

HYDERABAD

Sticky jam affair: Traffic snarls a nightmare in Gachibowli **page 3**

STATE

EV sales in top gear as dealers bear tax amount **page 5**

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Illegal migration major threat, warns Sunak **page 9**



Gram panchayat polls likely in Jan

Tenure of 12,769 GPs across Telangana expiring on January 31

PS DILEEP
HYDERABAD

Political parties in Telangana are up for another face-off, this time to prove their strength in rural local bodies. With the tenure of rural local bodies expiring on January 31, the State Election Commission (SEC) has already begun preparations to conduct the elections and has directed all District Collectors to kick-start the poll process.

Elections are on the horizon for 12,769 gram panchayats in the State. Though the previous BRS government proposed the formation of 224 gram panchayats in the State, the file is pending approval from the Governor. If the Governor clears it before the election notification, elections will be held for a total of 12,993 gram panchayats.

As per the Panchayat Raj Act 2018, the current governing body's tenure is set to

Another poll face-off

STATE ELECTION COMMISSION (SEC) HAS DIRECTED ALL DISTRICT COLLECTORS TO KICK-START POLL PROCESS

2024, A YEAR OF ELECTIONS

- SEC expected to release notification in December-end
- Consecutive polls scheduled from January to May
- After gram panchayat elections in Jan, MPTC, ZPTC, Mandal Praja Parishad and Zilla Praja Parishad polls lined up
- This will be followed by elections to 6 MLC posts in March-April
- Election season will culminate with Lok Sabha elections in May

Polling to be conducted via ballot papers

VOTE

conclude on January 31, 2024. In 2019, the election notification was issued on January 1 and polling was held in three phases on January 21, 25 and 30. This time, the SEC is expected to release the notification in the last week of December and conduct polling in three phases. Normally, the election process should com-

mence three months prior to the conclusion of the incumbent panchayat body's term. However, owing to the recent Assembly elections, the process is learnt to have been delayed. The State government already communicated the voters' list with the Commission. Village secretaries, in adherence to orders, have submit-

ted details concerning reservations for sarpanch and ward members.

A directive issued on December 4 by SEC Secretary M Ashok Kumar has advised District Collectors to initiate necessary measures, including the appointment of Election Returning Officers, Polling Officers and the training of staff for election duties. The polling will be conducted via ballot papers.

The 2019 law enacted by the then State government mandates reservations for gram panchayat elections to remain in force for 10 years. Sources said unless the new Congress government decides to alter the reservations, the elections are likely to proceed with the existing reservations. Official sources said making any change to the existing reservations would need three to four months. Any fresh change was unlikely to ensure that the polls were held as per schedule. (SEE PAGE 2)

'Parliament security breach serious issue'

PM says there should be no squabbling over it

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the seriousness of the security breach in Parliament cannot be underestimated and called for no squabbling over the issue amid the Opposition's protests over it in Parliament.

In an interview with Hindi daily *Dainik Jagran*, Modi said probe agencies are investigating the incident and taking stringent measures, noting that it is equally necessary to go to the root of people behind it and their motives.

The newspaper said he described the breach as "painful and a matter of concern". "Efforts should also be made to look for a solution with collective spirit. Everyone should avoid squabbling over such an issue," he said. "The gravity of the incident which happened in Parliament should not be underestimated," the Prime Minister said, adding that the Speaker has also been taking necessary steps with all seriousness.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses beneficiaries at the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra in Varanasi on Sunday. — Photo: ANI

Two persons jumped from the visitors' gallery into the Lok Sabha chamber on December 13, with opposition parties, demanding a statement from Home Minister Amit Shah. Some members have also sought Shah's resignation.

The government has insisted that the security in Parliament complex is the responsibility of the Lok Sabha secretariat and it has been following the Speaker's directives. It has

also cited numerous such violations in the past, accusing the opposition of politicising the issue.

Meanwhile, Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge slammed Shah for not making a statement in Parliament over the December 13 security breach and also said they keep on ridiculing Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi to seek votes. PTI (PM INAUGURATES DIAMOND BOURSE PAGE 7)

Auto drivers at crossroads

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Tunnel found near Gaza

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Arshdeep, Avesh shine as India win

SPORT | PAGE 10



ENTERTAINMENT
PAGE 12

Looking at bright side

Sunny finds new fans post *Gadar 2's* release



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With skin.....	Rs. 177
Skinless.....	Rs. 201
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11 bureaucrats get new postings

STATE BUREAU
Hyderabad

In a major reshuffle of top bureaucrats, the Telangana government on Sunday transferred 11 IAS officers and gave them new postings. Those given new assignments as part of the reshuffle included Special Chief Secretary Arvind Kumar and Principal Secretaries B Venkatesham and A Vani Prasad.

Arvind Kumar — a senior IAS officer of the 1991 batch who held the post of Special Chief Secretary to Government, Municipal Administration and Urban Development, Metropolitan Commissioner, HMDA (Full Additional Charge), Commissioner and Director of Municipal Administration (FAC) — has been transferred and posted as Special Chief Secretary, Revenue (Disaster Management). He will be relieving Rahul Bojija from the additional charge of the Disaster Management Department.

