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HYDERABAD | TUESDAY | 23 FEBRUARY 2021

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Vol. 84 No. 53 Established 1938 | 20 PAGES | ₹6.00

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RH: 45%
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Cloudy sky.
Mist or haze likely.
Max/Min temp. 31/19 9°C

COVID-19 COUNT

CASES (10,705)

DEATHS (+77)

1,10,15,776 1,56,495

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+114) (+1)

TS: 2,97,712 1,625

(+41) (+0)

AP: 8,89,339 7,167

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

11,21,09,295

DEATHS

24,80,757

COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES 219

worldometers.info/coronavirus

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari; Uttarayana

Tithi: Magha Shuddha Ekadasi till 5.59 pm

Star: Arudra till 12.25 pm

Varjyam: 12.48 am to 2.27 am (Wednesday)

Durmuhurtam: 9.01 am to 9.47 am; 11.15 pm to 12.04 am (Wednesday)

Rahukalam: 3 pm to 4.30 pm

HJRI CALENDAR

Rajab 10,1442 AH

PRAYERS

Fajar: 5.39 am

Zohar: 12.40 pm

Asar: 4.43 pm

Maghrub: 6.27 pm

Isha: 7.34 pm

SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.37 AM

SUNSET TODAY 6.20 PM

MOONSET 3.18 AM

MOONRISE 2.36 PM

COUNTER POINT



He is promising an underground Metro in every village!

INSIDE

CITY.. PAGE 3

TS targets \$100 bn in life sciences by 2030

TRS leader sues own government for land**TS minister Kamalakar disses CM land reforms**

N. VAMSI SRINIVAS | DC HYDERABAD, FEB. 22



THE MINISTER challenged the "illegal and arbitrary decision" of the government to include in Dharni portal, a disputed property from the prohibitory register after hailing the CM's new Revenue Act

In a rare event, prioritising his land claims over loyalty to his government and party, Gangula Kamalakar, Telangana state minister for civil supplies and BC welfare in, approached the High Court against his own government to protect ownership of a disputed 15 acre-property in the outskirts of Karimnagar city.

After hailing the new Revenue Act, brought into force by Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao and Dharni portal initiative in several public fora as "revolutionary" and "fool proof", the

minister challenged the "illegal and arbitrary decision" of the government to include in Dharni portal, a disputed property from the prohibitory register. The matter is listed for hearing before Justice P. Naveen Rao on Tuesday. The minister pleaded with the Telangana High Court to order the deletion of the property, situ-

ated in survey number 126 of Khazipur village of the Kothapalli mandal in Karimnagar district from the prohibitory list. He made Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar, the district collector of Karimnagar, the State Wakf Board and other revenue officials as respondents.

■ Page 2: Wakf board claims land for long time

Cong govt falls in Puducherry

RAJIB CHOWDHURI KOLKATA, FEB. 22

Pitching for the BJP to come to power in West Bengal, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday urged people to let the *kamal* (lotus) bloom in the coming Assembly election to bring *asol poriborto* (real change) which will replace the evils of the "syndicate raj through cut money", *tustikaran* (appeasement) and *tolabaji* (extortion) culture of the ruling Trinamul Congress with the all-round development of the state.

"A BJP government has to be formed in Bengal not only for mere *poriborto* (change) in power but for *asol poriborto* (real change) here. The lotus needs to bloom here so that *asol poriborto*, for which our young generation is waiting, is ushered in," Mr Modi told a BJP rally at Chinsurah, Hooghly, on his second trip to the state in two weeks.

Reiterating that the people "have already made up their mind" to oust the TMC, he also said the state's infrastructure development has always been the Centre's "priority". Mr Modi gave a fresh example of the state government's lethargy on implementing yet another Central welfare scheme, after PM Kishan Samman Nidhi and Ayushman Bharat, under chief minister Mamata Banerjee's rule.

LOK SABHA MP ENDS LIFE BY SUICIDE

Mohan Sanjibhai Delkar, 58, Lok Sabha MP from Dadra and Nagar Haveli, was found dead in a Mumbai hotel. It is suspected he committed suicide after a note was found.

■ REPORT ON PAGE 8

A fresh bout of resignations on Sunday took the tally in the last few days to three and cumulative since last month to six and further reduced to – Congress 9 (including the Speaker), DMK 2, All India NR Congress 7, AIADMK four, BJP 3 (nominated but with voting rights) and one independent who supported the government.

Speaker VP Sivakolundhu announced that the motion for a confidence vote moved by the chief minister in the morning was defeated, even as it was not taken up for either voice vote or division.

The Opposition, led by NR Congress chief and Leader of Opposition N. Rangasamy said it has no plans to form the government and that discussions would be held.

■ Page 2: Mumbai, Feb. 22: The Bombay High Court granted interim bail for six months on medical grounds to ailing poet and activist Varavara Rao. A bench of Justices S.S. Shinde and Manish Pitale said though UAPA imposes restrictions on bail, in Rao's case, the HC could not be a "mute spectator".

VARAVARA RAO GRANTED BAIL FOR 6 MONTHS**NEGATIVE VIBES No safety precautions taken during inauguration****Mayor breaches Covid rules**

MADDY DEEKSHIT | DC HYDERABAD, FEB. 22

Mayor-elect Gadwal R. Vijayalaxmi and her deputy Mothe Srilatha Reddy assumed office amid fanfare and jubilation here on Monday. Covid-19 protocols were breached as TRS leaders from across the state thronged the event.

The spirited event was held at the Mayor's chambers in the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) headquarters near Tank Bund. Several senior leaders including home minister

Mahmood Ali, minister Talsami Srinivas Yadav, MP K. Keshava Rao, MLC Prabhakar Rao and former mayor Bonthu Rammohan were present.

However, very few were seen wearing face masks and cared two hoots about social distancing and use of sanitizers even as the number of Covid19 cases saw a fresh increase in the state in recent days. Some leaders even breached the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) unmindful of the presence of the returning officer just 100 metres away.

The GHMC staff with strong political leanings made it a point to prominently place photographs of Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao and Municipal Administration and Urban Development minister K.T. Rama Rao, in the backdrop.

Vijayalaxmi performed special rituals at the GHMC office before she took charge. A second-time corporator and daughter of TRS parliamentary party leader Keshava Rao, the 56-year-old Vijayalaxmi retained the Banjara Hills division in the GHMC polls

on December 1 by defeating former BJP MLA Baddam Balreddy's son Mahipal Reddy.

In the mayoral elections held on February 11, Vijayalaxmi and Srilatha Reddy, both TRS nominees, secured 100 votes (56 of TRS and 44 of MIM) and walked away with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor posts.

The Mayor did not speak to the media after the event. Information was passed on that she would interact with them three days later, after acquainting herself with the problems of various wings of the GHMC.

KCR tells TRS to canvass 18 lakh jobs he created

TRS to fight MLC polls by publicising employment generation

L. VENKAT RAM REDDY | DC HYDERABAD, FEB. 22



The ruling TRS has decided to take up an aggressive campaign on the jobs created during its reign to counter the Opposition parties in the upcoming graduate MLC elections for two seats, according to TRS chief and Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao on Monday.

The '18 lakh jobs created in the last six years' will be the main poll plank of TRS to attract and seek votes of graduates and youth in these elections, Mr Rao said.

The party supremo instructed his two MLC candidates — Surabhi Vani Devi and P. Rajeshwar Reddy — to counter the criticism of the opposition parties that the TRS government had failed to create many jobs for youth in the last six years, by aggressively bringing this out during their poll campaigns.

According to sources, CM Chandrashekhar Rao gave a detailed account of TRS government's achievements in providing jobs to youth. As per the CM's presentation, 1.31 lakh jobs were provided in the government sector, 2.11 lakh jobs created in the IT/ITES sector and 14.59 lakh jobs were provided in the private sector, due to the faster approvals given to industries under the TS-iPASS since he assumed office more than six-and-a-half years ago.

The TRS government has decided to distribute pamphlets, put up banners and other harness public display mechanisms. Besides the two candidates, senior party leaders and cadre were told to strive hard to highlight the 18 lakh jobs provided by the TRS government. They were asked to distribute these pamphlets, particularly among graduate voters, in educational institutions and hold debates on the issue at several platforms.

In the ongoing MLC elections, all the Opposition parties are targeting TRS on the issue of lack of jobs to students and youth in Telangana.

Opposition parties argue that the "tagline" of Telangana statehood agitation was "jobs, funds and water". Students and youth had sacrificed their lives and careers to fight for Telangana statehood, with a hope of getting jobs, once the statehood was achieved.

■ Page 2: Opposition says TRS failed youth

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SHORT TAKES
UPSET OVER HARASSMENT, WOMAN ENDS LIFE

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, FEB. 22

A woman who was reportedly depressed over marital issues and alleged dowry harassment committed suicide by jumping to her death from the 10-storied government allotted 2BHK building at Keesara on the city outskirts on late Sunday night.

According to the police, the woman was identified as Satya Santoshini, 27, a BTech graduate. She was married to Pavan Bhagwan, 28, working in a private firm about three years ago following a love relationship and the couple was residing at a flat in Srinivasa Nagar colony which is close to the 2BHK buildings, said the police.

"During their wedding, Santoshini's family gave cash and gold ornaments as dowry to Pavan. However, his mother Kameshwari and sister Sarada allegedly began harassing Santoshini for additional dowry soon after. On Sunday night, the couple reportedly had a quarrel which turned into a heated argument between them, following which she left the house without informing anyone and went to the 10th floor of the multi-storied building nearby, from where she allegedly jumped to death," said the police.

MIM TO CONTEST IN GULBARGA MUNICIPAL POLLS

ATHER MOIN | DC
HYDERABAD, FEB. 22

In an attempt to expand its footprint further in Karnataka, the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen will contest the ensuing civic body polls in Gulbarga.

This was announced by MIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi after meeting party leaders from Gulbarga district here on Monday. He said that they will be fielding Ilyas Baghban (Ilyas Seth) for the North Gulbarga Assembly constituency in the 2023 elections.

He said that MIM will become an independent political voice that will be raised from Gulbarga. After the demise of former minister Qamarul-Islam, a political vacuum was created and AIMIM will fill this gap, he said.

Owaisi appealed to the people in the district to support MIM in the civic body elections that are likely to be held in April or May.

District President Abdul Raheem Mirchi Seth, Ilyas Saith Baghban Jameel-ur-Rahman, Abdul Majeed, Jawed Alam, Idrees Baghban, Mohammed Akhtar, Syed Jeelani and Gurnshat Pattedar attended the meeting.

Later, Owaisi held a virtual meeting at Dharussalam with ad-hoc committee members of the Jharkhand state unit.

MAHMOOD ALI PROMISES TO PROMOTE UNANI

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, FEB. 22

Home Minister Mohammad Ali assured to take up the matter of promotion of Unani medicine and disbursement of funds from the Centre. He said that there were several issues related to Unani in Telangana, especially in the Government Nizamia General Hospital (Unani).

Mahmood Ali was addressing the seventh World Unani League and 20th Unani Medical Association Excellence awards function.

He said that the importance of indigenous medicine has increased after Covid-19.

Director, Chicago Muslim Medical Alliance, Dr Tajamul Hussain said that although he was a cancer specialist and an expert in allopathic therapies, he found that allopathy has not eradicated cancer. Lamenting the mafia of pharmaceutical companies that was tarnishing the image of the profession, he said that Unani medicine is very effective and its prospects for research are bright.

Corporator Sohail Qadri wondered why appointments were being made in all medical departments, but Unani remained ignored. Excellence awards were presented to Unani practitioners from across the country.

Hakim Badruddin Siddiqui, Corporator Dr Samina Begum, Dr Munawar Hussain Kazmi, Dr Abdul Hassan Ashraf, Dr Muhammad Ali Haider Yami, Dr Khawaja Badruddin Siddiqui, Dr Masood Wakil Qureshi, Dr Muhammad Rafi Haider Shakib, Dr Ahsan Farooqi, Dr Abdul Rehman Khan, Dr Waqar Haider and Dr Azmat Rasool were present on the occasion.

Revanth urges Vani to withdraw nomination

Says CM should have nominated her under Gov. quota

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, FEB. 22

The TRS party fielded S. Vani Devi, educationist and daughter of former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, only to tarnish the image of the Pamulaparthi family. Congress MP A. Revanth Reddy said on Monday.

Reddy said that if Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao had any love or respect for the family of late P.V. Narasimha Rao, he should nominate her under either the Governor's quota or send her to Rajya Sabha.

He questioned why Chandrashekhar Rao offered her an MLC seat



Revanth Reddy

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the Congress party which honoured P.V. Narasimha Rao, from fielding him to elections in which he won, starting at the village-level to making him a Prime Minister.

The Malkajgiri MP further said that Chandrashekhar Rao was indulging in dirty politics by bringing Vani into the picture at the last minute. He urged her "not to fall prey" to KCR's machinations and asked her to "think twice before taking this next political step".

He even requested her to withdraw her nomination. "I know what KCR wants to prove to society by offering an MLC seat to a great family, in which Vani would most certainly be defeated," he added.



Sitting MLC and BJP candidate for Hyderabad-Ranga Reddy-Mahbubnagar Graduates' Constituency N. Ramchander Rao is offered aarati as he begins his rally from Barkatpura BJP office to the GHMC head office to file his nomination on Monday. Union minister of state for home affairs G. Kishan Reddy and BJP leader P. Muralidhar Rao also participated.

— S. SURENDER REDDY

Bandi urges voters to think, vote BJP MLC

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, FEB. 22

BJP state president and MP Bandi Sanjay Kumar has urged intellectuals to think and vote for BJP candidate G. Premender Reddy and senior party leader P. Muralidhar Rao.

Speaking to media on occasion of Premender Reddy filing his nomination papers in Nalgonda, the state BJP chief accused Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao of having an adamant mentality that suppressed the voice of people.

He said only BJP has the guts to face KCR and capture the state, so that it can be taken on the path of development. He said though KCR became CM after thousands of students

if BJP wins, it will fight for justice to people and issue of employment notifications for providing jobs to unemployed.

