

KLIS report politically orchestrated?

STATE BUREAU
 Hyderabad

The National Dam Safety Authority's (NDSA) findings on the Medigadda barrage's structural issues have drawn sharp criticism from irrigation experts and Telangana State Irrigation Department sources. They perceived that the report had been "hastily compiled under pressure" from powers-that-be to give a political colour while overlooking key submissions by the State.

Despite the State providing comprehensive data on 17 out of the 20 points requested by the NDSA, their data points were not included in the preparation of the report, sources disclosed.

RAISING EYEBROWS

Experts, TS Irrigation Dept sources perceive NDSA report on Medigadda barrage as "hastily compiled under pressure" from powers-that-be

Question as to how so-called report got into the hands of a political party, which went public with it, despite Centre or NDSA not releasing it officially

Despite Telangana providing data on 17 of 20 points sought by NDSA, data points not included in report

Suspicion raised that it was a deliberate attempt to give a political dimension to Medigadda episode aimed at discrediting TS govt & project

Picking holes in barrage's design would amount to finding fault with design manuals & codes issued by Central organisations themselves

ing over four decades of expertise. The barrage designs conformed to established standards set forth by the Central Water Commission (CWC), the Central Board of Irrigation and Power (CBIP) and the Bureau of Indian Standards' IS codes. Endorsements of these designs came after rigorous consultations with CWC design experts and after a thorough study of barrage designs in the Tapovan project under CWC guidance.

Not an isolated case
 In many barrages built in India after Independence, 'raft foundations' were used and the codes and manuals for such foundations were released by Central organisations only. (SEE PAGE 2)

Information on three more points was to be submitted to the NDSA, but the final report was released in haste without waiting. "What's their intention in hurriedly preparing and releasing the report?" they sought to know.

The release of the NDSA's findings to the media, even before the report was sent to the

department officials concerned, has raised many an eyebrow among official circles. They suspect that it was a deliberate attempt to give a political dimension to the Medigadda episode aimed at discrediting the State government and the project.

Interestingly, neither the Central government nor the NDSA released the report officially and

the State government was not asked for comments. "How could the so-called report get into the hands of a political party which went public with the report? Doesn't this show that the whole thing is politically orchestrated?" sources questioned.

Furthermore, officials were incredulous as the report assigned the sinking of the piers of

the barrage to a multitude of causes, including planning, design, quality control and maintenance failures.

State officials point out that the Medigadda barrage, an integral part of the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Scheme (KLIS), was engineered by the Central Design Organisation's seasoned professionals, each boast-



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SPORT | PAGE 10



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'TS trumps Maha on all counts'

KCR HIGHLIGHTS STARK DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO STATES

SAYS ONLY GOOD GOVERNANCE CAN BRING DESIRED CHANGE

URGES VOTERS TO EXERCISE THEIR FRANCHISE MINDFULLY

STATE BUREAU
 HYDERABAD

Drawing a comparison between the administration in Telangana and neighbouring Maharashtra in the realm of delivery of services and fulfilment of people's aspirations, BRS supremo and Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao made it clear that only good governance could bring in the desired difference.

Addressing the Vijaya Shankharavam Sabha at Bhainsa on Friday, he pointed out that people in Maharashtra do not have the facilities they ought to have on par with people in Telangana. In fact, Maharashtra was formed nearly 70 years ago, while Telangana was the youngest State with a history of only nine-and-a-half years.

Farmers from the adjacent pockets in Maharashtra were preferring to buy at least a piece of land in Telangana. It was because they were certain of getting water here and round-the-clock supply of free power. They were collecting water from local sources and pumping it across the inter-



BRS supremo and Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao during his election campaign at Bhainsa on Friday. (RELATED REPORTS PAGE 5)



state border to irrigate crops in Maharashtra.