B Venkatesham, Principal Secretary and Commissioner (BC Welfare), has been transferred and posted as Principal Secretary (Education). He will be relieving Vakati Karuna from the FAC of the Department. A

Vani Prasad, Principal Secretary, Transport Department, has been transferred and posted as Principal Secretary, Environment, Forests, Science and Technology. She will be relieving Chief Secretary A Santhi Kumari from FAC of the department. She has been placed in the full additional charge of EPTRI as its Director General.

M Dana Kishore, Managing Director, HMWSSB, has been transferred and posted as Principal Secretary, Department of Municipal Administration and Urban Development, in place of Arvind Kumar. He has also been given FAC of the post of Metropolitan Commissioner, HMDA, and Commissioner and Director of Municipal Administration.

KS Sreenivas Raju, Secretary to Government, Roads & Buildings Department, has been posted as Secretary, Transport, Roads and Buildings Department. He will be relieving Vani Prasad from the Transport Department.

Rahul Bojija, Secretary to the Chief Minister, has been transferred and posted as Secretary, GAD. He will be relieving V Sheshadri from additional charge of the department. (SEE PAGE 2)

Young blood



DEDICATED TO NATION: Cadets during the Combined Graduation Parade (CGP) at the Air Force Academy in Dundigal on the outskirts of Hyderabad on Sunday. — Photo: Surya Sridhar (REPORTS PAGE 2)

Nine killed in factory blast

NAGPUR

Nine people were killed and three others seriously injured in a blast at an explosives manufacturing factory in Chakdoh in Maharashtra's Nagpur district on Sunday, police said.

Ashish Srivastava, senior general manager of Solar Industries India Limited, said, "A tragic incident occurred at 9 am in building number HR-CPCH-2 (Mixing, Melting and Casting) in which nine workers lost their lives."

Srivastava said the incident occurred in the building where boosters used in coal mines are produced. It took place when sealing work of the product was going on, he added. The Maharashtra government will provide ex gratia of Rs 5 lakh to the victims' kin. PTI

Revanth seeks details on Medigadda

STATE BUREAU
Hyderabad

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has directed irrigation officials to submit all details pertaining to the sinking of a few piers of the Medigadda barrage.

He held a review meeting with irrigation officials at his

residence in Jubilee Hills here on Sunday. Irrigation Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy, Engineer-in-Chief Muralidhar and other senior officials participated in the meeting.

The Chief Minister also asked the officials to furnish all details on the expenditure incurred in construct-

ing different irrigation projects during the previous Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) government.

On water disputes
He discussed the measures to be adopted to ensure there were no water disputes with neighbouring States in future, besides the

arguments to be made before the Krishna tribunal over water disputes. "All steps should be taken to resolve inter-State water disputes," the newly elected Chief Minister told the officials at Sunday's review meeting.

The Chief Minister also directed the officials to initi-

ate measures to supply sufficient water to farmers for Yasangi crops. He made a few suggestions on water availability and other aspects. "All details sought on different aspects during the meeting should be submitted at the earliest," he said, according to an official statement.

Bezos to build clock lasting 10,000 years

NEW YORK

Billionaire Jeff Bezos has invested Rs 350 crore or \$42 million to build a clock that will last 10,000 years and will tick just once a year, according to a report.

The 500-ft-tall clock, designed by computer scientist and inventor Danny Hillis, is located inside a mountain in Texas, Fox News reported. The 10,000-year clock with a solar synchroniser, a pen-

Invests \$42 million in 500-ft-tall clock being designed by computer scientist and inventor Danny Hillis. It will be located inside a mountain in Texas

dulum, a chime generator and a series of gears and dials, uses the Earth's thermal cycles to power itself.

The clock is engineered to require minimal maintenance and is powered by mechanical energy harvested from sunlight as

well as the people that visit it. It is entirely mechanical and made of long-lasting materials, including titanium, ceramics, quartz, sapphire and 316 stainless steel.

It will mark time with astronomic and calendric

displays and a chime generator that can produce over 3.5 million unique bell chime sequences — one for every day the clock is visited for the next 10,000 years. The clock also has five room-sized anniversary chambers, one for each of the first, 10th, 100th, 1,000th and 10,000th-year anniversaries. The chambers are sealed spaces for time-related artefacts and messages about the future, the report said. (SEE PAGE 2)

Nagpur orange storms markets

ASIF YAR KHAN
Hyderabad

A bumper crop of the famed Nagpur oranges is flooding Hyderabad's markets this season with the fruit being sold at a lower price compared to previous years.

This season, 491 trucks carrying the fruit from different districts of Maharashtra arrived at the Batasingaram market. A few dozen trucks also arrived at the Maozanjahi and Gudimalkapur markets. The Nagpur variety of the citrus



fruit is grown in the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra and farmers there have reported a bumper crop. While 114 truckloads arrived here in December 2021, around 344 truckloads of the

orange landed here the following year. However, this year so far, 491 trucks arrived at the Batasingaram market. "The average price per quintal is Rs 1,000. During the corresponding period last year, it was Rs 1,750," said Batasingaram Fruit Market secretary Ch Narsimha Reddy. The common man is benefiting to a large extent due to the low prices. A dozen is sold for Rs 100. "It depends on the quality. There are also oranges sold for Rs 700 a quintal," he said. (SEE PAGE 2)