

Fight between the two "G's"

By H. KUSUMAKAR

CHIKMAGALUR, October 26.

AS the morning mist lifts in this many-splendoured Lok Sabha constituency, Mrs. Indira Gandhi sets out on what has come to be called a "cur jatra" against Mr. George Fernandes' "padayatra" while the Janata party candidate, Mr. Veerendra Patil, largely confines himself to house-to-house campaigning.

Many people say that it is essentially a fight between the two "G's", meaning Mrs. Gandhi and "George" as every one addresses Mr. Fernandes. V.P. (Mr. Veerendra Patil) is not seen or heard as much as Mrs. Gandhi or Mr. Fernandes.

Never in the past had Mrs. Gandhi battled so hard and so earnestly for a Lok Sabha seat. Spending 16 long days and driving in convoy through rain-swept roads, she has planned to address at least 23 major public meetings and 120 road-side meetings.

Not lagging behind is Mr. Fernandes who is practically following Mrs. Gandhi's route, trying to undo what her charisma produces by way of sizeable crowds and their instantaneous

response to "Chikmagalur", the little daughter of Bharatmata as she calls herself.

Mr. Fernandes's personalised campaign has created a certain impact. But, the Janata party workers who have spread out to the villages admit that it is an uphill task. "We are, however, progressing," they say.

This small headquarters is bursting at the seams with visitors and election workers. Many are turned away from the hotels because they are full. The hotel people like to remain apolitical. Hence they display boards pleading "No politics, please."

Mr. Fernandes's public meeting at the town square yesterday evening was a wash-out. The rains began immediately after Mr. Ramakrishna Hegde, general secretary of the Janata party, made his introductory remarks. Mr. Fernandes uttered only a few sentences. "The Janata should win. Help us win." He sees panic with lunge on the face of the Congress (I). Mrs. Gandhi returns the compliment: "If the Janata is so confident of winning why is it making such a fuss?" And the Janata propaganda is pretty loud.

Two bits of news have provided the grist to the propaganda mills of both the Janata and the Congress (I). The reported false declaration made on behalf of Mrs. Gandhi that she was a resident of a village near Doddaballapur in order to enlist herself as a voter in Karnataka and thus become eligible to seek a Rajya Sabha seat from the state, was termed by Mr. Fernandes as "perjury" calling for action. His statement that she was a "liar" had come true, he told reporters in the travellers' hangar.

Coming from another room in the same hangar was a statement from Mir Kasim, Congress (I) parliamentary board member, that there were several instances of people getting elected to the Rajya Sabha from a state where they did not normally reside. "Why make a fuss of it?"

Another contextual news development drawing comments from the opposite camps was the Kerala chief minister, Mr. Antony's offer of resignation following the decision of the Congress to oppose the Janata in the Chikmagalur election. Mr. C. M. Stephen, leader of the Congress (I) parliamentary party, remarked that Mr. Antony should have resigned when he repudiated his allegiance to Mrs. Gandhi. Mr. E. M. S. Namboodiripad, on the other hand, spoke appreciatively of Mr. Antony's decision, at a public meeting which was well-attended.

Gujarat leader quits Congress

AHMEDABAD, October 26 (UNI): The former Gujarat Congress secretary, Mr. Nanubhai Trivedi, today resigned from the party in protest against the central parliamentary board's decision regarding Chikmagalur, describing it as "a Himalayan blunder."

Expressing his complete agreement with the sentiments of Mr. Trivedi, the GPCC secretary, Mr. Jairambhai Patel, today said that even now the CPB could reverse its decision. He said the state Congress had suffered a big loss due to Mr. Trivedi's resignation.

The president of the Gujarat Youth Congress, Mr. Bikhubhai Zala, also welcomed the decisions of Mr. A. K. Anthony, Dr. Karan Singh and Mr. Chandrajit Yadav.

