur Rahman exhorted Muslims to ensure that they perform prayers five times a day without fail. He stressed on maintaining peace and communal harmony in society.

Shabbir Ali

SAMPLE | ANALYSIS **CCMB research finds virus mutation is not very virulent**

SARS COV-2 shows mutation in TS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

The SARS-CoV-2, which causes Covid-19, has shown a mutation, N440K, in 34 per cent of the samples analysed in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra and Karnataka. The mutation was found to be not very virulent.

There are two more mutations — C120Y and P84T — in the state of Kerala. The mutations were noted in the samples analysed earlier this month. The two mutations found in Kerala are restricted to that state, and numbers are not very high.

A senior scientist from the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) said, "The samples are being collected to check on the mutations. Since there is a virulent mutation in the United Kingdom we want to check the mutations here. So far it has been noted that some mutations are restricted only to one state. Other mutations have spread. All the data will be collated to check which strain is more prevalent and accordingly steps taken."

Mutations are common in the virus and genome testing is the only way to help to understand the spread. Dr K.K. Agarwal, president of Confederation of Medical Association in Asia and Oceania, said, "The spread of mutated virus must be monitored strictly. The surveillance cannot be given up as cases are less."

STATE RECORDS 189 FRESH COVID-19 INFECTIONS, TWO MORE DEATHS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

The state recorded 189 Covid-19 cases and two deaths on Monday. The toll now stands at 1,592 and the caseload is 2,93,590, according to the daily bulletin issued by the state health department. With 38 cases, the GHMC area recorded the most cases on the day, followed by Ranga Reddy and Medchal Malkajgiri districts.

As many as 349 people recovered from Covid-19 between Sunday and Monday, taking the number of recoveries to 2,88,926.

Telangana state state now has 3,072 active cases, including 1,543 individuals in-home or institutional isolation.

SHORT TAKES

BASTAR VILLAGE UNFURLS NATIONAL FLAG FOR 1ST TIME

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC
BHOPAL, JAN. 26

The village of Chikpal, a Naxal stronghold, in Chhattisgarh's south Bastar district of Dantewada on Tuesday witnessed 'unfurling' of national flag for the first time since Independence on the occasion of 72nd Republic Day celebrations.

Dantewada district superintendent of police Abhishek Pallav unfurled the Tricolour in the village in the presence of around 2,000 villagers.

"Naxals used to hoist red and black flags in the village for decades. This was the first time since Independence, the people in the village celebrated the Republic Day by unfurling the national flag", Pallav told this newspaper.

This was a significant development as the village was considered a Naxal stronghold and strategically important for Maoists as the village has hitherto been used as a passage by ultras for their movement from Odisha to Chhattisgarh without being challenged by security forces.

"Presence of around 2,000 villagers on the occasion has sent a message to the Naxals that one of their key strongholds has been breached by security forces. This is a very significant development", Pallav said. The area falls under the jurisdiction of Katekalyan area committee, considered one of most dangerous formations of outlawed CPI (Maoist).

Significantly, 24 Maoists, three of them carrying a bounty of ₹1 lakh each on their heads, surrendered before the police on the occasion.

JD(U) AVOIDS QUERY ON PADMA AWARD TO PASWAN

Patna, Jan. 26: The JD(U) on Tuesday squirmed at suggestions that a posthumous Padma Bhushan award for former Union minister Ram Vilas Paswan indicated the BJP's fondness for the LJP, founded by the late leader and headed by his son Chirag who has turned renegade.

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, de facto leader of the JD(U) who has known Paswan senior for many decades, had on Monday night come out with a statement expressing delight over a number of people from Bihar, including the late leader, receiving the Padma awards.

At a function organised at the JD(U) headquarters here on the occasion of Republic Day, journalists sought reaction on Padma Bhushan for Paswan from R.C.P. Singh, a key aide of Kumar who replaced his mentor as the party's national president last month. A former career bureaucrat, Singh sought to wriggle out with a generic reply.

"We extend our congratulations to all distinguished persons who have received the civilian honours. We extend the same to family members of those on whom these have been conferred posthumously", he said.

COVID: INDIA SEES LOWEST NO. OF CASES IN 8 MNTHS

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JAN. 26

India recorded its lowest number of daily new cases after eight months with 9,102 persons found positive to Coronavirus in the last 24 hours. The active cases have now come down to 1.66% of the cumulative positive cases (1.77 lakh). The daily fatalities also dropped to 117 after more than eight months.

At the same time, the number of vaccinated healthcare workers was 20.29 lakhs on Tuesday. "India has crossed a crucial milestone in its fight against the global pandemic. The daily new cases have touched a new low today, 9,102 daily new cases were added to the national tally in the last 24 hours after 237 days. The daily new cases were 9,304 on 4th June, 2020," Union health ministry officials said.

Health ministry officials said with a sustained, pro-active and calibrated strategy of the Centre based on 'whole of government' and 'whole of society' approach, the daily new cases have seen a consistent decline. This has ensured a steady fall in daily fatalities too.

Kerala reported the maximum daily new cases 3,361 in the last 24 hours while Maharashtra recorded 1,842 new cases and Tamil Nadu reported 540 new cases.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi waves to the public at Rajpath, during the 72nd Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi on Tuesday. — PTI

Army tanks and other weapon systems being showcased during the 72nd Republic Day parade at Rajpath, in New Delhi on Tuesday. — PTI

Workers take soil samples for tests from the over 5 acre land which has been allotted for the construction of a mosque after the Supreme Court verdict on Ram Janmabhoomi-Babari Masjid case, at Dhannipur, Tuesday. The foundation stone for the mosque was symbolically laid on Republic Day in the village, about 25 km from the under-construction Ram temple, being built in Ayodhya. — PTI

A tableaux of the government biotechnology department showing Covid-19 vaccine passes through Rajpath during the 72nd Republic Day celebrations, in New Delhi on Tuesday. — PTI

India showcases its military might

Bhawna Kanth becomes first female fighter jet pilot to be part of IAF's tableau

New Delhi, Jan. 26: The newly inducted Rafale fighter aircraft was the show-stopper as India displayed its military might and vibrant cultural heritage on Rajpath on the 72nd Republic Day on Tuesday, with the ceremonial event this year being drastically scaled down in view of the Covid-19 pandemic.

India also displayed its key assets from the Army, including T-90 tanks and BrahMos missile system, BMP-II, two Pinaka multiple launch rocket system, two bridge laying tanks, electronic warfare equipment Samvijay and one upgraded Schilka air defence weapon system, the last one being Captain Preeti Choudhary from 140 Air Defence Regiment (Self Propelled).

The ceremony began with Prime Minister Narendra Modi leading the nation in paying homage to the martyrs by laying a wreath at the National War Memorial. Defence minister Rajnath Singh, chief of defence staff Gen Bipin Rawat, Army chief Gen M.M. Naravane, Navy chief Admiral Karambir Singh and IAF chief Air Chief Marshal R.K.S. Bhadauria were also present on the occasion.

The parade, commanded by Lt.Gen. Vijay Kumar Mishra, with Maj.Gen. Alok Kacker as the second-in-command, began with President Ram Nath Kovind taking the salute. The national flag was unfurled followed by the national anthem, synchronised with a 21-gun salute.

The replica of the Ram temple planned at Ayodhya was part of the Uttar Pradesh tableau. As it rolled down Rajpath, many among the spectators, including ministers, stood up to applaud. The tableau had a giant statue of sage Valmiki and depicted various stories from Ramayana.

Another first at the ceremony was a 122-member marching-cum-band contingent of the Bangladesh armed forces taking part in the parade.

The Bangladeshi tri-services contingent was the first marching contingent to walk down the ceremonial boulevard.

Lt.Col. Abu. Md Shahnoor Shawon of the Bangladesh army, who spearheaded the parading contingent said, "It was an honour for us to be part of this august ceremony of India, and that too in the 50th year of our Independence. And, India gave us the honour to lead the parade."

Sarang Helicopters fly past Rajpath during the 72nd Republic Day Parade in New Delhi on Tuesday. — PTI

The Bangladeshi military band right behind the marching contingent played six tunes in all, including some of the iconic ones like war song *Chal Chal Chal* by poet Kazi Nazrul Islam, and *Shono Ekti Mujiborer*.

Known otherwise to witness huge bustling crowds across many age groups, the annual ceremonial event at Rajpath was scaled down this time in view of the Coronavirus pandemic, with spectators' size drastically cut to 25,000 from about 1.25 lakh last year.

From members of contingents to spectators, everyone wore masks, the audience maintained the mandated distance while sitting, and standing spectators were not allowed.

The marching contingents' route was also curtailed and they stopped at the National Stadium this year instead of following the regular route all the way to the Red Fort.

The size of the marching contingents was also reduced from regular 144 to 96 so that they could maintain social distancing, a senior official said.

Due to Covid-19 safety norms, gravity-defying stunts by motorcycle-borne men — a major attraction for the crowd at Republic Day celebrations on the Rajpath — were also missing this year.

Depicting the nation's rich cultural heritage, 17 tableaux from states and UT, and nine from different Union ministries and paramilitary forces took part in the 72nd Republic Day celebrations.

Six tableaux from the defence arm, including one each from the Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Navy, were also part of the parade. Flt Lt Bhawana Kanth, the first woman pilot of the IAF was part of its tableau, which depicted scaled down models of Light Combat Aircraft, Light Combat Helicopter, Su-30 MKI and Rohini radar.

The Navy's tableau displayed models of Indian naval ship (INS) Vikrant and naval operations that were conducted during the 1971 India-Pakistan war.

India is currently celebrating the Swarnim Vijay Varsh — the Golden Jubilee year — commemorating the country's victory over Pakistan in the 1971 war that led to the creation of Bangladesh.

Young Union Territory of Ladakh made its debut in the extravaganza on Rajpath with a beautiful tableau depicting the iconic Thikse Monastery and its rich cultural heritage.

The Union Territory of Ladakh was created in 2019 after the central government bifurcated the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Other states and UT which showcased the diversity of India included Gujarat, Assam, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh, Punjab, Tripura, West Bengal, Sikkim, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh and Delhi.

Ancient city Ayodhya's heritage, replica of a Ram temple, glimpse of 'Deepotsav' and various stories from Ramayana epic were depicted in the tableau of Uttar Pradesh in the parade. — PTI

RAVI RUES MENACE OF RAMPANT EXTORTIONS

MANOJ ANAND | DC
GUWAHATI, JAN. 26

Nagaland Governor and Prime Minister's envoy for Naga peace talks R.N. Ravi on Tuesday said that the menace of rampant extortions under the guise of illegal taxation by anti-social elements in Nagaland has not yet been fully curbed which has been creating a sense of fear among businesses, small and large, and inhibit entrepreneurship that severely undermines the economy and growth of the state.

Pointing out that police and security forces have been taking action against such elements, Ravi in his Republic Day's address, however, said that the state government has also continued its efforts to curb the menace of extortion and illegal taxation.

Asserting that the state hasn't seen any major eruption of law and order problem for some time Ravi reiterated that illegal taxation by anti-social elements hampers development.

Pointing out that Nagaland is rich in natural resources and endowed with one of the finest human resources Ravi regretted that the people of Nagaland have not been able to reap optimum benefit of these as well as various progressive schemes of the Central and state governments because some extra constitutional entities in the guise of espousing the Naga national cause have queered the pitch for the people and the government and kept the peace and progress at bay. He said that the Centre has taken several political initiatives for its enduring resolutions from time to time.

PARTY | ISSUES

Ghoshal compares Shubhendu Adhikari's popularity with that of Mamata

Disgruntled TMC MLA quits party posts

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC with agency inputs
KOLKATA, JAN. 26

Rebel Trinamul Congress MLA of Uttarpara, in Hooghly, Prabir Ghoshal on Tuesday publicly quit his two party posts, alleging that a section of party leaders was attempting to ensure his defeat in the coming West Bengal Assembly election.

He also compared newly-inducted BJP leader Shubhendu Adhikari's popularity with party supremo and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. Within a few hours of Ghoshal's public resignation, the TMC issued him a show-cause notice.

In the morning the journalist-turned MLA told the media, "I have lot of grievances which were not addressed. After Lok Sabha polls, I repeatedly alerted the party of a disease like cancer infecting the rank and file. But there was no response. Rectification is needed in the party because good men cannot work here amid bad faces. Otherwise party will have to pay the price." He said, "I once thought I would resign as an MLA but I did not do it because common people need MLA's signature for their "purposes." I now feel isolated in the party and hence resign as a district TMC core committee member and spokesperson. The day MLA Laxmi Ratan Shukla quit our party, I told the CM that it is better for me not to contest the election in view of the problems in Uttarpara constituency. She then asked me to fight the polls from any other seat, if needed."

Ghoshal claimed, "After Banerjee, if there was someone popular and important like her in the TMC that was Shubhendu. He should have been retained. But there was gap in efforts. Otherwise Shubhendu would not have defected to the BJP."

He also complained that he was not invited to the CM's rally at Purshura on Monday. Stung by his explosive outburst, the TMC showcaused and cautioned Ghoshal in the afternoon, suspecting his secret link with the BJP. He, however, rejected the possibility of his rapport with the saffron party.

Meanwhile, BJP leader Shubhendu Adhikari on Tuesday claimed that more MLAs will desert the TMC in the coming days and wondered whether West Bengal Chief Minister will contest from their seats as well.

The Chief Minister has announced that she will contest from Nandigram seat, of which Adhikari was the sitting MLA, besides her Bhowanipore constituency after the former transport minister in Banerjee's cabinet quit the ruling party in the state, sparking an exodus of TMC leaders to the BJP.

