



NATION | PAGE 07

### Need proof to act: Naidu on Adani bribery case



WORLD | PAGE 09

### New Orleans tragedy: Pickup truck driver inspired by ISIS

Suspect, who killed 15 on New Year Day, was a US Army veteran, say officials



SPORT | PAGE 10

### Rohit faces axe in Sydney Test; Bumrah poised to lead

#### In a nutshell

#### PM condemns New Orleans carnage

**NEW DELHI:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday condemned the terrorist attack in New Orleans, which has killed 15 people, and expressed condolences to the families of victims. "We strongly condemn the cowardly terrorist attack in New Orleans. Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims and their families. May they find strength and solace as they heal from this tragedy," PM Modi said on social media platform X. **PTI**

#### Iran vows to help with nurse case

**NEW DELHI:** Iran will do whatever it can in the case of Indian nurse Nimisha Priya, facing a death sentence in Yemen, a senior Iranian official said on Thursday. Priya, hailing from Kollengode in Kerala's Palakkad district, has been found guilty of murdering a Yemeni citizen in July 2017. The 37-year-old nurse is currently lodged in a jail in Sana'a, the Yemeni capital city that is under the control of Iran-backed Houthis. **PTI**

#### Tesla Cybertruck explodes

**LAS VEGAS:** Firework mortars and camp fuel canisters were found stuffed into the back of the Tesla Cybertruck that exploded outside President-elect Donald Trump's Las Vegas hotel early Wednesday, killing a suspect inside the vehicle and sparking an intense investigation into possible terrorism. Las Vegas Metropolitan Police and Clark County Fire Department said a person died inside the futuristic-looking pickup truck. **WORLD PAGE 9**

#### Ketan Parekh banned

**NEW DELHI:** Markets regulator Sebi on Thursday barred three individuals, including Ketan Parekh, from the securities markets with immediate effect for their alleged involvement in a front-running scheme which generated illegal gains of Rs 65.77 crore. It also directed 22 entities, including Parekh, to impound unlawful gains worth Rs 65.77 crore earned from the alleged violations. **PTI**

## Congress govt pushes TG into debt spiral

### Planned borrowing will propel debt to Rs 70,757 cr for the year, nearly equivalent to Rs 72,658 cr when TG was carved out

PS DILEEP  
HYDERABAD

The Congress government in Telangana is setting alarmingly poor records in fiscal mismanagement with its decision to borrow an unprecedented Rs 30,000 crore in the last quarter of the current financial year (2024-25).

This massive borrowing spree is likely to not only shatter the State's budgetary estimates, but also push its debt burden perilously close to the liabilities Telangana inherited at its formation in 2014. The government's calendar for borrowing indicates plans to participate in auctions on all 12 Tuesdays of the January-March quarter, raising Rs 10,000 crore each month.

This level of dependency on market loans showcases a lack of foresight and governance, financial experts opined.

The planned borrowing would propel the State's market debt to Rs 70,757 crore for the year, almost equivalent to the Rs 72,658

**THIS MASSIVE BORROWING SPREE IS LIKELY TO NOT ONLY SHATTER THE STATE'S BUDGETARY ESTIMATES, BUT ALSO PUSH ITS DEBT BURDEN PERILOUSLY CLOSE TO THE LIABILITIES TELANGANA INHERITED AT ITS FORMATION IN 2014**

crore in outstanding liabilities the State carried when it was carved out a decade ago. Economists and opposition BRS leaders are raising concerns about the State's financial health, warning that these reckless fiscal policies could cripple Telangana's economy for years.

Under the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act, States are permitted to borrow up to 3.5 per cent of their Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP). Telangana's GSDP for 2024-25 was pegged at around Rs 16 lakh crore, allowing a borrowing ceiling of Rs 57,112 crore.

However, the Centre restricted it to Rs 49,255 crore due to budgetary adjustments made during the Covid-19 period to maintain FRBM norms. But, the Con-

gress government has already borrowed Rs.40,757 crore by December-end. The additional Rs 30,000 crore borrowing plan would overshoot the Budget estimates by a staggering Rs 21,502 crore. Experts have criticised the government's move as a blatant disregard for fiscal discipline as it is higher even by standard FRBM limits.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has clarified that the actual amount of borrowing depends on approval from the union Finance Ministry under Article 293(3) of the Constitution. Yet, the State Finance Department remains tight-lipped on whether the Centre has cleared this exorbitant borrowing proposal over and above the ceiling fixed for the current fiscal. Economists point out

that the Congress government's borrowing spree is not matched by visible improvements in infrastructure or public services. Instead, these funds appear to be fuelling poorly-planned populist schemes and temporary measures that do little to generate long-term economic growth.

