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OTHER STORIES

RANI: FARMERS
PADDY WILL BE
PROTECTEDDC CORRESPONDENT
KHAMMAM, DEC. 4

The Nagarjunasagar Left canal's, 19th major canal deputy engineer Rani, said that the paddy crop of farmers in nine villages, in Nelakondapalli and Mudigonda mandals, will be saved at any cost.

She said that works on the canal have commenced, and farmers will get two water releases soon. I am also the daughter of a farmer, and I will not allow the crops to dry. We are working 24x7 to solve the problem.

After NSP officials released water into the canal, the farmers in the area raised nursery beds. She said, "It is a fact that paddy in Chandapuram, Anasagaram, Kamalapuram, Gokinapalli and Nachepalli villages are at the reaping stage. It will be protected at any cost."

NIZAM SUGARS
LANDS TO BE
PROTECTEDDC CORRESPONDENT
NIZAMABAD, DEC. 4

District collector C. Narayana Reddy directed revenue officials to protect the lands of the Nizam Sugar factory in Bodhan.

He directed Bodhan revenue divisional officer Rajeshwar to initiate action against the encroachers. Following complaints of NSF lands encroachment, revenue inspectors and surveyors have been asked to be vigilant.

Meanwhile, director (sugar) and commissioner (cane) Bhadraru Maloth directed officials to initiate criminal action against those who have encroached on the Nizam Sugar lands. The company has appointed a retired tahsildar to look after the land of the factory in Bodhan.

CHILD RIGHTS
HEAD HOLDS
REVIEW MEETDC CORRESPONDENT
JAGTIAL, DEC. 4

Protecting the rights of the children is the responsibility of the parents and those in society, said Telangana Child Rights Commission member, Arikella Devaiah while participating in a review meeting in Jagtial district on Friday.

Mr Devaiah enquired with the officials from the education, medical, police, labour, women and child welfare, social welfare and BC Welfare departments of the steps taken to protect the rights of children.

He asked the concerned officials to take precautionary steps before rescuing a child because of Covid-19 pandemic situations.

The officials were asked to take perfect steps to prevent child marriages and sexual exploitation of children. He said, "Violation of child rights will be taken seriously by the child rights commission."

People can dial 1098 if they notice any violations of child rights, the details of the informer will be kept a secret," he assured.

After inquiring about the situations before and after Covid-19, Mr Devaiah ordered the officials to distribute daily essentials to the poor and needy and to educate them about the facilities and opportunities in regards to health and education along with providing drinking water and mini anganwadi centres in the villages.

District Collector, G. Ravi said, "There will be an inspection of the departments from time-to-time on how they are implementing the protection of child rights. The district, mandal and village level committees will carry out the inspection."

District Superintendent of Police, Sindhu Sharma said that in recent times there is an increase in the number of children being exploited and harassed sexually.

Many people are sending their children to work. We will initiate action against them and lodge cases, she warned.

■ **DEVAIAH SAID** that the violation of child rights will be taken seriously by the child rights commission. People can dial 1098 if they notice any violations of child rights, the details of the informer will be kept a secret.

Misuse of sirens
in Nizamabad

Allegedly being used to cover illegal activities

NARENDER
PULLOOR | DC
NIZAMABAD, DEC. 4

A few private-owned vehicles in the towns of Nizamabad, Bodhan and other areas have been blatantly flaunting police and ambulance sirens for their vested interests in Nizamabad district in the last few months. It is alleged, these persons are close to some elected representatives, and use the sirens on their private vehicles, to transport gutka, sand and carry out other illegal activities smoothly.

As per rules, vehicles used by police officers, ambulances, fire-fighting vehicles, are allowed to use sirens to clear traffic either on the National

■ **ALLEGATIONS ARE** that these persons are close to some elected representatives, and use the sirens on their private vehicles, to transport gutka, sand and carry out other illegal activities smoothly.

Highways or internal roads in towns.

Subhash, a businessman, said, "The police can easily identify the private vehicles using sirens. If this is not stopped, in future people will not give way to ambulances and police vehicles". It is a serious issue, and the police department should take note of it and initiate action against the errant

vehicle owners, he added. Speaking to Deccan Chronicle, a senior police officer who did not wish to be named said, "The use of sirens in private vehicles is illegal. People should complain to the police along with giving the registration number. It is a known fact that only influential people dare to use sirens on their vehicles. We are ready to initiate action against the errant persons, if higher-ups direct us."

Meanwhile, a few persons in Nizamabad and Kamareddy districts who are not engaged by any media house are flashing press stickers on their four-wheelers and two-wheelers, to avoid police vehicle checks and carry out illegal activities.

GOVT HOSPITAL IN
SIRCILLA TO GET ALL
MODERN FACILITIESDC CORRESPONDENT
SIRCILLA, DEC. 4

District collector, D. Krishna Bhaskar inspected the Government Main hospital in Rajanna Sircilla district on Friday.

He said, "To offer better medical services to poor patients in the districts, ultra modern facilities will be made available in the Government Main hospital." He said with the ₹40 lakh sanctioned by the state government, a liquid oxygen tank, with a capacity of six litres is established in the premises of the hospital.

Construction works on the fabricated shed with 50 beds is progressing. Patients visiting from distant places will benefit, he added. After inspecting the dialysis ward, he said, an additional five dialysis units, at an investment of ₹50 lakhs, will be added, taking the total number of dialysis units to 10.

The hospital will also get a digital X-ray machine at an investment of ₹20 lakh, and the laboratory will be equipped, with modern equipment at an investment of ₹5 lakhs.

ZP chairperson, Nyalakonda Aruna who accompanied the Krishna Bhaskar said, "The government is taking steps to develop the hospital into an ultra-modern facility. It is the responsibility of the hospital to keep the hospital premises neat and clean and render better services to the poor."



ABVP activists protest at KU crossroads on Friday.

ABVP protests for
fee reimbursementDC CORRESPONDENT
WARANGAL, DEC. 4

Demanding the release of pending fee-reimbursement and scholarships, ABVP activists staged a half-naked protest at the Kakatiya University Cross Roads on Friday.

ABVP state secretary Ambala Kiran criticised the government for not resolving the issues faced by the students.

He said, "The students are facing numerous problems, as the state government sits on the fee-reimbursement and scholarships dues amounting to ₹4,300 crore. With the non-release of fee-reimbursement funds, students have a tough time getting their

certificates from the college managements".

Kiran held the government responsible for the non-appointment of Vice-Chancellors to the universities. Referring to thousands of vacant posts for DEO, MEO, teaching and non-teaching, in educational institutions, Kiran accused the government of being apathetic in filling them.

He threatened the government that they would launch state-wide agitations if it fails to address the problems faced by the students.

ABVP state joint secretary Punnam Venu, KU wing president Sandeep, secretary Rajesh, Shiva, Pasha and Balaram were present along with others.



Gothi Koya youth play Kabaddi at Tadvai on Friday.

Gothikoya youth
encouraged to
excel in sportsANUDEEP
CEREMILLA | DC
WARANGAL, DEC. 4

In a bid to identify and encourage local talent for sports and to build better relationships with the tribals, the Mulugu police organised 'Mulugu Division Level Gothikoya Youth Kabaddi Competitions' for the youth belonging from the Gothikoya Gudem in Tadvai mandal.

Mulugu ASP P. Sai Chaitanya said that the department is conducting several events in the areas of education, health and sports.

He said that even though the world is moving fast, the Gothikoya people are lagging. He assured that the police would always help the Gothikoya to rise along with the rest of the world. "Kabaddi is a sport that people in the village can connect with, so kabaddi competitions are being held. More sport competitions will be held in the future. Those who show talent in sports will be sent to play at the higher levels," he promised.

The ASP encouraged the educated Gothikoya youth to take advantage as there are job opportunities for those who excel in sports. He said that the police department would arrange for the necessary training programmes.

He said, "Contact the SIs and the CIs of Mulugu sub-division, for assistance in health, education and sports."

Tribal youths from Gothikoya hamlets under Pasra, Tadvai and Venkatapuram police stations in Mulugu sub-division enthusiastically participated in the Kabaddi competition held on Friday. Athletes received sportswear, and meals were arranged, for all who came.

Tadvai A team, Tadvai B team, Venkatapuram team and Pasra team took the top four positions. They received cash prizes and mementoes.

PET teachers made the programme a success and were felicitated, with shawls. Pasra SI G Ravinder, Tadvai SI CH Venkateswara Rao, PET association district president Yalam Adinarayana.



Mission Bhagiratha officials interact with the villagers of Pallevada in Khammam district on Friday.

Pallevada villagers unhappy with
quality of Bhagiratha water suppliedRAVINDRA SESHU | DC
VEMSOOR (KHAMMAM),
DEC. 4

The locals of Pallevada in Vemsoor mandal complained to the Mission Bhagiratha officials about the inferior quality of drinking water they receive.

They sought permission to use the drinking water from the erstwhile water scheme. The locals complained that the water received through the Mission Bhagiratha has mud and weeds.

Officials rushed to the village and tried to convince the villagers to collect the Bhagiratha water. Pallevada sarpanch

■ **THE LOCALS** complained that the water received through the Mission Bhagiratha has mud and weeds.

■ **THEY SOUGHT** permission to use the drinking water from the erstwhile water scheme.

Ravuri Ramadevi explained to the officials that the ph value (potential of hydrogen) of the erstwhile drinking water scheme is equal to the ph value of the Mission Bhagiratha water. "We will use the existing scheme to fulfill our daily

water needs and in summer will use the Mission Bhagiratha water", she said.

Mallela Narasimha Rao, TRS leader from the village, said, "Former minister Tummala Nageswara Rao responded to the fluoride problem 30 years back and set up a drinking water scheme by bringing water from the Lankasagar reservoir".

He said that the bore well in the village is giving good water and the people of the surrounding villages, like Choudavaram and Rajugudem coming to Pallevada to fetch bore well water for drinking. Vemsoor mandal

Bhagiratha assistant executive engineer Jayalaxmi asked the locals to use Bhagiratha water as the water is proved safe in all the tests.

She conducted tests like PH, fluoride, hardness, iron content and H2S of the Bhagiratha water in the presence of locals. She said that the water is equivalent to the water produced by the reverse osmosis plant and tried to convince them to use the Bhagiratha water.

Finally, the Pallevada villagers agreed to use the Mission Bhagiratha water and requested the officials not to impose an additional burden on the Pallevada gram panchayat.

DC report mentioned GHMC
poll result similar to NizamabadDC CORRESPONDENT
NIZAMABAD, DEC. 4

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) results have proved the prediction of Deccan Chronicle, that no party will get the magic figure in the civic elections.

A news item published in these columns on November 24, stated that the GHMC voters' trend might be like the Nizamabad Municipal Corporation results in last January.

On the lines of the Nizamabad Municipal Corporation, the TRS-MIM alliance is the need of the hour in Hyderabad, if the parties want their persons elected to the mayor and the deputy mayor posts.

The sudden rise of the BJP in the municipal corporation elections halted the victory march of ruling TRS in the Nizamabad municipal corporation and in the GHMC too.

As the TRS lacked a majority, it had to share

power with the MIM in Nizamabad in 2014 and 2020 municipal elections.

TRS candidates Akula Sujatha in 2014 and Dandu Neethu Kiran in 2020, were elected as mayors. TRS offered the deputy mayor post to MIM leaders M.A. Faheem and Idris Khan in 2014 and 2020.

Of the 50 corporators in the Nizamabad corporation, BJP won only six corporators in the 2014 elections. In the January 2020 Nizamabad municipal corporation polls, it bagged 28 corporator posts out of the 60 seats.

BJP emerged as the single largest party in the Nizamabad corporation, but lacked a majority and has to sit in the Opposition. Under the BJP leadership, in particular, Nizamabad MP D. Arvind worked hard to increase the party's tally.

