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Cong Working Committee to draw up 2025 action plan



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Netanyahu signals progress in ceasefire deal

Vows to continue to act in every possible way until Israel brings everyone home



SPORT | PAGE 10

India, Pakistan face-off on February 23 in Dubai

In a nutshell

UP teen urinated upon, ends life

BASTI: A 17-year-old boy allegedly died by suicide after four men purportedly assaulted him and urinated on his face in the district's Captainganj area, police here said on Tuesday. The men, who have been arrested, also allegedly recorded the act. Superintendent of Police Krishna Gopal Chaudhury said Captainganj SHO Deepak Kumar Dubey was suspended and departmental action initiated against him. PTI

Rupee at record low of 85.20

MUMBAI: The rupee extended the slide for the second straight session and depreciated 9 paise to settle at a fresh all-time low of 85.20 against US dollar, dragged by a strong greenback against major crosses overseas and subdued domestic equities. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 85.10 and touched lowest-ever level of 85.21 against the greenback during intra-day. PTI

Two heist accused killed in encounter

LUCKNOW: Two criminals allegedly involved in the robbery at the Indian Overseas Bank's Chinhat branch in Lucknow were killed in separate encounters with Lucknow and Ghazipur police. While Sobind Kumar, 26, was killed in an encounter with the Lucknow police near Kisan Path, Sunny Dayal, 28, was gunned down by the Ghazipur police and SWAT surveillance team in a separate encounter, they said. PTI

Ex-US Prez Clinton hospitalised

WASHINGTON: Former US President Bill Clinton, 78, was admitted to MedStar Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, DC, after developing a fever, according to a statement from his deputy chief of staff, Angel Urena here on Tuesday. "Former President Clinton is doing well," Urena told CNN, adding that he remains in good spirits and is hopeful to return home by Christmas. IANS

TG capital expenditure turns regressive

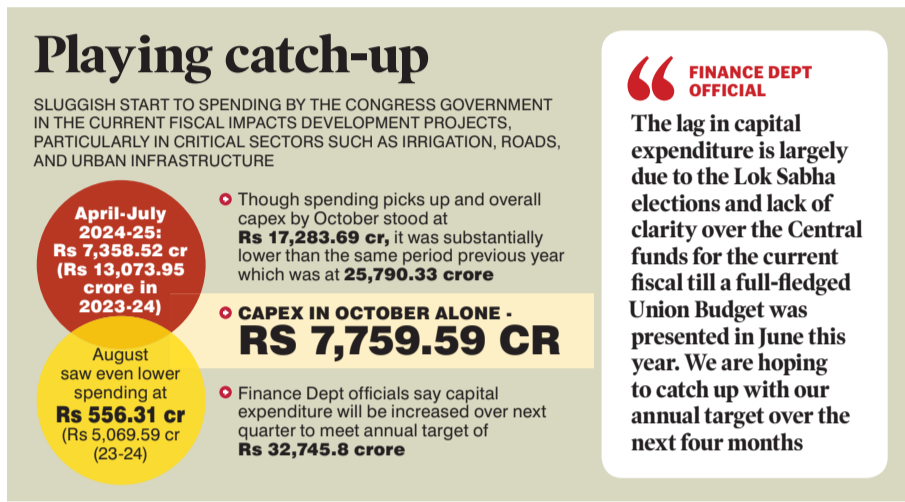
Capex by Oct at Rs 17,283 cr as against Rs 25,790 cr in 23-24

STATE BUREAU
 HYDERABAD

Telangana's capital expenditure for 2024-25 turned regressive under the Congress government as compared to the previous financial year during the BRS regime. The capital expenditure shows a significant surge in October, helping narrow the gap with last year's spending. However, the overall progress continues to lag.

