



**NATION | PAGE 07**  
**Fight against terror in decisive phase, says Shah**



**WORLD | PAGE 09**  
**Israel announces 'tactical pause' in war**  
 Says it will halt Gaza offensive in daytime to help ramp up aid



**SPORT | PAGE 10**  
**Australia crush Scotland by 5 wickets; Eng enter Super 8**

**In a nutshell**

**Boat capsizes in Bihar, 4 missing**

**PATNA:** Four persons are still missing, while 13 have been rescued following the boat tragedy near Umanath Ganga ghat in Barh sub-division of Patna district on Sunday morning, officials said. "So far, 13 people have been rescued, including those who managed to swim to the banks. Rescue operation is still on to trace the four missing persons," Patna district administration said in a statement. **PTI**

**Delhi Jal Board vandalised**

**NEW DELHI:** Amid protests over the severe water crisis in the national capital, Delhi Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj on Sunday accused BJP leaders and workers of vandalising an office of the Delhi Jal Board. Terming it a "conspiracy" against the government, Bharadwaj shared a video showing some people breaking the windows of an office by hurling stones and earthen pots at it. **PTI**

**Pre-Budget meeting on June 20**

**NEW DELHI:** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is likely to hold pre-budget consultations with industry chambers on June 20, sources said. The Budget for 2024-25 fiscal is likely to be presented in Parliament in the second half of July. Industry sources said the pre-Budget consultation with Sitharaman would be preceded by a meeting with Revenue Secretary Sanjay Malhotra on June 18. **PTI**

**Over 2L X accounts banned in May**

**NEW DELHI:** Elon Musk-run X Corp has banned 2,29,925 accounts in India between April 26 and May 25, mostly for promoting child sexual exploitation and non-consensual nudity. The microblogging platform, going through churning under Musk, also took down 967 accounts for promoting terrorism on its platform in country. In total, X banned 2,30,892 accounts in the reporting period. **IAN S**

**CHICKEN RATES IN HYDERABAD**

Farm.....	Rs. 139
Retail live.....	Rs. 161
With skin.....	Rs. 233
Skinless.....	Rs. 266
Egg Rates (12 eggs).....	Rs. 65



**Celebs raise a toast to their '1st hero'**

Several actors share heartfelt Father's Day wishes

## NEET-UG row: Accused confess to paper leak

**A candidate says he was made to memorise question paper**

IAN S  
PATNA

Two accused, including an examination mafia, confessed their role in the question paper leak in the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET), an official of the Economic Offences Unit (EOU) of Bihar Police said on Sunday. EOU constituted a 9-member Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the NEET question paper leak case.

Thirteen persons, including six examination mafias, four students and three parents have been arrested in connection with the alleged question paper leak case.

Now, one of the arrested exam mafia, Sikandar Yadvendu (56), a Junior Engineer in Danapur Municipal Council, confessed his role in the paper leak. Besides him, a candidate, Ayush Kumar, also confessed that he was made to memorise the question paper a day before the exam. NEET was held on May 5 and examination mafias obtained the question paper a day earlier on May 4.

Meanwhile, the EOU recovered six post-dated cheques which were suspected to have been issued in favour of mafia demanding over Rs 30 lakh from each candidate seeking alleged leaked question paper.

As per the confession of Sikandar Yadvendu, he said that two persons named Amit and Nitish had obtained the question paper on May 4. They went with the question papers and an-

**KTR calls for comprehensive probe**

**HYDERABAD:** BRS working president KT Rama Rao strongly disapproved Centre's handling of the NEET exam issue, stating that it was neglecting the future of lakhs of students. He called for a thorough investigation into the exam irregularities, involving investigating agencies to ensure a fair and transparent process. In an open letter to the NDA government, Rama Rao demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the union Ministers who participate in 'Pariksha Pe Charcha', should initiate immediate action against those responsible and address the concerns of students and parents. **(REPORT PAGE 5)**