In Hyderabad, MLC and contesting candidate N. Ramchander Rao filed his nomination at the GHMC office. He was accompanied by union minister G. Kishan Reddy and senior party leader P. Muralidhar Rao.

sacrificed their lives, he is now neglecting all communities. The Chief Minister has cheated people with his unfair promises, Sanjay stated.

Asking graduates to vote for BJP, he warned them against choosing TRS candidate Palla Rajeswar Reddy. Rajeshwar, if elected, will spend all his time at Chief Minister's farmhouse serving the CM. However,

NON-DIVISION OF INTERMEDIATE BOARD ANGERS HC

VUJJINI VAMSIDHARA | DC
HYDERABAD, FEB. 22

Enraged over the six-and-a-half years delay in division and allocation of Intermediate Board employees between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, a division bench of Telangana High Court, comprising Justice M.S. Ramachandra Rao and Justice T. Vinod Kumar observed that the higher authorities, who have responsibility to look into such issues, are behaving like emotionless people.

The bench upbraided administrations of both States for impeding allocation of employees and division of properties and obligations. More than 100 organisations were listed in IX Schedule and most of them have been pending without any reason. This is affecting employees, who are at the crossroads and many of them are not getting their salaries, the bench said.

"But, you (higher authorities) are enjoying getting timely salaries," slammed the bench, which reserved its judgment on the petition filed by Intermediate Board staff seeking a final allocation.

Kishan Reddy said Ramchander Rao is a people's candidate and will work for people every minute. He recalled that Ramchander Rao had won the seat even during the TRS wave. He will again get elected, as there is an anti-incumbency wave against the ruling party, the union minister stated.

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90 file papers so far

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, FEB. 22

As many as 90 persons have so far filed their nominations for contesting from the Mahabubnagar-Rangareddy-Hyderabad MLC Graduate con-

stituency. Nominations will be accepted till Tuesday.

While Congress candidate G. Chinna Reddy has already filed his fourth set of nomination papers at Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corpora-

tion (GHMC) headquar-

ters, N. Ramchander Rao and TRS candidate S. Vani Devi, daughter of former prime minister P. V. Narasimha Rao, filed their nominations on Monday.

Durga Prasad lodged a complaint in Jangaon police station and said the lorry driver claimed that the accident took place because of brake failure.

driver, who tried to escape, was caught by local villagers and bashed up.

Durga Prasad lodged a complaint in Jangaon police station and said the lorry driver claimed that the accident took place because of brake failure.

use of brake failure. "If that is true, how was his vehicle brought to the police station? I deal in land-related cases and I was to be present in a case related to a land issue in Warangal. A lawyer couple was murdered in Peddappalli last week and today I was attacked. We, lawyers, are unsafe and we may be compelled to leave our profession if such life-threatening circumstances remain," he said.

Brothers, Sisters, Son's, Daughters, Grand Kids, Friends, Family Members & All Parsi School Staff

14th DEATH ANNIVERSARY

N. MARY SAMBAVY
(Teacher Amma)
D.O.B: 23-02-2007

!! Though you Left us you are always in our heart Amma !!

Inserted by:

Brothers, Sisters, Son's, Daughters, Grand Kids, Friends, Family Members & All Parsi School Staff

(S/2021/D01268)

16th DEATH ANNIVERSARY

Shri A. GHANSHAM

You are always remembered for your valuable upbringing us with discipline and simplicity.

A.G. SATISH KUMAR
9177770050

Inserted by:

Brothers, Sisters, Son's, Daughters, Grand Kids, Friends, Family Members & All Parsi School Staff

(S/2021/D01268)

25th ANNIVERSARY

Sri. Gummadri Ramakrishna Reddy Garu

Expired on 23-02-1996

23 years have passed, your memories are still fresh in our hearts. May your soul rest in peace.

Inserted by:

G. Mahendra Reddy - Akhil Reddy

Grand sons: Rohan Reddy, Vardhan Reddy

Grand Daughter: Thanyi

GUMMADI RAMAKRISHNA REDDY GARUDENS

BATTUVANIGEBOLE, BOLLARAM, 5395540694000571

(S/2021/D01268)

Attempt made to murder me, alleges HC advocate

DC CORRESPONDENT
WARANGAL, FEB. 22

A High Court advocate Durga Prasad alleged that some unidentified persons tried to kill him by chasing and hitting his car with a lorry while he was on his way to the Warangal court from Hyderabad on Monday.

The lorry hit the car he was travelling in at Yeshwanthpur and dragged it for several metres before coming to a halt. The truck

use of brake failure. "If that is true, how was his vehicle brought to the police station? I deal in land-related cases and I was to be present in a case related to a land issue in Warangal. A lawyer couple was murdered in Peddappalli last week and today I was attacked. We, lawyers, are unsafe and we may be compelled to leave our profession if such life-threatening circumstances remain," he said.

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Inserted by:

SHORT TAKES

TTD PERFORMS BHUMI PUJA FOR TN TEMPLE

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, FEB. 22

The ceremonious bhoomi puja for the construction of TTD's fifth temple in Tamil Nadu was performed by priests at Ulundurpettai in Kallakurichi district on Monday.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palani-swamy took part in the celestial programme along with TTD chairman Y.V. Subba Reddy in the presence of devotees.

The bhoomi puja was performed amid chanting of Vedic hymns by pandits who placed four bricks and performed special puja.

Local MLA Kumara-guru, who donated land for Srivari temple, made elaborate arrangements for the ceremony. The MLA donated 3.98 acres of land and ₹3.16 crore towards the construction of the Srivari temple and sub-shrines for Padmavathi Ammavarti and Andal Godai.

Later, addressing a public meeting, Palani Swami appreciated the efforts of TTD in promoting Hindu Sanatana Dharma and the glory of Lord Venkateswara by building temples in many states.

Subba Reddy said that they aspired to establish at least one Lord Venkateswara temple in every state and union territory in the country. He also said TTD plans to build around 1,000 small temples in remote areas across AP and Telangana by spending ₹100 crore.

JAGAN'S GOOD WORK BORE FRUITS: YSRC

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, FEB. 22

The ruling YSR Congress attributed credit to the good governance of Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy for witnessing overwhelming victory in the recently concluded gram panchayat as their party-supported candidates won 80.51 per cent of seats while the Opposition Telugu Desam was confined to just 16.05 per cent in the state.

Panchayat raj minister Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy told the media here on Monday that the YSRC supported candidates swept all four phases of gram panchayat polls indicating the support base to their party in the state and said that the TD was reduced to ignominy. He rejected the TD's claim that it won 41 per cent seats.

Referring to the claims of the TD that it won 41 per cent of seats in the gram panchayat polls, the minister slammed the party for trying to come up with distorted figures to mislead the people and said that though the TD supremo N. Chandrababu Naidu tried to manage the system during the polls, the people rejected the party and predicted that it would soon vanish.

In a separate development, minister for water resources P. Anil Kumar Yadav said that the Telugu Desam might have got single-digit seats in the polls if they were having no party rebels. On TD chief Naidu's claim that their party won 41 per cent of seats, he challenged him to prove it and asked him to step down if he failed to prove it. He said that the TD secured only eight seats on Naidu's native village and so was the case in the Kuppam segment. On Naidu's remarks that their party suffered defeat due to police atrocities, the minister castigated him for saying so.

The minister predicted that their party would continue the winning trend in the ensuing urban local body polls and also in MPTC/ZPTC polls in the state.

In the Nellore district, the YSRC bagged 205 gram panchayats while TD got only 29 and the JS and BJP combo managed to get just two gram panchayats out of 236 gram panchayats went for polls in Saripalli, Kovur, Venkatagiri and Nellore rural segments in the district.

Similarly, the YSRC secured 180 panchayats, TD bagged 23 GPs and one panchayat went to Jana Sena and four to independents when the election was conducted for 208 GPs in the final phase at Markapur mandal apart from Giddalur and Yerragonadapalem Assembly constituencies.

In Tirupati, Srikanthasthi MLA Biyappa Madhusudhan Reddy said that their party swept the fourth phase of polls by securing 120 of the 121 sarpanch positions in the Srikanthasthi segment.

He said that their party candidates won in all 27 gram panchayats at Thottambudu and also 39 out of 40 gram panchayats at Yerpedu mandal.

As fierce rivalry marks MLC fight in Hyd-RR-Mah polls; youth, jobs get focus

Deccan Chronicle correspondents catch up key candidates in the fray in the run up to the elections for the Hyderabad, Ranga Reddy and Mahabubnagar graduate constituency elections. Since the TRS official candidate was named on Sunday and Monday marked a rushed effort to file her nomination, she did not have time to give an interview. DC will subsequently cover her views. In this edition, three candidates, G. Chinna Reddy of the Congress, independent candidate Prof. K. Nageshwar and the incumbent and BJP leader N. Ramchander Rao articulate why they should be the selection of voters in this crucial election.

'I will fight for jobless youth'

MADDY DEEKSHITH | DC
HYDERABAD, FEB. 22

Former minister and Congress candidate for the Hyderabad-Ranga Reddy-Mahabubnagar graduate MLC constituency G. Chinna Reddy said that he would sit on an indefinite hunger strike to fight for the aspirations of unemployed youth, teachers and employees after being elected.

"At this age, I am willing to fight for the welfare of people till the end of my life," said Chinna Reddy in an exclusive interview with Deccan Chronicle.

Q Why should people vote for Congress in the upcoming election?

A. The TRS has failed miserably in fulfilling poll promises. K. Chandrasekhar Rao has cheated every strata of society, including unemployed youth, teachers, employees, advocates, contract employees and pensioners. The TRS did not even implement its poll promise made for unemployed youth.

This apart, KCR's government is yet to fill over two lakh vacancies. He failed to provide employment to one member of each family as promised. He is doing injustice to government employees through 7.5 percent fitment. The TRS government has no moral right to ask votes in upcoming MLC polls.

Q Why should voters elect you as their MLC?

A. The sitting MLC and BJP candidate N. Ramchander Rao did not raise a single issue pertaining to unemployed, teachers, graduates and advocates, despite being a



G. Chinna Reddy

KCR's government is yet to fill over two lakh vacancies. He failed to provide employment to one member of each family as promised. He is doing injustice to government employees through 7.5 percent fitment. The TRS government has no moral right to ask votes in upcoming MLC polls.

Q Why should voters elect you as their MLC?

A. The sitting MLC and BJP candidate N. Ramchander Rao did not raise a single issue pertaining to unemployed, teachers, graduates and advocates, despite being a

practising advocate himself, either in the Legislative Council or outside during his term of six years. Though the BJP is in power at the Centre, Ramchander Rao did not make any efforts to revoke the Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS).

On the other hand, independent candidate Prof. K. Nageshwar is a good analyst and debates eloquently on television channels but did ever go out into the public domain or participate in any protest, dharna or lead any fight for employees, teachers and youth.

I have been active in politics for over 40 years. I have fought several battles, including the agitation for formation of a separate Telangana state. Prof. K. Nageshwar served twice and Mr Rao once. I urge people to give me a chance to serve them better.

Q What will you do for voters in the Hyderabad-Ranga Reddy-Mahabubnagar graduate constituency?

A. Unemployed youth, who got registered in the employment exchanges, have not received a call from the agency. I assure you I will fill vacancies based on eligibility. The TRS has promised and announced ₹3,016 per month to each unemployed person. Till January, the government owes ₹75,400 to each youth. I will demand for immediate release of funds and continue payment until they get jobs.

About 25,000 teachers are waiting for jobs. Yet, the government is trying to shut down government schools. I will fight to stop closure of schools and ensure all vacancies are filled. On similar lines, I will fight until 7.5 percent fitment is enhanced and HRA is hiked. I will demand income tax exemption for pensioners, enhancement of IT exemption from ₹5 lakh to ₹10 lakh. I would demand stipend for young advocates and fight for private employees, teachers and contract workers.

Q What have been your achievements as an MLC? What have you done for the graduates constituency?

A. I was the lone MLC from BJP in the council, where I have constantly raised several issues that revolved around the well-being of farmers, advocates, doctors, teachers, students, the BC, SC and ST community, besides putting pressure on the government to make higher budgetary allocations for weaker sections. I fought the government while advocating better welfare fund utilisation. It is because of my fight that the fund which was allocated but not utilised was utilised completely for the welfare of advocates across the state. I am the only person with 100 per cent attendance and raised a range of issues and questions.

'TRS broke promises'

IREDDY SRINIVAS REDDY | DC
HYDERABAD, FEB. 22

With growing anti-incumbency against the ruling TRS party and a weak opposition party, the BJP is the only party that can fight the K. Chandrasekhar Rao-led government and ensure justice for people, said sitting MLC and BJP candidate for the Hyderabad, Rangareddy and Mahabubnagar graduate constituency, N. Ramchander Rao. He MLC spoke to Deccan Chronicle exclusively while filing his nomination on Monday.

Q What is your main agenda in fight the election? How do you rate your chances?

A. The government of Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao has failed to fulfil any of its promises made before the last two elections. Like the promise to waive loans to farmers up to ₹100,000. Like the promise to create jobs and fill vacancies for unemployed youth. The government has neglected and worked against the interests of teachers and government employees for several years.

TRS neglected and oppressed the Dalits and has not fulfilled the promise to give three acres of land. It has broken the back of the public health and education system. The TRS government failed in staff recruitment in universities, degree and intermediate colleges, pushing students towards a dark future. People are still praying for a double bedroom house, which was the main promise made by KCR in the run up to the 2014 assembly election. After seven years, people are still waiting for the 2BHK houses.

Q What have been your achievements as an MLC? What have you done for the graduates constituency?

A. I was the lone MLC from BJP in the council, where I have constantly raised several issues that revolved around the well-being of farmers, advocates, doctors, teachers, students, the BC, SC and ST community, besides putting pressure on the government to make higher budgetary allocations for weaker sections. I fought the government while advocating better welfare fund utilisation. It is because of my fight that the fund which was allocated but not utilised was utilised completely for the welfare of advocates across the state. I am the only person with 100 per cent attendance and raised a range of issues and questions.

Q You were accused of going soft on TRS. There were reports that you sought support of TRS from outside for this election?

