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Credit to KCR for big drop in poverty rate, says Harish **page 5**

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Not in favour of de-dollarisation, says RBI **page 8**



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Zambia reels from cholera outbreak with over 400 dead **page 9**

Discoms may go for power tariff hike

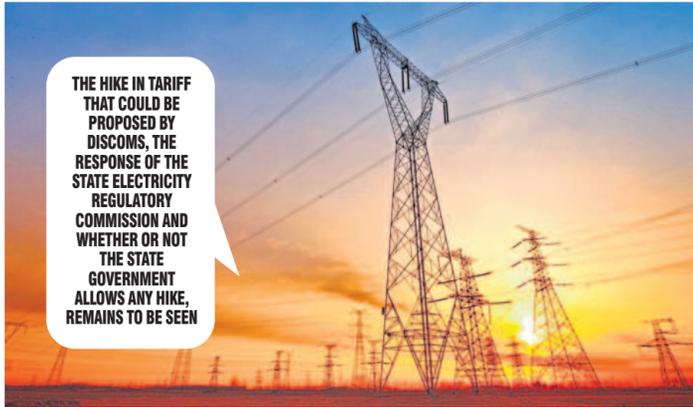
Centre allows them to recover costs incurred from consumers

ANIL KUMAR
HYDERABAD

The Union Power Ministry's move allowing Discoms to recover various costs incurred, including power purchase costs, from consumers in the form of charges for supplying power, is likely to allow Discoms to increase the power tariff in the coming financial year (2024-25).

The hike in tariff that could be proposed by Discoms, the response of the State Electricity Regulatory Commission and whether or not the current State government allows any hike, remains to be seen.

Every year by November, Discoms have to submit estimates of the revenue for the next financial year to the Electricity Regulatory Commission (ERC) and based on these, the ERC examines the revenue requirements of the Discoms. But in November 2023, due to the Assembly elections, the process was delayed and the ERC has asked the Discoms to file the Annual Revenue Require-



ment (ARR) by January 31. Since the Discoms are running in losses, there is a possibility that they would seek a hike in tariff.

During the previous government, the Telangana State Electricity Regulatory Commission (TSERC) accepted the power tariff hikes proposed by State-run power utilities several times, but the then State government had refused to

pass on the burden to the public and allowed very nominal tariff hikes, that too, only twice.

In fact, during the 2023-24 financial year, the State government had decided to take over the distribution and power purchase true-up charges burden from consumers by extending necessary financial support to power utilities over a period of five years along with in-

terest. The measure provided relief to consumers to the tune of Rs 12,718.4 crore, as approved by the ERC against Rs 16,593.87 crore proposed by the Discoms, which otherwise would have been levied on them. Now, the Ministry of Power unveiled the Electricity (Amendment) Rules, 2024, which have come into force from January 11.

(SEE PAGE 2)

Two killed in fresh Manipur violence

IMPHAL

Two Manipur Police commandos were killed and two sustained bullet wounds after heavily-armed militants targeted them amid renewed violence in Moreh, a business town close to the Myanmar border, on Wednesday, officials said.

The deceased have been identified as Wangkhem Somorjit (32) and Takhelambam Saileshwore from Lamshang in Imphal West district, they said. Somorjit was hit by bullets during an ambush near Ima Kondong Lairembi Devi temple in the morning. He succumbed to injuries during treatment at Key Location Point (KLP) of Assam Rifles. Saileshwore was shot dead by militants on Wednesday evening, officials said. Constable N Bheem (35), who was hit by a bullet in his left leg, and ASI Sidharth Thokchom (35), who sustained injuries on his face and ears, were airlifted from Moreh and have been admitted to RIMS in Imphal for treatment, the official added. According to an official, the gunfight began after militants fired a RPG at a temporary police unit near SBI Moreh. This was followed by multiple attacks by militants on security forces. PTI

Iran strikes Pak terror bases

Islamabad warns Tehran of serious 'consequences'

TEHRAN

Iran "obliterated two key strongholds" of a terror group in Pakistan through precision missile and drone strikes, a media report said. Significant bases belonging to the Jaysh al-Dhulm (Jeish al-Adl) terrorist group on Pakistani soil were destroyed on Tuesday, Tasnim news agency reported, adding that these bases were "specifically targeted and successfully demolished" by a combination of missile and drone attacks.

The focal point of this operation was the region known as Kouh-Sabz (green mountain) in the Balochistan province of Pakistan, recognised as one of the largest hubs for the Jeish al-Dhulm militants, the Iranian news agency reported.

According to Iranian media, the terrorist group was responsible for the attack on a police station last month in Sistan, southeast of Iran, which resulted in the martyrdom of 11 Iranian Police forces.

Meanwhile, Pakistan on Wednesday warned Iran of

Pak recalls Ambassador

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Wednesday recalled its Ambassador to Iran and suspended all high-level planned bilateral visits in the coming days, hours after Tehran launched an unprecedented missile and drone strikes on what it said were terrorist bases of a Sunni militant group in the restive Balochistan province.

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"serious consequences." It said the attack killed two children and injured three others. Islamabad also summoned the Iranian charge d'affaires to the Foreign Ministry and issued a strongly-worded condemnation of Iran's "violation of its airspace," the Foreign Office said.

Iran's attack could potentially raise tensions in the Middle East, already roiled by Israel's war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip. AP

Wings India set to take off

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Trump takes a dig at Haley

WORLD | PAGE 09



Rohit smashes 5th T20 hundred

SPORT | PAGE 10



CHICKEN RATES IN HYDERABAD

Farm.....	Rs. 97
Retail live.....	Rs. 119
With skin.....	Rs. 173
Skinless.....	Rs. 196
Egg Rates (12 eggs).....	Rs. 69

WEF: TS attracts Rs 36,670 cr deals

STATE BUREAU
Hyderabad

Telangana attracted investment proposals worth around Rs 36,670 crore on the second day at the World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Summit in Davos on Tuesday.

