



HYDERABAD | PAGE 02

Hussain Sagar quality dips after Ganesh immersion



WORLD | PAGE 09

UK hands over Chagos Islands to Mauritius

British Indian Ocean Territory status of archipelago has been in contention for years



SPORT | PAGE 10

Women's T20 World Cup: India ready for Kiwi challenge

In a nutshell

IIT-H staff chased by dogs, dies

SANGAREDDY: A bike rider died after his two-wheeler skidded while he was trying to escape a pack of street dogs that chased him near the Indian Institute of Technology-Hyderabad (IIT-H) in Kandi mandal on Wednesday night. According to the Sangareddy rural police, Yerpula Naveen (36), a resident of Chimnapur, was working in IIT-H. He died while undergoing treatment hours later. A case was registered.

Marathi, Bengali classical languages

NEW DELHI: The Union Cabinet on Thursday approved conferring the status of classical language to Marathi, Pali, Prakrit, Assamese and Bengali languages. The decision was taken at a meeting of the Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The Government of India decided to create a new category of languages as 'classical languages' on October 12, 2004 declaring Tamil as classical language. PTI

India rejects US report on religion

NEW DELHI: India on Thursday trashed a report by the US Commission on International Religious Freedom and described it as a "biased" organisation with a "political agenda". In its report, the USCIRF criticised India for alleged violations of religious freedom. It also recommended to the US State Department to declare India a 'Country of Particular Concern' in the context of religious freedom. PTI

RG Kar case: TMC leader arrested

KOLKATA: The CBI on Thursday arrested a Trinamool Congress leader and a house-staff attached to RG Kar Medical College & Hospital, Asish Pande, said to be a close confidant of Sandip Ghosh, in connection with the financial irregularities case pertaining to state-run medical college and hospital — an angle that emerged in the probe into the rape-murder of a junior doctor. PTI

CHICKEN RATES IN HYDERABAD

Farm.....	Rs. 110
Retail live.....	Rs. 132
With skin.....	Rs. 191
Skinless.....	Rs. 218
Egg Rates (12 eggs).....	Rs. 72

KONDA SUREKHA SORRY, NOT SORRY!

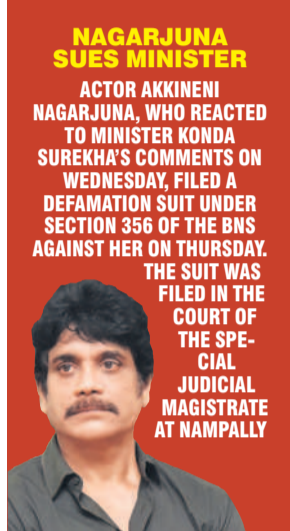
Minister retracts remarks on Sam but raises divorce issue again

STATE BUREAU
HYDERABAD

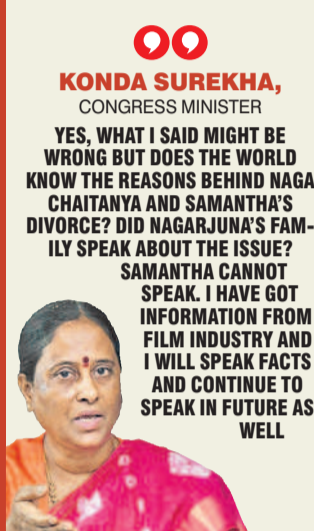
The ruling Congress found itself cornered yet again after Minister Konda Surekha's derogatory comments against actors Samantha Ruth Prabhu, Akkineni Nagarjuna and BRS working president KT Rama Rao, with the severe backlash from multiple quarters forcing the party to ask Surekha to tender an apology.

The situation saw the Congress losing the battle on multiple fronts, forcing Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee president Mahesh Kumar Goud to attempt some damage control by releasing a video message, asking the film industry to stop issuing public reactions and imploring with actors that the issue should stop here.