A. Tough battles are not new for me. I defeated all these parties twice in 2007 and 2009 as an independent. This is history. I did not contest in 2015 due to personal reasons. One should remember that the BJP could win in 2015 only after I opted out. I am confident of repeating history by trouncing all these parties and achieve a hat-trick of victories with the support of students, youth, unemployed, employees of state and Central governments, besides outsourcing and contract employees of state government. I am associated with them for a long time. Over 2,000 supporters from all these sections accompanied me voluntarily in a rally when I filed my nomination. This itself is a big achievement for an independent candidate.

Q You entered the council twice?

A: The Telangana Legislative Council has become a sort of 'bhajan batch' now. What we hear in Council today is just praising CM KCR and his government

all the time. Out of a total of 40 MLCs, barring a two or three, rest are TRS, or its friendly party AIMIM. Even those two or three are sitting quiet. In my earlier stints, I raised and debated issues pertaining to the education sector, students, youth, unemployed, employees. I will fight for jobs and PRC, and if they fail to resolve it, I will hit the streets.

Q What makes you confident of winning this election?

A: Over 50 organisations belonging to students, contract/outourcing employees, banking sector, life insurance sector, central government undertakings in Hyderabad, pensioners of state and central governments etc., have already declared their unconditional support for me.

'Never sought TRS support'

L. VENKAT RAM REDDY | DC
HYDERABAD, FEB. 22

Prof. K. Nageshwar has plunged into electoral politics, after a gap of six years. In the process, he has transformed the upcoming MLC elections for the Hyderabad, Rangareddy and Mahabubnagar graduate constituency intense and fascinating. Nageshwar, who won twice before as an independent from the same seat in 2007 and 2009, did not contest 2015 elections.

In an exclusive interview to Deccan Chronicle, the professor spoke about various issues, why graduates should vote for him and why his re-entry into Telangana Legislative Council is a necessity to safeguard the interests of students, youth and employees.

Q Three major political parties, the TRS, Congress and BJP are fighting this election in a 'do or die' battle. What chances do you stand?

A: Tough battles are not new for me. I defeated all these parties twice in 2007 and 2009 as an independent. This is history. I did not contest in 2015 due to personal reasons. One should remember that the BJP could win in 2015 only after I opted out. I am confident of repeating history by trouncing all these parties and achieve a hat-trick of victories with the support of students, youth, unemployed, employees of state and Central governments, besides outsourcing and contract employees of state government. I am associated with them for a long time. Over 2,000 supporters from all these sections accompanied me voluntarily in a rally when I filed my nomination. This itself is a big achievement for an independent candidate.

Q You were accused of going soft on TRS. There were reports that you sought support of TRS from outside for this election?

A. The NIA filed a supplementary chargesheet before a special court here on Monday against two terrorists of Pakistan-based terror group LeT for their alleged involvement in a conspiracy to commit subversive activities and wage a war against India, besides killing key personalities of the Hindu community in the country, an official said.

The chargesheet was filed against Dr Sabeel Ahmed of Bengaluru and Asadulla Khan of Hyderabad under sections of the India Penal Code (IPC) and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), a spokesperson of the country's premier investigation agency said. The case, initially registered in August 2012 in Bengaluru, pertains to a conspiracy hatched by members of proscribed terror organisations Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Harkat-ul-Jihad-e-Islami (HuJI) to commit subversive activities and wage a war against the government of India, the NIA official said.

During all previous elections, gram panchayat polls were hotly contested and these had an adverse impact on the polling in a majority of villages in the Rayalseema region.

While the LeT had tried to maintain their hold on villages through booth-captures and attacks, historian Dr. Harinath Reddy observed that the gram panchayat polls demonstrated a similar culture. The fanatics had proven their existence in many past gram panchayat polls and created a tense situation to capture the mid-men.

Shankar a farmer from Eklaspur said that the centre and State governments are cheating farmers who form 80 per cent of the Indian population.

Gaddam Kumar of Adavi Srirampur wanted to know how the farmers can be protected from the mid-men.

The farmers urged the CLP leader to impress on the TRS government to continue input subsidy scheme for farmers, along with Rythu Bandhu scheme

A: This is malicious propaganda by my political rivals, especially the BJP. They alleged that the TRS will not contest this election and will support me from outside, that I had met Chief Minister KCR at his farmhouse and sought support. Some even stooped to the extent that I will join TRS. I never sought support from KCR, who has now announced former prime minister PV. Narasimha Rao's daughter as the official TRS candidate. This is a slap on the faces of those who indulged in false propaganda against me. Those people owe an answer to people.

Students, youth and employees are very angry with TRS as it has failed to give jobs and a new PRC as promised. Only a fool will seek TRS support in present circumstances. I am the one who is attacking the TRS government on its failures on jobs and PRC.

Q You entered the council twice?

A: The Telangana Legislative Council has become a sort of 'bhajan batch' now. What we hear in Council today is just praising CM KCR and his government

all the time. Out of a total of 40 MLCs, barring a two or three, rest are TRS, or its friendly party AIMIM. Even those two or three are sitting quiet. In my earlier stints, I raised and debated issues pertaining to the education sector, students, youth, unemployed, employees. I will fight for jobs and PRC, and if they fail to resolve it, I will hit the streets.

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FARM LAWS Cong. leader's state yatra highlights farmers' plight

Without MSP, we will have to beg, TS farmers tell Bhatti

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, FEB. 22



Congress Legislator Party leader Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu at a press conference.

Scores of farmers met leader of the Congress Legislature Party (CLP) Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu at his 14 Raitulatho Mukha Mukhi (face to face interactions with farmers), much on the lines of the Kisan Mahapanchayats of northern India and poured their hearts out on the challenges they face and their unheard grievances.

Mr Bhatti has undertaken a yatra, 'Polam Bata, Poru Bata' (walk to farms, walk to fight), wherein he is covering vast tracts of the state to elicit farmers' views of the farm laws brought by the Central government, besides their welfare under the TRS government.

The long walk and interactions with farmers has succeeded in bringing out real problems faced by farmers of the state, said Mr Bhatti.

Farmers have been thronging to meet Bhatti at every village centre, pouring their anger against the three farm bills, which they say is "aimed at corporatising Indian farming, benefiting only the rich."

"This move will be disastrous for farmers, forcing them to beg for a better price in front of big corporations," they told the CLP leader.

Ashok, a farmer from Bheemarsi village in Adilabad district said that both Telangana and Central governments have been avoiding payment of premiums of "Fasal Bima" (crop insurance) by blaming each other, highlighting a real problem faced by Telangana farmers.

Kishataya, another farmer wondered how marginal farmers can transport their yield to markets elsewhere, as the new farm law says that farmers can sell their produce anywhere in the country.

The farmers urged

DECCAN Chronicle

23 FEBRUARY 2021

Withdraw restrictions on academic webinars

In the pre-Covid-19 era, governments used the visa as a tool to prevent individuals from certain countries from taking part in educational, cultural or sporting engagements. India cut a sorry figure when it showed the world that it was ready to demonise an entire nation for political reasons. At other times, it was particular individuals who were targeted for the views they held, regardless of their country.

But what we have just seen is a whole new ballgame. A January 15 order by the education ministry that recently came to light asked all government entities, including publicly funded educational institutions and universities, to "seek approval" of the "administrative secretary" of the concerned department/ministry for organising any "online/virtual international conferences/seminar/training etc".

On the other hand, those meant to confer approval were required to ensure that the subject matter of an event did not relate to the "security of the State, border, the Northeast states, UT (Union territory) of J&K, or any other issues which are clearly/purely related to India's internal matters".

In short, the very idea of discussion is being pushed into a room and the door banged shut in order to please Big Brother.

Has the government gone totally insane? Or is this just a way of imposing thought control through the backdoor because we are not — last heard — a country with a totalitarian constitution in which the single ruling party or dictatorial agency (the military, for instance) must decide and control everything, including who hears what and who says what?

In the Covid era, webinars became the lifeblood of intellectual and scientific interactions and exchange of ideas among peers internationally, and it is this which is being sought to be curbed, forcing Indian scholars and students in all fields to be shut in without being able to take recourse to the latest findings and thinking in the various domains around the world. In short, the very idea of discussion is being pushed into a room and the door banged shut in order to please Big Brother.

It is no surprise that the scientific community is not pleased. In a letter to education minister Ramesh Pokhriyal (and others), the president of the Indian Academy of Sciences, Partha Majumder, had called the order "too constraining" for the advancement of science in the country. He has also raised the valid point that frequently, even for domestic webinars, foreign scholars of repute, including Nobel laureates, are invited as interlocutors and discussants as exchanges with them are of extraordinary benefit to our own scholars and students. Are such forums to be classified as foreign?

Besides, even if we shut the doors on international experts, will Indians, when they are discussing crucial issues of science and other fields of scholarship, be wholly free to talk about issues for which the sanction-giving authority must specially look out? The answer seems fairly clear. Indeed, it is likely that it won't be before long that private institutions of knowledge too will be brought under the mischief of the order.

The instruction must be withdrawn lock, stock and barrel. Seeing that the heads of scientific institutions representing over 1,500 top scientists of the country reacted publicly, principal scientific adviser K. Vijayaraman and secretary (technology) Ashutosh Sharma have hinted at a modification of the order. That isn't enough, the whole thing must be scrapped. It is odd that that the PSA, a man of science, is not repelled by the tone and the meaning of the entire directive.

Cyborgs of tennis

Novak Djokovic, one of the three knights of modern tennis, turned on his best game on the hard court at the Rod Laver arena he can call his own backyard for having won nine times and never having been beaten in an Australian Open final. His opponent Daniil Medvedev was so much in awe of the champion that he calls him a "cyborg of tennis" alongside Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal, who between them have won 58 Grand Slams and 15 of the last 16. And is there a more accurate yardstick than Grand Slam titles to measure who among the three is going to be judged as the greatest tennis player of the professional era?

The Serbian's spotless returns of serve on a cool Melbourne night could be rated as his greatest weapon in the dismantling of a young challenger even as he played every ground stroke as if he were indeed armed with superhuman qualities. If tennis is all about eliminating errors, then Djokovic is just that champion. Not a crowd favourite because of the stand he has taken on various issues and because he called for leniency from the hard quarantine imposed on all visiting players before the Australian Open, Djokovic also had to battle many who were not chanting "Ole, ole, ole" in his support.

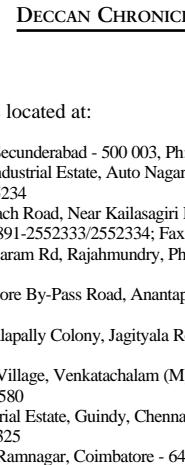
Naomi Osaka is the emerging great of the women's game who won her fourth Grand Slam in a manner reminiscent of the dominating tennis of Serena Williams, who she beat in the semis before demolishing Jennifer Brady in the final. The youngster may have victories that favour the hard courts of the Australian and US Opens but, on the evidence of her Melbourne showing, she may need only an attitudinal change to win on grass and clay. Having once said that to become a tennis legend was her life goal, the 23-year-old is well on her way now with a polished game and a record of Grand Slams to lend greater weight to the voice to speak up on sensitive social subjects that she has never been afraid of.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

K. SUDHAKAR
Printer & Publisher

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Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. H/SD-348/2006-08



The price of petrol has crossed ₹100 in some parts of India for the first time. A parallel development is that of the total revenue that the government receives — 33 per cent, or one-third, now comes from the tax on fuel. India's consumers pay the highest rate of tax on the petrol and diesel that they consume. The nations that follow India on the list of those with high taxes are all European nations, plus the United States and Japan. These are of course places where consumers are much better off than us and the government can in fact extract money from them without significant hurt.

In India, the majority of consumers are poor. And a tax on fuel affects all of us equally and hurts the poor disproportionately. The autorickshaw owner and the Uber driver pay the same to fuel up their vehicle as the corporate executive and or business tycoon. This makes very little sense. Ideally, taxation should be focused on those who can afford to pay more, and this is through direct taxes like income-

tax. But this has not happened in India for a variety of reasons. The base of people who file their income-tax returns has gone up, but the actual money that comes in as direct taxes has not gone up proportionally.

The other reason that taxes from fuel have gone up as a proportion of all taxes is what has happened to the Goods and Services Tax. This was meant to replace a series of other taxes and create a single market where more trade and more commerce would happen, expanding the economy. But the GST was not able to produce as much revenue as the taxes it replaced. And the market has not grown. Indeed, in the last 36 months, the Indian economy has slowed significantly, falling from around eight per cent growth in the quarter starting January 2018 to around three per cent in the quarter starting January 2020. And in the period after that, the economy has actually contracted for the first time in decades. And so, the short-term prospects for growth are not good, and the government must look

around for immediate ways in which it can fund itself. The easiest way is through taxes on fuel.

Petrol and diesel had been deregulated before Prime Minister Narendra Modi took office. The logic of deregulation was that the Indian State kept subsidising the consumer even when the price of crude rose globally, putting the mostly state-run oil businesses here at a loss. The consumer was protected no matter what the price of crude was. But now the reverse has happened. The government is protected no matter what the price of crude is. If the price goes down it takes more profits and does not lower the retail rate of petrol and diesel. If the price goes up, it hikes up the rates further. This was not the purpose of deregulation.

The Prime Minister says that it is not his fault and previous governments are to blame for keeping India dependent on imported crude. But that is the case with all the world's nations who do not have a reserve of oil that can be tapped. Alternative sources of energy are a

recent phenomenon and their ability to match fossil fuels in terms of price is something even more recent. We should know that in the area of petrol and diesel in automobile use, this parity has still not come.

Petrol and diesel are very energy dense. About 50 kg of fuel or a full tank can take the car for about 700 km. For an electric car to do that, it needs a lithium ion battery pack that must be at least 45 or so kilowatt hours. The price of this battery alone is around \$5,000, and so approximately ₹4 lakh. Add the rest of the car and the minimum cost of a vehicle that can do the same range as a petrol or a diesel-driven car can do today is around ₹10 lakh, which is out of the budget for three-fourths or more of India's car buyers. This will change over time and the cost of battery packs will fall as more and more nations take to electric vehicles for environmental reasons. But it is wrong to assume that it could be done today and certainly wrong to assume it could have been done in the past.