"Banerjee has announced that she will contest from Nandigram seat where she will be trounced. Besides, her vote share in Bhowanipore constituency has also shrunk drastically since the 2019 elections. The TMC supremo may also declare in the coming days that she will contest from Domjur or Bally seats. But, wherever she goes, she will face the music," Adhikari said addressing a public meeting.

The TMC turncoat claimed that "lotus will bloom" in the entire Adhikari family by Ram Navami and even in the Banerjee household by mid-February.

SHORT TAKES

TRACTOR MARCH HELD PEACEFULLY IN AURANGABAD

Aurangabad, Jan. 26: A tractor march organised here in Maharashtra on Tuesday to extend support to the protesting farmers in New Delhi passed off peacefully.

Around 150 to 200 people, five tractors, cars, and two-wheelers participated in the morcha, which started from Delhi Gate and culminated at Bhadkal gate, separated by a distance of about 2.2 kms.

The march was organised by the Maharashtra Rajya Kisan Sabha and the Maharashtra Rajya Lal Bawta Shetmajur Union.

Some workers of the Congress also joined the procession.

Ram Baheti, one of the organisers of the march, told reporters that around 4,000 volunteers from Aurangabad had recently visited Delhi and participated in the agitations being held at borders of the national capital.

He said the three agri laws were anti-constitutional since the government didn't send the draft bills to a joint parliamentary committee.

On eruption of violence during the tractor parade in New Delhi earlier in the day, Baheti said the lathicharge by police on farmers is condemnable. "The clashes occurred because of the stubborn stand of the Central government," he added.

PROTESTER UNFURLS TRICOLOUR

Mumbai, Jan. 26: Thousands of cultivators, who had arrived here from parts of Maharashtra to protest against the Centre's farm laws, left for their homes on Tuesday after an elderly woman agitator hoisted the national flag at the Azad Maidan in Mumbai.

To mark the Republic Day, the flag hoisting was held at the ground in south Mumbai at around 9.30 am following which the protesters headed towards their native places, the All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) said.

The farmers held a rally at the Azad Maidan on Monday to express solidarity with peasants agitating near Delhi borders against the Centre's three new farm laws.

NCP president Sharad Pawar, Maharashtra Congress chief Balasaheb Thorat, Peasants and Workers Party leader Jayant Patil and various farmers' representatives had attended the rally on Monday.

Around 15,000 farmers had arrived in the state capital for the rally, the Maharashtra unit of the AIKS earlier said.

"The flag hoisting ceremony was held at the Azad Maidan on Tuesday morning. After that, farmers headed towards their homes. The movement is in line with what we had decided earlier," AIKS president Ashok Dhawale said.

PATEL CONDEMNS ACTION OF FARMERS

New Delhi, Jan. 26: Union minister of tourism and culture Prahlad Patel on Tuesday condemned the actions of a section of farmers who entered the Red Fort as part of their tractor rally and said it violated the symbol of dignity of India's democracy.

Deviating from the designated route for the proposed tractor parade, a section of protesting farmers who were pushed back by the police form the ITO in Central Delhi drove their tractors to Red Fort complex.

The crowd swelled at the monument as some protesting farmers and 'Nihangs' (traditional Sikh warriors) were seen entering the Red Fort and hoisting a flag from the staff from which Prime Minister unfurls the tricolour on Independence Day.

"The Red Fort is a symbol of the dignity of our democracy. The farmers should have stayed away from it. I condemn the violation of this dignity. It is sad and unfortunate," Patel said in a tweet.

Earlier, a clash broke out between police and protesting farmers after the latter reached ITO and tried to push towards Lutyen's Delhi, prompting the force to resort to lathicharge and use tear gas shells against them.

The farmers who began their march from different border points, much before the time permitted to them for their tractor rally, reached ITO in Central Delhi despite the force denying them permission for it.

Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan chants fill the air

Shouting slogans farmers poured into Delhi on tractors, horses, cranes and motorbikes

New Delhi, Jan. 26: Chanting *rang de basanti* and *jai jawan jai kisan* numerous farmers rode tractors, motorbikes, horses and even cranes to cross the national capital's borders into the city for their proposed parade against the three contentious farm laws.

Locals stood on both sides of the roads at various locations showering flower petals on the farmers amid drum beats.

Standing atop vehicles decked up with flags, the protesters danced to the tune of patriotic songs such as *Aisa desh hai mera* and *Sare jahan se achcha*.

"People think farmers are only meant to plough their fields. But there is much more to a farmer's life. We also ride motorbikes and horses though we worship our tractors as it helps in earning our bread and butter.

"Today, everything is on display in this historical rally," said Gagan Singh, a protestor riding a horse to the parade.

Parmajeet Bibi, a woman in her late 40s, who was riding a tractor said, "Women are not just cooking at community kitchens. We help men in fields and we are riding tractors in this rally to send out a strong message".

Aditya Pajetta, a farmer from Haryana's Yamuna Nagar, carried a 15-kg plough on his shoulder while marching from Singhu border.

"Our fight is to save this plough. Generations have been involved in farming and it will be a pity if we cannot save their legacy. I have started marching from Singhu border and will carry it to the spot where the rally will conclude," he said.

The cranes which were part of the rally had a makeshift podium on the top with a mattress at the front for people to sit.

The Tricolour and flags of different farmer unions fluttered as marches began from Singhu, Tikri and Ghazipur border points, much ahead of the time decided for the tractor parade. Security personnel tried to convince the protesters to stick to the designated route and time and maintain peace.

"We support the demands of farmers. We survive on what they produce and it is time we stand up for them. We salute their spirit," said Rani Devi, whose family was applying tilak to forehead of the participants.

Thousands of farmers, mostly from Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh, have been camping at several Delhi border points since November 28, demanding a complete repeal of three farm laws and a legal guarantee on minimum support price for their crops.

It was a never seen before moment for thousands of people who gathered at roadsides and perched on the rooftops and balconies watching the tractor parade taken out by farmer unions on Tuesday.

The parade taken out from Tikri, Singhu, Ghazipur and other border points of the national capital received a warm welcome with locals showering flower petals, offering food and water and greeting them with slogans and cheers.

"I have never seen a tractor parade such as this. This is New India for me. I am recording this for my grandchildren who are too little to understand its importance now. I am sure they will thank me for this later," said Anita Batwal, 62, retired school teacher.

Many bystanders who witnessed the parade termed the farmers their brothers and guests who were fighting for their rights.

"My husband and I have come to welcome them. They are our guests. We lost our land in UP in a court battle, we know their pain," said Kamla from Boodhpur Delhi.

A large number of people near Anand Vihar railway station lined the roadsides and recorded the tractor parade as farmers from Ghazipur drove past. People cheered and waved at the farmers riding tractors and those walking on foot.

"It is bigger and better than what we expected. Local people cheering for us throughout the route has motivated us further. We will take what is our. *Ab Delhi door nahi,"* said 23-year-old Jaspal Singh from Gurdaspur in Punjab, taking part in the parade.

Local people showered flower petals at the cavalcade of tractors and other vehicles passing through Mundka village and offered food and water to the farmers.

"They are our brothers. Will do whatever it takes to help them in their struggle. They are fighting for all of us. This is just a little contribution from our end to tell them we stand by them," said Chant Singh, 45, a local distributing food and water.

The whole nation, in fact people across the world should know about this farmers' revolution taking place here in Delhi, said 32-year-old Jaskaran Bajwa who was busy making Facebook Live while sitting atop a brand new tractor.

The people as well as the farmers recorded the parade using cellphones, with many saying history was being scripted.

— PTI

1. Security personnel baton charge a protester during clashes after the farmers tractor rally turned violent on Republic Day in New Delhi on Tuesday.

2. Protesting farmers corner two policemen during clashes at Red Fort.

3. Combo picture shows a policeman falling from a rampart of the Red Fort during clashes with protesting farmers who had gathered there after their tractor parade.

4. Farmers participate in a tractor rally after breaking police barricades at Singhu border near Bhalswa landfill site in New Delhi on Tuesday. *— PTI*

Sikh religious flag 'Nishan Sahib' hoisted by protesters at Red Fort

Chandigarh, Jan. 26: The saffron flag hoisted by protesters from a staff at the iconic Red Fort during their tractor parade against the farm laws on Tuesday was the 'Nishan Sahib', a symbol of Sikh religion seen at all Gurdwara complexes.

The 'Nishan Sahib' is a triangular flag that is sacred to Sikhs. The emblem on the flag comprises of 'Khanda', a two-edged sword, Chakra, a disc, and two Kirpans that cross each other at the handles. The other flag appeared to be of a farmer union.

Describing as "most unfortunate" the incident of a protesting farmer hoisting a flag at the Red Fort, senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor said he supported the farmers' protests from the start but cannot condone "lawlessness". He asserted that on Republic Day no flag but the sacred Tiranga should fly aloft the Red Fort. "Most unfortunate. I have supported the farmers' protests from the start but I cannot condone lawlessness. And on #RepublicDay no flag but the sacred tiranga should fly aloft the Red Fort," the former Union minister said on Twitter, tagging a tweet which carried a video of the incident.

Wielding sticks and clubs and holding the Tricolour and union flags, tens of thousands of farmers atop tractors broke barriers, clashed with police and entered the city from various points to lay siege to the Red Fort and climb the flagpole on Republic Day.

Actor Deep Sidhu, who was among those present during the incident, on Tuesday sought to defend their action, saying it was a symbolic protest and they did not remove the national flag.

He said that they should not be given any communal colour or dubbed as fundamentalists or hardliners. *— PTI*

Samyukta Morcha condemns violence

New Delhi, Jan. 26: Farmers' union body Samyukta Kisan Morcha on Tuesday disassociated itself from those who indulged in violence during the tractor parade, and alleged some "antisocial elements" infiltrated their otherwise peaceful movement.

The union also condemned and regretted the "undesirable" and "unacceptable" events as the parade turned violent after several groups of farmers deviated from the pre-decided route for the march.

The Samkyukt Kisan Morcha, an umbrella body of 41 farmer unions, is leading the protest against the three central farm laws at several border points of Delhi.

"We thank farmers for the unprecedented participation in Tuesday's farmers' Republic Day Parade. We also condemn and regret the undesirable and unacceptable events that have taken place today and dissociate ourselves from those indulging in such acts.

"Despite all our efforts, some organisations and individuals have violated the route and indulged in condemnable acts. Antisocial elements had infiltrated the otherwise peaceful movement. We have always held that peace is our biggest strength, and that any violation would hurt the movement," the farmers' body said in a statement.

THE UNION condemned and regretted the 'undesirable' and 'unacceptable' events as the parade turned violent after several groups of farmers deviated from the pre-decided route for the march.

Its statement comes as farmers clashed with police at several places in the national capital.

A protesting farmer died at Delhi's ITO after his tractor overturned.

Police also had to use lathicharge and teargas shells to control unruly protesters at multiple locations in the city.

"We dissociate ourselves from all such elements that have violated our discipline. We appeal strongly to everyone to stick to the route and norms of the parade, and not indulge in any violent action or anything that taints national symbols and dignity. We appeal to everyone to desist from any such acts.

"We are trying to get a full picture of all the events with regard to the several parades that were planned on Tuesday and will share a full statement soon. Our information is that apart from some regrettable violations, the parades are underway peacefully as per plan," it said.

Wielding sticks and clubs and holding the tricolour and union flags, tens of thousands of farmers atop tractors broke barriers, clashed with police and entered the city from various points to lay siege to the Red Fort and climb the flagpole on Republic Day on Tuesday.

Farmers, mostly from Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh, have been camping at several Delhi border points, including Tikri, Singhu and Ghazipur, since November 28, demanding a complete repeal of three farm laws and a legal guarantee on minimum support price for their crops. — PTI

Violence is no solution: Rahul

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JAN. 26

As the unprecedented violent protests broke out in the national capital on the Republic Day, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said that violence is no solution to any problem. Taking to Twitter, Gandhi said, "Violence is not the solution to any problem. If anyone gets hurt, the damage will happen to our country. Take back the anti-farmer law for the benefit of the country."

While he was against the violence he once again reiterated his party's stand that the Center should take back the controversial farm laws.

The Congress has been supportive of the concerns of farmers. It was the first political outfit to take out a tractor rally in Punjab after the laws were passed in parliament. The party has also given its full support to the protesting farmers. In the recently held meeting of the Congress working committee CWC the party passed a resolution demanding the farm laws be taken back.

In her remarks the Congress president Sonia Gandhi had said, "It is abundantly clear that the three laws were prepared in haste and Parliament was consciously denied an opportunity for examining in any meaningful details their implications and impacts. Our position has been very clear from the very beginning, we reject them categorically because they will destroy the foundations of food security that are based on the three pillars of MSP, public procurement and PDS."

DIDI SLAMS CENTRE FOR FARMERS' STIR

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC
KOLKATA, JAN. 26

West Bengal Chief Minister and Trinamul Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee, who has been vehemently opposing the three farm laws, blamed the Centre for the farmers' siege at the Red Fort on Tuesday.

In the afternoon she tweeted, "Deeply disturbed by worrying & painful developments that have unfolded on the streets of Delhi. Centre's insensitive attitude and indifference towards our farmer brothers & sisters has to be blamed for this situation."

DECCAN Chronicle

27 JANUARY 2021

History made on R-Day, but disorder regrettable

For the first time since the birth of the Republic of India on January 26, 1950, Republic Day this year wasn't just the traditional military parade on New Delhi's Rajpath but also the tractors' parade by tens of thousands of farmers in the nation's capital, venting their demands that have caught the country's attention for many months.

