

Turncoat MLA Arekapudi Gandhi caught campaigning for Congress despite denying defection

Serilingampally MLA Arekapudi Gandhi, who denied defecting to Congress, was spotted campaigning for party candidate Naveen Yadav ahead of Jubilee Hills bypoll. Gandhi's actions coincide with a pending disqualification hearing

Hyderabad: In utter disregard for the Constitution and the Legislature, Serilingampally MLA Arekapudi Gandhi, who recently denied having defected to the Congress, was found openly campaigning for Congress candidate Naveen Yadav ahead of Jubilee Hills byelection on Thursday.

Accompanied by Telangana State Dairy Development Co-operative Federation Limited chairman and Congress leader Gutha Amith Reddy, he campaigned for the Congress at a meeting with residents at Sri Shakti Apartments in Kalyan Nagar. While Amith Reddy shared a post on X stating that they were participating in the meeting on the occasion of the Jubilee Hills by-election, the residents of Kalyan Nagar confirmed that Gandhi actively participated in the meeting and sought support for the Congress candidate.

Along with seven other MLAs accused of defecting to the Congress, Gandhi had submitted a written explanation to Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad, denying that he defected from the BRS to the ruling Congress party. He had maintained that his meeting with Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy was solely for constituency development and that morphed images were being circu-



lated by his political opponents to malign him.

Ironically, Gandhi was campaigning for the Congress candidate, even as

he is scheduled to appear before the Speaker for the hearing in the disqualification petition filed against him on November 12 and 13. His latest photo-

graphs, sharing the dais with Congress leaders and participating in campaign meetings, have come as a shot in the arm for the BRS ahead of the hearing.

BRS alleges illegal detention of party leaders ahead of Jubilee Hills bypoll



Hyderabad: Tensions flared in Jubilee Hills on Thursday evening after BRS leaders alleged that police illegally detained party workers to obstruct their campaign ahead of the crucial bypoll.

According to reports, BRS leader Arun was allegedly arrested by the Madhuranagar police without a valid reason. Several BRS workers from Rahmatnagar Basti were also detained without formal charges, triggering outrage within party ranks.

Upon learning of the incident, senior BRS leaders MLC T Ravinder Rao, BRS Hanamkonda district president Dasyam Vinay Bhaskar, former MLA Korukanti Chander, and Legal Cell advisor Srikanth among others, rushed to the police station and secured their release.

Condemning the alleged illegal detention, the BRS leaders accused the Congress government of misusing the police machinery out of fear of defeat in the Jubilee Hills by-election. They said the ruling party was resorting to intimidation tactics to stifle BRS's campaign momentum.

They staged a protest, demanding immediate action against the officials responsible for unlawful arrests.

Arundhati Reddy receives warm welcome after Women's World Cup victory

India fast bowler Arundhati Reddy, who was part of the team that won the Women's World Cup, was warmly welcomed at Hyderabad Airport. She credited the historic victory to collective team effort and expressed hope that it would inspire young girls

Hyderabad: India fast bowler Arundhati Reddy, a member of the Indian team that won the Women's World Cup by defeating South Africa in the final in Mumbai last week, was given a warm reception upon her arrival at Hyderabad Airport on Thursday.

Sports Authority of Telangana chairman Shiva Sena Reddy and the VC & MD of SATG, Mrs. Sonibala Devi, received the Indian cricketer.

Speaking on arrival, Arundhati said it was a dream come true to be a part of the victorious World Cup team and credited the historic victory to a collective team effort.

"It was pure joy to see the Indian team emerge as winners in such a terrific final. Truly unforgettable moments," said the 28-year-old pacer, who has been an integral part of the Indian team in major campaigns for quite some time.

"Yes, we do hope that women's cricket will witness a new chapter, as this World Cup win should motivate many young girls to take up sports and dream big," Arundhati added.



Father-son duo jailed for raping teen; woman accomplice gets 3 months

An Adilabad court sentenced two men to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment and fined them for raping a minor girl. A woman accomplice was also jailed for three months. The court directed Rs 5 lakh compensation to be paid to the survivor.



Adilabad: A court here on Thursday sentenced a man and his father to 20 years rigorous imprisonment and fined Rs 10,000 each for raping a minor girl nine months ago. It also sentenced a woman to three months in jail and imposed a fine of Rs 500 for her role in the offence.

Additional district principal judge Dr P Shivaram Prasad delivered the verdict awarding

the term and fine against Ingole Gangadhar (70), his son Anil (26) after finding them guilty of raping a 15-year-old girl from Adilabad Rural mandal on February 14. The court cross-questioned 18 eyewitnesses and pieces of evidence before it by public prosecutor B Praveen Kumar.

Students protest at Kakatiya University over limited PhD seats in Telugu department

PhD aspirants at Kakatiya University, Warangal, staged a protest demanding an increase in seats for the Telugu department. The controversy stems from the cancellation and rescheduling of interviews, with students objecting to the reappearance of the same panel.