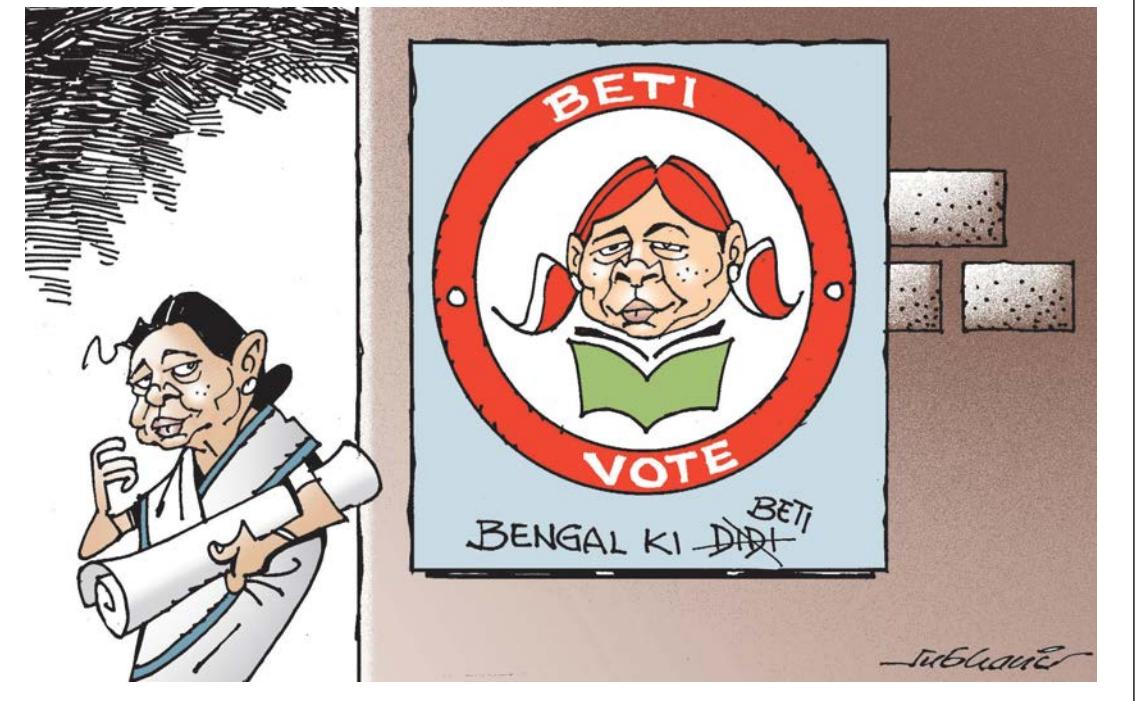
The last aspect is that of infrastructure. Lithium ion batteries in cars take about 10 hours to charge at home, assuming all car buyers have a garage with access to electricity. America, Europe and China have tens of thousands of direct current fast chargers in networks that span their nations.

This enables cars to charge up in about half an hour or so. India does not have these networks because the government has not built them. Even if all cars today were to magically become electric and not dependent on fossil fuel, where would they be charged? That the Prime Minister did not say.

The reality is that no matter what Jawaharlal Nehru or Indira Gandhi or Atal Behari Vajpayee did, we would be dependent today on petrol and diesel. The question is whether the government should extract such a large share of tax from us. That is a question only Narendra Modi can answer and not Jawaharlal Nehru.

The writer is a columnist and a senior journalist

Subhani



Hashtag power: Twitter, govt in fight for survival

Shashidhar Nanjundaiah



An Editors Guild of India webinar on February 12 on reporting from the Naxalite badlands featured song videos, pornography and abusive language. Now, why would an organised group of "unknown persons" like to cyber-bomb a seminar? Perhaps the theme was inconvenient? As the guild pointed out later, the seminar would talk about the excesses of the government and the struggles of the tribals — or Adivasis — at the hands of the left-wing extremists. Open webinars are vulnerable to mischief anyway, and this writer has himself faced tough, disruptive questions during them. But such is the nature of free speech. Where does free speech end? Would we consider the disruption of the guild's webinar also free speech, or would we find it unreasonable enough to be restricted? Should the guild be held responsible for those who misused the platform?

Gatherings, virtual or physical, promote mobilisation of thought, and that can be problematic. That is why the recent spat between the Centre and Twitter has rich meanings for a researcher.

The social media has two broad roles — the organisational and the dialogic, and it is the former that is spooking nervous governments. By threatening Twitter officials with jail and publicly contemplating the application of media laws to the social media, the government is putting on public display how spooked, rather than concerned, it is. For the Indian government, in particular, irrespective of party, there are several historical precedents — most glaringly so over the last six years. To cry conspiracy on groups of like-minded people who use a convenient technological tool — the hashtag — to

galvanise support and make claims is extremely thin-skinned.

People and political parties — many on Twitter, such is the delicious irony of the social media — have raised doubts about whether the Delhi police wittingly or unwittingly facilitated the Republic Day drama. Should we therefore assume that our government liberally allowed the virtual mobilisation to brew on Twitter, and then failed to protect a public monument where the real action was?

Certainly, history has shown us that mobilisation topples governments even through rhetorical intent. Organisational power can often translate into transactional power — and from Indira Gandhi to Narendra Modi, it poses a human challenge to professed development goals. The social media is just the latest galvanising force that transcends geography.

But can the social media enable a coup in India? But is it possible to argue that it can? Similarly, can a group of people hoist a private flag atop a public building as the police watch? But can the Centre argue that the breach was a security problem? That's what matters. And the public display of anger is a warning to the rest of us not to rub the government the wrong way. Consider the potent words of BJP leader Arun Vij in Disha Ravi's context: "Those who even think in anti-national problems must be eradicated".

Let's flip a question: Would the flag be hoisted atop Red Fort on Republic Day if the social media had not existed? This sounds like a rhetorical question. Like during the Arab Spring, "hashtag mobilisation" can indeed take on unimaginable, real proportions. But which political leader has not used it to campaign and just to all.

The writer has led reputed institutes of media and communications, and is the founder of "Being Responsible", which promotes media literacy. The views expressed here are personal.

LETTERS

PETROL VS IPL

The increase in fuel prices or price of IPL ticket has to be borne by middle class or the poor. In order to watch IPL, we must fill our fuel tanks. As for the ruling class, they neither know the cost of fuel or IPL ticket but enjoy perks at the cost of taxpayers.

G.V. Sudhir
Hyderabad

Blaming the Opposition and predecessors is the favourite pastime of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. For him, Parliament has been reduced to place to pass Bills to fulfil his personal goals due to the lack of Opposition. He needs to stop talking and serve people to fight hunger and poverty. Trying to erase the past and rewrite history is unbecoming of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Jugal Kishore
Hyderabad

By nominating former prime minister's daughter Vanu Devi, the TRS seems to be trying to encash on the good image of P.V. Narasimha Rao (*PV daughter Vanu is KCR's MLC pick, DC, Feb. 22*). Interestingly, PV always advocated for united Andhra Pradesh. One wonders why KCR is pitching on the "region" sentiment when the state under his governance is heading towards Bangalore Telangana.

Kshirasagara Balaji Rao
Hyderabad

Though Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao appears to be usurping former prime minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's legacy, it is the Congress that lost its claim to it morally in 2004 when his body was not allowed to be placed inside the party headquarters in Delhi for people to pay homage.

S. Nageswara Rao
Hyderabad

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

Opposition writ against PM rejected

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 22
A combined bid by five Opposition parties for a writ against Government failed in the Delhi High Court. They had alleged that the Prime Minister and other Central Ministers had used Government machinery for furthering Ruling Congress Party's prospects in the ensuing elections.

Chief Justice Mr. H.R. Khanna dismissed the petition, observing that the petitioners had not proved any violation.

Aakar Patel

Who's to blame for ₹100 petrol: Nehru, Indira or Modi Sarkar?



In India, the majority of consumers are poor. And a tax on fuel affects all of us equally and hurts the poor disproportionately. The autorickshaw owner and the Uber driver pay the same to fuel up their vehicle as the corporate executive and or business tycoon. This makes very little sense. Ideally, taxation should be focused on those who can afford to pay more, and this is through direct taxes like income-

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The Prime Minister says that it is not his fault and previous governments are to blame for keeping India dependent on imported crude. But that is the case with all the world's nations who do not have a reserve of oil that can be tapped. Alternative sources of energy are a

recent phenomenon and their ability to match fossil fuels in terms of price is something even more recent. We should know that in the area of petrol and diesel in automobile use, this parity has still not come.

Petrol and diesel are very energy dense. About 50 kg of fuel or a full tank can take the car for about 700 km. For an electric car to do that, it needs a lithium ion battery pack that must be at least 45 or so kilowatt hours. The price of this battery alone is around \$5,000, and so approximately ₹4 lakh. Add the rest of the car and the minimum cost of a vehicle that can do the same range as a petrol or a diesel-driven car can do today is around ₹10 lakh, which is out of the budget for three-fourths or more of India's car buyers. This will change over time and the cost of battery packs will fall as more and more nations take to electric vehicles for environmental reasons. But it is wrong to assume that it could be done today and certainly wrong to assume it could have been done in the past.

The writer is a columnist and a senior journalist

SHORT TAKES

AYODHYA AIRPORT
TO BE NAMED
AFTER LORD RAM

Lucknow Feb. 22: The under construction airport in Ayodhya will be named Maryada Purushottam Sriram Airport, Ayodhya after Lord Ram and a provision of ₹101 crore has been made for it in the budget presented in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly on Monday.

Besides the provision for the Ayodhya airport which will subsequently be made an international airport, the budget also provides for ₹2,000 crore for increasing the number of airstrips at Jellar Airport from 2 to 6.

Cities like Aligarh, Moradabad, Meerut will also be linked through air service soon. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath told reporters after the presentation of the budget by finance minister Suresh Khanna.

Under the Special Area Programme, a budget of ₹300 crore is proposed for special schemes of Purvanchal and a budget of ₹210 crore has been proposed for special schemes of Bundelkhand region.

Stressing on industrial and infrastructure development, a budgetary provision of ₹1,107 crore has been made for the Purvanchal Expressway Project, ₹1,492 crore for Bundelkhand Expressway Project and ₹860 crore for Gorakhpur Link Expressway Project.

PHOTOS OF COUPLE
IN GOVT COPTER
SPARK ROW

RABINDRA NATH
CHOWDHURY | DC
BHOPAL, FEB. 22

A couple did a 'wedding' photoshoot in a government chopper in Raipur triggering a security scare, officials said on Monday.

A video of the couple posing for a photoshoot in the helicopter on Monday went viral, causing flutter in the security establishment in Raipur.

Director of aviation department of Chhattisgarh government Nilam Namdev has constituted a 3-member committee headed by chief pilot Pankaj Jaiswal to probe the incident.

The committee has been asked to submit its report within a week.

A 3-member committee has been constituted to probe the incident. Information available till now suggests that a driver in the state aviation department had opened the state hangar for the couple to do the photoshoot. He has been placed under suspension. Accountability will be fixed on the officers found responsible for the security lapse leading to the incident after the probe", Namdev said.

One Sanket Sai and his wife, the newly married couple, had done photoshoots in wedding attire in the chopper on Sunday. The couple posed for the photoshoot inside and outside the helicopter.

Sanket is sarpanch of Dhandi Bahar village in Jashpur district in Chhattisgarh and is said to be a relative of the driver in the state aviation department Yugeswar Sai who allegedly led the couple to the hangar.

GUJARAT RS
BYPOLLS: BJP
WINS BOTH SEATS

Ahmedabad, Feb. 22: BJP nominees Dineshchandra Anavadiya and Rambhai Mokariya were on Monday declared elected unopposed to the Rajya Sabha from Gujarat as the opposition Congress did not field candidates for the two vacant seats, one of which was held by its veteran leader Ahmed Patel.

The two seats had fallen vacant following the demise of the sitting MPs belonging to the Congress and the BJP.

One of the seats was held by veteran Congressman Ahmed Patel since 1993 till his death on November 25 last year due to complications related to Covid-19. The other seat fell vacant as BJP's Abhay Bharadwaj, a first time MP elected to the RS in 2019, too, died on December 1 due to the Coronavirus infection.

Returning C.B. Pandya declared Anavadiya and Mokariya as elected uncontested from the two seats on Monday, which was the last date of withdrawal of forms.

Two dummy candidates of the BJP, Rajnikant Patel and Kirit Solanki, withdrew their nominations on Saturday.

With the bypolls to be held separately, the Congress, decided not to field any candidate.

Bomb diffused



Bomb disposal squad prepares to defuse an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) in Srinagar on Monday, which was detected at a bridge, near the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway near Pantha Chowk. Central Reserve Police Force personnel, patrolling the highway, found a tin can by the busy roadside at Nowgam, a police official said.

4G services likely to be suspended in J&K in March, April

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, FEB. 22

Security agencies are once again likely to recommend suspension of 4G services in J&K during March-April in view of specific intelligence inputs that Pakistan-based terror outfits were planning "major infiltration and terror attacks" in the Valley and along the Indo-Pak border areas.

The Centre had decided to restore 4G services in J&K last month after a gap of nearly a year.

There is concrete information with us that major infiltration and terror attacks are being planned during March-April. Cell phones play a major role in terror operations so if security situation deteriorates in the coming days then we will have suspend these 4G services again," a senior intelligence official said.

Kashmir Valley witnessed a relatively peaceful winter this year with a sharp drop in number of terror incidents. But things, security official feel, could change with the onset of summers for which adequate preventive measures like strengthening anti-infiltration grid along the border areas and increasing deployment with the Valley were being done.

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pads along the Indo-Pak to infiltrate into India with onset of summer. Cell phone serves, particular messaging plays a crucial role in terror activities hence security forces are skeptical that 4G services may once again have to be suspended in case violence in the Valley escalates in the coming days.

