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The crescent moon was sighted in Hyderabad on Saturday. Muslims have begun month-long Ramzan fasting. — P. SURENDRA

Ramzan in city begins as moon sighted

SANJAY SAMUEL PAUL | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

The holy month of Ramzan commenced with the sighting of the crescent moon on Saturday. Believers greeted one another with "Ramzan Kareem" and headed to mosques for special Taraweeh prayers, during which the Quran is recited. According to religious authorities, the first Roza (fast) will begin on Sunday, with Sehri (pre-dawn meal) at 5.11 am and Iftar (meal to break the fast) at 6.28 pm.

■ Page 7: City markets report brisk business

RAMZAN TIMINGS
IF TAR: 6.28 PM (TODAY)
SEHRI: 5.11 AM (TOMORROW)

All eight feared dead in SLBC mishap, ops to recover bodies

BALU PULIPAKA | DC DOMALAPENTA, MARCH 1

All eight workers missing since the collapse in the Srisaillam left bank canal (SLBC) tunnel in Nagarkurnool last Saturday are now presumed to be no longer alive.

Minister Jupally Krishna Rao, who visited the tunnel inlet site on Saturday, said the chances of finding survivors were next to nil. "Ninety-nine per cent chances are that they are no longer alive," the minister said.

According to officials supervising the efforts inside the tunnel, which have now turned into a recovery operation, the continuous seepage of water was making it very hard to dig in the spots



A big hurdle in speeding up the SLBC tunnel clean-up is the broken tunnel boring machine. Efforts to cut it into smaller pieces was on full swing on Saturday. — DC

where the missing persons were believed to be located. While four were in an area that is accessible between the broken tail portion and the rest of the tunnel boring machine (TBM), the

other four were reported to be between the collapsed section and the front portion of the TBM.

■ Page 7: Digging through silt a hurdle: Official

4 dead, 5 trapped in avalanche

Dehradun, March 1: Fifty workers have been pulled out of snow from the site of an avalanche-hit BRO camp in the Mana village in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district, but four of them died on Saturday as rescuers raced against time to save the remaining five.

The avalanche hit the Border Roads Organisation camp between Mana and Badrinath between 5:30 am and 6 am on Friday, burying 55 workers inside eight containers and a shed.

■ Full report Page 12



Amit Shah

Shah for free movement in Manipur

New Delhi, March 1: Union home minister Amit Shah on Saturday directed security forces to ensure free movement of people on all routes in Manipur from March 8 and also called for strict action against those creating obstructions.

He chaired a meeting to review the security situation of Manipur.

■ Full report Page 12



US President Donald Trump with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. — AP

US support crucial, says Zelenskyy

Washington/New York: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy thanked the American people and leadership and voiced hope for strong relations.

■ Full report Page 13

PM: Welfare of farmers is our aim

SHASHI BHUSHAN | DC NEW DELHI, MARCH 1



Narendra Modi

With the crucial Bihar elections approaching, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday reached out to the farmers and the country's agrarian sector. Addressing a post-budget webinar on "Agriculture and Rural Prosperity", the Prime Minister said that his government not only considers agriculture as the "first engine of development" but is also working towards building an India where "farmers are prosperous and empowered".

Highlighting that this year's Budget is the first full Budget of the BJP-led NDA government's third term, Modi pointed out the continuity in policies and a new expansion of the vision for "Viksit Bharat".

"Our resolve towards the goal of Viksit Bharat is clear. Together, we are building an India where farmers are prosperous and empowered," he said and highlighted that the effort is to ensure no farmer is left behind and to advance every farmer.

The Prime Minister stated that agriculture is considered the first engine of development, giving farmers a place of pride.

"India is simultaneously working towards two major goals: the development of the agriculture sector and the prosperity of villages," the Prime

minister said. Modi highlighted that the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana, implemented six years ago, has provided nearly ₹3.75-lakh crores to farmers and the amount has been directly transferred to the accounts of 11-crore farmers.

The Prime Minister emphasised that the annual financial assistance of ₹6,000 is strengthening the rural economy and a farmer-centric digital infrastructure has been created to ensure the benefits of this scheme reach farmers across the country, eliminating any scope for intermediaries or leakages.

The Prime Minister mentioned that the government is now working swiftly to implement the announcements made in this year's Budget and sought continued cooperation of experts and visionary individuals.

■ Pullout 3: Modi reaches out to farmers

Teenmar suspended from Cong.

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

The Congress on Saturday suspended its graduate constituency MLC Chintapandu Naveen Kumar, popularly known as Teenmar Mallanna, for indulging in anti-party activities. TPCC's disciplinary action committee, led by G. Chinna Reddy, issued the suspension orders.

■ Page 3: Mallanna sacked for anti-party remarks

42% BC quota: Cabinet to okay draft Bill next week

L. VENKAT RAM REDDY | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy is likely to convene a Cabinet meeting on March 6 to approve draft legislations on implementing 42 per cent reservations for Backward Classes (BCs) and provide legal sanctity to the Scheduled Castes (SC) sub-categorisation for introduction in the Legislative Assembly, official sources said here on



A. Revanth Reddy

Saturday.

The state government is also planning to convene a special session of the Legislative Assembly in

the second week of this month to facilitate introduction and passage of the BC reservations bill and the SC sub-categorisation Bill. It may be recalled that Revanth Reddy had convened a special session of the Assembly on February 4 to approve resolutions on the caste census and SC sub-categorisation undertaken by the Congress government.

■ Page 3: Revanth to lead all-party team to meet PM

PATANJALI wellness
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Akshatarpan	Hydro Therapy	Ozone Therapy	Leech Therapy

Note- 25% discount will be available for patients of type-1 diabetes, liver, kidney failure, cancer, auto immune disease only in the month of March.

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If you cannot make online payment, you can come here and register directly.

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WEATHER

Max: 33.4°C
Min: 21.6°C
RH: 48%
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Partly cloudy sky. Max/Min temp. 33/22.9C

ASTROGUIDE

Krodhi: Uttarayana
Tithi: Phalguna Masam Shukla Tadiya till 9.02 pm
Star: Uttarabhadra till 8.59 am
Variyam: 7.49 pm to 9.15 pm
Durmuhurtam: 4.45 pm to 5.32 pm
Rahukalam: 4.30 pm to 6 pm
HURI CALENDAR
Ramzan 1,1446 H
PRAYERS
Fajar: 5.33 am
Zohar: 12.38 pm
Asar: 4.44 pm
Maghrib: 6.28 pm
Isha: 7.36 pm
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.32 AM
SUNSET TODAY 6.22 PM
MOONRISE 8.47 PM
MOONSET 8.05 AM

COUNTER POINT



Heavy demand for 2 Rajya Sabha seats by 200 candidates who lost in the recent elections!

EVENTS TODAY

Duddilla Sripada Rao Gari Jayanthi
Time: 9 am
Venue: Ravindra Bharathi

Book release by Aksharayan (Telugu Women Writers Foundation)
Time: 9 am
Venue: Ravindra Bharathi

Hyderabad Music Festival
Time: 10 am
Venue: G.M.C. Balayogi Athletic Stadium

Hyderabad Art Fair
Time: 10 am; Venue: Hitex World Arena Polo Championship by The Hyderabad Polo Club
Time: 2 pm
Venue: Hyderabad Polo & Riding Club

Ugadi Puraskaralu by Sri Ariyani Sakala Kala Vedika
Time: 6 pm
Venue: Ravindra Bharathi

Living Temple: Abhyasam: Workshop On Kerala Mural Paintings
Time: 11 am
Venue: T-Works Foundation

Workshop on meditation
Time: 10 am
Venue: Dhamma Khetta Vipassana International Meditation Centre

Workshop on bottle painting
Time: 2 pm
Venue: Chai Pani Cafe

Sree Narayana Guru Literary Fest; Time: 2 pm; Venue: Sree Narayana Vidya Bhavan, Kanajiguda

Neta's natter

HELIPAD PASSES FOR SHOW OF STRENGTH

Unseen can pretty much mean being unheard. And in politics, this could mean all the difference between survival, growth, or oblivion unnoticed by those around. Such appears to be the case these days with the attention-grabbing battle that is going on between the old-timers and newcomers in the Congress, jostling for space to grab Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy's attention. This was on full display when Revanth was on the campaign trail in Nizamabad, Karimnagar and Mancherla districts the other day. There were many who joined the Congress, leaving the BJP and the BRS, doing their best to get a "helipad pass" to meet, greet and see-off Revanth. But doing the same were Congress old-timers. The successful ones, including former BRS leaders, women and youth leaders, have actively been participating in official and Congress programmes, and the reward was a fleeting meeting with Revanth. But some Congress leaders are reportedly unhappy at being grounded and not getting the passes.

VIZAG CAPITAL TALK LEAVES AU BUNGALOWS IN SHAMBLES

It was a capital plan but just didn't work out that way. In the process, a nice bungalow, the official residence of the vice chancellor for Andhra University, has fallen on pretty bad times, and achieved a certain stage of dilapidation. All this came to the fore after the newly appointed VC, Prof. G.P. Rajasekhara, took up his new role. The VC's bungalow was to be his new home, but the previous VC P.V.G.D. Prasada Reddy let it go to seed for the last six years. The word is that Revanth left both the VC's and registrar's residences vacant, with the hopes he can hand them over to top bureaucrats in case Vizag was made AP's administrative capital. That never happened but, for the university, some needless capital costs for repairs - estimated to run into lakhs of rupees - are said to be on the cards.

WHEN JAGAN SILENCED 'LOUDSPEAKER' ANIL KUMAR

Former minister P. Anil Kumar Yadav, dubbed "YSRC loudspeaker" by his opponents, appears to have hit the silent button - or perhaps someone else did it for him. Known for unfiltered jabs at Telugu Desam's N. Chandrababu



BANDI DRAGS INDIA-PAK MATCH ANALOGY INTO MLC POLLS

The recent India-Pakistan cricket match has bowled its way into Telangana's MLC elections, thanks to BJP leader and Union minister Bandi Sanjay. Drawing a controversial analogy, Bandi compared the BJP-Congress contest in the MLC polls to an India-Pakistan match, declaring, "we (BJP) are the Indian team; they (Congress) are Pakistan. Vote for us if you want India to win." Congress leaders were quick to hit back, accusing the BJP of stoking nationalism and religious sentiments for political gain. "This is

shameful. Every election, they drag Indo-Pak and Hindu-Muslim issues into politics to win elections instead of addressing real issues," said Congress MP Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy, who has lodged a complaint with the Election Commission. While India celebrated its victory over Pakistan on the cricket field, Telangana voters faced a different kind of match - one where political sledding, not sixes, took centre stage. Whether the BJP's pitch worked or the Congress hitting back will be known when counting of votes takes place on March 3.

KALESHWARAM, RYTHU BANDHU BRING STROKE OF LUCK FOR BRS

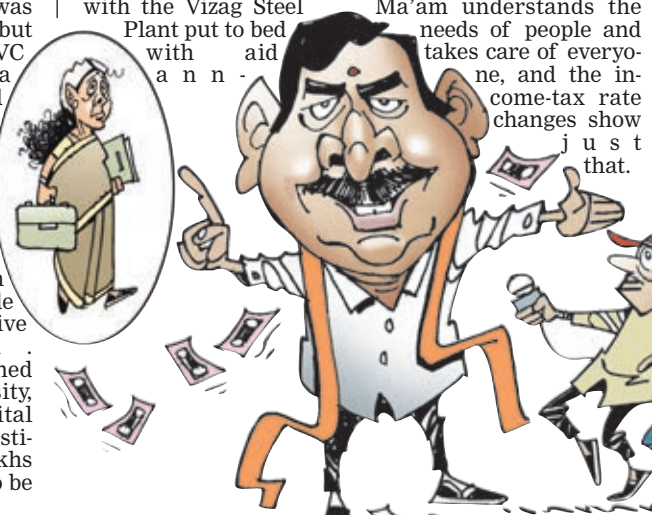
Shrugging off an Atlas Scam complicated business. And reading off the script is sometimes easy, but at times, can land one in a spot of bother. Take the case of the recently released Telangana State Statistical Abstract Atlas prepared by the Telangana State Development Planning Society and released by Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka. The report credited the Kaleshwaram project and Mission Kakatiya as policy initiatives that improved irrigation

infrastructure, but these schemes initiated by the BRS were often flayed by the incumbent Congress government. The Kaleshwaram project is also under a judicial inquiry commission's lens. This slip-up in the Atlas, came in handy for the BRS which immediately claimed that these were programmes of its government. Incidentally, Atlas also shrugged off making any changes to the names of Rythu Bandhu to Rythu Bharosa, the new name given to it by the incumbent government.

NIRMALA MA'AM TO THE RESCUE OF VSP

Anyone holding the purse strings usually carries a lot of heft, particularly if that person happens to be the country's finance minister. There was a time when she was referred to as "Nirmala ji" but now, with the Vizag Steel

Plant put to bed with aid from the state, the FM's status has been elevated to that of "Nirmala Ma'am," who, according to Union minister of state for steel Bhupathiraju Srinivas Verma, is like a "mother figure" as just like a mother, Nirmala Ma'am understands the needs of people and takes care of everyone, and the income-tax rate changes show just that.



UGLY FACE OF MONEY MATTERS IN ELECTIONS

Money talks, or so politicians believe when it comes to elections. When money talks, the belief is that the people will listen. The days preceding voting for the MLC elections for graduates' and teachers' constituencies also showed the divisive power of money. In the erstwhile Adilabad district, distribution of money to the voters led to differences between leaders both in Congress and BJP camps. Two senior BJP leaders from Adilabad openly quarrelled over money matters before party workers during a campaign meeting. The same was the case with the Congress' selection of leaders for distribution of money. The reason was who would dole out the money. The candidates were perceived wealthy and the hope was that there may just be an opportunity to collect some "distribution costs" by those in charge of the dole handouts.

SIRCILLA BRS LEADERS GET A LESSON FROM COLLECTOR

Never ruffle feathers unless called for. Especially that of a bureaucrat by heaping insults on the officer. Ever since BRS' K.T. Rama Rao dubbed Sircilla district collector Sandeep Kumar Jha a 'sannasasi (idiot)' things appear to have escalated between the two, with a tea stall becoming the unwitting star in this battle with a bit of everything - allegations, acrimony, flexis, and some questionable social media posts. Once KTR dissed Jha, things went south pretty fast with KTR's followers posting and reposting the comment on social media. These were folks who were already upset with Jha for his crackdown on encroachments and illegal commercial zones. A local team who has a flexi with KTR photo too got dragged into the mix and posts targeting the collector prompted a well, prompt crackdown. Jha says he is doing his job, but BRS leaders in Sircilla appear to have a different view of him, however.

Night curbs on kids in theatres eased

Revised order issued after request from theatres

VUJJINI VAMSHIDHAR | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

The Telangana High Court modified its January 24 order with regard to barring under-16 children from watching movies after 11 pm in theatres and multiplexes. This follows a request by multiplex operators and theatre owners.

Justice B. Vijayans Reddy also directed the state government to take decision on regulating the entry of children below 16 years of age in theatres and multiplexes before 11 am and after 11 pm.

The judge had earlier made it clear that till such a decision is taken by the state government, under-16 children cannot be allowed to watch films after 11 pm.

However, theatre and multiplex operators approached the High Court on that decision with an interim application.

THE JUDGE also viewed that the orders may have ramifications all over the state and may cause substantial loss to multiplexes and theatres during the release of new movies.

Senior counsel S. Niranjan Reddy, representing them, argued that there are no statutory restriction for allowing children of any age to watch late-night movies. He pointed out that such orders were issued in a petition challenging the enhanced ticket prices for 'Pushpa-2' and 'Game Changer' and allowing screening of benefit shows/additional shows, which was not a question in this petition. But the court gave directions restricting children from late night shows, which was not within the scope

of the petition. Senior counsel submitted that so far as the direction given by the court to the government to consult all stakeholders and take necessary decision for regulating entry of children, the multiplex operators were not aggrieved.

Upon hearing senior counsel, Justice Vijayans Reddy opined that the matter required the opinion of multiplex operators, whose interests were stated to be adversely affected. The judge also viewed that the orders may have ramifications all over the state and may cause substantial loss to multiplexes and theatres during the release of new movies.

As it was contended that the multiplex operators were stakeholders, they ought to be given opportunity before any order is passed. In the interest of justice, the order dated January 24 has been modified.

Women's Day: CM to launch several welfare schemes

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

The state government is set to organise grand celebrations with a gathering of one lakh women to commemorate the International Women's Day at Parade Ground ehre on March 8, where Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy will launch several schemes aimed at financially empowering women.

He will hand over allotment letters to women self-help groups (SHGs) for setting up 2MW solar power plants in all 32 districts.

Women's SHGs will receive financial assistance to purchase buses that will be leased to Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TGSRTC). Petrol pump allotments will be made to women SHGs in district headquarters, to thereby enhance economic opportunities for women across the state.

Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and other ministers will take part in the celebrations.

One of the major highlights would be the allotment of solar power

plants runs by women's groups.

The Chief Minister will virtually lay the foundation for these plants that will have an overall capacity of 64MW (2MW per district).

Women's SHGs have also finalised agreements to acquire buses for lease to RTC.

In the first phase, 50 such buses will be flagged off by the Chief Minister. Similar to the recent women-run petrol bunk initiative in Narayanpet, the state government will extend this model to the remaining 31 district headquarters through agreements with BPCL, HPCL and IOCL.

Interest-free loans will be provided to women's groups, and accident insurance cheques amounting to ₹40 crore will be distributed to the families of 400 women SHG members, who have since died.

The government will also initiate the recruitment process for over 14,000 Anganwadi teachers and helpers and launch the 'Indira Mahila Shakti-2025' policy.

Furthering its commitment to women's economic independence, the gov-

ernment is considering subsidised auto-rickshaws for women who have undergone free driving training. Plans are underway to merge SERP and MEPMA to streamline women-centric initiatives.

Seethakka directed officials to study the practices prevalent in other states in order to help formulate the country's most effective women's empowerment policies in Telangana.

In preparation for these events, minister for women welfare Danasari Anasuya Seethakka convened a high-level review meeting at the Secretariat here on Saturday.

The meeting was attended by Women's Commission chairperson Nerella Sharada, Women's Corporation chairperson Bandru Shobha Rani, Telangana Samskruthika Sarathi chairperson Venella Gaddar, Telangana Sangeet Natak Academy chairperson Alekhya Punjala, and senior government officials.

The discussions revolved around arrangements for the ensuing event and strategising initiatives for women empowerment.

TGPCB for reprocessing C&D waste

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Telangana State Pollution Control Board (TGPCB) member secretary G. Ravi stressed the need for proper reprocessing of construction and demolition (C&D) waste to stop lake encroachments and preserve natural resources.

He stated that strict implementation of C&D waste management rules was necessary for improving air quality in the city.

He made these remarks during his visit to the



Officials of Telangana State Pollution Control Board (TGPCB) during an inspection.

Soma Srinivas Reddy C&W reprocessing facility

STRICT IMPLEMENTATION of C&D waste management rules was necessary for improving air quality in the city.

in Shamshabad. The project proponents gave a presentation and explained the project to him. During the visit, senior officials including Hanumanth Reddy, JCEE, Nanarendur, SEE, zonal office at Hyderabad, and Venkat Narsu, EE, regional office, Rangareddy, were present.

Tele Manas receives stress calls ahead of Inter exams

V. SHIVANI REDDY | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

With the Intermediate exams set to begin on March 5, Tele Manas has reported a rise in calls from students struggling with exam pressure, sleepless nights, lack of preparation, fear of failure and anxiety over writing exams at unfamiliar centres.

The Telangana Board of Intermediate Education provides a 24/7 counselling service through the toll-free number 14416 for students facing stress and mental health concerns. In February, Tele Manas received 136 calls from Intermediate students, including 55 related to exam stress, 10 to anxiety, 30 for sleep disturbances and 43 for other



Counsellors receive calls from students at Tele Manas on managing exam pressure.

— BY ARRANGEMENT

and relaxation activities like walking and meditation should be practised," she explained. Counsellor T. Dedeepya Sarojini noted that most calls were from MPC and MEC students. "We receive calls about stress and sleeplessness and help students by recommending breathing techniques to stay relaxed."

Dr G. Sumana, a psychiatrist at Tele Manas, advised students to maintain proper sleep, stay hydrated and follow a structured study plan. "Sleeping for eight hours improves memory retention. While studying, students should take breaks every 45 minutes. Screen time should be limited

MERCURY | RISING

Hot summer this year? Brace for worse for the rest of your life

Indian Ocean heats up rapidly, to hit all

BALU PULIPAKA | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Summers in India are only expected to get hotter, even as monsoons may weaken with interspersed episodes of rains worth a week or a few days occurring in a matter of hours.

