

HC flags “serious” error in State’s affidavit on ‘Kalyana Lakshmi’ scheme

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
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THE Telangana High Court on Thursday questioned the legal basis and constitutional framework under which the State government introduced the ‘Kalyana Lakshmi’ and ‘Shadi Mubarak’ welfare schemes, which provide financial assistance for marriage to eligible beneficiaries.

Justice Natcharaju Venkata Shravan Kumar heard a writ filed by advocate Vijay Gopal, (appearing in person). The petitioner has challenged the GOs through which the two schemes were introduced and revised from 2014 onwards. He contends that framing welfare schemes and fixing eligibility criteria are essentially legislative functions and that the schemes, introduced through

executive orders, are arbitrary and contrary to Articles 14 and 15 of the Constitution. The petition challenges eight GOs issued between September 2014 and June 2019 by the Scheduled Castes Development, Minorities Welfare and Backward Classes Welfare departments.

During the hearing, Additional Advocate-General Mohammed Imran Khan appeared for the government. The bench questioned the State on various aspects of the implementation of welfare schemes and the financial obligations arising from them. The court also examined an affidavit filed by the State in response to the petition. The bench took serious exception to the manner in which Article 162 had been reproduced in the affidavit. The court observed that the provision had not been reproduced correctly and ques-

tioned how an incorrect version could form part of an affidavit filed on behalf of the government. Khan acknowledged the error and described it as a typographical mistake. He assured the court that the error would be corrected and a fresh affidavit filed.

The bench, however, said the mistake was a serious one and indicated that the issue could not be considered further on the basis of an affidavit containing such a material error. The court questioned whether the officer who had sworn the affidavit was properly authorised to file it on behalf of all respondents.

The State submitted that the GOs were issued in exercise of the executive power of the State under Article 162 and were intended to implement welfare measures aimed at achieving

the constitutional goal of social justice. The court made it clear that it was not seeking to dictate how the government should manage its finances. The concern, it said, was with the legal and constitutional basis of the schemes and the manner public funds were being allocated.

The bench directed the Finance department to file an affidavit setting out the State’s financial position and explaining whether any loans had been raised for continuing the welfare schemes. The court also sought details of the State’s total debt, observing that the information would be relevant to the issues before it. The court referred to the provisions relating to fiscal responsibility and questioned whether borrowing could be resorted to for meeting expenditure on such schemes.

During the hearing, the

bench expressed concern over delays in the payment of various welfare and statutory benefits. The discussion included pending payments to land losers, beneficiaries of welfare measures, retired employees and even government staff.

The court observed that when matters involving non-payment of statutory or welfare benefits come before it, it has to consider the competing claims and ensure a balance, while leaving financial policy decisions to the Government.

At one stage, the bench cautioned the parties against turning court proceedings into a platform for political arguments. The court said political statements and allegations should not be made in open court and stressed that the dignity and sanctity of judicial proceedings must be maintained.

Army Public School wins the Hyd Edition of TCS InQuizitive 2026

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

KALEPU Yashvardhan and Anirudh Rengarajan from Army Public School, Bolarum, emerged as winners of the Hyderabad edition of TCS InQuizitive 2026, organised by the IT giant’s flagship inter-school quiz programme. The programme was meant to foster innovation and talent, and the two students have secured their place in the national semi-finals.

The Hyderabad edition witnessed participation from 249 teams representing 28 schools. The event was graced by V Rajanna, President – Communications, Media, Technology, and Services, TCS and Challa Nag, Delivery Centre Head, TCS Hyderabad.

This year’s TCS InQuizitive introduced real-time AI-powered analytics, so partici-

pants could see detailed performance insights after each round and quickly identify areas for improvement.

Congratulating the participants and winners, V Rajanna, President – Communications, Media, Technology, and Services, TCS said, “TCS InQuizitive has, over the past 28 years, evolved into a platform that young learners aspire to be part of, enabling them to test their knowledge, broaden their curiosity, and experience the joy of learning beyond the classroom. The students showcased exceptional talent and demonstrated strong preparation, teamwork, and the ability to think quickly under pressure”

Challa Nag, Delivery Centre Head of TCS Hyderabad, said, “Hyderabad has earned a reputation as one of India’s leading hubs for technology, innovation, and talent, making it a fitting host for a competition that celebrates knowledge. The enthusiasm and confidence displayed by this year’s participants were truly inspiring, and it is heartening to see such young learners have a passion for continuous learning. We congratulate all the teams for their remarkable efforts and appreciate the schools, management, teachers, students, and parents in this region for their support and participation.”

