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 People should verify news from their end as well: Shriya

**CHICKEN RATES IN HYDERABAD**

Farm	Rs. 118
Retail live	Rs. 140
With skin	Rs. 203
Skinless	Rs. 231
Egg Rates (12 eggs)	Rs. 53

## Blaze engulfs landfill site



**SUMMER EFFECT:** Fire breaks out at the Ghazipur landfill site, in New Delhi on Sunday. Municipal Corporation of Delhi officials said excavators were pressed into service to control the fire. — Photo: PTI

# Limited voting hours in State

**EC cuts one hour for reasons unknown**

PS DILEEP  
 HYDERABAD

Telangana's polling hours — from 7 am to 5 pm — is turning into a curious case, with most other States, including the neighbouring Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra, having an extra hour till 6 pm to vote. Only left-wing extremism-affected and sensitive areas in those States have restricted voting hours, unlike in Telangana, where it is 5 pm across the State and 4 pm in LWE-affected areas here.

Though the extra hour could prompt more people to head to the polling station, especially those who work till 5 pm and those hesitant to venture out and stand in queues under the sweltering sun, why the extra hour has been cut here remains unknown. Interestingly, election authorities who are trying to increase the polling percentage with widespread campaigns, have for strange reasons restricted the polling hours in State till 5 pm as the State goes to the hustings on May 13.

So far, the ECI issued election notifications for four of the seven phases of polling to be held across the country. Accordingly, the general voting hours are

**TS is the only State to have voting till 5 pm in areas even in cities and regions that are not extremist-affected**

from 7 am to 6 pm. However, the voting hours are from 7 am to 5 pm in the North Eastern Region, 7 am to 4 pm in Manipur and Nagaland along with certain other constituencies. In LWE-affected areas and also certain sensitive areas, the voting hours are truncated by one or two hours to enable polling staff to return to headquarters safely.

On April 18, the Election Commission issued a Gazette notification for the fourth phase of the general elections in 96 Lok Sabha seats across 10 States, including Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, and Jammu and Kashmir. While the polling will be held from 7 am to 6 pm in the neighbouring Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and several other States, the closing hours in those States have been restricted to 4 pm or 5 pm.

only in sensitive or remote areas considering logistic issues. Telangana is the only State to have voting hours till 5 pm in areas even in cities and regions that are not extremist-affected.

Polling hours in Telangana's extremist-affected areas and sensitive Assembly segments of Adilabad, Peddapalli, Warangal, Mahabubabad and Khammam parliamentary constituencies end at 4 pm. Ironically, the polling hours are till 6 pm even in the Srinagar parliamentary constituency of Jammu and Kashmir but end at 5 pm in Hyderabad and Secunderabad parliamentary constituencies.

Telangana witnessed a poor voter turnout during the 2018 Assembly elections with 73.73%, which further declined to 62.11% in 2019 general elections. The State recorded a turnout of 71.34% during Assembly elections in December 2023, with all these elections having the polling timings restricted to 5 pm. This time, even as temperatures are hovering around and above 45 degrees Celsius in several areas, with such conditions sure to decrease voter participation, polling booths still will be shut to voters at 5 pm. (SEE PAGE 2)

## Cong will not even leave mangalsutra: PM

JAIPUR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday suggested that if the Congress comes to power, it would redistribute the wealth of people to Muslims and cited former PM Manmohan Singh's remark that the minority community had the first claim on the country's resources. "This urban-naxal mindset, my mothers and sisters, they will not even leave your 'mangalsutra'. They can go to that level," Modi said addressing a rally in Ra-

**Says party will redistribute wealth of people to Muslims and cited ex-PM Manmohan Singh's remark that minorities had the first claim on the country's resources**

jaasthan's Banswara. "The Congress manifesto says they will calculate the gold with mothers and sisters, get information about it and then distribute that property. They will distribute it to whom - Manmohan Singh's government had said that Muslims have the

first right on the country's assets," he claimed. "Earlier, when their (Congress) government was in power, they had said that Muslims have the first right of the country's assets. This means to whom will this property be distributed? It will be distributed among those who

have more children. It will be distributed to the infiltrators. Should your hard-earned money go to the infiltrators? Do you approve of this?" he said.

Modi's reference was to former PM Manmohan Singh's controversial "first claim" remark made in 2006. While Congress manifesto delves into the issue of economic inequalities, the party has asserted that it does not talk about "redistribution" and that it favours a "comprehensive socio-economic caste census". (SEE PAGE 2)

## Cong govt yet to spell out stand on Godavari diversion

STATE BUREAU  
 Hyderabad

The State government, after the change of guard in December last, is yet to spell out its stand on many of the complex challenges Telangana has been facing in safeguarding its interests in respect of river water sharing and utilisation. It is more so with the moves of the Ministry of Jal Shakti to facilitate the transfer of Godavari water to the Cauvery basin.

Even as it is feared that Telangana could stand to lose to a great extent, Tamil Nadu is expected to gain and the issue could potentially ignite a major conflict between the two States. Though the issue is being intensely debated, with

Leader of Opposition K Chandrashekhar Rao pointing out how the previous BRS government opposed the project and how it was detrimental to Telangana's interests, the Congress government is yet to clarify on the options before the State.

