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NDA will form govts in TN, West Bengal: Amit Shah



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US National Guards reach LA to quell protests

Protests break out against immigration authorities seeking to carry out deportations



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City's Rahil Pillarisetty national racing champion

In a nutshell

Chirag Paswan to contest Bihar polls

**ARA:** Union Minister Chirag Paswan on Sunday said it is for the people of Bihar to decide from which seat he should contest the Assembly elections due later this year. Paswan made the statement at a rally in Ara in Bhojpur district where his party, the Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), sounded the poll bugle. "I will contest the Bihar Assembly polls. I will contest not just in Bihar but for Bihar and its people," he said. [PTI](#)

Israel vows to stop Greta visit

**TEL AVIV:** Israel's government on Sunday vowed to prevent an aid boat carrying Greta Thunberg and other activists from reaching the Gaza Strip. Defence Minister Israel Katz said Israel wouldn't allow anyone to break its naval blockade of the Palestinian territory, which he said was aimed at preventing Hamas from importing arms. Thunberg, a climate campaigner, is among 12 activists aboard the Madleen. [WORLD PAGES 9](#)

Covid cases cross 6,000-mark

**NEW DELHI:** India's active Covid case tally crossed the 6,000 mark with 769 new infections being reported in the last 48 hours, according to the Union Health Ministry data released on Sunday. Kerala continues to be the most affected state, followed by Gujarat, West Bengal and Delhi, according to the Ministry. Due to the rising Covid cases, the Centre is conducting drills to check facility-level preparedness. [PTI](#)

## Cong MLAs sulk after Cabinet expansion

MLA Malreddy says he's ready to quit party; Meenakshi Natarajan in damage control mode

STATE BUREAU  
HYDERABAD

The much-anticipated Cabinet expansion by the Congress, on which an official announcement came early on Sunday, quickly spiralled into a political firestorm within the party, as top leaders scrambled to contain anger and dissent among senior MLAs who were overlooked for ministerial berths.

The All India Congress Committee (AICC) approved the induction of three new Ministers — Chennai MLA G Vivek Venkatswamy, Dharmapuri MLA Adluri Laxman and Makthal MLA V Srinivas Goud — taking the total number of Ministers to 14 out of the 17 sanctioned berths.

Even as preparations were on at Raj Bhavan for the swearing-in ceremony, AICC's Telangana incharge Meenakshi Natarajan launched into damage control mode. Accompanied by Advisor Vem Narender Reddy and other leaders, she rushed to meet Bodhan MLA and former Minister P Sudarshan Reddy, a key contender for a Cabinet position. Sudarshan Reddy reportedly expressed strong displeasure over being excluded, with Natarajan attempting to pacify him, re-

### TELANGANA CABINET EXPANDED WITH INDUCTION OF 3 MINISTERS

**HYDERABAD:** The State Cabinet was expanded on Sunday with the induction of three more Ministers, Chennai MLA Vivek Venkat Swamy, Dharmapuri MLA Adluri Laxman and Makthal MLA V Srihari. Governor Jishnu Dev Varma administered the oath of office to the three MLAs at a ceremony held at Raj Bhavan. Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, TPCC president Mahesh Kumar Goud and several others, including chairpersons of various corporations, attended the swearing-in ceremony. However, the portfolios for the new Ministers are yet to be announced. The induction of the three MLAs marks the long-pending cabinet expansion though three berths in the 17-member Cabinet remain vacant. The Chief Minister and the TPCC president congratulated the newly inducted Ministers and also extended their best wishes to Dornakal MLA J Ramchander Naik, who has been nominated for the post of Deputy Speaker.

portedly citing the high command's consideration of caste equations. Details of the assurances given, however, remain unclear.

