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Zakat showoff sparks ire during Ramzan in city



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Russia, Ukraine exchange fire amid truce talks  
Zelensky accuses Moscow of building up forces along border



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Hansal Mehta on debate around gender representation

**In a nutshell**

**India slams Pak for raking J&K issue**

**UNITED NATIONS:** India has slammed Pakistan for its "unjustified" reference to Jammu and Kashmir in the UNGA. India's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador P Harish, said frequent references by Pakistan will "neither validate their claim nor justify their practice of cross-border terrorism". "The fanatical mindset of this nation is well known, as also its record of bigotry," he said.

NATION PAGE 5

**4% quota for Muslims in tenders**

**BENGALURU:** The Karnataka government has decided to provide 4% reservation to Muslims in government contracts, along with oppressed and backward classes. Sources said the Cabinet has approved the proposal and a Bill will be presented before the State Legislature during the Budget Session. The Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act, 1999, aims to provide quota in tenders to Muslim contractors.

NATION PAGE 5

**Indian student departs herself**

**NEW YORK/WASHINGTON:** An Indian student at Columbia University, whose visa was revoked for allegedly "advocating for violence and terrorism" and involvement in activities supporting Hamas, has self-deported. Ranjani Srinivasan, a citizen and national of India, entered the US on a F-1 student visa as a doctoral student in Urban Planning at Columbia University, the Department of Homeland Security said.

WORLD PAGE 7

**Blast outside temple in Amritsar**

**AMRITSAR:** A blast occurred outside a temple in Amritsar around midnight when an unidentified attacker, who came on a motorcycle, hurled an explosive device towards the building, damaging a portion of its wall and shattering window panes, officials said on Saturday. Punjab Police said it suspects the role of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence in the attack on Thakur Dwar temple and vowed to apprehend the culprits.

**Ramzan Timings**

Iftar	Sunday	6:32 PM
Saheer	Monday	5:01 AM

## 'Will strip, parade those behind abusive posts'

**CM vows to bring law to punish those crossing the limits**

STATE BUREAU  
HYDERABAD

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy openly threatened individuals posting content abusing him, warning that they would be "stripped naked, thrashed, and paraded in public."

He vowed to bring out a legislation in the Assembly to punish digital media journalists, especially those running YouTube channels, for posting abusive content against elected representatives.

He made these remarks on the floor of the Assembly on Saturday while replying to the Motion of Thanks for the Governor's address of the joint sitting of the State Legislature.

The Chief Minister's outburst was in response to the growing criticism against the Congress government for the recent arrest of two women journalists for posting 'defamatory content' against him.

Revanth Reddy, who as TPCC president was criti-

## Remarks trigger debate

STATE BUREAU  
HYDERABAD

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's proposal to regulate digital media has triggered a debate on free speech and political duplicity. While social media platforms, particularly YouTube channels, have become battlegrounds for political abuse, the Chief Minister's own past re-

marks have come under scrutiny. Revanth Reddy, known for his aggressive rhetoric, had used abusive language as TPCC president before the Assembly elections and continues to do so as Chief Minister. Even while proposing to bring legislation to regulate abusive language on digital platforms, he threatened to "strip, thrash, and pa-

rade" those posting offensive content, drawing sharp criticism for the abusive language he used, ironically to threaten those allegedly using abusive language against him. "Those who are posing as journalists and commit mistakes will be viewed as criminals. They will be stripped, chased and thrashed," he said.

(FULL REPORT PAGE 5)

cised for bodyshaming BRS working president KT Rama Rao's son, expressed his anguish over the social media posts targeting his family. "We are in politics and are open to criticism, but why target our family members?" he remarked.

He declared that he would not remain silent while the culture of spreading derogatory content thrived on social media under the guise of journalism. He went on to

intimidate journalists and proposed to hold discussions with journalist unions and pass a legislation to regulate media content.

He even directed IT Minister D Sridhar Babu and Information and Public Relations Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy to compile a list of 'recognised journalists' who would be spared, while those outside the list would be dealt with separately. "Don't think I'm

silent because I am the Chief Minister. I will strip you and have you thrashed. There are lakhs who will take to the streets to beat you up at my call. But I am being tolerant because of my position. Whatever I do, I will do within the ambit of the law," he claimed.

