



NATION | PAGE 05

Naidu ignoring poll promises, says YSRCP chief Jagan



WORLD | PAGE 07

Trump's conviction upheld in hush money case, but no jail

New York judge indicates that he favours a so-called unconditional discharge



SPORT | PAGE 08

Sydney Test in balance; Pant scores blistering 50

In a nutshell

Hidden cam found in girls' toilet

MAHABUBNAGAR: Days after girl students of CMR Engineering College in Medchal district alleged that the hostel staff recorded their videos in bathrooms, another incident of videos being recorded through a mobile phone camera in Mahabubnagar Government Polytechnic College girls' toilets came to light on Saturday. One youngster has reportedly been taken into custody. **STATE PAGE 4**

Man feeds monkeys, fined

MANCHERIAL: Forest officials imposed a fine of Rs 3,000 against a man for feeding monkeys in the forests of Bheemaram mandal centre. Mancherial Forest Range Officer Rathnakar Rao said the fine was imposed against Odelu of Mahdumpur village from Karimnagar for offering snacks to monkeys in the forests. He said a special team caught Odelu while he was feeding monkeys.

Sullivan to visit India on Jan 5-6

WASHINGTON: Outgoing US National Security Advisor (NSA) Jake Sullivan will travel to India on January 5 and 6 to meet his counterpart Ajit K Doval and other top government officials for a final round of talks on a wide range of bilateral, regional and global issues and to finalise some ongoing initiatives that were important priorities for them to wrap up, the White House said in a statement on Friday. **PTI**

3 held for C'garh scribe's murder

RAIPUR: Three persons were arrested in connection with the murder of journalist Mukesh Chandrakar in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district, while Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma announced the setting up of a Special Investigation Team to probe the case. The Deputy Chief Minister also claimed the main accused was a Congress leader. **PTI**

Congress at it again! Slashes Rythu Bharosa to Rs 12,000

Citing financial woes, Revanth goes back on hiking aid to Rs 15,000

STATE BUREAU
HYDERABAD

The Congress government, which came to power riding high on its promise of hiking the Rythu Bharosa financial assistance for farmers from Rs 10,000 to Rs 15,000 per acre, has once again revealed its deceptive side by limiting the hike to just Rs 12,000 annum. Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, who said the financial assistance would be released from January 26, blamed the current financial condition of the State for his inability to keep his promise.

Addressing the media after a Cabinet meeting here on Saturday, Revanth Reddy said the government was "forced" by the financial condition of the State to reduce the Rythu Bharosa amount. "We will ensure that every



cultivated land in the State gets the benefits of the scheme," he said, also hinting at possible attempts to restrict the number of beneficiaries of the agricultural input scheme, which as Rythu Bandhu under the BRS government had pulled Telangana out of an agrarian crisis and earned plaudits with even the Centre repli-

cating it. The Chief Minister said landless farmers and tenant farmers would also be provided Rs 12,000 annually under the Indiramma Atmiya Bharosa scheme. A sub-committee, constituted to recommend eligibility criteria for beneficiaries, submitted its report during the meeting. The Chief Minister also an-

FARMERS BETRAYED, SAYS HARISH

HYDERABAD: Coming down heavily on the Congress government in the State for backing out on its guarantees, BRS leader and former Minister T Harish Rao accused the Congress government of betraying Telangana's farmers with false promises. The Congress party, which came to power on the back of grand promises to increase investment support under Rythu Bandhu and provide Rs 15,000 per acre annually through its "Rythu Bharosa" scheme, has failed to deliver on its commitments. Reacting to the cabinet decision to give only Rs 6,000 per acre per season, he recalled that during the election campaigns, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy had confidently proclaimed, "BRS is giving Rs 10,000 now; vote for us, and we will provide Rs 15,000." However, after securing power, the Congress government had reduced the Rythu Bharosa scheme to just Rs 6,000 per acre per season, far below the Rs 7,500 per season they had assured. This has led to widespread disappointment among farmers, who feel betrayed by the government's inability to keep its word. **(SEE PAGE 2)**

nounced that all eligible families in the State would be provided ration cards soon. "The government has decided to provide ration cards to all the people who deserve it," he said. The Cabinet also discussed the formation of a Yadagirigutta Temple Trust Board modelled after the Tirumala Tirupati Dev-

asthanam (TTD) and the timing of upcoming elections for local bodies, including Gram Panchayats, Zilla Parishads, and Mandal Parishads, which are expected to take place after the Sankranti festival. The Indiramma housing and distribution of fine rice through ration shops was also discussed.

