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WALK IN
EDEN PARK

HYDERABAD, MONDAY JANUARY 27, 2020; PAGES 12 ₹3



the pioneer



AND NOW,
SHRIYA
JOINS RRR

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GOOGLE'S VIBRANT R-DAY DOODLE SHOWCASES DIVERSITY, HARMONY

Google on Sunday dedicated a special doodle to mark the 71st Republic Day, which captured the country's vibrant diversity, rich sartorial and cultural heritage as well as its beautiful bio-diversity. The multi-hued doodle, with a dominant blue tone, depicts iconic monuments interspersed with images of famous music instruments and dance forms. The Internet behemoth is known to mark landmark occasions and life and times of celebrated personalities with special doodles. The word Google was portrayed colourfully using images of India's national bird and an iconic south Indian dance form.



GURDWARA HOLDS OPEN HOUSE DAYS AFTER RACIST ATTACK IN US

A Gurdwara in the US state of California has organised an open house and welcomed hundreds of people in a bid to spread awareness about the religion, weeks after it was defaced with a swastika graffiti in an apparent hate crime. On January 13, the priest of Guru Maneyo Granth Gurdwara Sahib in Orangevale saw words "White Power" and a swastika graffitied onto the sign out front and informed police. On Saturday, members of the minority community welcomed hundreds of people from different backgrounds, religions and races.



INDIANS ACROSS THE WORLD CELEBRATE 71ST REPUBLIC DAY

MELBOURNE/COLOMBO: Thousands of Indians across the world enthusiastically celebrated the 71st Republic Day on Sunday and participated in various cultural events with unfurling of the tricolour and singing of the national anthem. Indian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka Taranjit Singh Sandhu led the Indian community during the celebrations at the India House on Sunday. Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, along with his wife Shiranthi Rajapaksa, joined the Indian diaspora to celebrate the day organised by the Indian High Commission in Colombo.



CONGRESS SENDS PM COPY OF CONSTITUTION, TWEETS RECEIPT

On the 71st anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution, the Congress sent a copy of the book to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying, "When you get time off from dividing the country, please do read it". The dig encapsulated the opposition's allegations of the government violating the Constitution through the Citizenship Amendment Act or CAA. Most of the politicians, civil society and artists who are opposing the CAA, read the Constitution on Republic Day.



Saffron party to play opposition role in Nizamabad

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Kishan to KCR: Spell out how CAA can harm Indian citizens

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Union Minister of State for Home Affairs G Kishan Reddy has said that Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao, being in alliance with the AIMIM, has no right to speak on Hindus. Kishan's response comes a day after KCR hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah at a presser and said that the state Assembly would pass a resolution against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).



Union Minister of State for Home Affairs G Kishan Reddy speaks after unfurling the National Flag in Hyderabad on Sunday.

Hindus' if it was given 15 minutes' time. He said that KCR had no moral right to criticise BJP on CAA.

Participating in the Republic Day celebrations held at State BJP party office here on Sunday, Kishan Reddy alleged that MIM was the party that had tried to obstruct granting of freedom to the nation. Some political parties were spreading misinformation about the central government, he said.

Condemning KCR's decision to not implement CAA in the state, Kishan Reddy wondered how the Chief Minister could support the MIM

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was focused on developing all sectors. However, some political parties were opposing the National Population Register (NPR) for the sake of votes and seats. Telangana BJP chief Dr K Laxman also slammed KCR for offering to unite regional parties against CAA. "How far is it correct for a responsible Chief Minister to speak in a derisive manner against CAA," Laxman queried.

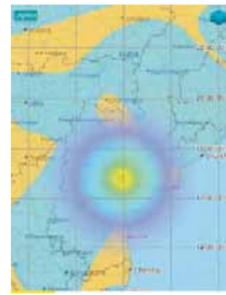
Continued on Page 4

Quake with intensity of 4.6 rocks Telugu states

Second most severe temblor recorded after 51 yrs

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

An earthquake, measuring 4.6 on the Richter scale shook parts of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana states in the early hours of Sunday.



NGRI identified the epicentre of the earthquake at Chintalapalem Zone at Vellatur, about 7 km deep into the ground. The resultant tremors were felt in parts of Hyderabad and Amaravati as well for a few seconds.

The earthquake was reported at around 2.37 am on Sunday in Jaggaiahpet and Nandigama areas. This is reported to be the second earthquake measuring over 4 on the Richter scale in the two Telugu speaking states, and the second

most severe in the last 51 years. The last such earthquake, recorded with a magnitude of 5.3 on the Richter scale, had rocked Bhadrachalam region in 1969.

While no loss of property was reported, residents fear that aftershocks may occur again or in a day or two.

NGRI Chief Scientist Nagesh said, "The waves from Chintalapalem reached Guntur and Krishna in Andhra Pradesh and Nalgonda and Khammam districts in Telangana creating tremors. The earthquake was occurred in a faultline that exists near Velthuru of Suryapet. We haven't named the faultline. The epicentre of the quake is in river Krishna."

Centre should mind its job: Ajit on NIA probe in Elgaar case

5

TRS sidesteps Jupally's push, seeks support of independents

90% of Independents inclined towards the pink party

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Despite having proved his mettle in the municipal elections, Jupally Krishna Rao on Sunday returned home without meeting TRS supremo and Chief Minister KT Ramarao.



TRS working president KT Rama Rao chairs a party meeting on finalising the names of candidates for urban local body posts, in Hyderabad on Sunday.

Acting tough, TRS working president K T Rama Rao didn't agree to a proposal to let rebels join the pink party.

Jupally ostensibly wanted to facilitate the deal for TRS in getting the chairperson's post by aiding rebel candidates in the Kollapur municipality to join the party. Jupally claimed that the candidates would join TRS unconditionally and support the candidature of any person for chairperson and vice chairperson posts. The TRS high command, however,

did not agree to this and stuck to its resolve to rely on ex-officio members to gain the post. In the process, Jupally did not even get an appointment with Minister KTR for crossing the line and he returned disappointed. Three ex-officio votes of Mahabubnagar MP, local MLA and MLC Kasireddy Narayana Reddy and 9 members who won will help TRS get 12 votes.

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R-Day: Advani hoists flag at his residence

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

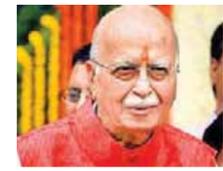
Senior BJP leader Lal Krishna Advani on Sunday unfurled the tricolour at his Prithviraj Road residence here and extended good wishes to the people on the occasion of Republic Day.



Chief Minister K Chandrababu Naidu receives Governor Tamilsai at the Republic Day function in Hyderabad on Sunday.

The nation celebrated the 71st Republic Day with a grand military parade and exhibition of its history, cultural diversity and strategic weaponry at the Rajpath.

Earlier, Advani, 92, attended the Republic Day parade.



Lal Krishna Advani

BJP will gain from better opposition: Nobel laureate

PNS ■ JAIPUR

India needs a better opposition which is the heart of any democracy and the ruling party should embrace that to keep it under check, noted economist and Nobel laureate Abhijit Banerjee said here on Sunday.

Speaking at a session at the Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF), the 58-year-old Indian-born American economist said there was no co-relation between the authoritarianism and the economic success.

"You can easily argue that Singapore had a successful dictator and can easily come back and talk about Zimbabwe. We can talk about this ad nauseum... At some level authority is an illusion," he said.

"India needs a better opposition. The opposition is the heart of democracy and the ruling party should want a better opposition to keep it under check," Banerjee said.



Abhijit Banerjee

Pattana Pragathi to beautify state: CM

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Drawing inspiration from the successful completion of 'Palle Pragathi' programme in rural areas, Chief Minister K Chandrababu Naidu on Sunday declared that 'Pattana Pragathi' programme would be launched to benefit all towns shortly. He emphasized that towns and villages would be improved, come what may.

KCR said he would undertake surprise visits to review the progress of Palle Pragathi works and take stock of work actually done

At a review on Palle Pragathi at Pragati Bhavan here on Sunday, KCR said: "When the government is giving so much support and encouragement, our villages and towns should be good."

programme, aimed at making villages clean and green, should be perfected, he suggested.

KCR said he would undertake surprise visits to review the progress of Palle Pragathi works and take stock of work actually done by officials and people's representatives. He wanted officials and public representatives to do their duties, instead of hankering after photo-ops.

The strategy adopted for implementing Palle Pragathi

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TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham: Magha & Shukla Paksha Panchangam

Tithi: Tithiya: Full Night

Nakshatram: Shatabhishta: Full Night

Time to Avoid: (Bad time to start any important work)

Rahukalam: 08:16 am- 09:40 am

Yamagandam: 11:04 am - 12:28 pm

Variyam: 02:47 pm - 04:33 pm

Gulika: 01:52 pm - 03:16 pm

Good Time: (to start any important work)

Amritkalam: 01:27 am - 03:11 am

Abhijit Muhurtham: 12:06 pm - 12:51 pm

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Clear with periodic clouds

Temp: 32/18

Humidity: 52%

Sunrise: 06:49

Sunset: 06:08

Current Weather Conditions Updated January 26, 2020 5:00 PM

Sharjeel Imam booked for instigatory speech



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police booked Sharjeel Imam, an activist who came in limelight during the ongoing protest in Shaheen Bagh, on Sunday for allegedly delivering inflammatory speeches against the amended

Citizenship Act and the planned National Register of Citizens, officials said.

According to the police, Imam, a resident of Bihar and former Jawaharlal Nehru University student, delivered "very inflammatory and instigatory speeches in his opposi-

tion to CAA and NRC".

"He had previously delivered one such speech in Jamia Millia Islamia on December 13 last year and thereafter one even more inflammatory against the government which is being widely circulated on social media," they said.

300 personalities back anti-CAA protesters

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Over 300 eminent personalities from the creative and scholarly community of India, including actor Naseeruddin Shah, filmmaker Mira Nair, vocalist TM Krishna, author Amitav Ghosh and historian Romila Thapar have expressed solidarity with the students and others protesting against the CAA and NRC.



The amended Citizenship Act and National Register of Citizens (NRC) is a "threat" to the soul of India, the signato-

ries said in a note published on Indian Cultural Forum on January 13.

"We stand in solidarity with the students and others who are protesting and speaking out against the CAA and against the NRC," the eminent personalities said.

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'Padma winners an awe-inspiring set of people'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Narendra Modi government has given the Padma awards, one of the highest civilian honours, to an awe-inspiring set of people hand-picked from all corners of the country and segments of the society, officials said on Sunday.



The past five years have seen an awe-inspiring set of people recognised and they were handpicked from all corners of the nation, all segments of the society, from every discipline and niche, an official said.

The stories of the awardees' struggles, dedication, perseverance and service script the 'story of new India' and they are the true heroes of India, who inspire generations.

The genius of the East and the North-East has been celebrated, deserving people have been found from all parts of the country, an official said

In the last five years, the government has gone beyond excellence alone, recognising larger impact and selfless service, the official said.

Since 2014, each year has seen an eclectic range of selections, historic selection of farmers from across states and disciplines, horticulturists to organic farmers, traditionalists

diseases against all odds, in difficult and inhospitable locations, the official said.

Writers across disciplines, styles, geographies and ages, from Marathi and Dalit theatre to Hindustani and Carnatic music, folk to film and devotional, 'Bhakti' to Sufi, Madhubani to Rogan and Kashmiri. Special focus areas like yoga, sanitation, environment have been championed, he said.

Continued on Page 4

"The right to swing my fist ends where the other man's nose begins," observed American jurist Oliver Wendell Holmes. In recent times, one can rarely find a better example of the truth of this statement than in the row over certain comments made by BJP leader Dharamapuri Arvind. The Telangana Rashtra Samiti party is taking the new entrant and fire-brand BJP leader Arvind seriously, thanks to his series of wins. Much of it, however, has to do with the tone and language of his criticism. Not only party leaders, even the TRS supremo has reacted to the Nizamabad MP's comment.

ARVIND BECOMING A PAIN FOR TRS

Arvind's boasts that he would "shave off" Asaduddin Owaisi's beard and cut the nose of Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao have not gone down well with TRS. Quite expectedly, the entire leadership, including K T Rama Rao, condemned the latter comments in particular. KCR countered, "Is this how an honorable Member of Parliament speaks? The Chief Minister also said that if TRS started resorting to such behavior, BJP would be nowhere in the picture. He remarked: "Our cadre itself is 60 lakhs" and asked, "If we start

cutting noses, will you be there?" The man responsible for the defeat of KCR's daughter in Nizamabad, and now the only saving face of BJP, Arvind is certainly going to be pain for TRS leaders.

The ex-officio tangle

The ex-officio tangle in the municipalities has stunned the rebel camp of Jupalli Krishna Rao in the all-important Kollapur. Although rebels emerged victorious and captured a majority of the seats in Kollapur and Ayija



Municipalities, the All India Forward Block representing the Councillors is not going to become the ruling force in the Kollapur municipality as the MLAs and MLCs are likely to help TRS scrape through the all-important goal

post of the chairman election. This same issue is helping TRS in many other places and the new Municipal Act-like elections is of course helping TRS emerge easy winner in many places

A leader's class on 'heart' breaking news'

Pressers of ruling and opposition parties' leaders on January 25th turned out to be out and out ones against media. The Congress MP from Malkajigiri A Revanth Reddy at Gandhi Bhavan expressed his ire at

the media, particularly electronic arm. Objecting the content telecast on the municipal elections results day in Telugu news channels, Revanth Reddy gave a call to the Congress cadre to attack the media houses if they fail to telecast news properly. Revanth Reddy then lectured on 'What is breaking news?' finding fault with the electronic media for telecasting everything as 'breaking news'. He said that there should be a limit on what electronic media telecasts as 'breaking news'. Likewise, Chief Minister K

Chandrasekhar Rao, at Telangana Bhavan, too found fault with the print media after terming the social media as 'anti-social media'. KCR advocated media personnel not to write as they wished. There should be a proper way to write the news, he suggested. A scribe who had covered pressers of both KCR and Revanth Reddy sarcastically said that Revanth Reddy criticized the media since he was unhappy, while KCR criticized the media in a happy mood. In either case, the victims are only scribes.

(Contributed by Naveena Ghanate, Avinash Deepak Puli and Kolishetty Venkateshwarlu)

GUV BATS FOR 100% LITERACY RATE

SAYS GOVT WOULD SOON ANNOUNCE AN ACTION-PLAN TO MAKE THE STATE FULLY LITERATE

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Government would soon announce an action-plan to make the state fully literate, Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan said on Sunday. Telangana stood first in many sectors, but it was lagging behind in literacy, she said in her Republic Day speech here.



Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan addressing the gathering at Public Gardens

Many people were coming forward to make illiterate literate as per the 'Each One, Teach One' call given by Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao, she said. The government will soon announce an action-plan to make the state fully literate. I urge all people to participate in this movement, she said.

On public health, she said the government conducted a Kanti Velugu programme intending to reach out to all those suffering from eye-related ailments. Eye camps were organised in villages, towns and cities and clinical tests were conducted on a whopping 1.54 crore people. The state government was now gearing up to conduct ENT and dental tests on a massive scale, she said.

After conducting the medical tests, the government would develop 'Telangana Health profile', she said, announcing that the programme would be implemented soon. On agriculture, she said the Rythu Samanvaya Samithis' (Farmers

Coordination Committees), formed by the state government to help and support farmers, would be activated soon.

The committees would ensure success of government policies and make agriculture profitable, besides ensuring cooperation among farmers to march forward, she said. The work on the state governments flagship programme of constructing major irrigation projects aimed at making arable one crore acre of land was progressing at a faster pace, Soundararajan said. She said the Kaleshwaram project has started pumping water from last year.

"From this year, everyday two TMC of water and from the coming year three TMC of

water will be pumped from the project to make Telangana fertile," she said. The state government would come up with a new Revenue Act to bring transparency in transaction of lands and simplify complicated land-related matters, she said.

Republic Day was celebrated at various government offices and at the offices of TRS, Congress, BJP, AIMIM and other parties. AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi hoisted the tricolour and read the Preamble of the Constitution in the old city of Hyderabad, party sources said. Owaisi, who addressed a number of rallies in Telangana against the CAA in recent weeks, read out the Preamble during such protests.

Telangana R-Day fete sees a drastic change

HYDERABAD: Telangana

celebrated the 71st Republic Day with the main official celebration undergoing a drastic change not just in the venue but also in its format. There was no march past, no parade review by the chief guest, no tableaux or cultural programmes by school children. In a departure from the past when Republic Day celebrations used to be held at sprawling Parade Grounds in Secunderabad, the celebrations were organised in the historic Public Gardens, adjacent to State Assembly in the heart of the city. Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan unfurled the national flag in the presence of Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao, his Cabinet colleagues and senior officials. This was the first Republic Day celebration for Soundararajan after taking over as the Governor. Unlike in the past when the ceremony used to take at least two hours, the formalities this time were completed in just 35-minutes including Governor's 25-minute speech.

The parade, comprising only five contingents, presented salute to the Governor on her arrival, followed by flag hoisting and contingents marching off. The ceremony was held in Public

There was no march past, no parade review by the chief guest, no tableaux or cultural programmes by school children

Garden, Hyderabad's oldest park built in 1846 by Sixth Nizam Mir Mahboob Ali Khan, the ruler of then Hyderabad State. It was organised in the backdrop of Jubilee Hall, considered an architectural masterpiece and built in 1913 during the reign of Seventh Nizam Mir Osman Ali Khan.

The venue was shifted following the decision of Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao that the Independence Day, Republic Day and State Formation Day celebrations be held in a place that would not cause any inconvenience to the people. After formation of Telangana State in 2014, Rao had shifted the venue of Independence Day parade from Parade Grounds to historic Golconda Fort to

highlight the rich cultural heritage of Telangana.

The Republic Day parade this time comprised just five contingents of Telangana Special Police, the Army and the Indian Air Force. In the past, the Governor used to stand in an open top vehicle to review the parade involving several contingents on the sprawling Parade Ground. The celebrations earlier involved participation of several contingents from various police wings, NCC, NSS and schools. Several tableaux from various government departments also used to be part of the celebrations to highlight various government schemes. The students from various government-run schools used to participate in cultural programmes. Officials said they have done away with the practice to save them from the inconvenience. The Governor, in her speech, said Telangana successfully overcame innumerable challenges under the visionary leadership of its Chief Minister Chandrashekar Rao. "Within a short period, the State had achieved great successes in several sectors and became a role model for the entire country," she said.

Coronavirus impacts Gold

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The outbreak of Coronavirus in China which is the second largest buyer of gold has adversely impacted price of the yellow metal in global markets during the week. Consequently, New York gold and silver closed at US \$1570.30 and 18.20 (per oz) respectively. Platinum and Palladium were quoted at \$1,009.75 and \$2,479.23(per oz).