"The Indian Ocean is entering a permanent state of marine heatwave stage. This will have two impacts," according to Dr Roxy Mathew Koll, a senior scientist and climatologist at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology.

"One, will be the weakening of the monsoon winds as they are determined by a large extent by the difference in terms of ocean and land temperatures. If the ocean gets warmer, the monsoon winds will weaken. A warmer Indian Ocean will

PERMANENT STATE OF MARINE HEATWAVE

- Indian Ocean heating up, will affect India, 39 other countries.
- Indian Ocean warmed 1.2°C per century during 1950-2020.
- Faster warming, at a rate of 1.7°C-3.8°C per century by 2100
- Monsoons to be affected.
- Longer, hotter summers ahead.
- Marine life set to get hit impacting fisheries.



mean more moisture in the air over the seas, and this could result in episodes when the wind is strong, and the higher moisture means heavy shorter concentrated rain spells."

The second impact, Dr Koll said, is that "India will definitely get hotter in the decades to come. And heatwaves are expected to be not only more frequent, but will

also exhibit increased intensity." The Indian Ocean is likely to hit the dangerous phase of being in a state of permanent marine heatwave conditions between 2071 and 2100. That may sound far off, but is just about a generation away.

On Friday, the India Meteorological Department, in its March to May (MAM) predictions, said this year,

most of the country including Telangana and Andhra Pradesh will see higher than normal temperatures as well as heat wave days than in the past. Dr Koll said "what we are seeing now is a result of just 1.2° Celsius rise in global temperatures and by 2050, this increase will be between 1.5° and 2°C. To be prepared for what is to come, assessments of conditions must begin right away from the panchayat level upward." Adaptations to the coming changes must begin at the local level. If we are not prepared, then things can become very hard for the people in this country, he added.

One of the impacts of the warming up of the ocean, Dr Koll, who was the lead author on a research study 'Future Predictions from the Tropical Indian Ocean' that

talks in detail about the conditions in the Indian Ocean and how they are expected to develop, is reduction in chlorophyll levels in the surface layers of the ocean.

Satellites recognise plankton and other microscopic plant life and algae among others found in the seas. Between 2071 and 2100, marine life that will impact fisheries, will go down by 8 to 10 percent, the study says, particularly along India's west coast and Arabian Sea.

The study also warns of increasing acidification of the Indian Ocean. The projected changes in pH may be detrimental to the marine ecosystem since many marine organisms — particularly corals and organisms that depend on calcification to build and maintain their shells — are sensitive to the change in ocean acidity.

SHORT TAKES

YOUNG INDIA POLICE SCHOOL FROM MARCH 31

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

The Young India Police School, coming up in Manchirevula, Rangareddy district, will be inaugurated by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on March 31. The CM said the special school was his idea to relieve one of the familial worries of security personnel, who tend to have strenuous work schedules. Revanth Reddy released a brochure and a website for the school on Saturday and inspected samples of the uniform. Admissions have also started for the coming academic year. Applications are being accepted on <https://yipschool.in/>.

The CM said, "Fifty per cent of the admissions are reserved for uniformed (security) personnel and the remaining 50 per cent are open for the public." He suggested that steps be taken to give priority in admissions to children of police martyrs. He said the police schools should be made a role model for the country on the lines of Sainik Schools. "We are planning to adopt a new trend in the education system and a special focus be placed on sports," the Chief Minister said.

The fee structure will vary based on the category of the personnel from home guards to SP rank. Revanth Reddy said the school will have an affordable fee structure.

"Works regarding the school are under the charge of a team of police officers led by Hyderabad police commissioner C.V. Anand.

CM CALLS FOR STREAMLINED SUPPLY OF SAND

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy directed officials to open sand stock points on three sides of the city to meet the huge demand for sand in Hyderabad. He directed mining officials to deal with illegal mining and transportation of sand and other minerals with an iron hand.

Reddy asserted that stringent action against illegal mining and transportation was the only solution to generate more revenue for the state government. He directed officials to ensure that the quantity of sand required by construction companies for mega projects is supplied through the Telangana Mineral Development Corporation (TGMDC). He wanted them to make available sand at reasonable prices so that consumers do not rely on illegal suppliers.

The Chief Minister was speaking at a review on the mining department here on Saturday. The officials briefed about the measures taken to curb illegal sand transport, which are also generating more revenue in last one month.

In view of the huge consumption of sand in Hyderabad and the surrounding areas, Reddy wanted the mining department to open sand stock points on three sides of the city. These will specifically benefit consumers with small requirements. The CM said that only TGMDC should supply sand for construction works taken up by various departments like irrigation, R&B, panchayat raj and the likes.

Reddy asked the officials about penalties imposed in the past on various mineral quarries under the jurisdiction of the mines department and the collections, thereof.

BANDI SLAMS CONG. OVER EXAM TIMING CHANGE

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Union minister of state for home Bandi Sanjay Kumar criticised the Congress government for its "appeasement politics" in abruptly changing the pre-final exam timetable for Class 10 students from 12.15 pm to 3.15 pm to accommodate a section of students during Ramzan. He said this would inconvenience others by scheduling exams at odd hours.

In a statement, Sanjay said the state government had allowed Muslim employees to leave offices an hour early, at 4 pm, and government schools were permitted to function until 4.15 pm. He called the decision to reschedule exams to students' lunch hours "unfortunate" and urged the government to reconsider the timing.

CM moots Kochi-like airport at Mamnoon

Revanth directs officials to expedite land acquisition

L. VENKAT RAM REDDY | DC
HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has directed officials to develop the upcoming Mamnoon airport in Warangal along the lines of Kochi airport, ensuring that the project fosters continuous economic activity in the region.

Following the Centre's approval for Mamnoon airport on Friday, Revanth Reddy also held a review meeting on Saturday to assess the progress and future plans for the project.

Officials briefed him about details of the new airport, including land acquisition status and pending works.

The Chief Minister instructed officials to expedite the land acquisition process and finalise the airport's design at the earliest. Stressing the importance of the project, he said that it should be developed as a key asset for Warangal, a city witnessing rapid growth and development in north Telangana.

Revanth Reddy said that the new airport should offer regular flight services and generate economic opportunities in the surrounding areas. To ensure smooth execution, the Chief Minister urged the officials to conduct regular reviews and provide the government with monthly progress reports on the status of construction.



Congress MPs and MLAs of erstwhile Warangal district meet Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy at his residence in Hyderabad to thank him for his efforts to get Mamnoon Airport approved on Saturday. — DC

MPs, MLAs thank CM for new airport

DC CORRESPONDENT
WARANGAL, MARCH 1

A delegation of MPs and MLAs from the unified Warangal district met Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy at his Jubilee Hills residence on Saturday to thank him for his role in establishing the Mamnoon Airport in Warangal.

The group acknowledged the Chief Minister's efforts and his sanctioning of a ₹205 crore for the airport project, which paved the way for the Central government's approval.

On this occasion, ministers, MPs, MLAs, and other leaders from the undivided Warangal district, including ministers Konda Surekha and D. Anasuya Seethakka

During the meeting, the leaders presented a bouquet to the Chief Minister as a token of appreciation for securing the green light from the Central authorities.

Among those in attendance were Warangal MP Kadiam Kavya, Mahabubabad MP Porika Balram Nayak, Chief Minister's adviser V. Narendar Reddy, and MLAs Kadiyam Srihari, Nayini Rajender Reddy, Revuri Prakash Reddy, K.R. Nagaraju, along with Mahabubabad DCC president Bharat Singhma Reddy.

met the Chief Minister to express their gratitude for his persistent efforts in securing the Centre's approval for Mamnoon airport in Warangal.

CONGRESS, BJP CLASH TO TAKE AIRPORT CREDIT

PULI SHARATH KUMAR | DC
WARANGAL, MARCH 1

Tensions escalated at Mamnoon airstrip on Saturday as leaders from the BJP and Congress clashed over taking credit for the Centre giving sanction for the facility. The dispute erupted during a function to thank Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his support in securing a ₹450-crore allocation for the airport.

BJP leaders, led by Warangal Urban Cooperative Bank chairman Erabelli Pradeep Rao, performed palabhishekam to a cut-out of Modi, distributed fruits and sweets.

Local Congress workers arrived at the airstrip and claimed that the Congress government was behind the airport's development. They attempted to place a portrait of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy at the site, sparking a heated exchange between the two groups.

Clashes ensued as BJP workers chanted "Jai Modi and Jai BJP," while Congress supporters countered with slogans of "Jai Revanthanna and Jai Congress." The confrontation escalated into a scuffle before police intervention restored order.



Union minister and state BJP chief G. Kishan Reddy addresses the media at the party's state office in Nampally on Saturday. — S. SURENDER REDDY

Revanth's comments not helpful: Kishan

NEERAJ KUMAR | DC
HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

State BJP president and Union minister G. Kishan Reddy termed the comments levelled by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy against him as below par and advised him to understand that his high-pitched criticism against the Centre will not help him in improving the situation.

"I have been pursuing pending projects with Central ministries. Revanth Reddy's cheap accusations that I am trying to stall projects are unbecoming of him," he told media persons at the state BJP office.

Kishan Reddy said the Centre had approved the first phase of the Regional Ring Road project and that the Union Cabinet would soon decide on launching the works. He attributed the delay in Central financing to projects to the state government

altering plans for key projects. He added the government had issued advertisements claiming it was funding the second phase of the Metro Rail on its own. "The Centre had already approved Metro Phase II during the BRS rule. After coming to power, the Revanth Reddy government wrote to Union urban affairs minister Hardeep Singh Puri about realigning the project. The Centre is yet to receive the revised plan," he said.

Kishan Reddy said that the Centre had released ₹1,200 crore for the first phase of the Metro Rail project to extend it to Falaknuma, but the work was halted at Darul Shifa.

He revealed that the Chief Minister had written to him seeking ₹1,66,569.31 crore from the Centre for various projects, yet the state government had not clarified its own contribution towards these works.

CM TO LEAD DELEGATION TO MEET MODI

FROM PAGE 1

During the session, Revanth Reddy had announced that the government would pass legislation to provide legal sanctity to the caste census and SC sub-categorisation to extend reservations to BCs and SC sub-castes in education and employment.

He also promised a 42 per cent quota for BCs in local bodies. Following this, officials from the BC welfare and SC welfare departments initiated the process of drafting legislations. Sources said these draft legislations will be discussed and approved in the upcoming Cabinet meet.

Once the Bill is passed in the Assembly, the CM will lead an all-party delegation to New Delhi to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi, urging for the passage of a Constitutional Amendment Act in Parliament. The aim is to include Telangana's 42 per cent BC reservations Act in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution, thereby shielding it from judicial review. If the legislation is included in the Ninth Schedule, it cannot be contested in any court. All ministers, Congress MLAs, MLCs, and MPs will accompany the CM to Delhi to exert pressure on the Centre for inclusion of the 42 per cent BC quota in the Ninth Schedule.

TG bifurcation helped BJP: Owaisi

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi claimed on Friday that a judge had warned the Pranab Mukherjee-led bifurcation committee that the BJP would gain in strength if the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh was split. He said recent political developments confirmed this prediction.

Speaking at the AIMIM's 67th revival day celebrations at Darussalam, the party headquarters, Owaisi stressed stopping the BJP's rise was not the sole responsibility of AIMIM but that of all secular parties. He warned failing to unite would make BJP's advance unstoppable.

Owaisi also accused AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal of mirroring RSS ideology, citing his selective campaign strategy in Delhi as evidence. He said the defeats of the



AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi addresses supporters during the 67th Revival Day Celebrations at the party headquarters in Darussalam on Saturday. — P. SURENDRA

AAP Delhi and the Congress in Maharashtra and Haryana signalled the weakness of secular parties.

Owaisi criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for allegedly remaining silent when US President

Donald Trump pushed India to buy F-35 fighter jets. He also claimed foreign institutional investors were withdrawing billions from Indian markets due to US tariff threats and shifting investments to China and

Japan. Citing a Goldman Sachs report, he said India's GDP could shrink by 0.6 per cent if US tariffs are imposed, yet Modi remained passive.

Questioning Modi's vision of Viksit Bharat, Owaisi accused him of spreading hate while embracing Qatar's Amir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani with "Ya Habibi" (my beloved). He alleged the proposed Waqf Bill would strip Muslims of their rights by granting excessive powers to district collectors, violating the "waqf by user" principle.

He rejected the linking of Indian Muslims with Mughal invaders, arguing rulers used religion for personal gain and that the Mughal army also included Hindus. On Modi promoting the film 'Chhaava', Owaisi asked why the government denied reservations to Marathas despite glorifying Chhatrapati Shivaji.

Mallanna sacked for anti-party remarks

FROM PAGE 1

Mallanna, backed by the Congress, had secured a decisive victory in the graduate elections in the Warangal-Khammam-Nalgonda graduates Legislative Council constituency in June 2024. However, his recent remarks on the caste census undertaken by the Congress government and his controversial statements against the Reddy community led to the disciplinary action against him.

Notably, it came a day after Meenakshi Natarajan assumed charge as AICC in-charge for Telangana, signalling the party's strict stance on internal discipline. Party circles say that this move served as a stern warning that any deviation from the party's interests would lead to severe consequences.

The DAC had issued a show cause notice to Mallanna on February 12 after his adverse comments against the caste census. He had called upon BC members to burn copies of the caste census

reports, alleging that they were flawed. He also made derogatory remarks about the Reddy community and its leaders within the Congress. However, Mallanna ignored the notice and continued his tirades against the caste census and the Reddy community.

The suspension reads, "You are continuing your tirade against the Congress party repeatedly. Everyone in the state has appreciated the Congress government's efforts in conducting the caste census and implementing sub-categorisation of Scheduled Castes. However, you are pursuing your own agenda, disregarding the party's interests. The Congress party belongs to every individual, irrespective of caste, region, or religion."

The caste census was a key initiative undertaken by the Congress government in Telangana. Mallanna's statements challenging the census and his attacks on the Reddy community were seen as a direct challenge to the party leadership.

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- Director, AcSIR

IN BRIEF
Dancer records video before death

Hyderabad: Mangalagiri Kavya Kalyan, 24, dancer on the TV show 'Dhee', was found dead at her Ponnal residence in Khammam after reportedly recording a selfie video of her suicide. In the video, Kalyan alleged that fellow dancer Abhi, with whom she had lived for five years following a secret marriage, had deceived her. She claimed that although Abhi professed his love and took her to his house, he had not decided to marry another woman and had asked her to leave. Neighbours called the police after the suicide. A case has been registered against Abhi, and the investigation is going on based on the evidence found on her mobile phone.

Teacher arrested for sexual abuse

Adilabad: Police booked a teacher R. Ramesh, for sexually misbehaving with a student in a government primary school in Bheemini Mandal of Mancherial district. The incident took place on Friday but came to light on Saturday. It is learnt that parents and relatives of the girls tried to attack the teacher. On learning of the incident, police rushed to the spot and took the teacher into custody. Police registered a case following the complaint lodged by the parents of the girl who informed them about how the teacher was misbehaving with her.

17 graft cases filled in Feb.

Hyderabad: Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) Hyderabad registered 17 cases in February this year, including 15 where corrupt officials were caught red-handed and two of disproportionate assets. Twenty one public servants and two private employees were remanded in judicial custody. The ACB seized ₹7.6 lakh in the "trap" cases where officials from BC welfare, energy, home, forest, agriculture, education, social welfare, panchayat raj, revenue, MAUD and transport departments were caught. In the two disproportionate assets cases, ₹4.13 crore was unearthed. In February, the bureau also got a conviction in an old case. The ACB has asked the public to register complaints at toll free number 1064, and the Facebook, X accounts to complain against corrupt public servants.

WARANGAL DOC DIES 8 DAYS AFTER BRUTAL ATTACK

PULI SHARATH KUMAR | DC HANAMKONDA, MARCH 1

Dr Gade Sumanth Reddy, 37, succumbed to his injuries at MGM Hospital late on Friday night, eight days after he was assaulted at Battupally Bypass in Kazipet.

Following investigations, police had on Thursday arrested his wife Flora Maria, a government lecturer, her alleged lover Samuel, a gym trainer, and an Armed Reserve constable, Raj Kumar, for the attack on Dr Reddy.

Police said Samuel and constable Raj Kumar had ambushed Dr Reddy's vehicle and struck him with rocks and iron rods. Police alleged that Dr Reddy's wife Maria had conspired with the duo to murder Dr Reddy as opposed her affair with Samuel.

The arrests were made following a complaint from Dr Reddy's father, Sudhakar Reddy. ACP Nandi Ram Naik said that the couple had married in 2016 and relocated to Sangareddy in 2018, where Flora began an affair with Samuel at a local gym. Flora allegedly paid Samuel ₹1 lakh to eliminate Dr Reddy to kill her husband.

ED to e-auction Nowhera assets

Notification issued for Naina Towers

MOULI MAREEDU | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Following Supreme Court orders, officials from the Enforcement Directorate (ED) will e-auction two properties of Nowhera Shaik that are located at two different places here on March 4.

Towards this, they issued a notification for conducting the e-auction of Naina Towers, Shaikpet, and a commercial building at Hydershakote in Rangareddy district.

The two properties belong to Heera Retail (Hyderabad) Private Limited, represented by the managing director Nowhera Shaik and Heera Foodex Pvt. Ltd. Naina Towers has a built up area of 45,217 square feet undivided share of land and the fifth and sixth ACC shed at road no. 11, Banjara Hills of Shaikpet village. It commands a starting

SEIZED TREASURES	OTHER BUILDING
<p>₹43.50 cr Starting price:</p> <p>45,217 sq. ft. Built-up area:</p> <p>45,217 sq. ft. Built-up area:</p> <p>Undivided share of land:</p> <p>Located at Road No. 11, Banjara Hills, Shaikpet Village</p>	<p>AREA: 3,726 sq. yards</p> <p>Built-up area: 1,05,353 sq. ft.</p> <p>Starting price: ₹42.50 crore</p> <p>Location: Hydershakote Village, Gandipet Mandal</p>

price of ₹43.50 crore. The other building measuring 3,726 square yards and built up area of 1,05,353 square feet at Hydershakote village in Gandipet mandal has a start price of ₹42.50 crore.

The ED officials stated that the properties that are being auctioned have a clear and marketable title and there are no legal issues or encumbrances. In case the legal issue cannot be resolved by the directorate

of enforcement within a reasonable time-frame, the full amount paid by the bidder will be refunded within seven days of request. The ED will collect ₹50 lakh pre-bid earnest money deposit for each lot property from all bidders taking part in the auction.

The ED registered cases against Nowhera Shaik and her illegal money collection on the pretext of Ponzi activities, seized her properties.

HC denies anticipatory bail in phone-tapping case

VUJINI VAMSHIDHAR | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

The Telangana High Court dismissed the anticipatory bail application filed by Aruvella Shruvan Kumar (Accused No. 6), managing director of a media outlet, in the FIR filed against him on charges of phone-tapping of politicians and members of the judiciary during the BRS regime. Justice K. Sujana, while dismissing the pre-arrest bail application, criticised the conduct of the petitioner Shruvan Kumar, who was absconding for nearly a year, fleeing abroad after the FIR was registered.

The judge observed that a person facing investigation or named

in a chargesheet was obligated to submit to the authority of law and seek remedies in accordance with the legal provisions rather than defying them. Further, the judge also stated that granting of anticipatory bail is an exceptional remedy that is exercised only

in extraordinary circumstances and not as a matter of routine. Justice Sujana emphasised that though arrest should be the last option and should be resorted to only when absolutely necessary, the primary objective of anticipatory bail is to prevent harassment or humiliation due to personal vendetta or under any given circumstances.

"At the same time, granting anticipatory bail shall not be to impede the normal course of investigation. Hence, pre-arrest bail must be exercised cautiously as it doesn't not interfere or slow down the ongoing investigation," Justice Sujana observed.

The court opined that in the given case, considering the conduct of the petitioner and severity of the allegations levelled against him and applying the established legal principles regarding anticipatory bail the petitioner is not entitled for a pre-arrest bail. There are no merits in this case, and the same is liable to be dismissed, she said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Teacher held in boy's suicide case

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

The Uppal police on Saturday arrested a physical education teacher (PET) in connection with the suicide of an student at a private school in Uppal. According to Uppal inspector Election Reddy, the accused, Anjaneyulu, a resident of Uppal, had fled to his native village to evade arrest.

Upon his return, police received a tip-off and apprehended him at

his residence. The incident occurred on February 23, when a 14-year-old boy died by suicide after allegedly being scolded and slapped by the teacher for "changing the direction of the CCTV camera."

In a note, the boy apologised to his mother for taking the extreme step. The boy was rushed to a hospital but was declared dead on arrival. A case for abetment to suicide was registered, leading to the arrest and of the teacher on Saturday.