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Mamata kin gives CBI 4 hours to grill her at residence today

Narula claims to be in dark about purpose of summons, her link to the probe

ED issues summons to TMC minister's daughter

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC
KOLKATA, FEB. 22

A day after getting summons to face grilling in the coal smuggling case, wife of West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's MP nephew Abhishek Banerjee Rujira Banerjee Narula gave the Central Bureau of Investigation a window of four hours on Tuesday to question her at her South Kolkata residence.

Narula, suspected by the CBI for her role in overseas financial transactions relating to the illegal trade, however, claimed herself to be in dark about the purpose of the summons to her and her link to the probe while replying to the CBI on a day her sister Menaka Gambhir faced its marathon questioning for her suspected link to the financial transactions.

The top leader is state urban development and

municipal affairs minister and outgoing Kolkata Mayor Firhad Hakim who is also a trusted lieutenant of the Trinamul Congress supremo. His daughter Priyadarshini Hakim has reportedly been called by the Enforcement Directorate to face grilling this week at its office in CGO Complex in Salt Lake on the overseas financial transactions.

ED sources claimed that a huge amount of money was sent abroad to a bank account during multiple foreign tours by Priya-

darshini's husband Yasir Haider in the last couple of years.

The Union finance ministry's agency has also come across a link of a foreign actress' name with Yasir's overseas visits, sources added.

Priyadarshini works at corporate communication department of the CESC. She was not available for comments. It is also not clear whether she would face the ED or not. Hakim, however, claimed, "I have neither heard nor do know anything about it."

The CBI officers were seen waiting in their cars outside for almost an hour before they were allowed to go inside only by walking after parking their cars outside the residential complex.

Later, the CBI team questioned Gambhir for three hours and recorded her statement on ₹36 lakhs which used to be deposited by Anup Majhi alias Lala, the abounding kingpin of the coal smuggling case, monthly to the Kasikorn Bank account at Bangkok in Thailand and another bank in London.

and 3 pm tomorrow, i.e. 23 February 2021. You are requested to kindly inform me your schedule."

In the afternoon a drama, however, unfolded when Kumar and his team went to grill Gambhir at her flat in an upscale housing complex at Anandapur off EM Bypass in the city but were denied entry by the security guards keeping the giant gate closed.

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SHORT TAKES

MP FOUND DEAD IN MUMBAI HOTEL

SHAHAB ANSARI | DC
MUMBAI, FEB. 22

Lok Sabha member representing Dadra and Nagar Haveli Mohan Sanjibhai Delkar was on Monday found dead at a hotel in south Mumbai. It is suspected that the Lok Sabha MP allegedly died by suicide.

Delkar's body was found at around 2pm on Monday. A suicide note in Gujarati was also found along with the body.

An accidental death report is being registered based on preliminary information, the police said.

"The body of Lok Sabha MP Mohan Delkar was found in a hotel in Marine Drive Police Station area today. A suicide note was found at the spot. ASP, Colaba, is investigating the matter," Mumbai Police Spokesperson Chaitanya S. said.

According to sources, Delkar had checked in the hotel last night.

When his driver, staying in the adjacent room, didn't get any response from him till the afternoon, he informed the hotel staff about it. Subsequently, the driver entered Delkar's room from the other side and found Delkar hanging.

Delkar won six consecutive elections from the constituency during 1989-2009, failing to retain the seat in the Lok Sabha elections in 2009 and 2014. However, he successfully contested the 17th Lok Sabha as an independent candidate.

He won the 1989, 1991 and 1996 elections as a Congress candidate and the 1998 election as a BJP candidate. He rejoined the Congress and unsuccessfully contested in 2009 and 2014. He is survived by his wife and two children.

INDIA COMMITTED TO NUCLEAR DOCTRINE

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, FEB. 22

India remains committed to its nuclear doctrine of "maintaining credible minimum deterrence with the posture of no-first use and non-use against non-nuclear weapon states", Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla said on Monday while addressing the "High-Level Segment of the Conference on Disarmament".

The foreign secretary also said that "Prime Minister Narendra Modi by delivering on his promise at the UN General Assembly to make Indian manufactured vaccines affordable and accessible to all of humanity, has once again shown that India is a force for global good".

The FS said, "India, as a responsible nuclear weapon State, is committed as per its nuclear doctrine, to maintain credible minimum deterrence with the posture of no-first use and non-use against non-nuclear weapon States. ... India is committed to the goal of universal, non-discriminatory and verifiable nuclear disarmament. Our call for complete elimination of nuclear weapons through a step-by-step process... India has supported the immediate commencement of negotiations in the CD on a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty."

The FS added, "PM Modi, by delivering on his promise at the UNGA to make Indian manufactured vaccines accessible to all of humanity, has once again shown that India is a force for global good."

POLITICAL | CHARGE

BJP leaders says Cong lost Puducherry after Rahul visited the UT

'Midas touch': BJP takes dig at Rahul again

BJP'S IT CELL chief Amit Malviya said Rahul Gandhi went to Puducherry and "true to his midas touch, Congress loses its government in the UT!"

visit to strengthen his party has "gone well".

"Congress loses power in Puducherry, reducing its presence to just 3 states, along with trivial existence in Maharashtra & Jharkhand. Few years from now, Congress will only exist in the books of history," he said.

Another Union minister, Harsh Vardhan, also took a dig at the former Congress chief, saying, "The marvel of Sh. @RahulGandhi Ji has worked again!"

"After losing out Puducherry, @INCIndia's presence has shrunk to just 3 states - Punjab, Rajasthan & Chhattisgarh, apart from

being fringe players in Jharkhand & Maharashtra. Clean sweep on the cards it seems!" he tweeted.

Reacting to the development, BJP's IT cell chief Amit Malviya said Rahul Gandhi went to Puducherry and "true to his midas touch, Congress loses its government in the UT!"

After Congress lost its government in Puducherry, its presence has shrunk to just three states - Punjab, Rajasthan and Chattisgarh and in Jharkhand and Maharashtra, it is as good as on the margin, Malviya said.

"It's just a matter of time before Rahul Gandhi achieves, which no other Gandhi has," he tweeted.

BJP MP Rajeev Chandrasekhar claimed that Rahul Gandhi is "effectively doing a job of dismantling" the Congress all over the coun-

try and now in Puducherry too.

"Congress is left in 3 states only and in rest of India survives as B/C teams of and on the coattails of parties like Shiv Sena, DMK," he said in a tweet.

BJP general secretary C T Ravi said, "Rahul Gandhi goes to Puducherry, and the rest is history!!!"

Several BJP functionaries at the state level also took jibes at the Congress over the fall of government in Puducherry.

BJP leader from Andhra Pradesh Rameshnaidu Nagothu said after Puducherry, BJP workers invite Rahul Gandhi for a visit to West Bengal and Assam. Both Assam and West Bengal are poll bound.

BJP MLA from Maharashtra Siddhartha Shirole took a dig at Rahul Gandhi saying his leadership is helping millions

of Indians "fulfil their dream of Congress Mukt Bharat".

"A feat that no other Gandhi family member could ever achieve," he added.

Khushbu Sundar, who recently switched to the BJP from the Congress, took a swipe at her old party, tweeting, "Karma comes back. You reap what you sow."

It was not just the BJP that took potshots at the Congress after it lost power in Puducherry.

Aam Aadmi Party, from its official Twitter handle, said, "Prove: Voting for Congress = Voting for BJP. Congress won MP but now BJP is ruling MP. Congress won Puducherry but now BJP is ruling Puducherry. Congress won Karnataka but now BJP is ruling Karnataka. Congress won Goa but now BJP is ruling Goa. Hence Proved: L.H.S.=R.H.S."

- PTI



A train approaches Srinagar Railway Station, after services resumed since its closure from March 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic, in Srinagar on Monday. - PTI

Previous govt neglected Assam, says Prime Minister

MANOJ ANAND | DC
GUWAHATI, FEB. 22

WHILE INAUGURATING the expansion project of Bongaigaon refinery, the Prime Minister said that with the help of the Ujjwala Scheme, liquefied petroleum gas, or LPG, coverage in Assam stood at nearly 100 per cent.

self-sufficiency. "Assam's tea, tourism, handloom and handicraft will strengthen the state's self-reliance. Earlier I had said that Assam will become the growth engine of North East, now we have seen the reality," he said.

The Prime Minister who inaugurated a number of projects worth over ₹3,300 crore said, "Today, the whole world is recognising India's engineers. The youths of Assam have amazing potential. The state government is working hard to increase this capacity. Due to the efforts of the Assam government, today there are more than 20 engineering colleges here."

Asserting that he will visit Assam and other poll-bound states as many times as possible before the Assembly election dates are announced, Modi said, "Those who ruled for decades since Independence believed Delhi was too far from Dispur but Delhi is not far now, it stands at your doorstep."

Reiterating his commitment for the development of the state, Modi said, "I will visit Assam, other poll-bound states as many times as possible before elections are announced, likely in the first week of March. If we assume March 7 as the day of election dates announcement, then I will try to come to you whenever I get the time."

He said, "Centre and the Assam government are working collaboratively to develop state infrastructure. Despite the state having great potential, previous governments gave it 'sauteela' treatment by overlooking development in various sectors."

He also highlighted the steps taken by the Sarbananda Sonowal-led state government, and the Centre over the past few years, saying that they were working together for the balanced growth of the region.

Pointing out that his government is working on the policy of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikash and Sabka Biswas", he said that they are taking the state towards

"In Assam, this number stood at 40 even after a refinery was present in the state. With the help of Ujjwala Yojana, LPG coverage in Assam stands at nearly 100 per cent today," he added.

86.3% of new Covid cases are from 5 states including Maha

7th minister, 35 govt employees test +ve ahead of Maha budget session

DC CORRESPONDENT
with agencies inputs
NEW DELHI, FEB. 22

People in Kasargod fume as K'taka ups restrictions

GILVESTER ASSARY | DC
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, FEB. 22

With the Karnataka authorities scaling up restrictions on transit passengers from Kerala, people living in Kasargod and adjoining areas are facing a harrowing time.

People of Kasargod, the northernmost district of Kerala, depend on hospitals in Mangalore for their medical requirements. Besides, a large number of students from Kerala are also pursuing higher education in various institutions across Karnataka.

The Karnataka authorities have stated that those who wish to enter the state have to produce Covid-19 negative certificates through an RT-PCR test taken 72 hours before their crossover. There is also heavy deployment of health and police personnel at the four borders to screen the people entering the state.

The restrictions have led to angry protests by a section of people in Kasargod. On Monday morning workers of the

Congress-led UDF staged a demonstration on the national highway and blocked traffic at Talapady. The protesters did not allow vehicles coming from Karnataka to enter Kerala for a couple of hours even as the authorities on the other side of the border intercepted people and asked them to produce Covid negative certificates.

The blockade and checking by officials resulted in long queues of vehicles on either side of the interstate check post.

On Monday, Kerala reported 2,212 new cases of Covid-19. As of now the state has 55,468 positive cases, over 2.42 lakh people are under surveillance including 2,33 under home/institutional quarantine.

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The restrictions have led to angry protests by a section of people in Kasargod. On Monday morning workers of the

railway stations as train services resumed in Kashmir after remaining suspended for around 11 months due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Two trains chugged on the railway tracks in Kashmir as the railway authorities resumed the services partially. The Railways has been increasing the number of train services in a graded manner.

During the meeting, the ongoing vaccination drive and the steps needed to check further spread of the virus were discussed.

The possible assistance to be offered to the affected states was also discussed in the meeting, senior officials said.

Haryana has announced to open schools for classes 3-5 from Wednesday while students for classes 6-8 will start going to school from February 1. Uttar Pradesh too has announced to reopen schools from March 1 though parents are still uncomfortable with the idea of letting children attend physical classes.

Meanwhile, nearly 1,100 people travelled between Banital and Baramulla on Monday deciding to

maintain status quo on the number of passengers, sources said.

The decision was taken as states like Maharashtra, Kerala, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Punjab are witnessing a surge in new Covid-19, according to sources.

Last week, the Delhi transport department had sent a proposal to the DDMA to allow people to travel standing up in public buses.

DTC and cluster buses are currently plying with full seating capacity in the national capital even as standing of passengers during travel is not allowed at present. In metro trains, commuters can sit on alternate seats, leaving a seat between them vacant.

With Maharashtra see-

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MASKS MADE COMPULSORY IN BHOPAL, INDORE

DC CORRESPONDENT
BHOPAL, FEB. 22

Madhya Pradesh chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Monday ordered coronavirus tests for people entering into MP from Maharashtra in the wake of sudden surge in Covid-19 cases in the neighbouring state.

Mr Chouhan who held a meeting to review situation in the state directed the collectors in the districts bordering Maharashtra to strictly implement guidelines issued for the pandemic and conduct thermal screening and RT-PCR tests on the people coming from the neighbouring state.

He asked them to be vigilant while granting permission to organise big fairs and religious festivals in the areas bordering Maharashtra.

Mr Chouhan also ordered the collectors in all the 52 districts to constitute crisis management committee to deal with the situation.

Wearing masks in Bhopal and Indore has been made mandatory in the wake of sudden surge in cases of coronavirus in these two cities in the past couple of days.

Indore and Bhopal have reported 104 positive cases and 76 positive cases respectively in the last 24 hours.

However, no death due to coronavirus was reported in the state in the last 24 hours.

Coronavirus has taken a toll of 3,854 in MP so far.

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REGISTRATION NOTICE

MG ASC HEADQUARTERS SOUTHERN COMMAND ARMY SERVICE CORPS ADVERTISEMENT FOR REGISTRATION AS APPROVED ASC CONTRACTORS

1. Supply of Fresh Articles.

(a) Applications are invited from interested suppliers for registration as ASC contractors for annual contracts for supply of fresh articles like Meat on Hoof (MOH), Chicken (Broiler) Alive, Eggs Fresh, Fish Fresh, Vegetable Fresh, Fruit Fresh, Potato, Onion, Garlic, Firewood, Charcoal, Lime Quick, Ice (Machine Made), Bread, Aerated Water, Mineral Water, Green Fodder, Lucerne Green, Hay Baled and Combined Items at the stations located in the State of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu and Kerala.

