



WINDOWS
AAP MLA Somnath Bharti arrives to attend a special session of the Delhi Assembly, in New Delhi. Bharti was sentenced to two years in jail for assaulting the AIIMS security staff in a case registered in 2016, on Saturday

India, China to hold 9th round of talks to resolve border row

NEW DELHI: Indian and Chinese militaries will hold a ninth round of talks aimed at resolving the border disputes in Eastern Ladakh after a deadlock prevailed since the last negotiations in November 2020, sources said. The latest "Corps Commander level meet is likely to take place in the next few days, probably in a day or two", the sources, adding contours of the dialogue were being worked out and some changes are expected.

Austin will be first African American Defence Secy

NEW YORK: The United States Senate on Friday confirmed a former Army general, Austin Lloyd to become the Defence Secretary, making him the first African American to hold the job. He received the overwhelming support of both parties, overcoming reservations about a retired general becoming the Defence Secretary within the legally required seven-year gap between retirement and appointment. The Senate voted 93 to two to confirm him after Congress had voted on Thursday to exempt the general who retired in 2016 from the legal seven-year requirement.

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‘Netaji dreamt of strong India... from LAC to LOC’

Bose is an idol, inspiration for India’s Parakram, says PM in Kolkata

KOLKATA

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said India was following the footsteps of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, who had dreamt of a strong and powerful country. Addressing a crowd at an event marking Bose’s 125th birth anniversary at Kolkata’s Victoria Memorial, Modi said, “Netaji had dreamt of a strong India... from the Line of Actual Control (LAC) to the Line of Control (LOC), we are following his footsteps.”

In his first visit to West Bengal in the run-up to the Assembly elections, Modi also said Netaji had once asked people not to lose hope of a “free India”, and similarly, no one could stop India from being Atmanirbhar. “I wonder how Netaji would have felt had he seen the new India that is taking shape today. How would Netaji have felt seeing India manufacturing its own Covid-19 vaccines?”

Continued on Page 4



PM Narendra Modi and West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee sharing a stage during the event at Victoria Memorial in Kolkata on Saturday

‘DON’T INSULT AFTER INVITING’, FUMES MAMATA

KOLKATA: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee erupted in anger at Kolkata’s Victoria Memorial on Saturday evening - at an event to honour legendary freedom fighter Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose

on his 124th birth anniversary - after she was interrupted with chants of “Jai Shri Ram”.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was on stage for the incident - one of the few times in the recent past she has shared a plat-

form with him. “Don’t insult me after calling me here. This is not a political programme. If you invite someone to a government programme, you should not insult them,” Banerjee said, cutting short her speech.

BSF detects another tunnel along Indo-Pak border

NEW DELHI: The Border Security Force (BSF) on Saturday detected yet another underground tunnel in Jammu and Kashmir’s Kathua district.

A spokesperson of the border force said the tunnel was constructed by Pakistan along the International Border (IB) to facilitate infiltration of terrorists into the J&K region.

The tunnel was discovered during an anti-tunneling operation at the border outpost in Pansar area of Hiranagar sector. In a press statement the BSF said, “On specific intelligence inputs BSF detects another tunnel in the area of Pansar, Jammu in the series of anti-tunneling drive in the wee hours of Saturday. The tunnel has been detected between BP number 14 and 15 and it is approximately 150 metres long and 30 feet deep.

The statement further said that in June 2020 the BSF had shot down a Pakistani Hexacopter in the same area carrying load of weapons and ammunition.

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BUDGET 2021 FM leads pre-budget ‘halwa ceremony’



Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman with MoS Anurag Singh Thakur at Halwa Ceremony, at North Block in New Delhi on Saturday

NEW DELHI

AHEAD of the Union Budget presentation on February 1, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday led the Halwa ceremony held at the North Block. Accompanying her were Union Minister of State for Finance Anurag Singh Thakur, Finance Secretary Dr A B Pandey, Expenditure Secretary and others.

While the halwa ceremony marks the printing of the Budget documents, this year’s Union Budget will be paperless, owing to the prevalent Covid-19 pandemic. There will also be no printing of the economic survey. The Indian dessert is prepared in a big kadhai and served to the entire staff involved in the budget preparation. The significance of serving halwa to the officials is to mark the secrecy of the whole project. It also intends to laud the efforts of the staff involved in the budget-making process. Soon after the halwa cere-

mony, the officials who are involved in the making of the Union Budget have to stay at the North Block, cut off from their families till the presentation of the budget in the Lok Sabha.

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They are not allowed to contact their families through phone or any other form of communication, such as e-mail, texts. Only very senior officials in the Finance ministry are permitted to go home. Mobile phone jammers are installed to block phone calls.

Internet connections of staff and senior officials are cut. Phone calls made through landlines installed are closely monitored.

RIGHT TO LIFE Vs CONSTITUTIONAL OBLIGATION

AP SEC issues notification for local polls

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

THE stand-off between the State Election Commission and the AP government continued on Saturday over the conduct of the local body elections. While the government wants to wait till Monday for the decision of the Supreme Court before starting the process of holding elections, the SEC on Saturday issued the poll notification for the first phase of the elections to be held on February 5.

In the first phase, gram panchayats under 146 revenue mandals in 11 districts will go to polls, according to the notification issued by State Election Commissioner Nimmagadda Ramesh Kumar on Saturday.

Ramesh Kumar said if the Supreme Court gives a different verdict, the SEC would honour it.

The SEC called the gram panchayat elections ‘historic’, given the circumstances under which they were being held. “People are very enthusiastic to take part in the election process. It is, of course, a major chal-



State Election Commissioner Nimmagadda Ramesh Kumar addresses a press conference as he releases Panchayat election notification, at his office in Vijayawada on Saturday

lenge for the Commission to conduct the polls against the odds,” Ramesh Kumar remarked.

Panchayat elections are not being held in the first phase in Vizianagaram and Prakasam districts. The elections will be held on apolitical basis. A high drama followed the announcement of the notification. The

SEC convened a videoconference with the Chief Secretary, the Director General of Police and District Collectors. The CS urged the SEC to postpone the videoconference, but the SEC refused saying that since the notification was issued it was necessary to discuss the process with district officials. Finally, none of the of-

ficials participated in the conference citing technical glitches.

This was followed by statements by Ministers, including Minister for Panchayat Raj Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy, that a conspiracy against Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy was being hatched by some forces. He even said no official will cooperate till the Supreme Court judgement comes. He said the state government had sought a 60-day time to hold the elections as the vaccination process has begun. On the other hand, some employees’ unions citing ‘life above all’ priority, said that if the SEC wants to go ahead with the conduct of the polls, they will go on strike.

The SEC, however, said that it was the responsibility of the state government to ensure that the elections were conducted in a smooth manner. “Ultimately, the government will have to face the consequences if anything doesn’t go well,” he observed. Ramesh Kumar said he had apprised the Governor of the prevailing situation.

Continued on Page 4

Covid vaccines may not be available in open market soon

NEW DELHI

IN December, Serum Institute CEO Adar Poonawalla had said that his company is eying to make the Covishield vaccine available in the open market in a couple of months and had set a timeframe of March-April for it.

This means that the life-saving vaccine would be available in the market and anyone who is willing to



pay for it can buy them. But now it appears that the plan may not be that easy as the Union government is yet to clear them for

open markets. It had given the vaccine companies only the emergency use of the vaccines.

According to Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan, the two Covid-19 vaccines being manufactured by the Serum Institute of India and Bharat Biotech were given approval only for the restricted use of the vaccine.

He said the vaccines won’t be available in the

open market until the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) approved the data sought from the vaccine manufacturers.

A market authorisation is a pre-requisite to sell the vaccines in the open market, but Bhushan said no market authorisation has been given to any of the emergency-approved vaccines – Covishield and Covaxin, currently in use in India.

agents causing morbidity. This proposed lab will also enable the researchers and doctors to undertake research activities on the existing as well as new viruses. The BSL – 3 lab equipped with a negative pressure, ante room and air lock with HEPA filters in exhaust air design for specimen processing and virus culture as per WHO guidelines. When a particular virus is found at any specific area, the lab can be put up there to start research on that.

Continued on Page 4

SVIMS to set up bio-safety lab for virology research

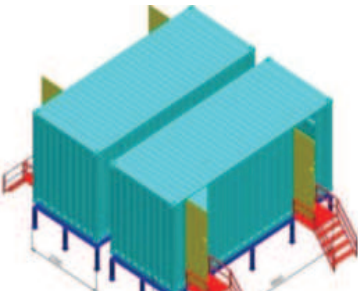
V PRADEEP KUMAR
TIRUPATI

A bio-safety lab level – 3, worth Rs 69 lakh, will come up at SVIMS soon in collaboration with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). This modern lab is intended for research in virology where viral cultures and mutations among other advanced studies can be done. This facility will be established under mobile shelter which looks like a container so as to be posi-

Collaborates with DRDO to set up Rs 69-lakh level-3 lab



SVIMS Director Dr B Vengamma. (R) A replica of BSL-3 lab



tioned anywhere to study the viruses based on the requirements. Apart from

performing various laboratory screenings etc, it enables the test services at

remote places and extensive research on identification of viruses and related

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SCAN



Bal Thackeray's statue unveiled in Mumbai

MUMBAI: A statue of Shiv Sena founder Bal Thackeray, his first in Mumbai, was unveiled in Colaba area on Saturday on the occasion of his 95th birth anniversary in the presence of leaders of various parties. Late Thackeray's son and Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, his cousin and Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) president Raj Thackeray, NCP chief Sharad Pawar, former CM Devendra Fadnis, and senior Congress leader Balasaheb Thorat attended the event. The statue is located at the busy roundabout between Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya and National Gallery of Modern Art in south Mumbai. "It is an unforgettable moment in my life, like it is for every Shiv Sainik. There are some moments where you fall short of words to express your gratitude, and I think today is that day. Balasaheb remained cordial with all political parties at the personal level," the CM recalled.

Postal stamp to mark golden jubilee of HP

SHIMLA: A special postal stamp will be released to mark the golden jubilee of Himachal Pradesh's Statehood Day on January 25, Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur said on Saturday. The postal stamp will be released during the golden jubilee function at the Ridge ground here on Monday. Talking to the media here, Thakur said Union Home Minister Amit Shah would be the chief guest at the event. Governor Bandaru Dattatreya will preside over the function, which will also be attended by BJP president JP Nadda and Union Minister Anurag Thakur. (PTI)

Indian who crossed over to Pak returns

AHMEDABAD/AMRITSAR: A cattle herder from Gujarat's Kutch district, who had inadvertently crossed over to Pakistan in 2008 and was arrested there on charges of spying, has finally returned to India after languishing in the neighbouring country's jails, officials said. Ismael Sama, 60, from Nana Dinara village in Kutch, located some 60 kms from the Pakistan border, had mistakenly crossed over to Pakistan while grazing his cattle. He was arrested and kept in the jails of that country before he was released two days back following the Islamabad High Court's order on a plea moved by the Indian High Commission there. Sama reached Amritsar after crossing over to the Indian territory through Wagah-Attari international border on Friday, officials at Attari said. (PTI)

Rahul Gandhi hits campaign trail in TN, targets PM Modi

A campaign Tamil video song released asking people to join hands with Rahul

COIMBATORE

LAUNCHING his party's campaign for the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday accused the AIADMK government of "compromising" with the Centre and alleged Prime Minister Narendra Modi used agencies like the CBI to get what he wanted.

