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Microsoft to invest \$3 bn in AI, cloud expansion



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Trump renews his offer of making Canada 51st US State

If Canada merges with the US, there will be no Tariffs, says the President-elect



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Rabada confident of SA winning WTC title

In a nutshell

CRPF ASI shoots himself dead in J&K

KATRA/JAMMU: A CRPF assistant sub-inspector allegedly shot himself with his service rifle in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district on Tuesday. Rajnath Prasad (55), a resident of Bihar, allegedly shot himself on the chest inside a makeshift Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) picket along the Tarakote route leading to Mata Vaishno Devi shrine in Katra, they added. Prasad's colleagues rushed to the scene on hearing the gunshot and found him lying dead. PTI

Memorial to be set up for Pranab

NEW DELHI: The government has decided to set up a memorial for former president Pranab Mukherjee at the 'Rashtriya Smriti' area complex. Mukherjee died on August 31, 2020. Sharmistha Mukherjee, daughter of the former president, met Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday and thanked him for honouring her father. Mukherjee said that she was happy that the government had recognised the contribution of her late father towards the nation. PTI

Asaram gets interim bail

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Tuesday granted till March 31 interim bail to jailed self-styled godman Asaram in a 2013 rape case observing he had various ailments and needed treatment. The Bench directed Asaram not to meet his followers in a group post-release. Asaram, however, would remain in jail as he faces another rape case in Jodhpur. The court said it won't consider the plea on merits, but only the medical grounds. NATION PAGE 8

HC CJ Aradhe to be transferred

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court Collegium on Tuesday recommended the transfer of Chief Justice of Telangana High Court Alok Aradhe to the Bombay High Court. Born on April 13, 1964, Justice Aradhe was appointed as an additional judge of the Madhya Pradesh High Court in December 2009 and took oath as the permanent Judge in February 2011. Alok Aradhe took oath as the Chief Justice of the Telangana High Court on July 23, 2023. IANS

KTR challenges Revanth for open debate on Formula-E

BRS leader launches counter-offensive; lists quid pro quo acts of Congress

STATE BUREAU
HYDERABAD

Launching a fierce counter-offensive against the Congress after the ruling party tried to portray the Telangana High Court's dismissal of his quash petition as an indictment of him in the Formula-E case, BRS working president KT Rama Rao said he had full faith in the judiciary and that he had approached the Supreme Court.

Responding to quid pro quo allegations, he listed out what could actually be instances of quid pro quo deals by Congress. "The Congress is celebrating as if the court found me guilty. The High Court merely dismissed the quash petition, and we are pursuing our legal options," he said. Criticising Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy for misusing investigative agencies for political vendetta, he said during questioning by the ACB, his constitutional rights were violated when his advocates were denied access.

He also highlighted the misuse of agencies to leak



BRS working president KT Rama Rao addressing the media in Hyderabad on Tuesday.

fabricated statements to the media. He had approached the High Court once again, seeking to ask the ACB to question him in the presence of his advocates, which was his constitutional right, he said.

Refuting corruption allegations, he said not a single paise of corruption had occurred in the Formula-E case. "Hosting the event

was a decision to position Hyderabad as an Electric Vehicle (EV) hub. I challenge Revanth Reddy to an open debate on the matter, and I will prove my innocence," he asserted.

Rama Rao also rubbished Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy's quid pro quo allegations against him, listing out what could be quid pro quo acts of the Congress.

"If electoral bonds are evidence of quid pro quo, the Congress, BJP, TDP and YSRCP have also benefited from Greenko," he pointed out, adding that Megha Engineering Infrastructure Limited (MEIL) gave funds to all major political parties, including the Congress, through electoral bonds.

(SEE PAGE 2)

KTR approaches SC as HC dismisses plea

STATE BUREAU
Hyderabad

The Telangana High Court has on Tuesday dismissed the criminal petition filed by BRS working president KT Rama Rao seeking to quash the criminal proceedings against him. The case registered by the State ACB involves allegations of misappropriation of funds and abuse of power during his tenure as the Minister of Municipal Administration & Urban Development Department. The complaint, lodged by the current Principal Secretary (MA & UD), accused Rama Rao of directing the HMDA to make substantial payments to a foreign company without proper authorisation. The payments were related to hosting Formula E Championship in Hyderabad, with allegations of financial misconduct and violation of Secretariat Business Rules, the Telangana State Finance Code and Article 299 of the Constitution of India.