During the year, palladium price saw an increase of 31 per cent. In foreign exchange market, Indian Rupee further weakened. On the closing day, US Dollar and British Pound commanded the exchange values of Rs 71.33 and Rs 93.25 respectively. Similarly, Euro and Canadian dollar were quite optimistic. With the weakening of rupee vis-a-vis American dollar, the import of gold and silver became costlier.

On the closing day, US Dollar and British Pound commanded the exchange values of Rs 71.33 and Rs 93.25 respectively



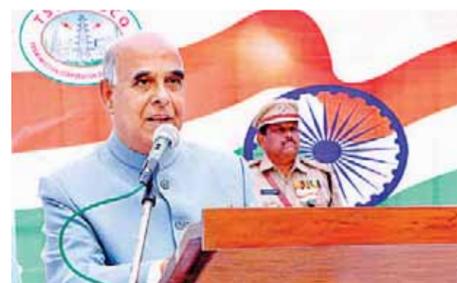
COMMODITIES

The sentiment in local principal wholesale commodity markets continued to be firm. The markets at Begum Bazaar, Osmangunj, Mir Alam Mandi, General Bazaar, Bowenpally, Kukatpally, Dilsukhnagar, Risala Abdullah, Maharajgunj, Kishangunj and Monda Market witnessed brisk business activity.

'Telangana the most happening state'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Under the dynamic and visionary leadership of Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao, the Telangana power sector has become a role model in the country, said TSTransco and TSGenco chairman and managing director D Prabhakar Rao here on Sunday. He appealed all the employees to rededicate themselves for the betterment of power sector.



He was speaking after hoisting the national flag on the occasion of 71st Republic Day at Viduyat Soudha. Speaking on the occasion, he said that TSGENCO has introduced the concept of Reversible Pumping Facility at Nagarjuna Sagar and Srisailem Hydrel stations. "The flexibility of Reverse Pumping System at these

Hydel stations is very much beneficial for Grid Management and has also resulted in substantial quantum of power of 518 MU from

Srisailem Project and 162 MU from Nagarjuna Sagar Project during the last 3 years, thereby minimising the costly purchases during the peak hours," he said. "Telangana has become the most happening state in power sector. Nowadays, the major concern for the entire world is the climate change and global warming. The way, the global economy manages the natural resources deeply influences the Earth's climate. Currently, Electric Vehicle industry is fast picking up and set an ambitious target of having 100% electric vehicles for public transport and 40% electric vehicles for personal mobility by 2030," he said.

TREAT TO EYES



Artists perform during the 'Bharata Mala Harathi' programme held at Necklace Road in Hyderabad on Sunday. (Inset) Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan, Union Minister Kishan Reddy and Jana Sena president Pawan Kalyan at the programme

TMREIS takes cue from 'Palle Pragathi'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

As part of 'Palle Pragathi' programme, Telangana Minorities Residential Educational Institutions Society has conducted 'Patashala Pragathi' programme in all TMR Schools and colleges across the State to build social responsibility among students.

Taking an inspiration from the on-going Palle Pragathi programme, launched by Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao, to turn all villages into clean and green entities and make the villages of Telangana State as role models for others in the country, the Secretary of TMREIS, B Shaifullah felt that this concept should be taught to every student of the society.

On the occasion, he participated in "Patashala Pragathi" initiative at TMR School at Ibrahimpatnam by planting saplings and cleaning the surroundings along with students, teaching and non-teaching staff. Addressing the students, he said that this initiative is aimed to build social responsibility among the students. To create more awareness about the programme, the students will also visit nearby villages and participate in Palle Pragathi.



FINALLY, IT'S INDIA VERSUS PAKISTAN!

HC UPADHYAY ■ HYDERABAD

The ongoing tirade over implementation of Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), National Population Register (NPR) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) by fringe pseudo-secular elements has ultimately culminated into proxy war by Pakistan against India. There is no surprise element in it; rather it is on expected lines. The all-out war on all fronts, viz. legislature, judiciary and streets by the Congress-Left-Communal-Extremists combine has fiercely erupted in the last-ditch battle to disintegrate, divide and douse India into the fire of communal frenzy which, if successful, would be nothing but a repeat of the 1947 Partition scenario.

The rogue state, called Pakistan, with its like-minded henchmen in India, has now come out in the open to support such anti-national elements in all possible ways, including the

much-needed finance and breast-beating globally.

Although the conspirators have ganged up against nationalist forces, happily the nation stands united like a rock. The CAA-NRC cries have created more hatred against these gangs than sympathy. The authorities, both in public administration and judiciary, are rightly acting in sync to set right these anti-national, terrorist and communal forces.

Indeed, the present volatile situation in the country is nothing, but the rehearsal of the gory days ahead when the imminent war against Pakistan becomes a reality. As Prof. Balraj Madhok, the co-founder of Bharatiya Jan Sangh had predicted, "the country will face war from within the country as well as from Pakistan." Therefore, he had favoured one last decisive

The rogue state, called Pakistan, with its like-minded henchmen in India, has now come out in the open to support such anti-national elements in all possible ways, including the much-needed finance and breast-beating globally.



war with Pakistan. Unfortunately, the stage has been set now. The war is certainly not a good word, but like a bitter pill, it has to be accepted to cure the country from the cancer of anti-national elements and the external enemy. And, India is capable to teach a fitting lesson to both these enemies. The need of the hour is to expedite this cleansing process. The Constitution of India, too, clearly mandates that we shall strive to protect sovereignty, integrity and unity of our democratic nation at any cost. On our part, the nationalist

and patriotic forces should be vigilant and spare no efforts to inform and awaken the people in their circles to identify such divisive forces wearing the mask of 'patriotism' and further that they should not be carried away by the sham Tiranga rallies and the cunning of those merely swear by the Constitution. Remember, even Ravana had adorned the clothes of a Sanyasi when he had gone to abduct Sita from her Ashram.

SC on time limit for written statement

The SC, in a recent judgment, has held that the time-limit of 90 days from the date of receipt of

summons by the defendant for filing the written statement (W/S) fixed under Order VIII, Rule 1 in the Civil Procedure Code is just 'directory' in nature and not 'mandatory' and as such, the courts have discretion to extend the same in appropriate cases.

However, in case of the commercial cases, the time-limit of 120 days for filing the W/S is 'mandatory' and the same cannot be extended by the courts, as has been held in Oku Tech Pvt. Ltd vs. Sangeet Agarwal and Others. A three-judge bench, comprising the Chief Justice of India S.A Bobde and Justices Surya Kant and B.R Gavai, in Desh Raj vs. Balkishan (D) through LRs considered a catena of earlier judgments on the subject and concluded as hereinabove.

Child's welfare paramount: SC

In a path-breaking judgment, the Supreme Court on January 20 held that whatever be the differences between a wife and hus-

band, the courts should show utmost concern for the welfare of their child.

In Yashita Sahu vs. State of Rajasthan, a division bench of Justices Deepak Gupta and Aniruddha Bose also held that the habeas corpus writ petition to secure production of the child in the court was maintainable. The court also recognised the contact right in addition to the visiting right of a parent who was denied custody of the child. Elaborating the concept of 'Contact Right' the court observed that considering the availability of new technology such as internet, WhatsApp etc; the child should be allowed to contact the other parent via these mediums at least for five to ten minutes on daily basis.

Court declines loudspeakers once again

There have been loud and clear verdicts by several High Courts and even the Apex Court that installation of loudspeakers on mosques cannot be allowed,

and refusing permission to do so does not violate any constitutional right. Recently, stating that no religion prescribes the use of loudspeakers for worshipping, the Allahabad HC declined the permission sought by two mosques to install loudspeakers for the purposes of azaan. The court in Marsoor Ahmed and Another vs. State of U.P and Others observed: "No religion prescribes or preaches that prayers are required to be performed through voice amplifiers or by beating of drums and if there is such practice, it should not adversely affect the rights of the others, including that of not being disturbed."

The division bench of Justice Pankaj Mishra and Justice Vipin Chandra Dixit placed reliance on Church of God (Full Gospel) in India v. KKR Majestic Colony Welfare Association & Ors., 2000 (7) SCC 282, whereby the Supreme Court held that the rights under Articles 25 and 26 of the Constitution are subject to public order, morality and health.

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No water supply in some areas

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Several areas in the city will have to go without drinking water supply from January 29 to 30, said the Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board in a press statement. Owing to repairs to the leakages on 2200 mm dia and 1500 dia MS gravity mains of Krishna Drinking Water Supply Project Phase-III, a 24-hour shutdown would take place from 6 am on January 29 to 6 am on January 30.

Hence, there will be no water supply to the areas including Saheb nagar, AutoNagar, Vaishal nagar, Meerpet, Jalpally, Mailardevally, Shastripuram, Bandlaguda, Budvel, Sulemannagar, Hyderguda, Golden Heights, Gandhamguda, Allabanda, Bhojagutta, Asifnagar, Redhills, Shaikpet, Prashasan Nagar, Madhapur, Gachi-bowli, Manikonda, Narsing, Boduppal, Chengicherla, Prizadiguda, Alwal, Sainik-puri, Moula-ali, Lalapet, Snehapuri, Kailasagiri reservoir areas.

HMWSSB request the consumers to use water conservatively to avoid inconvenience.

CM tells officials to ensure healthy environment in city

■ KCR instructs officials to increase number of Basti Dwakhana to 350

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao has instructed the officials concerned to take measures to ensure that Hyderabad and other cities should not turn into pollution ridden cities and to take action to protect environment.

KCR directed the officials concerned to initiate steps to plant trees both inside and outside the city as well as forest lands to enhance greenery.

"Population was increasing by several folds in Hyderabad. As the city does not have seashore, there is scope for more pollution and any negligence on the part of officials in taking necessary measures was sure to take it to the ranks of other cities which were suffering with acute pollution making people's life as hell," the Chief Minister said.

To counter this situation, environment protection measures should be taken, he added.

KCR noted that there was 1.6 lakh hectares of forest land available in and outside the city. Large scale tree plantation



KCR directed the officials concerned to initiate steps to plant trees both inside and outside the city as well as forest lands to enhance greenery

should be taken up on these lands. He directed the officials to convert them into dense forest to keep temperatures low and control pollution.

The Chief Minister said, "Plant trees in large numbers in the city too. 10 per cent of the GHMC and HMDA Budget funds should be utilised to increase the green cover"

Apart from this, KCR also asked authorities to prepare

Haritha plans for other cities and towns too. "Create one nursery per ward in all the towns. All the towns and cities in the state should be resplendent with greenery as part of the measures taken under Pattana Pragathi," the Chief Minister said.

Meanwhile, KCR has instructed the officials concerned to increase the number of Basti Dawakhana to 350,

which are rendering a great service to the poor in Hyderabad.

He said that 118 Basti Dawakhana in the city are working very well and people are very happy with the services rendered by them.

"The number of Basti Dawakhana should be increased substantially. In the 150 divisions in the city, two Basti Dawakhana should be established per division. Create more Dawakhana in the places where there is substantial population of the SCs, STs, Minorities and poor," the Chief Minister said exhorting the officials to complete the process within a month.

Cops target agency areas to curb marijuana sales in city

■ Every 2nd drug bust in Hyd has links with Vizag

NAVEEN KUMAR ■ HYDERABAD

As a new way to curb the smuggling of marijuana from Vizag's agency area, cops decided to hit the headless syndicate's biggest cultivation source in the south and used drones, GPS with satellite images to destroy plantations there. Officials said that they have destroyed ganja plantations in over 3,500 acres, worth over Rs 300 crore, by engaging workers and with the support of police and other departments in Vizag agency in the current season.

Every second drug bust in Hyderabad has found its origin to the agency area, from where rookie peddlers and professional smugglers transport the contraband using different modus operandi to evade arrests.

The latest one was reported earlier this week. The Mahabubnagar Police uncovered an international racket on Friday after it caught a gang that was smuggling ganja from Andhra Pradesh to Sri Lanka via Tamil Nadu. The police said that four people have been arrested and 180 kg of ganja, worth Rs 21 lakh, has been seized.



The tribal pockets in EG, Vizag districts and border areas are home to cultivation of three varieties of cannabis

The place has been running over a long time from the heavily naxal-bound agency areas of AP borders and the supply has been constant. Officials say that it's the prime source for most of the market in all the southern metro cities. Using drones, GPS and satellite images, the special task force comprising armed police, revenue, forest and few others, led by AP prohibition and excise wing resumed destruction of ganja plants in the remote areas of Vizag and Andhra Odisha Border (AOB).

Speaking to this newspaper, a higher official from the Excise and Prohibition Department said that the cultivation of marijuana is done by the local tribes in this agency area and it does not

have one person as a kingpin manning the whole operation. "It is a naxal dominated area and the Andhra Pradesh Excise officials have been attempting to diminish the source by using drones to access the crops and evaluate the strike force accordingly. The data collected by the drone was then used to make plans to check the cultivation and smuggling of ganja in Vizag and Godavari districts" said the official, on the basis of anonymity, adding that the police force in Hyderabad and other metro cities are breaking the tentacles of this racket by continuously busting cases and seizing the contraband from them and by also gathering information about their regular sellers and buyers.



'Swachh Bharat is priority for SCR'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

South Central Railway celebrated the 71st Republic Day with gaiety and fervour at Railway Sports Complex Grounds, Secunderabad on Sunday.

Gajanan Mallya, General Manager, South Central Railway, who was the chief guest on the occasion unfurled the National Flag and received the Guard of Honour presented by contingents of Railway Protection Force, Civil Defence, National Cadet Corps, Scouts and Guides etc. A big gathering of railway officers

and staff, their family members were present on the occasion. Utilising the occasion to share the performance and achievements of SCR in the current fiscal, Gajanan Mallya stated that the originating gross earnings of the Zone reached the revenue of Rs 10,270 crore in 2019. Gajanan called upon the entire SCR workforce to perform to their best, drawing inspiration from the spirit of Republic Day celebrations, so as to play their role in the Nation's journey of progress. A host of cultural events showcasing skills of dog squad of RPF marked the event.

'Constitution should not be changed'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Former MP and political activist Brinda Karat spoke about the JNU incident and the brutal attack on the students during the Republic Day Talk 'Constitution at Crisis - Democracy and Secularism in Contemporary India' organised by SFI at Central University on Sunday.

Speaking during the event, Brinda said "I don't know whether the administration has learnt any lesson from the horrific incident that took place upon the students at JNU. It is clear that those in Delhi and who were behind this have not learnt anything. They have just learnt to be more brutal and authoritarianism, dictatorship, new educa-



MANUU students union appeals to students to join the postcard campaign to send one lakh postcards to President against CAA on Sunday.

tion system and towards the rights of students."

Brinda also congratulated the students who stood for what is right and questioned the government about NRC and CAA.

Brinda concluded the talk by saying that the constitution of India should not be changed and it is the

beauty of the country that it has such diversity in every aspect and it should remain the way it is. "We are here not to say this or that religion because we know that our religious belief can be the same only if the constitution of India is the same. Fundamentalists only help each others and they weaken our movements and motives."

I am not one of those who believe that the constitution has all the answers.
—BRINDA KARAT Former MP and political activist

Police foil UoH students' march

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The police detained Union President of University of Hyderabad Abhishek Nanda and two other students on Sunday when they tried to take out march to 'save the Constitution' to mark the Republic Day. Police stopped the students at the main gate as they wanted to march to Ambedkar statue at Masjid Banda near the university.

The march was called by the students' union of the University with the slogan "Uphold Constitution, Defeat Manu". Holding the national flag and Ambedkar's portraits, they started the march from within the campus and tried to go out of the campus to the Ambedkar statue at Masjid Banda.

However, the Cyberabad

The police personnel detained the students and whisked them away in the police vehicles

Police stopped them at the main gate of the university, saying that there was no permission for the march. Raising slogans of "Telangana police go back", "Inquilab Zindabad", "Manu vad ho barbad" and "Long live students' unity" they squatted near the gate. The police personnel then detained the students and whisked them away in the police vehicles.



Arvind lauds team spirit of HMDA staffers

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Principal secretary of municipal administration and HMDA commissioner Arvind Kumar has lauded the role of the HMDA employees in development of the city and recalled how they are overcoming hurdles by working with a team spirit.

Addressing employees of the HMDA after hoisting the Tricolor on Sunday in connection with the Republic Day, Arvind exhorted the employees of the HMDA to work with renewed zeal.

Arvind urged them to forge ahead with commitment to groom the city as the world class city in tune with the government's vision.

25-year-old man found murdered

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A 25-year-old man was murdered by unidentified assailants at Falaknuma area of Hyderabad on Sunday.

The victim was identified as Azam, a resident of Vattapally and an auto driver by profession, said the police. He was bludgeoned to death by a heavy blunt object, possibly a rock, suspect the cops.

"Azam's body was found at Vattapally ground near Bibi Ka Chashma in Falaknuma by locals," said the police, adding that CCTV cameras are being checked for further evidence. A case was booked under Section 302.

BIE conducts workshop for smooth conduct of exams

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana State Board of Intermediate Education (BIE) with the recommendations of the three-man committee conducted a one day training and workshop programme on Sunday at Hyderabad regarding the forthcoming Intermediate Public Examinations.

Syed Omer Jaleel IAS, Commissioner & Secretary, Intermediate Education, gave details on the roles and duties of the district officers and district examination committees for the smooth conduct of examination in the state.

He has asked to conduct the coordination meeting chaired by the collector with the dis-

District Officers sensitised about their roles and duties for the Inter exams

trict officers of different departments i.e., revenue, police, medical, RTC, electricity, post and Telegraph and BSNL for their cooperation in the smooth conduct of the public examinations.

Ethics and Human Values Examination will be held on January 28 from 10 am to 1 pm and Environmental Edu Exam will be held on January 30 from 10 am to 1 pm.

Azad arrested on the way to anti-CAA public meet venue

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bhim Army chief Chandrashekhara Azad was arrested on Sunday by Hyderabad police while he was on way to address a public meeting against the CAA in the city. As permission had been denied for the meeting, police took Azad and those accompanying him into custody.

The Dalit leader was on way to Crystal Garden Mehdiapatnam to address the meet, organised to celebrate the 71st Republic Day by AIDMPAF. The Bhim Army chief was initially taken to Habeebnagar police station but as his sup-



Chandrashekhara Azad

porters began to reach there to lodge protest, he was shifted to Bolaram police station on the city outskirts. Others were taken to Goshamahal PS.

A posse of police was deployed near the venue since morning to foil the meeting.

Wahdat-e-Islami leader Moulana Naseeruddin, who had also reached the meeting venue, condemned the police action and accused police of "muzzling the voice of democracy" and committing "excesses" on those trying to protest peacefully against the CAA, National Register of Citizens and National Population Register.

A public meeting at the same venue, scheduled to be addressed by former Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) Students Union president Kanhaiya Kumar on January 13, was also cancelled after police denied permission.



