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## SC rules out blanket ban on firecrackers

Also not to allow fireworks throughout the day

NEW DELHI: Ahead of festival season, the Supreme Court on Wednesday said it will neither impose a complete ban on firecrackers nor allow their use round the clock, noting that a middle ground would require specifying the hours during which they can be used. A bench of Justices MM Sundresh and PB Varale said a total ban would affect people's sentiments, while allowing fireworks throughout the day would have a "huge impact" on others, including the elderly, sick and children. "We need to find a solution by which we can give a specified time," the bench observed orally. Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati submitted a note stating that limited and conditional relaxation could be considered for specified "next-generation joined green crackers" recommended by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (CSIR-NEERI), subject to applicable noise, emission and safety requirements.

## TG's Chikitha strikes double gold on debut in Asian Games

K CHANDRASHEKAR  
HYDERABAD

AN archer from the Peddapalli District in Telangana Taniparthi Chikitha has made the country proud by winning two gold medals in team events on her Asian Games debut.

The icing on the cake in India's golden hat-trick in compound archery was the mixed combination of Chikitha and Sahil Jadhav also securing an Olympic quota place

### PEDDAPALLI PILLA'S BANAM FOR OLYMPICS

for the country following their top finish. Chikitha is India's first-ever Women's U-21 Compound World Champion.

Chikitha won the two gold medals in the women's team and mixed team on Wednesday. In the Compound Archery (Women's Team) Chikitha Taniparthi, along with Jyothi Surekha Vennam and Prithika Pradeep, defeated China 238-234, equal-



ling world record to grab the gold at the Asian Games. Repeating her marvellous performance on

the same day in a different event of Compound Archery of mixed team, Chikitha, along with Sahil Jadhav, secured gold. Altogether the Archery team had a stellar gold rush on Wednesday by bagging three gold medals. Despite being on her debut tournament, Chikitha held her nerves to contribute in the team's rush for gold at the games.

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### Murmu pats archers

NEW DELHI: President Droupadi Murmu extended her congratulations to Indian archers Chikitha Taniparthi, Sahil Rajesh Jadhav, Prithika Pradeep and Jyothi Surekha Vennam following their gold medal victories at the Asian Games 2026.



## PM Modi calls up Trump, discusses trade & energy

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said that he had a "productive conversation" with US President Donald Trump and reviewed bilateral cooperation between New Delhi and Washington in various sectors.

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## 'KCR family amassed ₹1L-cr wealth'

Revanth says KCR and his family looted state in the name of Telangana movement

- ▶ Demands KTR to release white paper on KCR, Harish, Santosh and his assets
- ▶ Revanth assures Padmashali community of MLC representation

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

ALLEGING that the KCR family amassed one lakh crore of rupees in the name of Telangana movement, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy challenged BRS working president KT Rama Rao to release a white paper on his assets and those of former chief minister K Chandrashekar Rao, T Harish Rao, and J Santosh Kumar.

Addressing a public meeting in Sircilla on Wednesday,



Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy addressing a public meeting in Sircilla on Wednesday

day, Revanth Reddy alleged that the KCR family had amassed substantial assets by exploiting the Telangana movement and accused the family of benefiting disproportionately during the previous Bharat Rashtira Samithi

(BRS) regime. "If KTR has the courage, let him release a white paper on his assets as well as those of KCR, Harish Rao, Santosh Rao," the Chief Minister said. He questioned the ownership and sources of properties and farmhouses

owned by the members of the KCR family and sought explanations regarding their reported investments and assets outside the country.

The allegations are part of an ongoing political exchange between the Con-

gress government and the BRS leadership over land and assets. KTR has separately demanded a white paper and documentary details from the government regarding its allegations concerning 8,000 acres of land owned by him in Sircilla.

On Wednesday, Revanth Reddy alleged that assets and land worth thousands of crores of rupees, which were earlier held by individuals from the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh region, were transferred to members of the KCR family within a short period.