Addressing people at multiple locations from his campaign van, Gandhi targeted the Prime Minister in his first of the three-day campaign of western Tamil Nadu.

"I will work with the people of Tamil Nadu to help you get a government that you deserve," he said and refrained from mentioning ally DMK, the ruling AIADMK's archrival and a key contender for power in Tamil Nadu.

In April or early May assembly elections are likely in Tamil Nadu and AIADMK, a BJP partner, is in power since 2011.

"I want to help bring a government in Tamil Nadu that truly respects poor people, farmers, labourers and small and medium business owners," Gandhi said.

The Congress party's ties with the DMK appeared strained after the Dravidian party days ago said it had plans to contest all the 30 seats in neighbouring Puducherry as part of efforts to strengthen the party.



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi addresses party workers during his election campaign, in Coimbatore on Saturday

Also, DMK office-bearers could not be seen in his campaign here. Cadres of alliance parties taking part in the campaign of top leaders of the combine had so far been a practice in the state.

Hitting out at the AIADMK government, Gandhi said, "You have a government today in Tamil Nadu that is compromised. Narendra Modi uses the CBI and Enforcement Directorate to get what he wants."

"Narendra Modi feels that he can buy anybody. He thinks he can frighten anybody. He does not understand that just because he is for sale does not mean Tamil Nadu is for sale," Gandhi said.

The Prime Minister believed that as he 'controls' the Tamil

Nadu government, he could extend his dominance over the people of the state as well, the Congress MP said, adding the public, were, however, going to make the PM known that he cannot control them.

"Only the Tamil people will determine the future of Tamil Nadu. Nagpur (RSS) can never determine the future of Tamil Nadu." Modi does not understand the spirit of self-respecting Tamil people who would respond only to love and affection, he said.

During his campaign, Gandhi had tea in a roadside shop and interacted with people there and also took part in a brief reception accorded to him by 'Baduga' people of the Nilgiris district.

The Congress leader alleged the Prime Minister partnered with big businessmen and was 'selling' everything that belonged to the people.

"What does Modi do? Modi partners with three or four big businessmen in this country. They provide him media and he provides them money...Narendra Modi is one by one selling everything that belongs to the people of India and Tamil Nadu," he alleged. Gandhi said what belonged to the farmers was now being taken away by the three new farm laws and alleged riots "are going to be made servants" of biggest industries. That was why his party backed farmers and fought the government, he said.

Citing his interaction with representatives of small and medium industries, he said they explained the 'damage' caused by demonetisation and GST implementation.

He accused the Prime Minister of giving away to a few industrialists what rightfully belonged to the farmers and small industries.

Attacking the BJP, he said his party was involved in a fight against a 'particular' ideology that believed that "only one culture, one language and one idea should rule India."

"Modi ji believes that the entire India should worship only one person called Narendra Modi," Gandhi claimed.



Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) activists participate in a motorcycle rally in support of farmers' agitation against Centre's farm reform laws in Amritsar on Saturday

AAP holds motorbike rallies in Punjab for Jan 26 tractor parade

CHANDIGARH

THE Punjab unit of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) took out motorbike rallies in several parts of the state on Saturday to mobilise people for a proposed tractor parade of farmers in Delhi on January 26. AAP legislator and Leader of Opposition in the Punjab Assembly Harpal Singh Cheema said party workers have taken out two-wheeler rallies across the state to mobilise people for the tractor parade in the national capital on Republic Day.

The motorbike rallies were organised at many places in Punjab, including Sangrur, Mohali and Faridkot. The AAP workers taking part in the rallies carried placards with slogans such as "No Farmer No Food" and "Kisan Mazdoor Ekta Zindabad".

The AAP has already announced that it will join the farmers' tractor parade in Delhi but "not as a political party". MLAs and office-bearers from the party's Punjab

unit would take part in the tractor parade on January 26.

The farmer unions protesting against three farm laws of the Centre have said that they will go ahead with their proposed tractor parade in Delhi on Republic Day. They have said the tractor parade will be held on the busy Outer Ring Road in the national capital. Thousands of farmers, mostly from Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh, have been camping at several border points of Delhi since November 28 last year, demanding a repeal of the three farm laws and a legal guarantee to the minimum support price (MSP) for their crops.

Enacted in September last year, the three laws have been projected by the Centre as major reforms in the agriculture sector that will remove middlemen and allow farmers to sell their produce anywhere in the country. (PTI)

BRACING UP FOR THE BIG DAY



A glimpse of full dress rehearsal of Republic Day Parade 2021 near India Gate in New Delhi on Saturday

Scientists find two new species of rare ant in Kerala, TN

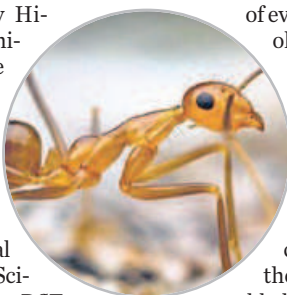
NEW DELHI

TWO new species of a rare ant genus have been discovered in Kerala and Tamil Nadu by a team of scientists, the Department of Science and Technology said on Saturday. The team was led by Himender Bharti of Punjabi University in Patiala. One of the two species found in the Periyar Tiger Reserve of Kerala has been named Ooceraea Joshi in honour of professor Amitabh Joshi -- a distinguished evolutionary biologist from Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), a DST institute.

"The species of the ant genus Ooceraea found in Kerala and Tamil Nadu add to the diversity of this rare genus. They differ from others of the same genus on the basis of the

number of antennal segments," the DST said. New species are typically named after some distinguishing attribute or location but are often named after scientists as a means of honouring their research contributions to biology, especially in the fields of evolutionary and organismal biology, ecology or systematics.

"The two new species, the first ones spotted with 10-segmented antennae among this rare genus, were discovered by a team led by Prof. Himender Bharti of Punjabi University, Patiala. The discovery has been published in the journal ZooKeys," the DST added. The genus is currently represented by 14 species of which eight possess nine-segmented antennae, while five possess 11-segmented antennae and one species has recently been reported with eight-segmented antennae.



Maha govt to start jail tourism in state from Jan 26

NAGPUR

THE Maharashtra government will start 'jail tourism' in the state from Pune's Yerawada prison on January 26 to facilitate people to visit and see from close quarters the historical prisons, a minister said on Saturday. Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar will inaugurate the jail tourism initiative at Yerawada Central Jail on the Republic Day, state Home Minister Anil Deshmukh said in a press conference. This is the first of its kind



initiative in the country, he claimed. "Jail tourism in the state will start from the Yerawada jail in the first phase.

Students from schools, colleges and other people will get a chance to visit these historical places," he told re-

porters at Police Gymkhana here. "Under the British rule, several freedom fighters, including Mahatma Gandhi, Lokmanya Tilak, Motilal Nehru, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Sarojini Naidu, Subhas Chandra Bose had been imprisoned in Yerawada jail and their memories have been preserved there," he said. Deshmukh said that guides will be provided to the visitors and ticket prices will range from Rs 5 to Rs 50. "In view of the coronavirus pandemic, only 50 visitors will be allowed daily," he said. (PTI)

SPREADING AWARENESS

Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson speaks during a coronavirus press conference at 10 Downing Street in London on Friday. Johnson announced that the new variant of Covid-19, which was first discovered in the south of England, may be linked with an increase in the mortality rate.



Shashi Tharoor to incorporate public views in UDF manifesto

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

CONGRESS MP Shashi Tharoor has been given the crucial task of meeting people from various walks of life, including the youth, and incorporate their views while drawing up the "People's manifesto" of the UDF opposition in poll-bound Kerala. A decision in this regard was taken at the first meeting of the Election Management and Strategy Committee held here on Saturday.

Tharoor, who is also a member of the 10-member committee, constituted by Congress President Sonia Gandhi recently, will be meeting people in Thiruvananthapuram, Kottayam, Ernakulam, Palakkad and Kozhikode districts, Committee Chairman Oommen Chandy told reporters after the meeting.

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Employees unions fume at election notification

- Question how can the SEC put their lives at risk
- APNGOs State president Chandrasekhar Reddy wants polls postponed till SC verdict, but adds that they will abide by the apex court's decision
- Amaravati JAC chairman Venkateswarlu says Covid vaccination is very important to lakhs of employees

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

ANDHRA Pradesh Non-Gazetted Officers Association (APNGOs) state president N Chandrasekhar Reddy said the employees were not ready for the local body polls due to threat of coronavirus and appealed to the State Election Commissioner N Ramesh Kumar to postpone the elections. Chandrasekhar Reddy on Saturday responded to the notification released by the SEC for the first phase of elections. He questioned who would take responsibility if the employees were infected by coronavirus while discharging polling duty. "Some employees have already died on duty in the state due to virus and their families



APNGO State president N Chandra Sekhar Reddy and other leaders addressing a press conference in Vijayawada on Saturday

are facing many hardships. What is the urgency to conduct the local body polls? The same SEC did not conduct elections in two-and-a-half years. AP High Court has clearly said both corona vaccination drive and polls are important," he said. Chandrasekhar Reddy said the State Election Commissioner N Ramesh Kumar addressed the media at his office in Vijayawada covering his face with the face shield. If his life was precious for him, was it not the case for employees, he said. "We strongly oppose the decision of the SEC to conduct the local body polls and are hopeful that the Supreme Court verdict will come in favour of the employees on Monday. We will abide by the Supreme Court verdict on elections," he said.

Amaravati JAC chairman Bopparaju Venkateswarlu said Covid vaccination was very important to the lakhs of employees and stated that the employees would attend the duty after taking the vaccine. He said election was very lengthy process and employees need protection from coronavirus. SEC staff was very limited and most of the election work is done by the government employees. Venkateswarlu made it clear that the employees cannot attend poll duties at the cost of their lives. He said the SEC was not giving appointment to the JAC leaders who were trying to meet him since Friday. He said they had prepared a detailed memorandum to submit to the SEC but not got the appointment.

Botcha questions SEC's haste

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NELLORE

MUNICIPAL administration and urban development minister Botcha Satyanarayana said that it was unfortunate that the State Election Commissioner was pressing ahead with local body poll process in the state and asked what happens if the elections were postponed for two or three more months. He said the State Election Commission (SEC) was adopting 'confrontationist' attitude towards the state government "which won more than 150 seats". Satyanarayana addressed the media here on Saturday after laying the foundation stone for the Gosha hospital along with the minister for water resources P Anil Kumar Yadav. He repeated the usual allegation of the state government and the ruling party leaders that opposition leader N Chandrababu Naidu had connived with State Election Commissioner Nimmagadda Ramesh Kumar with an intention to 'dilute the democratic spirit' in the state. Asking why Chandrababu had failed to conduct elections in 2018 though their term had expired, he said SEC Ramesh Kumar should know his responsibility along with the duties as he had been behaving like a politician. At the same time, he predicted that the opposition could get only 10 per cent of votes in the local elections polls. "The opposition leader of the state is commenting against the



Municipal Administration Minister Botcha Satyanarayana addressing the media in Nellore on Saturday. Water Resources Development Minister P Anil Kumar Yadav and MLAs are seen.