State planning board vice chairman B Vinod Kumar felicitates Padma Shri award winner Bhashyam Vijayasarithi at Raj Bhavan on Sunday.

Minister congratulates Padma award winners

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Minister for IT KT Rama Rao congratulated Indian professional badminton player PV Sindhu for being conferred with the Padma Bhushan award. The Minister stated that PV Sindhu has not only brought glory to the Telangana state but also to the entire nation. He said that the Padma Bhushan award to PV Sindhu will boost the morale of many sportspersons in the country.

KTR congratulated Bhashyam Vijayasarithi over a phone call after he was conferred with the Padma Shri Award, which is one of the highest civilian awards of the country. Vijayasarithi is a well-known poet and this award is a fitting tribute to his works, he said.

The Minister also called Chintala Venkat Reddy and congratulated him on being conferred with Padma Sri Award. KTR expressed happiness as Padma Sri Award is

The Minister stated that PV Sindhu has not only brought glory to the Telangana state but also to the entire nation

being given to a farmer who has introduced innovative methods in the agriculture sector.

Venkat Reddy is a native of Hyderabad and is known for his innovative farming practices, especially for producing record yields using organic practices and for introducing a patented soil fertility process.

Meanwhile, vice chairman of state planning board B Vinod Kumar congratulates Padma Shri award winner Bhashyam Vijayasarithi and felicitated the awardee at Raj Bhavan on Sunday.

RGIA INTRODUCES 'SELF BAG DROP' FACILITY

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

On the occasion of the 71st Republic Day of India, Chief Executive Officer, GMR Hyderabad International Airport SGK Kishore along with the key officials launched live trials of Self Bag Drop at the domestic departures terminal.

With an objective to empower passengers and bring in more automation, the airport has initiated installation of Self Bag Drop Machines at the domestic departures. Now the domestic departures passengers can print out their boarding cards and baggage tags from any of the self check-in kiosks and proceed to drop their baggage at the SBD facility.



CEO of GHIAL SGK Kishore, Deputy CEO of GHIAL Pradeep Panicker along with other officials launch the Self Bag Drop at RGIA

Currently, the SBD facility is available for passengers flying by IndiGo airlines.

Subsequently this facility will be extended to passengers of all other domestic airlines.

Meanwhile, the 71st Republic Day of India was celebrated at GMR Hyderabad

The passengers can print out their boarding cards and baggage tags from any of the self check-in kiosks and proceed to drop their baggage at the SBD facility

International Airport with great patriotic fervor and camaraderie on Sunday. On this occasion, SGK Kishore

hoisted the national flag to the rendition of the National Anthem. SGK Kishore congratulated and addressed the gathering.

SGK Kishore recalled the sacrifices of the freedom fighters that freed India from the clutches of the British rule.

In his address, SGK Kishore highlighted how aviation sector has given a boost to the nation's economy connecting the globe while making air travel affordable for many. He spoke about the various new developments and tech advancements at RGIA aimed at enhancing passenger comfort and operational excellence.

Harish Rao's 'election strategy' yields results

PNS ■ SIDDIPET

The perfect planning in selection of candidates and the campaign strategy by Finance Minister T Harish Rao helped the Telangana Rashtra Samithi win all the 15 Municipalities in erstwhile Medak district. TRS president and Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao had appointed Harish Rao as incharge of municipal elections in Medak district.

Harish Rao, who has led numerous election campaigns since TRS was founded in 2001, is known as a troubleshooter in the party circles and for his close relationship with party cadre. He convinced ticket aspirants not to create problems for the party in various wards in Sangareddy, Siddipet and Medak districts. Rao's election strategy trumped the Congress in Sangareddy Assembly Constituency. Harish's effective planning and multiple campaign meetings by him placed the TRS Party in a position of strength to retain both Sangareddy and Sadhasivpet municipalities under the constituency.

Since Congress has a strong base in Sangareddy and Sadhasivpet municipalities, Congress candidate T Jayaprakash Reddy had won the last Assembly election. To prove his mettle, Reddy put in all efforts to win the election, but his strategy could not match that of Harish Rao.

300 personalities back anti-CAA protesters

Continued from Page 1

Over 300 eminent personalities from the creative and scholarly community of India said: "We salute their collective cry for upholding the principles of the Constitution of India, with its promise of a plural and diverse society."

"We are aware that we have not always lived up to that promise, and many of us have too often remained silent in the face of injustice. The gravity of this moment demands that each of us stand for our principles," the statement read.

Writers Anita Desai, Kiran Desai, actors Ratna Patak Shah, Jaaved Jafferri, Nandita Das, Lillete Dubey, sociologist Ashis Nandy, activists Sohail Hashmi and Shabnam Hashmi were also among the signatories. "The policies and actions of the present government, passed quickly through parliament and without opportunity for public dissent or open discussion, are antithetical to the principle of a secular, inclusive nation."

"The soul of the nation is threatened. The livelihoods and statehoods of millions of our fellow Indians are at stake. Under the NRC, anyone unable to produce documentation (which, in many cases, does not exist) to prove their ancestry may be rendered stateless. Those deemed 'illegal' through the NRC may be eligible for citizenship under the CAA, unless they are Muslim," the statement further read. The personalities said that contrary to the stated objective of the government, the CAA doesn't appear to be a 'benign legislation only meant to shelter persecuted minorities'."

'Democracy at stake in TS'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) president and Nalgonda MP N Uttam Kumar Reddy alleged that the TRS has won the municipal elections on the basis of money, liquor and misuse of official machinery. He also alleged that TRS, BJP and MIM have conspired together to damage the Congress party.

Speaking after hoisting national flag at party headquarters Gandhi Bhavan on the occasion of 71st Republic Day on Sunday, Uttam said all three parties have conspired to defeat the Congress in just concluded municipal elections. However, he said despite several conspiracies and obstacles, the Congress have performed better than previous elections.

He said the share of Congress party in municipal polls has increased compared to Lok Sabha elections held in 2019. He said there has been a significant increase in party's vote share from Assembly to Parliament and then Panchayat Raj and now civic polls. Therefore, he said that the Congress would certainly come to power in next Assembly elections. He said Congress had won nearly 25% of municipalities in the State.

He alleged that TRS was winning elections using money power and liquor. He alleged that the TRS had spent up to Rs 30,000 per vote to win the civic polls. Despite using money and liquor to influence



TPCC chief Uttam Kumar Reddy and other Congress leaders at the flag hoisting ceremony at Gandhi Bhavan on Sunday

The TPCC chief said that the party was not losing elections in Telangana. But it is the democracy and Constitution which are being defeated every time. He said there was serious threat to democracy in Telangana

voters, he said Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao was calling it a people's mandate.

Calling this as a dangerous trend for democracy, he called upon the intellectuals and other members in the society to launch a movement to save democracy in the State. He said democracy could not be restored unless elections are held in a free, fair and transparent manner.

The TPCC chief said that the party was not losing elections in Telangana. But it is the democracy and Constitution which are being defeated every time. He said there was serious threat to democracy in Telangana. He said practices

like engineering defections of elected representatives of opposition parties into ruling party; kidnapping of political leaders, extreme usage of liquor, money and official position; curbing protest against wrong policies; house arrests; implication in false cases and using police to harass and terrorise political opponents have become common in Telangana. He said these practices have raised serious doubts on the very survival of democracy in Telangana. Uttam also accused the BJP government at the Centre of targeting a particular community through the Citizenship Amendment Act. He said people across the

country have been protesting against the CAA and many State Assemblies have passed resolutions opposing the CAA. Responding to CM KCR's announcement that Telangana Assembly too would pass an anti-CAA resolution, he said despite repeated demands by him for a special Assembly session on the issue, KCR remained silent. However, immediately after declaration of results of municipal elections on Saturday, KCR began a new drama. He said KCR could not be trusted as he keeps changing his stance and never honours his own words.

The TPCC chief said that both BJP and TRS Governments were violating the Constitution. He said Modi Government was trying to take away the fundamental rights of citizens. He said Congress had opposed the manner in which Article 370 was removed from Jammu & Kashmir.

BJP to play opposition role in Nizamabad

PNS ■ NIZAMABAD

Lok Sabha member Dharmapuri Aravind on Sunday announced that the BJP will sit in the opposition as it did not get the magic figure to stake claim for the mayor post. Addressing media here, he said that the TRS, MIM and ex-officio members of the municipal corporation together constitute more than the magic figure and hence the BJP is backtracking on its claim for the mayor's post.

As no party could be able to muster clear majority in the Nizamabad Municipal Corporation in the recent municipal corporation, there is suspense over who will become the Mayor of the city. The candidates were elected in 28 divisions, while the TRS got only 13 seats. However, the MIM candidates won from 16 seats, Congress candidates bagged two divisions while an independent candidate from the remaining division.

Therefore, the BJP after weighing various pros and



44 The TRS, MIM and ex-officio members of the municipal corporation together constitute more than the magic figure and hence the BJP is backtracking on its claim for the mayor's post

— DHARMAPURI ARAVIND
Nizamabad MP

cons decided to limit its role to the opposition. Meanwhile, the TRS, MIM together will stake claim for the Mayor post. Leaders of both parties held discussions on the alliance and other terms and conditions. The MIM is understood to have put down the condition that the TRS should allow the MIM to stake claim for the Bodhan municipal chairman post to support the TRS in Nizamabad.

Dharmapuri Aravind said that the BJP would resist the corruption and pave the way for the development of the city. In an angry voice, he

dared Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao to oppose the CAA and noted that the Assembly has no right to adopt a resolution on the CAA and CAA passed by parliament is binding on all.

Offering to prove that the TRS candidates banked on money power for their victory, he said whether the CM would quit his post provided he proved the money power of the ruling party candidates in the municipal polls. The BJP is gaining roots in Telangana slowly, he said predicting the end of the TRS soon.

Jagga congratulates Harish on TRS victory

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Congress MLA T Jagga Reddy congratulated Finance Minister T Harish Rao for registering victory in two municipalities in Sangareddy. He also congratulated TRS working president and IT Minister KT Rama Rao for winning more than 100 municipalities as said by Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao before elections.

He opined that the voters made him stress free by not making his wife Nirmala Jagga Reddy as chairman of Sangareddy municipality as development is not possible being in opposition party. Speaking to the media at Gandhi Bhavan on Sunday, Jagga Reddy said that the Congress gave a tough fight to the TRS in municipal elections.

"The Congress cadre waged a fight against ruling party sincerely. Congress is hero even if it wins or loses elections and there is no need to cleanse the state Congress for losing



Candidates' husband attempts suicide over defeat

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Depressed over losing the Municipal elections, a candidate's husband allegedly attempted suicide in Jayashankar Bhupalpally district on Saturday. The results for Municipal elections were announced on Saturday. The victim, identified as Singanaveni Chiranjeevi, who belongs to ruling TRS, consumed pesticide. He was rushed to a hospital, where his condition is said to be stable. His wife, Vijetha had contested from the fifth ward in the town.

Though Vijetha has lost from her ward, their party has bagged the municipality with a thumping majority. TRS grabbed 23 wards and BJP candidate won from one ward. Six independents also won in the town. The fifth ward in the town was reserved for women. Chiranjeevi tried for the ticket for himself but it was subsequently reserved for women.

PICKS UP THE GAUNTLET



Nagari MLA RK Roja plants a sapling as part of the 'Green Challenge' initiated by MP Santosh Kumar, at PCN High School, Nagari in Andhra Pradesh on Sunday

VH threatens fast-unto-death

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Congress senior leader V Hanumantha Rao said that he would take up fast-unto-death if the government fails to install the statue of BR Ambedkar at Punjagutta Circle before February 5. He said the police had kept the statue at police station after removing it from the crossroads.

"What sin did Ambedkar committed? On 71st Republic Day, Ambedkar's statue is in police station," he said. He was speaking after participating in flag hoisting ceremony at Gandhi Bhavan on the occasion of Republic Day celebrations on Sunday.

'Govt honouring awe-inspiring people with...'

Continued from Page 1

Special focus areas like yoga, sanitation, environment have been championed, the official said. The genius of the East and Northeast has been celebrated, deserving people have been found from all parts of the country, going beyond merely breaking the hegemony of the North and West, to in fact inverting it, official said. Reflecting the country's growing relevance on the global stage, foreign nationals from across the world have been awarded a special recognition of the deep bonds people all over the world share with India. Unearthing unsung ser-

vice and excellence from every nook and corner has been an important part of the awards every year: From the likes of Jadav Payeng, Chewang Norphel and Arunima Singh in 2015 to Simon Oraon and Arunachalam Muruganantham in 2016.

The year 2017 saw the list balloon, with the likes of Meenakshi Amma, Daripalli Ramaiah, Girish Bharadwaj and it continued through 2018 with Lakshmi Kutty, Subhasini Mistry and Sitava Joddatti. The tradition continued in 2019 with Smita and Ravindra Kolhe, Jamuna Tudu, Daitari Naik, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee and Kamala Pujari.

Pattana Pragathi to beautify state: Chief Minister KCR

Continued from Page 1

Ministers Errabelli Dayakar Rao, A Indrakaran Reddy, Satyavathi Rathod, Government's Chief Advisor Rajiv Sharma, Chief Secretary Suresh Kumar, Panchayat Raj Principal Secretary Vikas Raj, Principal Secretary Forests Rajiv Tiwari, Panchayat Raj Commissioner Raghunandan Rao, PCCF Ms Shobha, CMO secretary Smita Sabharwal, Special Secretary Bhoopal Reddy, OSD Priyanka Varghese and others participated in the meeting. The Chief Minister said, "Certain Ministers, Collectors, public representatives posing for photo shoot in media are claiming that they are cleaning the villages as part of Palle Pragathi programme. They are doing it for publicity sake. This is not correct. They are not there to clean the villages

Certain Ministers, Collectors, public representatives posing for photo shoot in media are claiming that they are cleaning the villages as part of Palle Pragathi programme, the Chief Minister said

with a broomstick. They are there to ensure work assigned is done properly. We have recruited the required staff in Gram Panchayats. We have hiked their salaries. Tractors are there. Use the tractors and make the employees work. But, don't do things for namesake. Find out how works related to clean and green initiatives in the villages are going on. What progress the village is making? Are all those concerned discharging their duties properly? To find out these things, I will make sur-

prise visits to villages," the Chief Minister said. KCR said that every month the government was releasing Rs 339 crore without fail. "We have made one tractor available in every village. Make it compulsory to plant and grow trees at every place and in all the villages. Clean the roads every day and keep the villages clean and tidy. Clean the drains. It is not enough to do these works for some days and forget about them later. Every day the assigned works should be done in every village".

TRS sidesteps Juppally's...

Continued from Page 1

Meanwhile, TRS party, under the leadership of KTR, began the exercise for selection of Mayors, Chairpersons, Vice Chairpersons and Deputy Mayors. The success of TRS in the municipalities has been guaranteed by the party's ex officio strength. TRS is likely to take the help of rebel candidates in Ijeja municipality to get the posts. The Committee is making efforts to secure the remaining municipal councils, TRS already has clear majority in 100 municipalities. For this purpose, the committee is focusing on candidates who have won independently.

While KTR is already speaking to the local leaders, they in turn are seeking support from independents. Local MLAs have informed the party that more than 90 per cent of independents have already come forward to support TRS.

SECURITY REASONS

Newly-inaugurated cottages locked at Tadwai

PV KONDAL RAO
■ WARANGAL

The cottages, inaugurated by Ministers Srinivas Goud and Errabelli Dayakar Rao at Tadwai have been locked on Sunday following security reasons. The Department of Tourism had constructed thirty-cottage complex for the benefit of Medaram devotees and the department has expected to muster some handsome revenue on the eve of the ensuing Sannakka Jathara.

However, the cottages gate was locked on Sunday for the reason that there was a complaint about planting of explosives in the cottage complex prior to the construction process. Though this was spelled out openly by the higher-ups, the officials of Tourism



wing have received unofficial information that the area, where the cottages were constructed, was not tested thoroughly prior to the completion of the complex.

Sources say that the area, where the cottages were erected was previously frequented by the outlawed naxalites hence the need of testing that part with mine proof machinery was required prior to the construction process. Though the

police sniffer dog squads and mine unearthing machinery have tested the ground thoroughly and felt it was free from any explosive plantations, they still suspect that the cottages were not fool proof yet.

There is of course an opinion that the tourism wing or other departments might have floated this information in order to prevent the law enforcers occupying the prime cottages area during the Jathara period.

Independents hold sway in many municipalities

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Of the 640 wards and divisions in seven municipal corporations and 21 municipalities in Medchal and Rangareddy districts, independents were elected from 72 wards, majority of them contested as rebel candidates against the TRS official nominees as the party leadership denied them tickets.

In 10 cities of the state, independents outnumbered the candidates of main political outfits. In Nizampet Municipal Corporation, there are 33 divisions. While the TRS romped home in 26 divisions, independents won from the remaining 7 seats.

In Meerpet Municipal Corporation, no political party could be able to secure clear



In 10 cities of the state, independents outnumbered the candidates of main political outfits

majority. To elect mayor, support of independents is indispensable here. The ruling TRS has been trying to woo eight independents elected as Corporators.

In some municipalities, the support of independents

became very crucial, but not a single independent could not win the polls in places such as Bandlaguda Jagir municipal corporation, Adibatla, Amagal, Dammaiguda, Gundlapochampally and Kompally municipalities.

Rebel candidates taste victory

- In Ghatkesar municipality, four independents, including three TRS rebels, were declared winners
- In Nizampet municipal corporation, TRS rebel who contested against the official nominee in the 15th division emerged victorious
- In Jawaharnagar Municipality, five independents, including TRS rebels from 9th and 22nd divisions, were declared elected. In the 25th division, Congress rebel was elected.
- In Shadnaga municipality, six independents, including five TRS rebel candidates, were elected
- In Boduppal municipal cor-

poration and Peerzadiguda municipal corporation, five TRS rebels each were declared elected

- In Dundigal, the TRS rebels were declared elected from 6, 10, 17, 19 and 22 wards
- In Tumkunta municipality, three TRS rebels were elected, while two TRS rebels were elected in Sankarapally municipality
- In Medchal municipality, four independents, including three TRS rebels, were elected
- In Nagaram municipality, TRS rebels were elected from 8th and 19th wards.
- In Tumkunta, Teegulla Haribabu contested as independent and won against TRS candidate Teegulla Pravin Kumar Goud with a margin of 849 votes.

Kishan Reddy challenges...

Continued from Page 1

He alleged that KCR was trying to stoke religious feelings, and called upon BJP cadre to dismiss "opportunistic politics". KCR was speaking like a pawn in conspiracy with MIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi, he said. KCR was joining hands with Congress in opposing CAA and evidently both parties were similar, he reasoned.

