

ANALYSIS 7
 SOCIAL EXPERIMENT
 GONE AWRY

MONEY 8
 SENSEX SWINGS,
 ENDS 416 PTS LOWER

SPORTS 12
 KOHLI GREATEST ODI
 PLAYER OF ALL-TIME: FINCH

VIJAYAWADA, TUESDAY JANUARY 21, 2020; PAGES 12 ₹3



the pioneer



'MY WISH OF AN
 INDUSTRY HIT
 WITH DAD HAS
 BEEN REALISED'

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AP ASSEMBLY APPROVES JAGAN'S PUSH FOR THREE STATE CAPITALS

The AP Assembly on Monday passed by Andhra Pradesh Decentralisation and Equal Development of All Regions Bill 2020, putting into motion the government's decision to have three capitals for the state. The Bill was introduced by Finance Minister Buggana Rajendranath Reddy on Monday, who said that the three Capitals would be located at Amaravati, Visakhapatnam and Kurnool for legislative, executive and judicial functions of the State. The village and (municipal) ward secretariats system will now get statutory backing as it has been made part of the new Bill.



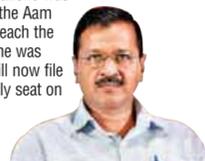
AFTER 88 YEARS, MUMBAI POLICE TO PATROL CITY ON HORSEBACK

Mumbai will get a mounted police unit for traffic and crowd control after a gap of 88 years, and the horses will be deployed on duty after taking part in the Republic Day parade at Shivaji Park this year, Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh said on Sunday. Mr Deshmukh said the mounted police unit, which would patrol the streets of the bustling metropolis, was disbanded in 1932 due to growing vehicular traffic. "Today Mumbai police has modern jeeps and motorcycles".



KEJRI GETS STUCK IN ROADSHOW, MISSES DEADLINE TO FILE PAPERS

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday missed the deadline for filing his nomination because of his massive roadshow and will now file it on Tuesday. The filing of nominations was allowed between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., but the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief was not able to reach the office of the sub-divisional magistrate as he was stuck in the roadshow. Kejriwal said he will now file the nomination for the New Delhi Assembly seat on Tuesday morning, which is the last day of filing nominations.



63 INDIAN BILLIONAIRES HAVE MORE MONEY THAN UNION BUDGET

India's richest 1 per cent hold more than four-times the wealth held by 1953 million people who make up for the bottom 70 per cent of the country's population, while the total wealth of all Indian billionaires is more than the full-year budget, a new study said on Monday. Releasing the study 'Time to Care' here ahead of the 50th Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF), rights group Oxfam also said the world's 2,153 billionaires have more wealth than the 4.6 billion people who make up 60 per cent of the planet's population.



Bill introduced in Assembly to move Govt to Vizag

■ Decentralisation Bill introduced ■ Four zonal boards to be constituted ■ Village, Ward Secretariats get statutory backing

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Finance Minister Buggana Rajendranath Reddy on Monday introduced the Andhra Pradesh Decentralisation and Equal Development of All Regions Bill 2020 in the Assembly, setting into motion the government's decision to have three capitals for the state.

Stating that the Bill was historic, Buggana said the three Capitals would be located at Amaravati, Visakhapatnam and Kurnool for legislative, executive and judicial functions of the State.

The minister also said that the village and (municipal) ward secretariats system that the government brought in, in October last year will now get



Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy presides over the Cabinet meeting on Monday.

statutory backing as it has been made part of the new Bill.

Likewise, four zonal boards in North Andhra Pradesh, Central Andhra Pradesh, South Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema. Raj Bhavan, Secretariat and HOD offices of all departments would be re-

located to Visakhapatnam while Amaravati will be the seat of Legislature and the High Court will be relocated to Kurnool. All offices related to Tribunals and other legal matters will be located in Kurnool.

Buggana said that balanced development and employment

opportunities could be created only through decentralisation. "Even Srikrishna Committee opined that North Andhra and Rayalaseema were backward and the present government was committed to their development," he said, alleging that former Chief Minister N



Speaker T. Sitaram presides over the Business Advisory Committee meeting on Monday. Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy and ministers are also seen.

Chandrababu Naidu had ignored the Srikrishna Committee's recommendations and constituted a panel headed by his ministerial colleague P Narayana.

Buggana pointed out that the Srikrishna Committee had

opined that agricultural land should not be used for Capital construction. "Srikrishna Committee has said that in order to avoid a situation like in Telangana, development of all the 13 districts was imperative," he recalled.

"Naidu failed to bring the recommendations of the Srikrishna Committee to the notice of the Assembly," the Finance Minister said, adding that the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) report had mentioned that if Amaravati was flooded, AP's income would come down by 70 per cent. "In such a scenario, it is highly unwarranted to build a Capital with funds secured through loans," he said.

Stating that AP was in the last place in terms of per capita income in the southern states, Buggana said if the Capital were to be built at Amaravati, the government had to spend at the rate of Rs 30,000 crore for every 10,000 people.

Continued on Page 2

Nadda elected BJP president, may follow course set by Shah

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Jagat Prakash Nadda was elected unopposed as the BJP's national president on Monday, taking over the reins from Amit Shah whose tenure of five-and-a-half years saw the party turning into a formidable election-winning machinery despite occasional setbacks. The 59-year-old leader from Himachal Pradesh is seen as an affable and low-key politician who enjoys the trust of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the RSS -- the BJP's ideological mentor. He is largely expected to continue with the course it took under Shah with Modi laying out the broader agenda.

The Delhi assembly election is the first challenge for Nadda,



Home Minister Amit Shah greets JP Nadda after his unanimous election as the BJP national president, on Monday.

who has been touring the capital extensively as the Bharatiya Janata Party works overtime to oust the Aam Aadmi Party from power.

BJP leader Radha Mohan Singh, who was the in-charge of the organisational election

process, made the announcement of Nadda's election as the party's 11th president after he emerged as the only nominee in the fray.

Continued on Page 2
 More reports in Page 2

Jana Sena MLA Rapaka welcomes 3 capitals decision

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Jana Sena legislator Rapaka Vara Prasad on Monday welcomed the government's three state capitals proposal.

He was taking part in the discussion on the CRDA dissolution and decentralisation of development on the first day of the special session of the Assembly on Monday. Gauging the pulse of the people, he said that the vox populi was strongly in favour of the three capitals formula of the government. Expressing the desire for development of all 13 districts of the state, the lone Jana Sena MLA felt that migration of people from rural areas to cities would come down drastically if Visakhapatnam were to be made executive capital of the state.

High drama as protesters almost reach State Legislature complex

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Defying prohibitory orders and breaking security cordon by armed personnel and others, hundreds farmers and women of Amaravati region on Monday almost managed to reach the Andhra Pradesh Legislature complex protesting the introduction of bills for relocating the state capital.

Caught literally off-guard, the police resorted to lathicharge to quell the crowd as the key assembly session was underway just a few meters away. Even as the high drama was witnessed on the rear side of the complex, Leader of Opposition N Chandrababu Naidu led his Telugu Desam Party legislators on a padayatra a few meters from the main entrance gate into the Assembly.

However, the TDP could not organise the Assembly siege



Protesters carrying the National Flag seen near the Legislature complex protesting against the government's plans to introduce Bills on Capital location, on Monday.

programme as planned due to deployment of a strong posse of police force.

Police claimed six of their personnel sustained injuries in stone pelting by the protesting farmers and others and said cases were being registered against those who defied the law. As many as 5,000 police personnel, including several senior officers, were deployed for bandobust duties in view of

the crucial three-day extended winter session of the Legislature.

About 700 to 800 protesters, including a large number of women, from villages like Mandadam, Velagapudi and Tulluru ran across the barren fields and reached the rear periphery of the Legislature complex, much to the dismay of the police personnel.

Continued on Page 2

Those rejected by public spreading lies: Modi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Slamming the opposition parties and the "ecosystem" backing them, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said those rejected by people in elections have been left with few weapons and were spreading confusion and lies.

He asked the BJP workers to reach out to the public more actively, adding that maintaining direct communication with the masses has always been the party's strength. Modi also said that the party will face

Modi did not name his rivals not did he refer to any issue during his speech, but his comments come against the backdrop of anti-CAA protests

more challenges in the coming days than what it did while in the opposition.

Addressing an event at the party headquarters to felicitate its newly-elected president JP Nadda, Modi said the opposi-



tion's problem is not that BJP was making any mistake but that people continue to bless it. "Those rejected by public in

electoral politics and are no longer acceptable to the masses. They have been left with few weapons. Spreading confusion and lies is one of them... Then you let your ecosystem fuel it. This is what we have often been witnessing," he said.

Neither did Modi name his rivals not did he refer to any issue during his speech. But his comments come against the backdrop of anti-CAA protests, which have been backed by opposition parties. His government has received flak from many quarters over this issue.

Saibaba birthplace row resolved, agitation withdrawn

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Amid speculation that Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has withdrawn his remark on the birthplace of the Shirdi saint Saibaba, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Radhakrishna Vikhe-Patil said, here on Monday, the controversy was resolved amicably.

Shiv Sena MP from Shirdi, Sadashiv Lokhande, said the Chief Minister had withdrawn his statement. Vikhe-Patil said the agitation by the Shirdi residents had been withdrawn, but declined to reveal details.

However, there was no official word on the outcome of the meeting, Thackeray had convened with representatives of Shirdi town.

BJP earned Rs 24.10 billion in 2019

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

BJP more than doubled its income to nearly 24.10 billion rupees in the financial year ended March 2019 ahead of elections, which is more than twice that of its five major rivals put together.

About two-thirds of the Bharatiya Janata Party's income, or 14.50 billion rupees (\$204 million), came from opaque financing instruments called electoral bonds. These bonds allow individuals as well as corporations -- including those partly owned by foreign entities -- to fund political parties anonymously, according to a report by the Association for Democratic Reforms, which cited the latest data from the Election Commission of India.

The BJP swept to a second term in office in May 2019, winning more than 300 seats out of 545 in Lok Sabha, giving PM Modi a powerful mandate.

Cyclone-prone 'Executive Capital' Vizag needs much better disaster management

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

With Vizag being crowned the Executive Capital of the city by the state government on Monday, the focus has now turned to the city's resilience, or lack thereof, to cyclones.

Vizag city was battered beyond recognition by Cyclone Hudhud in 2014 with the epicentre of the cyclone moving through the city.

Being the main operation centre of the state with its administrative capital here, Vizag cannot afford to get paralyzed during natural calamities.



The time is to come up with cyclone resistant structures and infrastructure. The underground cabling

project underway in the city is one of the examples of the infrastructure the capital city need to go with. Part of the city

is being covered now and the project should be extended to all the area.

The chronicles of the cyclones prepared by the AP State Disaster Management Authority (APSDMA) mentions 71 cyclones had hit the state coast in the past 127 years. The losses due to natural calamities run in thousands of crores and have claimed hundreds of lives.

In a span of just three months in 2018, two cyclonic storms, Titli and Phethai, battered the state.

Continued on Page 2



Tiger that raised orphan cubs passes on, CM says 'sad news'

PNS ■ JAIPUR

A 15-year old male tiger, which famously raised two orphan cubs, has died in a suspected territorial fight in Ranthambore Tiger Reserve of

Rajasthan's Sawai Madhopur district, forest officials said on Monday. The carcass of T-25 was found in Sanwata area of the tiger reserve on Monday.

Continued on Page 3

TODAY

ALMANAC
 Month & Paksham: Pausa & Krishna Paksha Panchangam
 Tithi: Dwadashi: 01:44 am (Next Day)
 Nakshatram: Jyestha: 11:43 pm
 Time to Avoid: (Bad time to start any important work)
 Rahukalam: 03:14 am - 04:37 pm
 Yamagandam: 09:40 am - 11:03 am
 Varjyam: 10:06 pm - 11:43 pm
 Gulika: 12:27 pm - 01:50 pm
 Good Time: (to start any important work)
 Amritakalam: 02:50 pm - 04:27 pm
 Abhijit Muhurtham: 12:05 pm - 12:49 pm

VIJAYAWADA WEATHER
 Forecast: Clear
 Temp: 32/20
 Humidity: 75%
 Sunrise: 06:49
 Sunset: 06:04
 Current Weather Conditions
 Updated January 20, 2020 5:00 PM

Amit Shah has been BJP's real rock

From the day Amit Shah became the national president of the BJP, the party has been going through its most glorious era, and has reached pinnacle not only by grabbing power at the Centre and in many states but also ideologically, politically and structurally.

The period between July 9, 2014, when Amit Shah became BJP national president and January 20, 2020 when JP Nadda replaced him is undoubtedly the party's most glorious and fruitful period.

Amit Shah left his indelible mark on the BJP much before the 2014 general elections. He was made in-charge for the UP elections in July of 2013 giving him less than a year to lead BJP in the UP Assembly polls. He was aware of the fact that the BJP would have to win the highest number of seats from UP for Narendra Modi to become the PM. The BJP won 73 out of 80 seats, reflecting his prowess.

Modi became the PM riding on the electoral success

of the BJP in UP.

Success in UP elections vaulted Amit Shah in the BJP national president's seat, saddled with responsibilities of leading the party successfully in elections and building it into a strong organisation.

The BJP emerged strong during the Jan Sangh era and gained firm roots in states during LK Advani's term as its president. However, during Amit Shah's term it emerged as a formidable force.

The BJP has more members than even the Communist Party of China; the 1921-founded Chinese Party enjoys 9-crore membership as against the BJP's 16 crore. The BJP was founded in 1951 with just 10 leaders but has emerged as the largest political party.

When the BJP surpassed China's record by March 31, 2015, reaching an important

The BJP has more members than even the Communist Party of China; the 1921-founded Chinese Party enjoys 9-crore membership as against the BJP's 16 crore. The BJP was founded in 1951 with just 10 leaders but has emerged as the largest political party.

milestone because of Amit Shah's leadership, Modi had not even completed one year in office as the PM.

When Amit Shah took reins of the party, it had only 3,60,000 members. How did Amit Shah build the BJP as the largest party in the country in no time and propel it to power in many states?

As soon as he took reins of the party, he relaxed and reformed membership rules.

He exploited computers and mobiles to enrol new members.

Rules of enrolling primary and active members were changed. He identified those who enrolled 100 members and remained active in party activities as active members. Instead of issuing receipts, he digitized fee collection.

Using social media extensively, Amit Shah enrolled Narendra Modi as the first member online. On that day,



Y SATYA KUMAR
BJP National Secretary

4,77,000 were enrolled.

His methods laid stronger foundations and helped expand the party. Undisputedly, the BJP became the largest political party in the country because of the Sadasyata Maha Abhiyan, a mission launched by him.

He constituted teams with state and national-level lead-

ers and appointed 5000 vis-taraks. The abhiyan was described as another 'Dandi march'.

He deputed party members to states and travelled 39,682 km across the country to supervise enrollment. Targets were fixed taking into consideration the number of members of the party in each state, the number of votes polled and response of the party sympathisers and people to party activities.

He made the dream of Deendayal Upadhyay's come true. The latter propounded that the today's opponent should become tomorrow's voter, today's voter should become tomorrow's party member and the members should become active party workers.

In 1990, Amit Shah conducted extensive membership drive under Narendra Modi's leadership enabling the BJP to become the Opposition party first and ruling party later.

After he became the national president of the BJP, the BJP got 18 Lok Sabha seats in West Bengal with a vote share of 40 per cent. The BJP succeeded in limiting the CPM's vote share to six percent and confined the century-old Congress vote share to less than five per cent. The BJP enjoys membership of 77 lakh in West Bengal because of his strategy.

The BJP replaced Left party in Tripura and has 10 lakh members there. Amit Shah implemented the same strategy across the country.

The BJP has over one crore new members in the

south. It got rid of the Hindi belt party tag because of strong foundations laid by Amit Shah. The party's presence is felt from Kashmir to Kanyakumar and Kutch to Kohima.

Close on the heels of implementing Sadasyata Maha Abhiyan, Amit Shah introduced Maha Sampark Abhiyan to introduce party ideology to new members thereby to strengthen the party at the booth level.

The membership drive is not mechanical, but aimed at meeting three objectives: to increase party voters, propagate ideology and make the party stronger.

He insisted on party leaders and activists have an ideological clarity on any issue right from J&K issue to CAA and advised them against taking part in any programme if they are not able to clearly state the party's viewpoint.

During his six-year tenure as national president, he gave ideological direction to the party. His term is described as the red letter day in the BJP's history.



Nadda, a low-profile leader who rose up the ranks

Jagat Prakash Nadda, 59, who has his roots in the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and its affiliates, was appointed the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) national president on Monday, replacing his 'mentor' and Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

Former Environment, Health and Law Minister from Himachal Pradesh, which has just four of the Lok Sabha's 543 seats, Nadda has tried to carve out his own space in national politics with his low profile and astute organisational skills, believe his party leaders.

He rose through the ranks from the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), the student wing of the RSS, from where he has managed to build inroads from university to the state politics.

Nadda has been active on the national political scene since 2010 when he was picked by then BJP chief Nitin Gadkari to

join his new team. He was made the party's national general secretary.

Born on December 2, 1960, Nadda did his graduation from Patna and holds a post-graduate degree in political science and Bachelor of Legislative Law (LLB) from Himachal Pradesh University in Shimla.

Starting his political career as a student leader of the ABVP in 1978, Nadda had also worked both with Gadkari and Shah even in the party's youth wing the Bharatiya Yuva Morcha from 1991 to 1994.

In the previous BJP government (2007-12) in the state, Nadda was forced to resign as Forest Minister in 2010 owing to differences between him and then chief minister Prem Kumar Dhumal.

He was elected to the Rajya Sabha in 2012.

Nadda won his first Assembly election

- Minister of Health and Family Welfare (Assumed office 9 November 2014)
- Himachal Pradesh's Minister of Environment, Forest, Science & Technology (1998-2003)
- Member of the Rajya Sabha from Himachal Pradesh (Assumed office 3 April 2012)
- Member of the Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly for Bilaspur (2007-2012)

from Bilaspur (Sadar) in Himachal in 1993. In 1998, he again won from that seat and became the state Health Minister.

He lost the Assembly elections in 2003, but again won in 2007 and was appointed the

Forest Minister in the Himachal Pradesh. Nadda, as a Forest Minister, was the brain behind opening forest police stations to check forest crimes, launching community-driven plantation, setting up forest

ponds and the massive plantation of deodars to boost the depleting green cover of the 'Queen of Hills', as Shimla was fondly called by the British.

A close confidant of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Nadda was among those who were mentioned as likely aspirants to the BJP top post after Rajnath Singh was inducted into the Central government as the Home Minister in 2014.

Later, Nadda was inducted into the Union Cabinet in its first expansion in 2014 as the Health Minister.

Hailing Nadda's appointment, Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur said it is a proud moment that a leader belonging to a small state in the national politics is today the leader of the country's biggest national party.

His father NL Nadda, who was a Vice-Chancellor of the Ranchi University, resides in Bilaspur town.

JP Nadda takes over as BJP president

Continued from Page 1

Modi later arrived at the party headquarters to felicitate the newly-elected president at a ceremony that was attended by members of the BJP parliamentary board, its highest body, and veterans like L K Advani and Murli Manohar Joshi.

Earlier, Shah was joined by senior party leaders, including Union ministers Rajnath Singh and Nitin Gadkari, besides several functionaries from state units in filing nominations in support of Nadda. BJP chief ministers like Yogi Adityanath of Uttar Pradesh and Vijay Rupani of Gujarat were also at the party headquarters to endorse his bid.

Nadda's elevation was on expected lines since his appointment as the BJP working president last June after Shah joined the Modi government as the home minister. The BJP has traditionally abided by the norm of 'one party one post'.

BJP leaders hailed the appointment, expressing confidence that the party would achieve new successes under his leadership.

Wishing Nadda a successful tenure, Rajnath Singh said: "I am confident the party will achieve new glory and success under his leadership. Known for his organisational experience Naddaji has always been an asset to the party."

