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 Future lies in 'budh', not in 'yudh', says Modi



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 Russian missile attack on southern Ukraine kills 13
 Nothing more brutal than aerial bombing of a city, says Zelenskyy



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 India eye strong start in 1st ODI against Ireland

In a nutshell

Playback singer Jayachandran dies
THRISSUR: P Jayachandran, the celebrated playback singer who recorded over 16,000 songs in Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Hindi, died at the age of 80. The singer died while undergoing treatment at a private hospital here, hospital sources said. Jayachandran was widely recognised for his contribution to Indian music, having won several awards for best playback singer. He was also honoured with the Kerala government's prestigious JC Daniel Award. **PTI**

Gold price rises by Rs 300 per 10 gms
NEW DELHI: Gold price climbed Rs 300 for a third consecutive session to Rs 80,300 per 10 grams in the national capital on Thursday amid strong global cues, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Traders said the precious metal surged, following news that People's Bank of China increased its reserves for the second consecutive month. In the previous session, the yellow metal of 99.9 per cent purity ended at Rs 80,000 per 10 grams. **PTI**

80-year-old tests HMPV +ve in Guj
AHMEDABAD: An 80-year-old man tested positive for HMPV infection in Ahmedabad city of Gujarat on Thursday. The patient is currently receiving treatment at a private hospital and he does not have any travel history abroad, a statement issued by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation said. He was admitted to the hospital on Wednesday and his samples tested positive for HMPV on Thursday. The man has been suffering from asthma for some time and his condition is stable. **PTI**

L&T chief calls for 90-hr work week
NEW DELHI: After Infosys' NR Narayana Murthy's controversial 70-hour-a-week work, it is now the turn of Larsen & Toubro Chairman SN Subrahmanyam, who has gone beyond Murthy's work call, suggesting employees to work 90 hours a week — including Sundays — to stay competitive. In a video message, Subrahmanyam sparked a controversy with his comments, suggesting employees should work 90 hours a week. **NATION PAGE 8**

ACB on wild goose chase: KTR

Says it has nothing new to ask in Formula-E case with same questions repeated



BRS working president KT Rama Rao at the Telangana Bhavan in Hyderabad on Thursday.

STATE BUREAU
 HYDERABAD
 BRS working president KT Rama Rao on Thursday said the Anti-Corruption Bureau was on a wild goose chase, and that for the seven hours they questioned him, officials had nothing new to ask with the same questions being repeated several times. Stating that just like there was 'no Mysore in Mysore bonda', he said the ACB's corruption case had no corruption in it.

Speaking to the media after coming out of the ACB office in Banjara Hills, where he had reached at 10 am, Rama Rao reiterated that the ACB probe was a politically motivated exercise orchestrated by Chief

Though they might arrest and imprison me eventually, I will come out clean. I have complete faith in the judiciary

— KT RAMA RAO, BRS WORKING PRESIDENT

Minister A Revanth Reddy. However, he declared his willingness to cooperate further, asserting that he had nothing to hide as he had done nothing wrong. "This is a frivolous and politically motivated case. The officials are on a wild goose chase. Though they might arrest and imprison me eventually, I will come out clean. I have complete faith in the judiciary and will explore all legal avenues," he asserted.

Rama Rao was given a rousing welcome by the party cadre as he stepped out of the ACB office, with a massive rally being taken to Telangana Bhavan in a mark of defiance, raising slogans against Revanth Reddy and the Congress government. At the party headquarters, he was given a 'mangala harati' with supporters carrying him on their shoulders into his office.

Addressing the media persons at Telangana Bha-

van, the BRS working president revealed that ACB officials had posed 82 questions, many of which were repetitive. "The questions were prepared by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy himself. The officials, despite their competence, appeared clueless about the case," he said, adding that the frivolous case was filed against him under political pressure from Revanth Reddy.

He observed that the FIR lacked specifics about beneficiaries or proceeds of the alleged crime. The FIR failed to identify any beneficiary or proceeds of crime, underscoring the lack of evidence in the case, he said.