The polarisation of votes saw the first and second places go to the BJP and the MIM in Nizamabad. However, MIM got a higher number of seats than the

TRS but had to adjust to the deputy mayoral post in the two terms.

Nizamabad city replicates the lifestyle of Hyderabad as people of different faiths have settled here in large numbers. Nizamabad and Hyderabad share strong business and family ties.

The mood of the voters is reflected similarly in Nizamabad and Hyderabad in civic polls.

Surprisingly, seven BJP municipal corporators in Nizamabad have joined the TRS in a phased manner. Speaking to the *Deccan Chronicle*, BJP National council member P. Hanmanth Reddy said that the victory march of the BJP is said to continue in Telangana state.

GHMC election results prove that the party is getting stronger. "Setting aside divide talk, BJP is emerging as a strong political force in the state. The morale of the cadre is upbeat. We are expecting miracles in the coming Assembly elections", he said.

ADIVASI STAGED
PROTESTS OVER
TIGER ATTACKSDC CORRESPONDENT
KOMARAM BHEEM
ASIFABAD, DEC. 4

The incidents of a tiger attacking and killing two persons has created unrest among the Adivasis in the interior areas in the Kaganagar Division in Komaram Bheem Asifabad.

Adivasis from the interior areas staged a protest in Bejjur mandal headquarters on Thursday demanding that the forest officials catch the tigers by setting up cages in a week, or else they would step in.

In the last 20 days, two Adivasis died due to tiger attacks in separate incidents in Dahegaon and Penchikalpet mandals.

Adivasi Girijana Sangham leaders said that the forest officials have failed to protect the lives of the Adivasis despite repeated appeals. On Friday in Mancherial, Adivasi Hakkula Porata Samiti leaders said that the tigers released by the officials are not local tigers.

GOOD | RETURNS

Investment almost recovered

Techie plants guava in 5
acres; reaps rich rewardPILLALAMARRI
SRINIVAS | DC
LANDASANGI (ADILABAD),
DEC. 4

A 26-year-old with a B. Tech in agriculture, Ankath Ravishekar, has brought about a magical turnaround while cultivating guava in his five-acre land in his village Landasangi in Adilabad mandal.

He has successfully encouraged farmers from the district to take advantage of guava cultivation. He said he has achieved near breakeven of his ₹11 lakh investment in two years and was all set for making a profit.

He states that selection of quality plants and knowledge of containing pests like fruit fly and nematodes were important before cultivating the crop.

Ravishekar said his father Anand was not happy when he took ₹11 lakh from him for raising orchards instead of looking for a government or a private job. Today, he is happy that the 'Jama orchard' is to earn profits.

The youngster pointed out that he had planted 3,200 saplings of Taiwan



Ankath Ravishekar of Landasangi village who did his BTech in agriculture, planted 3,200 saplings of Taiwan Guava variety in his farm in Adilabad district. Ravi shows big size guava fruits.

Guava variety on August 19, 2017 and so far he got two crops. He opted for the semi-organic way and was not fully dependent on chemicals and pesticides. His field is located in Arli (B) village, two kilometres from Landasangi.

He earned ₹8 lakh from the first yield of 360 quintals, which were sold to fruit merchants and traders in Adilabad itself. He is expecting more than 250 quintals yield this year. He says that there was 10-20 per cent loss of guava crop

because of pest attacks but farmers can get good returns if they work hard and gain sufficient knowledge about its cultivation.

Ravishekar said he has also cultivated red gram as intercrop in the jama orchard and is now planning to raise papaya from next season. He says changes in cropping pattern enhance soil fertility.

He advises farmers to shun cotton crops and go in for horticulture crops on small plots. This would be a sound economic move, he says.

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LIST OF CANDIDATES
DECLARED ELECTED
IN GHMC POLLS

Hyderabad: The following are some of the names of corporators declared elected.

- **Gawalipura:** Bhagya Laxmi (BJP)
- **Vinayaknagar:** Rajyalakshmi (BJP)
- **Gudimalkapur:** Devara Karunakar (BJP)
- **Champapet:** V. Madhusan Reddy (BJP)
- **Adikmet:** Sunitha Prakash (BJP)
- **Musheerabad:** M. Supriya (BJP)
- **Gaddiannarram:** Prem Mahesh Reddy
- **Hasthinpuram:** Sujatha (BJP)
- **Malkajigiri:** V. Shravan (BJP)
- **Moosapet:** K Mahender (BJP)
- **Jiyaguda:** Bogini Dharshan
- **RK Puram:** Radha-Dheera Reddy
- **Kotkapet:** Pavan Kumar
- **Rajendranagar:** P. Archana (BJP)
- **Nagole:** Chintala Aruna Yadav (BJP)
- **Kavadiiguda:** Rachanasree (BJP)
- **Vanasthalipuram:** R. Venkateshwar Reddy (BJP)
- **Kachiguda:** Kanne Umarani (BJP)
- **Ramanthapur:** Bandaru Srivani (BJP)
- **Ameerpet:** Kathineni Sarala (BJP)
- **Gauthamnagar:** Mekala Sunitha Yadav (TRS)
- **Boudhanagar:** Kandi Shailaja (TRS)
- **Chandanagar:** Manjula Raghunath Reddy (TRS)
- **Rahmathnagar:** C.N. Reddy (TRS)
- **Banjara Hills:** Gadwal Vijaya Laxmi (TRS)
- **Golnaka:** Dusari Lavanya (TRS)
- **Seethaphalmandi:** Hema Samala (TRS)
- **Somajiguda:** Vanam Sangeetha Yadav (TRS)
- **Kondapur:** Shaik Hameed Patel (TRS)
- **Charlapalli:** Bonthu Sridevi (TRS)
- **Jagathgiriigutta:** Kolukula Jagan (TRS)
- **Fathenagar:** P. Satish Goud (TRS)
- **KPHB Division:** Mandadi Srinivasa Rao (TRS)
- **Serilingampally:** Ragam Nagender Yadav
- **Hafeezpet:** Poojitha Jagadeeshwar (TRS)
- **Madhapur:** Jagadeeshwar Goud (TRS)
- **Alwyn Colony:** Dodla Venkatesh Goud (TRS)
- **Meerpet HB Colony:** Jerripothula Prabhudas (TRS)
- **Khairatabad:** Vijaya Reddy (TRS)
- **Vengal Rao Nagar:** Dedeepya Rao (TRS)
- **Allapur:** Sabiha Begum (TRS)
- **Mallapur:** Pannala Devender Reddy (TRS)
- **Patancheru:** Mettu Kumar Yadav (TRS)
- **Suraram:** Manthri Satyanarayana (TRS)
- **Gajularamam:** Ravula Seshagiri (TRS)
- **Kukatpally:** Jupally Satyanarayana
- **Balajinagar:** Sirisha Baburao Pagudala (TRS)
- **Rangareddy Nagar:** Budda Vijay Shekhar Goud (TRS)
- **Kapra:** Swarna Raj (TRS)
- **Alwal:** Chintala Shanti (TRS)
- **Venkatapuram:** Sabitha Kishore
- **Outbullapur:** K. Parijatha (TRS)
- **Chintal:** Rashida Mohammed Rafi (TRS)
- **Saathnagar:** Kolanu Laxmi Bal Reddy (TRS)
- **Bharathinagar:** Adarsh Sindhu (TRS)
- **Venkateshwara:** Manne Kavitha Reddy (TRS)
- **Old Bowenpally:** Muddam Narsimha Yadav (TRS)
- **Bansilalpet:** K. urma Hemalatha (TRS)
- **Begumpet:** M. Srihari (TRS)
- **Hydermagar:** Narne Srinivasa Rao (TRS)
- **Balanagar:** Aavula Ravinder Reddy (TRS)
- **Borabanda:** Baba Fasiuddin (TRS)
- **Ramachandrapuram:** Pushpa Nagesh Yadav (TRS)
- **Mettuguda:** R. Sunitha (TRS)
- **Ramnasthupura:** Mohammed Khadar (AIMIM)
- **Mehdipatnam:** Majid Hussain (AIMIM)
- **Dabeerpura:** Alamdar Hussain Walajahi (AIMIM)
- **Rein Bazaar:** Abdul Wasay (AIMIM)
- **Santosh Nagar:** Muzaffar Hussain (AIMIM)
- **Doodhbowli:** Mohammed Saleem (AIMIM)
- **Jahanuma:** Muqtadir Baba (AIMIM)
- **Navab Sahab Kunta:** Shireen Khatoun (AIMIM)
- **Shalkpet:** Md Rashed Farazuddin
- **Talab Chanchalam:** Sameena Begum (AIMIM)
- **Riyasatnagar:** Mirza Mustafa Baig (AIMIM)
- **Nanalnagar:** Mohammed Naseeruddin (AIMIM)
- **Falaknuma:** K. Thara Bai (AIMIM)
- **Chandrayangutta:** Abdul Wahab (AIMIM)
- **Uppuguda:** Fahad Bin Abdul Samad Abdad (AIMIM)
- **Shailbanda:** Mohammed Mustafa Ali (AIMIM)
- **Dattatreyanagar:** Zakir Baqueri (AIMIM)
- **Lalitabagh:** Mohammed Ali Sharif (AIMIM)
- **Erragadda:** Shaheen Begum (AIMIM)
- **Shastripuram:** Mohd Mubeen (AIMIM)
- **Shastripuram:** Mohd Mubeen (AIMIM)
- **Akbarbagh:** Syed Minhajuddin (AIMIM)
- **Moghalpura:** Nasreen Sultana (AIMIM)
- **Pathargatti:** Syed Sohail Quadri (AIMIM)
- **Kishanbagh:** Hussaini Pasha (AIMIM)
- **Jangammet:** Abdul Rahman (AIMIM)
- **Chavni:** Abdul Salam Shahid (AIMIM)

BJP's show boosted by vote share of Congress, Desam

TRS may see its vote percentage fall; SEC yet to provide data

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 4

The political vacuum that was created by the non-performance of the Congress and the Telugu Desam was filled by the BJP in the GHMC elections.

The BJP by winning 11 seats in the LB Nagar Assembly segment and two seats each in the Maheswaram and Saroonagar Assembly seats clearly indicated that it had taken away the TD vote share.

Though the final vote share of each party was not released by the State Election Commission, the preliminary assessments indicate that the TRS has lost about four to five per cent of the votes that it had won in 2016, bringing its tally down from 99 to 55.

The BJP and Telugu Desam contested together in 2016 and secured a combined share of 23.5 per cent of the vote — the TD 13 per cent and the BJP 10.5 per cent — and settled with one and four seats respectively.

In this election, with a seat tally of 48, the BJP vote share appears to have jumped to 33 to 35 per cent.

The MIM had 15 per cent vote share in 2016. Its retaining the 44 seats shows that it has kept its vote share intact, or has garnered slightly more votes.

The Congress which had 10.4 per cent of the votes cast in the last elections gave a fight in 46 divisions of the Malkajigiri Lok Sabha segment. In a trian-



TRS leaders and workers celebrate the victory of their party candidates in the GHMC elections in Hyderabad on Friday. — S. SURENDER REDDY

gular contest, the TRS secured 26 seats in Qutbullapur, Kukatpally, Malkajigiri and Secunderabad Cantonment Assembly segments. The BJP won 18 seats including 11 seats in LB Nagar segment one in Kukatpally and rest from other segments under the Lok Sabha. The Congress settled with two seats.

Four circles gave most seats to BJP

From Page 1

The divisions in flood-affected areas like Kavadiiguda, Adikmet, Nallakunta, Moosarambagh, Musheerabad, Gandhinagar Monda Market Champapet, Chaitan-

● **IN SECUNDERABAD** GHMC circle's total of 27 divisions, BJP clinched 14 seats.

yapuri and Bagh Amberpet were pocketed by the BJP.