Hyderabad: Demanding enhancement of PhD seats in Telugu department, several students staged a protest at Kakatiya University, Warangal, on Thursday. According to protesters, the university announced admission to fill up two PhD seats in the Telugu department.



The interviews were conducted on September 25. However, they were cancelled after a gap of 45 days and rescheduled for Thursday, said Ravinder, one of the aspirants.

"Students want to know why the earlier interviews were cancelled. We objected to the interviews on Thursday as the same panel that conducted interviews on September 25 was present again. We also want the department to increase the seats by four or five," he said.

Protesters said there was no response from the university administration despite reaching out to the dean, registrar and vice chancellor. Efforts to reach vice chancellor Prof. K Pratap Reddy for a comment proved futile.

Rs 3.33 crore cash seized during Jubilee Hills bypoll checks

Ahead of the Jubilee Hills by-election, enforcement teams seized Rs 3.33 crore cash, 685 litres of liquor, freebies worth Rs 1.37 lakh, and drugs including ganja and MDMA. Flying Squads and surveillance teams are deployed to ensure compliance with the Model Code of Conduct

Hyderabad: The enforcement teams set up for the Jubilee Hills by-election have seized Rs 3.33 crore cash since the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) came into force from October 6.

The District Election Officer, R V Karnan, on Thursday released a cumulative seizure report and said, "The enforcement teams seized Rs 4,63,297 worth of 685.585 litres of liquor during the checks in the Jubilee Hills assembly by-poll. Another Rs 1,37,840 worth of freebies (laptops, vehicles, pressure cookers and sarees) were also seized".

The Police and Excise department officials seized Rs 1,97,600 worth of 2.264 kg ganja and 0.011 grams of MDMA during the checks, the DEO said. Flying Squad Teams, Static Surveillance Teams, Video Surveillance Teams, and Video Viewing Teams have been deployed to enforce MCC violations in the constituency.



Woman plots robbery at in-laws's home, nine held

In a bizarre case from Paloncha, a woman allegedly conspired with her father and son to rob her in-laws, upset over withholding retirement benefits. The plan failed when police intercepted the gang during a recce.

Kothagudem: In an interesting criminal plot, a married woman planned a robbery in her in-laws' house along with her father and son and hired novices to do the job, but the plot botched up as they were caught even before executing the plan.

The woman in question, Mohammed Israth along with her husband Abdul Rasool lived with her in-laws, Mohammad Isa and Farhah Sultana at Dammamet centre at Paloncha in the district.

Isa, a KTPS employee, retired from service recently. But Sultana was neither revealing the details of retirement benefits Isa received nor giving any money to her husband or to her. Upset over this, Israth planned to loot the money and valuables stashed in an almirah in their house.



Speaking to the media on Thursday, Paloncha DSP Sathish Kumar said that during the wee hours of the day, Paloncha SI, K Suman and staff

who were on night patrolling spotted some suspicious persons present in two cars near Jammula Garden at Dammamet centre.

When they searched them, police found a knife, two iron rods and four monkey caps in their possession. During questioning, they confessed to the police that they had come to steal money from Sultana. They were prepared to kill them if anyone interfered and loot the money.

They revealed that Israth, her son Mohammed Abdul Wajid (Sultana's grandson) and Israth's father Mohammad Osman plotted the robbery. Osman, who works as a mason at Jangaon, had allegedly gathered his eight accomplices from Hyderabad, Siddipet, Jangaon and other places to do the job. They were caught while conducting a recce at Isa's house. The accused, Osman, Abdul Wajid, G Krishna, Taduri Dasu, Isakanti Emmanuel and Podisetty Praveen, Yerra Kanaka Raju, Bandarapu Nagaraju and K Ganesh were sent to judicial remand. Israth was absconding, the DSP said.



Telangana ACB Nabs Asifabad Civil Supplies Officials Taking Rs 75,000 Bribe for PDS Rice Transport

Hyderabad: The Telangana Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) has arrested two officials from the Civil Supplies Department of Asifabad district after they were caught red-handed while accepting a bribe of ₹75,000 from a local businessman.

According to ACB officials, the accused have been identified as Gurubelli Venkat Narsimha Rao, District Manager, and Kothagolla Manikanth, Technical Assistant (outsourced). The officials had allegedly demanded the bribe from the complainant to allow the transportation of PDS rice loaded in his lorries from his private godown to the Civil Supplies godown in Asifabad, without conducting a mandatory quality check on the rice.

Also Read: Telangana ACB Nabs Agriculture Officer Red-Handed While

Taking ₹10,000 Bribe

Following a formal complaint, ACB officers laid a trap and apprehended both the accused while they were accepting the bribe amount. The tainted currency was seized and sent for forensic examination. Officials confirmed that both officers have been taken into custody and will face legal proceedings as per the Prevention of Corruption Act.

The Telangana ACB has reiterated its zero-tolerance stance towards corruption and urged citizens to report any public servant demanding a bribe. The Bureau assured that the identity of complainants will remain strictly confidential.

