

Central Chronicle

Founder: Late Shri Ramgopal Maheshwari

Inspiration: Late Shri Prafulla Kumar Maheshwari

EDITORIAL

Talks of democracy in danger

Opposition parties are continuously alleging that the country's democracy is in danger due to the way central agencies and institutions are being used against the opposition parties. On Thursday, Congress held a press conference and made serious allegations against the Central Government. Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge were present in this press conference. Congress alleged that the accounts of their party have been frozen. In such a situation, the Congress party is finding it difficult to meet the expenses for the elections. Congress questioned whether opposition parties not getting a level playing field is not a sign of weakness of democracy? The round of discussions regarding Congress's press conference had just begun when Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate at 9 pm. He was arrested on liquor scam charges. In this case, the law will take its course and the court will give its verdict, but does the opposition's allegation that the government is deliberately targeting only the alleged corruption of opposition leaders hold water? If we look at the raids of ED and CBI, it becomes clear that these government agencies have taken most of the action against the opposition. But it cannot be denied that the leaders who have been arrested face serious allegations of corruption. If there were not sufficient grounds for arrest, these leaders could have easily got bail but leaders like Satyendar Jain, Manish Sisodia, Sanjay Singh have not got relief even from the Supreme Court. Therefore, the opposition needs to look inside itself also. As far as the arrest of Arvind Kejriwal is concerned, the opposition leaders have definitely united due to his arrest, but it remains to be seen how much sympathy he gets among the general public. The opposition may accuse the central government of misuse of agencies, but no serious case of corruption has yet come to light against Prime Minister Narendra Modi or his government. In fact, considering the track record of the Prime Minister, the opposition parties are not going to face any criticism

in the matter of corruption. Not capable of making any type of allegations. This is the reason why it does not seem that the opposition parties will get much political benefit from the arrest of Arvind Kejriwal. As far as Kejriwal is concerned, he will have to stay out of politics for a long time.

Aam Aadmi Party leaders may claim that Kejriwal will remain the Chief Minister, but now it will be almost impossible for Arvind Kejriwal to remain on the post of Chief Minister. Delhi state holds a special position. Here the Lieutenant Governor has unlimited powers. The Lieutenant Governor comes under the Central Home Department. In such a situation, if Arvind Kejriwal does not resign, it is certain that he will be dismissed in the future. The arrest of Arvind Kejriwal will have an impact on the election campaign of Delhi and Punjab. Aam Aadmi Party is definitely playing the victim card but it has to be repeatedly criticized by the public. Will have to give clarification in front. That means the entire opposition is currently on the defensive on the issue of corruption. In fact, Arvind Kejriwal has committed a huge strategic and legal mistake by not responding to ED's nine summonses. He has to bear the brunt of this at the time of Lok Sabha elections. If he had gone to the ED office for questioning in November itself, he would have been arrested today. One does not have to see this day. Even if ED had arrested him in November, he could have got bail after four-five months like it happened in the case of Sanjay Raut. Sanjay Raut came out on bail after being in jail for about 120 days. Obviously the leaders of Aam Aadmi Party made serious mistakes in the case of Arvind Kejriwal. However, the elections have been announced. Therefore, it is the duty of the Central Election Commission to ensure free and fair elections and to create such an environment in which all political parties get equal opportunity to express their views. Here, despite all the cases, does it not seem right for the opposition parties to say that the country's democracy is in danger?

Ups & downs of Power Politics in Bihar - II

by Er. Prabhat Kishore

The first non-Congress government was sworn in on 5th March 1967 under the leadership of Mahamaya Pd. Sinha, a Kayasth, of Jan Kranti Dal. The alliance was a mix up of conflicting ideology parties like Jansangh, Samyukt Socialist Party (SSP), Praja Socialist Party (PSP), Communist Party and Kamakhya Narayan Sinha, ex-King of Ramgarh. It was very tedious for Mahamaya Babu to keep these opposite ideology parties united for long time and ultimately, the government fell by 13 votes in the Vidhan Sabha on 25th January 1968. Bindeshwari Prasad Mandal (the chairman of Mandal Commission) was an SSP MP and joined in Mahamaya Pd. Ministry, but was not elected as MLA or MLC. To become a member of Vidhan Mandal his 6-month deadline was only 10 days left. On the initiative of Congress, B.P. Mandal, a Yadav, formed "Shoshit Samaj Dal" to become the CM. So, first Satish Pd. Singh, a Koiri, of his Party was sworn in as the CM, whose tenure was for just 5 days (28th Jan 1968 to 1st Feb 1968) and Sri Mandal was nominated to the Vidhan Parishad through a Governor Quota. Mandal formed the government with the

support of the Congress. The Congress was not convenient in supporting a backward Chief Minister. To topple Mandal Government, a break up in Congress took place and "Loktantrik Congress" under the leadership of Bhola Paswan Shastri, a Dusadh, was formed. Mandal remain in power for just 47 days (1st Jan 1968 to 22nd March 1968).