In Secunderabad GHMC circle's total of 27 divisions, BJP clinched 14 seats, in LB Nagar circle they bagged 15 seats out of 23, in Khairatabad nine seats out of 27 while in Charminar circle it won seven of 36 seats.

TRS fell 25 seats short of expectations: KTR

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 4

TRS working president and minister K.T. Rama Rao, who spearheaded the TRS election campaign, on Friday thanked the people of Hyderabad, who voted for the party and chose TRS as the single largest party.

While addressing a press conference after the results were declared, Rama Rao said, "The result is certainly not what we expected. It is short by 20-25 seats. We lost about 10-12 divisions with an extremely narrow margin of less than 200 votes. In fact, a couple of divisions like BN Reddy Nagar and Malkajigiri, where we lost by 18 votes and 70 votes are classic examples of how narrow the margin of defeat or victory was."

Rao said, "I thank every single TRS leader and worker for coming all the way to Hyderabad to support the candidates and to ensure their campaign went on successfully. I thank all those who voted for us and every social



TRS working president K.T. Rama Rao addresses the media after the results for the GHMC elections were declared on Friday. — S. SURENDER REDDY

media warrior, who was active in our support."

The minister said that they will discuss everything in the party and review why the desired outcome was not deliv-

ered by the people. Rama Rao said that there was a lot of time to think about the Mayor and the party will certainly take a decision at the appropriate time.

Bhagyanagar bait worked out for BJP's drive

From page 1

The BJP's campaign on changing the name of Hyderabad to Bhagyanagar and its attack on the TRS government seems to be worked out well.

The party drafted top vote-catchers like Union minister Amit Shah, who held a hugely successful roadshow in Secunderabad, and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath who ratcheted up the temperature as well as Bharatiya Jana Yuva Morcha president Tejavi Surya, the BJP MP from South Bangalore. Surya's foray into the Osmania University campus was also well received and helped attract many peo-

ple to the party. The campaign had party general secretary Bhupendra Yadav, fresh from the victory in the Bihar Assembly elections, as in charge. Yadav has noted that this is a moral victory for the BJP and has squarely placed it as the prime opponent to the TRS.

National president J.P. Nadda participated in roadshows and intellectual meetings in campaign as did Union minister Smriti Irani. The BJP charge sheet against the TRS which was released by Union minister Prakash Javadekar and the manifesto released by Maharashtra former chief minister Devendra Fadnis gave for the people the 'ring of confidence' for the BJP.

BJP to sit in Opposition at GHMC

From Page 1

The BJP did well in the LB Nagar, Musheerabad and Goshamahahal constituencies as well as Uppal, LB Nagar and Maheshwaram. The wards in the core city were shared almost equally between the TRS, the BJP and the MIM.

The MIM retained most of its wards in its stronghold of seven Assembly segments including Charminar, Karwan and Chandrayanagutta which are part of the Lok Sabha constituency of party president Asaduddin Owaisi. The party had won more than 40 wards in the 2010 and 2016 GHMC elections.

After the Congress won only two wards — AS Rao Nagar and Uppal — state

ZONE-WISE SEATS WON BY PARTIES						
Zone	TRS	BJP	AIMIM	Congress	Others	Total
LB Nagar	6	15	0	2	0	23
Charminar	0	7	29	0	0	36
Khairatabad	5	9	13	0	0	27
Serilingampally	13	1	1	0	0	15
Kukatpally	20	2	0	0	0	22
Secunderabad*	11	14	1	0	0	26
TOTAL	55	48	44	2	0	149

*Counting has been halted at Neredmet ward

party unit president N. Uttam Kumar Reddy submitted his resignation. TPCC working president A. Revanath Revanth, the MP from Malkajigiri, failed to show his political dominance.

The TRS won a considerable number of wards in

the Secunderabad Lok Sabha constituency represented by Union minister of state G. Kishan Reddy.

The TRS had planned to use its 34 ex officio members to get its mayor elected if its tally fell to 75-plus seats. Since it has won only 55 wards, its

only option is to enter into a post-poll alliance with the MIM and share the two posts.

The BJP has decided to sit in the Opposition in the GHMC council as the party does not have the required numbers to claim the key posts.

TENSION MACHA BOLARAM AS BJP ALLEGES FRAUD

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 4

Mild tension prevailed at the Macha Bolaram counting centre on Friday. As per the BJP leaders, the returning officer announced that the BJP candidate Sai Nareesh had won by 177 votes. The BJP lead-

ers claimed that the returning officer was pressured by TRS MLA Mynampalli Hanumantha Rao to order a recount, in which the TRS candidate got 27 votes more.

Nareesh still the won but the returning officer announced that the TRS candidate had won, the

BJP leaders alleged. BJP cadre staged a protested at the counting centre and were taken away by the police to the Shamirpet police station.

The BJP leaders alleged that TRS MLA manipulated the ballots and influenced the returning officer.

HC keeps SEC circular in abeyance

VUJJINI
VAMSHIDHARA | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 4

The High Court issued an interim direction to State Election Commission (SEC) to keep in abeyance its circular allowing consideration of votes polled in GHMC elections with "distinguish marks", even though they may not have the standard 'crossed arrow' mark.

Hearing a house motion on Friday morning by K. Anthony Reddy, advocate and BJP leader just before

the start of counting, Justice Abhishek Reddy suspended the circular. The judge said ballots with 'distinguish marks' should be kept separately. If they are found detrimental to poll results, the outcome of that result should not be announced.

"SEC is directed to inform returning officers to keep ballot papers not stamped with arrow cross marks separately. If the margin of difference in votes polled in favour of first and second candidates is more than the dis-

puted ballot papers, the election officer is free to declare the results. If the margin is less than the disputed ballot papers, results may not be declared till the petition is decided," Justice Reddy said. The matter has been posted to December 7.

At the same time, the State Election Commission also a filed house motion appeal petition challenging the interim orders issued on Friday by Justice Abhishek Reddy. In the appeal, the SEC contended

that interim order of the court amounts to interference in duties of the Election Commission. Hence, the order should be set aside.

The State Election Commission contended distinguishing marks under some circumstances can be provided to voters at some polling stations by returning officers. The appeal petition filed by the SEC may be heard on Saturday by a division bench headed by Chief Justice Raghavendra Singh Chauhan.

BJP overjoyed, TRS goes low-key

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC.4

It was a study in contrast. There was jubilation all around the BJP camps as the party's strength shot from four to a phenomenal 48 in the GHMC Council on Friday. On the other hand, celebrations of TRS winning candidates were

restricted to their divisions.

The euphoric celebrations of the BJP activists included enthusiastic bike rallies and bursting of crackers while there was a festive-like atmosphere across the city.

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, BJP central state coordinator Nune

Balraj said, "The celebrations have started. Our supporters reached the party office after taking out bike rallies."

Irrespective of parties, the winning candidates engaged brass bands and danced on the streets. After all, these 'baldia' elections were so hyped that they looked like gen-

eral elections.

Meanwhile, soon after the results started pouring in, some winners rushed to temples and some to the division to thank the people Marian Raju, who supported a winning candidate, said it's time to raise a toast. This is a phenomenal victory for our division."

TRS, MIM may have to continue 'friendly contest'

N. VAMSI SRINIVAS | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 4

The Telangana Rashtra Samiti and the Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimmeen may have to continue what the Bharatiya Janata Party describes as a "friendly contest" in the election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

Though none of the three major political forces — the TRS, MIM and the BJP — is in a position to win the Mayorship on its own, the ruling party can retain the post and run the show without a majority.

At the time of mayoral election, both the TRS and MIM are likely to field their respective candidates to thwart the BJP's campaign that the two parties are indeed partners.

Fearing polarisation of the Hindu vote in favour of the BJP, the TRS sought to project the otherwise friendly MIM as its principal rival during the high-pitched campaign for the polls. However, due to its poor performance, the results of which were announced on Friday, the ruling party is in a dicey situation.

Ironically, the ex officio members, who otherwise provide great strength to the ruling parties are of no help to the TRS. The strength of the electoral college is 195 thanks to the addition of 45 ex officio members. This puts the magic figure to win the Mayor at 98, a number the TRS cannot reach

● **FEARING POLARISATION** of the Hindu vote in favour of the BJP, the TRS sought to project the otherwise friendly MIM as its principal rival during the high-pitched campaign for the polls.

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even with the help of its ex officio members.

As per the results declared for 149 out of 150 wards, the TRS won 55, the BJP 48, the MIM 44 and the Congress two. The TRS strength will be 86 (or 87 if its candidate from Neredmet is also declared elected) including its 31 ex officio members and the party will still be short of the magic figure.

"It's a high risk if we take MIM support directly or indirectly by asking it to abstain from the voting," a senior TRS leader pointed out. The best solution in this scenario is that both parties will field their respective candidates and we will obviously win because the BJP can not support MIM, he added.

GHMC WEBSITE DELETES DETAILS OF CORPORATORS

MADDY DEEKSHITH | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 4

The city will have 300 corporators till February 8. The term of 150 members of the outgoing GHMC Council ends on February 8. Those elected in the recent elections will stay as corporators-elect till then.

Meanwhile, the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) has deleted the contact details of incumbent corporators from its website. Interestingly, the civic body came up with a surprising answer that it has removed the contact numbers since it would attract model code of conduct (MCC). However, the names of mayor Bonthu Rammohan and his deputy Baba Fasiuddin stay on the website.

When *Deccan Chronicle* enquired into the issue, the civic authorities informed that since the corporation will have newly elected corporators, officials have removed names of sitting representatives well in advance. Officials said that names and contact details of new corporators would be uploaded immediately after their election.

The lack of knowledge of officials will mean that the sitting corporators will be out of reach for the public until the new Council comes into being, and that too in February.

SHORT TAKES

M.P. MINISTER ‘UNFIT’ AS VACCINE TRIAL VOLUNTEER

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC
BHOPAL, DEC. 4

Madhya Pradesh home minister Narottam Mishra was on Friday disqualified to be a volunteer for Covid-19 vaccine trial.

Doctors in a private medical college hospital here where trial of a vaccine candidate was in progress have declared him ineligible to become a volunteer for the vaccine trial when they found that 2 members of his family had earlier tested positive for Coronavirus.

“The minister offered to volunteer for a vaccine trial During counseling, we have found that 2 members of his family had earlier tested positive for Coronavirus. Hence, he was disqualified to be a vaccine trial volunteer”, principal investigator of vaccine trial in the hospital Dr Raghavendra Gumasta said here.

Earlier on Thursday, Mishra appealed to the people to volunteer for a vaccine trial and announced that he would be a vaccine trial volunteer.

Sources said People’s Medical College and Hospital could so far motivate hardly 50 people to become vaccine trial volunteer in the last one week, whereas it has provision to vaccinate 2,000 people on trial.

COURT DENIES BAIL TO PNB SCAM ACCUSED

SHAHAB ANSARI | DC
MUMBAI, DEC. 4

A special CBI court on Friday rejected the bail application filed by Vipul Chitalia, the vice president of Gitanjali Group of Companies, arrested in connection with multi-crore Punjab National Bank scam.

Special judge V.C.Barde on Friday rejected the second bail application filed by Chitalia. He has been behind bars since his arrest in March 2018.

As per the investigating agencies, Nirav Modi and his uncle Mehul Choksi, in connivance with certain bank officials, allegedly cheated the Punjab National Bank (PNB) to the tune of ₹14,000 crore through issuance of fraudulent Letters of Undertaking (LoUs).

An LoU is a bank guarantee under which a bank can allow its customer to raise money.

These LoUs were allegedly issued in a fraudulent manner by a Mumbai branch of the PNB to the group of companies belonging to Modi and Choksi since March 2011 till the case came to light.

