



HYDERABAD | PAGE 02

Hyd records coldest March morning as mercury dips



BUSINESS | PAGE 08

100% tariffs aligns with WTO: Finance Minister
Sitharaman justifies it, says levied for national development



SPORT | PAGE 11

Grandmaster Arvindh wins Prague Masters

In a nutshell

India inks defence deal with Russia

NEW DELHI: The Defence Ministry on Friday said it has inked a \$248 million deal with Russia's Rosoboronexport for the procurement of engines for T-72 tanks. The deal also includes the transfer of technology from the Russian defence major to the state-run Armoured Vehicles Nigam Ltd (heavy vehicle factory) based at Avadi in Chennai. The Ministry said it has signed a contract worth \$248 million (approximately Rs 2,156 crore) with Rosoboronexport (RoE) for the procurement of 1,000 HP engines for T-72 tanks "in fully formed, completely knocked down and semi-knocked down conditions." PTI

IAF jet crashes in Haryana

CHANDIGARH: Indian Air Force's Jaguar aircraft crashed in Haryana's Panchkula district on Friday with the pilot ejecting safely, said a police official. He said the pilot manoeuvred the aircraft away from any habitation on the ground and there was no loss of life or injury reported to anyone on the ground. "The IAF aircraft crashed in the hilly terrain of Panchkula district (near Morni hills). The pilot ejected safely," SHO, Raipurani in Panchkula district said. Haryana Deputy Commissioner of Police Himadree Kaushik said the aircraft crashed in Raipurani area of Panchkula district. PTI

Ramzan Timings

Iftar Saturday 6:30 PM
Saheer Sunday 5:08 AM



Vidya on taking charge of money

Actor explains why financial independence is important

12

KCR to mark 25 years of BRS with public meeting

Event on April 27 in Warangal being planned as a turning point in TG politics

STATE BUREAU
HYDERABAD

Marking the 25th anniversary of the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS), party chief and former Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao has announced plans for a massive public meeting in Warangal on April 27.

The event, expected to draw lakhs of supporters, is being planned as a turning point in Telangana politics, with the BRS leadership preparing to take on both the Congress-led State government and the BJP-led Central government.

A crucial meeting was held at Chandrashekar Rao's Erravelli residence on Friday, where party leaders deliberated for over eight hours on the political roadmap ahead. He said the silver jubilee celebrations were not just about the BRS' foundation, but represent the aspirations of the Telangana people. He asserted that under the Congress rule, the State has witnessed rising dissatisfaction and uncertainty, proving that only the BRS can provide strong governance and pro-



BRS chief K Chandrashekar Rao addressing a party meeting at his Erravelli residence on Friday.

tect Telangana's interests. During the meeting, the former Chief Minister said Telangana was achieved after decades of struggle and sacrifices, and for 10 years, the BRS had set an example of governance. However, he said the progress made

under his administration was now being undone by the Congress regime. He called upon party workers to mobilise people in large numbers for the Warangal rally, which will serve as a platform to expose the failures of the Congress gov-

ernment. "The BRS party is not just a political entity, as it belongs to the Telangana people who consider it as their own. Today, people who believed in the Congress' promises during elections, feel deceived. They are looking back at the BRS

for help and are ready to bring it to power, whenever elections come," he declared.

The meeting also resolved to hold constituency-wise preparatory meetings leading up to the Warangal event. (SEE PAGE 2)

Stalin writes to CMs for fight on delimitation

Proposes first JAC meeting in Chennai on March 22, asks them to join the movement

CHENNAI

Chief Minister M K Stalin on Friday wrote to his counterparts in Kerala, Karnataka, West Bengal, Punjab, Odisha and party heads as well, inviting them to join hands with Tamil Nadu and be part of a Joint Action Committee for an "uncompromising fight", over delimitation of Lok Sabha seats, which he termed an unfair exercise.

