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Will resign if Congress fulfils promises by Aug 15, says Harish **page 5**

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Curtains down on poll campaigning for second phase of voting **page 7**

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**Biden signs \$95-bn aid**

Includes provision for sale or ban of TikTok in US



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**SRH eye run-fest in tie with RCB**



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**Warrior spirit**

Lakshmi unveils stunning Naga tattoo

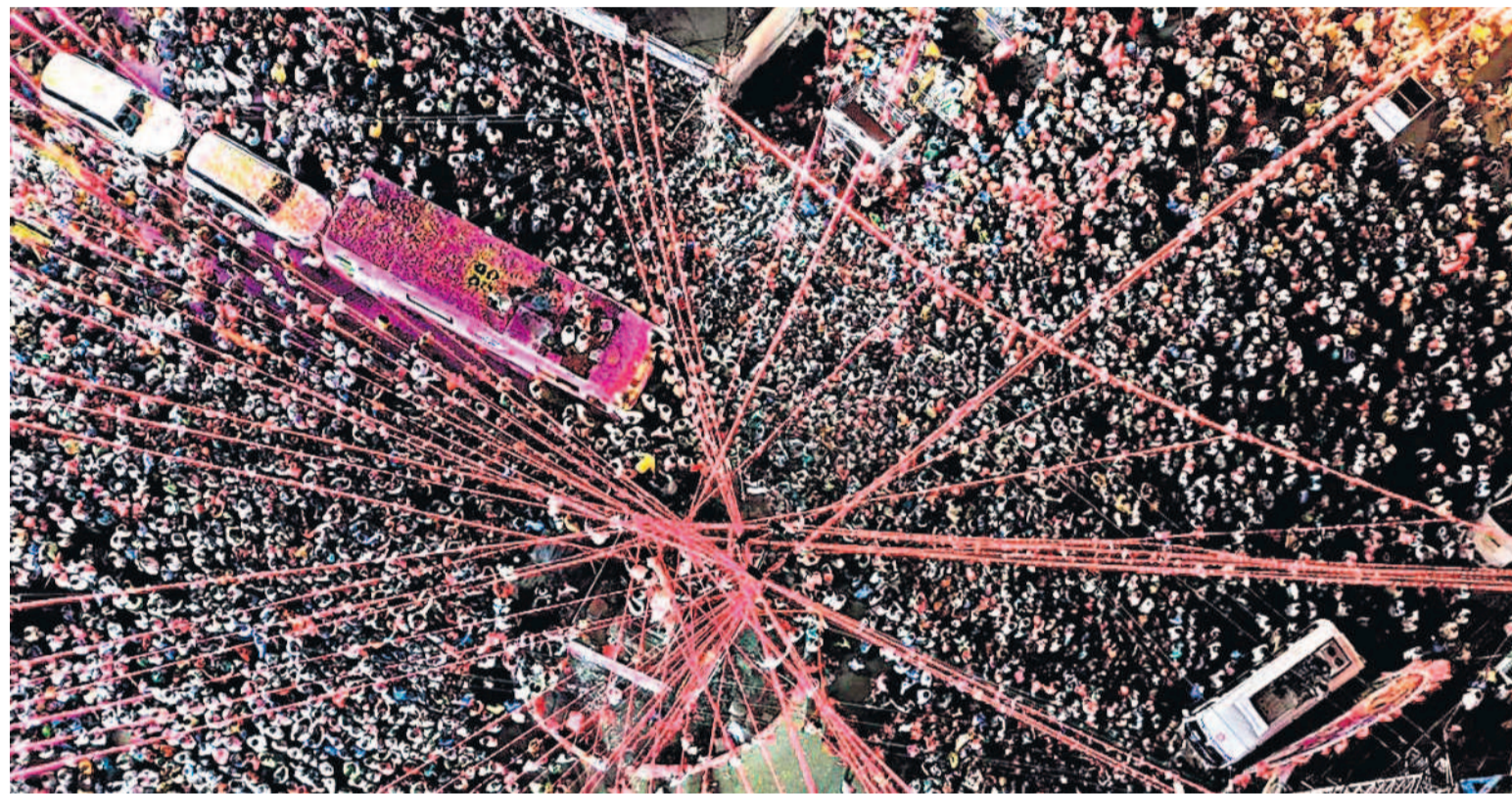


**CHICKEN RATES IN HYDERABAD**

Farm	Rs. 120
Retail live	Rs. 142
With skin	Rs. 206
Skinless	Rs. 234
Egg Rates (12 eggs)	Rs. 50

## Congress threats won't work with me, says KCR

Says leaders targeting him & BRS to divert people's attention from real issues



People gather in large numbers to hear BRS president K Chandrashekhar Rao speak during his roadshow in Miryalaguda on Wednesday.

