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**Rs 65,000 cr
Amaravati
project works
begin in AP**



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**Over 30 killed in Russia's
missile attack on Ukraine**

Russia, Ukraine blame each other of
violating temporary deal



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**Salt, Kohli
power RCB to
nine-wicket
win over Royals**

In a nutshell

India test-fires new weapon

NEW DELHI: India on Sunday carried out a successful trial of a laser-directed energy weapon system, joining a select group of nations having the new-age armament used to bring down hostile drones and unmanned aircraft. The DRDO said the weapon system was tested at Andhra Pradesh's Kurnool. India is among very few countries which are developing directed energy weapon systems to deal with future security challenges. The US, China and Russia are known to have developed directed energy weapon systems. (PTI)

RMP killed in lift mishap

HYDERABAD: An RMP died after a lift in an apartment came crashing on him in Medchal. According to information, Akbar Patil was peeping into the well of the lift at Sai Manikanta Residency in Suraram in an effort to retrieve a ball that fell down there. When the 39-year-old RMP looked into the well of the lift searching for the ball, the elevator car was up on the higher floors. Reports suggest that Akbar Patil from the floor was bent down into the lift well enclosure when the elevator was operated and came down crashing on his head.

Punjab LoP Bajwa booked

CHANDIGARH: Hours after being quizzed over his "50 bombs have reached Punjab" claims, the Punjab Police on Sunday booked Leader of Opposition in State Assembly Partap Singh Bajwa on various charges including misleading information that endangers country's sovereignty and unity. The case has been registered at Cyber Crime police station in Mohali, sources said. Punjab Police questioned Bajwa over his claims even as Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann asked the Congress leader to reveal the source of his information.

Kancha Gachibowli land deal raises red flags

Rs 15,776 cr repayment obligation sparks concerns of financial burden on State

PS DILEEP
HYDERABAD

The Congress government's decision to mortgage 400 acres of prime Kancha Gachibowli land to raise a Rs 9,995 crore loan has sparked fresh concerns over the staggering financial burden it imposes on the public exchequer. A closer look at the borrowing terms reveals a long-term liability of Rs 15,776.93 crore to be repaid over the next 10 years, raising serious concerns over fiscal prudence.

After payment of necessary taxes, charges and Rs 169 crore commission to Trust Investment Advisors Private Limited for mediation, around Rs 8,476 crore was deposited in the TGIIC account through the sale of bonds. Thus, the government would be effectively repaying double the amount it borrowed within 10 years.

At an interest rate of 9.3 per cent, well above the prevailing government borrowing rates, the loan will accrue a cumulative interest of Rs 5,781.93 crore over the next 10 years. The instalments are required to be



High-cost borrowing by a State agency with no revenue-generating plan to match the debt service raises questions on viability and intent, say experts.

paid at the end of each quarter in a financial year. In the first two years i.e., till December 2026, the TGIIC will pay Rs 1,933 crore towards interest alone.

Experts point out that such high-cost borrowing by a State agency with no revenue-generating plan to match the debt service raises questions on viability and intent. Except for the fact that the TGIIC loan is guaranteed and serviced by

the Telangana government, the loan raised at such huge interest is not being used for capital expenditure.

Breach of ethical norms

"Such action will affect the State's reputation in the market," a financial advisor said. According to IT and Industries Minister D Sridhar Babu, the amount was spent for the crop loan waiver, Rythu Bharosa investment support and also Rs 500

bonus per quintal for fine variety rice. Around 37 entities, including banks and institutional investors, are reported to have subscribed to these bonds. Adding to the discomfort is the Rs 169 crore paid as commission to Trust Investment Advisors Private Limited, the firm that facilitated the loan by acting as the lead arranger.

Interestingly, Trust Investment Advisors, along with its group subsidiaries

Trust Capital Services (India) Pvt Ltd and Trust Financial Consultancy Services Pvt Ltd, later subscribed to Rs 525 crore worth of the very same bonds they helped issue.

Ballooning liability

With a total repayment obligation of Rs 15,776.93 crore over 10 years, TGIIC would need to repay an average of over Rs 1,500 crore annually. There is, however, no clear roadmap on how the agency plans to generate revenues of that magnitude.

The assumption appears to be that the Kancha Gachibowli land auctions or monetisation of State assets will fill the gap. However, if the courts decide that Kancha Gachibowli meets the criteria of a deemed forest, then the entire land would come under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. Any non-forestry use of this land would require prior approval from the union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. And this will block the State's plans to auction these lands, thus making the bonds financially toxic.

Bills: Centre may file review petition

NEW DELHI

The government is likely to file a review petition on the Supreme Court judgement setting a timeframe for the President and the Governors to decide on giving assent to Bills passed by State legislatures.

Sources said that besides seeking a review of the timeline, the government may seek a review of the apex court's order that the State governments can directly approach it if the President withholds assent to a Bill sent by a Governor for consideration. There are active considerations at the highest echelon of the government on the issue and, in all probability, a review petition will be filed, the sources said. The grounds on which the review petition will be filed are being considered and will be known once the government approaches the apex court.