History was thus made. But it didn't turn out to be entirely peaceful as the chief coordinating body of the dozens of farmers' unions may have desired. Providing dramatic television footage, in some parts of the city, hundreds of farmers clashed with the police, which resorted to lathicharges and teargas shelling, but on the whole conducted itself with reasonable restraint.

Had a volatile section of the farmers not veered off the route marked out for the tractor parade by the Delhi police, rushed inside the Red Fort — Delhi's iconic landmark which has symbolised India's grandeur in unity since the mid-nineteenth century — and raised their sectional banners from one of its flagpoles, although taking care to keep these at a lower level than the tricolour which flutters there, the chaos and disorder that marked the day might not have drawn the kind of attention it now has.

The disorder unleashed by a section of farmers, although the main body of the parade stuck to orderly conduct, is apt to turn the spotlight on the agitation leaders. Their tactical skills will be tested.

The Samyukta Kisan Morcha, the federating body of farmers' unions whose thousands of members have been camped at Delhi's borders for two months along with their families, braving intense cold weather, were quick to dissociate their wholly peaceful agitation from the sporadic violence, disorder and chaos of the day.

The farmers' organisations, from chiefly Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh in northern India, have been pressing for their demand for the repeal of three agricultural reform laws since about the middle of last year. Lately, there have been protests in sympathy by farmers in other parts of the country too. With the Narendra Modi government adopting an unbending stance in the negotiations, and right-wing social media groups seeking to malign the farmers as anti-national, the agriculturists decided to parade their determination by entering the capital city on Republic Day.

This was also an unspoken assertion that the historic day belonged as much to the people as to the State which commemorates it by staging a military show each year. However, the disorder unleashed by a section of farmers, although the main body of the parade stuck to orderly conduct, is apt to turn the spotlight on the agitation leaders. Their tactical skills will be tested. They will need to remain united — if they are serious about their demands — while ensuring the isolation of violent elements. It is to be hoped that the government will be dispassionate in investigating who the troublemakers were, especially focusing on whether fifth columnists had infiltrated to give the months-long peaceful agitation a bad name.

Republic Day in India is high on ceremony and is associated with form. It is this aspect that was breached by the events of the day. As the Covid-19 pandemic is still around, the official celebration was kept at a reduced scale. If this offered a flavour of the times — the parade of the "kisans", practically in tandem with the "jawans", who put up the traditional military display — offered a glimpse of the people's history through the staging of a democratic protest even if it went somewhat awry.

Bihar cops overstep limits

The Bihar police's warning of legal action against social media users who criticise the government, netas and babus stems from over-enthusiasm of the top cops. The threat appears to come from officers who appear to be so beholden to their political masters that they are prepared to step beyond boundaries in playing up to their hypersensitive bosses. The warning from the inspector general of Bihar Police has been served against "offensive" posts, but there are already ways to curb any overt misuse of social media by raising the issue with those who provide these platforms like Twitter, Facebook and others.

In threatening to make offensive use of social media a cyber-crime, the Bihar police are overstepping the bounds of law as there are no provisions in cyber-crime laws to deal with it since the Supreme Court struck down Section 66A of the IT Act. Police can find other provisions in "prescribed laws" to pressure activists who target netas and babus but they would be well advised not to as they would be setting a bad precedent in circumscribing freedom of expression and trampling upon the right to free speech. It is not for a branch of the executive like the police to creatively use existing laws to browbeat critics.

The Bihar chief minister, Nitish Kumar, has not helped matters either by talking up against criticism of the government on social media. Having chosen to be in public life, netas must face up to criticism. Dissent is legitimate in a democracy and it cannot be trampled upon nor can officials hide under ill-advised police action to muzzle those who criticise them or expose their corrupt ways. There are processes to deal with inflammatory social media posts stoking communal tensions or inciting violence and defamatory ones through civil and criminal action. The Bihar government would do well to junk police advice and respond to criticism with just good governance.

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KAUSHIK MITTER
Editor

K. SUDHAKAR
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DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:

Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad - 500 003, Ph: 040-27803930-4; Fax : 040-27805256
Vijayawada: No.C-3 & 4 Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.), Ph: 0866-2555284/2555287; Telefax: 0866-2555234
Visakhapatnam: Survey No.1/3A Beach Road, Near Kailasagiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017 (A.P), Ph: 0891-2552333/2552334; Fax: 0891-2755285
Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhawaleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry, Ph: 0883-2417618/2417208; Telefax: 0883-2417208
Anantapur: Thapovan colony, Bangalore By-Pass Road, Anantapur - 515004, Ph: 08554-276903; Fax: 08554-276904
Karimnagar: Survey No.1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar - 505 001, Ph: 0878-2228908; Telefax: 0878-2220433
Nellore: Survey No.527/2, Burranpur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chemmudugunta Panchayat, Nellore, Ph: 0861-2348581/82; Telefax: 0861-2348580
Chennai: SP-3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600 032, Ph: 044-22254747/ 48/50/51; Advt Fax: 22254765/22254766/42305325
Coimbatore: 77, Vivekananda Road, Ramnagar, Coimbatore - 641 009, Ph : 0422 2231255
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Subhani

Biden's real challenge is to fix America's finances

Mohan Guruswamy

Thomas L. Friedman is a *New York Times* columnist and three-time Pulitzer Prize winner and is possibly the world's foremost globalisation evangelist. A kind of Billy Graham of globalisation. His first book *The World is Flat* came at a time when globalisation was still in its early days and was seen by many as the wave of the future and a panacea to the world's economic ills. Globalisation is described as the process in which people, ideas and goods spread throughout the world, spurring more interaction and integration between the world's cultures, governments and economies.

But what it turned out to be in practice is a system where the low-cost producers ended up as providers to America's gargantuan appetite for manufactured goods. They got paid in US dollars, which they promptly invested in US banks or treasury notes. American banking institutions in turn lent most of it to US consumers and companies who then bought more from us with that money. In 2020, the US posted a trade deficit of $880 billion. But for the Covid-19 pandemic-induced economic contraction this was headed for a trillion dollars. This is the money the rest of the world salivates for. The US dollar is the world's most trusted and preferred currency. That is directly related to the rest of the world's confidence in the US system and its credibility. Is it any surprise then that 66 per cent of the world's reserves are held in US dollars? Even China holds almost $3 trillion in US notes. India has $548 billion. This cycle of production, consumption, conversion, credit and demand is what globalisation has in fact become. Without the annual US deficits, the rest of the world will stagnate.

Every thinking American knows that the good times will not last forever. Former President Barack Obama tried to set it right by promising to narrow America's trade deficit or possibly ending it in 10 years by seeking to make US businesses competitive. He planned to make the US the centrepiece of a new Indo-Pacific trading bloc (Trans-Pacific Partnership) to blunt China's export surge and burgeoning trade surpluses. He failed. He left the US with an annual trade deficit of $568 billion in 2016. Then Donald Trump picked up the gauntlet. He threw out the TPP and sought to beat down China's growing economic power with a sledgehammer as policy. He raised tariffs and banned many companies and their products. It only ended up with US consumers having to pay more and the US having to subsidise its farmers more as China dropped shutters on US farm products. By the time he was through he left the US with a trade deficit of $880 billion in 2020. Now he has gone, and Joseph R. Biden has to pick it up from there.

The problem with the Americans is that they have the problem defined wrong in the first place. The problem is not about the US sliding into oblivion because its education system is faltering, or its R&D is flagging, or because Americans have ceased to be innovative and finally that China and India are beating it at all this. Far from being America's competitors, China and India are still its under-economies, serving it with cheap labour working on repetitive jobs and repetitive number crunching. The problem with the US is that it lives far beyond its means and its profligacy has left it as debtor unable to pay its bills by endeavour, but by printing new banknotes. The problem with the unlimited printing of banknotes is that the more you print the less they can do.

The American crisis began unfolding when Richard Nixon disengaged the US dollar from the gold standard. Remember how we in the ex-colony of the empire upon which the sun never set used to refer to the UK pound as sterling? That was because every British pound was linked to a gold equivalent in weight. That's how world currencies were valued then.

That was the basis of exchange rates. In one fell swoop, Richard Nixon, aka Tricky Dicky, unable to finance his twin wars in Vietnam and Cambodia, found a way out. Delink the US dollar from the gold standard and put the printing presses at its five Federal Reserves to full use. This had gone on over 40 long years and the birds have begun to come home to roost. Its two seaboards, the US' blue wings, keep it soaring. In the east the "masters of the universe" have invented an ideology — globalisation — that makes them the rest of the world's money managers. That money drives domestic consumption with easy credit. That money also drives the relentless innovation in America's west that drives global production and consumption. It's the geographical middle with its wheat, corn and soyabean fields, industrial scale production of poultry, pork, beef and dairy products and with its shuttered factories, that is blaming the rest of the world for its relative penury. They want to make America great again by making, if not all, but most of the world's manufactured goods. These need the giant steel mills and chemical plants gushing out industrial material to turn into industrial and consumer products. All those have also bolted. There is little President Biden can do to reverse it. The genie has left the American bottle and America's industries have mostly gone overseas.

The American crisis began unfolding when Richard Nixon disengaged the US dollar from the gold standard. Remember how we in the ex-colony of the empire used to refer to the UK pound as sterling?

The error in Friedman's analysis is that declining education standards, declining spending on R&D and productivity have led to the American crisis. President Obama never tired of stating this. Assuming the US sets right its high school education and the maths proficiency of its kids are on par with that of Indian or Chinese kids, would that stop US jobs from leaving for Bengaluru or Nanjing? As long as Indian and Chinese workers work for less than one dollar an hour when US workers will not work for less than $15 an hour, jobs will flow across the deep oceans.

Despite what Friedman writes, the US will never cede the innovation crown to either China or India. If not the brilliant young techie entrepreneurs US universities churn out, young Indians and Chinese who flock to Silicon Valley and its clones in droves will see to that. The US will keep innovating. China and India will turn the innovation into goods and services. That is the future, till the house of cards falls down. Keeping it up is Mr Biden's biggest challenge.

The writer, a policy analyst studying economic and security issues, held senior positions in government and industry. He also specialises in the Chinese economy.

LETTERS

HONOUR TO GUSSADI

Conferring the Padma Shri on Kanaka Raju, a great dance master who is working to save the Gussadi dance form with Lachu Patel, is the worthiest honour for the great Adivasi dance. Cultural organisations under the state government should support the dance financially and popularise it so as to make children to learn Gussadi and perform it.

D. Kishan Prasad
Ramakrishna Colony, Karimnagar

WORKING R-DAY

Over the years, people have lost interest in being part of Republic Day celebrations due to tight restrictions on movement in the name of security. India, like other countries, had lost a lot of working days last year. The government could have declared Republic Day a working day this year.

N. Nagarajan
Hyderabad

NEW POLITICS

These are new trends in the state politics — the Malkajgiri MLA suspending a corporator with 17 days left in her term, Manakondur MLA Rasamai Balakishan in defiance of party diktat declaring he has no freedom to express himself and Jagtial MLA Dr Sanjay Kumar being the first politician to take the Covid-19 vaccine. Hail democracy.

P.R. Ravinder
Hyderabad

RATNA FOR SPB

S.P. Balasubramanyam was conferred the Padma Vibhushan after his death. In my view, he deserves the highest honour, the Bharat Ratna. His contribution to Indian music is unparelleled.

Dr Rajiv Bhosekar
Hyderabad

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

Giri issues poll notices for 11 States

NEW DELHI, January. 27

By a notification issued today, the President, Mr. V.V. Giri, called upon all the Parliamentary constituencies in 11 States and three Union territories to elect members to the fifth Lok Sabha.

The notification is the first of a series to be issued by the President. It marks the commencement of the election process.

No space for communal politics in AP under Jagan

V. Vijayasai Reddy

Miscreants associated with Opposition parties in Andhra Pradesh are vandalising and desecrating temples to destabilise the democratically-elected YSRC government led by Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy as they feel religious sentiments can be exploited to create a communal flareup.

Bizarrely, some of them, after instigating/condoning such attacks for political gain, accuse the YSRC of being responsible. Why would any government or ruling party attack temples or idols? How would it benefit to hurt the sentiments of a majority of people?

With the Jagan Mohan Reddy government's focus fixed on development and the state's welfare, there is no political space for the Opposition. The CM has likened such attacks on religious sites as "political guerrilla" warfare. The Opposition must understand that in the minds and hearts of Andhra's people, the CM doesn't belong to a particular religion but is a leader of all sections.

India is a religious society. Religion plays a key role in the lives of most Indians. It is an indispensable and foundational part of our society. Faith underlies our ceremonies, festivals, even harvest celebrations.

The Constitution explicitly recognises this, and provides for a country based on secularism, with tolerance and respect for all religions. Andhra Pradesh has seen a spate of temple desecrations of late. These cowardly attacks need to be tackled firmly by the State, creating a strong deterrent.

While the law will take its course and the CM has given assurances, it is important to gauge the action, attitude and role of the Opposition. While the state government has stuck to its constitutional obligation and is rolling out welfare schemes without discrimination, the Opposition led by former CM N. Chandrababu Naidu is politicising these unfortunate events to incite communal feelings.

Mr Naidu's desperate actions shows he realises the massive erosion of his political capital and support. He has resorted to such dirty communal politics as his development/welfare activities as CM don't compare with what young Jagan Mohan Reddy has achieved in less than two years.

The Opposition's role is to criticise and correct the government in areas that positively affect people. The Opposition's criticism should force a government to take more steps towards effective governance. But the TDP-led Opposition in Andhra aren't playing this role and are instead damaging the state's social fabric by stoking religious sentiments. Mr Naidu's actions are a great disservice to the nation at large and setting a wrong precedent to other regional parties – to turn communal as their last option to remain politically relevant.