The NWDA officials, immediately after the Congress came to power in the State, had an interaction with the State officials on the project at Jala Soudha. Top brass of the Irrigation Department that took part in the interaction, had made it clear that the construction of a new project at Inchampalli, proposed at a downstream point of Godavari (below Medigadda barrage), would not lend any additional advantage. (SEE PAGE 2)

## Jagga's 'courage' remarks spark row

**BRS worker killed a day after he asks cadre not to fear police**

STATE BUREAU  
 Hyderabad

TPCC working president T Jagga Reddy's comments asking the Congress workers not to fear the State Police and to show their courage has triggered an uproar from different sections, particularly in the wake of a BRS worker being killed by Congress workers the very next day in Sangareddy.

The fact that the TPCC working president made these comments in the presence of Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and a couple of Ministers has startled many. The Chief Minister along with his Cabinet colleagues had participated in a roadshow at Medak on Saturday. Speaking from the dais, with the Chief Minister beside him, Jagga Reddy had



TPCC working president T Jagga Reddy addressing the gathering in the presence of Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, in Medak.

exhorted Congress workers not to fear the State Police as the Congress government was in power.

He also asked the Congress workers to "show their dum" (courage) and that the Chief Minister would manage things at a higher level.

"On April 20, Congress leader said show your guts, no matter what, we are here to take care. Chief Minister will manage at his level. It is our government and do not be afraid of the police," Nayini Anurag Reddy, an entrepreneur, posted on X. (SEE PAGE 2)

## BRS alleges political motive

**SANGAREDDY:** Even as the BRS has alleged a political motive behind the murder of a party worker at Sigar Boguda, the police have denied the claim. Former BRS MLA Mahareddy Bhupal Reddy said the Congress was trying to create fear among the BRS workers and voters with such attacks ahead of polls. BRS worker Srinivas Nayak (22) died in an attack by Congress workers at Sigar Boguda on Saturday. (SEE PAGE 2)

## Hubballi killing: Muslim outfits call for bandh

DHARWAD

Muslim organisations here have given a call for a 'bandh' (strike) on Monday, condemning the murder of 23-year-old college student Neha Hiremath in Hubballi recently.

Dharwad-based Anjuman-e-Islam president Esmail Tamatgar said all the businessmen from the Muslim community will observe bandh from 10 am to 3 pm to offer their condolence to the departed soul and protest the brutal incident.

"Chicken shops, garage workshops, fruit vendors, banks and institutions will remain closed to condole the death and show our solidarity with the family. We will put up 'Justice for Neha' stickers at our shops," Tamatgar said. He added that a rally will also be taken out. PTI

## I.N.D.I.A bloc unites for Kejriwal, Soren

RANCHI

In a 'show of strength and unity', the I.N.D.I.A bloc on Sunday organised the 'Ulgulan Nyay Rally' here with top leaders of the alliance terming the Lok Sabha polls as a battle to save the Constitution and Democracy, and unseat the BJP-led government at Centre from power.

In the rally held here at Prabhat Tara Maidan, two empty chairs were placed on the stage in a symbolic gesture — hinting towards the absence of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and former Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant



Congress and RJD workers clash during 'Ulgulan Nyay' rally of I.N.D.I.A bloc, in Ranchi, on Sunday. — Photo: PTI

Soren. While the Delhi Chief Minister was arrested in connection with the liquor policy scam, Soren was held in a land grab matter. The I.N.D.I.A bloc leaders, slamming the arrest of both leaders,

termed the development a conspiracy, stating the response has to be given through votes. Speaking at the rally, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said: "Hemant Soren is not going to lose courage. He

is not scared of jail. We won't be finished if two CMs are imprisoned."

**'BJP wants to kill Kejri'** Meanwhile, at the rally, Sunita Kejriwal alleged that a conspiracy was being hatched to kill her husband in the prison. She said even as Kejriwal is a diabetic, he was being prevented from taking insulin. "What's shameful is even the cameras in jail are keeping an eye on what my husband is consuming! she said while raising a slogan "Jail ka taala tootega, Arvind Kejriwal chhutega, Hemant Soren chhutega." IANS (RELATED REPORTS PAGE 7)

## Direct tax collections up at Rs 19.58L cr

NEW DELHI

India's net direct tax collections surged by a massive 17.7 per cent year-on-year to Rs 19.58 lakh crore in the fiscal year ended March 2024, surpassing even revised estimates by a wide margin. Net collections of income and corporate taxes, which make up for most of the direct taxes, in 2023-24 financial year exceeded the Budget estimates by Rs 1.35 lakh crore and the revised estimates by Rs 13,000 crore. The government had raised the target for direct tax collection in FY24 to Rs 19.45 lakh crore. (REPORT PAGE 8)

## Thief confesses to killing boy, ends life

STATE BUREAU  
 Sangareddy

A youngster, who called the police and confessed that he had killed a 13-year-old boy who saw him stealing cables from a scrap shop, later died by suicide by hanging from a mobile tower in Jogipet town on Sunday.

According to Jogipet Police, Vadde Nagaraju (25) used to extort money from traders in the Jogipet market area. On Saturday evening, he is said to have stolen some cable wire from a scrap shop in the market area when Alakunta Shekar (13) saw him and informed

the owner. Developing a grudge against Shekar, Nagaraju called him to a well on the outskirts of the town, where he allegedly strangled the boy and smashed his head with a rock before throwing the body into the well on Saturday night.

Later, Nagaraju climbed a mobile tower, called the police and informed them that he had killed the boy. When the police reached the spot and persuaded him to climb down, he refused. Though his friend Ramu and a trader Prakash climbed the tower to bring him down, he attacked them with a knife and a rod. (SEE PAGE 2)