

**STATE**

**BRS shows the mirror to Rahul over widespread corruption in Cong** **page 5**

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**Interest rate likely to remain high, says RBI** **page 8**



## Israel strikes Gaza Strip, empties town

**This is latest sign of potential ground invasion against Hamas**



Palestinians walk by buildings destroyed in the Israeli bombardment on al-Zahra, on the outskirts of Gaza City, on Friday. — Photo: AP

AP  
 KHAN YOUNIS (GAZA STRIP)  
 Israel bombarded the Gaza Strip early on Friday, hitting areas where Palestinians had been told to seek safety, and it began evacuating a sizable Israeli town near the border with Lebanon, the latest sign of a potential ground invasion of Gaza that could trigger regional turmoil.  
 Amid the fighting, Israel's Defence Minister said the country did not have plans to maintain control over civilians in Gaza after its war against the Hamas mili-

tant group. Defence Minister Yoav Gallant's comments to lawmakers were the first time a top Israeli official discussed its long-term plans for Gaza.  
 Gallant said Israel expected a three-phase war, starting with airstrikes and ground manoeuvres. It anticipates then defeating pockets of resistance, and finally, ceasing Israel's "responsibility for life in the Gaza Strip". Palestinians in Gaza reported heavy airstrikes in Khan Younis, a town in the territory's south, and ambulances carrying men, women and children

streamed into the local Nasser Hospital. The hospital, Gaza's second largest, was already overflowing with patients and people seeking shelter.  
 The Israeli military said it had struck more than 100 targets across Gaza linked to the territory's Hamas rulers, including a tunnel and arms depots. Over a million people have been displaced in Gaza, with many heading Israel's orders to evacuate the northern part of the sealed-off enclave on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea.  
 Though Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had

called areas in south Gaza "safe zones" earlier this week, Israeli military spokesman Nir Dinar said: "There are no safe zones." UN officials said with the bombings across all of Gaza, some Palestinians who had fled the north appeared to be going back.  
 Meanwhile, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres arrived at the Egyptian side of the Rafah border crossing on Friday, CNN reported. This comes as the UN focuses on efforts to push humanitarian aid across the Egyptian border into Gaza. (REPORTS PAGE 9)

## 'Opposition parties colluding to defeat BRS'

**KTR urges voters to thwart conspiracy**

**STATE BUREAU**  
 Hyderabad

BRS working president and Minister KT Rama Rao said opposition parties were colluding as part of a larger conspiracy to defeat the BRS and confine Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao to Telangana. However, he assured them not to worry as Chandrashekhara Rao will be retained as the Chief Minister of Telangana for the third consecutive term.  
 "The Chief Minister has become a headache for Prime Minister Narendra Modi, senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and others ever since he announced plans to foray into national politics. They are conspiring to confine him to Telangana," he said.  
 The BRS working president was addressing a gathering of Congress activists led by Jitta Balakrishna Reddy and former TNGOs president Mamilla Rajender, who joined the BRS, at Telangana Bhavan on Friday. He called for unity to

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**The CM has become a headache for Modi, Rahul and others ever since he announced plans to foray into national politics. They want to confine him to TS**  
**— KTR, IT Minister**

respected the State by questioning its formation, TPCC chief A Revanth Reddy was mocking its agitators stating that if UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi did not deliver the State, they would still be begging on the streets of Hyderabad.  
 "Notwithstanding their party affiliation, all Telangana agitators must speak out. Telangana was not given by anyone, but was realised due to a joint struggle of Telangana agitators," he said. He reminded that Revanth likened Sonia Gandhi to a devil seeking human sacrifice and termed Rahul Gandhi as "pappu" (good-for-nothing).  
 The Minister ridiculed Rahul Gandhi's recent emphasis on conducting a Backward Classes (BC) census, noting that the Telangana State Assembly had passed a resolution demanding that the Centre conduct it about nine months ago. He questioned why a BC census was not carried out in Congress-ruled States. (SEE PAGE 2)

thwart the attempts to undermine Telangana's growth.  
 Rama Rao cautioned that there were well-planned attacks on the identity of Telangana. While Modi dis-

## Shivaram Rathod surrenders

**CITY BUREAU**  
 Hyderabad

The Chikkadpally police took into custody Shivaram Rathod, who had allegedly cheated Pravallika, the young student who eventually slipped into depression and died by suicide at a hostel in Ashoknagar Chikkadpally last Friday night.  
 Shivaram approached the Nampally court on Friday, expressed his intention to surrender and sought a judicial remand. However, the court maintained that as the investigation into the case was ongoing, it cannot send him to judicial remand.  
 Special teams were making efforts to nab Rathod since the police registered a case against him four days ago. Pravallika, a native of Warangal, was in a relationship with him for a few years. But he committed to marry another woman and on coming to know about it, Pravallika hanged herself.  
 Some students' organisations and political parties attributed the suicide to the TSPSC Group 2 exam cancellations. But the police came to know that Pravallika ended her life after her relationship with Rathod turned sour.

## KCR confident of BRS hat-trick



Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao addressing BRS leaders and cadre of Gajwel constituency in Anthaipally.

