



Sikh devotees perform martial arts 'Gatka' as they participate in 'Nagar Kirtan' (holy procession), ahead of the 551st birth anniversary of Sikhism founder Guru Nanak Dev, near Golden Temple in Amritsar on Saturday

Will change name of Hyd to Bhagyanagar: Yogi



UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, BJP State president Bandi Sanjay Kumar garlanding a statue of Alluri Sitarama Raju during a roadshow at Kukatpally on Saturday. Photo: Ch Prabhu Das

HYDERABAD: On the penultimate day of the campaign for the GHMC elections, one of the star campaigners of the BJP, Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Yogi Adityanath, pitched for changing the name of Hyderabad to Bhagyanagar. Addressing a public meeting during his roadshow in Lal Darwaza area of the Old City, the UP Chief Minister said that only when Hyderabad becomes 'Bhagyanagar' the city will be on the road to 'vikas' (development) and if the BJP comes to power in GHMC elections, it would certainly re-christen Hyderabad as Bhagyanagar. He said the people were asking him whether Hyderabad can be rechristened as Bhagyanagar? "Why not?" When the BJP could change the name of Faizabad as Ayodhya and Allahabad (the confluence of three rivers) to its original name, Prayagraj, why not the name of Hyderabad could be changed as Bhagyanagar?" Yogi Adityanath during his meetings targeted the TRS and MIM, stating that they have a tacit alliance. "TRS is ruling the city like the Nizams and have given a free hand to the MIM. Together, they are looting the city's fortunes. The TRS enabled the MIM to encroach the Musi river and these people have caused the city to drown," he said. Referring to the incident where an AIMIM MLA who recently took oath in the Bihar Assembly had raised objection to the word 'Hindustan' to take the oath of office, he said, "They live in Hindustan, eat in Hindustan, but, when it comes to taking oath in the name of Hindustan, they shy away. It exposes the true face of AIMIM," he said.



Farmers' protest may intensify

2 lakh more set to reach Delhi in 40km-long cavalcade

NEW DELHI

THE largest among the 31 farm organizations in Punjab protesting the Central government's farm laws set out for Delhi on Saturday in a cavalcade that stretches for 40 km as they resumed their onward journey from Haryana's Jind town where they made a night halt under the open skies. Packed in hundreds of tractor-trailers, buses, cars and motorcycles loaded with eatables these farmers belong to the Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) Ekta-Ugrahan and they will reach the national capital soon.

They will join the farmers camping at Tikri and Singhu borders of Delhi since Friday for a planned protest. While a part of the protesters were escorted late on Friday to the Nirankari Samagam Ground in Burari in outer Delhi to continue their agitation as the Delhi police gave nod for entry to the protesters.

As per police estimates, the number of protesters belonging to the Left-leaning union BKU Ekta-Ugrahan could be between 1.5 to 2 lakh with sizeable number of youngsters and women. The BKU protesters are largely from Sangrur, Mansa, Bathinda and Barnala districts.



BKU members sit on a road, as protestors attempt to cross a police barricade at Ghazipur border during their 'Delhi Chalo' march against the new farm laws, in New Delhi on Saturday

Protest has Khalistani link: Haryana CM

CHANDIGARH

HARYANA Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Saturday said the protests against the central government's farm laws was backed by political parties and alleged a Khalistani link. "The state has inputs



of some unwanted elements raising pro-Khalistan slogans in the ongoing farmers' protests in and around the national capital," he told the media. He categorically said he will share more details once the information "is concrete". ► P3

Simultaneously, hundreds of thousands of farmers belonging to the Kisan Sangharsh Committee started their journey after breaching the massive blockades comprising huge boulders, barbed fences and mounds of earth on the Bathinda-

Bracing tear gas and water cannons on Friday, the BKU protesters started their journey after breaching the massive blockades comprising huge boulders, barbed fences and mounds of earth on the Bathinda-

Dabwali road to enter Haryana.

Later in the day, the Haryana police had removed all the barricades and allowed the farmers to cross the state peacefully, even as political leader, including Punjab

Chief Minister Amarinder Singh urged the Centre not to be harsh on the agri community.

Kisan Sangharsh Committee general secretary Sarwan Singh Pandher said farmers from Amritsar, Tarn Taran, Batala and Gurdaspur districts are heading towards Delhi.

The farmers are protesting against the farm laws as they feel that these laws would pave the way for the dismantling of the minimum support price (MSP) system, leaving them at the mercy of big corporate entities. An advance team of youth volunteers the BKU Ekta-Ugrahan has been taking the lead of the cavalcade of loaded tractors of daily essentials to clear blockades and make smooth way for the protesters to move ahead without obstructions.

"Our duty is to make smooth passage for the entire fleet of vehicles peacefully," Ramandeep Gill, a farmer from Sangrur, said.

He said special instructions have been given to them to ensure peace en route. "If there is any blockade erected by the police, only we are allowed to break it. Today there is no such blockade but on Friday we managed to break two multi-layer barricades."

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INDIA-CHINA STANDOFF

India deploys marine commandos in Ladakh

NEW DELHI

AMID the ongoing stand-off between India and China, the Marine Commandos (MAR-COS) of the Indian Navy have been deployed in the Pangong lake area in eastern Ladakh.

The idea behind the deployment of the MARCOS in Eastern Ladakh where Indian Air Force's Garud operatives and Indian Army's Para Special Forces, which have been there since day one of the conflicts, is to enhance the integration of the three services and provide the naval commandos exposure to extreme cold weather conditions, sources said.

"The MARCOS have been deployed in the Pangong lake area where the Indian and Chinese forces have been engaged in a conflict situation since April-May timeframe this year," the sources said.

The Navy commandos are soon going to get new boats for



operations in the lake along with the existing infrastructure for operations, they said.

Indian Army's Special Forces including the Para Special Forces and Cabinet Secretariat's Special Frontier Force have been operating in

Eastern Ladakh for carrying out special operations for a long time.

The Indian Air Force's Garud Special Forces moved to hilltops on the strategic heights on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) along with their Igla shoulder-fired air defence systems in the early days of the conflict to take care of any fighter or other aircraft of the enemy which may have tried to violate Indian air space.

Continued on Page 4



Modernisation of fishing harbour to take off soon

RANI DEVALLA
VISAKHAPATNAM

THE fishing harbour in Visakhapatnam is bracing for a major transformation in the coming days. In a move to fill the infrastructure gaps and strengthen business, the harbour will be revamped with modern amenities. As the state government is keen on establishing eight fishing harbours in Andhra Pradesh, it also sets its focus on modernising the existing harbours along with setting up the new ones. In tune with the decision taken at the cabinet meeting, the

harbour in Visakhapatnam is getting a facelift at a cost of Rs 100 crore.

From installing CCTV cameras to facilitating ice-crushing machinery and providing solar-powered lighting, the harbour in the Port City is soon to have fishermen-friendly infrastructure. "With the improved amenities that also focuses on maintaining hygiene standards, the fishing harbour is set to get a leg-up with the upgraded infrastructure. This apart, an effluent treatment plant is also on the cards," says K Phani Prakash, Joint Director of Fisheries. Continued on Page 4

Keep away divisive forces: KCR

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

TELANGANA Chief Minister K Chandrababai Naidu made a fervent appeal to different sections of people, particularly the IT sector, the real estate, businessmen and those who had come from other states and settled here not to allow "divisive forces" to win the GHMC elections. Addressing an election meeting - Pragathi Sankharavam - at LB Stadium in Hyderabad on Saturday, the Chief Minister appeared to have targeted the settlers mostly because they can tilt the balance in about 25 to 30 divisions. KCR cautioned people of Hyderabad that if they "commit the mistake," of voting for "divisive forces," the brand image of Hyderabad will take a nose-dive, business will suffer, real estate would suffer and industries will not come to Hyderabad. Continued on Page 4

MODI ON 3-CITY VACCINE TOUR

PM'S THUMBS UP FOR COVID VACCINE WORK

HYDERABAD/
AHMEDABAD/ PUNE

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday visited Hyderabad, Ahmedabad and Pune to review coronavirus vaccine development work and complimented the team of researchers involved in the process.

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said the day-long visit was aimed at getting a first-hand perspective of the preparations, challenges and roadmap in India's endeavour to vaccinate its citizens.

Modi began by visiting pharma major Zydus Cadila's manufacturing facility near Ahmedabad. Wearing a PPE kit, he reviewed the vaccine development process at the company's research centre, located over 20 km from Ahmedabad.

Modi was extensively briefed about the vaccine work at the plant by the company officials. He was briefed about the vaccine production procedure. He interacted with scientists and vaccine developers, an official said.

"Visited the Zydus



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being briefed during a visit to the Zydus Biotech Park to review the development of COVID-19 vaccine, in Ahmedabad on Saturday

Biotech Park in Ahmedabad to know more about the indigenous DNA based vaccine being developed by Zydus Cadila. I compliment the team behind this effort for their work. The government of India is actively working with them to support them in this journey," the PM tweeted after the visit.

Zydus Cadila chairman Pankaj Patel recently said the company is aiming to complete the vaccine trial by March 2021 and could pro-

duce up to 100 million doses a year. Modi spent over an hour at the plant, before leaving for the airport, from where he left for Hyderabad at 11.40 am.

Modi landed at Hakimpet Air Force station near Hyderabad around 1 pm and proceeded to pharma major Bharat Biotech's vaccine manufacturing facility at Genome Valley, located around 20 km from the air station, by road.

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MODI PATS COVAXIN MAKERS

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday visited Bharat Biotech, the vaccine maker's plant at Genome Valley on the city outskirts and reviewed the development of indigenous Covaxin in collaboration with ICMR and National Institute of Virology which is undergoing phase-3 trials.

Narendra Modi was received by Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar and Director-General of Police and other officials. He drove straight to Genome Valley, a life sciences cluster about 20 km from the Air Force base.

He also interacted with scientists and senior management of the city-based vaccine maker on the status of Covaxin. Later in a tweet, the Prime Minister said, "At the Bharat Biotech facility in Hyderabad, was briefed about their indigenous Covid-19 vaccine. Congratulated the scientists for their progress in the trials so far. Their team is closely working with ICMR to facilitate speedy progress."

Biden will be a President who represents the best: Kamala

WASHINGTON

JOE Biden will be a president who represents the best of America, his deputy and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris has said, asserting that he is a leader the world will respect. Lavishing praise on 78-year-old US President-elect, Harris on Friday said that Biden will be a president for all Americans. "Know that" Biden "will be a president who represents the best in us. A leader the world will re-

spect, and our children can look up to," Harris said in a tweet.

Harris, 56, the daughter of an Indian immigrant from Chennai, has created history by becoming the first Black American woman to be elected as the country's Vice President.

While Indian-origin politicians have been elected as heads of the state in various parts of the world in the last several decades, from Mauritius to Fiji, Harris as the Vice President of the United



States would be the most powerful politician ever. Biden, in a series of tweets, called for unity in the country.

"This is our moment — ours together — to write a newer, bolder, more compassionate chapter in the life of our nation," Biden said in a tweet.

"Each of us has a responsibility in our own lives to do what we can to slow the virus. Every decision we make matters. Every decision we make can save a life.

"This is the moment where we need to steel our spines, redouble our efforts, and recommit ourselves to the fight against COVID-19. Let's remember: We are all in this together," he said.

According to Johns Hopkins data, there are 61,585,651 COVID-19 cases and 14,41,875 deaths across the world. The US has recorded more than 13 million cases and 264,000 deaths, the highest tolls registered anywhere in the world.

Campaign ends today; parties to migrate to social media

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

AFTER much hype and hoopla, the high-voltage campaign in poll-bound Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) for the last 10 days will come to an end on Sunday evening. While the State Election Commission (SEC) is busy making fool-proof arrangements to hold elections on December 1, main political parties roped in all senior leaders to woo the voters on the last day of the campaign.

With just 24 hours left for the poll after the campaign ends, the parties have already begun poll management, aiming to allure voters in their favour. In the last-ditch efforts, the three major parties – the TRS, the BJP and the Congress – also prepared special campaign strategy on digital media, which is free from restrictions to the campaign until the polling ends, to counter their political rivals.

BJP senior leader and Union Home Minister Amit Shah's Hyderabad tour on the last day of the campaign assumes political significance. Amit Shah has been invited to attend the party road shows and address the meetings during the BJP campaign. He will visit the famous Bhagyalaxmi temple near the historic Charminar in the old city before winding up the BJP campaign in Greater Hyderabad. Senior State BJP leaders have been asked to visit as many divisions as possible and meet the voters till the campaign ends this evening.



nar in the old city before winding up the BJP campaign in Greater Hyderabad. Senior State BJP leaders have been asked to visit as many divisions as possible and meet the voters till the campaign ends this evening.

TRS working president KT Rama Rao, who is busy with road shows all these days, would take up a whirlwind visit of the Greater Hyderabad and sign off the party campaign tonight. All the State ministers, MLAs and

MLCs and party senior leaders have been instructed to organise door-to-door campaign on Monday. The local leaders were asked to distribute the TRS pamphlets, which describes the State government's achievements, to every household.

Congress senior leaders, mainly TPCC president N Uttam Kumar Reddy and party working president A Revanth Reddy, will take up road shows in the colonies.

For poll management, the three parties constituted special teams which adopted different strategies to lure the voters. It includes distribution of money and liquor to the voters dwelling in the slums, handing over gifts like silver ornaments and electronic gadgets to the people living in the colonies and organise big night parties in star hotels. It is learnt that the parties are distributing Rs 1,500 to Rs 2,000 per voter to cast the vote in their support.