Police raid brothel, arrest organiser

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Amberpet police raided a brothel operating from a rented house in Golnaka in the early hours of Saturday, arrested Timothy Barchi, 30, a Liberian national who was allegedly the main organiser, along with a local pimp, Lingala Bal Reddy. Police rescued four women from Tanzania and Uganda who were shifted to a shelter home.

According to Amberpet station house officer D. Ashok, Timothy had arrived in India on a student visa but became involved in running the prostitution racket.

Fire near TG Bhavan quickly contained

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

A fire broke out in a garbage dump on the service road near Telangana Bhavan and the Integrated Command Control Centre (ICCC) around 1 pm on Saturday, reportedly due to careless cigarette disposal. Thick smoke billowing from the flames caught the attention of commuters and visitors nearby.


Fire officials stationed at the ICCC noticed the smoke and alerted the fire department. Fire officials took about 20 minutes to douse the flames. No casualties were reported.

Wrong-side driving killed 12 since 2023

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Wrong-side driving killed eight persons in 2023, three in 2024 and one in this year, joint commissioner of police (traffic) D. Joel Davis said on Saturday, ahead of a awareness drive on Monday. "Special

16th ANNIVERSARY



SUNIL R. DALAL
A LIFE TRULY NOBLE THAT GUIDES US THROUGH THE TRAVELS OF LIFE.

- PRADEEP C. UPADHYAYA, USHA UPADHYAYA, UNNATI, KRUTIKA, ADITYA.

TGCSB warns public against falling for MLM schemes

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

The Telangana State Cyber Security Bureau (TGCSB) has warned citizens against falling prey to multi-level marketing (MLM) schemes and urged them to report any existing operations to the nearest police station. TGCSB officials said they would take strict action as per the law against such operators.

"Any company using MLM to lure innocent citizens with promises of high profits in a short period is, in reality, cheating people for its gain,"

explained TGCSB DSP K.V.M. Prasad. Under the direction of TGCSB director Shikha Goel, the bureau has been conducting a statewide awareness drive on MLM fraud. "We are actively organising awareness programmes to educate citizens on these scams," he added. Prasad stated that MLM operators exploited human greed by offering gold, luxury cars and extravagant returns. "These schemes rely on word-of-mouth publicity, using existing members to recruit others. Initially, they pay commissions using money circulated from new

members," he added. Calling MLM a pyramid scheme and a large-scale fraud, Prasad cautioned that even companies promising returns above 20 per cent should be viewed with suspicion. "Such schemes are unsustainable and often collapse, leaving investors at a loss. Only private financiers who lend ₹1,000 in the morning and collect ₹1,200 to ₹1,500 by evening operate with real cash flow," he explained. He said organisers collect membership fees ranging from ₹5,000 to ₹10,000, impose sales targets.

POLICE BUST CRICKET BETTING RING, ARREST 2

Hyderabad: The south-east zone task force and Gudimalkapur police busted a cricket betting ring and arrested bookie Mujeeb Jahangir Khan Mohammed and a punter Mohd Mujtaba Ali in Mehdiptnam on Saturday.

A laptop, three mobiles and ₹18,000 in cash as well as ₹40,500 in betting IDs were seized from them, task force additional DCP Anand Srinivasa Rao said adding that the duo had multiple user IDs on betting sites.

<p>20th Death Anniversary</p>  <p>Smt. S. P. ANDAL W/o Sri. S. R. Pandu Those special memories of you, will always bring a smile if only I could have you back, for just a little while. Love you Amma, Missing You Very Much VISHAL SUDAM (S/2425/D01111)</p>	<p>16th ANNIVERSARY</p>  <p>SUNIL R. DALAL HIS MEMORIES LIVE, HIS IDEALS CHERISHED, HIS DEEDS UNFORGETTABLE, HIS PRESENCE MISSED. SRI RAJENDRA DALAL LEENA S. DALAL SANGESH DALAL KOSHA DALAL SAMARTH DALAL KHYATHI DALAL SONALI NARANG SUNIL NARANG (CA-4335)</p>	<p>SHRADDANJALI</p>  <p>Shri MULCHAND MANWANI Has Left for heavenly abode on 01-03-2025 Funeral Procession will start from our Sindhi Colony Residence at 12:00 pm towards Bansilalpet. In Grief, Son: HEERALAL MANWANI Prakash Manwani & Family (CA-4335)</p>	<p>PAGDI</p>  <p>Smt. RAJKUMARI VATWANI W/o Mohan K Vatwani Left for heavenly abode on 28/2/25 Pagdi Ceremony, will be held on 2nd March 2025 at 4:00 PM to 4:30 PM At Sindhu Hall Sindhi Colony, PG Road, Secunderabad. Deeply Mourned by: Mohan K Vatwani (Husband) Rishi (Ravi) Michelle - Son & Daughter in law Vanshika (Soni), Jitendra - Daughter & Son in law Hema - Daughter Esha, Tuskar - Grandchildren Mobile: Hema +91 985066660 Deepak +91 985004446 Vanshika +91 985783238 Entire Vatwani & Parwani Family (S/2425/D01108)</p>
<p>Dasa Dina Karma</p>  <p>Smt. P. DIMPALATHA DOB: 26-12-1953 DOD: 21-02-2025 On Sunday, 2nd March 2025 From 12:00 noon, followed by lunch at Flat No. 303, Yashwanth Residency, Plot No. 71, H.No. 10-2-112, St. No. 6, West Marredpally Secunderabad. (S/2425/D01104)</p>	<p>SHRADDANJALI</p>  <p>Shri MULCHAND MANWANI We will always miss U Kiran & Laveen Tilani (CA-4335)</p>	<p>7th ANNIVERSARY</p>  <p>Late Mrs. LINGALA JESSICA (Retd. Govt. Teacher) W/o Mr. L.J. Krupiah DOB: 13.03.1939 DOD: 02.03.2018 Thank God for the priceless gift, we call her "DEAR MOM". We Miss You MOM Inserted by: Family Members Ph: 9966768910 (Lingala Justin) (S/2425/D01088)</p>	<p>CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF</p>  <p>Mr. JANNU SAMUEL PRAVEEN KUMAR S/o Late Mr. Jannu Prabhakar D.O.B: 03-06-1956 D.O.D: 28-02-2025 @ Our Residence 12-1-1558, Shanthi Nagar on 2nd March 2025 @ 12:00 pm. Deeply Mourned by: Children: J. L. A. Praneesh Kumar, J. Priscilla Shruthi, Vasu Dev. Ph: 9032652593, 9912101576. (S/2425/D01103)</p>
<p>6th DEATH ANNIVERSARY</p>  <p>THADAMALLA MARTHA (Retd. Govt. Teacher) W/o T. WILSON D.O.B: 17-06-1959 D.O.D: 02-03-2019 In remembrance of 4th Death Anniversary by Family Members, Brother, Sister and Grand Children. (S/2425/D01110)</p>	<p>11th DEATH ANNIVERSARY</p>  <p>Mr. GIRIGALLA JOHN DOB: 04.05.1925 DOD: 02.03.2014 Mrs. MARTHA VENKAIAH JOHN DOB: 05.03.1929 DOD: 17.06.2018 We miss you everyday in our lives We remember your love and compassion We thank God for both of you. Inserted by: Children & Relatives (CA-4334)</p>	<p>16th ANNIVERSARY</p>  <p>SUNIL R. DALAL TODAY IS THE DAY YOU LEFT US SIXTEEN YEARS AGO WITH TWO FOLDED HANDS, WE BOW TO BLESS US FOR THE LONG WAY TO GO. - SUHANI, SURALI, JHANVI, SIMRAN, SHAURYA, ZISHYA. (CA-4335)</p>	<p>SHRADDANJALI</p>  <p>Shri MULCHAND MANWANI We will always miss U Nirmala & Vasudev Chandnani (CA-4335)</p>
<p>7th DEATH ANNIVERSARY</p>  <p>Mrs. L.K. JESSICA (Retd. Govt. Teacher) W/o Mr. L.J. Krupiah D.O.B: 13-03-1939 D.O.D: 02-03-2018 "Your memories remain in our hearts forever" Inserted By: Husband, Children & Grand Children (S/2425/D01105)</p>	<p>SHRADDANJALI</p>  <p>Shri MULCHAND MANWANI U Will remain in our heart forever Smt. Laxmi Rupani & Family (CA-4335)</p>	<p>Vaikunta Samaradhana</p>  <p>Sri. Suneel V Ropiekar H/o of Smt. Padma Ropiekar Retired employee of Board of Intermediate Birth: 18/11/1952 - Death: 21/02/2025 Vaikunta Samaradhana will be held on 04/03/2025, Tuesday 12 PM onwards at Sri Raghavendra Swamy Mutt, Lingampalli, Hyderabad. Deeply Mourned and Cherished by Family Members. Ph: 9908599405</p>	<p>OBITUARY</p> <p>We are heartbroken to share the passing of Mrs. Aadeeb Muneer on 01.03.2025. As a Principal of Sunrise High School, Muradnagar, Hyd. She dedicated & served for more than 30 years of her life in shaping young minds single handedly steering the institution with grace and resilience will be remembered forever. We wish her soul rest in peace. Inserted by: Family Member, School Staff & Ex-Students Cell : 7207249868</p>
<p>12th DAY CEREMONY</p>  <p>SARVANI THIGULLA W/o. Sandeep Kiran Thigulla 12th Day Ceremony on 2nd March 2025 at Le Palais Crown Village Gardens, opp. Gymkhana Grounds, Balamral, Secunderabad. Inserted by: Husband: Sandeep Kiran, Son: Aryan Thigulla, Daughter: Shya Thigulla, Father in law: Surya Kiran Thigulla, Advocate. Mother in law: Mrs Geeta Kiran Thigulla Ph: 9949060608</p>	<p>16th ANNIVERSARY</p>  <p>SUNIL R. DALAL DOD: 2.3.2009 Inserted by: Premier Spinning & Weaving Mills (P) Ltd. Dealers * Sri Padma Textiles * Gokul's * B.G. Meena Swetha * G.R. Textiles * Susheel Textiles & Kailash Ravi Shankar</p>	<p>16th ANNIVERSARY</p>  <p>SUNIL R. DALAL WE FONDLY CHERISH YOUR MEMORIES. MAY YOUR IDEALS CONTINUE TO INSPIRE US. - SRI LABDHI CORPORATION L.K. AGENCIES, SRI PREMIER TEXTILES AGENCY.</p>	<p>7th DEATH ANNIVERSARY</p>  <p>Chintala Jagan Mohan DOB - 08.05.1960 DOD - 02.03.2018 Seven years have passed, yet it feels like yesterday you were here. Your love, your lessons and your strength still resonate in our hearts. Though you're no longer with us, your spirit remains a guiding light. We miss you more than words can express, but your memories will forever live on. Inserted by: Grandsons, Wife, Daughters & Son-in-laws.</p>
<p>17th ANNIVERSARY</p>  <p>B. PRASAD CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT Time moves but memories live forever Inserted by: K.NARSING RAO & FAMILY</p>	<p>SHRADDANJALI</p>  <p>Shri MULCHAND MANWANI U Will remain in our heart forever Mamtha & Ashok Sadnani & Family (CA-4335)</p>	<p>8th DEATH ANNIVERSARY</p>  <p>CHIDURA SRINIVASULU (CVK) S/o Rai Sahib C.K. Durvasulu DOB: 20/11/1920 DOD: 28/02/2017 You will always live in our hearts and be our guiding light. Inserted by: Chidura Narasimha Rao-Son Chidura Saraswathi-Daughter-in-law Chidura Dhruva-Grand Son Chidura Avantika-Grand Daughter-in-law CHIDURA SIDVIK-Great Grand Son</p>	<p>17th DEATH ANNIVERSARY</p>  <p>Late Shri. POTHULA DEVA SAMUEL M.A., M.Ed (Retd. Head Master) You are always in our prayers Inserted by: Family Members</p>

PUBLIC NOTICE

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DECCAN Chronicle

2 MARCH 2025



Krishna Shastri Devulapalli

Off the beaten track

The best literature festival I didn't go to

I don't go to literature festivals. That could have something to do with my not being invited to too many these days. I used to be at one time, mind you, and went to a dozen or so. But each time I came back, what did I do? Instead of writing a piece on the curator's scintillating wit, magnetic sex appeal or his priceless collection of vintage Barbie dolls, and ensuring my berth the following year, I wrote yet another article about the same boring faces, the same pecking orders, and the same tired gas passing for discourse, sparing no one, from the writers to the audience to the caterers. Which, naturally, brought down my popularity sizeably.

Recently, when the good folk of the Dibrugarh University International Literature Festival (DUILF) asked me if I'd like to participate, I figured the fair thing to do was to ask them if they were aware of my oeuvre. They said they were.

"And you still want me?" I said.

"Yes," said, Pavan Kumar Kamaraju, one of trustees of the festival, who had had the misfortune of stumbling across my work and bewilderingly presumed I was suitable company. "You'll like this one." Following which I had a series of conversations with their intrepid curator, Rahul Jain, who despite my subtle warnings, refused to withdraw the invitation.

Among the sessions I was to be part of was one called 'Young and Sensitive: Writing for Gen Z'. (To my knowledge, I hadn't ever written specifically for any generation, leave alone Gen Z.) My co-panellists were Hamid Ismailov, prolific Uzbek poet, novelist and journalist, whose works have been published, other than in Uzbek, in Russian, French, German, Turkish and English, and Maria Reimóndez, Galician feminist queer translator, interpreter, writer and scholar whose work has taken her all over the world. And there was me. Primarily known in certain obscure pockets of India for my indefatigable silliness.

What struck me about the panel was that, while Ismailov, I and Reimóndez were born in the '50s, '60s and '70s respectively, our moderator, writer and research scholar Harshita Hiya, was born in the '80s, and the four of us would be talking about writing for those born in the '90s.

How wonderful, if you think about it, that four generations of writers, from four different parts of the world (presuming Dibrugarh and Besant Nagar are somewhat different), all getting together to talk about the generation that has inherited our world.

I was pleasantly surprised when our moderator, Hiya, mailed the three panellists a series of well-thought-out questions. It was indeed a departure from my earlier experiences, which ranged from the moderator not knowing my name (alternately referring to me as "Devraj Krishnapalli" or "Krishnapal Rajdevi") to not being entirely sure of his own, thanks to the previous night's fake Black Label.

Alas, by the time I received her questions, I realised — due to unavoidable personal reasons — that I wouldn't be able to make it to Dibrugarh. I did, however, respond to all her queries in as much detail as I could. That, plus an apology to everyone involved for my inability to attend was the least I thought I could do.

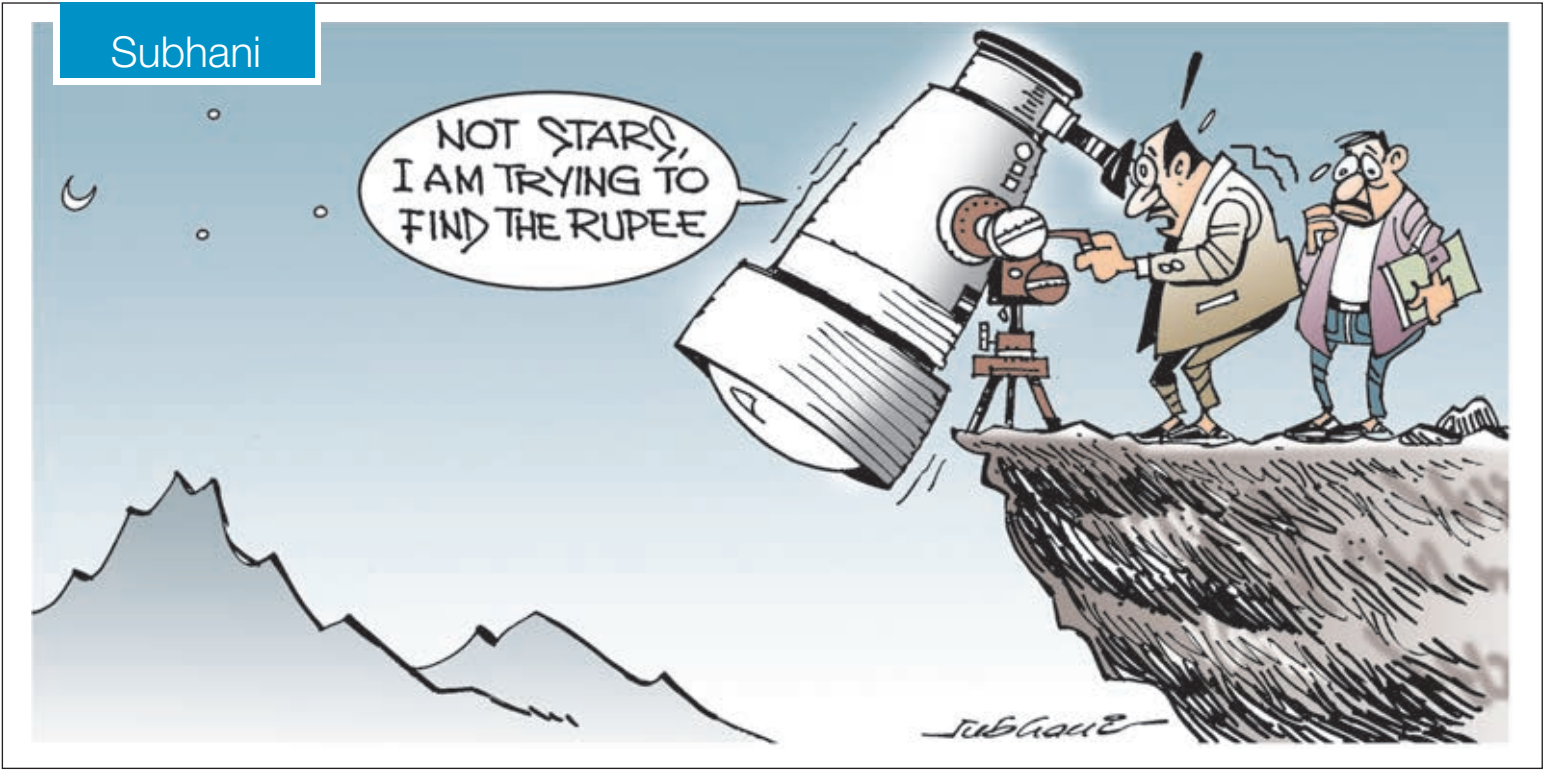
Among the many questions raised for discussion, the one that stayed with me was "Who do we write for?" This made me realise that, while writing, thus far, I hadn't ever thought of the reader's age, gender, race, etc. In fact, come to think of it, I hadn't thought of the reader at all. Instead, I have always tried to write, when required, from my most authentic self, as though I'm writing both my first and last piece.

My first novel was about a kid growing up in Madras in the '70s. It came out in 2011. The feedback I got — from people in their eighties to their twenties, and everything in between — was that it reminded them of their childhood. So, in a sense, despite all that social media and the phone have taken away from us in the ensuing years, it proved one thing: we are ageless when we read. Or books ought to make readers feel that way. Also, as writers, if we are going about our job the right way, we ought to feel as ageless, too.

But perhaps it's time for all writers to consciously consider who we are writing for. Maybe make a special effort to write for the young; it's that time in the world. After all, we have taken away much of their air, water, trees, livelihoods and dreams. And handed out misinterpreted history, misguided mythology and meaningless hate in their place. Maybe this is the time to give them the one thing that hasn't been destroyed yet fully — hope. Maybe everything we write should involve an apology and a promise to make good.

Dear curators, do continue inviting me to your lit fests. And conspire with the universe to make sure I don't turn up. Chances are I may come up with something useful to say.

Krishna Shastri Devulapalli is a novelist, columnist, playwright and screenwriter



Bihar's turn to vote next: Jan Suraaj has a fair shot



Pavan K. Varma

Chanakya's View

The next big electoral battle will be for the Bihar Assembly elections at the end of this year. Just this week, PM Narendra Modi launched the BJP's campaign. The Bihar Cabinet has also been reshuffled. The three established political players, the BJP, the RJD and the JD(U) have been in power for 30 years, in different combinations.

But their political strategies have become fatiguingly repetitive. Bihar is where it was 30 years ago, the poorest and most backward state in the country. Obviously, therefore, politics and politicians have failed the aspirations of 13 crore Biharis. The cradle of India's civilisation remains a cesspool of abject poverty, unbelievable deprivation, educational backwardness, and rampant corruption. The 15 years of Lalu Yadav's 'jungle raj', was followed by a brief ray of hope when Nitish Kumar came to power, but that hope was short lived, and the state has lapsed back into unethical political alliances and misgovernance.