The Minister's denigrating comments on Wednesday had sparked an immediate and scathing response from across the Telugu film fraternity, forcing Surekha to come out on Thursday stating that she was retracting her comments on Samantha. However, she



NAGARJUNA SUES MINISTER
ACTOR AKKINENI NAGARJUNA, WHO REACTED TO MINISTER KONDA SUREKHA'S COMMENTS ON WEDNESDAY, FILED A DEFAMATION SUIT UNDER SECTION 356 OF THE BNS AGAINST HER ON THURSDAY. THE SUIT WAS FILED IN THE COURT OF THE SPECIAL JUDICIAL MAGISTRATE AT NAMPALLY



KONDA SUREKHA, CONGRESS MINISTER
YES, WHAT I SAID MIGHT BE WRONG BUT DOES THE WORLD KNOW THE REASONS BEHIND NAGA CHAITANYA AND SAMANTHA'S DIVORCE? DID NAGARJUNA'S FAMILY SPEAK ABOUT THE ISSUE? SAMANTHA CANNOT SPEAK. I HAVE GOT INFORMATION FROM FILM INDUSTRY AND I WILL SPEAK FACTS AND CONTINUE TO SPEAK IN FUTURE AS WELL



RAKUL PREET, ACTOR
IT IS PAINFUL TO HEAR SUCH BASELESS AND VICIOUS RUMOURS. I AM ABSOLUTELY APOLITICAL AND HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH ANY PERSON/POLITICAL PARTY, WHATSOEVER. I URGE TO STOP USING MY NAME IN A MALICIOUS WAY TO GAIN POLITICAL MILEAGE

stuck to her stance against Rama Rao, and continued the diatribe on multiple instances the same day.

Though she said her intention was not to hurt Samantha's feelings, the Minister unabashedly continued her comments before the media on the divorce of actors Naga Chaitanya and Samantha.

"Yes, what I said might be wrong but does the world know the reasons behind Naga Chaitanya and Saman-

tha's divorce? Did Nagarjuna's family speak about the issue? Samantha cannot speak. I have got information from the film industry itself and I will speak facts and continue to speak in future as well," she said.

Despite the TPCC president asking Ministers and Congress leaders to maintain restraint and mind their language, Surekha did not stop her diatribe against Rama Rao, going to the extent of even accusing him of

murder. Speaking at a programme in Gajwel, she alleged that BRS president K Chandrashekar Rao was "not to be seen", and that "Rama Rao might have strangled him or smashed his head or even buried him." She also handed out threats to Rama Rao, saying that he would not be allowed to step out of his home or move around in the districts or even in Hyderabad. (SEE PAGE 2)

(RELATED REPORTS PAGE 4)

Congress govt resorts to record borrowings

PS DILEEP
Hyderabad

The Congress-led State government has been on an unprecedented borrowing spree. Since coming to power in December last year, it has borrowed an average of Rs 241 crore per day in the last 300-odd days.

Currently, the State debt stands at around Rs 72,500 crore since the Congress came to power, while the market borrowings are at around Rs 32,500 crore in the first two quarters of the current fiscal year.

The borrowings began with a Rs 500-crore loan on December 12, 2023, and has continued at an alarming rate, with loans averaging Rs 5,000 crore per month. As of September 30, Rs 47,618 crore of the debt was directly sourced from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) through market borrowings. During the last month alone, the State government secured Rs 2,500 crore on September 3, Rs 1,500 crore

Market borrowings (IN RS CR)



on September 10, Rs 500 crore on September 17 and another Rs 1,000 crore in the last week of September.

The State government is likely to raise another Rs 7,400 crore through market borrowings in the third quarter (October to December) of 2024-25. (SEE PAGE 2)

Israeli strike kills nine in Beirut

BEIRUT

An Israeli airstrike on an apartment in central Beirut has killed nine people, according to Lebanon's Health Ministry. There was no warning before the strike late on Wednesday, which hit an apartment in central Beirut not far from the United Nations headquarters, the Prime Minister's office and parliament.

Hezbollah's civil defence unit said seven of its members were killed. The strike came as Israel was pursuing a ground incursion into Lebanon against Hezbollah, while also conducting strikes in Gaza that killed dozens, including children.

Meanwhile, the Lebanese Red Cross said an Israeli strike killed four of its paramedics and a Lebanese army soldier as they were evacuating wounded people from the south. It said the convoy near the village of Taybeh, which was accompanied by Lebanese troops, was targeted on Thursday despite coordinating its movements with UN peacekeepers.

The Israeli military has ordered the evacuation of villages and towns in south-



Smoke rises from the site of an Israeli airstrike in Dahiyeh, Beirut, Lebanon, on Thursday. — Photo: AP (RELATED REPORTS PAGE 9)

ern Lebanon that are north of a United Nations-declared buffer zone established after the 2006 war. The warning signalled a possible broadening of Israel's incursion into southern Lebanon, which until

now has been confined to areas close to the border.