- Wonders what will happen if the local polls are postponed for a few more months
- Says that Oppn will not get even 10% of votes in the elections
- Reiterates allegations that TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu and State Election Commissioner have connived against the State govt

government sitting at home. While the state is facing a critical situation due to COVID, the SEC is planning to conduct polls immediately. Nimmagadda is speaking to the officials like a political leader, not as a Commissioner. This is pathetic and I had never seen in my political career of around 30 years," said Minister Satyanarayana. He said SEC Ramesh Kumar was now pointing fingers at the senior IAS officer Gopala Krishna Dwivedi who earlier served as the Chief Electoral Of-

ficer with utmost sincerity. He criticised that it was nothing but misusing constitutional bodies for personal reasons. The minister said that even though they had requested the SEC to conduct polls earlier, he decided to stop polls citing Covid situation when there were only 50 cases. Now the situation is critical, and still the SEC is mandating the poll process in the state, he said. He pointed out that the SEC had asked the state government to relieve some officers from

election duties even before the release of the election notification. He wanted the commission to wait till further directions of the Supreme Court and asked why Ramesh Kumar had been rushing to conduct polls. "Do you think that Chandrababu can get more than 10 per cent of votes in the polls even if you conduct a campaign for him? Now people are ready to banish him from the political arena. The opposition is resorting to stealing statues and attacking the structures just because of its inability to digest the popularity of the ruling party. Tekkali incident is a clear example where CCTV footage revealed activists of the TDP were involved in Nandi idol incident," he said. Minister for water resources P Anil Kumar and legislators were also present.

POLICE CRACK DURGA TEMPLE SILVER LIONS' THEFT CASE

- Arrest two persons, including the gold trader who bought the booty
- Vijayawada Commissioner says accused Saibaba has committed thefts in many temples in West Godavari and Krishna districts since 2008
- Saibaba steals the idols in June last year, hammers them out of shape so that no one recognises them before selling to a bullion merchant in Tanuku

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

VIJAYAWADA city police arrested a person in connection with the theft three silver lions of chariot at Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy temple and recovered 9 kg silver from his possession. Though the theft took place in June 2020 during



Commissioner of Police B Srinivasulu giving details of arrest of the accused in Durga temple silver lions' theft case in Vijayawada on Saturday. Special Investigation Team (SIT) chief G V G Ashok Kumar (left) is also seen.

the peak of Covid pandemic, it came to light later. The crime triggered a political storm with opposition blaming the government for looking other way as temples were attacked and desecrated in different parts of the state. The accused was identified as Jakkamsetti Saibaba, 49, of Gollavanipeta village in Bhimavaram mandal of West Godavari district. Giving details of the arrest, Vijayawada commissioner of police B Srinivasulu told the media on Saturday that Saibaba was an offender who robbed many temples since 2008 in West Godavari district and other places.

According to commissioner Srinivasulu, the accused was the habitual offender and also worked as daily wage labourer in aqua tanks and agriculture fields. The accused visited the Sri Durga temple for darshan of Goddess Kanaka Durga in June last year and noticed the silver lion idols attached to the chariot. He found that there was no proper security due to lockdown. He decided to steal the silver lions and went back to his village. He came back to the temple in the same month and cleverly lifted the three idols between 7.30 pm and 8.30 pm. Then he went to Tanuku town and sold them to a gold mer-

chant for Rs 35,000. Before selling them, he hammered the idols out of shape so that no one recognises them. The police during the course of investigation identified Saibaba as the one who robbed the idols after going through the past records of temple offenders. The commissioner said the idols were melted. Police also arrested the gold trader M Kamlesh, 39, of Surendra Jewellery showroom of Tanuku. The accused Saibaba was involved in more than 20 cases of temple robberies in West Godavari and Krishna districts since 2008. Police commissioner Srinivasulu praised the assistant commissioner of police (West) K Hanumantha Rao, I Town circle inspector P Venkateswarlu and other staff for arresting the accused and cracking the mystery behind the sensational theft case. Special Investigation Team (SIT) chief and DIG G V G Ashok Kumar said the police department was taking measures to protect the temples and places of worship in the state. He said village protection squads were being formed and CC cameras were installed at the places of worship across the state.

CPI wants govt to cooperate with SEC

HANS NEWS SERVICE
TIRUPATI

CPI state secretary K Ramakrishna asked the state government to cooperate with the State Election Commission (SEC) in conducting the local body polls. Instead of moving around courts, the government should come forward and facilitate the election process. Speaking to the media here on Saturday, he said that it was not correct for the government to move to Supreme Court on local body polls issue even after the High Court gave its clear verdict. "Even in the US where the virus was rampant, elections were held. Now in our state not even a single case has been reporting in some districts. The government has removed the contract employees also recruited at the time of pandemic which is a clear indication of the reduced effect of the virus. But, the government is trying to use it as an excuse to run away from elections," he criticised. The CPI leader said vaccine was not being administered in AP alone but in several nations, which the Chief Minister should remember while citing it to seek postpone-

- Party State secretary Ramakrishna points out that vaccination is going on in the entire country, not only in AP
- Says it is not proper on the part of the govt to make employees to declare that they will not cooperate with the SEC in conducting the elections
- Calls upon people to defeat BJP candidate in Tirupati LS bypoll to teach a lesson for its anti-farmer attitude

ment of polls. It was unfortunate to make employees to say that they were not ready for elections. The government should act in wisdom and cooperate with the SEC, he opined. CPI district secretary A Rama Naidu, Janardhan, Chinnam Penchalaiah, Nagarajan and others were also present. Later, the CPI cadres held cultural shows and a rally protesting against the three farm laws. They lambasted the Union government for its attitude in dealing with the farmers agitations and gave a call to defeat BJP candidate in the forthcoming Tirupati Lok Sabha by-election to teach it a lesson.

'Netaji dreamt of strong India... from LAC to LOC'

Continued from P1
He would have been immensely proud to see India helping other countries fight the pandemic," the PM said. He announced that Netaji's birth anniversary (January 23) would henceforth be celebrated as 'Parakram Divas', and that the freedom fighter's life, work

and decisions were an inspiration for all. "130 crore Indians are indebted and will remain so to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose," the Prime Minister said. Modi had landed at the Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport around 3 pm on Saturday, from where he took a helicopter to the city. His chop-

per landed at the RCTC Ground where he was received by Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar and state minister Firhad Hakim. He paid tribute to Bose at Netaji Bhavan, and attended an international seminar on Bose at the National Library, where he interacted with delegates and artists.

BSF detects another tunnel along Indo-Pak border

Continued from P1
The BSF troops had also foiled an infiltration bid in the same area in November 2019 wherein BSF troops had fired upon the party trying to infiltrate into India. Notably, during the past 10 days, two underground tunnels have been detected by BSF personnel in Hiranagar sector. While this is the fourth along the Pakistan border in the Samba, Hiranagar and Kathua areas of Jammu and Kashmir in the past six months, it is the tenth tunnel in the past decade. The area has been cordoned off and further details are awaited.

AP SEC issues notification for local polls

Continued from P1
"I will continue to keep reporting to the Governor on the poll process. If required, I will submit a report to the Supreme Court as well," he said. Following the day's developments, the SEC wanted to meet the Governor on Sunday and submit a status report. But as he did not get any confirmation from the Raj Bhavan till late on Saturday evening, he left for Hyderabad.

tion of State Government Employees Venkatarami Reddy, who has been opposing the conduct of the polls, had threatened to kill him. Ramesh Kumar in his letter said that Venkatarami Reddy had claimed that the Constitution has given a right to every individual to defend his life. In continuation of this right, the Constitution has given him the right to kill. The SEC said the Commission views this as most provocative statement and asked the DGP to keep close watch on the activities of Venkatarami Reddy.

Letter to DGP on threat to life
Meanwhile, the SEC wrote a letter to the DGP saying that the Chairman of the Federa-

SVIMS to set up bio-safety lab for virology research

Continued from P1
Modern technology and advanced equipment will be made available in it as required by the researchers and medical experts. All precautions will be taken into consideration from the PPEs to be used inside the lab to sample collection and experiments to ensure the safety of the researchers and other staff. The SVIMS is currently having BSL-2 and BSL-3 is soon going to upgrade the facility in the Institute. While the equipment to be set up in BSL-3 used to be imported in the past, now DRDO has taken initiative to manufacture it indigenously with other companies. They have given the quotation for Rs 69 lakh to SVIMS for this laboratory. Speaking to The Hans India, the Director cum Vice Chancellor Dr B Vengamma said that the equipment is ready and DRDO has arranged Rs 25 lakh donation through Sri City MD Ravindra

Sannareddy. The equipment worth Rs 30 lakh will be sponsored by the DRDO recommended company which manufactured it. SVIMS has been planning to use the funds from Sri Balaji Aarogya Vara Prasadini (SBAVP) scheme to meet its obligation of providing the balance Rs 14 lakh. Now it is under the approval stage and the lab will become a reality very soon which will be located near the Centre for Advanced Research (CFAR) building in the campus. Specialised virologists are also to be appointed to carryout research in BSL-3, she disclosed. The institute is also contemplating the idea of launching three new branches in the institute - Geriatrics, Clinical Immunology and Genetics which was in principle approved, said Dr Vengamma. They were planning to take the financial support from SBAVP for these courses too.

Enthusiastic R' Day celebrations to bring in cheers

RAJU VERNEKAR

Despite a shadow of Covid-19 still looming large, with ongoing vaccination drive and unlock measures, people are expected to participate enthusiastically in 72nd Republic Day celebrations, looking forward to the resumption of normalcy across the country soon.

Although the celebration of R day at Rajpath in New Delhi will be a low key affair, the participation of contingents floats from states and students' cultural programs, is certain to add flavour to the R day parade. The 321 school children and 80 folk artists will present the programs on different themes such as "Aatma Nirbhar Bharat: Vision for A Self Reliant India" (Mount Abu Public School and Vidya Bharti School, Delhi) and " Hum Fit Toh India Fit" (Government Girls Senior Secondary School, Delhi). 127 children from DTEA Senior Secondary Schools, Delhi will showcase folk dances of Tamil Nadu. Besides 80 folk artists of Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre, Kolkata will present the folk dance Bajasal from Kalahandi, Odisha.

In keeping with COVID-19 protocol, not more than 25,000 spectators will be allowed, compared to nearly a lakh people turning up for the parade that showcases India's military might and cultural diversity. Children



below the age of 15 will not be permitted. The replica of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya is expected to be a special attention.