(b) Annual value of contracts ranges from Rs. One lakh to Rs. Seven Crore. Payment of bills is made on fortnightly basis and tenders are invited from July to September and November to March every year.

2. Interested parties may submit application on a plain paper to Major General Army Service Corps, Headquarters Southern Command, Pune-4

SHORT TAKES
**OFFICER SHOT AT
McDees, KIDNAP
SUSPECT DIES**

Loneo (US), Feb. 22: An Arkansas police officer was hospitalised in stable condition after being shot during a confrontation at a McDonald's restaurant with a man who was kidnapping a 14-year-old North Carolina girl.

The suspect died from an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound on Sunday after fleeing from authorities, according to the Arkansas State Police. The girl was found safe.

**CHILD SEX ABUSE
TRIAL OF EX-U.S.
PRIEST PUT OFF**

Oecusse (East Timor), Feb. 22: East Timor abruptly postponed the trial on Monday of a defrocked American priest facing allegations he sexually abused young girls at a children's shelter he ran in a remote enclave in East Timor — one of the most Catholic places on Earth.

Soon after Richard Daschbach, a former missionary from Pennsylvania, arrived in the courtroom, judges said they needed more time to make revisions to documents and asked the 84-year-old defendant to return on Tuesday.

Angry youth rattle Spain in support of jailed rap artiste

Demand roll back of Public Security Law passed by the previous admin

Barcelona, Feb. 22: The imprisonment of a rap artist for his music praising terrorist violence and insulting the Spanish monarchy has set off a powder keg of pent-up rage this week in the southern European country. The arrest of Pablo Hasél has brought thousands to the streets for different reasons. Under the banner of freedom of expression, many Spaniards strongly object to putting an artist behind bars for his lyrics and tweets. They are clamoring for Spain's left-wing government to fulfil its promise and roll back the Public Security Law passed by the previous conservative administration that was used to prosecute Hasél and other artistes.

Hasél's imprisonment to serve a nine-month sentence on Tuesday has also tapped into a well of frustration among Spain's youths, who have the highest unemployment rate in the European Union. Four in every 10 eligible workers under 25 years old are



A man throws a road sign against police officers protecting a national police station during clashes following a protest condemning the arrest of rap singer Pablo Hasél in Barcelona, on Sunday.

For many, Hasél's case also represents what they perceive as a heavy-handed reaction by a state whose very structure is in need of deep reform. Hasél's lyrics that strike at King Felipe VI and his father, King Emeritus Juan Carlos I, have connected with a growing public debate on the future of Spain's parliamentary monarchy.

Unquestioned outside fringe circles of the Left until the past decade, the royal house has been plagued by financial scandal that has reached Juan Carlos himself. Many Spaniards were aghast when the former monarch left Spain for the United Arab Emirates amid a court investigation into his alleged fiscal improprieties.

As well as shouting its support for Hasél, a crowd that gathered in Madrid on Saturday chanted "Where is the change? Where is the progress?" and "Juan Carlos de Borbón, womaniser and thief."

— AP

without a job. "I think that what we are experiencing now with the cases of Pablo Hasél (...) and other rappers politically detained by this regime is a brutal attack against the freedom of speech," 26-year-old student Pablo Castilla said during a protest in Barcelona. "The protests are being brutally repressed by the allegedly progressive national government and the Catalan government. They are attacking us youngsters because we are showing our anger."

— AP

Ground 777s with engines that blew apart, says Boeing

**NIGERIAN PLANE
CRASHES, 7 DEAD**

Lagos, Feb. 21: A military plane crashed in Nigeria on Sunday, killing all seven people on board, said officials. The King Air 350 plane had just taken off from the airport in Abuja, Nigeria's capital, when it reported engine failure and tried to return, said Ibukun Daramola, a spokesman for the Nigerian Air Force.

"First responders are at the scene. Sadly, all 7 personnel on board died in the crash," he said. Hadi Sirika, the minister of aviation, also tweeted that the crash "appears to be fatal" and urged calm as a probe by the military is carried out. — AP

stepped up for the hollow fan blades that are unique to this model of engine, used solely on Boeing 777 airplanes.

— AP

CINEMA

DEVI 70MM
(ENJOY 4 LASER PROJECTION & DOLBY ATMOS)
11.00, 2.15, 6.00, 9.15PM
ARJUN 70-11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30PM
MEGHA 70-11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15
TARAKARAMA 2.15, 9.00PM
OAMB AMB-10.30, 1.20, 7.15, 10.35PM
LAXMIKALA-11.15, 2.30, 6.30, 9.45
PRASADS-10.15, 12.45, 8.30, 11.00
Sivaganga-11.15, 9.30pm
Gpr-10.30, 1.50, 7.45PM
Radhika-10.30, 4.30, 10.10PM
Mcube-10.30, 4.30, 10.40PM
Cinesquare-10.30, 1.35, 4.20, 7.45, 10.10
INOX LIVE THE MOVIE
Gvk-10:10, 12:35, 7:20, 10:50PM
Mp-9:50, 4:10, 10:40PM
Gsm-1:00, 4:10, 7:20, 10:30PM
MIRAJ CINEMAS
Balanagar-11.30, 4.20, 10.30PM
Chandanagar-12.45, 7.00PM
Shalini Shivani-11.30, 4.20, 10.30PM
10.40, 4.50, 7.30PM
TIVOLI
11.15, 4.15, 10.00PM
PLATINUM
10.50, 1.15, 7.00, 11.10
10.20, 1.45, 7.40, 10.45PM
PVR CINEMAS
Forum-10.10, 1.15, 4.10, 7.05, 10.40PM
Inorbit-10.15, 4.40, 7.35, 10.30PM
Central-10.50, 1.45, 7.50, 10.35PM
RK-11.30, 8.10PM|Hitech-1.30, 4.00, 10.45PM
L&T-10.30, 4.40, 7.35, 10.30PM
Irrum Manzi-1.25, 6.50, 10.00PM
Moosarambagh-12.30, 6.20, 9.15PM
Prestone-1.30, 4.25, 9.45PM
MULTIPLEX EYE VISION LUXE
1.55, 7.50PM
AMEERPET
4.25, 10.20PM
MUKTA A2 RAMAKRISHNA 35MM
11.15, 2.30, 6.15, 9.30PM
AARADHANA 70
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
VIMAL 70MM
11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15
SV CINESQUARE-2.00, 9.00PM
VYJAYANTHI
6.00, 9.00PM
SAIRANGA 70
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
SREERAMANA
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
BR HITECH
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
SAIPOOJA 70MM
6.00 & 9.00PM
AMBA 70MM
11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30
METRO 70MM
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
SRIDEVI CHGUDA
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
JYOTHIRCPURAM
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
INDRA VENKATARAMANA/PADMAVATHI
11.30, 6.00PM
ANJALI 70
VIMAL 70MM
TALLURI 70MM
2.00, 6.00PM
6.00, 9.00PM
SV CINESQUARE
SENSATION INSO
6.00, 9.00PM
SAMPOORN 70
6.00, 9.00PM
SIVASAKTHI 70
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
LAXMISHAMASHABD
11.30, 2.30, 6.15, 9.15
SIVARANJANI
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
VENKATASAI 70
6.00, 9.00PM
LAXMIKALAMANDIR
6.30, 9.30PM

2nd WEEK
SUDARSHAN 35MM
(ENJOY 4 LASER PROJECTION & DOLBY ATMOS SOUND SYSTEM)
11.00, 2.15, 6.00, 9.15PM
OAMB 10.55, 1.35, 1.50, 4.00, 4.45, 7.00,
7.40, 10.05, 10.35PM
11.45, 2.30, 5.15,
5.45, 8.00, 9.45PM
ASIAN CINEMAS
Sudarshan-11.15, 9.30pm
Gpr-10.30, 1.50, 7.45PM
Radhika-10.30, 4.30, 10.10PM
Mcube-10.30, 4.30, 10.40PM
Cinesquare-10.30, 1.35, 4.20, 7.45, 10.10
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Mp-9:50, 4:10, 10:40PM
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10.40, 4.50, 7.30PM
TIVOLI
11.15, 4.15, 10.00PM
PLATINUM
10.50, 1.15, 7.00, 11.10
10.20, 1.45, 7.40, 10.45PM
PVR
FORUM-10.00, 11.15, 1.10, 2.25, 4.20, 5.05, 7.30,
8.00, 10.40, 11.00PM
MUSARAMBAGH-12.00, 3.10, 4.10, 6.20,
7.20, 10.30PM
GALLERIA-10.20, 11.30, 1.30, 2.40, 4.40, 7.50,
10.00, 11.00PM | PRESTON-1.30, 4.40, 7.50, 11.00PM
ICON-12.00, 1.00, 4.10, 7.20, 10.30PM
CENTRAL-10.20, 11.30, 1.30, 3.50, 4.40, 7.00,
7.50, 11.00PM | RK-1.10, 4.20, 7.30, 10.40PM
INORBIT-10.20, 11.30, 1.30, 3.50, 4.40, 7.00,
7.50, 11.00PM | IRUMMANZIL-12.00, 3.10, 6.20, 7.30,
9.30, 10.40PM
MULTIPLEX EYE VISION LUXE
1.55, 7.50PM
AMEERPET
4.25, 10.20PM
MUKTA A2 RAMAKRISHNA 35MM
11.15, 2.30, 6.15, 9.30PM
AARADHANA 70
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
VIMAL 70MM
11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15
SV CINESQUARE-2.00, 9.00PM
VYJAYANTHI
6.00, 9.00PM
SAIRANGA 70
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
SREERAMANA
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
BR HITECH
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
SAIPOOJA 70MM
6.00 & 9.00PM
AMBA 70MM
11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30
METRO 70MM
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
SRIDEVI CHGUDA
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
JYOTHIRCPURAM
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
INDRA VENKATARAMANA/PADMAVATHI
11.30, 6.00PM
ANJALI 70
VIMAL 70MM
TALLURI 70MM
2.00, 6.00PM
6.00, 9.00PM
SV CINESQUARE
SENSATION INSO
6.00, 9.00PM
SAMPOORN 70
6.00, 9.00PM
SIVASAKTHI 70
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
LAXMISHAMASHABD
11.30, 2.30, 6.15, 9.15
SIVARANJANI
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
VENKATASAI 70
6.00, 9.00PM
LAXMIKALAMANDIR
6.30, 9.30PM

HEART TOUCHING LOVE STORY GRAND 2nd WEEK
SUDARSHAN 35MM
(ENJOY 4 LASER PROJECTION & DOLBY ATMOS SOUND SYSTEM)
11.00, 2.15, 6.00, 9.15PM
MYTHRIL MOVIE MARKETING
Sukumar's writing
BUCHIBABU SANA
Naveen Yereni Y Ravishankar Devi Sri Prasad
Sharmi Sainudeen Ravi Nelli Ramakrishna Mehta
Venkat Yasharayya Cheriy
INOX LIVE THE MOVIE
Gvk-11:00, 1:15, 2:30, 6:00, 7:15, 9:30PM
Mp-10:45, 2:45, 5:20, 7:15, 9:30PM
Gsm-1:00, 2:15, 4:45, 6:00, 8:30PM
PVR
FORUM-10.00, 11.15, 1.10, 2.25, 4.20, 5.05, 7.30,
8.00, 10.40, 11.00PM
MUSARAMBAGH-12.00, 3.10, 4.10, 6.20,
7.20, 10.30PM
GALLERIA-10.20, 11.30, 1.30, 2.40, 4.40, 7.50,
10.00, 11.00PM | PRESTON-1.30, 4.40, 7.50, 11.00PM
ICON-12.00, 1.00, 4.10, 7.20, 10.30PM
CENTRAL-10.20, 11.30, 1.30, 3.50, 4.40, 7.00, 7.50, 11.00PM | RK-1.10, 4.20, 7.30, 10.40PM
INORBIT-10.20, 11.30, 1.30, 3.50, 4.40, 7.00, 7.50, 11.00PM | IRUMMANZIL-12.00, 3.10, 6.20, 7.30, 9.30, 10.40PM
MULTIPLEX EYE VISION LUXE
1.55, 7.50PM
AMEERPET
4.25, 10.20PM
MUKTA A2 RAMAKRISHNA 35MM
11.15, 2.30, 6.15, 9.30PM
AARADHANA 70
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
VIMAL 70MM
11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15
SV CINESQUARE-2.00, 9.00PM
VYJAYANTHI
6.00, 9.00PM
SAIRANGA 70
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
SREERAMANA
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
BR HITECH
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
SAIPOOJA 70MM
6.00 & 9.00PM
AMBA 70MM
11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30
METRO 70MM
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
SRIDEVI CHGUDA
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
JYOTHIRCPURAM
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
INDRA VENKATARAMANA/PADMAVATHI
11.30, 6.00PM
ANJALI 70
VIMAL 70MM
TALLURI 70MM
2.00, 6.00PM
6.00, 9.00PM
SV CINESQUARE
SENSATION INSO
6.00, 9.00PM
SAMPOORN 70
6.00, 9.00PM
SIVASAKTHI 70
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
LAXMISHAMASHABD
11.30, 2.30, 6.15, 9.15
SIVARANJANI
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00
VENKATASAI 70
6.00, 9.00PM
LAXMIKALAMANDIR
6.30, 9.30PM

FEBRUARY 27th RELEASE
APRIL 28th
PRODUCER V.G. ENTERTAINMENT
WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY VEERA SWAMY
MUSIC SANDEEP KUMAR | DP SUNIL KUMAR | EDITOR K. SANTOSH
ACTION REAL SATISH | STORY HARIHARA JAIKA | CINEMATOGRAPHY RAHUL | PROPS PRAVIN
COSTUME DESIGNER MALLIKAA B | PRODUCTION DESIGNER M. KISHORE | PRO MUSIC MADHU MADHU
PRODUCER V.G. ENTERTAINMENT
WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY VEERA SWAMY
MUSIC SANDEEP KUMAR | DP SUNIL KUMAR | EDITOR K. SANTOSH
ACTION REAL SATISH | STORY HARIHARA JAIKA | CINEMATOGRAPHY RAHUL | PROPS PRAVIN
COSTUME DESIGNER MALLIKAA B | PRODUCTION DESIGNER M. KISHORE | PRO MUSIC MADHU MADHU
SAPTAGIRI 70 MM RTC X ROADS
N.T.R. GARDEN
AMB CINEMAS
GACHIBOWLI
CENTRAL PANJAGUTTA
R.K. COMPLEX BANJARA HILLS
OSIAN CINEMAS
RADHIKA KAPRA
FORUM FIZA MALL KUKATPALLY
OSIAN CINEMAS
SIVAGANGA DILSHUNKNAGAR
INORBITMALL MADHAPUR
OSIAN CINEMAS
CINESCAPE UPPAL
<

quick BITES

INDICATORS	%
Sensex	49,744.32 -2.25
Nifty 50	14,675.70 -2.04
S&P 500*	3,886.18 -0.53
Dollar (\$)	72.49 0.22
Pound Sterling (\$)	101.39 0.23
Euro (\$)	87.62 0.10
Gold (10gm)* (\$)	46,013 ▲278 0.60
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	64.53 2.58
IN 20-Yr bond yield	6.202 0.00
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.345 0.00

* As of 8:30 PM IST

Labour surveys to begin across India by April

The Labour Bureau would launch its five all-India surveys, including on migrant and domestic workers, by April 1, as two of the three mandated pre-testings of the studies yielded "encouraging and positive results". Labour Bureau director general D. P. S. Negi said, "We are hopeful to launch all five surveys across the country by April 1 and work on ground to release results in seven to eight month."