The Bureau emphasized that swift action will be taken against any government employee found involved in corruption or misuse of authority.

Private colleges' strike over fee reimbursement enters fourth day

Hyderabad: The indefinite strike by private professional colleges in Telangana, demanding release of fee reimbursement dues, continued for the fourth day on Thursday.

Around 2,000 professional colleges, including engineering, pharmacy, MBA, MCA, B.Ed and nursing institutions across the state, remained shut to demand that the state government release 50 per cent of the ₹10,000 crore fee reimbursement dues. Federation of Associations of Telangana Higher Institutions (FATHI) announced the boycott of pharmacy exams under Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University (JNTU). It de-

manded that the university postpone the exams.

FATHI has made it clear that the strike will continue until ₹5,000 crore out of the ₹10,000 crore reimbursement arrears is released. It is demanding that the remaining ₹5,000 crore be released in monthly instalments of ₹500 crore over 10 months.

FATHI president Ramesh Babu said they never went against the government, but the "non-release" of pending dues has made it impossible for the management to run the colleges.

The government has invited FATHI for talks, but it ruled out withdrawing the strike until its demands were met.

Hyderabad's Growth Stalled by 12 Years of Neglect Under BRS and Congress: BJP Chief Ramachander Rao

Hyderabad: Telangana BJP President N Ramachander Rao alleged that Hyderabad's development had been completely neglected during the ten years of BRS rule and the last two years under the Congress government.

Speaking as the chief guest at the "Gaud Samajika Atmiya Sammelanam" organised by the BJP OBC Morcha at the Moti Nagar Community Hall in Hyderabad, he said that the city's roads, drainage, and street lighting systems have deteriorated severely due to administrative neglect and corruption.



Criticising former Municipal Minister K T Rama Rao, he said that Hyderabad continues to suffer from potholes, traffic congestion, and damaged manholes even after a decade of his leadership.

Rao also targeted Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, saying that despite promising to allocate ₹2,000–3,000 crore for the city's development, no funds have been released so far.

He accused both BRS and Congress of indulging in religious vote bank politics while ignoring the welfare of the majority of Hyderabad's people. "These two parties are fighting for just 20 per cent of the vote bank, while ignoring the remaining 80 per cent who are the lifeblood of the city," he said. Highlighting BJP's efforts, he praised leaders Deepak Reddy and Raghunandan Rao for opposing the Congress government's alleged move to allocate government land in Erragadda for a Khairath Khan, stating that they "protected people's rights" while BRS and Congress remained silent. Rao said that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, Backward Classes have received respect, recognition, and rights for the first time, and the upcoming caste census will ensure welfare benefits reach BC communities more effectively.

He appealed to the people of Jubilee Hills to elect a strong leader who would be a powerful voice in the Assembly, asserting that only the BJP could provide responsible leadership and real development. Condemning the Congress and BRS governments for "destroying the livelihood of the Goud community" by shutting down palm oil compounds during the YSR regime through G.O. 676, Rao said both parties continued the injustice. He claimed that the BJP is the only party fighting for the economic self-reliance and dignity of the Gouds. "Political gain is the only motive for Congress and BRS, but the welfare of the people is the goal of the BJP," he said, calling on the community to stand with the party for a stronger and more developed Hyderabad.

Jubilee Hills BJP MLA candidate Deepak Reddy, MLA Payal Shankar, former MP and State Vice President Boora Narsayya Goud, State General Secretary Tulla Virender Goud, OBC Morcha State President Anand Goud, and several other leaders took part in the programme.

“Governor’s Permission Not Required to Arrest KTR”:

BJP MP Accuses CM of Shielding KCR’s Family in Formula-E Scam

Hyderabad: BJP MP Raghunandan Rao on Tuesday questioned Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy for seeking the Governor’s permission to arrest BRS leader K.T. Rama Rao and alleged that the Congress government was only doing politics over the issue.

Addressing newsmen at the BJP state office in Nampally, Raghunandan Rao said, “Where is the need for the Governor’s permission to arrest an MLA? Have MLAs not been arrested before? Revanth Reddy himself was arrested twice during the BRS regime – did KCR seek the Governor’s consent then?”

The BJP MP accused the Chief Minister of misleading the public, claiming that Revanth was ‘buying time with lies’ instead of acting against KCR’s family in the alleged Formula E car race scam.

Raghunandan Rao also pointed out that despite the NDSA and PC Ghosh

Commission reports and a CBI probe order, the state government had failed to file a counter affidavit in the Telangana High Court, resulting in a stay on the investigation against KCR, Harish Rao, and senior IAS officers.

He further slammed the Congress for ‘vote-bank politics’ in the Jubilee Hills bypoll, alleging that the party was aligning with AIMIM, and questioned whether Minister Mohammad Azharuddin was given the post under the BC or minority quota. “The Congress and BRS are like conjoined twins”, Raghunandan Rao remarked, asserting that Revanth Reddy lacked sincerity in addressing corruption and BC reservations issues.