Gadkari said the elevation of Nadda, who started as a common party worker, shows that the BJP was an organisation of workers unlike parties run by dynasties.

Nadda, considered an affable and accessible politician, enjoys good rapport with all top party leaders. He is seen as seasoned organisation man, who was associated with the ABVP from his college days before joining the youth wing of the BJP and rising through its ranks.

Nadda has also served as a minister in BJP governments in Himachal Pradesh and at the Centre. He was in charge of his party's campaigns in a number of states.

BJP will become stronger, grow under Nadda: Shah

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who handed over the presidency of the BJP to JP Nadda on Monday, said that under his successor's leadership the party will become stronger and expand further.

Nadda was elected unopposed as the BJP national president after he emerged as the only leader in the fray following the nomination process in which his candidature was endorsed by top party brass.

"Heartiest congratulations to JP Nadda Ji on being elected the national president of the Bharatiya Janata Party. I firmly believe that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji's guidance and your leadership, the BJP will become stronger and expand even further," Shah said in a tweet.

"The party will benefit from Nadda ji's organisational skills

and experience and will set new records," he said in a series of tweets.

Under Nadda's leadership,

"I am grateful for the affection and support that I got from the organisation as the BJP national president. I thank Prime Minister Modi, all senior leaders and colleagues for always keeping faith in me"

—AMITH SHAH
Union Home Minister



all BJP workers will continue to walk on the organisation's path, he said.

Nadda was appointed the BJP's working president in June last.

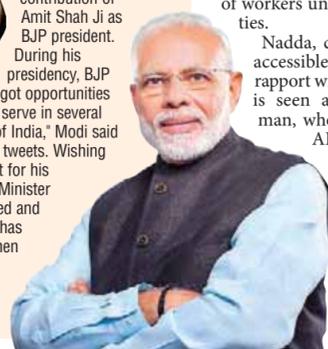
"I am grateful for the affection and support that I got from the organisation as the BJP national president. I thank Prime Minister Modi, all senior leaders and colleagues for always keeping faith in me," Shah added.

"I consider myself fortunate to have had the privilege of working as president for five years in this great organisation, nurtured by many great personalities and great men," Shah said.



Party will scale newer heights during Nadda's presidency: Modi

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday congratulated J P Nadda on his election as the BJP president and said he was sure that the party will scale newer heights during his presidency. Modi, who felicitated Nadda at the BJP headquarters here, also praised Amit Shah for his contribution, describing him as an 'outstanding karyakarta (worker)'. "I do not think words can do justice to the rich contribution of Amit Shah Ji as BJP president. During his presidency, BJP got opportunities to serve in several parts of India," Modi said in a series of tweets. Wishing Nadda very best for his tenure, the Prime Minister said, "Nadda Ji is a dedicated and disciplined Karyakarta who has worked for years to strengthen the party at the grassroots. His affable nature is also known to all."



VIJAYAWADA BULLION RATES	
GOLD	
₹ 40,230 (10 gm)	₹ 210 ↑
SILVER	
₹ 46,800 (1kg)	₹ 100 ↑
CHICKEN RATES ₹/KG	
Dressed/With Skin	₹155
Without Skin	₹177
Broiler at Farm	₹107
EGG RATES ₹/100	
HYDERABAD	395
VIJAYAWADA	420
VISAKHAPATNAM	420
RETAIL PRICE	₹4.20

High drama as protesters almost reach...

Continued from page 1

The protesters even jumped over barbed wire fences placed by the police at various spots.

There was a dug up channel, filled with slushy water and weed, abutting the compound wall of the Legislature and Secretariat complex on the rear side that virtually acted as the biggest barrier for the protesters from marching ahead. Some of the protesters, however, stood waist-deep in the slushy water, holding placards and raising Save Amaravati slogans. Guntur Rural SP C Vijaya Rao told PTI that two constables sustained head injuries while four others suffered other wounds when protesters pelted stones at them.

The protesters came from different villages and also Guntur city. Some of the followers of MP Galla Jayadev were also involved, he said. Over 75 women were taken into preventive custody while cases were being registered against those involved in the attack on police and violation of prohibitory orders under Section 144 Cr P C and Section 30 of Indian Police Act, the SP said.

The YSRCP government introduced the AP Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of All Regions Bill, 2020 in the assembly to give shape to its plan of having three capitals for the state, which is being opposed by farmers, who had given their land for development of Amaravati as the capital.

Bill introduced in Assembly...

Continued from page 1

He added: "Regional imbalances, absence of equitable growth have caused an acute sense of deprivation among various sections of the state population, leading to disturbances."

"The logical solution would be to lay emphasis on decentralised development and decentralised administration to ensure fruits of socio-economic progress are enjoyed equally by people of various regions," the minister said, quoting the recommendations of the High-Power Committee of ministers and bureaucrats, which formed the basis of the new legislation.

Amid the din, the government also moved a Bill to repeal the Capital Region Development Authority Act, 2014.

The government said it intended to constitute a new Amaravati Metropolitan Region Development Area under the provisions of AP Metropolitan Region and Urban Development Authorities Act, 2016.

The CRDA Act was enacted on December 22, 2014 for the development of the state capital post-bifurcation with a specific area demarcated as the capital region.

Now that the YSR Congress government has decided to have three capitals for the state, the CRDA Act is proposed to be repealed.

Earlier in the day, the Cabinet met under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy and cleared the draft Bills. The Cabinet also approved the rec-

ommendations of the HPC on the capitals issue.

Based on the recommendations of the High Power Committee, key issues like decentralisation of development, concerns of farmers, employee issues, "insider trading" in purchase of lands in Amaravati and CRDA amendment were discussed.

Accordingly, the State Cabinet decided to increase the ex gratia being paid to the farmers of the capital region from Rs 2,500 per month to Rs 5,000 per month. The Cabinet had also approved a proposal to extend the tenancy limit for 15 years to the farmers who gave up their lands for the capital city construction and approved the establishment of the Amaravati Metropolitan Region Development Auth-

ority in place of CRDA.

Further, the Cabinet agreed to establish over 11,000 Farmer Assistance Centres (Rythu Barosa Kendram) across the State.

After the hour-long Cabinet meeting, the Business Advisory Committee meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Speaker Tammineni Sitaram.

Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy took part in the BAC meeting along with TDP MLA K. Atchannaidu.

It was decided that the Assembly sessions would be held for three days and two Bills would be tabled.

However, the government could face hurdles in getting the Bills cleared in the Legislative Council, which sits from tomorrow, as the ruling party does not have majority.

Cyclone-prone Executive capital...

Continued from page 1

However, this is not unusual as in the past even three back-to-back cyclones have wreaked havoc in North Coastal Andhra.

There were three cyclones in 1915 and two each in 1904, 1933, 1969, 1976, 1977, 1979, 1982, 1985 and 1989 and now in 2018.

More cyclone shelters need to be built and other measures for disaster management are needed to be taken, according to the disaster management officials.

Learning from the disasters, AP has strengthened its real-time weather monitoring system. There is a cyclone warning centre located at Visakhapatnam.

CAPSULE



Group -I exams deferred

AMARAVATI: The Group-I (Mains) examinations, which are scheduled to be held from February 4 to 16 in seven sessions, have been postponed on administrative grounds. The revised dates will be announced on January 27, according to an order issued by PSR Anjaneyulu, Secretary (FAC).

Tahsildar lands in ACB net

MACHILIPATNAM: The ACB sleuths on Monday caught tahsildar D Prashanti in the department of land reforms red-handed while demanding and accepting Rs 3 lakh towards bribe from Meka Ramalingeswara Reddy of Tadepalli in Guntur district. She demanded Rs 6 lakh for not to service notices on him under the Land Ceiling Act. The ACB sleuths trapped her, while she was in the receipt of Rs 3 lakh towards the first installment.

Applications invited to fill vacant posts

ONGOLE: District Superintendent of Police Siddharth Kaushal on Monday in a release informed that unemployed youth in the district can apply for vacant posts in the department. He said interested and eligible youth can attend the examination on January 23 at 10.30 am at the district police office in Ongole. Data entry operators, app developers, driver-cum-motor mechanic, cyber experts and control room customer support personnel posts will be filled up.

Privileged darshan for physically challenged, elderly

VIJAYAWADA: The scheduled privileged darshan for senior citizens and physically challenged will be on January 21 and 28, while for parents with children below five years will be on January 22 and 29. All the devotees in these categories are advised by TTD to plan their visits to Tirumala accordingly and there by beget comfortable darshan of Lord Venkateswara. As a part of the exercise, the TTD issues 4,000 tokens for senior citizens and physically challenged in three time slots on January 21 and 28, which includes 1,000 tokens at 10 am, 2,000 tokens at 2 pm slot and 1,000 tokens at 3 pm slot. Similarly for parents with five-year-old children, the TTD has made arrangements for darshan from 9 am to 1.30 pm on January 22 and 29 through the Supatham gate.

AMRDA to replace CRDA

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

Minister for Municipal Administration Botsa Satyanarayana introduced the Capital Region Development Authority Repeal Act in the Assembly on Monday. It will be replaced by the proposed Amaravati Metropolitan Region Development Authority Act (AMRDA). Speaking in this connection, Satyanarayana said all assurances given to farmers would be fulfilled.



He said the Bill envisages increasing benefits to agricultural labourers and farmers. The pension for farmhands would be raised from the present Rs 2,500 to Rs 5,000. The Municipal Administration Minister said annuity for farmers, who had participated in the Land Pooling Scheme (LPS), would be increased. The annuity would be raised from the present Rs 50,000 to Rs 55,000 per acre in the case of wet lands and from Rs 30,000 to Rs 33,000 in the case of uplands. Besides, developed plots and commercial spaces would also be extended to those who had parted with their assigned lands.

■ Sops rained on capital farmers

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government had not taken into account the Srikrishna Committee recommendations. It had taken a unilateral decision without considering the people's aspirations. Unlike the previous government, the present YSRCP government would render justice to all the five crore people of the State by developing all 13 districts. Once the Bill is passed, all the assets and liabilities and bonds issued by the CRDA with the government's guarantee would be transferred to AMRDA. The government would stand guarantor for all the loans availed by the CRDA.

All master plans, zonal development plans, including town planning schemes in the Capital region, would continue to be in force. He said the united Andhra Pradesh was divided only due to regional imbalances.

Man held for stealing gold, cash from employer's house

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The city police on Monday arrested a 36-year-old Kurri Naga Venkata Satyanarayana alias Satyanarayana, a driver, for stealing gold ornaments from his employer's house. Police said that Satyanarayana has been working as a car driver of Peri Gopalakrishna, a retired Chartered Accountant, and resident of Kancharapalem area in the city, for the past few months. Since Gopalakrishna and his wife are the elderly couple, Satyanarayana used to help them by carrying their luggage and also keeping the articles in the cupboards and he had earned faith of his employer. According to police, Satyanarayana had seen while Gopalakrishna was keeping gold and cash in a mini iron safe and he also observed that where Gopalakrishna kept the key of the iron safe. DCP B Uday Bhaskar said that Satyanarayana decided to rob the valuables to buy a car. In the first week of January, Satyanarayana got the key of the iron safe and he stole 244 gms of gold ornaments and Rs 4.59 lakh cash when the couple was sleeping in their bed room. The accused burnt the CCTV camera cables to destroy the evidence and fled the city. Based on a complaint from the couple, police registered a case and nabbed the accused on Monday. Police also recovered 244 gms of gold ornaments Rs 4.49 lakh cash from the accused.

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YSRCP relocating capital for selfish goals: Anagani



PNS ■ AMARAVATI

TDP legislator Anagani Satya Prasad charged the YSRCP government for meting out injustice to farmers of Amaravati region in the name of decentralisation of development. The leaders of the government have been misleading people with their statements. He was participating in a discussion on annulment of the Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) and decentralisation of development during the special session of the Assembly on the first day of the session on Monday. Farmers of the CRDA alienated their lands for the bright future of people of Andhra Pradesh, he said claiming that the TDP was not against decentralisation of development and charged the government with relocating the capital to meet the selfish goals of some people. However, he did not name the individuals. Criticising the style of functioning of the State government, he alleged that venom has been spewn on Amaravati in every way.

TENSION PREVAILS IN AMARAVATI

13 cops hurt in stone pelting



Police take TDP leader into custody to foil lay siege bid to the Assembly at Velagapudi in Amaravati on Monday (right) TDP MP interacts with a cop as he is put under house arrest

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

Tension prevailed for some time on Monday when irate farmers and activists of Opposition parties attempted to lay siege to the Assembly at Velagapudi in the Capital region. As many as 13 police personnel were injured when the protesters pelted stones at them. Their condition was said to be stable. Similar scenes were witnessed at Tulluru where one policeman was grievously injured. This was despite the police placing TDP and leaders of other Opposition parties under house arrest. Notices were earlier issued to TDP leaders as a precautionary measure. As many as 314 persons were arrested in 35 cases since Sunday night in Srikakulam district. In Vijayawada, TDP MP Kesineni Nani was placed under house arrest. A large number of police personnel were deployed in front of his house.

Condemning the police behavior, Nani said, "I am an MP. How can the police detain me in my own home? The government owes an explanation in this regard."

He said Amaravati was a people's Capital and Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy would not be successful in shifting it. "The people of Andhra Pradesh want Amaravati to be the only Capital and the TDP would continue to fight on behalf of the people," he said. Gollapudi on the outskirts of Vijayawada virtually turned into a fortress with a large number of police personnel being deployed in the village. The police heightened vigil on TDP leaders and workers in the village which is traditionally a TDP bastion. A large number of people set out on the Chalo Assembly rally under the leadership of former minister Deveneni Umamaheswara Rao. However, hundreds of police personnel surrounded them to foil their attempt. Addressing the protesters,

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Umamaheswara Rao said Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy was holding the Assembly session by deploying an unprecedented number of 10,000 police personnel. He said the CM was afraid of facing the wrath of Amaravati protagonists, hence the trial run of his convoy before going to and coming out of the Assembly.

Prakasam girls clinch handball championship



Prakasam district junior girls team receiving the trophy of 5th State-level Inter-district Handball Tournament at Velagaleru on Monday

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Prakasam district junior girls handball team clinched the title at the 5th State-level Inter-district Handball Tournament at Velagaleru Zilla Parishad High School on Monday. In the two-day tournament, Prakasam district and West Godavari district teams entered the finals and in a nail-biting finish, Prakasam district team excelled and clinched the title. Handball Association state secretary P Satyanarayana Raju gave away Winners were given the trophy and mementoes. Ch Ramchandra Rao, Lakkireddy Hanimi Reddy, Ch Anil Kumar, Lela Srinivas Rao, P Madhu and others were present.

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Swachhta Pakhwada inaugurated

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Vice-Chancellor Prof K Sivaramakrishna inaugurated Swachhta Pakhwada-2020 activities at GITAM Deemed to be University here on Monday. Addressed the students, he emphasised the importance of cleanliness in society and called upon NSS volunteers to strive for clean India. The Vice-Chancellor exhorted students to fulfil Mahatma Gandhi's dream of a clean India. During the Pakhwada, GITAM will organise cleanliness awareness activities such as, sapling plantation, skit presentation and awareness programmes on hygiene in the nearby areas of GITAM campus.

Contract staff of electricity board demand regularisation

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA



Leaders of Andhra Pradesh Electricity Board Contract and Outsourcing Employees Associations from across the State demanded that the government regularise their services with immediate effect. They recalled that Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy had assured them of regularisation of their services during his padayatra. In this regard, the leaders from 13 associations of Contract and Outsourcing Electricity Board from across the State formed a Joint Action Committee (JAC) at a meeting at the Press Club here on Monday. Addressing the media, JAC leader Y Amarnath Reddy from Anantapur said that there are 24,000 contract and outsourcing employees in the electricity department are waiting for regularisation of their services for the past 20 years. He said that political parties assure to regularise their services, but after coming to power, they forget about their promise. He recalled that YS Jaganmohan Reddy had assured to regularise the con-

Tiger that raised orphan cubs dies, CM says 'sad news'

Continued from Page 1

The postmortem has been conducted, a forest official said. "The suspected cause of death is territorial fight. The tiger's head bone was crushed," the official said. The tiger's movement was mostly seen in Khandar area of the reserve. Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said it was sad to know about the death of the tiger. "Sad news from the wild life that Ranthambore's famous tiger T-25 is no more. It was a magnanimous tiger, who took care of two orphan cubs, displaying fatherly instincts in raising and protecting them to the surprise of conservationists. T-25 will be missed," Gehlot tweeted. The tiger took care of twin orphan cubs of T-5 tigress. The forest official said T-5 died in 2011 and was survived by two female cubs of around three months. There was serious concern over their survival, the official said. "It was then T-25 came into the picture and started protecting them from other tigers and animals. He used to stay close to them and even allowed to eat with him, which is a rare phenomenon," the official added.

VMC strives for better Swachh Survekshan ranking

C PRADEEP ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) has taken measures to improve its ranking in Swachh Survekshan, the annual survey on cleanliness and sanitation, which is underway in Vijayawada. The survey, which was started on January 4, will end on January 31. It was launched as part of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, which aims at making the country clean and free from open-defecation. The VMC officials are creating awareness among people on Swachh Survekshan in an innovative manner through Kala Jatha and Burra Katha teams. The teams are visiting educational institutions and crowded places to educate people with their performance. The city rank dropped to 12 in 2019, while it has bagged the fifth position in 2018. Explaining various initiatives taken by the VMC in getting a better ranking in Swachh Survekshan for the current year, chief medical and health officer Dr R Venkataramana told The Pioneer that about 4,370 cities across the country with more than 10 lakh population are competing for the Swachh Survekshan Award this year. The chief medical and health officer exuded confidence of the city securing the third or fourth rank in the present Swachh Survekshan ranking.



lators are competing for the Swachh Survekshan Award this year. He is confident of the city securing the third or fourth rank in the present Swachh Survekshan ranking. He said as part of the Swachh Survekshan ranking, the VMC has been maintaining toilets at 60 places under VMC limits out of which 18 toilets have additional facilities like vending machines with disposable napkin facilities for college and school girls. These places include public and private places, community halls and slum areas by providing hygiene and continuous water facilities. The city has secured 5-star rating in the Open Defecation-Free (ODF) category after officials concerned inspected the maintenance of toilets. The Swachh Survekshan team would visit the places as common people and grade the maintenance, unlike previous years. He said for maintaining Garbage-Free City (GFC), they strengthened the maintenance staff to keep the city clean from any kind of garbage. They have taken measures to segregate wet and

dry garbage and educate people on preparing home composting. Initiative has been taken by organising awareness programmes to educate people on plastic-free city, which was very successful, he said and added that they have been monitoring road sweeping, collection of dry and wet garbage and other activities. He appealed to denizens to feel the responsibility to keep the surroundings clean and hygiene and opined that this year they would bounce back and get a better ranking than before.

GITAM NCC cadets selected for national camps



PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Two NCC cadets of GITAM Deemed to be University have been selected to participate in prestigious NCC national level camps for 2020, said GITAM NCC Officer Captain B Sreenivasa Rao here on Monday. NCC cadet Priyansh selected for prestigious basic skiing course to be held at Jawahar Institute of Mountaineering and Winter Sports (JIM & WS) Pahalgam (J&K) from January 20 to February 2, while Shiva Kumar has been selected for advanced leadership camp. Vicky Mallik also selected for NCC 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' (EBSB) camp, which will be held in Arunachal Pradesh. GITAM Vice-Chancellor Prof K Sivaramakrishna appreciated the NCC cadets on their selection.

Netaji's nephew asks Centre to include Muslims in CAA

PNS ■ KOLKATA

An "atmosphere of fear" is being created by both the ruling and opposition parties over the new citizenship law, West Bengal BJP vice president Chandra Bose said on Monday, and urged the Centre to grant citizenship even to Muslims under the amended citizenship act.

He also said the government should issue a written clarification on the issue.