In January 2013, I joined Nitish Kumar as adviser with Cabinet rank, and came to know him closely. Later, I represented his party, the JD(U), in the Rajya Sabha, too, and was its national general secretary. Nitish in those days was a different person, someone who stood out from the other politicians in Bihar. An engineer, he was well-educated, known for his personal rectitude, a very sharp mind, and administrative, giving him the title of "sushasan babu" — the man capable of good governance. But after 2016, his decline was equally precipitous. In a series of inex-

plicable political flip-flops, he first joined the BJP, then broke with it to join hands with the RJD, and then pivoted back to the BJP. Somewhere along the line, he lost both is credibility and his focus on governance, and transitioned from "sushasan babu" to "paltu kumar" — one who is forever changing sides. He was also derisively called "kursi kumar", a man in love with the chair of the Chief Minister for which he would make any compromise.

In the midst of this ideologically barren landscape, Bihar has continued to suffer. The state's paradox is stark: it is rich in human resources yet deprived of even basic opportunities. Over 25 per cent of its youth are compelled to somehow eke out a living in distant states, a testament to chronic unemployment. Agriculture, employing 70 per cent of the workforce, remains subsistence-based. Industrialisation is almost non-existent. Primary education is largely one where if there are schools there are no teachers, and if teachers, no schools. Primary health is pathetic; higher education only produces an army of the mostly unemployable.

What Bihar needs now is a quantum shift in the quality of governance. Can the current political players deliver this? So far, their obsession with political wheeling and casting arithmetic and religious polarisation. The RJD relies on the M-Y consolidation, an alignment of the estimated 14 per cent Yadav community with about 17 per cent Muslims. The Muslims vote for the RJD because of the fear of the BJP; and the other castes vote for the

The entry of Jan Suraaj strongly interrogates old political formulas. Kishor's message is corrosive, even as the challenges he faces are daunting. His organisational prowess is his strength.

BJP because of the fear of demonstrated Yadav misrule. Between these two polarities, the JD(U) obtains its shrinking share of seats banking on other sub-castes.

Within this troika, political alliances shift with unashamed expediency, but little changes on the ground. The people of Bihar are used as canon-fodder on the altar of dharma and jati. The gods of this temple reward the manipulators, not the manipulated. The same set of people come to power, and the same praja is cheated of its expectations.

Nothing, then, will change in Bihar unless its voters say: Enough is enough. This will require an attitudinal revolution. Voters will have to rise above the repeated tropes of religion and caste, and vote for what can concretely change their own lives. In this context, a new entrant on the political landscape is Jan Suraaj, led by Prashant Kishor. Kishor's message is dramatically simple: Vote for the future of your children and a better life for yourselves, instead of allowing cynical politicians to use you only to come to power.

The entry of Jan Suraaj strongly interrogates old political formulas. Kishor's message is corrosive, even as the challenges he faces are daunting. Jan Suraaj is a new party, launched as recently as October 2, 2024. But its launch was preceded by a two-year arduous 3,000 km padyatra by Kishor across Bihar's countryside, reminiscent of Gandhi's Champaran odyssey. Kishor's organisational prowess as the architect of

electoral triumphs of dozens of parties, and his ability for relentless work, are his strengths. Being in his 40s, he also resonates with Bihar's large youth population. His clarion call for foundational change in governance, also has takers. But whether he will succeed in persuading Bihar's voters to accept a qualitatively new brand of politics focused on the immediate and radical development of Bihar, is to be seen.

Given Bihar's size, both geographically and numerically, its continued lack of economic development has become a drag on India's overall development. The need for change is, therefore, an imperative not only for Bihar but for all Indians. To achieve this, those who have thus far been governing Bihar, need to see the writing on the wall. More of the same kind of political cynicism will be disastrous. Above all, the people of Bihar must do their own bit in ending their exploitation, and erasing the mortifying jibe of being 'Bihari' in the eyes of others. Once the capital of India's greatest empires, and the very womb of unprecedented cultural and intellectual renaissance, Bihar's current condition presents a humiliating contrast. Better politics, and much better governance, is the only solution.

The next Assembly elections provide the opportunity to find that solution. Ramdhari Singh Dinkar's lines resonate: *Kshama shobhti us bhujang ko jiske paas garal hai, uska kya jo danteen, vishrahit, vinamra, saral hai*: Forgiveness is becoming of the serpent that's got venom; who cares for the weak, gentle, kind and forgiving one. The toothless, meek and humble of Bihar must realise that democracy, while imperfect, remains the only arena where the marginalised can script their destiny.

The writer is an author, diplomat and former member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha)

LETTERS

MITR CLINIC

Noted corporate hospitals should be roped in to run the Mitr clinic (*Musk enters fray over Mitr clinic closure in Hyderabad, March 1*). It is shameful to blame USAID for its closure.

K. Gopal Rao Hyderabad

India should probe allegations. It should find out if other funds were leaking, as most of them were funded by foreign nations.

Koona Naveen Secunderabad

STOCK MARKETS

Subhani's cartoons are eagerly awaited every day. His cartoon on stock markets is the correct depiction of current affairs (*March 1*).

Govind Kumar Hyderabad

HELP TELANGANA

Keeping aside politics, the Centre should help Telangana (*Centre lowers TG's borrowing limit, Feb. 27*). We have unemployment problem, starvation deaths, poor infrastructure, etc., all over the country.

K.R. Heeralal Secunderabad

CARING FOR DOGS

I agree with the letter writer on caring for dogs this summer (*Fawn rescued, March 1*). They will be desperate for food and water.

Raseel Ahluwalia Secunderabad

ABANDONED CHILDREN

It's better to give children to adoptive parents based on information with CARA than handing them to biological parents who abandoned them in the first place (*Trafficking Case: Fate of rescued kids uncertain, March 1*). Hope the government will do the needful.

Mateti Pradeep Kumar Hyderabad

IAF REQUIREMENTS

We are proud of Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal A.P. Singh for speaking the truth (*Need 35-40 jets every year, says IAF chief, March 1, March 1*). Believing in 'Make in India' will definitely lead us to Viksit Bharat.

Datta Shivane Hyderabad

Email your letters to info@deccanmail.com, editor@deccanmail.com.



Anita Katyal Political Gup-Shup

Kejriwal missing, Atishi holds fort; 'ghost' voters on WB electoral rolls

Ever since his dramatic arrival on the capital's political scene in 2012 following an anti-corruption campaign, former Delhi chief minister and Aam Aadmi Party's national convener Arvind Kejriwal never lost an opportunity to use the media to his advantage. Locked in a constant battle with the Modi government-appointed lieutenant governor, Kejriwal managed to grab headlines and eyeballs given that he had a lot to complain about the Centre's uncooperative attitude towards an Opposition-ruled state. In fact, the AAP leader ensured that he remained in the news when he refused to step down as chief minister even after his arrest in connection with the Delhi excise policy case. But it's a different story today. Kejriwal has been virtually incognito after his shock defeat in the recent Delhi Assembly election. He is barely seen or heard from these days. It would have been expected that a combative Kejriwal would come out all guns blazing after the CAG's audit report on his government's liquor policy was tabled in the Delhi Assembly. But not so. The burden of defending his

government's excise policy has now fallen on his successor and Delhi Assembly leader of Opposition Atishi who has been left to face the newly-elected BJP government's ire against AAP while Kejriwal contemplates his future course of action.

It is ironic that in all the years the Delhi government was led by the Arvind Kejriwal-led Aam Aadmi Party, it was the Bharatiya Janata Party which headed the capital's cash-rich Municipal Corporation of Delhi. Their roles have now been reversed. The BJP is now the new Delhi government boss but it is AAP which runs the show in the MCD, having won the last civic election. Even as Kejriwal remains sequestered following his electoral defeat, internal discussions are on remaining relevant in Delhi. For starters, AAP strategists suggested that the party take advantage of the fact that it controls the MCD by undertaking a series of populist measures having an immediate impact on the lives of people. It is in this connection that the AAP-led MCD has decided on a house tax

waiver scheme for Delhi residents and also regularised 12,000 contractual workers in the civic body. But given the AAP's current poor standing, it will not be easy for its leaders to take credit for these decisions. Besides, there is no guarantee that the AAP will succeed in retaining its hold over the MCD as the BJP is bound to "persuade" the rival party's corporators to shift loyalties.

West Bengal is currently in the midst of *labharthi* wars with Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee pitted against the Centre on the issue of welfare schemes. With state Assembly elections due next year, Banerjee has started selecting her targets for the disbursement of budget benefits which is being seen as a clear strategy to outmanoeuvre the Modi government's tax bonanza for the middle class announced in this year's budget. For instance, the West Bengal government recently announced hefty salary hikes, ranging from Rs 25,000 to Rs 80,000, for junior and senior doctors. These doctors had called out the corrupt

practices and the system run by the Trinamul Congress government after a trainee doctor at the R.G. Kar Hospital was raped and murdered. The Modi government, on the other hand, is targeting the state government for not implementing Central schemes like the Ayushman Bharat Yojana and has withheld funds for the MNREGA and PM Awas Yojana on the ground that the accounts had not been maintained properly. The Centre has further accused the Mamata government of siphoning off funds by adding false names of beneficiaries. Banerjee has hit back, saying a Centre-backed organisation had been deployed in West Bengal to replace names of local voters with those of outsiders from as far as Punjab, Haryana and Gujarat.

After a brief falling out, the Bharatiya Janata Party and its ideological mentor, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh have been making efforts to mend their relationship which went through a rough patch in the run-up to last year's Lok Sabha elections. Prime Minister Narendra

Modi and other leaders are now mindful of paying due respect to the Sangh as the party needs its foot soldiers for amplifying BJP's message to the voters. Recently, while speaking at the inaugural function of the 98th Akhil Bharatiya Marathi Sahitya Sammelan, Modi heaped praise on the RSS, saying it was a privilege to have been inspired by the Sangh to live for the nation. Now that the rift between the BJP and the RSS is in the past, there is a possibility that Modi and RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat could be seen together at a function in Maharashtra during the Gudi Padwa celebrations on March 30. Though there has been a rapprochement between them, the BJP and the RSS have yet to forge a consensus on naming the next BJP president as the current party chief J.P. Nadda's three-year tenure ended over a year ago. Several reasons are being cited for this delay but the political grapevine says the names suggested by the RSS do not meet with the BJP's approval and vice-versa.

Anita Katyal is a Delhi-based journalist

SHORT TAKES

WOMAN FROM HYD ON WAY TO U.S. DIES OF HEART ATTACK

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

A Hyderabad-based woman on her way to the US suffered a heart attack and died in the Miami airport, reports reaching here said. Kaishetty Laxmi Bai, 70, a Langer Houz resident, was travelling along with her son.

She was to stay in the US for five months. Her relatives, speaking with Deccan Chronicle, said, "After getting down at Miami, she said she was feeling sick and uneasy."

"She was going to the wash-room, and collapsed. Despite immediate CPR efforts, she could not be revived."

Doctors said she died of a heart attack," a family member said.

Her body is at Jackson Medical Centre in Florida. Laxmi Bai's elder sister Mutyala Pramila, eldest son Kayishetti Srinivasa Rao and other family members requested the government to help repatriate her body.



MAN KILLED, ANOTHER INJURED IN HIT-AND-RUN

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

A 25-year-old man died, and another was injured after a tipper lorry hit their two-wheeler on the Outer Ring Road (ORR) service road around 9 am on Saturday before fleeing the scene.

Gachibowli investigating officer Venkateswarulu identified the deceased as Pili Ganeshwara Rao from Andhra Pradesh and the survivor as Markandeshwara Rao, both residents of Manikonda.

The accident occurred as the duo was heading to Vattenagulapalli from Exit No. 1 of the ORR.

Police said the lorry driver abandoned the vehicle in a parking lot and fled. Police are trying to trace him.

GHMC TO HIRE AGENCIES FOR TRAFFIC SIGNALS

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

The GHMC said it would hire new agencies for design, supply, installation, testing and commissioning of traffic signals, as well as upgradation, operations and maintenance of the existing signals. The contract with the previous agencies will end in March.

The GHMC manages 404 traffic signals across the city. The corporation said it was aiming at modernising the traffic signalling system, implementing new technologies, and ensuring comprehensive maintenance.

The initiative focuses on improving urban mobility, pedestrian safety, emergency vehicle prioritisation, and leveraging advanced technologies such as adaptive traffic signal control (ATSC) and pelican signal systems (PSS), the corporation said in a statement.

NH 163 GATES OPENED, 25 YRS AFTER ATTACK

DC CORRESPONDENT WARANGAL (MULUGU), MARCH 1

After 25 years, gates placed on the National Highway 163 in front of the Eturnagaram police station after an attack by Naxalites, were reopened on Saturday, allowing traffic movement. Since 2001, traffic was routed through a detour.

The ceremony took place under the supervision of Eturnagaram ASP Shivan Upadhyaya, following security measures ordered by district superintendent of police Shabharish. Upadhyaya recounted the 2001 incident in which Naxalites attacked the police station, resulting in the death of five cops. The Naxalites had blocked the road in front of the station by placing explosives on tractors.

He noted ACP Kiran Kumar, then SSP, resisted the assault, after which the road in front of the police station was closed.

Costly spices, less demand for chicken jack up haleem prices

Mutton haleem remains top choice as vendors claim 200 kg daily sale

SANJAY SAMUEL PAUL | DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Haleem, the much-loved delicacy known for its slow-cooked blend of wheat, pulses, spices, ghee, and generous portions of meat, continues to be a staple at Iftar despite rising costs. Relished for its taste as well as high nutritional value and protein content, the dish has earned a cross-community appeal, with outlets bustling with customers from all walks of life after Iftar.

Mutton haleem remains the top choice among connoisseurs, though some consumers recently speculated that the slight price hike might be due to lower demand for chicken haleem. However, several local vendors have dismissed these claims, noting that chicken sales at restaurants have returned to normal levels.

One popular outlet, Café Bahar, has increased its price by ₹30 per plate, to ₹250. "The prices of all the ingredients have gone up," explained Syed Ali Asghar Bolooki, the managing director of Café Bahar.

Chicken haleem is being sold at ₹120 per plate, though there are only a few stalls selling it. Mohammed Ibrahim Hussain, another vendor, added, "Before the season starts, our customers are excited to indulge in this seasonal dish. A single plate is priced at ₹220 and a special plate with nalli and chicken 65 at ₹800. We are selling 200 kg of haleem daily, and we expect that number to rise to around 600 kg."



People relish haleem at an eatery in Hyderabad on Saturday. Restaurants began selling the delicacy soon after sighting of the moon which marks the beginning of the month of fasting. — R. PAVAN

Experts give tips for safe fasting

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

As the holy month of Ramadan begins with the pre-dawn meal (Sehri) on Sunday, many Muslims — including those battling hypertension and diabetes — are preparing to observe the month-long fast. Health experts are advising people with such medical conditions to take precautions and follow a suitable diet plan during this period.

Sixty-year-old Masab Tank resident Tasneem Begum, who was diagnosed with hypertension and diabetes soon after the Covid-19 lockdown, is set to observe her fourth Ramadan fast since her diagnosis.

"This month of fasting and prayer brings me immense peace and strength," she said, adding that she takes her medication before Sehri and relies on her daughter to help prepare meals as prescribed by a dietician.

"If my blood sugar levels drop, I break the fast and skip fasting for a few days until I recover," she explained. For many in the Muslim community, refraining from fasting due to health ailments can be emotionally challenging, especially when other family members are fasting. However, doctors emphasise the importance of prioritising health.

Dr Md Minhajuddin Khan of Siraj Hospital noted that Ramadan is not only a time of spiritual devotion but can also offer physical benefits. "Fasting can boost metabolism, benefit liver and kidney functions, and potentially lower elevated urea and creatinine levels. However, timely medication, sufficient rest, and monitoring one's condition are essential. If health deteriorates, it's crucial to break the fast immediately and avoid fasting until recovery."

Dietitian Ayesha Sheikh Abdullah recommends carefully monitoring blood sugar levels during fasting. "Those with diabetes should opt for low-glycemic index foods and high-fibre options during Sehri. Hydration is key, and meal portions should be kept small when breaking the fast. Avoid fried foods and consume non-vegetarian dishes in moderation."

GOVT ADJUSTS SCHOOL TIMINGS FOR RAMZAN

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Responding to requests from teachers and stakeholders, the Telangana government has announced a change in timings for Urdu medium schools, parallel medium schools, and Urdu medium sections of District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) during the month of Ramadan.

As per the directive issued by the director of school education, the revised timings will be in effect from March 2 to April 1.

During this period, schools will function from 8 am to 1.30 pm.

The change comes following representations from Mohammed F A H e e m u d d i n Qureshi, vice-chairman and president of Telangana Minorities Residential Educational Institutions Society (TMREIS), who took up the matter with the state government to facilitate religious observances for students and teachers for the holy month.

● AS PER the directive from the Director of School Education, the revised school timings will be in effect from March 2 to April 1.

● DURING this period, schools will operate from 8:00 AM to 1:30 PM.

Hyderabad markets report brisk business

FROM PAGE 1

Throughout this month, the faithful will observe daily fasts, engage in prayers, and participate in charitable activities.

Local markets reported brisk business over the weekend, as people shopped for special provisions and ingredients typically used in Ramadan dishes.

Families and friends often gather for Iftar parties, where an array of delicacies is served, traditionally beginning with dates.

A wide variety of imported dates is available in the market, ranging in price from ₹200 to more than ₹2,000 per kg.



Muslims offer first 'taraweeh' prayers welcoming the holy month of Ramzan at Macca Masjid, Old City in Hyderabad on Saturday. — P. SURENDRA

Many mosques, including the historic Macca Masjid, offer dates to those breaking their fast. The mosque administration has arranged approximately 2.250 kg of high-quality dates for the occasion.

Superintendent Abdul Quadeer Siddiqui of Macca Masjid commented, "The moon was sighted here in Hyderabad on Saturday, signalling the start of Ramadan. After Sehri, the fast continues until Iftar that evening."

Throughout Ramadan, congregational prayers are expected to draw large crowds, and religious scholars will deliver sermons on the teachings of the Quran.

HYDRAA has no authority over private properties: HC

L. RAVICHANDER HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Justice K. Lakshman of the Telangana High Court suspended the notices issued by a HYDRAA inspector, and clarified that the agency's authority was limited to government roads, government land, and public properties. The judge was dealing with a writ petition filed by one M.A. Mokheem in connection with an alleged encroachment dispute and challenging the actions of HYDRAA in demanding revenue documents to determine encroachments. According to the petitioner, the notice had failed to specify the period for which revenue records were required. A subsequent notice claimed that the authority had rights over open spaces, parks and roads within the layout. The petitioner contended that such a claim was invalid, as the land in question was under a pending civil dispute, and the notice was issued at the behest of the Rajagopalnagar Association. The respondent authority argued that since roads were located within the peti-

tioner's property, HYDRAA had the authority to investigate based on complaints. The judge ruled that the agency lacked jurisdiction over private properties. The judge relied on a GO of June 2024, which limits HYDRAA's authority to government roads, government land, and other public properties. The judge noted that, since a civil suit was already pending, the association had no right to approach HYDRAA. The judge held that HYDRAA cannot be used as a tool to settle private disputes and suspended the notice. The matter was posted for further adjudication.

HC JUNKS WRIT AGAINST BAR COUNCIL

A quo warranto writ was filed by Madhupu Shahikant, contending, inter alia, that the term of office of the present Bar Council members had expired in 2020 and that their continuation was contrary to law. A two-judge panel of the Telangana High Court, comprising Justice P. Sam Koshy and Justice Narsing Rao Nandikonda, was hearing the



LEGAL STORIES

writ petition, which, however, did not brook from the scrutiny of the administrative wing of the court, as the registry raised preliminary objections regarding the maintainability of a quo warranto writ petition in the stated circumstances. Counsel appearing for the petitioner failed to muster sufficient reasons to justify filing of a quo warranto writ petition. After constant probing, the petitioner sought leave and withdrew the writ petition.

BAR OWNER CLEARED IN COVID-TIME CASE

The Telangana High Court quashed criminal proceedings against the owners of a bar and restaurant that was accused of illegally storing and selling liquor during Covid-19 lockdown. Justice Juvvadi

Sridevi held that the charges under the IPC, the Epidemic Diseases Act and the Telangana Excise Act were not legally sustainable against the petitioners as the allegations lacked substantial evidence. The judge was dealing with criminal petitions filed by Theegala Ajay Goud and Theegala Shekar Goud. The case was registered against the petitioners after police seized liquor bottles from the first-floor lodge of their establishment during the lockdown, alleging that they intended to sell the stock in the black market. The petitioners argued that they had an excise licence and had not engaged in illegal sales or transportation. The judge held that mere possession of goods does not constitute an offence unless there is clear evidence of sale or public harm. Notably, the prosecution failed to produce any witness statements or documentary proof showing that the petitioners had sold liquor at higher prices, it was stated by the petitioners.

Full reports in deccanchronicle.com

CHIT FUND AGENT ENDS LIFE; FIRM SHUT, INVESTORS DEMAND MONEY

DC CORRESPONDENT KARIMNAGAR, MARCH 1

A 46-year-old chit fund agent died by suicide after he was unable to repay the amounts deposited by investors at his urging. Police said Chintala Rajaiah died by suicide in Malkapur village of Karimnagar district on Saturday.

