

Bengaluru brouhaha resonates in distant Delhi

If ever there was a perfect tussle for power, the Karnataka example would fit to a 'T'. What began as a sustained bout of shadow boxing in the summer of 2023 as a resurgent Congress stormed to power in the south-western state has continued to pop up, at the most inappropriate of times for the ruling dispensation and much to the delight of the Opposition who have rubbed it in, almost at will. The two contenders – one the incumbent Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and the other his fiery and influential deputy, D K Shivakumar have for the present decided to bare their real intentions, stop pretending, and indulging in typical Congress party doublespeak, thereby letting it out all in the open. With south India still refusing to be 'Modified' to the extent the saffron headquarters wants in New Delhi and

elsewhere, the dramatic high which the GOP experienced two years ago when they wrested control in Bengaluru is no more evident in the silicon city. Propped up by well-wishers and a motley set of mutt leaders brazenly exhibiting a cocktail of casteist and religious power, both Shivakumar, the crisis manager and the go-to man for Congress for a few years and his senior competitor Siddaramaiah have not let anything pass in their battle for the gaddi. With loyalties split within the cabinet as groupism is rampant, the CM and his deputy have had to enable the campwalas to vent out their feelings (like how a ventriloquist does) and then pretend to douse the fire that it invariably causes. One has read a host of loaded statements, directly and indirectly, made by the leaders themselves and the ubiquitous AICC heads, who

still unsuccessfully try to cover up and deflect attention from the raging controversy. It is still inexplicable why Congress is doing this. In a long time, they won with a convincing number of seats in 2023 after receiving sizeable support from the public in Karnataka, who were fed up with the ineffective rule of BJP, fighting its own battles within the party. If ever power sharing by 'rotation' was considered a doomed to fail task, the Karnataka example would add to the many that have taken place in India over the past three decades, when coalition governments, shaky right from the start, patch up just in time to seize the gaddi and convince the dissidents in their respective parties that it will be an equal tenure rule for the principal players. Invariably, betrayal and opportunistic switch of partners to stay on and make

fresh alliances to ensure their political survival have been the oft-used tactics of both regional and national parties, which are forgotten as the next elections are announced. There is a huge list in this regard for political scholars to study all over the nation. Karnataka has once again grabbed attention as the political pow-wow as of now is being played out in New Delhi, where political pundits enjoy the southern flavour of this no-holds-barred fight and come up with expert theories on how it may all end up. As far as the grand old party is concerned, it has often shown that it needs no enemies from outside, laden as it is with 'good friends' within. Going by past experiences, Bengaluru may quiver and shake for a while, but this too shall pass. Or fail, depending on which lobby you want in power.

LETTERS

MNS MLA must be punished

THIS refers to the editorial 'Politicians wreaking havoc should be duly punished' (THI July 10). Sadly, Maharashtra is witnessing political highhandedness of Shiv Sena and MNS workers, who are indulging in needless violence either in the name of 'Marathi' language or in the process of intimidating innocent people from other states. The over-focus by the MNS to teach Marathi to others is unnecessary and unwarranted. Its MLA slapping and punching a non-local in the MLA canteen over the quality of 'dal' served there, has brought the reputation of the Shiv Sena and MNS combine several notches down in the public eye. The wanton vandalism of the toll booth showed the rowdy and uncouth behaviour of the opposition in Maharashtra in dismal light; and the government must take to task these lawbreakers so that they would not dare to repeat such acts again.

K V Raghuram, Wayanad

Publicly humiliate all law-breaking leaders

Politicians displaying a troubling disregard for constitutional norms and democratic principles is not only condemnable but is also indicative of a larger political conspiracy due to its inability to reconcile with failures. Recently, the way MNS members are resorting to violence in the name of linguistic pride in an increasingly polarised and identity-driven political climate is deplorable. Similarly, politicians taking law into their lands at the drop of a hat and going on a rampage on a false notion is dangerous. It is time to draw a line and unequivocally warn people triggering mob frenzy. Strict action should include arrests, fast-track trials and publicly damning the perpetrators. The courts, police and civil society must unite in ensuring this does not spiral into another round of violence. Only then, can hate violence and mob violence on one pretext or the other can be put to an end