STATE BUREAU  
HYDERABAD

Vowing to fight on behalf of distraught farmers and ensure them justice, BRS president and former Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao on Wednesday said despite water being the primary factor for the Telangana Statehood movement, the current Congress government had handed over the management of the Nagarjuna Sagar Project (NSP) to the Krishna River Management Board

(KRMB) due to its inefficiency and incompetence. Addressing the first roadshow of his Lok Sabha poll campaign at Miryalaguda, Chandrashekhar Rao said the Congress government had failed on all fronts. To cover up their inefficiency, Congress leaders were targeting him and the BRS to divert people's attention from real issues. "They are threatening to wipe out my presence in Telangana and send me to Cheralapally prison. How could they

think that I will be threatened with such stupid statements? Would Telangana State have become a reality if I had feared such threats?" he asked, reminding Congress leaders that people did not give them power to mislead them or abuse him. He termed the Congress as the number one enemy of the people of Telangana since 1956. For decades, the Congress had put the people of Telangana through numerous hardships. He recalled that throughout the

Telangana agitation of 15 years, the struggle was always for water. Recalling his visit to Miryalaguda 21 years ago in his fight for the release of water from the NSP, he said the fight has always been for water. "Due to the inefficiency of the current Congress government, we are forced to launch our fight for water once again," he said. The BRS president said farmers, who were confident and happy till four-five months ago, were now in distress. (SEE PAGE 2)

**KCR gets rousing welcome**

**HYDERABAD:** Leader of Opposition and BRS president K Chandrashekhar Rao set out on a 17-day bus tour to cover 12 parliamentary constituencies in Telangana. He will visit fields and interact with farmers over their plight and participate in roadshows. (REPORT PAGE 5)

**BOILING ISSUE**

## Slugfest over inheritance tax

Cong's loot... zindagi ke baad bhi: Modi

AMBIKAPUR/NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday seized on Congress leader Sam Pitroda's remarks on inheritance tax to step up the ruling BJP's blistering attack on the issue of "wealth redistribution", saying "zindagi ke saath bhi, zindagi ke baad bhi" is the opposition party's mantra to "loot" people. In his poll rallies, Modi framed Pitroda's comments in his wider onslaught against the Con-

gress, asserting that they have exposed its hidden agenda and that the party has become so removed from the country's social and family values that it wants to legally rob people of their assets and lifelong savings they want to bequeath to their children. At a poll rally in Chhattisgarh's Ambikapur, Modi said the dangerous intentions of the Congress are coming to the fore and now "it says it will impose inheritance tax". (SEE PAGE 2)

No plans to bring such a law: Ramesh

NEW DELHI

Refuting the BJP's claim that Congress aims to impose inheritance tax in the country, party leader Jairam Ramesh said it was former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi who abolished the Estate Duty in 1985. He also demanded an answer from Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the issue. Taking to social media platform X, Ramesh said, "The Congress has no plan whatsoever to introduce an inheritance tax. In

fact, Rajiv Gandhi abolished Estate Duty in 1985." The MP also shared a video of BJP MP Jayant Sinha, in which the former Minister of State is advocating for estate taxes in the country. "Please listen to BJP MP Jayant Sinha, once MoS Finance in the Modi Sarkar, and later Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Finance. He has spent 15 minutes vehemently arguing in favour of an Inheritance Tax of 55%, like in the US," he said. (AGENCIES)

**State's Dhriti looks to shine on world stage**

BISWAJIT TALUKDAR  
Hyderabad

Telangana triathlete Dhriti Koujalgi is excited to don the Indian colours in the upcoming Asia Triathlon Cup and South Asian Championship in Pokhara, Nepal, starting April 27.

At just 15 years of age, Dhriti stands out as one of the youngest competitors in the championship. "I'm thrilled and focused solely on giving my best," she says, emphasising her pride in representing her country on the international stage. (REPORT PAGE 11)

## Can't change thought of EVM critics, says SC

Reserves verdict on petitions claiming that EVMs can be tinkered with

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court said on Wednesday it cannot "control the elections" or issue directions simply because doubts have been raised about the efficacy of Electronic Voting Machines (EVM), as it reserved its judgement on a clutch of petitions claiming the polling devices can be tinkered with to manipulate results.

The court said it cannot change the thought process of those doubting the advantages of polling machines and advocating going back to ballot papers.

A Bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta reserved its verdict on a batch of pleas seeking complete cross-verification of votes cast using EVMs with Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT), after taking note of the answers to queries it had posed to the Election Commission.