The social media teams of all parties will be more active from Sunday night till the polling ends at 6 PM on Tuesday. The parties have made special arrangements to storm social media with creative content and videos. All the political parties are also taking necessary measures to check false propaganda by rivals on the crucial polling day.

BJP, Cong stalling development: KTR

“Why many central ministers are coming to seek votes despite denial of funds for flood victims and for city development? The BJP is raking up communal issues and spreading hatred during polls,” KT Rama Rao, TRS working president and MA&UD Minister

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

PROMISING to protect the interests of all people in the city, TRS working president and Municipal Minister K T Rama Rao on Saturday urged them to bless the party in the GHMC polls for committed development.

The Minister addressed a meeting of business communities in the city at Hotel Marigold and urged their support to continue development, and teach a lesson against divisive policies of the opposition parties.

The Minister took serious exception to the BJP and the Congress gimmicks to gain in the polls. “Though there were apprehensions when we came to power, within six months power crisis and water problems were addressed. Kiran Kumar Reddy government created panic on power, water, problem to business community, ruling and law and order. However, within no time, the Chief Minister, K Chandrashekar Rao, has tide over all the issues by addressing them in a systematic manner,” the Minister clarified.

The TRS has addressed various issues of power, water, welfare and others and on fast growth trajectory, he said, adding that the BJP and the Congress were coming in the way of development. “The KCR government ensures protection, security to



TRS working president and Municipal Minister K T Rama Rao addressing members of business community in Hyderabad on Saturday

people of all States and multiple businesses to flourish,” he said. The Minister dared the opposition parties to try to disturb peace and face action. “Ours is a city of cosmopolitan culture and the government is for their complete protection to follow traditions. We have been implementing different welfare schemes to help poor and all destitute sections, farmers, women and students,” he added.

The Minister said that nalas to be expanded to prevent the recurrence of floods in the city. “Our focus is to remove all encroachments and take cognizance of people to ensure peace. The Centre denied funds to flood victims in the city and the BJP is trying to misguide people,” KT Rama Rao added.

He expressed surprise as to why many central ministers were coming to seek votes despite denial of funds for flood victims and for city development? The BJP raking up communal issues and spreading hatred during the polls, the Minister said. “Why talk of Rohingyas and others of overstaying after giving them voter cards and Aadhaar cards?” he asked.

“Kishan Reddy talks of city development though money was denied by the Centre. The people did not get help from the Centre in spite of Rs 20 lakh crore package announced. After taking Rs 2.72 lakh crore from the State, the Centre gave only Rs 1.40 lakh crore,” KTR said. Note ban and GST in BJP rule have devastated the national economy, he charged.

Cases slapped on Akbaruddin, Bandi Sanjay

Police says they are booked under Section 505 of the Indian Penal Code (statements conducing to public mischief)

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

AIMIM leader Akbaruddin Owaisi was on Saturday booked for his comments on the samadhis of former Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao and TDP founder N T Rama Rao, and state BJP president Bandi Sanjay Kumar, for his retort to it. They were booked under Section 505 of the Indian Penal Code (statements conducing to public mischief), police said.

Akbaruddin Owaisi, younger brother of AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi, courted a controversy on November 25, asking whether the ‘samadhis’ of former Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao and TDP founder N T Rama Rao on Hussain Sagar lake bank would be removed as he questioned the eviction drive against “poor people” residing near water bodies. The ruling TRS and BJP had termed his remarks as ‘inappropriate’ and demanded that he tender an apology.

The AIMIM leader, addressing a public meeting here on Wednesday in the run up to the December 1 Greater Hyderabad municipal elections, claimed that the banks of the lake were spread over 4,700 acres when it was built by saint Hussain Shah Wali, but was now it shrank to not even 700 acres. He said it had become a road, with shops and samadhis of the two leaders there, as also the Lumbini Park. State BJP president and MP Bandi Sanjay Kumar, without naming Akbaruddin, had in a sharp retort asked if he has the guts to demolish the samadhis.

Kishan Reddy slams TRS in GHMC polls campaigning

HYDERABAD

UNION Minister of State for Home Affairs, G Kishan Reddy during a roadshow in Gandhinagar on Saturday said that the time has come to question Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao. The BJP MP said that the TRS crawling before the AIMIM following whatever it says during the elections. Chief Minister follows the footsteps of Majlis. But, the separate Telangana achieved with the sacrifices made by many is not meant to handover to either Kalwakuntla family or Owisi family, he added. He lashed at the TRS and other parties making it a practice to bow down and salute to Majlis.

SEC goes all out to ensure hitch-free polls

In an exclusive chat with The Hans India, the SEC elaborates the arrangements made for smooth conduct of GHMC elections

MAHESH AVADHUTHA

AS the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) is gearing up for civic polls on December 1, political parties are leaving no stone unturned to lure voters, while the State Election Commission is busy making all arrangements for free and fair elections.

According to State Election Commissioner (SEC) C Partha Sarathi, the first result is likely to be out by 3 pm and results of all 150 divisions will be announced by 6 pm on December 4.

So far 62 poll code violations are reported, the Commissioner said, adding that all contingency plans are ready to ensure a smooth election.

A total of 52,500 police personnel is being deployed to maintain law and order. Contingency plans are ready to meet all exigencies. Rs 1,41,88,950 cash without valid documents have been seized so far from various sources. The SEC and election authority, GHMC, are conducting various voter awareness campaign through print, electronic media, FM radios and social media platforms to guide and bring



State Election Commissioner (SEC) C Partha Sarathi

awareness among voters to cast their vote, Said Partha Sarathi.

Speaking exclusively to The Hans India, the Election Commissioner said polling hours are from 7 am to 6 pm and the voters can exercise their franchise at any time as per their convenience. In view of winter season, sufficient lighting will be arranged in an around polling station, he added.

All the electors existing in Assembly electoral rolls till the SEC election notification on November 17 are mapped and included in the GHMC ward wise electoral rolls. If the name exists in the GHMC electoral roll, he can find out his polling

station using search option available in tsec.gov.in (web-site), Te-poll Mobile APP & MyGHMC Mobile App.

The SEC said there was no scope for rigging or impersonation in the present system with photo electoral rolls, photo identity cards and other 18 identity documents having photograph of the voter. “We are arranging web casting and videography. Further the field level officials prepare ASD (Absentee, Shifted, Duplicate or Dead) electors list to avoid impersonation. Every polling station will be covered by webcasting, videography and there is also a micro observer to watch the

Sensitive:	2754
Hypersensitive:	1357
Critical PS:	163
Web casting:	2281
Micro Observers:	5538
Videography:	1286

poll process,” he said.

All the elections to local bodies will be conducted with ballot boxes only. The polling personnel are well acquainted with procedures of both EVMs and traditional ballot boxes. “Hence, we are not expecting any problem in that angle. Majority of the political parties also opted for ballot boxes in view of Covid-19 pandemic,” he added.

There are total 9,101 polling stations located in 2,937 locations. Every polling station will be covered either by web casting, videography or micro ob-server. In the present Covid-19 scenario, the time required for counting of ballot papers will be less than that of EVMs. Exclusive counting halls with 14 tables for each ward are arranged, and the commission is expecting the first result by 3.00 pm on December 4.

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

STATE BJP president Bandi Sanjay Kumar on Saturday predicted midterm elections in Telangana State. Calling Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao-led State government a corrupt government, he said

that the government would collapse very soon leading to the midterm elections. He made these remarks while addressing public meeting in Ramnagar division in the city.

Speaking on the occasion, he said that K Chandrashekar Rao would go to jail at any cost. He alleged that the ruling TRS

party leaders were distributing Rs 5 crore for each division to attract the voters and urged the voters to take the money from TRS leaders and vote for BJP. Adding that CM KCR and his family would lead a happy life, he said that the people of the State would not need KCR as their Chief Minister.

TRS incapable of handling State: Bandi Sanjay

The State BJP chief says that the TRS government will collapse very soon leading to midterm elections

PM visit to Bharat Biotech is poll stunt, fumes CPI

CPI national secretary Dr K Narayana says that it is unfortunate that even the PM is taking part in the local body election campaign albeit indirectly

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE national secretary of CPI, Dr K Narayana, on Saturday lashed out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Referring to the official visit of the PM to Hyderabad, he said that it was unfortunate that even the PM of the country was taking part in the local body election campaign albeit indirectly. He mocked that 15 Union Ministers from rival BJP took part in the election campaign so far.

Addressing the media persons, he said that the PM was attacking the opposition political parties by sitting on

the shoulders of Bharat Biotech company. He made it clear that the tour of the PM under the guise of a visit to Bharat Biotech company to observe the development of Covid-19 vaccine was nothing but election stunt.

He asked the PM to make the Chief Minister of the State as a part of his visit if he was really visiting the lab to observe the development of the vaccine of the deadly virus. He alleged that the PM had ignored the Chief Minister as he thought KCR would get benefits from the visit. He termed the visit of the PM as the misuse of power.

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

RESIDENTIAL welfare associations from East Anandbagh have urged the contesting parties of GHMC polls to address two long-pending issues namely, removal of their colonies from Wakf properties list and also widening of nala along Banda Cheruvu nala by removing the encroachments. Executive Board members and residents from these colonies brought their issue to the notice of Malkajigiri MLA Mynampally Hanumanth Rao and TRS corporator candidate Prem Kumar when they visited the area as part of the GHMC poll campaign a few days ago.

G Venkateshwar Reddy, president of Sri Ramachandra Enclave, stated that they addressed



letters to local MLA and also to MA&UD Minister K T Rama Rao earlier. He said that Survey Numbers-561, 562, 563 and 592 are reportedly notified as belonging to Wakf Board a few years ago while

Uttam urges people to vote judiciously in GHMC polls

Says people should make a conscious decision and vote judiciously



TPCC chief and MP N Uttam Kumar Reddy campaigning in Banjara Hills on Saturday

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

TPCC chief and MP N Uttam Kumar Reddy held roadshows in Banjara Hills, Serlingampally and Secunderabad as part of GHMC poll campaign on Saturday. He said that people of Greater Hyderabad would never forgive TRS, BJP and MIM for not discussing their real problems during the election campaign while keeping their focus only on polarisation on communal lines.

Uttam was critical of Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao, Minister K T Rama Rao, Telangana BJP President Bandi Sanjay, MIM President Asaduddin Owaisi and other leaders of TRS, BJP and MIM for running the GHMC election campaign on non-issues. “These parties did not discuss a single problem concerning the common people. In addition to the civic prob-

lems people have been facing in their localities, lakhs of people were badly hit due to lockdown in view of Covid-19. Similarly, a majority of residents were hit due to the recent floods and heavy rains,” he alleged.

With the State Election Commission and local police taking no action, the provocative speeches were delivered at free will with absolutely no fear of law,” he lamented.

The TPCC Chief said that the Congress party did not let down the people and it honestly raised the people's issues.

“TRS, BJP and MIM are seeking people's votes just to win the GHMC elections. But the Congress party is seeking votes only to resolve people's problems. Therefore, people should make a conscious decision and vote judiciously to ensure that they elect the right leaders to represent them in the GHMC for the next five years,” he said.

East Anandbagh residents want removal of colonies from Wakf list

bers and people have constructed houses and are in possession of them for the last five decades.

Vardharajulu, General Secretary of Anantha Saraswathy Nagar Colony Welfare Association and Somaiah, General Secretary of CIEFL Colony Welfare Association also brought this issue to the notice of MLA and urged him to expeditiously resolve the matter.

Venkateshwar Reddy said that a GO has to be issued to remove the survey numbers from the prohibited and agriculture category on Dharani portal. The colony associations from East Anandbagh expressed happiness after Minister K T Rama Rao made a statement on stage to resolve the Wakf lands issue during his roadshow in Anandbagh on Thursday.

Mahatma Gandhi, Churchill statues in UK may be toppled

HITESH TIKOO
LONDON

THERE are fears that statues of Winston Churchill and Mahatma Gandhi in the UK could be toppled after both were named in a Welsh government report reviewing historical figures as "complicit" in colonialism and slavery.

The report said that "many reputations have been brought into question" and "there is a need to assess the culpability or otherwise of individuals who are publicly commemorated and celebrated".

This comes amid Black Lives Matter protests, and brings into question the reputation of the former wartime Prime Minister Churchill and civil rights leader Gandhi.

Churchill, which has two buildings and 15 streets named in his honour, has been found to be "widely hated in South Wales mining communities for his actions as Home Secretary during the Tonypandy riots", the report



said. The report added that Churchill "expressed a belief in the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race", was "opposed to dismantling the British Empire", and failed "to take sufficient action to relieve the Bengal famine".

The report also named Indian independence leader Gandhi, whose statue stands in the Welsh capital.

Gandhi has been implicated for "racism against Black South Africans".

An audit of memorials in Wales has assessed the historical figures they celebrate

for "culpability" in the slave trade, imperialism, and racial bigotry, The Telegraph reported.

Leading the audit, Gayor Legall told The Guardian that some contentious memorials "could be moved to museums so people can see the links".

I don't see the point of destroying things, there's enough death and destruction around as it is."

Andrew Roberts, author of "Churchill: Walking with Destiny", said: "It's rare for quite such a level of ignorance to be squeezed into one single paragraph, but the Welsh Government has exceeded itself in the bilge it has regurgitated about Winston Churchill.

"Churchill did not order troops with bayonets into Tonypandy. Nor did any of Churchill's actions make the Bengal Famine worse than the typhoon had already made it." Roberts added that the Welsh government had authorised "tripe posing as history".

VOTING IN KASHMIR



Polling officials wearing PPE kits check the documents of a voter as he arrives to cast his vote for the District Development Council election, at a polling station in Reasi district, Kashmir

Farmers' protest has Khalistani link: Har CM

CHANDIGARH

HARYANA Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Saturday said the protests against the central government's farm laws was backed by political parties and alleged a Khalistani link.

