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No welfare scheme cuts if BJP wins Delhi, says PM



WORLD | PAGE 09
30 killed in fresh Israeli attacks on Gaza Strip
 Aircraft targeted residential house; 11 bodies recovered so far



SPORT | PAGE 10
Listless India mauled, Aus reclaim BGT after 10 years

In a nutshell

Villager injured in bomb blast

MULUGU: A villager was injured when a pressure bomb, allegedly laid by Maoists, went off in Veerabhadravaram forest area of Venkata-puram (Nuguru) mandal of the district on Sunday. According to reports, the villager, Nagaraju, who went into the forest to collect firewood, accidentally stepped on a pressure bomb and it went off, injuring him. The villagers shifted Nagaraju to Eturnagaram Government Hospital for treatment.

Cop ends life in Amberpet

HYDERABAD: A police constable, posted at the Pargi police station in Vikarabad district, reportedly died by suicide at his house in Amberpet in the city on Sunday. A 2002 batch constable, Bhanu Shanker worked in Vikarabad while his wife and two children stayed at Amberpet. On Sunday, while the family was at home, the constable went into a room and hanged himself from a ceiling fan. The family tried to revive him, but their efforts failed.

4 Naxalites, cop killed in encounter

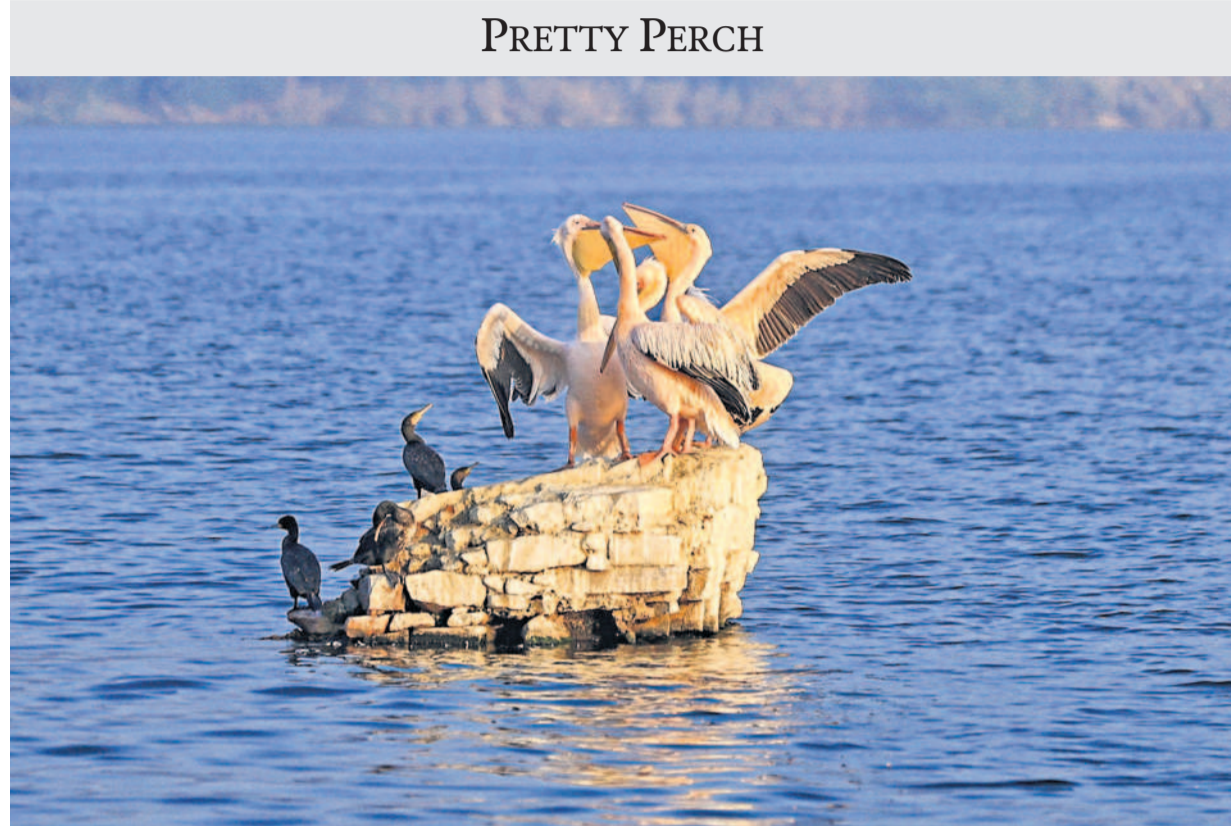
DANTEWADA: Four Naxalites were killed in an encounter with security forces in Chhattisgarh's Bastar region, a senior police official said. A head constable of the District Reserve Guard was also killed in the face-off, he said. The gunfight broke out on Saturday evening at a forest in south Abujh-maad along the border of Narayanpur and Dantewada when a joint team of the DRG and STF was out on an anti-Naxalite operation. PTI

