

Auditions over, Maharashtra gets Fadnavis as CM

Mohammed Sohail



123, 63, 42, 41; these seemingly ordinary numbers have over the past few days haunted some, pleased a few, humiliated many, brought some high flying snobs of politics back to the dirty ground and in the process given the state of Maharashtra its newest Chief Minister.

The reigns of the wealthiest part of the country with more than 117 million people in it was handed over to one Devendra Fadnavis. The state which is home to the financial capital of the country and is the originator of billions of dollars of trade in the global market now has a new administrator. So the question is inevitable. Who is Devendra Fadnavis? Why was he chosen as CM? How can he be trusted?

On his website, Devendra

Fadnavis describes himself as "Chief Political Officer (CPO)." His opening words there are - "Politics to me is an instrument to bring socio-economic change in the lives of people." Youngest corporator of the Nagpur Municipal Corporation at 21, youngest mayor at 27, winning his first Assembly election aged 29 and set to be the second youngest CM at 44; Fadnavis can be considered the role model of starting young. He represents the Nagpur South West constituency and took over as the chief of the BJP's Maharashtra unit in 2013.

As his rivals made a public spectacle of their ambitions, Fadnavis merely said, "The party will decide."

Born in a brahmin family of social activists associated with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh or RSS Fadnavis holds a law degree from Law College, Nagpur. He joined the RSS in his childhood and started his political career as a member of the BJP's student wing, the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad. Unassuming, he has been known to often ride Mumbai's local trains and readily stands in queue to buy tickets. All the above qualities seem perfect and seamlessly straight out of the Narendra Modi guide book on how to be a CM. Humble background, RSS backing, display of humility and of course a brahmin family.



Ben Bradlee

The Watergate Hero is no more



Ben Bradlee, the editor per excellence who reigned over the Washington Post with the chic of a well-dressed swashbuckler and the profane vocabulary of a dockworker as the newspaper helped dethrone President Richard Nixon, died on Tuesday aged 93.

Bradlee's death at his Washington home of natural causes was announced by the Post, which reported late last month that he had begun hospice care after suffering from Alzheimer's disease for several years. As executive editor from 1968 until 1991, Bradlee became one of the most key figures in Washington, as well as part of journalism history, while transforming the Post from a staid morning daily into one of the most dynamic and respected publications in the United States.

Bradlee's work guiding young reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein as they traced a 1972

burglary at Democratic Party headquarters at the Watergate office and apartment complex back to the Nixon White House has been celebrated from journalism schools to Hollywood.

The Post won a Pulitzer Prize for its coverage of the Watergate scandal, which forced Nixon to resign under threat of impeachment in August 1974.

Bradlee gave Woodward and Bernstein license to pursue the scandal and its cover-up vigorously, approving their use of the unidentified "Deep Throat" source, and the newspaper published about 400 articles about Watergate over 28 months.

The Post's coverage -- along with the book and movie about it, "All the President's Men" -- inspired a generation of investigative reporters.

Ben's death is an irrecoverable loss in the field of international journalism.

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Snap shots

Prasar Bharati's new chairman

A Surya Prakash has been appointed as the new Chairman of Prasar Bharati. A senior journalist, Surya Prakash's appointment fills a post that has been lying vacant for the last six months after the completion of the tenure by Mrinal Pande. The appointment will be for a period of three years. Dr A Surya Prakash is an author and columnist and is a leading commentator on Indian constitution and parliamentary issues. He has been the Editor of Zee News, Executive Editor of the Pioneer, Political Editor of Enadu Group of Newspapers among others.

Wifi station

Bangalore City Railway Station became the first railway station in the country to be fitted with WiFi facilities. Inaugurated by Union Railway Minister DV Sadananda Gowda, the facility in the city is a pilot project by the Indian Railways. This service was introduced for the commuters to stay connected and surf

the internet on the go. This facility shall be available to passengers on their free of charges for a period of 30 minutes, following which, the user may continue to surf the internet upon the purchase of scratch cards, which will be made available at the WiFi Help Desk.

Delhi most polluted

Delhi recorded the highest level of pollution post Diwali followed by Chennai and Bangalore. The Respirable Suspended Particulate Matter, which directly affects breathing, has gone up by five times from the national ambient air quality standard, stated scientists from System of Air quality and Weather Forecasting and Research. These pollutants can harm the heart and brain as well. People with existing heart or lung diseases such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, congestive heart disease, or ischemic heart disease are at increased risk of admission to hospitals based on the severity of already existing problem.

The List, who is there and who is fair?

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Keeping its pre-election promise alive, the government on Wednesday 29th October submitted the list of black money account holders to the Supreme Court. The list contains the names of 627 people. The centre provided a list of persons having accounts with HSBC Bank in Geneva, given by France.

But, the Supreme Court has refused to open the sealed envelope stating that the documents will be placed before the Special Investigation Team (SIT) and that only the SIT chairman and vice chairman can open the sealed envelope containing names of account holders. Contrary to expectations, the apex court decided that the SIT will take further action on the black money issue.

The list was submitted a day after the apex court had directed the Centre to pace before it the

names of those holding black money overseas.

Re-instilling faith in the judiciary, the SC completely refused to give in on the terms of the 2011 order in which it had asked for the names. And as the government showed "interest" in people on the list, shielding out a "protective umbrella" for a selective few, the court took offence and scoffed the attempt off.

But, the question here is, has the BJP bitten off more than it can chew as far as election promises are concerned? The government released names of Rajkot-based bullion trader Pankaj Chimanlal Lodhya and Goa-based mining company Timblo Private Limited and its five Directors among the names that figured in the list which was filed in the apex court. While there are no official estimates, Global Financial Integrity (GFI), a Washington-based think-tank,

has estimated that Indians had parked USD 462 billion in overseas tax havens between 1948 and 2008. This move seems ludicrous as if taunting democracy with justice.