Too much security for Indira: S. D. Patil

CHIKMAGALUR, October 25 (UNI): The Union minister of state for home, Mr. S. D. Patil, today objected to what he called the "extra security" provided by the administration to Mrs. Gandhi. Congress (I) candidate in the Chikmagalur Lok Sabha by-election.

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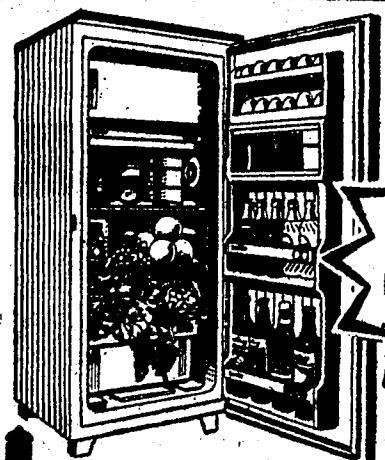
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Mr. Veerendra Patil, Janata candidate in the Chikmagalur Lok Sabha by-election, addressing a meeting at Karkala in South Kanara on Tuesday. Seated are Mr. E. M. S. Namboodiripad, general secretary of the CPM, and Mr. Suryanarayana Rao, secretary of the Karnataka unit of the CPM.

Action if declaration is false: S. D. Patil

CHIKMAGALUR, October 25 (PTI).

MR. S. D. Patil, Union minister of state for home, said here today that Mrs. Indira Gandhi would attract action under the penal code if the allegations levelled against her by Mr. Era Chezhian, Janata MP, were proved correct.

Mr. Chezhian had alleged in Delhi yesterday that Mrs. Gandhi had made a false declaration before the electoral registration officer of the Doddaballapur constituency of Karnataka in June this year for getting herself enrolled as a voter.

Stating that it was a serious matter if she had made a false declaration, Mr. Patil said she was answerable for that action.

Mr. Patil said Mrs. Gandhi had tried to get into parliament anyhow. "Having been frustrated in that attempt she is now contesting the by-election," he said.

He said any false statement made on oath would attract action under the penal code and also under the people's representation act.

Asked whether the Janata govern-

ment had delayed to take action on the issue though it had figured on the floor of the state assembly a few months back, Mr. Patil said they could not proceed against anybody unless they had relevant documents.

Mr. Patil said the Union law minister, Mr. Shanti Bhushan, would now provide to Mr. Era Chezhian photostat copies of original applications made by Mrs. Gandhi.

Mr. Patil said he had received complaints that "some" outside goonda elements had been brought by the Congress (I) here. He had passed on the names to "our agencies" (Union home ministry agencies) for necessary action," he added. He had also passed on the complaint to the state police for dealing with the complaint.

Asked to elaborate what he called "our agencies" Mr. Patil said: "It is better not".

Mr. C. M. Stephen, leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha, said he did not want to make any comment on the report without knowing the actual position. He said the only possibility was that somebody might have signed the paper on behalf of Mrs. Gandhi.

Stephen to step down if Indira wins

By Our Correspondent

MANGALORE, October 25: Mr. C. M. Stephen, opposition leader in the Lok Sabha, told a rural gathering at Palli, a remote border village in the Karkala assembly segment of the Chikmagalur Lok Sabha constituency, yesterday that the "progressive economic policies of the 30-year Congress rule, and particularly under Mrs. Gandhi," had been scuttled by the Janata government and the gold resources were being drained off into the coffers of a few.

He felt Mrs. Gandhi's entry into the election fray had made the Janata leaders and ministers, big business and multi-nationals, American "exploiters" and several others, jittery.

Mr. Stephen said Mrs. Gandhi was regarded as a "pishach" or devil incarnate by smugglers, blackmarketeers, big zamindars, multinationals and anti-social elements but to the poor farmers, Harijans and tenants, she was an "angel and protector." He was referring to Mr. George Fernandes' criticism of Mrs. Gandhi while electioneering earlier at Karkala.

Mr. Stephen said he would step down as opposition leader immediately after Mrs. Gandhi was elected and offer her the position.