"An atmosphere of fear is being created on the issue of citizenship. This applies to both the ruling party and the opposition parties."

"Just because it (the law) has been passed by Parliament, it can't be used to bulldoze people by ignoring the protests. The same applies to opposition parties which are deliberately misleading the masses," He told PTI.

Bose, a grandnephew of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah have categorically noted the Citizenship (Amendment) Act is not based on religion.

However, statements made by some other leaders are cre-



West Bengal BJP vice president Chandra Bose

ating confusion.

"In order to deal with this, I think that this clause should be included (in the new law) that the CAA is not based on religion....and Muslims should also be included in it," he said.

The Citizenship (Amendment) Act aims to provide Indian citizenship to Hindus, Jains, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Parsis who entered India on or before December 31, 2014 from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan, having fled religious persecution in their countries.

"Now what will happens to the Muslims who had come to

this country before that date? There is a confusion. The Centre must take steps to remove that confusion," Bose said.

A few state BJP leaders PTI approached declined to comment on Bose's statements.

Bose had pitched for the inclusion of Muslims in the CAA earlier also.

"If CAA, 2019 is not related to any religion why are we stating Hindu, Sikh, Buddhists, Christians, Parsis and Jains only? Why not include Muslims as well? Lets be transparent," he had tweeted last month.

"Don't equate India or compare it with any other nation - as it's a nation Open to all reli-

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gions and communities," he had said in another tweet.

West Bengal has been witnessing relentless protests over the CAA, a pan-India NRC and the updation of the National Population Register, with Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee leading the charge against the government on these livewire issues.

The protests, though initially very violent, have acquired a somewhat milder tone but are continuing. Scuffles have been reported from several campuses including the prestigious Jadavpur University and Visva Bharati.

ANTI-CAA STIR: Lawyers read Constitution preamble outside HC



PNS ■ MUMBAI

A group of lawyers gathered outside the Bombay High Court gate on Monday to read out Preamble to the Constitution of India in protest against the Citizenship Amendment Act.

Over 50 lawyers, including senior counsels Navroze Seervai, Gayatri Singh and Mihir Desai, read out the preamble in unison and later said no one can divide the country and its citizens on the basis of religion. The lawyers said the CAA seeks to provide citizenship to refugees belonging to six religious communities but leaves out one - Islam, which is "constitutionally wrong". Protests have been going on a cross the country against the new law, which grants Indian citizenship to Hindus, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Parsis and Jain refugees from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh who entered India on or before Dec 31, 2014.

NPR dangerous game, a precursor to NRC: Mamata

PNS ■ KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday appealed to her counterparts in the northeast and non-BJP states to take a note of the "clauses" mentioned in the NPR form, before participating in the exercise to update the register.

Dubbing the NPR exercise as "a dangerous game", Banerjee said the form, which seeks birth details of parents, could be nothing but a precursor to NRC implementation.

"I will appeal to all chief ministers, governments including those in BJP-ruled northeast states — Tripura, Assam, Manipur and Arunachal — and the opposition party-ruled states to read the law properly and consider the clauses in the NPR form before arriving at a decision."

"I request them not to participate in this matter because the condition is very bad," the chief minister said. The TMC boss asserted that the West Bengal Assembly would soon pass a resolution against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.



Banerjee also said that she came to know from the news media that fields which seek birth details of parents in the NPR form were not mandatory.

"If the fields are not mandatory, why are they a part of the form? Efforts should be made to remove those questions. "If they continue to exist on paper (form), those that do not enter birth details of parents might be automatically excluded. There is an apprehension..." she claimed, before leaving for Siliguri.

The CM is scheduled to lead anti-citizenship law rallies in north Bengal over the next four days.

SHORT READS



Arvind Kejriwal to file his nomination today

NEW DELHI: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal will file his nomination on Tuesday instead of Monday due to a delay caused by his roadshow. Kejriwal was going to file his nomination Monday afternoon but due to a delay in the roadshow he was unable to do it. He will now be filing his nomination on Tuesday from Jamnagar House, party functionaries said.

Gang busted for cheating people on pretext of providing domestic helps

NEW DELHI: The Delhi police has busted a gang in southeast Delhi's Kalkaji area for allegedly cheating people on the pretext of providing domestic helps, officials said on Monday. They used to charge hefty amount for providing the domestic helps, who used also flee after stealing of valuables from the house, an officer said.

SHO injured as rival parties clash after panchayat polls

JAIPUR: A police official was injured during a clash between members of rival parties after panchayat polls in Rajasthan's Jhalawar district, police said on Monday. SHO Ajit Meghwanshi of Manoharthana police station had gone to Khatkedhi village on information of some dispute when members of one side pelted stones at him. He received head injuries and was admitted to a hospital, deputy SP Durgaram Chaudhary said. 36 persons have been arrested under Section 151 of CrPC (arrest to prevent commission of cognisable offences) and five for attacking the SHO, he added. The dispute was related to panchayat elections and one of the candidates, who lost the election, and his supporters were creating ruckus in the village.

Fake call centre duping US nationals busted, two arrested

MUMBAI: Two people were arrested in Andheri in the metropolis for allegedly operating a fake call centre that targeted United States nationals on the pretext of selling cheap medicines online, police said on Monday. Acting on a tip-off, a Crime Branch team raided the third floor of Sumer Plaza and busted a fake call centre and arrested two people, identified as Mudassar Harun Makandar (34) and Ashley Glen D'souza (34) on Friday, Unit XI senior inspector Sunil Mane said.

J-K DGP supports establishment of deradicalisation centres

PNS ■ SRINAGAR

Director General of Jammu and Kashmir Police Dilbagh Singh on Monday supported the idea of setting up deradicalisation centres for youth, who have gone astray, in the trouble torn union territory.

"In recent times, there have been lot of efforts from Pakistan and it's attempts to spur radicalisation in this area, some of our young minds have been affected by it and have gone astray. If such a facility (deradicalisation centre) comes up, it should be welcomed," DGP Singh told reporters here.

He said some of the youth, who have been caught by police, did not seem to talk sense sometimes. "At our end, when we have got hold of such youth, they don't seem to talk much sense at times," he said.

Singh said if an attempt is made to set up a facility where experts in the subject and religious experts are part of it, it will help these youth. "It will be a good development and it should be welcome," the DGP said.

The idea of setting up deradicalisation centres for the misguided youth in Kashmir was first mooted by Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat, leading to criticism from some quarters.

ED quizzes Karti on buying assets abroad via shell firms

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Karti Chidambaram, son of former Finance Minister P. Chidambaram, here on Monday, appeared before the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for questioning as summoned in connection with alleged violation of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in the INX media case.

An ED official said Karti was summoned following new developments regarding his association with shell companies that received the siphoned off payments and invested that in properties abroad.

During the custodial interrogation of Chidambaram, the agency unearthed new evidence and thus Karti, the main accused in the case, was questioned, said the official.

Earlier this year, Karti, a Lok Sabha member from Tamil Nadu's Sivaganga, had skipped ED summons citing his preoccupation with Pongal festival.

Chidambaram, arrested on August 21 by the CBI and later by the ED, had spent 106 days in the custody. The ED and the CBI are probing how Karti managed clearance for INX Media from the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) in



2007 when his father was a Minister.

According to the probe, INX Media directors Peter and Indrani Mukerjea had met Chidambaram to prevent any hold-up or delay in the FIPB approval.

Karti was arrested on February 28, 2018, by the CBI for allegedly accepting money to facilitate the FIPB clearance. He was later granted bail.

The ED registered a PMLA case based on a CBI FIR and alleged irregularities in the FIPB clearance to INX Media for receiving Rs 305 crore overseas funds in 2007. The agency has said the money received by associated entities was channelled back into the ASCPL.

The ED has attached Rs 54 crore properties of Karti and a firm in the case. It has also attached Mukerjeas' properties in the case.

JNU VC says 82% students registered for winter semester

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid registration boycott by the students' union, Jawaharlal Nehru University administration on Monday said over 80 per cent of students have registered for the winter semester.

Out of 8,500 students at JNU, 82 per cent of students have cleared their hostel dues for winter semester registration as on Monday, the varsity's vice-chancellor M Jagadesh Kumar said.

The remaining students are also expected to complete their registration process since the registration is still open with a late fee, he said. "The University is putting every effort to help the willing students in registering for the winter semester. The campus is peaceful and active in pursuing academic activities," he said.

Kumar said the University is gearing up to celebrate Republic Day. This year, for the first time, the NCC cadets of the University will be participating in a parade at the venue during the Republic Day celebrations, he said.

The students' union has given a call to boycott registration over the issue of hostel fee hike. The registration for the winter semester had ended on January 17.

Rahul: Modi extracts wealth from India's poor, gives it to 'cronies'



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi extracts wealth from India's poor and gives it to his "crony capitalist friends" and the big power brokers he is dependent on. Gandhi's attack on the prime minister came over an Oxfam report which claimed that India's richest 1 per cent hold more than four-times the wealth held by 953 million people who make up for the bottom 70 per cent of the country's population.

"Modi extracts wealth from India's poor and gives it to his crony capitalist friends & the big power brokers he's dependent on. 1% of India's super rich, now own 4 times more wealth than 1 billion of India's poor,"

The total wealth of all Indian billionaires is more than the full-year budget, said the study titled 'Time to Care' which was tagged by Gandhi

the former Congress president said in a tweet.

The total wealth of all Indian billionaires is more than the full-year budget, said the study titled 'Time to Care' which was tagged by Gandhi

Oxfam also said the world's 2,153 billionaires have more wealth than the 4.6 billion people who make up 60 per cent of the planet's population.

New series on India's fight to save Gir lions from virus

PNS ■ MUMBAI

A new 10-part series, "The Lion Kingdom", will focus on the heroic efforts of the forest department officials to save the Asiatic lions of Gir National Park from the deadly canine distemper virus in 2018.

The show, set to premiere on Animal Planet on January 27, will take viewers at the forefront of India's battle with the deadly virus, which threatened to wipe out the last of the surviving Asiatic lions in the Gir National Park.

The disease is known to have wiped out over 1000 lions in one deadly sweep in the Serengeti National Park in Tanzania in the 1990s.

Produced by filmmaker Upma Bhatnagar of Optimum Television, "The Lion Kingdom" features renowned veterinary surgeon Steve Leonard as the series host.

The forest department of Gir National Park worked round-the-clock to try and save lions while battling heavy rains and flooding and dealing with a sudden increase in the number of crocodiles in the area as a result, a release from Animal Planet said.

BJP alleges foul play in DTC office fire, 'suspects' AAP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Monday smelt a "conspiracy" behind the DTC office fire in which essential documents were destroyed, with its city unity chief Manoj Tiwari alleging it could be an attempt by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to hide his "failures".

Officials said essential documents, furniture and electronic equipment were gutted in the fire at the Delhi Transport Corporation office near the Civil Lines metro station before

it was brought under control by 10.20 am.

"I can smell a conspiracy. It could be a conspiracy by Arvind Kejriwal to hide his failures. They cannot escape by burning details of wrongdoings at the government office. Tell me why you could not buy a single bus till now and now you burnt all the documents," Tiwari tweeted in Hindi.

Former AAP MLA Kapil Mishra, who rebelled against the party and has now been fielded by the BJP from Model Town assembly constituency,



concurred with Tiwari and alleged the Transport Department is the "most corrupt".

"A losing government is busy in erasing marks of its

scams. The transport department has been the most corrupt department under the Kejriwal government," Mishra tweeted in Hindi.

"This desperation to burn files is first indicator of Kejriwal defeat in this election," he alleged. No immediate reaction was available from the Aam Aadmi Party.

Officials said a call about the fire was received at 8.38 am, following which eight fire tenders rushed to the spot initially.

The fire started from the server room on the first floor

and later spread to eight other rooms located on the same floor of the building, said Atul Garg, Director of Delhi Fire Services.

The blaze later spread to another room on the second floor of the same building, he said.

In total, 26 fire tenders were rushed to the spot, he added.

Several essential documents, furniture and electronic equipments were damaged in the fire which was brought under control by 10.20 am, the official said.

India 5th on list of corporate commitments to SBTs: Report

PNS ■ MUMBAI

India has ranked 5th among the countries surveyed for corporate commitments to science-based targets (SBT), ahead of Germany and Sweden, according to a report by a non-profit organisation released here on Monday.

The report found that investors are demanding better disclosure of climate change risk from Indian companies which has spurred better disclosure from India Inc.

The Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) India annual report, which examines carbon reduction activities of companies, shows a whopping 58 Indian companies, 98 per cent of the 59 firms surveyed between 2018 and 2019, have board-level oversight of climate-related issues.

Increasing climate activism and the growing band of climate-conscious investors have ensured that almost all boards of top responding Indian companies now have committees and members designated to addressing climate risk, the report said.

"Scores of investors are actively engaging companies to disclose their climate risk and helping them to do better," said Hamandeep Singh, Director



CDP India. "This can only benefit the companies through green innovation and help clean up our environment. The unlikely duo of world's teenagers and investors seem to be pushing the world, we now need to pick up the pace," Singh said in a statement.

Over 6,900 companies with over 55 per cent of global market capitalisation disclosed environmental data through CDP in 2018.

The report shows India is now the fifth country, and the first developing economy with maximum number of companies committing to SBT.

The US and Japan topped the list with 135 and 83 companies, where as the UK ranked third with 78 countries,

and France took the fourth spot with 51 companies.

By December last year, 38 Indian companies have been committed to SBT, which is significant growth from 25 companies in 2018, according to the report.

Germany and Sweden had 30 and 27 companies respectively, while as Switzerland and Spain had 23 and 22 companies respectively. Netherlands was 10th on the list with 18 companies in SBT initiatives.

According to the report, top corporate managements in India have integrated climate concerns in performance evaluation of key personal, with nearly 90 per cent providing incentives to senior staffers to help meet targets.

Revenue official held taking bribe in UP's Bareilly

PNS ■ BAREILLY (UP)

A revenue department official was arrested while accepting a bribe of Rs 4,000 in Uttar Pradesh's Bareilly district on Monday, police said. On the complaint of one Rampal Singh that Iekhpal Ramchandra was demanding bribe for some work, a police team caught him red-handed in Nawabganj township, Superintendent of Police (Anti Corruption Organisation) Rajiv Mehrotra said.

Air India launches bi-weekly flights between Bhubaneswar and Surat

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The much sought after direct flight service between Bhubaneswar and Surat was launched by Air India from the Biju Patnaik International Airport here on Monday.

The national carrier's Airbus A 320 aircraft took off for Surat from here at 8.40am with 81 passengers on board. "Air India will operate the direct flights between Bhubaneswar and Surat twice a week," the



Director of Biju Patnaik International Airport, B Venkateshwar Rao, said.

He informed that the airline will operate the flights from

Bhubaneswar to Surat on Mondays and Thursdays and from Surat to Bhubaneswar on Fridays and Sundays.

The flights to Surat from

SHORT READS

Cops launch hunt for four Maoists after pamphlet distribution

KANNUR (KER): Four suspected Maoists, including a woman, raised slogans and distributed pamphlets and pasted posters at a village in Kannur district on Monday, prompting the police to launch combing operations to nab them. The police said they were informed by the local people about the presence of the ultras at Ambayathode in Kottiyoor. Police and "Thunderbolt", an elite commando force of the Kerala police, was combing the forest area. A banner wanted people to cooperate with the CPI (Maoist) "Bharat Bandh" call on January 31 against the Centre's "Operation Samadhan"-anti-Left Wing Extremism (LWE) strategy.

'Live bomb' found near ticket counters of Mangaluru airport

MANGALURU: A 'live' bomb was found placed in an unattended bag near the ticket counters at the airport here in Karnataka on Monday, creating panic. According to police, the bomb was found in the unclaimed laptop bag and has been taken in a bomb disposal unit vehicle for controlled explosion at an open place here. "According to the preliminary reports, a live bomb was found at the Mangaluru Airport today. Steps have been taken to neutralise it and carry out further inquiry to identify people behind it," said Karnataka Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai. Earlier, after the suspicious bag was noticed, the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), which is maintaining security at the airport, cordoned off the area and reported the matter to the police.

Modi, Nepal Premier to jointly inaugurate projects on Tuesday

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Nepalese counterpart K P Sharma Oli will on Tuesday jointly inaugurate the second integrated check post at Joghani-Biratnagar, built with Indian assistance to facilitate trade and people's movement between the two nations. Both the prime ministers will also witness the remarkable progress in Indian-assisted post-earthquake housing reconstruction projects in Nepal, the Prime Minister's Office said in a tweet.

VIP movement, R-Day rehearsals throw Delhi traffic out of gear

NEW DELHI: Commuters in Delhi had a harrowing time on Monday as VIP movement, a protest march and Republic Day rehearsals affected movement of traffic on several key stretches. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal took out a roadshow from Valmiki Mandir near Gole Market to Patel Chowk metro station, causing huge traffic jams near Connaught Place and Panchsheel Road. Several students held a march from Mandi House to Jantar Mantar to protest the Citizenship Amendment Act and the National Register of Citizens. Rajpath, from Vijay Chowk to India Gate, was closed for traffic from 9 am to 12 noon for the Republic Day parade rehearsals. Traffic movement was also restricted on Rafi Marg, Janpath and Mansingh Road during this time.

Thakur, 18 others convicted in Muzaffarpur shelter home case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A Delhi court Monday convicted Brajesh Thakur and 18 others for sexual and physical assault on several girls in a Muzaffarpur shelter home.

Additional Sessions Judge Saurabh Kulshreshtha convicted Thakur for aggravated sexual assault under POCSO Act and gang rape.

The shelter home was run by Thakur, former MLA of Bihar People's Party (BPP).

The court acquitted one of the accused, who included 12 men and eight women.

It fixed January 28 for arguments on quantum of sentence.

It had held trial for the offences of rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, drugging of minors, criminal intimidation among other charges.

Thakur and employees of his shelter home, as well as Bihar department of social welfare



officials were charged with criminal conspiracy, neglect of duty and failure to report assault on the girls.

The charges also included offence of cruelty to child under their authority, punishable under the Juvenile Justice Act.

The court had reserved order on September 30, 2019 after final arguments by the CBI counsel and 20 accused in

the case in which former Bihar Social Welfare Minister and the then JD(U) leader Manju Verma also faced flak as allegations surfaced that Thakur had links with her husband.

She had resigned from her post on August 8, 2018.

The case was transferred on February 7, 2019 from a local court in Muzaffarpur in Bihar to a POCSO court at Saket district court complex in Delhi on

The court had on March 30, 2019, framed charges against the accused, including Thakur, for offences of criminal conspiracy to commit rape and penetrative sexual assault against minors

the Supreme Court's directions.

The matter had come to light after the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) submitted a report to the Bihar government on May 26, 2018, highlighting the alleged sexual abuse of minor girls in the shelter home for the first time.

Joint secretaries appointed for dept. of military affairs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Senior bureaucrats Rajeev Singh Thakur and Shantanu have been appointed as joint secretaries in the newly-created department of military affairs, as part of major bureaucratic reshuffle effected on Monday by the Union government.

Thakur, a 1995 batch IAS officer of Rajasthan cadre, will have a tenure till December 3, 2022. Shantanu, a 1997 batch Tripura cadre IAS officer, has been appointed to the post till March 27, 2024, an order issued by the personnel ministry said.

A total of 31 IAS officers have been appointed as joint secretaries in central government departments.

Odisha cadre IAS officer Vishal Gagan will be joint secretary, department of defence for a tenure of five years, it said.

Ashutosh Agnihotri has been appointed joint secretary in home ministry.

Jammu and Kashmir cadre IAS officer Ashok Kumar Parmar will be advisor, inter state council secretariat under the home ministry.

Bharat H Khera has been appointed joint secretary in



The Centre had last month created the department of military affairs headed by Chief of Defence Staff Bipin Rawat

Cabinet Secretariat. Vimalendra Anand Patwardhan, an officer of Indian Audit and Accounts Service, has been named as joint secretary and financial adviser in ministry of civil aviation, and IAS officer Nagaraju Mad-dirala will be joint secretary in the coal ministry.

