



HYDERABAD

Alprazolam supply racket busted, 16 people arrested **page 3**

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MPs' suspension premeditated: Kharge **page 7**

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Egypt floats ambitious plan to end Israel-Hamas conflict **page 9**



Army to probe Poonch civilian deaths

Initiates Court of Inquiry, cops file murder case

PTI
JAMMU

The Army has initiated a Court of Inquiry as police lodged a murder case against unknown persons over the death of three civilians picked up for questioning by the force after three soldiers died in a terrorist attack in Poonch recently, official sources said on Monday.

In a related development, a Brigadier-level officer was shifted and action is being taken against three officers of 48 Rashtriya Rifles as the Army has taken serious note of the incident, which sparked allegations of custodial torture and widespread outrage.

The soldiers lost their lives when their vehicles were ambushed by terrorists at Dhatyar Morh between Dhera Ki Gali and Buffliaz in the Surankote area of Poonch on December 21. Three civilians, aged between 27 and 42, were allegedly picked up by the Army for questioning following the attack and they were found dead on December 22.

The counter-insurgency unit of the Army was in the news for the wrong reasons in October also when one of its Major-rank officers opened fire on his col-

Conduct ops in professional manner, says Army chief

JAMMU: Army Chief General Manoj Pande visited Jammu and Kashmir on Monday and exhorted commanders to conduct operations in the "most professional manner", amid outrage over the killing of three civilians picked up by the force for questioning following a terrorist attack in Poonch last week that left four soldiers dead.

The Chief of Army Staff (CoAS), who visited the ground zero in the Poonch-Rajouri sector where a massive anti-terrorism operation is under way, also asked the

troops to remain resolute and steadfast against all challenges.

"General Manoj Pande #COAS visited #Poonch sector and was given an update on the prevalent security situation. #COAS interacted with commanders on ground, exhorted them to conduct the operations in the most professional manner and remain resolute & steadfast against all challenges," the Additional Director General of Public Information (ADGPI) of the Indian Army posted on social media platform X. PTI

leagues and exploded grenades inside the Neeli post camp near Thanamandi, leaving five personnel, including three officers, injured.

The sources said police have also registered a case under Section 302 (murder) of the Indian Penal Code against unidentified accused Army personnel.

Mohd Sadiq, a relative of one of the deceased, said three men were picked up

by the troops accompanied by policemen — Mohd Rafiq and Mohd Rashid, along with their sources Jagi and Ganesh in full public gaze. "We want names of the Army major concerned, policemen and the Army sources to be included in the FIR besides immediate shifting of the Rashtriya Rifles camp," he said, adding, "Innocent persons were killed in cold blood and we want justice for them."

K'taka Minister sparks row again

BENGALURU

Karnataka Minister for Sugar and Agriculture Marketing Shivanand Patil's statement that farmers wish for repeated droughts in the State so that their loans get waived has caused a stir, with the Opposition on Monday terming it as an "affront" to the farming community and seeking his removal from the Ministry.

Coming down heavily on the Congress government over the remark, the BJP urged Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to take his resignation. BRS working president KT Rama Rao also condemned the remarks. "What sort of Ministers are these? Making ab-

solutely ludicrous statements about the farmers. No farmer will ever wish for drought. Even in the worst of conditions, all they wish for is empathy from Government," he posted on X.

Patil had in September stoked controversy for his statement that cases of farmer suicides started rising after the compensation amount to the kin of the deceased was hiked from Rs 2 lakh to Rs 5 lakh.

Speaking at an event in Belagavi on Sunday, he said, "Krishna river water is free, power is also free. The CM also gave seed and fertilizer. Farmers will only wish for repeated droughts because their loans will be waived."

(SEE PAGE 2)

Flight with 276 Indians leaves France

PARIS

A Romanian aircraft carrying 276 passengers, mostly Indians, on Monday left for India four days after they were detained by the French authorities at an airport near Paris over suspected 'human trafficking'.

"The plane, which had been grounded since Thursday, departed shortly after 14.30 pm (local time)," BFM TV, a French news broadcast television and radio network, reported.

The Nicaragua-bound charter flight that took off from Dubai carrying 303 passengers was grounded at the Vatry airport on Thursday. PTI (REPORT PAGE 8)

Dense fog blankets Hyderabad

Visibility drops to 300 m, flight operations at RGIA disrupted



Vehicles make their way through thick fog at Shankerpally in Rangareddy district on Monday.

CITY BUREAU

Hyderabad

Dense fog blanketed several parts of Hyderabad and districts on Monday, reducing visibility and hampering road and air travel early on Monday.

Visibility dropped to a mere 300 m at the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA), Shamshabad, marking it the first instance of such low visibility this season. Chilly weather conditions accompanied by dense fog enveloped the Shamshabad airport, leading to disruptions and delays in flight operations. From 8.30 am on Monday, visibility plummeted to a mere 300 m, causing several flights to be cancelled or delayed inordinately, as flight operators waited for a few hours for the weather to clear up.

Air Vistara Flight UK873, scheduled from Mumbai to Hyderabad, was compelled to return to Mumbai due to adverse weather conditions at RGIA. Similarly, Air Vistara Flight UK897, originating from Bengaluru and bound for Hyderabad, also

Five killed in two road accidents

NALGONDA: Poor visibility caused by fog proved tragic for a family when two accidents occurred one after the other, killing four people. Another person also lost his life in the first road mishap at Nidmanoor mandal early on Monday.