Maha Kumbh: Mass conversions feared

LUCKNOW: Ahead of the Maha Kumbh, a cleric has written to UP CM Yogi Adityanath expressing fears that mass conversions of Muslims will take place during the event, while other community leaders have flagged the alleged demand raised by some Hindu seers' body to keep Muslims out of the gathering. Cleric Maulana Shahabuddin Razvi Bareilly urged Adityanath to "thwart plans". NATION PAGE 8

CHICKEN RATES IN HYDERABAD

Farm.....	Rs. 111
Retail live.....	Rs. 133
With skin.....	Rs. 193
Skinless.....	Rs. 219
Egg Rates (12 eggs).....	Rs. 72



Flocks of pelicans and cormorants congregate at the Man Sagar Lake in Jaipur on Sunday. — Photo: PTI

PRETTY PERCH

Skeletal fluorosis back to haunt Nalgonda

New cases signal potential public health issue

STATE BUREAU
 Hyderabad

Besides cases of dental fluorosis that were detected in Marriguda mandal of Nalgonda district recently, resurgence of skeletal fluorosis in a cluster of villages has also been confirmed.

A few skeletal fluorosis cases were identified during an intensive survey taken up by the Department of Medical and Health in selective pockets and it has signalled a potential public health issue, also reigniting concerns over water contamination issues in the region.

The effective implementation of Mission Bhagiratha in recent times, after the programme had ensured freedom from the fluoride

Implementation of Mission Bhagiratha in recent times, after it ended fluoride menace 3 years ago, now under question

menace three years ago, is now under question.

Health staff had conducted over 34,800 door-to-door contacts to identify serious fluorosis symptoms, focusing on children and elderly population in the affected villages.

While the number of skeletal fluorosis cases among the elderly is not large enough, the potential for a wider outbreak re-

mains a pressing concern, said officials. The resurgence of both skeletal and dental fluorosis in villages with a history of fluoride contamination has prompted the district administration to re-evaluate the drinking water supply under Mission Bhagiratha, with effective implementation of the programme running into glitches of late.

With evidence pointing to water contamination as a contributing factor, ensuring safe and clean water for all residents is now a top priority. Health experts cautioned that while the immediate numbers may not be alarming, the possibility of a fluoride relapse could have long-term implications. (SEE PAGE 2)

Speeding truck mows down family, 3 killed

CITY BUREAU
 Hyderabad

In a heart-wrenching incident, three members of a family were killed, while a child is battling for life, after a truck hit their two-wheeler, at Medchal on Sunday. Those killed have been identified as Bullabai (37), Lavanya (30) and Harshita (10), while four-year-old Siddeshwar is undergoing treatment.

According to the police, the family was going from Uppal towards Yellampet Medchal to visit their relatives. Around 4 pm, a container truck with a Nagaland registration number hit their two-wheeler from behind and ran over them.

"The driver was reckless and hit the two-wheeler. Three members of the family died on the spot and the boy was rushed to hospital," said Medchal Inspector A Satyanarayana.

Adilabad villagers attack forest officials

STATE BUREAU
 Adilabad

Tension prevailed for a while when some villagers allegedly pelted stones on forest officials and vandalised a vehicle after officials seized timber logs at Keshavapatnam village in Echoda mandal on Sunday.

Forest officials said that a team of around 50 forest officials led by Uttoor FDO Revanth Chandra were carrying out raids on houses of certain suspects at the village known for felling teak trees and smuggling the timber, after receiving in-

formation about a huge dump of timber. Some residents began pelting stones on the officials, and damaged the windshield of a vehicle of the department resulting in the tension.

The officials said that some villagers surrounded the forest officials and partially damaged a windshield of an official vehicle for conducting the raids. Forest officials were forced to run for safety. No official sustained injury in the incident. A complaint will be lodged with the police. Timber worth Rs 3.5 lakh was seized during the raids. (SEE PAGE 2)

3 killed in Gujarat Coast Guard helicopter crash

PORBANDAR/NEW DELHI

Two pilots and an aircrew diver of an Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) of the Indian Coast Guard were killed when the chopper crashed and caught fire at Gujarat's Porbandar airport on Sunday, government authorities said.