After hoisting the national flag at state party office here on Sunday, Laxman expressed his happiness that the saffron party had achieved effective results in the municipal elections despite facing several obstructions.

SHORT READS



'Honouring unsung heroes with Padma awards is discovery'

NEW DELHI: Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu on Sunday said honouring unsung heroes with the Padma awards is in a way discovery of India. Congratulating all the Padma awardees, Naidu, in a series of tweets, said this year's Padma awards are also an 'ode to the unsung heroes' who have quietly contributed to the cause of our society in different ways. "I appreciate the Government for recognizing the unrecognized irrespective of their visibility. One way, this is a discovery of India," he said. Complimenting all the Padma awardees, the vice president appreciated their spirit of selfless service to the cause of the nation.

Ahead of flag hoisting by MP CM, 2 Cong leaders hit each other

INDORE: Two Congress leaders in Indore on Sunday hit each other after an altercation minutes before Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath was to arrive at the party office to hoist the tricolour on Republic Day. A video, which went viral on social media, showed state general secretary Chandrakant Kunjeer and senior party colleague Devendra Singh Yadav arguing and hitting each other, before being separated by onlookers and police. The fight started after Kunjeer reached close to the stage and Yadav raised an objection, eye witnesses said. Minutes after the fight, Nath arrived and hoisted the national flag.

Mamata urges people to uphold principles of Constitution

KOLKATA: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Sunday urged people to take a pledge to protect the Constitution of the country and uphold its principles. Taking to Twitter, she said, "On #RepublicDay, let us pledge to protect our #Constitution and uphold the principles of sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic, republic, justice, liberty, equality and fraternity, as enshrined in the Preamble." India is celebrating its 71st Republic Day on Sunday. On this day in 1950, the Constitution of India came into effect.

Man held with US dollars worth Rs 12 lakh at Delhi airport

NEW DELHI: A Bangkok-bound passenger was apprehended by CISF personnel on Sunday at the Delhi airport for allegedly carrying US dollars worth Rs 12 lakh concealed inside a pair of sandals kept in his bag, officials said. Mohammed Waseem was apprehended at the Terminal-3 of the Indira Gandhi International Airport at 5 am when his bag was being scanned, they said. The CISF personnel seized 17,000 USD worth about Rs 12 lakh from the pair of sandals kept in Waseem's bag, the officials said. He was handed over to Customs authorities for further probe, they added.

Republic Day: 51 BSF officials get police medals

NEW DELHI: As many as 51 Border Security Force (BSF) personnel were honoured with the distinguished and meritorious service police medals on the occasion of Republic Day, a force spokesperson said on Sunday. The awardees for the distinguished service medal include Inspector General (IG) Sonali Mishra and Deputy IGs M S Sharma, R S Rathore, Pradeep Katyal and V S Yadav. Mishra, a 1993-batch Indian Police Service officer of Madhya Pradesh cadre, is at present serving as the chief of the intelligence or the 'G' branch of the force here. She has also headed the BSF formation in the Kashmir valley as its IG. Those decorated with the president's police medal for meritorious service include Commandants Rajan Sud, Nilotpal Kumar Pandey, Harendra Singh Rautela and Constable (cook) Shankar Kumar Ghosh among others.

SEVERAL FIRSTS IN 71ST REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATIONS

Military might and cultural diversity on show

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The nation celebrated the 71st Republic Day on Sunday with a grand military parade and exhibition of its history, cultural diversity and strategic weaponry at the Rajpath.

Brazilian President Jair Messias Bolsonaro was the chief guest for this year's ceremony which started with Prime Minister Narendra Modi paying tributes to martyrs at the National War Memorial.

This was the third time that a Brazilian president was the chief guest at the Republic Day.

There were several firsts in the celebration this year, including the prime minister paying homage at the National War Memorial, display of Chinook and Apache helicopters in the fly past and showcasing of the A-SAT weapons system.

Jammu and Kashmir, which participated in the parade for the first time as a Union Territory, had the "Back to Village" programme as the

theme for its tableau.

The band played the national anthem with a 21-gun salute in the background when the tricolour was being unfurled at the Rajpath before the start of parade.

Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, former prime minister Manmohan Singh, Congress president Sonia Gandhi and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal were among those who attended the celebrations.

Earlier in the day, Modi took to Twitter to extend his greetings to countrymen. "Wishing everyone a happy #RepublicDay. Jai Hind," he tweeted.

After Republic Day parade, he waved at the cheering crowd while walked on the Rajpath.

Twenty-two tableaux were on display during the parade, of which 16 were of various states and UTs and six were of ministries, departments and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF).

Bomb blasts in Assam, CAA protests

PNS ■ GUWAHATI/ KOLKATA/ PATNA

The 71st Republic Day was celebrated with pomp and pageantry across the eastern region on Sunday, even as four serial explosions rocked Assam early in the day, and sparse protests over the new citizenship law were reported from parts of the state and neighbouring West Bengal.

Barring Meghalaya, where Tathagata Roy is on leave since December, governors in their respective states, unfurled the Tricolour and presided over the ceremonial parade, amid heightened security. In Assam, four power explosions - three in Dibrugarh and one in Charaideo districts - shook Upper Assam, with police sources suspecting it to be a handiwork of ULFA (Independent) militants, who had called for a boycott of Republic Day celebrations.



All four blasts occurred in a span of 10 minutes - between 8.15 and 8.25 am, a police officer said, adding no casualty had been reported, as Republic Day being a holiday, people were mostly indoors.

Later in the day, Governor Jagdish Mukhi said the Assam government was committed to protect the political, cultural and linguistic rights of indigenous people and a committee, headed by retired Gauhati High Court judge Biplab

Sharma, would soon submit a report in this regard.

Assam minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and BJP MLA Angoorlata Deka were shown black flags by anti-CAA protesters at separate locations in the state, when they were on their way to attend functions.

In West Bengal, Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar led the celebrations, as he hoisted the national flag and inspected the parade by armed forces and police personnel.

ULFA(I) claims responsibility for R-Day Assam blasts

PNS ■ GUWAHATI

Banned outfit ULFA (Independent) has claimed responsibility for the four powerful explosions in Assam earlier on Sunday prior to Republic Day celebrations in the state. The ULFA(I), in a statement signed by Lt Joy Asom of its Publicity Department,



claimed that all the four blasts were carried out by the outfit. The Paresh Barua-led ULFA(I), along with a few other militant outfits of the Northeast, had called for a boycott of the Republic Day celebrations in the region. Three blasts had taken place in Dibrugarh and one in Charaideo districts of Upper Assam in a span of 10 minutes -- between 8.15 and 8.25 am on Sunday, a police officer said. There has been no report of any casualty, as Republic Day being a holiday, people were mostly indoors, he said. The first blast was reported outside a shop at Teokghat in Sonari police station area of Charaideo district. Three explosions followed soon after in Dibrugarh district -- two at Graham Bazar and AT Road, beside a gurudwara, and another at the oil town of Dulaijan Tinali, just 100 metres from the local police station, Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Padmanabh Barua said.

Centre should mind its job: Ajit on NIA probe in Elgaar case

PNS ■ PUNE

The Maharashtra government was trying to go to the root of the 2017 Elgaar Parishad case when it was suddenly handed over to the National Investigation Agency (NIA) by the Centre, Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar said here on Sunday.

He also sought to remind the Centre about the federal structure of governance when asked about the development.

"I feel that the Centre and state governments should do their respective works. The Centre can intervene when an issue of the national level crops up," Pawar told reporters on the sidelines of the launch of Rs 10 'Shiv Bhojan Thali'-a flagship scheme of the Shiv



Ajit Pawar

Sena-NCP-Congress government.

Pune Police are probing whether "provocative" speeches made at the Elgaar Parishad conclave in Pune on December 31, 2017, led to the caste violence around Koregaon Bhima in the district the next day.

Police had first used the term 'urban naxals' during the

investigation after arresting nine activists and lawyers, including Telugu poet Varavara Rao and Sudha Bharadwaj.

"I recently met state home minister Anil Deshmukh and his deputy Satej Patil. We were briefed about the case by investigating officials. I felt they were trying hard to probe the case," Pawar said while responding to a query on the NIA taking over the probe.

"In the event of any untoward incident, the basic objective is to investigate that incident, go to its root, check facts and avoid any communal rift. The state government was in tending to investigate the case on that line, but suddenly the Central government decided to take over the case," he said.

Let us raise level of protests: PC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid pan-India agitations against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, senior Congress leader P Chidambaram on Sunday called for raising the 'level of protests', saying "as long as freedoms are denied to any number of people, the whole population is denied freedom."

Greeting the people on the occasion of 71st Republic Day, he said the soul of the Constitution lies in the freedoms guaranteed in part three of the document.

These freedoms were given by the people unto themselves and no government can take them away, the former home minister said in a series of tweets.



PM Modi continues 'safa' tradition, sports saffron 'bandhej'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Continuing his tradition of donning colourful turbans on Republic Day and Independence Day celebrations, Prime Minister Narendra Modi sported a saffron 'bandhej' headgear with a tail for the 71st Republic Day on Sunday.

Wearing his traditional kurta pajama and jacket, Modi paid homage to the fallen soldiers at the newly-built National War Memorial here on the Republic Day for the first time instead of the Amar Jawan Jyoti beneath the India Gate arch.

Bandhej is a print developed using tie and dye method practiced mainly in states of Rajasthan and Gujarat.

Turbans have been a high-

light of the prime minister's sartorial choices at Independence Day and Republic Day events.

Modi had sported a multi-coloured turban when he gave his sixth Independence Day speech from the ramparts of the Red Fort last year after securing a second term.

For his maiden Independence Day address as the prime minister in 2014, Modi had opted for a Jodhpuri bandhej turban in bright red colour with green at the tail.

A yellow turban covered with criss-crossed lines in different shades of the same colour, along with a few in red and deep green, marked his 2015 look, and he chose a tie and dye turban in hues of pink and yellow for his appearance at the Red Fort in 2016.

Modi pays homage to fallen soldiers

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday paid homage to the fallen soldiers at the newly-built National War Memorial here on the Republic Day for the first time instead of the Amar Jawan Jyoti beneath the India Gate arch. The iconic memorial in the India Gate complex behind the canopy was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on February 25 last year.

Amar Jawan Jyoti is symbolised by an inverted bayonet and soldier's helmet over it with an eternal flame burning beside it. It was built in 1972 underneath the India Gate arch to commemorate soldiers martyred in the Indo-Pak War of 1971. Spread over an area of approximately 40 acres, National War Memorial comprises four concentric circles, namely - the 'Amar Chakra', 'Veerta Chakra', 'Tyag Chakra' and the 'Rakshak Chakra' with names of 25,942 soldiers inscribed in golden letters on granite tablets.

It also includes a central 15.5-m obelisk, an eternal flame and six bronze murals depicting famous battles fought by the Indian Army, Air Force and the Navy in a covered gallery (Veerta Chakra).

EDUCATION IN CHHATTISGARH

'Local dialects to be medium of instruction'

PNS ■ RAIPUR

Local Chhattisgarhi language and different dialects will be made the medium of instruction in primary schools across Chhattisgarh from the next academic session, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel said on Sunday.

Speaking at the state-level Republic Day function held in Jagdalpur, around 290 kms from here, he also cautioned political parties by quoting Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar's statement that if parties place their creed above the country, then people's freedom will once

Appealing to the people to work towards protecting the Constitution, he said its different aspects will be taught in schools

again be in danger and might end forever.

Appealing to the people to work towards protecting the Constitution, he said its different aspects will be taught in schools.

The state government had



Bhupesh Baghel

on Friday issued a circular to schools, asking them to hold discussion on the Constitution after prayers every Monday.

He said the previous UPA government at the Centre had made a provision in the Right to Education Act 2009 to ensure children are taught in their mother tongue as much as possible.

"But ironically, the state has not yet taken any concrete step in this direction," he said.

"From the forthcoming academic session, arrangements will be made to use local Chhattisgarhi language and dialects like Gondi, Halbi, Bhatri, Sargujia, Korwa, Pando, Kudukh, Kamari and others as medium of instruction in primary schools," Baghel said.

Postal Dept to provide civic services

PNS ■ Allahabad

Several civic services including birth and death certificates, Aadhaar enrolment and updation, and bus and flight ticketing would be provided by the Postal Department in Uttar Pradesh from April 1, with a special portal being set up for the purpose, an official said on Sunday. Superintendent of post offices, Allahabad division, Sanjay D Akhade told PTI that initially these services will be available in the head post offices of the state and later they will be expanded.

He said the government has planned to provide citizen-centric services through a CSC portal across the country. Akhade said for this purpose a Common Service Center-Special Purpose Vehicle (CSC-SPV) has been set up which will work closely with the Department of Posts. The head post office at Parliament Street in New Delhi has been made the nodal office. Under the new services, people will be able to apply for PAN card, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Soil Health Card, Pradhan Mantri Crop Insurance Scheme and PDS, he said.

'Misinformation being spread on CAA, atmosphere vitiated'

PNS ■ NAGPUR

Stating that Muslims were never subjected to discrimination in India, RSS general secretary Bhaiyyaji Joshi on Sunday alleged that misinformation was being spread in the country over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA).

He was talking to reporters after hoisting the national flag at the Sangh headquarters here

on the occasion of the 71st Republic Day.

"Till date, the followers of Islam have never been subjected to any kind of discrimination in this country. If any citizen from there, be it a Muslim, come to India, then they can also get citizenship as per the law which is already in place. What is the problem in that?" Joshi said in response to a question on the CAA.



Bhaiyyaji Joshi

Planned Central Vista makeover makes R-Day special

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

For 85-year-old Keval Krishna, this year's Republic Day parade on the Rajpath had a special significance as it was one of the last such processions on the historic stretch before being redeveloped under the government's ambitious Central Vista renovation plan.

"I have been here more times than I can count. I am aware that the government plans to redevelop the Central Vista. The Rajpath may not look the same... The old Rajpath will be remembered and the new one welcomed," Krishna, who hails



from Punjab, said.

The redevelopment project of Central Vista envisages a triangular Parliament building next to the existing one, common Central Secretariat and the revamping of the 3-km-

According to sources, the historic Rajpath will go for redevelopment works soon after hosting the Republic Day parade in 2021

parade in 2021.

Many others voiced concerns about the project affecting the heritage character of Lutyens' Delhi.

Samsun Mumei, from Manipur's Tamalong district, believes heritage should be given priority over development.

"The redevelopment project has alarmed heritage lovers.

This is the finest place in the entire city. When (Edwin) Lutyens designed it, he had an idea in mind. The government is welcome to redevelop the landscape, spruce it up without fiddling with its heritage character," he said.

Digambou Newmai, 27, who was viewed the Republic Day parade on the Rajpath for the first time, suggested that the

government should invest in planting trees and reducing pollution.

"The buildings are in a fine shape. The India Gate lawns and the Rajpath are a go-to place for a picnic or a drive. I am not sure if the public will be allowed move freely here after two years," he said.

Aniket Ghosh (31) from Kolkata, witnessing his fourth R-Day parade, said development is good, but it should not come at the cost of heritage.

Derrier, a French tourist, said he prefers heritage over development.

PAPER WITH PASSION

Toxic war of words

The BJP seems to have lost the plot with its support to rabid statements by party leaders and is in no mood to engage



If the ruling BJP is indeed serious about its outreach to civil society, which it feels is an alien species and needs an education in *Bharat Parv*, then its methodology of hammering home truths is grossly and crudely misplaced. And at best ends up as an egoistic assumption of what a dialogue should be like — more and more force-feeding, treating questions like malignant spyware and blaming all of the nation's problems to either Pakistan or Bangladesh. How else does one explain the distasteful transgressions of the BJP candidate

for the Delhi polls Kapil Mishra and Bengal BJP in-charge Kailash Vijayvargiya? The former, clearly defying the party diktat to dispel fears on the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), likened civil protest spots, like Shaheen Bagh, to mini-Pakistan. He even called the Delhi polls an Indo-Pakistan match, clearly implying Hindutva as India and lumping all sorts of otherness into one disposable basket. The Election Commission, which had overlooked incendiary remarks during the run-up to the Lok Sabha polls last year, has thankfully issued a notice and the Delhi police has lodged an FIR against him. Vijayvargiya, who is to drive the party's campaign in Bengal, has found out a simpler method of identifying infiltrators that does not need documents at all. He feels people eating flattened rice or *chidwa* are confirmed Bangladeshis, totally ignoring the fact that all Bengalis have this as a staple snack or that *poha* is a breakfast favourite even in his home State, Madhya Pradesh. At least, he seems to have dispelled the need to go for an elaborate process of compiling and sorting out the National Population Register (NPR). The point is such racist, misogynist and uncouth statements are not even funny any more. They are dangerously serious considering that they are given legitimacy, either because the party's top leadership stays silent or because fringe leaders of the Sangh, who were once kept under wraps by the old BJP, have been coopted and rewarded in proportion to their success in disseminating a divisive agenda. What else could explain how even a seasoned senior leader from the old school like Prakash Javadekar had to reduce the Delhi electoral battle to the binaries of who is more committed to Indianness and who is a traitor. He labelled the fight as one between "*Bharat Mata Ki Jai*" and "*Jinnah wali azaadi*." One can understand that the BJP has nothing to show as a record of its performance unlike its key opponent Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). Can that, therefore, justify this dog-whistling politics? BJP leaders know that their party cannot match the hyper-localised agenda of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and are, therefore, countering that with an umbrella issue that can generate a swell of emotion, which in the current scenario of identity politics, happens to be the most virulent strain of nationalism. Having been out of power in the city for almost 20 years, most of which had seen high-performing regimes, the BJP can no more claim to champion anything revolutionary. Even its war room expert and Home Minister Amit Shah has not picked up any issues except pledging ₹1 lakh crore for bolstering infrastructure in the recently regularised colonies. And now that AAP deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia has also publicly extended support to the women protesting citizenship laws at Shaheen Bagh, the BJP feels it has drawn out its opponent to an arena where civic issues become somewhat national.

What is frightening though is that in the process, the BJP is dictating the zeitgeist of contemporary politics. Worse, it is changing the DNA of political discourse with a mythologised sanctity of India's greatness that has been eaten away by all kinds of imposed viruses until the party rescued it. There was a time when Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself reined in party motormouths and had advised them to stay away from media platforms. Now that same man is either painfully silent or sometimes guilty of playing to the gallery. Anyway, his restraint was just in the nature of an advisory and the fact that someone like Pragya Thakur is now a bonafide MP or that Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is allowed a free run with his religion-specific remarks, proves that they not only have the blessings of higher-ups but are deployed as their prize arrowheads. If the Modi of 2014 was about the ABCs of development, he himself has been rather brazen if his comments of green versus pink revolution (against meat-eaters) and *kabristan* versus *shamshan ghat* are any indications. So clearly, toxicity was not just limited to campaign rhetoric. And 2014 was just a stepping stone to get a hold of national consciousness in 2019. Now that the BJP has that at its command, it wants to replicate the Sangh's vision as a voluntary national will that has nothing to do with science, reason, history or culture. With a new obsession on whom we need to be as Indians, issues like the economy can be easily swept under the carpet or become a secondary concern. The saddest part is that this does great disservice to Hinduism and the tenets of an Indic civilisation.