It sought answers from an official of the poll panel to five questions related to the functioning of EVMs in-

cluding whether the micro-controllers fitted in them are reprogrammable. Senior Deputy Election Commissioner Nitesh Kumar Vyas, who had earlier made a presentation to the court on the functioning of EVMs, was summoned by the Bench to appear at 2 pm to answer the queries. Vyas, on microcontrollers, said they are one-time programmable at the time of manufacture and installed in all three units of EVMs — the balloting unit, VVPAT and control unit. They cannot be reprogrammed thereafter, he asserted. Advocate Prashant Bhushan appeared for Association for NGO Democratic Reforms. PTI

**EVMs are secure: EC**

**NEW DELHI:** The ECI on Wednesday apprised the Supreme Court that all three units (ballot unit, control unit and VVPAT) of the EVMs have their own microcontrollers. "These microcontrollers are housed in secured unauthorised access modules so they cannot be accessed physically also," an ECI official submitted before a Bench presided over by Justice Sanjiv Khanna. IANS

## RBI imposes curbs on Kotak bank

MUMBAI

Cracking down on repeated non-compliance of IT norms, the RBI on Wednesday barred Kotak Mahindra Bank from onboarding new customers through its online and mobile banking channels and issuing fresh credit cards with immediate effect after the regulator found "serious deficiencies" in the lender's IT risk management.

These actions, the RBI said, are necessitated based on significant concerns arising out of the Reserve Bank's IT examination of the bank for 2022 and 2023 and the continued failure on part of the bank to address these concerns in a comprehensive and timely manner.

In an almost similar action, the RBI in December 2020 had barred HDFC Bank from issuing new cards and launching new digital initiatives after re-

Bars it from onboarding new customers online, issuing new credit cards after finding gaps in IT inventory

peated instances of technological outages at the lender. The restrictions were lifted in March 2022.

In a statement regarding the supervisory action against Kotak Mahindra Bank, the apex bank stated that: "Serious deficiencies and non-compliances were observed in the areas of IT inventory management, patch and change management, user access management, vendor risk management, data security and data leak prevention strategy, business continuity and disaster recovery rigour and drill, etc." PTI

## 5 Inter students end life over poor results

STATE BUREAU  
Hyderabad/Mancherial/Khammam/Sangareddy

In separate incidents, five Intermediate students died, reportedly by suicide, in the State after being upset over the results that were announced on Wednesday.

In the first case, Maidam Sathwik (18) from Achulapur village in Thandur mandal was found hanging after he failed in mathematics, physics and chemistry. He was a student of Pragathi Junior College, Bellampalli,



Maidam Sathwik, Gattika Tejaswhini

and the elder son of Narayana, a farmer, Thandur Sub-Inspector K Jagadish said. (SEE PAGE 2) (RELATED REPORTS PAGE 3)

## JEE-Main: 15 from TS score perfect 100

NEW DELHI

Fifty-six candidates achieved the perfect 100 score in the engineering entrance exam, JEE-Main, with the maximum of 15 being from Telangana, the National Testing Agency (NTA) announced on Wednesday.

Thirty-nine candidates were debarred from taking JEE-Main for three years for using unfair means during the exam, NTA said. Over 10 lakh candidates took the test. (SEE PAGE 2)

## Go 'shadowless' in Hyderabad on May 9

CITY BUREAU  
Hyderabad

People in Hyderabad will experience a unique celestial event on May 9, when they will not be able to see their own shadows! Yes, the rare and fleeting astronomical phenomenon — "Zero Shadow Day" — will occur in Hyderabad between 12.12 pm and 12.19 pm.

On Zero Shadow Day, the sun will be exactly overhead at noon (local time) and vertical objects

- EXPERIENCE THE PHENOMENON**
- **MAY 6:** Bhongir, Mahabubnagar
  - **MAY 7:** Nalgonda
  - **MAY 8:** Suryapet, Khammam
  - **MAY 9:** Hyderabad, Secunderabad, Kothagudem
  - **MAY 10:** Sangareddy, Jangaon
  - **MAY 11:** Medak, Warangal

will not cast a visible shadow. While the window of the planetary event is quite short, it promises to provide a captivating display of astronomy in action.

"This celestial event also provides us with a

glimpse into the intricate dance between the Earth and Sun. It's a reminder of the precise celestial mechanics that govern our months and seasons. In the entire month of May, several locations in the two Telugu States will

witness Zero Shadow Day," says founder-secretary of Planetary Society of India (PSI) N Sree Raghunandan Kumar.

According to the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), the Sun does not rise exactly in the east and set exactly in the west every day. It also does not rise directly overhead at noon and does not reach its highest point at noon every day.

As a result, the elevation of the Sun at its maximum height also varies throughout the year.