S Suresh Kumar and Puneet Agarwal have been appointed as joint secretaries in department of commerce and department of defence production respectively.

Vineet Mathur, a 1994 batch officer of Indian Postal Service, will be JS, department of consumer affairs and Indian Forest Service (IFoS) officer Sanjukta Mudgal has been appointed as joint secretary in culture ministry. IAS officer Tanmay Kumar has been appointed joint secretary in the power ministry. Madhya Pradesh cadre IAS officer Hari Ranjan Rao will be joint secretary, department of telecommunications for five years.

Shah says BJP will thrive under Nadda

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who handed over the presidency of the BJP to J P Nadda on Monday, said that under his successor's leadership the party will become stronger and expand further.

Nadda was elected unopposed as the BJP national president after he emerged as the only leader in the fray following the nomination process in which his candidature was endorsed by top party brass.

"Heartiest congratulations to J P Nadda Ji on being elected the national president of the Bharatiya Janata Party. I firmly believe that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji's guidance and your leadership, the BJP will become stronger and expand even further," Shah said in a tweet.

"The party will benefit from Nadda ji's organizational skills and experience and will set new records," he said in a series of tweets.

Under Nadda's leadership, all BJP workers will continue to walk on the organization's path, he said.

Good marks are not everything, PM tells students facing exams

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Reaching out to students across the country in exam season, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said good marks in exams are not everything and also suggested that homes should have a "technology free" room where those entering can't carry any gadgets.

Addressing students during a "Pariksha Pe Charcha" programme, the prime minister sought to speak to them in their own language and said his conversations with them will be "hashtag without filter". "Speak to me hashtag without filter," he said at the interaction held at the Talkatora Stadium here.

In the event, telecast and streamed live, Modi said everyone should keep abreast of the latest technology but stressed that it should not be allowed to govern lives.

"We should have the strength to keep technology under our control and ensure it does not waste our time. One room in our homes should be technology free. Whoever enters will not carry any gadgets," he told students.

Assuring students of his complete focus, Modi said they could speak to him openly.



The PM highlighted the importance of extra-curricular activities and said there is a growing tendency among parents to push their children into activities considered "glamorous"

The prime minister also urged students to spend their spare time with the elderly.

He said students should not be afraid of failure and take it as a part of life.

"I was told I shouldn't attend Chandrayaan landing as there was no guarantee of success but I needed to be there,"

the prime minister said, recalling the failed landing of the Chandrayaan-2 mission's Vikram lander.

Good marks in exams are not everything, he told the students. "We have to come out of the thinking that exams are everything," the prime minister said.

"Parents should take time out to find out what their children want to do instead of pushing them into activities that are considered glamorous which they can discuss in their conversations with their friends," he said.

Modi also said children should be "pursued not pressured into studies" and recommended that students read his book, "Exam Warriors", to get over the stress of appearing for exams.

Shiv Sena should clarify over Chavan's statement: Fadnavis

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Former Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Monday said Shiv Sena should clarify over Congress leader Prithviraj Chavan's statement that it had proposed to form a coalition government with Congress and NCP after the 2014 Maharashtra Assembly election to stop the BJP from coming to power in the state.

Fadnavis, now Leader of Opposition in the Assembly, said Chavan's remarks were very surprising and revealed the "true face" of the Uddhav Thackeray-led party, which in November formed the government in the state along with Congress and NCP.

"What Chavan has said is very surprising. Coming from someone of his stature, it has to be taken seriously. The disclosure has revealed the real face of Shiv Sena," Fadnavis told media in Delhi.



Devendra Fadnavis

"The Shiv Sena should come out with a clarification over Chavan's remarks," Fadnavis said.

Chavan has said that after the 2014 Assembly polls, Shiv Sena and NCP had approached him to form a coalition government to stop the BJP. But the Congress had rejected the demand immediately, Chavan told PTI in an interview on Sunday.

Even after the Assembly election in 2019, Congress chief Sonia Gandhi was not ready for a coalition with the Uddhav Thackeray-led Sena but she relented after long deliberations, Chavan has said.

Yechury attacks govt on slowdown in economy

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury on Monday slammed the government over the slowdown in economy and said that this was not just "mismanagement" but "destruction of lives".

Reacting to reports that the government's tax collection is likely to fall short of its estimate by Rs 2.5 lakh crore or 1.2 per cent of GDP in 2019-

20, Yechury said that the Centre will be made accountable.

"This is not mere mismanagement of the economy. It is the destruction of lives and livelihoods of millions of Indians, while Modi's rich cronies continue to benefit and fund the BJP. The people on the streets have taken note, accountability will be fixed," he tweeted.

J-K woos businesses with its first investors' meet

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Monday organised a first of its kind pre-summit investors' meet here, inviting investments from across the world by highlighting the untapped potential of the newly-formed union territory.

The event, which was a curtain-raiser to the three-day Global Investors' Summit to be held in Srinagar and Jammu this year, showcased policy and regulatory environment, investment opportunities in 14 focus sectors to boost manufacturing and employment generation in the region.

On the occasion, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Girish Chandra Murmu said that the Global Investors' Meet -- with the theme of 'explore, invest and



grow' -- is a platform that will bring together senior entrepreneurs, leaders from corporate sector across the country, senior policymakers, development agencies, investors from across the world and local businessmen.

"We intend to take a leap forward in making Jammu and Kashmir an economic par-

adise for investors and I would like to invite you all to take the lead in setting up your enterprises in Jammu & Kashmir.

"Today's Pre-Summit Investors' Interaction has been organised to deliberate with you all on desired initiatives for creating an investor-friendly ecosystem and make you interested in Jammu and Kashmir,"

Minister of State, PMO Jitendra Singh congratulated the lieutenant governor for taking such an initiative "at the right time and right place"

Murmu said.

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Secretary B V R Subrahmanyam said, "Jammu & Kashmir is little known about the places except what we have seen in the films, it is quite different what we know. J&K is not a backward place but it has the brightest and skilled people. I have read in a book that people in J&K don't die from the disease but from the old age."

Nirbhaya case: SC rejects death row convict's plea claiming juvenility

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Monday rejected the plea of a death row convict in the Nirbhaya gang rape and murder case challenging the Delhi High Court order which had dismissed his claim of being a juvenile at the time of commission of offence.

A bench comprising Justices R Banumathi, Ashok Bushan and A S Bopanna dismissed the plea of the death row convict, Pawan Kumar Gupta, and upheld the Delhi High Court



verdict. The apex court said there was no ground to interfere with the high court order that rejected Pawan's plea and his claim was rightly rejected by the trial court as also the high court.

Advocate A P Singh, appear-

ing for Pawan, said that as per his school leaving certificate he was a minor at the time of the offence and none of the courts, including trial court and high court, ever considered his documents.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for Delhi police, said that his claim of juvenility was considered at each and every judicial forum and it will be a travesty of justice if the convict is allowed to raise the clam of juvenility repeatedly and at this point of time.

Shamsher Surjewala passes away

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/CHANDIGARH

Veteran Congress leader Shamsher Singh Surjewala passed away in Delhi on Monday following prolonged illness. He was 87.

Surjewala, father of party leader Randeep Surjewala, breathed his last at the AIIMS hospital in New Delhi this morning, family sources said.

Shamsher Singh Surjewala was a five-time MLA and one-time Rajya Sabha MP from Haryana. He was also the former president of the Haryana Congress and a former minister.

He was president of the Haryana Krishak Samaj and fought for the rights of farmers.

His body was taken from AIIMS to Narwana in Haryana where his cremation will take place later in the day.



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi visited AIIMS and met Randeep Surjewala to convey his condolences on Monday morning.

"In the passing of Shri Shamsher Singh Surjewala, we have lost a popular & respected Congressman who worked tirelessly in the service of India's farmers & the development of Haryana. My condolences to his family & friends. Om Shanti," Gandhi tweeted. Former Haryana chief min-

ister Bhupinder Singh Hooda also condoled his demise and said he was sad on hearing the news.

"My tribute to the departed soul. May God give peace to his soul and strength to the family to bear this grief," he said. Haryana Congress chief Kumari Selja said, "Deeply pained at the demise of former Haryana Congress chief, former Rajya Sabha MP and former Haryana minister Shamsher Singh Surjewala.

ED arrests NRI in case against Robert Vadra

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The ED has arrested NRI businessman C C Thampi in connection with its money laundering probe against Robert Vadra, the son-in-law of Congress chief Sonia Gandhi, and absconding arms dealer Sanjay Bhandari in a case related to acquisition of alleged illegal assets abroad, officials said on Monday.

Thampi is stated to be "controlling" a Dubai-based company Sky Light. In 2009, Bhandari's firm Santech FZE purchased a London asset from a private company, which was acquired by Sky Light.

Vadra is alleged to have acquired this London-based asset, and few purported emails between him and Bhandari, regarding renovation of this flat, are part of the evidence in the case.



The agency claims Thampi met Vadra through an aide of his mother-in-law and Congress president Sonia Gandhi, while the latter reportedly told the Enforcement Directorate that he only met him on board an Emirates flight some years ago.

Thampi, during his earlier

grilling session with the ED, claimed that Vadra had stayed at the Bryanston Square property in London. Vadra, in his statement made to the agency, denied Thampi's claim.

The agency arrested Thampi on Friday under the provision of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) after

It is understood that the arrest will unravel the "missing links" in the case where the ED has charged Vadra of acquiring illegal assets abroad in coordination with Bhandari

he was summoned in the case, they said.

It is understood that his arrest and subsequent custodial grilling will unravel the "missing links" in the case where the ED has charged Vadra of acquiring illegal assets abroad in coordination with Bhandari.

Thampi has been charged by the agency in the past in an

alleged illegal hawala dealings and land purchase case in the country in 2017, in alleged contravention of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA).

It had also issued a FEMA show-cause notice to Thampi for alleged violation of foreign exchange laws to the tune of over Rs 1,000 crore in the purchase of vast tracts of land in Kerala.

The firms that are being investigated by the ED, as part of the two FEMA show-cause notices issued against him, include Holiday City Centre Private Limited, Holiday Properties Private Limited and Holiday Bekal Resorts Private Limited.

Agency sources had said the NRI businessman is also under the scanner for his reported dealings with some politicians and bureaucrats.

BJP's new chief

J P Nadda is being considered a proxy for Shah but has organisational strengths of his own. Will he be allowed to rise?



When LK Advani was the BJP president and clearly the more "seen" face of a resurgent Right, having steered the Rathayatra and the temple campaign in Ayodhya, he stepped back and proposed the name of the moderate and avuncular Atal Bihari Vajpayee as the party's prime ministerial candidate. That was in 1995 and Advani's wisdom lay in understanding why governance needed a softer, inclusive and acceptable face and a broader alliance with other parties. He had the foresight to set the foundation upon

which a winning formula could be built. In that sense, the BJP president's post became important in carving out a legitimate space for the Right within the coalition template of the times and ensuring that it emerged as a sound electoral alternative to the Left of Centre Congress-dominated narrative. That was a tough time of building and managing the party, positing all that the Congress was fast-losing — a credible organisational decorum, regular elections, fair processes and an inner-party democracy. To that extent, the party president's post was originally intended to be sacred. The arrival of Narendra Modi and Amit Shah clearly changed all that, the two building the BJP's base not so much by processes but the weight of their persona. While Modi concentrated on building a pan-India image as a trusted leader, deputy Shah took up backroom mathematics and personally weighed in on even the microscopic, unit-level decisions of the party. During his tenure of over five-and-a-half years, Shah's focussed aggression strengthened the BJP's matrix and ensured its political conversion as the party's best ever electoral performance. Barring a few setbacks in State polls, the party has managed to become the single-largest in the Lok Sabha. That gave him more than stature; the cadres held him in awe. And he revelled in the arrogance of that absolutism, pushing most contentious issues in the BJP manifesto as Home Minister in the Government, a man in a hurry to prove his heft in the party than in people's minds. And now that he is the Home Minister, he is duty-bound to honour the party's "one person, one post" formula and has handed over its reins to Jagat Prakash Nadda, a loyalist and a low-key worker of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the BJP's ideological anchor that, at this point of time, has complete hold of policies and deliverance, and cares not much about realpolitik. In many ways, therefore, Nadda is being considered a proxy for Shah, who would like to be remembered as the usherer of Right wing legacies and a neo-cultural revolution, one that seeks to overturn liberalism as an imposition and Hindu theocracy as the natural evolution of history — the Ram temple, the abrogation of Article 370 and the review of citizenship based on ancestry. Shah wouldn't want to relinquish this helmship of BJP's transitional moment. The ascension of Nadda, therefore, seems to be about ticking off the right boxes. Besides, it also allows Shah to escape the heat arising from the citizenship row at the moment. Seen as the architect of the otherisation politics in the country and linking the party's agenda to Government policy, the delegation of party responsibilities to Nadda is an attempt to seemingly dilute this autocracy.

Nadda may be following Shah's footsteps but in the end will have to be the media face and explain the BJP's most difficult phase — keeping the faith of the Lok Sabha verdict and presiding over the social unrest over citizenship. The extent of civil society protests proves that it is fast losing hope in the BJP as a "party with a difference." If the States the BJP lost after the general election are any indication, then the people now want it to account for its non-performance on the economy and jobs crisis and subversion of social equilibrium through religious polemics. Nadda, while continuing the existing party's agenda, can do so subtly and use his newness to soothe anxieties through sensible outreach programmes. There are parts to Nadda that the BJP can use smartly to change perceptions before the next round of general elections. A student leader, who has plodded his way up the ranks, he has a grasp on grassroots, having been in-charge of the BJP's Lok Sabha campaign in Uttar Pradesh and the Maharashtra polls. He has to deliver Delhi and Bihar, the former quite a difficult challenge. But going by the speeches of the Modi-Shah duo at his anointment, it seemed the election of the BJP president was another missile aimed at the Congress which is yet to hold the most basic of organisational elections. Nadda may appear to be gifting BJP a "lit" moment but that will have little value if he is a cipher.

Flying kites

The Government may be testing waters with silly proposals. But this points to a lack of creativity in policy-making



The bureaucrat, who thought about the preposterous suggestion to limit duty-free alcohol purchases to a single bottle, will one day head the entire department. And that frankly is more worrying than the proposal itself because such ideas can come only from the heads of narrow-minded individuals with a puritanical sense of morality. Of course, one is not encouraging alcoholism or smoking. It remains unlikely that the Government will ever go down the route of prohibition, although given some previous illogical decisions taken by it and the

fact that the ruling BJP is an ally of arch-prohibitionist Nitish Kumar, nothing can ever be ruled out. That said, drinkers and smokers are a rich source of funds for the Government and Bihar is still reeling from the after effects of Kumar's bizarre decision. In addition, the Commerce and Industry Ministry led by Piyush Goyal wants to restrict the volume of goods Indians can bring into the country while coming back. The derision that these decisions have been met by is completely justified. But what boggles one's mind is that the Government is looking at such minor issues when it should be thinking about ways and means of reviving the economy. If the thinking is that Indians will suddenly quit their Scotch whisky and start buying the *shudh desi* molasses-derived liquid that masquerades as "whisky", then one can safely assure the powers that be that it won't happen. Such thinking will only take us back to the command and control economy of Indira Gandhi when smuggling and bootlegging ruled. Ironic then that the BJP is trying to highlight Indira's links with Mumbai's most notorious smuggler of that era, Karim Lala.

The simple fact is that to get the economy going again, the Government needs a whole new thinking, the concept of wealth transfer from the very rich being impractical. The Modi Government, despite such schemes as Digital India and Start-up India, hasn't been able to spur entrepreneurial growth. Job creation is at its lowest and India risks turning its demographic dividend into a time bomb. The greatest advantage this country has is being squandered with a pliant Opposition, which has sought to focus on issues that do not have large-scale appeal. But the Government is more keen on looking at silly minutiae than the bigger picture. At the end of the day, a masterpiece not only has fabulous details but looks appealing overall. This Government is concentrating on trying hard to choose the colour for a dull, monochromatic image of modern India.

A new lurking danger

The three-day *Ijtima* organised by the Tablighi Jamaat last year points towards a larger trend of home-grown radicalism within the country. Radicalisation of the vulnerable must end



SANDHYA JAIN

Few would have missed the videos of children (under 10 years of age) chanting *azadi* and abusing the Prime Minister and Home Minister for alleged animosity and evil intent towards one community. Since one cannot expect children of such tender age to have knowledge or understanding of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and the National Population Register (NPR), it is safe to conclude that family elders tutored them to express such visceral anger towards the Government.

A dangerous radicalisation of the Muslim community is being fostered — with deliberate intent — the consequences of which are yet to unravel. Barring perhaps Saudi Arabia, it is doubtful if even Islamic countries make girls of such tender age wear full *abaya* (head and neck covering). Certainly, it has not been seen in India before. This points to deep indoctrination of every family within a targeted area and does not bode well for the future.

On the one hand, it will intensify the ghetto mentality within the community. On the other, it will make other citizens wary of dealing with those who wish to leave or avoid the ghetto. This is a double-edged sword that can only harm the Muslim community in the long and short run.

Doubtless, a powerful section of the community is behind the radicalisation agenda, for reasons unknown. The first indication of this phenomenon came during the three-day *Ijtima* (religious gathering) organised by Tablighi Jamaat (November 30 to December 2, 2018), when 15 lakh Muslims gathered at Bulandshahr, Uttar Pradesh, though permission was given for only two lakh people. Many guests came from abroad.

The proceedings of this gathering are not known. It attracted national attention when some cows were killed in a village on the road to Bulandshahr. Police inspector Subodh Kumar Singh died in the violence that followed but managed to contain the situation within the affected village. The *Ijtima* concluded peacefully but analysts said such a large gathering should not have been permitted in such a sensitive State and by such an orthodox body. Tablighi Jamaat exhorts Muslims to strictly follow practices adhered to during the lifetime of the Prophet, especially in matters of dress and ritual. All traces of non-Islamic (syncretic) behaviour are to be erased.

This converges with a larger trend of home-grown radicalism within the country. After the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) and the Indian Mujahideen (IM) were banned, the Kerala-based Popular Front of India (PFI) emerged as the successor militant body and spread to Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Telangana, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar.



Experts expect the Islamic State (IS) to formally tie up with the PFI to entrench itself in India and reach Nepal, Bangladesh and Myanmar. Sri Lanka has already been radicalised by people who visited southern India before the Easter blasts in 2019. Several youth from Kerala have travelled to Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan to join the IS; others have been caught doing online propaganda for it. Intelligence agencies are aware that the IS is attracting youth in India and in May 2019, it announced a new "Wilayah of Hind" (Hind Province) without specifying its geographical limits.

The Counterterrorism Group (CTG) Analysis & Intelligence Report (November 2019) states that after being driven out of Syria and the Middle East, the IS asked its leaders to move to South-east Asia as almost every country in this region has deep ties to the Middle East. Its focus is on female domestic workers in Hong Kong and Singapore, who are vulnerable on various counts; Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines are next.

Female migrant workers are chosen because of their low (but stable) incomes, familiarity with English and wide network of international connections. Typically, they earn around \$1.00 to \$1.50 per hour and are often in need of financial help, for which they agree to join the Caliphate. English-speaking workers help

“MIGRANT WORKERS ARE EASY TO MANIPULATE AS THEY ARE POORLY EDUCATED, LIVE IN AN ALIEN ENVIRONMENT AND ARE LONELY. THE RECRUITER CONTACTS THE MOST VULNERABLE AND OFFERS A SECURE, ROMANTIC, AND LOVING RELATIONSHIP; SOON THE MIGRANT IS INVITED FOR TRAINING VIA ONLINE CHAT ROOMS”

the IS reach other demographics and regions. They help acquire resources and intelligence from areas its members normally don't frequent.