Opposition parties, particularly the BRS, have charged the Congress government with fiscal irresponsibility. "This is not governance but financial anarchy. Telangana, a State once hailed for its fiscal prudence under K Chandrashekar Rao, is now staring at a debt disaster due to the Congress's reckless policies," said a senior BRS leader.

Surprisingly, the Congress had accused the previous BRS government of pushing the State into a debt trap, despite the latter initiating numerous development works and remaining among top States in capital expenditure at the national level which propelled the State's economic growth.

## No bail for former ISKCON monk

DHAKA

A court in the southeastern port city of Chattogram on Thursday denied bail to former ISKCON leader Chinmoy Krishna Das in a sedition case.

A group of 11 lawyers stood for him with a bail petition during the hearing for which Das appeared virtually. "The hearing continued for some 30 minutes when (Metropolitan Sessions) Judge Mohammad Saiful Islam heard both the prosecution and the defence lawyers and then rejected his bail petition," a court official said.

Das, formerly with the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) and now a spokesperson for the Bangladesh Sammilita Sanatani Jagran Jote, was arrested at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport

**Chinmoy Krishna Das was arrested for 'desecrating' the Bangladesh flag brought to Chattogram**

in Dhaka on November 25. He was brought to Chattogram where the court sent him to jail rejecting his bail petition the next day.

He was arrested on sedition charges for allegedly "desecrating" the Bangladesh flag brought to Chattogram where violence over his arrest left a government prosecutor dead, sparking tensions. "The allegation is baseless as it was not a national flag. We told the court that this case cannot proceed," defence counsel Apurba Kumar Bhattacharya said. **(SEE PAGE 2)**

## Thrashed by girl's family, Class X boy hangs self

STATE BUREAU  
Rajanna-Sircilla

Upset over being thrashed by the family of a girl, a Class X student, Chinthakindi Shiva Kishore (16), died reportedly by suicide in Bheemuni Mallareddy of Ghambhiraopet mandal. He was found hanging from the ceiling at home.

According to villagers, Shiva Kishore, who was studying in the local government high school, extended New Year greetings to the girl from the same village, who was also his classmate.

However, enraged over this, family members and relatives of the girl attacked the youngster on Wednesday afternoon and thrashed him severely. Upset over the thrashing, Kishore hanged himself at his home on Wednesday night. **(SEE PAGE 2)**

## RSS leader presents chadar at Ajmer dargah

JAIPUR

RSS leader and patron of the Muslim Rashtriya Manch, Indresh Kumar, presented a *chadar* at the Ajmer Dargah Sharif on Thursday on the occasion of the 813th Urs of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti.

The 40-ft-long *chadar* was sent from Delhi with a delegation from the Muslim Rashtriya Manch. Prayers for peace, harmony, and brotherhood in the country were also offered. Indresh Kumar's heartfelt message was read aloud from Buland Darwaza, emphasising the importance of mutual harmony, adopting Khwaja Garib Nawaz's teachings, and spreading his timeless message of love and unity.

Khwaja Saheb's annual Urs has been inspiring visitors with an enduring message of brotherhood and humanity, welcoming people from all walks of life to celebrate his legacy.

Union Minister for Minority and Parliamentary Affairs Kiren Rijiju will present the *chadar* on behalf of Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Dargah Sharif on Saturday. Haji Salman Chishti, Chairman Sufi Foundation and Gaddishin Ajmer Dargah said that PM Modi has been sending *chadar* to Ajmer Dargah for the last 10 years. **IAN5**

## BSF allowing infiltrators in India: Mamata

### Accuses it of torturing women

KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday accused the Border Security Force (BSF) of allowing infiltration from Bangladesh and alleged that they were doing so as part of a Central government's "blueprint" to destabilise the State, a charge the BSF denied, asserting it diligently guards the country's boundary.

Speaking at an administrative review meeting at the State Secretariat, Banerjee also alleged that the BSF was torturing women. "We have information that the BSF is letting infiltrators enter India through various border areas, including Islampur, Sitai and Chopra. This is a deliberate attempt to destabilise the state. There is a deep-rooted conspiracy involving the Central government," she said.

Banerjee claimed that she could sense a "blueprint of the Centre" behind this attitude of the BSF. "Goons are entering India. I want peace on both sides of the border.

This is a deliberate attempt to destabilise WB. There is a deep-rooted conspiracy...

— MAMATA BANERJEE  
WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

We have a good relationship with neighbouring Bangladesh," she said.