Maharashtra has the city of Mumbai, the commercial capital of India, with it. It has the advantage of the highest tax revenues from Mumbai. Indeed, people in Maharashtra should be better off compared to Telangana. But the

ground reality was different. Those travelling across the interstate border could make out the boundaries between the two States and the road stretches that looked plain and motorable were being understood to be part of Telangana. The Chief Minister asserted that

Telangana was way ahead in providing irrigation and drinking water. It had already scrapped water cess, an outdated element of the revenue system that was still in force in water-starved Maharashtra. People in Telangana today boast of their irrigation facilities,

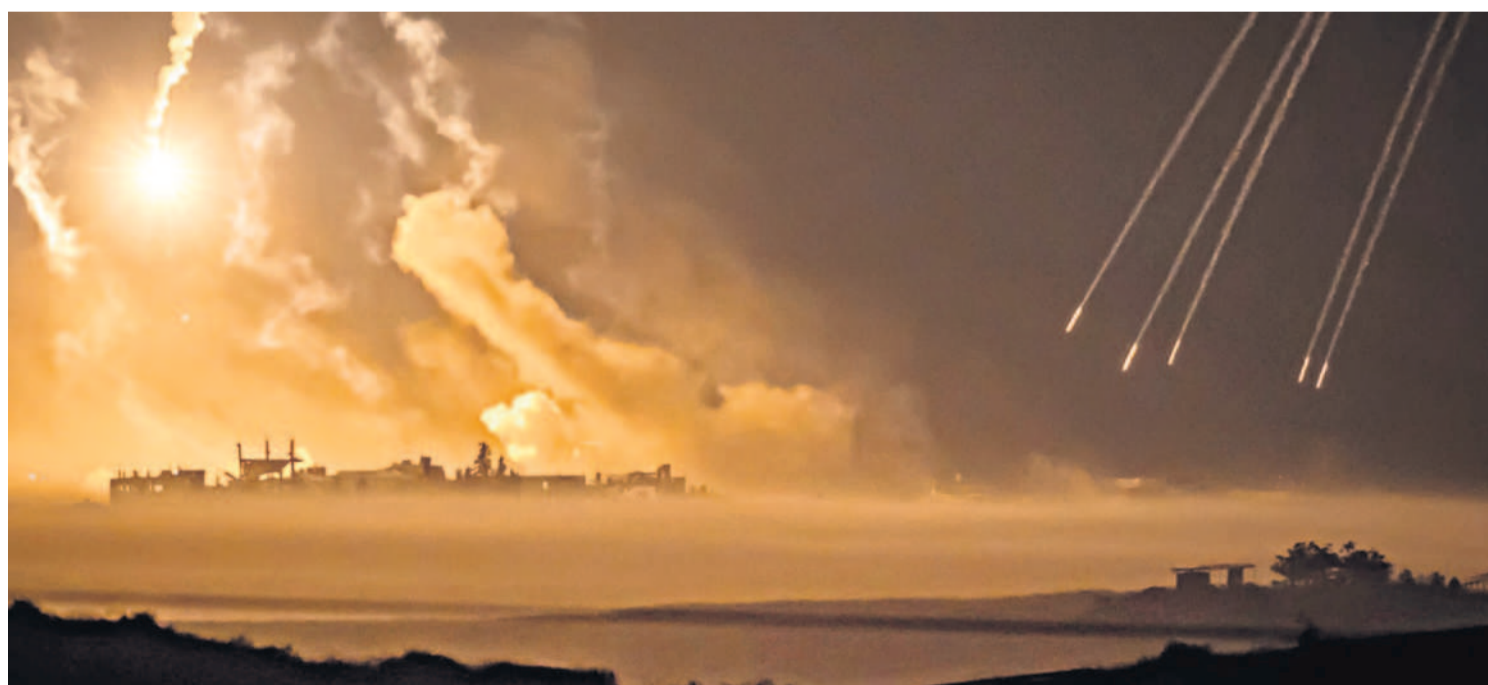
round-the-clock free power, Rythu Bandhu and Rythu Bima. Stating that those in the neighbouring pockets of Maharashtra were deprived of the same, he said it would be the responsibility of the voters to exercise utmost discretion while choosing the right candidate and the

right party to exercise their franchise in their favour. Vote is the ultimate weapon in their hands to make the difference.