Migrant workers are easy to manipulate as they are poorly educated, live in an alien environment and are lonely. Radicalisation usually begins after a traumatic event such as divorce, financial hardship or culture shock. The recruiter contacts the most vulnerable and offers a secure, romantic, and loving relationship; soon the migrant is invited for training via online chat rooms. Often migrants are recruited by fellow workers at a prayer group or social gathering on their day off. Some workers have been known to reach out to militants; they are quickly inducted into radical groups and groomed to become militants.

In a survey of radicalised domestic workers, the Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC) found that at least 50 Indonesian women working overseas as maids, nannies and caretakers for the elderly were radicalised by the IS and its affiliates. A study between 2013 and 2018 found that around 800 domestic workers from South-east Asia tried to enter Syria or Iraq to join the IS after being radicalised abroad. This shows the efficacy of the IS' recruitment methods. IPAC has asked Governments to create mandatory training modules to educate migrant workers about the

signs of exploitation and to help exploited victims.

In September 2019, Singapore arrested three Indonesian women domestic workers who promoted the IS online in their spare time, donated money to militants overseas and became so committed that at least one was ready to die as a suicide bomber in Syria. One Indonesian maid revealed that she listened to Salafi podcasts while working and an Indonesian butcher she met online encouraged her to go to Syria to join the IS. However, the Singapore authorities discovered her plans and deported her back to Indonesia in 2017.

Zachary Abuza, expert on IS in South-east Asia at the National War College, Washington, says the real stuff happens in dedicated chat rooms on encrypted apps — from bomb designs to active coordination. The female recruits serve as financiers, recruiters and coordinators; they collect funds from radicalised maids and send them to domestic *jihadist* groups. India is sitting on a tinderbox. When elementary school children chant obnoxious slogans against the nation and its top leadership, the masterminds behind the scenes should ponder what poison harvest they will reap from these toxic seeds. *Azadi* cannot hide behind the *tiranga*; India will never submit to further loss of territory.

(The author is a senior journalist)

SOUNDBITE

This is not mere mismanagement of the economy. It is the destruction of lives and livelihoods of millions of Indians while Modi's rich cronies continue to benefit and fund BJP.

CPI(M) general secretary —Sitaram Yechury

The world is respectful; there's a lot to do and give. And for the first time, I can think about myself. Let me be a little self-centered and enjoy what I have earned.

Actor —Kangana Ranaut

We will not take retaliatory action against India over its boycott of palm oil purchases amid a political row between the two nations. We are too small to take action.

Malaysian Prime Minister —Mahathir Mohamad

Our job is to explain to people that we are right and they are wrong. Just because we have numbers today we can't do terror politics. Let's go to people explaining benefits of CAA.

WB BJP vice president —Chandra Kumar Bose

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Whose sentence?

Sir — One fails to understand why so many chances are being given to depraved humans indulging in heinous acts. Why do we need to empathise with an undeserving handful of the worst behaved citizens? It is time to change this thinking. There is a worldwide debate on whether the death penalty stands scrutiny. There have been strong arguments for and against. Suffice it to say that our legal system currently allows death penalty to be prescribed only for the rarest of rare cases.

Rather than discussing this aspect, I would like to draw attention to the "sentence" meted out by criminals to innocent citizens for no fault of theirs. The relatives of the accused, sometimes abetted by the local officials, put pressure on the victim to withdraw the case. The victim and her family thus live under fear and dread constantly. Now activists have joined the bandwagon. Instead of focussing on the human rights of the criminals, why do we not vociferously argue about the right to life and liberty of the victim as guaranteed by Article 21 of our

Nation at the cusp of political extremes

The nation is passing through trying times with the Modi Government at its nadir of popularity. Its reputation as the architect of "modern" India has taken a sound beating. The nation-wide protests over the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) has doused all intentions of the Modi-Shah duo to usher the country into a "golden" period. Branded as "dictatorial", the BJP's rule has only created a wedge between communities. Every decision of the Government that was flung at the people has been met with "distrust" and "apprehension." A slew of laws that have been passed in recent times have had a debilitating effect on the secular fabric of the country. The ruling dispensation's agenda, which is to alienate the masses, is not difficult to understand.

Nevertheless, one would certainly not want to believe in "hearsay" and rather expect the Government to come clean on its will and intention on issues that matter to the country. By allowing "misinformation" and "rumours" to dwell in the minds of the people, the saffron party is doing a disservice to its own image. The highly-hyped "*Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas*" slogan sounds all but hollow now. A massive public mandate does not give any Government the right to push through with its agenda at the cost of public sentiments.

Constitution? Or the human right against cruelty in the Universal Declaration?

It is ironic how those, who brutally violate the rights of another, clamour for their own rights to be protected and are listened to

with a great show of fairness. Those adults, who commit these heinous crimes, know it well that they are punishable with severe sentences.

Padmini Raghavendra Secunderabad

Stop interfering

Sir — US President Donald Trump and Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg are both attending the ongoing World



Agreed, every Government is well within its right to frame legislations. But shouldn't they be implemented after proper deliberations? More importantly, after taking the people into confidence? What we see now is that a "popular" Government installed at the Centre is hell-bent to dislodge its predecessor but has earned the wrath of the countrymen for "authoritarianism" and "evasiveness" that has become its "virtue." Will the citizenship imbroglio make the people of the country seek a change of guard at the Centre? In any case, oscillating between the Congress and the BJP is the only answer right now.

Pachu Menon Margao

Economic Forum (WEF) meet. For sure, Trump will renew his running battle with the young climate campaigner when they join the A-list movers and shakers attending the 50th anniversary of the Davos conclave this week. Thunberg has already made her message clear: Put an end to the fossil fuel "madness." That her missive is aimed at Trump, among others, would be anybody's guess.

Thunberg hogged the limelight when she began a grassroots campaign at the age of 15 by skipping school every Friday to demonstrate outside the Swedish Parliament. The protests had inspired millions of young people to take action against climate change. Her meteoric rise from an ordinary school-going child to becoming a world-renowned climate campaigner must be appreciated. If Trump and other leaders cannot appreciate her efforts to fight climate change, then we can only pity them. If they can't help her cause, they must at least not throw a spanner in her efforts to fight climate change.

TK Nandanam Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Centre must not lose the vision

Nobody would like solar and wind power generators also to turn into NPAs with the key parameters being compromised



AMIT KUMAR

The national vision of infrastructure services, which raises the quality of life and ease of living in India to global standards, sets the context of the recently-unveiled National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) for the next five years. Projects in energy, roads, railways, urban, rural and social infrastructure constitute the NIP. Of the ₹102 lakh crore outlay of the NIP, energy takes the lion's share at 24 per cent of the total investment. Within the energy sector, the share of conventional power, renewable and nuclear energy is 48 per cent, 38 per cent and six per cent respectively. About 42 per cent of the projects are already under implementation whereas 19 per cent are under development and 31 per cent are in the conceptual stage. In both the latter categories, key projects are in the renewable energy sector. According to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, the Central and State Governments would have an equal share of 39 per cent each in the NIP. The private sector, on the other hand, would have a 22 per cent share, which the Government expects to increase to 30 per cent by 2025.

Elaborating on the energy sector vision 2025, the NIP Task Force envisages an increase in the total installed capacity from the present 356 GW to 619 GW. Furthermore, it expects the share of thermal power to come down from 66 per cent to 50 per cent while the share of renewables rises from 22 per cent to 39 per cent in 2025. Indeed, renewable energy's share in consumption is envisioned to reach 19 per cent from the present nine per cent. The continued thrust on energy transition is certainly encouraging. Interestingly, unlike the conventional power sector where only six per cent of the NIP is implemented by the private sector, in the renewable energy sector, 100 per cent of implementation would be by the private sector.

Without going into the merits of the projected capacity of 619 GW in a decelerating economy at a time when the existing capacity is either severely underutilised or stressed, the private sector's appetite to reach 241 GW in five years has to be viewed critically. Reasons for slippages in the 12th Five Year Plan outlined in India's National Electricity Plan, 2018 include problems in acquisition of land; issues in timely completion of power evacuation systems plus capacity of the transmission system and issues in availability of adequate finances from banks and financial institutions.

In fact, even now, the challenges pertaining to land availability, transmission infrastructure/connectivity, inordinate payment delays, and discoms' disinclination to sign Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) for renewable energy continue to act as roadblocks to the sector's growth. On top of it is the tendency of some discoms to renegotiate the existing PPAs because of an excessive obsession with low tariffs elsewhere, without understanding the dynamics of renewable energy technologies. All these factors ultimately have put a dampener on the sentiments of private players. The spate of tender cancellations or multiple rounds of re-bidding is a testimony to this troubling trend.

This in turn has resulted in a perception of political peril among the renewable energy industry, something that would have been unimaginable earlier. Couple it with the risk-averse approach of financial institutions on one hand and a general lack of appetite for new investments by the private sector on the other, and we have a scenario not exactly conducive to implementation of renewable energy projects.

While several Government initiatives such as reverse auctions and ultra-mega solar parks successfully catapulted this sector to commendable heights, it is time for the Government to provide another push by working proactively to remove already well-recognised bottlenecks. A consistent policy regime with long-term visibility is a prerequisite to encourage private sector investments, whether domestic or foreign. Unfortunately, even at the Central level, lack of clarity on various aspects such as applicable GST and safeguard duty did actually disrupt the pace that the industry had gathered. As electricity is a concurrent subject between the Centre and States it adds another layer of complexity. A conducive policy environment at the Centre alone is not sufficient unless it is backed by an equally supportive State-level policy framework. Discoms being the primary buyers of renewable electricity, whether from large plants or from distributed solar energy, their financial health and willingness to purchase renewable electricity play a crucial role. Curtailment from renewable energy generators, overdue payments and reluctance in adopting solar energy are not only indicators of archaic mindsets but are roadblocks. This reinforces the urgent need for reforms in the power sector — much more fundamental and structural than the ones undertaken so far, backed by strong political will. It is equally important to recognise the risks associated with unviable tariffs. No one would like solar and wind power generators also to turn into NPAs with the key parameters being compromised for the sake of artificially created tariff caps. Against this background, it would be crucial for the Centre to seize the initiative to take along the States, bringing them on board for effective delivery through the infrastructure pipeline.

(The writer is Senior Fellow and Senior Director, TERI)

ALMOST 50 LAKH MUSLIM INFILTRATORS WILL BE IDENTIFIED AND CHASED OUT OF THE COUNTRY IF NEEDED.

—WEST BENGAL BJP CHIEF DILIP GHOSH

POINT COUNTERPOINT



THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE ARE SAFE BECAUSE THEY HAVE MAMATA. WE ARE IN A POSITION TO FIGHT AGAINST NPR AND CAA TO RETAIN THEIR CITIZENSHIP —WEST BENGAL EDUCATION MINISTER PARTHA CHATTERJEE

Social experiment gone awry

Because of CAA, even the NRC exercise gets debunked. This gives a further jolt to ethnonationalist identities, who take CAA to be a bigger threat than illegal immigration



PRASENJIT BISWAS

Do those among the linguistic and religious minorities of Assam, who have failed the test of citizenship in the recently-concluded update of the National Register of Citizens (NRC), become the soft target of the heightened cry for protection of indigenous identity in Assam and North-east India? With the passage of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), one section of those left out of the NRC now gets an opportunity to be citizens, solely on the basis of religion, while another section remains ignored. Does such a contrived outcome make anyone happy in Assam?

Assam's Bengali-origin religious minorities, particularly called *Miyas* or *Bhatiyas* in Brahmaputra Valley and *Bangals* in Barak Valley face the biggest threat of proving their credentials after being left out of the NRC. Those excluded will now have to prepare for a complicated legal battle to prove their citizenship through the Foreigners' Tribunals. These tribunals are supposed to decide the fate of an estimated five lakh presumed illegals and how many would succeed in such a trial is anyone's guess. The tribunals, governed by the Foreigners' Act, 1946, place the "onus of proof" on the suspect and not on the prosecution, making it difficult for a "suspect" to get natural justice. As citizenship is considered the most basic right to have or not to have all other rights, the shifting of the "onus of proof" makes it extremely difficult for anyone to prove credentials. Worse is the case when the tribunals at random *ex parte* declare too many people foreigners. Many of those people have been put in inhumane detention camps in six places, numbering around a thousand, of which 23 have already died in custody.

The protest against the CAA remains silent on this humanitarian crisis and the ignominy of effacing these unfortunate excluded people from public discourse. With the coming of CAA, a section of these excluded people now wait for some redemption, while another section silently prepares for a long and uncertain legal battle that lies ahead. Both the sections, however, face another cultural test of proving their antecedents, which could be satisfied only by accepting the dominant language of the State.

Any democratic movement, such as one currently against the CAA, should have taken into account the plight of these people. But they are looked upon as "foreigners" and "illegal immigrants" whose very presence threatens indigenous language and culture. This is how, much of the protesters favour the NRC to weed them out while they reject the CAA. The CAA bears the signature of sheltering "persecuted religious minorities from three neighbouring countries" and thereby changes the rules of the game with which the NRC was carried out. Because of CAA, even the NRC exercise gets automatically debunked. This gives a further jolt to ethnonationalist identities, who take CAA to be a bigger threat than illegal immigration. The layered and nuanced ideas of citizenship as indigeneity stand in contrast to granting citizenship to a section of illegal immigrants on the basis of religion. In effect, old faultlines between indigenous ethnic identity and non-indigenous Indian citizens is reinvoked, turning both the CAA and NRC exercise as detrimental to the language, land and culture of ethnic groups. The question is no longer just saving the indigenous habitats of North-east from illegals but it is also a question of "protective discrimination" for the native and the indigenous from non-indigenous Indian citizens. The land policy of the Government of Assam

“ THE FEAR AND ANXIETY SURROUNDING THE NEW ENTRIES RELATING TO FATHER'S BIRTHPLACE AND DATE OF BIRTH IN THE NPR FORMAT AND DROPPING OF ALL MUSLIM FESTIVALS FROM THE LIST OF HOLIDAYS SUGGESTED IN THE NPR CREATE A BIGGER SENSE OF DISCRIMINATION. THE SENSE OF PROTECTION GENERATED OUT OF FEAR OF BEING OUTNUMBERED IN THE NORTH-EAST FEELS THIS FEAR OF DISCRIMINATION AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL AND VICE-VERSA. ALTHOUGH FEAR TRANSMITS EASILY, YET THE CAUSE AND PURPOSE OF ANTI-CAA PROTESTS ALSO REMAIN DIFFERENT BETWEEN THE NORTH-EAST AND THE REST OF INDIA ”



stated clearly why non-indigenous citizens, being settlers cannot buy/own land.

CAA's exclusion of the Sixth Schedule tribal States from its ambit created a sense of heightened anxiety in Assam and Tripura for being forced to accept those non-indigenous settler immigrants who would be legalised by the CAA. The possible demographic impact and squeeze on language and culture has reinvoked the fear of getting outnumbered. To rein in such a majoritarian impact of the CAA, there are rising demands for introduction of an Inner Line Permit (ILP) system to physically restrict the movement of other citizens from outside the State.

In a sense, the CAA meets its toughest resistance from such demands of protective discrimination, as it would further alienate the North-east and its people from the mainstream while ensuring their specific rights. Certainly this would negatively impact economic transaction between the North-east and the rest of India and as a corollary break the idea of seamless economic connections with South and South-east Asian countries, as mooted in the Act East Policy of the Centre.

The governance structure of States in the North-east seemingly is not able to face the implosion of sentiments of ethnic and indigenous groups against the CAA and is also unable to contain the fight against the CAA from relapsing into a full fight against the State and the Government. In an Assam-specific way, a slew of measures like amendment to Article 345, 347 and Article 371B to ensure protection of Ahomias as the State language, culture and identity of the people of Assam has been announced by the State Government to neutralise the anti-CAA protests, but social organisations are not convinced of some measures. They argued that if protective measures had preceded CAA, probably it would not have become such a big

protest. The shift of focus in the protest from illegal immigrants to strict measures of protection in Assam and Tripura not only created an alternative political discourse of pre-colonial identity assertion and securing of homelands, but it also harmed those who are supposed to benefit from the CAA, notably the Hindu Bengalis. This change into community affirmation rigidly redraws several boundaries, creates a reverse discrimination towards the beneficiaries of the CAA by uniting everyone else.

The announcement of the National Population Register (NPR) at the national level and much of the resistance to the idea that the NPR and National Register of Indian Citizens (NRIC) are the same arose from transmission of Northeastern reactions to the mainland due to greater visibility of protests in the North-east. After the first wave of protests in the North-east, major Indian cities witnessed a stir against the NPR and NRC exercise that are supposed to supplement CAA by separating the infiltrators from persecuted religious minorities. This inherently differentiating tenor of CAA made a nationwide resurgence of demands for a caste census and rejection of any test of citizenship. The dystopic Assam experience occupied much of the national imagination in calling for a boycott of NPR cum NRIC, especially when CAA makes it clearer for whom the bell will toll.

The fear and anxiety surrounding the new entries relating to father's birthplace and date of birth in the NPR format and dropping of all Muslim festivals from the list of holidays, as suggested in the NPR, create a bigger sense of discrimination. The sense of protection generated out of fear of being outnumbered in the North-east feeds this fear of discrimination at the national level and vice-versa. Although fear transmits easily, yet the cause and pur-

pose of anti-CAA protests also remain different between North-east and the rest of India. The question of defending the Constitution, an essential part of the pan-Indian discourse of resistance to CAA finds very little speck in the North-east where the it is more about protection from the non-indigenous and the illegals. The convergences and the divergences are both ingenious as they promise to set up new equations and alliances between social identities. The beauty of such disjointed resistance to the CAA is that it gives rise to a new form of federal relations. How the Government manages it will decide the future course of politics in India.

It is also worth nothing the debates centering around some of the States opposing implementation of the CAA and their moves by filing cases against it in the Supreme Court. Interestingly enough, Arunachal Pradesh, being a State with ILP is exempted from CAA, yet it has decided to file a petition in the apex court opposing any procedure to grant citizenship to Chakma and Hajong refugees. It is also widely contended that the CAA might lead to exodus of tribal refugees from CAA-exempted tribal States of the North-east to Tripura and Assam, where they can apply for citizenship through CAA. The case of Bengali Hindu refugees in Bodoland Territorial Council of Assam is even more dismal, as they have to move out of areas falling under the council and resettle in a neighbouring district within Assam to become eligible to apply under CAA. While these anomalies continue, the lived reality of "illegal immigrants" continues to be difficult, as they try to survive through double-edged laws granting benefit and withholding them at the same time.

(The writer is Associate Professor at North Eastern Hill University, Shillong and a human rights activist)

Let religion lead to peace, prosperity

Religious leaders and theologians from across the country should come together to review the different faiths from the perspective of pluralism and social justice



EDUARDO FALEIRO

Religion has emerged as a major source of conflict across the globe. Ideological strife has now given place to the "clash of civilisations" and it is felt that in the foreseeable future, religion will be a major source of conflict within and among nations. The possibilities of conflict are greater in countries such as India where different cultures and religions meet. However, such clashes can be prevented if appropriate strategies are formulated and implemented at an early stage so as to ensure religious harmony.

The United Nations (UN) designates the first week of February every year as the World Interfaith Harmony Week. All religions lead to the same God and differences among them are not essential. Indeed, the common goal of every religion is the same. The spir-

it of the founders of the different religions was the same though rituals differ. All religions proclaim similar principles.

Mahatma Gandhi, who devoted a large part of his life to the study of religion and discussions with religious leaders of all faiths, affirmed that every scripture should be treated equally, that there is no justification for the claim of supremacy of any one religion and that we are all children of the same God. He said, "What is needed is a living friendly contact among the followers of the religions of the world and not a clash among them in the fruitless attempt on the part of each community to show the supremacy of its faith over the rest."

Swami Vivekananda asserted that all religions preach ethics, virtues and good character. Yet, all major religions, instead of uniting people often divide them due to the lack of understanding of the purpose of religion by their followers.