"The state has inputs of some unwanted elements raising pro-Khalistan slogans in the ongoing farmers' protests in and around the national capital," he told the media. He categorically said he will share more details once the information "is concrete".

"We've inputs of some such unwanted elements in crowd. We've reports, will disclose once it's concrete. They raised such slogans. In videos they said 'jab Indira Gandhi ko ye kar sakte hain, to Modi ko kyu nahi kar sakte' (When it can be done to Indira Gandhi, why not Modi?)," said the Chief Minister.

A day earlier, Khattar appealed to the farmers to directly talk to the Centre regarding their demands. "The central government is always ready for talks," Khattar said in a tweet on Friday.

Khattar also told the farmers that the path of stir could not be a medium for the resolution of problems and asserted that a solution will emerge from talks.



A young boy holds a flag as security personnel stand guard, during the 'Delhi Chalo' protest march by Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) members against the new farm laws, in New Delhi

Won't pick Khattar's call: Amarinder

NEW DELHI

PUNJAB Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Saturday lashed out at his Haryana counterpart Manohar Lal Khattar for the crackdown on farmers protesting the centre's new agricultural laws, saying that he will not even answer the latter's phone calls now because of the way he has acted, according to NDTV report.

"He doesn't know what to say,

so, he is saying all this. Punjab is not stopping its farmers because it is their right to protest. Why are you stopping them? Why are you using water cannons and tear-gassing them? When we are not stopping them and Delhi is not stopping them, who are you to stop them? I don't like this dishonest behaviour. He can call me 10 times now, I won't pick up his call," he said, rubbing his charges that he had not answered three phone calls from Mr Khattar.

LUCKNOW

UTTAR Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel on Saturday gave assent to an ordinance against forcible or "dishonest" religious conversions, an official said. The Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Ordinance, 2020 has been promulgated with the approval of the Governor, the official said.

The state cabinet presided over by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had earlier this week approved the draft ordinance to curb forcible or "dishonest" religious conversions including those for the sake of marriage, which could land violators in jail for up to 10 years. According to it, a marriage will be declared null and void if the conversion of a woman is solely for that purpose, and those wishing to change their religion after marriage need to apply to the district magistrate.



The move comes after the Allahabad High Court in a key verdict has said two adults have the right to choose their life partner. The court said that the law allows two adults to live together, whether they are of the same or opposite sex. The court made it clear that no person or family could interfere in their peaceful life. Even the state cannot object to the relationship of two adults,

said the court.

Earlier the UP government had approved the draft of a stringent law to deal with religious conversion for the sake of marriage, which BJP leaders refer to as "love jihad". In recent weeks, BJP-run states like Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh have revealed plans to enact laws to counter alleged attempts to convert Hindu women

to Islam in the guise of marriage, which party leaders often refer to as love jihad.

"The UP Cabinet has decided to introduce an ordinance against unlawful religious conversions," said State Cabinet Minister Siddharth Nath Singh. "The way in which religious conversions are done using deceit, lies, force and dishonesty is heart-wrenching, and it was necessary to have a law in this regard."

The ordinance was approved at a meeting of the state cabinet chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in Lucknow. "The UP Cabinet has decided to introduce an ordinance against unlawful religious conversions," said State Cabinet Minister Siddharth Nath Singh. "The way in which religious conversions are done using deceit, lies, force and dishonesty is heart-wrenching, and it was necessary to have a law in this regard."

RASHTRAPATI BHAVAN Sikh Regiment takes over ceremonial duties

NEW DELHI

THE Sikh Regiment of the Army on Saturday took charge of the Ceremonial Army Guard duties at the Rashtrapati Bhavan here from the Gorkha Rifles. The 5th Battalion of the 1st Gorkha Rifles, on completion of its three-and-a-half years term as Ceremonial Army Guard Battalion, handed over the charge to the 6th Battalion of the Sikh Regiment. President Ram Nath Kovind witnessed the ceremonial change-over of the Army Guard Battalion stationed at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. Different Infantry units of the Army function as the Ceremonial Army Guard at the Rashtrapati Bhavan by rotation. The Army Guard Battalion performs ceremonial duties at important events such as Guard of Honours to visiting dignitaries, Republic Day and Independence Day parades, Beating the Retreat Ceremony, apart from performing ceremonial guard duties at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

BJP on MVA's first anniv: Govt machinery collapsed

MUMBAI

AS the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government completed its first year in office on Saturday, the Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party slammed its 'lustreless performance' and alleged that the Constitutional machinery in the state has collapsed.

In a scathing attack, Leader of Opposition in the Assembly Devendra Fadnavis, dismissed the MVA's one-year as a "total failure" by saying: "The two recent court rulings in the Arnab Goswami and Kangana Ranaut cases clearly reflect that there is a breakdown of the Constitutional machinery and abuse of power."

However, in the same breath, he declared that the BJP would "not demand President's Rule in the state", but made it clear that the Opposition would continue to play its role effectively, pull up the government when it errs, and even take to the streets if necessary.

Adding that the BJP doesn't fully endorse Goswami or Ranaut's views, but it also doesn't agree with the manner in which the government headed by Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray is hounding those who speak against the MVA regime and crushing dissent.



"The government is cracking down on anyone speaking out against them like RTI activists, social media posts or mediapersons. The Supreme Court and Bombay High Court have clearly observed that there is gross misuse of power. There seems to be an undeclared emergency," Fadnavis contended.

Giving the MVA a report card as "failure on all fronts", the BJP leader said the ruling Shiv Sena-Nationalist Congress Party-Congress has only done one job - to scrap projects launched by the former BJP-led government in the state.

Stating that there is absolutely "no coordination among the three alliance partners," Fadnavis reiterated that the MVA government was born out of treachery, indicating the BJP had not yet swallowed the fact it lost power in the changed political equations post-October 2019 Assembly elections.

Bhagat Singh's spirit alive amid Punjab farmers' protest

NEW DELHI

WITH slogans of 'Inquilab Zindabad' on lips, hundreds of the protesting farmers, both men and women, with grit, determination and revolutionary thoughts of Shahid-e-Azam Bhagat Singh, have gathered along borders of the national capital for a planned protest against new farm laws with the commitment and spirit of volunteering.

Men wearing t-shirts with photos of Bhagat Singh on them and women donning yellow 'dupattas' on their heads that represent the colour of martyrs, the protesters largely from Punjab have been hogging the limelight.

"We are the backbone of the country. But it is really sad that how these security people are treating us like an enemy," said protester Rajdeep Kaur, daughter of a farmer from Punjab's Sangrur district, while pointing towards a police contingent.

Like Kaur, a sea of protesters inspired by the thoughts of Shaheed Bhagat Singh, are shouting slogans 'Inquilab Zindabad' at the protest site.



Even many of them were seen carrying a photo of Shaheed Bhagat Singh.

"We travelled from Amritsar peacefully. As we reached the Haryana border, we had major scuffles with Haryana Police at several points," said farmer Gurdev Singh, who belonged to the Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) Ekta-Dakaunda faction.

He said the revolutionary spirit of the farmers has emerged victorious. "We managed to cross all hurdles despite the heavy deployment of men and the use of water cannons and tear gas."

Echoed another farmer Jarnail Singh, "Even my single hand is enough to shake the Modi regime that doesn't care about the farmers. Yeh inquilab

hai (This is a revolution)." Holding a yellow flag, Jarnail Singh, who lost his hand in his childhood after sticking it into a combine harvester, was shouting, "Ekta Zindabaad".

"Age doesn't matter but your passion does," remarked octogenarian Nachatar Kaur who reached here after travelling two days on a tractor-trailer from a village in Gurdaspur district along with his eight-year-old great-grandson, who was holding a flag.

Ruldu Singh, a leader of the BKU (Ekta-Ugrahan), the largest among the 31 farm organisations in Punjab, said they have hundreds of volunteers who have been pursuing the ideology of Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh.

"The young ones have been assigned duties to regulate traffic peacefully while the convoy was on its way from the Khanauri border (in Sangrur district) to Delhi. Without violence they breached the massive blockades comprising huge boulders, barbed fence and mounds of earth on the Bathinda-Dabwali road to enter Haryana," he said.

Court tells Trump: Calling vote unfair doesn't make it so

WASHINGTON

A federal appeals court flatly dismissed President Donald Trump's claim that the election was unfair and refused to freeze Joe Biden's win in the key state of Pennsylvania.

In a scathing review of the Trump campaign's arguments that the President was cheated in his November 3 reelection bid, three appeals court judges unanimously said that allegations of unfairness were not supported by evidence.

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TTD BOARD MEET

Mahadwaram to get gold coating

- ▶ Besides, Dwajastambham, Balipeetam will also be gold-coated
- ▶ In an unprecedented move, the board decided to keep open Vaikunta Dwaram for 10 days instead of usual two days, during Vaikunta Ekadasi and Dwadasi

HANS NEWS SERVICE
TIRUPATI

THE TTD Trust Board meeting held on Saturday chaired by chairman Y V Subba Reddy resolved to give a golden touch to the Tirumala temple Mahadwaram, the main entrance of the Sri Venkateswara temple. Addressing the media after the meeting, chairman Subba Reddy said that the board had given its nod to give gold coating to Mahadwaram, Dwajastambham and Balipeetam. It also resolved to make Suryaprabha Vahanam with 11 kg gold for Goddess Padmavathi at Tiruchanur temple.

The meet took many important decisions, including observing of Vaikunta Ekadasi religious fete for 10 days to keep open the Vaikunta Dwaram, also known Uttara Dwaram to enable more number of pilgrim to have Uttaradwara darshanam, which was hitherto remain open for only two days on Vaikunta Ekadasi and Dwadasi days but from this year onwards 10 days.

Subba Reddy said TTD had decided to keep open Srivari temple Vaikunta Dwaram for 10 days from December 25 (2020) to January 3 (2021) on the recommendation of a committee set up on the direction of AP High Court and also in consultation with Vaishnavite Matadhipathis and Peetadhipathi and keeping in view many popular Vaishnavite temples like Srirangam shrine observe the fete for



TTD Board chairman Y V Subba Reddy, EO Dr K S Jawahar Reddy and other members at the meeting at Annamayya Bhavan at Tirumala on Saturday

10 days. "The board has given green signal to release white paper shortly on its landed properties. The white paper will disclose the details of the status of the lands donated by devotees in various places across the country to TTD totalling 1,128 properties to the extent of 8,088 acre," chairman said added that the board formed a committee on how to utilise these properties to make them useful and fetching both revenue wise and promotion of spiritualism.

The Chairman stressed that as far as providing health facilities to TTD employees board is permitted to implement EHS (employees health scheme) only and added that officials will create awareness among the employees in favour of the scheme.

As part of eco friendly practices at Tirumala, the TTD would shortly introduce 100 to 150 electrical buses for devotees transportation.

The other decisions approved by the board include renovation of Galigopuram on Alipiri footpath, reconstruction of SNC and ANC cottages in Tirumala at a cost of Rs 29

crore, intensification of Dharma Pracharam through its Rathams in two Telugu states, resuming Kalyanamasthu programme in all the district headquarters in Andhra Pradesh for conducting of mass weddings at the cost of TTD for the benefit of poor families.

Subba Reddy said as TTD is not interested to implement Ananda Nilayam Anatha Swarnamyam project, the board decided to return the donations received from the devotees for the project and if any devotees consent to use this gold donation be used for other activities of TTD, it will be retained.

TTD will construct additional hostels for Balamandir (orphanage) at a cost of Rs 10 crore and would release funds for Tirupati Garuda Varadhi flyover construction in the next financial year, Subba Reddy said adding that will construct Sri Venkateswara Temple at Ullandur in TN for which TTD trust board member and MLA Kumaraguru donated 4 acres land and cash donation Rs 10 crore.

Answering a question, he made it clear that TTD decided to deposit its

White paper on properties

TIRUPATI

FOLLOWING its Trust Board decision, the TTD released the white paper on its 1,128 landed properties with a total extent of 8,088.89 acre.

The details of the landed properties including agriculture and non-agriculture were placed on TTD's website.

In a release on Saturday, TTD said that the details also include the lands sold by TTD since 1974 with survey number and extent of the lands, place and also TTD trust board decisions approving the sale of lands donated by devotees to TTD and the amount got through the sale of the lands.

The paper revealed that from 1974 to 2014, 141 lands to the extent of 335.23 acre were sold by TTD. The lands include 61 agriculture lands totalling 293.02 acre and 80 non-agriculture lands with a total extent of 42.21 acre. In all, TTD had got Rs 6.13 crore through the sale of lands. The remaining landed properties with TTD as on November 28 are 987 to the total extent of 7753.66 cents including agriculture 172 (1792.39 acre) and non-agriculture 815 (5961.27 acre).

money only in PSU banks.

TTD ex-officio members including TTD EO Dr K S Jawahar Reddy, TUDA chairman and Dr Chevireddy Bhaskar Reddy, TTD board members Murali Krishna, Kumarguru, special invitees B Karunakar Reddy, A J Sekhar participated in the meeting.

CM, YSRCP leaders pay tributes to Jyotiba Phule

AMARAVATI

CHIEF Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy paid rich tributes to Mahatma Jyotirao Phule on his death anniversary at his camp office in Tadepalli on Saturday.

The Chief Minister garlanded the portrait of Jyothirao Phule and paid tributes to the social reformer.

At the party central office, YSRCP leaders offering floral tributes to Jyotirao Phule, said Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy has been empowering weaker sections like never before.