Police said the company he represented, Akshara Chit Funds, with a branch in Rampur of the city, had closed shop without repaying those who invested with it, leaving Rajaiah to face the anger of depositors.

Faced with mounting pressure from these clients and overwhelmed by his own financial burdens, he took the extreme step, police said. Upon receiving a complaint lodged by Rajaiah's wife Lavanya, the police registered a case and started an investigation into the circumstances surrounding Rajaiah's death.



Irrigation minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, Chief Secretary A. Santhi Kumari with senior rescue officials at the SLBC tunnel site on Saturday. — BY ARRANGEMENT

Digging through silt hurdle: Official

FROM PAGE 1

It may be recalled that a team of scientists from the National Geophysical Research of India had provided locations of what is strongly believed to be the missing persons. It is quite easy to spot soft materials in the ground penetrating radar report, and the material properties indicate that the 'anomalies' found on Friday were the missing workers, a rescue official said.

Unless the exposed portion of the TBM is cut and removed, it will be a challenging task to dig through the silt, an official supervising the efforts told Deccan Chronicle.

An 8 am Sunday deadline has been set to complete removal of this hurdle.

Even as work was on to resolve this problem, teams of mine rescue specialists from Singareni Collieries who have been digging through the silt to reach the first four workers, reported continuous filling up of water in the holes which was setting them back continuously. An additional lightweight pump was to be installed later in the night to evacuate the constantly oozing water.

"There is foul smell coming from the water," one of the workers who returned from a shift inside the tunnel said.

"It is now a recovery effort and it is vital that we do this. It is a terrible tragedy. The families of the missing workers need closure and we must do everything we can on this front," an official said.

Meanwhile, another Singareni Collieries team has stepped in to repair the broken conveyor belt system. A SCCL official said that a team, with equipment and materials to join the broken conveyor belts, and do the necessary repairs will arrive on Sunday. This task is expected to be completed on Monday.

Earlier in the day, a top-level team led by ministers N. Uttam Kumar Reddy and Juppala Krishna Rao, Chief Secretary A. Santhi Kumari, special chief secretary, disaster relief, Arvind Kumar and senior officials who reviewed the efforts that were speeded up after a team from NGRI pinpointed likely spots in the silt and debris where the missing workers are believed to be buried.

SOUTHERN POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY OF TELANGANA LIMITED.
Operation Medchal Circle
TENDER NOTICE No. 13/2024-25
Old: Ext-III-TspNo.166/24-25, Ext-I-TspNo.177/24-25
New-TspNo.221 to 256/24-25
Sealed tenders are invited from the experienced and GST Registered Vendors for
1. TspNo. 241to251/24-25-Jeedimetla Division
2. TspNo. 223to252/24-25-Kukatpally Division
3. TspNo. 166, 177, 221, 224, 224 to 233, 235 to 240, 260to266/24-25-Medchal Division
4. TspNo. 234, 24-25-Medchal Civil Sub-Division Office
5. TspNo. 222/24-25-Medchal Construction Division Office
Further Details Visit www.tssouthernpower.org Sd/- Superintending Engineer
Operation, Medchal
DIPR R.O. No.: 10773-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2024-25

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
CHENNAI DIVISION (COMMERCIAL BRANCH)
BID NO-GEM/2025/B/5968181
For and on behalf of the President of India, Divisional Railway Manager /Commercial Branch, Chennai Division, Southern Railway, Moore Market complex, 14th floor, West wing Park Lane, Chennai 600 003, invites On-Line tender from the experienced contractors for the following work as per tender notice uploaded in GeM portal www.gem.gov.in.
GeM Bid No. GEM/2025/B/5968181
Description of work Mechanized Parcel Handling contract at Dr MG Ramachandran Central Railway Station, Chennai (MAS)
Approximate cost of work ₹ 2,20,98,364/-
EMD ₹ 260500
Closing date of E-Tender 17:00 hrs of 12.03.2025
Period of Contract 2 years
Website www.gem.gov.in
The bidders shall make payments towards Earnest Money Deposit against tenders through on-line payment modes like net banking, debit/Credit Card etc. available on GeM portal.
The details regarding terms and conditions are available in the website.
Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager,
Chennai Division, Park Town, Chennai-600003

GOVERNMENT OF CHHATTISGARH, WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
WATER RESOURCES DIVISION, MARWAHI H.Q. PENDRA ROAD
DISTT. GAURELLA-PENDRA-MARWAHI (C.G.)
e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE
eProcurement Portal: <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>
CORRIGENDUM NO. 1
IN NIT No. : 13 & 14 /SAC/2024-25, Dated : 10.01.2025, System Tender No. 164168 & 164169 (2nd Call), Whose G-Number- 242505308 following amendments are made-
S.No. Amendments
1. Amendment regarding Clause 2.1.6 (Disqualification) of Form-"B" as per Govt. of C.G. WRD, Raipur Order No. 466/F-7/5-2/31/2001, Nava Raipur, Date 27.01.2025 & Order No. 795/F-7/5-2/31/2001, Nava Raipur, Date 21.02.2025
2. Bid due date & time 06.03.2025 at 17:30 Hours. (The last date & time for submission of bid response, after which no bids can be submitted)
3. Bid Open start date and time 07.03.2025 11.30 Hours. (The date of opening of Envelope - 'A' & 'B' online)
Note :- Detailed Amendment in can be viewed on the website <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>, Probable Amount of Contract (P.A.C.) is as per S.O.R. 01.08.2010. (As Amendments 22.08.2022). All other terms and conditions of NIT will remain unchanged.
Sd/- EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
WATER RESOURCES DIVISION
MARWAHI (C.G.)
For, Chief Engineer
Hasdeo Basin Water Resources Department
Bilaspur (C.G.)
G-242505621/2

Vigyan Vaibhav-2025



People visit the exhibition stalls arranged by the ministry of defence as part of the Vigyan Vaibhav 2025at Gachibowli stadium on Saturday. — R. PAVAN

139 sanitary staff shifted after 5 years

NABINOM BOMMALA | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

After years, the GHMC on Saturday transferred 139 sanitary jawans in a move to improve sanitation in the city. They had been working in the same circle for more than five years, amid suspicion that some of them were paying temporary staff to do their work for them.

The GHMC's 30 circles have a total of 269 sanitary jawans and about 900 sweepers. Each sanitary jawan oversees eight to 14 sweepers. All of them are permanent employees of the corporation.

However, the major sanitation activity is undertaken by 13,352 sweepers and 9,053 sanitary field assistants (SFAs) who are outsourcing employees.

The salaries of the permanent sanitation staff including sweepers and sanitary jawans range from ₹50,000 to ₹90,000 per month based on their length of service.

The outsourcing sweepers are paid ₹18,000 per month,

There were allegations that some sanitary jawans skip their duties and pay a portion of their salaries, ₹10,000 to ₹15,000 to SFAs to do their work.

and the SFAs ₹500 more. Each SFA handles three seven-member groups comprising 21 sweepers. The SFA is responsible for ensuring their attendance and discharge of duties.

There were allegations that some sanitary jawans skip their duties and pay a portion of their salaries, ₹10,000 to ₹15,000 to SFAs to do their work. These SFAs made sure that the outsourcing sweepers complete the work of the permanent employees.

Earlier attempts to transfer the jawans failed due to a few union leaders and political intervention. "Those who do not indulge in corruption are welcoming the steps taken by GHMC commissioner K. Ilambarathi," said a senior corporation official.

Parents slam 50% school fee hike

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Parents gathered outside a school in Hayathnagar on Saturday, to protest what they claimed was a fee hike of up to 50 per cent. The protest spilled on to the Vijayawada National Highway and brought traffic to a standstill.

"We have been trying discuss the issue for the past month, but the management is not responding," said a parent. Another parent added, "Last time when we scheduled a meeting with the management, they escaped and diverted us. But they did not give us any response."

Someone in the crowd shouted that the school was quick to send fines if fees were delayed, but when parents had questions, there was no response.

A school in Vanasthalipuram had witnessed a similar protest just last week over the fee. Further, schools in Secunderabad and Bowenpally had doubled or tripled fees overnight, unlike the usual 10 per cent hike.

The Hyderabad School Parents Association said schools were exploiting the delay in fee regulation. The

Telangana Education Commission (TEC) had proposed a Bill to cap hikes and classify schools based on infrastructure, location, and quality. A committee was reviewing it, with discussions expected in the March assembly session.

TEC also warned that schools raising fees beyond reasonable limits would become illegal once the law passed. However, parents at the protest site did not trust that fees would be regulated soon enough to help them. Some feared that schools would introduce hidden charges if they were prevented from increasing tuition directly. "We are requesting the government to take action," a protestor said.

Others worried about what this meant for their children's education. One mother broke down as she spoke. Her child had been humiliated in front of classmates for unpaid fees. "If we don't pay the fees, they won't allow our children inside. My daughter was insulted in front of her classmates. She was told, 'You don't pay the fees, so you don't belong here.'"

Fire breaks out at Panjagutta hotel

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Fire broke out at the terrace of Hotel Shanbagh Samarth in Panjagutta on Saturday. Panjagutta police and fire officials extinguished the fire in two hours from when it broke out at 3 pm.

"Two fire tenders reached the spot and could gain access comfortably to the terrace of the five-floor building as there were no trees as obstruction," the station fire officer said.

Police diverted the traffic coming from Amerpet till the blaze was under control. Commuters were asked to take a left turn towards the Begumpet side and connect



Smoke billows from Hotel Shanbagh Samarth in Panjagutta on Saturday. — DC

via arterial lanes. A short circuit is suspected to have caused the fire.

OU scientists find leaf-nosed bat from Lanka in India

RACHEL DAMMALA | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

A research led by Osmania University's Dr Bhargavi Srinivasulu, in collaboration with an international team, has discovered a new species of leaf-nosed bat in Sri Lanka, and carved out a

kind of bat found only in India as a distinct sub-species. Named Hipposideros srilankaensis, it was identified through field studies, morphological examinations and genetic analysis. The research has been published in the international taxonomy journal Zootaxa.

"Bats play a crucial role in ecosystems, and understanding their diversity is essential for conservation," Dr Srinivasulu explained, on why the study was necessary. Bats are vital as pollinators, seed dispersers and natural pest controllers, though they did get

a bad image during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The decade-long study also led to a taxonomic revision of Hipposideros galeritus, a bat species found in South Asia. Researchers confirmed Hipposideros brychotus, previously considered a subspecies of H.

galeritus, is actually a distinct species found only in India. The Sri Lankan population of Hipposideros galeritus, earlier grouped under H. galeritus, has now been classified as Hipposideros srilankaensis. The study involved experts from OU, the Zoological Survey of India, the Univer-

sity of Ruhuna, Rajarata University, the University of Colombo, all from Sri Lanka, the Prince of Songkla University of Thailand, and the University of Reading of England. Their findings were based on fieldwork across Sri Lanka, India and Thailand.

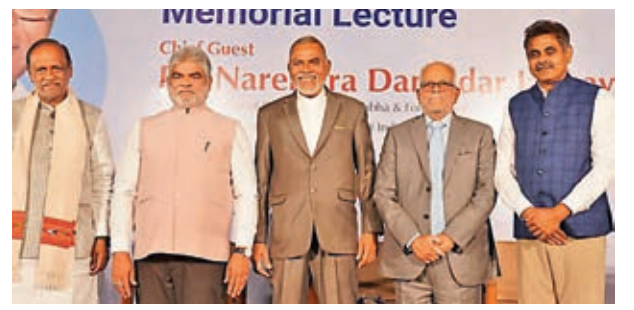
Table with columns: Sl. No., Sy. No., Nature of the Land, SDR Extent, Name of the Patta, Name of the Engager, etc. It lists land acquisition details for various villages in the Jayashankar Bhopalpally District.

TG releases ₹5 lakh ex gratia each to kin of Gulf victims

Hyderabad: The state government has disbursed ₹5 lakh each as ex gratia to the families of Gulf migrant workers who lost their lives abroad. Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy directed finance secretary Rama-

krishna Rao to release funds for 113 affected families during a review meeting of the mineral development department at the Police Command Control Centre on Saturday. The initiative, aimed at providing financial relief to bereaved families, was brought to the CM's attention by TG Mineral Development Corporation (TMDC) chairman, Anil Erevathri. In response, Revanth Reddy instructed officials to expedite the fund transfer. By Saturday evening, payments had been deposited in the bank accounts of 94 families, including 31 from Jagtial, 28 from Nizamabad, eight from Rajanna Sircilla, five from Nirmal, four each from Kamareddy and Sid-

dipet, three each from Karimnagar and Mancherial, two from Medak and one each from Warangal, Hanamkonda, Peddapalli, Nalgonda, Sangareddy and Rangareddy districts. TPCC NRI cell convener Manda Bheem Reddy thanked Revanth Reddy, minister Ponnamp Prabhakar, TPCC president B. Mahesh Goud, MLC T. Jeevan Reddy and other leaders.



From left: Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar, BJP MP Dr K. Laxman, RBI former chief economist Dr Narendra Damodard Jadhav, BJP MP Konda Vishveshwar Reddy, Justice B. Sudarshan Reddy, at teh Justice Konda Madhava Reddy memorial lecture.

Dr Ambedkar put together 12 bids to draft statute

NEERAJ KUMAR | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Former chief economist of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Narendra Damodard Jadhav on Saturday said many people only know that the Constitution was written by the Constituent Assembly between 1946 and 1950, whereas in reality the statute book was the outcome of a 55-year process of constitutional reforms that began in 1895. Delivering Justice Konda Madhava Reddy memorial lecture on '55 years of The Constitution Making and the Role of Dr B.R. Ambedkar', Jadhav, a former member of the Raja Sabha, said that two parallel tracks of constitutional reforms were initiated in those days — one by British rulers and the other by Indian leaders. These two were eventually merged in 1946, when the Constituent Assembly was formed, he said. There were around 12 major attempts to write the Constitution. One leader who was common to most of the 12 efforts was the indomitable Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar, he said. Justice B. Sudarshan Reddy pointed out that the Constitution was conceived as a framework for governance and social relations. It was shocking and deeply

distressing to read about constitutional functionaries, including some Supreme Court judges, likening welfare recipients as parasites, he said. "To call welfare schemes as freebies and suggesting that the recipients were undeserving was an attempt to dehumanise fellow-citizens. It is a matter of serious concern," Justice Reddy said. Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar said that Justice Konda Madhava Reddy was a stalwart in the field of judiciary and a great scholar, who also brought reforms in the field of education. Raja Sabha member Dr K. Laxman said that Dr Ambedkar differed with Jawaharlal Nehru on certain issues right from the beginning, including Article 370, giving special status to Jammu and Kashmir. Dr Ambedkar considered the state as an integral part of the country. There were many attempts to disrupt the Constitution like imposing Emergency and gross abuse of Article 356, but it survived all such attempts and became stronger, Dr Laxman said. Chevella MP Konda Vishveshwar Reddy said that the Constitution was the beacon that can help India realise the Vikas Bharat goal.

Large table with multiple columns containing land records, including names of owners, land areas, and other details. The table is organized into sections for different villages like Beglur, Mulkipally, and Lakshmi.



People using an open air gym in Padmaranagar, Secunderabad on Saturday.

Workout in open gyms has its risks

PRATHYUSH NALLELLA | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Several open gyms in public parks are not maintained properly. Fitness experts warn that broken and poorly maintained equipment pose health risks to users, like dizziness, vertigo, and severe muscle pain. Open gyms — introduced to encourage fitness among residents — have gained popularity. A number of open gyms were opened by politicians and philanthropists in community/public parks. However after years of use and nature-driven wear and tear, users now complain about loose handles, rusted parts, and jammed equipment. Fitness coach and professional bodybuilder Vikas V. speaking to Deccan Chronicle, said, "If the machines are not maintained properly, it affects balance and posture of people using them. Using jammed or broken machines can even cause serious injuries." "Any physical training needs to be done with properly functioning and cali-

gated machinery. The open gyms in parks are used by people who are above 40 years old, and misaligned or wrong workouts can cause major issues later on," Vikas added. A visit to Dr G.S. Melkote Park in Narayanguda revealed two machines with loose and missing bolts and one machine with rusted moving parts. At Domalguda Park, almost all the machines were dysfunctional, with walkers and gym-goers stating that they had a lot of leg and back pain after using the machines. Anil, a walker at Melkote Park, said, "I used the pendulum twister once, and within 20 seconds I felt dizzy. When I got down and regained my composure, I saw a nut loose on the handle. They should check their machinery properly." Residents urged local authorities and the park management to step up maintenance efforts, and suggested appointing dedicated personnel for regular inspections and repairs. Until then, experts advise enthusiasts to be cautious and report any faulty machines to prevent accidents.

Unhealthy diet, sedentary lifestyle fuel obesity: Study

SHRIMANSI KAUSHIK | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

OBSESITY RISKS

Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted India's growing obesity crisis in his 'Mam Ki Baat' address last week, launching a campaign to promote awareness about reducing edible oil consumption.

He tagged 10 celebrities, including Anand Mahindra, Mohanlal, Omar Abdullah, Shreya Ghoshal and Sudha Murthy, urging them to spread the message. Actor R. Madhavan, also nominated, extended the campaign by tagging 10 others.

While obesity is increasingly seen as a serious public health risk, it remains widely misunderstood and stigmatised.

Sedentary lifestyles and unhealthy diets have fuelled its rise, with medical experts warning of severe long-term health consequences.

According to the National Family Health Survey-5 (2019), 17.4 per cent of Indians were overweight or obese. By 2060, this figure is projected to surge to 64.5 per cent, straining both the healthcare system and the economy.

The projections show 60.5 per cent of men, 64.6 per cent of women and an alarming 78.9 per cent of boys and 62.3 per cent of girls will be overweight or obese.

"Obesity is typically classified by Body Mass Index (BMI), with a BMI of 30 or higher considered obese," said Dr Venugopal Pareek, a senior bariatric surgeon. "However, BMI alone doesn't tell the whole story—body composition, fat distribution and metabolic health are equally important."

Dr Surender Madhukar Ugale, a bariatric metabolic surgeon, pointed out that waist circumference was a better indicator of central obesity, which increases the risk of diabetes, heart disease and metabolic disorders. A waist measurement exceeding 90 cm in men and 80 cm in women signals serious health concerns.

Bariatric surgeon Dr Abhishek Katakwar noted that individuals with a BMI above 35 were seven times more likely to require a ventilator during the Covid-19 pandemic. Additionally, over 50 per cent of obese adults in India suffer from non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, while 25 per cent are at a higher risk of heart disease.

A key contributor to obesity is excessive oil intake. While oils are essential for brain function, hormone production and nutrient absorption, they are also calorie-dense. "Just one

Key facts on obesity & weight management

OBSESITY CLASSIFICATION: A BMI of 35 and above is considered obese.

WAIST CIRCUMFERENCE: Exceeding 90 cm in men and 80 cm in women signals serious health risks.



HEALTH RISKS: Over 50% of obese adults in India suffer from non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, and 25 per cent face a higher risk of heart disease.

CHILDHOOD OBESITY CAUSE OF CONCERN

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Obesity is no longer just an adult issue — it is increasing at an alarming rate among children in India. Paediatrician Dr B. Satyanarayana Reddy cited a Cochrane Systematic Review, which estimated childhood obesity prevalence at 8.4 per cent, with one in ten Indian children expected to be obese by 2030. Genetic predisposition, sedentary lifestyles, unhealthy diets and environmental factors all contribute to this trend.

To combat childhood obesity, experts advocate a holistic approach: a nutrient-rich diet, reduced screen time, and at least 60 minutes of daily physical activity.

tablespoon of oil contains around 120 calories," warned Dr Pareek. Overconsumption, particularly from deep-fried and processed foods, leads to weight gain, insulin resistance and heart disease. Palm oil, commonly found in ultra-processed foods, is especially harmful due to its high saturated fat content. Dr Ugale recommended limiting oil intake to 5-7 teaspoons per day and opting for healthier alternatives like extra virgin olive oil, which provide heart-friendly unsaturated fats.

How difficult is it to lose a kilo of weight

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

FITNESS TESTS

How many calories does one need to burn to lose one kilogram of weight? Experts say a deficit of approximately 7,700 calories is required. But any programme to lose weight but be carefully structured and not undertaken at random, in a rush and especially not on advice taken from social media.

"This means reducing calorie intake while maintaining nutritional balance," Dr Venugopal Pareek, a senior bariatric surgeon, explained. However, extreme calorie restrictions can lead to nutrient deficiencies, muscle loss and fatigue.

Experts advise a balanced diet rich in protein, fibre and healthy fats to support sustainable weight management.