Ladakh to make debut

The size of the marching contingents from the armed forces and the paramilitary has been trimmed with 96 participants in a squad compared to 144 in the ordinary course. Fifteen floats of central government departments and 17 floats of different states will participate in the parade. A

tableau of Ladakh will be showcased for the first time on Rajpath. Besides for the first time in the history of R-Day, the parade will not culminate at the Red Fort. It will start from Vijay Chowk and end at the National Stadium. The distance of the parade has been cut down from an earlier 8.2 kilometers to 3.3 kilometers.

The main Republic Day Parade, in New Delhi, will get underway at 9.30 a.m., following the flag hoisting at 9 a.m. Although it used to run for around three

hours, this year it will be shorter.

Rafale show

The parade will be led by the three divisions of the Indian armed forces (Army, Navy, and Air Force) who will display their strength. Features include performances by India's Border Security Force "Daredevils" motorcycle stunt team, Sikh Light Infantry, the Grenadiers, and the Parachute Regiment. There will also be a showcase of weapons and combat vehicles and a dra-

matic air show. Rafale fighter plane, the latest multi-role fighter aircraft acquired by the IAF will be part of the flypast at the culmination of the parade. A total of 42 aircraft will be seen in the flypast including 15 fighter planes, five transport, and one vintage aircraft. Some new formations will also be seen for the first time.

A contingent of Bangladesh

A contingent of the Bangladesh armed forces will also take part in the parade given the 50th anniversary celebrations of the 1971 war of liberation of Bangladesh. The R Day reminds people about sacrifices by freedom fighters and armed forces. The patriotic songs are played and the air is filled with patriotism. On the occasion of Republic day, an assessment of the situation in the country becomes imperative.

Population

The country's population is estimated at 138 crores, equivalent to 17.7 per cent of the total world population. 35.0 per cent of the population is urban, while 65 per cent the population is located in rural areas. The total land area is 2,973,190 Km2 (1,147,955 sq. miles) and the population density is 464 per square kilometer.

Literacy

At present, the Literacy rate of India 2021 is 74.04 per cent (aged

Honour Pingali Venkayya

On the eve of Republic Day, it is customary and necessary to remember the freedom fighters and other stalwarts who rendered yeomen service to keep India's pride in dizzy heights in various fields like Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. B R Ambedkar, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel etc. The services of health warriors especially need a special mention. This year, the 125th birthday of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose who sacrificed his soul for achieving freedom in trusted style by forming Azad Hindu Fauj, is marked as 'Parakram Divas' and it should be celebrated every year by observing a two minute silence nation wide at 11 am. This decision may also politically support in strengthening BJP stand in the en-



suing West Bengal assembly elections.

In this context, it would also be a great honour to cite from the ramparts of Red Fort, the name of unsung freedom fighter and designer

of India's tricolour national flag Pingali Venkayya. It would also be a respectful tribute to him if his contribution to the nation is expounded in the media for keepsake to the present generation.

Dr NSR Murthy, Secunderabad

seven and above). The male literacy rate is 82.14 per cent and the female literacy rate is 65.46 per cent. Kerala is the most literate state, with 93.91 per cent literacy. Bihar is the least literate, with a literacy of 63.82 per cent.

Amid the pandemic, the economy is slowly limping back to normalcy. India is expected to become one of the most powerful countries in the time to come. Let us hope that we become superpower at least by 2030.

Amazon's anti-Hindu web serials



Amazon the retail giant of the world went through many controversies in the past in India as well as around the world. It is a big fish in the retail world but they should have understood that hurting the feelings of Hindus of the world is a game for them, the latest one being the web series "Tandav".

It's true that for past six years India has changed a lot in terms of industrialisation, education, technology, medicine etc and one more important which should not be missed is nationalism. There is nothing in adopting a hard core nationalism it's just a way to show love and affection for the country in which one is living.

Tandav incident did shown that lots of followers of lord Ram and lord Shiva are growing up in the country and it is showcased in a very cheap manner by the film makers. Cutting down those scenes is not actually the problem solver, it should be completely cut off for at least a year or so.

Amazon always acts like as if it doesn't know what the matter is when it's about a controversy on Hindus. Consumers or Amazon Subscribers must think twice before they purchase from this giant. There are many other platforms where you will get the same products which is available on the amazon.com so I will think twice before I purchase from them.

Present India is not that erstwhile India which used to get hurt and hurt always at every moment. This India shows that it will get no more get hurt because we have got all the rights to speak and take action against those forces which always hurts the sentiments of the Indians. This present India has shown the world that we can develop the vaccines against those diseases which has haunted most of the people in this world in recent. India might be a wounded tiger presently but India is intelligent as an eagle.

Sharadchandran S, New Delhi

TRUST DEFICIT IS THE MAIN ISSUE

It is indeed a concern to one and all that the issue of farmers is continuing with their firm stand on the demand for repealing the three controversial Farm Acts. The ruling dispensation would have never anticipated an opposition of this magnitude that could go on for such a long period in which people braving such a chill weather and more than 60 of them having lost their lives and maintaining their tone and tenor intact. The government has brought about a number of Acts equally virulent like these Farm Acts.

Bringing four Labour Codes in the place of 44 Labour Acts virtually render the entire work force as an enslaved lot. It did not encounter agitation of a serious magnitude. The historical march of the corresponding of migrant workers left at lurch did not see agitation

of this sort. Therefore government seems to have taken it so lightly and pushed through these Farm Acts. Now the government is caught unaware. It is taken more as a matter of prestige by the government and a livelihood issue by the farmers. The effort of the Supreme Court forming a panel with known pro-Act persons having kept aside by the agitators the government has offered an Olive Twig with its offer to suspend the enforcement of these three Acts for one year has also been rejected by the farmers. Such offer makes it clear that it is not such an imminent subject and can wait for more than a year. In that case instead of pushing through the Bills the government would have taken more time for more consultation, more convincing efforts and more improvements in the Bill.

A G Rajmohan, Anantapur

Should women be paid for domestic work?

Why should domestic work and farm labour done by women not be accepted in India's socio-economic policy framework? The government is making gender discrimination by not measuring the role of women in making the country's gross domestic product (GDP). The Census of India places household chores in a non-working population with beggars and students. The number of non-working population in the census 2011 was 728.9 million. The official definition states that these are people who did not work of any nature in any time period. Of these 165.6 million people were the main 'discharge of domestic responsibilities', they are mostly 96.5 percent or 159.9 million women.

There is a clear and present need to recognize this work, but also to redistribute it. Household duties should be shared among members of a family. The study,



published in 2011 in the journal Mountain Research and Development, entitled "Women in the Contribution to Household Food and Economic Security, reported that women in the mountain region" did no work ". However, when analyzing their activities, it was observed that when the men of the area worked an average of nine hours, the women worked for 16 hours. There is a discussion

among women thinkers as to what the pay of women will actually be. Sociologist Ann Oakley, who studied the history of homework in her path-breaking books published in the 1970s, said that 'wages for the home' only imprisons women within the home, increasing their social isolation.

The debate over monetary remuneration for homework has remained unresolved within the

women's movement, with tools for measuring the value attaching women's unpaid work in national economies become more sophisticated. These tasks that are part of the responsibility of women that maintain human life and reproduce the labor force are suppressed as usual.

The question of how and how to measure the value of house tax has received serious attention from women domestic workers and their trade unions in Tamil Nadu and elsewhere. Their demands include an hourly minimum wage, a weekly day off, an annual bonus, and protection of their physical autonomy in the workplace. This is an agenda that all parties can and cannot just include in their election manifesto, but can strengthen them politically by recognizing them and taking the mandate of homework seriously.

Priyanka Saurabh, Hisar, Haryana

SUKUMARAN C V

A new generation Malayalam actress has recently revealed a groping experience through her Instagram account. She says in the post: "I am not the one to rant often on social media. But what happened today is something I can't seem to let go. Two men walked past me in a generously spaced aisle in Lulu hypermarket which barely had people crowding and one of them not so accidentally grazed his hand on my back while walking past me. Because it caught me off guard I couldn't react immediately."

The police registered a suo motu case based on the Instagram post; and inspecting the CCTV footage, the culprits were identified and nabbed. And yet, there is no doubt, men will continue to behave like that to ladies in future too.

Kerala is often called the most educated of all Indian states. But misogyny thrives among this most educated people in almost all spheres of life. In 2019, the renowned feminist scholar of Kerala, J. Devika (a professor with the Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram) was insulted during a seminar conducted by the English Department of a government women's college. She was the invitee to present a paper (Feminist Modernism? Madhavikutty in Malayali Homoeaesthetic Circles). After the presentation, in the question and answer session, a male teacher of the college aired absolute misogynistic remarks against her. He even said that until he is there with lingam (penis) between his legs, he won't allow such anti-male harangue. He was trying to reduce the renowned feminist's deconstruction of literature and patriarchy into mere anti-male grudge. Viewing feminism as animosity against the males not only expresses the ignorance about feminism but also denigrates it. People who don't know

Kerala's culture of misogyny



ing the culprit to go scot-free!

Why the female is always sexually harassed in our societies? Why this happens even when we are the most educated people? Why the female, from the ordinary women to the prominent persons in the academic circle, faces the same intimidating, belittling and abusive experiences?

The female can't appear in the public sphere without fear. The female can't fearlessly travel by train or bus without fear. "If any woman, anywhere in the world, hears footfalls behind her on a darkened street, she has reason to be afraid, Robin Morgan called it the democracy of fear under patriarchy," says Derrick Jensen, in his book Endgame (Volume-1, Chapter 12—Predator and Prey). In our movies we often see the heroine being harassed by ruffians and we are thrilled to see the hero smashing those who misbehave with the heroine. But we don't think why such misogynistic scenes are portrayed in the movies. Women are always por-

trayed as frivolous, flirting and depending on the males. And we hear the dialogues of the male characters about the female characters as "What a piece!" etc. In real life, we see the female as a 'piece' to be enjoyed by the male, and in real life too the female is generally seen not as an individual but as a piece. Real life is exaggerated in reel and reel life is enacted in real life.

Almost every female can narrate the experience like that of the actress and almost all (bold) ladies narrate such experiences on their social media platforms. My wife has told me she has had to pierce a man's hand with a safety pin to stop him groping her aboard a bus when she was a college student.

The sexual harassment the female has to suffer in public places is a ubiquitous menace in the so called God's Own Country (the general picture of India may not be qualitatively different) and I wonder why the men-folk who indulge in such abominable practice are not ashamed of their indecent

behaviour. It seems our culture is basically misogynistic. Our religions, our upbringing, our education, our print and visual media relentlessly inculcate misogyny in children and male chauvinism thrives in almost all fields of life and, as a result, the female has to suffer the ubiquitous menace of sexual harassment.

