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KCR asks cadre to gear up for celebrations on Sunday **page 5**

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NSP row: Centre steps in to defuse tensions

Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla orders AP, TS to maintain status quo

STATE BUREAU
 HYDERABAD

Timely intervention by the Centre warded off what could have been an ugly face-off between the Andhra Pradesh and Telangana governments on Friday after the former deployed its police forces and attempted to draw more than its share of water from the Nagarjuna Sagar dam.

As tensions escalated between the two States, Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla intervened to direct the restoration of the status quo at the dam site. This order includes the immediate withdrawal of AP forces, who recently assumed control over the dam's operations.

The conflict escalated following AP's attempts to draw more than its allocated share of water, a move contested by Telangana. Bhalla's directive came in response to an overnight operation where AP forces took control of the dam's 13 gates and the right canal head regulator. This takeover involved damaging CCTV cameras and other infrastructure at the dam office, actions that have intensified the dispute between the neighbouring States.

The Nagarjuna Sagar dam, a critical water resource in the region, has traditionally been under the operational jurisdiction of Telangana's Irrigation Department. The recent developments mark a significant escalation in the ongoing water-sharing dispute between AP and Telangana, necessitating Central intervention to maintain order and uphold existing agreements. The



Timely intervention

JAL SHAKTI MINISTRY, CWC TOLD TO MONITOR THE SITUATION CLOSELY, INITIATE MEASURES TO AVOID ANY UNTOWARD INCIDENT

- Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla directs immediate withdrawal of AP forces from dam site
- Intervention comes close on the heels of TS' decision to scale up deployment of police at project to beat back forcible occupation by AP

BHALLA ASKS CHIEF SECRETARIES, IRRIGATION SECRETARIES, DGPS OF BOTH STATES TO RESTORE NORMALCY IMMEDIATELY

- Directs KRMB officials to reach dam site immediately, initiate measures to defuse tension
- Tells officials to step up surveillance by drawing reinforcements from CRPF stationed in both States
- Wants barricades, fencing set up by AP to be cleared immediately

Centre's directive in response to overnight operation wherein AP forces took control of dam's 13 gates and right canal head regulator

Union Home Secretary took exception to the midnight operations in which the AP police intruded into the project and took control of all operations. The intervention came close on the heels of the decision of Telangana to scale up its deployment of police at the project to beat back the forcible occupation of a major portion of the project by Andhra Pradesh.

The Home Secretary held a video conference with the

Chief Secretaries, Irrigation Secretaries and DGPs of the two States and asked them to restore normalcy immediately. He directed the Krishna River Management Board (KRMB) officials to reach the dam site immediately and initiate measures to defuse tension on the inter-State borders.

He also directed officials to step up surveillance at the project, if needed, by drawing reinforcements from the CRPF stationed in both

States. He wanted the obstructions put up by barricading and fencing of the roads leading to the dam by AP to be cleared immediately. Officials of the Jal Shakti Ministry and Central Water Commission, who also took part in the conference, were asked to monitor the situation closely and initiate measures to avoid any untoward incident.

High-level meeting today
 As a follow-up, a high-level

meeting of officials of the two States as well as the KRMB and CWC will be held to discuss steps to resolve the conflict over the sharing of water available in both the Nagarjuna Sagar dam and Srisaikal project on Saturday. The KRMB also dashed off a letter to the Principal Secretary, Water Resources Department of AP, on Friday directing him to "stop the drawal of water from the NSP right canal immediately". (SEE PAGES 2, 5)

Stomped, lashed! Indian student tortured in US



The accused Venkatesh R Sattaru, Nikhil Verma Penmatsa and Sravan Varma Penumetcha, who have been arrested.

WASHINGTON

Authorities in the US have rescued a 20-year-old Indian student, who was held captive for months without access to a bathroom, viciously beaten and forced to work at three homes by his cousin and two other Indian-origin men in an incident described as "absolutely inhumane and unconscionable".

The victim, whose name was not disclosed, spent months trapped in three homes in the US State of Missouri. On Wednesday, police descended upon a home on a rural highway in St Charles County. They later arrested Venkatesh R Sattaru, Sravan Varma Penumetcha and Nikhil Verma Penmatsa, and on Thursday charged them with offences, including human trafficking, kidnapping and assault. Police

were dispatched to investigate the home after a concerned citizen became aware of his situation and called 911. The victim is safe and being treated at a hospital for bone fractures, as well as lacerations and injuries covering his entire body, said prosecutor Joe McCulloch.

Over seven months, the men locked the student in a basement and forced him to sleep on an unfinished floor without access to a bathroom, charges say. He scavenged for scraps in nearby restaurant dumpsters and was beaten with electrical wires, PVC pipes, metal rods, wooden boards, sticks and a water supply hose for a washing machine, media reported. "It's absolutely inhumane and unconscionable that one human being could treat another human being like this," said McCulloch. (SEE PAGE 2)

KCR to chair Cabinet meeting on Monday

STATE BUREAU
 Hyderabad

The State Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao will be held at the Dr BR Ambedkar Telangana State Secretariat on Monday.

According to an announcement from the Chief Minister's Office, the meet-

ing will be held at 2 pm. The Cabinet meeting being held immediately after the poll results are announced on Sunday has gained significance, with speculations over its possible decisions.

However, official sources said the agenda is likely to be for reviewing ongoing schemes and no policy decisions will be taken.