**Won't spare NTA officials if found guilty: Minister**

**SAMBALPUR:** Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Sunday assured action against National Testing Agency officials if they are found guilty of the "irregularities" in the conduct of NEET-UG. The Minister added that the improvement in NTA, which conducts NEET exam, is needed. "On the recommendations of the Supreme Court, the order has been given for retest of 1,563 candidates. Some irregularities have come to light in two places. I assure students and parents that the government has taken this seriously," Pradhan said. "Even if the big officials of the NTA are found guilty, they will not be spared. A lot of improvement is required in NTA. The government is concerned about this, no culprit will be spared, he said. **PTI**

**Congress questions integrity of NTA**

**NEW DELHI:** The Congress on Sunday said there are "serious questions" on the integrity of the NTA and the manner in which National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test is designed and administered. The opposition party hoped that when the new Standing Committees of Parliament gets constituted, it would take up an in-depth review of the NEET, NTA and NCERT. **PTI**

**NEET, 'masquerading' as a measure of merit, is a 'scam' and the Centre must stop defending the national test as it went against the interests of students**

— MK STALIN, TAMIL NADU CM

swers to a playschool located in the jurisdiction of Ramakrishna Nagar police station area. At least 25 to 30 NEET candidates were already there. All were made to memorise the question paper and its answers till 9:00 am on May 5. He also confessed that all the candidates were dropped off directly at the exam centres by car after 9:00 am. Meanwhile, the EOU officials claimed that new facts were

coming to light every day during the investigation. The SIT is looking for exam mafia Sanjeev Mukhiya of Nagarnausa in Nalanda district, Pintu of Hilsa in Nalanda district, Rakesh Rangan alias Rocky, Chintu alias Baldev of Karai Parsurai of Nalanda district, Ashutosh of Didarganj of Patna district, Nitish Yadav, Manish Prakash and Nitish Patel alias Abhimanyu. SIT is conducting raids on their prem-

ises to nab them. It also emerged during the investigation that the NEET question paper with answers was available on the mobile phone of Chintu, one of the accused. Earlier on Saturday, the National Testing Agency (NTA) provided information about 11 candidates including seven girls to EOU. Accordingly, EOU served notices, asking them to join the probe on Monday and Tuesday.

## Medak on edge a day after communal clash

**Police step up vigil, BJP bandh peaceful**



Commercial establishments remain closed following a bandh call given by BJP, in Medak on Sunday.

STATE BUREAU  
Medak

**KTR CALLS INCIDENT SHAMEFUL**

**HYDERABAD:** BRS working president KT Rama Rao termed the communal violence in Medak shameful, stating that a peaceful town like Medak, which never witnessed any communal activity in the past, had now become a mess. He reminded that when former Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao was at the helm of affairs, Telangana had remained peaceful without any communal violence for the last nine and a half years. Communal tensions escalated in Medak on Saturday after members of two religious groups clashed over the transportation of cattle. Taking to X, Rama Rao stated that Telangana was peaceful sans any communal violence for the last nine and a half years. "And now in the Congress Government, neither is there any Law nor any Order," (sic) he said.

A day after a communal clash broke out over the transportation of cattle in Medak, a huge contingent of police stood their ground in the town, ensuring there were no more untoward incidents even as the situation continued to remain tense.

While the BJP enforced a bandh in Medak town on Sunday in the wake of the clash between two religious groups on Saturday night, the police managed to restore peace by deploying huge numbers of police personnel. IG multi-zone-IAV Ranganath, who reached Medak on Saturday night itself, stayed put in the town and mobilised the police force from other districts. Since Bakrid will be celebrated on Monday, the police are keeping a strict vigil across the town.

Except for emergency services, all commercial establishments remained closed until Sunday evening. Meanwhile, the

police took several BJP leaders, including the party's district president, Gaddam Srinivas, town president Nayani Prasad and others into preventive custody.

Ranganath said the police identified nearly 45 persons involved in the clash from both sides. Since the police had video evidence of the people involved in the clash, Ranganath said all those involved would be

booked soon. Addressing the media on Sunday, Ranganath said nobody would be let off. Some people were spreading falsehood that the police were acting against one group favouring the other, he said, dismissing such theories and said people should, however, bring the transportation of cattle to the notice of the police instead of taking the law into their own hands. **(SEE PAGE 2)**

**AP sets 30-month deadline for Amaravati works**

AMARAVATI

Andhra Pradesh Municipal Administration Minister P Narayana said that the Amaravati capital city development works will be completed in two-and-a-half years. He said the capital will be developed as one of the top five capital cities in the world and that the plans devised in the past will be implemented to meet this target.