Roger that

With his fightback at Australian Open, Federer is the first singles player to win 100 matches in two Grand Slams



Roger Federer is not just a sporting legend. He is a human story and an inspiration for everybody because he has demonstrated true grit that survival requires in our times, surprising us every time when we feel he has just gone over the hill. And at a time when individual power sports is all about burnouts, Federer has crafted lastability as a credo despite the competition and overcome challenge from millennials. He has produced several great performances over the years. One of those performances came in the match against Australia's John Millman during the third at the Australian Open 2020 on Friday where the former world number one was looking down and out in the fifth-set super tie-breaker after falling behind with the score of 8-4. However, he showed why he has won 20 Grand Slams in his career by picking up six consecutive points and cementing his spot in the fourth-round at the first Grand Slam of the year. And he did it in a thrilling match that began Friday night in Melbourne and ended after midnight Saturday. Who cares if he is 38 years old when he keeps finding new ways to redefine his greatness? Unlike other tournaments — such as Wimbledon and the US Open, which play first-to-seven in a tiebreaker — the Australian Open has a first-to-10 format, and Federer fell behind 8-4 early on. So imagine the kind of rallying he had to do with six straight points to win the tiebreaker and the third-round match, 4-6, 7-6 (2), 6-4, 4-6, 7-6 (10-8). With this, he has also become the first singles player to win 100 matches in two different Grand Slams; his Wimbledon 100 happened last year. In his post-match interview, Federer joked that when Millman had that huge lead in the tiebreaker and was two points away from taking the match, he was already preparing himself to offer excuses during his press conference for why he lost. Now we know how he didn't let his doubts get the better of him. So tennis can still be an old man's game. Just like life itself.

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You're what you say you're

In the midst of all the din created by parties that has earned India the dubious title of a divided nation, Delhi stands as a calm outlier. AAP has significantly changed perceptions



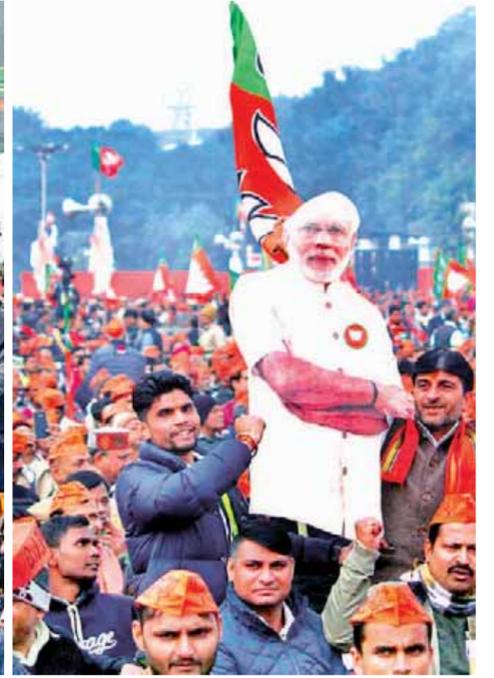
AJOY KUMAR

I was reading a piece on the popular online platform, *Medium*. In the said article, I came across an interesting tidbit about an American football coach, Bill Parcells. He has been listed in the "Pro Football Hall of Fame" and is one of the most successful football coaches in the US. While he has won many championships and brought great success to his team, most fans remember him for his famous quote rather than something he had done on the field: "You are what your record says you are." This is a lovely take on the classic adage, "You are what you say you are." Both phrases are rooted in real-life experiences. There can be no greater example of it than the prevailing political scenario in New Delhi.

Elections in the national capital are due in February. With the media's focus on the said polls, it is likely that one may have had a chance to hear about or must have come across the different political campaigns currently at play by various parties in the city. One of the favourite catch phrases for one of the political opponents of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has been "Pakistan." It's very hard to escape any mention about it. Whenever any panellist speaks against the AAP on a television debate or otherwise, it is almost inevitable that reference to "Pakistan" is made. This is in stark comparison to the catch phrase of the AAP, which reads: *Kaam Pe Vote*.

Why is there such a difference in the approach of both parties? To understand this, the phrase, "You are what you say you are" may be of help. When the AAP exploded into the Indian political landscape, it came up with a message that was entirely different from the prevailing political narratives at that time. There was no talk about division along religious or caste lines. Instead, the message of hope that was offered then was that the AAP is in politics to change the narrative and that of the politicians. Communalism or crony capitalism was not on the agenda. Instead, the focus was on "development" and to provide cheaper power and ample water supply to the people of Delhi.

At that time, this mandate was only based on "hope" because back in 2015, the AAP had no prior record in Indian politics. Fast forward it to 2019 and the story is quite different now. Just how different will be dealt in detail later in this piece. The reason why the AAP chose to speak about "development" and aimed to provide basic amenities to the people is simple. Its focus on these issues isn't one of "obsession" or "identity." On the contrary, AAP's belief is that most Delhiites, and for that matter most Indians, do not care as much about what makes them different but what can take them and their children forward. It's an aspirational view of politics that speaks to not only what it can be about but also



how a commitment to this basic principle can help the citizens move forward.

On the other hand, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has made "Pakistan" its main focus area. Party spokespersons speak little or do not even talk about development. But if one were to ask them about Pakistan, they can write a thesis about our neighbour. This is why BJP leaders have little or no idea about how to improve the state of education or to provide cheap electricity. The BJP's agenda is to focus on what divides us. Differences abound among Indians; we have different religions, eating habits, climates, spices and different colours. But just because we have differences doesn't mean that we must be divided.

Our greatest asset lies in "diversity" and Delhi is a microcosm of it where citizens from all across the country have come together to make it their home. I believe that as Indians, we are in unison about at least one thing: We want our children to see a better India than what we have seen until now. Citizens want affordable electricity, a corruption-free Government, good roads and an empowering education system. These formed the foundation of the AAP's 2019 slogan, *Kaam Pe Vote*.

While 2015 may have been an election about hope, in 2020, the AAP has asked for

SINCE 2015, AAP HAS REDUCED TEACHER VACANCIES BY OVER 70 PER CENT. THE FACT THAT 1.4 LAKH CHILDREN IN THE CAPITAL HAVE BEEN SHIFTED FROM PRIVATE TO GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS IS A TESTIMONY TO THE FACT THAT PEOPLE APPRECIATED THE WORK DONE BY IT

votes only on the basis of the work done by it. This is a marked departure from the way its political opponents, who are obsessed with identities, have campaigned. The AAP is obsessed with "work." This is where Bill Parcells' quote comes into picture: "You are what your record says you are."

Since 2015, the AAP has reduced teacher vacancies by over 70 per cent. The party's focus, which is to improve Delhi's education system, has been recognised by the world. The fact that 1.4 lakh children in the national capital have been shifted from "private" to "Government" schools is a testimony to the fact that people have recognised and appreciated the work done by it. In the healthcare sector, too, the party has already set up 450 mohalla clinics till December 2019 and has served around two crore people in the city.

The power sector, too, has undergone a transformative change. Delhi is the only State where both domestic and commercial tariffs have reduced and where 24x7 electricity is a reality. Under previous Governments, an increase in tariffs was all but regular. To receive 24x7 electricity was a treasured rarity. Delhi is going the way most Indians want India to go. Its economy is growing and the AAP Government has managed a

surplus by reducing leakages and corruption at every level.

I can go on and on speaking about the efforts and results of the AAP in Delhi but this article is about something more than this. It's about how in 2010, the term, "India" was on everyone's lips. Great things were expected of us and the entire world looked upon the country to provide them "intellectual" and "human capital."

We were on the cover of international magazines as an emblem of hope. Now, we are on their covers as an example of a divided nation. A mixture of corruption, incompetence, entitlement from certain political parties and politics of hatred, division and communalism on the part of certain political parties has brought us to this unfortunate moment.

However, all is not lost. Amidst all this din, the fact is that Delhi stands as a calm outlier that has done actual work for the people. It has done so by leaving the task of talking to be done by those who are more adept at it. And when the AAP does speak, it's about *kaam* (work) not "Pakistan." The party believes in the phrase, "You are what you say." Does anybody not believe us? Have a look at our records and they will speak for themselves.

(The writer is a former IPS officer, a former MP and currently a member of the AAP)

SOUNDBITE

People in Bangladesh have taken several measures to mitigate the crisis. However, on our side of the border, there is very little awareness about climate change.



Author — Amitav Ghosh

Books have played a very big role in bringing me out of the darkest period of my life. I read copiously and indiscriminately. I read Russian writers like Dostoevsky.



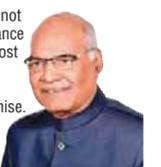
Supermodel-actor — Lisa Ray

India's broadening strategic horizons over the past two decades have resulted in a shift away from a passive foreign policy to one that advances its interests more vigorously.



US official — Alice Wells

Some of our voters do not understand the importance of their franchise. In most democratic nations, common people had to agitate to get the franchise.



President — Ram Nath Kovind

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Widening gap

Sir — Recently, a study conducted by Oxfam revealed that one per cent of the richest people in India holds more than four-fold the wealth of the poorest 70 per cent of the population. In the Global Hunger Index, India ranked a middling 55th in 2014. In 2019, the country ranked 102nd. Yet, we are supposed to be a socialist country. It is, thus, crucial for lawmakers to ensure that basic resources such as food reach the marginalised sections of society. The Government must strive to uplift the poorest of the poor to a level of self-sufficiency where no person is deprived of the most fundamental requisites — food, clean water, clothes and shelter.

Shivanshu K Srivastava
Lucknow

Be alert and prepared

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Another deadly virus" (January 23). The spectre of coronavirus has caught the attention of the entire world, especially China, where as many as 40 people have

Address key issues to remain relevant

It's high time that the Government realises that a slew of gigantic projects launched by it in the name of development has failed to impress the common man. In fact, the *aam aadmi* has now come to terms with the state of affairs of the economy, which has shown little or no signs of recovery despite the tall claims made by the Government. The country is passing through harrowing times and the Modi *sarkar* is in no mood to even accept the stark reality. With the prices of almost all essential food items skyrocketing, citizens are not mistaken to feel that they have been let down by the Government.

With inflation and unemployment being the true indicators of the deteriorating economic situation, it is but natural for the people to be bothered. Surprisingly, in contrast to the popularity that Prime Minister Narendra Modi presumes he is enjoying among the masses, the agenda pursued by him so far has been anti-people. In an apparent bid to assert its will over the nation, the Government has diverted the attention of the people from pressing issues to dwell on debates on the controversial Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). Here, too, it has not yet clarified all doubts. Rather, its statements have led to more confusion. It has by now become evident that if matters of national importance are dealt with bla-



tantly, as the Central Government has done with CAA, there will be some repercussions. The combined stance taken by various State Governments and a slew of petitions filed against it in the Supreme Court provide a glimpse of what could happen if a decision is taken without consent. The primary duty of any Government is towards the people. But when the welfare programmes envisaged for the masses pale in comparison to the larger machinations, the nation is in for troubled times ahead.

Pachu Menon
Margao

are worrying but they do give us an opportunity to prepare for the next threat. In the light of this, India must take all precautionary measures to prevent the entry of coronavirus into our country.

TK Nandan
Chennai

Reduce food wastage

Sir — This refers to the shocking reports about 25,000 *rotis* (bread) being wasted daily in Delhi's Tihar jail as the prisoners do not take their full diet due to mental pressure. The report revealed that the situation is more prevalent among under-trial prisoners who form the majority of the inmates, while the convicted and death row prisoners have a better diet. The system must be modified. Meals can be cooked on an average basis rather than the prescribed diet to avoid such large-scale wastage of food, including *rotis*. Further steps can be taken to utilise the surplus *rotis* to produce biscuits.

Madhu Agrawal
Delhi

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Endless protests and their fallout

For any protest to last beyond a small fraction of sustainable time, it needs the support of sponsors. The challenge is in keeping it free from vested interests



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

There's a feeling of disquiet among segments of the cross section of a news-aware people across the country. They consume news either in print or television, which is dominated by private players. This has led to a situation where financiers view their broadcasting channel to be a surrogate of their own political, social and economic inclinations. This is a fact of life that is seldom flagged. By and large, the so-called public is unaware of the political slant of the promoters and protectors of the medium who carry the news. Hence, the distinction between facts, comments and commentary often becomes dubious. Comments parade as facts and commentary often becomes the explanation thereof. This makes the job of the reader — to understand what is actually happening — even more complex. The result is that rabble-rousing often gets mistaken for a vibrant democracy.

The current atmosphere of agitations for and against an issue has raised some fundamental questions. One of them is: How significant are street protests as a counterfoil of a dominant majority of parliamentarians, who in their wisdom, took a decision on a given topic? It is generally assumed that given the total voting population of the country, a parliamentarian represents approximately 16 to 17 lakh voters. No single demonstration ever approximates that number. What makes a demonstration great is the media coverage it receives and how for hours, certain shots can be repeated over and over again. That some people get animated and get prone to posture in an excitable manner is no secret. Thus, it is that process give a slant to a situation represented by a selection of facts. Repetition of this approach across more than one forum serves as a drumming up. It goes far beyond the wildest dreams of the sponsors of that limited agitation on the crossroads.

Brigades of two types of professionals then descend upon the location. On January 23, an aspiring leader-to-be descended with a mike on the crowd of protesters in Shaheen Bagh to encourage them. He promised that he would create 500 or better still, 5,000 more Shaheen Baghs across the country. The same day, while delivering a memorial lecture, a now retired VVIP lauded the very act of protest as something very encouraging. Whether it is encouraging or not is another matter. The bald truth remains that it raised several unanswered questions. For instance, protest is a desirable process in a democracy but the concurrent question is: What form should it take? How should the theme be chosen? What is the mode of protest? Is it disrupting the life of an average citizen, who is interested in nothing more than leading a normal, quiet and ordinary life? The questions are numerous but answers are few. At the end of the day, any protest that has to last beyond a small fraction of sustainable time needs the support of sponsors. Somebody has to promote it and that person would not do so without a vested interest.

Across world history, from Paris Commune to Bolshevik Revolution, lessons are easy to identify. The Paris Commune collapsed when organised sponsorship withdrew. Perhaps, there would have been no Bolshevik Revolution if the Germans had not smuggled Lennon into Czarist Russia. In such circumstances, serenading protest for the sake of it, especially by the young and distinguished professionals, who have no track record of having participated in a significant populist protest movement, can only be pandering to the gallery. Such episodes cannot be overlooked because they tend to feed upon themselves, get drummed up and projected. The ultimate spread effect cannot be a gain to anyone or any process. There are innumerable cases where protest movements have fizzled out because of the absence of a sustainable agenda. That, too, would be a tragedy because protests or any process should be an input to be more robust. The danger of throwing the baby in the bath water is too risky to sustain or even consider. It would have made sense if some leader of standing, credibility and past records made a headline by pointing out how protests can get out of hand.

Besides, there are ripple effects, too. Reports have it that a lady enumerator of a certain, totally a political social intervention, while dealing with a community of people of her own faith in Kota, was summoned back to the colony after she collected data of names and addresses. She was threatened not to use them. This kind of contagion is highly infectious. A little later, hundreds of miles away from Kota, a programme run in the aid of internet awareness by Google India and Tata Trust got into foul weather. The reason was that enumerators were asking for the names and addresses of the trainees. The upshot was that the programme, at the end of December 2019, was halted in all the five districts of West Bengal because the trainers faced trouble. Is this right?

(The writer is a well-known management consultant)

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

KEJRIWAL HAD PROMISED TO BUILD 500 SCHOOLS. FAR FROM BUILDING NEW ONES, THE CONDITION OF EXISTING ONES REMAINS IN SHAMBLES.
 —UNION MINISTER

AMIT SHAH



DON'T MAKE EDUCATION A PART OF YOUR DIRTY POLITICS. PLEASE TAKE OUT TIME AND COME WITH ME TO VISIT GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS.
 —DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

ARVIND KEJRIWAL



Listen to the teenage zealot

One does not have to buy into Greta Thunberg's apocalyptic angst to see that something has to be done on climate change. Changing to a cleaner energy future is a good thing in itself



PHILIP JOHNSTON

An unfamiliar white patina covered our lawn recently, something seldom seen any longer, certainly not here in the South: A frost. For the first time this year, I considered digging out my heavy coat from the depths of the cupboard but it wasn't really cold enough. Where have our winters gone? I miss them. No doubt having written those words, the country will freeze for the next month but there is no sign of anything remotely wintry in the long-term forecast anywhere in the country, not just in London. It is hard to recall an old-fashioned winter where it would snow at least two or three times between December and April.

This mild pattern is noticeable across the entire European continent and has been for some time now. In Moscow, the authorities sprayed fake snow around the city centre over the New Year to give the residents a sense of the season. The temperature in the Russian capital last week was 4°Celsius; usually it is -10°Celsius or lower.

I remember visiting Moscow in late January and it was -25°Celsius, with the River Moscow frozen so solid you could drive across it. They used to call it General Winter — weather so ghastly that it was an integral part of Russia's defences, repelling Napoleon and Hitler, among others. Now it's not even Lance-Corporal Slightly Chilly.

All the great eastern and central European cities — Berlin, Warsaw, Vienna and St Petersburg — are exceptionally mild, though winter could yet have a sting in the tail. The so-called Beast from the East that arrived late in the season a few years ago temporarily shocked us out of our complacency but it was relatively short-lived and not that exceptional in any case.

Mild Januaries are now the norm. We have a lovely old wooden toboggan that has hardly been put to use since the 1980s, which is the last time I can remember a succession of cold winters. Growing up in Kent in the 1960s and 1970s, heavy frosts and blizzards were an annual occurrence. Not now.

I am reluctant to attribute what might prove to be temporary weather glitches to long-term climate change but there is clearly something going on that cannot be ignored. We don't have to buy into the apocalyptic angst of Swedish environmental activist Greta Thunberg, on show again in Davos last week, to recognise that something has to be done.

Whether or not you are a sceptic about the impact of carbon dioxide on the climate or question man's involvement in producing the greenhouse gas, our energy future is a non-carbon one, like it or not. Virtually every Government across the world has committed to this as an overt aspect of public policy and those that haven't, like China or the US, have a rapidly growing green energy sector poised to exploit the move to a carbon-free future.

If US President Donald Trump wants to be remembered for anything other than being impeached, he would throw his weight behind it because it is happening anyway, even in his



own backyard. American greenhouse gas emissions are falling despite his commitment to fossil fuels.