Speaking on the occasion, Advisor to the Government (Public Affairs) Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy said that the Chief Minister has been striving to fulfil the ideals of Phule, by banishing

- ▶ Party leaders liken Jagan to the great social reformer
- ▶ Say he is striving to end social inequalities and turning Backward Classes into Backbone Classes

the inequality in the society and uplifting the downtrodden. He said that the state government had turned the Backward Classes into a Backbone Classes in just 18 months after assuming office, by setting up 56 BC corporations and providing equal opportunities. In the next three years, BCs will be supported by all means, he said.

YSRCP BC Cell president and MLC Janga Krishna Murthy said

Jyotirao Phule's special contribution to the reconstruction of the nation is quite remarkable and the Chief Minister has been working as another Phule to the people of Andhra Pradesh. With the inspiration of Jyotirao Phule, the state government is moving forward by providing welfare to the BC communities, education to all, and women empowerment in the state.

Deputy Chief Minister Dharma Krishna Das, ministers Botcha Satyanarayana, Ch Venugopal Krishna, Gummanuru Jayaram, party state secretary L Appireddy, MLAs K Parthasarathy, Jogi Ramesh, K Ramachandra Reddy, and senior leaders Boppana Bhavakumar, S V Mohan Reddy, Sivarami Reddy and other members took part in the event.



Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy paying tributes to social reformer Mahatma Jyotirao Phule on his death anniversary at his camp office on Saturday. Minister Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy and others are seen.

AP Assembly gets set for session post Covid

- ▶ Speaker Tammineni Sitaram and Council Chairman Shariff stress that HoDs concerned are responsible for providing answers to the questions raised by members
- ▶ Speaker tells officials to be ready with the Bills to be presented in the session tomorrow when the session commences
- ▶ Chief Whip in Council Ummareddy Venkateswarlu says that if the petitions committee meets frequently, answers to the questions will be made available

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

IT is the fundamental right of the members of the Assembly and the Council to get answers to their questions during the question hour, said Legislative Council chairman Shariff Mohammad Ahmed.

Along with Assembly Speaker Tammineni Sitaram, he addressed the meeting of the special **ASSEMBLY SESSION** chief secretaries, principal secretaries and secretaries of various departments in view of the forthcoming session of the Legislative Assembly and the Council from Monday.

The Council chairman said that the heads of departments concerned are responsible for compulsorily providing answers to the questions raised by the members. The responsibility of making the session success squarely lies on the officials, he added. "Zero-hour is the very important in the session when the members bring various problems to the notice of the Assembly and the council."

Speaker Sitaram instructed the officials to be ready with the bills to be presented in the session by Monday when the session starts.

He said that the people are closely watching the proceedings in the Assembly and the Council and the officials should provide answers to all the questions raised by the members to their satisfaction. "People look forward for the answers to the questions pertaining to their regions and they would be happy if they found answers and even solutions," he said.

The Speaker said that the heads of departments should conduct reviews before the session regarding the answers provided in the previous session which would do a lot of good.

Chief whip in the Council Ummareddy Venkateswarlu said that the number of days of session is reduced for various reasons. If the petitions committee meets frequently, the answers to the questions would be made available. The members would face problem in their respective constituencies if they could not secure answers to their questions, he warned.

Finance minister Buggana Rajendranath Reddy, Assembly chief whip G Srikanth Reddy, Assembly secretary Balakrishnamacharyulu, special chief secretaries, principal secretaries, secretaries and others were present.



Assembly Speaker Tammineni Sitaram, Council Chairman Shariff Mohammad Ahmed along with Ministers reviewing security arrangements for the Assembly session with police officials in Amaravati on Saturday

Security beefed up at Assembly; cops to follow Covid-19 norms

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

ANDHRA Pradesh Assembly Speaker Tammineni Sitaram and Legislative Council chairman Shariff Mohammad Ahmed while reviewing the security arrangements on the Assembly premises with the top police officers here on Saturday in view of the forthcoming Assembly and Council session from November 30, told them to arrange fool-proof security scrupulously following the Covid19 guidelines.

Speaker Sitaram told the police officers in particular to be respectful towards the MLAs and MLCs who are attending the session from November 30. "They should show restraint while discharging their duties." He asked in detail the security arrangements.

Intelligence officer on special duty (OSD) Sasidhar said that a series of meetings was already held on the security arrangements and the rehearsals with the convoy of

- ▶ Speaker tells the cops to be respectful towards MLAs, MLCs while discharging their duties
- ▶ Tammineni Sitaram and Legislative Council Chairman Shariff Mohammad Ahmed review security and other arrangements for the session which will start tomorrow
- ▶ Officials inform that corona tests were conducted to the security personnel to be deployed for the security of VIPs

the Chief Minister and other VIPs were conducted. He said that in view of the corona pandemic, tests were conducted to the security personnel of the VIPs and the police personnel before assigning them

duties in the Assembly.

Guntur Rural SP Vishal Gunny said that a route map has already been prepared and parking slots for the ministers, the MLAs, the MLCs were identified. Strict security measurements would be in force in and around the Assembly premises to prevent agitations and anti-social activities.

Finance minister Buggana Rajendranath Reddy said that traffic should be controlled near the Assembly, particularly on the opening day and the closing day. There should not be any hindrance to the convoy of the Chief Minister, he said. Assembly chief whip Gadikota Srikanth Reddy, Intelligence additional DG K Rajendranath Reddy, law and order additional D G Ravishankar Ayyanar, SPF commandant K N Rao, Vijayawada police commissioner Battina Srinivasulu, Guntur range IG Trivikrama Varma, Guntur Urban SP Anji Reddy and other officials were present.

Farmers' protest may intensify

Continued from P1

Amid the journey, 'langar' or community kitchens have been put up by the special committees comprising women and elders to feed the scores of farmers. The farmers have received thousands of litres of milk and fruits from the villagers of Punjab and Haryana. "We have enough ration with us to support the protesters in Delhi at least for two months," said protester Rajinder Kaur.

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh has reiterated that the voices of the protesting farmers "cannot be muzzled indefinitely". He also reiterated his appeal to the Centre to initiate immediate talks to address farmers' concerns on the farm laws and resolve the simmering issue.

PM's thumbs up for Covid vaccine work

Continued from P1

At the facility, he reviewed the progress of Covaxin, a vaccine candidate being developed by the company. He also interacted with Bharat Biotech Chairman and Managing Director Krishna Ella, scientists and senior management.

"At the Bharat Biotech facility in Hyderabad was briefed about their indigenous Covid-19 vaccine. Congratulated the scientists for their progress in the trials so far. Their team is closely working with ICMR to facilitate speedy progress," Modi tweeted after his hour-long visit there.

After leaving the facility, the PM got down from his vehicle

at the main gate and waved to mediapersons and the cheering crowd standing nearby. Covaxin, being developed by Bharat Biotech in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research and National Institute of Virology, is undergoing phase-3 trials.

At 3.20 pm, Modi took off for Pune, where he landed at 4.30 pm. From the airport, Modi proceeded by helicopter to the Serum Institute of India (SII) at Manjari, located 17 km from the airport.

The PM interacted with scientists at the Serum Institute of India and went around the facility, taking stock of vaccine development work being carried out there, before leaving for the Pune airport

around 6 pm on way back to Delhi.

"Had a good interaction with the team at Serum Institute of India. They shared details about their progress so far on how they plan to further ramp up vaccine manufacturing. Also took a look at their manufacturing facility," the PM tweeted.

Modi's visit to SII was aimed at reviewing the progress of the vaccine candidate for coronavirus and to know about its launch, production and distribution mechanism, an official said.

The Serum Institute of India has partnered with pharma giant AstraZeneca and Oxford University for the vaccine.

India deploys marine commandos in Ladakh

Continued from P1

The special troops belonging to both the Army and Air Force have been there for more than six months now.

On August 29-30 also, the Indian side had used the special forces to occupy strategic heights along the LAC to pre-empt the Chinese from doing so.

The Chinese have also maintained special troops on their side of the LAC. The Indian Navy has deployed teams of its MARCOS in the Wular lake area of Jammu and Kashmir to tackle terrorism there.

Modernisation of fishing harbour to take off soon

Continued from P1

Elaborating further, he adds, "Once the funds get sanctioned, the modernisation work will commence and is expected to be wrapped up in a year." A couple of days back, Joint Collector M Venugopal Reddy held a meeting with the members of the Fishing Harbour High-Level Managing Committee and sought suggestions for the modernisation works which include facilitating extra halls, boundary wall and jetty repair works at the harbour. Sharing details with The Hans India, president of AP Mechanised Boat Owners'

Association PC Appa Rao says, "A request has been made to the authorities concerned to form a sub-committee to monitor the development of the fishing harbour. In addition, we have also appealed to facilitate mechanised boat repair works to be carried out at the harbour itself."

For a long time now, the project that aims at enhancing the socio-economic conditions of the fishermen and plug infrastructure gaps has been gathering dust. However, with the DPR being readied, the project is poised to take shape soon.



Ensure polling in large numbers for GHMC elections

FOR a flourishing democracy heavy polling is necessary. It is proved many a time that effective governments can be formed only with high percentage of voting. Several studies have revealed that the percentage of polling is registered more in local body elections of rural areas rather than the Parliament and various Assembly elections.

But urban local bodies are registering lower percentage of voting than that of general and rural local bodies elections. The low percentage of voting started in 1945 and it was continued up to mid-80s, later it is improved significantly in general and rural local bodies elections. But in urban local bodies that too in Corporation elections the percentage of voting is relatively low - in GHMC the percentage of voting was 42 per cent and 45 per cent in 2009 and 2016 respectively.

There are two reasons for this lower voting. One is organisational like location of polling



stations, non-revision of voter lists in time, misinterpreted reservations etc and the other

is individual like lack of interest in voting, irresponsible behavior in voters, prejudice about

voting and some people think that there would be no danger to democracy if I didn't vote.



Kangana should be paid by BMC officials

IT refers to welcome decision of November 27 from Bombay High Court ordering Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) to pay compensation to courageous film-actress Kangna Ranaut for BMC demolishing major portion of office-complex of the young film-actress, considering it a deliberate biased and unjustified act of BMC.

But BMC is funded by hard-earned money of tax-payers, and must not be allowed to be paid as compensation for sin and faults of concerned officials and political personalities at BMC or Maharashtra government. Or-

dered compensation-money must be recovered from these concerned ones. Moreover concerned officials should also be immediately suspended from their posts as a lesson for others for not dancing to tune of heavy-weight political rulers and other politicians. Morality and ethics demand that concerned political rulers should be removed from their posts putting a bar on their contesting any election in lifetime so that political rulers may not be able to act to take revenge from selected citizens.

Subhash Chandra Agrawal, Delhi

Modi should re-think on farm Acts

WE really wonder if Prime Minister Narendra Modi seriously thinks that the new farm laws will help realise his promise of doubling the incomes of farmers. We hope that the ongoing farmer protest will persuade him to have a rethink of the farm Acts.

The three agricultural marketing 'reform' laws will put vulnerable farmers at the mercy of large corporate behemoths, reduce their bargaining power and undercut the prices of agricultural produce. Worse, contract farming provided for in the laws could lead to the takeover of their lands by the rapacious corporate giants. Serfdom had been abolished long ago. Any attempt to revive it has to be thwarted.

The new agrarian laws are not at all farmer-friendly, as made out to be by the ruling

elites. In fact, they are blatantly anti-farmer. It is inconsiderate of the government to force this new set of laws on the farmers as the panacea for their distress. Government mandis with agricultural market produce committees have to be made better and not shut down. True, these laws will open up the markets, but they cannot benefit farmers in an increasingly unregulated and competitive market dominated by big agri-businesses. The monopolisation of agriculture market and production by the corporates, the possibility of which becomes distinct with the laws, will affect the lives and livelihoods of over half of the country's population depending on agriculture for a living. There is no mention of Minimum Support Price (MSP) guarantee and pro-

Once urban areas were known for civilisation but now they stand for low polling. So, the political parties which are trying to rise emotional tempers to achieve upper hand over their rivals must concentrate on percentage of voting.

The corporation officials, NGOs, and civil society must take up campaign to create awareness among voters about the importance of voting. If necessary, multi storied and gated community executive committees should be roped in to enlighten the voters. It is estimated that there are 74 lakh voters in Balidia of which 15 lakh are youth and six lakh are IT employees.

So in ensuing GHMC elections high percentage of voting is to be noted so as to form popular governing body. For this purpose social media can be used to create awareness among voters and also to overcome Covid19 hurdles.

Pratap Reddy Yaramala, Tiruvuru

PAST & PRESENT

The bliss called bicycle ride



DR VENUGOPALA RAO KAKI

THE bicycle which was spotted in large number on urban and rural Indian roads in 1960s and 70s was invariably the common man's easy means of transport. Peddling the bicycle and making short and long journeys, men would enjoy bicycle-rides. Students would go to schools and colleges on bicycles while employees would reach offices comfortably on their bicycle. Bicycles, besides being easy mode of transport, offered people good physical exercise and helped them stay quite strong and healthy. But alas! the bicycle, replaced by air and sound-polluting motor-vehicles of varied kinds, is hardly spotted on Indian roads nowadays.

But I still vividly remember my experience of learning bicycle-ride. "The bicycle-rider is my hero and the bicycle is the object of my fascination". That's exactly how I viewed the bicycle and the bicycle-rider in my school-days. Then I was studying in V class. Watching the bicycles and the people peddling bicycles on roads of our town while going to my school and returning home from school, I was so excited.

When I glimpsed young boys riding bicycles, my boyish excitement peaked and with wonderment gleaming in my eyes, I would keep staring at them and the way they were riding the bicycles. Sometimes, I stood transfixed on the edge of the road and watched those young bicycle-riders with pleasure. Often, I was seized with envy whenever I caught the spectacle of boys of my age riding bicycles with beaming countenances, letting out cries of bubbling happiness.

