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Rains drench Hyd, districts witness heavy rainfall



WORLD | PAGE 09

Mediators hopeful of deal to end Israel-Hamas war

Biden says 'we are closer than we've ever been' to an agreement



SPORT | PAGE 10

'Focus on increasing athletes for LA Olympics'

## J&K, Haryana polls in Sept-Oct

Results on Oct 4; J&K to vote after a decade

PTI  
NEW DELHI

Assembly elections will be held in Jammu and Kashmir after a decade in three phases from September 18, setting the stage for the people of the Union Territory to elect a government after the scrapping of Article 370 in 2019.

The Election Commission also announced that elections to the 90-member Haryana Assembly will be held on October 1 and results for both the polls will be declared on October 4.

The two Assembly elections will be the first popularity test for the BJP and the I.N.D.I.A bloc following the Lok Sabha polls. The three-phase elections to the 90-member Jammu and Kashmir Assembly will be held on September 18, September 25 and October 1, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar told a press conference in the presence of Election Commissioners Gyanesh Kumar and Sukhbir Singh Sandhu.

After suffering reverses in the Lok Sabha polls, including in Haryana, the BJP is

### The schedule

THE TWO ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS WILL BE THE FIRST POPULARITY TEST FOR BJP, I.N.D.I.A BLOC FOLLOWING LOK SABHA POLLS

#### JAMMU AND KASHMIR

PHASES: 3 | SEATS: 90

VOTING: Sept 18, Sept 25, Oct 1

- BJP aims at putting up a strong show
- Its strongholds confined to Jammu division
- National Conference, PDP won most seats in Kashmir valley
- Although part of I.N.D.I.A bloc, both regional parties & Cong likely to contest separately



#### HARYANA

PHASES: 1

SEATS: 90

VOTING: OCT 1

- BJP keen to regain political momentum by retaining power
- Congress hopes to topple BJP from power after 10 years



#### MAHARASHTRA

EC SAYS MAHARASHTRA ASSEMBLY POLLS WILL BE ANNOUNCED LATER, CITING THE REQUIREMENT OF ADDITIONAL SECURITY FORCES FOR J&K POLLS, PACKED FESTIVAL SEASON

to regain political momentum by retaining power in the State and putting up a strong show in Jammu and Kashmir, where its strongholds have been traditionally confined to Jammu.

The Congress, however, is hoping to continue with its political revival by toppling the BJP from power in Haryana after 10 years and inflicting losses on its rival

in the Jammu region where the two parties are the main contestants. Two regional parties, the National Conference and PDP, have won most of the seats in the Kashmir valley between them in past elections. Both parties are part of the I.N.D.I.A bloc along with the Congress but all three fought separately in the Lok Sabha polls. (REPORTS PAGE 7)

### NATIONWIDE DOCTORS' STRIKE TODAY

NEW DELHI: The Indian Medical Association announced a 24-hour nationwide withdrawal of non-emergency services from 6 am on August 17 to protest the alleged rape and murder of a PG doctor in Kolkata. (NATION PAGE 7)

### MPOX IN PAK, NO CLARITY ON TOTAL CASES

ISLAMABAD: Confusion prevailed in Pakistan over the number of mpox cases in the county, as a federal government official confirmed only one patient, contradicting the three cases reported by provincial officials. (PTI)

### NURSE RAPED, KILLED IN UTTARAKHAND

RUDRAPUR: A nurse of a private hospital was allegedly raped and killed, and her face crushed with a stone by the accused who dumped her body in a vacant plot in an Uttar Pradesh village near the Uttarakhand border. (PTI)

### NATIONAL FILM AWARDS ANNOUNCED

NEW DELHI: Malayalam film *Aattam: The Play* won the award for best feature film and Sooraj R Barjatya was judged best director for Hindi movie *Uunchai* in the National Film Awards announced on Friday. Best actress award was shared by Nithya Menon and Manasi Parekh. (REPORT PAGE 12)

### Heroin paste worth Rs 4.34 cr seized, 8 held

CITY BUREAU  
Hyderabad

In one of the major drug busts in recent times, the Madhapur Special Operations Team, along with the Raidurgam police, nabbed three drug peddlers and five consumers at Telecom Nagar on Thursday. Officials seized 620 grams of heroin paste worth Rs 4.34 crore, two cars and eight mobile phones, altogether worth Rs 4.65 crore from their possession.

