



HYDERABAD

In a first, Navroz festivities open to non-Parsis

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NATION

Ponmudy sworn in after SC nudge

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WORLD

37 mothers killed daily in Gaza as Israel carries out mass raids, arrests

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2G scam: HC admits CBI plea



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Power infra hit

Parts of Ukraine in dark as Russia intensifies strikes



SPORT | PAGE 11

Sindhu out of Swiss Open



ENTERTAINMENT PAGE 12

Working on Kapkapiii

Shreyas excited over reuniting with Tusshar Kapoor



Ramzan Timings

Iftar Saturday 6:34 PM
 Saher Sunday 4:55 AM

CHICKEN RATES IN HYDERABAD

Farm	Rs. 113
Retail live	Rs. 135
With skin	Rs. 196
Skinless	Rs. 223
Egg Rates (12 eggs)	Rs. 57

Court sends Kejriwal to six-day ED custody

Probe agency says Delhi Chief Minister a 'key conspirator' in excise policy scam

PTI
 NEW DELHI

A court here on Friday sent Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to the Enforcement Directorate's (ED) custody till March 28, a day after his arrest in the excise policy-linked money laundering case.

Special Judge Kaveri Baweja at the Rouse Avenue court said Kejriwal will be produced before the court on March 28 at 2 pm. The court passed the order on the ED's application seeking a 10-day custody in the case.

During the hearing for remand, the ED said Kejriwal — the AAP's national convener — was a "key conspirator" in the excise policy scam case along with other Ministers and party leaders. Kejriwal was produced in the trial court shortly after he withdrew from the Supreme Court his plea against his arrest.

The ED told Judge Baweja that Kejriwal received several crores of rupees as kickbacks from the 'South group' for formulating and implementing the Delhi Excise Policy 2021-22. He demanded Rs 100 crore from some accused from the 'South group' for contesting the Punjab elections, Additional Solicitor General (ASG) SV Raju, who appeared for the agency, told the court.

The law officer said the money trail showed that Rs 45 crore "kickback" used in



An AAP supporter raises slogans as she is detained by police during a protest against the arrest of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, in New Delhi on Friday. — Photo: AP (REPORTS PAGE 7)

the Goa elections came from four hawala routes. He said the statements of the accused and witnesses have been corroborated through Call Detail Records (CDR).

The AAP chief was produced before the court around 2 pm amid tight security on and around the court premises. "We have given an application for 10 days' remand," ASG Raju told the court. He said the AAP is not an individual but a company, and every person responsible for the conduct of the company will be held responsible. Senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, representing Kejriwal, said the power of arrest is not equal to the need of arrest.

BJP posing threat to democracy: KCR

HYDERABAD: BRS president and former Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao has decried the recent arrests of opposition leaders, including AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal, as a dark spot on India's democratic history. He condemned the politically motivated actions orchestrated by the BJP government, posing a threat to democratic principles. In a statement released on Friday, Chandrashekhar Rao criticised the BJP's alleged attempts to stifle strong op-

position voices with the arrests of key leaders such as Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren and BRS MLC K Kavitha. He accused the BJP government of misusing Central investigation agencies such as the ED, CBI and I-T to conduct politically motivated attacks on opposition parties.

He denounced the BJP government's actions as they undermined the democratic foundation of the nation. He called for prompt release of those detained.

Kavitha to approach trial court

NEW DELHI: In a setback to BRS leader K Kavitha, the Supreme Court on Friday refused to grant her bail in the money laundering case related to the alleged Delhi excise policy scam.

A Bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna, MM Sundresh and Bela M Trivedi asked Kavitha to approach the trial court, saying it is a practice that this court is following and cannot bypass the protocol. "Issue notice. Counter affidavit shall be filed in six weeks. Rejoinder, if any, in six weeks. It will be open to the petitioner to move the trial court or invoke any other remedy for grant of bail," the Bench said, adding that all pleas and contentions available to the petitioner are left open.

It clarified that the court has not made any comments on the merits of the case. The Bench said as far as Kavitha's plea challenging the provisions of the PMLA is concerned, the court is issuing notice to the ED and seeking its response. PTI

State to spend Rs 20k cr less than estimates

Shortfall attributed to Cong gov't's changed priorities

PS DILEEP
 Hyderabad

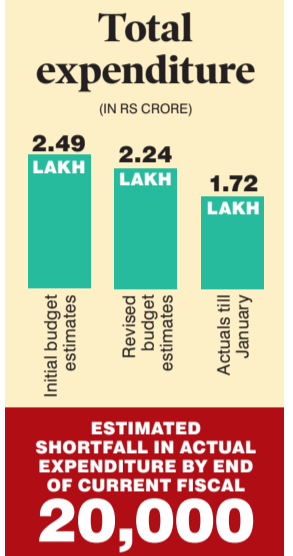
With changed priorities and a delay in implementing proposed schemes, Telangana is likely to spend around Rs 20,000 crore less than the revised Budget estimates for the 2023-24 financial year.