India has the largest number of religions and religious people in the world. In our country, there are millions of Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists. There are also Parsees and Jews. We have eight religions in India, the maximum number of religions and religious people anywhere in the world. Communal har-

mony is essential for peace and stability in the country.

Article 51A of the Constitution affirms that it is the fundamental duty of every citizen to promote harmony among the people of the nation transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities. Respect for religious diversity and interfaith dialogue are an essential and urgent need.

Some years ago, I decided to study the issues that affect inter-religious peace and harmony in the country. In this connection, I visited several States and held meetings with leaders and organisations of different religions. I spent the whole of September 2004 in the villages of Odisha, in the districts of Kandhamal and Mayurbanj, where Graham Staines and his two sons were killed some years earlier.

The purpose of my visit was to study and understand the open confrontation that has existed for long in that State between Christian and Hindu missionaries for conversion and re-conversion (*ghar vapsi*) respectively. I informed Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik of what I had observed in those areas and he promised to take necessary action. Mainline Christian theologians see both the Sangh Parivar's Hindutva ideology and Christian campaigns for evangeli-

isation as having a fundamentalist attitude and an aggressive methodology to achieve their respective goals.

Proselytism is opposed on several grounds; it attacks other religious beliefs and practices and asserts that its own religion is the only way to *moksha* (salvation). It is often supported by financial resources and marketing techniques that make local religious activities seem shabby.

The Federation of Asian Bishops Conferences (FABC) articulates its theological vision thus, "Asia is the womb of the great world religions. All great scriptural religions were born on Asian soil. The Church has to be in constant dialogue with the religions of Asia and to embark on this with great seriousness... There may be more truth about God and life than is made known to us through the Church. As such, Christians who take Jesus Christ's injunction seriously must search for this truth in the various religions of the world."

On the question of proselytism, the FABC says, "A phenomenon which continues to awaken the most resentment among the peoples of Asia is that of proselytism and conversion. In the minds of Asians, the Church's primary objective seems to be to convert as many people as she can so as to

increase her little flock. The Church's expansion is also seen as a Western extension. The increase in the number of Church movements engaged in aggressive evangelisation (understood in the very narrow sense of the word) is certainly a cause for concern for our brothers and sisters of other faiths. Perhaps, it might be good to be reminded of the golden rule which nearly all religions speak of: Do not do to others what you do not want done to yourself."

The traditional way of teaching religion puts emphasis on theology and rituals ignoring the social dimension, namely the need for interaction and tolerance among the followers of different religions. Religious leaders and theologians from across the country should come together to review the different religions from the perspective of pluralism and social justice.

The following steps ought to be taken to ensure peace and harmony in India: Organised drives for conversion and reconversion should stop. They violate the Constitution. The Government should promote an agreement among the religious heads of all the major faiths in the country to stop proselytism. Given the positive mindset of theologians belonging to different religions, this is possible.

Combat all forms of expression which incite sectarian hatred and take action against dissemination of such material in the media.

Adequate training and awareness programmes about religion and religious harmony for young leaders at all levels and Government officials, particularly the police and other law enforcement agencies, judges, teachers and social workers must be held.

Introduce inter-religious education in schools as part of the curriculum so as to promote communal harmony.

Assure all victims of religious intolerance adequate support and speedy administrative and judicial remedies.

Provide effective access to all citizens, including religious minorities, to the decision-making process in society.

Counter social exclusion and marginalisation in particular by providing adequate access to all to education, health and employment. Pay specific attention to development of vulnerable groups such as tribals and other weaker sections and those who suffer discrimination on different grounds.

With this we will ensure peace that fosters inclusive development. (The writer is a former Union Minister)

CAPSULE



Kotak Mahindra Bank Q3 profit rises 24 pc to Rs 1,596 cr

NEW DELHI: Kotak Mahindra Bank on Monday reported 24 per cent growth in standalone net profit to Rs 1,596 crore for the third quarter ended December 31, 2019. The private sector lender had posted a profit of Rs 1,291 crore in October-December period of the previous financial year. Total income rose to Rs 8,077.03 crore during the quarter under review from Rs 7,214.21 crore in the year-ago period. Kotak Mahindra Bank said in a statement. "Net Interest Income for the third quarter increased 17 per cent to Rs 3,430 crore from Rs 2,926 crore in the same period a year ago. Net Interest Margin for Q3FY20 was at 4.69 per cent, up from 4.31 per cent in Q3FY19," it said. On consolidated basis, the profit increased 27 per cent to Rs 2,349 crore as compared to Rs 1,844 crore in the same period a year ago.



SIAM bullish about revival of automobile industry

NEW DELHI: Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), the apex body representing all major vehicle and vehicular engine manufacturers in the country, is bullish on the revival of the automobile industry in 2020, a senior official said on Monday. Since the penetration of automobiles in the country is low, many foreign players will look at this opportunity to enter India, he said here. "This is the worst downturn of the automobile industry in the last 20 years," SIAM deputy director Sugato Sen told reporters here. "We hope that the year 2020 will be the year of revival of the Indian automobile industry."



TCS shares fall over 2 pc at close of trade after Q3 earnings

NEW DELHI: Shares of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) on Monday fell over 2 per cent after the company reported a muted growth in consolidated net profit for the third quarter ended December 2019. The scrip declined 2.16 per cent to close at Rs 2,170.25 on the BSE. During the day, it fell 2.76 per cent to Rs 2,156.70. On the NSE, it went lower by 2 per cent to close at Rs 2,174. In traded volume terms, 2.14 lakh shares of the company were traded on the BSE and over 58 lakh shares on the NSE during the day. The country's largest software services major, after market hours on Friday, reported a muted 0.2 per cent growth in consolidated net profit at Rs 8,118 crore for the third quarter ended December 2019.

Sensex swings, ends 416 pts lower

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Retreating from its record peak, market benchmark Sensex closed 416 points lower on Monday, tracking an intense sell-off in index heavyweights Reliance Industries, Kotak Bank, HDFC Bank and TCS following their quarterly results. After hitting a record intra-day high of 42,273.87, the 30-share BSE Sensex gave up all gains to settle 416.46 points, or 0.99 per cent, lower at 41,528.91. Likewise, the broader NSE Nifty sank 127.80 points, or 1.03 per cent, to 12,224.55. It hit a record

After hitting a record intra-day high of 42,273.87, the 30-share BSE Sensex gave up all gains to settle 416.46 points, or 0.99 per cent, lower at 41,528.91

intra-day high of 12,430.50 in early session. Kotak Mahindra Bank was the biggest laggard in the Sensex pack, dropping 4.70 per cent, after the lender reported a rise in non-performing assets in Q3. Reliance Industries, HDFC Bank and TCS fell up to 3.08 per

cent after the companies reported their quarterly earnings over the weekend. On the other hand, PowerGrid was the top gainer, rising 3.75 per cent, followed by Bharti Airtel, ITC, Asian Paints, ICICI Bank and L&T. According to traders, besides stock-specific action, domestic

investors were also seen booking profits at record peaks. Bourses in Shanghai, Tokyo and Seoul ended higher, while Hong Kong closed in the red. European markets were trading on a negative note in their early sessions. Brent crude oil futures rose 0.66 per cent to USD 65.28 per barrel on supply concerns after exports from Libya were blocked after a pipeline was shut down by armed forces and a strike at a key oil field in Iraq hit output. The rupee depreciated 5 paise to 71.13 per US dollar (intra-day).



'Halwa Ceremony' kickstarts printing Budget docs process

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of State for Finance Anurag Thakur and senior officials of the finance ministry on Monday participated in the symbolic 'Halwa Ceremony' that marks the launch of formal printing of Budget 2020-21 documents. The second Budget of the Modi 2.0 government will be presented on February 1.



Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Nirmala Sitharaman at the Halwa ceremony to mark the commencement of Budget printing process for Union Budget 2020-21, in New Delhi on Monday. The Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Shri Anurag Singh Thakur and other dignitaries are also seen.

As part of the ritual, 'halwa' is prepared in a big 'kadhai' (large frying pot) and served to the entire staff in the ministry

Finance Secretary Rajeev Kumar, Revenue Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey, Economic Affairs Secretary Atanu Chakraborty, DIPAM Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey, and Expenditure Secretary T V Somanathan too attended the customary pre-Budget event. "To maintain the secrecy of Budget, there is a 'lock-in' of the officials involved in making the Budget. Budget Press, situated inside North Block, houses all officials in the period leading up to the presentation of the Union Budget," the finance ministry said in a statement. These officers and staff will come in contact with their near and dear ones only after the Budget is presented in Parliament, it said. Later, the finance minister

took a round of the press and acquainted herself about the Budget printing process. As part of the ritual, 'halwa' is prepared in a big 'kadhai' (large frying pot) and served to

the entire staff in the ministry. The significance of the event is that after the sweet dish is served, a large number of officials and support staff, who are directly associated with the

Budget making and printing process, are required to stay in the ministry and remain cut off from their families till the presentation of the Budget in the Lok Sabha. They are not even allowed to contact their near and dear ones through phone or any other form of communication, like e-mail. Only very senior officials in the finance ministry are permitted to go home.

Hindustan Coca-Cola appoints Melvin Tan as CFO

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages on Monday appointed Melvin Tan as its new chief financial officer, who will also be part of its senior leadership team reporting to chief executive Christina Ruggiero.

Tan, a graduate from the University of Sheffield in England, with an honours degree in accounting and financial management, joined the Coca-Cola system in 2010 after spending a decade with KPMG and Honeywell. He was the financial controller of Coca-Cola's bottling investment group in Singapore and Malaysia wherein he was instrumental in the scaling up and growth of greenfield operation in Malaysia, implementation of various strategic restructuring initiatives and establishment of robust financial support and governance system to support the growth agenda of the business.



CCI approves Reliance's divestment of Jio tower assets

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Fair trade regulator CCI has approved divestment of Reliance Jio's telecom tower assets to Canada's Brookfield Infrastructure Partners LP and other investors.

The other investors include British Columbia Investment Management Corporation, GIC Infra Holdings Pte Ltd's subsidiaries Anahera Investment Pte Ltd and Valkyrie Investment Pte Ltd. In a tweet on Monday, the regulator said "approves subscription of the units of Tower Infrastructure Trust by BIF JV Jarvis India Pte, British Columbia Investment Management and GIC Investors."

Tower Infrastructure Trust, an InvIT, currently holds 51 per cent of the outstanding equity share capital of RIJPL. Current Sponsor of the InvIT is Reliance Industrial Investments and Holdings Ltd (RIIHL).

The proposed transaction involves the acquisition of indirect control of Reliance Jio Infratel Pvt Ltd (RIJPL) by Jarvis, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) noted in a combination notice filed with it. Tower Infrastructure Trust, an InvIT, currently holds 51 per cent of the outstanding equity share capital of RIJPL. Current Sponsor of the InvIT is Reliance Industrial Investments and Holdings Ltd (RIIHL). The deal, as per the notice, is subject to receipt of requisite approvals from markets regulator Sebi. Jarvis would execute the trust deed and be designated as one of the sponsors to the InvIT in addition to RIIHL. Besides, Jarvis would subscribe to the majority of the units to be issued by the InvIT. "Jarvis, subscribing to the

units of the InvIT, subject to receipt of necessary approvals from SEBI, will discuss and mutually agree with the Parties on suitable mechanism, in accordance with the provisions of SEBI InvIT Regulations, for change of the current investment manager to an entity nominated and controlled by Jarvis," the notice said. The parties are Jarvis, British Columbia Investment, GIC investors, InvIT, and RIJPL. From the proceeds of the issuance of units, the InvIT proposes to acquire the remaining 49 per cent of the outstanding equity share capital in RIJPL. Additionally, GIC Investors and British Columbia Investment propose to acquire a minority interest in the InvIT by either directly subscribing to units of the InvIT, or by indirectly acquiring an interest in the InvIT through acquisition of shares in BIF JV India Holdings.

Organic food industry needs incentives to boost growth: Kesarwala

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Organic food start-up Kesarwala on Monday sought incentives from the government in the forthcoming Budget for the fast growing sector to push the industry growth. "The industry needs adequate infrastructure in terms of number of testing and certifying labs in the country. This will help in cutting the cost as currently these things are expensive," Founders of Kesarwala Divaker Bhalla and Yousuf Khan said. They said that starting from the farmers to the industry, the sector needs support from the government. "To replenish farm land for the purpose of growing organic produce, which are completely chemical free, a farmer has to wait for at least five years as he or she can not use that land before that for organic farming. Leaving the land for five year is a long period. If government can announce



some kind of subsidies to those farmers, it will provide a big help to them," Khan said. He also said increasing awareness about the benefits of consuming organic produce too is important for the growth of the sector. Bhalla said although people are gradually shifting towards organic foods, more steps needs to be taken in this direction in all big and small cities. "We can take cue from countries such as the US and Europe to taker forward this sector," he added. Further, Khan said that skill development is another area, which needs to be focussed.

HDFC Bank shares fall nearly 2 pc

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of HDFC Bank on Monday declined nearly 2 per cent after the company's non-performing assets (NPAs) rose in the third quarter ended December 31. The scrip fell 1.80 per cent to close at Rs 1,254.90 on the BSE. The company's stock plunged 1.96 per cent to Rs 1,252.80 during the day. On the NSE, it dipped 1.62 per cent to close at Rs 1,257.35. Private lender HDFC Bank on Saturday reported a 32.8 per



cent growth in net profit to Rs 7,416.5 crore for the third quarter ended December 31 driven by interest and non-interest income. The bank had posted a net profit of Rs 5,585.9 crore in the October-December quarter of the last financial year. During the quarter, gross

non-performing assets (NPAs) rose to 1.42 per cent of the total advances, compared with 1.38 per cent at the end of the third quarter of 2018-19. Net NPAs of the bank too increased to 0.48 per cent of the assets in October-December 2019, against 0.42 per cent a year ago. As a result, the bank's provisions (other than tax) and contingencies increased to Rs 3,043.56 crore against Rs 2,211.53 crore reported in the corresponding period of the previous financial year.

I-T searches premises of Lalit hotels promoter

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Income Tax Department has launched searches at multiple locations of the Bharat Hotels group, its associates and a leading automobile dealer firm in connection with a tax evasion probe, officials said on Monday. They said about 8 premises linked to Bharat Hotels CMD Jyotsna Suri and some

of her associates as well as Jayant Nanda, promoter of Cargo Motors, one of the largest dealers of Tata motors in the country, are being searched in and around the national capital. The searches, they said, were launched late on Sunday and are related to a tax evasion probe

being conducted by the department. Transactions of these groups, under the scanner of the department, are related, official sources said. The Bharat Hotels group owns the chain of Lalit hotels in the country. It runs over a dozen such luxury

facilities at present. Jyotsna Suri has been associated with the Bharat Hotels group since 1989 and took over as the Chairperson and Managing Director (CMD) in 2006, after the death of her husband and hotelier Lalit Suri. The businesswoman has also been the chairman of industry body FICCI in the past.



Rs 1,600cr FPO by ITI Ltd opens Friday

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned ITI Ltd will come out with Rs 1,600 crore follow-on public offer (FPO) on Friday. The FPO comprises fresh issue of up to 18 crore equity shares. Besides, an additional issue constituting up to 18 lakh shares will be reserved for employees. The issue will open on Friday, January 24 and close on Tuesday, January 28, the company said in a statement on Monday. The price band for the FPO will be announced on Wednesday. Proceeds of the issue will be utilised towards working capital requirements, repayment of loan taken by the company and for general corporate purpose. According to market sources, the company's FPO is expected to fetch Rs 1,600 crore. The public issue is being managed by BOB Capital Markets Ltd, Karvy Investor Services Ltd and PNB Investment Services. The FPO will help the company meet Sebi's requirement of minimum 25 per cent public shareholding. ITI is into manufacturing of a diverse range of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) products and solutions.

India ranks low at 76th place on global Social Mobility Index

PNS ■ DAVOS

India has been ranked very low at 76th place out of 82 countries on a new Social Mobility Index compiled by the World Economic Forum, while Denmark has topped the charts. The report, released ahead of the 50th Annual Meeting of the WEF, also lists India among the five countries that stand to gain the most from a better social mobility score that seeks to measure parameters necessary for creating societies where every person has the same opportunity to fulfil his potential in life irrespective of socioeconomic background. Increasing social mobility, a key driver of income inequality, by 10 per cent would benefit social cohesion and boost the world's economies by nearly 5 per cent by 2030, the WEF said.



But, few economies have the right conditions to foster social mobility. Measuring countries across five key dimensions distributed over 10 pillars - health; education (access, quality and

equity); technology; work (opportunities, wages, conditions); and protections and institutions (social protection and inclusive institutions) - shows that fair wages, social protection and lifelong learning

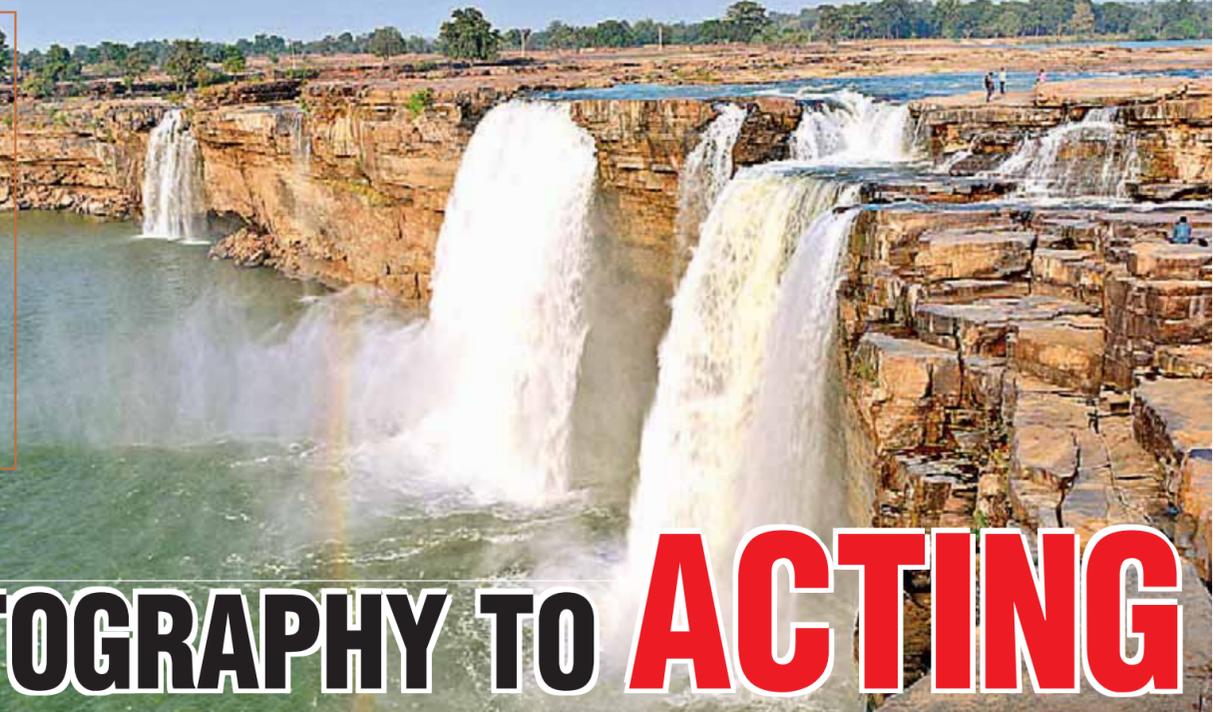
are the biggest drags on social mobility globally. In the case of India, it ranks 76th out of 82 economies. It ranks 41st in lifelong learning and 53rd in working conditions. The Areas of improvement for India include social protection (76th) and fair wage distribution (79th). The inaugural Social Mobility Report showed that across the Global Social Mobility Index, only a handful of nations across the 82 countries covered have put in place the right conditions to foster social mobility.

