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India, New Zealand vow to deepen defence ties



WORLD | PAGE 09

Amid tariff tensions, Canada PM Mark Carney in Europe

Seeks support from France as Trump attacks Canada's sovereignty and economy



ENTERTAINMENT | PAGE 12

Taapsee Pannu wraps up her next movie Gandhari

In a nutshell

Row on Aurangzeb remarks

MUMBAI: Maharashtra Congress chief Harshvardhan Sapkal's controversial comparison of Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis to Mughal emperor Aurangzeb rocked the State legislature on Monday with Mahayuti leaders demanding exemplary action. The uproar echoed through both Houses of the State legislature in the ongoing Budget session, with demands for tough legal action against Sapkal. **NATION PAGE 8**

Orry drinks liquor at Vaishno Devi

JAMMU: Social media influencer Orry and seven others were booked for allegedly consuming alcohol at a hotel in Katra, the base camp for the pilgrimage to Mata Vaishno Devi shrine in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district, police said on Monday. Their action evoked strong resentment among the people, with BJP and Peoples Democratic Party legislators demanding stern action against the accused. **PTI**

Terrorist killed in J&K encounter

SRINAGAR: An unidentified terrorist was killed in an encounter with security forces in Zachaldara of Jammu and Kashmir's Kupwara district on Monday, officials said. Security forces launched a cordon and search operation at Krumhoora in Zachaldara following information about the presence of terrorists in the area. The operation turned into an encounter after the terrorists opened fire. **PTI**

Modi joins Trump's Truth Social

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday joined Truth Social, a social media platform owned by Trump Media and Technology Group, signalling his close bond with US President Donald Trump. Modi's debut on Truth Social came on a day when Trump shared the YouTube link of the PM's podcast with Lex Fridman on his handle. "Delighted to be on Truth Social!" the PM wrote in his first post. **PTI**

Ramzan Timings
Iftar Tuesday 6:32 PM
Sahar Wednesday 5:00 AM

'Amitabh Bachchan was dragged into Bofors scam'

NEW DELHI

Bollywood megastar Amitabh Bachchan was sought to be implicated in the Bofors scandal by a planted story linking his name to a secret Swiss account for kickbacks from the Swedish arms giant as part of a "vicious campaign", says journalist Chitra Subramaniam.



imagine the name of the Bachchans, I mean it's a big name..." Subramaniam, who has detailed how she faced pressure to find any proof of the involvement of the Bachchans — the Big B and his brother Ajitabh — after their names cropped up in the scandal, in her recently released 'Boforsgate: A

Journalist's Pursuit of Truth', accused a section of the then government and media of trying to implicate the Bollywood megastar, who was then a member of Lok Sabha from Allahabad. "And you say the sixth account...there was no sixth account. It didn't exist... it was planted by the Indian government officials," she said, and called out the media and some then officials from top legal authorities of a "habit of speaking around loosely". "You don't speak loosely as a journalist... if you are a journalist or an official of stature, you don't speak loosely, throwing names here and there," she said. **IANIS**

China hails Modi's remarks on ties

BEIJING

China on Monday appreciated Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "positive" remarks on the Sino-Indian ties favouring dialogue over discord and said that a co-operative "dance between the elephant and dragon" contributing to mutual success is the only choice for both sides. "China appreciated Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent positive statements on China-India relations," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said while responding to a question on Modi's remarks in conversation with American podcaster Lex Fridman. The successful meeting between President Xi Jinping and Modi in Kazan,

Russia, last October provided strategic guidance for the improvement and development of the bilateral ties, she said. "Both sides have earnestly followed through on the important common understandings of our leaders, strengthened exchanges and practical cooperation at all levels, and achieved a series of positive outcomes," she said. On Modi's remarks that the relationship between India and China isn't something new as both nations have ancient cultures and civilisations and have for centuries learned from each other, Mao said, "In the 2,000-plus history, the mainstream of China-India interactions has been friendly exchanges." **PTI**

Kerala officials shoot tiger in self-defence

IDUKKI

Forest officials on Monday shot dead a tiger in self-defence as it attacked them during a tranquillising mission in Vandiperiyar in this hill district of Kerala. The injured big cat, which strayed from nearby forests, triggered panic among locals as it killed some domestic animals in Granby estate area in the recent days. Though the wildlife officials fired tranquilliser shots when it was spotted inside a tea estate in the morning, the tiger suddenly charged at them forcing the team to open fire for self defence. A senior wildlife official later said the second tranquilliser shot was successfully fired but the animal suddenly turned aggressive and destroyed the helmet of a wildlife staff by hitting it. **PTI**



Ukrainian soldiers fire 120-mm mortar towards Russian army positions near Chasiv Yar, Donetsk region in Ukraine. US President Donald Trump will speak with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday in a possible pivot point in efforts to end the war and an opportunity for Trump to continue reorienting American foreign policy. — Photo: AP/ Ukraine's 24th Mechanized Brigade **(REPORT PAGE 9)**