Open to students in Grades 8 -12, TCS InQuizitive combines learning and excitement with a dynamic format across a wide range of subjects, including education, entertainment, sports, business trends, advertising, and social media. With a stronger emphasis on STEM, the quiz also highlighted domains such as artificial intelligence, cloud computing, automation, biometrics, and robotics.

Settle bifurcation issues faster, TG urges Centre

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He pointed out that 12 years after the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014 took effect, several issues between the two Telugu states remain unresolved and appealed to Amit Shah to find a solution amicably. Andhra Pradesh has sought division of assets of certain Schedule X institutions. Telangana has maintained that such claims are not supported by the AP Reorganisation Act, except for continuation of facilities under Section 75. The matter was also pending before the High Court of Andhra Pradesh, Bhatti said. Telangana is seeking resolution through the legal process.

Referring to the Krishna

water dispute, the Deputy CM said that Telangana was seeking no special privilege in respect of Krishna waters and the state wanted its fair entitlement through legal mechanisms. Since the allocation of Krishna waters between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh was already under consideration before KWDI-II, the state government was stressing that the matter should be dealt with through the established legal and adjudicatory process, he said. Bhatti explained the importance of lift irrigation projects and sought central financial support for the Kaleshwaram and Palamuru-Rangareddy Lift Irrigation Schemes. Rehabilitation

of Kaleshwaram, revival of the Pranahita-Chevella project at Tummidihetti, and special aid for the Palamuru-Rangareddy Lift scheme was mentioned in the meeting.

The Deputy CM highlighted that Telangana had adopted an approach of seeking fair, time-bound, and legally sustainable resolution of inter-state issues. He emphasised that cooperation among the southern states will become even more important in the coming years. Bhatti identified the following as challenges that increasingly transcend state boundaries: water security, energy, climate resilience, urbanization, logistics, and economic competitiveness.

HC hears plea challenging Speaker’s rejection of Danam’s disqualification petition

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD: The Telangana High Court on Thursday continued hearing a batch of petitions challenging the Assembly Speaker’s decision rejecting disqualification petitions against 10 BRS MLAs who allegedly joined the Congress without resigning from the pink party.

The division bench comprising Chief Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh and Justice Ghouse Meera Mohiuddin heard the petition filed by BJP MLA Alleti Maheshwar Reddy, who challenged the Speaker’s March 11, 2026 order in the disqualification proceedings concerning Nagender.

The petitioner sought a declaration that Nagender stood disqualified under para-

graph 2(1)(a) of the Tenth Schedule from April 23, 2024, the date on which he filed nomination affidavit for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. He sought consequential directions, including recovery of benefits allegedly received by Nagender as an MLA from that date. Senior counsel A Venkatesh, appearing for Nagender, opposed the plea and argued that the disqualification petition itself was not maintainable as it failed to comply with the mandatory requirements of the Telangana Legislative Assembly Members’ Disqualification Rules. Referring to Rule 6, he submitted that a disqualification petition could be made to the Speaker only by a member of the House. He pointed out that the rules require the petition and its annexures to be properly signed and verified.

The Shah favours early resolution of water-related issues thru talks

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Chairing the 31st meeting of the Southern Zonal Council at Mahabalipuram, Shah stressed the need for early resolution of pending water-related issues concerning southern states through mutual dialogues and joint meetings involving the Union Ministries of Jal Shakti, Home Affairs, the Inter-State Council, and the respective states.

The southern states agreed with the Home Minister’s suggestion to resolve these pending water disputes expeditiously through mutual dialogue and constructive solutions. Shah said that since 2014, efforts have been made to transform the Zonal Council into a meaningful platform.

Regarding the issues concerning the division of assets and liabilities between Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, both states agreed to resolve these matters in consultation with the Ministry of Home Affairs, Shah said in his address at the meeting.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay, who serves as the council’s vice-chairman, personally welcomed Shah upon his arrival. The two leaders also held a brief interaction before the meeting began. During the proceedings, Vijay was seated alongside Karnataka Chief Minister DK Shivakumar. Representatives from Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Telangana took part in the meeting.

