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J&K WILL GET STATEHOOD AT APPROPRIATE TIME: SHAH

Allays Oppn fears on J&K Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill

NEW DELHI

JAMMU and Kashmir will be given Statehood "at an appropriate time", Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Saturday, during a Lok Sabha discussion on the J&K Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2021.

Responding to claims that passing an amendment to the 2019 Bill - which split the former state into two Union Territories after Article 370 was withdrawn - meant the Centre had no intention of restoring Statehood, a furious Shah said he had "clarified the intentions" of the Bill. "Many MPs said bringing the amendment means J&K won't get statehood. I am piloting the Bill, I brought it. I have clarified the intentions. Nowhere is it written that Jammu & Kashmir won't get Statehood. Where are you drawing this conclusion from?" Shah asked of the Opposition.

"I have said in this House and I say it again - this Bill has got nothing to do with the statehood of Jammu & Kashmir. Statehood will be given... at an appropriate time," Shah stressed.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah speaks in the Lok Sabha during ongoing Budget Session of Parliament, in New Delhi on Saturday

On Monday Congress's Ghulam Nabi Azad said: "You (Shah) had promised that statehood will be restored....But this Bill creates suspicion government wants to keep J&K as a Union Territory." The J&K Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill seeks to merge the J&K cadre of all-India services officers with the Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Mizoram Union Territory (AGMUT) cadre. The Home Minister also criticised the Opposition - particularly the Congress - for seeking answers over promises made as J&K's special status was withdrawn, but failing to provide any of their own. "We were asked what we did about promises made during abrogation of Article 370. It has been 17 months since... and you are demanding an account? Did you bring the account of what you did for 70 years? Had you worked properly... you need not have asked us," Shah raged.

"I will give an account for everything. But those who were given the opportunity to govern for generations should look within if they are even fit to demand an account," he added. Shah pointed to the conduct of local body polls with over 51 per cent voter turnout in November last year - the first since J&K was split into two union territories - as proof that statehood for the region would soon be restored.

In a move that sparked controversy and made international headlines, the Centre, on August 5, 2019, revoked special status given to J&K under Article 370 and split into two union territories. The move was preceded and followed by a security blanket that included the suspension of mobile internet and broadband services for over 18 months and the deployment of thousands of troops.

J&K Reorganisation Bill gets LS nod

NEW DELHI: The Lok Sabha on Saturday passed the Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2021. During discussion, Union Home Minister Amit Shah urged the members not to oppose the Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2021, just for the sake of politics.

WINDOWS

Mahua Moitra under 'surveillance'?

NEW DELHI: Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra on Saturday took strong exception to the stationing of three armed security personnel at her home in the national capital, wondering whether she was under "some sort of surveillance" and asked Delhi Police chief to withdraw them. In the letter to Delhi Police Commissioner S N Shrivastava, she said the station house officer (SHO) of Barakhamba Road police station had come to meet her at her residence on February 12 and shortly "thereafter, around three BSF personnel armed with assault rifles had been deputed outside her house" she stated.

1st Indian woman to head Oxford Students' Union

NEW DELHI: Rashmi Samant has made history by becoming the first Indian woman to head the Oxford Students' Union. An alumnus of Karnataka's Manipal Institute of Technology, Samant in her LinkedIn profile says she is "a sustainable energy enthusiast who believes in effective policymaking and energy equality for healing the deteriorating climate of the world". She won the students' union election with 1,996 votes.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

This is just for our safety.
Anti-Valentine's Day groups only target those who swear in the name of love!

Week-long Steel agitation flame grows fiercer in AP

VASU POTNURU
VISAKHAPATNAM

THEIR slogans continue to reverberate across the Steel City. As the battle to save the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (VSP) from the proposed privatisation intensifies, the week-long agitation flame ignites protests, 'sabhas', hunger strike camps and other forms.

Along with trade unions and political parties, an army of women, students and school-going children are contributing their part to the ongoing agitation.

Apart from demanding the Union government to take back its privatisation proposal, the stress is also on allotting an iron ore mine exclusively for the steel plant to sail through the financial crisis.

In the Gajuwaka constituency, the indefinite hunger strike of former TDP MLA Palla Srinivasa Rao entered the fourth day. At Kurmannapalem, the 'ukku' protest carried out by Visakha Ukku Parirakshana Porata committee grew fiercer as the trade unions continued their relay hunger strike.

Continued on Page 4

JeM man recced Doval's office, sent videos to Pak

Arrested terrorist makes confessions

NEW DELHI/JAMMU:

THE video clip of National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval's office and several other top locations in the national capital were recovered from the phone of an arrested Jaish-e-Mohammad terrorist.

The development has sent security officials into tizzy leading to additional security measures being deployed, official related to the development said in Saturday.

A senior Jammu police official related to the development said, "The Jammu police arrested a person named Hidayat-Ullah Malik on February 6. During interrogation he confessed that he has done recce of Doval's office and several other locations and sent it to the commanders of JeM in Pakistan."

The official said that Malik, a resident of Shopian was arrested and a case was registered against him under several sections of Unlawful Activities Prevention Act at the Gangayal police station in Jammu.

Continued on Page 4

PM to hand over Arjun tank to Army today

CHENNAI

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi will hand over the Arjun Main Battle Tank Mark-1A (MK-1A) to the Indian Army on Sunday in Chennai.

G Satheesh Reddy, Secretary of Defence Research and Development and Chairman of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), said: "It is a great decision by Prime Minister to dedicate MK-1A to the nation by handing it over to Indian Army, giving a message that India stands by its indigenous systems and they would be promoted and encouraged in a big way."

"People in the country and the organisations should strive in making state of art indigenous systems so that in the upcoming years the armed forces will have the maximum indigenous content-based equipment," Reddy added.

Wrestling coach arrested for 5 murders in Delhi

NEW DELHI: Sukhwinder, the main accused in the murder of five people at a wrestling academy(akhara) in Haryana's Rohtak was on Saturday arrested from Samaypur Badli by the Delhi Police in a joint operation with Haryana Police.

"He would be produced in court and then handed over to the Haryana police," said a senior police officer. The Haryana Police were tailing the accused, himself a wrestling coach and there were inputs that he is hiding in the national Capital. The Delhi Police, along with members of the Haryana Police, succeeded in identifying the location of the accused and finally arrested him.

Union Budget set pace for Aatmanirbhar Bharat: FM

Covid didn't deter us from undertaking reforms: Sitharaman

NEW DELHI

UNION Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday said the Union Budget 2021 set the pace for India to become Aatmanirbhar.

Replying to a debate on the Budget in the Lok Sabha, the minister said the challenges of pandemic did not deter the government from undertaking reforms for maintaining long-term goals of the country. The reforms undertaken will lay the path for India to become one of those fastest-growing economies in the world, she said, adding that the Budget has set the pace for India to become Aatmanirbhar or self-reliant.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Lok Sabha during ongoing Budget Session of Parliament, in New Delhi on Saturday

Earlier this month, the Union Finance Minister presented a 34.5 lakh crore Budget for 2021-22 in the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic. Continued on Page 4

LOK SABHA ADJOURNED

NEW DELHI: The Lok Sabha was adjourned on Saturday as the first phase of the Budget session concluded. The House would reconvene on March 8 after recess.The Budget session usually is held in two phases. In the first phase, the President addresses the two Houses as it is the first session of the year. The Union Budget is also introduced in the phase one.

2021-A Year of Elections for Telangana

A series of elections keep parties busy

PATAN AFZAL BABU
HYDERABAD

UNLIKE the year 2020, this year is going to witness hectic political activity as all parties will be on their toes as it promises to be a year full of elections.

The series of elections would begin with the polls for the two MLC seats under the Graduates' constituency quota, preparations for the bypoll to Nagarjuna Sagar constituency and seven municipalities, including Warangal and Khammam.

This would be followed by elections to six MLC seats under the MLA quota in June and 12 MLC seats under the local body quota in December. Among the local body quota MLC seats, TRS supremo and Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao's daughter K Kavitha would also seek fresh mandate.

As part of the election preparations, the State Assembly Secretariat has already submitted a report to the EC for the conduct of elections to the MLC seats under MLA and local body quota . State Legislative Council Chairman G Sukhndar Reddy , Vice-Chairman N Vidyasagar Rao and TRS senior leaders – K Srihari, B Venkateswarlu, Mohd Fariduddin and Akula Lalitha's term would end in June this year. All of them were elected under the MLA quota in 2015.

Continued on Page 4

Mahatma's granddaughter backs farmers' agitation

Visits protest site at Ghazipur

GHAZIABAD

MAHATMA Gandhi's granddaughter Tara Gandhi Bhattacharjee on Saturday visited Ghazipur on the Delhi-Uttar Pradesh border to extend support to the farmers' movement against the Centre's contentious farm laws, according to a BKU statement. The 84-year-old Bhattacharjee, who is also the chairperson of National Gandhi Museum, exhorted farmers to remain peaceful in their protest and urged the government to "take care" of the farming community. She was joined by Gandhi Smarak Nidhi chairman Ramchandra Rahi, All-India Sarv Seva Sangha managing trustee Ashok Saran, Gandhi Smarak Nidhi director Sanjay Singha and National Gandhi Museum director A Annamalai.

Tara Gandhi Bhattacharya, granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi, with BKU spokesperson Rakesh Tikait at farmers' protest site in Ghazipur on Saturday

"We have not come here as part of any political programme. We have come here today for the farmers, who have fed all of us our whole life," Bhattacharjee said, according to the statement by the Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU), the farmers union leading the protest here. "We are because of you all. In the benefit of farmers lies the benefit of the country and all of us," she was quoted as telling the protesters, who are camping at Ghazipur since November with a demand that the Centre repeal the three new farm laws and make a new one to guarantee minimum support price (MSP) for crops.

GLACIER BURST: DEATH TOLL AT 38

Rescue ops continue as 166 people still missing

DEHRADUN

FOLLOWING the glacier burst and flash floods, the rescue and search operation entered the seventh day on Saturday in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district with 166 people still missing.

According to the Chamoli Police, as many as 38 bodies have been recovered so far, while the relief and rescue operation is still underway. The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) personnel looking for missing persons on the banks of Dhauli Ganga and barrage sites in Tapovan and Raini.

The ITBP personnel also continue to distribute ration and essential items in Suki, Lata and Bhalgaun villages which have been cut off due to flash flood in Dhauliganga.

Meanwhile, a new machine has been brought to Tapovan tunnel in Joshimath, Chamoli district to carry out further drilling.

Rescue and restoration work at Raini village, after a glacier burst on Feb. 7 in Joshimath triggered a flash flood, in Chamoli district of Uttarakhand on Saturday

With the help of the machine, the rescue teams began widening a hole drilled into an approach tunnel on the way to the possible location of over 30 people trapped inside a sludge-choked tunnel of the NTPC's Tapovan-Vishnugad hydel project.

As per NTPC, excavation has been till 136 metres inside the tunnel. Excavators are also placed at Raini village, a body was found there yesterday. Out of the 204 missing persons, 38 bodies have been recovered and two people were found alive, said Chamoli DM Swati S Bhadoria earlier on Saturday. After a lake was formed near the Raini village in Joshimath due to the glacier burst last week, the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) on Saturday visited the site and informed it is not a danger zone, said Uttarakhand Director-General of Police (DGP) Ashok Kumar.

IRRIGATION PROJECTS IN TELANGANA

State BJP chief urges Javadekar to stop TS from bypassing norms

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

- Asks the Union Environment Ministry to stop the loot of public money
- Alleges project costs were jacked up to benefit contracting firms

TELANGANA State Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) chief Bandi Sanjay Kumar sought the intervention of Union Minister of Environment and Forests and Climate Change, Prakash Javadekar to prevent loss to the public exchequer on account of irrigation projects in Telangana.

In a memorandum submitted to the union minister in Delhi on Saturday, Sanjay said that Telangana has taken up several irrigation proje2cts on the inter-state rivers of Godavari and Krishna.

As per the procedure, the DPRs are appraised by MoJS (Ministry of Jal Shakti) and approved by them based on merit. It was only, then, that the state can seek Environmental and Forest clearances from MoEF&CC.

Sanjay further alleged that Telangana is not following the laid-out norms and procedures. He said that they are not submitting the DPRs to MoJS for appraisal. He said that the reason for non-compliance is, "the DPRs by the TRS party led Telangana government are prepared for the benefit of the contracting firms executive the project. In turn, illegally benefitting from the firms executing the works, he alleged.

The Karimnagar MP accused that the techno-economic viability of the projects is not being considered thus denying the people the intended benefits from these projects. If these DPRs were to be appraised by MoJS, then these irregularities in the DPRs would come out.