K R Srinivasan, Secunderabad-3

Mandate semi-circular layout of classrooms

IT is commendable that some schools in Kerala have given up the traditional row-based seating arrangement in favour of a semi-circular layout in classrooms inspired by Vinesh Viswanath's debut Malayalam film Sthanarthi Sreekkuttan. The film portrays school life in a rural setting in Kerala. The time has indeed come to actualise the idea of semi-circular configuration of classrooms to foster friendship and fellowship among students. This innovative adaptation would de-congest the classroom, create a more congenial atmosphere for interaction and learning and enable schools to do without pigeonholing students as 'front-benchers', 'middle benchers' and 'backbenchers' and students to imbibe the spirit of equality and companionship and camaraderie and value cooperation more than competition. Further, it would do away with getting seats depending on height or supposed brilliance or based on names in alphabetical order. In the new classroom configuration, all students get the teacher's attention in equal measure and no student feels neglected. From now onwards, the governments and private school managements would do well to design and build new schools, keeping in mind creation of enough space for the semi-circular layout of classrooms.

G. David Milton, Maruthancode (TN)

Identify Nipah cases on urgent basis

PATIENTS recovering from Nipah infection, which has become endemic in north Kerala, have been disease-free and without post-infection sequelae thus far. However, two persons continue to be bed-bound in a vegetative state, as an aftermath of Nipah encephalitis. This has cast a gloom on Nipah survivors and is worrying healthcare providers. The unfavourable long-term effect of the infection renders the identification of the source of the dreaded viral infection even more crucial.

Dr. George Jacob, Kochi

No way to treat history-making women cricketers

INDIA'S women's cricket team has just made history by winning their first T20 series in England. Alas, what has been the nation's reaction? A passing cheer. Had it been the men's team, headlines would scream the achievement and there would be celebrations on the streets. Why must women work twice as hard for half the recognition? This win isn't just about cricket—it's about respect, equality, and breaking old patterns. The question is: will sponsors and fans now stand behind them—or simply scroll past? If victory abroad doesn't earn lasting support at home, what will? Let's not just clap today. Let's commit to change. Because real progress isn't in trophies—it's in the way we value them.

Hasnain Rabbani, Mumbai

thehansreader@gmail.com

BENGALURU ONLINE

BBMP to spend Rs 2.88 crore on stray dog feeding project

BENGALURU: In a first-of-its-kind move, the government, which has long supported the Indira Canteen initiative to feed the urban poor, is now extending its compassion to Bengaluru's stray dog population. The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has announced a new project to provide nutritious meals to stray dogs across its 8 zones and has floated a tender worth Rs 2.88 crore.

BBMP Special Commissioner Vikas Kishore Suralkar stated that the initiative aims to reduce stray dog attacks, especially on children, by ensuring that the animals are well-fed. He added that pilot programs conducted in a few wards have shown promising results. In these test runs, meals were provided to around 100 dogs over a period of 2-3 months, helping curb aggressive behaviour.

The BBMP plans to serve calorie-rich meals such as egg rice and chicken rice to stray dogs. These meals will be distributed in collaboration with local restaurants and food providers.

According to the tender notice issued via the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal, proposals are being invited to provide cooked food to stray dogs across all 8 BBMP zones.

Read more at <https://epaper.thehansindia.com>

TRIUMPH OF IDEOLOGICAL LOYALTY

SURGICAL STRIKE



K. KRISHNA SAGAR RAO

A few moments in public life restore our collective faith in the possibility of justice. One such moment arrived with the elevation of my senior party colleague, N. Ramchander Rao, as the State President of BJP Telangana. It is more than just a political appointment. To me, it is a triumph of ideological loyalty over expediency, of consistent service over opportunistic maneuvering. In a political climate where party affiliations shift faster than breaking news tickers, and ideological loyalty is treated as an inconvenience, this development feels like a powerful counter-narrative. Rao's rise is not sudden. It is a result of over four decades of unwavering commitment to the same ideological framework, to the same party, and to the same larger purpose.

Four decades of consistent commitment:

I have known him for over 12 years, not just as a party colleague but as someone I have had the privilege to work with closely, especially during our time as spokespersons for BJP Telangana. While he was senior and I was new to the role, we collaborated on many party assignments, media campaigns, crisis communications, press conferences, strategic outreach efforts, and I always admired his clarity, composure, and deep-rooted ideological conviction. He is not a man of noise, but of substance. And in a political age addicted to instant gratification, his trajectory reminds us that meaningful leadership is not a sprint but a long, committed climb.

Rao began his political life as a spirited student leader with the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) in Osmania University campus. In the turbulent political environment of student activism in the 1980s, ideological clarity was not a convenience, it was a conviction. And he held onto it like a torch in the dark.