Gruha Jyothi scheme flickers

ANIL KUMAR
Hyderabad

Even as the State government is making tall claims about providing free power of up to 200 units under the Gruha Jyothi Scheme, lakhs of consumers across Telangana are in a fix as they have been deprived of the benefit.

The beneficiaries claim that several eligible people

were left out in the first phase of the Gruha Jyothi Scheme and the government has asked them to re-apply. However, since then a large number of people are not receiving zero bills. Sources say in the districts of Hyderabad, Rangareddy and Medchal, a total of 19.8 lakh applications were submitted under the Gruha Jyoti Scheme as part of the Praja Palana programme. However, around 2.50 lakh eligible applicants are still receiving electricity bills, with no benefit being ex-

tended to them. A similar situation is prevailing in all the districts of the State. Officials have attributed this issue to incomplete data entry, which is preventing eligible consumers from receiving the promised zero bills.

As per official data, there are over 1,31,48,000 household electricity connections in the State, of which 1.05 crore households consume 200 units per month. Despite fulfilling all conditions, many eligible individuals are still facing difficulties in waiving their electricity bills. During the Budget Session, the government presented data indicating that 42.25 lakh people were receiving free electricity.

There is no clarity on when the rest of the eligible beneficiaries will receive the benefits. The government has been issuing zero bills under the Scheme since March last year. **(SEE PAGE 2)**

2.5 LAKH ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS STILL RECEIVING ELECTRICITY BILLS IN HYDERABAD, RANGAREDDY AND MEDCHAL DISTRICTS

'Revanth misleading people on finances'

KTR says Chief Minister unable to run govt

STATE BUREAU
Rajanna-Sircilla

BRS working president KT Rama Rao came down heavily on Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, stating that he was trying to mislead the people of the State with blatant lies on the economic condition of the State.

Commenting on Revanth Reddy's statement that the financial condition of the State was in a miserable condition and that the State was in a debt trap, Rama Rao said being the head of the State, Revanth Reddy should not have made such a statement.

Reacting sharply to Congress leaders' comments that the previous BRS government had pushed the State into debts, Rama Rao

KLIS IS LIFELINE, THOSE WHO WROTE IT OFF OWE APOLOGY: KTR

HYDERABAD: Highlighting the importance of the Kaleshwaram project for the State and the Hyderabad city in particular, BRS working president KT Rama Rao pointed out that despite the project being targeted with deliberate criticism, it turned out to be the only source quenching the thirst of Telangana. **(REPORT PAGE 3)**

termed such statements false and said there was no truth in those allegations.

When the separate State was formed, Rs 369 crore was the surplus revenue of Telangana in 2014. When the Congress came to power, this had shot up to Rs 5,944 crore.

The BRS government had enhanced the revenue of the State by striving hard for 10 years. Surprisingly, the

Congress government had pegged Rs 1000 crore as surplus revenue in the recent Budget.

Contrary to Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka's announcement, the Chief Minister was claiming that the financial condition of the State was bad. This was nothing but misleading the public with lies. **(SEE PAGE 2)**



Farmers gather at the Khanuari border during the Kisan Mahapanchayat seeking a legal guarantee on the minimum support price for crops, in Sangrur district, Punjab, on Saturday. — Photo: PTI **(REPORTS PAGE 5)**

UNITED THEY STAND

No HMPV cases in State so far

M SAI GOPAL
Hyderabad

So far no case of Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV), which is being reported in large numbers in China, has been reported in Telangana, Director of Public Health (DPH), Telangana on Saturday said.

In an advisory on Saturday, the DPH, Dr B Ravinder Naik said that there was no cause for alarm regarding HMPV reports from China.

"So far, no case of HMPV has been reported in Telangana. The Health Department has analyzed the data of prevailing respiratory infections in Telangana state. There is no substantial increase of such infections in December 2024 compared to last year December, 2023," the DPH said. The health department is monitoring the situation closely in collaboration with health officials from union Ministry of Health

'HMPV NOT KILLER VIRUS LIKE COVID'

NEW DELHI: An expert from the IMA said HMPV does not cause fatalities like Covid-19 but can cause lung infection in some. Dr Rajeev Jayadevan, chairman of Kerala State IMA Research Cell, said HMPV is common in youth. **(SEE PAGE 2)**

and Family Welfare (MOHFW), New Delhi.