He also questioned how properties in and around Hyderabad, including hotels and service apartments, were acquired and asked KTR to explain the sources of the alleged wealth.

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## INDIA bloc declares all-out war on SIR

- Announces protests on 'vote chori'
- To undertake march to EC on Oct 6
- Demands paper ballots in future polls



Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge addresses a press conference following the INDIA bloc meeting, alongside LoP in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, J&K CM Omar Abdullah and CPP chairperson Sonia Gandhi in New Delhi on Wednesday

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI

PUTTING up a united front on the 'vote chori' issue, the Opposition INDIA bloc on Wednesday announced joint 'save democracy' marches in

all districts and five major rallies, demanded that future polls be held with ballot paper and appealed to the Supreme Court to expedite cases of SIR and electoral "malpractices".

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## Indian sailor among 5 killed by pirates on hijacked tanker

NEW DELHI: An Indian sailor was among five crew members killed during an anti-piracy operation on the hijacked fuel tanker MT Honour 25 in Somalia. Puntland Maritime Police Force successfully rescued MT Honour 25, apprehending 16 suspected pirates, and freed other vessels like MT Siblu 1 and MT Eureka. The High Commission of India in Kenya is providing assistance to the family of the deceased Indian national and ensuring the safety and repatriation of other Indian seafarers. The incident highlights a resurgence of Somali piracy, driven by regional conflicts and geopolitical instability in the Red Sea, impacting international shipping. Other hijacked vessels, including MT Eureka with Indian crew, were also released, though some were damaged and had cargo siphoned off.

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## Key decisions likely in Cabinet meet today

PRC, DA arrears, Indiramma Insurance scheme on the agenda



PATAN AFZAL BABU  
HYDERABAD

THE Telangana government is likely to take some important decisions in the Cabinet meeting on Thursday, including the implementation of the Pay Revision Commission (PRC) report, the release of Dearness Allowances (DAs), and the finalisation of the modalities for launching the 'Indiramma Family Insurance Scheme' on October 19.

"The Cabinet is set to approve the sanction of a 3.64 per cent Dearness Allowance (DA) and a 2.74 per cent DA for employees and pensioners, which is being paid to all government employees during the festive season of Dussehra and Diwali this year. The other demands raised by

the employees' unions, mainly the submission of the second PRC report and the enhancement of the pay scales, replacement of the Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS) with the Old Pension Scheme (OPS) would be part of the main items on the agenda of the Cabinet meeting," sources said.

The Cabinet Sub-committee headed by Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka would submit a status report on the preparations for the Global Summit in December this year. The government's plan to launch Rs 5 lakh Indiramma Family Insurance Scheme on Indira Gandhi's birth anniversary would also be discussed to ascertain the financial implications of launching the scheme.

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## Cabinet hikes MSP for all rabi crops

Green Energy Corridor, Delhi traffic mgmt system get nod

NEW DELHI: The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved three major measures spanning agriculture, power infrastructure and urban mobility, including higher Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for all mandated rabi crops for the 2027-28 marketing season, a Rs 1.86 lakh crore Green Energy Corridor Phase-III scheme and a Rs 1,789.52 crore technology-led traffic management system for Delhi. **Continued on Page 5**

## Heroic Indian captain prevents flydubai hijack

Makes emergency landing in Saudi Arabia; saves 180 passengers

NEW DELHI

IN a dramatic mid-air incident, an Indian Captain of flydubai flight FZ1073 from Dubai to Tel Aviv carrying 180 passengers thwarted a hijack attempt by his co-pilot, averting what Israeli media described as a potential "second 9/11."

The flight made an emergency landing in Saudi Arabia after an alleged violent altercation between the two pilots inside the cockpit triggering a mid-air emergency, with



videos purportedly capturing passengers screaming as the aircraft rapidly descended.