The Supreme Court, way back in 1994, warned of the perils of inciting religious feelings in the landmark nine-judge bench ruling in S.R. Bommai versus Union of India, where it said: "In a secular democracy like ours, mingling of religion with politics is unconstitutional". Its implication was clear -- communal politics are a flagrant breach of our Constitution and of the secular democratic ethos. It is imperative that religion and caste aren't brought into politics by any party, association or individual.

Communal hatred is being used in Andhra to divert people's attention away from the unprecedented welfare schemes of the YSRC government. Recently, the CM flagged off the distribution of 30 lakh housing sites, an initiative to help every citizen fulfil their dream of owning a site and house. The Opposition couldn't digest such progress. This had led the Opposition parties to resort to communal politics to play spoilsport.

Note the factual irony of the Opposition protests on the issue. Data on attacks on temples in AP shows that in 2020, 228 cases of attacks on temples were registered, compared to 305 cases in 2019, 267 (2018), 318 (2017), 332 (2016) and 290 cases in 2015. The attacks on temples under the YSR Congress government has actually reduced. It also shows clearly that the issue had more potential to be communalised when Mr Naidu was in power. As the principal Opposition party then, we could have done the same thing, but didn't.

Ever since Jagan Mohan Reddy came to power in May 2019, communal politics have been used to target his government, despite his repeated assertion that "humanity is his faith". Mr Naidu is playing religious politics with an ulterior motive of undermining the YSRCP government and polarising votes on religious lines. During the TDP government, Mr Naidu demolished many temples on Vijayawada's Krishna riverfront, razing them to the ground with bulldozers in the name of Pushkarams. He vandalised the famous thousand-pillar mandapam in Tirumala, even sold the lands of Sadhavarti, performed tantric rituals in the Kanaka Durga temple. A pink diamond went missing during his rule, which was later sold for ₹500 crores in a Sothbey's auction in Geneva.

Andhra Pradesh DGP D. Gautam Sawang has issued an alert across the state, asking all police officials to increase vigilance at temple sites. CCTV surveillance at all places of worship are being ramped up to monitor all movement at shrines. Over 2,600 temples across Andhra have been mapped for installation of CCTV cameras.

Finally, it's pertinent to note most attacks have taken place in temples run by TDP leaders. For instance, the temple with the Ramatheertham idol was headed by former TDP MP Ashok Gajapathi Raju, who has now been removed from his post by the state government.

Despite the Opposition's communal politics, the state government's conscience is clear. We will strive for development, irrespective of caste, creed, race, religion or gender, keeping in mind the principles enshrined in our secular Constitution and strive to make Andhra Pradesh India's number one state.

The writer is a Rajya Sabha MP and YSRCP Parliamentary Party leader and YSRC's national general secretary. He can be reached at: venumbaka.vr@sansad.nic.in.

Dismiss case: Epstein ex-girlfriend

New York, Jan. 26: A British socialite charged with recruiting teenage girls for financier Jeffrey Epstein to sexually abuse in the 1990s asked a judge Monday to dismiss the case on multiple grounds, including that a deal years ago not to prosecute Epstein and others should shield her from prosecution. Lawyers for Ghislaine Maxwell said the indictment against their client was obtained unjustly and doesn't allege crimes specific enough to bring before a jury.

But they listed first among 12 separate arguments attacking the indictment that a non-prosecution deal Epstein reached with the federal government a dozen years ago should shield Maxwell from prosecution too. The deal sought to protect Epstein and those around him, but Maxwell was not identified by name in the document that was signed as Epstein agreed to plead guilty to state charges in Florida that forced him to register as a sex offender afterward. Lawyers for Epstein had planned to argue that the deal with prosecutors in Florida in 2008 protected him against sex trafficking charges lodged against him in July 2019 in New York City. *— AP*

'Threat': National Guard to stay in Washington till Mar.

Violence remains a concern ahead of Trump's impeachment trial

Washington, Jan. 26: Thousands of US National Guard troops mobilised in Washington for the presidential inauguration will remain in place through mid-March due to ongoing threats, Pentagon officials said Monday.

The officials did not offer specific information on the threats, saying the information came from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

But Washington remained concerned about more possible violence after the January 6 attack on Congress by supporters of president Donald Trump, and ahead of the impeachment trial of Trump beginning the week of February 8.

Acting Army Secretary John Whitley said they had been briefed on possible risks with "several" upcoming events in Washington over the coming several weeks.

Security officials are concerned that protests "could either be used by malicious actors or other problems that could emerge," he said.

"We are posturing our forces to be able to respond to those threats if they emerge," he said.

The attack on the US Capitol on January 6, which left five people dead and has been labelled an insurrection, led the army to increase the number of National Guard troops deployed in Washington from a few hundred to 25,000 for the January 20 inauguration of President Joe Biden.

On Monday about 13,000 of the reservists remained.

About 7,000 would stay through the end of January, and then fall slowly to about 5,000 in mid-March, according to Whitley. *— AFP*

Biden walks high wire balancing act with Russia before Putin call

Washington, Jan. 26: President Joe Biden has been quickly thrown into a high-wire balancing act with Russia as he seeks to toughen his administration's stance against Vladimir Putin while preserving room for diplomacy in a post-Donald Trump era. The relationship is sure to be different than the one Putin enjoyed with Trump, who was enamored of the Russian leader and sought his approval, casting doubt on Russian interference in the 2016 elections and involvement in a massive hack last year.

Despite this conciliatory approach, his administration toed a tough line against Moscow, imposing sanctions on the country, Russian companies and business leaders for issues ranging from Ukraine to energy supplies and attacks on dissidents. Unlike his immediate predecessors, Biden has not held out hope for a "reset" in relations with Russia but has instead indicated he wants to manage differences with the former Cold War foe without necessarily resolving them or improving ties. And, with a heavy domestic agenda and looming decisions needed on Iran and China, a direct confrontation with Russia is not something he seeks. *— AP*

Yemen rebels: Some sanctions suspended

Washington, Jan. 26: President Joe Biden's administration on Monday froze US sanctions on dealing with Yemen's Huthi rebels for one month as it reviews a terrorist designation that aid groups warn will aggravate a humanitarian crisis.

The Treasury Department in a notice said that all transactions with the group will be authorized through February 26 at 12:01 am (0401 GMT).

The order signed by Bradley Smith, acting director of the Office of Foreign Assets Control, said the United States was not unblocking any funds that have already been targeted. *— AFP*

CINEMA

GRAND RELEASING ON 29th. FRIDAY

SUDARSHAN 35 (Enjoy 4k digital projection & dolby) RTC X ROADS
MEGHA 70MM-DSNR
MALLIKARJUNA / BRAMARAMBA COMPLEX
MAHALAXMI COMPLEX
PRASANTH 70MM-SEC'BAD
VENKATARAMANA KACHIGUDA
AMB CINEMAS-GACHIBOWLI
PRASAD MULTIPLEX-NTR GARDENS
PVR: FORUM MALL | CENTRAL MALL | RKPLEX RK PLEX | INORBIT MALL | IRRUMMANZIL GALLERIA | ICON CITY | MUSARAMBAGH
Cinépolis | MANTRA | SUDHA-SHALIBANDA CCPL | DSL MALL
LAXMIKALA CINEPRIDE-MOOSAPET
ASIAN CINEMAS: CINESQUARE | MCUBE | RADHIKA RADHIKA | GPR MALL | SIVAGANGA
AMEERPET SHAMEERPET | INOX GVK | GSM MP MALL
CINE PLANET | PLATINUM | MIRAJ CINEMAS
NOMA TALKIES | TIVOLI
SANGEET 70MM-R.C.PURAM (Fully renovated with latest equipment)
SRISAIRAM 70MM-MALAKAJGIRI

SUSHMA 70MM VANASTALIPURAM	SRILATHA 70MM R.C.PURAM
VYJAYANTHI NACHARAM	SRILAXMI 70 KARMANGHAT
RANGA 70MM JEEDIMETLA	GOKUL 70MM ERRAGADDA
EESHWAR70MM ATTAPUR	SAIRANGA70MM MIYAPUR
BR HITECH70MM MADHAPUR	SUPER70MM BALAPUR
SREERAMULU MOOSAPET	SRIDEVI70MM CH.GUDA
SREERAMANA AMBERPET	VIMAL70MM BALANAGAR
ALANKAR70MM LUNGERHOUSE	VIJETHA70MM BORABANDA
AMBA70MM MEHDIPATNAM	SHARADA70MM KAPRA
NARTHAKI 70 ALWAL	SSV CINEPARK PATANCHERU
SREEPREMA 70 TUKKUGUDA	SIVARANJANI ISNAPUR
KRISHNA 70MM ALIYABAD	TALLURI ECIL X ROADS
GANESH 70MM SHAMSHABAD	SENSATION COMPLEX
SANTOSH 70MM IBRAHIMPATNAM	JYOTHI 70MM IDA BOLLARAM
SAIPOOJA70 SOORARAM	KRISHNA70 NAGARAM
SRINIVASA 70-UPPAL	ASIAN MUKUND MEDCHAL

SREEPREMA70-TUKKUGUDA
VENKATESWARA70-GUMMADIDHALA
VENKATASAI70-KEESARA

SUPER HIT

TARAKARAMA70MM 11.15,2.15,6.00,9.00PM
ARJUN70-KUKATPALLY 11.30,2.30,6.30,9.30PM
MEGHA70MM-6.15,9.15PM
PRASANTH70MM-SEC'BAD 11.00,6.00PM(2 SHOWS)
AMB 10.45,11.00,1.45,4.15,7.15, 7.35,10.00,10.25PM
ASIAN CINEMAS: Sivaganga-11.15,6.15PM; Gpr-10.40,1.30,4.20,7.10,10.00; Radhika-10.50,1.40,4.30,7.20,10.00PM; Mcube-10.50,1.40,4.45,7.20,10.10PM; Cinesquare-10.40,1.25,4.20,7.10,10.00PM
Chinthal 11.15,6.15 | 10.40,1.35, 4.30,7.25,10.20
Prasad Multiplex 11.30,2.00,7.45,10.15PM
Laxmikala Cinepride 11.30,2.45,6.15,9.45PM
MJR Square-Narapally 10.55,1.45,4.35,7.25,10.20PM
PVR: Central-1.30,4.15,7.00,9.45PM; Forum-11.30,2.15,5.00,7.45,10.30PM; Inorbit-11.15,2.00,4.45,7.30,10.15PM; Icon-1.00pm,3.45,6.30,9.15PM; Galleria-11.15,2.00,4.45,7.30,10.15PM; Irrummanzil-12.45,3.30,6.15,9.00PM; Musarambagh-12.45,3.30,6.15,9.00PM; RK-02.45,5.30,8.15PM
INOX: GVK-12.45,4:40,7:45,10:40PM; MP-10:40,4:30,10:30PM; GSM-11:00,3:30,7:15,10:40PM
Cinépolis: CCPL-12.00,3.10,6.20,9.30PM; SUDHA-12.00,3.10,6.20,9.30PM; DLS-12.30,3.40,6.50,10.00PM; MANTRA-12.30,6.35,9.45PM
PLATINUM 10.00,4.00, 7.00PM | S2 1.15,4.00,6.45, 9.30PM
L.B.NAGAR 11.00AM, 1.45PM, 7.40PM, 10.25PM
MIRAJ CINEMAS: SHALINI-10.30,4.30,7.30,10.30PM; BALANAGAR-11.00,1.10,7.20,10.20; CHANDANAGAR- 04.15,7.15,10.15PM
10.45,1.30, 7.25,10.20PM | TIVOLI 11.15,2.10, 7.30,10.10
AARADHANA 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00 | TALLURI70MM 11.00,2.00PM
SENSATION 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00 | MAHALAXMI 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00
SAIPOOJA 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00 | BR HITECH 11.00,2.00PM
SRIDEVI R.C.PURAM 11.15,2.15,6.15,9.15 | SRIDEVI CH.GUDA 11.00,2.00PM
BHUJANGA70 11.00,6.00PM | AMBA70MM 11.30,2.30,6.30,9.30
SIVARANJANI 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00 | RK35-ABIDS 6.00,9.00PM
SIVASAKTHI70 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00 | ASIAN MUKUND 2.00,9.00PM
GLOBAL CINEMAS RELEASE