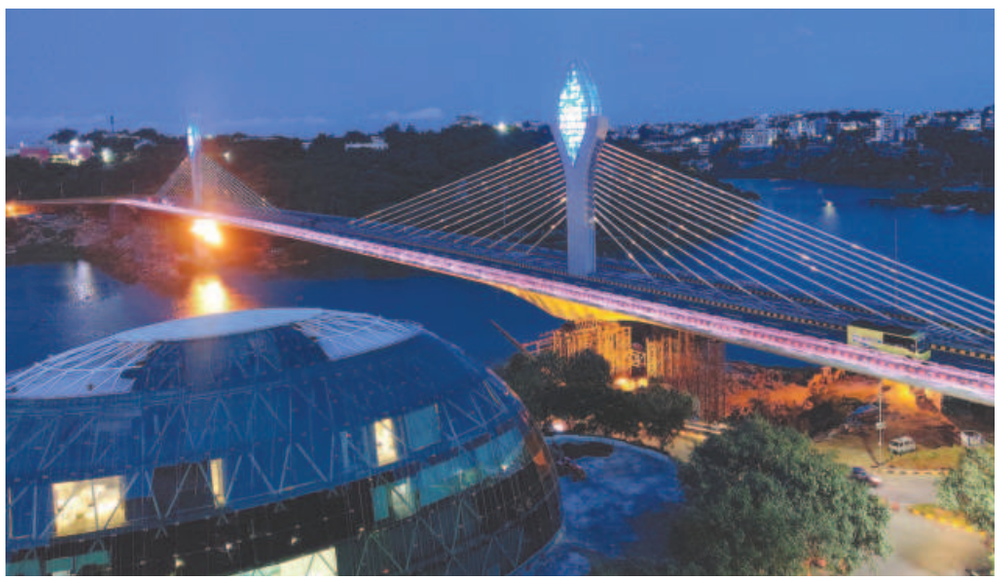
For this reason, the State government is not submitting the DPRs to MoJS for their appraisal and approval, he added.

Sanjay Kumar said that the State government is taking recourse since the approval from MoJS is advisory in nature. Therefore, they are conveniently avoiding submitting DPRS to MoJS and directly submitting them for obtaining environmental clearance from the MoEF, as the submission is statutorily mandated.

However, the MoEF gives its clearance scrutinising the issues related to the environment and forests, without concerning the approvals from the MoJS.

Taking advantage of this, huge amounts of public exchequer are being misappropriated because of the reported cost escalations in the DPRs with the connivance of the executing private firms and higher echelons in the TRS led State Government.

Sanjay asked the Union Minister that mandatory approvals by the MoJS be built into the mandate of Expert Appraisal Committee of MoEF for considering the environmental clearances of any such projects of Telangana on rivers Godavari and Krishna. Though it may require amendment in the relevant Statute, the TS BJP chief stressed the need for the same pun in place to foreclose the embezzlement of huge amounts of public exchequer.



Army Symphony Band to perform on Durgham Cable Bridge today

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

ARVIND Kumar, Principal Secretary, Municipal Administration and Urban Development and Information Commissioner Saturday informed that Durgham Cheruvu Cable Bridge will be closed on February 14 (Sunday) for public as to conduct the Army symphony band programme.

This programme is organised to mark the Swarnim Vijay Varsh, the 50th Golden Jubilee year since India's victory in the 1971 Indo-Pak War.

As part of the celebrations to mark the occasion the Army Symphony Band is to perform on the Durgham Cable Bridge on Feb 14 (Sunday) at 5.30 pm.

Hence, the bridge would be closed to traffic movement from February 14 (Sunday) morning 10.00 a.m. onwards for arrangements of the event.

He informed all the citizens are welcome to come and enjoy this fabulous performance and pay their respects on this occasion of "Swarnim Vijay Varsh".

The event is free and will commence from sharp 5.30 pm on Sunday.

2nd phase of corona inoculation drive begins

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

SECOND drive of Corona vaccine inoculation programme in about 140 centers in Telangana kicked off on Saturday. While, the First phase was conducted from January 16.

To mark the occasion TIMS director Vimala Thomas first took the jab. The government asked health officials to ensure that the staff takes vaccine in two spells as per the schedule.

The officials informed that in the second phase of corona vaccine inoculation drive as many as three lakh health staff of both government and private hospitals will take it. Which will enhance resistance power in them, said officials.

As per the schedule second phase will continue till February 25. The officials also said, "All those who took the first inoculation must surely take the second one by time." They further said that this jab cannot be given after February 25, thus all those who got the first phase of dose will have to take by February 25.

Two minors drowned

KARIMNAGAR

TWO children drowned on the outskirts of Neerukulla of Sultanabad mandal at Manairvagu. On the intervening night of Friday and Saturday, the local police fished out bodies with the help of experienced swimmers.

According to police, Kothapalli Anil (13) and Kothapalli Ramcharan (8) went to Manair rivulet with their parents to attend their relative's death anniversary ceremony on Friday evening. The duo went away from the spot and got into the rivulet to swim while their family members were engaged in puja. They reportedly drowned in the rivulet as they did not know how to swim. For a long time when children were not to be found, the panicked parents started looking for them frantically and found their clothes near a rock. The parents later informed the police. After learning about the incident, the Sultanabad police, headed by Sub-Inspector Upender Rao, conducted a night rescue operation and with the aid of trained swimmers, retrieved the bodies.

The new branch of E-Store India – The People's Mart bing inaugurated at Shambhunipet in Warangal on Saturday

SCCL to plant 2 lakh saplings on Feb 17

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KHAMMAM

SINGARENI Collieries Company Limited is planning to plant about 2 lakh saplings across the company offices on February 17, as part of Haritha Haram programme. According to company officials, arrangements are on to plant 2 lakh saplings on the day. Director (Operations) S Chandrasekhar, Director (Finance) N Balaram and project director D Satyanarayana will take part in the big event. Company officials said all employees and staff would participate in the event and make it success. They also said that Covid-19 norms will be followed during the programme.

Karimnagar cops lauded for developing mini forest

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KARIMNAGAR

OSD in CMO Priyanka Varghese inspects the mini forest raised using the Miyawaki technique on the premises of city police training centre

THE OSD in Chief Minister's Office, Priyanka Varghese, during her visit to Karimnagar district on Saturday inspected the City Police Training Centre (CPTC) and observed the Rashi Vanam, Navagraha Vanam, Nakshatra Vanam, aquaculture besides mini forests grown using Miyawaki technology.

It can recalled that as part of Haritha Haram programme, the officials of Karimnagar Police Commissionerate have planted as many as 12,500 saplings of 33 varieties under project-1 in about one acre of land and under project-2 around 14,800 saplings in about 1.14 acre of land in CPTC, which is present in the heart of the Karimnagar city in 2017.

Speaking on the occasion, Priyanka Varghese said that even though the land was not suitable for growing plants, the Karimnagar police with full commitment and dedication has turned the entire area into fertile land by developing the mini forest using the Miyawaki method of plantation.

Expressing surprise over the steady growth of mini forests in the heart of the city, she said that the low-lying area which was present along the shore of Lower Manair Dam in the CPTC was not suitable for the plants to grow. But, the Karimnagar police had made it possible using the organic farming techniques and drip irrigation system.

The CPTC has become a model for the entire State and is competing with the Forest College Research Centre present in Jogulamba Gajwal district, she added. Commissioner of Police VB Kamalasan Reddy explained about how they raised the saplings and transformed the area into mini forest using the Miyawaki method.

He said that transforming a small piece of land into mini forests in the CPTC was a small contribution to the green cause.

OSD in Chief Minister's Office Priyanka Varghese watering a sapling after planting it on the premises of city police training centre in Karimnagar on Saturday. Police Commissioner VB Kamalasan Reddy seen next to her

Congress will vanish soon: Tribal Minister

HANS NEWS SERVICE
ETURNAGARAM (MULUGU)

THE Congress will soon vanish, Minister for Tribal Welfare Satyavathi Rathod said speaking at the TRS party preparatory meeting for the upcoming election to the Warangal-Khammam-Nalgonda Graduates Council seat here on Saturday. "In no way the padayatra taken up by the Congress leaders will help them," Rathod said.

Stating that no other State in the country has introduced so many welfare schemes and developmental programmes like the Telangana government had, the Minister said that all the credit goes to Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao. Irrigation facility to every acre in the State is high on KCR's agenda, she claimed. She said that Palla Rajeshwar Reddy's contribution towards rolling out the Rythu Bandhu and Rythu Bima schemes was significant. Stating that the government was ready to issue patta papers to tribal farmers who were practicing Podu agriculture, Rythu Bandhu Samithi state president and MLC Palla Rajeshwar Reddy asserted that tribal farmers too would get assistance under Rythu Bandhu. Referring to the BILT factory, Reddy said that he would strive hard for its revival.

GHMC slaps ₹3 lakh fine on newly-elected Mayor's supporter

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

Mayor's follower Atish Agarwal has erected giant bill board at two places which displayed Vijayalaxmi's big photo with congratulatory message on being elected as the second Mayor of Greater Hyderabad Corporation

THE Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) on Saturday slapped a fine of Rs 3 lakh on the newly-elected Corporation Mayor G Vijayalaxmi's follower for displaying a bill board at a busy junction in Hyderabad by violating the norms. In a quick reaction, Vijayalaxmi took to Twitter and said she welcomed the corporation for imposing the penalty.

The Mayor's follower Atish Agarwal has erected giant bill board at two places at Banjara Hills and Jubilee hills which displayed Vijayalaxmi's big photo with congratulatory message on electing as the second Mayor of Greater Hyderabad Corporation after the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh. Taking serious note of the complaints poured in on the social media by local people, the Enforcement, Vigilance and Disaster management (EVDM) wing of GHMC removed the hoarding and imposed fine. The first challan of Rs 1 lakh was issued for violation of norms at Jubilee hills and Rs 2 lakh penalty for two violations at Banjara hills.

The EVDM said in the notice that "The fines were imposed for the erection of unauthorised advertisement element above 15 feet in height from ground level. Several people flooded the Director EV&DM, GHMC Twitter handle with pictures of her banners, to which the officials responded saying e-challan were being issued.

The Mayor tweeted through her Twitter handle that "fines were imposed to my followers who set up flexes and hoardings in GHMC premises. This is to reiterate the fact that everyone is equal before law. We must adhere to the rules and regulations of the city".

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Yummy pizza in the tribal hinterland

ADEPU MAHENDER
MULUGU

DON'T get floored by the news that Mulugu, a predominantly tribal populated district, now has a pizza centre. Pizza that is normally available in cities made its way to Mulugu district headquarters, 190 kilometers northeast of Hyderabad. All thanks to the endeavours of the district administration that is hellbent on empowering the women in this part of Adivasi land.

The Ganapathi Mahila Podupu Sangham, a self-help group, running under the Nava Bharat Mandala Samakya, has come up with a pizza centre, christened as 'Pizzeria N Wings' on the premises of District Collectorate.

Additional Collector Adarsh Surabhi with the Mahila group (SHG) at the inauguration of Pizza Centre in Mulugu on Saturday

Although the district administration which provided loan of Rs 1 lakh was behind the SHG, local man Kanthala Prabhakar Reddy of Palsapally village had his role in setting up the pizza centre. Reddy who ran a pizza centre in Chanda Nagar, Hyderabad, since 2013 returned Mulugu after the coronavirus-enforced lockdown last year. Encouraged by District Collector S Krishna Aditya, trained the SHG members to prepare a host of pizza varieties.

Referring to the business plan to attract the town people, Reddy told The Hans India, "The prices of pizza recipes are 30 per cent less compared to the cities. This apart, we have plans to attract the tourists who in huge numbers head to Ramappa, Laknavaram Lake, Eturnagaram Wildlife Sanctuary, Bogatha waterfalls etc from the NH-163 through Mulugu." It may also be mentioned here that devotees turning to Sammakka-Saralamma jatara at Medaram also pass through Mulugu.

Ganapathi Mahila Podupu Sangham Group leaders Anisetty Swaroopa and Devulapally Suguna said that they will ensure indicators and signboards on the NH-163 so that visitors could know that Pizza is available in the tribal hinterland. On the other hand, the same SHG has been successfully running Annapurna Canteen availing a loan of Rs 3.50 lakh from the government. On Saturday, Additional Collector Adarsh Surabhi inaugurated the Pizzeria N Wings.

TDP fields candidate in Nagarjunasagar by-poll

HYDERABAD

TELANGANA TDP, which maintained distance from contesting elections since 2019 Lok Sabha elections, has decided to fight the by election to Nagarjunasagar Assembly constituency to be held in March this year. The party on Saturday announced M Arun Kumar as the party candidate in the by-poll. The party's decision to field the candidate has surprised the political circles. Political observers said that the by-election will be four corner contest between ruling TRS, Congress, BJP and TDP. The TDP's entry in the by-elections may affect the winning prospects of either ruling TRS or BJP which were trying hard to garner the support of the Telugu Desam sympathisers in the poll-bound assembly segment.

India accounts for 10% of global road crash victims: World Bank

LALIT K JHA
WASHINGTON

INDIA, which has one per cent of the world's vehicles, accounts for 10 per cent of all road crash victims, the latest World Bank report on road safety said on Saturday. Hartwig Schafer, World Bank's Vice President for South Asia, said the Indian government in recent years has taken significant steps to address the issues related to road safety.

"For India, it's one per cent of the world's vehicles and 10 per cent of the crash victims. This is something where, in particular in India, we have to pay attention," Schafer told PTI in an interview on the occasion of the release of the report on road safety in New Delhi on Saturday. While the attention in the last year has shifted due to COVID-19, there is an interesting link between road safety and pandemic right now, he noted.

"Unfortunately, the road crashes have not been going down and any time 10 per cent of the capacity in hospitals is being used for the treatment crash victims," he said. Schafer said road crashes actually hit the poorest and the most vulnerable segments of the populations. "The financial impact of the crash is much more on poorer households than on better-off households. It is much higher on women who have to take care of the burden of caregiving. It is much higher on those who rely on foot and also in the informal sector," he said.