Perhaps Trump would be persuadable if he were to recognise there is a hard-headed economic imperative here. He should listen to someone like Marco Alvera, an oil and gas CEO who understands what is going on and has ideas to address it.

At a conference in Venice at the weekend, he said we should commit to the one clean energy source that is plentiful, easy to transport and getting cheaper to produce. It is all around us, does not have to be drilled out of the ground in parts of the world favoured with the right geology and does not pollute the atmosphere. It is hydrogen, the most widespread element in the universe. Like many businesses reliant upon carbon-based energy, Alvera's Italian energy infrastructure company, Snam, has no long-term future unless it adapts because its pipelines, compressors and storage tanks will be useless as oil and gas come under pressure from state actors around the world. They can be used for hydrogen instead.

However, this is more than just a commercial calculation. Alvera has published a book compellingly setting out the case for Governments, manufacturers and investors to get behind hydrogen now before they head off down other less-promising blind alleys.

Hydrogen can be burned to drive a turbine, can be piped into homes for boilers, cookers and air conditioners and converted into electricity using a fuel cell to power a car or a lorry. Unlike wind and solar power, it is easily stored and can generate the intense heat needed by industrial processes including manufacturing steel and cement. The only waste



“HYDROGEN CAN BE BURNED TO DRIVE A TURBINE, CAN BE PIPED INTO HOMES FOR BOILERS, COOKERS AND AIR CONDITIONERS AND CONVERTED INTO ELECTRICITY USING A FUEL CELL TO POWER A CAR OR A LORRY. UNLIKE WIND AND SOLAR POWER, IT IS EASILY STORED AND CAN GENERATE THE INTENSE HEAT NEEDED BY INDUSTRIAL PROCESSES INCLUDING MANUFACTURING STEEL AND CEMENT”

product is water.

True, there is nothing new about the concept. Fuel cells were developed in the mid-19th century and some buses were running on hydrogen in Germany and Britain in the 1930s. There are cars today that have been converted to hydrogen but they are expensive and there is no infrastructure to support them. Manufacturers like Toyota are developing hydrogen cars with their Mirai range but few others are following suit. They should.

In the past, hydrogen has been too expensive relative to fossil fuels but that will change as new taxes are loaded onto coal and gas to meet carbon dioxide targets and the cost of renewable energy continues to fall. No one pretends the transition will be straightforward but if there's widespread adoption of the technology and the necessary infrastructure, it will become increasingly affordable.

This is a reasoned, not a hysterical, approach. Alvera likes to adapt the argument known as Pascal's wager to our climate change conundrum. The 17th century French philosopher and mathematician asked what we should do if we had to bet our lives on the existence of God. Pascal posited that the rational response was to behave as though he did exist because we have nothing much to lose if it turns out that he doesn't but risk eternal damnation if he does.

Climate change is the same. If Greta is right then the consequences of doing nothing are calamitous. But if she is wrong, changing to a cleaner energy future is a good thing in itself and can even generate growth and prosperity. You do not have to be a teenage zealot to see sense in that.

(Courtesy: The Telegraph)

Students of a feather

What makes a university campus Left wing or Right wing? Fact is, both try to mould the ideological orientation of the students. They are actually endangering the whole idea of free speech and critical thinking



NADEEM PARACHA

Across India, protests have erupted against the controversial Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) that was enacted in December last year. Even though the law is widely being deemed "anti-Muslim", many non-Muslim Indians, too, have participated in the protests. They see the law — passed by the Right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Government — as an attack on the country's Constitutional secularism, first established in 1950.

At the centre of the protests are thousands of university and college students. One of the most active campuses in this respect has been Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University

(JNU). On January 5 this year, at least 40 JNU students were admitted to the hospital with injuries. According to a January 6 report by the BBC, masked men and at least one woman, allegedly belonging to the student wings of Hindu nationalist parties, attacked students of the JNU and vandalised university property.

For decades, JNU has been one of India's most politicised campuses. It is often described as a hot-bed of radical Left-wing politics. According to a study of politics in JNU, published in the March 2018 edition of *Economic and Political Weekly*, Jean-Thomas Martelli and Khilaiq Parkar wrote that on 33 occasions, radical Left-wing student outfits have won JNU's student union elections.

Even though the student wings of the BJP and the paramilitary Hindu nationalist organisation the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) are also active there, only once have they won the presidential post in the university's union.

The university's union has

remained in the hands of Left-wing student groups and alliances due to what Martelli and Parkar say is JNU's "dominant anti-establishment discourse."

The BJP and RSS student wings have lamented that anti-Left politics is suppressed at the university. There are also, of course, universities and colleges in India where Right-wing student outfits are dominant and Left-wing student groups accuse them of repression.

So what makes a university campus Left wing or Right wing? Recently, in the US, conservative think-tanks, academics and student outfits accused their Left-wing counterparts of blatantly repressing free speech by disallowing conservative groups to operate on various campuses. They accused "radical" Left-wing professors of "indoctrinating" students in the name of liberalism and socialism, while, in fact, turning them into "Left-wing fascists."

Such allegations are not entirely unfounded. In their 2005 essay for a journal called *The Forum*,

researchers Stanley Rothman, S Robert Lichter and Neil Nevetti wrote that Left-wing "ideologically-based discrimination in academic advancement deserves serious consideration." Even many "moderate" commentators in the US have not hesitated in pointing out the proliferation of "political correctness", purportedly formulated on "Left-leaning" US campuses as the reason behind the off-campus "backlash" that eventually put Donald Trump in the White House.

But again, what makes a campus Left or Right wing? In February 2017, the American journalist Scott Jaschik (in an essay for *Inside Higher Ed*) analysed four studies conducted between 2007 and 2016. The studies concluded that faculty members of most American universities leaned Left. Professors thus play a major role in shaping the students' ideological orientation and biases.

I shall briefly discuss cases of some specific universities to elaborate this. Locally, between the early 1960s and 1970s, the Karachi University (KU) was seen as a

vibrant bastion of diverse student political activity. But a former founder of the erstwhile Pakistani Left-wing student outfit, the National Students Federation (NSF), Husain Naqi, and another NSF luminary, the late Meraj Muhammad Khan often accused the university's Vice Chancellor — from 1961 till 1971 — Dr Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi, of siding with Right-wing student groups to curb NSF's electoral influence in KU.

Naqi told *The News International* in June 2007 that NSF was popular among KU's students but Qureshi went the extra mile to change this. Therefore, by 1970, KU's student union had been won by the Right-wing Islami Jamiat Talaba (IJT) and NSF broke into various factions.

In 1968, KU had been active during the largely Left-wing movement against the Ayub Khan regime. But in 1977, it went the other way by becoming the epicentre of a Right-wing movement against the "socialist" ZA Bhutto Government. Of course, there is more to this than

just a faculty turning Right and influencing the students but after 1977, it became tough for Left-wing groups to operate at KU without being harassed. The results were tragic. Another example in this context is of Tehran University. In his book, *Democracy in Iran*, the sociologist Misagh Parsa wrote that between the 1950s and 1979, student politics in almost all major campuses in Iran, especially the Tehran University, was a mixture of Left and Right groups.

Most of these groups were opposed to the Iranian monarchy. According to Parsa, after the monarchy was toppled in 1979, the Iranian clergy, under Ayatollah Khomeini, attempted to oust its former anti-monarchy allies on the Left. Protests against many of Khomeini's prescribed "Islamic laws" erupted at the Tehran University.

In June 1980, Khomeini ordered a "cultural revolution" to eliminate all "Western," "anti-Islam" and Leftist influences from Iran's universities. Leftist students were physically attacked by pro-Khomeini groups

and faculty members suspected of being Leftists or liberal were expelled, replaced by teachers and professors sympathetic to Khomeini.

Commentators perturbed by the Left-Right "cultural wars" that have erupted on US campuses have insisted that when faculty members — both on the Right and the Left — try to mould the ideological orientation of the students, they are actually endangering the whole idea of free speech and critical thinking.

They are blocking young minds from intellectually engaging with those who may hold different opinions. That's why the young Indian Hindu nationalists from "Right-wing campuses" decided to use iron rods to engage with their left counterparts at JNU. And that's why, in November last year, Left-wing students at California's Berkeley University went on a rampage and refused to allow a speaker from the other side of the ideological divide to speak at the university. The casualties in both cases were free speech and basic democratic norms.

(Courtesy: The Dawn)

CAPSULE



Republic Day: Air India distributes 30K national flags among its passengers

NEW DELHI: The national carrier Air India celebrated the 71st Republic Day by distributing 30,000 Indian flags made of eco-friendly seed paper among its passengers at airports in metro cities and Srinagar on Sunday. The airlines also put up a big hoarding at the historic Lal Chowk in the heart of Srinagar to congratulate the people on Republic Day. It was the first Republic Day celebration in Srinagar after the abrogation of Article 370 provisions that gave special status to the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir. The handmade flags prepared by Sahariya tribals of Madhya Pradesh were distributed at the airports in Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai Kolkata, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Srinagar, said Air India spokesperson Dhananjay Kumar.



Six of top-10 cos lose Rs 81,148 cr in m-cap; RIL hit hard

NEW DELHI: Six of the 10 most valued Indian companies suffered a combined erosion of Rs 81,148 crore from their market capitalisation last week, with Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) taking the biggest knock. Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), HDFC Bank, HDFC, Kotak Mahindra Bank and ITC were the other bluechips which witnessed a drop in their market capitalisation (m-cap) for the week ended Friday, while HUL, ICICI Bank, Infosys and SBI finished on the gainers' side. The market valuation of RIL, the country's most valued firm, plunged Rs 37,369.7 crore to Rs 9,64,639.40 crore.



Sarovar Hotels to add 15 properties across India

NEW DELHI: Hospitality firm Sarovar Hotels and Resorts is looking to open 15 more properties across India by the end of this year, adding around 900 rooms to its portfolio as part of its expansion plans in the country, a top company official said. The company currently manages 85 hotels with 6,500 rooms in India and three locations overseas. "We are optimistic that we should cross the hundred mark this year. We plan to open 15 hotels across India by end of 2020," Sarovar Hotels and Resorts Managing Director Ajay K Bakaya told PTI.

GOYAL-AMAZON ROW

India should welcome investments, says UKIBC

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The Indian government is responsive to concerns expressed by businesses but needs to do more to attract investments into sectors such as e-commerce, the UK India Business Council (UKIBC) has said.

The comments from the lobby grouping come after there was a sharp criticism of Goyal for saying Amazon was not doing India a favour by the investment announcement. India's GDP growth is set to slow to a decadal low of 5 per cent for 2019-20 and all eyes are set on the strategy deployed by the government in the upcoming Budget.

Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos has said the e-commerce major will invest USD 1 billion (over Rs 7,000 crore) in digitising small and medium businesses in India.

Declining to comment specifically on the impact on investors because of Goyal's comments, UKIBC Chief Executive Officer Richard Heald told PTI here that the e-commerce sector has a tremendous potential, especially for the smaller businesses, who get



“I am a great fan of e-commerce and I think that e-commerce is misunderstood to a certain extent and it benefits the general public and those people who operate within the supply chain in ways that are not popularly understood”
—RICHARD HEALD
UKIBC Chief Executive Officer

a platform to sell their wares.

"I am a great fan of e-commerce and I think that e-commerce is misunderstood to a certain extent and it benefits the general public and those people who operate within the supply chain in ways that are not popularly understood," he said.

Heald said Mukesh Ambani-promoted RIL also has plans to enter the e-commerce segment through a different business model and one can have her own preferences on business models.

"Encouraging investments into India is important, encouraging the e-commerce

sector is important because it benefits small businesses disproportionately to large businesses," he said adding that British businesses may not be "startled" at the posturing.

India represents a large opportunity for the British businesses and even a slower 4.8 per cent GDP growth is much faster than what the UK or Europe is witnessing, he said.

When asked if the government is responsive in India, he answered in the affirmative and said, "What I found striking (in conversations with government officials) was that increasingly, it is a two-way dialogue. The Indian government wants to understand and engage, it wants to understand what the operating issues are and get those addressed, positives as well as negatives."

Welcoming the cut in corporate taxes, Heald advocated a relaxation in fiscal deficit targets in the upcoming Budget and added that the UKIBC will keenly watch the narrative on growth being set by the Indian government and look for specific measures on rural poverty alleviation and infrastructure spends.

Industry tells FM: Address policy issues stalling growth

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Leading industry body Indian Auto LPG Coalition has sought GST reduction on Auto LPG as well as on conversion kits for gaseous fuels to promote the adoption of clean automotive fuels.

LPG used as fuel in automobiles or Auto LPG, which is among the cleanest alternative fuels with a Global Warming Potential of 'zero' is currently taxed at 18 per cent GST. Also, the GST rates on Auto LPG/CNG conversion kits stand at a prohibitive 2 per cent, IAC said.

High GST rates on clean fuels and conversions kits are in complete variance to the government's stated green mobility push, it said in a statement.

"We seek the attention of Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman towards the imminent need for devising friendly policies to allow rapid growth of environment-friendly transport fuels such as Auto LPG. Auto LPG which is being promoted actively by governments across the world is facing discriminatory policies in India. It is taxed at a high GST slab of 18 per cent. Similarly, conversion kits for auto LPG and CNG are placed at the highest slab of 28 per cent which is meant for either luxury goods or demerit items like tobacco products,"



High GST rates on clean fuels and conversions kits are in complete variance to the government's stated green mobility push, it said in a statement.

said Suyash Gupta, Director General, Indian Auto LPG Coalition (IAC).

IAC said LPG is the most widely used alternative fuel in the world, with a proven track record of improvement in air quality.

The global consumption of Auto LPG has risen by over 40 per cent over the past 10 years, fuelled by environmental concerns. Among the key nations that have successfully adopted this green fuel for their transportation requirements are South Korea, Turkey, Poland,

Japan, Australia, Italy, Mexico and Russia.

The association said even as India plans a long-term shift to electric vehicles, it is missing out the environmental benefits that can be gained by adopting low hanging fruits like Auto LPG. Investing in a wider basket of clean alternative transport fuels that are more readily available can bring about an immediate improvement in air quality unlike EVs that are still a decade away from becoming commercially viable.



Gadkari: 22 expressways, green corridors to be built at Rs 3 lakh-crore

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government plans to complete three of the 22 expressways and green corridors in the next three years, including the flagship Delhi Mumbai Expressway being built at a new alignment, Union minister Nitin Gadkari has said.

These 22 projects comprising 7,500 km of greenfield expressways and corridors are planned to be completed by FY25 at a cost of Rs 3.10 lakh crore.

"We will complete the flagship Delhi Mumbai Express Highway in the next three years. The work will be done in 51 packages and work has already been started on 18. This will be India's longest expressway at 1,320 km and will reduce travel time between Delhi and Mumbai from 24 hours to 13 hours," the road transport and highways minister said.

Of the projects, six are 2,250 km expressways to be built at a cost of Rs 1.45 lakh crore.

These 22 projects comprising 7,500 km of greenfield expressways and corridors are planned to be completed by FY25 at a cost of Rs 3.10 lakh crore

The remaining 16 are greenfield corridors, including 5,250 km projects to be constructed at a cost of Rs 1.65 lakh crore

Besides Delhi Mumbai Expressway, the minister said the trans-Rajasthan and trans-Haryana projects will be completed within the next three years.

About Delhi Mumbai Expressway, he said greenfield alignment has been selected to avoid habitation and optimise cost of land acquisition.

US-China deal effect: FPIs pour in Rs 1,624 cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Foreign portfolio investors (FPI) have infused a net sum of Rs 1,624 crore into the Indian capital markets in January so far, buoyed by the signing of the first phase of the US-China trade deal.

As per latest depositories data, FPIs invested a net Rs 13,304 crore in equities and withdrew a net Rs 11,680 crore from the debt segment between January 1-24. This translates into a total net inflow of Rs 1,624 crore.

"After starting the year on a muted note, investments from FPIs has picked up pace and most of that flows came after US and China signed a trade deal putting the trade war between them on a pause," said Himanshu Srivastava, senior analyst manager research at



Morningstar Investment Adviser India.

The latest investments came despite challenges such as enhanced geopolitical tension between the US and Iran and dwindling domestic economic growth, Srivastava noted.

On the domestic front, "there are some signs of India shaking away the slowdown with business activity picking

up and this is reflecting in the investments coming into equities. Besides, after the limit to which FPIs can invest in debt instruments has been increased, more inflows into the debt category can be expected," said Harsh Jain, co-founder and COO at Groww.

The Reserve Bank of India on Thursday raised the investment limit for FPIs in government and corporate bonds, a move that is likely to bring in more foreign funds in the country.

According to the current norms, short-term investments by an FPI should not exceed 20 per cent of the total investment of that FPI in either central government securities (including treasury bills) or state

FPIs invested a net Rs 13,304 crore in equities and withdrew a net Rs 11,680 crore from the debt segment between January 1-24. This translates into a total net inflow of Rs 1,624 crore. The latest investments came despite challenges such as geopolitical tension between the US and Iran and dwindling domestic economic growth

development loans. The same norms are applicable on investments in corporate bonds.

The short-term investment limit has now been increased from 20 per cent to 30 per cent in both the cases, the RBI said in a circular.

Additionally, the RBI has also made relaxation in the voluntary retention route (VRR) for FPI investments in debt. The investment cap through VRR has been doubled to Rs 1.5 lakh crore, the RBI said in another circular.

Going forward, "all eyes will now be on the upcoming Budget to get further cues. This will play major role in terms of shaping up the investment views of foreign investors and decision to invest in the Indian equity markets," Srivastava added.

MG Motor eyes increasing production of SUV Hector

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

MG Motor India plans to increase production of its SUV Hector by around 30 per cent after BS-VI emission norms come into effect from April 1, according to a senior company official.

The company, which last week launched the ZS EV, is also set to review plans for a sub-Rs 10 lakh electric vehicle (EV) considering the robust response to its pure electric SUV.

"In case of Hector we are planning for another ramp up and hopefully that should happen in two-three months' time," MG Motor India President and MD Rajeev Chaba told PTI.

NCLAT sets asides insolvency proceedings against Raheja Developers

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Providing a major relief to Raheja Developers, the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) has set aside the insolvency proceedings against the NCR-based real estate firm and handed over the management of the company back to its board of directors.

Earlier, on August 20 last year, the Delhi-based principal bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) had directed to initiate insolvency proceedings against the company over the plea filed by one of its flat buyers citing delay in the project and appointed an interim resolution professional.

Setting aside it, a three-member NCLAT bench head-



ing the possession," said the NCLAT.

The NCLAT also questioned the role of its flat buyers and observed that they moved the NCLT to initiate insolvency proceedings against the company "fraudulently with malicious intents".