According to police, Ramavath Keshavulu, who was riding a motorbike, hit a pedestrian, Nagaraju, at Vempadu village and both lost their lives. After their bodies were shifted to the Area hospital in Miryalaguda, Keshavulu's

family hired a TATA Ace to reach Miryalaguda.

While on their way to Miryalaguda, tragedy struck again when a truck rammed their vehicle, leading to four deaths. Those who died in the second incident were Ramavath Pandu (40), Ramavath Bujji (38), Ramavath Ghanya (40) and Ramavathu Keshavulu (19).

The victim of the first accident, Nagaraju (28), was from Mallevani Kunta thanda in Peddavoora mandal.

Man dies as car plunges into lake

HYDERABAD: A man lost his life after a car veered off the road and plunged into a lake at Shivaredipet in Vikarabad district on Monday morning when dense fog impacted visibility.

Five friends — K Sagar, Raghu, Gunna Shekar, Poojita and Mohan — who live in different parts of the city, were on their way to Ananthagiri hills when their car fell in the lake around 5.30 am. "They told us the car was hit by a bus," Vikarabad SI Satyanarayana Raju said. (SEE PAGE 2)

Telangana govt to make presentation on KLIS project

STATE BUREAU

Hyderabad

The Telangana government is gearing up to make a presentation on the Kaleshwaram project at the Meddigadda barrage on Friday.

Irrigation Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy and Industries Minister D Sridhar Babu will visit the barrage on Friday. Uttam Kumar will make a PowerPoint presentation on the Kalesh-

waram and Pranahita Chevella projects. He will also share details on the advantages and disadvantages of constructing the Kaleshwaram project.

Uttam Kumar is likely to share all details, including the cost of the Kaleshwaram project, the new ayacut created, the stabilisation of ayacut and the power supply required for the project. He will also review the issues of the Meddigadda, Sundilla and

Annaram barrages. The Ministers will visit the three barrages. Instructions have been issued to the Irrigation Department to extend invitations to officials from construction agencies, sub-contractors and all those involved in the Kaleshwaram project. The Ministers will fly to the Meddigadda barrage in a helicopter at 9 am. A senior official said the schedule was yet to be finalised.

No maayusi, no naaraazgi, says Nitish



PATNA

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Monday rubbished speculations that he felt he had been passed over at the I.N.D.I.A bloc's meeting in Delhi last week when it was suggested that Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge be made the prime ministerial face.

The JD(U) leader maintained that having taken the initiative to bring parties opposed to the BJP, he desired nothing for himself but admitted having stressed at the meeting the need to expedite seat-sharing arrangements. "I felt no disappointment (maayusi)... no resentment (naaraazgi)," asserted Kumar when journalists approached him with queries here at a memorial of late Atal Bihari Vajpayee where he turned up to pay tributes on his birth anniversary. (SEE PAGE 2)

Hyd emerges GCC hub in country

CITY BUREAU

Hyderabad

Hyderabad has solidified its position as a burgeoning hub for Global Capability Centres (GCCs), establishing four new centres across various sectors, according to the latest 'India GCC Trends' quarterly analysis report released by Nasscom.

Surpassing major metropolitan cities such as Mumbai, Delhi, Ahmedabad, Pune and Chennai, Hyderabad emerged as the second-most preferred destination after Ben-

galaru for setting up these centres in the third quarter of 2023. Bengaluru led the pack with seven new GCCs established during the same period, the report stated.

The report delved into the specifics of the four new GCCs in Hyderabad, emphasising their vertical focus areas. In the electrical and electronics sector,

one centre in Hyderabad is concentrating on advanced battery modelling and utilising machine learning for product development.

Another GCC in the retail sector is focusing on engineering design, strategic sourcing, supply chain management and IT infrastructure. Additionally, a centre dedicated to tele-

com and networking is focusing on next-generation hardware, software, and space-related technologies. Lastly, a GCC in the pharmaceutical sector is primarily engaged in research and production of oligonucleotides.

Furthermore, the expansion of the established GCCs in India during Q3CY2023 saw Hyderabad and Bengaluru leading with three additional centres each. Among the notable new GCCs established in Hyderabad during the quarter is AST SpaceMobile (telecommunications). (SEE PAGE 2)

Infant dies after street dogs maul him

CITY BUREAU

Hyderabad

A five-month-old boy died after being attacked by a pack of street dogs in Shaikpet.

The victim, Sharath, lived with his parents Anusha and G Anji at Vinobhanagar in Shaikpet. On December 8, his mother left him in the hut and went out to hand over some keys to a neighbour when a pack of dogs entered the house and attacked the infant.

On hearing the child's cries, Anusha ran into the house to rescue him. But by

the time she reached, the dogs bit the infant badly, injuring his head.

The baby was rushed to a government hospital at Shaikpet and later to Niloufer Hospital where he was under treatment for two days. On the advice of doctors, Sharath was shifted to Osmania General Hospital (OGH) where he died on Monday.

The parents were persuaded to take the child for cremation in their native place in Wanaparthy district.

No case has been registered so far in this regard.

Buzzing with festivities

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Pope blasts weapons industry

WORLD | PAGE 09



India keen on ending long wait

SPORT | PAGE 10



ENTERTAINMENT PAGE 12

Christmas surprise

Ranbir, Alia pose for paps with daughter Raha



CHICKEN RATES IN HYDERABAD

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Retail live.....	Rs. 107
With skin	Rs. 155
Skinless	Rs. 177
Egg Rates (12 eggs)....	Rs. 79

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