Once exercised in favour of a wrong person, you need to wait for five years to correct your decision, he said. Advising people not to fall

prey to the campaign of misinformation, he said India was yet to reach mature levels of democracy. Political parties that have been lavish on their lies and false propaganda would be inimical to the interests of the State and the voters should be wary of them, he stressed.

Unending conflict



ATTACKS INTENSIFIED: Israeli bombardment in the Gaza Strip amid ongoing battles with Hamas. — Photo: AFP (REPORTS PAGE 9)

Bigg Boss winner Elvish booked

NOIDA

The Noida Police has booked reality television show *Bigg Boss* winner Elvish Yadav and arrested five people over the alleged use of snake venom at rave parties, officials said.

Yadav, a YouTuber and social media influencer, refuted the charges and expressed his willingness to

cooperate with police in the investigation, even as BJP MP and environmentalist Maneka Gandhi called for his arrest. Nine snakes, including cobras, were rescued from the possession of the arrested accused, who came to a banquet hall in Sector 51 on Thursday for a party, which was a trap laid by People For Animals (PFA). (SEE PAGE 2)

Delhi chokes as air pollution peaks

NEW DELHI

Delhi's air quality plummeted to the 'severe plus' category on Friday even as the Central government deferred the implementation of stricter measures under the air pollution control plan, saying the AQI in the region is already showing a declining trend.

On Friday, Delhi's 24-hour average air quality index (AQI) reached 468,

placing it in the 'severe plus' category. This is the stage at which all emergency measures, including a ban on polluting trucks, commercial four-wheelers and all types of construction, are mandated in Delhi-NCR.

The city's AQI on Friday was the worst since the previous high recorded on November 12, 2021. However, during a review meeting, the Commission for Air Quality Management

decided to monitor the situation for a day or more before implementing stricter curbs. It said curbs under Stage III of the Graded Response Action Plan were implemented only a day ago; and it's reasonable to allow time to have their full impact on AQI in the region, according to a latest update. The hazardous pollution levels compelled many to forgo their morning walks and sports. PTI (REPORT PAGE 7)

MIM to contest from 9 seats

CITY BUREAU
 Hyderabad

The All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) will contest from nine seats in the upcoming Telangana Assembly elections.

The party will contest from Nampally, Malakpet, Chandrayangutta, Yakutpura, Bahadurpura, Charninar and Karwan, seats that it had won in 2018, and Rajendranagar and Jubilee Hills too. AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi on Friday announced the candidates for six constituencies, while those for Bahadurpura, Jubilee Hills and Rajendranagar will be declared on Saturday.

Asaduddin said two party veterans — Mumtaz Ahmed

'Congress too responsible for Babri'

MIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi said the Congress was equally responsible for the demolition of Babri Masjid. He said party's MP chief Kamal Nath's remark — that the role of former PM late Rajiv Gandhi in Babri Masjid issue should not be forgotten — substantiates the party's role. (SEE PAGE 2)

Khan and Ahmed Pasha Quadri — have been replaced. (SEE PAGE 2)

Mahadev scam: Baghel got Rs 508 cr, says ED

NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate on Friday claimed that a forensic analysis and a statement made by a 'cash courier' have led to "startling allegations" that Mahadev betting app promoters paid about Rs 508 crore to Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel so far,

and that "these are subject matter of investigation". The alleged agent, 38-year-old Asim Das, has been arrested by the agency in Raipur after it recovered Rs 5.39 crore cash from him. Meanwhile, Baghel accused the ED of making a "malicious attempt" to tarnish his image ahead of the Assembly polls in the State. PTI