Mohammad Yousuf is an accomplished Content Editor with extensive experience in covering local, national, international, and sports news. Known for his sharp analytical skills and compelling storytelling, he has collaborated with leading media houses and earned



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passion for delivering accurate and engaging sports coverage. His dedication to content integrity continues to strengthen Munsif News 24x7’s reputation for credibility.

Devotees’ long for strong administration in Dakshina Kashi



Rajanna-Sircilla: The historic Sri Parvathi Raja Rajeshwara Swamy temple in Vemulawada — revered as the Dakshina Kashi continues to face delays in its expansion and development works, leaving devotees disheartened.

Despite generating crores in annual revenue, the temple’s growth is reportedly hampered by administrative lapses and a lack of coordination among departments.

Although the Vemulawada Temple Area Development Authority (VTADA) was constituted to streamline temple projects, devotees point out that delays

in decision-making, lack of clarity in responsibilities, and poor inter-departmental coordination have slowed down progress.

The recent confusion surrounding the temporary suspension of temple darshan further reflected these administrative shortcomings.

Government Whip and Vemulawada MLA Aadi Srinivas has been at the forefront of pushing the temple’s development.

From securing funds and taking up key issues with the Chief Minister, to

Although the Vemulawada Temple Area Development Authority (VTADA) was constituted to streamline temple projects, devotees point out that delays in decision-making, lack of clarity in responsibilities, and poor inter-departmental coordination have slowed down progress.

consulting the Sringeri Peeth seers for developmental guidance — his initiatives have been proactive.

The first phase of expansion, valued at Rs111 crore, has already completed the tender process.

However, devotees feel that for these efforts to translate into tangible results, a competent and experienced administrative officer — ideally of IAS rank — is essential to oversee and expedite on-ground execution.

Drawing parallels with the Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy temple at Yadagirigutta, where an IAS officer currently serves as Executive Officer, devotees believe that a similar administrative structure at Sri Parvathi Rajarajeshwara Swamy Temple,

Vemulawada would ensure transparency, speed, and synergy in temple governance.

“An IAS officer’s supervision ensures better coordination among various departments, efficient use of funds, and enhanced facilities for pilgrims. We want the same model for Rajanna’s temple,” several devotees expressed.

For the people of Vemulawada, the dream of seeing their temple regain its full glory — with improved amenities and comprehensive infrastructure — remains deeply cherished.

Devotees believe that only with strong administrative direction, under an IAS officer’s guidance, can this sacred shrine truly witness the renaissance it deserves.

How NASA, SpaceX will execute it?

SpaceX will use a powerful, souped-up capsule to shove the International Space Station (ISS) out of orbit once time is up for the sprawling lab. NASA and Elon Musk's company recently outlined the plan to burn the space station up on reentry and plunge what's left into the ocean, ideally at the beginning of 2031 when it hits the 32-year mark. Here's an outline of how they plan to bring down the space station

Why get rid of the space station?