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Other members of the committee include former Punjab and Haryana High Court Chief Justice Ravi Shankar Jha, former Delhi High Court judge Justice Shalinder Kaur, former CBI Director Rishi Kumar Shukla and retired Meghalaya Director General of Police Dr LR Bishnoi.

The committee will examine allegations of excessive use of pellet guns, electric batons, lathi charges and tear gas, along with alleged violence against women protesters. It will also look into police surveillance, the proportionality of crowd-control measures, and the provision of medical assistance and

SC sets up 5-member panel to probe police ‘excesses’ at CJP stir

compensation to victims. The committee will also consider allegations by authorities of violence against police personnel and damage to public property.

This comes as the apex court is hearing a batch of petitions alleging excessive police action against students who participated in protests at Jantar Mantar and other locations across the country over alleged NEET examina-

tion paper leaks and broader concerns relating to the examination system.

The proceedings come against the backdrop of weeks of student demonstrations led by the Cockroach Janata Party (CJP) at Jantar Mantar, including a hunger strike and a subsequent march towards Parliament.

On July 20, thousands of students participated in a Parliament march organ-

ised by the CJP, demanding, among other things, the resignation of Union education minister Dharmendra Pradhan over alleged examination paper leaks and seeking wider reforms in the examination system.

As demonstrators attempted to move towards Parliament and breach police barricades in central Delhi, security personnel used tear gas and lathi-charge to dis-

perse the protesters. Several videos subsequently circulated on social media, purportedly showing protesters being manhandled by police personnel, leading to allegations of excessive use of force.

The Delhi Police, however, defended its action and maintained that force was used only after sections of the protesting crowd allegedly turned violent and engaged in stone-pelting.

South CMs raise delimitation, water disputes at SZC meet

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Delimitation, an issue on which most southern states are on the same page, prominently figured in the meeting, with Karnataka and Tamil Nadu stressing that status quo of 543 Lok Sabha seats be maintained for another 25 years.

With his state locked in a dispute with Tamil Nadu over the Mekedatu dam proposal, Karnataka Chief Minister DK Shivakumar told TN that its interests would be protected if the reservoir is constructed. Shivakumar also urged the Southern Zonal Council to adopt a resolution asking the Union government to honour the 1971 census for delimitation, retain 543 Lok Sabha seats

for 25 years and fit women’s reservation within the existing seats.

Tamil Nadu CM Vijay conveyed to the Union Home Minister that the existing freeze capping Lok Sabha seats at 543 nationally and 39 in the state should continue, state minister R Nirmal Kumar said.

Both Andhra Pradesh and Telangana agreed to resolve matters related to the division of assets and liabilities in consultation with the Union Ministry of Home Affairs.

Keralam CM Satheesan raised the Mullaperiyar dam issue at the meeting and stressed the need for cooperative federalism in healthcare, infrastructure,

environmental protection and regional security. The Mullaperiyar dam issue was among the key state concerns raised by the CM at the meeting, according to a post on ‘X’.

Satheesan said Keralam was willing to provide Tamil Nadu with its full share of water from a new Mullaperiyar dam. Tamil Nadu would manage the design, location and construction of the new dam, while Keralam would bear the entire cost.

Telangana Deputy CM Vikramarka sought protection of the state’s rights in Krishna river waters and Central support for major irrigation projects. Puducherry was represented by Lt Governor K Kailashnathan.

J’khand HC stays Soren govt order to cancel JPSC exams

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Meanwhile, the government’s decision triggered a separate protest by candidates who had cleared the JSSC-CGL examination and were appointed to government posts. They have opposed the cancellation, arguing that successful candidates should not be punished for alleged irregularities unless wrongdoing is established against them.

Telangana to host next SZC meeting

HYDERABAD: The next meeting of the Southern Zonal Council (SZC) will be held in Telangana. SZC chairman and Union Home Minister Amit Shah accepted the request made by Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka at the Council’s meeting held in Mahabalipuram on Thursday.