However, according to Schafer, the good thing is that India was doing quite a bit on road safety. Last year, India amended its Motor Vehicle (Amendment) Act, which is "bringing a lot of innovation" in terms of financing, protection and enforcement to the fore, he said. Responding to a question, Schafer said that Tamil Nadu is one of the states which has reduced the number of crash fatalities by 25 per cent.

"For us in the bank, this is a major part of our engagement in the transport sector -- rural transport, urban transport -- the focus on new mobility post-COVID is something that we are doing," he said. In South Asia, he said, the World Bank is helping in road safety standards and institutional aspects of it as well. Building a safe infrastructure is one of the key aspects of addressing this major challenge, he said.

"We need to make sure that we have adequate roadside barriers. We need to make sure that traffic calming areas are being put in. The roads have to be safe. The vehicles have to be safe too," he said. "If we don't have an appropriate vehicle inspection system then you have unsafe vehicles on the road, and it's clearly documented that unsafe vehicles are actually contributing to crashes," he said. Emergency health care facilities in the vicinity of highways make a huge difference in addressing the challenge of road safety.

"When we plan highways now, we need to make sure that crash victims are getting care within the first hour of the crash. That very often makes the difference between life and death," he said. Highway corridors in India that have a very coordinated health-care and emergency health care of access, in terms of hospitals, trauma centres for emergency treatment, make a huge difference in terms of whether a crash victim recovers or passes away, he added.

Enforcement is another key aspect of road safety. In the countries having credible enforcement, the number of roads and traffic accidents is going down, he said, adding that data collection and generation related to it is also important. The Indian government is working on all these aspects, he said, exuding confidence that moving forward there will be a reduction in the crash fatalities in India.

However, the good thing is that India was doing quite a bit on road safety. Last year, India amended its Motor Vehicle (Amendment) Act, which is "bringing a lot of innovation" in terms of financing, protection and enforcement to the fore. Tamil Nadu is one of the States which has reduced the number of crash fatalities by 25%

Minister for Road Transport & Highways Nitin Gadkari is "personally, very much committed to road safety," Schafer said, adding that the prospects of reducing road crashes in India are very good.

The goal of reducing the road crashes by half by 2030, is achievable, he asserted, noting that the foundation for this has been laid out in India. Responding to a question, Schafer said that the global auto manufacturers should equip their vehicles in India with the same safety standards that they do in the United States and Europe. "The UN Special Envoy for Road Safety is working with the vehicle manufacturers association, to not have doubled standards," he said, adding that this has to be addressed from both sides. "I know that the Indian government is looking into raising those standards and setting standards, but it also has to come with a global pressure. It is important," it said.

"You look at things that are available in terms of, starting with antilock brakes to go to automatic computerized lane retention. Those are things that we should see as standard across the world because they make a huge difference," Schafer said. Indian roads witness 415 deaths per day in accidents, the highest in the world, Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari said last month. According to the Road Accident Report for 2019, a total number of 449,002 accidents took place in India during the calendar year 2019, leading to 151,113 deaths and 451,361 injuries.

COLOURFUL MOVES

Kalbelia artistes from Jodhpur perform during a workshop of 'Folk Safar' festival at Mohor Kun in Kolkata on Saturday

Humidity from masks may lessen severity of Covid

NEW YORK

THE humidity created inside the mask, which we wear to protect ourselves from getting or spreading SARS-CoV-2, can also help in combating Covid-19 as face masks substantially increase the humidity in the air that the mask-wearer breathes in, a new study suggests.

This higher level of humidity in inhaled air could help explain why wearing masks has been linked to lower disease severity in people infected with SARS-CoV-2, because hydration of the respiratory tract is known to benefit the immune system, according to the paper published in the Biophysical Journal.

"We found that face masks strongly increase the humidity in inhaled air and propose that the resulting hydration of the respiratory tract could be responsible for the documented finding that links lower Covid-19 disease severity to wearing a mask," said lead author Adriaan Bax from National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases.

"High levels of humidity have been shown to mitigate severity of the flu, and it may be applicable to severity of Covid-19 through a similar mechanism," Bax added.

High levels of humidity can limit the spread of a virus to the lungs by promoting mucociliary clearance (MCC), a defence mechanism that removes mucus and potentially harmful particles within the mucus from the lungs, the researchers said. For the study, the team tested four common types of masks -- an N95 mask, a three-ply disposable surgical mask, a two-ply cotton-polyester mask and a heavy cotton mask.

The researchers measured the level of humidity by having a volunteer breathe into a sealed steel box.

The results showed that all four masks increased the level of humidity of inhaled air, but to varying degrees. At lower temperatures, the humidifying effects of all masks greatly increased. At all temperatures, the thick cotton mask led to the most increased level of humidity. (IANS)

No respite from pollution in Delhi for next two days

NEW DELHI

THE air quality of the national capital mounted to 'very poor' category, with the hourly average air quality index at 332 micrograms per cubic meter on Saturday due to low wind speed.

According to Ministry of Earth Sciences's System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting And Research, "Surface winds are low. The ventilation is likely to stay in the same range and no significant change in AQI is expected for the next couple of days."

AQI , likely to marginally improve to lower end of very poor to poor category, is forecasted for February 15 and 16, the forecast further stated. AQI within the limit of 0-5 is regarded as good, 51-100 satisfactory, 101-200 moderate, 201-300 very poor and 401-500 is considered severe.

System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting And Research (SAFAR) officials have advised sensitive groups to avoid physical outdoor activities. Other people have been advised to avoid prolonged exertion and keep windows closed.

"Stop any activity level if you experience any unusual coughing, chest discomfort, wheezing, breathing difficulty, or fatigue. Keep the room clean - do not vacuum. Masks known as N-95 or P-100 respirators may only help if you go out," stated SAFAR.

Delhi's neighbouring regions - Faridabad, Noida, Greater Noida, and Gurugram also logged very poor quality of air. The air quality of Ghaziabad is, however, the worst at 401 micrograms per cubic meter.

Earlier today, a thick layer of fog engulfing parts of the city and affecting the visibility. Delhi Airport in a statement said that due to fog, low visibility procedures were in progress, however, all flight operations are normal. (IANS)

TTD to resume Kalyanamastu soon

HANS NEWS SERVICE
TIRUPATI

- Chairman Subba Reddy says the programme under which mass weddings for poor families are conducted will be relaunched as per the directions of CM
- Under Kalyanamastu, Mangalasutrams to the bride, silk clothes to the couple will be given and wedding lunch is arranged

Y V Subba Reddy

- Says Sri Padmavati temple for which foundation stone is laid is being constructed at a cost of Rs 6.85 cr

TTD will relaunch the Kalyanamastu programme, conducting of mass marriages for poor, soon across the country following the directions of Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy.

Speaking to media after the foundation ceremony for Goddess Sri Padmavati Ammavaru temple at GN Chetty road in Chennai and the launch of the Gudiko- Gomata campaign in Tamil Nadu on Saturday, TTD chairman Y V Subba Reddy said TTD aimed to complete the construction works within one-and-a-half-years.

He said it was the TTD's goal to provide the blessings of Sri Venkateswara Swamy and support to poor for meeting wedding costs of their children by conducting community weddings in a big way.

TTD will soon select a Muhurtam and launch the programme under which the TTD provides Mangalasutras, Pattuvastrams to bride and groom besides wedding lunch.

The TTD chairman said the Gudiko-Gomata campaign launched in Karthika masam has already in full swing in AP, Karnataka, Delhi and Telangana states and launched in Tamil Nadu on Saturday over the hands of Kanchi pontiff Sri Vijayendra Saraswati.

He said the cost of Sri Padmavati temple was estimated to be around Rs 6.85 crore of which TTD is bearing Rs 5.85 crore and TTD local advisory committee president Sekhar Reddy is contributing Rs 1 crore.

The TTD chairman said Tamil Nadu Government had agreed to grant 10 acre land in either at ECR road or OMR road towards the construction of Sri Venkateswara temple. Our engineering officials will visit both the places and take a final call, he added.

He said as part of Sanatana Hindu Dharma campaign TTD is building Sri Venkateswara temples at Jammu and Mumbai and is also developing the Kanyakumari temple.

The TTD board special invitees and Chennai advisory committee president Sekhar Reddy were also present.

2ND PHASE OF COVID VACCINATION STARTS

- Health and ICDS staff who were given first dose will get the second dose
- Health Commissioner K Bhaskar asks the 19,108 beneficiaries to get vaccinated before Feb 25, beyond which they will not be given vaccine
- Directs employees of all other departments to complete vaccination by March 5

C Venkatesu, a healthcare worker taking the second dose of Covid vaccine at Kalakada PHC in Chittoor district on Saturday

AMARAVATI

THE state on Saturday began administering the second dose of coronavirus vaccine to frontline workers. Healthcare and Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) workers are taking the second vaccine shot at the same place they were inoculated for the first time.

"Frontline workers should get inoculated with the same company's vaccine as their first jab," said health commissioner Katamneni Bhaskar.

Like most places in India, Andhra Pradesh is using Covishield produced by the Pune-based Serum Institute of India (SII) and Covaxin made by Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech.

Following the completion of 28 days, the state government began the second phase of vaccination lining up 19,108 workers on Saturday.

Bhaskar directed all healthcare workers and ICDS personnel to finish taking their first vaccine dose before February 25.

"After February 25, health workers would not be inoculated with the first vaccine dose," said Bhaskar. However, he allowed them to take the first vaccine shot anywhere in the state.

Likewise, he directed employees from all other departments to complete vaccination by March 5, clarifying that there would be no vaccination for them after this date.

Naidu slams false cases against TDP nominees in Kuppam

AMARAVATI

- Writes to SEC alleging 'blatant election violations' by the ruling party
- Says cops are slapping false cases indiscriminately against Oppn candidates and their supporters to create an atmosphere of panic
- Condoles death of noted social activist and educationist Muppavarapu Swarajyamma

TDP national president N Chandrababu Naidu strongly objected to the manner in which the YSRCP leaders were resorting to flagrant election offences with the connivance of some unscrupulous police officials in the ongoing panchayat elections.

The former chief minister demanded the State Election Commission (SEC) to take stringent action against the YSRCP culprits who were responsible for the election irregularities in Mittapalli village panchayat in Kuppam mandal in the Chittoor district. The errant police officials were filing wrong cases against the TDP leaders in order to sabotage the election process and benefit the ruling party, he said.

In a letter to SEC here, the TDP chief condemned that an illegal case was filed against TDP candidate Sivalakshmi's husband Manjunath and another leader Manohar under serious charges of criminal intimidation and the like.

Naidu deplored that the YSRCP leaders were making the police to file false cases everywhere just to create fear in the minds of the Opposition-supported candidates and their supporters. In Mittapalli panchayat, YSRCP-backed candidates Anjali and Kalavathi had withdrawn their nominations for various reasons. But still, the local police were showing over-enthusiasm to demoralise the contesting candidates by using strong arm tactics, he alleged.

He urged the SEC to keep the YSRCP candidates, Kalavati and Anjali, away from the poll process since they had withdrawn their nominations and take all steps for a peaceful and free election there.

Earlier, the TDP chief asserted that former MLA Palla Srinivasa Rao's fast-unto-death against the Visakha Steel Plant privatisation shows a way for all others in the state. It was the duty of every citizen of the state to agitate and prevent the sale of the steel plant. Though the YSRCP was using gimmicks and pressure to suppress the agitation, the protesters were continuing their fight with courage and conviction, he said.

Naidu expressed his grief over the death of noted social activist and educationist Muppavarapu Swarajyamma who hails from Neerukonda in Guntur district. He conveyed his condolences to the bereaved family members. She had extended her valuable support to Amaravati Capital City by donating Rs. 1 crore. Also, she had donated sites for the construction of schools and social service activities, he recalled.

Duvvada lashes out at 'atrocities' of Kinjarapu family

AMARAVATI

YSRCP Tekkali Assembly coordinator Duvvada Srinivas lashed out at TDP state president K Atchannaidu for his "criminal record" and said his case should be taken up suo motu by judiciary.

Addressing media at party office at Tadepalli on Saturday, Srinivas said that he was ready to provide evidence for Atchannaidu's atrocities. He said the TDP leader had threatened the ruling YSRCP candidate K Appanna for filing nomination for Nimmada sarpanch post against his wishes and his brother Kinjarapu Hari Prasad had also attacked him along with 500 people with weapons during the nominations for gram panchayat polls.

He listed the clashes and murders in which Kinjarapu's family was allegedly involved and said it was the nature of that family to supress anyone who rises against them. He said it was due to that family, people had not cast their votes in 10-15 panchayats in Tekkali constituency for 40 years.

In the first phase of panchayat elections in Tekkali constituency, elections were held for 135 panchayats in four mandals and YSRCP supporters won 113 seats and TDP supporters won only 22 seats and it had been made possible by stopping the rigging of Atchannaidu's family, he claimed.