The crew members killed in the accident have been identified as Commandant Saurabh, Deputy Commandant SK Yadav and Manoj Pradhan Navik, according to a Defence Ministry statement. (SEE PAGE 2)



Rescue work under way after a helicopter of the Indian Coast Guard crashed during landing at Porbandar airport. — Photo: PTI

At 70, Hyderabad scales 12,000-ft range

YUVRAJ AKULA
 Hyderabad

Seventy summers and yet, he is neither tired nor retired. And neither diminished is his yearning to scale new summits. Dr A Babu Rajendra Prasad Reddy, the 70-year-old Hyderabad, decided to trek the breathtaking Himalayas, a challenge for trekkers even half his age, and he did.

Former CEO of NIIT Middle East turned serial entrepreneur, Reddy amidst bone chilling weather with temperatures touching -7°C and harsh winds, journeyed to reach 12,000 feet altitude through rugged terrain with a 10-kg backpack. For him, it was not just reaching the summit, but also breaking barriers, which come with age.

He drew motivation from his daughter Sindhu, who already completed five treks in Himalayan range. An avid runner who completed a full marathon and three half-marathons, Reddy along with 24 member trek group started from the base camp at Raithel, Uttarakhand. "Sensing our enthusiasm, organisers increased the target by a few more feet to make it 12,000 feet and we took about 36 hours to hit the summit. The trek was beautiful with Gangotri and Yamunotri ranges providing us a scenic background," he recalls.

Initially, Dr Reddy's age seemed an obstacle. The trekking organisation, Indiahikes, which this septuagenarian joined, had an upper age limit of 62 years for trekking. However, Dr Reddy came out with flying colours in the fitness test including heart parameters. (SEE PAGE 2)



Dr A Babu Rajendra Prasad Reddy.

THE TREK WAS BEAUTIFUL WITH GANGOTRI AND YAMUNOTRI PROVIDING A SCENIC BACKGROUND... APART FROM A SEVERE WINTER, SCALING THE LAST STRETCH WAS TOUGH
 — DR A BABU RAJENDRA PRASAD REDDY

No entry in OYO for unmarried couples

NEW DELHI

Travel booking major OYO has launched a new check-in policy for partner hotels, starting from Meerut, introducing guidelines effective this year whereby unmarried couples will no longer be welcome to check in.

Under the revised policy, all couples will be asked to present valid proof of relationship at the time of check-in, including for bookings made online. OYO has empowered its partner hotels' discretion to decline

couple bookings based on their judgment, aligning with local social sensibility, the company said.

OYO has given the directive to its partner hotels in Meerut to ensure this with immediate effect. Based on ground feedback, the company may expand this to more cities, people familiar with the policy change said.

"OYO has received feedback in the past from civil society groups, especially in Meerut (Uttar Pradesh), urging action to address this issue," they said. (SEE PAGE 2)

Cold wave to last three more days

CITY BUREAU
 Hyderabad

The cold wave conditions in Telangana are expected to continue for three more days with minimum temperatures in some places to be below normal by 2-4°C.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD)-Hyderabad, in its early morning forecast on Sunday, indicated that early morning fog and misty conditions at multiple locations in the State are also expected to continue for five more days.

Meanwhile, the cold wave conditions continued to remain active in Hyderabad

Coldest areas (Temperatures in degrees C as on Saturday morning)

HYDERABAD	TELANGANA
UoH campus: 10.5	Bheempur (Adilabad): 5.9
BHEL Factory (Ramachandrapuram): 10.6	Sirpur (Kumram Bheem Asifabad): 6.0
Rajendranagar: 10.6	Tiryani (Kumram Bheem Asifabad): 6.1
Moula Ali: 11.1	Bela (Adilabad): 6.3
Gachibowli: 12.1	Mavalala (Adilabad): 7.1

and in the districts for the fourth day straight. The lowest average minimum temperature recorded between Saturday night and

Sunday morning was 5.9°C at Bheempur, Adilabad, followed by 6°C at Sirpur in Kumaram Bheem Asifabad. Bela and Mavalala mandal

headquarters and Bela mandal centre recorded the minimum temperature of 6.3°C and 7.1°C, respectively. Adilabad Rural, Neradigonda, Adilabad Urban, Talamadu, Tamsi and Talamadugu mandals saw minimum temperatures dropping below 11°C. Meanwhile, in Kumram Bheem Asifabad, Ginnedhari village of Tiryani mandal recorded minimum temperature of 7.1°C, while Kerameri mandal saw 8.3°C. Jainoor, Asifabad, Sirpur (T), Bejjur and Wankidi mandals were gauged to be between 9°C and 11°C. In Hyderabad, the average minimum was 10-11.5°C.