



**HYDERABAD | PAGE 02**  
 City teen mountaineer reaches Kang Yatse peaks



**WORLD | PAGE 09**  
 Harris gets under Trump's skin in presidential debate  
 Challenges him on foreign policy, economy and abortion, among other issues



**SPORT | PAGE 11**  
 Hyderabad lift Buchi Babu trophy, end 7-yr drought

**In a nutshell**

**Health coverage for 70 yrs & above**  
**NEW DELHI:** The Union Cabinet approved health coverage to all persons aged 70 years and above under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, irrespective of their income, benefiting around six crore senior citizens, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said. The Rs 5 lakh free health insurance cover will benefit senior citizens of 4.5 crore families.

**Kenya workers protest Adani deal**  
**NAIROBI:** Hundreds of workers at Kenya's main international airport demonstrated against a deal between the government and Adani Group. Planes have remained grounded, with hundreds of passengers stranded at the airport. The government said the build-and-operate agreement with the Adani Group would see the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport modernised.

**Semicon 2.0 policy soon: Vaishnaw**  
**NEW DELHI:** The Centre has started working on the second phase of the semiconductor policy, Semicon 2.0, which is expected to be in place in three-four months, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said on Wednesday. Speaking at Semicon India 2024 here, he said three-four States have attracted semiconductor investments, and one unit will soon come up in UP.

**Situation remains tense in Manipur**  
**IMPHAL:** The situation in Manipur remained tense but under control on Wednesday after students clashed with security forces during their march to Raj Bhavan a day before, police said. Curfew, which was imposed in Imphal on Tuesday afternoon, continued to be in place, while additional security forces were deployed and frequent patrolling was under way.

**CHICKEN RATES IN HYDERABAD**

Farm.....	Rs. 107
Retail live.....	Rs. 129
With skin.....	Rs. 187
Skinless.....	Rs. 213
Egg Rates (2 eggs).....	Rs. 70

## GOVT SCHOOLS HAVE NO FUNDS TO EVEN BUY CHALK!

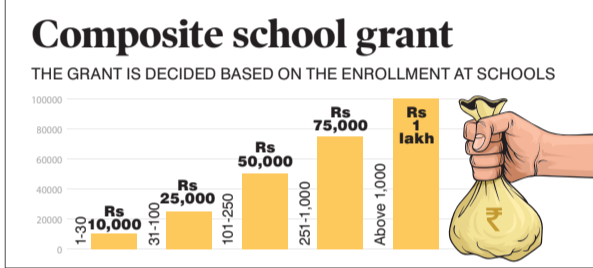
**Four months into 2024-25 academic year, Cong govt yet to release school grant**

**YUVRAJ AKULA**  
 HYDERABAD

Four months into the 2024-25 academic year, government and local body schools across Telangana do not have necessary funds for purchasing stationery, with the Congress government yet to release the composite school grant.

The composite school grant is meant for purchasing stationery, including chalk pieces, dusters, white papers and registers, among others, and conducting examinations in June. The grants are also used for celebrating national festivals such as Independence Day and Republic Day, besides for paying electricity bills and internet charges of the schools. The grant is decided based on the enrollment at the schools.

Every year, the State government releases 50 per cent of the composite school grant meant in June and during the 2023-24 academic year — the first installment to the tune of Rs 34.95 crore was released in June. However, this year, even with four months of



the academic year passing by, the State government has not sanctioned and released the grants. The delay in releasing the grant has created significant chal-

lenges and financial strain on the schools. Headmasters face mounting expenses and no immediate support from the government.

(SEE PAGE 2)

**Dues burden meal agencies**

**KARIMNAGAR:** Mid-day meal agencies, which are struggling to serve meals to students in the wake of an increase in cost of vegetables and other commodities, are facing more financial distress with the State government yet to clear their bills for the last eight months. Besides their staff salaries, bills for eggs and Ragi Java are said to have been pending for the last eight months.