Climber's amazing feat

HYDERABAD | PAGE 02

'Naxal violence down 52%

NATION | PAGE 07



India win series against Australia

SPORT | PAGE 10



ENTERTAINMENT
 PAGE 12

Playing a real hero

Vicky feels sense of responsibility playing Army roles



CHICKEN RATES IN HYDERABAD

Farm	Rs. 86
Retail live	Rs. 108
With skin	Rs. 157
Skinless	Rs. 178
Egg Rates (12 eggs)	Rs. 65

Would you like to subscribe to **TELANGANA TODAY** or **NAMASTE TELANGANA**? Please give a missed call to **9672533434**. We will get back to you.

Counting of votes tomorrow

Exercise to begin at 8 am

STATE BUREAU
 Hyderabad

Counting of votes would commence at 8 am on Sunday, beginning with postal ballots and followed by Electronic Voting Machine (EVM)-polled votes, Chief Electoral Officer Vikas Raj said here on Friday.

If the counting of postal ballot votes continues beyond 8.30 am, EVM counting will commence simultaneously. Usually, 14 tables are arranged at every counting centre but if voters in a particular constituency are higher, more tables will be arranged.

Addressing media persons here on Friday, the Chief Electoral Officer said at each table, there will be one counting supervisor, one micro observer and two counting staff, besides the contesting candidates' representatives. Results will be declared after thorough scrutiny and in the least possible time.

TIME FOR PEOPLE'S VERDICT

71.34% voter turnout recorded

Counting of votes to begin with postal ballots followed by EVM-polled votes

14 tables arranged at every counting centre

Each table to have a counting supervisor, a micro observer, **2 counting staff**, contesting candidate's representatives

per cent voter turnout was recorded in the State. Assembly constituency-wise details will be shared in the public domain by Friday evening, he said.

Regarding complaints of rigging by a few parties, the Chief Electoral Officer said there was web-casting footage available at many polling stations. (SEE PAGE 2) (RELATED REPORT PAGE 3)

32 killed in Gaza as war resumes

GAZA

The Hamas-controlled Health Ministry in Gaza claimed that Israeli airstrikes, which resumed on Friday after the collapse of the seven-day ceasefire, has killed 32 people in the besieged enclave so far.

A Ministry official said a majority of those killed were women and children. In another statement, the Ministry of Interior confirmed that Israeli strikes resumed across Gaza. (ANS) (RELATED REPORTS PAGE 9)

Bomb threat to B'luru schools

BENGALURU

Sixty-eight private schools in and around Bengaluru on Friday received emails warning of bomb threat on their premises, triggering panic among staff and parents, police said.

The school authorities immediately alerted police, who reached the institutions concerned with the bomb disposal squads and anti-sabotage check teams, they said, while indicating the bomb threat could be a hoax.

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said he has asked police to seriously investigate the e-mail and its source, and provide adequate security to schools and temples as a precautionary measure.

State Home Minister G Parameshwara said the message had come from an email id 'kharijites@beebble.com', saying bombs have been placed in the schools in Bengaluru and threatened to kill children and staff. "We are seriously verifying it and its source. I have spo-

ken to the Commissioner and officials and given the necessary instructions and verification on whether it is true or hoax and measures to be taken accordingly. We will verify as to who is behind it and if there is an involvement of any terrorist organisation, and take measures accordingly. For now, it cannot be said who is behind it. The message in the email asks people to convert and other things — it will be verified," he said.

Among the 68 schools, 48 are located in the city. PTI

End impasse with CM, SC tells TN Gov

NEW DELHI

The governor of a State cannot refer Bills passed by the legislature and readopted by it for presidential assent, the Supreme Court ruled on Friday, and asked Tamil Nadu Governor RN Ravi to hold a meeting with Chief Minister MK Stalin in an effort to end the impasse over 10 such pending Bills.

Ravi and Stalin have been locked in a war of attrition over numerous issues.

"We would like the Governor to resolve the impasse... We will appreciate it if the Governor resolves the impasse with the Chief Minister. I think the Governor invites the Chief Minister and let them sit down and discuss it," a bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra said.

The Bench took note of the submissions of senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, who appeared for the State government, that the Governor has now remanded the readopted Bills for consideration by the President. Accusing the office of the Governor of "constitutional obstinacy", Singhvi said Raj Bhavan referred the Bills to the President on November 28, after having sat on them for a long time. PTI

Phone repair service on wheels in Hyderabad

RUCHI RAI SOHNI
 Hyderabad

Ever found yourself in a phone crisis, desperately needing a repair but unable to spare the time for a trip to the shop?

Worry not, Hyderabad just received a game-changer — Fone Fixing — which is being positioned as India's first-ever phone repair on wheels.

A brainchild of Adil Vahevaria, this revolutionary service brings the repair shop directly to your doorstep, offering on-the-spot fixes with a touch of innovation. Recognising



Adil Vahevaria's Fone Fixing is the first such service in the country. — Photo: Anand Dharamana

the need for a hassle-free solution to phone repairs, it is a service that prioritises your time and convenience.

"I noticed that customers were reluctant to visit repair shops and many used services such

as Uber and Rapido for phone pick-up, and delivery, resulting in higher costs for customers due to additional fare charges. This observation sparked the idea of providing doorstep phone repair services," said Adil, the owner of Fone Fixing.

Gone are the days of trekking to a repair shop now, your phone can get the VIP treatment right at your doorstep. Schedule a visit and the mobile repair van, equipped with cutting-edge tools, makes its way to your location. Once on-site, they assess and repair the phone right in the van. (SEE PAGE 2)