"In the coming two-and-a-half years' time, we will complete the works," he said, speaking to reporters after assuming office at the Secretariat. According to the Minister, all work initiated in capital involved the Singapore government, especially in designing the city in such a way that all districts will benefit financially. **(REPORT PAGE 7)**

**TRIAL RUN ON CHENAB BRIDGE SUCCESSFUL**



The railways on Sunday successfully conducted an electric engine trial on the newly constructed world's highest railway bridge — Chenab Rail Bridge — built between Sangaldan in Ramban district and Reasi, Jammu and Kashmir. — Photo: ANI

## EVM 'tampering' takes centre stage

NEW DELHI/MUMBAI

A fresh political slugfest erupted over EVM tampering claims with Rahul Gandhi and other opposition leaders citing a media report that alleged the Shiv Sena candidate in Mumbai North West Lok Sabha constituency was found using a mobile phone "connected" to an electronic voting machine during the counting of votes on June 4.

However, Vandana Suryavanshi, returning officer of the constituency, dismissed the report in 'mid-day' newspaper as "false news" and said a defamation notice has been issued to the publication. She asserted that the EVM is a standalone system, not programmable and has no wireless communication capa-

**Oppn quote Musk's post on X, in which he talks about eliminating EVMs and claims the risk of hacking was 'too high'**

bilities. The BJP hit out at the opposition leaders over the issue and demanded that the Election Commission should prosecute all those who "amplified the lie" by sharing the news report. Questioning the reliability of EVMs, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and others also quoted a post by Elon Musk, chairman of X, in which he talked about eliminating EVMs and claimed the risk of hacking was "too high". **(SEE PAGES 2,7)**

## TS tribal bags Sahitya Yuva Puraskar

CITY BUREAU  
Hyderabad

What started as an honest effort to document the lives of his people has today made him the youngest and the first tribal person ever to be awarded the Sahitya Akademi Yuva Puraskar.

Nunnavath Karthik, 26, won the prestigious award for his Telugu short stories collection called 'Dhavlo'. While he is the talk of the literary town today, just years ago, he was doing odd jobs to make ends meet, and dreaming of becoming a teacher. As he soaks in the



Nunnavath Karthik

glory of being an accomplished writer at a young age, his feet remain grounded in his life's experiences and adversities that made him the author he is. Native of Jakranpally

Thanda in Nizamabad, he was born into a humble Lambada family in 1997. Thanks to his teachers, he grew fond of stories at a young age, but soon observed the lack of representation his community had in contemporary literature.

It is this feeling of disappointment, coupled with his encounters with casteist oppression, that led Karthik to represent the lifestyle of Lambadas through his writing. "The stories of my people, their lifestyle, and their struggles deserve to be written and understood. Even today, we are associated

only with jobs such as house help or drivers. With the help of my friends and teachers, I wrote poems and stories that seek to change this narrative," he shares. His dream now is to write about other tribal communities in the Telugu States.

In 2018, he published his first book 'Baldair Bandi' and so far authored four books under the pen name Ramesh Karthik Nayak. Along with multiple awards, his work is also part of the academic syllabus for UG and PG courses. He wrote his award-winning book 'Dhavlo' while quarantining in 2020.

## Will Telangana govt follow Karnataka, hike fuel prices?

S SANDEEP KUMAR  
Hyderabad

With the Congress government in Karnataka increasing petrol and diesel prices by Rs 3 a litre, speculations are rife that the Congress government in Telangana could also follow suit, considering the fact that the State government is exploring different avenues to generate revenue.

The Congress government in Karnataka is already facing a lot of criticism from



different sections after increasing the petrol price by Rs 3 a litre and the diesel by Rs 3.05. BJP national spokesperson Shehzad

Poonawalla was quoted as saying in media reports that the true face of the Congress was exposed. He also alleged that the government hiked the State tax on fuel because Karnataka was bankrupt on account of the implementation of the Five Guarantees of the Congress.

Condemning the Karnataka government's decision to increase fuel prices, the BRS is demanding the Congress government in Telangana not to increase fuel prices. **(SEE PAGE 2)**