YSRCP targetting Atchanna out of frustration, says TDP

AMARAVATI

- Party MLC Ashok Babu condemns allegations by YSRCP Tekkali Assembly coordinator Duvvada Srinivas against Kinjarapu family
- Asks how can Atchanna and Rammohan Naidu could win if they have so bad record
- States that YSRCP leader who lost elections has not enough stature to derogate the family

TDP MLC P Ashok Babu accused the YSRCP leaders of making cheap and baseless allegations against the highly-respected political family of Kinjarapu Atchannaidu just because their gimmicks were not yielding results against the TDP in the Srikakulam district.

Ashok Babu asked the YSRCP to explain how Atchannaidu and MP Rammohan Naidu could win the 2019 elections if their family was indeed having such a criminal background as was being alleged by the ruling party. Though Atchannaidu was imprisoned, he got many victories for the TDP in the panchayat polls from the jail itself.

Addressing a press conference here, the TDP MLC asserted that the YSRCP's vicious propaganda had failed when it came to the Atchannaidu family. YSRCP leader Duvvada Srinivas seemed to use objectionable language obviously to fill the gap after minister Kodali Sri Venkateswara Rao (Nani) had fallen silent. It was Srinivas who could not win in the Srikakulam parliament seat and in the Tekkeli Assembly segment. With sheer money power, the YSRCP leader tried to win the elections but the people had totally rejected him. He was no match for the long-standing political family of Atchannaidu, he said.

The TDP MLC said only out of fear of losing the public support, the YSRCP leaders were resorting to all sorts of violations in the panchayat polls. They were sitting in the polling booths and interfering with the polling process.

The YSRCP violations were continuing even in the second phase elections. He said Duvvada Srinivas had been accused in cases of murder, cheating, intimidation of the officials and also illegal mining activities in Odisha adding that he can't project the image of being a Gandhiji or a Patel as the people would not accept him as a leader.

YSRCP MP takes 'goings-on' in AP to Modi's notice

Says he appealed to the PM not to allow Amaravati capital, which took birth in his hands, to 'die'

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

YSRCP MP K Raghu Rama Krishna Raju meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on Saturday

YSRCP MP K Raghu Rama Krishnam Raju here on Saturday met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and submitted to him a memorandum "to bring to the notice of the PM the issues of Andhra Pradesh".

After reportedly meeting the Prime Minister, he said, "I have brought to the notice of the Prime Minister the functioning style of Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy. These include the three Capitals issue, privatisation of Vizag Steel Plant, the attacks on temples and the threats being meted out to the political rivals of Jagan. The Prime Minister responded positively and was even sympathetic on the issue of the steel plant".

He said the Modi was shocked to know that the Andhra Pradesh government had called for tenders to construct churches in the states. "In fact, he sought details of the same and I told him I would submit those separately."

He said he sought the intervention of Modi to halt capital shift to Vizag from Amaravati. "I told him Amaravati has taken its birth in the hands of the Prime Minister. It cannot be allowed to die," Raju said.

Week-long VSP agitation flame grows fiercer

Contineud from P1

Close to 250 employees from coke ovens and coal chemical plant of the Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL) took part on Saturday.

At both the venues, people from different sections of society are extending their support to the agitation.

In support of the protest, 2,000 students and the staff from Vignan's Institute of Information Technology (Autonomous) flagged off a massive rally.

An army of the Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI) representatives formed a human chain at Kurmannapalem to stop the Centre's plan on disinvesting the VSP.

Expressing their solidarity with the Visakha Ukku Parirakshana Porata committee protestors, Visakhapatnam MP MVV Satyanarayana, TDP leader M Sri Bharath, former Chairperson of state Women's Commission Nannapaneni Rajakumari, MLA Tippala Nagireddi, AP Congress women president P Ramani Kumari and Jana Sena Party leaders joined the agitation. "Already, we submitted a memorandum requesting to stop privatising VSP to Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi. We are planning to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi next," says MVV Satyanarayana.

Meanwhile, Nannapaneni Rajakumari made it clear that the concerted battle will continue until the Union government takes back its privatisation proposal.

As a mark of protest, representatives of the Gajuwaka Bar Association are attending the court with a black badge.

Meanwhile, Gandhi statue near GVMC office has become a stage for volunteers and NGO representatives to wave their flags in support of the agitators.

With TDP MLA Palla Srinivasa Rao's hunger strike reaching the fourth day on Saturday, a sense of anxiety prevailed among the TDP cadre and supporters.

After a long gap, the agitation drew Visakhapatnam North MLA Ganta Srinivasa Rao and Tourism Minister M Srinivasa Rao on to a common platform. Brushing aside their 'political rivalry', they mentioned that the fight will not be stopped until the VSP is saved from getting privatised.

With the ruling party, the Opposition and the communist parties coming together, the protest to protect steel plant from getting privatised is all set to become fiercer in the coming days.

Union Budget set pace for Aatmanirbhar Bharat: FM

Contineud from P1

The Budget has laid emphasis on increasing capital expenditure, raising allocation for healthcare capacity building and development of agriculture infrastructure, among others, which are expected to have a multiplier effect on the economy.

With regards to increasing allocation for the rural job guarantee scheme, the Finance minister said the government will allocate more funds for Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee (MGNREGA) scheme for 2021-22, if needed, as against Budget estimate of Rs 73,000 crore.

Hitting out at the Opposition, Sitharaman said the government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi works for common people and not for crony capitalists.

"This Budget draws from the experience of the PM when he was CM - on the ground in Gujarat, seen so many revivals happening at a time when the license quota raj was going away post-1991 & then based on that experience, commitment to reform was blended into this Budget," she added.

On allocations to the core health, Sitharaman said, "I will firmly establish that despite bringing water and sanitation, the allocations to the core health has not come down. On the contrary, it has gone up."

"Respecting Indian entrepreneurial skills, Indian managerial skills, Indian trade skills, Indian business skills, Indian youth, Jana Sangh onwards, the BJP has consistently believed in India. We didn't borrow something from somewhere and gave a hybrid," she added.

JeM man recced Doval's office, sent videos to Pak

Contineud from P1

The official said that Malik is the chief of a Jaish front group, Lashkar-e-Mustafa, and was arrested from Anantnag. Police also recovered arms and ammunition from his possession. The official further stated that during his interrogation Malik revealed that he had taken a flight to Delhi last year in May and recorded a video of Doval's office and then passed it on to his Pakistani commander named Doctor through WhatsApp. Malik during his interrogation also confessed that he had conducted recce of the Samba sector border area in mid 2019, along with Sameer Ahmad Dar, who was arrested by NIA in January last year for his involvement with the 2019 Pulwama terror attack.

The officials in Delhi on condition of anonymity said that following the revelations from the arrested terrorist the security has been beefed up. Doval has remained prime target for the terrorists since 2016 Uri surgical strike and Balakot air strike. He also has questioned JeM chief Masood Azhar after his arrest in 1994 and was also one of the persons who escorted Azhar to Kandhar in the wake of IC-814 hijack.

2021-A Year of Elections for Telangana

Contineud from P1

Under the local body quota, Kavitha, B Bhupoal Reddy, T Bhanu Prasad Rao, N Laxman Rao, P Satish Kumar, S Raju, Kasireddy Narayana Reddy, K Damodar Reddy, B Laxminarayana, P Mahendar Reddy and P Srinivas Reddy would complete their term in January first week of 2022 and the elections would be held in December this year.

Since the government has begun the exercise for the delimitation process, it is expected that the State Election Commission would issue notification for elections to seven municipalities, including Siddipet, Achampet, Nakirekal, Jadcherla and Kottur is likely to be issued after budget session of the state Assembly in April this year.

Elections to the six MLC seats under the MLA quota would be held in May. In November, the commission would announce a schedule to fill 12 MLC posts under the local body quota. "The TRS has required a number of MLAs to retain all the MLC seats under legislators quota. In the local body quota, the TRS will have to face the Congress and BJP in Nalgonda, Mahbubnagar, Karimnagar and Rangareddy districts.

Meanwhile, all parties are trying their best to win the two MLC seats under the graduate quota for which the elections would be held on March 14. The Congress has fielded G Chinna Reddy as the party candidate for Hyderabad – Rangareddy- Mahbubnagar graduate constituency and another Congress senior leader T Ramulu Naik will fight from Nalgonda – Warangal- Khammam constituency.

Party sources said that former GHMC Mayor B Rammohan is likely to be the TRS candidate from Hyderabad. BJP sitting MLC N Ramchandra Rao already launched a poll campaign in Hyderabad- Rangareddy – Mahbubnagar constituency.

The ruling TRS was still struggling to finalise the name of the candidate for Hyderabad graduate segment. The incumbent MLC from Nalgonda segment, P Rajeshwara Reddy is likely to be the party candidate for Hyderabad- Ranga Reddy- Mahbubnagar constituency. Leaders predict it would be a multi-corner fight as the left-wing parties and also Telangana Jana Samithi leader Prof Kodandaram are also testing the waters this time.

Tirumala witnesses heavy pilgrim rush

TIRUPATI

DUE to the weekend holidays, the pilgrim rush at Tirumala for darshan swelled on Saturday leading to pilgrims waiting for several hours to have the offline SSD (Srivari Sarva Darshan) tokens for free darshan in the morning.

TTD is issuing 22,000 SSD free darshan tokens offline through the two counters set up at Vishnu Nivasam near railway station and Bhudevi complex near Alipiri, a day ahead of their darshan date for the convenience of the common pilgrims for free darshan.

INBOX thehansreader@gmail.com

'Even God cannot save patients with Mixopathy'

Allopathic doctors are opposing the concept of Mixopathy which is unscientific and endangering the lives of patients in this modern world where human life is legally designated as of utmost importance. An Allopathic surgeon has long earned training skills to integrate into trouble shooting and healing more than just to know to use a scalpel! How is permitting an incompletely trained person to draw their scalpel on an unexpecting helpless person any less than a ticket/legal validation to harm?

It took centuries for Robotic surgery to develop with much advanced technology...which also needs monitoring by a trained human remotely. But think without any deliberations and fact checks by learned people of the field, one fine morning CCIM gives direction saying that Ayurvedic doctors can perform surgeries! This is a downfall of human culture as prime priority of nature is to safeguard its own species from devastation.

To be a Surgeon is not just to about knowing the procedure. There is an art that develops and blends with the skill. To permit an Ayush doctor whose basic knowledge of pharmacology and microbiology and social medicine is not evidence based or transparent needs to be cancelled for it is inhuman and dangerous act. What has compelled the CCIM to give permission to Ayush doctors for surgery who otherwise are limited themselves to practice of Indian medicine? The answer lies in the shortage of the doctors to take up the burden if of healthcare. Then the most logical and ethical way left is to produce qualified Allopathy doctors especially in fields that intrude into a living human body like surgery, if not for anything at least for justice sake.

Alternative solutions would be to

- Give more permissions to medical colleges be it government or private.
- To create exchange student programmes with thousands of foreign medical graduates across the globe.
- To fund the Indian graduates to achieve higher skills in an international multi-ethnicity based countries....as that is the need of the hour with globalisation.

Allopathic medicine is a scientific and an evidence based practice. Think about it.. Can so much knowledge be imparted with such time spent in training? Can safety be granted when intruding into God's creation which can give many surprises even to seasoned trained professionals?

— Dr. Dedeepya Reddy, Telangana State IMA, Hyderabad

PAST AND PRESENT

OF LOVING AND LONGING

M SOMASEKHAR PRASAD

EVERY Valentine's Day takes me down the memory lane. As you know, millions of lovers look forward to this day and plan in advance in their personal and often imaginative ways to express their love to their beloved ones and exchange beautiful, expensive, and surprise gifts. But a million dollars' question most people often ask is why love happens and when it happens? Ask lovers this question, and most of them would simply say that 'love happens just like that and we can't blame anyone. Yes,"you can't blame gravity for falling in love,"said Einstein. Even in my life too, love just happened like that, in a filmy style.

When I was in the second year of my degree course at Anantapur in late 70s, a group of five friends went to attend the marriage of a female student in a temple town near Guntakal. The bride happened to be the girlfriend of my friend in the group. There some friends of the bride's sister came from Kurnool town. One woman was of our age, very bubbly and talkative. She befriended all of us in the group and we enjoyed ourselves a lot. After a few days this woman gave us a pleasant surprise when she on her own came to Anantapur to stay a couple of days with us.

Since she belonged to my community and I had four sisters at home, my friends convinced me to keep her at our home. This brought us very close and she started writing letters to me from her college in Kurnool. Sometimes I used to call her from a land line phone at the courtesy of a rich friend of mine. This went on for some time and I was in deep attachment with her, though she was non-committal. One day it became clear that my "friend" was more interested in marrying off one of her sisters to my elder brother than in anything else! Thus, we met at a marriage and were separated at another marriage! Even now I often feel that I was perhaps wrong in misreading her feelings and intentions.

Bouts of depression and disappointment often visited on me, stealing my serenity and sleep.But I never thought of taking any extreme steps as it happens with many jilted lovers.I continued my studies. In later years also I ran into some good women and faced no problems. Perhaps the adage'Once bitten,twice shy' guided me here. I learnt later from my close friends that one good, wise, classmate was really interested in me and in fact what they didn't know was that I deliberately ignored her advances for no specific reasons. In hindsight,I can only say that I do not know how all this love, infatuation, crush and what have you happened in my life.

Eventually,I settled for an arranged marriage and have led a long, happy married life. My strong feeling is that love comes into our life in varied forms and ways. Now my two well read children have happily settled in life with their chosen and loved partners. In other words,they achieved that which I couldn't. And for this boon,for her care and attention,I often want to tell my wife that 'If I know what love is, it is because of you'.