According to the CBI, Chitalia is one of the prime accused in this case and he was “mastermind” for putting through fraudulent transactions along with absconding accused Mehul Choksi.

2008 MALEGAON BLAST TRIAL RESUMES

DC CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI, DEC. 4

The trial in the Malegaon blast case resumed on Friday with defence lawyers cross-examining the panch witness who had conducted the spot panchnama and identified two motorcycles and five bicycles recovered from there.

The witness had recorded his testimony before the special court in July last year and his cross-examination was pending since then.

Courts were not working at full strength during the lockdown period of Coronavirus pandemic hence his cross-examination couldn’t be completed. On Friday the court began the trial in the case again and advocate J.P. Mishra along with other defence lawyers cross-examined this witness.

During cross-examination the witness replied to a question that even though the police has noted down his statement in Marathi but he doesn’t understand the language.

The court has fixed December 7, as next date of hearing.

On September 29, 2008 the blast occurred in front of Shakeel Transport at Bhikku Chowk, famous for its tea stalls. Six persons died and 100 others were injured when a bomb fitted on an LML Freedom motorcycle exploded.

According to the police, one of the bikes found from the spot was registered in the name of accused BJP Bhopal MP Pragya Singh Thakur, who is out on bail currently.

LOW-KEY POLITICAL DRAMA IN TN

G. BABU JAYAKUMAR & D. SEKAR | DC
CHENNAI, DEC. 4

The day after actor Rajinikanth announced his political entry by launching his own party in January, there was no perceptible reaction to it in the state’s political arena, where all players were seemingly going about their business as usual without seeing any threat to their electoral prospects.

However, social media was agog with memes and trolls. Some social media users unearthed old videos and visuals to highlight the irony in the latest averments and positions taken by not just Rajinikanth but also others associated with the present drama.

One visual in which Rajini, in an old interview, saying that spirituality and politics do not go hand in hand as they travel in the ‘opposite direction’ was juxtaposed with a recent video in which he is saying that he would usher in ‘spiritual politics’. Needless to say, it went viral in social networking sites.

Heavy rains lash TN



Due to heavy showers, the ancient Nataraja temple at Chidambaram witnesses flooding of its inner corridors on Friday. Heavy rains continued in Tamil Nadu leading to inundation of crops and waterlogging in many rural and urban areas while the deep depression over the Gulf of Mannar near Ramanathapuram is likely to weaken into a depression on December 5.

— DC

Vaccine will be ready soon: PM

Prime Minister says one crore health workers will be among the first to get the Covid vaccine

DC CORRESPONDENT
With agency inputs
NEW DELHI, DEC. 4

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said, quoting experts, that it is believed a Coronavirus vaccine “will be ready in the next few weeks”. Speaking at an all-party meeting to discuss the roadmap on ways to combat the pandemic, Modi said India’s vaccination programme will start as soon as the scientists gave the go-ahead, adding all eyes were on India for developing the most affordable vaccine to fight the pandemic.

Once the vaccine

becomes available, the PM said about one crore health workers, along with elderly people and those with co-morbidities as well as those suffering from life-threatening diseases, will be among the first to get the shot.

“Experts expect the vaccine will be ready within the next few weeks itself. Once the scientists approve it, the nationwide vaccination drive will be started. Our scientists are very confident of succeeding in their endeavour of making the vaccine. The world is keeping a watch on the cheapest and safest vaccine,” he said at the meeting, which was attended

by around 12 leaders from major political parties. Modi, who last week visited India’s top vaccine hubs to personally review the development of the vaccine and the manufacturing process, also pledged that the country has the necessary infrastructure to manufacture the vaccine on a large scale.

Nearly eight vaccines are at different stages of trial, with their manufacturing assured in India, he said. “The vaccine distribution and administration is given to a national expert group. Advice will be taken from them on a comprehensive and real-time manner. India has the facili-

ties needed to manufacture the vaccine on a large scale. In fact, our preparations are better than most others,” the PM said at the meeting, which is the second such called by the government over the issue.

Three vaccines from India are also at different stages of trial, he said. “The Centre is in talks with state governments over the price of vaccines and a decision on it will be taken keeping public health as the topmost priority,” he added.

In an effort to administer the vaccine in an efficient, smooth, transparent manner, the database of healthcare and frontline workers, aug-

mentation of cold chains and procurement of syringes and needles are in advanced stages of preparation, the PM told the leaders of the various parties.

Meanwhile, according to a global analysis, India is the largest buyer of Covid-19 vaccines in the world with 1.6 billion doses, a number some scientists say could cover 800 million people, or 60 per cent of its population, and will be enough to develop herd immunity’.

India has purchased 500 million doses of the Oxford University-AstraZeneca vaccine candidate, one billion from the US company Novavax and 100

million doses of the Sputnik V candidate from Russia’s Gamaleya Research Institute, according to the US-based Duke university global health innovation center. The Launch and Scale Speedometer’ analysis, which is updated every two weeks, shows India has confirmed 1.6 billion doses of three vaccines as of Nov.30 while the US and the EU have purchased doses of six candidates.

According to the analysis, India is the top vaccine buyer followed by the European Union which has confirmed 1.58 billion doses and the US that has managed to purchase just over a billion doses.

Nadda begins nationwide tour

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, DEC. 4

BJP president J.P. Nadda on Friday began his nation-wide tour to assess the party’s organisational strength, till the booth level, and further strengthen the party machinery before Assembly polls and the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. Nadda commenced his tour from Uttarakhand, where Assembly polls are scheduled in 2022 and is also the venue for the religious congregation ‘Kumbh’ next year.

On a four-day visit to the hill state, Nadda visited the Shanti Kunj Gayatri Pariwar in Haridwar on the first day and met saints and seers of the Niranjani Akhara and later participated in the Ganga aarti.

Nadda will be holding meeting with the chief ministers, state office-bearers, MLAs, MPs and

cadre to take stock of the party’s “real strength on the ground.”

During this nation-wide tour, Nadda’s priority will also be visiting those constituencies which the BJP lost in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. Nadda will take stock of the Assembly election preparations in the states and will also meet eminent citizens in each and every state. He will also hold meetings with the social media volunteers, who play a key role in conveying the party’s messages, including during the election season.

On Sunday, the BJP president will be holding a detailed meeting at the Bijapur House in Dehradun with MPs, MLAs and party leaders and will also hold deliberations with the party leaders on BJP’s ideology, political viewpoint and how to guide the party ahead.

12 infants die in govt hosp, Shivraj reviews situation

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC
BHOPAL, DEC. 4

As many as 12 infants have died in the intensive care units of a government hospital in a Madhya Pradesh district in the last one week, setting alarm bells ringing in the state administration.

The deaths occurred in the special newborn care unit and pediatric intensive care unit of district hospital in Shahdol.

“Total 12 infants died due to various reasons such as premature birth, underweight and pneumonia in the district hospital since November 27”, V.S. Waria, civil surgeon in Shahdol district hospital said on Friday.

According to him, four infants died in the hospital in last 48 hours itself.

While one of them died due to premature birth and underweight, 11 other

● **THE DEATHS** occurred in the special newborn care unit and pediatric intensive care unit of district hospital in Shahdol.

● **THE CHIEF MINISTER** ordered the local health administration to take urgent measures to check mortality of infants in the hospital.

infants succumbed to pneumonia and other cold related diseases in the hospital in the last one week, he added.

He, however, admitted that the only pediatrician in the hospital had earlier tested positive for Coronavirus and was absent in his duty for some time. He joined his duty on Thursday.

He attributed the high infant mortality in the hospital to the late arrival of sick children for treatment. The sick infants

were being brought from far off places such as Annupur and Umariya for admission in Shahdol district hospital.

All the sick newborns admitted in the hospital were found to be in critical conditions, he added.

Death of 12 infants in the government hospital has alerted the state government with Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan convening an emergency meeting here on Friday to review the situation.

Chouhan ordered the local health administration to take urgent measures to check mortality of infants in the hospital.

In a related development, former chief minister and MP Congress president Kamal Nath constituted a 4-member-team of the party to make on-the-spot inquiry into the matter and submit him the report.

C’garh to have new revenue admin units

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 4

With a simpler, convenient, and easily accessible way, the functioning of the Revenue Administration in the Chhattisgarh, people of the state are heaving a sigh of relief.

Revenue administration plays a quintessential role in the regulation of the administrative affairs of the state.

It is the responsibility of the government to provide easy, simple, and timely access to these services so that people get benefitted to the fullest.

With the formation of a new government in Chhattisgarh under the leadership of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, the regulation and simplified accessibility of revenue administration is given the highest priority.

The revenue and disaster management department of the state government, under the guidance of the Chief Minister, has worked towards the strengthening of the Public Service Centers for the past two years.

Various matters falling under the revenue administration like land registration, distribution of land, government land, diversion, registry of small land blocks have been simplified. As a part of this system, new revenue administrative units are being established. These will include new sub-tehsils, tehsils, and sections.

Also, a new district of Gureala-Pendra-Marwahi was carved out from Bilaspur district. New tehsils have been constituted for the revenue works of people close to their residences.

OPPN FLAG GST SHORTFALL IN PM’S ALL-PARTY MEETING

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, DEC. 4

Though the main agenda of the Prime Minister’s all-party meeting was the strategy for rollout of a Covid-19 vaccine, many Opposition parties flagged the need for the government to urgently bring the economy back on track. Most parties demanded financial help from the Centre and a holistic plan for rollout of the vaccine.

The meeting was attended by 13 parties which included Congress, Shiv Sena, Trinamul Congress, DMK, among others. The parties highlighted the GST dues that the Central government owed states adding that they were facing severe revenue shortfall due to Covid-19 pandemic.

The Congress was represented by Ghulam Nabi Azad, who said that the pandemic should be a part of India’s internal security policy, and all political parties should be involved against any misinformation campaign on vaccine.

Telangana Rashtra Samithi MP Namma Nageshwar Rao said the government should provide the vaccine free of cost. The Central government, he said, should ensure that cold storage units are set up across the country for easy transport of the vaccine.

The Shiv Sena’s Lok Sabha MP Vinayak Raut said that the GST collection by the Central government was more than ₹1 lakh crore and thus the Centre should not withhold the share of the State governments.

Similar views were echoed by the Trinamul Congress, represented by Sudip Bandopadhyay. He too said there was a need for additional financial help for the State governments, considering the financial stress they were going through.

The Chief Minister also

launched 23 new tehsils in various districts of the state on November 11. These 23 new tehsils have been formed keeping in mind the convenience of the general public amid 15 districts of the state.

To ease the cumbersome process of availing a caste certificate, caste certificates are now instantly being provided to the children, whose parents have caste certificates too.

The Chief Minister also took a major decision and lifted the ban on the sale of small plots. Now, less than five decimals of land is being registered in the state, which has created relief for the needy and hard working labourers, small businessmen and homeless people. Homeless families are being provided with aid to build their houses. The state’s revenue has also increased as a result of the simplified process of functioning of the government.

The government of Chhattisgarh is now working towards the computerisation of the revenue records and making them available digitally so that people can have access to it easily.

The Geo maps of 2,26,08,000 khasres from 20,089 villages, 65,43,000 B-1, and 19,000 villages have been made digitally available through Bhuiya and Geo map software.

Within the E-court system, approximately five lakh revenue cases have been disposed of by their registration and entries being made digitally.

The manual coverage has been also digitised in the E-court process.

Cases involving Revenue affairs are being resolved quickly via the E-court system.

DECCAN Chronicle

5 DECEMBER 2020

BJP real winner in Hyd, though TRS stays No. 1

A municipal election so *sui generis* it grabbed the attention of an entire nation has finally ended with a verdict that will be a watermark moment in the history of Telangana politics. The ruling TRS managed to narrowly edge out all challenges to slip past the ribbon with a wafer-thin margin, to manage to hold on to the GHMC mayoral seat. The AIMIM, player number three and factor X in the polls, held its fortress unscathed.