The top five are all Scandinavian, while the five economies with the most to gain from boosting social mobility are China, the United States, India, Japan and Germany. "Creating societies where every person has the same opportunity to fulfil their potential in life irrespective of socioeconomic background would not only bring huge societal benefits in the form of reduced inequalities and healthier, more fulfilled lives, it would also boost economic growth by hundreds of billions of dollars a

year," the WEF said. "The social and economic consequences of inequality are profound and far-reaching: a growing sense of unfairness, precarity, perceived loss of identity and dignity, weakening social fabric, eroding trust in institutions, disenchantment with political processes, and an erosion of the social contract. The response by business and government must include a concerted effort to create new pathways to socioeconomic mobility, ensuring everyone has fair opportunities for success," said Klaus Schwab, Founder and Executive Chairman of the WEF. The most socially mobile societies in the world, accord-

ing to the report's Global Social Mobility Index, are all European. The Nordic nations hold the top five spots, led by Denmark in the first place (scoring 85 points), followed by Norway, Finland and Sweden (all above 83 points) and Iceland (82 points). Rounding out the top 10 are the Netherlands (6th), Switzerland (7th), Austria (8th), Belgium (9th) and Luxembourg (10th). Among the G7 economies, Germany is the most socially mobile, ranking 11th with 78 points, followed by France in 12th position. Canada comes next (14th), followed by Japan (15th), the United Kingdom (21st), the United States (27th) and Italy (34th).





From PHOTOGRAPHY TO ACTING

Medak-based photographer Sunny Palle has won various awards in photography and made his debut into movies recently. Speaking to V SATEESH REDDY, Sunny speaks about his photography journey, acting career, awards and more



A picture is worth a thousand words. Medak-based photographer-turned-actor Sunny Palle aka Srikanth is making his mark in both professions. He bagged the award for the best cameraman for the 48-hour film festival organised recently by the Department of Language and Culture, Government of Telangana. For his efforts in photography, Hong Kong Nature Photographic Society invited him for the fellowship. He also made his debut in films recently with the movie *Dorasani*. Speaking to *The Pioneer*, Sunny says, "I was interested in acting since my childhood and used to act in various street plays during my schooling. Later, one of my friends opened a photo studio where I started learning about the camera. The art of photography excited me for its ability to capture beautiful moments. To know more about photography, I attended various photography workshops in Hyderabad. That is how my journey into photography started." In 2014, Sunny won the national-level best photographer award in the Sigma National Level Photography

contest. Sunny shares, "I received the award in 2014 for a photograph that I captured in a tribal hamlet. I showcased the lifestyle of tribals in my photos. The award inspired me to travel other beautiful places in India." Presently, Sunny is studying photography at the Sri Venkateswara College of Fine Arts in Hyderabad. He won the best cameraman award at a short film festival that was held organised by Department of Language and Culture, Government of Telangana recently to encourage youth in filmmaking. About the contest, Sunny says, "Our topics for the contest included love, childhood memories and so on. We chose love. I worked as a cameraman for the short film *The Love* directed by my friend Bandari Harikrishna. Out of 200 entries, I was chosen as the best cameraman." Sunny recently visited Bastar in Chhattisgarh along with his friends for a research work on the Kakatiya dynasty. During the research, Sunny captured the beauty of Chitrakote Falls and Teerathgarh Falls. He says, "The waterfalls are located in the Bastar district on the Indravati river. It is the widest



waterfall in India. Every monsoon season, when the Indravati floods, the waterfall spreads for about 300 meters wide and it is a visual delight for tourists." Sunny said that places like Kerala are more clean and green compared to us since people feel it is each one's responsibility to keep the place clean. He informed that his photos were also displayed in World Street Photography Club Gallery, USA. Recently, he debuted in

movies with *Dorasani*. He shares, "I played Anand Deverakonda's friend in the movie. After the movie released, I got more offers and I will share the details soon. I want to focus on films with different roles. I don't have any dream role and I give my best to any role I get." On a concluding note, Sunny said that hard work is the secret of success for budding photographers and it is always important to observe nature while capturing images.



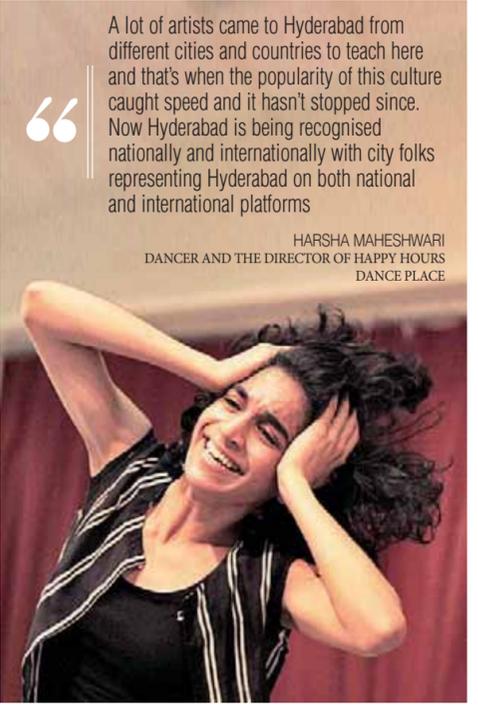
“ The art of photography excited me for its ability to capture beautiful moments. To know more about photography, I attended various photography workshops in Hyderabad. That is how my journey into photography started

— SUNNY PALLE
 PHOTOGRAPHER-TURNED-ACTOR

A cultural revolution in EXPRESSION

SIDDHESH SUMAN writes about the growing trend of hip hop in the city. He finds out how hip hop has integrated itself into the mainstream cultural expression

there has been a rise in the youth practicing the hip hop culture. Be it dance, rap or street art, the influence is visible. Harsha Maheshwari aka Komet is a Hyderabad-based dancer and the director of Happy Hours Dance Place. She is known for the workshops she conducts in which she invites artistes from across the country to Hyderabad where they teach budding artistes through workshops like 'Camp Celebrate' and also organises dance battles such as 'Cypher Hours'. Talking to *The Pioneer* about this growing culture of hip hop, she said, "Initially, it was the dance studios who started promoting the hip hop scene in the city where all youngsters, teachers came together and started making hip hop crews. It started with 'Blame it on the Boogie' organised by the Proximity Crew." "I have been a part of this scene for almost seven years now and it is super hard to get people into hip hop in a city where classical dancing has been given the highest platform. In the South, the government encourages classical music and dance performances by providing them with funds. Here, parents too do not encourage their chil-



dren to learn western styles and prefer the traditional classical dance forms," she added. "But people started attending workshops and a lot of artists came to Hyderabad from different cities and countries to teach here and that's when the popularity of this culture caught speed and it hasn't stopped since. Dance battles were a platform



where artistes could share and learn from one another. And now Hyderabad is being recognised nationally and internationally with city folks representing Hyderabad on both national and international platforms. That's because we have a lot of people coming from different cities to judge, to teach and artists from our city are going there to judge and teach. This exchange is how the word spreads and of course, social media is a very powerful platform pumping people over here

to put up their work," she said, stressing on the fact that people now know about the Hyderabad scene and that out of the five best Hip Hop jams in India, two of them belong to Hyderabad. Like any other dance form even hip hop is associated with music. Rapper and DJ Aishan Vali explains how rapping is associated with hip hop. "The five major elements of hip hop are dance, DJing, rap, graffiti and beatboxing. The Mumbai scene of hip hop picked up

initially, thanks to rappers like Divine and Naezy. Anybody can take up rapping. You don't need to have a background in music. You just have to be yourself and original," he said, adding, "Hip hop is a culture that gives youth a platform to speak up and make themselves heard. This is a very inclusive culture anybody can be a part of. It is very accessible and easy to get into and that is why I think rapping and hip hop is going to only grow in the future."

There are various locations in the city where aspiring artistes meet and discuss hip hop. Happy Hours dance place at Begumpet and HY dance studio at Madhapur are among many such places where artistes meet, discuss and jam together. Some Hyderabad-based artistes — Swapnil Kumar, Jerome Xavier, Smriti Agarwal, Anil Bhargav from Proximity Crew and Varun Dhopeswarkar aka Dope V — are creating ripples in the hip pop scene in the country.

AMITABH BACHCHAN UNVEILS FIRST LOOK POSTER OF *JHUND*

Megastar Amitabh Bachchan on Monday treated his fans by sharing the first official poster of his upcoming film *Jhund*.

"First glimpse of #Jhund," Big B wrote on Instagram.

In the poster, Amitabh can be seen showing his back to the camera as he stares into what appears to be a dilapidated football field.

Directed by Nagraj Manjule, *Jhund* is reportedly based on the life of Vijay Barse, who is the founder of Slum Soccer. Amitabh plays the role of a professor who channels the street children to build a soccer team.

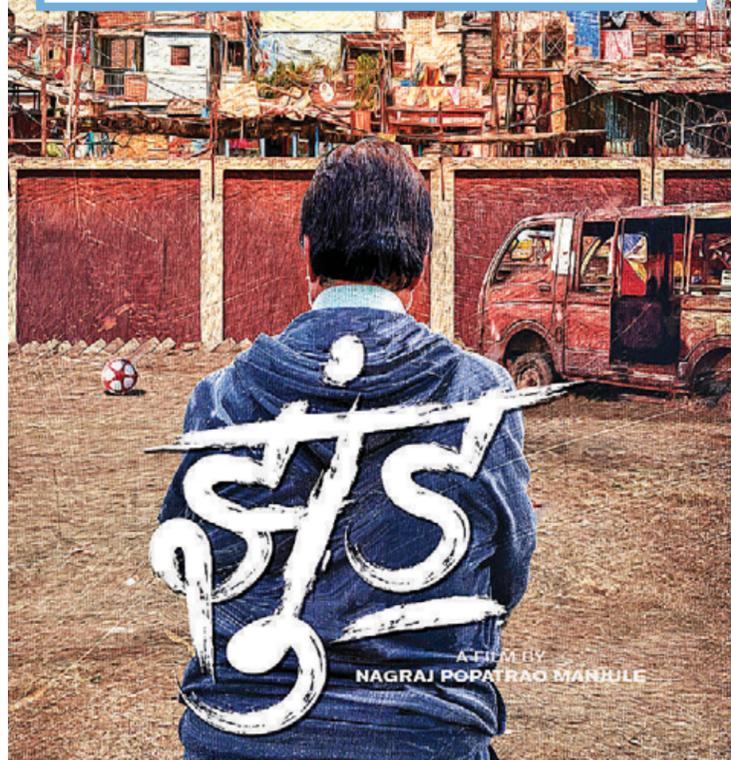


The look of Big B has left his fans in awe of him.

"Superb glimpse, waiting for your different avatar sir," a user commented. Actor Amit Sadh too sent his best

wishes to Big B. "Good luck sir... Can't wait for another master piece," he added.

Apart from *Jhund*, the cine icon will also be seen in *Chehre* and *Gulabo Sitabo*.



JENNIFER ANISTON scores maiden SAG best actress trophy

The *Morning Show* star Jennifer Aniston won her first best female actor in a drama series honour at the Screen Actors Guild

Awards (SAG).

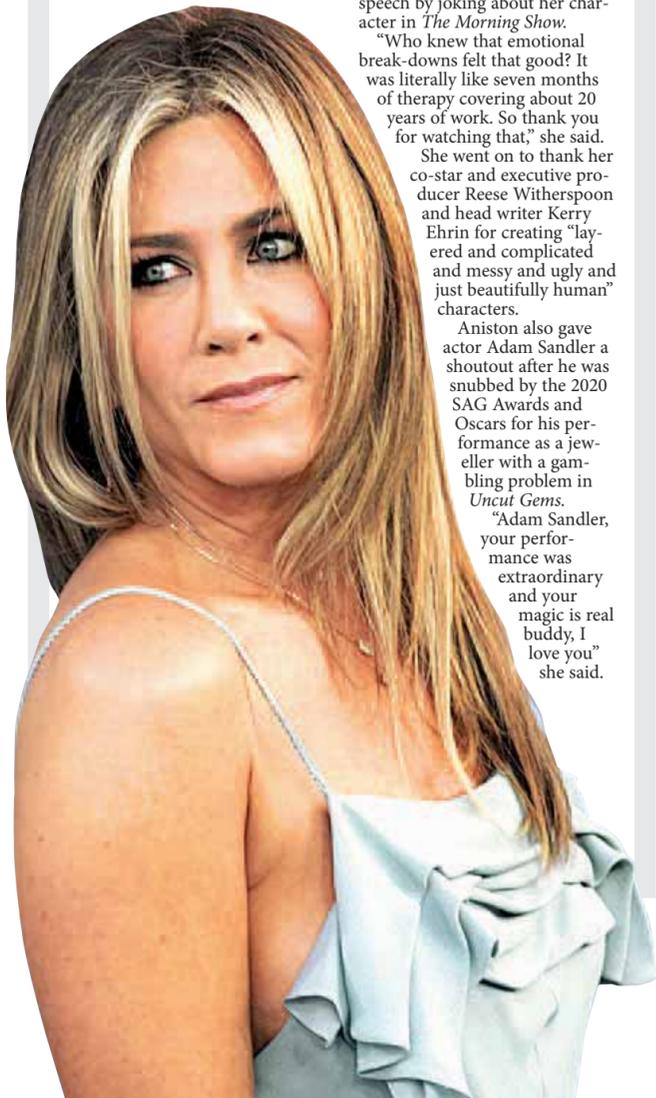
The honour marks her first overall win in more than two decades and her first-ever individual win from SAG.

The actor began her acceptance speech by joking about her character in *The Morning Show*.

"Who knew that emotional break-downs felt that good? It was literally like seven months of therapy covering about 20 years of work. So thank you for watching that," she said. She went on to thank her co-star and executive producer Reese Witherspoon and head writer Kerry Ehrin for creating "layered and complicated and messy and ugly and just beautifully human" characters.

Aniston also gave actor Adam Sandler a shoutout after he was snubbed by the 2020 SAG Awards and Oscars for his performance as a jeweller with a gambling problem in *Uncut Gems*.

"Adam Sandler, your performance was extraordinary and your magic is real buddy, I love you" she said.



Ayushmann Khurrana: I choose films whole family can go watch

Bollywood actor Ayushmann Khurrana, who is gearing up for his next *Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan*, say he always chooses films which the entire family can watch together in a theatre.

"As an entertainer, I would love to reach out and entertain as many people as possible. I choose films where the entire family can go and watch them together in a theatre. There is no greater joy as an artist than seeing them enjoying your cinema and also coming out with a message to take home, to discuss and ponder," Ayushmann said.

In *Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan*, Ayushmann will be seen playing the role of a gay man and he says the film will entertain audiences.

"*Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan* is again one such script that will thoroughly entertain audiences and also deliver an important social message about inclusivity and individual-

ity. Like all my films, it is again a full family entertainer," he added.

Ayushmann said that the people will instantly connect to the film.

"It's a film that will touch the hearts of audiences and also entertain them to the fullest. I can't wait for people to watch *Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan* because it is a story that everyone will connect to," he added.

He says *Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan* is a film that had to be made because of the impact that it can have on society.

"It is an important film that had to be made and when I heard the narration, I was bowled over immediately with the impact it had on me. It's funny, quirky, important from a social messaging point of view and it keeps one invested and engaged completely. It's not everyday that you find a film like *Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan* and I'm proud to be a part of this project," he said.

FUN

ARCHIE



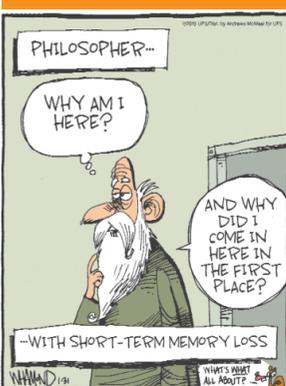
CALVIN AND HOBBS



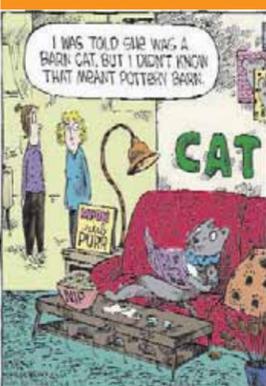
GARFIELD



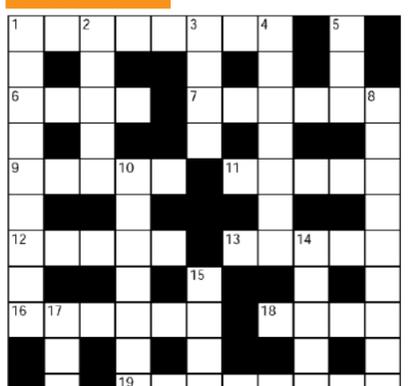
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



NANCY



SUDOKU

2								5
1			6					7
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4	6			8		5		
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Yesterday's solution

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

- 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

- Squashes completely
- A red gemstone
- Make tea in this
- Words by which people or places are known
- A striped animal
- Donates
- Defeats
- A red fruit for sandwiches
- A song performed by one
- Sick or injured people are cared for in this place

DOWN

- Two weeks
- A book for photographers
- Has a meal



My wish of an industry hit with dad has been realised: **BUNNY**

Allu Arjun was speaking at the success celebrations of *Ala Vaikunthapuramlo* in Visakhapatnam over the weekend, reports **NAGARAJ GOUD**

With his Sankranti release, *Ala Vaikunthapuramlo* chugging on with immense steam at the box-office, leading man Allu Arjun is chuffed to bits. The film has minted a share of Rs 118 crore in the first week, surpassing the figures of *Sarileru Neekevuru* and establishing non-Baahubali records in many places. Admittedly, the actor is grateful for director Trivikram, with whom he has joined forces for the third time. "My dad has produced industry hits with Chiranjeevi garu, Rajinikanth garu, Charan garu. Ghajini with Aamir Khan was an industry hit as well. I've been carrying a feeling that I haven't been a part of an industry

hit with him but *Ala Vaikunthapuramlo* changed that. I don't think I would've had the same fulfillment with other producers. On behalf of entire Allu family, I extend my wholehearted thanks to Trivikram," a gleeful Bunny pointed out. He was speaking at the success celebrations of the film in Visakhapatnam over the weekend.

He added this is the first time that his performance in a film was lauded by one and all. "Earlier, I used to receive individual craft compliments like I've danced well, excelled in action and acted comedy but this is the first time that I've unanimously got calls in praise of my performance. Trivikram garu deserves credit for it," he noted.

Recalling his association with the city of destiny, he informed that his first three films were shot at Vizag and that the place and its people have been a part of his success. "Revenue-wise, the area has become my fortress," he noted. He reiterated they had their own doubts whether audience will flock in big numbers to watch *Ala Vaikunthapuramlo*, especially with the advent of digital medium. "But Telugu audiences across the world have proved once again that they will always be ready to lap up a good film."



Tarak and Trivikram's fun ride

With *Aravinda Sametha Veera Raghava*, Trivikram proved that he can pull off a serious drama without his trademark humour in abundance. The film was his intentional attempt to try something different after a disaster like *Agnyaathavaasi*. While he came back to the family-drama genre and played it safe with his subsequent film *Ala Vaikunthapuramlo*, *Aravinda Sametha...* gave him the confidence to tell stories without entertainment thrown into the mix. "I was sure that regular commercial elements

which include songs, humour and comedy tracks shouldn't cross my mind as I began to write *Aravinda Sametha...* and I succeeded. Overcoming my fear was my biggest take away from that film," Trivikram had told us early this month.

Which is why, for his next with Jr NTR, a joint production venture between Haarika & Hassine Creations and NTR Arts, he is trying an out-and-out comedy entertainer, something that will be different to his Sankranti blockbuster. "The film will hardly boast of any action. Even if distributors pressure him as the stakes will be

too big for a film of his with Tarak and that mass audience would love to see a mainstream star indulge in a fight or two, he wants to conceive action sequences realistically. It's been a long time since both he and Tarak individually have done a full-fledged comedy film and they want to enjoy the process of making this film. He has told the actor the story and his character graph. He will begin working on the story extensively from next month, with the film set to go in front of the cameras in summer. It will most likely be a Sankranti release," said a source.