Stalin proposed the inaugural JAC meeting in Chennai on March 22, 2025, and urged the leaders to join forces to chart a "collective course forward". Writing to CMs and leaders, he said reports suggest that the delimitation exercise is being considered based on population, with two potential approaches. In the first case, the existing 543 seats could be redistributed among the States, and in the second,

the total number of seats could be increased beyond 800. "In both scenarios, all the states that have successfully implemented population control measures stand to lose significantly if the exercise is based on post 2026 population. We should not be thus penalised for effectively controlling population growth and upholding national development goals," he said.

Despite the gravity of this issue, the Centre has provided neither clarity nor any concrete commitment to address concerns. Their representatives have vaguely said delimitation would follow a "pro-rata" basis, without explaining the base that will be used for such pro-rata calculation.

Further, the Chief Minister slammed "empty rhetoric" than no State will face a decrease in its seats. "When the very foundation of our democracy is at stake, can we accept such vague assurances? When our states' futures hang in the balance, do we not deserve transparent dialogue?" he asked. "I believe this issue transcends individual State concerns — it strikes at the heart of our federal principles," he said. PTI

Contractors protest at Bhatti's chambers



Civil contractors at Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka's chambers in the Secretariat on Friday.

STATE BUREAU
HYDERABAD

Vexed with the Telangana government's apathy in addressing their issues, civil contractors assembled at Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka's chambers in the Secretariat on Friday and demanded that their pending bills to be cleared before this month end.

Under the aegis of the Telangana Civil Contractors Welfare Association, the contractors warned that if the government failed to clear their bills, protests, including relay hunger

strikes, would be staged in Hyderabad.

The contractors from 33 districts arrived at the Deputy Chief Minister's chambers. They charged that their bills had been pending since long and the government was delaying the payments.

Majority of them were small and medium contractors and claimed that the bills of big contractors were being cleared promptly. The association members wanted to meet the Deputy CM and submit a representation, but the Special Protection Force denied them permission. (SEE PAGE 2)

15 IPS officers transferred

CITY BUREAU
HYDERABAD

The State government on Wednesday transferred 15 IPS officers and gave them new postings. The officers with their new postings are Mahesh Muralidhar Bhagwat - Additional DGP (L&O) Telangana, Swati Lakra - Additional DG Organisations and Home Guards, Vijay Kumar - Additional DG, Personnel and will also hold the additional charge of Additional DG Sports and Welfare.

Sanjay Kumar Jain - Additional DG TGSP Battalions, M Stephen Raveendra - Additional DG, GreyHounds, G Sudheer Babu - Rachakonda CP, Dr Tarun Joshi - Director ACB, S Chandrasekar Reddy - IG Multi Zone - I, K Ramesh Naidu - IG - Railways and Road Safety, V Satyanarayana - IG - Multi Zone - II, Rakshita K Murthy - DCP CAR Headquarters Hyderabad, D Uday Kumar Reddy - Medak SP, R Giridhar - Wanaparthy SP, B Bala Swamy - DCP (East) Hyderabad and G Chandra Mohan - DCP (South West) Hyderabad also got new postings.

Farmer suicides rising in State

D CHANDRABHASKAR RAO
HYDERABAD

Telangana is witnessing a resurgence of agrarian crises, with a staggering 442 farmer suicides reported during the 15 months of Congress rule. In 2024 alone, 376 farmers took their own lives, marking a significant increase in suicides compared to previous years. Almost every day, a farmer is driven to suicide due to crippling financial strain and lack of support.

The State is feared to be on the verge of becoming as prominent as Vidarbha, which has historically recorded the highest number of farmer suicides in the country. This alarming trend is triggered by severe challenges faced by the agricultural sector, including government policies and natural adversities.

The financial burden on farmers is mounting due to unfulfilled promises and lack of support from the government.

The Congress government in Telangana has faced criticism for its failure to fulfil key promises, including the loan waiver and Rythu Bharosa schemes. These unfulfilled promises have left many farmers feeling betrayed, contributing to the spike in suicides.

Though the issue of farmer suicides in Telangana is not new, the numbers had come down during the 10-year BRS rule, registering a remarkable decline.



Kattravula Sambhamurthy, a farmer from Hanamkonda, who committed suicide.



The bereaved family of Myka Srinivas.



Bhukya Badhru's wife Chitti and children.