Enjoy Coffee Break EVERYDAY IN hyderabad CHRONICLE

2nd Week

DEVI 70MM 11.00am, 2.15, 6.00, 9.00pm
SHIVAPARVATHY 70MM 11.30am, 2.45, 6.30, 9.45pm
SANGEETA - R.C Puram 11.00am,2.00,6.00,9.00pm
PRASAD MULTIPLEX - Khairtabad 10.30am,4.30,10.45pm TAMIL : 4.30pm
AMB - Gachibowli - 1.25,3.55,7.10pm
TIVOLI - Sec-bad - 1.30pm,4.15,10.20pm
PVR: FORUM MALL - Kukatpally I 10.50am,12.00,3.55,7.10,9.45,10.45pm; CENTRAL MALL - Punjagutta 12.00pm,3.35,7.10,10.45pm; GALLERIA MALL - Punjagutta 11.00am,2.35,6.10,9.45,10.45pm; INORBIT MALL - Cyberbad 11.00am,12.20,2.35,6.10,9.45pm; MOOSARAMBAGH 12.00pm,3.35,7.10,10.45pm; IRRUM MANZIL 11.30am,3.05,6.40,10.15pm; ICON MALL - Hitech City 11.30am,3,05,6.40,10.15pm; RK - Banjara - 4.40pm, 11.00pm
ASIAN: MJR SQUARE MALL - Narrapally 1.20pm,4.20,7.20,10.30pm; CINEPLANET - Kompally 1.20pm,7.25,10.10pm; CINESQUARE - Uppal 1.25pm,7.15,10.30pm; LAXMIKALA - Mosapet 11.30am, 6.25; GPR MALL - Kukatpally 4.10,10.10pm; M CUBE MALL - Attapur 1.10,7.20pm; RADHIKA - Kapra - 4.20pm, 7.40pm; SHIVA - Dilshuknagar - 6.00pm; SHA - Chintal - 6.00pm
INOX: GVK MALL- Banjara 10.20am,2.00,6.00,10.00pm; GSM MALL- Miyapur 11.30,2.00,6.00,8.30,10.00pm; MP MALL- Kachiguda 10.50am,1.40,6.05,10.00pm — TAMIL; GSM 6.40pm
Cinépolis: MANTRA - Attapur 2.10pm,6.10,10.10pm; DSL MALL - Uppal 2.20pm,6.10,10.10pm; SUDHA - Shalibhanda 2.15pm,6.30,9.20pm; CCPL - Malkajgiri -11.00,6.30,9.50pm — TAMIL; MANTRA MALL 12.00pm; DLS : 11.45am; CCPL : 2.05pm
Balangar - 11.00am,2.45,5.30,10.45pm; Chandanagar - 11.45am,3.30,6.45pm
S2 - Mallapur - 11.45,3.20,6.55,10.30pm
PLATINUM - Mallapur 11.00,12.30,4.00,7.00,10.00pm — TAMIL 12.30PM
BVK - Mallapur - 1.40pm,4.30,10.45pm
TALLURI - Ecil X Road - 11.00am, 9.00pm
Ameerpet - 10.00,1.00,3.50,7.20,10.40pm

RANGA 70MM 11.00am & 9.00pm	PRASHANT 70MM 2.00pm & 9.00pm
SRIKRISHNA 70 11.00am & 9.00pm	VENKATARAMANA 2.00pm & 9.00pm
NARTAKI 70MM 11.30,2.30,6.30,9.30	SENSATION INSOMNIA 11.15am & 6.15pm
SRIDEVI CHANDANAGAR 11.30,2.15,6.00,9.15	RAMAKRISHNA 35 11.00am & 2.30pm
SREERAMANA 5.45pm & 9.00pm	SV CINESQUARE 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00
SHARADA 70 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00	ALANKAR PRATAP 5.45pm & 9.00pm

3rd WEEK

SAPTAGIRI70MM 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM
BRAMARAMBA70MM-KUKATPALLY 11.30, 2.45, 6.30, 9.45PM
RAJADHANI COMP-11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15
MANJU70MM- 11.00,6.00,9.00PM
AMB 10.45,1.10,4.20, 6.50,10.10PM | 11.00,11.45,2.00,5.00 7.45,8.00,11.00PM
10.30,1.35,4.20, 7.25,10.10PM | 11.30,2.45,6.30, 9.45PM
TIVOLI 10.40,1.40,4.40, 7.45,10.45PM | 10.45,1.35,4.30, 7.20,10.15PM
10.00,1.10,4.20,7.30, 10.40PM | NARAPALLY-10.30, 1.20,4.25,7.35,10.30PM
PVR: INORBIT-10.10,1.20,1.50,4.30,5.00,7.40,10.50PM; ICON-12.00,1.35,3.10,4.50,6.20,9.30PM; FORUM-10.00,10.30,11.00,1.10,1.40,4.20,4.50,5.50,7.30; IRRUMMANZIL-1.00,3.10,4.10,6.20,7.20,8.00,9.30,10.00; MUSARAMBAGH-1.30,3.10,4.50,6.20,7.40,9.30,10.50PM; GALLERIA-10.20,11.50,1.30,3.00,4.40,6.00,7.50,8.30,9.20
ASIAN: RADHIKA-10.40,1.40,7.35,10.40PM; GPR-10.15,1.15,7.30,10.45PM; UPPAL-10.45,1.20,4.35,7.50,10.20PM; MCUBE-10.15,1.20,4.20,7.05,10.20PM — 10.30,1.40, 4.35,7.30, 10.30PM
MIRAJ CINEMAS: CHANDANAGAR-12.30,3.45,7.00,10.15,10.30PM; BALANAGAR-10.10,1.20,4.35,7.50,9.20,11.00PM; SHALINI-10.40,1.50,4.00,5.00,8.10,10.00,11.20PM
INOX: GVK-10.30,11.30,2.05,3.05,5.40,6.40,9.15,10.15; MP-10.20,11.30,1.55,3.05,5.40,6.40,9.15,10.15PM; GSM-10.00,11.00,12.35,1.30,2.35,4.00,5.00,6.10,7.25,8.30
Cinépolis: CCPL-10.30,12.00,3.35,6.05,7.10; SUDHA-11.00,12.00,3.20,6.00,; MANTRA-10.30,12.00,2.05,3.35,5.40,7.10; DSL-10.30,12.00,2.05,3.35,5.40,7.10,10.45 — PLATINUM 9.30,10.00,1.30, 2.30,4.00,6.40, 7.30,10.30PM
INDIRA: VENKATARAMANA | PADMAVATHI COMPLEX 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM

ANJALI 70MM 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM	SVC EESHWAR 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM
GOKUL 70MM 11.45,2.45,6.45,9.45PM	SRIKRISHNA70 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM
SREERAMANA COM 11.00 & 2.00PM	VYJAYANTI70MM 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM
VIJETHA70MM 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM	VIMAL70MM 11.15,2.15,6.15,9.15PM
SAIRANGA70MM 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM	ALANKAR70MM 11.00,2.00PM
SRILATHA RCPURAM 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM	LAXMIKALA MANDIR 6.30 & 9.30PM
SRILAXMIKALA MANDIR-ALWAL 11.30,2.30,6.30,930PM	
SAMPOORNA70MM 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM	SVC MAHALAXMI 11.15,2.15,6.15,9.15PM
SUPER70MM 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM	BHUJANGA70MM 2.00 & 9.00PM
TALLURI70MM 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM	SENSATION INSOMNIA 6.00 & 9.00PM
METRO70MM 11.30,2.30,6.30,9.30PM	ULS SRIDEVI CH.GUDA 11.30,2.30,6.00,9.00PM
LAXMI SHAMSHABAD 11.30,2.30,6.00,9.00PM	SV CINESQUARE70 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM
KRISHNA NAGARAM 11.30,2.30,6.00,9.00PM	VENKATASAI70MM 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM
JYOTHI IDABLRM 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM	SREEPREMA70MM 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM
SANTOSHIBPATNAM 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM	KRISHNA ALIYABAD 11.00,2.00,6.00,9.00PM

VENKATESWARA-GUMMADIDHALA

PETS ARE BACK: BIDEN'S 2 DOGS SETTLE IN AT WH

Washington, Jan. 26: The patter of paws is being heard in the White House again following the arrival of President Joe Biden's dogs Champ and Major. The two German shepherds are the first pets to live at the executive mansion since the Obama administration.

Major burst onto the national scene late last year after Biden, then president-elect, broke his right foot while playing with the dog at their home in Wilmington, Delaware. The Bidens adopted Major in 2018 from the Delaware Humane Association. Champ joined the family after the 2008 presidential election that made Joe Biden vice president. The dogs moved into the White House on Sunday, following Biden's inauguration last week. *— AP*

'MADE IN U.S': BIDEN PREFERS SWISS ROLEX

Washington, Jan. 26: Americans tend to notice everything about an incoming president at their inauguration, and thus Joe Biden's choice to wear a $7,000 Rolex watch on the day he was sworn in. Nor did the fact that the timepiece was made in Switzerland escape attention, as it marked one of the new president's first breaks with his predecessors, who chose watches a bit more quotidian and even manufactured domestically — the type of industry Biden says he wants to promote.

Biden's stainless steel Rolex Datejust "is a far cry from the Everyman timepieces that every president not named Trump has worn conspicuously in recent decades," *The New York Times* wrote, referring to just-departed head of state Donald Trump. The new president is of course not the first to wear a Rolex, sharing the fashion preference with Dwight Eisenhower, Lyndon B. Johnson and Ronald Reagan.

But since the presidency of Bill Clinton, American leaders have tended towards more low-profile or patriotic timepieces.

Clinton chose a Timex Ironman, but that won him no kudos from *The Washington Post.* *— AFP*

Italy PM quits to form new govt

Rome, Jan. 26: Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte resigned Tuesday in the hope of forming a new government after weeks of turmoil in his ruling coalition, leaving Italy rudderless as it battles the deadly coronavirus pandemic.

He tendered his resignation to President Sergio Mattarella, the ultimate arbiter of Italian political crises, who invited him to stay on in a caretaker capacity pending discussions on what happens next.

The uneasy coalition that has led Italy since September 2019 was fatally weakened earlier this month by the withdrawal of former premier Matteo Renzi's small but crucial Italia Viva party.

Ahead of a key vote in parliament this week that he looked set to lose, Conte informed his cabinet on Tuesday that he would quit in what supporters said was a move to form a new government.

After the meeting with Mattarella, a spokesman for the president said he "reserves the right to decide (what to do next) and invited the government to stay in office in a caretaker capacity".

Mattarella will open discussions with party leaders on Wednesday afternoon which are likely to lead into Thursday — leaving a vacuum at the top of the eurozone's third largest economy at a crucial time. — *AFP*

Moscow, Tehran call for 'rescue' of Iran nuke deal

Moscow, Jan. 26: Moscow and Tehran called for the rescue of the Iran nuclear deal Tuesday, as their top diplomats held their first talks since Joe Biden's election raised hopes of Washington returning to the agreement.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said ahead of the talks in Moscow that "one of the most pressing topics is the task of rescuing the Joint Comprehensive Action Plan (JCPOA)".

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif thanked Moscow for its efforts to repair the JCPOA after the US exit in 2018 and for Russia's "constructive and principled" position on the deal.

Zarif urged unity between Moscow and Tehran "in order to save the JCPOA from the risks and fears that arose after the United States left this plan." The talks in Moscow come days after Zarif urged the United States to make the "fundamental choice" to lift sanctions and reverse the "failed policies" of the previous administration, which took a hard line on Tehran.

THE AGREEMENT was largely left in tatters after former US president Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew and ordered officials to reimpose tough penalties against Tehran as part of his administration's "maximum pressure" policy.

He cautioned that any efforts from Washington to extract additional concessions would ultimately end in failure.

"Iran wants the nuclear deal it made," Zarif wrote in an op-ed in the Foreign Affairs magazine.

The agreement was largely left in tatters after former US president Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew and ordered officials to reimpose tough penalties against Tehran as part of his administration's "maximum pressure" policy.

The deal was agreed in 2015 between Iran, the United States, China, Russia, Britain, France and Germany. It offered sanctions relief in exchange for curbs on Tehran's nuclear ambitions and guarantees it would not seek an atomic bomb. Iran maintains it has only pursued a civilian nuclear energy programme.

A new wave of US sanctions have hit hard Iran's vital oil sector and its international banking ties, plunging the economy into a recession.

But Tehran has signalled it could be willing to engage the new White House administration while rhetoric from officials in Moscow has suggested a change in tack in Washington from the Trump administration.

Joe Biden's pick for secretary of state, Anthony Blinken, said at a Senate confirmation hearing this month that Trump's policies had made Iran "more dangerous". While Blinken confirmed Biden's desire for Washington to return to the nuclear agreement, both sides have said the other must return to full compliance before the accord is implemented again.

Since the deal began unravelling with the US exit, Russia and European signatories have advocated efforts to salvage the accord and cautioned Iran against bolstering its nuclear enrichment.

Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov in December urged Iran to take "maximum responsibility" after Tehran announced plans to install advanced centrifuges in its main nuclear enrichment plant.

The ministry earlier this month blamed Iran's departure from norms of the nuclear deal on "systematic crude violations" by the United States. — *AFP*

CINEMA

Coronavirus may take 4-5 years to end, says Singapore minister

Singapore, Jan. 26: It may take four to five years for the Covid-19 pandemic to end and the world to look to a post-Covid normal, a senior Singaporean minister has warned. Speaking at the Singapore Perspectives 2021 conference hosted by Singapore's Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) on Monday, Singapore's Education Minister Lawrence Wong, who co-chairs the Covid-19 multi-ministry task force, said there are still many uncertainties to contend with in the next few years, while sharing his hopes about how the future can be "reset" once the pandemic is over, the *Channel News Asia* reported.

"At some point of time the pandemic will pass, but it may take four to five years before we finally see the end of the pandemic and the start of a post-Covid normal. What will this new post-Covid world look like? No one can tell," Wong said. He said there was still a great uncertainty about how the coronavirus will shape society in the coming years.

He said adhering to safe management measures like mask-wearing and avoiding crowds will continue for this year and "maybe a good part of next year". "Beyond that, the availability of Covid-19 vaccinations will progressively restart global travel, but getting the world vaccinated won't be quick or easy," he said during the conference.

The Government has planned for everyone in Singapore to be vaccinated by the third quarter of this year, but Wong conceded that there could still be "bumps along the way". He noted that the current vaccines may not be so effective against new mutant strains of the virus, and will have to be modified to counter them. "In the positive scenario, this means the vaccine becomes a bit like an annual flu jab ... or perhaps we develop a vaccine that works for all strains. But in the worst case, we end up always a step behind an evolving virus, and you will not be able to catch up in time," he said.

"So there are still tremendous uncertainties ahead of us. And the bottom line is that we live in a shared world and no one is safe until everyone is safe," the report quoted the minister as saying. — *PTI*

Ultra-Orthodox Jewish protesters clash with Israeli security forces during the enforcement of the Coronavirus emergency regulations in Jerusalem's ultra-orthodox neighbourhood of Mea Sharim, on Tuesday. — *AFP*

Minnesota case 1st Brazil variant in US

Minneapolis, Jan. 26: A new Brazilian variant of the Coronavirus has made its first known appearance in the United States in a person who recently returned to Minnesota after travelling to Brazil, state health officials announced Monday.

