

Saturday March 9, 2024 **HYDERABAD** 

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#### **Fiesty** speech

Democracy and freedom under threat, says Biden



SPORT | PAGE 10 Rohit, Gill put India on top



**ENTERTAINMENT** 

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### Alia's wise words

Asks women to celebrate themselves every day



**CHICKEN RATES IN HYDERABAD** 

Farm Retail live With skin Skinless	Rs. Rs.	107 129 187 213
Skiniess	Rs.	213
Egg Rates (12 eggs)	Rs.	63

# Telangana Today

Rumble strips breaking backs, ignite debate on health hazards page page 3

Kejri, Mann launch AAP poll campaign page 7



Cut off from food, Gaza children succumbing to hunger page 9

# 'Indians duped to work in Russian army'

#### MEA asks citizens not to get swaved by offers

NEW DELHI

Several Indian nationals have been "duped" to work with the Russian Army and India has strongly taken up the matter with Moscow for their early discharge, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Friday.

MEA spokesperson Rand-hir Jaiswal said strong action has been initiated against agents and unscrupulous elements who recruited the Indians on false pretexts and promises. He said India remains committed to ensuring the early release of its nationals serving as support staff with the Russian Army.

The MEA spokesperson's comments came days after Indian national Mohammed Asfan from Hyderabad, who was duped into joining Russia's war against Ukraine, was killed. Another Indian, who also had worked as a support staff to the Russian army, died several days ago.

The MEA spokesperson said India is trying its best to bring back their mortal remains. He said around 20 people have contacted the Indian government and it is

4 from TS in Cong first list

The All India Congress

Committee (AICC) on Fri-

day released the first list of

four candidates contesting

the ensuing Lok Sabha

Suresh Kumar Shetkar

has been finalised as the

candidate from Zaheer-

abad, Raghuveer Kunduru

from Nalgonda, Balram Naik Porika from Mahabubabad and Challa

Vamshichand Reddy from Mahabubnagar, AICC gen-

eral secretary KC Venugopal said in New Delhi.

the first list of 39 candi-

dates across the country.

But before it officially re-

leased the list, another list

of 36 candidates, including

Sunitha Mahender Reddy's

candidature from Chevella,

was circulated on social

(SEE PAGES 2, 8)

In all, the AICC released

elections in the State.

STATE BUREAU

#### 2 Russia-based agents involved in trafficking on CBI radar

**NEW DELHI:** Two Russia-based agents involved in the human trafficking network that pushed Indians into the Ukraine war zone are under the CBI scanner, officials said on Friday. The agents allegedly confiscated the passports of Indians arriving in Russia and forced them to fight with the armed forces, officials said. The network was busted by the CBI on Thursday.

Christina and Moinuddin Chippa, a resident of Rajasthan, are based in Russia and were facilitating the trafficking of Indian youth to Russia by offering them lucrative job opportunities there, officials said. The central probe agency's FIR has listed 17 other Visa consultancy companies, their owners and agents spread across India, they said. The agency has booked them under Indian Penal Code Sections related to criminal conspiracy, cheating and human trafficking. (SEE PAGE 2)

doing its best to locate them. However, the exact number of Indians working as support staff in the Russian Army is not yet known.

Jaiswal appealed to Indian nationals to not get "swayed" by offers made by agents for support jobs with the Russian Army, saying it is fraught with danger and risk to life. "Several Indian nationals have been duped to work with the Russian army. We have strongly taken up the matter with the

Russian government for

their early discharge," he said. The spokesperson said strong action has been initiated against agents and unscrupulous elements who recruited the Indians on "false pretexts promises".

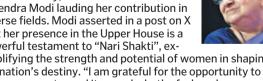
"The CBI yesterday (Thursday) busted a major human trafficking network conducting searches in several cities and collecting incriminating evidence. A case of human trafficking has been registered against

#### Cooking gas price cut by Rs 100 weeks before polls

NEW DELHI: Weeks before general elections, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday announced a Rs 100 per cylinder cut in cooking gas LPG price to ease financial burden on households. Non-subsidised cooking gas price will be cut to Rs 803 per 14.2-kg cylinder in the national capital with effect from midnight of Friday-Saturday, official sources said. Prices vary from State to State depending on the incidence on local taxes. The reduction has been made possible because of easing of international oil and gas prices, against which domestic fuel rates are benchmarked. However, no change in petrol and diesel prices was announced. Petrol and diesel prices continue to be on freeze for a record 23 months now. PTI

#### **Sudha Murty nominated** to Rajya Sabha

**NEW DELHI:** Philanthropist and author Sudha Murty was nominated to Rajya Sabha on Friday, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauding her contribution in diverse fields. Modi asserted in a post on X that her presence in the Upper House is a powerful testament to "Nari Shakti", ex-



emplifying the strength and potential of women in shaping the nation's destiny. "I am grateful for the opportunity to serve our country and its people, both of whom have taught me so much about life...," Murty said. PTI

## TDP, BJP, JSP unite in AP

media.