Members of the ruling Congress thumped the tables supporting the Chief Minister's statement.

(RELATED REPORTS PAGE 5)

## RLIS: Panel flags unauthorised works

**Asks AP to restore site to pre-construction condition before seeking green nod**

STATE BUREAU  
HYDERABAD

The Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) of the Ministry of Environment and Forests has flagged the works being carried out as part of the unauthorised construction of the Rayalseema Lift Irrigation Scheme (RLIS) in Andhra Pradesh.

During the 25th virtual meeting held on February 27, the EAC which deliberated on the project, made unanimous recommendations emphasising the need for the AP government to restore the RLIS site to its pre-construction condition before proceeding with the application for Environmental Clearance (EC).

The EAC further mandated that the project proponent must submit an affidavit confirming that no construction work has been carried out beyond the preparation of the Detailed Project Report (DPR). This measure was aimed at ensuring transparency and compliance with the Environmental Impact Assess-



The RLIS is designed to lift and utilise 3 TMC of water per day from the Srisailem reservoir at a cost of Rs 6828 crore.

ment (EIA) notification issued for the project. This directive seeks to establish transparency and accountability in the project's implementation, it said.

The unanimous recommendations made by the EAC are seen as a response to concerns voiced in different quarters over the potential violations of the Environmental Impact Assessment notification for the project. The RLIS is designed to lift and utilise 3

TMC of water per day from the Srisailem Reservoir on the Krishna river at a cost of Rs 6828 crore as estimated initially. This water will be diverted beyond the Krishna basin to meet the irrigation and drinking water needs across the Rayalseema region, benefiting its arid districts. Despite

Telangana raising serious concerns for the last five years, a significant portion of works were already implemented by AP. (SEE PAGE 2)

## BRS boycotts CM's reply to Governor's speech

STATE BUREAU  
HYDERABAD

The Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) members boycotted Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's reply to Governor Jishnu Dev Varma's speech in the Assembly, protesting against the Chief Minister's objectionable comments made against BRS supremo K Chandrashekhara Rao.

It may be recalled that the Chief Minister had said that Chandrashekhara Rao was on a stretcher and would soon end up in the mortuary. Raising objections against his comments, complaints were lodged by BRS leaders against the Chief Minister at different police stations in the State.

On Saturday, soon after Speaker G Prasad Kumar announced that the Chief Minister would reply to the Governor's speech, the BRS members boycotted his speech and left the House.

Earlier in the day, the BRS appealed to the Speaker to revoke the suspension of BRS MLA and former Minister G Jagadish Reddy.

Former Minister and BRS MLA T Harish Rao said Jagadish Reddy had not disre-

## Revanth's blamegame still on

HYDERABAD

Even after 15 months in power, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy continued to blame the previous BRS regime for Telangana's woes, right from the financial crisis the State was in, water disputes and even infrastructure failures. From Nalgonda's fluoride contamination to Mahabubnagar's labour migration and the collapse of the SLBC tunnel to the mounting debts, he pinned the blame squarely on his predecessors. Re-

plying to the Motion of Thanks to the Governor's Address in the Assembly on Saturday, he accused former Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao and ex-Minister T Harish Rao of compromising Telangana's water rights. He alleged that they did not oppose the construction of the Pothireddypadu project in the Andhra region of erstwhile Andhra Pradesh during the YS Rajasekhara Reddy-led Congress regime despite being members of his Cabinet. (REPORT PAGE 5)

spected the Chair in the House. If he was provided an opportunity to explain his version, he would have submitted a detailed clarification but unfortunately he was not given opportunity to speak, he said.

"The BRS party has immense respect towards the Chair and to you personally. In fact, BRS Chief K Chandrashekhara Rao had welcomed and expressed hap-

piness over your appointment as Speaker," he said.

"Considering our plea, we request you to revoke Jagadish Reddy's suspension," Harish Rao appealed to the Speaker.

On Thursday, the Speaker had suspended Jagadish Reddy from the House for the remainder of the budget session for his comments towards the Chair. (RELATED REPORTS PAGE 5)

## MAJESTIC ROAR



Leopards resting inside their enclosure at the Maharaj Bagh Zoo in Nagpur on Saturday. — Photo:PTI

## Record number of Maoists surrender

STATE BUREAU  
KOTHAGUDEM

As many as 64 Maoists — 48 men and 16 women — from various border villages in Sukma and Bijapur district of Chhattisgarh, surren-

dered before the police here on Saturday. It was the first instance in Telangana wherein such a large number of Maoists surrendered to police at a time.