The Brazil P1 variant was found in a specimen from a patient who lives in the Minneapolis-St Paul area who became ill in the first week of January, the Minnesota Department of Health said in a statement. Epidemiologists are interviewing the person to obtain more details about their illness, travel and contacts. There was no immediate indication that the variant was spreading in Minnesota.

Viruses are constantly mutating, and new versions — called variants — often emerge. Health officials are also worried about variants that were first reported in the United Kingdom and South Africa. Researchers believe they may spread more easily than the virus that has already sickened millions in the United States and caused nearly 420,000 deaths.

The Brazilian variant was first identified in four travelers who were tested at an airport outside Tokyo, Japan. It contains a set of mutations that may affect its ability to be recognized by antibodies, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The Minnesota Department of Health has a programme that conducts regular surveillance for variants, testing 50 random samples from University of Minnesota laboratories weekly.

State Health Commissioner Jan Malcolm said the new finding underscores the importance of testing as well as continued efforts to limit the spread of the disease. "We know that even as we work hard to defeat COVID-19, the virus continues to evolve as all viruses do," Malcolm said in a statement. — *AP*

DENMARK TO PAY FOR SHUT MINK INDUSTRY

Copenhagen, Jan. 26: Denmark has said it could pay out more than 19 billion Danish kroner to its mink farmers after it closed down the industry over Coronavirus fears. Denmark was the world's largest exporter of mink fur but culled all 15 million of its mink population last year after some were found to be carrying a mutated virus variant, and later banned mink breeding until 1 January 2022.

The support scheme includes reimbursements to the country's roughly 1,000 mink farmers for the cull, as well as support for them to change their businesses. Mink breeders and related businesses now have "a good opportunity to move on", said agriculture minister Rasmus Prehn. — *AFP*

US plans to put abolitionist on $20 bill

Washington, Jan. 26: The White House said Monday it was expediting plans to put Harriet Tubman, a PoC woman who escaped slavery and became a leader of the pre-Civil War abolitionist movement, on the $20 bill, a project that had been significantly delayed under Donald Trump.

The move means Tubman would become the first African American to feature on a US bill.

The project, launched by former president Barack Obama, has come back to the forefront after historic demonstrations denouncing racism and police violence against people of colour. "The Treasury Department is taking steps to resume efforts to put Harriet Tubman on the front of the new $20 notes," said presidential spokeswoman Jen Psaki.

"It's important that our notes, our money... reflect the history and diversity of our country and Harriet Tubman's image gracing the new $20 note would certainly reflect that," she said. Tubman was born into slavery in 1822 but escaped before going back to the slave-owning southern states to help dozens of others flee bondage, either to the northern US or in Canada, both before and during the Civil War of 1861-65.

Harriet Tubman

After the war, she became a champion of women's rights before her death in 1913.

Her life, and in particular her work helping enslaved people escape as a conductor on the "Underground Railroad," were featured in a 2019 Hollywood biopic. Her image was set to replace the portrait of Andrew Jackson, the US president behind the "Trail of Tears" that drove dispossessed Native American tribes from the southeast of the expanding country, and who was much admired by Trump.

Trump's treasury secretary Steve Mnuchin announced in 2019 that the revamp of the $20 bill was being put off until 2028, citing "security issues" around counterfeiting one of the most popular bills in circulation.

During his 2016 presidential campaign, Trump criticized the plans to replace Jackson with Tubman, calling the move "pure political correctness."

He suggested putting Tubman's picture on the two-dollar bill, which is no longer printed. Jackson, who occupied the White House from 1829 to 1837, was seen by Trump as the first "populist" president of the country, and hung his portrait in the Oval Office during his tenure.

The fiery general rose to fame for his historic victory against British forces in New Orleans in 1815. But he is also remembered for the mass deportation of tens of thousands of Native Americans from their ancestral lands in the southeast that left thousands dead. — *AFP*

LIVE RICH
FINANCIAL Chronicle
HYDERABAD | WEDNESDAY | 27 JANUARY 2021

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	48347.59	-1.09
Nifty 50	14238.90	-0.93
S&P 500*	3,854.61	-0.02
Dollar (₹)	72.94	0.05
Pound Sterling (₹)	99.70	0.03
Euro (₹)	88.62	0.24
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	48,509▼141	0.00
Brent crude ($/bbl)*	55.83	-0.09
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.954	0.25
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.046	0.007

* As of 8:30 PM IST

India Inc puts 42% less money in foreign arms

Overseas investment by domestic firms fell by over 42 per cent to $1.45 billion in December 2020, according to Reserve Bank data. In the year-ago month, companies in India had invested $2.51 billion in their foreign firms (joint ventures / wholly owned units). In November 2020, the total outward foreign direct investment (OFDI) was of $1.06 billion, down by 27 per cent from a month ago.

Gail plans to float pipeline InvIT before bifurcation

Gail (India) Ltd plans to launch an InvIT of its two gas pipelines between Dahej and Bengaluru ahead of a proposed splitting of the pipeline business from the gas marketing function, sources said. The nation's top gas marketing and transportation firm plans to monetise Dahej-Uran-Panvel-Dabhol pipeline and Dabhol-Bengaluru pipeline by setting up an Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT).

Grofers expects ₹10,000 cr in GMV by March

Grofers expects to achieve Rs 10,000 crore in gross merchandise value (GMV) by March supported by traction in its ongoing sale. The company claims to have witnessed around 3 to 4 times increase in sales during its ongoing Grand Orange Bag Days (GOBD) sale. "We are on road to double our GMV every year and are aiming to hit Rs 10,000 crore in GMV by financial year 2021," Grofers founder Saurabh Kumar said.

Mahanadi Coal Railway scouts for CEO

Mahanadi Coal Railway Ltd, ajoint venture of MCL, Ircon and Idco, is scouting for a chief executive officer to implement coal evacuation infrastructure projects in Odisha, officials said. Initially, one corridor has been identified for implementation of the project, the estimated cost of which is Rs 1,700 crore. This project will help in creating railway evacuation infrastructure for Talcher mines.

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■ Health tax may go up; 4-yr plan to up spend to 4% of GDP

Budget may double spending on health

AFTAB AHMED
NEW DELHI, JAN. 26

India is likely to double health spending in the next fiscal year with the aim of raising expenditure in the sector to 4 per cent of gross domestic output in the coming four years, two officials said, as the country looks to fix its health system after the coronavirus pandemic.

India will likely raise its health spending to Rs 1.2-1.3 lakh crore ($16.46-$17.83 billion) in the fiscal year starting April 1, from the current year's projected spending of Rs 62,600 crore, the officials told Reuters.

The new healthcare plan is likely to be unveiled on February 1 when finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman presents the country's budget for 2020-21. The officials did not want to be named as the plan is not yet public.

Even after decades of high growth, the country's spending on healthcare has been a meagre 1.3 per cent of GDP, way below Brics peers and developed countries.

The strain on India's underfunded healthcare system was put in stark focus during the pandemic, with states forced to set up makeshift Covid care centres and many hospitals struggling to meet the demand for beds and oxygen cylinders.

India has recorded over 10.6 million coronavirus cases, the second-highest in the world after the United States.

Sitharaman is likely to unveil a four year health budget plan with the aim to move India's healthcare spend to 4 per cent of GDP, with the help of a dedicated health fund, the officials said.

The government could also increase a health tax from the current 1 per cent of income and corporate tax to fund the new programme, one of the above officials said.

Currently it raises about Rs 15,000 crore-Rs 16,000 crore annually from the health tax.

The finance ministry did not reply to an e-mail seeking comment on the story.

—Reuters

BUDGET MAY HIKE AGRI CREDIT TARGET TO ABOUT ₹19 LAKH CR

New Delhi, Jan. 26: With the aim of doubling farmers' income by 2022, the government is likely to raise farm credit target to about Rs 19 lakh crore in Budget 2021-22, to be presented on February 1, according to sources.

For the current fiscal, the government has set a farm credit target of Rs 15 lakh crore.

The government has been increasing the credit target for the farm sector every year and this time too, the target is likely to be increased to around Rs 19 lakh crore for the 2021-22, sources said.

"Non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) and co-operatives are active in the agriculture credit space. The Nabard refinance scheme will be further expanded. Agriculture credit target for the year 2020-21 has been set up at Rs 15 lakh crore," Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had said while announcing the Budget 2020-21.

The agricultural credit flow has increased consistently over the years, exceeding the target set for each fiscal. For instance, credit worth Rs 11.68 lakh crore was given to farmers in 2017-18, much higher than the Rs 10 lakh crore target set for that year, they added.

Similarly, crop loans worth Rs 10.66 lakh crore were disbursed in the 2016-17 fiscal, higher than the credit target of Rs 9 lakh crore.

— PTI

MSEs seek council help to get over ₹18,700-cr dues

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, JAN. 26

Micro and small enterprises (MSEs) have filed over 66,500 applications seeking payment of Rs 18,700 crore pending dues from central PSUs, ministries and other entities. The Micro and Small Enterprise Facilitation Council (MSEFC) has disposed of cases involving 4.6 per cent of the payment dues. Only a miniscule of the MSME payment dues is reaching the council for settlement.

MSEFC, which facilitates settlement of pending dues of MSEs, has received a total of 66,503 applications seeking payment of Rs 18,728 crore, or over $2.5 billion, from buyers, as per data from MSME Samadhaan. The buyers are central PSUs, ministries, departments, state PSUs and government departments, railways, proprietor owned entities, individuals and other MSMEs.

The council has disposed of 5,889 applications, accounting for Rs 871 crore, or 4.6 per cent, of the Rs 18,728-crore dues. Further, the council has rejected 11,616 applications, which amounted to payment of Rs 2,541 crore. As many as 5,930 cases involving Rs 895 crore were mutually settled with the buyers.

The council is currently considering 16,088 cases, involving total payments of Rs 6,804 crore. The MSEFC is yet to review 26,980 applications, seeking Rs 6,978 crore of payment dues.

According to Rajive Chawla, chairman of IamSMEofIndia, less than one per cent of the payment dues are reaching the council for settlement. "Many of the MSMEs do not want to drag their buyer to the council as it risks losing the buyer, especially if private companies are involved. In the case of government departments and PSUs that risk is not there. Further, they wait for the situation to improve and the buyer to settle the payments. Moreover, the awareness about the council is also limited among the MSMEs," he said.

However, of late, MSMEs are increasingly approaching the council after the government increased the threshold of payment dues to approach NCLT to Rs 1 crore. Further, government also has suspended fresh cases under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code. "The MSMEs earlier had the option of approaching NCLT. But since the government has put fresh cases on hold and increased the threshold of dues, they are approaching the council more," said Chawla.

Sitharaman could unveil easier FDI routes for construction, animation

SHRUTI SRIVASTAVA
JAN. 26

The government is considering easing foreign investment rules for sectors ranging from construction to animation to lure overseas capital needed to create jobs in an economy cratered by the pandemic, people with knowledge of the matter said.

A proposal to allow limited liability partnerships (LLPs) to invest in the construction of townships, roads, hotels and hospitals is under discussion, the people said, asking not to be identified, citing rules. A plan to allow 100 per cent foreign direct investment in animation, visual effects, gaming and comics sector may also find mention in the government's budget, one person said.

Allowing LLPs will open a new investment avenue when the government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is struggling to revive the economy.

The government estimates India will require investment worth $777 billion across infrastructure for development by 2022.

The construction sector received FDI inflows worth $25.7 billion between April and September 2020, government data show. The relaxation in rules may help the government get closer to its target of creating affordable housing for all in urban areas by 2022 and building 100 smart cities.

—Bloomberg

Cairn Energy cautions Indian assets abroad could be seized

AMMAR ZAIDI
NEW DELHI, JAN. 26

Just like US oil firm ConocoPhillips grabbed Venezuelan assets overseas to enforce an arbitration award, Indian bank accounts, airplanes and other foreign properties can be seized to collect $1.4 billion awarded to UK's Cairn Energy against Indian retro tax, according to a letter seen by PTI.

The British firm has begun identifying overseas Indian assets in case the Indian government fails to honour the arbitration award.

Cairn CEO Simon Thomson in the January 22 letter to the Indian High Commissioner in London—with copies marked to the Prime Minister's Office, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman and external affairs minister S. Jaishankar—said the arbitration award is "final and binding" and "the Government of India has an obligation to comply with its terms."

"As India is a signatory to the New York Convention, the award can be enforced against Indian assets in numerous jurisdictions around the world for which the necessary preparations have been put in place," he wrote.

In 2019, ConocoPhillips had moved US courts to seize Venezuelan state oil company PDVSA's assets to collect $2 billion compensation it had won in an arbitration against Venezuela's 2007 takeover of its assets. PDVSA thereafter paid ConocoPhillips.

The three-member tribunal, which comprised a judge appointed by India, last month unanimously overturned a Rs 10,247 crore retrospective tax demand on Cairn and asked the Indian government to return value of the shares it sold, dividend it seized and tax refunds it stopped to enforce the tax.

If India does not comply with the order of the tribunal at the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague, it would be a violation of international rules on arbitral awards, commonly called the New York Convention.

Sources with knowledge of the matter said the options before the Indian government were limited. An appeal against the award in a court in The Hague may not yield positive results as the tribunal had given a very detailed 582-page order to make it "as bullet-proof" as possible.