remained far from the magic figure of 160. On 26th Feb. 1969, the government was formed under the leadership of Sardar Harihar Singh, a Rajput (26th Feb 1969 to 22nd June 1969) of United Forum, but he was also unable to provide stable government. Due to large-scale defection of ministers & legislatures, the Harihar Singh government was defeated in the Vid-

Congress brought a no-confidence motion in the Vidhan Sabha which was passed with the support of Jansangh, and within 9 days Shastri Govt. (22nd June 1969 to 4th July 1969) collapsed. On 6th July 1969 President Rule was imposed, which was revoked on 16th Feb. 1970, when Daroga Prasad Roy, a Yadav, of the Congress was sworn in as CM. But again the upper caste lobby of the Congress could not accept Mr. Roy for long time.

In the opposition, there was internal fight in the SSP between the upper and backward caste lobbies for leadership in which Karpoori Thakur, a Nai, succeeded. Daroga Roy govt. (16th Feb. 1970 to 22nd Dec. 1970) fell down and Karpoori Thakur became CM on 22nd Dec. 1970 with the support of the Jansangh. He too became a victim of defections and had to resign on 2nd June 1971.

A forum of like minded legislatures named "Pragatishil Vidhayak Dal" was formed and its leader Bhola Paswan Shastri took over as CM for the third time.

He again fell to kept legislature united and resigned on 27th December 1972; followed by President Rule on 9th Jan. 1972.

Government of Samyukt Morcha under the leadership of Shastri took charge, but this Schedule Caste CM also had to resign only after 95 days (22nd March 1968 to 29th June 1968) and for the first time in the history of Bihar, President Rule came into force on 29th June 1968. In the Mid-Term Election of 1969, the Congress got only 118 seats and remained far from the magic figure of 160.

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han Sabha by securing only 143 votes against 164.

Bhola Paswan Shastri took charge for the second time through double-cross of legislatures from different parties. The Jansangh wanted to keep the Congress out of the government. Congress also did not want the leaders of Jansangh, PSP & SSP to be inducted in the government. The

IIT Madras Develops India's Most Customizable Electric Standing Wheelchair

Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) has developed India's most customizable Electric Standing Wheelchair, which has been developed indigenously for the benefit of wheelchair users.

The 'NeoStand' was launched at the campus today (20th March 2024) in the presence of Prof. V. Kamakoti, Director, IIT Madras, eminent dignitaries, generous supporters of this project, faculty, researchers and users of these rehabilitative devices.

NeoStand is a compact standing wheelchair with easy-to-use navigation for its motorized standing mechanism. At the touch of a button, wheelchair users can effortlessly transition from sitting to standing, opening a world of possibilities—be it engaging in eye-level conversations, reaching for a book, or simply enjoying a cup of coffee standing by a counter.

The project development was led by Prof. Sujatha Srinivasan, Head, TTK Center for Rehabilitation Research and Device Development (R2D2), IIT Madras, who also led the development of 'Arise', India's first manual standing wheelchair, and NeoBolt, the country's first motorized add-on for wheelchairs. This device has been commercialized and is being taken to the market through NeoMotion, an IIT Madras-incubated start-up.

Addressing the launch event at

campus today (20th March 2024), Prof. V. Kamakoti, Director, IIT Madras, said, "These are very important translational research works guided by faculty of IIT Madras that have great social impact."

NeoStand redefines the wheelchair experience with its user-centric design. It promises users the freedom to sit for prolonged hours and stand comfortably when needed reducing the risk of secondary health complications. Its compactness ensures easy manoeuvrability through tight spaces, enhancing accessibility. The seamless transition between sitting and standing, with an option to pause midway, underscores its innovative approach to improving users' quality of life and social participation.

Highlighting the benefits of this innovation, Dr. Henry Prakash, Associate Medical Superintendent, Christian Medical College, Vellore and Professor, Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Christian Medical College, Vellore, said, "Today as we navigate the complexities of accessibility, affordability, and societal attitudes, let us keep in mind that the advancements in this field of assistive technology is not a technological imperative, but a moral one too."