Exercise plays a crucial role in weight loss, but diet has a greater impact. "You can't outrun a bad diet," said Dr Pareek. Activities like running, cycling, swimming and strength training help burn calories and preserve muscle mass, but they must be combined with mindful eating, portion control, quality sleep and stress management. Everyday activities like climbing stairs and walking also contribute to calorie expenditure.

For those struggling with severe obesity, medical interventions may be necessary. Dr Surender

● TO LOSE one kilogram, a 7,700-calorie deficit must be created.

● This must be done under the advice of a doctor, and after undergoing fitness tests.

● Do not jump to do exercise or go on a fast suddenly, without qualified medical advice.

● Calories burned per hour (For a 90 kg person)

- Running (10 km/h): 650-700 kcal
- Cycling (Moderate Pace): 550-650 kcal
- Swimming: 400-600 kcal
- Brisk Walking: 250-350 kcal
- Strength Training: 300-400 kcal

Madhukar Ugale, a bariatric metabolic surgeon noted that newer weight-loss medications, intermittent fasting and muscle-toning exercises can help.

Non-surgical options such as swallowable gastric balloons and endoscopic sleeve gastroplasty help in controlling food intake. In extreme cases, laparoscopic bariatric surgery remains the most effective long-term solution, particularly for patients with obesity-related conditions like diabetes, hypertension and infertility.

Juvenile convicted for rape sentenced to social service

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Fifth Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Court Judge T. Madhavi on Friday convicted a juvenile for raping a minor and sentenced him to community service

at a special home for one year. The court ordered a compensation of ₹50,000 for the 17-year-old victim.

The juvenile has been ordered to perform community service every third Friday and Saturday from 10 am to 5 pm, starting

March 21, at the special home in Gajularamaram. The prosecution was handled by APP Anitha Deshmukh.

The investigation, led by then inspector A. Anjaneyulu, revealed that the minor had established

contact with the victim over social media and later engaged in physical relationship on multiple occasions. The victim's mother filed the initial complaint, leading to the juvenile's apprehension on November 8, 2023.

MAN HELD FOR BID TO EXTORT NRI

Asifnagar police on Saturday arrested one Md Younus, who claimed he was a journalist and tried to extort ₹15 lakh from an NRI.

Police said Younus threatened that he would file a complaint with the GHMC accusing the NRI of constructing an illegal building.

The NRI moved the police who booked a case and arrested Younus.

Large table with columns for Village, S.No., Sy. No., Nature of Land, SDR Extent, Name of the Owner, Name of the Recorder, Name of the DiO, W/o, Enjoynment, Tree, Area, etc. It lists various land records across different villages like Ambatpally, Mahadevapur, and Suraram.

Ameenpur Lake JAC gets warning from HYDRRAA

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

The HYDRRAA said it had received multiple complaints from Ameenpur residents about illegal money collection in the name of the Ameenpur Pedda Chervu Flood Victims Joint Action Committee (JAC). According to HYDRRAA, residents were being asked to pay ₹1,000 for JAC membership and ₹500 per square yard to 'settle' land disputes with government. HYDRRAA commissioner A.V. Ranganath warned that strict action would be taken against those involved. Victims provided receipts and WhatsApp messages as proof of these collections.

One Nanduri Satyanarayana introduced himself as the JAC chairman and issued printed receipts for the payments. Ranganath urged victims to report such incidents to the police and directed officials to file cases under HYDRRAA's behalf. He clarified those with land submerged by the Ameenpur tank waters do not need to approach any JAC or make payments. He added HYDRRAA is conducting a detailed study to determine how the tank expanded from 95 acres to 450 acres. He said the full tank level determination would be completed within two to three months using Survey of India maps and National Remote Sensing Centre imagery. A committee comprising experts from JNTU and IIT has been formed for this purpose.

(Contd. from page 10)

Sl. No.	Sy. No. As Per SDR	Natu re of the Land	SDR Extent (Ac. Gts.)	Name of the Paddar As Per Records/ Dharrani (So, Do, Wo)	Name of the Engor (So, Do, Wo)	Enjor ment sur vey Ext (Ac. Gts.)	Tree s/ST ruc tur es	Re ma rks
41	56	Patta	00-01	Challa Thirupathi (Lakshmaiah)	Challa Thirupathi (Lakshmaiah)	0.200	0	106
42				Mulika Rajiah (Bhaskar)	Mulika Rajiah (Bhaskar)	0.100	0	106
43				Mulika Rajiah (Bhaskar)	Mulika Rajiah (Bhaskar)	0.100	0	107
44				Mulika Rajiah (Bhaskar)	Mulika Rajiah (Bhaskar)	0.090	0	108
45	160	Patta	00-14	Rama Lakshmi Reddy (Krishna)	Rama Lakshmi Reddy (Krishna)	2.000	0	109
46				Rama Ashok Reddy (Maha)	Rama Ashok Reddy (Maha)	2.000	0	110
47	162	Patta	00-23	Alu Bakkiah (Veeriah)	Alu Bakkiah (Veeriah)	2.000	0	111
48				Lolla Sathiah (Ashani)	Lolla Sathiah (Ashani)	0.250	0	112
49	163	Patta	00-09	Challa Venkatesh (Chamaiah)	Challa Venkatesh (Chamaiah)	1.175	0	113
50				Godshela Rajamma (Lachiah)	Godshela Rajamma (Lachiah)	2.340	0	114
51				Mulika Rajiah (Bhaskar)	Mulika Rajiah (Bhaskar)	1.175	0	115
52	165	Khar jka thia	00-15	Rama Maheshwari Reddy (Mohan)	Rama Maheshwari Reddy (Mohan)	1.130	0	116
53				Mulika Rajiah (Bhaskar)	Mulika Rajiah (Bhaskar)	1.130	0	117
54	166	Patta	00-20	Rama Bhaaskar Reddy (Krishna)	Rama Bhaaskar Reddy (Krishna)	2.050	0	118
55				Rama Bhaaskar Reddy (Krishna)	Rama Bhaaskar Reddy (Krishna)	2.040	0	119
56				Rama Lakshmi Reddy (Maha)	Rama Lakshmi Reddy (Maha)	2.050	0	121
57	167	Patta	00-17	Rama Maheshwari Reddy (Mohan)	Rama Maheshwari Reddy (Mohan)	1.360	0	122
58				Rama Maheshwari Reddy (Mohan)	Rama Maheshwari Reddy (Mohan)	2.200	0	123
59				Rama Maheshwari Reddy (Mohan)	Rama Maheshwari Reddy (Mohan)	1.000	0	124
60	168	Patta	00-03	Challa Ram Reddy (Bhaskar)	Challa Ram Reddy (Bhaskar)	1.105	0	125
61				Challa Chandrababu (Bhaskar)	Challa Chandrababu (Bhaskar)	1.150	0	126
62				Challa Raj Reddy (Bhaskar)	Challa Raj Reddy (Bhaskar)	0.385	0	127
63				Challa Raj Reddy (Bhaskar)	Challa Raj Reddy (Bhaskar)	0.190	0	128
64				Challa Raj Reddy (Bhaskar)	Challa Raj Reddy (Bhaskar)	0.155	0	129
65				Challa Raj Reddy (Bhaskar)	Challa Raj Reddy (Bhaskar)	1.020	0	130
66				Challa Raj Reddy (Bhaskar)	Challa Raj Reddy (Bhaskar)	2.060	0	131
67				Challa Raj Reddy (Bhaskar)	Challa Raj Reddy (Bhaskar)	1.150	0	132
68				Challa Raj Reddy (Bhaskar)	Challa Raj Reddy (Bhaskar)	1.160	0	133
69				Challa Raj Reddy (Bhaskar)	Challa Raj Reddy (Bhaskar)	2.170	0	134
70				Challa Raj Reddy (Bhaskar)	Challa Raj Reddy (Bhaskar)	0.300	0	135
71				Challa Raj Reddy (Bhaskar)	Challa Raj Reddy (Bhaskar)	0.085	0	136
72				Challa Raj Reddy (Bhaskar)	Challa Raj Reddy (Bhaskar)	1.300	0	137
73	169	Patta	00-17	Nalamma Sadasiva (Uma)	Nalamma Sadasiva (Uma)	3.270	0	138
74				Nalamma Sadasiva (Uma)	Nalamma Sadasiva (Uma)	0.080	0	139
75	180	Patta	00-16	Odi Ravi Reddy (Pochi)	Odi Ravi Reddy (Pochi)	1.000	0	141
76				Odi Ravi Reddy (Pochi)	Odi Ravi Reddy (Pochi)	1.000	0	142
77				Odi Ravi Reddy (Pochi)	Odi Ravi Reddy (Pochi)	1.000	0	143
78				Odi Ravi Reddy (Pochi)	Odi Ravi Reddy (Pochi)	3.000	0	144
79				Odi Ravi Reddy (Pochi)	Odi Ravi Reddy (Pochi)	0.250	0	145
80				Odi Ravi Reddy (Pochi)	Odi Ravi Reddy (Pochi)	0.250	0	146
81				Odi Ravi Reddy (Pochi)	Odi Ravi Reddy (Pochi)	0.160	0	147
82				Odi Ravi Reddy (Pochi)	Odi Ravi Reddy (Pochi)	2.240	0	148
83	181	Patta	00-13	Ahu Babu (Pochiah)	Ahu Babu (Pochiah)	0.200	0	149
84				Ahu Babu (Pochiah)	Ahu Babu (Pochiah)	1.000	0	150
85				Ahu Babu (Pochiah)	Ahu Babu (Pochiah)	3.335	0	151
86				Ahu Babu (Pochiah)	Ahu Babu (Pochiah)	0.200	0	152
87	182	Patta	00-04	Rama Rajiah (Sammaiah)	Rama Rajiah (Sammaiah)	0.250	0	153
88				Rama Rajiah (Sammaiah)	Rama Rajiah (Sammaiah)	0	0	154
89	183	Patta	00-14	Ahu Babu (Pochiah)	Ahu Babu (Pochiah)	0.100	0	155
90				Ahu Babu (Pochiah)	Ahu Babu (Pochiah)	0.200	0	156
91				Ahu Babu (Pochiah)	Ahu Babu (Pochiah)	2.000	0	157
92				Ahu Babu (Pochiah)	Ahu Babu (Pochiah)	0.200	0	158
93				Ahu Babu (Pochiah)	Ahu Babu (Pochiah)	0.200	0	159
94				Ahu Babu (Pochiah)	Ahu Babu (Pochiah)	0.250	0	160
95	184	Patta	00-13	Chinnappa (Maha)	Chinnappa (Maha)	1.070	0	161
96				Chinnappa (Maha)	Chinnappa (Maha)	1.000	0	162
97	185	Patta	00-28	Chinnappa (Maha)	Chinnappa (Maha)	1.000	0	163
98				Chinnappa (Maha)	Chinnappa (Maha)	3.155	0	164
99	186	Patta	00-19	Mulika Rajiah (Bhaskar)	Mulika Rajiah (Bhaskar)	1.070	0	165
100				Mulika Rajiah (Bhaskar)	Mulika Rajiah (Bhaskar)	1.070	0	166
101	207	Patta	00-12	Bhaskar (Maha)	Bhaskar (Maha)	5.230	0	167
102	208	Patta	00-09	Bhaskar (Maha)	Bhaskar (Maha)	3.905	0	168
103	209	Patta	00-11	Nagappa (Maha)	Nagappa (Maha)	2.220	0	169
104	210	Patta	00-17	Nagappa (Maha)	Nagappa (Maha)	1.290	0	170
105				Nagappa (Maha)	Nagappa (Maha)	1.300	0	171



Eggs displayed for sale at a shop in Miyapur on Saturday. - K. DURGA RAO

Flu no bar for egg demand

PRATHYUSH NALLELLA | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Notwithstanding bird flu fears among the people, the demand for eggs remains quite high in the city. They are shelling down ₹72 for a dozen eggs. Parashurama Reddy, a poultry vendor at Ram nagar, said "Although prices went down two weeks back, there is a gradual increase in the last four days. Amid bird flu concerns in February, egg prices went down by 0.75 paise but now they are inching back to the pre-avian flu prices."

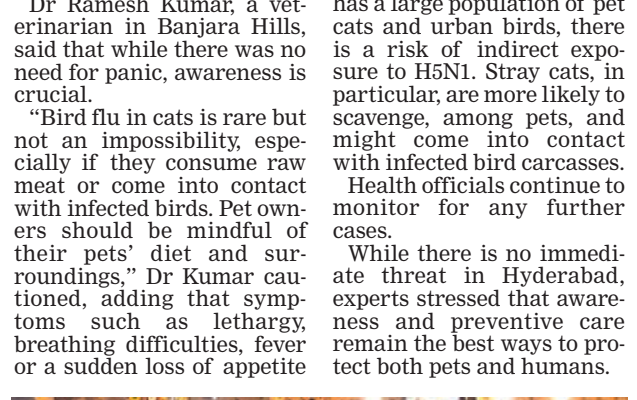
Chicken prices, however, remain very low. Vendors and wholesalers stated that the retail price of one kg of chicken is between ₹150 and ₹160, which are resulting in heavy losses for them. Many customers told Deccan Chronicle they are purchasing eggs but remain wary of buying chicken, though doctors are saying that eating chicken is fine. Meanwhile, mutton and other meat are in demand despite the spike in prices. Mutton is priced at ₹900-950 a kg, while live fish is being sold at ₹550-650.

Do not feed pets raw poultry: Vets

RACHEL DAMMALA | DC HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

The detection of bird flu (H5N1) in domestic cats in Madhya Pradesh - a first-of-its-kind case in India - has raised concerns. While avian influenza primarily affects birds, certain strains are known to infect mammals. With the virus now found in cats, experts urged for caution, particularly for pet owners in cities like Hyderabad, where close contact between animals and humans is common. Veterinarians in Hyderabad advised pet owners to take precautions, even though no cases have been reported in the city.

Dr Priya Deshmukh, a veterinary virologist, explained that the virus has been found in cats in other countries as well. "In some cases, cats have been infected after eating raw poultry or drinking unpasteurized milk. There is no evidence yet of cat-to-human transmission, but given the unpredictable nature of H5N1 pet owners should take preventive steps," she said. She advised against letting pet cats roam freely in areas where they could come in contact with sick birds or contaminated surfaces. Considering Hyderabad has a large population of pet cats and urban birds, there is a risk of indirect exposure to H5N1. Stray cats, in particular, are more likely to scavenge, among pests, and might come into contact with infected bird carcasses. Health officials continue to monitor for any further cases. While there is no immediate threat in Hyderabad, experts stressed that awareness and preventive care remain the best ways to protect both pets and humans.



Priests perform puja at Sri Lakshminarsimha Swamy Temple in Yadagirigutta on Saturday. - DC

Brahmotsavams begin with pujas

P. SRINIVAS | DC BHONGIR, MARCH 1

The 11-day annual Brahmotsavams of Sri Lakshminarsimha Swamy Temple started on Saturday with traditional ceremonies, including Ankurapana and Vishwakshana Puja performed by the temple priests. A special attraction this year is the newly gold-plated Vimanu Gopuram. Amid Vedic chants and rituals, the Swasthi Vachan was recited to mark the beginning of the festivities, followed by a Rakshabandhan ceremony in which temple executive officer A. Bhaskar Rao and hereditary trustee Narsimha Murthy participated.

According to officials, Dwajaranam (flag-hoisting ceremony) will be conducted on March 2, formally inviting the deities to preside over the Brahmotsavams. From March 3 to 6, the idol of Sri Lakshminarsimha Swamy will be adorned in various attires, and several Seva programmes will be organised for devotees. The traditional 'Eduro-kolu' ritual is scheduled for March 7, while the celestial wedding of Sri Lakshminarsimha Swamy will take place on March 8. On March 9, devotees can witness the Rathotsavam (chariot procession). The festivities will conclude on March 11 with the Sahastra Ghatabhishhekam.

Executive officer Bhaskar Rao said that all arrangements have been made to accommodate the expected surge in devotees. Drinking water facilities, shade structures, and a carpet laid out on the Mada Veedulu (temple streets) are among the amenities provided.

CHEMICAL ATTACK ON LAWYER

Lucknow: A woman lawyer was allegedly attacked with an inflammable substance in a Moradabad court by two male litigants, police on Saturday said.

(Contd. from Page 11)

Table with 10 columns: S.No., No. of the SDR, Nature of the SDR, Extent (Ac. Gts.), Name of the Patta, Name of the Patta, Name of the Patta, Name of the Patta, Name of the Patta, Name of the Patta. Includes entries for Ratna Rajtha, Batti Chirna, Thadkala Ramadevi, Thadkala Ramadevi, Thadkala Ramadevi, Thadkala Ramadevi, Thadkala Ramadevi, Thadkala Ramadevi, Thadkala Ramadevi, Thadkala Ramadevi.

Let people move freely on Manipur roads, says Shah

Asserts strict action should be taken against those creating obstructions

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 1

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday directed security forces to ensure free movement of people on all roads in the Manipur from March 8 and also called for strict action against those creating obstructions.

Chairing a review meeting on the security situation of Manipur, he said the Centre remains fully committed to restoring lasting peace in the state and is providing all necessary assistance in this regard.

This was the first such meeting held after the imposition of President's rule on February 13 after resignation of chief minister N. Biren Singh in Manipur which has been witnessing ethnic violence since May 2023



Union home minister Amit Shah chairs a meeting to review security situation in Manipur, in New Delhi on Saturday.

and over 250 people have lost their lives in the violence.

The home minister directed that free movement of people should be ensured on all roads of Manipur from March 8, an official statement said.

He also said that strict action should be taken against those creating obstructions on the roads.

Sources said Shah took stock of the security situation in Manipur and a detailed briefing was given on the overall law and order situation in the state.

The home Minister directed that the fencing work on both sides of the designated entry points along Manipur's international border should be completed at the earliest.

Shah also said to make Manipur drug-free, the entire network involved in the drug trade should be dismantled.

After imposition of the President's rule was imposed in Manipur, the state assembly, which has a tenure till 2027, has been put under suspended animation. The security review was held after the February 20 ultimatum

given by the governor to everyone holding illegal and looted arms to surrender.

During the seven-day period, more than 300 weapons were surrendered by the public, primarily in the valley districts.

These include 246 firearms surrendered by Meitei radical group Arambai Tenggol.

Governor Bhalla on Friday extended the deadline for the surrender of looted and illegal arms until 4 pm on March 6 following demands by people from both hill and valley areas for additional time.

Since taking over the charge of governor on January 3, Mr Bhalla has been meeting a cross sections of people, taking feedback from them on how to bring back normalcy in the northeastern state.

All is not well between Cong., RJD in Bihar

ASHHAR KHAN | DC NEW DELHI, MARCH 1

At a time when the BJP and the JD(U) are consolidating their alliance in Bihar ahead of impending Assembly polls, all is not well between the Congress and the RJD. Refusing to learn any lesson from its electoral defeats in Haryana, Maharashtra and Delhi, the Congress continues to flex its muscle with its leader planning to demand a "respectable" number of seats from the RJD. The party will be holding a meeting with its Bihar leader, following which it will hold seat-sharing talks with the RJD.

Newly appointed Congress state in-charge Krishna Allavaru visited Patna earlier this week and met up with the Bihar leadership. He emphasised the importance of unity and grassroots outreach, urging members to focus on connecting with voters at the booth and village levels.

Speaking on the possibility of Congress contesting the Bihar Assembly elections independently, similar to its approach in Delhi,

SOURCES SAY that the Congress Bihar unit cadres want the party to start strengthening itself from grassroots levels instead of relying on the RJD for support.

Allavaru indicated that the party is in the process of formulating its electoral strategy for the state. He made it clear that only those who work hard on the ground will get organisational positions and election tickets. He has also issued a strict warning to the party leaders that factionalism and groupism will not be tolerated by the party.

Sources say that the Congress Bihar unit cadres want the party to start strengthening itself from grassroots levels instead of relying on the RJD for support. Speaking to this paper on the condition of anonymity, a senior state leader said, "We are increasingly being perceived as the B-team of the RJD. We have to focus on party building instead of relying on the RJD. Even if it takes more time, the party needs to be strengthened."

GST collections up by 9% to ₹1.84L-cr

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO | DC NEW DELHI, MARCH 1

India's gross goods and services tax or GST collections during February 2025 also grew by 9.1 per cent to about ₹1.84 lakh crore in February 2025, while gross and net GST revenues in February 2024 were ₹1.68 lakh crore and ₹1.50 lakh crore. The GST revenue includes a 10.2 per cent jump in domestic revenues at ₹1.42 lakh crore and 5.4 per cent rise in revenues from imports to ₹41,702 crore during February, respectively, the finance ministry data showed on Saturday.

As per the data, during the month, mop up from central GST stood at Rs 35,204 crore, state GST at ₹43,704 crore, integrated GST at ₹90,870 crore and compensation cess of ₹13,868 crore. "Total refunds issued during

February were ₹20,889 crore, up by 17.3 per cent over the year-ago period. The net GST collections during February 2025 also grew by 8.1 per cent to about ₹1.63 lakh crore," the data showed.