Finally, from experience I want to tell all youngsters that if you succeed in choosing your partner in life, it is well and good. But if you fail, let your life choose your partner and enjoy love in another way.

The horrifying impact of environmental degradation

The Himalayan tragedy unfolding in Uttarakhand due to Chamoli glacier devastation triggering massive avalanche and flash floods in Dhauli Ganga, Rishi Ganga and Alaknanda rivers leaving many dead and missing brought face to face the reality that climate change in the region is the real cause for the deluge. Though it is a sad moment for the nation already plagued by pandemic and the farmers stir, what is disturbing that no serious measures were taken up to address the deepening concerns even as earth's atmosphere is getting warmer by the day due to greenhouse gas emissions.

As the deluge wreaked havoc to the fragile ecology of Himalayas by swallowing up everything in its way, the massive flooding washing away houses on the banks of rivers and sweeping away the NTPC project completely clearly reveals that the disaster was foretold. Despite, ill-conceived big infrastructural projects including more dam constructions were taken up and are underway in this sensitive region without a rigorous survey which ultimately led to this catastrophe.

This is a serious warning to government and authorities that fleeting attention after a disaster without bothering to hear to the concerns of locals about ecology of the area. Mere announcement of compensation to the families of the victims and then continuing to extract nature's resources endlessly using modern technology characterises that resources are more important and paramount than lives of hundreds of poor villagers lost due to massive flooding is only a recipe for more disasters than prevention.

Notwithstanding the fact that Kedarnath tragedy of June 2013 due to deforestation, ever changing weather patterns and biodiversity loss was a wake-up call, scant attention paid to rectify the mistakes leading to rapid climate changes thereby causing glacial lake outburst and sudden rise in water level lasting hours. This has compounded the problem manifold this time as a result the impact fell on the locals and people working in hydropower projects. As the nature's fury not only washed away the people working on the surface but those working inside the tunnels were trapped even as many succumbed to their fate.

Obviously, the Uttarakhand crisis threw a big challenge to the govt to take drastic steps on priority to save lives that live downstream in villages, towns and cities, it also sounded a warning to authorities to approach nature with respect and humility while listening to the ecological knowledge of local communities who know better of landscapes before going ahead to strategise and execute the plans.

However sounding red alert to people due to large downstream river discharges to help people stranded and retrieve bodies from debris and pray that things return to normalcy rapidly so that rescue work in difficult access areas resume without any problem is understandable but at the same time what is more vital is to understand the concerns about complexity of nature in-depth and heeding to the wisdom of the locals about the area in and around by stopping executing environment unfriendly projects in order to avert unprecedented crisis in hilly region of Uttarakhand in future after the avalanche has caused extensive damage to the ecology.

— K R Srinivasan, Secunderabad

Uncontrolled exodus from Trinamool

The list of Trinamool Congress (TMC) leaders quitting the party just got a tad longer when it's Rajya Sabha member Dinesh Trivedi announced during the proceedings announced that he is quitting his seat as per the voice of his soul who instructed him that if you cannot do anything for others then it is better to quit. Will this dramatic resignation prove to be a setback for state Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee especially just a few days before the announcement of the Legislative Assembly elections? The issue is that this incident is definitely not a celebratory factor at this hour. Undoubtedly this is a loss.

But how much impact can it have? Now it is just a wait and watch situation. Prior to Trivedi a number of leaders had resigned from the party including Rajib Banerjee, Sovan Chatterjee, Suvendu Adhikari and Laxmi Rattan Shukla. Nevertheless BJP will utilise this resignation to combat the 'outsider' issue. Trivedi's personal relations with PM and HM are well known. Causing defections, sometimes en masse, make it easy to win a state election and the BJP is doing just that. Only the time will tell whether it is going to be good or bad for the country.

— Yash Pal Ralhan, Jalandhar

When Swami Vivekananda enthralled Hyderabad...

February 13 is a remarkable day in the history of the Pearl City as it coincides with the maiden public speech of the modern monk Swami Vivekananda to Hyderabad in 1893 at the Mahboob College ground. The day and the event assumes greater significance as it preceded the historic Chicago speech of September 11, 1893 where the visionary monk has highlighted the equality of all religions quoting The Vedantic aphorism, Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudavadanti. Swamiji's ideology is timeless.

While the top executive of the country time and again reminds the relevance of Swamiji's ideals in daily life through their speeches on various national and international platforms, the legislative attributes the formulation of the successful New Education Policy – 2020 based on his vision. Swamiji's views have been interpreted by the top judiciary on countless occasions and including the one on secularism in its landmark judgment in the Bommai case. The 128th anniversary of this historic event not only to be celebrated with great joy and enthusiasm in Hyderabad alone but also across the world since this very incident infused a fresh lease of confidence in the Swami who had been uncertain about his participation in the forthcoming World Parliament of Religions and where he proudly claimed two vitally secular credentials of Hinduism namely Tolerance and Universal acceptance to the world order which was excessively obsessed with religious fanaticism.

The government should consider declaring the day as a day of historic significance in the history of the city as it has the potential of inspiring more youth as Swamiji is revered as the most popular Youth Icon in the country and whose birth anniversary is celebrated as the National Youth Day.

—Satish Reddy Kanaganti, Tipparthy, Nalgonda

Rethink on rules for new labour codes

As the government finalises the rules for the new labour codes, the Labour Ministry is now considering giving flexibility to companies to have four working days instead of five or six. This implies that there will be longer working hours if the working days are reduced. For instance, a four working day week will have to meet the 48-hour weekly work hours, resulting in daily shifts of 12 hours, which will correspondingly reduce if there is five-day or six-day working week.

The proposed labour code by Labour Ministry, Govt. of India to have 48-hour work structure is nothing but an act of exploitation. This new law clearly indicates an excessive workload i.e., additionally 3-hours. Ideally, any MNC have 9-hours a day for a period of 5-days i.e., 9 Hours *5 Days = 45 Hours a Week. But this new proposed law is having additional 3-hours that too by giving a discretion to the employer, which is nothing but giving an free hand to exploit and most of them take it as a mere advantage of it.

Although it is a choice of employee whether to work in 4-day time frame or not, but by bringing this 4 days 48 hours work plan is absolutely unacceptable. As far IT Industry is concerned this will have lots of impact on mental health, fitness, physical fitness.

I would like to appeal to the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India to rethink its decision in implementing this newly outlined rules and rather follow the existing plan of 5 days a week and 9 hours a day and felicitate instruct the organisations to let their employees work 3/4 days a week at office and 1/2 days at home, which will burden the work pressure, and helps us to focus on work and maintain a proper work-life balance.

— Shashidhar Vuppala, Hyderabad

Myanmar coup has implications for India

Mass protests being staged against the military junta that captured the power on February 1 in Myanmar are being attacked and suppressed by the military regime. The military junta seized power following a general election in which Ms. Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) party won by a landslide. However, the armed forces had backed the opposition, who were demanding a rerun of the vote. But the election commission clearly said there was no evidence to support their claims. Discarding and disregarding the election commission's finding, military commander-in-chief Min Aung Hlaing, who has immense political influence, captured the country's government and Ms. Suu Kyi was put under house arrest. Further, she has been charged with possessing illegally imported walkie-talkie. Many other NLD leaders have also been detained or put in jail.

It may be noted that Myanmar is a South East Asian country and it has a population of about 54 million. Its main religion is Buddhism. There are many ethnic groups including Rohingya Muslims. Its neighbours are China, India, Thailand, Laos and Bangladesh. It is pertinent to note that China has blocked a UN Security Council statement condemning the coup. This has raised many people's eyebrows and looked at China with suspicion. We have seen China meddling in Nepal's affairs recently and likewise, China's role in installing a dictatorial despot in Myanmar dancing to its tune cannot be ruled out. Many world leaders have condemned the military take over and the UN Secretary-General said it was a 'serious blow to democratic reforms.' US President Joe Biden has even threatened to reinstate sanctions. Recalling the Saffron Revolution in 2007 when thousands of the country's monks rose up against the military regime, the protesters include teachers, lawyers, students, bank officers and government workers have taken to streets and voiced their anger against the military regime. Democratic leader Ms.Suu Kyi's party won a landslide majority in the general election, but she is in house arrest. Her international reputation already suffered as a result of Myanmar's treatment of the Rohingya minority. Thousands of Rohingya were killed and more than 700,000 fled to Bangladesh following an army crackdown in 2017. So, Myanmar is just like an active volcano and anything may happen there. Since Myanmar is strategically lying between the South China Sea and the Bengal Ocean, a democratic stable government should come there for the best interest of India. If the military regime is allowed to be ruled in Myanmar, then it will only help China. It may be noted that the South China Sea is a beehive of military activities and warships are roaming to further check Chinese hegemonic control in the region. With the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic and the world veering off the usual path of journey, a new world order is about to take shape. So, China wants to establish its domineering position with the help of Myanmar. Taking into consideration of this fact, India should be vigilant and at any rate, India should not accept the military regime in Myanmar.

— T K Nandanan, Kochi

LAND RECORDS AND REGISTRATION IN TS

A revolutionary step awaiting implementation

DR BIKSHAM GUJJA

THE Government of Telangana has initiated revolutionary reforms process related land -keeping records, registration and giving passbooks to farmers. This is certainly innovative and commendable step in the right direction. Its success will have far-reaching positive impact on our society for decades to come. This is the first time, to my knowledge, a state Government has attempted our country.

Unfortunately, for various reasons this well intended attempt has got into too many operational issues, controversies, legal challenges and speculations about its motives. The vested interests, litigations in the courts, bad communication all added to the confusion, misinformation. We are living in highly binary politics, where supporting or opposing of any Government policies and programs are not based on merits or otherwise, but on overall likening or dislike of party or its leader. That is across the board in our country.

That is the reason, some of the best policies and programs to protect the rights of the people are also getting into trouble. This is one such instance where a good policy did not get the required support from civil society and Telangana intellectuals. Many progressive people who could have otherwise supported such initiatives either disinterested or misinformed or just silent about due to prevailing scepticism or fear of being branded as Government supporter.

The objective of this article is to suggest a simple and practical process for Government and civil society to work together to implement this major reform. It is not too late for such co-operation in the larger interest of the state on such an important issue. And hope of this article is that GoT will reach out to the sections of civil society to hear their views and make this initiate work better on the ground.

Why do we need reforms?

First it is important to understand the issues related to current system of keeping land records, retrieving it, accessing, modifying, updating and transferring during the sale etc. This system was created during different times, for a purpose of controlling the farmers by the colonial and oppressive Governments. The main objective then was to keep control and authority over land in order to extract as much as possible revenue for Government. Now Governments don't get any revenue, but the control remains due to confusion and ambiguity over the records and ownership.

The existing system thrives, promotes and even perfects the following:

CONFUSION: Thrives and perpetuates the confusion about land ownership.

DISEMPOWERS, HUMILIATES SMALL FARMER: Asking her/him to prove that they own the land, which they are cultivating for generations.

CREATES VULNERABLE SITUATION TO TRADITIONAL OWNERS: Farmers who are owners for generations have more problems than the one who purchased recently. Too much scope for misuse of power in favour of less privileged. It creates oppressive relationships undermining the confidence of small land owners.

SCOPE FOR MISINTERPRETATIONS AND DELAY: There is too much scope for interpretations thus delay and misuse of power.

ENCOURAGES LITIGATION: The system is in favour of litigations on genuine owners

FAMILY DISPUTES: Lack of quick decisions leading to family disputes.

These are just few, the land and

land related disputes are primary source of all social conflicts, corruption and many crimes. The current system is rather designed to create problems so that real land owner has to come offices many times and submit and surrender to authorities. There is strongincentive for the establishment to keep the system than to reform in favour of simplification, transparency and speedy disposal of issues. Some of the misinformation related to GoT reforms is part of that propaganda from within and outside.

Good idea, good intention and even announcing the good policy is not enough. GoT has made several strategic, procedural and even administrative errors in conceptualising and rolling out this initiatives. Reforms are always challenging, the reforms of this fundamental nature will have much opposition within the system who are supposed to be implement the reforms. These are not unique to Telangana or to this particular policy.

Without getting into too much of critical, it is important to devise a process to move forward. However, it is up to Government of Telangana to follow it up such process which is open and consultative. If it continues without any consultations, modifications and major security of digital dataconcerns, surely, this initiative will create more problems now and in future than it is intend to solve.

Technology, digital in specific, is tool, if we do not devise mechanisms right in the beginning to deal with security issues of that digital tool, surely the issue will blow out and people will not have recourse of old system. That should be avoided, that requires building confidence and demonstration of merits of the reformed.

Objectives of the reforms

Often in many sectors, the reforms which meant to solve problems, if not designed create more problems often more complicated than existing. Therefore, the clear objectives for the reforms are required. Switching to digital system is process and a tool and not an end. The main objective of the reform process is to empower the land owner to access his ownership document fully protected from any manipulations, duplications and false papers.

The following clear objectives are required for that:

TO CREATE A SINGLE RECORD/DOCUMENT: A single document/record containing all the relevant information of ownership related to that land, ownership in the past, present and scope for future changes in ownership. Using the blockchain avoid any possibility of either creating documents or falsification of existing documents

TO ESTABLISH A SINGLE ACCESS POINT: Every land owner will be able to access his or her land records from anywhere, anytime, any number of times for many purposes. At the same time preventing access and tampering of others, other than designated officials for specific purpose, keeping the digital finger print of who and when the document was accessed.