In contrast, the September 2020 arbitration award in UK's Vodafone Group challenge to retro tax demand of Rs 22,100 crore was only 100 pages. That order has been challenged by India in a court in Singapore—the seat of that arbitration. *—PTI*

Insurers told to offer uniform Saral Pension plan from April

FALAKNAAZ SYED
MUMBAI, JAN. 26

In a bid to help customers make an informed choice, the insurance regulator has mandated all life insurers to offer a standard individual immediate annuity product from April 1 this year. The product called, "Saral Pension", prefixed by the insurer's name, will be a traditional, single premium, non-participating immediate annuity plan with two annuity options. The minimum entry age to buy this plan will be 40 years and the maximum will be 80 years.

It may be noted that annuities are plans bought by an individual from insurance companies for retirement or other purposes while a pension is provided by an employer to the employee solely for the purpose of retirement.

In the first of the two annuity options, 'Life Annuity with Return of 100 per cent of Purchase price', the annuity is paid for the entire life of the annuitant, or subscriber. In addition, 100 per cent of the Purchase Price will be returned to the nominee / legal heirs on death of the annuitant.

The second variant called 'Joint Life Last Survivor Annuity with Return of 100 per cent of Purchase Price on death of the last survivor' the annuity is first paid to the annuitant for life. After death of the annuitant, if the spouse is surviving, the spouse continues to receive the same amount of annuity for life till his/her death. Subsequently, on death of the spouse, the Purchase Price shall be payable to nominee/legal heirs. However, if the spouse has pre-deceased the annuitant, then on the death of the annuitant, the Purchase Price shall be payable to the nominee /legal heirs.

However, there will be no maturity benefit under the product.

As per the guidelines, the minimum annuity will be Rs 1,000 per month, Rs 3,000 per quarter, Rs 6,000 per half year and Rs 12,000 per annum.

There will be a limit for maximum annuity. The minimum and maximum purchase price depends on the annuity amount, , the guidelines said.

The guidelines further said pricing is left to the insurers. However, annuity rates should be derived based on actuarial principles and ensure that annuity rates are fair and reasonable to customers.

"Indian life insurance market currently has several individual immediate annuity products marketed by life insurers, with each product having its own features, terms and conditions and annuity options. With a view to having uniformity across insurers, and to make available a product by all life insurers that will broadly meet the needs of an average customer, it is felt necessary to introduce a standard, individual immediate annuity product, with simple features and standard terms and conditions," said the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai) on Monday in a statement.

The policy can be surrendered any time after six months from the date of commencement, if the annuitant or the spouse is diagnosed with any specified critical illnesses.

TECH SECTOR TOP PAYOUT CONTRIBUTOR OVER FY10-20

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD
MUMBAI, JAN. 26

Technology was the largest payout contributor to the overall payout pool at 20 per cent during the decade FY10-20, while the oil and gas sector was the largest contributor to the overall profit pool at 22 per cent.

Technology was the second highest contributor to the profit pool at 14 per cent, according to the 'Payouts' – The Eabler for Value Creation report from Motilal Oswal Financial Services.

The top six sectors that contributed high payout ratios are mining (75 per cent), consumer (70 per cent), technology (58 per cent), utilities (50 per cent), media (41 per cent) and capital goods (40 per cent).

"Divergence in the profit pool and payout pool of companies is primarily due to varying levels of capital intensity across different sectors. Consumer and technology sectors have the lowest capital intensity," the report said.

The top six sectors with high profit contribution during FY10-20 were oil & gas– 22 per cent, technology– 14 per cent, banks (private sector) – 9 per cent, mining–9 per cent, automobiles–8 per cent and consumer – 6 per cent.

Top six sectors with high payout contributions were technology – 20 per cent, oil & gas – 17 per cent, mining -16 per cent, consumer – 10 per cent, utilities – 7 per cent and automobiles – 6 per cent.

GOOGLE WORKERS TO FORM GLOBAL UNION ALLIANCE

Jan. 26: Google employees from across the globe are forming a union alliance, weeks after workers at the search engine giant and other units of parent company Alphabet Inc formed a labour union for US and Canadian offices.

UNI Global Union, that represents about 20 million workers globally, said on Monday it helped form Alpha Global, Google's union alliance that includes multiple countries such as the United States, Germany, Switzerland, Sweden and the UK.

Alpha Global will fight for the rights of full-time Alphabet employees as well as temporary, vendor and contract workers, UNI Global said.

"The problems at Alphabet ... are not limited to any one country, and must be addressed on a global level," UNI's General Secretary Christy Hoffman said.

Alphabet did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

After years of protests over working conditions and business practices, 200 Google workers formed Alphabet Workers Union, a so-called "minority union," in early January.

Under US labour law, Alphabet can ignore the union's demands until a majority of employees support it. — Reuters

WEF | PLEDGE **Firms sign up for core Stakeholder Capitalism Metrics**

RIL, M&M commit to sustainability metrics

New Delhi/Davos, Jan. 26: Reliance Industries and Mahindra Group on Tuesday joined more than 50 global giants in committing to core Stakeholder Capitalism Metrics—a set of environmental, social and governance (ESG) parameters and disclosures prepared by the World Economic Forum.

The global giants who have made this commitment include Accenture, Bank of America, Credit Suisse, Dell Technologies, Deloitte, EY, Heineken, HP, HSBC Holdings, IBM, JLL, KPMG, Mastercard, McKinsey, Nestle, PayPal, PwC, Royal Dutch Shell, Royal Philips, Salesforce, Schneider Electric, Siemens, Sony, Total, UBS, Unilever, Yara International and Zurich Insurance Group.

Announcing the details during its online Davos Agenda Summit, the WEF said a total of 61 business leaders have so far committed to the core Stakeholder Capitalism Metrics, which offer a core set of 31 universal, comparable disclosures focused on people, planet, prosperity and governance that companies can report on, regardless of industry or region.

The move signals that private sector leaders view environmental, social and governance factors as critical to the success and long-term viability of all businesses and a unified voice is gathering pace on a global solution for non-financial reporting, the WEF said.

The metrics are aimed at strengthening the ability of companies and investors to benchmark progress on sustainability matters, thereby improving decision-making and enhancing transparency and accountability on the shared and sustainable value companies create.

The business leaders and their organisations have committed to "reflect the core metrics in their reporting to investors and other stakeholders (such as annual report, sustainability report, proxy statements, or other materials) by reporting on the metrics most relevant to their business or briefly explaining why a different approach is more appropriate".

They will also publicly support this work and encourage their business partners to do so and promote the further convergence of existing ESG standards, frameworks and principles to support progress towards a globally accepted solution for non-financial reporting on common ESG metrics.

In making these commitments, business leaders are signalling that ESG factors are increasingly critical to the success and long-term viability of all businesses, the WEF said.

—PTI

SHORT TAKES

Two UAE players banned for fixing

Dubai: United Arab Emirates players Mohammad Naveed and Shaiman Anwar Butt were on Tuesday suspended by the ICC after they were found guilty of trying to fix matches during the T20 World Cup qualifier in 2019.

Former UAE captain Naveed and top-order batsman Shaiman were found guilty of two offences each under the ICC Anti-Corruption Code after they exercised their right to a hearing before a tribunal. The two players were "party to an agreement or effort to fix or contrive or otherwise influence improperly the result, progress, conduct or other aspect(s) of a match or matches at the ICC Men's T20 World Cup Qualifier 2019," the ICC said in a statement. — *PTI*

Nadal takes veiled swipe at Djokovic

Melbourne: Rafael Nadal has taken an apparent swipe at Novak Djokovic over his requests for quarantined players preparing for the Australian Open, saying not everyone felt the need to "advertise" how they were trying to help.

The Serbian world number one issued a list of suggestions to Tennis Australia last week on behalf of 72 players unable to leave their Melbourne hotel rooms after Covid-19 cases were detected on their planes to Australia. "We all try to help each other," Spanish great Nadal told *ESPN* from Adelaide, where he and Djokovic are quarantining ahead of the Grand Slam.

"Some need to make public everything they do to help others," he added, in remarks widely seen as referring to Djokovic. — *AFP*

Ex-India goalie Prasanta dies

Kolkata: Former India goalkeeper Prasanta Dora, who made a name for himself while playing for big three clubs of Kolkata Maidan, died on Tuesday. He was 44 and is survived by 12-year old son Adi and wife Soumi.

According to his elder brother Hemanta, who also played as a goalkeeper for India and Mohun Bagan, Prasanta was diagnosed with Hemophagocytic lymphohistiocytosis in December after he developed unremitting fever.

"His platelet count reduced drastically and doctors took a long time to diagnose the disease. We were giving him blood regularly but he could not survive and died at 1.40pm today," the elder brother said. — *PTI*

Govt decree saves Italy from Oly ban

Rome: The Italian government pushed through a last-minute decree Tuesday providing more autonomy for the country's Olympic committee in an effort to prevent the team from being suspended for the Tokyo Games. It was one of the final acts of Giuseppe Conte's government before the premier headed to the presidential palace to offer his resignation.

The IOC's executive board had on its agenda Wednesday whether to impose a humiliating probation on Italy because of a two-year domestic dispute that it said amounted to government interference.

After the decree was approved, Italian Olympic Committee president Giovanni Malag immediately called IOC president Thomas Bach and both parties expressed their "satisfaction" over the development. — *AP*

Live on TV

BADMINTON

BWF World Tour Finals: Group matches from 9.30 am on Star Sports 2 HD, 3

CRICKET

Pakistan vs South Africa: First Test, Day 2 from 10.30 am on Sony Ten 2

Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy T20 Tournament: Quarterfinals — Haryana vs Baroda from 11.55 am; Rajasthan vs Bihar from 6.55 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

FOOTBALL

English Premier League: Chelsea vs Wolverhampton Wanderers from 11.30 pm on Star Sports Select 1; Manchester United vs Sheffield United from 1.45 am (Thursday) on Star Sports Select 1

WWE

NXT: Bouts from 6.30 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 1, HD

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STATUS KOHLI

Nothing changes between me and Virat, he is my captain and I am his deputy: Rahane

Ajinkya Rahane

New Delhi, Jan. 26: Ajinkya Rahane has won many a fans with his astute captaincy during the Indian team's epic triumph in Australia but he would like to make it very clear that the undisputed leader of this side is Virat Kohli and he is happy filling in when required.

Come February 5, Rahane will again be the vice-captain of the Test team against England with Kohli back in the saddle. So will things be different now when he once again dons the vice captain's hat?

"Nothing changes. Virat was and will always be the captain of the Test team and I am his deputy. When he was absent it was my duty to lead the side and my responsibility to give my best for Team India's success," Rahane, who was on his way to Chennai, said.

For the vice-captain, it was not about being on the hot seat but having the ability to perform the role to perfection that mattered the most.

"Its not the matter of merely being a captain. How you perform the captain's role is what's more important. So far I have been successful. Hopefully, in future also, I will try to give these kind of results for my team," said the man, who has led his country to four wins in five Tests.

Reflecting on his relationship with Kohli, Rahane said it has always been smooth.

"Me and Virat have always shared a good bonding with each other. He has time and again praised my batting. Both of us played memorable knocks for our team in India and overseas conditions. It only helped that Virat comes at No.4 and myself at No.5. We have had a lot of partnerships," the 32-year-old said.

Theirs is a relationship based on mutual respect. "We have always backed each other's game. When we are at the crease, we discuss threadbare about opposition's bowling. We caution each other whenever one of us plays a rash shot," he said. — *PTI*

HUSSAIN FEELS INDIA CAN'T BE BULLIED NOW

London, Jan. 26: Former England captain Nasser Hussain feels Virat Kohli has instilled a fighting attitude in the current Indian team, which does not get bullied by adversities, whether on or off the field. Despite missing some key players to injuries and Kohli, who was on paternity leave, an inexperienced Indian team, led by Ajinkya Rahane, displayed grit and determination to register a historic come-from-behind 2-1 series win over Australia.

Hussain warned England to be ready for a tough one in the four-Test series against India, starting February 5.

"Any side that can go to Australia, go 1-0 down after being bowled out for 36, lose Kohli because he's going home on paternity leave, lose your bowling attack and still come back and win after some of the stuff that went on off the field in Australia, they won't be bullied," he told *Sky Sports*.

"They (India) are a tough side. I think Kohli has instilled that. Make no mistake, at home, they are a formidable outfit."

Insisting that England will head into the assignment with plenty of confidence after the series sweep in Sri Lanka. — *PTI*

Khaleel, Krishna belt double tons

Tanuj, Naman, Abid, Kranthi, Shiva, Varun, Avik too shine

Naman Agarwal

Varun Vinod

Shiva Srikanth

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

Shaik Khaleel and N. Jyothi Sai Krishna slammed a double century each to hog the limelight on Tuesday at n the Hyderabad Cricket Association's A-2 Division two-day league matches.

Khaleel hit 212 with the help of 34 fours and six sixes to help Sri Shyam to 385 against Vijay Hanuman on the first day.

In another match, N. Jyothi Sai Krishna's 207 that was decorated with 18 fours and eight sixes propelled Postal to 452 against Medak District.

Abid Hussain (106) of Mahbubnagar District, S. M. Tanuj (115) of Young Master, Naman Agarwal (113) of Oxford Blues, Shiva Srikanth Naidu (5/38) of Deccan Blues, Varun Vinod (112) of Hyderabad Wanderers, Galaxy's Kranthi Kiran (5/22) and Avik (5/55) of Hyderabad Titans were the other performers.