(REPORT PAGE 4)

**EDU SYSTEM IN SHAMBLES, KTR SLAMS CONG GOVT**

**HYDERABAD:** BRS working president KT Rama Rao on Wednesday came down heavily on the Congress government, stating that it had pushed the State's education system into shambles. "Schools and colleges without faculty, basic amenities like chalk pieces and dusters — this is the reality under Congress rule," he posted on X, pointing out that government schools and colleges running from rented buildings were being locked by owners for non-payment of rent, forcing students to stand on roads.

"It is shameful that even after eight months, the Congress government did not pay the rents. Despite the Chief Minister holding the Education portfolio, the Education Department is suffering due to lack of funding and direction," he said.

(SEE PAGE 2)

## Valmiki scam: KTR for probe

**STATE BUREAU**  
 Hyderabad

With the Enforcement Directorate (ED) filing its chargesheet in the infamous Valmiki scam in neighbouring Karnataka, BRS working president KT Rama Rao reiterated that the Congress misused the funds from Karnataka to finance its Lok Sabha election campaign in Telangana. He demanded for an in-depth probe into the multi-crore scam and stringent punishment for those involved.

Pointing to the recent chargesheet filed by the ED, which indicated diversion of the Valmiki scam funds to Telangana, Rama Rao said the Congress indulged in the brazen misuse of public funds. The ED had confirmed the involvement of Congress leader and former Karnataka Minister B Nagnendra as the mastermind behind the scam.

Telangana Cong stooped to a new low by using funds meant for welfare of tribals in their election campaign

— **KT RAMA RAO**  
 BRS WORKING PRESIDENT

"The Telangana Congress stooped to a new low by using funds meant for the welfare of tribals in their election campaign. This is not just unethical, but also a criminal act," he said.

The scam allegedly involved the diversion of Rs 187 crore from the Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation Limited. These funds were allegedly funneled through Nagnendra, he said. (SEE PAGES 2, 8)



A girl, whose family was displaced after her house was razed during the recent HYDRABAD demolition drive, plays with a cat at Sunnam Cheruvu in Madhapur, Hyderabad, on Wednesday. — Photo: M Gopikrishna

**TOUGH TIMES**

## Mystery fever kills 11 in Guj, teams deployed

**BHUJ:** The Gujarat government has deployed specialist doctors and 50 medical teams in and around seven villages of two talukas in Kachchh district after an undiagnosed fever claimed the lives of 11 persons in a week. Health Minister Rushikesh Patel held a review meeting in Bhuj over the steps being taken in the region. He said 48 new cases of fever have been detected in seven villages of Lakhpat and Abdasa where 11 persons, including four children, died earlier due to an undiagnosed fever between September 3 and 10. While the cause of the fever is still unknown, 48 new cases were detected in the surveillance exercise.

## 8 tribals die of unknown disease in Jharkhand

**RANCHI:** Over the past 22 days, at least eight members of the 'Pahariya' tribe at Nengra Tand village in Jharkhand's Jamtara district have died of an unidentified disease, with more than 10 others still suffering. Some fatalities have occurred due to delays in receiving timely treatment. Jharkhand BJP president Babul Marandi criticised the Hemant Soren-led state government, demanding a high-level investigation. Mathiam Malto from the tribe struggled to get medical attention for his six-year-old daughter.

## Medak priest's hi-tech virtual Ganesh puja in Dallas goes viral

**T KARNAKAR REDDY**  
 Medak



Dorbala Mahesh Sharma performing Ganesh puja virtually for Telugu people in Dallas, from Medak.

A priest from Medak is drawing attention with hi-tech rituals, which involve performing a Vinayaka Puja in virtual mode to a Ganesh idol installed in Honey Creek Colony in Dallas, US.

Dorbala Mahesh Sharma (39), the chief priest of Saraswathi temple located at Peruru in Medak mandal, is usually busy at the temple. During Vinayaka Chaturthi celebrations, his schedule turns all the more hectic, yet Sharma accepts requests to perform pujas virtually for his customers who stay abroad.