Commenting on the latest GST data, Vivek Jalan — Partner Tax Connect Advisory Services LLP said that this year's GST Collection is almost on target and that is one of the reasons that the actual fiscal deficit for FY2024-25 of 4.8 per cent is estimated to be below the budgeted 4.9 per cent. "On a different note, it is heartening to see that the growth of GST on import is 7.2 per cent only vis-a-vis growth in domestic GST Collection of 10.1 per cent. If at all, it is an indication that India is getting more 'atmanirbhar'," Jalan added.



Rescue operation underway after several labourers got trapped under snow following an avalanche in Mana area of Chamoli district, Uttarakhand.

4 BRO workers dead in Uttarakhand avalanche

PRITHVIRAJ SINGH | DC DEHRADUN, MARCH 1

Four BRO construction workers trapped under an avalanche at Mana village near Badrinath on Friday have died as rescue operations launched jointly by the Indian Army, ITBP, BRO and Indian Air Force resulted in safe retrieval of 46 workers by Saturday late afternoon. Rescue teams are trying to locate five remaining workers still missing.

Although the Uttarakhand government is yet to confirm the workers deaths, Indian Army PRO Lt Col Manish Shrivastava said, "In the latest

update as of now, it has been confirmed that 50 persons have been recovered so far. Unfortunately four injured persons have been confirmed as fatal casualties. The injured are being prioritised for evacuation. The search operation led by the Army is underway to save the balance of five persons."

Lt Col Shrivastava added, "The avalanche rescue operation is currently underway led by the Indo-Bhutan Expeditionary Brigade (IBEX Brigade) of the Indian Army. A total of six helicopters were deployed for the evacuation as the road was blocked. The helicopters include three Cheetah helicop-

ters from Indian Army Aviation, two Cheetah helicopters from the Indian Air Force and one civil helicopter hired by the Indian army."

It's notable that the IBEX Brigade of the Indian army is a specialised unit trained mainly for high-altitude and mountainous operations. Earlier, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami conducted an aerial survey of the avalanche site and took stock of the rescue works on the ground. He informed that instead of the earlier stated figure of 57, the strength of workers trapped under the avalanche was 55.

Kant Pandey takes charge as Sebi chief

MUMBAI, MARCH 1: Seasoned bureaucrat Tuhin Kant Pandey assumed charge as Sebi chairman on Saturday, promising focus on transparency and teamwork.

Pandey, formerly the Finance Secretary, termed Sebi as a "robust market institution" which has been built over the years by successive leaders.

Declining to outline his exact agenda or style of working, the successor to Madhabi Puri Buch, said he will not comment on anyone.

Buch, who had faced a slew of allegations of impropriety during the final few months of her term, was not present when Pandey arrived at the Sebi



Tuhin Kant Pandey

headquarters in the Bandra Kurla Complex business district. She is reportedly unwell and down with a Covid infection. "Sebi is a very robust market institution, it has been built over the years with successive leaders and will continue," the 59-year-old Pandey told reporters.

Paper ballot out of ONOE scope

New Delhi, March 1: The question of reverting to ballot papers does not fall under the ambit of the mandate of a joint committee of Parliament examining the two bills on simultaneous polls, the Union law ministry is learnt to have said.

Going back to the ballot paper system was a "suggestion" made by some of the members of the joint committee, and the law ministry was to respond to it in writing. While the ministry's Legislative Department gave elaborate responses to a variety of questions posed to it by the committee, it did not give a direct reply on the suggestion on the ballot paper system.

The ministry is learnt to have said it was "out of scope" of the parliamentary panel to make a suggestion on the use of the ballot paper system, according to sources.

Whether to use Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) or ballot papers for casting votes is not the subject the panel is examining,

they underlined.

The committee is mandated to examine the bills on simultaneous polls — the Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill — and give its report on whether they are sound enough for the purpose or need changes, the sources said.

The committee is mandated to examine the bills on simultaneous polls — the Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill — and give its report on whether they are sound enough for the purpose or need changes, the sources said.

MAJOR CHALLENGE IAF strength down to 30 squadrons, needs 60+ to counter Pak, China

Forces feel pinch in delay of Tejas aircraft

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 1

With China expanding its air force fleet and Pakistan acquiring new fighter jets, the Indian Air Force (IAF) will need 60-65 fighter squadrons to effectively counter both.

However, this is a major challenge because the IAF's current strength has dropped to 30 squadrons, well below the sanctioned strength of 42 squadrons. "Things have changed a lot in the neighbourhood since we had set the target of 42 squadrons and in the current circumstances we need a lot more fighter jets if we need to

counter both the countries. China and Pakistan are expanding their strength and there is a need to counter them more aggressively," said official sources.

China has been constantly adding new fifth generation fighter jets and has recently also tested the prototype of a sixth generation fighter jet.

Pakistan is also in talks with China to acquire 40 fifth-generation J-35A fighters. These are one of China's most advanced military aircraft and would add significant strength to Pakistan's Air Force. However, India has been hit by delays in the

delivery of the Tejas Mark-1A aircraft. IAF chief Air Chief Marshal A.P. Singh said on Friday that the force will need to induct 35-40 fighter jets every year to cater to existing gaps and also

replace aircraft which will be phased out in the next couple of years like Jaguars and Mirages.

The defence ministry has set up a panel under defence secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh to look into the challenges being

replaced by the IAF. The committee is looking into the overall capability development of the IAF through indigenous design, development and acquisition projects. It was formed around one month ago after the IAF



made a presentation to defence minister Rajnath Singh on its fighter requirements to tackle a two-front threat.

The defence secretary will also look into the cause of delays in Tejas and suggest measures for faster induction of the indigenous fighter jets into the IAF.

The panel could suggest roping in private players for the production of Tejas due to high order for the indigenous aircraft.

Air Chief Marshal Singh has also suggested involvement of the private sector in the production of the fighter aircraft on the lines of transport aircraft C295.

Maharashtra deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar on Saturday said that the money will be recovered from those people who have destroyed the state owned properties during the protest in the backdrop of rape of a 26-year-old woman inside a Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) bus at Pune's Swargate bus station. The Deputy Chief Minister's remark a day after the arrest of the accused in the rape case, Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT) had staged the protest and damaged the properties after the alleged rape at the Swargate bus depot.

Uddhav Thackeray had praised his party workers and leader Vasant More for ransacking the office of MSRTC at the Swargate bus stand.

SONU SHRIVASTAVA | DC MUMBAI, MARCH 1

AJIT CONDEMNS DAMAGE TO PUBLIC ASSETS

Maharashtra deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar on Saturday said that the money will be recovered from those people who have destroyed the state owned properties during the protest in the backdrop of rape of a 26-year-old woman inside a Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) bus at Pune's Swargate bus station. The Deputy Chief Minister's remark a day after the arrest of the accused in the rape case, Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT) had staged the protest and damaged the properties after the alleged rape at the Swargate bus depot. Uddhav Thackeray had praised his party workers and leader Vasant More for ransacking the office of MSRTC at the Swargate bus stand.



Ajit Pawar

This Notification is made under the Provisions of Section - 11(1) of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (Central Act No. 30/2013), as amended by the Right to Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (Tamil Nadu Amendment) Act, 2016 (Act No. 21 of 2017) to all whom it may concern. A plan of the land may be inspected in the Office of the District Collector, Jayashankar Bhupalpally & Land Acquisition Officer, Special Duty Collector, L.A. Bhupalpally on any working day during the working hours. The Collector-cum-Appropriate Government is pleased to survey Special Duty Collector, L.A. and his staff to enter upon and survey land, take levels of any land, dig or bore into the sub-soil & do all other acts required for the proper execution of their work as provided in Section 12 of the said Act. Under Section 11(4) of the Act, no person shall make any transaction or cause any transaction of land, or sale or purchase, etc. or create any encumbrances on such land from the date of publication of this notification without prior approval of the Collector. Objections to the acquisition of land may be filed by the person interested in the land within 80 (sixty days) from the date of publication of this Notification as provided under section 15 of the Act, before District Collector, Jayashankar Bhupalpally. Sd/- Land Acquisition Officer & Special Deputy Collector, L.A. Jayashankar Bhupalpally. Sd/- Additional Collector (Revenue), Jayashankar Bhupalpally. Sd/- District Collector, Jayashankar Bhupalpally. DIPP R.O. No. 736 /LA-PP/Adv/Pub/2024-25

SHORT TAKES

NAMIBIA BIDS FAREWELL TO FOUNDING FATHER

Windhoek, March. 1: Thousands of Namibians and dignitaries gathered on Saturday to mourn the country's independence leader, Sam Nujoma, as nearly a month of homage climaxed with a state funeral. Nujoma, the guerrilla leader who won independence for the desert nation from apartheid South Africa, died on February 9, aged 95. His casket — draped in the blue, white, red and green Namibian flag — was pulled in a gun carriage to its final resting place at the Heroes' Acre, a mountainous memorial.

CYBER SCAM: CAMBODIA SENDS BACK 119 THAIS

Bangkok, March. 1: Cambodia on Saturday said it deported 119 Thais across the two countries' shared border, the latest handover in a crackdown on illegal cyberscam centres.

Cambodia's immigration department said in a post on its Facebook page that the Thais — 61 men and 58 women — had "snuck in to work and stayed illegally" in the kingdom.

They were among 230 foreigners detained during raids on alleged cyberscam centres in the border city of Poipet on February 22 and 23, it said. The Thais were deported via the Poipet border checkpoint.

CYCLONE HITS FRENCH ISLAND, CLAIMS 4 LIVES

Paris, March 1: At least four people died after cyclone Garance struck the French overseas territory of La Reunion on Friday, bringing wind speeds of up to 155 kph (96 mph), local authorities said on Saturday.

"Garance has been downgraded to a strong tropical storm and the red alert has been lifted," the local prefecture said in a new update on X, advising the population to stay cautious and limit travel.

The prefecture said 953 people were being sheltered in centres, 1,60,000 households were without electricity, and 3,10,000 without water.

CHINA REOPENS EVEREST AREA AFTER QUAKE

Beijing, March 1: China on Saturday reopened the scenic area of Mt Everest, known as Mount Qomolangma, in the Tibet Autonomous Region after it was closed to the public following the January earthquake.

The area was closed on January 7 after a 6.8-magnitude quake struck Dingri, home to the northern base camp of the world's highest peak. The quake claimed 126 lives and left 188 others injured. The scenic area was closed on the same day for the safety of tourists and staff. In the Tibetan language, Mount Everest is known as Mount Qomolangma.

DEEPSEEK CLAIMS COST-PROFIT RATIO OF 545%

Beijing, March 1: Chinese AI startup DeepSeek on Saturday disclosed some cost and revenue data related to its hit V3 and R1 models, claiming a theoretical cost-profit ratio of up to 545% per day, though it cautioned that actual revenue would be significantly lower.

This marks the first time the Hangzhou-based company has revealed any information about its profit margins from less computationally intensive "inference" tasks, the stage after training that involves trained AI models making predictions or performing tasks, such as through chatbots.

NICARAGUA QUILTS 2 MORE GLOBAL ORGANISATIONS

San Jos, March 1: Nicaragua said that it would leave the International Organisation for Migration and the International Labour Organisation, extending its retreat from multilateral bodies following criticism of its human rights record.

The two organisations "do not fulfill the mission for which they were created," said Rosario Murillo, who co-governs with her husband, President Daniel Ortega. "We reiterate our firm position of repudiation of all insults, offenses, falsehoods, aggressions," she said.

Crucial for Ukraine to have Trump's support to battle Russia: Zelenskyy

Moscow: Miracle Trump didn't hit Zelenskyy; Russians gloat over Ukraine Prez 'suicide'

Washington, Moscow, March 1: Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on Friday that his relations with the United States can still be repaired, after President Donald Trump shouted at him in an angry White House meltdown accusing the Ukrainian leader of refusing to make peace with Russia.

"Of course," Zelenskyy said when asked in a Fox News interview if the relationship with Trump could be salvaged.

Russia reacted with glee on Friday to the bitter clash between Trump and Zelenskyy in the White House, saying the Ukrainian leader got what he deserved. The acrimonious shouting match was a gift to Moscow, which is working to build ties with Trump's new administration while trying to discredit Zelenskyy and undermine his legitimacy.

Russia also said it was a "miracle" that Trump restrained himself from hitting Zelenskyy during their verbal clash.

"US-Ukrainian ties are about more than two presidents," Zelenskyy said, adding that Ukraine badly needs Washington's help in the fight against Russia's far bigger and better-armed military.

"It will be difficult without your support," he said on Fox — Trump's favourite news channel.

Zelenskyy's olive branch came hours after the Oval Office scene where the years-long US policy of massive support for Ukraine's fight against the Russian invasion collapsed.

It saw European leaders scramble to voice support for Ukraine after Zelenskyy was made to leave the White House early and without signing a minerals-sharing deal seen as vital to an eventual US-brokered truce. — Agencies



Demonstrators hold up a placard reading Taurus for Ukraine as they take part in a march of members of the Russian opposition in Berlin, on Saturday. — AFP

Europeans rally behind Zelenskyy

SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI NEW DELHI, MARCH 1

With the Trump-Zelenskyy spat rocking the world, the European Union (EU), whose commission (EC) President Ursula von der Leyen concluded her visit to India on Friday, will almost certainly have to raise its defence expenditure steeply to further aid Ukraine with funds and weaponry, in case the United States under the Donald Trump administration pulls out of the conflict and withdraws financial and military support to Ukraine.

Von der Leyen, a former German defence minister, had already announced in Delhi on Friday that the EU would increase its defence expenditure. "We (the EU) will step up defence spending," she had said at a key note address in New Delhi.

Just hours after her departure from New Delhi, the EC president backed Ukraine and its President to the hilt by stating, "Your dignity honours the bravery of the Ukrainian people. Be strong. Be brave. Be fearless. You are never alone, dear President Zelenskyy." Von der Leyen had said

on Friday in New Delhi, "Russia's goal is to tear Ukraine apart. A failed Ukraine will weaken Europe," the EC President had said in New Delhi on Friday. In what is seen by some as a veiled indication towards China, she had also cautioned that "other countries are watching closely if there is any impunity or real deterrent" when one country attacks its neighbour. She had also stated, "Europe is ready to take greater responsibility for defence and security". She had further said that "Ukraine can join the European Family".

— ANTHONY ALBANESE, AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER

World reactions

NO ONE WANTS peace more than the citizens of Ukraine! That is why we are jointly seeking the path to a lasting and just peace. Ukraine can rely on Germany — and on Europe. — OLAF SCHOLZ, GERMAN CHANCELLOR

— VIKTOR ORBAN, HUNGARIAN PRIME MINISTER

WHAT IS NEEDED is an immediate summit between the United States, European states and allies to talk frankly about how we intend to deal with the great challenges of today, starting with Ukraine. — GIORGIA MELONI, ITALIAN PRIME MINISTER

— DONALD TRUMP, POLISH PRIME MINISTER

WE WILL CONTINUE to stand with Ukraine for as long as it takes, because this is the struggle of a democratic nation versus an authoritarian regime led by Vladimir Putin. — ANTHONY ALBANESE, AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER

YOUR DIGNITY honours the bravery of the Ukrainian people. Be strong, be brave, be fearless. You are never alone, dear President. We will continue working with you for a just and lasting peace. — URSULA VON DER LEYEN, EUROPEAN COMMISSION PRESIDENT

— VIKTOR ORBAN, HUNGARIAN PRIME MINISTER

STRONG MEN make peace, weak men make war. Today President

@realDonaldTrump stood bravely for peace. Even if it was difficult for many to digest. Thank you, Mr. President!

— VIKTOR ORBAN, HUNGARIAN PRIME MINISTER

DEAR @ZELENSKYYUA, dear Ukrainian friends, you are not alone. — DONALD TRUMP, POLISH PRIME MINISTER

A BRUTAL dressing down in the Oval Office. — DMITRY MEDVEDEV, FORMER RUSSIAN PRESIDENT

New age of infamy began with row, says Germany

Berlin, March 1: Germany's foreign minister said Saturday the "unspeakable" row between United States President Donald Trump and his Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelenskyy in the White House resembled a "bad dream" as Kyiv's European allies rallied to its side.

"Yesterday evening underlined that a new age of infamy has begun," foreign minister Annalena Baerbock said in a televised statement. "Many of you will have slept uneasily after seeing the unspeakable videos from the White House," she said, adding: "Honestly, I

did too." "Sadly this was not a bad dream, but a heavy reality," she said.

She also urged that both Germany and the European Union loosen their budget rules to facilitate support for Ukraine following the row which ended with Zelenskyy

being thrown out of the White House.

She said she would "wholeheartedly push for more flexibility in the Stability and Growth Pact" of the EU as well as a "fundamental reform of the debt brake" anchored in Germany's constitution, in order to enable more help

for Ukraine, which is battling Russia since February 2022.

Baerbock said such measures could help "Ukraine withstand Russia's aggression even if the United States withdraws support, so that it can achieve a just peace and not a capitulation". — AFP

Gender identity protections out of Iowa civil rights law

Washington, March 1: Iowa on Friday became the first US state to strip gender identity protections from its civil rights law after its governor signed a bill removing safeguards for transgender people.

Republican Governor Kim Reynolds inked the measure the day after it won approval from the Midwestern state's Republican-controlled legislature, despite angry protests and hours of debate.

In a video on social media, Reynolds said the new law, which goes into effect on July 1, "safeguards the rights of women and girls." "Before I signed this bill, the Civil Rights Code blurred the biological line between the sexes," she said.

It was the latest blow to transgender Americans since President Donald Trump returned to power.

In his first days in office, Trump declared the federal government would recognise only two genders — men and women — and has targeted transgender people in a slew of other orders. Reynolds echoed Republican lines on the issue, saying the law "brings Iowa in line with the federal civil rights code." Trump expressed support for the bill on Truth Social. — AFP



Washington state attorney general Nick Brown speaks, following a hearing on the state's request for a preliminary injunction against US President Donald Trump's order attacking gender-affirming care for youth. — AFP

CLASSIFIED DOCUS TAKEN BY FBI ARE BACK: U.S. PREZ

Washington, March 1: US President Donald Trump said on Friday that boxes of classified documents that the FBI seized from his Mar-a-Lago home during an investigation into possible misconduct have been returned to him, and that he would one day display them in his presidential library. Trump said that the boxes with secret documents that he had faced charges of taking with him when he left the White House after his first term, had been returned. — AFP

TRUMP TO MAKE ENGLISH OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF U.S.

Washington, March 1: President Donald Trump is expected to sign an executive order designating English as the official language of the US, according to the White House.

The order will allow government agencies and organisations that receive federal funding to choose whether to continue to offer documents and services in language other than English, according to a fact sheet. — AP

FED STAFF GET SECOND EMAIL

Washington, March 1: A second email asking US federal workers to justify their jobs was sent on Friday, as part of President Donald Trump's initiative to slash spending, media outlets reported. It came a week after Elon Musk engineered a first mass email, ordering them to justify their work or risk being fired. — AFP

Readying for prayers



A Muslim mother prepares her daughter before the first Tarawih prayers to mark the start of Ramadan, at Baiturrahman Grand Mosque in Indonesia's Banda Aceh. For Muslims in Saudi Arabia and most Sunni-ruled Middle Eastern states, Ramadan began on Saturday, but in Shiite-majority Iran and Iraq, it will start on Sunday. — AFP

Hamas releases footage of hostages

Gaza City, Washington, March 1: Hamas's armed wing on Saturday released footage showing what appeared to be several Israeli hostages in Gaza, as the first phase of a fragile ceasefire neared its expiry amid uncertainty over the next steps.

US President Donald Trump's administration has approved a major nearly \$3 billion arms sale to Israel, bypassing a normal congressional review to

provide the country with more of the 2,000-pound bombs that it has used in the war against Hamas.

In a series of notifications sent to Congress late on Friday, the state department said it had signed off on the sale of over 35,500 MK 84 and BLU-117 bombs and 4,000 Predator warheads worth \$2.04 billion.

Hamas also reiterated on Saturday its readiness to go ahead with the "remaining stages" of a ceasefire

agreement in Gaza, as the first phase drew to a close with uncertainty over the next steps. "We affirm our keenness to complete the remaining stages of the ceasefire agreement, leading to a comprehensive and permanent ceasefire, full withdrawal of the occupation forces from the Gaza Strip, reconstruction and lifting the siege," the Palestinian militant group said.