The arrested were M Choudary, Dinesh Choudary and Ganesh Choudary, drug suppliers from Pali of Rajasthan. The main drug supplier, Savar Jhat, also from Rajasthan, is absconding. The consumers were identified as Nithin Gurjar from Gachibowli, Prakash Choudary from Saidabad, JV Dewasi from Ameenpur, Prakash Choudary from Sainikpuri Colony and Banaram Choudary from Bhongir. All are natives of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.

According to the police, Dinesh Choudary, Ganesh Choudary and Mangalram, who planned to earn easy money by drug peddling, ordered heroin paste from their known drug supplier Savar Jhat and paid Rs 48,000 advance. On August 7, Savar Jhat came to Hyderabad in a car and handed over 620 grams of heroin paste to the trio.

They decided to form a team to dispose of the drug to consumers, G Vineeth, DCP Madhapur, said. (SEE PAGE 2)

### LAUNCH SUCCESSFUL



ISRO's Small Satellite Launch Vehicle-03 carrying EOS-08 lifts off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh, on Friday. — Photo: PTI (REPORT PAGE 7)

### Yunus dials Modi, says safety of Hindus a priority

NEW DELHI

In his first direct contact with New Delhi over a week after becoming the head of Bangladesh's interim government, Nobel Laureate Mohammad Yunus on Friday conveyed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a phone conversation that

Dhaka would prioritise the protection and safety of Hindus and other minorities. In the talks initiated by Yunus, Modi reaffirmed India's support for a democratic, stable, peaceful and progressive Bangladesh and underlined the importance of ensuring safety of Hindus and minorities. (PTI)

## BRS challenges CM on loan waiver claims

KTR calls scheme attempt to deceive farmers

STATE BUREAU  
Hyderabad

Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) working president KT Rama Rao has challenged Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's claims over waiver of crop loans up to Rs 2 lakh, terming them as another attempt to deceive farmers.

He dared the Chief Minister to accompany him to the latter's Kodangal constituency along with media representatives and vowed to leave politics if a single farmer could confirm that their loans have been fully waived as promised.

Speaking to mediapersons at Telangana Bhavan here on Friday, Rama Rao refuted Revanth Reddy's claims that all crop loans up to Rs 2 lakh had been waived by August 15. He stated that only 40 per cent of the promised loans have been waived, accusing the Congress government of deceiving farmers and exaggerating the success of the scheme. He described the loan waiver as a "gross fraud" and called for farmers to file a cheating case against the Chief Minister for making false promises.

The BRS working president explained that while

### Congress spreading rumours on KCR's health, says BRS

HYDERABAD: Ruling Congress party's social media wing appears to have mastered the art of misinformation campaign. It has now begun to circulate false news on social media stating that BRS president and former Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao has been ill for last 12 days. The message also claimed that he was undergoing treatment at his residence in Erravelli under supervision of a team of doctors from a corporate hospital. However, the same message contradicts stating that he has been shifted abroad. (SEE PAGE 2)

### BJP-BRS merger Cong creation, says Eatala

HYDERABAD: Terming the reports about the BJP-BRS merger as Congress' propaganda, BJP MP Eatala Rajender accused the party of spreading lies to divert the attention of the people from the core issues. Responding to the claims of CM A Revanth Reddy that soon the BRS will be merged with the BJP, Rajender said all talks about the merger were the creation of the Congress and that there was no truth in it. "The CM is trying to divert people's attention by making false claims about the merger. There is no such discussion going on in the BJP," he said. On the crop loan waiver, he alleged that the government's claims were false. (SEE PAGE 2)

the Congress government initially promised to allocate Rs 40,000 crore for loan waivers, only Rs 31,000 crore was approved by the State Cabinet, and Rs 26,000 crore was allocated in the State Budget. However, as of Thursday, only Rs 17,934 crore had been spent, covering 22,37,848 farmers.

He also demanded that the Chief Minister face the people without security and answer them for his actions. "Revanth Reddy promised a full crop loan waiver of up to Rs 2 lakh with a single signature. But in reality, only 40 per cent of the loans have been waived," he said. (SEE PAGE 2)

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