One of the many manifestations of the working of this 'absolute sex' culture was witnessed by me recently. I have been assigned the duty of distribution and reception of election materials in the recently concluded local body elections in Kerala (December 2020). The 'distribution and collection' centre I have been asked to report at 7 am on the distribution day was a Higher Secondary school and there is a spacious ground in front of the school. I reached the school at 6.55 am and there was nobody there. Generally when asked to come at 8 am, people reach at 9 am. Hence the time was shown as 7 am to make the people reach at 8 am. And I had to waste a full hour standing in front of the school! I had nothing to do and I whiled away time by observing the activities in the ground. There were many people—middle aged men were seen walking; little boys were seen playing football and young men were seen running and doing other exercises. Not even a single little girl, or young lady or middle aged woman was seen playing or exercising or running or walking! In Kerala the population of the females is more than that of the males and yet the female is totally invisible in the public places—whether it is the playgrounds or beaches or clubs or village roadsides. In the evenings, we see young men whiling away time sitting on the culverts on the side of

village roads and little boys playing on the village grounds. But the female is missing everywhere.

Our culture meticulously excludes the female from all freedoms the males are privileged to have, and hence the female appears in the public sphere only when the necessity pulls her out and on such occasions the males harass them in untemper ways and reinforces in her mind that she is sex—absolute sex, no less!

To live in this male chauvinist world is really terrible and harrowing not only for the female but for the male who sees the female as an individual too. The name of the chapter which deals with the gender issue in Howard Zinn's A People's History of the United States is "The Intimately Oppressed" (Chapter 6) in which Zinn quotes from the Declaration of Principles signed by 68 women and 32 men at the first Women's Rights Convention held on 19th and 20th of July, 1840: "The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her."

All around us, even today, even when we claim we are the most educated and the most progressive, we see the female is subjected to repeated injuries and the tyranny of the male over the female is still intact. As long as women continue to be harassed in public and private spheres, the humans can't claim themselves to be educated or civilised. As Sarah Grimke, one of the pioneering women's rights activists, wrote in 1830, "...it is perfectly clear that whatsoever it is morally right for a man to do, it is morally right for a woman to do."

It is high time we Indians realised this truth and treated the female as an individual just like the male is, with all the feelings the male is having; and deserving all the dignity, respect and status the male is entitled to have.

Wealth created massive employment in TS



Vanam Jwala Narasimha Rao

THE time has come now to redefine the whole notion and perspective of employment at least in the context of Telangana. It is high time that critics realise that jobs are not mere figures and that too in government departments. The umpteen welfare and development programs in Telangana that enhance the living standards of people and create livelihood in some form or other whereby people are able to stand on their own legs with an assured monthly or annual income are the real employment creation and job creation.

Put this in the perspective of the Telangana State under the Chief Ministership of K Chandrashekhara Rao. Ever since KCR assumed the office, he had been consistently advocating the need to create wealth and prosperity of all sections of the people. He always stresses on the prosperity of people. When wealth is created it automatically creates employment, the term often erratically used for jobs. KCR's preference is social insurance.

We defined our country as a welfare State. The welfare State is a form of government in which the State protects and promotes the economic and social well-being of the citizens, based upon the principles of equal opportunity and equitable distribution of wealth. The welfare State is a way of governing in which the State or an established group of social institutions provides basic economic security for its citizens. By definition, in a welfare State, the government is responsible for the individual and social welfare of its citizens. A fundamental feature of the welfare State is social insurance. All these fundamental concepts hold good cent per cent in case of Telangana State led by KCR.

Against this theoretical context, one should understand the difference between unemployment and getting a gainful employment. No State in the world can ever provide jobs for all its unemployed in the government

sector. A quick look at all the welfare and development programmes, policies and schemes that KCR's government had been implementing for the past six and half years, one can come to the conclusion that, each and every measure is aimed at creating wealth and making people self-reliant financially and socially. This essential part of the policies, programmes and schemes of KCR are never explored in real essence.

Take any of the schemes and programmes of the KCR government, there is an opportunity linked to it to create wealth. These include programmes like Palle Pragathi and Pattana Pragathi that have tremendous economic activity imbibed to it. For instance, under Palle Pragathi each Gram Panchayat is given a tractor with trolley and tanker to transport the debris and to water the plants. The activity of each tractor with trailer and tanker provides employment at least to three persons. Imagine how much employment it created in the villages all over the State. Should we not count this as job creation?

Take the programmes aimed at empowering the hereditary professions, be it distributing sheep, fish lets, incentives given to the dairy industry or helping the hairdressers to open a modern saloon in the rural areas or helping a goldsmith to open his workshop and sale outlet have all provided new opportunities. Fish culture has been developed at several irrigation projects and reservoirs. The day is not far off when Telangana state starts exporting the meat and fish to other states and country. These are all directly and indirectly increase the economic activity, which in turn creates both personal, and market wealth. Should we not count this as job creation?

Take another major policy like Rythu Bandhu. The financial assistance given to each farmer for two crops in a year will result in the farmer employing some more people to help him in his activities. Even assuming that each farmer needs four to five persons support, it means more gainful employment. Construction of major, medium, minor and small irrigation projects also add to the list of more employees. Once these projects are all completed, we need a major work force to maintain them. Mechanisation of agriculture too creates job oppor-



tunities. Is this not employment? The Rythu Bhima a social insurance enables the diseased farmer's family members to stand on their own legs-a livelihood.

For any evaluation of state's economic health, the per capita calculation gives the actual position. In the Telangana State, for the past six and half years, the Per Capita power consumption has increased leaps and bounds. In 2014, the total power consumption was 47,338 million units (MU). The power consumption was 68,147 MU in 2018-19. In the last six years, there has been an increase of 44 per cent in consumption. This is an indicator of individual's wealth strength.

The reforms and restructuring in the power sector not only pulled the state out of perennial power crisis to a power surplus state but also opened up vast opportunities to thousands of skilled and unskilled people to get a gainful employment.

The per capita income at constant prices in Telangana State had increased from Rs 91,121 (during 2011-12) to Rs 1,53,927 (during 2019-20) registering a growth from 1.8 per cent to 7.2 per cent. The GSDP during the same period increased from Rs 359434 to Rs 663258 registering a growth from 2.97 per cent to 8.23 per cent. The per capita income at current prices in Telangana State had increased from Rs 91121 (During 2011-12) to Rs 228216 (During 2019-20) regis-

tering a growth of 11.6 per cent. The GSDP during the same period increased from Rs 359434 to Rs 969604 registering a growth of 12.61 per cent. This is yet another indicator of great wealth creation.

Right from the day one, KCR had been focussing on the need to strengthen the rural economy. All his schemes, policies and programmes are planned and executed towards this direction. Besides filling up of all the government vacancies in the rural areas, KCR created many jobs with his reform linked administrative decisions like creation of new districts, converting several panchayats to major panchayats, merging some major panchayats to municipalities, converting some municipalities into Corporations etc. The government also converted tribal gudem, thanas and other habitations into panchayats. Increase in the police stations, circles, divisions and a host of other decisions have created more employment and wealth creation.

Construction of Vaikunta Dhamams, Burial grounds, integrated veg and non-veg markets, Rythu Vedikas, repair and development of internal and external roads, creation of plant nursery in every village, implementation of Harihar Haram on a regular basis, all these activities are proving direct and indirect employment to the local people.

A slew of welfare and develop-

ment measures taken in the handloom sector, textiles have not only pulled the sector out of woods but also helped it to sustain economically. To support this sector, the government ordered that all the government educational institutions including the residential one gets their required school dresses and other upholstery done from buying cloth from the handloom and powerloom sectors. This opened up a flood of activity, which led to more employment and wealth creation.

If one does an analysis sector by sector, the results would be mind-blowing, and they show how Telangana State under KCR's chief ministership created more wealth creation and thereby more jobs and more gainful employment as well as livelihood. Moreover, in the past six and half years the state had employed more than 1.25 Lakh jobs in the government, State-owned public sector undertakings, non-government sector besides 5.82 lakhs in IT sector and 14.96 lakhs in industrial sector due to TS-IPASS totalling 22 lakhs.

If one can recall what Kautilya (Chanakya) stated in his Arthashastra, one would realise that the ideas of wealth creation are rooted in our country's tradition. Several recent economic surveys by the States and the nation have mentioned about the importance of wealth creation.

(with VJM Divakar)

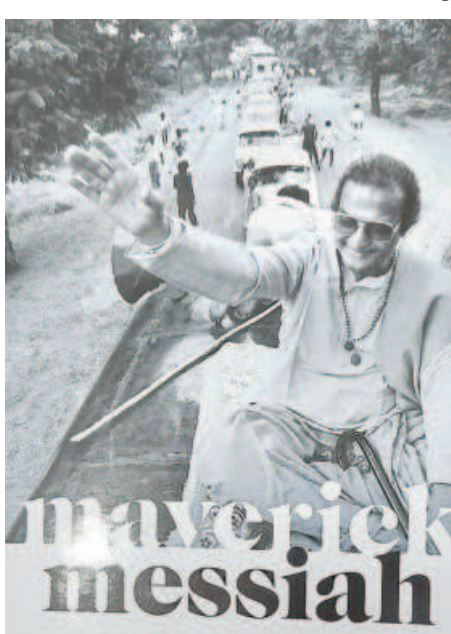
TANK BUND STATUARY

A reminder of NTR's broader cultural nationalism

NTR inaugurated the refurbished boulevard on Tank Bund with its awe-inspiring iconography with fanfare on 1 November 1986, the formation day of the linguistic state. He delivered an inspiring speech, detailing the great qualities of the stalwarts standing on Tank Bund. Each one of the statues was unveiled by a prominent personality invited for the occasion. For example, the statue of Rani Rudrama Devi was formally unveiled by writer Illendula Saraswathi Devi. Sir Arthur Cotton's statue was unveiled by Rev. Bishop B G Prasad Rao and that of Sri Sri (Srirangam Srinivasa Rao) by Justice K. Punnaiah, while Pothana's statue was uncovered by Prof Biruduraju Ramaraju.

NTR had roped in the services of film cameramen in Madras such as Marcus Bartley and Jaihind Satyam to help give shape to some of the personalities of the distant past. The historical iconographies created in films through photography in the past were used as the visual reference. An example was Tyagayya, portrayed by Chittoor Nagaiah in a film of the same name from the 1940s. As NTR had, in his films, played historical personalities, such as Sri Krishnadevaraya and Pothuluri Veerabrahmendra Swamy, they were modelled on his portrayal.

For others like Nannaya and Tikkana, literary references were used as clues. There was obviously less of a problem with twentieth-century figures. NTR had requested his long-standing writer-friend Jnanpith awardee C Narayana Reddy to come up with pithy couplets in Telugu. The verses captured the valuable contributions made by these eminent personalities. These were inscribed on the six-feet high pedestal of each nine-feet-tall statue. For example, the writeup on Pothuluri Veerabrahmendra Swamy read thus: 'Aagami kalagnana karta, purogrami samaaja samskartha [Foreteller of times ahead, forward-thinking reformer].'