Brief scores:

A-2 DIVISION (TWO-DAY)

Day-1:

- Sri Shyam 385 in 89.4 overs (**Shaik Khaleel 212 — 187b, 34x4, 6x6**, Syed 54, Bharath 3/73) vs Vijay Hanuman 13 for no loss in 3 overs.
- Postal 452 in 88.5 overs (Md Shakeer Ahmed 77, **N. Jyothi Sai Krishna 207 — 229b, 18x4, 8x6**, V. Bhargav Anand Goud 50, M. Suresh 32, Md Azam Raza 2/88, B. H. Prem Charan 3/68) vs Medak District.
- Lords CC 225 in 54.5 overs (Md Azheruddin 72, Sohail Ali Khan 37) lost to Young Master 228/2 in 36.2 overs (Aaron George 73, **S. M. Tanuj 115 — 105b, 15x4**). **Points:** Young Master 5, Lords 0.
- Oxford Blues 269 in 89.4 overs (**Naman Agarwal 113 — 198b, 15x4**, Yashaswi 56, **Shiva Srikanth Naidu 5/38 — 18-3-38-5**) vs Deccan Blues.
- Marredpally CC 192 in 48.4 overs (K. Arjun Reddy 46, Shafi Ali 72, Ghazi Abbas 4/71, Karthikeyan 4/23) lost to Hyderabad Wanderers 196 for no loss in 33.3 overs (**Varun Vinod 112 — 97b, 17x4,** Ghazi Abbas 77 n.o). **Points:** Wanderers 5, Marredpally 0.
- Mahbubnagar District 292 in 64.2 overs (**Abid Hussain 106 — 123b, 19x4, 1x6**, Sai Kumar Yadav 79, Sachit Kaundinya 4/42) vs Green Turf 109/9 in 45 overs (Syed Afzal 53).
- Galaxy 134 in 47.1 overs (Amit Kulkarni 34, **Kranthi Kiran 5/22 — 13.1-8-2-5**) vs Deccan Wanderers 72/1 in 28 overs (Jawad Khan 46).
- Saleemnagar 218 in 58 overs (Ibrahim 57, Hemanth 41, **Avik 5/55 — 16-2-55-5**) vs Hyderabad Titans 76/1 in 25 overs (Jainath 41 batting).
- Telangana 69 in 22.4 overs (Kamal Yadav 46, Sai 3/17) lost to Sayi Satya 72/2 in 21.5 overs (Jai Nag 42 n.o). **Points:** Sayi Satya 5, Telangana 0.
- Pasha Beedi 213 in 79.5 overs (K. Shreyas Goud 32, Md Zakaria 41, C. Aadhitya Reddy 41, K. Sundesh 50, Vansh Sharma 3/19, Aarya Udupa 3/35) vs Balaji Colts 47/1 in 12 overs.
- Visaka 214 in 85.3 overs (Md Farees Shareef 52, M. Kshitij Reddy 39, P. Jagadish 38, K. Sri Harsha 3/44, B. Jeevan 3/11) vs Classic 75 for no loss in 13 overs (S. Harshit 44 batting, S. Raghavendra 30 batting).
- Osmania 274 in 69.4 overs (Ashrit 35, Vishu 40, Vinay 31, Anish Rao 84, Manikanth 34, Rachit 3/36, Ramna 3/38) vs Yadav Dairy 61/3 in 18.1 overs.
- PJLCC 260 in 64 overs (Hussain Liakhath 85, K. Raghavendra 63, C. Tarun Kumar 3/31, Sathvik Pujish 3/55, Tibrewal Nandesh 3/57) vs Future Star 10/3 in 9 overs.
- Agarwal Sr 126 in 50.1 overs (Noman Ahmed 44, Shaik Azhar 4/25, Appa Rao 3/21) vs Khammam District 127/2 in 24.1 overs (Jai Prakash 76 n.o). **Points:** Khammam 5, Agarwal Sr 0.

PUNJAB KNOCK CHAMPS KARNATAKA OUT

Ahmedabad, Jan. 26: Punjab knocked defending champions Karnataka out from the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy T20 cricket tournament as their bowlers set up a comfortable nine-wicket win in the first quarterfinal on Tuesday.

In the other quarterfinal, Tamil Nadu defeated Himachal Pradesh comfortably by five wickets.

After restricting Himachal to a lowly 135 for 9, thanks to Sonu Yadav's 3 for 14, Tamil Nadu rode on fine knocks from Baba Aparajith (52 not out) and Shahrukh Khan (40 not out) to romp home with 2.1 overs to spare.

Punjab first dismissed Karnataka for meagre 87 and then overhauled the target in 12.4 overs in what turned out to be a lopsided contest at the Sardar Patel stadium.

Pacers Siddharth Kaul (3/15) and Sandeep Sharma (2/17) ran through the Karnataka top-order after they were sent in to bat. Karnataka were reeling at 26 for three, after openers Karun Nair (12) and Devdutt Padikkal (11) fell cheaply.

Pavan Deshpande (0) was dismissed off his second ball, as Mayank Markande took a diving catch.

Kaul dismissed both Padikkal and Deshpande in the fourth over.

It soon became 26 for 4 as young left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh (2/16) dismissed B. R. Sharath (2), who was caught in the slip cordon.

BRIEF SCORES

- Karnataka 87 in 17.2 overs (Aniruddha Joshi 27, Siddharth Kaul 3/15, Arshdeep Singh 2/16) lost to Punjab 89/1 in 12.4 overs (Prabhsimran Singh 49 n.o, Mandeep Singh 35 n.o).
- Himachal Pradesh 135 for 9 in 20 overs (Abhimanyu Rana 28, Nitin Sharma 26, Rishi Dhawan 35 n.o, Sandeep Warrier 2/32, Sonu Yadav 3/14) lost to Tamil Nadu 141/5 in 17.5 overs (Baba Aparajith 52 n.o, Shahrukh Khan 40 n.o, Vaibhav Arora 3/30).

Spurs spring into round 5

Wycombe (England), Jan. 26: Gareth Bale scored only his fourth goal since returning to Tottenham in leading a comeback to beat Wycombe 4-1 in the FA Cup.

Playing his first full match of the season on Monday, Bale netted before halftime to cancel out Fred Onyedinma's shock opener for the second-tier side.

With extra time looming, Harry Winks put Tottenham in front with a curling strike in the 86th minute then Tanguy Ndombele netted twice.

Jose Mourinho's side plays Everton in the fifth round to maintain their challenge in four competitions. Mourinho named a strong team and this was a chance for Bale to show why he should be in the team more often while back on loan from Real Madrid. He wasted a chance after five minutes by heading wide and dragged an effort wide from another good position on the edge of the area. Those misses proved costly as Wycombe took the lead in the 25th minute.

Uche Ikpeazu got the better of Tottenham defender Toby Alderweireld down the right and his cross was not cleared by Davinson Sanchez, who could only divert it into the path of Onyedinma to fire home.

Tottenham's Gareth Bale celebrates after scoring against Wycombe in their FA Cup fourth round match in High Wycombe, England, on Monday. — *AP*

BILBAO ROUT GETAFE

Raul Garcia scored twice as Athletic Bilbao maintained their recent impressive run by routing Getafe 5-1 in the Spanish league.

Yeray lvarez, Alex Berenguer and Oscar de Marcos also scored for Athletic, which a week ago celebrated the Spanish Super Cup title after beating Barcelona in the final and Real Madrid in the semifinals.

The home win against Getafe on Monday left Athletic in ninth place in the Spanish league, closer to the qualification spots for European competitions. — *AP*

PAK IN TROUBLE AS RABADA LEADS SA FIGHTBACK

Karachi, Jan. 26: Fast bowler Kagiso Rabada took two wickets for just eight runs as he led a South African fightback against Pakistan in their first Test here Tuesday.

Pakistan were in trouble at 33/4 at the close of play, having bowled out the visitors for 220 — their second-lowest total in the country.

Fourteen wickets fell on the National Stadium pitch, which had been expected to take spin from day one. But then Rabada paid back the hosts with interest, bowling Abid Ali (four) in his third over and then getting debutant Imran Butt (nine) caught at leg-slip off a rising delivery. — *AFP*

Brief scores: South Africa 220 (Elgar 58, Linde 35, Yasir 3/54, Nauman 2/38) vs **Pakistan 33/4** (Rabada 2/8).

Vaishnavi heads R-Day main fleet

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

The extremely light winds saw a total mix-up in the results and more than 80 per cent of the Sub Junior Main Fleet retiring from the race as they were compelled to break the rules and paddle towards the finish line in a hurry to finish on the second day of the Republic Day Regatta on Tuesday.

India No.2 Vaishnavi Veeravamsham made a protest and the entire fleet had to retire en masse leaving her at the top and all those at the top languishing below her due to penalties.

Mohammad Moutameen of Udbhav School topped the ranks with consistent performances and a win in the fifth race. Ganesh Peerkatta and Shyam Bellapaly of Eureka Model School are placed at second and third overall. Monday's winner Chiran Deep dropped to sixth position overall after a lacklustre performance in the fourth race.

TOP RESULTS

- **Sub Junior Main Fleet (Optimist):** 1. Vaishnavi Veeravamsham 17 points, 2. Tanuja Kameshwar 33 pts, 3. Teja Kethavath 46 pts.
- **Sub Junior Green Fleet (Optimist):** 1. Mohammad Moutameen 22 points, 2. Ganesh Peerkatta 25pts, 3. Shyam Ballapally 30 pts.

A trainee at the high performance Republic Day tennis camp conducted by Academia Sports Village at their courts at Hyderabad Polo and Riding Club in Aziz Nagar, receives her certificate from Ms Khursheed Begum (centre), chief patron of RR Foundation, on Tuesday.

Nambiar cherishes 'late' Padma award

New Delhi, Jan. 26: It was a long time coming, over three decades to be precise.

For 88-year-old O. M. Nambiar, the man who nurtured one of India's greatest athletes in P T Usha, the announcement of his name in the list of this year's Padma Shri awardees is a case of "better late than never".

"I feel very happy for this award though it could have been many years back. Still I am happy. Better late than never," Nambiar, who is battling the Parkinson's disease, said in an interaction from his home in Kozikhode.

Usha was conferred the Padma Shri in 1985 while Nambiar, presented the Dronacharya that year, had to wait for another 36 years before the nation's fourth highest civillian honour came his way.

His affliction will, however, not allow him to receive the honour in person when the President gives it away at the Rashtrapati Bhawan later. But that's not lessened his joy.

"Every medal won by my trainees gives me immense satisfaction. I consider my Dronacharya Award, Best Asian Coach award and now Padma Shri as recognition of my hard work and dedication," said the legendary hailing from Kerala.

Looking back in time, an Olympic medal for his most famous ward — Usha — was Nambiar's "lifetime dream" and he recalled being devastated when she missed the bronze in the 1984 Los Angeles Games by a whisker.

> **I feel very happy for this award though it could have been many years back. Still I am happy. Better late than never.**
> **— O.M. NAMBIAR**
> P. T. Usha's coach

The man, who moulded Usha into one of India's finest athletes during his mentorship from 1977 to 1990, said he couldn't stop weeping once Usha was done with that race.

"It is absolutely true that I wept when we knew that Usha missed the bronze by one-hundredth of a second in 400m hurdles in 1984 Olympics. I was inconsolable," Nambiar said.

"I cannot forget that moment. An Olympic medal for Usha was my biggest lifetime dream," he added.

Usha was beaten by Romanian Cristieana Cojocaru for the bronze medal in a photo-finish, denying India what could have been its first Olympic medal in athletics. The Romanian clocked 55.41 seconds while Usha recorded 55.42 seconds.

Nambiar's son Suresh said that someone from the family will collect the award for him when the ceremony is officially held.

"My father will not be able to collect the Padma Shri. His movement is restricted. Somebody from the family will receive the award," he said.

Nambiar was with Indian Air Force for 15 years and retired as a Sergeant in 1970.

He got a coaching diploma from the NIS-Patiala in 1968 and joined the Kerala Sports Council in 1971.

He was tasked with finding talented athletes in the state. — *PTI*

RITHIKA, MIHIR IN THIRD ROUND OF U-16 TENNIS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 26

Rithika Kakarlamudi and Mihir Parcha were the best players on show as they sailed into the third round of the girls and boys categories respectively at the AITA C7 Under-16 tournament being held at Sania Mirza Tennis Academy in Murtuzaguda, Hyderabad.

Rithika blanked G. Hansika Reddy 6-0, 6-0 while Mihir thumped Thakur Arman Singh 6-2, 6-0.

THE RESULTS

Boys singles: Mihir Parcha bt Thakur Arman Singh 6-2, 6-0; Tarun Korwar bt Arnav Bishoyi 6-1, 6-2; Parth Malik bt Rohan Sriram 6-4, 4-6, 6-4; P. Sandilya bt Yeswanth G. 6-3, 6-1; Nikhil D'souza bt Satyajit Sunil Nair 6-4, 7-6 (9-7); Vishal Vasudev bt S. V. Pranav Kumar Reddy 4-6, 6-2, 6-2; Venkat Rishi Batlanki bt Dandu Trishant Reddy 6-2, 6-2; Dreek Saha bt Murali Koushal 7-6 (7-5), 7-5.

Girls singles: Rithika Kakarlamudi bt G. Hansika Reddy 6-0, 6-0; Sama Chevika Reddy bt P. V. Yeshasri 6-4, 6-3; S. Kaavya bt G. Harshmetha 6-3, 6-1; Pushti Ladda bt Dandu Laxmi Siri 7-6 (7-4), 6-2; T. Sai Janvi bt Gagana Moana Kumar 6-3, 6-0; Monisha Devarakonda bt M. Sri Vidya 6-2, 6-2; Divija Maneni bt G. Sowkhya 6-4, 6-4; Rishitha Basi Reddy bt Sameeksha Anem 6-3, 6-2.