The standing committee of the SZC, comprising five southern States and Union Territory of Puducherry, would meet soon to prepare action taken reports on the issues discussed on Thursday and finalise the agenda for the next meeting that is likely to include the items carried over from Thursday’s meeting.

Centre limits SIM cards to 9 per person

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The DoT has also put in place a mechanism to help telecom operators identify such subscribers. From August 23, a representative image of the photo of each subscriber who has already reached the prescribed limit for mobile connections in their name will be made available on the DIP.

The DIP uses subscriber information submitted by telecom operators. The latest directive requires operators to use the platform to help identify people who have already reached the permitted limit.

The DoT has asked telecom operators to streamline the process with the Digital Intelligence Platform before November 30. “Till the time

such measures are implemented by a TSP on a post-facto basis, as per terms and conditions of the Customer Application Form (CAF), any mobile connection activated beyond the prescribed limit for a day shall be immediately suspended till resolution of the issue in respect of crossing the permitted limit for mobile connections,” the circular said.

The government said the objective is to ensure that each subscriber is able to subscribe to and use mobile connections only within the prescribed limit. Under existing instructions issued on August 9, 2012, an individual customer can have a maximum of nine mobile connections in their name across all telecom service

providers and all licensed service areas in the country. However, the limit is lower in certain regions. Subscribers in Jammu and Kashmir, Assam and the North-East can have a maximum of six mobile connections. The latest development is about enforcement of the existing limit. The instructions also require customers to provide a declaration in the Customer Application Form (CAF) regarding the mobile connections already held in their name across telecom operators and licensed service areas. The DoT said the respective Licensed Service Areas (LSAs) will be the competent authorities to decide issues arising from the implementation of the instructions.

‘I can see papa smiling’

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“Mama, I last saw you and Papa together more than 35 years ago. Since the day Papa left, I have watched you face everything life threw at you with never-ending courage and dignity,” Rahul Gandhi wrote. The Congress leader said that he and his sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra were perhaps the only ones who could truly understand the difficulties their mother faced in the years following Rajiv Gandhi’s assassination. “Only Priyanka and I really know what you have been through, and how difficult your life after Papa truly was,” he said. Rahul Gandhi also welcomed the publication of Sonia Gandhi’s memoir, *Belonging: A Journey of Love*, saying he was proud that her story would now be read by millions of people who have followed her public life. He noted that opening up about her personal journey could not have been easy for someone as private as his mother.

Konda Surekha defiant on daughter’s remarks

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The TPCC Disciplinary Committee issued a notice to Surekha on Wednesday after her daughter Konda Susmitha made corruption allegations against the Chief Minister and his family members. The Minister clarified in her letter that she should not be held responsible for the comments made by her daughter and requested the panel to withdraw the notice immediately. A day after the notices

were served, the Minister sent a reply to the Disciplinary Committee Chairman Mallu Ravi on Thursday. Surekha claimed that on the occasion of her birthday on August 19, fans of the ‘Konda’ family and Congress party workers organized celebrations.

She explained that her daughter attended the birthday celebrations organized by Congress workers at Geesukonda, her native place, as the chief

guest. She maintained that the comments made by her daughter during the event were entirely her personal opinions.

Surekha took exception for holding her accountable for her daughter’s personal views due to family ties.

The Minister affirmed her complete respect for the Congress party leadership and its code of discipline. She requested the committee to immediately withdraw the notice issued to her.

Trump announces ‘Economic D-day’

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“Their navy is gone, their air force is destroyed, their military factories are now rubble, their currency is worthless, and their country is hanging by a thread,” he said. He further warned that any countries or entities that provide Tehran with a financial lifeline would face severe penalties from the United States.



Meanwhile, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi hit out at Trump over his move, calling it a “diversion from America’s own crisis”. He criticised Washington for spreading “economic terrorism”, which he said threatens the global economy and sovereignty worldwide. The so-called “Economic D-Day” is a diversion from America’s own crisis: unprecedented

debt & surging interest costs. “The so-called “Economic D-Day” is a diversion from America’s own crisis: unprecedented debt & surging interest costs. Doubling down on failed policies will only bring further defeat—and enmity of Iranians. US economic terrorism threatens the global economy and sovereignty worldwide,” he said in a post on X.