But the real political winner of the battle and narrative is the BJP, which has succeeded in managing to seed its narrative of being a challenger for power for Telangana, reducing the Congress to an insignificant naught in state politics. The BJP juggernaut has only strengthened from Nizamabad in Lok Sabha elections, 2019, to Dubbaka a few weeks ago to Greater Hyderabad on Friday; promising to keep aggressively surging ahead, with Nagarjunasagar as the next episode.

By holding the TRS far from increasing its tally of 99 to a century or more, to even denying the pink party a clear majority of 76 in popular vote for 150 divisions to bring it below 60 divisions, the BJP has scripted an exceptional win. What is more significant is that it has managed to surpass the AIMIM as the second largest party.

The real political winner of the battle and narrative is the BJP, which has succeeded in managing to seed its narrative of being a challenger for power for Telangana, reducing the Congress to an insignificant naught in state politics

The TRS now has an additional immediate problem of having to formally enter into some alliance or agreement with the MIM to resolve the impasse of the numbers of a hung municipal council. This will further give the BJP an additional benefit of having portrayed the TRS as a clandestine partner of the MIM.

What surprised nobody is that the Congress party has been reduced to a big zero in its ability to impact the politics of the state. The party was the principal Opposition less than two years ago when the results of the December 2018 Assembly elections came out. The TRS has used many a Machiavellian tactic to weaken the Congress, thus losing its advantage of two incompatible national parties splitting the anti-incumbency vote. Like a snake biting its own tail, the TRS is now paying a price for its strategic blunder. The anti-TRS sentiment was reflected early in the day when postal ballots revealed a strong verdict amongst government employees.

While parties win or lose, the state election commission under the stewardship of a retired IAS officer, C. Parthasarathi, has not covered itself in glory with several controversial decisions, one passed late last night after midnight being stayed by the high court. The perception that SEC was hardly Caesar's wife will go down as a sad day in the otherwise illustrious story of Indian election commissions being the highest upholders of the core values of our democracy.

Finally, now that elections for GHMC are over, it is a fair expectation that the winners will forget politics and apply their minds to addressing the problems of people and bettering the civic amenities of the city. Three cheers to that hope.

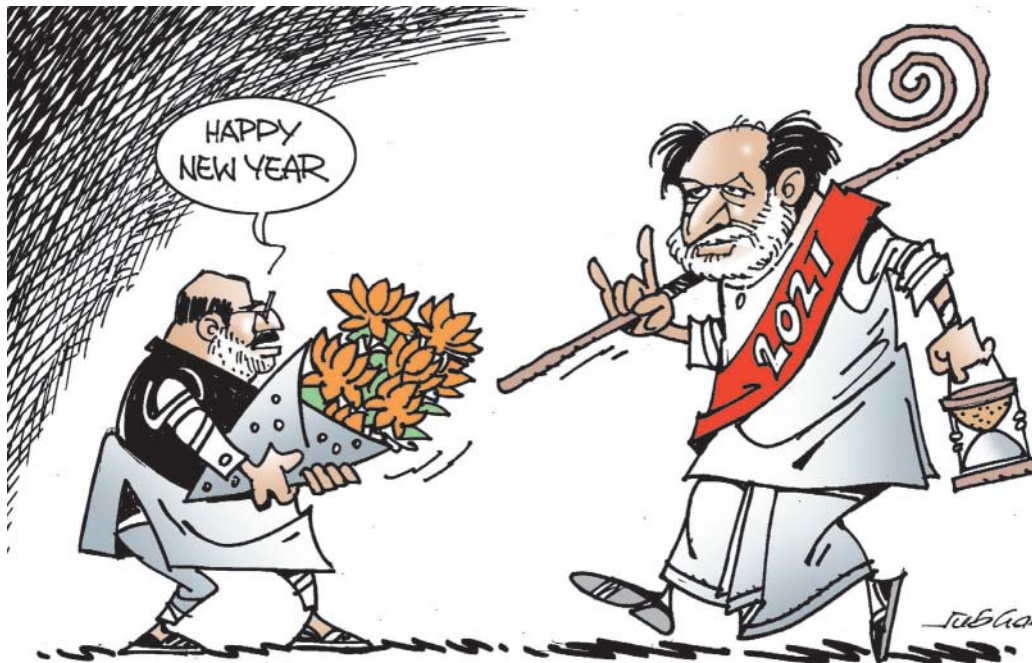
Innovate to glory

She is just 15 years old, but this Indian-origin scientist from Lone Tree, Colorado, is making history as *Time's* first-ever "Kid of the Year". Leadership it is that helped Gitanjali Rao make the cut out of 5,000 other talented teenagers. After Malala Yousafzai and Greta Thunberg who was last year's *Time* "Person of the Year", she is now the youngest kid on the role model block. Gitanjali uses her intellectual prowess to tackle some of the world's pressing concerns like cyber bullying and opioid addiction. She is exercised by the gender pay gap and climate change, for both of which she matter-of-factly holds older generations responsible. But she does not believe in big fixes, doing, as she says, what she can and taking on one urgent question at a time.

Surprisingly or not, this isn't the first time Gitanjali has been feted. In 2019, the teenage innovator was included in the *Forbes'* list of 30 under 30, when she was way below that age bar. Two more years back, at 12, she was named the United States' top young scientist for creating a device that detects lead in water. Gitanjali had been inspired by the drinking water crisis of 2014 that hit Michigan to design the gadget. She has worked in refugee camps and conducts global innovation workshops wherein she has mentored 30,000 students. Her amazing aptitude ranges from artificial intelligence to carbon nanotube sensor technology, while including more commonplace activities such as baking. The Stem School Highlands Ranch student is preparing to pursue genetics and epidemiology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. This generates promise: Perhaps, she will be the one to save the planet from the next pandemic.

To diaspora Indians, Gitanjali's feat though is the latest one in a long line of academic laurels that youngsters from the community have been bringing home. The question then is about how to have more people emulate her achievement. Gitanjali's personal experience has been that students just don't know where to start. But if one can give them that spark that they can then build off of, then that changes everything, and may mean that one more person in this world wants to come up with ideas to solve problems. A point to ponder, and take a leaf from, for parents, teachers and child-raisers.

Subhani



Pivot or perish: India's heartland sends signal

Shikha Mukerjee



Twenty-first century India's farmers have written themselves into the history of the country and into the international chronicles of historic protests. It's an irresistible force that is finally giving voice. Just as the 250 million who joined the nationwide strike by the trade unions had articulated the anger and distress of the working poor.

The solidarity, scale and pared-down simplicity of their call, that is, for the repeal of the three laws rushed through without consultation by the Narendra Modi government in September, as a confirmation of stealthily issued ordinances, is imperative and compelling. The farmers' protest has called out the Modi government as essentially autocratic, and the BJP as unrepresentative of the farming poor, who are the predominant sector of India's population and economy.

The protest has established that if dissent or disagreement is ignored, the discontented will make their presence felt. It proved that brutality against dissenters and the discontented cannot be used as a solution. The use of violence by the State against people is especially dangerous, when the individuals deployed to unleash the violence belong to the same rural base as the protesters. The inadequacy of the Modi government is stark, because it failed to realise the reality of the umbilical connection between the law enforcers and fighting forces and the *kisan*, even as it plagiarised Lal Bahadur Shastri's slogan of "Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan".

The Modi government, described by the ordinary protesting farmers from Punjab as "arrogant," can now do one of two

things: pivot or perish. The swelling numbers of farmers representing the collective discontent are a fact that cannot be fictionalised as a conspiracy or as anti-national.

Pivoting will require trashing the three laws -- Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, and the Essential Commodities Amendment Act -- legislating the minimum support price mechanism into law for government and private buyers in agricultural markets, and rewriting the law on commercial rates for power consumed by farmers, cancelling fines for stubble burning. If the Modi government does what is being asked, peacefully and unanimously by the 40 representatives who attended the second round of meetings with agriculture minister Narendra Tomar, then it can save face.

To defy the demands by India's farmers is as politically risky for the BJP as it would be reckless for the Modi government. If the BJP were an urban phenomenon, it could try and confuse its constituents about the character of the protest and the position of the farm union leaders who have virtually surrounded New Delhi. But it is not. The politics of an ephemeral Bharat Mata has been overturned by the reality of farmers, men and women, precisely articulating their problems, their clear-eyed understanding of how their protest shall continue and what is the minimum outcome they are waiting for.

The remarkably controlled and peaceful farmers, especially from Punjab, as the Modi government ought to understand, have quit their fields at the beginning of

the rabi crop season. The winter wheat, rice, pulses, oilseeds, is a commercial crop, sold to sustain the permanently indebted farmer. As every economist and cultivator-politician like Narendra Singh Tomar and Rajnath Singh is well aware, farming is a zero-profit and negative profit sector the world over. Generation after generation a few farmers barely break even, that is, zero profit, while the rest remain in debt, that rolls over, season to season. The cash they make is not profit.

Having harvested the kharif crop, which for the 86 per cent marginal and small farmers of India, is the crop they stock to feed their families and sell only the tiny surplus that is left over, missing the rabi season, which is irrigation and therefore power intensive, means that they are impoverishing themselves in order to change the rules enacted by the Narendra Modi government.

Recent reports indicate that around 40 per cent of the rabi crop has been sown in Punjab. Without the 60 per cent that remains to be sown and cannot be sown without the men, who are joining the protest in increasing numbers from Punjab, western Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Maharashtra, the Indian economy could be looking at an unprecedented crisis, deeper than the current level of contraction and recession.

India is the third largest producer of wheat, rice, pulses, cotton, peanuts in the world. Its trade in agricultural commodities is around \$40 billion. The states that produce the surplus which keeps the Indian economy ticking, including Karnataka, where farmers have called a seven-day protest

from December 7, have all registered their solidarity by joining the protests that surround the national capital. This is not conspiracy or a blockade masterminded by terror outfits; it is farmers who have reached the end point.

Nine days of protesting out on highways in the coldest weeks in 70 years is a visual document drawing attention to the land alienation of farmers who once owned the tiny plots they cultivated, to thousands of farmers who committed suicide as they had lost hope in dealing with the accumulated debt. India's marginal and small farmers never expect to the debt free; they hope to keep their debts within manageable limits.

Around 500 have committed suicide, according to reports, in Punjab between June and September. Farmers, men and women, are clear that the new laws will deepen the crisis, unless they are cancelled.

The demand is clear and simple; and new laws are needed. The new laws must be drafted in consultation with the farmers' organisations, who know what they need and what is due to them as the backbone of India's economy, as the backbone of its law enforcing machinery, its fighting forces, its cheap, unprotected labour force, the source of the endless army of domestic workers who ease the lives of India's middle class. To negotiate for anything less, by breaking up the totality of the demands, as the farm leaders point out, would be a sellout.

Good faith as a negotiating principle has been rejected by the farmers' unions. The farmers are seeking structural changes that would shift the paradigm within which agriculture and farmers have been perceived by the "modern" State. It is the Narendra Modi government's hard luck that it finds itself in the mess which is as much of its own making as it is an accumulated mountain of grievances.

Shikha Mukerjee is a senior journalist in Kolkata

LETTERS

EXIT POLLS

Exit polls proved that they cannot be trusted and were far from reality yet again (*Exit polls give GHMC Council to TRS yet again, DC, Dec. 4*). The ruling party lost many seats as predicted. Surprisingly, the BJP has made a dent in the TRS and AIMIM bastions. It is a big blow to the government. The next Assembly polls will be an acid test for the TRS as the BJP will encash this results.

Lalitheswara Raju Valluru
Hyderabad

MINOR VOLUNTEER

A minor boy volunteered to be a presiding officer in the recently concluded GHMC elections and our dutiful SEC had appointed him. What a mockery of the elections. When did the SEC seek help of volunteers? Where was that appeal published? There are so many retired Army officers who would have taken up this responsibility. SEC must be taken to task for this unacceptable action.