"HMPV is like any other respiratory virus which causes common cold and flu-like symptoms during winter season, especially among younger and older age groups. However, as a part of precautionary measure, we have urged people to follow certain Dos and Don'ts as a safe guard against respiratory infections," the DPH said.

Life sprouts in space: ISRO

NEW DELHI

ISRO on Saturday said the cowpea seeds it had sent to space onboard the PSLV-C60 POEM-4 platform have germinated under microgravity conditions within four days of the launch of the mission.

The space agency sent eight cowpea seeds as part of the Compact Research Module for Orbital Plant Studies (CROPS) experiment conducted by the

Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) to study plant growth in microgravity conditions. "Life sprouts in space! VSSC's CROPS experiment onboard PSLV-C60 POEM-4 successfully sprouted cowpea seeds in 4 days. Leaves expected soon," ISRO said on X.

The PSLV-C60 mission placed two SpaDeX satellites in orbit on the night of December 30. The fourth stage of the rocket carrying the POEM-4 platform has

been orbiting the earth with 24 onboard experiments at an altitude of 350 km since Tuesday. The experiment aims to understand how plants grow in the unique conditions of space, which is essential for future long-duration space missions.

The experiment involves growing eight cowpea seeds in a controlled environment with active thermal regulation, simulating conditions that plants might encounter during space travel. **PTI**

4 soldiers die as Army truck falls into gorge

SRINAGAR

Four Army personnel died and another was injured when their vehicle skidded off the road and fell into a gorge due to inclement weather and poor visibility in Jammu and Kashmir's Bandipora district on Saturday, the second tragedy in less than two weeks.

The accident occurred near SK Payen in the north

Kashmir district where the soldiers were on duty, officials said. The region had received snowfall on Thursday and there were foggy conditions on Saturday.

The Army said "while performing duty in Bandipora, a vehicle of Indian Army skid and fell into the gorge due to inclement weather and poor visibility conditions". J&K L-G Manoj Sinha paid tributes. **PTI**

Scientist Chidambaram passes away

NEW DELHI

Emergent physicist Rajagopala Chidambaram, who played a key role in the nuclear tests of 1974 and 1998, passed away on Saturday, according to the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE). He was 88.

Chidambaram, who was also associated with the nuclear weapons programme, breathed his last at Jaslok Hospital in Mumbai, a DAE official said. Prime Minister Modi said he was "deeply saddened" by his demise. "He was one of the key architects of India's nuclear programme and made ground-breaking contributions in strengthening India's scientific and strategic capabilities. He will be remembered with gratitude by the whole nation and his efforts will inspire generations to come," the Prime Minister said. **(SEE PAGE 2)**

Delhi man cons 700 women on dating apps

NEW DELHI

Delhi Police arrested a 23-year-old man who allegedly scammed over 700 women after befriending them on dating applications by posing as a US-based model, officials said on Saturday.

The cyber police station of West district arrested Tushar Bisht on charges of exploiting online platforms such as Bumble and Snapchat to lure his victims,

blackmail them using private photos and videos, and extort money, a statement issued by Delhi Police said.

"Posing as a US-based freelance model, the accused created fake identities using a virtual international mobile number and photographs of a Brazilian model," Deputy Commissioner of Police (West), Vichitra Veer, said in the statement. Bisht used the fake pro-

files to connect with women aged between 18 and 30 years on various online dating platforms. "His primary targets were users of Bumble, Snapchat and WhatsApp," the statement said.

The DCP said Bisht gained his victims' trust by engaging in conversations, and convinced them to share private and intimate images and videos.

"Once he obtained the content, he resorted to

blackmail, threatening to leak the sensitive material online, or sell them to dark web unless the victims paid him," the DCP said.

Preliminary investigation revealed that the accused interacted with over 500 women on Bumble and 200 others on Snapchat and WhatsApp, police said.

The accused's mobile phone contained incriminating evidence, including objectionable data of victims, a

virtual mobile number, and details of financial transactions involving extortion.

The police also seized 13 credit cards linked to various banks, the statement said.

The matter came to light on December 13, last year, when a Delhi University student filed a complaint with the cyber police station claiming that she had connected with the accused on Bumble earlier in the year. **PTI**