If the government approaches SC, the review petition will have to be filed before the same bench of Justices J B Pardiwala and R Mahadevan that pronounced the verdict, the sources said. After the April 8 judgement, the Tamil Nadu government notified 10 pending bills as Acts in government gazette.

(SEE PAGE 2)

8 killed in AP cracker unit mishap

VISAKHAPATNAM

Eight people, including two women, were killed and at least seven others injured in a powerful explosion at a firecracker manufacturing unit in Anakapalli district of Andhra Pradesh on Sunday.

The explosion occurred around 12.45 pm at Kotavuratl village and the injured were shifted to hospitals. Prime Minister Narendra

Modi expressed grief over the incident.

He said, "An ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh from PMNRF would be given to the next of kin of each deceased. The injured would be given Rs 50,000."

"Eight people, including two women, died and seven others were injured in the fire accident," Andhra Pradesh Home Minister V Anitha said. The blast

ripped through the licensed crackers manufacturing unit functioning under an asbestos roof, where 15 people were reportedly present. Charred body parts were scattered around, making identification difficult, an eyewitness said.

Meanwhile, postmortem of the five deceased is underway at a local hospital in Narsipatnam and three more at Anakapalle. (PTI)

Tension in Balanagar after man's death

CITY BUREAU
Hyderabad

A man lost his life allegedly due to the highhandedness of traffic police at Balanagar on Sunday afternoon.

According to the reports, the man in his late 20s was driving a motorcycle when a traffic constable tried to stop his bike. During the process, the man lost balance and fell on the road. An RTC bus which was close behind, ran over him, leading to his death on the spot. Soon, a crowd gathered at the spot and started a protest. A few people tried to attack the traffic policemen, then the local law and order police reached the spot and resorted to a lathi charge to disperse the crowd. A few people suffered injuries in the police lathicharge.

Day after violence, uneasy calm in Murshidabad

KOLKATA

Skeletal remains of burnt vehicles, a looted shopping mall and a vandalised pharmacy were some of the tell-tale signs of violence that engulfed parts of Murshidabad district of West Bengal during protests against the Waqf (Amendment) Act.

On Sunday, roads were deserted, shops closed and people remained indoors as police and Central Armed Forces patrolled sensitive areas in Dhulian, Shamsherganj and Suti areas which witnessed violence in the last two days.

Leading a media team inside a vandalised building in Dhulian, some locals showed remains of bomb splinters, and ashes of furniture that were stacked on the courtyard and set ablaze. "We were caught unawares as suddenly, an armed gang of hundreds of people emerged from nowhere. They were baying for blood shouting that no member of our community



Waqf Act: Owaisi wants PM to reconsider

HYDERABAD: AIMIM President and Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi on Sunday appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to reconsider the Waqf (Amendment) Act. Speaking to the media, he reiterated that the Act is unconstitutional, claiming that the 'black law' was made by the BJP with the support of NDA's supporting parties. "We are appealing to the Prime Minister to please reconsider this Act. You are making a law that is against the Constitution of India, and you are imposing your ideology on the country." (SEE PAGE 2)

will be allowed to live in the area as we are collaborating with a ploy to take away Waqf land through the Act. "As we pleaded with them, they did not harm us but ex-

ploded a number of bombs and vandalised the property before leaving the spot. The police arrived much later," one of the residents said. (SEE PAGE 2)



Roman Catholic clergymen carry palm fronds during the Palm Sunday procession at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, traditionally believed by many to be the site of the crucifixion and burial of Jesus Christ, in Jerusalem's Old City, on Sunday. — Photo: AP



TG BIE likely to release inter results on WhatsApp

YUVRAJ AKULA
Hyderabad

If the plan of the Telangana Board of Intermediate Education (TG BIE) fructifies, students can view their results on WhatsApp. The Board is exploring the option of making the recently held intermediate public examinations (IPE) results available on WhatsApp.

For this, the Board is planning to roll out a dedicated number on which the results can be viewed and scorecard downloaded. All that is required is the candidate's hall ticket number. This initiative is on the lines of the Andhra Pradesh government's 'Mana Mitra', an initiative for WhatsApp governance. By sending 'Hi' message to Mana Mitra at

number 9552300009, people can avail around 200 services, including download of the intermediate results that were released on Saturday.

According to sources, TG BIE is looking into technical aspects and arrangements before commencing the new service. If not for the IPE March 2025, the initiative is likely to be launched for the intermediate advanced sup-

plementary results. Meanwhile, the Board concluded the evaluation of the intermediate answer scripts.

At present, codification is being done at the Centre for Good Governance that is expected to take a week or 10 days to complete. Results may be released in the last week of April. This time, to ensure that there are no discrepancies in the results, the

Board officials randomly scrutinised the answer scripts, particularly of the candidates who scored lowest marks i.e., zero. Under this exercise, the spot evaluation camp officials - examiners and scrutinisers - were given four slabs - 0 to 10 marks, 25-35 marks, 50-60 marks and 90-100 marks - for re-verification of the answer scripts.