Chandra Dasaka
Hyderabad

RAJINI'S FORAY

Rajinikanth launching a political party without a clear agenda is bound to be a failure as proved in the case of Shivaji Ganesan and Chiranjeevi (*Rajinikanth will float party in Jan to fight TN polls, DC, Dec. 4*). MGR and NTR proved successful as they were conscious of people's problems and solutions thereof. Against such a backdrop and in view of his poor health, Rajinikanth should skip politics and save his reputation.

Kshirasagara Balaji Rao
Hyderabad

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

Yunus Salim favours separation of states

INDORE, Dec. 4. Mr Yunus Salim, Union Deputy Minister for Railways said here today that the people of Telangana had "genuine grievances" and their demand for a separate State must be conceded. If that was not possible, some other "fair" solution would have to be found early to remove their "deep sense of long standing injustice to their region."

Speaking at a reception by the Indore Press Club, he said that after the reorganisation of States, emotional integration between the people of Telangana and Andhra was not brought about.

Farruk Dhondy
Cabbages & Kings



"They say it's not over till the fat lady sings
That final and fatal aria
And in that moment stumbles and clings
To the neck of the lover who'll carry her
Off the stage and into the wings
Without having promised to marry her!"

— From *Showcase Mein Itna Tho Godown Mein Kitna* by Bachchoo

The empire strikes back! Secret plan is unveiled

My demented second cousin twice removed (each time by the deportation authorities), "Rusty" Immoralearningswalla, would always boast of his intention to balance history by striking back at Britain's imperial past. He's been reading these books by Shashi Tharoor and William Dalrymple and has become obsessive.

One of his mad schemes was to start a restaurant in London called "The Revenge of the Empire". He would import a substance we were aware of in our short and happy childhoods in Poona (now Pune), called *jamal gota*, a strong horse purgative fed to the

poor animals who pulled tongas before rickshaws infested the city's streets. Russi would poison bits of the food served to the British clientele of his restaurant, inducing in them the relentless symptoms of Delhi-Belly — or worse.

I attempted in vain to point out that no one would eat at a restaurant called Revenge of the Natives. Better to call it Memories of the Raj. He simply said that the clientele he was aiming at wouldn't notice what it was called — they'd just stagger in after the pubs closed, muttering "I could murder an Indian!" and wouldn't remember where they ate that night.

Rustom's efforts to raise capital for his restaurant came to naught. When he was deported, he left this sack of *jamal gota*, the horse purgative, in my study. I have advertised it on e-bay and other Internet sites but have had no buyers rushing to avail of the low asking price.

At first, I thought nothing of Rustom's deportation. With all his activities and schemes, he was asking for it. But then one day it struck me as extremely odd that he hadn't been

deported to Mumbai but had been sent to Canada and was making a good life there in his usual trade. And when he began sending me, under cover, envelopes marked "Miss Let Up" to be delivered, unopened, by hand, to an address in the posh part of London, I became suspicious.

Who could this mysterious "Miss Let Up" be? I couldn't resist the temptation. Though strictly a betrayal of his trust, I opened one of the missives he had sent under cover of an envelope to my address. "Step up deportations, first of criminals and when the public begins to accept these as routine, then all useful personnel of non-British vintage." Russi does pride himself on rather stylish vocabulary.

I resealed the envelope and delivered it and waited on the opposite side of the road, sitting on a blanket, pretending to be a homeless beggar, a sight that is very common in London. Sure enough, a big black car drove up flying the Union Jack and a lady stepped out of the house and was driven away. Did I recognise the lady? Jesus, Joseph and Mary, the realisation dawned. "Let Up" spelt back-

wards? Putel? Yes, it was she!

Then the whole glorious scheme fell into place when I recalled that after Rustom's plan for his revenge restaurant fell through, he didn't seem in the least despondent. He would disappear for what he said were walks in Crystal Palace, but he'd be gone for hours and why call for an Uber to go for a walk? Then there were the phone calls he shielded from me. Only once I caught him saying "Yes, Canada would be ideal". The next day two immigration fellows called and carried him away.

Now, gentle reader, I am not one to believe in conspiracy theories, but the evidence is overwhelming, and these are my conjectures. Russi has consolidated his attack on the Empire at the highest level. Consider the facts:

Several individuals with an ex-colonial ancestry infiltrate the Tory Party and diligently rise to high positions and begin their work of dismantling the British economy, its social fabric and work unflaggingly towards its ruin. First of all, they pretend to be ardent advocates of Brexit, knowing that it will leave Britain isolated and poorer for decades.

Then, having achieved high office, they begin the ruinous policy of "borrow and sorrow", and then "Free ports and deport's".

Rishi Sunak has compelled the Bank of England to print, in this year, £500 billion in inflationary borrowing to pay for wild schemes — ten times as much as a Labour government did in ten years. Now he proposes 10 "free ports" which will turn Britain into Bringapore — the world's leading money-laundering and tax dodging drug haven destroying what's left of its manufacturing base.

And here, gentle reader, I must apologise for consistently calling home secretary "Pritti" Patel "Clueless". I now realise that as part of Russi's plan, she is grooming the great liberal British public to jail and deport the non-Brits on whom several sectors of the economy and social fabric rely. I can only speculate that the last batch of deportees will include "Miss Let up" who will thus, at the state's expense, be given a free ride to Canada or Uganda and anyway away from a failing, flailing Britain. The Empire strikes mercilessly back!

IN BRIEF

Indian wins \$3M in Dubai raffle draw

Dubai: A 51-year-old Indian expat in Dubai has won a whopping over \$3 million in a raffle draw, according to a media report. George Jacobs, a medical equipment salesperson, was announced the winner in the Big Ticket draw held in Abu Dhabi on Thursday, the Khaleej Times reported. Jacobs, who lives in Dubai with his wife, daughter and son, said that the lucky draw has come as huge blessing as he was suffering from financial difficulties. "Congratulations to George Jacob, from India, with winning ticket no. 069402. He won AED (United Arab Emirates Dirham) 12 Million in The Dream 12 Million series 222," the organisers said in a Facebook post. Jacobs had bought the ticket on November 30.

Rains cause havoc in Indonesia

Medan: Torrential rains in Indonesia's third largest city caused four rivers to overflow, flooding thousands of homes and killing at least two people, officials said Friday. The local disaster mitigation agency said rescuers were searching for six missing people, including a toddler, after the heavy rains in Medan, the capital of North Sumatra province. At least two people were found dead after being swept away by the floods, which began on Thursday evening, the agency said in a statement. More than 2,700 houses were flooded in the city, which has about 2.9 million people, forcing authorities to cut off electricity and water supplies, it said. On Friday, rescuers took 181 people to temporary shelters after floodwaters reached as high as 5 meters (16 feet) in several places.

By 2050, Denmark to halt oil drilling

Copenhagen: Denmark has decided to end to all oil and gas offshore activities in the North Sea by 2050 and has cancelled its latest licensing round, saying the country is "now putting an end to the fossil era." The Danish Parliament voted late Thursday to end the offshore gas and oil extraction that started in 1972 and has made it the largest producer in the European Union. Non EU-members Norway and Britain are larger producers. Denmark is estimated to pump some 83,000 barrels of crude oil and another 21,000 barrels of oil equivalent this year, according to the government. That is relatively little in a global context. The UK produces about ten times that amount while the US, the world's largest producer, pumped over 19 million barrels of oil a day last year. Environmental activists nevertheless hailed the move as significant as it shows the way forward in how to fight climate change.

QATAR HOPEFUL NEIGHBOURS WILL LIFT BOYCOTT

Dubai, Dec. 4: Qatar's foreign minister said Friday that his energy-rich nation has seen "some movements" toward resolving the boycott of Doha by four Arab nations. Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani cautioned that the crisis wouldn't be immediately resolved in comments to Italy's annual Mediterranean Dialogue.

He declined to offer any timetable nor any details of the negotiations. Jared Kushner, President Donald Trump's son-in-law and senior adviser, recently visited Doha along with other American officials in an effort to help resolve the crisis.

Sheikh Mohammed said "this needless crisis needs to come to an end."

"There are some movements that we hope that this will put an end to this crisis," he said. "We believe actually that Gulf unity is very important for the security of the region." However, even he acknowledged a promised breakthrough over a year ago also fell apart. The four boycotting nations have not publicly acknowledged any coming breakthrough.

Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates cut ties to Qatar on June 5, 2017, just after a summit in Saudi Arabia in which Gulf leaders met with Trump.

They say the crisis stems from Qatar's support for extremist groups in the region, charges denied by Doha.

Santa can't escape Covid test

A man dresses as Saint-Nicolas (Santa Claus) undergoes a Covid-19 detection test at a street detection centre in Schiphol on Friday as global Coronavirus cases top 65 million. — AFP

Britain defends vaccine decision amid criticism**UK plans to distribute initial batch of 8 lakh doses next week**

London, Dec. 4: Britain's medicines regulator insisted on Friday its world-first approval of the Pfizer-BioNTech Coronavirus vaccine met all safety standards, after officials in Europe and the United States queried the rapid process.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) on Wednesday announced emergency approval for the vaccine's general use against Covid-19, and the government plans to start rolling it out next week.

Any vaccine "must undergo robust clinical trials in line with international standards", the MHRA said in a statement.

"No vaccine would be authorised for supply in the UK unless the expected standards of safety, quality and efficacy are met."

Leading US infectious disease scientist Anthony Fauci on Thursday said the MHRA had "rushed through that approval", but later apologised.

"I have a great deal of confidence in what the UK does both scientifically and from a regulator standpoint," Fauci, who leads the US National Institute of Allergy and

German firm's super-coolers to send vaccines around the world

Wurzburg, Dec. 4: At first sight, they look like regular containers. But the rectangular boxes made by German company Va-Q-Tec will in fact play a key role in keeping life-saving Covid-19 vaccines ultra cool as they are shipped across the world.

After Britain this week became the first country to approve the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine for general use, other medical authorities around the world could in the next days or weeks decide on similar applications by a host of pharmaceutical companies developing Coronavirus vaccines.

There will be an enormous logistical challenge to transport billions of

doses at the right temperature across the globe, maintaining the so-called "cold chain" from a vaccine manufacturer into a patient's arm.

Pfizer/BioNTech's vaccine for instance, must be stored at a frigid minus 70 degrees Celsius (minus 94 Fahrenheit).

The Va-Q-Tec containers will serve this purpose of

keeping the vaccines cool enough, the company's founder and chief executive Joachim Kuhn said, describing them as "big thermos flasks".

In the company's factory in the Bavarian city of Wurzburg, workers were assembling panels with glue or making vacuum-packed linings.

— AFP

agency, which has stressed it prefers to wait for further review and consultations across the 27-nation bloc.

Britain plans to distribute an initial batch of 8,00,000 doses starting next week, prioritising care homes.

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POOR COULD BE 'TRAMPLED' IN VACCINE PUSH, WARNS W.H.O.

United Nations, Dec. 4: The head of the World Health Organisation warned on Friday that the poor risk being "trampled" as wealthy nations roll out Covid-19 vaccines, which he said should be a public good.

Speaking at a virtual UN summit on the pandemic, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the world was seeing "light at the end of the tunnel" in the nearly year-long Covid crisis.

"But let me be clear: We simply cannot accept a world in which the poor and marginalised are trampled by the rich and powerful in the stampede for vaccines," Tedros said.

"This is a global crisis and the solutions must be shared equitably as global public goods. Not as private commodities that widen inequalities and become yet another reason some people are left behind," he said.

He also warned that the world has plenty of other challenges, saying: "There is no vaccine for poverty, no vaccine for hunger. There is no vaccine for inequality. There is no vaccine for climate change."