Meanwhile, another aspirant, Ibrahimpatnam MLA Malreddy Rangareddy, went public with his frustration, saying he was prepared to quit, if social equations were a hurdle in appointing an MLA as a Minister from Greater Hyderabad and erstwhile Rangareddy district. Efforts were also made to reach out to Munugode MLA Komatireddy Rajgopal Reddy and Mancherial MLA Prem Sagar Rao, both of whom were seen as strong contenders for Cabinet in-

clusion. However, it was unclear if any assurances were extended or whether the two leaders softened their stance or were biding their time to go public with their displeasure. The response of Rajgopal Reddy, in particular, remains to be seen since he was sure of a berth for himself, and had made public statements on the same. TPCC president Mahesh Kumar Goud, along with other senior leaders, reportedly contacted various discontented MLAs, including those questioning the party's deviation from its own 2022 Udaipur Declaration. [\(SEE PAGE 2\)](#) [\(RELATED REPORT PAGE 5\)](#)

## Gopinath passes away at 62

BRS MLA's sudden demise shocks political circles in State



BRS chief K Chandrashekhara Rao consoles Maganti Gopinath's son in Hyderabad on Sunday.

STATE BUREAU  
HYDERABAD

Jubilee Hills MLA and senior BRS leader Maganti Gopinath passed away on Sunday while undergoing treatment following a heart attack. He was 62.

Gopinath, who had recently undergone surgery for a kidney-related ailment, had complained of chest pain at his residence on Thursday afternoon and was rushed to a private hospital in Gachibowli. Despite intensive care and ventilator support, he breathed his last at around 5.45 am on Sun-

As an MLA, Gopinath was always accessible to his constituents and established himself as a senior political figure in Hyd — **K CHANDRASHEKHAR RAO**, BRS president

day. His funeral was held later in the day. A three-time legislator, Gopinath had a long and active political journey. Starting with the Telugu Desam Party in 1983, he held multiple roles, including the party's youth wing Telugu Yuvaatha president and Director of the Hyderabad Urban Develop-

feated Congress candidate and former cricket captain Mohammed Azharuddin by over 16,000 votes.

His sudden demise shocked political circles in Telangana, with condolences pouring in from across party lines, many remembering him as a committed public representative and seasoned leader.

BRS president and former Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao, who reached Gopinath's residence in Madhapur, struggled to hold back his tears as he paid his last respects to the leader. [\(SEE PAGES 2, 5\)](#)

## Schooling in BJP, college in TDP, now working in Congress: CM

STATE BUREAU  
HYDERABAD

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Sunday candidly admitted to switching political loyalties over the years, beginning with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), then moving to the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), and currently

"working" with the Congress party.

"My school education was with the BJP, college education was under TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu, and I'm currently doing my job with Rahul Gandhi," Revanth Reddy said while launching Haryana Governor Bandaru Dattatreya's autobiography

*Prajala Kathe Na Atma Katha* in Hyderabad.

Recalling a recent interaction with Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a NITI Aayog meeting in New Delhi, Revanth Reddy said Modi had called him over and, pointing to Chandrababu Naidu, remarked that "his friend was also there." [\(SEE PAGE 2\)](#)

## Stampede: Police warning ignored

BENGALURU

Even as the Congress-led government is highlighting the "failure" of the Police Department in connection with Bengaluru stampede that claimed 11 lives, it has emerged that a letter from the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Bengaluru, had warned against holding the event, citing security and overcrowding concerns.

The letter, dated June 4, was sent to the Chief Secretary of the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms (DPAR). Responding to letters from the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) and the Under Secretary of the DPAR, DCP MN Karibasa-vana Gowda issued the warning in his three-page reply. [IANS](#) [\(REPORT PAGE 7\)](#)

## 3 minor communal incidents in Hyd

**HYDERABAD:** The peaceful atmosphere in the city was marred by three minor communal incidents on Sunday evening. At Musheerabad, a group of local people staged a protest in front of the police station over a derogatory social media post targeting a particular community. Some local youngsters noticed a post on Instagram with distasteful content and assembled in front of the Musheerabad

police station demanding action against the person who had posted the content. On assurances from higher officials, the crowd dispersed from the spot after giving a representation to the police.