For the majority of wheelchair users across the globe, the ability to stand is far-fetched. Standing is

essential for better blood circulation, and digestion, preventing health issues like pressure sores and crucial for daily activities. Currently, users are often dependent on external help and some need to use orthoses. For persons with severe disabilities who have compromised upper body strength, this is a significant challenge, and a manual standing wheelchair is inadequate.

The team at IIT Madras set out to tackle this challenge faced by wheelchair users - the necessity and difficulty of standing. The team was committed to providing users with yet another device aimed at enhancing their independence and health.

Path To Commercialization

The journey of NeoStand from concept to reality was supported by a collaborative ecosystem. The project was sponsored by Tata Elxsi under its corporate social responsibility initiative. The development and design were spearheaded by the TTK Center for Rehabilitation Research and Device Development (R2D2) at IIT Madras and NeoMotion, which took the lead in bringing this product to the marketplace.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Sudhakar Rao, IAS (Rtd), Member, Board of Directors, Tata Elxsi and Chairman of CSR committee, Tata Elxsi, said, "The launch of a new product this evening for the differ-

ently abled signifies a turning point in our endeavour to foster inclusiveness and empowerment for individuals who face mobility challenges. As we unveil the electric wheelchair, which was designed and developed by this Centre, it is a fitting moment to acknowledge the significance of providing funding for assistive technologies and the profound changes they can bring about in the lives of individuals. During the preceding three years, Tata Elxsi has supported several innovative initiatives that seek to improve mobility and rehabilitation. Enabling new developments in the area of technology has been an area of great importance and priority to Tata Elxsi CSR policy... In the last three years, Tata Elxsi has provided possibly more than Rs. 5 crore to IIT Madras."

Developers' Vision

Highlighting the vision behind this project, Prof. Sujatha Srinivasan, who is also a faculty in the Department of Mechanical Engineering, IIT Madras, said, "Integrating standing function in a wheelchair provides health benefits as well as functional and psychological benefits to the user. Our first standing wheelchair was Arise, a low-cost mechanical design, especially designed for rural users, enabling standing and outdoor mobility for short distances."

Satire

Everyone yearning for relief



The friend told us, "Like the leaders, the weather has also started changing its mood. Summer was about to start here but there was unseasonal rain in the month of March. Even in the election, the leaders will wait for the rain of votes so that there is coolness in their hearts. In areas where there is water crisis, people will feel relief from the rain."

We said, "Leave others, say yours. Tell me whether you got relief or not? Relief fulfills people's wishes. As elections approached, dearness allowance of central employees increased. What have you got? Did the state government give you relief or the central government? Was it not received from the Prime Minister's Special Relief Fund? How much did you get? Who prepared the list of those getting relief? How did your name reach the collector? You must have taken the help of some leader. Nowadays, no work can be done without lobbying."

The friend said, "It has become a crime to express my feelings to you. We expressed our views very freely and as always you are making a mess of the matter."

We said, "This is how facts are

investigated. The words of your heart reached your lips. You yourself admitted that you were relieved. Do you think we don't know the meaning of relief? Relief means compensation or assistance amount. On receiving reports of things like flood, earthquake, land subsidence, railway accident, destruction of crops due to unseasonal rains, the government gives orders to provide relief. Only a select few people get relief and the rest of the money is eaten up by politicians and officials. You are our neighbour, it was your duty to take relief yourself and provide it to us too. You showed selfishness. Took relief alone and did not let us know."

The friend said, "Why are you wrapping us like this? We did not get any relief. Anyway, with the implementation of the code of conduct, the government cannot give anything to anyone right now. In fact, we were relieved by the sudden rain showers during the summer season. Got satisfaction and solution. The heart felt relieved."

We said, "Next, use your words wisely. You told us that you were relieved. There was a lot of fuss about this word 'relief' for so long.

Science Fact

Foiling deadly prions

My friend Charlie Clark began complaining that his eyeglasses were faulty in September 2023. A trip to the optician didn't fix them; they were still "out of alignment," he said. The same month, his insomnia, a decades-old problem, became a torment. Still, at age 70, Charlie, a dogged journalist and prominent local historian in Arlington, Virginia, was thriving. He masterfully interviewed philanthropist David Rubenstein in front of a packed dinner audience at an Arlington country club; he put on his tuxedo for a library gala at Mount Vernon; and he cranked out, week after week, his "Our Man in Arlington" column for the Falls Church News-Press.

In early October, Charlie suddenly couldn't remember what day of the week 60 Minutes came on, after watching the TV program every Sunday night for 40 years. His sense of where things were in space grew warped: Out for a walk, he grabbed Ellen in a panic, thinking a passing car was swerving to hit them on the sidewalk.