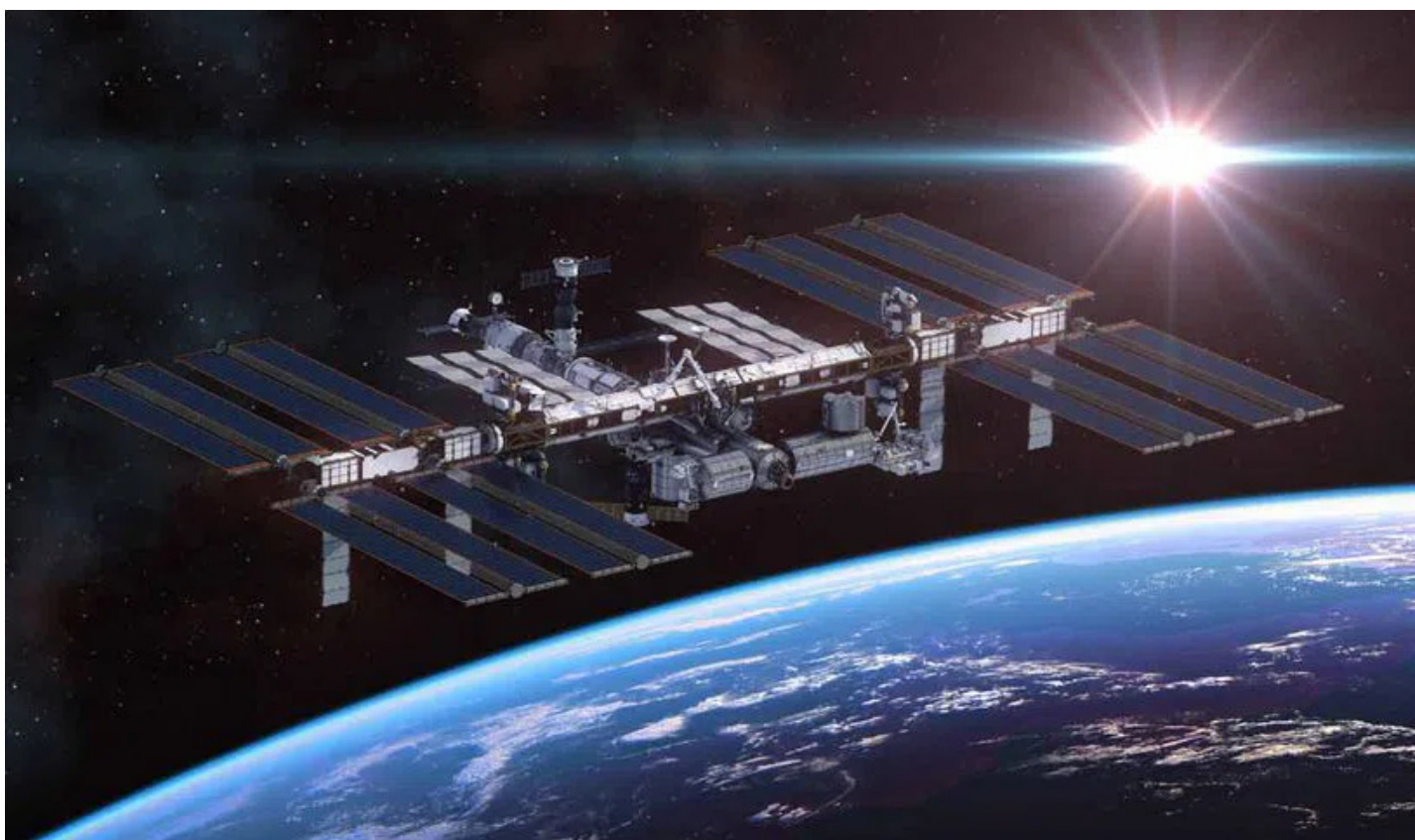
The space station is already showing signs of age. Russia and the US launched the first pieces in late 1998, and astronauts moved in two years later. Europe and Japan added their own segments, and Canada provided robotic arms. By the time NASA's shuttles retired in 2011, the station had grown to the size of a football field, with a mass of nearly 4,30,000 kilograms. That strategy — already in place for station cargo and crew deliveries — will free NASA up to focus on travelling to Moon and Mars. The NASA could decide to extend the station's life, too, if no commercial outposts are up there yet. The agency's objective is to have an overlap so that scientific research is not interrupted. BLURB: NASA figures the station will last until at least 2030. The goal is for private companies to launch their own space stations by then, with NASA serving as one of many customers

Why not bring it back to Earth?

NASA considered dismantling the space station and hauling the pieces back to Earth, or letting private companies salvage the parts for their own planned outposts. But the station was never intended to be taken apart in orbit, according to NASA, and any such effort would be expensive and also risky to the astronauts who would handle the disassembly. Besides, there's no spacecraft as big as NASA's old shuttles to bring everything down. Another option would be to boost the empty station to a higher, more stable orbit. But that, too, was dismissed given the logistical issues and the increased risk of space junk.

How will it be brought down?

Visiting spacecraft periodically boost the space station so it remains in an orbit 420 kilometres high. Otherwise, it would keep getting lower and lower until it plunged from orbit. NASA wants to ensure a safe reentry over a remote section of the South Pacific or the Indian Ocean, so that means launching a spacecraft that will dock to the station and steer it toward a watery grave. Mostly, the deorbit module will guide the space station to a designated re-entry zone over a remote area of the Pacific Ocean, often referred to as the "spacecraft cemetery" or "Point Nemo." This area is far from human activity, reducing the risk of harm from any debris that does not burn up in the atmosphere.



NASA expects some denser pieces to survive, ranging in size from a microwave oven to a sedan, in a narrow debris field 2,000 kilometres long. NASA and its partners considered using three Russian supply ships for the job, but a more robust craft was needed. The call went out to industry and, in June, SpaceX won the contract for a deorbit vehicle.

What will the deorbit spacecraft look like?

SpaceX plans to use an ordinary Dragon capsule — the kind that carries supplies and astronauts to the space station — but with a much bigger trunk housing a record 46 engines and more than 16,000 kilograms of fuel. The challenge will be creating a spacecraft powerful enough to guide the space station while resisting the tugs and forces from increased atmospheric drag during final descent. This spacecraft will require an especially powerful rocket just to get to orbit, according to NASA. The capsule would be launched one and half years before the station's planned demise. Astronauts still would be aboard as it's gradually lowered. Six months before the destruction, the crew would abandon ship and return home. Once the station is down to 220 kilometres, the Dragon would bring it down four days later. BLURB: NASA gave SpaceX a USD 843 million contract to bring down the station — the biggest structure ever built off the planet. Key Considerations: Safety: Ensuring the safety of people on Earth and any remaining space assets is the highest priority. Environmental Impact: Minimising the environmental impact of the re-entry process

International Collaboration: Coordination among all ISS partner nations to share responsibilities and resource. Technological Challenges: Managing the technical challenges of controlling such a large structure during re-entry. Has this been done before?

