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Hospitalisation leading to financial ruin among families



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Congo declares war as rebels claim major city
Rwanda-backed M23 rebels capture Goma; gunfire heard throughout city



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India targets series win, SKY aims to regain form

In a nutshell

Complaints galore on schemes

HYDERABAD: The first day after the launch of four welfare schemes by the State government saw complaints from multiple sections. Many farmers, especially small and marginal ones, complained that they had not received the promised financial assistance under Rythu Bharosa. Similar complaints were aired by landless labourers as well. There were several complaints from hopeful beneficiaries of other schemes, including Indiramma Indlu.

STATE PAGE 5

Modi dials Trump to discuss ties

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday spoke to US President Donald Trump with a focus on enhancing the India-US partnership and jointly working towards global peace and security. Following the phone conversation, Modi said both sides are committed to "mutually beneficial" and "trusted partnership". "Delighted to speak with my dear friend President @realDonaldTrump @POTUS. Congratulated him on his historic second term," the Prime Minister said on X. PTI

Himachal IGP, 7 cops get lifer

CHANDIGARH: A special CBI court on Monday sentenced Himachal Pradesh Inspector General of Police Zahur Haider Zaidi and seven other policemen to life imprisonment in a 2017 custodial death case. On January 18, the court of special CBI judge Alka Malik convicted Zaidi and others in the case which pertains to the custodial death of an accused in the gang rape and murder of a minor girl in Kotkhai in Shimla district. The court also imposed a fine of Rs 1 lakh each. NATION PAGE 7

67 trafficked Indians rescued

VIENTIANE: Sixty-seven Indians who were trafficked and forced to work in cyber-seam centres in Laos have been rescued by the Embassy of India in Vientiane, officials said on Monday. These youth were forced to work there under intimidation and abuse by criminal syndicates operating in Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone in Bokeo province of Laos, the Indian mission said. The rescued individuals were transported to Vientiane. NATION PAGE 8

Gurdwaras in NY, New Jersey checked for illegal immigrants

WASHINGTON

Law enforcement officials from the US Department of Homeland Security have started visiting gurdwaras in New York and New Jersey to check for the presence of illegal immigrants, drawing a sharp reaction from some Sikh organisations which see such actions as a threat to the sanctity of their faith.

Some of the gurdwaras in New York and New Jersey are believed to be used as a hub by Sikh separatists along with illegal and undocumented immigrants.

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Within hours of Donald Trump being sworn in as the 47th President of the United States, acting Department of Homeland Security Secretary Benjamin Huffman in a directive rescinded the Biden administration's guidelines for the

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) enforcement actions that thwart law enforcement in or near so-called "sensitive" areas.

These "sensitive" areas included places of worship like gurdwaras and churches. "This action empowers the brave men and women in CBP and ICE to enforce our immigration laws and catch criminal aliens — including murderers and rapists — who have illegally come into our country," a spokesperson for the department said. PTI

Farmers attack agri market office



The farmers broke open the doors and damaged the furniture in the office at Achampet in Nagarkurnool on Monday.

STATE BUREAU
Nagarkurnool

Tension prevailed at the agriculture market in Achampet here on Monday afternoon, when farmers in large numbers attacked the market office and a few staff members complaining that remunerative prices were not being offered by traders for their groundnut crop.

The farmers thrashed Market Committee chairperson A Rajitha's husband A Mallesh and a couple of other staff members. Alleging that Mallesh and traders were hand in glove, the

farmers abused and thrashed him. As tempers were running high, Mallesh managed to escape and locked himself up in the market office. However, farmers broke open the doors and damaged the furniture in the office.

The farmers alleged that until three days ago, a quintal of groundnut was offered nearly Rs 7,000. On Monday, the traders were not offering remunerative prices and the prices were slashed to Rs.4,000 to Rs.4,500 per quintal, citing poor quality and other reasons, the farmers said. (SEE PAGE 2)

The Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TGSRTC) unions on Monday announced an indefinite statewide strike from February 9.

CITY BUREAU
Hyderabad

The Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TGSRTC) unions on Monday announced an indefinite statewide strike from February 9.

The Joint Action Committee, comprising members from a host of RTC unions, submitted a strike notice to VC Sajjanar, the Corporation's Managing Director, at Bus Bhavan on Monday.

The JAC members contend that they are vexed over the Congress government's apathy and inaction towards the welfare of the RTC employees. "Despite being in power for 14 months, the State government is yet to ground a single welfare measure aimed

LONG JOURNEY TO HOME



Displaced Palestinians return to their homes in the northern Gaza Strip, following Israel's decision to allow thousands of them to go back for the first time since the early weeks of the 15-month war with Hamas, on Monday. — Photo: AP (REPORTS PAGE 9)

at RTC employees and their family members. We have submitted our charter of demands and if they are not met in the coming days, a massive strike will be launched," the JAC members said after meeting the RTC MD.