Evidently, a lot of thought and effort went into the project. An analysis of the figures would show the liberal and democratic spirit behind the selection. The eclectic list included: the early literary trinity Nannaya, Tikkana and Yerrapragada; followed by Pothana of Bhagavatham fame; modern literary and reformist figures like Gurajada Appa Rao, Gurram Jashuva, Veesalingam Pantulu and Srirangam Srinivasa Rao (Sri Sri); cultural

icons who contributed to Telugu devotional poetry such as Annamacharya, Kshetraya, Ramadasu and Tyagayya; the first Telugu emperor of yore, Salivahana; the founder of modern Kuchipudi, Siddhendra Yogi; progressive medieval writer Vemana; accomplished woman poet Kummari Molla; the celebrated king who presided over the golden period of Telugu literary history, Krishnadevaraya; social reformer Raghupati Venkataratnam Naidu; editor-journalist Mutnuri Krishna Rao; historian Suravaram Pratapa Reddy; national flag designer Pingali Venkayya; Hindu mystic Pothuluri Veerabrahmendra Swamy; philosopher and statesman Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan; rationalist playwright and reformer Tripuraneni Ramaswamy; educationist and scholar C.R. Reddy; iconic revolutionary Alluri Sitarama Raju; modern theatre personality Bellary Raghava; broad-minded medieval minister Brahmanaidu; liberal Muslim ruler of Hyderabad Abul Hasan Tana Shah; the enlightened sixth Nizam Mir Mahabub Ali Khan; the builder of a gigantic irrigation development work in the Godavari Delta, Sir Arthur Cotton; progressive Urdu poet Maqsood Mohi-uddin; and the valorous queen of Kakatiya Dynasty, Rani Rudrama Devi. It showed the heterogeneous, non-sectarian and broad-based approach adopted by NTR to represent the glorious achievements of Telugus.

However, several pro-Telangana commentators, during the peak of the separatist agitation, saw in the Tank Bund statues 'regional hegemony', a thinly veiled expression for alleged Andhra domination. One objection was that the Telangana region did not get adequate representation. Though proportional regional representation was not the goal, out of the thirty-three personalities, seven were from the Telangana region, sixteen from coastal Andhra, six from the Rayalaseema region, and four were born outside the erstwhile united AP.

Another criticism was that the project helped mainly to consolidate the TDP's identity and inscribe NTR's image within it. Critics said the facial features of some of the statues looked suspiciously like NTR's. Santosh Kumar Sakthina, an art researcher, alleged that the visual symbolism of the Tank Bund statues involved 'a form of occupationist intervention in the city', by suppressing 'the syncretic Islamic historical identity of Hyderabad by projecting a new hegemonic Telugu history'.

The argument of these scholars appears to be that the 'Islamic historical identity' of Hyderabad should be frozen for all times to come despite the city having emerged as the capital of Telugu-speaking people, with their distinct culture and long history. The subsequent destruction of several of these statues on Tank Bund by highly charged Telangana activists was certainly not an effort to restore this 'Islamic historical identity'. It was more an assertion of the Telangana ownership of Hyderabad. The act of defilement, however, was explained away by the apologists as a legitimate expression of the long-suppressed anger of the people at the continuing injustice done to the region.

None of the stalwarts on the Tank Bund at the receiving end of the separatist ire would have had any inkling of these latter-day rumblings. Nor could they, by any stretch of the imagination, be accused of partaking in the alleged discrimination since regional identities were not formed in the way they came to be perceived in modern times.

In any case, NTR took his mission as one of bringing a sense of community among the Telugu-speaking people. He wanted the Tank Bund iconography to serve as a reminder of past glory and its continuity in the present. 'There is no future for people who forget their past,' NTR said on unveiling the statues. He called the icons 'inspiring symbols' that showed the way for a 'society devoid of caste, class and religious discrimination'.

In conceiving the project, NTR directed his efforts towards broader cultural nationalism and not the narrow confines of linguistic chauvinism. He wanted to draw inspiration not merely from Telugu-speaking people but anyone who was related to Telugu or contributed to its glory. That was the reason non-residents and even non-Telugu speakers found a place on Tank Bund. But ironically an affirmation of regional identity was later subverted by a counter-assertion of sub-regional identity.

(Excerpt from 'Maverick Messiah - A Political Biography of N T Rama Rao' By Ramesh Kandula, Published by Penguin eBury Press)

Being fearless in the Republic



B. Maria Kumar

WHILE inaugurating the country wide coronavirus vaccination drive on January 16, Prime Minister Narendra Modi quoted the 19th century Telugu social reformer Gurajada Appa Rao's famous lines that, 'the notion of a nation doesn't mean mud and soil but people and their lives'. It is this very idea of people and their expectations that form the crux of philosophy behind the essence of republic. Originally connoting 'people's thing', the word 'republic' entails the realisation of people's authority, sovereignty, freedom, liberty, fraternity, equality etc which determine the extent of a nation's glory. It is essentially these lofty ideals on which the Republic of India was founded and it came into force on 26th January 1950. It is also an awe-inspiring fact to cherish that the world's first republic also originated in India itself when the people of Licchavi state established themselves as 'Gana Sangha' around 6th century BC.

In a way, the most vital feature which is embedded in all the sacred tenets of the republic is nothing else than 'fearlessness'. Because it enables every citizen to enjoy unequivocally the rights enjoined on him/her. It was amply illustrated in Rabindranath Tagore's poem, 'Where the mind is without fear', that the spirit of fearlessness stands out as an all-time guiding principle in the unflinching pursuit of the goals of the Constitution. Hence, the ideal of fearlessness presup-

poses that every citizen has, inter alia, a two-in-one fundamental human right known as freedom-cum-liberty. Freedom from fear of others, things, situations etc and liberty to be fearless of dealing with others, things, situations etc are like two sides of the same coin that holds the key to the principles of natural justice, comprising the domains of life, fraternity, equality, dignity and so on.

Living freely without fear is the sine qua non of meaningful human existence called life. A fearless quest for opportunities and making of choices will determine the quality of equality attained. Justice is what the citizen experiences when the laws and rules are freely, fairly and fearlessly applied. Fraternity signifies a fearless camaraderie which as a special feature was incorporated in the Preamble by Dr. Ambedkar. Dignity is the fearless feeling of self-worth as a result of which citizens hold their heads high.

It is at the same time to note that the realities the people face in some republics are not pleasant though they are not uncom-

mon. Recent example is America, again a republic where its outgoing President put himself in the eye of the storm when ripples of fear spread out of racial prejudice across the nation following the killing of a black man named George Floyd in last July. There are certain namesake republics like China and North Korea where the law of the land is autocratic and the rule is oppressive by fearsome means. Such instances of tyrannical regimes will not go down as the embodiment of a true republic in the annals of human history. Because what actually matters is the state of well-being in which the citizens eventually find themselves.

As the famed progressive poet of 20th century, Sri Sri remarked, history shall not become a sycophantic documentation of rulers' tenures but it must reflect as the mirror of real lives of real people. It implies that the fearless way of living responsibly expands not just into society and polity alone but also into the realms of economy. Pertinent here is to mention that the American politician Marco

Rubio has gone on record saying aptly '... economy has to be measured in the real eyes of real people but not simply in statistics that appear in newspapers..'

Coming to the contemporary trends in the wake of Covid pandemic, the tense socio-economic conditions have already sown the seeds of fear - fear of interpersonal interactions in financial affairs, fear of taking initiatives in business enterprises, fear of holding trade meets, fear of undertaking travel and tourism etc. These repercussions are highly concerning as the same are corroborated by strict health protocols being practised in many western countries particularly after the surge of new strains of coronavirus. The government authorities in India have elaborately embarked on various mitigating mechanisms in order to normalise lives and livelihoods. But still, the Damocles' sword of uncertainty looms large in the society. Impractical laws, unrealistic regulations, unwarranted procedures, time consuming formalities etc will only exasperate the fear-stricken financial scenario.



(The author is retired DG (Cyber Crimes), MP)

Recall planned changes in COTPA: FRAI urges PM

HANS BUSINESS
HYDERABAD

Federation of Retail Association of India (FRAI) recently appealed to the Prime Minister to intervene and order recall of the proposed amendments in the COTPA law, which threaten to further attack the livelihoods of petty retailers selling tobacco and tobacco-based products across India.

The Telangana Chapter of FRAI, following a protest rally, appealed to the Chief Minister Chandrashekar Rao to save the interests and livelihoods of around 6.5 lakh micro retailers and their 30 lakh dependants in the State.

FRAI vice president and Hyderabad unit general secretary of Panshop Owners' Association of India Sallaudin Deccani said, "Already India has the toughest tobacco control laws in the world which has led to degrowth in legal tobacco consumption.

The coronavirus-triggered lockdowns have added to the conditions added to the woes of the small retailers. He said, "Any further adverse policy, which destabilises their business will be devastating."

The proposed changes under the Cigarettes and Other

Tobacco Products Act (COTPA) Amendment Bill, 2020 that severely affect the small retailers are: Prohibiting sale of tobacco products to persons below 21 years; Limiting in-shop advertisement and promotion among others.

"As per law, we do not sell tobacco products to minors," he said.

Terming the proposed changes as impractical, he said, "Conditions such as increasing the minimum distance for setting up of shops near an educational institution would affect the petty traders in the busy towns and cities."

Current laws have only helped illicit and smuggled cigarettes to grow benefiting anti-social element, he added.

The petty retailers requested exemption from licensing as required in the proposed amendment.

FRAI believes that a few NGOs who work for foreign companies are constantly pressurizing the government to enforce unfair and unimplementable laws against small shopkeepers. These policies are helping big foreign and e-commerce companies at the cost of business of petty retailers, the FRAI members lamented.



It's high time to incentivise investments in agri sector

Government should aggressively push setting up warehousing in BOT or PPP mode

DEBASIS MOHAPATRA

How has the Covid pandemic affected Origo Commodities' business?

Our business is in two parts. One is on the structured fund side and another is on the warehousing side. In the warehousing side, 80-90 per cent of our business is from the government, while the rest is for the exchanges and some private parties. During Covid times, the government business didn't get impacted at all because we were still stocking farmers' produce and also ensuring supply to ration shops. During the lockdown period, we had special passes to operate and we were functioning with full capacity for stocking and releases.

Structured finance got impacted because mandis were closed for six weeks (during the initial period of lockdown). After that, mandis slowly started and by June end, mandis were fully functional again. However, rabi season buying got impacted during April-May last year. We are trying to make that up by purchasing more now. So, structured finance will pick up. This year, we aim to buy double the volume that we bought together. So, the overall financial year should be fine. In revenue terms, we will end up higher and profitability should be similar to last year.

Which is the growth area for Origo Commodities? Is trade finance growing higher than warehousing for you?

Last fiscal, we had a revenue of Rs 295 crore of which Rs 150 crore came from warehousing and the remaining from structured debt business. Both are growing areas for the company.