IndRa ups outlook on banking sector to stable



India Ratings & Research revised its outlook on the banking sector to stable for FY22 from negative even as it sees higher stress emerging in the retail loan segment. For PSBs the outlook has been revised to stable from negative and for private banks, the stable outlook is retained. Overall stressed assets (gross NPA+ restructured) could rise 30 per cent for the banking system, almost 1.7 times in the retail segment in H2FY21.

Smaller realtors hurt in K-shaped recovery: Icra

A 'K-shaped recovery' is underway in the realty sector, where access to credit and demand consolidation has helped large players grow handsomely even as their smaller sized rivals struggle. Their struggle will weigh heavily on the sector as a whole, rating agency Icra said, adding such players hold an 80 per cent market share. Icra said the top-10 listed companies witnessed a 61 per cent growth in the December quarter.

Hyundai starts new maintenance scheme for users

Hyundai Motor India Ltd said it has launched a new maintenance programme under which customers would be able to replace parts like brakes and clutch across nine models. For the first five years of the purchase, a customer would be able to replace 14 parts such as wipers, bulbs, hose belts and much more across its nine models. Customers can buy the Hyundai Shield of Trust package before the first free service.

■ Covid fear, bond yields pull down stocks

Sensex sinks below 50,000

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD

MUMBAI, FEB. 22

The Sensex tumbled below the 50,000-mark on negative global cues, as bond yields and crude oil price rose globally. Besides, Covid concerns leading to localised shutdowns in parts of Maharashtra added to the market anxiety.

The Sensex fell 2.25 per cent, or 1145 points, to close at 49744 on sustained selling. Monday's fall is the biggest in the last two months.

The Nifty-50 Index also fell 2.04 per cent, or 306 points, closing at 14,675.

This is the fifth straight session the market has fallen over rising bond yields.

BSE's market capitalisation dropped below Rs 200 lakh crore as investors suffered notional loss of over Rs 4 lakh crore in the Monday sell off.

"Global cues were weak as yields on the benchmark US 10-year Treasury notes rose to a one-year high, worrying investors that money might move away from emerging markets. Further, there were concerns over the risk of higher inflation due to sharp jump in commodity prices, which tempered optimism around a vaccine-led economic recovery," said Siddhartha Khemka, head-retail research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services.

Except Metals, all other sectoral indices closed in the red. The top losers included the Nifty Bank



SBI CALLS ON RBI TO MAKE SHORTING BONDS COSTLIER

SUBHADIP SIRCAR

FEB. 22

The RBI should consider steps to disincentivise short selling, which may have triggered the recent sell-off in the sovereign bond markets, according to the chief economic adviser at SBI Research.

Banks and primary dealers resort to such short-selling when they expect bond prices to fall, and this becomes a 'self-fulfilling prophecy' sometimes with traders borrowing securities from the repo market and rolling them over till yields rise, Soumya Kanti Ghosh wrote in a note to clients on Monday.

"The only way to break such self-fulfilling expec-

(-1.63 per cent), Nifty (-2.89 per cent) Auto (-2.28 per cent) and Nifty Realty (-2.80 per cent).

"The recent spike in the Covid cases combined with subdued global cues

tations is for RBI to conduct large scale open market operations to provide necessary steam to the bond market to rally and with the increase in price many short-sold positions will trigger stop losses and market players will scramble to cover open positions," he said.

Yields on the benchmark 2030 debt rose 14 basis points last week amid fears about how the RBI plans to manage the huge government borrowing programme and a rise in global bond yields. The 2030 yield was up 6 basis points to 6.20 per cent on Monday.

Short selling typically involves selling security borrowed from the repo market. —Bloomberg

is weighing on the sentiment," said Ajit Mishra, VP-research, Religare Broking.

FPIs were net sellers by Rs 893.25 crore and DIIs, by Rs 919.88 crore.

—PTI

Goldman sees Brent oil at \$75 as supply response trails demand

SHARON CHO

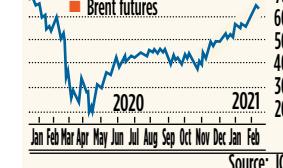
FEB. 22

Oil prices will rally sooner and higher than previously thought as the global energy demand recovery outpaces the supply response from the Opec+ alliance, shale and Iran, according to Goldman Sachs Group Inc.

Consumption will get back to pre-virus levels by late July, while output from major producers is

Rapid recovery

Brent has quickly gotten back to pre-virus levels



recovery forecast," bank analysts including

Kochi firm completes phase 2 trial of Covid drug

Kochi, Feb. 22: The city-based PNB Vesper Life Sciences has successfully completed phase 2 clinical trials of PNB-001 (GPP-Baladol), its proprietary drug to treat the coronavirus infection and said it will soon move the government for deploying the drug for emergency use.

The company, which has its labs in England, had in early September 2020 received the approval from the Drug Controller General (DCGI) to conduct the phase 2 clinical trial of GPP-Baladol in patients with moderate infection of the pandemic with oxygen support.

The company on Monday said the clinical trial was initiated in November at BJ Government Medical College and Sassoon General Hospital in Pune, and Victoria Medical College and Research Institute in Bengaluru on 40 patients.

"We will submit the clinical trial report to the DCGI on Monday itself," the company's promoter and chief executive P.N. Balaram said, adding the trial protocol was designed in-line with the solidarity trial conducted by the WHO and other international clinical trials.

The Kochi-based was firm the first in the world to begin phase 2 trial for a new chemical entity.

—PTI

COMMODITIES FLARING UP

Damien Courvalin said in the note.

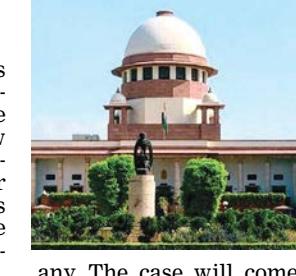
Oil's rebound to levels last seen before Covid-19 wreaked havoc on the global economy has been driven by Saudi Arabia's unilateral output cuts together with the improving demand outlook.

The rally has also been supported by investors using crude to position for a

SC halts NCLT okay for Future-Reliance deal

SANDEETHA G

CHENNAI, FEB. 22



The Supreme Court has on Monday halted regulatory approval by the National Company Law Tribunal for the Future-Reliance deal till further orders. While this comes as a relief to e-commerce giant Amazon, it is a setback for Future Retail, which has been maintaining that it will face liquidation if the deal collapses.

The Supreme Court ordered that the NCLT can continue reviewing the deal and overseeing the approval process, but cannot pass a final order till the court hears Amazon's concerns. The stock exchanges and the antitrust watchdog Competition Commission of India have already cleared the deal.

"In the meantime, the NCLT proceedings will be allowed to go on but will not culminate in any final order of sanction of scheme," the court said in its order. The court has given two weeks to file the counter-affidavit and another week for rejoinder affidavit, if,

any.

The case will come up for further hearing after five weeks. Amazon had filed a special leave petition in the Supreme Court against the Delhi High Court's division bench order of February 8. The division bench had stayed the status quo order passed by a Single Judge of the court on February 2, asking Future Group and concerned authorities to maintain status quo in the Reliance-Future deal till it pronounces the final order.

The division bench had said that statutory authorities like NCLT and Sebi should not be restrained from proceeding in accordance with law on Future-Reliance deal.

Future Retail also said the NCLT can issue directions to convene

meetings of shareholders and creditors of applicant companies, including Future Retail, to consider the deal.

Amazon had approached the Delhi High Court last month, seeking enforcement of the October 25 interim order of the emergency arbitrator (EA) at the Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC) that had restrained Future Retail from going ahead with the deal with Reliance. Amazon alleges that the deal violates an earlier contract between the company and the Future Group.

As part of the agreement entered while buying 49 per cent stake in Future Coupons in 2019, Amazon would have a call option to acquire all or part of the promoters' shareholding of 47.02 per cent in Future Retail between the third and tenth year of the transaction and this would be subject to law. Amazon also claims that the 2019 agreement had categorically prohibited Future Retail from selling a stake to Reliance Industries.

DHFL: AUDITOR UNEARTHED FRESH FRAUD WORTH ₹6,180 CR

New Delhi, Feb. 22: Dewan Housing Finance Corporation (DHFL) on Monday said its transaction auditor, Grant Thornton, has reported another fraudulent transaction of Rs 6,182 crore in the company.

The administrator of the company received an initial report from Grant Thornton indicating that there are certain transactions which are "undervalued, fraudulent and preferential in nature", DHFL said in a regulatory filing.

the application amounts to Rs 5,381.90 crore towards outstanding principal, Rs 589.36 crore towards accrued interest and Rs 210.85 crore towards notional loss of interest on the transaction.

"As per the transaction auditor report shared with the administrator, the monetary impact of the above transactions covered under

the application amounts to

Rs 5,381.90 crore towards outstanding principal, Rs 589.36 crore towards accrued interest and Rs 210.85 crore towards notional loss of interest on the transaction.

—PTI

TATA MOTORS SEES DOUBLE-DIGIT GROWTH FOR CAR INDUSTRY THIS YR



MICHAEL GONSALVES

PUNE, FEB. 22

Tata Motors, India's biggest automaker by revenue, expects domestic passenger vehicles industry to grow in double digits in 2021-22 on account of continued robust demand momentum driven by shift towards personal mobility after the Covid pandemic.

Shailesh Chandra, president at Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles told a virtual media conference on Monday after the launch of its SUV, the new Safari, that sales growth for Tata Motors would be better than the automobile industry.

"There is a market momentum which continues on the demand side because of the shift towards personal mobility," Chandra pointed out, adding that this would remain till everybody gets vaccinated. "We don't know when everyone will get vaccinated."

He said by and large people are and will be cautious and, therefore, there is this gravity towards personal mobility.

As for Tata Motors, he said, "We would expect growth to be much better than the industry."

The new generation Tata Safari is sold in six variants, including options of manual and automatic transmission as well as 6/7-seat configurations.

The prices range from Rs 14,69 lakh for the entry-level XE variant to Rs 20.20 lakh for the top-end XZ+ (Adventure Persona edition) in the manual trims, while the automatic versions of the full-blown SUV cost between Rs 17.25 lakh and Rs 21.45 lakh at Delhi showroom.

Copper surges above \$9,000 as deficit drives record rally

FEB. 22

likely to remain "highly inelastic" to the rising prices, the bank said in a note. Goldman raised its Brent forecasts by \$10 a barrel to \$70 next quarter and \$75 in the following three months.

"This faster re-balancing during what was expected to be the dark days of winter will be followed by a widening deficit this spring as the ramp-up in Opec+ production lags our above-consensus demand

forecast," bank analysts including

reflationary environment, Goldman said. Brent oil traded above \$63 a barrel on Monday and is up around 22 per cent this year.

Supply will keep lagging behind demand for several reasons, the bank said:

Opec+ will fall behind the market rebalancing, especially as the pace of

crude to position for a

stockpiles has accelerated; There are no signs of more activity from most non-Opec+ producers outside of North America, creating a risk supply will fall 900,000 barrels a day short of the bank's estimates in the coming year;

The US earnings season

confirms that big explorers and producers, the key drivers of US shale output, remain focused on returning cash to shareholders.

—Bloomberg

Potash rally may prod India to cut imports

FEB. 22

demand will weaken as India still has a sizeable stockpile.

"In India, consumption of potash is very price sensitive," Gahlaut said in an interview. "Whenever prices have gone up, there's an immediate effect on consumption."

Potash is a nutrient that helps plants withstand drought and diseases. Prices have risen amid a surge in agricultural commodities to multi-year highs as this implies farmers will be planting more acres and using more fertiliser.

Bloomberg's Green Markets sees global potash demand at a record this year.

Weak India demand could put pressure on potash suppliers such as K+S AG, Uralkali PJSC and Campotex Ltd as these companies may have to lower prices for new deals. India is the fourth-biggest user of potash.

India and China recently signed potash contract deals with Belarusian Potash Co at \$247 a tonne. Although that's above 2020 prices, it caused a stir among some producers expecting even higher prices. Nutrien Ltd, the world's biggest fertiliser company, is selling potash in the US corn belt for about \$350 a ton, while prices in Brazil rose \$50 this year.

Stockpiles of Indian companies and traders still total more than 1 million tonnes, said Gahlaut. The proposed

SHORT TAKES
Anand in Global Chess League

Chennai: In what would be a shot in the arm for chess in India, IT giant Tech Mahindra is all set to launch a franchise-based league. Five-time world champion Viswanathan Anand will be the "mentor, advisor and facilitator-in-chief" of the Global Chess League, which will have eight teams competing for the top prize in the inaugural edition.