Curiously, Mr. Stephen did not name the Janata candidate, Mr. Veerendra Patil, even once at all the three meetings addressed by him at Venoor, Ujire and Palli but directed his attack on Mr. Fernandes, the campaign manager of the Janata party.

Karanth to join Janata campaign

CHIKMAGALUR, October 26 (UNI): The Kannada literary celebrity K. Shivarama Karanth will soon join the Janata party's election campaign in the Chikmagalur Lok Sabha by-election, according to party sources here.

The winner of the prestigious Jnanpith award, Dr. Karanth will be touring the constituency for three days.

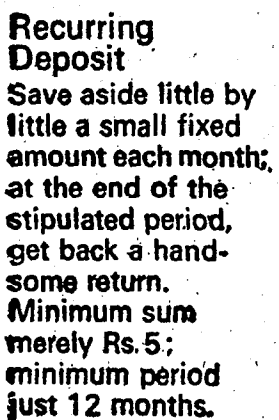
Another prominent Kannada litterateur, Mr. Ananthamurthy, is already campaigning in support of Mr. Patil. Mr. Ananthamurthy, who shot into limelight after the publication of his novel "Samskara" says that he is in the field to break the local peoples' mythical attitude towards Mrs. Gandhi.

New Delhi: The Shahi Imam of Jama Masjid, Syed Abdulla Bukhari, said here today that he would remain neutral in the Chikmagalur by-election campaign.

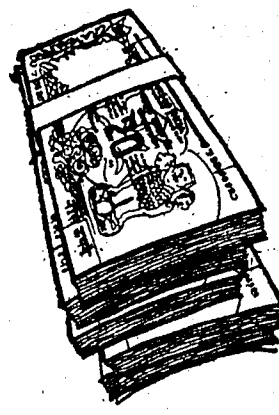
The Imam told PTI that in the past few days, many Janata and Congress (I) leaders had met him with requests to visit Chikmagalur but he had decided not to participate in the campaign.



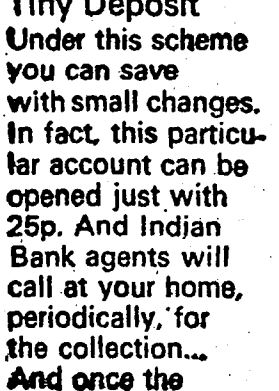
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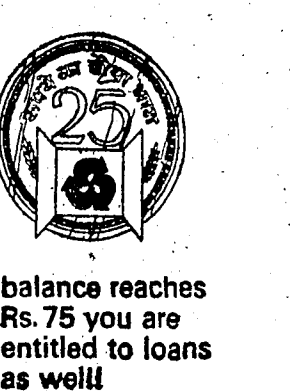
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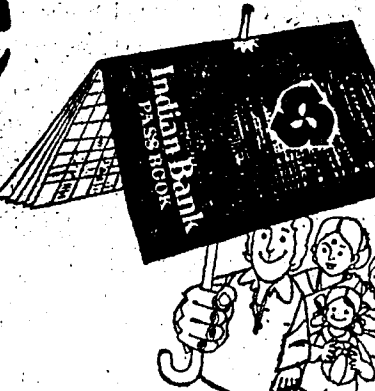
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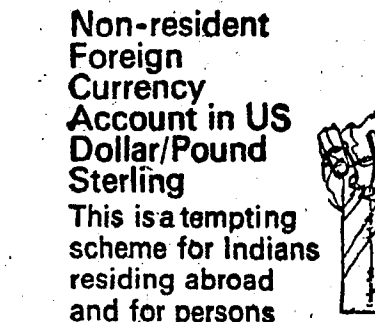
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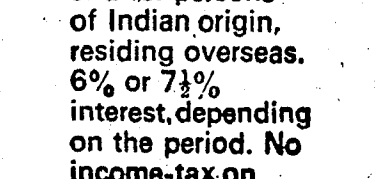
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