NASA's first space station, Skylab, came crashing down in 1979, with debris raining down onto Australia and the surrounding Pacific. The space agency had hoped one of the first space shuttle crews could attach a rocket to control Skylab's descent or boost its orbit. But the shuttle wasn't ready by then, with its first flight not until 1981. Ground controllers managed to send Skylab into a slow tumble, aiming for the Indian Ocean. But some pieces also landed in Western Australia. Russia has had more experience with incoming space stations. Mir operated for 15 years before being guided to a fiery reentry over the Pacific in 2001. Before that, several Salyut stations bit the dust. Will anything

be saved?

NASA wants to bring back some small items from inside the space station for museum display, like the ship's bell and logs, panels with patches and other mementos. Those can come down in SpaceX supply ships in the final year or two. Unfortunately, they can't bring home really big stuff. China's space station, Tiangong

Tiangong is a permanently crewed space station constructed by China and operated by China Manned Space Agency since 2022. It is China's first long-term space station, part of the Tiangong programme and the core of the 'Third Step' of the China Manned Space Programme; it has a pressurised volume of 12,000 cubic ft, slightly over one third the size of the International Space Station. The space station aims to provide opportunities for space-based experiments and a platform for building capacity for scientific and technological innovation

HYLENR demonstrates world's first cold fusion technology to generate clean energy

Hyderabad: Hyderabad-based Startup HYLENR has demonstrated world's first and a ground breaking cold fusion technology to generate clean energy. This innovation has received a patent from the Government of India for its Low Energy Nuclear Reactor Technology. HYLENR's Low Energy Nuclear Reactor is a promising alternative for power generation, by amplifying input electricity to produce heat for space application (MMRTG), steam generation for multiple applications, room heating across cold regions globally, induction heating for domestic and Industrial requirements. Also, HYLENR devices can drastically decrease the risk profile for space missions. In a live demonstration during the launch of the product here on Wednesday, HYLENR's product successfully achieved a consistent 1.5x heat amplification (150 watts equivalent heat) from 100W electrical input.

A visionary who brought Kannada theatre from Udupi to Hyderabad

It was financial difficulties that compelled Karody Gundu Rao to relocate to Hyderabad from Udupi in coastal Karnataka in 1950. But his first love — Kannada theatre — stayed with him. In the place he relocated to, he not only rebuilt his livelihood, but also a new world of Kannada theatre. A recently released biography of the theatre maker by his son Karody Niranjana Rao, *Full Many a Gem*, chronicles this unusual journey. It looks back at how Gundu Rao came to be known for building an audience who participated in and admired Kannada theatre in Hyderabad. Gundu Rao managed to draw an audience of 800-1000 for his plays in Hyderabad. Gundu Rao's theatre journey in Hyderabad started under the banner Kannada Natya Ranga, which he founded in 1968 and he ran it until he died in 2010, says Niranjana Rao. His book brings alive days and moments in the 50-plus glorious years of his theatre journey. An early start: Starting his theatre journey at the age of 12, Gundu Rao was the grandson of popular Udupi-based theatre and Yakshagana artiste Karody Subba Rao.

Gundu Rao wrote his first play in 1934, a children's play titled *Draupadi Swayamvara*. He organised the play by roping in all his cousins and playmates. He wrote another children's play, *Muppina Maduve*, in early 1935. As a child artiste, he acted in a social play titled *Seva Sadan*, presented by the neighboring village's graduates. Gundu Rao grew up in an atmosphere imbued with music and theatre. He listened to the soulful *natyasangeet* of Bal Gandharva, Baburao Pendharker and other well-known luminaries of the Marathi stage. His son says he had a good singing voice and had learnt Hindustani music as well as instruments such as tabla from his grand-uncle, Karody Madhava Rao, who stayed at Kuthupady, Udupi, for many years and learnt the harmonium from his father, Karody Narasinga Rao. Speaking to *The Hindu*, Niranjana Rao said of the circumstances under which the family moved to Hyderabad and what happened there, "We were a family of six, but when we moved to Hyderabad, it was just my parents, my brother and I. Our father decided to move to Hyderabad due to financial issues. Though we had some agricultural land, it did not yield much. He wanted a new start, and when we were contemplating moving to Bombay (now Mumbai) or elsewhere, he decided to move to Hyderabad. He took up many different jobs there, but parallelly did theatre, introduced Kannada theatre to Hyderabad and eventually started his own troupe."

Gundu Rao assumed a different role in Hyderabad, initially becoming a



teacher. His wife also pursued teaching after completing her post-graduation. However, the death of his father in 1968 temporarily halted these activities. But Gundu Rao picked it up again soon, starting an amateur troupe. Until then, serious theatre, apart from the occasional one-act Kannada play, was virtually nonexistent in Hyderabad. It was a chance remark from an acquaintance that inspired Gundu Rao to embark on an ambitious theatre journey, producing full-length plays complete with songs, verses, and technical details. Although he initially faced challenges in assembling his cast, including female artists, he successfully launched *Kannada Natya Ranga* on July 27, 1968, at Ravindra Bharathi, with Telugu cinema icon Akkineni Nageswara Rao inaugurating the event before a large audience.