(REPORT PAGE 5)

Delhi elections on Feb 5, results Feb 8

NEW DELHI

All the 70 Assembly seats in Delhi will go to polls on February 5 and the votes will be counted on February 8, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar announced on Tuesday. By-polls to two Assembly constituencies — Milkpur in Uttar Pradesh and Erode in Tamil Nadu — will also be held according to the same schedule.

The bypoll was necessitated following the election of Milkpur MLA Awadhesh Prasad to the Lok Sabha and the death of Erode MLA EVKS Elangovan. The CEC announced that bypolls in two constituencies of Jammu and Kashmir — Budgam and Nagrota — will take place later due to the current snowy conditions. The byelections in West Bengal's Basirhat and Gujarat's Visavadar cannot be held till election petitions are pending, he said.

The last date to file nominations is January 17 and the scrutiny of nominations will be done by January 18. Candidates will be able to withdraw their nominations till January 20, Kumar said. "It is a single-phase election... We have deliberately kept polling on a Wednesday so more people come out to vote... like we did in Maharashtra. The entire election process will be completed

EVMs CANNOT BE TAMPERED WITH: CEC

NEW DELHI: Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar on Tuesday rejected suggestions that EVMs can be tampered with and cited several court judgments upholding their reliability to state that rigging them is an impossibility. Rejecting claims by opposition parties, he said the allegations of tampering were baseless and advised the public against "jhoth ke gubbare (spreading lies)". PTI

by February 10," Kumar said at a press conference. Of the 70 seats in Delhi, 58 are general and 12 reserved.

According to the electoral roll, Delhi has 1.55 crore voters — 83.49 lakh men, 71.74 lakh women and 1,261 transgender persons. There are 25.89 lakh young voters, 2.08 lakh first-time voters, and 830 above the age of 100, Kumar said. More than 13,000 polling stations will be set up in Delhi, he said. In the 2020 polls, the AAP won 62 seats and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) eight while the Congress drew a blank.

(RELATED REPORTS PAGE 7)

NGO cautions bikers on Chinese manja threat

STATE BUREAU
Sangareddy

Come Sankranti, the skies in Telangana and Hyderabad in particular, will be dotted with colourful kites.

However, every season, the kites also come with the threat of nylon manja to birds, animals, and humans. Despite several reports of deaths and injuries to humans, people have failed to change and continue using nylon manja to fly the kites even today.

As a precaution against the threat of nylon manja getting entangled around the necks of bike riders, the Ameenpur-based NGO, Animal Warriors Conservation Society (AWCS) released some guidelines. It also cautioned car drivers to prevent passengers, especially kids, from standing out of the sunroof.

Pradeep Nair, founder of AWCS, called upon the people not to use the sunroof in their cars at least for one month. Nair also urged bike riders to use thick neck

CHINESE MANJA INJURES BIKER

NIRMAL: A biker suffered a deep cut on his neck after being entangled by a string of banned Chinese nylon manja in Khanapur on Monday. The injured, Vilas from Vidyanagar, was initially admitted to a government hospital in Khanapur before being shifted to another hospital in Nirmal. With similar accidents becoming frequent during the kite-flying season with many people still using the banned Chinese nylon manja, police and NGOs have warned the public to be wary of loose strings of manja while travelling. Bikers have been asked to wear helmets and to wear a scarf around their neck to prevent grievous injuries.

bands or a scarf as a precautionary measure apart from using helmets. He further said that bike riders and people using sunroofs would sustain grave injuries within a fraction of a second, resulting in profuse bleeding which may even lead to death unless he/she gets timely treatment.

(SEE PAGE 2)

126 killed as quake rattles Tibet

188 others injured; tremors also felt in Nepal; Xi orders all-out relief, rescue ops

BEIJING

A 6.8-magnitude earthquake struck near one of Tibet's holiest cities on Tuesday, killing at least 126 people and injuring 188 others with tremors also shaking buildings and forcing people to run to the streets in neighbouring Nepal.