At such moments, I was possessed by an aspiration to join the group of those boys, riding my own bicycle proudly, happily and excitedly. Gradually, my aspiration of riding a bicycle grew into a fond dream which I nurtured in my boyish heart.

How to realise my dream was what I was preoccupied with. The first and foremost thing in the realisation of my dream was that I must have a bicycle and somebody to teach me how to ride a bicycle. Of course, my father had a bicycle which he used for his official work and to bring groceries and vegetables from the market. But my father's bicycle was too heavy and high for me to learn bicycle-ride.

Moreover, my father would not let me learn bicycle-ride, for he thought that I was too young to ride a bicycle. Then, how to learn bicycle-ride? My dream of learning bicycle-ride remained unrealized till I grew to be in VII class.

My high-school from my

house was more than two kilometers. To walk such a long distance to attend my school, carrying my bag of textbooks and notebooks was very tiresome. As I was my mom's pet, I conveyed my desire to have a bicycle. When my mother asked my father to buy a bicycle so that I could go to school on bicycle, father told her, "First, let him learn to ride a bicycle. Then, I shall buy him a bicycle". When I heard my father's words, my dream of riding a bicycle rose and spread like a rainbow before my eyes.

In those days, at bicycle-shops, bicycles of different sizes were given to people on payment of fixed-money per hour. I had a friend who was well-known to be an expert at bicycle-riding. He offered to teach me and help me to learn bicycle-riding on Sundays.

On Sunday-mornings, after break-fast at home, I hired a bicycle of medium size at a cycle-shop near my house and accompanied by my friend, I would go to a large, vacant ground where under the guidance and supervision of my friend, I practiced learning bicycle-riding. My friend taught me how to get on to the saddle of the bicycle, placing my foot slowly on the pedals, clutching the handle carefully and balancing the whole bicycle deftly and running both the pedals of the bicycle gently to make a forward movement.

For about ten days, I made a vigorous practice, guided by my friend. When I crept on to the saddle, peddling the bicycle, my friend, following me, holding the bicycle's carriage, ran after me. Sometimes, I slipped and fell off the bicycle. Fortunately, I did not sustain serious injuries as the ground was grassy.

One Sunday morning, I was peddling my bicycle on the ground. Surprisingly, my bicycle in a balanced way was running.

I thought my friend was behind the bicycle, holding its carriage and helping me to balance the bicycle. Suddenly, I heard a loud laughter of my friend with clapping of his hands. "Now, you are riding the bicycle yourself quite successfully with no help from me. You have learnt the bicycle-ride", cried my friend ecstatically.

When I looked back, I beheld my friend about six-feet away from me and my bicycle. The moment I realized I was riding the bicycle myself, finding myself on cloud nine, I screamed proudly and excitedly as if I had made a heroic achievement.

Later, when I grew up and during my college days and my teaching career, for long years, I enjoyed riding bicycle, for it provided me with good physical exercise to be healthy and active.

STOP VILIFYING JINNAH

WHY is Jinnah's name taken to compare with betrayers? I often feel very sad to see our leaders comparing betrayers name with great leader Mohd Ali Jinnah. After Bihar elections famous poet Munawwar Rana compared Owaisi with Jinnah. BJP leader Tejaswi Surya commented that Owaisi is a new avatar of Jinnah. Still in every elections our leaders use Jinnah's name and try to polarise voters. Some are declaring that Jinnah was betrayer who divided the country by demanding a separate nation.

In fact Jinnah fought for Hindu-Muslim unity. He was also responsible for the freedom of this country. His contribution for freedom struggle cannot be ignored. Partition of our country took place because of communal riots and many leaders at that time along with Jinnah preferred separate nation for Muslims.



Now how came Jinnah is a lone betrayer. It was Gandhi who awarded the title "Quaid E Azam" (great leader) to Jinnah. He is a "Maha Purush" a

great man for the contribution to India's freedom struggle, he must be respected in secular India.

Actually, if we go into his-

tory the great betrayers of India are Mir Jafar and Mir Sadiq. Mir Jafar the general who betrayed India and opened the door to British rule. He was a traitor, with a single act of treachery - Mir Jafar helped to set the stage for nearly 200 years of British rule in India. Because of his betrayal Siraj-ud-Daula the great fighter against British was captured and later executed.

Tipu Sultan was known for his fierce spirit of independence, who fought rigorously against British. He was betrayed by Mir Sadiq. Due to betrayal of Mir Sadiq, Tipu Sultan was killed fighting with British. This led Britishers to rule entire India. So instead of using Jinnah's name for comparing with betrayers, better call them as Mir Jafar and Mir Sadiq.

Zeeshaan, Kazipet

Indian team has one spinner less

TOUR down under started on a disastrous note. In Indian cricket's case they have known this vexing situation for almost a year now but have neither got over the issue or found any way to work around it. And this flawed combination came to haunt India at various junctures of the game. Indian cricket is suffering from lack of star spinner of the side. The batting is brittle but we solely depend on the middle order to do the miracle. The captaincy lacked imagination. The dropped catches and misfieldings played a pivotal part in this pathetic performance. The team selection did not show promise with the lack of speed in bowling and the field placements. If we do not have a 6th bowler we should have a clever choice rather than looking at the performance of our star spinner Chahal's success. It was disappointing and the Sydney surrender shows our misplaced planning before a test series. We lost the game when we allowed Warner to last longer than expected.

C K Subramaniam, Chennai

AN OPEN LETTER TO ELECTION COMMISSION

THE State Election Commissioner has been empowered to announce and conduct local body elections in Hyderabad and based on the recommendation of the State government, Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation election process has begun some 15 days back and 1 December has been fixed for voting by the people of Hyderabad.

In a democratic setup the recognised national, regional parties and independent are allowed to contest the elections by presenting before the local citi-

zens what they can do for the betterment of those living in Hyderabad. Over the last few days the leaders of ruling from Delhi have been criss crossing to gather votes for their party's candidate in the same way like the ruling party which now manages the state and GHMC.

Unfortunately, in the present local body election campaign we hear less about Electricity, Drinking Water, Roads and other civic amenities but are hearing Pakistan, Jinnah, Hindu Hirdya Samrat, Surgical Strike etc. On the one we feel

proud of our democracy and system, Pakistan and other countries would be laughing at us the way our leaders are campaigning to fight not national, state but local body elections. I hope you all are aware about late Chief of Election Commission T N Seshan, he may be grieving inside his grave the way you're now leading the highest constitutional body.

If this was not enough a young Member of Parliament Tejaswi Surya from Bangalore has been making provocative speeches and calling another senior four

time MP Assaduddin Owaisi as father of Pakistan and voting his party is voting against India. If the ruling party MP is indeed correct, how come Asaduddin Owaisi has been allowed to be a member of our Parliament. Another leader who happens to be BJP state Party President has threatened that a surgical strike would be conducted in a part of Hyderabad where large section of Muslim and others live.

I understand that the SEC has fixed Rs.5 lakh limit for spending towards campaigning. From what one can see, the parties are

spending probably ten times of the maximum amount per day if one goes by the way leaders of national and regional parties are moving around to promote. As the election is happening when a novel virus is still affecting the people, the SEC would have given some guidelines to follow while campaigning.

Having failed to follow any of the Covid guidelines in Bihar and other states where there no visible protocol was noticed even in the rallies addressed by PM, in the local elections all this has been given a good bye and

full-fledged road shows are being organized by BJP, Congress, TRS and MIM who are some major contestant aiming to capture local body.

The SEC and Police seem to be simply mute witnesses except few appeals in the presence of the media.

In a notification issued to poor teachers and other central staff appointing them for pool duty Election Authority and Commissioner GHMC has warned that "those who fail to attend the training classes and polling duty will be viewed seri-

ously. Defaulting officers are not only liable for disciplinary action but are also liable for Prosecution". The EC and their counterparts are empowered to take action only against poor polling officers drawn from other government departments and not the politicians who are called "law makers". It is a different matter, neither constitutional body like yours and ignorant people cannot take any action against elected members who fail to fulfill promises being made to voters.

N Nagarajan, Hyderabad

A saga of IPKF-LTTE conflict

VANAM JWALA NARASIMHA RAO

FOR evaluating the needs of civilians in the then conflict between Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), late Dr AP Ranga Rao was deputed by Ajit Bhownick, the then Secretary General of Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS), to Sri Lanka in the third week of October 1987. At that time Dr Ranga Rao, a medical professional was working in State TB Centre, Hyderabad. Dr Rao flew to Delhi and after obtaining a survival kit and a camera from IRCS flew to Chennai along with three nurses and two assistants from Central Red Cross.

After waiting for two days in Chennai, he could fly in an army chopper that was transporting goats, vegetables and poultry. He was one of three passengers on board. It took 40 minutes to reach Paley air base in northern Sri Lanka. It was raining. He got off the chopper and looked around. And it was like a scene in a war film around there. Everyone was in uniform except Rao.

Dr Rao took out his Red Cross badge and pinned it on his shirt. He introduced himself to an officer who led him to the nearby army medical core first aid post and asked them to accommodate him for the night. Next morning, he flew in a chopper to Jaffna and reached Jaffna General and Teaching Hospital in an army truck.

On the way he could see devastation. There were burnt out vehicles, corpses of few days old, eagles and dogs around them all over the place. He could only see the faces of army personnel with their helmets, guns pointed behind makeshift sandbag shields. He could hear occasional gun fire. Except these, roads were deserted.

On reaching the hospital, he wanted to go and meet doctors in the OP block, but Jawan guarding gestured him towards the other side. There he met a person who introduced himself as Colonel (Dr) Puri and asked Rao to follow him. Both moved towards the Emergency Area Operation theatre. Colonel Puri along with two other army doctors and staff were living in a room in theatre block.

While they were conversing, a jawan came to inform that a few civilian casualties were brought, and no one was attending on them. Rao could hear the wailing and crying in the corridor. Then with the consent of Colonel Puri, Ranga Rao went to a ward nearby where he met one young lady doctor, a doctor past middle age and another male doctor in his thirties. They all looked very haggard.

There was no electricity in the hospital and even in the town. There was curfew in the town. With reluctance, the doctors attended to the cases. During the course of chat, Rao understood that the main problem was shortage of manpower and medical supplies and electricity. Together they prepared an inventory of requirements and went back to Colonel Puri and requested him to arrange to send the indent to the Secretary General IRCS at Delhi.

That night Dr Ranga Rao rested in a labour room. He stretched on the labour table. Except a few hard chapattis and two cups of black tea, he did not have anything to eat the whole day. He was hungry, tired and fretful. It was dark and sultry. It was a nightmare. He was frequently disturbed by mosquitoes and sounds of gunfire and distant explosion of bombs. After a formal bath in the morning at a nearby well and morning routine, Dr Rao went back to Col Puri. During conversation with him he realised that death may strike one from any corner any time and it was futile to be afraid of it. He decided that he should be a real Red Cross worker and maintain his neutrality. He should first win the confidence of the three civil doctors so that he could help them in need.

Next morning, Col Venugopal arrived along with two general duty doctors and



three nurses and two assistants. All of them were from Delhi. In the afternoon, a truck load of medicines and supplies arrived from Delhi. The truck unloaded them and left. All of the medical team carried them and stored them in the stores of the hospital and handed over them to the civilian doctors.

Two days earlier to Dr Rao's arrival, there were some serious skirmishes between LTTE and IPKF forces. It is alleged that LTTE was firing from the hospital premises at the advancing IPKF. IPKF bombed the hospital areas. The gaping holes in the roofs of the emergency ward were still seen. Since the firing from hospital has not stopped even after the bombing, IPKF forces entered the hospital premises. They rushed into the OP block which was suspected to be the area from which LTTE was suspected to be firing. In

changed the required goods. Ranga Rao could procure some cigarettes as he was running out of his stock.

Next morning, they decided to visit some camps where people congregated to know their requirements. The camps were well stocked with food supplies and clothes etc. The demand was more for sanitary napkins, soaps, toiletries, milk powder and anti-hypertensive and anti-diabetic medicines.

Dr Ranga Rao and his team tried to establish clinics in the camps. Very few attended and those attended were asking for medicines which at that time were not available in India. Ranga Rao sent a report requesting for Tamilian doctors and staff to be deputed. In response, a few more Red Cross members arrived to take care of the distribution. Dr Ranga Rao made a courtesy call on the newly appointed town com-

Dr Ranga Rao recollected that often he wondered what were the aspects that led to civil strife in Sri Lanka. Jaffna peninsula was mostly inhabited by Tamils and Keralites, whereas southern Sri Lanka was mostly inhabited by Buddhists who migrated from north India during Ashoka time. While Tamilian in Jaffna Peninsula consisted 20% of population the Southern were 80%. The northern areas are not fit for agriculture and the people were mostly occupied in the service sector. Education was the industry in northern areas.

Every alternate house was an educational institute. During the period of rule of Bandaranaike in Sri Lanka there was massive agitation against the predominant occupation and domination of Tamilian in government jobs and professional courses. This led to legislation of reservation in government jobs and professional courses for the majority. The country was taken as a unit for its application.

Suddenly, Tamilian population found themselves in minority in government jobs and professional courses. A Tamilian student who secured marks and stood fourth in the country could not secure a seat in Jaffna Medical College and was accommodated in Colombo. Such sudden shift in their prospects led to strikes and agitations, which were effectively suppressed by the ruling Sinhalese majority.