The flight was diverted to Tabuk airport after transmitting emergency signals that briefly raised fears of a

after stabbing Captain Smit Machchhar during the flight. Despite sustaining injuries, the Captain fought back and prevented the plane from crashing. His quick thinking and courage ensured the safety of more than 180 passengers, most of them Israeli nationals.

The situation escalated when the Captain, injured but determined, managed to restrain the attacker long enough for two off-duty pilots traveling as passengers to intervene. **Continued on Page 5**

## SIR update: No more parent, grandparent details, says EC

Changes Form 6 rule for new voters in 20 states

NEW DELHI

NEW voters in 20 states, where the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) has been completed, will no longer have to provide details of their parents' presence on the electoral rolls. The Election Commission has amended Form 6 to allow applicants in these states to submit the form without the additional SIR-linked



declaration seeking details of parents and grandparents. However, in states where SIR is still underway, new voters will continue to be required to submit the declaration. The move comes days after reports of internal objections within

the three-member poll panel over changes made to Form 6. Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi had reportedly raised objections to the addition of the declaration, with internal records cited by The Indian Express showing that they questioned its legality in the absence of an amendment to the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960. **Continued on Page 5**

## 'SURGICAL STRIKE' OVER DUES FROM GOVT!

## Aargoyasri Network Hospitals shun major cases

K CHANDRASHEKAR  
HYDERABAD

MEMBERS of the Telangana Network Hospitals Association (TANHA) are not accepting major surgeries under the Aargoyasri scheme, apart from staying away from the newly launched Employees Health Scheme (EHS). Besides, they have just announced that they will not be able to provide "some more services" if the government

- ▶ Aargoyasri dues between Rs 2,000 and Rs 2,500 cr
- ▶ Bills pending for 14 months for many network hospitals
- ▶ Hospitals also shying away from new EHS

does not clear the Aargoyasri dues that have mounted to between Rs 2,000 and Rs 2,500 crore.

The Network Hospitals



wanted the government to call them for discussions and make them part of the committee seized of the EHS scheme so that they

too can put forward their viewpoints.

Representing a network of over 350 hospitals in the state, the TANHA stressed that coordination, transparency, and continuous dialogue among the government, the Employee Health Care Trust (EHCT), and the network hospitals were essential for the successful implementation of the new EHS scheme.

TANHA state president Dr Vaddiraju Rakesh said

that the government had formulated the policy without fully considering the nature of diseases and treatments, and without adequately incorporating the views of network hospitals. He said that there was limited scope of beneficiary coverage, failure to follow appropriate scientific methods in determining treatment costs, resulting in difficulties faced by the beneficiaries and the hospitals.

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## 76-yr-old gets 13-yr jail for 1988 bank robbery

KALPETTA

A 76-year-old man has been sentenced to 13 years in prison and fined Rs 16,000 for his role in the 1988 robbery at the Nallurnad Service Cooperative Bank in Wayanad. The sentence was handed down by Additional District and Sessions Court Judge L Jayavanth.

The convict, Abdul Samad, a Kollam native, was arrested by police in October 2024 and faced trial while in judicial custody. The court said he will have to undergo another 10 months in prison if he fails to pay the fine.

According to police, the robbery took place in the early hours of January 8, 1988, when a six-member gang arrived at the bank in a car, broke open the locks and entered the premises. The gang took away a safe, nearly one kilogram of gold ornaments and Rs 5,544 in cash.

The prosecution said two people who reached the bank after hearing the noise were attacked with a crowbar. In the case,



four accused -- Subair, Suresh Babu, Alikkuttu and Naseer -- were arrested and sentenced in 1993. Another accused, OK Babu, who had remained absconding, surrendered before the court in 2017 and was later sentenced.

During the trial, the court examined around 40 witnesses. The prosecution produced 166 documents as evidence and 21 material objects seized under the mahazar before the court.

The initial investigation was carried out by the then Mananthavady police and was later taken over by the District CBCID. Public Prosecutor E R Santhosh Kumar appeared for the prosecution.