The State government signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) with investment proposals from six companies in this regard.

On the sidelines of the WEF Annual Summit, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy along with IT and Industries Minister D Sridhar Babu met several investors, including Adani Group chairman Gautam Adani, Godrej Industries chairman and managing director Nadir Godrej, JSW Group chairman Sajjan Jindal, Ara-

gen Life Sciences whole-time director and CEO Manni Kantipudi, GODI India Private Limited founder and CEO Mahesh Godi, Iron Mountain CEO William Meaney and Web Werks CEO Nikhil Rathi, among others.

IT and Industries Minister D Sridhar Babu, Principal Secretary for IT and Industries Jayesh Ranjan and Special Secretary for Investment Promotion Vishnu Vardhan Reddy were also present.

(REPORT PAGE 5)

Jallikattu turns deadly



TRADITIONAL SPORT: A man tries to take control of a bull as he participates in a Jallikattu event at Alanganallur, in Madurai, Tamil Nadu. Two persons, including an 11-year-old boy, were gored to death at Siravayal. — Photo: PTI

Four officials suspended for tiger deaths

STATE BUREAU
Kumram Bheem Asifabad

Two officials, including a forest divisional officer (FDO) and forest range officer (FRO), were placed under suspension in connection with the recent deaths of two tigers in the Dharigaon forests in Kaghaznagar mandal. An order to this effect was issued by PCCF RM Dobriyal.

As per the order, Kaghaznagar FDO T Vijay Babu and FRO S Venugopal were suspended for showing negligence in the protection of the tigers. The action was initiated against the officials based on a report submitted by Kawal Tiger Reserve Field Director S Shantaram, following the deaths of a female cub and an adult male tiger reported on January 6 and 8, respectively. (SEE PAGE 2)

Packaged food making urban Indians obese: NIN

M SAI GOPAL
Hyderabad

Urban India, including people from Hyderabad, consume way more packaged foods including sweets and savouries.

On average, a typical urban Indian consumes at least 100 gm of packaged food that provides 500 kilocalories per day, which is more than necessary, the urban data on food eating habits from Hyderabad-based National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), says.

As a result of the abundance of high-energy food coupled with no physical activity, people in cities are overweight and obese. "There has been a remarkable rise in the occurrence of overweight and obesity in both urban and rural popu-

Alarming facts

- Average consumption of high-energy food high in urban India
- Over 60% of individuals in urban India overweight, obese
- Minor positive energy imbalance of 50kcal per day results in monthly weight gain of 1 kg
- Overeating causing heart and kidney ailments, hypertension, stroke among younger population
- Sweet biscuits alone constitute over 45% of ultra-processed food market



lations, surpassing 60 per cent in the most recent NIN data. Even a minor positive energy imbalance of 50 kcal/day results in monthly weight gain of up to 1 kg," says Dr R Hemalatha, Director, NIN.

The NIN scientist in a paper (January 2024) on "Transforming Markets for

Better Nutrition' says, "The hyper-palatable nature of processed foods makes it easy to over-consume. This is linked to a rise in diet-related Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) such as non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases (CVDs). (SEE PAGE 2)

Two steal MP Police vehicle, go on joyride

BHOPAL

In a daring theft that left the cops in Madhya Pradesh's Ratlam district red-faced on Monday, two men stole a police vehicle from inside a police station and went for a joyride in it with the siren blaring.

However, their joyride was a short one as they were caught soon after an eatery owner informed the police, who came and arrested the two men, identified as Irfan Khan and Sadab Khan, and recovered the stolen police vehicle, MP II, CC-7326, from them.

As per the police report, the incident occurred at midnight on Monday when the two men entered the police station, took the vehicle's key from inside and drove it away without the cops on night duty noticing them!

Once they reached the main road the accused switched on the police siren and made for a marketplace located near the railway station in Ratlam. Posing as cops on patrol in civil dress, the accused demanded money for liquor from an eatery owner who refused to give it.

Threatened Irfan and Sadab then slapped him and threatened the eatery owner with dire consequences before moving on to the next shop. While the accused were busy threatening and asking for money from some other shopkeepers there, the eatery owner called the police. A police team reached the spot and the accused were arrested. The police vehicle was recovered and returned to the sheepish staff of the police station. IANS

GHMC's 'singing sweeper' for Republic Day fete in Delhi

EPSITA GUNTI
Hyderabad

Clad in an orange safety jacket and armed with a long-bristled broom, Narayanamma can be found at Banjara Hills Road No 12 every morning. Working as a GHMC sanitation worker for about 22 years, she carved a unique niche for being what some would call the 'singing sweeper'.

Her melodious tunes and diligent work ethic have earned her a spot at the upcoming Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi. She plans to travel to the national capital on January 24.



Narayanamma — Photo: Surya Sridhar

songs every day, she picked up the habit of singing spiritual and folk songs in her childhood. Even as she moved to Hyderabad from her village Yacharam in the Rangareddy district, she continued her practice and was often found humming on her job. "It is a habit and just can't be without singing. I sing while sweeping the streets and

the residents of that area seemed to really like it. They do not let me be transferred to any other area," says Narayanamma, adding that her songs are often inspired by the teachings of her mentor Nityananda Rajeshwaryulu.

Reacting to the news of her being invited to the Republic Day parade, she thanked the GHMC officers who she adds have always been supportive of her. "I got to the news on January 1. Everyone in my family along with my neighbours and friends are very happy for me." Having gone through many hardships in her life, Narayanamma believes that this opportunity is the result of her good deeds.