TO ELIMINATE FALSE RECORDS: Eliminating all the venues for creating false land records and detecting such false records as soon those records are being used to for some purpose.

TO RESOLVING ALL BOUNDARY DISPUTES ONCE FOR ALL: Avoiding all the boundary disputes once for all between farmers. For this moving from age- old survey numbers out dated survey instruments to digital coordinates, GPS, GIS and high-resolution maps of time series. A farmer will get the co-ordinates of his or her land than a survey number with multiple subdivisions etc.

TO PROVIDE A SINGLE DOCUMENT FOR ALL PURPOSES: banks, sale, mortgage etc. non- manipulatable, using block Chain.

These and many other measures are possible with well designed, well tested and verified system. Most significant of this initiative, if done properly, will restore the self-respect of small and marginal farmer. They deserve that and for long it has been take away from them by the very system which guaranteed it. It is difficult to estimate the positive value of such a thing in our society.

Establish a consultative committee

Government of Telangana needs to establish a consultative committee consisting experts, civil society, independent policy experts with specific terms of reference to come out with frame work for implementation. This consultative committee may facilitate the following:

- Discuss and open up for suggestions, through broad based consultation process.
- Invite opinion makers for a dialogue, discussion and modifications to the system. This is critical so important, it is better to listen to people. That will help in the long run. Even greatest ideas by greatest minds need to be discussed and debated.
- Discuss with stake holders the pilot projects immensely help in that process.
- Make sure all the bugs are fixed and all the safety are taken care.
- Integrate with blockchain method so that no scope for tampering.
- Move away from survey numbers to geo co-ordinates, so that the universal system of boundaries which are fixed forever without any scope for disputes.

Government of Telangana has come out one of the most important reform related to land. Surely there will be issues in such large and fundamental reform. There is urgent need civil society to co-operate and work with Government in fixing these issues. Government need to open up to civil society and progressive sections in explaining, discussing and taking suggestions to implement this important reforms.

We need to take full advantage of the digital systems- moving from survey numbers to GIS coordinates, from age old cloth or paper maps to high resolution satellite maps, integrate with high security systems of blockchain, make sure system will not be tampered internally and also will not he hacked by external actors. That should be part of the system design not as an option.

System itself should eliminate for any scope of individuals tampering the records. It is possible, it is feasible, it can be done. Not doing this reform will have serious consequences on our Telangana society. Government of Telangana and Telangana civil society has responsibility to work together to make this happen in right way. First step has to come from Government to establish a consultative process. Let us hope that will be done soon, before it is too late.

(The author is an expert in agriculture and water resources. He has worked with UN, WWF and many international agencies)

Minority Affairs Ministry gets short shrift in the Union Budget

FATIMA HASAN

The 2021-2022 budget estimate for the Ministry of Minority Affairs (MoMA) records an increase of 20.12 per cent on the revised allocation but it is 4.34 percent lower than the budget estimate of the current financial year 2020-2021.

The allocation for MoMA in the Union Budget for ensuing fiscal 2021-22 is pegged at Rs 4,810.77 crore. It is Rs 805.77 crore higher than the revised allocation of Rs 4,005 crore of the current fiscal. On the face of it, the budget estimate of 2021-22 appears to be higher to the revised estimate of 2020-21 but, when compared to the budget estimate of Rs 5,029 crore in the fiscal 2020-21, the allocation is lower. In the Union Budget for 2021-22 with overall allocations of Rs 34,83,236 crore, the minority affairs allocation of Rs 4,810.77 crore accounts for a meagre 0.14 per cent. In the current year, the minority affairs ministry was allocated a share of 0.16 per cent and this dropped to 0.12 per cent in the revised estimate

The minorities (Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains) constitute for almost 20 per cent of the population in the country. But the allocation for them in the union budget is far, far meagre compared to their proportion in the country's population. In the central sector schemes in the education sector, the pre-matric scholarships got an allocation of Rs 1,378 crore in the next fiscal as

against Rs 1,330 crore in the current fiscal, an increase of Rs 48 crore. However, the post-matric scholarships received Rs 67 crore less next year compared to the revised and budget estimate of Rs 535 crore in the current fiscal.

The allocation for the merit-cum-means scholarships for professional and technical courses is being cut to Rs 325 crore from Rs 400 crore in the current financial year. In the next fiscal, Maulana Azad National Fellowship Scheme for minority students is allotted Rs 99 crore and it is Rs 76 crore less than the 2020-21 allocation of Rs 175 crore. The interest subsidy scheme for educational loans for overseas students received a cut of Rs 6 crore as it only gets Rs 24 crore as against Rs 30 crore in the 2020-21 budget. Rs two crore has been cut in the allocation for financial support for students clearing Prelims conducted by the UPSC and it received only Rs 8 crore compared to Rs 10 crore in the current year. The total cut in the education empowerment sector comes to Rs 110 crore.

Whereas the skill development and livelihood schemes received a reduced allocation of rupees Rs 175 crore. The allocation for Nai Manzil - the integrated educational and livelihood initiative – was reduced to Rs 87 crore from the current fiscal's allocation of Rs 120 crore. Next year's budget allotted only Rs 47 crore for the scheme for upgrading skills and training in traditional arts/crafts for development (USTTAD) compared to the current year's allocation of Rs 60 crore.

The scheme for leadership development of minority women received only Rs 8 crore compared to Rs 10 crore in the current fiscal. For equity contribution to the National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC), the allocation has been reduced to Rs 153 crore, which is Rs 7 crore less than the allocation of Rs 160 crore in the current fiscal.

The special programmes for minorities got a cut of Rs 12.80 crore in next year's outlay. The allocation for the scheme for containing the population decline of small minority community (Parsis) and for Hamari Dharohar for conservation and protection of culture and heritage of minorities has been reduced by Rs one crore each. Lastly, research/studies, publicity, monitoring and evaluation of development schemes for minorities got allocation of Rs 41 crore only as against Rs 50 crore in the current year.

On the other hand, under the centrally sponsored schemes, the education scheme for madrasas and minorities has been provided Rs 174 crore. For Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakaram (earlier known as Multi-Sectoral Development Programme—MSDP), the budget allocation next year is Rs 1,390 crore, entailing a cut of Rs 210 crore in this year's allocation of Rs 1,600 crore.

The actual expenditure of the current fiscal will be known when the year draws to a close on March 31. The actual expenditure for the financial year 2019-2020 stood at Rs 4,431.10 crore. Thus, the Union government has provided the allocation for the next fiscal year based on the revised estimate of the present fiscal 2020-21.

India got the rough end of the stick

The present Indian side has shown it has the resilience to fight back in the past and they will now need to do so once again

The uncertainty of the game of cricket is what makes it exciting to watch. The Indian team, especially after its superlative performances in Australia, was earmarked to defeat England easily at home. The success that India have had on their shores made them odds on favourites. Therefore, the defeat against England in the first Test match came as a bolt in the blue.

India, according to me, got the short end of the stick in all aspects. The Indian players having played for two months of IPL and then completing a long arduous and commendable tour of Australia, came back bathed in glory. A week's break spent with their near and dear ones, in a euphoric state of mind, was a well-deserved welcome for each one of them. Although they were at home, they were in quarantine. They, therefore, missed out on rejoicing and enjoying their achievements with their friends and well-wishers.

For a successful sportsman, it is as important to celebrate those golden moments that get them refreshed and rejuvenated. Unfortunately, this was not to be and their short restricted holiday was immediately followed by re-entering the stifling bio-secure bubble. A three-day practice session was all that they were given to prepare to play an important Test series against an in-form, acclimatised English side that had just beaten host Sri Lanka. The tired Indian cricket warriors were expected to regroup and reconvene their march into a major cricket battle against England in the same brave way that they did in Australia. The players were in seventh heaven with words of appreciation coming from all quarters, including a mention in the Budget speech in the Indian Parliament. They also received financial bonuses and gifts that were well deserved. However, cricket is a great leveller and the thoughtless Test match schedule, and the lack of preparedness seemed to all finally culminate into a massive defeat against a well-prepared English side.

India were further disadvantaged when Virat Kohli lost the toss in Chennai and England batted on a slow, docile MA Chidambaram Stadium pitch to notch up a huge total. Indian bowlers and fielders looked tired, both mentally and physically, once Joe Root and Ben Stokes took control. England captain Root ensured that India were made to toil hard on the field and his exemplary double century in his 100th Test match was a work of sheer dedication and brilliance. Losing the toss was a decisive factor as far as India were concerned, as the wicket gradually disintegrated into a loose grassless surface, which was exploited by the English bowlers. India from there on were playing "catching cook".

The way India bounced back, with a good rear-guard batting performance by Washington Sundar and Ravichandran Ashwin and then bowling England out for 178 runs in the second innings was commendable.

DISENGAGEMENT AT LAC

Decoding China-India moves ahead

MAJOR GENERAL S.B ASTHANA

CHINA and India have announced the disengagement of troops along Line of Actual Control (LAC), at the southern and northern bank of the Pangong Tso Lake having commenced since February 10. It seems to be a positive step to mark the beginning of a possible end of one of the longest stand-offs, which had tremendous financial and human cost to bear, due to 'LOCisation' of the LAC, in harsh winters. A compulsion to get into some mutually acceptable solution, out of numerous negotiations at various levels is understandable, as stretching the standoff beyond a point was serving no useful purpose. The actual worth of announcements will be seen in implementation stage, in view of trust deficit and past track record of Chinese in junking agreements, when it suits them, as the LAC as well as border remains undemarcated between both countries.

Decoding the statements and implications

Chinese strategic design involves misinterpreting the statements to its convenience. Chinese statement indicates that it is a Pangong Tso specific Agreement, meaning synchronised and organised disengagement of frontline troops at the southern and northern bank of the Pangong Tso Lake, which can be well inferred by them as pullback of Indian troops from Kailash Range, in exchange of PLA moving back their frontline troops from Finger 4 and continuing to maintain their presence elsewhere.

The Defence Ministry's statement in Rajya Sabha on February 11, highlights that the Chinese side will keep its troop presence in the North Bank area to east of Finger 8, thus moving back from Finger 4 to 8. Reciprocally, the Indian troops will be based at their permanent base at Dhan Singh Thapa Post near Finger 3. A similar action would be taken in the South Bank area by both sides. Structures built by both sides since April 2020, in North and South Bank area to be removed and the landforms restored. The Chinese, however, have not put out any such assurances in public domain, so far.

The Ministry also highlighted some outstanding issues with regard to deployment and patrolling at some other points along the LAC in Eastern Ladakh to be discussed later, in next meeting of the Senior Commanders within 48 hours after the complete disengagement in the Pangong Lake area. It indirectly implies that some Indian concerns including extra kilometrage with China in Depsang plains, Galwan, Gogra and other areas, restrictions on patrolling, vulnerability of DS-DBO road will remain to be discussed later. From Chinese perspective, it indirectly means that newly occupied heights on Kailash Range, which were their major concern, will be vacated in a phased, coordinated and verified manner by both.

iTel beats Samsung in smartphone brand trust: Survey

HANS BUSINESS
HYDERABAD

iTel smartphone has been adjudged the most trusted brand in the below Rs 7000 smartphone segment India in the year 2020, according to a Cyber Media Research (CMR) 'Insights on the Go Survey' report. The global leading brand Samsung followed itel as far as the brand preference is concerned.

Delving into the details of the research, in 2020, Indians, across demographics, depended on their smartphone for their leisure (62 per cent), remote work (50 per cent) and remote learning (38 per cent).

Brand trust is a key determinant for smartphone loyalty in aspirational India (tier II and tier III cities and beyond). In particular, users in the sub-Rs 7,000 smartphone segment in India are highly aspirational and seek the best-in-class style and specs at competitive price-points, the report finds, according to the release.

The break-down of a few key parameters is as follows: Brand trust iTel (42 per cent, Samsung 39 per cent); product quality (42 per cent), affordability (44 per cent); trendy technology (42 per cent); localized and Innovative Marketing Approach (42 per cent) and after sales service (43 per cent).

The CMR Survey is the first-of-its-kind exhaustive consumer survey covering 2,123 smartphone users, cutting across eleven Tier II and Tier III cities of India, including Guwahati, Jabalpur, Ludhiana, Madurai, Nashik and Siliguri, among others.

Indian coffee in demand as it's the tastiest

Hyd-based CCL's MD says Indian coffee market poised for a higher growth trajectory in coming years

P MADHUSUDHAN REDDY

Hyderabad-based CCL Products (India) Limited, established on a modest scale in 1995 by Challa Rajendra Prasad, emerged as a leading player in the global coffee market with its exports going to over 90 countries now.Two years ago, the company launched its instant coffee products in the Indian market. "The Indian coffee market is growing at 10-15 per cent annually. High growth in India is due to a low base as our coffee market is smaller compared to the rest of the world. We are expecting the Indian market to see higher growth trajectory as coffee consumption is on the rise in India," **Challa Srishant,** Managing Director, CCL Products (India) Limited, tells **Bizz Buzz** in an exclusive interview.

HAS the Covid crisis impacted your business adversely or did it lead to increase in sales?