On 22 October, Charlie was admitted to Virginia Hospital Center with increasing confusion and paranoia. Within days, he developed double vision and a left-sided tremor that soon became a rigid paralysis. In the deafening MRI machine, he thought the hospital was being bombed and cried: "We have to save the babies!" He died on 15 November, after tremendous suffering. But until the end, Charlie displayed his trademark generosity of spirit. "Congratulations on solving the mystery," he said, holding his hand out to the doctor who informed him, 12 days before his death, that he had Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD). CJD is the most prominent of the handful of diseases, all fatal, that result when prions, proteins of uncertain function that are abundant in the brain, misfold into an infective form that spreads widely.

Spiritual

Meditation is the way for inner transformation, brings positive changes

In an awareness drive for creating an aura about the significance of meditation in our day to day lifestyle, Buddha-CEO Quantum Foundation, a non-profit and non-religious organization formally passed a resolution and announced the proposal for the global well-being to the policymakers at the national and global level to form a universal policy that scientific meditation is the way for inner transformation to bring about positive changes to enhance the growth and excellence of an individual, organizations and communities.

The decision was made during the two-day global conference for the meditation leaders in the presence of some key dignitaries and steering council members of the Buddha CEO Quantum Foundation - Padma Shri D.R Kaarthikeyan, Former Director, CBI, CRPF, Govt of India; Mr. Chandra Pulamarasetti, Founder, Buddha-CEO Quantum Foundation; Mr. S.K Ghai, Chairman, Sterling Publishers Pvt Ltd; Mrs. Laurence Guihard-Joly (France), Former GM, IBM Corporation and Dr. Narendra Mairpady, Former Chairman, Indian Overseas Bank. The two day global conference was hosted by Buddha CEO Quantum Foundation, a non-profit trust and founded in India and run globally by the corporate and business leaders, mentored by Padmashri D.R. Kaarthikeyan, Padamshri Dr R.V Ramani and S.V Balasubramaniam, the Foundation operates globally, with volunteers and participants across the world. The main objective of the foundation is to spread awareness about the significance of meditation in driving positive social change globally, we appeal to the leaders and decision makers in the government, education, healthcare, business and non-profit sectors, to begin with, and bring peace in the world through inner transformation.



Letters to the Editor

Ensure water security

Sir,
It is imperative for the Karnataka government to adopt and execute long-term strategies to ensure water security for the populace. It is crucial to curb the expansion of Bengaluru as there will be insufficient water resources to sustain the city in the future. Prioritizing schemes for rainwater harvesting, lake rejuvenation, and water recycling is essential, as these initiatives are often overlooked until crises arise. It is crucial to acknowledge that the Supreme Court has imposed a restriction on usage of Cauvery water. With the looming threat of climate change, the situation is expected to deteriorate further. The water crisis is palpable in numerous districts, including Chamarajanagar, Ramanagar, Mysuru Mandya and also in North Karnataka districts including Bellary, Raichur, Yadgir, Bidar and Koppal. Many taluks in Karnataka are grappling with a drinking water shortage, while water levels in most reservoirs, including the Krishnaraja Sagar and the Tungabhadra, have plummeted to unprecedented lows. The distress signals and warnings from towns and villages must not be ignored.

Vijaykumar H K

Tech

Xiaomi HyperOS Releases in India; Company Reveals Rollout Timeline

Xiaomi introduced the HyperOS interface in India on Thursday, February 29. The company also revealed the rollout timeline of the new operating system in the country for existing smartphones and tablets. Recently, Xiaomi also confirmed a list of devices that will get the HyperOS update globally in H1 2024. Notably, the Xiaomi 14 is set to launch in India on March 7 and will be the first phone in the country to run this UI out-of-the-box. It was also the first model ever, alongside the Xiaomi 14 Pro, to ship with HyperOS, when they were unveiled in October 2023.

Xiaomi HyperOS is claimed to optimise performance and increase the interconnectivity of a device. This interface comes with an AI-backed gallery, a new colour system, redesigned icons and Xiaomi's HyperConnect, which is said to improve productivity across Xiaomi devices. The company notes that the availability of certain features will vary depending on the device which is getting the update.

In India, Xiaomi 13 Pro and Xiaomi Pad 6 users are currently eligible for a stable HyperOS upgrade, as well as Redmi 12 5G, Redmi 12C, Redmi 11 Prime and Redmi Pad users. The company claims that the following devices will get the update in the month of March: Xiaomi 12 Pro, Redmi Note 13 Pro+, Redmi Note 13 Pro, Redmi Note 13, Redmi Note 12 Pro+, Redmi Note 12 Pro and Redmi Note 12.



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