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Arvind Kumar appears before ED

HYDERABAD

Former MA&UD Department Special Chief Secretary Arvind Kumar appeared before the ED in the Formula-E case. The senior IAS reached the ED office around 11 am on Thursday. The ED is conducting the probe under the PMLA based on the FIR filed by the ACB. The agency is looking into possible violations of the FEMA. Former chief engineer of HMDA BLN Reddy appeared before the ED on Wednesday and the ED officials grilled him for nine hours. **IANIS**

Private bus operators cash in on Sankranti rush

CITY BUREAU
 Hyderabad

With Sankranti around the corner, private bus operators who are mandated to keep fares in line with the RTC rates are charging around three times the regular prices on major routes across Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

Families and individuals wishing to return to their native places in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana for the Sankranti festival via private buses and other means of transport are forced to pay exorbitant fares. Many private operators have increased their bus fares towards Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada, Kurnool, and Rajahmundry in Andhra Pradesh. Private operators are exploiting the high passenger demand, which typically peaks between January 10 and 15, by significantly increasing ticket prices. Nor-



Many operators increased bus fares towards Vizag, Vijayawada and Rajahmundry in Andhra Pradesh. — Photo: Surya Sridhar

mally, regular ticket fares for AC bus services range between Rs 1,000 and Rs 1,800 to Vijayawada, but during the current festive week, these fares have surged to as much as Rs 4,000 to Rs 5,000, even on routes such as from Hyderabad to Visakhapatnam. The TGSRTC and APSRTC are operating over 6,000 special buses each for passengers going to their native places this Sankranti.

They have requested citizens to book tickets in RTC services at normal rates and for hassle-free travel. Meanwhile, the RTA officials are carrying out special drives across the city against private buses for demanding high fares from passengers, and booking cases. On Thursday alone, about 15 private buses were seized for irregularities.

(RELATED REPORTS PAGE 2)

Three naxals killed in Ch'garh encounter

RAIPUR/SUKMA

Three naxalites were killed in an encounter with security forces in Chhattisgarh's Sukma district on Thursday, state Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma said. The security forces have achieved success in the anti-naxal operation in Sukma, he said.

So far, bodies of three Naxalites have been recovered and the search operation is still underway, Sharma, who holds the Home portfolio, told reporters in Raipur. Referring to the IED blast triggered by naxalites on January 6 wherein eight security personnel and a civilian driver of their vehicle were killed in Bijapur district, the deputy CM said, "There is huge anger among security forces after what naxalites have done." Last year, 219 naxalites were neutralised by security forces. **PTI**

Revanth govt starts off 2025 on slippery note

STATE BUREAU
 Hyderabad

The New Year has been no different for the Revanth Reddy-led Congress government, with last year's trend of bloopers, U-turns and broken promises continuing in 2025 as well.

To begin with, the extension of the Hyderabad Metro Rail beyond Medchal was projected as Revanth Reddy's 'New Year gift' to the people of Hyderabad. However, that soon turned out to be a poor PR stunt with people pointing out that the Metro Rail services to those parts of the city were announced by the BRS government and that Revanth Reddy's gift was just a few minor tweaks in the route.

The next blooper, however, is likely to have a long-lasting impact, especially with local body polls coming up. The State govern-

Announcement of Metro beyond Medchal backfired as many pointed out that it was already announced by BRS

ment declared that Rythu Bharosa would be launched from January 26. While the launch was good news, what came with the launch wasn't that good and in fact, made people ask why Revanth Reddy was so habituated to breaking his promises.

Rythu Bharosa
 This was after the financial assistance under the scheme was cut down from the promised Rs 15,000 to Rs 12,000 per acre per annum. This was also a blot on the Congress Assembly election manifesto. Even as farmers were protesting the be-

trayal, ongoing strikes by another section exposed another broken promise. During the Assembly elections in 2023, Revanth Reddy had promised the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan employees at Hanamkonda that their services would be regularised after the Congress government came to power. Forget the promise not being kept, Revanth Reddy in fact went to the extent of claiming services of SSA employees could not be regularised as it was a Central government scheme. Didn't he think of that while making the promise?