The NCLAT said that Raheja Developers had offered possession of flats to the buyers but they wanted refund of the amount with more interest and refused to take the actual amount in terms of flat buyer's agreement.

"We have no other option but to set aside the impugned order dated August 20, 2019. The application preferred by 1st and 2nd respondents under Section 7 of the I&B Code is dismissed," said the NCLAT.



Gold imports dip 6.77 pc during April-Dec 2019

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Gold imports, which have a bearing on the current account deficit (CAD), fell 6.77 per cent to USD 23 billion during the April-December period of the current financial year, according data from the commerce ministry.

Imports of the yellow metal stood at USD 24.73 billion in the corresponding period of 2018-19.

The decline in gold imports has helped in narrowing the country's trade deficit to USD 118 billion during the period, against USD 148.23 billion a year ago.

Reliance's partnership with S Aramco not retreat from energy biz

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Reliance Industries' partnership with Saudi Aramco for its USD 75 billion oil-to-chemicals business signals expansion rather than retreat as growth opportunities are expected to boost the petrochemical and refining vertical, market analyst firm Bernstein said.

Billionaire Mukesh Ambani had in August last year announced initial agreements to sell a 20 per cent stake in the oil-to-chemical business to the Saudi national oil company. Also, a 49 per cent interest in fuel retailing business was sold to UK's BP plc for Rs 7,000 crore.

"Reliance has pivoted away from energy to the new economy. But energy still accounts for 64 per cent of EBITDA. While RIL has divested stakes to BP and Aramco, we expect RIL to grow their petrochemical and refining business given



the secular growth opportunities," it said in a report.

Stating that India has significant secular expansion (that is, unaffected by short-term trends) ahead in refined prod-

ucts and petrochemicals, it said with the lowest demand per capita of 1.3 barrels per person, demand for refined products will grow by 5 million barrels per day over the next two

decades, more than any other major market.

Ethylene demand could grow ten-fold from 5kg per person per annum to 50-60kg pp/pa as consumer demand rises.

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"Reliance partnership with Aramco and BP signals expansion ahead rather than retreat," Bernstein said. "Aramco's investment is to secure market access and growth. While refining is a cash cow for the business, we believe that there are significant opportunities for petrochemical expansion ahead given demand growth and synergies with refining."

Fuels marketing will be significantly expanded given the partnership with BP and plans for 5,500 stations, it said.

Ambani had in August last year announced that the deal with Aramco will close by March 2020 but it is now expected to close within the current calendar year.

Refining and petrochemicals are a cash cow for Reliance. "But to think of this as an ex-growth part of the business would be a mistake. In India, there is strong secular demand growth ahead. India is estimated to be the fastest growing refined fuels market over the next 20 years (faster than

China) and will also one of the fastest growing markets for petrochemicals given the per capita demand which will grow with the GDP," it said.

As part of the August deal, Saudi Aramco will supply 500,000 barrels per day of crude on a long-term basis to RIL's Jamnagar refinery complex (40 per cent of the refining capacity).

"While bears will argue that Reliance is stepping away from energy to digital, we see this deal as an opportunity to expand the downstream business in India with a solid partnership. For Aramco, the deal provides direct access to what is widely expected to be the fastest growing refined oil product market over the next 20 years," it said. "For Reliance, it provides cash to fund expansion of their digital business and further expansion of downstream capacity with an experienced partner."

Govt likely to soon allow Indian cos to list overseas

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government is likely to soon decide on permitting Indian companies to list their equity shares overseas, according to an official.

Apart from providing an additional fund raising avenue for the corporates looking to expand and boost their business activities, overseas listing of shares would also help in bringing more capital into the country.

The official said many companies are interested in listing their equity shares in foreign countries. Currently, quite a few Indian companies have American Depository Receipts (ADRs) that are traded in the US.

ANUSHKA PRADEEP speaks to Adoor Gopalakrishnan, one of the pioneers of the new-wave in Malayalam cinema, about the training required to be a filmmaker, his journey into movies and more

UNDERSTANDING AN AUTEUR'S JOURNEY

Adoor Gopalakrishnan — one of the most recognised Indian film directors across the world, ranking alongside stalwarts of Satyajit Ray and Mrinal Sen — on the recent drift in Indian cinema towards innovative concepts, away from what is consumed through mainstream commercial movies, said, "I usually prefer to not watch mainstream cinema as the process of sitting through these movies is something which I honestly find to be a gruesome process. However, it is good to see that there are young people nowadays who are trying to make movies which stand out and that is most welcome. They are different

from what commercial cinema has been churning out so far. This shows promise in the next generation."

"I don't make standard films. I make films the way I like it. The technique, story and the narrative I use are different each time." Adoor spoke about his method and process of making a movie. Adoor Gopalakrishnan has directed 12 films in his career spanning more than 50 years. Each of which has received several accolades on various national and international platforms. He is the recipient of the Padma Shri Award in 1984 and Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 2004.

While there are so many upcoming directors working on films without having to go to a film school, Adoor Gopalakrishnan was of the opinion that a formal education in filmmaking is important.

In an exclusive with *The Pioneer*, Adoor Gopalakrishnan said, "One should know their medium. Formal education in the subject is important for a filmmaker is what I believe. Even if a director has a basic understanding about the movie he wishes to make, there will still be people under him

who know the subject and it is they, who would end up creating the movie for him. Hence if the director doesn't know his subject the director receives credit for something that cannot be called his original work."

But Adoor Gopalakrishnan also focussed on the kind of learning that comes from studying cinema by just watching them. He gives the example of Bengali filmmaker Satyajit Ray as someone who made it without any formal training.

It is a known fact that filmmaking and other such career prospects in arts were mostly frowned upon during his younger days but Adoor had the support he needed. "Fortunately I was born into a family of artists. They were particularly patrons of Kathakali for generations and sponsored Kathakali troops known as the Kathakali Yogam. Hence when I showed interest in filmmaking, my family members were equally enthusiastic. While one of my uncles on my father's side of the family was an artist another was a painter and a sculptor, who had both been tutored under the guidance of Rama Varma, the son of the celebrated



A still from Adoor Gopalakrishnan's movie, Pinneyum (Once Again)

artist Ravi Varma. Rama Varma had an art school in Mavelikkera. My mother's eldest brother was a connoisseur of art. I joined the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) in 1962. By the time I joined I had dabbled in writing, directing and acting in theatre," Adoor said and added that his role model is G. Shankara Pillai who he met during his time in theatre.

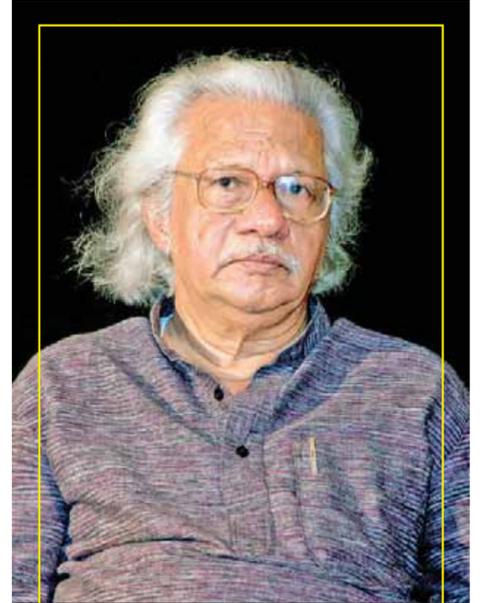
So what does it take to be cast in a movie directed by Adoor Gopalakrishnan? "I

don't even do screen tests. I look at a person and decide whether I find them fit for a particular role or not. I've worked with both well known and experienced actors just as much as I have worked with new actors who may not even have an idea about acting and the film-making process," Adoor Gopalakrishnan said.

"Several actors I picked to star in my movies eventually made it big in the industry. Abhirami, who was later nicknamed 'Adipoli

Abhirami' in Tamil industry, first starred in my film *Kathapurushan* and went to act alongside Kamal Hassan. Similar is the case with Narain who debuted in *Nizhalkuthu*, Sudheer who used to be a set boy earlier, Bharath Gopi who starred in *Kodiyettam*, or Karamana Janardanan Nair among others."

When asked about which movie of his he holds dear, he says, "All my movies hold the same amount of importance to me. They are all alike. I'm happy about each one of



"I was born into a family of artists. They were patrons particularly of Kathakali for generations and sponsored Kathakali troops known as the Kathakali Yogam. Hence when I showed interest in filmmaking, my family members were equally enthusiastic

ADOOR GOPALAKRISHNAN
 FILMMAKER

them. I don't make many films but the ones I do work on, I make sure I spend enough time on it and I don't regret anything about any of the films I made as I never compromised on the quality

of the content." "What I believe are my future prospects is something I can't really tell you as even I am clueless about my future, just as much as you are," he concluded with a laugh.

Hyderabad-based Akhil Reddy created various platforms and initiatives to help bring out the hidden artist inside each individual through right training, finds V SATEESH REDDY



A journey of THOUSAND STEPS

The 11th edition of the Republic Ride of LifeCyclul in association with Synchrony was a great success. The event was fully digitalised with the introduction of the LifeCyclul app. The app can connect interested participants across the globe to take part in the ride irrespective of their location and time zone. People can simply download the LifeCyclul app, enroll and start the Republic journey from anywhere in the world. The Republic Ride is a yearly fixture in Hyderabad's cycling calendar and has seen around 50,000 cyclists participate during the past 11 years.

The event was held at Pala Pitta Cycling Park Gachibowli, Hyderabad and was attended by Andy Ponneri, Senior Vice-President and Business Leader-India, Synchrony,

and Kameswari Gangadharabhatla, Vice-President, Human Resources, Deenanath Harapanahalli, CEO LifeCyclul along with other senior leaders from various corporations who flagged off the ride which saw the participation of more than 2,000 amateur and pro cyclists. Speaking on the occasion Andy Ponneri said, "The annual Republic Ride has helped encourage cycling in Hyderabad. We are happy to participate and were amazed to see such an overwhelming response. It's a wonderful and healthy way of celebrating our Republic Day together. I thank all the participants and enthusiastic citizens who came to cheer on the riders. To help drive a culture of wellness, we are pleased to support fitness programs like these that promote a healthy lifestyle."



PROVIDING A CANVAS FOR ARTISTS

Akhil Reddy Kommid, founder of Dabaki platform, is inspired by various cultures and art forms from around the world. A photographer and documentary filmmaker by profession, he also has the experience of working on projects to boost local tourism funded by the state and the central governments. He founded Dabaki as a common platform for artists from all disciplines to come together and collaborate. "Dabaki is a multi-disciplinary artist engagement platform dedicated to content creation and art produc-

tion. Dabaki is the existential journey through which we constantly discover answers to three questions — where are you from, what feeds your soul and where are we going. We are helping artists from various states and background to work with other artists, which now is at 75, and perform their best," Akhil said.

He curates a programme called 'Heart Talks' through which artists narrate their journey through their work. In the recently concluded Hyderabad Literary Festival, Akhil held talks with various artists for literature lovers. "In Heart Talks, we take artists to a farmhouse and

they would stay there for three days. During this time, the artists work with senior artists to improve their art through panel discussions, workshops and more, and finally learn how to build their ideas into formative and substantial performances," said Akhil who added that the next edition of Heart Talks would be held from February 21 to 23.

Speaking to *The Pioneer*, Akhil says, "I learned photography at Rajan's School of Photography, Hyderabad. While working as a photographer and a documentary filmmaker, I realised that if you don't do mainstream work like covering weddings,



"We take artists to a farmhouse and they would stay for three days. During this time, the artists work with senior artists to improve their art through discussions and workshops, and finally learn how to build their ideas into something substantial

AKHIL REDDY KOMMIDI
 PHOTOGRAPHER, FILMMAKER

then we could not keep our passion alive. Hence, I had an event management firm called The Show which I managed for four years. I also worked for educational companies and curated programmes for high school students. As a photographer and a filmmaker who has

gone through all these experiences, I can understand the plight of an artist."

Akhil also guides artists to come out of their comfort zone and work while travelling. As part of one of his assignments, he had travelled to Cambodia to document the lives of farmers. Akhil

said, "Travel takes artists out of their comfort zone and helps them try something innovative. I went to Cambodia alone to document the lives of farmers there and to find out how they manage their agriculture even with sudden climate changes. I was impressed with their techniques and later followed it with another trip to Cambodia where I took many artists along with me. That trip was a success."

Recently, Akhil and team travelled to the Nilgiris. "Our aim behind the Nilgiris trip was to make the artists interact with nature and the people there and share their stories through art. We had documented our work there. We will be releasing it soon as a web series titled *Art In Motion*," said Akhil and added that he has plans to go to the Northeast next because he feels that many are not aware of the culture and traditions of that region.

what's brewing?

CITY GUIDE

EVENTS

ANNUAL BELLYDANCE RECITAL

The students of Payal's Dance Academy bring the second edition of the Annual Bellydance Recital. Special guest performances include other dance styles like Ballet, Afro and Contemporary by some of the best dancers of Hyderabad. The dance Recital shall be held at Phoenix Arena on February 2 at 7 pm.



THE ACT OF KILLING

Cinephiles Film Club is screening a film The Act of Killing on January 29 at Lamakaan from 7.30 pm. Filmmakers expose horrifying mass executions of accused communists in Indonesia and those who are celebrated in their country for perpetrating the crime.



DRAUPADI - A DANCE DRAMA



Draupadi is a dance drama in Kuchipudi format, with Sravya Manasa playing the lead role as Draupadi. It deals with the less familiar phases of Draupadi's life along with her inclination towards Karana. The play shall be held at Phoenix Arena on February 1 at 7 pm.

GET YOUR EVENT LISTED: To get your events listed, send your details along with a poster and contact number to pioneer.features@gmail.com

PARTY



GRAND INAUGURAL
Magnets infra services recently announced the launch of two new projects, Magnets Charmant at Shadnagar and Magnets Magnifique at Aler. The event was inaugurated by actress Tamanna Bhatia at star hotel. Musical performances by Tollywood singers Sri Krishna, Lipsika and Anudeep Dev, were organised to entertain the guests.

Photos by SV Chary



PATRIOTIC SPIRIT

On the occasion of Republic Day, members of the Queens Lounge Ladies Club held a grand event at A la Liberty Banjara hills. The members thoroughly enjoyed themselves at the gathering.

FUN

ARCHIE

CALVIN AND HOBBS

GARFIELD

REALITY CHECK

CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20

NANCY

SUDOKU

2	3	9						
1			2	7				
	8	6			3			
				3	7	5		
7		1	8		2			
5	6	2						
		4			6	5		
		1	5				4	
				6	9	3		

Yesterday's solution

2	4	9	6	3	7	1	8	5
3	7	1	8	2	5	9	4	6
8	5	6	4	9	1	7	2	3
9	6	3	2	8	4	5	7	1
5	1	8	7	6	3	4	9	2
4	2	7	5	1	9	6	3	8
1	9	4	3	5	8	2	6	7
7	3	2	1	4	6	8	5	9
6	8	5	9	7	2	3	1	4

Rules

- Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9) exactly once.
- The sum of all numbers in any row or column must equal 45.

ACROSS

- A tank for live fish
- Mix this with yellow to get green
- Stopped doing something
- A pale purple colour
- A crown-wearing woman
- A female relation
- Workers sit at these in offices
- Hot coals left after a fire
- A list of restaurant meals
- People who work in classrooms

DOWN

- An emergency vehicle
- Normal
- A feeling that makes you want to scratch
- Check the length of
- A female sheep
- Large extinct animals
- Very old
- A person from Sweden
- The largest continent
- Adult males

SOLUTION

L	W	S	S	S
B	N	S	A	W
R	I	G	H	P
E	O	T	I	C
A	P	P	R	O
K	N	Y	E	E
F	I	R	S	T
A	A	O	P	A
S	T	R	A	B
T	E	N	N	S



Film with RAVI TEJA an action-thriller: RAMESH VARMA



Ramesh Varma wants to make it big on the screen with Ravi Teja. NAGARAJ GOUD finds out what the director has in store for his next film with *Mass Maharaja*

After bouncing back with *Rakshasudu* last year, filmmaker Ramesh Varma has now landed a Ravi Teja film. Although buzz about the same has been doing rounds for past two weeks, the project was officially announced on Ravi Teja's birthday on Sunday. Speaking exclusively to *The Pioneer*, Ramesh scoffed reports that the film is another remake for him after *Rakshasudu*. "It's an original screenplay falling under the action-thriller

genre. I've shared the plot line with Ravi Teja garu last October and he was impressed with it. He gave us the go-ahead to fully develop it. Fifteen days ago, me and my team, gave him a detailed narration for three-and-half hours and he was sold. We wanted to announce the project next month but since Sunday is his birthday, we've decided to advance our plans and greet him this way," the director said. The director is planning to take the film to floors in February-end or

in early March, while the official muhurat will be held early next month. "Around 50 per cent of it will be shot in Hyderabad, while the other half will be filmed across Azerbaijan. It will feature will two heroines. While one actor will have a prominent role, the other will last around for 20 minutes on screen. The casting process is on," he added.

Ramesh had earlier teamed up with Ravi Teja for *Veera* (2011), which was an above average grosser. On small screen though it continues to rake in good TRPs whenever it is telecast. "Veera was an okay film overall but I didn't get a good name out of it. The protagonist of the film was not my kind of hero. I had to do the film because of certain situations. I've just delivered a hit in the form of *Raid* and felt doing a film with Ravi Teja will keep me moving forward. The stability that I have today, I didn't possess it back then. Veera could've been done by any other hero than Ravi Teja but this new film of mine needs only him," he stated.

The director is collaborating with educationalist Koneru Satyanarayana again after *Rakshasudu* for the untitled film. On his choice of producer, Ramesh said, "I did get many offers last year but I had a great time working with Satyanarayana garu on *Rakshasudu* and felt the need to continue my association with him again. He is a good producer. There is Havish as well in the back-end," he concluded.



Trivikram's punch to *O Pitta Katha*

Filmmaker Trivikram Srinivas, who is basking in the afterglow of *Ala Vaikunthapuramlo*, has unveiled the title of production house Bhavya Creations' next venture in Hyderabad on Sunday. Featuring Viswam, Sanjay Rao, Nithya Shetty and Brahmaji in lead roles, the film, titled *O Pitta*

Katha, has been directed by debutant M. Chandu. The film is a comedy thriller and its shooting has been wrapped up.

Trivikram said, "I found the story interesting. When the director told me about the title options, I evinced my interest on *O Pitta Katha*. I suggested running it with a caption 'it's a long story'. My contribution ended there itself. The title

is good and I hope people will connect to it."

Termining the film as a screenplay-driven film, director Chandu added, "The story unfolds in a village in a realistic ways. On one hand it will have the audience in the theatres rolling with laughter, on the other it will keep them glued to their seats with suspense. The twists will add to the thrills."