Britain has become the first Western nation to approve a vaccine for Covid-19, with the United States and other countries expected to follow soon and begin mass immunization drives.

A UN-backed COVAX consortium has been set up to provide vaccines equitably around the world.

The United States has been a notable holdout, with President Donald Trump attacking Tedros and moving to pull out of the World Health Organisation, although President-elect Joe Biden plans to stay in the UN body.

Tedros, an Ethiopian doctor and diplomat, praised nations for providing free vaccines, tests and treatment for Covid-19 but questioned why similar efforts are not being devoted for earlier diseases such as cancer, tuberculosis or HIV/AIDS — or for needs such as maternal health.

"The pandemic has only underlined why universal health coverage is so important," he said.

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Iran's N-plan on track despite scientist killing

In an online chat with **Mohammed Anas**, Dr Foad Izadi, head of the department, International Relations, at Tehran University, tries to explain Iranian response to the assassination of its top nuclear scientist, Dr Mohsen Fakhrizade. Apart from teaching and articulating Iran and its relations with the world, Dr Izadi also advises Iranian foreign minister Javad Zarif at times. Excerpts:

Q How big a setback is the assassination of nuclear scientist Dr Mohsen Fakhrizade to Iran's nuclear programme in particular and Iranian scientific development in general?

A: Dr Mohsen Fakhrizade was a renowned nuclear physicist in Iran. He was known throughout the country for his efficiency. Apart from being a good scientist, he was believed to be a good manager. He was attached to Iran's defence ministry and was overseeing several defence projects. In addition to that, he was working on research for Covid vaccine and was instrumental in developing a handy test kit, which was perhaps the only one manufactured in the Middle East. Iran's "peaceful nuclear programme" is extensive and doesn't depend on any individual. However, the loss of a scientist of Dr Fakhrizade's stature is difficult to make up for and Iran will miss him a lot.

However, to think that the absence of Dr Fakhrizade will hamper the Iranian nuclear programme is hogwash. Rather, the Iranian Parliament has passed a Bill this week to enhance the pace of the nuclear programme. So, Iran is now determined more than ever to achieve its nuclear targets.

Q Does Iranian government admit to security and intelligence failure for such a daring attack in the vicinity of its capital in Tehran? If yes, then what is their assessment of this failure?

A: Yes, many government officials, including the secretary of Iranian Security Council, have said that it was a serious security lapse. Dr Fakhrizade was a target of foreign enemies for the last 20 years and there had been previous attempts on his life. Iranian security services managed to save this scientist for all these years but this particular lapse cost his life. As we are talking, the Iranian security establishment is investigating all contours of this assassination. They have discovered that no human being was used in this assassination and that only remote-controlled technology was put to use. It was not done ever before by even Israeli intelligence service. That's why the Iranian security apparatus was bamboozled. But, I am sure Iranian security services will learn from this mistake and will brace up for future threats more carefully.

Q Will this assassination have any bearing on the clerical regime in Iran? Will it weaken their position or will it coax people to rally behind them?

A: The news of the terrorist attack (the assassination) was a shock to the people. Irrespective of whether they support the regime (clerical regime) politically or not, they don't want to see scientists of the country getting killed. Moreover, Iran is a religious society. There is a huge respect for martyrdom. In Dr Fakhrizade, people are seeing a martyr who laid down his life for the country. It will inspire people and they would want to emulate Dr Fakhrizade.

Q&A

Dr Foad Izadi

Q Will it impact travel and stay of non-Iranians in Iran for a while?

A: No, there is no indication from the Iranian regime that it will curb the movement of non-Iranians. They will not have any difficulty in traveling to or from Iran. Iran will continue to be friendly towards people from outside.

Q Iran has alleged that Israel is behind this gruesome assassination. Do you see any direct conflict emerging between Iran and Israel in near future?

A: It's not just Iran that has blamed Israel for this assassination. The American and western sources have clearly suggested that it was the handiwork of Israeli intelligence agency. The Zionist regime (Netanyahu government) plotted it thoughtfully. As far as Iranian response is concerned, the reply will come. If Iran doesn't respond, it will embolden the other side and it will continue to attack more often. However, Iran will respond in its own way, at a chosen moment and in a measured extent.

Q If Iran chooses to indirectly respond to its enemies instead of going into direct conflict, what possible steps will Iran take?

A: Iran will not disclose how it will respond. Neither has the Iranian regime hinted any such thing. Even experts like us are not privy to any such detail. Early in the year 2020, when Gen. Qasem Soleimani was killed, Iran had attacked American bases in Iraq. It was a quick and open response. But, this time, there is complete secrecy.

Q Will this assassination have any bearing on the clerical regime in Iran? Will it weaken their position or will it coax people to rally behind them?

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China 'greatest threat' to world: US intel chief

Washington, Dec. 4: The US intelligence chief on Thursday branded China as "the greatest threat to democracy and freedom worldwide since World War II," as Washington clamped down hard on travel visas for members of the Chinese Communist Party.

US Director of National Intelligence John Ratcliffe, writing in a Wall Street Journal opinion piece, pointed to China's theft of US business secrets and defense technologies.

"The People's Republic of China poses the greatest threat to America today, and the greatest

● US DIRECTOR OF National Intelligence John Ratcliffe, writing in a Wall Street Journal opinion piece, pointed to China's theft of US business secrets and defense technologies.

threat to democracy and freedom worldwide since World War II," he wrote.

He also described operations in which Chinese operatives used economic pressure to influence or undermine US legislators.

"Our intelligence shows that Beijing regularly directs this type of influence operation in the US," he wrote.

"China's leaders seek to

subordinate the rights of the individual to the will of the Communist Party," Ratcliffe said.

"They exert government control over companies and subvert the privacy and freedom of their citizens with an authoritarian surveillance state." Meanwhile, the State Department said Chinese Communist Party members are "hostile to US values" and engage in "nefarious activities." Under new rules effective immediately, visas issued to party members and their immediate family will remain valid for just one month after issuance, and for single entry. — AFP

BETTER | ABODE**Many were reportedly unwilling to move to the isolated place****Bangladesh relocates 1,600 Rohingya**

Dhaka, Dec. 4: Bangladesh on Friday relocated the first batch of 1,600 Rohingyas to a remote island in the Bay of Bengal for a "better abode" amid reservation from rights groups fearing the place's vulnerability to tropical cyclones and climate change.

Rohingyas, who are Myanmar's ethnic minority Muslim community, fled their homeland to evade a ruthless military clampdown since August 25, 2017 and after initial reluctance Bangladesh offered them the refuge on humanitarian grounds.

"The Rohingyas onboard



Rohingya refugees disembark from a Bangladesh Navy ship to the island of Bashar Char in Noakhali on Friday. — AFP

six navy and one military ship reached the Bhashan Char (island) this after-

noon," Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner Shah Rezwan Hayat

told the media.

A batch of 1,600 Rohingyas were the first group of people who agreed to move to a "better abode", while 19 more ships were kept ready to ferry fellow refugees to the island in the next few days.

Officials earlier said that Bangladesh spent \$350 million in the recent past to build the facilities to accommodate 1,00,000 refugees of over 1.1 million Rohingyas living in cramped makeshift camps in southeastern Cox's Bazar, which borders their homeland in Myanmar's Rakhine state.

Aid agencies and rights groups, however, expressed their reservation against the relocation campaign fearing the vulnerability of the island to tropical cyclones and climate change.

Many Rohingyas were reportedly unwilling to move to an isolated place severing ties with relatives and neighbours. But the government said embankments and other infrastructures would protect the island and only those who expressed their willingness to be moved after Rohingya representatives visited the place were being relocated there. — PTI

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	45,079.55	+1.00
Nifty 50	13,258.55	+0.95
S&P 500*	3,690.32	0.64
Dollar (₹)	73.79	0.17
Pound Sterling (₹)	99.50	-0.42
Euro (₹)	89.79	-0.26
Gold (₹)	48,813	-0.27
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	49.21	1.03
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.898	-0.556
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.941	+2.172

*As of 9:30 PM IST

Zyduz Cadila gets DGCI nod for phase 3 trials



Zyduz Cadila said it has received the approval from the drugs controller to start phase 3 clinical trials with its biological therapy PegiHep in Covid-19 patients. The firm had completed the phase 2 clinical trials with PegiHep last month. The trials, which will start this month, will be conducted on 250 patients across 20-25 centres. Sharvil Patel, MD, said, "we are encouraged by the results of phase 2 study."

■ Status quo on rates; GDP contraction seen at -7.5% RBI ups growth forecast

FALAKNAAZ SYED
MUMBAI, DEC. 4

The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) monetary policy committee (MPC) on Friday unanimously decided to keep policy rates unchanged while continuing with the accommodative policy stance "as long as necessary—at least through the current financial year and into the next year", despite higher-than-expected inflation and growth outturns. This means the equated monthly instalments (EMIs) on home loans, auto loans and personal loans will remain more or less steady for borrowers.

The RBI revised its current fiscal real GDP growth from a decline of 9.5 per cent to a decline of 7.5 per cent; retail inflation (CPI) inflation is projected at 6.8 per cent for Q3, and 5.8 per cent for Q4 FY21.

Contrary to market concerns of measures to withdraw the abundant liquidity in the system, RBI governor Shaktikanta Das said the flush liquidity conditions will be kept up while flagging that the RBI is increasingly looking to sterilise its forex interventions keeping in mind the liquidity and inflation dynamics. The RBI announced extended liquidity support to 26 stressed sectors.

"Our expectation on inflation which we had over the last two months has not materialised. And we have to keep in mind that we are dealing with an extraordinary situation, a once in 100 years kind of event that and the kind of impact it has produced on the economy and on

Highlights of RBI's monetary policy statement

- **Benchmark rate kept unchanged for third time at 4%**
- **Economy to contract 7.5% against 9.5% projected in October**
- **Economy to clock growth of 0.1% in Q3; 0.7% in Q4, FY21**
- **Retail inflation projected at 6.8% in Q3, 5.8% in Q4**
- **Inflation to remain elevated, barring transient relief in winter**
- **Fiscal stimulus helping growth-generating investment**



- **Private investment slack, capacity use not fully recovered**
- **RBI to ensure ample liquidity is available in the system**
- **RBI to maintain accommodative monetary policy stance**
- **Central bank committed to preserving depositors' interest**

Contactless card limit raised to ₹5K

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, DEC. 4

The RBI has decided to increase the limit on contactless card transactions at Point of Sale (PoS) terminals and e-mandates for recurring transactions via cards and UPI from Rs 2,000 to Rs 5,000 from January 1.

This will help customers execute their high ticket recurring payments like utility bills, investments, two-wheeler EMIs, consumer durable EMIs etc. seamlessly.

The RBI has also decided to make the Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) transaction facility available round-the-clock from

December 14.

The RTGS system is used for high value transactions. The system will be available for customers and inter-bank transactions round-the-clock, except for the interval between 'end-of-day' and 'start-of-day' processes, whose timings would be duly broadcasted through the RTGS system.

RBI also has proposed to allow settlement files of payment systems like AePS, IMPS, NETC, NFS, RuPay and UPI to be posted to the RBI all days of the year. This measure will reduce build-up of settlement and default risks and enable better management of funds by banks.

human lives not only in India but across countries which is huge and we have

to respond to that situation," Das told reporters at a virtual press conference.



Burger King IPO get subscribed 156 times

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD
MUMBAI, DEC. 4

Burger King India's Rs 810-crore initial public offering received huge response from all categories of investors and was subscribed over 156 times.