We have both positive and negative takeaways from the Covid crisis. We export coffee to over 90 countries. Our clients could not import our products into some countries due to Covid-induced lockdowns. Though they placed more orders in the anticipation of Covid restrictions, they could not take delivery. So, they postponed their orders. On the positive side, we saw an increased demand for our products in India as there was not enough supply of other brands. That way, Covid crisis provided a big opportunity for us to grow our sales in the Indian market. We set a target of Rs 120-130 crore top line from the Indian market for the current financial year. But we are going to end up with Rs 140-150 crore.

CCL Products (India) exports over 90 per cent of its production. Are you looking at any new global markets now?

We export over 1,000 varieties of finished coffee products. We are the only company in the world that has that many different products. We do keep expanding our market reach every year. We are looking at adding three to four countries from Latin America this year. Ecuador, Brazil and Chile are on our radar now.

You launched your products in India two years ago. How is your Indian business doing now?

Our overall turnover currently stands at about Rs 1,200 crore and we are aiming at a top line of Rs 2,000 crore a few years down the line. As I mentioned earlier, the Indian market accounts for about 11 per cent of that. We expect India's contribution to increase. We turned aggressive on the Indian market just two years ago. Prior to that, we focused only on exports and were supplying in bulk to others globally. Further, we couldn't create and focus on our own brand as we were operating at full capacity to meet the demand from bulk customers. But we expanded our capacity and then launched our own brand, Continental Coffee. We started in a small way in Hyderabad and gradually expanded to other cities and States in India.

Do you have any plans to expand manufacturing capacity in the existing plants or setting up new units?

Our company has two plants in Andhra Pradesh. Our annual production capacity of instant coffee in India is 25,000 tonnes. Way back in 1995, we started our operations by setting up a 3,000-tonne plant at Duggirala near Vijayawada. We gradually expanded the capacity at the Duggirala plant to 20,000 tonnes. Recently, we set up a second plant in India in Chittoor district. We invested Rs 300 crore on the new plant which has a capacity of 5,000 tonnes. Besides, we have a 13,500-tonne plant in Vietnam, which takes our total global production capacity to 38,500 tonnes. Furthermore, we operate an agglomeration unit in Switzerland where we convert coffee powder into granules, pack and sell it. We are in the process of expanding our capacities further to meet the increasing demand.

How is the coffee industry doing in India and globally?

> Covid crisis provided a big opportunity for us to grow our sales in the Indian market. We set a target of Rs 120-130 crore top line from the Indian market for the current financial year. But we are going to end up with Rs 140-150 crore

Globally, the coffee market has consistently been growing at 2.5 to 3 per cent, year-on-year. But the growth is much faster in India. The Indian coffee market is growing at 10-15 per cent annually. High growth in India is due to low base as our coffee market is smaller compared to the rest of the world. We are expecting the market to see incremental growth as coffee consumption is on the rise in India. During the Covid period, the in-house consumption of coffee went up substantially across the world as coffee shops and hotels were closed. Though there was some fall in the out-of-home consumption, the increase in in-house consumption stabilised the overall demand. That way, the coffee market withstood the test of the Covid pandemic. Before Covid, in-home consumption accounted for 70 per cent. This increased to around 90 per cent during the Covid crisis.

Where do you see the Indian coffee market going in the next decade?

India is still a tea-drinking country. So, coffee is a niche product here. Consumption in India is also small. The US consumes 80,000 tonnes of instant coffee annually. Europe is in the similar range. Even Japan consumes 35,000 tonnes a year. India, though home to 1.3 billion people, consumes just around 15,000 tonnes annually. India stands at a low 20th place in the list of coffee consuming countries. However, we do see a definite increase in the consumption pattern of coffee in India. The current volume growth level of 10-15 per cent will continue in the coming years. So, the Indian coffee market is poised for a higher growth trajectory in the coming years.

Why do you expect higher growth rates in the Indian market?

In India, tea is available for Rs 5 to 10 a cup. But coffee is expensive. Even a street side vendor sells coffee at Rs 15. It is a common practice in India that coffee is invariably priced higher than tea. As Indians are price sensitive, they opt for tea. But there is a growing tendency to drink more coffee now. As a leading Indian coffee company, we are also trying to popularise coffee by making coffee more affordable. That's why we started offering good quality coffee products at affordable prices here. Furthermore, coffee consumption is more in South India as people here know how to make filter coffee. That's not the case in North India. So, we are pushing our instant coffee products there.

How is the tax structure for this sector? Does this sector need any support from the government?

There is no GST on green coffee. However, instant coffee attracts 18 per cent GST. So is the tea. We don't see the tax coming further down. As far as the government support is concerned, we believe that market forces will take care of the market growth in India. Coffee is one such industry that has grown without any government's intervention globally. It will be the same in India as well.

Where do you source the raw material?

We source coffee from around the world. We buy from Vietnam, Indonesia, Columbia, Ivory Coast and Ethiopia. For the Indian market, we have to buy from India only as there is a 100 per cent import duty on coffee. We procure 1,20,000 tonnes of green coffee annually. Of this, India accounts for only 10,000 tonnes and the rest is from other countries.

How is the cultivation of coffee beans in India?

India is the fifth largest grower of green coffee. Our farmers cultivate both Arabica and Robusta varieties. Robusta accounts for 70 per cent, while Arabica makes up the rest. That's not the case with other countries. For instance, Brazil cultivates the Arabica variety predominantly. While Arabica accounts for 70 per cent cultivation in that country, Robusta makes up the remaining 30 per cent. That way, India is very unique. Moreover, we are now the second largest manufacturer of instant coffee in the world after Brazil. Vietnam is expanding its instant coffee manufacturing base at a faster pace. It may overtake us in a couple of years.

There are some coffee plantations in Andhra Pradesh, especially in Araku area. Are you sourcing from there?

We do source from Araku area. Globally, there is very high demand for the Indian coffee as it's the tastiest in the world. That's the reason why the Indian coffee products are sold at 20 per cent higher premium compared to similar products from other countries. We supply for French supermarkets. They did a blind test of all coffee varieties and our Indian coffee came first. It is a known fact around the world that Indian coffee is the best. India is the only country that produces shade-grown coffee. Here, coffee is grown under forest cover and trees. That's the reason why the Indian coffee is the tastiest in the world.Though there is a high demand for the Indian coffee varieties, there is not much supply.

Battling your way through toxicity

Most discernible thing about toxic people is their self-absorption and disregard for others

Viiveck Verma

As we navigate through our social lives, we inevitably encounter difficulties because of unfavourable interactions with people. Things become complicated when we happen to be in long-term equations with the same set of people and when rough patches get particularly frequent, it might be a good idea to ask-- are there toxic people in my life? While all of us should aspire to kindness, generosity and tolerance, some people and relationships are best evaded, to save one's time and effort.

To use a scientific metaphor, the toxicity of a substance depends on three factors: its chemical structure, the extent to which the substance is absorbed by the body, and the body's ability to detoxify the substance, or change it into less toxic substances and eliminate it from the body. In today's rat race, all of us go through difficult times and have the potential to be toxic. The difference lies in whether we choose to absorb toxicity or stray away from it and process our emotions or let them disfavourably take control of us.

Toxic people remain unaware of the negative impact they cause, and that, despite all factors which may make them act in those ways, is an irresponsible position to take. While we all go through trouble, draining other people of their energies and resources, and making them uncomfortable is immature behaviour that does good to nobody.

Dealing with toxic people have substantial and immediate consequences. Forbes, in a 2014 article reports that research from the Department of Biological and Clinical Psychology at Friedrich Schiller University in Germany found that exposure to stimuli, which cause strong negative emotions - the kind of exposure you get when you deal with toxic people - caused subjects' brains to have an enormous stress response.

Stress, as is known to everyone, is a detriment to well-being with physical and emotional hazards. Concerning yourself with toxicity, without securing yourself, is also harmful and unfair to your dignity. The question to ask then is, how do we identify toxicity and then deal with it to evade unpleasant circumstances?

One of the first discernible things about toxic people is their self-absorption and disregard for others. In a profoundly self-centred exercise, such people subordinate others' comforts to their requirements and disrespect their boundaries. They may not be attentive to what ruins your day, but will act entitled to ensure their peace through your labour and space. The other noteworthy kind of toxic people are the ones who create drama out of the least dramatic of situations. A request to get something on their way to your place could be impetus for drama, as could be a polite conversation about boundaries. People like these cover up their immaturity with drama to escape accountability and leave a bitter impression in its aftermath.

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Toxicity is also linked to other negative traits, most notably, jealousy and irrationality. Jealous friends and colleagues can consistently make you feel guilty for your success or for keeping your life in order, or for simply exercising your freedom. They loathe themselves and what they perceive to be their inadequacies or limits and consequently cannot tolerate the happiness and fulfilment of others.

The other kind of people, in their stark defiance of rationality shroud unacceptable behaviour in an apparently emotional response.

They do not want to reason and present themselves as emotionally driven to stake claim on a space where they can take all liberties and arrogantly crush the comforts of other people with their articulation. There can be many other permutations and combinations of these traits, but toxic people, on the whole, are harmfully self-involved, irrational and have not made their peace with themselves.

However, what is the next step after identification? Some of these people could be our best and oldest of friends, the most important of colleagues or family members.

How do we negotiate our responsibilities towards them while taking care of ourselves? Brushing them away might lead to feelings of guilt and repressing yourself to suit them can be incredibly frustrating. The answer lies in doing exactly what toxic people do not do- reasoning with care.

While it is important to be socially connected, it is also necessary to keep your boundaries in place. All of us are unconditionally entitled to our personal time and space to process emotions and events. Keep people, especially, toxic people away from this space. On a related note, erect limits while interacting with toxic individuals. These limits could be linked to quantitatively and qualitatively restricting how much time you spend with them, and how often you share a context with them.

Distance yourself from people when it is necessary to rejuvenate, make excuses if you need to - you do not owe somebody a resolution for what they cannot resolve themselves. On the other hand, it is necessary to take the right people seriously. If we have annoying attention-seekers and complainers in this world, we also have the dearest of friends and family members who make our everyday struggles less taxing.

Instead of directing all your energy towards a toxic bond, invest in relationships that empower and emancipate you. Most significantly, it is essential to evade toxicity yourself. You wouldn't want to end up toxic, while trying to help others with their toxic patterns.

Thus, self-care, necessary isolation and self-affirmation are indubitably needed.

We also must reject social impositions such as toxic definitions of masculinity and fixed gender roles to be our most free selves and contribute effectively to the world we inhabit.

We all deserve the best of what experiences have to offer and letting toxicity and toxic people ruin that is a disservice to ourselves. So, unclog your mind and heart to let toxicity out and strategically evade toxic people.

(The author is Founder, Upsurge Global, and Senior Advisor, Telangana State Innovation Cell)

QUIZ NO. 160

HANS BIZ QUIZ

WORLD RADIO DAY

1. The community radio is part of the Centre Government's initiative to set up such stations in academic institutions to promote community interactions and disseminate knowledge. Which Indian Institute of Technology launched and operated its own Community Radio FM since 2010, the first-of-its-kind in any IITs in the country?
a) IIT - Kharagpur b) IIT- Bombay
c) IIT - Kanpur d) IIT – Delhi

2. Besides educating, informing, or entertaining, Community FM Radio focuses on the community's overall development by discussing the major issues the community faces. Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute launched the community radio station in 2008. Identify the FM station?
a) SRFTI 90.4 FM b) Ray 99.9 FM
c) Satyajit 111.1 FM d) SaRayFilm 80.7 FM

3. The community radio provides a new platform for students, teachers, and residents to showcase their creativity. In June 2008, Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute's community radio began to broadcast programmes. Which Information and Broadcasting Minister's brainchild is the FM station?
a) Ravi Shankar Prasad
b) Jaipal Reddy
c) Priyaranjan Das Munshi
d) Sushma Swaraj

4. World Radio Day is celebrated on 13 February each year. When was India's first-ever private FM station inaugurated, and which city became the first in the country to have a private FM?
a) Radio City, Bangalore on 3 July 2001
b) Times FM, Delhi on 15 August 1998
c) Radio Mirchi, Delhi on 26 January 2001
d) Big 92.7 FM, Chennai on 14 April 2000

5. The idea of community radio at educational institutions involves the students and faculty in various local community issues. Which of the below educational institutions inaugurated its own Community Radio FM 90.8 MHz in April 2008, the first of its kind in Eastern India?
a) Birla Institute of Technology, Mesra
b) University of Calcutta, Kolkata
c) Jadavpur University, Kolkata
d) Xavier School of Management, Jamshedpur

6. NSHM Knowledge Campus is the first private college in India's eastern part to begin its own FM radio station, with the objectives of empowerment, information, and entertainment. Which of the below is NSHM's Community Radio?
a) 90.1 N FM b) 91.2 Y FM
c) 99.9 K FM d) 94.5 NSHM FM

7. Collins Radio Company was founded by celebrated Radio engineer and entrepreneur Arthur Andrews Collins in 1933 in Iowa. Collins invented the radio equipment to establish a communications link with the South Pole. Which company acquired Collins Radio Company in 1973?
a) United Technologies Corporation
b) Philips Corporation
c) General Electric
d) Rockwell International

8. Which Radio company was founded in 1932 from the remains of the Graham Amplion company?
a) Murphy Radio b) Bush Radio
c) RCA Radio d) Tesla Radio

9. When was India's first amateur radio organization, the Amateur Radio Club of India, was inaugurated?
a) 1985 b) 1973
c) 1957 d) 1948

10. Which among the notable figures in India are licensed Amateur Radio operators?
a) Kamal Hassan, N Ravi (The Hindu), S Karivardhan (Lakshmi Mills)
b) Amitabh Bachchan, Rajiv Gandhi, M Venkatachalam (Murugappa Group)
c) Mammootty, A C Muthiah(SPIC), M Saravanan(AVM)
d) All of the above

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

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

Sharma's 161 help India reach 300/6

CHENNAI

ROHIT Sharma scored his seventh Test century -- his first one year and after eight innings -- to help India reach the 300 for six wickets on the first day of the second Test against England at the M.A.Chidambaram Stadium here on Saturday. Ajinkya Rahene scored 67 while Rishabh Pant was batting on 33 at close.