The video released by the Ezzedine Al-Qassam Brigades, which AFP was unable to immediately verify, showed three people whose faces were visible, two of whom appeared to be hostages released in February, with the third calling on the Israeli government to free him. The video, which also showed two others with their faces blurred, was accompanied with the message: "Only a truce deal brings them back alive". — Agencies

EUROPEAN SAT LAUNCHER SET FOR 1ST FLIGHT

Paris, March. 1: After several postponements, Europe's Ariane 6 launcher will carry out its first commercial mission on Monday when it puts a French military intelligence satellite into space. The launch from the Kourou base in French Guiana is key to Europe's efforts to build up its security autonomy amid the shocks caused by the US-Russia diplomatic rapprochement. "The whole world is watching us," ArianeSpace chief executive David Cavailloles said. — AFP

SEA OF COLOUR We need to respect everyone for who they are, says Aussie PM Albanese Sydney's Mardi Gras celebrates inclusion

Sydney, March 1: Thousands of scantily clad revellers danced through Sydney on Saturday for the 47th annual Mardi Gras parade, transforming the Australian city into a vibrant sea of colour and costumes.

More than 10,000 people — many of them painted in glitter makeup — and 180 floats rolled down a packed Oxford Street, lighting up the vibrant heart of Sydney's LGBTQ scene.

Mardi Gras is a highlight of the city's social calendar, with this year's theme "free to be" celebrating freedom, authenticity, and the right to live openly and proudly, organisers said.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, who has marched in Mardi Gras for almost 40 years, said the event "shows a commitment to respect everyone for who they are".

"We need to respect everyone for who they are," he told the national broadcaster ABC. "This is a great celebration, but it also began as a political protest, when being gay or lesbian, your

identity, could be a crime here in New South Wales," he said. "We've come a long way, but there's still further to go, and we need to make sure that every Australian feels safe."

The roar of dozens of motorbikes carrying women and rainbow flags, or "Dykes on Bikes", kicked off the parade, followed by the First Nations Community Float and the 78ers 1 a group of activists who marched in Sydney's first Mardi Gras event in 1978.

Dylan Hoskins, who was with the First Nations float, said the evening was about bringing people together during a time of division. "Mardi Gras is about inclusion. It's about celebrating identity, expressing identity, and like, celebrating human nature," he told AFP.

Kyle Schneider, who was on the Sydney Opera House float, said he was "really excited" to attend his first Mardi Gras. "It's just a great time for everyone to come together and celebrate and allow everyone to be who they are." — AFP



Participants take part in the 47th Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade in Sydney, on Saturday. — AFP



Pope Francis

PEACEFUL NIGHT AFTER POPE'S BREATHING ISSUE

Rome, March 1: Pope Francis, hospitalised for two weeks with pneumonia in both lungs, spent a peaceful night after suffering a breathing crisis, the Vatican said on Saturday, as Catholics prayed for his speedy recovery.

The 88-year-old pontiff was put on a ventilator because of an "isolated" breathing crisis on Friday, sparking concern.

"The pope spent a peaceful night and is resting," the Holy See said in a statement on Saturday. A Vatican source said: "There have been no crises like yesterday. The pope woke up, had breakfast, and read the papers as usual".

His doctors have said it would take 24 to 48 hours to see if the breathing trouble has worsened his condition or not. The Vatican source said the pope's prognosis of "reserved" had not been modified. — AFP

KURDISH ULTRAS' TRUCE IN 40-YR TURKIYE REVOLT

Istanbul, March 1: Kurdish militants who have waged a 40-year insurgency in Turkiye declared a ceasefire on Saturday in what could mark a significant boost to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's government, two days after their imprisoned leader called for the group to disarm.

The announcement by the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, comes against the backdrop of fundamental changes in the region, including the reconfiguration of power in Syria after the toppling of president Bashar Assad, the weakening of the Hezbollah militant movement in Lebanon and the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza.

The conflict between Turkiye and the PKK has led to tens of thousands of deaths since it began in 1984. The ceasefire is the first sign of a breakthrough since peace talks between the PKK and Ankara broke down in 2015.

The PKK declaration was published by the Firat News Agency. It referred to the insurgents' leader, Abdullah Ocalan, imprisoned by Turkiye since 1999. It said, "We declare a ceasefire effective today to pave the way for the implementation of Leader Apo's call for peace." — AP

SHORT TAKES

Rashmikaa and Sahaja for India

New Delhi: There were no surprises in the Indian team picked for the upcoming Billie Jean King Cup with the AITA selection committee going for tried and tested top-ranked players, led by number one Aniketa Raina, while Vishal Uppal returned as captain of the side after two years. Raina will have Sahaja Yamalapati, Shrivalli Rashmikaa Bhamidipaty, Vaidehi Chaudhari in the side, while Prarthana Thombare will be the doubles specialist in the five-member squad. Teen sensation Maaya Rajeshwaran, who recently made the semifinals of the WTA Mumbai Open, will be the reserve player in the side. India will host the Billie Jean King Cup at Deccan Gymkhana in Pune from April 8. A training camp will begin at the venue from April 2 and Rutuja Bhosale and Vaishnavi Adkar have also been invited to be part of the preparations. In March 2023, Uppal was removed as non-playing captain with Shalini Thakur replacing him. — PTI

Neeraj supports FIT India Sundays

New Delhi: Two-time Olympic medalist Neeraj Chopra on Saturday pledged support to the government's FIT India Sundays on 'Cycle' event, saying that the initiative would not only help people improve their fitness but also contribute towards controlling pollution. The javelin superstar urged the people to take out time every Sunday and join the initiative. "Namaste FIT India Sundays on Cycle is a fantastic way to improve one's fitness and to contribute towards controlling pollution. So, I would like to tell you that please indulge in cycling every Sunday, if you are not able to find time every day," Chopra said in a ministry release. The cycling drive began on December 17 last year by Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya with the overall objective of fitness ka dose, aacha ghanta roz (Daily dose of fitness for 30 minutes) and a way to find a solution to pollution. This weekend's cycling initiative is themed upon fighting obesity among citizens. — PTI

Footballer's truck stolen in Mexico

Mexico City: Uruguayan midfielder Nicols Fonseca was robbed and his truck was stolen near his Mexican club Leon. The club on Friday said Fonseca was not harmed and was training with the team. It did not specify the date of the robbery. The 24-year-old Fonseca is in his first season in Mexico after playing for River Plate in Argentina. According to Leon, the robbery occurred on a highway between Leon and the state of Jalisco, near the club training facilities. "Nico is fine and trains regularly along with his teammates getting ready for tomorrow's match," the team said in a statement. Leon hosts Tijuana on Saturday in the Mexican Clausura. Guanajuato state prosecutor's office said it was collaborating with Jalisco authorities to find the perpetrators. Local media reported Fonseca was kidnapped and abandoned in a remote area, but the team denied that happened. "We ask not to pay attention to rumors or to divulge fake news about issues as delicate as this," Leon said. — AP

Cavaliers rally to crush Celtics

Los Angeles, USA: Donovan Mitchell scored 41 points to fuel the league-leading Cleveland Cavaliers in a 123-116 comeback from behind statement win over the reigning NBA champion Celtics in Boston on Friday. The Cavs posted their ninth straight victory, withstanding Boston star Jayson Tatum's near triple-double of 46 points, 16 rebounds and nine assists. Darius Garland scored 20 points and Evan Mobley added 17 points and 12 rebounds for Cleveland, which took the lead for the first time on Mobley's three-pointer with 8:43 left in the fourth quarter. Boston star Jaylen Brown — who scored 37 points — tied it up at 114-114 with 3:15 remaining, but Mitchell responded with a pair of driving baskets and the Cavaliers held on for a win that pushed their league-best record to 49-10 — 7.5 games ahead of Boston atop the Eastern Conference. — AFP

VILLA CRACK CARDIFF

London, March 1: Marco Asensio fired Aston Villa into the FA Cup quarterfinals as the Spanish forward struck twice in a 2-0 win against Cardiff on Friday. Unai Emery's side were held at bay by the gritty Championship outfit until deep into the second half of the Last 16 clash at Villa Park. Asensio's double ensured Villa advanced to the Last Eight for the first time since their run to the final in 2015. The 29-year-old has four goals in six games for Villa since joining on loan from Paris Saint-Germain in the January transfer window. It was a welcome victory for Villa, who were thrashed 4-1 at Crystal Palace in the Premier League on Tuesday. "We needed Asensio. We were creating chances but not clinical. The second half was still difficult to beat them. We scored one goal. After that it was easier to dominate," Emery said. "Playing against a Championship team is not easy, trying to respect them because you can lose even if you're better than the opponent," he added. Despite the Champions League Last 16 first-leg tie at Club Brugge looming on Tuesday, Emery opted to pick a strong team against the Bluebirds. Teetering just six points above the Championship relegation zone, Cardiff boss Omar Riza took the opposite approach, as he selected a weakened team to prioritise their survival battle. Marcus Rashford's snapshot and John McGinn's curler from distance were both well saved by Cardiff keeper Ethan Horvath in the opening stages. Ollie Watkins should have put Villa ahead but the England striker poked



Erzi Kansa (right) of Aston Villa executes a shot as Cardiff City's Rubin Colwill tries to block it during their English FA Cup fifth round match at the Villa Park stadium in Birmingham, England, on Friday. Aston Villa won 2-0. — AP

wide after racing into the penalty area. Emery's men monopolised possession to such an extent that Cardiff fans sarcastically chanted "we've got the ball" when they finally stemmed the tide of Villa attacks for a moment. **BAYERN CLOSER TO TITLE** Stuttgart, Germany: Goals from Michael Olise, Leon Goretzka and Kingsley Coman took Bayern Munich to a comeback behind 3-1 win at Stuttgart on Friday and sent them 11 points clear in the Bundesliga with 10 games remaining.

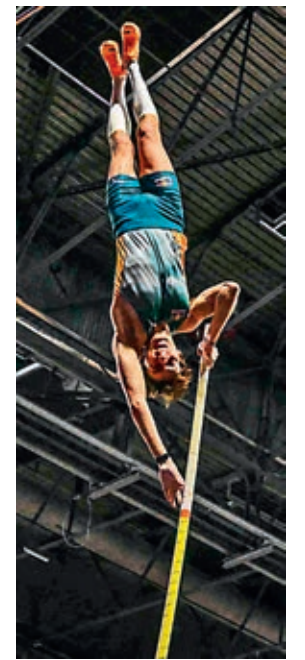
Bayern's win, the ninth of their past 10 league matches, puts the German giants on course to win the title from Bayer Leverkusen. Leverkusen can restore the gap to eight points with a win at Eintracht Frankfurt on Saturday. Bayern and Bayer meet in the first leg of their Last 16 Champions League tie in Munich on Wednesday. **THIRD 'TRICK FOR MIKA** Monaco, France: Mika Biereth is enjoying life in France. He scored his third hat-trick of the month when Monaco beat

Reims 3-0 in Ligue 1 on Friday. The London-born Dane joined Monaco from Sturm Graz in the last transfer window and his form in his first eight games has been spectacular. Friday's goals were his eighth, ninth and 10th since joining the club and follow hat tricks against Auxerre on Feb. 1 and Nante on February 15. Biereth opened the scoring against Reims after 34 minutes by stealing in at the back post to side-foot home a cross from Caio Henrique. He doubled Monaco's

lead five minutes later when he steadied himself in a crowded penalty box and volleyed home. His third was a simple tap in the second half after a point-blank save by the Reims goalkeeper. **FIORENTINA BEAT LECCE** Florence, Italy: Fiorentina recorded their first win in four games when a first half goal from Robin Gosens held up to beat lowly Lecce 1-0 in Serie 'A'. The German defender put in a thumping header after nine minutes, connecting with a deep cross from Brazilian full back Dod. — AFP, AP

Duplantis breaks his own record

Clermont-Ferrand (France), March 1: Swedish Olympic champion Armand Duplantis broke his own world record on Friday at the All Star Pole Vault event in Clermont-Ferrand, France and then promoted another type of record. After securing victory in the competition by clearing a bar at 6.07 metres, Duplantis then took aim at the world record, raising the bar to 6.27 metres and clearing it at the first attempt. "I just felt really good," the vaulter known as "Mondo" said. "What can I say, I came here to do it. I put everything in place to do it. The run-up worked really well. I just did it. Sometimes it's easy, sometimes it's not, but there's a lot of hard work, hardship, bad days, good days, everything in between that gets you to the easier moments," he said, adding that breaking the world record remained exhilarating. "It's always special. It's a crazy feeling every time. It's like a feeling of euphoria. It's hard to explain," he added. It was the 11th time he had broken the record by one centimetre since first claiming it with a leap of



Armand Duplantis in action during pole vault event at All Star Perche International. — AFP
6.16m in February 2020. Duplantis made sure that his song "Bop" — released just in time for the meet — was playing in the arena. "That was my song that was playing," the breathless Duplantis said immediately after the jump. — AFP

CITY CLIPS



Players of the Hyderabad Queens pose with the trophy at the Asmita Women's Rowing League at Hussain Sagar Lake in Hyderabad.

Hyd Queens shine in rowing league

Hyderabad Queens bagged an overall six medals — 4 gold, 1 silver and 1 bronze to finish second in the Asmita Rowing League held at Hussain Sagar Lake in Hyderabad. The event is backed by the Government of India's Khelo India mission. In the Under 23 category, rowers from Hyderabad Queens clinched three medals — one gold, one silver and a bronze — to finish behind the Cochin Queens and ahead of Bhopal Queens. In the Juniors section, Hyderabad Queens secured three gold medals to top the table followed by Cochin Queens and Chennai Ranis. Cochin Queens took the first position in the overall tally, followed by Hyderabad Queens and Cuttack Queens.



HCA president A. Jagan Mohan Rao (right), vice-president Daljeet Singh (left) and Councillor Sunil Agarwal (second from right) pose with BCCI president Roger Binny (second from left) at the BCCI headquarters in Mumbai on Saturday.

Telangana Premier League in June

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has given the green signal to Hyderabad Cricket Association for organising the Telangana Premier League (TPL), HCA president Arshanapalli Jagan Mohan Rao said on Saturday. The tournament will be held in June after the conclusion of the IPL. The HCA is looking at six to eight teams in the League with matches to be held in Hyderabad. The authorities are also exploring the possibility of fielding two players from outside Hyderabad in the playing XI. Efforts are on to seek the BCCI's permission in this regard. However, each team would be entitled to have a former Indian international on board as their mentor. HCA president Jagan, vice-president Daljeet Singh and Councillor Sunil Agarwal were at the BCCI headquarters in Mumbai on Saturday for meet to elect Rohan Desai of Goa Cricket Association as the national cricket board's new joint secretary. Jagan participated in the election as HCA's representative.

Sreenidi set to take on Namdhari

After securing two consecutive wins on the road, Sreenidi Deccan Football Club will be back in action as they host Namdhari FC at the Deccan Arena here on Sunday. The Deccan Warriors go into the match on the back of an inspiring 3-2 victory away at Dempo SC, whereas Namdhari played out a 1-1 draw against Churchill Brothers in their last I-League fixture. Assistant coach Ishant Singh, who is currently in charge of the Deccan Warriors, spoke about the challenge of the upcoming fixture. "It will be crucial for us to build on the last two wins and keep the momentum in our favour. The players are confident but, at the same time, grounded. They know what is at stake, and they need to perform the way they have in the last two matches to secure a win tomorrow," he said.

Travel challenge for Oz, Proteas

Dubai, March 1: The Australian and South African cricket teams will fly into Dubai ahead of the Champions Trophy semifinals, even though it remains uncertain whether their match will be held in Dubai or Pakistan, according to a BBC report. Dubai is set to host the first semifinal on Tuesday, with Lahore hosting the second on Wednesday. The final venue decision hinges on the outcome of the last Group 'A' match between India and New

Zealand on Sunday, which will determine if Australia or South Africa will face Rohit Sharma and Co in Dubai. Due to security concerns in Pakistan, India are playing all their matches in Dubai. As a result, both Australia and South Africa must travel to Dubai and await the result of Sunday's game before knowing which team will return to Lahore for the second semifinal. "Group 'B' concludes with South Africa's match

against England on Saturday but neither the Proteas or Australia will know the venue for their semifinal until after the conclusion of India's match against New Zealand on Sunday," wrote BBC on Saturday. "Were they (Australia and South Africa) to wait until Monday and only travel when the fixtures were confirmed, that would rule out the possibility of training in Dubai — where India will have played all three group matches," it added. — PTI

The report further added that a situation might arise where Australia might take a three-hour flight from Lahore to Dubai on Saturday, and then fly back on Monday if they do not meet India in the semifinal. "Similarly, South Africa will fly to Dubai in the early hours of Sunday (after their last group match against England) and could return to Pakistan 24 hours later if they do not have to face India," added the report. — PTI



Vijay Kanth Somsubhra

SOMSUBHRA & VIJAY DO WELL IN 'C' MATCHES

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Vijay Kanth Nayak and Somsubhra Paul were the top performers in the Hyderabad Cricket Association's 'C' Division matches played at various grounds on Saturday. SA Amberpet's Vijay Kanth took five wickets while conceding 31 runs as Sunshine were bundled out for 117 in 31.5 overs. Amberpet chased down the target in just 13.3 overs with five wickets in hand. Somsubhra hammered an unbeaten 100 off 80 balls with 18 boundaries to lead PPMCC to an eight-wicket victory over Lords, who had made 178 for 9 in 35 overs while batting first.

Brief Scores:

- 'C' DIVISION LEAGUE
- Sunshine 117 in 31.5 overs (M. A. Shadab 31, Vijay Kanth Nayak 5/31 — 8-1-31-5, Vignesh Naik 3/21) lost to SA Amberpet 121/5 in 13.3 overs (Santosh Goud 57).
- Lords 178/9 in 35 overs (Shams 74) lost to PPMCC 179/2 in 26.2 overs (Somsubhra Paul 100 n.o — 80b, 18x4, Nupavesh 49).

'D' DIVISION LEAGUE

- FCI 279/4 in 25 overs (Upendra 69, Satya Prasad 86, Nelson Adarsh 92) bt CCM 142/8 in 25 overs (Manish Kumar 39, Gopichand 3/17).
- TSRTC 178/8 in 25 overs (Sai Kiran 65, Lingeshwar Rao 3/19) bt IIC Staff Club 166 in 24.3 overs (Srinivas 53, Phani Kumar 3/27, Anil Kumar 3/24).
- Vidyuth Soudha 212 in 35 overs (Mallikarjun 75, Vijender Goud 45, Manga Rao 3/51) lost to TS Electricity Board 215/4 in 34.2 overs (Kantha Reddy 55, Pavan Kumar 71, Uday Bhaskar 49).
- NFC 166/9 in 35 overs (Sandeep Kumar 32, Bhadrin Binnu 37, Prashanth 3/29) lost to RBI 168/9 in 34.1 overs (Amol Malhari 56, Dayaram Yadav 3/27, Sandeep Kumar 3/17).



Rachakonda Police Commissioner G. Sudheer Babu (center), IPS, presents the International Ladies Polo Challenge trophy to Deevyashakti Chargers at the World Arena Polo Championship at Hyderabad Polo and Riding Club at Aziz Nagar in Moinabad on the outskirts of Hyderabad on Saturday. The Chargers defeated Galaxy Tigers 4-2.

Germany, UK share silver

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Germany and United Kingdom emerged joint winners of the AMR Silver Cup at the World Arena Polo Championships being held at the Hyderabad Polo and Riding Club at Aziz Nagar in Moinabad on the outskirts of Hyderabad. Saturday's final was a slugfest with both teams trading goals before ending tied at 8-8 at the final bell. Romain Darroux and Robbie Slatter scored five goals each for Germany

and UK respectively while UK's Raphael Bruckner and Germany's Daniel Hauss got two goals apiece. The Germans began with a bang, scoring a flurry of goals in the first chukker. The lightning fast Darroux drilled three in the first three minutes (the second being a double goal — for being executed from outside the 25-yard line) with his teammate Andreas Schwirtz sounding the board in the fourth minute. The British could only convert a penalty in the fifth minute as the score read 4-1 at the end of the first chukker.

The roles sort of reversed in the second chukker with UK scoring three goals, via Slatter (6th and 8th minutes) and Bruckner (7th) while Hauss got the only goal for Germany, who led 5-4 at the end of the period. With all to play for in the third chukker, both teams threw everything at each other, barring their mallets! UK were a bit more aggressive and struck through Slatter (10th, 12th and 16th minutes) and Bruckner in the 15th minute. Germany got their goals through Darroux in the 11th and 13th minutes with Hauss

contributing one in the 14th minute. UK were trailing by two goals towards the end of the game but Bruckner's hit in the 15th minute and Slatter's strike in the 16th helped them finish the match on even keel, much to the relief of their supporters. **The Result:** **AMR SILVER CUP** ■ Final: Germany 8 (Romain Darroux 1, 2, 3, 11, 13 minutes; Daniel Hauss 9, 14; Andreas Schwirtz 4) drew with United Kingdom 8 (Robbie Slatter 6, 8, 10, 12, 16; Rafael Bruckner 7, 15; One Penalty-5)