Sharma, who completed Yajurveda education from the Vedic School at the Kotilingala temple in Siddipet 25 years ago, had started assisting his father ini-

tially at the temple in various pujas. He started offering online services in 2009 when he performed a Naga Dosha puja to a couple living in the USA over an audio call when video calls were not so popular.

Since then, Sharma said he was performing different pujas for Telugu people living in the USA, the UK, Canada and various parts of the world. His customers call him 'Hi-tech Panthulu' for using technology effectively.

Speaking to *Telangana Today*, he said Telugus living abroad approach him for various 'dosha' pujas. However, he would always suggest them to believe in their work 50 per cent and leave the rest to God. As for the Ganesh in Dallas, the idol was installed by a group of Telugus in Honey Creek Colony, who contacted Sharma.

## Gandhi Hospital intern attacked

**CITY BUREAU**  
 Hyderabad

A female intern at the casualty wing of the Gandhi Hospital was reportedly attacked by an intoxicated patient on Wednesday.

The patient, who was brought to the hospital's casualty wing for treatment by a relative, grabbed the intern, without any provocation, while she was attending to another patient and attacked her. Fellow medics and senior doctors rushed to the intern's rescue and quickly subdued the attacker.

The sudden assault on the intern at the hospital, in the backdrop of the recent strike by medics demanding security following the death of the trainee doctor in Kolkata, has shocked the community. "We promptly reported the incident to our Superintendent, who assured that both a police and an institutional FIR will be filed without delay to address the situation appropriately. The Gandhi Junior Doctors Association condemns this assault and calls for swift and decisive action," the association members said. (SEE PAGE 2)

## Two JeM terrorists killed in encounter

**JAMMU**

Two terrorists affiliated with Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) outfit were killed in an ongoing operation in the upper reaches of Basingarh in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur district on Wednesday, officials said.

They said bodies of the two terrorists, believed to be from Pakistan, along with an M-4 carbine, an AK assault rifle, a pistol and large quantity of ammunition and eatables were re-

covered from the scene. This was the first successful operation against the terrorists in the dense forest, which witnessed over half-a-dozen encounters in the past six months, killing a village defence guard on April 28 and a CRPF inspector on August 19.

The officials said one more terrorist is believed to be trapped in Khandara top area and efforts are on to neutralise him. More reinforcements were rushed to the spot.

## Laddu stolen from Ganesh pandal in Medchal

**CITY BUREAU**  
 Hyderabad

Laddu thieves targeted a Ganesh pandal in Medchal and stole the laddu prasadam placed in the hand of the Ganesh idol early on Wednesday, according to the police.

The suspects sneaked into the pandal at Raghavendra Nagar Colony, when there was no one in the vicinity, picked up the laddu weighing nearly 1 kg and fled the spot.

The pandal organisers, who realised that the laddu was missing from the pandal, informed the Medchal police who are investigating.

Footage gathered from CCTV cameras installed at the pandal and the nearby area is being examined in detail to nab the accused, according to the police.

## Wife fails to repay loan, husband thrashed

**MEDAK:** A man was tied to a pole and thrashed at Padalappally in Toopran municipality, allegedly after his wife failed to repay a loan she had taken through a women's self-help group. According to Kanukunta Bikshapathi, his wife Mini, a member of an SHG group in the village, had taken the loan eight months ago. However, she left home and was staying with her mother as she was unwell. The group's members and their families began asking Bikshapathi for repayment. Though he told them that he had nothing to do with the loan, Bikshapathi said a group of 10 persons tied him to a pole and beat him up on Tuesday night. (SEE PAGE 2)

## 2 thieves electrocuted in bid to steal cables

**MAHABUBNAGAR:** Two men, suspected to be thieves, were electrocuted during an attempt to steal cables from a solar plant at Midjil Mandal in Jachchala constituency here. According to reports, as there were frequent cable thefts at the Pragathi Solar Plant, the management installed two electric fences. On Tuesday night, two men reportedly tried to enter the plant by cutting the electric fences. They cut the first one, but as they were about to cut the second, they were electrocuted. Police have registered a case.