The other unbeaten batsman was debutant Axar Patel, who was on five, on a pitch that had started assisting spin from the first hour of the day.

Sharma's counter-attacking 161 (off 231 balls, 18x4s, 2x6s) and his 162-run partnership with Rahane (149 balls, 9x4s) helped India recover following a poor start after captain Virat Kohli won the toss and chose to bat.

Later in the day, Pant (56 balls, 5x4s, 1x6) put up a 35-run stand with R. Ashwin (13). Axar has so far played seven balls so far and hit one boundary.

India, who lost three wickets in the first session, didn't lose any in the second session and both Sharma and Rahane handled the England bowlers with ease.

Sharma, who was struggling to get a big score since his return to Test cricket last month, took the attack to the English bowlers in a confident manner. The 33-year-old batsman raced to 80 off 78 deliveries (13x4s, 1x6) to take India to 106 for three wickets at lunch despite India losing three wickets.

On a pitch that aided turn early on, England introduced left-arm spinner Jack Leach as early as the eighth over of the match. Sharma, however, looked in control and put India in the driver's seat before a couple of wickets late in the first session gave Joe Root's team some relief.

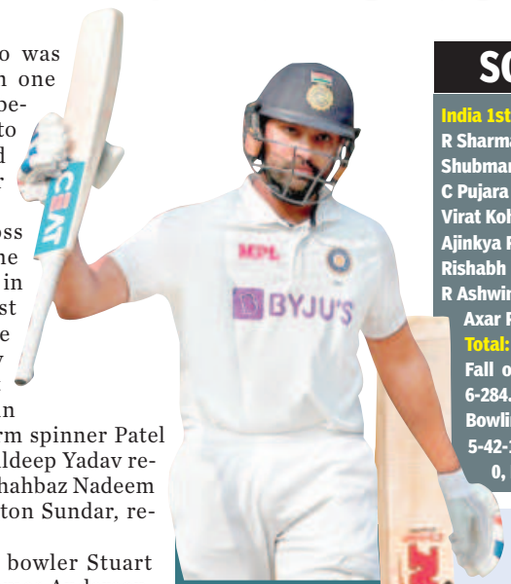
India had lost Shubman Gill early with the team still to open its account. But then Sharma and No.3 Cheteshwar Pujara (21) shared an 85-run partnership for the second wicket to help India move into a commanding position. The partnership was dominated by Sharma as he unleashed his strokes.

However, just as they looked like they were taking the game away from England, the spinners got into action. Leach got rid of Pujara having him caught at slip by Ben Stokes.

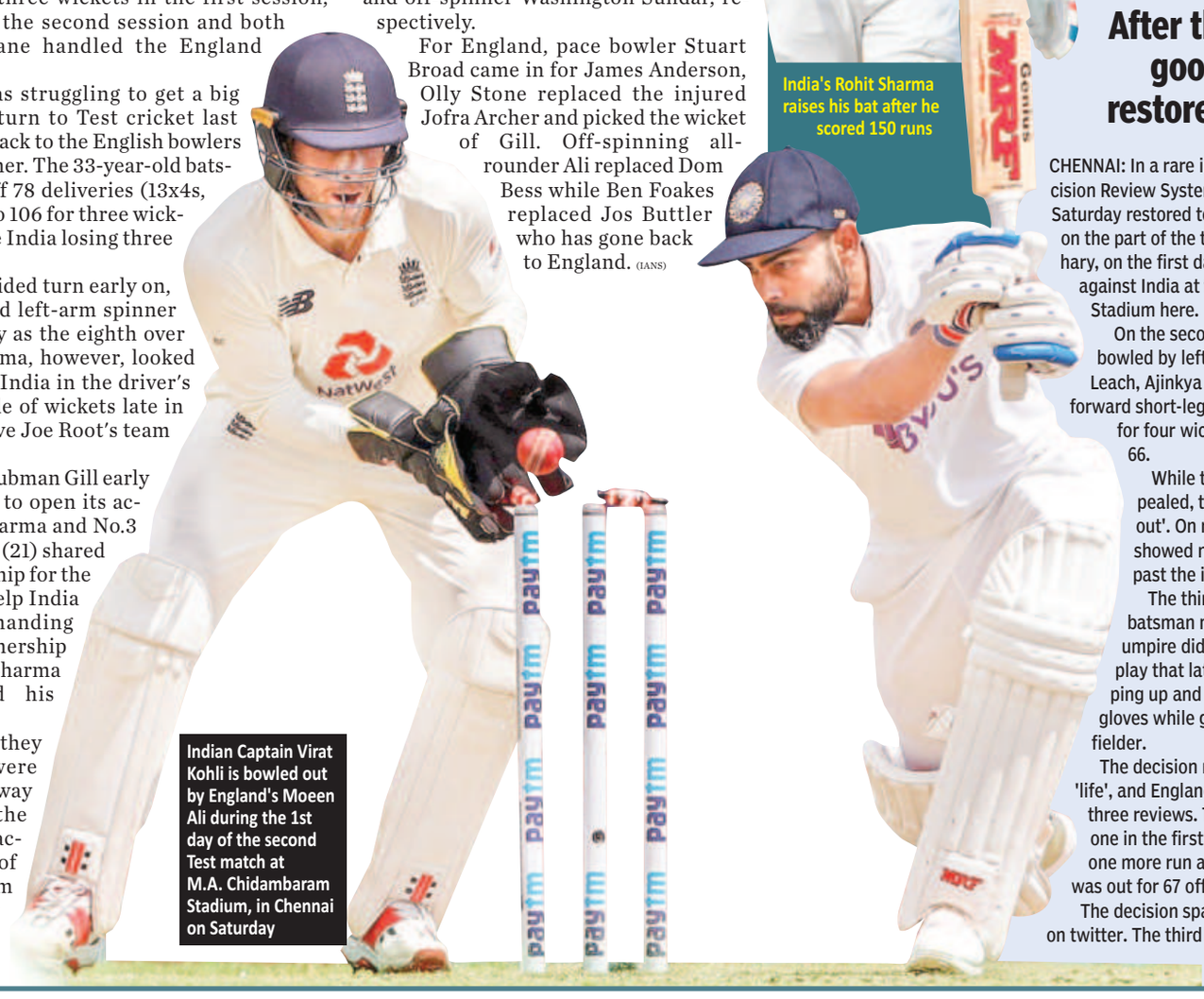
Soon after, off-spinner Moeen Ali, who was proving expensive, spun one back in through the gap between Kohli's bat anpad to dismiss him for a duck and reduce India to 86 for three.

India had won the toss and elected to bat. The hosts made three changes in the XI that lost the first Test by 227 runs in the four-Test series. They rested pace bowler Jasprit Bumrah and brought in Mohammed Siraj. Left-arm spinner Patel and Chinaman bowler Kuldeep Yadav replaced left-arm spinner Shahbaz Nadeem and off-spinner Washington Sundar, respectively.

For England, pace bowler Stuart Broad came in for James Anderson, Olly Stone replaced the injured Jofra Archer and picked the wicket of Gill. Off-spinning all-rounder Ali replaced Dom Bess while Ben Foakes replaced Jos Buttler who has gone back to England. (IANS)



India's Rohit Sharma raises his bat after he scored 150 runs



Indian Captain Virat Kohli is bowled out by England's Moeen Ali during the 1st day of the second Test match at M.A. Chidambaram Stadium, in Chennai on Saturday

SCOREBOARD DAY 1

India 1st Innings

R Sharma c Moeen b J Leach	161
Shubman Gill lbw b O Stone	0
C Pujara c Stokes b J Leach	21
Virat Kohli b Moeen	0
Ajinkya Rahane b Moeen	67
Rishabh Pant batting	33
R Ashwin c O Pope b Root	13
Axar Patel batting	5
Total: (for 6 wkts in 88 overs)	300

Fall of Wickets: 1-0, 2-85, 3-86, 4-248, 5-249, 6-284.

Bowling: Stuart Broad 11-2-37-0, Olly Stone 15-5-42-1, Jack Leach 26-2-78-2, Ben Stokes 2-0-16-0, Moeen Ali 26-3-112-2, Joe Root 8-2-15-1.

After third umpire's goof-up, 'review' restored to England

CHENNAI: In a rare incident, an umpire's Decision Review System (DRS) referral was on Saturday restored to England after an error on the part of the third umpire, Anil Chaudhary, on the first day of the second Test against India at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium here.

On the second ball of the 75th over, bowled by left-arm spinner Jack Leach, Ajinkya Rahane gloved it to the forward short-leg fielder. India were 248 for four wickets and Rahane was on 66.

While the England players appealed, the umpire declared 'not out'. On review, the snickometre showed no spike as the ball went past the inside edge of the bat.

The third umpire declared the batsman not out. However, the umpire did not watch the entire replay that later showed the ball popping up and brushing Rahane's gloves while going to the short-leg fielder.

The decision meant that Rahane got a 'life', and England lost another of their three reviews. They had already lost one in the first session. Rahane added one more run after umpire's error and was out for 67 off 149 balls.

The decision sparked a huge outburst on twitter. The third umpire later restored the review.

Sindhu moves out of Gopichand Academy, to train at Gachibowli

NEW DELHI

TO prepare for psychological firepower with her opponents, Olympic silver medallist PV Sindhu will be training at the Gachibowli Stadium in Hyderabad from Tuesday, after moving out of the city's Pullela Gopichand Academy, says her father.

PV Ramana, a former international volleyball player, clarified that a change in the training venue is only for psychological reasons as Gachibowli Stadium provides that feeling of playing at a world class venue, and not because of any disagreement with Gopichand.

"She hasn't split with Gopichand, but wants to train in an ambience that gives her a feel as if she is training in an Olympic arena. The change of venue is with the approval of the Sports Authority of India (SAI) and in coordination with the Badminton Association of India (BAI)," Ramana, an Arjuna Award winner, told IANS.

Sindhu, 25, hasn't qualified for the 2021 Tokyo Olympic Games so far, but is close to securing the berth. In her quest to achieve a podium finish at the Olympics this July-August, she will train under the Korean coach Park Tae Sang from Tuesday.

Sang took over the job of training Sindhu after another Korean expert, Kim Ji Hyun, quit in September 2019.

While denying a rift between Sindhu and Gopichand, whose Hyderabad's academy has been the venue for her Olympic preparation in the past, Ramana said the shift in the venue is more to do with an eye on major competitions in the future.

Regarding the sparring partners for Sindhu, Ramana said it would depend on who the Korean expert wants. "He [Sang] will take a call on that issue," he said.

IPL auction: Doshi's son oldest at 42,

NEW DELHI

AT the age of 42, Nayan Doshi, son of former India left-arm spinner Dilip Doshi, is the oldest player to feature in the pool of 292 players shortlisted for the Indian Premier League (IPL) auction on February 18 in Chennai. Doshi, who has represented Saurashtra in the Ranji Trophy, last played a T20 match in 2011.

Doshi has been listed the lowest reserve price bracket of Rs. 20 lakh.

Nayan played 70 first-class matches for Saurashtra, Derbyshire, Rajasthan Royals, and Surrey between 2001 and 2013.

Nagaland's Khrievitso Kense is the youngest Indian in the pool at the age of 16 years. The spinner took seven wickets in the T20 Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy last month. However, the youngest player overall is Afghanistan's Noor Ahmad, who is just 16.

RESULT

Chennaiyin FC draw FC Goa 2-2

TODAY'S MATCHES

NorthEast United FC vs Odisha FC — Tilak Maidan Stadium 5pm

ATK Mohun Bagan vs Jamshedpur FC — Fatorda Stadium 7.30pm

ISL STANDINGS

CLUB	M	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
Mumbai City FC	16	10	4	2	25	11	14	34
ATK Mohun Bagan	16	10	3	3	22	10	12	33
FC Goa	17	5	9	3	22	21	1	24
Hyderabad FC	17	5	9	3	21	17	4	24
NorthEast United FC	16	5	8	3	21	20	1	23
Jamshedpur FC	17	5	6	6	16	19	-3	21
Bengaluru FC	17	4	7	6	19	21	-2	19
Chennaiyin FC	18	3	9	6	13	19	-6	18
SC East Bengal	17	3	8	6	15	22	-7	17
Kerala Blasters FC	17	3	7	7	22	29	-7	16
Odisha FC	16	1	6	9	16	27	-11	9

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