Initially, it was hard for Gundu Rao to find Kannada-speaking actors or Telugu-speaking actors who could also speak Kannada. "For his first Kannada play in Hyderabad, my father had asked his friend G.N. Rao to recruit actors, but he could not find even a single one. He ascribed this to the language barrier. This was the situation in 1968. Hyderabad then had upwards of nearly a lakh Kannadigas. Most of them belonged to the erstwhile Hyderabad Karnataka area. Their Kannada was a mixture of Kannada, Telugu and the Deccani Urdu." Most schools offered Hindi and Telugu as additional languages to be learnt under the three-language formula.

It became clear that getting Kannada-speaking actors was going to be an uphill task. "Father began to tap his vast circle of friends for potential talent. Back then many Kannadigas were serving in the branch offices of banks that originated in Karnataka. Having been educated in Karnataka, many of them could read, write and speak Kannada with ease. But would they have the commitment and dedication to undertake lengthy rehearsals and stage a play was the question. Soon, he found a 25-year-old banker who fitted the bill, and that is when he directed his first play in 1968 titled *Bahdur Ganda*, written by Parvatavani," narrates Niranjana Rao. No looking back

Gundu Rao went on to direct and compose music for a total of 41 plays, such as *Roopa Chakra*, *Akshayambara*, *Mamatheya Mane*, *Gampara Gumpu*, *Kurudu Kanchana*, *Devayani*, *Tippu Sultan*, *Kittoora Huli*, and *Sanmaana Sukha*, which was his last play in 2010. Niranjana Rao says there was never a problem getting an audience for his father's Kannada plays despite performing them in a state that did not speak the language. "Hyderabad has at least 3-4 lakh Kannadigas. Though not everyone is involved in social events like dramas, we managed to attract people. The tickets when we started were priced at not more than a rupee or two. Surprisingly, most of our dramas had an audience count of 800-1,000 people easily. The majority of our plays happened at

Ravindra Bharathi, which is equivalent to Ravindra Kalakshetra in Bengaluru, and we managed to have houseful shows in such a huge space." "On the day of the first show, around 9 p.m., we were ready and nervous, wishing we could dream away the next few hours. The theatre had started filling up, heightening our tension. By 9.15 p.m., it was jam-packed. There was not a single vacant seat, either in the hall or in the gallery. Quite a few were standing at the gate and in the aisles. Almost every other show was like this whenever we performed. So, pulling an audience for a Kannada play in Hyderabad was never an issue," he says. Gundu Rao went on to direct numerous plays with a strong command of production elements. He was involved in makeup, lighting, and music as well. Sharing his experience working with the late theatre maker, Ramachander Rao V., who acted in Gundu Rao's plays, says he was a very dedicated director. "He was my school teacher, and later on, his son was my boss. When Niranjana told me that his father was directing a play and was looking for Kannada-speaking actors, I told him I was interested. Rao sir was very dedicated, and was a perfectionist, if he took up something he would work on it till he succeeded." His forefathers were from Karnataka, but he was raised in Hyderabad. "Though I knew Kannada, Telugu was a language I was fluent in, and it had become my mother tongue as I was raised here. I

Tamil Nadu's own Stonehenge left to rot with its potential for research

About 4000 years ago, a south Indian traveller might have taken advantage of the best navigational season to reach Sumeria. There, to write a letter home, he would have used the stylus and he might have engraved his well-being in cuneiform, the oldest form of writing, on a clay tablet. This would be baked and sent by sea to his homeland, perhaps a village in Tamil Nadu. But this clay tablet did not make its way home, but remained in Sumeria to be unearthed centuries later. In the early 20th Century, it was translated and found that the Sumerian language and the Dravidian language, the early Tamil script, had a genetic linguistic relationship. Though many can vouch for the fact that Tamil Nadu had a flourishing culture 4000 years ago, the remains that are being unearthed, other than rock paintings, only reveal a thriving culture from about 3000 to 3500 years ago. But artefacts from south India that have been unearthed in Mesopotamia point to a civilization of over 4000 years. The first astronomers

One can assume that the traveller might have taken with him objects like wood and gold to be traded. Along with his business acumen, he would have exchanged his knowledge of the stars and the moons with the Sumerians. History says the Sumerians, or the ancient Mesopotamians, were among the first astronomers, and they had come up with a solar year consisting of 365 days. After gaining new knowledge for a few years, this unnamed traveller might have returned home. It may have been possible that his home was in a village now called Ellanthankarai in Sivaganga. South India had a flourishing megalithic civilization. Potsherds, beads, and ornaments are still being unearthed from areas around Pudukkottai, Sivaganga, and Ramanathapuram. Residents like Sumathi of Kalayarkoil, which is 8 km from Ellanthankarai, say that each time someone digs up the ground for erecting a building, pieces of black and red pottery keep coming up. This claim is backed by the recent discovery of a huge burial and habitation site by amateur archaeologist Ramesh at Ellanthankarai. Assuming that the early traveller was from the region, the finding of an ancient observatory at the burial site assumes significance.