To make a living, majority of young educated Tamilian population migrated to other countries while the older members of family stayed back in northern Sri Lanka. Since there were many cheaper educational opportunities in northern Sri Lanka, their children stayed back with their grandparents. There was a tremendous vacuum of age groups of 20 to 60 in northern Sri Lanka for decades. The migrated population used to send money from abroad to support their parents and children. The small group of uneducated Tamilian population mostly living on fishing and allied activity soon took control of the local situation.

There was a big scope for them to indulge in smuggling activity to neighbouring countries like India where a sympathetic Tamil population lived. The young children living with their grandparents were soon lured to the adventurism and under the guise of culture and fight against exploitation joined the cadres of LTTE. The grandparents who lost the earlier opportunities and suffered the majority rule stayed as silent mute spectators.

(Source: Hopping Memories, an autobiography of Late Dr AP Ranga Rao)

Next morning, Col Venugopal arrived along with two general duty doctors and three nurses and two assistants. All of them were from Delhi. In the afternoon, a truck load of medicines and supplies arrived from Delhi. The truck unloaded them and left. All of the medical team carried them and stored them in the stores of the hospital and handed over them to the civilian doctors

the resulted firing, it is said that totally 70 persons were killed, and the number included patients, two junior doctors, three nurses, and a senior doctor and some LTTE activists and sympathisers. The bodies of the dead were still lying in the OP block which was sealed after sanitisation.

Civilian doctors Dr Shashi Sabha Ratnam, Dr Ponnampalam and the other doctor thanked Dr Ranga Rao for the supplies. Colonel Venugopal found some accommodation within the hospital for the Red Cross team to stay and all moved into it. All slept on floor in the same room. Col Venugopal made some arrangements for food to be cooked in a hotel nearby "Subash Hotel".

Curfew was lifted for a few hours after a week after its imposition. There was chaos. The general market which was close to the hospital was looted. Even the patients left their beds and returned with whatever they could lay their hands on. There was a barter between people, and they ex-

mandant Brigadier Callahan. Dikshit who was Indian Ambassador visited Jaffna and the hospital.

Days passed by and there was no let-up in the fighting. It spread to new areas. Total curfew with relaxation for few hours was imposed throughout the northern peninsula. Curfew in Jaffna lasted for 21 days. Ranga Rao could not contact his family during the period. On his request and suggestion, a team consisting of thirty-five with 8 doctors was deputed. The team was divided into four groups the bigger group staying back at Jaffna and others were sent to Batticaloa, Vavuniya, and Trincomalee and to point Pedro.

The Red Cross used to receive many enquiries from various countries in regards the safety and whereabouts of persons said to be living in Jaffna peninsula. Slowly the life was returning to normalcy. After intimating IRCS Ranga Rao withdrew and returned to Hyderabad to re-join his regular duty.



Maoist surrenders on the rise as TS thrives

FATIMA HASAN

IT is an unprecedented event in the history of the erstwhile united state of Andhra Pradesh, that around 5 in the evening of October 1, 2003, People's War Group activists triggered a series of nine powerful Claymore mines, which they are suspected to have planted over a period of time on the ghat road leading to Tirumala hills from Tirupati, barely minutes after the then Chief Minister's convoy had crossed Alipiri toll gate downhill.

The impact of the blast was so intense that Nara Chandrababu Naidu's bulletproof car was hurled into the air and landed on its side. Security personnel extricated the dazed and injured Chief Minister from the mangled car in which he was seated beside the driver. Those accompanying him were all injured and rushed to the hospitals. This was the second incident after the 1998 attack when PW cadres placed Claymore mines in a bullock cart alongside a road on which he was to travel during an Assembly by-election campaign in Karimnagar district and wherein a constable was injured.

PWG cadres were among the different groups of Naxalites. Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) People's War, usually called People's War Group (PWG), was an underground Communist party in India. It merged with the Maoist Communist Centre of India to form the Communist Party of India (Maoist) in 2004, almost one year after the Alipiri attack.

Now, the difference between Maoist struggle and the Naxalite movement is that both trace their origin to the Naxalbari uprising of 1967. But while the Naxalite movement thrives on the original spirit of Naxalbari, the Maoist struggle is an outcome of the 1967 uprising. Maoists work with an agenda and use weapons to achieve their aims. Naxalism focuses on mass organisations, while Maoism relies mainly on arms. The underlying fact is that both are the two facets of the same coin.

The Maoist groups are the offshoot of Naxalism. And this is how the Maoist insurgency runs parallel to the history of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. On Monday this week, 33 militia members of the banned Maoist party surrendered before Bhadradi Kothagudem Superintendent of Police in Telangana, bringing our attention back to these groups amid the Corona virus pandemic.

When we trace the time-line of Maoist surrenders in Telangana, interestingly we see that they started again in huge numbers since 2014. This is the case not just in Telangana but other States too. In August 2014, a Maoist couple of Chhattisgarh surrendered in Telangana. Then again in the following year in October, two Maoist cadres, including an outlawed CPI Maoist area committee secretary, surrendered to Telangana police. In 2015, a senior leader of the Communist Party of India-Maoist (CPI-Maoist), who was the deputy commander of Mangi Dalam operating in Telangana State, surrendered due to ill health.

In December 2017, top Maoist leader Jampanna and his wife surrendered before Telangana Police following 'ideological differences' with CPI (Maoist). In October 2018, a Maoist couple looking for peaceful life surrendered in Hyderabad. In February 2019, top Maoists surrendered in Telangana, making startling revelations blaming the group for extortion. Lastly, coming to the hallmark year 2020, at different times, there have been surrenders of cadres of different Naxalite groups in the State.

When we closely vet the timeline, we notice one thing that the Maoists in all these years have chosen the second half of the calendar year, i.e. July, August, September, October, November and December to Surrender. If one can ask then, this can be a good question to be asked to the Maoists as to why they choose the last half-year to surrender. Is there any pattern behind it? One more interesting thing to be noted is that the Naxals or Maoists have always been at 'war' against successive governments and threatened the top political functionaries many a times while on the other hand, their friendly hand towards KCR's Telangana is something that raises questions.

How their surrenders are a good sign for the State? Firstly, it boosts the image of the State police who get them to surrender. Then, if few members from a larger group surrender, then they may help to track the other members engaged in the game. The ideology of left-wing extremism may not win new cadres. If more number of insurgents join hands with the State and join the mainstream, then there can be faster development. There will also be a reduction in landmine blasts, burning of road rollers and other violent activities that hamper development in the countryside.

Farmers' welfare in corporate grip

SUNKARA PADMASREE

THE free market law introduced by the Central government would do a great harm to the farming community. The new law would certainly increase the profits of the middlemen, traders and the corporate companies, forget about profits to the farmers. The central government had opened the flood gates of the agriculture to the corporate sector, as it had been doing in every other sector, which are already given to the corporate companies. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had given a call to the farmers recently, promising to double their income by 2022 and also assured them of a comfortable India, where everyone can have peace of mind in all aspects.

If this statement is true and if it is to be believed, the Prime Minister would not have brought these new legislations to cripple the farming sector in the country. These laws are not progressive and revolutionary as Modi is claiming. They don't intend to bring richness to the farmers as Home Minister Amit

Shah claims. They blow a death knell to the farmers in reality.

The way these legislations were made is not a healthy parliamentary practice. The government acted in haste and adopted dictatorial form in passing them in the Parliament, without conceding the demand of the opposition parties send the bills to the select committee. It did not even allow debate in the House. Though agriculture is a state subject, the Centre did not even consult the states before making this law much against the federal spirit of the country.

The first law gives freedom to the farmers to sell their produce anywhere in the country. The second law is to give legal guarantee to the agreements that farmers reach with the traders. The third law is lifting ban on the storage of millets, pulses and oilseeds. The central government talks big about the benefits of these three laws to the farmers. But the facts are otherwise.

Is it practically possible for the small and medium farmers to take their produce to the city or other state? Are our farmers



educated enough and have money and other resources to sell their produce in other markets? Can a farmer holding two

acres take his produce to a market away from his village and sell it? Who will pay him the transport charges? Can this farmer

mange the market forces? Can he bargain with the market forces? What if he fails to get even the transport cost? All

these laws are aimed at weakening the local market committees and empower the corporate sector. This would make the farmers sacrificial goats.

The market forces have been cheating the farmers even in the local market yards by suppressing the demand and thus bringing down the price. The farmers are not even getting the minimum support price. Instead of giving them the MSP guarantee, leaving the market to the corporate sector and the traders would do no good to the farmers. The laws would also take away the right of the farmers to complain against the non-payment of the MSP.

Coming to the issue of lifting of ban on storage of essentials like pulses, spices, it is for sure that the traders will buy the produce at the time of yield at lesser price and stock them, and create artificial demand for them to make greater profits. The government has no mechanism to control this gambling by the traders and the corporate companies, who can store the essential commodities creating artificial scarcity. The govern-

ment fails every time when the market forces create artificial scarcity when there is a ban on storage. Now, with the ban lifted, the government would not be in a position to check the market and make the essential commodities available to the people.

The BJP leaders who have come to power by promising to implement the recommendations of the Swaminathan Commission are wasting their time and energies and resources of the country by making useless and meaningless laws and decisions. These laws would jeopardise the food security and security of the farmers in the country. If the Central government is sincere and honest to help the farmers, it should take measures to ensure MSP for every crop. This is what the farmers across the country have been asking for decades. The government, if it is farmer-friendly, should give MSP to the farmers, buy their crop and pay their money directly into their bank accounts.

(The author is Member of APCC Coordination Committee)

Manufacturing GVA growth in Q2 surprising: SBI report

THE manufacturing sector played a major role in narrowing down the India's GDP contraction in Q2 of FY21. An SBI Ecowrap report, however, dubbed the growth in manufacturing GVA as 'astonishing' as the IIP manufacturing for the same period declined by 6.7 per cent.

India's GDP in the July-September period contracted 7.5 per cent, compared with 23.9 per cent in the preceding quarter.

The GVA in Q2 2020-21 from the manufacturing sector grew 0.6 per cent, as compared with a de-growth of 0.6 per cent in the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal. The report by Soumya Kanti Ghosh, Group Chief Economic Adviser, State Bank of India, said: "Though the whole press release is full of surprising numbers, the most astonishing number is the positive growth in manufacturing in Q2."

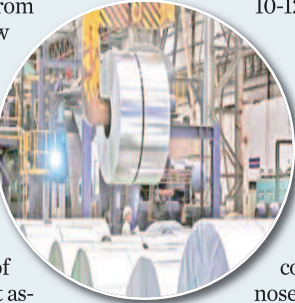
He noted that despite being the worst affected sector in Q1 (due to lockdown), it is quite puzzling how manufacturing turned itself around. The IIP manufacturing and manufacturing GVA growth are highly correlated (almost more than 0.90) and this correlation collapsed in Q2 when IIP manufacturing de-

clined by 6.7 per cent (average of July/August/September) while manufacturing GVA grew by 0.6 per cent. He said that one possible reason for this could be stellar corporate GVA numbers in Q2 on the back of massive purge in costs. Further, he said that small companies, with turnover of up to Rs 500 crore, are more aggressive in cutting cost, displaying reduction in employee cost by 10-12 per cent.

"This could turn a potential headwind in future in terms of a drag on consumption. Additionally, there is evidence of inventory build-up that could act as a drag on future manufacturing growth," said the report.

Interestingly, government consumption expenditure has also nosedived in Q2, that is difficult to explain, as such expenditures are typically pro cyclical, he added.

During the July-September period, agriculture sector continued to perform well with its growth pegged at 3.4 per cent. Services remained in the negative territory, although the decline was contained as trade, hotels, transport, communication and services related to broadcasting showed recovery.



Centre to upgrade 157 hospitals linked to medical colleges

Dr Harsh Vardhan addresses webinar organised by FTCCI, others

HANS BUSINESS
HYDERABAD

AS many as 157 hospitals that are linked to medical colleges, will undergo major upgradation, according to Dr Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare.

He addressed a webinar organized by Federation of Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FTCCI), Fapcci, Ficci, and ASCI, on the government measures on Covid 19-health care reforms.

Stressing on the measures being initiated by the Health Ministry, Harsh Vardhan said



that the government had spent Rs 900 crore under Covid Kavach. He said "1.5 lakh health and wellness centres will come up by 2022." As many as 2.4 crore beneficiaries would get health assistance as part of the Ayushman Bharat scheme.

The government health services were available free of cost to all citizens, said FTCCI President Ramakanth Inani.

Pointing out that there were severe limitations in quality and infrastructure, he sought that the government needs to work with private healthcare companies for building health infrastructure and to upgrade the current primary care centres in a more efficient manner.

Severe shortage of trained personnel in government hospitals should be addressed, he demanded. "We are happy that pharma companies rose to the occasion and have come forward to offer the Covid-19 vaccine," he said.

Lower tax inflows increase fiscal deficit worries

The fiscal numbers for the govt for the first 7 months are on expected lines

KUMUD DAS

AT a time when there was a lower tax and non-tax collection due to Covid-19, the collections coming from excise is the only solace.

All taxes except excise are lower: corporate Rs 1.72 lakh cr (Rs 2.72 lakh cr last year), income tax Rs 2.03 lakh crore (Rs 2.44 lakh cr), GST Rs 2.05 lakh cr (Rs 2.85 lakh cr), customs 0.5 lakh cr (Rs 0.64 lakh cr). Non-tax receipts are also lower at just 30 per cent of target as against 72 per cent last year-the dividend component is lagging.

Last the non-debt capital receipts are way down and it is here that the government has to work hard to finish with the disinvestment process. Excise collections are the only component which is up, a CARE report says.

The fiscal numbers for the central government for the first 7 months are disappointing though on expected lines. The government has largely kept expenditure under check with total expenditure so far being 55 per cent of the budgeted amount compared with 59 per cent last year. This also has meant some cut in capex which is lower at 48 per cent of budget compared with 60 per cent last year.