Senior Telugu Desam Party (TDP) leader and Rajya Sabha MP K Ravindra Kumar claimed on Friday that the BJP, Jana Sena and his party have decided in principle to work together for the upcoming polls and the modalities are being

worked out. A day after TDP president N Chandrababu Naidu held deliberations with union Home Minister Amit Shah and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) chief JP Nadda, Kumar said preliminary discussions have taken place for the "purpose of an alliance" for the Lok Sabha

Top leaders of 3 parties may hold another round of talks to finalise seat-sharing for polls in Andhra

and State Assembly polls, which are held simultaneously in Andhra Pradesh. "In principle, the BJP, TDP and Jana Sena have decided

to work together," he added. Jana Sena president and actor Pawan Kalyan was also part of the discussions that went on for more than an hour and a half at Shah's residence here on Thursday night. Sources said the number of seats the BJP will get in such an alliance remains a sticking point.

Andhra Pradesh has 25 Lok Sabha and 175 Assembly constituencies. The top leaders of the three parties may hold another round of discussions to sort out the differences and finalise the arrangements, the sources added.

While the BJP wants to contest more than 20 Assembly and around eight Lok Sabha seats, the main opposition party in the southern State, TDP, is unwilling to concede more than five-six parliamentary

#### **Abducted JCO** rescued in Manipur

A serving Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO) of the Indian Army, who was abducted from his home in Manipur's Thoubal district by anti-social elements on Friday morning, was rescued by security forces in

the evening, sources said. JCO Konsam Kheda Singh is currently at Waikhong police station in Thoubal district. Police are investigating the incident. According to sources, a coordinated search operation was launched to rescue the JCO which ultimately led to his safe release at 6.30 pm on Friday. PTI

#### Acute water crisis



PARCHED: With the Akeru Vagu at Narsimhulapet mandal in Mahabubabad district drying up, farmers are forced to hire earthmovers to dig pits to source water for irrigation purposes. (REPORT PAGE 4)

# 'Will work with MIM to develop Hyd'

STATE BUREAU

Stressing that politics and development were different, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy said the Congress government would work along with the AIMIM to develop Hyderabad.

"We are involved in politics only during elections and later our priority will be development. In the Assembly, we debate on several issues and shout at each other

but it is limited to the House. We don't have any personal rivalry with them (MIM)," Revanth Reddy said.
The Chief Minister laid

the foundation for the Metro  $\,$ line covering 5.5 km from MGBS to Falaknuma here on Friday. "AIMIM candidates keep winning from Old City and even I tried to defeat them but was not successful," he admitted.

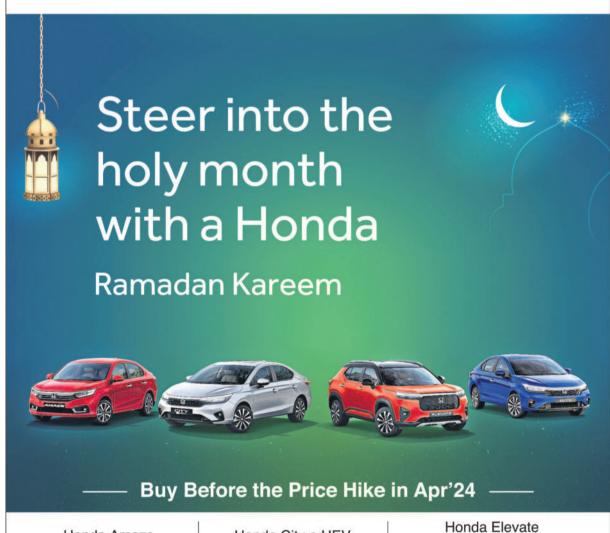
Assuring that the Congress government was committed to developing Old City, the Chief Minister said Old City was the real Hyderabad.

The Congress government would be in power till 2034 and the Metro works in Old City would be completed in five years, he assured, adding that the gov-ernment would take loans and seek Central funds for executing the works.

Ridiculing the past government's plans to construct the Metro from Hitec City, ORR and the airport, the Chief Minister said people living in Jubilee Hills and Banjara Hills do not board the Metro, instead they use their cars. People from middle and low-income groups, who fly to the Gulf from Old City, need Metro, he said.

A Metro junction would be constructed at Chandrayangutta and once the operations commence in Old City, it would generate more employment for the local youth, the Chief Minis-





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