What are your views on the new farm laws? Will any disruption in

Gurugram-based agri startup Origo Commodities is planning to increase its assets under management (AUM) under its warehousing business by 10-15 percent in the coming fiscal year. It also plans to double its structured finance business with rising demand for funding in the sector. In a conversation with **Bizz Buzz**, **Sunoor Kaul**, Co-Founder and Director of Origo Commodities, said that the company expects the Budget to give an aggressive push towards building new warehouses apart from giving tax incentives to investors for investing in agri-financing instruments



Sunoor Kaul, Co-Founder and Director of Origo Commodities

the current structure of the agriculture market impact Origo Commodities?

The farm laws, in terms of direction, have the right intent. Though there is a debate going on the interpretation of the law, hopefully, it will get resolved. If you see, the Essential Commodities Act has to be taken out because there are no benefits of that particular Act. On the mandi side, farmers will have multiple options for selling their produce. The interpretation of MSP seems like a point of contention. However, with the Supreme Court intervening, that debate should be resolved.

How was the initial response to the securitised commodity transaction that you completed recently? Will it give more confidence to investors for putting money into agriculture sector?

As we know, there is a dearth of capital in the agriculture sector. The need for formal financing is very high in the sector. Banks try to fund it but all banks put together don't fund more than Rs 30,000 crore. This is only 5-6 per cent of the total requirement. While there is an appetite from the investor's side to fund this sector, there is no financial instrument. I think, pass-through certificate is the instrument that connects the investors with the agriculture sector directly through a SEBI-regulated instrument. It is highly rated (A1), which provides liquidity to the producer at the end. So, this works well for investors, producers apart from providing much-needed liquidity to the sector.

What is the AUM as of now? What kind of growth do you expect next financial year?

As far as warehousing is concerned, we should have around Rs 9,000 crore of inventory in our warehouses. In structured finance, we should buy Rs 250 crore of inventory this year in the kharif season. We will almost double it to around Rs 600 crore next year. In terms of assets under management in the warehouses, it should be 10-15 percent higher.

How many warehouses Origo Commodities manage as of now? Will there be any addition in the current year?

We have around 400 warehouses as of now. These are all managed or leased warehouses. We are trying to see whether we can enter into a contract to build the warehouses for the government. But, none of the current warehouses are owned by the company. We should see 10-15 percent in-

crease in the number of warehouses in the next financial year.

Are you adequately funded now? Will you raise more funds in the near future?

We are adequately funded now. We may look at raising some funds in the second half of next year.

Origo has an NBFC license to fund the agriculture sector? Is there any new segment, you plan to enter within the financing space?

As far as banking partners are concerned, we have been funded by HDFC Bank and Yes Bank. We also have other relationships with NBFCs and international institutions. We hold an NBFC license since 2016, which is looking at different instruments for funding in the agriculture sector. We started doing supply chain financing recently. We are also looking at whether we can finance the input-side of the agriculture business under which dealers and distributors of seed and fertilizers are planned to be funded.

What are your expectations from the Budget?

Given the shortage of storage space, the Budget should provide for more funding for building warehouses. The government should aggressively push setting up warehousing in BOT (build, own, transfer) mode or PPP (public, private partnership) model. In terms of agri-financing, there should be some tax incentives. Currently, an investor investing in the agriculture sector is being taxed at the same rate just like a normal investor. So, we have highlighted this issue with the Finance Ministry. If the government can provide tax concessions for investing in agriculture instruments, that will make these instruments more attractive.

WILL 'ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL' INSURANCE PLANS WORK?



Gopal V Kumar

"IRDAI has come out with a slew of standardised insurance plans in the year 2020 - Corona Kavach and Rakshak for Covid-19, Arogya Sanjeevani for health insurance, Saral Jeevan for term insurance and now proposal to have a standardised personal accident cover - to help customers make informed decision and reduce mis-selling. In my view, this trend also manifests lack of customer awareness/education and need for further protection of customers' interest."

Life and health insurance needs of an individual depend on various parameters, including risk exposure, risk perception, risk appetite and personal financial situation. Insurance companies are expected to understand the existing and emerging insurance needs and design well-aligned products at competitive price within the regulatory framework. They need to innovate products continuously, build a robust sales process and create a long-term trust with the customers to ensure enduring growth of the industry.

Standard product life cycle journey of the insurance industry begins with simple commoditised insurance products and moves towards catering to the customised insurance needs of various target segments of the market.

including Corona Kavach & Corona Rakshak for Covid-19, Arogya Sanjeevani, a health plan, Saral Jeevan, a term insurance policy and now a personal accident policy. This shift has some reasons and implications in short- and long-terms.

Why this trend!

■ The first and foremost reason for this could be that the regulator wanted to increase the insurance penetration through simple and standard products. This pandemic has made people acknowledge and appreciate the need for insurance like never before. This approach would help to make available a product by all insurers that will broadly meet the needs of an average customer.

■ The other reason could be that the customers who are not financially savvy find it difficult to select the right product. This has made it necessary to introduce a standard insurance product, with simple features and standard terms and conditions.

■ There seems to be a lack of awareness of risk requirements between the insurer & the insured and the regulator is helping bridge that requirement by issuing the standardised product features.

■ This approach has also been taken to reduce mis-selling as well as potential dis-

putes at the time of claim settlement. Mis-selling has been a concern for the insurance industry and the regulator, and the companies have taken a number of initiatives to reduce it, but it is still prevalent. Any sustainable improvement will happen through efficient investor awareness framework and robust protection mechanism.



pricing. This may not encourage many insurers to actively participate in that line of business or product segment as the standard pricing may not be financially viable for them.

■ This may also lead to consolidation in the industry as products would become a non-differentiating factor and to optimise cost and achieve scalability, companies would merge to compete effectively in the market.

Why such standardised products with a commodity approach of insurance needs are required even after 20 years of opening of the sector? Has the industry missed something?

We need to understand the genesis of such approach and a true prognosis will pave the way for creating a balance between innovation & penetration, between regulation & development.

In my view, we need to create awareness so that customers can make an optimum choice and establishing a right regulatory framework to safeguard the interests of all stakeholders concerned. Whether this 'one size fits all' approaches, is good for the industry, only time will say.

An educated customer is a protected customer is the template we need to reinforce.

(The author is Fellow of Institute of Actuaries of India, Member of Investor Education and Protection Fund (IEPF) Authority, Government of India. The views are personal)

Implications: ■ There is no gain saying that standardisation of insurance products ensures the availability of specific-purpose plans but it leaves behind a limited scope to innovate on product design to differentiate and provide more options to policyholders. The scope of differentiation becomes limited on design and pricing as well.

■ With standardisation of products, the competition among insurers will increase and this may lead to price war. This situation would have beneficial impact on the premium rates in short run while the price war has its own advantages and disadvantages for the sector. The companies with competitive costs and scalable business would be the winners. This would also depend on the stage of business cycle they are.

■ Standardisation of products may lead to some sort of standard

Why such standardised products with a commodity approach of insurance needs are required even after 20 years of opening of the sector? Has the industry missed something?

HANS BIZ QUIZ

QUIZ NO. 157

REPUBLIC DAY PARADE

1. When does the Republic Day celebration in New Delhi end officially, every year?
a) January 27 b) January 29
c) January 30 d) January 28

2. India's oldest Paramilitary force created history in R-Day 2019 as an all-woman contingent marched past the Rajpath at the 70th Republic Day parade. Identify the force?
a) Garhwal Rifles b) Assam Rifles
c) Gorkha Rifles d) Rajputana Rifles

3. On Republic Day, the President of India hoists the national flag and takes the 21-gun salute. What ritual is observed by the Prime Minister of India before the Republic Parade's commencement at Rajpath?
a) Addresses the Nation
b) The announcement of Bharat Ratna
c) Wreaths are placed at the Amar Jawan Jyoti in honor of the soldiers
d) The National Bravery Awards are given to the children

4. The tableaux for Republic Day Parade are chosen based on models, concept, speciality, and diversity. Which department selects and approves the Tableaux of various States and Union ministries for the Republic Day Parade?
a) A committee from the Ministry of Defence
b) The Ministry of Home Affairs
c) Prime Minister's Office (PMO)
d) The Ministry of Culture

5. The daredevilry and breathtaking feats of the motorcycle riders are some of the major attractions at the Republic Day parade. The bike-based 'daredevils' represent which of the armed forces?
a) Army and the BSF alternate every year
b) The Army, Air Force, and Navy together participate every year
c) The regiments of Army and BSF jointly participate every year
d) Army and Air Force jointly participate every year

6. The tableaux of various Indian States represent and participate in the Republic Day Parade. What does the nation communicate by displaying various tableaux every year?



a) Art and Handlooms of respective States
b) The States' economic path
c) Festivals and celebrations of multiple States
d) India's Cultural diversity and its rich cultural heritage

7. The Republic Day celebration is held in grandeur at India Gate, New Delhi. The Republic Day parade can also be seen at which other places on 26th January?
a) Victoria Memorial, Red Road, Kolkata, and Shivaji Park Stadium Mumbai
b) Parade Grounds, Secunderabad (Hyderabad) and Manek Shaw Parade Grounds, Bangalore
c) Kamarajar Salai, Marina Beach Road, Chennai
d) All of the above

8. Military bands, pipes, and drums by Army, Air Force, and Navy, fill the atmosphere at Vijay Chowk, New Delhi, with patriotic fervor every year. Which ceremony marks the end of Republic Day celebrations?
a) Performance by the Tri-Services Band
b) Beating the Retreat
c) 21-Gun Salute ceremony
d) Gallantry Awards ceremony

9. Republic Day parade rehearsals commence on January 18 every year at Rajpath in New Delhi. When does the full dress rehearsal parade is held every year to take stock of the parade preparedness?
a) January 22 b) January 23
c) January 24 d) January 25

10. India's BSF boasts of the only camel-mounted music band in the world and features in the Guinness World Records. When was the first time the band participated in the Republic Day Parade?
a) 1950 b) 1972
c) 1990 d) 2001

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

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

Hyderabad face Jamshedpur in a crunch faceoff



Hyderabad FC players in action during a practice session on Saturday

PANAJI, GOA

HAVING picked up just two points from their last two Indian Super League games, Hyderabad FC will look to go a step further when they face Owen Coyle's Jamshedpur FC in a Round-13 encounter, at the Tilak Maidan in Vasco, on Sunday.

Stephen Eze's late stunner earned a point for the Red Miners the last time these two sides met in the league, back in early December. And with just four points separating both teams in the league table at the moment, there could be another close encounter on the cards this weekend.

Kuldeep likely to play in Tests against England

NEW DELHI: The Indian team management is likely to field Chinnabowler Kuldeep Yadav in the forthcoming four-Test series against England in February-March. The left-arm spinner was not played in the four-Test series in Australia even as India tried as many as 20 players due to injuries.

Incidentally, the last Test Kuldeep played was during the previous tour of Australia in 2018-19. He played in Sydney in 2019 and picked five wickets. Altogether he has played six Tests. On the recently-concluded Australia tour, he played just one ODI and a warm-up game.

"It was tough for you. You didn't play a game here but your attitude was really good. We are going to India now, your time will come. So keep working hard," India vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane said in a video posted on the BCCI website on Saturday.

India bowling coach Bharat Arun too said that Kuldeep would be played in India.