Meanwhile, US President Joe Biden said he doesn't expect Israel to retaliate immediately against Iran and rejects the suggestion that the US would grant permis-

sion for such an attack. "First of all, we don't 'allow' Israel, we advise Israel. And nothing's going to happen today," he said. In another development, Israel said one of its airstrikes in Gaza killed a Palestinian who was

convicted in the killing of two Israeli soldiers by an angry crowd in the West Bank at the start of the 2000 uprising. Abdel-Aziz Salha was killed in an overnight strike on the central Gaza town of Deir al-Balah. AP

Azhar skips ED summons in PMLA case

CITY BUREAU
Hyderabad

Former Indian cricket captain and Congress leader Mohammad Azharuddin on Thursday failed to appear before the ED in a money laundering case linked to alleged financial irregularities in the Hyderabad Cricket Association (HCA).

The former Member of Parliament, who is currently the working president of the Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC), was asked to appear before the ED on Thursday. However, it was learned that he did not appear before the central law enforcing agency and is said to have sought more time.

The ED, which is probing the Rs 20-crore fraud case in the HCA, had questioned former cricketers Arshad Ayub and Shival Yadav in December last year. Former Minister and former HCA president G Vinod was also questioned by the central agency.

In November last year, the ED carried out searches at the residences of Vinod, Shival Yadav and Arshad Ayub. The searches were conducted at nine locations across the State under provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The ED's investigation was based on three



FIRs registered by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), Hyderabad, relating to criminal misappropriation of HCA funds to the tune of Rs 20 crore.

The ACB had registered FIRs for alleged irregularities in the procurement of DG sets, firefighting systems and canopies for the Rajiv Gandhi Cricket Stadium construction. There were also allegations that despite deadlines, several works were delayed inordinately, leading to escalated costs and budget enhancements and corresponding losses to the HCA.

In October last year, four criminal cases were registered against Azharuddin and others for alleged misappropriation of funds to the tune of Rs 3.85 crore at Uppal police station. Azharuddin and others were charged with criminal breach of trust, cheating, forgery and criminal conspiracy. A city court later granted him anticipatory bail in four cases for alleged misappropriation of HCA funds. The former cricketer had termed the allegations false and motivated.

Azharuddin was elected HCA president in 2019 and his term ended in February 2023 with the SC appointing a one-member committee. (SEE PAGE 2)

Centre against criminalisation of marital rape

NEW DELHI

If sexual acts by a man with his own wife is made punishable as "rape", it may severely impact the conjugal relationship and lead to serious disturbances in the institution of marriage, the Centre has told the Supreme Court.

Opposing the criminalisation of marital rape, which is sought by many petitioners before the apex court, the Centre has filed its preliminary counter affidavit in the top court.

The apex court is seized of petitions raising the vexed legal question. PTI (REPORT PAGE 7)

'Savarkar used to eat meat, was not against cow slaughter'

BENGALURU

Karnataka Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao claimed that Hindutva ideologue Vinayak Damodar Savarkar used to eat meat and was not against cow slaughter.

"Savarkar, a Chitpavan Brahmin, used to eat meat. He was a non-veg eater and was not against cow slaughter. He was modern in a way," he said at an event here on Wednesday. "Some say that he used to eat beef as well. As a Brahmin, he used to eat meat and was openly propagating eating meat. So he had that thinking," the Minister claimed.

REMARKS UNFORTUNATE, SAYS BJP

NEW DELHI: The BJP on Thursday flayed the Congress over Karnataka Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao's controversial remarks about VD Savarkar, saying the revolutionary freedom fighter is insulted by the party whose leaders never even faced imprisonment at cellular jail in Andaman-Nicobar Islands by the British. "The party whose none of the leaders ever suffered 'kala pani ki saja' even for one day is insulting the person who was handed down double life imprisonment at cellular jail in Andaman-Nicobar Islands," BJP national general secretary Tarun Chugh said. "Insulting Savarkar, who was an inspiration to revolutionaries in the country, is akin to spitting on the moon," Chugh added. PTI

Rao added that Mahatma Gandhi was a vegetarian and had a firm faith in Hinduism "but his actions were different. He was a democratic person." "Jinnah was another extreme. He was a hardcore Islamist believer.

He used to drink wine and it is said he used to eat pork as well but he became a Muslim icon after the two-nation theory and politics. But Jinnah was not a fundamentalist, Savarkar was," he said. (SEE PAGE 2)