Muska Saidaiah's widow Renuka and son.

A TALE OF DESPAIR AND UNFULFILLED PROMISES

HYDERABAD: Pinireddy Gudem in Garla mandal of Mahabubabad district is surrounded by endless stretches of chilli farms.

Leaders from peasant bodies, social activists and media persons have been making a bee-line to the village of the late Bhukya Badhru, a tenant farmer who ended his life by sui-

cide on December 6. Last year, chilli cultivation brought prosperity to many farmers in the region, with prices soaring to over Rs 21,000 per quintal. Encouraged by the success of his fellow farmers, Badhru decided to take on lease four acres of land — three for chilli cultivation and one for cotton. He se-

cured the land by offering Rs 1,500 more than the standard rate of Rs 25,000 per acre, putting all his resources at stake.

A suicidal lure
However, this year, his fortunes turned. The chilli crop, which once promised a fortune, became a bane. (SEE PAGE 2)

In 2015, the State recorded 1,358 farmer suicides, which gradually decreased in the following years. The numbers were 632 in 2016, 846 in 2017, 900 in 2018, 491 in 2019, 466 in 2020, 352 in 2021, 178

in 2022 and 271 in 2023. However, the number once again shot up to 376 in 2024, indicating a resurgence of the agrarian crisis.

The families losing their breadwinners are left aban-

doned with not even the local officials reaching out to them with at least a sympathy call. Even the token gesture of sharing the families' grief is missing, not to speak of the entitled financial help.

India's 1st allergen forensics lab in Hyd

M SAI GOPAL
HYDERABAD

Like a scene straight from a crime novel, for the first time in India, senior allergy specialists from Hyderabad have launched an Allergen Forensics Laboratory, aimed at arming investigators with evidence to unlock mysteries through pollen deposits.

The groundbreaking allergen laboratory, coming up at Nanakramguda, has the potential to open a new chapter in crime investigations by identifying minute pollen deposits from crime scenes, a science that is also

We are focusing on forensic palynology not only as an investigative tool but also as academics

— DR VYAKARNAM NAGESHWAR, WORLD ALLERGY FOUNDATION

known as forensic palynology. In a step towards establishing forensic allergy as a research subject and Forensics Allergen Laboratory, founder of World Allergy Foundation Dr Dr Vyakarnam Nageshwar on Friday entered into an MoU with his counterparts at Centurion University in Hyderabad. The initiative

brings together experts from allergy super-speciality, forensic science and botany to study of airborne allergens and their forensic significance.

By analysing pollen and fungal traces at crime scenes, investigators can gain critical insights into the location, movement and timelines of criminal activi-

ties. This scientific evidence will serve as a powerful tool for law enforcement agencies, helping them identify criminals and close cases with greater accuracy.

Sharing that the idea of developing allergic forensics research was inspired from his teacher, aerobiologist late Dr Shripad Agashe, a senior faculty at CMC Vellore, Dr Vyakarnam said: "Dr Agashe used to share his immense knowledge about pollens and its multiple applications in various situations. This is our first-of-its-kind attempt to launch allergen forensics." (SEE PAGE 2)

'Elephant, dragon ballet right choice'

BEIJING

A ballet between the elephant and the dragon contributing to each other's success is the "only right choice" for India-China relations, Foreign Minister Wang Yi said on Friday as he acknowledged positive strides in bilateral ties after the end of the military standoff in eastern Ladakh.

There is every reason for us to support each other rather than undermine each other or undercut each other, Wang, who is also a member of the powerful political bureau of the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC), said at his annual press conference here.

A "cooperative pas de deux" between the dragon and the elephant is the "only

right choice for both sides," Wang said while replying to a question on how Beijing views the course of bilateral ties after the two countries ended the four-year stalemate in the ties.

Bilateral relations between the two Asian giants froze after the Galwan valley clash in eastern Ladakh in June 2020. The four year military standoff ended last

year. China-India relations have made positive strides over the past year after last year's breakthrough, he said.

The successful meeting between President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Kazan last October provided strategic guidance for the improvement and development of the bilateral ties, he said. PTI