PRABHAS' next to release this year itself



When veteran actor-producer Krishnam Raju recently announced that his next production with nephew Prabhas will mostly likely release during this year-end or in the summer of 2021, the young rebel star fans were dejected. Sensing the dejection among fans, it seems that the actor has decided to release his film, directed by Jil fame Radha Krishna, a little before the year-end. With the third schedule, which started on January 17 completed on Saturday, the makers want to amp up the proceedings now. "The next schedule will start in Hyderabad from February 7, post which the unit will embark on lengthy schedules to finish the film at the earliest. Beginning April, the Austria schedule of 60 to 75 days will wrap up the

THE LOVE STORY WILL BE SIMULTANEOUSLY MADE IN TELUGU, TAMIL AND HINDI

principle shoot, leaving the unit to film some songs. The release date will be decided once *RRR* makers officially confirm their date first. Right now, they are eyeing a date in October. Also, the makers have made up their mind to regularly update about the film's development in view of mounting pressure from Prabhas fans," said a source.

We also hear that to avoid leaks about the actor's look and production design; the makers have heightened security measures. "More than 20 sets replicating Europe have been erected in prominent studios of Hyderabad and in Tellapur and the makers are in no mood to have any leaks," added the source.

Being made simultaneously in Telugu, Tamil and Hindi, the film, a love story, is a joint production venture between Gopi Krishna Movies and UV Creations.

Mahasamudram to be a bilingual



The *Pioneer* was the first (on December 28) to inform you that director Ajay Bhupathi has got the nod from Sharwanand and Samantha to front his second film *Mahasamudram*. To this end, the latest we hear is that there

is a high probability for the film to be shot in Tamil as well. "It was Sharwa who first put forward the proposal of shooting in it Tamil besides Telugu as he felt that the film's content and backdrop can resonate with Tamil audience as well. He has a sizeable following there and the fact that his next with Tamil production house Dream Warrior Pictures is a Telugu-Tamil bilingual meant that he wants to consolidate his Tamil market. Plus, there is Samantha who is as popular in Tamil as she is in Telugu. Bhupathi couldn't agree more. However, a lot depends on who will play the second hero — a cop — besides Sharwanand. Names like Vijay Sethupathi, Atharva Murali and Bobby Simha are attached to it," informed a highly-placed source close to the unit.

Major portions of *Mahasamudram*, a love story set in the backdrop of smuggling, will be shot in Visakhapatnam. Sithara Entertainments is tipped to produce the project, while Chaitan Bharadwaj is already on board to render music. It will move to floors mostly in May. — NG

AND NOW, SHRIYA JOINS *RRR*

The cast of S.S. Rajamouli's ambitious *RRR* has grown bigger. *The Pioneer* has exclusively learnt that Shriya Saran is on board to play a key supporting role in the film. What's more is that the Delhi beauty has already joined the sets in Vikarabad.

"Shriya is cast opposite Ajay Devgn in the film. Soon after the *Singham* star landed in Hyderabad last week, the actress followed suit. They will be seen as husband-wife in the film and portions involving them as a young pair are being shot at in Vikarabad forests by Rajamouli as we speak. Besides her acting chops, the fact that Shriya is a notable figure in Hindi belt has sealed the deal for her," said a well-placed source who further added that shoot will go on in Vikarabad for another five to six days, post which the setting will shift to other sets in Hyderabad.

RRR, which is riding high on expectations, already sees an impressive roster of prominent supporting actors such as Samuthirakani, Satyadev and Rahul Ramakrishna. The source further added that Makrand Deshpande is also playing a small role.

Set in early 1920s, the film, a production venture of DVV Danayya, is a fictional story based on two real-life heroes and freedom fighters — Alluri Seetharama Raju and Komaram Bheem. Tarak is playing the younger Bheem, with English actress Olivia Morris paired alongside him, while Charan will be seen as younger Ramaraju, with Alia Bhatt as his love interest. — NG



Walk in Eden Park

Indian bowlers trap Kiwis in slow track and win 2nd T20 by 7 wickets to go 2-0 up in five-match series

PTI ■ AUCKLAND

India tightened their grip on the T20 series with a seven-wicket drubbing of New Zealand in the second match after their bowlers stifled the hosts on a pocket-sized Eden Park on Sunday.

Boasting a formidable batting line-up, chasing 133 proved to be a cakewalk for the visitors on a pitch that was slightly on the slower side.

The very short boundary ensured the match ended with as many as 15 balls to spare.

The trio of Ravindra Jadeja, Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami allowed no respite to Kane Williamson's team after New Zealand surprisingly chose to bat, restricting them to 132 for five.

K L Rahul then scored 57 not out off 50 balls while Shreyas Iyer scored 44 off 33 balls, the duo adding 86 runs for the third wicket and after Rohit Sharma's twin failure.

Tim Southee took 2-20 as India had to do without major contributions from both Sharma and skipper Virat Kohli.

Sharma (8) was out caught at slip in the first over off Southee. New Zealand's new ball bowlers were compact and didn't let the Indian top order get away unlike the first T20 on Friday.

Even so, Rahul and Kohli added 31 runs for the second wicket. The latter then was caught behind off Southee in the sixth over with Tim Seifert taking a brilliant diving catch.

Kohli scored 11 off 12 balls and the wicket's slow nature was starting to impact proceedings. New Zealand held back their spinners too, but Rahul-Iyer settled down in this passage of play.

They rotated strike well and added 50 in 55 balls by minimising risks. Rahul brought up his 11th T20I half-century off 43 balls.

Couldn't play like first game as pitch was different: Rahul

AUCKLAND: Indian batsman K L Rahul on Sunday said he had to change his approach in the second T20I due to the slightly slow nature of the pitch at Eden Park.

Rahul, who had smashed 56 off 27 balls to set up India's six wicket win in the first T20I, produced an unbeaten 50-ball 57 to anchor the visitors' seven-wicket victory in the second game.

The 27-year-old said he had to make some changes to his game as the pitch was different than the one India played during the opening match.

"Obviously different circumstances, the target was different, the pitch was a little different from what we played on a couple of days ago. So I knew I couldn't play the same way I played a couple days ago," said Rahul, who was adjudged the *Man of the Match*.

Overall, Rahul hit three fours and two sixes, while Iyer hit one four and three sixes. India crossed 100 in the 15th over after which Iyer cut loose to approach the finish line. He fell just prior, holing out off Ish Sodhi (1-33).

But Rahul stuck around while Shivam Dube finished the job with a six over midwicket. This was after Indian bowlers made good use of a slower pitch.

Opting to bat, the Black Caps couldn't generate enough momentum in the middle overs and finished with a sub-par total.

Martin Guptill top-scored with 33 off 20 balls, while Tim Seifert was unbeaten on 33 not out off 26 balls.

Guptill and Colin Munro (26) provided a measured start to New Zealand putting on 48

of the Match.

"I had a different responsibility today. We lost our senior players Rohit and Virat early so I had to stay in there and make sure I finish the game."

Rahul, who has been in sizzling form in white ball format, said he has improved in his shot selection and reading of the game.

"I think the understanding of my game and how I'm reading the situation and reading the game has gotten better for me. That's helped me be more consistent and I've always put the team ahead and thought about what the team requires at that moment," he said.

"More often than not I've come up with the right shots and right answers so that's been the mantra for my success in the last several T20s." **PTI**

runs for the first wicket.

Surprisingly, India held back Jasprit Bumrah (1-21) as Shardul Thakur (1-21) and Mohammed Shami (0-22) bowled four overs in the power play. The tactic worked as Thakur got rid of Guptill at end of six overs.

India then used the slow nature of the used-wicket to put brakes on the New Zealand middle order. Wickets came at a regular interval as the Black Caps struggled to get the big shots out.

Yuzvendra Chahal (0-33) and Shivam Dube (1-16) combined well after the powerplay, while Ravindra Jadeja was the stand out bowler with figures of 2-18 from four overs.

Overall, India also raised their fielding effort barring a bizarre drop from Virat Kohli late in the innings.



KL Rahul raises his bat after completing his second consecutive half-century against New Zealand

KL/Instagram

Bowlers stood up & took control: Kohli



New Zealand captain Kane Williamson on his way back to pavilion after being caught out by Yuzvendra Chahal off Ravindra Jadeja's bowling

PTI ■ AUCKLAND

India captain Virat Kohli lauded his bowling unit for taking control of the proceedings from the onset after an emphatic seven-wicket victory against New Zealand in the second T20.

"I think we had another good performance today, especially with the ball. The bowlers stood up and took control of what we wanted to do out there. Sticking to one side of the wicket was a very good feature for us as a team to restrict a good New Zealand team to 132 which I think was below par," Kohli said at the post-match presentation ceremony.

The low target led to India chasing down the total with 15 balls to spare. "The low total led us to bat in that manner but we thought the pitch was good for 160 in the first half. We understood the angles of the field better, how the pitch was playing and I had to think on my feet as a captain," he added.

Kohli's opposite number Kane Williamson reckoned that the pitch was tough for batting compared to the first match and that they were 20 runs short.

"It was a tough day. The wicket was quite different from the first game. I think as a batting unit we needed another 15 or 20 to make it a little bit more competitive. But credit to the way India bowled," Williamson said.

He termed India as a "class side" which put them under constant pressure.

"They're a class side in all departments and they put us under pressure in that middle period. Even though we only had 130 on the board on a small ground, we still knew if we were able to take early wickets and build pressure like they did, then you never really know."

"But they showed their experience and took the game much deeper than we were able to in the first innings and they were very clinical."

Iyer learnt art of chasing watching Kohli bat

PTI ■ AUCKLAND

There is no one better than Virat Kohli when it comes to chasing down totals in white-ball cricket, something that India's newest No 4 Shreyas Iyer wants to emulate on a consistent basis in coming days.

With a half-century and 44 off 33 balls in the successful chases in the first two T20 games, Iyer is fast becoming another viable option for the Indian team apart from its talismanic skipper when it comes to tricky run-chases.

"I personally feel that you have a fair idea how many runs you are going to chase and at what run-rate you have to chase them. Virat Kohli is the perfect example when he goes out to bat and the way he plans his innings. I learn a lot from him personally, the way he grinds out and he tries to finish the game. That's the best part about him," Iyer told mediapersons.

He also learns a lot from his senior Mumbai teammate Rohit Sharma, who can demolish any attack on his day.

"(I) Also (learn from) Rohit Sharma, whenever he's given an opportunity, he makes the best use of it. All these amazing characters in the team set a really good example for us youngsters.

"There's a lot to learn from them and that's what I try to apply whenever I go out there. I think that I have to stay not out and it really helps me grind throughout that middle period and when the time comes, I take on the bowlers. That's how you plan your innings when you are chasing," Iyer said.

The 25-year-old is known for his penchant for hitting big sixes but he also understands the value of rotating the strike as a middle-order batsman.

"You have to play all sorts of shots and take singles. As well as when you want to hit sixes, you have to be aware of the fact that you have to create that moment for yourself. You have to give yourself that time to get set. That's what I usually do."

He has now played 34 white-ball games for India (15 ODIs and 19 T20Is) and realises that staying at the crease an important virtue.

"I have realized playing so many matches that as long as I stay on the wicket, I tend to see the ball really well and I can take on the bowlers," he opined.



Shreyas Iyer plays a shot over wicketkeeper Tom Seifert's head during 2nd T20

Pitch became hard for batting as game progressed: Guptill

PTI ■ AUCKLAND

Senior New Zealand opener Martin Guptill blamed the sluggish Eden Park track for their flop show with the bat in an absolute surrender to the Indian side.

Guptill scored a quickfire 33 off 20 balls but Indian bowlers kept a tight leash on the Black Cap restricting them for 132 and then reaching the target in only 17.3 overs.

"We certainly felt that the pitch was getting slower and slower when we were batting. It got harder and harder to bat as the game progressed. We need-

ed one of the top three-four to bat majority of the innings. We weren't able to get partnerships to add up the total," Guptill told reporters after his team lost second successive game.

The surface was slower compared to the first game where New Zealand scored 203.

"It was a slightly different wicket. Earlier on, it was coming nicely. Colin (Munro) and I were off to a reasonable start. We lost momentum thereafter the sixth over, and we had to sort of rebuild from there," he said.

The target was not a tough one to chase down admitted

Guptill.

"We probably knew we were light on runs. But we had to try and defend that, and get early wickets upfront. Thought the bowlers did well in the front six overs, we needed more wickets after Virat got out. Shreyas Iyer and KL Rahul batted very well and we were not able to break that partnership," he added.

Guptill and Colin Munro put up 48 for the opening stand after 80 in the first game.

"Our role in the team is to be aggressive and we go out there to do that. One of us would have been good to bat 15 overs to set the innings up and

have guys bat around us. It was not supposed to be today and we have time to try to do that in the next game and do a better performance," he added.

The opener felt that India once again out-batted them on a difficult track.

"They played very well, as hard as they did the other night. They built partnerships to put pressure on us. We were not able to do that and got out-batted tonight. India have got some great players and match winners. It is hard for the boys to go out there and try their best. Sometimes you come up short," Guptill further added.



Martin Guptill hits a six off Shardul Thakur's bowling during second T20I

AP

India A suffer five-run defeat

CHRISTCHURCH: Ishan Kishan was left stranded on an unbeaten 71 as India A lost four wickets in nine balls to suffer a narrow five-run defeat in the deciding third ODI against New Zealand A on Sunday.

Chasing 271 for a series-win, India A needed seven runs from the final over with two wickets in hand but wicket-keeper batsman Kishan took a single off the second ball after playing a dot to

expose the tail. It proved quite costly as pacer Kyle Jamieson (4/49) knocked off Sandeep Warrier and Ishan Porel off consecutive balls to end the match with two balls to spare.

In the 49th over, India A lost well-set Axar Patel (32) and Rahul Chahal (0) to left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel, as New Zealand snatched the momentum when it mattered the most.

India had got off to a good

start with young opener Prithvi Shaw (55) and Rituraj Gaikwad (44) putting on a confident 79-run stand for the opening wicket. Skipper Mayank Agarwal (22) got a start but could not convert it into a big knock.

After the top three, only Kishan and Axar offered resistance as Suryakumar Yadav (5) and Vijay Shankar (19) could not last long.

New Zealand A's left-arm spin duo of Ajaz Patel (3/44)

and Rachit Ravindra (2/43) did considerable damage to India's middle and lower order.

It was Mark Chapman, who got New Zealand back into the match with an unbeaten 110-run knock.

India had reduced the host to 68 for four and then 105 for six at one stage with dismissals at regular intervals but Chapman and Todd Astle (56) raised a 136-run partnership for the seven wicket to put up a fighting total. **PTI**



Mark Chapman in a file picture NZ/Twitter

England close to series win

AFP ■ JOHANNESBURG

Joe Root made a patient half-century as England set South Africa a world record target of 466 to win the fourth and final Test at the Wanderers Stadium on Sunday.

The England captain scored 58 and played an anchor role before he was last man out as England were bowled out shortly before the close for 248.

Root decided not to enforce the follow despite England leading by 217 runs on the first innings.

Fast bowler Mark Wood took five for 46 as South Africa were bowled out for 183 in their first innings.

Quinton de Kock (76) and Dwaine Pretorius (37) kept England in the field for most of the morning and probably made sure England would decide to bat again.

De Kock and Pretorius put on 79 for the eighth wicket and prevented England



from wrapping up the innings early. De Kock scored his fourth half-century of what has been a poor series for the South African batsmen. His team-mates have contributed

only five other 50-plus scores between them.

Vernon Philander was out to the sixth ball of the day, reducing South Africa to 93 for seven, at which stage a follow-on seemed a strong possibility.

It was an unhappy day for Philander, who will be retiring from international cricket at the end of the match as he pulled up with a hamstring injury after bowling just nine balls in the second innings.

He left the field immediately and was sent for a scan.

Despite the loss of their leading bowler, South Africa bowled and fielded better than in the first innings when England scored 400.

Left-arm seam bowler Beuran Hendricks claimed a five-wicket haul on debut, finishing with five for 64 when Root was last man out to a sensational diving catch by South African captain Faf du Plessis at a wide slip.

Philander fined for Buttler send-off

JOHANNESBURG: South African opening bowler Vernon Philander, who is playing in his final Test, has been fined 15 percent of his match fee after a send-off of England batsman Jos Buttler during the second day of the fourth Test at the Wanderers Stadium.

The International Cricket Council announced on Sunday that Philander had been found guilty of a level one offence for "using language, actions or gestures which disparage or which could provoke an aggressive reaction from a batter upon his/her dismissal in an international match."

Buttler was fined 15 percent of his match fee after the second Test in Cape Town where he was caught on camera swearing at Philander. **AFP**

SINGLES

B'DESH TO HOST ZIM IN FEB-MARCH

DHAKA: Bangladesh will host Zimbabwe in an int'l series in Feb-March, B'desh Cricket Board said on Sunday. The series will kick off with a one-off Test in Dhaka on Feb 22, and will also include three ODIs and two T20Is. The three ODIs will be held in the port city of Chittagong on March 1, 3 & 6. The tour will wrap up with two T20Is in Dhaka on March 9 & 11.

YUVRAJ, AKRAM TO PLAY IN RELIEF MATCH

SYDNEY: Former India all-rounder Yuvraj Singh and Pakistan fast bowler great Wasim Akram on Sunday became the first players outside Australia to confirm their availability for the charity cricket match organised to raise funds for the bushfire victims. Australia's prolific Test opening duo of Justin Langer and Matthew Hayden are also set to reunite after the latter's name was added to the squad list. They'll be joined by Australian men's team greats Andrew Symonds, Brad Haddin, Mike Hussey, Ponting, Warne, Adam Gilchrist, Brett Lee, Langer, Michael Clarke, Shane Watson and Alex Blackwell.

FED CUP MATCHES MOVED OUT OF CHINA

NEW DELHI: The Indian Fed Cup team on Sunday heaved a sigh of relief after the ITF shifted the Fed Cup matches from the Coronavirus-hit China to Kazakhstan but the side is likely to compete without Sania Mirza, who has aggravated a calf-injury. Concerned for its players' health due to a medical emergency in China, AITA had written to the ITF, requesting the world governing body to consider either shifting the venue or postponing the tournament, originally scheduled in Dongguan from February 4. After rejecting their request twice, the ITF finally shifted out of China.

INDIAN MEAN'S TT TEAM'S OLYMPIC BID ENDS

GONDOMAR: The Indian men's table tennis team's quest for an Olympic berth ended in disappointment after it suffered a 1-3 defeat to Czech Republic in a play-off match of the qualifying event. The loss significantly reduced India's chances of qualifying for the 2020 Summer Games in Tokyo. The Indian team will now hope to make the cut during the Asian Olympic qualification tournament to be held in Bangkok, Thailand from April 6 to 12. **AGENCIES**