Indian doubles pairs dream run end with semis

BANGKOK

THE Indian mixed doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Ashwini Ponnappa produced a spirited performance before going down narrowly to top seeds Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Sapsiree Taerattanachai in the semifinals of the Toyota Thailand Open here on Saturday.

Up against the world number three Thai pair, Satwik and Ashwini, who are ranked 36th, showed great skills and temperament as they scripted an extraordinary fightback after losing the opening game by a whisker. However, in the end, Dechapol and Sapsiree prevailed 22-20 18-21 21-12 over the Indians in a 57-minute battle.

Satwik and Ashwini, who spent most of the last



THAILAND OPEN

year away from the court in two different cities and could only practice together for a few weeks, on Friday became the first Indian mixed doubles pair to reach the semifinals of a BWF World Tour Super 1000 event.

Earlier, the impressive run of Satwik and Chirag Shetty also came to an end after a close semifinal defeat in men's doubles. The Indian pair, ranked 10th in the world, lost 18-21 18-21 to world number nine Malaysian combination of Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik in a 35-minute match.

Tokyo Olympics medal contender, Satwik and Chirag, had won their maiden super 500 title in Thailand

and one stage but Satwik and Ashwini showed great determination to draw parity at 20-20. But still, Dechapol and Sapsiree managed to pocket the first game.

In the second game, Dechapol and Sapsiree again opened up a 11-6 lead but the Indian pair won 8 of the next 9 points to make it 15-15 and then went into the lead with Satwik unleash-

ing a powerful smash. The duo kept moving together till 18-18. But Dechapol found the net and then Satwik produced another trademark smash as the Indian duo roared back into the contest. In the decider, the Thai pair were up 3-0 and extended it to 10-7.

The experienced pair continued their good run and managed to create a gap of 15-11 after Ashwini found the net. The Thai pair then stepped up the pressure as Satwik found the net thrice, which created a decisive gap. Soon they led 18-11 and held match points when the Indians erred at the net again.

Dechapol sealed it with a smash. In the men's doubles match, Satwik and Chirag couldn't bring their best to the fore as the Malaysian were more alert on court and also managed to diffuse any attack from the Indian pair to emerge victorious.

The Indian duo had a 4-2 lead early on but the Malaysians managed to claw back and eke out a slender 11-10 lead at the break. Satwik and Chirag stayed close till 15-16 when their rallies reeled off four points on the trot to eventually close out the opening game. (PTI)

from Sunday i.e. January 24. The eight teams that have qualified for the knockouts are Karnataka, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Baroda, Bihar and Rajasthan.

While Baroda and Himachal Pradesh, who played their league games in Vadodra were the first to arrive, the other teams arrived soon after. The players underwent Covid-19 tests on arrival and have cleared them. "They will begin full practice sessions from Sunday as they have ended their brief quarantine period," an official told IANS.

Teams cleared for Mushtaq Ali T20 knockouts

AHMEDABAD

THE eight teams that will play the quarter-finals of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy here at the Motera from January 26 have undergone their Covid-19 tests and ended their brief quarantine period. They will begin practice

Karnataka will face Punjab in the first quarter-final while Tamil Nadu will play Himachal Pradesh in the second quarter-final, on January 26.

On January 27, Haryana will play Baroda in the third quarter-final. Their match will be followed by the fourth quarter-final between Bihar and Rajasthan.

The Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 knockouts will be the first competitive matches to be played at the revamped Motera Stadium which now has a seating capacity of 1,10,000. (IANS)

England spinners' tap may run dry on dry Indian pitches

NEW DELHI

TOURING England spinners' failure to take a single wicket in hosts Sri Lanka first innings of the ongoing second Test in Galle, has put a question mark on their ability to perform in India when their four-Test tour begins early next month.

While both off-spinner Dom Bess and left-arm spinner Jack Leach shared 14 wickets in England's first Test win over Sri Lanka, the Sri Lanka batsmen's ability to play them out and score 381 in first innings of the second Test may worry the English team management on the sudden ineffectiveness of their spin bowlers. England had to rely on Anderson, who picked six wickets, and Chris Woakes, who got three, to bowl out Sri Lanka on Saturday.

The last time England toured India, the performance of the spinners was the major difference as India romped to a 4-0 win in the five-Test series.

While the Indian spinners took 68 wickets at an average of 30.35, their English counterparts took 40 at 48.1.

England are travelling with three spinners to India and barring Moeen Ali, none of Bess or Leach have toured India before.

Even Ali, despite his success against India in England, failed to get wickets the last time England toured India in 2016-17. He managed just 10 wickets in five Test matches at an average of 64.9.



Former India spinner Maninder Singh says he is not sure England spinners would be successful in India.

"I have my doubts [they will trouble India batsmen]. The English spinners are not used to bowling on the surfaces you get here. They are used to bowling on good wickets. Bowling on turning pitches requires some different skills and is also an art," Maninder, who played 35 Tests through 1980s and 1990s, told IANS.

"The lengths and lines of spinners on Indian surfaces are different from those on good pitches. And adapting is not easy," said the former left-arm spinner.

India and England play the first two matches in Chennai and the next two in Ahmedabad. The weather is likely to be hot in India

ENGLAND'S SPIN TRIO FOR TESTS vs INDIA

JACK LEACH (LEFT-ARM SPINNER)	DOM BESS (OFF-SPINNER)	MOEEN ALI (OFF-SPINNER)
		
AGE: 29 YEARS TESTS: 11 WICKETS: 40 AVERAGE: 29.10 BEST BOWLING/INNINGS: 5/83	AGE: 23 YEARS TESTS: 11 WICKETS: 27 AVERAGE: 33.37 BEST BOWLING/INNINGS: 5/30	AGE: 33 YEARS TESTS: 60 WICKETS: 181 AVG: 36.59 BEST BOWLING/INNINGS: 6/53

Indian cricketers to assemble in Chennai on Jan 27

NEW DELHI

MEMBERS of the Indian cricket team will assemble in Chennai on January 27 ahead of the first Test against England that begins at the M. Chidambaram Stadium on February 5.

It has been learnt that the players would reach Chennai in batches -- from different cities -- and enter the bio-bubble from January 27. They will undergo a week-long quarantine during which the Indian team management will devise its strategy for the series.

The England team will also enter the bio-bubble from January 27 when they arrive after completing the ongoing second Test against Sri Lanka in Galle that ends on January 26. However, players coming to India from England, like all-rounder Ben Stokes, pace bowler Jofra Archer and opener Rory Burns, will arrive a bit earlier as they will land straight from England. The trio is not part of the England team that is currently touring Sri Lanka for the Tests.

Both teams will be stationed at the Leela Palace in Chennai along with match officials.

Indian squad: Virat Kohli (captain), Rohit Sharma, Mayank Agarwal, Shubman Gill, Cheteshwar Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane (vice-captain), KL Rahul, Hardik Pandya, Rishabh Pant and Wriddhiman Saha (wicket-keepers), R Ashwin, Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Ishant Sharma, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj, Shardul Thakur

Net bowlers: Ankit Rajpoot, Avesh Khan, Sandeep Warrier, Krishnappa Gowtham, Saurabh Kumar

Standbys: KS Bharat, Abhimanyu Easwaran, Shahbaz Nadeem, Rahul Chahar, Priyank Panchal

India and England play four Test matches. The first two matches will be held at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai (Feb 5-9 and Feb 13-17) while the next two will be held in Ahmedabad (Feb 24-28 and Mar 4-8).

The Test series will be followed by a five-game T20I series in Ahmedabad's Motera and a three-match ODI series at Pune. (IANS)

and that could result in dry wickets, with not much help in the air. England spinners, who tend get natural drift or movement when bowling in England due to the cooler and wetter weather at home, will have to adapt and bowl lines and lengths different from what they do at home.

For example, for a left-arm spinner, on good wickets your line will be off-stump.

On turning tracks, the line would be leg-stump. Also, on turning tracks you have to bowl up. On good wickets like in England, if you bowl up you'll get smashed for four. So, you have to go further down from full on those wickets," Maninder explained the adjustments the English spinners may have to make in India.

Both Bess and Leach have played 12 Tests each, with Leach

taking 40 wickets and Bess 27. Ali, who tested positive for Covid-19 on arrival in Sri Lanka, missed the first Test since he was in quarantine. He was not picked for the second Test as England went in with the squad that won the first Test. But with the limited experience in spin bowling, England may have to rely on his experience of 60 Tests in which he has picked 181 wickets. (IANS)

Root leads England reply after Sri Lanka score 381

GALLE (SRI LANKA)

ENGLAND overcame early loss of wickets to end the second day of the second Test against Sri Lanka at 98 for two with skipper Joe Root leading the charge with an unbeaten 67, as the visitors replied to Sri Lanka's 381 in the first innings. England are still 283 runs behind with eight wickets in hand.

England lost both openers Zak Crawley and Dominic Sibley for five runs as Sri Lanka left-arm spinner Lasith Embuldeniya, who shared the new ball with Suranga Lakmal, dismissed both batsmen.

Root, however, took the attack to the Sri Lankan bowlers and raced to 67 off just 77 deliveries. The right-handed batsman had scored a double century in the first Test. Jonny Bairstow was with him on 24 at stumps.

Earlier, Sri Lanka were bowled out for 381 as fast bowler James Anderson took six for 40 and speedster Chris Woakes picked three for 84.

After Anderson removed the overnight centurion Angelo Mathews for 110 in his first over of the day, wicketkeeper-batsman Niroshan Dickwella made 92 and added 89 for the seventh wicket with Dilruwan Perera.

England lead the two-Test series 1-0, having won the first Test by seven wickets.

Brief scores: Sri Lanka: 381 all out (A Mathews 110, N Dickwella 92, D Perera 67, D Chandimal 52, J Anderson 6/40, M Wood 3/84) England 98/2 wkts (J Root batting 67, J Bairstow batting 24).



James Anderson picks 30th five-wicket haul, goes clear of McGrath

GALLE

JAMES Anderson picked his 30th five-wicket haul in Test cricket as he moved to sole sixth position among cricketers with most five-wicket hauls.

The right-arm England pace bowler, who was tied with Glenn McGrath in joint sixth position with 29 five-wicket hauls before this Test, removed Niroshan Dickwella for his fifth wicket in the Sri Lankan first innings during the second Test between the two teams at the Galle International Stadium.

He then got rid of Suranga Lakmal to get his sixth wicket of the innings. Anderson had taken three of the four Sri Lankan wickets to fall on the first day.

He removed centurion Angelo Mathews early on second day, in just his first over of the morning. The former Sri Lanka captain edged one behind to

wicket-keeper Jos Buttler. Anderson is the fourth highest wicket-taker in Test cricket and the best among pace bowlers with 606 scalps. The 38-year-old pace bowler needs 14 more to get past leg-spinner Anil Kumble as the third highest wicket-taker in Test cricket.

Among pace bowlers, only Richard Hadlee has more five-wicket hauls (36) than Anderson in Test cricket. (IANS)