Ravi Teja hints at a sequel to **DISCO RAJA**

More than a year after his last release, *Amar Akbar Anthony*, hit the screens; Ravi Teja is back with *Disco Raja*, a scientific-thriller set in the 80s. It marks him teaming up with Vi Anand for the first time. Speaking at the pre-release event, the actor said he had a great time shooting for the film, which opens this Friday, and hoped that audiences too will have a great time watching it.

"I've grown up watching films of late '70s and early '80s and I've got a character on the lines of those old films in *Disco Raja*. Which is why, I've enjoyed the part and immersed myself more. If everything goes well, there will be a sequel or prequel to the film," he said.

Anand on his part said that after *Tiger* released, Ravi Teja was the first person from the industry to have rung him and sang praises about his direction. "He didn't even know who was I to begin with, yet he had a word of encouragement for me. It meant a lot to me. He had good words to say after *Ekkadiki Pothavu Chinnava* and *Okka Kshanam* as well. *Disco Raja* took shape because of him," Anand said.

He added that every director should work with Ravi Teja at least once before they go on to make films with other actors. "It's been a great learning experience working with him. I've learnt life lessons as well from him," he informed.

A science fiction action film, *Disco Raja* also features Payal Rajput, Nabha Natesh, Tanya Hope, Vennela Kishore, Satya, and Ajay while Bobby Simha will be playing the role of the main antagonist. S.S Thaman is composing the music.



Ronit Roy, Ali join Puri's next with Deverakonda

Vijay Deverakonda's next with Puri Jagannadh was launched in Mumbai on Monday, with Charmme Kaur sounding the clapperboard for the traditional *muhurtam* shot, which was filmed on Deverakonda. An emotional action-drama, the likes of Ramya Krishnan, Ronit Roy, Ali, Vishu Reddy and Getup Sreenu round off the film's supporting cast. Being made in Telugu and Hindi simultaneously, it will be a joint

production venture between Karan Johar, Apoorva Mehta, Puri Jagannadh and Charmme Kaur. While *Fighter* was in contention to be the film's title, a little birdie tells us that Karan has advised Puri to come up with an alternate powerful title. "If the director cracks one, its good, else *Fighter* will be retained," said the source. Ananya Panday is the frontrunner to romance Deverakonda in the film although the makers didn't divulge her name in the official press release.



Vidhi Vilasam launched



The Pioneer was the first to inform you that Shivathmika Rajasekhar has signed a film, *Vidhi Vilasam*, opposite Adith Arun (on December 18, 2019). To this end, the latest is that the film, which marks the directorial debut of G. Durga Naresh who assisted Dasaradh earlier, was officially launched in Hyderabad on Monday. As Harish Shankar switched on the camera, director Praveen Sattaru sounded the clapperboard for the first shot. Dasaradh directed the honorary first shot. Speaking later, Shivathmika said that she hopped on board after finding the story to be interesting. "I'm excited to begin

shooting for the film. Adith is a friend of mine and I'm happy to be acting with him," she said. The director said Adith has been a dear friend to him and that he is happy to be directing him. "Shivathmika has a performance-oriented role. The title is drawing great response," he said. To go to floors next month, the film, produced by Shiva Dinesh Rahul Ayyar under SKS Creations, features Kota Sreenivas Rao, Indrara, Jayaprakash, Posani Krishna Murali, Ajay, Satya and Thaguboth Ramesh in supporting roles. Sekhar Chandra is the music director.

Thaman's music for Mahesh's film

Hot off the phenomenal success of *Ala Vaikunthapuramlo*, SS Thaman is the prime contender to compose music for Superstar Mahesh Babu's next with Vamshi Paidipally. While everybody expected Paidipally to repeat Devi Sri Prasad again for the film, pressure from Mahesh's fans forced him to approach Thaman. It is said that the composer has evinced his interest straightaway. With the film set to start in summer, he believes he can complete the projects in hand and start afresh for Mahesh film. The

composer has previously belted out hit albums like *Dookudu*, *Businessman* and *Aagadu* for Mahesh. A major part of the untitled film, which sees Mahesh in the role of a gangster, will be shot in Visakhapatnam. Dil Raju is attached to produce it.

WHILE EVERYBODY EXPECTED PAIDIPALLY TO REPEAT DEVI SRI PRASAD, PRESSURE FROM MAHESH'S FANS FORCED HIM TO APPROACH THAMAN



Virat confident of good show in NZ

Citing recent result Indian skipper says his team will try to put Black Caps under pressure from start

PTI ■ BENGALURU

A series win against a strong Australia and the performance in New Zealand last year gives India a lot of confidence ahead of a fresh tour beginning on January 24, said skipper Virat Kohli whose team will be aiming to put the Black Caps under pressure from the word go.

India will be playing five T20s, three ODIs and two Tests in New Zealand. They had beaten the hosts 4-1 in ODIs before losing the T20 series 1-2.

"We are taking a lot of confidence from our performance (in NZ) last year. We were very positive in how we played, very sure of what we wanted to do. The thing about playing away is if you're able to put the home team under pressure, you can enjoy your cricket," Kohli said.

"You have to win at home, there's that sort of feeling (for hosts). So if you bring out your A game, you can really put them under pressure. That's what we did last year, squeezed them in the middle overs, picked up wickets, spinners were outstanding. Looking forward to take that same intensity into the series."

Ahead of the New Zealand tour, Kohli said it became even more important to win the home series against Australia here on Sunday. The team leaves for New Zealand on Monday night.

"We spoke of that at the huddle, that this is the last game we're playing in the series and if we win, you go on a tour on a happy note. If you lose, it can go under the radar, you can brush it aside as 'oh it's just one loss'."

"But when you win and win under pressure, the last two games were tough wins, it boosts your confidence which we're carrying forward," he said.

On the limited overs leg of the New Zealand tour, Kohli picked out the areas of improvement.

"Again, we want to bat well when



Virat Kohli bats during the third one-day international cricket match between India and Australia

we bat first and in case we're defending a low total, we should be able to do that as well. We can't afford to ease into the series after two games, because then it keeps getting tougher and tougher, so we'll look to make a mark in the first game that we play," he said.

The skipper loves playing against Australia as it brings the best out of him. He explained why he relishes the Australian challenge.

"Last year (at home) after 2-0 up, we thought we're definitely going to win one of the three at home, but they showed us that they understand these conditions very well now (to win 3-2), having played here a lot in the IPL and so many tours over the years," Kohli said.

"So, although they had a stronger side (with Steve Smith and David Warner back) than last time, we thought if we play good enough, we can beat this team. The only thing we needed to be wary of was our body language and intent because that's Australia's strongest point.

"All the teams in the world are skilled but these guys play with the intent of making things happen every over you play against them. So you can't take your foot off the pedal at all, that's what we've done in the last two games. The partnerships that I mentioned today, even the singles were taken with intent," said Kohli.

India raced to victory in the series-deciding third ODI against Australia, courtesy fine knocks from Kohli himself and Rohit Sharma. They both could not stay till the end but the finishing touches were provided by Shreyas Iyer, who remained unbeaten on 44. And the skipper was all praise for Iyer.

"I don't think he's (Iyer) going to have any issues anymore because he really went after their best bowlers and got the results. It took pressure off of me as well not having to take risks and the other guy striking at 140-145. I think it was really smart how we went about it" Kohli added.

Kohli, Rohit consolidate top batting positions

PTI ■ DUBAI

India captain Virat Kohli and his deputy Rohit Sharma consolidated their top two positions in the batting chart, while pace ace Jasprit Bumrah continued to lead among bowlers in the ICC ODI Rankings issued on Monday.

Following their stellar performances against Australia in the just-concluded series, which India won 2-1, Kohli (No.1) and Rohit (No.2) have strengthened their positions.

With 183 runs under his belt against Australia, Kohli was the player-of-the-series while Rohit was a close second, garnering 171 runs in the rubber, including a match-winning 119 in the deciding ODI in Bengaluru on Sunday.

Kohli (886 points) and Rohit (868 points) have gained two and three ratings points, respectively to occupy the top two positions in the batting rankings.

Left-handed opener Shikhar Dhawan has also gained seven slots to reach 15th position with 170 runs in two innings, missing a chance to bat in Bengaluru after injuring his shoulder while field-

ing. K L Rahul, who opened in his place in the final ODI, has gained 21 slots to reach 50th position with an aggregate of 146 runs.

Bumrah, who returned from injury in the Australia series, is atop the bowlers chart with 764 points, ahead of New Zealand left-arm pacer Trent Boult and Afghanistan's Mujeeb Ur Rahman. South Africa's Kagiso Rabada and Australian Pat Cummins complete the top five.

India all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja has moved up two slots to be 27th among bowlers after finishing with four wickets in the series.

He also scored 45 runs in two innings and has gained four places in the all-rounders' list to be ranked 10th.

Australian Steve Smith, who topped the series with an aggregate of 229 runs including a knock of 131 in the final ODI, has been rewarded with a four-place jump to 23rd position.

David Warner, a formerly top-ranked batsman in the format, has also moved up one place to sixth while captain Aaron Finch has moved up one place to 10th. Wicketkeeper Alex Carey is in 31st position after gaining two slots.

Leg-spinner Adam Zampa's five wickets in the series saw him advance 20 places to reach 37th position, while Kane Richardson has moved from 77th to 65th.



Kohli greatest ODI player of all-time: Finch

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Australian captain Aaron Finch has rated his Indian counterpart Virat Kohli as "probably" the greatest ODI player of all-time, while picking Rohit Sharma in the top-five.

Rohit (119) scored his 29th ODI hundred and Kohli made 89 off 91 balls as they shared a match-winning stand of 137 in the decisive third game against Australia here on Sunday.

For Finch, what stood out was that India overhauled the 287-run target with ease despite opener Shikhar Dhawan not coming out to bat due to a shoulder injury.

"They've got Virat who is probably the greatest ODI player of all-time, and Rohit who'd probably be in the top five batters of all-time. They're exceptional, and the thing with the Indian side at the moment is their experienced players are getting the job done in the big games," Finch said.

"Rohit's 100, especially without Shikhar there tonight, for them to shuffle and their two most dominant players to still get majority of the runs is a sign of a really settled and real-

ly quality top-order," said Finch. Australia could not get the final flourish they were looking for, mustering only 63 runs in the last 10 overs at the loss of five wickets, far too many in Finch's view.

"In the last two games we have had the bowlers batting for the majority of the last few overs. Which we saw in Rajkot the damage that KL (Rahul) could do in the back end because he was a settled batter. I think that's an area we just missed a couple of tricks. "Just not having an in batter being in and having faced 20 or 30 balls to get us deeper and get us to the back end," Finch said.

He also praised India's death over bowling at the same time. "But credit to India, their death bowling in the last few games was exceptional. (Mohammed) Shami was nailing his yorkers, (Navdeep) Saini in the last two games and (Jasprit) Bumrah. In both games they were exceptional. You can look at where we could have improved but also you've got to give some credit to India," said Finch.

Eng celebrate innings win over SA

MOST RUNS IN A SINGLE OVER IN TESTS				
Runs	Batsman	Bowler	Venue	Season
28	Brian Lara (West India)	Robin Peterson	Johannesburg	2003-04
28	George Bailey (Australia)	James Anderson	Perth	2013-14
28	Keshav Maharaj (S.Africa)	Joe Root	Port Elizabeth	2019-20
27	Shahid Afridi (Pakistan)	Harbhajan Singh	Lahore	2005-06

FAISEL FEATURES



England team celebrate taking the wicket of Rassie van der Dussen

AFP ■ PORT ELIZABETH

England completed a comprehensive win by an innings and 53 runs on the fifth day of the third Test against South Africa at St George's Park on Monday, taking an unbeatable 2-1 lead in the four-match series.

England were held up by a last wicket stand of 99 between Keshav Maharaj (71) and Dane Paterson (39 not out) and it needed a direct-hit run-out by Sam Curran from mid-on to clinch the result shortly before lunch. South Africa were bowled out for 237. The partnership

between Maharaj and Paterson was easily South Africa's best of the match and showed up an otherwise poor batting performance by the hosts.

South Africa added 135 runs in losing their last four wickets, which seemed unlikely when Vernon Philander chipped a catch to midwicket off Stuart Broad three balls into the day.

Mark Wood and Dom Bess also took wickets but England captain Joe Root could not add to his four wickets taken on Sunday, conceding 56 runs in 10 overs on Monday to finish with four for 87.

TRIUMPH

Maharaj hit Root for three fours and two sixes in an over which ended with four byes, costing 28 in total.

Despite the late face-saving flourish for the hosts, it was a result which was a triumph for England's youth policy, while the way South Africa were outplayed was a devastating blow for captain Faf du Plessis and new coach Mark Boucher.

Even before Monday's last rites there was speculation about Du Plessis' future. He has expressed his desire to lead South Africa in the T20 World Cup in Australia in October and November, by which time he will be 36.

It seems possible that the fourth Test in Johannesburg from Friday could be his last home series in charge.

It was South Africa's seventh defeat in their last eight Tests, the only exception being their win in the first Test against England when it seemed that radical changes in the team management might have heralded a new dawn.

Tiripano strikes early to give Zimbabwe edge

AFP ■ HARARE



AFP ■ HARARE

Donald Tiripano struck early to remove Oshada Fernando and complete an excellent second day of the first Test for Zimbabwe against Sri Lanka in Harare.

The 31-year-old seamer had earlier made a handy 44 not out batting at number eight as Zimbabwe advanced from their overnight 189 for two to 358 all out.

Left-arm spinner Lasith Embuldeniya, playing in his sixth Test, was the stand-out bowler with five for 114.

When bad light stopped play for the day, Sri Lanka had reached 42 for the loss of Fernando who had his off stump flattened by Tiripano's very first delivery.

The day began with Zimbabwe Craig Ervine well set on 55 and looking for his third Test century.

The 34-year-old progressed comfortably to 85 until pace

bowler Suranga Lakmal nipped one through his defence shortly before lunch.

It was the third wicket to fall during the morning as Lakmal also produced a full inswinger to have Brendan Taylor leg before for 21 and Zimbabwe captain Sean Williams edged left-arm spinner Embuldeniya to Niroshan Dickwella behind the stumps.

The left-arter spinner removed Regis Chakabva shortly after lunch but Sikandar Raza and Tiripano then both settled in.

Raza fell for a flighty 41, stumped by Dickwella as he charged at Embuldeniya, who also bowled Jarvis.

Ndlovu was brilliantly snapped up at short-leg by Kusal Mendis off Lahiru Kumara. Lakmal dismissed last man Victor Nyauchi just after the delayed break to finish with three for 53, leaving Tiripano undefeated on 44.

Simmons blasts 10 sixes as WI rout Ireland

AFP ■ BASSETTERRE (SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS)

Opening batsman Lendl Simmons blasted 10 sixes in an undefeated 91 as West Indies routed Ireland by nine wickets in the third and final Twenty20 International at Warner Park here on Sunday.

Simmons, the nephew of West Indies coach Phil Simmons, also hit five boundaries in his 40-ball blitz. It was his highest score in the format and came just five days before his 35th birthday.

Chasing a modest 139 to win, Simmons won the match in style with a six over midwicket off spinner Simi Singh whose three overs cost 41 runs.

Fellow opener Evin Lewis made 46 with four boundaries and three sixes as West Indies raced to victory with 54 balls remaining.

The three-match series ended 1-1 after Ireland edged a first-game thriller by four runs in Grenada before Saturday's match at Warner Park was abandoned due to rain. Earlier, veteran all-rounders Kieron Pollard and Dwayne Bravo shared six wickets as West Indies restricted Ireland to 138 all out. Captain Pollard who produced the best bowling spell by a West Indian in T20 internationals (4-25) in Saturday's abandoned game, claimed 3-17.

Bravo finished with 3-19 to become the West Indies' leading all-time wicket-taker in the format with 57 victims in his 69th game. That beat the previous best of 54 by leg-spinner Samuel Badree.

Put into bat, Ireland raced to 50-0 off just 3.3 overs with openers Kevin O'Brien (top scoring with 36) and Paul Stirling again getting their team off to a storming start. However, Pollard dismissed O'Brien after the Irishman hit his runs off only 18 balls with Bravo then accounting for Stirling (11).

Ishant's injury adds to Delhi woes as Vidarbha take complete control

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi's miserable season just got worse as premier speedster Ishant Sharma twisted his ankle after another woeful outing with the bat against defending champions Vidarbha in a Ranji Trophy group A encounter on Monday.

On a helpful track, former India U-19 seamer Aditya Thakare's career-best 7 for 55 restricted Delhi to 163 in reply to visitors' first innings score of 179.

By the time, play was called off due to bad light, Vidarbha were 35 for no loss as the track got easier for batting.

Vidarbha now have an overall lead of 51 but more importantly, the pitch has eased out. With a bowler short and the wily artist Wasim Jaffer longing for an easy second innings pitch, Delhi at the moment is looking down the barrel.

And it didn't help Delhi's cause



On a helpful track, former India U-19 seamer Aditya Thakare's career-best 7 for 55 restricted Delhi to 163 in reply to visitors' first innings score of 179

bowling was exposed again.

IPL specialist Nitish Rana became Thakare's fifth victim of the innings giving a catch to skipper Fazal.

Only keeper Anuj Rawat (37 off 101 balls) showed some stomach for fight adding 36 for the ninth wicket

with Simarjeet Singh (23) even as Umesh Yadav (2/45) removed all-rounder Lalit Yadav (7) and Kumar Bidhuri (19).

YADAV'S DOUBLE TON FLOORS MUMBAI

Mumbai : Batsman-wicketkeeper Upendra Yadav's maiden double ton propelled Uttar Pradesh to a mammoth 625/8 declared on the second day of their Elite Group B Ranji Trophy game against Mumbai on Monday.

Twenty three-year-old Yadav was the cynosure of all eyes at Wankhede Stadium as he took a listless Mumbai attack to the cleaners first in the company of Saurabh Kumar (44 off 47 balls; 8x4) and then with skipper Ankit Rajpoot (32 off 63 balls; 5x4) and Yash Dayal (41 not out).

Yadav (203 not out off 239 balls) conjured 72 runs for the seventh wicket with Saurabh to take the game away from Mumbai, and then

forged a 119-run eight-wicket stand with Rajpoot, as Uttar Pradesh took complete control.

Adding to Mumbai's woes, Yadav and Dayal put up an unbroken 131-run stand for the ninth wicket.

Yadav, who registered the highest score by a number 7 batsman against Mumbai, smashed 27 fours and one six in his 239 balls unbeaten knock.

TIWARY TRIPLE TON TO PUT BENGAL ON TOP

Kalyani (WB) : Senior batsman Manoj Tiwary cracked his maiden first class triple century to put Bengal in the driver's seat against Hyderabad in their Ranji Trophy Group A clash here on Monday.

The 34-year-old, who has played 12 ODIs and 3 T20 Internationals, was at his sublime best, smashing 30 fours and five sixes, en route to his unbeaten 303 from 414 balls at a strike rate of 73.19. His marathon

knock lasted 10 hours and 30 minutes.

His final 50 came off just 37 balls as he got to the landmark in the fourth ball of the final session of the second day, gliding part-timer Buddhi Rahul through covers boundary. Bengal immediately declared their first innings at 635 for seven.

Tiwary, who last played for India in 2015, also became the only second batsman from Bengal to hit a triple ton — after Devang Gandhi's 323 versus Assam at Guwahati in 1998-99 season. His previous best was 267 as Bengal skipper against Madhya Pradesh in a drawn encounter in Kolkata in 2011-12 season.

After Tiwary's sensational innings, it was time for Bengal pace duo of Akash Deep (3/46) and Mukesh Kumar (2/29) to wreak havoc as they reduced Hyderabad to 83 for five in the final session. Hyderabad still trail Bengal by 552 runs with two days left.