From those early days to holding responsibilities as the official spokesperson of the BJP, State General Secretary, Member of the Legisla-

tive Council, and now as the State President, his climb has been both principled and patient. He did not hop across parties when times were tough. He did not rebel when the tides were not in his favour. He stayed, served, and strengthened the party when there was little visibility and even lesser reward. He believed in the ideology, in the organization, and in the vision of a stronger India led by principled politics.

Ideology is not a costume: In contemporary politics, ideology has become a fashion statement, worn one day, discarded the next. It has become something leaders wear on stage and take off in the green room. But for those of us who take public life seriously, ideology is not a costume, it is our character.

A strong ideological foundation is not meant to restrict, but to refine. It helps leaders make decisions that are consistent, communities feel represented, and policies remain rooted in purpose. That is why parties like BJP are not just electoral vehicles, they are ideological missions. And leaders like Ramchander Rao are its long-distance runners.

The great political betrayal-Party-hopping as a culture:

Let us talk about the rot.

We are now living in an era of political restlessness. Leaders jump from one party to another like changing outfits for an evening function. One day, they are condemning a party's ideology, and the next, they are its star campaigners. They have mastered the art of ideological amnesia, conveniently forgetting what they stood against, to now claim what they never believed in.

It has become commonplace to see people jump from one extreme of the political spectrum to the other. Even from extreme Left to extreme Right. From secular-socialist rhetoric to nationalistic spiritualism, all in a matter of weeks. They swing across ideologies like it is all part of some harmless political game. But it is not. It is an insult to the electorate, a mockery of democracy, and a brutal erosion of trust in public life.

Let me be clear, party-switching is not illegal, nor is it unconstitutional. But it is ethically troubling and democratically corrosive. People elect representatives based on what they say they stand for. If that representation is betrayed for personal



N. Ramchander Rao

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My own journey-Loyalty without expectation:

I speak not just as an observer, but as a participant in this journey.

When newcomers claim seniority:

I have served BJP for over twelve years as its chief spokesperson in Telangana. Through changing leadership, shifting political equations, and intense public scrutiny, I have remained in the same role. Many have asked me why? Why not ask for something bigger? Why not negotiate for a more powerful post? Why not jump to a party that offers me more?

Believe me, I have had many such invitations. Roles in State Government. Higher party positions in other political parties. More visibility, more comfort, more responsibilities, more growth, more opportunity. However, I did not flinch for a minute to reject these offers.

I stayed. Not because I lack ambition, competence, but because I value allegiance. I believe in the BJP's ideology, deeply, emotionally, and intellectually. I did not join this party to climb a ladder. I joined to help rebuild a nation. And I know I am not alone. There are thousands like me across the state and this country. Competent, highly educated and passionate individuals, who chose

Ice baths are potential health risks

But the benefits are questionable and, importantly, ice baths can have health risks – particularly for people who have limited experience using them.

Cold water immersion isn't a new concept. The "frigidarium" – a room with a cold plunge pool or bath – was a feature in most Roman bathhouses. For decades, athletes have used cold water immersion, such as swims in cold water, for recovery. But in

recent years, with the proliferation of commercial cold plunge centres, there's been an explosion in people using ice baths recreationally. Many people are even setting up their own ice baths at home. Social media shows serene influencers meditating through the pain, claiming it boosts mental health, serotonin, testosterone, and their metabolism. But does the evidence stack up?

Ice baths can reduce mus-

cle soreness after intense training. However, the effect is modest and short-lived. Some research shows cold water immersion can improve mood after a single exposure in young, healthy people, but other research doesn't find these benefits. Most claims about mental health, testosterone and weight loss aren't backed by strong evidence. Rather, they're anecdotal and amplified by influencers.

Businesses offering ice

baths don't always actively supervise patrons or monitor a person's time in the ice bath. They may leave their customers to self-regulate, assuming people will know to get out of the water before they pass their body's limits. What are the risks?

Cold water immersion triggers a powerful physiological response. Gasping occurs and breathing becomes rapid and uncontrollable. Heart rate spikes. Blood

pressure rises. Staying in the water for too long can lead to hypothermia, a condition where a person's core body temperature drops dangerously low. Shivering may begin within minutes in cold water.

As far back as 1969, researchers found even experienced swimmers could struggle after just a few minutes in cold water. Recently one of us (Sam Cornell) had to provide first aid at an ice bath venue in Sydney. A young man collapsed after staying in an ice bath for ten minutes.