Asserting that "guarding of borders is not in our hands", the TMC chief said: "It's the BSF's duty. The Trinamool Congress doesn't guard the border. When people enter, where are they going? The DMs have information on where they are going." Banerjee's remarks drew sharp and strong reactions from the force as well as from the BJP leaders. A BSF official dismissed the allegations, emphasising that the force was performing its duties with sincerity. **(SEE PAGE 2)**

## DOING HIS BIT



A Paryavaran Mitra (Snow Warrior) of Nagar Palika Parishad Joshimath picks up garbage thrown by tourists, as part of a campaign to save the environment, in Chamoli district of Uttarakhand on Thursday. — Photo: PTI

## Leakage at Srisailem power house triggers concerns

**HYDERABAD:** Srisailem Left Bank power house, a crucial component of Telangana's energy infrastructure, faced an unexpected crisis. Over the past few days, a minor leakage was detected in the cooling system, causing concern among engineers and staff. The leakage, originating from a small crack in one of the draft tubes, had led to water seeping into and pooling around the turbine. This was dismissed initially as just a minor inconvenience; but it posed a serious threat to the operations of the plant. The continuous flow of water around the turbine could lead to corrosion and operational issues, if not addressed soon. **(SEE PAGE 2)**

## NSP faces structural issues due to potholes on spillway

**HYDERABAD:** After experiencing two years of poor inflows, the Nagarjuna Sagar Project is now facing the issues that come with abundant water flows. For the last six months, the project has been continuously releasing floodwaters after retaining as much as possible to maintain its gross storage levels. This has had a considerable impact on the spillways. A pressing issue before the project authorities is the appearance of potholes on the project spillway. These potholes, ranging from 1-6 meters deep, could pose a risk to the structural integrity of the dam. If not addressed promptly and properly, these could lead to further deterioration. **(REPORT PAGE 5)**

## Cold wave-like conditions grip State

CITY BUREAU  
Hyderabad

A fresh spell of cold wave-like conditions, after a break of nearly 15-days, has gripped Hyderabad and parts of Telangana, causing a steep drop in minimum temperatures and extensive fogging in the early hours of Thursday.

With the pattern of weather shifting, the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD)-Hyderabad on Thursday evening, in its updated forecast, said the minimum temperatures will hover between 2 degrees C and 3 degrees C in a few isolated districts of Telangana, in addition to mist or hazy conditions in the morning over the next five days.

After December 17, 2024, when the minimum temperatures at several locations in Telangana and Hyderabad dropped to single digits, temperatures started to rise



Youngsters unwind by Hussain Sagar as the sun sets on a chill winter evening on Thursday. — Photo: Anand Dharamana

and hover between 17 degrees C and 19 degrees C due to excessive cloud cover. However, with weather remaining largely dry, there has been a resurgence of cold-wave like conditions in Telangana with the start of the New Year.

On Thursday, in Hyderabad, the University of Hyderabad (UoH) campus in

and Vanasthalipuram, on Thursday. Based on the weather data from the Telangana State Development Planning Society (TSDDS), the minimum temperatures in multiple regions of Hyderabad, which used to hover between 15 degrees C and 19 degrees C till the last few days, has now dropped to less than 15 degrees C. At Moula Ali, the minimum temperature dropped to 12.1 degrees C, while Rajendranagar recorded a minimum of 12.3 degrees C.

Single digit minimum temperatures ranged from 7.3 degrees to 9.9 degrees in Kumram Bheem Asifabad, Sangareddy and Adilabad districts. Another mandal in Kumram Bheem Asifabad, Tiryani, recorded a minimum of 8 degrees, while Kohir in Sangareddy district recorded a minimum of 8.4 degrees C.

**(SIRPUR SHIVERS PAGE 4)**

## Protests over hidden cams in engg college

CITY BUREAU  
Hyderabad

Allegations of girl students being surreptitiously filmed using hidden mobile cameras in a washroom of an engineering college on the city outskirts resulted in massive protests on the college campus.

The impromptu protests on Wednesday night snowballed with other students and students unions lending support and joining the aggrieved girl students on the campus on Thursday.

The students allege that around 300 private videos were secretly recorded in the girls' washroom over the last three months but the college management kept the issue under wraps. Expressing suspicions of some hostel workers being involved in recording the videos, the students claim

that the management had threatened them with severe consequences if the issue went out.

The secret filming in the washroom came to light on New Year's Eve when a girl student, who went to use the washroom after attending a musical night, found a mobile camera in the ventilator. According to a complaint registered with the Medchal police, the student informed the warden about the hidden mobile, but the warden allegedly did not respond immediately and take any action.

The complaint also alleged that evidence was removed from the scene and there was neither proper management nor supervision of the hostels. Men were roaming the hostel premises at night and there was no proper security, the student said. **(SEE PAGE 2)**