If successful, it would be first RTC union strike to be taken up in the last five years. The RTC union leaders expressed dissatisfaction over the State government's inaction on promises made to the Corporation's employees.

There is a sense of fear among RTC employees regarding speculations of RTC privatisation that are circulating in Telangana. The employees fear that such a move could lead to large-scale retrenchment. (SEE PAGE 2)

Uttarakhand first State to implement UCC

DEHRADUN

BJP-ruled Uttarakhand on Monday became the first State in independent India to implement the Uniform Civil Code, which promotes equal laws for every citizen across all religions and standardises personal laws on marriage, divorce and property.

With the implementation of the UCC which applies to all people of Uttarakhand except those belonging to the Scheduled Tribe community, the BJP has fulfilled a major commitment made to people of the state ahead of the 2022 assembly polls which saw the party storming to power for a second consecutive term.

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said with this the UCC implementation, constitutional and civil rights of people have become uniform. PTI

RTC unions to go on strike from Feb 9

Waqf Amendment Bill gets panel nod

JPC accepts ruling alliance's changes, rejects Oppn's tweaks

NEW DELHI

The parliamentary committee scrutinising the Waqf Bill is set to propose that existing "Waqf by user" properties will remain so if not in dispute or are government facilities but they must be registered before the new law takes effect, providing little relief to Waqf bodies in their unverified title claims.

Opposition MPs on Monday proposed amendments in all 44 clauses of the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, seeking to mostly restore the provisions of the current Act, and claimed that the law proposed by the committee in its report would maintain the Bill's "draconian" character and the bid to interfere in the religious affairs of Muslims.

While the accepted amendments make some concessions to Muslim bodies criticising the Bill, including leaving it to Waqf



AIMIM MP Asaduddin Owaisi, TMC MP Kalyan Banerjee and others in New Delhi on Monday. — Photo: PTI

boards to decide on welfare measures for widows and orphans, among others, instead of mandating it by law, a few of them may further irk the critics. The meeting of the joint parliamentary committee headed by BJP MP Jagdambika Pal was again marked by noisy protests by opposition members, who accused him of "subverting" democratic process. The panel is set to adopt its report on Wednesday with MPs of opposition parties such as the Congress, TMC, DMK and the AIMIM expected to give their dissent, sources said.

The committee will now meet for one last time, likely on Wednesday, the timing for which was notified on Monday. All 32 amendments proposed by BJP MPs

and their allies from the TDP and the JD(U) were accepted. Opposition MPs put forward more than 500 amendments at Monday's meeting. With Parliament's Budget Session set to begin on January 31, the ruling BJP-led NDA can get the Bill passed in the first half of the session as it enjoys a majority in both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, they said.

Among the amendments that may draw objection from Muslims and opposition parties is that a Waqf board can now have even four non-Muslim members instead of two. One of the changes passed said "two members appointed under this sub-section, excluding ex-officio members, shall be non-Muslim", the sources said. (SEE PAGE 2)

Mansarovar Yatra to resume

NEW DELHI: India and China on Monday decided to resume the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra as the two sides agreed to take certain people-centric steps to "stabilise and rebuild" ties. The Ministry of External Affairs said this following Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri's talks with his Chinese counterpart Sun Weidong in Beijing. It said the two sides also agreed in principle to resume direct air services. (REPORT PAGE 7)

Boat blaze: Search on for missing man

HYDERABAD: A youngster from Nagaram, identified as Ajay, is missing following the fire accident on two boats at Hussain Sagar on Sunday night. On Monday morning, Ajay's family reached Hussain Sagar and informed police officials that he had been missing since the previous night. They requested a search operation to locate him. Civic authorities and police launched a joint search operation. (RELATED REPORT PAGE 3)

GBS cases cross 100 in Maha

NEW DELHI

The Centre has deployed a seven-member team of experts in Maharashtra to assist the State in monitoring and managing the increasing cases of Guillain-Barre Syndrome (GBS), an official source said on Monday.

Maharashtra reported its first suspected death linked to GBS in Solapur, while the number of cases of the im-

munological nerve disorder in Pune has crossed 100, health officials said on Monday. The man had come to Pune, where he is suspected to have contracted the disease, and died in Solapur, an official said without giving more details.

"The total number of GBS cases in Pune on Sunday increased to 101, comprising 68 males and 33 females. Of these, 16 are on ventilator

support. One suspected death has been reported in Solapur," the State health department official said.

Meanwhile, the Rapid Response Team and Pune Municipal Corporation's health department continued surveillance in the affected Singhad Road area in Pune. "A seven-member high-level team of experts has been deployed in Maharashtra," an official source said. PTI