By October 2024, the State recorded Rs 17,283.69 crore in capital expenditure, substantially lower than Rs 25,790.33 crore for the same period in 2023-24. While October alone contributed Rs 7,759.59 crore — nearly half of the year's total so far — the earlier months saw lower spending, particularly in August and September. For instance, August 2024 expenditure stood at just Rs 556.31 crore this year compared to Rs 5,069.59 crore in 2023-24.

The sluggish start, with April-July 2024 spending at Rs 7,358.52 crore against Rs 13,073.95 crore in 2023, points to cautious fiscal management and potential



delays in project approvals due to the elections. This early lull impacted development projects, particularly in critical sectors such as irrigation, roads, and urban infrastructure.

However, a sharp increase in October suggests a focused government push to revive the momentum. The spike reflects efforts to fast-track delayed projects and maintain public confidence in infrastructure development. The officials of the Finance Department indicated that the capital expenditure would be increased over the next quarter to meet the annual target of Rs 32,745.8 crore by the end of the current fiscal. "The lag in capital expenditure is largely due to the Lok Sabha elections and lack of clarity over the Central funds for the current fiscal till a full-fledged union Budget was presented in June this year. We are hoping to catch up with our annual target over the next four months," a top official in the department

said. However, they are sceptical about the State revenue as well as the market borrowings which are lagging far behind the annual target. While the revenue receipts were pegged at around Rs 1.02 lakh crore at the end of November as against the annual target of Rs 2.21 lakh crore, the market borrowings have already surpassed Rs 41,000 crore as of December 20 against the Budget estimate of Rs 49,255 crore for the current fiscal. (SEE PAGE 2)

PM to lay stone for river linking project

Ken-Betwa project is the first under national river interlinking policy

BHOPAL

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will on Wednesday lay the foundation stone of the Ken-Betwa river linking project, the first such initiative under the national river interlinking policy, at Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh. Nearly 44 lakh people in 10 districts of Madhya Pradesh and 21 lakh in Uttar Pradesh will get drinking water under the project, which is estimated to cost Rs 44,605 crore, MP Chief Minister Mohan Yadav said on Tuesday.

Nearly 7.18 lakh farmer families of 2,000 villages will benefit from the project, which will also generate 103 MW of hydropower and 27 MW of solar energy, he said. "Prime Minister Modi is coming to Khajuraho in Chhatarpur district on December 25 to lay the foundation of this project which will change the image and destiny of Bundelkhand in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar



Nearly 44 lakh people in 10 districts of Madhya Pradesh and 21 lakh in Uttar Pradesh will get drinking water under the project.

Pradesh," Yadav said. The Ken-Betwa Link Project is a unique example of cooperation and coordination between the Central government, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh, he said. Prime Minister Modi has taken the initiative to realise the dream of former PM late Atal Bihari Vajpayee of the river linking campaign, Yadav added.

Through this project, farmers will get ample water for irrigation and it will also provide sufficient water for drinking and industrial uses.

Along with the economic and social development of the area, tourism will also be promoted and new employment opportunities will be

created. The situation of groundwater in the drought-hit Bundelkhand region will also improve, the Chief Minister said. Yadav said Ken-Betwa is the largest irrigation project in the country, adopting an underground pressurised pipe irrigation system.

Under the project, a 77-metre high and 2.13 kilometres long Daudhan dam and two tunnels (upper level 1.9 km and lower level 1.1 km) will be constructed on the Ken river in the Panna Tiger Reserve. The dam will store 2,853 million cubic metres of water, the CM said. The surplus Ken water will be transferred to the Betwa river through the 221-km-long link canal. (SEE PAGE 2)

Cops grill Allu Arjun for over 3 hrs

CITY BUREAU
 Hyderabad

Amidst heavy police deployment, actor Allu Arjun was questioned for over three and half hours on Tuesday by Chikkadpally police in connection with the recent stampede during 'Pushpa 2: The Rise' movie screening at Sandhya theatre at RTC X roads.