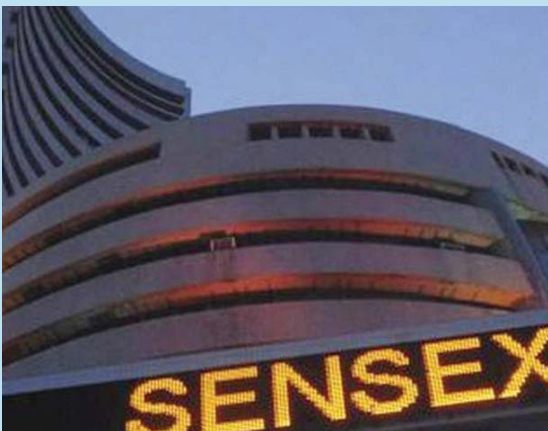
As per NSE data, overall the issue was subscribed 156.65 times, with the issue receiving over 24.15 lakh applications.

Qualified institutional buyers turned up on the last day and their quota of shares was subscribed 86.64 times, non-institutional investors or high net worth individual's portion was subscribed 354.11 times as per sources close to the merchant bankers.

Retail individual investors portion was subscribed 68.14 times.

Burger King India is among the top-3 most-subscribed IPO this year along with Happiest Minds Technologies and Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders.

Sensex crosses 45000-mark

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD
MUMBAI, DEC. 4

Equity benchmark Sensex rose above the 45000-mark for the first time ever and touched a new all-time high of 45,148.28 as the RBI raised the GDP growth projections for the current fiscal to 7.5 per cent contraction from 9.5 per cent contraction projected in October and positive global cues in expectation of a stimulus package by the new US administration.

The Sensex closed at 45,079.55, up 446.90 points while the Nifty-50 gained 124.65 points, or 0.95 per cent, to close at a new all-time high of 13,258.55.

The BSE's market capitalisation hit a new high of over Rs 179.48 lakh crore. Rate sensitive bank, realty, capital goods and auto stocks led the gains as the overall accommodative stance of the Reserve Bank to support economic growth boosted sentiments.

"The MPC expectedly kept the policy rates

unchanged but this was accompanied by strong accommodative guidance and assertive market signaling of lower-for-longer. The MPC reckoned the inflected growth momentum, while also stressed that the case of an eventual fall in inflation with easing supply shocks is yet to play out," said Emkay Global Financial Services.

The BSE Bankex index gained 2.14 per cent and Nifty Bank index gained 2.05 per cent while BSE Realty index gained 1.00 per cent.

The top gainers among the banks included ICICI Bank (4.20 per cent), SBI (2.77 per cent), Axis Bank (1.98 per cent), IndusInd Bank (1.96 per cent), Kotak Mahindra Bank (1.34 per cent) and HDFC Bank (0.59 per cent).

Foreign portfolio investors were net buyers of equities worth Rs 2,969.59 crore while the domestic institutions were net sellers of equities worth Rs 1,971.60 crore.

GAMES

SHORT TAKES

SA-England game put off due to virus

Cape Town: The first cricket one-day international between South Africa and England was postponed Friday after another player tested positive for the Coronavirus in the host team's secure bio-bubble.

The South African player wasn't named. The game, the first of three ODIs, was postponed from Friday to Sunday, the two cricket federations said.

Cricket South Africa and the England and Wales Cricket Board said the decision was made "in the interests of the safety and well-being of both teams, match officials and all involved in the match."

The CEOs of both boards, Kugandrie Govender of CSA and Tom Harrison of the ECB, agreed to the postponement.

— AP

Williamson hits double century

Hamilton (New Zealand): New Zealand captain Kane Williamson hit the highest Test score of his career on Friday with a majestic 251 as the hosts posted an imposing 519 for seven declared on day two of the first Test against the West Indies in Hamilton.

In reply, the injury-hit West Indies were 49 without loss with John Campbell on 22 and Kraigg Brathwaite on 20 after cautiously negotiating the 26 overs to stumps.

Williamson's third double century, eclipsing his unbeaten 242 against Sri Lanka nearly six years ago, included 34 fours and two sixes. It extended his New Zealand record to 22 Test centuries, three more than teammate Ross Taylor. For the West Indies, Gabriel took three for 89, Kemar Roach took three for 114 and Joseph one for 99. — **AFP**

Brief Scores, Day 2: New Zealand 519/7 decl. (Williamson 251, Jamieson not out 51; Kemar Roach 3/114, Gabriel 3/89) vs **West Indies 49 for no loss in 26** overs (J. Campbell not out 22.

INDIA ROAR BACK

Turn in allround show to beat Oz by 11 runs

Canberra, Dec. 4: Yuzvendra Chahal turned out to be the perfect concussion substitute after an injured Ravindra Jadeja did his part with the bat as the duo played their roles to perfection in India's impressive 11-run victory over Australia in the first T20 International here on Friday.

While Jadeja smashed an unbeaten 44 off 23 balls to propel India to 161 for 7, his head injury turned out to be a blessing in disguise with India unleashing Chahal (3/25 in 4 overs) on an Australian side caught completely off-guard. The hosts could manage only 150 for 7 in 20 overs.

Credit was also due to the lion-hearted effort from debutant Thangarasu Natarajan (3/30) and off-spinner Washington Sundar (0/16 in 4 overs), who bowled well in Powerplay.

ICC match referee David Boon allowed the visitors a "like for like" replacement, as mandated by the rules, for Jadeja in Chahal even though home team coach Justin Langer looked visibly angry.

And to make matters worse, Chahal dismissed two form men — Aaron Finch (35) and Steve Smith (12) — in his first two overs to turn the game on its head.

Earlier, vice-captain KL Rahul continued his impressive run in the shortest format with yet another fifty but it took Jadeja's brilliant back-end flourish to take India to a fighting total.

The Indian vice-captain hit 51 off 40 balls but leg-spinner Adam Zampa (1/20 in 4 overs) and all-rounder Moises Henriques (3/22 in 4 overs) were brilliant between overs 11th and 15th, which shifted the momentum in favour of the home team till Jadeja came into play with a 44 not out off 23 balls.

During 11th and 15th over, India scored 22 runs and lost three wickets in Sanju Samson, Manish Pandey and Rahul. — **PTI**



Indian captain Virat Kohli (centre) celebrates with teammates after Thangarasu Natarajan dismissed Australia's Glenn Maxwell during their T20 cricket match at Manuka Oval in Canberra on Friday.

● **ICC match referee David Boon allowed the visitors a "like for like" replacement, as mandated by the rules, for Jadeja in Chahal.**

● **Jadeja smashed an unbeaten 44 off 23 balls to propel India to 161 for 7 while Yuzvendra Chahal 3 wickets wreaked havoc on Australia.**

SCORECARD

India: Lokesh Rahul c Sean Abbott b Henriques 51, Shikhar Dhawan b Mitchell Starc 1, Virat Kohli c and b Sweeney 9, Sanju Samson c Sweeney b Henriques 23, Manish Pandey c Hazlewood b Adam Zampa 2, Hardik Pandya c Steve Smith b Henriques 16, Ravinder Jadeja not out 44, Washington Sundar c Abbott b Mitchell Starc 7, Deepak Chahar not out 0. Extras (LB-2, NB-1, W-5) 8. **Total (for 7 wickets in 20 overs) 161.** **FoW:** 1-11, 2-48, 3-86, 4-90, 5-92, 6-114, 7-152.

Bowling: Starc 4-0-34-2, Hazlewood 4-0-39-0, Adam Zampa 4-0-20-1, Sean Abbott

2-0-23-0, Sweeney 2-0-21-1, Henriques 4-0-22-3. **Australia:** A. Finch c Pandya b Chahal 35, D. Short c Pandya b Natarajan 34, S. Smith c Samson b Chahal 12, G. Maxwell lbw Natarajan 2, M. Henriques lbw Chahal 30, M. Wade c Kohli b Chahal 7, S. Abbott not out 12, M. Starc b Natarajan 1, M. Sweeney not out 12. Extras (LB-4, W-1) 5. **Total (for 7 wickets in 20 overs) 150.** **FoW:** 1-56, 2-72, 3-75, 4-113, 5-122, 6-126, 7-127.

Bowling: Deepak Chahal 4-0-29-1, Washington Sundar 4-0-16-0, Mohammed Shami 4-0-46-0, Chahal 4-0-25-3, Thangarasu Natarajan 4-0-30-0.

CONCUSSION SUB WORKED FOR US: KOHLI

Canberra, Dec. 4: India captain Virat Kohli was quite pleased that the concussion substitute rule worked out well for his side even though there were no plans to play Yuzvendra Chahal, who proved to be a match-winner after replacing Ravindra Jadeja in the first T20 International against Australia here.

Chahal turned out to be the perfect concussion substitute after an injured Jadeja did his part with the bat in India's impressive 11-run victory.

While Jadeja smashed an unbeaten 44 off 23 balls to propel India to 161 for 7, his head injury allowed India to unleash Chahal (3/25 in 4 overs) on an Australian side caught completely off-guard.

"There were no plans of having Yuzi (Chahal) in the game. Jaddu (Jadeja) got a knock on the side of the head and was a bit dizzy and still is," Kohli said.

"Concussion replacements are a strange thing, today it worked for us maybe another time he wouldn't have found a like-for-like," he added.

Kohli was full of praise for all his players but singled out Jadeja and Chahal for their efforts. Earlier, just before the start of Australia's chase, home team head coach Justin Langer was seen having an animated conversation with match referee David Boon on the sidelines even though it was not known whether it had anything to do with the decision to allow Chahal as a concussion substitute. But Aaron Finch preferred to play it down when asked about the concussion substitute at the post-match presentation ceremony. — **PTI**

Sneha shimmers in women's golf

Noida, Dec. 4: Amateur Sneha Singh took the spotlight with a wire-to-wire win in the seventh leg on Friday, as the Women's Pro Golf Tour staged its first event after nine months due to the Covid-19 pandemic at the Noida Golf Course here.

Hyderabad teenager Sneha, who won a title on the Hero WPGT in 2019, overcame a difficult start and then a potentially crippling triple bogey to hold her nerve over the closing stretch to win by a comfortable margin of four shots. Her closing 74 gave her a total of one-over 217.

Hunar Mittal, another talented amateur, carded the final day's best score with an even par 72 that showcased a bogey-free back nine of two-under 34, as she aggregated five-over 221.

With amateurs holding sway, Amandeep Drall was the top professional as she shot two-over 74 and finished in a tie for the second spot with Hunar.

Ridhima Dilawari (80) in T-12th and Diksha Dagar (81) in 15th place, just did not get going this week.

Sneha opened the day with a one-shot lead but bogeyed the par-5 first. She quickly made amends with a birdie on second, but a



Sneha Singh in action during the Women's Pro Golf Tour at the Noida Golf Course on Friday.

triple bogey on par-4 sixth endangered her title ambitions.

She bounced back again with a birdie on par-4 seventh and added another on par-3 10th. Despite bogeys on 11th and then 14th, she held on with a birdie on 15th.

Vani Kapoor also had three bogeys and no birdies in the front nine. She managed only one birdie and then gave it away on 18th, allowing Sneha to stay in the race and eventually win.

— **PTI**

COVID-HIT PAK DENIED RIGHTS TO TRAIN IN NZ

Wellington (New Zealand), Dec. 4: The Pakistan cricket team has been denied the right to train while in managed isolation in New Zealand after eight members of the touring squad tested positive for Covid-19. Under exemptions granted to visiting sports teams, members of the 53-strong Pakistan team could have been allowed to leave their Christchurch hotel to train in small groups after the third day of their 14-day isolation period.

But the positive tests and a breach of isolation protocols by team members on their first day in isolation has led New Zealand authorities to withhold the training exemption.

Dr Ashley Bloomfield, New Zealand's director-general of health, confirmed Friday the exemption would not be granted.

The team was issued a final warning after the breaches of isolation protocol occurred shortly after the team's arrival in New Zealand last week. Close circuit television coverage from their hotel showed players breaking rules by mingling in corridors and sharing food.

— **AP**