At Attapur in Rajendranagar, tension prevailed after some persons stopped a vehicle carrying cattle and attacked the driver. The local people belonging to a particular community gathered in large numbers. [\(SEE PAGE 2\)](#)

### POLL RIGGING: EC INSIDERS SLAM RAHUL

**NEW DELHI:** Countering misinformation over Maharashtra elections, Election Commission insiders on Sunday shared a nine-point rebuttal to allegations by Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, adding that his concerns can be formally replied to only once he writes to the poll panel. The EC insiders also slammed Gandhi and his Congress for indulging in sensationalism through misinformation, while "developing cold feet" when invited by the EC to share their concerns over alleged poll rigging. Countering Gandhi's allegations of "match-fixing" in the November 2024 Maharashtra polls, made in a news article on Saturday, EC sources said the matter could have easily been raised before officials when it invited the party. [IANS](#)

## Protests in Manipur after leaders' arrest



The skeleton of a bus burnt by protesters stands on a road in Imphal, the capital of Manipur, on Sunday. — Photo: AP

IMPHAL

Protests over the arrests of Meitei outfit leaders continued in Manipur on Sunday even as the administration imposed prohibitory orders and suspended internet services in five Imphal valley districts, officials said.

Protesters burnt tyres on roads at Uripok and Koirengei in Imphal West district and Khurai in Imphal East, defying the prohibitory orders, they said. At Koirengei, demonstrators dug up the road and made heaps of soil on the

thoroughfares to prevent the movement of security forces. Similar agitations were also staged in Jiribam district of Assam.

Prohibitory orders have been clamped in Imphal West, Imphal East, Thoubal, Bishnupur and Kakching districts, while internet and mobile data services, including VSAT and VPN facilities, have been suspended in these valley areas since Saturday night after violent protests erupted over the arrests of leaders of the Meitei outfit Arambai Tenggol. [PTI](#)

## 75-yr-old man waiting for fish prasadam dies of heart attack



Fish prasadam distribution at Nampally Exhibition Grounds on Sunday. — Photo: Anand Dharamana

CITY BUREAU  
HYDERABAD

A septuagenarian who had come to take fish prasadam at the Exhibition Grounds at Nampally reportedly died of heart stroke on Sunday.

M Satyanarayana (75) was a retired government employee and a resident of Azampura, Medak district.

According to police, he was standing in the queue when he developed severe back pain and went to the health camp set up at the venue. "The doctor made Satyanarayana sit on a chair and was examining him when he collapsed. The doctor gave him CPR and when he did not respond, he was rushed to a nearby hospital

where doctors pronounced him dead," police said. Satyanarayana's family was informed and they are on their way to the city, according to latest reports.

The distribution of fish prasadam, believed to be a cure for asthma, by the Bathini Goud family began on Sunday at Exhibition Grounds here. [\(SEE PAGE 2\)](#)

YUVRAJ AKULA  
HYDERABAD

Far from the misty meadows of Kashmir Valley, where saffron is traditionally cultivated, a silent revolution is taking shape in Telangana.

Scientists from Sri Konda Laxman Telangana Horticultural University have teamed up to grow saffron without soil — using modern, non-traditional farming methods — right here in the State. Saffron, also known as 'red gold' for its vibrant hue,

high value, and medicinal properties, has long been cultivated in Kashmir's cool climate, especially in areas like Pampore. But now, thanks to a modern technique called aeroponics — where plants are grown using nutrient-enriched mist — the researchers are preparing to cultivate saffron under controlled indoor conditions.

In the last week of June, a team of scientists will begin replicating the cool weather conditions of Kashmir in-



side a state-of-the-art, 600 sq ft facility at the College of Horticulture in Wanaparthy district. The facility will feature vertical racks, LED grow lights, and a full aeroponic system.

Along with temperature, humidity, and ventilation controls, the facility will be equipped with a real-time monitoring mechanism. By mid-July, saffron corms weighing 7 grams and above — sourced from Pampore — will be planted. These will be nurtured using a carefully timed misting system to induce flowering.

The process involves a 90-100-day "dark phase" with controlled temperatures, followed by a "light phase" where light is intro-

duced to stimulate flowering. Flowering is expected to begin around October-November, after which the flowers will be harvested and their stigmas separated. The saffron is then dried at temperatures below 55°C.

"The idea is to introduce saffron cultivation from Kashmir to Telangana," said Dr Pidigam Saidaiiah, principal investigator and associate dean of Telangana Horticultural University, speaking to *Telangana Today*. [\(SEE PAGE 2\)](#)