Higher spending by the consumer affairs and rural development ministries has meant cuts in housing and rural development, defence, railways and roads to control overall expenditure. So where is the problem?

The problem is essentially on the revenue side where the collections have been lower for tax, non-tax, and non-debt capital receipts. For tax receipts there is less control as it is based on the state of the economy.

The fiscal deficit is at Rs 9.53 lakh crore which would be roughly 4.8-5 per cent of GDP if it holds for the full year.

We believe the deficit based on



The YoY uptick in gross tax revenues in October 2020 was fairly broad-based, led by excise duty, customs duty, CGST as well as income tax, mirroring the pre-festive upswing in a number of economic indicators

the expenditure allocations announced by the FM will double this amount taking the ratio close to 9-9.25 per cent for the year.

Hence while tax collections can increase in proportion to growth in the next 4 months, it may not be possible to recoup the losses in the first 7-8 months, the CARE report added.

The overall fiscal picture for the Government of India (GoI) for the April-October 2020 period remains grim, although the expansion in gross tax revenues as well as capital spending in the month of October 2020 are encouraging.

The government's gross tax revenues recorded a healthy 17 per cent growth in October 2020, marking the first month of expansion in this beleaguered fiscal year.

"The YoY uptick in gross tax revenues in October 2020 was fairly

broad-based, led by excise duty, customs duty, CGST as well as income tax, mirroring the pre-festive upswing in a number of economic indicators," says Aditi Nayar, principal economist, ICRA.

Moreover, the pace of contraction in corporate taxes eased to a modest 5% in October 2020, which primarily reflects a favourable base effect related to the tax rate reduction in FY2020.

The monthly trend in expenditure is also encouraging, especially the 130% expansion in capital expenditure, even as revenue expenditure declined by 1.3% in the month of October 2020 despite a large increase in the outgo for food subsidy.

Our baseline estimate places the gross tax revenues of the government at Rs 9.2 trillion in the last five months of FY2021, only mar-

ginally lower than the Rs 9.6 trillion garnered in November-March of FY2020.

This is supported by the recent upswing in various lead indicators of the economy, brisk festive sales in many categories, robust excise inflows, and base effect related to corporate tax collections, are expected to boost tax generation in H2 FY2021, she added.

Overall, ICRA expects the net tax revenues of the Centre, non-tax revenues and disinvestment proceeds to together trail the budgeted level by Rs. 6.5 trillion in FY2021.

Central tax devolution to the states was reduced to Rs 372 billion in October 2020 from the level of Rs. 420 billion transferred in the previous four months. In our view, this is a precursor of the acute adjustment that lies ahead, as the government's shareable taxes are expected to fall sharply short of the budgeted level.

An ICRA estimate says that the government's total expenditure (excluding recovery of loans) at Rs 30.2 trillion in FY2021, mildly lower than the budgeted level, despite the fiscal support measures that have been announced so far. This translates into a projected expenditure (excluding recovery of loans) of Rs 13.7 trillion in Nov-Mar FY2021, which is a considerable 33.6 per cent higher than the outgo in the last five months of FY2020, and therefore may prove to be challenging to achieve despite the recent relaxation for Q3 FY2021.

It expects the Government's fiscal deficit to widen to Rs 14.5 trillion or 7.7% of GDP (assuming contraction of 7.5% in the nominal GDP) in FY2021 from the budgeted level of Rs 8.0 trillion, and Rs 9.4 trillion in FY2020.

With healthy inflows into small savings in the last few months, we do not foresee a further expansion in the Government's dated borrowing programme for FY21.

A millennial crypto victory bigger than price of Bitcoin

Crypto currency emerging as the millennial generation's alternative asset

ANDY MUKHERJEE

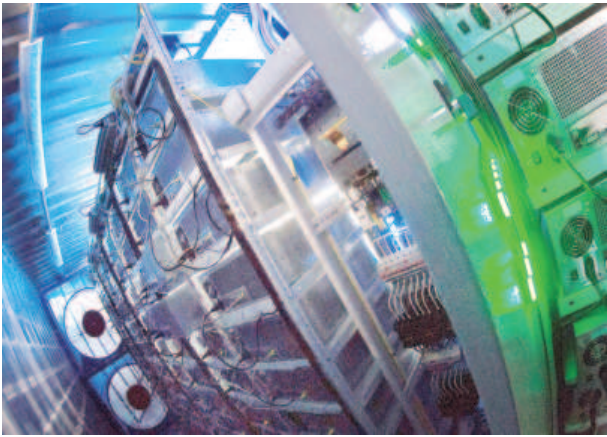
WITH the speed crypto currency is emerging as the millennial generation's alternative asset of choice in India, it's hard to imagine that just two years ago a couple of blockchain pioneers were briefly in police custody.

Sathvik Vishwanath and Harish BV, cofounders of a then five-year-old startup, were arrested in late 2018. No, they hadn't pulled off a shady initial coin offering. Their "crime" was that they put up a kiosk in a mall in Bangalore where customers could swap Bitcoin, Ether or Ripple for cash or vice versa. That was the whole point of Unocoin, their crypto token exchange. But the police were suspicious of the new-fangled "ATM."

A lot has changed since then. Unocoin, which just raised financing from Tesla Inc - backer Tim Draper's Draper Associates, is flourishing, together with other Indian blockchain ventures. India's share of person-to-person virtual-currency trading in Asia has surged to 33 per cent, the same as in China, according to Oslo-based Arcane Research's analysis of volumes on Paxful and LocalBitcoins, the biggest platforms for transactions in the region.

Some of this is no doubt due to the bubbly rise this year in Bitcoin, which recently came within \$100 of its all-time high after surpassing \$19,000 for the first time since 2017. Even after Thursday's wobble, prices have still more than doubled this year.

But fundamental factors are also at play. Sending money to India in a tokenized form, and thus avoiding hefty bank charges, is becoming an option. Some customers of digital-asset exchanges, probably tech-savvy freelancers, receive



tokens at regular intervals as payment for their work and convert them into rupees via their local bank accounts. Families in India are using the same channel to send money to students overseas.

Having the world's largest diaspora - and more than \$100 billion in two-way money flows last year - isn't the only thing. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's disastrous ban on 86 per cent of the country's currency in November 2016 shook Indians' faith in fiat money. Add the fear of leaving spare cash in banks when three major deposit-taking institutions have crumbled in the past 15 months. No wonder Arcane expects Indian crypto volumes to overtake China's. The domestic asset management industry is also helping adoption of crypto - by its incompetence. Most large-cap fund managers have struggled to beat their benchmarks, especially in recent years. The

Nifty 50 index has returned only about 2 per cent annually in dollar terms over the past decade. Yet, as Bloomberg Intelligence's Gaurav Patankar and Morgan Barna have shown, lack of performance hasn't kept managers from pocketing high fees.

Disgruntled younger savers are taking note, and dipping their toes in US exchange-traded funds. At 1 per cent, international allocation is still tiny, the Bloomberg Intelligence analysts say, but it's growing rapidly. Ditto for crypto-investing, even though holding a highly volatile digital asset over the long term isn't for the faint of heart. Only 600 of Unocoin's 1.2 million customers have started a systematic buying plan to invest (mostly) in Bitcoin. But 99.5 per cent of them are sitting on profit, and must be bragging about it to their friends.

There's one dampener: regulation. Nobody wants a re-

India's share of person-to-person virtual-currency trading in Asia has surged to 33 per cent, the same as in China, according to Oslo-based Arcane Research's analysis of volumes on Paxful and LocalBitcoins, the biggest platforms for transactions in the region

turn to 2018, when the Reserve Bank, the monetary authority, instructed banks not to entertain customers who dealt in virtual currency.

The draconian approach nearly strangled India's blockchain revolution. The action against Unocoin's kiosk in Bangalore was like the heavy hand of the state crashing down on a kids' lemonade stand. If folks in India's technology capital couldn't pay cash to buy digital tokens, then the asset was effectively being banned nationwide.

In hindsight, the founders' ordeal with the police proved to be a blessing in disguise. Young entrepreneurs joined together, went to the Supreme Court in New Delhi and got the RBI's direction to banks declared unconstitutional. That was in March. Already, the exchange has seen a fivefold jump in trading, averaging \$150,000 a day, from \$30,000 before the court's verdict. Of late, trading is much higher, thanks to the rally in Bitcoin prices.

Larger bourses such as CoinDCX were witnessing daily volumes of almost \$700,000, when I last checked.

The players are urging the government to bring digital assets under the existing money-laundering law, which will give the industry legitimacy. The next step would be to regulate the tokens as money or secu-

rities, depending on their use.

India's phlegmatic bureaucracy may wonder if this is all a craze, perhaps not. It isn't even unique to Indian Millennial and generation Z consumers.

Wringing the global banking industry dry of its exorbitant fees, and putting more purchasing power in people's hands after the Covid-19 pandemic, will be a worldwide goal. In their study titled, "What We Must Do to Re-build," Deutsche Bank AG economists are advising companies and policy makers to design alternatives to credit cards and "remove middle-man fees." In the short run, conventional fintech will help, but in the longer term, major economies will all do this by replacing cash with their own central bank digital currencies.

That's when older consumers will join in. If they don't, they'll get stuck, and not just figuratively. Automatically triggered crypto "smart contracts" will make it possible for self-driving cars to switch lanes faster than others. Commuters will be continuously paying one another in official digital currencies - or in stablecoins like Facebook Inc.'s proposed Libra, private tokens whose values are fixed against fiat money. The Indian Millennials have read the tea leaves right. (Bloomberg)

QUIZ NO.
149

HANS BIZ QUIZ

'Economics of Covid-19 vaccine'

1. Name the entity that inked a deal with Dr. Reddy's Laboratories to conducting a clinical trial and distribution of Sputnik V in India?
a) Sistema
b) Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation
c) Russian Direct Investment Fund
d) All of the above

2. ZyCoV-D is Zydus Cadila's vaccine against the novel coronavirus. Which is India's first indigenous Covid vaccine, being developed by Bharat Biotech International Limited?
a) Covaxin
b) Covishield
c) CanSino
d) CoronaVac

3. The past six months have brought several scientific terms to public attention. Which novel technology do Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech use for producing the vaccine?
a) tRNA
b) rRNA
c) mRNA
d) All of the above

4. The Pune-based Serum Institute of India is the contract manufacturer in India for Oxford-AstraZeneca's COVID 19 vaccine. What is the Indian version of Oxford-AstraZeneca's COVID 19 vaccine that SII is busy manufacturing?
a) Covishield
b) ChAdOx1-S
c) Novavax
d) Serumovac

5. BioNTech entered into a research and development collaboration with Pfizer pharma. Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines must be stored and transported at minus sixty to ninety degrees Celsius. Which company's vaccine is stable at fridge temperatures of 2-8 Celsius, so there is no need for freezer boxes.
a) Sputnik V
b) Oxford University-AstraZeneca
c) Moderna
d) Sinopharm

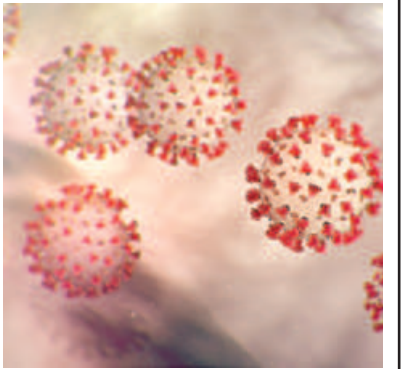
6. Russian Direct Investment Fund finances the production of the Sputnik V vaccine, which is being manufactured in Zelenograd, Russia. Which Russian holding company owns Binnopharm and R-Pharm, the manufactures Sputnik V vaccine?
a) Sistema
b) Pharmasintez
c) Novamedica
d) UCB Pharma

7. The mRNA is a molecule that genetically encodes a set of instructions based on which cells make proteins and send them to various parts of the body. The BBIBP-CorV vaccine is being developed by which of the below in China?
a) China National Pharmaceutical Group Corp
b) Sinopharm and Beijing Institute of Biological Products
c) Wuhan Institute of Biological Products and Sinopharm
d) Shanghai Pharmaceuticals Holding Co.Ltd and Wuhan Institute

8. Moderna's vaccine manufacturing company's vaccine will be priced the highest amongst all vaccines (between \$25 and \$37). Who is the manufacturer of vaccine 'mRNA-1273'?
a) The Gamaleya National Center of Epidemiology and Microbiology
b) Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness (CEPI)
c) CanSino Biologics
d) Moderna

9. Oxford University-AstraZeneca pledged not to profit on the vaccine, pegs its vaccine at about \$4 a dose, and stressed its ambition to enable the entire world to be vaccinated. Which was the COVID-19 vaccine is trade named as SPUTNIK V?
a) Vaktisina Perun
b) Ad5-nCoV
c) Gam-Covid-Va
d) CanSino

10. INOVIO, the International Vaccine Institute (IVI), and Seoul National University Hospital announced a partnership to produce COVID 19 vaccine. What is the COVID-19 vaccine candidate known as?
a) Inovio-Vac
b) iIS-2021
c) Kor-Covi
d) INO-4800



KEY

10I

9C

8D

7B

6A

5B

4A

3C

2A

1C



Guha lashes out at Ganguly, superstar culture in Indian cricket



NEW DELHI

HISTORIAN Ramachandra Guha, a former member of the Committee of Administrators (CoA) that ran the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) during the reforms process ordered by the Supreme Court, has lashed out at the superstar culture in Indian cricket that has allowed top cricketers to have veto power over every decision.