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Multi Zone-I, S

Chandrashekhara Reddy said 181 Maoists of different ranks had surrendered before the Telangana police from January 2024 till date. Speaking to the media along with Superintendent of Police B Rohith Raju and

Bhadrachalam ASP Vikrant Kumar Singh, he said the highest number of Maoists — 158 — surrendered to Kothagudem police and 19 in Mulugu since January 2024 and in all 90 Maoists were arrested. (SEE PAGE 2)

## Mission to bring home Suni, Butch

NEW YORK

**Dragon spacecraft takes off aboard SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from NASA's Kennedy Space Centre in Florida**

NASA and SpaceX on Saturday launched a crewed mission to the International Space Station (ISS) to bring home NASA astronauts Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore who have been stranded in space since June last year.

The Dragon spacecraft took off aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from NASA's Kennedy Space Centre in Florida at 7.03 pm ET on Friday (4.33 am on Saturday IST). "Have a great time in space, y'all! #Crew10 lifted off from

NASA Kennedy at 7.03 pm ET (2303 UTC) on Friday, March 14," the US space agency shared in a post on social media platform X. "Falcon 9 launches Crew-10, Dragon's 14th human spaceflight mission to the Space Station," added SpaceX. (IANS)

## 6 injured in gas leak at Kokapet restaurant

CITY BUREAU  
HYDERABAD

Six persons were reportedly injured due to a gas wave exerted from a gas pipeline at a restaurant located on the ground floor of the GAR Infobahn Towers in Kokapet, Narsingi, on the city suburb on Saturday evening.

The incident occurred around 6 pm, reportedly when workers, including those belonging to GAR Infobahn Towers, were taking up works related to gas pipeline fixture and other interiors at the restaurant. (SEE PAGE 2)

## Summer begins to peak across State

CITY BUREAU  
HYDERABAD

As summer starts to peak tad early this season, several districts of Telangana are in the throes of heatwave conditions. Adilabad experienced the heatwave on Saturday with the mercury sharply rising to 40.8°C, 4.9°C higher than the normal. Nizamabad recorded 39.6°C followed by Medak with 39.2°C.

In a special bulletin issued on Saturday, the Indian Meteorological Department-Hyderabad looks at intensification of maximum temperatures and more districts ending up with heatwave conditions in the next

## Heatwave conditions

MAXIMUM TEMPERATURES (IN DEGREE CELSIUS) IN HYDERABAD	TELANGANA Maximum temperatures on Saturday:
Chandrayangutta 38.7	Adilabad: 40.8
Charminar 38.7	Nizamabad: 39.6
Saroomagar 38.6	Medak: 39.2
Falaknuma 38.6	Bhadrachalam: 39
Secunderabad 38.6	Mahabubnagar: 38.5

(Weather recordings by Telangana Development Planning Society)

two days. Day temperature ranging from 41-44°C has been forecasted for Adilabad, Jagtial, Kumram

Bheem, Mancheril, Peddapalli and Rajanna Sircilla. In Hyderabad, the rise in day temperatures was experi-

enced, particularly more during noon, on Saturday. For Hyderabad and its neighbourhood, the IMD-Hyderabad forecast looks at daytime being hotter at around 38°C till Sunday.

Meanwhile, according to data collated by the Telangana Development Planning Society, several parts of Hyderabad had the mercury inching towards 40°C.

In the city, LB Nagar was hottest with 39.6°C followed by Kapra which recorded a day temperature of 39.4°C. Several other areas, including Saroomagar, Chandrayangutta, Falaknuma, Secunderabad and Charminar, had temperatures above 38°C.

## ONGC employee kills two sons, dies by suicide

KAKINADA

A 37-year-old ONGC employee allegedly killed his two minor sons for "poor academic performance" and died by suicide in this district, police said.

The boys were allegedly drowned by their father V Chandra Kishore in a bucket of water around 10 am on Friday as he was disappointed with their academic performance.

"Kishore killed his sons due to their poor academic performance, fearing they would struggle in a competitive world," a police official said. (SEE PAGE 2)