Chandrayaan-5 mission approved

NEW DELHI

The Centre has approved the Chandrayaan-5 mission, and it will carry a whopping 250-kg rover to the lunar surface, said Indian Space Research Organisation Chairman V Narayanan. It will be the fifth flight as part of the Chandrayaan programme, also known as the Indian Lunar Exploration Programme, and aims for the exploration of the Moon. While Chandrayaan-3 carried a 25-kg rover named 'Prayagyaan,' the Chandrayaan-5 mission,

in collaboration with Japan, will feature a much heavier 250-kg rover. **TN spaceport to see first SSLV launch in 2027** The Kulasekarapattinam spaceport in Tamil Nadu's Thoothukudi district, the second launch complex for ISRO outside Andhra Pradesh, will see the maiden launch with the Small Satellite Launch Vehicle in 24 months. The SSLV will support polar launches of upto 500 kg, with Indian industry involved in production. **AGENCIES**

3 from TG die in US accident

CITY BUREAU

Hyderabad

In a tragic incident, a family of three from Shadnagar died in a road accident in the US. As per available information, Pragathi Reddy (35), her son Harveen (6) and mother-in-law Sunitha (56) died in the accident. Pragathi Reddy was the daughter of former Sarpanch Mohan Reddy of Tekulapalli village in Konduргуmandal of Shadnagar. According to information reaching here, the family was travelling in a car on March 16 and another car, which was hurtling down the wrong route, collided



(L) Pragathi Reddy (35) and her son Harveen (6); and her mother-in-law Sunitha (56).

with it leading to three deaths around 3 am (IST). It is said that Pragathi returned to the US just three months ago. She was married to Rohit Reddy from Bakrichepalli village of Sidipet district and lived in Florida. The news of the accident has cast a shadow of sadness over Tekulapalli village. Other family members are on their way to the US for the final rites.

Congress government monumental failure: KTR

Says Revanth admitting to Rs 71,000-crore shortfall historic humiliation for TG

STATE BUREAU
HYDERABAD

BRS working president KT Rama Rao on Monday lashed out at the Congress government, calling it a monumental failure after Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy admitted to a staggering Rs 71,000-crore shortfall in the 2024-25 Budget estimates.

Terming this a historic humiliation for Telangana, he blamed the Congress government for admitting to financial mismanagement even before presenting the State budget.

In an informal media interaction at the Assembly on Monday, Rama Rao attributed Telangana's financial decline to Revanth Reddy's faulty policies.

"The Chief Minister himself has confirmed the bitter truth — Telangana is not rising but falling. His decisions have crippled agriculture, industry and investments. If the economy was truly growing, why has revenue plummeted?" he asked, charging the Congress with sabotaging Telangana's progress out of political vendetta.

Stating that the closure of the Kaleshwaram project was driven by hatred for former Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao rather than practical reasons, he said this move had crippled agri-



BRS working president KT Rama Rao, along with party MLAs P Sabitha Indra Reddy and V Sunitha Lakshma Reddy, at Chanchalguda Women's Prison on Monday.

Two women journalists get bail

HYDERABAD: A local court in Hyderabad granted bail to two women journalists — Revathi Pogadadanda, managing director of Pulse Digital News Network; and Thanvi Yadav, an employee — who were arrested by the Telangana Police for allegedly circulating content against Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy.

BRS working president KT Rama Rao slammed the Congress government for the arrests, calling it an attack on press freedom. He charged Revanth Reddy with suppressing dissent and ruling with an Emergency-era mindset. "People believed Indiramma Rajyam meant a welfare state. But today, it reminds us of the dark days

of Emergency. Is this what Rahul Gandhi's Mohabbat ki Dukaan stands for — throwing journalists into jail for questioning the government?" he asked after he, along with former Ministers P Sabitha Indra Reddy, V Sunitha Lakshma Reddy and MLC Dasoju Shruvan, met the journalists at Chanchalguda prison. **(SEE PAGE 2)**

culture and shattered the rural economy. The BRS leader ridiculed Revanth Reddy's claims of strong ties with the Centre, questioning

what Telangana had gained from it. "What has been brought from Delhi besides empty rhetoric? His meetings with the Central Minis-

ters yielded no benefits. If Telangana was handed over as a state of gold, Revanth has reduced it to rubble, calling it a 'cancer' on public

164 forest fires every day in State this year



A staffer extinguishing a forest fire in Mancherial district.

SANTOSH PADALA
Ailabad

Burning issue

Forest fires from Jan 1 to March 10	11,434
Forest fires from Jan 1 to Dec 31, 2024	14,027
o Bhadradi circle: 3,243	
o Kawal Tiger Reserve: 2,479	
o Kaleshwaram circle: 2,080	
o Basar circle: 1,784	
o Charminar circle: 146	
o Amrabad Tiger Reserve: 924 mishaps	
o Rajanna-Sircilla district: 788	
o Jogulamba-Gadwal: 75	
o Yadadri circle: 11	

In an alarming trend, the State is recording an average of above 164 forest fires every day, with human errors and not mere accidents, said to be triggering the shocking number of wildfires even in critical tiger reserves in Telangana. According to official data, Telangana registered a staggering 11,434 forest fires from January 1 to March 10 this year. The gravity of the situation is evident when this figure is compared against the 14,027 forest fires that were reported in an entire year in 2024! On an average, the State has witnessed nearly 163.4 forest fires a day in 2025.

While the Bhadradi circle saw 3,243 wildfires in the last 70-odd days, 2,479 forest fires occurred in the Kawal Tiger Reserve.

The Kaleshwaram and Basar circles saw 2,080 and 1,784 fire incidents respectively, while the Amrabad Tiger Reserve (ATR) experienced 924 forest fires. **(SEE PAGE 2)**