In an interview to www.espnricinfo.com about his new book, *The Commonwealth of Cricket*, Guha lavished praise on former India captain Bishan Bedi but blames the Board, especially the Vinod Rai-headed CoA, for not showing enough spine to stand up to the likes of MS Dhoni and Virat Kohli.

"When Bedi once gave a television interview where he said some sarcastic things,

he was banned for a (Test) match in Bangalore in 1974. Players had to get more power, they had to get organised, they had to be noticed, they had to be paid properly, which took a very long time. The generation of Bedi and (Sunil) Gavaskar was not really paid well till the fag end of their careers," said Guha.

"But now to elevate them into demigods and icons -- one of the things I talk about is (Virat) Kohli and (Anil) Kumble and their rift (Kumble was forced to step down as coach after the 2017 Champions Trophy). How essentially Kohli had a veto over who could be his coach, which is not the case in any sporting team anywhere," Guha questioned the power given to the Indian captain.

Guha also touched upon an incident during a CoA meeting when he had asked the committee to consider demoting Dhoni in the central contracts system as he had retired from Test cricket. The rest of CoA, he says, was too scared to do that.

"(MS) Dhoni had decided: I'm not going to play Test cricket. He was only playing one-day cricket. And I said (in the CoA) that he should not get a (Grade) A contract. Simple. That contract is for people who play throughout the year. He has said, 'I'm not playing Test cricket'. Fine. That's his choice and he can be picked for the shorter form if he is good enough. (They said) 'No, we are too scared to demote him from A to B'. And more than the board, the CoA, appointed by the Supreme Court, chaired by a senior IAS officer, was too scared. I thought it was hugely, hugely problematic. So I protested about it while I was there. And when I got nowhere, I wrote about it," he explains.

Guha also lashed out at the current BCCI president Sourav Ganguly, saying that the former India captain has capitulated.

be practising this shocking conflict of interest. The kind of example it sets is abysmal. I say this with some sadness because I admired Ganguly as a cricketer and as a captain. I'm glad I'm out of it and I'm just a fan again. I can just enjoy the game and not bother about the murkiness within the administration," he said.

Guha called Bishan Bedi a man of character.

"He is a person of enormous character, integrity and principle. He never equivocates, he never makes excuses. And he calls it as it is. These kinds of people are rare in public life in India. To find someone like Bishan Bedi, who is ramrod straight in his conduct, in any sphere of public life in India today is increasingly rare. He is also an incredibly generous man," Guha said of Bedi. (IANS)



Battered India raise against time to find right mix in ODI

SYDNEY

INDIA have just one day to rebound and recover from the psychological blow that Australia inflicted on them by winning the first One-day International after setting their highest-ever total in the 50-over format against India in Friday's game at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

The two teams face each other in the second ODI at the same venue on Sunday.

Australia had hammered 374 for six wickets in 50 overs, built on centuries from captain Aaron Finch and Steve Smith, half-century from David Warner and a 19-ball 45 from Glenn Maxwell.

Josh Hazlewood then rubbed salt to India's wounds as he removed three of the top four batsmen inside the first 10 overs with short deliveries as Virat Kohli's team, despite a fight-back from Hardik Pandya, fell short by 66 runs.

The ODI series is the first for India in the ICC Cricket World Cup Super League, from which the top seven teams will qualify for the 2023 World Cup, to be held in India.

India, playing in the retro jersey from 1992 World Cup, faced problems on different counts -- the bowling and fielding was not up to the mark and their over rate was slow enough to force ICC to dock 20 per cent of the players' match fees.

None of the bowlers, except Mohammed Shami, could go below six runs an over with leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal conceding 89 in his 10 overs. Chahal's is the most by an Indian bowler in ODI history.

India could replace Chahal with Chinaman bowler Kuldeep Yadav in Sunday's fixture although the bigger problem for India is that they don't have enough bowling options to back the five bowlers. It meant that the team lacks an all-rounder unlike Australia.

Kohli lamented after Saturday's match that the team doesn't have someone like Glenn Maxwell or Marcus Stoinis.

"Unfortunately, Hardik is not fit enough to bowl, and we don't have other all-round options to pick from either, someone like Stoinis or Maxwell," he said after the match.

Pandya, who is playing only as a batsman as his bowling is not match-ready, also agreed with it and said that India needs to prepare more all-rounders for the future.

Lack of all-round option means India have no one to fall back on in case a bowler has an off-day like Chahal did on Friday.

Australia, on the other hand, have plenty of all-round options. Despite Stoinis injured and doubtful Sunday's second one-day match,



Oz will win series in all formats against India, predicts Vaughan

NEW DELHI

HOSTS Australia are the favourites to win the series against India across all formats, former England captain Michael Vaughan has predicted, pointing out that the Aaron Finch's team was outstanding in the first game on Friday.

India lost to Australia by 66 runs at the Sydney Cricket Ground after the hosts scored 374 for six in their 50 overs. The two teams face off again on Sunday, at the same venue. Vaughan expressed his opinion on Twitter and criticised India heavily.

"Early call... I think Australia will beat India this tour in all formats convincingly," he tweeted. "India's

the hosts have a range of all-rounders to choose from with Cameron Green likely to get a look-in. Smith had praised Green in the post-match presser, saying that he faced him in the nets for a couple of deliveries and the youngster looked good.

Kohli had also blamed his team for not getting into ODI mode despite getting enough time and practice during the two-week quarantine period. The team's fielding was poor. They dropped a few catches in the outfield and conceded runs in the latter part of Australia's innings, showing that they have not

over-rate is appalling... !!! Body language defensive... fielding is my standard (shocking)... Bowling ordinary!!! Aussies on the other hand have been outstanding... Long tour for India me thinks," added Vaughan.

As Australian batsmen prospered, none of the Indian bowlers looked good. Worse, India did not have a back-up option to lend support to their bowlers, who were leaking runs by the bucketful.

"This Indian ODI team is too old school for me... Just 5 bowling options & the batting isn't deep enough!!!" Vaughan added.

Former India cricketer Sanjay Manjrekar too criticised the balance, saying that India do not have an all-round option.

"That's why need pure batsmen who can bowl 3-4 overs. Big concern for India that none of their batsmen can bowl a single over. Aus have Stoinis and Maxwell," the former Test batsman tweeted after Friday's match. (IANS)

yet got out of T20 mould.

Kohli admitted that the body language of the players wasn't good after 25 overs.

The second ODI will also hold significance for Kohli as he would like to better his poor ODI average at the SCG. While he has done well in the Tests and T20 Internationals at the venue, his ODI average at SCG has been below-par, just 11.4, in six 50-over innings. The 21 he made on Saturday is his highest ODI score at SCG.

Australia, on the other hand, looked good with their top-order scoring heavily. (IANS)

HYDERABAD FC TIE ENDS IN DRAW



Bengaluru FC skipper Sunil Chhetri (second from left) heads away a dangerous ball during the Hero ISL 7 match against Hyderabad FC at JLN Stadium, Fatorda on Saturday. Hyderabad FC and Bengaluru FC shared the points as their second matchin ISL ended in a goalless draw. Hyderabad FC having won their opener tie remains unbeaten in this ongoing season.

Kerala to face Chennaiyin, aim for first win of season

GOA

KERALA Blasters will be keen to

register their maiden win against their southern rivals Chennaiyin FC, having secured a solitary point from their first two matches in Hero Indian Super League Season 7, at the GMC Stadium, here on Sunday.

The two teams have so far faced each other on 14 occasions and two-time champions Chennai have got the better of their opponents on six occasions and faced just three losses while five matches have ended in draws.

After winning their opener against Jamshedpur FC, CSaba Laszlo's Chennaiyin will once again bank on Rafael Crivellaro and Anirudh Thapa. The onus will be on forward Esmael Goncalves to spearhead their attack.

"We know our opponent well.

We have to try to control the game. Kerala has a good team, their coach (Kibu Vicuna) is spending his second year in India and he knows Indian football well. He's new and so is the team. Generally, the most important (thing) is the reaction from the team and their desire. This is a derby game, not just another game," said Laszlo.

"We will continue what we began (with) -- to enjoy ourselves, our football, and our style and work on that. Hopefully, we can win and collect the three points."

In contrast, Kerala have struggled to create chances despite dominating possession against their opponents in the first two matches. Apart from his attack, Vicuna will expect his team's defense to improve. (IANS)

Today's Matches

Jamshedpur FC vs Odisha FC at Tilak Maidan Stadium 5pm
Chennaiyin FC vs Kerala Blasters FC at GMC Stadium Bambolim 7.30pm

Pakistan's tour of NZ doubtful after 7th player tests covid +ve

CHRISTCHURCH

THE Pakistan cricket team's tour to New Zealand for three T20 Internationals and two Test matches has come under a cloud with another member of the team testing positive for Covid-19, taking the number of affected players to seven.

The Pakistan players have been unable to train as they are on a final warning for breaching New Zealand's tight quarantine restrictions.

"One additional member of the Pakistan cricket squad has today tested positive," New Zealand's Ministry of Health said in a statement on Saturday.

"The remainder of the results from the squad's day-three swab testing, apart from the six who have already returned a positive result, are negative." The Pakistan team arrived only four days back, on November 24, and are under a 14-day quarantine. (IANS)

SYDNEY

AUSTRALIA international Calum Ferguson has said that cricket authorities need to enforce strict penalties to get rid of slow over rates from international cricket.

The first One-day International between Australia and India at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Friday went beyond the scheduled close by almost over an hour -- the match was supposed to end at 10.15 p.m. local time, but the final ball was delivered at 11.10 p.m. The game went on for about eight-and-a-half hours.

"It's literally got to come down to a lack of pressure being put on by administrators," Ferguson, who has played 30 ODIs for Australia, said on ABC Radio.

"I don't understand how it has been able to happen for so long, not just in this format, but all three formats. We need to start taking a harder line, work out what is going to hurt the players the most," he added.

"It doesn't seem to be a

Aus cricketer Ferguson calls for strict action on slow over rates

huge issue at domestic level... why do captains and players feel like it's OK to stroll between overs, when you see in domestic competitions around the world players sprinting between overs trying to make sure to keep up with the over rate?"

The match on Saturday was also held up during Australia's innings after a couple of protesters came onto the pitch, delaying the proceedings. However, they caused a delay of only about five minutes.

Friday's man-of-the-match Steve Smith said after the

game that it was the longest ODI he has played. "That was the longest 50 overs in the field I've ever had, that's for sure," Smith told reporters after the match. "I don't know what to put it down to. Obviously there was the (pitch invaders) who came on the field in India's innings which took a bit of time. And I think they went 45 minutes over the scheduled time and we were something similar," he added.

"I don't know why. Not sure why. But it certainly felt like a long time out there," Smith said. (IANS)

India fined 20% for slow over-rate

SYDNEY

INDIA cricket team players have been fined 20 per cent of their match fee for maintaining a slow over-rate against Australia in the first One-day International (ODI) in Sydney on Friday.

David Boon of the ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees imposed the sanction after Virat Kohli's side was ruled to be one over short of the target after time allowances were taken into consideration.

"Kohli pleaded guilty to the offence and accepted the proposed sanction, so there was no need for a formal hearing. On-field umpires Rod Tucker and Sam Nogajski, TV umpire Paul Reiffel and fourth umpire Gerard Abood levelled the charge," the statement added. (IANS)

India's Daruvala earns Maiden F2 Podium

BAHRAIN

INDIAN racing star Jehan Daruvala earned his maiden FIA Formula 2 podium at the Bahrain Grand Prix Support Race on Saturday. The Red Bull Racing Junior is the first Indian to stand on the podium in an FIA Formula 2 Race, in the present era of the championship.

The F2 season moved to Sakhir, Bahrain, for the last two rounds of the F2 championship, and Daruvala immediately showed his pace in the only practice session. In the last 15 minutes, Daruvala posted a lap time of 1:42.782 seconds to go fastest. With just five minutes left, Nikita Mazepin of Russia went faster by a mere 0.122 secs.

Qualifying threatened to completely undo all of Daruvala's efforts. He faced traffic on his quick laps that allowed him to post a time that was quick enough for eighth on the grid, two places ahead of Championship leader Mick Schumacher. Callum Ilott of Great Britain earned another pole position.

Daruvala made an excellent start for the Feature Race (Race 1) from eighth. He gained two places and stayed in a sixth for a few laps. Daruvala and other racers on the Medium compound of tyre, then seemed to struggle against those on the Hard Compound. Lap 5 saw Daruvala lose two places and was forced off the circuit. The resulting loss of speed lost him more positions. Daruvala stayed in tenth

for a few laps before pitting to change tyres.

The 22 year old Indian emerged from the pit down in 18th place. He then reeled of a series of quick laps to climb up the order. He gained more positions as others pitted and was running sixth by lap 19 of the 32 lap race. Daruvala soon overtook multiple race winner Robert Schwartzman to move up to fifth.

Race leader Mick Schumacher then took his mandatory pit stop. Daruvala's blistering pace after his own pit stop meant that Schumacher emerged from the pits behind Daruvala, who was now running third.

The main risk was that Schumacher had tyres that were many laps fresher than Daruvala. The two were evenly matched for at least another six laps, before Schumacher, now in his second season, started closing the gap to Daruvala. Schumacher soon brought the gap down from two seconds to around 1.5 seconds. Besides much fresher tyres, Schumacher was also now on the faster Medium compound and charged to reduce the gap down to 0.7

seconds with five laps remaining.

Unfortunately for Daruvala, this meant that Schumacher was now also able to use his DRS (Drag Reduction System) which gave him extra speed on three straights around the F1 circuit. It seemed only a matter of corners before Schumacher would overtake Daruvala. (IANS)