With a first-of-its-kind 'phygital' league — physical and digital — the league organisers are aiming to raise the profile of chess by expanding the fanbase.

The league will use new-age technologies such as 5G, artificial intelligence, and virtual reality.

Anand expects the global league to be a game changer. "There is a renewed interest in the game of chess and through this unique global league format, we will be able to keep the spirit of chess intact," he said.



Sports Authority of Telangana State chairman Allipuram Venkateshwar Reddy (left) greets Hyderabad Mayor Vijayalakshmi Gadwal after she assumed charge on Monday. Mr Reddy said she assured support for development of sports in the city.

Kabaddi trials for RR district

Hyderabad: The Ranga Reddy District Kabaddi Association is conducting selection trials from 3 pm on Wednesday at the SATS Indoor Stadium in

Saroornagar, Hyderabad, to pick the junior boys and girls teams for the 47th Junior Inter-District Kabaddi Championships to be held at Thorrur in Mahabubabad district.

Boys and girls from Ranga Reddy District should be below 20 years of age and weigh under 70 kg and 65 kg respectively to be eligible for selections. They should report at the venue along with the copy of their Aadhar Card or SSC memo. For further details contact M. Ravikumar, Secretary, Ranga Reddy District Kabaddi Association, on 9849532287.

TENNI-KOIT SELECTIONS

Selection trials to pick the Telangana State senior men & women and junior boys & girls (under 18 years) tenni-koit teams will be held on February 28 from 7 am at Lal Bahadur Stadium in Hyderabad. Entries should be sent to S. Laxmi Kanthan on 8309857074 or A. Yadaiah on 9393053838.

Team India finish 5th in ALMS race

Abu Dhabi: Chasing the Le Mans dream, Racing Team India, the first all-Indian team to compete at the international endurance racing stage, ended its first Asian Le Mans Series campaign fifth in the overall championship standings.

The trio of Naren Karthikeyan, Arjun Maini and Naveen Rao, raced their ORECA 07 LMP2 car to a pair of fifth place finishes in the final two races of the season at Abu Dhabi's Yas Marina track.

The results came on the back of the fifth and fourth-placed finishes the team chalked up in the two season-opening races in Dubai.

The team will now have to make a presentation to the ACO next week to get an entry for the '24 Hours of Le Mans'. A committee will vet all the applications before finalising the invitations in March.

Live on TV

CRICKET
South Africa T20 Challenge: Warriors vs Cobras from 1:30 pm; Lions vs Knights from 5:55 pm on Star Sports Select 2

FOOTBALL
Champions League: Atletico vs Chelsea from 1:30 pm (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 2; Lazio vs Bayern Munich from 1:30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 1

Regd. No. HQ/SD/509/2021-23
Printed and Published by K. Sudhakar on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited. Printed at Deccan Chronicle Press situated at Plot No. 9 Alwal Village, Vallabh Nagar Taluk, Medchal Malkajgiri Dist. Telangana and Published at 36, S.D. Road, Secunderabad-3. RNI Registration No. 30817957. Editor: Kaushik Mittra

ROOT FOR GRASS

Anderson happy with grass on Motera strip but says it won't be there on match day

Ahmedabad, Feb. 22: Veteran fast bowler James Anderson is pretty sure that the newly laid track at the Motera Stadium will be devoid of any grass for the upcoming Day/Night Test against India even though there is a nice green cover on it at the moment.

The third Test under lights will start from Wednesday and for England's premier fast bowler, he doesn't expect it to be much different from the second Test track at the Chepauk which India won by 317 runs.

"The pitch, it has got grass on it but I am pretty sure it's not going to be there when we turn up on the match day," Anderson said with a wry smile during a virtual conference on Sunday.

"So we have to wait and watch. As seam bowlers, we have to be prepared to bowl as best we can in any given condition. If it swings, it's great and if it does not, we still have a job to do," Anderson said.

He felt that the pink SG Test ball that he bowled with during the net sessions, swung more than its red counterpart.

"Look this is the second pink Test in India and first in February so we don't know how it would behave."

He urged critics of the much-debated rotation policy to look at the "bigger picture", considering the massive amount of cricket to be played by the England team in the coming days.

England did not play Jonny Bairstow and Mark Wood in the first two Tests but have brought them back for the final two games as part of a rotation policy while first-choice keeper Jos Buttler is back home after the opening Test. The idea is to help players cop up with life inside the bio-bubble.

"You have got to try and look at the bigger picture," — PTI



Members of the Indian team during a training session at Motera in Ahmedabad on Sunday. — BCCI

The idea was if I missed that one, that would give me the best chance of being fit and firing for the pink-ball Test," Anderson said.

Former players, especially Kevin Pietersen, have criticised ECB's thought process, saying the board must play its best players in a big series like this against India.

Anderson, 38, himself played the series-opener where he took five wickets in England's victory but was rested for the second where India emerged triumphant by a massive 317-run margin.

"I am feeling good and fresh and ready to go again if called upon. It's frustrating to an extent but I can see the bigger picture with the amount of cricket that we have got," — PTI

BLACK CAPS CON KANGAROOS TO WIN FIRST T20

Christchurch (New Zealand), Feb. 22: A Devon Conway batting masterclass inspired New Zealand to a 53-run win over Australia in the opening Twenty20 international in Christchurch on Monday.

Conway smashed an unbeaten 99 off 59 balls as the Black Caps overcame a shaky start to finish on 184/5 after losing the toss and being put in to bat.

In reply, the tourists were all out for 131 after 17.3 overs, with Black Caps spinner Ish Sodhi taking four wickets for 28 to give the hosts an early edge in the five-match series.

Australia captain Aaron Finch refused to blame the loss on his team's two-week Covid-19 quarantine upon arrival in New Zealand. — AFP

Brief scores: New Zealand 184/5 (Conway 99 n.o., Phillips 30, J. Richardson 2/31) beat Australia 131 (Marsh 45, Sodhi 4-28, Southee 2/10).

Paddler Snehit dumps defending champion



SFR Snehit in action at the TT Nationals on Monday.

THE RESULTS

Quarters: SFR Snehit bt Sushmit Sriram (TTF) 8-1, 12-10, 11-9, 11-8, 11-3; A. Sharath Kamal (PSPB) bt Anthony Amralaj (TTF) 11-8, 11-3, 5-11 13-11, 11-2; Manav Thakkar (PSPB) bt Ronit Bhanya (Ben) 11-7, 12-10, 10-12, 11-6; G. Sathiyaraj bt Sanil Shetty (PSPB) 11-9, 11-9, 11-8, 11-6. **Pre-Quarters:** SFR Snehit bt Harmeet Desai (PSPB) 11-9, 11-7, 11-9, 11-5; A.

Sharath Kamal bt Sougata Sarkar (LIC) 7-11, 11-7, 11-9, 9-10, 11-15; Anthony Amralaj bt Soumyajit Ghosh (Har) 9-11, 12-10, 9-11, 11-8, 11-10, 11-15; Ronit Bhanya (Ben) bt Sudhanush Grover (Del) 13-11, 7-11, 6-11, 11-7, 11-9, 11-8, 15-13; Manav Thakkar bt Nitin Thiruvengadam (TNTTA) 11-9, 8-11, 11-5, 11-9, 11-5; Sushmit Sriram (TTF) bt Arjun Ghosh (Ben) 6-11, 11-8, 8-11, 8-10, 11-9; Sanil Shetty bt Sarthak Gandhi (TTF) 11-4, 7-11, 8-11, 11-9; G. Sathiyaraj bt Manush Shah (Gu) 11-8, 12-14, 11-9, 11-8, 13-11. — PTI

Shetty slams 3rd ton on trot in 2-day league

Gopi gets double ton, Nishanth, Srinivas also do well in local cricket

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, FEB. 22


Brief Scores:
A-2 DIVISION (TWO-DAY) LEAGUE
Day-1

I Anu CC 170 in 45.3 overs (Sachin 36, Rizwan 62 n.o. Rasheed 30, M. A. Jaweed 4/66, **Srinivas 5/54 (16.3-5-54-6)** lost to Canara Bank 172/3 in 23.5 overs (**Arvind Shetty 100 — 55b, 21x4, 2x6, Suresh 30**). **Points:** Canara Bank 5, Anu CC 0.

II SN Group 409 in 84.3 overs (M. Gaurav 67, Aryanam Thakur 35, **Nishanth Reddy 137 — 167b, 14x4, 1x6**, Ritwik 54, Athvara 34, Ghanraj 4/44) vs Kishoresans 17/0 in 7 overs.

A-3 DIVISION (ONE-DAY) LEAGUE

III ML Jaisimha 317/9 in 50 overs (**G. Gopi Krishna Reddy 202 n.o.**, Gnana Prakash 32, R. Vedvyas 4/63) bt St Andrews 147 in 37.3 overs (Aditya 37, SM Hussain 41, Dheeraj Goud 4/58). **Points:** ML Jaisimha 5, St Andrews 0.

IV Team Kun 93 in 39 overs (**Vishal Dhumal 5/6**) lost to Victory CC 96/3 in 17.3 overs (Harikiran 34 n.o.). **Points:** Victory 5, Team Kun 0.

V Southend Raymonds 312/4 in 47 overs (Kowsihli Reddy 69, **Noman Ahmed 135**, CR Rahul 3/55) bt AB Colony 71 in 29.3 overs (Md Sami 13, Md Khaleel 3/24). **Points:** Southend Raymonds 5, AB Colony 0.

VI MP Blues 305/8 in 47 overs (S. Raju 73, E. Srikanth 101 n.o., Naveen 60) bt Mahesh CC 182 in 36.3 overs (Sudharshan 32, Vinay Reddy 32, Mahesh CC 0).

VII Red Hills 130 in 44 overs (Meraj 31, Naresh 4/24) lost to PPMCC 132/3 in 39.3 overs (Sanju 35, Pavan 58 n.o.). **Points:** PPMCC 5, Red Hills 0.

VIII Drhuv XI 101 in 29.2 overs (Praveen 4/24) lost to Lal Bahadur CC 102/2 in 24.1 overs (Pranav 58 n.o.). **Points:** Lal Bahadur 5, Drhuv XI 0.

IX All Saints 191 in 34.4 overs (Koushik 30, Ronith 49, Chandra 4/25) lost to Youth CC 192/5 in 39.1 overs (Harshvardhan Reddy 32, Parikshit 4). **Points:** Youth 5, All Saints 0.

X LNCC 248 in 40 overs (Pranav 30, Gopi 45, Yashwanth 35 n.o., Aditya 4/44) bt Starlets 122 in 38.3 overs (Praneeth 42, Prathap 3/24, Lalit 3/5). **Points:** LNCC 5, Starlets 0.

Tanmay thumps ton as Hyd win

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, FEB. 22

Captain Tanmay Agarwal proved his batting prowess once again as he smashed a swashbuckling century in Hyderabad's seven-wicket victory over Chhattisgarh in the second round of Vijay Hazare Trophy being played in Surat, Gujarat.

Tanmay followed up his first match score of 86 with 122 on Monday as he stroked 17 boundaries in his 116-ball knock. Tanmay has been knocking on the doors of IPL teams but has been overlooked of late.

Thakur Tilak Varma (60) played second fiddle while Tanmay's cousin Himalay contributed 49 as Hyderabad cantered to victory with almost 10 overs to spare. Electing to bat, Chhattisgarh could only muster 242 in their stipulated 50 overs. Mehdi Hasan (3/2) was the pick of the Hyderabad bowlers.

ANDHRA UPSET TN

Meanwhile in Indore, Ashwin Hebbal slammed an unbeaten 101 and powered Andhra to a seven-wicket win over Tamil Nadu. Andhra bowlers did very well to dismiss TN for 176 in 41.3 overs.

Hebbal was in cracking form and toyed with the opposition to attack to a comfortable win.

Left-arm medium-pacer C. Stephen (3/46), off-spinner Shaobil Mohammed Khan (3/24) and right-arm medium-pacer Girinath Reddy (2/33) struck at regular intervals to restrict a



Tanmay Agarwal

BRIEF SCORES

I Chhattisgarh 242/7 in 50 overs (Shashank Chadrakar 36, Harpreet Singh 8, Bhatoe 63, Ashutosh Singh 51, Shashank Singh 31, Mehdi Hasan 3/32) lost to Hyderabad 243/3 in 40.4 overs (Tanmay Agarwal 122 — 116b, 17x4, Tilak Varma 60, Himalay Agarwal 49). **Points:** Hyderabad 4, Chhattisgarh 0.

II Tamil Nadu 176 in 41.3 overs (Aparajith 40, R. Sonu Yadav 37, R. Sai Kishore 29, Shaobil Mohammed Khan 3/24, Stephen 3/46) lost to Andhra 181/3 in 29.1 overs (Ashwin Hebbal 101 not out, Ricky Bhui 52 not out). **Points:** Andhra 4, Tamil Nadu 0.

strong Tamil Nadu batting line-up, led by Dinesh Karthik, Girinath Reddy struck an early blow by dismissing left-handed opener C Hari Naishaan (4). The other opener N Jagadeesan (11), who scored a ton in the opening match, was bowled by Girinath to leave the team at 23 for 2.

Tamil Nadu, winner of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy recently, never really recovered from the early setbacks.



The tournament's youngest players Viyan (from left), Eshwar Sai and woman player Maanasvi pose ahead of the Telangana State Ranking Snooker & Billiards Championship in Hyderabad on Monday.

Colour on table as state snooker starts

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, FEB. 22

In other matches, Sai had it easy against Mohit 58-21, 50-20 and G. Srikanth clawed back to beat Venkat Sai Ram 31-56, 53-43, 52-20 in the first round of the event in which more than 200 players are competing for top honours in the junior as well as senior categories.

THE RESULTS

I Junior Snooker first round: Bharat Choudhary bt Maanavi 2-0 (59-14, 42-20); Vibhas, Sai and G. Srikanth made winning starts at the Telangana State Ranking Snooker & Billiards Championship which got underway at the Telangana Cue Sports Association premises at Khajaguda on Monday.