As per the revised estimates, the actual expenditure for the fiscal is around Rs 1.71 lakh crore at the end of January this year against the projected Rs 2.24 lakh crore for the current fiscal.

Under the BRS regime, the State Budget estimates projected the total expenditure at Rs 2.49 lakh crore, including revenue expenditure of Rs 2.11 lakh crore and capital expenditure of Rs 37,524 crore, for the 2023-24 financial year.

However, while presenting the revised estimates for 2023-24, Deputy Chief Minister (Finance and Energy) Mallu Bharti Vikramarka revised the total expenditure to Rs 2,24,625 crore, of which revenue expenditure is Rs 1,69,141 crore and capital expenditure Rs 24,178 crore.

Revenue expenditure is the operational expenses, including salaries, pensions and welfare schemes, while capital expenditure is typically an investment in creating assets for the State through infrastructure development. Before the Con-



gress government was formed last December, the actual total expenditure stood at Rs 1.44 lakh crore. In January, the actual total expenditure increased to Rs 1.72 lakh crore, including Rs 1.38 lakh crore in revenue expenditure and another Rs 33,991 crore in capital expenditure.

The actual expenditure of the Congress regime in the initial two months was around Rs 28,086 crore. Even if the State government's expenditure is another Rs 32,000 crore in February and March, the actual expenditure is unlikely to surpass Rs 2.04 lakh crore, officials in the Finance Department said.

(SEE PAGE 2)

BRS nominates Praveen, Venktram for LS polls

STATE BUREAU
 Hyderabad

Former civil servants RS Praveen Kumar and P Venktram Reddy will contest as BRS candidates from the parliamentary constituencies of Nagarkurnool and Medak in the Lok Sabha elections.

BRS president K Chandrashekhar Rao made an announcement in this regard. With the latest update, the party announced candidates for 13 of the total 17 Parliamentary constituencies for the Lok Sabha polls. It is expected to announce candidates for four more constituencies, including Hyderabad, Secunderabad, Nalgonda and Bhongir, in the next couple of days. (SEE PAGES 2, 4)

EAPCET, ICET schedules revised

CITY BUREAU
 Hyderabad

The schedules of the Telangana State Engineering, Agriculture and Pharmacy (TS EAPCET) 2024 and Telangana State Integrated Common Entrance Test (TS ICET) 2024 have been revised.

EAPCET will now be conducted from May 7-11, with the A&P test on May 7-8 and the engineering test from May 9-11. Earlier, EAPCET was scheduled for May 9-12.

The EAPCET schedule was revised as it almost clashed with the Lok Sabha elections date, i.e., May 13. The ICET, held for admissions into MBA and MCA programmes, has been rescheduled as it coincided with the election counting

date on June 4. According to a senior official, the capacity of centres per session this time will be increased from 25,000 to 35,000 to accommodate the growing number of students appearing for the test.

Meanwhile, the JNTU-Hyderabad, which is holding the TS EAPCET, received 2,15,686 applications, including 1,54,891 for engineering, 60,624 for A&P and 171 for both, till the last count on Friday.

The last date for the online submission of applications without a late fee on https://eapcet.tsche.ac.in/ is April 6. Corrections, if any, in the online application can be done from April 8-12. With a late fee of Rs 250 and Rs 500, applications can be submitted up to April 9 and 14, respectively.

Massive drug manufacturing racket busted

CITY BUREAU
 Hyderabad

Acting on an Interpol alert, the TS Drugs Control Administration (TSDCA), in a joint operation with the Prohibition and Excise Department, busted a drug manufacturing unit at Bollaram that was involved in the illegal manufacturing of psychotropic substance 3-Methylmethcathinone (3-MMC).

3-MMC is a highly addictive designer drug that mimics the effects of XTC and cocaine. The DCA inspectors seized 90.48 kg of 3-MMC worth Rs 8.99 crore from the premises of PSN Medicare Pvt Ltd, IDA Bollaram, Sangareddy district, while the Prohibition and Excise officers arrested its director and two other officials. (SEE PAGE 2)

Kudos to mother-daughter bravery

CITY BUREAU
 Hyderabad

The Begumpet police arrested two people, who made a vain bid to rob a family on Thursday, and felicitated the mother and daughter, who in a rare display of bravery, fought off the armed robbers.

Scenes of the attempted robbery captured on surveillance cameras, which went viral, showed a martial arts-trained Amitha

Mehnot and her 17-year-old daughter fiercely deterring the duo who barged into their home on the pretext of delivering a courier packet.

After the mother-daughter fend off the robbers, the neighbours joined in to nab one of the two suspects. Within 24 hours, the Begumpet police arrested the other person too and identified them as Sushil Kumar and Prem Chandra, residents of MS Maqtha. (SEE PAGE 2)



North Zone DCP Rohini Priyadarshini felicitating Amitha Mehnot and her 17-year-old daughter.

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