The actor, accompanied by his legal team and father Allu Arvind, father-in-law Chandrashekar Reddy and film producer Bunny Vasu, reached the police station at 11.05 am. Stepping out of his black Benz car, he greeted the media personnel and maintaining a calm demeanour, went into the police station.

Allu Arjun reportedly faced a volley of questions over the stampede at the theatre, which resulted in the death of a woman and serious injuries to her son. He was reportedly confronted and questioned, showing a 10-minute video that detailed the happening on the fateful day in the theatre. After over three and half hours of questions, the



Allu Arjun at the Chikkadpally police station for questioning as part of an ongoing probe into the stampede case. — Photo: Anand Dharmana

actor came out of the police station at 2.48 pm and headed for his home. The police asked the actor to appear for questioning with regard to the investigation

into the stampede at the theatre. The police booked a case under relevant sections and cited Allu Arjun as accused No. 11 in this case. (RELATED REPORTS PAGE 3)

5 soldiers killed in Jammu mishap

JAMMU

Five soldiers were killed and 5 others injured in a road accident in J&K's Poonch district on Tuesday. Officials said that an army vehicle, which was on its way from Nilam Headquarters to the

Balnoi Ghora Post, met with an accident upon reaching Ghora Post. "The vehicle fell into a deep gorge around 300-350 feet deep resulting in on-the-spot death of five soldiers and serious injuries to five other soldiers. The vehicle was part of the 11

MLA. After receiving the distress call, the quick reaction team of 11 MLI immediately reached the spot and undertook rescue and relief operations," an official said. The injured were shifted to the hospital for treatment, the official said. (SEE PAGE 2)

Hyderabad may receive rains in midst of winter

CITY BUREAU
 Hyderabad

It could rain in the middle of winter! Yes, in a mid-winter surprise, the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD)-Hyderabad on Tuesday issued a weather bulletin forecasting isolated showers, overcast conditions and light rain or drizzle in parts of Hyderabad for the next two to three days.

The chances of drizzle, sporadic showers and cloudy skies are also likely in the districts.

The forecast looked at the likelihood of generally cloudy sky, mist or hazy conditions during mornings and likely light rain/drizzle. Forecasting similar conditions State-wide, the IMD said the minimum temperatures are likely to be above normal by 20 degrees Cel-



According to IMD, the chances of drizzle, sporadic showers and cloudy skies are also likely in the districts.

sus to 40 degrees Celsius during the next three days. Barring Adilabad, the minimum temperatures across the State will hover anywhere between 15 degrees Celsius and 20 degrees Celsius, a far cry from last week when the minimum temperatures, even in some core areas of

Hyderabad were in single digits. According to amateur weather enthusiasts, winter has been replaced with monsoon-like conditions because of a well-marked low-pressure system in the Bay of Bengal and chances of widespread rains in coastal regions of Andhra Pradesh.

Crime rate up 64% in Cyberabad

ASIF YAR KHAN
 Hyderabad

The crime rate in Cyberabad Commissionerate of Telangana witnessed an alarming rise of 64 per cent in 2024 compared to seven per cent the previous year.

The Cyberabad Police registered 37,689 cases this year as against 22,859 in 2023. The cybercrime cases almost doubled during the year, with a total of 11,914 cases registered in which people lost around Rs 780 crore.

Cyberabad Commissioner of Police Avinash Mohanty said the police adopted a 'free registration of FIR approach' and hence, an increase in the number of cases. "We are registering cases for every complaint received at the police station. Of the total 37,689

Cybercrime cases almost doubled, with a total of 11,914 cases registered in which people lost around Rs 780 crore

cases registered this year, cybercrimes constituted 32 per cent and 11,914 FIRs issued," he said. Mohanty said there is an increase in property offences and economic offences this year as well. "Every complaint is converted into an FIR to lay the foundation for a thorough investigation. Special emphasis is laid on the investigation of cybercrimes and economic offences, which are drastically increasing," he said. (SEE PAGES 2, 3)

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