The U-turn approach continued when it came to the movie industry as well. After targeting actor Allu Arjun in the Assembly, the Congress announced that there would be no more ticket price hikes, no benefit shows and no special privileges for Tollywood. **(SEE PAGE 2)**

Four electrocuted in separate incidents

STATE BUREAU
 Nirmal/Adilabad

Four people, including two farmers, were electrocuted in separate incidents in Nirmal, Mancherla and Adilabad on Thursday.

In the first incident, a 69-year-old farmer, Panthulu Bhumanna, was electrocuted when he was operating an electric motor at his agriculture field at Mayapur village in Dilawarpur mandal on Wednesday night. His wife Adela lodged a complaint with the police. A case was registered, and investigations were taken up. In the second incident, Madavi Bheemrao (26), a

farmer, died on the spot when he touched a live wire while tying a swing for children at Dubbaguda village in Indervelli mandal on Thursday. He was survived by his wife and two children. A native of Dhanvenguda in Gudihathnoor mandal, Bheemrao, was visiting his relatives at Dubbaguda when the incident occurred.

In the third incident, a 35-year-old daily wage earner, Ravula Suresh of Kagaznagar town, was electrocuted when he accidentally touched a live wire in Ramakrishnapur on Wednesday evening. The incident came to light on Thursday. **(SEE PAGE 2)**

Stampede case: Naidu orders probe

TIRUPATI

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Thursday announced a judicial inquiry into the Tirupati temple stampede in which six people were killed and dozens injured, and transferred three senior officials including the Superintendent of Police of Tirupati district. One deputy superintendent of police, who was on the spot, has been suspended, he said.

Expressing grief over the incident, Naidu also announced Rs 25 lakh ex-gratia to the kin of the deceased and Rs 2 lakh to those injured. Addressing a press conference, the Chief Minister also attacked the previ-

IN THE PAST (YSRC REGIME), SO MANY PROBLEMS HAVE COME UP. WE ARE CORRECTING EVERYTHING. FOR LAST 5 YEARS, THEY LAUNCHED NEW PRACTICES.
 — N CHANDRABABU NAIDU, ANDHRA PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER

CROWD FOR VAIKUNTHA EKADASHI IS EXPECTED EVERY YEAR. WHY WERE THERE NO ARRANGEMENTS? WHY SECURITY NOT DEPLOYED?
 — YS JAGANMOHAN REDDY, YSRCP PRESIDENT

ous YSRCP for changing practices in the temple. According to him, a new system of issuing tokens was introduced by the previous regime in Tirupati as opposed to the earlier system of giving them in Tirumala

hills. "In the past, so many problems have come up. We are correcting everything, starting with 'prasadam', 'annadanam', even cottages, administration and everything. All of a sudden this incident happened. his inci-

dent also happened due to a legacy problem. Never in my lifetime tokens were given in Tirupati for 'darshan' (to see the deity). For the last five years, they (YSRCP) introduced new practices," Naidu said, without directly naming the Jagannathan Reddy-led party.

He further said he noticed some loopholes in the administration and monitoring mechanisms in Tirupati which should have been 'perfect'. Naidu also said no "adequate precautions" were taken while opening the gates and that triggered the incident. DSP reportedly opened the gate to help a sick woman come out of the area where the devotees were waiting. **(SEE PAGE 2)**

Cold wave sweeps Hyd, parts of State

CITY BUREAU
 Hyderabad

After a brief respite, the cold wave is back and is sweeping across Hyderabad and parts of Telangana State, with average minimum temperatures dropping by 2 degrees Celsius to 4 degrees Celsius.

Minimum temperatures fell to single digits at multiple locations in Hyderabad and its surrounding regions, especially Moinabad and Ibrahimpatnam in Rangareddy district and several areas in the districts of Adilabad, Kumram Bheem Asifabad, Kamareddy and Sangareddy between

Wednesday night and early hours of Thursday.

The ongoing coldwave is expected to continue for a day or two across Telangana State before minimum temperatures start rising again. The IMD-Hyderabad forecast said "Minimum temperatures are likely to be normal in next 3 days, thereafter likely to be below normal by 2 degrees Celsius to 3 degrees Celsius.

Dry Weather is very likely to prevail over the State. Mist/ Hazy conditions are very likely to prevail during morning hours at isolated pockets over Telangana during the next 5 days."