**STATE BUREAU**  
 Hyderabad

BRS president and Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao exuded confidence in his party's performance, asserting that it would secure victory with 95-105 seats in the ensuing Assembly elections in Telangana. He urged the people to vote for the BRS to ensure that the ongoing development in the State continues unabated.  
 The Chief Minister, who is busy with multiple public meetings across the State, held a meeting with key leaders and the cadre of the Gajwel constituency at a function hall in Anthaipally of Medchal-Malkajgiri district on Friday. He instructed them to work in coordination and strive to get him a better majority than

the previous elections, i.e. more than 58,000 votes majority. He assured them of spending at least a day every month with the people of the constituency.  
 Chandrashekhara Rao reminded them about how the constituency transformed in the last 10 years and acknowledged that a lot more was yet to be achieved. "The people of the constituency extended their complete support at crucial junctures. As an elected representative, one should never be satisfied with what they have done for the constituency or the people," he asserted. He empathised with those who lost their land to projects such as Kondapochamma Sagar and Mallanna Sagar and assured them of doing justice to their sacrifice. (SEE PAGE 2)

## Row over Gowda's claim on Vijayan backing BJP alliance

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM**

A political row has erupted in Kerala over a statement by JD(S) supremo HD Deve Gowda a day ago that Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan had greenlit his party's alliance with the BJP in Karnataka to protect its interests.  
 However, Vijayan on Friday categorically denied Gowda's statement, dismissing it as "both baseless and devoid of truth". In a statement, the Kerala Chief Minister asked the former Prime Minister to correct

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**This is not the first time Deve Gowda is joining hands with BJP. We all remember 2006, when JD(S) joined BJP. He left this ideology and associated with the BJP to get a ministerial post for his son**  
**— PINARAYI VIJAYAN, Kerala CM**

his statement. He said the JD(S) State unit had made it clear that it was categorically against the association with the BJP and that it would stand strong with the Left Front. "This is not the first time Deve Gowda is

joining hands with the BJP. We all remember 2006, when JD(S) joined the BJP. He left this ideology and associated with the BJP to get a ministerial post for his son," Vijayan said. (SEE PAGE 2)

## Mahua's counsel withdraws

**NEW DELHI**

TMC MP Mahua Moitra's counsel on Friday withdrew from a case in the Delhi HC seeking restraint orders for BJP MP Nishikant Dubey, an advocate and several media houses from circulating alleged defamatory content against her. Advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan withdrew himself from the matter after HC was informed by advocate Jai Anant Dehadrai that he was contacted by him for withdrawing his complaint to the CBI. (REPORT PAGE 8)

## Jagan Mohan Rao HCA prez

**SPORTS BUREAU**  
 Hyderabad

In keenly-contested polls, A Jagan Mohan Rao has been elected as the president of the Hyderabad Cricket Association (HCA) after winning by the closest of margins in the elections held for the Apex Council, at the Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium in Hyderabad on Friday.  
 Jagan Mohan Rao, from the United Members of HCA panel, secured 63 votes, one more than his closest rival Amarnath (62 votes) for the top post. The other candidates for the



president's post Anil Kumar and PL Srinivas got 34 and 10 respectively.  
 R Devaraj, from Cricket First panel backed by former cricketers Shivlal Yadav and Arshad Ayub, won the secretary post after securing 77 votes. Hari Narayana, with 49, was the closest.  
 For the post of vice-president, Daljeet Singh of the Good Governance got a 17-vote majority securing 63

votes. His nearest rivals were T Srinivas (46) and Sridhar (41).  
 Meanwhile, Basavaraju from Panel for Good Governance won the joint secretary post after edging out Chitti Sridhar by just one vote. While Basava Raju got 60 votes, Sridhar got 59 votes. Noel David (40) and Satish (8) were the other two contestants.  
 United Members of HCA panel's CJ Srinivas Rao will be the treasurer as he defeated his nearest rival Sanjeev (33) with a 33-vote majority after attracting 66 votes for the win. (SEE PAGE 2)

## Formula E returns to Hyderabad in Feb

**CITY BUREAU**  
 Hyderabad

Hyderabad is gearing up to host the electrifying world of Formula E once again, marking a significant milestone in the city's burgeoning motorsport landscape. The global phenomenon, known for its eco-friendly racing, has announced its plans to return to the city.  
 Hyderabad was initially missing from the provisional 2024 calendar, raising questions about the series' return to the country.



The 2.83-km racetrack adjacent to Hussain Sagar in the city will remain unchanged for the upcoming season. — Photo: File

However, the organisers have officially confirmed that Hyderabad, which made its debut on the calendar this year, will host a race on February 10, 2024.  
 The 2.83-km racetrack will remain unchanged,

adjacent to Hussain Sagar. The sold-out inaugural race earlier this year injected a staggering \$84 million into Hyderabad's economy, according to a release.  
 Alberto Longo, co-founder and chief championship officer of Formula E, said, "Without a doubt, our Season 10 calendar is the most compelling yet for drivers, teams, fans and viewers worldwide. We are honoured to return to India thanks to the support of the Telangana government and Minister KT Rama Rao." (SEE PAGE 2)

**Staff told to hold mock polls**  
**HYDERABAD | PAGE 03**

**Bypoll blow to Sunak's Tories**  
**WORLD | PAGE 09**



**Warner, Marsh pummel Pakistan**  
**SPORT | PAGE 10**



**ENTERTAINMENT**  
**PAGE 12**

**11 years in cinema**  
**Alia remembers her first film and future projects**



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