According to regional disaster relief headquarters, the quake jolted Dingri County in Xigaze at 9:05 am Tuesday (Beijing Time). The US Geological Service, however, put the quake's magnitude at 7.1.

At least 126 people have been confirmed dead and 188 others injured, state-run Xinhua news agency reported. Chinese President Xi Jinping has ordered all-out rescue efforts to carry out relief and rescue operations in the affected areas.

Xi ordered utmost efforts to treat the injured and urged efforts to prevent secondary disasters, properly resettle affected residents, and handle the aftermath work effectively.

Following the quake, China Earthquake Adminis-



People stand amidst damaged houses in the aftermath of an earthquake in Tonglai Village of Tibet on Tuesday. — Photo:AP

tration launched a level-II emergency service response and sent a work team to the site to assist with disaster relief efforts. Xizang Autonomous Region

also issued a level-II emergency response to the quake. Some 22,000 disaster relief items, including cotton tents, cotton coats, quilts and folding beds, to-

gether with special relief materials for high-altitude and frigid areas, have been dispatched by central authorities to the quake-hit area. Over 1,500 local fire-

fighters and rescue workers have also been dispatched to the ground. Xigaze is close to border with India.

(SEE PAGE 2)

Brace for another cold wave: IMD

CITY BUREAU
Hyderabad

Following a brief spell of rise in minimum temperatures by 2 degrees Celsius to 4 degrees Celsius, a significant temperature drop is expected in the coming days in Hyderabad and districts.

According to the IMD-Hyderabad and amateur weather enthusiasts tracking weather patterns in Telangana, a powerful cold wave is expected to sweep Telangana between January 8 and 10. Hinting at a similar change in weather, the IMD-H, in its Tuesday forecast, said, "Minimum temperatures are likely to be normal in the next three



According to the IMD-H and amateur weather enthusiasts tracking weather patterns, a powerful cold wave is expected to sweep Telangana between January 8 and 10. — Photo: Surya Sidhar

days. Thereafter, the temperatures are likely to be below normal by 2 degrees

Celsius to 3 degrees Celsius. Mist or hazy conditions are likely to prevail during

morning hours over Telangana for the next 5 days," IMD-H said. (SEE PAGE 2)

23 hospitalised due to food poisoning

STATE BUREAU
Karimnagar

Around 23 students of the Jyotiba Phule BC Gurukul at Sharmanagar here fell ill due to food poisoning and were admitted to a hospital. The students developed vomiting after midnight. School authorities shifted about 19 students to the district headquarters hospital at night and another four students in the morning. The condition of students is said to be stable.

Cabbage curry served in dinner is said to be the reason for the ill-health of students. (SEE PAGE 2)

2 suspected HMPV cases in Nagpur

NEW DELHI

The Centre has advised States to step up surveillance for respiratory illnesses, including ILI and SARI, and spread awareness about the prevention of transmission of the human metapneumovirus (HMPV) after five cases were detected in India.

On Tuesday, two suspected cases of the virus were reported from Maharashtra's Nagpur. Both the patients were discharged after treatment, a senior official said. Their samples have been sent to the All India Institute of Medical

Sciences (AIIMS) in Nagpur and the National Institute of Virology in Pune, the official said. India reported its first HMPV cases on Monday after five children tested positive in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Gujarat.

Union Health Minister JP Nadda had said that the government was closely monitoring the situation and there was no reason to worry. HMPV is a globally recognised respiratory virus. It is a viral pathogen that causes respiratory infections in people of all age groups.

(SEE PAGE 2)

BJP, Congress workers clash in Nampally

STATE BUREAU
Hyderabad

A tense situation prevailed in front of the BJP State office at Nampally after Congress and BJP workers clashed with each other on the issue of BJP former MP Ramesh Bidhuri's sexist remark against Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi on Tuesday.

Earlier in the day, Youth Congress functionaries surrounded the BJP office and pelted stones and eggs in protest against the comments made by Bidhuri on Priyanka Gandhi.

(REPORT PAGE 5)