K. Balakrishnan, principal, Bharathi Matriculation School, Tiruchi, and a resource person in astro-archaeology, says this is the first astro-archaeological site in Tamil Nadu that reveals a clear observatory ground. This would then lead to a highly learned group called Tamil Arivargal who resided in the region. According to Madurai-based archaeologist Ve. Balamurali, the earliest

mention of these people is in The Tholkaappiyam. These people were well versed in astronomy. They would disseminate what they learnt to others and this form of learning was called Ainthiram, the mention of which is also found in The Tholkaappiyam. Today, at Ellanthankarai, opposite the open prison, is a 70-acre land covered with thorny shrubs. Here lies the huge burial site dating back to the megalithic period. A small canal, now called the Nattarkaal, divides the burial site from the habitation sites. This canal may have been once a tributary of the Vaigai or it may have been dug for irrigation. This stream drains into the sea on the Ramanathapuram coast. The habitation sites seem to have been built near lakes and ponds. As the region is characterised by floodplains, rain-fed agriculture might have been practised here. Numerous cairn circles The burial site, filled with brownish granular soil, seems to be on an elevated plain. The burial ground is mostly flat, and might have been treeless, and with not much human disturbance, it would have been the perfect place for the ancient astronomers to observe the night sky. A walk through the site reveals numerous cairn circles signifying the remains of a huge population of early people. The cairn circles are a megalithic burial place. The site is marked by a circular or quasi-circular arrangement of stones with a chamber often containing the remains of the deceased, along with grave goods such as pottery, tools, and beads.

At each turn among brambles, one can glimpse shards of black and red pottery and sometimes thick red ware pottery. Some retain their shape in the dense laterite soil and some are broken, hanging precariously in pits dug by vandals. Many of the stones show signs of heavy erosion and at some places, there are gaps revealing that they have been removed. Some of the stones are fully covered with climbing shrubs. And in the midst of this burial site, the Tamil Arivargal had an observatory. A cylinder pillar still stands. Here, these men might have hunched down to observe the sun, the moon, and the stars. The site is strewn with menhirs, large upright stones that may signify some sort of ritual or a marker for a calendar. A very distinct menhir, shaped like an anthropomorphic figure, might have represented ancestral worship and played a major role in the celestial study. Accurate reading of axial tilt Mr. Balakrishnan says that after making continuous reading at the site, they found that the ancient people had even got the earth's axial tilt precisely, which is about 23.5 degrees. These stones, some roughly hewn into a star shape, some hacked to reveal the first and third



quarters of a moon, are in a line straight to the observatory point. He says this study of celestial movement might have been the precursor to making a calendar. The marking of seasonal changes by observing the stars was needed for the early merchants to travel to Sumeria. It would have also helped to predict the monsoonal season for the early farmers. Even today, if one observes from the pillar, the winter solstice, the summer solstice, and the equinox are perfectly marked with the stones set in the precise location, Mr. Balakrishnan adds. "What is needed are steps to protect this site that has immense potential for research. The U.K. government has turned a similar astro-archaeological site, the Stonehenge, into a major

tourist attraction. At Stonehenge, only 52 of the original sarsen stones remain, but here we have numerous menhirs, a clearly marked station stone, and laterite stones kept in a studied distance with markings reflecting their use in astronomy," Mr. Balamurali laments. Sources from the Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology confirm that Ellanthankarai is a massive burial site and steps are being taken to protect it. As for its importance to astronomy, they say that more research needs to be done. Till then, the Tamil Arivargal will remain hidden in the crumbling pages of history and will have to wait for someone to unlock their knowledge of the stars.

Drugs Control Administration finds misleading drug claims violating 1954 Act

Hyderabad: Drugs Control Administration, Telangana, detected certain medicines circulating in the market with misleading claims on their labels, stating that they treat kidney stones and fever. Such claims were in contravention of the

Drugs and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisements) Act, 1954 which prohibits advertisement of certain drugs for treatment of certain diseases and disorders. During a special drive, the Drugs Inspector, Gandipet detected Pathri Saaf Capsules and Syrup, an Ayurvedic medicine manufactured by Laborate Pharmaceuticals, Haryana with label bearing a misleading claim of treating kidney stones and seized stocks during a raid at a medical shop in Narsingi. In Khammam, the Drugs Inspector detected Ague Nil Syrup, a Homoeopathic medicine manufactured by Bhargava Phyto Labs, Rajasthan with label bearing a misleading claim stating that it treats fever and seized the medicine during the raid at a medical shop. Persons who make misleading advertisements regarding drugs for treatment of certain diseases and disorders are punishable with imprisonment which may extend to six months, or with fine, or with both, a DCA press release said.

